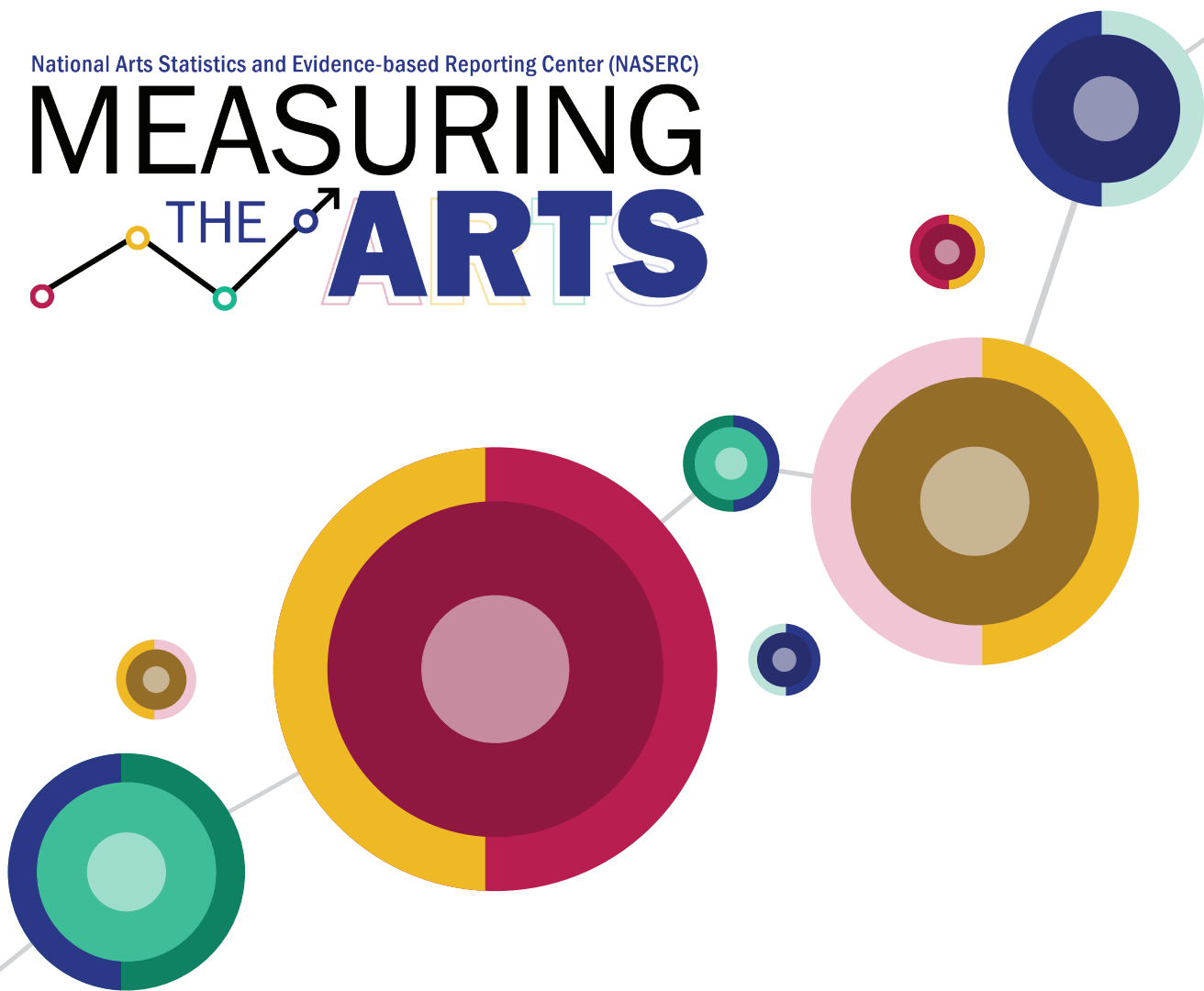



National Arts Statistics and Evidence-based Reporting Center (NASERC)

# MEASURING THE ARTS



Domain C

**Arts and Cultural Assets**



Indicator C.2: **Which Industries Employ Artists and Other Cultural Workers?**

## Introduction

The arts are an essential part of the U.S. economy. While the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the sector, 2021 data from the Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account (ACPSA) show the start of a rebound across arts and cultural industries. Indicator C.2 presents major arts and cultural industries that employ artists and other cultural workers by looking at the overall number of workers engaged in producing arts and culture-related goods and services, arts and cultural workers as a percentage of total industry employment, and average compensation for arts and cultural workers. For more information on this definition, see *Arts and Cultural Industry Definition*. Additional data from the ACPSA on total economic output for arts and cultural industries and goods and services and import/export activity appear in **Indicator C.1: What Do the Arts Contribute to the U.S. Economy?**

### Arts and Cultural Industry Definition

The U.S. Census Bureau classifies business establishments and enterprises into industries using its North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Arts and cultural industries are those NAICS codes that represent organizations that are engaged in the production of arts and culture-related goods and services. The estimates of arts and cultural production employment in this indicator include just those workers in these organizations who are engaged in producing arts and culture-related goods and services. They include arts and cultural industries as well as non-arts industries that produce arts and cultural goods and services (a.k.a. all other industries). The employment figures for this indicator do not include artists and cultural workers who are self-employed or employed in other industries that do not produce arts and culture-related goods and services. For more information, see the National Endowment for the Arts' Arts Data Profile #34 [The U.S. Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account \(1998–2021\)](#).

## Workers in Arts and Cultural Industries

In 2021, 4.9 million U.S. residents were employed by arts and cultural industries (see **Table C2-1**).<sup>1</sup> Information services had the highest number of workers (1.3 million), followed by art support services (1.2 million), design services (546,000), performing arts (230,000), and manufacturing (149,000; **Figure C2-1**).<sup>2</sup> Construction employed the smallest number of workers in 2021 (83,000). The number of workers engaged in producing arts- and culture-related goods and services by arts and cultural industries declined overall between 2018 and 2021 from 5.2 million to 4.9 million. This 6 percent decline in the number of workers is likely due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the arts and cultural industry sector. While the number of workers increased 1 percent between 2018 and 2019 to 5.2 million workers, it dropped 11 percent to 4.6 million in 2020, the first year of the pandemic. The number of workers rebounded by 5 percent in 2021 to 4.9 million but had not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels by 2021.

Between 2019 and 2021, construction, the performing arts, and museums experienced the largest declines of any of the major arts and cultural industry sectors in the number of workers engaged in producing arts and culture-related goods and services. Construction declined by 37 percent from 132,000 in 2019 to 83,000 in 2021. The number of workers in the performing arts declined by 29 percent from 323,000 to 230,000, and the number of workers in museums declined by 21 percent from 155,000 to 123,000. While the performing arts and museums saw some recovery between 2020 and 2021, there was no change in the number of workers in construction during this time period. Between 2020 and 2021, the number of workers

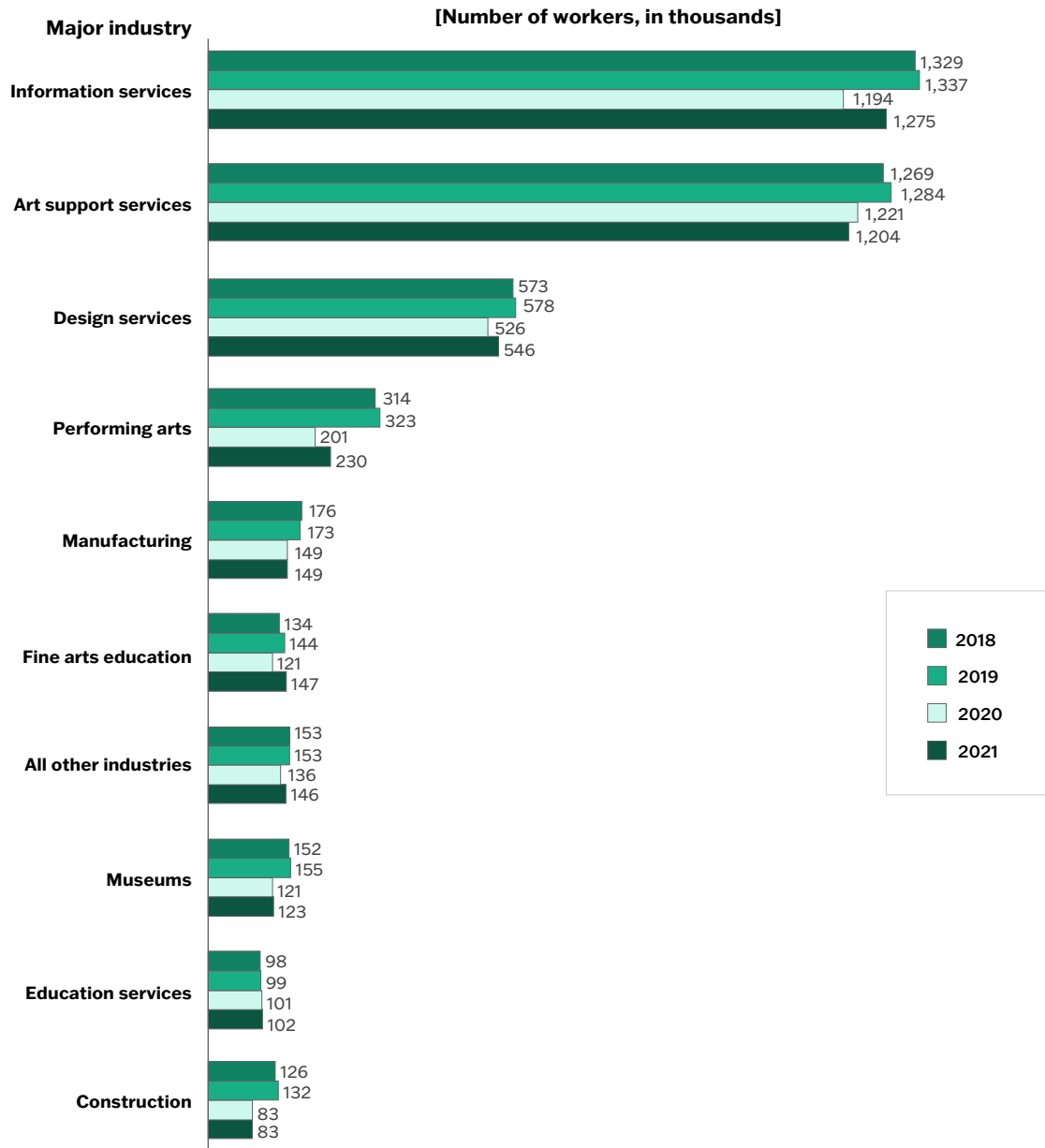
<sup>1</sup> “Art support services” includes rental and leasing, grant-making and giving services, unions, government and other support services (such as theatrical ticket agencies). “Design services” includes advertising, architectural services, landscape architectural services, interior design services, industrial design services, graphic design services, computer systems design, photography and photofinishing services, and all other design services (such as jewelry design services, lighting design services, and textile design services). “Information services” includes publishing, motion pictures, sound recording, broadcasting, and other information services (such as web publishing and streaming). “Manufacturing” includes jewelry and silverware, printed goods, musical instruments, custom architectural woodwork and metalwork, and other goods (such as pottery manufacturing, stained and blown-glass manufacturing, and motion picture equipment). “Performing arts” includes performing arts companies; promoters of performing arts and similar events; agents/managers for artists; and independent artists, writers, and performers.

<sup>2</sup> Differences between estimates (including trends over time) are considered significant because they are based on satellite account information derived from the Bureau of Economic Analysis core statistical program, so statistical tests related to sampling theory are not applicable. For more information see *The Arts in the United States: Developing Key National Indicators of Arts Activity* report.

in the performing arts increased by 14 percent from 201,000 to 230,000, and the number of workers in museums increased by 2 percent from 121,000 to 123,000. Other arts and cultural industries experienced increases in the number of workers between 2019

and 2021. For example, fine arts education employed 144,000 workers in 2019 and 147,000 workers in 2021 (an increase of 2 percent), and the number of workers in education services increased by 3 percent from 99,000 to 102,000.

**Figure C2-1. Number of workers engaged in producing arts and culture-related goods and services, by major arts and cultural industry: 2018–2021**



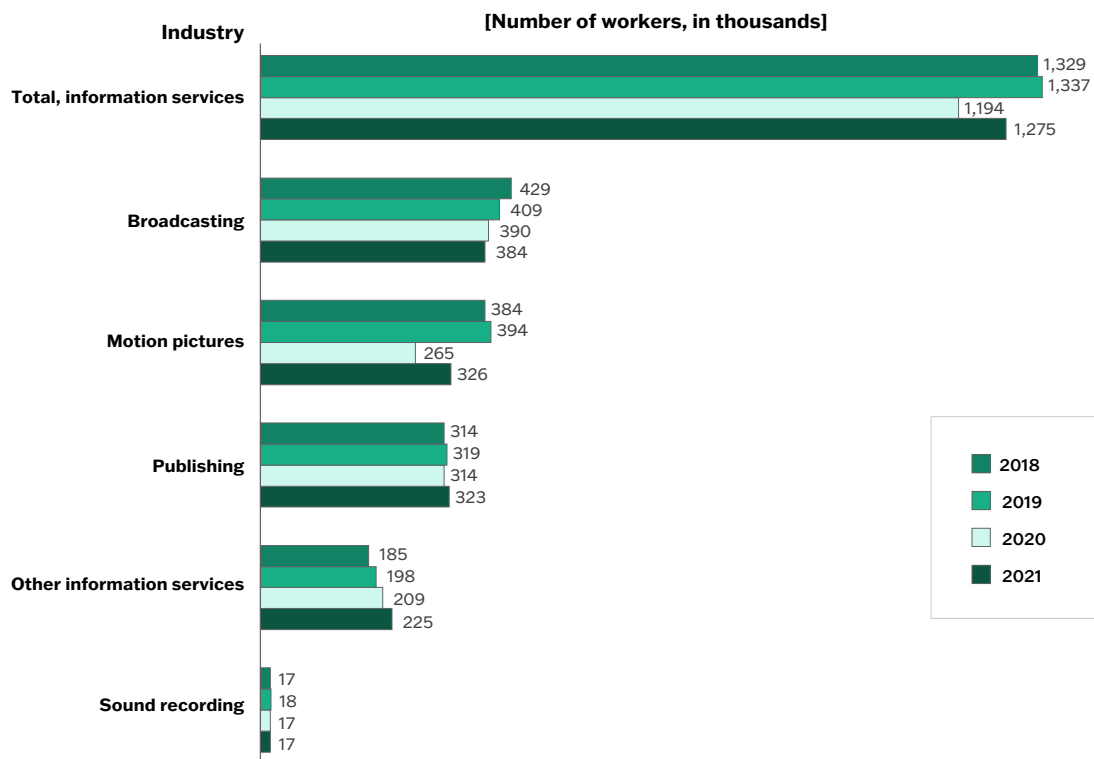
NOTE: “Art support services” includes rental and leasing, grant-making and giving services, unions, government and other support services (such as theatrical ticket agencies). “Design services” includes advertising, architectural services, landscape architectural services, interior design services, industrial design services, graphic design services, computer systems design, photography and photofinishing services, and all other design services (such as jewelry design services, lighting design services, and textile design services). “Information services” includes publishing, motion pictures, sound recording, broadcasting, and other information services (such as web publishing and streaming). “Manufacturing” includes jewelry and silverware, printed goods, musical instruments, custom architectural woodwork and metalwork, and other goods (such as pottery manufacturing, stained and blown-glass manufacturing, and motion picture equipment). “Performing arts” includes performing arts companies; promoters of performing arts and similar events; agents/managers for artists; and independent artists, writers, and performers. “All other industries” refers to non-arts industries that produce arts and cultural goods and services.

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis and National Endowment for the Arts. Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account (ACPSA), 2018–2021.

Within the most productive arts and cultural industry—information services—broadcasting employed the most workers in 2021 (384,000), followed by motion pictures (326,000) and publishing (323,000; **Figure C2-2**). The number of workers in information services showed less change during the COVID-19 pandemic (decrease of 5 percent between 2019 and 2021) than the number of workers in other arts and cultural industries. However, some industry subcategories fared better than others. The number of workers in the motion pictures industry fluctuated the most between 2019 and 2021. In 2019, the industry

employed 394,000 workers. By 2020, the number of workers in motion pictures decreased 33 percent to 265,000. The number of motion picture workers then rebounded 23 percent to 326,000 workers in 2021. Conversely, the number of workers in the other information services industry, which includes industries such as web publishing and streaming, increased annually between 2019 and 2021. In 2019, there were 198,000 other information services workers. This increased 6 percent to 209,000 workers in 2020 and a further 7 percent to 225,000 workers in 2021.

**Figure C2-2. Number of workers engaged in producing arts and culture-related goods and services in information services industries, by industry: 2018–2021**



NOTE: “Broadcasting” includes industries such as radio, television, and cable broadcasting excluding sports. “Motion pictures” includes industries such as motion picture production and distribution, television show production, cartoon production and distribution, cinemas, and film festivals. “Publishing” includes industries such as book publishers, newspaper publishers, art print publishers, and arts-related software publishing. “Other information services” industries such as web publishing and streaming. “Sound recording” includes industries such as record producers, music publishers, and sound recording studios.

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis and National Endowment for the Arts, Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account (ACPSA), 2018–2021.

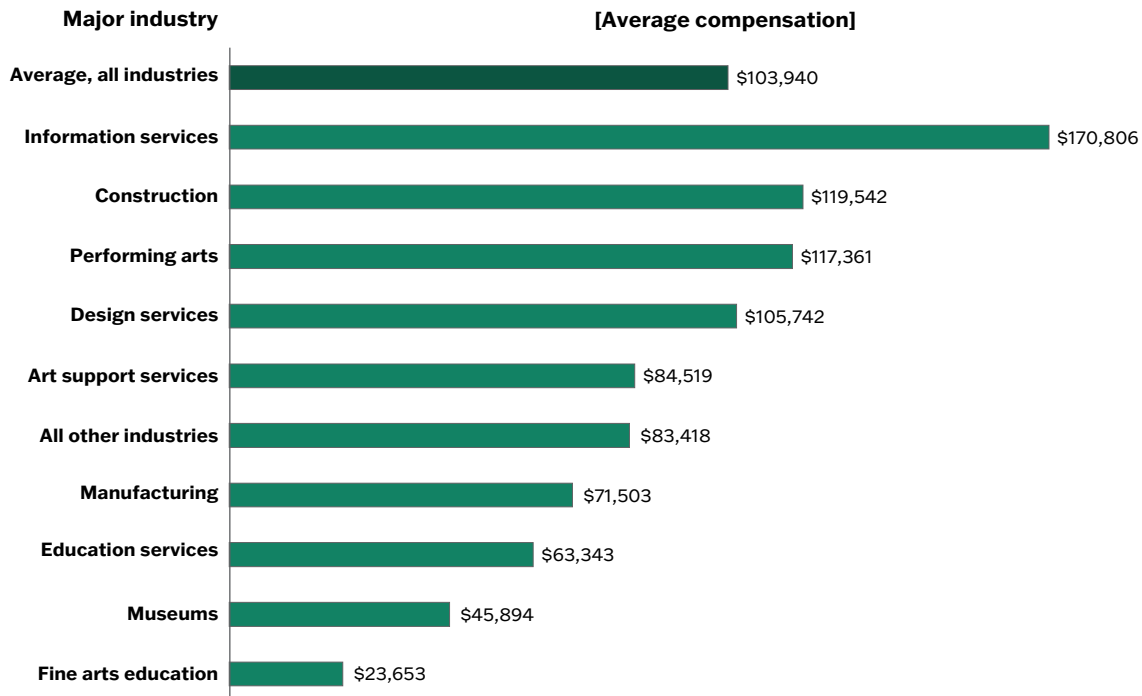
# Compensation Within Arts and Cultural Industries



Average compensation<sup>3</sup> for all industries (arts and cultural industries as well as non-arts industries that produce arts and cultural goods) was \$103,940 in 2021,

ranging from an average of \$23,653 for the fine arts education industry to \$170,806 for the information services industry (Figure C2-3). It is important to note that the values are average total compensation (salaries and benefits) within each industry and reflect a wide range of compensation, experience, and expertise across workers.

**Figure C2-3. Average total annual compensation per arts and cultural worker, by major arts and cultural industry: 2021**



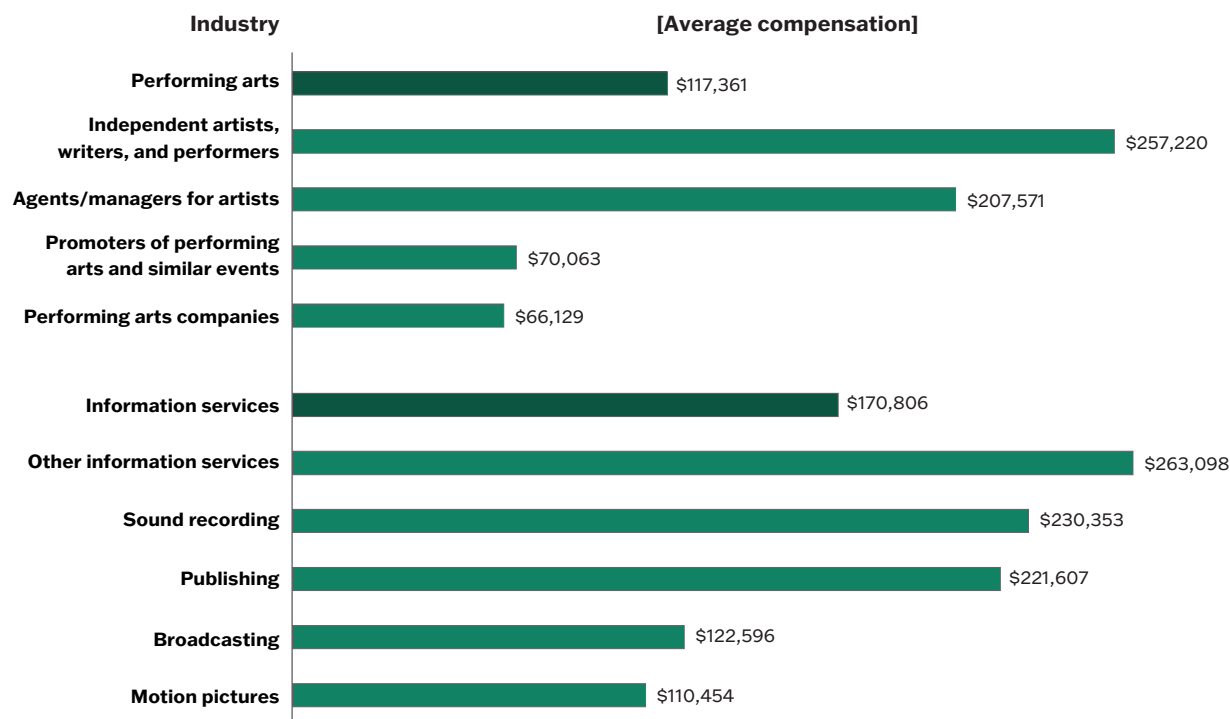
NOTE: Arts and cultural production compensation consists of the remuneration (including wages and salaries, as well as benefits such as employer contributions to pension and health funds) payable to employees in return for their arts and cultural production-related work during a given year. For more information see: [https://www.bea.gov/sites/default/files/2023-03/acpsa0323\\_0.pdf](https://www.bea.gov/sites/default/files/2023-03/acpsa0323_0.pdf). Self-employed artists and related workers who do not employ others are not included in this category. "Art support services" includes rental and leasing, grant-making and giving services, unions, government and other support services (such as theatrical ticket agencies). "Design services" includes advertising, architectural services, landscape architectural services, interior design services, industrial design services, graphic design services, computer systems design, photography and photofinishing services, and all other design services (such as jewelry design services, lighting design services, and textile design services). "Information services" includes publishing, motion pictures, sound recording, broadcasting, and other information services (such as web publishing and streaming). "Manufacturing" includes jewelry and silverware, printed goods, musical instruments, custom architectural woodwork and metalwork, and other goods (such as pottery manufacturing, stained and blown-glass manufacturing, and motion picture equipment). "Performing arts" includes performing arts companies; promoters of performing arts and similar events; agents/managers for artists; and independent artists, writers, and performers. "All other industries" refers to non-arts industries that produce arts and cultural goods and services. SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis and National Endowment for the Arts. Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account (ACPSA), 2021.

<sup>3</sup> Arts and cultural production compensation consists of the remuneration (including wages and salaries, as well as benefits such as employer contributions to pension and health funds) payable to employees in return for their arts and cultural production-related work during a given year. For more information see: [https://www.bea.gov/sites/default/files/2023-03/acpsa0323\\_0.pdf](https://www.bea.gov/sites/default/files/2023-03/acpsa0323_0.pdf).

Among arts and cultural industries, workers in information services, construction, and the performing arts earned the highest average compensation in 2021. However, there was a wide range of compensation within each information services and performing arts industry subcategory (there are no subcategories for the construction industry). Within information services, average compensation in 2021 ranged from \$110,454

for workers in motion pictures to \$263,098 for workers in other information services (Figure C2-4). Workers in other information services had the highest average compensation among all industry subcategories in 2021. For the performing arts that year, average compensation ranged from \$66,129 for performing arts companies to \$257,220 for independent artists, writers, and performers.

**Figure C2-4. Average total annual compensation per arts and cultural worker in the performing arts and information services, by industry: 2021**



NOTE: Arts and cultural production compensation consists of the remuneration (including wages and salaries, as well as benefits such as employer contributions to pension and health funds) payable to employees in return for their arts and cultural production-related work during a given year. For more information see: [https://www.bea.gov/sites/default/files/2023-03/acpsa0323\\_0.pdf](https://www.bea.gov/sites/default/files/2023-03/acpsa0323_0.pdf). Self-employed artists and related workers who do not employ others are not included in this category. "Agents/managers for artists" include industries such as agents for theatrical talent and literary agents. "Broadcasting" includes industries such as radio, television, and cable broadcasting excluding sports. "Independent artists, writers, and performers" includes industries such as independent artists, independent authors, and independent songwriters and only include independent workers who that employ others on a payroll. "Motion pictures" includes industries such as motion picture production and distribution, television show production, cartoon production and distribution, cinemas, and film festivals. "Other information services" includes industries such as web publishing and streaming. "Performing arts companies" include industries such as theater companies, dance companies, symphony orchestras, opera companies, and circuses and includes taxable and tax-exempt organizations. "Promoters of performing arts and similar events" include industries such as live theater and art center operators and music festivals. "Publishing" includes industries such as book publishers, newspaper publishers, art print publishers, and arts-related software publishing. "Sound recording" includes industries such as record producers, music publishers, and sound recording studios. SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis and National Endowment for the Arts. Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account (ACPSA), 2021.

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