

Copyright 1999  
Business Wire, Inc.  
Business Wire



September 14, 1999, Tuesday

DISTRIBUTION: Business/Technology Editors

LENGTH: 567 words

HEADLINE: The New England Council to Study Economic Impact of the Arts

DATELINE: BOSTON

BODY:

Sept. 14, 1999--The New England Council, in partnership with the New England Foundation for the Arts and the six state arts councils, will begin a study this fall to assess the economic impact of the cultural arts industry on New England.

The Council recently engaged Mt. Auburn Associates of Somerville to conduct the study which will examine the full economic impact of the cultural economy on the six-state region.

James T. Brett, President and CEO of The New England Council, made the announcement at a September 14 forum at the Ritz Carlton Hotel featuring Bill Ivey, Chairman, National Endowment for the Arts.

"We ware embarking on a major study that will, we expect, redefine the cultural industry. Cultural arts generate about \$ 4 billion annually for the regional economy, according to a study published by the New England Foundation for the Arts. Approximately 100 million people visit cultural attractions and events each year in New England. More than 30 percent of those are out-of-state visitors, who bring with them tourism dollars that fuel restaurants, hotels and other establishments," said James T. Brett, President and CEO of The New England Council. "Unfortunately, federal support for the arts is declining. And there is no existing coordinated strategy to further enhance the economic impact of this industry."

Grants from the National Endowment for the Arts have dropped by 47 percent over the past five years. The NEFA study also noted that the arts provide jobs for more than 110,000 people throughout New England.

The Council's study, Brett added, will expand upon the work done by NEFA in 1996.

"Part of this study will involve identifying 'best practices' throughout New England, the nation and from around that world that could be applied to our region to support and grow this important industry," said Michael S. Greco, of Hill & Barlow, chairman of the Council's Committee on Tourism, which created a Task Force on Culture earlier this year.

The study will conclude with a blueprint and implementation strategy to enhance support for the cultural economy and greater understanding of its contribution.

The formation of a Task Force was first discussed at a program organized by the Council's Committee on Tourism. At the event, held at Tanglewood in Lenox, Mass., nearly 100 members of the business and arts community came together in an unprecedented forum.

"We are extremely pleased with the response, particularly from the business community," Brett said. "The Council's inclusion of this topic as part of its agenda is an important step in our long history of commitment to economic development."

A Task Force on Culture, which includes representation from throughout New England, has been created to help oversee the study. Additional support for the effort is being offered by such corporate leaders as Raytheon, Philip Morris, Massport Authority and Northeast Utilities.

Greco noted that the Task Force is expected to release its initial economic study in six months.

CONTACT: The New England Council  
James T. Brett  
617-437-0304

Today's News On The Net - Business Wire's full file on the Internet  
with Hyperlinks to your home page.

URL: <http://www.businesswire.com>

LOAD-DATE: September 15, 1999