

Economic Impact Findings & Recommendations

FINDINGS

- Economic situation is dire
- Sector is losing vital workforce members
- Arts & culture organizations have adapted to support their community

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Immediate, unrestricted financial relief
- Technology assistance for nonprofits and communities
- DEI and anti-racism training and funding
- Workforce development and retention

What we see from this data is dire. Cultural organizations in the region are facing unimaginable challenges, not the least of which is a collective loss of \$214 million dollars. But we also see hope. Hope that manifests itself in the evolution of art. We have seen these groups pivot to become the beacon of hope in their communities. They are connecting us to education, food, healing and more when it most seems out of reach. We expect to emerge as an innovative, resilient and vibrant arts community. As we always do.

But this cannot happen in a vacuum. The following are recommendations for ways to support arts and culture in the Philadelphia region in the short-term (3-6 months) and post-pandemic recovery.

Immediate, Unrestricted Financial Relief

Arts and culture organizations in the Philadelphia region need new, unrestricted dollars infused into their organizations by June 2021 to survive this pandemic. With an average operating loss of nearly \$500,000 per organization, we recommend funders provide new, additional grants to their current grantees and another phase of collective relief funding to support organizations who may be outside of their existing funding networks.

We also ask officials, particularly at the state level, to allocate financial assistance in the form of additional PPP loans, CARES funds and other relief funding for the cultural sector via the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts.

Technology Assistance

Arts and culture organizations in the Philadelphia region need access to technology and digital equipment (computers, cameras, microphones) and IT expertise to reimagine their work while shutdowns and restrictions loom. We ask funders, nonprofits and corporate partners to collaborate on technology assistance programs for lending equipment and connecting experts with nonprofits to provide guidance and support and advocate for digital equity for the communities they serve.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion and Anti-Racism Support

Arts and culture organizations in the Philadelphia region, even in the midst of financial crises, recognize the need to address issues of DEI and anti-racism holistically within their organizational structures. Cultural organizations need support for this work through staff and board training, peer-sharing and professional development opportunities.

Workforce

Arts and culture in the Philadelphia region have always struggled with retaining skilled, innovative workers due to low pay and benefits. And now, with over 1,200 jobs lost (and counting), reduced hours and gutted benefits packages that talent drain is exacerbated.

In the short-term, immediate unemployment assistance is needed to support contractors and furloughed employees who have fallen victim to the effects of the pandemic. As we look ahead to the sector's—and the region's—recovery from this moment in history, we recommend long-term targeted programs to recruit and retain talented, diverse staff at every level of organizations.