

THE ARTS ECOLOGY OF SASKATCHWAN

Collaboration + Resources



Saskatchewan
Arts Alliance

prepared by

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Collaboration & Resources

In 2014, the Saskatchewan Partnership for Arts Research, a research partnership formed in 2012 by the Saskatchewan Arts Alliance, the Saskatchewan Arts Board (SK Arts,) SaskCulture and the University of Regina, conducted two major surveys with a view to broadening their understanding of the arts ecology of Saskatchewan.

These surveys, and accompanying reports, have been foundational research into the arts ecology of Saskatchewan, and contain data on which the SAA has consistently relied, and referenced in their advocacy efforts, and therefore felt that it was crucially important to conduct a follow-up survey to examine the ways in which the arts ecology of Saskatchewan had changed in the past ten years.

In order to best facilitate comparison, the SAA maintained the original survey as closely as we were able: questions accounting for the effects of COVID-19, as well as some minor edits to language were made in order to elicit the best results, and to facilitate ease of understanding. The SAA circulated two versions of the survey for artists: one version of the artist survey was strictly limited to those who are members of the artist registry hosted and curated by the SAA, while the other was promoted more broadly, via email and social media communications, to anyone who identifies as an artist.

The SAA has decided to generate a number of smaller, 'breakout' reports from the report as a whole, to best showcase all of the findings. This particular report focuses on the importance and methods of collaboration to artists, as well as their access to resources, both for collaboration and general purposes.

The majority of artists indicated that collaboration was of importance to them, with 63% indicating that it had been important to their ability to create or interpret work and 69% indicating that collaboration with artists within their specific discipline was important, and 79% indicating that connecting and networking with artists within their discipline was important to them.

Electronic communications and electronic resources were found to be of the most importance to artists, with 71% of artists communicating primarily by email and social media being considered the most important resource by 73% of respondents.

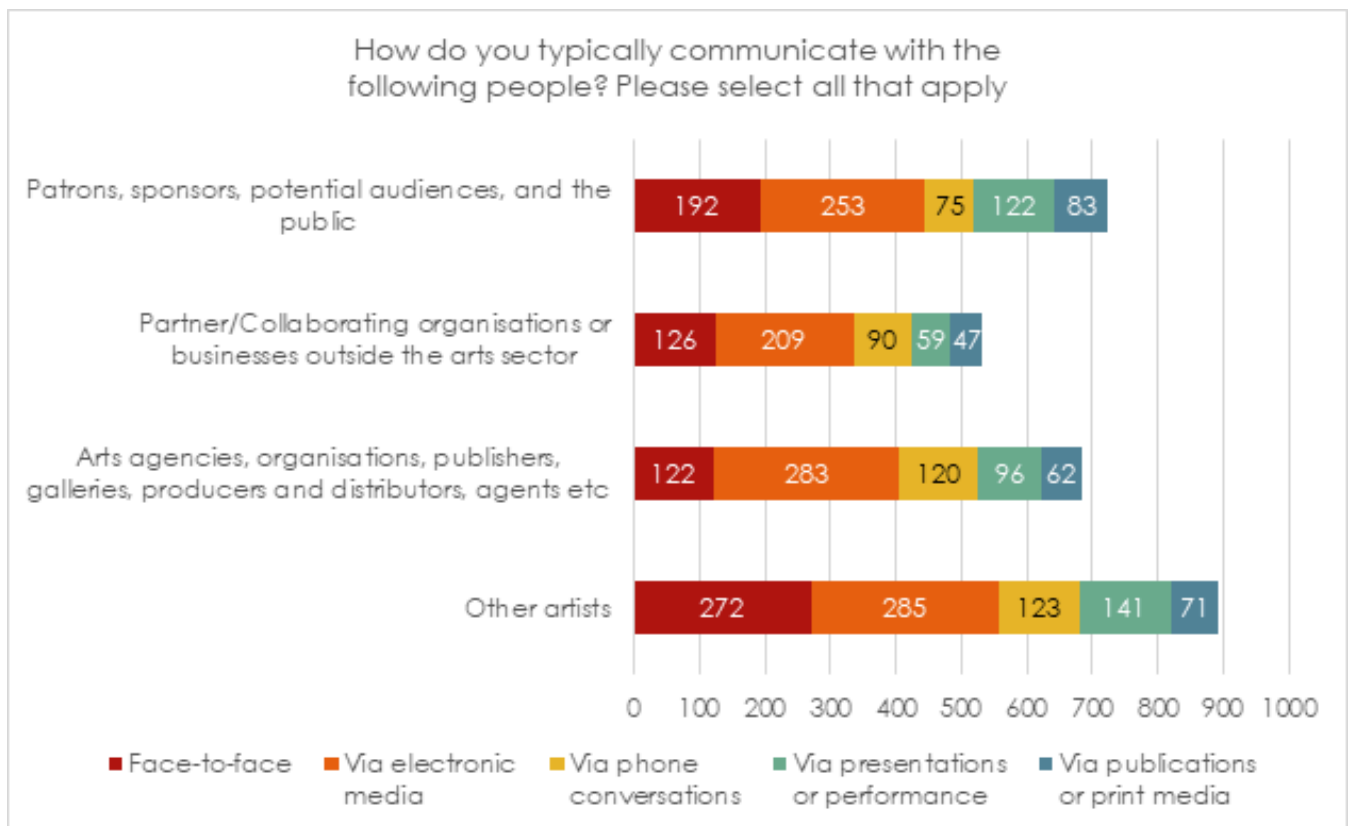
Artists still feel that local connections are more important than international connections, with 76% indicating the connections within Saskatchewan were important and 75% identifying that local neighbourhood or municipal connections were important.



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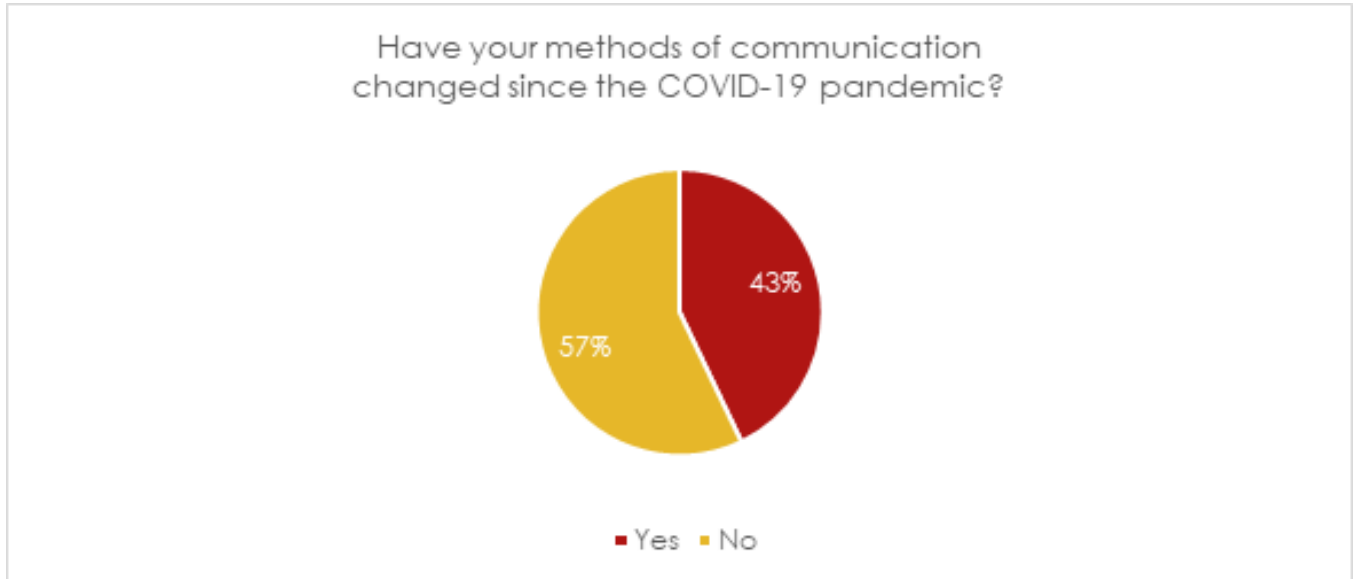
The survey additionally asked respondents about their professional relationships, as well as their communication methods. The majority of the questions in this section deal with collaboration and networking, but there were a few questions about how they foster those connections. The artists were asked how they typically communicate with various professional contacts: patrons, partners, arts organisations and other artists. Participants had the ability to select multiple options. The most popular, by far, was electronic media, with 71% of respondents indicating this was how they communicate across the board, followed by face-to-face communication, which 49% of respondents selected.

Figure 1 Methods of communication with professional contacts



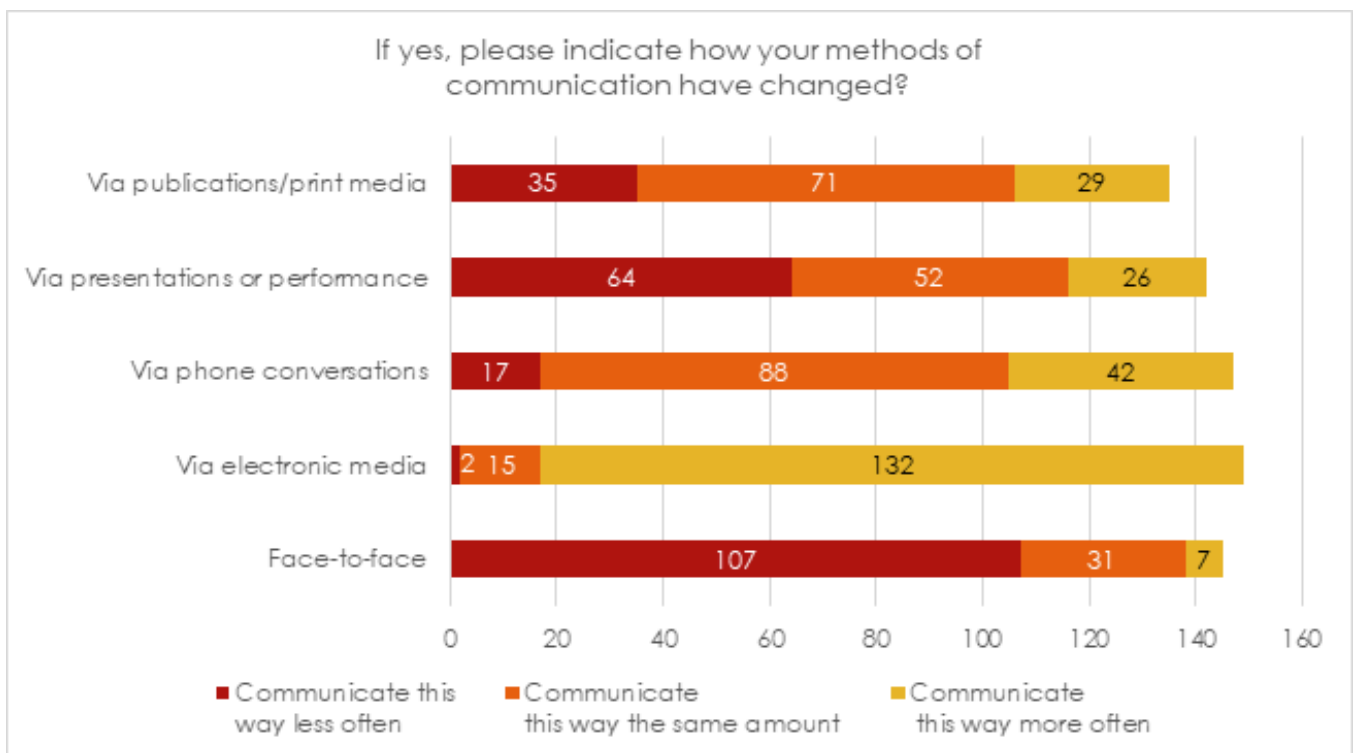
Artists were subsequently asked if their methods of communication with the above entities had changed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. 57% stated that they had seen no change.

Figure 2 Impact of COVID-19 on communication methods



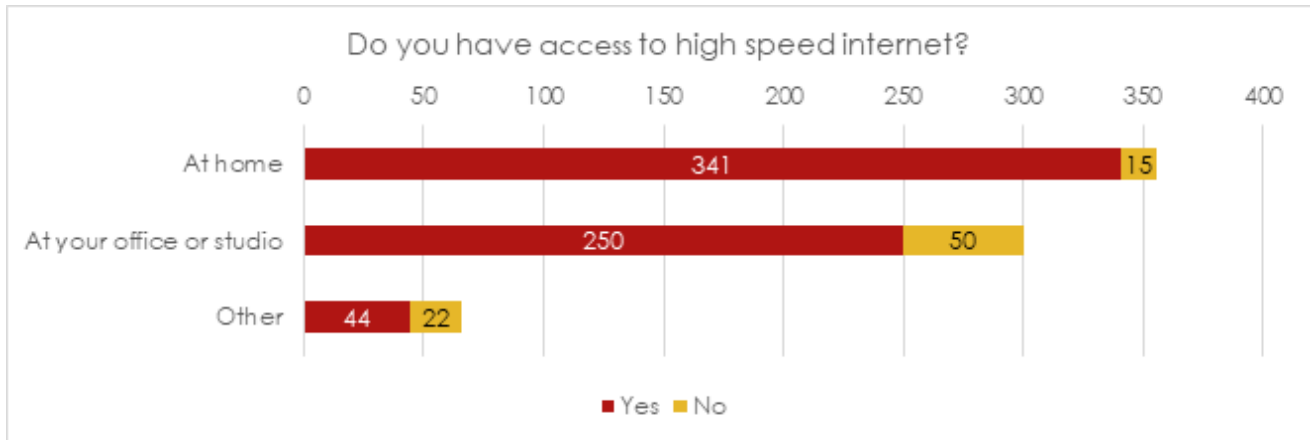
For those who stated that their methods of communication had changed because of the pandemic, the results were unsurprising: methods of communication that complied with social distancing, by and large, either increased or stayed the same – such as via electronic media or via phone conversations – while methods of communication that were restricted or limited due to pandemic measures saw decreases – such as via presentation or performance and face-to-face communication.

Figure 3 Changes in communication due to COVID-19



96% of respondents indicated they have high speed internet at home while only 70% have it in the office or studio. In both cases, this is less than in 2014, in which 98% had access at home and 88% had access in the studio.

Figure 4 Access to high speed internet

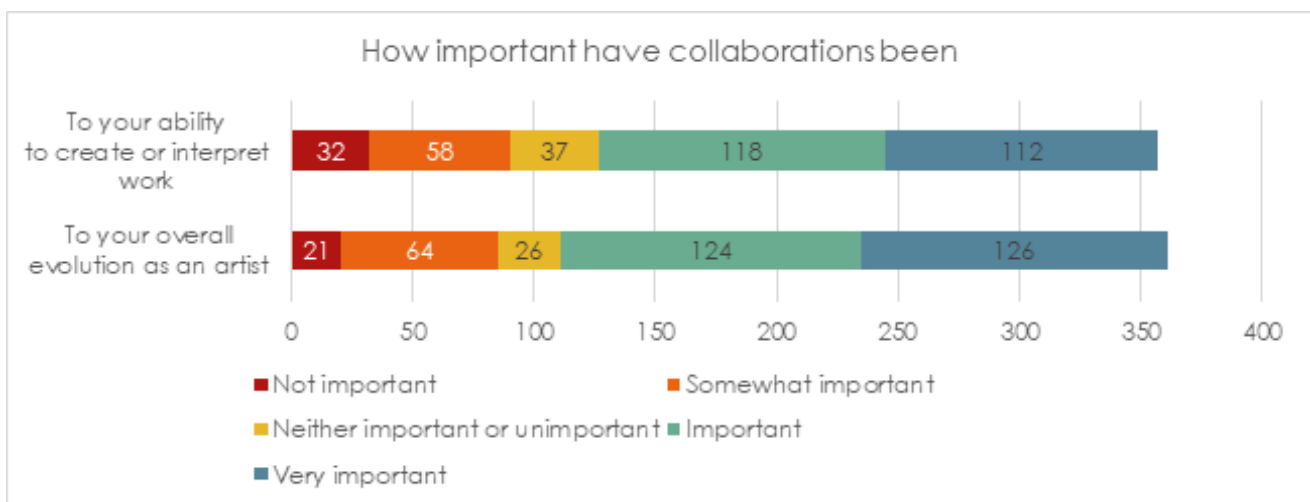


As part of the survey, respondents were asked a number of questions relating to networking and collaboration. The first two questions asked how important collaboration had been to the artists' creative practices, and further asked with whom collaboration had been important.

69% of respondents indicated that collaboration had been either Important or Very Important to their evolution as an artist, while 63% indicated that collaboration had been either Important or Very Important to their ability to create or interpret their work.

Here there was a distinction between the general artist survey and the artist registry, as 41% of the general artist respondents indicated that collaboration was Very Important to their overall evolution as an artist, compared to only 28% of respondents from the artist registry.

Figure 5 Importance of collaboration



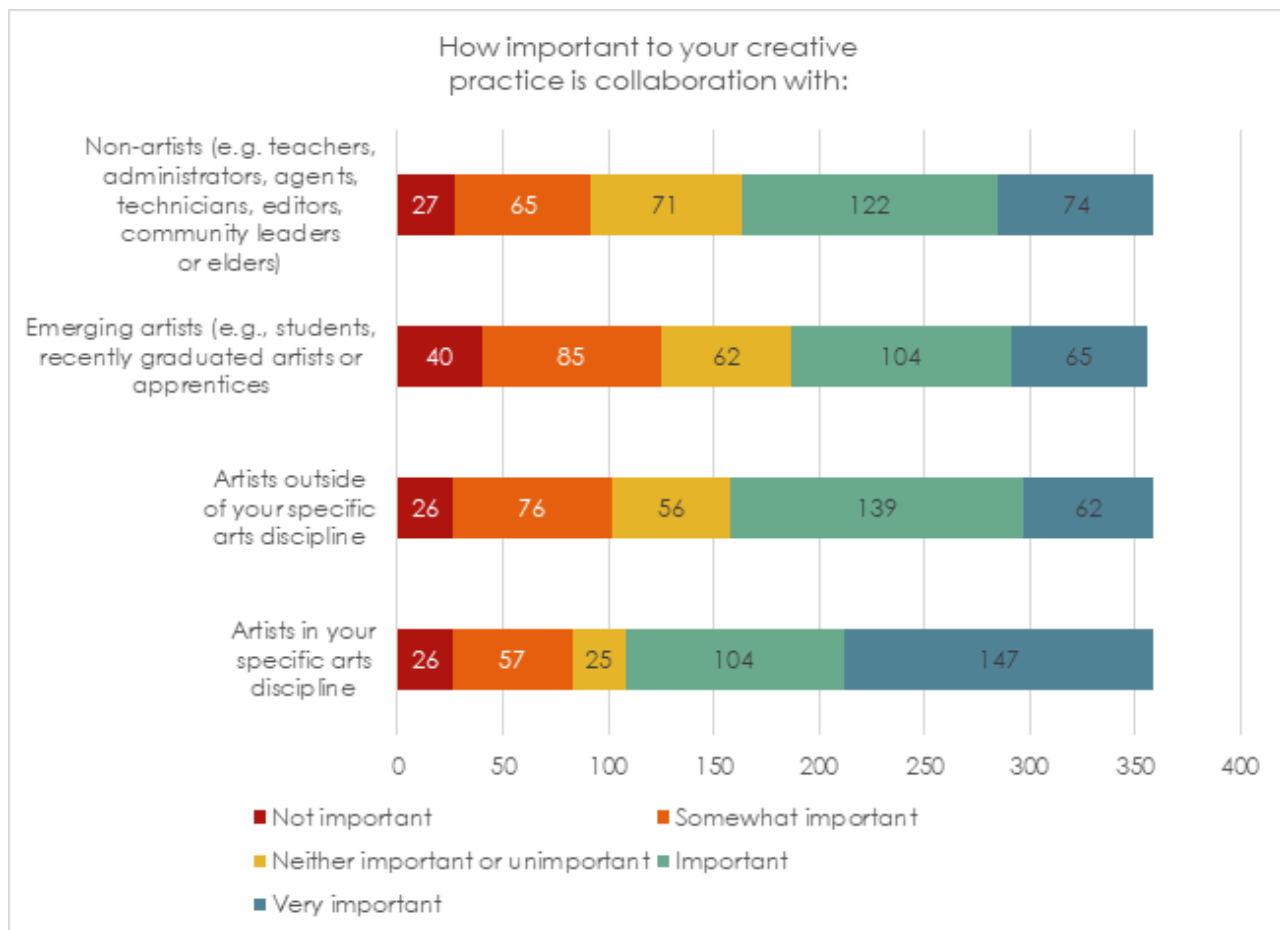


Respondents indicated that collaboration with other artists in their specific artistic discipline had been the most important (69% of respondents indicating it had been Important or Very Important,) followed by artists in different disciplines (55%), non-artists (54%) and emerging artists (48%).

49% of the respondents to the general artist survey indicated artists in their discipline were Very Important to their overall evolution as an artist, compared to 32% of the artist registry.

The majority of respondents indicated that collaboration was important in some way: although collaboration with emerging artists was not shown to be important to the majority, at 48% it was Important or Very Important to nearly half of respondents.

Figure 6 Importance of collaboration to creative practice

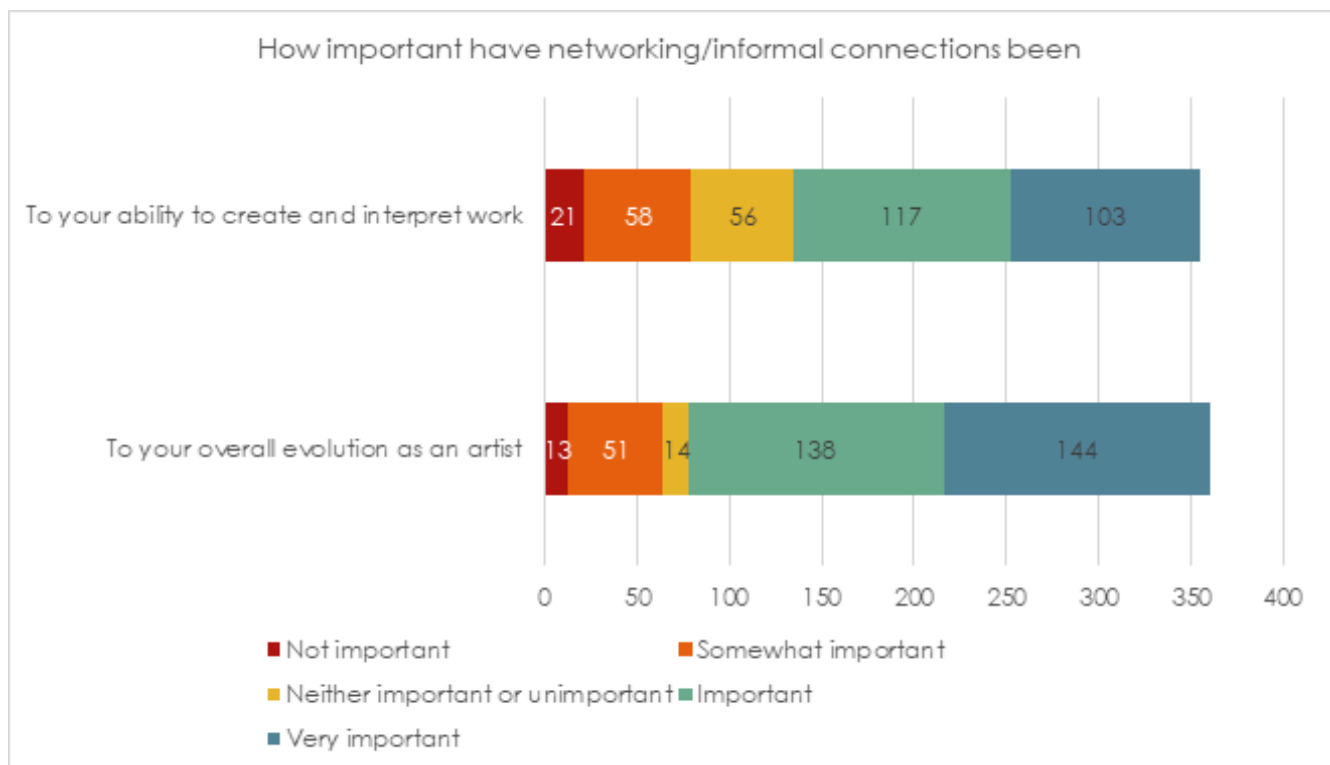


The survey then asked about the importance of networking and informal connections and their importance to the respondents' creative practices, as well as to whom they felt networking and informal connections were important.

78% of respondents indicated that networking and informal connections had been Important or Very Important to their evolution as an artist, while 61% indicated it had been important to their ability to create and interpret work.

Here, too, the general artist survey respondents were more likely to indicate that networking and collaboration were Very Important to them than participants on the artist registry survey. The general artist survey had 46% of respondents indicate that networking and informal connections had been Very Important to their overall evolution as an artist, compared to 34% of the artist registry respondents. Similarly, 33% of the general artist survey indicated networking and informal connections were Very Important to their ability to interpret work, compared to only 24% of respondents to the artist registry survey.

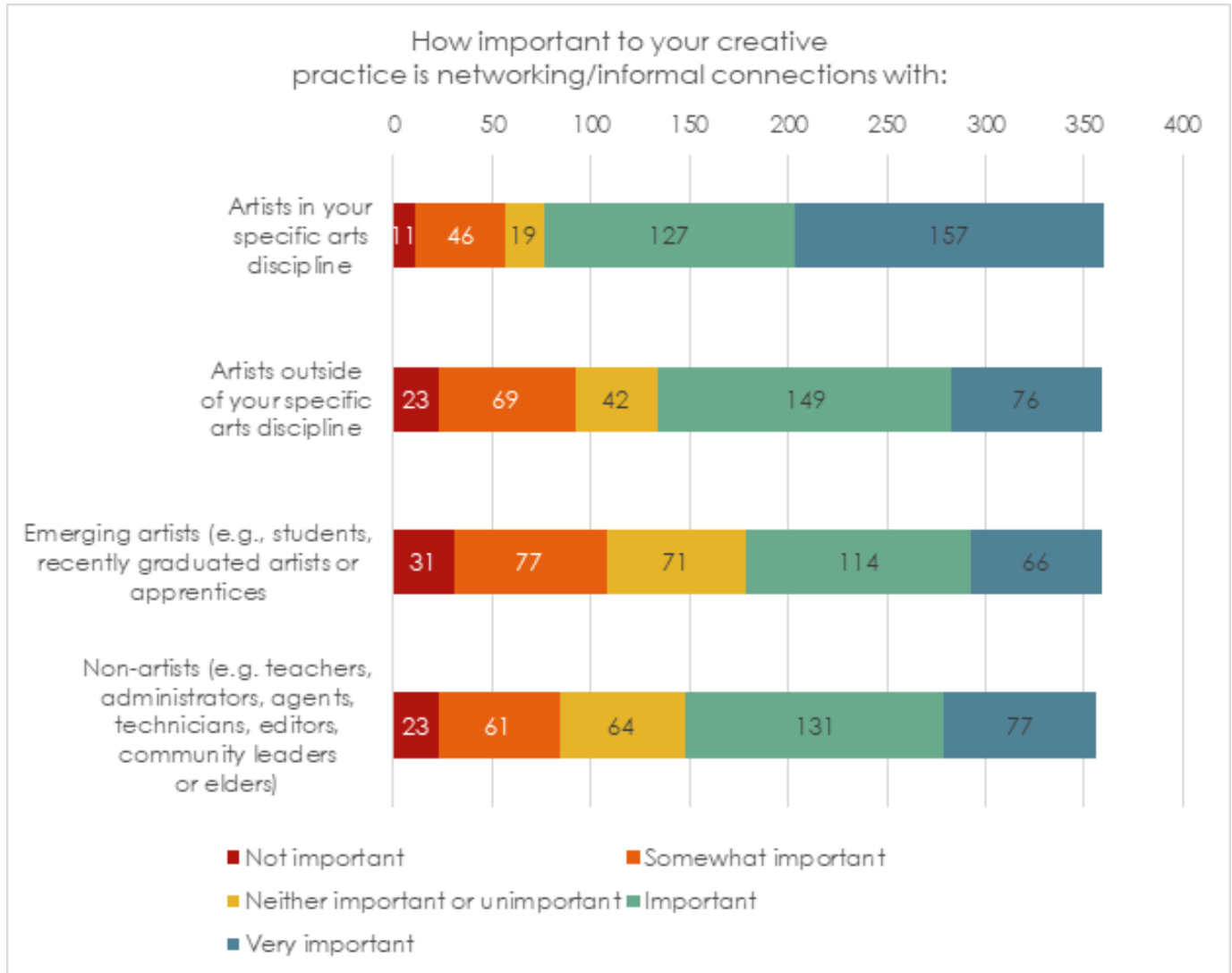
Figure 7 Importance of networking and informal connections



Similar to collaboration, the respondents indicated that networking and informal connections with artists within their specific discipline were Important or Very Important (79%), followed by artists in different disciplines (62%), non-artists (58%), and emerging artists (50%). Once again, networking and informal collaborations were shown to be of importance to the majority of respondents, with collaboration with emerging artists showing the lowest amount of importance, but still having half of the respondents indicate it had been Important or Very Important.

The largest proportion of general artist survey respondents (48%) indicated networking and informal connections with artists in their discipline was Very Important, compared to 40% of respondents from the artist registry.

Figure 8 Importance of networking/informal connections to creative practice



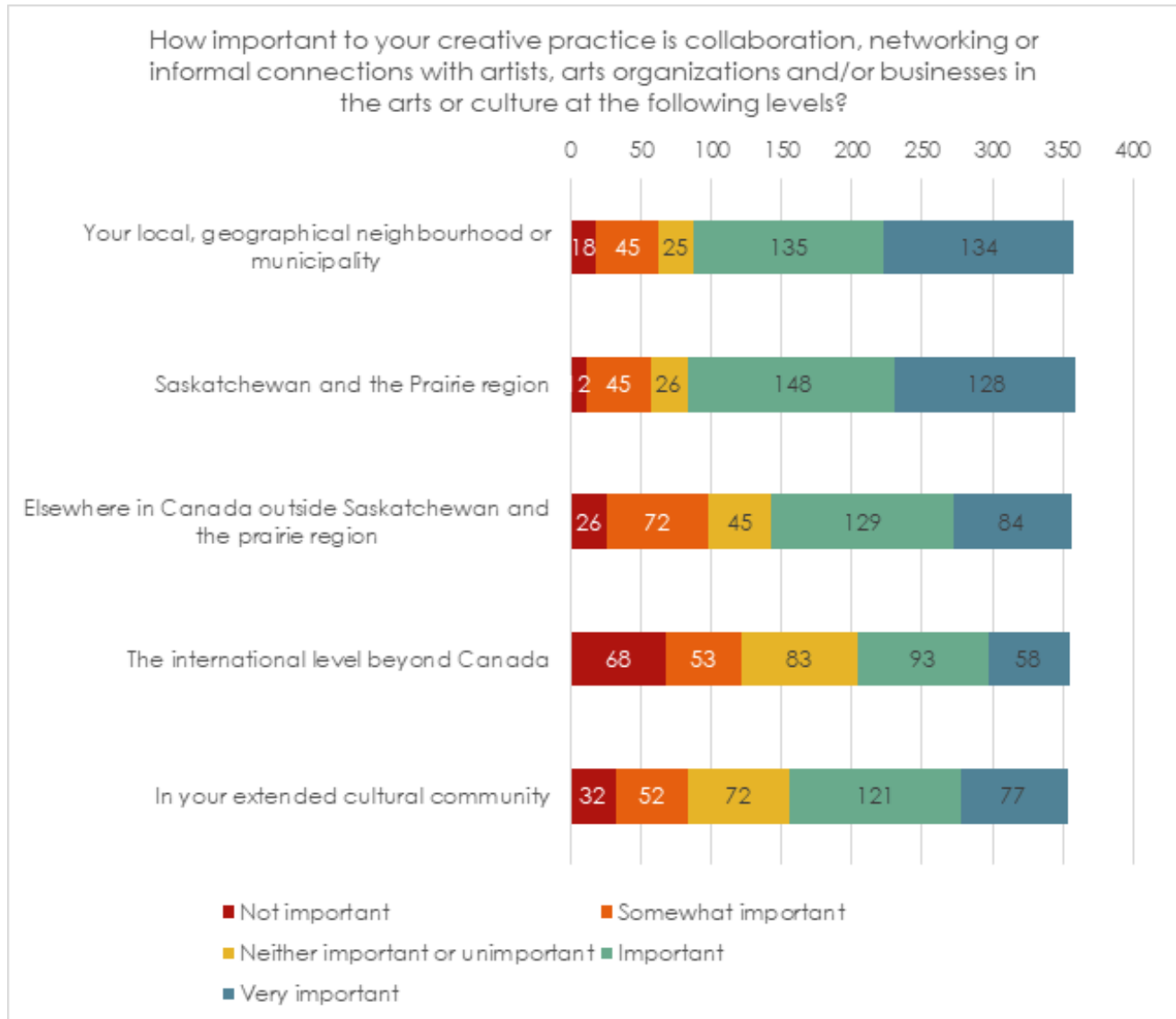
The survey then asked how important respondents found collaboration, networking or informal connections with arts, arts organizations and/or businesses within the arts at a variety of different levels.

Connections within Saskatchewan and the prairie region were demonstrated to be the most important to respondents, with 76% indicating it was Important or Very Important, followed closely by connections in their local neighbourhood or municipality (75%), elsewhere in Canada (59%), in the extended cultural community (54%), and internationally (41%).

Once again, the general artist survey and the artist registry survey showed differences: the largest group of the general artist survey respondents (41%) stated that collaboration within their local geographic context was Very Important compared to 33% of the artist registry respondents. Similarly, 39% of the general artist survey stated that collaboration within the prairie provinces was Very Important, compared to 29% of the artist registry.

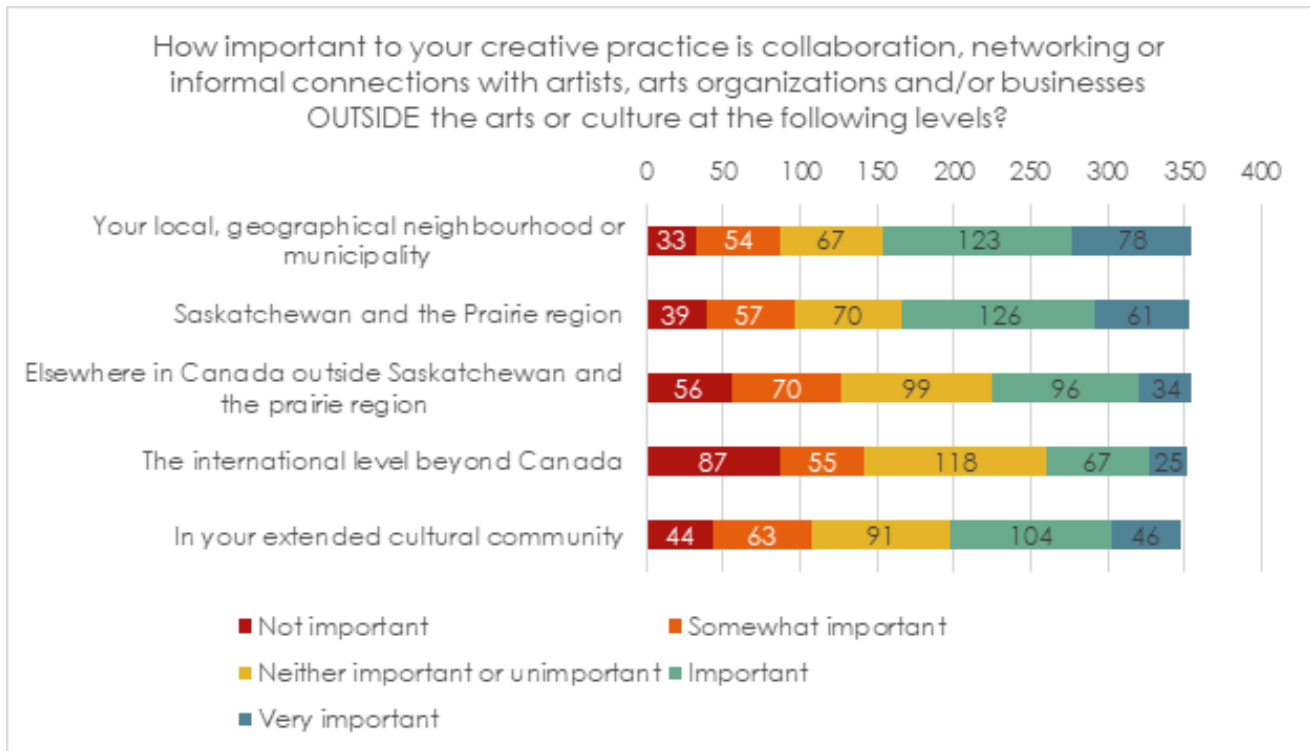


Figure 9 Importance of collaboration, networking and informal connections within the arts & culture



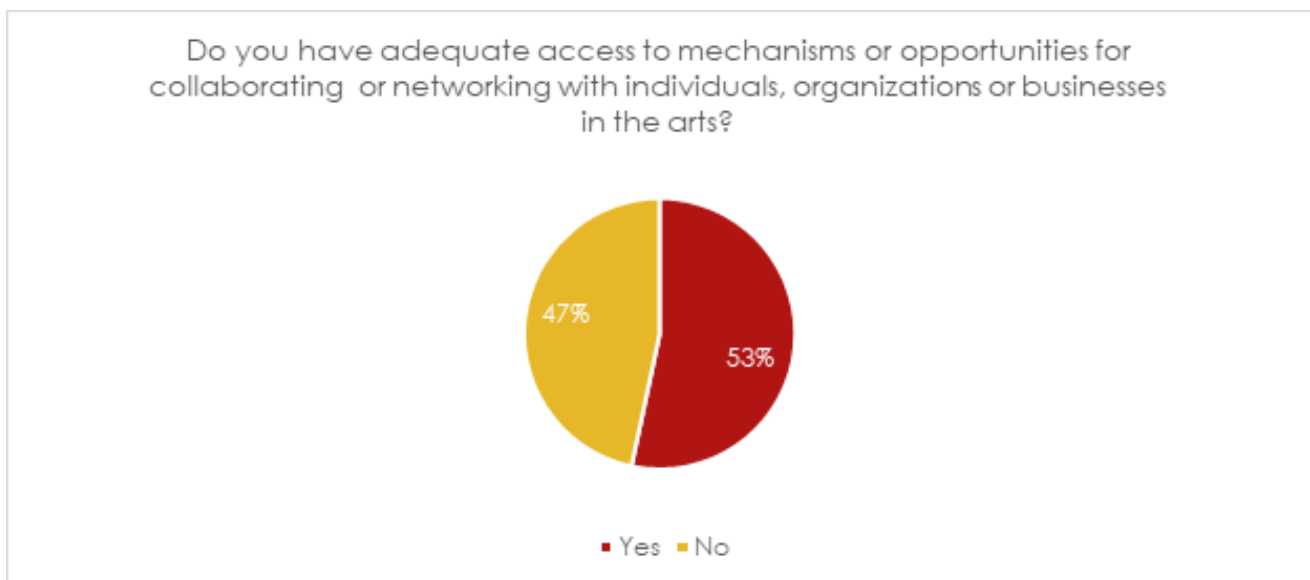
The survey then asked the same question, but this time about organisations and businesses outside arts & culture. Connections with organisations and businesses outside of arts & culture were indicated to be less important overall to respondents, with only a very slight majority indicating local or municipal connections were Important or Very Important (55%) within the province and the prairie region (51%). Slightly under half of respondents indicated that connections outside arts & culture in their wider cultural community were Important or Very Important (42%), while only 36% found connections elsewhere in Canada to be of importance and only 25% indicated international connections outside arts & culture were important.

Figure 10 Importance of collaboration, networking and informal connections outside of arts & culture



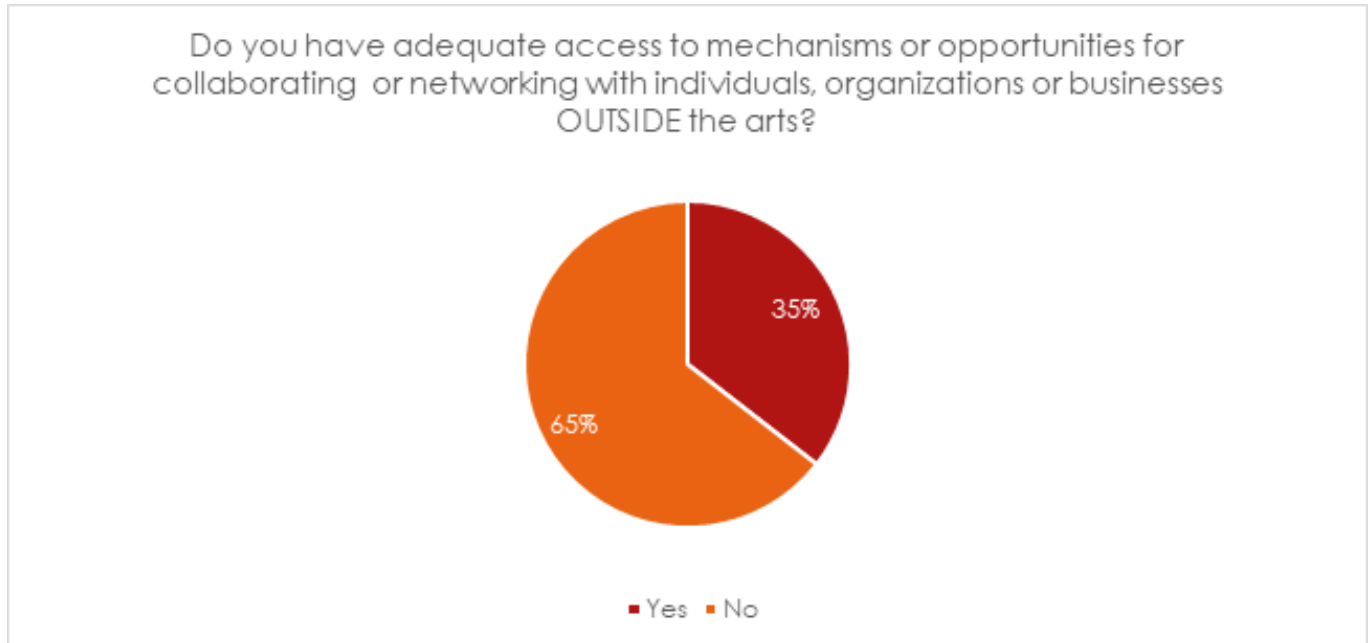
The survey then asked if respondents felt they had adequate access to collaborations and connections with organisations in arts & culture, as well as outside of arts & culture. The majority of respondents (53%) indicated they had adequate access to collaborating and networking within the arts.

Figure 11 Access to mechanisms or opportunities for collaboration within the arts



63% of all respondents indicated they did not have adequate access to collaborating outside of the arts. Nearly 70% of the general artist survey respondents indicated that they did not have access, contrasted with 60% of participants in the artist registry survey.

Figure 12 Access to mechanisms or opportunities for collaboration outside the arts



The final question about networking and collaboration asked how important certain organisations and institutions had been in helping respondents make connections necessary for their creative work. The organisations were as follows:

- Readings, artist talks, residencies and other visiting artist positions
- Festivals and fairs
- Commercial galleries
- Public galleries
- Found temporary performance or exhibition spaces (not purpose-built arts facilities)
- Print publications
- Electronic publications, blogs, galleries and websites
- Social media and email
- Video and tele-conferencing
- Artist cooperative, shared facilities and/or equipment
- Commercial film theatres
- Independent/not-for-profit film theatres/screenings/festivals
- Arts facilities in educational institutions
- Multipurpose or arts facilities managed by municipal, First nations, regional or provincial governments
- Other not-for-profit performance spaces
- Commercial performance spaces
- Conferences and meetings
- Informal social gatherings
- Other

The below table ranks the organisations/institutions by the percentage of respondents who indicated that they were either Important or Very Important in helping them make necessary connections for their creative work.

There were only minor discrepancies between the general artist survey and the artist registry survey: Festivals and fairs were stated to be Important or Very Important by 30% of the general artist survey vs to 16% of the artist registry; Print publications were considered of importance by 48% of the general artist survey vs 39% of the artist registry; 'Multipurpose or arts facilities' were considered Very Important by 21.5% of the general artist survey, but only 9.4% of the artist registry, with 48% and 42% respectively, indicating some level of importance; 15.5% of the general artist survey indicated Conferences and meetings were Very Important, compared to 8.3% of the artist registry.

Figure 13 Organisations and institutions ranked by importance

Organisation/Institution	Important & Very Important	Important & Very Important in 2014
Social media & email	73%	62%
Readings, artist talks, residencies & other visiting artist positions	60%	55%
Festivals and fairs	59%	50%
Informal social gatherings	57%	54%
Electronic publications, blogs, galleries and websites	55%	58%
Arts facilities in educational institutions	51%	47%
Video and teleconferencing	47%	21%
Artist cooperatives, shared facilities and/or equipment	46%	35%
Public galleries	46%	41%
Multipurpose or arts facilities managed by municipal, First nations, regional or provincial governments	44%	36%
Found temporary performance or exhibition spaces (not purpose-built arts facilities)	43.5%	37%
Print publications	43%	47%
Other not-for-profit performance spaces	42%	42%
Conferences and meetings	40%	37%
Commercial performance spaces	26%	27%
Independent/not-for-profit film theatres/screenings/festivals	26%	24%
Commercial galleries	26%	17%
Commercial film theatres	10%	7%
Other	7%	21%

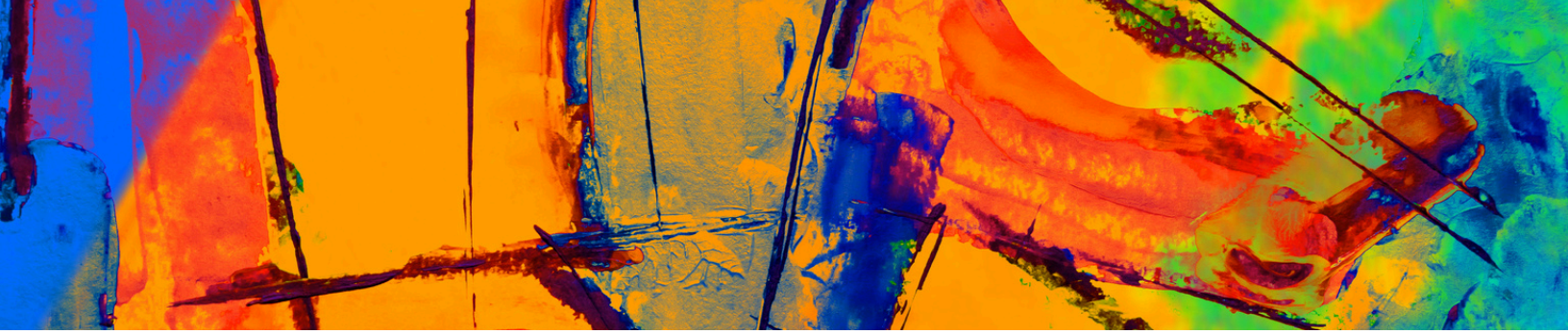
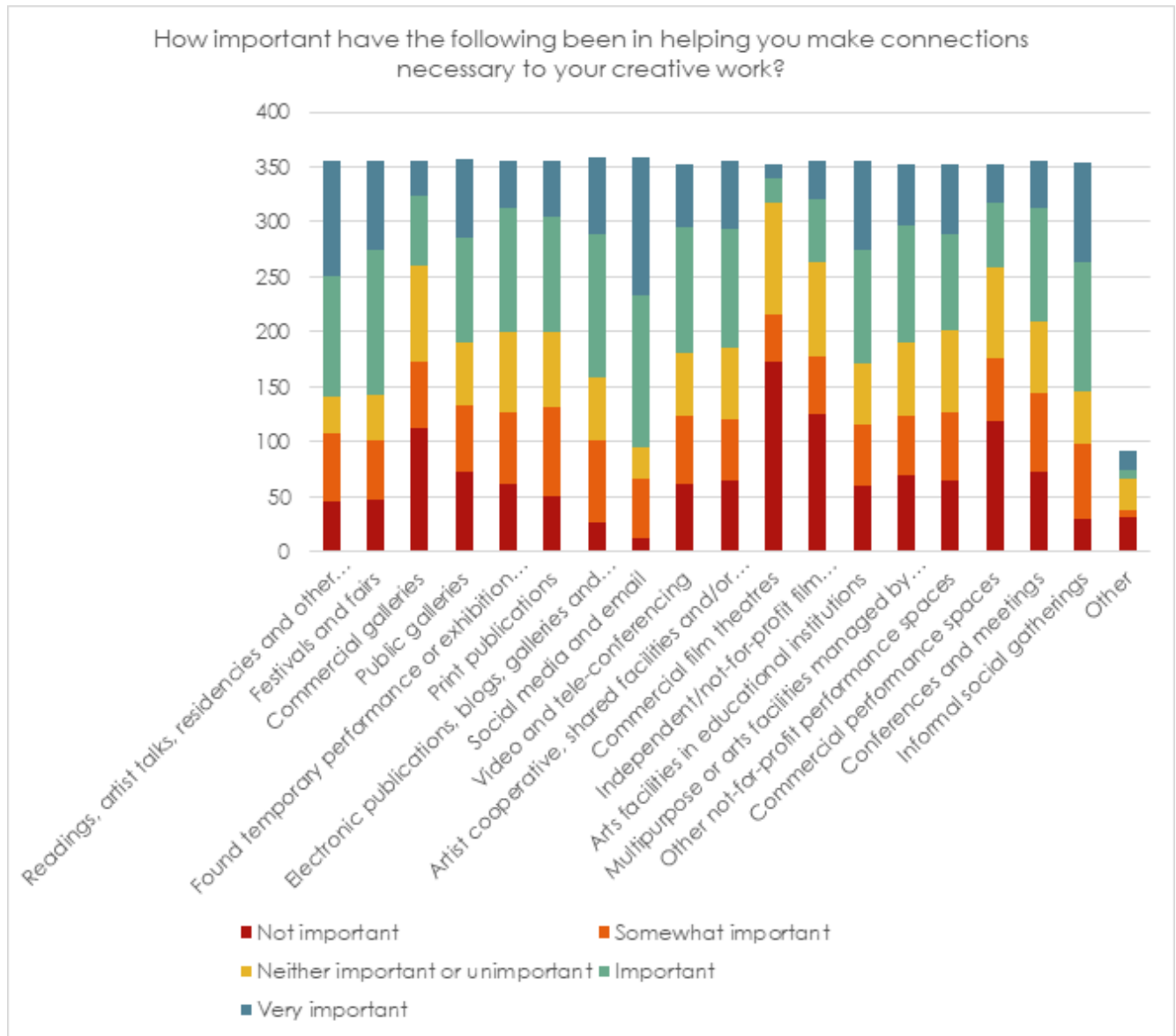


Figure 14 Importance of organisations and institutions in making necessary connections



For the ease of the reader, the below table identifies which response was the most common for each individual category.

Figure 15 Most popular response in relation to organisations and institutions important to making necessary connections

Option	Most Popular Response	Response Value
Readings, artist talks, residencies and other visiting artist positions	Important	31%
Festivals and fairs	Important	37%
Commercial galleries	Not Important	32%
Public galleries	Important	27%
Found temporary performance or exhibition spaces (not purpose-built arts facilities)	Important	32%
Print publications	Important	29%
Electronic publications, blogs, galleries and websites	Important	36%
Social media and email	Important	38%
Video and tele-conferencing	Important	32%
Artist cooperative, shared facilities and/or equipment	Important	30%
Commercial film theatres	Not Important	49%
Independent/not-for-profit film theatres/screenings/festivals	Not Important	35%
Arts facilities in educational institutions	Important	29%
Multipurpose or arts facilities managed by municipal, First nations, regional or provincial governments	Important	30%
Other not-for-profit performance spaces	Important	25%
Commercial performance spaces	Not Important	34%
Conferences and meetings	Important	29%
Informal social gatherings	Important	33%
Other	Not Applicable	75%

Artists were then asked if the importance of any of these organisations/institutions had changed for them since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. In this instance, 59% of respondents indicated that there had been some change in these organisations'/institutions' importance, although, 70% indicated that they had not had access to these resources prior to the pandemic.

Figure 16 Impact of COVID-19 on resources for making necessary connections

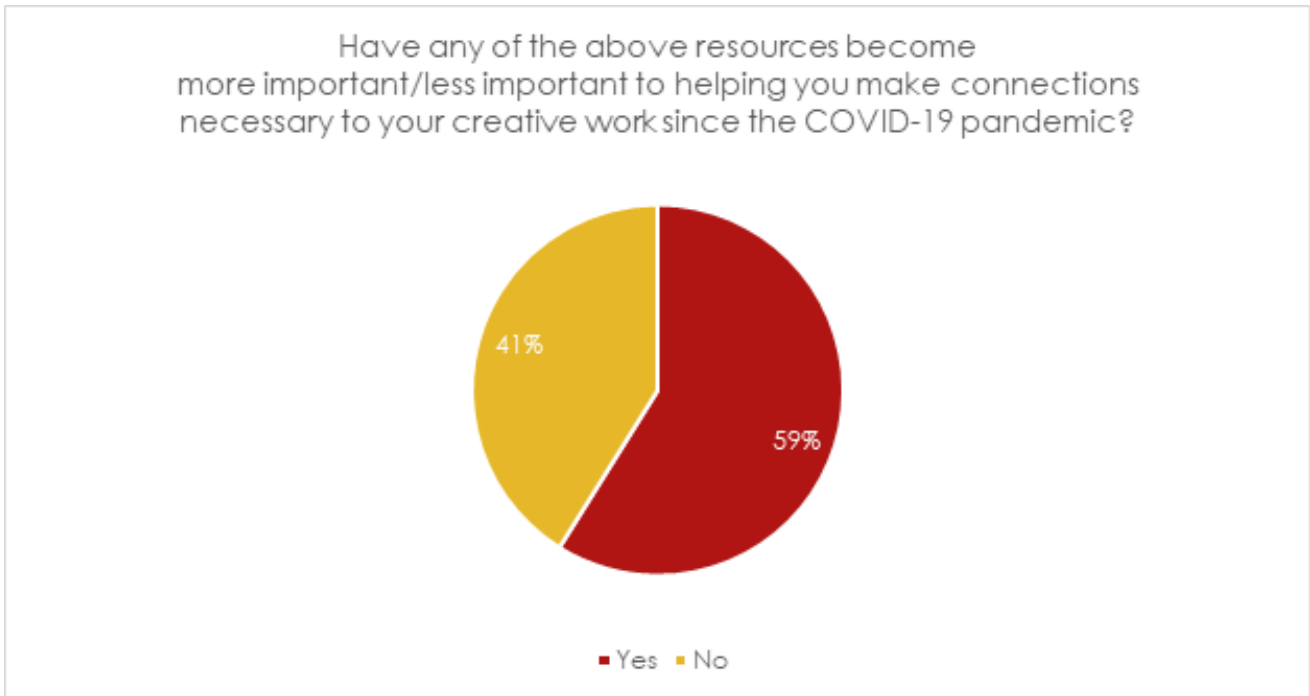
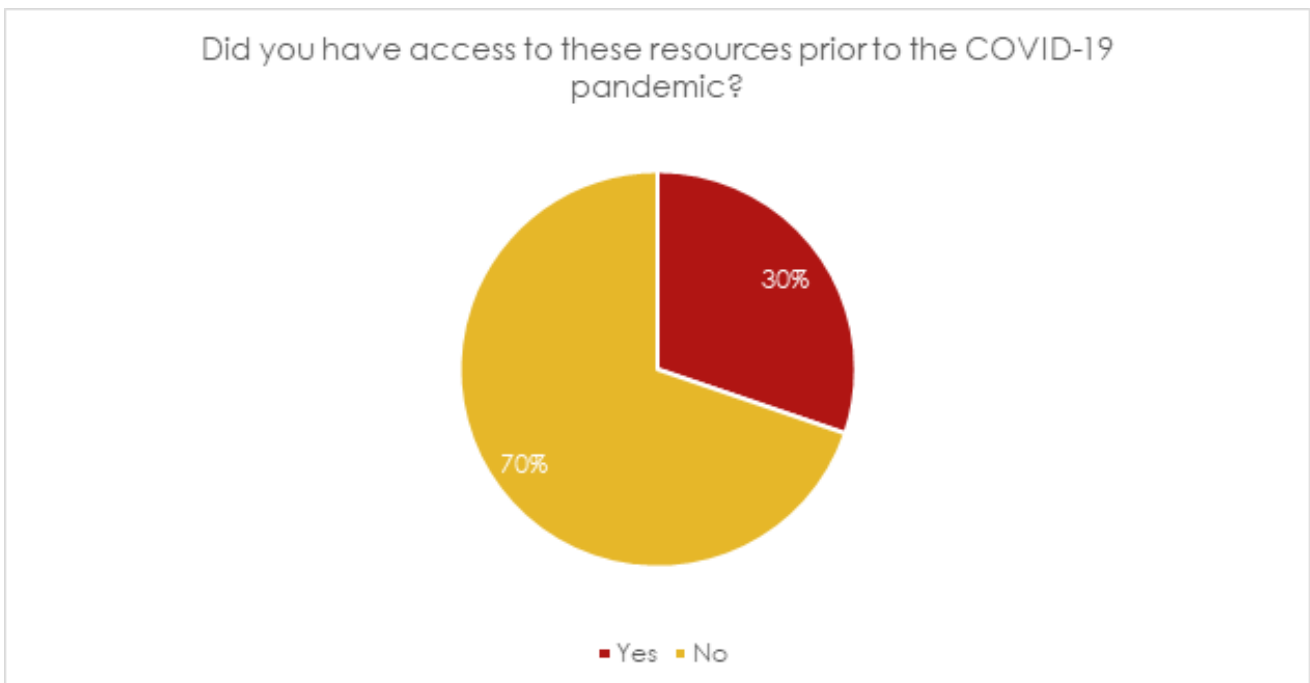
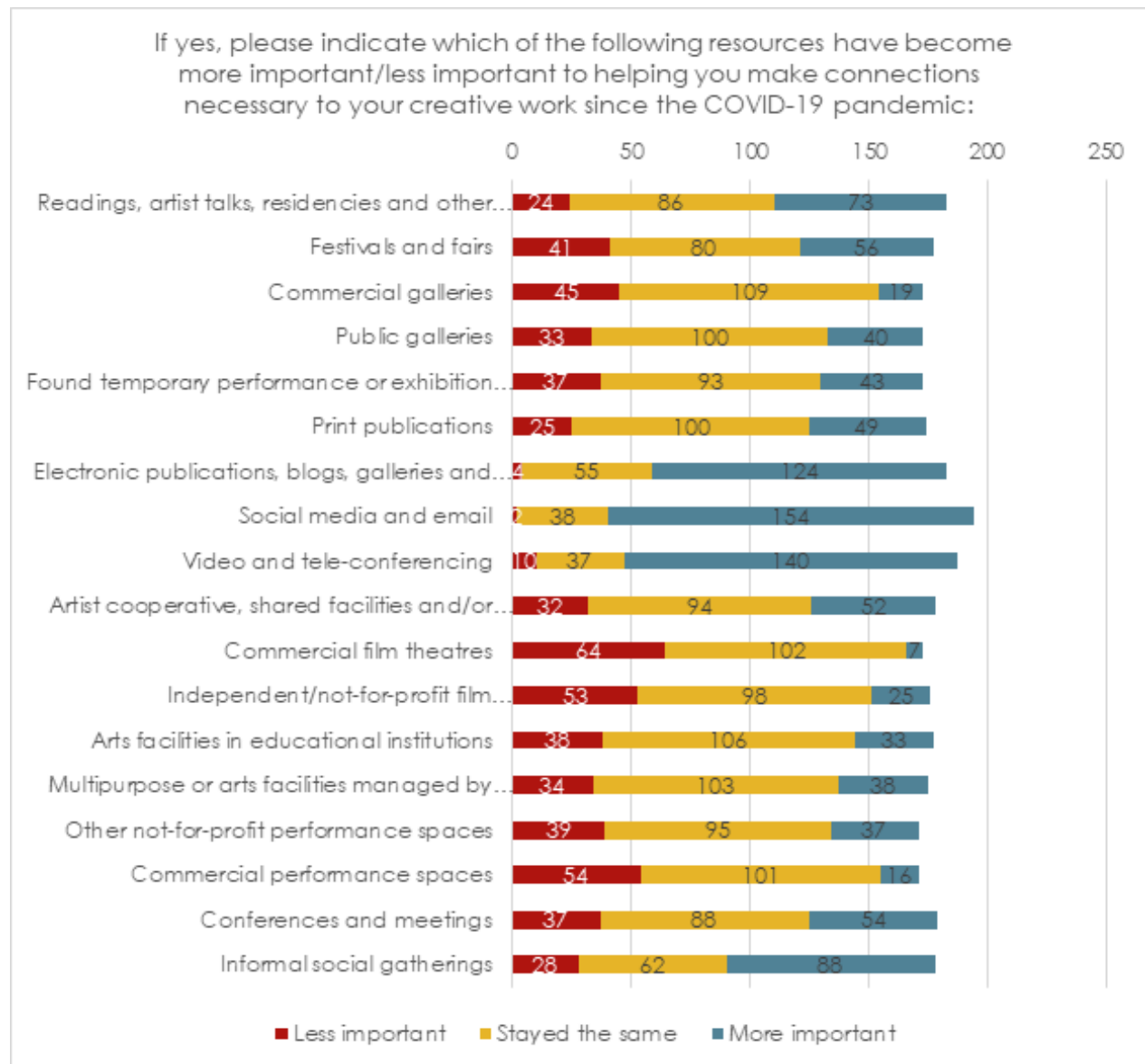


Figure 17 Access to resources prior to COVID-19



Somewhat unsurprisingly, electronic and digital resources were indicated to have increased in importance for the majority of respondents: 'Electronic publications' had 67.8% of respondents indicate it has increased in importance; 79.4% indicated Social media and email had increased in importance; and 74.9% stated Video and tele-conferencing was now more important. Commercial film theatres saw the largest decline in importance, with 37% indicating they were less important.

Figure 18 Change of importance of resources for making necessary connections



There were some variances between the two surveys here: 'Arts facilities' were more important to 25% of the general artist survey as opposed to 12% of the artist registry; Conferences were 25% less important, 41% the same and 33.7% more important to respondents to the general artist survey compared to 15.5% less important, 58.3% the same and 26.2% more important to the artist registry respondents. A similar trend was observed with informal gatherings, in which the general artist survey respondents indicated they were 21.3% less important, 27.7% the same, 51% more

important, while artist registry respondents indicated they were 9.5% less important, 42.9% the same and 47.6% more important.

When asked about local public institutions and the amount of support provided, 65% indicated that they believe organisations provide Moderate to Substantial support to artists, and 59% indicated they have received Moderate to Substantial support.

Figure 19 Amount of support provided to local artists by local public institutions

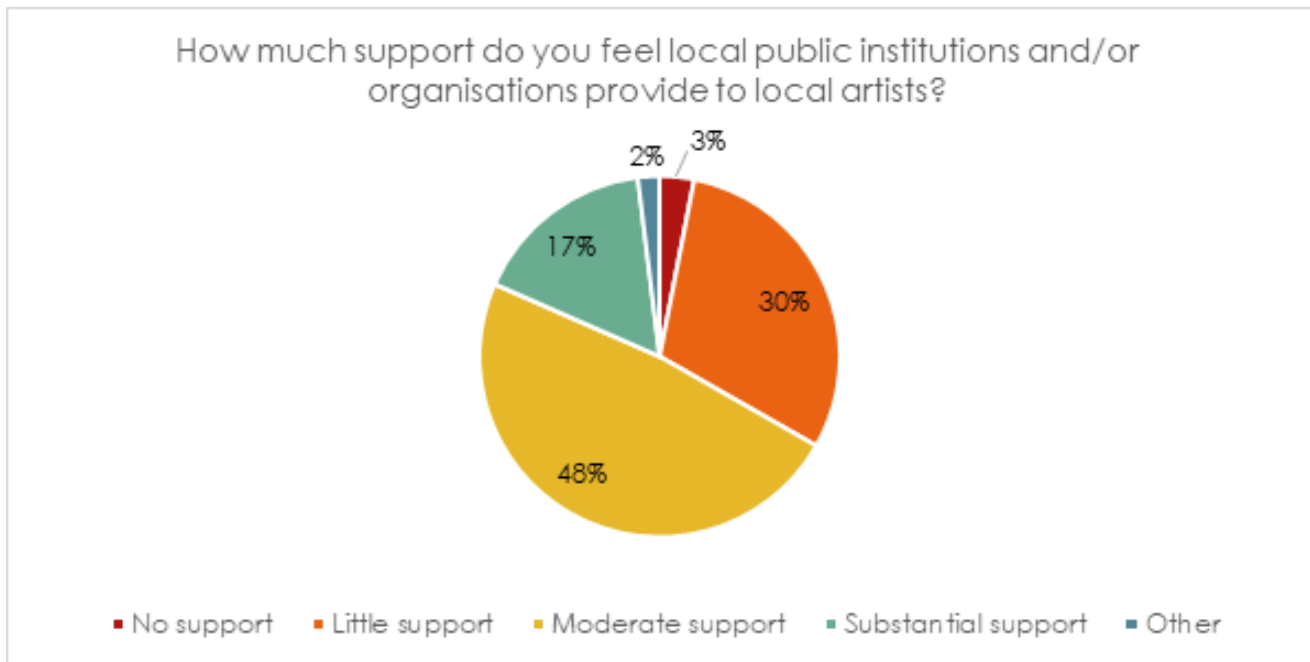


Figure 20 Amount of personal support received from local public institutions

