

**Universities as Arts and Cultural Anchors:
Moving Beyond Bricks and Mortar to
Artist Workforce Development**

(working paper)

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Abstract

Universities are “anchor institutions” because they are rooted in their communities and are important drivers of regional economic development activity. Our study asks: what is the role of universities in anchoring arts and cultural activity in the regional creativity ecology, and how are university leaders identifying, communicating, and investing as arts and cultural anchors? Through a qualitative comparative case analysis of four public universities in the Intermountain West combined with target interviews of field innovators and a synthesis of transdisciplinary literature, we deepen the concept of the university arts and cultural anchor and map a theoretical and practical shift from a traditional to contemporary form of anchoring. We identify four stages of anchor readiness, and we develop a pilot assessment tool for university leaders to determine their anchor stage based on awareness and investment. Our applied research helps universities move from being an arts patron to an arts investor, innovator, and catalyst.

Executive Summary

Universities in the U.S. are touted as great patrons of the arts largely due to their investments in bricks and mortar projects and their academic programs that train emerging artists in traditional and discrete artistic disciplines. This perspective overlooks the ways that universities anchor arts and cultural activity as part of the regional creative ecology. The lapse is particularly problematic in a time when liberal arts education (which includes the visual and performing arts) is under increased scrutiny due to dwindling public investment in higher education, a sharp prioritization of STEM, and an eagerness to respond to workforce readiness calls-to-action. Simultaneously, positioning the university as patron suggests that while the arts may be a jewel in a university’s crown and a sign of its beneficence, they are rarely central to its primary role as an intellectual innovator. This makes investing in arts and culture difficult since

they are not regarded as essential university assets crucial for driving institutional advancement and distinction. This oversight or misunderstanding is due in part to the anchor concept's relative "fuzziness" both from a scholarly standpoint, and from the practical vantage of those actually working in and leading institutions. Additionally, while scholars have done impressive work aimed toward understanding different players in the creative ecology and the regional arts and cultural network, they have yet to contextualize where the university or "higher education institutions" (HEIs) sit in these "sticky" conceptualizations with the exception of scholarship (Beckman 2007; Beckman and Essig 2012; Essig 2016) on a handful of new curriculum streams to enhance artist workforce readiness.

Our research asks: To what extent is the university an arts and cultural anchor? How do universities support and enhance arts and cultural activity in the regional creativity ecology? How are university leaders identifying, communicating, and investing as arts and cultural anchors? We answer these questions through a comparative case study of four public HEIs in the Intermountain West (Boise State University, Colorado State University, University of Nevada-Reno, University of Utah) and supplement the data through interviews with field innovators across the U.S. and a synthesis of transdisciplinary research. We chose the Intermountain West as a focal point not only because it is an understudied geographic region in urban studies and planning, but because it is home to some of the fastest growing population regions in the country with concomitant increasing student enrollment numbers. These sites also provide a different set of supposed opportunities and challenges due to their physical and geographic isolation combined with the fact that they are newer cities that do not have the deep tradition of arts and cultural investment from large scale private and corporate philanthropy that bigger, older cities have as part of their DNA. Subsequently, beyond what these cases can tell us generally about

anchors, we were also interested in whether the anchor concept looks different in places with those particular traits or if it presents new opportunities and challenges from a theoretical and practical perspective.

Our data and analysis leads to six major findings that link theory to practice that have both implications for research and for policy and practice.

1. The university is an important and diverse arts and cultural anchor as a knowledge center, landowner and real estate developer, major employer and facilitator, and as a social problem-solver.
2. There has been a shift in how the university acts as an art and cultural anchor from the traditional patronage approach to a contemporary model where the university is an investor, innovator, and catalyst. While the potential for this shift seems especially profound for cities in the burgeoning Intermountain West, our research did not demonstrate that the potential was being fully realized.
3. There are four broad stages or opportunities as an anchor institution: dormant, aspirational, accidental, and intentional that are driven by their awareness of what an anchor can do, which involves both identifying and promoting the essential features of an anchor, and by their activities to invest in arts and culture elements.
4. University leaders, both in the arts and in general leaderships positions, are largely unaware of the ways that universities can act as anchors both generally, and specifically in the case of their own institutions, and thus they cannot communicate this important value that their programming, people, and influence adds.

5. The anchor concept is limited in its focus on a standard treatment of regional economic development and overlooks the ways that the university anchor contributes to social development in the community.
6. The arts and cultural anchor institutions in the Intermountain West show that context matters as the geographic, political, and cultural development of this region influences the ways that universities can perform as anchors creating both opportunities and limitations.

These findings demonstrate a disconnection between theory and practice, which leads to missed opportunities to invest in ways that respond to evidence-based strategies.

To address this issue, we marshalled our data and analysis to design a pilot *University Anchor: Arts and Cultural Impact Assessment Tool* for university leaders (Presidents, Deans, Provosts, Directors, Department Chairpersons, Program Leads) to employ to help them identify the defining features of a university arts and cultural anchor so that they can communicate their value to relevant stakeholders and to provide support for investment discussions and decision-making. This assessment tool coupled with our typology of anchor status gives university leaders more information to help make decisions in the difficult funding and political climates they face currently. We hope our applied research helps universities in the developing Intermountain West and far beyond see how they can move from being an arts patron to an arts investor, innovator, and catalyst.

The National Endowment for the Arts award for the Art Works program has given us the opportunity to study the broad concept of the “anchor institution” and apply it to arts and cultural contexts. We have been able to deepen not only the anchor concept but to fill in some central actors and strategies from work we observed to map and define the regional creative ecology. Our work also suggests the need to expand the anchor concept from a pure economic

development angle about regional growth and shrinkage to also include the “social purpose credo” and role that universities play in their place-based communities as noted by Taylor and Lutner (2013) and Ehlenz (2017). The grant program has allowed us to develop future directions that align theory and practice, including pilot testing the assessment tool with select university communities; conducting a network analysis of universities with regional economic and community development stakeholders; evaluating contemporary artist workforce development programs; and identifying practices of how universities are using arts as a tool for social innovation and social practice.

Introduction

Policymakers, economic developers, and university leaders label and position higher education institutions (HEIs) as “anchor institutions” in our cities and regions. Civic, private, and public actors champion these deeply rooted and entrenched organizations as invaluable sources of regional economic activity because HEIs have the political influence, financial resources, and institutional infrastructure to grow, sustain, and revitalize metropolitan regions in a time of footloose industrial location and global corporate consolidation (Birch 2010). Researchers attempt to sharpen this blunt concept and refine understanding of HEIs’ regional economic contribution and “stickiness” through analysis of workforce chains (Nelson and Wolf-Powers 2010), technology transfer roles (Allen and O’Shea 2014), and property development (Gaffikin 2011) among other areas of impact and contribution in social development and civic engagement. While scholars have made significant progress in unpacking the anchor concept and connecting theory to practice, they have yet to thoroughly identify and explain how HEIs

perform as arts and cultural anchors in local and regional arts economic development (AED) or the networking of the regional creative ecology.

When the academy and popular media discuss the relationship between the university and arts and culture, their attention primarily centers on large bricks and mortar investments generating mass media frenzy linked to star-architect projects and how these iconic facilities remake university identities and create cultural gateways (Hannon 2019). As Tepper and Arthurs (2013) broadly note, universities are likely the “greatest arts patrons” in the United States, with an estimated investment of more than 5 billion dollars due to their wide-ranging budgets that support such investments as capital projects, arts department funding, artist commissions, and public art installations. While important, this traditional focus with the anchor as patron, overlooks new and alternative connections, opportunities, and imperatives that universities have in other arenas, including artistic workforce development (AWD) and innovation. This evolving concept of the university as a twenty-first-century arts and cultural anchor is driven by the growing realization that the arts are more than just an amenity but a vital part of economic development--in the same way that the university is not a patron of science and technology, but a partner and collaborator in the regional development of related industries. Executive vice president of the Association of American Universities, John Vaughn, predicts that universities will follow the example of American cities when it comes to recognizing the arts as a key asset for economic development:

Ten years ago, mayors across the country viewed arts institutions and artists as amenities and symbols of achievement and status...Today, mayors see the arts as essential for economic development, strengthening schools, improving quality of life, addressing issues of sustainability and attracting and retaining talented creative class workers” (Tepper and Arthurs 2013, no page number).

However, it's unclear if university leaders know how to operationalize, or optimize their role as arts and cultural anchors. In part, this is because there is a significant lack of applied research that might provide universities with access to a framework or tool for making and articulating these connections, which means that theory and practice are often disconnected (Ehlrenz 2017). While this is a general problem across all anchor literature, but it is compounded by the lack of knowledge around the intersection between the anchor concept and AED. Little is known about how to realize these connections explicitly or how universities are marshalling financial, structural, and faculty resources to be a potent anchor that is aware of its role in the local and regional arts and cultural ecology. There is some movement on the notion of "integration" that calls for a "creative turn" in higher education (Penn State 2019). Barbara Korner, Dean of the Penn State College of Arts and Architecture, spoke to members of the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities on June 18, 2019, to argue for greater, substantive collaboration across the arts and sciences to "maximize the impact that the university research can have on people's lives, and she noted:

Too often the arts are considered useful methods of communication and we're brought in at the end of the research project to visualize the data, or to translate that data. However, I've been hammering away at the notion that if science researchers bring artists and designers to the table at the beginning, they will find that these creatives will ask new questions, will explode those questions and explode that research wide open, and will lead to new directions and new discoveries (Penn State 2019, no page number).

This reflects a savvy movement underway by a small number of research universities organized under the umbrella, Alliance for Arts in Research Universities (A2RU), to study and promote the integration that is happening across universities with a substantive focus on curriculum.

This general dearth of knowledge regarding arts and anchor institutions combined with these specialized movements in research and curriculum integration comes at a crucial moment given general trends in higher education. Decreasing investment in HEI coupled with university

reliance on the extramural funds provided by federal and corporate research funding is placing strong pressure on public universities to prioritize Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM). The broad and dogged emphasis on a “workforce ready labor force” has contributed to the devaluing of liberal arts education (Dull-Ballerstadt 2019) with “generalists” and “careerists” (Jones 2016) debating whether the liberal arts will “survive” the twenty-first century (Haris 2018). At the same time, news stories abound about the value of liberal arts with headlines proclaiming, “In this Digital Age, Students with Liberty Arts Training Stand Out,” “Liberal Arts Majors Are the Future of the Tech Industry”, “Google Finds STEM skills aren’t the most important Skills,” and a “Liberal Arts Degree is More Important than Ever.” While many voices debate whether the liberal arts is “dead” or if it is part of a larger historical arc of “continuous death and resurrection” (Jones 15, no page number), policymakers, civic leaders, parents, and students are asking the university to be able communicate and articulate the value of higher education in new ways. The “arts” fall under the liberal arts and humanities umbrella, and thus, face those same pressures if not greater ones thanks to a lack of public appreciation for the broad applicability of artistic skills in a contemporary market place. We share the public’s interest in how universities are responding and adapting to these external forces given that universities are a site of existing or organic cultural activity. We see the potential for their important role as an arts and cultural anchor as an important avenue for reform in higher education.

Our transdisciplinary research bridges social science (urban studies and planning) and the arts (performance and cultural criticism) to help universities in the region turn instinct into data-informed practice. We broaden and deepen the university anchor concept by asking several related questions: *How do public universities support arts and culture in the twenty-first century? What are the features of a university arts and cultural anchor? How do universities see*

and articulate their role in the regional arts and cultural ecosystem? How do universities support students, faculty, and regional artists as they create and sustain artist career trajectories as professional creative workers?

We study these questions by looking at existing literatures and practices in AED, urban studies, and university reform in the early twenty-first century while we look specifically at public HEIs in the fast-growing Intermountain West, which is understudied geographic area in the contemporary AED field that typically favors older, larger cities or smaller niche communities. Our comparative case study research highlights HEIs in Boise (ID), Fort Collins (CO), Reno (NV), and Salt Lake (UT). These highly desirable, livable cities share more than a place on the map in the Intermountain West and similar population sizes: they are all home to growing, public, metropolitan universities and booming, buzz-generating cultural scenes despite limited resources, a short history of philanthropic wealth, and smaller markets on which to draw. We compare and contrast how Boise State University, Colorado State University, University of Utah, and the University of Nevada, Reno are situated in the urban arts ecologies of their thriving Western home cities particularly from the perspective of arts economic and artistic workforce development. This comparison allows us to develop and deepen our theories and applied work around anchor institutions.

As university leaders begin to turn their attention to maximizing the economic and cultural impact of their artistic assets, including the ways they are training artists for their careers in and beyond the arts, they need to understand the specific conditions affecting the regional artistic labor force and the potential role that universities have as intentional, potent arts and cultural anchors. Our study provides guidance on how to conceptualize and communicate about the university as an arts and cultural anchor so that universities can make (and defend) evidence-

based decisions and investments. Based on the research, we also include a pilot assessment tool that universities leaders can use to consider different ways of approaching their role as a contemporary cultural anchor. We anticipate customizing future versions of our assessment tool to take into account unique regional features that universities might want to consider, but for our pilot assessment we sought to create an instrument that could add value regardless of the university's particular regional features, challenges, and opportunities.

Literature Review

There's a significant body of scholarly literature in urban studies and urban planning around the idea, importance, and evolution of the "anchor institution," which Ehlenz (2017) notes is a concept that the Aspen Institute coined in the early 2000s to denote an institution with significant assets that is unlikely move. Universities, hospitals, and some large nonprofit institutions (foundations, churches, cultural institutions, and sport teams) became anchors either consciously or unconsciously in regional economic development due to corporate consolidation and the globalization of industries that created footloose companies and organizations that were no longer so heavily tied to place. In response, scholars began to identify the traits and characteristics that university anchors and their "sticky capital" possess: they are major employers and support career ladders; they have sizable landholdings and invest in infrastructure; and they are centers of knowledge and innovation (Maurrasse 2001).

A handful of scholars suggest that there is an additional "social purpose" credo in the U.S, including Taylor and Luter (2013, 7) who argue that "to be an authentic anchor, an institution must be more than a large place-based organization in the region. It must have a social-purpose mission enabling it to become a change agent and engine of socioeconomic development." HEIs

might articulate these “shared valued” approaches through curriculum innovations like service-learning or more formal university-community partnerships. More work is needed in this area from a university and arts perspective that follows Ehlenz (2017)’s approach to create and assess the utility of a typology of how universities “practice” the anchoring of neighborhood urban development with its pros and cons.

There is a sliver of anchor institution research connected to arts and cultural nonprofits that draws on in-depth qualitative case analysis. Johnson (2011) studies the politics and implementation of arts and cultural districts as urban anchors in place-based economic development in Dallas, Denver, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and Seattle. Birch et al (2013) and Johnson (2014) identify how nonprofit arts and cultural organizations perform as urban anchors through their involvement in arts education, arts public participation, neighborhood revitalization as well as how they develop and navigate public/private partnerships to fulfill their missions. However, there is a gap in this branch of anchor research that looks at the intersection between universities and arts and culture. In sum, we increasingly recognize that universities act as urban anchors, but we know very little about how universities act in the realm of arts and culture.

We may not immediately think of universities as arts organizations, but universities are likely the greatest arts patrons in the United States, with an estimated investment of more than 5 billion dollars (Tepper and Arthur 2013). Universities house art museums, theatre companies, symphony orchestras, film studios and publishing outlets, just to name of a few of the kinds of arts organizations and bricks and mortar investments that live under the higher education umbrella. But most crucially for our study, universities in the twenty-first century are more than just arts patrons of physical structures, they are collaborators and partners in the regional arts and cultural ecology. They are the places where most emerging artists receive their artistic training

and skills. Universities support and invest in faculty and staff that oversee arts curriculum, they fund scholarships, they pay faculty who are artists in their own right, and they provide the research support and infrastructure for arts economic development. They hire faculty who bring ideas of organizational change for arts and culture and then consider how to fund and finance those ideas.

The shift in perspective we are chronicling relates to a provocative area of work on higher education reform broadly conceived. Recent scholarship such as Joseph Aoun's (2018) *Robot Proof: Higher Education in the Age of Artificial Intelligence*, David Staley's (2019) *Alternative Universities: Speculative Design for Innovation in Higher Education*, Robert Sternberg's (2016) *What Universities Can Be: A New Model for Preparing Students for Active, Concerned Citizenship and Ethical Leadership*, Mark William Roche's (2017) *Realizing the Distinctive University: Vision and Values, Strategy and Culture*, Ronald Barnett's (2013) *Imagining the University*, and Cathy Davidson's (2017) *The New Education: How to Revolutionize the University to Prepare Students for a World in Flux* are among the works charting innovative new paths for HEIs in response to the technological revolution of the late twentieth century and its subsequent impact on the ways people work, what and how they need to learn, and the economic and social pressures of the evolving knowledge economy. Staley writes

Like the crisis of the university that Chad Wellmon has identified [in *Organizing Enlightenment: Information Overload and the Invention of the Modern University* (2015)], ours is a moment fertile for new forms of the university. Like the German philosophers who imagined the research university as a response to that crisis, we have an opportunity to imagine what the university can be. If we are truly interested in innovation, we might simply ask, 'What can the university become?' (2019, 216)

Our research is particularly interested in what the university can become if it is activated as a cultural anchor in its community and how that community can become stronger economically, socially, and creatively as a result. Staley (2019) argues the universities struggle to achieve “distinction” from each other, offering similar programs, celebrating similar achievements, and marketing themselves with similar images and slogans. We see awareness of anchor traits, particularly in a specific regional context, as a yet untapped resource for offering universities a chance to tell a powerful story of distinction to their multiple stakeholders.

The role and potential of the university as an intentional artistic and cultural place maker in the urban ecology is beginning to attract international attention as well. Roodhouse (2010) studies the role of universities in cultural quarters (CQs) (often referred to as art and cultural districts in the United States) and how these cultural concentrations influence creative innovation and workforce growth in English cities. He (2010, 72) comments:

Those institutions with an established interest in the creative industries that may have one or more faculties of art, design, performing arts, music, architecture, media, and animation are most likely to be involved not only in training individuals to enter the workforce, but also in developing the workforce and supporting business growth with their engagement in CQs. It is in the interests of the university to support creative businesses in the locality through mechanisms such as CQs in order to generate employment for graduates, have access to expertise to support teaching, and as a living research laboratory. What is missing in this scenario is the formalization of relationships between CQs and the appropriate university. There are university science and technology parks, but, more important, CQs in partnership with universities can be the new creativity parks.

Roodhouse’s work not only deepens knowledge about the role of universities in localized spaces for arts and cultural innovation, but it underscores the ways that the anchor concept plays out. In generations past, emerging artists looked towards undergraduate and graduate arts education to hone the artistic skills that they’d been developing since early childhood, and then they learned how to put those skills to work strategically if and when their careers evolved. Many parents,

politicians and pundits have lost patience with the time this process takes and its sometimes-lackluster results for school-to-career transition. They have pressured universities to monetize the value of their arts programs and to consider new innovative curriculum models to improve student and university outcomes.

Hoping to smooth their graduates' transition to the workforce and spur economic development in their home cities, many universities are experimenting with curricular, extra-curricular, and structural models that complement or supplement traditional fine arts curricula. Transdisciplinary arts integration programs like Arts Entrepreneurship; STEAM-initiatives that merge the arts with computer science, digital media, and other technologies; and Public Policy and Administration arts-related programs have proliferated across the country, particularly in the aftermath of the last decade's financial crisis. As Korner (Penn State 2019) notes earlier, there is still a challenge in ensuring that artists are part of the entire process rather than joining as sporadic assistance particularly around STEM and STEAM integration. In tandem with these efforts, some universities are also situating the arts in their broader entrepreneurial ecosystems that may include maker spaces, incubators, and venture competitions.

There is a growing body of research that seeks to understand different aspects of these integration ideas where most of the convergence centers on arts entrepreneurship and management due to their prevalence. This small but robust group of scholars unpacks this burgeoning research arena as a hybrid field and practice (Beckman 2007; Beckman and Essig 2012; Essig 2016). Beckman and Essig's seminal works have both identified and distinguished trends and the broader landscape of the arts while also specifically looking at different more targeted manifestations and investments in direct and indirect curriculum, including labs and maker spaces.

As these leading scholars note, a fair amount of debate exists about how to define and conceptualize “arts entrepreneurship” as a stand-alone curricular concept or in contrast to “cultural” or “creative” entrepreneurship in the U.S. and internationally (Essig 2017). Beckman’s early work treats arts entrepreneurship as a catch-all phrase, and in one of his earliest foundational studies, Beckman (2007, 91) argues that arts entrepreneurship embodies two curriculum avenues: 1) “new venture creation” that aligns with typical economic development activity around innovation and new products; and 2) a fuzzier concept noted as the “transitional” approach that gives students skills that they may need as professional artists. As the field and practice began to grow and specialize (Essig and Guevara (2016) have documented its prevalence and growth), both scholars and academic leaders are beginning to dismantle and differentiate this all-encompassing concept (i.e. traditional arts education plus any kind of additional training in non-arts arenas) to include a more refined set of avenues, purposes, and intentions. Goldberg-Miller and Wyszomirski (2015) suggest that the naming of arts entrepreneurship approaches needs to be more narrowly defined where entrepreneurship focuses on the “individual” artist that starts their own businesses while “arts management” centers on how an “artists” works within and across organizations in the public, private, and community sector. As we found in our work and as we explain later, arts management and arts entrepreneurship are the most common approaches but not the only ways to think about integration or how the university anchors workforce development of arts. Our research contributes to a greater understanding of the depth of different practices and approaches.

Beyond naming or articulating the foundational qualities of these approaches, Beckman’s rich work on “adventuring” HEI curriculum points out there is little agreement about the most effective techniques for arts entrepreneurship because most of this education exists outside of

established degree plans and the degrees that do exist are not-accredited and there is little commonality from one university to another (2007, 90). His work focuses solely on how this plays out for traditional arts programs in music, arts, and theatre where department chairs typically tend to merely append general business course/s as opposed to creating specialized business arts offerings due to financial and structural imperatives and an instinct to support an interdisciplinary approach. Overall, Beckman (2007) critiques approaches where students just learn skill sets but not the ability to contextualize or apply those skills for their particular fields or career paths, which is why he argues for a new model that prioritizes experiential learning. In that same conversation, Sternal (2014, 168) reinforces Beckman's critique by pointing out that there isn't enough "basic data" to know what works and what doesn't from a curriculum perspective but also argues that even if these programs deliver on providing an array of skills and talents that they will be weakened without external policy or programmatic measures in the region.

What we don't know is whether these arts integration connections, through curricular and programmatic endeavors, are cultivating sector resilience or new opportunities for students that they couldn't get in traditional arts programs. To do so, scholars and university leaders would need not only to evaluate the effectiveness of learning outcomes at the end of a university career but also when they are participating in the workforce whether as a self-employed entrepreneur or in supporting and organization. As Beckman (2007) notes, there is little consensus on the most effective techniques or how to differentiate the primary end goal of these programs whether it's professional development or a "discrete educational directory" (89).

While career success in the traditional sense meant a set of dots on a straight path rising over time, work life today is evolving into a chaotic pattern of short-term, project-based

employment: A 2010 study by the US Department of Labor finds that, on average, Americans between the ages of 24 and 45 will work 11-15 different jobs in their lifetimes (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2010). Today's graduates (arts and non-arts) will change jobs more often (1/3 of American workers expect to be in a different job within 3 years), hold more jobs at any one time, work across sectors, be self-employed and start more enterprises. About 50 percent of all college graduates — including STEM fields — will not be working in fields closely related to their majors within 5 years (United States Census Bureau 2014). These general trends are amplified by what we know about the career trajectory and profiles of artists as a workforce practice. In-depth examinations and surveys should that artists are “multiple jobholding” or “moonlighting” compared to other professions (Alper and Wassall 2000) where they work across public, private, and civic sectors (Markusen et al. 2006). Studying how universities help artists cope with uncertainty and the factors that influence their resilience should be relevant for understanding these broader social and economic trends facing today and tomorrow's workforce.

Over the past decade, researchers have established creative labor as a fundamental force driving the entire economy, not merely animating an attractive but discrete sector. Stuart Cunningham and Jason Potts (2015, 387-404) argue that “the creative industries provide the capabilities that incline us, both individually and socially, toward the origination, adoption, and retention of novel ideas.” But despite such eloquent championing of the power of artists to propel ideas and products through the “innovation trajectory,” artists' economic and civic potential remains at best partially tapped. It's unclear what drives this un-tapping but is likely not just personal individual traits but might be the way they are trained or not.

Artists have long been part of the “precariat” because creative work tends to “individualize risk” (Bain and McLean 2013, 93-111). It is likely to be highly competitive

despite its modest or intermittent financial rewards; it may place great demands on the worker intellectually, physically, and emotionally; and it frequently requires workers to self-finance necessities like insurance, benefits, professional development, marketing, and workspace. Such conditions compel working artists to develop multi-dimensional strategies of resilience in order to thrive. This sector agility is a key trait of artistic career resilience, ways that artistic competencies can be translated from conventional arts contexts to the civic and corporate spheres in the form of “innovation services” (Cunningham and Higgs 2009, 190-200) Far from just making products “pretty,” when artists leave the arts as traditionally defined or organized, they take their unique skill competencies in need identification, problem definition, iterative thinking and action, sensitivity to issues of social justice and equity, and facility in building human connection to audiences, markets, and communities with them (Medea 2016; UNESCO and UNDEP 2013). The question becomes how the university as an arts and cultural anchor helps their students with this risk and to prepare them for their resilience.

While the AWD literature is a central concept to deepening the anchor concept, it is just one part. Our research, seeks to broaden and give depth to the ways that universities act as arts and cultural anchors, and to understand how they see their role in our attempt to align theory and practice in this specific topical area. Our questions are: how do public universities support arts and culture in the twenty-first century? What are the features of a university arts and cultural anchor? How do universities see and articulate their role in the regional arts and cultural ecosystem? How do universities support students, faculty, and regional artists to create and sustain artist career trajectories as professional creative workers?

Research Design: Data and Methodology

Our qualitative comparative case study takes on an institutional approach where we breakdown the university's monolithic structure into different "actors" and components to explore how HEIs anchor artistic economic development across different occupations, sectors, and career stages (Markusen 2003). We follow Yin's (2008) suggestion of a "cross-case synthesis", an analytical technique where "each case is treated as a separate study," and then the findings are aggregated across all cases to look for trends and patterns (Yin 2008, 156). We employ this approach by treating the four different cities/universities as separate cases and considering each individual case by examining our qualitative data collected from interviews with university stakeholders. The goal is not to provide a descriptive comparative case analysis but to use these observations and analyses to develop and deepen our grounded theory around anchor institutions.

Drawing on a scan of Intermountain West universities, we selected three primary universities because of their location, the size of their university, and the presence of some kind of arts integration or new ways of thinking about arts education (Table 1). These institutions include: University of Reno-Nevada, Colorado State University, and the University of Utah. We also added a secondary case study, Boise State University, since it is our home institution and acted as point of comparison in the analysis and development of our work.

Table 1. Contextual Factors for Comparative Cases.

	Boise State University	University of Nevada, Reno	Colorado State University	University of Utah
City/Population	Boise 226,570	Reno 248,853	Fort Collins 165,080	Salt Lake 200,544
Region Population	Boise-Nampa 730,426	Reno-Spark 425,417	Fort Collins-Loveland 310,487	Salt Lake 1,087,873
Student enrollment (undergraduate/graduate)	25,520 22,716/2824	21,657 17,930/3,025	33,877 25,688/7,370	32,994 24,735/8,251
Integrated Departments, Centers, Institutes	School of the Arts	School of the Arts	LEAP Institute for the Arts	College of Fine Arts
Integrated Degrees or Value-added products (degrees, certificates, specializations, badges)	Arts Entrepreneurship Minor; Gaming, Interactive and Media (GIMM)	n/a	Minor in Arts Leadership and Administration; Master of Art Leadership and Cultural Management	Entertainment, Arts & Engineering
Artist workforce development initiatives	n/a	n/a	n/a	ArtsForce

Source: University and public sector websites.

We collected different types of data that help create necessary “thickness” for our comparative structure (Creswell 2014, 226). We visited each site and interviewed 6-15 people at each location, and in total we interviewed 30 subjects. These targeted “elite” interviews focused on university leadership (Deans, Department/Program Chairpersons, Center/Institute Directors, Research Directors), relevant faculty, and community partners so that we could begin to uncover “fantasies and realities” of university investment and partnership (Baum 2000) as well as opportunities for the alternative university (Staley 2019).

This methodology is optimally suited for our work because we can compare university investment, broadly defined, across similar metropolitan HEIs in similar sized cities as well as artist perceptions and experiences with university investment. Targeted subjects focus on those who control funding and set university policy, including university presidents, provosts,

college/school deans, and research directors. Our interview protocols are designed to unearth 1) how these different “actors” perceive of the cultural assets on campus and in their city, and 2) how they view the universities role in artistic economic development, and 3) the ways that they support artistic workforce development. Interviews lasted between 45 and 90 minutes, and we employed four different semi-structure formats.

For Dean or upper administration interview subjects we asked:

1. What is the history of your degree program/center/department/college?
2. How does your university and your university’s culture support the arts and conversely, make it difficult to be an artist or educate artists?
3. Do the narratives and realities about an Arts and Humanities or Liberal Arts crisis affect the way you developed and run your programs and/or do your work?
4. How/when do you connect to other arts programs or non-arts programs at the university?
5. How do you promote the unique skill sets of arts graduates to community partners, the corporate sector, etc.?
6. Have you had to react to new budget or new assessment models in the university? How? What do you consider your greatest success and/or how do you measure success? What have been your major sticky points or challenges?
7. When do social justice or equity issues connect to the university’s work in arts and culture?
8. How do you make the work you do visible to the University, the community locally, your community at large?
9. How does the community and local culture support or affect your work?
10. What impact do you hope the program/your work will have on your city/community? How will you measure impact?
11. How does the university support people and placed creative innovation and artistic workforce development?
12. If someone gave you \$5M to advance the university’s work on art and culture, how would you spend the money?

For Chairperson or Program Lead interview subjects, we asked:

1. What’s your research background, and what have been your program/department/initiative priorities?
2. How does the university support the art, and how do they support artists?
3. How do your specific program or department support arts and culture and artist workforce development?
4. How did you become familiar with the new arts programs and initiatives on campus?
5. What is your role with these programs and initiatives?
6. What is the structure of the program or initiative?
7. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the program or initiative?
8. How well are the programs integrated into the broader academic units?

9. When do social justice or equity issues connect to the university's work in arts and culture?
10. Do the narratives around the crisis of the Humanities and Liberal Arts affect these programs?
11. If someone gave you \$5 million, how would you advise the university to use that money to invest in arts and culture?

For Faculty interview subjects, we asked:

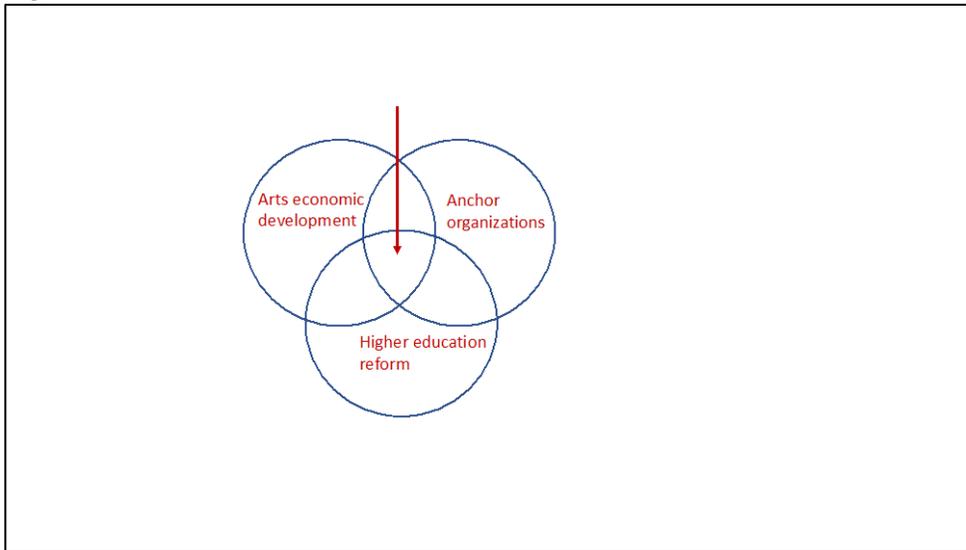
1. Why did you become an artist? What is your training and background?
2. How do you and your department/program talk to your students about their unique skill sets?
3. When and how did you become connected to the new arts program or initiative?
4. What's the history and evolution of the new program or initiative?
5. How do these programs connect to other arts programs or non-arts programs on campus?
6. How do you promote the unique skill sets of arts graduates to the public, private, and community sector?
7. What do you consider the integrated program's greatest success and/or how do you measure success? What are your major sticky points or challenges with these integrated programs?
8. How do you make the work that the integrated program does visible to the University, the community locally, your community at large?
9. What impact do you hope that your work has on your city/community? What impact do you hope that the integrated program work will have on your city/community? How will you measure impact?

For Community partner interview subjects, we asked:

1. How did your community organization connect with the university? What is your relationship to the university?
2. How does the university support art and culture in the community and region?
3. How are you connected to the new integrated arts program/initiative?
4. What do you think are the strengths/weaknesses of the integrated initiative?
5. How would you like the university to support arts and culture in the community?

As mentioned above, we developed a quad-case framework for understanding how different university actors perceive of their role in artistic economic development and to analyze this against contemporary thinking about how universities can anchor such activity. We supplemented these cases with a literature review that looks at the intersection of research on artist workforce development, anchor institutions, and high education institution reform (Figure 1). We also scanned university activity in arts and culture nationally to look for integrated initiatives, and we interviewed five leaders in the field who were undertaking integrated initiatives of different configurations.

Figure 1: Literature intersections of our research



Source: Ashley and Durham (2019)

Our data allows us to identify the ways that the universities support, hamper, or overlook their connections to artist-driven economic development in their role as contemporary urban anchors. We believe our methodology is optimally suited to the research design above as it is exploratory in nature, and we see the isolation of universities in medium-sized markets in the Intermountain West not as a limitation but as an opportunity to control for variables that strengthen comparative elements as well as providing a much-needed lens with which to view high-growth cities that are overlooked in AED research.

We coded the interviews with university stakeholders and explore the first overarching research question: to what extent are universities or HEIs helping artists incubate creative businesses and products in the region? The rich data provides a comprehensive interpretation of how universities understand AED and their role in artist workforce development specifically. Third, we moved from single case analysis to conduct a cross-comparative analysis across cities to identify any themes that transcend all case experiences. Part of this process involved returning to “prior expert knowledge” (Yin 2008, 161) generated by academic scholars

to consider variables that universities and/or artists may not have considered or referred to in our data collection, which allows us an additional dimension to analyze. Here, our analysis allows us to revisit the research questions from a cross-case perspective to uncover the ways that universities anchor artist-driven AED as well as the opportunities, challenges and barriers that exist. Our research analysis is not a description of individual cases but how these cases help us further develop our grounded theory to understand the role of the university as part of the arts and cultural ecology of the region, and to better understand how to deepen the general concept of the university as an anchor and also an anchor of arts and culture.

By running the cross-case analysis and framing it within expert knowledge, we are then able to produce as one of our products, an evidence-based impact assessment tool for universities to employ when attempting to explain, narrate, or critique their role as AED anchors. This final step in our analysis, the development of a research-based impact assessment tool that universities can use to determine the ways in which they support artist-driven economic development and the ways to consider improving their role as arts economic development anchors, will come from the cross-case synthesis above and will be supplemented by evidence-based research. In many ways, this assessment tool is part of a broader movement by communities and institutions to quickly and efficiently evaluate the “state” of their city, region, organization or institution from a particular perspective. These assessment mechanisms are used heavily in the health industry, and fall under the diverse rubric of health impact assessment (Forsyth et al. 2011). They are also slowly beginning to develop in the arts economic development and arts community development field through such labeling as “cultural vitality indicators” (Jackson et. al 2006). We believe that beyond a region-wide snapshot, it would also be useful for public universities to evaluate the perceptions and realities of artist-driven

investment in order to create awareness of the multiple and comprehensive ways to anchor AED.

Analysis and Findings

We collected and analyzed our data to answer the following research questions: *How do public universities support arts and culture in the 21st century? What are the features of a university arts and cultural anchor? How do universities see and articulate their role in the regional arts and cultural ecosystem? How do universities support students, faculty, and regional artists create and sustain artist career trajectories as professional creative workers?* Our goal was not to focus on comparative case analysis of each university but to compare and contrast how these university experiences can be employed to answer these questions in a way to broadly deepen the anchor concept. From our analysis, we identified six major findings.

Finding 1: The University is an Arts and Cultural Anchor. The university is an important and diverse arts and cultural anchor as a knowledge center, landowner and real estate developer, major employer and facilitator, and as an agent for social practice. Our research is designed not only to apply general anchor attributes to arts and cultural frameworks, but also to see how and arts and cultural perspective may change how we view the anchor concept. Our observations underscore recent research that calls for an unpacking and differentiating the anchor conceptualization. Our work, while it has a different focus, agrees with Ehlenz' (2017) argument that the anchor concept, while new, has undergone a series of evolutions. We find the same in our research in differentiating between the traditional and contemporary anchor as noted below. These shifts in identity and usage are catalyzed by external forces (the utility and vitality of the liberal arts debates, decreased government funding, civic emphasis on workforce readiness,

enrollment declines) as well as internal culture (e.g. faculty hired who are inspiring these changes whether through their own research and administrative interests; administrative leaders with or without a background in the arts).

We also suggest there needs to be deepening of what knowledge creation means from an anchor perspective: that it goes beyond just offering degrees but has a workforce readiness component as well as a clearer articulation of what integration means for curriculum and beyond. The university is not an ivory tower but the anchor position allows it to be a convener of different ideas, interests, expertise, and motivations.

The current anchor conceptualization does not take into account how the university's art and cultural assets support regional economic development beyond the arts. So much focus from economic developers is to create attractive environments to draw clusters of high knowledge workers and related industries. The arts as Ashley (2017) notes are part of this amenity package and profile, and the university not only houses infrastructure but nurtures these artists who act as a particular draw. For the arts community, the universities also create new consumers and donor bases and they develop arts and cultural preferences.

There were some typical anchor attributes that we could not align or did not have evidence to connect to the arts and cultural anchor. For example, we could not uncover how university research offices respond to the creation of artistic intellectual property and products. We also could not see a deep commitment to helping artists incubate creative businesses and products in the region although we know this is happening elsewhere to different degrees of success. We hypothesize that universities broadly are not yet actively cultivating artistic economies in the way they are fostering development in the biomedical and technology sectors. Universities, we suspect, have not translated technology transfer and intellectual property into

applications that might be applied to the arts. Rising to and overcoming this challenge may lead to an expanded and sustainable model of arts investment. This is an area of future research.

Finding 2: A Shift from a Traditional to Contemporary Anchor. There has been a shift in how the university acts as an art and cultural anchor from the traditional patronage approach to a contemporary model where the university is an investor, innovator, facilitator, and catalyst. We see an evolution underway that marks a transition from a traditional arts and cultural anchor to a contemporary 21st century model (Table 2). The traditional activities are still important, vital anchor contributions but they have evolved to include additional elements that supplement these practices and to catalyze some reflection on how to refresh traditional practices. In the contemporary manifestation, the university moves from a more passive role as a patron to an intentional innovator in creative investments. From our analysis, we created a map to articulate how general anchor attributes (knowledge transfer, innovation capital facilities and landholdings, regional employer, social practice) could be relayed or conveyed into art and cultural functions. We then were able to see patterns emerge between a traditional and contemporary framework where the transitions from a patron to an investor perspective. We argue that this shift happens on a much more comprehensive scale than just academic programs alone. The different categories are to be treated fluidly as one example can illustrate more than one attribute where intentionality and motivation matter. For example, a university can finance maker space, which can speak to priorities in both landholdings and real estate as well as artist workforce readiness and innovation.

Table 2. Traditional and Contemporary Attributes of Universities as Arts and Cultural Anchors.

Traditional Anchors of Arts & Culture	Contemporary Anchors of Arts & Culture
Knowledge Transfer	
<i>Artist patronage</i>	<i>Human capital investment in workforce training and new signifiers of training mastery</i>
Traditional training in arts programs with specific but separate and distinct degrees in music, visual art, theatre, and dance	New interdisciplinary degrees that integrate the arts but are for students interested in creative, or more commercial focused arts (e.g. arts and engineering, gaming and design) and aren't aligned with traditional arts and are usually not in the same administrative unit
	New interdisciplinary degrees for traditional arts students (majors, minors)
	New non-degree credentials for art students that opt-in and skills focused to supplement traditional degrees (certificates, badges one-off skills courses and workshops)
	New learning outcomes and courses supplement traditional arts degrees that are geared towards workforce training or a broader contextualization of the arts in society
Internal apprenticeships and graduate research opportunities (e.g. college radio stations, printmaking assistantships, lab assistants)	Focus on experiential learning, including internships, service learning, studios connected with external partners
	Connecting with local and regional workforce providers in both arts and non-arts fields to work on job placement but alignment with training and job needs
Landholdings, Facilities, and Infrastructure	
<i>Artist patronage</i>	<i>Bricks and mortar investments enhanced</i>
Build and subsidize facilities where material is delivered by experts who manage, produce, and present the material to visitors or passive observers (e.g. performing arts theatres, museums, exhibition spaces, black box theatres, roadhouses)	Build and subsidize new physical spaces (maker spaces, arts labs, other) where work is self-directed and democratic, and may involve collaborating with external partners

Provide access to equipment, materials, audiences through traditional facility investments to members of the community	Opens doors to community members and organizations to provide access to equipment, materials, audiences either for subsidized rates and supports arts faculty and students collaborating with community members and organizations to design, produce, and share work
Using large scale arts and cultural facilities as part of Urban Renewal histories and legacies	Use arts and cultural facilities and infrastructure for targeted neighborhood revitalization and redevelopment (e.g. Baltimore’s Station North; MICA; Johns Hopkins)
	Works with regional economic partners to use public art facilities as part of an amenity profile or attraction for high knowledge workers
Major Regional Employer	
<i>Artist patronage</i>	<i>Human capital investment in attraction and retention</i>
Hire artists as faculty where salary supports artist work and also gives these faculty access to equipment, networks, and performance/exhibition spaces	Recognize and support arts faculty and students as creative forces that drivers shaping the regional creative sector in economic development
Hire artists (community artists, student artists) to staff arts and cultural programming on and off-site	Focus on art degrees and programs where artist is (re)trained as an innovator and problem solver that will lead to greater economic benefits for the region
	City and regional economic developers market arts and cultural facilities as part of region’s amenities profile to attract and retain knowledge workers
Innovation and Transfer of Ideas	
Creating traditional arts programming that is delivered to internal and external audiences	Build and subsidize new physical spaces (maker spaces, arts labs, other) that are designed to help students learn how to create “products” not just for traditional nonprofit sectors but also civic and for-profit ends
	Focus on new integration degrees geared towards the for-profit creative sector and economy to support STEM clusters and high knowledge workers

	New integration initiatives, generally called STEAM or design thinking, that are housed outside of traditional arts programs that draw on art approaches and processes to solve problems more effectively and efficiently; may not involve traditional arts faculty or programs
Grow and spin-off arts and cultural organizations that initiate from student/faculty collaborations	Grow and spin-off arts and cultural organizations that tests an idea or product then helps these groups launch it strategically and with resources
Social Practice Focus	
<i>Artist patronage</i>	<i>Investment in community or community development</i>
Train students to be art educators, establishing future gatekeepers of arts and culture	Collaborate and partner with community groups and stakeholders on equitable development and neighborhood revitalization
Offer subsidized tickets to low income or resourced groups for university performances and exhibitions	Different academic units (colleges, schools, centers, departments, programs) incorporate a “social” purpose into their mission
Subsidize university space for arts and cultural events for low resourced groups	Offer new academic programs that use or leverage arts for social practice (e.g. Creative Placemaking)
	Collaborate with other regional anchors to address issues of inequality and oversight

Source: Synthesis of literature, interviews, and case study research (Ashley and Durham 2019.)
Note: This is not an exhaustive list but illustrations of the shift from a traditional to contemporary anchor institutions.

In its earlier form, the university had three primary functions in 1) knowledge creation and transfer, 2) capital projects and real estate activities, and 3) major employment generators. First, it primarily focused on bricks and mortar investments through landholding, facilities, and infrastructure. Performance and exhibition facilities provided space and equipment for students to train; for faculty to use for their own artistic practice; and for the university to use as a source of revenue through touring companies and events. These facilities also supported the university’s role as a site of knowledge transfer with its emphasis on offering traditional arts degrees and experiences where students learn and develop a particular craft and discipline in

traditional arenas, including music, theater, visual arts, and dance. As a major regional employer, the university hires artists as faculty (tenure-track, lecturers, clinical, adjuncts) that provide financial stability to the artist and also gives them opportunity to train and mentor students in their particular discipline. Depending upon the position and other factors, the artist as a faculty member is also given access to equipment, networks, and performance/exhibition spaces. While some scholars debate whether universities anchor through social practice in general, we saw illustrations of this in the traditional realm too, namely through the university's ability to subsidize space and event experiences, but also through training artists to be educators and art students to work in K-12 settings.

In the contemporary form, the university arts and cultural anchor not only takes on greater variation in its activities but there is also an emerging shift towards a more active and intentional approach to its role. There is a movement from pure artistic training in a singular practice to a workforce readiness approach that features skill development and cross-sector training. There has been a well-documented increase in curriculum experiments around arts entrepreneurship and arts management products or value-added signifiers (singular courses, minors, certificates, badges, specializations) that art students can couple with their traditional degrees. There are also several other integration curriculum experiments that bring art and artists into other student experiences across campus in non-arts academic units. For example, there is an increase in STEAM (Science-Technology- Engineering-Arts-Math) initiatives that see how arts-related inputs (whether the input is students, faculty, materials, or scholarship) can change the way a problem is conceptualized, solved, and communicated that makes for a better end product or solution. There are also new, more commercial focused degrees in gaming and design that meld different components of computer science, engineering, and graphic design (along with

storytelling and music composition and editing). There is also a small and slow growing cluster of courses and certificates that integrate the arts in urban studies or in community and environmental health to champion creative place-making and public health benefits in place-based communities. Beyond these individual curriculum innovations, the university is also investing in new structural operations, including new centers about creative enterprise, creative placemaking, arts and entertainment, and arts entrepreneurship. The university anchor has adapted in response to these new integration avenues.

The university has also made a substantial shift in how it marshals its capital facilities and infrastructure investments. Maker lab spaces, art incubators, creativity labs, and more facility-based innovations are supporting student training and undergraduate/graduate research but also faculty research development. These are smaller fine-grained spaces that have an array of motivations and intentions that vary across universities and can be, but do not have to be, connected to academic units and programs. We increasingly see universities collaborating with regional economic partners to use the public art facilities as part of a broader marketing package to attract and retain highly coveted knowledge workers (people with college degrees) to the region, which shows closer connections to growth coalitions than in the past where the university was often isolated from conversations about how to grow the region.

As arts and cultural anchors, universities are also increasing their role in social practice, which often manifests as civic engagement and community development. There are a growing number of academic units that incorporate “social practice” into their mission, values, and principles. There are academic experiences, both credit and non-credit bearing, where students through curated service learning projects, externships, and other experiential opportunities use their traditional training and any valued-added training to be a part of a solving a community

problem. This goes beyond having a visual arts student paint a generic mural downtown to having artists and/or urban studies students use pop-up art to start a civic conversation about sustainability in neighborhoods. Some universities partner with local arts organizations on neighborhood revitalization and equitable development as did Baltimore Station North Inc. with Maryland Institution of Contemporary Art and Johns Hopkins University to help revitalize the Baltimore Station North Arts and Entertainment District through funding, internal and external space, faculty/student time, and marketing support.

Finding 3: The Anchor Role is Hidden and Isolated. University leaders, both in the arts and in general leaderships positions, are largely unaware how they might explain and communicate the ways that universities can act as anchors and how their specific institution performs in that role. They could identify some anchor components where they had strengths and weaknesses, but it was not their frame of reference. Universities leaders did not think or talk about themselves as arts and cultural anchors. They were unable to position themselves broadly as actors in AED and its trends: aesthetics; workforce development; community development; amenity building; creative industries (Ashley 2017). They do not measure the local economic impact of their campus arts activities and of the arts activities their faculty participate in off and on campus or what kinds and quality of relationships their institutions have with commercial and non-profit arts organizations in the community. This is a prime example of how research and practice are disconnected in that scholars increasingly visualize or narrate these processes or attributes, but it is not the language of the actual practitioners or stakeholders.

Universities provide important resources to student and faculty artists affiliated with the institution such as employment, training, networking, and access to facilities, and even in a climate of dwindling resources, universities are arts-rich places. Yet, they are unable to see the

places where their work is going well or could be improved, and thus they are unable to share and rewrite this story. In fact, we often see university structures as the barriers to shaping the creative ecosystem, and it isn't clear where the universities' points of entry are for high community impact. Additionally, we did not see evidence of universities measuring how these resources advance artistic careers or how they support the creative eco-system.

In general, interview subjects typically noted a curriculum alternative in supporting artist workforce development, which is an important starting point. However, we also see this "hiddenness" as isolation when it comes to curriculum integration via arts entrepreneurship, arts management, creative placemaking, and STEAM practices (Table 3). Ideally in a contemporary setting, universities actively and intentionally shape artistic careers through their resources and infrastructure, and these programs try to do so. There is external excitement around new integration or workforce readiness programs, but as Beckman (2007), there is also fuzziness around design and implementation because the lack of accreditation in fields with otherwise strong accrediting bodies (NASAD, NASM, NAST, and NASD) but also the lack of articulating what the different programs accomplish for students. In many instances, these programs do not have a "home" program or department due to their interdisciplinary structure, and if they do have a home, it is often disconnected from the traditional arts departments and their related infrastructure. In many instances, these programs have high expectations from university administrators, but are inadequately resourced while also being critiqued for low quality instruction and delivery. Additionally, these programs are opt-in, and thus, it suggests that workforce readiness is not important enough to integrate into the existing and traditional arts programs.

Table 3. Illustrations of Types of Integration and Interdisciplinary Programs.*

	Intention/ Motivation	Student Targets
Arts Entrepreneurship	Skill building: Give arts students the skills to own their own business, make new products, create their own brand; highly connected to self-employment	Arts
Arts Management	Skill building: Give art students the skills to work for arts organizations in public, private, civic sector	Arts
STEAM/Gaming	Problem solving: Give STEM students a new approach to answer problems by using art practices, applying art theory, or working with artists	STEM Sometimes Arts
Creative placemaking	Social innovation: Use art and design to remake urban space or to work with artists to help facilitate urban change	Urban planning Urban Studies Sometimes Arts Community members
Design Thinking	Problem solving: use a particular strategy to address a problem in the private, civic, or nonprofit sector	Business
Arts Education	Supporting artists and non-artists to become art teachers in K-12	Education Arts

Source: Ashley and Durham (2019)

*Note: This list is not exhaustive but shows illustrations of integration.

Finding 4. Broadening Anchor Concept to include Social Practice. We agree with Taylor and Luter (2013) that the arts and cultural experience within HEIs shows how the university anchor conceptualization should include a “social purpose credo” (Ehlenz 2017) or a “change agent in social development” since we see an increasing practice of this theoretical positioning in our cases and in research. The anchor concept is limited in its focus on a standard treatment of regional economic development and overlooks the ways that the university anchor contributes to social development in the community, which leads to not only intrinsic but extrinsic outcomes. Our work goes beyond typical “scholarship of engagement” frameworks or how the university sees its public facing role in connecting students to the “real world” (e.g. service learning, technical assistance) (Northmore and Hart 2011; Reardon 2006; Wiewel and Knaap 2005; Winkler 2013) to incorporate a richer understanding of engagement as posited by

Tepper and Arthurs as a “trading zone” where collaboration, innovation, and intellectual risk-taking build transformative new alliances that explode previous institutional structures and redefine participants’ experience of relationship and place. For example, the National Creative Placemaking Certificate employs arts and culture as a strategy for improving community development in under resourced neighborhoods, and there are a number of ways that the university could partner with community organizations on a variety of topics as other scholars have noted in their work (Wiewel and Knapp 2005).

These experiential collaborations are more than just tacking on a service-learning project or experiential learning connected to arts curriculum, but a more comprehensive and deliberate way to use the problem-solving skills of art student, art/integration faculty, and community partners to realize the broader vision as Alexroth and Dubb (2010, 15) suggest of how

Urban universities [can] seek to fully achieve their anchor institution mission —that is, to consciously apply their long-term, place-based economic power, in combination with their human and intellectual resources, to better the long-term welfare of the communities in which they reside.

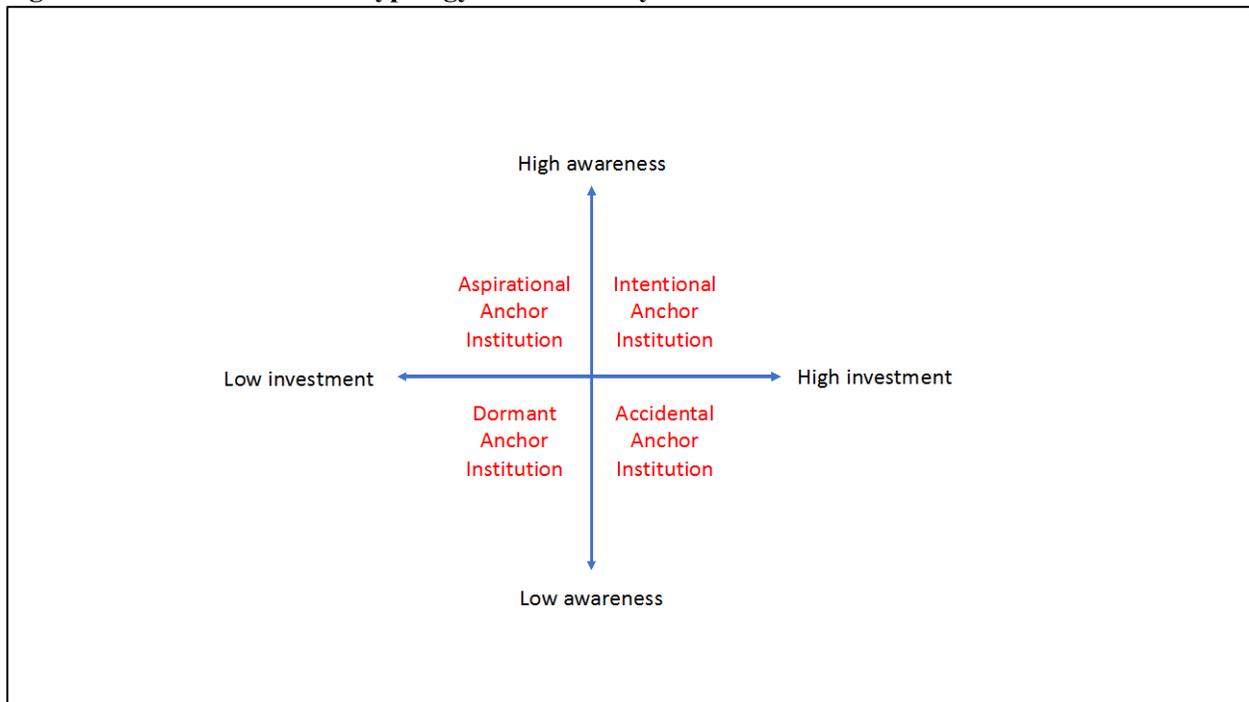
In essence, this is another way that arts and culture have contributed to the contemporary frame of the anchor institutions by reinforcing the problem solving role that universities have in their communities and how arts and cultural students, faculty, and related university assets can play.

Finding 5: A Typology for Anchor Positioning. Our data shows that there are different stages of anchor positioning. There are four broad stages or opportunities as an anchor: dormant, aspirational, accidental, and intentional that are driven by their awareness of what an anchor can do, which involves both identifying and narrative the building blocks of an anchor, and by their activities to invest in arts and culture elements. We suggest that this is part of the general anchor evolution in that are ways that universities contribute to the economy that are standard and

require very little activation; however, there are ways that the university can become a more advanced anchor through strategic narratives and investment.

Based on interviews and literature from general anchor studies, arts economic development research, university arts evaluations, and arts and cultural anchors, we have identified four university anchor types for arts and culture. The y-axis denotes whether university administrators are aware of how they anchor arts and culture in the region, and the x-axis denotes the extent to which the university has invested in arts and culture. This is a conceptual drawing to help universities figure out where they sit and to give them information about how to move to different phases (Figure 1). Below, the four types are briefly articulated.

Figure 1: Arts and Cultural Typology for University Anchor Institutions



Source: Ashley and Durham (2013)

Aspirational anchor institution: These are universities that have high awareness and interest about what it means to be a contemporary art and cultural anchor, but they have limited resources to invest in the ways they would like. These universities might have a few initiatives or

strategies in play but they are unable to harness the resources (political, financial, administrative) to become an active or intentional anchor and are looking for ways to do so.

Intentional anchor institution: These are universities that have high awareness of what it means to be a twenty-first century arts and cultural anchors, and they are actively engaged in investing and supporting their capabilities because they are able to harness significant resources.

Aspirational anchor institution: These are universities that have high awareness of what it means to be a twenty-first century arts and cultural anchor, but they are unable to harness the resources or to invest in this role.

Passive anchor institution: These are universities that have low awareness about how to identify the building blocks of an arts and cultural anchor and don't know how to communicate or narrate their story. However, they have made significant investments in arts and culture. This is a missed opportunity to fully communicate their role or help make a case for the importance of arts and culture for economic, community, and workforce development.

Dormant anchor institution: These are universities that do not know how to identify the building blocks of an anchor institution, and they can't convey their narrative or story; they have made limited investments in arts and culture.

We see these anchor types deeply aligned and connected to the impact assessment tool that we discuss below. The assessment tool offers universities the opportunity to identify its strengths while recognizing aspects of its programming that might benefit from strategic redesign. We take inspiration from Cathy Davidson (2017) who writes,

We need educators and administrators themselves committed to redesigning ethical, democratic, pragmatic, forward-looking education... We need individuals and institutions to work together to rejuvenate an antiquated system for our accelerating times and to ensure that the solutions we craft address the real problems rather than just generating new ones.

The alternative university setting has the potential to move from treating the anchor concept as a “given” and consider ways to energize its opportunities through active reflection.

Finding 6: The Intermountain West as Varied Context. We found that anchor attributes and the evolution of the anchor identity is not a one-size fits all narrative. Rather, universities are part of a longer historical arc in development of the region’s arts and cultural identity. Analyses need to move beyond the university as an isolated, separate (or immune) entity, and they need to frame how the university has responded and reacted to the political, cultural, financial, and regulatory forces that drive the structural foundation of the region. This observation is particularly relevant for our geographical focus and scale. For example, the right-to-work nature of many of the Intermountain West states has implications for how universities anchor arts and cultural activity. In another example, prevalent faith-based organizations and institutions influence how certain arts practices and disciplines develop, and thus, how the university responds to those priorities. Additionally, a fair amount of the anchor literature stems from the loss of corporate commitments and the rise of large profits to fill that leadership, funding, employment, and philanthropic gap. However, the large cities of the Intermountain West don’t share that story, but are often connected to different industries in agriculture and extraction rather than in corporate finance and high-end services. It is essential to understand the path-dependent nature of the arts and culture eco-system to position the university and its role as an anchor. There is limited information about how anchor institutions as well as how arts and cultural institutions play a different or more profound role in the Intermountain West due to the geographic isolation and the lack of a strong history of philanthropic investment in the arts. At the same time, it does raise questions about whether the entrepreneurial spirit of the West influences the way universities work and function as their role shifts.

Impact Assessment Tool: Universities as Arts and Cultural Anchors

Our research underscores that universities do not think of themselves as art and cultural anchors or they think about it in marginal ways. As a result, they are unable to evaluate or communicate their contributions, and they are not able to make good choices about arts and cultural investments so that they strengthen their anchor role and realize their potential. To help university leaders perceive their role in influencing the artistic communities in their vicinity and to help them become aware of their cultural assets, we have created a pilot impact assessment tool. This will give them the knowledge to enhance their universities' reputations and distinguish their universities' identities while enhancing the reputations and distinguishing the identities of their home cities. Universities attract significant artistic talent to their faculty ranks, and those uniquely skilled faculty in turn attract students. Without the university's presence in a region like the Intermountain West, artistic labor would be scarce for a variety of industries. This would allow them to start to measure the creative and economic contribution they have. We want them to identify the key aspects of being an anchor and we have designed the pilot test to help with this stage. We suggest that there are three parts: 1) being able to identify the key aspects of being an anchor, 2) being able to tell the anchor story through narrative frameworks, and 3) then investing and developing partnerships based on an evaluation of performance or based on the mission of the institution and its different units. This exercise is useful for universities in any locale, but it may be especially critical for universities in the Intermountain West experiencing tremendous growth and that have not historically had deep and highly developed artistic resources. The impact assessment tool and its overview is found in the Appendix.

Conclusion and Future Work

Universities in the U.S. are touted as a great patron of the arts largely due to their investments in bricks and mortar projects and their academic programs that train emerging artists in the traditional arts. However, this patronage status overlooks the ways that universities anchor arts and cultural activity as part of the regional creative ecology. Our research shows the breadth and depth of this anchoring to overcome the fuzziness of the concept, and to help university and economic development stakeholders understand the powerful role that the university plays in the regional creative ecosystem or the regional arts and cultural ecology. Our research makes five central points. First, the university is an important and diverse arts and cultural anchor as a knowledge center, landowner and real estate developer, major employer and facilitator, and as a social developer. Second, there has been a shift in how the university acts as an art and cultural anchor from the traditional patronage approach to a contemporary model where the university is an investor, innovator, and facilitator. Third, there are four broad stages or opportunities as an anchor: dormant, aspirational, passive, and intentional that are driven by their awareness of what an anchor can do, which involves both identifying and narrative the building blocks of an anchor, and by their activities to invest in arts and culture elements. Fourth, university leaders, both in the arts and in general leaderships positions, are largely unaware about how to explain and communicate the ways that universities can act as anchors or how they specific institution does. Fifth, the anchor concept is limited in its focus on a standard treatment of regional economic development and overlooks the ways that the university anchor contributes to social development in the community, which leads to extrinsic outcomes. Sixth, the arts and cultural anchor institutions in the Intermountain West show that context matters as the geographic, political, and cultural development of this region influences the ways that universities can perform as anchors creating both opportunities and limitations.

These findings demonstrate a disconnection between theory and practice, which leads to missed opportunities to invest in ways that respond to evidence-based strategies. To help ameliorate this disconnect, we marshalled our data and analysis to design and create a pilot *University Anchor: Arts and Cultural Impact Assessment Tool* for university leader (President, Deans, Provosts, Directors, Chairs, Leads) to employ to help them identify the building blocks of a university arts and cultural anchor so that they can narrate their value to relevant stakeholders and to provide support around investment discussions and decision-making. This assessment tool coupled with our typology of anchor status gives university leaders more information to help make decisions in the difficult funding and political climates surrounding HEIs. We hope our applied research helps universities how they can move from being an arts patron to an arts investor, innovator, and catalyst.

The National Endowment for the Arts award for the Art Works program has given us the opportunity to study the broad concept of the “anchor institution” and apply it to art and cultural contexts. From a scholarly endeavor, we have been able to deepen not only the anchor concept but to fill in some central actors and institutions from work happening to draw and define the regional creative ecology. Our work also suggests the need to expand the anchor concept from a pure economic development angle about regional growth and shrinkage to also include the social role or the “social purpose credo” that universities play in their place-based communities as noted by Taylor and Lutner (2013) and Ehlenz (2017). The grant program has allowed us to develop future directions that align theory and practice, including pilot testing the assessment tool with select university communities, conducting a network analysis of universities with regional economic development stakeholders, evaluating contemporary artist workforce

development programs, and identifying practices of how universities are using arts as a tool for social innovation.

Appendix 1: Assessment Tool

Intentional Arts Anchor Assessment Tool

What it is:

A series of questions developed in response to data collected while creating university case studies in the Intermountain West; after interviews with national arts education leaders; and as a result of synthesizing current work on anchor institutions broadly conceived, arts economic development, and the twenty-first century university.

As one considers the questions, she gains a richer appreciation of the assets on her campus and in her community, and has the opportunity to view them through a broader lens of the multi-dimensional components that an innovative arts anchor might have.

The questions are in four parts: integrative arts training; supporting integrative arts training beyond the curriculum; investments and infrastructure; and university/community connections. While these four pieces together form the core of the innovative arts university, it is also possible to focus on one of the four areas for analysis, work, and investment.

What it does:

Maps local arts and community features in the context of what an innovative arts anchor can be regionally and nationally. It builds awareness of key anchor features; ensures self-awareness of university assets and how they relate to each other; and the results provides an essential tool for promoting the importance of arts on campus and in the community.

Helps university arts leaders tell the story of their artistic innovation, cultural relevance, and economic impact to their various stakeholders including faculty; students and parents; campus fundraisers and potential donors; upper university administration; and community stakeholders in the arts and in a variety of industries.

Who might use it and in what contexts:

The tool will be of value to individuals and teams. It can be used as an independent “desktop exercise” or in a workshop or meeting. Multiple university perspectives (from administrators, faculty, professional staff, and community partners) will likely maximize the tool’s impact, but a solo investigator can also use the tool effectively if she assembles some relevant institutional data.

The benefits:

It helps universities assess where they should invest precious resources

- To fill gaps in a developing or established arts ecosystem
- To highlight and advance identity-building strengths that already exist
- To forge deeper community connections aimed at advancing social good
- To create a vibrant creative workforce prepared to meet the challenges of twenty-first century employment
- To accelerate the economic impact of the arts in the local community

Intentional Arts Anchor Assessment Tool

The Innovative Arts University as Cultural Anchor			Yes	No	Unsure
Intergrative Arts Training: Key Components and Skills					
	Fundamentals of arts training	Does training in technique, theory, and history meet or exceed the standards of the disciplinary accreditation body? (NAST, NASM, NASD, NASAD)			
	Interdisciplinary exposure	Do students have learning and making opportunities within at least one of their field's subdisciplines?			
		Do students have learning and making opportunities across artistic fields?			
		Do students have exposure to arts management or arts administration?			
		Do students have exposure to entrepreneurship--arts or general?			
		Do students have exposure to current or new technologies?			
		Do students have exposure to placemaking and planning?			
		Do students have exposure to arts as social practice?			
		Are interdisciplinary experiences integrated into the arts curriculum and degree requirements?			
		Are interdisciplinary experiences offered as supplements to the arts curriculum/degree requirements?			
		Are interdisciplinary experiences credentialed through degrees, minors, certificates, or badges?			
	Applied learning	Do students have apprenticeship opportunities?			
		Do students have internship opportunities in non-profit arts?			
		Do students have internship opportunities in commercial arts?			
		Do students have internship opportunities in the education sector?			
		Do students have internship opportunities in the government sector?			
		Do students have internship opportunities in commercial sector beyond the arts?			
		Do students have service learning opportunities?			
		Do students have service learning opportunities that include a social justice component?			
		Are there study abroad programs focusing on the arts?			
		Do students have opportunities to participate in faculty-developed research projects?			
		Do students have opportunities to participate in student-developed research projects?			
	Skills articulation	Are students asked to recognize and assess their creative thinking?			
		Are students asked to recognize and assess their critical thinking?			
		Are students asked to recognize and assess their skills in team work and collaboration?			
		Are students asked to recognize and assess their ability to respect diverse perspectives?			
		Are students asked to recognize and assess their capacity for empathy?			
The Innovative Arts University as Cultural Anchor			Yes	No	Unsure

The Innovative Arts University as Cultural Anchor							
Supporting and extending the integrative arts curriculum				Yes	No	Unsure	NA
	Admissions						
		Do general recruiting materials feature the arts?					
		Are there recruiting materials specially designed for prospective arts students?					
		Is there arts focused recruiting?					
		Is there arts focused orientation?					
	Arts experiences						
		Is student work shown on campus?					
		Is student work sold on campus?					
		Is faculty work shown on campus?					
		Is faculty work sold on campus?					
		Is the work of community-based artists shown on campus?					
		Is the work of community-based artists sold on campus?					
		Is the work of non-locally based artists shown on campus?					
		Is the work of non-locally based artists sold on campus?					
		Is the work of artists from under-represented groups shown on campus?					
		Is the work of artists from under-represented groups sold on campus?					
		Do students have free access to arts events on campus?					
		Do students have free access to arts events off campus?					
		Do faculty have free access to arts events on campus?					
	Advising						
		Do academic advisors for arts students have an arts background?					
		Can academic advisors for arts students articulate the skills a student is likely to gain through the arts degree?					
		Can academic advisors articulate the skills a student is likely to gain in particular arts courses?					
		Are academic advisors familiar with classes that would complement the standard arts curriculum?					
		Are academic advisors knowledgeable about applied learning opportunities?					
	Career Services						
		Do Career Services staff have an arts background?					
		Do Career Services staff recognize the range of skills arts students have and the industries in which they would be applicable?					
		Is Career Services well connected to non profit arts employers?					
		Is Career Services well connected to commercial arts employers?					
		Does Career Services have an established record of placing arts students beyond the arts sectors?					
		Do they host job fairs or industry showcases focusing on artist employment?					
		Can Career Services staff help students with application materials targeting arts sector jobs?					
		Can Career Services staff help students translate arts-based application materials for non arts jobs?					
	Alumni						
		Does the alumni association track and promote arts alumni successes?					
		Is there an arts alumni board?					
		Are there events for arts alumni networking?					
		Are there professional development events designed for arts alumni?					
		Are there structures for connecting arts alumni and current students?					

The Innovative Arts University as Cultural Anchor								
Investments and Infrastructure								
	Facilities		Yes	No	Unsure	NA	Comments	
		Does the number of performance venues meet the needs of academic programs?						
		Does the number of performance venues meet the needs of community presenters?						
		Does the number of exhibition venues meet the needs of academic programs?						
		Does the number of exhibition venues meet the needs of community artists?						
		Do the sizes of performance venues meet the needs of academic programs?						
		Do the sizes of performance venues meet the needs of community presenters?						
		Does the number of maker spaces meet the needs of students and faculty?						
		Does the number of maker spaces meet the needs of community artists?						
		Do facilities have current industry standard technology?						
		Are maintenance funds allocated to update technology regularly?						
		Are arts facilities accessible by public transit?						
		Is parking readily available at arts facilities?						
		Do faculty artists have office and studio space on campus?						
		Is there a living/learning community for arts students?						
		Are there on-campus accommodations for visiting artists?						
	Advancement and Fundraising							
		Is there at least one development director focusing on the arts?						
		Does scholarship funding for arts students align with funding levels at peer institutions?						
		Are there endowed chairs in the arts?						
		Are the arts a focus in major university fundraising initiatives?						
		Are arts spaces and programs named for donors?						
	Faculty							
		Does faculty staffing in arts disciplines follow accreditation guidelines?						
		Are faculty salaries at or above CUPA averages?						
		Do arts faculty serve in administrative roles beyond their departments?						
		Are promotion and tenure policies attentive to and respectful of artistic work products?						
		Do promotion and tenure policies recognize interdisciplinary work in and beyond the arts?						
		Do promotion and tenure policies recognize community-based work?						
		Do promotion and tenure policies recognize work done in collaboration with students?						
		Do promotion and tenure guidelines recognize entrepreneurial work?						
		Are there professional development opportunities designed specifically for arts faculty?						
		Is there an effort to create and maintain a diverse faculty?						
		Is there a dual career policy used to recruit faculty artists?						
	Research							
		Does anyone in the research office have arts expertise?						
		Is there proposal development assistance for arts faculty?						
		Does the research office publicize opportunities for external funding in the arts?						
		Does the research office have						

The Innovative Arts University as Cultural Anchor					Yes	No	Unsure
University/Community Connections		University expertise in the city					
		Do arts faculty work in the local non-profit arts sector?					
		Do arts students work in the local non-profit arts sector?					
		Do alumni work in the local non-profit arts sector?					
		Have arts faculty created new local arts entities?					
		Have arts students created new local arts entities?					
		Have arts alumni created new local arts entities?					
		Do faculty work in the local commercial arts sector?					
		Do students work in the local commercial arts sector?					
		Do alumni work in the local commercial arts sector?					
		Are faculty patrons of local arts entities?					
		Are faculty donors for local arts entities?					
		Do faculty researchers analyze or evaluate local culture activities?					
		City expertise at the university					
		Do locally-based artists serve as adjunct faculty at the university?					
		Do locally-based artists participate as artists-in-residence at the university?					
		Do locally based artists serve on industry advisory boards for the university?					
		Do locally based artists volunteer their time in support of university arts programming?					
		Economic Impact of the Arts					
		Does the university measure the economic impact of its arts activities in the city?					
		Does the city count the university's artistic activities in its assessment of local arts economic impacts?					

Source: Ashley and Durham (2019)

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