



Office of Research & Analysis
National Endowment for the Arts
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Arts Data Profile: The U.S. Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account (1998-2015)

Research Brief #2: The Economic Contributions of Tax-Exempt Performing Arts Organizations

In producing arts and cultural goods and services, tax-exempt performing arts organizations (i.e., performing arts companies and presenters) contributed an estimated \$9 billion to the U.S. economy in 2015.

That production employed over 90,000 workers who were compensated, according to NEA calculations, in roughly \$5.6 billion in wages and salaries and supplements such as pensions and health insurance.

Theater companies, performing arts presenters (including performing arts festivals), and symphony orchestras and chamber groups contribute the largest value added by the tax-exempt performing arts. In 2015, these industries added \$7.3 billion to arts and cultural GDP.

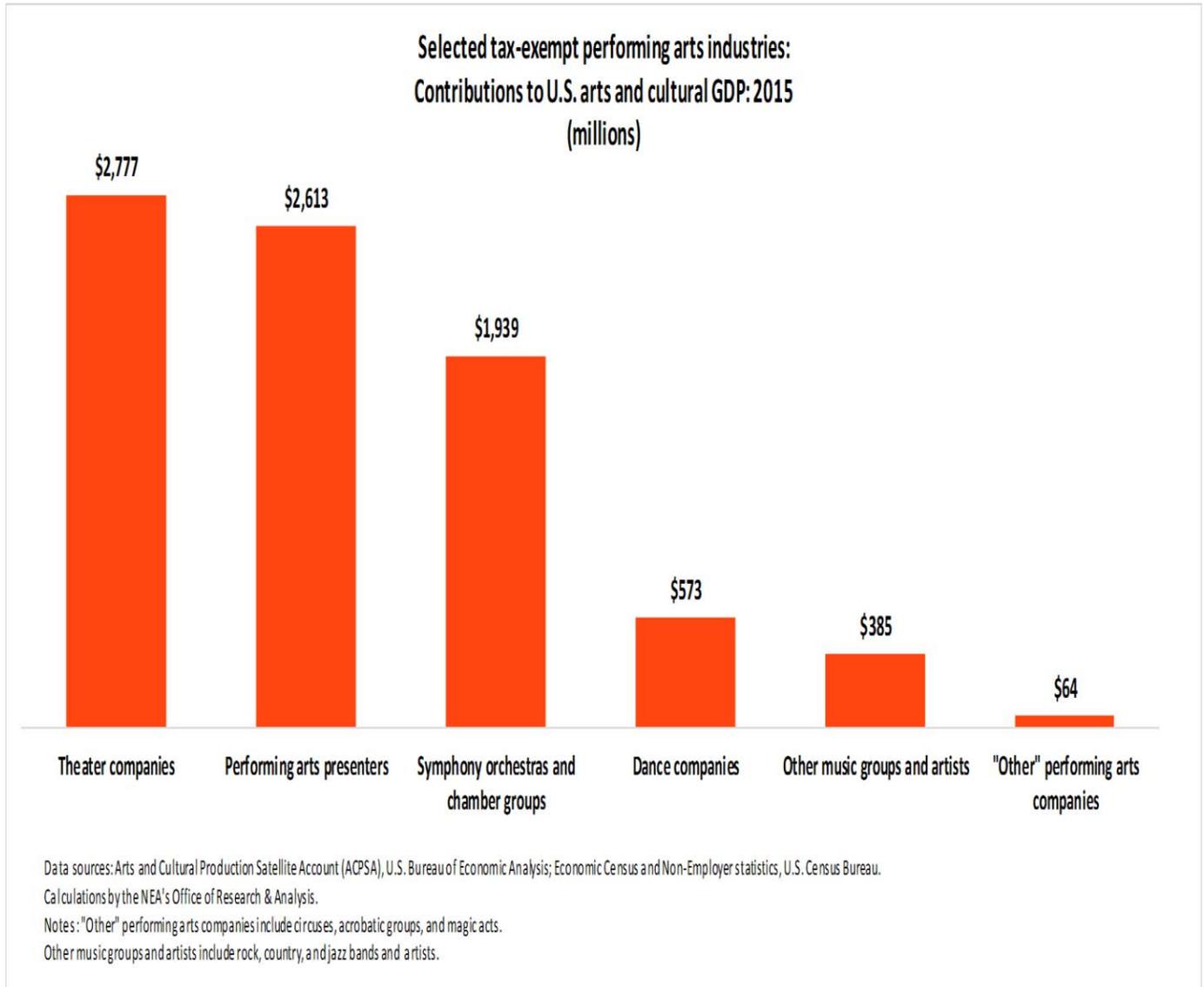
The following types of tax-exempt performing arts organizations employed more than 73,000 workers in total, and compensated them more than \$3.8 billion in 2015: theaters, presenters, and symphonies/chamber groups.

Production by Opera Companies

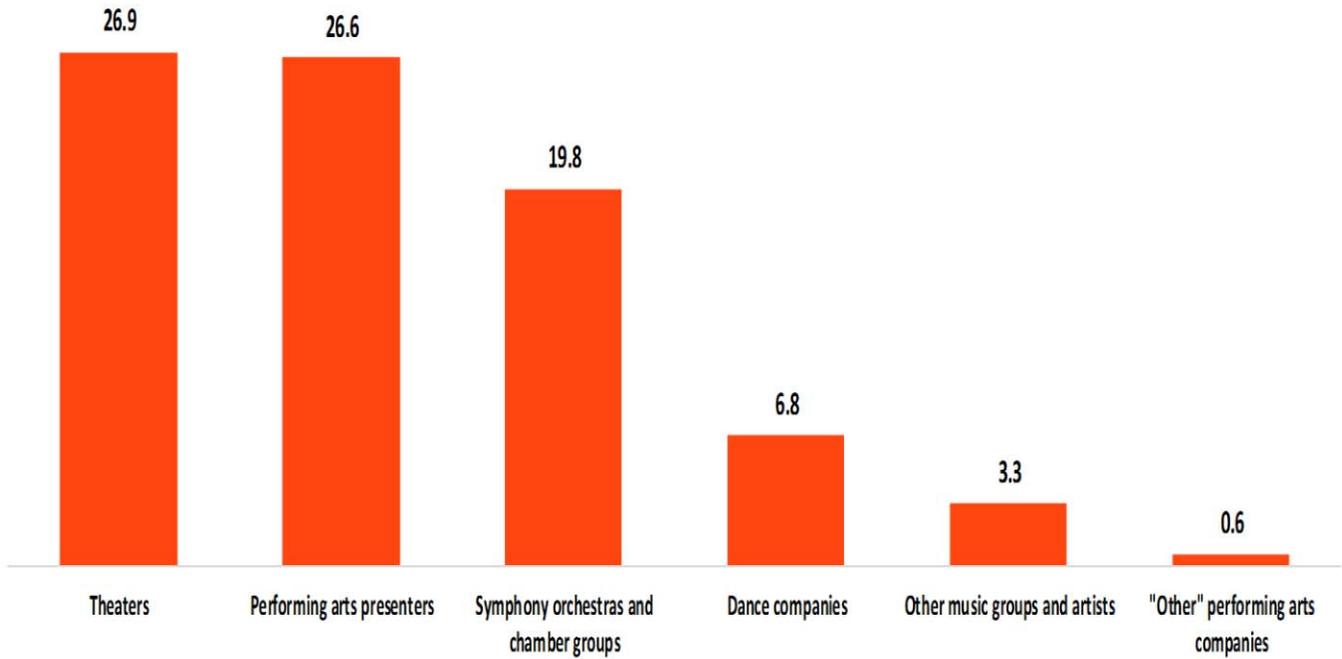
The estimates of tax-exempt production and employment presented in this Research Brief were based on data from the ACPSA and the Economic Census. Neither data source is detailed enough to provide similar calculations on the economic contributions of opera companies.

A glance into opera company production, however, is enabled by data reported in filings of IRS Form 990/990EZ, which are required of most tax-exempt organizations with gross receipts of at least \$50,000.

Filing data collected in 2015 show 143 tax-exempt opera companies whose revenues totaled \$955 million.ⁱ Given that nearly all opera companies are nonprofits, their revenue can be used to approximate the value added by this industry. **In all, filing data suggest that opera companies comprise roughly 9 percent of value added by tax-exempt performing arts companies. The opera industry's value added, therefore, was an estimated \$576 million in 2015.**



Selected tax-exempt performing arts industries:
Number employed to produce arts and cultural goods and services: 2015
(thousands)



Data sources: Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account (ACPSA), U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis;
Economic Census, U.S. Census Bureau.
Calculations by the NEA's Office of Research & Analysis.
"Other" performing arts includes circuses, acrobatic groups, and magic acts.
Other music groups and artists include rock, country, and jazz groups and artists.

ACPSA gross output, value added, employment, and compensation

Performing arts organizations by tax status: 2015

	Gross output (Millions)	Value added (Millions)	Employment (Thousands)	Compensation (Millions)
Total performing arts companies	\$30,180	\$17,801	105.0	\$8,294
Taxable	\$19,315	\$11,393	41.0	\$3,732
Tax-exempt	\$10,865	\$6,408	64.1	\$4,562
<i>Selected performing arts companies:</i>				
Theaters	\$12,072	\$7,120	44.1	\$3,152
Taxable	\$7,364	\$4,343	17.2	\$1,923
Tax-exempt	\$4,708	\$2,777	26.9	\$1,229
Dance companies	\$1,056	\$623	7.4	\$498
Taxable	\$85	\$50	0.5	\$30
Tax-exempt	\$972	\$573	6.8	\$468
Symphony orchestras and chamber groups	\$3,320	\$1,958	20.0	\$1,576
Taxable	\$33	\$20	0.2	\$16
Tax-exempt	\$3,287	\$1,939	19.8	\$1,560
Other music groups and artists ¹	\$8,149	\$4,806	13.7	\$1,576
Taxable	\$7,497	\$4,422	10.4	\$1,418
Tax-exempt	\$652	\$385	3.3	\$158
"Other" performing arts companies ²	\$2,716	\$1,602	5.3	\$415
Taxable	\$2,608	\$1,538	4.6	\$377
Tax-exempt	\$109	\$64	0.6	\$37
Performing arts presenters ³	\$25,002	\$10,453	95.0	\$3,314
Taxable	\$18,752	\$7,840	68.4	\$2,287
Tax-exempt	\$6,251	\$2,613	26.6	\$1,027

¹ Includes rock, country, and jazz bands and artists.

² Includes circuses, acrobatic groups, and magic acts.

³ Includes performing arts festivals.

Estimates for detailed performing arts industries, as well as for taxable and tax-exempt categories, were calculated by the NEA's Office of Research & Analysis.

Data sources: Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account (ACPSA), U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis; Economic Census and Non-Employer Statistics, U.S. Census Bureau.