

10 Reasons to Support the Arts in Pinellas County in 2024

1. **Arts unify communities.** 72% of Americans believe “the arts unify our communities regardless of age, race, and ethnicity” and 73% agree that the arts “helps me understand other cultures better”—a perspective observed across all demographic and economic categories.
2. **Arts improve individual well-being.** 81% of the population says the arts are a “positive experience in a troubled world,” 69% of the population believe the arts “lift me up beyond everyday experiences,” and 73% feel the arts give them “pure pleasure to experience and participate in.”
3. **Arts strengthen the economy.** The nation’s arts and culture sector is a \$1.02 trillion industry that supports 4.9 million jobs (2021). That is 4.4% of the nation’s economy. In Florida, arts and culture is 3.1% of the state economy—and supports 244,510 jobs (bigger than transportation, education, and agriculture). Pinellas County’s nonprofit arts industry alone generates \$294.7 million in economic activity annually—spending by organizations *and their audiences*—which supports 4,528 jobs and generates \$58.9 million in local, state, and federal government revenue. (2022)
4. **Arts drive tourism and revenue to local businesses.** The 4.1 million attendees at Pinellas County’s nonprofit arts and culture events spend an average of \$35.62 per person, per event, beyond the cost of admission on items such as meals, parking, and lodging—vital income for local businesses. 34% of attendees live outside of Pinellas County; they average \$46.37 in event-related spending. Arts travelers are ideal tourists, staying longer and spending more to seek out authentic experiences.
5. **Arts improve academic performance.** Students engaged in arts learning have higher GPAs, standardized test scores, and college-going rates as well as lower drop-out rates. These academic benefits are reaped by students across all socio-economic strata. Yet the Department of Education reports that access to arts education for students of color is significantly lower than for their white peers. 91% of Americans believe that arts are part of a well-rounded K-12 education.
6. **Arts spark creativity and innovation.** *Creativity* is among the top five applied skills sought by business leaders, with 72% saying creativity is of “high importance” when hiring.
7. **Arts have social impact.** University of Penn. researchers found that a high concentration of the arts leads to higher civic engagement, more social cohesion, higher child welfare, and lower poverty ra
8. **Arts improve healthcare.** Nearly one-half of the nation’s healthcare institutions provide arts programming for patients, families, and even staff. 78% deliver these programs because of their healing benefits to patients—shorter hospital stays, better pain management, and less medication.
9. **Arts for the health and well-being of our military.** The arts heal the mental, physical, and moral injuries of war for military servicemembers and Veterans, who rank the creative arts therapies in the top four (out of 40) interventions and treatments.
10. **Arts Strengthen Mental Health.** The arts are an effective resource in reducing depression and anxiety and increasing life satisfaction. Just 30 minutes of active arts activities daily can combat the ill effects of isolation and loneliness associated with COVID-19.