British Columbia arts, culture, and heritage organizations in 2015

An in-depth analysis of organizations' structure, human resources, attendance, finances, community engagement, strengths, and challenges based on a major survey of 206 organizations

Prepared for

ALLIANCE FOR ARTS+CULTURE

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vancouver foundation

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Introduction

The BC Alliance for Arts + Culture, with funding from the Vancouver Foundation, commissioned Kelly Hill of Hill Strategies Research to conduct a major research project regarding the situation of the arts and culture in British Columbia. The project's four research streams include examining existing research and data, conducting a province-wide survey of not-for-profit arts and culture organizations, conducting interviews about best practices, and comparing revenue sources between select BC organizations and similar ones in other provinces.

This report summarizes findings from the province-wide survey of arts and culture organizations. The survey was available at www.BCculturesurvey.com between June 18 and July 20, 2015. The Alliance for Arts + Culture and Hill Strategies Research thank respondents for their time and openness in completing the survey.

206 B.C. arts and culture organizations completed at least a substantial portion of the survey. Some respondents skipped some questions, and the percentages in this report are based on the number responding to that question, not the overall number of usable (but partial) responses to the survey (i.e., 206).

A report from StepUp BC (*Characteristics of the Labour Market in BC's Non-Profit Sector*, March 2014) provides an estimate of 4,515 arts and culture organizations in the province. The 206 respondents to the survey represent 4.6% of this StepUp BC estimate. However, it should be noted that the StepUp BC estimate includes some organizations that are in existence but may not have been active during the year.

The StepUP BC report also estimates that there are 676 arts and culture organizations that are charities and have at least one employee (whether part-time or full-time). In the Alliance's survey, 86% of respondents have at least a part-time staff member and 67% are charities. A more appropriate statistic than the broad numbers above might be to compare the number of charities with staff responding to the Alliance's survey (120) with StepUp BC's estimated total of arts and culture charities of organizations with staff (676). In this case, the 120 responding charities with staff represent 18% of all arts and culture charities with staff.

While this was not a randomized survey, many efforts were made to ensure broad geographic and discipline distribution of respondents. As highlighted in the body of the report, responses were received from organizations in 45 different communities and 166 different postal codes across the province. In addition, organizations from a wide range of disciplines responded to the survey.

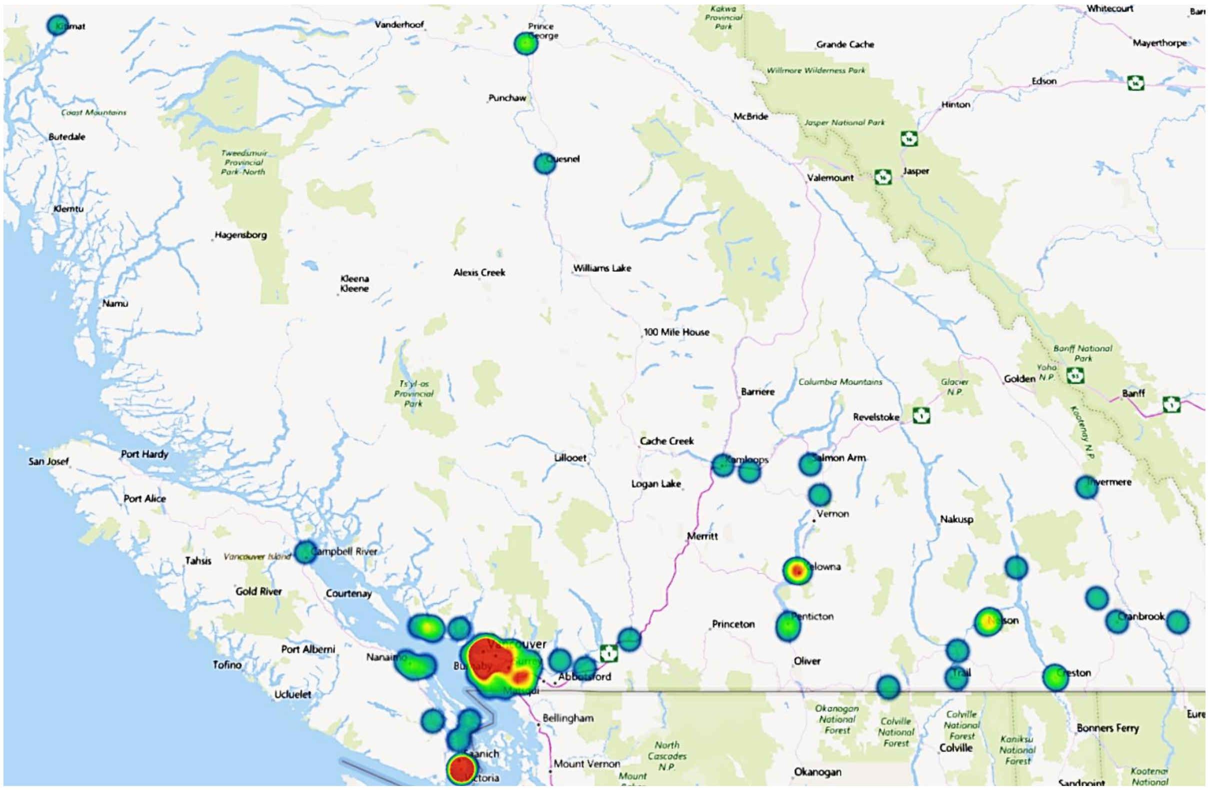
Key findings

Some of the key findings of the survey include the following:

- Most B.C. arts and culture organizations are deeply involved in education.
- Survey respondents reported total attendance of 4 million (equivalent to 88% of B.C. population), with over 1.5 million free attendees (both statistics based on 118 organizations with attendees).
- Essentially all of the province's arts and culture organizations are short of human resources, even the better financed ones. Many staff work extra unpaid hours. As noted by one survey respondent, "the job is 35 hours a week on paper, but in reality the job is a lifestyle."
- A majority of arts and culture organizations have a focus on or a mandate to serve culturally diverse individuals. Almost 40% reported a focus on or mandate to serve Aboriginal people.
- Arts and culture organizations primarily serve their municipal areas and broader regions. A significant minority serve the province, Canada, or international areas.
- Arts and culture organizations reported a range of benefits in their communities:
    - Artistic impacts
    - Stimulating thought
    - Education
    - Fostering creativity
- Major challenges reported by arts and culture organizations include:
    - Business and individual support
    - Facilities
    - Staff capacity
    - Competition (for time / from other entertainment options)
- Major strengths reported by arts and culture organizations include:
    - Retaining staff and attracting volunteers
    - Community partnerships
    - Education
    - Getting government support
    - Financial health
- The key issues anticipated for the next five years relate to staff capacity, facilities, and finances (earned revenues, general, government support).
- There are many differences in these key statistics for organizations in different regions of the province, in different disciplines, of different revenue sizes, and of different ages. One consistent element is the importance of overall staff capacity for the organizations' development in the next five years.

Location of responding organizations

Responses were received from organizations in 45 different communities and 166 different postal codes across the province. The “heat map” below shows the communities in which respondents are located. Red shading indicates the highest concentration of respondents (Vancouver, Victoria, and Kelowna), while lighter green shading represents a slightly above average concentration.



For analytical purposes, the responding organizations were grouped into the following regions. (Some regions of the province were combined because of the relatively small number of respondents.)

- City of Vancouver: 108 (54% of the 201 respondents that provided their location)
- Greater Vancouver / Southwest: 38 (19%)
- Thompson-Okanagan-Kootenay: 27 (13%)
- Vancouver Island / Coast: 24 (12%)
- North (including Prince George, Kitimat, and Quesnel): 4 (2%). Because of the small number of northern respondents, detailed breakdowns are not provided for these organizations.

Arts and culture disciplines

A wide range of organizations responded to the survey. The most commonly selected area of work is arts and culture education (121 respondents, or 59% of the 204 organizations responding to this question).

It should be noted that organizations were asked to choose *all areas* that apply to them, not the area in which they are the *most* active. Because of this, 981 selections were made by 204 different organizations, for an average of nearly 5 per organization.

As can be seen from the results, the phrase "arts and culture organizations" in this report refers to groups active in many arts disciplines, broader cultural areas, and heritage.

The arts and culture disciplines (except arts and culture education) are listed below in the order in which they appeared in the survey.

Live performance

- Music or opera: 75 respondents (37%)
- Theatre: 78 (38%)
- Dance: 54 (26%)
- Circus, puppetry, etc.: 20 (10%)
- Presentation or promotion of performing arts: 80 (39%)
- Festivals or celebrations of the performing arts: 68 (33%)

Visual arts

- Visual arts, photography, crafts: 60 (29%)
- Artist-run centres (visual arts): 15 (7%)
- Festivals or celebrations of the visual arts: 35 (17%)

Written and published works

- Books: 35 (17%)
- Periodicals / magazines: 15 (7%)
- Newspapers: 5 (2%)
- Other published works: 25 (12%)
- Festivals or celebrations of writing, publishing, or literature: 23 (11%)

Audio-visual and interactive media

- Film and/or video: 52 (25%)
- Artist-run centres (media arts): 9 (4%)
- Sound recording or music publishing: 14 (7%)
- Interactive media / gaming: 10 (5%)
- Broadcasting: 5 (2%)
- Festivals or celebrations of film, video, or other audio-visual and interactive media: 27 (13%)

Museums, heritage, and libraries

- Museums, public art galleries: 44 (22%)
- Libraries: 14 (7%)
- Archives: 31 (15)
- Historic and heritage sites, historic buildings, and archaeological sites: 21 (10%)
- Botanical gardens, zoos, aquariums, etc.: 2 (1%)
- Festivals or celebrations of museums, heritage, or libraries: 19 (9%)

Advertising, architecture, and design

- Advertising: 11 (5%)
- Architecture: 3 (1%)
- Design: 7 (3%)
- Festivals or celebrations of advertising, architecture, or design: 3 (1%)

Based on these responses as well as an examination of organizations' websites, Hill Strategies Research assigned a primary discipline to each respondent. A simple count of organizations by primary discipline confirms the diversity of respondents:

- Theatres: 35 (17% of all respondents)
- Music, including opera: 22 (11%)
- Multidisciplinary organizations, including local arts councils: 20 (10%)
- Festivals: 18 (9%)
- Art galleries and artist-run centres: 18 (9%)
- Dance: 17 (8%)
- Multidisciplinary venues: 14 (7%)
- Arts education: 12 (6%)
- Museums: 12 (6%)
- Books (publishing): 10 (5%)
- Heritage: 10 (5%)
- Associations: 8 (4%)
- Film: 7 (3%)
- Other: 3 (1%)

Many organizations of long standing

The median year of establishment of survey respondents is 1986, for a typical age of 29 years as of 2015. The oldest organization was established in 1894 (Museum of Vancouver), while the two newest organizations were formed in 2014.

Broken down by age ranges:

- 19 organizations have been in existence for less than 10 years (9% of the 202 organizations that provided their year of establishment)
- 52 have been in existence for 10 to 19 years (26%)
- 33 have been in existence for 20 to 29 years (16%)
- 35 have been in existence for 30 to 39 years (17%)
- 36 have been in existence for 40 to 49 years (18%)
- 27 have been in existence for at least 50 years (13%)

While these results are not definitive (i.e., do not include organizations closing over the years), they do hint at growth (and possibly increased competition) within the arts: 35% of responding organizations have been in existence for less than 20 years. Furthermore, the survey may underestimate younger organizations, as they might have been less likely to respond (lacking paid staff).

Relatively new organizations in dance, relatively old museums

Compared with the overall median of 29 years in existence, the "youngest" disciplines in B.C. are in:

- Dance (median age of 16, sample of 17 dance organizations responding)
- Arts education (median age of 16, n=12)
- Festivals (median age of 24, n=18)
- Multidisciplinary organizations (median age of 24, n=19)
- Theatre companies (median age of 25, n=35)

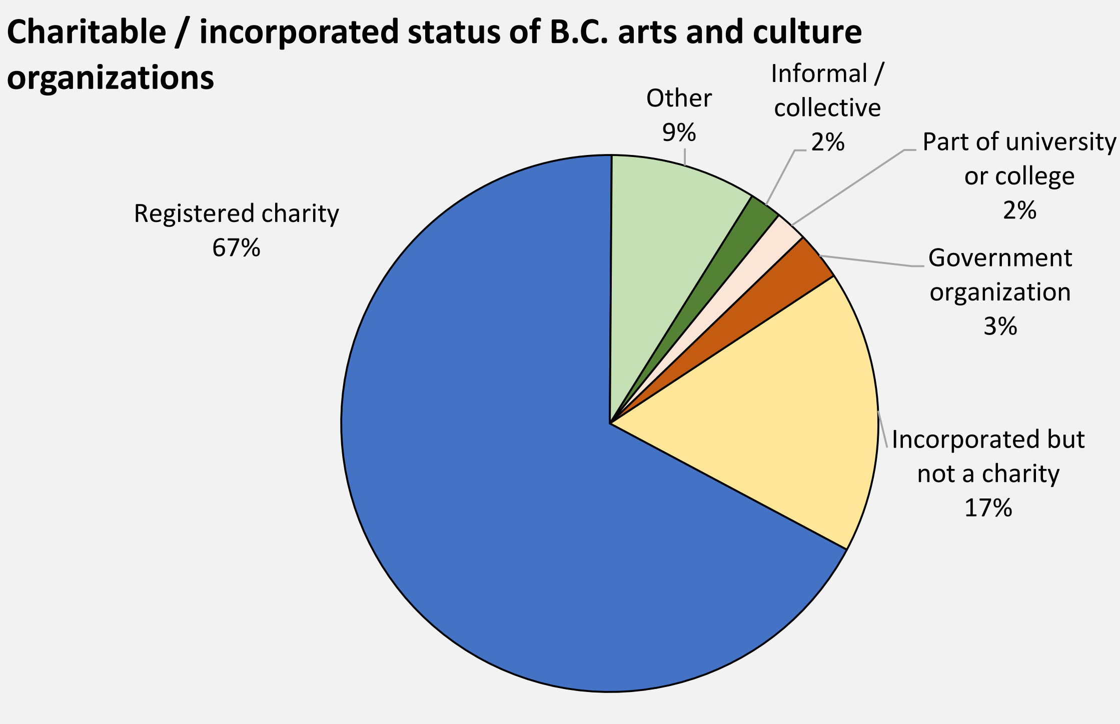
On the other hand, the "oldest" organizations are in:

- Museums (median age of 57, sample of 11 museums responding)
- Art galleries or artist-run centres (median age of 39, n=18)
- Associations (median age of 39, n=7)
- Book publishers (median age of 36, n=10)
- Music or opera companies (median age of 35, n=21)

Respondents are predominantly registered charities, governed by a board

As shown in the chart below, two-thirds of responding organizations are registered charities (138, or 67%). Another 35 respondents (17%) are incorporated not-for-profit societies without charitable status. The remaining options are much less common.

In keeping with the predominance of registered charities and other not-for-profit societies, 89% of respondents are governed by a Board of Directors or Trustees (184 respondents). Much less common are advisory committees (6 respondents, or 3%), municipal councils or other government representatives (4, or 2%), and other (12, or 6%).



Source: 205 B.C. arts and culture organizations responding to a survey by Hill Strategies Research, 2015

Human resources

The situation of human resources in the province's arts and culture organizations was a major focus of the survey. Findings in this area relate to paid staff members, unpaid overtime, staff benefits, performance reviews, artists hired, and volunteers engaged in arts and culture organizations.

Paid staff

Of the 194 organizations that provided their total full-time equivalent (FTE) staff numbers:

- 14% have no staff members
- Another 14% have a part-time or only 1 full-time staff member (i.e., >0 but <=1)
- 15% have between 1.1 and 2 FTE staff members
- 29% have between 2.1 and 5 FTE staff members
- 13% have between 5.1 and 10 FTE staff members
- 13% have more than 10 FTE staff members

A typical B.C. culture organization has about 3 FTE staff members, including between 1 and 1.5 FTE artistic staff (including exhibition, production, programming, and technical staff) and between 1 and 1.5 FTE administrative staff (including facility, marketing, communications, and fundraising staff). (These are median figures, which give an indication of the situation of a typical organization.)

In total, the 183 organizations that provided a staffing breakdown have 1,229 full-time equivalent staff members, split nearly equally between artistic (53%) and administrative staff (47%).

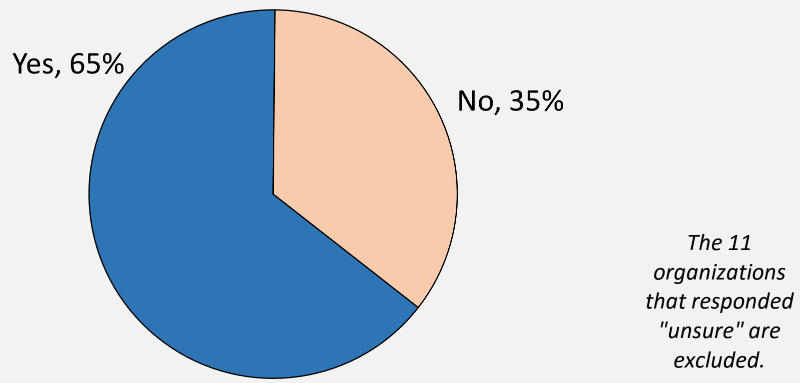
In addition, 89 responding organizations had 224 FTE positions covered by unpaid administrative staff, interns or student placements during their most recent fiscal year.

Two-thirds of responding organizations "staff up" at peak times of the year (66%, or 121 of the 183 organizations that provided staffing details). The maximum staff contingent of responding organizations is nearly 2,300 – nearly double the regular FTE staffing numbers.

Many culture workers do extra unpaid work

Extra unpaid work is very common among staff members in B.C. arts and culture organizations. The chart below shows that 65% of the organizations responding to this question (116 of 179) indicated that staff members do extra unpaid work.

Percentage of B.C. arts and culture organizations with staff members doing extra unpaid work



Source: 179 B.C. arts and culture organizations responding to a survey by Hill Strategies Research, 2015

Paid staff in different types of organizations

The median staff contingent in B.C. arts and culture organizations is 3. This number is very consistent across regions of the province, except the Thompson-Okanagan-Kootenay area, where the median FTE staff level is only 1.6. All other regions have a median of 3 staff members.

Staff members in arts and culture organizations in the Thompson-Okanagan-Kootenay region are most likely to do extra unpaid work: 81% of organizations in the region reported that this is the case, compared with the provincial average of 65%. On the other hand, only 48% of Vancouver Island / Coast organizations report that staff members do extra unpaid work. The percentages are close to the provincial average in the Greater Vancouver / Southwest region (72%) and the City of Vancouver (63%).

While the median staff levels are similar in most regions of the province, the total number of staff members in Vancouver based organizations represents 58% of workers in all responding organizations. (Vancouver organizations represent 54% of survey respondents.)

Typical staff levels vary by type of organization. For organization types with at least ten respondents, the median FTE staff levels are:

- Multidisciplinary venues: 6.6 (sample of 14 organizations responding)
- Museums: 5.9 (n=12)
- Arts education: 5.2 (n=12)
- Festivals: 4 (n=17)
- Art galleries or artist-run centres: 4 (n=18)

- Book publishers: 3.8 (n=10)
- Overall median: 3 (n=194)
- Music or opera companies: 3 (n=18)
- Dance: 2.5 (n=17)
- Theatre companies: 2.4 (n=32)
- Heritage organizations: 1.2 (n=10)
- Multidisciplinary organizations: 1 (n=19)

The proportion of organizations reporting extra unpaid staff work also varies by type of organization. Compared with the provincial average of 65% of organizations, 77% of dance organizations, festivals, and multidisciplinary organizations report that staff members do extra unpaid work. The proportions are also high for arts education organizations (73%) and music or opera companies (70%). The proportions are lower among theatre companies (still about one-half: 49%) and art galleries and artist-run centres (56%).

Not surprisingly, longer established organizations tend to have higher staff contingents. The median number of FTE staff members is:

- 0 for organizations under 10 years of age
- 2 for organizations in existence for 10 to 19 years
- 3 for organizations in existence for 20 to 29 years
- 4 for organizations in existence for 30 to 39 years
- 4 for organizations in existence for 40 to 49 years
- 5 for organizations in existence for at least 50 years

While it might be expected that 61% of organizations in existence for less than 10 years do not have a paid staff member, it is more surprising that 16% of B.C. arts and culture organizations in existence for 10 to 19 years still have no staff. In addition, among the “younger” organizations that have paid staff, there is a high percentage reporting that staff members do extra unpaid work (73%-74% of organizations under 20 years of age).

As expected, staffing levels increase by budget size. Organizations with revenues of $2 million or more account for 52% of total employment in B.C. arts and culture organizations responding to the survey. These larger organizations represent only 14% of all survey respondents.

The median number of FTE staff members by revenue size is:

- 0 for organizations with total revenues under $100,000 (n=35 organizations)
- 1 for organizations with total revenues between $100,000 and $199,999 (n=26)
- 2.5 for organizations with total revenues between $200,000 and $399,999 (n=33)
- 4 for organizations with total revenues between $400,000 and $1 million (n=34)
- 7 for organizations with total revenues between $1 million and $2 million (n=24)
- 21 for organizations with total revenues of $2 million or more (n=24)

Smaller budget organizations are most likely to report that staff members do extra unpaid work. Compared with the provincial average of 65%, unpaid work was reported by 77% of organizations with budgets under $100,000 and 89% of those with budgets between $100,000 and $199,999.

Comments regarding paid staff

Respondents' comments regarding their paid staff situation reflect the numerous challenges that come with limited staff budgets, a fluctuating number of staff, and a tremendous amount of work. For example:

- "[We are] desperately in need of more people to help ease the overwhelming burden of work. Also need money to pay for them."
- "Staff are woefully underpaid while carrying significant responsibilities. Opportunities are lost due to inadequate staff resources."

Regarding the extra unpaid work that they do for their organizations, respondents commented that:

- "The job is 35 hours a week on paper, but in reality the job is a lifestyle".
- "We work much more than we have been contracted to, but that is what happens when you have two staff running an organization".
- "I do what is necessary in order to keep things going – which extends well beyond a normal work week".
- "Our organization would not be able to run its programming unless the paid staff were working as if they were being paid for full time".

A small number of organizations mentioned that they try to limit staff from working extra time uncompensated, as well as offer time off in lieu, but find it difficult to keep track with events and committee work outside of work hours. Many suspect that staff are putting in unpaid hours.

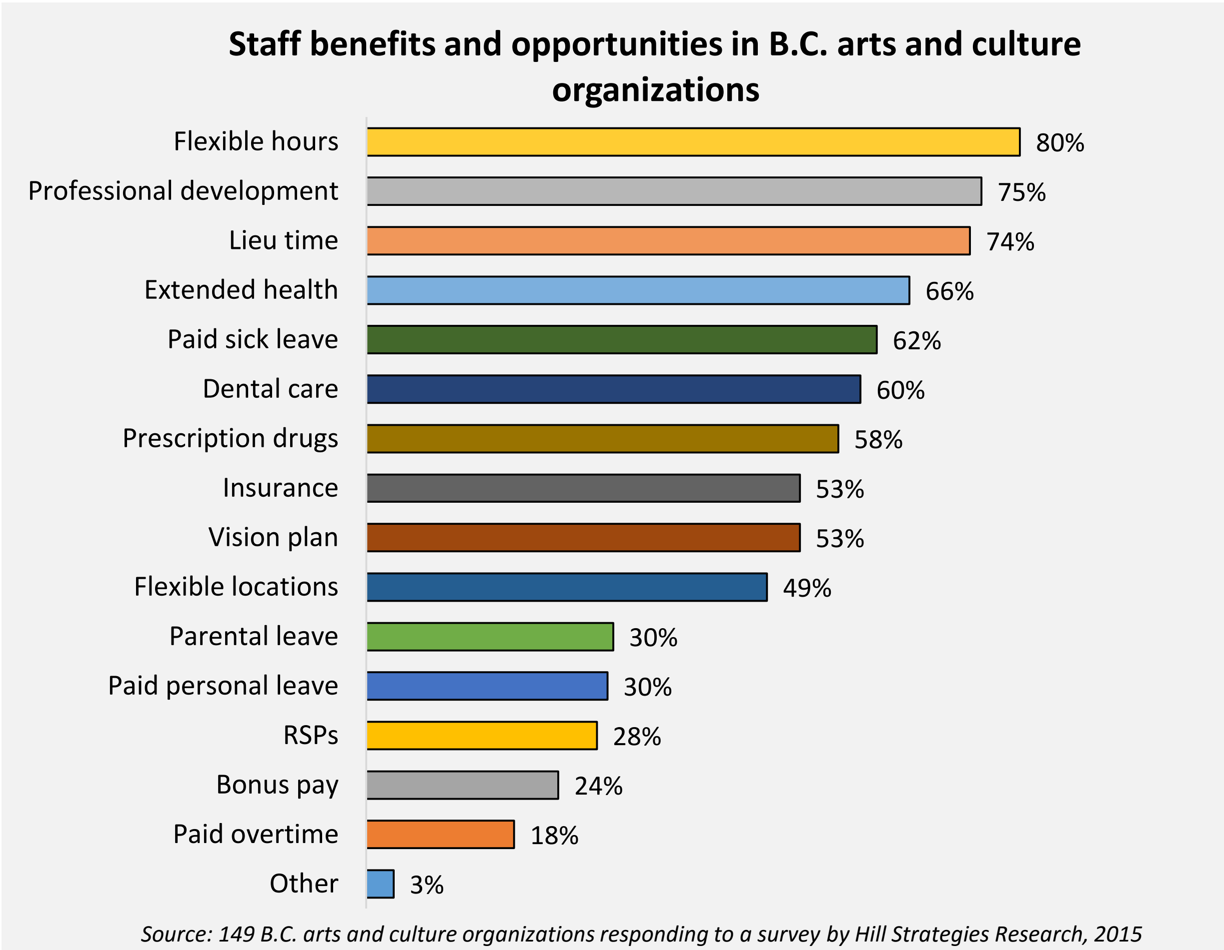
Staff benefits and opportunities

As shown in the chart below, the most common staff benefits and opportunities in B.C. arts and culture organizations are flexible work hours (80% of the 149 responding organizations) and professional development opportunities (75%). A large number of organizations provide time off in lieu of payment for overtime (74%), while only 18% provide paid overtime.

Two-thirds of responding organizations (66%) have extended health coverage for employees, 62% have paid sick leave, and 60% provide dental care.

Along with paid overtime, other benefits that are **not** commonly provided by B.C. arts and culture organizations include bonus pay (24% of respondents), retirement savings plans or contributions (28%), paid personal leave (30%), and parental leave (30%).

25 organizations indicated that they do not provide benefits, largely for financial reasons (i.e., "lack of budget" as noted by one respondent).



Extended health benefits for different types of organizations

As noted above, 66% of responding organizations offer extended health benefits. On a regional basis, there is not much variation in the percentage of organizations providing extended health benefits.

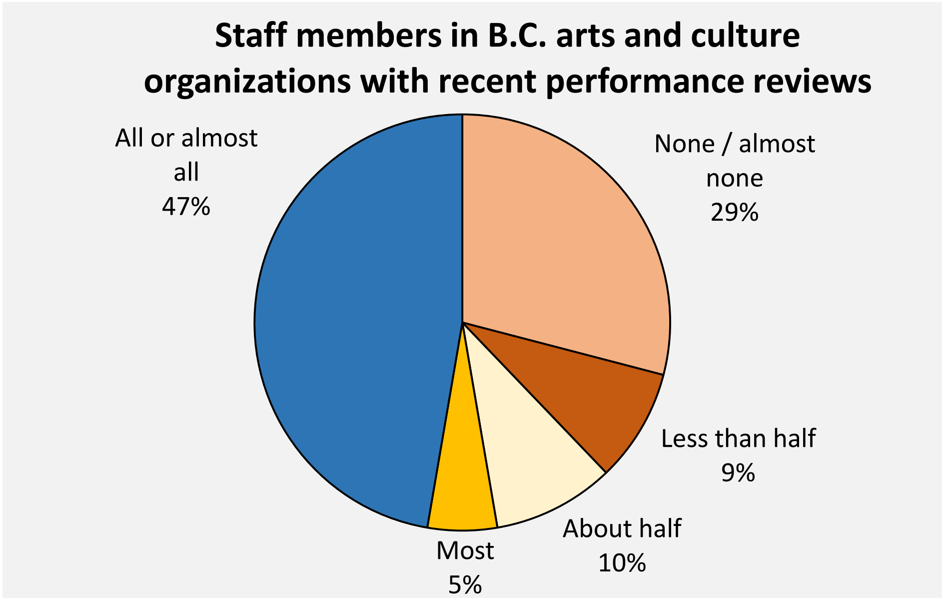
As might be expected, younger organizations are least likely to provide extended health coverage. Compared with the provincial average of 66%, extended health is provided by only 50% of organizations between 0 and 9 years of age and 46% of organizations between 10 and 19 years of age. Extended health benefits are most common for the longest standing organizations (91% of those in existence for 50 years or more).

Similarly, smaller budget organizations are least likely to provide extended health benefits. Compared with the provincial average of 66%, extended health is provided by 50% of organizations with revenues under $100,000, 30% of those with budgets between $100,000 and $199,999, and 48% of those with revenues between $200,000 and $399,999. Extended health benefits are more common for larger organizations: 74% of organizations with budgets between $400,000 and $999,999, 88% of those with revenues between $1 million and $2 million, and 96% of those with revenues of $2 million or more provide extended health coverage.

Formal performance reviews

Almost one-half of responding arts and culture organizations have had formal performance reviews for all (or almost all) staff in the past 12 months, as shown in the chart below. On the other hand, 29% of organizations conducted no performance reviews in the past year.

In other words, while many arts and culture organizations are conducting regular performance reviews, the next largest number of organizations have no performance reviews. There are relatively few organizations in the middle.



Source: 148 B.C. arts and culture organizations responding to a survey by Hill Strategies Research, 2015

Comments regarding staff benefits and opportunities

The most common comment regarding staff benefits and opportunities was that organizations cannot afford to provide a benefit plan. For example:

- "Since we are a small organisation, benefit package costs are too expensive for what they offer. It would be great to have an arts non-profit umbrella organisation that can pool staff so that we could all buy into a provincial wide or nationwide benefit plan". [Note: The Alliance for Arts + Culture does have such a plan for its members.]

Other organizations that don't offer benefits noted that their staff is entirely contract or part-time workers. The StepUP BC project found that 84% of employees in arts and culture charities worked part-time or part-year in 2012 (based on Canada Revenue Agency data).

Artists paid fees or salaries

In total, nearly 9,300 artists were paid fees by 170 responding arts and culture organizations, for an average of 55 artists per organization that pays fees. A typical B.C. arts and culture organization engaged 22 artists during the past year.

On average, arts and culture organizations had 1.4 artists on staff (i.e., paid salaries).

Volunteers

184 responding organizations (out of 204 responding at that point in the survey, or 90%) reported that their organizations have a total of 19,000 volunteers, including 1,700 board members and 17,300 other volunteers.

These volunteers donated over 450,000 hours of their time to the 184 arts and culture organizations. This equates to about 226 full-time equivalent positions.

A typical arts and culture organization in B.C. has 56 volunteers contributing nearly 1,400 hours. This equates to about two-thirds of a full-time equivalent position for each arts and culture organization.

High volunteer numbers are not always a positive indicator. It is possible that some volunteers would be paid for their work done if the organizations had sufficient budgets to cover their operations. Also, some organizations might rely too heavily on specific volunteers, potentially making them vulnerable to burnout in the longer term.

From written-in comments, it is clear that B.C. arts and culture organizations do indeed rely quite heavily on volunteers:

- "Without volunteers we can't continue".
- "Our volunteers are a part of the core, an essential piece in executing our festivals on a tight budget. Our volunteers also ensure that our festivals are for the people, keeping us connected and accessible to our community."
- "We rely on volunteers from the organization membership for many production, marketing, coordination tasks."

The written-in comments also seem to show that B.C. arts and culture organizations are in a range of situations regarding their ability to attract volunteers:

- "It is very difficult in rural communities to recruit volunteers. Many people are volunteering for or sitting on the boards of numerous organizations as we do not seem to have enough people to go around. Many volunteers are retirees as they are the only ones who can afford the time, younger people tend to be more transient because of work/lack of work opportunities. Many people want to live here, but it can be difficult to make it work economically. This impacts the availability of volunteers".
- "Volunteerism varies wildly…. Members are struggling just to pay their rent and we find volunteers hard to attract particularly in this city where most need at least two jobs if not three to pay housing costs and other expenses. The traditional model of non-profit structures and volunteerism was based in the era between 1960 and 2000. The economics of current times have altered this reality and it would be refreshing if those at the top would at least acknowledge this. Unless there is a payoff (such as admission to glitzy events or film screenings), it is difficult to attract volunteers."

Attendance / participation

Total attendance was 4 million in the 118 organizations that provided their total attendance figure. (Approximately 30% of responding organizations are not attendance-based.)

In the 110 organizations that provided a full breakdown of their attendance, paid attendees represent 56% of overall attendance. Nearly 1.5 million free admissions were offered, representing 44% of total attendance.

Note: Multidisciplinary venues and organizations with rental clients were asked to provide the broadest possible picture of their attendance and finances.

Attendance / participation in different types of organizations

Total attendance at Vancouver-based organizations was 1.9 million, or 47% of total attendance in all responding organizations. Greater Vancouver / southwest B.C. organizations had total attendance of 1.1 million (29% of the total). Total attendance at Thompson-Okanagan-Kootenay organizations was 460,000 (12%). Vancouver Island / Coast organizations had total attendance of 300,000 (8% of the total).

Data on total attendance are relatively robust (i.e., minimum of ten respondents) in only six types of organizations. Multidisciplinary venues have the highest attendance totals (1 million, 26% of overall attendance, 12 venues reporting), followed by festivals (630,000, 16%, 12 festivals reporting), theatre companies (570,000, 14%, 27 theatres reporting), museums (527,000, 13%, 10 museums reporting), music or opera companies (410,000, 10%, 11 companies reporting), and dance organizations (79,000, 2%, 13 organizations reporting).

Larger budget organizations represent a significant proportion of total attendance: the 12% of responding organizations with revenues of $2 million or more represent 45% of total attendance (1.8 million out of 4 million). The 17% of responding organizations with budgets between $1 and $2 million had 1 million in attendance (26% of the total). The 27% of responding organizations with revenues between $400,000 and $1 million accounted for 22% of total attendance (852,000).

Smaller budget organizations account for much smaller shares of overall attendance: the 18% of responding organizations with budgets between $200,000 and $400,000 had 180,000 in total attendance (5% of the total). The two smallest budget groups each accounted for 1% of total attendance (34,000 for those with revenues between $100,000 and $200,000, and 48,000 for those with revenues under $100,000).

Older organizations do not have as dominant a share of total attendance as larger budget organizations. Total attendance by age of organization is as follows:

- 71,000 for organizations under 10 years of age (representing 2% of total attendance and 8% of responding organizations)
- 762,000 for organizations in existence for 10 to 19 years (representing 20% of attendance and 25% of responding organizations)
- 972,000 for organizations in existence for 20 to 29 years (representing 25% of attendance and 18% of responding organizations)

- 382,000 for organizations in existence for 30 to 39 years (representing 10% of attendance and 17% of responding organizations)
- 817,000 for organizations in existence for 40 to 49 years (representing 21% of attendance and 19% of responding organizations)
- 829,000 for organizations in existence for at least 50 years (representing 22% of attendance and 14% of responding organizations)

Operating finances

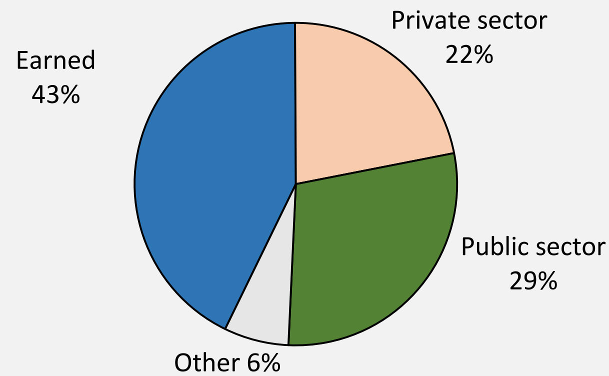
177 organizations reported data on their operating finances based on their most recently completed fiscal year (2014 or 2015). In 40 of these cases, the survey data were incomplete or did not make sense mathematically. In these cases, data from the Canada Revenue Agency's Charities Listing were used.

The 177 B.C. arts and culture organizations had total revenues of $180.6 million and total expenses of $172.8 million, for a surplus equivalent to 4% of total revenues. Of the 177 organizations that provided their revenues and expenses, 70% reported a balanced budget or surplus, while the other 30% experienced an operating deficit.

A typical B.C. arts and culture organization has total revenues of $355,000 and total expenses of $350,000.

The following chart shows that earned revenues (including admissions, touring, workshops, classes, and other earned revenues) represent 43% of total revenues, followed by public funding (29%), private sector revenues (22%, including individual donations, corporate donations and sponsorships, fundraising initiatives, net revenues from trusts, endowments and investments, other private sector revenues), and other revenue sources (6%).

Revenue sources of B.C. arts and culture organizations



Source: 177 B.C. arts and culture organizations responding to a survey by Hill Strategies Research or reporting to the Canada Revenue Agency, 2014 or 2015

Revenue sources in different types of organizations

There are some differences in the revenue sources of organizations based on their location in the province. However, in addition to location as a factor, there may also be differences in the types of organizations reporting from each region, which could influence the statistics.

Vancouver Island / Coast organizations generate the highest percentage from earned revenues (49%), while organizations in the Thompson-Okanagan-Kootenay region generate the least (32%). Vancouver and Greater Vancouver / Southwest organizations generate 42% of their revenues from earned sources (essentially equal to the provincial average of 43%).

Private sector fundraising is also highest for Vancouver Island / Coast organizations (27%, compared with the provincial average of 22%). On average, Thompson-Okanagan-Kootenay organizations raise 19% of their revenues, while Vancouver organizations raise an average of 25%. Greater Vancouver / Southwest organizations generate the lowest percentage of revenues from the private sector (9%).

Vancouver Island / Coast organizations receive the lowest percentage from government sources (23%), similar to the percentage for Vancouver organizations (24%). Organizations in the Thompson-Okanagan-Kootenay region receive the highest proportion of their revenues from public sector sources (49%), while Greater Vancouver / Southwest organizations receive 42%. The provincial average is 29%.

Other revenues not accounted for in previous categories represent the remainder of the revenues in each region (ranging from 1% for Vancouver Island / Coast organizations to 8% for Vancouver and Greater Vancouver / Southwest organizations).

Overall, 70% of the organizations that provided their revenues and expenses reported a balanced budget or an operating surplus. The proportion of organizations with a balanced budget or surplus was larger among Greater Vancouver / Southwest organizations (79%) than in the other regions (68% of Vancouver Island / Coast organizations, 67% of City of Vancouver organizations, and 62% of Thompson-Okanagan-Kootenay organizations).

The table below shows the variations in revenue sources by type of organization (where a minimum of ten organizations reported their revenue sources). The table is sorted by public sector percentage of revenues (lowest first). Arts education organizations receive a low percentage of their revenues from government sources and earn a very high percentage. Festivals and music / opera companies both receive relatively low percentages from government. These organizations generate substantial revenues from both earned and private sector sources. Theatre companies, like arts education organizations, generate much more from earned revenues than private sector revenues.

Of these nine types of organizations, only music / opera companies and multidisciplinary venues reported collective operating deficits.

Type of organization	Earned	Private sector	Public sector	Other	# respondents
Arts education	54%	22%	13%	11%	11
Festivals	35%	34%	19%	12%	14
Theatre companies	57%	17%	24%	2%	34
Music / opera companies	36%	36%	25%	3%	22
Museums	37%	7%	36%	21%	11
Dance	36%	22%	41%	1%	15
Multidisciplinary venues	42%	7%	43%	8%	11
Multidisciplinary organizations	39%	11%	46%	4%	16
Art galleries / artist-run centres	15%	27%	51%	7%	16
All responding organizations	**43%**	**22%**	**29%**	**6%**	**177**

Source: 177 B.C. arts and culture organizations responding to a survey by Hill Strategies Research or reporting to the Canada Revenue Agency, 2014 or 2015

The following table shows the variations in revenue sources by budget size and age of organization. Large organizations earn the highest proportion of their revenues and receive the lowest proportion from government sources. Public sector revenues vary much less among other sizes of organizations. Private sector revenues do not follow a consistent pattern (and do not vary that much by budget size).

The smallest and largest organizations are most likely to report a balanced budget or a surplus: 79% of organizations with revenues below $100,000 did so, as did 77% of those with budgets between $1 and $2 million and 71% of those with budgets over $2 million. Balanced budgets or surpluses were not as common among organizations in the middle revenue ranges, especially organizations with revenues between $100,000 and $200,000 (56%). 67% of organizations with revenues between $200,000 and $400,000 and 65% of those with budgets between $400,000 and $1 million reported a balanced budget or surplus.

There are no consistent patterns in revenue sources by age of organization. However, older organizations are most likely to report a balanced budget or a surplus: 70% of organizations in existence for 30 to 39 years, 82% of those in existence for 40 to 49 years, and 70% of those in existence for 50 or more years reported balanced budgets or surpluses. This compares with 62% of organizations under 10 years old, 69% of those in existence for 10 to 19 years, and 61% of those in existence for 20 to 29 years.

Budget size	Earned	Private sector	Public sector	Other
Less than $100,000	28%	25%	43%	4%
$100,000 to $199,999	21%	23%	48%	9%
$200,000 to $399,999	31%	19%	44%	6%
$400,000 to $999,999	30%	24%	41%	6%
$1,000,000 to $1,999,999	39%	19%	40%	3%
$2,000,000 or more	49%	23%	21%	8%
All responding organizations	**43%**	**22%**	**29%**	**6%**
Age of organization	Earned	Private sector	Public sector	Other
0 to 9 years	45%	44%	11%	0%
10 to 19 years	35%	17%	28%	20%
20 to 29 years	39%	25%	35%	1%
30 to 39 years	46%	22%	28%	4%
40 to 49 years	49%	14%	32%	5%
50 years or more	39%	28%	29%	4%
All responding organizations	**43%**	**22%**	**29%**	**6%**

Source: 177 B.C. arts and culture organizations responding to a survey by Hill Strategies Research or reporting to the Canada Revenue Agency, 2014 or 2015

Community engagement and collaborations

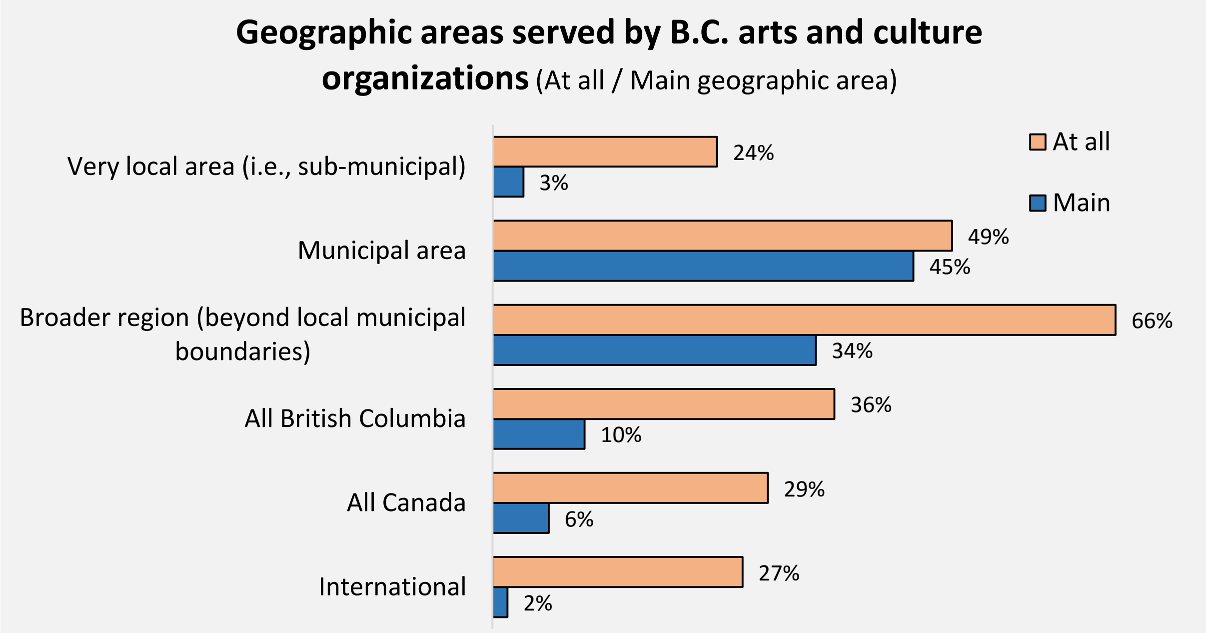
Geographic areas served

Respondents were asked two similar questions about the geographic areas that they serve (What geographic areas are served by your organization? and What is the primary geographic area served by your organization?).

The most common geographic area served (at all) is the broader region (beyond local municipal boundaries), selected by 66% of responding organizations. The municipal area was selected by 49% of respondents.

Over one-third of respondents serve all of the province (36%), while about three in ten serve all of Canada (29%). Similar percentages of responding organizations have an international focus (27%) or a focus on a very local, sub-municipal area (24%). These are represented by the orange bars in the below chart.

The most commonly selected **main** geographic area (the blue bars in the below chart) is the municipal area (45% of responding organizations). The broader region beyond municipal boundaries was the second most commonly selected main geographic area (34% of respondents).



Source: 183 B.C. arts and culture organizations responding to a survey by Hill Strategies Research, 2015

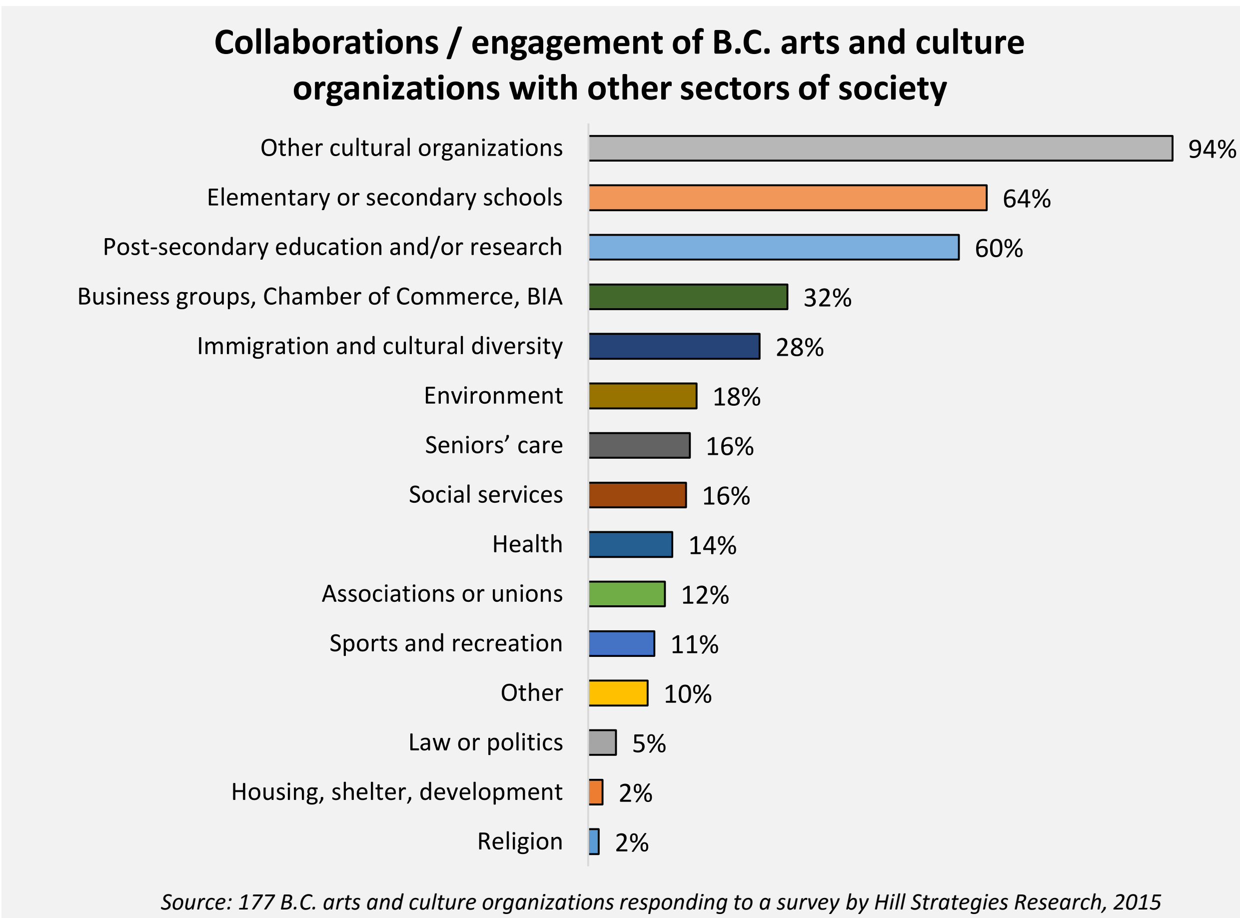
Respondents were asked whether they participated in important local community or provincial activities or festivals during their most recent fiscal year. Among responding organizations, 66% participated in a local festival, 34% participated in Culture Days, and 46% participated in other activities or festivals.

Engagement and collaborations

Not surprisingly, arts and culture organizations most frequently collaborate with other cultural organizations. In fact, almost all respondents (94%) indicated that they do so.

Nearly two-thirds of respondents are engaged with elementary or secondary schools (64%) or post-secondary schools or researchers (60%).

Fewer arts and culture organizations engage with business groups (32%) or organizations in the areas of immigration or cultural diversity (28%). Even fewer organizations collaborate in other areas of society, as shown in the chart below.



139 respondents provided an example of their activities involving engagement and collaborations.

- 59 groups mentioned collaborating with other arts and culture organizations;
- 42 commented on working with students in elementary and secondary schools, 21 mentioned working with post-secondary schools and students, and 10 referred to educational activities with groups of all ages, including adults;
- 25 groups commented on their outreach activities with community groups;
- 14 groups mentioned collaborations with businesses, BIAs and or chambers of commerce;
- 13 respondents mentioned activity relating to promoting cultural diversity;

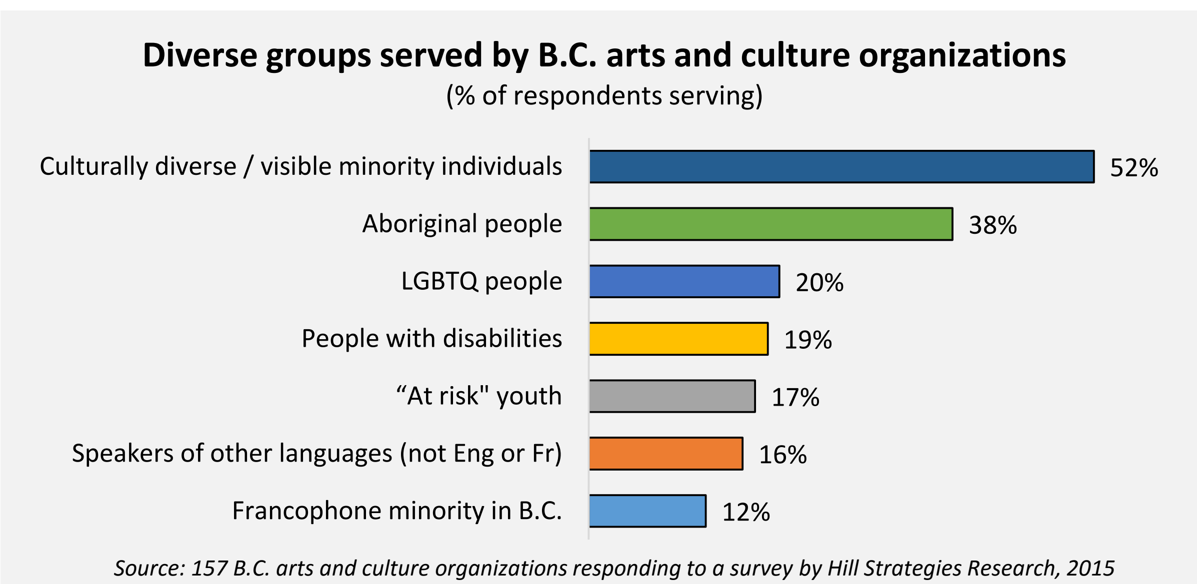
- 11 respondents commented on their collaboration and outreach to Aboriginal communities;
- 14 groups mentioned collaborations with businesses, BIAs and or chambers of commerce;
- 10 groups cited activities with seniors and seniors' residences;
- 3 respondents mentioned working with and presenting work for people with disabilities;
- 3 groups cited work with at-risk youth; and
- 2 respondents mentioned with work with LGBT communities, particularly LGBT youth.

Respondents provided comments on a wide variety of engagement activities with various groups and diverse communities, such as:

- "We focus on art from all sectors, but specifically focus on First Nations because we occupy premises on their traditional territory and because they have their own very vibrant artistic tradition".
- "We partner with a wide variety of other community groups and organizations (festivals, theatres, youth centres). Our recent programming has offered queer and questioning youth performance and dialogue opportunities; the youth were also primarily recruited through local secondary schools".
- "We aim to be inclusive of all. We DO notice that in Metro Vancouver, there are venues accessible for those in wheelchairs to be in the audience, but NOT to access stage areas as performers".
- "A new initiative this coming season involves partnering with the Okanagan Boys and Girls Club to involve 'at risk' youth in a for-youth by-youth creation".

Diversity

Many B.C. arts and culture organizations focus on or have a mandate to serve a range of diverse groups, including culturally diverse individuals (52% of responding organizations), Aboriginal people (38%), LGBTQ people (20%), people with disabilities (19%), "at risk" youth (17%), speakers of languages other than English or French (16%), and the Francophone minority in B.C. (12%).

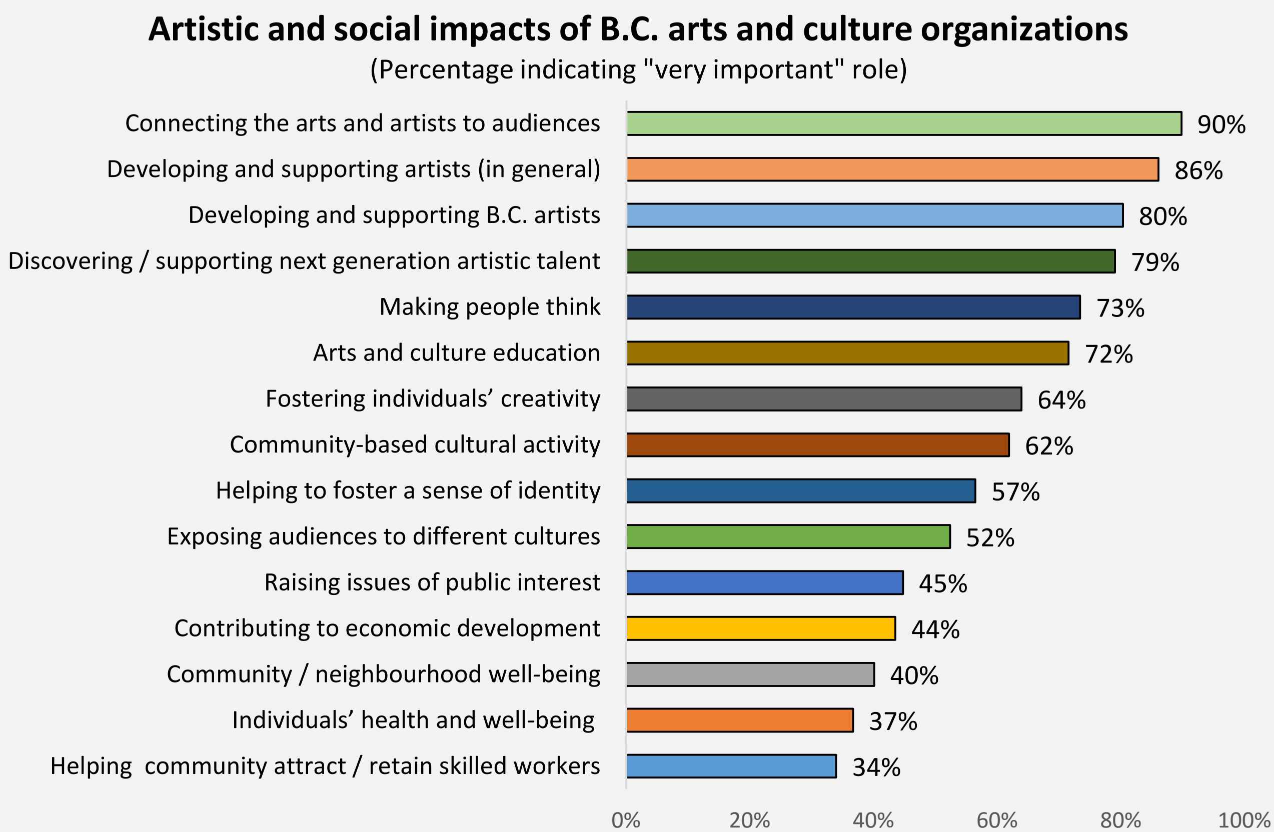


Benefits and impacts of B.C. arts and culture organizations

Respondents were asked if they believe that their organization plays a very important, somewhat important, or not important role in 15 different areas related to the arts and to community well-being or economic outcomes.

Not surprisingly, the artistic outcomes were selected as very important by the largest proportion of respondents. As presented in the chart below, 90% of respondents believe that their organization plays a very important role in connecting the arts and artists to audiences. Between 79% and 86% of respondents believe that their organization plays a very important role in developing and supporting artists, B.C. artists, and next generation artists. "Making people think" was selected by 73% of respondents, while 72% chose arts and culture education.

On the other hand, relatively few organizations believe that they play a very important role in helping their community attract or retain skilled workers (34%), enhancing individuals' health and well-being (37%), enhancing community or neighbourhood well-being (40%), or contributing to economic development (44%).



Source: 150-177 B.C. arts and culture organizations responding to a survey by Hill Strategies Research, 2015

Strengths and challenges of B.C. arts and culture organizations

Respondents were asked whether, in the current environment, they perceive 26 different issues as a challenge or a strength for their organizations. Respondents rated each item on a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 equals a major challenge and 5 equals a major strength.

Six of the 26 issues were selected as a strength (rating of 4 or 5) by more than one-half of respondents:

- Developing and maintaining community partnerships (60%)
- Governance (57%)
- Education / Young audience development (56%)
- Community engagement or outreach (55%)
- Retaining qualified staff (e.g., turnover, reliance on short-term workers) (55%)
- Strategic planning (52%)

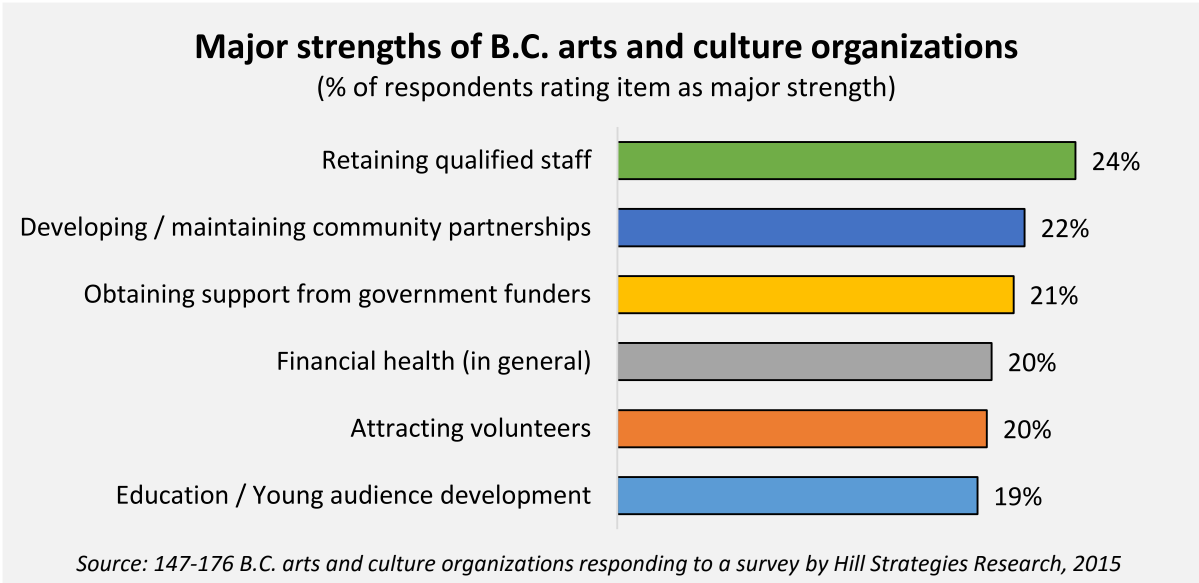
The six most common challenges (ratings of 1 or 2) are:

- Competition from other demands on people's time (64%)
- Obtaining support from businesses (62%)
- Competition from other sources of entertainment (54%)
- Facilities / physical plant (54%)
- Obtaining support from individuals (49%)
- Overall staff capacity (47%)

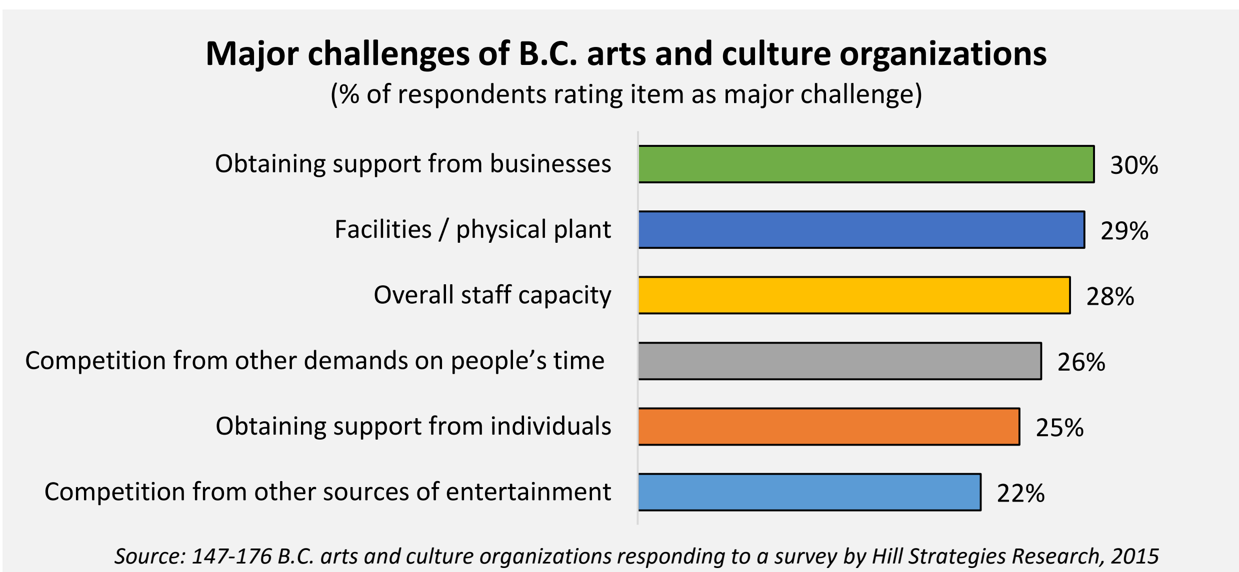
The responses were analyzed a second way in order to identify the most significant strengths and most acute challenges. The following charts look at the percentage of respondents indicating that an item is a **major strength** (rating = 5) or a **major challenge** (rating = 1). In theory, the same issue could be on both of these lists (i.e., a major strength in some organizations but a major challenge in many others) yet have a moderate overall ranking. That was not the case in this survey, however.

The first chart shows that only three of the six items from the above list of common strengths were also considered to be **major** strengths (i.e., retaining qualified staff, developing and maintaining community partnerships, and education / young audience development).

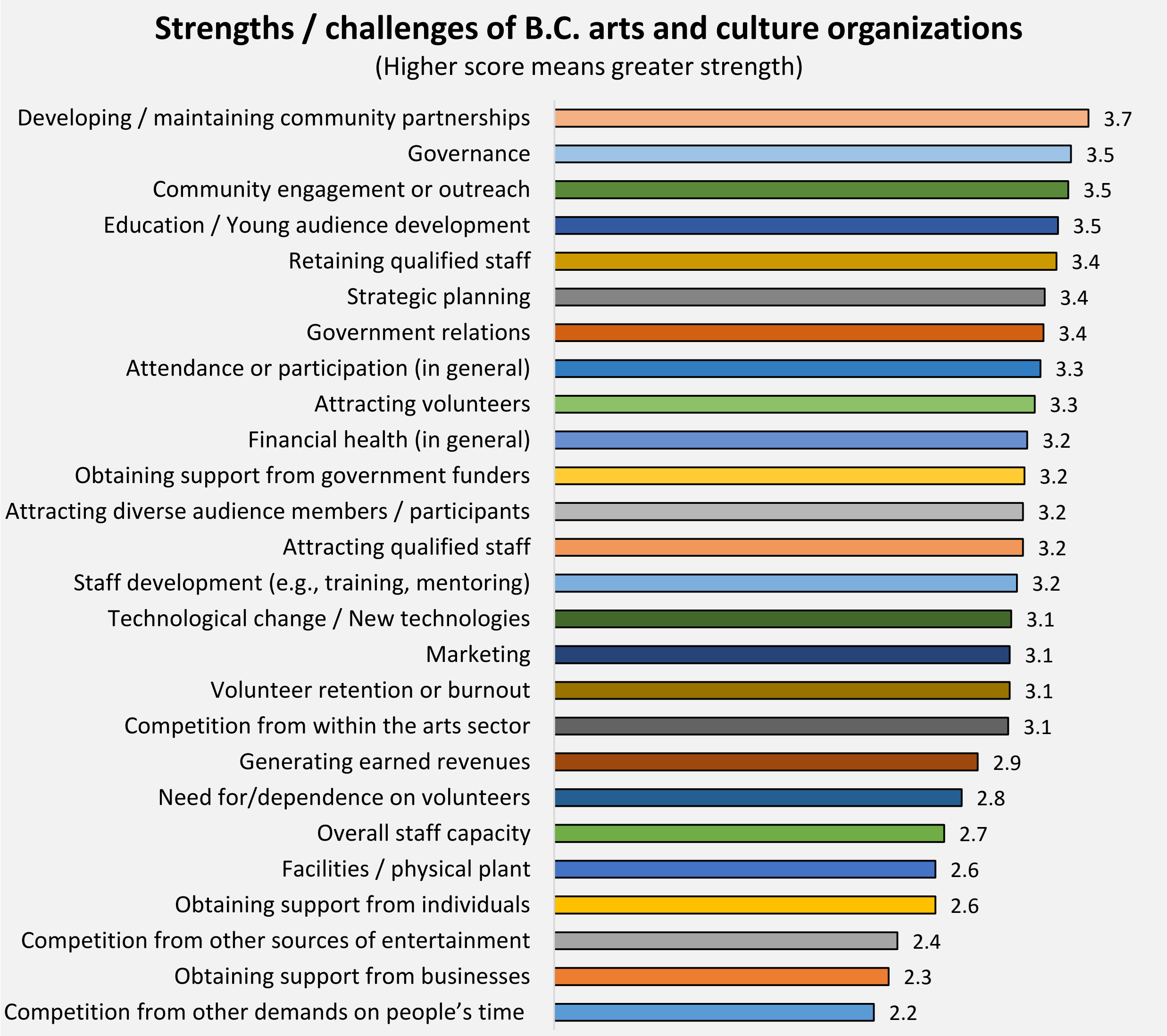
Three other items moved onto the list of top major strengths: support from government funders, financial health, and attracting volunteers.



All six items from the initial list of challenges were also considered to be **major** challenges, with slight changes in their order, as shown in the chart below.



A third way of analyzing the results is to examine the average score for each of the 26 items. The chart below shows that the same items as in the initial analysis received the highest and lowest average ratings, with some changes in order.



Source: 147-176 B.C. arts and culture organizations responding to a survey by Hill Strategies Research, 2015

Comments regarding strengths and challenges

Many organizations provided comments or further details regarding their strengths and challenges.

Reflecting on their strengths, respondents provided comments such as:

- "Our main strength is in the staff we employ. Highly qualified and dedicated".
- "We have an amazing collaborative team both admin and artistic".
- "We have a great relationship with the city".
- "Fundraising is a major strength that is central to our progress and sustainability".

Other comments reflect the most common challenges, including competition for attendees' time, the availability and affordability of proper facilities, and funding challenges related to staffing:

- "The major challenge is the competition from other children's activities. There are so many to choose from in today's society that finding committed singers and their families is a challenge".
- "Vancouver's current real estate situation is a major problem".
- "Without having a stable space, planning for growth and strategies are very challenging".
- "The biggest challenge is securing enough funding for our organization to pay staff well enough to avoid burn-out".
- "Staff capacity: we make the most of what we have, all staff are working to the max, but finding the funding to maintain or build on capacity is a challenge".

Major strengths and challenges in different types of organizations

Major strengths

As noted above, six major strengths were selected by the largest number of arts and culture organizations: retaining qualified staff (24%); developing and maintaining community partnerships (22%); support from government funders (21%); financial health (20%), attracting volunteers (also 20%); and education / young audience development (19%).

While retaining qualified staff was selected as a major strength by many organizations in all regions, most other major strengths varied between the regions. For example, community partnerships were identified as a major strength by 25% of Vancouver respondents but only 10% of those from the Vancouver Island / Coast region.

Similarly, obtaining support from government funders was a major strength for 28% of Vancouver respondents (making it the most commonly selected major strength among Vancouver respondents), compared with only 12% of organizations in the Greater Vancouver / Southwest region and 11% of those in the Vancouver Island / Coast region.

In the Greater Vancouver / Southwest region, the most commonly selected major strength was overall financial health (30%). In contrast, only 10% of organizations in the Thompson-Okanagan-Kootenay region indicated that their overall financial health was a major strength.

Compared with the provincial average of 20%, attracting volunteers was most commonly selected by Vancouver Island / Coast organizations (22%) and Vancouver organizations (21%) and less commonly selected by Thompson-Okanagan-Kootenay organizations (14%) and those in the Greater Vancouver / Southwest region (16%).

Compared with the provincial average of 19%, education and young audience development was most commonly selected by Thompson-Okanagan-Kootenay organizations (25% - the most common major strength in this region) and those in the Greater Vancouver / Southwest region (also 25%) than Vancouver Island / Coast organizations (16%) and Vancouver organizations (also 16%).

The most commonly selected major strength among organizations in the Vancouver Island / Coast region was staff development (including training and mentoring). Staff development was selected by 25% of Vancouver Island / Coast organizations, compared with 11% of all organizations in the province (and only 6% of Vancouver based organizations).

There are different major strengths for organizations in different budget ranges. There was little consensus among smaller organizations: the most commonly selected items were chosen by only 21% of organizations under $100,000 (education / young audience development) and 18% of those with budgets between $100,000 and $200,000 (obtaining support from government funders).

On the other hand, the most common strengths were clearer for larger organizations. Those with revenues between $200,000 and $400,000 most commonly selected retaining qualified staff (39%). Organizations with revenues between $400,000 and $1 million most frequently selected obtaining support from government funders (38%). Those with budgets between $1 million and $2 million emphasized general financial health (44%), while the largest organizations ($2 million or more) emphasized their ability to attract volunteers (37%).

The youngest organizations emphasized their ability to attract volunteers (major strength for 43% of organizations under 10 years of age) and their ability to retain qualified staff (36%). Developing and maintaining community partnerships was selected as a major strength by 28% of organizations between 10 and 19 years of age. Three major strengths were selected by about one-third of organizations in existence for 20 to 29 years: facilities / physical plant (33%); financial health (32%); and obtaining support from government funders (also 32%). Organizations between 30 and 39 years of age emphasized their ability to retain qualified staff (31% selecting it as a major strength). Organizations in existence for 40 to 49 years emphasized their ability to obtain support from government funders (34%) and their overall financial health (31%). Finally, the oldest group of organizations (in existence for at least 50 years) most commonly selected community partnerships and attracting qualified staff as major strengths (32% in both cases).

There are too few organizations in each discipline to reliably analyze major strengths or challenges by primary discipline.

Major challenges

The six major challenges that were selected by the largest number of B.C. arts and culture organizations are: obtaining support from businesses (30%); facilities / physical plant (29%); overall staff capacity (28%); competition from other demands on people's time (26%); obtaining support from individuals (25%); and competition from other sources of entertainment (22%).

The major challenges are different for different types of organizations.

In Vancouver, obtaining support from businesses and overall staff capacity were cited as major challenges by 33% of organizations. Facilities / physical plant was the most commonly selected major challenge by organizations in both the Greater Vancouver / Southwest region (36%) and those in the Thompson-Okanagan-Kootenay region (33%). Obtaining support from businesses (39%) and competition from other demands on people's time (35%) were selected as major challenges by a large number of organizations in the Vancouver Island / Coast region.

It is not surprising that, among the smallest budget organizations (i.e., under $100,000 in revenues), the most common major challenge is overall staff capacity (selected by 48% of these organizations). Obtaining support from businesses is the major challenge for the next two groups of organizations: those with revenues between $100,000 and $200,000 (35%) and those with budgets between $200,000 and $400,000 (48%).

Facilities / physical plant is the most common major challenge for organizations with budgets between $400,000 and $1 million (selected by 28%) and those with revenues between $1 million and $2 million (42%). For organizations with budgets over $2 million, the major challenge is competition from other sources of entertainment (selected by 28%).

A few major challenges were identified by the youngest organizations (i.e., those in existence for less than ten years), including their need for / dependence on volunteers (46%), facilities / physical plant (41%), and competition from other sources of entertainment (40%). Overall staff capacity was selected as a major challenge by 40% of organizations between 10 and 19 years of age, while competition from other demands on people's time was selected by 44% of organizations in existence for 20 to 29 years. Two major challenges were selected by almost one-third of organizations in existence for 30 to 39 years: obtaining support from businesses (31%) and obtaining support from individuals (also 31%). Organizations between 40 and 49 years of age emphasized competition from other demands on people's time (32% selecting it as a major challenge) and obtaining support from businesses (30%). Facilities / physical plant is a major challenge for 38% of the oldest group of organizations (i.e., those in existence for at least 50 years).

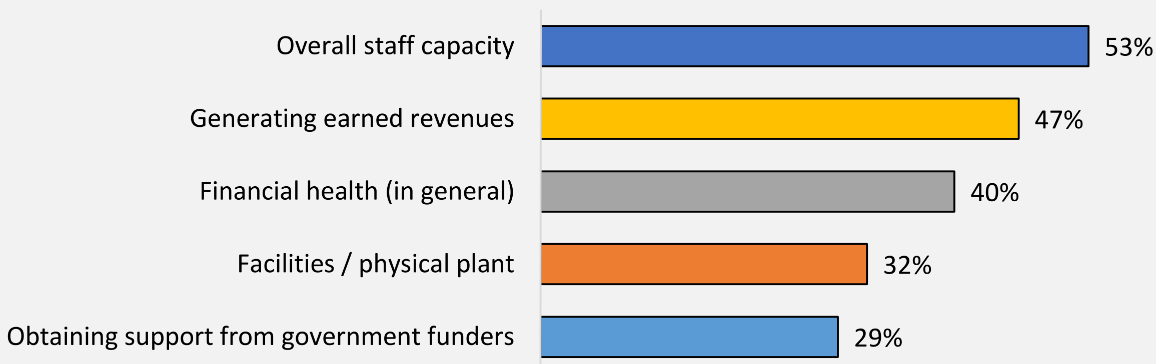
Finances, staff, and facilities are key to the future development of B.C. arts and culture organizations

Respondents were asked to select five of 26 issues that would be the most important in the development of their organizations over the next five years. The most commonly selected items, presented in the chart below, reflect a focus on finances, staff, and facilities. About one-half of respondents selected staff capacity (53%) and earned revenues (47%). General financial health was selected by 40% of respondents, while about one-third selected facilities (32%) and government support (29%).

Respondents were not asked whether these issues would have positive or negative influences in the future. However, facilities and overall staff capacity were among the most acute challenges in a previous question (low average scores: 2.6 and 2.7 respectively). The other items ranked near the middle: 2.9 for generating earned revenues and 3.2 for both general financial health and obtaining government support.

Important considerations in the future development of B.C. arts and culture organizations

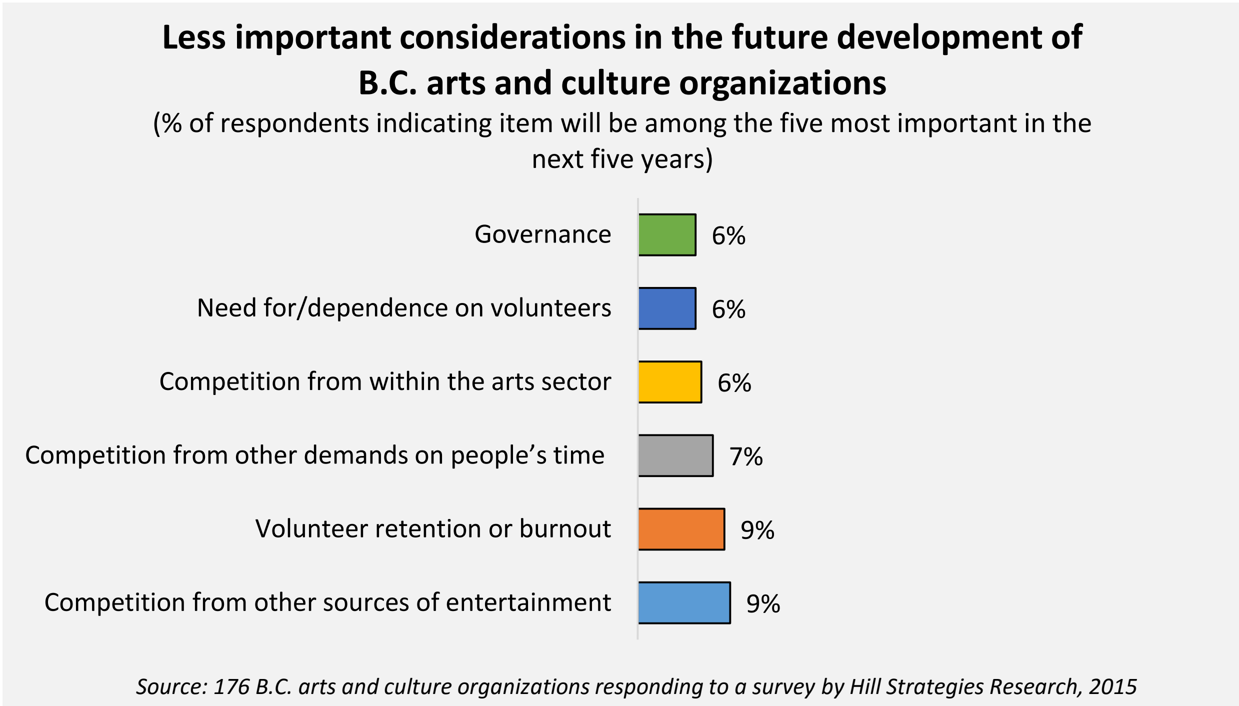
(% of respondents indicating item will be among the five most important in the next five years)



Source: 176 B.C. arts and culture organizations responding to a survey by Hill Strategies Research, 2015

Which issues are not as important in the future development of B.C. arts and culture organizations? As shown in the chart below, it appears that most organizations believe that they are able to manage governance, volunteers, and competitive issues.

Three of the six items in the chart obtained fairly low strength / challenge scores, indicating that they might be important challenges (2.8 for need for / dependence on volunteers, 2.2 for competition for people's time, and 2.4 for competition from other sources of entertainment). However, as shown below, they were not commonly chosen as the most important future considerations. The other two items (governance and volunteer retention / burnout) ranked near the middle of the strength / challenge scores (3.1 for both).



Important considerations for the future of different types of organizations

The most important issues in the next five years among all B.C. arts and culture organizations, as noted above, are staff capacity (53%), earned revenues (47%), general financial health (40%), facilities (32%), and government support (29%).

Overall staff capacity was selected as an important consideration by many different organizations, including those in three regions of the province: Greater Vancouver/ Southwest (selected by 39% of organizations), Thompson-Okanagan-Kootenay (62%), and Vancouver (55%). Obtaining support from government funders is the most important consideration for organizations in the Vancouver Island / Coast region (65%).

Staff capacity was also the most commonly selected issue in the next five years by organizations in four revenue groups: those with budgets under $100,000 (selected by 58%), those with revenues between $200,000 and $400,000 (53%), those with budgets between $400,000 and $1 million (59%), and those with revenues between $1 million and $2 million (57%). Generating earned revenues is the most common issue for the future for organizations with budgets between $100,000 and $200,000 (selected by 74%). For organizations with budgets over $2 million, the major issue is obtaining support from individuals (selected by 62%).

Overall staff capacity was the most commonly selected issue in the next five years for all but the oldest arts and culture organizations (selected by 77% of organizations under ten years of age, 55% of those in existence for 10 to 19 years, 61% of those between 20 and 29 years of age, 53% of organizations in existence for 30 to 39 years, and 47% of those between 40 and 49 years of age). Among organizations in existence for more than 50 years, the top issue in the next five years is generating earned revenues (selected by 46% of organizations).

Final comments and suggestions

At the end of the survey, respondents were asked to provide final comments and suggestions for future research into B.C. arts and culture organizations.

Final comments

- “Hope the results of this survey make a positive impact.”
- “Thank you for providing this opportunity to share with you about our struggles. Maybe leads to some advocacy and lobbying for better situation for BC artists”.
- “I don't know how this survey is going to help an organization like ours, but I hope it does.”
- “Thank you for asking.”
- “These sorts of surveys are vital for creating a profile of arts and culture activity across the country”.
- “Would be interested to see the results and see how we stack up with other similar groups.”
- “I wonder how this information will be different than what is probably available through our financial statements to Revenue Canada? I hope you find something useful and that it doesn't end up on a shelf somewhere as so many of these reports have done.”
- “We are supportive of quantifying the strengths of our industry, but if the organizations producing these surveys could work together and produce fewer of them it would be more efficient for everyone. We frequently receive requests to complete surveys which are often time consuming and redundant.”
- “To be honest, I am very interested in how the results of this survey are parsed, as there is such a difference between large and small organizations. I wonder whether the ‘arts community’ is best viewed without asking the basic question of ‘what does success look like for your organization’?”
- “The constant challenge for financial support from government (local & regional & federal) makes planning for the future very difficult. Arts & culture in communities is an important and vital component to a healthy community. The constant financial struggle takes a toll on staff and volunteers.”
- “We need more solid support by the government.”
- “BC arts organizations have low funding compared to other provinces, and the competition is very high.”
- “It seems the very way the BCAC was established has created many of these problems and the increased politicization of it has hurt the arts groups badly. The ‘sprinkling of funds’ to many groups has not created a healthy cultural climate. And the Olympics, instead of genuinely supporting culture, just created an ‘anorexic supermodel strutting its stuff to the world’. If the only way to justify support is with numbers without any thought to benefits that are not quantifiable for a civil and civilized society, then we deserve to go back to the Dark Ages and that's where we are headed.”
- “I doubt that this organization will survive 5 more years.”
- “I believe we always have to educate the public on the importance of arts and culture. It's an ongoing message. People forget how steeped our lives are in [the arts]. When it comes time to support, they say [that the arts are] not important. But, they forget how we as a people express ourselves – through our arts and our culture in its many forms.”

Research suggestions

- "I would enjoy research focussed on the effect of venue accessibility on the vitality of the arts sector... as well as what are determining factors in artists choosing to live in a city versus another, and working in a city versus another."
- "How many of us run on almost completely volunteer basis and yet are producing professional work?"
- "I would be interested in clocking unpaid hours by Artistic Directors, Producers, Curators, etc of small companies not receiving operating assistance."
- "Audience market survey. Legal and HR compliance resources, courses and support. Fundraising & Board Management training, courses and support."
- "Salary and wage comparisons. Professional development opportunities."
- "A study on how the cost of living in the Lower Mainland is affecting the arts."
- "Add specific measures of diversity within organizations. A disproportionate amount of arts funding goes to organizations run by white able-bodied people who hire the same."
- "I'd like to see BC do a choral census. How many people are singing in choirs in this province? In Europe, it's 4.5% of the population. In Minnesota, it's 7%!!! How many people in BC are quietly participating in community singing?"
- "Put more emphasis on heritage. Note that culture includes the arts along with a number of other disciplines other than arts. Unfortunately, people have become accustomed to using the expression 'arts and culture' and I suspect most don't really understand what 'culture' actually includes."
- "As a Heritage organization, we are always 'lumped' in with the arts when it comes to funding under the culture umbrella."
- "More work has to be done to connect 'Arts and Culture' with the 'Creative Industries'. There is still far too much siloing going on."
- "A quarterly meeting (with a social after) with representatives from major cultural areas to identify, discuss & suggest solutions & partnerships to challenges to this sector may be helpful or at least interesting."
- "There is a disconnect between the projects that government funders are supporting versus what presenters in BC are demanding. Further research should be conducted amongst audiences that BC arts and cultural organizations are serving to better understand audience interest and demand for artistic 'products'. At times, projects that are deemed as having high 'artistic merit' by funding juries and are therefore supported are in turn rejected by presenters because they lack 'accessibility'. Let's give audiences a chance to vocalize their needs and wants, not only the presenters and the funding juries."