



# Engage Now!: A Guide to Making the Arts Indispensable

*Doug Borwick*

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## Engage Now!: A Guide to Making the Arts Indispensable Doug Borwick

Arts organizations cannot long survive without earning impassioned support from the communities they serve. Communities cannot reach their full potential without the benefits the arts can provide. ----- For some, the arts as indispensable is a preposterous idea, yet nearly every stakeholder in the industry believes the arts' value to be unquestionable. That gap accounts for most of the challenges arts organizations face. As long as the arts are seen as an amenity (at best), they will struggle in a world that only has time for that which is necessary. "Mere" relevance will not suffice. To compete in the marketplace of public value the required standard is indispensability. Engage Now! is a "how to" manual for the arts organization seeking to become invaluable. ----- Engage Now! is a "how to" manual for the arts organization seeking to become invaluable. It • Presents basic principles and practices of effective community engagement, • Provides guidance for achieving systemic focus on engagement, and • Outlines a process for becoming a universally recognized community asset. This book is intended for anyone with a vested interest in the arts. Since the arts are essential for healthy individuals and healthy communities, it is for everyone. However, far too few people are aware of their "vested interest." That makes Engage Now! important for us all. ----- TABLE OF CONTENTS Part I: The Mission of Arts Organizations Chapter One: Systemic Challenges and Internal Issues Chapter Two: What Is the Arts Business? Chapter Three: The Way Forward: New Understanding of Mission Part II: A Community Engagement Primer Chapter Four: Engagement Essentials The Practice of Engagement Chapter Five: The Engagement Process: Principles and Practice Chapter Six: Engaged Arts: Organizations Chapter Seven: Engaged Arts: Artists (Entrepreneurship Chapter Eight: The Engagement Process: An Operational Blueprint A Benediction: It's Not Easy Conclusion ----- What they're saying: "A playbook for arts organizations to become as indispensable as the corner store" Jamie Bennett, Executive Director, ArtPlace America "An eloquent and persuasive voice in a global conversation about the power of the arts to transform our society" Simon Brault, author, No Culture, No Future Director and CEO, Canada Council for the Arts "Great advice about engaging more of the population, growing your organization and increasing opportunity for successful operations and artistic expression" Janet Brown, President & CEO Grantmakers in the Arts "Inspiring advice about how the arts sector can play a more powerful role in the public life of our communities" Ra Joy, Executive Director, Arts Alliance Illinois "A distinctively valuable guide for how to integrate arts management and community development" Jonathan Katz, former CEO, National Assembly of State Arts Agencies "Borwick probes arts organizations to evaluate their relationship with their community and provides action steps to building a stronger, more sustainable connection with the people [we] serve." Robert Lynch, President & CEO, Americans for the Arts "A guiding light for nonprofit arts organizations seeking to be relevant, responsive, and indispensable to the communities we exist to benefit" Josephine Ramirez, Arts Program Director, James Irvine Foundation "Borwick leaves no question unasked, proving why he is the authority on community engagement work" Alan Salzenstein, President, Association of Arts Administration Educators and Professor of Performing Arts Management/Arts Leadership, DePaul University "A clear guide to taking on the necessary efforts to broaden our missions, serve our communities and increase the impact of the arts" Marc A. Scorca, President & CEO, OPERA America

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