CREATIVE VITALITY INDEX
WASHINGTON

Great coffee shops, bustling bookstores, a lively music scene, well-designed buildings, thriving art galleries – these are elements we find in the communities that drive the new economy. In places like Bellingham, Seattle and Spokane, this kind of energetic, open atmosphere attracts good companies and skilled workers interested in a high quality of life – which in turn leads to a self-sustaining cycle of economic and cultural vitality.

Not every community can be a hub of economic and cultural innovation. But every community can develop and enhance its economic and cultural health by fostering policies that support creative vitality. The Creative Vitality Index was conceived as a tool that states, counties, cities and towns can use to assess and enhance their creative edge.

What is the Creative Vitality Index?

The Creative Vitality Index is an annual measure of the health of the creative economy in a city, county, state or other geographic area. The creative economy as defined in the Creative Vitality Index includes for-profit and nonprofit arts-related enterprises. Using readily available, inexpensive data on employment and community participation, the Creative Vitality Index reflects the vigor of this sector of the economy and culture.

The Index has two major components. One component measures seven indicators of community **PARTICIPATION** in the arts, the other measures concentrations of arts-related **EMPLOYMENT**.

1) Income of nonprofit arts organizations

2) Income of other nonprofit organizations with a record of arts activity

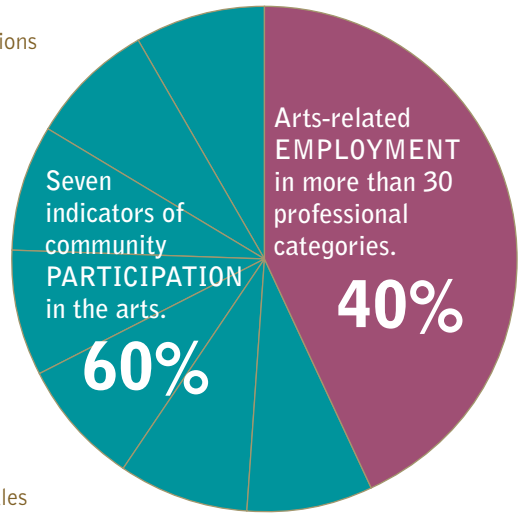
3) Per capita CD and bookstore sales

4) Per capita musical instrument and supply store sales

5) Per capita photography store sales

6) Motion picture theater attendance

7) Per capita museum and art gallery revenues from ticket and product sales



Actors, Producers & Directors
Advertising & Promotions Managers
Agents & Business Managers**
Announcers
Architects & Landscape Architects
Architecture Teachers*
Art, Drama & Music Teachers*
Art Directors
Audio & Video Equipment Technicians
Broadcast & Sound Technicians
Camera Operators, TV, Video & Movies
Commercial & Industrial Designers
Dancers & Choreographers
Directors, Religious Activities & Education
Editors
English Language & Literature Teachers*
Fashion & Floral Designers
Film & Video Editors
Fine Artists (Painters, Sculptors, Illustrators)
Graphic & Interior Designers
Librarians
Media Equipment Workers
Multimedia Artists & Animators
Music Directors & Composers
Musical Instrument Repairers & Tuners
Musicians & Singers
Other Art & Design Workers
Other Media & Communications Workers
Photographers
Public Relations Managers
Public Relations Specialists
Set & Exhibit Designers
Technical Writers
Writers & Authors

* Post-secondary
** Of Artists, Performers and Athletes

How Did We Do?

The baseline score for the Creative Vitality Index is 1.00 – this is the national score using the same data streams used locally. A region's score reflects a value relative to this national baseline; a score of 1.00 or greater means that the area has a relatively strong arts sector.

Washington state's Creative Vitality Index score for 2004 was 1.33. Among the sub-indices that make up the Index, the state scores high in arts-related employment (1.76) and near the 1.00 national benchmark in most other measures.

While figures from one or two years can show us where we stand relative to the national baseline, the true application of the Creative Vitality Index is in reflecting change from year to year in a given study area. As it is repeated over the coming years, the Index will serve as a tool to track the evolution of Washington state's creative sector and to help maintain its strength and liveliness.

A Tool for Growth

The Creative Vitality Index can inform public policy decision-making and support the work of advocates for the development of the creative economy.

Among many projected uses, the Index can:

- Call attention to and educate the community at large concerning the components and dynamics of **the creative economy**.
- Promote the concept that the creative economy includes **both for-profit and nonprofit** arts-related activities.
- Call attention to significant changes in the creative economy ecosystem. If contributions from private foundations drop substantially in a year and three major architectural firms leave the area, it's **time for action**.
- Act as a framework upon which to **define and build a coalition** to support and expand the creative economy.
- Serve as a **diagnostic tool** to provide a baseline and then annually measure changes in the creative economy.

Part of a Bigger Conversation

Around the country, civic leaders, economists, philanthropists, mainstream business leaders and arts community leaders are engaged in lively dialogue about what constitutes the creative economy and to what degree it impacts a region's overall economic and cultural health.

The Creative Vitality Index reflects the broad, systems-oriented thinking behind this dialogue and reinforces that nonprofit arts organizations and public arts agencies are part of an interdependent whole, the creative sector, the vitality of which is essential to the continuing health and vitality of the greater economy and community.

CREATIVE VITALITY INDEX WASHINGTON

For more information and/or a copy of the full Creative Vitality Index, please visit www.arts.wa.gov or contact Mark Gerth at the Washington State Arts Commission: 360.586.8093 or markg@arts.wa.gov