

## **Saskatchewan Arts Alliance**

### **COVID-19 Impact Survey: Artists and Cultural Workers**

Saskatchewan Arts Alliance  
October 2020



Saskatchewan  
**Arts Alliance**

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## **Introduction**

This survey was conducted by the Saskatchewan Arts Alliance to assess the initial impact on artists and cultural worker in Saskatchewan resulting from the implementation of social distancing due to COVID-19. The goal is to use these data to understand and determine effective strategies for mitigating the impacts of the pandemic on our cultural sectors and supporting their recovery. This survey is focused on ensuring that such strategies are grounded in the current lived experience of artists and cultural workers in Saskatchewan and informed by our community's input on solutions. A follow-up survey to allow the SAA to more thoroughly analyze the actual impacts on artists and cultural workers in Saskatchewan is planned for 2021.

## **Methodology**

This online survey was conducted from April 3rd - 20th, 2020 with a total of 284 responses. Invitations to participate were distributed by email on April 3rd to the SAA Artist Registry list, the Saskatchewan Partnership for Arts Research list, and posted on the SAA website and social media pages. Recipients were encouraged to share the survey invitation with other artists and cultural workers.

The survey was designed based on initial community responses to COVID-19 restrictions and the identified need to gather data in order to provide information on the pandemic's impacts on our cultural sector and what is needed to mitigate those impacts. The survey format included demographic questions, dichotomous questions, open-ended questions, multiple choice, and multiple select questions. Participants were asked to provide information about their arts and cultural discipline(s), practice(s), arts and cultural engagement in the community and their circumstances, including financial, both before and during the initial restrictions due to COVID-19.

## **Summary**

The online survey was conducted from April 3rd - 20th, 2020, in the initial weeks of COVID-19 restrictions. The 284 individual participants provided information about their arts and cultural disciplines, financial circumstances, health and well-being, and the immediate and estimated medium- and long-term effects of COVID-19 restrictions on their practices.

The survey responses represent a wide range of creative and cultural disciplines with responses from nearly all areas of the province; 25% Regina, 50% Saskatoon, 25% other areas in the province. Close to 72% of respondents report that arts and related education is their main employment.

The key results of this survey indicate significant disruption to artist and cultural practices from necessary restrictions due to COVID-19. The pandemic restrictions affect respondents in a number of areas.

### **Financial circumstances:**

The majority of survey respondents report significant decline in their financial circumstances.

### **Disruption of arts / cultural work:**

Over 60% of survey respondents report being unable to continue with any paid or funded creative work that is unaffected by COVID-19 restrictions. While some participants report having more time

to spend on their creative work due to job layoffs and government financial subsidies, there is parallel acknowledgement that these circumstances and most especially the financial supports are short-term.

Survey participants indicate that the impacts of COVID-19 restrictions on creative and cultural practices resonate through reduced access to funding, dissemination, viewers / audiences and materials, supplies and work spaces. Further, the impacts of pandemic restrictions resonate beyond creative and cultural producers to viewers / audiences / students in regional, provincial, national and international communities.

**Technology:**

While some practices and dissemination continue or reshape virtually, many respondents report sharply increased workloads in adapting to digital content. Survey participants report issues with access to necessary technology and technological fluency, either on the part of the creative producer or the audience / viewer / student. Artists have also had limited success in increasing their income through increased digital presence

**Impacts on health and well-being:**

Survey participants report pronounced increase in stress in their arts or cultural work and their personal lives. While this is not peculiar to cultural workers, artists report that their mental health has reduced their capacity to carry on with creative work despite increased time to do so.

**Support going forward:**

Survey participants express strong support for universal basic income that would serve all individuals who are part of the expanding gig economy. Additionally, they saw shorter term relief mechanisms, including new grants, as important. They also cited the importance of support with online development and dissemination, as well building broader public recognition for artists and cultural workers.

## Survey Results

### Respondents as Representative of the Arts Ecology

There was a reasonably representative distribution of survey participants from across the province with the greatest number of respondents (137 out of 272) from Saskatoon and others fairly evenly distributed from Regina and areas outside the major population centres.

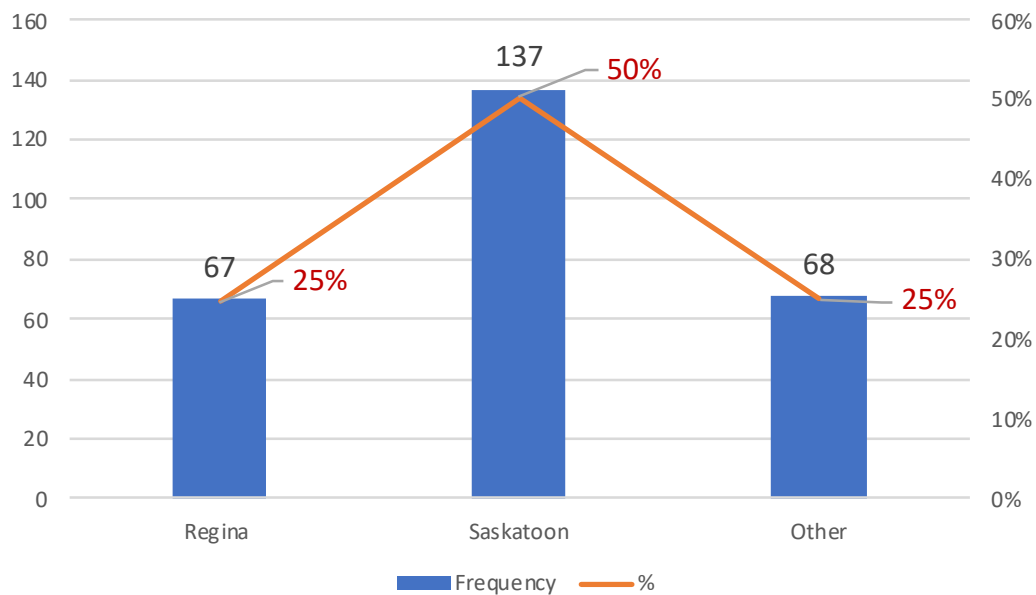


Figure 1. Survey responses by Forward Sortation Area.

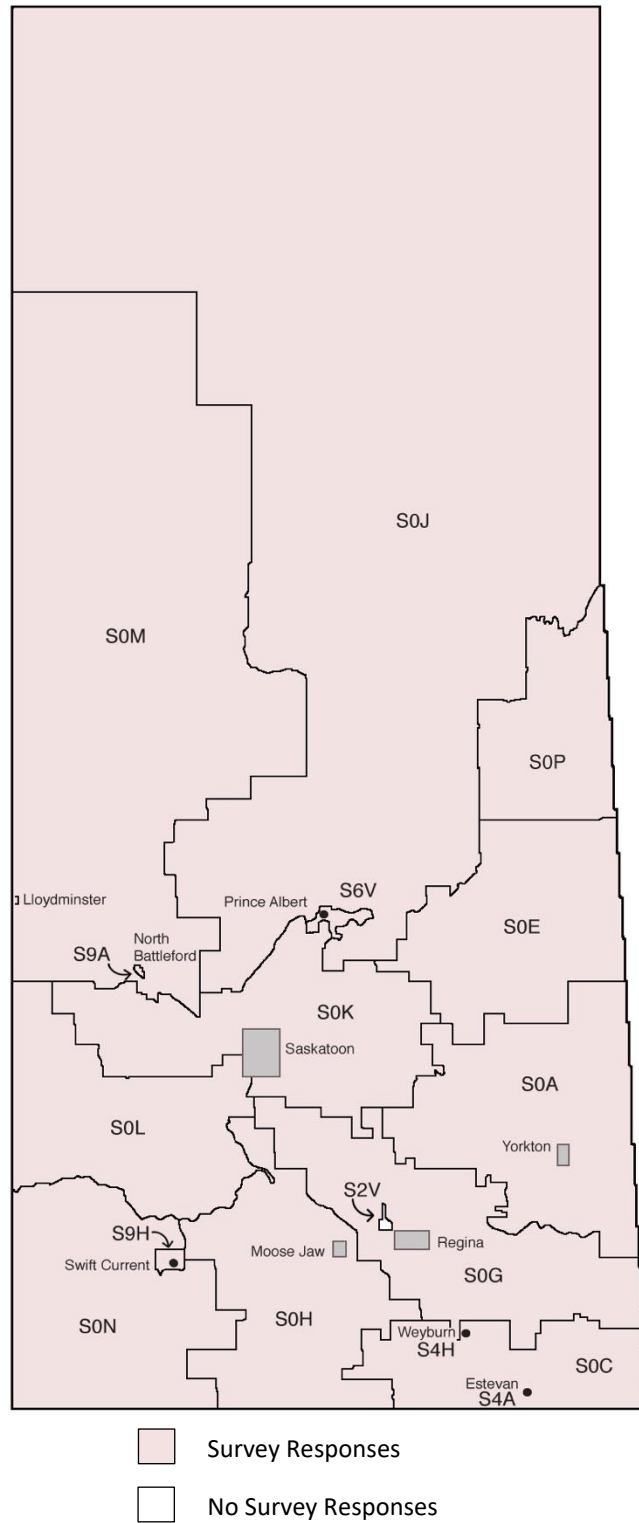
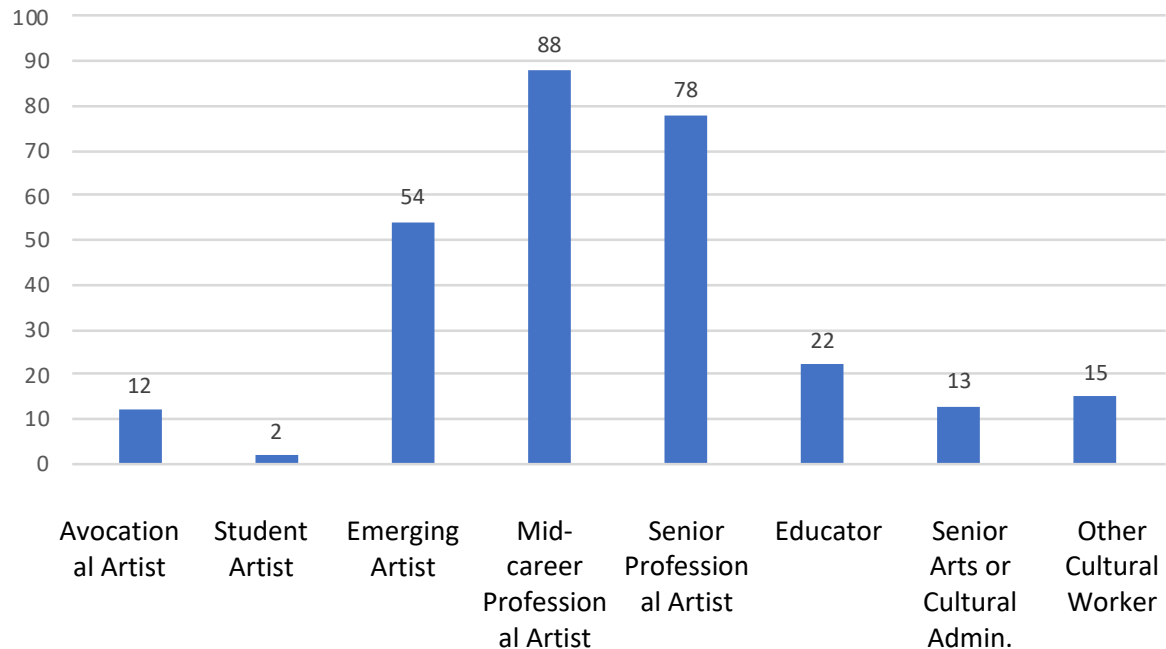


Figure 2. Survey responses mapped by Forward Sortation Area.

Survey participants were asked to indicate the level of engagement that most closely represented their primary position within the arts community. Artists constituted 77% of our respondents. (220 out of 284 total responses). Educators (8%) and cultural administrators or other cultural workers (10%) constituted the majority of other respondents (22 and 28 respectively out of 284 total responses).



*Figure 3. Primary level of artist / cultural worker engagement.*



Respondents were asked to indicate any other levels of engagement appropriate to their position within Saskatchewan's arts and cultural community, checking all applicable options. An additional 100 respondents indicated they also had a role as an educator. Combined with individuals who responded to the previous question indicating that their primary involvement in the arts was as an educator, we can conclude that 43% of our respondents were educators at some level. An additional 65 respondents were also cultural administrators or cultural workers and an additional 58 respondents were also artists. Overall, then, 31% of our respondents are engaged in cultural administration or other types of cultural work outside of a creative practice, and 98% of our respondents were practicing artists. These data suggest that the roles of Saskatchewan artists, educators, cultural administrators and other cultural workers are closely intertwined and that impacts on the educational sector as well as arts and cultural organizations are likely to affect artists directly.

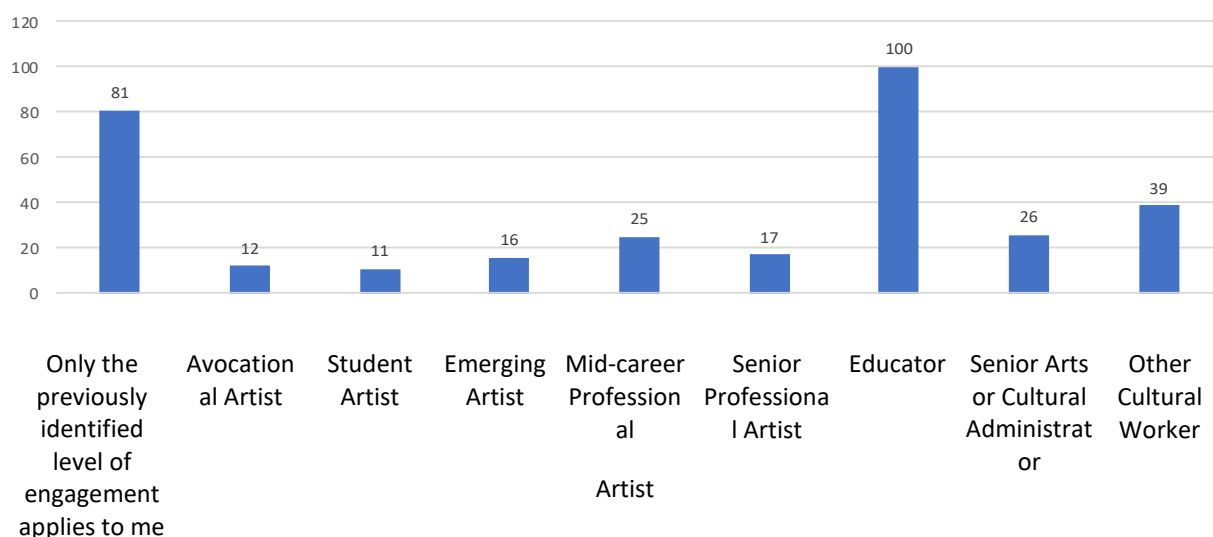


Figure 4. Secondary levels of artist / cultural worker engagement.

Participants were asked to indicate the arts discipline that most closely relates to the primary focus of their creative practice or other arts and cultural engagement, describing any disciplines not included in the list provided. Additional disciplines described include Disability and Deaf Arts, Radio and TV Production and Hosting, Jewelry Art, Fiber Art, Magic and Ventriloquism, Blacksmithing, Woodcarving and Hairstyling. Nearly 40% of respondents (108) identified engagement primarily in the live performing arts (Dance, Music and Theatre) with nearly a quarter (68) engaged in Visual Arts and just over 10% (29) involved in Creative Writing.

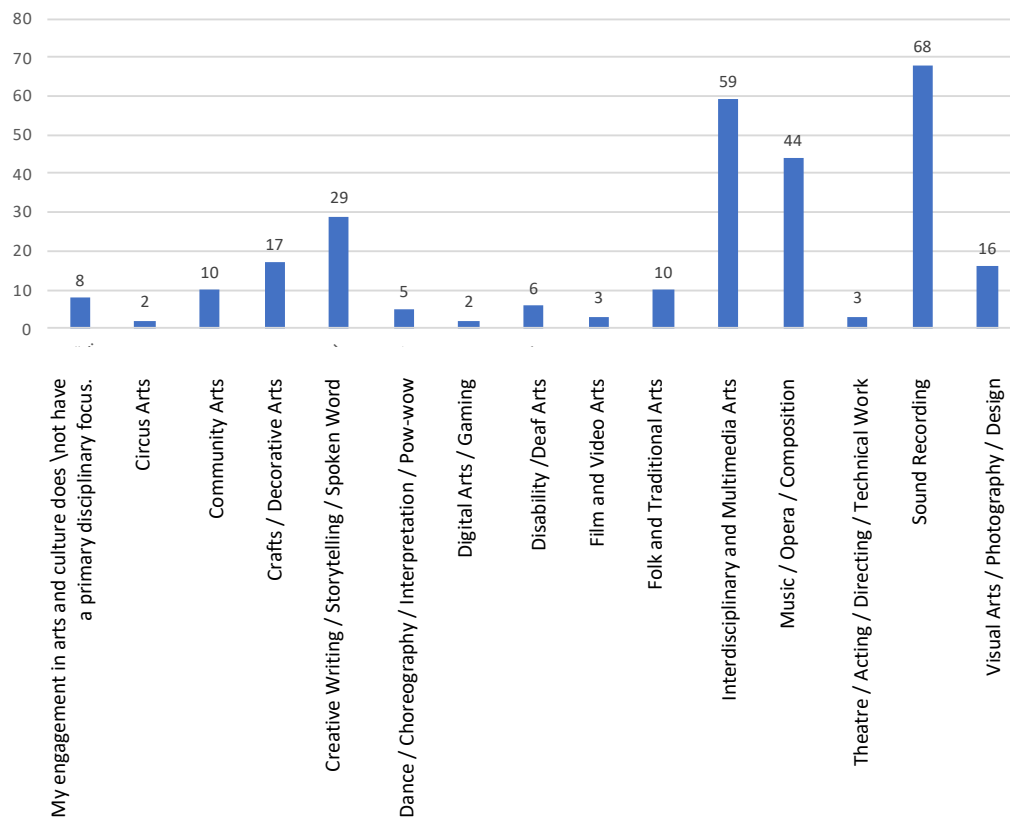


Figure 5. Primary Arts Disciplines

Survey respondents were asked to indicate their cross-disciplinary involvement in arts and culture, selecting all options that apply and describing any disciplines not included in the list provided. Additional disciplines described include Documentary Filmmaking, Radio Hosting, Comic Creation, Publishing, Audio Book Narration and Board Game Design. As indicated in the 2014 artist survey conducted by the Saskatchewan Partnership for Arts Research,<sup>1</sup> Saskatchewan's arts ecology is so profoundly cross-disciplinary that especially at the level of individual artists, impacts on one or more arts disciplines are likely to have impacts across the ecology.

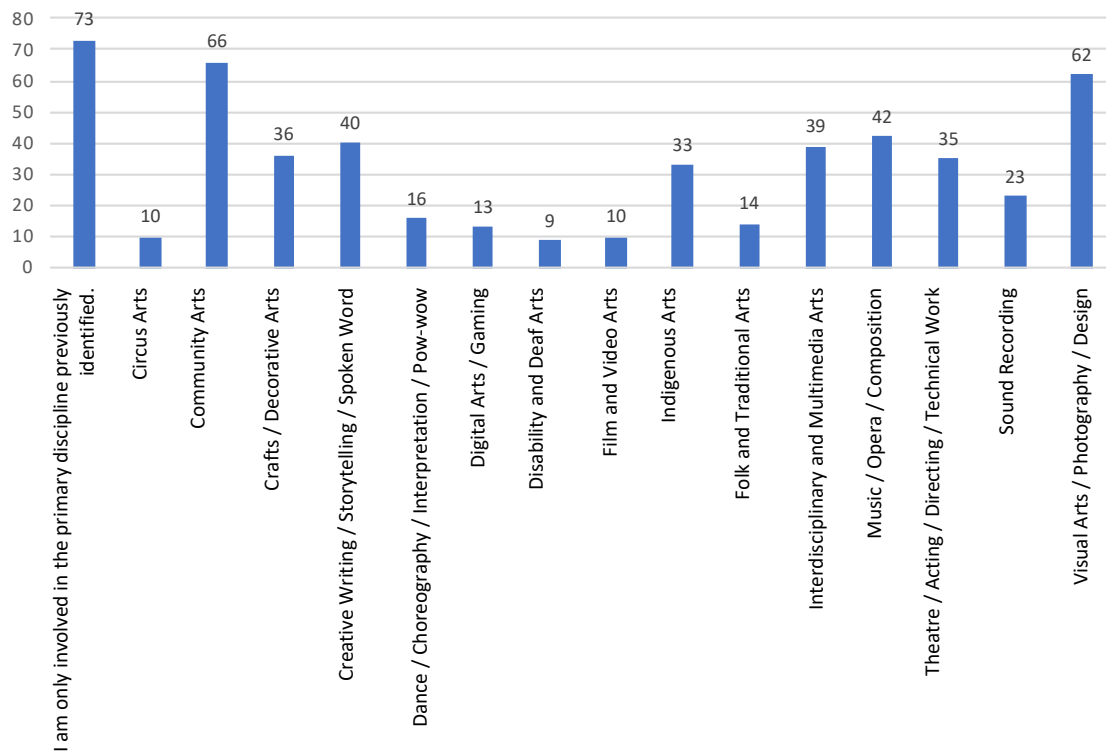
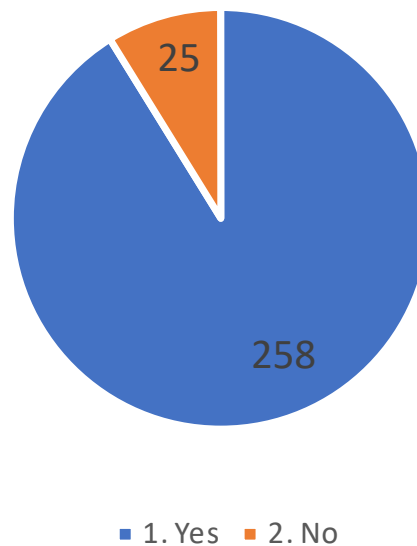


Figure 6. Cross-disciplinary involvement.

<sup>1</sup> Mary Blackstone, Sam Hage and Ian McWilliams, Understanding the Arts Ecology of Saskatchewan from the Artist's Perspective: An Overview of Results from the Artist Survey of 2014, p. 10;

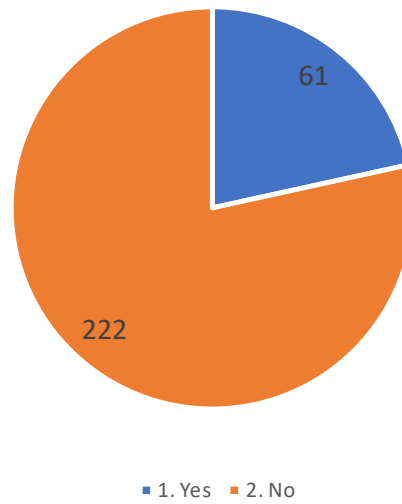
Survey participants were asked to indicate if their creative practice or responsibilities as an educator or cultural worker involve live public participation at events or exhibitions and / or gatherings of more than 5 people. Given that for at least 51% of respondents (146 out of 284) their creative practice involves a live performing art form as either a primary or secondary mode of creation, one would expect a significant positive response to that question. However, over 90% (258 out of 283 respondents) of respondents replied yes to this question. It is clear that the role of artists in a wide range of art forms, not just the live performing arts, involves bringing members of communities together through live events to celebrate and negotiate their culture. It is also clear that social distancing regulations and the longer term influence of COVID-19 on public behaviour have had and are likely to continue to have a major impact across the arts sector.



*Figure 7. Work involving live public participation.*

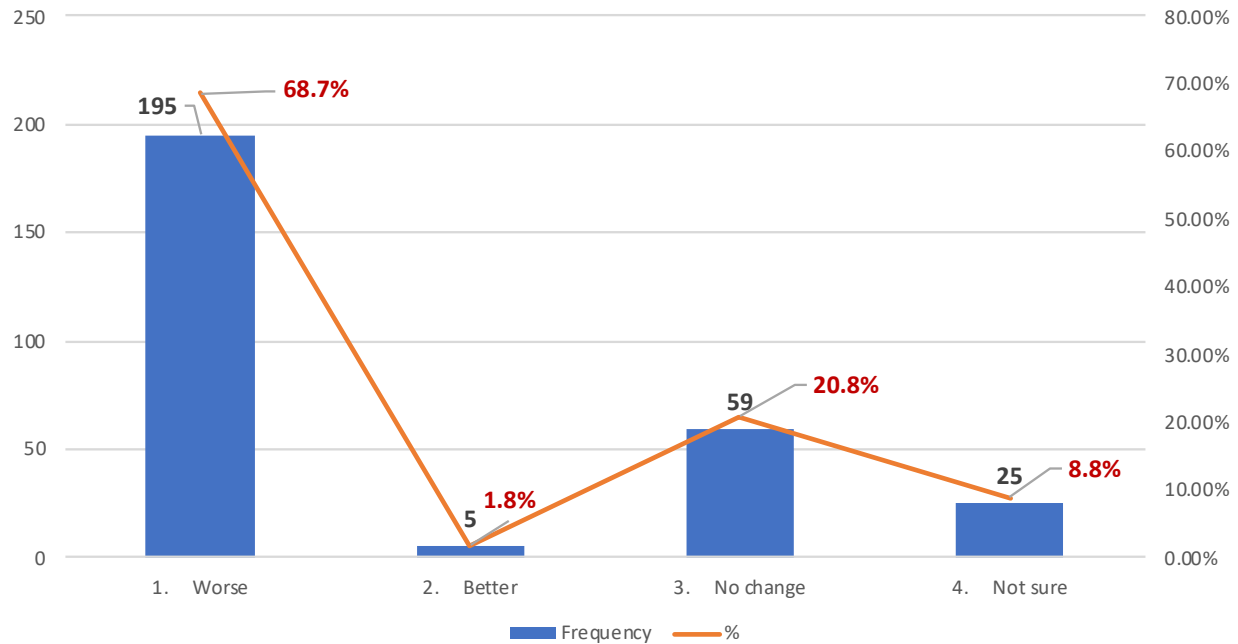
### Respondent Financial Circumstances

Respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they had been in a precarious financial situation prior to the COVID-19 crisis, and only 22% (61 out of 283) indicated that they had been in such a situation.



*Figure 8. Financial circumstances prior to COVID-19.*

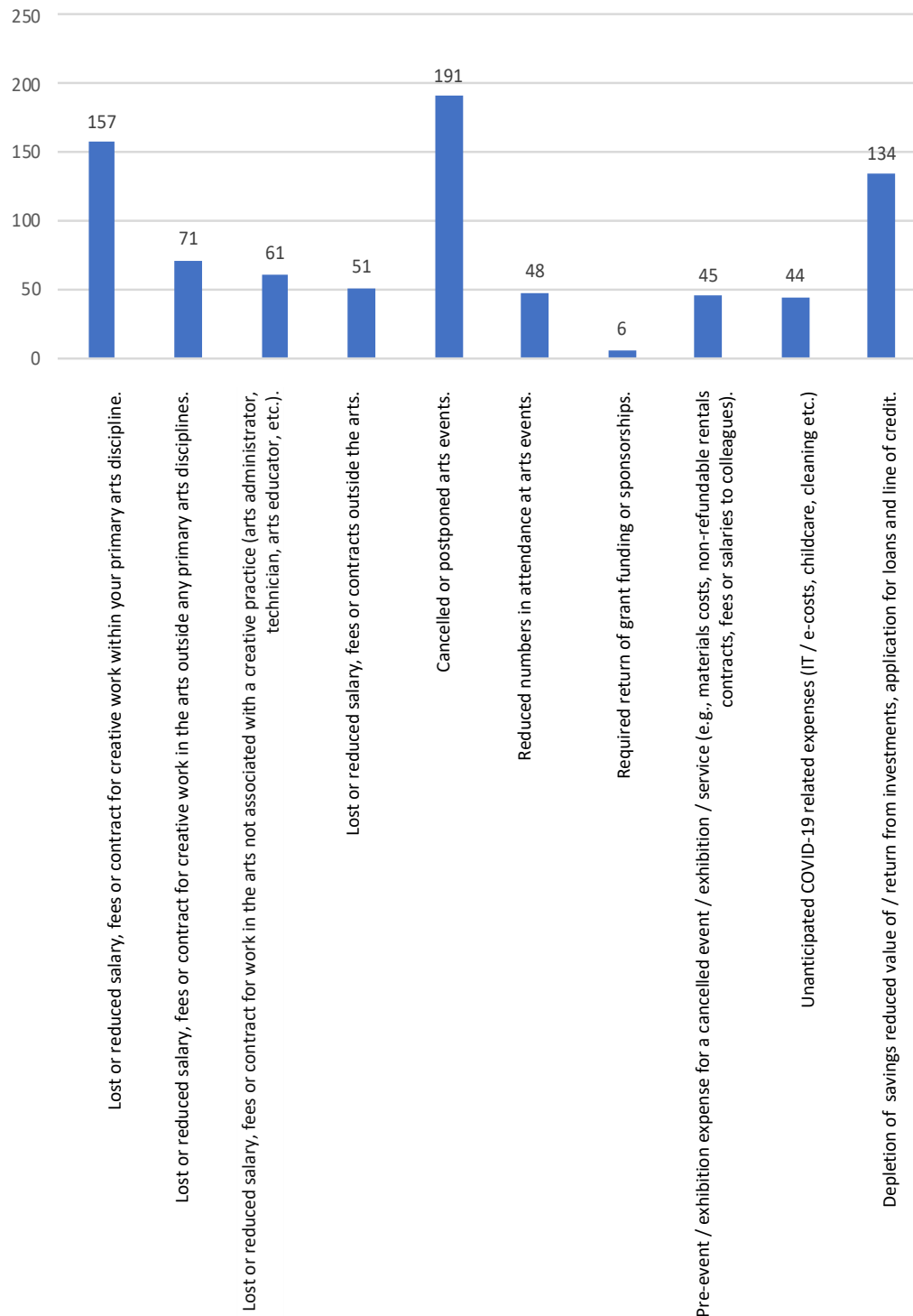
When then asked to compare their financial situation at the time of the survey in relation to what it was prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, 69% of respondents (195 out of 284) indicated that their situation was worse.



*Figure 9. Comparison of financial circumstances pre / during COVID-19.*

Survey participants were asked if they have experienced lost income or unexpected expenses, selecting all options that apply and describing any options not included in the list provided. Given the number of respondents who indicated above that their work is directly connected with live arts events (90%) it is not surprising that 67% (191 out of 284) had been impacted financially due to the cancellation of events, 55% (157 out of 284) had experienced the loss of salary, fees or contracts in their primary arts disciplines, a further 21% (61 out of 284) had experienced similar losses as cultural administrators or other workers, and nearly half (47% or 134 out of 284) had depleted savings or investments.

Figure 10. Causes of lost income or unexpected expenses.



Survey respondents were also asked to indicate whether or not they have been able to continue working on any paid or funded creative work that had been unaffected by pandemic restrictions. While free time and isolation may have enabled some artists to continue or accelerate work that had been paid for or funded and potentially create a backlog of work they could benefit from once the climate for arts events has improved, 61% (169 out of 279) of respondents indicated that they were currently not working on any paying creative work.

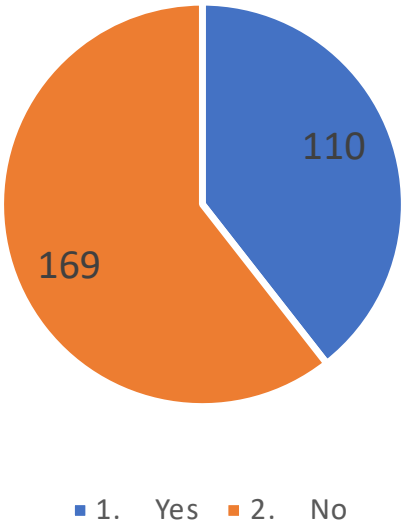


Figure 11. Continuation of paid or funded creative work.

In order to put this information into perspective it is important to keep in mind the employment dynamics of those individuals surveyed. 72% of respondents (204 out of 284) normally had no other employment income outside the arts and education.

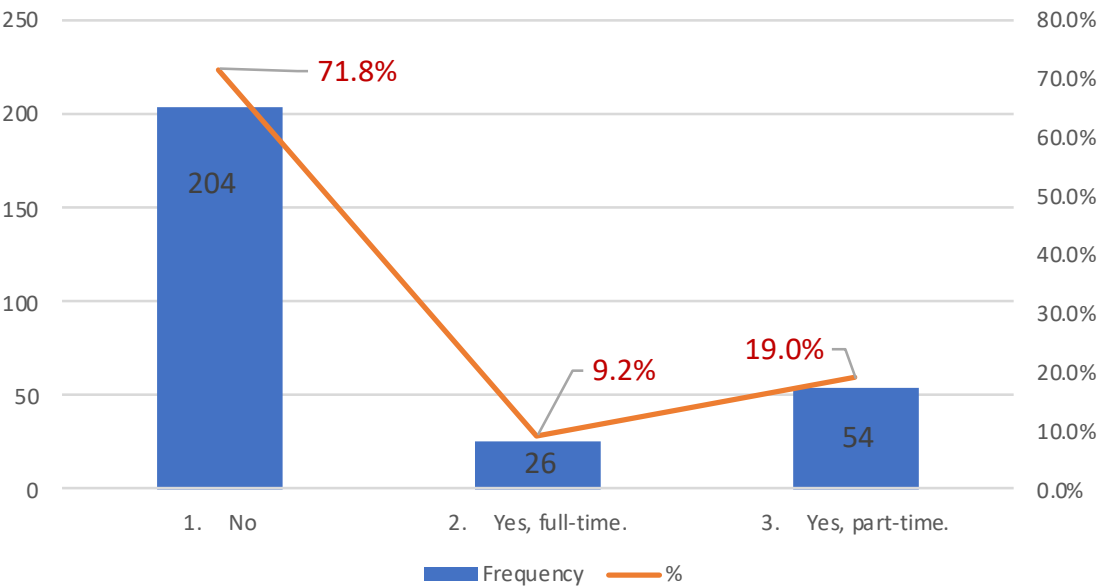
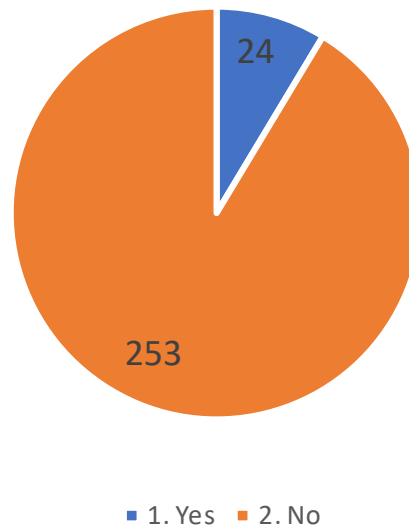


Figure 12. Employment outside arts and education.

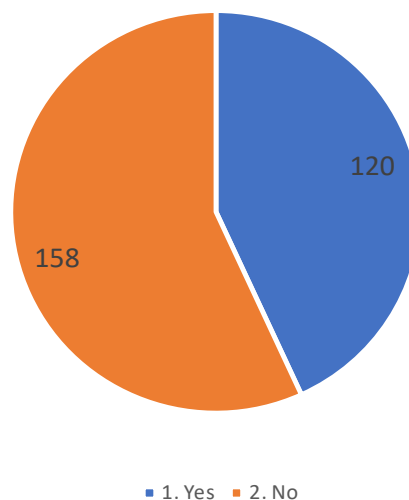


This had not changed in the context of the pandemic. Survey respondents were asked to indicate if they have taken any additional work outside the arts in the context of COVID-19 restrictions since January 15, 2020. The vast majority of respondents had not (91% or 253 out of 277 respondents).



*Figure 13. Additional work outside the arts as a result of COVID-19 restrictions.*

When asked if they have done anything else to address financial pressures due to COVID-19 restrictions, 43% of respondents (120 out of 278) reported having tried to address the financial pressures they were experiencing in other ways.



*Figure 14. Financial adjustments due to COVID-19 restrictions.*

Apart from these more general questions relating to prior and post-COVID financial and work-related circumstances, the survey requested specific input from respondents regarding lost income and other financial losses since the onset of COVID-19.

Although it was not until mid-March that the full effects of attempts to deal with the pandemic began to be felt in Saskatchewan, it must be noted that artists with national or international level practices may have begun feeling its effects much earlier in the year. For that reason and other reasons associated with the different nature and timing of impacts on various arts disciplines and locations, respondent input provides a highly variable but grim picture of the pandemic's actual financial impact on artists and cultural workers.

Given that it was only on March 18 that Saskatchewan declared a state of emergency including the first limitations on the size of public gatherings, respondents to this survey in the April 3-20 window were, like other individuals, still trying to make sense of the impact. Many respondents were unable to estimate actual dollar losses to date or the extent of unanticipated expenses resulting from the pandemic. One respondent observed: it "could be catastrophic but at this point I don't know." Only 205 out of the 284 respondents ventured an estimate of the total cost of the pandemic to them to date. Out of that group only 12 indicated they had experienced no losses, with the greatest number of respondents estimating losses of up to \$5000. Even fewer respondents were able to project future losses into June.

If respondents could not estimate actual or projected income loss, it may have had to do with their diverse sources of income—which under normal circumstances seems to be much more diverse than that of traditional workers who derive their income from one full-time job. The complexity of the financial package artists put together to sustain themselves is exemplified by one respondent who had lost income due to the cancellation of a "book presentation, art shows, art lessons and music lessons." Another described their usual income as derived from "writing & publishing, fibre arts, music performance, drama, gaming and arts admin." While most of these sources of income would have been impacted by the COVID shutdown, some may have been buffered to a degree by the range of their creative endeavours. The simultaneous shutdown of education and the arts, though, clearly created a 'double whammy' for many artists who teach classes or depend on school bookings. Artists also cited COVID-related losses in investment or rental income, income from outside the arts or a spouse's income as types of income they had depended on to subsidize their creative practice.

Finally, several artists made it clear that more is at stake than personal finances because their art practice involves running a small business or a not for profit company they have helped established in conjunction with their creative practice. In those situations, artists were like many small business people faced with the closure of their business and the loss of not only a regular income but also significant investments in the business or non-profit. They had expended cash and commitments in anticipation of future sales, productions and income. So, for instance, artists had pre-paid for studio space or a sales venue, performance venues, booths at fairs and shows, materials and supplies, and they were uncertain that they would get any of their money back through revenue. Many had signed artist and crew contracts, had paid staff or were committed to ongoing rentals, and while the circumstances in some instances would have allowed for breaking contracts or letting staff go, the recognition that many cultural workers were already in precarious financial positions clearly increased the difficulty of an already difficult decision.

For non-profits, who depend on fundraisers to augment ticket sales, revenue through educational programs, etc., the loss of live fundraising options is as serious as the loss of other revenue streams, and

several artists were anticipating the loss of late winter and spring fundraisers. Many of Saskatchewan's smaller to medium sized non-profits are closely connected with the creative practice and careers of individual artist leaders, so COVID has not only placed those kinds of organizations in jeopardy but also placed those artist leaders and the artists who depend on them in jeopardy as well.

### Disruption to the Cultural Ecology

Although the financial impacts of COVID-19 that immediately began to affect the livelihoods of cultural workers and their families were clearly a major concern for our respondents, the broader impact of the serious cultural disruption that was evolving in the province and the country was only beginning to be apparent in April. Respondents were asked to indicate the number of arts and cultural events / exhibitions / services they would have been involved in that had been cancelled. While the numbers reported ranged from 1-60 (221 responses), the majority of respondents (133) reported 1-4 cancellations.

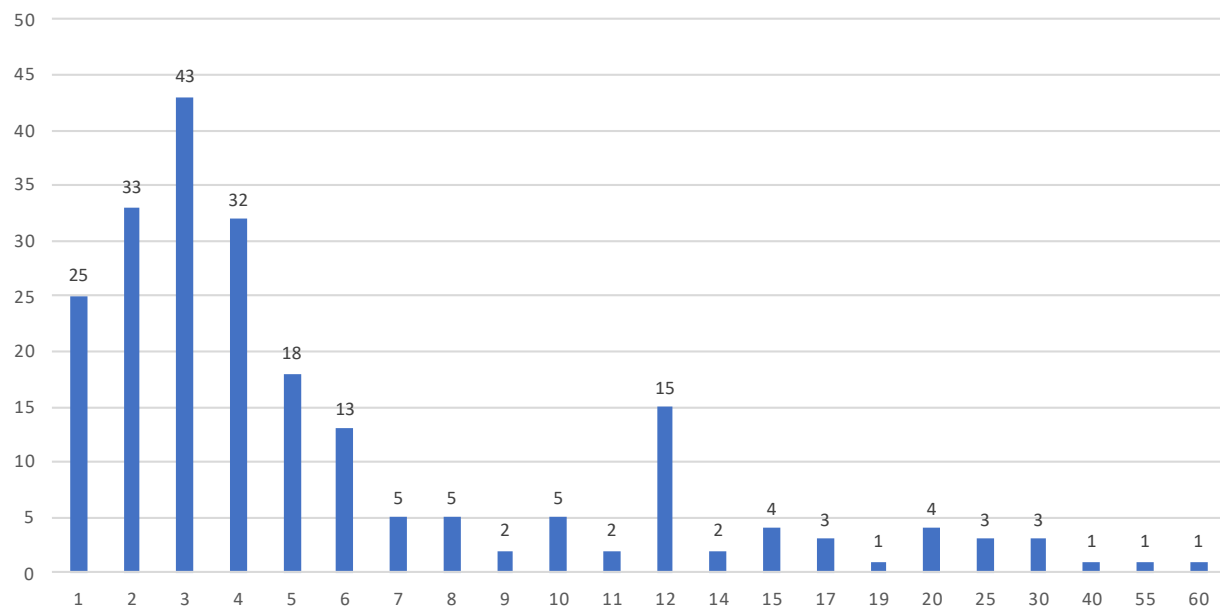
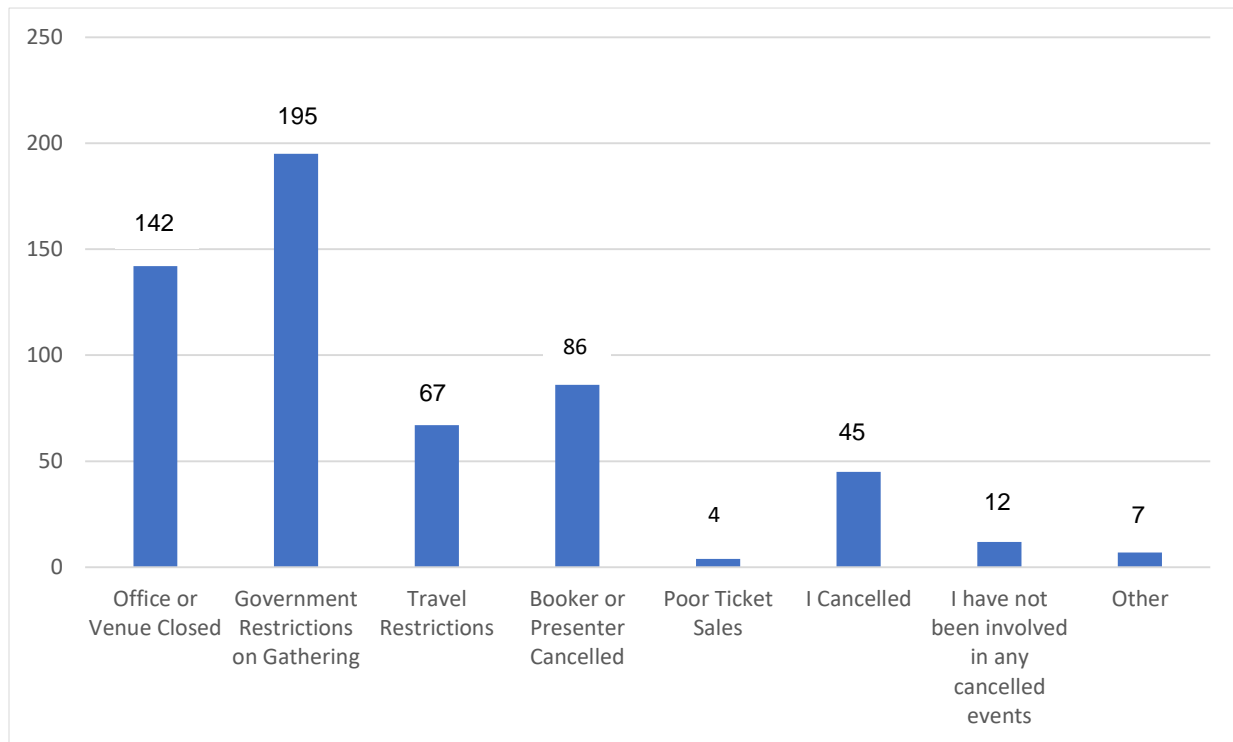


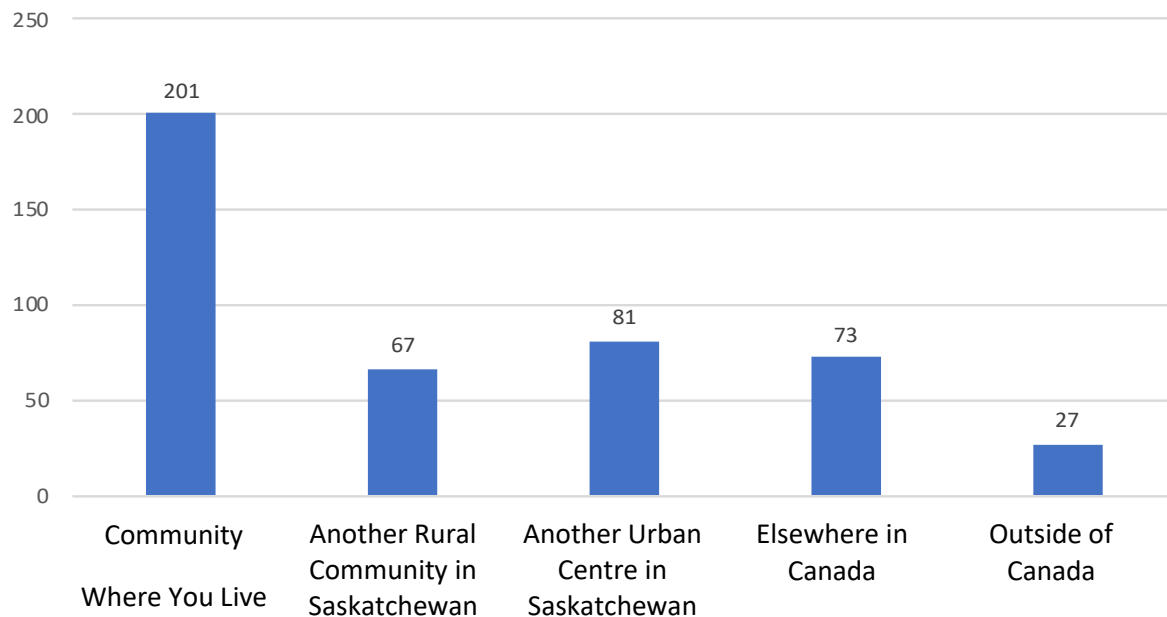
Figure 15. Cancelled arts and cultural events / exhibitions / services.

Respondents were asked to indicate the reasons for event cancellations, selecting all options that applied and describing any reasons not included in the list provided. All but 12 respondents had experienced cancellations: 195 respondents attributed those cancellations to government restrictions on the size of gatherings and exactly half of respondents (142) attributed them to the closure of offices or venues.



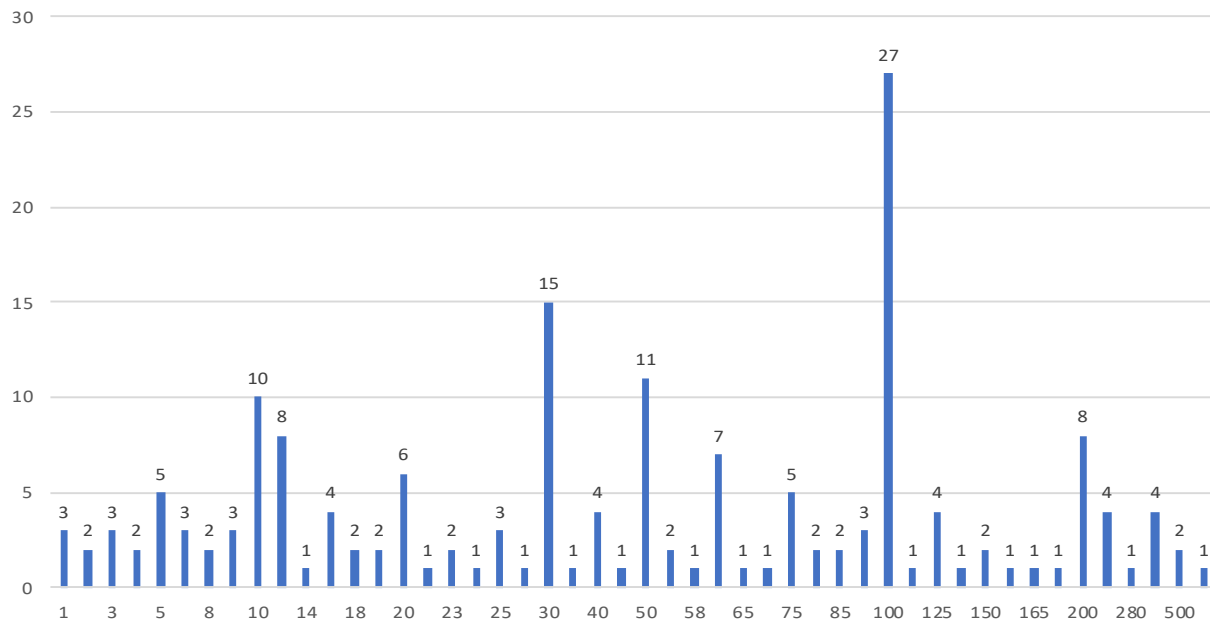
*Figure 16. Reasons for cancelled events.*

Survey participants were asked to indicate where the cancelled events / exhibitions / services were supposed to have happened, selecting all options that apply. While the vast majority of cancelled events appear to have been planned for Saskatchewan, 73 had been planned for elsewhere in Canada and 27 would have taken place outside the country.



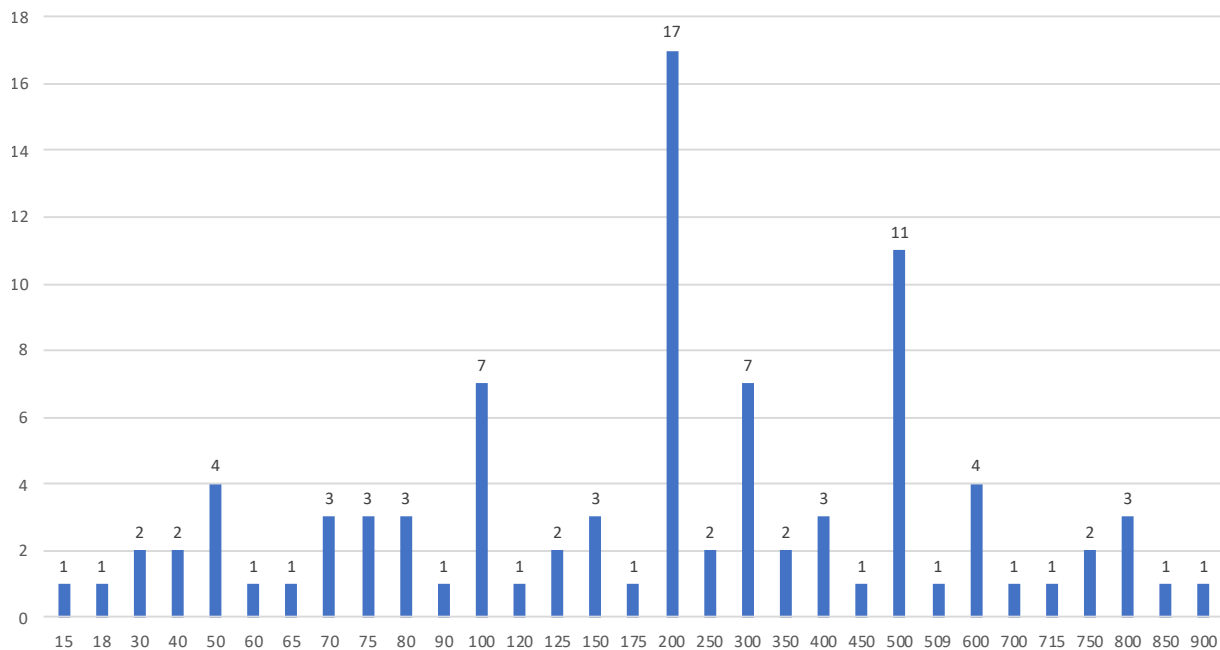
*Figure 17. Locations of cancelled arts and cultural events / exhibitions / services.*

Respondents were asked to estimate the number of other artists or cultural workers affected when the public events / exhibitions / services they had been involved in were cancelled. There was a wide range of responses to this question from the 178 participants who responded, but it would appear that for all the respondents to this question there were many more artists or cultural workers impacted by these cancellations.



*Figure 18. Estimated number of artists or cultural workers affected by the cancellation of public events / exhibitions / services.*

Respondents were asked to estimate the number of audience members, participants or attendees expected at the cancelled events / exhibitions / services in which they were to have been involved. The small number of responses to this question (93 out of the total of 284) provides a wide range in numbers, but overall, the data underscore the difficulty for artists to project such figures and a healthy unwillingness to offer such projections. Perhaps more significant were responses to open questions in which artists expressed concern that “even when restrictions are finally lifted [on public gatherings of any size], people won’t want to come back.” There was also a recognition that the longer the shutdown lasts the more difficult it will be to draw previous or new patrons in to live venues. This concern anticipates the findings of three studies, one national in scope and two others focused on Alberta and British Columbia, that solicited public responses to the pandemic and revealed that anxiety about public gatherings will linger well beyond the lifting of restrictions.<sup>2</sup>

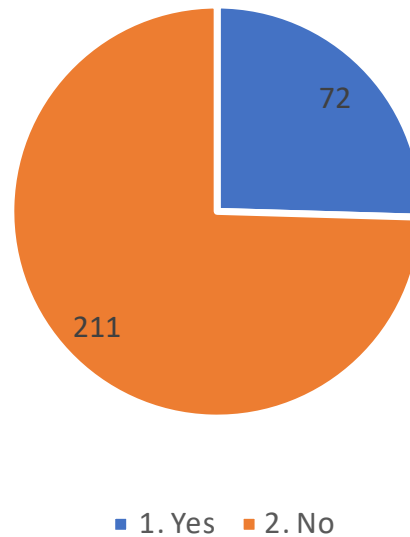


*Figure 19. Estimated number of audience members, participants or attendees expected at cancelled public events / exhibitions / services*

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.affta.ab.ca/news/when-are-canada's-culture-goers-willing-come-back-arts>; <https://www.stone-olafson.com/insights/experienceconomy-results>; <https://www.gvpta.ca/programs/bc-patron-insights>

## Technological Interventions

Respondents were asked if they had undertaken any volunteer work or other community service related to the COVID-19 crisis. Just over 25% (72 out of 283) of respondents had.

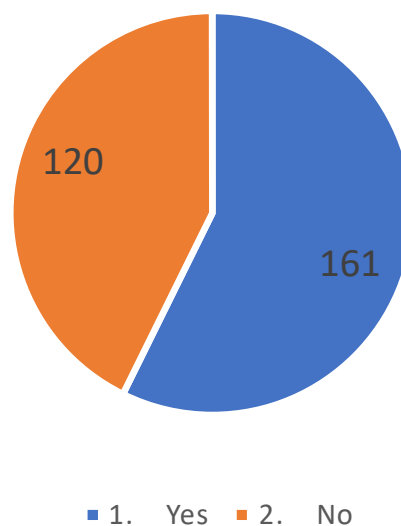


*Figure 20. Volunteer or community service related to the COVID-19 crisis.*



However, artist contributions to the common good during the COVID shutdown included farther reaching offerings of their work made possible through technology. Many artists already had a web presence prior to COVID and were depending on that presence for the sale of their creative product (e.g. books, music, visual art and fine crafts). Unfortunately, respondents reported that online sales appeared to have shut off completely or slowed dramatically at the same time that in-person sales and commissions had shut down.

Artists in the live performing arts of theatre, dance and some forms of music were less likely to have been making their creative work available online prior to COVID, and while some companies and organizations were in a position to transform their online ticket sales mechanism to generate income from the distribution of online creative work, many chose to make that work available to the public for free. Individual artists in those disciplines frequently did not have the online sales mechanism in place to make that choice, but even if they did many seem to have embraced a role as morale booster while maintaining a public profile and some form of their creative practice. The cost of this contribution went beyond time and creative product. When asked if they had introduced or expanded their use of electronic platforms to reach their audience / fans / public as a result of COVID-19 restrictions, 57% of participants (161 out of 281) reported that they had.

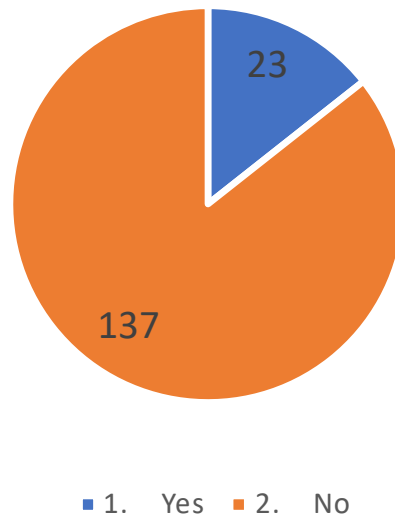


*Figure 21. Introduction / expansion of electronic platforms due to COVID-19 restrictions.*

This transition to or ramping up in the virtual world was not easy, nor was it always regarded as a positive intervention. For at least two respondents, it has made the work more tiring and stressful.

- ☐ I needed to work 10 to 14 hours each day for 16 days in a row to get prepared for new virtual platform and organisation of my virtual enterprise.
- ☐ Working online has caused eyestrain. Listening to untuned instruments or inadequate sound online exhausts me.

When in a follow up question participants were asked to indicate whether or not they had generated additional income from a new or increased e-presence, it became clear that while artists' purchase of new hardware or software and their creative interventions on virtual platforms may have contributed to the greater public good, they had not (at least by April) provided substantial financial relief to artists. Only 14% (23 of the 160 individuals who responded to the follow-up question) said they had generated additional income in this way.<sup>3</sup>

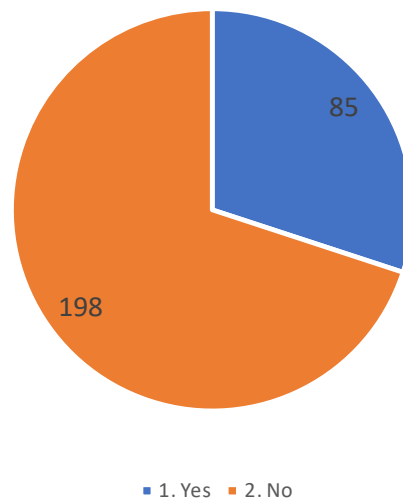


*Figure 22. Additional income from new or increased e-presence.*

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<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that 161 respondents answered the question relating to the creation of enhanced digital capacity, but only 160 of those respondents answered the question concerning revenue they might have gained from that enhanced digital capacity.

Perhaps a better indication of how e-delivery mechanisms have been functioning for artists during the pandemic comes from the response of survey participants to another question. They were asked whether in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic they had donated their creative talent or skills to provide free arts and cultural programming to the public through live streaming e-venues or other types of delivery mechanisms. Out of 283 respondents 85 or 30% had done so.



*Figure 23. Creative talent or skills donated to provide free public arts and cultural programming.*

## Impacts on Cultural Worker Health and Well-Being

Participants were asked to indicate the effects of COVID-19 on their health and well-being, selecting all options that applied and describing effects not included in the list provided. From their responses, it is clear that respondents have experienced increased stress due to concerns for their health and the health of loved ones, their financial circumstances, a sense of isolation and their inability to work or connect with other artists they depend on for collaboration. As of April, however, no respondents had contracted COVID-19 and only 2 reported family members having contracted the disease.

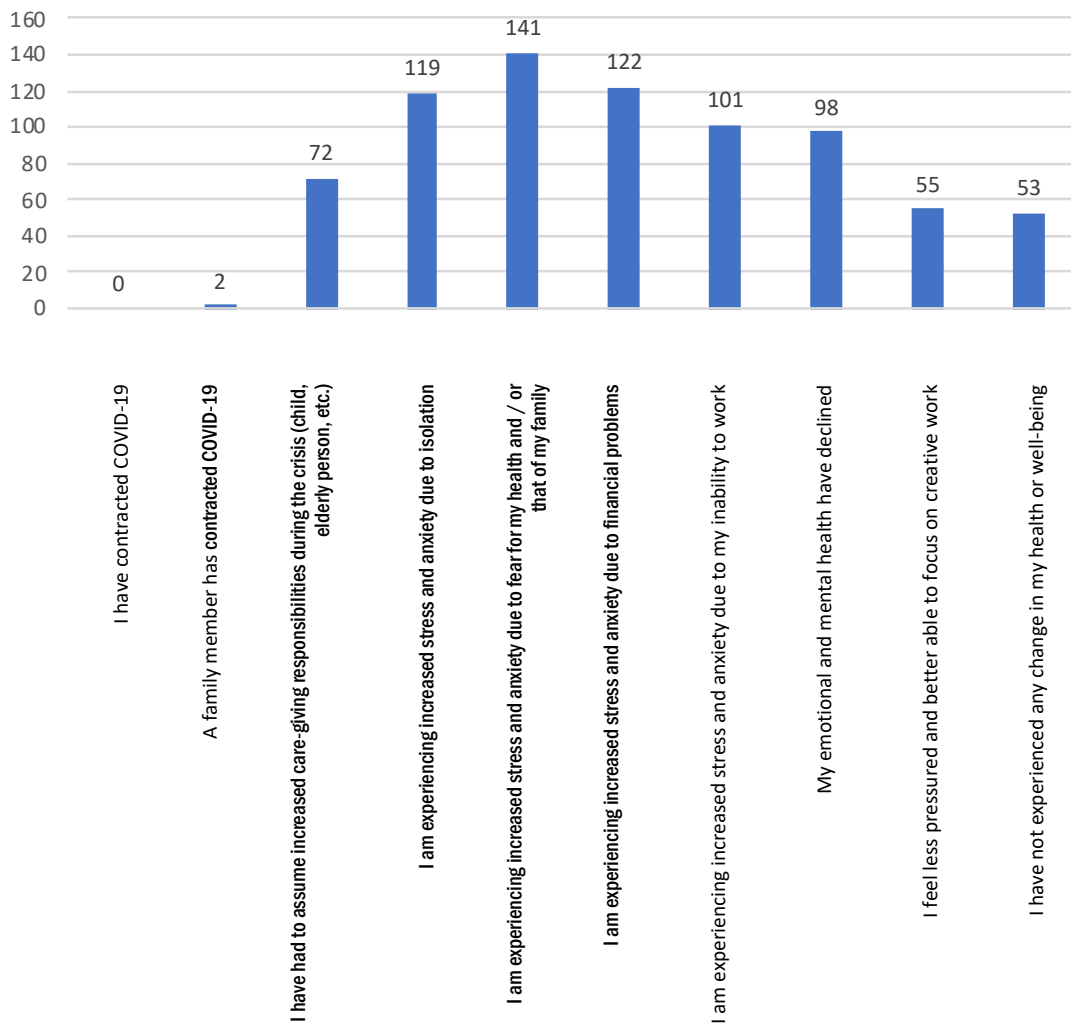


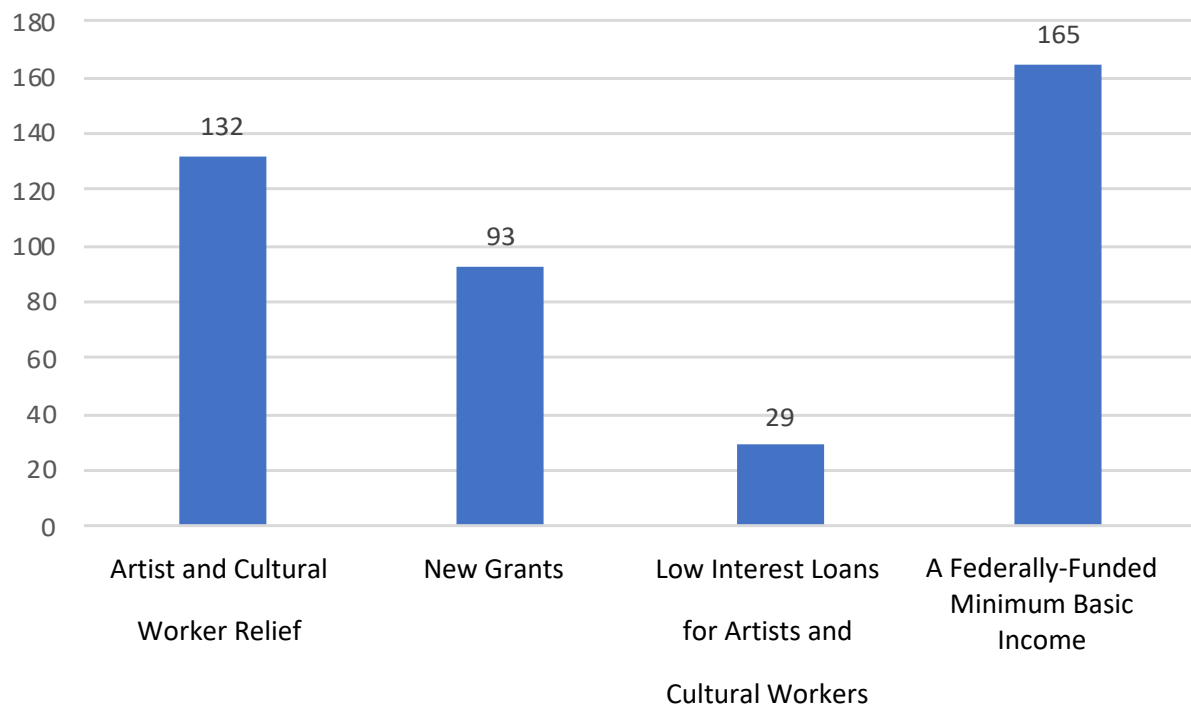
Figure 24. Effects of COVID-19 on health and well-being.

Many of our respondents reported a general malaise (I'm "mentally finding things challenging") that parallels the feelings of many in the general population. However, other respondents also identified particular pressures being experienced by those involved in the arts:

- I work as an arts funder and often feel the pain of the community and am entirely frustrated by the low priority level given to the arts community and the lack of realization and understanding at how quickly the arts community was impacted.
- Being the sole income earner now, and taking extra responsibility from home (only person with driver's license, taking care of 4 elderly family members), have made my creative work stalled. My creative work has just begun to garner attention, but I can't focus on it right now despite the deadlines and galleries asking for work and online promotion. I feel busier than ever, even though I'm home most of the day and week.
- More is required by boards I am volunteering for, taking up more time. But this work, although stressing at times, is necessary and meaningful.
- I have more time for creativity but no one to buy it.
- Increased stress because of decisions needing to be made without a clear timeline.
- I feel MORE pressured to be creative when I am experiencing grief of lost programs, performance, projects. Society is expecting artists to churn out the goods and actually so are other artists. I personally need more time to digest everything that is happening and have minimal desire to create anything new.

## Solutions for Survival and Recovery

Survey respondents were asked to indicate what would be most useful in helping them to survive the crisis and continue their creative practice or cultural work by selecting all options that applied and describing other applicable options not in the list provided.



*Figure 25. Supports to survive COVID-19 crisis and continue creative and cultural practices.*

Respondents did identify the need for shorter term solutions such as targeted COVID-19 relief for cultural workers or assistance in transitioning to virtual platforms. In particular they called for improved programming, funding, education, assistance and policies to better facilitate artist transitions to virtually facilitated creative practice.

- Having the technology and know-how to do livestreaming and YouTube videos (I'm a musician, educator, adjudicator, performer who primarily does not use a cell phone at all ... have a flip phone, but that won't cut it for livestreaming, etc.).
- Financial help to create / maintain a website. Perhaps this could be done through a grant?
- Someone to help publicize my creative output that is available on-line.
- Campaign online to encourage people to tip artists for their work or support their fundraisers on Canada Helps etc.
- Artist's organizations like Canadian Actors Equity Association should show some flexibility and allow theatre artists to work and get paid online.

There was also a respondent observation that, as with many of the areas seriously affected by COVID-19, the pandemic's impacts on the arts community simply highlight pre-existing deficiencies—in this case, the need for “adequate funding for the arts from the provincial government.” In particular, one respondent noted the need for “continued programming at museums and galleries... so relief funding specific to institutions!”

In response to the grants option provided in this question, another respondent noted, “Any income support should apply to all affected, not just grants that only some can access.” This observation is related to the broader, longer term and continuing solution most strongly supported by our cultural worker respondents: a federally-funded minimum basic income. As one respondent put it, “I don't ask for the minimum basic income for myself, but for everyone.” Another respondent demonstrated the potential for artists to contribute to solutions that encompass but extend well beyond the arts into the future “normal” for all of us: “Guaranteed Universal Income is the next step in social restructuring and the only way to move forward from here.”

## **Conclusions**

Despite the dislocated and fraught circumstances that many cultural workers were experiencing less than a month after a state of emergency had been declared in the province, this survey generated a remarkably representative response from the arts community. While the majority of survey respondents reported from Regina and Saskatoon, artists and cultural workers from nearly every area of the province responded to the survey. The 284 respondents represented a wide range of creative and cultural disciplines, stages of career and engagement and dissemination regionally, provincially, nationally and internationally.

The cultural workers who responded were clearly experiencing serious job insecurity and financial hardship or uncertainty. This included access to contracts through community, educational and cultural institutions, revenue from salaried work that supports creative and cultural practices and revenue from funding sources. The financial impacts of interruptions to creative and cultural practices as a result of restrictions in the near term are further complicated by uncertainty in the long term regarding arts, cultural and government funding, and audience / public engagement going forward. While some practices continue, and some respondents report the time freed by job layoffs and supported by federal government funding has allowed them to focus on their creative and cultural work, over 60% of respondents report being unable to continue on any paid or funded creative work that is unaffected by COVID-19 restrictions.

Behind the financial losses and uncertainty experienced by cultural workers is the fundamental disconnection caused by the necessary COVID-19 social distancing restrictions imposed on creative and cultural practices. Reduced access to normal venues and mechanisms for dissemination, to viewers and audiences and to other artists, materials, supplies and work spaces have all created substantial obstacles to ongoing creative work for many artists and cultural workers—especially those in the live performing arts and those who work collaboratively. While some practices and dissemination continue or reshape virtually, some respondents reported sharply increased workloads in adapting to digital content. As well, there are issues with access to necessary technology and technological fluency, either on the part of the creative producer or the audience / viewer / student.

While the level of impact on cultural workers is significant and the obstacles to ongoing creative and cultural practices concerning, the scope of disruption to our cultural fabric that emerges out of these surveys is staggering. The impacts of pandemic restrictions and the lingering effects of these restrictions

extend to viewers / audiences / students in regional, provincial, national and international communities. Public surveys conducted national and provincial levels elsewhere suggest that these restrictions have created a profound disruption to the cultural fabric that may be one of the pandemic's most sweeping and longest lasting impacts.

To assure the survival of cultural practices and our province's cultural workers, respondents recommended both short and longer term financial measures. This included Immediate relief funding to assure the survival of artists and arts organizations—including support for online development and dissemination and for building broader recognition for artists and cultural workers. It also included the provision of an improved level of ongoing provincial financial support for both artists and arts organizations. If the level of arts funding had not been so bare-bones prior to the pandemic, the community would have been in a better position to survive and adapt.

Finally, from a longer term perspective respondents offered an impassioned call for broader social restructuring that better provided for the precarious employment and financial circumstances being experienced not just by cultural workers but by an increasing per centage of the working population from farmers to IT workers. In particular, they called for a federally-funded universal basic income that would facilitate a more sustainable economic and social structure.



## **Appendix: COVID-19 Impact Survey: Artists and Cultural Workers**

In the current battle to save lives and reduce levels of infection from COVID-19, artists and cultural workers were among the first to feel the effects of social distancing. Many arts organizations limited attendance at their events and now most are completely closed to the public. The Saskatchewan Arts Alliance (SAA) has heard about the toll this situation is taking on our artists and cultural workers. We want to ensure that governments' attempts to mitigate impacts of the pandemic address impacts on our arts community. This survey is focused on ensuring that mitigation plans are grounded in the current lived experience of our artists and cultural workers and informed by their input on solutions. Once this crisis is behind us, a follow-up survey will allow SAA a more thorough analysis of the actual impacts on our arts sector.

Your responses to this survey will remain confidential and in no way associated with your name. At the end of this survey you will be given an opportunity to provide your contact information so you can be included in the later follow up survey, but that information will not be associated with your other responses to this survey.

Please take the time to provide as much information as you can and encourage other artists and cultural workers to do the same. If you do not have specific financial or numerical details, provide your best estimate where possible. Information from this survey—and from a parallel survey of cultural organizations currently in progress—will be made available as quickly as possible to governments, arts organizations and agencies—and to you, our colleagues in Saskatchewan's arts community.

### **Your Engagement in the Arts**

In order to understand your role in the arts and cultural community as well as the impact of this crisis on you and specific sectors of the community, we would like you to provide us with some basic details about yourself.

01. Please check the level of engagement that most closely represents your primary position within the arts and cultural community. Please check only one. You will be able to identify other levels of engagement in the next question.

- ☐ Mid-career Professional Artist
- ☐ Senior Professional Artist
- ☐ Educator
- ☐ Senior Arts or Cultural Administrator
- ☐ Other Cultural Worker

02. Check any other levels of engagement that are appropriate indicators of your position within Saskatchewan's arts and cultural community. Please check all that apply.

- ☐ Only the previously identified level of engagement applies to me
- ☐ Avocational Artist
- ☐ Student Artist
- ☐ Emerging Artist

- Mid-career Professional Artist
- Educator
- Senior Arts or Cultural Administrator
- Other Cultural Worker

03. Which of the following general arts disciplines most closely relates to the primary focus of your creative practice or other engagement in the arts and culture? Please choose only one answer. You will be able to identify other disciplinary connections in the next question. If "other," please describe.

- My engagement in the arts and culture does not have a primary focus
- Circus Arts
- Community arts
- Crafts / Decorative Arts
- Creative Writing / Story-Telling / Spoken Word
- Dance / Choreography / Interpretation / Pow-wow
- Digital Arts / Gaming
- Disability and Deaf Arts
- Film and Video Arts
- Folk and Traditional Arts
- Interdisciplinary and Multimedia Arts
- Music / Opera / Composition
- Theatre / Acting / Directing / Technical Work
- Sound Recording
- Visual Arts / Photography / Design
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

04. If your engagement in the arts and culture involves other cross-disciplinary involvement please check all other areas of engagement that apply. If "other," please describe.

- I am only involved in the primary discipline previously identified
- Circus Arts
- Community Arts
- Crafts / Decorative Arts
- Creative Writing / Story-telling / Spoken Word
- Dance Choreography / Interpretation / Pow-wow
- Digital Arts / Gaming

- ☐ Disability and Deaf Arts
- ☐ Ethnocultural, Folk and Traditional Arts
- ☐ Film and Video Arts
- ☐ Indigenous Arts
- ☐ Interdisciplinary and Multimedia Arts
- ☐ Music / Opera / Composition
- ☐ Theatre / Acting / Directing / Technical Work
- ☐ Sound Recording
- ☐ Visual Arts / Photography / Design
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

05. Does your creative practice and/or your responsibilities as an educator or cultural worker result in live public participation at events or exhibitions and/or gatherings of more than 5 people?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

### **Financial Effects of COVID-19**

We want to know how you have been affected financially by the COVID-19 pandemic. While the first case of COVID-19 in Canada was reported on January 15, 2020, travel and touring outside the country could well have been affected prior to that date, so please consider that when providing details if appropriate.

06. Prior to the COVID-19 crisis were you in a precarious financial position?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

07. Currently, what is your financial situation in relation to what it was prior to the COVID-19 outbreak?

- ☐ Worse
- ☐ Better
- ☐ No change
- ☐ Not sure

08. Have you experienced lost income or unexpected expenses due to any of the following? Please check all that apply. If "other," please describe.

- ☐ Lost or reduced salary, fees or contract for creative work within your primary arts discipline

- Lost or reduced salary, fees or contract for creative work in the arts outside any primary arts discipline
- Lost or reduced salary, fees or contract for work in the arts not associated with a creative practice (arts administrator, technician, arts educator, etc.)
- Lost or reduced salary, fees or contracts outside the arts
- Cancelled or postponed arts events
- Reduced numbers in attendance at arts events
- Required return of grant funding or sponsorships
- Pre-event / exhibition expense for a cancelled event / exhibition / service (e.g. materials costs, non-refundable rentals, contracts, fees or salaries to colleagues)
- Unanticipated COVID-19 related expenses (IT / e-costs, childcare, cleaning, etc.)
- Depletion of savings, reduced value of / return from investments, application for loans and line of credit
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

09. If you had an event or events cancelled, for what reasons were your public events cancelled?

Check all that apply. If "other," please describe.

- I cancelled
- I have not been involved in any cancelled events
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Please estimate any lost income or financial costs to you of the COVID-19 pandemic. Provide estimates for losses / costs related to each of the following areas as appropriate and / or provide an overall total of losses / costs you have experienced. Subtract any compensation you may have already received for cancelled contracts, lost fees, etc.

10.1. Your primary area of creative practice.

10.2. Any other areas of creative work.

10.3. As a cultural worker outside any creative practice (arts administrator, technician, educator, etc.).

10.4. Any work outside the arts.

10.5. General unanticipated expenses not specifically attributable to any of the above (increased child care, IT, lost value/income from investments, prepaid rentals, materials costs, etc.).

10.6. Other areas of lost income or costs. Please specify.

10.7 Total cost to you of the pandemic to date.

11. If the limitation on public gatherings were to continue through June 2020, please estimate and/or explain the additional projected lost income and any other financial cost to you beyond the current costs to date as estimated above.

12. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, have you taken any additional work outside the arts since January 15, 2020?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

13. Have you done anything else to address financial pressures you are facing due to COVID-19?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

13.1. Please explain what else you have done to address financial pressures you are facing due to COVID-19.

14. Have you introduced or expanded your use of electronic platforms to reach your audience / fans / public as a result of COVID 19?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

14.1 Have you been able to generate any additional income from this new or increased e-presence?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

15. During this pandemic have you been able to continue working on any paid or funded creative work that has been unaffected by the pandemic?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

### **Other effects of COVID-19**

While the financial effects of the pandemic on artists and cultural workers may have been significant, we also want to know about other ways it has affected you. As well, we want to know how the impacts of this pandemic on your creative work have affected others

16. What have been the effects of COVID-19 on your health and well-being? If "other," please describe.

- ☐ I have contracted COVID-19
- ☐ A family member has contracted COVID-19
- ☐ I have had to assume increased care-giving responsibilities during the crisis (child, elderly person, etc.)
- ☐ I am experiencing increased stress and anxiety due to isolation
- ☐ I am experiencing increased stress and anxiety due to fear for my health and / or that of my family
- ☐ I am experiencing increased stress and anxiety due to financial problems
- ☐ I am experiencing increased stress and anxiety due to my inability to work
- ☐ My emotional and mental health have declined
- ☐ I feel less pressured and better able to focus on creative work
- ☐ I have not experienced any change in my health or well-being
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

17. Have you or would you have been involved in any arts or cultural events / exhibitions / services that have been cancelled?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

17.1. To date, how many arts and cultural events / exhibitions / services that you would have been involved in have been cancelled?

17.2. Where would your cancelled events / exhibitions / services have happened? Please check all that apply.

- ☐ Community where you live
- ☐ Another rural community in Saskatchewan
- ☐ Another urban centre in Saskatchewan
- ☐ Elsewhere in Canada
- ☐ Outside of Canada

17.3. Estimate how many other artists or cultural workers were affected when the public events / exhibitions / services you were involved in were cancelled.

17.4. Estimate the number of audience members, participants or attendees that you were expecting at the cancelled arts events / exhibitions / services in which you were to have been involved.

18. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, have you donated your creative talent or skills to provide free arts and cultural programming to the public through live streaming, e-venues or other types of delivery mechanisms?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

19. Have you undertaken any volunteer work or other community service related to the COVID-19 crisis?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

20. What would be most useful in helping you to survive this crisis and continue your creative practice or cultural work when it is over? If "other," please describe.

- ☐ Artist and cultural worker relief
- ☐ New grants
- ☐ Low interest loans for artists and cultural workers
- ☐ A federally-funded minimum basic income
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Basic Information

In order to better understand the extent of the COVID-19 impact on you and your community please provide us with some basic information.

21. Please provide us with the first three digits of your postal code.

22. On average over the past two years, what was your usual annual income from your creative practice and / or work in the arts and cultural sector? This should include any educational programming or visiting artist positions funded by arts organizations or agencies, but it should exclude salaried work for an educational institution (e.g. public schools, colleges, universities).

23. On average over the past two years, what was your annual income from sources such as government, lottery, agency or foundation grants?

24. On average over the past two years, what has been your annual income from educational institutions?

25. Are you normally employed outside the arts and education?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes, full-time
- ☐ Yes, part-time

25.1. Over the past two years, on average what has been your annual income from outside the arts and education?

***Thank you for your time and thoughtfulness in completing this survey. The Saskatchewan Arts Alliance wishes you and your family the best in these difficult times.***

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