

Redwood Region RISE

08/21/2024

ARTS, CULTURE, TOURISM

Sector Table Report

WHAT IS THE ACT SECTOR?



- Incredibly Diverse

- Over 110 NIACS Codes by our estimate



- Includes artists, event producers, tour guides, service workers, shop owners, designers, hoteliers - and many, many more



ANNOTATIONS - SLIDE 1

The Arts, Culture, and Tourism Sector contains a wide and diverse collection of industries and professions - Our estimate for the RRRISE ACT Strategy Report was over 110 separate six-digit NIACS Codes (utilizing 3 digit code categories was insufficient granularity for representing the sector.)

While these industries are linked together by complex webs of economic activity - in the practice of regional workforce development and network-building, the sheer number of separate industries requires constant review to prevent exclusion or inequitable division of attention in the work.

SECTOR STRENGTHS



It's nature...



...and the people!

ANNOTATIONS - SLIDE 2

According to a service report issued by the National Park Service on September 4th 'shows that 409,105 visitors to Redwood National Park in 2023 spent \$29.6 million in communities near the park. That spending supported 384 jobs in the local area and had a cumulative benefit to the local economy of \$37.9 million.' (press release [HERE](#))

And that's just representative of one park system in the region - not only are there many other redwood parks and groves throughout the region drawing tourists from across the globe, but countless rivers, lakes, and hiking trails abound, offering a one-of-a-kind experience for outdoor recreation.

The region is also known for it's high population of artists and creatives - thanks in large part to the cultural hub offered by CalPoly Humboldt in the region. These artists and creatives are entrepreneurial, passionate about the places they live, and are responsible for the many cultural events, festivals, and arts venues that are found across the region.

SECTOR WEAKNESSES

- Prevailing low wages
- Lack of employee safety nets
- Seasonal/gig work
- Volatility
- Regional underinvestment



ANNOTATIONS - SLIDE 3

The ACT Sector first suffers from a number of structural weaknesses that are unfortunately common to many other areas (including other CA Jobs First regions) - The sector is primarily service-oriented and suffers from low wage averages, a lack of traditional employee safety nets such as retirement and health insurance, employment volatility due to gig work/seasonal work patterns, and reduced options for upward career mobility.

Additionally, the sector suffers, as other sectors do, from decades of underinvestment in rural areas of the state, and challenging prevailing conditions presented by a long history of resource-extraction based 'boom-and-bust' economies.

Gig/seasonal work patterns, combined with rural underinvestment also combine to make data collection in the sector particularly challenging.

It will be imperative, to be in alignment with CA Jobs First vision and priorities, that RRRISE investment efforts not only attempt to create jobs, but in the process attempt to address these structural weaknesses in measurable actions.

SECTOR OPPORTUNITIES

- *“The sector has many opportunities, including (among others) museums, theaters, and art galleries, cultural events (festivals, concerts, art exhibitions), including traditional arts and Indigenous cultural practices, and development of heritage sites. .”*

- *“...forward-thinking, passionate, creative professionals who are deeply motivated to contribute to and serve their communities.”*



GREAT REDWOOD TRAIL AGENCY



ANNOTATIONS - SLIDE 4

This slide features two direct quotes from the RRRISE Regional Plan Part 1 (including references to the ACT Strategy Report). The sector has an outsized selection of opportunities for growth, including outdoor recreation, cultural events, and regional festivals (a particular note given to the Great Redwood Trail, currently in it's planning phases - link [HERE](#)) And the sector includes the imaginative, collaborative, and driven professionals that are the core to making these growth opportunities a reality.

SECTOR THREATS

- COVID recovery and future pandemics
- Heightened threat of wildfire
- Increasing adoption of AI
- Gentrification and extractive tourism



ANNOTATIONS - SLIDE 5

Covid and the recovery from the pandemic had a variety of extreme effects on the sector. Live entertainment, bars/restaurants, and other similar service-industries in the sector were shut down abruptly, followed by a lengthy and chaotic re-opening process. Meanwhile, outdoor recreation saw a sudden boom, along with 'revenge tourism' boost to tourism in general in the years after the pandemic. These effects are still lingering and introduce additional fragility into the sector, and Covid is still here with us and it would be naive to assume that this was the last pandemic in an increasingly globalized world. Ensuring that concrete lessons are learned from the recent past is necessary for long-term resiliency.

Wildfires are now a part of the 'new normal' in the state of California, and have a significant impact on tourism, tourism-related activities, and particularly threaten smaller, rural communities in the state that primarily rely on tourism in their economies. New efforts, like the recently-announced collaboration between the Insurance Commissioner and CalPoly Humboldt to develop enhanced predictive models, are necessary to pro-actively adapt.

Artificial intelligence is currently in its 'gold-rush' phase - a great deal of investment that is currently yielding no gains but still leveraged because no-one wants to be behind this curve (notably including the state of California.) As such, the actual impact of AI on the sector and the economy in general is still opaque, but it's the opinion of this report that with proper adaptation (and proper state and federal support and regulation), AI could have limited negative impacts (at least in this sector and region, it's very important to note), while offering new opportunities where it could potentially be utilized to 'backfill' a lack of human resources in areas like digital way-finding, data collection, etc.

As the recent protests in Barcelona this summer indicated, one of the sector's greatest threats can be success - with its accompanying gentrification and erosion of quality of life for residents. This necessitates a holistic approach to economic development in the sector, one that prioritizes maintaining and improving quality of life for residents while encouraging sector growth.

STRATEGIES

**REGIONAL NETWORKING &
RESOURCE SHARING**

ADVOCACY

BRANDING

DATA COLLECTION

**TRAINING AND SKILL
DEVELOPMENT**

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

**SECTOR
PARTNERSHIPS**

**PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT**

CREATIVE PLACEMAKING

COMMUNITY HUBS

QUALITY OF LIFE

**SERVING ISOLATED
COMMUNITES**

ANNOTATIONS - SLIDE 6

Another organizational framework to look at the specific strategies listed in Slide 6 would be:

REGIONAL (Regional Networking & Resource Sharing) - Strategies of Data Collection, Branding, and Advocacy.



COMMUNITY (Creative Placemaking) - Strategies of Supporting/Developing Community Hubs, Serving Isolated Communities, and Enhancing Quality of Life.



INDIVIDUAL (Training and Skill Development) - Strategies of Professional Development, Entrepreneurial Support, and Development of New Intra/Inter-Sector Partnerships.

Each of these strategy groupings can be thought of concentric, nested levels of development activities.

A regional landscape assessment (data collection) would be a 'bedrock' asset, informing following efforts, including a regional branding campaign (in collaboration with Visit California's regional branding efforts) and a cohesive regional platform for advocacy with state and federal agencies.

Supporting and developing community hubs means finding a community's 'ingredients' for what makes it special - maybe it's nearby parks, an attraction like the Redwood Skywalk, or a vibrant shopping district. Meanwhile, there are so many communities off the beaten path in this region that have suffered greatly from the boom-bust cycles of the last century and require extra attention/investment for their survival. And this is all part of a development strategy that prioritizes quality of life (a good place to live/visit is a good place to visit/live) and an 'economy of hope.'

Many professionals in the sector move into entrepreneurship because not only of creativity and ambition, but also because it's often one of the only opportunities for career advancement. A regional data-driven approach to long-form entrepreneurial support would enhance their chances of success. And developing new programs for professional development would not only develop traditional areas of the sector, but open up additional pathways of collaboration with other sectors - one example being behavioral health (social prescription and the positive impact of arts, culture, and nature-related activities on health outcomes - link to more information [HERE](#))

DEVELOPMENTAL DYADS



ANNOTATIONS - SLIDE 7

The Developmental Dyads are not meant to represent discrete strategies in and of themselves, but rather are a potentially useful framework for evaluating balance, synergy, and inclusion in strategy and developmental activities:

PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Buildings, places, programs, structured goals, 'Hard'



KNOWLEDGE INFRASTRUCTURE

Data collection, relationship-building, context-placement, 'Soft'

TOURISM

Economic Development, Outward-facing



COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

Quality-of-life Development, Inward-facing

IMMEDIATE ACTION

One-time projects/goals, urgent prioritization



LONG-TERM PLANNING

On-going 'maintenance' activities, long-range prioritization

OUR VISION

*We believe in utilizing the responsive, flexible and innovative industries of arts, culture, and tourism to stimulate economic activity, create sustainable living conditions within the sector, provide service to our communities, and promote the values of **hope, joy, equity, exploration, and creativity**, thereby raising the quality of life for everyone.*

THANK YOU!