

arden armbruster

ardenarmbruster.com • adarmbruster@gmail.com • Brooklyn, NY • she/her/hers

Cultural policy analyst, researcher, and educator, experienced in cross-sectoral analysis and translating complex data into insights for government and civil society.

EDUCATION

Master of Public Administration, Baruch College. GPA: 4.0 (2022)

Bachelor of Music, The University of North Carolina School of the Arts. GPA: 3.9 (2014)

EXPERIENCE

CURRENT

Lead Budget and Policy Analyst, NYC Independent Budget Office (2024–present)

- Leads a policy portfolio covering NYC's cultural agencies, public libraries, and criminal legal systems
- Establishes agency research priorities across concurrent projects, leading project teams, and supervising interns
- Produces analyses that inform the mayoral administration, elected officials, the press, and the public about the city's budget, spending, staffing, and other policy decisions
- Presents findings and builds relationships with a wide range of stakeholders to further municipal policy conversations and improve public understanding of city budget and policy practices

Budget and Policy Analyst, NYC Independent Budget Office (2022–2024)

- Conducted research on and responded to inquiries about NYC's cultural and criminal legal agencies
- Produced written reports, slideshows, and infographics on budget and policy topics
- Corresponded with the public, elected officials, advocates, and press

PREVIOUS

Graduate Intern, Office of Data & Technology, Taxi & Limousine Commission (Summer 2022)

Contributed research and data analysis to the city's [first electrification plan](#) for NYC's for-hire vehicle fleet.

Graduate Assistant to Professor Michael Seltzer, Baruch College (2021–2022)

Supported graduate coursework on racial equity and philanthropy and coordinated a leadership program for emerging nonprofit executives.

Administrator, Mellon Public Humanities & Social Justice Scholars, Hunter College (2021)

Managed grant requirements, public programs, and correspondence for a humanities research program.

Production Coordinator, Public Programs, The New York Public Library (2017–2020)

Produced 90+ public programs annually as one of two producers, from managing speaker contracts and logistics to running ticketing systems to coordinating day-of with facilities, security, and event staff.

Assistant/Associate Producer of Performing Arts Programs, Symphony Space (2015–2017)

Produced 60+ events annually on a team of two, overseeing artist contracts, department invoices, and department intern while managing events: coordinating box office, front of house, and technical crews.

Company Manager, The Nouveau Classical Project (2015–2017)

Supported administration, fundraising, and event production for an avant-garde classical music ensemble.

Education Coordinator, PopsEd, The New York Pops (2015)

Handled administrative and on-site logistics for the education initiative of the nation's largest independent pops orchestra.

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Artist Residency Intern, SPACE on Ryder Farm (Summer 2014)

Supported daily and special event logistics for a residency program on an organic farm in upstate New York.

William R. Kenan Jr. Fellow, Lincoln Center Education (2014)

The Kenan Fellowship provides an opportunity for recent graduates to train in Lincoln Center Education's Aesthetic Education philosophy while developing a professional network in New York City.

LEADERSHIP & SERVICE

Co-founder and Co-host, NYC Arts and Cultural Researchers (2024–present)

Professional development and networking community for researchers in the cultural sector and creative industries.

Part-Time Lecturer, Master of Arts Administration Program, Teachers College (2024–present)

Co-taught and co-created courses with Gonzalo Casals on critical analytical skills in the arts:

- “Data Analysis for Decision-Making in the Arts” (Fall 2025, [evaluations here](#))
- “Using Data for Cultural Policy and Advocacy” (Fall 2024, [evaluations here](#))

Public Speaking & Media Appearances

- [Presentation for Bronx Community Board 8 on Arts Education](#) (May 2025)
- [NYC City Council Arts Education Hearing Testimony](#) (April 2025)
- [The New York Times Close-Up](#) (March 2024)
- [The Power of Transparency: Towards An Open Data Agenda For Culture & Arts](#) (March 2024)

SKILLS

Research and Analysis

- Quantitative research: Research design, administrative data analysis, descriptive and inferential statistics, data wrangling, critical evaluation of research studies
- Data collection: Development of survey instruments, collection design for research and operations
- Other: Data visualization, querying relational databases

Professional Skills

- Communication: Presentations, public speaking, plain language, teaching, training
- Other: Budgeting, nonprofit and public management, program evaluation, copy editing

Software and Applications

- Data analysis and management: R, Excel, Airtable, PowerBI, Stata, ArcGIS, SQL
- NYC government systems: CHRMS, FMS3, Crystal
- Survey and website builders: SurveyMonkey, Qualtrics, WordPress, Squarespace, Mailchimp
- Standard professional applications: Google Workspace, Microsoft Office Suite, Canva

Trainings

- Procurement 101 (NYC Mayor's Office of Contract Services, 2026)
- Microsoft Power BI Data Analyst (PL-300Too) (Microsoft, 2025)
- Introduction to Python (Datacamp, 2024)
- Rethinking Criminal Justice as Public Health (Columbia University, 2023)
- Data Analytics: Tools and Techniques for Auditors (NYC DCAS, 2023)
- ArcGIS Pro: Essential Workflows (ESRI, 2023)
- Building Racial Equity Training (Race Forward, 2022)

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WRITING

[*Painting the Town's Budget: An Overview of DCLA Expense Funding, 2017–2026*](#) (NYC IBO, 2025)

Analysis of NYC Department of Cultural Affairs spending from fiscal year 2017 through 2026, providing transparency into program-level funding otherwise unavailable in public budget documents.

[*Testimony on Cultural Development Fund Programs in NYC Public Schools*](#) (NYC IBO, 2025)

Analysis of NYC Department of Education teacher certification data and Department of Cultural Affairs program location data to identify geographic disparities in arts education access.

Press: [NY Daily News](#), [Yahoo! News](#), 1010 WINS

[*A Shrinking System with Similar Spending: A Decade of Jail Trends, 2014–2023*](#) (NYC IBO, 2024)

Overview of changes in Department of Correction population, staffing, and spending using city administrative, payroll, and budget data that found stable jail costs despite substantial drops in headcount for both incarcerated people and staff, highlighting institutional persistence in criminal justice systems.

Press: [Gothamist](#), [City and State](#), 1010 WINS

[*In Custody: Length of Stay and Population Demographics at NYC Jails, 2014–2023*](#) (NYC IBO, 2024)

This report charts the changes to the number and characteristics of people incarcerated in NYC jails over the prior 10 years through longitudinal population data provided by the NYC Department of Correction.

Press: [NYT Close Up](#), [Queens Eagle](#), PIX11

[*Money, Money, Monet: Identifying New York City Payments to Cultural Nonprofits*](#) (NYC IBO, 2023)

Matching across millions of payments made by the NYC government in 2022, this analysis calculates the total paid to arts and culture nonprofits by the city, pointing to lesser known pathways for city arts funding.

[*Where Are Cultural Development Fund Awards Distributed Throughout New York City?*](#) (NYC IBO, 2023)

Analysis using Department of Cultural Affairs and IRS data to assess the spatial distribution of city arts grantees across the five boroughs.

[*Art, Democracy, and Economics: Measuring the Arts' Relationship to Civic Engagement*](#)

(Baruch College MPA capstone, 2022)

Using linked CPS and ATUS survey data, this research found a positive, moderate association between participating in arts activities and participating in civic activities such as volunteering and voting.

Co-authored reports:

[*How Federal Budget Changes Could Impact New York City Cultural Organizations*](#) with Erin Unger (NYC IBO, 2025)

Overview of early to mid-2025 federal actions related to the arts and analysis of NEA, NEH, and IMLS grants made to NYC nonprofits.

[*Changes to New York City Employee Staffing Levels*](#) with Cameron Chapman (NYC IBO, 2025)

Analysis of citywide and agency-level city employee headcount trends in the context of public discussion of delayed city services.

Press: [The Chief Leader](#)

[*Capital Projects on Rikers Island*](#) with Zachary Herman (NYC IBO, 2024)

Examination of maintenance and repairs costs at Rikers Island jails, given capitalization limitations inherent in the legally mandated closure of the facilities. The analysis identified paths forward for the nearly \$400 million remaining in capital needs to maintain the jails and increasing maintenance operations costs.