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ArtsBoston's *The Arts Factor 2019* report finds arts and culture bring \$2 billion to local economy annually

Update to 2014 cultural impact report quantifies the increasing impact the arts, culture, and creativity have on Greater Boston's economy, community, and competitiveness as a region

BOSTON, MASS. – **ArtsBoston**, Greater Boston's service organization supporting the region's arts and culture sector, unveiled findings yesterday from [The Arts Factor 2019](#) demonstrating the impact of nonprofit arts and cultural organizations in Greater Boston. Sponsored by **Bank of America**, the new data and testimony from arts and business leaders illustrate the arts and culture sector's potent impact in driving economic growth, attracting and retaining talented workforce, and attracting visitors from across the globe to Greater Boston.

An update to its landmark 2014 study, *The Arts Factor 2019* reveals that the region's arts and culture sector contributes \$2 billion annually to the local economy through direct and indirect spending by cultural organizations and audiences—an increase of more than 40% since 2014. It counts 21 million annual attendees to arts and cultural events—more than four times the combined total attendance to Boston's four major professional sports teams. It also notes the sector generates 30,000 jobs—nearly as many as the region's retail industry.

"The arts are as integral to Greater Boston's DNA of as our championship sports teams, cutting-edge technology, and world-class education and healthcare—but they remain an underleveraged asset," said Catherine Peterson, Executive Director of ArtsBoston. "*The Arts Factor 2019* makes the case for greater investment in the creative sector using hard data to complement the immeasurable impact we know the arts, culture, and creative community to have on our region's quality of life and connection to one another."

"Bank of America knows that the arts create economic value in communities, while also educating and enriching societies for greater cultural understanding," said Miceal Chamberlain, Massachusetts President, Bank of America. "We're proud to support *The Arts Factor* because a thriving creative sector is an essential element to a robust, innovation economy that attracts and retains top companies and an engaged workforce"

Honored with the Mass Cultural Council's Commonwealth Award and named "one of top 20 new things" by *The Boston Globe* in 2014, *The Arts Factor* report proved to be a critical tool supporting work by a range of constituencies throughout the region. Arts groups report using it to educate their Boards and advocate for funding, and it has been cited in numerous speeches and op-eds by civic and community leaders, as well as media reports.

Designed to empower and to make the strongest possible case that arts and culture and necessary, part of the fabric of our communities, and integral to the well-being of our citizens.

Designed to empower its readers in their advocacy and to convey the necessity of arts and culture, their role in our communities, and the integral nature to the well-being of all, *The Arts Factor 2019* was designed as a digital tool kit. ArtsBoston will release updated data points, infographics, and stories digitally and on a rolling basis in the coming year to complement and amplify the full written report that will be available on June 4. *The Arts Factor 2019* findings will also be presented to the City of Boston cabinet chiefs and department heads, the Boston City Council, and—in collaboration with MASSCreative and the Massachusetts Cultural Council—the Massachusetts Legislative Cultural Caucus in upcoming meetings to inform future policymaking.

Key Report Findings

- With a direct infusion of \$1.3 billion into the local economy, arts, culture, and creativity are economic engines for Boston, with arts audiences spending an adjacent additional \$675 million locally at restaurants, parking facilities, and other local businesses—creating a \$2 billion in total economic impact, a 40% increase since 2014.
- The arts sector creates more than 30,000 jobs, nearly as many as the retail industry in our region.
- More than 21 million people attend arts and cultural events annually, which is greater than four times the total annual attendance of the Boston Red Sox, New England Patriots, Boston Bruins, and Boston Celtics combined.
- Arts and culture are integral to raising the next generation of leaders, entrepreneurs, and social innovators, as 60% of CEOs say creativity is the most important leadership quality.
- With 78% of Millennials reporting they would rather spend money on experiences than things, arts and culture help attract – and retain – a talented, educated workforce, keeping the region competitive.
- The region's annual offerings are so robust that, on average, a new arts event happens every 9 minutes.

- Accessibility to arts and cultural experiences creates community. Local organizations provided 9.8 million free admissions to arts and cultural events, more than 2x the population of greater Boston.
- Arts organizations served 535,000 Greater Boston school children last year, offering a critical supplement to the work that schools offer directly.
- Reporting shows an overall decline in contributed support, which has not been offset by increases in earned revenue.
- While the current City administration has taken great strides, Boston ranks 10th of 11 comparable cities in public funding of the arts.

“All data should be considered in the context of the people it describes and impacts,” said Peterson, and so *The Arts Factor 2019* is organized in four sections, each of which was introduced at the May 21 unveiling by a leading member of the local community with a personal story and related data.

David Howse, Executive Director of ArtsEmerson, shared data points about the volume and reach of local arts and cultural experiences when he spoke about **Building Character**. “Art has built my personal character, builds the character of young people, and builds the character of our community. We in the arts and culture sector have an important role in driving change in this city: we can curate experiences that shift the way we think about Boston, changing the narratives, and shifting the way we think about ourselves in a way that’s inclusive and reflective of the rich diversity that exist all around us,” he said.

James E. Rooney, President and CEO of the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, revealed the sector’s impact on the local economy and job market as he spoke about **Raising Standards**. “We pay a lot of attention to the white coat and white-collar industries...but arts, culture, and creativity are economic engines for Boston. They are increasingly critical as Boston competes globally for investment and talent. The more we elevate the visibility of this sector, the easier it will be to create a growth cycle of advocacy, investment, and impact that will benefit the entire economy and our community,” he said.

Kiki Mills-Johnston, catalyst and entrepreneur, described the importance of creativity in leadership and the value millennials place on experiences over things as she spoke about **Staying Ahead**. “We continue to attract the best and brightest people to build their lives and careers here, especially as Boston continues to be ranked as one of the top innovation capitals in the world. A critical component to feed that leadership role is a vibrant arts and culture scene. Creativity doesn’t just support product development, it also drives leadership. You generate creativity by inspiring people. Boston is creating the leaders of tomorrow right now, and we need to be intentional about investment,” she said.



Evelyn Francis, Interim Artistic Director of The Theatre Offensive, spoke about **Creating Community** and the importance of *The Arts Factor* as a tool for both quantifying and qualifying the sector’s reach. She said, “If the arts community can do better at explaining the impact of the work that we do, the role that we play, and the extensive benefit of investing in arts and culture as a key strategy for building up not just communities, but people, then we can find the allies that we need to do our work.”

Report Methodology

The ArtsFactor 2019 highlights community-wide data points (and the stories that help illuminate them) that demonstrate the impact of nonprofit arts and cultural organizations in Greater Boston. When not otherwise noted, the data for this report come from SMU DataArts Cultural Data Profiles (CDP). Unless otherwise noted, analysis is based on “Most Recent Fiscal Year Data” from the Massachusetts CDP using the most recently available completed fiscal year. Arts and cultural organizations located in Bristol, Essex, Middlesex, Norfolk, Plymouth, Suffolk, and Worcester counties were included. The data in the Massachusetts CDP are self-reported by the individual cultural organizations. ArtsBoston does not make any representations or warranties concerning the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of the self-reported data. Data analysis was performed by SMU DataArts and ArtsBoston. Any interpretation of the data is solely the view of ArtsBoston.

About ArtsBoston

ArtsBoston is a champion for Greater Boston’s arts and cultural institutions and a collaborative partner for public, private, and nonprofit leaders who seek to engage more deeply with the region’s arts and cultural sector. ArtsBoston gathers, analyzes, and disseminates data that provides a window into the significance of arts and cultural organizations to the region. It also helps those organizations build their audiences and work more productively and effectively. In the 44 years since its founding, ArtsBoston has become a powerful voice for the sector and a positive force for the region while remaining committed to its original mission: to enrich the lives of our citizenry by connecting people of every age and background with the arts and cultural organizations that call Greater Boston home. Programs of ArtsBoston include BosTix, the ArtsBoston Audience Initiative, the Network for Arts Administrators of Color, a comprehensive online arts and cultural calendar, and The Arts Factor. www.artsboston.org