

I AM

CREATIVE
BIRMINGHAM

DESIGN

Literary & Publishing
GRAPHIC DESIGN, ARCHITECTURE
& PRODUCT DESIGN

CULTURE
& HERITAGE

MUSEUMS, LIBRARIES, AND HISTORIC SITES

NEWSPAPERS, TV, RADIO,
FILM & VIDEO PRODUCTION,
AND RECORDING STUDIOS

MEDIA
& FILM

PERFORMING
ARTS

THEATRES & THEATER COMPANIES,
MUSICAL COMPOSITION, PRODUCTION,
CHOREOGRAPHY, & DANCE

VISUAL ARTS
& CRAFTS

PHOTOGRAPHY, PAINTING, POTTERY,
GLASSBLOWING, & FURNITURE MAKING

CULINARY ARTS

CHEFS, CATERERS, CRAFT BREWERS, MIXOLOGISTS,
FOOD STYLISTS, FOOD TRUCKS, RESTAURATEURS

STOKING INNOVATION IN THE MAGIC CITY: BIRMINGHAM'S CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

A Report to

THE CULTURAL ALLIANCE OF GREATER BIRMINGHAM

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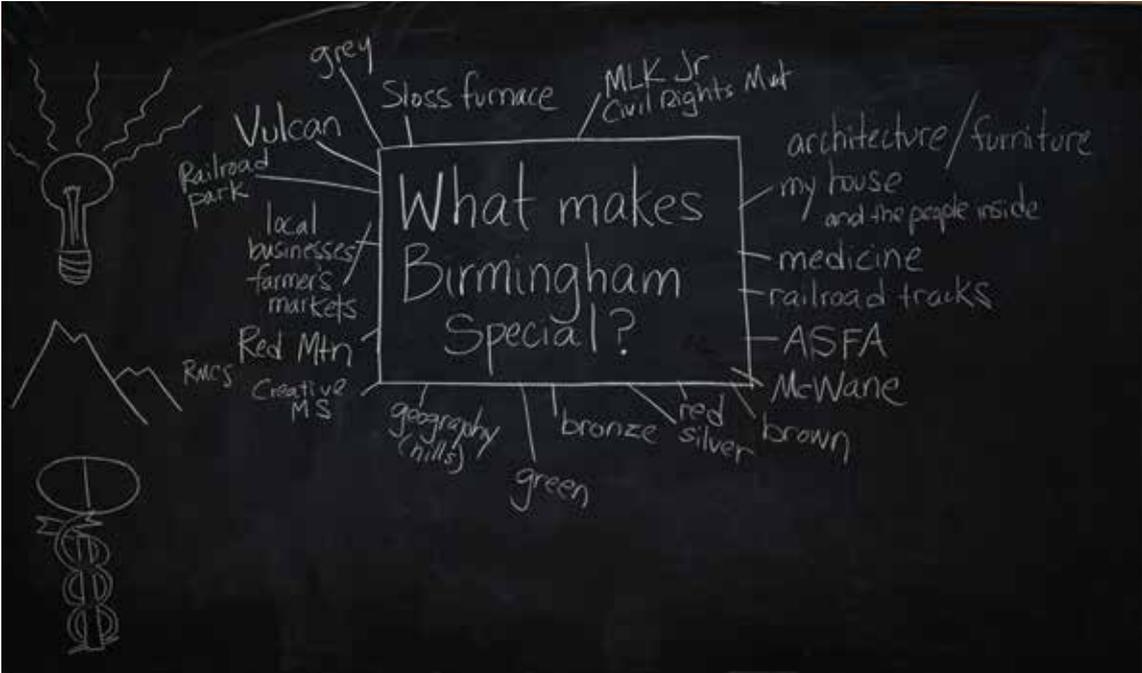




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BIRMINGHAM IS EXPERIENCING A RENAISSANCE.



NATIONAL MEDIA ATTENTION

In 2013, national media outlets recognized Birmingham as a great place to live, work, or visit. These accolades share a focus on arts, food, history, and other cultural offerings—components of the city's burst of creativity.

National Geographic Traveler highlighted Birmingham's comeback and attributed the renaissance to its creative side, chefs, microbreweries, and visual arts.

NBC's "Today Show" mentioned Birmingham as one of the top cities to visit because of the 50th anniversary of the civil rights movement.

Fodor's chose Birmingham as one of its best fall destinations, placing it in an elite group of cities including Istanbul, Hong Kong, Miami, Portland, and Chicago.

Under30CEO readers ranked Birmingham 10th among all small-size U.S. cities for best places to open new companies based on local resources, culture, atmosphere, and overall appeal to people in their 20s.

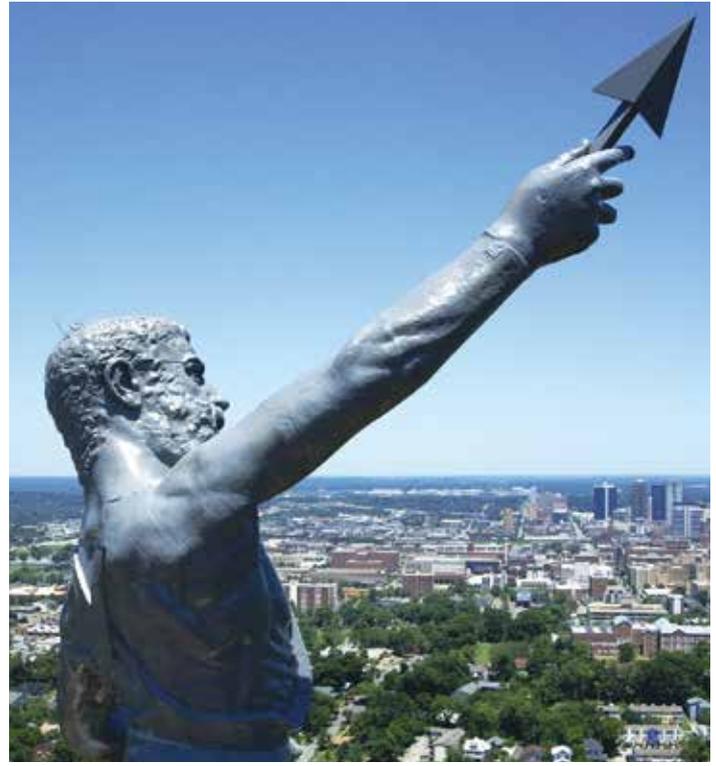
Livability.com included Birmingham in their 2014 "Top 10 Best Downtowns to Live In."

Progress, prosperity, and growth headlined national media coverage of the city's 2013 commemoration of the civil rights events that made Birmingham infamous 50 years ago. Attention to Birmingham's vibrant food and beer scene, award-winning parks, and new attractions highlight how revitalization efforts are improving the city's image.

To capitalize on this forward movement, the Cultural Alliance of Greater Birmingham (the Alliance) sponsored an in-depth research study to inform residents, leaders, and stakeholders on growing Birmingham's economy.

This resulting report, **Stoking Innovation in the Magic City: Birmingham's Creative Industries**, provides a snapshot of our arts, culture, and design communities at a critical stage where investment and stewardship can be a catalyst for continued momentum. The **Creative Industries Plan** examines labor statistics across industries and occupations and provides a strong economic case for encouraging the arts, culture, and design. Results are focused on how to increase opportunities for success and contribute to innovation, growth, and quality of life in Birmingham. The plan's eight strategies reach across creative sectors to government, education, and businesses, as well

as other growing industry sectors such as healthcare, technology, and manufacturing. Guiding and implementing the recommendations would first require capacity building and dedication of resources. This enhanced organizational structure, plus investment in education and small businesses, will allow Birmingham to build on its unique personality and create an attractive environment for innovation and growth. With our wealth of cultural assets and talented people, the city is perfectly positioned to support and nurture new creative endeavors and ensure all residents of Birmingham have equal opportunities to realize their full potential.



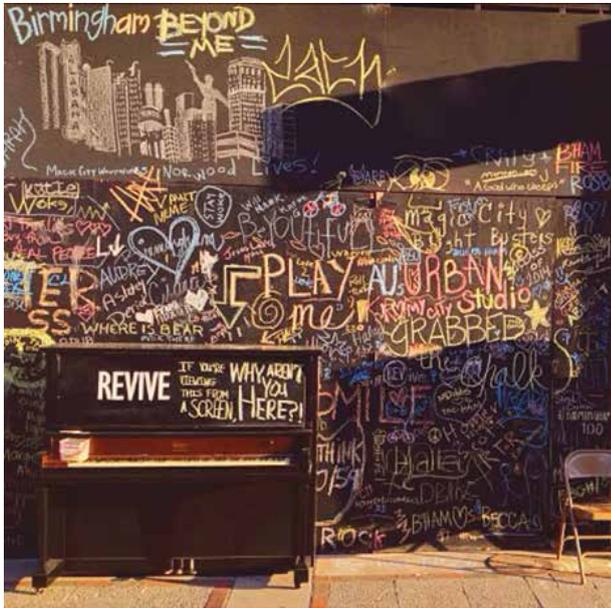
CREATIVE INDUSTRIES CONTEXT

At the turn of the 20th century, Birmingham earned the moniker “The Magic City” because of its rapid growth from a small railroad crossing town into a bustling manufacturing and industrial city. Decades later, when iron and steel waned as economic forces, the city turned its focus to healthcare and research with the University of Alabama at Birmingham leading the way. Throughout Birmingham's history, the abundance of art and culture has given the city its unique cultural personality and creative character. Birmingham's long traditions of music, art, and theater have been preserved, even in the face of industrialization, modernization, and change.

Arts and cultural activities have always supported the city's economy and are poised to influence future growth. Additionally, the creative industry sector and its specific subsectors generate new jobs, recruit talent and businesses, and enhance the amenities available to everyone in the region. Birmingham's ability to grow and prosper in the future depends on its willingness to encourage this next wave of innovation, entrepreneurship, and ingenuity. Positioning the city at the forefront of a new economy requires investment in creative endeavors and activities in the local environment, schools, and workplaces.

To illustrate the context of creative industries in Birmingham's economy, in-depth analysis of the region's 12-15 economic sectors or clusters was gleaned from three recent documents: Blueprint Birmingham, A Growth Strategy for the Seven-County Region, Birmingham Business Alliance, 2010; Accelerate Alabama, A Strategic Economic Development Plan, Economic Development Partnership of Alabama, 2012; and the Comprehensive Master Plan for the City of Birmingham, 2013. The healthcare, finance, insurance, and other services sectors have been relatively strong throughout the recession. Targeted growth sectors include healthcare, biological and medical technology, and some niche areas of advanced manufacturing. Notably, the “arts, entertainment, and tourism” sector shows promise as a catalyst for Birmingham's economic growth. Emphasizing food, entertainment, heritage, arts, and culture gives all industry sectors the assets needed to recruit businesses and workers. Plus, these assets are vital to attracting tourists, conventions, and other visitors. By supporting Birmingham's unique creative culture, entrepreneurship, new businesses, and new jobs develop.

The emphasis on arts and culture is not a new focus. In 2002, a coalition of leaders developed the Cultural Master Plan, celebrating the region's rich heritage and diversity. That plan emphasized the size of the cultural sector and the importance of cultural industries to the city's economic development. Recommendations included increasing funding and support for the arts and expanding participation among minority populations through education and neighborhood-based programming.



Then, in 2012, the Cultural Alliance of Greater Birmingham's Arts and Economic Prosperity Study (by Americans for the Arts) concluded that nonprofit arts and culture organizations generated \$234.9 million in economic activity. These Birmingham nonprofits alone supported an estimated 6,805 full-time-equivalent jobs. Employment growth in arts, entertainment, and recreation expanded approximately 25% (fourth highest out of the city's 18 industry clusters) from 2001 to 2010.

This report builds on those previous studies. A steering committee (listed on page 73) was formed to guide researchers as they first explored traditional economic development methods to measure Birmingham's creative jobs and the wealth they generate. Researchers further used online and in-person interviews and research, plus input from the steering committee and focus groups.

This report defines the broad creative industry sector and its sub-sectors, and explores businesses that transform, distribute, and commoditize art, design, and culture to consumers. Direct economic activities with the city's creative industries are measured, as well as larger indirect effects. Recommended strategies and activities are outlined with a special emphasis on creating educational opportunities and support.

Art, culture, and design enrich people's lives, enhance communities, give pleasure, and provide educational and emotional experiences. This intrinsic value combined with the significant economic contribution establishes a new context for funding the arts, culture, and design and justifies much greater public sector investment in creative enterprises and activities. To remain competitive, the city must take advantage of this opportunity to reinforce and solidify its position. To strengthen the economy and generate employment, Birmingham must bolster existing strengths, remove obstacles to success, and develop new and innovative opportunities.

Suggested strategies to achieve those goals were developed from the consultants' local research and exemplar success stories from other communities. To reap the full benefits of its creative people and creative industries, Birmingham should create an overarching organizational strategy to help prioritize, develop, and implement the strategies and actions; identify strategies that build on ongoing activities and require immediate action; and plan long-term strategies to develop the creative industries in ways that generate and equitably distribute wealth and opportunity. Creative investment promises to grow Birmingham's economy and ultimately improve the quality of life for everyone.

MEASURING THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

To measure the scale of the creative industries' economy, the number of jobs and amount of income associated with producing goods and services were considered. Using the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes, this study estimates employment in defined creative industries and defined creative occupations, including nonprofit employees, freelancers, and the self-employed. Further data was gathered from focus groups, individual interviews, online surveys, site visits, open forum summits, and steering committee meetings. For more information about methodology, see page 54.



TOTAL EMPLOYMENT IN CREATIVE INDUSTRIES AND CREATIVE OCCUPATIONS

22,700+

CREATIVE WORKERS IN CREATIVE INDUSTRIES **6300+**

CREATIVE WORKERS IN OTHER INDUSTRIES **5400+**

NON-CREATIVE WORKERS IN CREATIVE INDUSTRIES **11,000+**

CREATIVE INDUSTRY JOBS PRODUCE ANNUAL EARNINGS EXCEEDING

\$558 MILLION.

CREATIVE INDUSTRIES CONTRIBUTE TO ALL INDUSTRIES

Creative industries and occupations comprise the six interrelated sectors pictured. For this report, creative industry jobs were counted and financial impact measured. The resulting conservative estimates offer insight into the potential for greater economic growth in Birmingham when creative industries and jobs are supported.

Performers, painters, and musicians are just the beginning of the creative industries. Chefs, architects, and printers make large contributions to the creative sectors and demonstrate how interrelated creative occupations can be with the city's economy. Arts and entertainment contribute directly to Birmingham's burgeoning tourism sector. Additionally, investment in creative sectors elevates the city's image and helps major sectors such as finance, healthcare, technology, and manufacturing attract and retain new businesses and a talented workforce.

As defined by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, creative jobs are directly represented in 6 out of 22 sectors. However, every job sector has some interest in a creative industry sector. Individuals in every industry can relate to others as customers, service providers, investors, or interested citizens.

22,754 total creative jobs = 4.68 % of overall jobs in Jefferson County in **SIX** creative sectors



From this research, the most conservative estimates reveal that creative industry jobs produce annual earnings exceeding \$558 million. These numbers are considered conservative because creative occupations are often part-time, irregular, or contract jobs that are not measured in labor or tax-related data. The strength of the creative sectors can be seen in their growth over the last decade. Those creative industries with net losses are not simply shrinking. For instance, while jobs in newspaper and magazine print publishing have decreased at a rapid rate, Birmingham has experienced significant growth in digital media jobs.



The online intersection of digital media and computer technology is just one example of cross-over between the six creative sectors and the other 16 labor categories. Employment in all sectors needs access to a pool of employees who are well-educated, well-rounded, and able to innovate. Arts education in our schools prepares Birmingham’s next generation of workers for an ever-evolving job market. Investment in creative sector businesses improves Birmingham’s overall economy by supporting entrepreneurs, freelancers, and independent artists. Non-creative sectors depend on arts and culture programming to attract and retain talent in our region. But the creative economy is about more than providing activities. Creative industries, creative workers, and non-creative support workers are significant contributors to the quality of life in our community.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

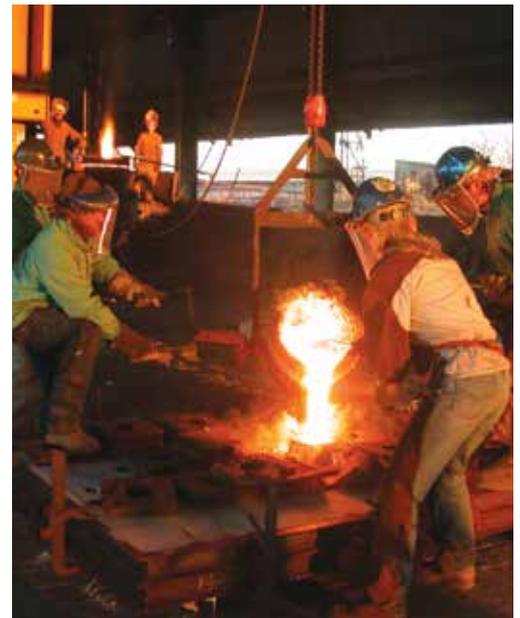
The proposed **Creative Industries Plan** requires Birmingham's commitment to strategic organization and planning. The overarching priority is to develop the community capacity to facilitate and execute the Creative Industries Plan, to include establishment of a formal **Creative Industries Board** or Stewardship Committee; development of strategic partnerships in the community; designing an effective, broad-based communications plan and developing a brand identity; development of a database of individuals and organizations; organization of networking events; securing funding for the organization; and cementing relationships with the business community.

To capitalize on current momentum, the Plan should focus particular attention on projects already in development. These ongoing activities include supporting maker spaces and food hub and processing facilities; establishing a design hub and institutionalizing Design Week; renovating the Gaston Hotel as an historic and cultural site that is part of the Civil Rights Trail; finding a venue for the showing and viewing of independent and foreign films; and further developing weekend or long-term residency crafts programs at Sloss Furnaces.

A brief description of eight core strategies with their recommended actions follows. For full detailed information about the recommendations, see page 44.

1. DEVELOP AND RETAIN TALENT

- Expand Arts and Design Education in the Public Schools
- Make Career Paths and Economic Opportunities Explicit and Available to People Making Career Choices
- Require Entrepreneurial or Business Skills in Educational Programs for Careers in Creative Fields
- Expand Media and Design Programs in Public Education with Particular Emphasis on Recruiting and Reaching Minority Populations
- Consider Becoming a Replication Site of the National Center for Arts and Technology (NCAT)
- Increase Access to Higher Education in Design
- Develop Internships for Art and Design Students
- Expand Local and Residential Crafts Programs at Sloss Furnaces



2. BLEND THE ARTS WITH SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY TO NURTURE INNOVATION

- Coordinate Existing Efforts that Integrate Learning among Sciences, Arts, and Humanities
- Establish a Design "Wing" at the Innovation Depot for Companies Developing Creative Products or Services
- Organize Monthly Events that Combine Creativity and Innovation





3. EXPAND SUPPORT SERVICES AND BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE BUSINESS AND CORPORATE COMMUNITY

- Develop Business Services Tailored to Freelancers, Microenterprises, and Nonprofits
- Establish Formal Connections to Cities Outside of the U.S. to Expand Markets and Learning
- Nurture and Advertise the Existing Niche Markets in an Effort to Make Use of Existing Publishing Talent
- Establish a “Loaned Executive” Program
- Enhance Film and New Media Business Opportunities

4. ESTABLISH BIRMINGHAM AS A HUB FOR DESIGN

- Integrate Design into Technical Education
- Make Manufacturing Technologies Available in Schools in Low-Income Parts of the City
- Initiate a Creative Challenge Program

5. FURTHER DEVELOP BIRMINGHAM’S CREATIVE DISTRICTS

- Inventory and Promote the Creative Enterprises, Assets, and Available Space for Each Business District
- Strengthen the Relationship with the Greater Birmingham Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Expand the Use of Public Art that Matches Each Neighborhood’s History or Culture
- Encourage the Use of Local Art in Private and Public Enterprises

6. LEVERAGE THE ECONOMIC POTENTIAL OF THE CITY'S CULTURAL ASSETS

- Develop a Longer-Term Civil Rights Heritage Strategy
- Create a Birmingham Cultural Collaborative to Develop Shared Marketing Opportunities, Product Development, and Services

7. DEVELOP THE ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY TO STRENGTHEN BIRMINGHAM'S MUSIC INDUSTRY

- Create More Collaboration and Partnerships Among Musicians and Groups
- Use Public Art and Public Venues to Increase Visibility and Guide Tourists Interested in Music History
- Create More Centralized and Coordinated Organizational Capacity for the Music Industry
- Increase Emphasis on Music Education

8. STRIVE TO CREATE A PROSPEROUS AND EQUITABLE REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEM

- Identify Business Opportunities for Culinary Entrepreneurs that Will Create Jobs
- Establish Food Hubs for Processing and Distributing Regionally Produced Food
- Increase Access, Availability, and Affordability of Healthy Foods for All Residents



DESIGN: FUNCTION WITH STYLE

PRODUCT, ENVIRONMENTAL, AND COMMUNICATIONS

Birmingham is home to a particularly strong design cluster, with more than 5,100 full-time and freelance workers. The design cluster has three distinct but interrelated subsets: product design, environmental design (places), and communications design (materials and messaging about products and places).

Design industries include commercial printing, binding, metal work manufacturing, millwork manufacturing, publishers, architectural services, landscape architectural services, interior and industrial design services, graphic design services, advertising agencies, and photography studios.



Design occupations include architects, landscape architects, drafters, commercial and industrial designers, graphic designers, interior designers, fashion designers, floral designers, merchandise and exhibit designers, advertising and promotions managers, and photographers.

Design surrounds us, from the things we buy and use to the places we visit and experiences we have. Creating “by design” means a synthesis of art, craft, environment, and engineering. As a cluster of economic activity, designers consider concepts, plans, aesthetics, usage, packaging, and branding of places and products.

Product design includes design services and design-intensive manufacturing. It is difficult to rigorously quantify due to the limitations of the industrial classification system in judging the value of design to products. A conservative firm-by-firm assessment found 302 individuals employed in this segment. With a strong manufacturing past, today the region boasts one of the nation’s most concentrated automotive segments. Using ever more affordable, accessible, and technologically advanced tools, local companies make creative products.

Environmental design includes all applied activities involving the built environment such as architecture, urban planning, interior design, landscape architecture, and gardening. The concentration of employment in the county’s architectural firms is well over double the state average and almost 25% above the U.S. average, and the concentration in advertising is 17% above the national average. The concentration of professional interior designers exceeds the state average by more than 50%. Birmingham is also home to landscape architecture firms; professional landscape architects; gardening, landscaping, and lawn art supply centers; as well as clubs, associations, and organized classes associated with gardening and landscaping.

Communications design includes firms delivering visual messages that inspire, educate, and motivate people. This diverse group includes graphic design and printing, web design, animation, advertising, app development, and media services. The concentration of advertising employment in Birmingham is about 17% higher than the national average. With newer small agencies complementing older firms, Birmingham is emerging as a creative advertising center with the capacity to compete with much larger cities.

This cluster is dominated by self-employed people and freelancers. High proportions of graphic and web designers, interior decorators, and landscape architects operate as independent businesspeople. Local chapters of professional organizations exemplify efforts being made to network and collaborate. In October 2013, the city’s design community organized the first Design Week Birmingham. The event created platforms for networking as well as sharing of ideas and inspirations. Design Week also advertised to the region the depth of the city’s design talent and the strength of its commitment.

Motus Motorcycles, a graduate of the Innovation Depot, plans a line of boutique sport-touring bikes. In 2012, Motus had a bike named “motorcycle of the year” by *Motorcyclist* magazine. Push Product Design is a design and engineering firm creating breakthrough solutions that combine scientific, mathematic, and artistic concepts. Recently, Push produced a wheelchair using interactive kinetic sculpture. Earth Creations, an eco-friendly fashion company, produces clothing using sustainable resources such as organically grown cotton, hemp, and non-toxic dyes. MDM Design Studio, originally a one-person custom furniture design and building business, has grown into a multi-service company for custom cabinetry, furniture, and millwork.

Birmingham’s architects make up a community of more than 60 firms. From Davis Architects (founded 1912) to GA Studio (founded 1966), well-established firms have nurtured the careers of many of the city’s outstanding architects including Standard Creative, Architecture Works, and Cohen, Carnaggio, Reynolds. Interior designers of note include Rebecca Hatcher of Hatcher Design Associates, Allison Harsh of Ray Harsh Design, and Jeannie Krumdieck, Interior Design department chair at Samford University.

Railroad Park, a 19-acre green space in the middle of Birmingham, was designed as “Birmingham’s Living Room.” It won the Urban Land Institute’s prestigious Urban Open Space Award, beating out four other finalists: New York City’s High Line and Pier 25, Calgary’s RiverWalk, and Portland’s Tanner Spring Park. Charlie Thigpen’s Garden Gallery in Pepper Place is a showcase for garden and plant art, tools, equipment, information, and furniture. A former garden editor at Southern Living magazine, Thigpen also teaches, tutors, and consults on living architecture.



EBSCO Media, the largest privately owned company in Alabama, has been the graphic arts division of EBSCO Industries since 1946. Massivemedia, a billboard and experiential marketing vendor that designs, develops, and deploys street-level marketing campaigns for national advertisers, operates billboard properties in New York, Chicago, Denver, and Los Angeles. Metrocket is a software development company that developed the popular road-trip app, iExit, and will soon be releasing the iExit Dashboard, which will help business owners to market their businesses to travelers approaching their exit on the interstate. Big Communications was named 2013 Southeast Small Agency of the Year by *Advertising Age*.

EDUCATION AND SUPPORTING SYSTEMS

Birmingham City Schools Engineering Career Academy introduces high school students to the basics of product design. Their Business and Finance Career Academy integrates marketing and advertising instruction. Higher education programs at Birmingham’s colleges and universities include, but are not limited to, graphic design at UAB and Samford, interior design at Samford, computer information systems and computer science at Miles College and UAB, and engineering at UAB. Local for-profit colleges also offer instruction in interior design and computer science skills. Jefferson County residents represent large segments of students in other Alabama schools. Auburn University has well-regarded programs in architecture, graphic design, and industrial design. The University of Alabama offers majors in textile and apparel design, interior design, and advertising.

Businesses within the design cluster are interrelated and supportive of one another. The healthcare, biotechnology, and automotive manufacturing economies drive new product designs and communications. Environmental designers play a vital role in the city by planning and creating places for residents to work and play.

REV Birmingham is playing an increasingly important role in arts, cultural, and design development in the city. REV Birmingham has made substantial investments in the “spaces and places” and physical infrastructure that are so essential to the presence of arts and entertainment in many neighborhoods throughout the city.

ORGANIZATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS

Birmingham designers network through local chapters or individual membership in professional organizations such as American Institute of Architects; American Society of Landscape Architects; American Society of Interior Designers; American Advertising Federation; and American Institute of Graphic Arts.



STRENGTHS

Development of maker spaces. Shared spaces supporting small-scale entrepreneurial production are in the early stages of development. By providing shared access to space, equipment, support services, and knowledge, spaces have the potential to accelerate the growth of the city’s manufacturing base. MAKEbhm is a collaborative making/learning center formed by architect Bruce Lanier that will allow new and potential entrepreneurs to share costs of specialized resources, learn from one another, and build support networks. Red Mountain Makers engages in scientific and artistic research and experimentation in their collaborative workspace located in Woodrow Hall in Woodlawn. The Stream in Avondale brings together independent creative designers, artists, and craftspeople to share and support each other’s growth toward building their own successful business. The Stream is a resource conduit that offers clients scalable product design and development with prototyping and custom limited production.

Design concentration. The city is home to a large number of highly qualified, creative architects. This pool of talent has been a major factor in the successful revitalization of Birmingham’s downtown and the rebuilding of its neighborhoods. Birmingham also has several large and growing advertising companies specializing in creative branding that compete nationally and internationally.

Development of interesting, attractive, and creative spaces for people to live, work, socialize, and play. The combination of design talent and planners has put the city of Birmingham on the national map. Auburn University has its School of Architecture Urban Design Studio in the center of the city.

Creative landscaping. Birmingham is known for its appreciation of gardens and the charm of its landscaped homes, parks, and gardens, including the EcoScape gardens developed by the Southern Environmental Center at Birmingham-Southern College.

CHALLENGES

Lack of early introduction to design occupations. The public schools need to emphasize instruction that shows practical applications for art. Vocational, baccalaureate, STEM focused, and other students should be informed of potential design professions as well as fine arts opportunities. Early education will better provide students for programs such as interior design at Samford, the urban design projects at UAB, graphics and prepress communications at Lawson State Community College, and introductory graphic and multimedia design in the state’s career and technical schools.

Inadequate support for entrepreneurial designers. Economic and technology development target growth companies. Freelancers and microenterprises have little access to startup capital or support such as facilities or insurance.

Lack of diversity. The design field is predominantly white. Although there are efforts to diversify, beginning with the public schools, little success has been made.

Fragmentation within clusters from competition. High numbers of designers competing for a relatively small pool of clients can undermine the social infrastructure and strong connections that drive innovation.

SUCCESSFUL NATIONAL EXAMPLES

The Center for Design Innovation in the Piedmont region of North Carolina brings in top designers to meet with local businesses and is working on forming a design council. It hosts an annual Design, Art, and Technology Symposium and brings in internationally known speakers to give workshops.

Twenty-one grammar and technical schools in the United Kingdom were provided with funding to purchase a 3D printer and support to investigate its potential for stimulating teaching in STEM and design subjects. Many schools reported high levels of pupil motivation when engaged in these projects. "All the pupils who have been involved with the 3D printers so far have been inspired by the possibilities." (3D Printers in Schools: Uses in the Curriculum, UK Department for Education, Oct 2013).

Bertie County, North Carolina's Emily Pilloton, a young designer and author of *Design Revolution*, developed a design-build curriculum for high school students called Studio H. Her goal was to engage high schoolers while bringing smart design and new opportunities to the poorest county in the state. In August 2010, she and her partner began teaching their first class of 13 students, featured on TEDTalks.

The Berkshires' Creative Challenge Program enables businesses needing product or marketing design services to contract for the services through a juried group of artists and designers. Designers and artists who are selected are compensated for their work and sometimes kept on retainer. In the Berkshires, Crane Paper Company worked with several local artists and designers on a new, high-end stationery product.



FILM & MEDIA: TARGETING NICHE MARKETS

The film and media cluster's diverse industries include print publishing, music, radio, motion picture production, motion picture distribution, television broadcasting, software publishing, Internet publishing, broadcasting, and web search portals. Film and media occupations include broadcast announcers, reporters and correspondents, writers, editors, audio-visual operators, technicians, and editors.

The relative concentration of the film and media employment within the county has increased significantly over the last decade, due in part to the growing number of small film and media production companies, a distinctive Christian media niche, the renowned Sidewalk Film Festival, and popular niche magazines. Film and media jobs are more concentrated in Birmingham than in Alabama, but less than across the nation, largely because of exceedingly high concentrations in a few cities.



More than 1,800 individuals are employed in the print publishing sub-cluster. Locally published regional and national lifestyle and shelter magazines have a well-established base with potential for growth. *The Birmingham News* has reduced frequency of publication to three days per week, as they focus on statewide reporting online at www.al.com.

While print publishing employment has declined substantially as print media moves online, this decline is matched by corresponding growth in software publishing, Internet publishing and broadcasting, web search portals, and teleproduction. Between 2003 and 2012, 250 jobs were added in the county and, as of 2012, software publishing accounted for approximately 10% of all jobs in the film and media industry. Internet publishing and broadcasting

and web search portals, also a growing segment, added more than 100 jobs since 2003.

Birmingham has over 1,000 jobs in TV, radio, and Internet broadcasting. The greater Birmingham area serves as the headquarters for TV networks with state and national reach, and the Eternal World Television Network, one of the world's largest religious stations, reaches an international audience. Sound recording studios are also gaining momentum in Jefferson County, and the city has the potential to be a major center for gospel music recording. Radio stations covering an array of music, shows, and news account for nearly 25% of broadcasting jobs.

Employment in motion picture and video production and motion picture theaters accounts for just over 400 jobs. Alabama is interested in attracting more film production to the area and offers statewide film incentives. A large portion of Birmingham film production is for the commercial or public sector markets. Universities, hospitals, banks, churches, corporations, and government agencies use videographers to create multimedia messages for target audiences.

Writers and authors, editors, and radio and television announcers are among the most prevalent occupations in the film and media industry. The number of writers and authors increased 42% over the last decade, with more than 800 writers and authors in 2012. Film and video editors, radio and television announcers, broadcast news analysts, public relations specialists, and broadcast technicians are highly concentrated in the area.



The film and media sector is going through a rapid transformation, with social media diffusing the means of production and dissemination. Even with intensifying international competition, Birmingham has the talent to stay on top of these changes and to develop niches in which it can excel and become more widely known.

Southern Progress Corporation (SPC), a subsidiary of Time, Inc., has seen significant staff reductions due to industry-wide publishing trends. However, SPC continues to attract publishing talent from across the nation to its renowned stable of titles: *Southern Living*, *Cooking Light*, *Coastal Living*, *Health*, and *Sunset*. Hearst Magazines is moving the headquarters of *Country Living* from New York City to Birmingham to be closer to their audience of 1.6 million and create brand extensions, including live events like Country Living Fairs. Hoffman Media publishes national special-interest titles, such as *Victoria* and *Cooking with Paula Deen*, with a growing consumer event business and an established ancillary products division.

With more than 200 local employees, Alabama Media Group is a digitally-focused news and information company that publishes *al.com*, *The Birmingham News*, and *Birmingham* magazine. EBSCO Industries, one of the country's largest privately held companies, owns Grandview Media, a specialty publisher. Books-A-Million, or BAM!, a \$500 million company that began in Florence, Alabama, is the second largest book retailer in America. *Weld* is a popular small-scale newspaper of regional news, opinion, and entertainment published and distributed free weekly and updated online daily. Glossy city magazine *b-Metro* is published monthly.

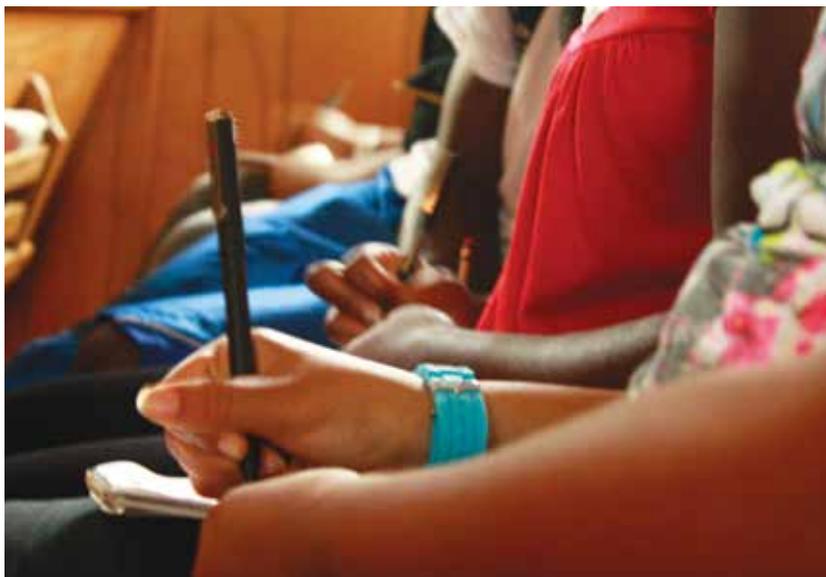
WBHM, the local public radio station sponsored by UAB, continues to grow, making the voice of NPR in Birmingham more prominent. Several radio personalities reach beyond the local market, including the Rick and Bubba show and Reg's Coffee House. In addition to stations in four other states, Birmingham's Summit Media owns six local stations, including KISS-FM, the top ranked Urban Adult Contemporary station in the U.S.

A number of popular films and documentaries produced in Birmingham have targeted the large Christian audience, including *Grace Unplugged*, *October Baby*, and *The Jefferson County Sound: Alabama's Black Gospel Quartets*. Erwin Brothers Motion Pictures produced the feature film, *Mom's Night Out*, released nationwide in May 2014. Several small companies are involved in film and video production, including Magic City Films, FilmDog Media, and Vulcan Media. Most local production companies, however, are "full-service" firms working across a broad spectrum of multimedia platforms, e.g., Pitts Media, NVision Productions LLC, and Media Works Communications.

EDUCATION AND SUPPORTING SYSTEMS

Educational opportunities for elementary, middle, and high school students are more common in after school and summer programs.

On the Set Summer Film Camp, supported by the Peep This Actors/Director Guild, is an innovative youth summer camp where kids learn cinematography, lighting, sound, scriptwriting, acting, and producing. Campers shoot and produce a short film and present it at a premiere event at the end of the summer. Bright House Networks broadcasts the film to select cities. The camp is led by David Tucker, Jr., a graduate of UAB's TV and Broadcast Department.



Desert Island Supply Company (DISCO) is a nonprofit dedicated to "cultivating the imagination" through creative writing. Founded and operated by two university instructors and published authors, DISCO runs workshops, in-school programs, summer camps, literary parties, and writing booths at various local spaces. Its target audience is youth ages 6-18. DISCO partners with Jones Valley Teaching Farm for "Food Story" summer camps that integrate gardening and cooking with writing and storytelling.

Birmingham-Southern College offers a major in Media and Film Studies. UAB's Media Studies program is comprised of interdisciplinary courses designed to teach "the art of digital storytelling." UAB student work has been featured in numerous film festivals and was recognized with a national Addy Award from the American Advertising Federation.

The film and media industries are closely intertwined with other creative industries serving as subject matter, content, and promotions. Other local industries contribute to film and media with financial support for advertising production and media placement.

ORGANIZATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS

Every year since 1999, the Sidewalk Film Festival has screened more than 200 local and national independent films and attracted 10,000 film-goers to the three-day event. The festival and its associated year-round events also serve as the networking hub and resource for local film and media professionals. “Salon” networking events throughout the year provide access to productions and creative outlets that retain local talent. Sidewalk has formed an active Junior Board for high school students interested in all aspects of filmmaking.

An organization called See Jane Write provides networking opportunities for those in the publishing world by hosting workshops, seminars, and networking events for Birmingham area women interested in journalism and blogging. FoodBlog-South holds an annual conference in Birmingham for beginning and experienced food bloggers.

STRENGTHS

Writing and publishing talent. Writers and authors make up the bulk of the occupations within the film and media industry. This rich talent is no surprise given the number of publishing-related companies headquartered in the greater Birmingham area.

Christian media niche. Featuring the largest Christian media network in the world (EWTN), a notable segment of Christian radio stations, Christian film production and recording companies, and the well-established *Divine Favor Gospel* magazine, there is a clear and distinct Christian niche within the film and media segment in Birmingham.

Many small independent film production companies. Birmingham has a growing number of small independent video production companies working with clients looking to communicate with customers through digital means.

The nationally recognized Sidewalk Film Festival. The Sidewalk Film Festival highlights local films and talent, attracts nationally known independent films, provides a networking forum for local and national industry specialists, and draws visitors from outside Birmingham to celebrate national and local independent films.

CHALLENGES

Structural declines in publishing. As companies are shifting more and more towards digital media, newspaper and magazine publishers and their employees have taken a major hit.

Lack of information on suppliers and industry talent. The organization of the cluster is informal, with most opportunities via word of mouth. This benefits those already embedded in the local industry, but excludes those new to the area or isolated. The production directory of filmmakers from the Alabama Film Office is said to be outdated and producers have difficulty finding a crew in time.

Gaps in film and media production facilities. Film and media professionals struggle to build a strong local film and media hub without production facilities that support the creation of these products, like film labs and digital editing studios.

Lack of venues to screen independent films. The area lacks an art house for independent and foreign cinema or an independent movie theater. Those in the industry recognize that the city has many theaters but not for independent films.

Retaining talent. Talent in film and video production is difficult to retain due to paucity of paid work or employment. Talented people frequently are asked to work for free or as interns. Film producers often bring the majority of their crews with them, leaving only a small number of temporary employment opportunities. Those in film production must freelance, piecing together small projects.

PERFORMING ARTS: BUILDING A BRAND

With more than 1800 jobs in 2012, the performing arts cluster increased 38% since 2003. Performing artists have the highest proportion of self-employment of any of the creative industry clusters at 37%. 50% of the performing arts cluster are performers who have other full-time employment or perform part-time for supplementary income or without compensation. Only 44% of the performers who responded earned more than \$15,000 last year as a performer.

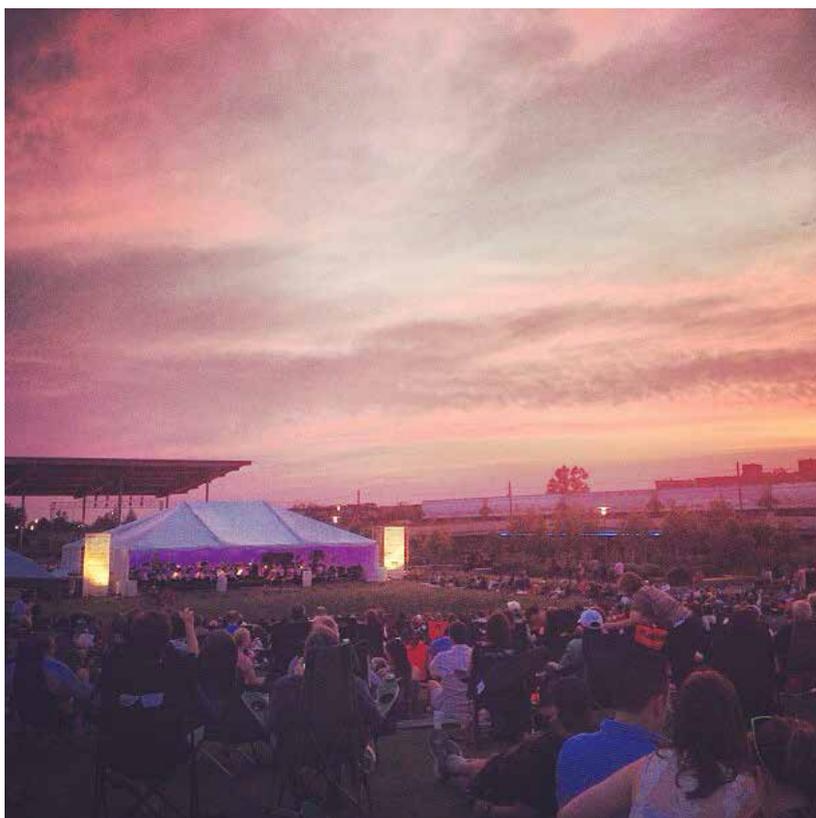
The performing arts cluster includes all art forms that are performance-based, both live and recorded. The cluster spans music, dance, and theater as well as the businesses, organizations, and institutions that support, organize, produce, manage, and present them, such as agents and promoters. Performing arts occupations include actors and directors, dancers and choreographers, musicians and singers, producers and other performers.

Music is a very important part of Birmingham's identity and economy. It includes a rich and diverse blend of genres and styles such as folk, opera, gospel, country, jazz, big band, blues, and bluegrass. The music is rooted heavily in agricultural and rural culture, drawing from the cultural influences of Scots-Irish and African-Americans in the first half of the 19th century. The struggle for racial justice and equality added another dimension to the city's musical landscape.

As the premier and only full-time professional orchestra in the state, the Alabama Symphony Orchestra employs 54 musicians as well as administrative and technical staff. Americans for the Arts estimated that the symphony's employment and its 190 performances a year had an economic impact of \$18.2 million. The orchestra was recognized for its adventurous programming and dedication to new music with American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) awards in 2010 and 2011. ASO performed at Carnegie Hall in 2012.

Birmingham has become an indie rock "hot spot" and destination, largely thanks to venues such as Bottletree and Workplay, and recent addition Iron City. Up-and-coming venues include the Forge, an all-ages music and arts space run by volunteers, and Sound & Page, an intimate "listening room." Birmingham's indie rock scene developed organically in the late 1980s and early 1990s, driven by the influence of major indie and garage bands; new and relatively inexpensive technology that allowed musicians to produce and distribute music; a do-it-yourself culture in the city that freed creative production from mainstream and corporate control; and a spirit of collaboration among many early-stage musicians and bands in the city clubs. In 2013, music magazine *Paste* listed "12 Alabama Bands You Should Listen to Now." Six bands on the list hail from Birmingham. They are Banditos, Dead Fingers, Duquette Johnston, The Great Book of John, Lee Bains III and the Glory Fires, and St. Paul and the Broken Bones. With styles that range from lush vocal harmonies to rollicking soul sounds to classic Southern rock, Birmingham indie musicians are garnering national attention. Birmingham has also fostered a small but potent enclave of hip-hop artists. Groups such as the Green Seed and the duo Shaheed and DJ Supreme stand toe-to-toe on stage with the best in the country.

Much of the success of local bands in the national arena can be attributed to local DJs who have consistently supported and promoted Birmingham musicians. Radio personality Scott Register was considered a music taste maker even as a teenager. Since the late 1990s, he has cultivated a dedicated fan base that has followed his shows from station to station, including the Sunday morning staple "Reg's Coffeehouse." Like most radio markets, stations in Birmingham change formats, but when it appeared that Reg would be off the air, broadcasting alternatives were sought. As a result, Birmingham Mountain Radio was established as an online adult/alternative radio station where local



DJs highlight Birmingham events and musicians. It now airs online and through FM radio.

Ensley native Erskine Hawkins' 1939 composition "Tuxedo Junction" became a jazz standard and laid the foundation for a musical festival that started in 1985 and is still going strong. The Birmingham Heritage Band helped keep the jazz tradition alive during the 1970s and beyond, and its theme song "Birmingham is My Home" has also become a jazz standard. The Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame was founded in 1978 and moved to the Carver Theatre in 1993.

Gospel is particularly notable in Birmingham's music industry. Birmingham Industrial High School, Birmingham's first African-American high school, and two of its music teachers, Julia and Malachi Wilkerson, trained generations of African-Americans in traditional forms of gospel and a cappella singing. The music was further encouraged by Charles Bridges, who founded the Birmingham Jubilee Singers in the mid-1920s. Today, most African-American churches in Greater Birmingham have gospel choirs and groups, and many of the larger ones have full-time musical directors. The music helps knit the community together and, in some instances, generates revenue through the sale of CDs, DVDs, and performances.



The Birmingham Metro Area is also a nationally recognized location for Sacred Harp music, a unique form of Protestant hymns performed a cappella and called "shape-note singing." The city has hosted the National Sacred Harp Convention since 1980, and the American Gospel Quartet Convention since 1993, attracting participants from the U.S. and abroad.

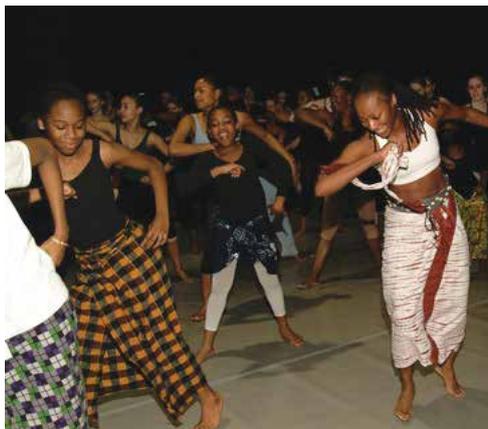
The premier dance company is the Alabama Ballet, focused on and committed to reaching new audiences, promoting ballet and dance, and providing instruction to the next generation of dancers. Resident choreographer and associate artistic director Roger Van Fleteren is a former American Ballet theater soloist whose innovative choreography has bolstered the company's reputation for excellence. In addition to classical ballet, African tribal, hip-hop, jazz, belly dancing, tap dancing, step dancing, praise and liturgical dancing, modern, and contemporary dance make up the diverse and vibrant dance segment. From companies and organizations that present and perform dance to studios that primarily teach dance, Birmingham dancers often have a foot in both categories, as performers and as teachers.

Arova Contemporary Ballet performs new works and variations of classics. Sanspointe Dance Company, a modern dance company, has produced more than 40 original works by Alabama choreographers. Osumare South African Drum and Dance Ensemble performs and teaches dance, culture, and music from Nigeria and Western Africa. Um-dabu South African Dance Company produces dance reflecting the traditional and modern culture of South Africa. M.A.D. (Music And Dance) Skillz performs and teaches a combination of hip-hop, jazz, ballet, African, and modern dance. Woodlawn Ballet is new to dance education, but has taught more than 130 students in its semester-length dance program. Nathifa Dance Company and Outreach integrates African culture and dance, West African dance, traditional praise dance workshops, drum classes, and dance and movement.



The Children's Dance Foundation is one of the most established and prestigious of the city's dance schools, reaching between 18,000 and 20,000 students. Its outreach programs include more than 20 community- and school-based sites, a school-touring program, a summer modern dance series with guest teaching artists for adults, and a summer session for all ages.

Birmingham's theater options showcase something for everyone. Birmingham Children's Theatre (BCT) produces shows at the Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Center (BJCC) as well as regional touring productions. Red Mountain Theatre Company, a nonprofit professional theater company, emphasizes musical theater productions. The



Company attracts seasoned performers in addition to training new talent at their summer Youth Musical Theatre Workshop. City Equity Theatre performers and technical staff are eligible for membership in the Actor's Equity Association with wage and benefits protections and can work in other professional theaters around the country.

The Virginia Samford Theatre (VST) at Caldwell Park has hosted shows for more than 80 years in its 300-seat auditorium. Within VST, the Martha Moore Sykes Studio provides an intimate rehearsal and performance space. Its STARS (Students Take a Role at Samford) arts education program trains young people in the production and technical aspects of theater. While Broadway in Birmingham brings national touring shows to the city, smaller theater companies also thrive. These include Terrific New Theatre, Theatre Downtown, the Birmingham Festival Theatre, Ex-

temporaneous Theatre Company, and Positively Funny, Inc.

EDUCATION AND SUPPORTING SYSTEMS

CityDance is a 16-week program that offers instruction to children, mostly in the Birmingham public schools. Six of the seven high schools in the Birmingham City School district have dedicated jazz band programs.

Alabama School of Fine Arts (ASFA) provides tuition-free instruction in six specialty areas: creative writing, dance, math and science, music, theater, and visual arts, along with a full college preparatory curriculum. Located in the heart of Birmingham's downtown Cultural District, ASFA enrolls more than 300 students in grades 7-12. The school has the 500-seat, state-of-the-art Dorothy Jemison Day Theater for professional and student performances and teaching.

Miles College, a historically black college, offers baccalaureate degree programs, minors, and electives in drama and theater, as well as jazz and lyrical dance, plus a bachelor's degree in music education. Birmingham-Southern College and UAB both offer majors in music and theater. The nationally-known UAB Gospel Choir, led by founder and director Kevin Turner, brings American gospel music from choir to classroom. Samford and UAB also offer BFA programs in musical theater. All of the local colleges and universities provide performance space for students and other area productions. The City of Birmingham hosts performances at the BJCC and the historic Boutwell Auditorium.



Recording studios and record labels such as Skybucket, Ol Elegante, Boutwell Studios, and Higher Ground Studios help launch new musicians and bands. The studios and labels provide engineering, recording, promotional and management services that are professional, yet lower cost, than in larger cities. Bands and musicians can also find local recording, engineering, and production assistance from CrownBox Studios, which has state-of-the-art production equipment and facilities and is especially dedicated to Christian music. Woodlawn's 55th Place is home to Commu-

nicating Vessels, a record label, recording studio, and record store. Audiostate 55 is also located in Woodlawn's 55th Place and is an affiliate of the Berklee City Music network. Audiostate 55 offers two educational programs and has its own record label with a large focus on gospel music. Their Music Industry Program provides non-certificate and leveled certificate programs for students looking for experience in the music business. Students use Audiostate 55's state-of-the-art facilities and are taught by award-winning recording artists and engineers. Audiostate 55's Woodlawn Music Tech Summer Camp offers students insight into career opportunities in music and media production by exposing them to the latest technology production tools. Also of note is Real Records, a 2001 company affiliated with Universal Records producing its own record label specializing in Southern rap music.

ORGANIZATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS

The Cultural Alliance of Greater Birmingham has strong, longstanding connections and relationships with the arts and culture communities. Their site, Birmingham365.org, is an online comprehensive calendar of events and performances and regularly highlights happenings around the city.

Major institutions such as Alabama Symphony Orchestra, the Birmingham Chamber Music Society, the Magic City Choral Society, the Birmingham Art Music Alliance, and the colleges and universities collaborate and perform with each other. Local composers often are featured in classical performances, getting to see their work come to life with audiences. Gospel music is organized mainly within the city's churches, and indie rock typically does so through informal networking. Musician Eric Essix started the Preserve Jazz Festival in 2007 and was recently appointed to the UAB Department of Music faculty. Magic City Smooth Jazz has produced more than 25 shows since its founding in 2008, and this year marks the 10th anniversary of the Taste of 4th Avenue Jazz Festival.



The Alabama Dance Council is the organizational glue for the state's dance community. It provides research, organizing, and advocacy and developed the Alabama Dance Exchange, a comprehensive list of individuals and organizations in Alabama's dance community. Its 10-day Alabama Dance Festival features Dance Across Birmingham, free dance classes, and workshops for teachers.

STRENGTHS

Richness and influence of music. Birmingham's history in gospel, blues, and jazz has spawned leaders and pioneers who have influenced the development of these musical forms. Local churches have created sophisticated arts and music ministries.

Fast-growing indie rock scene. Because of a strong support infrastructure, indie rock has been on an upward spiral, particularly over the last 10 years. Eclectic, vibrant, and benefiting from a do-it-yourself culture, it has also gained national attention, and could position the city as a music destination.

Diversity and depth of theater. The Birmingham theater community boasts a broad and diverse infrastructure, including professional theater, from classical to contemporary, community-focused and youth-oriented and education programs, multiple venues and performance opportunities.

CHALLENGES

Diversity and branding. The strengths of the area’s performing arts are clearly their quality and diversity, but the diversity also makes it more difficult for the cluster to develop a unified brand.

Audience base. The audiences for performing arts are very loyal and have been stable in many respects, but they are narrow and the challenge is to expand and increase the audience base with more cross-pollination between genre audiences.

Weak coordination across music genres. There is no single central, coordinating organization, vehicle, or website that supports and serves the different parts of the music industry. Fierce competition often discourages collaboration, which fragments efforts among industry genres.

Need for stronger promotion and marketing. Increased promotion, marketing, and outreach efforts are critical to the ability of performing arts organizations and performers to expand their audiences. Funding for this kind of activity is difficult to secure.

SUCCESSFUL NATIONAL EXAMPLES

The Mississippi Blues Trail was created by the Mississippi Blues Commission to place interpretive markers at notable historical sites related to the growth of the blues throughout the state of Mississippi. Though statewide, the markers are heavily concentrated in the heart of the Mississippi Delta. It is supported by calendars of events, maps, apps, and even license plates.



CULINARY ARTS: FOODTOPIA

The South is often best described through the culture of its cuisine. The region's diverse populations have long found fellowship around a common table where everyone is welcome. Over the years, Southern food has become even more beloved as more people discover the rich and varied flavors grown on local farms and prepared in time-honored ways. In recent decades, the burgeoning food entertainment business has recognized and embraced our unique food culture with increasing frequency. Birmingham has even served as a home base for food-focused magazines *Southern Living* and *Cooking Light* which have brought talented workers from around the country. While classically-trained, professional chefs have led the way, local culinary successes are indebted to traditions found in many Alabama home kitchens. The culinary arts cluster includes food production, preparation, and presentation created by food producers, professional chefs, food photographers, stylists, and writers. In order to continue the remarkable growth of this sector, it is critical to connect innovators with entrepreneurial resources.

In 2013, *Zagat* named Birmingham one of seven up-and-coming food towns in the U.S. The city boasts several celebrity chefs, renowned restaurants, and microbreweries. Birmingham has a wealth of well-known writers, bloggers, and networkers who are supporting this trend and generating excitement. The supporting food industries—those who produce, process, distribute, prepare, and sell foods—are increasingly engaged with restaurants. *Zagat* reports that “some of the best brick-and-mortar eateries in town stay true to their Southern roots—and native terroir—by incorporating local ingredients creatively into traditional recipes.”

When analyzing the culinary arts cluster, it is important to note that its size cannot be compared to other places or previous years because it is based not on NAICS data but on qualitative criteria unavailable at the state or national



level. Consistent data on job characteristics in Birmingham were unavailable. Because culinary arts and artisanal foods are defined by creativity and innovation and not by class of products or services, the enterprises that produce them cannot be identified by the government's standardized industry data. Creative establishments are embedded within a much larger food chain classification system that also includes data from national chain, fast food, and otherwise unremarkable restaurants and mass-produced foods.

To distinguish certain eating establishments as creative, the consulting team established baseline criteria and identified the establishments that met them. Companies that process vegetables, fruits, meats, or beverages, or produce artisanal baked goods and candies also require a finer definition to distinguish them from companies that mass produce standardized food products. The creative producer is differentiated by an emphasis on authenticity, customization, aesthetics, design, or other unique or unusual characteristics. Educational institutions that exist primarily to prepare students for food-related occupations are considered in the culinary arts cluster as well. Also included are specialized suppliers, distributors, and services in the food system value chain, such as wine and beer distributors and printers and producers of labels and packaging. Businesses producing and preparing creative forms of food are among the newest, but fastest growing, of the creative enterprise clusters. After examining business websites, product descriptions, and customer bases, and applying baseline criteria, the research team conservatively estimated that the creative culinary arts sector provides more than 1,600 jobs. A broader definition of Birmingham's local food system would significantly increase the economic impact defined in this report.

As in other sectors, Birmingham's industrial past influences its restaurants. Iron and steel manufacturing attracted workers from diverse cultures in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Immigrants to the area brought their culi-



nary traditions, which were further shaped by Alabama's rich agricultural output. Greeks, in particular, established restaurants throughout the burgeoning city, creating a template for the meat-and-three restaurants that continue to thrive today. The Bright Star Restaurant, owned and operated by the Koikos family, has been a Bessemer landmark since 1907, and was recognized as an "American Classic" by the James Beard Foundation. African-American cooking traditions significantly shaped Birmingham culinary arts as well. Often considered "home cooking" or "soul food," African-American tastes and techniques influenced the city's love for slow-cooked pork, cornmeal-fried vegetables, and fruit pies. From cafeteria-style lunch spots to white-tablecloth dining, southern food traditions have been celebrated throughout Birmingham's history and have helped to create the current food scene.

When Highlands Bar and Grill was opened in 1982 by Chef Frank Stitt, it transformed the city's food culture. By combining classic southern ingredients, such as grits and field peas, with French-style culinary skills, Highlands elevated familiar tastes and introduced Birmingham fine dining to the nation. Chef Stitt and Highlands have been honored with numerous James Beard award nominations. With Highlands, Bottega, and Chez Fon Fon, Stitt paved the way for other chefs in the city. Chefs who worked with Stitt have opened successful restaurants including Hot and

Hot Fish Club, Brick & Tin, El Barrio Restaurant Y Bar, Little Savannah, and Ollie Irene. Hot and Hot Fish Club's owner/chef Chris Hastings has also received a Southeast James Beard award, published a cookbook, and appeared on national television programs.

Southern traditions and local foods from local farms meet innovative recipes and techniques at fine dining establishments such as Satterfield's Restaurant, Bistro Two Eighteen, and Café Dupont. More casual eateries stay true to the same fine dining principles of fresh, local foods prepared in creative, authentic ways. Examples include Bettola, Saw's, Irondale Café, McKinley's BBQ and Soul Food, and Chez Lulu. Among the newest trends in Birmingham's culinary arts is the mobile food segment, the specialized gourmet food trucks, a growing phenomenon across urban America.

Many Birmingham restaurants proudly serve locally produced specialty foods alongside fresh produce from nearby farms. Their menus often feature the origins of each dish, educating consumers about local products that can also be purchased from retail stores. For example, Stone Hollow Creamery goat cheeses are featured in dishes at Satterfield's and Ollie Irene. The cheese can also be purchased at Whole Foods Market and Western Supermarket, as well as at Stone Hollow Farmstead's Pantry. Other specialty foods include D'Agostino's Sausage Empire, Red Mountain Honey, Crimson Fire Sauce, Red Bike Coffee, Avondale Brewing Company, and Vizzini Farms Winery. Dreamcakes Bakery, Louise's Cakes and Things, Sweet Treats Unlimited, and Continental Bakery illustrate bakeries that produce artistic products.

While artisanal foods are flourishing in some parts of Birmingham, other areas remain food deserts. REV Birmingham's Urban Food Project is working to increase production and access to local and healthier foods in areas detached from the food movement. In the East Lake community, the nonprofit organization P.E.E.R., Inc. created the East Lake Market to educate residents and improve their access to fresh foods. Urban Ministry's WE Community Gardens, led by trained chef and Culinary graduate Ama Shambulia, educates the West



End community in the craft of growing food organically and sustainably. Their annual Collard Green Cook-off and Health Festival attracts West End neighborhood residents eager to sample collard green recipes that contain no meat or fat. Jones Valley Teaching Farm offers nutrition and healthy living educational programs for families and schools. Several local restaurants support Jones Valley Teaching Farm by purchasing their produce.

The quality of the experience of eating and drinking provides an essential component for attracting tourists, conventions, and meetings. In order to keep this food culture and food economy thriving, Birmingham must retain and uphold its world-class chefs and restaurateurs, while nurturing new talent to innovate and meet demand. Residents and visitors appreciate and demand diverse, authentic, and interesting foods. Outstanding eating establishments have created a magnet for culinary arts and a fashionable food scene. However, the success of the city's food culture will be seen when all residents have equitable access to quality foods.

EDUCATION AND SUPPORTING SYSTEMS

An expanding food scene requires a continual flow of new talent and a skilled workforce. Culinar, the Culinary Institute of Virginia College, and Jefferson State Community College are the leading sources of that talent. The latter operates a full classroom café called bistro proVare. Many local restaurants and chefs participate with the schools' internship programs and mentor chefs-in-training.

Birmingham City Schools' Career and Technical Education offers Culinary Arts I and II at the Academy of Hospitality and Tourism located at Wenonah High School. Jones Valley Teaching Farm helps to make children and young adults aware of the economic and health benefits of good food and the potential for urban gardens.

The Alabama Farmers Market on Finley Avenue is the primary wholesale farmers market for the city. Pepper Place is one of the city's largest and most successful farmers and food markets. Smaller neighborhood markets such as the Norwood Trolley Stop Market, the East Lake Farmers Market, the Homewood Market, and the Summit Market operate seasonally.

National chains Whole Foods and Publix follow the lead of locally-owned groceries such as Piggly Wiggly, Western Supermarket, and V. Richard's by featuring local and regional produce and select local specialty foods. Organic Harvest and Made in Alabama stock goods made in the state.

ORGANIZATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS

Underlying the growth of this segment is a powerful literary and web-based dimension that includes local authors of books about food and food preparation and the fastest growing part of the literary segment, food bloggers. Local bloggers such as foodimentary.com and FoodBlog-South (birminghamcooks.wordpress.com) keep people aware of new trends in foods and food preparation, health benefits, and the food scene in general. FoodBlogSouth holds an annual conference in Birmingham for beginning and experienced food bloggers. Former Southern Living executive food editor Scott Jones operates a culinary media company.

The city has a chapter of Slow Food USA, an organization that relates eating to biodiversity, the environment, health, and politics. Birmingham Originals is an alliance of independent local restaurants and associates that promotes local foods and restaurants. Birmingham has recently established a chapter of the prestigious Les Dames d'Escoffier, a philanthropic society of professional women leaders in food, beverage, and hospitality.

STRENGTHS

Well-known chefs. Birmingham has produced or attracted a large number of award-winning chefs with extensive experience in other regions of the world.

Plans to develop food hubs and kitchen incubators. A variety of promising efforts are well underway to develop food hubs, kitchen incubators, and shared food processing centers.



Social infrastructure for foodies. The art of food, combined with its related health benefits, has given people new reasons to interact and associate formally and informally. It accelerates interest and grows markets for the more creative elements of the local food sectors.

Growth of breweries and brewpubs. With popular breweries such as Good People and Avondale experiencing exponential growth each year, more opportunities for business expansion will be found.

Education and learning opportunities. Educational programs for culinary occupations are available in the Birmingham City Schools and higher education institutions.

CHALLENGES

Poor access of low-income populations to fresh, local foods. A combination of lack of transportation, education about the health benefits, and higher costs prevents large segments of the population from acquiring healthier, local, and artisanal foods. More than 88,000 Jefferson County residents experience food insecurity, lacking access to fresh, healthy foods. One-third of the county's population is obese.

Paucity of local growers. Despite efforts to promote urban gardening, including support for the Alabama Sustainable Agriculture Network, the region is not known for its organic meats or specialty crops. Access to diverse local foods remains limited.

Support for more food hubs. The success of the plans for small-scale food hubs will depend upon collaboration and long-term support from food producers, economic development, cooperative extension, and the many emerging players in this cluster.

Low salary and temporary employment. Too much of the culinary workforce is part-time, temporary, and dependent on tips for a living wage. Forty percent of those employed at creative eating establishments in Birmingham are part-time. The result is that many key employees are either young, transitional, or require a second job.

SUCCESSFUL NATIONAL EXAMPLES

The Piedmont Food and Agricultural Processing (PFAP) Center in Hillsborough, North Carolina is a facility where food entrepreneurs and farmers can produce value-added foods and farm products for wholesale and retail markets. The shared-use, food business incubator leases commercial kitchen space and vegetable/fruit processing facilities by the hour to produce value-added food products for commercial distribution. Freezer and refrigerated space as well as entrepreneur offices are available for lease. Proposed programming includes training workshops on beginning and building food businesses.



CULTURE & HERITAGE: THE MEANING OF PLACE

Birmingham's culture and heritage cluster includes museums, historical sites, libraries, zoos, botanical gardens, and other institutions preserving and exhibiting cultural and natural heritage. Occupations include archivists, curators, conservators, librarians, and multimedia collections specialists. Despite the small number of jobs in this cluster, culture and heritage play an important role in tourism, education, place-making, and public access to the arts. These organizations and spaces define Birmingham for both residents and visitors. Capitalizing on these cultural assets will be crucial to the success of all creative industries strategies.



Accurate employment data in culture and heritage organizations is difficult because of overlap with public sector and academic employment. In Jefferson County, only 374 jobs at independent private sector firms are in the four NAICS codes that define the cluster. Culture and heritage establishments in the public sector or part of a private academic or research institution are counted in other categories. A more accurate, but still conservative, estimate includes public library staff, academic library staff, and Birmingham city employees at the Museum of Art, Sloss Furnaces, the Southern Museum of Flight, Arlington Antebellum Home and Gardens, and Birmingham Botanical Gardens. The research team estimated almost 1,300 jobs with the broader criteria. It is also important to note that the culture and heritage sector makes frequent use of volunteers who are not counted in employee data.

Museums and historic sites provide the city's residents with a sense of continuity and authenticity, preserving the city's cultural and artistic heritage so new generations of artists and creators can build on the work of the past. Some are small, volunteer-driven operations, while others are major institutions. The city's museums feature civil rights, human rights, history, industry, sports, art, motorcycles and race cars, aviation, ecology, and local individuals and families.

The majority of Birmingham's historical attractions are historic buildings, landmarks, memorials, and heritage parks around the city. Birmingham has 148 locations designated in the National Register of Historic Places. While generally not significant sources of employment, they include some of the city's most valuable physical and cultural assets. Sloss Furnaces, one of the city's three National Historic Landmarks, is a large industrial complex consisting of a pair of preserved blast furnaces and related buildings and machinery. The construction of a new \$13 million visitor's center and museum is underway.

The city features several unique parks, which consciously incorporate history into their design, combining industrial heritage and recreation. Vulcan Park and Museum is an iconic Birmingham destination. Built under the WPA and re-

stored to its original 1936 condition about 10 years ago, its centerpiece is a 56-foot tall statue depicting Vulcan, Roman god of the forge, the largest cast-iron statue in the world. At its base, a museum features permanent and changing exhibits focused on local art and history. Red Mountain Park is a new park on a large section of Red Mountain southwest of downtown, which is covered with the remnants of mining activity. The park is also meant to allow visitors to experience and understand some of the industrial ruins.

Birmingham's industrial past coupled with the contemporary emphasis on medicine make technology and science museums prominent. The McWane Science Center, Birmingham's science museum, has the city's only IMAX theater and recently began work on a \$5 million children's museum on the second floor. The Southern Environmental Center at Birmingham-Southern College is an educational facility, garden, and interactive museum that teaches children about the environment. The Southern Museum of Flight is a small museum near the Birmingham airport that features historical planes and other aviation artifacts. The Barber Vintage Motorsports Museum houses one of the world's largest collections of vintage motorcycles.



Historic sites associated with the civil rights movement are among the city's most meaningful and important places. Birmingham has worked to preserve or create landmarks, memorials, and places for education and healing. The Birmingham Civil Rights Heritage Trail is a set of walking routes with interpretive markers and other visual cues to link and explain many of the historic sites and march routes in and around the district. The city is adding new markers and new trails, some of which will extend into neighborhoods beyond downtown. Significant sites include municipal buildings, parks, and city streets where civil rights protests took place, as well as the churches where activists met and organized the movement. A National Historic Landmark, Bethel Baptist Church in the Collegeville neighborhood is where Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth founded the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights. The church and parsonage were bombed three times between 1956 and 1962. The 16th Street Baptist Church, also a National

Historic Landmark, anchors the Civil Rights District with the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute and Kelly Ingram Park. The September 1963 bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church that killed four young girls is commemorated as a defining moment for the movement. Sculptures in Kelly Ingram Park teach visitors about civil rights and powerfully explain the city's history. The Birmingham Civil Rights Institute houses an interactive museum, library, and educational center that serve to educate visitors, provide resources for scholars, and give national and global context to civil and human rights.



The city is also home to a number of museums and cultural sites that focus on visual and performing arts. The Birmingham Museum of Art (BMA) is one of the city's most important cultural assets. Owned by the city, a separate nonprofit manages most aspects other than facilities. BMA has a particularly strong focus on iron, ceramics, and Asian art. It operates a number of educational programs and holds frequent events. The Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame in the Carver Theatre is a renovated art-deco movie theater in the 4th Avenue business district now used as a performance space and museum. The Hall of Fame pays tribute to Alabama natives and residents important to jazz, including musicians, but also producers, songwriters, broadcasters, entrepreneurs, and other behind-the-scenes people.



Although a relatively young city, Birmingham has a wealth of historic buildings, monuments, and other landmarks. Arlington Antebellum Home and Gardens, the oldest building in the city, is a historic Greek Revival style plantation house built in the 1840s. Since 1952, the city has owned and operated it as an event facility and museum for 19th century decorative arts. The Birmingham History Center is a new, small museum that focuses on the history of Birmingham and Jefferson County. Currently, it is seeking a permanent space. The Alabama Historical Radio Museum features antique radios, radio memorabilia, and other radio-related artifacts put together by the Alabama Historical Radio Society in the lobby of the Alabama Power Building. The Bessemer Hall of History, a small museum occupying Bessemer's old railroad depot, includes a door from the Jefferson County Jail where Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was held in 1967.

Birmingham has a comparatively high concentration of zoo and botanical garden employment, comprising more than half of zoo and botanical garden jobs in the state. Almost all of the jobs are at the Birmingham Zoo and the Birmingham Botanical Gardens, neighboring institutions located a few miles southeast of downtown, near Homewood. The Birmingham Zoo is one of Alabama's largest tourist attractions, with over 540,000 visits in 2012. Transferred to private ownership in 2000, the zoo has undertaken several major renovation and expansion projects, adding a children's zoo focused on Alabama wildlife and "Trails of Africa," an exhibit featuring African animals and their habitats.

Birmingham Botanical Gardens, opened in 1963, includes 30 thematic gardens classified as Gardens of Collections, Gardens of Nature, and Gardens of Culture. A partnership between the city and Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens, the facility offers educational programming, such as the Central South Native Plant Conference scheduled for November 2013. The gardens also host family activities such as Hikes for Tikes and Dirt Dash. In addition to special family events, Birmingham Botanical Gardens holds children's summer camps and various adult and family classes, including those of the Southern Institute of Photography. Its full-service public library is the largest public horticultural library in the Southeast.

Birmingham has an exceptionally strong public library system. Birmingham Public Library (BPL) is the most well-funded large library system in the southeastern United States, and it was ranked higher than four out of five peer libraries in the Library Journal's Index of Public Library Service. BPL engages and educates the public through lectures, films, book readings, computer classes, art shows, history exhibits, book groups, and other programs. Birmingham is also home to several academic libraries, including two at UAB and several smaller ones at the city's community colleges and private universities.

Culture and heritage is a cluster where Birmingham has undeniable advantages, if they can be developed, organized, and marketed as a cluster and not piecemeal. Coordination, organization, and resources are all that hold it back from even greater national recognition.

EDUCATION AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Many Birmingham sites and museums feature robust volunteer and internship programs for young people. Local higher education institutions offer courses of study preparing students for employment in this cluster.

ORGANIZATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS

The Cultural Alliance's Birmingham365.org brings the cultural, philanthropic, tourism, and business interests of the community together to celebrate what is going on in the community with printed and online comprehensive calendars of events and other happenings.

Cultural and heritage organizations rely on dedicated community support from board members, volunteers, and patrons.

STRENGTHS

Civil rights history. Birmingham is one of just a handful of places that represent epochal transitions in the story of the United States, and the city’s civil rights landmarks have national and even international significance. As the events of the civil rights movement recede from memory into history, Birmingham residents, both black and white, are realizing how important it is to tell the city’s stories to locals and outsiders alike.

Industrial heritage. Birmingham’s industrial history is being increasingly acknowledged and preserved. If the city continues to capitalize on its unique combination of assets—mines, foundries, and museums, all in an urban setting—it has the potential to be a national destination in a new niche tourism segment.

Strong regional cultural attractions. Birmingham’s zoo, botanical garden, art museum, and science museum are large regional attractions that draw people to the city, particularly young families.

Supportive city government. The Birmingham city government provides support for some of the city’s culture and heritage cluster. Birmingham’s libraries, museums, parks, and historic sites help preserve the region’s art for the future, but also play a role in facilitating the work of today’s artists and creative workers.

CHALLENGES

Need for better coordination and joint marketing. While the Cultural Alliance works for the system as a whole, competition for civic, state, and corporate funding discourages active cooperation. More collaboration in marketing activities, program offerings, strategic planning, and advocacy could benefit everyone.

Underdevelopment of heritage tourism sector. Despite its attractiveness, Birmingham is still a “hidden gem,” unknown to most tourists. Birmingham has not yet fully capitalized on its extensive culture and heritage assets. Birmingham has begun to recognize its potential, but until there is a sustained, collective effort to invest in and market the city’s tourism destinations, it will remain an underachiever.

Underdevelopment of African-American heritage. Birmingham is home to outstanding museums and historic sites related to its African-American heritage. To be more competitive as a cultural tourism destination, the city must look for new ways to creatively expand upon and leverage its existing assets.



VISUAL ARTS & CRAFTS: ARTISTIC INSPIRATION

The visual arts and crafts sector includes pottery, glass, china, and jewelry manufacturing industries; photography and art supply, needlework and jewelry stores; and art dealers. Occupations include painters, photographers, sculptors, crafters, quilters, and jewelers. Their products are largely one-of-a-kind or produced in limited editions and, until about a decade ago, assumed to be in large part a public good supported by public and private donations, not an economic investment. This set of creative industries also includes those businesses that are part of the value chain necessary to produce and sell art—the companies that make and sell art supplies and equipment, the photographic equipment dealers, art dealers and galleries, and fine arts schools.

This cluster is difficult to describe using national industry-based data because many artists work independently and a large proportion of artists are part-time, relying on other sources of income to earn a sustainable living. Two-thirds of those calling themselves artists responding to the survey of creatives earn their primary living from other occupations, with the largest number in public or higher education or business services, and the next highest in manufacturing. Similarly, the employment data include only six art galleries or dealers in the county when searches revealed a significantly higher number. Thus, it is quite difficult to capture accurately with industry data. As a result, the composition of this cluster is dominated by educational businesses, photographic studios, and the stores that sell jewelry, sewing and knitting, and photographic supplies to artists and craftspeople.



When aggregated, this cluster is estimated to include more than 2,300 people in Jefferson County, a number that has increased by 17% since 2003. Of those artists responding to the survey, 17% earned less than \$2,000 last year and 45% earned less than \$15,000.

Given its industrial history, much of the city's art includes metal forging and ceramics. Sloss Furnaces, once a pig iron blast furnace and now a historic landmark that attracts visitors, hosted its third National Conference on Cast Iron Art in 2013. With its metal arts featured on National Public Radio in 2009 as a source of "New Life for Iron and Steel," Sloss has plans to develop residential metal and ceramic crafts programs on site.

Birmingham is also home to nationally recognized folk artists. Seventy-year-old Joe Minter, featured in the *New York Times*, produces yard art installations that reflect his African ancestry, and octogenarian Thorton Dial, featured in the *New Yorker* and previously on "60 Minutes," creates political art out of found objects. His work has been on display at the Whitney and High Museums.



Many artists depend on associations, networks, and other forms of collaboration to achieve scale and share costs. The Birmingham Art Association has 16 members and the collective workspace called 21st Street Studios became home to a dozen artists in 2011.

Local artists use festivals, art shows, galleries, installations in restaurants or office buildings, and the Internet to show and sell their work. The survey of artists found that fairs and festivals were the most important markets for local visual artists and craftspeople (87% of those surveyed noted this as important; followed by local galleries, 55%; and the Internet, 47%). Because of the uncertainty of the market for art and the breadth of interests, visual art is one of the more difficult talents for earning a living. Sixty artists responding to our survey reported the following.

- 36% Art is essential to maintaining a middle-class or better lifestyle.
- 36% Art provides supplementary income to maintaining their standard of living.
- 9% Art has kept the household out of poverty.
- 19% Art is a hobby generating minimal income.

Birmingham’s relatively small creative core includes highly accomplished visual, craft, and folk artists. The cluster taken as a whole, however, has not achieved the scale, received the exposure, or established the brand to receive national or even regional recognition.

EDUCATION AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS

The Birmingham City School system is in the early stages of creating an art instruction curriculum for K-12 students. UAB, Birmingham-Southern, and Samford have distinguished studio art programs. Outside of the schools, neighborhood programs highlight educational and social values. Kuumba Community Art, for example, uses photography as a community development tool for civic and social change.

The city’s galleries are important venues for local artists. Artists Incorporated is a local gallery in Vestavia Hills representing about 50 local artists. Naked Art is one of Birmingham’s premier galleries, representing an eclectic group of some 60 artists from across the South. Exhibition space for Birmingham visual artists is not only in traditional galleries. Area libraries, restaurants, coffeehouses, and other venues display curated collections.

The culinary sector was critical to the success of ceramics artist Tena Payne’s Earthborn Studios. In 1997, Hot and Hot Fish Club began using her pottery as serving pieces to enhance the eating experience. Now employing nine people, Earthborn Pottery can be found in restaurants from Las Vegas to London. Earthborn and Cahaba Clayworks offer classes in their 24,000-square-foot facility.



ORGANIZATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS

Artwalk is an annual event that brings more than 100 artists into a downtown neighborhood. Festivals such as the Magic City Art Connection in downtown Birmingham, the Black Creek Arts Festival, Bluff Park Art Show, Birmingham Arts and Music Festival, Moss Rock Festival, and Art on R Mountain all give local artists exposure to large potential local markets.

Organizations representing visual artists and craftspeople are more likely to be local and based on a shared service like marketing, galleries, or working space. For example, the Birmingham Art Association exhibits members' work,



and the Birmingham Art Collective and the 21st Street Studios are collective workspaces. Crafts-related groups include the Birmingham Quilters Guild and Bib and Tucker Sew-Op. MAKEbhm provides resources for sculptors working with metal, wood, and other media. Paper Workers Local nurtures the production of and appreciation for fine art prints and other paper arts. WeAreRtists is an open membership group of Black Birmingham that has about 230 members and has moved to more web-based interactions.

The East Lake Arts District organizes installations in vacant spaces in their community. The cities of Mountain Brook, Homewood, and Leeds also have arts associations or councils that produce events and shows throughout the year. Surrounding counties Shelby, Chilton, and Walker have arts councils or alliances as well.

STRENGTHS

Industrial and metal arts. Birmingham's past as a leader in metal and steel production has spilled over into metal art. With Sloss Furnaces taking the lead in metal art classes and workshops, the area is home to a number of artists who work with metals.

Willingness to network and collaborate. Artists are willing to work collectively to share costs and work space, reach larger markets by expanding their presence, and inspire one another. A number of art guilds and associations that serve groups of artists make the whole larger than the sum of its parts.

Folk, outsider, and political art. The area has a number of folk and street artists who are not captured by any employment data, but are recognized in the folk art world.

CHALLENGES

Visibility for young rising artists. Artists in the community colleges, in particular, felt they have too little exposure and too few venues to be seen to develop their art and build their reputations.

Insufficient scale. While there are a large number of visual artists and craftspeople in the area, Birmingham lacks the critical mass necessary to be known as a center for these visual and handmade arts.

Expanding public art. Even with notable examples of public art in the civil rights and parkside districts, many areas have little, if any, public art.

Exposure and marketing. Artists surveyed expressed the greatest need for more assistance with local and regional marketing, more art venues, and more arts advocacy.

EDUCATION & TRAINING IN CREATIVE INDUSTRIES



To grow and prosper, Birmingham’s creative industries need, first and foremost, an educated, talented, and entrepreneurial workforce. Employers across all sectors of the economy are beginning to look more for talent and creativity than for narrow, job-specific skills. Even the fine arts, once assumed to have little economic value for all but exceptional students, are turning out to be not only a realistic path but also a preferred path to potential employment in many industries. “The MFA,” as a number of experts have argued, “is becoming the new MBA.” Moreover, the arts and design also help boost educational achievement and are an important part of a well-rounded education.

The robustness and resiliency of creative economies are nearly always linked to the strength and support of local educational institutions. Schools, colleges, and universities not only provide a stream of new talent needed to replenish and grow the creative industries, but also foster an appreciation for the arts and creativity among all students. Furthermore, educational institutions provide public venues for new, emerging talent to be seen and heard and for artistic and cultural performances, exhibitions, and lectures.

Talent in and appreciation of the arts, both in their pure and applied forms, is developed in a variety of educational settings. That path, beginning in preschool and early grades and supplemented by private after-school and summer programs, exposes children to the arts and culture in order to develop appreciation and talents. That is followed in the schools by programs for learning about

and participating in arts. By secondary school, students can choose to develop and showcase specific artistic talents and explore their potential for careers.

In post-secondary education, the arts are offered either as a choice for specialization, an interest students choose to develop as a hobby and/or secondary career, or as electives to strengthen creative thinking and problem-solving skills.

ART IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Fewer than half of the city’s elementary schools—just half of the K-8 schools and only one-quarter of the middle schools—offer art classes. Music, and particularly band, are more common, with many achieving notable distinctions. But these are electives, not requirements, and serve the few, not the many. Schools that offer the arts appear to do it with pride in their accomplishments. Perhaps one of the most unfortunate impacts of reducing arts in the public schools is limiting opportunities for those students who may not perform well on standardized tests from experiencing success in non-tested creative outlets.

Even students in the vocationally-oriented Career and Technical Education (CTE) track have some opportunities in applied art, depending on demand. CTE includes some design-based programs such as graphic design, multimedia design, audio-visual technologies, and the Academy of Hospitality and Tourism at Wenonah High School offers culinary arts during the senior year under CTE. The new high school career academies will also offer architecture. But, for the most part, the new academies are constrained by the conventional job training orientation of CTE and the

undervaluation of career paths associated with arts and design.

Alabama School of Fine Arts (ASFA), a prestigious statewide magnet school for the arts, was established by the state legislature in 1971. It moved to its current \$10 million facility in the heart of the city's cultural district 20 years ago. A grade 7-12 arts school, ASFA now accepts students into a blended math and science department in grades 8-11. The school has visual arts, dance, music, theater, and creative writing as well as math and science.



Graduates score, on average, 30 percent above the state average on the ACT and leave with a portfolio of their work. Virtually all go on to higher education, and about three in four eventually embark on careers in the arts.

The limitations of arts in the public schools are somewhat offset by after-school, weekend, and summer programs for children—at least for those who can afford them. Music and dance are the most common, with 47 offerings ranging from Rhythm N Motion and Umdabu South African Dance Company to Glitter and Grace Dance and Briarwood Ballet.

CREATIVITY IN THE COLLEGES

Birmingham is fortunate to have a number of colleges and universities with outstanding programs in the fine and applied arts, as well as design and experimental programs that link the arts and sciences. The city's colleges and universities are turning out a stream of employable graduates in a range of creative fields and providing a steady stream of performances and exhibits.

The dominant higher education institution, the University of Alabama at Birmingham, well-known for basic science, technological, and medical research, offers a wide range of baccalaureate programs, minors, and courses in its College of Arts and Sciences. These include fine arts, communications studies, and design. In 2012, 45 students were enrolled in creative writing degree programs, 102 in music, and 82 in theater.



UAB is among the leading research universities in the recently formed Alliance for the Arts in Research Universities. The Alliance was formed to generate “knowledge, advocacy, and resources that enable universities to integrate arts and design practices, fostering highly adaptive creators and thinkers.” Its goal is to encourage multidisciplinary learning and problem solving.

Even before the Alliance formed, innovative faculty at UAB were moving in this direction. Courses in the creative fields had been gaining popularity as ways to stand out in the labor market. In creative writing classes, for example, the majority of the students are from the medical, science, and business programs and are seeking to improve their communications skills. Many of the students taking the school's 18-hour minor in media expect to use multimedia technologies in other fields to

more effectively tell stories or to engage the community. Medical students, for example, wanted to communicate with remote hospitals and physicians, and nonprofits wanted to influence public opinion.

Other local colleges and universities have strong programs in creative fields. At Samford University last year, more than 300 students enrolled in programs in the arts, about half in music, where the school has a 100-year-old tradition and offered a pre-med music degree. Another 70 students enrolled in theater programs, 70 in visual arts, and 20 in interior design. These programs are job focused, and most graduates either go on to graduate school or get job offers. The college also has a pre-architecture program and a minor in film and media, and 200 students majoring in a journalism/mass communications program in arts and sciences.

Birmingham-Southern College, a smaller liberal arts school that is a member of the prestigious Associated Colleges of the South, offers degrees in studio arts, theater arts, musical theater, and media and film studies, including one of the very few Bachelors of Fine Arts available in the state. Provost Mark Schantz noted, “Creative expression is required of all students here.” Specialties are studio arts, including sculpture and photography; a music program; a media and film studies program that sends some faculty and students to the Sundance Film Festival; and a creative writing program that produces the literary magazine Quad. Graduates, according to the provost, tend to remain in the area.



The college also hosts the Southern Environmental Center, which draws heavily on the arts and design to teach and encourage sustainability. In addition to EcoScape, its four-acre outdoor classroom, the program builds artistic EcoScapes around the city, including healing gardens in a retirement community, on church grounds in southwest Birmingham, and on lots in Homewood.

Miles College, a historically black college, offers baccalaureate degree programs, minors, and electives in visual art, drama and theater, and jazz and lyrical dance, plus a bachelor’s degree in music education. The college also has a program in communications studies that highlights mass communications.

Alabama’s community college system, like most such systems, provides low-cost, open access to post-secondary education leading to careers or further education opportunities. The system is best known for its capabilities in meeting the workforce needs of industry, supporting industrial recruitment, and as a point of entry for minorities and families with no college history. The community colleges often have fine arts programs that typically provide an Associate of Arts (AA) degree, with many students then transferring to a baccalaureate program. They also offer a small number of applied arts programs leading to Applied Associate of Science (AAS) degrees or certificates directly related to employment.

Community colleges serving Jefferson County are Lawson State and Jefferson State. Lawson State, listed among the top 50 community colleges in the U.S., has associate degree programs in music, art, and journalism of telecommunications and film broadcasting. Its applied programs are shorter certificate programs in radio/TV broadcasting technologies, and graphic communications, and the college is developing a short-term culinary arts program. The college recently received a grant from the state to train technicians to support potential film and media projects.

Jefferson State’s strongest program for creative industries is hospitality management/culinary apprenticeship, which graduated 73 students in 2011. The program operates bistro proVare, a classroom café on the campus. The college also offers courses in the arts and, in the past, has had programs in interior design and telecommunications.

On an annual basis, the region’s colleges and universities have the potential to provide an important “pipeline” of creative talent into the economy. There are over 250 students graduating with a degree of BA or higher in a creative area. In addition, close to 200 students are receiving degrees in the culinary arts. (See Exhibit 20.) Helping these students to stay in the Birmingham area—to pursue their careers or to start their own businesses—could be an important contribution to the creative economy.

The public and private educational programs, schools, and institutions that further educational outcomes, develop talent, and generate interest in creative goods and services from cradle to grave are a vitally important part of Birmingham’s creative infrastructure. The system in the community has a number of strengths and challenges.

STRENGTHS

Music and theater programs. Local institutions of higher education have strong degree programs in both music and theater that have proven employment outcomes. Each is backed up by its institution's sophisticated performance facilities to showcase student and faculty performance and offer high-quality regional and national performers.

Efforts to integrate arts with science and technology. Each of the four-year colleges and universities, as well as the Alabama School of Fine Arts, recognizes the value and applications of the arts to creativity and innovation across disciplines.

Desire to keep art in the classroom. As resources for arts in the K-12 classroom dwindle, there is a base of support in the community working to retain and expand its presence and to supplement it.

CHALLENGES

Keeping the arts in the public schools. Support for the arts will continue to be a challenge because of tight budgets and the emphasis on STEM education at local and state levels. The impact of the arts on learning and achievement should be recognized and acted upon.

Under-appreciated career potential. Despite growing interest among employers, creative occupations are under-appreciated by workforce and educational agencies that usually focus on employment projections rather than on potential economic value. The challenge is to overcome the current trend questioning the need for liberal arts programs that do not match specific jobs.

Limited opportunities for education in design fields. The area has no programs in industrial design or architecture and few enrollments in graphics design or communications design.

Isolation of community college students. Community colleges, not well known for their arts, offer limited opportunities for students to perform and exhibit and depend heavily on the connections of their teachers for their weak links to the creative industries.

Little emphasis on business/entrepreneurial skills. Given the large numbers working in creative industries that are self-employed or in small enterprises, business skills ought to be given a higher priority. In most programs, it is up to the student to find electives to meet this need.



PERCENT OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS OFFERING ARTS PROGRAMS

Program	Elementary	K-8 Schools	Middle Schools	High Schools
Arts	41%	50%	25%	88%
Band	28%	75%	67%	88%
Choral	72%	38%	17%	88%
Orchestra	3%	0%	0%	13%
Drama	0%	0%	8%	37%
Debate-Literary	0%	13%	25%	13%

CREATIVE DEGREE PROGRAMS IN COLLEGES

Institution	Art	Music	Dance/Theater	Film/Media	Design	Culinary
Birmingham-Southern College	BA, BFA	BA	BA	BA		
Miles College		BA	BA	BA		
Samford College	BA, BS	BA, BS, MM	BA, BFA	BA	BA, BFA	
University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB)	BA, BFA, MA	BA	BA		BFA	
Jefferson State Comm College	AS			AS	AS, AAS	AAS
Lawson State Comm College		AA		AA	AS, AAS	AAS
Culinary at Virginia College						Diploma, AAS

GRADUATES, BIRMINGHAM HIGHER EDUCATION, 2011

Cluster	BA/BS or higher	Associate Degree
Visual arts and crafts	72	1
Performing arts	72	2
Design	42	17
Film and media	56	26
Culinary arts and food	0	197

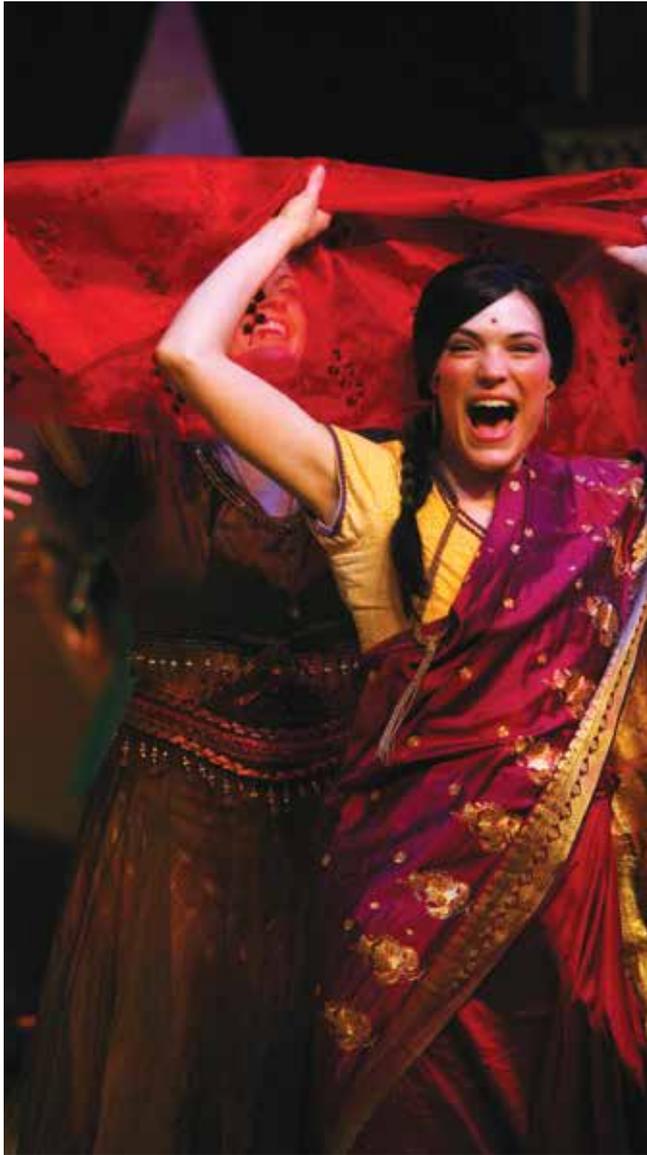


SUPPORTING THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

Leveraging and building upon Birmingham's current creative strengths requires an environment that has the following characteristics: nonprofit organizational support and funding, networking, entrepreneurial and business assistance, and space for production, presenting, selling, and showcasing products and talent.

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

A strong support system includes a stable funding stream for the work of artists and cultural organizations of all sizes and an organizational infrastructure that is able to provide assistance and resources aimed at advocating for and



strengthening the community's cultural assets. The region's nonprofit cultural institutions have substantial needs for both operating support as well as facility improvements. Focus group and key interview participants voiced concerns not only about sustaining existing organizations, but also about providing the resources needed to further build the community's cultural and historic assets.

The cultural community has a diversity of organizations, including the Cultural Alliance of Greater Birmingham, which administers a range of services and initiatives on behalf of arts, cultural, historical, and entertainment enterprises. However, the organization has relatively limited staffing capacity and breadth in terms of the full range of creative industries.

The cultural organizations have limited contact and relationships with the business and economic development communities. Throughout the interviews and focus groups for this project, it became clear that the support organizations are most comfortable working with and building relationships within the arts and cultural community. Relationships and collaborations with the business community have been much more limited.

While not a cultural organization, REV Birmingham plays an increasingly important role in arts, cultural, and design development in the city. REV Birmingham has made substantial investments in the "spaces and places" and physical infrastructure that are so essential to the presence of arts and entertainment in a number of neighborhoods throughout the city.

The region's philanthropic community is a strong and important funder of arts and cultural activities in the city. The foundation community continues to be a significant source of

financial support to arts and cultural organizations in the city for programs, special projects, operations, and facilities. This support has been critical to many of the organizations.

Public sector funding through the state and city have been critical to the operation of a number of major cultural institutions, as well as smaller organizations and individual artists. At the state level, the Alabama Humanities Foundation and Alabama State Council on the Arts provide funding for cultural activities in Birmingham. In particular, the Council on the Arts supports performing arts, visual arts and crafts, media, local arts councils, fairs and festivals, literature, design, folk and traditional arts, and arts education. These funds have helped to support some of the smaller cultural organizations in the city such as the Birmingham Music Club, Sanspointe Dance Company, Metropolitan Arts Center at Virginia Samford Theatre, and Space One Eleven.

The city plays a very important role in supporting and nurturing arts, cultural, and creative activities. In fiscal year 2012, 9% of the city's General Fund was devoted to eight programs, venues, and attractions. That included 124 park properties and 20 recreation centers, the 750,000 square foot Cross Plex facility, 19 libraries, Boutwell Auditorium, Arlington Antebellum House, Birmingham Museum of Art, Southern Museum of Flight, and Sloss Furnaces. The Department of Economic Development has also been supportive of the creative community and could be more so in the report's implementation stage.

While there is a strong funding base, many of the city's cultural institutions and individual artists are facing a much more limited funding environment, creating considerable vulnerability particularly for smaller, nonprofit cultural institutions and individual artists. Fiscal constraints in the public sector, along with competing needs and priorities due to the economic environment, impact the ability of many cultural organizations to maintain their level of activities. Flexible seed funds to jump-start commercially-oriented creative projects (e.g., affordable production space) are in short supply, as is funding that would bring about new collaborations and innovations within the community.

NETWORKING

Creative industries are, by their nature, social. The experiences that define creative industries are often based on personal connections among agents, producers, and consumers. Economic opportunities and markets are often word of mouth, the result of social connections and networking. When information is disseminated through your network of acquaintances and friends, you increase your chances of financial success and community visibility.

Formal networking takes place in the various membership-based professional associations, business associations, and guilds that represent subsets of the creative industries and meet, provide information, and, in some instances, provide services. The informal networking environment is important because of successful interactions in the casual atmosphere of bars, cafés, and coffee shops. The Birmingham Creative Roundtable invites artists, designers, entrepreneurs, bloggers, and others to monthly meetings for discussions and to brainstorm ways to strengthen and brand the city's creative industries. Active local chapters of national professional associations representing, for example, advertising, architects, and interior designers, meet regularly, host events, and communicate with members. These chapters promote innovation and create synergy among members.

While each cluster and sub-segment of the creative industries may have specialized forums for networking and support, the Cultural Alliance of Greater Birmingham is the leading voice for the creative economy, spanning across all of its parts, plans, and patrons. The Alliance advocates, facilitates, and connects artists, performers, educators, audiences, and policymakers from early education to final markets. Its Birmingham365.org brings the cul-



tural, philanthropic, tourism, and business interests of the community together and demonstrates the depth and breadth of the region's vibrancy.

Taking responsibility for creating professional networks and organizing events takes time, resources, and persistence. This cannot easily be done on an ad hoc basis and will be most successful when someone has both the time and the resources to take responsibility.



ENTREPRENEURIAL AND BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

Perhaps the most fundamental and undervalued aspect of the creative industries is their influence on innovation and job growth. Every artist or creative professional is a potential entrepreneur with many creative products and services produced by small businesses. An effective system to support entrepreneurs and growing small businesses is an important part of the creative infrastructure.

The region has recognized the economic value of innovation and is beginning to recognize the potential of interdisciplinary efforts, particularly merging the arts and design with science and technology. Birmingham has a cadre of individuals who understand the value of design thinking and are committed to the integration of art and technology. Dedicated spaces and collective resources such as Social Venture, UAB's Edge of Chaos, and the new beta site for MAKEbhm are places where services can be shared among creative people, startup companies, or small growth enterprises.

Creative industries tend to be underserved by existing public and private business services. The technical assistance and incentives available for entrepreneurial development and for high-growth businesses are rarely even known by, much less accessed by, the typical creative enterprise. While local business services stand ready to help, most creative enterprises and artists do not use the services either because they are unaware of them or because they believe their needs are so special or their scale too small to be understood or considered by general and conventional service providers.

The city's Economic Development Department has several funding and business support programs and services. A few programs have particular relevance to the city's creative enterprises. The EDA Revolving Loan Fund makes loans to businesses in the city, principally for working capital. These loans start with a minimum of \$50,000, and two to three loans are typically made in a year. Creative enterprises are eligible for the loans, but there have not been any applications from creative firms in recent years.

The Birmingham Business Development Loan Program offers loans in the range of \$350,000 to \$1 million. Generally, four to five of these loans are made each year. REV Birmingham's Social Venture building in Woodlawn houses entrepreneurs, freelancers, and small firms, some of whom are from the creative community.

PLACES AND SPACES

Creative businesses, individuals, and groups need places to perform, exhibit, and share their work. Birmingham has a wide array of spaces suitable for virtually every genre of performing and visual arts and for all aspects of the arts community, from established professionals to emerging local artists to promising students.

Numerous facilities are available to host the performing arts, ranging from large theaters and concert halls to community performing spaces and clubs featuring individual or small groups of performing artists. Educational institutions offer small and large spaces for performing arts productions. Beyond the major venues, the city has a number of small theaters. The city's churches, outdoor spaces including Railroad Park, and public libraries provide spaces for a wide variety of music, dance, and theatrical performances.

The decline in the city's manufacturing base during the past several decades has left a large inventory of vacant and underutilized industrial spaces, which creates opportunities to re-purpose these properties for arts-related uses, including work, exhibition, and performance spaces. Some of this is already occurring but could be expanded. Investments could be strategically targeted to areas of the city with an existing or emerging base of arts activities such as the downtown residential loft district, and neighborhoods such as Woodlawn, Lakeview, East Lake, Avondale, and Ensley.

Ensuring that existing facilities can obtain sufficient funding for maintenance and modernization is a challenge. Boutwell Auditorium, a historically-significant venue for large-audience music and theatrical performances, is in need of significant funding for essential renovations. Arts funders could benefit from an inventory of venues that identifies and costs-out needed investments.

The local arts community has identified a need for additional affordable spaces for emerging local artists. This will require local government, philanthropies, and private developers to work collaboratively with local artists to create public-private partnerships that finance and develop affordable live, work, and performance spaces, with particular attention to areas with emerging clusters of arts activities. The local arts community has also identified the need for more nontraditional spaces such as cross-disciplinary venues and collaborative workspaces. More collaboration is needed among arts funders, developers, and artists to conceptualize such facilities, assess market demand, and implement development projects.

As the city's cultural scene has expanded, certain areas have taken on a distinctive artistic character, each offering its own blend of cultural activities. In the 4th Avenue Business District and the adjacent Civil Rights District, historic



sites and businesses center around the Civil Rights Institute. The Theater District is the home of the city's most historic and architecturally significant theaters, including the Alabama Theatre, Carver Theatre, and Lyric Theatre, as well as the Red Mountain Theatre Company's cabaret and the IMAX theater at McWane Science Center. These venues host the annual Sidewalk Film Festival as well as other events throughout the year. The nearby city center Loft District features galleries, lofts, an eclectic mix of restaurants and shops, and hosts ArtWalk and the Secret Stages music festival. The Uptown entertainment district, the center of Birmingham's convention activity, is anchored by the Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex, two major hotels, new upscale restaurants, and cultural venues, such as the Birmingham Museum of Art, Boutwell Auditorium, and the Alabama School of Fine Arts.



Five Points South features award-winning restaurants ranging from fine dining to barbecue, lively bars, and specialty shops including Charlemagne Records and Renaissance Records. The area is home to letterpress printer Kempis Press, as well as the Birmingham Festival Theatre. With the Pepper Place complex as its focal point, the Lakeview district is the home of a number of design firms as well as restaurants, and entertainment venues including the Terrific New Theatre. The Railroad Park/Regions Field area (Parkside) is an emerging focal point for cultural and entertainment events.

SUCCESSFUL NATIONAL EXAMPLES

Montana's Artrepreneurship Program was developed at a two-year college in Great Falls to help its creative arts enterprise students learn to develop a sustainable business and become "market ready." The Montana State Arts Council subsequently adopted the program statewide. It developed 35 tools, such as researching potential customers, developing promotional materials, building a budget, and writing a business plan, and taught it as a market-ready certification program.

Haywood Community College in western North Carolina hosts an arts business boot camp every summer during which artisans are taught about managing their business, finances, marketing, use of e-commerce, and budgeting. Most years, the camp is oversubscribed, with attendees coming from across the U.S. It is supported by the partnership of the Arts Business Institute and HandMade in America in Asheville.

Milwaukee Makerspace is a physical space with equipment, but it is also a community of makers and a social club. Modern software, the Internet, and economies of scale have all come together to allow ordinary people with a little bit of knowhow to begin blurring the lines between manufacturer and consumer. Makers pursue their individual interests within the framework of the collective, whether electronics, robotics, wood, metals, music, art, video, photography, textiles, or printing. People pursuing their interests in close proximity to one another leads to increased productivity, personal satisfaction, and innovative products and projects.

The Laboratory for Arts and Ideas outside of Denver conducts "mixed taste" events that combine, for example, a presentation on Prairie Dogs with a presentation on Gertrude Stein, Earth Art with Goat Cheese, and Swiss Typology with TV Theme Songs.

CORE STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

The following eight general strategies are each followed by a set of discrete suggested actions, some accompanied by successful examples from other places.

1. DEVELOP AND RETAIN TALENT

Alabama has developed an outstanding education and training system for producing the workforce that has been needed for an industrialized economy. However, only 7 percent of Jefferson County's employment is now working in manufacturing, a proportion that is likely to decline further with the adoption of new technologies and increases in productivity. The successful manufacturers of the future and the other new industries that produce tomorrow's growth and wealth will depend on talent that is generally, but not always, measured by levels of education.

Many firms make their investment decisions based on where that talent is, and talented people make their job choices based on where other creative people congregate. Birmingham's outstanding resources in higher education are already driving much of the city's growth. The city should extend its ability to grow new talent by (1) investing more heavily in developing creative talent in the public schools, especially those with populations that previously have not entered post-secondary education, (2) expanding educational programs for the creative industries, and (3) making sure that creative graduates have the economic opportunities and cultural amenities they need and want to remain in the region.

Expand Arts and Design Education in the Public Schools

Develop a community commitment to ensure that arts education is available in every public school, both as a requirement in primary education and as electives in different art forms in every middle and secondary school. According to a National Governors Association paper, "The arts can provide effective learning opportunities to the general student population, yielding increased academic performance, reduced absenteeism, and better skill-building. An even more compelling advantage is the striking success of arts-based educational programs among disadvantaged populations especially at-risk and incarcerated youth." This will require added investment, which can be most easily allocated if the arts are integrated into the core curriculum.

Make Career Paths and Economic Opportunities Explicit and Available to People Making Career Choices

Information about careers in many of the creative occupations is scarce, either because the occupations are new and/or do not have standardized titles or documented skill sets or because they are heavily oriented toward freelancing and microenterprises and not included in official projected employment figures. Contributing to the scarcity of career information is the prevailing emphasis on connecting workforce demand with the needs of large-scale industries such as healthcare, automotive, information technology, and energy. By systematically educating career, counseling, and placement offices in schools, workforce investment centers, and employment offices about creative sector opportunities, students will better appreciate and understand career opportunities and paths within the various components of the creative economy. Guidance and career counselors and employment services should be provided with information and knowledge about economic—not just employment—opportunities in creative fields.



Require Entrepreneurial or Business Skills in Educational Programs for Careers in Creative Fields

Programs in the arts and design in both secondary and post-secondary education rarely include enough of the entrepreneurial skills students will need if they plan to work independently or in a small enterprise. Those who do acquire business skills generally depend on the interests and experiences of individual teachers who work practical business training into the curriculum. Students in music, design, media—any programs for creative occupations that are likely to result in self-employment or entrepreneurship—need similar skills.

Expand Media and Design Programs in Public Education with Particular Emphasis on Recruiting and Reaching Minority Populations

Design offers an entry point to learning that can reach and retain creative but nontraditional learners and, at the same time, give them a set of marketable skills for growth occupations. Many young people are nontraditional learners yet very creative. Media and design are growth clusters that value creative skills, but that also offer a more attractive way for nontraditional learners to improve their core competencies.

Consider Becoming a Replication Site of the National Center for Arts and Technology (NCAT)

Manchester Craftsmen's Guild (MCG) is a nonprofit enterprise developed by Bill Strickland in Pittsburgh and targeted primarily to under-served high school students and young people. The organization has a national reputation for effectiveness in combining arts and technology training and giving participants a new portfolio of skills for employment and economic opportunity in the creative and technology industries. Because of local successes, MCG developed a replication model (NCAT) in eight cities across the country and is currently under consideration in Atlanta and Richmond.

Increase Access to Higher Education in Design

This access exists on a modest level via Auburn's architecture, design, and construction students, who take courses in Birmingham focusing on urban design. Degree programs in most aspects of design are limited at both community colleges and universities. Students who wish to continue in design fields must find a school elsewhere for more advanced or more specialized education. Establishing formal articulation agreements with other colleges or universities, providing access to online courses, or expanding programs with sufficient demand are all viable options.

Develop Internships for Art and Design Students

Providing workplace learning opportunities in creative businesses would give students experiential learning opportunities and a chance to explore career options. At the same time, it would allow employers to find out what a student has to offer and take advantage of their fresh perspectives and ideas. Internships and class projects with client businesses have proven effective at the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design in supporting Milwaukee's creative economy.

Expand Local and Residential Crafts Programs at Sloss Furnaces

Take advantage of the setting, resources, and craftsmanship associated with Sloss Furnaces to offer short-term introductory and long-term resident programs in the metal and ceramic arts. This has been tried with mixed success. Partnering with Penland School of Crafts or other resident crafts program and connecting to its metal industry heritage, Sloss can rebuild its national reputation.



2. BLEND THE ARTS WITH SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY TO NURTURE INNOVATION

Successful economies are driven by innovation, a term often not well understood. Public policy favors top-down, research and development driven innovation that begins with the research lab and, if successful, ends in commercialized products produced locally. But the vast majority of innovations do not come out of research. They originate with users, designers, and interdisciplinary creativity. Some businesses and universities recognize the value of merging the thinking patterns of scientists and artists. Matching Birmingham's research and development strengths with its creative talents will enable the city to accelerate innovation and become a leader in this global trend.



Coordinate Existing Efforts that Integrate Learning among Sciences, Arts, and Humanities

Activities are already underway at a few institutions but they are uncoordinated. UAB's Edge of Chaos, Leonardo Art and Engineering program, Alliance for the Arts in Research Universities, and the other course-specific efforts would benefit from coordinated, joint efforts to learn from one another, and to systematically test and evaluate different approaches.

Establish a Design “Wing” at the Innovation Depot for Companies Developing Creative Products or Services

Given the number of creative companies already operating in the Innovation Depot, this may be an opportune time to further develop the creative face of innovation. By recruiting and supporting creative enterprises and organizing events around creativity, the Innovation Depot would not only diversify its enterprise base but also encourage new ideas and innovations among its technology-based tenants. The cross-fertilization of design and technology would raise all ships and provide a possible entrepreneurial opportunity for ideas emerging from the new multidisciplinary innovation efforts at UAB.

Organize Monthly Events that Combine Creativity and Innovation

Events could be organized that offer opportunities for technically-oriented professionals, artists, and designers to congregate to hear from speakers about cutting edge ideas, to network, and to interact to develop new perspectives that stimulate innovation and entrepreneurship.

3. EXPAND SUPPORT SERVICES AND BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE BUSINESS AND CORPORATE COMMUNITY

Creative enterprises often need external advice and support to be sustainable and successful but lack access to conventional support services. Creative enterprises frequently are smaller, may not be looking to rapid growth, operate in more uncertain markets, and have products that are more difficult to value. Collectively, they have considerable growth potential, but they need business advice and support tailored to their needs. The active involvement of the Birmingham Business Alliance (BBA) and the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama (EDPA) will be critical to coordinating support from within the business community.



Develop Business Services Tailored to Freelancers, Microenterprises, and Nonprofits

Individuals in creative businesses often lack the business acumen or interests necessary to operate and grow successful businesses. Despite the plethora of small business services, artists often have markets and issues with which they are not familiar, and artists cannot afford consultants. A special service targeting the arts and design could be developed either within one of the existing services or independently, partially subsidized, as many small business services are already, by government or from private sources.

Establish Formal Connections to Cities Outside of the U.S. to Expand Markets and Learning

Building relationships with two or three cities in other parts of the world would create opportunities for cultural, student, and market exchanges and sharing ideas and experiences. While this may require some modest investment, the potential for opening doors to new and different ideas and acquiring international exposure can pay off. For example, connections could be pursued with cities of similar size like the British city of Manchester, which has made a heavy investment in building its creative industries; Aarhus in Denmark, which is known for arts and music; or Ballarat in Victoria, Australia, an industrial city redefining itself.

Nurture and Advertise the Existing Niche Markets to Make Use of Publishing Talent

Given the strength of the city's publishing industry—both hard copy and online—and the pressures on the industry, it is important to nurture it. Highlighting what greater Birmingham has to offer could both help retain local graduates in the industry and attract new young talent. Literary events like the proposed Walker Percy centennial or a Birmingham Book Festival could create networking opportunities for those in publishing, as the Sidewalk Film Festival has for film. Hoover Library's successful "Southern Voices" program and previous library book reads can be used as a precedent for putting together a more comprehensive and well-advertised literary festival.



Establish a "Loaned Executive" Program

Senior and mid-level managers in the business community would be "loaned" to creative nonprofits to provide assistance with the business side of their work and the businesses they serve. A loaned executive could help an organization or its members create more effective financial systems and protocols, create a more high-powered marketing plan, institute cost-reduction and containment strategies, create more earned revenue, develop new creative products and services, and/or build a stronger audience or customer base.

Enhance Film and Media Business Opportunities

Providing industry specialists with up-to-date, accessible information will lower the barrier to entry for others interested in taking advantage of the film incentives and those looking to document the rich history and landscape of the Birmingham area through local film production. To build a critical mass in the industry and take advantage of existing local talent, the film and media professionals need such a business infrastructure.

4. ESTABLISH BIRMINGHAM AS A HUB FOR DESIGN

Given the talent and reputation of Birmingham's environmental design cluster, its architecture, landscape and interior design, urban planning, and advertising, the city has the potential to become a world-class design cluster in the South and, eventually, nationally.



Integrate Design into Technical Education

Competitive manufacturing in the U.S. is increasingly dependent on design skills and design thinking. Surveys of employers in other states have shown overwhelmingly (two to one) that they want creative employees. This suggests integration of art or industrial design into technical education in the community colleges and engineering education in the universities. This is quickly becoming common practice in some of the nation's leading engineering colleges.

Programs in industrial and graphic design that involve creative and artistic content ought to become an integral part of the city's emerging Career Academies, complementing the programs in architecture.

Make Manufacturing Technologies Available in Schools in Low-Income Parts of the City

The ability to make things must be readily available to the many, not just those ready to begin a business. Three-D printers, for example, are low enough in cost to be available in the public library in Missoula, Montana. Introducing the technologies and teaching the design and applications to students early on can both increase retention rates and provide potential career opportunities for less-advantaged populations.

Initiate a Creative Challenge Program

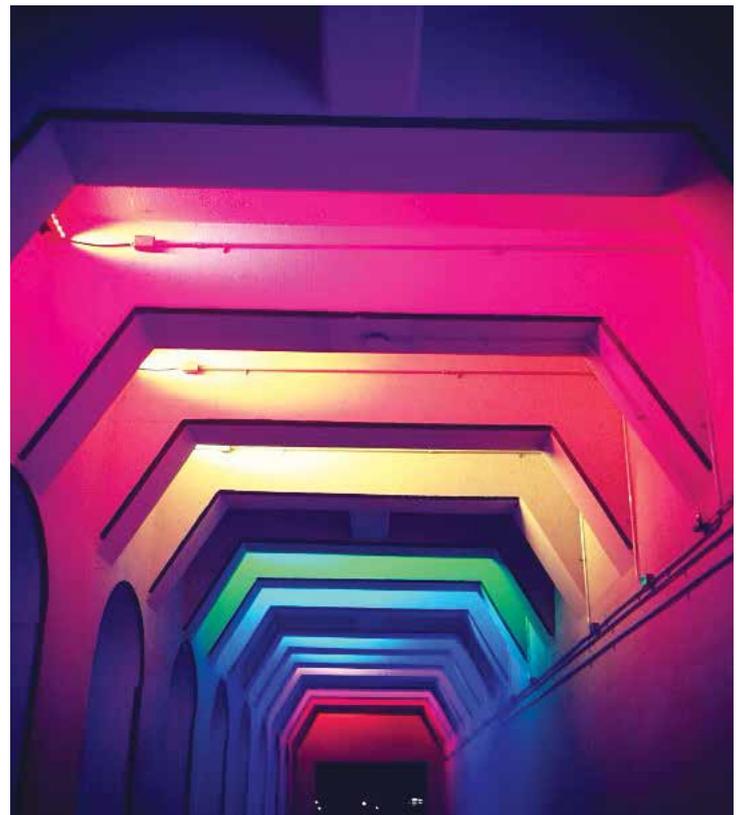
Businesses that need product or marketing design services but lack those in-house competencies develop a "Request for Proposals" for the service, which is circulated among a selected group of artists and designers including students. Designers and artists who are selected are compensated for their work and sometimes kept on retainer as contract designers.

5. FURTHER DEVELOP BIRMINGHAM'S CREATIVE DISTRICTS

The city has a very well-designed plan for clustering certain types of creative businesses in distinctive districts already well underway. This process builds identities and produces synergy. The challenge is to embrace the continued development and support of these districts so they complement one another and expand their collective markets; are safe, easily accessible, and enriching for all residents of the city; and embody distinctive environments and brands.

Inventory and Promote the Creative Enterprises, Assets, and Available Space for Each Business District

Create a Creative Business District website with maps, calendars, and directions that allows visitors, residents, and potential tenants to know what is available to see or do and where one might want to live or work in each district. This could also be developed as an app that maps and links to sites, much as the state of Alabama has done for its Civil Rights Trails.



Strengthen the Relationship with the Greater Birmingham Convention and Visitors Bureau

The Birmingham Creative Industries report and resulting organization can be the basis for developing collaboration with the Greater Birmingham Convention and Visitors Bureau. The Bureau's strength is marketing and promoting the city's cultural, historic, and recreational assets. Birmingham's profile can be further enhanced by the creative resources that have been unearthed in the report. For example, the Bureau's current promotional materials could more fully capture the design, film, and media strengths that are strong components of the city's creative strengths.



Expand the Use of Public Art that Matched Each Neighborhood's History or Culture

Increased investment in public art—sculptures, trail markers, plaques, and murals—makes places more interesting and attractive and creates a sense of pride for residents. Involving citizens in selecting and producing this art can also provide exposure for young and emerging artists. The Civil Rights District and Trail, EcoScapes, selected building wall murals, and the viaduct lights already provide such art, but it is not a consistent strategy across the city.

Encourage the Use of Local Art in Private and Public Enterprises

Businesses are a large potential market for local art, for decoration, marketing, branding, and employee morale. The display of local art in businesses showcases the creative side of the community, provides an attractive image, and can inspire creativity. Munro Shoes in Arkansas and Winzeler Gear in Chicago are examples of companies that believe art in the workplace inspires creativity. Visual art and music in medical centers and doctors' offices can have both healing and calming effects on patients and visitors.

6. LEVERAGE THE ECONOMIC POTENTIAL OF THE CITY'S CULTURAL ASSETS

While many mid-sized cities have an array of museums and heritage sites, Birmingham has particularly deep strengths and quirky diversity. The recent 50th anniversary events surrounding its civil rights history, for example, made clear the national significance of the city. This will grow as more and more Americans seek to fully understand the impact of the civil rights movement and the key role of Birmingham. The city also has been very effective at building on its industrial heritage and making it part of the city's past and future. Beyond these two clear strengths, the city boasts strong museums, unusual sites, and many public spaces that celebrate its arts and culture.

The full economic benefits of these assets, however, have yet to be realized. Many of the city's cultural institutions remain fragile, with a number depending on increasingly scarce public resources. As small institutions, many have very limited resources for marketing and audience development, booking, selling their products online, and fundraising. Knowledge and recognition of cultural assets are limited within the Birmingham region, as well as in the state and nation. With increased visibility and growing momentum, this is an opportune time to further build upon what the city offers. The following recommendations take these next steps.

Develop a Longer-Term Civil Rights Heritage Strategy

Preserving the civil rights heritage assets in the city, creating greater educational opportunities related to the city's history, and increasing the number of tourists who come to Birmingham to visit its civil rights sites requires that a cross-stakeholder group come together to develop a more comprehensive strategy. Some critical assets, such as the Gaston Motel, are in jeopardy. While the city has engaged in efforts to develop a master plan for the civil rights district and study the redevelopment of the Gaston Motel, no strategy is yet in place. The effort might be strengthened by engaging government, business, and philanthropic leaders from inside and outside of the city to develop a long-term plan and funding strategy. The highest immediate priorities would be to preserve the Gaston Motel, develop more visitor friendly materials related to the multiple civil rights sites in the city, and develop a fundraising plan.

Create a Birmingham Cultural Collaborative to Develop Shared Marketing Opportunities, Product Development, and Services

While collaborative efforts do occur, much more can be done. In some places, formal collaborative organizations have been established that include multiple cultural organizations. These collaborations have, at a minimum, developed events and products across institutions. But in some cases, collaboration has been extended to audience development and marketing. In times of fiscal uncertainty and concerns about financial viability, organizations have found ways to reduce costs by sharing services, which is particularly beneficial for small organizations. A starting point would be to convene the directors of the city's museums and heritage organizations to begin to explore this potential.

7. DEVELOP THE ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY TO STRENGTHEN BIRMINGHAM'S MUSIC INDUSTRY

The city's music industry is both strong and diverse. The talent, technical capacity, and performance venues already exist. Gospel, indie rock, classical, and jazz have the potential to lift the industry's national profile and solidify its brand. With organization and support, music could become a creative hallmark of the city.

Create More Collaboration and Partnerships Among Musicians and Groups

Groups currently are siloed within their respective genres. Some cross-pollination does occur, but is not consistently and effectively orchestrated. High-level promotion of leading and emerging musicians, bands, and groups would give the industry more revenue-generating opportunities and put the city's music scene in the national spotlight.

Use Public Art and Venues to Increase Visibility and Promote Music History

This could include statues of some of Birmingham's famous musicians, more signage to highlight historically important venues and clubs, and a music trail for those interested in a walking tour that describes the pioneering work done by earlier bands and musicians. Stronger institutional connections are also needed between the music industry and high-profile music festivals. Birmingham has a presence at some of the events, but it could be stronger and more strategic in order to position the city's music industry as an emerging music location and destination.

Create More Centralized and Coordinated Organizational Capacity for the Music Industry

The music industry in Birmingham could easily grow and increase its presence and economic contribution with greater promotion capability, and if there was an entity to fill an organizing function. The music industry would benefit from such an organization that could provide assistance with marketing and attracting investment. In some cities and regions, the coordination and support mechanism has been a music commission, municipal office of music, or an existing creative industries or cultural organization. All of these options should be considered.

Increase Emphasis on Music Education

There is a need for increased coordination and collaboration among public school music education programs and private music instruction programs and projects currently in operation. The development of intensive educational programs and internships targeted to up-and-coming musicians and bands, with emphasis on the business side of the music industry, could help a new generation of musical talent navigate its way through the difficult terrain of the money and financial and business aspects of the music industry.

8. STRIVE TO CREATE A PROSPEROUS AND EQUITABLE REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEM

Identify Business Opportunities for Culinary Entrepreneurs that Will Create Jobs

Support local food providers, restaurateurs, and other food entrepreneurs with resources needed by small businesses. Coordinate with other creative sectors to design and produce brands, packaging, displays, and other support services.

Establish Food Hubs for Processing and Distributing Regionally Produced Food

Continue current efforts to build kitchen incubator/shared space and support further development of more locations, especially in communities with high food insecurity.

Increase Access, Availability, and Affordability of Healthy Foods for All Residents.

Work with the Jefferson County Health Action Partnership and nonprofits including the Urban Food Project, Jones Valley Teaching Farm, WE Community Gardens, and East Lake Market to support and further develop current efforts to provide better accessibility to fresh, healthy foods.



DEVELOP ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY TO FACILITATE AND EXECUTE THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES PLAN

The Cultural Alliance of Greater Birmingham, which spearheaded the Birmingham creative industries project, was “founded on the belief that arts and culture enhance lives, communities, and the economy.” To carry out the recommendations and lead an implementation process that extends beyond the original mission of the organization, the Alliance would have to strengthen its staffing and organizational capacity in the business and economic development aspects of the creative industries.

In this context, we suggest two options. The first is to restructure the Alliance so that its mission and program focus are more in line with developing the city’s creative industries. The second is to partner or collaborate with an organization that already has the complementary capacity in business and economic development. This allows the Alliance to maintain its identity yet draw upon the resources and capacity of the partnering organization. The resulting organization would take on the following tasks and activities.

ESTABLISH A CREATIVE INDUSTRIES STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

The stewardship committee would include representatives from business, economic development, higher education, city government, and various creative industries. Members would be selected based on their willingness to help with the implementation and their ability to bring active effective support and resources to the process.

Assume Tasks and Responsibilities

Based on the strategies and actions that follow, set priorities, develop an implementation timeline, and embark on implementation. Some will be relatively easy to undertake and carry out in the first four to six months, some will require more time, and others will be more complex and require substantial time and resources.

Potential activities of the organization will include:

Develop strategic partnerships with other organizations in the creative, economic development, and education communities with which the organization will want to collaborate. Identify organizations that could appropriately take on a project or initiative on their own. Such organizations may be businesses, higher education institutions, or existing creative and cultural organizations. These partnerships are important for building capacity but also broadening the “ownership” of the plan.

Design an effective, broad-based communications plan and capability for informing stakeholders and supporters about the implementation plan and related activities. This may include a new website, using Birmingham365.org, developing an electronic creative newsletter and e-blasts, social media, periodic press releases, and/or coverage in local magazines. It also will require developing a brand and identity.

Develop a database of all individuals and organizations that were engaged in the planning process, and update that database over time. This will be an extremely valuable resource for the organization and creative community for moving forward.

Organize networking events across and within the different creative spheres. Networking meetings and events can be purely social or they can focus on key topics and issues important to or of interest to the creative community.

Secure funding for the organization to carry out its work. No single funding model fits all organizations and programs. Birmingham should explore philanthropic and corporate support, national sources such as the National Endowment for the Arts and ArtPlace, and opportunities that can generate revenue.

Cement relationships with the business community. The business community can benefit from both the services of the creative industries and the amenities they provide, and the creative industries can benefit from the knowledge and experience of the business and corporate community. Creating opportunities for businesses and creatives to come together around product ideas should be explored.

DEVELOP ONGOING ACTIVITIES

The following efforts are already in various stages of development and have the potential for a major impact on the city's economy. Each, however, still needs further planning and resources to achieve its full economic and social potential.

Support the Development of Maker Spaces

One of the latest trends in integrating design and technology is through those small-scale, affordable production technologies that are generating new interest in making things. Across the nation, entrepreneurs and communities are dedicating space and resources to innovative makers with ideas for new products, often called FabLabs or TechShops. The garage-based businesses that inspired the information technology revolution are now focusing on applying those technologies to making physical products, but still operating in small garage-like spaces. The website www.100kgarages.com anticipates 100,000 garage-based businesses. But such production by microenterprises can be more cost-efficient by sharing space and resources.



Support Development of Food Hub/Processing Facility

Efforts are already underway to tighten the farm-to-table connections in the region and make local and fresh foods more readily available to more people, particularly in the pockets of “food deserts” within the county. Efforts are moving towards a kitchen incubator/shared space that would allow urban farmers and food entrepreneurs to share space to process and distribute local food products. Designers could help create brands for food products that can bring more income from some markets and possibly subsidize distribution in low-income neighborhoods.

Establish a Design Hub and Institutionalize Design Week

The success of the October 2013 Design Week represents great promise, both as an annual event and to establish Birmingham as a leader in a cluster generally associated with the largest cities. The multi-faceted Design Week program brought together all industries in the design clusters, from interior design to landscape architecture, graphic design to industrial design, culinary art to microbrewers, to celebrate the role of design in the economy and in everyday life. The event energized and organized the sector, demonstrating the value of more frequent exchanges and connections as a design hub. It is also an opportunity to promote design to young people in the secondary schools, possibly adding a design competition for youth with displays and awards to be made during a future design event.

Other Immediate Priorities

The following are projects that are already underway and/or well into the planning stage that, with immediate attention and targeted resources, can add value and possibly become game changers.

- Renovating the Gaston Hotel as an historic/cultural site and part of the Civil Rights Trail
- Finding a venue for the showing and viewing of independent and foreign films
- Further developing weekend and long-term residency crafts programs in metal and ceramics at Sloss Furnaces



THE APPROACH

The analysis of Birmingham's creative industries in this report is grounded in traditional economic development theory. While past studies have shown that art, culture, and entertainment make a city more attractive to people and businesses, this effort focuses on a broader definition of creative industries and emphasizes the wealth generated directly by enterprises and organizations rooted in creativity.

The creative industries are treated as business clusters, the current conventional approach to understanding and developing regional economies. Industry clusters are defined as a group of firms, related economic actors, and institutions which draw productive advantage from being closely related to one another by their products, talents, or markets.

These creative clusters are design, performing arts, film and media, visual arts and crafts, culture and heritage, and culinary arts and artisanal foods. Each cluster includes all the individuals and enterprises in its respective value chain and encompasses all firms and organizations that generate wealth—suppliers, education, specialized services, associations, producers, distributors, marketing, and presentation.

Although the choice of industries to classify as creative is a place-based decision, the large majority of those used in this analysis and the framework in which they are presented have been used in studies of creative economies across the U.S. and around the world.

Much of the most important information about the creative industries cannot be explained simply by numbers and flowcharts. It requires a deeper understanding of the companies, the people, and the organizations, as well as some idea of the hopes, dreams, needs, and challenges that can only come from personal interactions. Therefore, the consultants engaged with hundreds of people from the community to carry out this research, including:

- two open creative economy summits that drew a total of more than 350 participants;
- ten focus groups of eight to 16 individuals;
- individual telephone or in-person interviews with approximately 100 people;
- Internet searches of well over 100 businesses;
- an online survey of creative individuals with 160 responses;
- site visits to dozens of schools, cultural and historic sites, and businesses; and
- four steering committee meetings.

All information was compiled, processed, organized, and assimilated into the fullest picture of the city's creative industries the consultants could develop with the resources and time available.

The resulting report looks at the quantitative data to better measure the size and economic value of the creative

industries. It also looks at each of the creative clusters to better represent the breadth and depth of their economic importance to the city. Given the importance of education, the report examines the intersection between creativity and the city's educational resources. The impact from a community's creative industries depends upon a strong support system which includes organizational infrastructure and funding (from municipal and philanthropic sources), networking opportunities, available venues, and business assistance resources. Strengths and challenges, educational opportunities, and supporting organizations are detailed within each cluster as well. This report offers strategies and recommendations aimed at ensuring that the vision of a new Birmingham is fully realized.

ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

Defining and Measuring the Birmingham Creative Economy

Economic research found 22,754 direct creative jobs in Jefferson County. Of these, 17,316 are in creative industries and an additional 5,438 jobs are in creative occupations outside of the creative industries. This means that 4.68% of the 485,830 jobs in the county are directly associated with the creative economy, either through being in a creative occupation or working in a creative industry.

It is important to understand the methods used to derive these impressive numbers. To analyze Birmingham's creative industries properly, it is necessary to have a concrete understanding of the scale of economic opportunity associated with their employment. Can the creative industries serve as an economic engine for the city's economy in the same way as industries more traditionally grouped together and thought of as sectors, like manufacturing, information technology, and healthcare? This study's methodology uses the same measures that are applied to other economic sectors, namely the number of jobs and amount of income associated with the production of goods and services in particular industries and occupations, to try to answer this question.

The methodology includes not just payroll employment but also jobs associated with freelance work and self-employment. An increasingly large number of individuals earn their living not as "employees," but as sole-proprietors, contractors, or freelancers working on their own. This is particularly widespread in creative industries and occupations. The importance of this kind of labor is a major reason why many economic studies fail to recognize the significance of creative industries. They often only count employees covered by the state unemployment insurance system. This report does not include tourism multipliers or other estimates of indirect impact; the goal is to produce measures of direct economic activity that are easy to understand and compare, not to try to calculate all of the related economic impacts associated with creative industries.

Employment at creative enterprises only provides a portion of the picture of the creative economy though, because many establishments that would not be defined as creative rely on people in creative occupations. For example, an architect could be employed by a construction or engineering firm, a graphic designer could work in a manufacturing firm or for a retailer, and an interior decorator could work for a chain of restaurants or hotels. This report considers both creative industries and creative occupations. To assess the economic importance of the creative component of the economy, one must look at it from two dimensions:

1. All jobs in the defined creative industries, including the employees of commercial and nonprofit creative establishments as well as freelancers and other self-employed workers.
2. All jobs that are in creative occupations.

To get a full picture of economic importance, the number of jobs in creative industries or occupations are added together and the overlap—creative jobs in creative industries—is subtracted.

Employment in Creative Industries

The definition developed for this report of the Birmingham creative industries includes 80 industries divided into six creative clusters: design, culinary arts and artisanal foods, visual arts and crafts, film and media, culture and heritage, and performing arts. In 2012, there were 17,316 jobs in the creative industries in Jefferson County. The mean annual earnings (including supplements) in the creative industries are about \$38,000. In total, these industries represent about \$642 million in total earnings per year.

Types of creative industries within each cluster include those commonly perceived as creative, as well as several industries that represent more technical, creative work such as sound and video production, graphic design and architecture, printing and publishing, and advertising.

The majority of creative industry jobs are in two creative clusters: design, and film and media. Each accounts for about 30 percent of the overall number. These clusters are dominated by commercial enterprises, not the craftspeople, fine artists, performers, and nonprofit cultural institutions that are normally thought of as comprising the bulk of the creative sector.

In terms of job growth between 2003 to 2012, while certain segments performed better than others, there was almost no change in the overall number of jobs. The most striking difference over the decade was a shift in the nature of employment, with self-employment increasing by 2,166 jobs and payroll employment decreasing by 2,348 jobs. In 2003, just 31 percent of the creative jobs in Jefferson County were self-employed workers and freelancers; by 2012, that proportion had grown to 46 percent. While growth in the proportion of self-employment is consistent with national trends in the creative industries, the shift was almost twice as large in Jefferson County than in the U.S. as a whole.

Compared to Alabama as a whole, Jefferson County has a higher concentration of creative industry employment. The county has a location quotient of 1.44, the ratio of the proportion of employment compared to a similar ratio for the state. However, the creative industries in Jefferson County have a relatively weak presence when compared to the national average, with a location quotient of 0.88.

Creative industries with the largest number of jobs are primarily in the design and film and media clusters. Most of these industries are not simply large because they are large everywhere—they all represent a higher proportion of all employment in Jefferson County than in the U.S. as a whole, as indicated by the location quotients.

Creative industries with at least 100 jobs in 2012 were ranked by percentage growth in employment between 2003 and 2012. In the highest growth industry, Internet publishing and broadcasting, the number of jobs nearly quadrupled. Software publishing was another extremely high growth area. The growth in these two areas provides an indication of the importance of new technologies for the future of the creative industries. Other industries that saw very high rates of growth include event promoters, which more than tripled in size, and landscape architecture.

Creative Industry Clusters (Creative and Non-creative Occupations in Creative Industries)		
Industry Cluster	Total Jobs	Examples of Content
Visual Arts and Crafts	2,303	Independent visual artists, portrait photography studios, art dealers and galleries, craft businesses, arts and crafts supply stores
Film and Media	5,107	Broadcast networks, audio and video producers, newspaper, book and periodical publishers
Design	5,109	Industrial design, architecture, interior design, graphic design, advertising, landscape/gardens
Culture and Heritage	1,287	Museums, cultural centers, zoos, botanical gardens, libraries
Performing Arts	1,873	Dance companies, independent performers, event promoters, theater companies, musical groups
Culinary Arts	1,637	Restaurants with professional chefs, food manufacturers, processing companies, breweries
TOTAL	17,316	

Creative Industries with Highest Level of Employment

*Location Quotient: The ratio of the proportion of employment in a particular sector or set of sectors compared to a similar ratio for the entire state or nation. Thus, 1.0 represents perfect concentration, 1.25 would be 25 percent more concentrated than in the state or U.S., and 0.75 would be 25 percent less concentrated than in the state or U.S.

NAICS Code	Description	2012 Jobs	National Location Quotient*
711510	Independent Artists, Writers, and Performers	2,004	0.70
541810	Advertising Agencies	776	1.17
611610	Fine Arts Schools (Private)	705	1.25
541310	Architectural Services	690	1.23
51120	Periodical Publishers	630	1.62
515120	Television Broadcasting	586	1.80
541410	Interior Design Services	535	1.48
323110	Commercial Lithographic Printing	525	1.07
541921	Photography Studios, Portrait	512	1.00
51110	Newspaper Publishers	508	0.79

Creative Industries with Highest Percent Job Increases and More than 100 Employed

NAICS Code	Description	2012 Jobs	% Change 2003-2012
519130	Internet Publishing Web Search Portals	158	295%
711320	Promoters without Facilities	391	229%
511210	Software Publishers	483	107%
541320	Landscape Architectural Services	352	90%
451140	Musical Instrument and Supplies Stores	184	75%
323113	Commercial Screen Printing	112	65%
611610	Fine Arts Schools (Private)	705	55%
541921	Photography Studios, Portrait	512	48%
711410	Agents and Managers	106	47%
541410	Interior Design Services	535	47%

Design Industry Dashboard, 2012

Total number of jobs	5,109
Job growth (2003-2012)	-10%
Relative concentration (compared to Alabama)*	1.65
Relative concentration (compared to U.S.)*	1.02
Number of establishments	357
Number of full-time employees	2,926
Number of freelance/self-employed/independent	2,183
Average annual earnings (employees)	\$61,045
Average annual earnings (self-employed/independent)	\$25,334

Film and Media Dashboard, 2012	
Total number of employees	5,107
Job growth (2003-2012)	-9%
Relative concentration (compared to Alabama)*	1.42
Relative concentration (compared to U.S.)*	0.80
Number of establishments	174
Number of full-time employees	3,202
Number of freelance/self-employed/independent	1,905
Average annual earnings (employees)	\$59,553
Average annual earnings (self-employed/independent)	\$19,676

Performing Arts Dashboard, 2012	
Total number of employees	1,873
Job growth (2003-2012)	38%
Relative concentration (compared to state)*	1.33
Relative concentration (compared to U.S.)*	0.90
Number of establishments	37
Number of full-time employees	615
Number of freelance/self-employed/independent	1,258
Average annual earnings (employees)	\$32,376
Average annual earnings (self-employed/independent)	\$15,392

Culinary Arts Dashboard, 2012		
Category	Establishments	Employees
Eating establishments and catering	44	875
Specialty food production	38	391
Culinary education	2	345
Equipment, supplies, infrastructure	5	26
TOTAL	89	1,637

Visual Arts and Crafts, 2012	
Total number of employees adjusted to include municipal, county, and academic employees *private sector only	1,287
Job growth (2003-2012) *	28%
Relative concentration (compared to state) *	2.12
Relative concentration (compared to U.S.) *	0.90
Number of establishments *	9
Number of full-time employees *	352
Number of freelance/self-employed/independent *	41
Average annual earnings (employees) *	\$34,229
Average annual earnings (self-employed/Independent) *	\$26,509

Culture and Heritage Dashboard, 2012	
Total number of employees	2,303
Job growth (2003-2012)	17%
Relative concentration (compared to Alabama)*	1.15
Relative concentration (compared to U.S.)*	1.01
Number of establishments	149
Number of full-time employees	860
Number of freelance/self-employed/independent	1,443
Average annual earnings (employees)	\$31,641
Average annual earnings (self-employed/independent)	\$11,696

Employment in Creative Occupations

In addition to examining the importance of creative industries, it is crucial to examine the creative *occupations* because a large number of individuals work in creative occupations in non-creative businesses. For example, about one-third of musicians and singers are employed by religious organizations, which are not included.

In Jefferson County, 11,723 people are classified in creative occupations. This includes workers in both creative (6,285) and non-creative industries (5,483). The number of jobs in creative occupations in Birmingham has been relatively stable over the past decade, increasing by about 5 percent, a rate that is slightly less than half of the national average.

Trends in occupational growth vary widely across the different occupational categories. Occupations in the visual arts and crafts and performing arts, the more traditional arts and cultural sectors, have shown the highest growth over the past decade. Creative occupations in Jefferson County earn an average hourly earnings of \$18.10, slightly lower than the county's overall average hourly earnings of about \$20.13.

Creative Occupations in Creative and Non-creative Industries		
Category	Total Jobs	Examples of Content
Artists	1,017	Craftspeople, Fine Artists, Multimedia Artists, Animators, Sculptors
Cultural	645	Archivists, Librarians, Library Technicians, Curators
Performing Arts	2,235	Actors, Directors, Dancers, Musicians, Composers
Designers	2,869	Architects, Industrial Designers, Interior Designers, Fashion Designers, Graphic Designers
Media	4,805	Writers, Reporters, Agents, News Analysts, Camera Operators, Film and Video Editors, Photographers, Audiovisual Equipment Technicians
Culinary	152	Chefs, Head Cooks
Total	11,723	

Growth by Occupational Category		
Percent Change 2003-2013		
Category	Jefferson County	U.S.
Artists	11.3%	7.7%
Cultural	0.5%	5.6%
Media	7.7%	15.4%
Performing Artists	15.5%	21.0%
Designers	-6.3%	1.7%
Culinary	14.0%	6.1%
Total	5.2%	11.5%

Beyond the Jobs

The primary argument for focusing on companies and people producing creative and cultural goods and services is the direct contribution they make to the economy—as employers and as taxpayers. As the previous section demonstrated, these enterprises generate many more jobs and wealth than generally realized or even suspected from conventional analyses. Beyond the jobs, however, there are many additional economic benefits associated with the creative industries:

Attracting and Recruiting Talent and Businesses: The days of educated young people following the large corporations wherever they might be has, for the most part, ended. Today, it is much more common for highly educated individuals to choose a place to live based on values, amenities, and community and then look for work. For that very reason, companies that depend on an educated and talented labor pool choose those same locations. It is obvious from activities underway that Birmingham recognizes the importance of amenities and quality of place and is investing in them.

Increasing Tourism and Spending: Creative and cultural assets not only bring more tourists and business events, but also give visitors a reason to stay longer and spend more money. A study of North Carolina's creative economy found that the concentration of artists, performers, and designers in a county independently influenced expenditures on tourism. People traveling to Birmingham for business reasons, professional conferences, or university events are apt to visit creative venues, attend cultural events, and purchase locally made crafts, art, and other artisanal products.

Improving Educational Attainment: Education in creative fields and for creative occupations improves educational outcomes and expands economic opportunities. First, the arts can be used to effectively teach required topics and improve problem-solving and creative skills. Second, education in creative fields recognizes talents not generally identified through conventional testing processes. Third, creative courses and programs in the schools help attract and retain nontraditional learners who may otherwise leave the educational system.

Inspiring Innovation: Creative people and companies have an effect on imagination, innovation, and well-being across many disciplines and communities. Art and culture inspire different ways of thinking about and solving problems. When the arts are integrated with business and science, they can influence solutions and productivity. Place-based creative and cultural assets generate a milieu that can affect a business, institution, and community and engender a greater sense of pride on every civic level.

Convergence Among Industries

While representing a significant proportion of the state's economy, Birmingham's creative industries also affect other industries. The creative industries operate as a form of "keystone species," a biologist's term for something with an impact on its environment that is greatly disproportionate to its scale. The city's creative industries both overlap and influence the competitiveness of a large number of other sets of industries that are important to the city's economy.

Some of the overlap is a function of the ways industries are classified by the NAICS Codes, which do not regard creative content. Many creative industries include firms that are classified in other sectors in conventional cluster analyses, such as furniture making, information technology, and food processing. But some of the overlap with other industries is more subtle and affects companies that fall outside of the boundaries established for the creative economy. For example, building and landscape architects and interior designers are integral parts of any construction and housing clusters. The building and construction industries in the city's economy depend on designers to determine their work.

Many of the eating establishments, designated part of culinary arts, purchase local foods from the agricultural and food processing industries and are part of their value chains. Graphic designers, writers, web designers, and other media are valued by industries from banking to technology. Manufacturing utilizes advertising, industrial designers, and writers to develop and brand their products. Even mass produced products, such as automobiles, apparel, and furniture, depend heavily on design and advertising.

The tourism and hospitality industries are the most obvious area of convergence, with many of the places that attract people also being included as part of the creative economy, particularly in its culture and heritage and performing arts sectors and clusters. Cultural tourism and culinary tourism depend heavily on creative people and places.

FINAL THOUGHTS

The abundance of art and culture in Birmingham has given the city its distinct creative identity. The creative industry sector here has the potential to create new jobs, recruit talent and businesses, and enhance the amenities available to everyone in the region. Expanding arts and design education will be beneficial to develop and retain talent in the city. Further developing Birmingham's creative districts will encourage creative enterprises. New opportunities for growth and entrepreneurs will be found by expanding support from the business and corporate communities. The arts and culture enrich people's lives, enhance community spirit, and provide both educational and emotional experiences. Birmingham has a cultural responsibility to preserve civil rights heritage sites and personal histories. It is time to capitalize on Birmingham's current forward movement to reinforce and solidify the city's position as a vibrant, active community. Investment in creative industries ensures economic growth, while further improving the quality of life for everyone in the region.



PHOTOGRAPHY PROVIDED BY

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Birmingham Botanical Gardens

Birmingham Museum of Art

Birmingham Civil Rights Institute

Jones Valley Teaching Farm

Push Product Design

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I would like to extend a special thanks to the entire Steering Committee for their patience and perseverance throughout the course of this research project. Their leadership will create a better quality of life for all residents of our multi-faceted community.

The Cultural Alliance of Greater Birmingham would also like to acknowledge the Mike & Gillian Goodrich Foundation, the Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham, the C. Eugene Ireland Foundation, The Daniel Foundation of Alabama, the Susan Mott Webb Charitable Trust, the Hugh Kaul Foundation, and the Robert R. Meyer Foundation for providing the generous financial support that made this project possible.

The diligence and hard work reflected in this report is a direct result of the dedication of the Cultural Alliance staff. They thoughtfully and strategically considered every word and image in order to provide the Committee with the most accurate snapshot of Birmingham's creative industries. The recommendations in this report emerged only after the Cultural Alliance team diligently vetted each concept.

Ultimately, there is no better way to show my gratitude than to recommit myself to bringing these ideas to fruition in our community. From in-school programs and college readiness to job training and overall quality of life, every Birmingham citizen stands to benefit from the full range of experiences and opportunities that the creative industries can provide. It is our civic responsibility to support arts, culture, and design for current and future generations.

Brian Giattina

Steering Committee Chairperson

This study, sponsored by the Cultural Alliance of Greater Birmingham (Alliance), was a joint effort of the Alliance; a consulting team led by Regional Technology Strategies that included RTS, Mt. Auburn Associates, and Michael Kane Consulting; and a steering committee that advised and helped guide the research and reviewed progress.

Throughout the process, the consultant team of Stuart Rosenfeld, Michael Kane, and Beth Siegel worked closely with Buddy Palmer, president and CEO of the Alliance; Gia Rabito, consultant; Brian Giattina, Creative Birmingham Steering Committee chairperson; and Richard Pigford, Alliance chairperson. Buddy Palmer, in particular, kept us aware of information and events relevant to the project and provided us with access to more key people and places than we could ever have known or met working alone. Steering Committee members Brian Giattina, Kate Nielsen, Chip Brantley, Bruce Lanier, Tom Spencer, and Keith Cromwell, plus Nan Baldwin of the Birmingham Business Alliance and Dick Pigford, were particularly helpful in reviewing the early draft and offering suggestions.

The Alliance was supported in this effort by grants from the Mike and Gillian Goodrich Foundation, the Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham, and the C. Eugene Ireland Foundation. A 20-person steering committee (listed on page 73) met four times and reviewed draft reports.

At RTS, Corinne Cain collected and organized much of the information about the creative economy and, to ensure accuracy, made dozens of phone calls to update, validate, and correct information from many sources. Contributors at Mt. Auburn Associates included Peter Kwass; Adam Kornetsky, who did much of the quantitative analyses and writing; and Alyssa Rosen, who contributed to the research and writing. Judi Luciano at Mt Auburn did a masterful job of formatting, editing, and proofreading the draft report.

At the Alliance, Jessica Moody and Bonner Wagon provided invaluable help in organizing summit meetings, steering committee meetings, interviews and focus groups, transcribing discussions, and generally helping to manage the project.

More people gave of their time and contributed ideas than we are able to list, but their support and views were very important and highly valued. They provided the context and gave us a much deeper understanding of the city than numbers could ever reveal.

Stuart Rosenfeld, RTS, Inc.

Project Manager, November 2013

APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Cluster: A set of similar or complementary companies and institutions with sufficient scale to attract and support specialized services and labor and with a geographic region that enables labor mobility and regular face-to-face interactions.

Creative Enterprise: A business, including self-employed, in which the creative content is central to the economic value of their products or services because they are differentiated from their competitors by distinguishing characteristics or experiences.

Creative Industries: Industries as defined by the North America Industrial Classification System (NAICS) that are composed of creative enterprises. The NAICS system is commonly used in economic development to describe, prescribe, measure, or compare regional or state economies.

Creative Occupations: Jobs that require high levels of creative thinking, originality, and knowledge of the arts as indicated by Department of Labor occupational content analyses.

Location Quotient: The ratio of the proportion of employment in a particular sector or set of sectors compared to a similar ratio for the entire state or nation. Thus, 1.0 represents perfect concentration, 1.25 would be 25 percent more concentrated than in the state or U.S., and 0.75 would be 25 percent less concentrated than in the state or U.S.

NAICS: North American Industrial Classification System, a means of classifying all businesses at a particular location by their primary product or service. Companies self-identify so that in some cases the classification may not reflect the true core competency of a company, especially those with multiple products and functions. The six-digit codes are increasingly specialized at each level beginning at the two-digit level with construction or wholesale trade. This is the standard used in nearly all economic and cluster analyses.

Segment: Represents a subset of economic enterprises and organizations that are more specialized than those defined as a cluster, which allows a deeper level of understanding.

Value Chain: All of the enterprises, organizations, and institutions necessary to design, produce, and deliver a good to market.

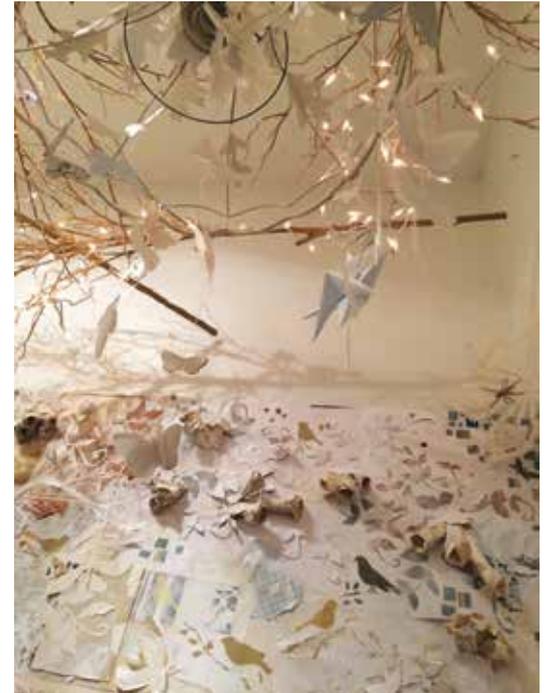


APPENDIX B: CREATIVE INDUSTRIES BY CLUSTER

The following NAICS codes are the core of the cluster definitions. In addition, the category of independent artists, performers, and entertainers was apportioned among the clusters, proportioning them according to occupational distribution in the county.

VISUAL ARTS AND CRAFTS

- 327112 Vitreous China, Fine Earthenware, and Other Pottery Product Manufacturing
- 327212 Other Pressed and Blown Glass and Glassware Manufacturing
- 339911 Jewelry (except Costume) Manufacturing
- 339942 Lead Pencil and Art Good Manufacturing
- 443130 Camera and Photographic Supplies Stores
- 448310 Jewelry Stores
- 451130 Sewing, Needlework, and Piece Goods Stores
- 453920 Art Dealers
- 541921 Photography Studios, Portrait
- 611610 Fine Arts Schools (Private)



PERFORMING ARTS

- 339992 Musical Instrument Manufacturing
- 451140 Musical Instrument and Supplies Stores
- 711110 Theater Companies and Dinner Theaters
- 711120 Dance Companies
- 711130 Musical Groups and Artists
- 711190 Other Performing Arts Companies
- 711310 Promoters of Performing Arts, Sports, and Similar Events with Facilities
- 711320 Promoters of Performing Arts, Sports, and Similar Events without Facilities
- 711410 Agents and Managers for Artists, Athletes, Entertainers, and Other Public Figures

FILM AND MEDIA

- 334310 Audio and Video Equipment Manufacturing
- 424920 Book, Periodical, and Newspaper Merchant Wholesalers
- 451211 Book Stores
- 451212 News Dealers and Newsstands
- 451220 Pre-recorded Tape, Compact Disc, and Record Stores
- 511110 Newspaper Publishers
- 511120 Periodical Publishers
- 511130 Book Publishers
- 511199 All Other Publishers
- 511210 Software Publishers
- 512110 Motion Picture and Video Production
- 512120 Motion Picture and Video Distribution
- 512131 Motion Picture Theaters (except Drive-Ins)

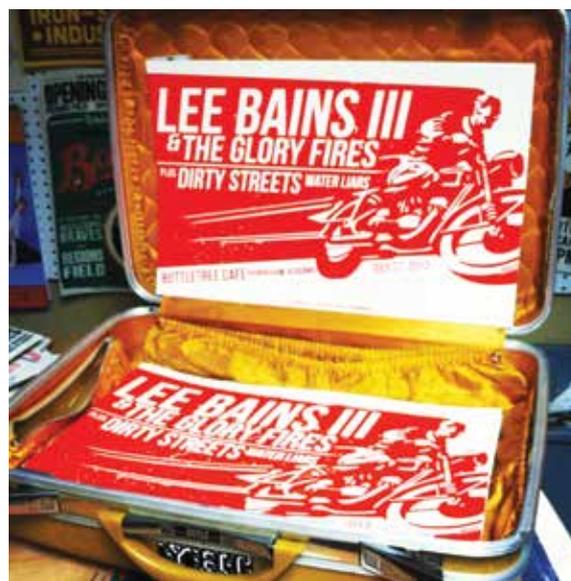


- 512132 Drive-In Motion Picture Theaters
- 512191 Teleproduction and Other Postproduction Services
- 512199 Other Motion Picture and Video Industries
- 512210 Record Production
- 512220 Integrated Record Production/Distribution
- 512230 Music Publishers
- 512240 Sound Recording Studios
- 512290 Other Sound Recording Industries
- 515111 Radio Networks
- 515112 Radio Stations
- 515120 Television Broadcasting
- 515210 Cable and Other Subscription Programming
- 519110 News Syndicates
- 519130 Internet Publishing and Broadcasting and Web Search Portals
- 541830 Media Buying Agencies
- 541840 Media Representatives



DESIGN

- 323110 Commercial Lithographic Printing
- 323111 Commercial Gravure Printing
- 323112 Commercial Flexographic Printing
- 323113 Commercial Screen Printing
- 323115 Digital Printing
- 323117 Books Printing
- 323119 Other Commercial Printing
- 323121 Tradebinding and Related Work
- 323122 Prepress Services
- 332323 Ornamental and Architectural Metal Work Manufacturing
- 337212 Custom Architectural Woodwork and Millwork Manufacturing
- 511191 Greeting Card Publishers
- 541310 Architectural Services
- 541320 Landscape Architectural Services
- 541340 Drafting Services
- 541410 Interior Design Services
- 541420 Industrial Design Services
- 541430 Graphic Design Services
- 541490 Other Specialized Design Services
- 541810 Advertising Agencies
- 541820 Public Relations Agencies
- 541850 Display Advertising
- 541860 Direct Mail Advertising



- 541890 Other Services Related to Advertising
- 541922 Commercial Photography

CULTURE AND HERITAGE

- 519120 Libraries and Archives
- 712110 Museums
- 712120 Historical Sites
- 712130 Zoos and Botanical Gardens

APPENDIX C: CREATIVE OCCUPATIONS

- 11-2011 Advertising and Promotions Managers
- 11-2031 Public Relations and Fundraising Managers
- 13-1011 Agents and Business Managers of Artists, Performers, and Athletes
- 17-1011 Architects, Except Landscape and Naval
- 17-1012 Landscape Architects
- 17-3011 Architectural and Civil Drafters
- 25-4011 Archivists
- 25-4012 Curators
- 25-4013 Museum Technicians and Conservators
- 25-4021 Librarians
- 25-4031 Library Technicians
- 25-9011 Audio-Visual and Multimedia Collections Specialists
- 27-1011 Art Directors
- 27-1012 Craft Artists
- 27-1013 Fine Artists, Including Painters, Sculptors, and Illustrators
- 27-1014 Multimedia Artists and Animators
- 27-1019 Artists and Related Workers, All Other
- 27-1021 Commercial and Industrial Designers
- 27-1022 Fashion Designers
- 27-1023 Floral Designers
- 27-1024 Graphic Designers
- 27-1025 Interior Designers
- 27-1026 Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers
- 27-1027 Set and Exhibit Designers
- 27-1029 Designers, All Other
- 27-2011 Actors
- 27-2012 Producers and Directors
- 27-2031 Dancers
- 27-2032 Choreographers
- 27-2041 Music Directors and Composers
- 27-2042 Musicians and Singers
- 27-2099 Entertainers and Performers, Sports and Related Workers, All Other

27-3011	Radio and Television Announcers
27-3021	Broadcast News Analysts
27-3022	Reporters and Correspondents
27-3031	Public Relations Specialists
27-3041	Editors
27-3042	Technical Writers
27-3043	Writers and Authors
27-3099	Media and Communication Workers, All Other
27-4011	Audio and Video Equipment Technicians
27-4012	Broadcast Technicians
27-4014	Sound Engineering Technicians
27-4021	Photographers
27-4031	Camera Operators, Television, Video, and Motion Picture
27-4032	Film and Video Editors
27-4099	Media and Communication Equipment Workers, All Other

APPENDIX D: SELECTED SURVEY RESULTS

The following tables are based on 160 complete or partial returns.

Table 1 describes the population that responded, with the largest numbers representing visual arts and crafts (37%) and the performing arts (35%). About two in five respondents work at home according to Table 2. About one in five respondents own an arts-related business, one in three are a full-time or part-time employee of an arts-related business, and nearly one in 10 is retired according to Table 3. Three in five respondents have six or fewer employees and one-quarter has none. (Table 4).

About one in five creatives earn their living in education, but nearly half earn their living in areas not offered as choices, which included retirement income (the largest group), real estate or rental property, churches, or their spouses. (Table 5) Nearly half those responding earned less than \$15,000 per year from their art and about one-third earned more than \$30,000 per year. (Table 6) Almost two in five called their income from art essential to a middle class or better lifestyle, one in eight were kept out of poverty by art, and for one in five it was mainly a hobby. (Table 7) The greatest need of the respondents was for publicity, second highest was networking opportunities, a close third and fourth were grants and loans, and then performance or exhibit venues. (Table 8)

1. What is your primary art form? Please check only your primary activity.	
Functional, Crafts & Custom Designed	8.1%
Music (e.g., performer, composer, singer, rapper, director, producer)	10.6%
Dance (e.g., performer, choreographer)	3.8%
Theater (e.g., actor, director, playwright, storyteller, lighting, set design)	20.6%
Visual art (e.g., painting, sculpture, photography, public art)	28.8%
Media arts (e.g., film, video, computer art, multimedia, animation, sound artist)	8.8%
Writing/literary (e.g., fiction, nonfiction, poetry, journalism, spoken word)	10.0%
Other (please specify)	9.4%

2. Where is your primary work space?	
At home (includes studio space on your personal property)	42.8%
Rented or owned private studio at another location	7.5%
Shared studio space with other artists	0.0%
Performance venue	15.7%
School or educational facility	11.9%
Both at home and at an outside studio or performance venue	14.5%
Other (please specify)	7.5%

3. What is your current economic status? (Please check all that apply.)	
Art or creative activity	38.7%
Own business related to the arts or creative products and employ others	19.4%
Own business not related to the arts or creative products	3.2%
Full-time employee at an arts-related organization or business	21.9%
Part-time employee at an arts-related organization or business	12.3%
Full-time at a non-arts related organization or business	13.5%
Part time at a non-arts related organization or business	8.4%
Student	1.9%
Retired	9.0%
Currently unemployed	2.6%

4. How many individuals do you employ (other than yourself)?	
None	26.1%
1-2	17.4%
3-6	17.4%
7-10	17.4%
11-15	13.0%
More than 15	8.7%

5. If you are NOT earning your living ENTIRELY from your creative work, how do you primarily earn your living? (Please check only one answer.)	
Gallery or theater	1.0%
Art non-profit	6.7%
K-12 schools	11.4%
Higher education	13.3%
Government	2.9%
Healthcare or Human Services	4.8%
Construction	0.0%
Retail	1.0%
Food industry	0.0%
Architecture, Advertising, Law, or other business services	6.7%
Services	1.0%
Computer/information technology	0.0%
Hotels or tourism related	1.0%
Manufacturing	2.9%
Other (please specify)	47.6%

6. Approximately what was the annual gross income of your arts-related work last year?	
Less than \$2,000	20.4%
\$2,001 - \$5,000	10.9%
\$5,001 - \$15,000	15.6%
\$15,001 - \$30,000	13.6%
\$30,001 - \$50,000	13.6%
More than \$50,000	18.4%
Prefer not to answer	7.5%

7. How would you describe the income your household derives from your art? Is it:	
Essential to maintaining a middle class or better lifestyle	38.3%
Essential to keeping my household out of poverty	12.8%
Supplementary, not essential to maintaining our standard of living	27.7%
Primarily a hobby, with minimal or no income generation	21.3%

8. Please indicate your level of need for each of the following resources:	Average Rating (5=High)
Information on available work or rehearsal space	2.85
More affordable work space	2.61
More affordable living space	2.22
More places to sell, exhibit, or perform	3.45
Business/financial management assistance	2.65
Marketing assistance	3.24
Computer/web/technology assistance	3.09
Protecting my intellectual property	2.75
Pricing my art or performance	2.41
Healthcare	2.55
Grants or loans	3.48
A local arts council	3.35
More publicity, coverage in the media	4.04
Opportunities for networking with other artists	3.57
Continued artistic training and/or professional development	3.13



Project Steering Committee

Chair: Brian Giattina, GA Studio/Cultural Alliance of Greater Birmingham board member

Chip Brantley, Desert Island Supply Company

Carol Butler, Mike and Gillian Goodrich Foundation

Shaun Chavis, Oxmoor House/Time Home Entertainment, Inc. and FoodBlogSouth

Carol Clarke, Regions Bank

Keith Cromwell, Red Mountain Theatre Company

Chris Davis, Graphic Designer/Illustrator

David Fleming, REV Birmingham

Ann Florie, Leadership Birmingham

Sara Hamlin, Greater Birmingham Convention and Visitors Bureau

Elias Hendricks, Wee Care Academy/former city councilor

David Hooks, University of Alabama at Birmingham

Bruce Lanier, Standard Creative, LLC

Matt Leavell, Alabama Innovation Engine

Kate Nielsen, Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham, Retired

Jay Pigford, ArchitectureWorks

Ken Rhoden, Alabama Power Company

Tom Spencer, Public Affairs Research Council of Alabama

Frank Stitt, Highlands Bar and Grill

Perry Ward, Lawson State Community College

Brandon Wilson, Wilbron Institute

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