



Americans
for the Arts



Groundbreaking Study Reveals Economic and Social Impact of \$203.9 Million Nonprofit Arts and Culture Sector in Tallahassee/Leon County

Arts & Economic Prosperity 6 Study Centers Equity in Economic Research and Highlights Vital Role of Arts and Culture in Building More Livable Communities

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[TALLAHASSEE, FL], **October 12, 2023**— The Council on Culture & Arts (COCA) today announced that Tallahassee/Leon County's nonprofit arts and culture industry generated **\$203,984,071** in economic activity in 2022, according to the newly released *Arts & Economic Prosperity 6 (AEP6)*, an economic and social impact study conducted by Americans for the Arts. That economic activity –\$118,109,909 in spending by nonprofit arts and culture organizations and \$85,874,162 in event-related spending by their audiences supported 2,930 jobs and generated \$33,203,566 in local, state, and federal government revenue. Spending by arts and culture audiences generates valuable commerce to local merchants, a value-add that few other industries can compete with.

Building on its 30-year legacy as the largest and most inclusive study of its kind, AEP6 uses a rigorous methodology to document the economic and social contributions of the nation's nonprofit arts and culture industry. The study demonstrates locally as well as nationally, arts and culture are a critical economic driver of vibrant communities.

"Local arts, culture, history & heritage is the cornerstone on which Tallahassee and Leon County is built," states Kathleen Spehar, Executive Director of COCA. The agency announced its participation in the AEP6 study in May 2022 and collected over 800 audience surveys from various arts & culture organizations in Leon County from May 1, 2022, through July 18, 2023.

Spehar continues by discussing how film festivals, book launches, music concerts, and new play premieres shine a spotlight on the deep and social economic impact of the Leon County arts-inclusive community. "It affirms that centering ourselves in the arts means we are more engaged, creative, thoughtful, and accepting, which drives business development, tourism, and a better quality of life. And it demonstrates the crucial part our arts & culture nonprofits play in creating dynamic, robust social and economic impact in our Capital City region."

Nationally, the *Arts & Economic Prosperity 6 (AEP6)* study reveals that America's nonprofit arts and culture sector is a \$151.7 billion industry that supports 2.6 million jobs and generates \$29.1 billion in government revenue.

"Arts and culture organizations have a powerful ability to attract and hold dollars in the community longer. They employ people locally, purchase goods and services from nearby businesses, and produce the authentic cultural experiences that are magnets for visitors, tourists, and new residents," said Nolen V. Bivens, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts. "When we invest in nonprofit arts and culture, we strengthen our economy and build more livable communities."

AEP6 represents a reset from its previous versions, establishing a new benchmark in the AEP study series.

- **Social Impact:** For the first time, AEP6 expands beyond the economic and financial data to include social impact measurements of arts and culture's effect on the well-being of communities and residents.
- **Equity and Inclusion:** AEP6 broke new ground by prioritizing equity, community engagement, and inclusivity. With the goal of reducing systemic bias, Americans for the Arts transformed its approach. They expanded the inclusion and participation of organizations serving or representing BIPOC- (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) and ALAANA- (African, Latine, Asian, Arab, Native American) identifying communities.

"It is our responsibility to continue creating a community that embraces diversity, equity, and inclusion by promoting culturally diverse programs and activities that showcase every culture at its best," states Aurora Hansen, founder of the Asian Coalition and Experience Asia Festival and board member of the Florida Cultural Alliance. "We are fortunate to live in [Tallahassee/Leon County], where arts and culture is considered part of life. "

Nationally, the extensive research reveals proportional economic and community impacts among attendees at BIPOC and ALAANA organizations to the overall national average. These findings should initiate new, and escalate existing, critical funding conversations about BIPOC and ALAANA organizations receiving fair and proportional financial support.

Key figures from Leon County's AEP6 study include:

- Leon County's nonprofit arts and culture industry generates \$85.9 million in event-related spending by its audiences.
- The typical attendee spends \$32.69 per person per event, not including the cost of admission.
- 16.2% of arts and culture attendees were from outside the county in which the activity took place. They spent an average of \$61.16. All vital income for local merchants.
- 86.3% of respondents agreed that the activity or venue they attended was "a source of neighborhood pride for the community."
- 82.4% said they would "feel a sense of loss if that activity or venue was no longer available."

AEP6 demonstrates the significant economic and social benefits of arts and culture to their communities, states, and the nation. To amplify the study results and raise awareness of these widespread benefits with public and private-sector leaders, seventeen national organizations partnered with Americans for the Arts on AEP6:

- Actors' Equity Association
- African Diaspora Consortium
- Arts & Planning Division (American Planning Association)
- Black Legislative Leaders Network
- Department for Professional Employees
- AFL-CIO (American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations)
- Destinations International
- International City/County Management Association
- Independent Sector
- National Association of Counties
- National Conference of State Legislatures
- National Alliance of Community Economic Development Associations
- National Independent Venue Association
- National Organization of Black Elected Legislative Women

- Race Forward
- Recording Industry Association of America
- The Conference Board
- U.S. Conference of Mayors

By measuring arts and culture's wide-ranging impact, public and private sector leaders can work together to secure funding and arts-friendly policies that shape more vibrant and equitable communities.

The full report, a map of the 373 study regions, and a two-page economic impact summary can be found at AEP6.AmericansForTheArts.org. For more information, follow us @Americans4Arts

Randy Cohen, the Vice President of Research at Americans for the Arts, will join COCA to present the results for Leon County, Tallahassee, and Florida on October 25. More information can be found at tallahasseearts.org/about-coca/economic-development/#AEP6

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COCA is the officially designated local arts agency for Tallahassee and Leon County by the City, County, and State and marks more than 35 years of service to the community. COCA envisions a vibrant and thriving creative community that enhances the quality of life and economic vitality. COCA's mission is to serve and support the community by promoting and advocating for arts and culture in Florida's capital region. Visit COCA at tallahasseearts.org.

The Arts & Economic Prosperity 6 study was conducted by Americans for the Arts, the nation's leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education. It was supported by The Ruth Lilly Endowment Fund of Americans for the Arts. Americans for the Arts' 297 study partners contributed both time and financial support to the study. For a full list of the communities who participated in the Arts & Economic Prosperity 6 study, visit AEP6.AmericansForTheArts.org.

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