

# What's Next Survey Summary Report

Since COVID-19 restrictions started, RACC has been responding to calls for support and providing additional resources to artists, creative workers, and arts organizations. Moving forward, how can we build resilience for the change, challenges, and opportunities ahead? What support is needed now and over the next couple of years? How can RACC better support Black, Indigenous, and other marginalized artists by traditional support systems?

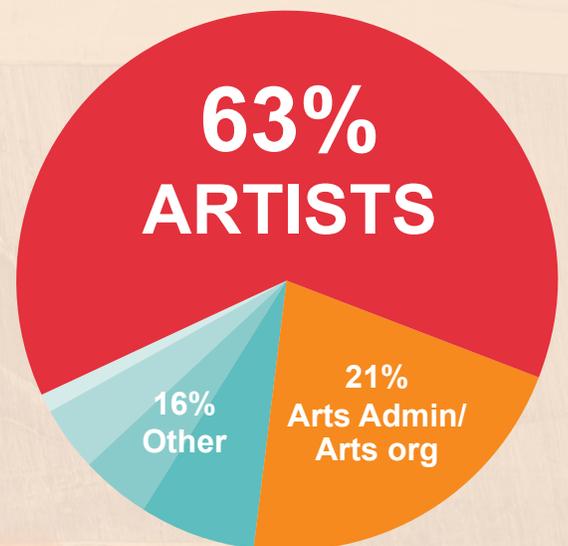
RACC's budget next year includes significant resources that can be used for programs, technical assistance, grants, and more. We want to be strategic, making the greatest impact and aligning our investments with our commitment to community, and racial equity and access.

What should be our priorities? How do these priorities fit into RACC's new strategic framework?

To answer these questions, we administered the *What's Next* survey in August 2020.



River Miles VI  
James Lavadour

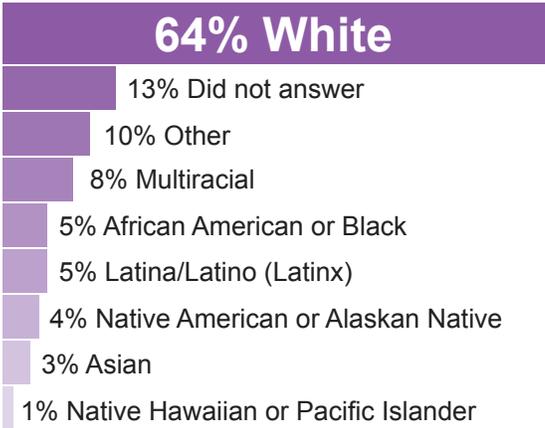


**Of the 392 responses received, most were artists (63%)**

- Artist administrator or a part of an arts organization (21%)
- Board member of an arts organization (7%)
- Staff on payroll (4%)
- Other (4%)
- Staff on contract (1%)

# DEMOGRAPHICS OF SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

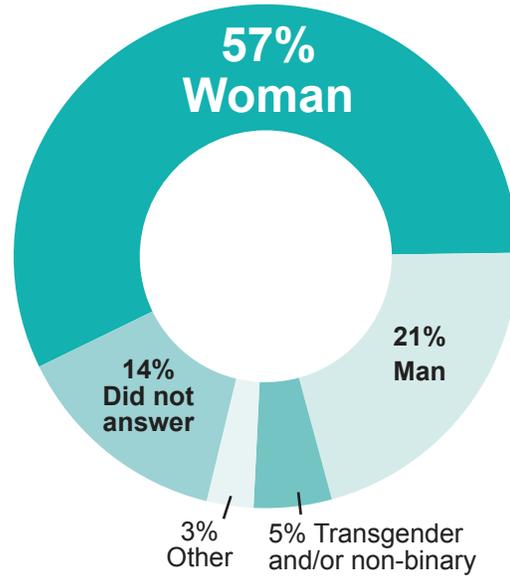
## Most Identified as White



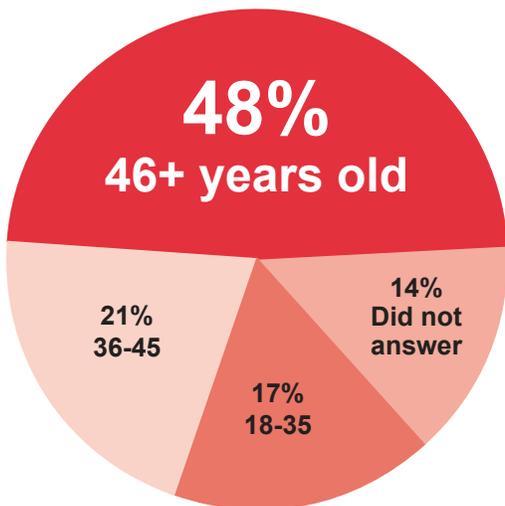
\*Totals exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one response.

\*\*Most respondents questioned the need to identify their racial identity

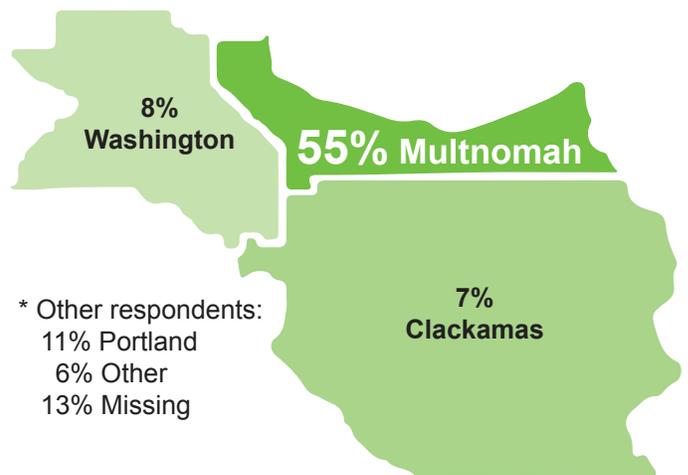
## More Than Half Identified as Women



## Nearly Half are 46 or Older



## Most from Multnomah County



# KEY FINDINGS

The *What's Next* survey revealed agreement on the following critical needs across all arts organizations and artists who responded.

## FUNDING

There is currently an overwhelming need for arts funding in the region as organizations and individual artists face extreme challenges resulting from the Covid pandemic and struggle to remain financially viable. (More details on funding needs are provided on the next page.)

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Training, professional development, collaboration, and mentorship opportunities are essential, especially with the need to reinvent and reimagine the ways in which art is presented during and recovering from a pandemic when in-person gatherings are limited.

## EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

More support is needed for inclusion of local artists from underrepresented groups and those who work in unconventional art genres. Outreach efforts are essential to attract and retain more diverse audiences.

## SPACE

A shortage of spaces, both physical and mental, was highlighted by respondents as a challenge to surviving and thriving in the current environment. Physical spaces have been lost due to rising rents and limitations on in-person capacity. Reductions in mental space for creativity and networking opportunities have been difficult.

## CONNECTION

Community-building is essential in the arts and many find it lacking here in Portland. Collaboration is needed now more than ever as the pandemic has increased isolation. New ways to engage communities are required.

## MARKETING SUPPORT

Artists and arts organizations need assistance with advertising, marketing, and promotion in order to help recover from pandemic losses. Reaching and engaging an audience is more important than ever.

*“Without audiences or with limited ones, operational funds are the highest priority, to avoid cultural organizations totally going under and disappearing.”*



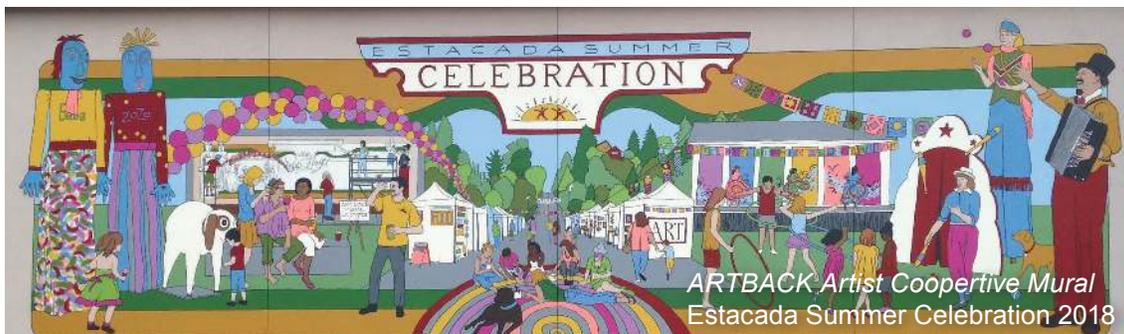
Helping Hand  
David Flores

# THE TOP NEED FOR ARTISTS AND ARTS ORGANIZATIONS IS FUNDING.

The overwhelming need for both artists and arts organizations is funding. Both see ongoing advocacy as a means to achieve long-term, sustainable funding to ensure a secure future.

The greatest needs identified by arts organizations are funds for (1) general operations, (2) investment in technology (equipment, implementation, and training), and (3) diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. Flexible, unrestricted grant funding would be the most helpful, allowing the organization to apply the funds to the area of greatest need.

For individual artists, both grants and opportunities to work were the most identified needs. Simple, straightforward, streamlined processes to find and apply for grants would be helpful as the current processes are complicated and time-consuming, which only add to the stress that artists are already experiencing.



## Arts Organizations: Top 5 Most Helpful Financial Supports

Survey participants were given a list of possible financial supports and asked to identify which ones would be most helpful in the next 6-18 months.<sup>1</sup>

#1

**General operating support**

#2

**Equity, diversity, inclusion and access**

#3

**Artistic projects**

#4

**Building organizational capacity**

#5

**Professional or organizational development**

*“We need financial resources for the hiring of more BIPOC staff and equity consulting.”*

*“The greatest challenge has been finding a way to reach our audiences and entering into a new artistic medium that none of us are too confident about.”*

# Artists: Top 5 Most Helpful Financial Supports

Survey participants were given a list of possible financial supports and asked to identify which ones would be most helpful in the next 6-18 months.<sup>1</sup>

#1

Commissions

#2

Direct purchase of art

#3

Support business development

#4

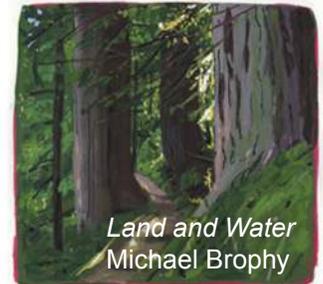
Funding for emergencies (personal bills)

#5

Paid residencies, fellowships, or similar

*“Advocate for the city to create jobs for artists like the WPA. Make sure your funding and programs support all artists.”*

*“Residency opportunities, small project grants, education awards. I need mentorship. I would love to see RACC as an org that cares about me and my work and wants to make it more possible for me to thrive.”*



*“More city art purchases or corporate art purchases. Encouraging businesses to purchase work from area artists: perhaps showing portfolios or hosting (large) presentations of area art.”*

<sup>1</sup>The survey was administered in August 2020, therefore, the 'next 6 – 18 months' refers to February 2021 – February 2022.

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

## Arts Organizations: Top 5 Professional Development Needs

Survey participants were given a list of possible professional development, technical support, or other related services and asked to identify which ones would be most helpful in the next 6-18 months.<sup>1</sup>

#1

**Skill development workshops (e.g., board development, marketing, fundraising, etc.)**

#2

**Coordinated political advocacy**

#3

**One-on-one or group coaching for staff, board and/or other professionals**

#4

**Group info sessions for opportunities (e.g., grants or public art calls)**

#5

**Convening discussions around urgent topics**

*“Marketing, fellowships, and mentorships one-on-one would be very helpful, space allocation, grants, commissions, also the admin side taxes and managing professional artistry as a business.”*

*Local Stories  
Nick Goetting*

*“Now more than ever artists have to get creative and collaborate.”*

# Artists: Top 5 Professional Development Needs

Survey participants were given a list of possible professional development, technical support, or other related services and asked to identify which ones would be most helpful in the next 6-18 months.<sup>1</sup>

#1

Social media and marketing support

#2

One-on-one coaching with RACC staff or other professionals

#3

Skill development workshops (e.g., marketing, grant writing, legal issues, bookkeeping, etc.)

#4

Review and feedback of draft proposals

#5

Feedback after decisions

*“An opportunity to network with other creative writers and painters (as a mentor for me).”*

*“RACC could be more instrumental in helping advertise and support individual arts educators’ cultural programming; e.g., assisting with community outreach + connecting artists with audience/participants.”*



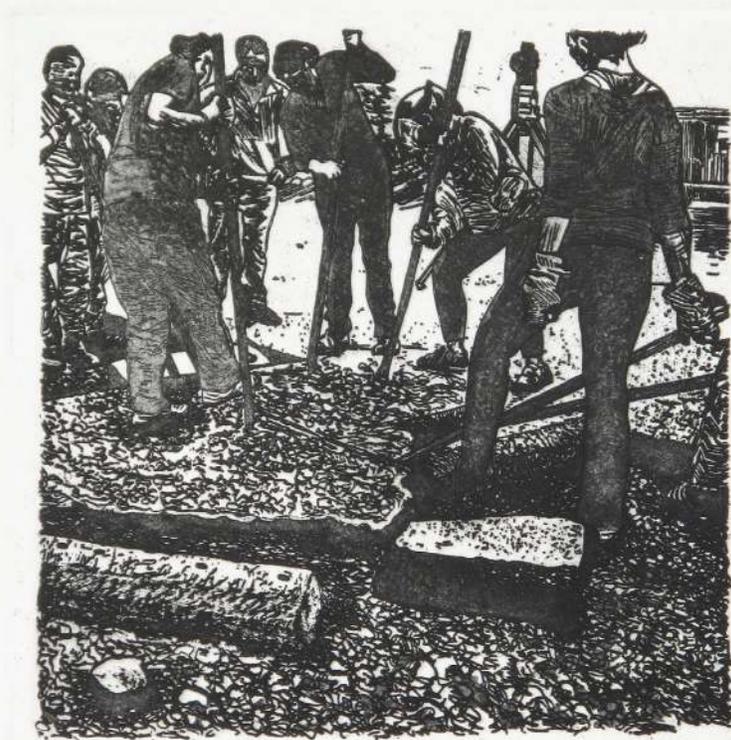
January 3  
Lillian Pitt



Chicken Crossing  
Barbara Earl Thomas

<sup>1</sup>The survey was administered in August 2020, therefore, the 'next 6 – 18 months' refers to February 2021 – February 2022.

Thank you to all who participated in the survey.  
These results will help to inform resource  
planning for the coming months.



*Breaking N.E.*  
Kristin Kohl