

Thinking About the Arts **Recommended Resources**

The resources listed here have been selected as starting points for dialogue, strategic thinking, and capacity building around the arts in organizations and communities in Alberta.

This list of resources is not meant to be exhaustive; rather it is a listing of current resources that members of arts communities in Alberta, Canada, and other English-speaking regions (Australia, UK, US, New Zealand) have found instructive or informative.

Most of the articles included in this listing were published within the past five years. They are included to begin to capture the best contemporary thinking about community arts ecology. However, a few older articles are included because they still add value to the discourse.

The resources are organized into several broad categories: benefits of the arts; engaging the community; and, policy and funding. The country of origin for each resource is provided if it is not clear in the title or description. The year of publication is provided for articles and finite projects.

If there is a resource that you would like to see added to this list, please forward suggestions to the Alberta Foundation for the Arts at sonya.thompson@gov.ab.ca.

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1. BENEFITS OF THE ARTS

[National Benefits Hub: The Arts](#)

This database provides access to many articles that document the benefits of the arts for individual and communities. (Canada)

[The Value of Presenting: A Study of Arts Presentation in Canada](#)

CAPACOA and Canada's performing arts presenting networks are conducting a large-scale enquiry in order to understand and communicate the value and benefits of presenting for Canadians and to raise awareness of the role of the live arts presenter in the creative chain, in communities, in society. This enquiry will initiate a series of dialogues, throughout the country and in both official languages, which will strengthen the connections between the various stakeholders of the presenting field. (2011-13)

See [Selection from the Literature Review](#) for [The Value of Presenting: A Study of Arts Presentation in Canada](#)

[Building Public Engagement with the Arts in New Brunswick – Attitudinal Research](#) (2008)

[Canadians' Experiences Attending Arts Presenter and Festival Activities – Participation, Appreciation, and Motivation](#) (2009)

[The Arts and Heritage in Canada: Access and Availability](#) (2007)

[Developing and Revitalizing Rural Communities Through Arts and Culture: Summary](#) (2009)

[The Arts Ripple Effect](#)

Supporters of the arts have struggled to develop a national conversation that makes the case for robust, ongoing public support for the arts; but public spending on the arts is too often criticized as an example of wasteful government spending or a misguided government intrusion into an area where it does not belong. Employing a rich variety of research tools and analytics, this report presents a strategy for the public messaging of artwork that address the common default patterns obscuring a sense of public responsibility in this area. (2010, US)

[Arts and Economic Prosperity Calculator](#)

The Arts & Economic Prosperity III Calculator is a free and simple tool that makes it possible for you to estimate the economic impact of your nonprofit arts and culture organization—or even your entire nonprofit arts community—on your local economy. These analyses are based on research findings from the 156 communities and regions that were part of Arts & Economic Prosperity III, Americans for the Arts' national economic impact study of nonprofit arts and culture organizations and their audiences. (US)

[How the Arts Impact Communities: An introduction to the literature on arts impact studies](#)

This paper lays out some of the issues that need to be addressed when thinking about and studying how the arts impact communities, in addition to providing an introduction to the literature on arts impact studies. (2002, US)

[Art and community development: the role the arts have in regenerating communities](#)

The arts are often considered to be at the periphery of the community development process and only a minor player in regenerating areas. Despite increasing globalization, communities are beginning to recognize their own identity, culture, traditional art forms and the value of working together at a local level. This paper is based on a recent study which shows that the arts have a role in regeneration and at a local level can be used as a tool within a wider community development programme. (2000, UK)

[Gifts of the Muse: Reframing the Debate About the Benefits of the Arts](#)

The goal of the study was to improve the current understanding of the arts' full range of effects in order to inform public debate and policy. The study entailed reviewing all benefits associated with the arts, analyzing how they may be created, and examining how they accrue to individuals and the public through different forms of arts participation.

This report synthesizes the findings from these sources and proposes a new way of thinking about the benefits of the arts. The view we propose is broader than the current view. It incorporates both intrinsic and instrumental benefits and distinguishes among the ways they affect the public welfare. This framework acknowledges that the arts can have both private and public value, but also

draws distinctions between benefits on the basis of whether they are primarily of private benefit, primarily of public benefit, or a combination of the two. (2004, US)

Social Impact of the Arts Project

The Social Impact of the Arts Project is a research center at the University of Pennsylvania School of Social Policy & Practice. SIAP conducts research on the role of arts and culture in American cities with a particular interest in strategies for arts-based revitalization. Since 1994, SIAP has focused on developing empirical methods to study the links between cultural engagement and community well-being. (USA)

Art in the Public Interest

Art in the Public Interest is a non-profit organization that supports the belief that the arts are an integral part of a healthy culture, and that community-based arts provide significant value both to communities and artists. The Community Arts Network (CAN) project promoted information exchange, research and critical dialogue within the field of community-based arts, that is, art made as a voice and a force within a specific community of place, spirit or tradition. The CAN project was active from July 1999 through April of 2010. The CAN website is now archived on Archive-It courtesy of Indiana University. [You can view it here](#). CAN maintains an active [Facebook page here](#). (USA)

Arts Health Network Canada

Mandate: arts for the health of it, as well as the joy of it! AHNC has a broad mandate to increase understanding of the health benefits of arts-based activities and to help make them available across the country. Specifically, AHNC's purposes are to:

- Bring arts and health activities into the mainstream of Canadian life so that all Canadians are able to engage in arts for the health of it, as well as the joy of it.
- Engage with organizations, institutions, governments, practitioners and the general public
- Establish and coordinate the activity of a network of local branch and affiliate organizations throughout Canada

2. ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

[The Creative City Network of Canada](#)

The Creative City Network of Canada (CCNC) is an organization of municipal staff working in communities across Canada on arts, cultural and heritage policy, planning, development and support.

The CCNC exists to connect and educate the people who do this work and share this working environment so we can be more effective in cultural development in our communities. By sharing experience, expertise, information and best practices, members support each other through dialogue, both in person and online.

Toolkits on the website:

[Public Art Toolkit](#)

[Cultural Planning Toolkit](#)

[Cultural Mapping Toolkit](#)

[Ontario Arts Engagement Study](#)

The study looks at the full spectrum of arts activities from traditional audience-based activities (such as attending performing arts events or visiting an art gallery) to personal practice activities (such as playing a musical instrument, painting or taking dance lessons) and includes arts participation via electronic, print and digital media (such as radio, television or the Internet). It also explores the importance of these activities to Ontarians, the settings in which arts activities take place, the relationships between personal practice and attendance, and the patterns of engagement across regions and demographic groups such as age and gender. (2011, Canada)

[Engaging Audiences - Strategies for Expanding Arts Audiences – The Wallace Foundation](#)

Building arts audiences is important even in tough economic times. That was the message at a conference of 50 arts organizations that received Wallace Excellence Awards to make arts a bigger part of people's lives. Conference speakers described efforts to build participation by means including conducting market research, "re-branding" and drawing lessons from professional sports. (2009, US)

[Audiences London](#)

Audiences London helps arts, culture and heritage organisations build the stronger, larger and more diverse audiences that are the heart of a dynamic and sustainable arts economy. Audiences London has in-depth knowledge of arts audiences, extensive research and the experience of our collaborative projects with frontline arts providers. We make our knowledge available to all in the sector: we make connections and bring people and organisations together to build audiences. (UK)

[Resources](#)

Here, Audiences London gives you free access to essential facts, figures, tools, case-studies and resources about London's cultural attenders and how to engage them.

[What people want from the arts](#)

A summary of findings from the arts debate in the UK. (2008)

[The Art of Participation: Shared Lessons in Audience Engagement](#)

A report on the efforts of 22 Boston area arts organizations to increase participation in the arts over the course of four years, 2006-2010. (2010, US)

[A New Framework for Building Participation in the Arts](#)

This landmark RAND Corporation study offers arts organizations a way to avoid hit-and-miss efforts at audience building that waste scarce resources. It suggests that building arts participation refers to one or more of three activities: "broadening" audiences (increasing their size); "deepening" them (enriching the experience of current participants); or "diversifying" them (bringing new groups into the fold). (2001, US)

[Engaging arts audiences online](#)

How can arts organisations use the internet to increase attendance at arts events? - Building awareness - Enhancing drivers and reduce barriers to attendance - Improving the quality of audience experiences before, during and

after events - Building stronger engagement between audiences and artists, event organisers and other attendees. (2011, Australia)

Culture Connects All: Rethinking Audiences in Times of Demographic Change

Culture Connects All, benchmark report published by Partners for Livable Communities and funded by MetLife Foundation, offers new audience-building opportunities for arts and cultural organizations to engage two of America's fastest growing populations: older adults and immigrant populations. (2011, US)

Beyond their walls

Ten major London arts and cultural organisations share experience of working in the public realm. (2009, UK)

Arts for All: Connecting to New Audiences

A Wallace conference gathering of 200 arts providers and other experts yielded rich insights about three ways that arts groups can widen their audiences: improving their marketing, using technology and undertaking audience research. (2008, US)

Motivations Matter: Findings and Practical Implications of a National Survey of Cultural Participation

In building arts participation, one size does not fit all, concludes this summary of findings from a path-breaking national survey from the Urban Institute. By dividing the data by art forms, the report offers a more precise way to understand and address the challenge of increasing arts participation. (2005, US)

The Diversity of Cultural Participation: Findings from a National Survey

This full-length report of the findings of a nationwide survey by The Urban Institute reveals why people decide to attend particular kinds of arts events and what they expect when they do, providing valuable information about what people want out of each art form. The results can help arts groups shape their audience-building efforts. (2005, US)

Supporting growth in the arts economy

Within the series of three papers: 'The arts economy', 'Place infrastructure and digital' and 'Towards an arts and creative economy', Tom Fleming and Andrew Erskine illustrate synergies between the arts and the creative economy and discuss suggestions for the Arts Council's approach. (2011, UK)

A review of the literature on community relevance

The literature notes a range of issues associated with reflection on relevance, including the need to constantly adapt, a lack of resources, and balancing relevance with artistic goals and creativity.

The literature also provides valuable new insight in terms of:

- Understanding the challenges for different organisations to increase their relevance
- Defining “community” – as a concept beyond audiences, and distinct from non-attendees, stakeholders, the public, and taxpayers
- Some techniques and resources to guide development of a reflection approach that includes the community
- Better understanding of the benefits arts organisations can create through a focus on relevance. (2011, Australia)

Understanding community relevance: A discussion paper

The community relevance project is a part of the Australia Council's artistic vibrancy program. In line with the program's aims to promote open and honest dialog about artistic vibrancy, this project seeks to:

- Define what community relevance means for a diverse group of organisations
- Promote a shared language to talk about relevance
- Raise the profile of relevant work in the performing arts sector
- Develop practical and flexible resources for reflecting on community relevance
- Inspire arts organisations to reflect on relevance and how it relates to their work.

This document sets out some ideas about community relevance for discussion. (2011, Australia)

[Equity within the Arts Ecology: Traditions and Trends](#)

The research report from the Canadian Public Art Funders (CPAF) is intended to provide an overview, through a literature review and environmental scan, of current knowledge and surrounding context on the theme of “equity within the arts ecology” in order to better understand how equity is defined, understood, implemented and measured within the Canadian arts ecology, as well as within a broader international arts context; and Identify key gaps or questions for future research. (2011, Canada)

[The Arts + Community Change Initiative](#)

Incubated at the Pratt Center for Community Development, connects arts, culture, equitable development, and social justice in all of their complexity to strengthen low-income neighbourhoods and work towards systemic change. The Initiative works to shape public policy, support innovative practice, build collaborative capacity, and support learning and networking. (US)

Children and Youth

[English National Youth Arts Network](#)

ENYAN aims to raise the profile and support for youth arts within England, and by doing so create more opportunities for the creative and personal development of young people, especially young people at risk. (UK)

[Cultivating Demand for the Arts: Arts Learning, Arts Engagement, and State Arts Policy](#)

This RAND Corporation report argues that reversing declining participation in the arts will require more and better arts education, because those who experience the arts as children are more likely to pursue the arts as adults. The Wallace-commissioned report is the second in a series of four taking a “big picture” look at state arts agencies. (2008, US)

Encourage children today to build audiences for tomorrow

This briefing explores the relationship between childhood arts experience and arts engagement patterns in adulthood. The analysis is based on data from the

Taking Part adult survey 2005/06, and is the result of collaboration between the Arts Council Research team and Dr Tak Wing Chan from the Department of Sociology, University of Oxford. The analysis confirms that being encouraged to engage in the arts when growing up has a significant impact on the chances of being an active arts consumer as an adult, even when a range of other socio-economic factors have been taken into account. The effect of childhood experience is very strong – almost as strong as the effect of education, one of the strongest predictors of arts engagement. We also report on how family background and personal demographics influence the chances that an individual was encouraged by their parents to get involved with the arts. (2009, UK)

Artswork

Artswork's mission is to place the arts at the heart of work with, for and by children and young people and to champion, lead and facilitate high quality work led by artists, arts and cultural organisations including the development of young arts practitioners/leaders. We work through strategic alliances with the arts, cultural, education, youth and community sectors and aim to act as national champion to increase opportunities for children and young people to lead, participate, work in, experience and enjoy the arts. (UK)

Arts matters

Arts matters is about the positive contribution that the arts can make to the lives of children and young people. It aims to bring about a greater understanding of how the arts can help to achieve the outcomes of government agendas *Every Child Matters* and *Youth Matters*. (2006, UK)

Using the arts and culture to deliver positive activities for young people

Following three successful national events run by Arts Council England and Museums Libraries and Archives which looked at the ways arts and culture deliver positive activities for children and young people, we have collated a small number of case studies which represent the essence of the three events and which we hope you will find useful as an advocacy tool. (2009, UK)

Culturally Diverse Communities

[Beating the odds: enhancing the engagement of young people from culturally diverse backgrounds with careers in the arts](#)

This report, commissioned by Arts Council England, West Midlands in partnership with INIVA (Institute of International Visual Arts), explores the piloting of a more strategic approach to engaging young people from diverse cultural backgrounds with the possibility of developing careers in the visual arts. (2008, UK)

[Arts and Refugees. History, Impact and Future](#)

A report on refugees and the arts, jointly commissioned by Arts Council England, London, The Barings Foundation and The Paul Hamlyn Foundation. (2008, UK)

Seniors

[Thought Leader Forum on Arts and Aging](#)

Grantmakers in the Arts, the National Center for Creative Aging, and Grantmakers in Aging brought together frontrunners in funding health, wellness, and the arts and aging fields with arts and aging practitioners, researchers, and other experts. Twenty-six individuals gathered at the Arena Stage Mead Center for American Theatre in Washington, DC to explore their common ground and the potential benefits of working together. In response to the enormity of the challenge, the group recounted accomplishments, and then moved to explore the ways in which their arts-aging collaborations might go broader and deeper. The Forum ended with a shift from thought to action in the form of a set of recommendations that could be pursued. (2011, US)

[The Arts, Health and Seniors Project](#)

The Arts, Health and Seniors Project explores how involvement in the arts can improve the health and wellbeing of vulnerable seniors. This initiative also supports the development of new knowledge and expertise in the fields of seniors' wellness, chronic disease management, and community-engaged arts. (Canada)

[Well Into Older Age: Age and Opportunity and the Evidence](#)

What research says about the value of promoting participation of older people engaging in creative arts programmes, both in the community and in care settings, can lead to gains in older people's physical and mental health and may have benefits in terms of social cohesion. (2010, Ireland)

Arts and Health

[The arts and health handbook](#)

Drawing on the experience of artists and people working in health or social care environments, this handbook puts arts and health in context, and presents a practical guide to setting up and managing an arts project within health and social care settings in Ireland. (2003, Ireland)

[Shift in Perspective - an arts and disability resource pack](#)

This resource pack is the result of a partnership between the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon, Arts & Disability Ireland (ADI), Mayo County Council, the Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA) and South Tipperary County Council. It grew out of the partner organisations' work to develop innovative approaches in high-quality contemporary arts and disability practice, and to make arts venues more accessible to artists and audiences with disabilities. (2010, Ireland)

[The arts, health and well being](#)

This is Arts Council England's first national strategy for the arts, health and wellbeing. (2007, UK)

[Building inclusion: Physical access guidance for the arts](#)

Physical access to buildings is often the first aspect that people think of when considering the needs of disabled people. When planning a new build or refurbishment of an existing building, you will need to consider all areas of the building. This means areas used by performers and staff as well as those that are publicly accessible. (2008, UK)

[Picture this: increasing the cultural participation of people with a disability in Victoria](#)

To examine ways that the participation of people with a disability in the arts, as artists and as audience members, can be increased. (2010, Australia)

Rural Communities

[Developing and revitalizing rural communities through arts and culture: international research project](#)

This comprehensive review of research on cultural and creative business development in rural communities includes information from Canada, Australia, the United States, and Europe. It is intended to assist rural communities to take best advantage of their creative capacity. (2009, Australia)

[Rural Artistic Initiative](#)

The Rural Artistic Initiative allows the Empress Theatre Society to expand the Windy Mountain Music Festival to include training for rural-based classical musicians, tours to other rural Alberta communities, and off-season residencies with artistic partners across Alberta. Funding also allows the society to develop a system for restoring and screening historical films and a world music series, while modernizing its booking, promotional, and ticket sales systems. (Canada)

3. POLICY AND FUNDING

[Arts Funding, Austerity and the Big Society Remaking the case for the arts?](#)

This paper brings together a wide range of creative voices to debate issues around resilience, audience and the value of arts and culture and seeks to explore some of the key questions addressed here: in a time of austerity, what are the priorities now? What is our vision for the long term? What imaginative and practical approaches are needed to sustain the arts through this period? What new opportunities are there to deepen the value of the arts to individuals, to society and to the economy? (2011, UK)

[FUSING ARTS, CULTURE AND SOCIAL CHANGE: High Impact Strategies for Philanthropy](#)

Fusing Arts, Culture and Social Change outlines compelling demographic, aesthetic and economic reasons for foundations to rethink their grantmaking practices to stay current with changes in the cultural sector and to continue to be relevant to the evolving needs of our communities. Regardless of its history or primary philanthropic focus, every foundation investing in the arts can make fairness and equity core principles of its grantmaking. It can do so by intentionally prioritizing underserved communities in its philanthropy and by investing substantially in community organizing and civic engagement work in the arts and culture sector. By doing so, arts funders – individually and collectively – can make meaningful contributions toward a more inclusive and dynamic cultural sector, and a fairer, more democratic world. (2011, US)

[Creating Public Value Through State Arts Agencies](#)

This report by Harvard professor Mark Moore, a leading authority on public administration, offers state arts agencies practical guidance on setting realistic goals, measuring and communicating the public value of their work, and cultivating the support of policymakers. (2005, US)

The Art of the Possible – Using secondary data to detect social and economic impacts from investments in culture and sport: a feasibility study

This report is a feasibility study into obtaining robust quantitative estimates of the effects of cultural and sporting (C&S) investment using existing (i.e. secondary) data sources. The project aims to determine this by examining the techniques that have been used internationally, and the data in the UK that is currently available. Effects that are of particular interest are those on business activity in the local area, the local property market and wider measures of social, educational and health outcomes.

The issues this study examines are potentially very important to policy makers. By exploring new techniques to evaluate the impact of cultural and sporting investments it opens up the possibility of fresh insights into how such investments benefit local areas, and new approaches to quantify and value their impact. It indicates what is currently feasible and suggests areas for future research. This research agenda should ultimately help provide policy makers with evidence on how to make, and design, investments that have the greatest benefit for our society and economy. (2011, UK)

Integrating “benefits of the arts” studies into models for policy and research

Evaluating the educational, social and economic impacts of learning and participation in the arts appears to be methodologically complex. Nevertheless, accumulated findings across many studies indicate a variety of benefits can be credibly linked to various kinds of arts engagement. The authors of most large reviews retrieved for this report argue that policy and research approaches need to move beyond an exclusive focus on the “instrumental” benefits of arts learning and participation, and instead focus on models that integrate the “intrinsic” and “instrumental” benefits and provide a framework for understanding how personal benefits can accrue and spill over into public benefits in social, cultural and economic terms. These models suggest how arts learning experiences can contribute to long-term arts participation, and in turn, to the various personal and collective benefits that can accrue. (2010, New Zealand)

Using Arts and Culture to Stimulate State Economic Development

The creative industries offer numerous benefits to state economies, and states have an opportunity to both improve liveability and boost state and local economies by investing in the arts and culture. This report offers insights and examples from states across the country to help governors incorporate the arts and culture into state economic development strategies. (2008, US)