



YORK

— COUNTY —
PENNSYLVANIA

Supporting York County's Arts and Culture Ecosystem



Cultural Alliance
BRINGING ARTS AND CULTURE
TO LIFE IN YORK COUNTY

August 2022



York County, Pennsylvania, has an abundance of quality of place assets that contribute to its vibrancy and unique character. From world-class musicians and performing artists to multi-talented muralists and artist collectives, intentionality and passion consistently shine through across York County’s cultural programming.

Bolstering support for York County’s arts and culture ecosystem builds from the directives of the York County Economic Action Plan, which was published in 2020 and cites a clear desire by the community to enhance and elevate the amenities that make York County a great place to live, work, and play. For more information, please see the companion full-report, “Supporting York County’s Arts, Culture, and Outdoor Recreation Ecosystem,” which combined data mapping and analysis as well as one-on-one interviews and surveys, to help guide York County stakeholders toward strategies to support these essential assets.

YORK COUNTY’S ARTS AND CULTURE ASSETS

In the spring of 2022, the York County Economic Alliance and Cultural Alliance of York County distributed a survey to outdoor recreation and cultural entities throughout the county, to have them self report their organization name, contact information, website, location, geography served, service category, beneficiaries, audience reach, staff levels, budget levels, funding sources, and more. **80 organizations in total responded to the survey, 58 of which were primarily categorized as “cultural.”**

Though most fit neatly into either overarching category – arts/culture or outdoor/recreation – many organizations serve a dual purpose, with service offerings blending beyond set boundaries. In some instances, arts organizations make use of outdoor recreation spaces like parks, public squares, or markets to display and perform, while some outdoor recreation assets highlight the region’s deep history and rich culture for their guests to experience.

For example, the Susquehanna National Heritage Area features trails, water access, and historic sites to preserve, interpret, and promote the abundant cultural and natural resources of the lower Susquehanna River region. **These instances show the interconnectedness of the outdoor recreation and arts and culture sectors in creating a robust place-based experience for those in York County.**

While 80 outdoor and cultural organizations completed the survey, nearly 200 more were identified through stakeholder groups and included on the map; desktop research enabled categorization and supplied basic information like website and organizational structure. Many of these identified organizations are outdoor recreation entities, which unlike arts and culture amenities, do not have a singular “owner” to fill out the survey, but rather are managed by an overarching entity, like County Parks. **Through this process, a total of 105 cultural assets were identified.**

The survey results and additional organizations were transposed onto [an ecosystem map](#), which displays each organization, as well as its relationship to other entities in the county. This map highlights the connectivity of the many quality of place assets and amenities of York County. It also provides the public a view of the many quality of place assets available in the county, as well as contact information and websites for people to plan their visit or learn more.

Total Survey Responses

80

58 cultural

Responses included at least one arts and culture feature or subcategory of offerings:



- performing arts (15)
- visual arts (31)
- fairs and festivals (15)
- museums (10)
- historic sites or buildings (19)
- heritage sites (11)
- cultural education (25)
- arts entrepreneurs and makers (29)
- design (14)
- media and communication (11)
- filmmaking (5)
- music recording and production (2)
- journalism (3)
- book and magazine publishing (5)
- libraries (5)

Of the 58 Arts and Culture Assets surveyed:

Location

Nearly half are located the City of York (28); (5) are located in Hanover Borough; (4) are in Spring Garden Township; (3) each are in Dillsburg Borough and Springettsbury; the rest are scattered throughout the county

Service Area

Many serve a local audience, though several have a larger reach.

When asked about their Service Area: 67% of respondents serve a local borough, municipality, or neighborhood; 72% serve all of York County; 71% serve the entire South Central PA region; 40% of respondents serve a statewide audience; 33% have a national reach; and 19% have an international reach

Minority Ownership

25% of the organizations surveyed (14) are minority-owned or managed

Beneficiaries/Audience

While nearly all York County organizations surveyed serve a "general population", organizations indicated they serve the following populations:



children/youth

53%

31 organizations



senior citizens

43%

25 organizations



non-white / mixed-race

26%

15 organizations



LGBTQ+

26%

15 organizations



people with disabilities

24%

14 organizations



veterans/ active duty military

19%

11 organizations



immigrants

19%

19 organizations



indigenous people

19%

15 organizations



refugees

14%

8 organizations

Employment

The pandemic does not appear to have had drastic long-term negative impacts on employment within the arts, entertainment, and recreation sector in York County. Nationally and locally, the creative sector was hit hard by the public-health-related closure orders early on in the pandemic, and [saw high rates of unemployment and decreased revenue](#) to arts organizations. However, since reopening and experiencing rebounds in demand related to widespread vaccination availability, these industries have recovered significantly, and unemployment and other indicators have started to return to pre-pandemic levels.

Compared to national trends, the recovery of the creative sector in York County post-pandemic is quite good, thanks in part due to relief funding issued, such as through the Shuttered Venue Operators Grants (SVOG) distributed by the Department of Small Business Services, and CARES and ARPA funds distributed by the county. York County [received nearly \\$4m in SVOG funds](#) as of July 2022, and allocated \$3,780,000 in CARES and ARPA funds to York County tourism and arts entities.

Most organizations surveyed maintained staffing levels during the pandemic, and several appear to have transitioned from having no full-time employees to adding 1-4 in 2022.

37%

of organizations have **0 full time employees**, compared to 47% before the pandemic

50%

of organizations have **1-4 full time employees**, compared to 38% before the pandemic



Part time/ seasonal/ temporary employees:

The hiring of part time/seasonal/temporary employees **has increased** following the pandemic:

- 35% used part time, temporary, or seasonal employees prior to 2019.
- 50% currently use/anticipate utilizing part time, temporary, or seasonal employees in 2022



Volunteers

Volunteering decreased during the pandemic, likely in part to protect public health and safety. However, **volunteerism rebounded in 2022**, to pre-pandemic levels.

- 60% used volunteers prior to the pandemic (2019), which decreased to 50% during the pandemic
- 65% use/anticipate utilizing volunteers in 2022



BRINGING ARTS AND CULTURE
TO LIFE IN YORK COUNTY

culturalyork.org

Founded in 1999, the Cultural Alliance of York County is South Central Pennsylvania's only United Arts Fund. The Cultural Alliance's annual campaign powers arts organizations and artists that are essential to York's cultural soul, and over the last 22 years has invested over \$11.4 million in cash and \$2.2 million in in-kind support for the arts. Under its new more inclusive and diverse operating model, the Cultural Alliance will be expanding its funding to further grow and strengthen arts and culture in York County.