

2019 annual
artist survey



artist|TRUST
SUPPORTING ART AT ITS SOURCE

2019 Annual Artist Survey Report

Introduction

During the summer of 2019, 1,283 artists from across Washington State participated in the Artist Trust Annual Survey. The results of this annual survey allow us to better understand the artists we serve and share information from responding artists with other artist-serving organizations. With greater knowledge about the needs of artists around the state, we can all work to provide better support and further elevate the voices of Washington State's artists. Survey findings by region, as well as the raw data, are available by contacting Artist Trust.

Artists who took the 2019 Annual Artist Survey indicated the major challenges in their careers are marketing, building new audiences for their work and finding financial stability. With 2/3 of responding artists working out of their homes or home studios, they shared perspectives on accessing space and space affordability in Washington State. Throughout the survey, open-ended questions provided space for further explanation, revealing many artists are looking for more support for their work, as well as community. This year, a number of new topics also emerged, including concerns about the climate, LGBTQ and gender equality, and access to continuing education.

The key takeaways from the 2019 Annual Artist Survey are:

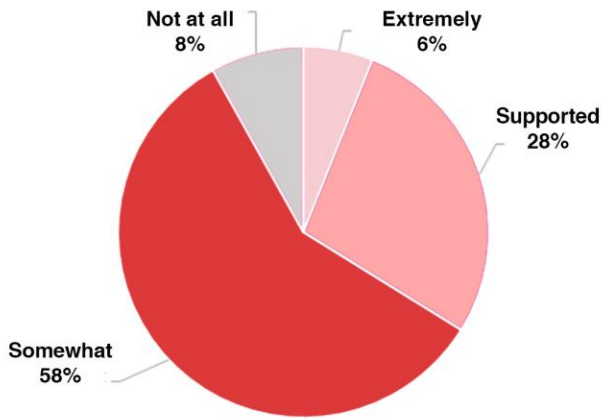
- **Arts funding, affordable health insurance, and affordable housing** ranked highest among Washington State artists when asked about local/city/state/federal issues they're concerned about.
- **67%** of responding artists **work out of their home**.
- Within the open-ended questions concerns about **climate change, aging as an artist, and the importance of community** emerged.
- In 2019, **31%** of respondents report **making at least half of their annual income from their art practice and related activities**, while **60%** reported that **less than half** of their income comes from their art practice.
- **87%** of responding artists report that they **vote** when asked how they engage politically, compared to the national voting average of **61%**, according to the United States Census Bureau.
- When it comes to **accessing space to make/practice** their art, **57%** of artists reported that space is not affordable where they live.
- **67%** of respondents living in **urban** areas feel **racial equity in the arts is important where they live**, compared to only **40%** in **suburban and rural** areas.
- When asked **how they engage politically, voting, donating time and money, and volunteering**, ranked highest among Washington State artists.
- **28%** of responding artists feel **artists are supported where they live**, with another **58%** indicating that artists are only **somewhat** supported where they live.

About Artist Trust

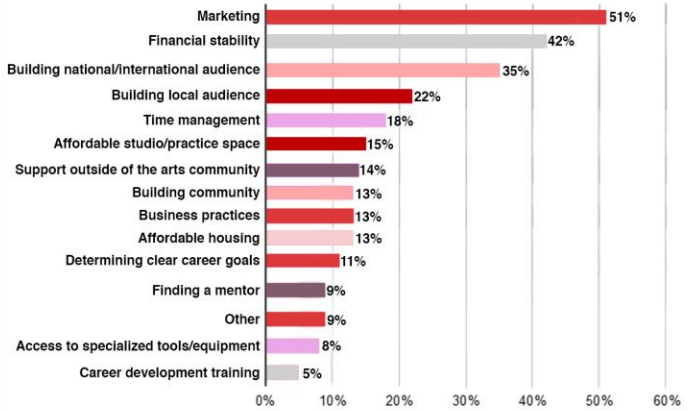
Artist Trust is a nonprofit dedicated to helping Washington State artists of all disciplines thrive. Founded in 1986, AT was formed by a group of artists and arts lovers who came together to create support for art at its source: the artist. Since then, Artist Trust has invested over \$11 million in Washington State artists through funding, trainings, and resources and has provided programs that meet the changing needs of artists. Artist Trust approaches our work through a lens of racial equity and helps artists establish and maintain careers through direct support, connections, and advocacy. Learn more at artisttrust.org.

Survey Findings and Data

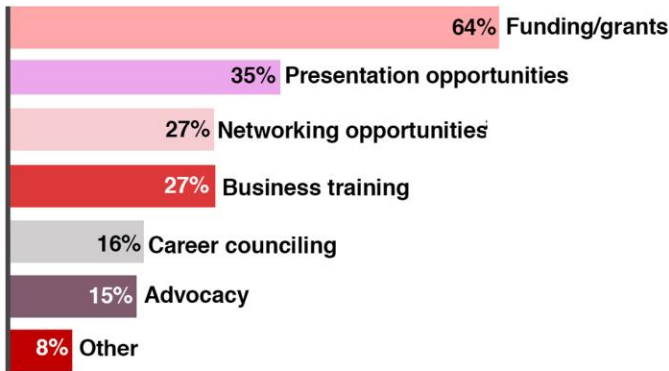
How supported and valued are artists where you live?



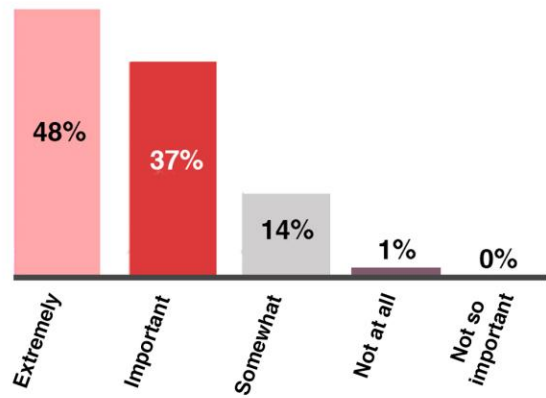
What are the major challenges you face in your practice? Select your top three.*



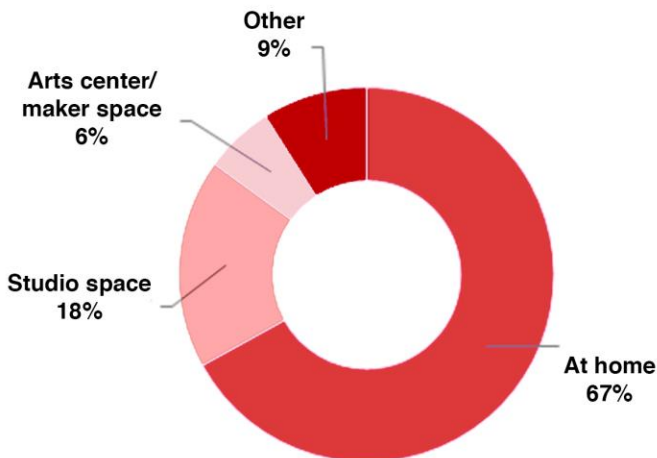
Please select two services you would like to see from artist supporting organizations across Washington State.*



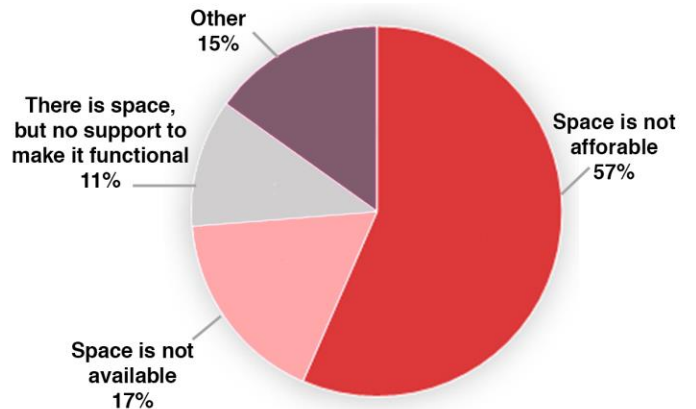
How important is building community/connecting with other artists to your art practice?



Where do you make/practice your art?

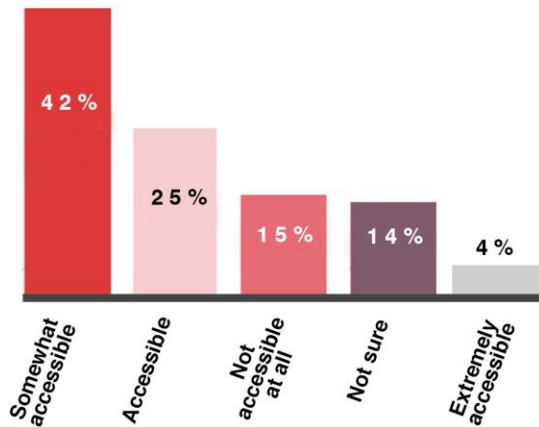


What is the biggest barrier for artists in your community when it comes to accessing space to make/practice their artwork?

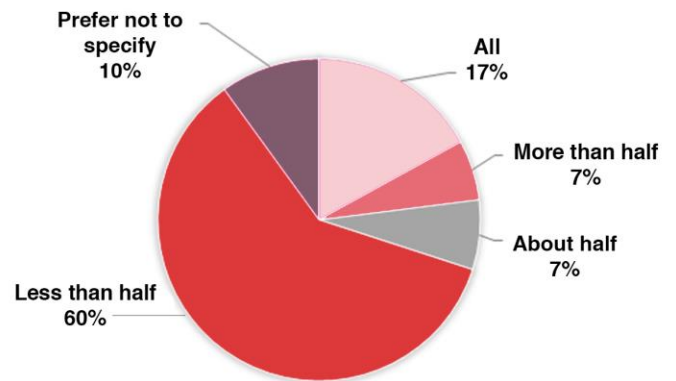


* denotes questions that were non-exclusive, making the total percentage greater than 100

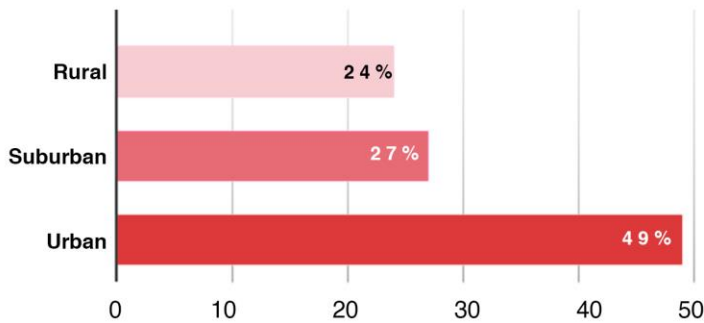
How accessible are artist support services in the town/city where you live?



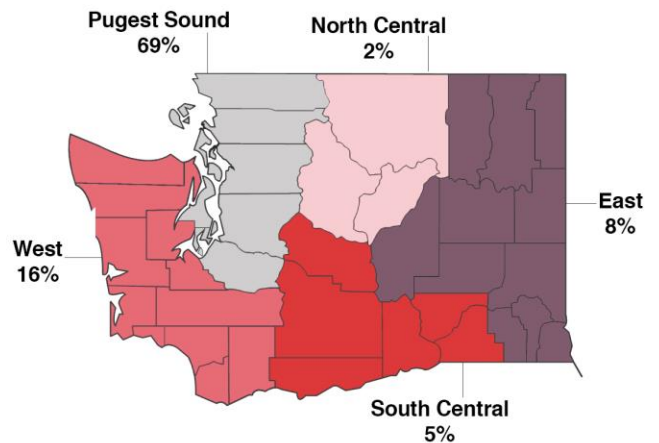
How much of your annual income comes from your art practice? This includes income from your art and related grants, teaching, and activities.



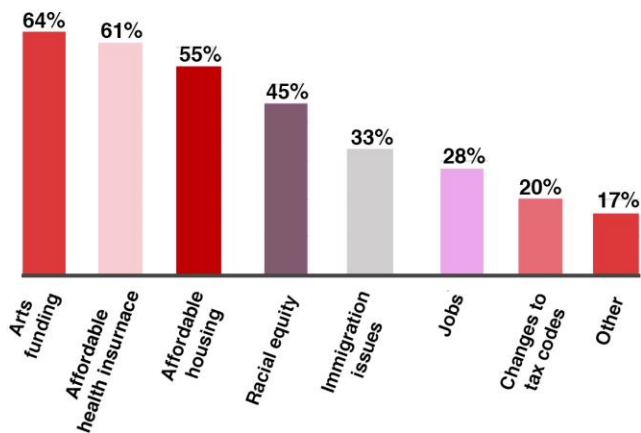
Do you live in a rural, suburban, or urban area?



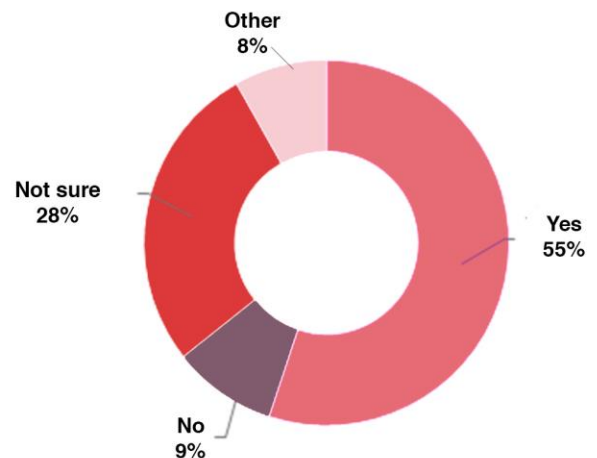
What Washington State county do you live in? (this is broken into AT designated regions in the chart below)



What local/city/state/federal issues are you most concerned about?*

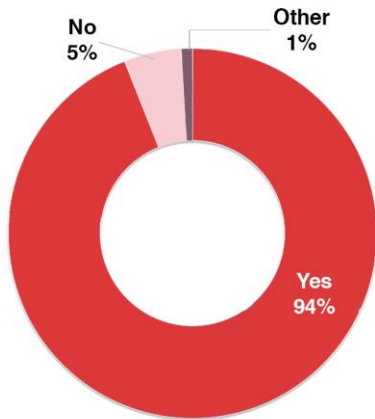


Is racial equity in the arts important where you live?

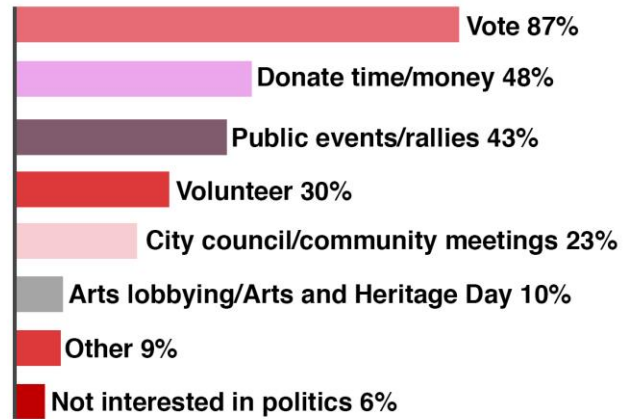


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Are you registered to vote in Washington State?



How do you engage politically?*



Demographic Information

In 2019, all questions regarding demographic information were optional. We use the demographic information collected to better understand the communities we serve and inform our programs across Washington State.

What is your artistic discipline? *

	Visual	Literary	Craft	Multi-disciplinary	Cross-disciplinary	Other	Music	Theater	Media	Dance	Social practice
2019	67%	21%	19%	15%	11%	5%	8%	8%	13%	4%	5%
2018	61%	19%	18%	13%	10%	8%	10%	8%	9%	6%	5%
2017	58%	20%	18%	12%	11%	11%	10%	9%	9%	4%	4%
2016	61%	19%	21%	12%	12%	n/a	10%	16%	10%	5%	4%

What is your age?

	18 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 59	60 to 64	65 to 74	75 to 84	85 or older	Decline to state
2019	3%	15%	18%	18%	12%	12%	15%	4%	1%	2%
2018	3%	15%	18%	18%	11%	13%	18%	3%	1%	1%
2017	3%	14%	18%	18%	12%	14%	18%	3%	1%	1%
2016	4%	16%	16%	19%	12%	12%	17%	4%	1%	1%

What is your gender?

	Male	Female	Self-Identify	Decline to state
2019	24%	73%	3%	n/a
2018	26%	71%	3%	n/a
2017	27%	70%	2%	2%
2016	26%	71%	2%	1%

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How do you define your race or ethnicity? *

	Alaskan Native	Asian/ Asian American	Biracial/ Multiracial	Black/ African/ African American	Hispanic /Latinx	Middle Eastern	Native American	Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	South Asian	White/ European	Prefer not to specify	Self-Identify
2019	1%	6%	4%	4%	5%	1%	4%	1%	0%	76%	6%	4%
2018	1%	7%	4%	5%	5%	1%	4%	1%	1%	76%	5%	5%
2017	0%	5%	4%	3%	4%	1%	4%	0%	1%	80%	5%	4%
2016	0%	6%	4%	3%	4%	1%	4%	1%	1%	79%	6%	4%

Background and Methodology

In summer 2015, Artist Trust launched a preliminary survey to explore artists’ needs. This survey proved instrumental to building responsive support mechanisms for artists, and in 2016 the Annual Artist Survey was launched as a new initiative to collect data from artists across Washington State. The Annual Artist Survey continues to serve as a yearly research process that gathers information and feedback from artists around the state.

The Annual Artist Survey is one of the many ways Artist Trust collects feedback from artists to inform our support approaches and programing. Survey data is supplemented with information from our work with partner organizations and through one-on-one conversations, focus groups, program evaluations, direct requests from artists, and other feedback loops. Through this mix of formal and informal research, we work to build relevant, comprehensive programming for artists in all communities across Washington State.

All self-identified artists in Washington State were welcome to participate in the 2019 Annual Artist Survey. Multiple efforts were made to reach as many artists as possible, including utilizing AT’s email distribution lists of over 16,000 individual artists, direct promotion to program participants and grant applicants, and by sharing the survey with more than 200 organizational partners around the state and inviting them to share with artists in their networks. All survey respondents self-selected to participate, providing a valuable, but not statistically accurate picture of artists in Washington State. The 2019 Survey launched on April 29, 2019 and closed on June 14, 2019. All answers were recorded anonymously.

Conclusion

The 2019 Annual Artist Survey provides information that will continue to inform our programming and artist support services here at Artist Trust. We make our findings and this report available publicly with the hope that other artist-serving organizations, artists, and arts advocates can learn from and utilize the results. Through this research, we continually work to gain a deeper understanding Washington State’s artists and better meet their needs.

Special thanks to [Humanities Washington](#) and [Artstra](#) for their feedback while developing questions for this year’s survey.

For additional information, questions about this report, or for access to the raw data from the survey, please contact Artist Trust Program Manager, Lydia Boss at 206-467-8734 x25 or lydia@artisttrust.org.

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