

IN THIS TOGETHER:

ART, BELONGING, AND THE URGENCY
OF SOCIAL CONNECTION





AT A TIME OF DEEP LONELINESS, **ART HELPS US RECONNECT**— TO OURSELVES, TO ONE ANOTHER, AND TO OUR COMMUNITIES.



1. THE ISSUE

SOCIAL ISOLATION IS AS DANGEROUS TO YOUR HEALTH AS SMOKING 15 CIGARETTES PER DAY AND LEADS TO:



INCREASED RISK OF DEMENTIA



INCREASED RISK OF STROKE



INCREASED RISK OF EARLIER DEATH

Across generations, communities, and geographies, many people are struggling to feel seen, connected, and less alone. Loneliness and social isolation—once considered private experiences—are now widely recognized as significant factors affecting health, civic life, and community resilience.

Research increasingly confirms what people already feel. [The Social Connection in America 2025 Report](#) documents widespread disengagement across age groups, with nearly three-quarters of respondents reporting that they rarely gather with close friends or family. [The U.S. Surgeon General’s Advisory on the Healing Effects of Social Connection](#) links social isolation to increased health risks and decreased well-being.

2. A DISTINCTIVE PARTNERSHIP

For over a century, the Springville Museum of Art has served as a place of reflection, beauty, and shared experience. The Museum represents a belief in the power of art to connect people—to themselves, to one another, and to their communities.

In This Together builds on that legacy through a rare and innovative collaboration with [Dr. Julianne Holt-Lunstad](#), one of the world’s leading researchers on social connection and health. Her work—spanning more than two decades and more than 3.4 million participants globally—has been central to the recognition of loneliness and social isolation as serious risk factors for early mortality and chronic illness, shaping policy and practice at national and international levels.

RESEARCH CLARIFIES THE STAKES.
ART MAKES THEM HUMAN.



DR. JULIANNE HOLT-LUNSTAD



SPRINGVILLE MUSEUM OF ART

PHASE 1: REGIONAL EXHIBITION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (2026-2027)

The initiative begins with a regional exhibition and community engagement program designed to translate social connection research into lived experience.

PHASE 1 INCLUDES:



A REGIONAL EXHIBITION

featuring 12–20 Utah artists selected through an open call, showcasing work that fosters connection and reflects themes drawn from social connection research



INTERACTIVE EXHIBITION

elements that encourage reflection, dialogue, and shared experience



A MAGAZINE-STYLE PUBLICATION

pairing artwork with accessible research context



PUBLIC PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

designed to cultivate meaningful social connection among diverse audiences

This phase establishes the narrative, artistic, and community foundation for the initiative—laying the groundwork for broader impact.



PHASE 1: GOALS

By the conclusion of Phase 1 (2026–2027), *In This Together* aims to:



Foster meaningful moments of connection among exhibition visitors and program participants



Increase public awareness of social connection research



Support artists in translating complex ideas into human-centered forms



Demonstrate how arts institutions contribute to belonging and community health



Develop a replicable model for future arts-based connection initiatives



Build and strengthen a network connecting artists, researchers, arts organizations, philanthropists, and advocates working at the intersection of art and social connection

These goals guide both program design and evaluation, ensuring the work remains grounded and intentional.

3. LOOKING AHEAD

Phase 2 (2027–2029)—developed in collaboration with partners and funders—will expand the initiative nationally through a traveling exhibition, a major publication, and deeper cross-sector collaboration.

Future growth will be shaped by what is learned in Phase 1.