

2025 Boulder Artist Census



CITY OF BOULDER OFFICE OF
ARTS+Culture

Table of Contents

Summary of Findings	4
About the 2025 Boulder Artist Census	4
Study Goal	4
Research Methodology	4
Defining “Artist”	5
1. Financial Realities: The balance between earnings and expenses makes sustaining a livelihood as an artist challenging	6
2. The Struggle for Space: Finding Affordable Spaces for Artists	9
3. Public Perception & Community Support: The Search for a Connected Arts Scene	12
Broad Suggestions	13
Analysis of the 2025 Boulder Artist Census Through the Lens of the City of Boulder’s Sustainability, Equity, and Resilience (SER) Framework	15
1. Safe Community	16
2. Healthy and Socially Thriving	16
3. Livable	17
4. Accessible and Connected	17
5. Environmentally Sustainable	17
6. Responsibly Governed	18
7. Economically Vital	18
Key Takeaways:	19
Comparative Analysis of Questionnaire Responses (2017/2018 vs. 2024)	20
Art Disciplines	20
Education	20
Boulder Residency	21
Age Demographics	21
Gender Demographics	22
Race and Ethnicity Demographics	22
Household Income and Financial Stability	23
Homeownership Trends	23
Disability and Accessibility	24
Conclusion	24

Comparative Analysis: 2024 Artist Census Questionnaire vs. U.S. Census Data on Boulder Residents 25

Appendices include focus group reports from Qualitative Research Centre, data visualizations of questionnaire responses, and the City of Boulder SER Framework

Cover image: Detail, painting by [Onecho](#), acrylic and wax crayon on canvas, 2025.
Commissioned by the City of Boulder Office of Arts and Culture for the 2025 Boulder Artist Census.

Special thanks to Arnold Jacobson and Vicky Johns from QRC for bringing their deep expertise in qualitative research and community engagement to this project. Their thoughtful facilitation of artist focus groups and insightful analysis played a critical role in shaping our understanding of the creative landscape in Boulder. We’re also deeply grateful to all the artists who shared their time, experiences, and perspectives—whether through focus groups or by completing the 2024 Artist Census questionnaire. Your contributions made this work possible.

Summary of Findings

About the 2025 Boulder Artist Census

Study Goal

The 2025 Artist Census builds upon the initial 2019 study to gain deeper insights into the lives of professional, practicing artists in Boulder. This study aims to:

- Broaden our understanding of the economic and social landscape for Boulder artists.
- Validate key concerns expressed within the artistic community.
- Provide data-driven guidance for community leaders and organizations to better support artists and cultivate a vibrant arts scene.
- Apply the City of Boulder's Sustainability, Equity, and Resilience (SER) Framework to assess systemic challenges.

Research Methodology

To achieve these goals, three key research approaches were employed:

1. Census Questionnaire – Conducted from June to November 2024, with 324 total responses collected, 236 of these reported earning income from their art in 2023. To support both continuity and deeper insight, this questionnaire repeated several questions from the 2017/2018 census and introduced new ones for expanded analysis.
2. Focus Groups – Small group discussions with local artists, facilitated by Qualitative Research Centre (QRC), conducted between August and November 2024. Information collected at these sessions was analyzed by QRC and presented in the report entitled "Artist Census Workshops: Playbook, August 2024"
3. Comparative Research – Review of relevant studies and public opinion research on arts and culture nationwide.
 - a. [Arts and Economic Prosperity 6](#), Americans for the Arts (2023)
 - b. [Americans Speak Out About the Arts in 2023](#), Americans for the Arts (2023)
 - c. [Los Angeles Artist Census](#) (2022)
 - d. Other research and assessments

The following findings are organized into sections based on the tools used: Questionnaire Insights, Focus Group Analysis, and Comparative Perspectives. Additionally, an evaluation of this information in relation to the goals and objectives of the City of Boulder Sustainability, Equity and Resilience (SER) Framework is presented in the SER Framework Analysis section.

Defining “Artist”

For this study, the term “artist” is defined based on specific occupational classifications outlined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), including:

Craft Artists (SOC Code: 27-1012)

Fine Artists (Painters, Sculptors, Illustrators) (SOC Code: 27-1013)

Other Artists & Related Workers (SOC Code: 27-1019)

Actors (SOC Code: 27-2011)

Dancers (SOC Code: 27-2031)

Choreographers (SOC Code: 27-3032)

Music Directors & Composers (SOC Code: 27-2041)

Musicians & Singers (SOC Code: 27-2042)

Writers & Authors (SOC Code: 27-3043)

Photographers (SOC Code: 27-4021)

Film and Video Editors (SOC Code: 27-4032)

Film and Video Producers and Directors (SOC Code: 27-2012)

The 2025 study welcomed input from all self-identified artists and creatives, including those in jewelry design, graphic arts, woodworking, and contemplative arts. Those who self-identified in a more specific category than what the BLS identifies were counted in the BLS SOC code that most closely includes their identified category. For consistency with previous studies, the primary focus remains on practicing, professional artists—those who earn and report income from their work. While insights from all participants are included where relevant, comparisons between the 2017-2019 and 2024-2025 studies are based specifically on this group.



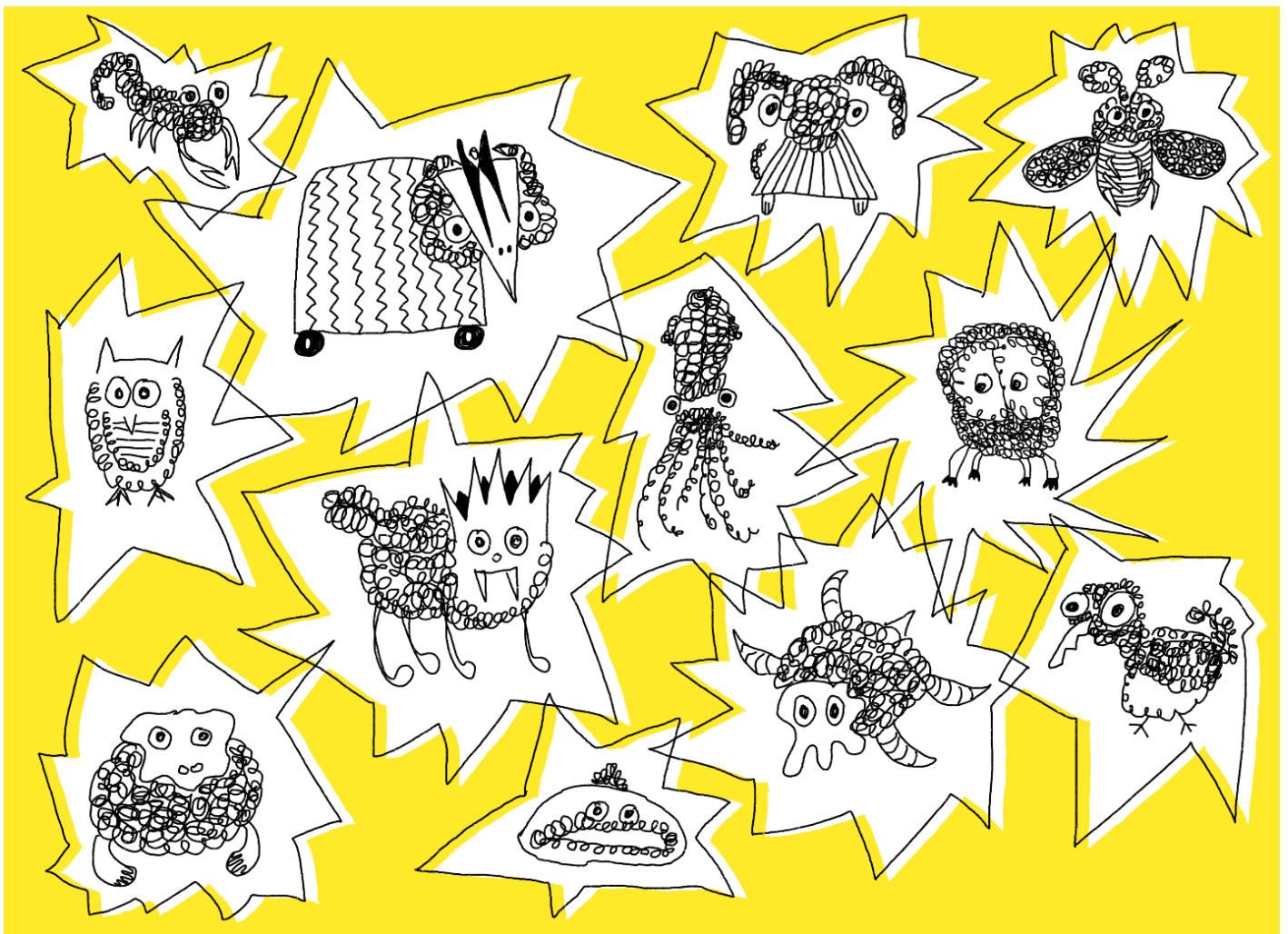
Artist focus group participants

Key Findings

1. Financial Realities: The balance between earnings and expenses makes sustaining a livelihood as an artist challenging

Questionnaire Insights:

Most artists in Boulder do not earn a sustainable wage solely from their artistic work. Rising costs of living and business expenses further impact financial stability.



Creatives in Community, [Will Betke-Brunswick](#), created for the 2025 Artist Census

2024 Findings

- 45% of respondents earn between \$5,000-\$10,000 annually from their work.

- 44% report experiencing financial hardship, impacting their ability to meet basic needs.
- 26% earn between \$10,000-\$50,000 from their artistic practice, indicating a middle-tier of working artists who are generating consistent income.
- 13% of artists earn over \$50,000 annually from their work, demonstrating that achieving a stable and sustainable income in the arts is attainable for some.
- 50% of respondents received income from arts organizations, galleries, schools, or collectives, showing strong institutional engagement.
- Over half of respondents surveyed (56%) report little to no stress in managing debt and living expenses

2017/2018 Comparison

- In 2017/2018, 80% of respondents required secondary jobs to sustain themselves. In 2024, this remains relatively unchanged, with 81.4% of respondents reporting they need additional income, often from arts-related jobs (teaching, arts administration).

Focus Group Analysis:

"Art is not a hobby—it's who I am. But I need two or three jobs to survive."

"There's a perception that only those with financial backing can afford to be artists here."

-Focus group participants

For most focus group participants, the idea of achieving a 'sustainable living' as an artist here seems almost unattainable. The cost of housing in and around Boulder is increasingly prohibitive.

Procuring affordable spaces to create, perform and show art is an on-going challenge. As a result, art and artists get pushed further and further away from the City of Boulder. This is especially true for artists newer to the community.

It was hard to realize, or conceive of, a clear pathway to a full-time, sustainable livelihood in art.

For most, 'thriving' as an artist would mean not having to juggle 2-3 jobs to support themselves (or have a partner with a more conventional job and salary that they can rely on).

They feel the ongoing economic challenges limit their ability to produce as an artist. Artists' whose livelihoods were most successfully rooted in their art had supportive

jobs within their discipline (e.g. arts administration in non-profits) or were teaching (especially those in the performing arts)¹

Comparative Perspectives:

According to 2024 questionnaire data, most creative professionals in Boulder earn significantly less *individually* than the national median income of \$51,660 for “Art and Design Occupations” (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics).² Meanwhile, the *median household income* for artists in the 2024 dataset is estimated at \$62,500—substantially lower than Boulder’s overall median household income of about \$87,000 in 2023 (U.S. Census).³ This gap underscores ongoing concerns about financial insecurity within the local arts community.

The uncertain balance between earning a living wage in the arts and the expenses of being a creative professional is a common challenge in many communities, for example, the Los Angeles Artist Census found that many artists spend close to or slightly the same amount on their art practice as they earn from it, indicating a precarious financial balance. Nationally, the arts contributed \$151.7 billion to the economy, sustaining 2.6 million jobs and generating \$29.1 billion in tax revenue.

Public support remains strong, with 86% of Americans agreeing the arts improve community quality of life, and 79% recognizing their role in boosting local businesses. These figures underscore the arts' vital role in economic and community growth, reinforcing the benefits of continued investment.⁴

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) offers comprehensive data on various arts and design professions through its Occupational Outlook Handbook, detailing job descriptions, median salaries, and educational requirements. According to BLS data, median pay for these occupations ranges from \$34,690 to \$106,500.⁵ However, questionnaire results indicate that the estimated average income from the arts in Boulder is under \$19,000. This significant income gap is largely influenced by differences in employment structures, income stability, market demand, and financial support. While BLS figures reflect structured, full-time arts careers, many Boulder artists navigate an unpredictable gig economy with lower earnings. Additionally, BLS data does not account for self-employed artists, further skewing the comparison.

¹ Qualitative Research Centre, *Boulder Arts 2024 Playbook*. Boulder, CO: City of Boulder, December, 2024.

² Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor. n.d. "Arts and Design Occupations." *Occupational Outlook Handbook*. <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/arts-and-design/>.

³ U.S. Census Bureau, "QuickFacts: Boulder County, Colorado," last modified April 2025, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/bouldercountycolorado>.

⁴ Americans for the Arts. *Arts & Economic Prosperity 6*. <https://aep6.americansforthearts.org/>.

⁵ Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor. *Occupational Outlook Handbook: Arts and Design Occupations*. <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/arts-and-design/>.



Still from *Equilibrium*, created and performed by [T2 Dance Company](#) for the 2025 Artist Census.

2. The Struggle for Space: Finding Affordable Spaces for Artists

Questionnaire Insights:

Limited availability and high costs of studio, rehearsal, and exhibition spaces—compounded by the overall high cost of housing—pose a significant challenge for artists, making it difficult to find and afford suitable creative workspaces.

2024 Findings

- Over 50% of respondents use home-based studios, possibly due to rising workspace costs.
- 17% rent workspaces, but affordability is a growing challenge.
- 64% of respondents own their homes and about 3.5% of those cited renting out room(s) in their home to help cover mortgage.

2017-2018 Comparison

- In 2017/2018, data revealed that 67% of respondents were homeowners, though younger respondents faced challenges in purchasing property⁶. In the 2024 questionnaire, this number went down by 3 percent to 64%.

Focus Group Analysis:

"We need designated live-work spaces for artists."

"Affordable studio space is non-existent. We need more hubs like NoBo."

-Focus Group Participants

The practical business of finding space to live and work, as an artist, is still the on-going and overwhelming challenge all artists face. Finding affordable space to live, in or near Boulder, is becoming out of reach for most of the artists who participated in the focus groups.

Artists in focus groups noted that creative hubs like the NoBo Art District, The Spark, Dairy Arts Center, and The New Local have established evolving models for artist collaboration and exhibition.⁷

Comparative Perspectives:

By 2024, younger artists continue to face significant barriers to homeownership compared to national averages, reflecting broader challenges in achieving long-term financial security. In the Boulder Questionnaire, only 23.8% of respondents under age 35 reported owning a home, compared to the national average of 37.4% for individuals under 35 in Q2.⁸ This disparity reflects broader affordability challenges, particularly within Boulder's artist community, where rising costs further restrict access to homeownership.

⁶ City of Boulder Office of Arts and Culture. 2019. "Census of Boulder Artists: Summary of Findings." <https://bouldercolorado.gov/media/12307/download?inline=>.

⁷ Qualitative Research Centre. *Boulder Arts 2024 Playbook*. Boulder, CO: City of Boulder, December, 2024.

⁸ National Association of Home Builders. *Lowest Homeownership Rate in Four Years*. NAHB Blog, August 2024. <https://www.nahb.org/blog/2024/08/lowest-homeownership-rate-in-four-years>.



Untitled, [Onecho](#), Acrylic and oil crayon on canvas, created for the 2025 Artist Census Census.

3. Public Perception & Community Support: The Search for a Connected Arts Scene

Questionnaire Insights:

2024 Findings

- Over half of respondents work from home or in isolated spaces, while only 17% have a workspace outside their home.

Focus Group Analysis:

"There's no real art 'scene'—just isolated efforts."

"We need a city-endorsed arts hub for connection and collaboration."

"There's no strong, connected arts scene in Boulder. The city is known for tech and nature, not the arts."

-Focus Group Participants

There is a strong and unfulfilled desire for greater appreciation of both art and the artists who create it. Many feel that Boulder still lacks a vibrant, recognizable arts scene. While this sentiment echoes concerns from 2018, a notable shift is the emergence of what artists describe as "pockets of vitality" – small but meaningful creative hubs scattered throughout the city where art is actively being produced and shared.⁹

A recurring theme, and hope, is for the arts to become a more visible part of Boulder's civic identity and culture, just as the outdoors and natural beauty is.

Artists in Boulder are increasingly seeking collaboration, with a growing enthusiasm for cross-disciplinary projects that foster creative synergy.

Comparative Perspectives:

In 2022, Boulder's nonprofit arts and culture sector generated \$69.98 million in economic activity, supporting 1,831 jobs and contributing \$52.22 million in local household income. The sector also provided \$2.83 million in local tax revenue and \$3.55 million to the state.¹⁰

Despite Boulder ranking among the top U.S. cities for independent artists and arts and culture firms per capita¹¹, its cultural identity remains more closely associated with technology and outdoor recreation.¹²

⁹ Qualitative Research Centre. *Boulder Arts 2024 Playbook*. Boulder, CO: City of Boulder, December, 2024.

¹⁰ Americans for the Arts. *Arts & Economic Prosperity 6*. <https://aep6.americansforthearts.org/>.

¹¹ SMU DataArts. "The Top 40 Arts-Vibrant Communities of 2023." *Cultural Data*, 2023.

<https://culturaldata.org/arts-vibrancy-2023/the-top-40-list/>.

¹² Boulder Convention & Visitors Bureau. n.d. "What Boulder Is Known For." *Boulder Colorado USA*.

<https://www.bouldercoloradousa.com/travel-info/what-boulder-is-known-for/>.

Cities like Austin, TX; Asheville, NC; and Santa Fe, NM have successfully integrated the arts into their civic identities through strategic investment in cultural infrastructure, arts districts, and direct support for independent artists.

Austin's Cultural Arts Division funds creative industries, provides grants for local artists, and fosters cultural districts that serve as economic and creative hubs.¹³ Asheville supports its creative sector through initiatives like the River Arts District, which offers affordable studio space and resources for artists to thrive.¹⁴ Santa Fe, a UNESCO Creative City, has built a globally recognized arts scene by supporting independent artists, preserving historic arts districts like Canyon Road, and hosting major arts festivals that sustain its creative economy.¹⁵ Boulder's strong grant funding, public art programs, and support for arts organizations provide a solid foundation for a thriving creative sector. Cities like Asheville, Austin, and Santa Fe take additional steps by investing directly in individual artists through dedicated grants, affordable studio spaces, and business development programs. These efforts, combined with large-scale public art initiatives and strategic marketing, further integrate the arts into their civic identities.

Broad Suggestions

Consultants conducting focus groups identified three key priorities for strengthening Boulder's arts community: **Connection, Support, and Space**. These themes reflect a broader need to unify artists, enhance access to resources, and integrate the arts more deeply into the city's identity.

- **Connection** – Artists expressed a strong desire for a more cohesive and visible arts community. A central hub for information and collaboration could help foster engagement, making it easier for artists to share ideas, opportunities, and support.
- **Support** – Sustainable funding and financial accessibility remain critical. Artists expressed a need for grant opportunities that go beyond one-time projects to support the ongoing practice of their art. In addition, they emphasized the importance of non-financial support—clearer communication about resources, access to affordable

Boulder Economic Council. June 5, 2024. "Boulder's Outdoor Industry Powers Economic Vitality and Prosperity." *Boulder Economic Council*. <https://bouldereconomiccouncil.org/news/boulders-outdoor-industry-powers-economic-vitality-and-prosperity/>.

Nucamp. December 22, 2024. "Inside Boulder's Thriving Tech Hub: Startups and Success Stories." *Nucamp Coding Bootcamp*. <https://www.nucamp.co/blog/coding-bootcamp-boulder-co-inside-boulders-thriving-tech-hub-startups-and-success-stories>.

¹³ City of Austin. "Cultural Arts Division." *AustinTexas.gov*. <https://www.austintexas.gov/department/cultural-arts>.

¹⁴ City of Asheville. "River Arts District." *Explore Asheville*. <https://www.exploreasheville.com/river-arts-district/>.

¹⁵ City of Santa Fe. "Arts & Culture Department." *SantaFeNM.gov*. https://www.santafenm.gov/arts_and_culture.

UNESCO. "Santa Fe - UNESCO Creative Cities Network." *UNESCO.org*. <https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities/santa-fe>.

and creative spaces, and stronger cultural infrastructure that fosters collaboration, visibility, and civic recognition—to build a more connected and thriving arts ecosystem.

- **Space** - The availability and affordability of living, working, and performance spaces continue to be major challenges. There is an opportunity for creative solutions that repurpose existing infrastructure and integrate the arts into Boulder’s urban fabric.



Still from *Equilibrium* created and performed by [T2 Dance Company](#) for the 2025 Artist Census.

Analysis of the 2025 Boulder Artist Census Through the Lens of the City of Boulder's Sustainability, Equity, and Resilience (SER) Framework

The City of Boulder's *Sustainability, Equity, and Resilience (SER) Framework* serves as a strategic guide for aligning city policies, programs, and projects with the community's vision of equitable access to health, prosperity, and fulfillment. It emphasizes the elimination of systemic inequities and the enhancement of resilience to social, economic, and environmental challenges.¹⁶

This framework integrates with the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan and the city's budgeting and planning processes, ensuring that all initiatives are aligned with the overarching goals of sustainability, equity, and resilience.

A copy of the framework is included in the appendix of this report.

Key Goals:

1. **Safe Community:** *A welcoming and inclusive community that fosters positive neighborhood and community relations and ensures that all residents are secure and cared for during emergencies and natural disasters. Public infrastructure is well-maintained and reliable, and natural resources like water, air, and land are protected.*¹⁶
2. **Healthy and Socially Thriving:** *All Boulder residents are able to meet their critical needs, enjoy high levels of social, physical, and mental well-being, and have access to abundant recreational, cultural and educational opportunities in an environment that respects and celebrates human rights.*¹⁶
3. **Livable:** *High-performing, safe, and well-maintained buildings and infrastructure that accommodate a diverse set of community needs for working, learning, playing, and living.*¹⁷
4. **Accessible and Connected:** *A safe, accessible, and sustainable multimodal transportation system that connects people with each other and where they want to go. Open access to information is provided both physically and digitally to foster connectivity and promote community engagement.*¹⁷
5. **Environmentally Sustainable:** *A sustainable, thriving, and equitable community that benefits from and supports clean energy; preserves and responsibly uses the earth's resources; and cares for ecosystems.*¹⁷

¹⁶ City of Boulder, *Sustainability, Equity, and Resiliency Framework* (Boulder, CO: City of Boulder, 2022), <https://bouldercolorado.gov/media/10447/download?inline>.

¹⁷ Ibid.

6. **Responsibly Governed:** *A local government that provides an excellent customer experience, responsibly manages the city's assets, and makes data-driven decisions informed by community engagement inclusive of those who have been historically excluded from government programs and services. The city organization exemplifies an employer of choice with policies and programs to support employee inclusion and well-being.*¹⁷
7. **Economically Vital:** *A healthy, accessible, resilient, and sustainable economy based on innovation, diversity, and collaboration that benefits all residents, businesses, and visitors.*¹⁷

1. Safe Community

- **Challenges:**
 - o Housing instability due to rising costs makes it difficult for many artists to remain in Boulder.
 - o The lack of affordable studio and performance spaces may push artists into non-optimal or unsafe environments.¹⁸
- **Positives:**
 - o Artists value Boulder's overall safety and quality of life.¹⁸
 - o Some creative hubs, such as NoBo Art District and The Spark, offer community and support, though access remains limited.¹⁸

2. Healthy and Socially Thriving

- **Challenges:**
 - o Many artists experience isolation and a lack of community connection, particularly outside their own disciplines.¹⁸
 - o Financial pressures force some to forgo basic needs—26% reported going without medical care, food, or reliable transportation.¹⁹
 - o There is a lack of dedicated social spaces for artists to gather, network, and collaborate.²⁰
- **Positives:**
 - o Artists expressed a strong desire for collaboration and cross-disciplinary engagement.²⁰
 - o Emerging "pockets of vitality" (e.g., NoBo Art District, Dairy Center, The New Local) provide creative spaces and community energy.²⁰

¹⁸ Qualitative Research Centre, *Boulder Arts 2024 Playbook*. Boulder, CO: City of Boulder, December, 2024.

¹⁹ City of Boulder. 2024. *City of Boulder Artist Census Questionnaire*. City of Boulder Office of Arts & Culture.

²⁰ Qualitative Research Centre, *Boulder Arts 2024 Playbook*. Boulder, CO: City of Boulder, December, 2024.

3. Livable

- **Challenges:**
 - Cost of living remains the primary concern—many artists cannot afford to live in Boulder and must relocate to surrounding areas.²⁰
 - Rising costs for studio and performance spaces make sustaining an artistic career difficult.²⁰
 - Only a small percentage of artists can rely solely on their creative work for income.²⁰
- **Positives:**
 - Some artists have found success by securing teaching or arts administration roles, allowing them to remain in Boulder.²¹
 - The city has public art programs (e.g., murals) that help integrate the arts into the broader community.²²

4. Accessible and Connected

- **Challenges:**
 - Many artists are unaware of city-provided resources such as grants, networking events, and professional development opportunities.²²
 - The Boulder Arts Alliance calendar is seen as overwhelming and outdated, making it difficult to track arts events and opportunities.²²
 - Artists struggle to attract audiences to performances and exhibitions.²²
- **Positives:**
 - A growing number of alternative creative spaces (e.g., pop-ups, cooperative spaces) are fostering small-scale artistic engagement.²²
 - Some community-driven initiatives, such as First Fridays, provide opportunities for artists to connect and showcase their work.²²

5. Environmentally Sustainable

- **Challenges:**
 - Boulder has underutilized commercial spaces that could be repurposed for artistic use but remain vacant.²²
 - The arts community is not strongly integrated into the city's broader sustainability initiatives.²²
- **Positives:**
 - Artists recognize the value of reusing and repurposing existing spaces for creative purposes.²²

²¹ City of Boulder. 2024. *City of Boulder Artist Census Questionnaire*. City of Boulder Office of Arts & Culture.

²² Qualitative Research Centre, *Boulder Arts 2024 Playbook*. Boulder, CO: City of Boulder, December, 2024.

- o The city's public art program (e.g., murals, installations) supports a more visually engaging urban environment.²²

6. Responsibly Governed

- **Challenges:**
 - o Artists feel that there is a lack of transparency in city funding distribution, particularly regarding the Arts, Culture and Safety Funding.²²
 - o Many artists believe that available grants are too difficult to access or not impactful enough to sustain creative work.²²
 - o There is a perception that the city could do more to advocate for artists and the arts.²³
- **Positives:**
 - o Some artists have successfully received city-funded grants, though more awareness is needed.²³
 - o The City of Boulder Office of Arts and Culture is seen as a potential ally if communication and outreach improve.²³

7. Economically Vital

- **Challenges:**
 - o The majority of artists earn less than \$10,000 annually from their creative work, making it difficult to sustain an artistic career.²⁴
 - o Many artists must rely on secondary income sources outside the arts.²⁵
 - o Boulder Arts Week, while a recognized event, is seen as underutilized and lacking strong impact.²⁶
- **Positives:**
 - o Some artists have successfully built hybrid careers that combine artistic practice with teaching, administration, or nonprofit work.²⁷
 - o The presence of arts organizations and collectives provides some support for artists seeking to grow their careers.²⁸

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ City of Boulder. 2024. *City of Boulder Artist Census Questionnaire*. City of Boulder Office of Arts & Culture.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Qualitative Research Centre, *Boulder Arts 2024 Playbook*. Boulder, CO: City of Boulder, December, 2024.

²⁷ City of Boulder. 2024. *City of Boulder Artist Census Questionnaire*. City of Boulder Office of Arts & Culture.

²⁸ Qualitative Research Centre, *Boulder Arts 2024 Playbook*. Boulder, CO: City of Boulder, December, 2024.

Key Takeaways:

Across all seven SER pillars, the most pressing challenges facing Boulder's artist community include:

- **Affordability issues** (housing, workspaces, cost of living).
- **Limited access to information and support** (grants, resources, networking).
- **Financial instability** (most artists require supplemental income).
- **The need for stronger public visibility and civic engagement** for the arts.

Despite these challenges, artists in Boulder remain passionate, resilient, and eager to build a stronger, more connected arts ecosystem. Addressing these key issues will help align the arts community with the city's broader Sustainability, Equity, and Resilience (SER) goals.

Comparative Analysis of Questionnaire Responses (2017/2018 vs. 2024)

The Artist Census questionnaire has been conducted over multiple years to assess the conditions artists face in Boulder. This analysis focuses on responses from those who did earn income from their art, comparing data from 2017/2018 Artist Census Questionnaire (273 respondents) with the most recent 2024 census questionnaire (324 respondents). The information included here is for reference, showing the difference between the responses collected in the 2017-2019 study and the 2024 study.

Art Disciplines

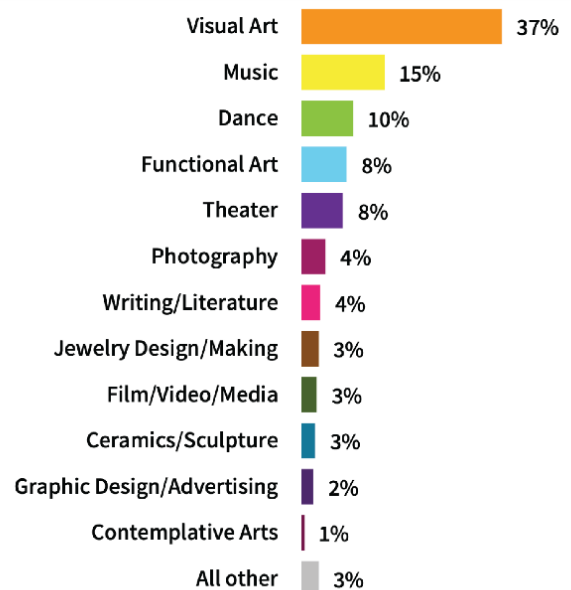
Key Findings:

- **Visual and Performing Arts** continue to dominate, with slight shifts in participation levels.
- **Digital and Commercial Arts** have shown a growing presence, reflecting technological advancements.
- **Writing/Literature** remains a niche discipline across both datasets.

Key Takeaways:

- Digital and commercial art forms are becoming more prominent.
- Traditional disciplines remain stable in representation.

From 2024 questionnaire: *What is your primary artistic discipline?*



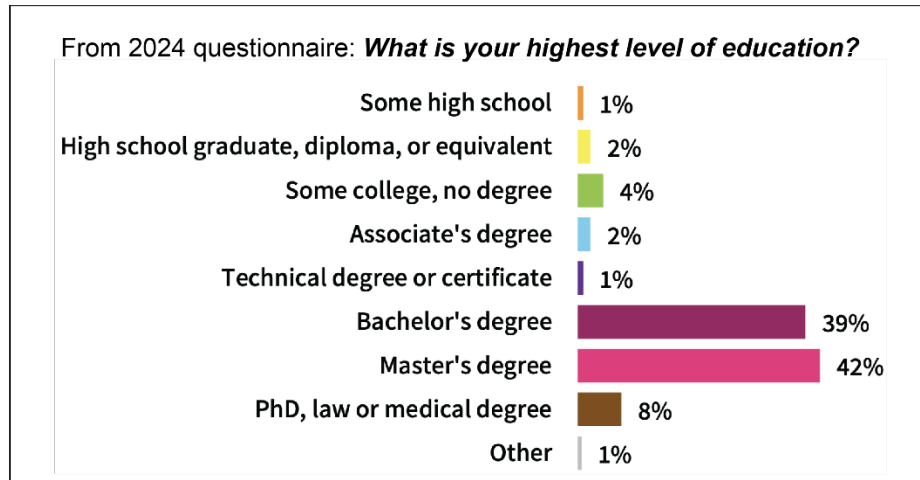
Education

Key Findings:

- **2017/2018:** 82% of respondents held at least a bachelor's degree or higher.
- **2024:** 89% of respondents hold at least a bachelor's degree or higher.

Key Takeaways:

- Education levels have risen slightly, but financial instability persists: More artists surveyed now hold advanced degrees, yet many still struggle to earn a sustainable income from their creative work.



Boulder Residency

Key Findings:

- **2017/2018:** 70.2% of respondents lived in Boulder, with 29.8% residing outside.
- **2024:** 68.7% of respondents live in Boulder, with 31.3% residing outside.

Key Takeaways:

- Although many perceive that rising housing costs are driving artists out of Boulder, the data shows that the proportion of artists living within city limits has remained largely consistent with 2017–2018 levels.
- Boulder remains an attractive hub, but affordability is a growing concern.

Age Demographics

Key Findings:

- **Increase in Younger Artist Respondents:**
 - The 25-34 age group increased from 14.8% to 16.5% (+1.7%).
 - Under 18 representation grew from 0.4% to 1.5% (+1.1%).
- **Decline in Older Artists Respondents:**
 - The 55-64 age group declined from 30.5% to 17.2% (-13.3%).

Key Takeaways:

- Although the population of Boulder County residents under 24 has declined and the percentage of those aged 25–44 has stayed relatively stable since 2017²⁹, younger artists appear to be increasingly engaged in the local arts community—or were simply more likely to participate in the 2024 Artist Census.

²⁹ U.S. Census Bureau. 2023. *Age and Sex: 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Boulder County, Colorado (Table S0101)*.
<https://data.census.gov/table?q=S0101&g=050XX00US08013&tid=ACSST5Y2023.S0101>.

U.S. Census Bureau. *Age and Sex: 2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Boulder County, Colorado (Table S0101)*.
<https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2017.S0101?q=S0101&g=050XX00US08013>.

- Meanwhile, the share of residents aged 65 and older rose from 11.4% in 2017 to 17.0% in 2023³⁰, yet older artists may be relocating or retiring, or they may have been less engaged in the census project in 2024.

Gender Demographics

Key Findings:

- **Expansion in Gender Diversity:**
 - Female respondents dropped slightly from 71% to 67% (-4%).
 - Male respondents saw a similar decline from 29% to 27% (-2%).
 - Nonbinary and transgender representation grew from 0.7% to 3.1% (+2.4%).

Key Takeaways:

- Among respondents, there was a slight increase in gender diversity, which may indicate that outreach efforts were more successful in engaging this population or that more individuals are identifying as gender nonconforming. This increase could also be attributed to the inclusion of more gender-inclusive response options in the questionnaire.

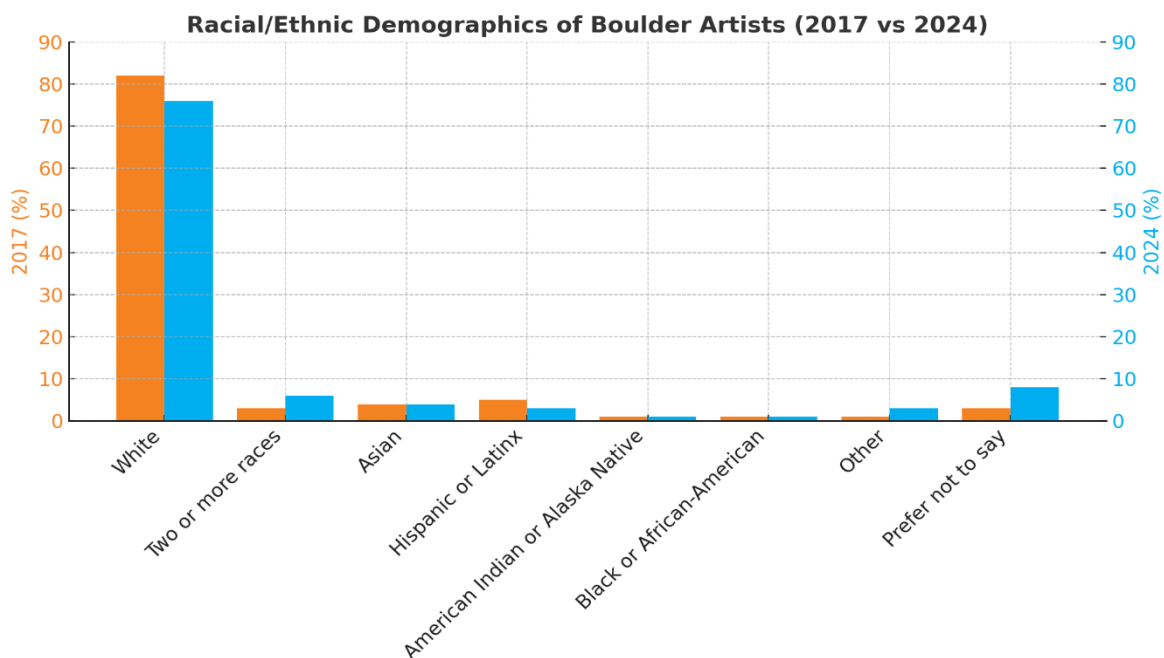
Race and Ethnicity Demographics

Key Findings:

- Representation of Asian artists grew from 3.5% to 4.2% (+0.7%).
- Hispanic/Latino representation increased from 5.8% to 7.3% (+1.5%).
- "Two or More Races/Ethnicities" category increased from 2.6% to 5.8% (+3.2%).
 - "Prefer Not to Say" responses rose by 7.4%.

Key Takeaways:

- Survey responses may reflect a growing diversity within Boulder's artist community.
- More respondents are identifying as multiracial, reflecting a growing trend.



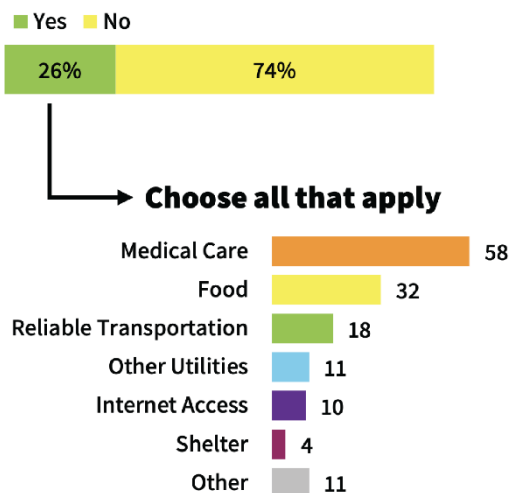
³⁰ Ibid.

Household Income and Financial Stability

Key Findings: (adjustment for inflation)

- **2017-2019:**
 - 38.7% of artists had household incomes below minimum living wage.
 - Only 18% reported financial stability.
- **2024:**
 - 45.3% of artists now report incomes below minimum living wage (+6.6%)
 - 84 respondents (approximately 25.8%) reported experiencing financial hardship that caused them to go without basic needs for a period over the last year. This indicates that one in four artists faced financial instability severe enough to impact essential living conditions.
 - 15% of artists report living with at least three roommates, emphasizing the affordability challenges in securing independent housing.

From 2024 questionnaire: *Have financial challenges caused you to go without any of the following basic needs over the last year?*



Measure from Census Questionnaire:

	2017	2025
Household income under minimum living wage	38.7%	45.3%
Need other income source besides art	81%	80%
Median household income of respondents	\$62,500	\$87,000
Median household income for Boulder as a whole	\$75,923	\$102,722
Homeownership	69%	64.7%

Key Takeaways:

- While more artists report higher household incomes in 2024, more artists also reported lower incomes in 2024 (the gap is growing) and most still face economic precarity, with earnings that often don't keep pace with inflation or cover the rising costs of maintaining an artistic practice.
- Financial conditions have worsened slightly for non-income-earning artists.
- More grants and financial support are needed for sustainability.

Homeownership Trends

Key Findings:

- Homeownership among artists declined from 69% in 2017/2018 to 64.7% in 2024 (-4.3%).
- Renting increased from 31% in 2017/2018 to 35.3% in 2024 (+4.3%).

Key Takeaways:

- Rising housing costs and economic pressures are making homeownership less attainable for artists.
- More artists are relying on rentals, increasing their vulnerability to displacement.
- There is a growing need for affordable housing initiatives to support Boulder’s artist community.

Disability and Accessibility

Key Findings:

- Disability representation increased slightly from 6% to 7% (+1%).

Key Takeaways:

- Representation of artists with disabilities is growing slightly.
- Accessibility in workspaces remains a challenge.

Conclusion

Findings from the 2024 Boulder Artist Census highlight key shifts and persistent challenges in the local creative community. While not representative of all Boulder artists, these responses point to an arts community that is adapting, but still faces affordability, equity, and access challenges.

1. Artistic Practices Are Evolving: Respondents continue to work primarily in visual and performing arts, but more are engaging in digital and commercial disciplines, likely reflecting broader technological trends.

2. Boulder Remains a Creative Hub, But Cost Is a Barrier: While most respondents still live in Boulder, many cited affordability concerns, with one in four experiencing financial hardship and 15% living with three or more roommates.

3. Younger Artists Are More Engaged: Participation from artists under 35 increased slightly, suggesting greater engagement among emerging creatives or more successful outreach.

4. Diversity Is Growing Among Respondents: Small increases in nonbinary, transgender, multiracial, and Hispanic/Latino respondents suggest a gradual broadening in representation. However, more “prefer not to say” responses point to gaps in trust or comfort.

5. Economic Stability Remains Elusive: In 2024, a greater share of respondents (49%) reported household incomes under \$50,000—up from 42% in 2017/2018. One in four experienced financial hardship that led to going without basic needs in the past year, and 15% reported living with at least three roommates. These figures point to increasing economic pressure and ongoing affordability challenges for many artists who participated in the census.

Comparative Analysis: 2024 Artist Census Questionnaire vs. U.S. Census Data on Boulder Residents

1. **Aging Artist Population** → Artist respondents in Boulder are significantly older than the general population (40% over 55 vs. 8.9% in the general population).³¹
2. **Female-Dominated Field** → 67% of artist respondents are female, compared to 50.7% in the general population, suggesting that women are more engaged in the arts in Boulder.³²
3. **Racial Underrepresentation** → Hispanic/Latinx artists appear underrepresented, making up only 3% of Artist Census respondents compared to 8.7% of Boulder's general population.³²
4. **Highly Educated but Financially Strained** → A high percentage (42%) of artists hold advanced degrees such as master's, PhD, law or medical degree—slightly higher than the general Boulder population, where 36% hold advanced degrees³²—but many still struggle financially, as seen in other survey findings about income and cost of living.

³¹ U.S. Census Bureau. n.d. "QuickFacts: Boulder City, Colorado." *United States Census Bureau*. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/bouldercitycolorado/PST045224>.

³² Ibid



City of Boulder Office of Arts and Culture
'Artist's census workshops – August 2024'

playbook

DRAFT 12.03.2024

QRC

THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH CENTRE | [QRCONLINE.COM](https://qrconline.com)

ARNIE JACOBSON | ARNIE@QRCONLINE.COM

VICKY JOHNS | VICKY@QRCONLINE.COM

The aim of this study was to explore how Boulder's artist community is feeling about living and working, as an artist, in Boulder today.

A similar study was conducted in 2018 as part of the Artist Census.

The learnings from this qualitative study will help guide the development of the Boulder Arts Blueprint as part of the next iteration of the city's Community Cultural Plan.

We worked with 4 focus groups of artists living and/or working within Boulder.

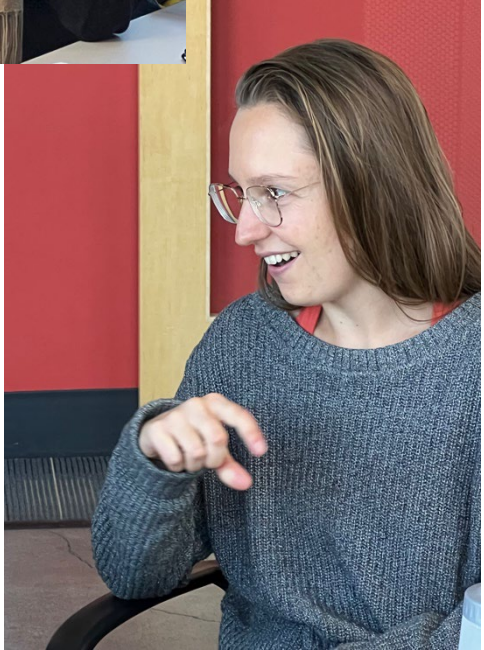
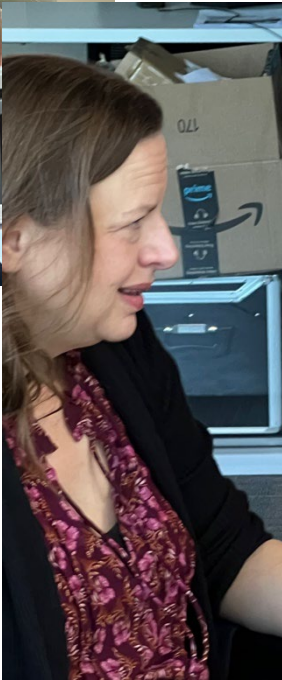
Our sample included a good representation across visual and performing artist disciplines and included a mix of artists who had lived/worked in Boulder for over 10 years and artists newer to this community (under 10 years).

Each session consisted of 6-14 participants and lasted approx. 2 hours. The focus groups took place Oct-Nov 2024.









Pages 8-12
On Being an Artist in Boulder...

Practical Challenges

Sustainability.
Space. Space. SPACE!
Role of the City

Cultural Challenges

Art + Boulder's Identity
...seeking an Art's Scene'.
Silos and Connections.

Pages 13-16
Moving Forward...



**Connection
Support
Space**

Practical Challenges

In pursuit of a sustainable living

For most people we worked with, the idea of achieving a ‘sustainable living’ as an artist here, seems almost unattainable.

The cost of housing in and around Boulder is increasingly prohibitive.

Procuring affordable spaces to create, perform and show art is an on-going challenge. As a result, art and artists get pushed further and further away from the City of Boulder. This is especially true for artists newer to the community.

Note: This echoed what we heard in 2018, although perhaps more so.

It was hard to realize, or conceive of, a clear pathway to a fulltime, sustainable livelihood in art.

For most, ‘thriving’ as an artist would mean not having to juggle 2-3 jobs to support themselves (or have a partner with a more conventional job & salary that they can rely on).

- They feel the ongoing economic challenges limit their ability to produce as an artist.

Artists’ whose livelihoods were most successfully rooted in their art...

- had supportive jobs within their discipline e.g arts administration (non-profits/Orgs.)
- were teaching (especially those in the Performing Arts)

“the art (and culture) would be better if we didn’t need three jobs to get by in life”

“Having to have part time jobs limits what you can accomplish.”

“It’s not a hobby...it’s who I am!”

“People creating the art here need to be able to live where the art is.”

“Scattered communities undermine the arts community. We need a culture of creatives within the city.”

“It’s got so expensive to get space here. It used to be affordable compared to NYC”

“People who have space here have a trust fund or a cool regular job.”

Space. Space. SPACE!!

The practical business of finding space to live and work, as an artist, is still the on-going and overwhelming, challenge all artists face.

The challenge is so great that it tends to overshadow examples of success stories. Thus, these pockets for optimism tend to be seen as exceptions in the arts space landscape in Boulder.

Note: Small improvement to 2018...there was more acceptance of the hard reality of being an artist, creative possibilities, juggling to make it work.

Finding affordable space to live, in or near Boulder, is becoming out of reach for most of the artists we worked with.

- Common theme = migrating further from the City to find affordable housing. Many, see their lives in the context of 'The Front Range' and Denver Metro area, rather than 'Boulder'.

Studio space to create in and performing/rehearsal space are huge, ongoing challenges. Compared with 2018...

- Signs of hope. e.g. NOBO (hub especially for visual artists), The Spark, Dairy Center, The New Local, maker and collaborative spaces (Sudiel City add others).
 - The Longmont Museum is a good example of community performance space, recognized and appreciated by those who know it.
- Ongoing irritation. You can't help go through your day in Boulder and not see all the unused, empty space...just sitting there. WHY!!!!....there's got to be a better way!
 - A deeply felt belief that there is a role for the City to step in, think and act creatively to engage, leverage and partner with the business community.

"...rehabilitate (and re-purpose) all this empty space!"

"what can the City do about all the empty store fronts on Pearl Street!"

"Celebrate found spaces that can be activated."

The role of the City

Many of these artists, and especially those newer to the community, are not well informed about the support and opportunities within the office of Arts & Culture.

There is still work to be done in effectively communicating with the artist community about resources available for them.

Many do not seem to know how to quickly access information about events, resources and opportunities.

- For whatever reason, much of this information is not reaching the people that need it.
- Boulder Arts Alliance is not a resource that everyone knew about or used.
 - By those who knew about it, the BCAA calendar was seen as overwhelming and outdated.
- Also, for many, Boulder Arts Week was not seen to be fulfilling its potential to be a vibrant hub for the arts (felt to be little more than a website).

Most know that the City funds grants, and quite a few have received them, but many more assume that their chances of receiving a grant that would make a real difference is minimal.

These groups had a long 'wish-list' for the types of grant funding that would make a significant difference to their ability to produce art, that included...

- Grants for producing art, not just projects.
- Arts showcase grants for a city promoted event.
- Grants for incubation projects.
- More grants for individual artists.
- Grants that focus specifically on collaboration between disciplines.
- Live-work space grants. Subsidized space downtown
- A challenge grant that harnesses the creativity of artists to make a difference to the city. e.g. "what do you want to do to make Boulder awesome?"

Art and Boulder's identity.

A recurring theme, and hope, is for the arts to become a more visible part of Boulder's civic identity and culture, just as the outdoors and natural beauty is.

As it is now...

It's hard to see a 'Boulder Arts Scene' or even as a city that visibly supports, promotes and celebrates the arts and its artists.

Note: change from 2018...'pockets of vitality/energy' emerging beyond City center. But there is less energy/interest happening downtown.

Artists see a clear connection between valuing art and valuing artists...and they clearly don't see, or experience, nearly enough appreciation for either.

A contributing factor (as in 2018) is that Boulder still is not seen to have a vibrant, let alone visible, Arts Scene.

A promising sign of hope is the emergence of what the artists often referred to as emerging 'Pockets of vitality/energy' ...Micro spaces around Boulder where art is happening.

- For the visual arts, NOBO is a great example of this. (also...The Spark/Etown for performing).
- Boulder was felt to have a well-run public arts program e.g. murals etc.

"Downtown, there's almost no Arts presence...you wouldn't know there are Artists in Boulder"

"It's a constant struggle to get people to show up for things" ... "how to get butts in seats" ... "there's a lack of (public) awareness...a struggle to figure out how to get it out there." ... "Community engagement is a constant struggle"

"There are interesting pockets that artists know about but not everyday people."

"Something is happening...something wants to happen."

Cultural Challenges

Silos and connections.

A consequence of not having a recognizable, vibrant, energetic Art's Scene is a feeling of creating, working and living in creative silos...presenting their art within the echo-chamber of their discipline-focused artists circles.

There is a collective 'felt-need' in the Arts Community to connect, collaborate, support (and simply hang out more).

Note: This was a key felt need in 2018, as well. ... "(we want) to feel connected to an arts community that is valued and vibrant, to be inspired and to inspire, to connect and to collaborate."

This can be especially lonely for visual artist (unless they are lucky enough to work in a collaborative space).

Even Performance Artists, who's nature is to create and nurture community, acknowledge getting stuck in their own discipline.

From these workshops, It does seem to be an artist's nature to seek out:

- cross-pollination across disciplines, creative connection and collaboration
- simply gravitating to where creative energy is to be found.
- energy, buzz, ideas.

But it's hard! Their lives are so busy, juggling...figuring out how to make it work is a daily pursuit.

There is a huge opportunity for the City to successfully execute initiatives that **facilitate connection.**

"I came out here tonight (to the focus group) to meet other artists!"

"It would be great to cultivate collaboration between the arts. The focus of First Fridays is just too narrow."

"We need an organic space where people can share ideas."

"We need cross-pollination between disciplines."



moving forward...

Three Buckets:

- **Connection**
- **Support**
- **Space**

Connection.

It is hard to conceive of a thriving, energetic, recognizable Art Scene emerging without ‘connection’. Artists need to be connected to one another, gravitate to events and spaces where other artists are, and creativity and ideas are to be found.

The biggest, most immediately helpful and impactful, idea coming out of these workshops was a Go-To **Boulder Arts Community HUB**. While this may currently exist in some form, it is not easily found, nor anywhere near top-of-mind as a go-to for what’s going on that engages and connects the Arts community.

- A visible, immediately useful, resource like this has the potential for the City to play a facilitating role supporting (even helping establish) a Boulder Arts Scene.
- Possible multi-faceted roles for the HUB:
 - Calendar(s) interface for Artist, Residents and Visitors.
 - Notification and links to City’s support/resources.
 - Networking/Connecting facilitator for Artists...including a resource for peer-to-peer support to events (e.g. discounted/free tickets to fellow artists to attend events and fill seats).

Other ideas generated in the workshops...

- 3rd spaces (Hub/Pub/Coffee) “where you show up and things happen”
- Hidden Boulder. Ideas connecting Boulder’s ‘Pockets of Vitality/Energy’. E.g. ART Bus. (e.g. NOBO Fridays ?)
- Importance of seeing an Arts Scene (Mall. Civic art. Arts area Identity, e.g. NOBO great example)



moving forward...

Three Buckets:

- Connection
- **Support**
- Space

Support.

Practical:

- Simple format grants for individuals, projects, education and space.
- Affordable housing designated for artists. (work/live, create/perform)
- Resources supporting social engagement, marketing/PR and other practical aspects of running a business.

Cultural:

- The City being seen as an advocate for the Arts, and for Artists.
Recognizing/celebrating/supporting are key ingredients to fuel a dynamic Arts Scene in Boulder.
- Grants and funding for collaboration and collaborative projects.
- 2A awareness was largely off the radar for most artists. As a clear plan for implementation is set, there is potential for PR opportunity/buzz to, again, celebrate the Arts in Boulder. (The People voted for 2A and sharing out what the City will be doing is, potentially, Big News)
 - *However, those closest to the initiative and who worked on it, expressed discontent about how the allocation of funds was eventually negotiated. For this minority, it felt that the City did not act in good faith, with the perception that the funds for the arts would be less than they had expected. This left a bit of a bad taste for those most engaged or involved with the initiative.*



moving forward...

Three Buckets:

- Connection
- Support
- Space

Space.

A recurring theme throughout these workshops was Boulder's unused, or under-utilized, retail/commercial/civic space.

Given that space to work in, create in, perform in and live in was the #1 practical and economic challenge artists faced, seeing all the open and unused space downtown and throughout the City was infuriating and frustrating.

Are there practical, creative, out-of-the-box ways the City can play a role here?

- ...like commercial collaboration, tax incentives, subsidies etc.

There was some hope that if Sundance comes to Boulder this would generate more space opportunities for local artists (after the festival was over).



moving forward...

In their words...

“Sustainability means a city that is excited about the Arts and shows it!”

“The City needs to step up!!!”

“An arts scene is part of the health of the City.”

“The arts are not (currently) central to the City experience.”

“An endorsement of the Arts scene needs to be as much a part of the City’s identity as the outdoors and football.”

“Do something different. Shake it up!! Don’t be short sighted about the arts.”

“It falls to the city to incentivize business to collaborate.”

“Find a consistent way to support local artist’s galleries.”

“The city needs a stronger arts backbone...a more robust support system for the Arts and for the artists.”

“There’s a perception that there are not grants for individual artists.”

“We need affordable housing for artists. Live-work spaces.”

“We need arts ambassadors from different parts of Boulder.”

“Celebrate found spaces that can be activated.”

“Boulder Arts week was kind of a thing but now it is just a website?”

“We need a tax incentive for spending in the Arts for businesses and other organizations.”

“There was such creativity and goodwill raised during Covid...it opened-up humanity and creativity. Artists found ways to do their art and bring it to people. Yes, we can do this!”

“Businesses opened their spaces for free. It felt like there were more community partnerships.”

Thank you City of Boulder Office of Arts + Culture!

Vicky Johns

M: 303-564-5365

vicky@QROnline.com

Arnie Jacobson

M: 303-249-3144

arnie@QROnline.com

2024 Artist Census Findings

January 22, 2025



About the 2024 Artist Census

The Artist Census questionnaire contained 32 questions:

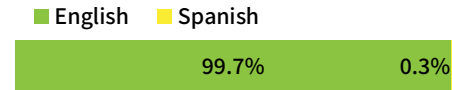
- 14 questions – demographics
- 5 questions – artist identity & practice
- 13 questions – financial experience

The survey gathered 324 responses between June – November 2024

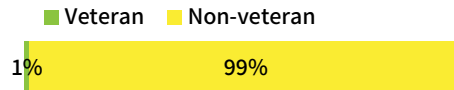
<https://bouldercolorado.gov/artist-census>

Demographics: basics

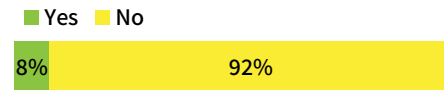
Q1: Survey language



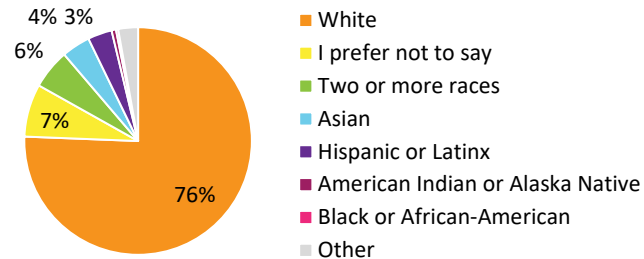
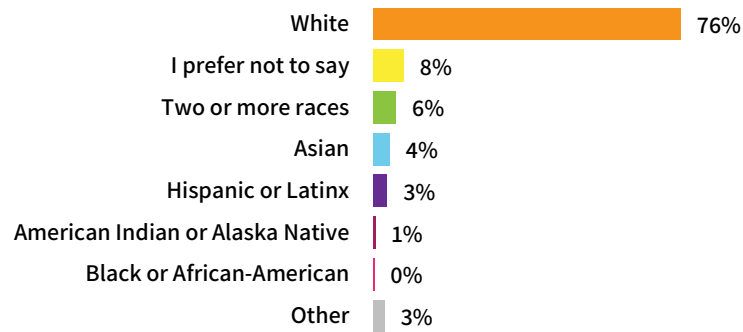
Q8: Veteran status



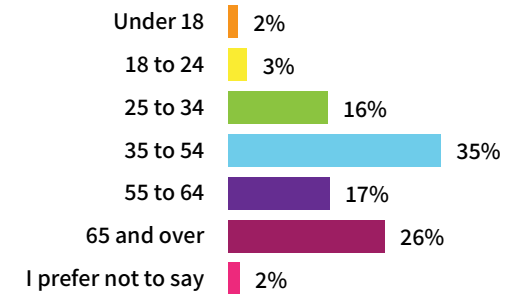
Q9: Are you a member of the disability community?



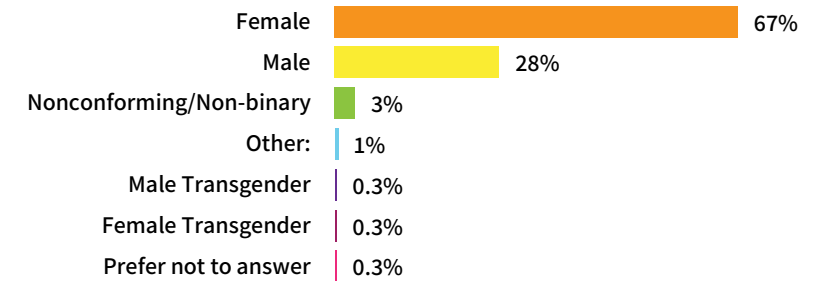
Q7: Which race or ethnicity do you identify with most?



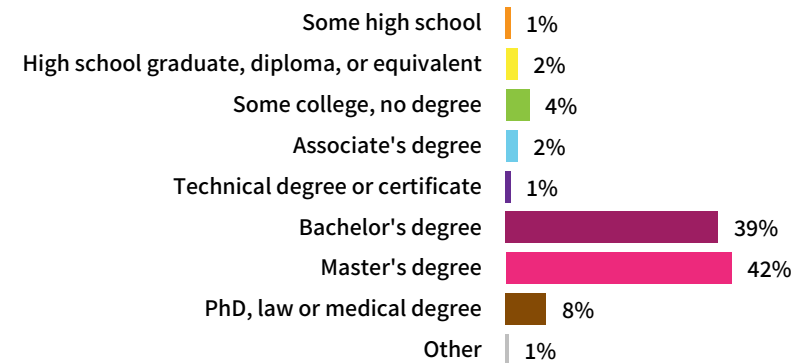
Q6: Age range



Q13: Gender identity



Q26: Highest level of education



The majority of survey respondents were white, female, and highly educated

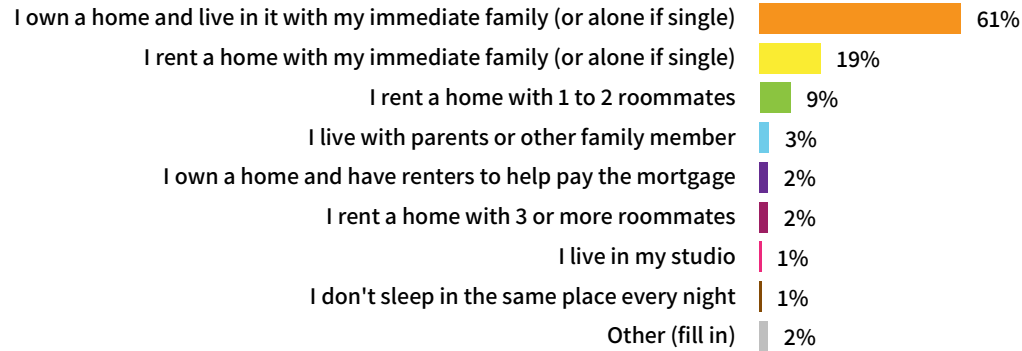
The largest age bracket was 35-54 (35%)
About 20% were under 35
About 40% were 55+

1% were veterans
8% were disabled

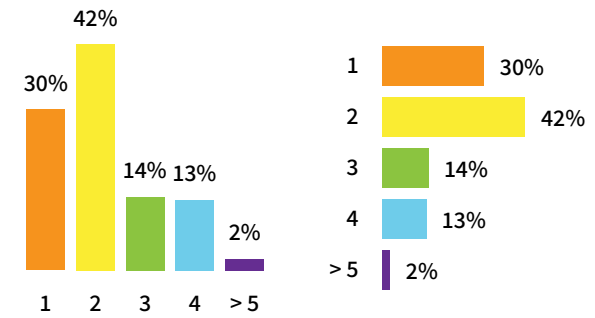
All but 1 person
took the survey in
English

Demographics: household

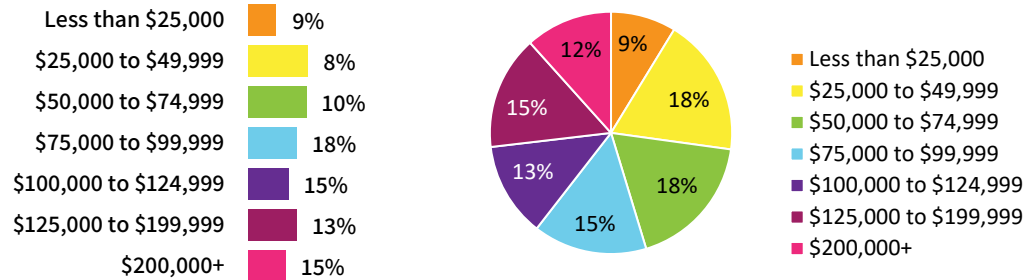
Q12: Current living situation



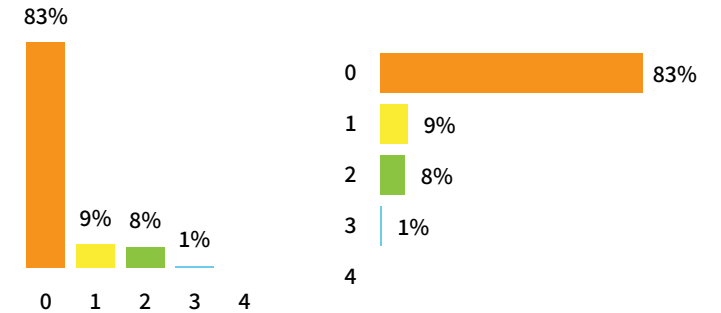
Q10: Number of people in household



Q24: Total household income in 2023 (including income from a spouse/partner)



Q11: Number of people in household under 18



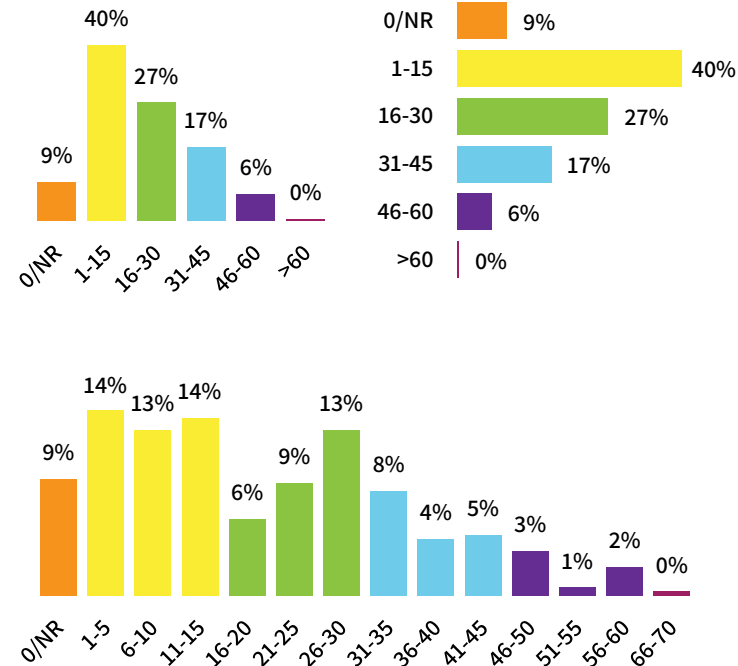
Most are homeowners who live with their immediate family in a 1- or 2-person household with no kids

17% had total household incomes less than \$50,000
28% between \$50,000 and \$100,000
43% over \$100,000

There were roughly equal numbers of households below \$100,00 and above \$100,000

Demographics: geography

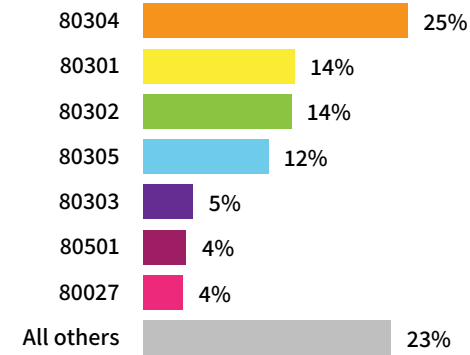
Q5: How many years have you lived in the Boulder area?



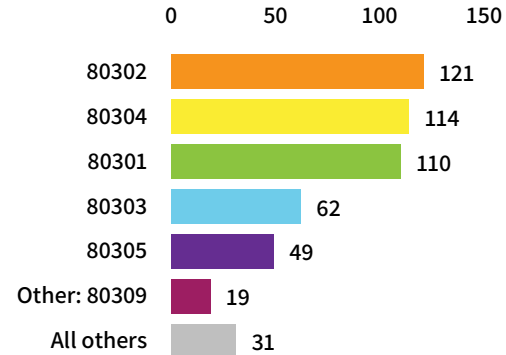
About 90% of respondents live in Boulder
40% have lived here 1-15 years
50% have lived here more than 15 years

The top 3 zip codes that respondents lived or worked in were 80304, 80301, and 80302

Q3: Zip code where you live

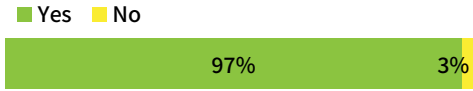


Q4: Zip codes within the City of Boulder where you have worked in the previous 12 months
Choose all that apply

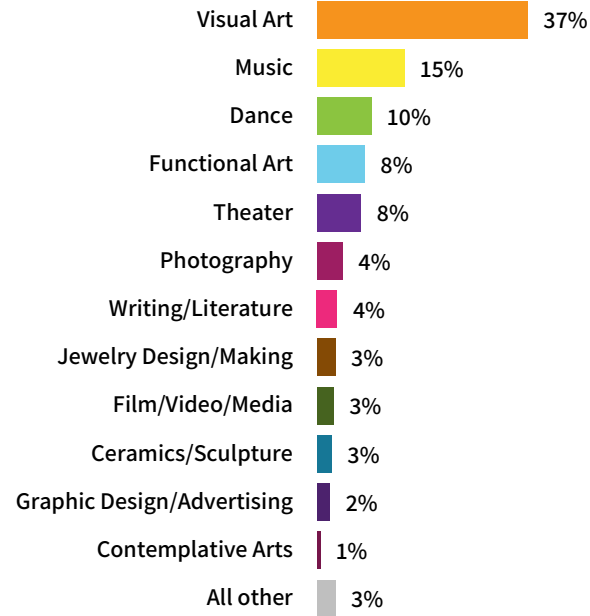


Artist identity & practice

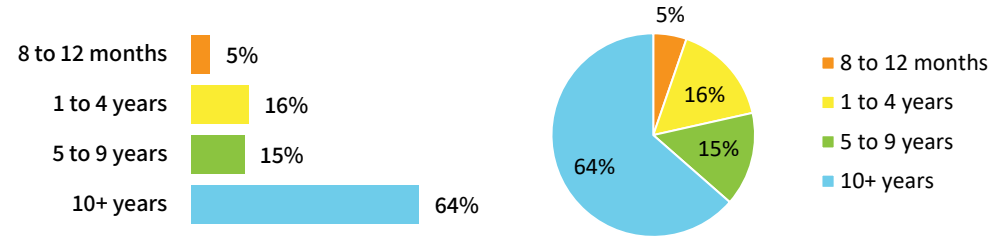
Q2: Do you identify as an artist?



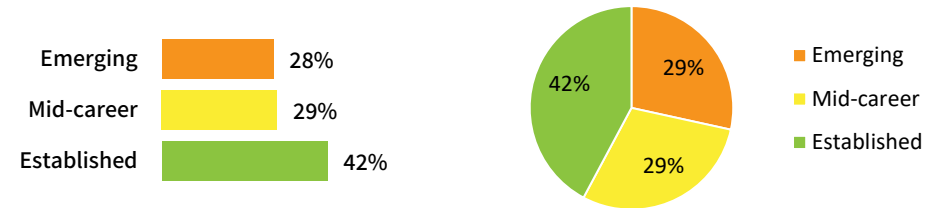
Q15: Your primary discipline



Q16: How long have you been making art professionally?



Q17: In what phase do you consider yourself in your art career?

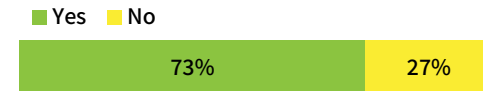


The top art disciplines were Visual Art, Music, Dance, Functional Art, and Theater

A majority have been making art professionally for 10+ years

Over 40% are established in their art career with about 30% each in the emerging and mid-career stages

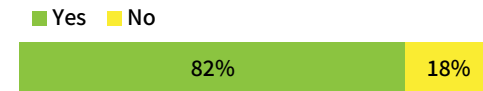
Q18: Did you receive income from your primary art discipline in 2023?



Q19: Did you receive income from any other art disciplines in 2023?



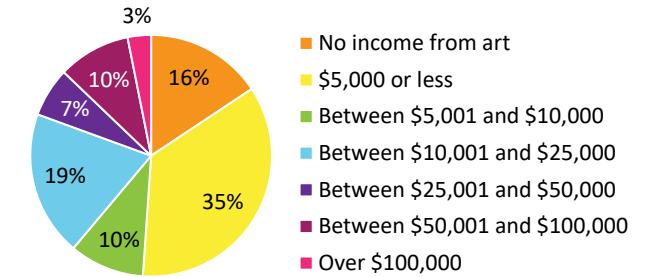
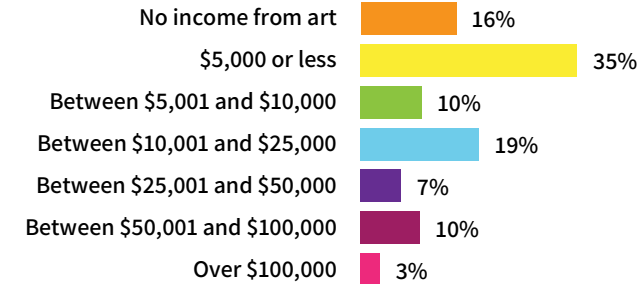
Q20: Do you have another source of income besides the production of art?



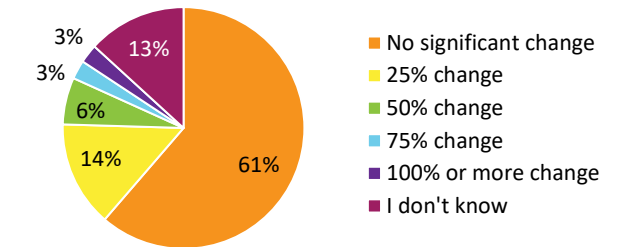
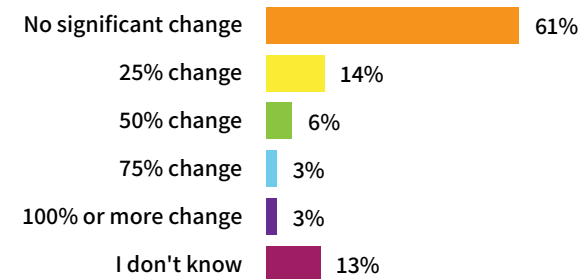
Q25: Did you receive income from participation in a performing arts company, school, gallery, co-op, collective, or other arts organization?



Q21: Your gross income from art in 2023:



Q23: How did art earnings in 2023 compare to 2022?



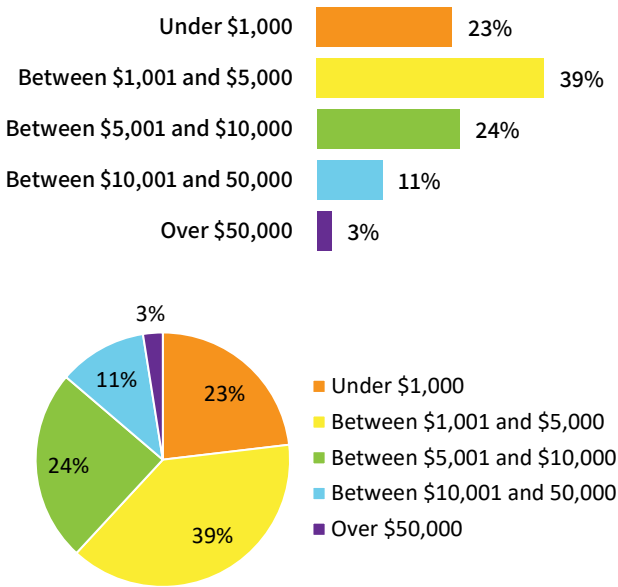
About three-quarters received income from their primary art discipline, but more than 80% had another source of income besides art

Half received income from participation in an arts organization

16% had no income from art
45% made \$5,000-\$10,000
26% made \$10,000-\$50,000
13% made over \$50,000

A majority saw no significant change in art earnings in 2023 from 2022

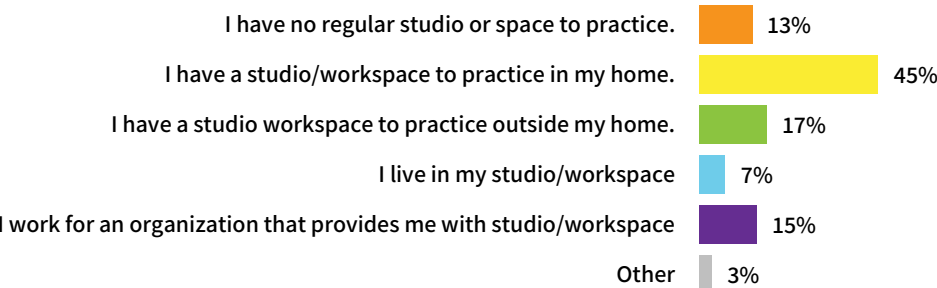
Q22: Annual cost of art practice (equipment, supplies, studio rental, promotion, costs associated with performances/exhibitions, commissions paid, etc.)



About 40% spent \$1,000-\$5,000 for their art practice

24% spent \$5,000-\$10,000
23% spent less than \$1,000
14% spent more than \$10,000

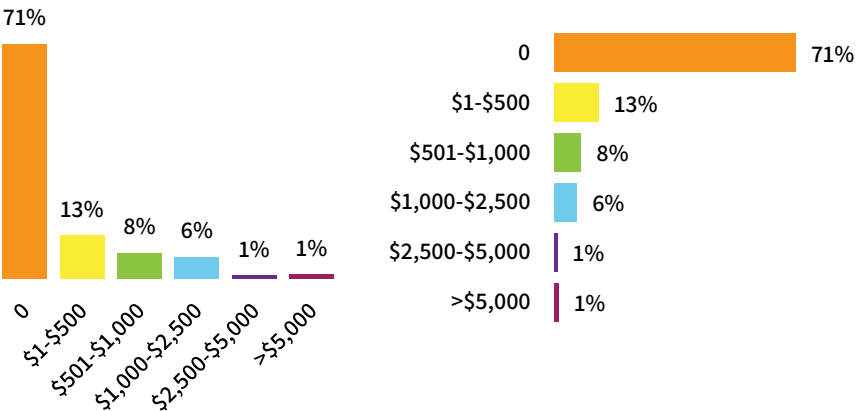
Q28: Current studio/creative workspace situation



Over 50% have a creative workspace at home or live in their studio/workspace

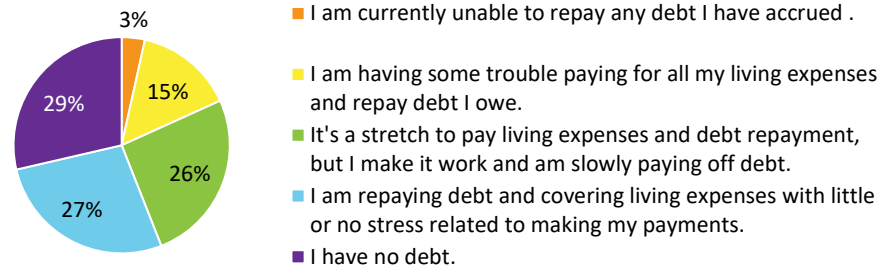
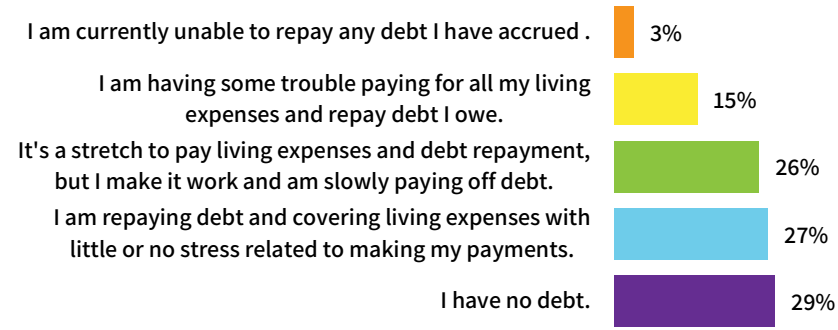
17% have a workspace outside their home
15% have a workspace at their workplace
13% do not have a regular workspace

Q29: Monthly rent for studio/creative workspace



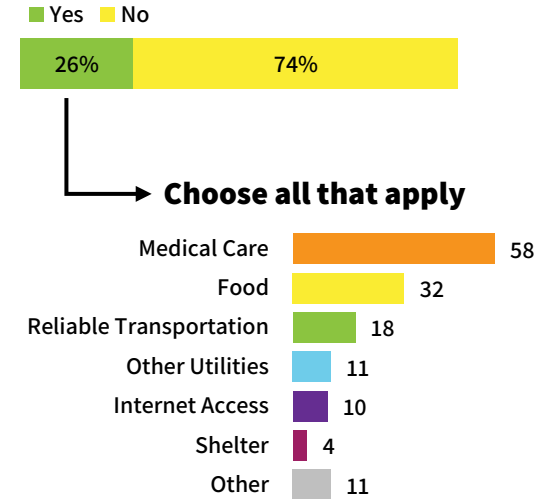
Most do not pay a monthly rent for their workspace

Q27: Current financial situation and debt obligations



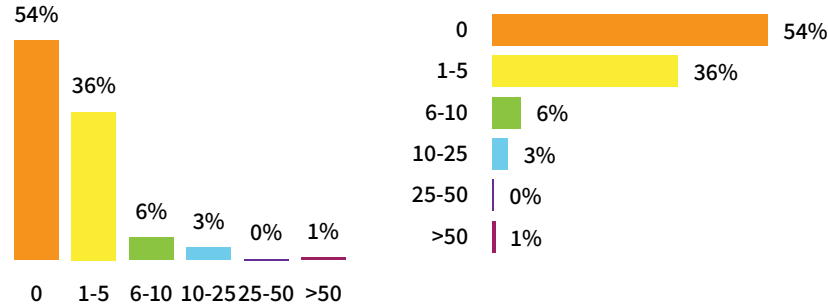
44% have some level of difficulty paying for living expenses and debt
27% have no difficulty paying for living expenses and debt
29% have no debt

Q14: Have financial challenges caused you to go without any of the following basic needs for any period over the last year?

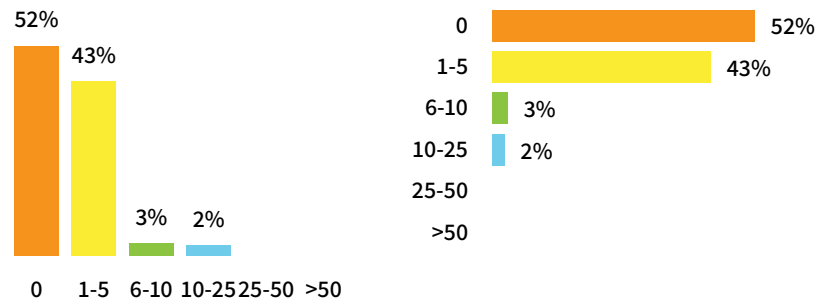


Financial challenges have caused about a quarter to go without basic needs, mainly medical care, food, and transportation

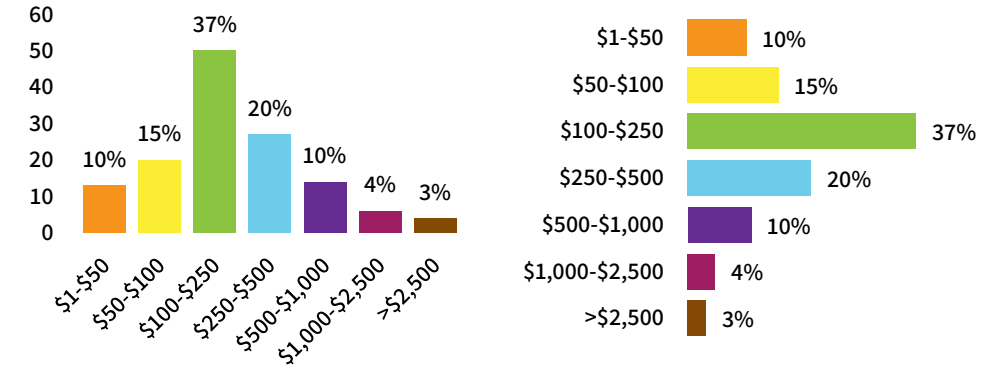
Q30: How many times were you asked to donate your art to a nonprofit in the last year?



Q31: How many pieces of your art have you donated to nonprofits in the last year?



Q32: What was the average value of each donation you made?



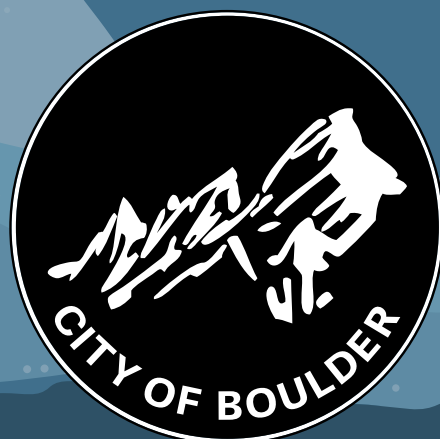
46% were asked to donate their art
Most were asked 1-5 times and a similar percentage donated 1-5 pieces

37% of donations had a \$100-\$250 value
25% had a less than \$100 value
37% had a greater than \$250 value



Sustainability, Equity and Resilience Framework

Revised
August 2022





PURPOSE

This framework provides the strategic planning foundation for the policies, programs, and projects of the city of Boulder. It also serves as the organizing tool for the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan, annual budget, and organizational planning processes by providing consistent goals and objectives necessary to achieve Boulder's vision of service excellence for an inspired future.

Broadly, Boulder seeks a future with equitable access to health, prosperity and fulfillment that is not limited based on a person's race, ethnicity, age, gender, ability, religion, sexuality, or socioeconomic status. Our community prepares, adapts, and thrives in response to current, emerging, and sometimes urgent, social, economic, and environmental shocks and stressors. This includes meeting community expectations for our core service delivery and ensuring that the root causes of inequities are eliminated through city policies, practices, programs, and financial decisions.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES



Safe

A welcoming and inclusive community that fosters positive neighborhood and community relations and ensures that all residents are secure and cared for during emergencies and natural disasters. Public infrastructure is well-maintained and reliable, and natural resources like water, air, and land are protected.

- Prevent crime, alleviate harm, and improve quality of life for community members and visitors while minimizing disparate impacts on community members of color and considering the needs of different cultures, individuals, and community values.
- Plans for and provides equitable, timely, and effective response and recovery to emergencies and natural disasters.
- Fosters a climate of safety for individuals in homes, businesses, neighborhoods, and public spaces.
- Leverages partnerships and encourages shared community responsibility to keep Boulder safe.
- Builds and maintains resilient infrastructure, landscapes and neighborhoods to mitigate existing and future hazards and risks.
- Operates services necessary to support basic public health including safe drinking water, removal of snow, wastewater and stormwater, and a reliable multimodal transportation system.



Healthy and socially thriving

All Boulder residents are able to meet their critical needs, enjoy high levels of social, physical, and mental well-being, and have access to abundant recreational, cultural and educational opportunities in an environment that respects and celebrates human rights.

- Cultivates a wide range of recreational, cultural, educational, civic, and social opportunities for all people regardless of their race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual identity, ability, or socioeconomic status.
- Supports the physical and mental well-being of its community members by providing public gathering places and programs to encourage social connection and prevent isolation.
- Fosters racial equity, inclusion, and diversity community wide.



Livable

High-performing, safe, and well-maintained buildings and infrastructure that accommodate a diverse set of community needs for working, learning, playing, and living.

- Provides a variety of housing types with a full range of affordability.
- Supports community members who are unhoused or underhoused to navigate systems, programs, and services to achieve housing security.
- Encourages sustainable and well-regulated development of buildings supported by reliable and affordable city services and public infrastructure.
- Increases the prevalence of 15-minute neighborhoods, in which individuals can access their most basic needs within a 15-minute walk from home.



Accessible and connected

A safe, accessible, and sustainable multimodal transportation system that connects people with each other and where they want to go. Open access to information is provided both physically and digitally to foster connectivity and promote community engagement.

- Offers and encourages a variety of safe, comfortable, affordable, reliable, convenient, and clean mobility options.
- Supports a balanced transportation system that reflects effective land use, manages congestion, and facilitates strong regional multimodal connections.
- Encourages diverse populations to connect through places of work, educational opportunities, retail, and nature to strengthen the larger community.
- Ensures physical and digital access to government services and public spaces.
- Enhances digital equity by investing in broadband infrastructure and providing relevant content on a variety of platforms to support democratic participation.



Environmentally sustainable

A sustainable, thriving, and equitable community that benefits from and supports clean energy; preserves and responsibly uses the earth's resources; and cares for ecosystems.

- Accelerates progress towards the community's ambitious climate and energy goals through a culture of shared environmental stewardship across Boulder.
- Ensures the efficient use of natural resources in a manner that does not deplete them over time while reducing the proliferation of non-reusable materials, toxins, and hazardous products.
- Supports the natural environment and its ecosystems so they are better able to resist damage and recover quickly.
- Provides affordable programming to diverse populations to increase access to and participation in local climate actions.



Responsibly governed

A local government that provides an excellent customer experience, responsibly manages the city's assets, and makes data-driven decisions informed by community engagement inclusive of those who have been historically excluded from government programs and services. The city organization exemplifies an employer of choice with policies and programs to support employee inclusion and well-being.

- Models stewardship, resilience, and sustainability of the city's financial, human, information, and physical assets.
- Builds organizational capacity for advancing racial equity by normalizing conversations about race, developing a shared understanding of institutional and structural racism, confronting oppression, and operationalizing equity strategies.
- Supports strategic decision-making with opportunities for accessible community engagement in multiple languages and timely and reliable data and analysis.
- Enhances and facilitates transparency, accuracy, efficiency, effectiveness, and quality customer service in all city business.
- Furthers the city's interests through the development and enhancement of strategic alliances and informed engagement with community partners and local, regional, state, and federal government entities.
- Provides assurance of regulatory and policy compliance and seeks to influence other levels of government to ensure policy and regulations are equitable.
- Disaggregates data by race and ethnicity to ensure programs, policies, and financial decisions do not have a disparate impact on historically excluded community members.
- Ensures that the city is a safe, equitable, and inclusive workplace.



Economically vital

A healthy, accessible, resilient, and sustainable economy based on innovation, diversity, and collaboration that benefits all residents, businesses, and visitors.

- Fosters a collaborative, resource-rich, and thriving regional environment for business, educational, and public institutions.
- Attracts, sustains, and retains a broad mix of businesses, entrepreneurs, and jobs, and supports a diverse and skilled workforce.
- Seeks to enhance the affordability of goods, services, and real estate that support the needs of all community members.
- Supports financial security, economic opportunity, and social mobility for all people regardless of their race, ethnicity, age, gender, ability, or socioeconomic status.
- Promotes creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship, and provides support for small businesses and community-based organizations.
- Invests in amenities, infrastructure, and services that contribute to an exceptional quality of life and attract employees and visitors.