

CONTACT: Victoria Winkelman  
Meadows School of the Arts  
214-768-3785; [ywinkelm@smu.edu](mailto:ywinkelm@smu.edu)

Hanna Gisel  
Resnicow + Associates  
212-671-5162; [hgisel@resnicow.com](mailto:hgisel@resnicow.com)

## **SMU'S NATIONAL CENTER FOR ARTS RESEARCH (NCAR) CREATES INDEX TO MEASURE ARTS VIBRANCY OF METROPOLITAN AREAS**

### **Data-driven Assessment Ranks Cities by Arts and Cultural Assets**

Dallas (SMU), January 22, 2015 - SMU's National Center for Arts Research (NCAR) today released its first annual Arts Vibrancy Index (<http://bit.ly/NCARArtsVibrancy>). The index ranks more than 900 communities across the country. Vibrancy is measured as the level of supply, demand and government support for arts and culture on a per capita basis. The report highlights the top 20 large markets and top 20 medium and small markets. NCAR provides rank scores on all measures for every U.S. county on its website (<http://bit.ly/NCARHeatMap>).

"The numbers are only the start of the story, not the end. Each city in our report is unique in what makes it a vibrant community for the arts," said Dr. Zannie Giraud Voss, Ph.D., director of NCAR and chair and professor of arts management and arts entrepreneurship in SMU's Meadows School of the Arts and Cox School of Business. "Our intention in developing this report is to stimulate conversation about what makes a city vibrant in the arts and how arts vibrancy varies across cities."

The overall index is composed of three dimensions. Supply is assessed by the total number of arts providers in the community, including the number of independent artists, arts, culture and entertainment employees, and arts organizations; demand is gauged by the total nonprofit arts dollars in the community, including program revenue, contributed revenue, total expenses and total compensation; and level of government support is based on state arts dollars and grants and federal arts dollars and grants.

Geographically, the rankings utilize Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), which are delineated geographic areas consisting of one or more counties that have high social and economic integration with an urban core as defined by the Office of Management and

Budget. By focusing on MSAs, the index captures the network of suburbs that rise up around a city or town rather than considering them separately.

Among cities with populations of 1 million or more, the five most vibrant arts communities are as follows:

1. Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV
2. Nashville-Davidson-Murfreesboro-Franklin, TN
3. New York-Jersey City-White Plains, NY-NJ
4. Boston, MA
5. San Francisco-Redwood City-South San Francisco, CA

For medium and small cities, with population under 1 million, the top five cities are all in the West:

1. Glenwood Springs, CO
2. Santa Fe, NM
3. Jackson, WY-ID
4. Breckenridge, CO
5. Edwards, CO

The full top-20 lists are available on the NCAR website, including scores on each of the three dimensions (supply, demand and government support).

Beyond the specific rankings, select key findings in the Arts Vibrancy Index include:

- No region has cornered the market on arts vibrancy. Cities large and small from every region appear in the top 40 cities, although there is high representation from Western communities in the set of Medium-Small cities.
- Arts vibrancy takes many shapes and forms. Some cities have impressive financial resources invested in nonprofit arts and cultural institutions, others are filled with many smaller organizations and venues, some are tourist destinations and still others are artist colonies. Some cities are strong in numerous arts sectors while others are capitals of a particular art form.

- There are interesting differences across very large Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs). Those that made the list tend either to have a strong concentration of arts vibrancy in an urban core and less going on in surrounding communities, or they are vibrant throughout the greater metropolitan area, and less so in the city center.
- The majority of arts vibrant cities have a population either under 300,000 or between 1,000,000 and 3,000,000.

### **About NCAR**

In 2012, the Meadows School of the Arts and Cox School of Business at Southern Methodist University launched the National Center for Arts Research (NCAR). The Center, the first of its kind in the nation, analyzes the largest database of arts research ever assembled, investigates important issues in arts management and patronage, and makes its findings available to arts leaders, funders, policymakers, researchers and the general public. The vision of NCAR is to act as a catalyst for the transformation and sustainability of the national arts and cultural community.

With data from the Cultural Data Project (CDP) and other national and government sources such as the Theatre Communications Group, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Census Bureau and the National Center for Charitable Statistics, the National Center for Arts Research is creating the most complete picture of the health of the arts sector in the U.S. The goal of the Center is to become the nation's leading source of expertise on: 1) arts attendance and patronage, 2) understanding how managerial decisions, arts attendance and patronage affect one another, and 3) the fiscal trends and fiscal stability of the arts in the U.S., and to create an in-depth assessment of the industry that allows arts and cultural leaders to make more informed decisions and improve the health of their organizations.

The project's indices and dashboard were created in partnership with IBM, TRG Arts and Nonprofit Finance Fund (NFF). The Center also partnered with the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) to develop its mission, vision and long-term strategies.

NCAR is led by Dr. Zannie Voss, chair and professor of arts management and arts entrepreneurship in the Meadows School of the Arts and SMU Cox School of Business, and Dr. Glenn Voss, Endowed Professor of Marketing at Cox School of Business.

Through this leadership, NCAR sources its cross-disciplinary academic expertise in the fields of arts management, marketing and statistics from Meadows and Cox faculty.

More than a dozen visionary foundations and individual arts patrons have supported NCAR with financial investments, including the Communities Foundation of Texas, M. R. & Evelyn Hudson Foundation, Carl B. & Florence E. King Foundation, Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, Jennifer and Peter Altabef, Marilyn Augur, Molly Byrne, Bess and Ted Enloe, Melissa and Trevor Fetter, Carol and Don Glendenning, Jeanne R. Johnson, Nancy Nasher, David Haemisegger, Nancy Perot, Bonnie Pitman, Caren Prothro and Donna Wilhelm.

For more information, please visit the NCAR website at [smu.edu/artsresearch](http://smu.edu/artsresearch).

### **About the Meadows School of the Arts**

The Meadows School of the Arts, formally established at SMU in 1969 and named in honor of benefactor Algur H. Meadows, is one of the foremost arts education institutions in the United States. The Meadows School offers undergraduate and graduate degrees in advertising, art, art history, arts management and arts entrepreneurship, communication studies, creative computation, dance, film and media arts, journalism, music and theatre. The goal of the Meadows School of the Arts, as a comprehensive educational institution, is to prepare students to meet the demands of professional careers. The Meadows School is a leader in developing innovative outreach and community engagement programs, challenging its students to make a difference locally and globally by developing connections between art, entrepreneurship and change.

The Meadows School of the Arts is also a convener for the arts in North Texas, serving as a catalyst for new collaborations and providing critical industry research. For more information, visit [www.smu.edu/meadows](http://www.smu.edu/meadows).

### **About the Cox School of Business**

SMU's Cox School of Business, originally established in 1920 and named in honor of benefactor Edwin L. Cox in 1978, offers a full range of undergraduate and graduate business education programs. Among them: BBA, Full-Time MBA, Professional MBA (PMBA), Executive MBA (EMBA), Master of Science in Accounting,

Master of Science in Business Analytics, Master of Science in Entrepreneurship, Master of Science in Finance, Master of Science in Management, Master of Science in Sport Management and Executive Education. The school also offers a number of unique resources and activities for students, ranging from its Business Leadership Center, Caruth Institute for Entrepreneurship, Folsom Institute for Real Estate, Latino Leadership Initiative, Maguire Energy Institute and Global Leadership Program to its Associate Board Executive Mentoring Program and an international alumni network with chapters in more than 20 countries.

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