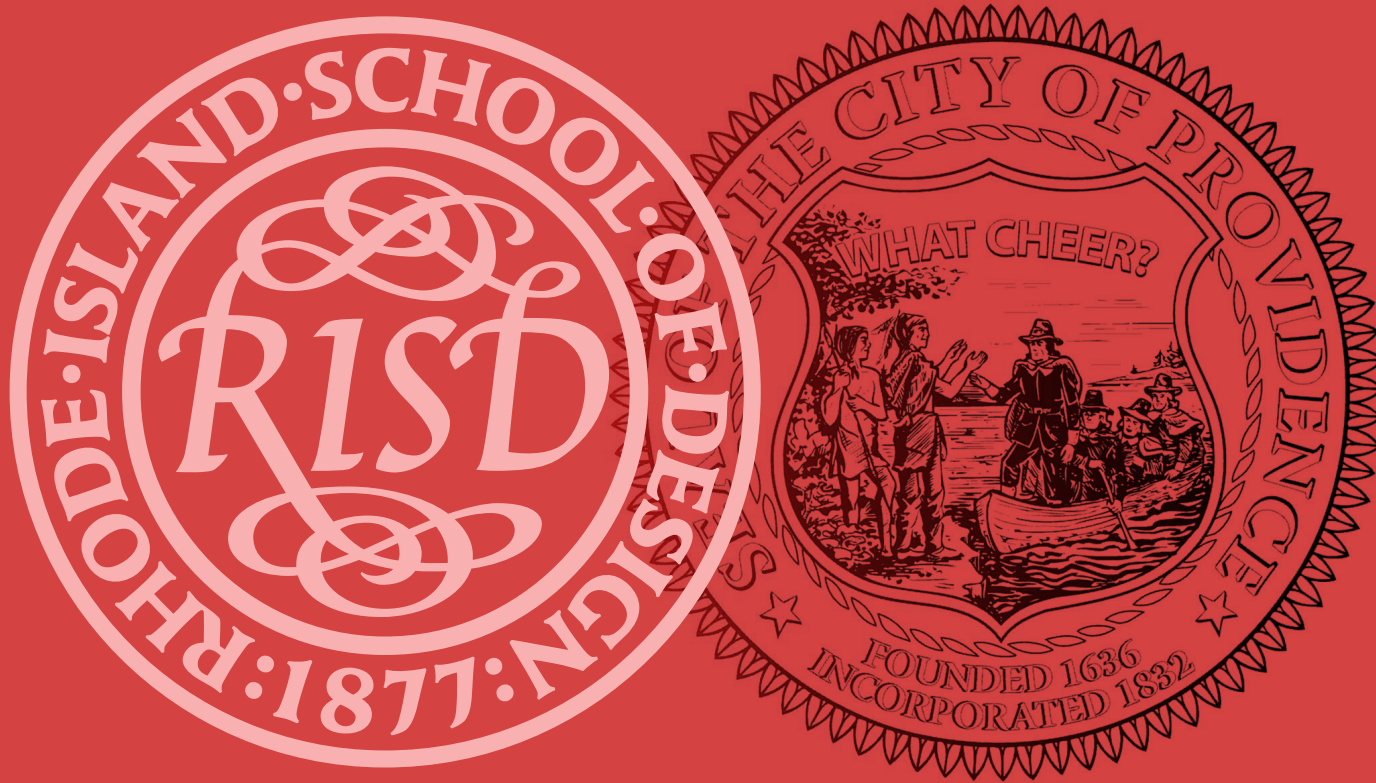


RISD'S ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PROVIDENCE



A summary of research from FY2019

OVERVIEW



Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) is a unique asset to the city of Providence. As one of the country's oldest and highest-ranked art and design schools, it contributes to the city in a wide variety of ways. This summary focuses on the institution's *economic impact* through research and data illustrating how RISD helps create a more vibrant and inclusive urban center.

OVERVIEW

In aggregate, RISD contributed \$112 million to the city of Providence in FY19. This figure includes direct institutional spending, student spending, institutional payments to the city and RISD's estimated share of the state's payment-in-lieu-of-taxes (PILOT) to the city. This economic activity is described in terms of the following three areas of impact:

**Anchoring
the local
economy**

**Contributing
to the
bottom line**

**Creating
quality
of place**



ANCHORING THE LOCAL ECONOMY

RISD makes a significant economic impact on the community, with a total contribution of \$112 million to the city of Providence in FY19.

\$85.9 million in total direct payments

\$51.2 million in net payroll

\$9.2 million for employee health benefits

\$25.5 million on construction and renovation

(including construction of North Hall, the new student residence hall)

16th largest employer in Providence (1,244 faculty and staff)

36% of RISD employees live in Providence

\$45.8 million in Providence-based spending for payroll,

health benefits and construction (53% of RISD's total

direct spending in these categories)

\$21.5 million in average annual spending locally by RISD students

\$16,900 annually per student living off campus (965 total)

\$3,500 annually per student living on campus (1,484 total)

\$1.1 million in additional spending by students' families during visits to Providence

ANCHORING THE LOCAL ECONOMY

In FY19 RISD made more than \$5 million in direct payments to the city through a variety of standing agreements.

RISD has contributed more than \$9.2 million in direct payments since 2004 as part of the 2003 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the city and its colleges and universities.

In addition, Providence receives a payment-in-lieu-of-taxes (PILOT) from the state of Rhode Island to support the cost of providing services to its colleges, universities and hospitals. In FY19, the city received \$33.8 million in PILOT funds, with approximately \$3.0 million of that attributable to RISD.

RISD paid the city \$253,900 in parking lease fees and spent \$172,241 to fully subsidize public transit rides for its students, faculty and staff. In addition to reducing traffic and pollution, this reduces wear and tear on city roads, resulting in lower maintenance costs.

CREATING QUALITY OF PLACE



Known as the Creative Capital, Providence depends on RISD and other colleges and universities for enriching its culture and reinforcing its reputation for quality urban life. While it's difficult to put a dollar value on this type of contribution, attachment to place often leads to local growth in GDP. RISD and the many alumni who choose to live in Providence help foster the city's appeal.

CREATING QUALITY OF PLACE

RISD's cultural assets are a draw for residents and visitors alike. Just under 123,000 people visited the RISD Museum in 2019, including more than 4,000 guided visits and 1,600 self-guided visits by students in Providence K-12 schools. In addition, RISD hosts numerous public events including:

Providence Children's Film Festival

An annual showcase of quality independent and low-budget films from throughout the world suitable for family viewing

A Better World by Design

A RISD and Brown student-led initiative that celebrates interdisciplinary collaboration between designers, educators, innovators and learners

Artist talks

Open to the general public, including recent visits from Heather Henson, Brian Gallagher, Hope Ginsburg, Sara Raza and Nicolas Galanin

Critical Encounters-Designing Innovation

A symposium held in conjunction with the RISD Museum exhibition *Gorham Silver: Designing Brilliance 1850-1970*, which explored the history and impact of the Providence-based Gorham Manufacturing Company

see additional examples in gallery below

CREATING QUALITY OF PLACE



Gorham Silver: Designing Brilliance 1850–1970



CREATING QUALITY OF PLACE



RISD sits within the College Hill Historic District, which includes some of the most celebrated architecture in the city. Its campus complements surrounding public green spaces such as Memorial Park and its physical plant staff maintain small, inviting outdoor spaces like the “RISD Beach” and Frazier Terrace on Benefit Street, along with the city’s Market Square and portions of the River Walk.

CREATING QUALITY OF PLACE

RISD supports programs aimed at increasing access to education for local residents.

More than 117 teens participated in Project Open Door, RISD's free art education program for underserved residents of Providence and other RI communities in need.

In 2019 RISD offered 79 scholarships to Rhode Island students, with an average annual award of \$30,808—totaling \$2.3 million overall.

Every year RISD supports a variety of other educational opportunities, including professional development for local educators (187 total RI-based visits in FY19).

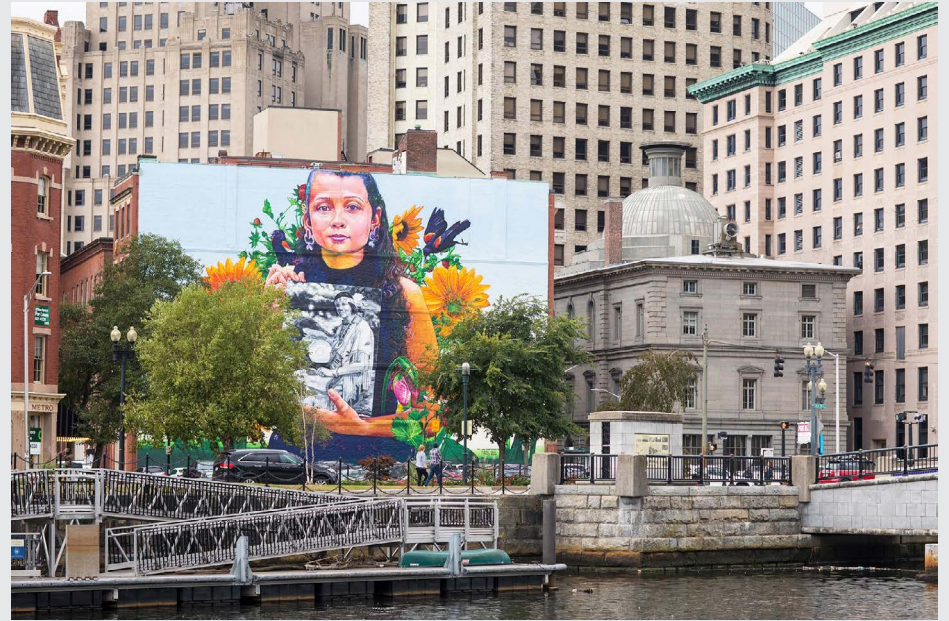
The RISD Museum offers free admission every Sunday (10 am–5 pm) and on the third Thursday evening (5–9 pm) every month. Children, students under 18 and active-duty US military personnel and their families have free access to exhibitions and special programming year-round.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Members of the RISD and local communities work together to improve the quality of life in Providence.



Five affordable, net-zero homes designed in a RISD studio are being built in Olneyville.



RISD grad Yarrow Thorne founded The Avenue Concept to enhance urban life in Providence through public art.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



RISD Architecture students work with the Southside Community Land Trust and other nonprofits to design and install curbside gardens in South Providence. [↗](#)



Interior Architecture students partner with the Episcopal Diocese of RI to reimagine Providence's Cathedral of St. John. [↗](#)

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



RISD's Project Open Door helps underserved teens explore their creative interests and prepare for college.



As the keynote speaker at DesignWeek RI,  RISD alum and former White House Creative Director Ashleigh Axios highlights the role of design during the Obama years.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



The Nature Lab's 80th anniversary celebration culminates in a thought-provoking exhibition and symposium probing our complex relationship with nature.



Through a new graduate degree program, students at RISD and URI explore interdisciplinary approaches to coastal sustainability.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



A groundbreaking new collaboration between RISD and Infosys provides global industry leaders with the design tools they need to solve complex problems.



RISD hosts a multidisciplinary initiative on gun violence that draws attention to the thousands of lives lost needlessly in the US every year.



APPROACH TO RESEARCH

This document follows the same approach and template as a 2016 study of RISD's economic impact on the city of Providence. RISD staff members compiled the data for this iteration. Sources for all statistics included in this summary are indicated below:

<u>Statistic</u>	<u>Source</u>
employment	<i>RISD Payroll Office, FY19</i>
payroll	<i>RISD Payroll Office, FY19</i>
construction spending	<i>RISD Construction Planning & Management, FY19</i>
health benefits spending	<i>RISD Human Resources, FY19</i>
employer ranking in Providence	<i>Providence Book of Lists, 2019</i>
student enrollment	<i>RISD Residence Life</i>
student spending	<i>IPEDS College Data, 2018-19</i>
pre-college visits	<i>RISD Admissions</i>
city MOU payments	<i>Memorandum of Understanding Agreement</i>
direct payments	<i>RISD Office of Budget & Financial Planning, FY19</i>
state PILOT contribution	<i>RI Office of Municipal Affairs, FY17 state contribution based on 12/31/16 assessed values</i>

APPROACH TO RESEARCH

<u>Statistic</u>	<u>Source</u>
Property taxes	<i>RISD Office of Budget & Financial Planning, FY19</i>
RIPTA payments	<i>RISD Office of Budget & Financial Planning, FY19</i>
Museum visits	<i>RISD Museum, FY19</i>
Project Open Door	<i>Project Open Door</i>
scholarships	<i>RISD Student Financial Services, FY19</i>
Continuing Education	<i>RISD Continuing Education, FY19</i>