



Report - March 2026

## Mohawk Valley's Creative Spark

New research finds the Mohawk Valley 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

- [Read the full Mohawk Valley's Creative Spark report here.](#)
- [Read the report's policy recommendations here.](#)
- [View reports for all 10 New York state regions in the series here.](#)

The arts are a catalyst for economic vitality in the Mohawk Valley, adding 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. Mohawk Valley'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 Mohawk Valley's arts and culture sector grew 15.6 percent while overall employment in the region fell 3.8 percent.
- Even while the population of the Mohawk Valley fell 2.5 percent from 2014 to 2024, its resident artist and design workers grew 57.9 percent.
- National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) funding for Mohawk Valley disappeared completely in FY 2025, one of two New York regions to receive no funding at all.

- This year, no Downtown Revitalization Initiative grants were directed towards arts and culture projects in the Mohawk Valley.
- New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) operating funding provided \$1.4 million in FY 2025, but funding has failed to keep pace; in FY 2000, NYSCA funding to Mohawk Valley totaled \$1.8 million after adjusting for inflation, 24.8 percent below.
- In 2024, arts and culture workers earned \$41,800, much less than the region's \$64,100 overall private-sector annual average wage.

[Read the full Mohawk Valley's Creative Spark report here.](#)

**Mohawk Valley'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.

**Mohawk Valley'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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