



WHAT WE LEARNED IN 2023

RESEARCH

Arts and Economic Prosperity is an economic and social impact study of the nation's nonprofit arts and culture industry. In 2023, CACHE partnered with Arkansans for the Arts and the Arkansas Arts

Top Takeaways from AEP6:

Arts & Culture Builds Jobs and the Economy

In Arkansas, the sector generated **\$306.4 million** in economic activity, supporting 4,800 jobs, providing \$182.6 million in personal income to residents, and generating **\$49.4 million** in tax revenue to local, state, and federal governments.

Arts & Culture Drive Commerce to local businesses

When people attend a cultural event, they often make it an outing —dining at a restaurant, paying for parking, and returning home to pay for child or pet care. In Arkansas, attendees spend \$31.57 per person per event, beyond the cost of admission.

Arts & Culture Strengthens the Visitor Economy

In the State of Arkansas, **4.9% of attendees are nonlocal visitors**; they spend an average of \$56.40. Additionally, 85.4% of nonlocal attendees reported that the primary purpose of their visit was to attend the performance, event, exhibit, or venue where they were surveyed.

Arts & Culture Create Pride in Our Communities

91.6% agree that the activity or venue where they were surveyed “inspires a sense of pride in this neighborhood or community.”

92% agree that “I would feel a great sense of loss if this activity or venue were no longer available.”

DEVELOP

Through 2023 we hosted 75 projects/paid bookings from partners that reached out about utilizing the Medium, which resulted in more than 470 dates held across our spaces, and just over \$79k in revenue generated for the space. This was completed while concluding and reigniting our internal program, the Creative Exchange Fund, that resulted in an additional 35 projects, and over 150 dates across space held.

Through these revenue-generating projects, the following types were at the forefront in terms of amount of time booked, in order:

- Meeting/Gatherings
- Theatre
- Music
- Dance/Movement
- Film/Video
- Exhibition

However, space for creatives to express and develop their projects is still something that the region needs further expansion on when we look at the fact that we received over 200 requests to use the space in the previous year, and could only accommodate 75 of them due to availability restraints.

From the audience perspective, we were able to welcome in over 13,000 people to attend the various events and programs offered at the Medium. When we look at attendance by project type, the order is as follows:

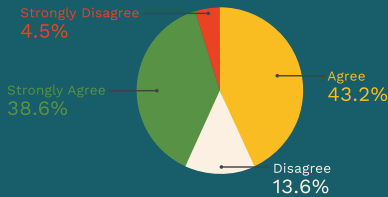
- Theatre
- Film/Video
- Dance/Movement
- Expo
- Music
- Meeting/Gathering
- Exhibition
- Fashion/Textiles
- Literary Arts
- Other
- Educational

It is worth mentioning that Theatre productions typically run for full weekends (Friday through Saturday) putting on multiple shows, while most of the other event types on here typically conclude with a single performance or showing (with the exception of exhibitions).

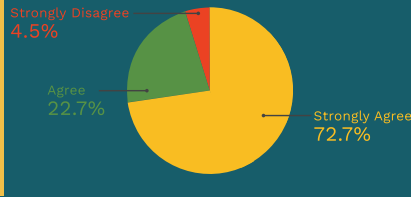
Across both iterations of the Creative Exchange Fund, we have been able to provide over \$280,000 to creatives. This is amplified however when taking into account the value of the space and time provided as part of the program. When computed at our current rate structure, the value of access to the Medium through this program can be valued at over \$250,000 across both iterations of the program.

And here are some charts from CFX post-assessment:

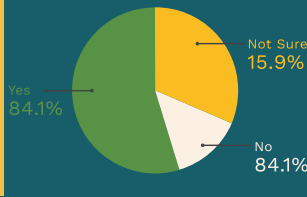
Count of How do you respond to the following statement, "I feel my work as an artist is more valued as a result of my participation in CFX?"



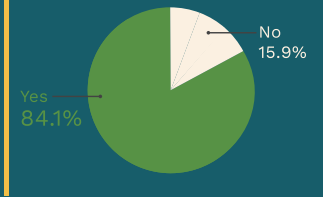
How do you respond to the following statement: "I would recommend participation in the Creative Exchange Fund program to other artists."



Do you anticipate future collaborations resulting from your CFX project?



Count of Did you develop or expand relationships with other artists/ organizations as a result of your work within CFX?



"Theater" is the primary booking type for outside client rentals, with local performing art nonprofits and private schools in search of venue space where they can not only present their final works, but also have time and space for rehearsals and tech. However, The Medium is consistently booked by other disciplines - fashion, film, music, movement, meetings/events, & exhibition - indicating access to space is a significant need across the entire creative community.

CONVENE

During the second year of the **Municipal Art Alliance**, we focused on empowering each cohort participant to attain their unique objectives. We leveraged the body of knowledge, resources, and relationships established in the initial phase as a solid foundation for identifying and pursuing individual projects. Throughout this process, our team committed to offering direct technical assistance, curating supplementary resources, and facilitating regular check-ins with the cohort. In line with the program's overarching approach, our implementation support prioritized candid exchange and feedback among participants, fostering a sense of shared identity and collaboration.

80% of Municipal Arts Alliance survey respondents said that the Municipal Arts Alliance program helped their municipality develop strategies to improve residents' access to arts and culture.

Cultural Planning, Placekeeping and **Cultural Policy** were identified as the Top 3 discussion topics most relevant to NWA regional municipal leaders.

100% of city leaders surveyed identified **"Differing priorities and agendas for arts and culture policy among municipalities"**

Through our initial two-year pilot of **NWA Coda**, it is clear there is a need to elevate the live music workforce, focused on training individual music event producers, promoters, and technicians. The necessary behind-the-scenes talent in our area needs development and support. Large scale venues like the Walmart AMP routinely have to pull in talent from Tulsa, Kansas City and beyond to support shows. Creating a pipeline for workforce development that begins at the local level but ultimately ends up supporting the larger institutions is critically needed.

100% of NWA Coda participants reported that it's important for music-focused organizations to continue meeting, compare event/booking calendars, and cross promote each other's work to strengthen the sector.

"We must cross-promote. The cost of marketing has far outgrown it's worth" - Srividya, Ra-Ve

60% of NWA Coda survey respondents identified "Resources/Funding" as the #1 most important topic among local music-focused organizations.

as the most significant and most likely threat to the success of regional arts and culture initiatives in the Northwest Arkansas Region - indicating a clear and necessary need to convene municipal leaders with a common goal of collaboration.

Additionally, work completed by CACHE and Public Sphere Projects in support of Siloam Springs' annual music festival increased access, growing from 20 - 50 event attendees to 2000 to 5000 attendees after working with both organizations.

40% of NWA Coda survey respondents identified "Collaboration" as the #1 most important topic among local music-focused organizations.

100% of NWA Coda survey respondents identified the following most important topics among local music-focused organizations:

- Resources/Funding
- Collaboration
- Guest Speakers/Training
- Workforce Dev
- Communications
- Organizational Development
- Shared resources