Artists, Artisans, and Entrepreneurs:

Creative Economy of the East Central Vermont Region

Acknowledgments

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Prepared for Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission and the East Central Vermont Economic Development District

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Appendices available at:
http://www.ecvedd.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/CE-Appendices.pdf

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GROWTH
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1. Nurturing and Harvesting Creativity

Organizations and individuals within the East Central Vermont Economic Development District (ECVEDD) have been involved in one way or another in the creative economy for over 20 years. Following the report on New England's creative economy in 2000, Vermont, and many of its towns and regions now accept the fact that creative enterprises are an important part of their economies. Citizens who have participated in regional meetings to learn about the economic and cultural value of the arts and creativity, make thoughtful, potentially effective, recommendations, and even take some steps, however tentatively, to convert the ideas into economic growth.

Lacking the resources and support available to other more conventional sectors, creative industries have not made the progress hoped for by the hundreds of citizens, including many from the area served by the ECVEDD Region that took part in the various planning processes.

What is different today?

Many people from the Region participated in the early efforts with enthusiasm and expectations. But those discussions and those proposed solutions took place more than a decade ago. Conditions have changed, in some instances quite dramatically. Manufacturing has continued to move offshore or automate, and

©Safeart | Chelsea

Two Steps Forward, One Step Back

Suggestions made in the past included a Vermont Cultural Coordinating Council and a Governor appointed nonpartisan Vermont Creative Economy Commission. Yet few of the organizational suggestions have taken root. The state's Office of the Creative Economy is no more and the Vermont Council on Rural Development, an early driver of creative communities, is still supportive but has redirected its focus. The Vermont Arts Council, which is not a state agency, is carrying most of the load and remains interested in broadening its core base but lacks the funding for any major expansion.

"Vermont is a unique place. Here you have a cheese maker with a PhD. A farmer who studied at Vermont Law School, an engineer who sculpts. Such pockets of novelty! It is a place where the mind can flourish."

~Forrest MacGregor

Creative Industries Contribute to the Economy

- A source of regional employment
- Contributes to the competitive advantage in other sectors
- Attracts and retains businesses, tourists, and talent
- As a source of inspiration and innovation
- As an opportunity for under-served people and places

more people are turning to creative and innovative jobs or self-employment and combinations of part-time sources of income.

What are the Region's characteristic strengths?

1. **Artisanal:** As the corporate mass production that invaded rural America in the latter half of the 20th century disappears, its earlier strengths in an artisanal production base is being re-discovered. The Region is well ahead of the game, with an economy that has been quintessentially artisanal for a long time. The Region already depends heavily on its micro and small businesses. Many of these are innovative hybrids with diverse creative talents that can generate expanded markets. This hybrid industrial model is a large part of the state's and Region's brand. "Vermont is a unique place. Here you have a cheese maker with a PhD. A farmer who studied at Vermont Law School, an engineer who sculpts. Such pockets of novelty! It is a place where the mind can flourish." ~Forrest MacGregor[1]

2. **Authentic:** Vermont is the quintessential authentic state, and the ECVEDD Region embraces that inherent authenticity of its culture and economy in ways that other regions only aspire to emulate. Businesses tightly link their brands to the Region's topography, agriculture, unique history and heritage, and its casual, relaxed culture. The Vermont brand epitomizes authenticity.

3. **Appropriately Innovative:** Innovation remains a key driver of rural economies, but not the popular notion of innovation driven by universities and research and development and measured by patents. The Region embodies a creative type of user innovation that is driven by changing interests, needs, and markets, by the increasing importance of participation and experience, and by social media and the affordability of desktop technologies like 3-D printers.

4. **Sustainable:** Vermont has developed a reputation for sustainability that goes hand in hand with the shift to more place-based, artisanal products and efforts to protect its local heritage. Ever since Act 250[2] was passed in 1970 regulating development, Vermont has been branded positively by its protection of the environment and its heritage, both of which converge with the Region's focus on and interests of the creative economy.

5. **Dispersed Creativity:** The Region's creative talent is found spread among its many communities, disciplines,

and enterprises. It's not only among those who generate income directly from their artistic talents, but it's also evident in how they brand and run their businesses and how they spend their leisure time. Some of this creative talent is a result of immigration, talented people from other places seeking a more compatible and supportive environment. Some of the creativity is homegrown, like VerShare,* born out of economic necessity. Even though it appears to be concentrated in places such as Woodstock and more recently White River Junction, many smaller and less wealthy communities are home to pockets of creative enterprises.

* *VerShare: Enhancing the spirit of community involvement; fostering economic development; contributing to projects to benefit the residents of Vershire, Vermont.*

Barrette Center for the Arts | White River Junction | ©Northern Stage

"I still don't really know what the creative economy is… I think it just means entrepreneurs doing creative stuff on their own: the power of the little person."

~Matt Bucy

Silo Vodka | Artisan's Park | Windsor | ©Silo Distillery

6. **Permeable Boundaries:** Even though economic measures specify certain towns, for the businesses and people living and working in those towns the boundaries are artificial and have little meaning. People in Randolph are likely to shop, sell, and interact in Montpelier, residents of Springfield with residents of Brattleboro, and White River Junction citizens with those in Lebanon, New Hampshire. Their professional associations, their markets, and their networks are likely to be statewide or national.

7. **Collaborative:** The Region has a natural collaborative culture that comes from a history of neighbors relying on one another and a more recent interest in cooperatives as a business organization. But some have taken it to the next level, building collaborative business models that link together compatible and complementary economic interests to offset the dis-economies of scale associated with dispersed rural regions and to spur innovation. This can be seen in growing interest in shared spaces and cooperative ventures across the Region.

These strengths loosely coincide with Vermont's recent Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) 2020,[3] which includes among its key steps to success, (1) enhancing the Vermont brand by supporting and strengthening the unique values and assets that contribute to the brand, (2) preserving the working landscape and the innovative spirit of its associated businesses, (3) cultivating innovation and Vermont's uniquely collaborative entrepreneurial culture, with hubs that produce innovative products and processes and services to benefit Vermonters and the economy. Further, the report specified Arts and Culture as one of ten target clusters, although this was defined more narrowly than the creative economy.

What's happening in the ECVEDD Region?

All of these strengths point to an expanding creative economy, the kind of economy in which Vermont and the Region already holds a decided edge. Creative businesses have already revitalized some parts of the Region, and a number of others stand on the cusp of real growth possibilities.

Matt Bucy, for example, who has played a major role in the resurgence of White River Junction said when he was first getting started, "I still don't really know what the creative economy is… I think it just means entrepreneurs doing creative stuff on their own: the power of the little person."[4] He obviously understands what it is and can do, no matter what

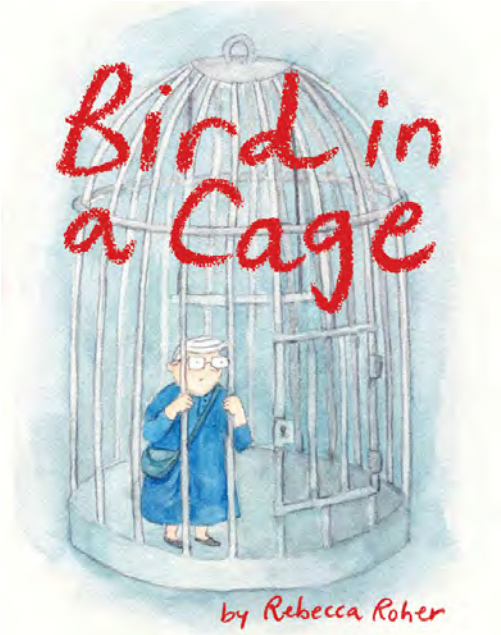
it's called. He proceeded to convert an old commercial bakery into the Tip Top Media and Arts Center that is now home to dozens of creative businesses and has similar plans for other downtown buildings.

Tip Top, combined with the Center for Cartoon Studies, Northern Stage, the Main Street Museum, and a host of other thriving enterprises have turned White River Junction from a sleepy crossroads to a hotbed of creativity and innovation.

Artisans Park is having a similar impact on Windsor, helping to turn it from a tired industrial town to an exciting tourist destination and business site. Applying some of the concepts used to develop technology parks in the 1980s and 1990s to Vermont's unique forms of innovation, which do not require conventional Research and Development (R&D), developer Terry McDonnell, working with long-time resident company Simon Pearce Glass and Pottery, created a space that has attracted a small cluster of loosely related companies. The end result, Artisans Park, is a synergy that generates a total impact greater than the sum of its parts.

There are many other pockets of activity across the Region that will be described in the following sections, from the Region's traditional tourist destination centers like Woodstock and Quechee to its historic industrial towns to its more isolated communities some of which are being revitalized by young artisans, re-energized farmers, and freelancers.

But the Region also has low-income communities that lack the resources and proximity to transportation networks, towns with per capita incomes less than 60% of the state average, e.g., Vershire, Granville, and Chelsea. These places also must be able to benefit from the development of the creative economy. Furthermore, the Region has a large number of low-income people,



"Bird in a Cage" Cover Art | Center for Cartoon Studies Alumni | ©Rebecca Roher: www.rebeccaroher.com

Key Definitions

Creative Economy describes the total employment in creative industries and in creative occupations within the remainder of the regional economy.

Creative Industries are defined by the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) and designated as creative based on their primary products or services or part of the value chain for these industries.

Creative Enterprises are commercial businesses, nonprofit organizations, and individual creative entrepreneurs whose principal value is based on creative content and relationship to the consumer.

Creative Segments (or clusters) are sets of complementary or similar industries that represent a cohesive form of creative activity.

Creative Occupations are classified based on the characteristics of the work required, the application of art or original thinking using the standard U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Classification System.

Creative Assets are organizations, venues, institutions, and other forms of infrastructure that support and serve creative businesses.

particularly those non-traditional learners who may have creative talents but do poorly on standardized tests that might succeed on a creative career path.

Developing the Plan

This Creative Economy Inventory and Action Plan is a direct result of the TRORC driven, HUD-funded 2015 *East Central Vermont: What We Want* Sustainability Plan that was formulated over the course of three years. Through workgroups, public meetings, and extensive discussions, it became clear that the Creative Economy is extensive within our Region, but it needs much more recognition, organization, and support. Beyond that plan, as of January 2016, support for the Creative Economy is now included in the ECVEDD Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).[5] This allows us to continue to support our efforts for the Creative Economy along with other identified areas of importance within the Region.

The Creative Economy Inventory and Action Plan was funded predominately by Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission (TRORC) with additional funding from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA). EDA funding is available to the Region because East Central Vermont is a Designated Economic Development District[6] and we have an EDA-approved CEDS. The ECVEDD is staffed by four organizations working together across its 40 towns: TRORC's and Green Mountain Economic Development Corporation's 30 towns and Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission's and Springfield Regional Development District's 10 towns.

The information used to inform the descriptions, analyses, and recommendation that follow come from a variety of sources that include:

- Advice from a Steering Committee that has met four times
- One hundred and four responses to an on-line survey, including comments
- Dozens of responses to email questions
- Six focus groups held around the Region that involved 88 people
- Fifty-four in-person or telephone interviews
- Economic industry and occupational data from Economic Modeling Specialists, Inc. (EMSI)
- Analysis of data provided by a number of public and private sources, including *Vermont Business Magazine*, Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund's Food Atlas, Vermont Department of Tourism's Palate to Palette database, Data from Vermont Arts Council, and membership lists of all Vermont associations or guilds of creative people or companies
- Information gathered from Internet searches, tourism information, and regional magazines and newspapers

The remainder of the report is organized into:

a) The scale and distribution of creative industries and creative occupations,
b) An in-depth analysis of the seven segments into which the creative industries have been divided: visual arts and crafts; film and media; design and fashion; museums and cultural heritage; literary arts; performance arts, and artisanal foods including summaries of strengths and challenges,
c) A description of the ways that creative industries influence and affect other parts of the economy and innovation,
d) The infrastructure that supports and serves the creative industries: education and training; networks and associational structure; places, spaces, and venues; events and festivals; and resources,
e) What was learned about the Region's creative economy from the process, and
f) Recommended goals and actions to move forward.

The Gallery at the VAULT | Springfield | ©Springfield on the Move

TRASH ONLY

2. The Big Picture: An Overview of Findings

A number of critical points that emerged from the research, interviews, and analysis of this project are encapsulated in the following key points. Additional detailed and specific findings follow the descriptions of each of the segments and assets in the report.

Creative Economy Size and Importance

- Employment in the creative industries is about 8.9% of the total Region's employment.
- Employment growth in the Region's creative industries was 10.2% from 2010-2015 versus 8.2% for the U.S. and 7.6% for Vermont.
- The proportion of the workforce employed in creative industries in the Region is 86% above the similar national proportion.
- Awareness of the economic role and contribution of the Creative Economy in the Region based on the survey and discussions with business leaders and town officials.

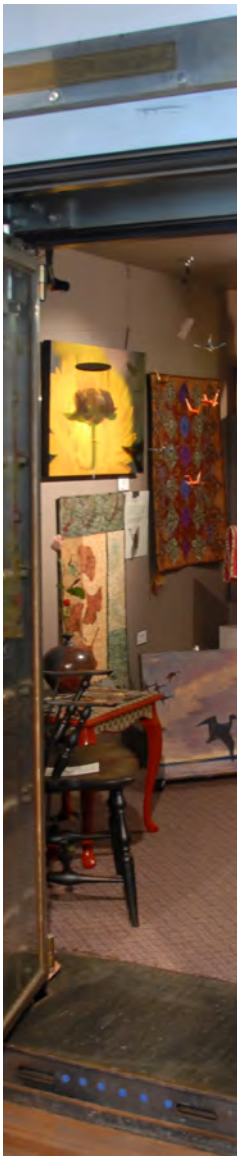
Organizing the Creative Economy

- Clearly, the Region's Creative Economy is doing very well on several quantitative measures. A higher level of organization and strategic intervention, however, could strengthen the Region's Creative Economy and bring about more sustainable growth.

Creative Businesses and Enterprises

- The Region's Creative Economy is made up predominantly of artisanal enterprises—freelancers, sole-proprietors, and enterprises that together average 3.5 employees.
- There is a very high degree of collaboration among creative individuals and enterprises in the Region that has led to new products and services for creative individuals and enterprises as well as more effective distribution of products and services.
- Given the nature of Vermont's economy, individuals are often forced

Safe & Seen Halloween Event | Randolph | ©Nathan Johnston



The Gallery at the VAULT | Springfield

to hold several jobs or have multiple sources of incomes in order to maintain a moderate lifestyle. While clearly a burden for some, it also has resulted in more creative, innovative, entrepreneurial workers and business owners.

- Creative individuals and small enterprises that rely solely on local markets and audiences often have difficulty growing their business.
- The Region is home to large numbers of hybrid companies, freelancers, and entrepreneurs, both by choice and necessity. A majority of those in the visual or performing arts, design and many in food production operate as hybrid companies, relying on a broad range of products and services, often to different markets, for economic sustainability and growth.
- Significantly scaling up within the Region is constrained by the size of the mid-skilled workforce, distances to market centers, lack of clustered specialization (e.g., suppliers, labor market, consultants, and similar and complementary businesses that enable businesses to grow large), and stringent regulations and permitting requirements.

Quality of Creative Products and Services

- Some of the larger, but still small enterprises have well-established and wide-spread reputations, which brings significant numbers of visitors and tourists to the Region.
- Many individual artists and performers and micro-enterprises have very high quality products and services and reach markets and customers far outside of the Region.
- Production is influenced by a deep agricultural and industrial history, which enhances the creativity and craftsmanship embedded in both sectors.

Identity

- The ECVEDD Region is clearly a part of the Upper Valley[7] area, which includes communities in both New Hampshire and Vermont. As a result, the Region's creative individuals and enterprises benefit from the markets and audiences outside the regional boundaries and from New Hampshire and proximity to Dartmouth College.
- However, this also means that the Region does not have a clear and distinct identity making it difficult to establish itself as a creative, arts destination and attracting a strong tourist market.

Character of the Region

- The communities in the Region have made the preservation of the natural and built environment a top priority, which makes the Region an attractive place to live and to work. About 75% of those surveyed moved to Vermont from somewhere else, in large part because of quality of life and character of the Region.
- Several of the larger communities in the Region have become, or are working to become, vibrant creative, cultural, and commercial centers, providing strong foundational support for the Creative Economy.
- The rich industrial heritage of the communities along Interstate 91 has added to and can add to the rich cultural fabric of the Region.
- The Region, exhibits higher levels of community trust than generally found in large cities, and this lends itself to sharing ideas, and building social capital.
- Less prosperous and outlying towns are making strong efforts to build on their creative assets. Some are looking to their creative assets and strengths to both rebuild their economies and generate community pride and cohesiveness.

Creative Talent

- Many extracurricular opportunities are available to develop or enhance residents' and visitors' interests in creative activities and products.
- There is limited support for careers in creative occupations from the public educational institutions. Although public education has effectively retained and even emphasized the arts, it has not embraced the full scope of possibilities for creative career paths in the technology-based, innovation and production sectors.

Dartmouth College and the Upper Valley Region

The contributions of Dartmouth College to the creative economy of Vermont and the Upper Valley Region, because it is located outside of the Region, exceed the scope of this project yet are incalculable. Therefore, it is useful to describe some of what Dartmouth contributes. The Hopkins Center for the Arts and the Hood Museum of Art are the two principal arts institutions at the College, and they draw thousands of visitors to the College and the Region. The College also prepares a new generation of artists and creatives in its academic programs in Art History, Film and Media, Music, Studio Art and Theater. The ensembles at the College enrich the experience of students and also attract first-rate professional talent – e.g. the Barbary Coast Jazz Ensemble, the Dartmouth Symphony Orchestra, and the Dartmouth Dance Ensemble. Student ensembles exist in Music, Dance, Film, the Spoken Word and Theater. Workshops are offered in creative areas such as ceramics, book arts, woodworking and dance. Dartmouth also has its own radio and TV stations. Finally, the Arts & Innovation District is a new initiative in the Provost's Office to build a culture of entrepreneurship where art, creativity, innovation and technology intersect. The intent is give students an opportunity to pursue their artistic and creative ambitions, and to do it with a grounding in real-world applications.

3. How Extensive is the Region's Creative Economy?

The first step in understanding the Region's Creative Economy is to define it in ways that describe and estimate its scale and scope using the number and proportions of the workforce employed in creative enterprises and occupations. Although the term "creative" can be applied to a wide range of intellectual activities, this report applies it to economic activities that directly rather than indirectly connect it to economic outcomes and wealth generation.

What are the economics of creativity?
The most direct impacts of the creative economy come from jobs it generates and the associated incomes earned by both those employed in creative enterprises and occupations. Additional economic benefits come from spending patterns by creative enterprises and their employees and spillover effects of creative industries on other sectors in the economy (Section 4).

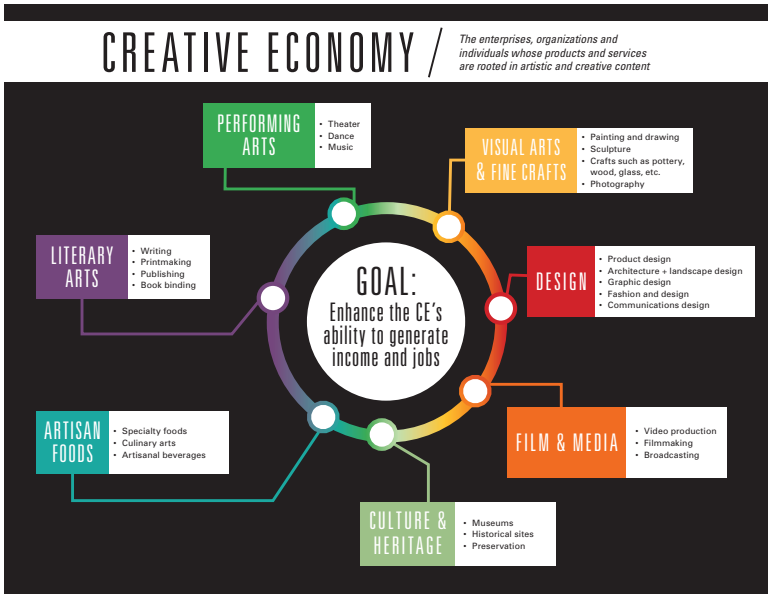
Creative industries: A "creative" industry is defined by products or services that obtain new or added value from a distinctive appearance, content, sound, or emotional response. This includes its value chain, those enterprises necessary to take production or services from materials and inspiration to markets.[8]

Creative workers: "Creative" is applied to people in occupations with job requirements that require ingenuity,

The Creative Economy

The Creative Economy consists of businesses, non-profit organizations and self-employed individuals who are engaged in the origination, production and distribution of goods and services that are rooted in artistic and creative content.

New World Festival - Randolph - ©First Light Studio | First Drop APA - Tunbridge - ©Upper Pass Beer Company | Conference Table - Randolph - ©Wallgoldfinger, Inc. | Silver Drop Dangles - Springfield - ©Caitlin Christiana | Village Pond - Barnard - ©Sabra Field



Creative Economy | ©Michael Kane, Stu Rosenfeld, and Beth Siegel of Mt. Auburn Associates

imagination, and/or artistic expression. These occupations exist both within and outside of creative enterprises. For example, enterprises that do not fit the definition of a "creative enterprise" quite often employ people who do creative work, such as window designers at retail chains, landscape architects at resorts, advertising writers or web designers for large corporations, or musicians in churches.

Creative and design thinking is also becoming more important in occupations not officially defined as "creative," whether its planning a manufacturing process, starting a new business, or managing a hospital.

Creative economy: The creative economy consists of businesses, non-profit organizations and self-employed individuals who are engaged in the origination, production and distribution of goods and services that are rooted in artistic and creative content. It is the sum total of (a) those employed in creative industries and (b) those employed in creative occupations outside of creative industries.

Who are employed in creative industries?

Government economic industry data alone fail to adequately capture the full scale of creative enterprises. Measuring the size of the creative economy is still more an art than a science. Even though this analysis uses the most commonly used and comprehensive proprietary data system, EMSI, that source has limitations.

- First, the government's classification system misses creative enterprises that operate within sectors that are not predominantly creative, including creative establishments embedded in government, agriculture, manufacturing, tourism, and information technologies sectors.
- Second, businesses self identify within primary single industry

classification when most businesses actually have multiple classifications.
- Third, government databases combine those self-employed in "art, entertainment, and recreation" into a single category. The distribution among segments can only be estimated using the proportional distributions by occupations within that industry code.
- Fourth, because government data are suppressed for sectors with small numbers of enterprises, most common in rural areas, they can only be estimated based on proprietary algorithms.

Thus, while the data comprise an important estimate of economic activity, they should be taken as the best available approximation but imperfect.

To compensate to the extent possible for the deficiencies, this analysis has supplemented the government classification system using "discovery," i.e., appending the data where possible with information obtained from other sources, often using qualitative criteria.

Other sources include, for example, the Food System Atlas of the Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund, a manufacturing directory published by the *Vermont Business Magazine;* state databases on libraries, tourism, and various business association directories; and even Wikipedia. Employment associated with these, when not known, was estimated based on sampling and applying conservatively. These numbers are considered "discovered," and are added to the EMSI data.

The EMSI data also includes information on "extended proprietorships" freelancers with income that is peripheral to their primary employment, perhaps as musicians, writers, web designers, or editors (Table 1).

- The Region's Creative Economy includes an estimated **5,515** people who earn their living from the creative content of what they support, make, and/or sell.
- Applying a multiplier of 1.34 to take into account the indirect jobs generated by the additional revenue in the Region, the total impact in jobs is **7,390** jobs (Figure 1).

Classifying the Creative Industries
Because the definition of a creative economy covers so many forms of creative expression with different strengths and needs, it's important to disaggregate it according to categories, or "segments," of creative industries that each represent distinct competencies and markets.

Table 1
Number identified as working in creative industries in the Region

Type	Employment
Total Employment in creative industries	4,192
Self-employment in creative industries	1,138
Extended proprietorships	864
Employment in creative Industries as % of total employment	8.9
Concentration in region as % of U.S. average	186*

*186% means that the proportion of all employment in the Region that is employed in creative industries is 186% of (or 86% higher than) that same ratio for the entire U.S.

Figure 1
Impact on Jobs, 2015

Thus, we have divided the creative industries into seven segments: visual arts and crafts, media and digital arts, design and fashion, performance arts, literary arts, museums and cultural heritage, and artisanal foods (See Appendix B for complete description by sector).

- **Visual arts and crafts** include artists who create and produce much of the artistic and cultural content and also provides other sectors with competitive advantages.
- **Film and media** includes firms that produce, distribute, and support film, radio, television, music, and computer and video games.
- **Design and fashion** encompass the commercial applications of the arts to the design and production of places and spaces, design-oriented products, and communications designed to influence markets.
- **Museums and cultural heritage** consists of public and private museums, historical sites, and cultural institutions that attract and serve tourists and provide distinguishing features for communities.
- **Literary arts** include sectors related to the art, re-production, and distribution of the written word, the writers, publishers, book stores, libraries.
- **Performance arts** includes all those sectors related to music, dance, and theatrical performances, artists who are performers, businesses that transport and/or stage productions, and publicity and ticketing systems.
- **Artisanal food**s comprise those farms that supplement food production with some form of creative expression, eating

establishments that create culinary experiences, and specialty food production.

Taken together, these sectors make a coherent whole that covers enough common ground to justify special attention and particular interventions that meet their common needs. Although many of these companies have multiple competencies and fit more than one segment, to avoid duplication, each company is defined by its dominant characteristic.

A term commonly called a "location quotient" in economic development terminology, is simply a measure of how important a group of industries in a place (in this report, the Region), is when compared to a larger base, in this case the U.S. This concentration is typically used to determine whether a region is home to a true industry cluster, with a number (selected arbitrarily depending on how many clusters a place wants claim).[9] The most common criterion is 25% above the national average, but some studies choose as low as 10%. The calculations in this report are based on the employment found only using EMSI employment data, and excludes any "discovered employment" so that it can be compared to similar U.S. measures (Table 2).

Table 2

Segment	Employed	Discovered*	Total	Firms	Extended Proprietorships	LQ
Visual Arts and crafts	495	0	495	227	142	88
Film & Media	440	0	440	136	123	120
Design and Fashion	1,020	27	1,047	214	261	614
Museums & Heritage	105	54	159	33	4	290
Literary Arts	467	91	558	226	30	187
Performing Arts	436	0	436	176	145	177
Artisanal Foods	647	410	1,057	188	159	202
Total	**3,610**	**582**	**4,192**	**1,200**	**864**	**186***

*Notes: Those discovered were the number that exceeded the numbers in the EMSI database. The Location Quotient (LQ) is the ratio of the % employment of the segment as compared to % employment across the entire U.S. An LQ of 100 would mean it is equal to the national average.

The Region exhibits an unusually high relative concentration in its creative industries, especially for a rural region that lacks large-scale employers. Some are expected, such as food segments and design and fashion, but others are surprisingly high—namely literary arts and museums and heritage (Table 3).

The relative concentration of employment for the entire creative industries was 1.86, or 86% above the U.S. average concentration for a group of similar creative industries.

The creative industries grew 10.2% from 2010 to 2015, a higher rate than the national average for all industries of 8.1%.

Another way of comparing the relative economic importance of a set of industries, or cluster, is to compare it to other sets, or clusters, of industries in the same geographic region. Whereas creative industries employed 4,204 in 2015 according to EMSI:

- Business and financial services was slightly higher, employing 4,325.
- Information technology and telecommunications employed 2,769.

Table 3
Percentages of Employment and Firms, by Segment

Segment	Total Employed	Firms	% of Total Employment	% of All Firms
Visual Arts and crafts	495	227	11.8	18.9
Film & Media	440	136	10.5	11.3
Design and Fashion	1,047	214	24.9	17.8
Museums & Heritage	159	33	3.8	2.8
Literary Arts	558	226	13.5	18.8
Performing Arts	436	176	10.4	14.7
Artisanal Foods	1,057	188	25.1	15.7
Total	**4,192**	**1,200**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Source: EMSI data, 2015 supplemented by other public and private sources (See Appendix B).

- Agribusiness, Food Processing and Technology (excluding farming) employed 2,769.
- Forest and Wood Products employed 1,984.

From Creative Industries to Creative Economy

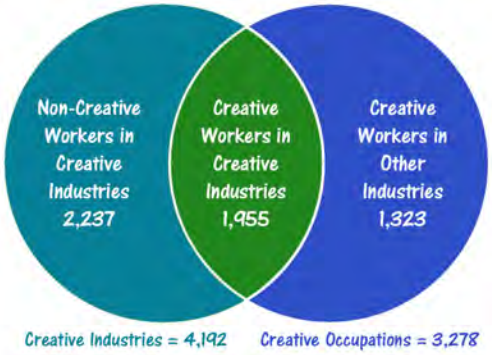
Most economic cluster analyses are based on numbers of people employed and, in some instances, self-employed by industries. But occupations can similarly be defined as creative based on the degree to which they require pure or applied artistic creativity. While creative industries employ people in creative occupations, they also employ people who do routine work. At the same time, other people work in creative occupations in industries that are not classified as creative. These include, for example, writers in the financial or health care sector, graphic designers working for manufacturers of government, a chef at a resort, or a musician employed by a church.

The full scope of the Creative Economy is defined as the sum of these two measures: (1) people employed in creative industries and (2) those employed in creative occupations that are not in creative industries. Each implies a particular policy emphasis. Creative industries suggest strategies and needs for sustainability and future growth and prosperity while creative occupations suggest strategies and needs for education and workforce development.

Figure 2

Creative Economy of Region, 2015

Total Creative Economy = 5,515



The Region's creative economy, as defined by the combination of both employees of creative companies and employees of other companies who work in creative occupations, includes just over 5,500 jobs.

The creative enterprises are responsible for the employment of 4,204 people in 1,200 establishments with about two in five in creative occupations in those businesses. An additional 1,323 people are employed in creative occupations in sectors of the economy that don't fit the criteria established for "creative industries" (Figure 2).

Creative Occupations
The number of people employed in creative occupations who were not employed in creative industries was measured by analyzing the staffing patterns for non-creative sectors of the economy based on the U.S. Department of Labor's Standard Occupational Classification System.

Occupations, along with median wages based on national averages, shown in Table 4 reflect only a person's primary occupation, not secondary. Photographers are the largest category and writers and authors second, as in nearly every creative economy analysis, because both are employed in a wide range of industry sectors.

The Region exhibits an unusually high relative concentration in its creative industries, especially for a rural region that lacks large-scale employers.

Ribbon cutting for the new So.802 Studios | Springfield

Table 4
Largest Creative Occupations in the Region

Occupation	Jobs 2015	Median Hourly Earnings
Photographers	329	$13.56
Writers and Authors	207	$15.57
Musicians and Singers	195	$13.78
Graphic Designers	129	$16.19
Fine Artists, Painters, Sculptors, and Illustrators	101	$ 7.97
Librarians	82	$23.03
Public Relations Specialists	82	$23.85
Editors	77	$21.59
Web Developers	72	$22.41
Architects, Except Landscape and Naval	64	$28.06
Craft Artists	54	$12.99
Chefs and Head Cooks	54	$15.41
Entertainers and Performers	51	$14.29
Interior Designers	48	$16.65
Producers and Directors	45	$17.51
Art Directors	43	$17.48
Actors	42	$11.49
Reporters and Correspondents	41	$14.96
Multimedia Artists and Animators	40	$11.36
Music Directors and Composers	34	$14.40

Source: EMSI 2015 data, 2015, median earnings are based on national averages.

EXIT
EXIT

4. Some Results from Surveying Creative Enterprises

To learn more about the characteristics of creative enterprises, their interests and needs, creative enterprises and individuals were identified from multiple sources and sent an on-line survey. (See Appendix C for full results.)

Who took the survey and who responded?
Some 104 individuals responded to the survey from across the Region. Most respondents were either native Vermonters, or had settled in the Region for the lifestyle and culture. Almost half were between the ages of 35 and 60, a sixth were between 26 and 34, and over a third were over 60 years of age. Respondents were very nearly half male and half female.

What kinds of creative businesses did they represent?
Based on the nature of their participation in the creative economy, respondents were grouped into four creative categories: (a) Visual Arts & Crafts (33%); (b) Music, Performance and Written Word (26.5%); (c) Media Arts, Design and Manufacturing (27.5%); and (d) Food Arts (13%). An overwhelming number of respondents reported that their creative talents were self-taught (81%). More than 60% of respondents also listed secondary or higher education as where they acquired their skills. Almost 30% had developed their creative techniques through internships or apprentices. When asked whether they were familiar with the concept of the creative economy, most reported that they understood the use and significance of the term, or that they are already actively engaged in planning and discussion around creative economic development. However, 20% of respondents had never heard of the concept.

100 Year Gala | The Great Hall at One Hundred River Street | Springfield | ©Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce

What did we learn about their businesses?
A majority of the respondents are engaged principally in "making" creative products (64%). Just less than 17% principally market or distribute creative products, and 3% provide services and support to creative businesses. More than half are self-employed or freelancers and about a third are businesses that employ between one and four people. For most of the respondents, creative work is their full-time employment, generating most or all of their income and considered essential to maintaining their standard of living.

There is a wide variety in how and where creative businesses derive their revenue.

Table 5
Levels of need for space/facilities

Space Needs	Average
Shared workspace	3.26
More affordable space	1.35
Co-working space with shared resources	1.15
Other	1.10
Shared business incubation space	0.91
Performance and/or rehearsal space	0.88
Differently zoned space	0.82

Note: Average represents the weighted average of the 1 to 5 rating given each need.

One key take-away is that over 50% of respondents said that between 75 and 100% of their revenue is generated via sales made directly to the customer. About 23% of survey respondents reported that the majority of their revenue comes from sales within Vermont.

What did we learn about their social relationships?
Over 70% of respondents indicated that face-to-face networking is important to the success of their business and most are satisfied with their current opportunities for face-to-face networking and collaboration. However, 33% felt that these opportunities are currently inadequate. For the majority of respondents, the most important form of networking is the internet, and/or social media (60% rated this 4 or 5). Personal websites were listed as the most important Internet networking tool (62%), followed by social media (52%).

Outside of on-line platforms, 46% of respondents listed community events as in important venue for networking, and 30% rated regional professional or business associations as an important venue for networking.

What did we learn about their business needs and issues?
In general, respondents seem satisfied with existing facilities. However, a third indicated that they have a strong need for more affordable workspace. One in five indicated a need for co-working spaces with shared resources (Table 5).

The strongest need among all respondents was for more affordable healthcare (63%). Almost 60% indicated a need for publicity or media coverage. Other resources that respondents rated as important include grants or loans (47%); place to exhibit, perform, or sell (45%); marketing assistance (45%); and social media (42%). Among manufacturers and providers of creative business services, the strongest need was for branding, advertising, and marketing (36%) and working capital (36%).

Overall, respondents indicated dissatisfaction with local and regional support and opportunities for creative economic development. Respondents were particularly dissatisfied with public funding for creative enterprises (62%) and state taxes (53%).

Some 57% also indicated dissatisfaction with the level to which government, development agencies, and foundations appreciate or understand the impact of creative enterprise on the economy.

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5. Digging Deeper: Segmenting the Creative Industries

The creative industries were divided into seven distinct segments in order to better understand the strengths of and challenges facing each, and more effectively and efficiently understand their needs. Each is based on the data acquired through EMSI plus the employment in creative enterprises that were "discovered" in sectors not included in among the industries identified as creative (Appendix B). This section provides a more detailed picture of how each segment is organized and what its prospects are for the future.

THE ART AND BUSINESS OF THE WRITTEN WORD

At a Glance:

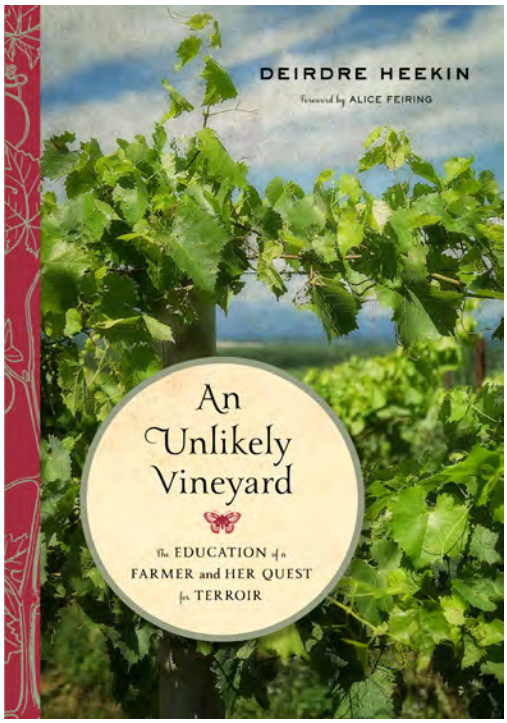
- 558 employed in Literary Arts
- 13.5% of Creative Industries
- 226 establishments in Literary Arts
- 175 writers and authors, by occupation
- 187% of the national average concentration

For more than a century, Vermont has been a leading destination for and source of writers and poets, both because of its bucolic environment and relative solitude and its access to writers' workshops, retreats, and other writers. The Region has benefited from, supported, and enhanced the state's literary reputation.

The ECVEDD Region is home to a rich literary industry segment, particularly among publishers and independent bookstores, with 13 independent book publishers, 14 independent book stores, 79 libraries, and well over 100 independent writers and authors (Table 6).

The literary arts economy begins with its writers but includes everything that it takes to find potential publishers, edit and publish the written words, and see that it reaches the largest possible markets in various forms and generates incomes at each stage of the process.

The stages of development originate with the writer, whether poetry, fiction or non-fiction, news reporting or feature articles, reviews and evaluations, technical or business reports, how-to-books, or greeting cards. Next in the process are agents, editors, and publishers and then wholesalers, book and magazine



Cover design by Kimberly Glyder & Cover photograph by Jan Cannon | © Chelsea Green Publishing

Table 6

Numbers of Employees and Establishments in Literary Arts Segment

Segments	NAICS Employment	Discovered	Total	Enterprises	Extended Proprietorships
Book publishers	103	6	109	13	0
Periodical publishers	82	0	82	3	26
Greeting card & other publishers	41	0	41	1	4
Book stores	49	0	49	14	0
Independent writers and authors	115	0	115	115	0
Libraries	73	85	158	79	0
Writing centers, festivals	4	0	4	2	0
Total	**467**	**91**	**558**	**227**	**30**

stores and dealers, and libraries. All of these are supplemented by writing centers, workshops, and literary festivals. A significant number in this segment, perform multiple functions, as writers, editors, illustrators, self-publishers, and even outside the segment, as storytellers, musicians, artists, and farmers.

The segment includes only businesses located within the ECVEDD Region but beyond the writers, the success of each depends on sources and markets far beyond the Region and state.

Publishers targeting niche markets

The Region is particularly rich in the book publishing sector, unusually so for a rural area. More than a dozen book publishers populate the ECVEDD Region, most with niche markets that reflect some special dimension of Vermont's economy—its politics, culture, and lifestyle—and that reaches across the U.S. and overseas.

- Skylight Paths in Woodstock and Inner Traditions in Rochester publish books about spiritual themes. Jewish Lights, also in Woodstock, publishes books on wide-ranging Jewish themes, such as values, parenting, holidays, cooking, and children's stories.
- Countryman Press in Woodstock, Vermont's oldest name in publishing and now an affiliate of W.W. Norton, produces about 70 books a year, many on recreational and regional themes and crafts as well as cookbooks.

- Trafalgar Square in North Pomfret publishes books and DVDs about equestrian topics and crafts, including children's books, and Nomad Communications and Publishing in White River Junction targets educational books.
- Schenkmann Press in Rochester is an independent publisher of academic books, but in 1997 spun off Penstroke Press as a non-profit to produce the work of young aspiring authors.
- Nomad Press publishes roughly 50 books a year for school children and young adults that have been translated into 40 different languages and sold throughout the world, and Nomad Press Commemorative publishes design-rich "coffee table" books for educational institutions, corporations and museums.
- Blue Ladder Services in Ludlow guides authors through self-publishing, from organizing material, to editing copy, finding designers, and handling all the details involved in publishing in print and electronic forms.

The Region's publishers are well integrated into the e-commerce and e-book economy. Eight of the book publishers are carried on-line at Amazon as well as other sites, and all but one have books that can be downloaded electronically.

Independent bookstores: promoting literary arts while building community

Although bookstores in the Region are more prevalent than most parts of the country, the advent of on-line purchasing means many must turn to innovative ways to attract faithful customers and make a bookstore a viable enterprise. They do it by making selling books part of a bigger package of creative products and activities. They also serve as gathering places, both formally for events such as readings and informally for socializing and exchanging ideas. Further, to compete with the discounted big box and on-line books, most offer a members discount.

Chelsea Green: Finding its Niche

Chelsea Green in White River Junction is a highly successful employee-owned publisher of books, including four New York Times Bestsellers. Founded by Margo Baldwin in 1984, it has settled into the twin themes of food and the environmental responsibility, both essential aspects of Vermont's identity. The company lives its mission by committing to a sustainable business enterprise model, and growth has been steady since 2003. Both the national reputations of its authors, some of whom speak at many conferences, and have distributors in the United Kingdom and Australia helps promote its books and build its reputation. The approximately 20 employees plus part-time sales reps in Kentucky, California, and Colorado and freelance editors and proofreaders are responsible for book design, editing, sales, and in-house production. Currently located in the Tip Top building in White River Junction along with many creative businesses, they have reached the point where they would like to have more space.

Sandy's Books in Rochester, which employs about a dozen people, has a collection of new and used books, many of which emphasize local interests such as food, recreation, and the environment. But Sandy's also offers a full service bakery where they make their own breads, rolls, and pastries, and serve breakfast, lunch and early dinners.

The Norwich Bookstore holds frequent readings and other events that promote authors, draw prospective customers and build relationships in the community.

Opened in 1935, The Yankee Bookstore in Woodstock is Vermont's oldest independent book store and one of its most successful, due in large part to the yearly influx of tourists, a core of dedicated local customers, and good selections. The store also holds frequent events for authors and local celebrities that attract locals and tourists into the store.

The Book Nook in Ludlow, which opened in 2008, encourages people to sit and browse and to use their WiFi. The store regularly hosts author talks, discussion groups, and films, and a Book Nook Book Club.

Sources of the written word

Vermont has a reputation for both attracting as well producing well-known writers. Robert Frost, David Mamet, Ellen Voight, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Sinclair Lewis, and John Irving, for example, all live part-time or have lived in the state. The state's magnetism for authors and writers is as strong as ever. The ECVEDD Region is home to 115 people who declare themselves independent freelance authors, writers, poets and 175 who classify their primary occupation as writers.

Twenty-two of the 115 are listed by the Vermont State Department of Libraries as authors or illustrators of children's books. For example, Molly Delaney in Hartland publishes her books through Simon & Schuster, which then reach world-wide markets. Norwich's Michael J. Caduto write children's books with environmental themes, but is also a

Buying Books in Chester

Misty Valley Books is a unique local bookstore in Chester that is run by owners Lynne and Bill Reed and four additional employees. The store was founded in 1988 and bought by the current owners in 2001. They sell not only an eclectic selection of books, but also greeting cards and oriental rugs. The hand knotted rugs from Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and India are marketed as "Magic Reading Carpets" and place the store at the intersection of the literary and textile sectors. The store's website provides numerous resources including recommended reading relating to Vermont, as well as links to local area authors, arts, and culture. Misty Valley offers author events including book launches and poetry and prose readings. In addition, they support local book clubs and reading groups through on-line resources and discounts.

storyteller and musician. Gail Gibbons in Corinth writes and illustrates teaching books for preschoolers and early readers that are distributed by Scholastic, as well as producing art and maple syrup for the Goose Green Maple Syrup Company.

In addition there are many others who publish but have other primary occupations. Like Jamie Gage, the general manager of Vermont Information Consortium whose poetry has been published in Main Street Rag, Inkwell, Out of Line, and Mountain Gazette and recently had a new book is poetry published. A sample of the Region's authors includes the following.

- Deborah Heimann, a playwright and author living in Woodstock, has more than 19 years' experience editing creative and professional on-line and print publications for a variety of authors, publishers, and organizations. For more than 20 years, she has collaborated on fiction, non-fiction, academic prose, theatrical plays, websites, and advertising copy, with particular strength in complex social and economic development issues.
- Judith Hertog, a freelance writer living in Windsor, was born in Amsterdam, moved to Israel as a teenager, and has lived in China, Tibet, and Taiwan. She ended up settling in Vermont with her Israeli husband and children. Judith teaches creative writing and works as a freelance writer, with essays published, among others, in Zone 3, Indiana Review, The Southampton Review, Tin House, and The Common.
- Leanne Jewett is a life-long writer of fiction and non-fiction, and is also an editor. Currently the managing editor of Fiber Art Magazine and managing editor of The Quarterly Review for the National Basketry Organization, she also contributes articles to both magazines and writes reviews and blog posts on a freelance basis for various publications and businesses.

Supporting and encouraging literary art

The Region encourages and supports its literary arts through 79 libraries, writer's workshops, festivals, and celebrations. In addition to being a source of borrowed books, many of the libraries offer e-books and audiobooks through "OverDrive" and conduct readings by authors and book discussion groups. Additional state and regional support is available from the League of Vermont Writers, Vermont Antiquarian Bookseller Association, and the New England Independent Bookseller Association.

Among the most influential source of support is the Writer's Center in White

Galway Kinnell, Pulitzer Prize for Poetry 1982 and poet laureate for the state of Vermont from 1989 to 1993 | Reading at BigTown Gallery in 2010 Summer Reading Series | ©BigTown Gallery

River Junction. It attracts people to workshops that target serious writers, or beginners, procrastinators who need help getting started, or writers who simply would like to spend time in the company of other writers. Recent workshop topics include writing about roots, meeting fiction deadlines, fast quality feedback, well-told stories, women's writing circle, encouraging teens, and, off-site, "writing with spirit," a retreat at Ghost Ranch in New Mexico.

Bookstock is an example of a festival, held in Woodstock, that celebrates authors and poets from the Region and encourages appreciation for good writing by introducing residents and visitors of all ages to writers, musicians and artists in an intimate setting. Events take place throughout the town, with ArtisTree Gallery in South Pomfret hosting its opening reception as well as an exhibition of book art.

In honor of Poetry Month, Randolph hosted PoemTown, for the third consecutive year. While most American poets rarely see their work highlighted, for a month Vermont's poets have the opportunity to see their work throughout the town in store windows. Published poets, students, professional writers and amateurs are invited to send in their work for consideration. Special poetry events round out the month.

Literary Arts Summary Conclusions

Strengths

Both bookstores and libraries are important to communities and offer a focal point of community activity.

The slower pace and fewer interruptions than cities and natural environment are often mentioned as reasons for living in the Region.

Regional publishers have managed to develop national and international networks to both attract authors and expand markets.

Challenges

Publishers often must look to the Burlington area or outside the state to find qualified employees, or have to outsource labor-intensive work to other places.

Bookstores often must diversify to make a profit as a result of sparse and seasonal demand and competition from on-line sales.

THE SOUL OF CREATIVITY: ARTS AND CRAFTS

At a Glance

- 495 employed or self-employed
- 11.8% of total creative industries employment
- 227 establishments plus an additional 142 with art or craft as a secondary business
- 118 artists, crafters, and photographers by occupation
- 88% of the national average concentration

This segment incorporates businesses that originate and produce creative products. These artistic talents are marketed directly or applied to other goods to make them more decorative, authentic, unique, and/or interesting and thus more valuable in the marketplace. While proportionally the Region's concentration in this segment may not be particularly high, scale is complicated by the decision rule used to classify businesses. For example, the distinction between a one-of-a-kind craft furniture maker or fashion designer, both of whom are classified under Design, and those who call themselves artists is quite narrow and imprecise.

Using the definitions assigned by sector, the Region employs 495 in visual arts and crafts, with another 246 claiming secondary employment in the arts or crafts (Table 7).

The results of the survey showed a few distinct differences within the visual arts and craft segment. It had the smallest proportion (38%) working full-time and

Paper made from invasive species | Randolph | ©Nathan Johnston

Table 7
Number of Employees and Establishments in the Arts and Crafts Segment

	NAICS Employment	Discovered*	Total	Enterprises	Extended Proprietorships
Art/craft businesses	208	0	208	147	104
Art dealers, galleries, stores	157	0	157	31	77
Supplies	29	0	29	17	4
Photography studios	35	0	35	4	31
Fine art schools	66	0	66	27	30
Total	**495**	**0**	**495**	**226**	**246**

*Unable to know which businesses are already counted, preventing discovering omissions.

"Route 103 is a goldmine."
~Barre Pinske

Combining Pottery with Farming

Farmhouse Pottery founders, Zoe and James Zilian, make simple, useful pottery from quality natural materials that combines the authenticity of both farmer and maker. In 2008, after living in Vermont for four years, they began selling their work at local craft shows and farmer's markets. Their small, home pottery studio and its surrounding farms are the landscape that encourages their vision, which led to the name Farmhouse Pottery. The on-line store opened in 2012, and the new Woodstock destination, the Farmhouse Pottery flagship retail store and workshop, opened in June 2014.

earning all of the income from their art (38%) and the largest proportion doing it mainly as a hobby or for some income (29%). This segment also expressed the greatest need for affordable space, with 44% ranking that need high and the greatest interest in shared, or co-working space, with 50% rating the need as high.

Visual artists, crafters, and photographers

All but a small number of the businesses that produce art are classified as self-employed. An estimated 162 are self-employed in the segment and another 104 are single proprietors earning some income from the arts in addition to holding full-time jobs.

Junker Studios, for example, produces metal art for home or garden. Elise and Payne Junker have a unique signature form of ironwork that merges traditional blacksmithing, modern technology, and design concepts from early American, Shaker, Art Nouveau, and Arts and Craft traditions. Together they have designed and built garden gates, chandeliers, railings, hardware and fireplace doors, as well as signature wall art and weathervanes. The weathervane atop the Guilford Vermont Welcome Center, custom chandelier for the American Fly Fishing Museum, the Franklin County Courthouse railing are among the larger projects they have completed.

Two Potters® is Becca Van Fleet and Nathan Webb, husband-and-wife potters living on what had been a dairy farm in Bethel. They both make and teach pottery, build things, and tend the land. They produce functional pottery with the simple goal of adding beauty and enjoyment to life and sell it through galleries, shows, on-line, and on Etsy.

Prominent artist, Ed Koren, lives and works in Brookfield but is known around the world. His over 1000 cartoons, covers and illustrations have appeared in publications such as The New York Times, Newsweek, Time, G.Q., Esquire, Sports Illustrated, Vogue, Fortune, Vanity Fair, The Nation and The Boston Globe and in books by Delia Ephron, Peter Mayle, Alan Katz, George Plimpton, and others. In addition, he has written and illustrated books for children, and published six collections of cartoons that first appeared in The New Yorker.

Barre Pinske is a chainsaw wood artist living in Chester, producing sculptured animals and household objects, including his version of a Frank Gehry chair, out of logs. He moved to the Region from Cape Cod originally because it was more affordable, and discovered that "Route 103 is a goldmine." But he still feels the Region ought to do more to market itself collectively. Most of his sales come from galleries or commissions. An innovator

as well as an artist, Pinske founded the annual fall Big Buzz Chainsaw Carving Festival in Chester and also rebuilds small handsaw power units sold to woodcarvers around the U.S.

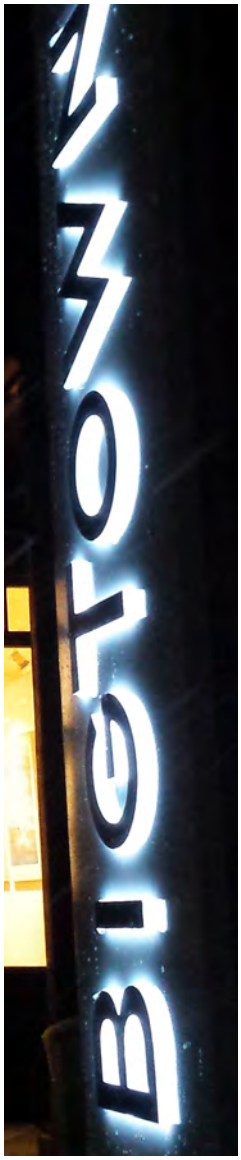
Green Mountain Glassworks was founded by native Vermonter Michael Egan and inspired by the intricate traditional glassmaking traditions of Italy's Murano studios. His Granville studio, a converted former wood products business that opened in 2000, like Murano, encourages visitors to come and watch glass art being made. Using a wide array of ancient techniques the studio blends clear base glass with colored glass from Germany and New Zealand, drawing and twisting large masses of glass into rods up to 50 feet long and sometimes no thicker than a pencil. Making his own glass rods allows the latitude to carry a creative concept from the very first hint of an idea to full fruition. In shorter lengths, the glass rods inform the design of much of functional and sculptured glasswork, bowls, vases, glasses, jewelry, lighting, and ornaments.

Bhakti Zeik is an internationally known weaver and textile artist living in Randolph with her artist husband, Mark Goodwin. Before choosing Vermont, she studied and taught across the U.S. as well as in Mexico, Great Britain, the Netherlands, and Canada. Her writings on contemporary fiber have been published in journals, including American Craft, Surface Design Journal, and Fiberarts, and she's co-authored two books, The Woven Pixel: Designing for Jacquard, Dobby Looms Using Photoshop, and Weaving on a Backstrap Loom. Better known outside the state, she teaches locally but currently has no students from Vermont. As much as they like the Region and community, the lack of a regional customer base for their work, or mechanisms for reaching that base, is proving to be a major challenge.

Galleries, dealers, and markets

Art can be purchased at a wide variety of places across the Region. These run the gamut from personal show rooms of artists and crafts people, where they avoid a seller's commission; to farmer's markets and craft shows, where they pay a booth fee but not a commission; to galleries and retail outlets, where fees vary; to selling from their personal or organizational website where they deal directly with the customer, unless it's a commercial shared website like Etsy.

The Vault in Springfield was started in a former historic bank building as a non-profit to showcase and sell the work of nearby artists. At the same time it was intended to spark the revitalization of the downtown, an example of using art to drive an economy. While a successful venture, the rebuilding effort was found to require a broader base.



BigTown Gallery | Rochester | ©BigTown Gallery

Big Town Gallery has been a significant presence in Rochester since 2003. Although starting small, it has grown into a visual arts, literary and performing arts destination for the greater Rochester community as well as for second home owners and visitors. It draws on a wide network of often world-class artists to fill its exhibition and performances spaces. A recent photography exhibit, Viva Cuba, was but one of many first-rate shows the gallery presents.

Many of the towns in the Region have at least one art gallery. The Vermont Standard, which covers Central Vermont, lists 17 galleries within its portion of the ECVEDD Region, but focusing primarily on the Woodstock/Quechee area. A list of all of the Region's art galleries, however, would far more extensive, and include the following and more:

- Art of Vermont is a relatively new art and craft gallery in downtown Randolph that sells the work of more than a dozen artists and showcases one or two artists every month
- Arabella Gallery and Gifts in Windsor carries fine arts by Vermont and New Hampshire artists
- VerShare in Vershire offers local, homecrafted goods
- Vermont North by Hand Artisans is a regional coop that sells members' art and crafts
- Pegasus Gallery in Quechee displays and sells regional art and crafts
- Depot Street Gallery in Ludlow carries the work of more than 100 artists
- The Chandler Arts Center Gallery in Randolph has a month long exhibit and market for artisans during the holiday season that draws large numbers of customers
- Chester, a town of about 3,000, is home to Chester Art Guild, Crow Hill Gallery, DaVallia Art & Accents, Gallery 103, and the Vermont Institute of Contemporary Art

Glass in the Valley

Nick Kekic and his wife, Tamasin, built Tsuga Studios in 2000 in Chester, on land that had been in the family for generations. Nick was born into a glass-making family; his grandfather worked for forty-two years as an industrial glassworker at General Electric in Ohio and his father helped build the first glass studio and program for the Rochester Institute of Technology. Growing up during the early studio art glass movement, he was surrounded by hand-made objects and artists. At age 19, Nick realized his legacy while attending a beginning glassblowing class at the Penland School of Crafts in North Carolina, where his father had been some twenty years before and the rest is history. "I design my work to be decorative with clean, strong lines in form and color while most of my work is also functional as I've often felt most satisfied making things that are both beautiful and useful." These include many functional products, such as wine glasses. He does not rely on the local economy but, increasingly, the internet, catalogs, national markets, and reputation. He does, however, "piggyback on," and benefit from, the Vermont brand.

Developing skills in the arts or crafts
Whether a novice or experienced artists, if a person is not seeking a recognized credential, there are places one can learn various forms of art in the Region at a relatively low cost.

- The White River Craft Center in Randolph teaches drawing, weaving, pottery, and woodworking and is the home of the Vermont Weavers Guild
- The historic Fletcher Farm School for Arts and Crafts in Ludlow, operated by the Society of Vermont Artists and Craftsmen, Inc., has residential and non-residential short courses in a wide range of arts and crafts, including fiber arts, fine arts, clay, jewelry, and basketry
- Two Rivers Printmaking, located in the Tip Top Building in White River Junction, is a non-profit that teaches various forms of expressive printmaking and its photographic adjuncts plus offers studio space and membership

A number of artists supplement their incomes by offering workshops at their home or a local gallery, and others take on apprentices, such as Heritage Weaving Studio and Simon Pearce.

Arts & Crafts Summary Conclusions

Strengths

The Region attracts large numbers of visitors that are interested in the arts, especially during skiing, sugaring and fall foliage seasons.

The Region's towns and villages have a disproportionately high number of venues for the arts—festivals and markets, and galleries—for their size.

Challenges

The levels of competition is increasing as more and more places turn to arts and crafts and "creative placemaking" for their identity.

Artists are widely dispersed without a single regional arts organization to provide services, such as website and maps.

Artists lack effective marketing options and need better access to collectors and higher end buyers.

Copper & Lace Ring, Silver Cuff Bracelet, Silver Drop Dangles | ©Caitlin Christiana

FOOD AND ART: FOOD AS ART

At a Glance

- 1,057 employed in the artisanal food segment
- 25.1% of creative industries employment
- 188 establishments
- 202% of the national average concentration

No state has aligned art and creativity with its core food economy more thoroughly and effectively than Vermont. The food sector is to the Region what the automobile industry is to the Detroit area. But unlike Detroit, Vermont has withstood global competition by becoming more creative, innovative, and by meeting—and generating—new customer demand.

A statewide example is the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development-led Palate to Palette program, which is aimed at discovering "the artisan culture of local foods and artistic expression.... a feast of food, farms and the arts" where you can find "everything from artisan chocolates, farmstead cheese and maple cream, to exemplary theater, music, arts, and fine craft." Vermont is unquestionably America's poster child for authentic and artisanal foods. The state's Organic Farmers Association dates back to 1971, the first in the nation and long before organic became a national brand and household term. Vermont leads all states in the density of its organic farms, CSAs, farmers markets, and, more recently, microbreweries.

Vermont Spirits in Quechee, for example, uses local agricultural products, including maple, apples and corn, sourced from partnerships with farmers from around Vermont. "Our goal," they explain, is to produce spirits with flavor and true character... not flavored spirits, and we distill each batch with the spirits connoisseur and lover of fine food in mind."

Unlike the corporate farming that dominates the sector across much of the nation, the Region's food system has remained for the most part locally or cooperatively owned and with on-going innovation and creativity fostered by a locally demanding and discriminating customer base, the hallmark of successful clusters.

Who's in the artisanal and creative food segment?

Defining a food-based business as creative requires distinguishing between food production and presentation as primarily for sustenance and food production and presentation as a form of artistic expression or culinary or expressive experience. Is there

something distinctive about the product to differentiate it from similar mass-produced goods and creates added value and enhances the experience of the user or customer? For a large segment of the food industry in the Region, as in Vermont statewide, the answer is emphatically yes. This allows us to include elements of the regional food system that are not typically included in creative economy studies (Figure 3).

Thus, this analysis includes sectors that are overwhelmingly composed of small, artisanal, specialized businesses, e.g., wine, beer, and spirits, specialty food production, confectioneries, and bakeries. Other categories that are more mixed, such as farms, many of which are purely producing crops or raising animals, or restaurants and food stores, most of which are part of larger national chains or have unimaginative and standardized fares, were more selectively included. For these, we applied a set of qualitative criteria to each enterprise individually. Restaurants are included, for example, if they employ professional chefs that develop their own menus, source locally, create unusual dining experience, and/or host artists or musicians, farms are included if they also produce their own branded products or integrate in some way their work or their reputation with the arts.

About 28% of the Region's creative employment is found in its food segment. The elements of this segment are businesses that grow or raise, process, serve, and sell edible or live ornamental products. Table 8 describes the distribution of employment across some of the sectors within this segment of the creative economy.

Creativity at the Source: The Farms

The agricultural scene in the Region is a creative combination of healthy food production with branding, education, agri-

Salted Bourbon Caramel Flan | Photo by Calley Hastings | ©Fat Toad Farm

and gastri-tourism, and connections to the arts. These are not our grandfathers' farms, growing mainly for sustenance. The names alone illustrate their individuality, e.g., Fat Rooster, No Cents, On the Edge, Howling Wolf, Free Verse, Leaning Ladder, and Jersey Girls. Many of these farms are a result of career changes, started by people from other parts of the country and by people in other fields.

What sets the Region's and Vermont's farms apart from the more conventional agribusiness operations are their emphasis on or involvement in:

- On-farm processing and locally branded foods
- Concern with sustainability and preservation
- Connecting products to local culture and history
- Willingness to host school groups and teach and mentor young people

Figure 3
Creative Food System

- Community supported agriculture (CSA) and farmers markets
- Secondary talents and jobs as musicians, artists, and writers

Cobb Hill Cheese in Hartland, for example, produces two kinds of award-winning handcrafted cheeses from Jersey cow milk obtained from Cedar Mountain Farm, which uses "Eco-Logical" methods. Both businesses are part of the 23-home Cobb Hill co-housing community. One co-owner of Cobb Hill is a former landscape Architect from Berkeley, California and one Cedar Mountain Farm owner is an author of numerous books and magazine articles.

Owners of Howling Hog Farm in Randolph, Jenn Colby and Chris Sargent, raise animals and prepare meat "with respect and care." Both are foodies who cook competitively. Chris also plays guitar and is active in regional planning and Jenn develops educational programming for grass-based livestock farmers.

Cedar Circle Farm is a 12-person organic vegetable, berry, and flower farm in East Thetford that engages the community in developing and sharing practices to promote regenerative agriculture, health, and the environment. They have their own farmstand, produce and sell baked goods, make land available to neighbors for gardens, help low-income populations obtain food, host and run school programs such as pumpkin science, nature in agriculture, and organic agriculture and global climate change.

Table 8
Number of Employees and Establishments in Creative Food Segment

	EMSI	Discovered	Total	Enterprises	Extended Proprietorships
Eating establishments	0	184	184	46	0
Beverages (wine, beer, spirits, cider)	192	4	196	19	14
Bakeries and confectioneries	152	0	152	41	27
Specialty food processors	158	216	374	54	102
Specialty food markets	145	0	145	23	16
Food-related services	0	10	10	5	0
Total	**647**	**410**	**1,061**	**188**	**159**

Sources: EMSI, 2015; Vermont Food System Atlas, Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund http://www.vtfarmtoplate.com/atlas; Palate to Palette, Vermont Business Magazine, Vermont Department of Tourism & Marketing; web searches.

Leaning Ladder Farm in Chester calls itself "the eclectic farm," selling fresh vegetables and also turning its vegetables, herbs, and fruits into fruit syrups, rhuberry sauces, granolas, baked goods, and soaps, available at farmers markets and in local stores.

Producing Culinary Art

The culinary arts refer to places where people dine for the cuisine and the experience rather than simply to "eat out." The creative economy thus includes those places where professional chefs design and prepare crafted meals, often using a combination of locally sourced and rare ingredients, in exquisite or unusual surroundings. Eating establishments that are part of national or regional chains, that rely on standardized recipes, and that rely on cooks rather than chefs have been excluded.

An estimated 44 dining or catering establishments in the ECVEDD Region fit these criteria, which err on the side of exclusion rather than inclusion. Thus the true number is likely even larger. Some of creative eating establishments are associated with B&Bs or inns, some host events such as weddings, music, or theater, others serve original and specialty dishes.

The Barefoot Gourmet in East Thetford was started by Barry Clarke, born in Tanzania where he learned to catch and cook seafood and sub-tropical foods, a well as experiencing the food influence of the large Indian community nearby in Durban. With his wife, Sarah, he emigrated to Vermont in 1977. Over the years Barry has worked in various industries – including time as a chef/consultant with a pub and caterer in Charlottesville, Virginia. As chef, he will customize and hone recipes for guests.

The Black Forest is a popular café, bakery, to go marketplace, and catering service in Chester. Head chef and co-owner Bruce Walters trained at the finest culinary schools in the world - including Le Cordon Bleu in London and Ecole de Cuisine, La

Free Verse Farm: Teas, herbs, and medicinal remedies

Free Verse Farm in Chelsea is a community-run farm and apothecary that grows and sells herbal teas, culinary herbs, and medicinal, herbal remedies. It prides itself on hand harvesting all ingredients. Products are sold at the farm, local stores and farmers' markets, on-line, and through the Farmshare Community, a CSA. Its apothecary shop also sells gifts and accessories made by local artists and artisanal manufacturers. Co-founder Misha Johnson is a photographer, and her images of nature and farm life can be purchased on-line. The Farm also offers interactive workshops and events open to the community that focus on herbal harvesting, preservation, and preparation. A resident farmer and herbalist at Free Verse offers herbal consultations for people wanting to integrate herbs into their daily routine for increased health and vitality. The farm functions at the intersection of a number of creative and non-creative sectors including food production, arts and crafts, education, community development and health.

Varenne in Paris. Since opening The Black Forest in 1988, he has focused his menus on made-from-scratch comfort foods, adding his own creative twists to dining room menu dishes as well as bakery treats and marketplace takeout.

Making creative food products

A large number of the Region's farms have taken the next step beyond farming to turn what they grow or produce into processed or preserved and packaged products that generate greater value. With small scale farming alone having become an increasingly risky and marginal way to earn a living, diversification—especially with products that become a recognized brand—can turn a small farm into a profitable enterprise.

Cheese and maple syrup products are the state's most successful and well-known farm products but a large number of farms in the Region are converting what they grow or raise into a wide range of other specialty food or beverage products that produce significant added income.

Flag Hill Farm turns its 250 apple tree orchard into Vermont, English, and Belgian beer style hard ciders featured in a Williams-Sonoma cookbook, and Pomme-de-Vie, an apple brandy. Fat Toad has seen its caramel sauce become so successful that it recently outsourced (locally) its farming operation.

Turning a goat farm into an entrepreneurial success story

Fat Toad Farm began in 2007 with a handful of goats producing fresh chevre and milk. Its founders sought advice and support from a number of sources, including UVM's Ag Extension, Intervale in Burlington, and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, and grants from the Vermont Fund for Women Farmers and Carrot Project in Boston. Eight years later, they had 60 goats and became nationally renowned for a different milk product—a high quality artisanal caramel sauce. Using traditional cooking methods and fresh, simple, all-natural ingredients, they turned the production of caramel sauce into a true art form. Each year, the family-run business grew to meet increasing demand for its award-winning Caramel Sauces. With its products in 250 stores in almost every state and on-line sales up, it had outgrown its farm. In 2016, the farm partnered with Vermont Creamery for its local goat's milk moving its herd there. Fat Toad Farm became, instead, the producer of an increasingly well known and sought after food brand.

Other businesses have gone directly into the production of foods or beverages, exemplified by King Arthur Flour, now in Norwich and America's oldest flour company founded in 1790. But more recent growth has been led by a variety of beverages—micro-breweries, artisanal distilleries, and small scale coffee roasters.

Cool Beans Coffee Roasters is an independently owned micro-roaster/retailer "obsessed with quality." It roasts small batches that are sold in its shop and on-line. Their coffee and espresso is prepared by baristas seven days a week. They have discovered that "the more we learn about coffee, the less we seem to know," so innovation is always a goal.

Vermont Spirits in Quechee distills a portfolio of award-winning artisanal spirits using local products, such as maple, apples and corn, all sourced from partnerships with farmers from the area. The distillery tasting room is open to visitors seven days a week. Originally known for its maple vodka, Vermont Gold®, today the company distills a dozen different spirits, distributed throughout New England and the mid-Atlantic states. Every stage in the process is designed and engineered in-house and hand-built. No additives or preservatives are used, and each batch is monitored before bottling.

Floating Bridge Food & Farms

With small farms making a come-back, a group of working farms, food producers, and lodging and dining establishments around Brookfield and surrounding towns have formed a cooperative to better provide neighbors and visitors with authentic experiences to deepen their appreciation and understanding of a working agricultural community and which could serve as a sustainable peer-learning and support system for its members. Its name comes from the renowned Floating Bridge built in 1820, the only floating bridge east of the Mississippi, which spans scenic Sunset Lake in the center of Brookfield Village. Members offer local farm products give farm tours, conduct cooking classes and on-farm workshops, host events, co-host farmers markets (that include music, crafts, and demonstrations), have a CSA, and provide farm homestay and vacation packages. As a cooperative they gather together, hosting seasonal markets and special events. Members also sell prepared foods, treats, and gifts including honey, maple syrup, frozen soups and pizzas, soap, candles, caramel sauces, flowers, and medicinal herbs.

Combining place and palate to create memorable experiences

As more people enter into careers in the food sectors, an increasing number aim at creating experiences, to (1) brand themselves, (2) generate added income, and (3) connect more directly to their customers to spawn new ideas. Farms do this through experience-based CSAs, providing venues for performances, festivals or other events, or exhibiting art. Eating or drinking establishments may host music, readings, performances, or other community events and/or show and market art. The Region's many farmers' markets put it all together, selling and eating food, selling art and crafts, hosting musicians, and serving as a scheduled social center for the community.

Even food producers are broadly integrating themselves into the creative community. King Arthur Flour, for example, is a green, 100% worker-owned cooperative that actively supports and funds community service by its employees, is a tourist destination with tours that begin with its historical timeline, has Life Skills Bread Baking Program that has taught more than 120,000 students and a Baking Education Center, and produces a regular magazine, Sift.

Fable Farm in Barnard, part of a larger food-related community called Feast and Field, is a fermentory that produces

medicinally potent wines from local fruits, herbs, saps, and honey. In the kitchen they use fresh wholesome food sourced directly from their farm and partner farms. The farm also hosts art events, theatre and live music for the public plus private events such as weddings and dinner parties. Plymouth Cheese Factory, located on the Calvin Coolidge State Historic Site, is part of the culture and museum segment.

Food As Art Summary Conclusions

Strengths

The state's food system is already nationally known for its focus on sustainability, authenticity, and organic standards.

Agriculture in general has a history of cooperation, but the Region is particularly strong in examples of cooperation among farms, processors, and eating establishments.

The Region is heavily populated with farmers markets that are both sources of food and local products but also social hubs, and few have to travel very far to find one.

Many employed on farms are multi-talented.

The Region's farmers have come to the industry from diverse backgrounds and have a wide range of creative talents.

Challenges

Local brands should be better known outside the Region, reaching more distant markets.

Earning a family living from small-scale farming without other sources of income is difficult. The vast majority of farms either have an off-farm source of income or find innovative ways to expand earnings.

Efforts to maintain organic and environmental standards add costs to the production process making products more expensive than conventional products.

Culinary arts depend on communities' success in drawing visitors and tourists and on word of mouth, building a solid reputation, and creating a "buzz."

MAKING BETTER THINGS: DESIGN AND FASHION

At a Glance

- 1,047 employed in Design & Fashion segment
- 24.9% of creative establishment employment
- 214 establishments
- 614% of the national average concentration

The Region has a very rich history of innovation and making things dating back to the 18th century. The Upper Connecticut River Valley, especially that part concentrated in and around Springfield and Windsor, was once known as Precision Valley. It was the heart of America's precision manufacturing industry, best known originally for its ability to design and produce precision interchangeable parts for a growing arms industry. This deep, successful cluster expanded into the design, development, and production of machine tools, as well as typewriters, sewing machines, toys, and garments for the entire young nation.

Although the vast majority of that manufacturing sector has long since left as manufacturing shifted from artisan-based to mass production, elements of that heritage have been preserved as a craft-based manufacturing and design sector. The Region's maker base today is composed of companies whose innovations are more artistic and design- and fashion-oriented than technology-based. It produces for niche, not mass, markets.

Moreover, the Region's design and market-making capabilities have carried over into a wide range of sectors that include design, for example, of buildings, websites, mobile apps, and advertising materials. This segment includes the following classes of industries:

a) "designing places" those businesses that apply artistic talents to creating environments, e.g., architects, landscape architects, outdoor design, and interior designers;
b) "designing things," businesses that use applied arts and innovation to design and make consumer products, e.g., fashion apparel, toys, and household goods;
c) "designing visuals," the businesses that apply artistic talents to influence, e.g., advertising, graphic design, branding.

How important is this segment to the economy?

The artisanal nature of the Region's design and fashion industries makes it very different from other part of the country where employment numbers are distorted by large scale, mass production

enterprises that fail to meet the criteria set for "creative enterprises." Therefore, this analysis can provide a more complete picture of the Region's creative industries and the relative importance of design and fashion segment to the economy.

The design and fashion segment includes 1,020 employed or self-employed plus another 261 individuals who have secondary businesses or are self-employed in some aspect of the segment (Table 9). The largest number in the latter category are working in communications design, perhaps building websites, doing graphic design, or developing apps. This category also, based on survey results, has the largest proportions earning all of their income full-time in their field, almost four out of five.

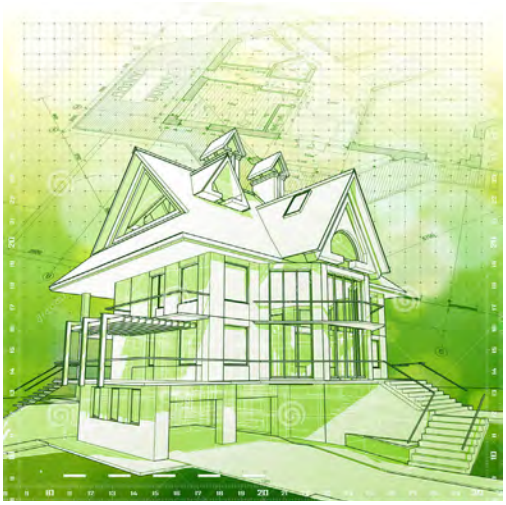
Designing places and spaces

Some 185 people were employed in this part of the segment, 66 worked in architectural firms, 31 in landscape architecture, 29 in interior design businesses, and 26 making ornamental architectural materials. Many of these were self-employed—32 architects and 16 landscape designers, and another 54 individuals named one of these fields as a secondary line of paid work.

Companies in this group that have chosen to operate in the Region rely heavily on their reputations, both within and outside the Region and state, and on the networks they build. Much of their client base is the result of word of mouth recommendations. The most successful companies in this segment, even though widely dispersed among towns across the Region, find ways to stay in touch, share information, and network. Architects, for example, meet at AIA events, pub gatherings, and over social media.

Some of the firms have developed a special area of expertise and created market niches for themselves.

- Bear Mountain Design in Barnard, for example, designs arenas and athletic facilities. Its philosophy is to always question the "status quo" and search



House design | ©Selestron76

for imaginative, practical, energy efficient and cost effective solutions. The firm has designed and built the Athletic Complex at Norwich College, Watson Arena at Bowdoin College, and an arena at Phillips Academy in Andover.

- Architect Claudio Veliz and his award winning firm, founded in 1986, have been based in Chester since 2005, providing architectural, interior and industrial design, and town planning services and consulting to local a well as international communities. Their approach is shaped by a commitment to energy efficiency and green design. Past projects have included corporate and residential development, historic preservation and renovation, retail and institutional design, as well as designs for museums, galleries and theaters.

The "design of spaces," i.e., home and business interiors, rounds out this part of the segment.

- Chrisandra's Home Showcase and Design center in Ludlow near the ski area is a residential and commercial interior design firm. It focuses on the entire spectrum of inspired design, decorating, and renovation for home, office or retail space. It also operates a home furnishings and gift retail store at a separate location in Ludlow.
- id3, also in Ludlow, was started in 2006 by two Connecticut transplants with degrees from the University of Virginia and Iowa State following a one year "sabbatical" in Vermont. They consult on interior design, space planning, and do conceptual computer-based design, and they have their own showroom for cabinets, tiles, countertops, and

Table 9
Number of Employees and Establishments in Design and Fashion Segment

	NAICS Employment	Discovered	Total	Enterprises	Extended Proprietorships
Environmental design	185	0	185	80	53
Design-based products	407	27	434	59	56
Fashion products	141	0	141	11	30
Communications design	287	0	287	54	122
Total	**1,020**	**27**	**1047**	**204**	**261**

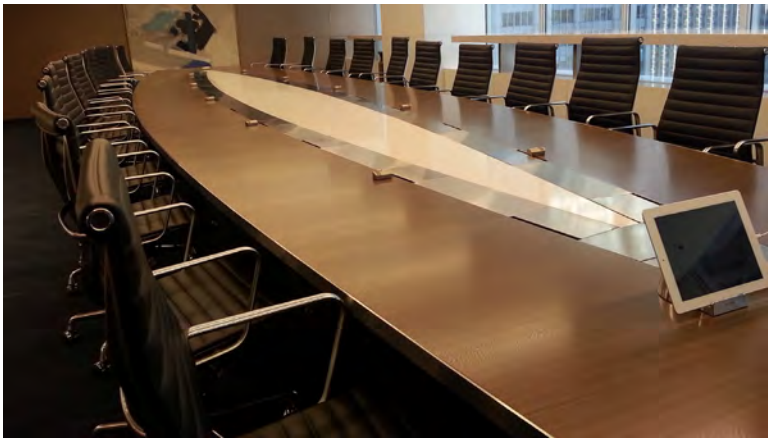
Note: Discovered employment is based on employment in creative enterprises in sectors not classified as creative.

fixtures. Both are active in the American Society of Designers.

Designing things

It is not surprising, given the Region's rich industrial history that the largest number of creative businesses in this segment manufacture things. The source of creativity among these firms, however, has shifted from improving function and manufacturability to building value through quality, fashion, and uniqueness and by establishing connections to, or experiences for, the consumer. The artistically creative elements of modern manufacturing are found most often in products designed for niche consumer markets, not as parts or as tools supplied to other, often mass production, manufacturers.

Most of the companies and virtually all of the self-employed do their own design. The Region is also home, however, to a handful of freelancer designers that offer industrial design services, either as their primary or secondary occupation. Phil Godenshwager of Atlantic Art, Glass & Design in Randolph, for example, is a fine artist but also a graphic designer with experience as a designer for Proctor and Gamble and Vermont Castings. Another Randolph resident, freelancer Forrest MacGregor, also an artist, poet, and inventor designs products, builds prototypes, and builds robots.



Wallgoldfinger, Inc.: Makers of the finest quality custom corporate furniture and reconfigurable table lines | Randolph | ©WallGoldfinger, Inc.

The largest numbers of creative manufacturing companies are those that take advantage of the Region's natural resources, making furniture and wooden household or leisure products and wool apparel. Most produce small numbers of customized products or stylized pieces for discriminating buyers; others make one-of-a-kind pieces of functional art. Five of the Region's more artistic master furniture makers are part of the Guild of Vermont Furniture Makers. Examples include:

- Raven's Nest Furniture makes unique and custom designed outdoor and indoor furniture, gates, and fences in Vershire from native and reclaimed lumber.
- Rockledge Farm Woodworks in Weathersfield is a small, family owned Vermont farm that has been crafting exquisite custom furniture

Watershed Studio Architecture

In 1994 architect Daniel Johnson, drawn to the Region by the opportunities for whitewater rafting, founded a studio in White River Junction. Watershed Studio Architecture designs sustainable architecture that is "integrated within its context, celebrates the landscape, and makes materials, space and light tangible." He also teaches at Yestermorrow Design Build School and Norwich University and received a research grant to study the landscapes of Finish architect Alvar Aalto and the relationship between landscape and building. Watershed Studio Architecture's sustainable experience ranges from collaboration on a LEED Platinum building, residential projects with the highest Energy Star rating to currently completing a Net Zero house, pending verification. Its practice as well as its efforts on sustainable projects centers on reuse, recycling and use of durable, natural, or local energy materials.

from native wood for generations. Sustainably harvested, meticulously selected, and uniquely designed for each customer.

- David Hurwitz in Randolph has established an international reputation designing and building contemporary, mostly made to order, furniture using hand carving and traditional furniture making methods. His furniture has been featured in the press across the U.S., and is part of many public and private collections and he was Vermont Woodworker of the Year in 2014, among his many state and national honors.

At the other end of the artisanal maker spectrum:

- WallGoldfinger, Inc., celebrating 45 years in business this year, designs, engineers, manufactures and installs some of the world's finest executive office furniture, innovatively designed to integrate the latest communication technology, built with responsibly sourced materials, and made in the U.S. Starting in 1971 with three creative employees working out of a barn for local customers, they now have a state-of-the-art facility in Randolph. Customers include Fortune 500 companies. The firm received Vermont's Small Business Person of the Year award in 2006.
- ShackletonThomas in Bridgewater has spurned mass-automation for the production of wooden furniture, bowls, and decorative items at a smaller scale and, instead, to pass on its artisanal tradition of apprenticeship and knowledge of handmade as an art form. The company also produces pottery and hold events and workshops.

The fashion sectors in this segment are partly driven by the state's production of wool, as a way to add value to the wool from the Merino sheep introduced in the early 1800s, rather than by a high fashion industry. Although the early woolen mills and the mass production of woolen goods—apparel, rugs, and blankets—have mostly moved off shore, a small

scale production has developed, artisans becoming fashion designers, making attractive wool products that are sold in specialty stores or on-line. More than 50 people are employed making fashion goods, another with another 20 producing apparel as a second source of income.

- Ibex Outdoor Clothing is a natural fiber wool clothing, community-supported agriculture, and coffee-in-front-of-the-woodstove company. It makes durable, evolving, active and modern outdoor clothing, headquartered in a repurposed used car dealership in White River Junction. Ibex maintains relationships with like-minded craftspeople, sheep farmers and clothing manufacturers, as well as with its customers that goes beyond the we make, you buy model of consumption. It sells its history as adventurers and innovation as clothiers.
- Boysenberry Smart Clothes in Rochester was founded by designer Beth Frock, a fashion designer who was trained in Paris. It's an example of user innovation, born to solve the problem that most baby clothes are gender oriented and many infant gifts are chosen before knowing the gender of the child. A small company, each item is handmade individually in the store and the company is committed to using high quality fabrics and unique and fun designs to meet the fashion needs of kids and their families.
- Fat Hat Clothing owner and textile designer Joan Ecker designs clothing for women that promote positive images, comfort, and confidence. The Vermont lifestyle and mentality are deeply ingrained in the design and style of Fat Hat's products. The company began in 1979 as a small-scale hat production and has grown into a robust, local, clothing manufacturing company based in Quechee. It now produces many different collections available for direct purchase, on site, or on-line, and via wholesale and retail boutiques. Ecker continues to run Fat Hat Clothing with her two daughters who also are budding textile designers and entrepreneurs.

A smaller part of this sector are producing toys, lighting fixtures, or metal furniture and accessories.

2016 Slider | ©F.H. Clothing Co.

- Bonnie's Bundles Dolls in Chester are made with jointed body and removable clothing using all new materials and Bonnie's original designs. Each doll is signed and numbered by the artist, registered, guaranteed forever, and can be sent back for repairs without charge.
- Stave Wooden Jigsaw Puzzles is a family-owned company making handcrafted jigsaw puzzles for all ages to represent creative expression and artistic entertainment, called the "Rolls Royce" of that industry. Each puzzle is meticulously hand cut by a skilled crafter on specialized equipment, and can be personalized.

Design oriented manufacturing in the Region has shown surprising resiliency in the light of the national and local decline in total manufacturing employment over the past two decades. It future is likely to rest with its ability to pass on the artisanal skills and, perhaps, on the emergence of low cost technologies such as 3-D printers and desktop computer controlled cutting machines. The global "Makerspace" movement is growing in Vermont, with nascent efforts to develop such spaces in the Region.

Vermont's Sock Lady and the Limits to Growth

Solmate Socks is the Region's best-known product and perhaps biggest success story of the last decade, growing from handcrafted mismatched socks to a nationally recognized brand. Marianne Wakerlin, popularly know as "the sock lady," started the company in 2000 with the idea, which became its slogan, "Life's too short for matching socks." A lifelong textile artist with an eye for design and instinct for business, she recognized a market for well-crafted, mismatched socks made in America. The company is committed to protecting the environment (e.g., ingeniously using recycled cotton yarn and reducing the amount of water, pesticides and herbicides to grow new cotton). In 2015 Marianne's son Randy and daughter-in-law Lisa took over the business and remain committed to continuing the Socklady legacy and Vermont, eco-friendly, artisanal brand and retaining a core staff in Norwich. Its success, however, has resulted in a need to shift its primary production out of the Region, to the Catawba Valley of North Carolina where the majority of America's sock industry is clustered and they have access to concentrated experience, skills, innovation, and marketing support that is available nowhere else in the U.S.

Designing visually

Visual design is generally intended to influence or explicate. This is the newest and fastest growing part of the segment, and the most attractive to young people because it builds on their attraction to social media. Its companies employ 287 in 54 business enterprises, many of which are freelancers. But another 122 others pursue business opportunities in this field as secondary, and possibly potentially primary, careers.

- Wild Apple Graphics in Woodstock is an art publisher and art licensor that works with artists and designers to place their art with manufacturers of wall decor and decorative products for the home—as framed and canvas

art collections, ceramics, dinnerware, bath sets, rugs, and kitchen accessories as well as art posters, wall decor and art licensing.

- The Imagination Company in Bethel is "an idea factory," a full service ad agency that offers creative marketing, advertising, and branding strategies with in-house production capabilities in award-winning TV spots, video, corporate film, documentary, web design, graphic design, and radio spots.

- Nomad Communications in White River Junction was started by Alex Kahan in 1988. The firm started out at a traditional advertising company, but reinvented itself as digital technology transformed the industry. With a full-time staff of 10 writers, designers, artists and strategic planners, Nomad is now a company with three areas of specialization. Nomad Communications provides clients with branding, marketing and strategic positioning services.

Together, these three forms of design—of products, places, and ideas—form some of the most promising commercial outlets for of creativity.

Design and Fashion Summary Conclusions

Strengths

The Region's rich history of manufacturing innovation and production is the gold standard for New England and elements of its infrastructure remain.

Vermont Technical College, the state's best source of technical education, along with career centers where design skills and career interests often originate are nearby.

Residents take pride in craftsmanship, either passed down as part of their heritage or something they came to Vermont to achieve, which has resulted in a high quality maker economy.

Challenges

Scaling up is difficult in a rural region with a limited workforce and distance to market centers and lacking the clustered specialization—suppliers, labor market, consultants, and similar and complementary businesses—that enables businesses to easily grow.

The time and difficulty of meeting regulatory standards and permitting requirements is a common concern of businesses in Vermont.

Small enterprises lack the resources and time to get to the trade or professional shows and exhibits that could lead to the growth they want.

PRESERVING AND EXHIBITING CULTURE AND HERITAGE

At a Glance

- 101 employed in segment
- 3.8% of overall creative industries employment
- 33 establishments
- 290% of the national average concentration

How big is the Museums and Heritage segment?

One does not have to drive very far in the Region before coming to a museum or historic building, society, site, or simply a marker. Though abundant and potentially attractive to tourists as a piece of the Region's early history, only a few of these sites charge entry fees and produce any significant employment. Some are open by appointment, many request voluntary contributions, some are self-guided, and others are managed solely or mainly by volunteers. Some are embedded in enterprises in other segments of the economy, such as the historical displays at King Arthur Flour Company. Many more are businesses operating in, and calling attention to, their historic locations, such as Hotel Coolidge in White River Junction or the Norwich Inn in Norwich. While this is the smallest of the creative economy segments in terms of employment, it is in virtually every creative economy study conducted (Table 10).

Finding these sites, however, can sometimes be a challenge. There are no comprehensive listings of the Region's museums and cultural sites. The official Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing materials and website divulge only the largest or most prominent museums and heritage sites. The Vermont Attractions Association lists a small number, also shown on its Vermont State Road Map & Guide. But finding the smaller, out-of-the way sites requires web searches, personal knowledge, or recommendations made by a merchant, innkeeper, or waitperson.

Of the sites listed on the State's official websites, ten are in the Region, including:

- The Senator Justin Morrill Homestead in Strafford
- President Calvin Coolidge State Historic Site in Plymouth
- The Old Constitution House in Windsor
- The Eureka Schoolhouse in Springfield
- The Theron Boyd House in Quechee
- The Dana House in Woodstock
- The Billings Farm and Museum in Woodstock
- Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historic Park in Woodstock
- The Marvin Newton House in Brookfield
- The Garipay House in Hartford

Many of the museums and the cultural and historic sites are managed by historical societies or businesses, and also serve as venues for performances, other events, and community meetings. Each holds a particular place in Vermont history and culture.

- The Old Constitution House in Windsor, for example, is where the 1777 Constitution of the Republic of Vermont, which prohibited slavery a century before the U.S. Constitution did, was ratified.
- The 1785 Eureka Schoolhouse is the oldest one-room schoolhouse in Vermont and one of its few surviving eighteenth century public buildings.
- The Billings Farm & Museum displays Vermont farm life as history, science, traditional culture, and human interaction through a variety of exhibits and audio/visual presentations.

The Old Constitution House | Windsor

Off the lists but in the public eye
Yet the state's official lists of the most prominent and visited sites cover only a small portion of the carefully preserved and presented historical and cultural history of the Region and the many small, private and public niche museums.

The Black River Academy Museum in Ludlow houses the cultural heritage of

Table 10
Employees and Establishments in the Museums and Preservation Segment

	NAICS Employment	Discovered	Total	Enterprises	Extended Proprietorships
Museums	100	38	79	23	4
Historical sites	5	16	22	10	4
Total	**105**	**54**	**101**	**33**	**8**

Note: Those discovered were the number that exceeded the numbers in the EMSI database.

the Black River Valley area. From 1835 to 1938, the site of the popular Black River Academy and later convalescent home, the Black River Historical Society eventually purchased the then idle building for one dollar, restored it, and transformed it into the museum that celebrates life in the Region. Exhibits include Main Street Ludlow, circa 1899, a barn exhibit, and the unique history of the Finns who immigrated to escape the Russian revolution in the early 20th century.

The heart of Vermont's manufacturing heritage

The American Precision Museum in Windsor was created to preserve the rich history and heritage of the Region's mechanical arts. In a region that was once the heartland of precision manufacturing, the museum celebrates the ingenuity of the Region's toolmakers and metalworkers, and fabricators and explores the effects of their work on everyday life in the Region. Housed in the original Robbins & Lawrence Armory, it now holds the largest collection of historically significant machine tools in the nation. Precision manufacturing was and still is the foundation for modern communication, transportation, medical care, and manufacturing. The tools and the methods that made mass production possible were pioneered at the Armory in Windsor, Vermont. Using precision metal and wood cutting machines and high standards of accuracy, Robbins & Lawrence proved the effectiveness of a new type of manufacturing that would soon be known as the American System. That powerful machine tool industry spread across America and became the foundation for modern industry. The rise of mass production, however, also led to unintended consequences. Manufacturers, over time, left Vermont for urban areas with larger labor pools and markets and by the 1970s to rural areas, mainly in the South, that were offering large incentives.

The Springfield Art and Historical Society at the Miller Art Center have some of the Region's most impressive and historically important art, crafts, and design. The collection includes Bennington pottery, portraits by 19th century artists, contemporary art by well-known local artists, including artifacts from Russell Porter's trip to the Arctic and his other engineering achievements, toys produced in Springfield in the early 1800s, and textiles from the early 19th century to present-day.

At the fringes of popular culture and perhaps the cutting edge of creativity, the Main Street Museum in White River Junction, founded in 1992, pushes the limits of the definition of museum. The Washington Post called it "quirky and avant-garde." The museum's collections of material culture, seemingly unfocused and heavy on pop culture, includes flora, fauna, significant objects from around the world, evidence of tramps, dog-chewed Frisbees, round things, tangled things, journals, extraneous bits of local history, sheet music collections, electromagnetism devices, taxidermy and biological anomalies. It simultaneously pays homage to the eighteenth century cabinet of curiosities and raises the questions of what constitutes art.

Preserving history
Retaining historic and landmark buildings and sites requires that a region assess and balance the benefits of development that expands and replaces with those of preservation. Each requires certain kinds of resources and support. One reason that the ECVEDD Region has been able to retain so much its heritage is the resources it has available. HIn 1971, for example, Historic Windsor was founded to prevent the demolition of Windsor House, now is a nationally recognized non-profit that supports preservation by teaching preservation skills and craftsmanship.

The Preservation Trust of Vermont is a statewide non-profit founded in 1980 that provides support, resources, and grants and hosts conferences on preservation. The Vermont Division for Historic Preservation has a resource center and provides financial incentives for preservation. In Hartland, architect Douglas Gest specializes in historic restorations and offers workshops.

Museum and Heritage Summary Conclusions

Strengths

A large number of historic sites and museums dot the Region and are important to local communities.

Some of the sites are effectively used to educate schoolchildren, travelers, and newcomers about local heritage and Vermont and U.S. history.

The Region and the state has well organized resources to provide assistance and financing for historic restorations.

Challenges

With few exceptions, state, county, and town agencies do little to promote all but their most prominent places that produce their own brochures and publicity.

Lacking the resources for paid staff, most museums and cultural sites rely on minimal volunteer staff and are self-guided with requests for voluntary contribution for maintenance.

Expanding public higher education

The Justin Smith Morrill Homestead in Strafford is Vermont's first National Historic Landmark. Senator Morrill is best known as the chief sponsor of the Land-Grant Acts, which changed the face of higher education in America. The Act, popularly know as the "Morrill Acts," awarded each state land to establish a college for teaching the "mechanic and agricultural arts" along with liberal arts and military studies, and in 1890 created another set of colleges for people of color. The Morrill Homestead is now a state-owned historic site that is run by the non-profit Friends of the Morrill Homestead. The Homestead preserves valuable gothic revival architecture, to celebrate the life and work of Morrill, and to emphasize the continuing importance of accessible higher education. From Memorial Day to Columbus Day, tours of the house are conducted on the hour, and the surrounding grounds and gardens are open to the public at no cost.

THE MEDIA ARTS

At a Glance

- 440 employed in Film & Media
- 11.7% of all creative industries employment
- 136 establishments in Film & Media
- 120% of the national average concentration

The Film and Media segment encompasses all those businesses that report or broadcast the news; convert stories, both fiction and non-fiction, to forms that can be seen or heard; and transmit them to the public. This segment is presently undergoing a cataclysmic shift. The conventional print and broadcast media are being replaced by wide-open, web-based, mostly free, media where almost anyone can report news, record events, create movies, and offer opinions for any and all to read and see 24/7. This has created both problems and opportunities for creative industries in the Region (Table 11).

The media sectors, while still relatively small, are trying to emerge and find a niche to develop. The Region is home to some very well known filmmakers who are well connected to the centers of this industry, and there are efforts to use film and media to engage young people, for educational purposes and perhaps discover pockets of talent.

Continuing to publish local news

It is increasingly difficult for rural journalism to survive, and those newspapers that do, have moved to weekly editions, for the most part, that concentrate on local news and events and/or have added websites. There are only eight daily newspapers left in Vermont. Software news publishing is a rapidly growing sector, but thus far mainly supplements rather than duplicates the print news in rural areas. However the Region, and in some cases the Upper Valley that also includes parts of New Hampshire, continues to support and sustain a number of very good regional and community based weekly newspapers and monthly magazines.

Six local or regional newspapers are published in hard copy and/or on-line in the Region: The Vermont Journal and Upper Valley Chronicle, published in Ludlow; The Vermont Standard published in Woodstock, the Journal Opinion published in Bradford; The Herald of Randolph; the Chester Telegraph; and the Valley News in White River Junction. The Valley News also publishes Enterprise, a monthly supplemental business magazine covering the Upper Valley.

All of these newspapers do an excellent job of covering the performing and visual arts and crafts, both as feature articles about local people and about events and

festivals, whether taking place at a local elementary school or professional staging with nationally known performers.

In addition, the quarterly magazine Northland Woodlands focusing on forestry and conservation is published in Corinth, and Woodstock Magazine is published in Woodstock to promote the area with feature articles about local people and businesses, many of which are drawn from the creative sectors.

The cutting edge of publishing, however, is clearly moving towards on-line access, and Subtext Media in White River Junction, is an example of a young company in the forefront. With out-of-state seed funding, Watt Alexander, a lawyer who had been dealing with sound recording copyright cases, moved to Vermont and is attempting to create a digital platform for publishers and advertisers. Employing a small staff from a variety of creative backgrounds and 45 freelancers at remote sites, Subtext already has a prototype platform.

Community radio and TV

The Region has ten licensed radio stations and two licensed broadcast TV stations. Of the ten regional radio stations, the one in Windsor is an NPR affiliate while of the others, two feature religious music, two have classical music, and two play country music. Close proximity of many communities to Montpelier, Brattleboro, and Lebanon, New Hampshire, however, bring a much wider range of programming to most people.

Table 11
Number of Employees and Establishments in Film & Media Segment

	NAICS Employment	Discovered	Total	Enterprises	Extended Proprietorships
News publishing	317	0	317	88	23
Motion picture & video	53	0	53	24	26
Radio, TV, and Cable	70	0	70	20	16
Total	**440**	**0**	**440**	**132**	**65**

In addition, community-based channels and stations can have a major impact on the Region. CATV8, for example, is a community building organization that enables open public dialogue by debating local issues, showcasing artistic expression and celebrating school and community events. The White River Junction-based studio is located in the Tip Top Media and Arts Building and serves five towns in Vermont and New Hampshire.

CATV8 also offers free training for anyone interested in being a volunteer producer or learning about lighting or sound systems and lend out special equipment, including cameras for free. It also has a four-week Summer Video Camp and a one-week Music Video Camp that give middle school students a chance to develop their film and video production skills using CATV8's production equipment. The station also partners with nonprofits to encourage local interest among youth in film and media careers or simply as a creative learning experience. For example, they co-produced a Halloween horror film themed contest, partnered with the White River Indie Film Festival, have an annual music video contest, and work in the local schools.

The Cohase Chamber of Commerce sponsors an annual 48 Hour Film Slam Competition where teams have two days and two nights to produce a short film. The event starts on a Friday night and filmmakers have to decide on the genre and local landmark to feature. The Film Slam is intended to encourage and nurture filmmaking and filmmakers in the Greater Bradford area.

Film and video production

The strength of the Region's film and video production lies in the capabilities, reputations, and connection of a relatively small number of filmmakers and video production companies. As a filmmaking center, this sector is limited by the absence of any significant state support or the support infrastructure that is available in places targeting and financing this sector.

KMA Publications Inc.

KMA Publications Inc. publishes The Vermont Journal and The Shopper. Both are upbeat weekly newspapers dedicated to accurately reporting events and activities in the Okemo Valley and the Connecticut River Valley. The papers are produced as a service to the community, providing an editorial page for readers to voice opinions on various local issues and world news events, submit ads, and spotlight local businesses and owners. Both papers focus on the unique character, issues, and offerings relevant to each paper's coverage area. The Vermont Journal focuses on Central Vermont, The Shopper on Southern Vermont and adjacent communities in New Hampshire. Both papers are distributed free of charge by mail and through regional businesses. The current publisher, Bob Miller, came from a family that had owned four Vermont weekly newspapers. Bob, after working in Boston and owning a paper in Cooperstown, New York, moved back to Vermont in 1998 and started the Journal in Waitsfield before moving it Ludlow in 2005.

Yet with so much of film and media production dispersed around the world, those individuals and businesses that are able to develop reputations or find niches to sustain their networks can operate successfully anywhere.

This opens up wide-ranging opportunities for talented people to choose where they want to live and work and explains how the companies that do operate in the Region can be successful in apparent isolation from the central part of their industry. Further, the success stories are inspiration for young people, and film and video is becoming an important form of artistic expression and learning tool for young people in the Region.

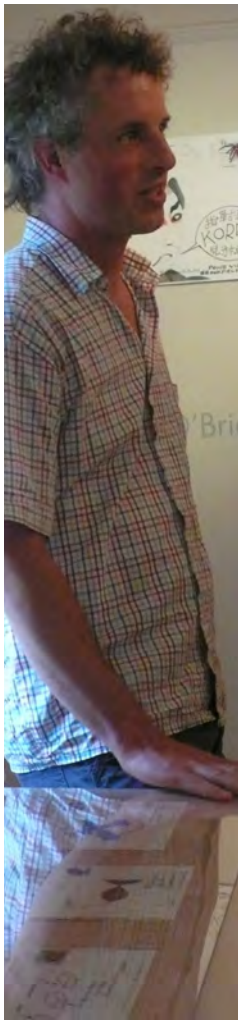
"Off the Grid Production" is an example of a rural film success story. Started by Nora Jacobson in 1995 after she returned to her native Vermont from living in New Jersey, she had been teaching in New York and working as a free-lance filmmaker, an editor and made an epic documentary that went on to premiere at the New York Film Festival and Sundance.

In 1993, Nora began working on a screenplay, "My Mother's Early Lovers," based on an unpublished manuscript by Vermont writer Sybil Smith about her agrarian/socialist parents who had lived on a commune with Scott and Helen Nearing. After commuting to Vermont

VERMONT INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

for readings and fundraising, Nora moved back and started the company. Twenty years later, Nora and Off The Grid Productions are enjoying the close-knit film and arts community, mountains and ethos of Vermont. She is currently making several new films and is developing a TV series about African Americans in Vermont before the Civil War.

The Vermont Movie, Freedom & Unity, is the first-ever documentary series about Vermont. The six-part film was a collaboration of over four dozen critically acclaimed Vermont filmmakers, led by the aforementioned award-winning filmmaker, Nora Jacobson and advised by well-known historians, educators, curators, authors, artists, politicians, and activists. Sponsors include the Vermont Arts



Vermont filmmaker John O'Brien at BigTown Gallery's Collectors Show, 2011 | ©Big Town Gallery

Council, Vermont Community Foundation, Vermont Humanities Council, Bay and Paul Foundation, John M. Bissell Foundation, Green Valley Media, National Life of Vermont Foundation, and the Vermont Country Store.

One of the most important initiatives involving regional filmmakers is the Vermont Archive Movie Project (VAMP), a statewide effort to restore, digitize and preserve as many films and videos about Vermont and by Vermonters as possible. Sponsored by the Vermont International Film Foundation, VAMP grew out of discussions at Green Valley Media involving filmmakers, archivists, historians, and others interested in the state's culture, history and filmmaking community. White River Junction is being considered as the final home for the project, its staff, its archives and a future hub for the state's film, video, and media industries.

Some other full service film and video companies include:

- Video New England in Woodstock, a full service video production company serving all of northern New England. Owned and operated by Tim Palmer-Benson, its services range from corporate videos to commercials to legal deposition videos to cinematic wedding films. Past work includes business seminars, business interviews, documentary work, commercials, company web videos, inns and bed and breakfasts videos, and wedding films.
- M.A.D. Productions in Pittsfield specializes in integrated design and editing, and in outdoor sports videography. Its team of freelancers has a diverse background in fine arts, sports TV and documentary film and a passion for digital media.
- The Imagination Company in Bethel is "an idea factory," a full service ad agency that offers creative marketing, advertising, and branding strategies with in-house production capabilities in award-winning TV spots, video, corporate film, documentary, web design, graphic design, and radio.

Back Stage

Advanced Animations employs artisans and technicians with talents in art and design, sculpting, engineering, fabrication, woodworking, costuming and computer programming. For more than 20 years, the company has been putting "Imagination in Motion" at major theme parks, casinos, museums, retail centers, trade shows and traveling exhibits throughout the world. It specializes in bringing concepts to life, from animated figures to interactive exhibits to the "never done before." Its touring events group, Advanced Exhibits, produces "edutainment" attractions for corporate, museum and theme park industries, providing, for example, design, fabrication, event management for animatronic figures, sets and scenery, special effects, edutainment shows, corporate, museum, and touring exhibits.

Media Arts Summary Conclusions

Strengths

The local print news media is very important to promoting and reporting on creative economy and much of local newspaper content is articles on and schedules of performances, exhibitions, and other art-related events.

Organizations within the Region are very effective in reaching into the schools and engaging young people of film and media as a way of introducing them to possible career paths but also as an educational tool.

Challenges

The small size of listening or viewing audience drives this sector to larger urbanized areas.

The expansion of on-line media and the effects of declining advertising revenues in the print media are making sustainability difficult.

TAKING ART TO THE PUBLIC: THE PERFORMING ARTS

At a Glance

- 436 employed in performing arts
- 10.4% of all creative industries employment
- 176 establishments in performing arts
- 177% of the national average concentration

The performing arts segment includes all of the artists that are paid to express their creativity through public performances plus all the enterprises it takes to make that happen—the businesses that organize and provide spaces for the performances, provide the sound, lighting and settings, reproduce the performances for commercial markets, make or sell the equipment and special apparel, and the agents that represent the artists.

The very nature of this segment, which depends largely on size of audiences for its income, makes it more difficult to earn a living as a performer in rural communities than in large cities. Thespians, dancers, and musicians living in less populated places generally need another source of income. Yet according to official occupational statistics, in 2015 195 individuals in the Region classified themselves as musicians and singers, 51 as entertainers, 42 as actors, and 34 as

Filmmakers in the ECVEDD Region, 2013

- Matt Bucy, White River Junction
- Kate Cone, Thetford
- Nora Jacobson, Norwich
- Ann Macksoud, Woodstock
- Michael Sacca, Tunbridge
- Jim Sadwith, Woodstock
- Ben Silberfarb, Norwich
- Bill Stetson, Norwich

music directors or composers, and 45 as producers or directors. The number of residents who perform as a secondary creative, in some instances perhaps for unreported creative economy income, is undoubtedly much higher. Some classified in other segments, for example, described themselves as musicians in addition to their primary occupation (Table 12).

The heart of performing arts in the Region: The Big Four

Four institutions provide the foundation for performing arts in the Region: Northern Stage in White River Junction, the Chandler Center for the Arts in Randolph, Pentangle Arts in Woodstock, and Artistree Community Arts Center in Pomfret. Collectively, these institutions provide the leading venues for theatrical, dance and musical performances. In addition, they offer classes and instruction in the performing arts.

Northern Stage, which opened in 1997, is the only professional and Actors Equity Theater Company in the Region and has played a key role in White River Junction's revitalization. A recent successful capital campaign allowed the organization to build a new theater next to its original building. It now has a new 240-seat theater, enhanced technical production capabilities, puts on six productions a year, and recently formed a partnership with the Theater Department at Dartmouth College. The Stage has put on 100 productions to date, and received the Moss Hart Award for Excellence in Theater for several of its productions. It now employs 23 staff and reaches about 28,000-30,000 people a year though its performances, four theater summer camps for children ages 6-11, new Summer Musical Theater, and Youth Ensemble Studio.

Table 12

Number of Employees and Establishments in Performing Arts Segment

	NAICS Employment	Discovered	Total	Enterprises	Extended Proprietorships
Dance and Theater	181	0	181	83	24
Music	245	0	245	192	29
Production	10	0	10	1	12
Total	**436**	**0**	**436**	**276**	**65**

Notes: Of 276 enterprises, 129 were establishments with no employees. Confident there are businesses overlooked but discovery not possible without knowledge of who is included.

Artistree Community Art Center and Gallery opened in Woodstock in 2003 when Kathleen Dolan founded Purple Crayon to teach art and performance to teens and adults. By 2010 the program was so successful it focused Purple Crayon on young children, expanded adult classes and instruction, opened an art gallery, and added performances and music space for—all under the umbrella of Artistree Community Arts Center and Gallery. In 2014, the organization moved into an 8,000 square foot newly renovated barn in Pomfret, as well as a renovated 5,000 square foot former farmhouse. This past spring Artistree teamed up with Pentangle Arts to produce the musical "Cats" with 40 people from the community as actors, musicians, and technical staff. Artistree is planning to renovate the Pomfret Grange and turn that space into an 80-seat community theater in 2017.

The Chandler Center for the Arts can trace its roots back to 1907. In spite of ups and downs, it has remained a central component of the Greater Randolph community. In 2007, the Board undertook a $3.7 million capital campaign to make significant renovations and structural improvements, giving the Chandler more capacity to strengthen its programs. It hosts several major festivals: the Vermont Pride Theater Summer Festival, the two-week Central Vermont Chamber Music Festival, and New World Festival, a celebration of Vermont, New England, Canadian, and Celtic Music and Culture. It also offers music, clowning and dance

Intermission at the Chandler | ©First Light Studios

classes for elementary school children, as well as art and music classes for middle and high school students. The Chandler's Gallery and Artisan Market give local artists a chance to exhibit and sell their work, especially during the holiday season.

Pentangle Arts, originally created in 1974 as a regional arts council, has grown into a community and performing arts center serving communities within roughly a 25-mile radius of Woodstock. Its driving force was giving school-age children the education in the arts that was missing in the schools. In addition, Pentangle moved into the performing arts. For example, as mentioned previously, they recently partnered with Artistree on the production of "Cats." The production involved several professionals in the theater industry, as well as local actors, musicians and technical staff. Recent Pentangle showcased two renowned musical groups, the Malek Jandali Trio, a world-renowned Middle Eastern and Classical Music group and Quartet Bussières, world-class classical musicians.

In addition to the four principal theaters and performing arts organizations in the Region, there are a number of community theater groups that are essential elements of the theater landscape. Old Church Theater in Bradford, for example, has been presenting summer theater for the last 30 years. Local residents are involved in everything from directing, set design, music, and ticket sales.

Performance troupes and groups

The Region has a small number of amateur and professional; community theater and dance groups that add considerably to the arts and culture in their communities and to opportunities for young people to be engaged and learn about their arts. Their economic impacts, however, tend to be more indirect than direct. While revenues and individual earnings of the artists who participate are minimal, this part of the creative economy can influence locational choices made by tourists, businesses and other talented people. Most performance troupes are non-profits, have tight budgets, and often rely on donations and grants.

The Parish Players, an incorporated not-for-profit community theater group that started in 1966 in Thetford, is dedicated to presenting high quality dramatic productions created by people who participate for the love of the work. Its goal is to offer an intimate, accessible, and affordable theater for audiences and artists; to inspire, encourage, and support the arts and cultures, and to raise expectations for community theater. In 1998, with financial support from the community, the Parish Players conducted a major restoration of the Grange where

they shared space resulting in the Eclipse Grange Theater, which now seats up to 100 people. Seven or eight performances are held each year, including classics, musical comedy, drama, and original works by Upper Valley residents.

In Rochester, the White River Valley Players has been presenting community theater for nearly 30 years. Its three to four shows a year can be Broadway shows or original shows produced by local playwrights. In 2000, a local couple wrote a musical "Second Chance," and a CD of the music was produced. The group also nurtures the next generation of theater producers through its summer Performing Arts Camps, where elementary school children write plays and music, create props, direct, make costumes and perform.

Barn Arts in Barnard is a year-round multidimensional performing and visual arts organization. In the winter, Barn Arts has several shows at Feast & Field Market in its Art On the Farm Winter Music Series, and in March, an Annual Masquerade Jazz and Funk Winter Music Carnival. In the summer, the organization has a Summer Youth Theatre Camp where youth get hands-on instruction and experience, ending with a theatrical performance.

The Flock Dance Troupe in Sharon, started in 1999 by Carol Langstaff, creates its own productions, often celebrating the imagery of Earth, Air, Fire, and Water. The core group of professional dancers develops each piece and then works with energetic amateurs from the community to create the final performance. The Troupe performs annually at its home, the multi-acre Star Mountain Amphitheater, with work created specifically for the site. Accompanied by an exceptional variety of music and enhanced by costumes, sets and props designed by collaborating visual artists, Flock's work celebrates the artistic contributions of diverse performers, who range in age from infants to seniors. The Dance Troupe also offers workshops to teach its naturalistic and organic movement to community

BigTent at BigTown Gallery Francois Clemens and Cynthia Huard | Rochester | ©BigTown Gallery

Musicians busking on the streets | Randolph | ©First Light Studios

members of all ages and to special groups such as at-risk youth, seniors and those with exceptional needs.

Windsor's East Bay Jazz Ensemble was formed by Gerry Grimo, a soft-spoken full-time banker who comes alive in his role as emcee, lead singer, bassist, keyboardist, librarian, equipment manager and all around jack of all trades for the traditional style big band that has become part of his heart and soul over the last 25 years. The 10-piece jazz ensemble plays classic arrangements of the Swing era, re-living the ballroom dances and sophisticated concerts of the great Big Bands.

Interplay Jazz and Arts in Hartland was founded in 1996 to attract and inspire musicians of all ages from around the world. Its experienced music faculty focuses on improvisational jazz and other creative art forms, integrated with daily yoga and meditation. It has grown from seven faculty and 18 students to 30 faculty and staff and 80 full-time and many part-time students. Interplay performs extensively throughout the Region, and it supports a strong vocal jazz program with several master teachers as well as faculty and student accompanists for vocalists during the day and at evening jam sessions. Now a non-profit, community members are invited to join in evening sessions and offered free performances and has held at least one weeklong jazz camp each year that is open to musicians of a variety of ages and levels of experience.

The performers: dancers, actors, and musicians

The performers, themselves, are either professionals; many of whom require another source of income to support their interest in music and acting; or amateurs who perform for free or for small fees to supplement their incomes. The most dedicated and talented performers are able to make a living, particularly if they also write, record, teach, and/or conduct workshops.

In the Performing Arts Segment, the Region is home to a number of musicians with national reputations and connections. Jim Rooney is a nationally known musician and music producer who was a talent coordinator for the Newport Folk Festivals in the 60s, and worked with Muddy Waters, Townes van Zant, Monroe, Nanci Griffith, and Alison Krauss, and is now living in Sharon.

Jeremiah McClane, also in Sharon, has played in many Vermont groups, composed for theater and film. In 2005, he started the Floating Bridge Music School to teach traditional music from the British Isles and U.S.

Michael Zsoldos is an accomplished

musician who has performed at Lincoln Center, New Orleans Jazz Festival and President Obama's inauguration. He also records and produces his own music, as do many in this field. Despite his successes, he has had to earn part of his living, for example, as band director at local schools and by teaching at Artistree, UVM, Castleton State College and Dartmouth.

D & J Music in Bradford encourages and supports music by teaching voice, guitar, piano, mandolin, and songwriting and by giving group lessons to school bands, theater groups, youth and teen groups, and at churches and senior centers. D & J Music also puts on a Summer Street Music Series, a focal point of the music landscape in the greater Bradford area.

Support for the performing arts

The Region's population is too small to support those businesses that specialize in supporting performances by providing sound, lighting, set design, staging, and special effects. Most is provided by local volunteers or, in some instances, brought in by the outside touring companies. Exceptions include Fancy Felix Theatrical in White River Junction, which provides vintage apparel and accessories that can be purchased or rented by performance groups as costumes for their performances, and Ellis Music, described in the text box on page 70.

In the studio of Varujan Boghosian, Dartmouth Professor Emeritus Visual Arts Dept with the distinguished poet, Mark Strand, Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress in 1990 | ©BigTown Gallery

The Region, however, is home to a small number of effective agents or promoters, perhaps best exemplified by Dave Clark and Yellow House Media. Formerly in advertising, sales, and marketing, Clark now applies his experience to serving as a focal point for promoting, booking, producing, marketing and nurturing music. Through its electronic newsletter, Yellow House Media functions like a virtual music marketplace for the 4,000 people on its mailing list. Clark, also a singer-songwriter and performer, writes a weekly in-depth column on the Region's

arts entertainment scene for The Vermont Standard's "On Stage."

It's easier for those elements of the support industry that can reach markets outside of the Region to be sustainable. Growing up in a famous musical family surrounded by folk music, Rochester's Jeremy Seeger, since 1968, has crafted high quality dulcimers of Shaker simplicity. Each is made with the highest sound quality and playability and guaranteed for the lifetime of its original owner. "Its design has matured much like a good wine, producing a highly responsive instrument that has a wide sound range."

Making Music Accessible to Rural Youth

Ellis Music Company was started in 1946 when Dick Ellis began acquiring instruments for his rural students living miles from a music store. That modest business expanded to become the Region's most trusted source for instrument rentals, sales, and repair services. Ellis grew up in South Royalton and started a dance band while still in high school, performing regularly at area venues. Counseled against a career in music, he enrolled in engineering at UVM but quickly realized his passion for music was not being satisfied. For two years he toured as saxophonist, turned down an offer to play sax in Gene Krupa's band, and chose to return to Vermont and teach music—but still performed at night. The family home doubled as company headquarters until 1988, when it moved into its current 7,200-square-foot facility with showroom, offices, repair shop, and warehouse. Ellis' three children took over the business in 1989. Today, with approximately 20 employees, Ellis Music Company adheres to its founding principles of support music in the Region with affordable, quality instruments, reliable repair work, and outstanding customer service.

Seeger also makes and sells zither harps, Qilauts, a sacred instrument of the Eskimos, offers dulcimer and music lessons, music residencies and workshops, and works in the school to incorporate instrument-making into the curriculum as a mechanism for teaching language, math, science and social studies.

Rock Farmer Records in Newbury was founded in 2014 by Patrick Ross, a native Vermont musician who has been playing folk, bluegrass, and French Canadian music since he was six. Rock Farmer Records was created as a place where meaningful music can be conceptualized, produced and recorded. The studio creates an environment where a live studio audience can feed the music in ways that inspire the musicians.

Resourceful Recordings is a conference recording company with over 24 years of experience in the convention industry. Located in Brookfield, it serves clients worldwide, evolving with the digital revolution. The seven-person firm provides the conventions with digital sound solutions, customizing for clients. Its products are intended to stimulate networking and to create a forum where education can flourish all year long.

Performing Arts Summary Conclusions

Strengths

The entertainment value to rural communities is quite high, especially during the off season.

Music, performance, and movement are effectively used as therapy by people with mental health problems, physical disabilities, and learning disabilities.

Challenges

Few companies achieve self-sufficiency, but instead depend on donors and grants.

Most performers either have another primary job or use their talent to teach, offer workshops, write or compose.

6. Convergence and Innovation

While the creative economy is important in its own right based on its contribution to the Region's economy, many of its most important impacts are the side effects it has on other important sectors, or, as they are commonly called, clusters. Creative industries and people have far greater effect than what is revealed by what their data alone reveal.

The creative economy can be viewed as a "keystone species," which is the biologists' term for things that have impacts on their environment that is disproportionate to their scale. The Region's creative industries both converge with and influence a large number of more conventional industry clusters (Figure 4). Two major sources of that effect is in the embedding of creative enterprises in more structured sectors and in the impacts of creative, "right brained" thinking on more traditional enterprises, employees, and entrepreneurship.

Converging Clusters

Some of the convergence is captured by the multiple functions of the sectors that define it. This includes sectors that can just as easily, and generally are, claimed as part of other clusters. Apparel companies, for example, are generally also classified as traditional manufacturing, web design as information technology, architects under construction, and gourmet restaurants under tourism. But much of the convergence is subtler, affecting companies that fall outside of the boundaries that have been established for the creative economy. In Vermont, some of the greatest impacts are found in health

Honey Bee | © Dianastiefer

The creative economy can be viewed as a "keystone species," which is the biologists' term for things that have impacts on their environment that is disproportionate to their scale.

Lead and Learn | ©Skypixel

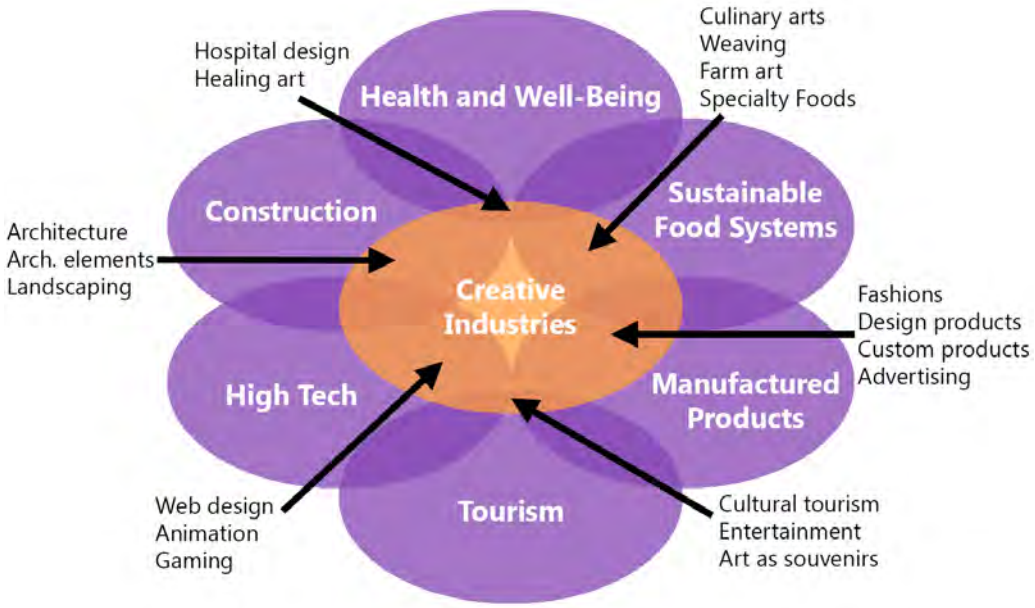
care, tourism, energy and environment.

Some of the more obvious examples of convergence in the Region are found in tourism, construction, education, health care, and technology.

Hotel Coolidge in White River Junction, part of the "tourism sector," uses art to attract customers. The Zollikofer Gallery featuring area artists is in the hotel lobby and continues into the Vermont Room, a major event room. The mural that decorates the Vermont Room was created by a Dartmouth graduate student who later attained national prominence as a mural and portrait artist. But back in 1950, the student lived at the hotel and painted the mural in exchange for room and board, and used hotel guests and community members as models.

Chelsea Country Store, as well as many other country stores across the Region, carry many locally produced goods, from baked goods and maple syrup to art and

Figure 4
Convergence across sectors



crafts to apparel and accessories. Though in the retail sector, the creative products they carry contribute to their incomes and draw tourists into their stores.

Visual arts, dance, and music have become not only popular forms of therapy but increasingly accepted by the medical profession, and at least two art therapists serve the Region, one through the Children's Outpatient Clinic in Hartford.

The Central Vermont Wellness Studio & Conference Center in Randolph offers dance therapy.

SafeArt in Chelsea is a non-profit that uses expressive arts to address a whole host of school problems through after school arts programs, residencies at schools, offering tools to therapists, social workers, and health care providers. SafeArt offers an artist mentoring program connecting youth with adult artists, some of which lead to apprenticeship opportunities.

Ambrose Custom Builders, part of the construction sector in South Woodstock designs and builds homes and specializes in remodeling, barns and historic restoration, all of which involve creative talents.

In the environmental sectors, ECO-Visions in Woodstock explores creative solutions to environmental problems through

Making crayons from invasive species: Japanese Knotweed | Randolph | ©Nathan Johnston

art. Through ECO-Vision's exhibits, and community discussions around various environmental themes, it tries to generate new perspectives and imagine alternative solutions. Last year's exhibit, "Sense of Place: Built and Natural Environments," at King Farm in Woodstock included a poetry reading and music and coincided with the annual outdoor sculpture exhibition.

Sparking User-Innovation

But perhaps the most important byproduct of a creative economy is the effect it can have on innovation across all sectors of the economy. Higher education institutions across the nation, focused for decades on traditional scientific research-based discovery methods, are beginning to realize this potential, and have formed a national "Arts in Research" network.

User innovation in rural areas is far more common than what is revealed by indicators such as patents or the technical workforce. The experiences of successful creative entrepreneurs in the Region demonstrates the value of thinking outside of normal boundaries and using the experiences of families and friends to spark innovation and entrepreneurship.

- For years Nancy Tucker made granola as a Christmas gift for family members and included it as a breakfast choices for guests who sometimes asked to buy it to take home. After moving to Vermont, and with a newborn baby, she was looking for a way to stay home and supplement the family income, she turned again to granola, purely on a whim with no business plan. Today, it is the successful company named Quaker Hill Granola in Randolph.
- In pursuit of something delicious, nutritious and shippable to friends around the world, Old Cavendish Products in Cavendish made its first fruitcakes as gifts. Once the owners became Vermont biking enthusiasts, they needed a granola bar to keep them energized climbing the hills. After many attempts, they made what they believed to be the best Granola Bar ever produced, the Vermont-branded MonkeyChew Granola Bar.
- After moving to Springfield, Vermont, Aram Polster acquired a large home coffee roaster that could handle about six ounces at a time. When friends raved about his roasted coffee, he realized that with a larger roaster he might be able to start a new business. Given of Springfield's industrial history as "Precision Valley," he assumed that a coffee roasting business requiring careful and precise monitoring would be the perfect business to tie the history to present consumer demands and the

Combining computer technology and art

Cone Editions Press, which relocated from New York to East Topsham in 1990, is the studio that originated digital printmaking and where fine black and white photographic inkjet printing was invented. It has been a digital printmaker longer than anyone else on the planet. Jon and Cathy Cone founded Cone Editions Press in 1980 and transitioned into digital as early as 1984. The company was founded in 1980 as an experimental, collaborative printmaking workshop by Jon and Cathy Cone. They first invited painters associated with the 1950's New York School to collaborate in experimental printmaking, in 1983 included artists of their generation emphasizing more direct hand drawn techniques and a year later experimented with computers and printmaking as an adjunct to printmaking produced in a studio. In 1986, David Humphrey and Jon Cone collaborated on the first of more than 14 years of digital projects in which they would combine computers with non-traditional printmaking. Considered to be the first pioneer of digital printmaking, Cone went on to train an entire generation of Giclée printers. Cone's software and inks set up a whole new generation of printmakers, as the IRIS fine art print studio era was born. In the late 1990s Cone turned his attention to developing inks and software for and facilitating process and workflow with EPSON inkjet printers, revolutionizing the fine art printmaking industry.

growing artisanal market. The result is Precision Valley Coffee.

Efforts to systematize the connections between arts and design and more structured types of businesses and work are beginning to be seen in the makerspaces being developed in the Region, in the interests emerging in some parts of public education as a form of interdisciplinary learning, and in those manufacturing sectors looking to design as a way to differentiate themselves and develop and enter new niche markets. The American Precision Museum in Windsor, for example, is developing a precursor to a full blown makerspace called a Learning Lab, encouraging visitors to spend time in a space with machine models conducting short experiments.

7. In Support of the Creative Economy

Because much of the value of creative economy is based on the manner in which its products are experienced and on the buzz that they generate, the creative economy depends heavily on support from a variety of physical, intellectual, technical, and social sources to deliver or provide services to the creative economy (Table 13).

The value of the support system is far greater than the number of people it employs or the income it produces. For example, formal and informal opportunities for associating, networking, and sharing ideas are part of how a buzz forms and ideas grow. Schools and private instruction help develop creative people and enterprises as well as appreciation for creative products. Planned events—festivals, fairs, and exhibits—operate as marketplaces for creative goods. Many creative and cultural goods are place-based. Finally, creative enterprises need resources and assistance, whether financial, technical, or business. The strength of the creative economy is, to some extent, linked to the quality and quantity of the social and support infrastructure that support it.

Table 13
Categories of the Creative Economy Support System

Category	Description
Social Organization	Formal organizations or associations and informal mechanisms or places that encourage and foster networking, learning, and associational behavior.
Education and Training	Programs and instruction aimed at developing or enhancing creative talent through public and private arts and craft schools, private teachers, and educational institutions.
Events and Festivals	Festivals, celebrations, exhibits, and literary events that showcase the creative economy.
Places, Spaces, and Venues	Locations such as eating establishments, inns, town halls, churches, farms, and shared spaces where creative enterprises or activities can be developed, exhibited, or performed.
Resources	Sources of support such as capital, grants, incentives, information, and business, technical, or entrepreneurial assistance.

Quechee Hot Air Balloon, Craft & Music Fesitval | ©Victoria Levite

DEVELOPING AND CULTIVATING SKILLS AND TALENT

Residents acquire and develop their interests in and skills for creative work in a variety of ways. These include through the State's schools and somewhat unique career and occupational education system, from independent education providers, though apprenticeships and on-the-job training, and from informal learning from others. Further, given the high levels of mobility among creative residents, many have acquired their credentials and talents elsewhere but still depend on the resources of the Region to further hone them.

Examples of public school creative career programs

- The River Bend Career and Technical Center in Bradford offers the Region's only school-based career path for Gaming, Web design, and Animation. Under Anthony Daniels, this program combines artistic, story-telling, and digital design skills for 10th, 11th, and 12th grade students from six sending high schools. Career & Technical Education (CTE) students attend 2.5 hours a day, 5 days a week, and up to 9 of the credits can be applied to higher education. Other non-CTE students enroll in these same creative topics for shorter periods to fulfill STEM requirements. The program currently has 21 students, many from economically depressed homes. Those who go on to college often are the first in their family to do so. Only about a quarter of the students are female, but they are motivated and more likely than male students to go on to college.

- At River Valley Technical College (RVTC) in Springfield, Donna Vargas teaches Culinary Arts to 30-40 students in grades 10 to 12, most taking classes two hours per day. The program recently collaborated with New England Culinary Institute (NECI) in Montpelier to design a course specifically for students who want to continue beyond high school, using standards set by the National Restaurant Association. Students range from the low performing, "dumped" into CTE to one of the top ten students in a school. About 40% of these students intend to get jobs in related occupations and about two in three go on to higher education. Graduates' career paths include one who attended and taught at NECI and then opened a restaurant in Ludlow, another started a restaurant in Chester that hires RVTC graduates, and yet another works at a microbrewery in Killington.

Beginning in K-12

The preponderance of Vermont's career-oriented education and workforce development—in all other states the responsibility of community colleges—is shared by Vermont Technical College (VTC) and a state system of secondary career and technical education (CTE) centers fed by the Region's high schools, which also offer post-secondary courses and certificate programs. Three of these centers, as well as VTC, are located within the Region.

Since 2013, Act 77 has required the state's CTE centers to offer flexible access to high school juniors and seniors. Programs that target creative career paths at the Region's CTCs include:

- Gaming, animation, and web design; culinary arts; and pre-tech foundations in audio/video technology at River Bend CTC in Bradford
- Design visual communications;

culinary arts; and drafting and design at Hartford Area CTC
- Video production; culinary arts; horticulture; and pre-tech foundations in audio/video at River Valley Technical Center in Springfield

A workforce needs assessment for the Upper Valley conducted in 2014, however, has little to say about creative careers, assigning industry priority to health care and social assistance; manufacturing; and professional, scientific, and technical services with architecture (except landscape) the only "creative" occupations listed. The report did recommend apprenticeships, and particularly multi-employer apprenticeship programs, which could be very useful for small-scale creative enterprises (Table 14).

The public schools also offer a wide range of non-vocationally oriented arts education, with State Board of Education approved national standards for pre-K through high school in dance, music, theater, visual arts, and media arts. These new standards mark a significant change over the previous standards in emphasizing process—creating, performing, responding, and connecting—in the programs and in expanding creative uses of technology. And possibly just in time. Austin Pellegrino at Whitcomb High School in Bethel thinks he wants to be a graphic artist. But the friendly teen said his small school doesn't offer any classes that would help him explore that field. His only option had been taking graphics art at Lyndon State College—out of the Region, as part of Vermont's early college program.[10]

Chelsea | ©Safe Art

"For those who believe the arts do not have a place in our classrooms, perhaps they should rethink their position and look at arts from an economic perspective."

~ Sen. Jeffords at the Kennedy Center, Feb. 10, 2005

Table 14
Schools in the Region or within commuting distance that offer diploma, degree, or credential in one of more creative fields

Institution	Location	Degree
Hartford Area Career Technical Center	Hartford	HS Diploma
River Valley Technical Center	Springfield	HS Diploma
River Bend Career and Technical Center	Bradford	HS Diploma
Vermont Technical College	Randolph	AAS, BS
Community College of Vermont	White River Junction	AA, AAS
Community College of Vermont	Springfield	AA, AAS
Center for Cartoon Studies	White River Junction	Cert., MFA
Vermont College of Fine Arts	Montpelier	BA, BS, MA, MS
Norwich College	Northfield	BA, MA
New England Culinary Institute	Montpelier	Cert., BA

Moving on to higher education
While the state's community college system has workforce programs, it has always had a primary orientation towards liberal arts programs and transfer to four-year programs. Further, courses are spread across its 12 centers and its extensive on-line education (about 40% of its offerings). Thus, most of its students are not institution based.

Although there are no four-year liberal arts institutions in the Region, it is home to many post-secondary degree-granting institutions, shown in Table 14. The Community College of Vermont (CCV) offers associate degree tracks in graphic design, multimedia communications, and visual arts, and on-line programs in digital marketing and web design.

As a relatively small region of a small state, however, many other educational opportunities are readily accessible including, in the near vicinity, Norwich College, which has northern New England's only certified architectural program, Yestermorrow Design/Build School nearby in Waitsfield, the Vermont College of Fine Arts, the New England Culinary Institute, and right across the state line, Dartmouth College. Many other colleges with programs for creative fields, with Champlain and Lyndon State mentioned most often, are close as well.

The Region, however, is in the enviable position of attracting already talented and wannabe talented, creative people. A large proportion of the creative enterprises and people encountered have come from and been educated in other parts of the nation. Only one in four of the creative business people surveyed are Vermont natives. Almost a third came for the lifestyle and culture. The creative economy thus draws on and incorporates a wide range of educational backgrounds and ideas into a distinctive Vermont experience.

Learning outside the system

The Region offers a wide array of educational opportunities for exploring, trying to develop, or further honing artistic talents. These range from year round schools teaching multiple art forms to demand-based classes in a wide variety of fields such as art, music, dance, or acting to individual instruction and apprenticeships.

Since 1984, the Springfield Dance Factory has taught ballet, pointe, modern, jazz, hip hop, tap, and creative movement to pre-school children through adults. Interplay Jazz and Arts in Woodstock is a summer program that has grown from 7 faculty and 18 students to 30 faculty and staff, about 80 full-time students, and many more part-time students who participate in evening activities, e.g., big band, gospel

The Center for Cartoon Studies, White River Junction

Nowhere else in the U.S. can one find a school dedicated solely to telling stories through sequential art, or visual stories—comics and graphic novels. The Center for Cartoon Studies has the distinction of offering a state-accredited Master of Fine Arts degree plus one- and two-year certificate programs, and summer workshops. In addition, the Center hosts events and exhibits. Students are selected more for their critical thinking skills, literary merit, storytelling abilities and curiosity than artistic talents. They learn graphic design and production, including self-publication, and promotion. Each year, the Center hosts more than 30 visiting artists, and it has a library named for the Charles M. Schulz, creator of Peanuts, whose widow supported the school since its inception.

The Center accepts 30-40 students a year from across the U.S. plus about 150 in the summer workshops. For the eighth year in a row, the Center donated a full scholarship to the Vermont Department of Libraries for a Vermont teen to attend the Create Comics summer workshop camp, a 5-day 'boot camp' on the essentials for producing comics. The high profile Board and faculty help maintain close connections to New York and Los Angeles, including Disney, which helps students make the connections they need to build their careers.

choir and jam sessions. The daytime focus is small group improvisation and developing the range of skills needed to play and improvise in a jazz combo. Many other musicians, performers, makers, artists, and farmers teach on the side to supplement their income or simply to pass on their skills. Artist Joan Hoffman, for example, teaches painting through ArtisTree and the AVA Gallery and Art Center. Some of the multidiscipline schools in the Region are:

- The Fletcher Farm Craft School, which offers a wide range of short-term classes, including basketry, fiber arts, clay, photography, jewelry, woodcarving, and clay taught by skilled professionals through the Society of Vermont Craftsmen in a bucolic rural setting
- The Vermont Independent School of the Arts in Sharon, which serves the Upper Valley, provides a diverse set of learning opportunities and performances including steel drum, dance, calligraphy, and music lessons and also rents space for performances
- The Windsor House offers certificate programs in preservation skills and technology to support historic preservation
- The Vermont Weavers Guild in Randolph offers regular workshops on weaving and related topics

Informal apprenticing is yet another way that skills are acquired in the Region. Simon Pearce in Windsor and Quechee and the Heritage Weaving Studio in Bridgewater both take on apprentices and teach them the skills of the crafts.

Cultivating Skills and Talent Summary Conclusions

Strengths

Young people in the Region are regularly exposed, both informally and through planned school programs in the arts, to people earning income from creative work.

Despite a scarcity of programs in creative fields, the CTC and CCV instructors in those programs that are offered are highly knowledgeable in and dedicated to their fields.

The teaching of arts, and now of design, is gaining support in the public schools, and new state standards for art and design offer long-term promise for building a more creative workforce.

Close proximity to institutions in surrounding counties that offer programs for creative occupations such as Norwich, NECI, and VCFA expands the educational opportunities of people living within the Region.

Challenges

The value of creative talents in other traditional areas of study is not widely recognized and specialization is valued over forms of multi-disciplinary learning that include the arts and design.

Too few business startup/ entrepreneurial skills taught in creative occupational paths.

Population and enrollment decline making it harder to expand classes in new and emerging creative fields if they cannot meet minimum enrollments.

The Community College of Vermont, a statewide system not institutionally based, is oriented towards liberal arts education and college transfer, and workforce development enrollments, including media and graphic design, are low.

PLACES, SPACES, AND VENUES

Places, spaces, and venues represent the yin yang of many rural regions. The duality in this case is that the Region's natural topography creates a desirable attraction for creative activity but its scale and dispersion poses a challenge for developing spaces and finding adequate venues in ways that support economic growth while preserving the local heritage.

Most likely because the Region's population is dispersed among 71 different towns and villages, most of the spaces serve multiple functions. The pure movie theater or single purpose theater are rarities. Instead, many places serve many different creative constituents. The Pentangle Arts Center in Woodstock, for example, is a venue for live performances of music, theater, dance, and films as well as an exhibition space for visual arts and provides a variety of special arts programs (Table 15).

Theater on the Farm

Fable Farm Theatre is the storytelling branch of Fable Farm, a theatre that merges art, food, and community. From its first year, the farm has held weekly gatherings on vegetable pick-up day with potlucks and live music behind the farmhouse in Barnard. After years of dreaming about building a true stage that could host full bands and professional theatre, in 2012, drawing in part on funding raised through Kickstarter, that stage was built. In 2013, the Theater put on Crimes of the Heart as dinner theater, with a full ensemble cast that lived and worked on the farm during its rehearsal period. This has led to an artist residency program.

Collaborative Spaces
Finding the best ways to use or reuse space to help develop creative businesses has been taken on by planners, architects, and sometimes groups of citizens. The process is continually evolving as both a business need and a form of creative placemaking to attract other businesses, talented people, and tourists.

The renovating and re-purposing of built and open spaces has boosted the Region's creative economy. Among the most innovative are the Tip Top Building in White River Junction, Artisans Park in Windsor, Quechee Gorge Village, the Heritage Weaving Studio in Bridgewater, Vershare in Vershire, Path of Life Garden in Windsor, 103 Artisan Marketplace in Chester, and the many farmers markets that cover the Region.

Table 15
Categories of Spaces

Type of Space	Number Discovered*
Collaborative workspaces	4
Dedicated film/performance venues	11
Venues in food establishments	13
Art exhibit space	26
Farmers markets as venues	13

Artisans Park is a quintessentially Vermont answer to North Carolina's Research Triangle Park, much smaller in scale, based more on homegrown than on recruited businesses, creativity and user-driven innovation rather than research and university-driven innovation, and attracting tourists to festivals and gardens rather than delegations to conferences. It consists of growing businesses with complementary products that have developed their own brands, together with a retail outlet for their own and other artisanal products.

The Tip Top Building, a repurposed old 45,000 square foot commercial bakery, has played a large part in driving the resurgence of White River Junction. The brainchild of filmmaker and developer Matt Bucy, the creative enclave in the heart of the city now houses about 40 artists and businesses and epitomizes the energy and potential of the creative economy.

VerShare was the brainchild of Sabra Ewing from Flag Hill Farms, a way for residents of Vershire, a rural village of about 730, to "build community and share skills." Founded in 1998, it was given the historic 1830 Church-Orr House in the village, acquired non-profit status, and began planning activities and building its programs. Today VerShare is home to the town's library, a "Made in VerShare"

gift shop for locally made products from knitted hats and cutting boards to musical CDs, a café downstairs and the Stagecoach Stop Hostel upstairs. It also provides a summer camp free for local children, soup nights, and senior lunches, and regular community events from craft exhibits to an annual cabaret.

Other spaces where creative enterprises collect and do business include Quechee Gorge Village, which is home to retail outlets for local microbrews, distilleries, cheese, candles, jewelry, pewter, ice cream, a toy and train museum, and a diner. And in Chester, 103 Artisan Marketplace includes a gift shop, café, and a metalworking studio.

The Ensemble of Mary Poppins | ©Northern Stage

John O'Brien, Vermont filmmaker speaking at BigTown Gallery's Collectors Show, 2011 | ©BigTown Gallery

Perhaps the fastest growing and changing venue for creative goods and performance are the Region's many farmers' markets. Initially a way to aggregate fresh locally grown food, over time the markets have added the sale of local art and crafts and, as they have expanded into community social gatherings, become venues for music and other performance-based art.

The year-round market in Barnard called Feast & Field brings partner farms and businesses together with the Vermont Land Trust together at the former Clark Farm in Barnard, Vermont to market food, crafts, and listen to music. Current partners include Carin's Kombucha, Camp Red Clover, Eastman Farm, Fable Farm Fermentory, Fable Theatre, Heartwood Fable Collective Farm, Kiss the Cow Farm, Merry Bones Tacos.

Performance Venues

Towns in the Region must be resourceful in order to provide places for artists to perform. The largest performance venues, which together form the organizational foundation for performing arts in the Region, are the Northern Stage in White River Junction, the Chandler Center for the Arts in Randolph, Pentangle Arts in Woodstock, and Artistree Community Arts Center and Gallery in Pomfret. These institutions provide venues for theatrical, dance and musical performances, for classes and instruction in the visual and performing arts, for the display of local artwork, and for the community. But these towns and other towns also have been able to maintain dedicated spaces: the Ludlow Auditorium, Damon Hall in Hartland, Eclipse Grange Theater in Thetford, Old Church Theater in Bradford, Woodstock Town Hall Theater, Briggs Opera House, and Springfield Community Players Studio.

Many other places that are not primarily theaters are able to rearrange themselves and somehow find ways to provide space for musical, theatrical, dance, or literary performances, including restaurants, pubs, inns and hotels, libraries, schools, farms, churches, town halls. The Norman Williams Pubic Library in Woodstock,

International Art in Reading

The Hall Art Foundation in Reading opened its doors to the public in the fall of 2012, welcoming visitors to view its exceptional program of rotating, temporary exhibitions of contemporary art. The exhibits are in a space on a former operating dairy farm that had been owned by the founders of the Hall Art Foundation since 1980. In 2009, they made the decision to renovate and turn it into an art exhibition space. The farmhouse and barns are situated next to a waterfall on a tributary of the Black River surrounded by pastures, hayfields and extensive woodland. Art exhibitions are held seasonally, open free-of-charge to the public, but by appointment. The Foundation is staffed by four part-time employees and administered in New York. It supports three other exhibition sites: Mass MOCA in Massachusetts, another in Oxford, England, and the fourth in Derneburg, Germany. The Foundation makes loans from its extensive art collection to galleries around the world.

Crossroads Bar & Grill, Big Fatty's BBQ, Harpoon Brewery, Inn at Weathersfield, Hotel Coolidge and the Main Street Museum in White River Junction periodically, and some regularly, schedule films, performances, and a variety of other creative community events.

Most schools in the Region, of course, also have auditoriums where they stage school performances but they also sometimes used by other local or visiting performers.

Art exhibition spaces

Visual arts and crafts are exhibited and sold at a wide variety of spaces scattered across the Region. Most towns have at least one such place, whether it's a dedicated, well-known galley, such as the BigTown Gallery in Rochester, Towle Hill Studio in Corinth, the ArtisTree Community Art Gallery in South Pomfret, The VAULT in Springfield, or the relatively new Hall Art Foundation in Reading. And of course, the exhibition space, often for local and upcoming artists, may simply be the walls of a local diner.

Others are workspaces where residents' art can be viewed, like the Tip Top Building in White River Junction, the Heritage Weaving Studio in Bridgewater, or the Path of Life Sculpture Gardens that is part of the Great River Outfitters in Windsor.

One of the newer and larger exhibition and meeting spaces is the Great Hall in Springfield, which opened on 2012. One of the attractions inside the Great Hall is the History Corner, which features pictures, documents and objects that present a visual time-line of the history of Fellows Gear Shaper Corp., which made precision gears and cutting tools in the building from 1895 until about 40 years ago.

A few places are turning to outdoor sculpture to define and distinguish place and demark walks, particularly in Windsor. The best known is the participatory Path of Life Garden, just adjacent to Artisan's Park, inspired by the humankind's relationship with the natural world, visitors travel through 18 works of art illustrating elements that constitute human life, engaging the 14 acres of sculptures and the surrounding expanse. The Path of Life Garden accommodates hiking, picnicking, yoga/meditation and unique camping opportunities.

Places, Spaces and Venues Summary Conclusions

Strengths

A number of galleries are able to attract internationally renowned artists.

Shows that are distinctive and promoted can draw large distant audiences.

Some of most ingenious workspaces are either shared or proximate so that they can take advantage of access to shared resources, networking, learning, and customers.

With limited gallery and theater space, artists take advantage of inns, pubs, restaurants, libraries, schools, and churches to both exhibit and perform.

Challenges

Performance spaces are limited in both scale and size.

Space is relatively expensive and there is a need for more affordable individual and shared workspaces.

Table 16
Associations for creative people and businesses

Type of organization	Number Discovered*
Formal place-based networking**	14
Regional art or craft organizations	15
State business associations	13
National professional associations	5

* These represent only what was found through searches.
** Does not include informal community locations such as coffee shops or pubs.

LEARNING, COLLABORATING, AND CONNECTING: THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF CREATIVITY

The success of any regional industry cluster is closely tied to its stock of social capital, the degree to which people trust one another enough to connect, collaborate, share information, knowledge and even resources, and do business. Although social media has taken on an increasing share of making connections, making deeper connections and learning requires some associational structure, times and places where people with similar or complementary interests can informally or formally meet. This is particularly true in places where the population is small and dispersed.

In the Region, formal networking generally occurs within formal organizational structures that have scheduled meetings and events (Table 16). Informal networking occurs at places that people with overlapping interests meet, like pubs, coffee shops, and farmers markets. About 70% of those interviewed said face-to face networking is important to their business success. But a third of respondents rated their opportunities for face-to-face networking as inadequate and only a fourth rated them as good.

Organic Networking
Vermont, and the Region, has had a long history of sharing through cooperatives, co-working spaces, and shared resources. Businesses that work in close proximity to one another, and share resources, find themselves in situations where they look to each other for help with solving problems, for ideas, and for contacts. Some lead to formal business relationships, such as Artisan Park tenants Harpoon Brewery and Farmstead Cheese; Harpoon Brewery features Farmstead Cheese products in its restaurants. The ECVEDD Region has a number of these organic networking situations.

The agricultural system has the deepest history of cooperatives. Cobb Hill Farm is an intentional co-housing community where members consider networking a part of its fabric. Floating Bridge Food and Farm in Brookfield is a group of working farms, food producers, and lodging and dining establishments that formed a cooperative to work together to provide neighbors and visitors with authentic experiences that deepen their appreciation and understanding of a working agricultural community, while also serving as a sustainable peer-learning and support system for its members.

Building networks from the top down

Based upon input from hundreds of Vermonters as well as a review of best practice models, the Vermont Arts Council is organizing the Vermont Creative Network; a broad collective of organizations, businesses, and individuals-all sharing a goal to advance Vermont's creative sector. The initial plan, among other things, partitions the state into six self-governed creative zones. Each zone will hold monthly "meetups" to enhance communications among creative sector types, to call for legislative recognition, including the reestablishment of the Office of Creative Economy, to make arts and culture a more visible part of the state's brand, and to create social media pacts among multiple partners.

Organizations representing the arts within the Region
Given the small size and population of Vermont, much of the formal organizational structure extends outside the Region's boundaries, either across the entire state, into the Upper Valley, which includes New Hampshire towns, or towns in adjacent regions. The Upper Valley Arts Alliance, for example, which includes Vermont and New Hampshire, has a strong presence in the area and plays an important role within the arts community. Similarly, the Vermont North by Hand Artisans Co-Op includes multiple towns in the Region but also some outside.

Small local organizations such as quilters' guilds in Barnard, Bradford, and Hartland; local art guilds; and chambers of commerce are found throughout the Region and they play a significant role in creating social networks. One aspiring

wool artist in Springfield—who earns her primary income selling cars—described at a focus group meeting why she started a community networking group that meets at the Great Hall every Thursday. "This is how artists in the area get new ideas and learn new techniques from each other."

Twelve people gathered at Silo Distillery in Artisan's Park last January for a tour of the facility and to discuss local sustainability between businesses and farmers. One farmer was happy to find a source of feed for his pig operation, and a farm stand couple was enthusiastic about setting up a farmer's booth at Silo over the summer. Silo's distiller said he was open to discussion with any local farmer about trying out new products and flavors.

Generic organizations and networks
Lacking the numbers to organize along narrow interests, rural areas tend to have more open and less formal social structures. The Upper Valley Young Professionals is a relatively new networking group aimed at keeping young talent in the Region, and organizations such as Vital Communities and BALE are non-profits that devise and support community initiatives that appeal to creative people, which in turn provide them with chances for civic engagement and forming connections.

Looking outside the Region
Many of the creative people and businesses look outside the Region to find organizations that more closely match their interests and specialties and have the scale to provide resources, put on festivals and schedule activities, and expose members to a wider set of colleagues. Most of these are industry, craft, or professional associations.

The Vermont Brewers Association, for example, founded in 1995, provides members with brochures of the state's microbreweries, holds a Brewers' Festival, holds meetings and events, and introduces members to national leaders. Steve Miller from Harpoon currently serves as Vice President.

The Guild of Vermont Furniture Makers is a select organization of master furniture makers who also consider themselves artists, designing furniture that can just as easily be displayed in a museum as used in a home. Five furniture makers from the Region are part of this small guild.

The many other statewide organizations that hold events and enable creative people to connect to peers, learn about new ideas, and build networks include the Vermont Arts Council, the Vermont Weavers Association, the Vermont Woodworkers Association, the Vermont Media Alliance, the newly formed Vermont

Glass Guild, the Vermont Craft Council, the Vermont Water Colors Society, the Vermont Association of Broadcasters, the Vermont Specialty Food Association, the Northeast Organic Farming Association, the Vermont Cheese Council, and the Vermont Maple Sugar Makers Association.

Finally, some parts of the creative economy—especially those that require completing a formal educational process and certification or licensure—are represented by professional associations. The American Institute of Architecture (AIA), the American Institute of Graphic Artists (AIGA), the Industrial Design Society of American, the Society of Interior Decorators, and the American Society of Landscape Architects. The AIA in particular provides local architects with connections and networking opportunities. Even though its meetings occur outside the Region, its members tend to meet informally from time to time in their home communities.

Learning, Collaborating, and Connecting Summary Conclusions

Strengths

The high levels of community trust associated with smaller communities lends itself to building trust and sharing ideas, and generally building social capital.

The small size of the state lends itself more to state organization in order to achieve the numbers to be sustainable and provide services

There is a tendency towards cooperative forms of businesses and social structure endemic to the Region and state.

Challenges

Populations are more dispersed and driving times between communities to attend meeting can be onerous.

Rural areas have insufficient scale for highly specialized associational structures to be sustainable.

CELEBRATING THE ARTS, PLACE, AND SEASONS: FESTIVALS AND EVENTS

Festivals are a common and effective way for communities and organizations in the Region to define themselves and to celebrate and showcase their creative talents. These events attract tourists and encourage them to stay longer and they provide marketplaces for creative makers and performers, and they generate added wealth for the Region.

Among the most unusual festivals in the Region—or maybe anywhere—is the Springfield Steampunk Festival, an event that was basically started through crowdsourcing. It began as a Facebook group of Steampunk fans sharing photos and thoughts. But that turned to the possibility of a festival and then the real thing, the Springfield Vermont Steampunk Festival, and even an organizational framework, the Steampunk Society of Vermont. The festival takes its inspiration from The Fantasy Worlds created by Jules Verne and H.G. Wells, combined with our present day knowledge of science and technology. It shifts Springfield's history as a bustling industry age town to youth busily engaged in making things, designing things, and inventing things.

Ready for the Springfield Steampunk Festival | ©Patrick Lennox Wright Photography

"For me, Steampunk goes beyond just pretty objects, it's more about being resilient and able to repurpose ourselves through life's adversities. Technology and time don't always mean an object or a place has to be discarded. We can give it new life if we can think differently and we can do that through this design and art movement of Steampunk." ~ Bruce Rosenbaum[11]

Web searches revealed 24 festivals and fairs in the Region, covering themes that are related to seasons, crafts, foods, media, or recreation (Table 17). Most events, however, contained elements of each, with musicians, craft foods, and artisan's exhibits complementing the principal themes of most festivals. Festivals tend to be held in or near places that have the population base, scale of accommodations, and infrastructure to

Table 17
Examples of Festivals

Festival	Town
Bakers Harvest Festival	Norwich
Big Buzz Chainsaw Carving Festival	Chester
Bookstock	Woodstock
Central Vermont Chamber Music Festival	Randolph
Connecticut Valley Fair	Bradford
Fall Festival on the Chester Green	Chester
FFS Summer Arts & Crafts Festival	Ludlow
Fine Furniture and Woodworking Festival	Woodstock
Fletcher Farm	Ludlow
Harpoon Octoberfest	Windsor
Quechee Hot Air Balloon, Craft & Festival	Quechee
Jenny Brook Family Bluegrass Festival	Tunbridge
SculptureFest	Woodstock
Maple Madness Weekend	Woodstock
New World Festival	Randolph
Poemtown	Randolph
Pride Theater Festival	Randolph
Springfield Steampunk Festival	Springfield
Summerfest	Woodstock
Tunbridge World's Fair	Tunbridge
Vermont Apple Festival	Springfield
Vermont Sheep and Wool Festival	Tunbridge
White River Indie Films	White River Junction
Woodstock Film Series	Woodstock

produce and handle crowds of people. Festivals in smaller communities most often are one-day affairs.

A few examples

The White River Indie Festival (WRIF), based in White River Junction, is a four-day film festival highlighting political and social issues with an emphasis on supporting local filmmakers and films. Since 2004 WRIF has steadily grown in size and scope and, in recent years, is moving towards a trans-media approach that transcends the traditional film festival by encouraging artists to share their work using a variety of platforms and formats. Many entries are now interactive installations using media and communication technology to engage the audience. Events, screenings and discussions take place at arts and culture spaces across the town. As a tax-exempt non-profit dependent on donations, the program is coordinated by two paid employees and roughly 20 volunteers. The WRIF also supports and assists the regional film community and other non-profit organizations.

The annual Quechee Hot Air Balloon, Craft & Music Festival, the longest running hot air balloon festival in New England, features up to 20 hot air balloons with five flights scheduled throughout the festival and additional tethered rides. The festival also offers continuous music and entertainment, as well as over 60 craft artisans and vendors, and food. Children's activities include the Euro Bungee, and a Rock Climbing wall.

Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historic Park's Annual Vermont Fine Furniture and Woodworking Festival was moved to Woodstock's Union Arena and is scheduled in conjunction with the National Park's Forest Festival weekend in September. This more centralized location and timing plus the addition of music, local foods, and kid's activities have made this one of the state's premier festivals.

The Vermont Sheep & Wool Festival at the Tunbridge Fairgrounds is a two-day event for sheep enthusiasts and anyone interested in learning about sheep and the products they produce. Displays include

The Postcard Festival

The annual four-day Jenny Brook Family Bluegrass Festival in Tunbridge is one of the nation's premier bluegrass festivals, nominated by the International Bluegrass Music Association for the prestigious Bluegrass Event of the Year award in both 2013 and 2014. The festival began at the Weston Playhouse Concert Series. But by 2009 it outgrew that site and moved to the much larger Tunbridge Fairgrounds. This new setting makes for great views and sunsets while listening to some of the best bluegrass music heard anywhere. Some fans call it the "Postcard Festival." Its promoters, volunteer staff and performers create a culture where attendees are made to feel at home with friends and a part of a something larger than themselves. In addition to the stage shows, the event is filled with activities 24 hours a day.

sheep breeds and fiber animals—llamas, alpaca, angora, goats and rabbits—sheep dogs, shearing and spinning demonstrations; yarns, knitting supplies, beautiful wool and fiber art for sale; fiber art classes, workshops on sheep, fiber and farm development skills; music, food.

Sculpturefest, now in its 26th year, is a one-day festival that takes place in Woodstock to showcase the year's sculpture exhibits from both continuing and new works by invited artists. The annual outdoor exhibit is curated and organized by local artist Charlet Davenport and her husband, Peter, who invite selected artists to install pieces on their property or at the Vermont Land Trust's King Farm, the two sites now joined by a walking trail. Some outdoor sculpture alters its environs just as the outdoors alters the art and other works are so integrated into the environment as to be nearly invisible.

For more than three decades, Springfield has celebrated Columbus Day weekend with the Apple Festival, a free, all-day affair. More than 50 artisans offer hand blown glass, wooden products, sweaters, scented soy candles, skin care creams, and even pickles preserved in country kitchens. Families can hear area musicians, watch puppet performances, spend time at carnival games and rides, and enjoy foods from vendors, apple crisp for dessert or pie, or buy from the Springfield Farmer's Market, a part of the Festival.

How do the festivals contribute to the economy?

While some festivals are designed primarily as community events and others aim for larger target audiences, a principal goal of most festivals is to attract increasing proportions of participants from outside the Region and entice them to purchase local goods and services. The impacts of the Region's festivals are quite sketchy, with few formal assessments conducted at the state or local level. Most of the information is anecdotal or rough estimates, although some festivals make efforts to learn as much as they can about their impact to inform their sponsors and supporters. Six responses to email questions about outcomes revealed the following information.

Attendance at four festivals ranged from 500 to 800 and attendance at two was about 2,000. Between a quarter and two thirds were from the immediate area. Two of the festivals have had substantial growth, one has seen slow growth, and for three, attendance was steady. Most of the financial support came for grants from a wide range of state agencies and regional and national foundations or funds, vendor fees, and some revenues from ticket sales, although one was totally supported by the company organizing it.

Prepping for Sculpturefest 2016 | Woodstock |

Festival and Events Summary Conclusions

Strengths
The Region is rich in festivals and fairs, taking advantage of the state's heavy investment in tourism, Vermont's largest industry cluster.

The festivals and events provide markets for local creative products and at the same time generate income for the festivals through vendor fees.

Challenges
Attendance, especially for multi-day events, is constrained by the capacity of the towns to provide accommodations, food and handle traffic.

None of the festivals examined approached self-sufficiency, all required varying levels of donors, sponsors, and grants to cover costs, based in part on revenues that the events generate for the community at large.

Those events that are conceived by an individual who then assumes much of the responsibility for planning and organization, runs the risk of discontinuing if that person leaves.

GETTING HELP: ACCESS TO SERVICES, RESOURCES, AND CAPITAL

Successful artists and other creative enterprises depend, to some degree, on access to technical and business support that understands their industry. They also depend on financial capital from private and public sources, in the form of loans, venture or working capital, and grants, to sustain their operations and/or expand the business.

Some of this support is similar to what any small or new business might need, but some has to be tailored to the particular needs and structure of the creative industries. Elements of this support system can be found within the Region, at banks, accountants, small business centers, and financial consultants. But because so many of the businesses are small in scale and not seeking the kind of growth likely to result in significant new employment, they have difficulty accessing financial support. Also, these businesses are sometimes managed by creative people who may or may not have a strong grounding in business skills, and they often lack the finances to pay the required fee for services. In the survey of creative businesses and individuals that was undertaken for this project, 37% of respondents indicated a high level of need for business or financial services and 48%, a high level of need for grants or loans.

Business and Technical Services
The source of most of the assistance available to small, rural businesses in the Region is listed on Table 18. Federal and state programs provide resources. Three of the largest are the Vermont Manufacturing Extension Center (VMEC), part of the National Manufacturing Extension Partnership between the states and federal government; the University of Vermont's federally supported Cooperative Extension Program; and the U.S. Small Business Administration's Small Business Development Centers (SBDC).

Vermont state agencies provide selected services, through grants, financial incentives, maintaining and providing information, and connecting small companies with partners and resources.

The state also provides funding for the Region's two regional development corporations: Green Mountain Economic Development Corporation (GMEDC) and the Springfield Regional Development Corporation (SRDC), as well as the Region's two planning commissions: Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission (TRORC) and Southern

Table 18
Examples of Available Services to Regional Businesses

Services	Office
Vermont Manufacturing Extension Center	Randolph
Small Business Development Center	White River Junction
Vermont Tech's Enterprise Center	Randolph
UVM Extension Service	Burlington
UVM Center for Rural Development	Burlington
Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund	Montpelier
Springfield Regional Development Corporation	Springfield
Green Mountain Economic Development Corporation	White River Junction
Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission	Woodstock
SCORE	Lebanon, NH
Vermont International Film Foundation	Burlington
Preservation Trust of Vermont	Burlington
Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission	Ascutney

Windsor County Regional Planning Commission (SWCRPC). They offer direct assistance to businesses and they ensure a business environment in the Region that supports growth and innovation. GMEDC, for example provided support for Maponics and WallGoldfinger, Inc. and SRDC was instrumental in helping make the VAULT Gallery and the Great Hall a reality in Springfield.

Local and regional organizations also provide assistance in a variety of ways. For example, Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission (TRORC), the organization sponsoring this report, is working to further the regional Creative Economy efforts, while targeting the bigger picture of regional development. GMEDC and SRDC often work with promising firms or groups of firms, helping ventures get underway or expand, solve problems, and identify for them and/or acquire services.

King Arthur Flour | Norwich

Each of these works in some way with creative enterprises. The Small Business Development Centers at Vermont Tech's Enterprise Center and in White River Junction focus on startup (20% of their effort) and expanding small businesses (80% of their effort), mostly with between five and 15 employees. The office in White River Junction estimates that five to 10% of its clients are "creative enterprises." The SBDCs offer low cost workshops on special issues, some of which are directly applicable to creative sectors, such as a recent workshop on branding.

The Vermont Manufacturing Extension Center (VMEC) has the potential to serve those parts of the creative economy that make things, which are primarily found in the design and food segments. Whereas nationally manufacturing extension centers target high tech and the larger end of the small manufacturers (i.e., 50-500), Vermont has an unusually artisanal manufacturing economy, and the VMEC has shifted its focus to these more innovative creative companies. One recent VMEC workshop held in

Randolph drew nearly all its participants from creative sectors, (e.g., specialty foods, wood products, beverages, picture frame company, household goods, and manufacturing from reclaimed materials). The Center, which has already worked with Simon Pearce, Fat Toad Farm, Silo Distillery, and King Arthur Flour, can potentially become a national leader in shifting Manufacturing Extension towards the creative maker industries.

UVM's Extension Service, as part of a strong interest in rural and community development, has played a major role in helping prospective farmers get started or expand. The Barre office has been particularly helpful in helping women-owned farms, which are quite common in the Region. The Extension Service, which has now existed for well over a century, offers courses and provides advice.

The federal funding has in the past kept the costs down, but increasing expectations for greater self-sufficiency plus the demands of the Government Accounting Office for documented results expressed as job creation and retention, work to the detriment of small, nascent creative enterprises.

Another source of support exists in the private sector, both from non-profit and for-profit entities. Non-profit statewide organizations include:

- The Vermont International Film Foundation, the state's principle film industry organization, serves as a resource for the state's film community.
- The Preservation Trust of Vermont provides resources for historic preservation.
- SCORE is a non-profit of business mentors with offices in Montpelier, Burlington, and Lebanon that works in cooperation with the U.S. Small Business Administration; through its New Hamphire office, SCORE assisted in the founding of the Center for Cartoon Studies in White River Junction.

In addition, for-profit freelancers and small businesses provide technical or business assistance and generally charge for their services. However, many very small or new firms may not be able to afford such services without full or partial subsidies from other sources.

Sources of capital, grants, and stipends
While banks are the first go to source of venture capital or loans for new creative businesses or projects, many independent artists and arts organizations look to grants, contracts, and stipends to help them get started. For creative projects or businesses that target social outcomes, organizations and communities seek foundation and private donors (Table 19).

For historic preservation, the non-profits Historic Windsor and the Preservation Foundation of Vermont, and the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation all make grants or award financial incentives for Historic preservation.

For artists, art-related activities, and non-profits, the Vermont Arts Council, Vermont Community Foundation, and New Hampshire Charitable Foundation are the largest regional or state sources of funding. Other sources include Vermont-based foundations such as the Woodstock Foundation and Redducs Chartered Foundation Corporation and New Hampshire-based foundations that are located across the state line, Jane's

Table 19
Examples of foundations, non-profits, and agencies providing funding for creative activities that target regions or the state

Source	Area
Ben & Jerry's Foundation	Community events, low-income communities
Historic Windsor	Historic Preservation
Jack and Dorothy Byrne Foundation (NH)	Social & community health, including arts
Jane's Trust (NH)	Arts and culture
Milk Money	Business start-ups and small businesses
New England Foundation for the Arts	Arts and culture
New Hampshire Charitable Foundation (NH)	Arts and culture
The Preservation Trust of Vermont	Historic Preservation
The Redducs Chartered Foundation Corp.	Arts and culture
Vermont Arts Council	Arts
Vermont Community Foundation	Arts
Vermont Division for Historic Preservation	Historic Preservation
Woodstock Foundation	Heritage
Working Lands Enterprise Initiative	Creative food and wood-based enterprises

Trust, and the Jack and Dorothy Byrne Foundation. State artists and communities of course also are eligible to apply to national programs such as NEA or Artplace, but given the intense national competition, funding is less likely.

New creative business startups and other for-profit small businesses seeking seed or venture capital or loans look to more conventional sources such as banks, venture capital funds, and investment clubs. These sources, however, generally look for investments in creative enterprises with growth potential, not in freelancers. In the last category, Vermont's new sources include Milk Money and the newly formed White River Investment Club.

With the advent of Vermont Crowdfunding, the state now boasts the nation's most progressive local investing regulations making it easier for small businesses to raise capital from friends, families, customers and neighbors who want to invest in their local economy. Today, Vermont businesses can raise capital by either limiting their offering to only Vermonters or allowing both Vermonters and non-Vermonters alike to invest side-by-side. Companies may seek up to $1,000,000 from an unlimited number of investors and use social media and the Internet to promote their offerings.

Access to Services, Resources, and Capital Summary Conclusions

Strengths

Services have close relationships to clients and those delivering the resources for the most part are from the area and part of the community, which builds trust.

Many of the services are provided by government-supported organizations and thus partially subsidized and low cost making them affordable to small businesses or communities.

Challenges

Most federally funded services try to reach very small companies but requirements to charge for services plus measure outcomes in terms of employment directs attention to the largest "small" companies.

Most grants programs make small awards to distribute their funding, which makes it more accessible but reduces the impacts.

Rural areas in general have trouble accessing seed or venture capital, which is highly concentrated in large metro areas. Foundations have tried to address this in some parts of the U.S., but access in the Region is still limited.

DECAPITA
DEIRCUS

8. Goals and Action Strategies

The size alone of the creative economy in the Region has a large and direct impact on the economy—about 1,200 establishments responsible for more than 5,000 jobs engaged in the production, distribution, and marketing of aesthetically or emotionally oriented products or services. This alone would be sufficient reason to invest further. However, the impacts of the creative economy on many other sectors must be considered as well. Sectors such as:

- Tourism
- Agriculture
- Information technology
- Manufacturing
- Health care
- Innovation
- Talent attraction

The potential of the Creative Economy far exceeds the conventional view of the industry as an artist at a booth at a festival, a musician at a pub, or a lone wolf app designer sitting in a coffee shop on a device.

Implementing Actions

Many of the goals in this section have multiple action steps and project ideas. Here are some suggestions for achieving these goals:

1. They are not cast in concrete. They can be modified in ways that make sense to the people and organizations that will be working on them or dropped if they seem inappropriate.
2. Identify a small team of leaders to work on the actions. Every project or program should have a core group of leaders and people who are committed and passionate about the Creative Economy.
3. Bring in partners. Some projects and programs will require the resources and expertise of organizations in the Region and perhaps the state. Adding them to the team strengthens the overall effort.

Bread & Puppet Little Big Tour at BigTown Gallery's intimate outdoor theater, 2011 | ©BigTown Gallery

States that have positioned and supported their creative economies:

— In 2010, the Governor of Colorado signed four legislative bills that were designed to support and capitalize on the states creative assets – for example, one bill created the Creative Industries Division in the Colorado Office of Economic Development.

— The Mississippi Development Authority, the state's leading economic development agency has adopted a recent Creative Economy Strategic Plan as a priority. As a result, the Creative Economy will be integrated in all economic and workforce development-related programs. Governor Barbour designated 2014 as the Year of the Mississippi Creative Economy.

— Louisiana's office of Culture, Recreation and Tourism has made the Creative Economy an integral part of all of the Department's activities, and in the last several years has created more than 50 cultural districts throughout the state.

— Former Massachusetts Governor, Deval Patrick, established the Massachusetts Creative Industries Council to help better understand the business and economic needs of the creative community, and to help his administration position the state's Creative Economy as one of its key economic clusters.

4. Be creative and bold when implementing the actions. The more excitement that can be generated, the better the chances of successful implementation.
5. To start the momentum going, choose projects and programs that are relatively easy to implement in the near-term. Creating momentum in the early phase of implementation is crucial.
6. Identify projects and programs that will require significant work and resources, and perhaps take months to implement, and slowly begin to work on them. Even if they pose a challenge, they could be transformative once executed.

Goal 1: AN ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND LEADERSHIP TEAM TO OVERSEE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

1. Create a Leadership Team/Group

Implementing the Plan requires a leadership group to guide the implementation process, secure funding for the various components of the Plan, coordinate the work of the staff/people who will be taking responsibility for specific projects, communicate with the public and key stakeholders about the Creative Economy and the implementation process, and develop partnerships with organizations that currently operate within the creative and economic development landscape in the Region and State.

The team could begin with the organizations that form the East Central Vermont Economic Development District (the Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission, the Green Mountain Economic Development Corporation, the Springfield Regional Development Corporation, and the Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission). It should also include representatives from the Creative Economy and Vermont Arts Council's Creative Network. The Vermont Arts Council expects to use this Plan as a guide for other regional efforts and could occasionally be spokespeople for the Region's projects.

2. Develop Staff Capacity

Staff and administrative support from existing organizations can provide some of the capacity to help implement the projects, programs and initiatives contained in this report. If this arrangement challenges the existing organizations, then additional staff should be considered. In essence, the successful implementation of this plan depends on effective and coordinated staff capacity. Coordination is a key issue because some of the projects and programs that are being recommended are regional in nature and will need the close communication and cooperation of whatever staff is working on them.

3. Seek Funding

Some funding will have to be secured through a combination of sources for the staff, administrative operations, communications, and for supporting the appropriate projects and programs. Some of the funding could be in-kind contributions of administrative and program support by participating organizations, but some will have to come from other sources.

The U.S. Economic Development Administration, which funded a portion of this project, is one source to pursue as well as foundations and Vermont state agencies. Legislative champions could be critically important to securing state funds. Some creative economy organizations also have generated income

Goal 1 continued next page

from fees for services, technical support, workshops, etc. This income generally supplements other larger sources of funding and is not a substitute. The Center for the Creative Economy, for example, in the Piedmont Region of North Carolina charges for some of its services and programs.

4. Support and Focus on Near-term Priorities

The leadership team should lend support for the following tasks and projects to get the implementation process started as the foundation of the Creative Economy project.

1. Schedule a leadership team meeting to develop a set of operational procedures and protocols that make it easy to communicate, and make decisions. Funding for the implementation should be a high priority.
2. Publish an Executive Summary. The final summary should be formatted and designed as a multi-color, visually compelling, accessible report. The "Captivate" report of the greater Albany region could be a model.
3. Develop a 'go-to' web site to be a focal point for people wanting information about or to become engaged in projects.
4. Refine the database of individuals, enterprises, organizations and resources that was initiated in the planning process. This database would be a valuable source of information concerning the Region's stakeholders and major drivers of the Creative Economy. The database would make it possible to communicate with the creative community, and it would provide opportunities for people to connect to each other for commercial purposes.
5. Plan a Creative Economy Summit. The Summit will provide an opportunity for the leadership team to present the plan, thank stakeholders for their participation, bring them up to speed on recent actions over, and invite their ideas for and participation in projects.
6. Follow up on the Early-stage Projects that were undertaken or jump-started during the planning process. Some of these are moving forward and some require further work. They include:
   a. The Vermont Film Archives project
   b. The effort to build an institutional relationship between this Creative Economy and key creative, entrepreneurial and innovation centers and departments at Dartmouth College (e.g. the Arts and Innovation District, Hood Museum, Digital Arts and Leadership Lab, and Dartmouth Entrepreneurial Network). A meeting was held in the spring 2016 to initiate a relationship that promises to significantly benefit the Region's creative community.
   c. Move ahead on Maker Space. A meeting on makerspaces was held in early June with Doug Webster, the state's lead resource for makerspaces,[12] and several downtown development staff in the Region.

Goal 1 continued next page

d. Schedule a meeting with the area's Chambers of Commerce and creative communities. A meeting with several of the Region's Chambers of Commerce will better acquaint them with this project and identify business opportunities between the creative community and Chambers' members.

Goal 2: IMPROVED GROWTH AND ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY OF CREATIVE INDIVIDUAL AND ENTERPRISES

Interviews, focus group meetings, and survey results clearly showed that creative individuals and enterprises are interested in increasing their income and revenue, finding the right business model, expanding their markets, growing their business, and making them sustainable. But, they need help and resources in order to realize their vision.

1. Form an East Central Vermont Creative Enterprise as a Virtual Center

The Center would be organized by the Region's economic development organizations, GMEDC, SRDC, TRORC, and SWCRPC plus the SBDC, SCORE offices, Vermont Manufacturing Extension Center, and UVM Extension. Consideration could also be given to including the Dartmouth Entrepreneurial Network (DEN).13 We suggest that a few creative economy-related businesses and organizations in the Region be members of the Group as well, organizations and businesses that bring connections to a rich network of creative individuals and enterprise across the Region. They would be able to market and promote the Center to their networks and help identify business needs. Examples are Yellow House Media which has an electronic network of 4,000 individuals and enterprises; Collective—The Art of Craft, a cooperative of fine crafts and artwork; North by Hand, an artisan coop in Orange County; and the VAULT, a high-end art gallery of artwork from the greater Springfield area.

Services and Programs: The Center would provide a full complement of business, finance and economic programs and services to creative individuals and enterprises in the Region. Based on what was learned from speaking to people in the creative community in the Region, there are a number of possible services and programs the Center could offer.

- Business-related seminars and information sessions on topics such as:
  - Choosing the Right Business Model for a Creative Enterprise.
  - How to Take Your Business to the Next Level
  - Using Social Media to Generate More Customers and Business
  - Effective Branding and Marketing Campaigns for Creative Enterprises
  - The Nuts and Bolts of Starting a Creative Enterprise

Goal 2 continued next page

- A Creative Business Mentoring Program that pairs a seasoned creative business person with others considering starting or expanding a business.
- Bi-monthly Entrepreneurial Meet-ups (e.g., Berkshire County, Massachusetts) where creative individuals and entrepreneurs meet and learn about other creative individuals and enterprises in the Region.
- A Financing Assistance program to help individuals and small enterprises navigate their way through the sources of capital that are available in the state and in the Region.
- A Start-up Lab, modeled on the Lab at the Hannah Grimes Center in the Keene, New Hampshire, which is a one-stop resource for small businesses and entrepreneurs. The Lab offers a multi-week instructional program on the essential ingredients required for starting a business, which would be tailored to creative enterprises.
- Local business markets and customers. The Center could be a focal point for connecting the business community to the products and services of the Region's creative enterprises. Local businesses and institutions, for example, are potential markets for local and regional creative products, such as purchasing art to display in public spaces and in offices. Dartmouth-Hitchcock has a paid arts program coordinator who purchases and displays the work of local and regional artists and sculptors. In Randolph, Gifford Hospital, a local insurance company and the Chamber have purchased local artwork for display.

2. Secure Support for Creative Food Products, Processing, Branding, and Marketing

Working with UVM Extension and the Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund, find assistance for farmers that have the potential to add value to what they grow or raise by processing, packaging, branding, and/or serving in creative ways. This would be in part an educational process, in part technical, and in part marketing. By identifying networks of businesses able to work together, small growers may be able to achieve greater scale and lower costs. This strategy may involve establishing a food hub or incubator to help develop and test new products to help entrepreneurs and existing businesses develop and market the new products or recipes.

Vermont already has a number of successful food hubs in other regions such as Mad River and UVM already has a national program to certify food hub managers that may be able to provide assistance.

3. Provide Assistance for Creative Individuals and Enterprises for Developing and Strengthening E-commerce, Business-related Social Media, On-line Advertising, and Others Application of the Internet

Web-based commerce and communications is moving so quickly, it is difficult for small and relatively isolated small businesses to keep up and take advantage of the new opportunities. This is affecting all

Goal 2 continued next page

sectors of the creative economy but particularly artists, makers, publishers, and writers. This strategy (a) establishes a focal point or network of regional or state-based providers that understand the nature of creative businesses and can assist them and (b) work towards improving and expanding access to high-speed Internet connectivity, expressed as a problem by some surveyed or interviewed.

CraftNet, an alliance of community colleges, with support from the Appalachian Regional Commission, established an on-line program to help artists and craftspeople learn how to use e-commerce.

4. Support Marketing Networks Among Small Manufacturers/Makers

Very small enterprises lack the resources and capacity to attend trade shows and industry marketplaces but could do more by sharing booths and entrance fees, and other expenses. Marketing networks have been used effectively around the world to achieve economies of scale but it requires an individual to organize and broker the networks, which could be done by a guild or collective or an independent network broker with costs shared by the members. In many states, the Manufacturing Extension Service has assumed the brokering role (VMEC, in Vermont).

USNet, a U.S. Department of Commerce-supported five-year program, partnered with 15 state manufacturing extension centers to help small companies form networks for market and product development, sharing resources, and learning.

Goal 3: EXPANDED EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR INSPIRING AND DEVELOPING CREATIVE TALENT

The Region has the educational capacity to develop the talent it needs to compete in a innovation-based, creativity-driven economy but has not reached its potential. Programs for creative careers are scattered across the state in higher education but are not well connected to the Region's schools.

1. Encourage Schools in the Region to Expand Programs that Target Creative Occupations

Most of the programs in the Region for the arts and design are found at the secondary, not postsecondary level. Postsecondary education institutions include the arts broadly as part of their humanities or cultural programs, but few students are enrolled in occupational career programs aimed at applied arts that prepare students to work in a more technically oriented enterprises, such as graphic or industrial design and film and media production.

2. Increase Access to and Information about Career Paths and Opportunities in Creative Fields in Community Colleges and in Career and Technical Education

Information about careers in many of the creative occupations is scarce, either because the occupations

Goal 3 continued next page

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. By ensuring that career counselors and placement offices, workforce investment centers, and employment offices understand and know about emerging opportunities in creative occupations and work, they can help students make more informed choices.

3. Integrate Business and Entrepreneurial Skills into Creative Programs of Study

Programs in the arts or design in both secondary and postsecondary education rarely include the entrepreneurial skills students will need to work independently or in small enterprises. Those who do acquire business skills generally depend on the interests and experiences of their individual teachers who work it into the curriculum. Students in music, design, media—programs for creative occupations likely to result in freelancing, self-employment or entrepreneurship—need similar skills. Creative enterprises have unique features with respect to markets, business relationships, scale of operations, and risks that do not lend themselves to generic business courses. Some are offered to artists as non-credit workshops, but the school, with support from the state, could develop courses that address needs of creative enterprises.[14]

Western North Carolina integrates a Real Enterprise entrepreneurship program into its school-based arts and crafts and offers short business programs to existing artists, and Montana's State Arts Council offers Artrepreneurship in schools and as adult education.

4. Expand Workplace Learning and Apprenticeships in Creative Fields

A number of businesses and individual artists already offer apprenticeships, such as Simon Pearce. But these are for the most part, neither officially recognized nor credentialed. Apprenticeship opportunities could be expanded, formalized, and integrated into creative occupation career and technical education and community college programs. Because this would most likely be easier to develop in creative fields where employers are already accustomed to working with apprentices than in other sectors of the economy. To ensure credit, the idea would have to be pursued in cooperation with the Vermont Department of Education. As interest in the U.S. grows in the apprenticeship programs that are common across Europe, the Region could become a demonstration site for the creative economy.

5. Integrate the Arts and Design into Other Existing Educational Programs

A wide range of employers value creative skills in the workforce because they inspire creativity and innovation. Multidisciplinary courses that integrate creative with the sciences and humanities meet that goal and could also fulfill some STEM requirements. The combination of arts and sciences is already accepted at most major universities and is working its way down to the lower levels of education and,

Goal 3 continued next page

with support from the public schools, this Region could become a leader in that effort.

Now a common practice at major universities,[15] interdisciplinary education is making its way into lower levels of education. For example, students at South Carolina's Beaufort Middle School are learning about cell structure from an artist who draws for scientific journals.

Goal 4: COMMUNITIES THAT DEVELOP, RESTORE, AND PROMOTE THEIR CREATIVE ASSETS

The Vermont Council on Rural Development initiated a Creative Communities Program but it has not yet had an impact on all communities. All should have the opportunity to further benefit from their heritage, creative businesses, and cultural strengths. Such a transformation is sometimes called Creative Placemaking.

1. Draw on State Resources to Conduct Creative Economy Assessments and Develop Community Based Plans for the Least Prosperous Towns and Villages

While much of the creative economy is concentrated in a relatively small number of towns and villages, many others places may have much more talent and creativity than they realize. Led perhaps by UVM's Center for Rural Development, faculty and graduate students in architecture, landscape design, and/or regional planning from nearby universities, UVM Extension, or community non-profits, teams would assess and catalogue the particular creative economy strengths on which a town or village has to build and recommend steps to build on them. These assessments and plans would involve a broad range of citizens. To develop and implement promising plans, the Region would have to help communities apply for and secure resources.

2. Develop Partnerships between Towns with Weak Economies and Towns with Strong, Vibrant Creative Economies

While the Region's larger towns, particularly those along popular tourist routes, have received both attention and investment, other towns have had to struggle to generate wealth, retain jobs, keep their young people, and benefit from the state brand. By forming a "sister town" relationship, the communities can learn from one another, provide advice and markets for each other, and possibly collaborate on economic activities. This idea could be tested by identifying and pairing two sets of interested towns or villages and assessing the impacts and value to each.

Goal 5: THE STATE OF VERMONT TAKES A MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN TREATING THE CREATIVE ECONOMY AS A KEY ECONOMIC ASSET

Although this report focuses on the Region's Creative Economy, there is no doubt that the Region's ability

Goal 5 continued next page

to grow and strengthen its Creative Economy will be affected by how the state positions and supports the Creative Economy. Previous efforts in the state to raise the profile and the economic importance of the Creative Economy have met with mixed results. Just recently, the Vermont Arts Council initiated its Creative Network project, and this holds real promise for bringing the Creative Economy into sharper focus. But even here, the state (governor and legislature) needs to take a stronger role.

See box on page 106 for examples of other states that have positioned and supported their creative economies.

Goal 6: AN EFFECTIVE MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS PLAN THAT INCREASES THE CREATIVE ECONOMY'S VISIBILITY

If the Region wants to publicize and leverage its creative assets, it will have to find a way to distinguish itself both as a place to grow creative businesses, and as a destination for tourists hoping to take advantage of the Region's creative assets. The Region's public and private sector leadership will have to decide how to package its strengths to get the most from its overall creativity. Several things can be done in this regard.

1. Develop a Distinctive Regional Creative Identity and Communications Strategy

A formal strategy is needed that better reflects both the importance and particular strengths of the Creative Economy in the Region that can be used in marketing the Region. All parts of the Region need a cogent and compelling story that can impress new immigrants, investors, and tourists. Create a communication strategy for telling the creative economy "story" in the Region. Since the Valley News' monthly publication Enterprise has made an explicit commitment to covering creative individuals, enterprises, and the Creative Economy, it would be appropriate to work with the editor on the communication plan.

2. Create a Regional Web Portal and On-line Platform for the Region's Creative Economy

The ECVEDD has a website which houses the Creative Economy project, and it is a go-to source for information, contacts and materials. It will also include this final report and the Executive Summary that is proposed elsewhere in this document. Consideration should be given to modifying that site, or developing a new site, that is more of a marketing and promotional site similar to the sites of other regional Creative Economy projects and initiatives – e.g. the Capital Region's Alliance for the Creative Economy, the Creative Alliance of Milwaukee, and the Center for the Creative Economy in the Winston-Salem area of North Carolina.

3. Create a Series of Well-designed Maps to Illustrate Key Assets of the Region's Creative Economy

These maps are intended to make it easier for visitors and residents to find the Region's creative assets

Goal 6 continued next page

and sharpen the image and identity of the Region. Vermont's Farm-to Plate map is a good example of such a concept. It helps residents and visitors alike navigate their ways to the farm and table destinations, and tells a compelling story.

The Virginia Heritage Trail map, the Mississippi Blues Trail map, the Literary Trail maps, and the Ohio Murals Corridor map are all good examples. Something similar could be done in the Region, perhaps in partnership with the Connecticut River Byway program or Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing.

Goal 7: STRENGTHENED SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Although the Region already is home to many professional and business associations that facilitate networking, the vast majority of working artists and creative professionals who responded to the survey and with whom we met indicated that more opportunities for person-to-person networking opportunities are high on their list of needs. They sometimes feel isolated in their work and expressed interest in further opportunities to network across disciplines, communities, and regions. Examples of town- or village-based networking events occur at places like the Artisan Park in Windsor, Chandler in Randolph, Thayer Academy in Bradford, and Common Gallery in South Royalton. Other examples are Tip Top Pottery's "Cork and Canvas," a combination of social networking and painting, and the weekly networking functions at the Great Hall in Springfield. Networking of this nature has become a high priority among creative regions across the country.

The Springfield Massachusetts Fine Arts Museum hosts a monthly networking event called Cocktails and Culture. The Denver Art Museum sponsors "Mixed Taste," a series of and short presentations, conversations, and connections on completely unrelated topics but creative topics. SPARK! is a networking event that has been in existence in the Berkshires for several years. As they arrive at the location, which changes each month, guests are asked to write a project or opportunity on their name cards they would like to talk about, which mixes social and business goals.

End Notes

[1] Dian Parker, "You've Got a Problem? Forrest Can Fix It," The Herald of Randolph, November 22, 2012.

[2] Act 250 provides a public, quasi-judicial process for reviewing and managing the environmental, social and fiscal consequences of major subdivisions and development in Vermont through the issuance of land use permits.

[3] Garnet Consulting, Vermont 2020: Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, Montpelier: Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development, 2016.

[4] Ethan de Seife, "Matt Bucy is making White River Junction into a Next Generation Nexus," Seven Days, Dec. 11, 2013.19

[5] Available for download at http://www.ecvedd.org/.

[6] An Economic Development District, or District Organization, is a federally designated organization charged with the maintenance and implementation of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

[7] The Upper Valley area of New Hampshire and Vermont includes at its southern border Cornish, New Hampshire and Windsor, Vermont and at its northern border Piermont, New Hampshire. Major cities and towns in the area include Lebanon and Hanover in New Hampshire as well as Hartford.

[8] All businesses are categorized according to the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS).

[9] Stuart Rosenfeld, Cluster-Based Strategies for Growing State Economies, Innovation America, Washington, DC: National Governors' Association, 2007.

[10] Nancy Remsen, "State Struggles to Offer Big Opportunities at Small Schools," Seven Days. April 20, 2016.

[11] http://springfieldvtsteampunkfest.com/about.html

[12] Doug Webster

[13] The DEN director expressed interested in working with the East Central Vermont creative businesses and individuals.

[14] See, for example the Montana Art Council's Artrepreneurship program, https://ace.fvcc.edu/CourseStatus.awp?&course=11SBUS9218A

[15] See A2RU, Alliance for the Arts in Research Universities, http://a2ru.org/

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CREATIVE ECONOMY /

The enterprises, organizations and individuals whose products and services are rooted in artistic and creative content

PERFORMING ARTS

- Theater
- Dance
- Music

VISUAL ARTS & FINE CRAFTS

- Painting and drawing
- Sculpture
- Crafts such as pottery, wood, glass, etc.
- Photography

LITERARY ARTS

- Writing
- Printmaking
- Publishing
- Book binding

GOAL:

Enhance the CE's ability to generate income and jobs

DESIGN

- Product design
- Architecture + landscape design
- Graphic design
- Fashion and design
- Communications design

ARTISAN FOODS

- Specialty foods
- Culinary arts
- Artisanal beverages

FILM & MEDIA

- Video production
- Filmmaking
- Broadcasting

CULTURE & HERITAGE

- Museums
- Historical sites
- Preservation