



Tennessee Arts Commission Strategic Plan Survey Report

— July 2024

Authored by



OchsCenter



TENNESSEE ARTS COMMISSION

Tennessee Arts Commission Strategic Plan Survey Report

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This project is funded through a contract with the Tennessee Arts Commission.

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Executive Summary

The Tennessee Arts Commission (TAC) is engaged in a process to develop a five-year strategic plan to enhance its mission of promoting the arts for all Tennesseans and Tennessee communities. To support this, TAC contracted with the Ochs Center to survey artists, organizations, and members of the public who are actively involved in Tennessee's arts and culture. The survey aimed to identify current challenges, programmatic interests, satisfaction with TAC's services, and future priorities for the commission.

The survey, distributed via email to over 9,000 recipients, gathered 922 fully completed and 493 partially completed responses. Participants primarily included artists, performers, writers, art educators, and organizational representatives from across Tennessee. The survey revealed diverse employment statuses and funding sources among artists, with many self-employed and others working for entities such as schools, arts organizations, or businesses.

Organizations reported on their budget sizes, board and staff compositions, and efforts to engage marginalized communities. Future programming areas of interest included K-12 education, outreach to low-income communities, senior services, and lifelong learning. Challenges for artists centered on professional growth, funding, marketing, and finding time to create art. Organizations highlighted sustainable funding, rising costs, audience development, and community engagement as key challenges.

The survey also explored public engagement barriers, such as cost and transportation, and successful strategies to overcome them. Respondents expressed satisfaction with TAC's services, especially staff responsiveness, but noted room for improvement in grant application processes and online systems.

Specialty license plates are a significant funding source for TAC. Most organizations reported that they actively promote the sale of specialty plates. However, half of all respondents were not aware that the specialty plates are the source of 80% of funding distributed by the Tennessee Arts Commission comes from revenue generated by the sale of specialty plates.

Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with current policies and procedures of the TAC. They reported a high level of satisfaction with the services provided, especially as it related to the responsiveness of TAC staff. They were less satisfied with the process for applying for grants and the online grant system. That noted, those who received grants reported that funding had the most impact on helping the artist or the organization to achieve their artistic goals or mission. They also expressed that grant funding added credibility to the work of the artist or organization, improved the quality of activities and services, and expanded the reach of arts to new and diverse audiences.

A theme that emerged from comments about the changes and opportunities that respondents expect to evolve in the next five years was the need to adapt to the current environment. This adaptability and resilience will be crucial for the future of the arts in Tennessee. Recommended future directions for TAC include continuing grant support, strengthening arts education through cultivating talent and encouraging interest in the arts, building collaborations, and expanding access to marginalized communities. Adapting to changes and forming partnerships are seen as crucial for the future of the arts in Tennessee. TAC's role in promoting the economic and social benefits of the arts and supporting the arts community remains vital.

Purpose and Methodology

The Tennessee Arts Commission (TAC) is engaged in a process to develop a five-year strategic plan to best meet their mission to cultivate the arts for the benefit of all Tennesseans and their communities. To inform the process, TAC contracted with the Ochs Center to conduct a survey with artists, organizations, and members of the public who are actively engaged in the arts and promoting arts and culture in Tennessee. The survey instrument was designed with a focus to collect input and gain insights about the current challenges being experienced by artists and organizations involved with arts and culture in Tennessee, current and future programmatic areas of interest, level of satisfaction with the services and systems provided by TAC, and recommended priorities for TAC in the future.

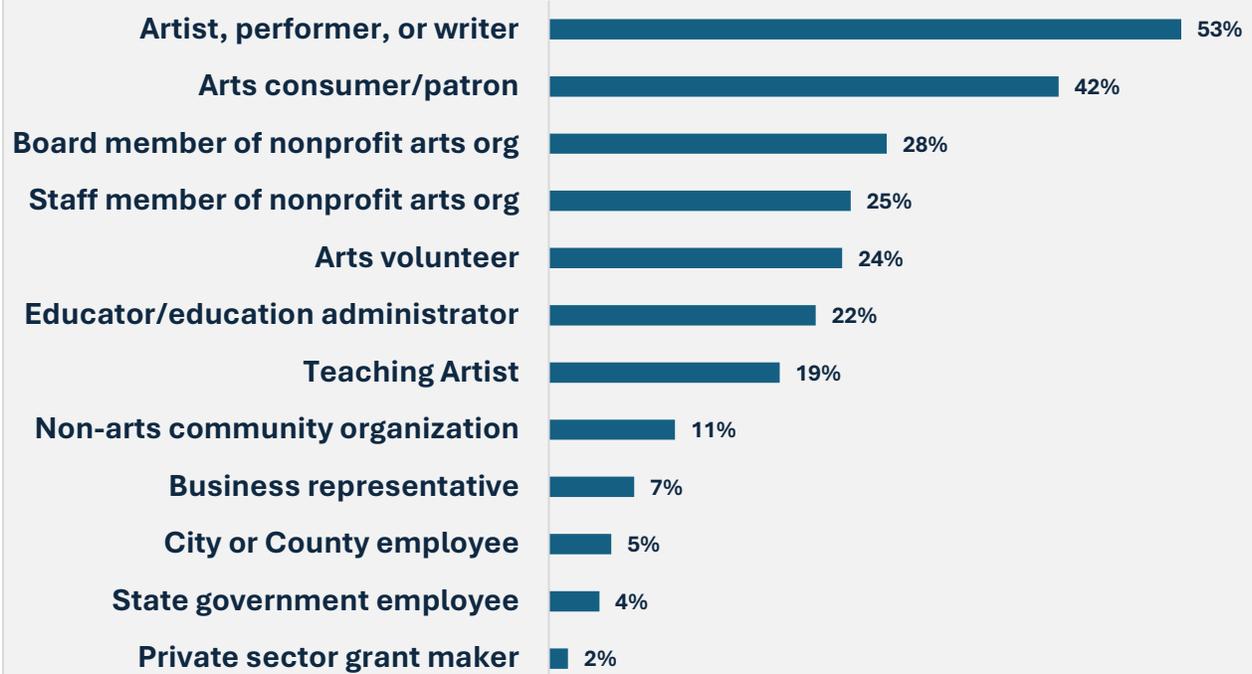
The survey was conducted using a web survey platform. An email invitation to participate in the survey was sent on May 10, 2024, by TAC to 9,315 email addresses from its distribution list. The invitation contained the link to the survey and recipients of the email were encouraged to share the link with anyone who might be interested in providing input to the strategic plan. Three additional emails seeking participation in the survey were sent. The last survey was received on June 16, 2024.

Responses from the survey were anonymous and all information about the respondents was self-reported. Data from 922 fully completed surveys and 493 partially completed surveys were included in the analysis. Results and findings from the survey are discussed below. Descriptive statistics for each survey are reported in the [Appendix](#) to this report.

Profile of survey respondents

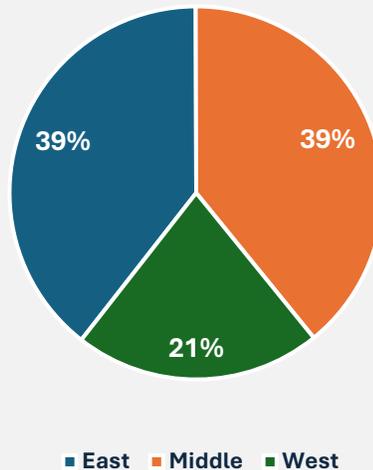
A majority of those who participated in the survey are artists, performers, or writers (Figure 1). However, participants also reported that they served in more than one role in the arts community - more than half (61.0%) served in at least two roles.

Figure 1. Role in the Arts Community



Responses were received from across the state of Tennessee and generally represented the population distribution of the state (Figure 2). Approximately one out of three responses were received from one of the four most populated counties – Davidson, Knox, Hamilton, and Shelby. The remaining responses were from suburban or rural counties. The racial and ethnic background of respondents was also similar to the overall population – 74% of the respondents indicated they were White, 16% indicated they were Black or African American, and 6% were Hispanic ([Table A-2](#)).

Figure 2. Location of Respondents in Tennessee's Grand Divisions



Artists

Artists and teaching artists were asked about their current employment status and their funding sources.

- More than one out three (37.6%) reported they were self-employed and 20.5% indicated that they were paid to make or teach art for another entity such as a school, arts organization, or business ([Table A-4](#)).
- Approximately one out of three (32.1%) had been paid for art services by a Tennessee nonprofit or government agency other than the TAC in the past year ([Table A-5](#)).
- Slightly more than one out of three (35.5%) had been paid in the past year by a for-profit entity ([Table A-6](#)).
- About one out of six artists (15.0%) had been paid by both nonprofits and for-profit agencies or entities.

Organizations

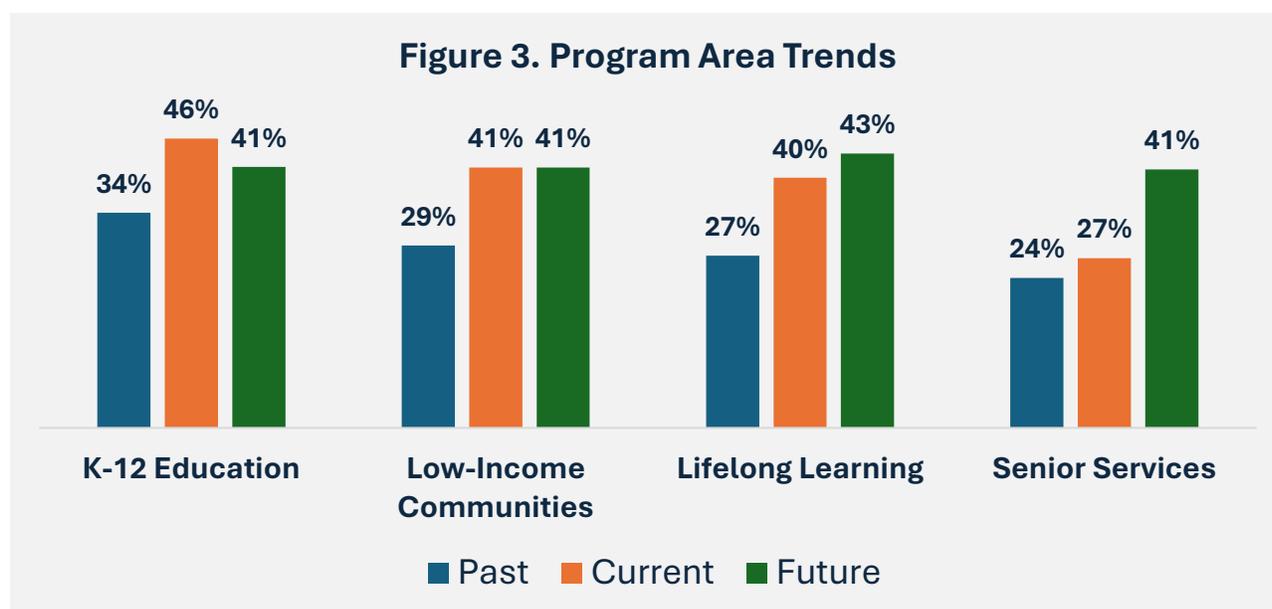
Representatives of organizations were asked about the organization's budget, staffing levels, and board make-up, and their involvement with engaging historically marginalized groups and communities.

- Most organizations (63.4%) have an annual operating budget below \$500,000 ([Table A-7](#)).
- The average number of board members was 11.6 and the average number of board members who are BIPOC was 2.6 ([Table A-8](#)).
- Approximately one out of four (23.5%) full-time or part-time staff members were BIPOC ([Table A-9](#)).
- Programming to address historically underserved groups and communities were most frequently focused on low income, the Black or African American community, and people over the age of 60 ([Table A-10](#)).

Program areas

Artists and organizations were asked about their experience with offering different types of programming. They were presented with a list of sixteen program areas and asked to indicate if they had engaged in the program area in the past, whether their programming is currently focused on that area, and whether they plan to focus on the area in the future.

- Almost half of the artists and organizations providing artistic programming (45.7%) are currently engaged in programming that focuses on K-12 education. Other current focus areas frequently identified were low-income communities, and lifelong learning (Figure 3).
- A significant number of artists and organizations indicated that they plan to increase their programming focus on senior services – an increase from 27% who currently focus on this group to 41% in the future.
- Artists and organizations involved with the arts indicated that their focus on all program areas would either remain stable or increase in the future.



Beyond the program areas discussed above, approximately one out of three artists and organizations expressed an interest in focusing on the program areas below in the future (Table 1).

Program area	Percent	Program area	Percent
Health & Wellness	38.8	Tourism	35.6
Social Emotional Learning	37.4	Literacy	34.0
Social Justice	37.2	Early Education	32.5
Environment	37.0	Economic Development	31.4

Table 1: Program areas

Programming focused on transportation was not an area most frequently chosen for future programming. However, this program area reported the steepest upward trend of all program areas to consider – from 5.7% who offered it in the past to 24.7% who are interested in offering it in the future ([Table A-11](#)).

Challenges, barriers, and successful strategies

One overarching purpose for conducting this survey was to hear from artists and organizations about their current challenges. Artists were provided with a list of seventeen potential challenges

and asked to select up to five challenges that they might be facing. They were also given the opportunity to share added challenges beyond those listed. From those challenges chosen by the artists, they were asked to select which was the greatest challenge. The challenges most frequently chosen by artists were:

- Finding opportunities to grow professionally as an artist (46.5%)
- Understanding funding opportunities available to individual artists (46.3%)
- Marketing artwork (40.7%)
- Finding time to create art (35.7%)

While there was considerable variation in which of these was the “greatest” challenge, finding time to create art, marketing their artwork, and understanding the funding opportunities available to individual artists emerged as the greatest challenge most frequently selected ([Tables A-12](#) and [A-13](#)).

The COVID-19 pandemic also presented challenges for artists. However, the impacts were often dependent upon the type of art. For instance, artists and performers who rely upon a live audience discussed loss of income and opportunities due to the closure of performance venues and social distancing restrictions. Some artists shared that their physical and mental health suffered or that their creativity suffered from social isolation during the pandemic. However, the pandemic also positively affected some artists – it gave them more time to be creative and focus on their artmaking. For some, it also offered an opportunity to expand their audience by performing using electronic platforms. Furthermore, some writers indicated they had not been negatively impacted by the pandemic and in fact demand for their work had increased. However, the increased demand has not necessarily continued.

“

“Brought everything to a standstill, became more isolated, lost opportunities.”

“As a theatre artist and educator it changed every aspect of what I was doing as an artist. My work was based on gathering people in spaces and when that stopped everything stopped.”

“We are musicians who had to switch to Zoom to perform. In person gigs disappeared. As a result we have appeared on Zoom performances around the country and have broadened our audience. Thankfully, we are starting to do live performances again.”

“I found it hard to be inspired. I was pretty depressed.”

“Actually, it gave me more time to brainstorm and create.”

“I actually had more time to create. The pieces I created were not as happy as my normal work. I sell in art shows or word of mouth so it did effect [sic] my ability to profit from my work.”

“I actually received more work during the pandemic because in 2020 on the heels of the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, Black journalists and writers were being offered so many opportunities. Those opportunities, in addition to the rapidly changing landscape of publishing and freelance writing, are now few and far between. So while the pandemic actually helped me to expand my resume, it is post pandemic that I am struggling as an artist/creative.”

”

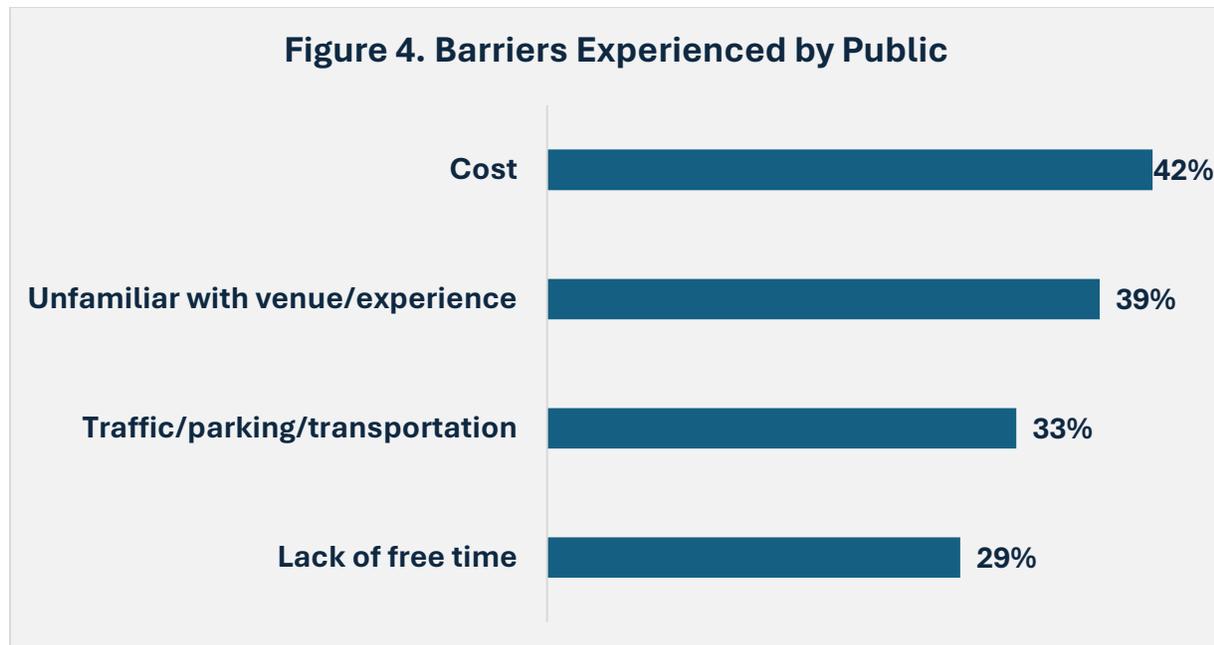
Those who represent organizations involved with the arts were provided with the same opportunity to identify the challenges being faced by their organizations. A constructed list of fourteen potential challenges was presented and they could select up to five challenges. Like

artists, organizations were given the opportunity to share additional challenges and were asked to identify the greatest challenge being faced. The challenges most often chosen by respondents representing organizations were:

- Developing diversified sustainable funding (49.8%)
- Rising costs/inflation (47.8%)
- Ability to develop our audiences (34.9%)
- Community engagement with the mission (31.1%)

Less variation emerged in what organizations perceived as their greatest challenge. Developing a diversified and sustainable funding stream was chosen as the greatest challenge by approximately one out three organizations (30.6%). Related to the challenge of building a sustainable funding stream, the impact of rising costs and inflation was selected as the greatest challenge by one out of six organizations (16.7%) (Tables [A-14](#) and [A-15](#)).

Another goal for the survey was to learn about challenges the public may be experiencing in engaging with the arts and to learn about successful strategies that have been implemented to overcome these barriers. Cost was the most frequently cited barrier, however, lack of experience in engaging in the arts was also a common reason reported (Figure 4). An issue with transportation was also often cited as a barrier. While members of the public experiencing apprehension about not feeling welcome did not emerge as one of the top cited barriers, BIPOC respondents were significantly more likely than others to indicate that they perceived this as a barrier – 13.5% of BIPOC respondents compared to 4.9% of other respondents.



Respondents were also asked about their personal participation in arts and culture compared to the time before the pandemic. Most reported their participation had increased or stayed the same – only 17.5% said their participation had decreased. The challenges that impact their personal participation were similar to those reported for the public - cost, lack of free time, and transportation issues. Not having more local options for participation was also reported as a barrier for personal participation ([Table A-29](#)).

Successful strategies for raising participation and expanding audiences in the arts included building new partnerships and experimenting with programming and outreach efforts that might resonate with new and diverse audiences (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Strategies for Increasing Attendance and Participation



Specialty License Plates

Tennessee offers a variety of specialty license plates for automobile owners. When owners register a new vehicle or renew their automobile registration, they can choose to purchase a specialty plate for an additional fee to support a designated organization. The sales of these plates are a significant funding source for the TAC. Survey respondents were provided with the following true statement about the source of funding and asked to indicate whether they thought the statement was true or false or whether they were unsure:

“Eighty percent (80%) of state public funding for grants to nonprofit arts and culture distributed in Tennessee by the Arts Commission comes from revenue generated by the sale of a variety of automobile specialty license plates.”

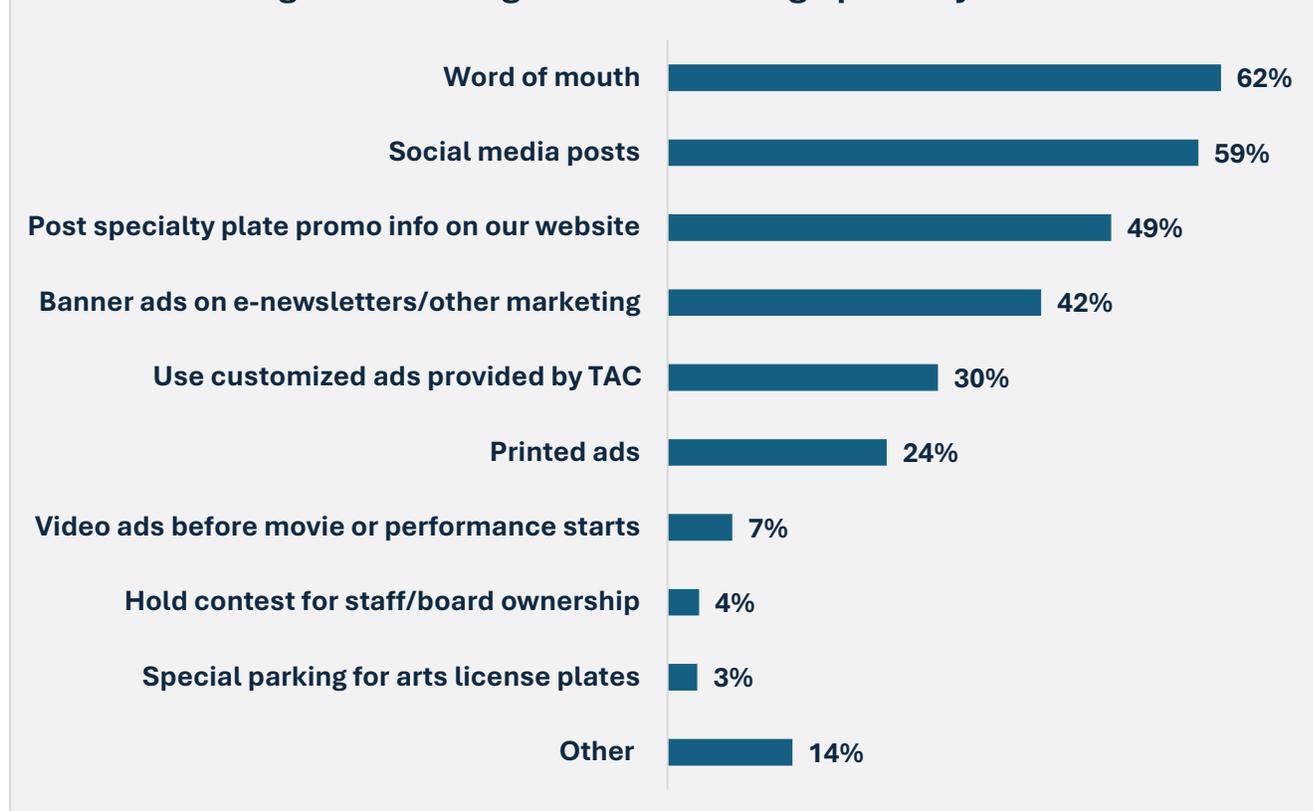
- Almost half of all respondents (47.8%) indicated that they are uncertain whether the statement was true and 10% thought the statement was false.
- Half of all respondents (50.8%) reported that they or their organization encourage members of the public to purchase specialty plates as a means for raising funds to support

arts and culture in Tennessee. However, more than one out of four (28.3%) of those who stated that they promote the sale of plates are uncertain whether the above statement about how much the plates contributed to the funding is true.

- Moreover, one out of three (35.5%) of those who received funding from TAC in the past three years were also uncertain whether the statement was true.

Respondents were also asked if they or their organization promoted the sale of specialty plates and if so, strategies that had proven to be successful in their efforts (Figure 6).

- More than half of those who represent an organization (57.6%) indicated that they actively promoted the sale of specialty plates.
- A majority of those who had received funding in the past three years (70.1%) reported that they or their organization engaged in promoting sale of the specialty plates.
- The most common methods reported for encouraging the public to purchase specialty plates was word of mouth (61.6%), social media posts (59.1%), posting promotional information on their website (49.4%), and utilizing banner ads on e-newsletters or other viral marketing material (41.6%).

Figure 6. Strategies for Promoting Specialty Plates

Satisfaction with Tennessee Arts Commission

One step in developing a strategic plan is to review current policies and procedures by engaging stakeholders to hear about what is working well and to learn what changes may be needed to best accomplish the goals of the organization. For this reason, questions were included in the survey to measure the level of satisfaction with current policies and procedures employed by TAC for grant applications and fund distribution.

Respondents were first asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the overall services provided by TAC ([Table A-20](#)).

- Overall, respondents reported a high level of satisfaction with the services provided by TAC. The responsiveness of staff received the highest rating with 44.0% indicating that were very satisfied. The frequency and quality of communication were also highly rated.

- While still relatively high, respondents were less satisfied with the ease of applying for a grant and navigation of the website.
- Little difference emerged between BIPOC and non-BIPOC respondents in their level of satisfaction with the services provided by TAC. However, BIPOC respondents were significantly less satisfied with TAC’s responsiveness to underserved communities.

“

“I can't emphasize enough how extraordinary the post-pandemic recovery response from TAC was, ranging from dedication of staff to level of funding.”

“I am so enthusiastic about the work of the Tennessee Arts Commission. The amount and quality of arts opportunities that you support is incredible. You make Tennessee a great place to thrive!”

“I appreciate all that the Commission is doing for the arts in Tennessee. Keep expanding the tent so more people will get enjoy the arts.”

“More needs to be done to fund arts organizations of color while addressing social justice and racial disparity for those organizations and artists and staffs of color.”

”

Respondents were next asked to report their level of satisfaction with the online grant system provided by TAC. The overall level of satisfaction for the grant system was lower than the level of satisfaction reported for the services provided by TAC ([Table A-21](#)).

- There were several features of the online grant system that respondents were more satisfied with than others - ease of the signature routing system, ease of uploading documents, ease of requesting payment, and receipt of payments.
- Respondents also gave higher marks for the efficiency of resolving issues or having questions answered.

- Lower marks were given for completing the overall application and providing the required budget information. Respondents were reportedly less satisfied with the complexity of the application.

Thirdly, those who completed the survey were asked to share their satisfaction with the grant guidelines and reporting requirements ([Table A-22](#)).

- Respondents were least satisfied with the potential award amount given the time and effort required to complete the application process. Some commented that the rate of return does not match the effort for completing the application process.
- However, the clarity of grant guidelines and transparency of funding process were given higher marks.

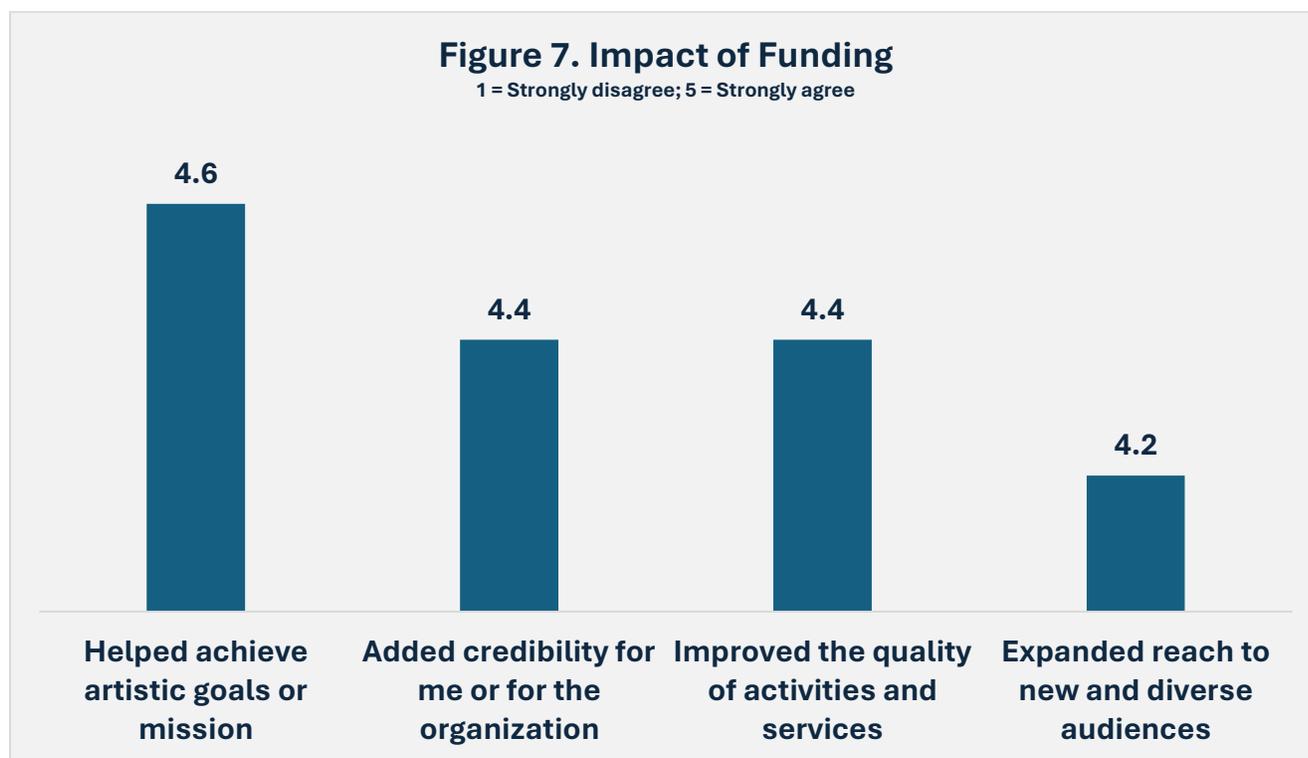
Finally, respondents were asked about their satisfaction with the panel review process ([Table A-23](#)). This area received the lowest overall levels of satisfaction compared to other services offered by TAC. However, those who had received funding from TAC in the last three years rated this area significantly higher than those who had not received funding.

Value of funding from Tennessee Arts Commission

Artists and organizations who received funding from the TAC in the past three years were asked to report on the impact of this funding. Several statements were presented to those who received funding and they were asked to report their level of agreement with each statement. A mean score ranging from 1 to 5 was calculated from the responses to each statement. A higher score indicates a higher level of agreement.

According to these scores, funding had the most impact on helping the artist or the organization to achieve their artistic goals or mission. Furthermore, receipt of the funding added credibility for the recipient. The funding also allowed the recipient to improve the quality of services and activities provided and to engage and expand a new and diverse audience (Figure 7). However,

funding reportedly had less impact on the recipient’s ability to evaluate or measure the impact of artists or organizations on the community.

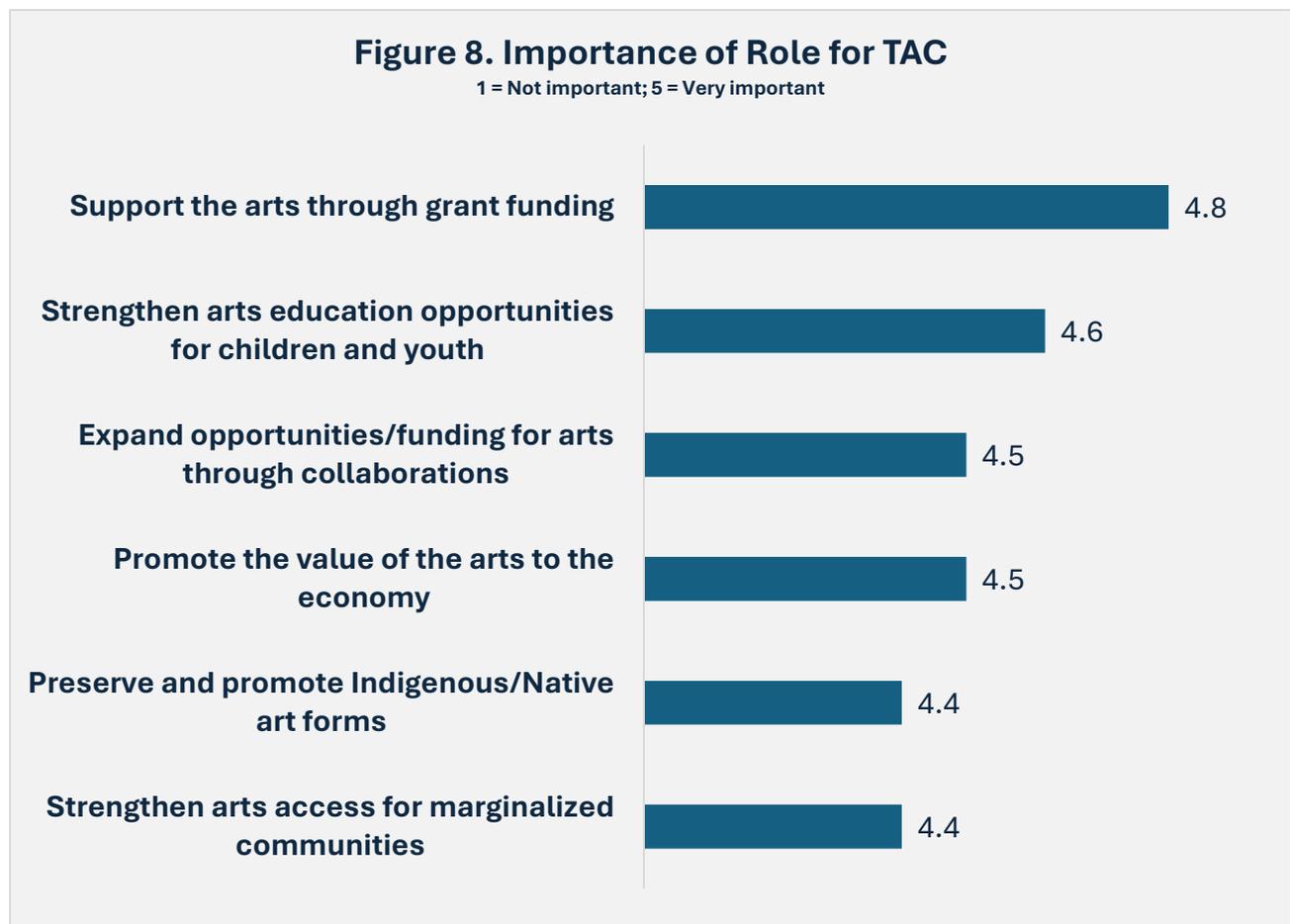


Future direction

The survey was also designed to gain insights about how the TAC should continue to support the arts community and public in Tennessee. Survey respondents were presented with a list of fourteen roles that TAC could play and asked to indicate how important each of these roles were ([Table A-25](#)).

- Continuation of TAC’s role of supporting the arts through grant funding was reported to be of highest importance.
- Beyond this role, there was also broad support for strengthening arts education for children and youth. Exposing children and youth to the arts at a young age may increase interest in the arts and foster high levels of participation in the arts as they mature.

- Building collaborations with other agencies to increase funding for the arts and promoting the positive economic impact on the local economy and quality of life also emerged as a top priority.
- Finally, expanding access to the arts for marginalized communities - Black, Indigenous, people of color, LGBTQ+, veterans, low-income families, rural residents, persons with disabilities, older adults, and promoting Indigenous art forms were also seen as important roles for TAC.



Changes and opportunities

A theme that emerged from comments about the changes and opportunities that respondents expect to evolve in the next five years was the need to adapt to the current environment. Artists and organizations reported on their need to adjust and sometimes pivot during the pandemic to remain professionally and economically viable. This adaptability and resilience will be crucial for the future of the arts in Tennessee. As the cost of supplies and operating expenses continue to rise, artists and organizations will be well-served to build partnerships and collaborations to cost-share operating expenses, expand capacity for fund raising, and cross-pollinate audiences. Through partnerships and collaborations, artists and organizations can increase their opportunities to engage diverse performers and attract more diverse audiences.

The importance of continuing to support educational opportunities for children and youth was also identified as critical for the sustainability of the arts. Educational programs afford children the chance to experience and engage in the arts on a personal level. With a growing reliance by the younger generation on social media and virtual platforms for entertainment, arts programming may be the only opportunity for children and youth to engage in “hands on” experiences with art. Furthermore, without these programs, the cultivation of talent and interest in the arts may be diminished.

Finally, as Tennessee continues to attract new residents, the arts community has an opportunity to be instrumental in the growth of the state and local communities. The TAC can play a vital role by continuing to share data and stories about how the arts and culture sector contributes to the economic and social vitality of local communities and the state. This role may be further strengthened by collaborating with other state agencies and partners to share resources for collecting data and measuring the positive impact made by the arts to improve the overall quality of life in Tennessee.

Conclusion

The mission of the Tennessee Arts Commission (TAC) is to cultivate and promote the arts for the benefit of all Tennesseans and their communities. The TAC is highly regarded by the arts community and is recognized for its positive contribution to the economic and social vitality of Tennessee and its communities. Through its grant funding, TAC facilitates efforts to expand and engage new and diverse audiences in the arts community. Grant funding is largely made possible from revenue generated by the sale of automobile specialty license plates. Additional efforts are needed to raise awareness about this revenue stream's importance and to support individuals and organizations engaged in promotional campaigns.

The confidence expressed by the arts community suggests that the TAC can continue to play a key role in supporting artists and organizations engaged in the arts beyond financial support. As members of the arts community navigate a challenging environment, the TAC can provide opportunities for members of the arts community to support each other. It can help to create a platform or safe space for the arts community to share insights and strategies that have proven to be successful in engaging the public and promoting the arts. By providing this type of opportunity and continued financial support, the TAC can be instrumental in ensuring the viability and sustainability of the arts community in Tennessee.

APPENDIX

Descriptive Statistics for Survey Questions

Appendix Table 1. Current Role in Arts Community

Table A-1. Current Role in Arts Community	Frequency	Percentage
Artist, performer, or writer	745	52.6
Arts consumer/patron	601	42.4
Arts volunteer	347	24.4
Board member of a nonprofit arts organization	398	28.1
Non-arts community organization representative	149	10.5
Business representative	100	7.1
City or county employee	73	5.2
Educator or education administrator	315	22.2
Private sector grant maker or philanthropist	22	1.6
Staff member of a nonprofit arts organization	355	25.1
State government employee	60	4.2
Teaching artist	272	19.2
Other	115	8.1

Appendix Table 2. What is Your Race/Ethnicity?

Table A-2. What is your race/ethnicity?	Frequency	Percentage
American Indian/Alaskan Native	24	2.7
Asian	30	3.3
Black/African American	111	12.3
Hispanic	36	4.0
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	5	0.6
White	672	74.4
Other	17	1.9
Choose not to disclose	83	9.2

Appendix Table 3. In What County Are You Located?

Table A-3. What county are you located?	Frequency	Percentage
East	353	39.2
Middle	352	39.1
West	193	21.4
Other	3	0.3

Appendix Table 4. Current Working Status

Table A-4. Current Working Status	Frequency	Percentage
I am a self-employed artist.	189	37.6
I am an artist who works as an arts administrator.	84	16.6
I am an artist employed by someone else (I make or teach art for a business, school, arts organization, or other artist).	103	20.5
I work in a non-arts field and create art on my personal time.	87	17.3
I am not currently employed.	40	8.0

Appendix Table 5. Payment for Art Services by Non-Profit/Government Entity

Table A-5. In the last year, have you been paid for art services by a Tennessee nonprofit or government agency (other than TN Arts Commission)?	Frequency	Percentage
No	342	67.9
Yes	162	32.1

Appendix Table 6. Payment for Art Services by For-Profit Entity

Table A-6. In the last year, have you been paid for art services by a for-profit entity?	Frequency	Percentage
No	323	64.5
Yes	178	35.5

Appendix Table 7. Organization's Estimated Operating Budget

Table A-7. Organization's estimated operating budget	Frequency	Percentage
Less than \$30,000	167	23.9
\$30,000-\$50,000	71	10.2
\$50,001-\$100,000	80	11.4
\$100,001-\$250,000	77	11.0
\$250,001-\$500,000	48	6.9
\$500,001-\$1,000,000	47	6.8
\$1,000,001-\$5,000,000	87	12.4
Over \$5,000,000	33	4.7
I'm not sure	89	12.7

Appendix Table 8. Board Members

Table A-8. Board Members	Frequency	Minimum	Maximum	Average
Number of Board members	543	1	50	11.6
Number of BIPOC Board members	528	0	20	2.6

Appendix Table 9. Staff Members

Table A-9. Staff members	Frequency	Minimum	Maximum	Average
Number of staff members	399	1	450	19.6
Number of BIPOC staff members	385	0	198	4.9

Appendix Table 10. Historically Under-Represented Groups Served

Table A-10. Historically under-represented groups served by organization	Frequency	Percentage
American Indian	125	20.3
Asian	123	19.9
Black/African American	287	46.5
Hispanic/Latino	194	31.4
People with disabilities	224	36.3
People aged 60 years and older	271	43.9
Low income	332	53.8
Active-duty military/veterans and their families	117	19.0
Other specific group (unhoused persons, trauma survivors, etc.)	89	14.4
None of the above	141	22.9

Appendix Table 11. Program Areas for Using Arts to Impact Community

Table A-11. Program areas for using arts to impact the community	Provided in past	Currently providing	Interested in providing in future
Agriculture	(143) 13.5%	(127) 12.0%	(314) 29.7%
Lifelong Learning	(288) 27.2%	(417) 39.5%	(458) 43.3%
Corrections/Law Enforcement	(104) 9.8%	(72) 6.8%	(267) 25.2%
Early Education (0-5)	(254) 24.0%	(258) 24.4%	(344) 32.5%
Economic Development	(146) 13.8%	(175) 16.6%	(332) 31.4%
Environment	(158) 14.9%	(158) 14.9%	(391) 37.0%
Health and Wellness	(221) 20.9%	(231) 21.9%	(410) 38.8%
K-12 education	(359) 34.0%	(483) 45.7%	(436) 41.2%
Literacy	(204) 19.3%	(269) 25.4%	(359) 34.0%
Low-income Communities	(304) 28.8%	(434) 41.1%	(434) 41.1%
Senior Services	(251) 23.7%	(283) 26.8%	(431) 40.8%
Social & Emotional Learning	(186) 17.6%	(290) 27.4%	(396) 37.4%
Social Justice	(167) 15.8%	(184) 17.4%	(394) 37.2%
Tourism	(186) 17.6%	(256) 24.2%	(377) 35.6%
Transportation	(60) 5.7%	(60) 5.7%	(261) 24.7%
Veterans and Military Family Support	(152) 14.4%	(145) 13.7%	(335) 31.7%

Appendix Table 12. Challenges Faced by Artists

Table A-12. Challenges faced by artists	Frequency	Percentage
Finding opportunities to grow professionally as an artist	357	46.5
Understanding the funding opportunities available to individual artists	355	46.3
Marketing my artwork	312	40.7
Finding time to create art	274	35.7
Finding opportunities to share art	265	34.6
Networking with potential funders	225	29.3
Finding space for artmaking	213	27.8
Affording supplies for my artmaking	197	25.7
Adapting my work to virtual platforms (creation, engagement or sales)	174	22.7
Finding affordable housing	111	14.5
Pricing my work that is for sale	108	14.1
Finding affordable healthcare	105	13.7
Protecting my work (AI, copyright, etc.)	101	13.2
Working with diverse communities and audiences	96	12.5
Networking with peers	86	11.2
Finding affordable childcare	57	7.4
Adapting to COVID-19 related restrictions	18	2.3
Other	55	7.2

Appendix Table 13. Greatest Challenge Faced by Artist

Table A-13. Greatest challenge faced by artist	Frequency	Percentage
Finding time to create art	113	15.1
Marketing my artwork	99	13.2
Understanding the funding opportunities available to individual artists	99	13.2
Finding opportunities to grow professionally as an artist	82	10.9
Finding opportunities to share art	54	7.2
Finding space for artmaking	52	6.9
Networking with potential funders	46	6.1
Affording supplies for my artmaking	42	5.6
Finding affordable housing	38	5.1
Adapting my work to virtual platforms	33	4.4
Finding affordable childcare	16	2.1
Finding affordable healthcare	15	2
Working with diverse communities and audiences	11	1.5
Networking with peers	9	1.2
Pricing my work that is for sale	6	0.8
Protecting my work (AI, copyright, etc.)	6	0.8
Other	29	3.9

Appendix Table 14. Challenges Faced by Organizations

Table A-14. Challenges faced by organizations	Frequency	Percentage
Developing diversified sustainable funding	499	49.8
Rising costs/inflation	479	47.8
Ability to develop our audiences	350	34.9
Community engagement with the mission	312	31.1
Attracting/retaining diverse board members	282	28.1
Building trust to attract more diverse audiences	221	22.0
Rebuilding our audiences after the pandemic	205	20.4
Attracting/retaining qualified staff	201	20.0
Maximizing operational efficiencies	195	19.4
Succession planning	189	18.8
Attracting/retaining diverse staff	134	13.4
Delivering services both in-person and online	109	10.9
Ability to pay our mortgage or lease	101	10.1
Preserving the integrity of the mission	98	9.8
Other	100	10.0

Appendix Table 15. Greatest Challenge Faced by Organizations

Table A-15. Greatest challenge faced by organizations	Frequency	Percentage
Developing diversified sustainable funding	278	30.6
Rising costs/inflation	152	16.7
Ability to develop our audiences	78	8.6
Community engagement with the mission	60	6.6
Rebuilding our audiences after the pandemic	48	5.3
Attracting/retaining qualified staff	45	5.0
Attracting/retaining diverse board members	41	4.5
Building trust to attract more diverse audiences	29	3.2
Ability to pay our mortgage or lease	26	2.9
Maximizing operational efficiencies	26	2.9
Succession planning	24	2.6
Attracting/retaining diverse staff	20	2.2
Preserving the integrity of the mission	10	1.1
Delivering services both in-person and online	9	1.0
Other	63	6.9

Appendix Table 16. Barriers to Attendance and Participation for Audiences

Table A-16. Barriers to attendance and participation for audiences	Frequency	Percentage
Cost	467	42.2
Unfamiliar with venue and experience	426	38.5
Traffic/parking/transportation	362	32.7
Lack of free time	319	28.8
Few local options	296	26.8
Not interested	206	18.6
Apprehension of not feeling welcome	161	14.6
Accessibility concerns	148	13.4
Time of performance	113	10.2
Safety or security concerns	104	9.4
Lack of child care	85	7.7
No one to go with	67	6.1
Health concerns	49	4.4
Other	132	11.9

Appendix Table 17. Successful Strategies for Building Audiences

Table A-17. Successful strategies for building audience	Frequency	Percentage
Partnerships	495	48.2
Experimenting with programming to reach different audiences	382	37.2
Special outreach	340	33.1
Programming in non-traditional venues	316	30.7
Special pricing	280	27.2
Daytime performances or hours	241	23.4
Virtual programming	185	18.0
Educating audiences on logistics of experience	142	13.8
Offsite programming	101	9.8
Accommodations for disabilities	89	8.7
Other	97	9.4

Appendix Table 18. Encouragement to Members of Community to Purchase Specialty License Plates

Table A-18. Do you or does your organization encourage members of the community to purchase specialty plates as a way to support the arts?	Frequency	Percentage
No	522	49.1
Yes	541	50.9

Appendix Table 19. Challenges for Promoting Specialty License Plates

Table A-19. Challenges for promoting specialty plates	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of awareness of the importance of this funding for the arts	554	57.4
Cost	258	26.7
Staff capacity	191	19.8
Marketing support	188	19.5
Not a priority for me or my organization	184	19.1
Time	157	16.3
Graphic design support	85	8.8
Technological hurdles	45	4.7
Other	142	14.7

Appendix Table 20. Level of Satisfaction with Services Provided by TAC

Table A-20. Level of satisfaction with services provided by Tennessee Arts Commission	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
Staff responsiveness	(11) 1.3%	(25) 2.9%	(186) 21.6%	(261) 30.2%	(380) 44.0%
Frequency of communication	(12) 1.4%	(42) 4.8%	(201) 22.9%	(327) 37.2%	(296) 33.7%
Quality of communications	(11) 1.2%	(42) 4.7%	(205) 22.9%	(312) 34.9%	(325) 36.3%
Ease of applying for grant funds	(54) 6.1%	(100) 11.3%	(233) 26.4%	(284) 32.1%	(213) 24.1%
Support during the pandemic	(24) 3.1%	(35) 4.6%	(267) 34.9%	(166) 21.7%	(273) 35.7%
The advice or technical assistance provided	(15) 1.8%	(33) 4.2%	(290) 36.5%	(238) 30.0%	(218) 27.5%
Responsiveness to the needs of underserved communities	(31) 3.7%	(64) 7.7%	(298) 35.9%	(228) 27.4%	(210) 25.3%
Value of information on TN Arts website	(13) 1.4%	(52) 5.8%	(248) 27.4%	(365) 40.4%	(226) 25.0%
Navigation ease of the TN Arts website	(22) 2.5%	(62) 6.9%	(286) 31.9%	(351) 39.1%	(176) 19.6%

Appendix Table 21. Level of Satisfaction with TAC's Online Grant System

Table A-21. Level of satisfaction with Tennessee Arts Commission's online grant system	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
Appropriateness of application complexity	(23) 4.1%	(59) 10.4%	(106) 18.7%	(282) 49.8%	(96) 17.0%
Ease in accessing historical data	(16) 2.9%	(44) 8.0%	(152) 27.7%	(235) 42.7%	(103) 18.7%
Ease of completing budget information	(19) 3.4%	(58) 10.5%	(135) 24.4%	(262) 47.3%	(80) 14.4%
Ease of contract signature routing process (DocuSign)	(6) 1.1%	(9) 1.6%	(78) 14.2%	(270) 49.1%	(187) 34.0%
Ease of general navigation within the system	(17) 3.0%	(54) 9.6%	(112) 19.8%	(274) 48.5%	(108) 19.1%
Ease of managing logins and profiles	(14) 2.5%	(47) 8.3%	(107) 18.9%	(268) 47.3%	(130) 23.0%
Ease of request for payment submission	(11) 2.1%	(27) 5.2%	(129) 24.8%	(248) 47.7%	(105) 20.2%
Ease of uploading support materials	(6) 1.1%	(24) 4.4%	(92) 16.8%	(285) 52.0%	(141) 25.7%
Efficiency of issue or question resolution	(8) 1.5%	(20) 3.7%	(105) 19.6%	(238) 44.3%	(166) 30.9%
Helpfulness of automatic email communications	(8) 1.4%	(13) 2.4%	(141) 26.0%	(255) 47.0%	(126) 23.2%
Timeliness of payments	(6) 1.2%	(17) 3.3%	(110) 21.7%	(227) 44.7%	(148) 29.1%

Appendix Table 22. Level of Satisfaction with TAC's Guidelines and Reporting

Table A-22. Level of satisfaction with Tennessee Arts Commission's guidelines and reporting	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
Clarity of grant guidelines	(11) 2.0%	(52) 9.2%	(91) 16.1%	(287) 50.9%	(123) 21.8%
Clarity of reporting requirements and evaluation questions	(10) 1.8%	(43) 7.9%	(111) 20.4%	(275) 50.6%	(104) 19.3%
Potential award size given time spent applying and reporting	(30) 5.5%	(62) 11.3%	(106) 19.3%	(232) 42.4%	(118) 21.5%
Transparency of funding process	(13) 2.4%	(44) 8.0%	(110) 20.0%	(242) 43.9%	(142) 25.7%

Appendix Table 23. Level of Satisfaction with TAC's Competitive Review Process

Table A-23. Level of satisfaction with Tennessee Arts Commission's competitive review process	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
Clarity of review criteria	(16) 3.0%	(40) 7.4%	(112) 20.7%	(269) 49.7%	(104) 19.2%
Fairness of panel review process	(15) 2.8%	(29) 5.4%	(131) 24.3%	(237) 44.0%	(127) 23.5%
Helpfulness of panel feedback	(18) 3.5%	(39) 7.4%	(137) 26.1%	(207) 39.4%	(124) 23.6%
Overall panel review process	(15) 2.8%	(26) 4.9%	(132) 24.7%	(239) 44.8%	(122) 22.8%

Appendix Table 24. Impact of Funding

Table A-24. Impact of Funding	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Helped achieve artistic goals or mission	(2) 0.4%	(7) 1.3%	(24) 4.6%	(152) 29.0%	(340) 64.7%
Added credibility for me or for the organization	(5) 1.0%	(8) 1.5%	(47) 9.0%	(176) 33.5%	(289) 55.0%
Improved the quality of activities and services	(3) 0.6%	(11) 2.1%	(50) 9.6%	(188) 36.0%	(270) 51.7%
Expanded reach to new and diverse audiences	(2) 0.4%	(15) 2.9%	(89) 17.1%	(174) 33.5%	(239) 46.1%
Made programs more affordable	(2) 0.4%	(14) 2.7%	(109) 20.7%	(148) 28.2%	(252) 48.0%
Increased my visibility or my organization's visibility	(2) 0.4%	(15) 2.9%	(95) 18.1%	(184) 35.1%	(228) 43.5%
Made work accessible to underserved community members	(3) 0.6%	(17) 3.3%	(119) 22.8%	(155) 29.6%	(228) 43.7%
Expanded community economic development opportunities	(3) 0.6%	(22) 4.2%	(98) 18.7%	(174) 33.3%	(226) 43.2%
Helped attract partner organizations or opportunities	(2) 0.4%	(36) 6.9%	(107) 20.5%	(157) 30.1%	(220) 42.1%
Helped me or the organization attract or leverage additional funding	(3) 0.6%	(35) 6.7%	(119) 22.8%	(176) 33.7%	(189) 36.2%
Preserved jobs or created new jobs	(8) 1.5%	(41) 7.9%	(180) 34.5%	(132) 25.4%	(160) 30.7%
Provided opportunities for new lifelong learning	(3) 0.6%	(24) 4.6%	(145) 27.9%	(172) 33.1%	(176) 33.8%
Strengthened managerial and fiscal practices/operations	(8) 1.5%	(24) 4.6%	(187) 36.1%	(167) 32.3%	(132) 25.5%
Improved evaluation or data collection	(3) 0.6%	(38) 7.3%	(193) 37.1%	(167) 32.1%	(119) 22.9%

Appendix Table 25. Importance of Roles for Supporting Arts Community and Public in Tennessee

Table A-25. Importance of roles for supporting arts community and public in Tennessee	Not important	Slightly important	Moderately important	Important	Very important
Support the arts through grant funding	(2) 0.2%	(6) 0.6%	(20) 2.0%	(125) 12.1%	(872) 85.1%
Strengthen arts education opportunities for children and youth	(2) 0.2%	(13) 1.3%	(57) 5.5%	(224) 22.0%	(723) 71.0%
Expand opportunities or funding for the arts by working with other public agencies	(7) 0.7%	(17) 1.7%	(58) 5.7%	(254) 24.7%	(687) 67.2%
Promote the value of the arts and creativity to the state economy and local economies	(3) 0.3%	(17) 1.7%	(69) 6.8%	(252) 24.7%	(678) 66.5%
Strengthen arts access for Black, Indigenous, people of color, LGBTQ+, veterans, low-income families, rural residents, persons with disabilities, older adults, etc.	(27) 2.7%	(27) 2.7%	(88) 8.7%	(232) 23.1%	(632) 62.8%
Preserve and promote Indigenous/Native art forms	(5) 0.5%	(29) 2.9%	(104) 10.2%	(279) 27.4%	(600) 59.0%
Preserve and promote Tennessee’s folk and traditional art work	(6) 0.6%	(36) 3.5%	(115) 11.3%	(292) 28.7%	(569) 55.9%
Educate the public on policies that encourage the arts	(5) 0.5%	(20) 2.0%	(100) 9.8%	(339) 33.2%	(556) 54.5%
Ensure that public art is distributed across the state	(9) 0.9%	(31) 3.1%	(103) 10.2%	(315) 31.2%	(552) 54.6%
Support the arts through services other than grants, such as technical assistance, training, and networking	(7) 0.7%	(41) 4.0%	(133) 13.1%	(317) 31.1%	(520) 51.1%
Promote and support arts leadership development	(12) 1.2%	(26) 2.6%	(112) 11.0%	(350) 34.4%	(518) 50.8%
Measure the impact of the arts and provide data	(11) 1.1%	(34) 3.3%	(131) 12.9%	(335) 33.0%	(504) 49.7%

Table A-25. Importance of roles for supporting arts community and public in Tennessee	Not important	Slightly important	Moderately important	Important	Very important
Support health and healing through arts-based programs	(23) 2.3%	(43) 4.3%	(136) 13.5%	(304) 30.2%	(502) 49.7%
Strengthen the arts field's emergency response capacity	(51) 5.2%	(103) 10.3%	(277) 27.7%	(293) 29.3%	(275) 27.5%

Appendix Table 26. Statements About Arts Education

Table A-26. Statements about arts education	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
All children in my community have access to and participate in high quality arts education.	(147) 13.7%	(264) 24.7%	(659) 61.6%
Nonprofits are an important provider of arts education for children and youth in our community, especially in out-of-school time.	(901) 84.4%	(120) 11.3%	(46) 4.3%
Nonprofits are an important provider of lifelong learning in arts for adults in our community.	(892) 83.4%	(135) 12.7%	(42) 3.9%

Appendix Table 27. Have You or Your Organization Use the TAC Online Grants System?

Table A-27. Have you or your organization used the online grants system of the Tennessee Arts Commission?	Frequency	Percentage
No	344	35.2
Yes	976	64.8

Appendix Table 28. Compare Your Participation in TN Arts and Culture Today to Before the Pandemic

Table A-28. Comparing your participation in TN arts and culture today to before the pandemic, has your participation increased, decreased, or stayed about the same since before the pandemic?	Frequency	Percentage
Less participation	161	17.5
More participation	371	40.2
Stayed about the same	390	42.3

Appendix Table 29. Barriers to Participation

Table A-29. Barriers to participation	Frequency	Percentage
Cost	334	38.5
Lack of free time	286	33.0
Few local options	214	24.7
Traffic/parking/transportation	189	21.8
Time of performance	126	14.5
Unfamiliar with venue and experience	112	12.9
Apprehension of not feeling welcome	63	7.3
Lack of childcare	61	7.0
Safety or security concerns	58	6.7
No one to go with	55	6.3
Accessibility concerns	52	6.0
Not interested	39	4.5
Health concerns	34	3.9
None of the above	201	23.2