



# Not-for-Profit Theatre in America: The Field at a Glance

In 1961, the American theatre field consisted of only 16 theatre companies established specifically for educational and charitable purposes. Today, thanks in large measure to the pivotal role played by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) since 1965, the not-for-profit theatre field consists of more than 1,855 theatres located in major metropolitan centers, urban neighborhoods, suburbs, and rural communities. Their wide-ranging repertoire includes classics; modern plays and musicals; new plays, adaptations, and translations by American and international writers; plays for culturally-specific and young audiences; and experimental, multimedia, and performance-art works.

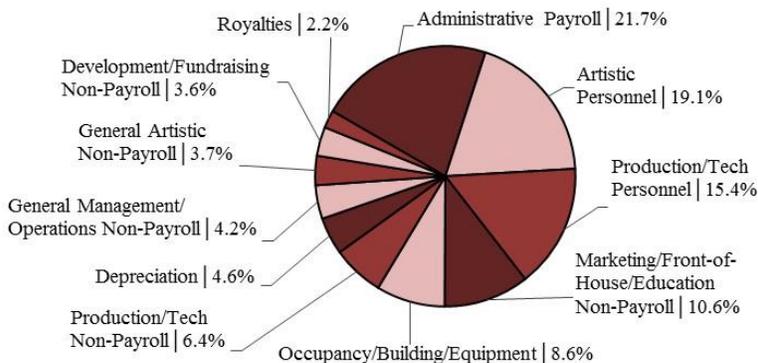
*Theatre Facts 2018*, a study by Theatre Communications Group based on its annual Fiscal Survey, reported activity by an estimated Universe of 1,855 professional not-for-profit theatres, including 177 Profiled TCG Member Theatres. Combined, these theatres directly contributed nearly \$2.7 billion to the U.S. economy; the real economic impact is even greater when spending by theatres' attendees and employees in their local communities is taken into account. The Universe of theatres employed 160,000 theatre workers, including actors, directors, playwrights, designers, administrators, and technicians. For the 177 Profiled Theatres—ranging in size from roughly \$154,000 to over \$51 million in annual expenses—compensation of personnel represented 56.1% of total expenses, a reflection of the labor-intensive nature of the art form and the many cultural workers whose livelihoods theatres are preserving.

<b>Estimated 2018 Universe of U.S. Professional Not-For-Profit Theatres</b>	
<i>1,855 Theatres</i>	
<u><b>Estimated Productivity</b></u>	
Attendance	39 Million
Subscribers	1 Million
Performances	170,000
Productions	21,000
<u><b>Estimated Finances</b></u>	
Total Expenses	\$2.660 Billion
Total Income	\$2.810 Billion
Earned Income	\$1.450 Billion
as a % of Total Income	52%
Contributed Income	\$1.360 Billion
as a % of Total Income	48%
<u><b>Estimated Work Force</b></u>	
Artistic	105,000
Administrative	21,000
Production/Technical	34,000
Total Paid Personnel	160,000

The Universe of not-for-profit theatres offered 170,000 performances that attracted 39 million patrons. The 177 Profiled Theatres also served 2.5 million people through 1,250 education and outreach programs, including touring productions, artists-in-the-schools, teacher training, classes, workshops and lectures in local community centers and libraries, internships for college students, special programs for at-risk children, and life-long learning opportunities.

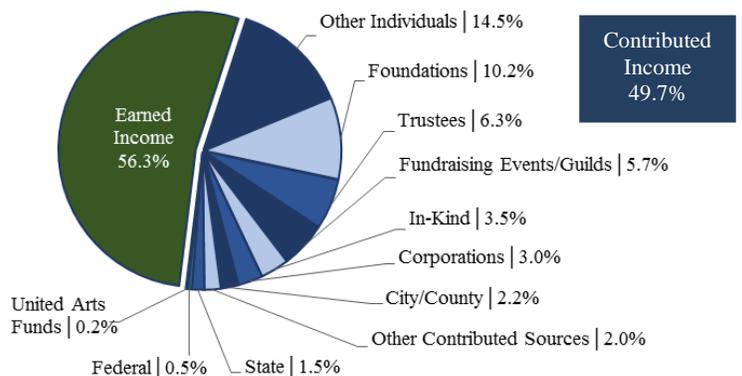
**FOR THE 177 PROFILED TCG MEMBER THEATRES, FROM THEATRE FACTS 2018:**

**BREAKDOWN OF EXPENSES**



**INCOME AS A PERCENTAGE OF EXPENSES WITH CONTRIBUTED INCOME DETAIL\***

\*Percentages total more than 100% because total unrestricted income exceeded total expenses.



**Contributed Income**  
49.7%

## NEA IMPACT

The direct impact of a theatre's receiving funding from the NEA comes not only in the form of project grants, but also in the multiplier effect that these grants, through their 2-to-1 or 3-to-1 matching funds requirement, have on theatres' abilities to leverage and attract other private and public funding.

Indirectly, NEA funding can be leveraged for its symbolic imprimatur and also affects theatres as it trickles down in the form of block grants to states. Forty percent of NEA funding goes to state arts agencies, which is then distributed to organizations like not-for-profit theatres. Of the 177 Profiled TCG Member Theatres, 38% reported funds from both the NEA and their State Arts Agency, while 44% reported funding from only one of the two sources. In total 82% of Profiled Theatres benefited from federal funding.

By supporting many of the nation's finest theatre institutions, the NEA has contributed far beyond the actual monetary value of its grants. Nearly every Pulitzer Prize-winning play since 1976 originated at an NEA-funded theatre, and a network of educational and outreach programs has sprung up across the country as a result of NEA support, ensuring access to all Americans and developing new generations of audiences.

### Examples of Community Impact

**Bloomsburg Theatre Ensemble** received a \$10,000 NEA Challenge America grant to hire acclaimed Philadelphia artist, Jorge Cousineau, as set and video projection designer for their production of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*. Specifically, the grant paid for the rental of the projector required to execute his complex design. Located in rural northeastern Pennsylvania, BTE serves an annual student and adult audience of 32,000. They were dazzled and moved by the visceral power of video projection to draw them into an internal, personal experience of autism. BTE used this ambitious production to connect with its community on multiple fronts including: nightly talkbacks with invited guests; three post-performance community panel discussions focused on Autism and the Family, Autism and the Community, and Autism and the Workplace; an Autism Awareness Day high school matinee featuring a moderated talkback among teens with siblings on the spectrum; an art exhibit in a nearby gallery featuring work by artists on the spectrum; BTE's first Sensory-Friendly matinee; visits to high school classes by the cast which included both an artist on the spectrum and a parent of a child on the spectrum; and a Q&A with Jorge attended by area University Technical Theater students and faculty.

**Children's Theatre Company** received a \$10,000 NEA grant to support the world premiere production of *Spamtown, USA*, a new play by Philip Dawkins. The play explores the 1985 Hormel Foods strike in the rural community of Austin, Minnesota, which took place after unionized workers voted to reject a contract following cuts to wages and benefits. Dawkins wrote the script from the perspective of children who were affected by the events, after interviewing adults who were the children of Hormel workers—both executives and laborers—at the time of the strike. Nearly 900 students from Austin will attend student matinees, with the support of the United Food and Commercial Workers' Local P-9 union. CTC, located in Minneapolis, is one of the nation's largest and most acclaimed theatre for multigenerational audiences, serving more than 250,000 people every year through productions, arts education, and access programs.

**Cincinnati Shakespeare Company** in Ohio received a \$15,000 grant from the NEA to commission and develop a new work by Lauren Gunderson. This play re-imagines and extends the story between Gertrude and Ophelia in *Hamlet*, inverting the most iconic of Shakespeare's plays and pulling back the curtain on two women who defied the patriarchy for their own survival. With support from the NEA, CSC will host developmental readings for the public with the opportunity to produce the play in an upcoming season. CSC is dedicated to highlighting the voices of women, authors of color, and other perspectives not often heard in American classical theatre and strives to be a home where artists feel their point of view is championed and where their work can flourish. CSC's year-round programming includes a Mainstage season featuring 9 productions of Shakespeare and the classics performed for 28,000 patrons; a robust education program serving more than 50,000 students; and a free Shakespeare in the Park tour that visits 45 communities every summer.

**Perseverance Theatre** in Alaska received a \$20,000 NEA grant to support a production of *Devilfish*, a new play by Vera Starbard. The play is inspired by traditional Tlingit tales told to the author by her parents. Incorporating anthropological theories of Tlingit origin with oral histories and imagination, *Devilfish* follows the story of a young girl surviving prehistoric Alaska and coming to terms with trauma. The all-indigenous cast and indigenous designers created a cultural experience for two of the largest communities in Alaska. Every eighth-grade student in Juneau was able to see the play. Perseverance Theatre serves over 17,000 artists, students, and audiences annually. Perseverance offered numerous post-show discussions, a pop-up gallery featuring Alaska Native art, and "Fry Bread Friday" providing this popular treat for free to audiences. Outreach efforts to Alaska Native organizations and to tribal entities including the Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Tribes of Alaska, drew larger Alaska Native audiences than any show in recent memory.



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