



# Arts & Economic Prosperity III:



***Tools and Tips for Utilizing the  
2007 National Economic Impact  
of the Arts Study  
to Make the Case for the Arts  
in Your Community***

*This information has been adapted for general use from the AEP III Partners Toolkit,  
developed by Ramona Baker, March 2007*



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### Toolkit Navigation:

This document contains several green category titles and other links designed to help you navigate to resources within and outside of this toolkit. Click on any of the green category titles, blue-underlined subtitles and references to follow these links. If you're viewing this document in Word, you may have to hold down CTRL while clicking with your mouse to follow the links.

## Icon Legend

These icons are a quick visual guide to the different kinds of tools in this toolkit:



Good Tip!



To Do



Ideas for your consideration



Reminders and helpful information to keep in mind



Putting your data to work: strategies and techniques



## INTRODUCTION

Americans for the Arts' *Arts & Economic Prosperity III* (AEP III) is our most comprehensive economic impact study of the nonprofit arts industry over the last 12 years. This study documents the economic impact of the nonprofit arts and culture industry in 156 communities and regions (116 cities and counties, 35 multi-county regions, and 5 states), representing all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The diverse communities range in population (4,000 – 3,000,000) and type (rural to urban). Researchers collected detailed expenditure and attendance data from 6,080 nonprofit arts and culture organizations and 94,478 of their attendees to measure total industry spending. The project economists from the Georgia Institute of Technology customized input-output analysis models for each study region to provide specific and reliable economic impact data.

The Arts & Economic Prosperity III website, along with this toolkit, is our way of sharing the lessons we have learned from our research and analysis of the economic impact of the arts. Most of the ideas presented here come from the experiences of our previous Partners and their work using our earlier studies. We are passing the ideas on to you in hope that it will serve and support your work in sharing the results of AEP III with others in your community.

This Toolkit is designed for those of you who are contemplating using economic data in making the case for the arts in your community and are interested in using economic impact data as one of the tools for advocacy efforts on the local level. Because of the variety of communities studied and the rigor with which the Arts & Economic Prosperity III study was conducted, nonprofit arts and culture organizations located in communities that were not part of the study can use the national data to open up a dialogue within their own community—by comparing the results from similar communities who were participants in the study, and by using some of our online tools to estimate local economic impact. The tools and tips included here can and should be adapted, modified and customized according to the resources currently available in your community.

The *Arts & Economic Prosperity* reports are more than just sets of numbers. They are resources and tools that our Partners, as well as national, state and local arts advocates, have used to tangibly demonstrate the value of the arts to such diverse groups as the business community, elected officials, the media, the arts as well as the general public. This toolkit will expand the ways that you can talk about the role of the arts in your community.



If you weren't an AEP III partner, and haven't conducted an economic impact study in your community, you probably don't have the customized data necessary to fully demonstrate the specific economic impact of your arts organization on your community.\* However, the National Study and Summaries of the 156 Participating Study Regions, available online, enable you to discuss the impact of AEP III from a larger perspective. Encourage your local arts and cultural organizations, local media, corporations and elected officials to view themselves as part of the national arts picture.



### **The Arts & Economic Prosperity III Website**

Our website is an evolving clearinghouse of information, where you will find the AEPIII results and reports, along with additional materials, including sample PowerPoint presentations, press releases, Op-Ed, and other strategies for proper application of estimated economic impact data. Throughout the year we will be adding to the website, so we encourage you to visit it periodically.

We have also included a tool on our website for estimating local economic impact for nonprofit arts and culture organizations located in communities that did not participate in the study. Estimates can be derived by using the [Arts & Economic Prosperity III Calculator](#), which provides an estimated economic impact per \$100,000 of spending by nonprofit arts and culture organizations.

However, keep in mind the following caveats if you are using the calculator to derive these estimates:

1. The results of this analysis are based on *averages of similarly populated communities*.
2. Your results are **merely estimates—this method of estimating economic impact is not a substitute for conducting a customized economic impact study on your community!** Be responsible in how you use and share these estimates with your board, your community, and with potential partners in a local impact study. The calculator can be a powerful tool in helping to generate interest in probing further the economic impact of the arts in the community, and is often an enticement to finding support for a localized study.
3. Input/Output models were customized for each of these similarly populated communities, providing very specific employment, household income, and government revenue data. Although the calculator is sufficient in estimating impact in these areas, it cannot provide you with the detailed, customized information that a local study will provide.

Our website includes a PDF which explains more about how the Arts & Economic Prosperity Calculator works, and how to use it effectively.

It's been our experience that as you include and share these data, more and more people will want to use the data—and will start to include the data in their information, etc. As this process builds momentum, new opportunities to use the data will provide ongoing interest in this information.

**Have questions? Want to conduct a study in your community?**

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## BACKGROUND

Arts & Economic Prosperity III is the most comprehensive economic impact study of the nation's nonprofit arts and culture industry ever conducted. It alters the percent the arts are luxuries worth supporting in prosperous times but hard to justify when the economy is struggling.

Researchers collected detailed expenditure and attendance data from 6,080 nonprofit arts and culture organizations and 94,478 of their attendees to measure total industry spending. Project economists customized input-output analysis models for each study region to provide specific and reliable economic impact data.

The study focused solely on the economic impact of nonprofit arts organizations and their audiences, and excluded spending by individual artists, the for-profit arts and entertainment sector (e.g., Broadway or the motion picture industry), and arts produced by non-arts organizations (schools or community centers).

This economic impact study sends a strong signal to communities that when they support the arts, they not only enhance the quality of community life but also invest in their economic well-being.

### Input/output Analysis

Arts & Economic Prosperity III uses a sophisticated economic analysis called input/output analysis to measure economic impact. It is a system of mathematical equations that combines statistical methods and economic theory. Input/output analysis enables economists to track how many times a dollar is "respent" within the local economy, and the economic impact generated by each round of spending.

How can a dollar be respent? Consider the following example:

A theater company purchases a gallon of paint from the local hardware store for \$20, generating the direct economic impact of the expenditure. The hardware store then uses a portion of the aforementioned \$20 to pay the sales clerk's salary; the sales clerk respends some of the money for groceries; the grocery store uses some of the money to pay its cashier; the cashier then spends some for the utility bill; and so on. The subsequent rounds of spending are the indirect economic impacts.

Thus, the initial expenditure by the theater company was followed by four additional rounds of spending (by the hardware store, sales clerk, grocery store, and the cashier). The effect of the theater company's initial expenditure is the direct economic impact. The subsequent rounds of spending are all of the indirect impacts. The total impact is the sum of the direct and indirect impacts.<sup>1</sup>

Input/output analysis is a highly regarded type of economic analysis that has been the basis for two Nobel Prizes in economics. This form of economic analysis is well suited for this study because it can be customized specifically to each community.

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<sup>1</sup> Note: Interestingly, a dollar "ripples" through each community very differently, which is why each study region has its own customized economic model.



## Measures of Impact

In this study, economic impact is defined as the employment (full-time equivalent jobs), resident household income (salary, wages, proprietary income), and government revenue (taxes, license fees) generated by the dollars spent in the community by nonprofit arts organizations and their audiences.

### **Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Jobs**

Describes the total amount of labor employed. Economists measure FTE jobs, not the total number of employees, because it is a more accurate measure that accounts for part-time employment.

### **Resident Household Income** (often called Personal Income)

Includes salaries, wages, and entrepreneurial income paid to local residents. It is the money residents earn and use to pay for food, mortgages, and other living expenses.

### **Revenue to Local and State Government**

Includes revenue from taxes (income, property, or sales) as well as funds from license fees, utility fees, filing fees, and other similar sources.

This spending supports 5.7 million full-time jobs right here in the U.S.—an increase of 850,000 jobs since our 2002 study. What's more, because arts and culture organizations are strongly rooted in their community, these are jobs that necessarily remain local and cannot be shipped overseas.

## Questions? Clarifications? Ideas?

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## The Arts Community

This research provides great news for the arts. Our experience has shown that arts and cultural organizations are among your most important partners. Many organizations feel underappreciated by their community, but you are providing hard evidence of the importance of arts organizations to the community. AEP III provides an important opportunity for you to solidify your relationship with the arts organizations in your area. The results of AEP III may develop new levels of mutual respect within and for the arts community.

You may need to remind the arts and cultural organizations of your strong belief in the intrinsic value of the arts and its value to education and the quality of life in the community. The purpose of this research is to provide you and the arts community with tools to effectively communicate with influential people who need numbers and statistics.

### Working with the Arts Community

To Do:

Ask each organization to use their programs for the next year to highlight AEP III statistics. Organizations that have newsletters (emailed or hard copy) can mention one statistic in each of their newsletters. Organizations that have performances or other events can mention the study and share a fact about the arts and economic impact in their community.



Above all, ask the arts and cultural organizations for their suggestions about the best ways to use the economic information.

These statistics can be an extremely important part of an advocacy campaign for the arts community. They can use the hard data to build support for arts funding as and their own organization. Encourage their use of this research whenever possible.



### Putting AEP III to Work



#### Hold a Meeting

As soon as possible, meet with the directors of your community's arts and cultural organizations. Help the leaders in your arts community feel included by giving them a sense of what their work will yield. Explain the information in your economic impact report. Remember that your support and enthusiasm will be reflected in their support and enthusiasm for this research. If your group of directors is small, include other staff members, especially those who work in marketing and development. If you have a large number of directors, meet separately with the organizations' marketing and development staff members.

Hold a special meeting for the board chairs or executive committees of the arts and cultural organizations. Give them an overview of Americans for the Arts and the AEP III. Many of these board members are likely to be from the business community. They will understand the importance of economic impact and will be among your strongest allies if they are informed and involved.

#### Do Lunch

Have a luncheon for the arts leadership in your community. This event does not need to be expensive; a small buffet or brown bag lunch would be fine. The point of the event is to build their support, and inform them about AEP III. Consider sending the luncheon invitations on fake hundred-dollar bills to stress the importance of their work in building the economic impact of the arts.



## Elected Officials

The information from AEP III can be one of your most valuable tools in support of the arts in your community. You can provide your elected officials with clear information and even sample responses they can use with their constituents who don't support the arts or believe government funds for the arts are a frivolous waste of taxpayer dollars.

Regardless of your perceptions of their strengths, weaknesses and points of view, all elected officials need votes; they want and need to be part of the neighborhoods and communities that they serve; they want to be informed and prepared; they want to be part of your good news about the economic impact of the arts.



Elected officials constantly receive massive amounts of information. Don't assume that if you send them something, they will see or read it immediately.

### Working with Elected Officials

If you already have a relationship with your elected officials, you are ahead of the game. If you don't, then get to know them. It is important to keep your elected officials informed on a regular basis, even when you don't need their help with advocacy issues and funding.

You want them to know they can count on you to provide accurate information and respond to their questions. When you meet with your elected officials, assure them that this is valuable information and explain how you believe it might be helpful to them.

Elected officials want to have communities, states, and regions with strong economies and opportunity for everyone. AEP III will help give them a better picture of the role the arts play in creating opportunity in their community. Talk to them about your economic data and your plans for using it. Leave them a short, one-page summary of this information. Consider providing them with multiply copies so they can readily present the information to their constituencies.



Remember, you're not only a constituent and a voter to your elected officials, but a valuable resource: as a leader in the arts community, you can speak on behalf of a large group of voters. The arts community (board, staff, patrons, volunteers, arts educators, etc) represents a large constituency. Voter research suggests that people with passion are more likely to vote in local politics. Arts supporters vote in high percentages, just slightly less than people with educational and safety concerns.



Recognize your elected officials at every possible opportunity; they need votes and recognition.

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Ask legislators that have indicated their support for the arts to sponsor a resolution recognizing the economic impact of the arts in their community (these are sometimes called “whereas documents”). Time this resolution to be presented as soon after your announcement as possible.

Someone in your city government may write resolutions using a standard format or you may be asked to draft the resolution yourself. Americans for the Arts will provide a template for this purpose.

This is an example of a resolution from the U.S. Conference of Mayors:

**ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY OF THE NONPROFIT ARTS INDUSTRY**

WHEREAS, Americans for the Arts conducted a benchmark study of the national economic impact of the nonprofit arts industry in 33 communities across the United States in 1993; and

WHEREAS, it was found that the nonprofit arts industry generates \$36.8 billion annually in economic activity and supports 1.3 million jobs—from large urban to small rural communities, and that the nonprofit arts industry annually returns \$3.4 billion in federal income taxes, \$1.2 billion in state government revenue, and \$790 million in local government revenue; and

WHEREAS, Americans for the Arts will release an updated national economic impact study in June 2002, entitled *Arts & Economic Prosperity*, measuring both the direct economic impact of the nonprofit arts industry in 85 communities as well as the indirect economic impact of these cultural organization's related audience expenditures; and

WHEREAS, this new *Arts & Economic Prosperity* study collected extensive survey data from more than 2,700 arts organizations and 110,000 audience attendees; and

WHEREAS, findings from the *Arts & Economic Prosperity* study reveal that America's nonprofit arts industry generates \$134 billion in economic activity every year—\$53 billion in spending by arts organizations and an additional \$80 billion in event-related spending by arts audiences. This economic activity results in a significant impact on the nation's economy:

Total Expenditures	\$134 billion
Full-Time Jobs	\$4.85 million
Household income	\$89.4 billion
Local Government Revenue	\$6.6 billion
State Government Revenue	\$7.3 billion
Federal Income Tax Revenue	\$10.5 billion

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the United States Conference of Mayors supports the findings of the *Arts & Economic Prosperity* study and urges mayors across the country to invest in nonprofit arts organizations through their local arts agencies as a catalyst to generate economic impact, stimulate business development, spur urban renewal, attract tourists and area residents to community activities, and to improve the overall quality of life in America's cities.

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Consider designating a specific day to focus on the arts and your elected officials - an 'Arts Day,' when as many people as possible from the arts community visit their elected officials to discuss the importance of the arts. Ask arts organizations to visit at least two elected officials on that day. Present them with posters and brochures. Remind them to bring information about their organization as well. Make sure that all elected officials get several visits.



Consider hosting a breakfast or luncheon meeting for your elected officials. For example, if your city council meets on Monday evenings at 7:00 p.m., ask if you can provide them dinner before one of their meetings. Choose a restaurant that is close to City Hall or consider having the event catered. If your city council is small, several of your board members could each make a dish (spaghetti, salad, and bread). While they're eating, spend five minutes talking about your report.



### Putting AEP III to Work



Meet with your elected officials, individually or in a group. Make sure they understand and are comfortable with all the information and research from AEP III. It is important that they're able to confidently present the data to others.

If possible, when meeting with your elected officials, include a board member who has been one of their supporters. It might be someone who has worked for them as a volunteer, given money to their campaigns, or supported them in some other way. If you don't have anyone on your board that has supported the elected official, take the most influential member of your board—an opinion leader in your community.

If it's difficult to schedule a meeting with an elected official, try to determine whether they're really busy or just don't have time to meet with you. Be aware of issues that may be urgent or critical for them, and try to time your request accordingly. If they seem to be avoiding meeting with you, ask one of your board members to request the meeting (again, involve someone who has supported their campaign or is an opinion leader in your community).



**Want to be a part of our next economic impact study?**

[Contact us](#) or call us at 202.371.2830

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## The Media

Members of the media are in constant need of new stories, or stories with a different approach or a new angle. And you have a great story. Your story is true, your research is credible, and your facts are accurate. You have new information and a unique tale that should be of interest to a variety of audiences. You have information about the economy of your community, and the economy is a topic that affects everyone.



Like elected officials, members of the media also constantly receive enormous amounts of information. Don't assume that just because you have sent them something, the right people have seen it. Follow up.

### Working with the Media



Get to know as many people in the media as possible. Learn what they need. Be aware of their deadlines. Respect their process. Some members of every community (including the arts) seem to have a sense of entitlement toward the media. Don't be one of them. Understand that they have a job to do just as you do.



Like your elected officials, you should regularly be in touch with key members of the media even when you don't need their help. Always be as accurate as possible with the media. If you can't talk about something for whatever reason, just tell them. Don't mislead them or give them false information. Develop a reputation with your local media as someone who's dependable, accurate and honest.

The following articles will be helpful with members of your local media:

#### 1. Template Press Release

[Press Release](#) Announcing the National Study Findings

#### 2. Online Resources

Our web site has several [online resources](#), including sample op-eds, a PowerPoint presentation and summaries of regional findings. There's also information from our previous study, *Arts & Economic Prosperity II* (AEP II).

A resolution, adapted unanimously by the [U.S. Conference of Mayors](#), that promotes the arts as an economic development tool.

Two articles from the National Governor's Association about the economic benefits of a vibrant arts industry:

[Strengthening Rural Economies Through the Arts](#) (August 31, 2005)

[The Role of the Arts in Economic Development](#) (June 21, 2001)

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### 3. Graphic Support Materials

Except for your friends in radio, the media are frequently more interested in information when it includes pictures or graphics. If you have interesting photographs of the arts in your community, it may be advantageous to include those photos with your story.

Depending on your community, the form of media, and your relationship with them, some members of the media may prefer an interview or may want you to present the information.



Depending on the size of your community, you may find that niche publications (especially business focused) are a more effective demographic than the general media. A *weekly community business magazine*, and its readers, is a prime market for your information

If you're not sure about media priorities, ask board members and volunteers what sources they rely on for their news and information. Find out the market for each media outlet and determine if it meets your needs. If you aren't sure about a market (this is most often true for radio, which can change format in the blink of an eye), call its advertising department and ask.

#### **Developing a Media Plan**

Have your media plan and timeline in place before you begin contacting the media. Get to know the members of the media. Then get them excited about your story.



The first approach (in writing, by phone, or in person) should be personal and targeted. Tell them about the research. Make sure they know they can count on you for accurate facts and respond to their questions.



### **Putting AEP III to Work**



Develop a list of the media outlets—publications, television, radio—in your community. Prioritize that list:

Your highest priority may be the largest *newspaper* in your community, city, or region.

Your next highest priority may be your *local television stations*. If you are in a larger community, you may have three or four. In addition to news programs, some stations may have a weekly program focused on the business community. An interview on that program to discuss the economic impact of the arts would be a great opportunity.

Your *local radio stations* are also important for getting the word out about your economic news.

Finally, consider your local public media outlets. *Local public television or radio stations* will be important to contact. Most have local information or interview programs. Some may have local programs that focus on the arts or business issues. Both of these can be important outlets for the economic impact information.





## Putting AEP III to Work



Develop several different stories from the AEP III with interesting angles for different types of publications. Consider the demographics of various local and regional publications. For example, you might develop a story about reasons to visit your community to enjoy the arts for a travel publication. Or you might write a story about dining out and pairing food (or spirits) to your arts event for a cooking publication.

Be creative as possible with your story. You might trace a fictitious can of red paint through its time with a dance company or discuss the economic impact of the arts through the printing of a season brochure or the story of nails from the hardware store.

Talk to your newspaper about possibly doing a series of articles on the economic impact of the arts. Perhaps one article is focused on the direct impact of arts organizations, another on the indirect impact of arts audiences, another on the nonprofit arts as an industry, and still another might compare audiences (arts audiences and sports audiences, for example).



Remind the members of the media why your information will be interesting to a variety of readers (or watchers or listeners). Discuss ways that the economic impact of the arts effects the business community, economic development planners, government officials, downtown development planners, convention and tourism affiliates, hotel and restaurant personnel, etc., ...as well as the arts community.

Find photographs of audience members at an opening or an exhibit and use them in your publications that talk about the arts industry. Ask arts organizations for their best photographs and remember to label and credit them.

This information provides an opportunity to articulate the tangible benefits of the arts. It will also stimulate discussion and show the direct impact of the arts on the economy.

**Want to know the economic impact of the arts in your area?**

[Contact us](#) or call us at 202.371.2830

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## The Business Community

The business community will be interested, intrigued, and excited by AEPIII - economic impact studies speak their language.

You probably have several members of the business community on your board. They are your best sources for advice regarding contacts and the distribution of this research to the business community. Ask them to help develop your plan for reaching the business community, for establishing priorities, and for making connections.

### Working with the Business Community



As soon as possible, meet with a few business leaders in your community. Tell them about AEPIII and ask for their suggestions and help contacting other business organizations in your community. It's a good idea to take a board member with you to the meeting, preferably someone they know. Some business leaders are constantly inundated with fundraising calls, so if there is any hesitation about getting the meeting scheduled, it may be helpful to reassure them that the purpose of the meeting is only to share information.



Many businesses schedule their programs several months to a year in advance. You should plan meetings as soon as possible to discuss their involvement and programs. If they are booked for the next 12 months, ask if you can distribute some material and just have five minutes during a meeting.

Board or committee members from public or private organizations devoted to economic development should be among those most interested in your AEPIII results. Most communities also have some type of economic development organization. The organization may be funded by city government, part of the Chamber, or a separate nonprofit organization. Ask to make a presentation to this group as soon after your announcement as possible. If the economic development department is within your community's government, ask for a list of committee members. In some cases, this and other useful information may be available on the department's or local government's website.



Many people in the business community work with facts and figures rather than abstracts. The AEPIII reports present an opportunity to speak to them about the arts with statistics and facts. Communicating the value of the arts in terms of economic impact also provides common ground for the business community, public officials, and others less comfortable with talking about the arts' intrinsic value. People from the business community are also more likely than others to ask about methodology and other factors involved in the research.



Consider smaller groups and associations that are affected by the economic impact of the arts. Meet with the chair of your local hotel/motel association. Tell them about AEPIII. Talk about those who are coming from outside the area. Show them that people are traveling for the arts. Engage them in stimulating a cultural tourism initiative.

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Often, the best way to gather business community leadership is over breakfast. Host a breakfast to speak with them, hear their suggestions and ask questions. Engage them and bring them into the arts loop. Ask them to help you spread the word that the arts are a major employer and a major contributor to the economy.

In many communities, certain groups hold getting-to-know-you events. These mixers, receptions, or cocktail parties are most often aimed at a particular demographic. If you have an appropriate venue, offer to host an after-hours event. Better yet, get one of your board members to sponsor a mixer for the business community.



Remember: the more the merrier. Make a conscious effort to bring people into the tent.



## Putting AEP III to Work



Speaking to businesses is also a great way get the business community interested in AEP III. They can help spread the word about the economic impact of the arts. You will need to develop a priority list for these organizations, along with notes about their members and program schedules.

You probably have a community and statewide Chamber of Commerce, an economic development board, a downtown business association, a Rotary Club, a Kiwanis Club, a Lions Club, etc. You may also have a New Leadership group (frequently part of the Chamber of Commerce) or a 40-under-40 organization. These groups focus on building the community leaders of tomorrow and are important to meet with.

You may also have other organizations that are industry-focused, particularly if your community has a large concentration of specific types of businesses (e.g., an association for bankers or for those involved in real estate or insurance). Businesses may also gather in less formal structures, and again your board members should be able to advise you in this area.

Some communities have arts and business organizations such as Business Committee for the Arts, Arts and Business Committee, Business Leadership and the Arts, etc. If so, they should be very interested helping you to promote your results.

As soon as you determine your priorities, contact these organizations to speak at one of their meetings. Ask if you and a board member can share some new information with their membership regarding the economic impact of the arts and how it applies to your community. If possible, involve a current (or former) board member who is a member of your targeted organization.



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## The General Public

This toolkit is designed to help you find ways to share the news about the economic impact of the arts. Most of the suggestions in this toolkit are ultimately designed to reach the general public—whether through the media, special events, word of mouth, elected officials, the business community, or public announcements.

### Working with the General Public

We have found that there are three important rules for communicating with the general public:

1. Keep it simple.
2. Include everyone.
3. Make it easy to understand.



People want to feel as though they have learned something but they may not have time to struggle over the details. As a general rule, most people want the big picture, and they want it in a way that is short, sweet, and easy to digest. Making your information fun and relevant will make it easier to remember and more likely to be shared and discussed. Develop “elevator statements,” brief statements that you can make in a short elevator ride. In the age of IM’s and Blackberries, people want short answers, a brief picture, a snapshot.



People want to be proud of their community and feel a sense of connection. We bond with others who share our beliefs and form social organizations (e.g., sororities and fraternities), business organizations, ethnic organizations (e.g., 100 Black Men, 100 Black Women, and the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce), etc. Ask to speak to these organizations and enlist their aid in spreading the word about the reports.



Give people information they can absorb quickly and easily. Everyone has lots of numbers (their security code, voice mail number, passwords, etc.) – yours can be more meaningful if you tell them that the nonprofit arts are the 14th largest employer in a nearby region, just ahead of hospitals. Don’t let your statistics get lost in a maze of numbers. Find ways to make them real.

The AEP data examines both the direct and indirect impact of the arts. These distinctions might be easier to understand if they’re illustrated with a story:

Let’s say that the nonprofit XYZ Theatre Company is producing a new play. It pays rent, utilities, salaries to its employees, and taxes to the local, state and federal government. It purchases fabric, paint, nails, and lumber for the costumes and the set. It pays to print tickets, programs, and marketing materials. It rents several pieces of furniture for the performances. It buys office supplies. It may also be paying contract fees for the director, the actors, and the designers. If some of the actors have come from out of town, it may be paying for an apartment or a hotel room.

This is direct economic impact.



## **Speakers Bureau**



A speakers bureau—comprised of you, members of your board and committees, prominent business representatives, and others—can be the secret to not getting overwhelmed. Develop a speakers bureau and decide what angle of the AEPIII story you want to promote to each type of organization or group, and script the message accordingly. You can download a visually engaging PowerPoint presentation from the Americans for the Arts web site.

Spend some time reviewing the material. You may need to reassure your speakers bureau that they don't need to be professional economists - we've already done that work and have put the results into language clear enough for anyone to understand.

**Want more information and not sure where to look?**

[Contact us](#) or call us at 202.371.2830

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## Ideas, Good Ideas, And Other Ideas

The following ideas have come from a many different people. Some are adaptations used in communities by Partners in previous economic impact studies. Others have occurred to various staff members while brainstorming about ways to promote the exciting results of this report. Adapt these ideas to your community, consider them as stimulation for your own brainstorming, or use them as they are:



### **The Arts...Part of the Fabric of our Community**

Buy large quantities of yarn, and take it to a school knitting program, local senior center, community center, assisted living facility, or church with a strong program for seniors. Ask the folks who can do so to help you out by knitting as many small, square pieces as they can (3 x 3 inches or so).

Distribute each of these small knitted pieces with your fact sheets and brochures.

Make a presentation along with your thanks to the folks at the senior center, community center, assisted living facility, etc. Invite them to your announcement.

If there are any fabric mills in your area, they might donate the yard. Yarn shops will also sometimes donate discontinued yarn.

With this project, you'll bring attention to your presentations with your handmade squares. You involve seniors, students, as well as yarn shops or fabric mills and you'll have spread your news further into the community.



### **The Arts...Part of the Pride**

Find out what people are most proud of in your community. Ask a local newspaper or radio station to sponsor a contest to collect ideas about community pride. Your community might value a sports team, a school, a new public building, low unemployment rates or high safety rates. There might be a building that was recently saved from the wrecking ball or a neighborhood that rallied around and solved an issue.

Find ways to promote community pride and tie the good news about the economic impact of the arts to community pride. The media will hopefully include the topics that your community is most proud of with the new arts statistics.

Also, consider ways that the sports community (school, college, and professional sports) helps build pride and borrow some of their ideas. Maybe you want to have cheerleaders for the arts. Maybe you want to distribute pom-poms with a slogan such as "The Arts...Part of the Pride." Perhaps you want buttons that say, "The Arts...Proud to be Part of the Community." This will involve the sports community, perhaps several schools or colleges, and many others.

Bringing attention to the good things in a city will help your organization and the arts to be seen as significant participants in building a positive image for the community.



## **The Arts...An Engine of Economic Development**

Consider ways to get involved with engines.

Ask a local automobile dealership to use their dealership showroom. Make a connection between the arts as an economic engine in your community and the car dealership.

Find ways to include and salute the mechanics that make the engines work. Is there an automobile plant somewhere in your area that builds cars, SUVs, trucks, motors, or small parts for those engines? Mechanics that repair engines may have a great deal in common with the backstage technicians of your arts organizations. Many volunteer backstage technicians may be mechanics or engineers. Find ways to bring these two groups together and help you spread the word about the arts.

Is there an antique car organization in your community? Is there a group that rebuilds “muscle cars”? Maybe there is a collector of train memorabilia in your community who would let people look at his collection while you talked about the arts. You could also use a train station, a train car or a hobby shop that sells miniature trains.

Connecting the arts with engines targets specific industries in your community. The unusual nature of this partnership will be intriguing to the media. It may also help the community focus on the arts as an industry.



## **The Arts Are at the Table**

Consider working with your largest furniture dealer. Perhaps they could have tent cards made for their showroom display tables for two-weeks. Or they could give self-identified arts patrons a five percent discount for two weeks.

Think about ways that you and the furniture dealer can promote each other. You could send notices to your patrons about the discount at their furniture store. You could ask them to use the phrase “The Arts Are at the Table” in the ads that they place over a three-week period just before and after your announcement.

You might approach an individual restaurant or your local restaurant association. Ask if they will display tent cards on their tables in support of your new economic information.

The visual design for this tent card might have arts icons or caricatures of the arts sitting in chairs around a table. The table itself might be a map of your community, region, or state.

With this theme, you can involve the business community and encourage a partnership among the arts and certain businesses that might not otherwise be included. The media will also be interested in your clever presentation.

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### **The Arts...Fanning the Economic Flame**

Since you'll be making your announcement in June, the weather is perfect for fans.

Work with your hardware stores. Ask if you can print and tie a note around their fans. Get a group of volunteers and arrive at the hardware stores 30 minutes before they open. You can have your information tied around all the fans in no time.

You could also have hand-held paper fans that say "The Arts are Fanning the Economic Flames" printed with the same message. Individual fans are inexpensive and you can find a printing company online. If you have trouble finding a printing company, your local or state fair will have information for you (they are currently among the largest users of paper fans). Print your message plus one great economic fact on your fans. You can also give the fans to your announcement event attendees. Make sure to get lots of folks fanning.



### **It's About the Arts, It's About Economic Impact, and It All Adds Up**

This is a more complex slogan but it can also be adapted and used in many ways.

"The Arts...It All Adds Up" might be broken down into several different pieces that reinforce each other. See the options we came up with for community business segments:

#### Coffee Shops

Biscotti and Beethoven...It All Adds Up

Coffee and Cezanne...It All Adds Up

Pastries and Pointillism... It All Adds Up

These would be good ways to reinforce the economic impact of arts audiences and the impact that these audiences have with their pre- and post-show refreshments.

#### Same Idea, but with alcohol

Beer and Ballet... It All Adds Up

Perhaps coffee shops and bars would display tent cards giving information from AEPIII. Maybe they would offer a modest discount or a two-for-one if an arts patron brings in an admission ticket.

#### Shopping Center or a Particular Chain of Shops

Shopping and Shakespeare... It All Adds Up

In the weeks following your announcement, they could slip flyers that focus on the economic impact of arts into their customers' bags.

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Hotels

Hotels and Handel... It All Adds Up

Banks

Money and Mozart... It All Adds Up

Both the hotels and the banks could focus on the importance of the arts in the overall economy of the community.

Other Industries

Baseball and Brahms... It All Adds Up

Dessert and Design... It All Adds Up

Housing and Handel....It All Adds Up (real estate)

Tourism and Tap...It all adds up (convention and visitors bureau)

Personalized Slogans for Specific Businesses

Quizno's and Quartets... It All Adds Up

Subway and Serenades... It All Adds Up

If you have a funder who is willing to pay for a billboard or two, you could use a formula format. For example:

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{It's about Economic Impact} \\ + \quad \text{It's About the Arts} \\ \hline \text{It All Adds Up} \end{array}$$

Remember not to use the names of artists or 'arts words' that are obscure.

**Have you seen or been involved in a successful arts campaign and want to share your experiences?**

[Contact us](#) or call us at 202.371.2830

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## Other Ideas



Develop a series of tent cards with one economic impact fact printed on one side and leave the other side of the tent cards blank. Take the cards to restaurants, hotels, retail businesses, etc., and ask them to print their own messages and logos on the blank side.

Work with your advisory committee to choose four different industries to focus on every two weeks. Ask them to help you promote the results of your study.

Ask parking garages if you can put fact sheets about the economic impact of the arts on the windshields of their cars. Target garages near arts venues. Enlist high school service organizations, music or drama clubs, etc. to pass out the flyers. Thank the students by giving them passes to arts events or exhibitions.

Ask several volunteers to form a marquee committee. Divide the city up into sections and ask cultural organizations and movie theaters to put your slogan on their marquee.

Billboards can be expensive and many of them are already rented 12 months out. You might try to find a sponsor to donate their space for a couple of weeks. You could also talk to the billboard company about letting you use some of their less popular spaces. With billboards, keep your message short and simple and use the space to reinforce your slogan or ask a question.

Involve others: can you get students, seniors, or other groups help you spread the word?

You might want to look for information and ideas on the websites of the following Partners who participated in AEP II:

The [Phoenix Office of Arts and Culture](#) built a campaign around “The Arts...Vital and Valuable.”

The [Boise City Arts Commission](#) has lots of great ideas.

[The Greater Hartford Arts Council](#) used “The Big Bang of Arts in Hartford.”

The [St. Louis Regional Arts Commission](#) combined a business approach to the arts and a series of fun facts

You could make buttons that say “The Arts Contribute to the Economy of [your city].” Send buttons to board chairs of all local arts organizations. If you have the budget, buy enough buttons to distribute to the arts organizations in large quantities to thank audience members, board members, staff and volunteers. It will also help spread the word.

Other ideas for themes and slogans include:

The arts make our city more fun, more creative, and stronger economically.

The Arts...the Big Reveal



The ABCs of the Arts (Arts. Better, creative, development. Economic driver...)

The Arts Mean Business

The Arts Are BIG Business

The Arts...Partners in the Economy (For a visual, consider photographs of famous partners, e.g., Fred and Ginger, Mutt and Jeff, etc.)

The Arts Sing, Dance, and Build our Economy

Art Matters

The Arts...Creative Catalyst and Economic Engine

Cultural and Cash...Arts and Economic Impact

The Arts...Vital and Valuable

The Arts are a Winning Hand (Print invitations and facts on a deck of cards.)

One community created a slide show of facts related to the economic impact of the arts and got local movie houses to show them during the movie previews.

In some communities, the local utility company includes inserts with their billing invoices. These inserts usually focus on energy-saving ideas related to the utilities, but they might allow you one month to promote the economic impact of the arts.

Ask your community arts organizations if they will insert an open letter in their programs. The letter could be a thank you to audience members and a reminder of the economic impact of the arts. It should not be a request for money, ticket sales, or advocacy letters to elected officials. It should emphasize the importance of their role in the arts and in the economic impact of the arts in their community.

Produce an obviously fake stock certificate for the arts. Send it to elected officials, audience members, volunteers, etc. It might say, "You have invested in making our community stronger through the arts." This will serve as a reminder that they are a key part of the good news and a thank you for their participation.

Develop a series of note cards, blank on the inside but with one fact taken from AEPIII on the front. Give to your board, staff, and volunteers, and ask them to send notes to their friends. Give some to local arts organizations and ask them to write their elected officials.

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