



Resource Guide

What is the CEI?

The Cultural Engagement Index (CEI) is a holistic, ongoing assessment of cultural engagement in the Philadelphia region, commissioned by the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance as part of the Engage 2020 initiative to double cultural participation in ten years. The Cultural Engagement Index (CEI) was commissioned by the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance with support from The Wallace Foundation and The Philadelphia Foundation, and is a program of Engage 2020, which is sponsored by a lead grant from The Pew Charitable Trusts, with additional support from The Wallace Foundation and The Philadelphia Foundation.

What are the objectives of the CEI?

- To provide the cultural community with a new, wider lens through which to see itself, and thereby stimulate innovation
- To create a measurement system that can detect changes in patterns of engagement over time
- To inform cultural policy by exposing opportunities for increasing cultural engagement
- To focus public attention on culture as an indicator of quality of life

How was data collected?

The study focused on residents in the 20-mile radius geography around downtown Philadelphia, and consisted of a comprehensive survey of a broad range of cultural activities, from playing music to visiting art museums. The first cycle of data collection was completed in summer 2008, to establish a baseline. The survey will be re-administered over time to track changes in engagement. The study employed a two-pronged sampling approach: 1) over half the data was collected through an online survey of a cross-section of consumers; and 2) a large number of in-person interviews were conducted in both low-income and affluent areas of the region where online response was low. A total of 2,864 surveys were collected.

Who conducted the study?

The study was done by WolfBrown, a national consulting firm that specializes in researching cultural consumers. Alan Brown led the study team.

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Key Findings

- Investments in culture are also investments in civic engagement and quality of life.
- A richer picture of cultural engagement appears when a broader definition of culture is used.
- Personal creative practice correlates with higher levels of audience-based activity.
- Communities of color are vitally engaged. People who identify with their cultural roots reported higher CEI levels, regardless of their race/ethnicity.
- Engaging more adults with modest education levels suggests emphasis on personal practice activities.
- The presence of children in the household appears to increase, not decrease, cultural engagement.
- Keeping older adults engaged in personal creative practice is a key challenge.
- Cultural role models are an important lever to increase engagement.

Who can I speak to about the study or the Engage 2020 Initiative?

For more information about the CEI, contact Alexis Pappas of the Cultural Alliance or Alan Brown of WolfBrown.

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