



Report - March 2026

## Mid-Hudson's Creative Spark

New research finds the Mid-Hudson Region's arts and culture sector has quietly driven economic vitality—adding jobs and attracting new residents even as other industries declined. But that momentum is now at risk due to federal funding cuts, even as state investment has not kept pace.

by Rachel Neches, Eli Dvorkin, and Sarah Amandolare

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The arts are a catalyst for economic vitality in the Mid-Hudson Region, adding thousands of jobs, attracting visitors and tourists, and drawing more resident artists to the area over the past decade. At the same time, artists and the arts sector in the region are fragile and face challenges of financial insecurity, affordability, and cuts in public funding, mirroring challenges felt across the state. Mid-Hudson Region's Creative Spark tells this story through data and interviews, and puts forth seven recommendations for state and local policymakers.

### Here are some select data points from the report:

- From 2014 to 2024, the arts and culture sector in the Mid-Hudson region added 2,343 jobs, an increase of 33.7 percent—outpacing regional employment growth of 8.1 percent.
- While the overall Mid-Hudson regional population grew 4.9 percent from 2014 to 2024 (gaining over 100,000 residents), the region's resident artist population doubled that pace, up 11.5 percent over the same period.
- In 2024, arts and culture workers earned \$48,200, far less than the region's \$84,600 overall private-sector annual average wage.

- National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) funding dropped by 47.7 percent in one year, from \$735,000 in FY 2024 to \$384,500 in FY 2025, while the number of grants fell from 34 grants to 15.
- In 2025, in round 15 of New York State Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) funding, 10 of the 53 grants that went to the Mid-Hudson region went to arts and culture projects, an increase from the past.

[Read the full Mid-Hudson's Creative Spark report here.](#)

**Mid-Hudson's Creative Spark** is one of a series of 10 reports from the Center for an Urban Future on the growing power of the arts as a catalyst for economic vitality in each of New York state's economic development regions.

**Mid-Hudson's Creative Spark** is a publication of the Center for an Urban Future. Researched and written by Rachel Neches, Eli Dvorkin, and Sarah Amandolare. Edited by Dorian Block. Additional research by Alejandra Díaz-Pizarro, Udonne Eke-Okoro, Rebecca Ortiz, Nora Lewis, Yona Litwin and Samuel Weidman.

**Center for an Urban Future** (CUF) is a leading think tank focused on building a stronger and more equitable economy in New York City, and expanding economic opportunity for all New Yorkers.

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