

# **Building a National Culture of Data-Driven Decision Making for Those Who Want to See the Arts and Culture Sector Thrive**

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The SMU DataArts 2019 Annual Report



**SMU** | DataArts

NATIONAL CENTER FOR ARTS RESEARCH

privileges or immunities of citizens of  
any person of life, liberty, or prop-



# Note from the Director

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Zannie Giraud Voss

**As I look back on our first year as a merged organization, it is remarkable how much we have accomplished in service to the national field of arts and culture.**

This year has been a period of profound discovery and joy. The accomplishments highlighted in this report are attributable to those noted here:

- *Our talented, good-humored, and dedicated staff who give life to our mission;*
- *SMU and those from around the university who support this work;*
- *The arts and cultural leaders who contribute their data and integrate our insights and tools into their decision making;*
- *The grantmakers, arts service organizations, and donors who partner with us and support us; and*
- *The national advisory board members who share their wise counsel.*

**We thank all who believed that we could serve the field better as a united organization rather than as separate entities, and our partners who contributed to this first year's success.**

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## **Major contributors**

- Donna M. Wilhelm
- Melissa F. Fetter and Trevor Fetter
- Diane M. Brierley and Hal M. Brierley
- Nancy Nasher and David Haemisegger



# The Mission: Year One and the Road Ahead

## Organization

SMU DataArts' mission is to empower arts and cultural leaders with high quality data and evidence-based resources and insights that help them overcome challenges and increase impact.

## Value proposition

Tip the scales for arts leaders on the side of perceived benefits rather than perceived costs of engaging with data.

## Three goals

- Improve the user experience of data collection
- Improve the dataset
- Increase the benefits and delivery of highly relevant insights

## Key Achievements


**3**   
INTERNATIONAL  
presentations

**73**  
NATIONAL  
presentations

**7**   
Unique arts  
*research reports*

**172,672**  
Website *visitors*

 **26**  
*Updates + 26  
new features*  
added to the  
CULTURAL DATA  
PROFILE

**6,240**   
Unique CULTURAL DATA  
PROFILE *logins*

**73**   
Participating  
GRANTMAKERS

**75**   
CULTURAL DATA NETWORK  
participants across U.S.

**4,139**   
*Analytic  
reports sent*

**34**  
Staff *members*  
+ 2 *offices*

  
**1,133**  
WORKSHOP &  
WEBINAR attendees

**4**   
WORKFORCE  
DEMOGRAPHICS  
studies

**424**   
*Organizations* represented in  
WORKFORCE DEMOGRAPHICS studies

**11,087**   
WORKFORCE DEMOGRAPHICS  
survey *responses*

# Research and Program Highlights

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The latest data and insights

**The Arts Vibrancy Index:** Data-driven insights on the most vibrant small, medium and large arts communities in America.

- *Interactive map of scores for every U.S. county*
- *A white paper spotlighting success in Northwest Arkansas*

**Field analyses and recommendations:**

- *Fundraising ROI and latest trend findings*
- *Are theatres prepared to weather an economic downturn? Can they be?*
- *This fall: a study on marketing impact*

**The Anchor Project:** Nasher Haemisegger Fellow Karen Brooks Hopkins' work as Senior Fellow in Residence at the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

**A benchmark for workforce diversity:** Our secure, safe five-minute survey to collect demographics and workplace perceptions, now used by the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.

# Field Engagement

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We are building a national community of data enthusiasts. We connect with arts and cultural leaders. We grow engagement with our insights and data through a robust schedule of national webinars, conference presentations, regional communities of practice, and local workshops.

**The 20+ Club: The most financial reports processed from the CDP (including advocacy reports) in one year:**

- *The African-American Shakespeare Company (CA)*
- *McCarter Theatre Center (NJ)*
- *3Girls Theatre Company (CA)*
- *Scottsdale Artists' School Inc. (AZ)*
- *California Symphony Orchestra (CA)*

**The most KIPi Dashboards processed:**

- *Dad's Garage Theatre (GA)*
- *McCarter Theatre Center (NJ)*
- *Alonzo King LINES Ballet (CA)*
- *Brooklyn Historical Society (NY)*
- *Attack Theatre, Inc (PA)*

**Workforce Demographics – Los Angeles County Study:** Participation included **2,412** respondents affiliating with **167** organizations; respondents identified their countries of origin from **one** of **63** different countries (*including the USA*).



# Impact

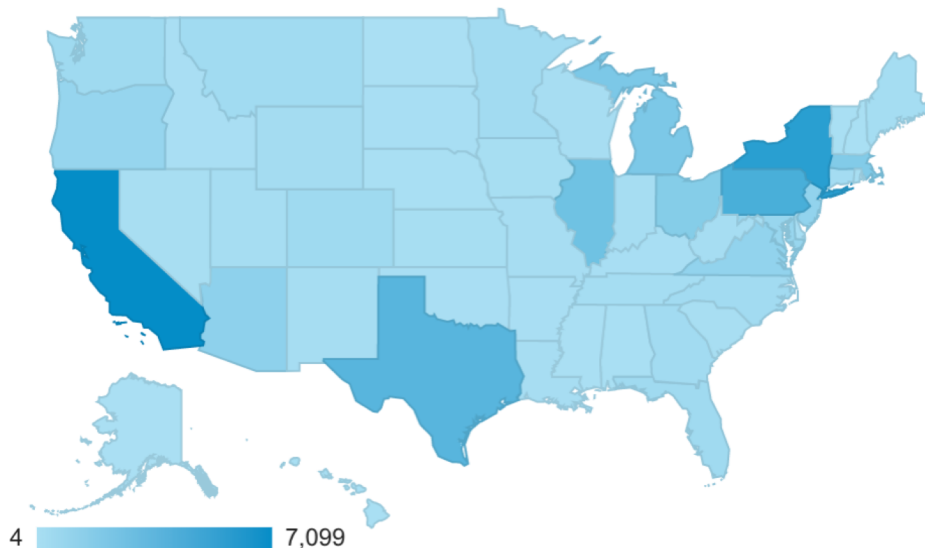
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More than **18,500 organizations** completed Cultural Data Profiles -- that's 91,000 CDPs over 15 years.

**13% increase** in pageviews from legacy NCAR. Average time on page up 41%.

**43% increase** in unique return visitors over legacy NCAR.

Social snapshot: Facebook followers up **35% year over year**. Email open rates and click through **11% and 5% above industry average** respectively.



**User engagement in *every state* in the U.S. and **143 countries** worldwide**

# Reach

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## SMU DataArts in the Press

**“This new DataArts survey [workforce demographics] gives us a tool we can use to do that more effectively and over time,” said Cultural Affairs Commissioner Tom Finkelppearl in a statement. “The data we gather will help us design programs to support NYC’s arts and cultural institutions in their ongoing efforts to create opportunities for all New Yorkers.”**

- in *Hyperallergic*, July 2019

## National and Local features including

- *American Theatre Magazine*
- Americans for the Arts
- BBC Radio
- *Chronicle of Philanthropy*
- *Forbes*
- Grantmakers in the Arts
- Hyperallergic
- *Inside Philanthropy*
- *The New York Times*
- *Nonprofit Quarterly*
- *Wall Street Journal*
- *Washington Post*
- WNYC - New York Public Radio

# Refining Our Platform and Creating New Tools

Improve the UX

## Interactivity and Speed

Designing CDP onboarding enhancements and fine-tuning the CDP's instructions and UX.

Improve the data

## New CDP Features

Updating our standards to comply with the latest Financial Accounting Standards Board requirements.

Increase the benefits

## Diversity and Inclusivity

Focusing on demographics insight: Piloting a tool for diversifying or broadening audiences. Offering a survey instrument allowing arts organizations to understand the characteristics of their workforces.



**“Dallas Black Dance Theatre’s use of SMU DataArts’ Audience Opportunity Tool helped to increase our season subscriptions by 20 percent. Combining this tool with marketing and promotional initiatives has helped us create a laser focus on target areas that were projected by the audience tool to produce the highest results. For the first time in 42 years, we have sold out five of six series in a season to date.”**

*– Zenetta S. Drew, Executive Director of Dallas Black Dance Theatre*



#ArtsDaySF

SAVE  
ARTS &  
CULTURE

#SaveTheNEA #SaveTheNDR #SaveTheI #SaveTheP

Physicians  
Responsible

Photo courtesy Katherin Canton

**“Through data, Levin says, ‘we can pinpoint ways that these organizations are materially able to manage better.’ SMU DataArts intakes information on elements such as cultural organizations’ budget size, board participation, and lead time for strategic planning on different initiatives. Levin emphasizes that these are ‘not just data points for the sake of having a number.’”**

*– Kate D. Levin, Principal at Bloomberg Philanthropies’ Arts Program, quoted in Artnet*





# Connect with us

## Subscribe

News for grantmakers,  
participating arts and  
cultural organizations

## Share

Infographics and interactive  
apps for arts and cultural  
leaders

## Storytelling

Testimonials and use  
cases from arts  
vibrant organizations



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