



CAR

CINCINNATI ARTIST REPORT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 03** INTRO
- 04** RESULTS
- 05** FUNDING
- 06** ARTIST SUPPORTS
- 07** EDUCATION + DEVELOPMENT
- 08** RELATIONSHIPS
- 09** CHALLENGES
- 11** BARRIERS
- 12** THANK YOU



INTRO

We know that the Arts have an enormous benefit to our communities. According to the 2019 [Ohio's Creative Economy report](#) by the Ohio Citizens for the Arts with the Center for Regional Development and Bowling Green State University, [the creative economy generates \\$6.1 billion in the Cincinnati metropolitan statistical area and supports 39,000 jobs](#). The arts are also proven to increase a communities mental and physical health, decrease isolation and loneliness, and play an important role in our quality of life. But what are artists getting in exchange for all of this benefit? And what do artists need in order to keep doing this work? The Cincinnati Artist Report aims to find out.

From July 1st to August 31st 2019, ArtWorks and Wave Pool partnered to dig deep into the needs of Cincinnati's artist community. Throughout those two months we gathered data both through an online survey as well as through in-person engagements from artists in Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky. We collected input from 875 artists in total, 355 in person and 520 online.

This collaboration brought together a team of four ArtWorks Youth Apprentices, led by local artist Anissa Lewis, who created community engagement opportunities for artists to further support survey participation throughout August. From visiting arts festivals such as the Northside Arts Festival and Second Sunday on Main, to visiting gallery openings and museum events around Over The Rhine and downtown, to visiting artists in their studios at The Welcome Project and Visionaries and Voices, we solicited interactions with people both on the street and in the studio, attempting to reach as many artists as possible. Wave Pool's Cal Cullen and Lewis developed the survey and authored the report in collaboration with ArtWorks and with the design work of Hannah Williams.

ArtWorks



Support for the project comes from the Carol Ann and Ralph V. Haile, Jr./U.S. Bank Foundation.



RESULTS



ABOUT OUR RESPONDEES*

45% of those who have graduate degrees make at least 50% of their income from art while only 25% of those that did not attend school for art make more than 50% of their income from art.

The top three mediums that do the best as far as making up a significant portion of an artists income are: Film (32.89% make more than 80%), Performance (30.85% make more than 80% of their income) and Socially Engaged Art (30% make more than 80%).

The bottom three that seem to have the highest number of folks who make 0-5% of their income from their art are Fiber Artists (50% make less than 5%), Drawing/ Illustrators (47.22% make less than 5%), and Painters (47.1% make less than 5%).

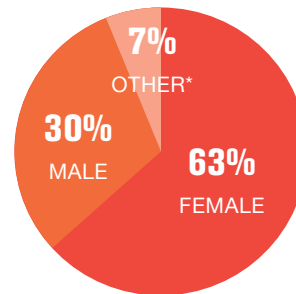
*** PLEASE NOTE:** that we see the lack of people of color who responded to this survey not as a reflection of artists in Cincinnati, but as a reflection of the lack of diversity at most of the art events in this city. We reached people for this survey through known artist channels (gallery events, arts festivals, etc.). Artists of color are not attending these events and we need to work harder to include them in Cincinnati's arts community.

RACIAL/ETHNIC IDENTITY:



5% OTHER
 Asian: 1.75%
 Hispanic: 3%
 Middle Eastern: 0.5%
 American Indian/
 Alaskan Native: 1.5%
 Not Listed: 1%

GENDER IDENTITY:



7% OTHER
 Transgender Female: 0%
 Transgender Male: 0.5%
 Gender Variant/
 Non-Conforming: 4%
 Prefer Not to Answer: 1%
 Not Listed: 1%

CURRENT WORKSPACE:



WORKING IN A STUDIO SEPARATE FROM HOME:

17% Solo Studio
 13% Shared Studio
 70% Other



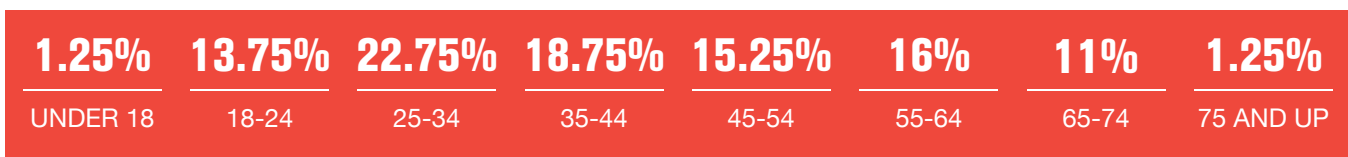
WORKING SPACE WITHIN HOME:

73% Home Studio
 27% Outside Studio

21.75%

CINCINNATI ARTISTS IDENTIFY AS LGBTQI

AGE:



FUNDING

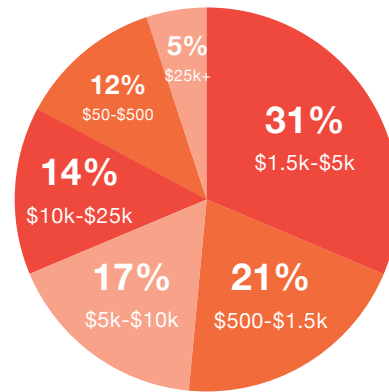


HOW MUCH GAS DO ARTISTS NEED?*

* **NOTE:** Though an average of 70% of artists surveyed believe they need \$5,000 or less to conduct a civic, public art, or other project, we believe that these results point towards an undervaluing of artist's time and labor and are evidence of a systemic and societal knowledge gap in what artists' should be paid. Working Artists for the Greater Economy (W.A.G.E.) states that fair wages for an artist to be paid should be at least .12% of an organization's total operating expenses. For example, at a small organization (annual budget of \$250,000) this would result in paying the artist at least \$300 per artist project. For a large organization (annual budget of \$2,500,000) this would result in paying an artist at least \$3,000 per artist project. These figures are baseline stipends for the artist's labor and don't include marketing, programming, or other budget costs associated with a project.



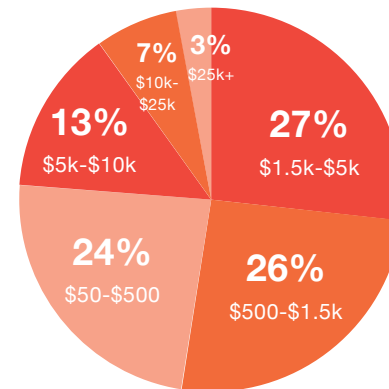
PUBLIC/CIVIC PROJECTS:



This includes projects that improve social good and community well-being. These projects could take form in many mediums such as murals, installations, community engagement experiences, performance or creative place-making/keeping:

- 31% \$1.5k-\$5k
- 21% \$500-\$1.5k
- 17% \$5k-\$10k
- 14% \$10k-\$25k
- 12% \$50-\$500
- 5% \$25k+

ART PROJECTS:



This includes individual works, gallery exhibitions, private work commissions, design projects, etc:

- 27% \$1.5k-\$5k
- 26% \$500-\$1.5k
- 24% \$50-\$500
- 13% \$5k-\$10k
- 7% \$10k-\$25k
- 3% \$25k+

ARTIST SUPPORTS



PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

TOP 6 SUPPORTS NEEDED BEYOND FUNDING

(In order)

1. Promotion/Exposure
2. Time
3. Workspace
4. Community Partners
5. Site Support/Permissions
6. Additional Labor/Assistance

AUDIENCE

WHO IS YOUR AUDIENCE? (In order)

1. General Public
2. Potential Buyers/Collectors
3. Other Artists

IDEAL WORKSPACE

**LARGE HOME WORK
STUDIO SPACE SHARED
NATURAL LIGHT ROOM
LIGHT ARTISTS ACCESS
OPEN GOOD LIGHT WINDOWS
SMALL WINDOWS STUDIO SPACE BIG
STORAGE TABLE CLEAN AREA PRIVATE**



ARTIST RESIDENCY WANTS/NEEDS

IDEAL AIR (ARTIST IN RESIDENCY) EXPERIENCE
(In order)

1. Includes studio space
2. Includes an exhibition of artist's work
3. Is self-determined and focused on personal studio practice
4. Is affiliated with an arts organization

IDEAL AIR LENGTH

LOCAL: 3 months **NON-LOCAL:** 1 month

SUPPORTS NEEDED FOR LOCAL AIR PROGRAM
(In order)

1. Connection with other artists
2. Funding for a specific project
3. Introduction to a network of arts supporters
4. Funding for arts practice in general
5. Funding for a living stipend

EDUCATION + DEVELOPMENT



EDUCATION

WHAT EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES DO YOU NEED? (*Respondees could choose multiple*)

- 57%** Selected taking a craft-based class or workshop
- 38%** Assist an artist in a studio
- 25%** Get your Masters of Fine Arts
- 26%** Other (Top answers: Time, Mentorship, and Critique Groups)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

TOP 7 PRIORITIES FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CLASSES (*In order*)

- 1.** Marketing
- 2.** Pricing your work/Getting paid
- 3.** Grant Writing
- 4.** Legal (copyright law, insurance requirements, etc.)
- 5.** Website Development
- 6.** Exhibition Planning
- 7.** Community Engagement Best Practices

TOP 3 MOST APPEALING FORMATS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (*In order*)

- 1.** One class per week over a few months
- 2.** One two hour class per month
- 3.** Self guided online with in person meetings

WHAT FEEDBACK IS MOST USEFUL? (*Respondees could choose multiple*)

- 70%** Peer review and critiques
- 60%** Mentorship
- 54%** Curator studio visits

WHO DO YOU NEED IN YOUR NETWORK THAT YOU CURRENTLY DON'T HAVE? (*In order*)

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| 1. Curators | 5. Funders |
| 2. Gallery Owners | 6. Collectors |
| 3. Artists (community space/shared space) | 7. Organizers/Organizations |
| 4. Mentors | 8. Sponsors/Patrons |



RELATIONSHIPS



SUPPORT NETWORK

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER LOCAL ARTISTS AND THOSE THAT SUPPORT THE ARTS?

(Respondees could choose multiple)

1.5%
NEGATIVE
RELATIONSHIPS

55.75%
NON-EXISTENT/LIMITED
RELATIONSHIPS

57.25%
POSITIVE
RELATIONSHIPS

FROM CINCINNATI ARTISTS



NEGATIVE:

“I don’t have many relationships with local artists. I find the local art scene to be very clique-y, divisive, and exclusive. I don’t feel welcome.”

“They seem to be tight knit groups that mostly curate to their own social circle.”



LACKING:

“I would like to grow beyond who I know from school. Having access to mentors and other graphic artists to get my career started. I’ve tried to connect to artswork in the past. But there hasn’t been much opportunities. It feels like a club.”

“I have great personal relationships with other artists, but as far as support from funders, critics, curators, arts organizations? Minimal, I need help here.”



POSITIVE:

“I love the CINCINNATI art community—most of my friends are involved in the arts, and I find it a very supportive community.”

“Strong. I welcome the feedback and support of other artists & I am highly stimulated with working with professionals in the arts & business world.”

CHALLENGES



WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE TO BEING AN ARTIST IN CINCINNATI?

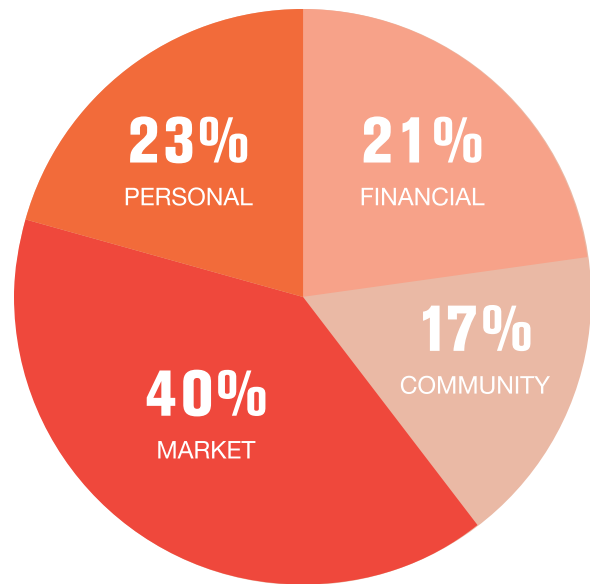
PERSONAL CHALLENGES:

Having Enough Time: “Balancing a full time and seeking out opportunities for emerging artist.”

Internal Barriers: “I guess it depends on what you want. I feel a bit stifled in this moment, but not due to a lack of opportunities.”

Marketing and Exposure: “Exposure is the biggest challenge. Not having anyone helping to market your work in the contemporary art spaces. Not having relationships that can be leveraged to show or lecture about the work. Not having the support to use the city as a springboard to go into bigger markets with higher visibility.”

Making Connections: “Networking; Cincinnati is very cliquy, especially if you didn’t go to school here.”



COMMUNITY CHALLENGES:

Geography of Cincy: “the community feels quite scattered, and without reliable transportation or access to the studios centered downtown, it can be difficult to find a working space that’s affordable.”

Conservative Mindset: “people are so dead set on a certain ideology of what art is supposed to be when art isn’t really something you can put into a little box.”

Lack of Public Interest: “Getting the public to understand, appreciate and buy less traditional types of art.”

Lack of an Artist Community: “We can’t as an artistic community rely on public and community projects. To create a strong community and encourage others to move and stay here we need a variety of ways to earn income.”

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE >

These results came from open ended questions that were analyzed and grouped by Miami University Students in the Leading Strategic Innovations in the Arts class, Fall 2019.

CHALLENGES



MARKET CHALLENGES:

Inpenetrable Market: “Breaking into the market and keeping my art fresh.”

Small Market Size: “There are not many art buyers in Cincinnati.”

Not Enough Opportunities: “Precarious income/employment opportunities. I feel like my only option is to create my own opportunities, but the entrepreneurial/non-profit learning curve feels really huge sometimes. I couldn’t do it without family sacrifice. I’m desperate to contribute greater resiliency to my family and community. Scraping by in the meantime can be so disheartening and daunting though.”

Oversaturation of Artists: “A lot happens here even though we are not that large a community. I think that getting your art noticed is tough.”

Lack of Space: “Affordable space is getting tough to find. It’s hard to get folks to value our work, the income isn’t rising as we grow.”

Expanding Beyond Cincinnati: “Getting past Cincinnati once you begin to get traction. Hard to make the jump to a national stage.”

Cliques and Favoritism: “It’s not just Cincinnati - but the art world is all about who you know. The city has their “favorite” artists who get all the opportunities to do fun things. However, there are MANY talented artists that aren’t given chances because they’re new(er) to the scene. It’s almost as if there are artist “cliques” and until you meet the right people, it can be difficult to get noticed.”

Knowledge: “Not knowing how to get involved and where my strengths and weaknesses are, as a useful artist, in this area.”

FINANCIAL CHALLENGES:

“Like anywhere else, I’m sure, always being asked to donate work for an “opportunity for exposure”. Artists are constantly undervalued, but ALWAYS being asked to donate time, materials and works to solve social problems.”

“Lack of funding, especially towards progressive ideas.”

“Funding / financial support / art community working together / network of art buyers to contemporary work that isn’t already established.., not only should more locals be getting shows, but curators in power here should be getting shows for artists or help expand their network to outside of the city.”

“Many of the people who love my work can’t pay me what I need to be paid, and the folks that could afford it don’t know who I am, and I don’t know how to connect with them. I generally see Cincinnati as not valuing artists as highly as they should. I don’t know if that’s an isolated Cincinnati trait though. There just aren’t enough local galleries. There isn’t enough artist representation. We don’t have much in the way of resources.”

These results came from open ended questions that were analyzed and grouped by Miami University Students in the Leading Strategic Innovations in the Arts class, Fall 2019.

BARRIERS



173 participants explained their barriers. 177 participants left suggestions for solutions. Below is an analysis of these comments with select quotes for each topic.

BARRIERS:

“The only thing, is as a woman, I don’t feel I was taught how to negotiate and be my own chief financial officer. It feels easy to get taken advantage of and difficult to know how to ask for and negotiate what is fair for the work I do. This could also be personality and not related to being a women; however, I’ve found it to be a common challenge for many women I know across disciplines.”

“I am LGBTQ, but it isn’t a barrier. My biggest barrier is being an emerging/outsider artist nearing 50.”

“Tokenization. Being a black queer man making art, who wants his MFA? Peers and professors try to box your work in as always political, because they feel more comfortable debating my rights in critique than learning about my perspective as an equal and how my experiences may vary. I’m also hyper aware of racial biases in funding, in engagement, there’s the stigma against mental illness and queerness, never mind lack of income due to institutional barriers and being consistently spoken over by cis white folks. The glossing over of POC (esp BLACK) artists and queer artists in art history contributes a lot to that attitude I feel.”

SOLUTIONS:

“I would love to learn about how to engage with a wider network including arts organizations, critics, funders, etc.”

“I’d love to have more all female production teams to learn how to lead together or an all-female collective working space to be able to deal with these issues as a group.”

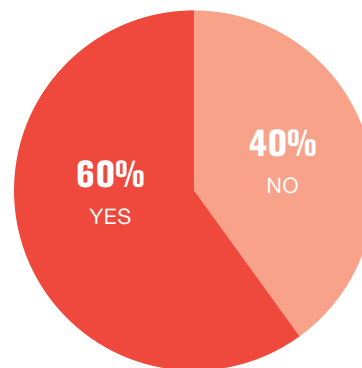
“Funding and business mentoring and accountability.”

“More grants! More networking events! More challenging the institutionalized snobbery! Accessible housing! Teaching the public to pay creatives what they are worth instead of constantly devaluing us!”

These results came from open ended questions that were analyzed and grouped by Miami University Students in the Leading Strategic Innovations in the Arts class, Fall 2019.

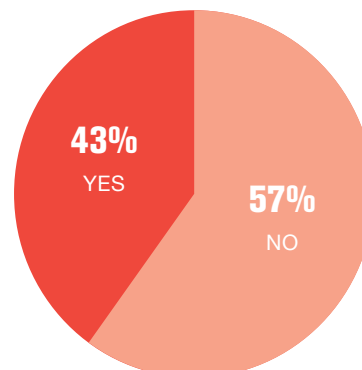
REPRESENTATION:

DO YOU IDENTIFY AS BEING PART OF AN UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUP?



BARRIERS:

BY BEING PART OF AN UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUP, DO YOU FACE SPECIFIC BARRIERS?



THANK YOU



Lastly, we want to say a big thanks to all of our supporters, participants, and sponsors involved with this report.

We see the Cincinnati Artist Report as just a start to a much bigger project at understanding the needs of local artists and working to fulfill these needs. We will be conducting interviews with artists who indicated they are up for more involved engagement and working to dig even deeper into the impact of the arts on Cincinnati, both the present impact and the potential future impact. In the meantime, we hope that this report is of use to other local arts organizations, funders, and supporters.



artworkscincinnati.org | wavepoolgallery.org
[@artworkscincy](https://twitter.com/artworkscincy) | [@wavepoolgallery](https://twitter.com/wavepoolgallery)

Photos courtesy of Wave Pool

ArtWorks Apprentices: Shalaisjah Cason, Darion Hassert, Hannah Jasper and Terrance Norris