



NATIONAL ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION  
SHAPING HUMAN POTENTIAL

## **Position Statement on the Impact of Visual Arts Workforce Development [Adopted March 2018; Reviewed and Revised February 2021]**

NAEA believes, given the research on employment trends and, anticipating that a variety of new career opportunities will emerge over time, that visual arts education is essential to every learner's educational foundation and training for future employment in an increasingly complex and interconnected world. When surveyed, CEOs identified creativity as the number one trait sought when hiring. Since learners are future contributors and creative leaders of tomorrow's work force, this underscores the importance that every learner must have ongoing access to sequential visual arts education throughout their PreK-12 education.

Visual arts education develops skills of deeper understanding and divergent thinking while also playing a vital role in cultivating collaboration, communication, critical thinking, curiosity, innovation, and problem solving, additional key competencies desired by employers. Visual arts education also develops emotional intelligence, the capacity to be aware of, control, and express one's emotions, and to handle interpersonal relationships judiciously and empathetically.

Learning in the visual arts benefits all areas of the business, industry, research, and service sectors. In addition, gainful careers in a variety of art, design, and digital-related fields are abundant and comprise a multi-billion-dollar industry in many states and provinces. When considered nationally and globally, the financial impact of the arts is compounded exponentially. Providing visual arts education to all individuals is forward thinking, preparing them for successful employment now and in the future.

### Resources:

*Ready to Innovate: Are educators and executives aligned on the creative readiness of the U.S. workforce?* The Conference Board, Americans for the Arts, American Association of School Administrators, 2008

*Using Arts Education to Build a Stronger Workforce*, NAEA Fact Sheet, June, 2016

*The Importance of the Arts in Workforce Preparation*, Arts Education Partnership blog post, September 2017. This link with the blog post has many other resources linked within the posting. <https://www.ecs.org/the-importance-of-arts-education-in-workforce-preparation/>

Watch the Skills Gap. See how U.S. executives see the skills gap impacting the American workforce, January 2018 (references communication, creativity, critical thinking, collaboration). <https://www.adeccousa.com/employers/resources/skills-gap-in-the-american-workforce/>

Arts Education Helps Train Tomorrow's Workforce: A Strong Arts Education helps Prep Kids for the Future, This is a blog post on Americans for the Arts *Kara Hurst, Director, WW Sustainability, Amazon & ArtsFund Trustee*. To build the workforce of tomorrow, let's invest in arts education for our youth today.

Americans for the Arts Data – <https://www.americansforthearts.org/research>

- Americans for the Arts' fifth Arts & Economic Prosperity study reveals that the nonprofit arts industry generates \$166 billion in economic activity, supporting 4.6 million jobs nationally and generating \$27.5 billion in government revenue.



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- 2017 Creative Industries reports reveal that there are 673,656 businesses in the United States involved in the creation or distribution of the arts. They employ 3.48 million people, representing 4.01 percent of all businesses and 2.04 percent of all employees, respectively.

SNAAP: Strategic National Arts Alumni Project. Tracking the Lives and Careers of Arts Graduates.

<http://snaap.indiana.edu/>

Catterall, James. <http://www.croc-lab.org/archive.html>. A list of Catterall's research including: *Doing Well and Doing Good by Doing Art: A 12-year Longitudinal Study of Arts Education – Effects on the Achievements and Values of Young Adults*. Los Angeles, CA: I-Group Books. 2009. Available on Amazon.com.