WHY THE ARTS MATTER IN RHODE ISLAND

NATIONAL ARTS FACTS

ARTS & CULTURE SECTOR REPRESENTS 4.3% OF NATION’S GDP & 5.2 MILLION JOBS

U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis reports that nationally the arts and culture sector was a $919.7 billion industry in 2019, representing 4.3% of the nation’s GDP, 5.2 million jobs, and total compensation of $466 billion.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2019 (Prior to COVID-19 pandemic)

$919.7 BILLION Arts & Culture Sector
$892.7 BILLION Construction
$269.9 BILLION Education Services

BONUS: In 2019, U.S. exports generated a $33 billion arts trade SURPLUS.

LOSS OF REVENUE AND JOBS (Commercial & Nonprofit Arts Organizations Combined)

Nationally, COVID-19 has devastated creative economy businesses with a loss of $150 billion in revenue. In addition, 52% of all creative workers became unemployed (2.7 million people) as of July 2020.


$150B LOST REVENUE & 52% OF UNEMPLOYMENT

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF NONPROFIT ARTS ORGANIZATIONS & THEIR AUDIENCES

Nationally, the nonprofit arts industry alone generates $166.3 billion in economic activity annually that supports 4.6 million jobs and generates $27.5 billion in federal, state, and local government revenue.

- Spending by arts audiences generated $102.5 billion to local businesses.


NONPROFIT ART IS A $166.3 BILLION DRIVER OF OUR NATIONAL, STATE & LOCAL ECONOMY.

RHODE ISLAND ARTS FACTS

RI ARTS & CULTURE SECTOR REPRESENTS 3.3% OF STATE’S GDP & 18,215 JOBS

U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis reports that the arts and culture sector contributed $2 billion to RI’s economy in 2019, representing 3.3% of the state’s GDP, 18,215 jobs, and total compensation of $1.1 billion.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2019 (Prior to COVID-19 pandemic)

$2 BILLION Arts & Culture Sector
$2 BILLION Education Services

BONUS: In 2019, RI arts and culture was also larger than the Transportation industry.

LOSS OF REVENUE AND JOBS (Commercial & Nonprofit Arts Organizations Combined)

In RI, COVID-19 has devastated creative economy businesses with a loss of $436 million in revenue. In addition, 57% of all creative workers in RI became unemployed (10,077 people) as of July 2020.


$436M LOST REVENUE & 57% OF UNEMPLOYMENT

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF NONPROFIT ARTS ORGANIZATIONS & THEIR AUDIENCES

In 2015, Rhode Island’s arts and culture sector employed thousands of FTE jobs and generated millions of dollars in economic activity. Nonprofit arts groups helped cultivate that activity.

- In Providence, for example, nonprofit arts groups generated $93.8 million in economic activity. Audiences of 3,839,971 people added another $112.0 million in related spending for a total of $205.8 million for the city in 2015, and this generated $20.9 million in local and state government revenues and 5,115 FTE jobs.


NONPROFIT ART IS A $1.8 BILLION DRIVER OF JUST ONE OF OUR LOCAL ECONOMIES.

PUBLIC INVESTMENT IN GRANTS TO NONPROFIT ARTS ORGANIZATIONS & ARTISTS

Q What about RI—how much does state government budget to the RI State Council (RISCA) on the Arts each year?
A In FY 20-21, the state allocated $2,487,857 to RISCA. The RISCA also received $776,200 in federal NEA funds, which the Council re-granted to dozens of cultural organizations throughout the state. An additional 24 nonprofit arts organizations received direct grants from the NEA totaling $720,000.


Q So how much is the federal government investing in the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)?
A Congress allocated $167.5 million to the NEA in FY 2021, which has been relatively level for the last several years. This amounts to just 51¢ per capita, yet the nonprofit arts industry generates over $13 billion in federal tax revenue back to the U.S. Treasury. Imagine what nonprofit arts groups could generate with $1 per capita.

**RHODE ISLAND ARTS FACTS**

**IN THE OCEAN STATE, THE ARTS UNITE US**

Community Music Works in Providence creates cohesive urban community through free music education and performances for children and youth.

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**THE RHODE ISLAND STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS (RISCA)**

Established in 1967, RISCA is charged by the state legislature to stimulate public interest and participation in the arts and to serve as the liaison to the state arts community. Honoring its state mandate, RISCA expands the state’s cultural resources and the public’s participation in them; assesses the needs of the arts statewide and makes recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly; provides opportunities in arts education; and protects freedom of artistic expression.

**Executive Director:** Randall Rosenbaum  
**Chair:** Libby Slader

> Learn more [here](#).

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**ART IN RHODE ISLAND**

- Arts Now RI offers a calendar of wonderful arts events all over the state [here](#).
- Motif Magazine is a free online and print arts and entertainment periodical featuring events in Providence and around RI [here](#).
- The Public’s Radio WNPN 89.3 is the public radio station serving RI and the South Coast of MA, and showcases arts and culture via their event calendar and regular “Artscape” radio series. [Here](#).

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**RHODE ISLAND ART ORGANIZATIONS**

- **Steel Yard**  
  [www.thesteelyard.org/](http://www.thesteelyard.org/)
- **Stadium Theatre**  
  [www.stadiumtheatre.com/](http://www.stadiumtheatre.com/)
- **Chorus of Westerly**  
  [www.chorusofwesterly.org/](http://www.chorusofwesterly.org/)

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**THE ARTS ARE EVERYWHERE!**

- Start in Providence and visit the RISD Museum, a fantastic, world-class museum of arts representing diverse cultures from ancient times to the present. Every summer, the city lights the Providence River on fire for WaterFire, an amazing art installation! Catch a theater performance at Trinity Repertory Company, RI’s professional resident acting company, or Teatro ECAS, RI’s Spanish-language theatre presenting plays with English simulcasts.
- The Gamm Theatre, in Warwick, has brand new facilities for its cutting-edge theater performances, lectures, classes, and workshops.
- In Cranston, the Artists’ Exchange is home to multiple art studios, a gallery, art boutique, and a multi-use performance space, providing integrated programming for people with and without disabilities.
- The Newport Art Museum offers 2,600 works of arts. The collection concentrates on American and contemporary art, from the 18th century to the present. Newport also has many art galleries. Island Moving Company offers performances of contemporary ballet.
- In Pawtucket, Mixed Magic Theatre brings diverse stories to the stage through prose and song including Rise to Black, a theater series featuring scenes from the works of black artists and Exult Choir, the theatre’s resident choir.
- In South County, Tomaquag Museum in Exeter is an Indigenous Cultural Education destination promoting thoughtful dialogue on Indigenous history, culture, arts and current Native issues. In nearby Wakefield, the Contemporary Theater Company has karaoke singing competitions and community theater.

To View the Top 10 Reasons to Support the Arts, Click [Here](#).

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**RHODE ISLAND ARTS NEED YOU!**

JOIN THE ARTS ACTION FUND FOR FREE TODAY!

**E-MAIL US:** ArtsActionFund@artsusa.org  
**VISIT US:** ArtsActionFund.org/join  
**CALL US:** 202.371.2830  
**FOLLOW US:** [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#)

To download this factsheet, "Why the Arts Matter in Rhode Island," with corresponding resource links visit [www.ArtsActionFund/StateFactsheets](http://www.ArtsActionFund/StateFactsheets)

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