IMPACT REPORT

NOVEMBER 11–13, 2016 NEW YORK CITY

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TCG Theatre Communications Group
“Are we asking the right questions? The right people? Are we willing to really listen to the answers, and change? How do our theatres act as instruments of civic healing in a time of such division? Are those the right questions? Are we the right people?”

—Teresa Eyring, Opening Remarks for the 2016 Fall Forum, Joe’s Pub at The Public Theater

Using “Are we asking the right questions?” as the central inspiration, during a time when data failed to show us a full picture of the historic 2016 election season, the 2016 Fall Forum on Governance: Measuring Up brought our community together to address not only the practical and strategic uses of data and research, but also the philosophical, the equitable, and the relational.

On our first morning, just two days after the election itself, 230 trustees and theatre leaders from across the country were asked to reflect on what questions were coming up for them. On post-its that decorated the mirrored walls of our plenary space, they provided responses from “What does data tell us about the success of co-productions and other collaborations?” to “How can marketing and development work together to collect and analyze data to maximize income (earned and contributed) from supporters?” to “How can we continue to effectively encourage our field to help people exercise the muscle of empathy?” This exercise launched the group into an exciting two days of investigation, discovery, and professional development.

Throughout the weekend, attendees heard about Big Data and its complications; what the numbers tell us about our need to diversify theatre leadership, and how we might actively work toward that goal; and how data can inform an organization's relationship with its audience. There were conversations about burgeoning research in theatre education, panels on effectively analyzing research to benefit a strategic plan, introductions to tools to analyze the likelihood of single ticket buyers becoming major supporters, and primers on building staff capacity to use data on a more regular basis.

On Sunday afternoon, attendees came together to address how their initial questions or perspectives had shifted throughout the convening, and commit to actions of change at their theatres or in their communities.

TCG continues to reflect on these questions and actions as we strive for ways to enhance our service to the field. As ever, your questions are our questions, and asking the right ones is paramount to our collective success.

Teresa Eyring
Executive Director

Adrian Budhu
Deputy Director
& Chief Operating Officer

Devon Berkshire
Director of Conferences
& Fieldwide Learning
FALL FORUM IN NUMBERS

INCLUDING:

89 TCG MEMBER THEATRES represented

60 TRUSTEES in attendance

25 SCHOLARSHIPS and SUBSIDIES were awarded to attendees

13 SPEAKERS

8 TCG AFFILIATES

230 ATTENDEES
OPENING RECEPTION
at Joe's Pub at The Public Theater

Excerpts from HOLDING IT DOWN: THE VETERANS’ DREAMS PROJECT
with opening remarks from Teresa Eyring, Executive Director, TCG;
Shanta Thake, Director, Joe’s Pub at The Public Theater;
Patrick Willingham, Executive Director, The Public Theater; Philip Himberg,
Producing Artistic Director, Sundance Institute Theatre Program

“Love Joe’s Pub and the performance was impactful.”
—David Schmitz, Executive Director,
Steppenwolf Theatre Company
“Because of the complexity of all these data sources that we deal with every day, there is no way to know the right answer. The only way to know is to continue to experiment.”

—SUSAN ETLINGER

### SATURDAY OPENING SESSION

**REMARKS FROM THE NEA**
Patricia Moore Shaffer, PH.D.
Deputy Director, Research & Analysis, National Endowment for the Arts

**DEMYSTIFYING BIG DATA**
Susan Etlinger
Industry Analyst, Altimeter Group

“I found Susan to be fantastic speaker. Her presentation on big data was very interesting, [and] got me thinking directly about our own challenges and how we can be doing more with our own collected data.”

—David Jadico, External Relations Director, 1812 Productions

**HOW WE MEASURE UP:**
* A FALL FORUM INTRODUCTION
Gus Schulenburg
Director of Communications & Community Engagement, TCG

**MEASURING OUR FIELD:**
* THE NCAR FUNDRAISING REPORT
Zannie Voss
Director, SMU National Center for Arts Research

“She was engaging and enlightening and clear. I learned a lot and went right to her website to find out more!”

—Carey Perloff, Artistic Director, American Conservatory Theater
“Our results indicate that the reason why there are so few women [in leadership positions] is not a question of merit, but a question of trust.”

—ERIN WASHINGTON

MEASURING OUR FIELD: EQUITY IN LEADERSHIP

Elena Chang, Associate Director of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion, TCG;
Hannah Fenlon, Associate Director of Conferences and Fieldwide Learning, TCG; Carey Perloff, Artistic Director, American Conservatory Theater; Erin Washington, Founder, Soul Center; Michael Courville, Founder and Principle, Open Mind Consulting; Angel Desai, Actor and Steering Committee member, Asian American Performers Action Coalition

Excerpts from SMART PEOPLE by Lydia Diamond

Selected performances from the EVERY 28 HOURS plays

“It was particularly heartening to me just to know that this research is being done and that someone is paying attention to this issue, digging in to understand what is at the root of it. It is far more complex and deeply rooted in our cultural norms than some may have thought. Personally, I see this as one of the most critical issues of our time—diversifying our theatres’ leadership in all ways.”

—Jamie Herlich, Director of Development, Seattle Repertory Theatre
“Digital relationships are not sufficient to move people to action. They’re helpful for creating a sense of collectivity, but that sense may not always step out into the real world.”

— RICH MINTZ

SUNDAY GENERAL SESSIONS

DATA-INFORMED AUDIENCE RELATIONSHIPS
Rich Mintz
Executive Vice President, Blue State Digital

“The speaker was able to draw cross-disciplinary conclusions, and we’ve already started implementing some of his suggestions as experiments.”

— Michael Bateman, Managing Leader, A Noise Within

TCG CLOSING SESSION: “ARE WE ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS?”
Emilya Cachapero
Director of Artistic & International Programs, TCG
Michael Robertson
Managing Director, The Lark
BREAKOUT SESSIONS

The 2016 Fall Forum featured nine breakout sessions, between 75 and 90 minutes in length. Saturday’s sessions focused on the impact of research and data on a theatre’s decision-making process; Sunday’s sessions featured tools and strategies for initiating or enhancing an organization’s relationship to research and data.

ON Making the Case: Live Theater and Education
“The information from this session may help me land a potential $100,000 donor who has decided he wants to give to education rather than the art.” —Joanie Flatt, Trustee, Childsplay and Arizona Theatre Company

ON Forming a Plan: Data Analysis and Strategic Planning
“Concrete ways to move a strategic plan forward!!” —Mark Plesent, Producing Artistic Director, The Working Theater

Breakout Sessions included case studies and presentations from 1812 Productions, The Alley Theatre, American Shakespeare Center, Data Arts, Golden Thread Productions, Goodman Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, People’s Light, The Public Theater, SMU National Center for Arts Research, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Shaw Festival, Spektrix, TheatreSquared, The Wallace Foundation, and Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company
“I found the overall discussion very stimulating and of course, it was great to be with our community at a time when we needed to know we were there for each other. It was uplifting.”
— Carol Ochs, Managing Leader, The 52nd Street Project

“The Fall Forum was a great learning experience for me in terms of gaining a deeper understanding of the kinds of conversations around governance, budgeting, and strategic planning that are happening across the country at large and small theatrical institutions.”
— Annalisa Dias, Producing Playwright, The Welders

“Great gathering at a meaningful time. Always great to get to talk one on one with peers in between sessions.”
— Stephanie Thompson, Managing Director, Ten Thousand Things Theater

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Turning THE TIDE 2017 TCG FALL FORUM ON GOVERNANCE

NOVEMBER 10-12 NEW YORK CITY