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Contacts: Sheila Smith, 651-251-0868  
Executive Director, Minnesota Citizens for the Arts  
Alyssa Herzog Melby, 507-645-7608  
Executive Director, Northfield Arts Guild

## Arts and Culture Means Business in the City of Northfield

### New Study Shows Strong Impact of Nonprofit Arts and Culture on Northfield’s Economy

SAINT PAUL, MN: We have known for a long time that the arts and culture are important to Northfield. They enhance our quality of life, bring diverse communities together and make our area a magnet for jobs and businesses. A new study was released today by the Northfield Arts Guild, Northfield Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism, City of Northfield Economic Development Authority, Northfield Downtown Development Corporation, Northfield Historical Society and Minnesota Citizens for the Arts that shows that, in addition to contributing to our state’s excellent quality of life, the nonprofit arts and culture sector is also a substantial industry in Northfield, generating **nearly \$2.2 million in total economic impact annually.**

As the most comprehensive report ever done of the creative sector, *Creative Minnesota* is a new effort to fill the gaps in available information about Minnesota’s cultural field and to improve our understanding of its importance to our quality of life and economy. Today’s report release is the second wave of a concentrated effort to collect and report data on the creative sector every two years for analysis, education and advocacy, this time including in-depth analysis of seventeen Minnesota cities and counties. All of the research developed by the *Creative Minnesota* team is available at [creativemn.org](http://creativemn.org).

#### Fourteen Northfield organizations are part of the study:

- Ameriikan Poijat Finish Brass Band
- ArtOrg
- Prairie Creek Community School arts programs
- Bridge Chamber Music Festival
- Cannon Valley Youth Orchestra
- Cello an American Experience
- City of Northfield arts and culture programs
- I Cantanti Chamber Choirs
- Lockwood Theater Company
- Northfield Arts Guild
- Northfield Historical Society
- Northfield Senior Center arts programs
- Northfield Youth Choirs, Inc.
- Norwegian-American Historical Association

*Creative Minnesota: The Impact and Health of the Nonprofit Arts and Culture Sector* found that these **fourteen nonprofit arts and culture organizations in Northfield support the equivalent of 59 full time jobs** in the city, and that **71,273 people attend** nonprofit arts and cultural events here annually.

Sheila Smith, Executive Director of Minnesota Citizens for the Arts, said “Clearly Northfield’s arts and culture organizations are bringing people to town who wouldn’t otherwise be there to spend their money in local businesses. There is something special going on in Northfield.”

"As the basics of life are more and more bought at big boxes and online, quality arts organizations become increasingly important to local economies. Without the arts, drawing customers from outside Northfield is an uphill battle. With them, we can be a destination," said Scot Covey, Director of Northfield Downtown Development Corporation.

Mayor Dana Graham noted, “Northfield is proud to be recognized as a leading arts community. Our strong organizations and citizen participation from every age group make us a destination place for arts and culture events. The economic impact is significant and grows by a healthy percentage every year!”

Local legislators were also impressed by the results.

Representative David Bly said, "It is hard to imagine any marketer ignoring the power of the arts; from design to sign painters to songwriters and singers, actors and announcers, painters, webmasters and all. Last night I attended a performance on gun awareness and was totally inspired by readings and songs that touched my heart and moved me act. This is the power of the arts and why every community needs to promote and celebrate the arts of all forms. It reminds us of the humanity we share and moves us to do things we might otherwise not have the motivation or the courage to do what needs to be done."

“Minnesota’s arts and cultural activities make our state an attractive place to live and work, enhance tourism, and enhance our famous quality of life,” said State Senator Kevin Dahle. “As a former high school theater director and lifelong community theater actor, I am thrilled to see these funds finding their way into our small towns throughout Senate District 20 and beyond. I appreciate all that the Northfield Arts Guild does to keep our community vibrant and the arts alive.”

*Creative Minnesota* was developed by a collaborative of arts and culture funders in partnership with Minnesota Citizens for the Arts (MCA). The report leverages new in-depth research made possible because of Minnesota’s participation in the **Cultural Data Project** ([culturaldata.org](http://culturaldata.org)). The first round of studies, released in February 2015, looked at the state’s eleven arts regions and at the state as a whole. This round is about cities and counties. *Creative Minnesota* is a snapshot of the health and impact of nonprofit arts and culture organizations’ budgets in 2013 and looks at their spending and their audiences as well as other indicators.

“We hope that arts advocates, legislators, local government officials and arts and cultural organizations will use this report to find new ways to improve their lives and economies with arts and culture,” said Smith.

The *Creative Minnesota* team includes **Minnesota Citizens for the Arts, The McKnight Foundation, the Minnesota State Arts Board, the Forum of Regions of Minnesota, Target, Bush Foundation, Mardag Foundation, and Jerome Foundation**, with in-kind support from the **Minnesota Historical Society** and others.

Kate Wolford, President of The McKnight Foundation said, “Like other entrepreneurs and small business owners, artists add significant economic and creative value across the entire state. Backed by hard data, *Creative Minnesota* reveals important truths about how our state’s artists and arts and culture organizations are making dynamic contributions to our economic vitality and to our high quality of life.”

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#### **Notes on the Cultural Data Project and other Sources:**

This research was made possible by the state’s participation in the **Cultural Data Project**, [www.culturaldata.org](http://www.culturaldata.org) which is a web-based data system utilized by arts and culture grant makers in thirteen states and the District of Columbia. Many public and private grant makers in Minnesota require some or all of their arts and culture grantees to submit data to the CDP. Most CDP data is

financial, though it includes information about services provided, numbers of participants, staffing and volunteers as well. CDP data in this report is from 298 arts nonprofits as they reported it to the CDP.

The CDP data was supplemented by the responses of 396 arts and culture nonprofits to a brief online financial survey and by 575 organization's grantee data provided by the Minnesota State Arts Board, Regions and the Minnesota Historical Society. In addition, 3410 audience members completed a survey at arts and culture events around the state. Additional information came from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Tourism Marketing Council, Explore Minnesota, the Minnesota Department of Education and others.

Americans for the Arts (AFTA) was commissioned to calculate the economic impact research portion of this report as part of *Arts & Economic Prosperity® IV: The Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts and Culture Organizations and Their Audiences in the State of Minnesota*, Americans for the Arts, 2014 and the associated eleven regional Minnesota studies, which can be downloaded at [creativemn.org](http://creativemn.org). Additional data analysis was done by CliftonLarsonAllen using the data sources cited above.

### The Legacy Amendment

The Legacy Amendment was passed by a statewide vote of the people of Minnesota in 2008 to dedicate a portion of the state's sales tax to create four new funds for 1. land conservation, 2. water conservation, 3. parks and trails, and 4. arts and culture. The legislature appropriates the dollars from the Legacy Arts and Culture Fund to the Minnesota State Arts Board, Regions, Minnesota Historical Society and other entities to provide access to the arts and culture for all Minnesotans.

### Sponsoring Organizations

- **Minnesota Citizens for the Arts (MCA)** is a statewide arts advocacy organization whose mission is to ensure opportunity for all people to have access to and involvement in the arts. MCA organizes the arts community and lobbies the Minnesota State Legislature and Congress on issues pertaining to the nonprofit arts and conducts original research. MCA works with over 40,000 arts advocates in Minnesota. 651-251-0868, [www.mncitizensforthearts.org](http://www.mncitizensforthearts.org) @MNCitizen.
- **Minnesota State Arts Board:** <http://www.arts.state.mn.us/>
- **Forum of Regional Arts Councils of Minnesota:** <http://www.arts.state.mn.us/racs/forum.htm>
- **Minnesota Historical Society:** <http://www.mnhs.org/about>
- **Ideas that Kick:** [www.ideasthatkick.com](http://www.ideasthatkick.com)
- **South Eastern Regional Arts Council**  
<http://www.semac.org/>
- **Northfield Arts Guild** <http://northfieldartsguild.org/>
- **Northfield Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism**  
<http://www.northfieldchamber.com/>
- **City of Northfield, Economic Development Authority**  
<http://www.ci.northfield.mn.us/index.aspx?NID=103>
- **Northfield Downtown Development Corporation**  
<http://nddc.org/about-2/>
- **Northfield Historical Society**  
<http://www.northfieldhistory.org>
- **The McKnight Foundation:** [www.mcknight.org](http://www.mcknight.org)
- **Target:** <https://corporate.target.com/corporate-responsibility/>
- **Bush Foundation:** [www.bushfoundation.org](http://www.bushfoundation.org)
- **Mardag Foundation:** <http://www.mardag.org/>
- **Jerome Foundation:** <http://www.jeromefdn.org/>

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