

# IMPACTS OF THE OREGON CULTURAL TRUST AND THE CULTURAL TAX CREDIT

The Oregon Cultural Trust (the Trust) has a wide-reaching influence on people's experience of culture in Oregon. Through the money it distributes to cultural organizations in Oregon and the statewide connections it forges, its impact reaches all corners of the state. The Oregon State Legislature created the Oregon Cultural Trust and its primary funding mechanism, the Cultural Tax Credit (the Credit) in 2002. Today the Credit generates on the order of \$4 to \$5 million per year. Using these resources, the Trust impacts culture through three primary activities:



## Securing Funding

The primary revenue source for supporting the work of the Trust is contributions through the Cultural Tax Credit. The Trust has grown charitable contributions over time faster than national giving trends. **Cultural Trust contributions grew by 4.3 percent annually between 2006 and 2016**, adjusted for inflation. The non-corporate donor base has grown 7.6 percent annually between 2006 and 2016.



## Distributing Funding

**Between 2006 and 2016, the Cultural Trust distributed \$17.5 million in grant funds.** Of these, the Cultural Development Grants and County and Tribal Coalition grants funded 4,958 projects; the total value of this funding was \$11.2 million. An additional \$6.3 million was distributed through partner and collaborative grants.



## Maximizing Returns

Once the Trust releases funds into the community, Oregonians begin to see direct benefits through the activities of the cultural organizations it helps to fund.

- **Producing cultural goods and services:** Performances, experiences, installations, and infrastructure—the “things” organizations do with the funds.
- For each \$1 million granted by the Trust and spent by cultural organizations in Oregon in 2016, an additional \$700,000 in economic value is generated for other Oregon businesses. **Grant funds and the resources they leverage support jobs and generates income for local communities.**
- **Investments in resources and relationships** endure beyond the funding period; funds help **leverage new funding sources**, and grants support creation of knowledge and access to information that **continue to produce value over time.**

## More About this Report

The Cultural Tax Credit program requires the ongoing approval of the State Legislature. Such approval is, and should be, conditioned on some assessment of how well the program is delivering on its objectives. To that end, the Oregon Cultural Trust asked ECONorthwest to assist it with describing the impacts of its activities, and the importance of the Cultural Tax Credit to supporting those activities. The full report is available for download at [www.culturaltrust.org/resources/annual-reports](http://www.culturaltrust.org/resources/annual-reports).

May 2018



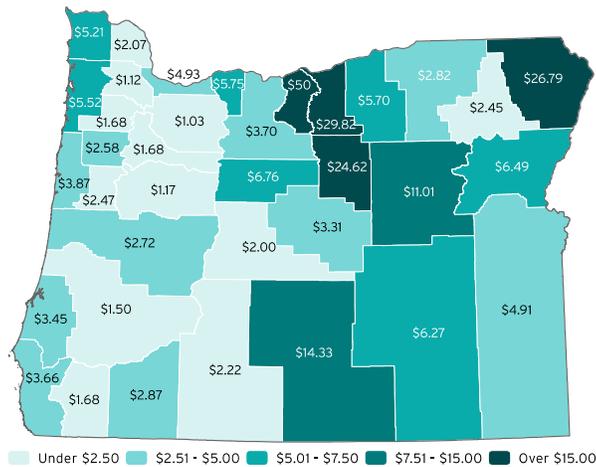
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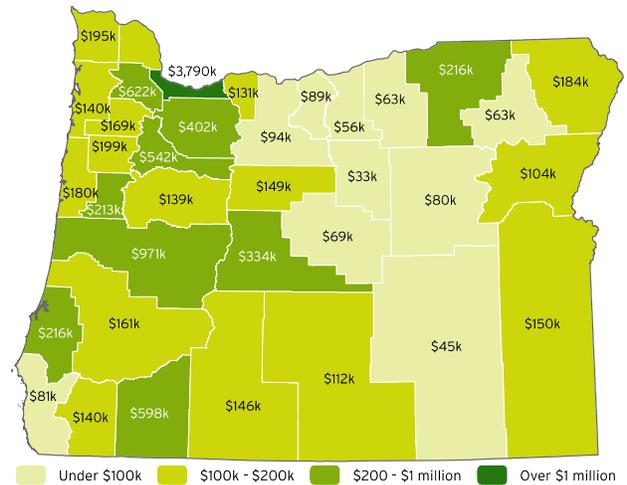
## KEY FINDINGS

The Cultural Tax Credit program and the Trust's grant-making activities provide a stable and accessible funding source for culture in Oregon. It is likely to grow in importance given national trends in cultural funding. The Trust's unique structure, combined with its permanent fund, helps to insulate arts and culture funding in Oregon against these uncertain future trends.

**Cultural Development and Coalition Funding per Capita, 2006 though 2016**



**Total Cultural Development and Coalition Funding, 2006 through 2016**



The Trust's geographic reach in distributing funding is remarkable. Over the last decade, the Trust has supported arts and culture in every county in Oregon, with higher per capita amounts of funding going to rural counties in Eastern Oregon, where other financial resources tend to be scarcer. The Trust effectively allocates resources to rural areas of the state by harnessing contributions from urban areas.

The Trust serves as a nexus for the entire cultural community in Oregon, and can use this position to amplify the effects of its grantmaking activities. The Trust and its partners provide cultural networking opportunities and invest in capacity building for small and growing cultural nonprofits across the state.



**BRAVO Youth Orchestras wind ensemble.**



*Un Dia De Teatro, Hood River.*

The Trust has tremendous potential to continue to grow contributions and expand impacts. In 2015, the Cultural Tax Credit was claimed by just one percent of eligible filers (i.e., tax payers who filed itemized tax returns). Given the efficiency and reach of the Trust's programming and grants, the impacts it already achieves could be expanded by increasing awareness among eligible donors and increasing its available funds.

