How are Canada's artists doing?

Analysis of a survey of affordability and working conditions in early 2024

Report prepared for the Cultural Human Resources Council
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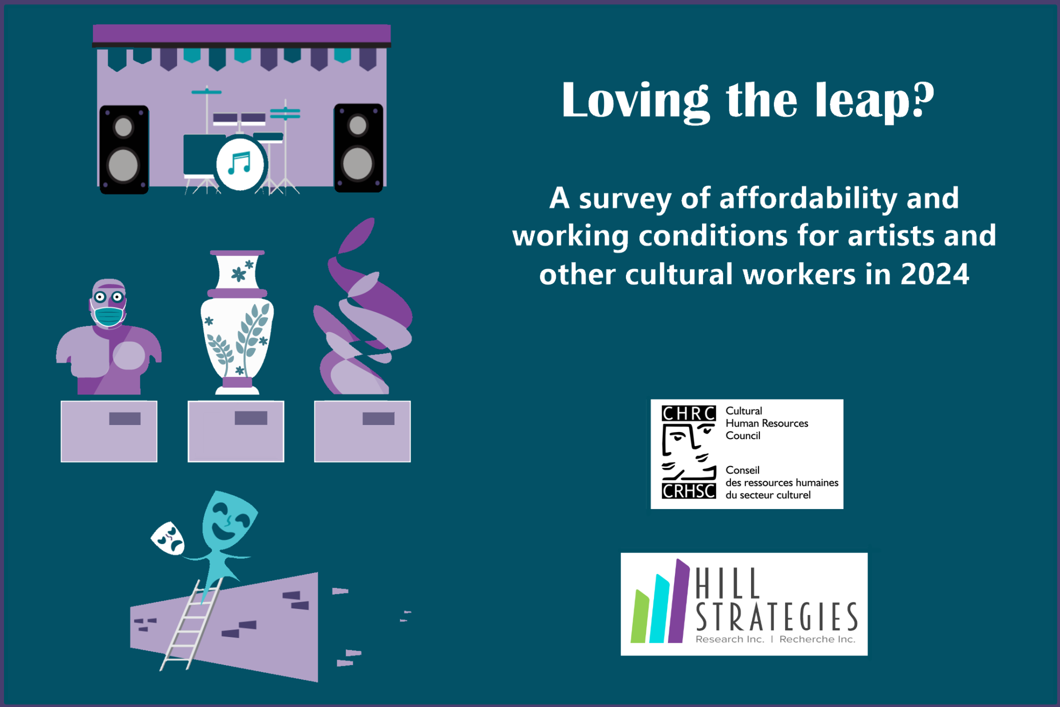

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Executive summary

Human resources are a very important issue in many sectors of Canadian society, and culture is no different. The current environment provides many significant opportunities and challenges for artists and others who work in the arts, culture, and heritage. However, relatively little is known about the state of cultural human resources in Canada, beyond macro-level statistics from the census and other sources, or anecdotal information about specific people working in the sector.

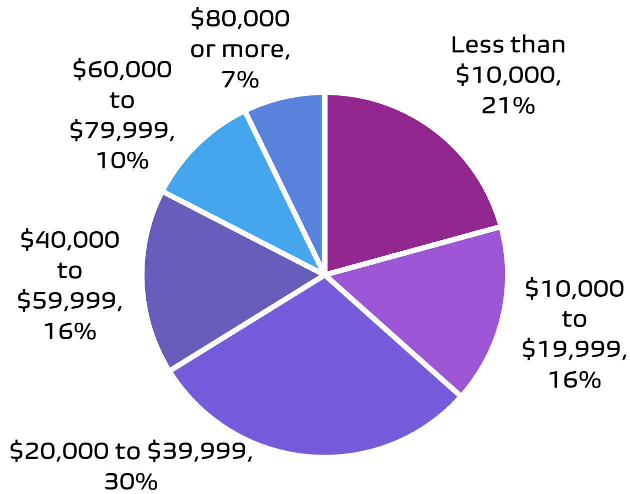
Sensing a need for more information, in early 2024 the Cultural Human Resources Council (CHRC) commissioned Hill Strategies Research to conduct a survey of affordability and working conditions in the careers of artists and other cultural workers. The survey received 1,170 responses, including 688 from artists. This report focuses on responses from artists, who form the core of the cultural sector.

Most artists are self-employed (51%). Self-employed artists appreciate their work flexibility, freedom, control, and sense of purpose. Most responding artists (54%) work from home, while only about 20% of all Canadian workers do the same.

Nearly three-quarters of artists (71%) have more than one job, and many of their second jobs are within the cultural sector. In fact, 51% of responding artists contribute both their artwork and their second-job effort to the sector.

Incomes are low for many artists. One-half of responding artists (51%) have total personal incomes below $40,000. Regarding incomes from cultural sector sources, two-thirds (66%) earned less than $40,000 in 2023, including 21% who earned less than $10,000.

Artists' income from the arts and culture in 2023



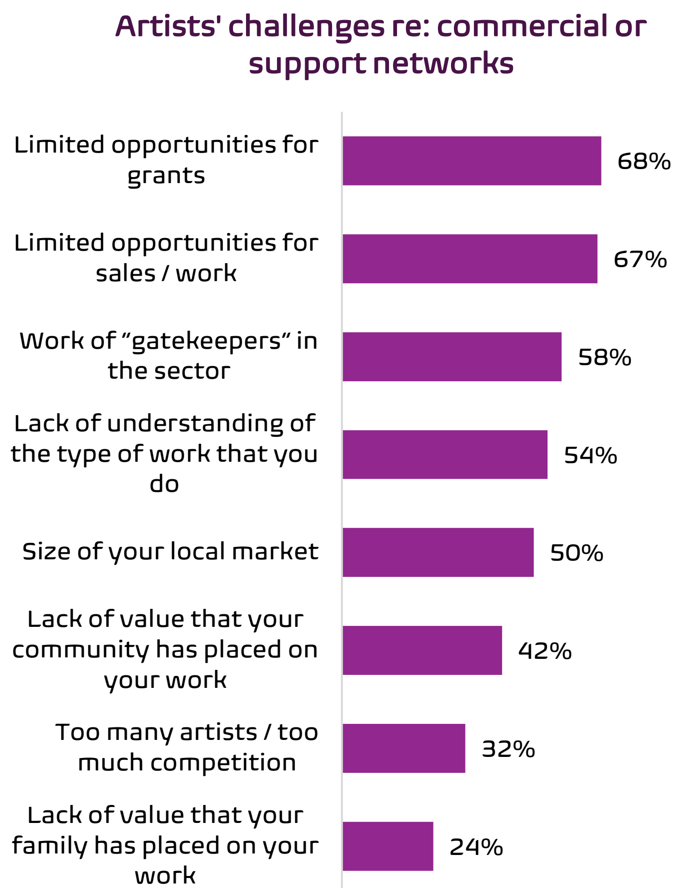
The survey results point to an affordability crisis among artists: financial stress is very common, and 91% of responding artists did *something* in 2023 to try to relieve their financial challenges. The most common actions to try to make ends meet were cutting back on expenses (67%) and drawing down savings or investments (53%).

Only 3 out of every 10 artists are satisfied with the affordability of their dwelling. Given that more than half work from home, this is a particularly troubling statistic.

The full report provides key financial indicators by region and for equity-deserving artists. The analysis suggests that financial challenges are particularly acute for IBPOC artists, artists who are D/deaf and/or disabled, gender diverse and women artists, and younger artists. In contrast, the financial situations of other groups of artists are quite similar to the overall averages: LGBTQ2SIA+ artists, official language minority artists, and artists from different regions of the country.

The survey results indicate that a supportive arts community is vital to success as an artist. Two-thirds of responding artists (67%) indicated that support from other artists or cultural workers has been a significant help in their careers.

Artists face many important challenges related to commercial or support networks for their work. Roughly two-thirds of responding artists selected grants and sales as important challenges. These were followed by gatekeeping and lack of understanding of their work.



Artists were asked to select the **first challenge that they would change** if they had a magic wand. Grants and sales again topped the list:

- Limited opportunities for grants (27%)
- Limited opportunities for sales / work (20%)
- The work of "gatekeepers" in the sector (17%)
- The lack of value that your community has placed on your work (13%)

About three-quarters of responding artists (78%) indicated that they have experienced systemic barriers in their careers. Sexism and ageism are most common, but many artists face a variety of other systemic barriers, including challenges related to class, race, mental ability or disability, physical ability or disability, language, and sexual orientation.

Regarding their mental health, almost as many artists are dissatisfied as satisfied. This finding runs counter to Statistics Canada data for all Canadians: more than twice as many Canadians rate their mental health as very good or excellent than fair or poor.

Despite all the challenges, about one-half of responding artists would choose roughly the same path if they had the chance to start their careers over again. One-third of artists are on the fence, responding "Not sure. Maybe". One in every five artists would not choose the same path again. There is a ray of sunshine in the fact that a large majority of responding artists (71%) are satisfied with their principal occupation in the arts and culture.

How are Canada's artists doing? That's the focus of this report. A separate report will summarize key findings from non-artist cultural workers. Given the differences in incomes and working conditions – such as a much higher self-employment rate among artists – we decided to produce two distinct reports.

Introduction

Human resources are recognized as a very important issue in many sectors of Canadian society. For example, much attention has recently been paid to the shortage of skilled tradespeople and conditions for health care workers. A recent Government of Canada release notes that "nurses are currently facing increased workloads, high rates of burnout, stress, anxiety and depression, and, in some cases, abuse."

Culture is incredibly important to Canadian society, given the substantial personal, health, economic, and social returns from cultural participation and production. Many of the issues faced by nurses and tradespeople are faced by those who work in the arts, culture, and heritage. However, relatively little is known about the state of human resources for artists and other cultural workers in Canada, beyond macro-level statistics that can be gleaned from the census and other sources, or anecdotal information about specific people working in the sector.

This is a critical time in the cultural sector. Many arts, culture, and heritage organizations are facing significant challenges in balancing their books and regaining audiences. What about the individuals who work in the sector?

Recognizing these information gaps, the [Cultural Human Resources Council](#) (CHRC) commissioned [Hill Strategies Research](#) to conduct a survey of affordability and working conditions in the careers of artists and other cultural workers.

The survey was open for three weeks, from February 14 to March 6, 2024, receiving 1,170 responses that were complete enough to retain for analysis, including 883 in English (75% of the total) and 287 in French (25%). The median time to complete the survey was 14 minutes and 49 seconds.

This report focuses on artists, who form the creative core of the cultural sector. Artists represent 60% of the survey respondents (n=688); other cultural workers represent 39% (n=468); and 1% chose not to answer that question (n=14).

The survey, which was intended to complement existing quantitative and qualitative sources, asked Canadian artists important questions, ones that have (for the most part) never been asked in this country.

The mandatory sections of the survey related to **demographic information,** respondents' **work in the arts and culture**, **affordability**, **self-employed workers**, and **employed workers**. There were optional sections related to **secondary employment** and **key opportunities and barriers in people's careers**. Of the 1,170 respondents, 317 people who have second jobs completed the optional section on secondary employment, and 859 completed the optional section on key opportunities and barriers.

For most questions, respondents could choose not to respond. The percentages in this report represent the number of artists responding to each question (which is usually less than 688).

Because the survey sample was not random, no margin of error can be estimated.

Hill Strategies and the Cultural Human Resources Council sincerely thank the artists and other cultural workers who took the time to lend their voice to this ground-breaking survey.

We also thank our partners in the arts, culture, and heritage community who helped spread the word about the survey.

Who responded?

The survey received responses from all 10 provinces and one territory (Yukon). Artists are at least one-half of the respondents in each province and represent two of the five Yukon respondents.

Province / territory	Total responses	Responses from artists
Newfoundland and Labrador	14	9
Prince Edward Island	14	11
Nova Scotia	31	24
New Brunswick	52	34
Quebec	313	162
Ontario	263	139
Manitoba	12	6
Saskatchewan	120	75
Alberta	98	54
British Columbia	217	153
Yukon	5	2
Northwest Territories and Nunavut	0	0
Not stated	31	19
Total	1,170	688

There is no Canada-wide definition of "rural" and "urban" locations. An easy option is to examine the second character of the postal code. If it's a 0, then the person could be considered to live in a rural area. Any other digit denotes an urban area.

The survey received responses from 98 rural residents (9% of all respondents who specified their location) and 1,035 urban residents (91%).

Weighting of the survey responses

The survey responses were found to have a significant under-representation of racialized respondents, a significant over-representation of women respondents, and a significant under-representation of men respondents. In addition, there were very different response rates between the provinces.

Because of this, the responses in the dataset have been weighted to better represent the proportion of all artists in Canada, based on the 2021 census. Weighting helps to ensure accurate representation for racialized respondents, different genders, and people from different regions of the country. Weights were applied for each province, except in the Atlantic and Prairie provinces, where weights were applied regionally.

The results presented in subsequent sections of this report are based on weighted data.

More information about the demographics of responding artists is available at the end of this report.

Artists form the core of the cultural sector. This report analyzes the responses of 688 Canadian artists who completed a recent survey.

Given limited time and financial resources, the report focuses on the nationwide picture, with an overview of select financial indicators by region and for equity-deserving groups. Drill-downs may be possible if funding is available.

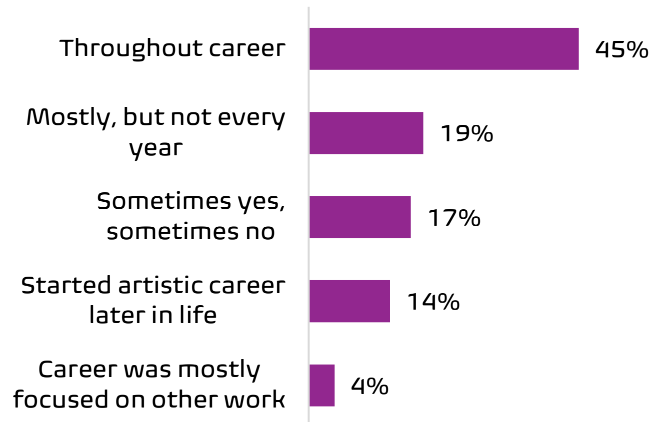
Artists and their careers

There are multiple ways to become an artist and to practice one's art, many of which are not related to income or even time spent on artistic practice. A "significant professional focus in 2023" is how this study differentiates "artists" and "other cultural workers". In the survey, 60% of respondents indicated that being an artist was a significant professional focus for them in 2023.

Varied career trajectories, but second jobs are the norm

Close to one-half of respondents who are currently artists have focused on being an artist throughout their careers (45%). However, slightly more than half have had other career trajectories, including not working as an artist every year (19%), sometimes focusing on artistic work, sometimes not (17%), and starting an artistic career later in life (14%).

How many artists have focused on being an artist throughout their careers?



Many artists contribute to the arts beyond their artwork. Nearly three-quarters of artists (71%) have more than one job, and 72% of artists with second jobs have a second position that is in the cultural sector. In other words, 51% of all responding artists contribute both their artwork and their other work effort to the sector.

A very large percentage of responding artists who work multiple jobs (80%) say that they work more hours in their principal occupation than their secondary job(s).

In the current financial climate, it comes as little surprise that the most common reasons for having a second job are to supplement earnings (84%) and to counter the rising costs of living (65%). That being said, more than one-half of artists (54%) wish to explore another area of interest to them through their second job.

51% of responding artists contribute both their artwork and their other work effort to the cultural sector.

The survey probed the nature of artists' second jobs and found that learning new skills is the aspect with which the highest proportion of artists agree (78%). The survey also found that second jobs are common throughout the careers of artists (selected by 77%).

About two-thirds of responding artists (68%) indicated that they enjoy their second position. About one-half (52%) said that they make much more money in their second position than in their main job. Less than one-half said that their second position is high stress (41%).

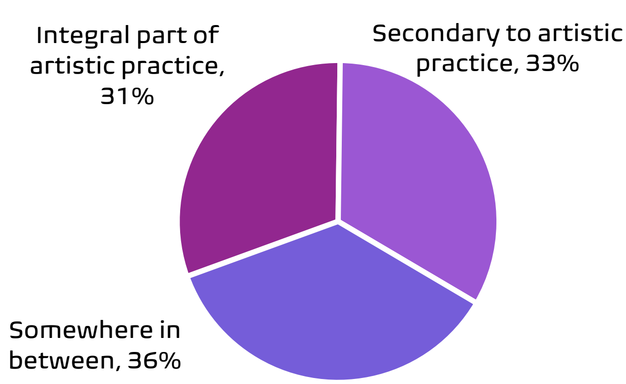
Aspects of artists' second jobs	% agreeing
You have learned new skills in your second position that you have been able to apply to your work in the arts and culture	78%
You have had a second position for most of your career in the arts and culture	77%
Your second position is related to your main work in the arts and culture	71%
You enjoy your second position	68%
Your second position has significant responsibility	65%
The money that you make (e.g., per day or per hour) is much higher than the money that you make in your main work in the arts and culture	52%
Your second position is high stress	41%

For a majority of responding artists (57%), their pre-professional training is directly related to their work. Another 33% indicated that their training is partially related to their work. While it was the least common selection, one in every nine artists (11%) said that their pre-professional training is not related to their work.

Artists, especially those who are self-employed, run a small business focused on their work. However, the survey found that almost half of responding artists (44%) have had no business or career management training at all. Of those who have had such training, roughly two-thirds (63%) have had just a minimal amount.

About two-thirds of responding artists (65%) teach in the arts. Among those who do, there is a nearly even three-way split in terms of how they view their teaching: 31% consider teaching to be an integral part of their artistic practice; 33% consider it

Is teaching an integral part of the artistic practice of Canadian artists?



to be secondary to their artistic practice, and 36% consider it to be somewhere in between those two extremes.

71% of responding artists have more than one job. 65% teach in the arts, but not all of them consider teaching to be a second job.

Most artists are self-employed

One-half of responding artists are self-employed (51%), but many others have a permanent employment position (26%) or a contract employment position (17%). The survey reached a few artists who are retired (2.2%), unemployed (2.0%), a stay-at-home parent or caregiver (1.1%), or a student (0.9%).

Most of the artists who have an employment position work for a not-for-profit organization, whether a registered charity (42%) or not (30%).

Self-employed artists were asked about many aspects of their working lives, specifically whether they perceive certain things to be better for the self-employed or for employed workers. Some elements were almost unanimously perceived to be better in self-employment:

- Flexible hours
- Flexible work locations
- Independence / freedom
- Control / responsibility / decision-making
- Challenge / creativity / success / satisfaction
- Sense of purpose and dignity in your work
- Motivation to get your work done

Work-life balance was perceived to be roughly similar between self-employment and employed positions.

Self-employed artists appreciate their work flexibility, freedom, control, and sense of purpose. But incomes are low.

The other items were almost unanimously perceived to be worse in self-employment:

- Availability of benefits (e.g., dental, prescription, vision, other health, retirement, etc.)
- Stability of earnings
- Stability of work
- Earnings potential
- Stress levels

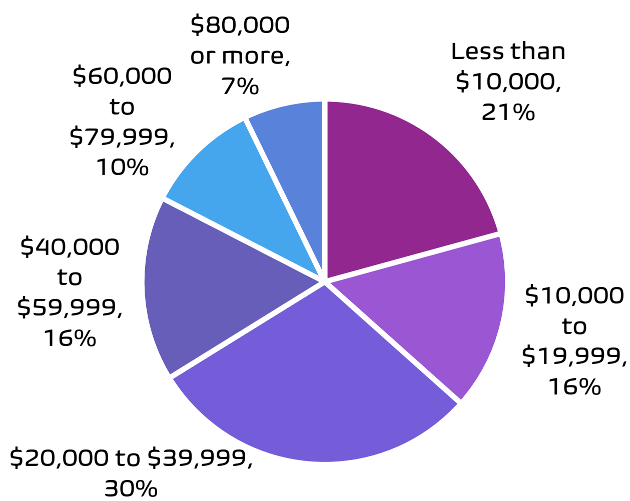
Incomes are low

One-half of all artists (51%) have total personal incomes below $40,000. Within this group, the largest contingent of artists (33%) has incomes between $20,000 and $39,999.

[Hill Strategies' analysis of the 2021 census]() has shown that the median total personal income of artists was $30,200 in 2020. The 2024 survey found a somewhat higher median income level in 2023 (close to $40,000). Given the different methods in the two surveys, this may or may not be a "real" increase.

A large majority of artists (66%) earned less than $40,000 from all their arts and culture sources in 2023, including 21% who earned less than $10,000. Only 7% earned more than $80,000 in the arts and culture. (The question was: "Please provide your best estimate of your gross income from all your arts and culture sources in 2023, after deducting work-related expenses but before subtracting taxes or other government deductions.")

Artists' income from the arts and culture in 2023

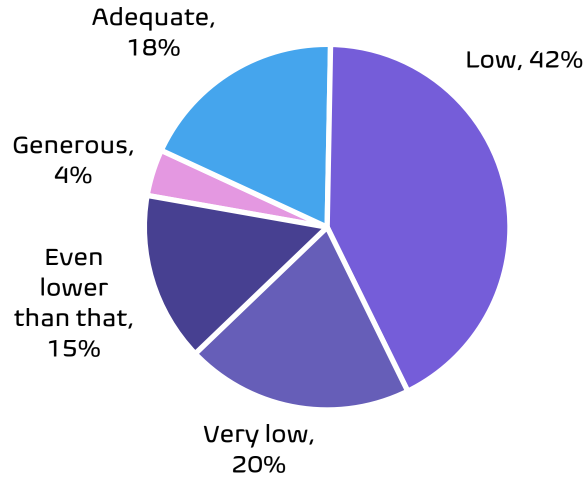


Despite its relatively low level, artistic income is very important for artists. Two-thirds (67%) indicated that their arts and culture income typically represents at least 75% of their total personal income, including 43% who said that it represents all of their income.

77% of artists believe their rate of pay in their principal occupation in the arts and culture to be low. Only 4% believe their rate of pay to be generous, and only 18% said adequate.

For almost 4 in every 10 artists, income from the arts and culture varies by about one-half or more: 12% indicated that their arts and culture income varies by 75% or more, and another 26% indicated that it varies by about one-half to around 75%.

Artists' perceptions of their rate of pay in their principal occupation



Affordability crisis: 91% of artists did *something* in 2023 to try to relieve their financial stress

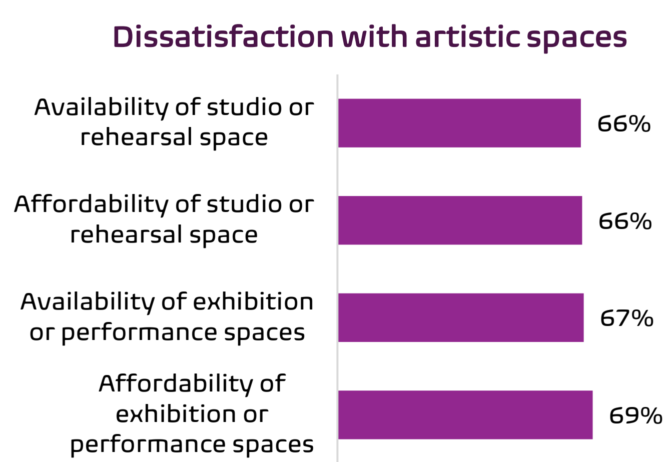
With the typically low incomes of artists, as noted above, many are facing severe affordability challenges. In fact, 7 in 10 indicated that they are financially stressed. This percentage is almost twice as high as a benchmark statistic for all Canadians (70% vs. 37%). Many fewer artists than other Canadians are satisfied with the affordability of their dwelling (30% vs. 69%).

What are artists doing to try to make ends meet? The most common actions are cutting back on expenses (67%), drawing down savings or investments (53%), receiving financial help from within the household (40%), and having another source of income (39%).

91% of responding artists indicated that they did **something** in 2023 to try to relieve their financial stress and make ends meet. That's a strong indication of how challenging their financial situations are.

Indicator / Action to try to make ends meet	Artists	Canadian benchmark
Financially stressed	70%	37% (Survey for Global News)
Satisfied with the affordability of their dwelling	30%	69% (Statistics Canada)
Cut back on expenses to make ends meet	67%	67% (Angus Reid Inst.)
Withdrew money from personal savings or investments	53%	40% (Angus Reid Inst.)
Received financial help from another member of the household	40%	No benchmark
Had another source of income to make ends meet	39%	No benchmark
Took on debt to make ends meet	34%	21% of the lowest income Canadians
Received financial help from other family or friends	32%	26% of the lowest income Canadians
Sold non-financial assets to make ends meet	15%	11% (Angus Reid Inst.)
Skipped or delayed mortgage or rent payments	7%	12% of the lowest income Canadians
Received help from a charity	6%	16% of the lowest income Canadians
None of the above	9%	No benchmark

Some financial challenges relate to artists' homes, while others relate to artistic spaces. The survey found that dissatisfaction abounds regarding "the affordability and availability of artistic space, outside of your home, that you need to do your work". For each of four options, about two-thirds of artists responded either "dissatisfied" or "very dissatisfied", with remarkable consistency.



Regarding their homes, just over one-half of responding artists (54%) indicated that they work from home. This high percentage makes it all the more troubling that only 3 out of every 10 artists are satisfied with the affordability of their dwelling.

54% of responding artists work from home.
Only about 20% of all Canadian workers do the same.

Interestingly, close to one-half of artists who are satisfied with the affordability of their home are (nonetheless) financially stressed. In other words, while dwelling costs are a big component of financial stress, there are other important factors.

Relatively speaking, artists are more satisfied with their work-at-home space(s) than artistic spaces outside the home. There is a fairly even split between satisfaction and dissatisfaction regarding artists' work-at-home spaces, especially regarding the size of their space:

- Size of work-at-home space(s): 40% satisfied, 44% dissatisfied.
- Quality of work-at-home space(s): 44% satisfied, 36% dissatisfied.

A supportive arts community is key

A supportive arts community is vital to success as an artist: two-thirds of responding artists (67%) indicated that support from other artists or cultural workers has been a significant help in their careers. Among nine potentially helpful experiences in artists' careers, this was easily the most commonly selected option. More evidence of the importance of a supportive arts community comes from the fact that finding or strengthening a community of peers was one of the most common professional development needs (selected by 47% of responding artists).

At least one-half of responding artists selected three other types of experiences as a significant help in their careers: a specific gig or job early in their careers (56%), support from family (55%), and a significant grant or award (52%). About one-quarter of artists (27%) feel that they have done it themselves without much help.

A supportive arts community is vital to success as an artist.

Professional development needs

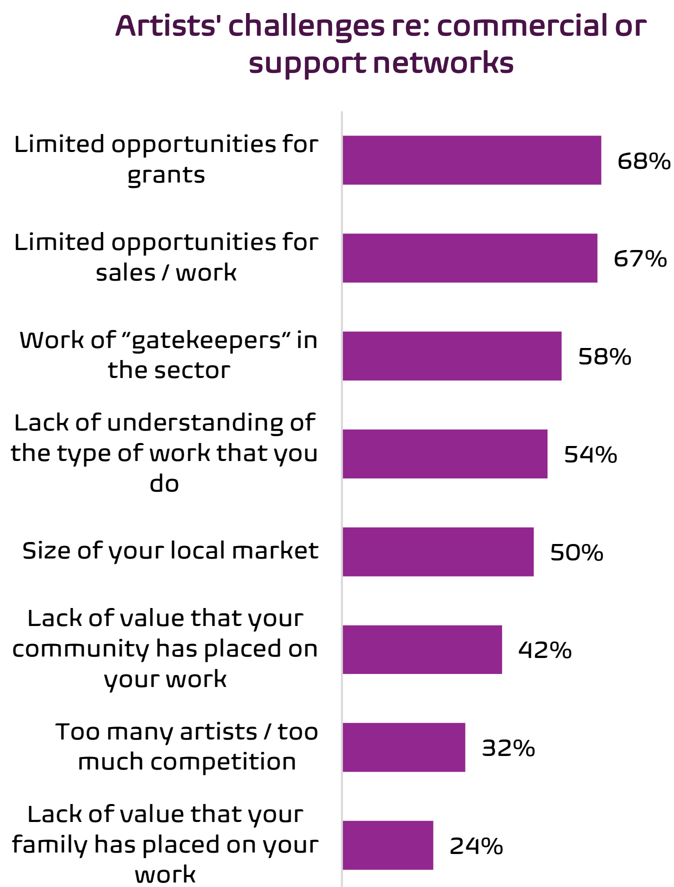
Given the typical financial situation of artists, it is not surprising that financial advice is the top professional development need (selected by 49% of responding artists), followed closely by finding or strengthening a community of peers (47%). Other common professional development needs include help with applying for grants or other funding (41%), learning to use / keeping up with specialized software for business needs (40%), and learning to use / keeping up with specialized software/technology in their field of practice (37%).

Career challenges and systemic barriers

Artists were questioned about important challenges related to commercial or support networks for their work. Two items, grants and sales, were selected by two-thirds of artists, followed by gatekeeping and lack of understanding of their work.

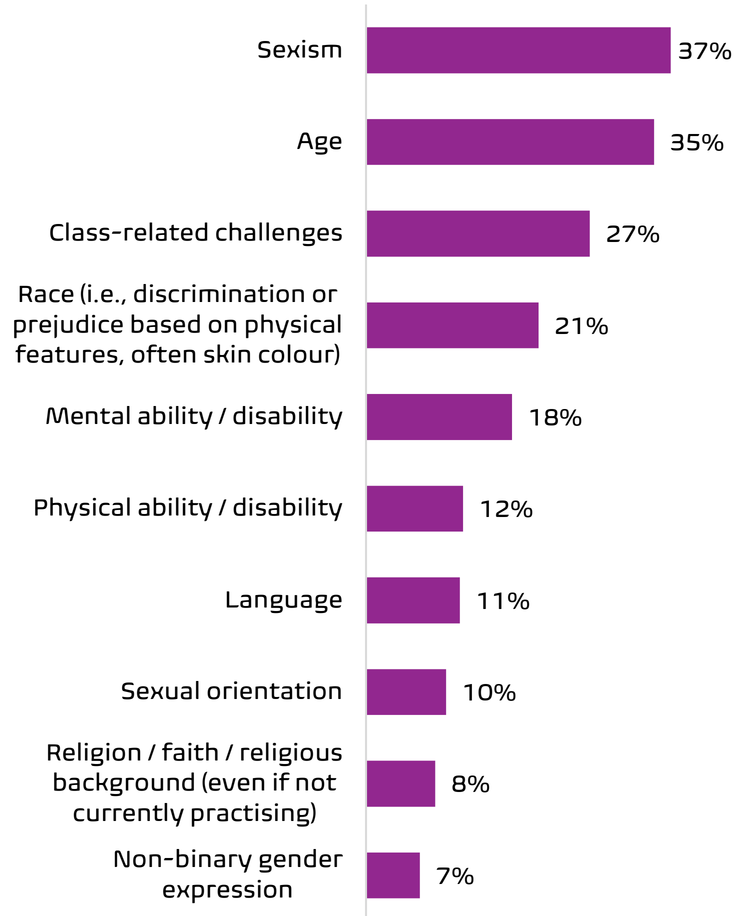
A similar question asked artists to select the **first challenge that they would change** if they had a magic wand. Grants and sales again topped the list:

- Limited opportunities for grants (27%)
- Limited opportunities for sales / work (20%)
- The work of "gatekeepers" in the sector (17%)
- The lack of value that your community has placed on your work (13%)



About three-quarters of responding artists (78%) indicated that they have experienced systemic barriers in their careers. Sexism and ageism are most common, but many artists face a variety of other systemic barriers, including challenges related to class, race, mental ability or disability, physical ability or disability, language, and sexual orientation.

Systemic barriers experienced by artists



Most artists derive satisfaction from their careers, but many struggle with their mental health

Most artists are satisfied with their principal occupation in the arts and culture. However, while 72% expressed satisfaction, only 24% said "very satisfied".

About one-half of artists (47%) are satisfied their overall well-being, compared with 33% who are dissatisfied.

Mental health is an important challenge among artists: almost as many are dissatisfied with their mental health (39%) as are satisfied (44%). For all Canadians, just 20% believe that their mental health is poor or fair, while 47% believe that their mental health is very good or excellent.

The risk of attrition appears to be quite high among artists. While most artists did not seriously consider leaving the arts sector in 2023 (35% said "not at all" and 37%

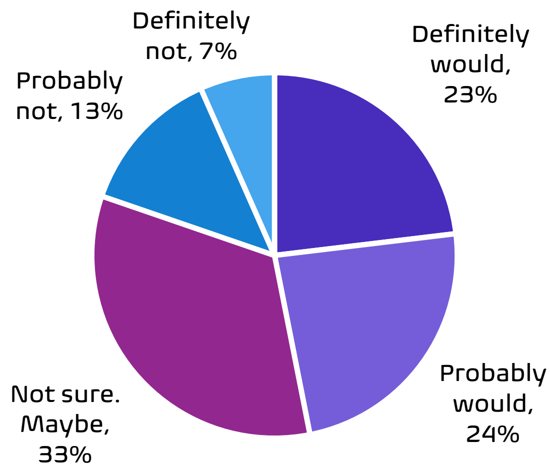
Regarding their mental health, almost as many artists are dissatisfied as satisfied. This finding runs counter to the statistics for all Canadians: more than twice as many Canadians rate their mental health as very good or excellent than fair or poor.

said "a bit"), a substantial minority did either leave (2%) or very seriously considered leaving the sector (26%).

At the end of the survey, artists were asked: "If you had the chance to start your career over again, would you choose roughly the same path in the arts and culture?"

Despite all the challenges, about one-half of responding artists would choose roughly the same path if they had the chance to start their careers over again: 23% definitely would and another 24% probably would. One-third of artists are on the fence, responding "Not sure. Maybe". One in every five artists would not choose the same path again (13% probably not and 7% definitely not).

Career re-do: Would artists choose the same path?



Equity among artists?

This section examines some key financial indicators from the survey to see if there are substantial differences for artists from equity-deserving groups, as well as between regions of the country. Because of the relatively low number of respondents in certain groups, we have had to combine responses into larger categories. This less-than-ideal compromise has been made for:

- Indigenous Peoples, whose responses are combined with racialized artists into an IBPOC artists category (102 respondents).
- Gender diverse respondents (n=62), which is a combined grouping for the smaller number of respondents who indicated that they are: non-binary / gender-fluid / gender non-conforming; transgender; agender; and/or two-spirit.
- Respondents who are D/deaf or hard of hearing, whose responses are combined with people who are disabled into a larger D/deaf and/or disabled category (154 respondents).
- Individual provinces: responses are examined by region for the Atlantic and Prairie provinces (78 and 135 respondents, respectively). The 2 responses from Yukon artists have been combined with responses from British Columbia (155 respondents in total).

IBPOC artists

The playing field in the arts appears to be tilted away from Indigenous and racialized artists, who are more likely to have arts incomes below $40,000 (72% of IBPOC artists vs. 66% of white artists) and total personal incomes below $60,000 (81% of IBPOC artists vs. 74% of white artists).

As a result, Indigenous and racialized artists are much more likely to be financially stressed (85% of IBPOC artists vs. 64% of white artists). In addition, IBPOC artists are much less likely to be satisfied with the affordability of their dwelling (18% of IBPOC artists vs. 34% of white artists).

Over two-thirds of IBPOC artists (69%) believe that they have faced systemic barriers due to their race during their careers. In addition, IBPOC artists are more likely than white artists to believe that they have faced a variety of other systemic barriers, including class-related challenges (42% vs. 20%), mental ability or disability (25% vs. 15%), religion, faith, or religious background (21% vs. 4%), and sexism (42% vs. 35%).

Artists who are D/deaf and/or disabled

Similar to the situation for IBPOC artists, financial challenges are particularly acute for artists who are D/deaf and/or disabled. These artists are more likely than artists who are neither D/deaf nor disabled to have arts incomes below $40,000 (77% of artists who are D/deaf and/or disabled vs. 65% of artists who are neither D/deaf nor disabled) and total personal incomes below $60,000 (79% of artists who are D/deaf and/or disabled vs. 75% of artists who are neither D/deaf nor disabled).

Consequently, artists who are D/deaf and/or disabled are much more likely to be financially stressed (78% of artists who are D/deaf and/or disabled vs. 67% of artists who are neither D/deaf nor disabled). In addition, artists who are D/deaf and/or disabled are less likely to be satisfied with the affordability of their dwelling (27% of artists who are D/deaf and/or disabled vs. 31% of artists who are neither D/deaf nor disabled).

Gender

The survey found that gender diverse artists are less likely than women artists to be financially successful, who in turn are less likely than men artists to be financially successful (recognizing that financial success is moderate for many artists):

- 77% of gender diverse artists have arts incomes below $40,000, compared with 67% of women artists and 65% of men artists.
- 86% of gender diverse artists and 79% of women artists have total personal incomes below $60,000, compared with 70% of men artists.

- 90% of gender diverse artists are financially stressed, compared with 70% of women artists and 66% of men artists.

Dwelling affordability is uncommon in all three groups: just 25% of gender diverse artists, 34% of women artists, and 27% of men artists are satisfied with the affordability of their dwelling.

Age

The survey results indicate that, broadly speaking, younger artists face the toughest financial situations: 88% of responding artists under 30 years of age have arts incomes below $40,000, compared with the average of 66% of all artists. Interestingly, many older artists also have low arts incomes: 75% of artists between 60 and 69 and 76% of those who are 70 or older have arts incomes below $40,000.

Regarding their total incomes, 95% of responding artists under 30 years of age have personal incomes below $60,000, compared with 75% of all artists. Older artists are least likely to have personal incomes under $60,000: this is the case for 71% of artists between 60 and 69 and 64% of artists who are 70 or older.

Financial stress decreases with age: 88% of artists under 30 years of age are financially stressed, as are 83% of artists in their 30s, 75% of artists in their 40s, 65% of artists in their 50s, 42% of artists in their 60s, and 28% of artists who are 70 years of age or more. The average for all artists is 70%.

One big reason why financial stress decreases with age is that dwelling affordability *increases* with age: 21% of artists under 30 years of age believe that their dwelling is affordable, as do 21% of artists in their 30s, 23% of artists in their 40s, 36% of artists in their 50s, 44% of artists in their 60s, and 66% of artists who are 70 years of age or more. The average for all artists is 30%.

LGBTQ2SIA+ artists

There are relatively small (but consistent) differences in the statistical findings regarding LGBTQ2SIA+ and non-LGBTQ2SIA+ artists:

- 70% of LGBTQ2SIA+ artists have arts incomes below $40,000, compared with 67% of non-LGBTQ2SIA+ artists.
- 78% of LGBTQ2SIA+ artists have total personal incomes below $60,000, compared with 75% of non-LGBTQ2SIA+ artists.
- 72% of LGBTQ2SIA+ artists are financially stressed, compared with 69% of non-LGBTQ2SIA+ artists.
- 26% of LGBTQ2SIA+ artists are satisfied with the affordability of their dwelling, compared with 32% of non-LGBTQ2SIA+ artists.

Official language minority artists

Anglophone artists in Quebec and Francophone artists outside of Quebec represent 10% of the artists who responded to the survey. Their financial situations tend to be similar to those of majority-language artists:

- 66% of minority-language artists have arts incomes below $40,000, compared with 68% of majority-language artists.
- 75% of minority-language artists have total personal incomes below $60,000, compared with 76% of majority-language artists.
- 66% of minority-language artists are financially stressed, compared with 70% of majority-language artists.

Dwelling affordability is the only key indicator with a substantial difference between official language groups: only 18% of minority-language artists are satisfied with the affordability of their dwelling, compared with 32% of majority-language artists.

Region

The survey results suggest that there are more similarities than differences in the situations of artists across the country. More than 60% of artists in all regions have arts incomes below $40,000 (Atlantic: 61%, Quebec: 69%, Ontario: 70%, Prairies: 65%, B.C.: 64%, nationwide average: 66%). Similarly, roughly three-quarters of artists in all regions have total personal incomes below $60,000 (Atlantic: 77%, Quebec: 76%, Ontario: 78%, Prairies: 73%, B.C.: 70%, nationwide average: 75%).

A majority of artists in all regions suffer from financial stress. Artists in Quebec are least likely to be financially stressed (53%), compared with 62% of Prairie artists, 64% of Atlantic artists, 75% of B.C. artists, and 76% of Ontario artists. The Canada-wide average is 70%.

Dwelling affordability is uncommon in all regions: 41% of Prairie artists are satisfied with the affordability of their dwelling, compared with 32% of Quebec artists, 31% of Atlantic artists, 29% of B.C. artists, and 28% of Ontario artists. The nationwide average is 30%.

Demographics of responding artists

** Please note that these statistics should not be taken as representative of all artists in Canada, just those responding to the survey.*

The survey received responses from artists in all age ranges:

- 18 to 29: 10% of responding artists
- 30 to 39: 30%
- 40 to 49: 24%
- 50 to 59: 15%
- 60 to 69: 16%
- 70 or older: 6%

Thanks to the broad coverage by age, the survey received responses from artists at all stages of their careers. Some artists have been in the sector for 1 year (the minimum that could be entered), while one responding artist has 70 years of experience. The typical length of work in the sector is 17 years, and 20 years was the most common entry.

The responses were weighted to census data to ensure appropriate representation from both women (48% of responding artists, after weighting) and men (46%). Weighting was not applied to gender diverse respondents, because no overarching statistics exist for gender diversity among artists.

The survey found that 9% of artists are gender diverse, which is a summary description of four options presented in the survey:

- Non-binary / gender-fluid / gender non-conforming: 8% of responding artists
- Transgender: 1.4%
- Agender: 1.3%
- Two-spirit: 0.5%

Many artists selected multiple gender identities, and with various combinations.

The survey was also weighted to ensure appropriate representation from Indigenous Peoples (4% of responding artists, after weighting) and racialized respondents (20%). Weighting was not applied to other options in the survey, because no overarching statistics exist for them:

- LGBTQ2SIA+: 25% of responding artists
- Having a disability: 20%
- Deaf or hard of hearing: 3%

The proportion of respondents from official language minority communities (10%) is very similar to census data on artists (11%). As such, weighting was not applied to this characteristic.

After the weights were applied, 41% of artists selected none of the above descriptions (i.e., Indigenous, racialized, LGBTQ2SIA+, having a disability, Deaf or hard of hearing, or official language minority).

The survey received responses from people working in a wide range of arts and culture disciplines (first table below) and other areas of the arts and culture (second table). Common artistic areas such as the visual arts, theatre, music, and writing are well-represented.

Disciplines	Artists
Visual arts (other than crafts or photography)	39%
Theatre	27%
Music (including sound recording)	24%
Writing / publishing	21%
Dance	15%
Audiovisual / film arts	15%
Crafts	11%
Photography	11%
Design	10%
Museums / archives / other heritage activities	9%
Opera	4%
Circus	2%
Libraries	2%
Architecture	2%

Arts administration is a very common area in which respondents work, possibly as a first job, possibly a second one. (We didn't ask that specifically.)

Other areas of the arts & culture	Artists
Administration or management in the arts and culture	42%
Education in the arts and culture	31%
Planning and/or research in the arts and culture	20%
Associations or unions in the arts and culture	11%
Technical work / cultural production	10%
Pre-professional training in the arts and culture	7%