Chapter 1

Introduction

The Overlooked Pillar

In the 21st century, humans have achieved notable technological progress and increased global collaboration, especially in the fields of science and technology. However, despite all the progress, we continue to struggle with various natural and man-made environmental, social, and economic problems; international conflicts; and global pandemics. Despite the invention of energy-efficient and environmentally friendly technologies, human-induced activities continue to produce high levels of pollution. Despite advances in disaster prediction, we seem to be insufficiently prepared to deal with hurricanes, earthquakes, and tornados. Despite notable signs of improvement, revitalized urban centers continue to suffer from social and economic inequities, casting doubt on the very progress that economic development has engendered. The persistence and increasing complexity of these various issues lead one to conclude that perhaps some aspects of the progress achieved to date might be short-sighted or not fully sustainable and need to be critically examined in more holistic ways.

Following this line of thinking, scholars and practitioners alike continue grappling with the problem of sustainability—the vaguely defined term that unites these diverse issues under the three interrelated dimensions—environment, economy, and sociopolitical systems (Adams, 2006; Dale, 2001; Edwards & Onyx, 2007; Fiorino, 2010; Nurse, 2006; Wang, Hawkins, Lebredo, & Berman, 2012; Stazyk, Moldavanova, & Frederickson, 2016). While the concept of sustainability and our understanding of it is constantly evolving, most agree with the definition of sustainability

1

developed by the World Commission on Economic Development (WCED 1987), also known as the Brundtland Commission. In its 1987 proceedings, WCED defined sustainable development as "the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (p. 16). Thirty years later, while many may question the developmental aspect of sustainability, as some developments are clearly unsustainable, it is clear that sustainability, as an idea, is rooted in the care of future generations. Following this logic, this book is dedicated to the idea of sustainability understood in intergenerational terms, whose successful enactment depends on the quality of institutions and organizations created collectively by many generations of humans.

Furthermore, since the rapid expansion of the environmental or ecological movement in the 1960s and 1970s, we came to recognize that the environmental framing of sustainability is incomplete without recognizing its interconnectedness with social and economic pillars. However, we seem to overlook the no-less-important pillar of sustainability, which is culture. Yet a recognition of culture—broadly defined as human values and belief systems accumulated and transferred from one generation to another, as well as more narrowly construed as institutions and organizations of the cultural sector that are tasked with preserving and transferring cultural heritage and values from the past into the future (Williams, 1983)—is critical to a holistic understanding of sustainability. While acknowledging the significance of culture as shared norms and beliefs, this book specifically focuses on organizations in the cultural sector, and it makes a case for the importance of such organizations for understanding the very intention and logic of intergenerational sustainability.

The argument about the importance for sustainability of the arts, humanities, creativity, and cultural institutions through which creative impulses flourish, is not new (Matarasso, 2001; Moldavanova, 2013, 2014; Nurse, 2006; Throsby, 1995, 2005; Tubadji, 2010; Tubadji, Osoba, & Nijkamp, 2015). In fact, cultural sustainability scholarship has emerged in response to a policy effort to add cultural governance to Agenda 21 for sustainable development initially approved by the United Nations at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992. While, at the outset, the ecological dimension of Agenda 21 was dominant, many governments incorporated cultural development into their sustainable development goals, and, in 1998, the World Bank and UNESCO both endorsed the inclusion of culture in their sustainable development strategy (Duxbury, Cullen, & Pascual, 2012). The scholarship on the subject, however, fell short of properly conceptualizing

the intersection between culture and cultural organizations and sustainable development, which is the task that this book undertakes.

The key premise of this book is that organizations are an important, albeit often overlooked, level of sustainability. Yet sustainability as an institutional logic unfolds in organizations, and it is enacted by managers who make decisions and engage in sustainable thinking on a daily basis, leading them to reconcile current organizational realities and the need to adapt to those realities while considering the needs of future generations. Organizations represent the meso level of sustainable development that functions alongside the macro (societal or policy) and the micro (individual) levels (Leuenberger & Bartle 2009). The macro level seeks to define and pursue sustainability at a societal or community level (Adams, 2006; Dale, 2001; Edwards & Onyx, 2007; Fiorino, 2010; Nurse, 2006; Portney & Cuttler, 2010; Wang et al., 2012). The micro-level positions individuals as change agents in fostering or inhibiting sustainability (Domask 2007; Smith Voß & Grin 2010; Thistlethwaite & Paterson 2016). The meso level affords a crucial role to organizations in advancing societal sustainability goals (Leuenberger & Bartle 2009; Guthrie et al., 2010; Osborne et al., 2014; Portney & Berry, 2015; Stazyk et al., 2016; Moldavanova & Goerdel, 2018), and it concerns itself with the "long-term success and preservation of organizations" (Leuenberger & Bartle 2009, p. 4).

The emphasis on organizations in the sustainable development literature is inspired by the growing corporate social responsibility discourse that emphasizes a commitment of a corporation to generate profits while remaining socially and environmentally responsible (Elkington, 1994; Moldavanova & Goerdel, 2018; Osborne et al., 2014; Paulraj, 2011; Schaltegger et al., 2014; Smith 2012; Stead & Stead, 2013; Thomas & Lamm, 2012). Public management scholars, likewise, have begun to use the term "socially responsible organization" to refer to an organization that engages in internally and externally sustainable practices, such as, for example, the advancement of social equity (Stazyk et al., 2016). Sustainability in the public-sector context, however, should be distinguished from its framing in the corporate world due to the different goals and missions that organizations in both sectors pursue (Bansal & DesJardine, 2014; Moldavanova & Goerdel, 2018).

The book takes an organizational approach to sustainability (March & Olsen, 1989), drawing attention to the importance of organizational thinking about sustainability, which has been lacking in the past. The book relies specifically on the context of organizations found within the

domain of the arts and humanities, as a representative case of institutions created collectively by many generations while considering the needs of future generations, to unpack and describe sustainability as an organizational logic and routine. The book systematically conceptualizes the intersection between culture and sustainability by considering different types of organizations (university-affiliated and freestanding) as well as different subfields of the arts and humanities (museums, literature, music and performing arts). While the focus here is on the classical forms of culture, questions of sustainability also affect new and emerging cultural industries, such as streaming companies and virtual arts, and the key lessons of the book are also relevant for those kinds of industries.

The theoretical framework of organizational sustainability presented in the book, which could be applied to a variety of public-serving organizations, is the result of over five years of research and fieldwork that incorporated a variety of cultural organizations located in seven U.S. states as well as an arts ecosystem formed in one particular area: metropolitan Detroit. This approach, however, is not without limitations, as organizations included in the study are embedded in particular political and social environments, and the findings are impacted by such environments. For example, levels of support for arts and culture institutions in the United States vary by geographical location, and this support affects organizations' baseline for sustainability. Therefore, it is important to take into account local conditions when applying the framework to new contexts.

On the surface, the intent to explore the logic of organizational sustainability via the arts and humanities may appear unique, particularly because of its emphasis on cultural preservation, and that supports the preservation of cultural heritage, objects, and institutions for future generations (Alivizatou, 2016; Cerisola, 2019; Duxbury et al., 2012; Rubio, 2014). However, the logic of sustainability that unfolds within arts and humanities organizations, as well as broader managerial implications that we can draw from this context, is nearly universally applicable to all public-serving institutions, including both nonprofits and governments. Importantly, the significance for sustainable development of the arts, humanities, creativity, and institutions through which creative impulses flourish goes well beyond cultural preservation. Cultural institutions make important contributions to the economy, environment, and social systems in their communities (Kangas, Duxbury, & De Beukelaer, 2017; Matarasso, 2001; Moldavanova, 2013, 2014; Nurse, 2006; Throsby, 1995, 2005; Tubadji, 2010; Tubadji, Osoba, & Nijkamp, 2015).

The book's novelty lies in its recognition of the connection that exists between sustainability as an ethical intention and aspiration and sustainability as a deliberate organizational and management strategy: one that ensures cultural organizations can flourish across generations by effectively coping with environmental and common but increasingly complex structural problems. In other words, while sustainability is recognized here as an important societal goal to which institutions of arts and humanities contribute, sustainability is also viewed as an institutional logic that unfolds within specific organizational settings.

The ability of cultural institutions to advance sustainability in society depends on their own survival but also depends on organizational contributions to their communities and effective participation in various societal discourses. There are many examples of how modern-day cultural organizations make themselves relevant: from orchestras providing discounted or free tickets to museums exhibiting their collections in public places, there is a sense of larger social responsibility that penetrates the creative sector and its organizations that aspire to achieve or advance sustainability. Some have been arguing that it is about time to add "A" into the STEM acronym (STEAM), thereby adding to the already common scientific and technological modes of human discovery a more humanistic approach to the sustainability problem that includes contributions by arts and culture institutions.

A founder and executive director of a children's theater in Michigan, with whom I spoke while researching this book, provided a convincing analogy for the importance of the arts and humanities and creativity as helping to provide solutions to the various problems that humans face. He compared the role of the arts in a community to that of the highly valued O-Negative blood type to the Red Cross by saying that the arts, too, are "universal donors . . . We [the arts] can only take O-Negative, but every other blood type can take O-Negative. We solve everybody's problem; that's what the arts do" (Personal Communication, 2015). Indeed, the arts and humanities play many important roles in their communities, from instrumental, such as contributing to local economic development, revitalizing buildings, beautifying neighborhoods, and providing entertainment, to intrinsic, such as being a public good and value in themselves (Belfiore, 2002; Belfiore & Bennett, 2008; Kim, 2016; Markusen, 2014; Moldavanova, 2013, 2014). They also engage in semi-instrumental roles, such as serving as a source of social capital and societal values—including sustainable thinking and social justice (Moldavanova 2013, 2014;

Moldavanova & Wright, 2020). By influencing individual and collective values, the arts' contributions to local communities affect both current and future generations.

Many scholars of the arts and humanites, as well as cultural managers themselves, tend to prioritize the importance of instrumental over more intrinsic types of roles, particularly focusing on cutural organizations' contributions to economic development (Rushton & Landesman, 2013). This happens in part because instrumental roles result in measurable outcomes and provide a commonly acceptable justification for supporting the arts (often framing such support as a return on investment) and in part because these types of contributions are easier to grasp and directly observe. However, cultural organizations' missions have been shifting toward an emphasis on the semi-instrumental roles that affect individual and collective values and perceptions, thus contributing to sustainable communities in the long run.

As John Dewey argued, aesthetic experiences are often the longest-remembered experiences possessing a predictive capacity: "The first strings of dissatisfaction and the first intimations of a better future are always found in works of art" (Dewey, 1934). One of the properties of such experiences is their endurance: art in which meanings have received objective expression endure because they become part of the environment and ensure the transmission of cultural meaning over time, which in turn ensures their continuity in the life of civilization (Dewey, 1934). Following this line of thought, this book shows how, by contributing to the sustainability of communities and societies both now and in the future, cultural institutions build the basis for their own intergenerational sustainability. Furthermore, the book argues that cultural organizations, by pursuing strategies that allow them to continue in their role as sustainable stewards of cultural heritage, are in essence working today to protect the rights and interests of future generations.

This intergenerational view of sustainability adds to the existing sustainable development scholarship by considering the longer-term or intergenerational aspect of sustainability, as opposed to focusing primarily on short-term survival. Such immediate focus on sustainability as organizational survival is quite common in organizational sustainability literature (Bowman, 2011; Garvare & Johansson, 2010; Miragaia, Brito, & Ferreira, 2016; Stead & Stead, 2013; Van der Heijden, 2004), resulting primarily from the practical difficulty of thinking beyond current generations (Catron, 1996; Frederickson, 2010). The focus on short-term survival is

also influenced by the strategic management paradigm and business-like management approaches adopted by many public-sector organizations in the aftermath of the New Public Management movement (Bryson, 2018; Koteen, 1997).

This book offers an alternative point of view. It conceives organizational sustainability as a two-level concept that includes both institutional survival as a necessary baseline for sustainability and intergenerational or longer-term sustainability, understood as the ability of institutions to persist and fulfill their social missions in the long run (Moldavanova, 2016). This understanding is consistent with a normative view of sustainability that treats sustainability as a form of intergenerational equity and implies that future generations should be treated as a priority (Parfit, 1984) or at least given as much consideration as current generations (Barry, 1997; Catron, 1996; Tremmel, 2009). Organizational sustainability conceived in this way is fundamentally about ethics and ethical organizational practices, whether those practices affect natural environment, economy, social systems, or organizations themselves. In many ways, human instinct aimed at creating cultural institutions to preserve and transmit cultural heritage and values from one generation to another is an example of pursuing intergenerational sustainability in action and displaying care for those yet to be born.

While intergenerational sustainability could be viewed as an extension of organizational survival (thus appearing as a self-serving goal), it is uniquely important for ensuring larger societal outcomes that cultural organizations aspire to produce both in their local communities and globally. When applied to the cultural sector, the definition of sustainability advanced here is particularly relevant, as it ensures that cultural organizations are able to pursue their foundational mission: the protection, accumulation, and intergenerational transfer of collective cultural heritage and values. Moreover, the view of organizational sustainability presented here shows that, in order to sustain themselves, organizations must engage in a variety of strategies that address both internal organizational and external environmental concerns. More specifically, the concept of intergenerational sustainability unfolds via specific institutional logics and the day-to-day managerial practices in arts and humanities organizations.

As such, the book seeks to answer two primary research questions. First, what are the main long-term sustainability strategies developed by organizations that allow transforming immediate institutional survival into longer-term sustainability? Second, what strategies ensure the commitment of organizations to future generations? In answering these

questions, the book offers a theoretical framework for intergenerational organizational sustainability, and identifies and describes mechanisms and strategies, adopted by managers of cultural organizations, that maintain and enhance intergenerational sustainability. The broader message of the book is that intergenerational sustainability is not an outcome—it is a process and an ethic.

Organizational Sustainability Argument

The book's argument is based on the interplay of the two interconnected narratives of intergenerational sustainability—institutional resilience and institutional distinctiveness—and the explanation of how these two narratives foster organizational survival and sustainability via sustainable managerial thinking. Cultural organizations engage in a wide range of strategies that ensure their social relevance and lead to improved institutional resiliency, while also helping them to remain unique. Together, institutional resilience and distinctiveness lead to the formation of institutional capital, which helps formalized organizations to sustain themselves. Organizational capital may exist in many forms: financial (operational funds, endowments), physical (buildings and collections), virtual (websites, digital collections), human (artists, board, management, staff and volunteer capacity, community of donors and friends), and intangible (intrinsic value for society). Sustainability capital functions like a bank savings account: when money is tight and times are hard, organizations can spend some of their capital to bounce back after environmental shocks, or they can choose to use such capital for future investment and exploration of new paths.

Institutional resilience is understood here as "the capacity to cope with unanticipated dangers after they have become manifest, learning to bounce back" (Wildavsky, 1988, p. 77), the capacity that incorporates "both the ability of a system to persist despite disruptions and the ability to regenerate and maintain existing organization" (Gunderson & Pritchard, 2002, p. 4). Due to lack of information about the future, long-term planning strategies (risk aversion) are less important for cultural organizations' resilience strategies (immediate system responses, risk taking). This observation is consistent with the work of Aaron Wildavsky (1988) and with James G. March's decision theory (1994). The latter maintains that successful managers take risks in ways that are different from what rational-choice theory would suggest: managers take risks based on their

own previous experiences, and they tend to be confident in their ability to influence the external environment. In many ways, cultural managers approach risky situations with confidence; they act boldly and astutely in the face of uncertainty.

The resilience of cultural organizations cannot be reduced to merely seeking system efficiency. Rather, similar to other fields, resilience is both about the capacity of the system "to deal with shocks and disturbances" and to use "such events to catalyze renewal, novelty, and innovation" (Krasny, Lundholm, & Plummer, 2011, p. vii). Institutional resilience can be described as adaptability, flexibility and change, innovation, capitalizing on failure, and turning challenges into opportunities.

The second narrative of intergenerational sustainability is the institutional distinctiveness narrative. The purpose of this narrative is to enhance sustainability by promoting the institutional distinctiveness of the sector as a whole, as well as that of particular organizations. Institutional distinctiveness implies that organizations identify a unique institutional niche and direct their focus toward occupying that niche but also staying true to their missions and establishing the value of a particular art form or a particular organization without reducing it to a commodity. Managers' unwavering commitment to keeping institutional purpose in mind while making operational decisions is key to the distinctiveness narrative.

Compared to the institutional resilience narrative that is often voiced in museums' strategic plans, the institutional distinctiveness narrative is much less explicit. It is rooted in the interpretive institutional and managerial order rather than in specific programmatic documents, statutes, or other formalized routines. While the resilience narrative is important for ensuring the survival of different types of organizations and systems (including environmental, health and safety, disaster mitigation, and high-reliability systems), the distinctiveness narrative is particularly prominent in cultural organizations since their survival as well as intergenerational sustainability would be impossible without the distinct character that each of these organizations seeks to establish (and indeed the unique value that cultural organizations contribute to society). In the long run, these narratives together serve as the basis for the intergenerational sustainability of cultural organizations.

In a sustainable organization, the two narratives constitute a duality, both complementing and contradicting one another. Together, the resilience and distinctiveness narratives produce what has been described by Astley and Van de Ven as the "strategy/natural selection" dichotomy (Astley &

Van de Ven, 1983). For instance, distinctiveness allows an organization to occupy a unique institutional niche, which ensures its survival in the process of natural selection; at the same time, proactive strategic choices by institutional managers can also result in sustainable organizations. The natural selection paradigm has been developed by scholars of organizational ecology (Amburgey & Rao, 1996; Carroll, 1984; Hannan & Freeman, 1989) and implies that organizations have limited capacity to adapt their internal structure to changing environments, meaning that their chances of survival are determined by how well they "fit" into specific niches. The notion of strategic choice, meanwhile, is embedded in the strategic management literature (Brown, 2010; Bryson, 2018; Koteen, 1997; Varbanova, 2013); it recognizes the importance of adaptive organizational change. Thus, while natural selection implies that organizations are at the mercy of their environments, strategic choice recognizes the proactive role of organizational managers in fostering organizational change. Both approaches, however, are important for understanding the complex interplay among the narratives of sustainability.

What We Know about Organizational Sustainability

This book does not offer a universal prescription for organizational sustainability. Rather, the book advocates for a special kind of anticipatory thinking, an institutional and managerial rationality that considers questions of legacy and considers the needs of future generations, thus leading to sustainability. Sustainable thinking, therefore, represents a mindset or a mental framework that managers of cultural institutions engage in on a daily basis. Although there is no singular correct path for every institution to achieve sustainability, there are common lessons about sustainable organizations that can nevertheless be drawn. Moreover, the book's lessons about sustainable thinking in the arts and humanities are relevant to a wide range of public and nonprofit organizations beyond the arts and humanities. For example, one of the book's findings, based on the analysis of both university-affiliated and freestanding cultural institutions, is that while institutional arrangements are important predictors of a choice of sustainability strategies, the form itself does not determine long-term sustainability: the ability of managers to make sustainable choices on a daily basis defines outcomes favorable to intergenerational sustainability. This lesson is important for any organization aspiring to achieve sustainability.

The starting point in thinking about organizational sustainability as presented here is to recognize it as both an internal and an external construct. Externally, business management literature defines sustainable organizations as those that pursue the idea of Triple Bottom Line by maximizing economic returns while also minimizing any negative social and environmental outcomes of their profit-making strategies (Elkington, 1994; Osborne, Radnor, Vidal, & Kinder, 2014; Paulraj, 2011; Smith & Smith, 2012; Stead & Stead, 2013; Schaltegger, Beske, & Seuring, 2014; Thomas & Lamm, 2012). In the public sector, mission-driven organizations are tasked with even more ambitious goals beyond the harm-minimization narrative—they seek to create positive effects in a form of social, environmental, and economic outcomes for their local communities. Cultural organizations, for example, contribute to sustainable communities via instrumental, intrinsic, and semi-instrumental roles (Moldavanova 2013, 2014; Moldavanova & Wright, 2020), as discussed above.

Internally, sustainability is about the ability of organizations to withstand various internal and external pressures to continue their social missions. Thus, organizational survival serves as a baseline for sustainability. An important argument developed in this book is that the internal and external layers of sustainability are interconnected because by engaging in practices that contribute to sustainability in their communities, organizations simultaneously improve their own chances for immediate survival and long-term sustainability. At a certain point, internal sustainability challenges may affect all organizational types, no matter their age, size, or genre. Even old organizations may face the prospects of closure, thus making organizational sustainability a compelling problem for all.

This was, for example, the case of the Belle Isle Aquarium in Detroit, Michigan: a living aquatic museum and the oldest continually operating public aquarium in the United States at over a hundred years old. It closed its doors to the public in 2005, prior to the start of the Great Recession, due to financial problems and a lack of commitment on the part of the city's leadership to save it. But the museum was since brought back to life in 2012 by dedicated volunteers and supporters. Likewise, large and famous organizations, too, may struggle with the sustainability challenge. A good example from the same metropolitan area is the Detroit Institute of Arts, whose collections were viewed in 2013 as valuable monetary assets, and some of which the City of Detroit, upon declaring its own bankruptcy, considered selling in order to cope with its financial debts. The collections were preserved as a result of a "Grand Bargain" that involved a judicial

system, state government, Detroit citizens and public officials, and private foundations working together to find a viable compromise.

In the aftermath of the Great Recession, the sustainability challenge affected many performing arts institutions as well, some of which ceased to exist, such as the Florida Philharmonic Orchestra, the San Jose Repertory Theatre and San Jose Symphony, the Tulsa Philharmonic, the Colorado Springs Symphony, and the San Antonio Symphony, to name a few. The most stable of cultural institutions, public libraries, also may face closures, especially during economic recessions, as financially struggling local governments may prioritize supporting other types of services for their citizens. Other literary organizations, especially publishing houses, have seemed on the verge of extinction for the last 20 years or so, partially due to fluctuating reading rates, and partially due to the spread of online publishing and open access–type models. Yet, sustainability of all these institutional types is critical when it comes to preserving and intergenerationally transmitting collective cultural heritage, as well as educating the young about the humanistic values embedded in literature, music, historic artifacts, and other forms of embedded and living culture.

While each institutional story is in many ways unique, there are common lessons about sustainability that could be derived by looking at the experiences of those organizations that avoided collapse and have done quite well in becoming sustainable as both organizations and societal actors. What distinguishes those organizations is the balancing act in which they engage via institutional routines and managerial practices to reconcile the various tensions, and the ability of managers to balance such tensions while finding their sustainability models. Before introducing more details on how this balancing unfolds, it is important to mention several broader lessons about organizational sustainability that this book offers.

What Organizational Sustainability Is and Is Not

The first broader lesson about organizational sustainability, and the one that may displease some in the cultural community, is that sustainability is not about buildings, artifacts, or artistic excellence alone. Without a doubt, the quality of cultural artifacts, creative works, and performances—as well as the aesthetic appeal of museum buildings and performance halls in which such artifacts are exhibited and plays are performed—contribute tremendously to establishing the societal value of cultural institutions.

However, it is not the quality of buildings or the artistic value of collections that explains how organizations achieve sustainability. Likewise, although artistic excellence contributes to organizational sustainability, at the end of the day, it is not the ultimate factor that makes it or breaks it, as many high-quality institutions whose examples were given above did not survive the pressures of time. Rather, organizations that are able to transcend the boundaries of their buildings and physical locations, and that are capable of reaching out to their external environment, making local and global connections, and achieving overall social relevance, are the ones that achieve sustainability in a meaningful intergenerational sense.

Furthermore, sustainability itself is much more about intangible social connectedness than it is about buildings and other assets that cement institutional presence in their communities. Social connectedness and community embeddedness, to which connectedness leads, are among the most important building blocks of organizational social capital, which in turn ensures a different kind of cementing in local communities—via cultural experiences, individual insights, and social reflections about the nature of the human condition that cultural institutions offer. The very nature of experiences delivered via cultural institutions, their deliberate intent and instinctual focus on preserving human legacy for future generations, constitutes the important intangibles that communities value intrinsically. However, social connectedness, as an intangible construct and a form of organizational social capital, can also be transformed into very tangible organizational benefits and resources essential for both organizational survival and long-term sustainability. Thus, organizations that are well-connected are also more sustainable. Therefore, it is no surprise that many organizations pursue social connectedness as part of their strategy. Some even adopt connectedness as part of their mission. The Charles Wright Museum of African American History in Detroit, for example, is a case in point. As part of its postrecession revival strategy, the museum has been developing ways to connect with and become more relevant to a wider community of its stakeholders rather than positioning itself as a niche institution primarily focusing on African American stakeholders. Museum managers and the board of directors realized that organizational lack of social connectedness and its reliance on primarily bonding-type ties, which are formed among similar actors, are unsustainable in the long term.

At the local level, social connectedness results in a sense of community ownership and civic pride that protects organizations even during the hardest of times. Globally, connectedness is often achieved with the

help of technological innovations. As an example, many publishing houses and literary magazines have been exploring the value of web platforms as a way to better connect with their global readers. Others, such as Words Without Borders—a nonprofit organization located in Brooklyn, New York, which positions itself as a global literature initiative—support a range of web-based literary-translation projects that allow communicating literature to wider global audiences despite the language barriers.

When it comes to social connectedness as a path to greater organizational sustainability, it is hard to overemphasize its significance, especially for certain organizational types. For example, social connectedness plays an especially important role when it comes to the sustainability of urban organizations. Such organizations, on the one hand, benefit from plugging themselves into local social discourses that are relevant to the urban core, but they also benefit greatly from reaching out to communities beyond their immediate geography. In fact, for them, focusing too much on the local environment may deprive them of the ability to diversify their resource base, and thus position them too narrowly.

Reaching out to external communities and building bridging-type ties, which are formed among diverse actors, often involves relying on partnerships with other institutions. Such inter-organizational partnerships need to be formed organically, and with trusted actors; otherwise, they would not serve as effective bridges to geographically distant communities. Furthermore, in the cultural field, efforts of foundations and other donors to artificially induce such partnerships are often met with skepticism. Moreover, starting new partnerships requires time and other resources that some organizations, especially smaller ones, may lack. It is no surprise, then, that partnerships are often initiated by larger and more resourceful organizations, and, even then, smaller organizations may be concerned about preserving their institutional distinctiveness and about being "subsumed" by larger organizations.

There is also a problem with cross-jurisdictional partnerships, especially in environments that are characterized by a strong city-suburb divide. An example of such a divide is the Detroit metropolitan area, where community cultures and institutional mindsets are quite different, making it difficult for organizations to engage in meaningful collaborations across jurisdictional lines. Some suburban organizations, in particular, are wary of partnering with Detroit-based organizations, in part due to the unique historical legacy of this metropolitan area, the discussion of which goes beyond the scope of this book, but also because of the expectation that

urban organizations may lack resources and exhibit greater dependency, whereas partnerships work best among equals. There is also a similar culture of suspicion in the urban core itself, where organizations are skeptical of connecting with and relying on others, which is not a sustainable attitude. To that extent, other actors—such as universities, schools, and social-service nonprofits—appear to be important members of the arts and culture eco-system, bridging divides among its various parts.

The second lesson about organizational sustainability is that organizational sustainability cannot be reduced to financial sustainability, albeit that the terms are frequently used as synonyms. In fact, many organizational managers and board members see organizational fiscal health (having a proper mix of revenue sources, including at least some reliance on earned income; balancing revenues with expenses; and establishing stronger endowments) as their primary focus. While such strategies are generally associated with greater prospects for organizational survival, they may not necessarily lead to intergenerational sustainability. Similarly, when it comes to internal operations, organizational capacity (particularly the quality of human resources, staff, board, and volunteers) is very important for organizational sustainability. Likewise, engaging in systematic strategic planning is important, too, but sustainability is not about following a perfect plan or having the most qualified staff. Moreover, strategic plans that outline goals for "achieving" sustainability may not be enough to ensure that the institutions and systems we hope to bequeath to future generations will actually survive long enough to meet those goals.

Organizational survival is, without a doubt, conditioned upon a healthy bottom line and strong organizational capacity, as well as the ability to use the strategic planning process to address environmental dependencies. However, organizational sustainability, in substantive terms, is more about the mission and the ability of organizations to continually pursue their core missions for generations to come. Not every institution with a large financial endowment, for example, would be considered fully sustainable. Good examples of the distinction are the two historical estates in the Detroit metropolitan area associated with the prominent Ford family. One is the Henry Ford House located in Dearborn, a culturally diverse suburb of Detroit; and another one is the Eleanor and Edsel Ford House located in Grosse Pointe Shores, which is a more homogenous and economically well-off suburb of Detroit. The first organization was temporarily closed due to much-needed renovations and the lack of funds to do such renovations without closing. In response to long-standing

financial pressures, the organization was eventually moved under the larger umbrella of the Henry Ford Estates. Earlier in its history, the Henry Ford House likewise ran out of funds and was "gifted" to the University of Michigan Dearborn. Despite its financial insecurities, the Henry Ford House is a respected institution that enjoys substantial public recognition and is well-embedded within its community. At the same time, the Eleanor and Edsel Ford House possesses an unusually substantial endowment that guarantees its long-term financial safety. However, the organization is much less connected with the larger community, and it is seeking to establish its broader social relevance. In this example, it is the less financially well-off institution that has managed to establish its relevancy and to have a lasting intergenerational impact, and it is the more financially well-off institution that has struggled to become socially meaningful and intergenerationally significant.

The third lesson about organizational sustainability is that even though "maintenance" is embedded in its meaning, sustainability is not about stability and status quo. Organizational sustainability is more about change and adaptation than it is about stability. This is partially because the external environment in which cultural organizations exist is always changing, presenting both new opportunities and new challenges and thus prompting organizations to respond and adapt. Partially, because sustainable organizations are dynamic internally, they may go through multiple periods of crisis and change: staff and board rotations, evolution in mission statements, and changes in core programs. Organizations that sustain are, therefore, those that are capable of changing, learning, and adapting in the face of internal and external transformations.

In many cases, some of these changes are driven from the bottom up by organizational staff or artists. One example is an institutionalization of a hospital initiative by the musicians of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, where musicians decided to volunteer their time by performing in local hospitals. This started as an informal grassroots initiative based on musicians' own connections, but the management quickly realized that, if the orchestra is to keep up with its community-oriented mission, it needs to support the musicians in this endeavor and take on a leadership role. As a result, the orchestra was able to achieve greater social relevancy and also distinguish itself, thus serving as an example to others.

The fourth lesson about sustainability is about *not* avoiding stress. Stress is actually a good thing for organizations, as it pushes their managers to be more creative in figuring out what works. It also prompts managers

to think whether their organizations are working on developing distinctive competencies and exploring the path of becoming more socially relevant. This message was stressed in many interviews I conducted for this book. Managers of organizations that suffered from stress and forced to engage in various traditional forms of downsizing were also forced out of their comfort zones to develop new strategic partnerships, wider public outreach, more inclusive and innovative programming, and other methods aimed at making their organizations more resilient. In particular, institutions located in urban settings, and those that also experienced high degrees of external stress, were the ones pushed to reinvent themselves, capitalizing on the diversity of their environment and the richness of ideas that such diversity carries with it.

While many organizational managers had regrets about the high levels of stress their institutions had suffered, they also acknowledged the importance of stress for longer-term organizational sustainability. Several of them explicitly stated that stress prevented their institutions from becoming complacent and stagnant. For example, in the context of the Detroit metropolitan area, an innovative and entrepreneurial response to stress is something that particularly large, struggling organizations used to set their institutions on a more sustainable path. External stress was effectively used as a driver toward greater innovation and adaptation by such major institutions as the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, the Detroit Institute of Arts, and the Henry Ford Museum, to name a few.

The fifth lesson about sustainability is that it is not solely in the hands of organizational managers and board members. At a certain point, it is the quality of the operational environment and community culture itself that explains why some organizations thrive and develop more than others. This lesson reflects the core idea of the systems-thinking theory developed in the context of museums by Yuha Jung and Ann Rowson Love (2017) and that implies that the world is open and interconnected, the parts are situated in context, and they shape the whole. Following a similar logic, this book identifies the profound connection that exists between cultural organizations and their environments. While some might consider this type of connection a sort of curse, it is actually a blessing in disguise. On the one hand, arts and culture organizations contribute to their communities in so many different ways that go above and beyond the widely recognized economic development, revitalization, and beautification roles. Cultural organizations generate social capital and foster values, including those associated with sustainability, and they also have intrinsic

significance (Moldavanova, 2013, 2014; Moldavanova & Wright, 2020). On the other hand, their own vitality can fall prey to the problems that their communities experience, such as economic decline or demographic shifts.

What distinguishes communities in which arts and culture organizations thrive is a general sense of appreciation and support for arts and culture coupled with the overall sense of civic pride. This sense of civic pride is then transformed in a sense of ownership that exists in such communities in relation to their cultural amenities, and that is especially important in environments where public support for the arts is scarce. Consistent with Richard Florida's argument (2002), arts and culture tend to thrive in areas with high concentrations of educational infrastructure, especially in the presence of major universities. On the one hand, these types of areas are likely to be home to arts and culture donors with naturally high levels of appreciation for the arts. On the other hand, areas with high per-capita levels of education and the presence of educational institutions are also places where creative activities are often initiated in association with the aforementioned educational institutions. For example, many large universities have their own art galleries, museums, theaters, and performing arts centers. They also have departments that educate art professionals and others employed in the various related industries.

However, sustainability of arts and culture institutions is also a product of a particular community-level mindset that encourages the presence of vibrant arts and science centers, thriving libraries and historical museums, and well-attended community theater productions. Communities that have this mindset are places where people like to gather outside of their homes and where they view caring for community institutions, whether arts-related institutions or homeless shelters, as part of their lives and as part of their personal legacies. Typically, these are very diverse communities in terms of race, ethnicity, income, and professions, and such diversity is associated with particularly rich cultural expression. These are collaborative and connected kinds of communities, where people have a stake in each other and in community life, but these are not necessarily high-income communities, although the presence of resources is important for sustaining various forms of social infrastructure. Arts and culture organizations thrive in these kinds of communities. It is important, however, that arts and culture organizations foster the sense of community ownership by deliberately increasing their social relevance while also protecting their institutional distinctiveness.

However, even in declining communities, the arts can thrive if they are capable of embedding themselves into larger social discourses that are important for their communities. Libraries, museums, and theaters in struggling communities often bring a ray of light to the life of their residents, giving them hope, a sense of solidarity, and creative ideas on how to improve community life. Detroit Repertory Theatre is an example of an institution that plays these roles in the struggling city of Highland Park—one of Detroit's inner-ring cities that was severely affected by the downsizing of the car industry and subsequent population decline. Today, Highland Park is a high-crime and low-employment area riddled with abandoned houses and empty store fronts. This is where the Detroit Repertory Theater, a community-based professional theater, is located. It opened its doors in 1957 and survived its share of dark times in Detroit's history, including the race riots of 1967. The theater hires professional actors to present modern-day and classic plays to the Highland Park community, but it also forms an unseen web of social connections and serves as a "third" place for community residents who, due to their generally low-income status, are not traditionally viewed as core patrons of the arts. Yet, the theater has endured largely due to the support of its local community and because of the unique place it holds and the value it provides for that community. What this example shows is that it is not necessarily economically well-off communities that are able to sustain their cultural institutions; it is rather the value that communities place on their cultural institutions that determines organizational destiny.

Following the idea that cultural sustainability is a collective enterprise, and both cultural managers and communities have a responsibility for sustaining the arts, the sixth lesson about organizational sustainability is that it requires advance investment. In particular, more investment is needed to conquer the history of elitism that still permeates institutional structure and operations in many classical cultural institutions (Acevedo, & Madara, 2015; Garibay, 2009; Olivares & Piatak, 2022; Ostrower, 2020), thus creating an unwelcoming environment for many underrepresented visitors. Despite some advances that have been made in recent years to diversify organizational boards and staff and make programming more inclusive, more work needs to be done to improve cultural representation (Olivares & Piatak, 2022; Sandell, & Nightingale, 2012). Another form of important advance investment is in the early exposure to the arts via the public education function. Early exposure to reading, theater-going, and

other cultural experiences forms long-term habits that people pass on to their children and grandchildren. Arts and culture institutions may appear too intimidating to those who have not visited an art museum or heard a symphony perform inside a concert hall early on in their lives; they may feel put off by the rules that one is expected to follow while attending an exhibition or play hosted by a classical cultural institution. That is why engaging with community and facilitating inclusive access is so important for arts and culture organizations' sustainability.

This also brings up the argument about the importance of public support for the arts. Even if modest, public funding serves as both a financial baseline and a symbol of larger societal legitimacy of the arts as a valued form of both living and embedded human heritage. Note that libraries that typically receive at least some public funding, and whose developed network owes a lot to the legacy of Andrew Carnegie's philanthropic efforts in the early 20th century, rarely suffer from the claims of elitism. Libraries are present in their communities, they are welcoming and accessible, and they perform multiple social roles. However, the lack of early exposure to libraries—and book reading more generally—can be damaging.

Organizational Sustainability: The Balancing Nature of the Concept

While it is clear now what organizational sustainability is and is not, it is worth discussing a fundamental feature of organizational sustainability that emerged in the process of my research. If we were to use one word to describe organizational sustainability, it would be "equilibrium," meaning "balance." The balancing nature of organizational sustainability manifests itself in a dynamic interplay of complementary and/or opposing concepts. As this book argues, achieving proper balance between the two narratives—institutional resilience and institutional distinctiveness—is key to achieving intergenerational sustainability. To that extent, it is more likely that the strategies designed to enhance institutional resilience will conflict with institutional distinctiveness, rather than vice versa, especially when environmental pressures are high and cause significant competition due to resource scarcity. It might be tempting at those times to prioritize resilience strategies; yet maintaining institutional distinctiveness is of equally critical importance for intergenerational sustainability.