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Contact: Christine D'Arcy, Oregon Arts Commission, (503) 986-0087  
Cynthia Kirk, (503) 986-0081

## Oregon's Creative Vitality Index Better Than National Average

Oregon's creative health is robust, according to a new report commissioned by the Oregon Arts Commission. Oregon is only the second state in the nation to measure its Creative Vitality Index, or CVI. Oregon's 2006 CVI ranks 1.05 against the national average of 1, with four county clusters or workforce development areas at 1 or above:

Benton, Lincoln, Linn	1.0
Gilliam, Hood River, Sherman, Wheeler, Wasco	1.07
Jackson, Josephine	1.22
Multnomah, Washington	2.16

A fifth cluster – Baker, Union and Wallowa – came in at .98.

The full report is available online at [www.oregonartscommission.org](http://www.oregonartscommission.org), and a summary report, "Creative Vitality in Oregon," is available both online and in print. Copies of the summary may be requested by calling 503-986-0082 or emailing [oregon.artscomm@state.or.us](mailto:oregon.artscomm@state.or.us).

The Creative Vitality Index, or CVI, drawn from existing census, employment and other available data, measures public participation in the arts as well as arts-related employment. It includes data from the profit and not-for-profit sectors to map the impact of creative pursuits in a local economy. The summary, "Creative Vitality in Oregon," includes portraits from around the state that plot the intersection of private and public creative enterprises. They include:

- **Enterprise's Big Read**, in the Baker, Union, Wallowa cluster where book sales average \$41.81 per capita, far above the national average of \$30.78;
- Artistic ferment in **the Gorge** where gallery and museums purchases in the five county area measure 4.21 – three times more per capita than the Portland metro area;

- **Medford's** Land Shark Bikes, one of Oregon's 275,000 micro enterprises (businesses with five or fewer employees), many creatively driven, that now comprise 18% of the state's workforce;
- **Portland's** independent music scene, fueling musical instrument sales that, at \$40 per capita, triple the national average of \$16.23;
- **Central Oregon's** thriving graphic design community, which contributes to the third largest concentration of arts-related jobs in the state; and
- **Salem's** Mary Lou Zeek who, since 2001 has used her art gallery and marketing savvy to jumpstart downtown revitalization.

The Creative Vitality Index is a departure from traditional arts economic impact studies. By extracting data from the profit and not-or-profit sectors, it provides a more complete picture of how creative work affects the broader economy. The CVI not only looks at the people who earn a creative wage outside the nonprofit arts world -- visual artists, graphic designers, writers, and architects -- it also measures participation beyond performing arts ticket sales and museum entry fees. Its indicators include book and music sales, photographic and art supplies shops, and the purchase of musical instruments.

The Creative Vitality Index concept was pioneered by the Washington State Arts Commission in partnership with the Western States Arts Federation. By using existing data, the CVI offers a faster -- and less expensive -- way to track changes, year by year.

Across the country, civic leaders, economists, philanthropists, business leaders and arts and community leaders are engaged in lively dialogue about how to define and build the creative economy. The Creative Vitality Index contributes broad, systems-oriented thinking to the discussion and demonstrates the interdependency of nonprofit arts organizations with local businesses, chambers of commerce with public arts agencies. The CVI makes explicit what has long been implicit: culture and commerce nurture each other. Together, they bring economic health, energy and progress to civic life.

Christine D'Arcy, executive director of the Arts Commission, said, "Oregon's Creative Vitality Index is an important new voice in our state's dialogue about the creative economy. Its specificity, and the inclusion of data from the for-profit as well as not-for-profit sectors, makes it a relevant and powerful tool."

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The Oregon Arts Commission provides leadership, funding and arts programs through its grants, special initiatives and services. Nine commissioners, appointed by the Governor, determine arts needs and establish policies for public support of the arts. The Arts Commission became part of the Economic Development Department in 1993, in recognition of the expanding role the arts play in the broader social, economic and educational arenas of Oregon communities. In 2003, the Oregon legislature moved the operations of the Oregon Cultural Trust to the Arts Commission, streamlining operations and making use of the Commission's expertise in grantmaking, arts and cultural information and community cultural development. The Arts Commission is supported with general funds appropriated by the Oregon legislature and with federal funds from the National Endowment for the Arts as well as funds from the Oregon Cultural Trust.