




IOWA CULTURAL COALITION

Iowa Arts & Culture SURVEY RESULTS

"Arts and culture are not just vital economic drivers for Iowa, they also draw talent to our state and knit together our communities."

www.iowaculturalcoalition.org





Thank you to everyone who took the time to share their thoughts in the Iowa Cultural Coalition's (ICC) recent survey. We had a response rate of 13.6% and have used your responses to pull great data and wonderful quotations. This report will share the results of our survey with you.

Arts and culture nonprofits are a major industry. Americans for the Arts in their latest Arts and Economic Prosperity 6 (AEP 6) survey found 10 Iowa communities produced \$705 million in economic activity last year. Clearly the arts deserve robust state investment. One key learning is that:

Iowans support and value arts and culture (*see below for comments*)

- **56% of respondents believe arts and culture are valued or extremely valued by Iowans**
- **76% indicated a willingness to write to a representative to advocate for arts and culture, and over 50% are willing to advocate in person, with a phone call, or on social media**

But despite arts and culture's important contribution to Iowans and to our communities, we also learned:

Iowans think arts and culture need more public support from leaders (*see below for comments*)

- **50% of respondents think arts and culture are underfunded in their community**
- **69% said Iowa leaders do not recognize culture and creatives as a critical industry**

ICC continues to push the State of Iowa to fund the Iowa Arts Council with \$3.1 million annually, or \$1.00 per Iowan. Actual funding is about \$.34 per Iowan and we lag behind all our competing nearby states. And the survey respondents are clear about their priorities:

Iowans believe there should be more funding for arts and culture.

- **The top three priorities identified by the survey are:**
 - **Increased funding for arts and culture nonprofits (36%)**
 - **Support for arts education in K-12 schools and classrooms (19%)**
 - **Funding for individual artists and creative professionals (13%)**


As survey respondents note, arts and culture attracts talent to our state, gives young people a reason to stay in Iowa, drives economic development locally, and improves everyone's quality of life. Not many industries can say the same. And the return on every dollar invested is enormous.

Survey responders want to tell elected officials these stories:

“Art and art immersion and culture are so important to our economic impact. Speaking as a city council member, I see firsthand the economic impact of cultural places and spaces. Diverse projects entail more than just theater and art, but music spaces, festivals, public murals. Investing in spaces and places that may not have those resources will only help add to the incredible work that so many of our communities and artists are doing and making!”

“Arts organizations are struggling with small staffs and huge dreams. Pitting them against each other and the cities themselves is disheartening when it comes to funding.”

“Local experiences for students make a HUGE difference in their quality of life and helps them see that they can pursue a creative occupation. These kinds of experiences are not being regularly funded by our state government. If the state wants to keep young creatives within our state..., the state needs to show that the arts are important by funding them fully!”



We are also using survey responses to improve our own communications with all of you. We heard loud and clear that you are an informed group regarding your legislators, but you will hear more from us about how we can help you advocate for increased support for arts and culture.

Please read the attached overview for more of the wonderful comments from our respondents, and more in-depth data. Thank you to everyone who responded, and who has asked about the survey results.


ICC is working towards our second annual Cultural Advocacy day, where we make our case to our legislative leaders for increased investment in this vital sector. Please check out our website at www.iowaculturalcoalition.com and follow our social media (add links here)

Arts and culture are not just vital economic drivers for Iowa, they also draw talent to our state and knit together our communities. Thank you for all that you do, and for your passion for lifting up the wonderful artists and organizations that make Iowa so special.

The Iowa Cultural Coalition Board

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The ICC's Three Pillars of Advocacy

- Arts & Culture attracts & retains talent in Iowa.
 - Arts & Culture promotes economic development in Iowa.
 - Arts & Culture builds strong communities in Iowa.
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Survey Comments on the Importance of Arts & Culture

“The art experience is not about large numbers, it’s about transforming a life – one at a time. Saving an at-risk youth, giving purpose to a senior, including an outsider inside. It’s not splashy, but it saves lives.”

“Art has the power to transform lives. Equally important, art helps for profit businesses to attract and retain the best employees. The arts have a direct and measurable economic impact in the state of Iowa.”

“My career as an artist was catapulted by the ability to apply for and receive grants through the Iowa Arts Council. This funding is instrumental in keeping artists in this state.”

Survey Respondents asked Elected Officials to Take Action

“Supporting and working with creative cultures and individual artists is an inexpensive way to attract creatives and professionals to stay, visit, study, work, and live in Iowa. ... Bring together a committee of creative professionals to study models of success with the goal of implementing and funding projects that attract creatives and professionals to Iowa.”

“Lead the country in arts and culture funding and see it solve attraction and retention issues.”

56% believe arts and culture are valued by Iowans, but...

50% think arts and culture are underfunded in their community
32% think they have insufficient space in their community for arts and culture
35% think they aren’t supported by local attendance at their arts and culture events

Are the arts, culture and creatives recognized as a critical industry in Iowa?

By the people of Iowa 48% said no, only 24% said yes
By Iowa leaders 69% said no, only 11% said yes

Of the institutions they serve and support, respondents understand...

72% receive at least some public funding
61% receive Iowa Arts Council funding, but
54% receive less than 10% of their budget from the local, state and federal government.
Only 20% report their arts and culture organization gets 30% or more of their funding from local, state or federal government.

ADVOCACY

75% or more of respondents know their state and federal representatives and senators.
50% have contacted their legislators and spoken to them about arts and culture in the last year.
50-75% would be willing to advocate in person or virtually.

Awareness of the Iowa Cultural Coalition

41% of respondents are unfamiliar with ICC and only 29% are clearly familiar with what we do
38% were aware of Arts Advocacy Day 2023
69% said they would participate virtually in Arts Advocacy Day 2024 50% said they would participate in-person in
Arts Advocacy Day 2024 (Feb. 28). Both groups indicated they would appreciate training.

DEMOGRAPHICS

94 respondents out of 691 (or 13.6% return)

Those responding volunteer (45%), or support arts and culture through donations and ticket purchases (over 75%)

49% of respondents work for a creative nonprofit.

31% were practicing artists, 3% are in K-12 education and 3% work in government.

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