

NEW COMMUNITY VISIONS

part of the **Transforming America's Communities Through the Arts Initiative**



DO-IT-YOURSELF COMMUNITY VISIONING FORUM

Workbook and Toolkit

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www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CommunityVisions

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Overview of the Do-It-Yourself Community Visioning Forum

Welcome to your very own Community Visioning Forum! Let's have some fun, shall we?

Before you jump into inviting participants and having the conversation, we thought it might be helpful to give you an overview of what you're getting yourself into, and to answer some initial questions that may help you to create your Forum.

The DIY Visioning Forum we have developed, and that you're about to embark upon, is designed to be completed in three hours. It is meant as a sort of **cross sector think tank to prototype 'arts and' opportunities, build new relationships and make and surface new knowledge** about the role of the arts in communities.

Over the course of those three hours, you, with those you've gathered, will explore what a "healthy, vibrant, equitable community" is, what role the arts can play in pursuing the vision of that idealized community, and how individuals, arts institutions, and support organizations like service organizations, foundations, and local arts agencies can help to achieve that vision.

This is a forum for thinking and dreaming—there will likely be no conclusions, and we hope that the conversation begun in these three hours extends long after, and informs the work and personal missions of each individual you have gathered.

You'll see we have included opportunities for taking notes. We encourage you to share those notes not only with your gathered peers, but with us. These DIY Visioning Forums are part of a large set of convenings Americans for the Arts is encouraging across the country in order to hear the goals, visions, and hopes of as many people inside and outside the arts as possible.

To upload your notes, please visit

<http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CommunityVisionsDIY>.

Basic Information about New Community Visions

The Goals

New Community Visions is designed to surface new knowledge and create new systems and tools for arts agencies, presenters, and supporters, along with, artists, and public and private policymakers, including civic leaders, so that they can encourage use of arts and culture as a mechanism for creating healthier, more vibrant, more equitable communities over time.

We are hoping to do this by:

- 1) Curating cross-sector and inter-sector “think tank” conversations, and encouraging new relationships, that end up being useful to those in the room as they return to their communities to pursue their own work of building visions and plans.
- 2) Detecting the common systems and barriers that facilitate or impeded progress, and figure out how the arts can be of service to larger societal and community shifts as they occur.
- 3) Strengthening and amplifying those common systems with national-, state-, and local-level arts agencies, arts organizations, foundations, and artists through the country.

Americans for the Arts designed this initiative with the goal of enhancing the health, vibrancy and equity in places, both within the arts and through the arts within the larger community. The people who come together in meetings across the country are invited to explore together what the end result might be, and how (independent of this work) they might move toward that result, and then to articulate how we all might make that movement easier.

The Theory/What We Want

The theory of change that underlies this project has to do with the ways that a set of interlocking, overlapping contributors to communities, and the role that the arts can play in amplifying positive impacts and mitigating negative ones.

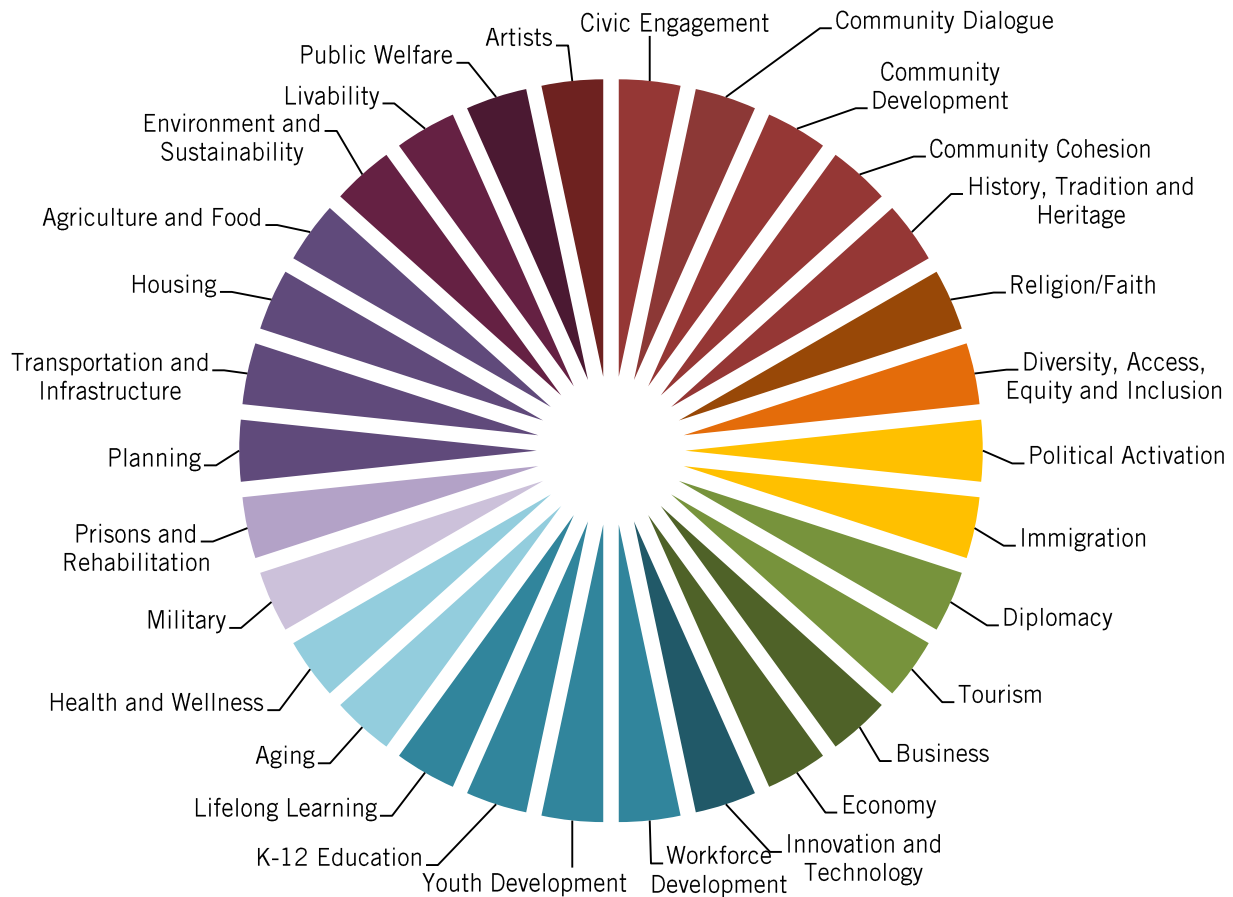
Americans for the Arts has identified 30 linked-but-separate contributors to healthy, vibrant, equitable communities. These components (see next page)—which relate to social justice, the environment, faith, culture and heritage, the economy and workforce, innovation, education, health and wellness, the military, and infrastructure—together strongly inform the life and experiences of individuals and the communities in which they move. When integrated fully, the arts can:

- 1) Transform systems by working at the intersection of different sectors, individuals, and communities

- 2) Amplify positive impacts and mitigate negative impacts
- 3) Increase participation, opportunity, and access

By encouraging the “Arts and...”, integrating the arts into the vital work of all of these contributing components of a community, we believe that we can help transform America’s communities through the arts over time.

What Impacts a Healthy Community?



A Bit of History/Where We Came From

In 1960, what would become Americans for the Arts was founded, with a particular goal of ensuring the vibrant, continued role of the arts in the development of communities all across the country. One mechanism for doing that was the proliferation of the “local arts agency,” a centralizing organization that advocated for the arts in the community, secured and distributed arts funding, provided certain types of capacity building, and in general minded the local arts ecology—which quickly, as early as 1965, became an exercise in minding the community overall, and determining the ways that arts and culture might contribute to making the whole community thrive.

In 1990, Americans for the Arts published a book called *Community Vision*. It was a mixture of essays, policy statements, and practical how-to's all designed to lay out a framework for how and why to create and maintain an effective local arts agency.

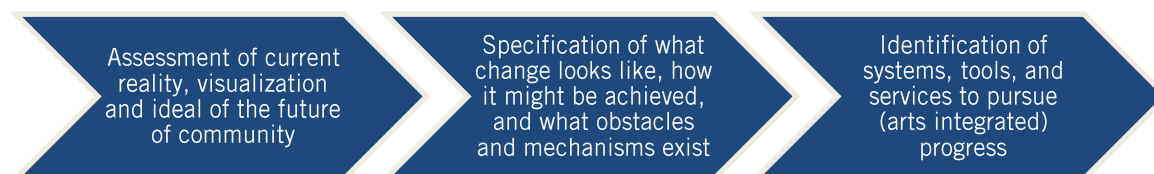
25 years ago, *Community Vision* was the book-form manifestation of a movement—and it is our goal to articulate what the “movement” around arts-based development of healthy, vibrant, equitable communities needs to be today and over the next 10-15 years.

The Mechanism/How We'll Do It

We will pursue this integration with an 18-month set of activities, including by encouraging forums like you are about to conduct all across the country.

These activities move from vision and ideation, through specification of outcomes and obstacles, to the identification of systems, plans, tools, and services that are deeply practical and can be used by all community stakeholders. What starts as a general interrogation of what each individual in the room thinks is a more ideal community eventually transitions into a collective conversation about the mechanisms that can be crafted and deployed at a local and national level to ensure that, as we pursue our more idealized communities, we are:

- 1) Ensuring that the arts are considered a necessary tool and that artists are active partners.
- 2) Building a deeper understanding of the role that arts and culture play in the creation of healthy communities.
- 3) Assembling a set of examples about the ways in which the arts are currently working with other sectors to carry forward critical community progress towards equity, health, and vibrancy.



Why “Healthy, Vibrant, Equitable Communities?”

We chose the words “healthy, vibrant, equitable communities” deliberately, because they speak to our goal that this work explore the impulses driving people from their most basic to their most complex needs. Health, equity, and vibrancy each exist in tandem with each other. Inequalities manifest within each area, and this work aims squarely at those inequalities. We hope we are making a space where Americans for the Arts, as well as the others assembled, can listen to challenges communities face, surface visions communities are moving toward, and begin to explore what arts-based tools might help that movement.

We recognize that community is a concept with more than one meaning, but in this context we view community as a collection of affiliated individuals, which may be geographic, or not. Community identity is fluid and sometimes impermanent. With this project, we seek to learn from the relative agency, expertise, and idiosyncrasy of the individuals in the room as it pertains to every community through which they move—and to determine if there are common tools, skills, and system designs that can help move communities in a more desired direction—including those that are arts-based.

The Contributors/Which Areas We Target

In order to frame these conversations, we organized the New Community Visions Initiative around ten of the thirty non-arts contributors that we initially identified.

Americans for the Arts selected these ten—inter-community connection, intra-community cohesion, workforce and economy, prisons and rehabilitation, K-12 education, tourism and cultural diplomacy, environment and sustainability, transportation and infrastructure, political activation and immigration, and health and wellness—because they are varied, and yet all share the likelihood of going through transformational change in the next decade.

Moreover, they all have significant impact on the lives of a diverse cross-section of people—and they often intersect and cross-over in ways that we believe will allow for fertile discussion. However, they are just ten of the thirty sectors—and our ultimate goals sit more squarely around systems and mechanisms for each individual or community to pursue their envisioned community—regardless of the particular components we’ve spotlighted in this initiative.

What You Will Need

- 3 white boards, chalkboards, easels, or just plain old pieces of paper
- Something to write notes with. Lots of notes!
- Markers
- A timer (a cell phone timer is fine)
- A trusty note-taker! It's almost impossible to take notes while facilitating, so find a partner in crime.

What to Do with All Those Notes

- We would love for you to contribute your notes back to Americans for the Arts so that your findings can be incorporated into our writings and other materials for the New Community Visions project. To do that, please visit <http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CommunityVisionsDIY> and you'll find questions that line up with the prompts in this workbook. Just type in as much or as little as you'd like, and hit submit! Thank you!

What You Will Need to Think About In Advance

1) What is your primary topic?

In the final hour of the Forum, you'll be diving deeply into one "arts and..." topic. **Choose one** from the list below...and think about why you've chosen that topic.

Each of these topics has an accompanying (optional) prompting paper available for free at <http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CommunityVisions>.

PICK ONE:

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts, Health, and Wellness | <input type="checkbox"/> Arts, Tourism, and Cultural Diplomacy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts and the Workforce | <input type="checkbox"/> Arts, Transportation, and Infrastructure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts and K-12 Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Arts, the Environment, and Sustainability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts, Prisons, and Rehabilitation | <input type="checkbox"/> Arts and Inter-Community Connection |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts, Immigration, and Political Activation | <input type="checkbox"/> Arts and Intra-Community Strength |

2) What are your three secondary topics?

In the second hour of the Forum, your group will have the opportunity to engage with three more "arts and..." topics in a story circle format. **Choose those three** from the list below...and think about how they might relate to your primary topic.

Each of these topics has an accompanying (optional) prompting paper available for free at <http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CommunityVisions>.

PICK THREE:

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts, Health, and Wellness | <input type="checkbox"/> Arts, Tourism, and Cultural Diplomacy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts and the Workforce | <input type="checkbox"/> Arts, Transportation, and Infrastructure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts and K-12 Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Arts, the Environment, and Sustainability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts, Prisons, and Rehabilitation | <input type="checkbox"/> Arts and Inter-Community Connection |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts, Immigration, and Political Activation | <input type="checkbox"/> Arts and Intra-Community Strength |

In general – read it all through. It's pretty straightforward, but there's lots of different moments, some of them really quick. Also—don't worry too much about it. Use this as a flexible guide—and let the conversation go where you want it to!

Part 1: Building Community/Defining Terms **(60 minutes)**

- 1) **Welcome everyone as you see fit. Encourage introductions. (5 minutes)**
- 2) **Start the Forum by reading the short paragraph below, which we call “The Call.” Then explain what will be happening during the Forum (5 minutes).**

Read:

We’re here today to talk about communities—the many different communities that we each find ourselves in every day. Over the next three hours, we’re going to explore how our communities are changing, or need to change. We’re going to look at some of the contributors to that change, and we’re going to talk through how the arts, in all of their forms, might help amplify positive impacts over time.

Our work today centers around a particular phrase: “healthy, vibrant, equitable communities.” And around a particular mechanism for change: the arts.

The words “healthy, vibrant, equitable communities” were chosen deliberately, hoping to explore the impulses driving people from their most basic to their most complex needs. Health, equity, and vibrancy each exist in tandem with each other. Inequalities manifest within each area, and this work aims squarely at those inequalities. I hope this is a space where those gathered can listen to challenges communities face, surface visions communities are moving toward, and begin to explore what arts-based tools might help that movement.

“Community” is a concept with more than one meaning, but in this context we want to view community as a collection of affiliated individuals, which may be geographic, or not. Community identity is fluid and sometimes impermanent. With this project, we seek to learn from the relative agency, expertise, and idiosyncrasy of the individuals in the room as it pertains to every community through which they move—and to determine if there are common tools, skills, and system designs that can help move communities in a more desired direction—including those that are arts-based.

As far as what you can bring here—this is a no-pressure situation. Just bring yourself. Be present and trusting, and open yourself up to a conversation about three core questions:

- *What does a healthy, vibrant, equitable community look like to you?*
- *What role can the arts, culture, arts education, and creativity play in making progress towards that idealized community?*
- *What can artists, arts organizations, support organizations like funders and local arts agencies, and allies in other parts of the community do to take*

incremental, actionable, arts-infused steps toward making your vision of a healthy, vibrant, equitable community a reality within ten years?

Over the course of the next three hours, we will be working in small groups, as individuals, and in one large group to explore this idea of how we can collaborate to create healthier, more vibrant, more equitable communities through the arts.

Over the remainder of this hour, we will learn more about each other, and then will talk about healthy, vibrant, equitable communities in small groups.

In the second hour, we will use story circles to explore some specific sectors and their intersections with your own lives, and with the arts.

In the third and final hour, we'll re-gather as one large group to dive deeply into the relationship between one non-arts sector and the arts, and discuss how allies throughout communities can work together to create a brighter tomorrow in part through the arts.

Thank you for being here to think with me over the next three hours.

3) Do some whole-room polling to make who those gathered are visible. (20 minutes)

Exercise 1 – Rapid Grouping (5 minutes):

Instructions: This is all about hands up, look around, hands down.

- What region of the United States were you born in? (Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, South, Southwest, Northwest, West)
- Do you work primarily inside or outside the arts and culture sector? If outside, what sort of job do you have?
- Who identifies as an artist? As a community organizer? As an activist? As an advocate? What other categories should we ask about?

Exercise 2 – Reason for Being Here (7 minutes):

Instructions: Go around the circle, and have each person share why they're here tonight, and what excites them about the work in front of us. Time everyone! Make sure no one speaks for more than 20 or 30 seconds.

Exercise 3 – Small Group Introductions (13 minutes):

Instructions: Divide the group into equal-size groups of 3-5 people each. These groups should each represent as diverse a set of sectors and jobs/occupations as possible. In their small groups, ask the participants to go around, each briefly introducing themselves to the small group using the following prompts:

- **Prompt 1:** (one minute per person) Three things that you should know about me outside of my job are...

- **Prompt 2:** (one minute per person) An experience that I have had where the arts helped build a better community was...

- 4) Begin to interrogate what “a healthy, vibrant, equitable community” means to those gathered. (20 minutes)

Read:

Let's generate some conversation now about what a “healthy, vibrant, equitable community” means to you. Please spend 5 minutes each on the following four questions. Make sure someone is taking notes!

Prompt 1: What does “community” mean to each of you?

Prompt 2: What values signify, for you, a healthy, vibrant, equitable community?

Prompt 3: What conditions do you think are necessary for a healthy, vibrant, equitable community?

Prompt 4: What actions must be taken to create a healthy, vibrant, equitable community?

5) Share out findings from the small groups, synthesize, and have a brief conversation about the findings. (10 minutes)

Instructions: Encourage everyone to return to one large group, and invite representatives from each group to briefly share out what stood out for each of the four prompts. Make sure to cover each of the four prompts, and encourage people to notice similarities and differences.

Prompt: So, given what you've just heard, what does that say to you about the role of the arts in healthy, vibrant, equitable communities?

Part 2- Exploring Three “Arts And...” Topics through Story and Inquiry (60 minutes)

6) Story Circles. (35 minutes)

Instructions: Have people arrange themselves into three equal-sized circles. Each circle will be assigned a different “Arts and...” topic, which should be indicated on an easel or piece of paper. In this section, you’ll be working on the three “secondary topics” that you selected on page 8—one circle for each topic.

Read:

Over the next hour, we’ll be doing using a participatory format called a story circle to explore three of the non-arts sectors identified by Americans for the Arts through your personal and shared experiences, and then to start imagining the current and future role of the arts in helping those sectors contribute to a healthy, vibrant, equitable community (as proposed in the last segment).

Please join one of the three circles based on which “Arts and...” topic you are most interested in.

What we’ll be doing is asking everyone, in turn, to think about a prompt and tell a short, two-minute story about their lives that relates.

Instructions: The facilitator of each group tells everyone the “Arts and...” topic, and reads the short briefing paragraph about that topic found in the Appendix. Five stories are told by members of the story circle. Each of these stories is a maximum of 2 minutes long, and the facilitator cuts off the storyteller at 2 minutes exactly.

Prompt 1 (15 minutes): In a maximum of 2 minutes each, tell the group about an experience you have had with the arts and this topic that seems relevant to helping this topic area contribute to a healthy community.

Instructions: After five 2-minute stories, each circle's facilitator asks for each person in the circle to turn to a person sitting next to them, and briefly talk about what they are hearing for 3 minutes. Following those three minutes, a member of each small group should quickly recap what they discussed to the others in the small group.

Instructions: After the recap, it's time for another round of stories, this time about the future. As before, each of these stories is a maximum of 2 minutes long, and the facilitator needs to cut off the storyteller at 2 minutes exactly. The nature of the stories this time is:

Prompt 2 (15 minutes): In a maximum of 2 minutes, imagine or envision the arts helping this non-arts sector contribute in some way that will move your imagined community towards a healthier, more vibrant, or more equitable places. The objective here is to allow yourself to envision a brighter tomorrow with the arts.

Instructions: After this second round of five 2-minute stories, each circle's facilitator asks for each person in the circle to turn to a person sitting next to them, and briefly talk about what they are hearing for 3 minutes. Following those three minutes, a member of each small group should quickly recap what they discussed to the others in the small group.

7) Full group sharing and group discussion. (25 minutes)

Instructions: Before coming back together as a group, take 5 minutes while the small groups work together to pull out the most salient points to share with the larger group. In the following 20 minutes, reconvene the full group, and ask each facilitator to report on the outcomes of the story circles.

Prompt 1 (10 minutes): After each report, give other members of that group the option of adding other things they found interesting or salient to the conversation.

Prompt 2 (10 minutes): What commonalities and differences emerged among the different story circles?

Part 3 – Diving Deep into the “Arts And...” Topic of the Day (60 minutes)

8) The Deep Dive (55 minutes)

Read:

In this third and final hour, we’re going to explore one Arts And topic together, and then try to tie up the whole conversation by looking at how all of the non-arts sectors work together, and to see how arts and culture might make a positive impact on all of them. This section is pretty rapid-fire, but basically we’re going to start with one non-arts sector, broaden to see how that sector fits with the other ones we just talked about, and then see where the arts might fit into that conversation.

Instructions: The facilitator tells everyone the “Arts and...” topic, and reads the short briefing paragraph about that topic found in the Appendix. Why did you pick this topic? Speak for a few minutes about what this topic means to you as facilitator and gatherer of these people—why is it resonant for you in the context of your life, community, and personal experience?

Instructions: After the moderator has discussed the non-arts sector, have those assembled return to the small groups of 3-5 people from the start of the forum.

Prompt 1 (10 minutes): In a maximum of 2 minutes, reflect on the primary topic and the reasons that the facilitator just laid out for choosing it. What does that topic mean to you? In what aspects of your life does it matter? How do health, vibrancy, and equity related to it?

Response (5 minutes): Following the small group conversations, the moderator asks people in the room to shout out very *brief* reactions and thoughts around the topic.

- **Prompt 2 (10 minutes):** Back in small groups, again in a maximum of 2 minutes, reflect on the connection between the primary topic and the other three topics that were discussed in the story circles. Where do they cross in your life? How does one impact the other? How do health, vibrancy, and equity related to it?

Response (5 minutes): Following the small group conversations, the moderator asks people in the room to shout out very *brief* reactions and thoughts around the topic.

- **Prompt 3 (15 minutes):** Back in small groups, build upon that discussion by now pulling the arts into the mix. Where are there moments of conflict among the sectors we're discussing

where the arts might play a role? What does that role look like? Where are there moments of success where the arts might play a role? What does giving the arts a role do to the health, vibrancy, and equity of the community?

Response (10 minutes): Following the small group conversations, the moderator asks people in the room to explore their reactions to this progression – from one sector to a set of crossing sectors to an arts-integrated understanding of how those sectors work together.

9) Conclusion (5 minutes)

Instructions: To conclude, make sure that any last thoughts are heard, and close by asking the following question:

- **Prompt:** What do you want to make sure local, state, and national agencies, including Americans for the Arts, know about this question of arts-integrated community development?

Thank everyone, and pat yourself on the back. Great job!

What to Do with All Those Notes

- We would love for you to contribute your notes back to Americans for the Arts so that your findings can be incorporated into our writings and other materials for the New Community Visions project. To do that, please visit <http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CommunityVisionsDIY> and you'll find questions that line up with the prompts in this workbook. Just type in as much or as little as you'd like, and hit submit! Thank you!

Appendix: The Topics and Sectors

Arts & Inter-Community Connection

Read a full essay on this topic at www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CommunityVisions

How will America's changing communities and interact with each other, and what is the role that the arts may play in positively impacting those changes over the next 10–15 years? Some ideas/examples drawn from the essay include:

- As debunked theories and practices—such as the Broken Windows theory, which pit different communities against each other and allow prejudice and privilege to override common goals—become untenable, an opportunity will open up for a new, more equitable way of ensuring safe and healthy communities. Creative deployment of the arts and artists will increase connections and understandings across disparate and historically unequal groups; provide opportunities for a more even-footed conversation; and build agency for marginalized communities to create, maintain, and share their own narratives.
- With a stronger and more sustained lens being trained on issues of gentrification and economic and cultural displacement, a movement to find ways of encouraging neighborhood investment and population growth without displacing indigenous residents or dismantling long-held cultural beliefs will arise.
- The arts and artists will need to recognize their historic role in displacement, deliberate or not, and to deploy their skills as stewards of cultural traditions and points of intersection among new and existing residents.

Arts & Intra-Community Strength

Read a full essay on this topic at www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CommunityVisions

How will transformations in the definition of “community” change how and where communities find strength and cohesion, and what is the role that the arts may play in positively impacting those changes over the 10–15 years? Some ideas/examples drawn from the essay include:

- As the United States continues to diversify, people will continue to grapple with how to strengthen their geographically based communities while also maintaining and strengthening connections to their identity-based communities. The arts will continue a long tradition of providing ways for individuals to express the nuance and complexity of this identity.
- Recent and long-standing mistreatment and discrimination against non-dominant groups including African-American populations, women, and the LGBTQ community will continue to have damaging, dehumanizing impacts on how the members of those communities see themselves. The arts, in particular the writing arts, in conjunction with social media and other amplification tools, will allow for an increased control of the narrative and a corresponding re-humanization of those community members who have felt dehumanized.
- As minority communities band together to ward off external threats and, simultaneously, seek to normalize the way other more dominant communities view them by employing a “politics of respectability,” silenced voices inside a community can fester. The arts can work to combat this forced assimilation within communities by revealing and celebrating intra-community difference and development new narratives of understanding.

Arts & the Workforce

Read a full essay on this topic at www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CommunityVisions

How will changes in the American economy and the workforce occur, and what is the role the arts may play in positively impacting those changes over the next 10–15 years and beyond? Some ideas/examples drawn from the essay include:

- Devices will become more prevalent and more active, creating ubiquitous connectivity and a new paradigm for engaging with each other. Artists and creatives will be a driving force for dictating the design, structure, and nature of that new paradigm.
- The rise of 3-D printing and similar technology will usher in an era of mass customization of products and services. The creative worker will drive that customization, and the unleashing of creative and personalized impulses among the larger population will drive a general artistic renaissance and the return of the artisan.
- An explosion in the mobility of the workforce and a shift in the nature of work will catapult artists and creative workers to the forefront in terms of redefining where, when, and what people do to be productive economic drivers. The result will be a new era defined by creativity and anchored in the creative impulse.

Arts, Health & Wellness

Read a full essay on this topic at www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CommunityVisions

How will the American healthcare system change, and what is the role that the arts may play in positively impacting that change, over the next 10–15 years? Some ideas/examples drawn from the essay include:

- Future healthcare will focus on the healing of the whole person and will specifically focus more fully on preventative care. In addition, a growing shortage of healthcare professionals will lead to a shift in tasks to adjacent professionals and are structuring generally of the healthcare team. Art and artists have a high potential to become more fully integrated into the healthcare team, entrusted with the care of our citizens, through design, arts-based therapies, and preventative exercise regimens.
- The Affordable Care Act and other new legislation will provide support for mental healthcare for the many people who have lacked access to those services in the past. Artists and creative arts therapists will continue to be among the first responders to trauma and crisis. The arts will also be utilized more fully as therapeutic alternatives to medication and as a way of easing and providing comfort to the families of those suffering.
- As the population of persons 85 and older grows exponentially, so will the need for interventions that can prolong cognitive function, increase quality of life and socialization, and allow for alternatives for a pending shortage of family caregivers. The arts, already known as a good mechanism for dealing with some of these issues, will come into wider use as a way of bettering the lives of our oldest Americans.

Arts & K-12 Education

Read a full essay on this topic at www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CommunityVisions

How will the K–12 American formal education system change over the next 10-15 years, and what role might the arts play in positively impacting those changes? Some ideas/examples drawn from the essay include:

- What is expected of students will shift from simple fact recitation and rote memorization toward deeper and more nuanced learning via systems and concepts. This shift opens up opportunities for the arts to be engaged to create more well-rounded learning environments, as well as a need for the arts to step in to achieve equity in access to quality education.
- The blurring of boundaries between the digital and physical learning environment and the increased acceptance of non-place-based learning environments as legitimate alternatives to in-school learning will increase, possibly increasing access to education, but also posing a very real possibility of niche learning experiences that may narrow the worldview of students. The arts will play a role in providing a commons for place-based engagement and learning, as well as an outlet for combating such insulated views.

Arts, Prisons, & Rehabilitation

Read a full essay on this topic at www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CommunityVisions

What changes will occur in the American prison system over the next 10-15 years, and what is the role the arts might play to positively impact those changes? Some ideas/examples drawn from the essay include:

- The next 10–15 years will see a continued rise in the number of children who have been impacted by the incarceration of a family member, and the psychological implications of experiencing such trauma threaten to perpetuate cycles of incarceration into a new generation. Innovative arts interventions and partnerships hold the possibility of both easing the trauma of having a parent incarcerated through expressive activity, highlighting the unique issues of children of those incarcerated to a larger audience, and providing an alternative, less destructive path that may help break the cycle.
- Shifts from mass, mostly short-term, incarcerations to fewer, mostly longer-term sentences, including Life without Possibility of Parole, will correspond with a decline in the already minimal interest from the public in interventions that help rehabilitate prisoners who may re-enter society. The importance of prison-based arts programs, of which there are a handful today, will only grow in that new era, as long-term prisoners seek opportunities to maintain humanized, varied lives. Arts-based interventions may be able to increase prisoners' connection to others, improve psychological health, and enable prisoners to tell their stories.
- As attention and care shifts away from an increasingly permanent prison population serving long or terminal sentences, political and public will to address core issues—who we lock up; the correlation of childhood conditions with future crime; capability of change—will wane. The role of the arts, particularly as vessels through which prisoners can communicate their stories to the world at large, will become paramount.

Arts, the Environment, and Sustainability

Read a full essay on this topic at www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CommunityVisions

What changes related to the environment and issues of sustainability will occur over the next 10-15 years, and what is the role of the arts in positively impacting those changes? Some ideas/examples drawn from the essay include:

- The next 10–15 years will see a burst of new technological and technical advances that will allow the construction of smarter, more energy-conscious appliances, buildings, and other devices. This will both mean a shrinking of the ecological footprint of arts experiences and an increase in the opportunity to creatively integrate environmentally conscious measures—including monitoring energy use, community engagement, and conservation efforts—into art projects large and small.
- As climate changes occur and certain parts of the world become less inhabitable, whole communities will have to migrate in what has been termed a “climate diaspora.” This diaspora will, initially, disproportionately impact marginalized native populations with fragile, rich cultural histories. Efforts to preserve and disseminate those cultural and artistic histories will both increase awareness of the migration and maintain community cohesion among those attempting to incorporate into strange new conditions.
- While others will not have to immediately move as a result of sea level rise or temperature fluctuation, many environments will eventually change so drastically as to impact the feeling of being “home.” Artists, in reaction to that unease and as activist leaders, will respond with an increase in art driven by environmental and ecological issues across all mediums, which will in turn create new public knowledge, dialogue, and action.

Arts, Transportation, and Sustainability

Read a full essay on this topic at www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CommunityVisions

How will America’s transportation and building infrastructure shift and transform over the next 10–15 years, and what is the role that the arts may play in positively impacting those changes? Some ideas/examples drawn from the essay include:

- As resources become scarcer, and populations become more aware of their impacts, corresponding rises in technology will encourage infrastructure innovations that improve resource management. The arts will provide creative outlets for such energy management as tools for resource use mitigation, public awareness, and energy generation.
- Shifts in priorities for consumers, and rising costs of doing business, will drive a new interest in sustainable business practices at airports and other large-scale transportation facilities. The arts will provide innovative opportunities to pursue such sustainability; increase the quality of the core experience; and reduce costs, resource usage, and wear.
- As the country continues to transition to a customized economy, where consumers demand deep, personalized user experiences even in circumstances where utility was previously enough, one area that will be deeply impacted is mass transportation. Art interventions in stations and transportation modalities will help raise the quality of the end-user experience, while advances in design and other creative workforce applications will meld deeper engagement with efficient construction and design.

Arts, Tourism, and Cultural Diplomacy

Read a full essay on this topic at www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CommunityVisions

What will happen to tourism in America over the next 10-15 years, and what role might the arts play in positively impacting those changes? Some ideas/examples drawn from the essay include:

- Increasingly, tourists will seek deeply authentic experiences and will sidestep kitsch or other more manufactured representations. Tourism will emphasize cultural experiences to respond to this increased desire to discover and explore new truths through historical and cultural resources and arts-based interpretation.
- Tourists will seek active experience as much as simply wanting to be in a physical destination as an observer. History, sensory experiences, and engaging activities that will leave a lasting memory will be paramount. A community's arts, crafts, and cultural traditions will be increasingly engaged to provide this deep level of experience, historical access, and memory.
- A general increased awareness of, and interest in, cultural differences will bring about a time when much tourism is centered around both domestic and international tourists being interested in learning about other cultural traditions. This soft diplomacy will be carried forward through the showcasing of local artistic and cultural experiences, interpretive activities, and the participatory arts.

Arts, Political Activation, and Immigration

Read a full essay on this topic at www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CommunityVisions

What changes will occur in the meaning of citizenship and political activation of individuals, particularly through the lens of immigration issues, over the next 10–15 years? What role might the arts play in positively impacting those changes? Some ideas/examples drawn from the essay include:

- A melding of technology and cultural awareness will catalyze a growing immigration movement through easier activation of cultural memory, the crossing of media for amplified effect, and a stronger connection among intersectional identities. The arts will provide a solid platform from which to tell their stories, build allies, and link issues across diverse identities as they creatively connect their assets for collective thinking and action.
- A generation of immigrants brought to the United States as children and living under an unauthorized status—as well as other youth immigrants that enjoy authorized status—will find themselves navigating an increasingly complex identity formation process. Arts and culture can be utilized as a mechanism for crystallizing self-definition of the individual and the group and activation of political will.
- As the demography of America continues to dramatically shift, a redefinition of the American Dream, the dominant culture, and what it means to be a citizen will occur. Much of that shift will be driven by the crossing and melding of disparate artistic and cultural traditions, which will also allow for a resistance to outright assimilation over time.