

LEXARTS



LEXINGTON

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Lexington Arts and Cultural Economy Audit



WHO ARE WE?

**SOUND DIPLOMACY IS THE GLOBAL EXPERT IN
INCREASING THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL
VALUE OF ENTERTAINMENT IN COMMUNITIES AROUND THE
WORLD**

We assess the value of an entertainment ecosystem - comprising music, film and digital entertainment - identify growth areas and produce actionable strategies and implementation plans that deliver measurable economic and social benefits.

WHAT WAS THE PROJECT ABOUT?

To facilitate economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and invest in the wider creative economy, LexArts was provided with a one-off allocation of \$300,000 from the Lexington-Fayette Urban Council Government to deliver a comprehensive, economic-focused creative arts masterplan.

WHAT WERE OUR GOALS?

- 1 Leverage the existing arts and culture economy.
- 2 Identify specific actions to take to grow and support Lexington's creative economy.
- 3 Better support artists.
- 4 Retain local talent.
- 5 Compete with cities, both regionally and nationally.
- 6 Build Lexington's identity around its creative economy and arts scene.
- 7 Unify the community to support the creative economy.
- 8 Embed the values and imperatives of DEI into Lexington's creative economy.

WHAT DID WE DO?

COMMUNITY IDEATION

Vision meeting with LexArts and key stakeholders.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND REGULATORY ASSESSMENT

Analysis of local and regional reports, plans, policies, and regulations relevant to Lexington's arts and cultural ecosystem.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Engagement with stakeholders to gather front-line insights on the Lexington arts and cultural ecosystem.

SWOT ANALYSIS

Analysis of research and findings.

ARTS AND CULTURAL ASSET MAPPING

Identification of arts and culture-related assets in Lexington.

ECONOMIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Assessment of the economic value of the arts and cultural ecosystem.

ACTION PLAN

A blueprint for developing and maintaining a thriving arts and cultural ecosystem in Lexington.

WHAT DID WE LEARN?

The presence of effective governance structures with clearly defined roles within Lexington's arts and cultural ecosystem is needed to spearhead action for the sector, but there is the appetite from the community to transform the local arts and cultural scene.

Local artists and arts professionals produce high quality work with little amateurism, despite limited resources. **There is a need for more professional development opportunities and arts-related business support to better empower local stakeholders and enhance talent retention.**

Targeted audience development and arts tourism strategies are essential to building a strong arts-focused brand for the city and enhancing the promotion of its vibrant arts scene to both residents and visitors.

Regulatory changes are needed to streamline the licensing and organization of cultural events. Simplifying these processes would encourage and better support arts stakeholders in their efforts to host more high-quality cultural events.

A more proactive approach to diversity, equity, and inclusion is needed to better reflect and represent the rich diversity of the local community.

KEY FINDINGS

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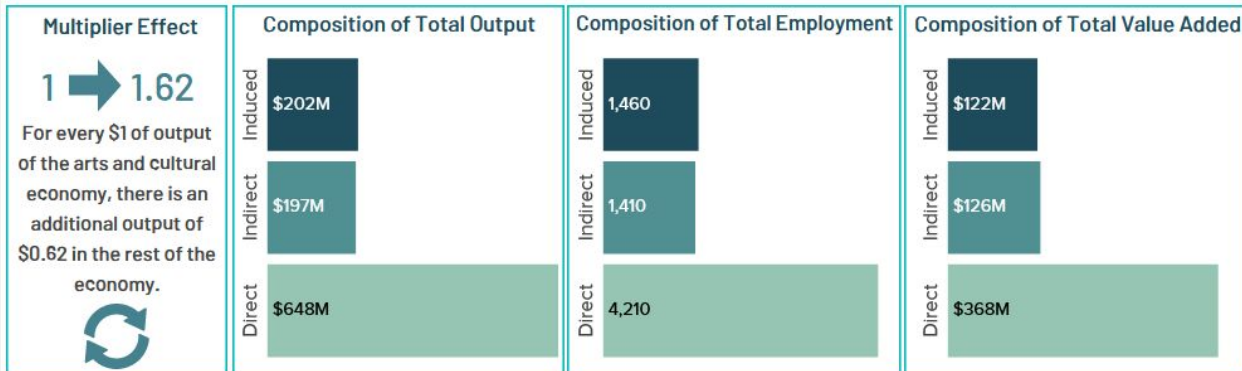
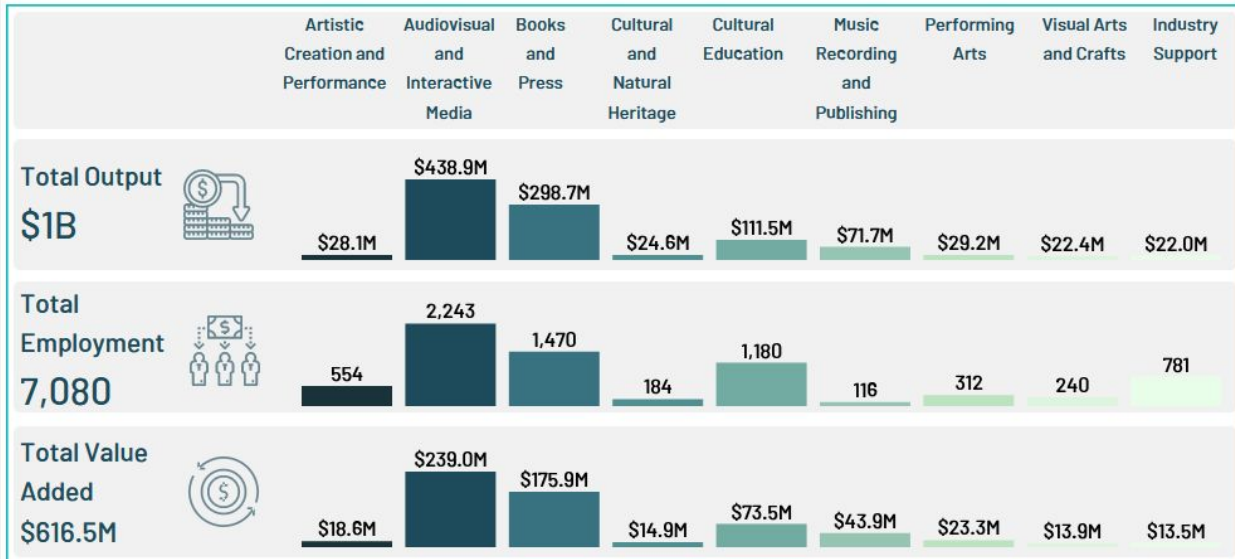
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KEY FINDINGS

ECONOMIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT



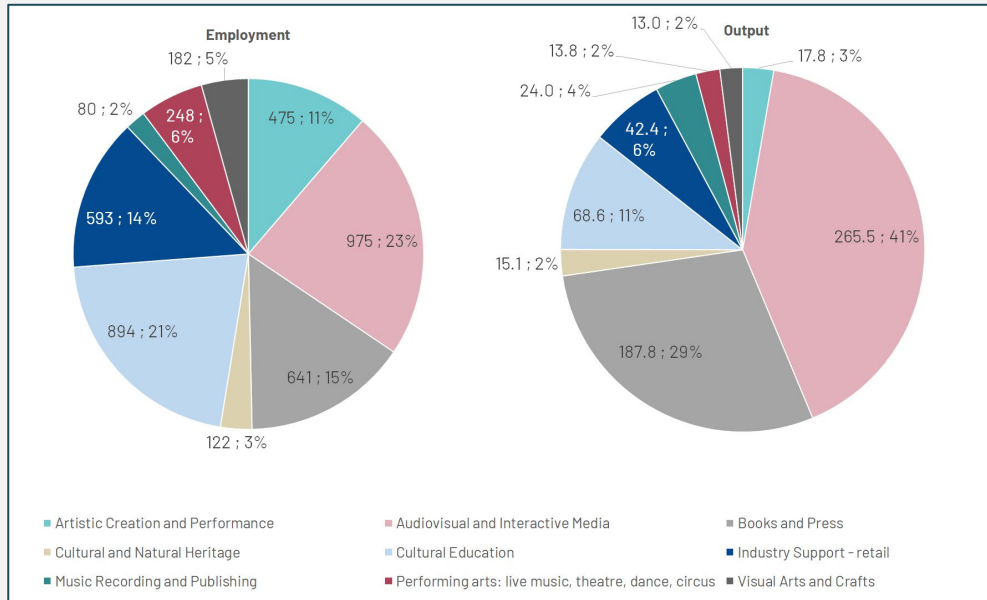
Lexington's arts and cultural ecosystem generated and supported:

- A total of 7080 jobs, representing 4.2% of local employment.
- A total output of \$1 billion.
- A total gross value added (GVA) of \$616.5 million.

KEY FINDINGS

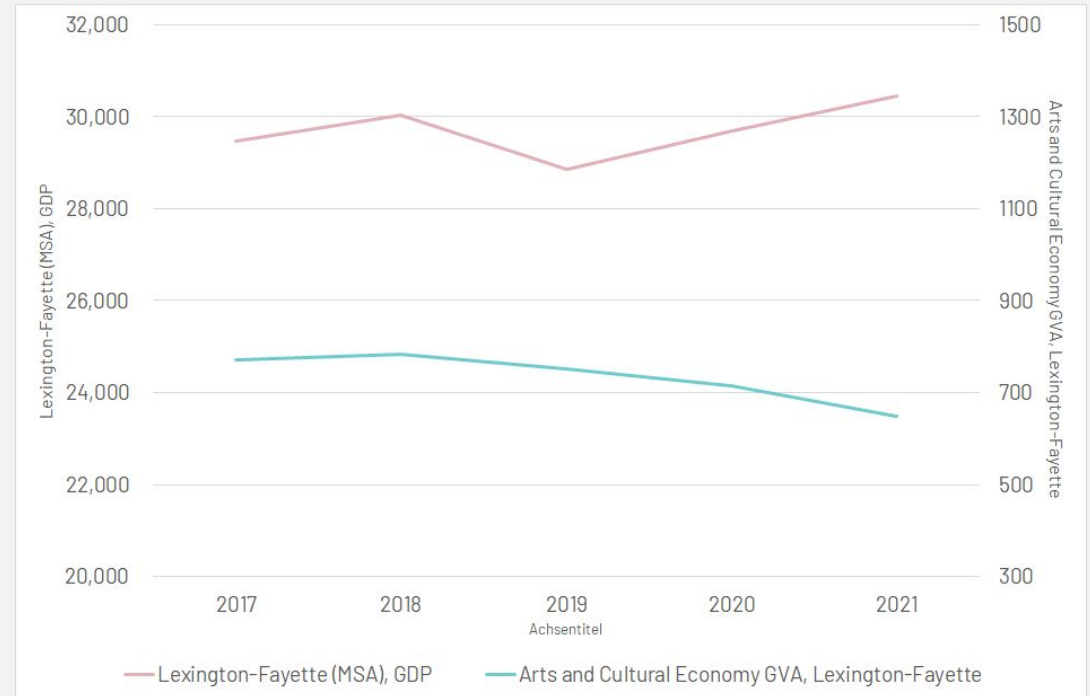
ECONOMIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Employment and Output Generated by the Arts and Cultural Ecosystem



Source: County Business Patterns 2021, BEA RIMS II, Sound Diplomacy Research

Lexington-Fayette (MSA) GDP, Lexington Arts and Cultural Economy GVA (in million \$) 2017-2021



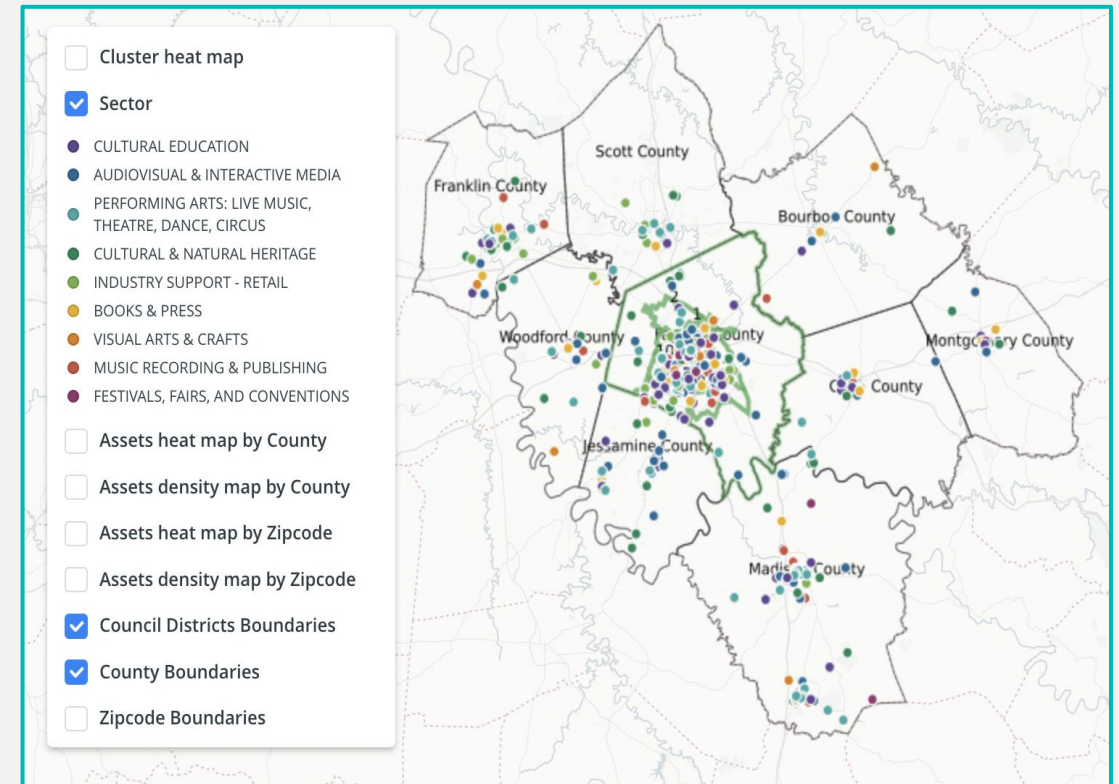
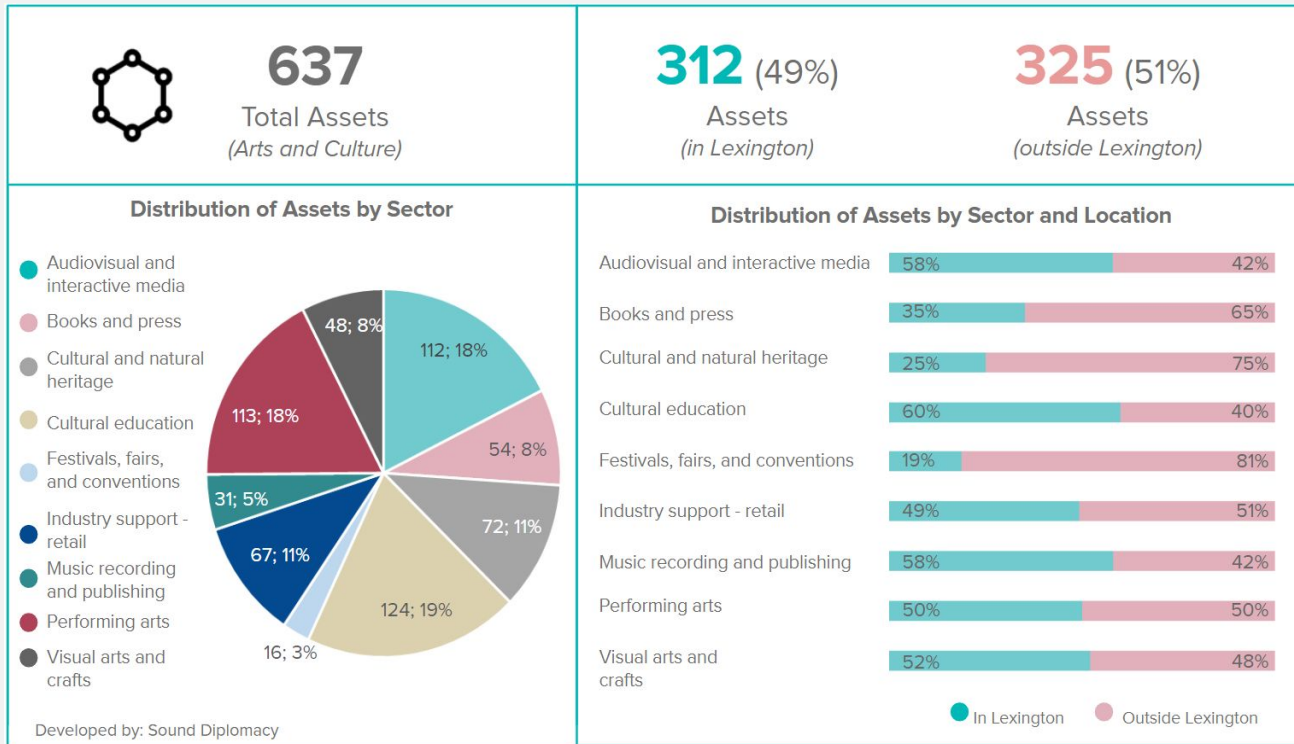
Source: County Business Patterns 2021, U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Sound Diplomacy Research

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Lexington-Fayette, KY (MSA), GDP (in million \$)	29,465	30,025 (1.9%)	28,847 (-3.9%)	29,679 (2.9%)	30,453 (2.6%)
Arts and Cultural Economy Lexington-Fayette, GVA (in million \$)	771.8	784 (1.6%)	751 (-4.3%)	714 (-4.8%)	648 (-9.3%)

KEY FINDINGS

MAPPING ANALYSIS

Asset mapping identified 637 arts and cultural-related assets, which can be viewed on an interactive map.



KEY FINDINGS

ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan is informed by our research, with a set of **24 actionable recommendations** to develop and maintain a thriving arts and cultural ecosystem in Lexington.

The Action Plan is divided into **7 strategic areas**:

1. Creative Economy Development
2. Professional Development, Talent Retention and Business Development
3. Licensing, Regulations and Zoning
4. Infrastructure
5. Arts Education
6. Marketing, Communication & Audience Development
7. Cultural Tourism



Source: Actors Guild of Lexington; AGL Fantasies.



How can Lexington support the arts and cultural ecosystem?

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RECOMMENDATIONS

Creative Economy Development

#1 Establish Oversight of the Implementation of the Arts and Cultural Economy Audit

#2 Review, Update and Communicate the LexArts Strategic Governance Plan to the Public

#3 Increase Cultural Funding Through Existing Revenue Streams

#4 Review and Communicate the Standardized Scoring System to Assess LexArts Grant Applications, and Advocate for Other Funding Bodies to Follow Suit

#5 Continue to Convene the DEI Committee at LexArts to Build Out the Sector-wide DEI Strategy

Professional Development, Talent Retention and Business Development

#6 Organize Workshops, Lectures and Networking Sessions to Provide Professional Development Opportunities for the Creative Industries

#7 Establish a Creative Economy Stimulus and Cultural Entrepreneurship Program



Source: Central Kentucky Youth Orchestra

RECOMMENDATIONS



Source: CitizensCreate

Professional Development, Talent Retention and Business Development Continued...

#8 Advocate for a Job Creation Program and a Freelancer Support Group

#9 Partner with Commerce Lexington to Recruit Businesses that Fill Gaps in the Arts Sector

#10 Host an Annual Arts and Cultural Industries Conference

#11 Create a Database of Lexington Arts Stakeholders and Spaces

#12 Create Best Practice Guidelines to Make the Cultural Ecosystem more Equitable, Accessible and Sustainable

Licensing, Regulations and Zoning

#13 Advocate for Arts Friendly Regulations and Licensing Processes

#14 Create a One-stop Shop for Art and Cultural Permits, Licenses, Grants, and Guides

#15 Ensure the Incorporation of the Arts as a Central Component of the New Downtown Master Plan

RECOMMENDATIONS

Cultural Infrastructure

#16 Repurpose Vacant and Underutilized Spaces for the Arts and Cultural Sector

#17 Advocate for Incentives to Retrofit and Upgrade Existing Cultural Infrastructure

#18 Advocate for a Pilot Program that Offers Extended Public Transit during Major Events

#19 Host Regular Workshops on Safety during Cultural Events

Arts Education

#20 Foster Partnerships to Augment Public Arts Education

Marketing, Communication & Audience Development

#21 Create a Centralized Calendar with Information for all Creative Events in the City, Including Events at Restaurants



Source: Central Kentucky Concert Bands; Bluegrass Band Trio

RECOMMENDATIONS

Marketing, Communication & Audience Development Continued

#22 Create an Audience Development Program Targeting the Student Population

#23 Develop a Wider Evening and Weekend Events Offer

Cultural Tourism

#24 Partner with VisitLEX to Create a Cultural Tourism Strategy and Marketing Campaign



Source: Lexington Art League; LAL Lexington As Home



THANK YOU

Questions & Discussion