

As a state agency, **Mass Cultural Council** works to elevate our rich cultural life in Massachusetts. We partner with communities across the Commonwealth to expand access, improve education, promote diversity, and encourage excellence in the arts, humanities, and sciences. Through our efforts, we make our state a better place to live, work, and visit for everyone.

10 St. James Ave., 3rd floor
Boston, MA 02116
617-858-2700

This is the power of culture.

An investment for our Commonwealth 2020



“To invest in our cultural life is to invest in our shared future.”

— ANITA WALKER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
MASS CULTURAL COUNCIL

Vibrant cities and towns. Children experiencing the delight of discovery. Our icons of liberty preserved and celebrated. Our science museums, helping us understand our world and inspiring a new generation to make it better.

This is the power of culture.

Mass Cultural Council works to unleash this power across the Commonwealth. As a state agency, we promote excellence, inclusion, education, and diversity in the arts, humanities, and sciences to foster a rich cultural life for all Massachusetts residents and contribute to the vitality of our communities and economy. We pursue this mission through a wide range of grants, initiatives, and advocacy for artists, communities, organizations, and schools.

Working through the arts, humanities, and sciences, culture is a dynamic force for enriching communities, growing the economy, increasing accessibility, and fostering individual creativity. Culture is intrinsically valuable and unique in its ability to lift the human spirit.

Realizing this vision will require resources. Funding for Mass Cultural Council comes from annual appropriations from the Commonwealth, grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, and other sources. The pages that follow illustrate the impact of our current investments.

A rich cultural life plays an essential role in healthy communities, good schools, and a strong economy. To invest in our cultural life is to invest in our shared future.

Sincerely,

Anita Walker
Executive Director
Mass Cultural Council

Front/back cover:
Acre Family Child Care, Lowell
Photo by Framed Photography

This page:
Carrie Gustafson
(Crafts Fellow '11), Cambridge

Culture embraces everyone.

We are making culture inclusive and welcoming to everyone in Massachusetts – as creators, participants, or audiences – and free of barriers, whether physical, educational, or societal. Why? Because, as our state grows more diverse, culture helps us build relationships across ethnic, racial, and generational lines. It makes our community stronger.

244

244 festivals were funded by the Council, providing **697,914** attendees free or low-cost experiences across the Commonwealth.¹

This page: Boston String Academy, Mercure Photography

Opposite: Craig Bailey/
Perspective Photo for Emerson Stage

368,506

The EBT Card to Culture has provided **368,506** free or discounted admissions to Mass residents of limited means since the program's inception in 2017. More than **240** sites participate in the program.²

“Being able to hear is not a prerequisite for being a skilled performer. My dream is to be an actor and inspire the world through storytelling. The public investment in cultural access is essential for all people. We all need exposure to, and experience with, arts and culture.”

— EJ, BOSTON-BASED DEAF ACTOR AND DIRECTOR

Our Universal Participation (UP) Initiative developed a cohort of over **60** organizations committed to the principles of universal design. Through the distinct learning and funding opportunities within the UP Initiative, more than **100** people with disabilities have been hired as leaders and consultants.

In 2019, Mass Cultural Council introduced **CultureRx**: an initiative that advances the role of culture as a protective factor for the health and well-being of everyone in the Commonwealth. We also continued our progress on our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan, which honors the breadth and diversity of cultural expression across the Commonwealth.

In 2019, Mass Cultural Council's state-designated Cultural Districts launched **Fair Saturday Mass** – joining a global cultural movement with a social impact and becoming the first state in the nation to participate in Fair Saturday.



Culture enriches our communities.

Culture is integral to quality of life: it engages residents, connects neighbors, and gives people compelling reasons to spend time – and money – in cities and towns across Massachusetts. That’s why the American Planning Association identifies culture as a primary tool for community revitalization.³

49 THOUSAND+

Our cultural organizations offer more than **49,833** public events each year; an average of **137** a day.⁴

This page: Gund Kwok Asian Women’s Lion & Dragon Dance Troupe. Photo by Mathew Muise

Opposite: Festival, Somerville

3 out of 4

3 out of 4 Massachusetts residents participate in at least one cultural event each month, higher than the national average.⁵

In a 2019 study the World Health Organization demonstrated that participation in the arts and culture can impact health and well-being. Research shows that the arts:

-  *Affect the social determinants of health*
-  *Support child development*
-  *Encourage healthy behaviors*
-  *Address negative impacts of social isolation and loneliness⁶*

Local Funding, Local People

Local Cultural Councils provide grants in all 351 Massachusetts cities and towns.

LCCs fund **6,278** projects across the Commonwealth with a median grant size of **\$400**.⁷



Culture drives growth and opportunity.

\$2.3

BILLION

in economic impact for Massachusetts.

Each year, cultural nonprofits spend **\$1.5 billion** directly into the economy; and generate **\$877 million** in indirect spending by visitors – totaling **\$2.3 billion**.⁹

When the state invests **\$16 million** into the Mass Cultural Council, the Cultural sector sends **\$128 million** back into state coffers.¹⁰ These funds help pay for transportation, education, and other public services – an eight to one return on taxpayers' investment in the Council.



The economic impact of culture goes way beyond state revenue and job creation. Culture also propels urban development, ignites innovation and creativity, and attracts the skilled workforce Massachusetts needs to compete on the global stage.



“The creative economy thrives on vibrant communities, diversity, and inspiration. Massachusetts and Boston are a haven for progressive, creative-minded people and that’s what makes this state a great place to recruit and retain talent. Mass is a place where talented people have the freedom to be their most creative.”

— JOY HOWARD, FORMER CMO OF SONOS AND LIFT

Focus on Employment

HireCulture.org, our creative employment website, is used by over **1,500** creative organizations with nearly **3,000** jobs posted for free each year.¹¹

We Are Where You Are

Mass Cultural Council’s staff held **808** meetings/events reaching **130** cities and towns across our Commonwealth.¹²

71,000

Our cultural nonprofits support more than **71,000** full-time-equivalent jobs.⁸

This page and opposite:
Peabody Essex Museum, Salem



Culture empowers a new generation.

More than arts education, culture is crucial to developing creative, productive, and independent-minded young people in Massachusetts – people who are ready to succeed in the global economy. Chances are tomorrow’s big entrepreneurs are earning their chops today in creative youth development programs.



111,262

111,262 children are engaged in creative youth development and education by Mass Cultural Council grantees.¹³

This page: Greater Boston Stage Company, Stoneham

Opposite: Zumix, East Boston

80%

80% of creative youth development participants plan for post-secondary education.¹⁴

“Arts and culture are a form of liberation. Once young people have access and exposure to art, they are able to build a foundation of self, and then expand their minds and eyes to the social landscape, identify issues in their communities, and use art to come up with creative solutions for those issues.”

– MARQUIS VICTOR, FOUNDING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ELEVATED THOUGHT

“It’s more than just creating art, it’s creating a place to call home.”

– KELLY, CREATIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT ALUM



101,444 children are engaged in education by Mass Cultural Council grantees.¹⁵ Our creative youth development programs provide brave spaces for **9,818** young people to create, connect, and catalyze change in their lives and communities.¹⁶

Regardless of economic status, students who study the arts in school have **lower dropout rates, higher GPAs, and better scores in math and language** on standardized tests.¹⁷





Investing in culture.

The numbers tell the story: culture is a powerful force for bettering our communities, growing our economy, creating opportunities, and developing a new creative generation. But there's more to culture than statistics. We believe that our cultural life is essential to our quality of life in Massachusetts. Culture elevates us, expands our perspective, and, in the words of Albert Einstein, "leads [us] toward freedom." We can't think of a better investment than that.

This page: Complex Textured Reality by Käthe Swaback

Opposite: Audacious Hope by Käthe Swaback

Leveraging public and private investment¹⁸

For every

\$1

Mass Cultural Council grants



\$157

is raised by grantees

What you can do.

1

Get informed. Mass Cultural Council funds dozens of programs and initiatives that have a profound impact in the lives of residents across the Commonwealth. This report shows only a sample: visit massculturalcouncil.org to learn more.

2

Start a conversation. Find out what's happening in the cultural life of your community. Talk to local employers, educators, engaged residents, and visitors. Ask them what culture means to them in their day-to-day lives.

3

Stay connected. You play an integral role in creating and supporting a rich, accessible cultural life in Massachusetts. Without you, we stand to lose everything that culture brings to our communities, to the state and local economies, and to our children. We believe in the power of culture. Will you?

Resources

Culture embraces everyone

¹ From Mass Cultural Council FY19.

² From Mass Cultural Council (data from July 1, 2017 – January 1, 2020).

Culture enriches our communities

³ The American Planning Association. "The Role of the Arts and Culture in Planning Practice."

⁴ From Mass Cultural Council FY19.

⁵ LaPlaca Cohen. "Culture Track 2014: Focus on Boston," Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Retrieved from <http://www.mfa.org/news/news-and-events/culture-trackfocus-on-boston>.

⁶ World Health Organization: What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and well-being? A scoping review.

⁷ From Mass Cultural Council FY19.

Culture drives growth and opportunity

⁸ Americans for the Arts' Arts & Economic Prosperity 5 Calculator.

⁹ Americans for the Arts' Arts & Economic Prosperity 5 Calculator.

¹⁰ Americans for the Arts' Arts & Economic Prosperity 5 Calculator.

¹¹ From Mass Cultural Council FY19.

¹² From Mass Cultural Council FY19.

Culture empowers a new generation

¹³ From Mass Cultural Council as reported by Big Yellow School Bus, STARS Residency, Creative Minds Out of School, Poetry Out Loud, YouthReach, and SerHacer grantees.

¹⁴ From Mass Cultural Council as reported by YouthReach and SerHacer grantees.

¹⁵ From Mass Cultural Council as reported by Big Yellow School Bus, STARS Residency, Creative Minds Out of School, Poetry Out Loud grantees.

¹⁶ From Mass Cultural Council as reported by YouthReach and SerHacer grantees.

¹⁷ Brown, Kimberley. (October 2017). "The Arts and Dropout Prevention: The Power of Art to Engage, A National Dropout Prevention Center/Network White Paper."

Investing in culture

¹⁸ From Mass Cultural Council FY19.

