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TORONTO  
**ARTS**  
FOUNDATION

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GENEROSITY -  
TORONTONIANS  
ENGAGING WITH  
THE ARTS

**ARTS**  
**STATS**  
**2017**



**#TOArts**

“ All of our donors amaze us with their generosity – the \$50 donation, the monthly \$10, each is a sacrifice some not-rich person has made to support and encourage us.

*Theatre organization*

“ I have donated money to help make instruments more accessible to children who cannot afford them. I felt happy that I was helping a good cause.

*Arts donor*

“ I volunteered at film festivals and music festivals. I volunteered to get connected in the community. Met lots of people and had lots of fun to boot!

*Arts volunteer*



# ▲ARTS STATS

In 2013, Toronto Arts Foundation and Leger began a partnership to explore public opinion about the arts. What has emerged in the last four years is a better understanding of the deep appreciation residents have for the arts.

Art Stats 2017 explores generosity. Our survey looks at giving from a number of angles including: how the arts stack up against other charitable organizations for donor dollars, the barriers that could stop people from giving, the benefits of volunteering and donating, and what information would help someone to decide to become a donor.

This year we have merged the results of two surveys: public opinion about giving to the arts and questions to arts organizations about their perceptions of philanthropy to the arts. The responses we have received provide us with insights but also more questions about how we can better engage our communities in giving to the arts.

Generosity matters to those that give and those that receive. No matter the amount given or the time spent, donating and volunteering helps artists and arts organizations to keep working. We hope Arts Stats 2017 helps generate discussion about the many ways Torontonians support the arts.



*Margo Charlton*  
*Research and Impact Manager*  
*Toronto Arts Foundation*



*Claire Hopkinson, M.S.M.*  
*Director and CEO*  
*Toronto Arts Foundation*

# GIVING TO THE ARTS: DONATING



Donations make an arts project possible, help a group live up to its potential, contribute to hiring talent, or sometimes help keep the doors open. Donors play a role in encouraging arts groups and some well-timed donations boost staff morale during difficult times.

Arts organizations understand that receiving a donation is about more than the money, it's about relationship building.

Donors are drawn to work that means something and that reflects their own values including concerns about justice, equity, and opportunities for children and youth to experience the arts. It feels good to donate, especially when you think your donation was needed, appreciated, and made something happen. People can see themselves donating because they want to feel connected to the work, the artist, or the company.



One couple have made a very modest donation every single year. Although the financial impact of their donation is not great, their impact on our morale IS great! Their loyal support encourages us to keep striving.

*Music organization*



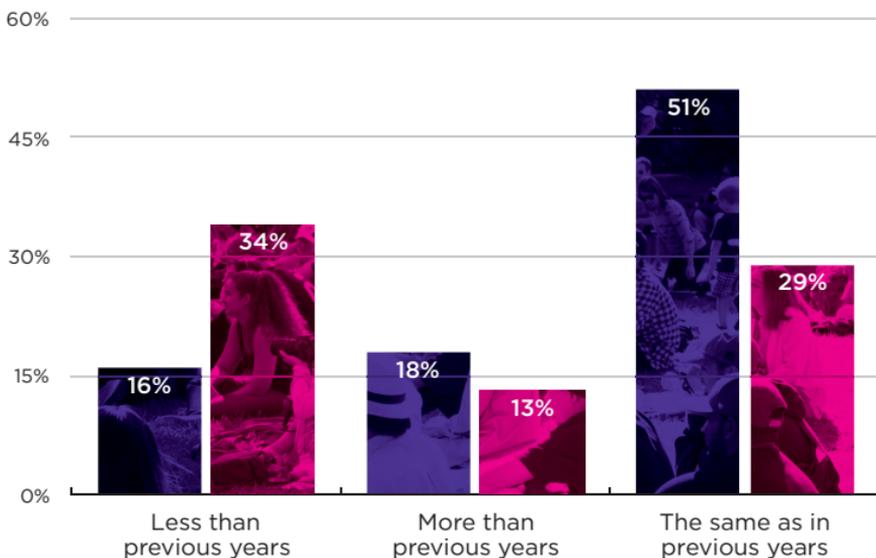
(The donor) gives a donation every year because he believes the work we are doing is unlike anything else in the city. He believes in the values and ethics that go into the work. His considerable donation means a great deal to him. He feels honoured and humbled that he has reached a point in his life that he can give back.

*Theatre organization*

# Are Torontonians more **generous** than in the past?

Arts organizations perceive a drop-off in donations. They think that approximately one third of Torontonians are giving less and only 42% are maintaining or increasing their donations.

However, 70% of respondents to a public survey say they are maintaining or increasing their giving. Half (51%) donated as much as they've done in previous years and nearly two-in-ten (18%) are donating more. Among those who made a donation in the past 12 months, these percentages jump to 60% and 23%, respectively.



■ *Public Opinion* ■ *Arts Organizations*

# How much are Torontonians donating?

Over the past 12 months, most Torontonians (74%) have donated to a charitable or non-profit organization. This includes all types of organizations including arts organizations.

Older Torontonians are more inclined to give donations.

55+: *18-34:*  
**82%** *vs.* **66%**

Torontonians donated to roughly four organizations apiece over the past year (3.91 on average).

Nearly three quarters (71%) of professional arts organizations think Torontonians donate to between two to four organizations.

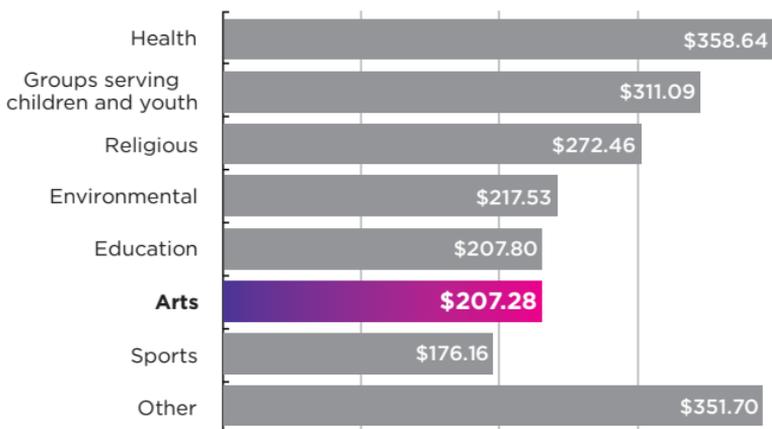
# What charitable organizations receive the most support?

When Torontonians are asked where they're likely to place their donations, the arts are unfortunately near the bottom of the list.

With a hypothetical \$1000 to donate, four-in-ten Torontonians (44%) would give to the arts. They would donate \$207.28, or roughly 21% of the \$1000 to the arts.

This is fewer dollars than what they'd give to health-based groups (\$358.64) and groups serving children and youth (\$311.09).

Regionally, those living in the central core (i.e. central and downtown Toronto, as well as East York) would give more to the arts, on average, than residents from any other area (\$248.86 vs. \$179.54 for the remaining areas surveyed).





“A donor became more confident in the quality of our operations and ability to teach and achieve artistic excellence with the children...(they) then unlocked double the funding for our organization.

*Children's choir*

“A donor with a long history with our organization made a large (and anonymous) donation to fund the performance of the North American premiere of a well-known work... He wanted to support a specific project that meant something to him and would have a public impact.

*Music organization*

“We had an active participant in one of our member organizations that passed away and since then his family has been a regular donor to our organization, making us aware of how we as an organization were valued and played a significant role in that person's life and work in the arts.

*Arts Service organization*

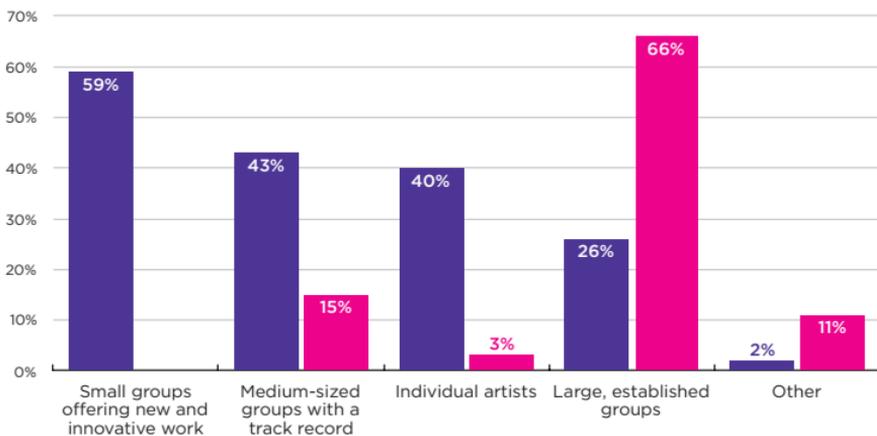


# Who would potential donors give to?

66% of arts organizations surveyed think Torontonians would most likely prefer to support large, established companies compared to small groups or individual artists.

However, Torontonians say that they would most likely donate to small arts organizations that provide new and innovative arts experiences. Large, established arts organizations placed further down on their giving list at 26%.

Arts groups understand the complexities of philanthropy and 14% pointed out that giving depends on a number of factors including the donor's interest and relationship to the art form.

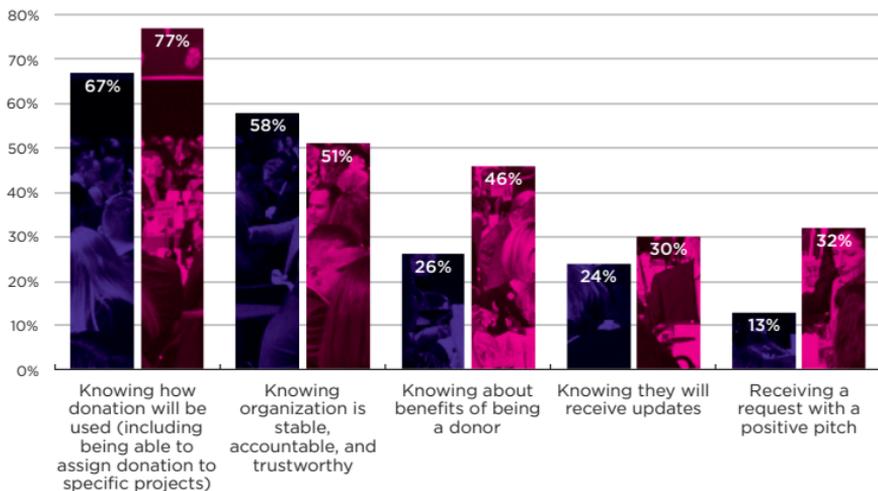


■ *Public Opinion* ■ *Arts Organizations*

# What would help Torontonians **decide** to donate?

According to Torontonians, knowing not only how their donation is to be used, but also that they're donating to a stable, accountable, and trustworthy organization, would be most effective in nudging them toward donating to an arts organization.

Arts organizations are in agreement with the public on the importance of receiving information on how donations will be used. They also see the importance to potential donors of knowing that an arts organization is stable, and that donors can assign a donation to a specific project.



■ *Public Opinion* ■ *Arts Organizations*



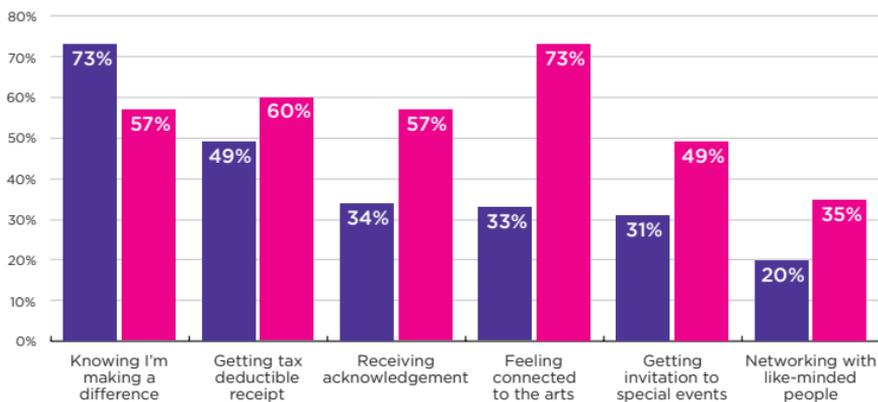
# What are the benefits of donating?

Arts organizations think the top benefit to donors is feeling connected to the arts. The public says it's about making a difference.

The public puts less emphasis on receiving acknowledgement, and getting invitations to special events and networking opportunities than arts organizations think they do.

Name acknowledgement (be it at an event, in a program, or on a plaque, etc.), as well as the opportunity to network with like-minded people, is particularly appealing to younger Torontonians (18-34: 17% and 32%, respectively), though the opportunity to network steadily loses traction with respondents as they age.

Only 10% of people over 55 see networking opportunities as a reason to donate.



■ *Public Opinion* ■ *Arts Organizations*



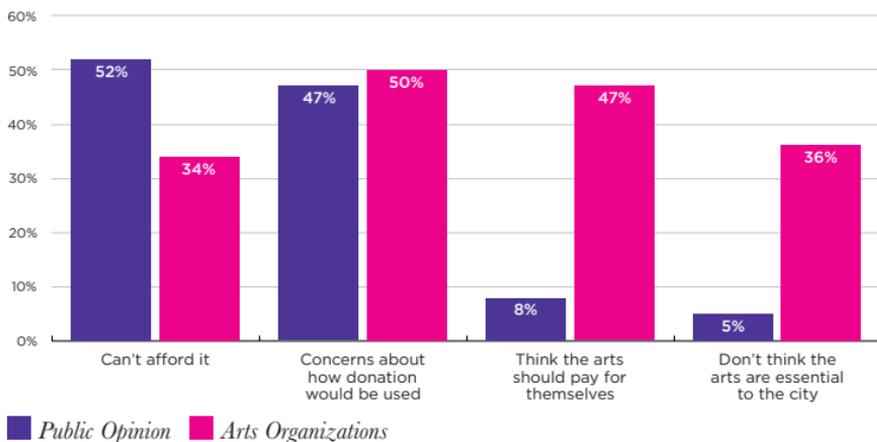


# What are the barriers to donating to the arts?

The top reason to stop Torontonians from donating to the arts is not enough disposable income in their household budget (52%). Not surprisingly, budget constraints are more likely among younger Torontonians, with household incomes under \$60K/year. Roughly two thirds of arts organizations didn't flag affordability as a factor when refraining from donating to the arts.

The public and arts organizations are in agreement that doubts about what a donation would be used for is reason enough not to give.

Arts organizations think the public might not want to give to the arts because people think the arts "should pay for themselves" (47%) or are "not essential to the city" (36%). On the other hand, few Torontonians believe these two reasons to be significant barriers to donating; only 8% think the arts should pay their own way and 5% think the arts are not essential to the city.



# What donations mean to an arts group.

“

My favourite donor story, is one that happened a few years back. We sent out a newsletter about an upcoming performance and received an email from someone saying “I would like to help, please call me.” This donor had seen our work and believed in our vision. In that first year he donated \$4,000 based on his love and belief in our work and since then has continued to raise his donation. He comes out to all our shows and is a great advocate for our work (though he chooses to donate anonymously). This donation has helped us to approach other donors and receive other large gifts! It was a turning point...

*Theatre organization*



# What giving means to a donor.

“ I donated to a local artist to support an exhibition. I knew the artist personally and it felt good helping them out.

“ I have donated to (a ballet company). They support emerging artists and the donation allows them to continue doing the fantastic work that they do...I got a tax receipt out of it and memories that will last a lifetime.

“ I donated to an emerging artist-run center. I donated because I believed in what they were doing, and they made the donation price point very affordable. What I got out of it was feeling good about supporting them.

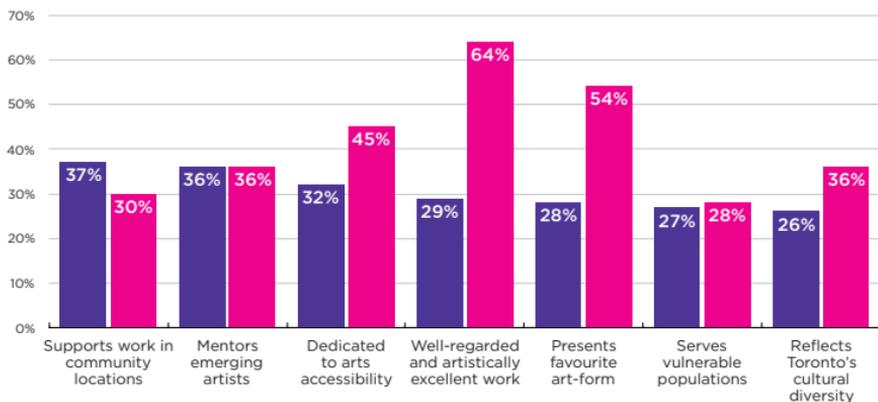
*Responses from Toronto Donors*

# What do potential donors value?

Most arts organization respondents believe that, above all else, donors want to support an organization that not only creates well-regarded and artistically excellent work (64%), but also presents and produces their favourite art form (54%).

The public's reasons for considering support for the arts is varied, with no single reason significantly standing out from the others. Reasons to support an organization include: their work in community locations, their support of emerging artists, and their dedication to arts accessibility.

Women are statistically more likely to look for social change outcomes, such as making arts accessible or the fact that the organization serves vulnerable populations.



■ *Public Opinion* ■ *Arts Organizations*

“ (I wanted) to continue to support the staging of a world-class opera from the classical, baroque and earlier periods. I felt a sense of satisfaction in making a financial contribution and enjoyed the performances.

“ We donate regularly and review our donations annually. We feel it’s something we should do and attempt to find worthy causes needing help. We limit our giving to charities that show a high % of donations being put to real work - not promo and admin! That makes us happy and allows us to feel useful.

“ I have donated to various organizations and events over the years, in support of smaller organizations...most recently I have donated to support a personal friend who is writing, producing and starring in his own works.

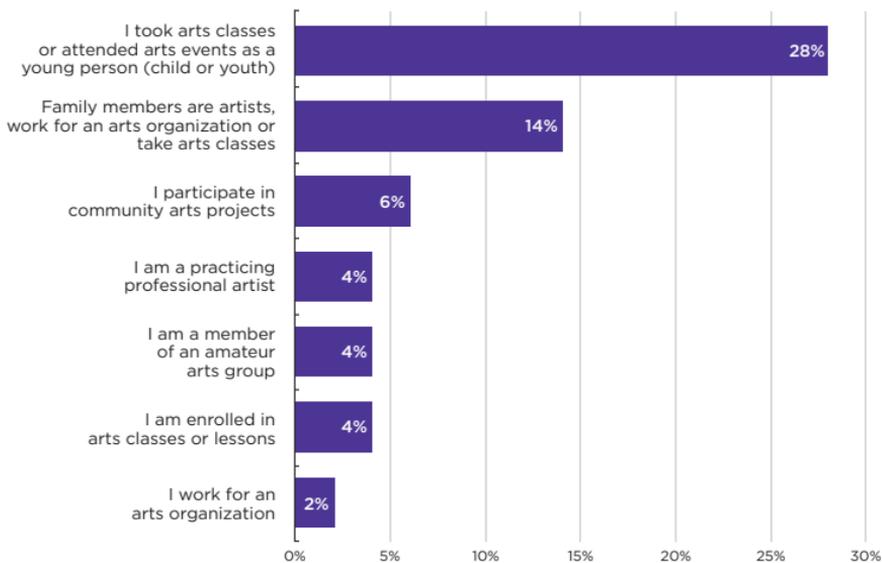
*Responses from Toronto Donors*





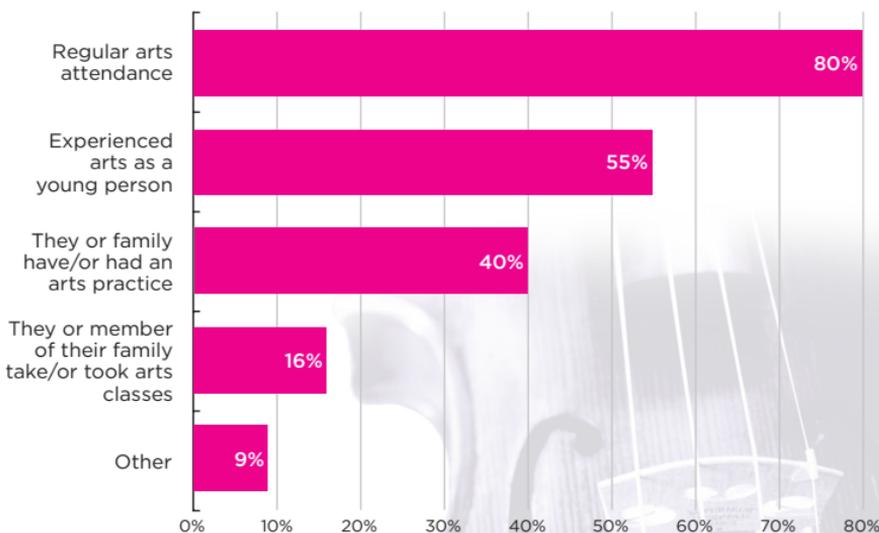
In addition to attending the arts some Torontonians have a deeper arts involvement.

**40%** of respondents said they had one or more personal connections to the arts.



# How does life experience influence potential donors?

Eighty percent of arts organization respondents believe regular arts attendance would influence a person's decision to become an arts donor. Experiencing arts as a young person (55%), as well as a current arts practice (40%), are believed to be influential in becoming a donor. Art classes alone appear to be the least influential, according to arts organization respondents (16%).



■ Arts Organizations

# ENGAGING WITH THE ARTS: VOLUNTEERING



Volunteers, like donors, are an invaluable resource to an arts organization. People consider volunteering because in exchange for their time and expertise, they receive benefits. They can meet people, feel connected, and support things they believe in, or gain experience and learn new skills.

Feeling connected to the arts community as a donor (33%) and as a volunteer (39%) received similar benefit ranking. However, only 20% of donors selected networking as a benefit compared to 52% of volunteers. Half of the volunteers who got involved in the arts did so because they are supporting something they believe in.

Some volunteers just want to help out when needed but others are willing to get more involved and are prepared to sit on boards or help with fundraising.

“ I volunteered at Word on the Street. I was unemployed at the time and looking to do something in a field I was interested in.

“ I have been a volunteer guide at several art shows at the Art Gallery of Ontario. I enjoy the experience and the fact that I can perhaps enlighten folks on what they are seeing.

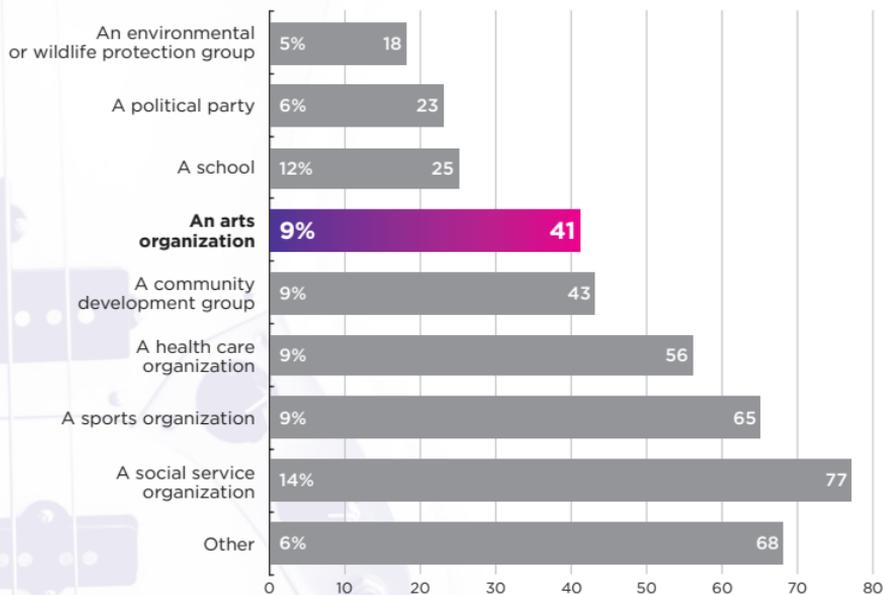
“ I am currently a board member of a dance company and enjoy supporting the artistic director whose work I love.

*Responses from Toronto volunteers*

# How much volunteer time is given to the arts?

Almost one-in-ten Torontonians surveyed (9%) have volunteered for an arts organization over the past 12 months, a percentage that is in line with most of the other organizations or groups tested.

Arts volunteers averaged 41 hours over twelve months, or just over three hours per month (3.4), placing them in the middle of the pack, when it comes to the amount of time volunteered. For comparison, volunteers for a social service organization averaged 77 hours this past year, or just over six hours per month (6.4).

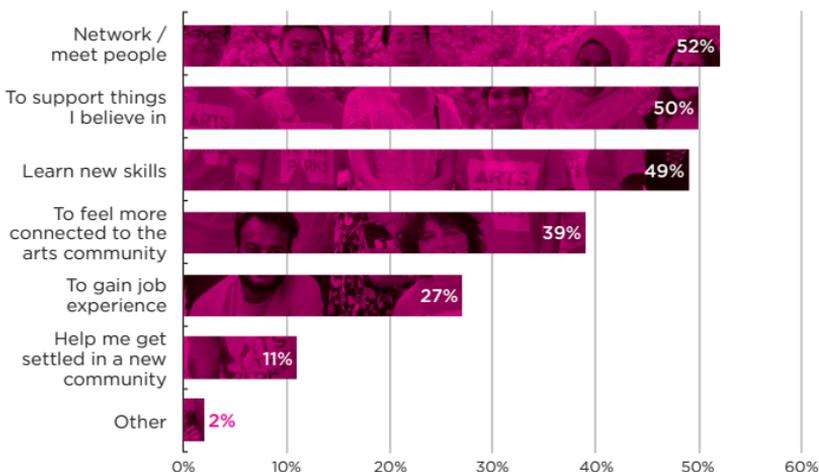


# What are the benefits of volunteering?

There are many expected benefits to volunteering for an arts organization, chief among them being the ability to network and meet new people (52%).

The chance to learn new skills and gain job experience also make it into the top five, though both benefits steadily lose appeal as respondents age (especially the benefit of job experience). By contrast, the main perceived benefit for those 55+ is a chance to support something they believe in (58%), highlighting the fact that the expected benefits of volunteering for an arts organization tend to differ markedly with age.

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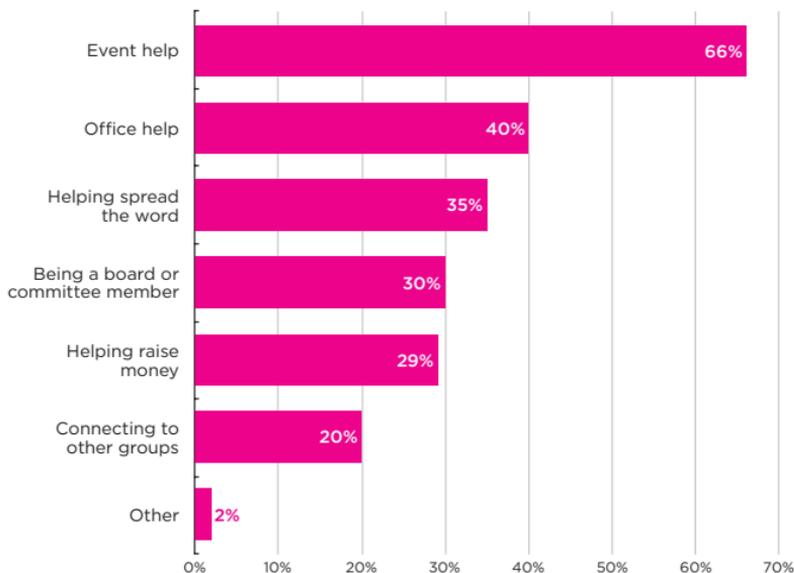


# How do volunteers support the arts?

If they were to volunteer for an arts organization, most Torontonians (66%) would offer to help out at an event in some way.

Others would offer office help (especially women), or help “spread the word,” among other things. While fewer than two-in-ten (20%) would help connect the organization to other groups, this is one skill offered up by more than twice as many 18-34 year-olds (32%), compared to those 35+ (14%).

Overall, more volunteers are willing to volunteer for less involved tasks such as event and office help compared to bigger commitments of governance and fundraising.





## **Methodology: Public Opinion**

### **QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT**

A survey of 502 Torontonians was completed online between January 25 and 31, 2017, using Leger's online panel, LegerWeb. A probability sample of the same size would yield a margin of error of approximately +/-4%, 19 times out of 20.

In order to qualify, a respondent's postal code needed to begin with the letter M.

### **ABOUT LEGER'S ONLINE PANEL**

Leger's online panel has approximately 475,000 members nationally – with between 10,000 and 20,000 new members added each month, and has a retention rate of 90%.

### **QUALITY CONTROL**

Stringent quality assurance measures allow Leger to achieve the high-quality standards set by the company. As a result, its methods of data collection and storage outperform the norms set by WAPOR (The World Association for Public Opinion Research). These measures are applied at every stage of the project: from data collection to processing, through to analysis. We aim to answer our clients' needs with honesty, total confidentiality, and integrity.

## **Methodology: Arts Organizations**

### **QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT**

92 arts organizations completed the online survey between January 23 and March 14, 2017, using Google Forms. A probability sample of the same would yield a margin of error of approximately +/-10%, 19 times out of 20.

In order to qualify, a respondent needed to be part of a Toronto Arts Council-funded organization receiving an annual operating grant from the Council through community arts, dance, literary arts, music, theatre, or visual/media arts programs.

### **QUALITATIVE RESEARCH**

In addition to collecting statistical data, respondents had an opportunity to share their ideas via written responses to the following questions:

**Arts Organizations:** Share a story about one of your donors who has made a real difference to your organization?

**Public:** Share a story about a time you donated to an arts organization or event. Why did you donate? What did you get out of the experience? Share a story about a time you volunteered for an arts organization or event. Why did you volunteer? What did you get out of the experience?

# Acknowledgements

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Thank you to Toronto Arts Foundation staff and board members for their help in shaping this year's questions, Michelle Parson for editing, and Humber College intern Samyuktha Sharath for assistance with the Arts Organization survey.

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