COMMUNITY ARTS CANOPY

SURVEY RESULTS

June 2020

Based on 75 filled surveys
IMPACTS
OF COVID-19 IN
THE SECTOR
WHAT IS YOUR COMMUNITY ASKING FOR DURING THIS TIME?

Ways to connect 65%
Programming 63%
Financial Support 53%
Info on accessing resources 47%
Free activities for youth 36%
Materials/Supplies for at-home use 29%

HOW ARE YOU AND YOUR COMMUNITY STAYING CONNECTED?

Zoom 79%
Facebook 75%
Website 57%
Phone Calls 55%

Other 45%
- Emails
- Newsletters
- Text
- Google (Meets, Hangout, Classroom)
- WhatsApp

Other 23%
- Online programming
- Live engagement (creative and safe)
- Technology accessibility (know-how)
- Volunteer support
Increased:
- Working from home/remotely
- Meetings
- Flexibility
- Personal check-in/ one-on-one meetings with staff
- Re-envisioning programs

Decreased:
- Staff and team members (due to leave of absence, taking care of family)
- Programs (rehearsals, concerts)

Respondents also noted: increases (8%) in deadlines, work hours, funding applications, board involvement, team unity, administrative processes, collaborations, research, and advocacy; and decreases (9%) in work hours, collaboration, funding accessibility, sponsorship, staff focus, staff morale, communications with stakeholders, and sharing of information.
HAVE YOU NOTICED **SKILLS GAPS** IN YOUR ARTISTS THAT HAVE BEEN EXPOSED AS A RESULT OF QUARANTINE?

Of those who selected yes, the two major concerns were:

- **Lack of Digital Literacy**: sales platforms, photo/video/audio editing, website best practices.

- **Financial Management**: prompt invoicing, revenue development, budgeting, bookkeeping.
DO YOU FEEL FINANCIALLY SECURE?

Responses 40 | N/A 29

**Systemic barriers identified in the responses include:**

- **24%** - Emergency funds going to larger institutions and those who already receive operating funding.
- **22%** - Inequity in funders framework.
- **20%** - Unavailable funding for those that are not registered charities, not-for-profit or social enterprises.
- **11%** - Unclear format and language of funding application forms and requirements.
- **11%** - Funding going to Toronto’s Downtown core.

**10% or less noted**: funding is difficult to access for organizations whose staff are on project contracts (contract not payroll), a delay in response from funders, not enough time to research funding opportunities and have work life balance, funders require statistics that are difficult to obtain at this time (events not running), funding bodies requiring collaborations that aren’t currently practical, status of artists (professional designation as defined by funding bodies), and lack of capacity and infrastructure (including no access to insurance).
OUTSIDE OF GOVERNMENT FUNDING, HOW HAVE YOUR FUNDERS AND SPONSORS BEEN RESPONDING TO THE CRISIS?

- Supportive and flexible (48%)
- Supportive but maintaining expectations (24%)
- Requested revised proposals (19%)
- Pulled funding (9%)

WHAT ARE YOUR BIGGEST CONCERNS ABOUT RESTRICTIONS LIFTING?

- Community not feeling safe attending programs
- Lack of safe space for programming
- Getting sick
- Office safety
- Other
- Childcare
- Dependent care
- Staff quitting

Other concerns include: risks of future intergenerational programming, restrictions on public spaces, and a worry about reintegration of paid programs when communities are now used to free options. Financial concerns about paying rent, securing funding, and unanticipated costs. Organizations are also worried about staff mental health, safety around transportation, and an adjustment to new workplace culture.
WHAT'S WORKING
WHAT PROGRAMMING HAS WORKED REALLY WELL FOR YOU DURING ISOLATION?

Digital Arts Engagement highlights include:
- 47% - Online workshops/classes
- 25% - Live streaming
- 23% - Conferences/webinars
- 21% - Art video tutorials/performances
- 9% - Newsletter content
- 8% - Online exhibitions
- 6% - Podcasts

Non-Digital Arts Engagement highlights include:
- 8% - Phone calls
- 6% - Colouring contests and engagements
- 6% - Art and Food supplies distribution

WHAT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF DURING THIS TIME?

41% Being able to respond, pivot programs to online format and reinvent ourselves
21% Staff and Collaborators (compassion, perseverance, resilience)
19% Our community bond, connections, support and board engagement
13% Staying true to our mandate and keep creating work
12% Youth and Seniors Programs
21% Staying on Track

Respondents also noted pride in: ability to learn and adapt, artistic creativity, broadening organizational reach, serving as facilitators for important conversations, and having financial reserves to draw on.
Digital Arts Can offer: new ways of connecting, interactive and user-driven experiences, a complement to in person programs.

Digital Arts will help: reaching/engaging new community, overcoming isolation, encouraging youth artists, and navigating new styles of art.

Digital Arts Concerns: adds new barriers, it can contribute to devaluing art, can make paying artists/tracking time and work product difficult, and can reduce revenue development (charging for online experiences vs in person).

TO WHAT DEGREE HAVE YOUR PROGRAMS BEEN ENHANCED BY DIGITAL COMPONENTS?

Responses 55 | N/A 20

A lot
A little
Somewhat
Not at all

Upgrades respondents have seen to their programs: ability to continue long-standing programming, keeps community connection and belonging, reaching high-risk populations and wider geographic demographics, able to offer more accessibility features, increased awareness of ongoing programs, encouraging new ways of thinking, multiple engagements with content, and more comfortable setting for some participants.
WHAT **TOOLS AND RESOURCES** DO YOU NEED?

Responses 72 | N/A 3

**Funding**
- Flexibility on funding and targeted grants for online programs
- Support due to reduced venue rental fees and rent subsidy
- CERB extension for artists
- Non-restricted Operating funding

**Technology**
- Online training (workshops to improve online curriculum development)
- Coding and web design experts to update web platform
- Live streaming platforms and programs
- Group pricing for software packages (Adobe Creative Cloud, Capture 1, Rhino 3D)
- Audio video devices & computer accessories

**Communications & HR**
- Marketing and communications support (to compete online)
- HR support for staff (increased stressors due to Covid)
- Shared Art Organizations’ platform to exchange best practices, information and technology

**Health and Safety**
- PPE and Health and safety equipment for in-person programs
- Safety guidelines and opening protocols from the City
- City point of contact to clarify questions around permits, guidelines, timelines, etc.
Ongoing digital programming includes: workshops/classes, meetings, digital summer camps, film screenings, sharing archival footage, live concerts, video lessons, phone calls, mentorships, and contests.

New in-person programming include: outdoor drive-through performances, pop-up park programming, community art package distribution, mural painting, outdoor exhibitions, balcony performances/workshops.

Many respondents noted administrative planning such as: consultations, strategic planning, web development, funding research, and supporting their artists.
WHAT ARE YOUR GREATEST SOURCES OF INSPIRATION CURRENTLY?

- Community and their solidarity (25%)
- The arts sector resilience (13%)
- Staff and artists (12%)
- Artistic creations and collaborations (13%)
- Advocacy in the arts (8%)
- Art creation by youth (7%)

IF MONEY WASN’T A CONCERN, WHAT PROGRAM WOULD YOU LOVE TO RUN DURING ISOLATION?

Responses 73 | N/A 2

- 23% - Large-scale outdoor project (public art, performances, film festivals, mural painting, art maps).
- 18% - Keep the existing programming and augment their capacity, scope and safety.
- 14% - Create more youth and seniors programming.
- 10% - Create or pivot current programming to involve advanced technology (i.e. VR, holodeck).
- 10% - Create programming online.

Other ideas from respondents include: virtual artist residencies, archival digital projects, film labs at home, storytelling projects, creation of a safe community performance space, working with neighbourhood to design new programs, research, staff increases, professional development, and a sabbatical year.
CAN THIS CRISIS **STRENGTHEN THE SECTOR?**

In general, recipients’ comments and responses were positive and insightful. Despite this, some negative trends emerged.

It shows that the crisis has exposed inadequate **funding structures** and organizations need to prioritize new strategic financial considerations moving forward. The survey responses showed that many organizations will cease operating, artists’ livelihoods are at risk, and there will be a time of instability as the economy recovers.

We see a high level of **anxiety** for the future, around working structures, a lack of empathy and human connection as a result of primarily digital programming, and a general lack of knowledge as to what the future holds and how to move forward.

However, Arts organizations are thinking about **programming** differently and thinking creatively about priorities and strategic planning. Many people feel that the crisis can showcase the importance of the sector as communities look for support, programs and ways of reconnecting. We can show our resiliency and layout best practices for other sectors.
MOVING FORWARD
WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO DISCUSS FURTHER?

61% - How can digital programming enhance the arts?
60% - How can we use this crisis to strengthen the sector in the long-term?
53% - How do you intend to maintain digital developments while moving back into in-person engagement slowly?
52% - What do you see as sustainability (digitally) in the long term?
49% - What does recovery look like to you?
48% - Strategic Planning during a global pandemic.
45% - What are you hoping will come out of this for your organization?
39% - Where do you anticipate gathering with your community post isolation?
28% - How have your working structures changed?