



2024

# ARTIST COMMUNITY SURVEY TECHNICAL REPORT



GREATER PITTSBURGH ARTS COUNCIL  
Arts loud and clear

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## About this Report

The Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council regularly measures the health of Greater Pittsburgh's arts and culture sector. Our Arts Community Survey is conducted every two years and tracks the challenges, accomplishments, and aspirations of artists and arts and culture organizations in the region.

In 2024, the organization community survey was combined with PA CultureCheck, a joint project between PA Humanities, The Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance, and the Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council. For that reason, this report focuses specifically on the 2024 survey of artists.

This technical report provides a detailed breakdown of all questions asked in the 2024 Artist Community Survey. For a condensed version of our findings and takeaways, please visit [pittsburghartscouncil.org/research](https://pittsburghartscouncil.org/research) for the shorter summary report.

## Scope and Methods

The Artist Community Survey was a 39-question digitally distributed survey administered over five weeks. Survey questions were connected to the following research questions:

1. How does the quality of life for artists continue to evolve based on access to basic needs (i.e., housing, health insurance, living wage, etc.)?
2. What are the biggest barriers to artists' career advancement and success?
3. How do artists perceive access to opportunities, funding, or exposure? How do perceptions vary across lines of difference in identity or experience?
4. How do artists feel about their future in the Greater Pittsburgh area?

## Responses, Compensation, and Data Validation

The Arts Council believes in compensating artists for their labor. Artist respondents received \$15 in exchange for their time to complete our survey.

This year's artist survey had record participation, receiving 340 (295 complete and 46 partial) individual responses. Three responses were removed due to being out of geographic range, leaving 337 responses to be analyzed.

## Limitations

The primary limitation of this survey is its overrepresentation of Allegheny County artists (90%). When generalizing about artists in the Pittsburgh area, this geographic representation should be noted.

## Definitions

The following terms are used throughout this report:

### Weighted Average

Weighted averages are determined by assigning a numeric score to each answer on a scale (i.e., “not at all important” = 1; “very important” = 5) and calculating the average score based on the number of respondents who selected each answer choice. Answers with the highest weighted averages were most frequently rated as having high significance or importance to respondents. In these surveys, both scales of 1-4 and 1-5 were used. Maximum values are noted where applicable.

### Global Majority Artists

When speaking about racialized people and or organizations as a collective, this report uses the term “Global Majority.” The following definition is attributed to Rosemary Campbell-Stephens MBE from the essay “Global Majority; Decolonizing the language and Reframing the Conversation about Race.”

“Global Majority is a collective term that first and foremost speaks to and encourages those so-called, to think of themselves as belonging to the majority on planet earth. It refers to people who are Black, African, Asian, Brown, dual-heritage, indigenous to the global south, and or, have been racialized as 'ethnic minorities'. Globally these groups currently represent approximately eighty per cent (80%) of the world's population, making them the global majority now, and with current growth rates, notwithstanding the Covid-19 pandemic, they are set to remain so for the foreseeable future.<sup>1</sup>”

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<sup>1</sup> Rosemary Campbell-Stephens, “Global Majority; Decolonising the language and Reframing the Conversation about Race,” 2020, [www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/-/media/files/schools/school-of-education/final-leeds-beckett-1102globalmajority.pdf](http://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/-/media/files/schools/school-of-education/final-leeds-beckett-1102globalmajority.pdf).

The Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council updated its style guide in 2024 to replace the term BIPOC with Global Majority at the recommendation of its Learning and Leadership Committee, an advisory committee of Global Majority arts leaders, artists, culture bearers, and creative entrepreneurs.

Where there were differences for Black respondents specifically, those differences are also noted in this report.

## **Emerging Artists**

This report defines “emerging artists” as people who reported practicing art in Pittsburgh for five years or less. We acknowledge that the actual length of the “emerging” career phase will vary from artist to artist and is not marked by passage of time alone.

## Who Responded

Artist Type/Role (check all that apply)		
Role	Percent	Count
an independent artist	86.94%	293
a creative	62.31%	210
an artist affiliated with a specific arts organization	20.18%	68
part of an arts co-op, collective, performance group, etc.	13.06%	44
the owner of an arts business	30.86%	104
an artist entrepreneur	36.50%	123
an artist activist	18.10%	61
an arts administrator	10.98%	37
a teaching artist or arts educator	40.36%	136
Other (please specify)	6.53%	22

“Other” responses included art and art education students, space curator, former arts educator, artists in transition, retired artists, and specifications of arts disciplines.

Arts Discipline		
Discipline	Percent	Count
Dance	6.53%	22
Music	14.54%	49
Opera	2.08%	7
Musical Theatre	5.04%	17
Theatre (dramatic, comedy, mime, puppet, etc.)	10.39%	35
Storytelling	18.10%	61
Visual Arts: 2-dimensional (graphics, painting, etc.)	56.68%	191
Visual Arts: 3-dimensional (sculpture, installation, etc.)	29.38%	99
Design Arts (architecture, graphic, fashion, etc.)	21.96%	74
Crafts (clay, fiber, metal, wood, etc.)	22.26%	75
Photography	20.77%	70
Media Arts (film, audio, video, etc.)	21.07%	71
Literature (fiction, non-fiction, poetry)	17.21%	58
Interdisciplinary	13.65%	46
Folk/Traditional Arts	5.93%	20
Humanities	4.45%	15

Comments included: mixed media arts, printmaking, digital artistry, illustration, cartooning, nontraditional styles of artistry such as floral and culinary arts, and further specifications of art practices within disciplines.

Years lived in the Greater Pittsburgh Region		
Year(s)	Percent	Count
Less than one year	1.01%	3
1-2 years	4.70%	14
3-5 years	11.07%	33
6-10 years	13.42%	40
11-15 years	8.39%	25
15+ years	54.03%	161
Other (please specify)	7.38%	22

“Other” responses included various time ranges longer than 15+ years, as well as non-continuous years

Length of Artistic Practice in Pittsburgh		
Time	Percent	Count
Less than one year	1.01%	3
1-2 years	8.72%	26
3-5 years	16.78%	50
6-10 years	21.14%	63
11-15 years	11.41%	34
15+ years	35.23%	105
Other (please specify)	5.70%	17

“Other” responses included various time ranges longer than 15+ years, as well as non-continuous years

Which of the following best describe your race or ethnicity? (Check all that apply)		
Race/Ethnicity	Percent	Count
American Indian or Alaska Native	1.68%	5
Asian or Asian American	6.40%	19
Black or African American	22.22%	66
Latine/a/o/x or Hispanic	5.72%	17
Middle Eastern or North African	1.35%	4
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.34%	1
White or European	64.31%	191
Prefer not to answer	6.40%	19
Another race or ethnicity not listed above or prefer to self-identify:	5.05%	15

Self-Identifying responses included Biracial, Mixed race, Jewish, Indian, Romani, 2<sup>nd</sup> generation Italian

<b>Which of the following best describes your gender? (Select one answer)</b>		
<b>Gender Identity</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Count</b>
Woman	60.27%	179
Man	23.23%	69
Non-binary	4.38%	13
Agender	0.34%	1
Gender fluid	2.36%	7
Gender queer	3.70%	11
Prefer not to answer	4.04%	12
Prefer to self-describe:	1.68%	5

Self-describing responses included genderfluid and nonbinary, trans masc nonbinary, two spirit

<b>Do you identify as a member of the LGBTQ+ Community?</b>		
<b>Identification</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Count</b>
Yes	29.29%	87
No	63.30%	188
Prefer not to answer	7.41%	22

<b>Do you identify as transgender?</b>		
<b>Identification</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Count</b>
Yes	3.03%	9
No	92.26%	274
Prefer not to answer	4.71%	14

<b>Do you identify as a person with a disability (a sensory, physical, mobility, health or age-related, cognitive, mental health, or other impairment or medical condition)?</b>		
<b>Identification</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Count</b>
Yes	30.64%	91
No	56.90%	169
Prefer not to answer	6.06%	18
Prefer to self-describe	6.40%	19

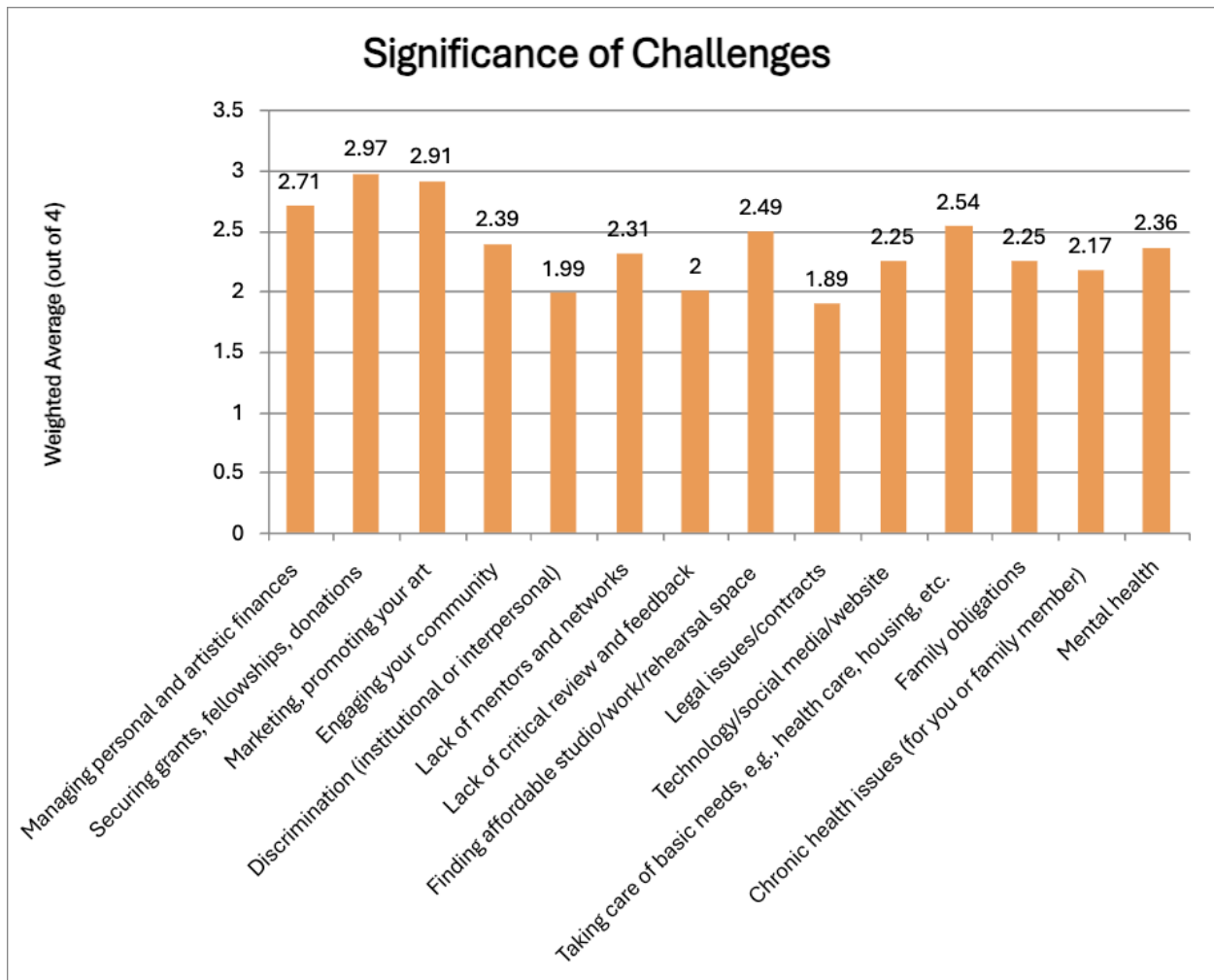
Self-describing responses included cancer survivor, age related conditions, mental health diagnoses, household impacted from partner ability status, vision related condition, colorblindness



# Artist Challenges and Living Conditions

## Significance of Challenges and Barriers

Artists were asked to “rate the significance of challenges and barriers you face in being an artist” from the list in the table below on a scale from “less significant” (scoring of one point) to “extremely significant” (scoring of four points). There was also a “don’t know/not applicable” option, which was not scored. The following chart demonstrates the weighted average scores for each barrier/challenge out of a maximum score of four points.



Comments included:

- “Changing landscape of priorities for foundations and what they want to fund.... Harder to find arts funding let alone there is nothing specific for dance”
- “I’ve been working as an artist for 25 years in the Pittsburgh area. Most of these categories were extremely significant for the first half of my career. There were fewer arts opportunities, and less support for emerging artists, in Pittsburgh in the first ten years of my career.”

- “Another challenge I currently face is continuously generating enough income from my creative practice that allows me the time and financial security to pursue more opportunities, such as grants and public art.”
- “If this is helpful, I find that personally each of these things interact so closely with each other. Due to lack of employment I find the small amount of funding that I would use to grow my artistic practice is used on my basic needs instead. Which leaves little to know room to allow for creativity to flourish!”
- “Financial stability to afford classes, coaching, headshots and lessons. Lack of union contracts being offered. Job flexibility that allows me to audition, perform and practice my craft.”
- “The lack of artistic opportunity severely impacts our ability to be productive and realize our creative goals. The few opportunities that exist are always through the same few organizations and often given to the same groups of artists.”

## Differences by Race

When compared to the top five challenges and barriers for the average all artists, the average for artists of the Global Majority shared the same top five challenges and barriers, overall. Artists of the Global Majority identified the same top three challenges as barriers in the same order as the average of all artists. The fourth and fifth highest rated challenges and barriers for Global Majority were reversed in order (highlighted in the chart below). Notably, the weighted score for each challenge/barrier is higher by at least 0.15 in every category for artists of the Global Majority compared to the average of all artists.

<b>Top 5 Challenges and Barriers: All Artists</b>	<b>Weighted Score (Out of 4)</b>
Securing grants, fellowships, donations	2.97
Marketing, promoting your art	2.91
Managing personal and artistic finances	2.71
Taking care of basic needs	2.54
Finding affordable studio/work/rehearsal space	2.49

<b>Top 5 Challenges and Barriers: Artists of the Global Majority</b>	<b>Weighted Score (Out of 4)</b>
Securing grants, fellowships, donations	3.12
Marketing, promoting your art	3.06
Managing personal and artistic finances	2.95
Finding affordable studio/work/rehearsal space	2.76
Taking care of basic needs	2.70

## Differences for Emerging Artists

Emerging artists also identified “securing grants, fellowships, donations,” “marketing and promoting your art,” “managing personal and artistic finances,” and “taking care of basic needs” as top challenges and barriers. For these artists, “Finding affordable studio/work/rehearsal space” is not a top challenge/barrier and “mental health” is instead within their top five.

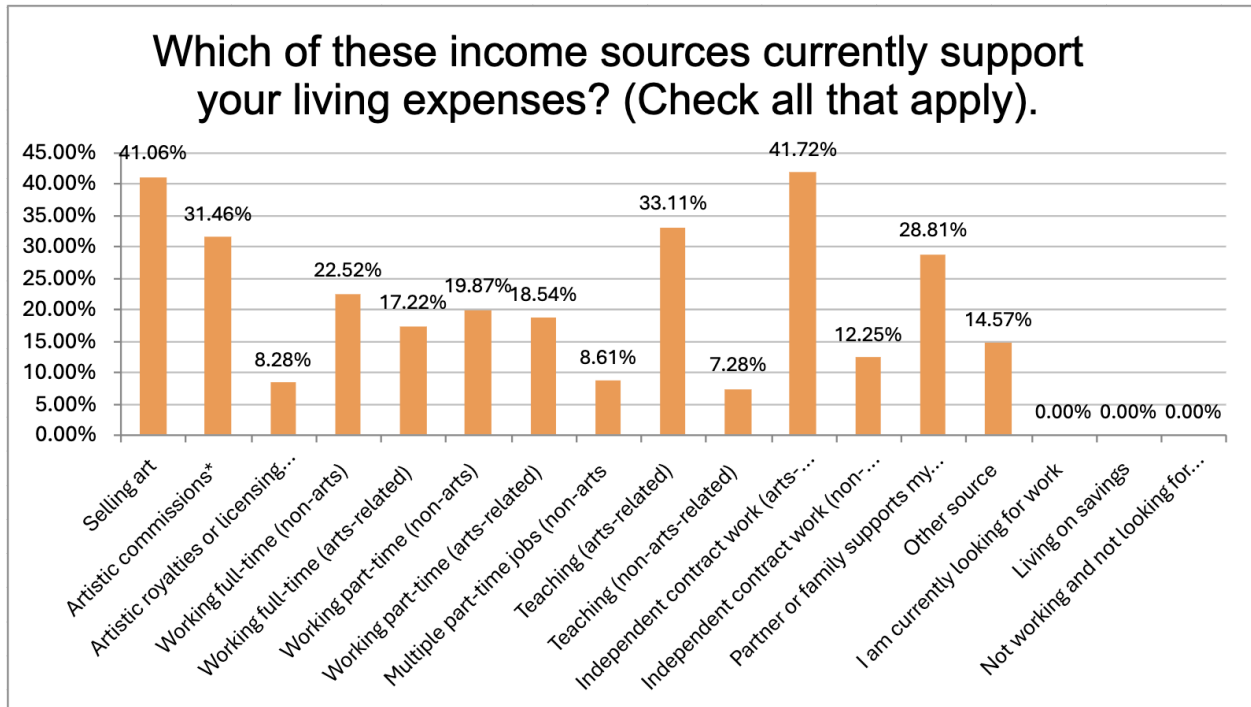
## Change Over Time

Many of the top challenges/barriers have remained consistent since 2016. Below, shaded cells denote presence in top five, with the darkest shade indicating the top challenge/barrier.

Significance of Challenges/Barriers (maximum weight of 4)					
	2016	2018	2022	2024	Change from 2022
Securing grants, fellowships, donations	2.93	2.85	2.85	2.97	4.21%
Marketing, promoting your art	2.71	2.84	2.87	2.91	1.39%
Managing personal and artistic finances	2.68	2.51	2.82	2.71	-3.90%
Engaging the community	2.31	2.40	2.45	2.39	-2.45%
Discrimination (interpersonal or institutional)	1.99	1.94	2.04	1.99	-2.45%
Lack of mentors and networks	2.03	2.34	2.61	2.31	-11.49%
Lack of critical review and feedback	2.11	2.23	2.32	2.00	-13.79%
Finding affordable studio/work/rehearsal space	2.37	2.51	2.67	2.49	-6.74%
Legal issues/contracts	-	1.99	2.06	1.89	-8.25%
Technology/social media/website	2.11	2.05	2.18	2.25	3.21%
Taking care of basic needs	2.43	2.45	2.56	2.54	-0.78%
Family obligations	2.21	2.27	2.36	2.25	-4.66%
Chronic health issues	-	-	2.27	2.17	-4.41%
Mental health	-	-	2.46	2.36	-4.07%

## Artists Sources of Income

Artists were asked to identify which sources of income supported their living expenses. In 2024, independent contract work was the most frequently named way that artists make a living in Pittsburgh. This does not suggest that artists make the highest proportion of their income from independent contract work. It simply suggests that over one-half of artists make at least part of their income this way.



## Change Over Time

Many top five sources of income have remained consistent since 2016. Over time, the percentage of artists who make a living in part through part-time work has increased, with the largest increase occurring since 2022. Shaded cells denote presence in the top five.

<b>Which of these income sources support your living expenses? Check all that apply.</b>					
	<b>2016</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>Change From 2022</b>
Selling Art	45.67%	35.33%	37.20%	41.10%	10.48%
Artistic Commissions*	-	-	-	31.50%	-
Artistic Royalties or Licensing Agreements*	-	-	-	8.30%	-
Working Full-Time	33.07%	35.93%	31.88%	39.10%	22.65%
Working Part -Time	20.47%	22.75%	28.02%	38.40%	37.04%
Multiple Part-Time Jobs	22.05%	-	14.01%	8.60%	-38.62%
Teaching	40.16%	40.72%	30.43%	40.40%	32.76%
Independent Contractor	37.80%	33.53%	31.88%	54.00%	69.39%
Partner or Family Support	21.26%	17.96%	28.02%	28.80%	2.78%
Living on Savings	-	10.18%	0.00%	0.00%	-
Looking for Work	10.24%	8.98%	0.00%	0.00%	-
Not working and not looking for work	-	-	0.00%	0.00%	-
Other	14.17%	16.17%	13.53%	14.60%	7.91%

\*Only asked in 2024

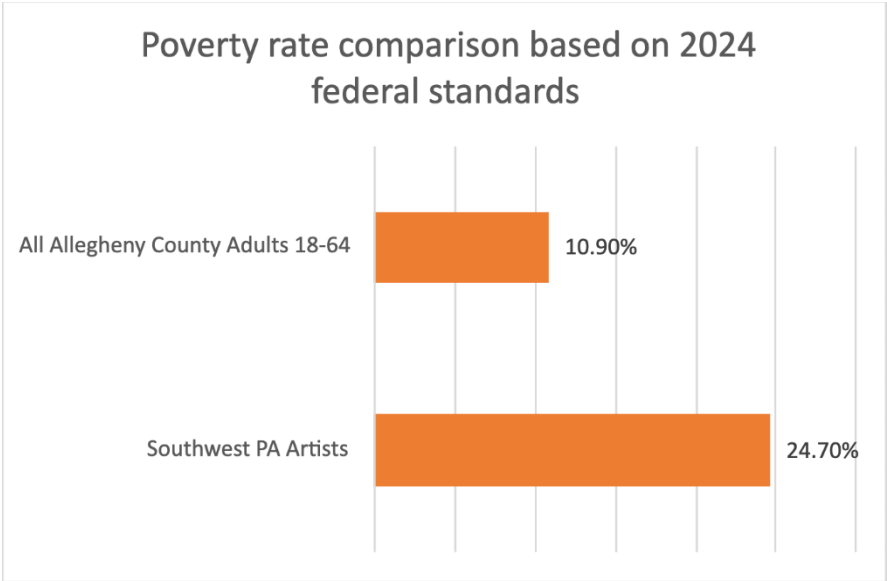
Other responses include social security, retirement, savings (despite a 0% response)

## Household and Individual Income

The chart below shows the annual individual and household incomes for all respondents. In this sample, there were no significant individual differences across race or gender, though it is possible differences do exist at a population level.

<b>Artist Annual Income</b>		
	<b>Individual Income</b>	<b>Household Income</b>
Less than \$15,000 per year	24.70%	8.70%
\$15,000 - \$29,999 per year	24.70%	11.80%
\$30,000 - \$49,999 per year	21.60%	24.60%
\$50,000 - \$74,999 per year	16.40%	20.80%
\$75,000 - \$119,999	8.90%	18.30%
\$120,000 – \$200,000	3.80%	14.90%
More than \$200,000	0.00%	1.00%

We adjusted our income brackets for the 2024 survey to better match the cutoffs for the federal poverty rate of \$15,060.<sup>2</sup> There are no notable changes in income distribution over time that cannot be attributed to the adjustment of these brackets. However, we can see that artists are reporting an individual poverty rate over twice the average of Allegheny County adults.<sup>3</sup>

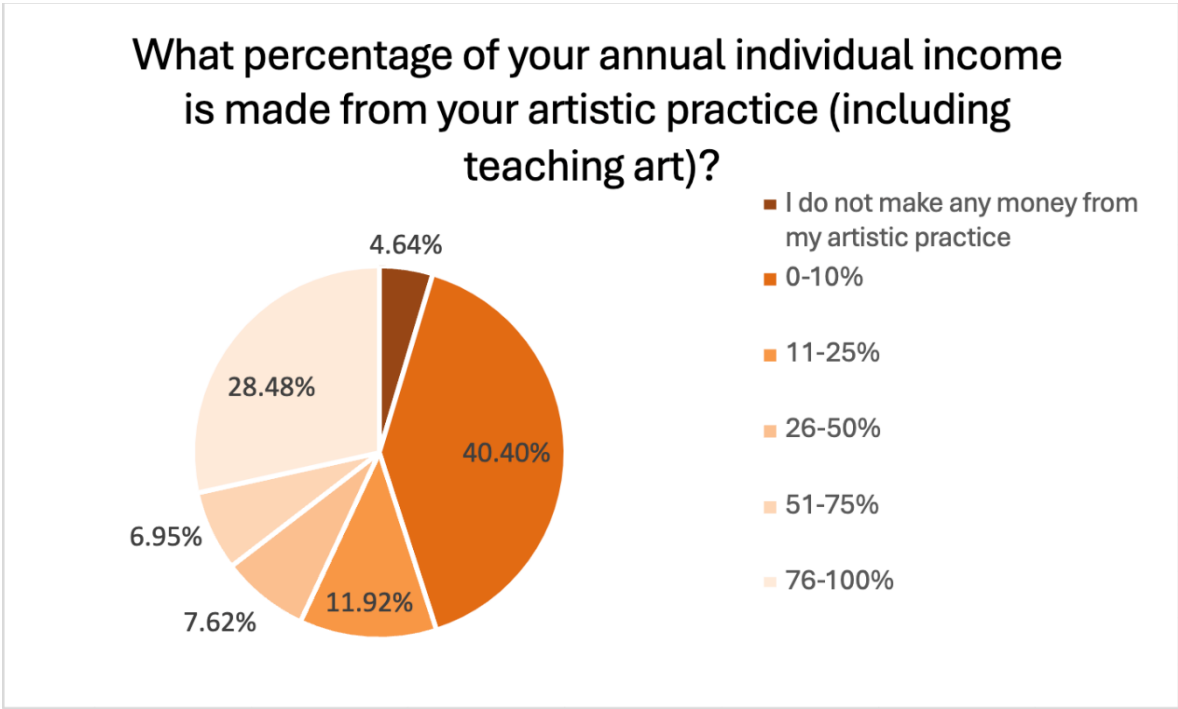


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<sup>2</sup> "Poverty Guidelines." Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation. Accessed October 10, 2024. [https:// aspe.hhs.gov/topics/poverty-economic-mobility/poverty-guidelines](https://aspe.hhs.gov/topics/poverty-economic-mobility/poverty-guidelines).

<sup>3</sup> United States Census Bureau. "Allegheny County, Pennsylvania." Accessed October 10, 2024. [https://data.census.gov/ profile/Allegheny\\_County,\\_Pennsylvania?g=050XX00US42003](https://data.census.gov/ profile/Allegheny_County,_Pennsylvania?g=050XX00US42003).

## Percentage of Income Earned from Artistic Practice



### Differences by Race

Artists of the Global Majority are slightly less likely to report making no money from their artistic practice (4.60%) and less likely to report making 76-100% of their income from their artistic practice (22.30%) compared to the average.

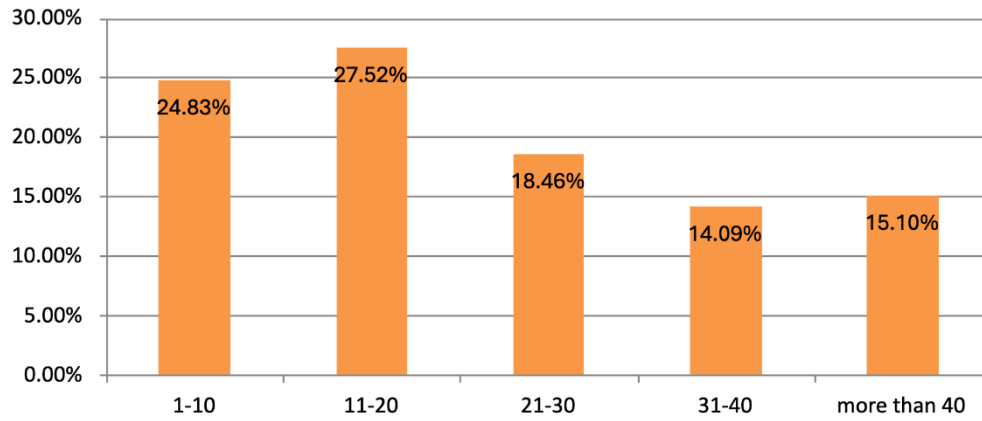
### Differences for Emerging Artists

Emerging artists are more likely to report making no money from their artistic practice (7.60%) and more likely to report making 76-100% of their income from their artistic practice (30.40%) compared to the average.

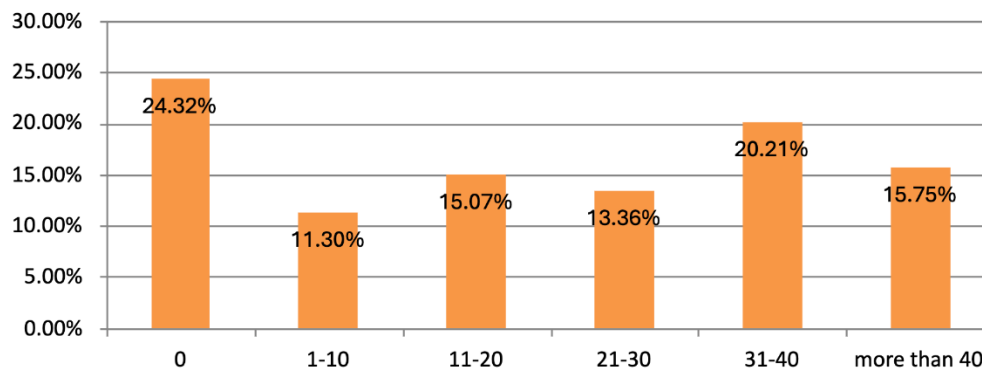
### Hours Spent on Artistic Practice vs Non-Artistic Work

Over one-half of artists report spending less than 20 hours a week on their artistic practice. One-fifth of artists report spending more than 40 hours a week on work not related to their artistic practice. Over one-half of artists report being either somewhat or very dissatisfied with their current balance of artistic work vs non-artistic work. The charts below detail answers for an average of all artists.

In the past year, on average, how many hours per week did you spend on your artistic practice?

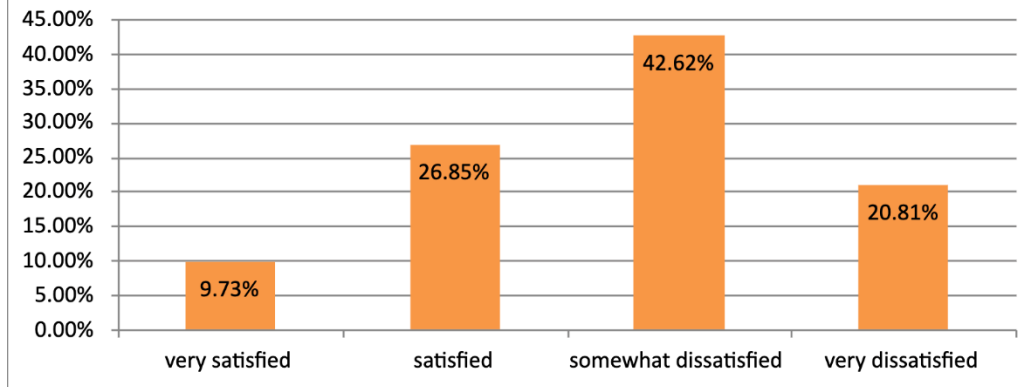


In the past year, about how many hours per week did you spend on work (earning income) NOT related to your artistic practice?





## Overall, how satisfied are you with the current balance of time you spend on your artistic practice versus on non-artistic work?



### Comments included:

- "I wish I had more time for my art, but I need to pay bills, so I have a full-time job art teaching job"
- "If I could receive affordable health benefits (dental, medical, vision) I would be able to concentrate on my business full-time. Without the benefits it's really hard."
- "I feel like lately I've been so overwhelmed with responsibilities I haven't really gotten the chance to give my art the time it deserves. From coaching, teaching, taking care of my father and art curating. It's been difficult to find the time."
- "I just can't afford to spend more time. I have to work to pay for my living expenses."
- "Ideally I would like to work part-time or teach full-time with the summers off to focus on my art."
- "I am teaching music full-time, but I would love more time on my own creative projects."

### Comparison Over Time

Fewer artists report spending over 40 hours a week on non-art related work compared to 2022 (15.10% vs 24.56%).

### Differences by Race

Artists of the Global Majority are more likely to report (22.70%) spending over 40 hours a week on non-arts related work. Additionally, artists of the Global Majority are less likely to report (15.00%) that they are satisfied with their current balance of artistic work and non-artistic work and more likely to report dissatisfaction (52.00%).

## Housing

What Type of Housing Do You Live In?		
Housing Type	Percent	Count
Rent an apartment	23.08%	69
Rent a house	9.03%	27
Own a house	53.85%	161
Live/work space	1.67%	5
Live with family or friends	8.03%	24
Transitional	0.67%	2
Other (please specify)	3.68%	11

“Other” responses included owned/co-owned with spouse, section 8 housing, living with and taking care of parents.

### Change Over Time

In 2024, there was a notable increase in artists reporting that they rent an apartment from 2022 and a continued decrease in artists reporting that they own a house from 2016 as shown in the chart below.

What Type of Housing Do You Live In?				
Housing Type	2016	2018	2022	2024
Rent an apartment	19.05%	22.84%	16.75%	23.08%
Rent a house	11.11%	9.26%	10.34%	9.03%
Own a house	59.52%	58.02%	57.64%	53.85%
Live/work space	1.59%	3.70%	0.49%	1.67%
Live with family or friends	2.38%	2.47%	11.82%	8.03%
Transitional	1.59%	-	0.49%	0.67%
Other (please specify)	4.76%	3.70%	2.46%	3.68%

### Differences by Race

Artists of the Global Majority are significantly more likely to report renting an apartment (32.0%) and significantly less likely to report owning a house (36.0%) than the average of all artists.

## Transportation

What forms of transportation do you use? (Check all that apply)		
Forms of Transportation	Percent	Count
Public bus	36.58%	109
ACCESS para-transit van	0.34%	1
Trolley/train	7.05%	21
Bicycle	16.44%	49
Personal car	84.56%	252
Zip car/Uber/Lyft, etc	18.79%	56
Skateboarding	0.67%	2
Walking	39.26%	117
Other (please specify)	4.03%	12

“Other” responses included carpool, wheelchair, incline, scooter, rides from friends, motorcycle

## Change Over Time

Since 2016, the vast majority of artists reported using a personal car for transportation. In 2024, significantly less artists reported using bicycles as a form of transportation, following a pattern of steady decline since 2018.

What forms of transportation do you use? (Check all that apply)				
	2016	2018	2022	2024
Public bus	43.65%	43.03%	34.67%	36.58%
ACCESS para-transit van	-	1.82%	2.01%	0.34%
Trolley/train	6.35%	7.88%	7.04%	7.05%
Bicycle	21.43%	21.82%	18.59%	16.44%
Personal car	85.71%	89.09%	86.93%	84.56%
Zip car/Uber/Lyft, etc.	15.08%	23.64%	13.57%	18.79%
Skateboarding	1.00%	0.61%	2.01%	0.67%
Walking*	-	-	36.18%	38.26%
Other (please specify)	15.08%	11.52%	2.51%	4.03%

\*Added as an answer choice in 2022

## Artistic Education

How did you, or do you, learn about your artistic practice? (Check all that apply)		
	Percent	Count
Self-taught	71.52%	216
High school	31.79%	96
Pre-college	8.28%	25
Art school/conservatory	17.55%	53
College/university (undergraduate)	49.01%	148
College/university (graduate)	26.82%	81
Classes at arts organizations	39.40%	119
Master/mentor	23.51%	71
Other (please specify)	13.91%	42

“Other” responses included online resources, YouTube, independent paid instruction, other artists’ workshops, some college classes, art books, family members.

## Differences Across Groups

Artists of the Global Majority were more likely to report learning from a mentor (32.0%) and less likely to report learning from college/university at the undergraduate (43.7%) or graduate (21.4%) levels.

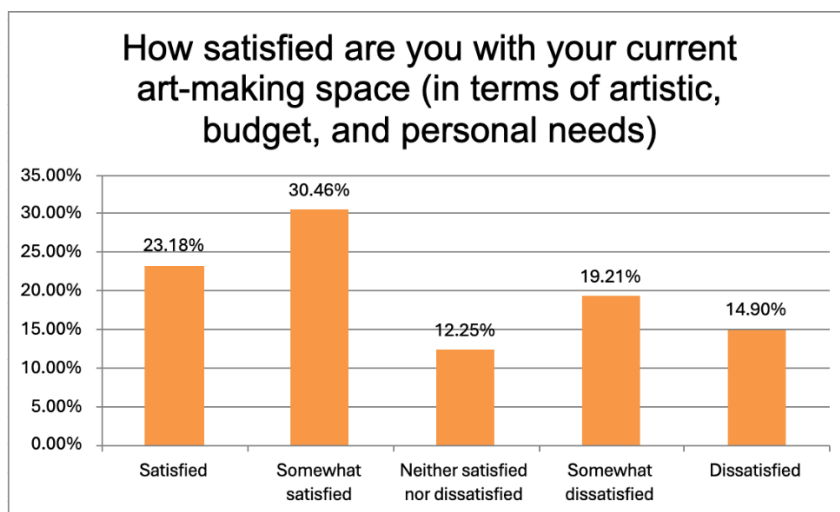
## Artistic Space

Where do you make your art? (Check all that apply)		
	Percent	Count
Home Studio	82.78%	250
Private Studio (not at home)	11.59%	35
Shared/Community studio space	11.92%	36
Commercial storefront	1.99%	6
Other commercial space	4.30%	13
University Space	5.63%	17
Nonprofit educational space	8.94%	27
Nonprofit theater/performance space	7.28%	22
Other (please specify)	11.92%	36

## Differences by Race

Artists of Global Majority are more likely to report practicing/making their art at a private studio (16.5%) or a shared/community studio space (16.5%) than the average. Artists of the Global Majority are more likely to report working/making art in commercial spaces (commercial storefront 2.9%, other commercial space 5.8%) and nonprofit spaces (nonprofit educational 10.7%, nonprofit theater/performance space 9.7%). These artists are less likely to report working/making art in university spaces (4.9%) or home studios (81.6%).

## Artistic Space Satisfaction



Comments include:

- “I love creating from my home, but I would like a space to create that is clear of distractions
- “Grateful but my space is small and not conducive to the big paintings I wish to make. I have investigated studio spaces around the city, but cost/availability is a factor.”
- “There are certain tools I want for my studio space that are just not within my means right now, both in regard to space and budget”
- “It is not always convenient to pull everything out and have to clean up every time, so that the space can be used as a kitchen.”
- “Working from home is wonderful, but I’m limited by space, e.g. I stopped making paintings because of a lack of space and instead switched to printmaking.”

## Differences by Race

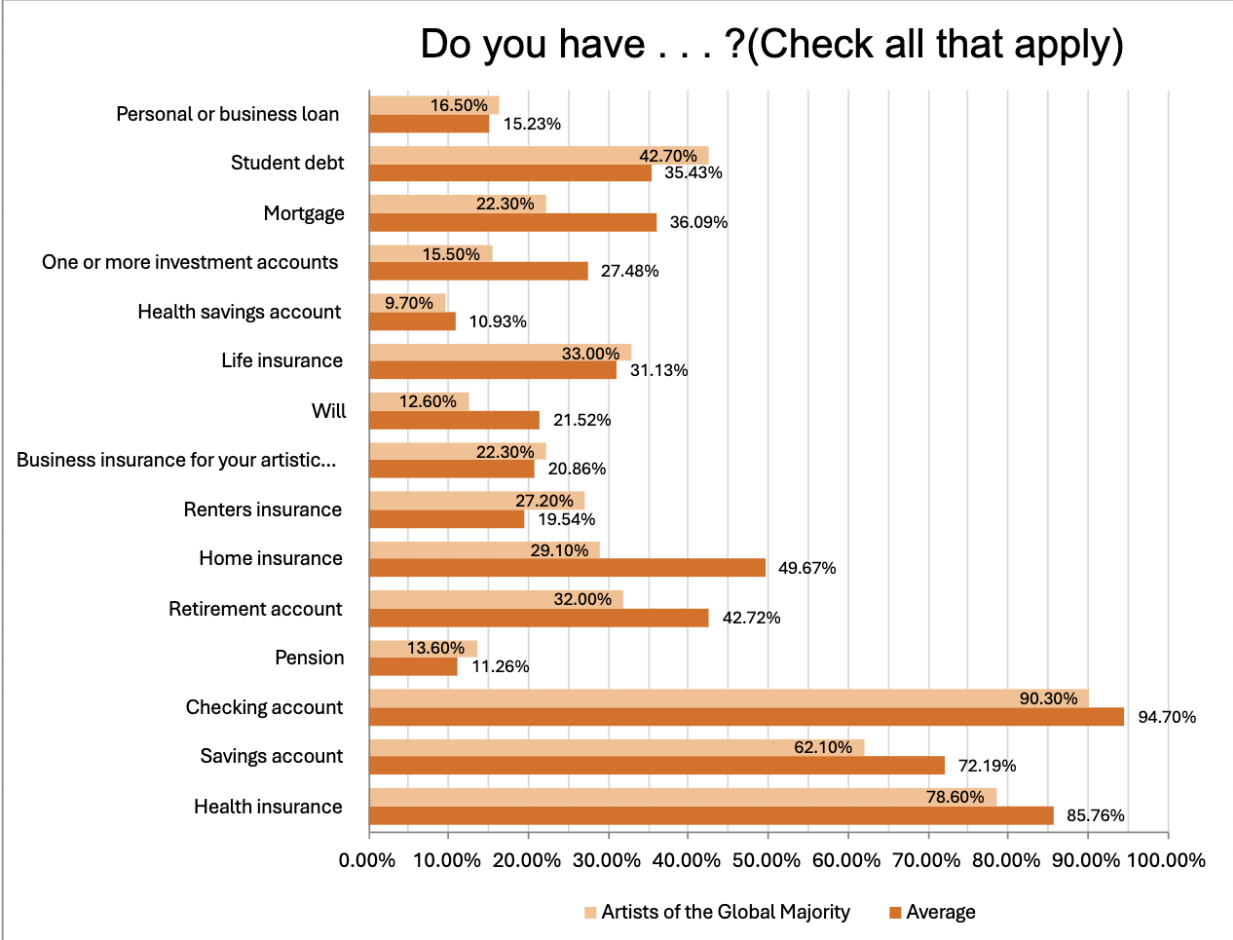
Artists of the Global Majority are less likely to report being satisfied with their artistic space (14.6%) and are more likely to report being neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (18.4%) or dissatisfied (19.4%).

## Insurance and Financial Security

Do you have...? (check all that apply)		
	Percent	Count
Health insurance	85.76%	259
Savings account	72.19%	218
Checking account	94.70%	286
Pension	11.26%	34
Retirement account	42.72%	129
Home insurance	49.67%	150
Renters insurance	19.54%	59
Business insurance for your artistic practice	20.86%	63
Will	21.52%	65
Life insurance	31.13%	94
Health savings account	10.93%	33
One or more investment accounts	27.48%	83
Mortgage	36.09%	109
Student debt	35.43%	107
Personal or business loan	15.23%	46

### Differences by Race

Artists of the Global Majority are less likely to have health insurance or more likely to have student debt, as shown by the chart on the following page.



### Changes Over Time

In 2024, the proportion of artists who reported having a checking account significantly increased from 2022. The proportion of artists who reported having one or more investments also increased in 2024. Other variations can be seen in the table on the following page.

<b>Do you have...? (Check all that apply)</b>				
	<b>2016</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2024</b>
Health insurance	94.40%	92.84%	89.37%	85.76%
Savings account	75.20%	80.37%	77.78%	72.19%
Checking account	96.80%	97.55%	80.68%	94.70%
Pension	14.40%	-	17.87%	11.26%
Retirement account	43.20%	58.90%	37.68%	42.72%
Home insurance	-	58.28%	47.34%	49.67%
Renters insurance	-	20.86%	15.94%	19.54%
Business insurance for your artistic practice	-	17.79%	16.91%	20.86%
Will	28.00%	31.29%	20.29%	21.52%
Life insurance	-	-	35.27%	31.13%
Health savings account	-	-	11.59%	10.93%
One or more investment accounts	-	-	18.36%	27.48%
Mortgage*	-	-	-	36.09%
Student debt*	-	-	-	35.43%
Personal or business loan*	-	-	-	15.23%

\*Added as an answer choice in 2024

## Social Safety Net Program Utilization

<b>Which of the following do you utilize? (Check all that apply)</b>		
<b>Programs</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Count</b>
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP/EBT benefits)	16.67%	45
Medicaid	22.22%	60
Cash assistance (TANF)	0.00%	0
Public Housing and Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8)	0.37%	1
Low-Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP)	5.56%	15
NAMS/CARR (Community Assistance and Refugee Settlement)	0.00%	0
Assistance or loans from friends/family	19.26%	52
Early Learning Resource Centers (for childcare)	0.74%	2
None of the above	63.70%	172



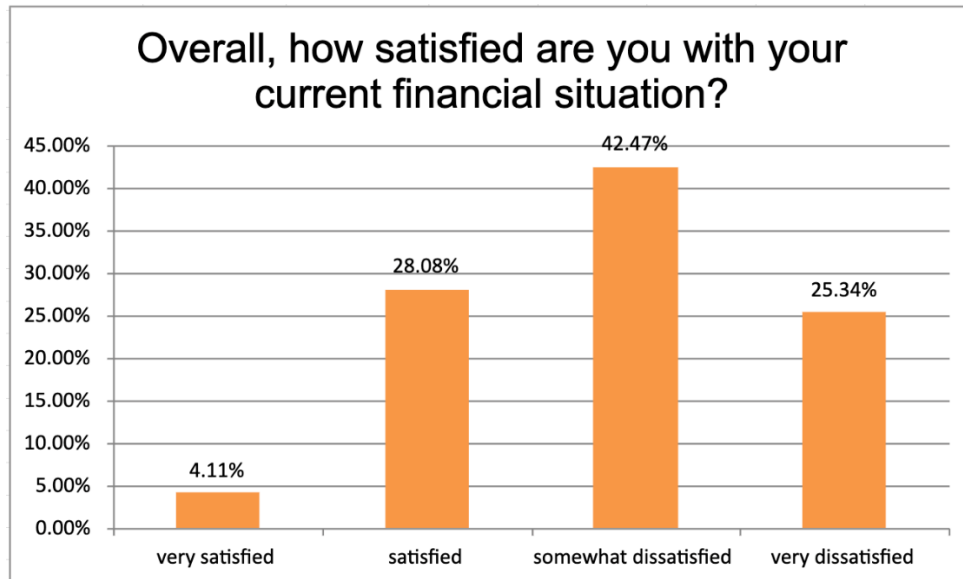
## Differences Among Groups

Which of the following do you utilize? (Check all that apply)			
	All Artists	Artists of Global Majority	Emerging Artists
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP/EBT benefits)	16.67%	19.10%	20.30%
Medicaid	22.22%	29.80%	23.20%
Cash assistance (TANF)	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Public Housing and Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8)	0.37%	0.00%	0.00%
Low-Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP)	5.56%	5.30%	5.80%
NAMS/CARR (Community Assistance and Refugee Settlement)	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Assistance or loans from friends/family	19.26%	20.20%	15.90%
Early Learning Resource Centers (for childcare)	0.74%	2.10%	1.40%
None of the above	63.70%	52.10%	63.8%

## Changes Over Time

Which of the following do you utilize? (Check all that apply)				
	2016	2018	2022	2024
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP/EBT)	20.83%	18.33%	12.83%	16.67%
Medicaid	29.17%	26.67%	20.32%	22.22%
Cash assistance (TANF)	-	-	3.74%	0.00%
Public Housing and Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8)	-	-	3.74%	0.37%
Low-Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP)	12.50%	5.00%	5.35%	5.56%
NAMS/CARR	-	1.67%	-	0.00%
Assistance or loans from friends/family	54.17%	46.67%	12.83%	19.26%
Early Learning Resource Centers (for childcare)	-	-	-	0.74%
None of the above	-	-	71.12%	63.70%

## Satisfaction with Current Financial Situation



### Comments included

- “Debt is debilitating.”
- “Not close to being able to retire.”
- “Pittsburgh strongly needs to increase minimum wage, and more arts organizations need to move toward livable wages for freelancers over token stipends.”
- “Things are improving, in general, compared to 2022.”
- “Moving toward greater stability and satisfaction after a couple years of distress.”
- “I appreciate the government help (since my taxes are going there) but I would still like to be a bit more financially secure!”
- “I want to be more financially independent and working on my art full time, but I do not have the ability to do so.”
- “I feel that with all of my schooling and experience I should be making a lot more at my current job, but I also feel that if I had more time for my business, I could do more shows and make more income that way, though it would be a lot harder life.”
- “Being unemployed and producing art without financial support is very stressful. I am comfortable for now through severance and unemployment, and I have a partner who is employed, but I spend a majority of my time searching for ways to get income.”

## Differences Across Race

Artists of the Global Majority did not report being very satisfied with their current financial situation (0.00%). These artists were slightly more likely to report that they are somewhat dissatisfied (45.30%) or very dissatisfied (29.50%) with their current financial situation.

## Focus on Funding

### Funds and Other Resources to Produce Work

Self-funding was the most reported source of support for artistic projects. This has remained consistent since 2016. The percentage of artists reporting using grants to fund their work increased significantly compared to previous years. Below, shaded cells denote presence in the top five sources for each year.

In the last year, where did you get funds and other resources to support your artistic projects? Check all that apply.					
	2016	2018	2022	2024	Change from 2022
Self-Funding	81.75%	74.40%	79.23%	76.80%	-3.07%
Patrons/Donors	21.43%	12.50%	12.08%	12.30%	1.82%
Grants	20.63%	16.67%	14.98%	23.50%	56.88%
Residencies	14.29%	11.90%	8.21%	10.90%	32.76%
Corporate Sponsorship	1.59%	2.98%	2.42%	2.60%	7.44%
Crowd-Sourced Fundraising	8.73%	2.98%	1.93%	2.00%	3.63%
Family	19.05%	17.26%	20.77%	19.90%	-4.19%
Artist Fees/Contracts	42.86%	40.48%	26.57%	31.10%	17.05%
None	-	10.12%	8.70%	4.60%	-47.13%
Other	8.73%	10.71%	8.21%	10.60%	29.11%

### Differences Among Groups

Artists of the Global Majority were more likely to report (35.00%) receiving funding from grants compared to the average. No other differences were noted across race, ability, or length of time practicing in Pittsburgh.

## Average Number of Grants Applied for and Percent Awarded

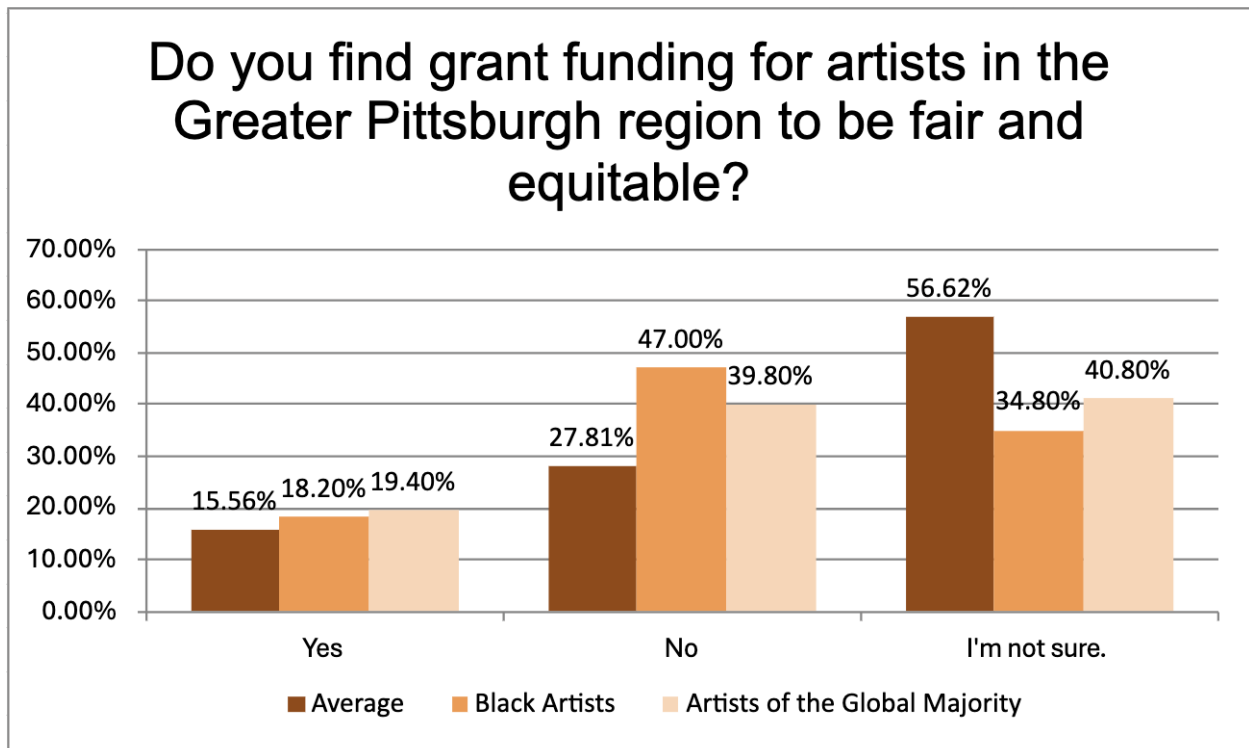
Artists reported applying for an average of 2.50 grants in the past two years and being awarded a grant 40.00% of the time.

### Differences Among Groups

Black artists reported applying for significantly more grants (4.20) than the average and were awarded 30.00% of the time. Artists who identified themselves as more than one race reported apply for twice as many grants (5.00) as the average and were awarded 41.00%, a similar margin to the average. Overall, artists of the Global Majority reported applying for an average of 3.38 grants in the past two years and being awarded a grant 48.25% of the time.

### Perceptions of Equity in Funding

Below are the responses for an average of all artists, Black artists, and artists of the Global Majority. We filtered the data for Black artists in this section because of a record of tracking funding equity perception among Black artists, specifically distinct and measurable differences in funding equity perception among Black artists compared to the average of all artists of the Global Majority.



A sample of comments for each answer choice included is shown on the following page.

## Yes

- “I think the Greater Pittsburgh region has fair and equitable grants opportunities. I love that there seems to be a tipping of the scales in favor for Black Artists as well. In general, all grant opportunities need to increase.”
- “Pittsburgh does appear to have an abundance of grant and funding opportunities compared to other cities which find as a huge asset of the region. Based on recipients, it does seem that there are great efforts to support minoritized artists, but I'm not sure where to access actual data that shows that grant funding is indeed as fair and equitable as possible.”

## No

- “The hourly rate is quite low for the work demand, though the fees for materials seem fair. I wish funding time was as good as funding material.”
- “Some grant funding does not consider fashion design a form of art. I have all of organization say, " you have made your grant proposal align with their vision" Whenever I search fashion grants Google would take me to grants into big city grants like New York city or small town article. In Pittsburgh fashion grant that support events or individual has a very grey area and as fashion designer who is looking for assistance and want change, this is alarming.”
- “Lots of accessibility-related gatekeeping, plus very few options to learn at depth the grant writing process for arts-specific grant funding.”

## Not Sure

- “It’s hard to say, sometimes the qualifications are unclear, so I won’t apply to something I would have qualified for, at other times it’s hard to know what reasons some proposals are selected and other aren’t.”
- “It may be a mixed bag with funding. It seems that funders want to give funds to applicants who they know.”
- “While I have won a Pittsburgh Foundation grant, I don’t know enough about back-end dynamics to know if the funding is equitable/fair enough overall.”
- “I’m too intimidated/don’t have knowledge or experience with applying for grants to have tried. Don’t know where to look– what to do, etc.”
- “I don’t know that it’s balanced in terms of racial equity. There are also just almost no opportunities for artists, especially literary artists. The loss of the Professional Development Grant, Creative Achievement Awards, and no Pittsburgh Foundation Exposure grant means there are no real opportunities in Pittsburgh for artists to even apply for funding to attend residencies or funding to pursue artistic goals.”

## Change Over Time

Do you find grant funding for artists in the Greater Pittsburgh region to be fair and equitable?					
	2016	2018	2022	2024	Change since 2022
<b>Yes</b>	22.35%	45.12%	26.09%	15.60%	<b>-40.21%</b>
<b>No</b>	77.65%	54.88%	19.32%	27.80%	<b>43.89%</b>
<b>Not Sure*</b>	-	-	54.59%	56.60%	<b>3.68</b>

\*Added as an answer choice in 2022

## Value of Artist Programs and Services

The top five valued programs/services indicated by artists, based on the weighted average of values, were:

1. Grants for artistic creations.
2. Performance/exhibition space.
3. Support for collaboration/development of new artistic works
4. Tie: Connection to artists/art outside of Pittsburgh and Fiscal sponsorship.

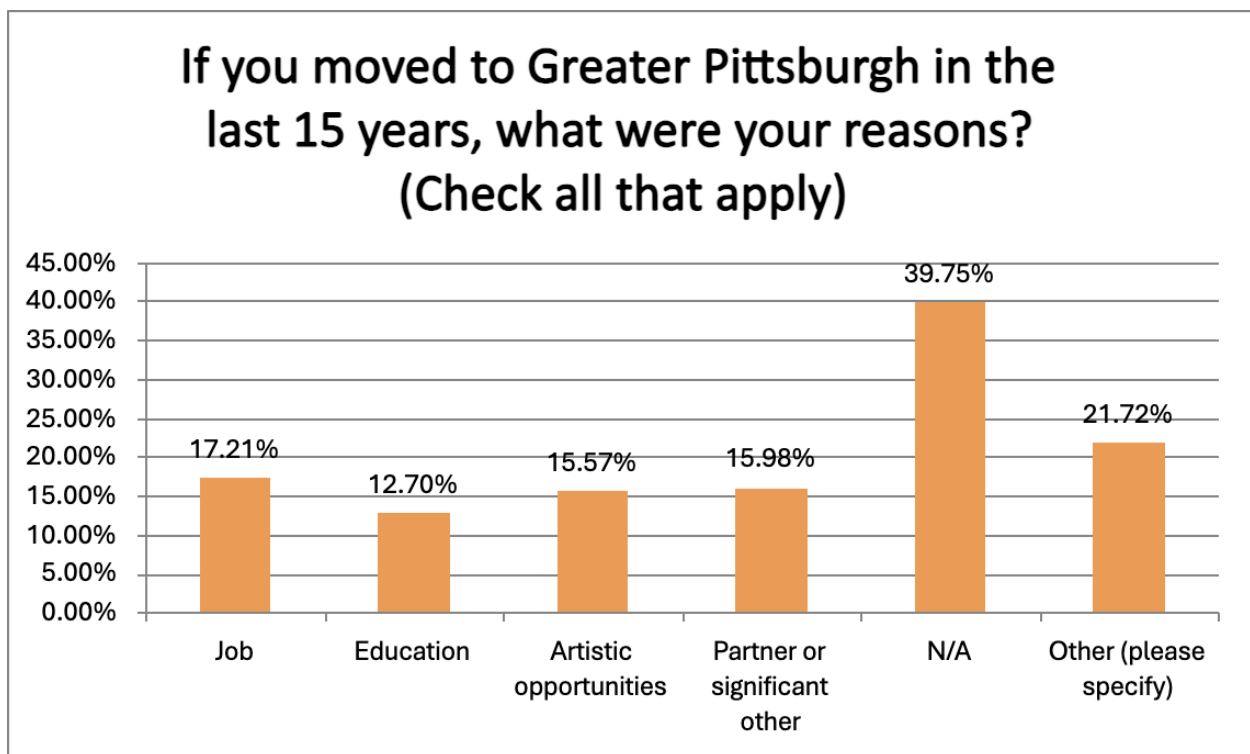
Please indicate how valuable each of the following programs and services are, or would be, to you. (Please rate at least 8 items)						
	Extremely	Very	Fairly	Less	Don't Know/ N/A	Weighted Average
Fiscal sponsorship	47.93%	18.62%	13.10%	10.34%	10.00%	3.16
Studio, rehearsal, or performance space rental	31.16%	21.23%	15.41%	21.92%	10.27%	2.69
Home ownership assistance	29.02%	10.84%	14.69%	23.08%	22.38%	2.59
Technology or equipment rental	23.02%	23.02%	26.80%	17.87%	9.28%	2.56
Career assistance/coaching	31.38%	26.21%	21.72%	14.14%	6.55%	2.8
Grants for artistic creation	71.81%	16.44%	6.38%	2.01%	3.36%	3.64
A campaign encouraging people to buy local art (performance and visual)	44.59%	24.66%	15.20%	10.14%	5.41%	3.1
Emergency funds for artists	43.88%	21.43%	14.29%	11.56%	8.84%	3.07
Information or events about health care and housing	17.54%	14.39%	20.35%	31.23%	16.49%	2.22
Teaching artist opportunities	32.76%	23.21%	18.09%	16.72%	9.22%	2.79
Accounting/financial management services	32.53%	22.60%	21.58%	18.15%	5.14%	2.73
Performance/exhibition opportunities	56.95%	22.03%	12.88%	4.75%	3.39%	3.36
"A seat at the table"--how and where to get involved with boards, committees, or advocacy	30.27%	26.19%	24.49%	13.61%	5.44%	2.77
Support for collaboration/development of new artistic works	49.83%	24.23%	16.04%	6.14%	3.75%	3.22
Residencies	38.70%	24.66%	16.78%	10.96%	8.90%	3
Connection to artists/art places outside of Pittsburgh	47.28%	28.57%	13.61%	8.84%	1.70%	3.16
Touring information	13.59%	13.59%	20.91%	27.53%	24.39%	2.18
Mentorship from other artists	33.11%	25.68%	22.30%	16.22%	2.70%	2.78
Workshops on topics of interest to artists	35.14%	32.77%	22.30%	8.11%	1.69%	2.97

## Artist Outlook:

### Living and Working in Greater Pittsburgh

This section began with two questions about the length of time the artists had lived and practiced art in Greater Pittsburgh. Those question breakdowns can be found in the “Who Responded” section of this report.

#### Reasons for Moving to Pittsburgh



"Other" responses included family in the area, cost of living, health care access

## Plans to Stay or Leave

Are you planning to stay in the Pittsburgh area of leave?		
	Percent	Count
<b>Leave within a year</b>	1.34%	4
<b>Leave whenever feasible</b>	11.07%	33
<b>Planning to stay</b>	69.46%	207
<b>Not sure</b>	18.12%	54

Comments included:

- “Unless greater opportunities present themselves to serve patrons and institutions with accessibility services, I will have to consider leaving.”
- “I would like to stay, but if it becomes hard to financially stable here as an artist, I might have to leave.”
- “Pittsburgh seems to be improving in many ways as years go by, but I don’t want it to be my forever home.”
- “Ideally, I would like to have a homebase here and leave work elsewhere.”
- “I plan on leaving within the next five years.”
- “I am on the fence about leaving the Pittsburgh area, most of my art is centralized around seascapes and sea life so living in a place that promotes this regularly would make more sense for my creative vision. However, at the same time I have a home I own here, and I live comfortably.”
- “I’ve been here since 2005, and I’ve absolutely had it with the ableism and casual dismissal of my community from the broader arts community.”
- “Pittsburgh’s housing is somewhat livable, but they don’t have a lot of jobs in art and design that pay a lot. Higher paying creative jobs seem to be more out west. Pittsburgh seems to be becoming a hub for robotics, tech, and fine art which is awesome by the amount that public art gets funded here, as opposed to out west is way lower and so it the rate at which artists are getting paid as well.”



## Optimism about the Future in Pittsburgh

The level of artist optimism about their futures in Pittsburgh has slightly decreased, as shown below.

Do you feel optimistic about your future as an artist in Pittsburgh?				
	2016	2018	2022	2024
<b>Yes</b>	74.10%	74.10%	74.27%	71.10%
<b>No</b>	25.90%	25.90%	25.73%	28.90%

There were 134 comments for this question. A sample of the overall themes include:

- “There is an extraordinary amount of funding available in the city, in both the private and nonprofit sectors. I believe with the proper education on the value of investing in the arts, we will see those funds streamed into the practices of independent artists.”
- “I am not optimistic about having my art sales support me in the Pittsburgh economy– I feel my work would probably be more likely to sell in larger, higher price point markets.”
- “While there are challenges to make a living as an artist, the cost of living here is still relatively low compared to other cities, and this is a city filled with a kind and generous artistic community.”
- “It’s a constant struggle to try and build a sustainable income and business and I just don’t know that the public wants to support the arts nor dance specifically anymore.”
- “Despite the slowdown of work due to the pandemic and the ongoing devolution of the arts as a whole I feel there are still individuals and organizations dedicated to promoting the arts in the region.”
- “I hope so. I do think my work appeals to other art communities out west more so than Pittsburgh; however, I feel it is more affordable to live in Pittsburgh with kids, so the balance of that is the most importance considerations at this time for me.”
- “I’m glad I chose, almost 30 years ago, to make Pittsburgh my home. I have felt welcome in the artistic community and fortunate in my opportunities.”
- “I feel like I will be able to continue making art and doing art projects for the foreseeable future. I am not sure, however, that I will be able to continue seeing work. This part seems to fluctuate.”
- “Things need to change. After the experience of galleries asking me for money to exhibit in their spaces, I am put off.”
- “There should be a “not sure” option. There is a lot of work to be done in Pittsburgh. I am a senior artist, so I am not sure as to how to answer this question. However, it is important for artists not to depend on Pittsburgh to flourish in their field.”
- “I find the artistic community here very welcoming, and healthy. I see a lot of growth in the future.”
- “Until the culture shifts, there is no place for my community of artists in this region. It’s a shameful state indeed.”
- “There is still a lot of racial bias in the arts, there isn’t a strong enough collector culture, not enough big life changing opportunities for artists.”

## Differences Across Race

Artists of the Global Majority were more likely to feel optimistic (76.70%) about their future as an artist in the region compared to the average.

# Issues to Address for a Healthy Future

The survey included an open-ended question that asked respondents to “please identify any issues that the arts and culture community must address to ensure a healthy future. Examples might be greater visibility, leadership, equity and inclusion, audience development, accessibility, and government relations, among others.

Based on analysis of 171 answers, the following three themes emerged most often. A sample of comments associated with these themes are shared below.

## 1. Funding (22.81% of responses)

- “I think more public art opportunities (murals, installations, etc.) that are accessible for local artists that may not have a history of public art projects, more funding, resources, that demystify and explain the process for grants/opportunities etc., and efforts to get the public not only attending and involved in gallery shows etc. but actually purchasing artwork.”
- “Getting grants is one thing, keeping relationships with donors and funders is another, and transitioning out of grant dependency is a whole entire other thing. I would like to see more resources and information on diversifying income streams to support artistic practices and livelihoods.”
- “There needs to be more agencies for artists, as well as artist insurance, fellowships that have no limits, and more performance opportunities for individual performers, where we can perform in and out of the Pittsburgh region that makes it more eligible for artists.”
- “More opportunities for mid-career artists to obtain grants to create new work that do not have limitations. Many grants are one time only and now I am not eligible for any additional funding.”

## 2. Visibility and Exposure (21.63%)

- “I think local art very rarely breaks into public local awareness. I'm not sure how the arts community could make going to art shows more part of regular life, but it seems like there's a vast number of people in Pittsburgh who never go to art shows, even if they have an interest in art.”
- “I think greater visibility for artists would be huge. I think Pittsburgh likes to push the same artists that have big followings, not allowing as much for the smaller artists. I really benefitted from the artist grant I received through the Pittsburgh Arts Council, I think if more people knew about it, they would benefit, too.”
- “Definitely visibility and accessibility for both artists and the general public. There are so many unknown local talented artists and many people in local population that would support more if more accessible.”

### **3. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (21.63%)**

- “Addressing the issue of diversity at arts organizations is the first step. The arts and culture community must offer opportunities to artists and curators from diverse backgrounds without tokenizing. A robust and critical conversation about art is lacking in the city and there are very few publishing outlets that offer reviews; healthy criticism holds us all accountable.”
- “Connections to larger markets and less emphasis on academic achievements - an MFA is not a requirement to make art, and I feel like most artists in this area might be better off with less school and more creating/business coaching. It's not a sustainable route for most people and it also indirectly cuts out marginalized people, who are statistically more likely to experience socioeconomic hardships.”
- “More resources allocated to artists of color, emerging artists and lgbtq+ artists. Promoting of event by artists of color. A way for artists to make a living year-round.”

### **4. Audience Development (18.71%)**

- “I think many performing arts events are financially accessible for people in Pittsburgh. However, the ways the Pittsburgh performing arts organizations deliver information about their events are not always so great and often lack information that non-traditional audiences need. I think it is urgent for them to do in-depth research on how to communicate with non-traditional audiences.”
- “Audience development is huge. I think a lot of this has to do with accessibility (ticket prices) as well as making people feel welcome in arts spaces that wouldn't normally go.”

### **5. Professional Development (9.36%)**

- “Opportunities for Artists to make money. Development and support beyond the initial grant. Access to business support such as marketing, budgeting, bookkeeping and taxes.”
- “I believe mentoring for younger artists would be greatly beneficial. Connecting these two groups and encouraging long-term mentorships, assistantships, internships, would go very far in the passing of craftsmanship, business, and general how-to on to the younger generation.”

# Acknowledgements

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The Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council builds a more resourced, connected, and informed arts sector, empowering artists and arts organizations throughout Southwestern PA. By sharing resources, fostering significant relationships, leading advocacy initiatives, and increasing public awareness of arts and culture, the Arts Council cultivates a thriving, vibrant arts community for the Greater Pittsburgh region.

**Learn more at [PittsburghArtsCouncil.org](http://PittsburghArtsCouncil.org).**