



HouArts in Action

Messaging Guide



HouArts in Action

Together, we are a collaborative, region-wide initiative designed to strengthen Greater Houston's arts and culture sector through strategic advocacy, expanded partnerships, and unified messaging. We're mobilizing arts and culture as an essential driver of the region's economic growth, community vitality, and civic identity.



Public Funding

Protecting and expanding sustainable funding streams through city and county HOT allocations, civic art ordinances, and innovative public funding mechanisms that ensure long-term stability for the creative sector.



Economic Opportunity

Facilitating pathways to prosperity for artists and creatives by improving funding and connectivity to resources, training, and spaces that enable sustainable creative careers right here in the Houston area.



Vibrant Spaces

Encouraging activation and preservation of the cultural spaces that make our neighborhoods distinctive through public sector initiatives that integrate local artists, musicians, creatives, and arts organizations into the region's urban fabric.



Effective Storytelling

Amplifying Greater Houston's cultural narrative locally and globally, transforming how residents, visitors, and businesses perceive our creative landscape.



Story Prompts

Don't know where to start when sharing your story? Try these prompts geared to various audiences, and then offer any other insights from your personal experience. You are the expert in your community and are filled with vast information and knowledge to benefit our commitment to the arts in Houston!



Elected Officials Audience

Great **(adjective)** cities **(verb)** in the arts. Every \$1 of HOT funds invested in arts and culture generates \$2.16 in local tax revenue. Investing in the arts isn't just good for **(noun)**—it's smart for the economy

The arts are not a luxury—they are an economic driver, a community necessity, and a powerful tool for education, public safety, and civic pride.

When making a decision to stay in or relocate to a new city, arts and culture offerings influence people's decision making about as much as the quality of schools.

Investing in culture is **(adjective)**; it is a **(adjective)** economic engine for our city and drives **(noun)**.

Our city's arts scene is a **(adjective)** reflection of our **(adjective)** **(noun)**.

By supporting the arts, we **(verb)** a more **(adjective)** and engaged population.

Together we can commit to making our city a **(adjective)** destination for arts and culture.

I **(verb)** about how arts and culture can transform Houston into a global destination. Tourists provide **(\$\$/adjective)** to **(place)** economy.



Business Leaders Audience

Everything is **(adjective)** in **(place)**, including our arts **(noun)**. The arts are not a **(noun)**—they are an economic **(noun)**, a community **(noun)**, and a powerful **(noun)** for **(noun)**. Investing in the arts isn't just good for culture, it's smart for business. Arts and culture organizations generated **\$1.3billion** in total economic activity in 2022. Locals and non locals alike spend an average of \$38.50 in the local economy when they attend an arts and culture event. A thriving arts sector boosts economic growth, attracts top talent, and makes Houston a more vibrant place to live and work.

It would benefit developers and our community to build/renovate **(adjective)** spaces when they revitalize our **(place)**. It will not only keep our community **(adjective)**, but it will also increase **(noun)**.

It's vital that everyone **(local/tourists)** can enjoy our **(adjective)** cultural spaces, so making them fully accessible for people with disabilities is essential.

We must **(adjective)** support art, which creates economic opportunities and makes our city **(adjective)** for **(noun)**.

Our **(name location)** art scene is a reflection of Houston's unique **(adjective/noun)**. This attracts **(verb/noun)** and benefits **(noun)**.

STORY PROMPTS



Residents Audience

Arts & culture make **(place)** feel like home. **86% of Harris County arts attendees** say arts venues inspire pride in their communities.

Neighborhoods with more cultural resources have lower crime rates, better mental health outcomes, and increased community connection.

Youth who participate in arts programs report an **81% boost in self-esteem**, and are **46% more likely to meet college readiness benchmarks**.

Investing in **(noun)** makes our city a **(adjective)** place to live and work and generates economic growth. This benefits our **(noun)** by providing **(noun)**.

By supporting the arts, we build **(adjective)** neighborhoods and a more **(adjective/noun)** for everyone. A great example of this is **(elaborate with an example)**.



Tourism & Hospitality

The arts light up Houston. Cultural events and destinations attract 15 million annual visitors and generate significant local revenue—nonlocal attendees spend an average of \$60 per visit in the local economy.

Houston's Museum District alone draws more annual visitors **(7 million)** than all major sporting events and the rodeo combined.

43% of Americans say arts and culture are a key factor when deciding where to travel. Promoting Houston's creative offerings enhances our global reputation and boosts hotel, dining, and retail revenue.

Nonlocal visitors spend an average of \$60 in the local economy each time they visit an arts and culture event in Houston.



Social Media Prompts

Use these prompts to engage audiences, foster creativity, boost visibility, and build a stronger community.



General Arts Advocacy Prompts

"My Houston Arts Story..." Share a personal story about how art has impacted your life in Houston. Use the hashtag #HouArtsStory.

"Imagine Houston Without Art..." Create a post or short video imagining what Houston would be like with less art.. Emphasize the loss of community, economic activity, and vibrancy.

"One Dollar, Big Impact." Share how every \$1 of HOT funds invested generates \$2.16 in tax revenue. Ask followers to share their thoughts or amplify the message.

"Spotlight an Artist." Interview a local artist or feature their work. Share their story and how they contribute to Houston's culture.

"Arts & [Neighborhood Name]" Create a series of posts showcasing the art and culture in specific Houston neighborhoods.

"Why I Support #HouArtsInAction..." Share a short video or post explaining why you support the HouArts in Action initiative. See HouArts STOLO and focus on a specific benefit.

Elected Officials Focused Prompts:

"Great Cities..." Start a post with **"Great cities invest in the arts because..."** and have followers finish the sentence.

"Dear [Local Official Name]..." Encourage people to write a short message to their elected officials about the importance of arts funding.

"What Does Arts Funding Mean to You?"

Create a poll or Q&A asking this question, specifically targeting those who follow local government accounts.



Business Leaders Focused Prompts

"Bigger in Texas..." Share a post: **"Everything IS bigger in Texas, including our arts business."**

Then, share related statistics about the economic impact of the arts.

"The Arts: Not a Luxury..." Use the quote **"The arts are not a luxury—they are an economic driver..."** and elaborate on what that means for Houston businesses.

"Talent Attraction & the Arts." Discuss how a vibrant arts scene attracts and retains talent for businesses in Houston.

Residents Focused Prompts:

"Houston Feels Like Home Because..." Ask followers to complete this sentence, focusing on the role of arts and culture.

"My Favorite Local Event..." Encourage people to share their favorite local arts events and why they love them.

"Youth & the Arts..." Share the statistic that approximately 81% of youth in arts programs report improved self-esteem. Ask parents and educators to share their experiences.

SOCIAL MEDIA PROMPTS



Tourism & Hospitality Focused Prompts

"The Arts Light Up Houston..." Use this phrase as a starting point and ask people to share their favorite arts and culture spots for visitors.

"Museum District Memories." Ask followers to share their favorite memories from visiting the Houston Museum District.

"Cultural Tourist Tip." Ask followers to share their best tips for experiencing Houston's arts and culture scene as a tourist.



Interactive Storytelling Ideas

"This or That: Houston Arts Edition." Create a series of "This or That" posts comparing different art forms, venues, or events in Houston.

"Caption This Art Photo." Share a photo of local art or a cultural event and ask followers to write a creative caption.

"Create a Houston Arts Haiku." Challenge followers to write a haiku about Houston's arts scene.

Use relevant hashtags like #HoustonArts, #HouArtsInAction, #HoustonCulture, and #[ArtsDistrictName]Arts to maximize visibility. Encourage engagement by asking questions and prompting responses.



Simple Steps to Create Digital Social Media Content

1. Plan and prep your story content

- **Select a Social Media Prompt** and use it to write a few words.
- Also include a call-to-action, such as visiting the website, following your profile, or liking your post.

2. Gather Your Supplies

- **Charged Cell Phone:** Ensure it has sufficient storage.
- **Tripod/Stabilizer (Recommended):** To minimize shaky footage.
- **External Microphone (Optional):** For improved audio quality.
- **Lighting:** Use natural or artificial light (ring light, desk lamp). Avoid backlighting.
- **Clean Background:** Choose a tidy, visually appealing space or showcase the art

3. Setting Up Your Shot

- **Frame:** Choose shot type (close-up, medium, full); use the rule of thirds for composition.
- **Camera Position:** Use a tripod/stable surface; ensure eye-level placement.
- **Background Check:** Test shot for visual appearance; adjust as needed.
- **Audio Check:** Test external mic (if used for clarity, record and review a test clip)

4. Recording Your Video

- **Eye Contact:** Look directly at the lens.
- **Good Tone:** Smile and speak at a moderate pace. Don't forget to be yourself!!
- **Short and Sweet:** 1 minute for Stories and up to 3 minutes for Reels on Instagram.
- **Minimize Distractions:** Turn off notifications; avoid interruptions.

5. Optimizing for Engagement

- **Compelling Caption:** Add context, questions, or encourage engagement.
- **Relevant Hashtags:** Use broad and niche hashtags for discoverability. See Social Media Prompts #HoustonArts, #HouArtsInAction, #HoustonCulture, and #[ArtsDistrictName]Arts



Stay Connected

To stay informed about the **HouArts in Action** initiative, you can sign up for their newsletter and events at HouArts.org.

