The Economic Impact of Arts and Culture

THE REGIONAL ARTS & CULTURE COUNCIL AND Americans for the Arts conducted a study of 183 nonprofit arts organizations in Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington Counties. Their combined spending in 2016 was $214.4 million, and they employed 7,992 FTE.

More than 3.9 million people attended an arts event in 2016, and spent an average of $22.35 per person as a result of attending the event, above and beyond the cost of admission, for a total of $116 million. For example, when patrons attend a cultural event, they may pay to park their car, eat dinner in a restaurant, shop in nearby stores, and pay a babysitter when they get home. Non-local attendees may spend the night in a hotel. These dollars generate commerce for local businesses.

The combined spending of arts organizations and their audiences totaled $330.4 million. This spending supports 11,505 full-time equivalent jobs in the region and generates more than $27.7 million in local and state government revenue. Investments in arts and culture pay fantastic dividends for the greater economy and help fund other vital public services.

More than 15% of all attendees were visitors from outside the area, contributing more than $32 million to local hotels, restaurants, retail shops and other local companies. Almost 80% of these visitors reported that their primary reason for travelling was specifically to attend that arts and culture event.

BY THE NUMBERS

$214.4 million
Arts organization expenditures

$116 million
Spending by audiences

$330.4 million
Total economic impact

11,505
Full time jobs

$14 million
State government revenue

$13.7 million
Local government revenue

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