



# Museum Results

Your Monthly Resource for Philanthropic News  
from Alexander Haas

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TRANSFORMING INSTITUTIONS THAT TRANSFORM LIVES

June 23, 2022



## Giving USA: 2021 A Banner Year for Museums & the Arts

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The Giving USA Report for 2021 contributions was released Tuesday June 21 and the results are impressive for museums and their fellow arts and culture organizations.

Giving to arts, culture, and humanities grew faster than giving in any other sector in 2021: an increase of 27.5% from 2020 to 2021. Gifts to the arts sector totaled \$23.5 billion in 2021.

What does this tell us? Three takeaways:

First, people missed the personal audience experience during COVID—taking in a museum exhibition or attending a play, concert, or arts festival. Last year, arts organizations of all sizes reunited with their biggest fans as soon as it was safe to re-open, and the increase in giving reflects that.

Second, although a significant amount of giving shifted to fund basic social services during the pandemic, patrons did not abandon the arts. We've heard countless stories in the past two years about donors' personal concern for the well-being of artists and staff members. Giving in 2021 reflects these donors are backing up their concerns with more charitable support than ever.

Third, while we celebrate 2021 as a banner year for giving to the arts, we must not be complacent. Significant pandemic aid from the government, large foundations, and other major donors replaced arts earned income during COVID closures, and now these pandemic aid dollars must be replaced with renewed growth in ticket sales, sponsorships, memberships, and annual contributions.

So, a pat on the back for 2021, and now back to work for 2022!

[Our Team](#)

[Giving to the Arts in 2021](#)

**Giving USA 2022: The Annual Report on Philanthropy for the Year 2021**, released on June 21, reports that individuals, bequests, foundations, and corporations gave an estimated \$484.85 billion to U.S. charities in 2021. Total charitable giving in 2021 grew 4.0% over the revised total of \$466.23 billion contributed in 2020. However, while giving increased in current dollars, it declined (-0.7%) after adjusting for inflation.

Giving to the arts and culture is an estimated \$23.50 billion, which is a **27.5% increase from 2020**. "The resurgence of giving to arts and culture is a pleasant result. These organizations suffered mightily in 2020 when they were forced to close, which resulted in a double whammy of lost contributed income and lost earned income from admissions and ticket sales. These are largely experience-based organizations, where being "there" is the service they provide," said our President & CEO, David King.

## Giving to Arts & Culture 1981-2021 \$ in billions

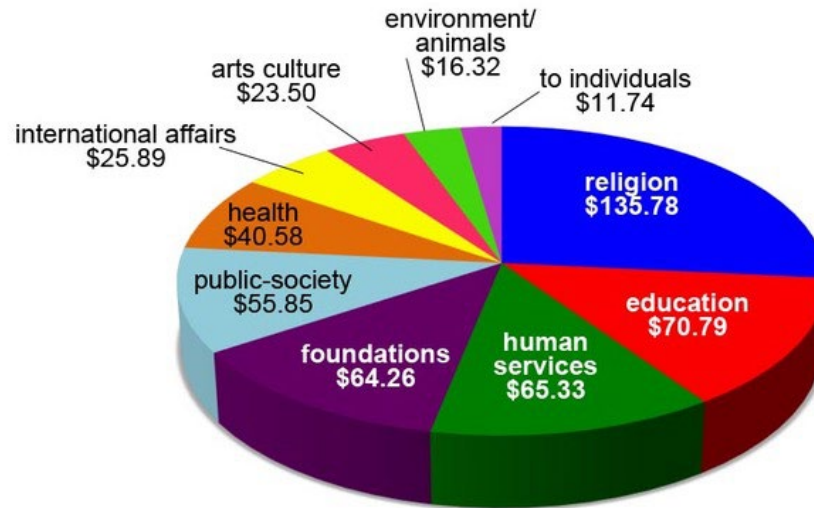
SOURCE: Giving USA Foundation / Giving USA 2022



- Arts, culture, and humanities organizations received the eighth-largest portion of charitable dollars in 2021, at 5% of total giving, receiving \$23.50 billion.
- In current dollars, giving to arts, culture, and humanities declined -5.6% between 2019 and 2020, and **increased 27.5% between 2020 and 2021**. Cumulatively, current-dollar giving to arts, culture, and humanities increased 20.3% between 2019 and 2021.
- Adjusted for inflation, giving to arts, culture, and humanities declined -6.8% between 2019 and 2020, and grew 21.8% between 2020 and 2021. Cumulatively, giving to arts, culture, and humanities grew 13.5% in inflation-adjusted dollars between 2019 and 2021.
- Giving to arts, culture, and humanities organizations has consistently totaled between 3% and 5% of all charitable dollars received by organizations over the last four decades.
- Contributions to arts, culture, and humanities organizations increased by 27.5% from 2020 to \$23.50 billion in 2021. Adjusted for inflation, giving to these organizations increased by 21.8%.
- The total amount contributed to arts, culture, and humanities reached its highest inflation-adjusted value in 2021.
- Online giving to arts organizations analyzed by Blackbaud Institute increased 11.1% between 2020 and 2021.

# Giving by Recipient in 2021

\$484.85 billion



- Giving to **religion** grew by 5.4% between 2020 and 2021, with an estimated \$135.78 billion in contributions. Inflation-adjusted giving to the religion subsector stayed flat with growth of 0.7% in 2021 and comprised 27% of all donations received by charities in 2021.
- The **education** subsector comprised the second-largest portion of charitable dollars in 2021, receiving \$79.70 billion, 14% of total gifts. Between 2020 and 2021, inflation-adjusted giving to education declined -7.2%. The cumulative change in giving to education between 2019 and 2021 is 6.8% in inflation-adjusted dollars.
- Giving to **human services** increased by an estimated 2.2% in 2021, totaling \$65.33 billion and received 13% of charitable dollars in 2021. Adjusted for inflation, giving to human services organizations declined by -2.4%.
- Giving to **foundations** is estimated to have increased by 9.3% in 2021, to \$64.26 billion. Adjusted for inflation, giving to foundations grew by 4.4%. In 2021, giving to foundations reached its highest inflation-adjusted value recorded to date.
- Giving to **human services** organizations grew 2.2% in 2021, totaling \$65.33 billion, ranking third in total gifts received, at 13% of charitable dollars in 2021. Adjusted for inflation, giving to human services increased 8.0% between 2019 and 2020, and declined -2.4% between 2020 and 2021.
- Giving to **health** organizations increased 7.7% in 2021, totaling \$40.58 billion, and ranked sixth in total gifts received, at 8% of charitable dollars in 2021. Adjusted for inflation, giving to health increased 2.9% between 2020 and 2021.
- Giving to **public-society benefit** organizations increased an estimated 23.5% between 2020 and 2021, receiving \$55.85 billion. Comprising the fifth-largest portion of charitable dollars in 2021, public-society benefit organizations received 11% of total giving. Adjusted for inflation, giving to public-society benefit organizations grew 17.9%.
- Giving to **international affairs** is estimated to be \$27.44 billion in 2021, staying level with 2020 with 0.0% growth. Adjusted for inflation, giving to international affairs organizations declined -4.5%. This subsector ranked seventh in total gifts received, amounting to 5% of charitable dollars in 2021.
- Giving to **environmental/animal** organizations is estimated to have increased 11.0% between 2020 and 2021, to \$16.32 billion. Comprising the ninth-largest share of charitable dollars in 2021, the environment and animals subsector received 3% of total gifts. Adjusted for inflation, donations to the environment/animals subsector increased 6.1%.
- Giving to **individuals** is estimated to have grown 1.8% between 2020 and 2021, to \$11.74 billion. Adjusted for inflation, donations declined by -2.7%. The bulk of these donations are in-kind gifts of medications to patients in need, made through the patient assistance programs of pharmaceutical companies' operating foundations.

## We Know Museums

For more than 35 years, Alexander Haas has been a fixture in the nonprofit community. We

are honored to have worked with leading museums and cultural organizations across the country that help communities be a better place to live. Just ask our clients.

[Our Museum Clients](#)

### Face It: Museums are Different

Our services aren't cookie cutter. We don't operate with a boilerplate, merely changing names and locations. We craft each and every service we provide to match your museum's unique needs, wants and abilities. We work hard and expect you to do the same. Together we can help you transform your museum, your fundraising, and the community you serve.

Whether your need is in Capital Campaign, Annual Fund Campaign, Major Gifts, Leadership Annual Giving, Planned Giving or all of the above, we take a fresh approach to nonprofit fundraising.

[Our Services](#)



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