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TEXAS CULTURAL TRUST AWARDED \$540,000 FROM HOUSTON ENDOWMENT
Art Can initiative bolsters research and advocacy for arts education in Texas

AUSTIN, Texas – The Texas Cultural Trust (TCT) is pleased to announce an award of \$540,000 from Houston Endowment in a multi-year grant to support Art Can, an arts education and economic research and advocacy initiative. The goal of Art Can is to improve arts education access and public support and awareness of the impact of arts in our state. In addition to expanding arts education research and data, the Trust will convene a Blue Ribbon Panel to define clear criteria for arts education access at the campus level.

“The ongoing support from Houston Endowment has played a truly catalytic role in furthering Texas Cultural Trust’s campaign to make the economic and educational importance of art known in our Texas communities,” said Heidi Marquez Smith, executive director of the Texas Cultural Trust. “This endowment will help maintain the significant strides the Trust has made, and will further our efforts towards innovatively using technology to enhance our message.”

The 2017-2018 initiative will be an evidence-based multimedia campaign, including earned media, social media, and paid media with bilingual radio, print, and digital advertising. The initiative will continue to build upon a grassroots website that serves as a digital hub for stakeholders to find information about arts access in their local schools and how to take action to advocate for more arts education.

The Trust will provide the latest data on the economic impact of the arts and produce the 2019 “State of the Arts Report,” which will be released in January at the start of the 86th Texas Legislature. Key data points from the initiative’s previous research include:

- The arts generate \$5.5 billion for our state’s economy.
- The arts contribute \$343.7 million in state sales tax revenue annually.
- Students who complete more arts classes have up to 15% higher pass rates on standardized test scores.
- High school students enrolled in arts courses attend an additional week of school each year.
- Students who complete more than one arts class are half as likely to drop out.
- Nine out of 10 Texas parents support increased funding for the arts in their schools.

The Trust will continue to conduct its research with partners Dr. Brent Hasty of MINDPOP, economist Travis James of Texas Perspectives, and opinion pollster Mike Baselice of Baselice & Associates. For more information on Art Can, visit <http://artcantexas.org>.

About the Texas Cultural Trust

The Texas Cultural Trust is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is *to be the leading voice for the arts in education, advocacy, and economic impact in Texas, spotlighting the artistic excellence of our state.* Programs of the Texas Cultural Trust include the Texas Medal of Arts Awards, Texas Young Masters, Arts and Digital Literacy Initiative, Texas Women for the Arts, as well as support for programs of the Texas Commission on the Arts. For more information, please visit www.txculturaltrust.org.

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