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**First international analysis of effect of COVID-19 on performing arts donations shows declines in United Kingdom and North America**

*North American donations fall 2% and UK 12% during first six months of year. Some organisations buck the trend with exponential growth.*

**Bristol, UK—29 July 2020**--Today international arts management consultants [**TRG Arts**](https://trgarts.com/) and UK arts data specialists [**Purple Seven**](https://purplesevenanalytics.com/) have released the first major study comparing the impact of COVID-19 on philanthropic giving to performing arts organisations in North America and the United Kingdom. The [**COVID-19 Sector Benchmark Insight Report**](https://go.trgarts.com/InsightReport_July20) for June is the second in a series that will be published during the pandemic crisis and recovery.

Using almost real-time data from 105 feeds from not-for-profit venues of all scales in the UK, United States and Canada, the study reveals that despite widespread initiatives to convert cancelled tickets to donations, there has been no aggregate growth in donations in 2020 in either the U.K. or North America. However, some individual organisations, particularly organisations with a lower initial level of contributed income, have seen substantial increases in the value of gifts.

Half of the UK-based organisations in the study increased the value of gifts received. 29% reported growth of over 100%, and 11% reported growth of over 400%.

In North America overall giving has only been sustained thanks to an increase in very large ($100k+) gifts. Gifts of over $100k accounted for 46% of all contributed revenue, up from 36% for the same period in 2019.

Analysis shows that in both markets there has been growth in the value of gifts of under $100k/£80k received from the most loyal audiences. In North America, the growth in revenue from larger gifts is driven by fewer people giving considerably more, with average gift size up 55%.

Analysis of donations by month reveals a worrying trend in the US in recent months with gifts of less than $100k down 35% in May and 27% in June.

[TRG Chief Executive Officer Jill Robinson](https://trgarts.com/Whoweare/StaffProfiles/JillRobinson.aspx) said, “It is encouraging to see the biggest individual donors digging deep in North America to support the sector. With both new major donors and some donating for the first time in many years, arts and cultural organisations need to show how much they value this support, demonstrate its impact, and maintain and develop dialogues to nurture partnerships for the long term.”

Robinson added, “The concerning findings in this analysis are that donations are down overall and that a smaller proportion of patrons are supporting at a time when arts organisations need them most. We must prioritise communicating with our audiences and broader communities, take the time to listen to their needs and plan our work accordingly.”

Purple Seven CEO Stuart Nicolle commented, “It is encouraging to see that some UK-based organisations have used the crisis to dramatically increase the volume and value of gifts generated from their patrons. To flourish in the future, organisations will need to work hard to ensure this is not a one-off gesture of goodwill but the first step towards growing a more loyal audience that engages both through ticket buying and philanthropy.”

Purple Seven and TRG Arts continue to offer free access to the free COVID-19 Benchmark Dashboard to organisations in the U.S., Canada, the UK.and now the Republic of Ireland. To register visit <https://go.trgarts.com/benchmark>.

Expansion of the COVID-19 Benchmark Dashboard is supported in part by a grant from the [National Endowment for the Arts](https://www.arts.gov/) (NEA) to [SMU DataArts](https://culturaldata.org/), a national center for arts research and TRG Arts’ long-time partner in advancing the arts and culture sector.

TRG Arts offers a range of free resources for cultural and arts professionals throughout the U.S., Canada, the UK and the EU to ensure the field of arts and culture thrives now and after the COVID-19 crisis:

* [TRG 30](https://go.trgarts.com/TRG30)**,** a weekly 30-minute webinar series of crisis counsel and best practices that attracts hundreds of executives globally each week: <https://go.trgarts.com/TRG30>.
* [TRG 30 Virtual Network](https://go.trgarts.com/TRG30_LinkedIn) on LinkedIn, where arts professionals gather and have their questions answered by TRG consultants: <https://go.trgarts.com/TRG30_LinkedIn>
* [TRG blog](https://trgarts.com/TRGInsights.aspx) for the latest on COVID-19 related topics: <https://trgarts.com/TRGInsights.aspx>

**Ends**

**Notes to Editors**

**The Report**

The full COVID-19 Sector Benchmark Insight Report is available at <https://go.trgarts.com/InsightReport_July20>. TRG Arts and Purple Seven plan to publish further studies on at least a monthly basis while the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact the arts and culture sector.

**About TRG Arts**

TRG Arts (The Results Group for the Arts) is an international, data-driven change agency consulting with arts and cultural executive leaders, marketers, and fundraisers on a patron loyalty-based approach to increasing sustainable revenue. Experts in the arts sector for 25 years, TRG Arts has earned a reputation unsurpassed for achieving results and building successful business models for non-profit and commercial arts and cultural organisations. TRG Arts is an industry pioneer in areas including audience loyalty development, membership and the subscription model, and dynamic pricing. TRG Arts believes in the transformative power of arts and culture, and that positive, profound change in the business model of arts organisations can lead to artistic innovation and the ability to inspire entire communities. Visit [www.trgarts.com](http://www.trgarts.com).

**About Purple Seven**

Purple Seven has been working in the UK Arts sector for 16 years, analysing audience behaviour across hundreds of organisations. Purple Seven’s extensive knowledge and experience of audience trends allows them to offer an industry context to audience data that helps cultural organisations focus on the important, not just the interesting. Visit <https://purplesevenanalytics.com/>

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