



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 21, 2018

CONTACTS:
Gus Schulenburg | gschulenburg@tcg.org | 212-609-5941

Theatre Communications Group Releases
38th Annual Research Report: *Theatre Facts 2017*
Growth in Theatre Workforce Supported by Rise in Individual Giving

New York, NY – Not-for-profit theatres contributed nearly \$2.6 billion to the U.S. economy and attracted 44 million attendees, according to ***Theatre Facts 2017***, released by Theatre Communications Group (TCG). Based on the annual TCG Fiscal Survey, *Theatre Facts* is the only in-depth report that examines the attendance, performance, and overall fiscal state of the U.S. professional not-for-profit theatre field.

"We are honored that we've been able to serve the theatre community through 44 years of in-depth longitudinal research on the state of the field, from attendance numbers to contributed income and employment," said **Teresa Eyring**, executive director, TCG. "This information is crucial as theatre leaders work to shape their organizations for the future."

Theatre Facts 2017 reflects data from the fiscal year that theatres completed between October 31, 2016 and September 30, 2017. Following an Executive Summary, the report presents data in three ways:

- **The Universe:** a broad overview of the estimated 1,759 U.S. professional not-for-profit theatres;
- **Trend Theatres:** a longitudinal analysis of the 129 theatres that completed the TCG Fiscal Survey each year from 2013 through 2017, with a side-note offering a 10-year view, based on a subset of 94 theatres that participated each year since 2008; and
- **Profiled Theatres:** a detailed examination of all 173 theatres that participated in TCG Fiscal Survey 2017, with data broken out into six budget categories based on annual expenses.

Theatre Facts 2017 is available at: <http://www.tcg.org/ResearchAndResources/TheatreFacts.aspx>.

Unless otherwise noted, all of the financial changes reported in this press release reflect **average, inflation-adjusted figures** for the Trend Theatres for the 5-year period from 2013 to 2017. Key findings include:

The big picture: For the 5-year period between 2013 and 2017, average total expenses grew 10.8% and average total income grew 13.8%. Average total earned income increased by 11.4%, while average total contributed income rose by 17.2%. Average CUNA (change in unrestricted net assets, or the difference between total unrestricted income and total expenses) was positive in every year, with more than half of theatres each year breaking even or generating a surplus.

Theatre workforce growing: In 2017, 56.1% of theatres' expenses went to payroll—up from 53.8% in 2013. Average total payroll increased by 15.5%, with average number of paid personnel growing annually for an overall increase of nearly 18%.

Individual giving drives rise in contributed income: Average combined giving from individuals increased by 23% with trustee giving alone increasing by 47.7%. Individuals were by far the greatest source of unrestricted contributed income each year, though there were increases in all but three contributed income areas (federal government, corporations, and "other sources" such as sheltering organizations).

More capital campaigns, more working capital problems: Forty percent of Trend Theatres were in some kind of capital campaign in 2017, strengthening theatres' long-term investments and contributing to a 13.2% rise

beyond inflation in total asset value. However, working capital—the unrestricted resources available to meet day-to-day obligations and cash needs—was negative in each of the 5 years, reaching its worst level in 2017.

Subscription tickets still vital but decreasing: Both the average number of subscribers/members and the average number of subscription/membership tickets sold fell 11.2% while the average subscription/membership ticket price increased by 7.6%. Average subscription/membership income was at its highest dollar amount in 2017, but growth still lagged inflation by 2.9%.

An uptick in single tickets: The average number of single tickets sold increased annually for overall growth of 2.3%. Average single ticket income increased by 12.3%, accompanied by a 6.2% increase in the average single ticket price.

For further information on the changes experienced by the field between 2013 and 2017 and on differences in income, attendance, and expenses between theatres of various sizes, see the Trend Theatres and Profiled Theatres sections of the full report at <http://www.tcg.org/ResearchAndResources/TheatreFacts.aspx>.

A feature story about *Theatre Facts 2017* that incorporates interviews with a diverse group of theatre leaders across the country was published in the November issue of *American Theatre* magazine and is posted at <https://www.americantheatre.org/2018/11/26/solid-footing-theatre-facts-2017/>.

Theatre Communication Group's *Theatre Facts 2017* was written by Zannie Giraud Voss, Professor and Director of DataArts at Southern Methodist University (SMU); Glenn B. Voss, Professor and DataArts Research Director, SMU; Ilana B. Rose, Associate Director of Research & Collective Action, Theatre Communications Group (TCG); Laurie Baskin, Director of Research, Policy & Collective Action, TCG; and Lesley Warren, SMU MA/MBA Class of 2018 and DataArts Research Assistant.

For over 55 years, **Theatre Communications Group** (TCG), the national organization for U.S. theatre, has existed to strengthen, nurture, and promote the professional not-for-profit theatre. TCG's constituency has grown from a handful of groundbreaking theatres to over 700 Member Theatres and affiliate organizations and more than 12,000 individuals nationwide. TCG offers its members networking and knowledge-building opportunities through conferences, events, research, and communications; awards grants, approximately \$2 million per year, to theatre companies and individual artists; advocates on the federal level; and through the Global Theater Initiative, TCG's partnership with the Laboratory for Global Performance and Politics, serves as the U.S. Center of the International Theatre Institute. TCG is North America's largest independent publisher of dramatic literature, with 16 Pulitzer Prizes for Best Play on the TCG booklist. It also publishes the award-winning *American Theatre* magazine and ARTSEARCH®, the essential source for a career in the arts. In all of its endeavors, TCG seeks to increase the organizational efficiency of its Member Theatres, cultivate and celebrate the artistic talent and achievements of the field, and promote a larger public understanding of, and appreciation for, the theatre. www.tcg.org.

###