CITY OF PORTSMOUTH &AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS (AFTA)
Arts & Economic Prosperity Survey
BEST PRACTICES

Arts & Economic Prosperity 6 (AEP6) is a study of the economic and social impact of the arts. It is being conducted by Americans for the Arts in partnership with the City of Portsmouth. Specific questions about the Greater Portsmouth Area's participation should be directed toProject Manager Lauren Rosen: rosen2015@gmail.com

The audience-intercept survey is the tool we use to learn about the people who attend arts and cultural performances, events, exhibits, venues, and facilities in the Greater Portsmouth Area. It collects critical information about event-related audience spending on categories such as food and beverages, gifts and souvenirs, local transportation, and lodging. **This data will allow you and the City of Portsmouth to tell your cultural tourism story and provide you with a powerful narrative on how the arts impact your community.**

- Questions 1-7 are the core economic impact questions.
- Question 8 adds a social impact component to the survey instrument.
- Questions 9-13 capture the respondents' demographic characteristics.
    - Partially completed surveys will be reviewed and analyzed. However, thorough responses to all three sections will provide the most useful narrative about how the arts and culture impact your community.

AN IMPORTANT RESEARCH NOTE:

The audience-intercept surveys must be collected from attendees while they are <u>physically on-site attending an in-person activity</u>.*They cannot be emailed to attendees of past events*. This is a strict requirement of the project's methodology.

<u>ONLY ONE SURVEY PER TRAVEL PARTY:</u>

Only one survey may be completed by any immediate travel party. For example:

- If a family of four attends an event, one person should complete the survey of behalf of all four people.
- If three couples attend the event together, one person may fill out one survey on behalf of all six people—or, **one person from each couple may fill out a survey on behalf of just that couple.**
- Surveys should be completed for immediate travel parties only. A survey should not be completed for an entire 40-person school group or tour group.
- No matter the event, the survey should be completed only by adults 18 years of age or older.

<u>TWO SURVEY METHODOLOGIES</u>

Two methodologies can be employed to complete the audience surveys: **(1) traditional audience intercept surveying,** and **(2) pre-event random distribution.**

METHOD 1: TRADITIONAL AUDIENCE-INTERCEPT INTERVIEWING

Traditional interviewing supports a higher rate of response. It is the preferred survey collection method for smaller performances as well as open air events and venues with multiple access points like festivals and fairs.

o To use this method, interviewers politely approach attendees and invite them to participate in the survey.

o **The interviewers can be anyone that you trust to represent your organization and the arts in your community.** While the interviews are often times staff, board members, or volunteers from our study partners, it is important to note that **a representative from the City of Portsmouth does not need to be present while the surveys are being collected**. In fact, the interviewers can include staff or volunteers from the organizations or venues that host the activities where the surveys are being collected. In the past, some of our study partners have had success recruiting volunteers from the arts programs at local colleges and universities. In addition, some communities have modestly compensated college AEP6 Audience-Intercept Survey Instructions for: City of Portsmouth Page 9 of 12 or university students for the evening or allowed them to stay and watch the performance.

o We recommend using teams of 2-4 interviewers.

o Interviewers should be mindful of their attire and wear identification such as a nametag. o An interviewer would approach, for example, **every tenth attendee** (or some other reasonable but random strategy) and ask them to complete the survey. This approach helps to avoid any unintentional sampling bias.

o Attendees should always be approached in a welcoming, knowledgeable, and confident manner.

o It is critical to remember that attendees cannot take the survey home with them to complete and return at a later date by mail or e-mail.

o Ideally, each attendee asked will agree to complete the survey. The reality, however, is that some people will refuse to participate. The best advice is to smile and be friendly. Explain that the project is very important to your area's cultural community, and that the survey should not take more than three minutes to complete.

o If utilizing the paper survey, each interviewer should have many copies of the paper survey, two or three clipboards, and several pens (black or blue ink is preferred).

o If utilizing the QR Code version, each interviewer should have many flyers containing the image of the code, or the image of the QR Code taped to the back of a clipboard.

(o If utilizing the URL version, each interviewer could have a tablet computer (e.g., iPad) with the electronic "kiosk" version of the survey open and ready to go.**NOTE: If your organization would like to use tablets or iPad, please contact Project Manager, Lauren Rosen, for the appropriate URL.)**

- Americans for the Arts encourages the study partners to consider a combination of these methods. For example, have a supply of both paper surveys and QR Code flyers, as well as the image of the QR Code taped to the back of clipboards or a tablet computer.

o If using the paper survey or the URL version(s), the interviewers may administer multiple surveys simultaneously. However, they should remain close to the persons completing the surveys and be prepared to answer any questions and/or collect the clipboard or tablet computer back from the attendee.

o For best results, interviewers should discuss their task with the venue or event sponsor to select the best time and location for survey collection. In addition, the possibility may exist to set up a booth or table in a central location to increase traffic.

o At a performance (e.g., dance, theater, opera, symphony, concert), the best time to solicit survey responses is typically by greeting people in the lobby during intermission or after the show. Surveys should never be distributed during a performance.

o At an exhibit or festival (e.g., museum, art gallery, craft fair, community festival), surveys can be distributed to attendees at any time

METHOD 2: PRE-EVENT RANDOM DISTRIBUTION

Pre-event random distribution supports a **lower rate of response**. It has proven to be an effective—and less strenuous—survey collection method for cultural activities that take place inside a seated venue or facility such as a theater, music hall, or arts center.

o This method allows the use of the **paper survey and QR Codes**.

o This method **does not require interviewers**. Rather, this method provides an opportunity for the City of Portsmouth to leverage its relationships with the arts producers, presenters, and venues that are located in the Greater Portsmouth Area—and to solicit their cooperation and assistance.

o To use this method, a cultural organization located in your community would agree to distribute 75-100 blank surveys or QR Code flyers randomly throughout the venue before an event. For example:

- An organization would agree to **place a paper survey on every tenth seat** throughout its venue before the doors open for a performance.
- Alternatively (or additionally), a venue would agree **to place a flyercontaining the QR Code on every tenth seat**—and/or **to place a poster containing the QR Code in highly visible locations/high trafficked areas**—and/or **to project the QR Code onto a screen for the entire audience to capture**.

o The host organization (the presenter, producer, or venue) would make an announcement prior to the event, informing the audience that a survey has been placed randomly throughout the venue. The announcement should explain that the survey is important for the arts in the Greater Portsmouth Area. Preferably, a person should wait in the lobby to collect paper completed surveys during intermission and after the performance. Another method is to place a clearly marked box in an easy-to-see location.

- Previous study participants have generated enthusiastic responses by having a member of the performance (e.g., actor, musician) make the announcement prior to a performance.

INCENTIVES:

If possible (and if resources permit), we certainly encourage the study partners to offer an incentive to attendees who complete the survey as a means of increasing the participation rate. Some examples that have been used in by past partners include stickers, pens, and even raffle entries for complimentary tickets to cultural performances. Incentives are not required—in fact, **the vast majority of our past partners have not used incentives**.

A FEW ADDITIONAL POINTS ABOUT SURVEYING

For the AEP6 audience survey data collection to be accurate and effective, please keep the following in mind at all times.

- **It should be anonymous and confidential.** The respondents who participate in the survey should feel certain that they can provide information anonymously and that their information will be treated confidentially. If you would like to use this opportunity to gather contact information from visitors you can hand out a separate "contact card," but it should not be attached to the survey form.
- **It must be credible**. Many people have grown suspicious and wary of being asked to participate in surveys. It is important that people quickly recognize that your survey is being conducted by a credible organization (i.e., City of Portsmouth), has an important purpose, and that they will not be pressured or asked to buy anything from you.
- **It should be as random as possible.** Every person attending the activity should have an equal chance of being selected to participate in the survey. This ensures that the characteristics, attitudes, and behaviors of the group surveyed reflect those of all the people who attended as accurately as possible.
- **It should be comfortable and convenient for people to complete the survey.** Once people recognize that participating in your survey will benefit a good cause, most people will be willing to participate—but doing so must be convenient and comfortable. Have the survey materials ready to go at a moment's notice.
- **Enthusiasm is contagious**. If the surveyors are enthusiastic, they will be more likely to attract attendees who are willing to complete the short survey. If an attendee declines the offer to participate in the survey, say "Okay. Thank you!" with a smile. Then move on to the next potential respondent (again, with a smile).

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

Question: What towns are included in Greater Portsmouth?

Answer: Participating organizations can come from Portsmouth, Rye, and Kittery, ME.

Question: Where do we get copies of the paper survey and Batch Cover Sheet?

Answer: They will be sent to you as email attachments. It is the organization's responsibility to make copies.

Question: What is the Batch Cover Sheet?

Answer: A completed Batch Cover Sheet must accompany each "batch" of paper surveys that are collected for the Arts & Economic Prosperity 6 study. For example, if 50 paper surveys are collected from attendees at a theater performance, a copy of this Batch Cover Sheet should be filled out and attached to the top of those 50 surveys (with a clip or rubber band, etc.) to identify where and when they were collected.

Question: What do I do with paper surveys that have been completed?

Answer: Complete a **Batch Cover Sheet**for that event, and attach to the surveys. Contact Project Manager, Lauren Rosen, for pick up OR drop them off at the front desk at City Hall,

Question: How soon must completed surveys be turned in?

Answer: If you know that you're going to be surveying audiences more than once in a particular month, you can wait until you've completed that month's surveys.If you are only surveying one audience in a particu**lar** month, please return them upon completion**.**

Question: Where do we get the QR code and how do we know how many audience members completed the survey that way?

Answer: You will be sent the QR code via email. When an audience member completes a survey using this method, their response goes directly to Americans for the Arts. You will not know how many are completed. AFTA will update our Project Manager regarding the number of QR code surveys have been completed for Greater Portsmouth.

Question: Will we be provided with QR code "flyers" to post?

Answer: We hope to receive templates from AFTA, but for the now you'll need to create your own.

Question: What if the person asked to fill out the survey declines, but someone else in the travel party says they'll do it?

Answer: That is perfectly fine. Let that person fill out the survey.

Question: What if an attendee asks to take the survey home and mail (or e-mail) it back?

Answer: This is not allowed. The survey data must be completed and collected on-site. Secondary source research consistently demonstrates that respondent recall/memory deteriorates quickly, particularly with regard to dollars spent. For that reason, the AEP6 study strictly adheres to the traditional audience-intercept methodology.

Question: What if it is easier to send them the survey link in an email after a show? Can we collect the audience surveys that way?

Answer: This is not allowed. The survey data must be completed and collected on-site. Secondary source research consistently demonstrates that respondent recall/memory deteriorates quickly, particularly with regard to dollars spent. For that reason, the AEP6 study strictly adheres to the traditional audience-intercept methodology.

Question: What if the person is a member of our museum, is a subscriber to our series, or has purchased a pass of some kind?

Answer: Everyone who attends the cultural activity is eligible to participate in the audience survey.

Question: What if the person already took the survey? Can they/should they take it again?

Answer: Only one survey can be collected per travel party, per activity. However, the same person (or the same travel party) might complete the survey multiple times throughout the 12-month data collection period. They may complete the survey at a theater performance in June, and again at a festival in September. Each time they attend a cultural activity, it is a unique "transaction." Even though a subscriber may be in the audience for every show, they are an audience member each time, for each separate transaction.

Question: What if a person doesn't fully complete the survey, leaves certain questions blank, or does not agree with answering some of the questions on the survey?

Answer: That is perfectly fine. Even if the survey is only partially completed, Americans for the Arts will use the data provided.

Question: What if someone is offended or put off by the survey?

Answer: Warmly, acknowledge their feedback, thank them for sharing, and reflect that participation is not mandatory. Then kindly move on to the next person.