

THE ARTS ECOLOGY OF SASKATCHEWAN

Rural and Remote Practice



Saskatchewan
Arts Alliance

prepared by
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The Arts Ecology of Saskatchewan: Rural & Remote Artists

In 2014, the Saskatchewan Partnership for Arts Research, a research partnership formed in 2012 by the Saskatchewan Arts Alliance, the Saskatchewan Arts Board (SK Arts,) SaskCulture and the University of Regina, conducted two major surveys with a view to broadening their understanding of the arts ecology of Saskatchewan.

These surveys, and accompanying reports, have been foundational research into the arts ecology of Saskatchewan, and contain data on which the SAA has consistently relied, and referenced in their advocacy efforts, and therefore felt that it was crucially important to conduct a follow-up survey to examine the ways in which the arts ecology of Saskatchewan had changed in the past ten years.

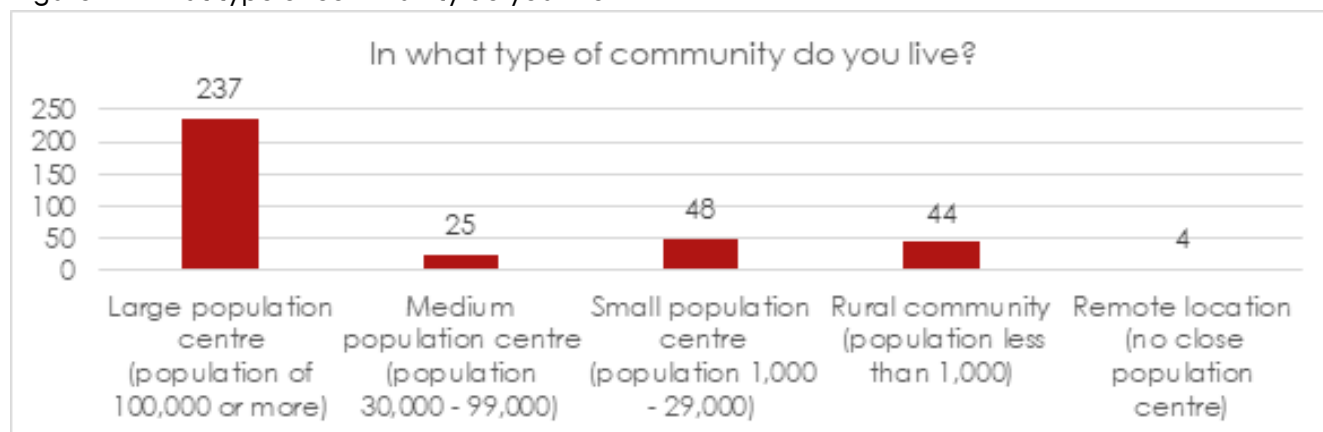
In order to best facilitate comparison, the SAA maintained the original survey as closely as we were able: questions accounting for the effects of COVID-19, as well as some minor edits to language were made in order to elicit the best results, and to facilitate ease of understanding.

The SAA circulated two versions of the survey for artists: one version of the artist survey was strictly limited to those who are members of the artist registry hosted and curated by the SAA, while the other was promoted more broadly, via email and social media communications, to anyone who identifies as an artist.

The SAA has decided to generate a number of smaller, 'breakout' reports from the report as a whole, to best showcase all of the findings. This particular report focuses on the artists who identified as living in both rural & remote.

Of the 358 total respondents, 48 artists identified as living in either a rural or remote community, which was defined as a place with a population of less than 1,000 people, or an area with no close population centre. This represents just about 13% of overall respondents. According to [Statistics Canada](#), approximately 32% of Saskatchewan's population was considered rural, following the same definition of an area with a population of less than 1,000.

Figure 1 In what type of community do you live?

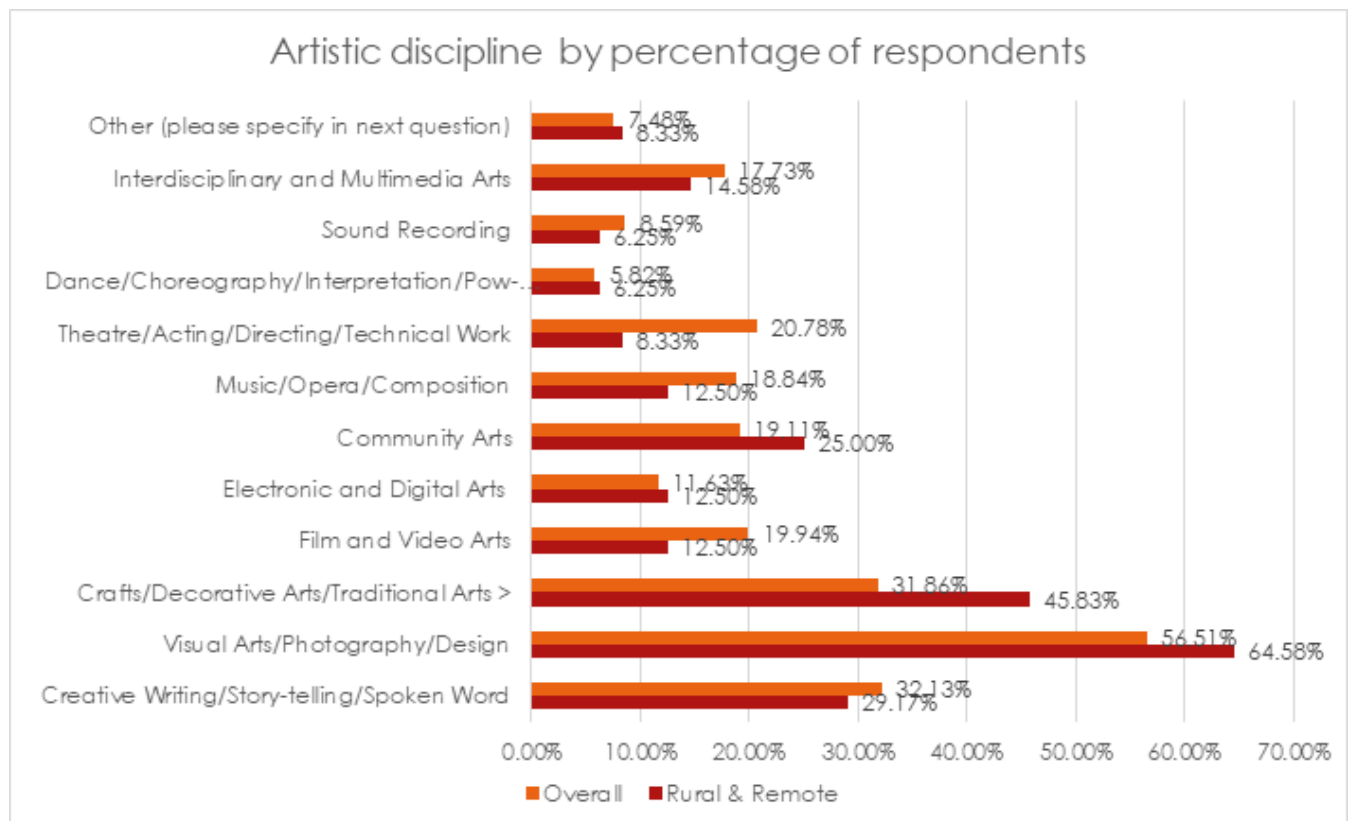


This report will examine the responses of these 48 respondents, and compare them to the overall responses from all of the artists. Obviously, this is a very limited sample and it is not proportionally representative of the number of people living rurally or remotely in the province. For that reason, while it is interesting to compare the responses here, broader conclusions about artists in rural and remote communities cannot be extrapolated from these results.

It is interesting to note that in many instances, the overall responses mapped quite closely to those of the rural & remote artists. As example, of all respondents, 60% had identified as being professional artists, as compared to 61% of the rural & remote respondents. 96% of overall respondents indicated their creative work had been presented to the public, compared to 94% of rural and remote artists. When asked if their work had received public or peer recognition, 79% of overall respondents indicated that it had, while 80% of rural & remote artists indicated that they had received recognition.

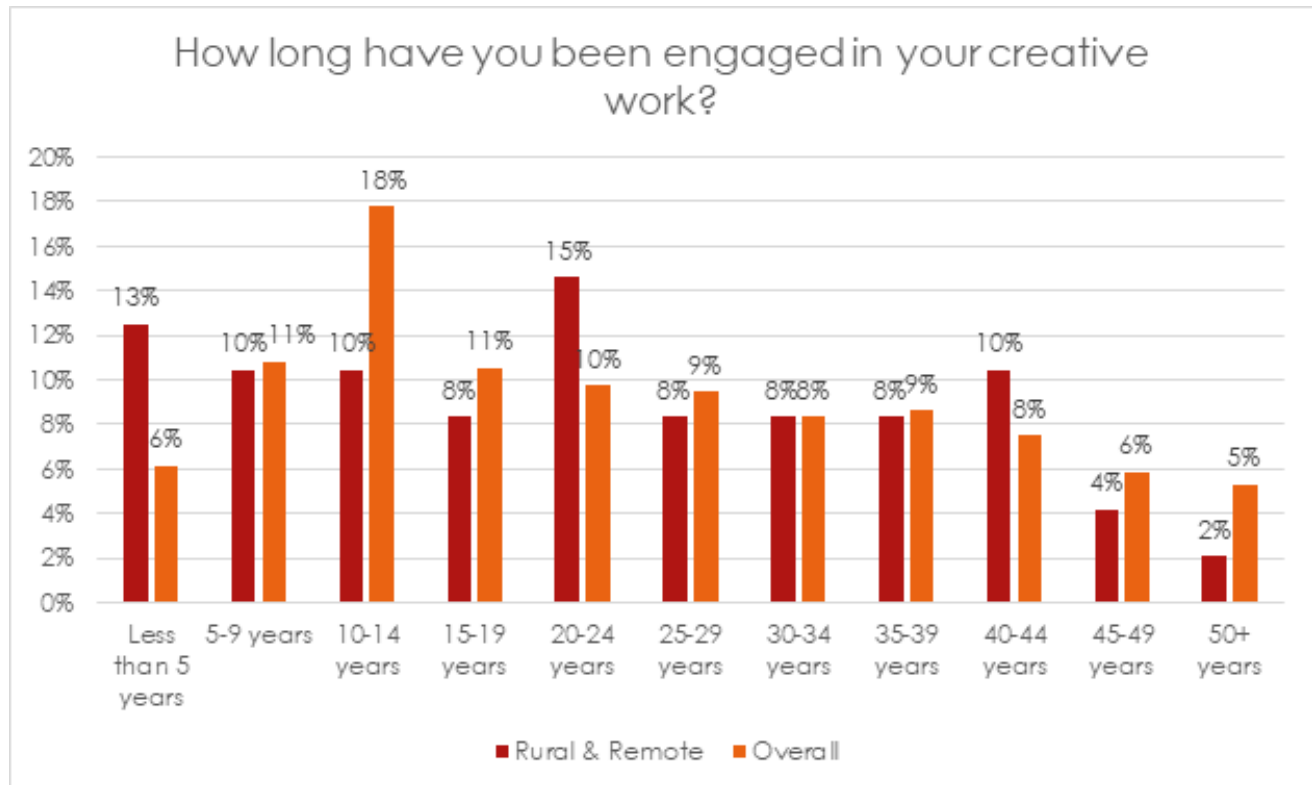
For that reason, this report will not be comparing the responses of every single question, and will instead focus on the ones in which the response rates varied. All comparisons will be drawn using percentages, as opposed to raw numbers, as obviously, there were significantly more respondents in the overall respondent base.

Figure 2 Artistic discipline by percentage of respondents



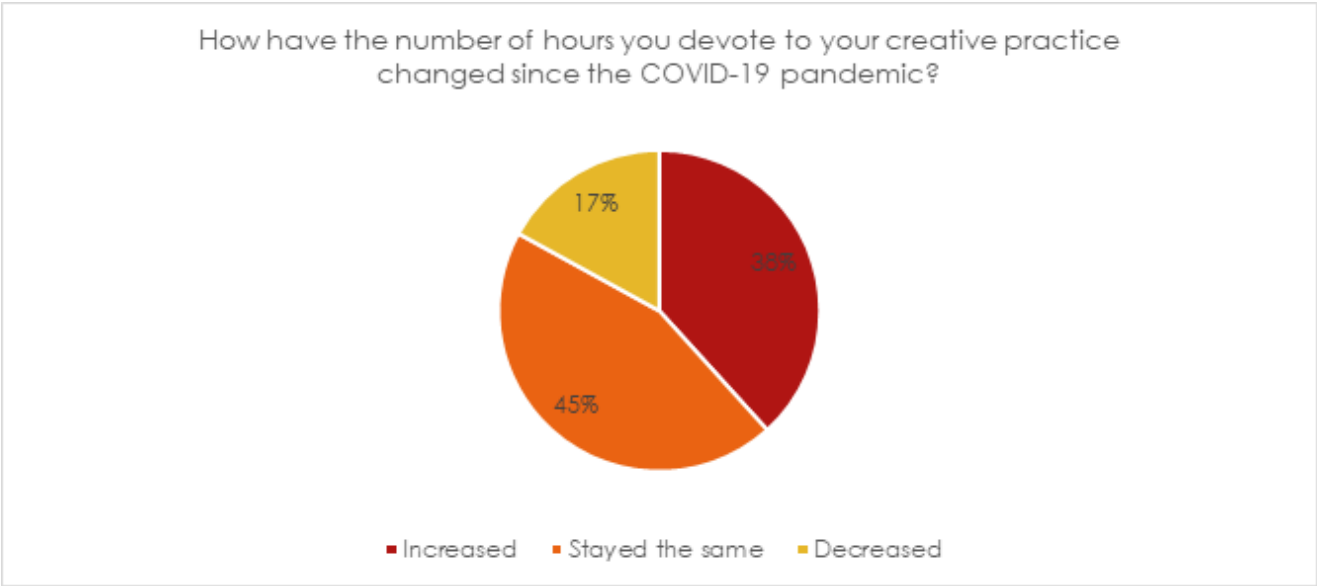
Unsurprisingly, there is some variation in the rates at which rural & remote artists identified with certain artistic practices when compared to overall respondents. In both cases, however, the most popular response was Visual Arts/Photography/Design, with more rural & remote artists (65%) identifying with this practice, compared to 57% of overall respondents. The least popular disciplines for rural & remote artists were a tie between Sound Recording and Dance/Choreography/Interpretation Pow-wow, though the latter was also the least popular for overall respondents.

Figure 3 How long have you been engaged in your creative work?



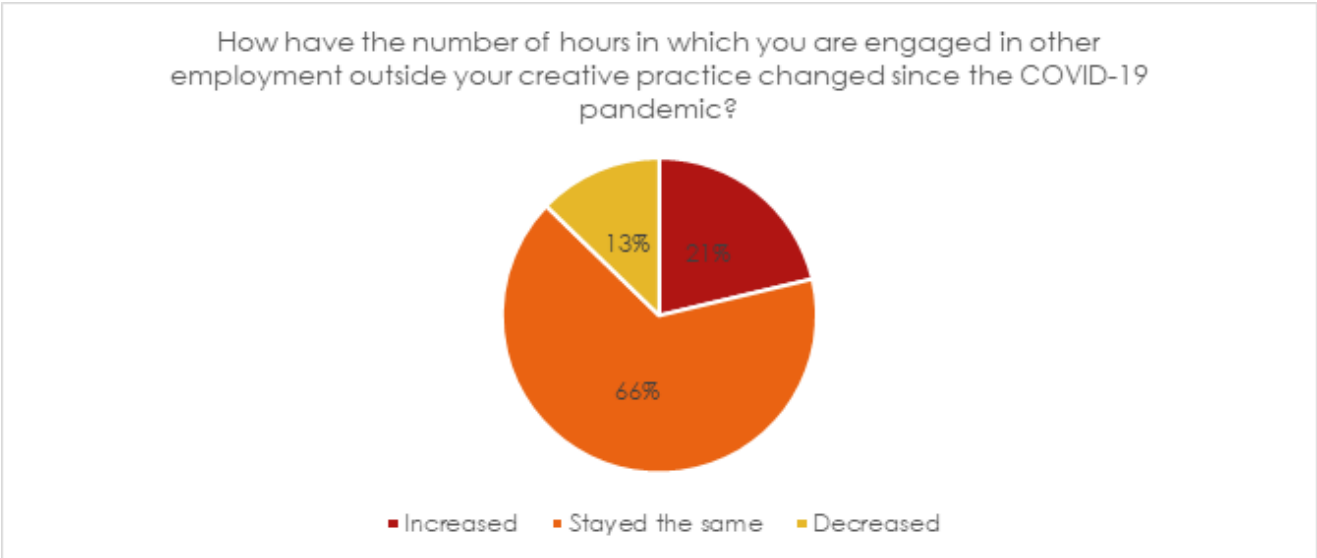
Although there are some differences, particularly in that, more overall artists identified in the 10-14 years range, the results of how long artists have been practicing their creative work were fairly similar. In both the overall respondents, and with regards to the rural & remote artists, 64% of respondents have practiced for less than 30 years, and 81% of both groups respectively have practiced less than 40 years.

Figure 4 How have the number of hours you devote to your creative practice changed since the COVID-19 pandemic?

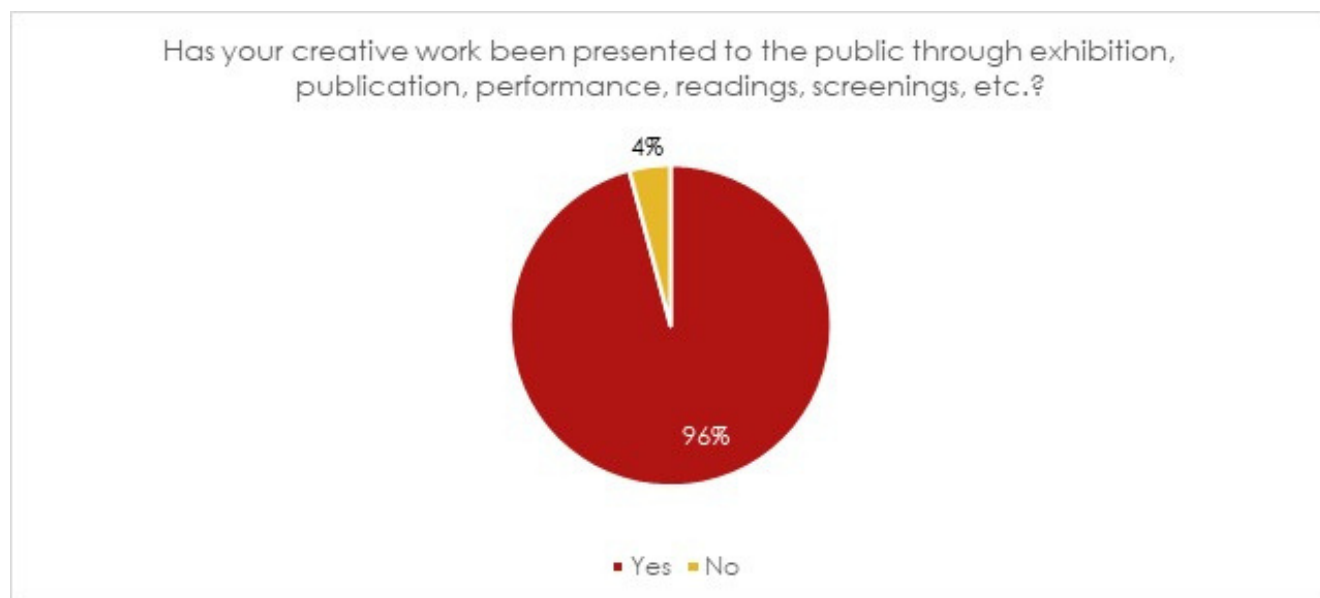


Overall, rural & remote artists were slightly less likely to have had the time dedicated to creative practice affected by COVID, with 45% of rural & remote respondents indicating it had stayed the same, compared to 38% of overall respondents. 38% of rural & remote respondents indicated that their time dedicated to their creative practice had increased because of COVID, compared to 35% overall, and only 17% saw a decrease, compared to the 27% of overall respondents who indicated their time dedicated to their creative practice had decreased.

Figure 5 How have the number of hours in which you are engaged in other work outside of your creative practice changed since the COVID-19 pandemic?



A similar trend is noticed with time dedicated to work outside of the creative practice: rural & remote artists reported being, slightly less affected by the COVID-19 pandemic than overall respondents with 21% of rural & remote artists seeing their time increase, compared to 15% overall; 66% report the amount of time was unaffected, compared to 60% and only 13% reporting that it decreased, compared to 25% overall.



Rural & remote artists were more likely to have either volunteered or made charitable donations than the overall respondent based: 18% of rural & remote artists indicated that they had volunteered, compared to 11% of overall artists, and 12% indicated they had given a charitable donation, compared to 8% of the total respondents.

The distribution between the rural & remote artists and the overall responses regarding which types of organizations received the most volunteer or donations was generally fairly similar, with arts & culture being the most popular. On the opposite end of the spectrum, rural & remote artists were the least involved with hospitals, while the overall responses had business development as the least popular option.

When it comes to volunteer hours, rural & remote artists volunteered roughly the same amount as the overall respondents, however, volunteers were more evenly split between 1-10 hours per week and 11-20 hours per week, whereas the overall respondents had 60% of responses volunteering between 1-10 hours.

Figure 6 Have you contributed to any of the following types of local groups or organizations in the past 12 months?

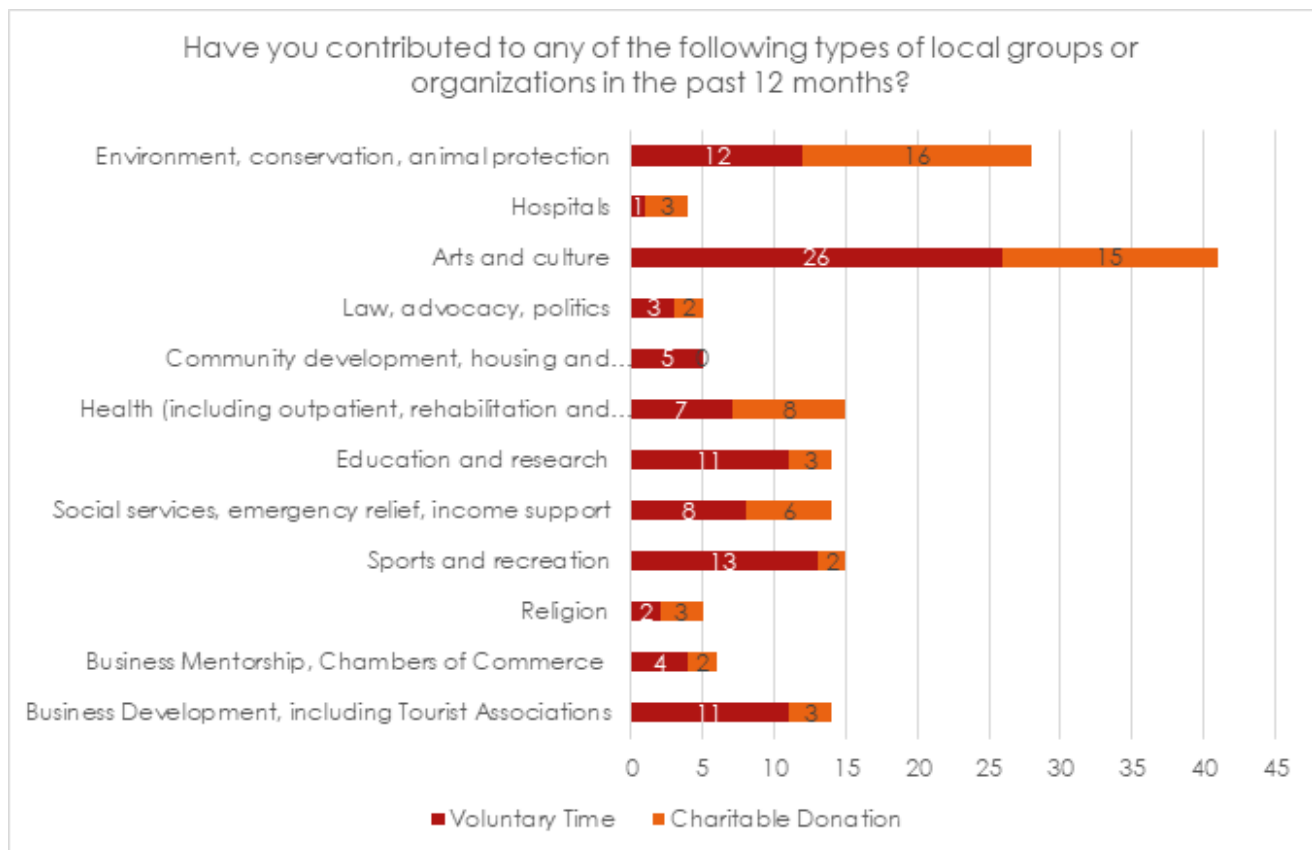
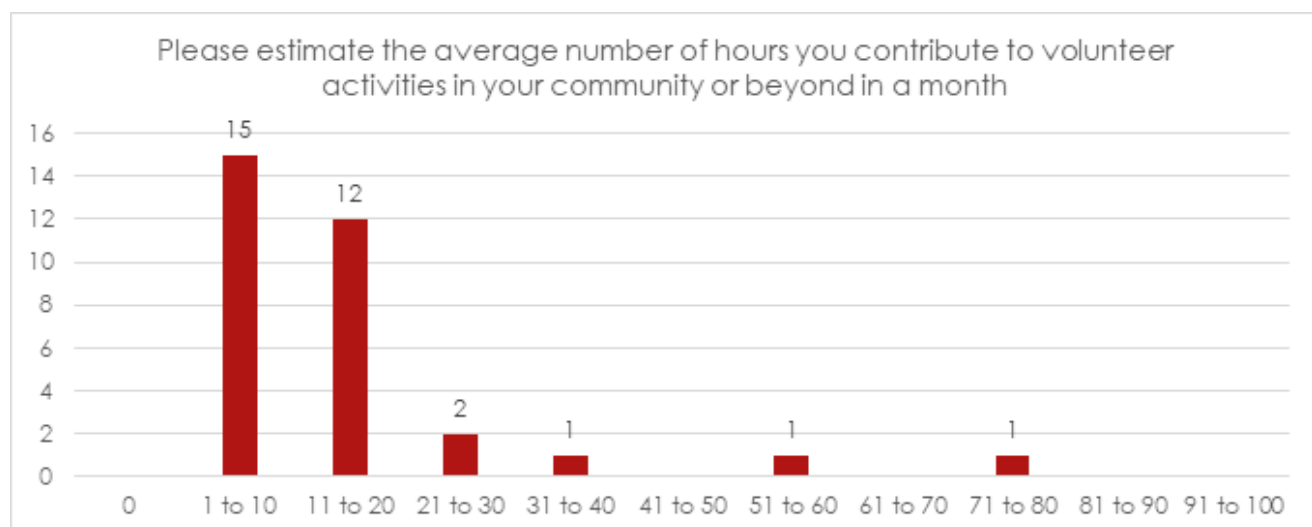
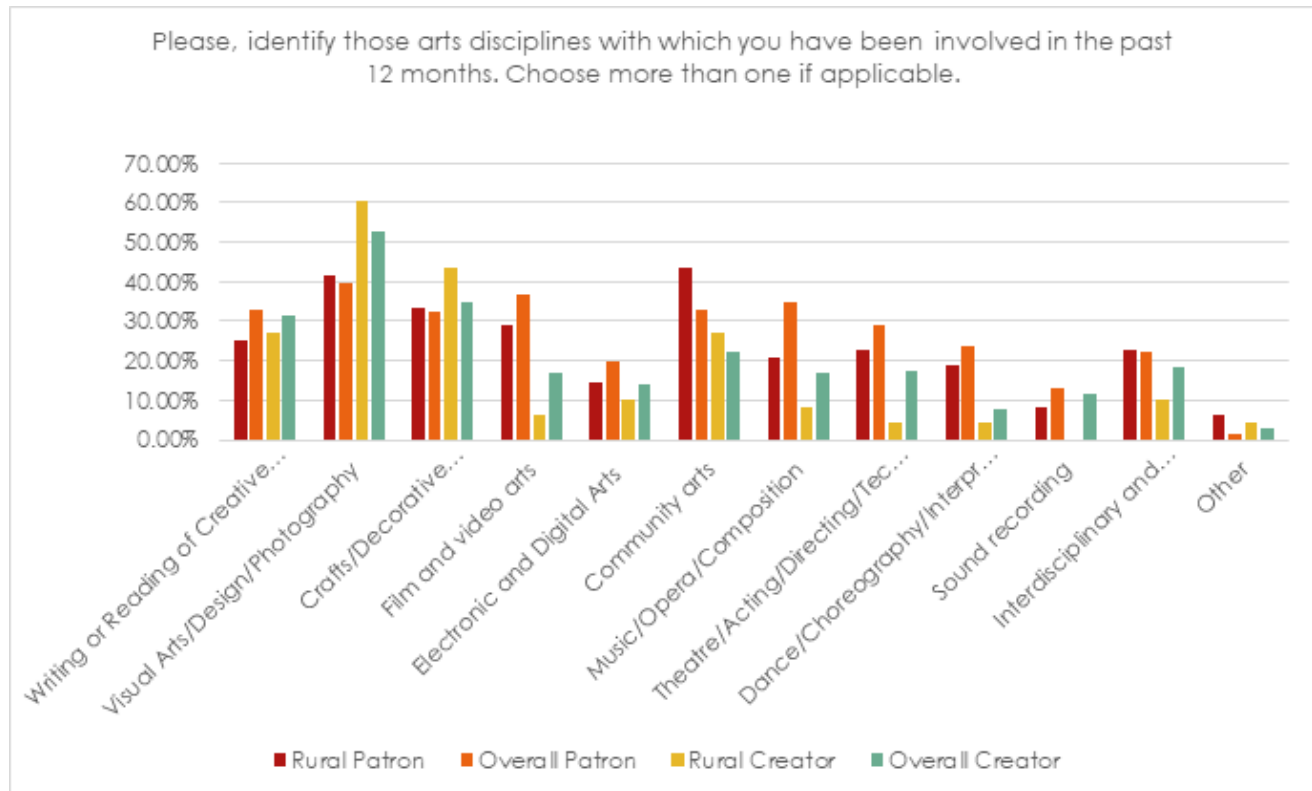


Figure 7 Estimation of number of volunteer hours



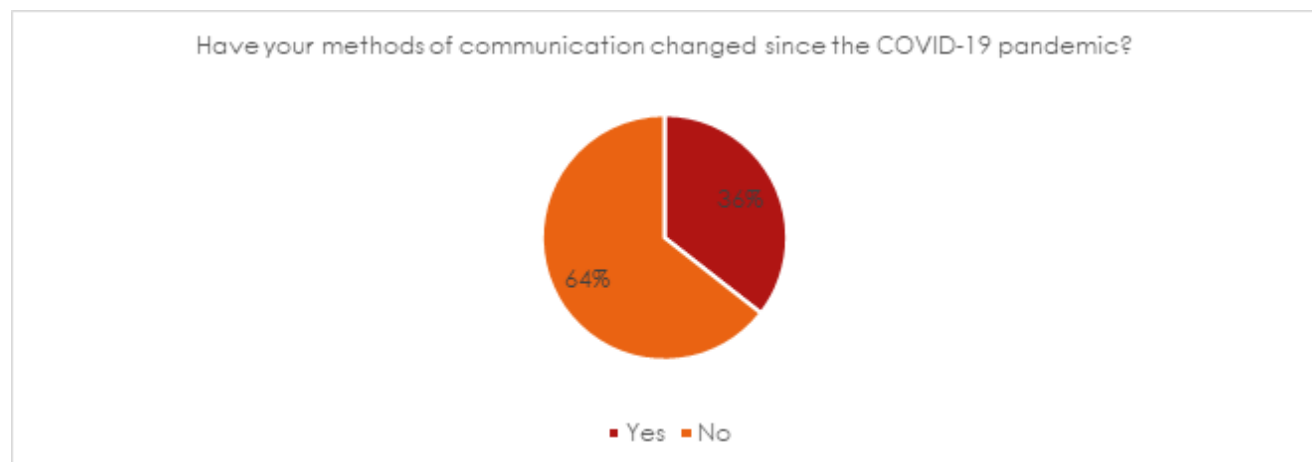
Rural & remote artists showed relatively similar levels of involvement with different disciplines as the overall responses, with only a few discrepancies here and there.

Figure 8 Arts disciplines with which artists have been involved



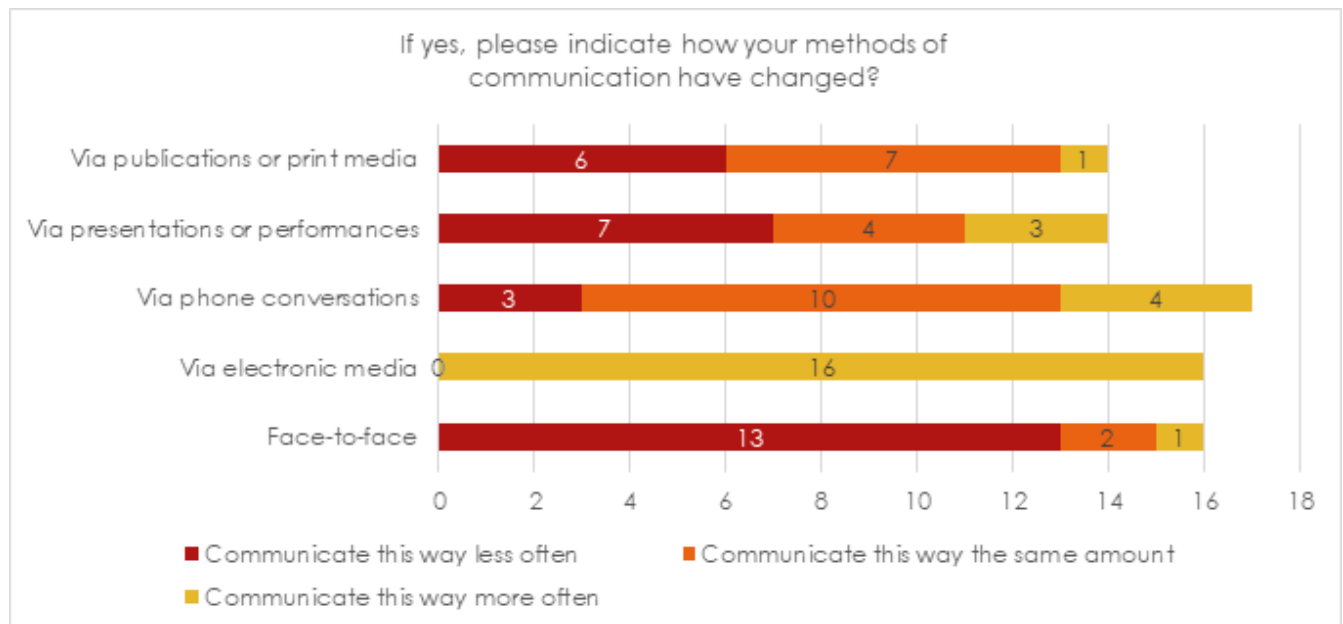
Rural & remote artists were less likely to see their methods of communication change on account of the COVID-19 pandemic, with 64% indicating nothing had changed, compared to 57% of overall respondents.

Figure 9 Have your methods of communication changed since the COVID-19 pandemic?



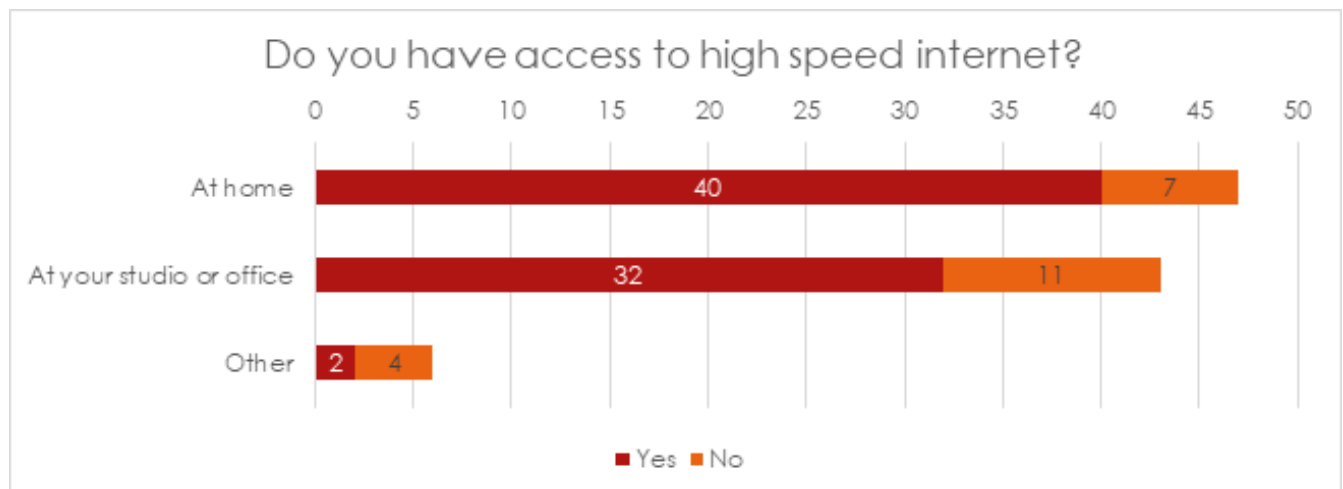
The way in which methods of communication have changed were overall pretty similar between the rural & remote artists compared to total results. The most striking difference was that 100% of the rural & remote artists who indicated their methods of communication have changed indicated that they were communicating more electronically.

Figure 10 How methods of communication have changed



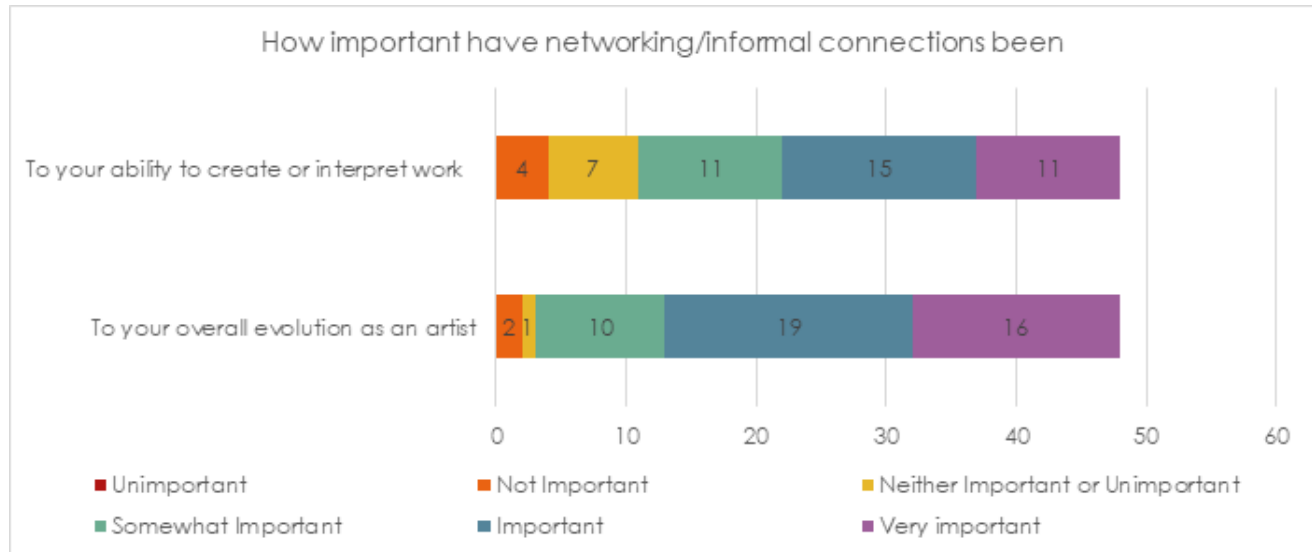
96% of the total respondent base have high speed internet at home, compared to only 85% of rural & remote respondents, indicating rural & remote respondents are less likely to have high speed internet at home. However, 74% of rural & remote artists have access to high speed internet at the office, compared to only 70% of total respondents, indicating rural & remote artists are more likely to have high speed internet at work.

Figure 11 High speed internet access



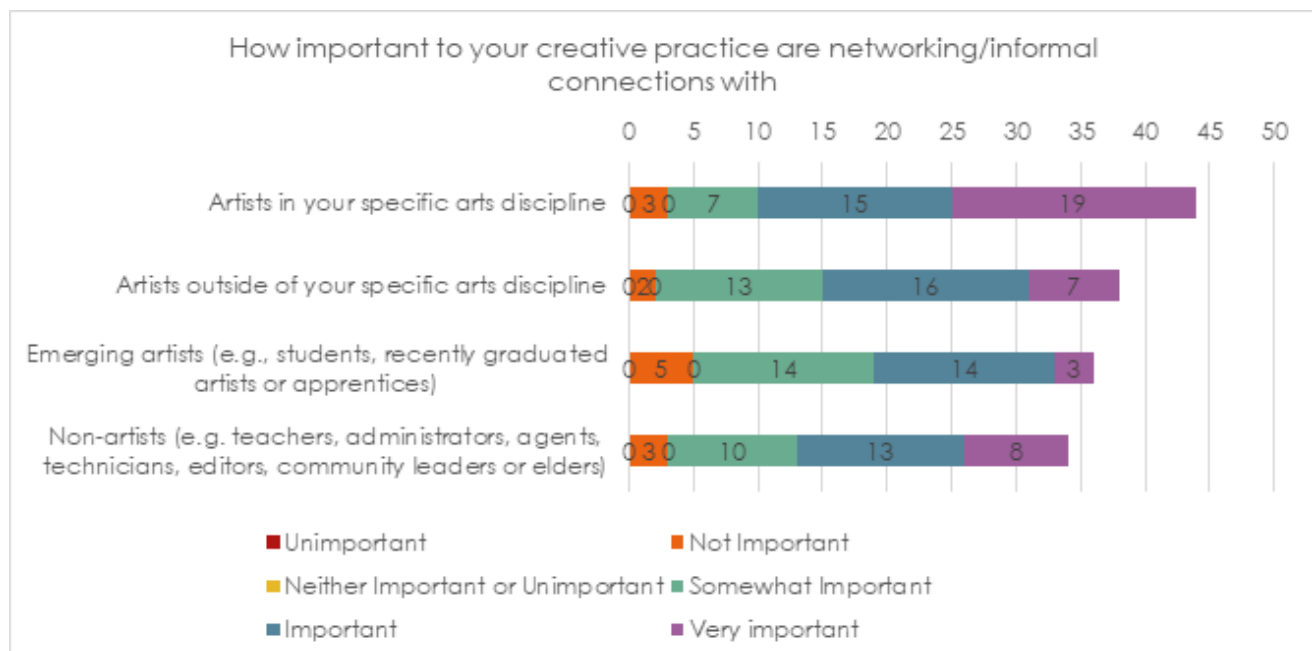
Rural & remote artists were less likely to consider networking and informal connections to be important. 73% of rural & remote artists indicated that connections were either Important or Very Important to their overall evolution as an artist, compared to 78% of total respondents. Similarly, only 54% of rural & remote artists indicated that networking was Important or Very Important to their ability to create or interpret worked, compared to 61% of the total.

Figure 12 Importance of networking & informal connections



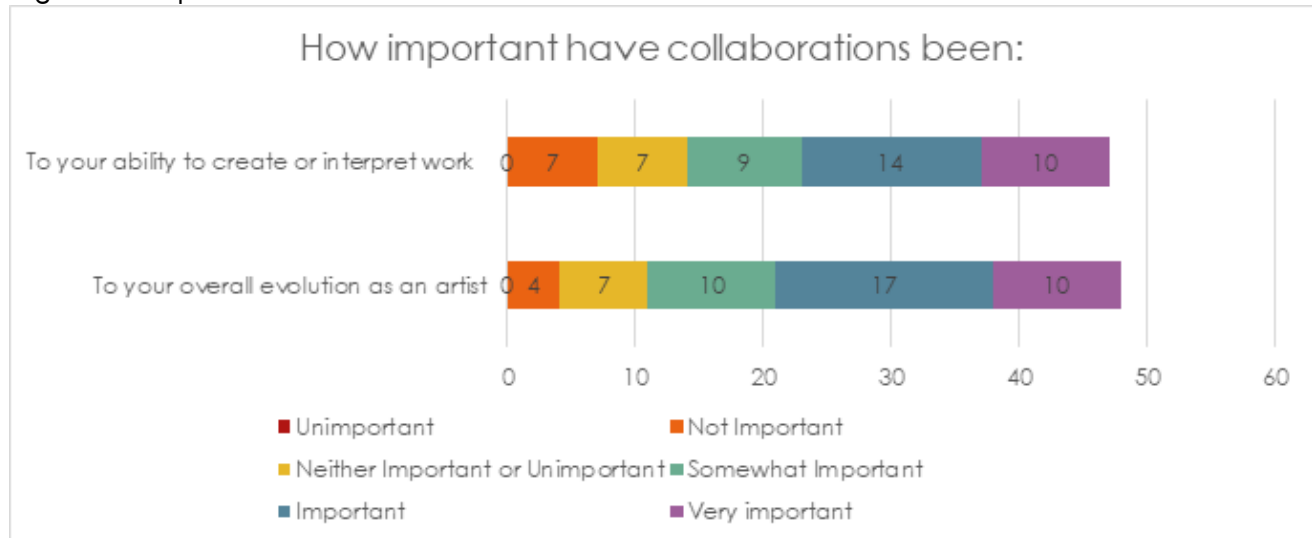
71% of rural & remote artists considered networking and informal connections with artists within their specific discipline to be either Important or Very Important compared to 79% overall; artists in different disciplines were only indicated to be important by 48%, sharply different from the 62% of the overall survey. Connections with emerging artists were Important or Very Important to 44% of rural & remote respondents, compared to 50% overall, and networking with non-artists were the least important, with only 35% of rural or remote artists indicating this was important to them, compared to 58% of the overall respondent base.

Figure 13 Importance of certain groups for networking/informal connections



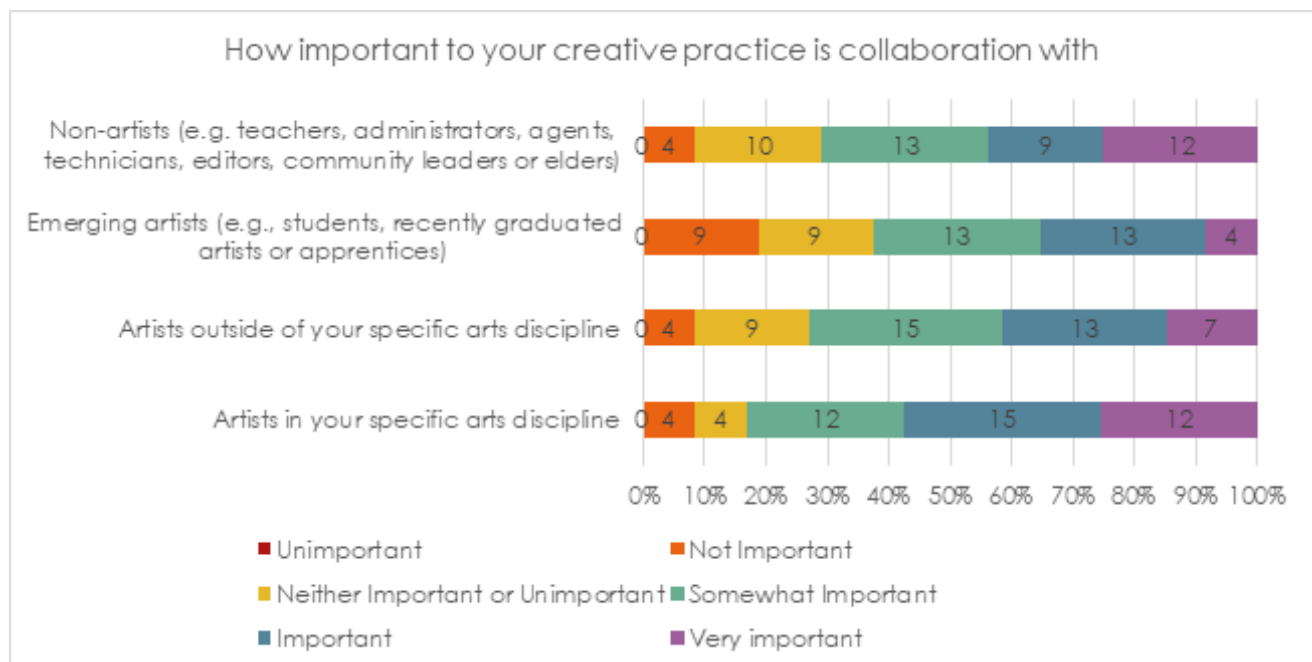
Collaboration was also, on the whole, less important to rural & remote artists, with 56% indicating it was Important or Very Important to their evolution as an artist, and 50% indicating the same for their ability to create or interpret work. This is compared to 69% and 63% respectively, of the overall base.

Figure 14 Importance of collaborations



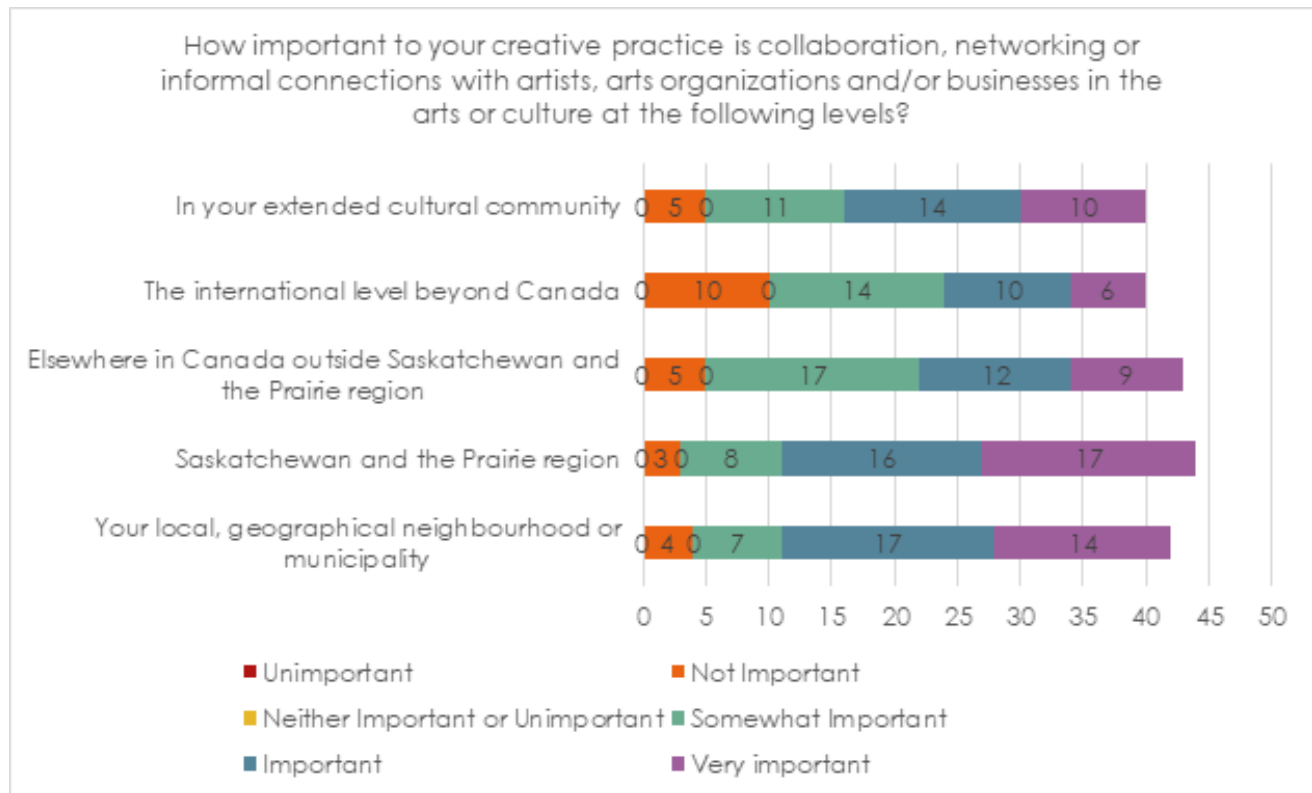
Unlike the overall respondents where 69% indicated that artists within their discipline were Important or Very Important to collaborate with, followed by 55% identifying artists in other disciplines, 54% non-artists and 48% emerging artists, rural & remote artists ranked them differently. 56% indicated artists in their discipline were Important or Very Important, similar to overall, but, emerging artists were identified by 43%, followed by artists in other disciplines (42%) and then non-artists 35%.

Figure 15 Groups with whom collaboration is important



Rural & remote artists were very similar to the overall group in evaluating connections in Saskatchewan and the prairie region as most important (75% compared to the overall 76%,) followed by connections in the local neighbourhood or municipality (74% to 75% overall.) Where they differed, however, was that the next most important area for connections for rural & remote artists was the extended cultural community, which 60% stated were either Very Important or Important, compared to only 54% of the overall responses. Elsewhere in Canada was indicated to hold some importance for 48% (compared to 59% overall,) and internationally was of some importance to 40% (compared to 41%, overall.)

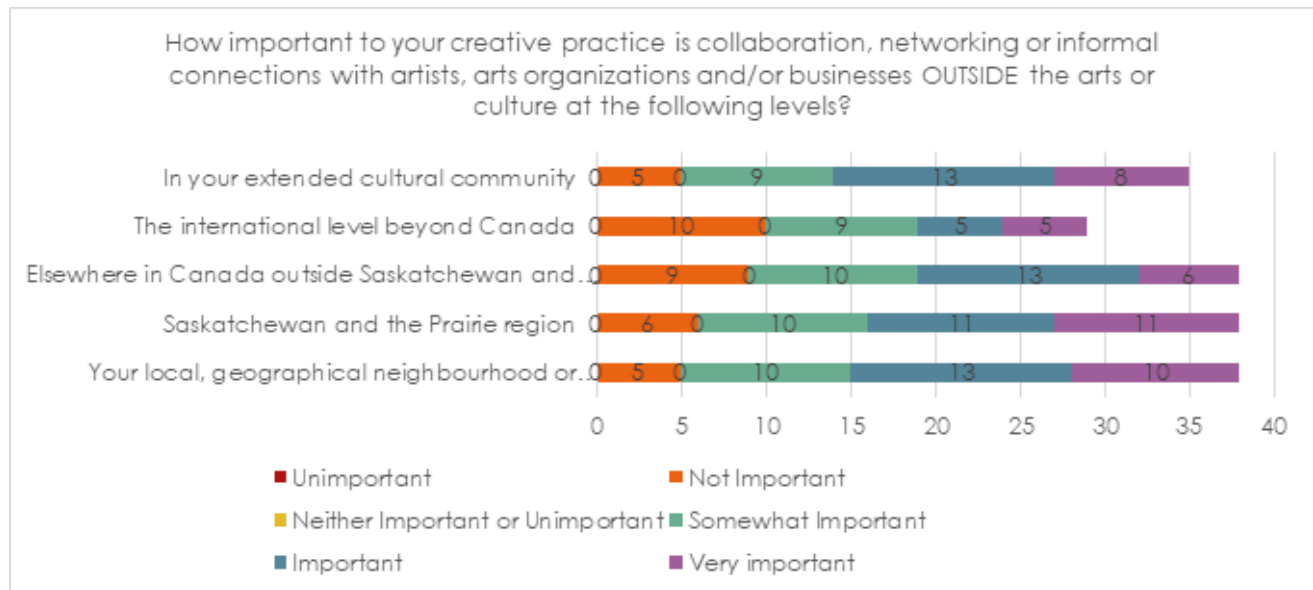
Figure 16 Importance of networking & collaboration with the arts from different geographic locations



With regards to organizations outside of arts & culture, rural & remote artists (61%) indicated connections within their local community were Important or Very Important, followed by the extended cultural community (60%,) within Saskatchewan and the prairies (58%,) elsewhere in Canada (50%) and internationally (34%).

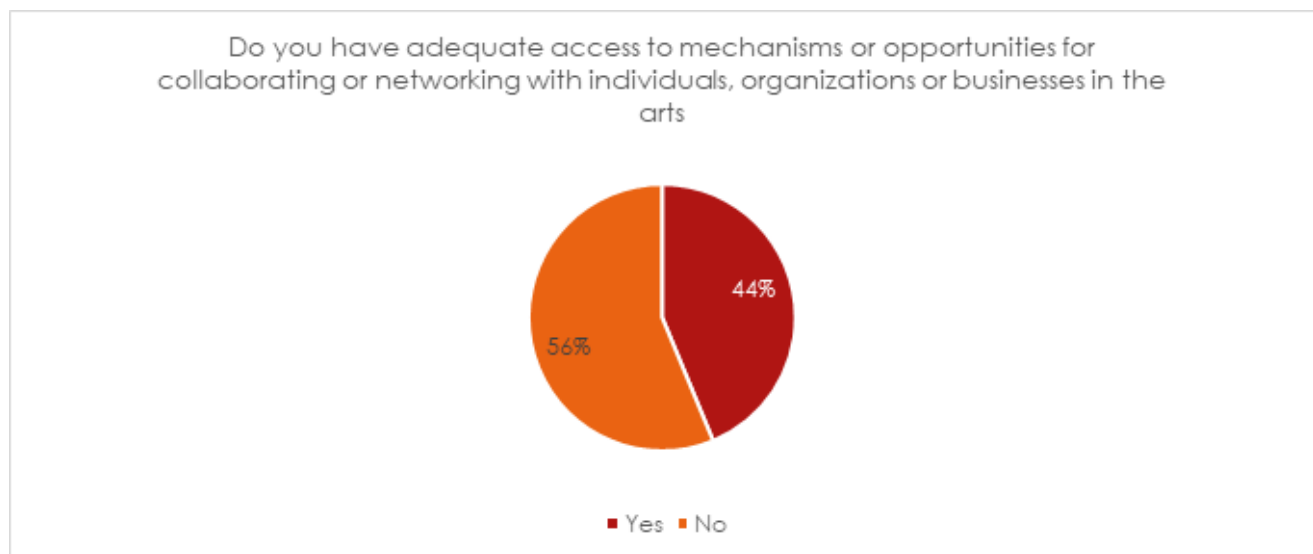
This is different to the overall results in which local connections were Very Important or Important to a majority (55%,) followed by Saskatchewan and the prairies (51%,) the wider cultural community (42%,) elsewhere in Canada (36%,) and then internationally (25%).

Figure 17 Important of networking & collaboration outside of the arts from different geographic locations



While both rural & remote artists and the overall survey indicated that 65% did not have adequate access for networking outside of the arts, 56% rural & remote artists also indicated that they did not have adequate access for networking within the arts, compared to 53% overall who indicated that they did.

Figure 18 Access to mechanisms for networking & collaboration within the arts



The artists were asked to indicate the levels of importance of a number of resources. For ease of the reader, the comparisons have been laid out in the below table.

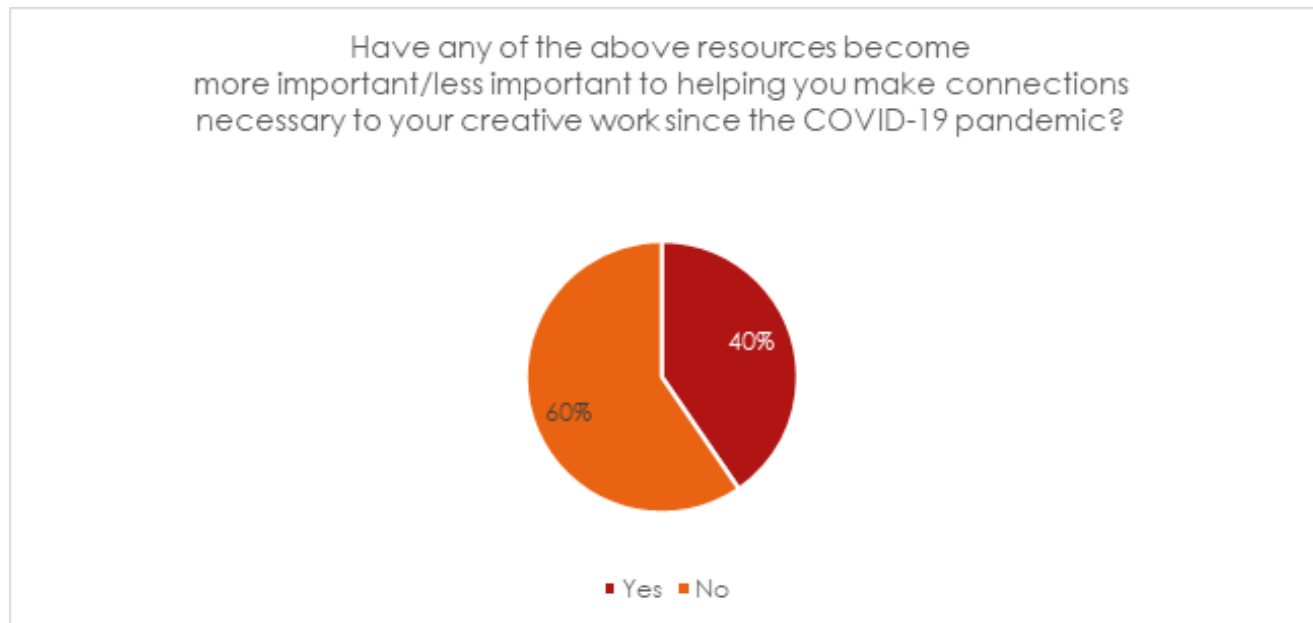
For rural & remote artists, the most important organizations/institutions were social media & email (60%,) public galleries (56%,) found temporary performance or exhibition spaces (54%,) festivals & fairs (52%,) and electronic publications, blogs, galleries and websites (50%.) The least important was commercial film theatres, with only 4% indicating it was of any importance to them.

Figure 19 Importance of specific organizations & institutions.

Organisation/ Institution	Important & Very Important Overall	Important & Very Important Rural & Remote
Social media & email	73%	60%
Readings, artist talks, residencies & other visiting artist positions	60%	46%
Festivals and fairs	59%	52%
Informal social gatherings	57%	60%
Electronic publications, blogs, galleries and websites	55%	50%
Arts facilities in educational institutions	51%	44%
Video and teleconferencing	47%	44%
Artist cooperatives, shared facilities and/or equipment	46%	48%
Public galleries	46%	56%
Multipurpose or arts facilities managed by municipal, First Nations, regional or provincial governments	44%	44%
Found temporary performance or exhibition spaces (not purpose-built arts facilities)	43.5%	54%
Print publications	43%	38%
Other not-for-profit performance spaces	42%	33%
Conferences and meetings	40%	44%
Commercial performance spaces	26%	19%
Independent/ not-for-profit film theatre/ screenings/ festivals	26%	15%
Commercial galleries	26%	33%
Commercial film theatres	10%	4%
Other	7%	10%

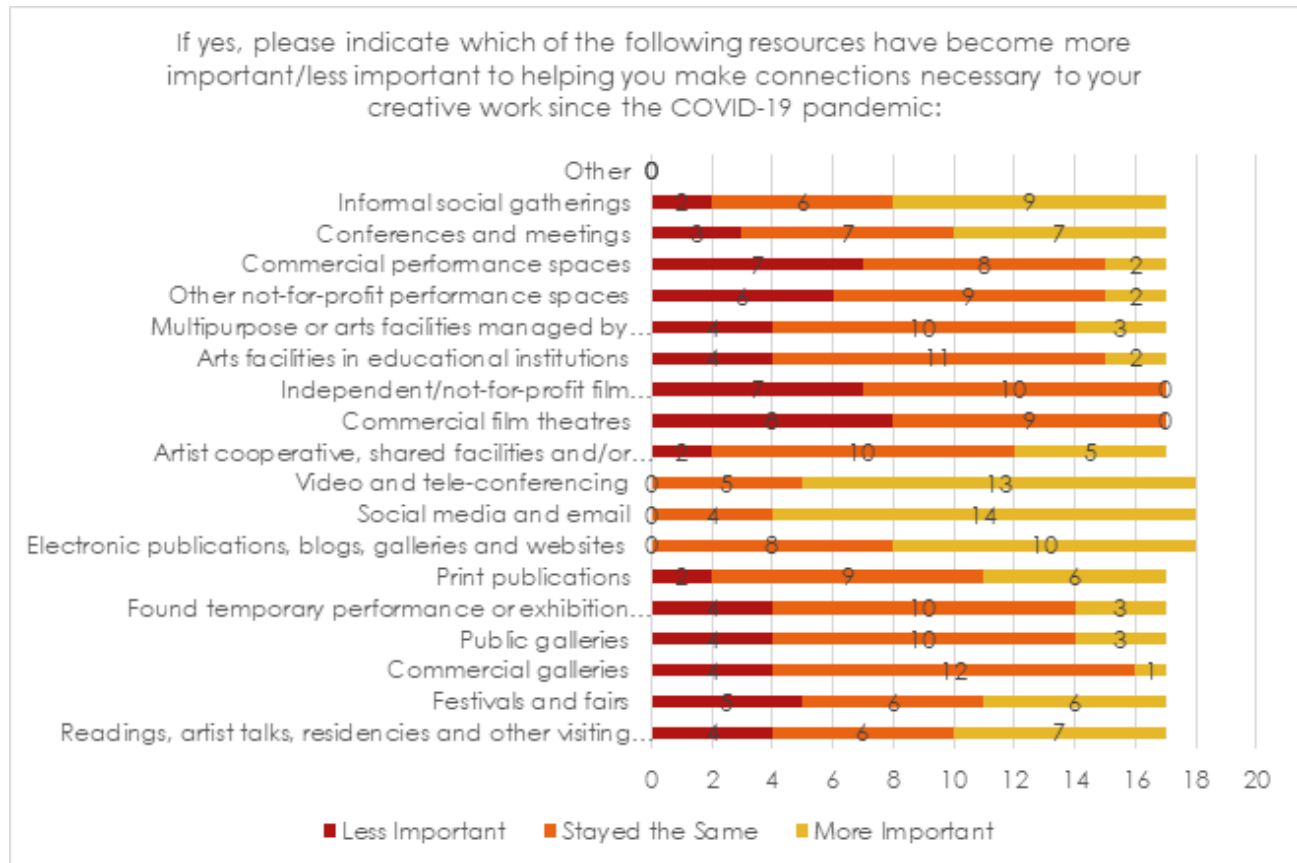
While 59% of overall respondents indicated that some of the above resources had become more or less important to them since COVID-19, the inverse holds true for rural & remote artists; 60% of whom indicated that things had not changed for them. When asked if they had access to these resources prior to the pandemic, 75% of rural & remote artists indicated they did not, compared to 70% of overall responses.

Figure 20 Change in importance to certain resources



Just as with the overall responses, social media was indicated to have increased in importance for 78% of rural & remote respondents (79% overall,) while video and tele-conferencing was more important to 72% of rural & remote artists (75% overall.) Commercial film theatres were less important to 47% of rural & remote artists, compared to only 37% of overall responses, which was the largest decline in importance in both respondent bases.

Figure 21 Change in importance of certain resources



When asked about local public institutions and the amount of support provided, 65% of overall respondents indicated that they believe organisations provide Moderate to Substantial support to artists, and 59% of overall respondents indicated they have received Moderate to Substantial support.

Rural & remote artists had similar answers, though slightly less in both cases: 60% indicated they believe organizations provided Moderate to Substantial Support, and 53% indicated they had received Moderate to Substantial Support.

Figure 22 Perception of support provided by public institutions

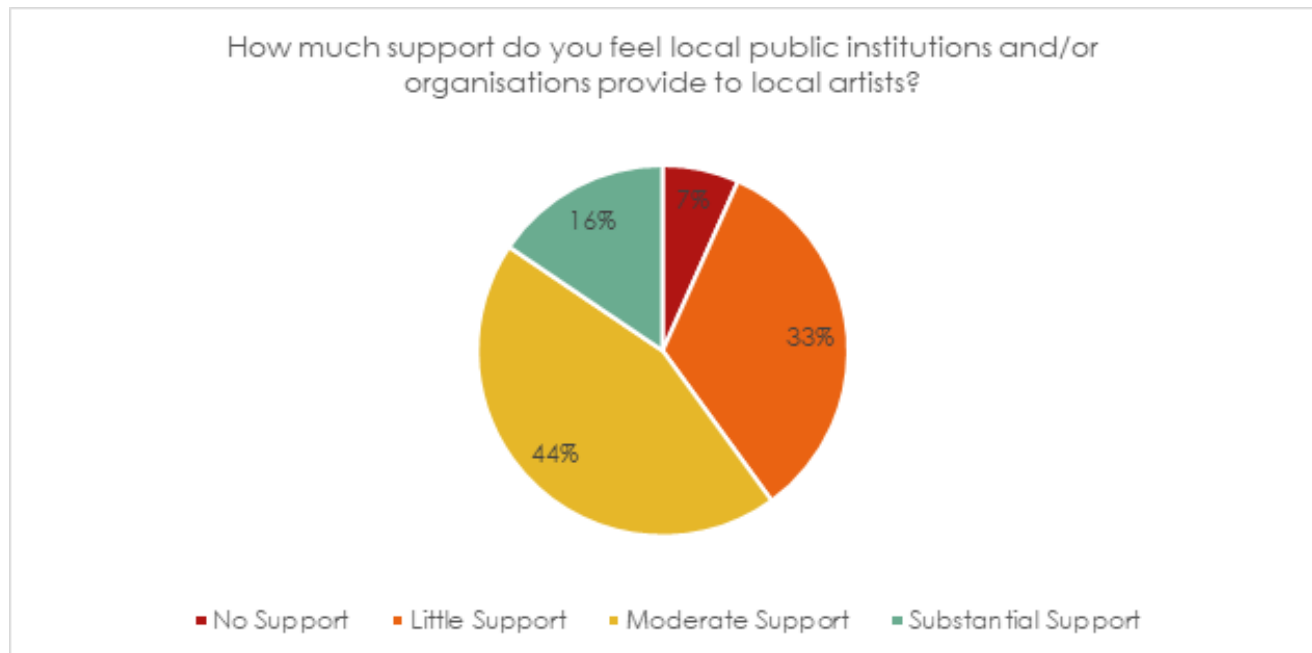
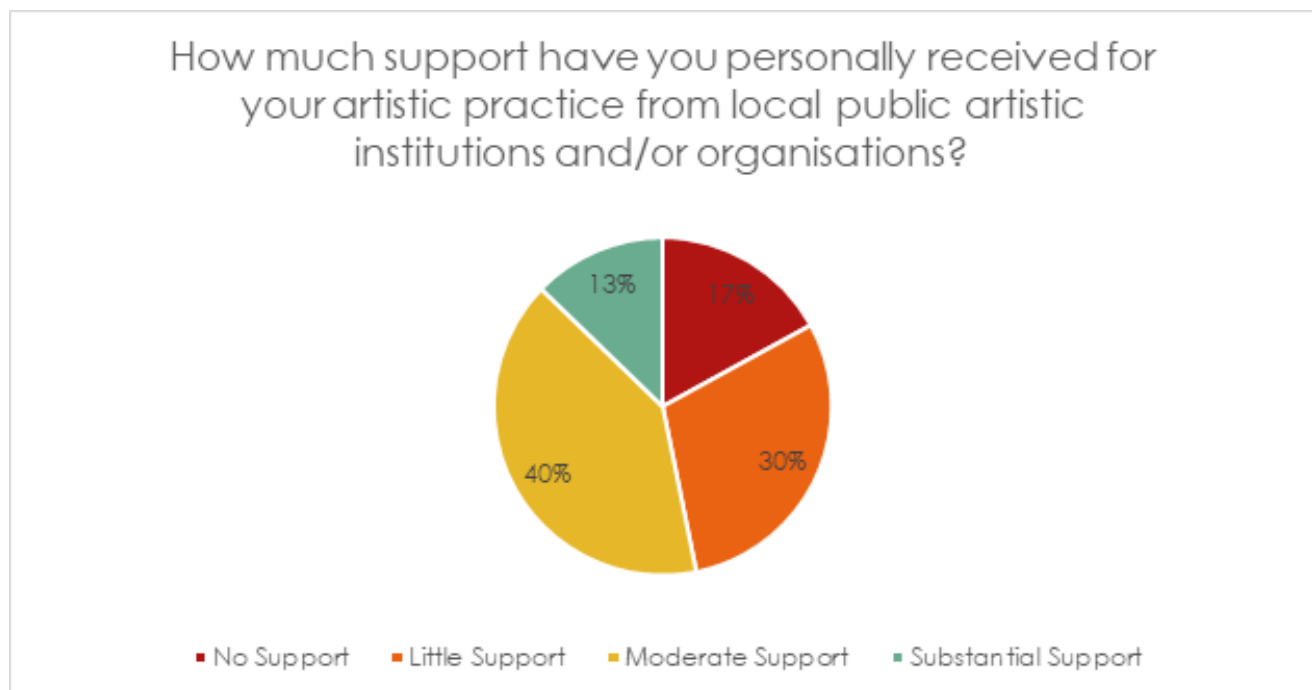


Figure 23 Support received from public institutions

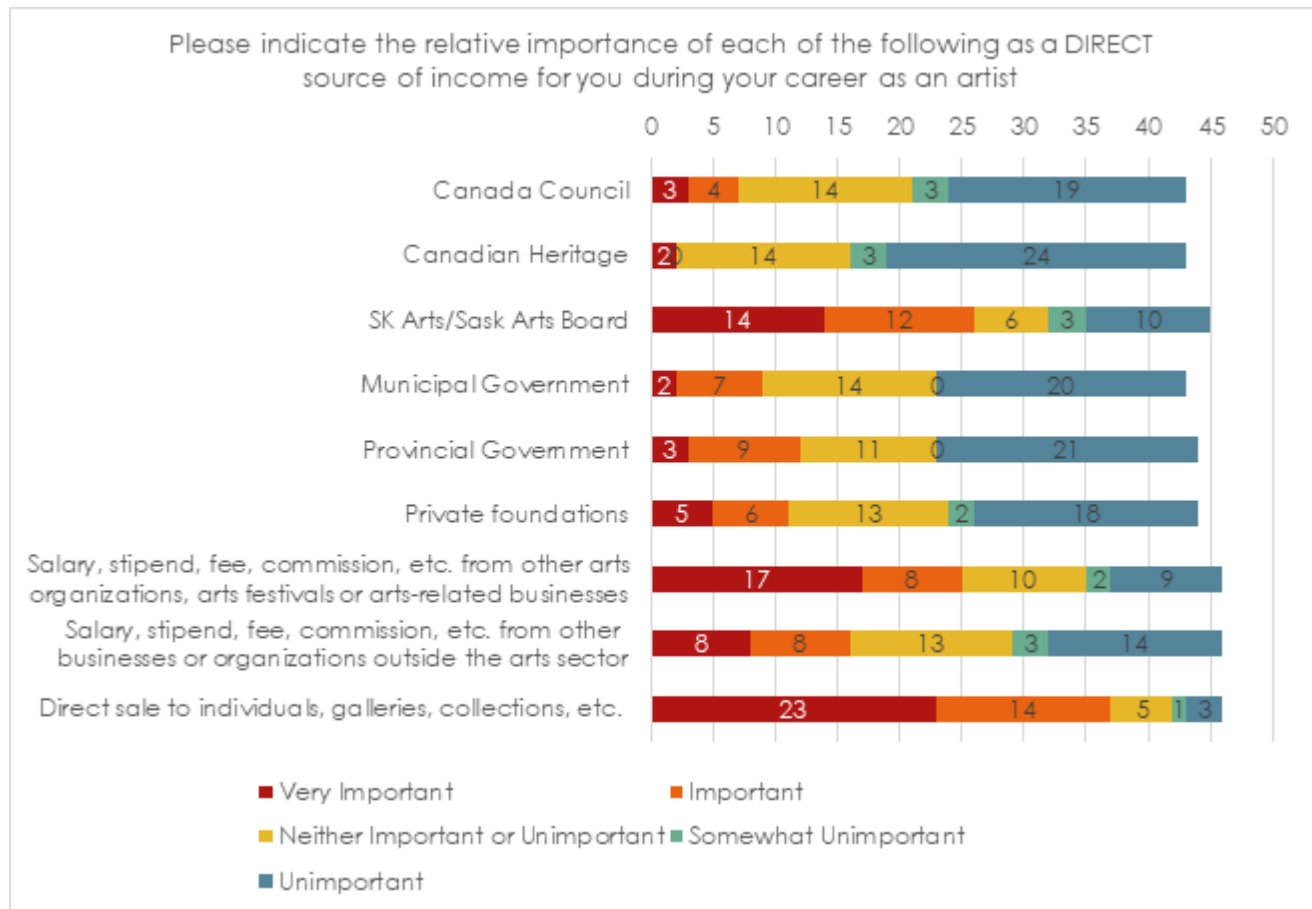


Rural & remote artists were more likely to have received income for their artistic practice, with 92% indicating that they had, compared to only 88% overall.

When asked to indicate the relative importance as sources of income, the most important was SK Arts, which 54% of rural & remote artists indicated are Important or Very Important; 52% indicated a salary or stipend from arts & culture organizations followed by 33% who indicated a salary or stipend from an organization outside of arts & culture.

Canadian Heritage was identified as being unimportant to 56%, Canada Council to 46% and funding from the provincial government was unimportant to 46%.

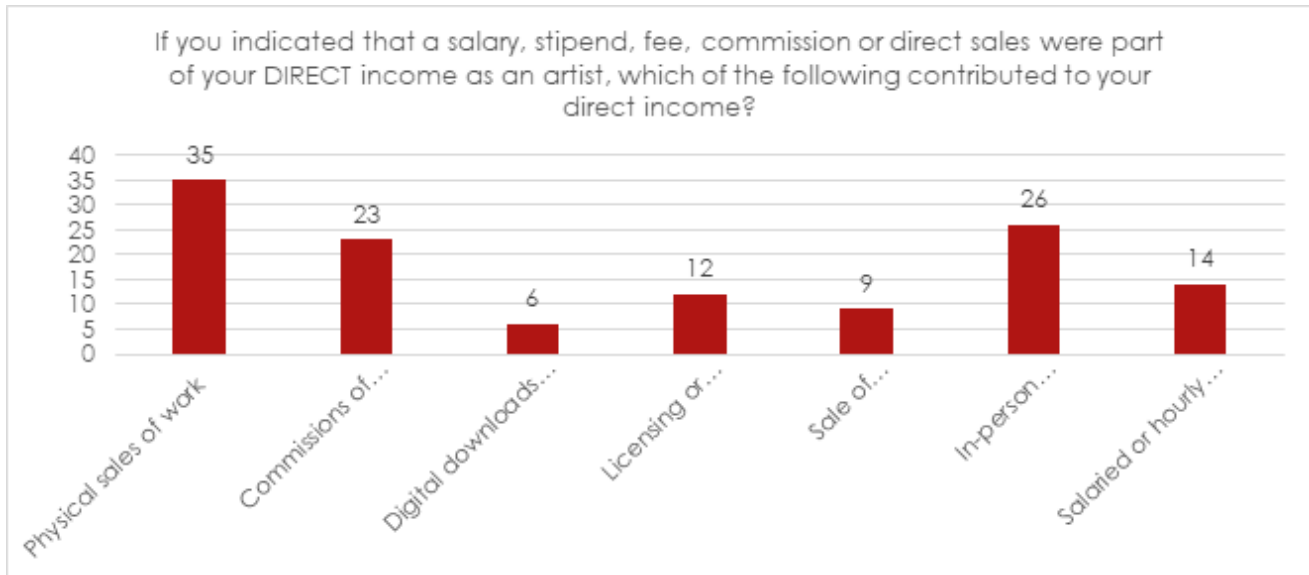
Figure 24 Relative importance of direct sources of income



Of the respondents who indicated that a salary, stipend, fee or direct sales of work were part of their direct sources of income, 58% indicated physical sales of work were part of their direct income. 53% indicated that in-person performance was a major component, with sales or merchandise and digital downloads, both with 17% being the least important source of direct income.

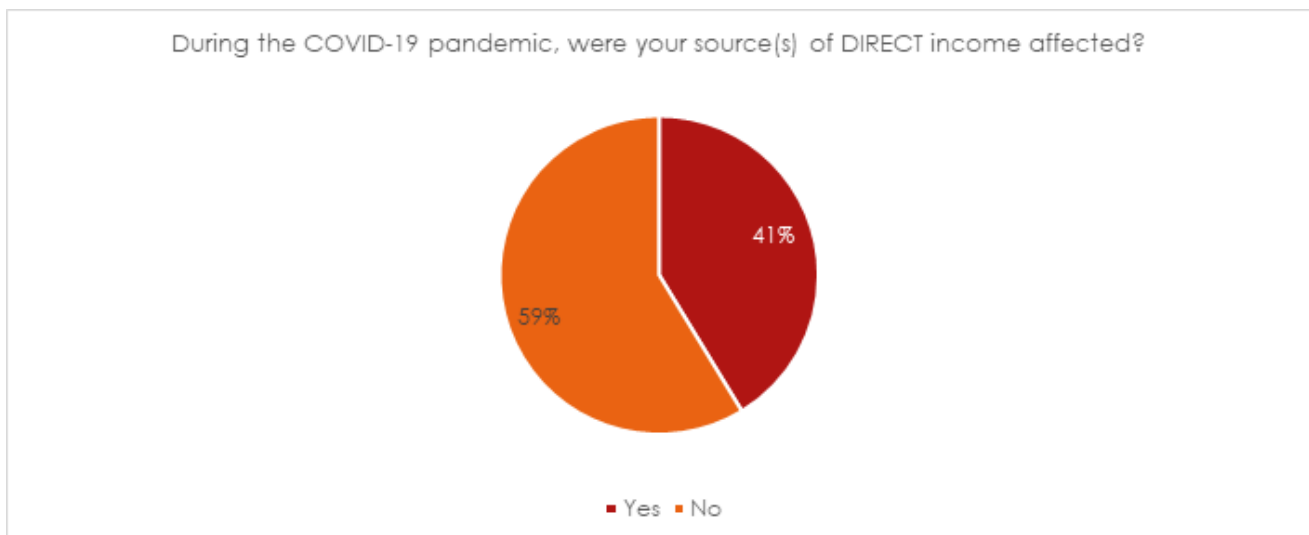
Of those who indicated a salary, stipend or fee or direct sales of work were part of their income, 73% of rural & remote artists indicated physical sales of work were part of their income, compared to 58% overall. 53% indicated in-person performance was a major component (compared to 54% overall, and 12% indicated digital downloads was the least important. Physical sales of work are, demonstrably, more important to the rural & remote respondents than they are to the overall respondent base.

Figure 25 Sources of direct income



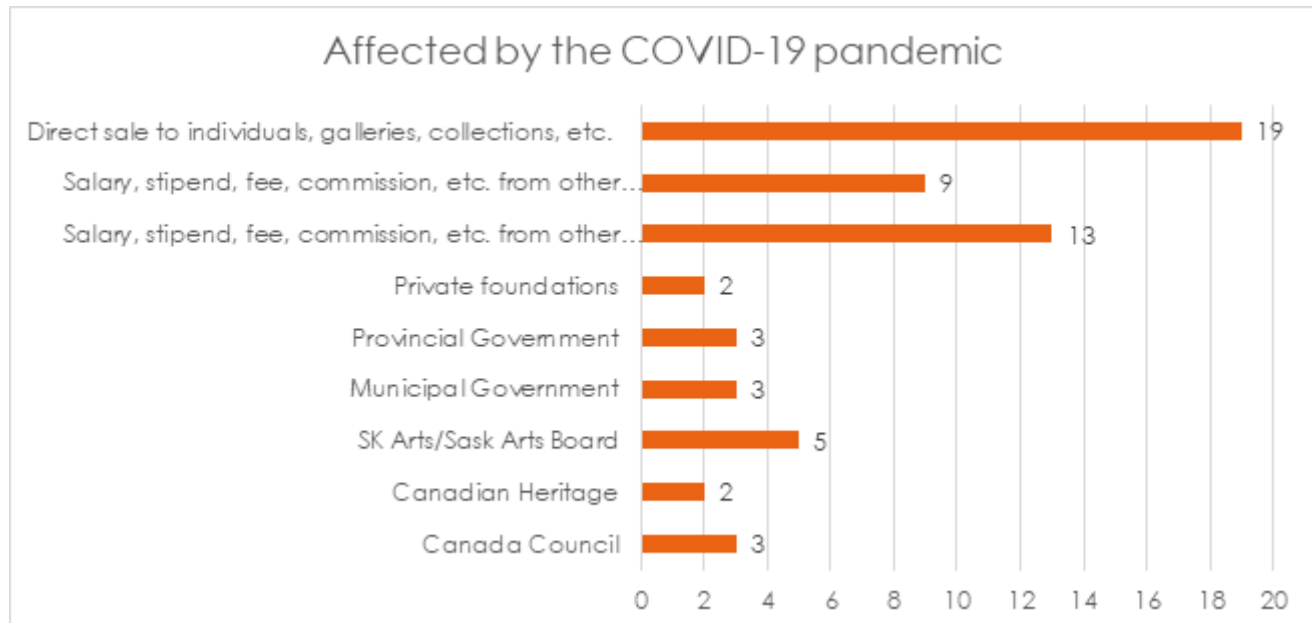
While 51% of overall respondents indicated their direct sources of income were affected by the pandemic, 59% of rural & remote artists indicated that their source of income was not affected.

Figure 26 Impact of pandemic on direct sources of income



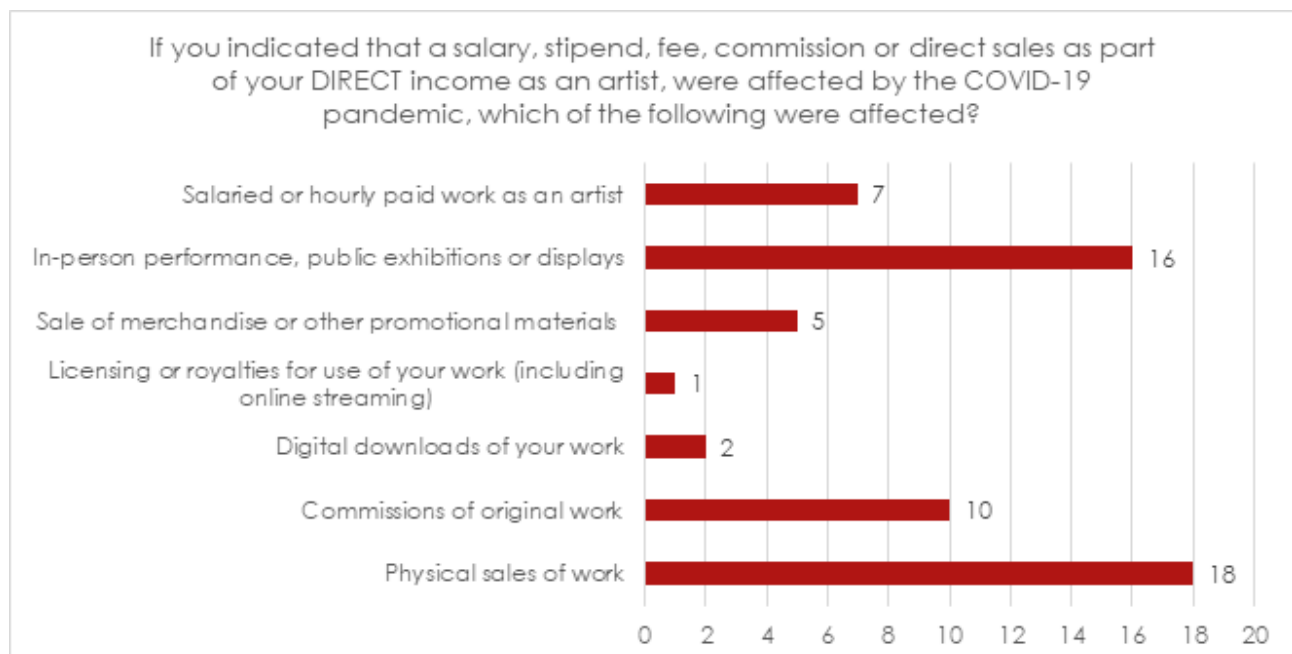
Of those who said yes, 100% of rural & remote artists said direct sales were impacted compared to only 31% of overall respondents; 68% of rural & remote artists indicated their salary, stipend or fees from arts organizations were affected (compared to 32% overall,) and 47% of rural & remote artists indicated their salary, stipend or fees from organizations outside arts and culture were affected (compared to 24% of the overall respondents.)

Figure 27 Sources of income affected by the pandemic



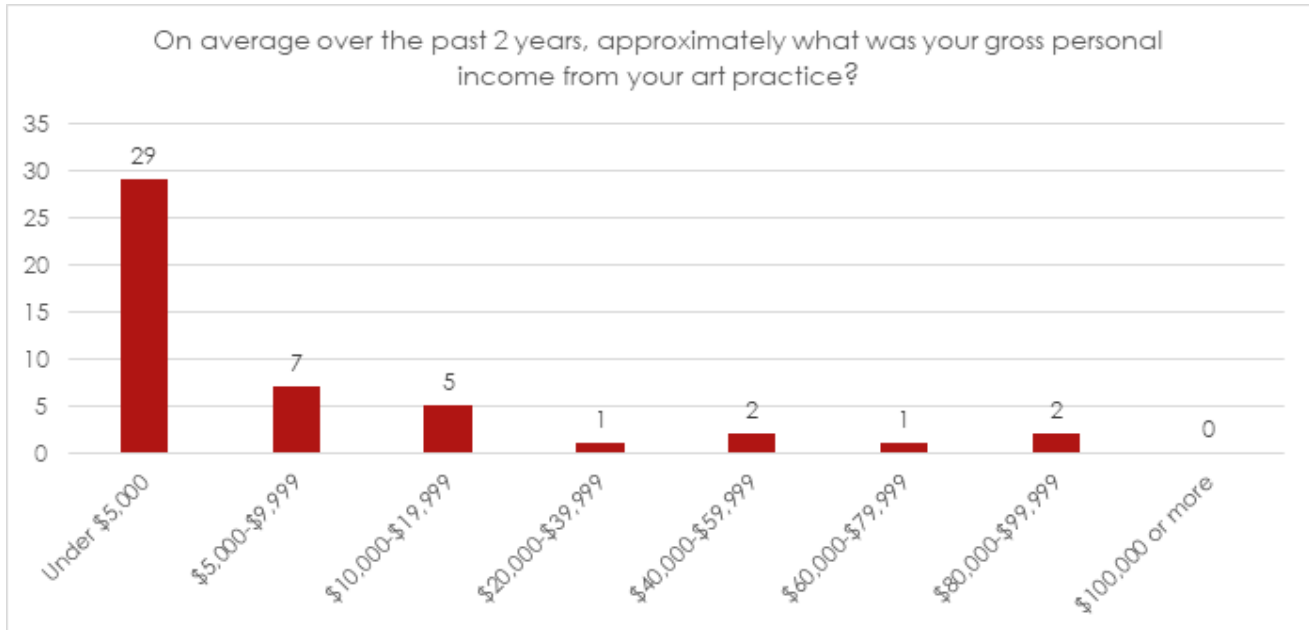
Rural & remote artists who indicated that a salary, stipend, fee or direct sales were impacted also demonstrated that, here as well, physical sales of work were the most important with 95% of respondents indicating they had been impacted (compared to 26% overall,) 84% indicated in-person performance had been affected (compared to 34% overall,) 53% saw an impact on commissions (compared to 15%,) and 37% saw an impact on their salaries (compared to 21%).

Figure 28 Types of direct sales, salaries, stipends and fees that were impacted by COVID-19



Artists were asked how much income they had derived from their creative work in the past two years. In the overall respondent base, 51% indicated they had made less than \$5,000. A higher proportion of rural & remote artists – 62% - indicated that they had made less than \$5,000. Only 13% of rural & remote artists had made more than \$20,000 in the past two years from their creative practice, compared to 18.5% of overall respondents. Rural & remote artists are therefore more likely to have made less money than overall respondents.

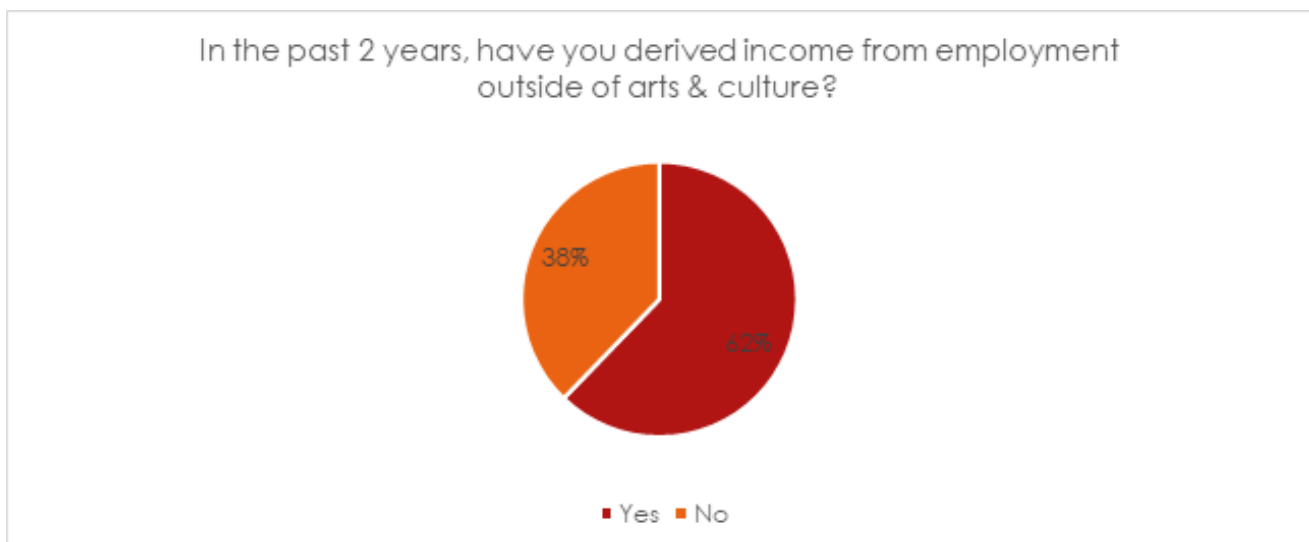
Figure 29 Average income over the past two years derived from professional arts practice



75% of rural & remote artists indicated that 50% or more of their income comes from within Saskatchewan, which is just slightly higher than the 70% of overall respondents.

While 51% of overall respondents indicated they had received income from outside arts & culture, rural & remote artists were more likely to have done so, with 62% indicating they had received income from outside arts & culture.

Figure 30 Employment outside arts & culture

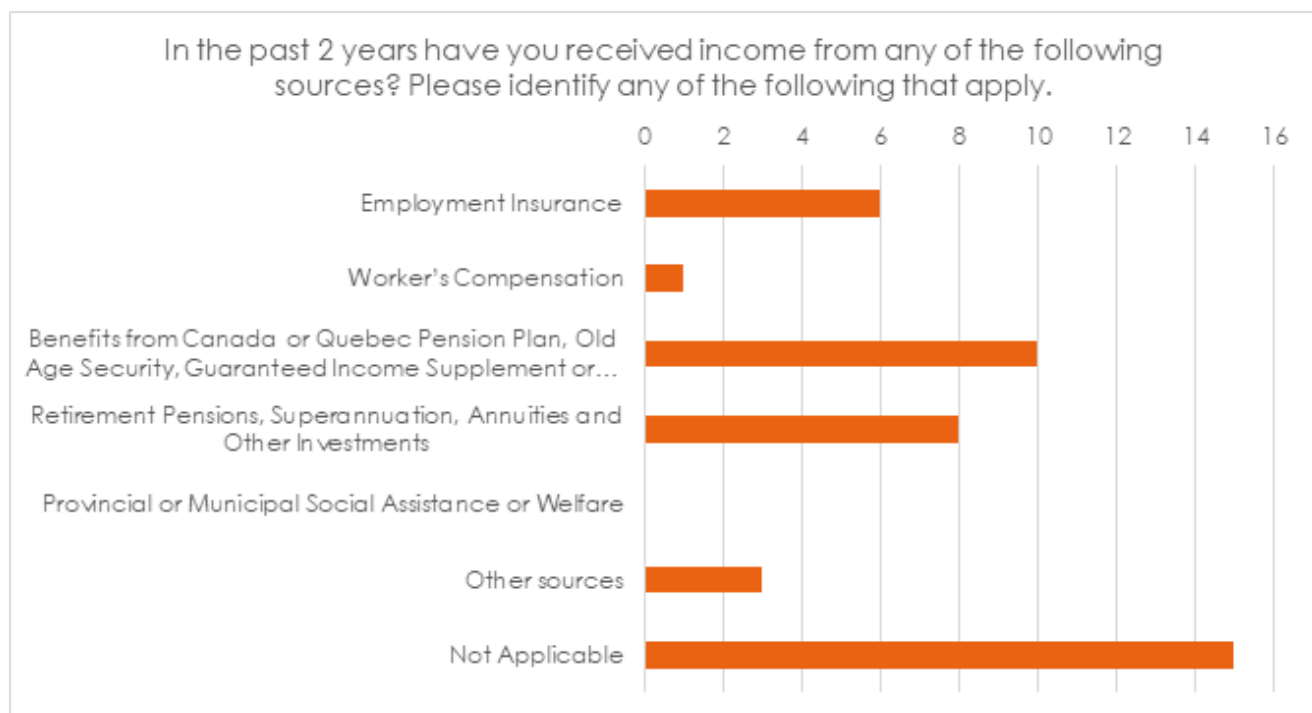


Participants were then asked if they had received any income from a variety of sources. These sources were:

- Employment Insurance
- Worker's Compensation
- Benefits from Canada or Quebec Pension Plan, Old Age Security, Guaranteed Income Supplement or Survivor's Allowance
- Retirement Pensions, Superannuation, Annuities and Other Investments
- Provincial or Municipal Social Assistance or Welfare
- Other sources

The results between the overall survey and the rural & remote respondents were similar but not the same. 23% of rural & remote respondents had received benefits from Canada or Quebec Pension Plan (compared to 22% overall; 19% had received a retirement pension (compared to 23% overall,) 7% of both respondent bases had received income from other sources; 14% of rural & remote artists had received Employment Insurance (compared to 9% overall,) and 2% had received Worker's Compensation (compared to 1% overall.) No rural & remote artist indicated they had received social welfare, compared to 3% overall, and in both bases, 35% indicated this question was not applicable to them.

Figure 31 Other income sources



Artists were asked to estimate their total income, before tax, from all source in 2022. On the whole, rural & remote artists were slightly more likely to make more money. While 18% of overall artists indicated they had made less than \$20,000 a year, onl 16% of rural & remote artists indicated they had made less than \$20,000. 49% of overall artists indicated they had made between \$20,000 and \$59,999 compared to 46% of rural & remote artists. 19% of overall artists indicated they'd made \$60,000 - \$79,999 in 2022, compared to 20% of rural &

remote artists and only 14% of overall artists indicated they'd made more than \$80,000 in 2022, compared to 18% of rural & remote artists, with 7% of rural & remote artists indicating they had made over \$150,000, compared to only 3% of overall artists.

Figure 32 Total income from all sources

