

Arts + Social Impact Explorer Fact Sheet

CULTURE & HERITAGE

ARTS + DIVERSITY, ACCESS, EQUITY, & INCLUSION

IMPACT POINTS

75% REDUCTION IN INCOME DISPARITY

From 2000–2010, more than 75 percent of diverse, low-income, and highly disadvantaged neighborhoods saw reductions in income disparity that directly correlated to the formation of new arts organizations within that community.¹

ARTS ENCOURAGE EMPATHY AND DECREASE DISTRUST

Research has shown that exposure to stories of other cultural experiences, such as through literary fiction, significantly increases empathy and the ability to see another person's point of view.²

CULTURE IMPROVES IMMIGRANTS' PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

Immigrants who participate in culturally meaningful activities, including their indigenous arts, show improved psychological well-being, enhanced positive emotions and feelings, and deeper social connections with others.³

63% INCREASE IN IMPROVING THEIR COMMUNITY

Following engagement in the arts, 63 percent of participants indicated that they had become more aware of, and more interested in remedying, local challenges.⁴

ARTS INCREASE TOLERANCE

The opinions of frequent television-viewers of women and other oppressed groups become more tolerant as the number of characters from such groups increase in each television season.⁵

CULTURAL IMMERSION IMPROVES ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Three decades of research confirm that well-implemented immersion in heritage language and culture improves language acquisition, enhances test performance, increases school retention and graduation rates, college entry, and increases parent involvement and cultural pride.⁶

ARTS IMPROVE UNDERSTANDING AS IT EMPOWERS

Artistically preserving heritage can help reconcile difficult history, encourage self-expression, and aid family healing in service to community empowerment and change.⁷

OVERVIEW

The diversity of America is one of its greatest strengths, but social forces often disadvantage women, immigrants, people of color, LGBT people, disabled people, and other oppressed groups. The arts can impact public opinion on these groups and open the door to legislative change that increases equity and inclusion.

Research suggests exposure to arts and media featuring characters or cultures representing these oppressed groups can help reduce and eventually eliminate racist, sexist, heterosexist, ableist, and other negative views. When we read literary fiction, we are more able to understand others' mental states—which is to say, we increase our ability to empathize.

Local arts organizations help to improve economic conditions without displacing residents. More than 75 percent of communities with new local arts organizations have seen reductions in their levels of income disparity. The arts improve intercultural understanding, promote civic dialogue, and create a common ground for celebrating diversity and pursuing equity.

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EXAMPLES OF PRACTICE

Conflict Kitchen, Pittsburgh, PA



Conflict Kitchen serves cuisines from countries with which the United States is in conflict. It integrates food culture with programming that helps diners connect with the experiences of those often misrepresented and marginalized by the government and mass media.

conflictkitchen.org
info@conflictkitchen.org

image: Staff engaging with customers during Iranian version of Conflict Kitchen. Courtesy of Conflict Kitchen

Guerilla Girls



Guerrilla Girls is an anonymous group of radical feminist female artists devoted to fighting sexism and racism within the art world. It has used everything from posters, direct actions, convenings, and art installations to critique society's oppressive structures.

guerrillagirls.com
gg@guerrillagirls.com

image: Guerrilla Girls Complaints Department at Tate Modern, 2012. Copyright © Guerrilla Girls, courtesy guerrillagirls.com.

Metro Nashville Arts Commission, Nashville, TN



Metro Arts recently developed the THRIVE program, which uses an obscure municipal regulation to award contracts of up to \$4,000 to individual artists and small arts groups ineligible for the Commission's larger general operating support grants. Two-thirds of the pilot recipients were artists of color.

nashville.gov/Arts-Commission
arts@nashville.gov

image: Norf at McGruder. Artist Joseph Love III working with students at McGruder Family Resource Center. Photo by Courtney Adair Johnson. Courtesy of Metro-Nashville Arts Commission.

"Until We Are All Free" Art Kit from CultureStrike, Oakland, CA



In collaboration with Mobilize the Immigrant Vote (MIV), CultureStrike has created an easy guide to help you with making stencils, banners, and other art projects to fuel events, marches, and actions specifically related to immigration.

<http://www.culturestrike.org/project/%E2%80%9Cuntil-we-are-all-free%E2%80%9D-art-kit>
sonia@culturestrike.org

image: Artwork include in CultureStrike's guides available for download on their website.

Make America Dinner Again



Make America Dinner Again is an avenue to listen. Developed after the 2016 election, MADA is about building understanding and moving forward together by inviting people to sit down and have dinner.

<http://www.makeamericadinneragain.com/>
makeamericadinneragain@gmail.com

image: Video from Make America Dinner Again.

top image: Cuban Version of Conflict Kitchen. Courtesy of Conflict Kitchen
REFERENCES

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READING LIST

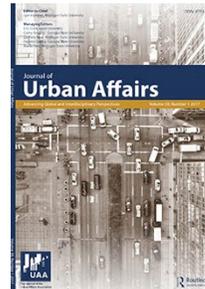
Different Stories: How Levels of Familiarity with Literary and Genre Fiction Relate to Mentalizing



This report follows an earlier study that observed an increased ability to understand others' thoughts and feelings after reading literary fiction. It looks at the prolonged effects of exposure to literary fiction and the resulting effects.

<https://www.americansforthearts.org/node/100932>

Neighborhood Diversity, Economic Health, and The Role of the Arts



The study, with data from the Cultural Data Project survey, looks at what neighborhoods newly formed nonprofit arts organizations in New York City chose to be in, and what effects this choice has had.

<https://www.americansforthearts.org/node/100951>

Figuring the Plural



This report is a broad collection of research and essays on ethnocultural arts organizations across the United States and Canada. It examines the resources available to these groups and the challenges they face.

<https://www.americansforthearts.org/node/100950>

Equity Reflection Questions



This framework is used for ensuring equity is considered in project development and was created by Metris Art Consulting.

<https://www.americansforthearts.org/node/100954>

Making Sense of Cultural Equity



This essay outlines a framework to understand the distinct and, at times, competing visions for cultural equity pursued by various wings of the arts and culture sector.

createquity.com/2016/08/making-sense-of-cultural-equity



ORGANIZATIONS

Alliance for Inclusion in the Arts

Alliance for Inclusion in the Arts promotes and advocates for full inclusion of artists of color and performers with disabilities at all levels of production in film, theater, television, and related media.

inclusioninthearts.org

Alternate ROOTS

Alternate ROOTS is committed to social and economic justice and protection of the natural world. It supports artists who have a commitment to their communities and those whose cultural work strives for social justice.

alternateroots.org

Sphinx Organization

This organization develops and showcases young musicians of color through ensembles, music competitions, and national convenings. It also hosts SphinxConnect, a national convening on diversity in the arts, where arts leaders meet to strategize and share their knowledge.

sphinxmusic.org

CultureStrike

CultureStrike empowers artists to dream big, disrupt the status quo, and envision a truly just world rooted in shared humanity. They operate through a migrant lens across various issues to create work that highlights the complexity, nuance, and beauty of communities that are often rendered invisible.

<http://www.culturestrike.org>

D5 Coalition

This five-year initiative was to advance philanthropy's diversity, equity, and inclusion. It lives on in a deeply interactive and informative website with recommended next steps, research, and network opportunities.

<http://www.d5coalition.org>

top image: Simone Boyd, Voices on the Edge Project. Photo by Morris Boyd. Courtesy of Metro-Nashville Arts Commission.

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