



GREATER PITTSBURGH  
ARTS COUNCIL  
**Arts loud and clear**

# IMPACT TO INSIGHT: FINDINGS FROM THE ARTS COMMUNITY SURVEY

**A RESEARCH REPORT OF THE GREATER PITTSBURGH ARTS COUNCIL**



**2022**

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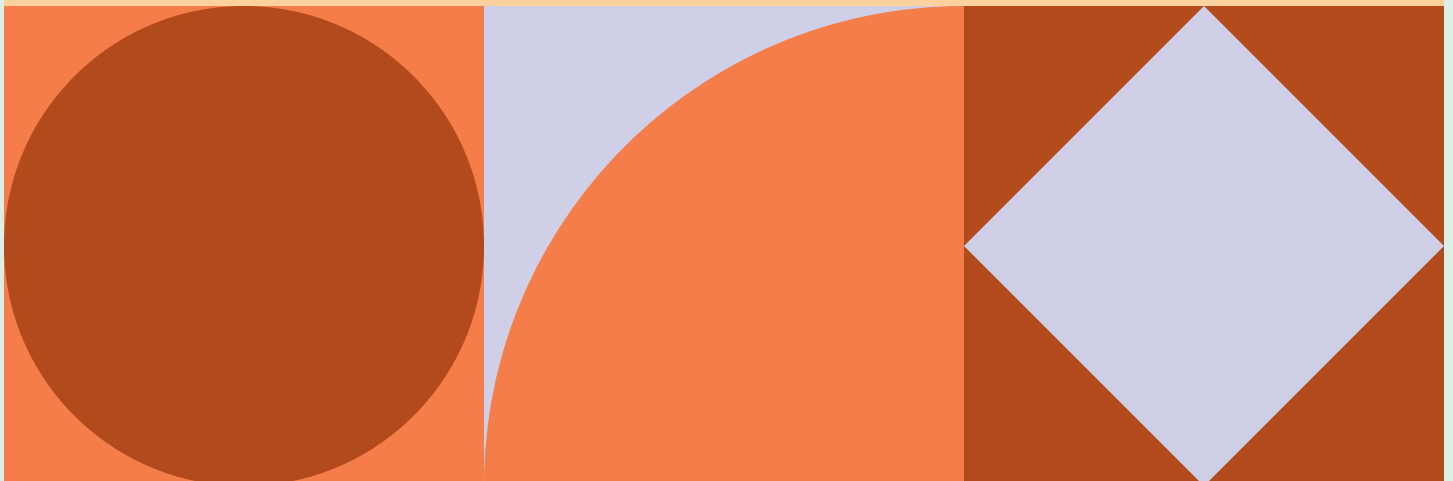
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## LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Arts Council respectfully acknowledges that we operate and reside on the traditional, ancestral and stolen lands of many native peoples in the Greater Pittsburgh region.

**The Adena, the Delaware, the Hopewell, the Iroquois, the Monongahela, the Osage, the Seneca, and the Shawnee stewarded this land throughout the generations.**

The process of knowing and acknowledging the land we stand on is a way of honoring and expressing gratitude for the ancestral people who were on this land before us.



# INTRODUCTION

Every two years, the Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council conducts the Arts Community Survey – a temperature check on the health of our sector. When 2020 hit, we shifted the focus of our research plans to track the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on our industry and economy. So much has changed in the arts and culture industry, nationwide and regionally, since we last collected this data in 2018. After hearing from 365 individuals living and working as artists or cultural workers in Southwestern Pennsylvania, you won't be surprised to see that immense loss and uncertainty impacted our industry.

## This report documents that impact.

To better reflect what was happening in our community, our research team made changes to the research questions focusing specifically on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and important issues surrounding equity in funding, DEAI trends in organizational policies, and specific impacts on BIPOC and emerging artists and cultural workers.

What we heard was remarkable. Many arts organizations, particularly those in the performing arts, continue to await the return of audiences to pre-pandemic attendance rates, and this is impacting essential earned income. We also heard that artists are experiencing higher than average poverty rates and rated “taking care of basic needs” as a more significant challenge in 2022.

## Despite this, loss and impact became kindling for insight and resiliency.

This data is a snapshot, showcasing how artists and cultural workers feel at a pivotal point in time. Perhaps more importantly, this data also tells us how our community wants to feel in the future. And this is an opportunity for all industries that touch or overlap with the arts to do better – businesses who employ artists, foundations who give money, communities who want to partner, state leaders that want to enact change, and even Arts Councils who support and advocate for the community.

We're grateful for the honesty and vulnerability shared by our survey respondents. Our hope is that these stories shed light on the struggles artists and arts organizations' staff in the region face, not just as cogs in the arts and culture industry, but as human beings.

Our industry cannot thrive if the artists at its center are not supported. This data amplifies the need for the industry to be more intentional, authentic, and expansive in its financial support of artists and their work. It is our hope that you will join the Arts Council in the continued support of artistic excellence and valued human experiences that artists share through their artistry.



**Dr. Veronica Morgan-Lee**  
Board Chair,  
Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council



**Mitch Swain**  
CEO,  
Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council



# REPORT PURPOSE AND RESEARCH METHODS

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 organization personnel living and working in the region.

In particular, this year's survey provided space for respondents to share what has been lost and gained in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. More than two years after its onset, the pandemic continues to affect day-to-day operations and activities for artists, arts organizations, and their audiences. The survey collected both quantitative and qualitative data on these impacts.

## SCOPE AND METHODS

This project included two digitally distributed surveys: one for individual artists and one for arts administrators working at arts and culture organizations (also called cultural workers). To define the project scope and goals, Arts Council staff developed a series of research questions for each survey.

Research questions guided what survey questions were kept, added, or removed from the 2016 and 2018 survey instruments. They also guided response analysis and how that analysis is represented and prioritized in this report. Both surveys included mixtures of single choice and multi-select, multiple choice, and open-ended comment and response questions.

### ARTIST SURVEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How has artist quality of life changed since 2018 in terms of ability to access basic needs (i.e., housing, health insurance, living wage, etc.)? What changes might be attributed to COVID-19?
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 for new vs. experienced artists?
4. How does access to opportunities vary across disciplines and other lines of difference?
5. How has the perception of equity in funding changed for BIPOC artists?

### ORGANIZATION SURVEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How has the financial health of organizations changed since 2018 (considering the COVID-19 pandemic) and what factors appear to be associated with these changes?
2. What trends can be identified in quality-of-life measures and career outlooks for cultural workers, and how do these experiences and opinions vary by position level, department, or other lines of difference?
3. How has the perception of equity in funding changed for BIPOC organizations?
4. What trends are we seeing in organizational policies that aim to make organizations and their workplaces more diverse, equitable, inclusive, and accessible?

## RESPONSES AND COMPENSATION

The Arts Council believes in compensating artists for their labor. Thanks to the funding of the Henry L. Hillman Foundation, artist respondents received \$15 in exchange for their time to complete our survey. This equates to an approximate rate of \$30-\$45/hour based on survey length. Because cultural workers were ideally taking our survey during paid work hours, they did not receive explicit compensation. However, cultural workers who submitted contact information were eligible to win one of 10 \$50 gift cards to use at their discretion. Direct compensation was not offered on an individual basis for the organization survey due to common organizational policies preventing additional compensation for tasks completed during work hours.

The Arts Council distributed the survey through its email lists, social media, and targeted individual outreach. Responses were collected from mid-May to mid-June 2022.

## DATA CLEANING AND VALIDATION

Before analysis, survey responses were cleaned and validated to ensure the most accurate, fair representation of its results. We excluded responses submitted from zip codes outside of Southwestern PA and responses from organizations outside of the arts sector (where the organization's work was reported as exclusively "Non-arts/Non-humanities"). For organization COVID-19 impact reporting, we also excluded "dupe" responses, defined as probable multiple responses from the same organization based on similarities across discipline, budget, staff size, and more. This de-duping process ensured that COVID-19 impact data wasn't skewed by multiple responses from a single organization; however, these "dupe" responses were not excluded from any other sections of analysis.

## LIMITATIONS

Despite efforts to collect responses from a diverse array of respondents including discipline, experience, budget size, and individual demographics, we cannot know whether our respondents or their answers are fully representative of the Greater Pittsburgh arts and culture sector. Where possible, we have included comparisons to local and regional data. We have also noted where our survey results depart from other established data sources, including the stories shared with us through everyday work at the Arts Council and in the arts community.

Comparisons made for subgroups including BIPOC artists, Black artists, BIPOC cultural workers, cultural workers with disabilities, BIPOC and LGBTQ+ organizations, and emerging artists were analyzed based on small sample sizes, often under 30 respondents. We believe that it's important to report differences and disparities for these groups as we receive them; however, small sample sizes likely mean that our data does not fully capture the breadth of experiences and opinions held by the people within these communities.



Photo courtesy of the Pittsburgh Glass Center, 2020.

# 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.

### **BIPOC ARTISTS AND CULTURAL WORKERS**

The acronym “BIPOC” stands for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. In this report, the term is used to indicate respondents who identified as American Indian or Alaska Native; Asian or Asian American; Black or African American; Hispanic, Latinx, or Spanish origin; Middle Eastern or North African; or Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. “BIPOC artists” refers to artist survey respondents of color. “BIPOC cultural workers” refers to organization survey respondents of color.

This system of classifying people and their experiences is imperfect. We use the term “BIPOC” as an acknowledgment that systemic racism impacts all people of color, but that Black and Indigenous communities have a unique relationship to whiteness in the U.S. due to the embeddedness of enslavement and genocide in our nation’s history.<sup>1</sup> Grouping BIPOC respondents together does not, however, allow for those distinctions and nuances.

Where there were differences for Black respondents specifically, those differences are noted in this report. In other cases, we grouped data from BIPOC respondents to analyze and share the broad impacts of systemic racism within the arts and culture sector. This choice was made mostly because of sample sizes. Both surveys had fewer than five respondents who identified as American Indian or Alaska Native, Middle Eastern or North African, and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. Comparisons across individual racial groups would be unreliable and possibly misleading in these cases, but we wanted to make sure these voices and experiences were heard. Where appropriate, comparing results for all BIPOC respondents was used to balance these priorities.

### **BIPOC ORGANIZATIONS**

Organization survey responses that identified their organization’s work and/or top leadership as primarily representative of Hispanic, African American or African Diaspora cultures are referred to as “BIPOC organizations” in this report. This also includes organizations that used the term “BIPOC” to identify their leadership or audience.

### **LGBTQ+ ORGANIZATIONS**

This category refers to organization survey responses that identified their organization’s work and/or top leadership as primarily representative of LGBTQ+ people or communities.

### **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.

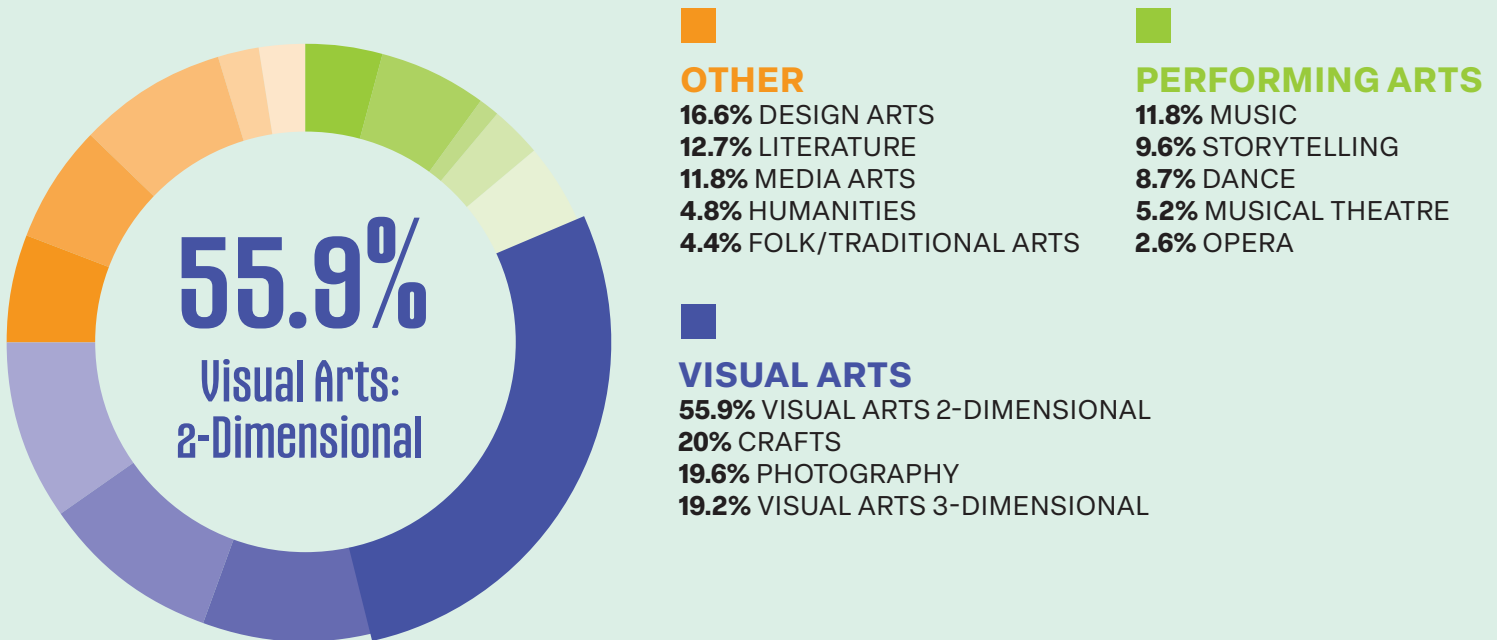
1. Definition adapted from The Bipoc Project, “About Us,” The Bipoc Project, Accessed August 11, 2022, <https://www.thebipocproject.org/about-us>.

# ARTIST FINDINGS

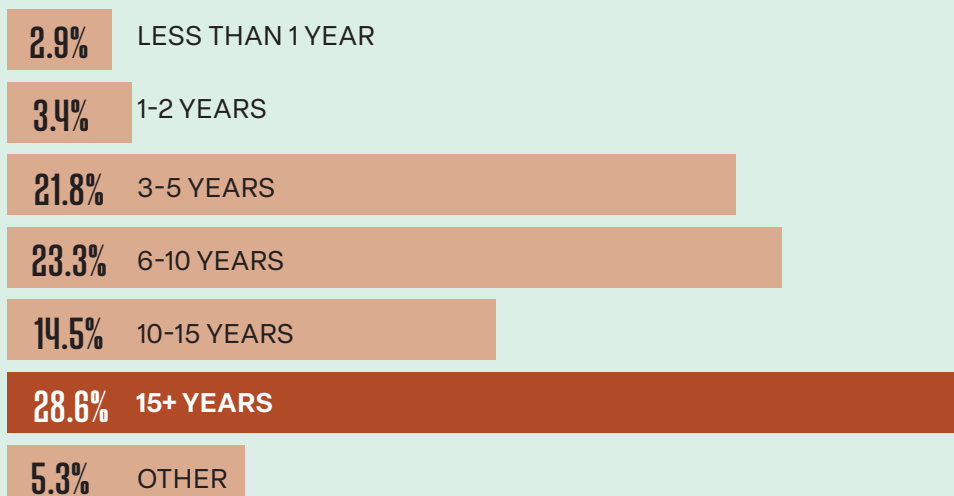
## WHO RESPONDED

With **229 responses** from Southwestern Pennsylvania artists, this year's artist survey had the highest number of respondents in its history. LGBTQ+ artists and artists with disabilities were strongly represented in this sample. Though this was our most racially diverse artist respondent pool yet, several races and ethnicities are underrepresented when compared to 2020 Allegheny County Census data.<sup>2</sup> Although we did receive responses from artists across various disciplines, we saw a high representation of visual artists working in 2-D mediums.

### ARTIST DISCIPLINE



### LENGTH OF ARTISTIC PRACTICE IN PITTSBURGH

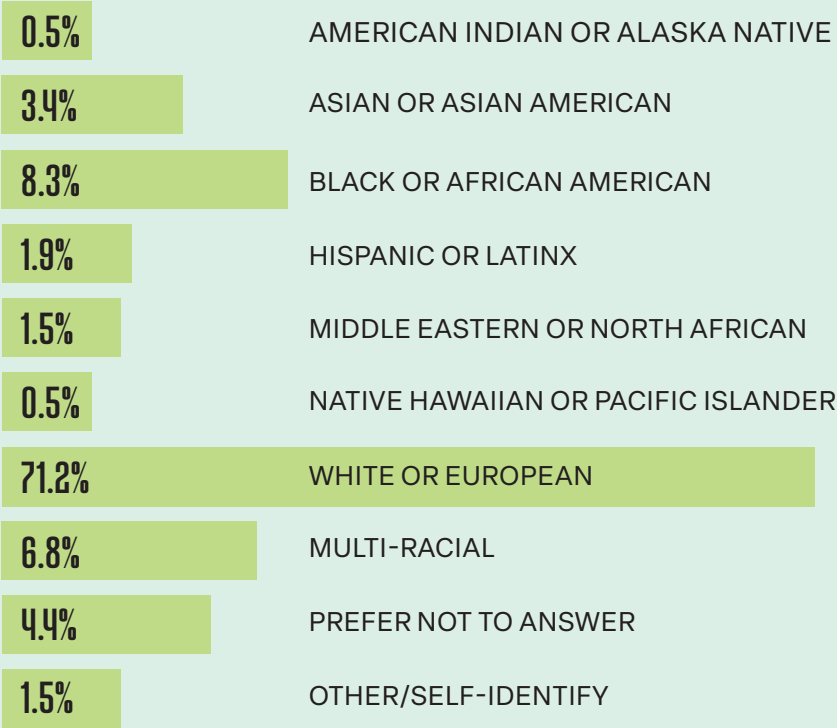


Beauty Slap performing at the Arts Council's 2019 Annual Convening, photo by Randall Coleman.

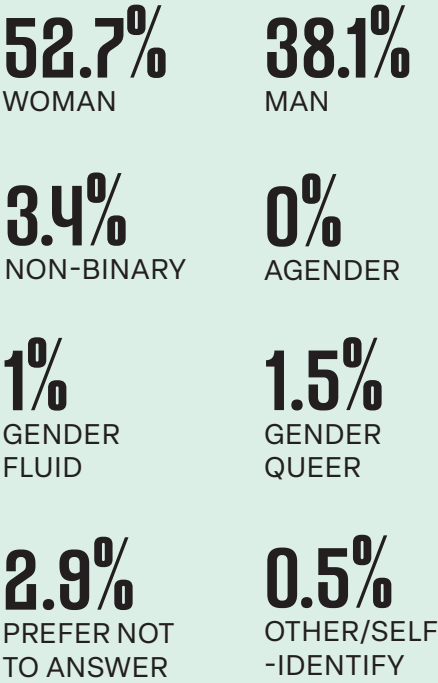
2. "U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Allegheny County, Pennsylvania," 2021, United States Census Bureau, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/alleghenycountypennsylvania>.



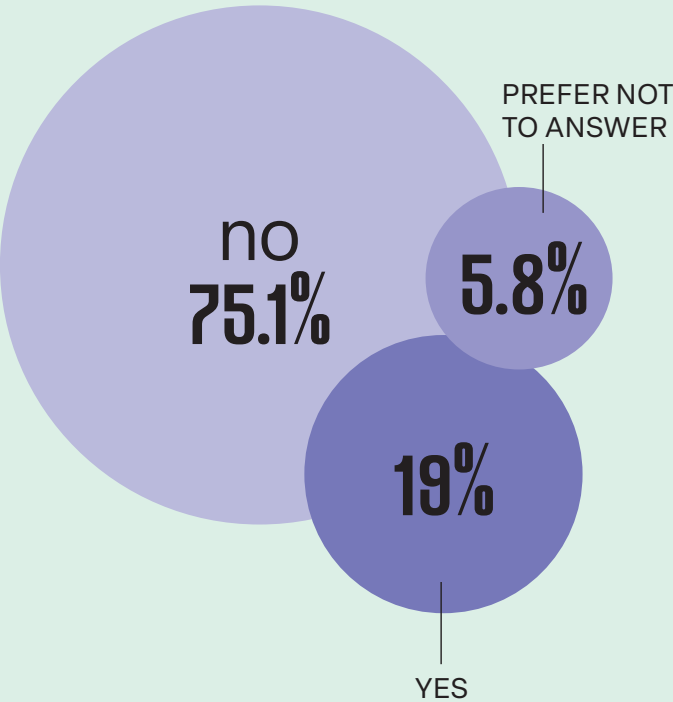
ARTIST RACE AND ETHNICITY



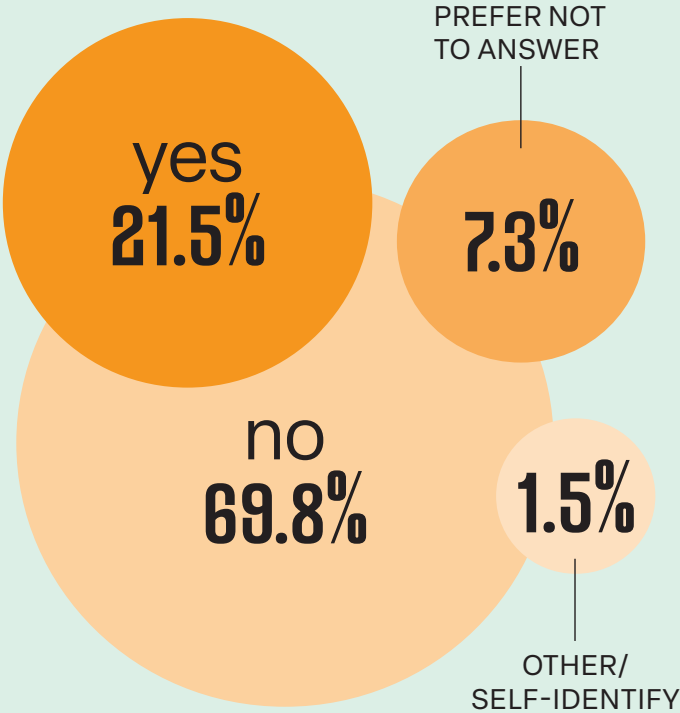
ARTIST GENDER



ARTISTS WHO IDENTIFY AS PART OF THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY



ARTISTS WHO IDENTIFY AS A PERSON WITH A DISABILITY



# COVID-19 IMPACT ON ARTISTS

We asked artists to share how their professional and personal lives had changed since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic more than two years ago. Some shared how pandemic isolation allowed them to grow personally, artistically, or spiritually. Others shared stories about adapting their practice to technological platforms. A few even noted that they decided to pursue their artistic passions more seriously after being laid off or quitting unfulfilling jobs.

However, many artists also spoke about financial difficulties as a result of lost work or unemployment. Inflation, inability to collect unemployment, obligations to care for family members and physical health issues heightened the financial stress. Many artists noted that they experienced depression and anxiety during this time. Some described their experiences as traumatizing.

Any identifying information has been redacted to maintain respondents' anonymity.

## TOP THREE THEMES IN COVID-19 IMPACT STORIES

**1 LOST WORK, INCOME, OPPORTUNITIES**

**2 MORE TIME SPENT ON ART**

**3 ISOLATION**

“It’s been extremely stressful. **Multiple periods of unemployment**, unable to collect unemployment because I could not demonstrate consistent income from my art business which was impacted by the pandemic.”

“I’ve done a lot **more work than I had in past years**. My work is mainly mental health related and I found myself making much more art and doing a lot **more writing to amplify the lived experiences of the mentally ill**.”



Herman (Soy Sos) Pearl DJing at a local arts event.

“It’s been downright depressing. From March 2020 to March 2021, I played one concert, and had no performances of my compositions. **Calendar 2021 had only 2 [performances]; normally that number would be 30-70.** ... And general malaise from the political environment & **social isolation didn’t nurture creativity...**”

“**I didn’t do any in-person shows between 2020 and 2022.** It also made me feel **disconnected from the greater ceramics community.**”

In the stories shared about how COVID-19 impacted their lives, artists most frequently noted **a loss of work (artistic or otherwise) and income**. These losses weren’t just about work, income, or opportunity. They also meant loss of connection and community, loss of financial stability, and sometimes loss of access to basic needs.

Many noted that the nature of the pandemic led them to **spend more time on art**. For others, **increased isolation** was not only emotionally challenging, but sometimes made artistic creation difficult or impossible.

## MENTAL HEALTH IMPACTS



**Mental health** was also frequently mentioned by all respondents, but BIPOC artists mentioned mental health impacts more frequently. Black artists reported being more impacted by lost artistic opportunity, mental health issues, personal loss, and personal growth.

“Covid was pretty tough for me. From early 2020 until about February to March of this year I made next to no art at all. **I had periods of anxiety and poor health,** but even when I was well, I couldn’t find the motivation to create.”

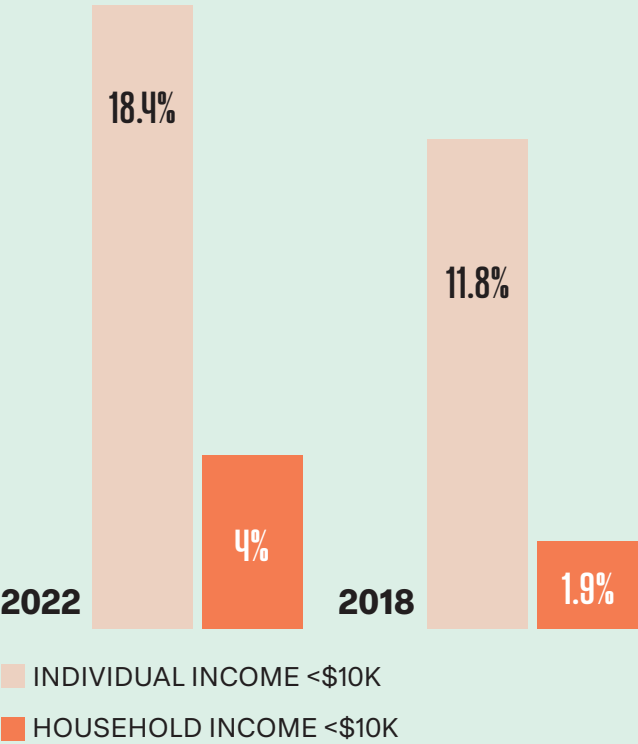
“**I have a lot of internalized fear and trauma relating to how the arts industry completely collapsed in March 2020.** I have a constant fear - rational or otherwise - that each job I get will be my last and that, despite my current job security, I will lose my full-time job with no notice because I was furloughed from it less than two months after starting. The past two years have helped me focus on the aspects of my life that are truly important - my personal and professional well-being, balancing work and life, not allowing my value to be exploited - and the industry seems slow to respond to societal change in views on labor.”

# STATE OF ARTIST QUALITY OF LIFE

The following data paints a picture of how artists are meeting their basic needs, earning income, and balancing artistic practices with non-artistic work. Where possible, artist quality of life measures were compared to Allegheny County averages and previous artist surveys

A higher than average poverty rate among artists was among the most concerning findings. The percentage of respondents earning less than \$10,000 also increased significantly from 2018. Given that an artist’s income impacts various other areas of quality of life, supporting the basic needs of the region’s artists is an urgent matter.

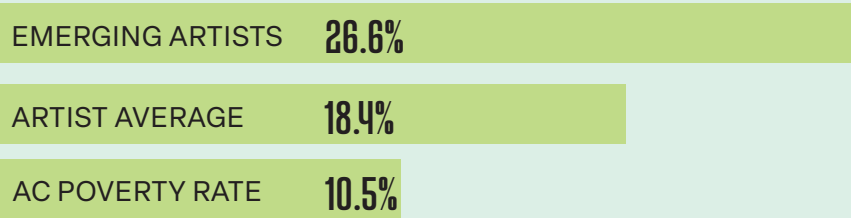
## ANNUAL ARTIST INCOMES UNDER \$10K INCREASED



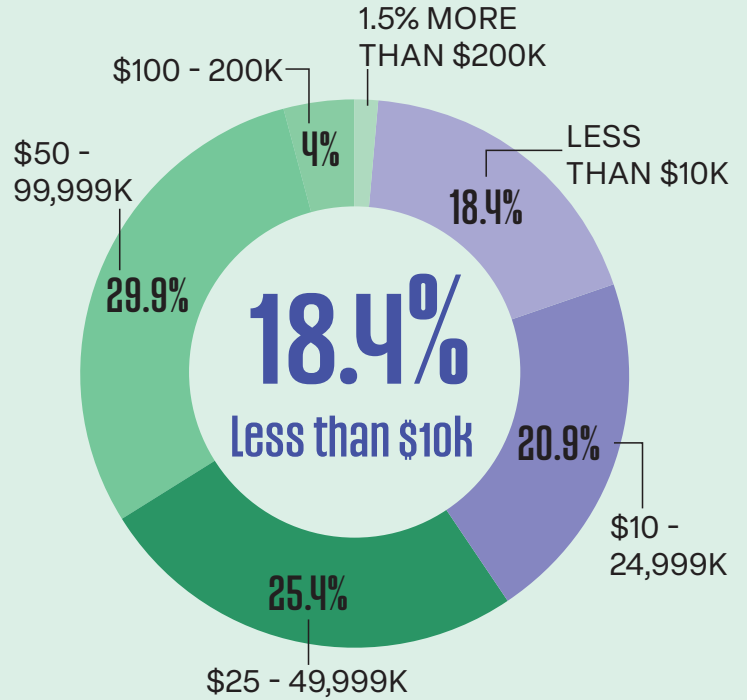
Artist stories about lost work and income are reflected in an increase of artists reporting annual household and individual incomes of under \$10,000 in comparison to 2018. The 2022 federal poverty line is \$13,590 for a household of one, **meaning that likely at least 1/5 of area artists are making incomes at or below the poverty line.**<sup>3</sup>

Based on this survey, **it appears artists are more likely to have individual incomes under the federal poverty line than the average Allegheny County (AC) resident.** This appears to impact emerging artists at even higher proportions, where 27% of emerging artists report making individual incomes of under \$10,000. There were no notable differences by race.

## ARTISTS WITH INDIVIDUAL INCOMES <\$10K COMPARED TO ALLEGHENY COUNTY POVERTY RATE<sup>4</sup>



## 2022 INDIVIDUAL ARTIST ANNUAL INCOME



## ARTISTS’ INCOMES UNDER \$10,000 WHEN COMPARED TO 2018:



3. HHS Poverty Guidelines for 2022,” Poverty Guidelines, Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, 2022, <https://aspe.hhs.gov/topics/poverty-economic-mobility/poverty-guidelines>.  
4 “U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Allegheny County, Pennsylvania,” United States Census Bureau, 2021, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/alleghenycountypennsylvania>.



That said, artists are less likely now to report accessing programs like SNAP (the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)/EBT (Electronic Benefit Transfer) and Medicaid than they were in 2018 and 2016. **In fact, they are less likely to use these programs in 2022 than the average Pennsylvanian.** Based on the poverty rates reported, it's possible that artists eligible for some of these benefits may not be accessing them.

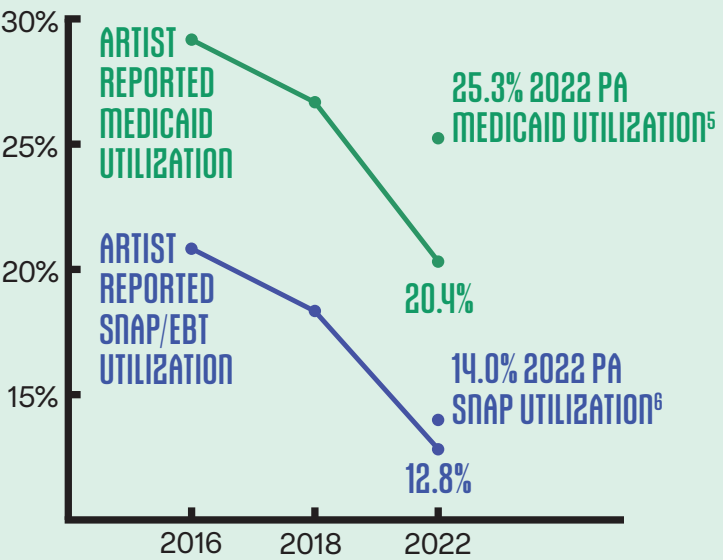
The artist community of the Greater Pittsburgh area is also underbanked/unbanked at a higher rate than the average.

**Underbanked** individuals have either a checking or savings account, but not both, and **unbanked individuals** have neither a checking nor a savings account.

ARTISTS WITH AND WITHOUT CHECKING OR SAVINGS ACCOUNTS		
	ARTISTS 2022	PGH 2019
BOTH CHECKING AND SAVINGS	64.7%	96.6%*7
EITHER CHECKING OR SAVINGS	29.0%	
UNDERBANKED		
NEITHER CHECKING OR SAVINGS	6.3%	3.4%**8
UNBANKED		

\*at least one account\* \*\*unbanked7

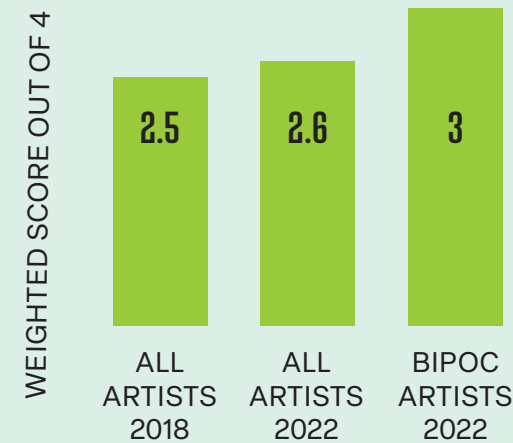
SOCIAL SAFETY NET



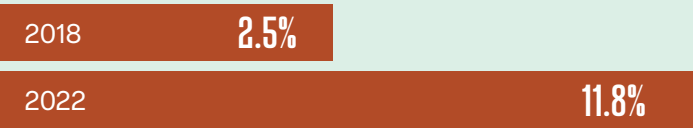
Between 2018 and 2022, the number of artists reporting **living with parents/family increased by 378.5%**. We cannot know exactly why this has occurred, but it's not surprising given the higher-than-average poverty rate reported by respondents.

Artists rated **“taking care of basic needs”** as a more significant challenge in 2022 than they did in 2018 and was among the top five barriers to career advancement for BIPOC artists.

SIGNIFICANCE OF CHALLENGE: TAKING CARE OF BASIC NEEDS



ARTISTS LIVING WITH PARENTS/FAMILY



“ I can only do this job because I am dependent on family help and support. It’s worth it to me, because it’s my dream and they are extremely supportive and willing, but I wish I could do this job and be independent. That dependence isn’t a great feeling.”

5. Lauren Hall and Nchako, Catlin, “A Closer Look at Who Benefits from SNAP: State-by-State Fact Sheets,” Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, Updated April 25, 2022, <https://www.cbpp.org/research/food-assistance/a-closer-look-at-who-benefits-from-snap-state-by-state-fact-sheets#Pennsylvania>.  
6. Citation: “May 2022 Medicaid & CHIP Enrollment Data Highlights,” Medicaid.gov, May 2022, <https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/program-information/medicaid-and-chip-enrollment-data/report-highlights/index.html>.  
7. Patty Tascarella, “Number of Pittsburghers without bank accounts drops again,” Pittsburgh Business Times, October 30, 2020, <https://www.bizjournals.com/pittsburgh/news/2020/10/30/pittsburghers-sans-bank-accounts-drops.html>.  
8. “2019 Survey Results for Pittsburgh, PA,” Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, 2019, [https://household-survey.fdic.gov/place-data?type=msa&area=Pittsburgh\\_PA](https://household-survey.fdic.gov/place-data?type=msa&area=Pittsburgh_PA).

# BARRIERS TO CAREER ADVANCEMENT

Artist surveys asked artists to rank the significance of certain challenges and barriers in their professional lives. This information helps the Arts Council and others to support the development of programs and services to address these barriers and help artists thrive. Artist comments also show where challenges originate or intersect. We were specifically interested in significant changes that could be attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic, but the comments revealed that artists’ challenges, while perhaps amplified by the pandemic, are mostly evergreen.

The top five barriers to career advancement have not changed significantly since 2016 or 2018, though this is the first time **“lack of mentors and networks”** has made the top 5.

TOP 5 BARRIERS TO CAREER ADVANCEMENT				
ALL ARTISTS		RATING*	BIPOC ARTISTS	RATING*
1	MARKETING, PROMOTING YOUR ART	2.87	SECURING GRANTS, FELLOWSHIPS, DONATIONS	3.24
2	SECURING GRANTS, FELLOWSHIPS, DONATIONS	2.85	MANAGING PERSONAL AND ARTISTIC FINANCES	3.22
3	MANAGING PERSONAL AND ARTISTIC FINANCES	2.82	FINDING AFFORDABLE STUDIO/ WORK/REHEARSAL SPACE	3.07
4	FINDING AFFORDABLE STUDIO/ WORK/REHEARSAL SPACE	2.67	MARKETING, PROMOTING YOUR ART	2.96
5	LACK OF MENTORS AND NETWORKS	2.61	TAKING CARE OF BASIC NEEDS	2.95

\*Out of 4

Though the list of top five barriers for BIPOC artists were similar to the average, BIPOC respondents rated many of these challenges as more significant than the average. In addition, “securing grants, fellowships, and donations” was rated as the top challenge for BIPOC artists.

Also, though pay for artistic work wasn’t a challenge listed for rating, it was frequently mentioned as a barrier by artists of varying experience levels.

**When asked to identify issues that the arts community must address for a healthy future,** artists named the same top two issues as cultural workers (discussed on page 23) equity and inclusion followed by audience development.

“Be more inclusive. There’s a lot of shows and opportunities that claim to promote equality and diversity yet exclude people from participating based on who they are.”

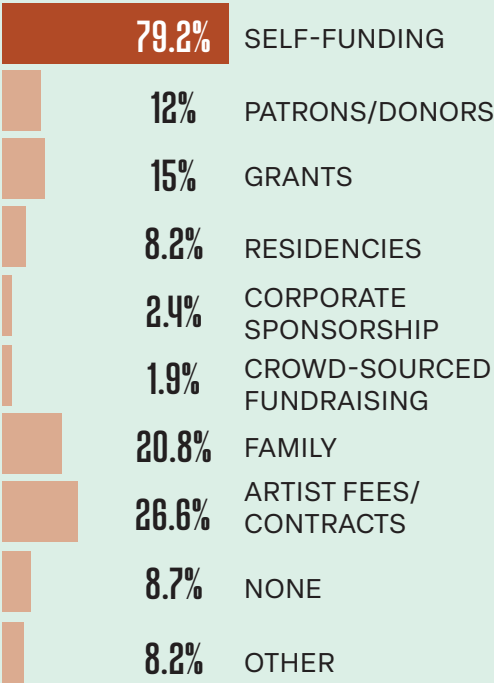
“I think that the biggest issues are class and economic issues. It is difficult to make money as an artist, and it is difficult to create art AND have a secondary job while maintaining work-life balance. These challenges are only compounded with people who have families, chronic health issues, issues with discrimination, etc. Any support for artists that would make it easier to create and be financially healthy would be very helpful!”

TOP FIVE CORE ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED BY THE ARTS AND CULTURE COMMUNITY (ARTISTS)			
1	EQUITY & INCLUSION	4	FUNDING
2	AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT	5	ACCESSIBILITY
3	VISIBILITY & EXPOSURE		

# FOCUS ON FUNDING

Tracking perceptions of funding equity, especially across lines of race, has been of interest to the Arts Council for many years. The previous section of this report revealed that artists, particularly artists of color, find securing grants, fellowships, and donations to be one of the greatest barriers to career advancement. This may be, in part, because most of the respondents in this survey have not received any funding from these sources in the past year, some despite applying for them.

## IN THE LAST YEAR, WHERE DID YOU GET FUNDS AND OTHER RESOURCES TO SUPPORT YOUR ARTISTIC PROJECTS?



Nonetheless, the average artist’s perception of fairness and equity in funding is improving. This is true, too, for artists of color, but to a lesser degree. In addition to sharing differences for BIPOC artists across various racial groups, we have shared analysis specific to Black artists to continue our specific focus on the experiences of this group.

Self-funding was the most frequently cited way that artists of all income levels funded their art in 2022, **with 79.23% of artists reporting that they at least partially self-funded their art.** By contrast, just 15% said that grants had a role in funding their art and only 8.2% said their work was partially funded by residencies. Given the data about income earlier in this report, these funding sources may not be sufficient or sustainable.

“Make grants large enough so artists can quit their full-time jobs for a year and just focus on their art.”

Fewer artists also reported funding through grants and residencies in 2022 than in 2018 and 2016, though this may be in part due to differences in who responded in a given year. Most artists reported that they have never been funded by an entity outside of Pittsburgh. Those that have received funding listed PA Council on the Arts, Small Business Administration, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

“It doesn’t seem attainable. Writing grants is not an easy thing to do so it feels out of reach for most artists.”

PERCENT OF ARTISTS PARTIALLY FUNDED BY GRANTS AND/OR RESIDENCIES HAS DECREASED OVER TIME

	2016	2018	2022
GRANTS	20.6%	16.7%	15%
RESIDENCIES	14.3%	11.9%	8.2%



C.B.Perry, local visual artist live painting during an event.

For the first time since we began asking this question in 2016, artists who responded that they find grant funding in our region fair and equitable outnumbered those who found grant funding not fair and not equitable. Differences among race remain, and most artists said they were “unsure” about funding equity.

**“Racial discrimination, social economic discrimination, educational [discrimination] is unfortunately interwoven in the selection process in the Greater Pittsburgh region. The lack of integrity is also a problem being demonstrated in who is continually selected to be funded and/or on selection panels.”**

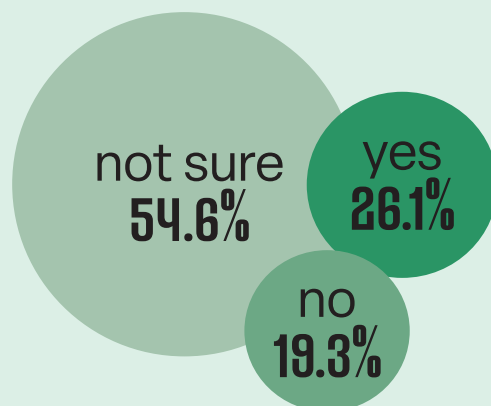
Despite the increasing perception among BIPOC artists that funding in Pittsburgh is equitable, BIPOC artists remain less likely to perceive arts funding as equitable than the average artist. This is true for Black artists to an even greater degree, where perception of equity in funding decreased slightly between 2018 and 2022.

Reasons for answering ‘no’ included reputation biases, lack of representation in certain disciplines (dance, performing arts in general, writing, photography), organizations being prioritized over individual artists, racial disparity, and finding the process to lack integrity.

Artists who answered “not sure” gave the following reasons: don’t understand the process, don’t have the time to apply, don’t meet the criteria, amounts are too small, or are newer to the area and unaware of opportunities.

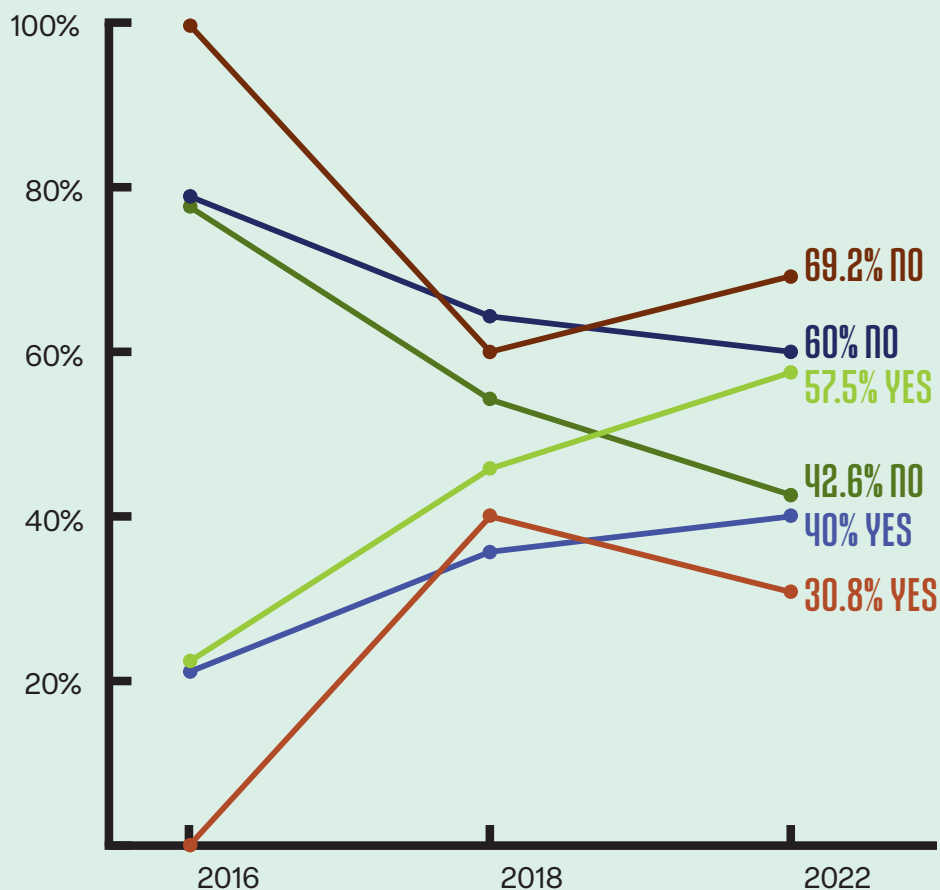
## DO YOU FIND GRANT FUNDING FOR ARTISTS IN THE GREATER PITTSBURGH REGION TO BE FAIR AND EQUITABLE?

AVG. FOR ALL 2022 ARTISTS



## DO YOU FIND GRANT FUNDING FOR ARTISTS IN THE GREATER PITTSBURGH REGION TO BE FAIR AND EQUITABLE?

- YES - BLACK ARTISTS
- NO - BLACK ARTISTS
- YES - BIPOC ARTISTS
- NO - BIPOC ARTISTS
- YES - AVERAGE OF ALL ARTISTS
- NO - AVERAGE OF ALL ARTISTS



**“I don’t find the allocation of funding equitable at all. Opportunities for exposure have extended to BIPOC and LGBTQIA folks, but without commensurate pay.”**

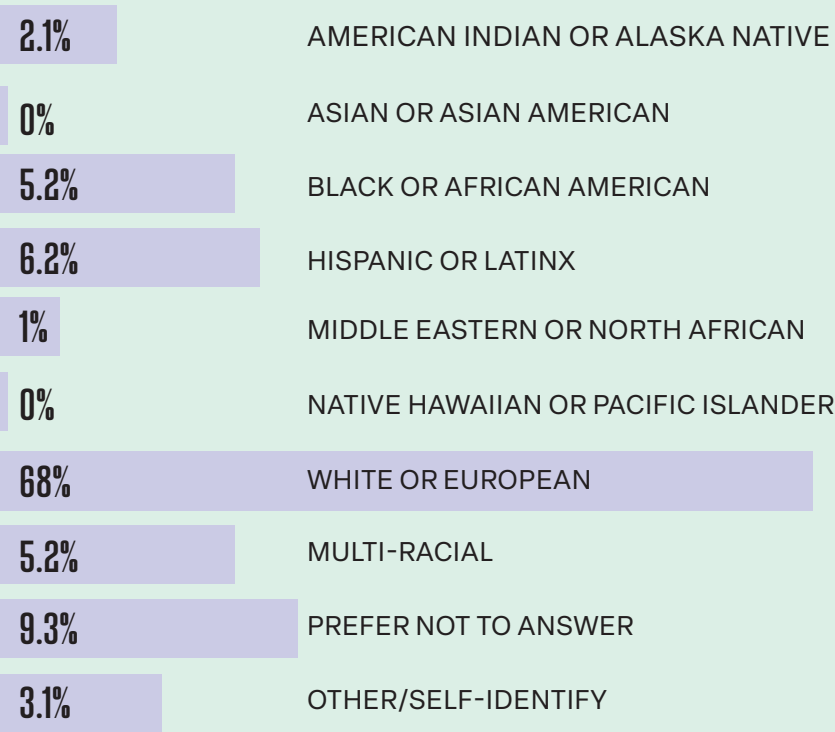


# ORGANIZATION FINDINGS

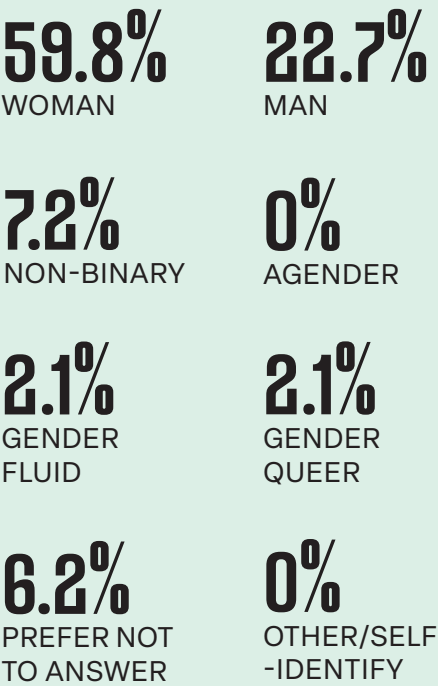
## WHO RESPONDED

The **136 organization** survey responses came from a range of artistic disciplines and budget sizes, with small organizations being the most-represented group. Most respondents occupied middle to upper leadership positions but represented a wide array of departments. One-third identified their organizations’ top leadership or work as being representative of a specific group, such as BIPOC or LGBTQ+ communities. At the individual level, we had strong responses from people who identify as LGBTQ+ and people who identify as having one or more disability. Racial diversity in respondent representation remains a growth area for further Arts Council research as Black and Asian respondents specifically were underrepresented.<sup>9</sup>

### INDIVIDUAL WORKERS RACE AND ETHNICITY

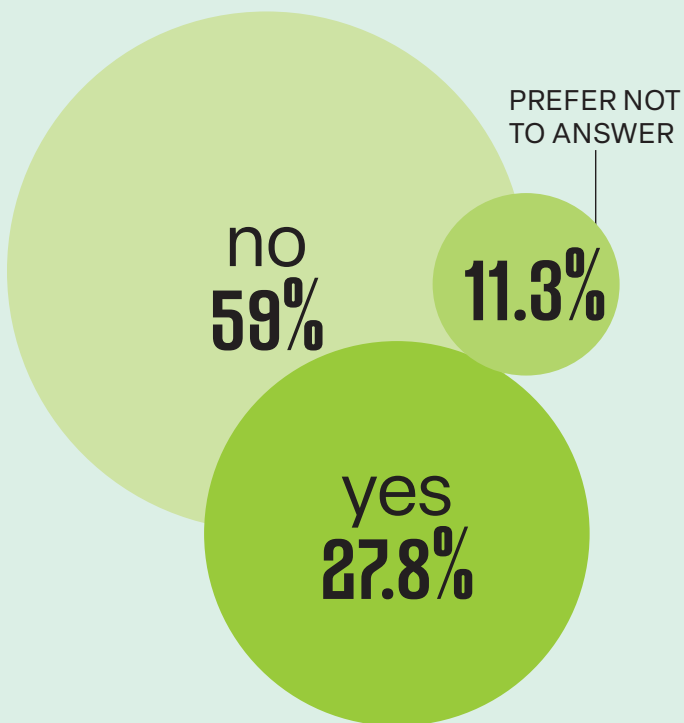


### INDIVIDUAL WORKERS GENDER

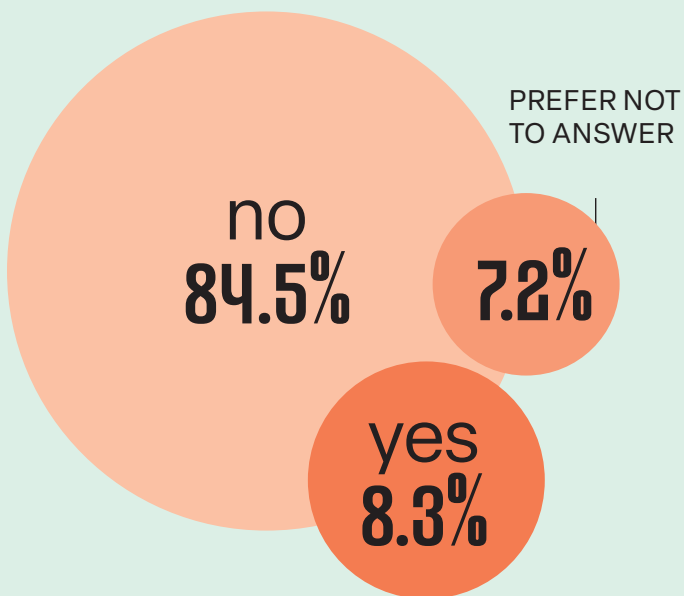


9. “U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Allegheny County, Pennsylvania,” 2021, United States Census Bureau, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/alleghenycountypennsylvania>.

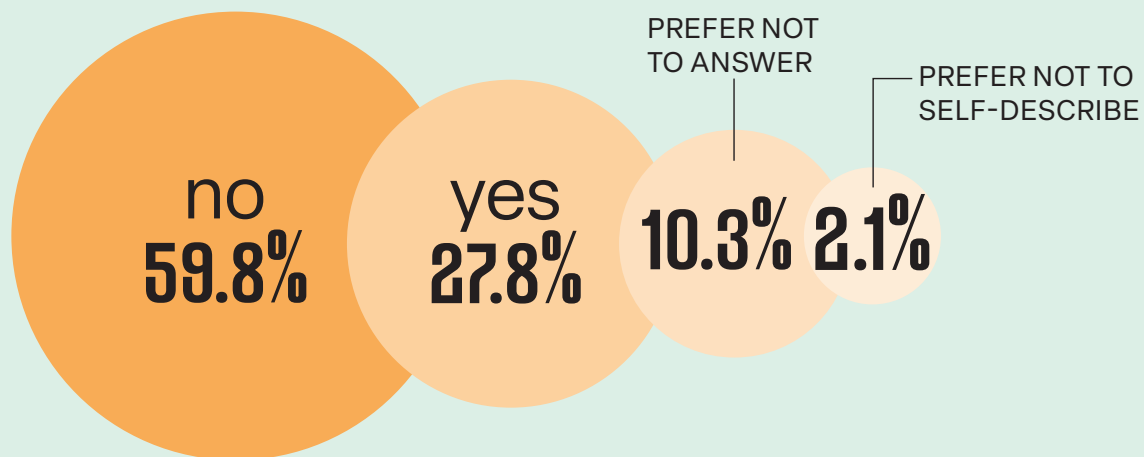
## IDENTIFYING AS PART OF THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY



## IDENTIFYING AS TRANSGENDER



## IDENTIFYING AS A PERSON WITH A DISABILITY



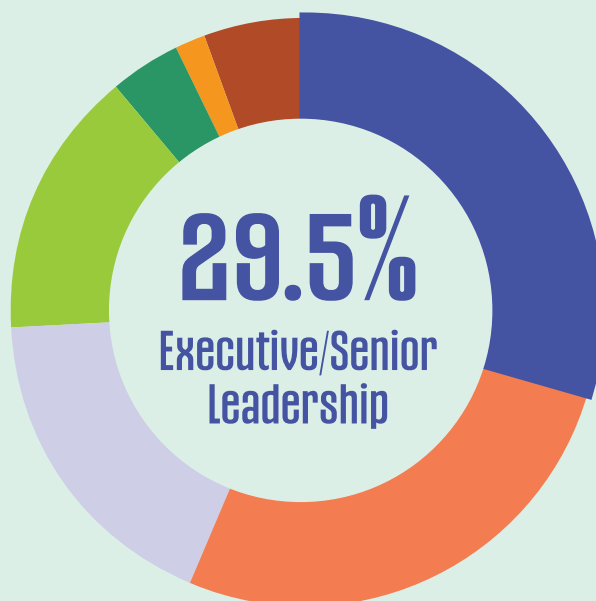
## ORGANIZATION DEPARTMENTS



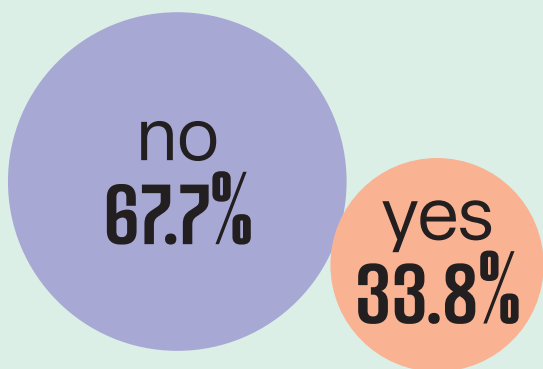
- 39.53% EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP
- 26.4% DEVELOPMENT/ADVANCEMENT
- 25.6% ARTISTIC/CURATORIAL
- 23.3% MARKETING/COMMUNICATIONS
- 22.5% EDUCATION
- 21.7% PROGRAMMING
- 21.7% COMMUNITY OUTREACH/ENGAGEMENT
- 20.2% DIVERSITY, EQUITY, ACCESSIBILITY, INCLUSION
- 14.7% FINANCE
- 14% VISITOR EXPERIENCE/FRONT OF HOUSE
- 10.9% HUMAN RESOURCES
- 10.1% RESEARCH/EVALUATION
- 9.3% FACILITIES, OPERATIONS, OR PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT
- 7% GUEST SERVICES AND/OR SALES
- 7% EVENT OR FACILITY RENTALS
- 6.2% NOT LISTED

## EMPLOYMENT LEVELS

- 29.5% EXECUTIVE/SENIOR LEADERSHIP (INCLUDING VICE PRESIDENT)
- 27.1% DIRECTOR
- 17.8% MANAGER
- 14.7% INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTOR (ASSOCIATE, COORDINATOR, SPECIALIST, ANALYST)
- 3.9% ENTRY LEVEL
- 1.5% VOLUNTEER
- 5.4% OTHER



**IS YOUR ORGANIZATION'S WORK AND/OR TOP LEADERSHIP PRIMARILY REPRESENTATIVE OF A PARTICULAR RACE, ETHNICITY, NATIONAL TRADITION, LGBTQ+ GROUP, DISABILITY COMMUNITY, OR OTHER IDENTITY?**



Groups include: 18 organizations identifying as predominately LGBTQ+, 14 organizations primarily representative of BIPOC leadership or BIPOC-focused work (8 of which specify Black and/or African Diaspora).

## RESPONDENTS BY ORGANIZATION BUDGET SIZE

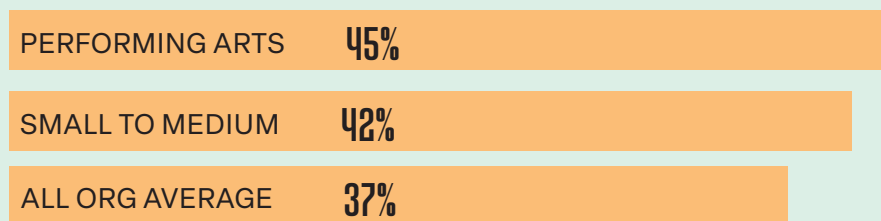
SMALL: LESS THAN \$250K	34.6%
MEDIUM: \$250-999K	15.9%
LARGE: \$1-9.9M	17.8%
VERY LARGE: MORE THAN \$10M	13.1%
UNKNOWN	18.7%

# COVID-19 IMPACT

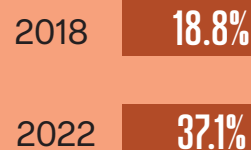
The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on arts and culture has been multi-faceted and far-reaching. National data from the National Endowments for the Arts and U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis showed that in 2020, the arts economy declined by nearly twice as much as the U.S. economy.<sup>10</sup> In Southwestern Pennsylvania, many organizations still await the return of audiences to pre-pandemic attendance rates, resulting in unpredictable or inconsistent earned income. The impact in our region has been particularly hard on performing arts organizations, a phenomenon echoed in other national data sources.

Organizations represented in this survey were about twice as likely to end their most recent fiscal year with a budget deficit than organizations who responded in 2018.<sup>10</sup> Deficits were seen more frequently in performing arts and small to medium-sized organizations with budgets of under <\$1 million.

## ORGANIZATIONS ENDING IN A DEFICIT OF ANY SIZE, 2022



## % OF ORGANIZATIONS ENDING RECENT FISCAL YEAR IN DEFICIT



Earned income has been slow to rebound, and nearly half of respondents predict audiences **will not return to 2019 levels until 2023 or later.**

## BASED ON CURRENT TRENDS, WHEN WOULD YOU ESTIMATE THAT ATTENDANCE AT YOUR ORGANIZATION WILL RETURN TO PRE-PANDEMIC LEVELS?

	ALL %
ALREADY BACK TO/ABOVE 2019	23.7%
NEXT THREE MONTHS (MAY-JUL 2022)	4.3%
BY END OF 2022	17.2%
SOMETIME IN 2023	35.5%
LATER THAN 2023	12.9%
DON'T EXPECT AUDIENCES TO RETURN TO PRE-PANDEMIC LEVEL	1.1%
OTHER/IT'S COMPLICATED	5.4%

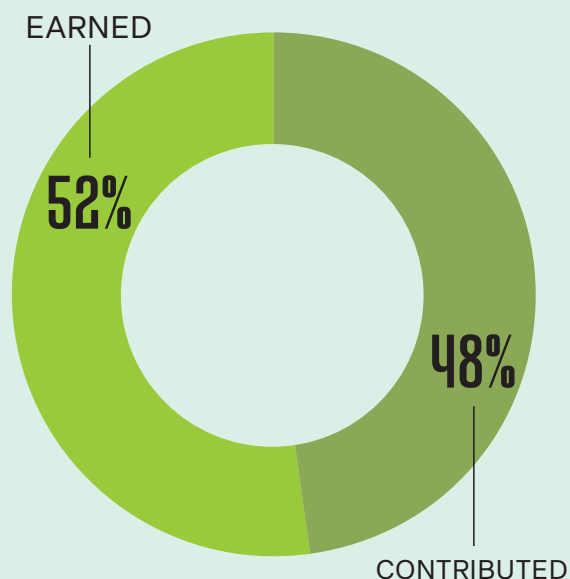
10. "New Data Show Economic Impact of COVID-19 on Arts & Culture Sector," National Endowment for the Arts, March 15, 2022, <https://www.arts.gov/news/press-releases/2022/new-data-show-economic-impact-covid-19-arts-culture-sector>.

10. IRS data suggests that the average deficit rate for all Allegheny County nonprofit arts and culture in 2018 was 38% and the average deficit rates for years 2016-2021 is 37%. We therefore make this historical comparison with caution. We thank Daniel Fonner of SMU DataArts for helping compile this IRS data.

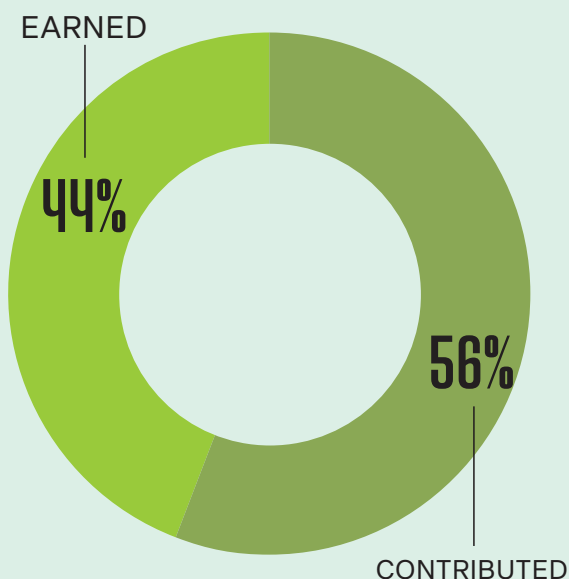


Slow audience return shows up in how respondents reported shifts in revenue composition. Since the onset of the pandemic, the sector on average is depending more heavily on contributed income than it did pre-pandemic.

### AVERAGE REPORTED REVENUE COMPOSITION, PRE-PANDEMIC



### AVERAGE REPORTED REVENUE COMPOSITION, MAY/JUNE 2022



A performance by Pittsburgh-based multidisciplinary group, slowdanger.

**Performing arts organizations reported the most significant impact** with the average earned revenue percentage dropped from 47.2% before the pandemic to 34.0% at the time of the survey. This is not surprising given similar findings from national sources. Alongside oil drilling/exploration and air transportation, the NEA and Bureau of Economic Analysis found that performing arts presenters and performing arts companies experienced greater economic decline than any other groups in 2020.

Other national data from 2022 **suggests that previous performing arts audiences have been less likely to indicate a return to their normal activities** compared to audiences of other visitor-serving organizations.<sup>12</sup>

Yet many organizations continue to do more with less. **Thirty percent of organizations are still operating with smaller staffs than they were pre-pandemic.**

Organizations reporting that they are operating at “normal” or “increased capacity” are still:

- **29%** - doing so having completed their last fiscal year with a deficit
- **43%** - working despite reporting they only “sometimes” or “rarely” had the resources to conduct necessary repairs, updates, or maintenance to their facilities
- **56%** - having increased wages or benefits beyond scheduled increases as a hiring or retention incentive

11. “New Data Show Economic Impact of COVID-19 on Arts & Culture Sector,” National Endowment for the Arts, March 15, 2022, <https://www.arts.gov/news/press-releases/2022/new-data-show-economic-impact-covid-19-arts-culture-sector>.

12. “The Pandemic Has Shifted the Types of Cultural Entities That People Prefer to Visit (DATA),” Colleen Dilenschneider, May 10, 2022, <https://www.colleendilenc.com/2022/05/10/the-pandemic-has-shifted-the-types-of-cultural-entities-people-prefer-to-visit-data/>.

# STATE OF CULTURAL WORKER PRIORITIES

As the Greater Pittsburgh arts and culture community began reopening its doors after COVID-19 closures, the **Arts Council heard many stories from organizational leaders about their struggles to fill various staff positions.** Our sector wasn’t alone. The phenomenon deemed “The Great Resignation” by Texas A&M professor Anthony Klotz was a common topic of discussion across corporate and nonprofit sectors in 2021 and 2022.<sup>13</sup> In the interest of learning more about what was motivating regional arts and culture workers, the Arts Council asked respondents to rate the significance of several job-related priorities and report their likelihood of remaining in the sector for at least two years.

We suspect some bias in this data, meaning it may not accurately represent all regional cultural workers. To illustrate this: while most respondents said they are “very likely” to remain working in arts and culture for the next two years, we assume that workers feeling disconnected from or disillusioned with the sector are less likely to complete a survey about their work. In any case, we believe these findings to be useful for arts and culture employers thinking about recruiting or retaining employees through a lens of diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion.

The survey found that our region’s cultural workers care about their impact. “Passion/interest” was the highest rated category of importance when considering job and career options. All but “benefits” were given a weighted average importance above four (out of five). This means that, on average, all aspects listed are important considerations for our respondents.

## WHEN CONSIDERING JOB AND CAREER OPTIONS, HOW IMPORTANT TO YOU ARE EACH OF THE FOLLOWING?

	NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT	SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT	MODERATELY IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	WEIGHTED AVERAGE (OUT OF 5)
PERSONAL INTEREST IN/PASSION FOR THE WORK THAT YOU DO	0%	3.10%	11.6%	21.7%	63.6%	4.5
ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE	1.6%	2.3%	12.4%	33.3%	50.4%	4.3
FLEXIBILITY IN WORK SETTING OR HOURS	0.8%	3.9%	17.8%	30.2%	47.3%	4.2
WAGES/PAY	0.8%	3.2%	15.9%	42.9%	37.3%	4.1
BENEFITS	4.8%	8.0%	20.8%	32%	34.4%	3.8

“I want to have a career that leaves a tangible and positive impact on how people understand and digest visual culture.”

“I must be passionate to be devoted to fulfilling an institution’s mission, goals, and objectives. Buy-in.”

“My priorities when considering job/career options is what will let me effect change in a positive and sustainable way, while also maintaining a dignified standard of living.”

Several respondents **noted the tension they feel between choosing** impactful work in the arts and accepting lower pay/benefits because of that choice.

“Above all, I want to work in the arts. I have sacrificed benefits and pay to work at the institution I am at.”

“I know I could make more money/get more benefits if I left the nonprofit arts sector but caring about what I do and enjoying my work environment mean more to me.”

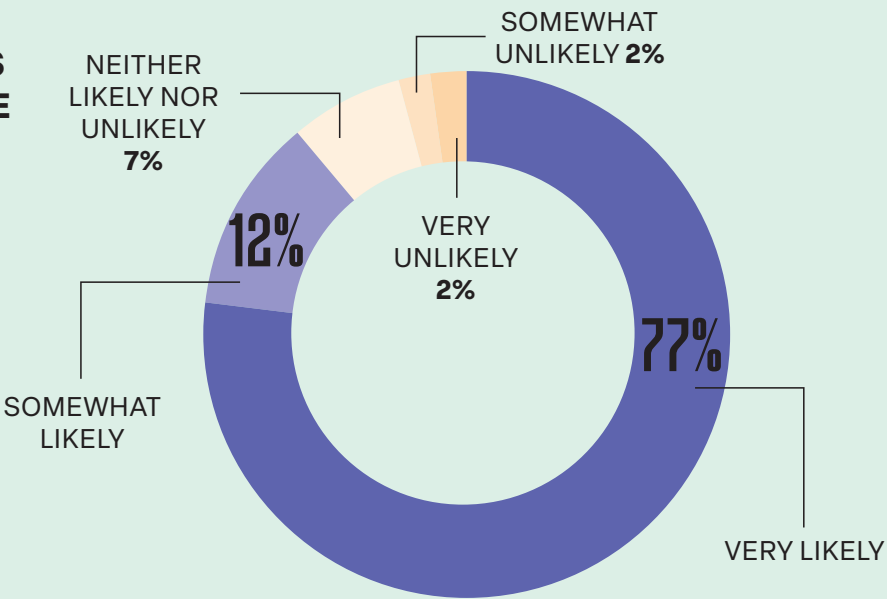
There were also differences in priority rankings for respondents with disabilities and respondents of color. For example, “flexible work environments” was the top priority for respondents with disabilities and second priority for BIPOC respondents. Note: Black respondents had the same order of priorities as the average of all BIPOC respondents but rated “flexibility in work setting” and “organizational culture” as having equal importance (on average).

“I’d love to have the luxury to care more about organizational culture, but I have to prioritize pay/benefits to survive.”

**Most respondents said they are likely to stay in the sector for at least the next two years.** There were no significant differences when compared across race, ability, or position level within organizations.

RESPONDENTS WITH DISABILITIES	WEIGHTED AVERAGE (OUT OF 5)
FLEXIBILITY IN WORK SETTING OR HOURS	4.3
ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE	4.2
WAGES/PAY	4.2
PERSONAL INTEREST IN/PASSION FOR THE WORK THAT YOU DO	4.1
BENEFITS	3.7
BIPOC RESPONDENTS	
PERSONAL INTEREST IN/PASSION FOR THE WORK THAT YOU DO	4.1
FLEXIBILITY IN WORK SETTING OR HOURS	4.0
ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE	3.9
WAGES/PAY	3.8
BENEFITS	3.6

HOW LIKELY ARE YOU TO REMAIN WORKING IN THE ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR FOR THE NEXT TWO YEARS?



# DEAI NEEDS AND TRENDS

Diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion (DEAI) are core values of the Arts Council and the community we cultivate, and our community survey respondents have echoed this focus for several surveys in a row. This section most accurately represents how DEAI work is taking shape at predominantly white organizations, which is the largest group of organizations represented in this survey. As noted, where relevant, BIPOC-led organizations often experience and address DEAI challenges differently.

DEAI consistently ranks at the top of individual organizational challenges and sector-wide issues to be addressed for a healthy future. In 2022, equity and inclusion, sometimes with a specific racial equity focus often with a broader, intersectional lens, was named more than any other topic as an “issue that the arts and culture community must address to ensure a healthy future.” This was also true in 2016 and 2018. This year’s responses also included calls for transparency and accountability around the arts sector’s role in upholding and advancing systems and impacts of inequity.

## TOP FIVE CORE ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED BY THE ARTS AND CULTURE COMMUNITY

	2016	2018	2022
1	EQUITY AND INCLUSION	EQUITY AND INCLUSION	EQUITY AND INCLUSION
2	SUSTAINABILITY	AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT	AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT
3	AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT	LEADERSHIP TRAINING/ TRANSITION	FUNDING (TIE)
4	VISIBILITY	FUNDING	VISIBILITY (TIE)
5	LEADERSHIP TRAINING/ TRANSITION	ACCESSIBILITY	INDIVIDUAL GIVING

“I would like to see more of an acknowledgment on how arts and arts settings have contributed to today’s [in]equities and firm plans from organizations on how they plan to combat that directly in tandem to their original organizational mission/vision.”

“Include young people of color in the decision-making about what work to produce.”

“Cronyism seems to be rampant in this city. It’s very difficult to access employment, opportunities, funding, etc. if you don’t know the cishet white people in charge, which of course poses a huge barrier to those from marginalized communities.”

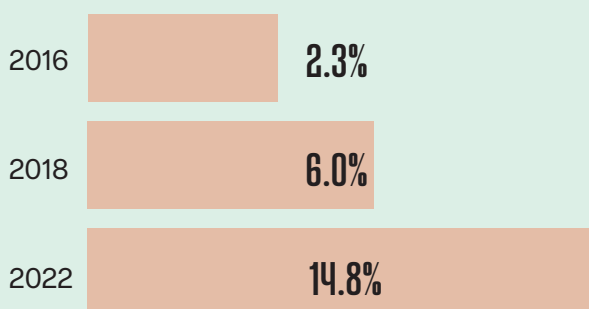


**“Increasing equity, diversity, inclusion (within board, staff, audiences)” was rated as the most significant organizational challenge in 2022**, with 84% of respondents rating it as “extremely significant” or “very significant.” We also assume that “community connections” is at least in part a DEAI-related challenge for many.

Respondents working at BIPOC or LGBTQ+-led organizations were less likely to rate “equity, diversity, inclusion (within board, staff, audiences)” as an “extremely” or “very” significant challenge. In fact, they ranked this challenge 10th out of 14 for their organizations. As one respondent said, **“the artists and arts workers making things happen don’t have as many issues with equity and inclusion.”**

ORGANIZATION TOP FIVE CHALLENGES & NEEDS	EXTREMELY SIGNIFICANT	VERY SIGNIFICANT	FAIRLY SIGNIFICANT	LESS SIGNIFICANT	WEIGHTED AVERAGE (OUT OF 4)
INCREASING EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION (WITHIN BOARD, STAFF, AUDIENCES)	34.4%	35.6%	20.0%	10.0%	2.9
LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY	34.7%	25.3%	26.3%	13.7%	2.8
COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS	31.2%	31.2%	22.6%	15.1%	2.78
EARNED INCOME/SALES	26.7%	34.4%	26.7%	12.2%	2.76
MARKETING	25.8%	31.2%	31.2%	11.8%	2.71

## MENTIONS BY ORGANIZATIONS OF ACCESSIBILITY AS A CORE ISSUE TO ADDRESS FOR HEALTH ARTS COMMUNITY



The percentage of respondents who identified accessibility as a core issue to overcome for a healthy arts community is steadily increasing.

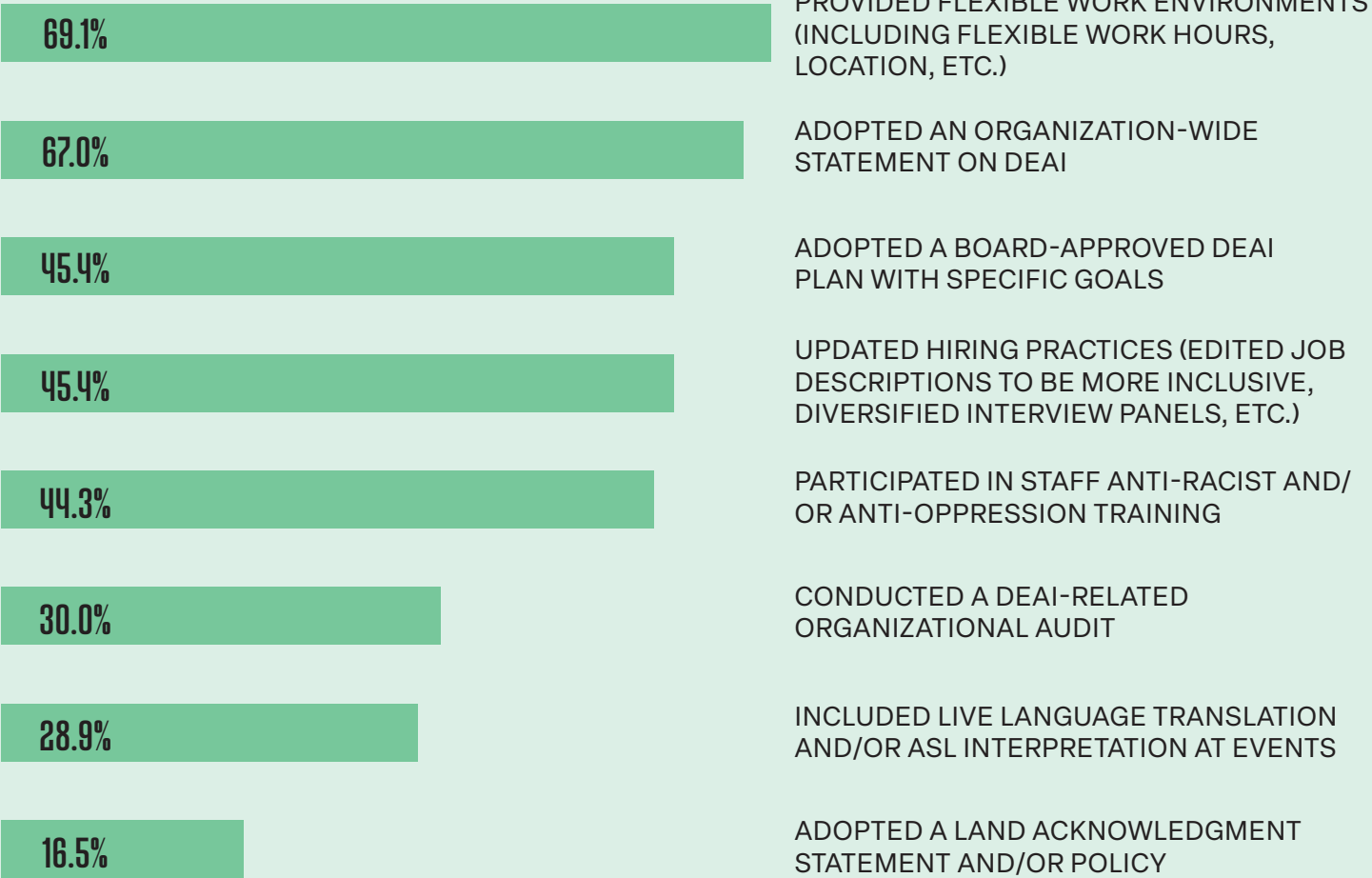
**“Accessibility will be one of our primary goals in 2022-23. We hosted our very first “Sensory Friendly” concert in 2021-22. We currently provide assistive listening devices, ASL interpreters, large print programs, and live stream viewing for all concerts.”**

More than two-thirds of respondents reported that their organizations had adopted organizational-wide statements on DEAI. Two-thirds also reported that their organization provided flexible work environments. In addition, eight participants noted that a collaboration/coalition-based approach was key to their work.

BIPOC organizations were more likely than the average to have adopted a land acknowledgment statement (25%) and provided flexible work environments (75%). They were less likely to have participated in other listed activities or policies, though this makes sense given the assumption that the boards, staff, and audiences of these organizations are more likely to be aligned with their missions and/or target audiences.

“ [We are] actively meeting with and working on (researching, writing policies, sharing our knowledge, accountability partners) DEAI issues with a formal coalition of our colleagues to prioritize this work.”

**ACTIVITIES OR POLICIES RELATED TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, ACCESSIBILITY, AND INCLUSION (DEAI) ENGAGED IN OR ADOPTED BY RESPONDENT ORGANIZATIONS (TO DATE):**



# FOCUS ON FUNDING EQUITY

Gauging equity in funding has been a research priority for the Arts Council since 2016, but this is the first time we included a funding equity question in our organization survey. Taking cues from our 2018 research, “Racial Equity & Arts Funding in Greater Pittsburgh,” this report places special emphasis on funding equity across racial lines due to historic underfunding of BIPOC-led and serving organizations. We also analyzed differences for respondents working at LGBTQ+ led and serving organizations due to a strong response from these organizations. There are still many intersectional issues related to funding equity that are not fully addressed here, but we hope that tracking basic data on these perceptions over time can support the deeper, richer discussions that lead to change.

Contributed income was the top-rated challenge by respondents who reported they worked for BIPOC-led or focused organizations. It was 9th for all organizations. One respondent noted the challenges of “local politics, [systemic] white supremacist hierarchies and systems” for their predominately BIPOC organization.

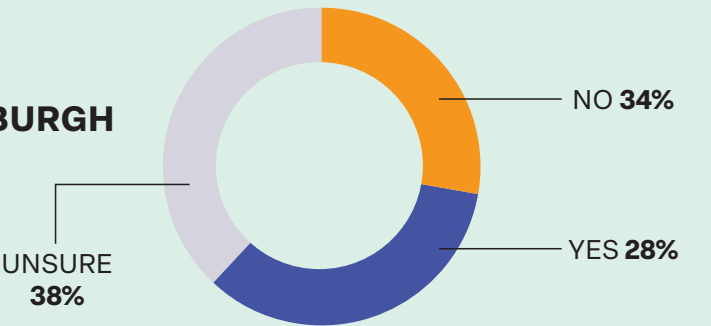
## TOP THREE CHALLENGES FROM RESPONDENTS WORKING AT BIPOC-LED OR SERVING ORGANIZATIONS (BY WEIGHT)

	EXTREMELY SIGNIFICANT	VERY SIGNIFICANT	FAIRLY SIGNIFICANT	LESS SIGNIFICANT	WEIGHTED AVERAGE (OUT OF 4)
CONTRIBUTED INCOME	60.0%	0%	40.0%	0%	3.2
EARNED INCOME/SALES	50.0%	16.7%	33.3%	0%	3.17
INDIVIDUAL GIVING/MAJOR GIFTS	66.7%	0%	16.7%	16.7%	3.17

On average, respondents were more likely to perceive regional arts funding as inequitable than they were to perceive it as equitable. More than one-third were “unsure” about this question. In contrast to artist data, BIPOC organization survey respondents were more likely to say “yes,” that funding was fair and equitable (42.1%) than the average (27.8%). Black respondents specifically were more likely to say “no, I do not find grant funding for arts organizations in the Greater Pittsburgh region to be fair and equitable” (57%). Respondents with disabilities were also more likely to answer “no” (44%).

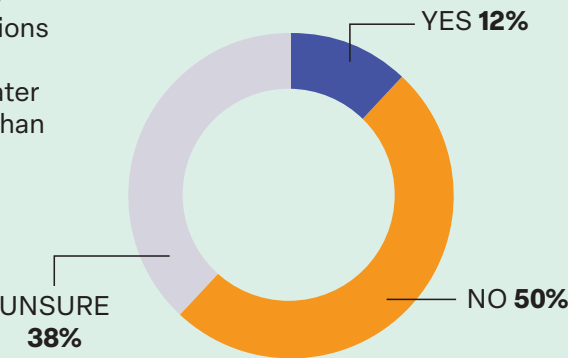
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AVG. OF ALL RESPONDENTS

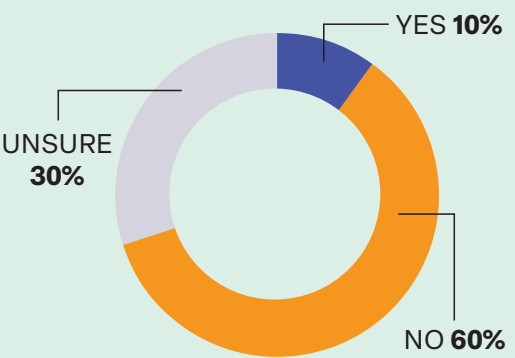


Regardless of individual demographics, respondents working at BIPOC or LGBTQ+-led and/or serving organizations were more likely to say that they felt arts funding in Greater Pittsburgh was inequitable than the average.

### RESPONDENTS FROM BIPOC-LED



### RESPONDENTS FROM LGBTQ+-LED



# FUTURE RESEARCH

**As is often the case, this project sparked as many new questions as it answered.**

Based on the findings, the Arts Council and other organizations may consider further exploration of the characteristics of and reasons behind artist quality of life departures from city, state, and county averages. While quantifying these gaps is a helpful starting point, a deeper understanding of the “why” behind these statistics is necessary for us to affect change. This work might take various shapes and employ several methods, such as deepening and broadening authentic relationships with artists most affected by these issues, building partnerships with community-embedded and/or culturally responsive and trauma-informed social service organizations, and more. Thoughtful qualitative research may also have a role in the next steps towards supporting improved quality of life for artists in the Greater Pittsburgh area.

In addition, the Arts Council is committed to following up on its 2018 “Racial Equity & Arts Funding in Greater Pittsburgh” report with an updated account of arts funding in our region in the coming years. Especially given the stronger organizational reliance on contributed income since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with evidence of shifting perceptions of funding equity among artists, the Arts Council is eager to reexamine measures of funding equity in the Southwestern Pennsylvania arts and culture sector.



“Miracle in Rwanda,” 2021, courtesy of Prime Stage Theatre. Photo by Laura Sloveko.



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## ABOUT THE GREATER PITTSBURGH ARTS COUNCIL

The Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council is the region's primary arts service organization that provides advocacy, professional resources, research, and grant making to artists and nonprofit organizations in 10 counties within Western Pennsylvania.

We are a membership organization with more than 600 diverse artists and arts organizations of all disciplines. We exist to help our community thrive and assist artists and arts administrators to grow their skills and art practices. Learn more at **PittsburghArtsCouncil.org**.





# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## CONTRIBUTORS

### FROM THE GREATER PITTSBURGH ARTS COUNCIL

Mitch Swain, CEO

Morgan Kasprowicz, Manager of Research and Special Projects

Natalie Larsen, Research Intern

Kristen Wishon, Senior Director of External Affairs

Thank you to Black Arts Action Committee members Natiq Jalil, Oronde Shariff, and Jacquelin Walker for their input and feedback.

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**Beth Bershok**

*Chief Marketing Officer, Louis Plung & Company*

**Tom Cords**

*Vice President, Financial Administration and Internal Controls, FedEx Ground*

**Monteze Freeland**

*Co-Artistic Director, City Theatre Company*

**Christopher Hahn**

*General Director, Pittsburgh Opera*

**Rob Hippert**

*Surety Manager & Account Executive,  
Henderson Brothers Inc.*

**Patrick Jordan**

*Founder & Artistic Director, barebones productions*

**Olivia Lammel**

*Vice President, PNC External Communications*

**Elsa Limbach**

*Dance Educator and Community Volunteer*

**Holly Lorenz**

*Chief Nurse Executive, UPMC*

**Richard Parsakian**

*Owner, Eons Fashion Antique*

**Jack Tomayko**

*President & CEO, The Tomayko Group*

**Susan Tsu**

*Bessie F. Anathan University Professor of Design,  
Carnegie Mellon University*

**Janis Burley Wilson**

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