Leading the Field with Innovative Research

The SMU DataArts 2021 Annual Report
In a year of so much change and ambiguity, we dedicated our energy to providing and engaging organizations and individuals with the evidence-based insights needed to collectively build strong, vibrant and equitable arts communities. We were joined by many in this pursuit.

The impact and achievements described in this report are attributable to the following extraordinary individuals and groups:

- Our talented and dedicated staff who have nimbly adapted to the changing landscape;
- SMU’s Meadows School of the Arts and those from around the university who support this work;
- The arts and cultural leaders who contribute their data, integrate our insights and tools into their decision making, and share their insights with us;
- The grantmakers, arts service organizations, and donors who partner with us and support us; and
- The national advisory board members who share their wise counsel

We are grateful to all who give life to our mission, and we are proud to support arts and cultural organizations during COVID-19 and in the pursuit of equity and racial justice.
“DataArts fosters an engaging conversation on difficult topics while offering insight and input on changing the status quo.”

- Chantal Honore, Arsht Center for the Performing Arts, Florida, 2021

Major contributors

- Bloomberg Philanthropies
- Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
- William Penn Foundation
- William & Flora Hewlett Foundation
- Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture
- The Wallace Foundation
- The Ford Foundation
- Bloomberg Consulting LLC/Bloomberg Associates
- Mass Cultural Council
- Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation
- Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust
“An excellent learning space backed with research and data to facilitate and substantiate open sharing and discussion of relevant issue/behaviors/concepts”

- Zenetta S. Drew, Dallas Black Dance Theatre, Texas, 2021

Major contributors

- Flinn Foundation
- Michigan Council for Arts and Culture
- Donna M. Wilhelm
- Nancy A. Nasher and David J. Haemisegger
- Melissa F. Fetter and Travis Fetter
- SMU Meadows School of the Arts
- CHANGE Philanthropy
- Calgary Arts Development
- National Endowment for the Arts
- United States Institute of Theatre Technology
- Anonymous
### The Mission: Evidence Based Insights to Build Strong Arts and Just Communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide intelligence, tools, and workshops to help arts leaders leverage data to answer critical management questions, communicate about their organizations, and integrate research insights into their own work</td>
<td>Provide and engage organizations and individuals with the evidence-based insights needed to collectively build strong, vibrant and equitable arts communities</td>
<td>- Accelerate research and data-driven insights that are robust, useful, and valued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Help organizations use data and insights to drive change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Contribute to a more equitable funding model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Further diversify data collection beyond finances and operations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BUFFERING AGAINST UNCERTAINTY: Working Capital and the Resiliency of BIPOC-Serving Organizations

MARCH 2021
Rebecca Thomas, Principal, Rebecca Thomas & Associates
Zannie Voss, Director, SMU DataArts

Image courtesy of Alonzo King LINES Ballet, San Francisco, CA. Image credit: RJ Muna

The Alchemy of High-Performing Arts Organizations, Part II: A Spotlight on Organizations of Color

BY DR. ZANNIE VOSS AND DR. GLENN VOSS

Our White Papers and Reports
Key Findings: Model Linking Strategy and Financial Sustainability in Arts Organizations

(From our report: The Alchemy of High-Performing Arts Organizations II: A Spotlight on Organizations of Color)

- Cornerstones for Success
  - Community orientation
  - High-quality programming standards

- External Moderating Factors
  - Disasters/crises
  - Local population changes/gentrification
  - Racism
  - Access to funding

- Short-Term Outcomes
  - Tactical wins
  - Stronger brand
  - High-functioning board
  - Relationship development and buy-in

- Intermediate Outcomes
  - Increased audience and donor financial participation
  - Increased organizational capacity
  - Deeper community and donor engagement

- Long-Term Outcome
  - Increased financial stability

- Mission focus: Socioeconomic status of primary target audiences served
  - Discipline to:
    - Stay within your means
    - Diversify revenue streams
    - Take informed risks in the face of uncertainty
    - Jointly set policies and priorities
On-Demand Data: Automating our KIPI Dashboard, a free diagnostic tool, for arts and cultural organizations
- Immediate access to scores (financial and operating performance results) for organizations who complete the Cultural Data Profile
- Provides quick insights for decision-making, recovery, and sustainability

Responding to the pandemic:
- Guide to Advocate for the Arts: Free advocacy report subscription
- Free educational opportunities and analytic tools including 5-year trend reports
- Crisis relief resources most viewed page of the year; Average user time spent on page is 5 mins

Streamlining the Cultural Data Profile: Reduced the number of line items in the CDP by 40% and added features to enhance the user experience. User surveys since the December launch have demonstrated a noticeable increase in user satisfaction.
Field Engagement

- Hosted 61 webinars with 1,880+ attendees. Participated in 29 conferences and other presentations, reaching nearly 3,700 more attendees.
- Persuaded the International Economic Development Council to add arts and culture to conference agendas.

The 20+ Club: The most financial reports processed from the CDP (including advocacy reports) in one year:
- San Diego Children’s Choir (CA)
- Creative Flagstaff (AZ)
- Department of Arts & Culture, San Antonio (TX)
- Sounds Academy (AZ)
- Lenawee Symphony Orchestra Society (MI)

The most KIPI Dashboards processed:
- Black Mountain Dance Foundation (CA)
- A Red Orchid Theatre (IL)
- Sisters Folk Festival Inc. (OR)
- Attack Theatre Incorporated (PA)
- Cornerstone Theater Company (CA)

Workforce Demographics – National webinar co-hosted with ArtEquity, The Intersection of Diversity, Employment, and Well-being.

Expanding our resources:
- New translations Cultural Data Profile in Spanish
- Interpretation services for the support center
- Spanish subtitles for key recorded training webinars
130,735 website pageviews, 37% of which were made by returning users who spent 2x the average amount of time on the site than new users.

Email open rates and click-to-open rates were 36% and 8%; Non-profit industry benchmarks as of December 2021 were 29.5% and 1.24% respectively.

User engagement in 175 countries worldwide and 42,300+ new users across the U.S. in FY2021
Reach

SMU DataArts In the Press

"To remain relevant to and representative of our changing society, studies like this will provide key information that can inform decisions that ensure all community members have access to opportunities available within the arts and culture sector. It will inform us about the current status of our industry."

Coverage on USITT's study in partnership with research from SMU DataArts’ Workforce Demographics in *Broadway World*

---

National and Local features including

- American Theatre Magazine
- Artforum
- Artnet News
- ARTNews
- Arts Journal
- Broadway World
- Crain’s New York
- Grantmakers in the Arts
- Houston Chronicle
- Hyperallergic
- Inside Philanthropy
- Philanthropy News Digest
- Quartz
- Texas Standard
Workforce Demographics Studies 2021

Participation
387 organizations administered surveys to their workforces, receiving 11,053 unique responses

Partners
Administered 2020 Diversity Among Philanthropic Partners (DAPP 2020)
2021 Entertainment Design and Technology Workforce Demographics Study partnering with United States Institute for Theatre Technology (USITT)
The Calgary Arts Development Demographic Survey

Value
DAPP report: Analyzes the philanthropic sector’s ongoing commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts
USITT report: The first study of its kind to explore the demographics of the design and technology industry
Calgary Arts: 219 organizations participated in this study which registered 4,659 unique responses
“SMU DataArts’ research documenting the impact of public funding in the arts and how Chicago compares to other major cities played a major role in our advocacy for an increased grants budget. Following this research study, City Council approved a 370% increase to DCASE’s annual Cultural Grants Program budget.”

- Kalena Chevalier, Program Director, Cultural Grants Program Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) | City of Chicago
“DataArts makes data easy to understand and interpret. They provide straight forward reviews of research and recommendations for how to understand your financial position, plan for the future, and the actions to consider to achieve your goals.”

− Katie M., Kun-Yang Lin/Dancers, PA, 2021

“Grateful to have access to such knowledgeable and passionate humans for free. These webinars and workshops should be mandatory for all arts leaders.”

− Jeremy, Farmers Alley Theatre, MI, 2021
Connect with us

Subscribe
News for grantmakers, participating arts and cultural organizations

Share
Infographics and interactive apps for arts and cultural leaders

Storytelling
Testimonials and use cases from arts vibrant organizations