

Philadelphia Dalí exhibition generates \$55 million

Every available ticket sold for this blockbuster show

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The Salvador Dalí retrospective, which closed at the Philadelphia Museum of Art on 30 May, generated \$55 million for the Philadelphia region, including \$4.46 million in state and local taxes, according to a study conducted by a local firm, Urban Partners. The economic impact assessment was based on survey responses from about 1,000 visitors to the show, and on information provided by tour operators. The report says that approximately 85% of the 370,000 visitors to the exhibition travelled from outside the city and more than 39,000 of them stayed in a hotel. The show benefited other destinations in Philadelphia as well, attracting some 52,000 visits to sites such as Independence National Historic Park, the report says and the Pennsylvania Academy of Arts.

The Dalí exhibition, first shown at Palazzo Grassi in Venice last year, was at the centre of a city-wide marketing push co-sponsored by the Philadelphia Museum, its corporate sponsor Advanta, and the local tourism and convention bureaus. They created hotel, restaurant, and shopping tie-ins, hung banners all over Philadelphia and New York, and placed advertisements throughout the region—a campaign the partners said was valued at \$2.6 million.

The exhibition was so popular that the museum extended the show's run by two weeks and sold every available ticket, staying open from 8am to midnight during the last 10 days.

Gail Harrity, chief operating officer of the museum, says the study's "calculations show that the museum's programmes and activities have a great impact on our region's economic vitality, and that for every dollar invested in the museum there is a far greater return. The museum", she concludes, "is an excellent investment, at any time".

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