

Reasons to Support the Arts

The following reasons show why an investment in artists, creative workers, and arts organizations is vital to help communities thrive and gives their residents a better quality of life.

1. [Arts unify communities](#). 72% of Americans believe “the arts unify our communities regardless of age, race, and ethnicity” and 73% agree that the arts “helps me understand other cultures better”—a perspective observed across all demographic and economic categories.
2. [Arts improve individual well-being](#). 81% of the population says the arts are a “positive experience in a troubled world,” 69% of the population believe the arts “lift me up beyond everyday experiences,” and 73% feel the arts give them “pure pleasure to experience and participate in.”
3. [Arts strengthen the economy](#). The nation’s arts and culture sector—nonprofit, commercial, education—is an \$876.7 billion industry that supports 4.6 million jobs (2020). That is 4.2% of the nation’s economy—a larger share of GDP than powerhouse sectors such as agriculture, transportation, and utilities. The arts boast a \$33 billion international trade surplus (2019). The arts [accelerate economic recovery](#): a growth in arts employment has a positive and causal effect on overall employment.
4. [Arts drive tourism and revenue to local businesses](#). The *nonprofit* arts industry alone generates \$166.3 billion in economic activity annually—spending by organizations *and their audiences*—which supports 4.6 million jobs and generates \$27.5 billion in government revenue. Arts attendees spend \$31.47 per person, per event, beyond the cost of admission on items such as meals, parking, and lodging—vital income for local businesses. Arts travelers are ideal tourists, staying longer and spending more to seek out authentic culture experiences.
5. [Arts improve academic performance](#). Students engaged in arts learning have higher GPAs, standardized test scores, and college-going rates as well as lower drop-out rates. These academic benefits are reaped by students across all socio-economic strata. Yet the Department of Education reports that access to arts education for students of color is significantly lower than for their white peers. [91% of Americans](#) believe that arts are part of a well-rounded K-12 education.
6. [Arts spark creativity and innovation](#). *Creativity* is among the top five applied skills sought by business leaders—per the Conference Board’s *Ready to Innovate* report—with 72% saying creativity is of “high importance” when hiring. Research on creativity shows that Nobel laureates in the sciences are 17 times more likely to be actively engaged as an *arts maker* than other scientists.
7. [Arts have social impact](#). University of Pennsylvania researchers have demonstrated that a high concentration of the arts in a city leads to higher civic engagement, more social cohesion, higher child welfare, and lower poverty rates.
8. [Arts improve healthcare](#). Nearly one-half of the nation’s healthcare institutions provide arts programming for patients, families, and even staff. 78% deliver these programs because of their healing benefits to patients—shorter hospital stays, better pain management, and less medication.
9. [Arts Strengthen Mental Health](#). The arts are an effective resource in reducing depression and anxiety and increasing life satisfaction. Just 30 minutes of active arts activities daily can combat the ill effects of isolation and loneliness associated with COVID-19.