

ual:

Social Purpose Lab x Artquest

Who gets to be an artist?

Exploring equitable career pathways
for visual artists

camberwell college of arts | central saint martins | chelsea college of arts | london college of communication | london college of fashion | wimbledon college of arts



Authors

Esme Trevelyan

Creative Industries Policy Manager
Social Purpose Lab, UAL

Jenny Haigh

Head of Policy for Fashion and Textiles
and the Creative Economy
Social Purpose Lab, UAL

Russell Martin

Artquest Programme Manager
Careers and Employability: Support, UAL

Nicholas Kaplony

Artquest Senior Programme Coordinator
Careers and Employability: Support, UAL



Joanna Cohn, 2021 MA Fine Art, Central Saint Martins, UAL | Photograph: Ben Turner

Contents

04 Introduction

- 05 Foreword
- 06 About UAL and Artquest
- 08 Context
- 10 What does it mean to be an artist?
- 11 Why does it matter?
- 12 Notes on data

13 Analysis

- 14 Demographics
 - 15 Note on intersectionality
 - 16 Socioeconomic background
 - 18 Education level
 - 19 Region/location
 - 21 Disability
 - 22 Gender
 - 23 Ethnicity
 - 25 Note on over-representation
- 26 Income and finances
 - 27 Income
 - 28 Impact of the rising cost-of-living
 - 31 Savings
 - 32 Barriers to success
- 37 Conclusion

38 Recommendations

- 40 Creative education and the talent pipeline
- 42 Good work agenda
- 44 Value of creativity
- 46 Further inquiry
- 47 Summary

48 Appendix

- 49 Bibliography

- Introduction
- Analysis
- Recommendations
- Appendix

Introduction

- Introduction
- Analysis
- Recommendations
- Appendix

Foreword

Artquest exists to help make the art world more equitable for artists. Driven by our lived experience of being (very different types of) artists, our team has long been curious about how and why artists’ work - the career barriers they face and how they are overcome. This report, using our data of artists working conditions and written in collaboration with UAL’s Policy and Advocacy Team, represents a further, and more public, development of our research outputs for the arts sector in England. It is planned as the first such collaboration at UAL, building on 25 years of our work with artists and arts organisations around the UK, Europe and the world in direct support of artists rights and working conditions. We invite you to consider what part you can play in making the arts fairer for marginalised artists so that all voices and experiences can be heard, and to work with us in making this a reality.

Russell Martin
Artquest Programme Manager
Careers and Employability: Support, UAL



Student working in the painting studio, 2022, Chelsea College of Arts, UAL | Photograph: Ana Blumenkron

- Introduction
- Analysis
- Recommendations
- Appendix

About UAL and Artquest

Artquest
Artquest researches visual artists working conditions, barriers and motivations to develop the professional information, advice and support projects artists need to meet their ambitions. Specialist research and insights data on artists’ livelihoods are collected anonymously through Artquest’s programmes. This data supports Artquest and its partner organisations to develop their programmes effectively for a more equitable art world.

Since 2001, Artquest has provided free access to robust and trusted information and resources that help artists to build their networks, find collaborators and get feedback on their work. Artquest projects support artists to understand and engage with the art world and develop business models tailored to their circumstances.

Staffed by artists working part-time, around 30 active partnerships, and freelance artists and researchers, Artquest is a free resource for professional artists at any stage in their careers who work in any medium, including those who are self-taught.

Artquest is a public programme of UAL funded by Arts Council England as a national portfolio organisation.

artquest.org.uk



Distant confluences, Julia Mazzoni, 2024 MA Fine Art: Drawing, Camberwell College of Arts, UAL
| Photograph: Julia Mazzoni

Introduction

Analysis

Recommendations

Appendix

UAL

University of the Arts London (UAL) generates and inspires the creativity the world needs for a better future. Since 1842 our Colleges have been defining creative education. With curiosity, imagination and intent we make work which creates lasting change for people and our planet.

London is core to who we are, a place where we meet and share ideas with people from different backgrounds and cultures. Our creative network influences learning, culture, industry and society on a global scale.

Our academics and practitioners deliver creative education and inspire new ways of thinking through research and innovation. We work with students at every level from pre-degree and short courses to postgraduate and online learning, enabling them to build the careers they want.

As a University we are ranked second in the world for Art and Design. We are formed of 6 Colleges with unique histories and identities; Camberwell College of Arts, Central Saint Martins, Chelsea College of Arts, London College of Communication, London College of Fashion and Wimbledon College of Arts. Together, we are a community of makers, thinkers, pioneers and storytellers redesigning the future.

[arts.ac.uk](https://www.arts.ac.uk)



Luke Chin-Joseph in the studio, 2023 BA Fine Art: Sculpture, Camberwell College of Arts, UAL |
Photograph: Alys Tomlinson

- Introduction
- Analysis
- Recommendations
- Appendix

Context

The UK’s creative industries are a powerhouse, and its thriving and dynamic visual arts sector is particularly special – the country boasts the second largest visual art market in the world, second only to the US¹, and has produced some of the world’s best known and most successful artists – from David Hockney, Tracey Emin, Sonia Boyce, and Barbara Hepworth, to William Turner, Thomas Gainsborough, and so many more.

We are home to the top two Art and Design universities in the world², including UAL, and British museums and galleries are frequented by visitors from across the globe each year, many of them completely free to access.

The arts are a British success story, and our artists come from all corners of the nation – yet sustaining an arts career remains a challenge for many. The arts, and particularly visual arts, have long been perceived to be the domain of the relatively more privileged and the reserve of those who can afford long periods of low or no pay.

Introduction
Analysis
Recommendations
Appendix

Most artists are self-employed and work on short-term projects or commissions³. It has become the nature of creative careers that such forms of work are more prevalent in the arts and the creative industries than in the wider workforce, and while these setups can be beneficial – providing flexibility and autonomy, allowing artists to dedicate time to their creative practice and commit to creative freedom – there are also concrete disadvantages to this way of working. Self-employment is precarious, and comes without employment benefits such as workplace pensions, paid annual leave and sick pay, maternity and paternity leave, as well as fewer employee protections, leaving freelancers more vulnerable to labour abuses like not receiving payment or being intentionally underpaid.

Unpaid work is commonplace in the arts sector; such as the normalisation of ‘working for exposure’, rather than for a fair wage – with nearly nine of out of ten creatives having worked for free in some way⁴. These practices are often seen as an essential way to ‘break into’ the industry, and are often perpetuated by a ‘this is just how things are done’ mentality passed down from those who were treated this way themselves, albeit in very different historical economic circumstances. Unpaid work is inherently exploitative, but it also widens access inequalities - only those who can afford to work unpaid, or who are able to work multiple jobs to sustain themselves, are able to access these opportunities. This makes it extremely and disproportionately difficult for many people – such as those from lower-income or marginalised backgrounds, and those with disabilities or caring responsibilities – to break into the industry or sustain a career for the long term. To make it worse, many of these opportunities are obtained through nepotism or other personal connections⁵. Not only does this perpetuate an environment of elitism and privilege, but it also means the industry loses out on a huge number of viewpoints and voices.

When work opportunities are paid, ultimately artist pay is still low. DACS’ artist income survey shows that the median income for artists in 2024 was just £12,500 – 47% lower than the income of full-time minimum wage workers in the same year⁶. Wages this low inevitably must be supplemented by additional work, and the roles undertaken by artists can range from sector-relevant part-time or freelance positions such as in creative organisations or in education, to non-sector relevant areas such as in retail, hospitality, or corporate roles.

Against this context, we can infer that ‘being an artist’ is not as simple as it might seem, with many nuances contributing to the reality of exactly who gets to do so.

- Introduction
- Analysis
- Recommendations
- Appendix

What does it mean to be an artist?

This report explores the question ‘Who gets to be an artist?’ through analysis of survey data collected by Artquest as part of their Applied data partnership.

It examines responses to an ongoing, open survey offered to professional visual artists covering demographics, their working and financial situations, and the barriers they report in pursuing a career in the arts (see page 12 for more detail on the data used).

In addressing this this question, it is essential to acknowledge that the value of art extends far beyond economics. For many artists, creative practice is not just a job – it’s a way of life, a means of expression, and a contribution to democracy, justice, society and culture. In fact, the data used in this report shows that only 58% of respondents consider earning a living from their artistic practice as a key measure of success. A greater proportion of respondents prioritised long-term sustainability of their practice (71%) and personal artistic growth (63%) as their primary markers of success.

This highlights that, for many artists, artistic practice is difficult to quantify in monetary terms. Their art carries deep personal, social and cultural meaning that transcends income. However, in an increasingly challenging economic environment – marked by rising costs of living, fewer work opportunities, and continued shrinking public funding– financial stability is becoming more critical and elusive than ever.

Artists’ ability to earn an income, and the extent to which they can rely on other sources of personal wealth or financial support, strongly shapes whether artists can dedicate the time, space, and resource required to develop their practice.

For this reason, whilst acknowledging that not all artists define success through income alone, this report takes earning a living, financial sustainability, and the ability to prioritise artistic work as core indicators when exploring the question of who gets to be an artist today.

- Introduction
- Analysis
- Recommendations
- Appendix

Why does it matter?

Who gets to be an artist matters. Art is absolutely vital – it shapes our society and our culture, and how we understand the world, whether it be directly experienced in artistic venues, or experienced through the wider cultural and creative scene that thrives across the country.

In both times of struggle and celebration, art can bring joy and meaning, catharsis and release, clarity and distraction. It shapes our cultural identity, helping us reflect, remember, and push forward, and it is also at the forefront of innovation, progress-making and pushing boundaries. As already established, the arts are of major importance to the UK’s economy and soft power, and access to and engagement with art and with creativity more broadly has been shown to benefit health and wellbeing, social cohesion, pride in place, and academic attainment^{7 8 9}.

In an industry this economically and culturally crucial, it is important that the makeup of the sector reflects the society around it, telling the stories of the whole of the country, not just its most privileged portions. Access to the arts should not be determined by your background or your family’s affluence or connections, and enabling different people to take part allows the sector to speak a greater truth, resonate with a wider audience, push more boundaries, and foster more connections. In short, it is imperative that whoever wants to be an artist should get to be one.

At UAL, we know that a large amount of our graduates head straight into creative careers, and many hold a desire to become artists¹⁰. As one of the biggest and best creative institutions in the world, some of the most successful and renowned artists studied at one of our six Colleges, including 40% of all Turner Prize winners. We believe that the world needs creativity, and we are committed to opening up access to the arts to people from all backgrounds.

Introduction

Analysis

Recommendations

Appendix

Notes on data

The data used for this report comes from the Artquest’s Applied partnership, a collaborative data collection and sharing initiative involving arts organisations that engage with a range of professional artists through their programmes. Partners, alongside Artquest, are:

- DACS, an artist-founded not-for-profit visual artists’ rights management organisation
- Film London Artists Moving Image Network (FLAMIN), a network, commission, award, showcasing and online resources for artist moving image makers
- New Contemporaries, an annual graduate touring exhibition showcase, mentoring programme, studio bursaries and residencies for emerging artists
- Outside In, providing a platform for artists who encounter significant barriers to the art world due to health, disability, social circumstance, or isolation.

All project partners run annual or more regular open calls, memberships, and services for artists. After completing a submission, artists are invited to fill in some more optional questions chosen by the partners. Questions cover demographics, income sources, studio behaviour, career ambitions and success measures, and more.

The Applied programme has been gathering data since 2017 and has a response rate of 10%. It is the only ongoing, artist-focused data project of its kind in the UK.

The project partners work with a broad range of artists, and effort has been made to ensure that Applied reaches many different respondents from all walks of life and is as representative of artists’ experience as possible. Survey responses were submitted by professional visual artists, and as such, the data is therefore not guaranteed to be fully representative of all the entire artist population working in the UK.

Our analysis aggregates responses to relevant survey questions (which are outlined at the back of this report in the Appendix), across the full 12-month period from April 2024 to March 2025, with a total of 658 respondents (although not every respondent answered every question). Unless otherwise specified, all statistics and insights in this report refer to this aggregated 12-month period.

- Introduction
- Analysis**
- Recommendations
- Appendix

Analysis

- Introduction
- Analysis**
- Recommendations
- Appendix

Demographics

The demographic data collected through these surveys offers insight into who gets to be an artist today – especially when considered in relation to the wider national picture. Whilst demographic information alone cannot capture the full complexity of artistic identity or experience, it can help us to understand how the sector reflects (or fails to reflect) the diversity of the UK population.

As noted above, effort has been made to ensure the Applied project reaches far and wide, but due to the self-selecting nature of survey data, we cannot assert that the data used in this report is fully representative of all artists. There may also be unknown factors influencing who chooses to participate in a survey of this kind and why.

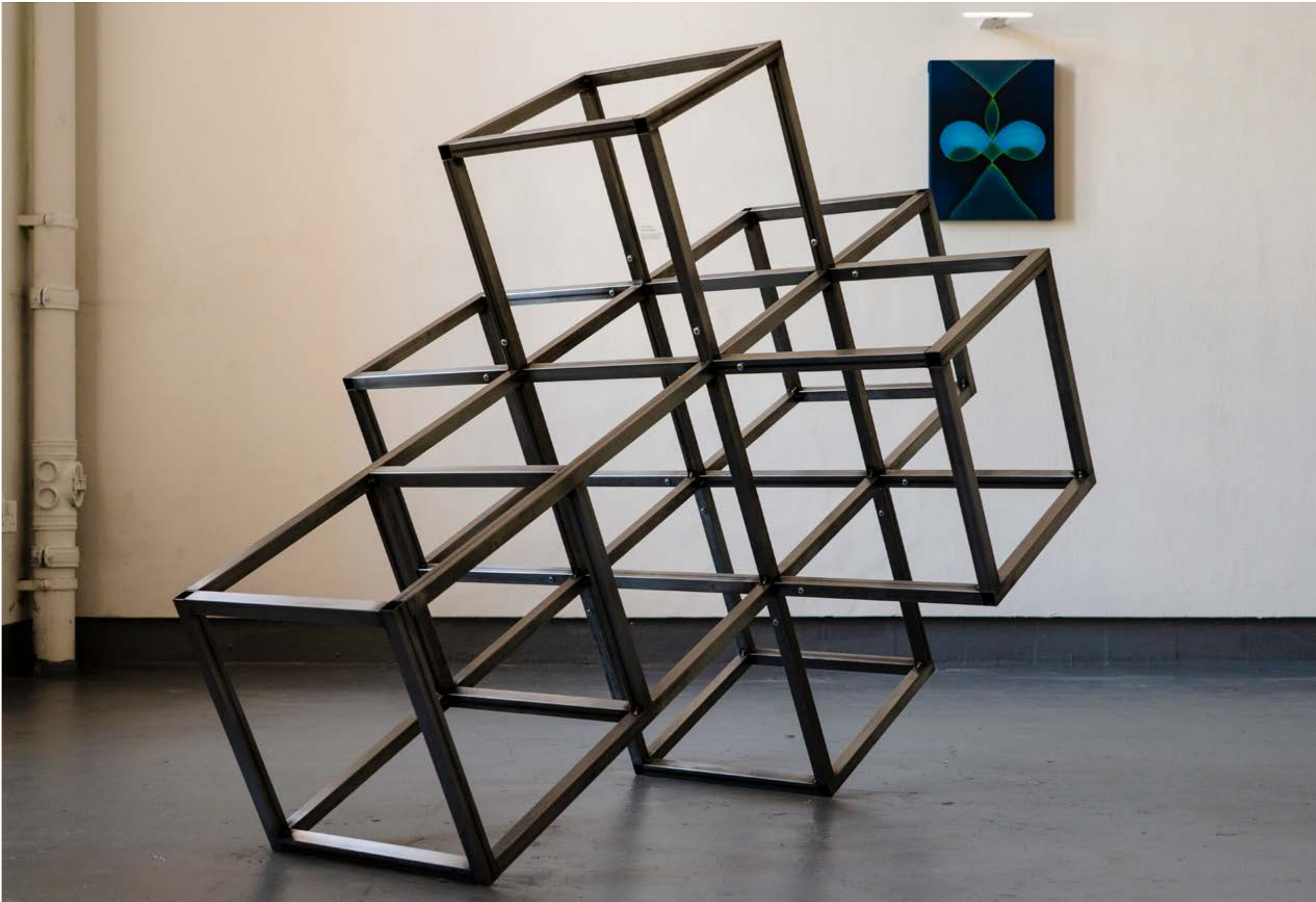
However, we do know that the demographics of the creative industries in general are not representative of the wider workforce or the nation more broadly¹¹, so the demographic data discussed below is broadly in line with wider trends. As such, the demographic findings presented below are valuable indicators of the experience of artists who engaged and the realities they report – and they reflect many of the broader trends seen in the creative workforce.

- Introduction
- Analysis**
- Recommendations
- Appendix

Note on intersectionality

We recognise that identify is multifaceted, and that demographic characteristics do not shape a person’s experience in isolation. Understanding questions of equality, diversity and inclusion requires an intersectional lens; one that considers how different aspects of identity, including protected and unprotected characteristics, can overlap and compound disadvantage across different axes.

While this report seeks to highlight some key trends, its scope limits the extent to which we can explore these intersections in depth. Further, more granular analysis is recommended in future reports to better understand how overlapping identifies influence access, opportunities and outcomes in the arts. This will be essential for developing more targeted and effective approaches towards equity in the sector.



Amy Poliero, Postgraduate Show 2025, MA Fine Art, Chelsea College of Arts, UAL | Photography: Orlando Myxx

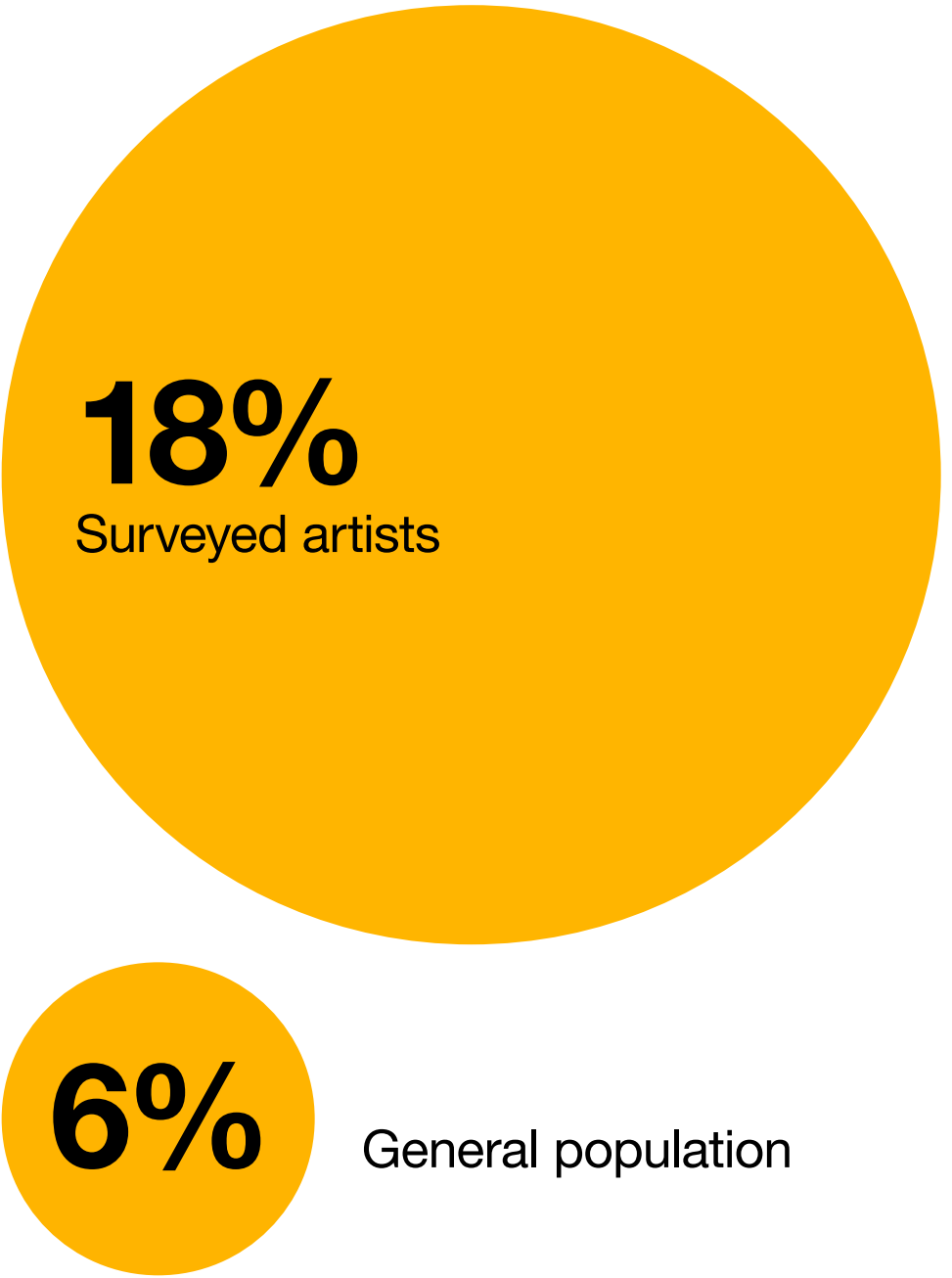
- Introduction
- Analysis**
- Recommendations
- Appendix

Socioeconomic background

The survey data provides two different lenses to examine socioeconomic background through – school type and parental occupation at age 14.

Of those surveyed, the proportion who went to a fee-paying school (including those who received some form of bursary support) is 18% — 3 times the amount of the general population who attended this type of school.¹²

Proportion of people who attended a fee-paying school – general population vs surveyed artists



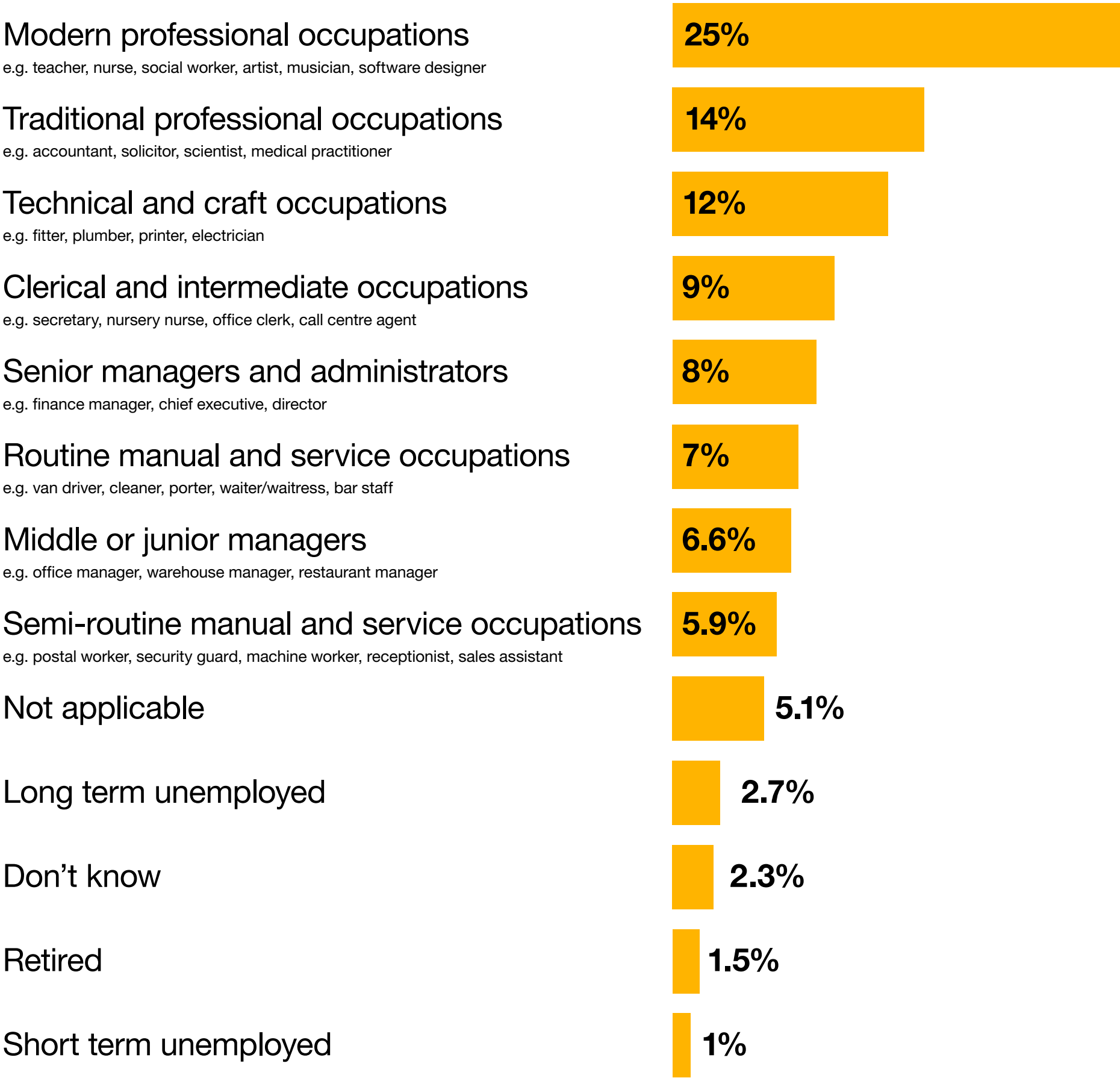
When using the measure of parental occupation at 14 years of age, 39% of artists surveyed reported having a parent in a traditional or modern professional role – representing the most advantaged social class¹³.

Meanwhile, only 7% answered routine occupations, 6% answered semi-routine, and 12% technical or craft occupations – representing lower socioeconomic backgrounds, commonly described as ‘working class’¹⁴.

- Introduction
- Analysis**
- Recommendations
- Appendix

Socioeconomic background

When you were around 14 years old, what kind of work did this parent/caregiver do?



The respondents’ answers suggest that artists may be more likely to come from higher socioeconomic backgrounds – the middle and upper classes – than those in the general workforce. This is in line with previous research, which has found that the creative industries is dominated by these groups, with those from less privileged backgrounds underrepresented^{15 16 17}.

Sadly, the type of school you go to matters when it comes to access to the arts – almost as much as to gaining a peerage or becoming a corporate lawyer.^{18 19} Creative education has been in decline in state schools in England since 2010, whilst private schools continue to invest in arts provision²⁰ – and where creative provision is squeezed in state school curriculum, families are often left footing the bill for extra-curricular activity which can be expensive, limiting access for those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Research describes this as an ‘enrichment gap’, where children in independent schools are much more likely to attend extra-curricular creative activities than state school children, and students who are eligible for free school meals are also much less likely to do so than those who are not²¹. In 2024, the Education Policy Institute found that children who attend clubs for hobbies, art, and music are 56% more likely to progress to higher education²², which, as discussed below, is also important in determining who gets to be an artist.

- Introduction
- Analysis**
- Recommendations
- Appendix

Education level

Over 9 in 10 respondents had attended a higher education institution (92.5%). Of these, almost half (49%) held a postgraduate degree as their highest qualification, and a further 39% held an undergraduate degree as their highest. This is in stark contrast to the education level of the general workforce, where the proportion of those with a degree or higher is lower, at around 26%^{23 24 25 26}.

Only 7% had a Level 3 qualification as their highest qualification, 2% held a vocational qualification, and 2% held secondary level qualifications as their highest.

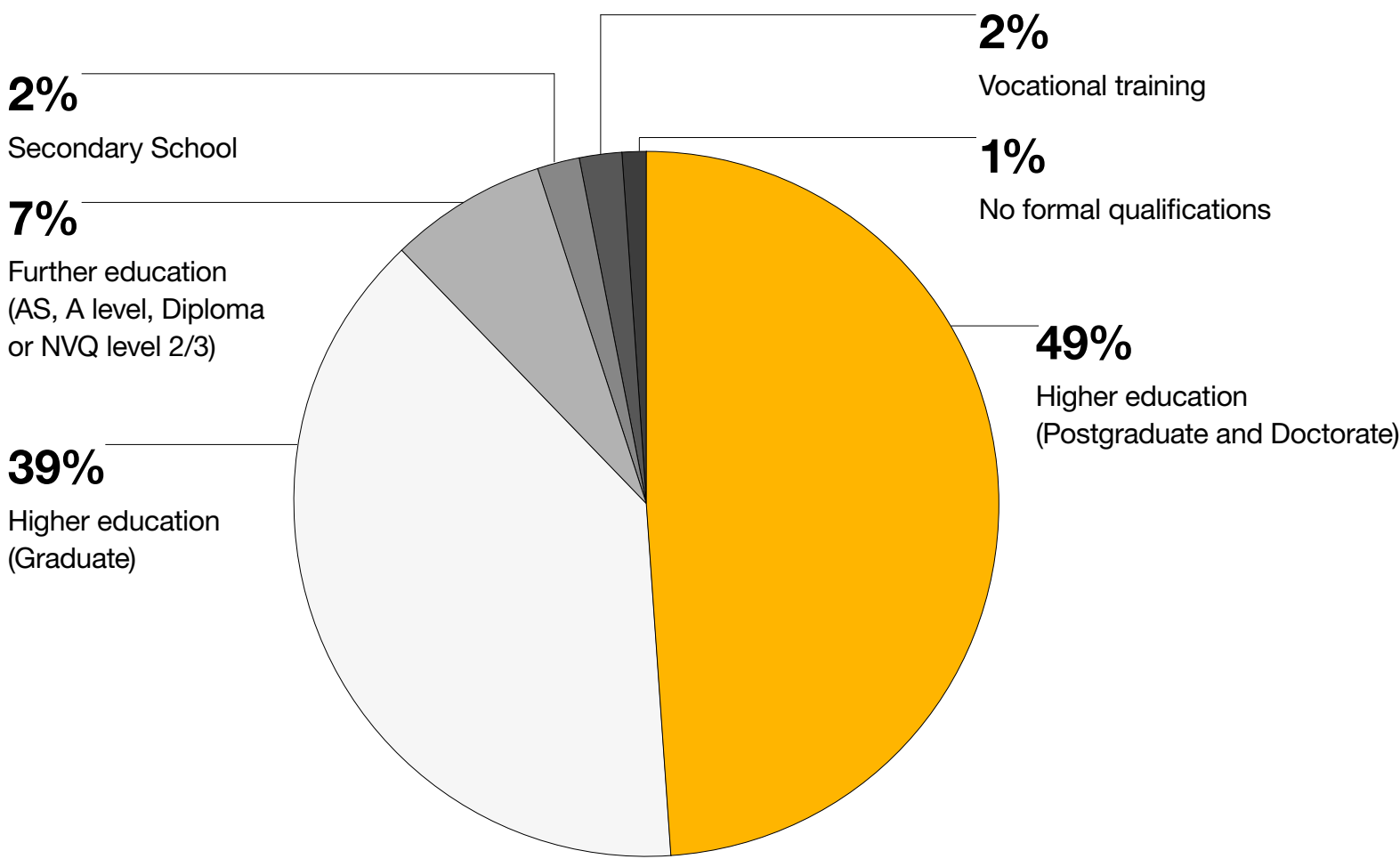
The respondents represent a highly educated group: a trend that we know is replicated across the broader creative industries^{27 28}.

Whilst there is no requirement for artists to have a degree, the fact that the majority of respondents hold at least a bachelor’s degree suggests that those without a degree may find it harder to become an artist. Creative degrees are not the only way to develop one’s practice, but do provide a strong foundation on which to build for an artist. They provide an opportunity to develop foundational skills as well a safe space to take creative risks, experiment, and push boundaries,

and access to professor, tutor, and peer feedback can support artists to develop further than other routes might. University settings also teach artists to think critically about both their own and others’ work, exposing them to new ideas and points of view, and surrounding them with other creatives and artists. For many, university is also a time of making important professional and peer connections and networks that can be useful for future career pathways.

But access to higher education is not equal – disadvantaged and underrepresented groups face many barriers to accessing and progressing through university²⁹, and despite efforts by successive governments over the years, there are still large gaps between the experience of those from lower and higher socioeconomic backgrounds³⁰. In particular, research has found that creative degrees are dominated by people from middle class backgrounds, with those from less privileged backgrounds especially under-represented at prestigious institutions³¹.

Highest qualification of respondents
What is your highest qualification?



The data underscores how access to creative higher education remains a gatekeeper for entry into careers in the arts, and yet we know that people from less privileged backgrounds are less likely to attend university, and to complete their degree when they do. Inevitably, this has an impact on who gets to be an artist – with those from disadvantaged backgrounds facing more barriers to realising a career in the arts.

- Introduction
- Analysis**
- Recommendations
- Appendix

Region/location

The creative industries are concentrated highly in London and the South East of England³² and the capital is the largest centre for the commercial art market in the UK³³, so it is no surprise that the majority of respondents were based there, with 46% living in London and a further 14% in the South East – meaning 6 in 10 respondents live either in London or close to it.

The UK’s capital city having a thriving, dynamic, and successful creative scene is welcome. London’s creativity and culture is a key part of the nation’s creative reputation, and the capital’s creative economy is of huge benefit to the UK economy.³⁴ However, whilst London is an incredible creative city, it is also one of the most expensive places to live in the UK³⁵. The concentration of opportunity in the capital city and the wider South East, where the cost of living is high, could be seen as preventative for aspiring or early career artists, particularly those from lower income backgrounds.

UK geographical location of respondents

Where in the UK are you currently based?

London	46%
South East	14%
South West	11%
Scotland	5.9%
North West	5.5%
East of England	3.9%
Yorkshire and Humber	3.6%
Wales	3%
East Midlands	2.8%
West Midlands	2.3%
North East	1.9%
Northern Ireland	0.6%



Introduction

Analysis

Recommendations

Appendix

The concentration of respondents in this small area of the UK also suggests a lack of opportunity for those outside the region, meaning that those who are unwilling or unable to move to London may be shut out from the chance to be an artist. Recent polling by Creative UK also found that people living in London have a significantly more positive view of creative career prospects than those in smaller towns or rural areas, suggesting that the concentration of the arts and creative industries in the capital skew opportunities and awareness, ‘with those farther from such hubs feeling creative careers are less accessible or secure’³⁶. Further research on the changing importance of London to the visual arts is currently underway by Artquest.

The data highlights the difficulty those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds face in pursuing a career in the arts, as those who can afford to support themselves in one of the most expensive cities in the world have greater access to London-centric opportunities and work than those from less privileged backgrounds. It also underscores the importance of regional investment in creative infrastructure in ensuring that opportunities are spread across the country, as well as the expansion of commercial art market opportunities outside of London, so that artists do not feel the need to uproot their lives to be able to pursue their creative practice.

- Introduction
- Analysis**
- Recommendations
- Appendix

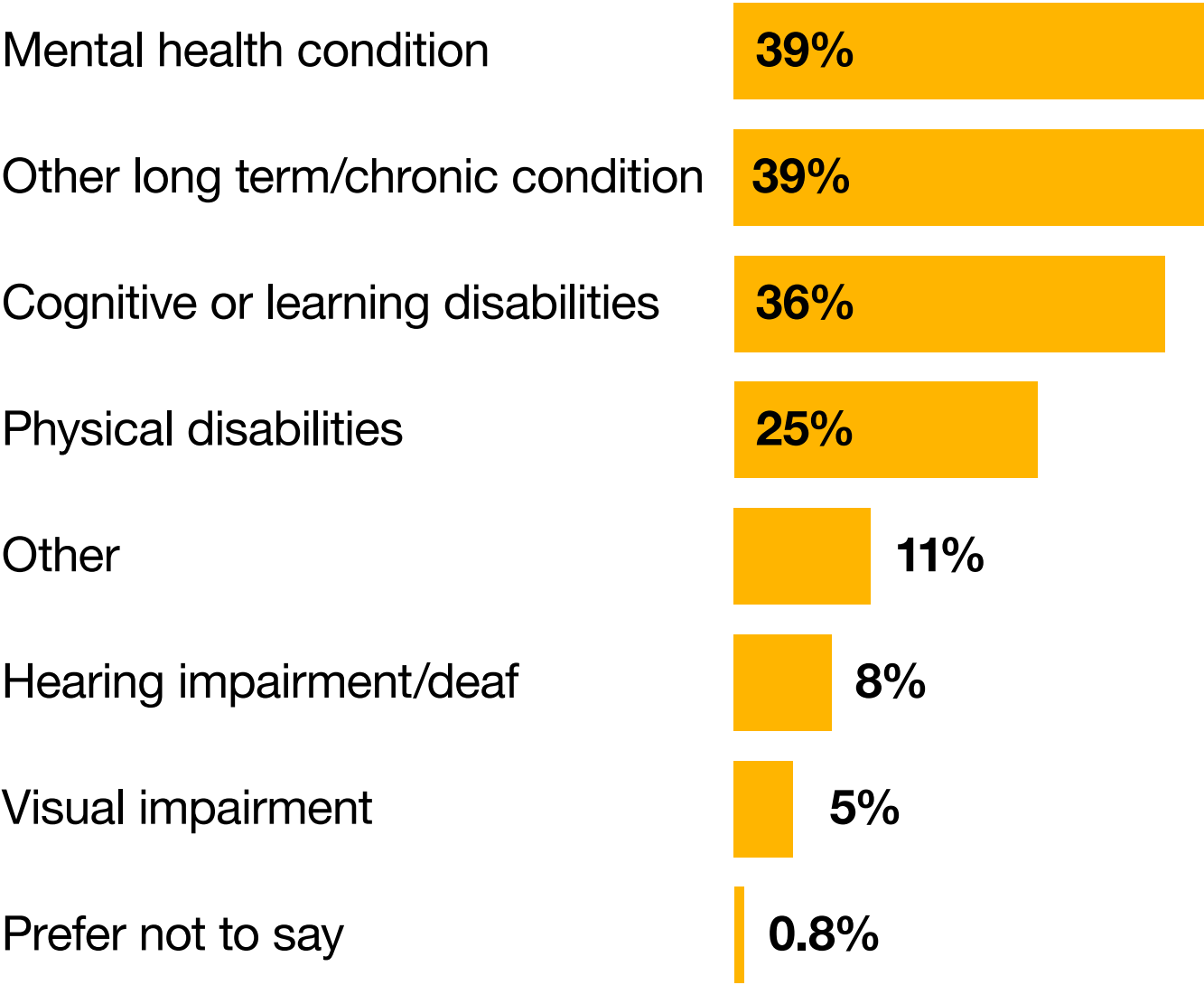
Disability

22% of respondents described themselves as having a disability, which is slightly higher than the proportion of the population in England and Wales, and slightly lower than the proportion in Scotland and in Northern Ireland.^{37 38 39}

Disabled people are generally underrepresented in the wider workforce in the UK and are almost twice as likely to be unemployed as non-disabled people⁴⁰ – often due to a number of intersecting barriers, including lack of confidence, inaccessible working practices, and inadequate support⁴¹.

The self-employed and self-directed nature of being an artist could be well suited to many disabled people – not having to deal with inaccessible commuting options and workplaces and the ability to work around individual access needs may make a career as an artist a good fit. However, many disabled people face high living costs compared to non-disabled people,⁴² meaning that the precarious nature of self-employment and the low and unstable income often associated with being an artist is likely to be an even larger barrier for disabled artists.

How do you describe the nature of your disability?

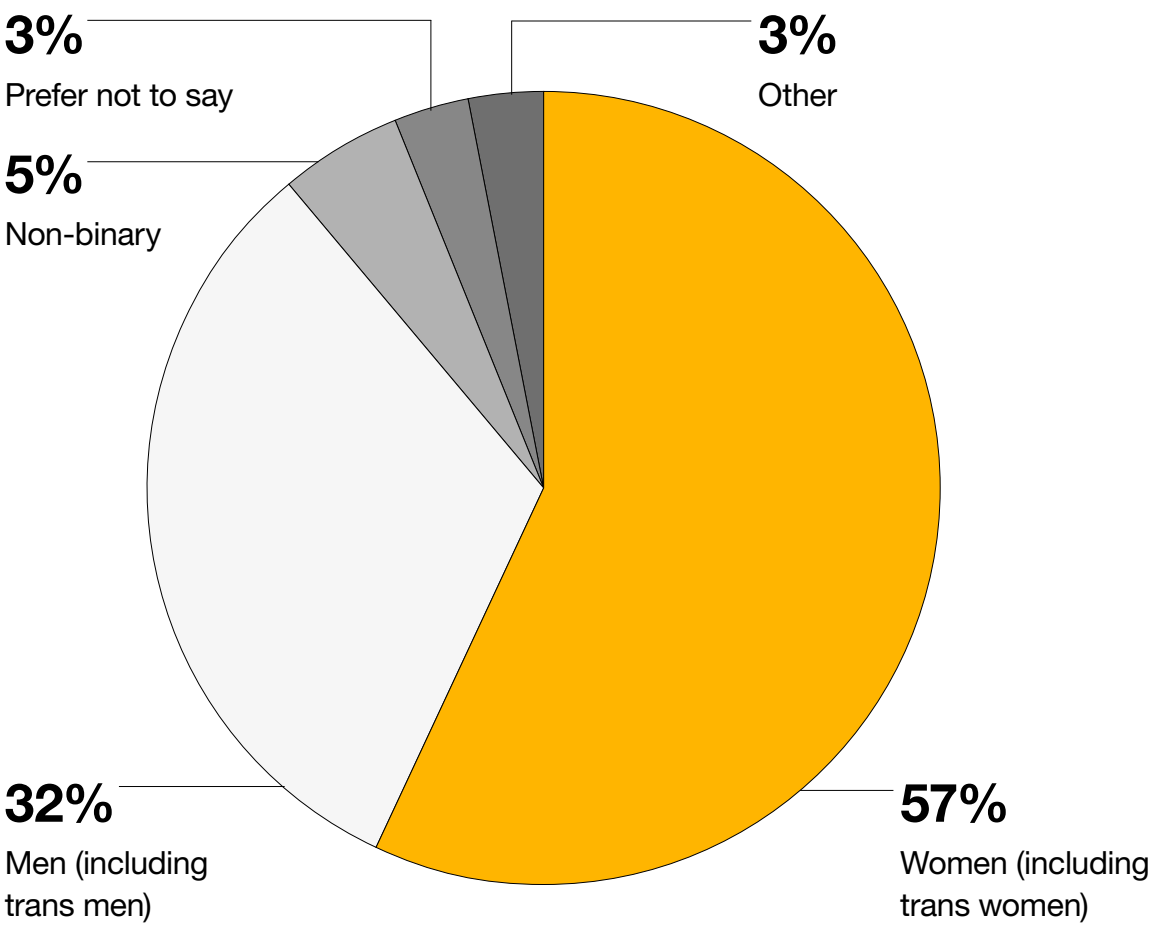


- Introduction
- Analysis**
- Recommendations
- Appendix

Gender

The survey asked respondents about their gender identity, finding that over half of respondents (57%) identified as a woman, one third (32%) identified as a man, and 5% identified as non-binary.

Gender identity of survey respondents
How would you describe your gender identity?



Women and non-binary people were overrepresented in the survey data when compared to the general population, according to census data from England and Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland.^{43 44 45} However, this over-representation is broadly in line with other research into the demographics of the arts and creative industries more broadly.⁴⁶

Societal norms may play a role in this composition, with ‘expressive’ subjects such as the arts and humanities more popular with women and girls in education, and men and boys dominating STEM subjects⁴⁷ – although there is plenty of work ongoing to address these trends⁴⁸. UAL’s own student population is majority women, who make up over three quarters of the student body.

The arts, and creative industries more broadly, are also often seen as more inclusive and open spaces, where self-expression is encouraged. This perception may be a reason for the over-representation of non-binary or other gender-nonconforming people – and we also know that the arts, culture and heritage sectors have larger LGBTQ+ populations than in the general workforce.⁴⁹

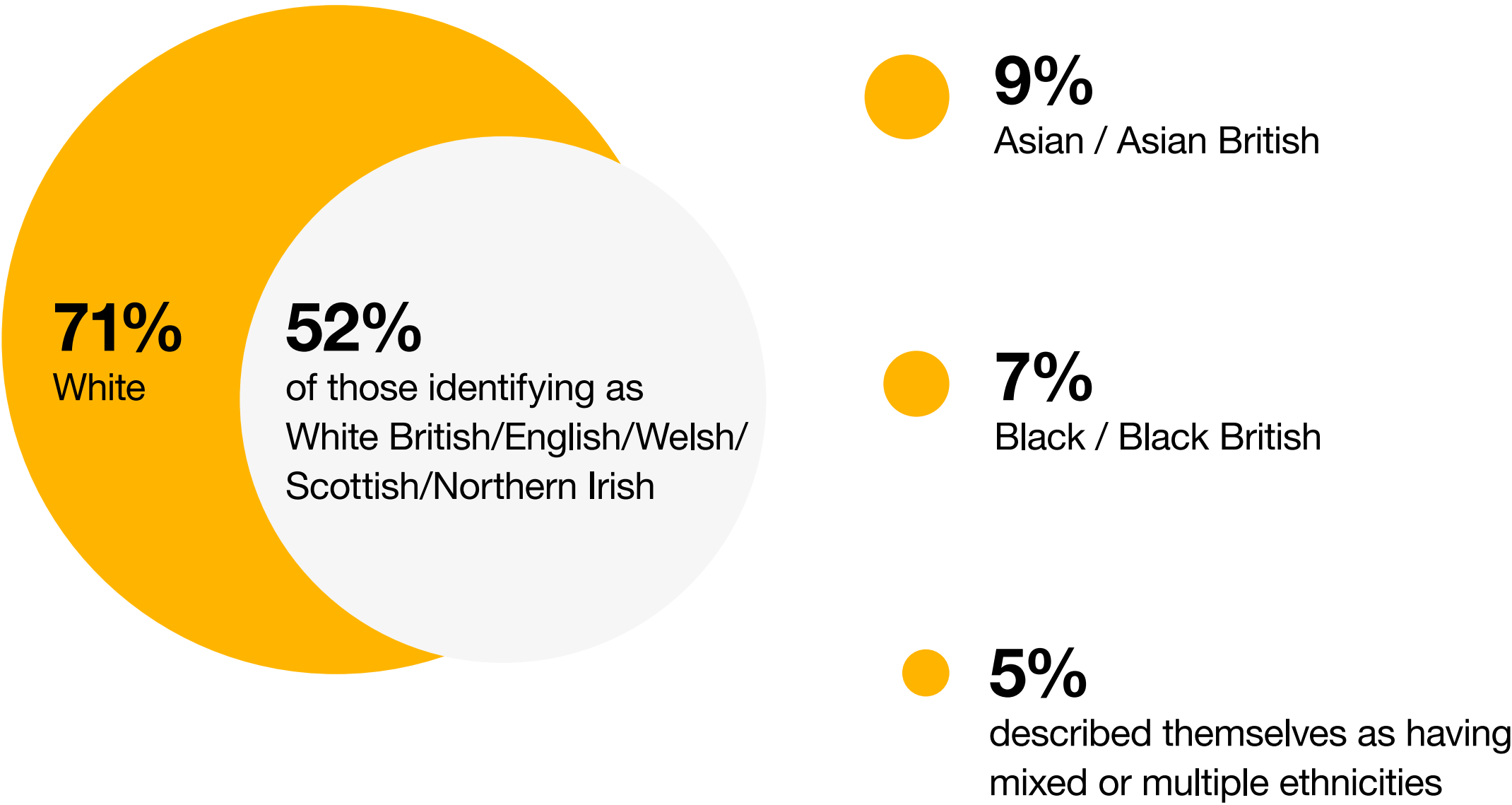
In addition, women still take on the lion’s share of childcare and caring responsibilities⁵⁰. The self-directed nature of work as an artist may be more beneficial in such cases, as it could provide more flexibility to fit working around these other commitments.

However, despite this data, male artists have dominated for centuries, and previous research has found that male artists lead in commercial sales and opportunities⁵¹. Although the data suggests that women and non-binary people may be over-represented in the artist workforce, this may not directly translate to positive outcomes for these groups.

- Introduction
- Analysis**
- Recommendations
- Appendix

Ethnicity

The majority of survey respondents were white:

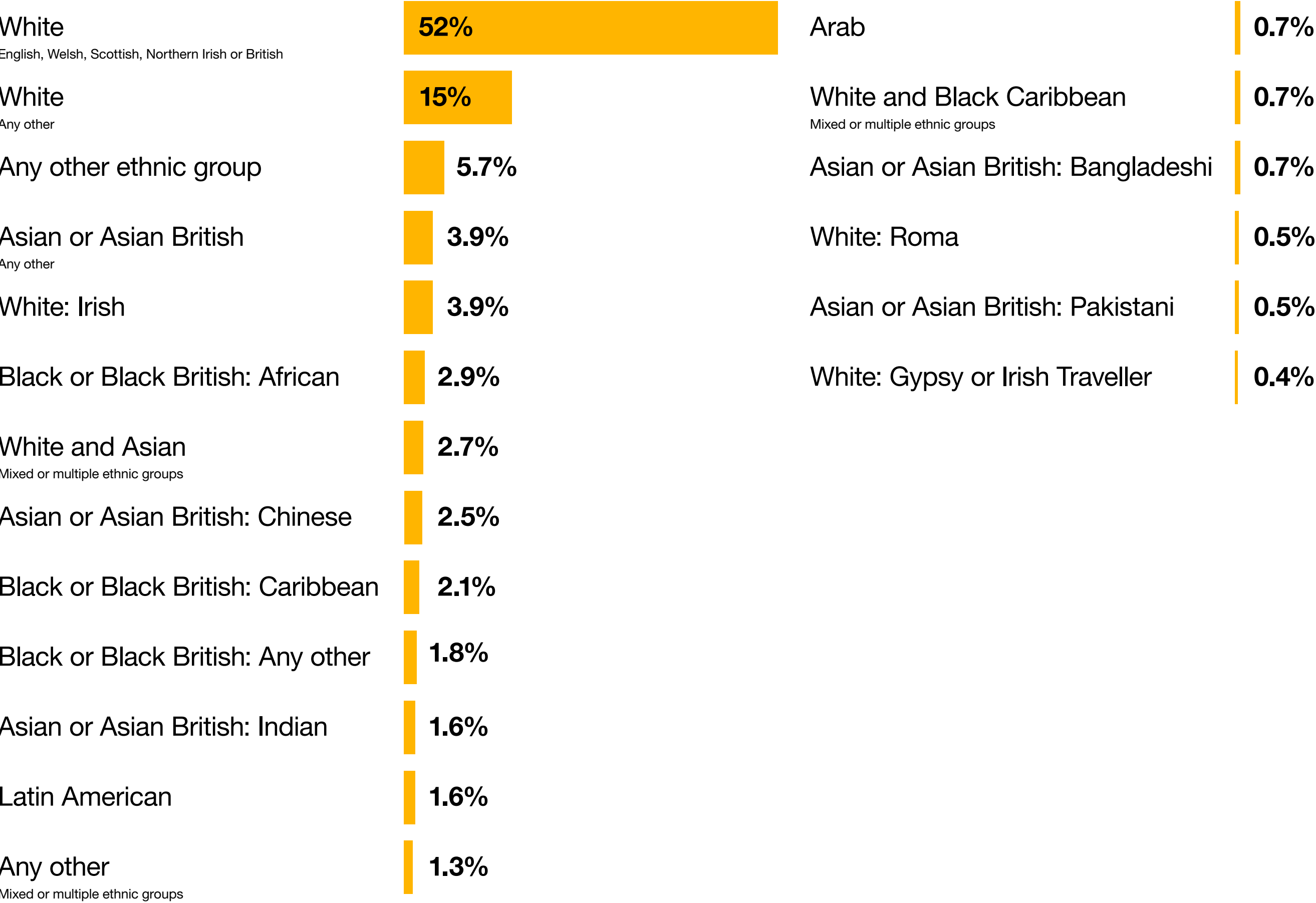


- Introduction
- Analysis**
- Recommendations
- Appendix

UK-wide ethnicity statistics are hard to ascertain, but when comparing this data to census results in England and Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland, a smaller proportion of respondents were white, and other ethnic groups were over-represented in the respondents^{52 53 54}.

Research into the wider creative sector workforce has found this group to be less ethnically diverse than the general workforce,⁵⁵ suggesting that our respondents represent a more diverse group when compared to the rest of the creative industries. However, as discussed above, almost half of the respondents live in London, which is the most ethnically diverse city in the UK. In the capital, 46% of the population are from a Black, Asian, or Minority Ethnic background – compared to 29% of respondents to the Applied survey⁵⁶. This suggests that while our sample is more representative than the wider creative sector, respondents do not necessarily reflect the diversity of the region and communities they’re most prevalent in – with white artists overrepresented.

Ethnicity of respondents: How would you describe your ethnicity?



- Introduction
- Analysis**
- Recommendations
- Appendix

Note on over-representation

The responses to this survey may be taken to suggest an over-representation of certain groups working as artists – including people with disabilities, women, non-binary people, and people from ethnic minority backgrounds. Whilst this could be seen as a positive for inclusion and equity efforts, other research has shown that many of these groups actually tend to be under-represented in the creative industries as a whole.⁵⁷⁵⁸

This survey is based on a self-selecting sample of professional visual artist respondents, and there may be unknown factors influencing who chooses to participate in a survey of this kind and why. Given the over-representation of certain groups within this data, one potential explanation is that groups who have more experience of marginalisation may be more inclined to take the opportunity to share their experience in comparison to those who do not face such issues. As will be discussed below, responses to the survey showed that issues around discrimination – including based on gender, disability, and ethnicity – are persistent barriers for artists, alongside the issues around income and finances which this report focuses on.

Whilst not in scope for this report, further analysis about the experiences of these groups – women and non-binary people, disabled people, and people from ethnic minority backgrounds – in the arts is key to understanding more about how intersecting characteristics can impact the experience of artists from under-represented backgrounds. Artquest has previously produced an insights report that looks at disabled artists’ experience during the cost-of-living crisis from 2023-2024, and continues to produce specialist research and insights data about the experience of artists, which [can be found here](#).

- Introduction
- Analysis**
- Recommendations
- Appendix

Income and finances

As discussed above, this report considers finances to be a major factor in either prohibiting or enabling people to be an artist today.

Breaking this down to look at income, the cost of living, and savings can help us understand more about the respondents, and about who gets to be an artist.



Sharon Ayiglo, 2023 BA Graphic And Media Design, London College of Communication, UAL
| Photograph: Sharon Ayiglo

- Introduction
- Analysis**
- Recommendations
- Appendix

Income

As stated above, whilst not considered to be the main measure of success for many artists, like in all careers, earned income is a very important factor.

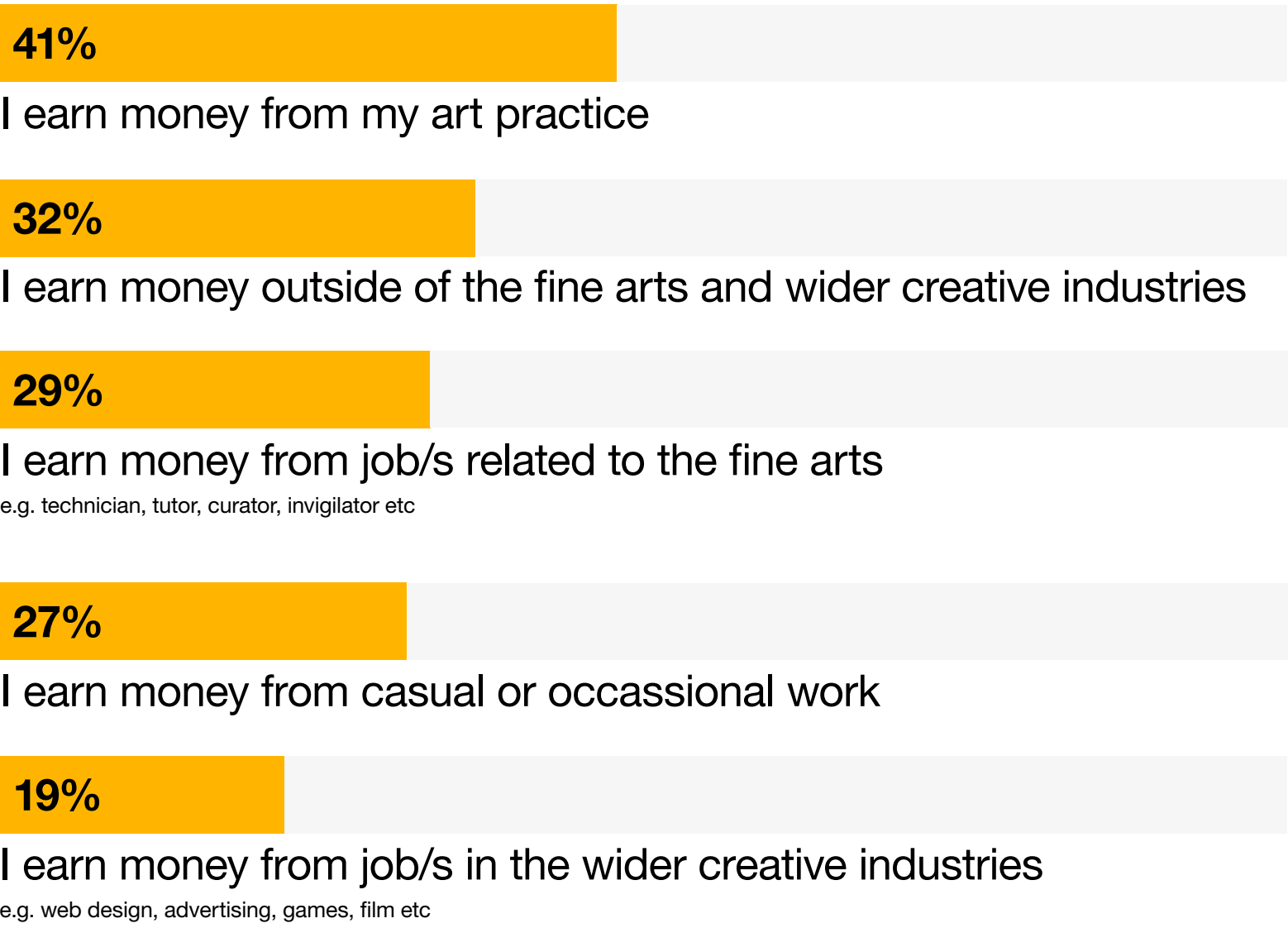
However, the survey results showed that just 41% of respondents regularly earnt money from their practice, and over two thirds (68%) of responding artists cited lack of income earned from practice as a barrier to their careers, making it the number one barrier (see [page 32](#) for further discussion of barriers).

When they cannot make ends meet through their creative practice alone, most artists who do not come from significant independent wealth are therefore inevitably supplementing their income with other work, and we can see from the respondents that many are earning money elsewhere. Some supplementation comes from work broadly relevant to their practice, some from work within the arts and creative industries – but almost a third of respondents are regularly earning money from jobs outside of the fine arts and wider creative industries.

Juggling multiple jobs and income streams not only leaves less time for an artist’s creative practice, potentially reducing their artistic output and limiting their creative freedom and progression, but it can also be stressful. Financial insecurity and feeling overworked can have a negative impact on artists’ mental health and wellbeing, and could lead to burnout⁵⁹ – and we know that over a third of our sample (38%) said they had accessed a mental health support line in the last year, see [page 28](#) for more detail.

This status-quo also disproportionately disadvantages those without external financial support – from family and friends or other, independent forms of wealth – as they are inevitably less able to withstand the financial uncertainty.

How do you regularly earn money?



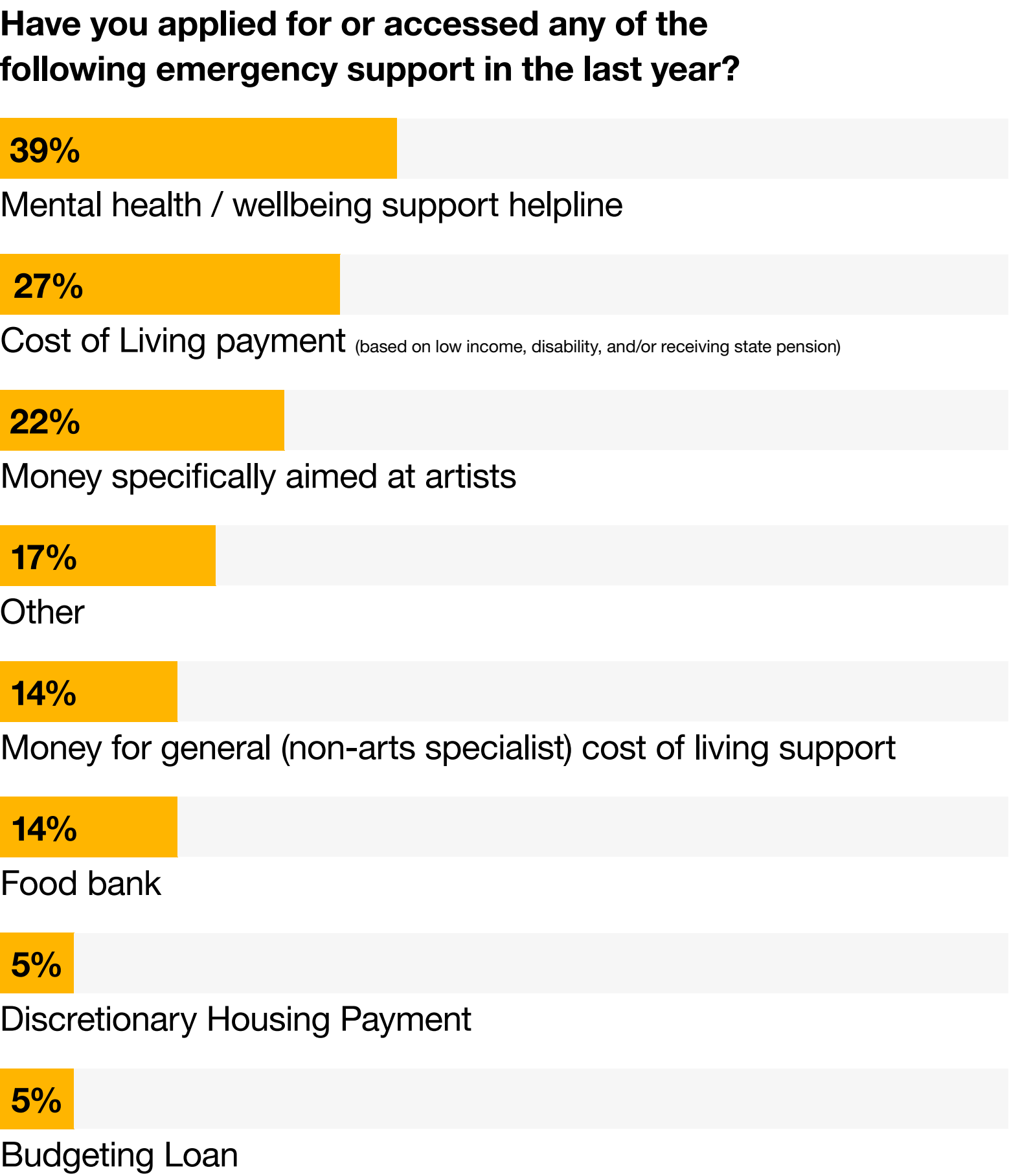
- Introduction
- Analysis**
- Recommendations
- Appendix

Impact of the rising cost-of-living

The cost-of-living in the UK has skyrocketed in recent years following a period high inflation and global geopolitical instability. This has impacted the whole population, but the unique work patterns and majority self-employment of artists can leave them especially vulnerable to economic shocks.

When asked about how they have managed during this period, respondents had a range of responses. Somewhat unsurprisingly, a majority of respondents (58%) had dipped into savings to support themselves (whilst 15% had none to dip into). More shockingly, nearly a third of respondents had taken on more debt in the last year, nearly 15% had accessed a foodbank to support themselves, and almost 40% of respondents had accessed a mental health support line.

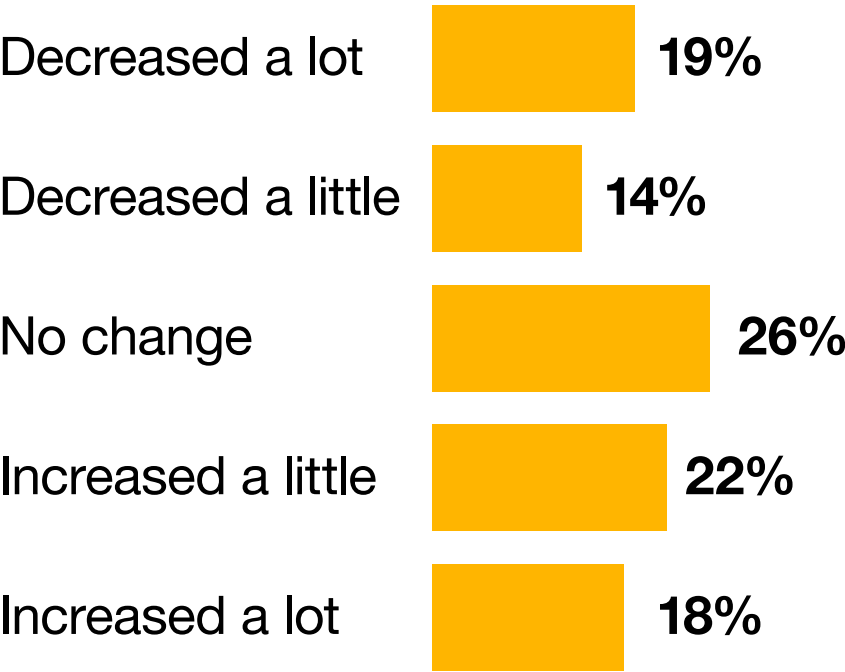
As already discussed above, artists are typically self-employed, often depending on commissions and short-term projects to sustain an income. During difficult economic periods, many commissioning organisations cut back spending and opportunities for freelancers often reduce as a result, and existing clients may delay or even cancel ongoing projects and payments – a recent example being the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic^{60 61}, during which 55% of Applied respondents saw a hit to their income from arts related work and 50% saw a reduction in income from commissions. This creates an uncertain picture for working artists, often leaving them at the mercy of wider economic trends that they cannot control – or at least feeling anxious about when they may be hit.



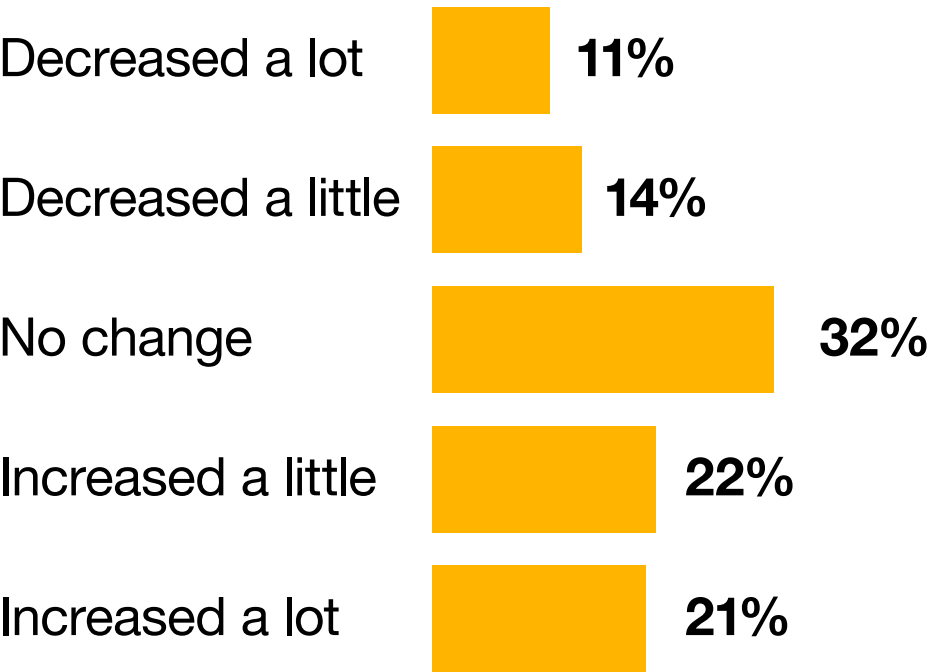
- Introduction
- Analysis**
- Recommendations
- Appendix

When asked about their workload over the last year, respondents relayed a mixed picture:

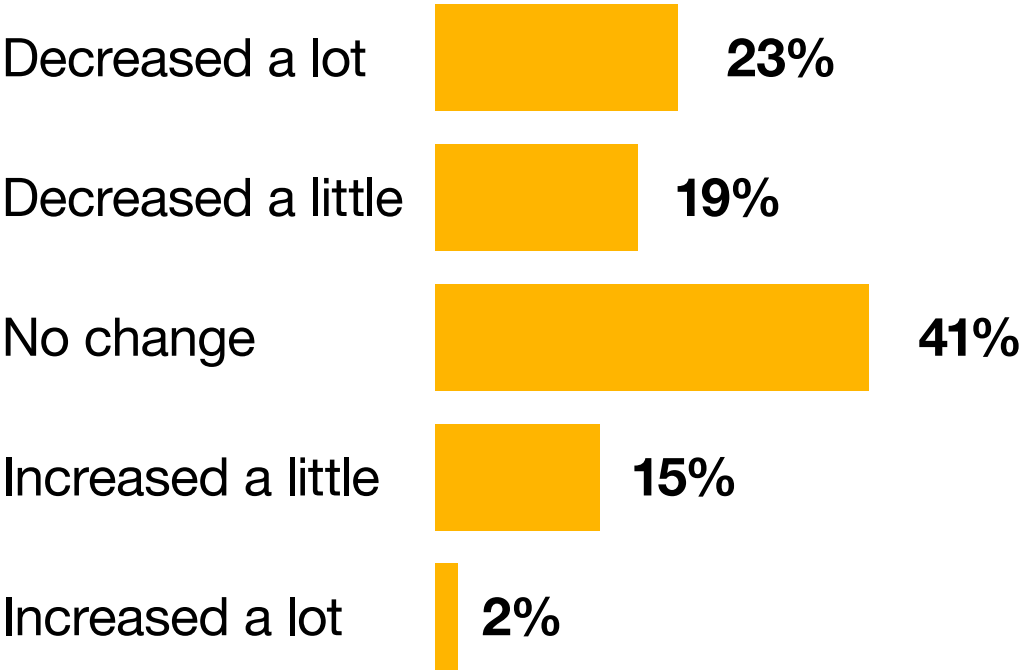
To what extent has your workload related to your art practice changed over the past year?



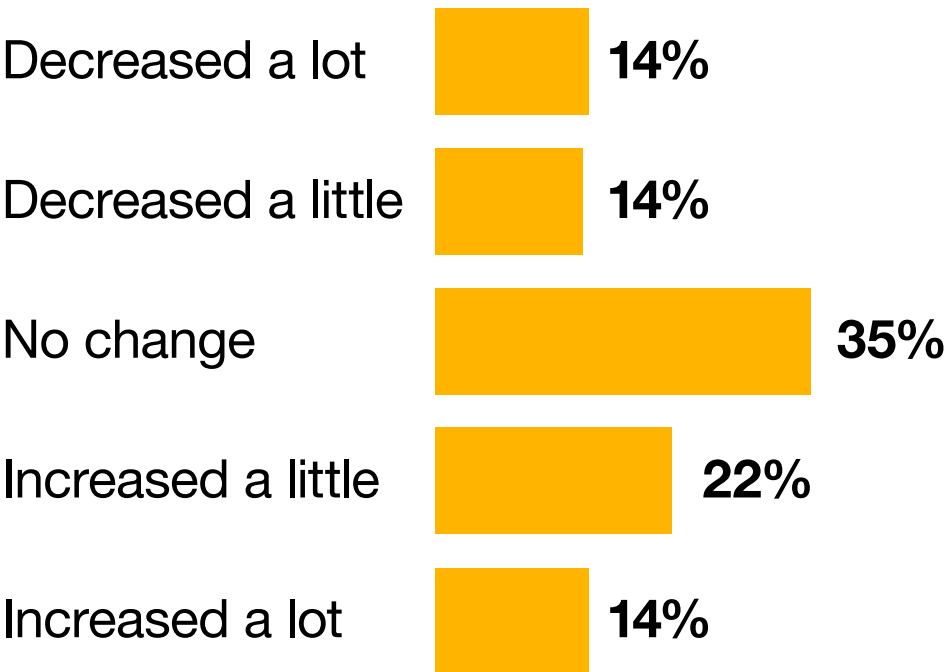
To what extent has your workload outside of your art practice changed over the past year?



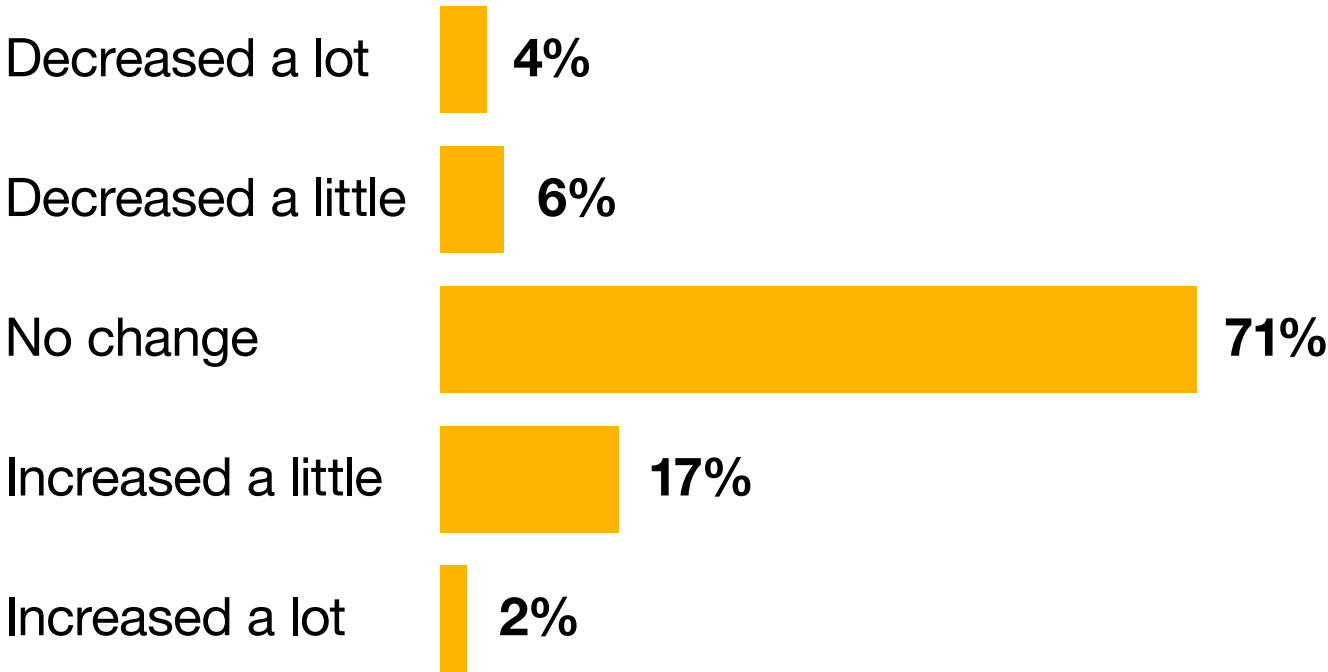
To what extent has income from your art practice (including sales, grants, and fees etc) changed over the past year?



To what extent has income outside of your art practice (including rents, shares income, benefits, and employment etc) changed over the past year?



To what extent has the amount you charge per day (your ‘day rate’) for your work as an artist changed since this time last year?



The variation in responses suggests a turbulent and unpredictable environment, with workloads and incomes fluctuating. Whilst some saw an increase in income, over a third saw their income from their art practice decrease, and over a quarter saw their income outside of art decrease. At the same time, only 20% of respondents had increased their own day rate. Perhaps almost as concerning is that many respondents saw their income across both streams, as well as their day rate, stay the same – in the context of rising inflation, this amounts to a real terms decrease. During periods of economic instability, uncertainty around income from month to month or year to year can increase precarity, and reductions or flattening of income inevitably contributes to financial insecurity.

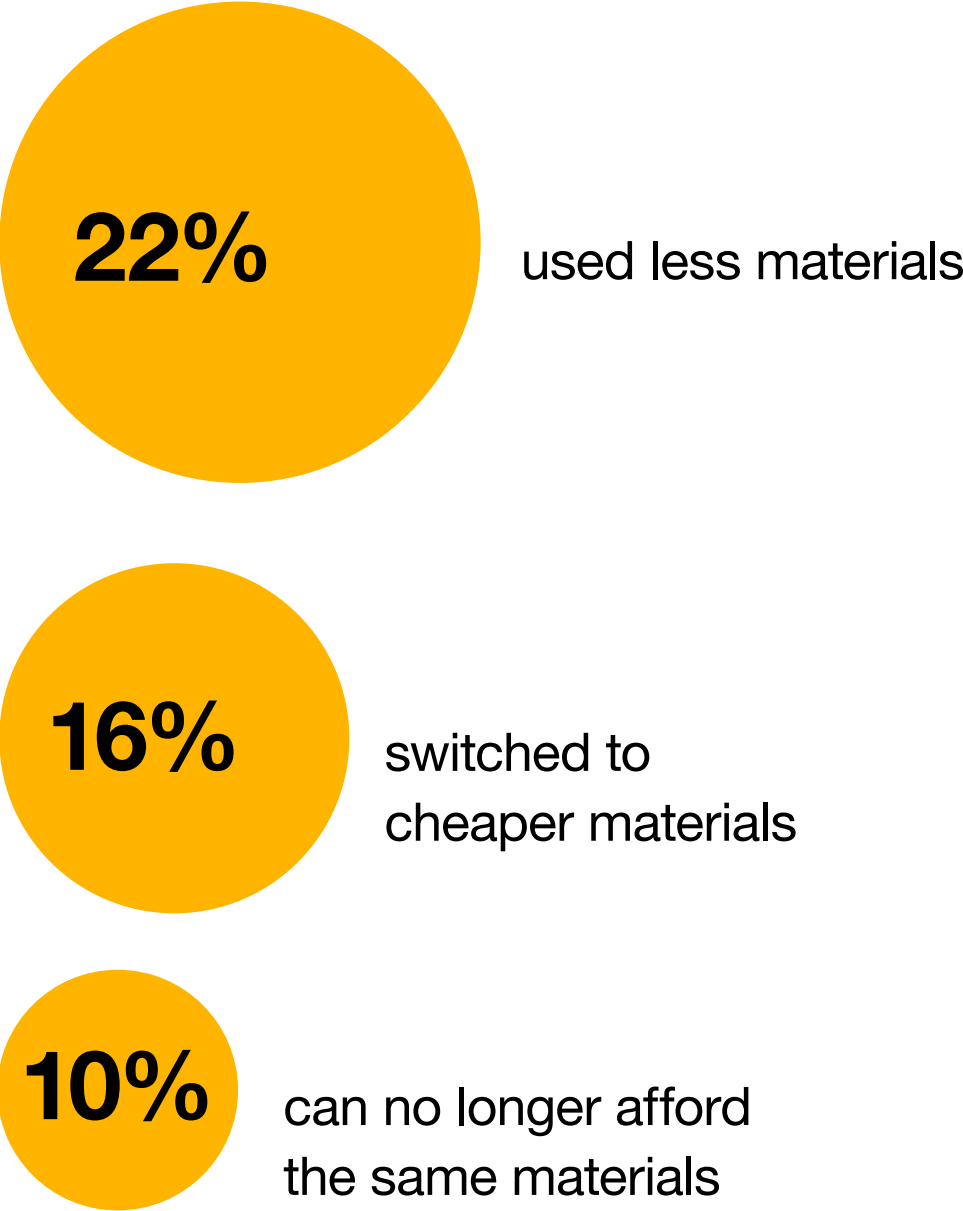
Introduction

Analysis

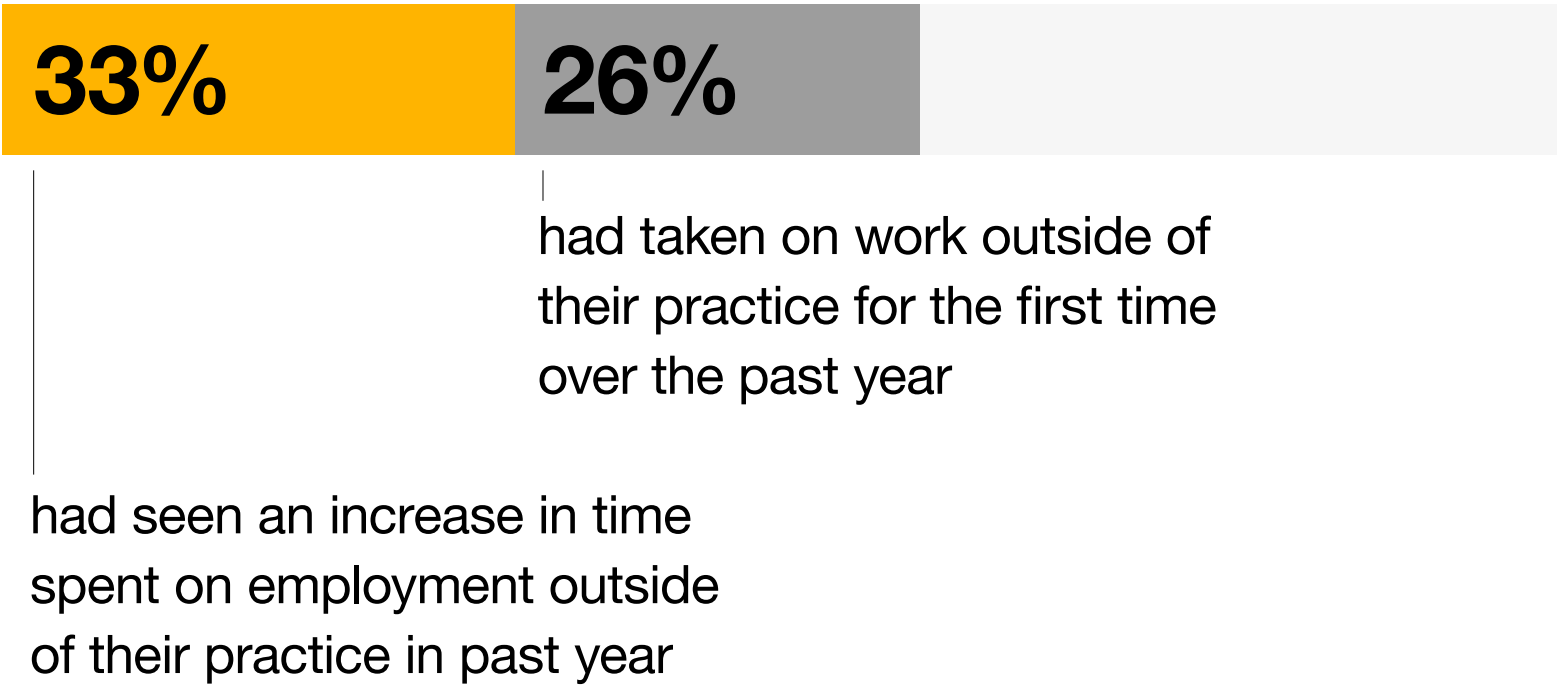
Recommendations

Appendix

When looking specifically at artists' ability to continue their art practice amidst rises in the cost of living, we can see that many artists reduced or changed their use of materials:



As already discussed in this report, many artists take on employment outside of their creative practice to supplement their income. However, in a time of rising costs, the survey found that many artists have been compelled to spend more time doing so, and just over a quarter of respondents had done so for the first time:



Artists having less time to spend on their practice and feeling forced to make changes to their material use due to rising costs inevitably has an impact on their creative freedom and output, and in some cases their ability to be an artist at all.

The unique employment situation of artists can mean that they face bigger challenges during times of economic turmoil. As the cost of living rises, those with the financial means to weather downturns in work and commissions, rises in the price of materials, and periods of precarity, inevitably fare better than artists from lower income backgrounds.

- Introduction
- Analysis**
- Recommendations
- Appendix

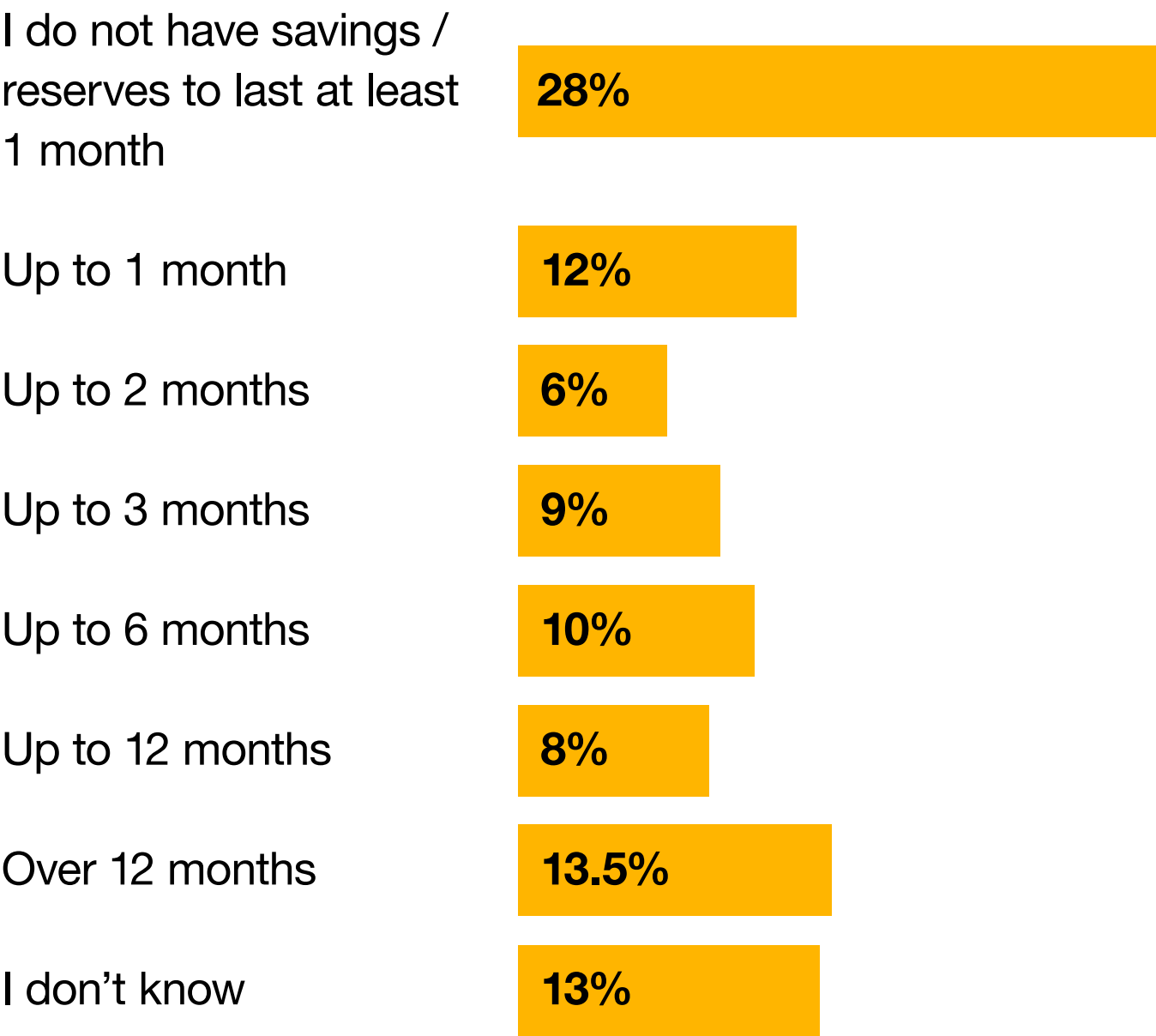
Savings

Savings are a key part of the financial picture for everyone – necessary for saving for future, for big life events like house moves, and for rainy days. When most artists are self-employed, savings can be a lifeline for slow periods or when payment is delayed, or can help with upfront investment in materials and resources. As freelancers largely lack employment benefits such as sick leave, holiday entitlement, and automatic pension contributions, their savings are often relied upon to fill that gap.

There is no hard and fast rule for how much each person should have in savings, however much of the available financial advice today recommends anything between three months and two years.

Yet the survey responses suggest that this may be unrealistic for many artists – over a quarter of respondents did not even have enough savings to last them one month, and only 8% had enough to last them for one year.

How long would your savings last if you suddenly had no work?



- 28% of respondents did not even have enough savings to last them one month.
- Only 8% had enough to last them for up to 12 months.
- 14% had enough for over 12 months.

Without savings, artists (and freelancers more broadly) are left vulnerable to economic shocks or unexpected expenses. This can lead to taking on debt (as seen above, 31% of our sample had done so in the last year), can put housing security at risk, and can make it harder to plan for the future. It can also impact an artist’s practice, leaving them more reliant on work outside of their practice or limiting how much they can invest in new creative work. As already discussed, financial precarity can impact a person’s mental health, leading to feelings of anxiety, depression, and burnout, and focusing on financial worries can stifle creativity and reduce productivity.

- Introduction
- Analysis**
- Recommendations
- Appendix

Barriers to success

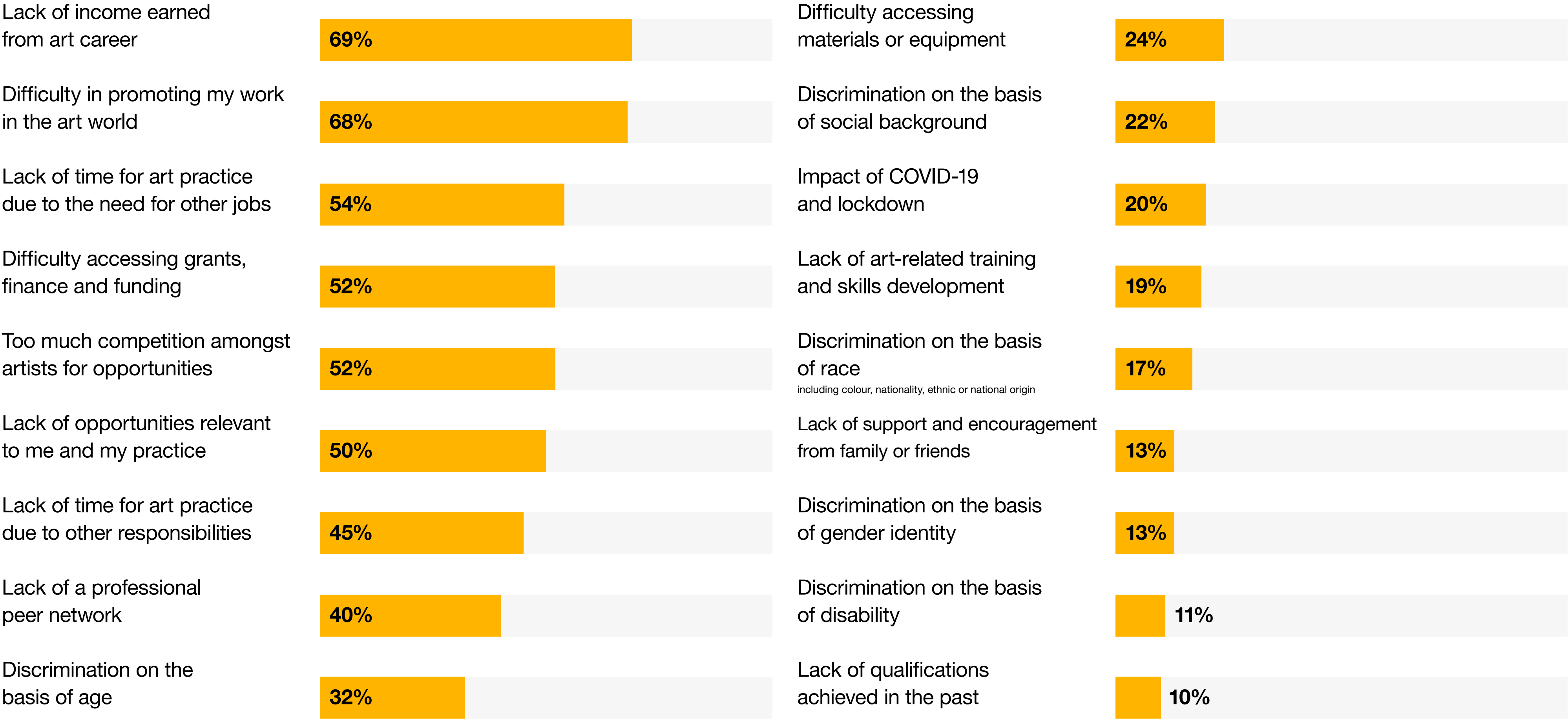
The career path for artists, and creatives more broadly, is rarely linear. Bumps in the road are normal in any career, but the specific barriers faced by artists are often unique, and looking at the respondents’ perceptions of the barriers in their own way can help us to answer the question of who gets to be an artist.

Lack of income is again shown to be a major problem for artists, with 69% of respondents citing this as a barrier. Lack of time to focus on art practice due to need for other jobs and responsibilities is also a clear issue, along with difficulties in accessing grants and funding.

We can also see that many respondents are facing discriminatory barriers, in particular on the basis of age (32%), social background (22%), and ethnicity (17%). People working freelance do not always have access to the same workplace policies, processes, and support as employees, which can leave them less protected from things like discrimination, harassment, and poor treatment. Even where they are entitled to protection, the precarious nature of freelancing can make it harder to access help and support, for fear of retaliation or losing clients or contracts.

- Introduction
- Analysis**
- Recommendations
- Appendix

Would you say any of the below are barriers that have impacted your career in the last year?



7.66% Discrimination on the basis of migration status
4.81% Discrimination on the basis of maternity / paternity / pregnancy
4.81% Discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation
2.85% Discrimination on the basis of religion or belief
1.60% Discrimination on the basis of marriage / civil partnership status
1.07% Discrimination on the basis of gender reassignment

Introduction
Analysis
Recommendations
Appendix

Conclusion

Analysis of the survey results presents a complex and, at times, contradictory picture of who gets to be an artist today.

Interestingly, some of the groups typically under-represented in the creative industries — such as those from ethnic minority backgrounds — were over-represented amongst survey respondents. This may reflect a form of response bias in support of the report’s premise, as those most impacted by the structural challenges explored in this report may be more motivated to share their experiences.

Yet one thing is unequivocal: being an artist is often an incredibly precarious pursuit. Income from creative practice is neither stable nor sufficient for most, and many artists are forced to supplement their earnings through additional work – often unrelated to their practice. A majority of respondents reported not earning regularly from their practice, and many respondents had little to no financial safety net.

The rising cost of living has only intensified this pressure. The data shows that artists are cutting back on materials, turning to food banks, and increasingly relying on other forms of employment simply to get by – all of which chip away at their ability to maintain a sustainable and fulfilling creative practice. The anxiety of ongoing long-term economic uncertainty and the impact of geopolitical turbulence will continue to compound this difficulty.

What emerges is a troubling picture where access to a stable artistic career is closely tied to privilege. Even getting into the arts to begin with is significantly easier if you have attended a fee-paying school and hold a degree. Once there, those with independent wealth or access to financial support from family and friends if needed are far better placed to withstand economic shocks and to sustain their artistic endeavours over time. For others, precarity and exclusion are all too common – and when the chips are down, their artistic practice is the first thing to go.

Ultimately, this report illustrates how financial insecurity, unequal access to creative education, and persistent regional disparities continue to shape — and limit — who is able to comfortably sustain a career as an artist.

These findings underscore the need for policy action:

- to expand access to creative education at all levels;
- to champion the value of the creative sector more broadly; and
- to address precarity and turbulence in self-employment that exist outside of traditional employment formats more generally.

The following section sets out UAL’s policy recommendations in response to these challenges, outlining clear steps that government and policymakers can take to ensure that a creative career is not a privilege for the few, but a real possibility for the many.

- Introduction
- Analysis
- Recommendations**
- Appendix

Recommendations

- Introduction
- Analysis
- Recommendations**
- Appendix

UAL believes that the world needs creativity – and access to creativity should be available to all. We are committed to breaking down the barriers that prevent many people from either entering or thriving in the arts and the wider creative industries. Everyone who wants to be an artist should have the opportunity to become one.

Yet, as this report and many before it show, access to the arts is not currently equal. Systemic inequalities continue to shape who gets to participate, succeed and lead the future of the sector. Tackling these disparities is essential. It requires coordinated action from government, industry, and the education sector to address these deep-rooted inequalities and ensure that talent, passion and potential – not privilege or background – determine who has a place in the creative future.

Below is a set of recommendations that UAL believes would help to make the arts more inclusive and accessible. While we identify several key barriers, further research is needed to fully understand the challenges and to identify the most effective interventions. In particular, this report draws attention to the role of socioeconomic background in shaping access to artistic careers. A deeper exploration is needed into how different characteristics – including race, disability, gender and geography – intersect with economic disadvantage to compound inequality. We know that certain groups are disproportionately affected, and understanding these dynamics is crucial to driving meaningful change.⁶².

- Introduction
- Analysis
- Recommendations**
- Appendix

Creative education and the talent pipeline

Access to the arts begins with universal access to high-quality creative education.

The survey data underpinning this report reinforces what existing research has long shown: that artists are more likely to come from middle class backgrounds, and are disproportionately educated in fee-paying schools in comparison to the general population. This reflects a wider trend in the creative industries, where access and progression are too often shaped by socioeconomic privilege and social or family networks.

To tackle these disparities, we must focus on the talent pipeline – which means reforming our education and skills systems.

Creative education in state schools in England has faced a well-documented and sustained period of decline. Since 2010, entries to creative subjects at GCSE and A Level have dropped significantly⁶³. The introduction of the English Baccalaureate and its integration into accountability frameworks like Progress 8 has pushed creative subjects to the margins. With no creative subjects included in the EBacc, schools are incentivised to deprioritise them in favour of so-called ‘core subjects’. Meanwhile, damaging rhetoric around arts education in recent years has compounded this marginalisation, making creative subjects more vulnerable to cuts – particularly in a challenging funding landscape. In stark contrast, private schools continue to invest in and prioritise creativity and the arts, both in and out of the curriculum offering^{64 65}.

As creative subjects are squeezed out of the curriculum, creativity is increasingly relegated to extracurricular activities. This not only signals that creativity is a lesser priority, but also transfers the financial burden of these activities onto parents – further disadvantaging students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds⁶⁶.

Beyond schools, work needs to be done to ensure that further education options are suitable for creative subjects. Apprenticeships and T Levels have been labelled as “poorly suited” to the nature of creative subjects and industries, where freelance and short-term contracts are the norm⁶⁷. Rigid programme structures and inflexible standards often fail to align with how the sector operates. Many creative businesses are small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and while they may have access to apprenticeship levy funding, they often lack the time or resource to design and deliver apprenticeships.

Introduction
Analysis
Recommendations
Appendix

The wider further education (FE) space has also been destabilised by frequent policy changes in recent years, affecting many creative qualifications. The growing emphasis on externally assessed exams further disadvantages students from underrepresented groups, particularly those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)⁶⁸.

The survey data also highlights the vital role of higher education in an artist’s career, with the vast majority of respondents holding at least an undergraduate degree. Again, this supports broader evidence showing that the creative workforce is highly-skilled, with a greater proportion of degree-educated workers than the national average. However access to higher education remains unequal: students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds less likely to attend, and, when they do, are less likely to finish their course. This further narrows the pipeline into the sector and risks entrenching exclusion.

We are calling on policymakers to:

- Create an education system – from primary through to secondary and tertiary – that values STEM, the arts and humanities in equal measure, and enables and embraces interdisciplinary study and research
- Use the Curriculum and Assessment Review to ensure that creative subjects are a core part of the curriculum for all learners, not just a peripheral ‘nice to have’
- Use the announced Enrichment Framework to address the enrichment gap between students from higher and lower socioeconomic groups
- Ensure that the Growth and Skills Levy addresses the ongoing issues with creative apprenticeships
- Safeguard the availability and diversity of creative qualifications at Level 3
- Secure the future of creative higher education, including a recognition of the high cost of provision

We also urge higher education institutions (including UAL itself) to take meaningful steps to tackle access issues and widen access, and to ensure that students of all backgrounds are supported not only to enter university, but to succeed and thrive once they are there.

Artquest recognises that ongoing professional development is also vital for artists after graduation, as well as for the 15% who enter the profession through routes outside formal higher education. Sustaining a creative career often involves navigating the challenges of balancing artistic practice—which may generate little or no income—with the demands of paid work. Yet over a quarter of artists surveyed (29%) reported receiving no career support at all, and 59% rely primarily on informal peer-to-peer networks. Structured, accessible professional development is therefore essential, not only to bridge the support gap but also to ensure that artists from underrepresented backgrounds can sustain long-term creative careers. Education must be understood as a process of lifelong learning, with professional development opportunities embedded across different career stages. Supporting working artists in this way strengthens the wider creative talent pipeline, ensuring that skills, innovation, and cultural participation continue to flow into and through the sector.

- Introduction
- Analysis
- Recommendations**
- Appendix

Good work agenda

We know that working conditions in the arts can be precarious, and the data in this report confirms that too many artists face a lack of secure income, limited opportunities, and the need to supplement creative practice with other forms of work.

Even when artists are paid for their work, research shows that earnings frequently fall below minimum wage⁶⁹.

While the freelance nature of an artist’s career can offer flexibility, autonomy and creative control, it also comes with significant downsides: including income instability, lack of legal employment protections, and limited access to employment benefits. These issues are compounded by entrenched cultures of unpaid labour, late or low pay, nepotism, and the persistent expectation to work ‘for exposure’ – creating conditions that are often exclusionary and, at times, exploitative.

These challenges hit artists from marginalised backgrounds the hardest. Without financial safety nets or industry connections, they are less able to navigate periods of unpaid work or gain entry to key opportunities. As a result, creative careers too often remain the preserve of those from more privileged socioeconomic backgrounds.

Fair, inclusive and equal access to careers in the arts requires more than just opening the door – it demands a transformation of the working environment itself. Improving pay, conditions, and protections for creative works will be essential in dismantling the systemic and structural inequalities that shape who gets to have, and to sustain, a career as an artist.

Introduction

Analysis

Recommendations

Appendix

UAL urges policymakers to embed a ‘good work’ agenda in the creative industries by:

- Ensuring all artists and creatives are paid a living wage
- Tightening existing laws on internships, enabling a proper ban on unpaid work
- Empowering the new role of a Freelance Champion to take real action to protect freelancers and address the issues of precarity they face
- Guaranteeing that creators are fairly remunerated for use of their work, particularly as technology like artificial intelligence develops

There is also room for improvement when it comes to industry practices, but tackling these issues requires action from the sector itself. UAL continues to advocate for a ‘good work’ agenda in the creative sector, supporting fair pay initiatives such as the Living Wage Foundation and UAL Arts Temps, and is working with our industry partners to encourage good practice and ethical employment, as well as to tackle unfair conditions.

Artquest also recognises structural inequalities are amplified within the art world, and has developed programmes to make the sector more equitable. This includes work addressing the exploitative practice of unpaid internships by providing arts graduates from lower socio-economic backgrounds with structured, high-quality placements paid above the London Living wage in small arts organisations and research projects exploring the barriers that traditional competitive open calls present to marginalised artists, recommending fairer approaches arts organisations can take to select artists to work with.

- Introduction
- Analysis
- Recommendations**
- Appendix

Value of creativity

Many of the barriers faced by artists — including those covered in this report — stem from a fundamental gap in how creativity and the arts are valued and viewed by policymakers and society at large.

Creativity is not a luxury or a ‘nice to have’. It is vital to the UK’s economy, society, and culture. It powers industries, drives innovation, and enriches lives. Research has shown that creativity supports health and wellbeing⁷⁰, builds community pride, and strengthens social cohesion⁷¹. Though not always easy to quantify, the role creativity plays in bringing joy, connection and meaning to millions of people each year is undeniable.

The thriving creative industries are one of the UK’s greatest success stories, and their economic might has been well documented: contributing £124 billion annually to the economy⁷². They are central to the UK’s global influence and reputation, helping to shape how the world sees and engages with us. But creativity’s value extends well beyond economics: it is a critical asset in addressing and overcoming the major challenges of our time, from navigating the impact of emerging technology to tackling the climate emergency. Innovation, adaptability and resilience all depend on creative thinking, and research has found that creative thinking is one of the most sought after skills by employers in the UK and around the world^{73 74}.

Introduction

Analysis

Recommendations

Appendix

To meet these challenges and unlock future opportunities, creativity must be supported to flourish alongside the UK’s other high-growth sectors, such as science and technology.

In June 2025 the UK government published its Industrial Strategy and Creative Industries Sector Plan, outlining its ambition to enhance the UK’s position as a creative superpower and make the country the number one destination worldwide for investment in creativity and innovation by 2035⁷⁵. Visual arts have been highlighted as part of the “frontier industries”; sub-sectors which will be specifically targeted for growth. Delivering on this vision will require a bold and cohesive approach across policy areas – from education and skills, to business, culture, and international trade.

UAL is are calling on policymakers to:

- Work strategically and effectively in partnership with the creative industries and creative education sector to fully realise the value of creativity to the UK and deliver on the Sector Plan’s ambitions

Introduction

Analysis

Recommendations

Appendix

Further inquiry

This report has used data from Artquest’s Applied partnership to consider certain factors relating to the question of ‘who gets to be an artist’, but has also highlighted that there are several areas for further inquiry and research when looking at this topic – particularly regarding the demographic make-up of artists and how different characteristics can intersect to impact an artist’s experience.

The Applied programme has a wealth of data, dating back to its inception in 2017, that could be used for other lines of inquiry or research questions. Artquest works in partnership with organisations in and outside the arts on research and insights projects in support of our mission to make the arts more equitable for all artists. Current main areas of interest include:

- Improving visual artists working conditions, particularly for artists marginalised by the processes and practices of the art world
- Exploring how artists can be matched to work and commissions more equitably
- The changing importance of London for artists, post-COVID and during the ongoing cost of living crisis
- How Arts Council England funded organisations are operating on standstill core funding since 2010

To find out more about these projects visit the [Artquest website](#), or contact Russell Martin, Artquest director, at r.d.martin@arts.ac.uk.

- Introduction
- Analysis
- Recommendations**
- Appendix

Summary

This report puts forward a range of interventions for policymakers, industry leaders, and education providers that would help move us towards a world in which anyone who wants to be an artist, can be.

There are clear socioeconomic divides that impact an artist’s career at present, with those who are independently wealthy or have other financial support being more able to weather the precarity that comes with this path. Addressing this issue requires coordinated action on creative education, working practices in the creative sector, and society-wide recognition of the incredible value of creativity and the arts as a whole.



‘Phantom 2025’, Elena Garcia Sirvent, 2025 BA Fine Art, Central Saint Martins, UAL | Photograph: Paul Cochrane

- Introduction
- Analysis
- Recommendations
- Appendix**

Appendix

Introduction

Analysis

Recommendations

Appendix

Please find all survey questions on the Artquest website.

Bibliography

1

theartmarket.artbasel.com/global-market

2

topuniversities.com/university-subject-rankings/art-design

3

freelance.wearecreative.uk/?utm_campaign=11882544-Manifesto%20Anniversary%202025&utm_source=website#hs_cos_wrapper_widget_1740656528007

4

journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1360780419895291

5

centreforlondon.org/publication/culture-club/

6

dacs.org.uk/news-events/artists-earnings-report-2024

7

britishfuture.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Creating-connections-V3.0-PDF_A.pdf

8

creativehealthtoolkit.org.uk/creative-health-systems/evidence-and-impact

9

culturallearningalliance.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/ImagineNation_The_Case_for_Cultural_Learning.pdf

10

issuu.com/artstudentsunion/docs/craft_your_future_ual_students_views_on_skills?utm_source=website&utm_medium=website&utm_campaign=craftyourfuture

11

pec.ac.uk/state_of_the_nation/arts-cultural-heritage-audiences-and-workforce-2/

12

explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-pupils-and-their-characteristics/2024-25#dataBlock-336e38e2-3bc6-489c-ba3c-e1df4c4b126e-tables

13

ons.gov.uk/methodology/classificationsandstandards/standardoccupationalclassification/soc2010/soc2010volume3thenationalstatisticssocioeconomicclassificationnssecbasedonsoc2010

14

ons.gov.uk/methodology/classificationsandstandards/standardoccupationalclassification/soc2010/soc2010volume3thenationalstatisticssocioeconomicclassificationnssecbasedonsoc2010

15

suttontrust.com/our-research/a-class-act/

16

creativeaccess.org.uk/app/uploads/2024/07/the-class-ceiling-in-the-creative-industries-report-2024.pdf

17

pec.ac.uk/research_report_entr/getting-in-and-getting-on-class-participation-and-job-quality-in-the-uks-creative-industries/

18

theguardian.com/politics/2025/mar/09/house-of-lords-in-charts-age-gender-education

19

sra.org.uk/sra/equality-diversity/diversity-profession/diverse-legal-profession/

20

culturallearningalliance.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/CLA-2025-Report-Card_AW.pdf

21

culturallearningalliance.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/CLA-2025-Report-Card_AW.pdf

22

epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/EC-and-outcomes-final-1.pdf

23

suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/A-Class-Act-1.pdf

24

ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/educationandchildcare/bulletins/educationenglandandwales/census2021#:~:text=More%20than%203%20in%2010,%25%2C%20or%2016.4%20million%20people.

25

scotlandscensus.gov.uk/census-results/at-a-glance/education/

26

nisra.gov.uk/publications/highest-qualification-level-and-participation-education-and-training-2022

27

suttontrust.com/our-research/a-class-act/

28

gov.uk/government/statistics/economic-estimates-employment-in-dcms-sectors-april-2023-to-march-2024

29

officeforstudents.org.uk/for-providers/equality-of-opportunity/our-approach-to-equality-of-opportunity/

30

explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/widening-participation-in-higher-education/2022-23

31

suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/A-Class-Act-1.pdf

32

pec.ac.uk/state_of_the_nation/geographies-of-creativity/

33

tbamf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/British-Art-Market-2023-Final-Low-Res-FINAL.pdf

Introduction
Analysis
Recommendations
Appendix

34 london.gov.uk/mayor-invest-more-ps10m-boost-creative-industries-and-add-more-ps25bn-londons-economy

35 ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/bulletins/housingaffordabilityinenglandandwales/2024#local-authority-housing-affordability-analysis

36 [7608628.fs1.hubspotusercontent-na1.net/hubfs/7608628/Reports/CUK-276%20-%20Perception%20and%20Potential-%20Public%20Attitudes%20Towards%20Creativity%20in%20the%20UK-v7%20\(1\).pdf](https://7608628.fs1.hubspotusercontent-na1.net/hubfs/7608628/Reports/CUK-276%20-%20Perception%20and%20Potential-%20Public%20Attitudes%20Towards%20Creativity%20in%20the%20UK-v7%20(1).pdf)

37 ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthandwellbeing/bulletins/disabilityenglandandwales/census2021

38 scotlandscensus.gov.uk/2022-reports/scotland-s-census-2022-health-disability-and-unpaid-care/

39 nisra.gov.uk/publications/census-2021-main-statistics-health-disability-and-unpaid-care-tables

40 scope.org.uk/media/disability-facts-figures

41 togethertrust.org.uk/news/explaining-disability-employment-gap

42 scope.org.uk/campaigns/disability-price-tag

43 ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/populationandhouseholdestimatesenglandandwales/census2021

44 datavis.nisra.gov.uk/census/census-2021-population-and-household-estimates-for-northern-ireland-statistical-bulletin-24-may-2022.html#:~:text=The%20population%20comprised%20967%2C000%20females%20and%20936%2C200%20males%2C,population%20%281%2C876%2C800%20people%29%20live%20in%20768%2C900%20private%20households.

45 scotlandscensus.gov.uk/census-results/at-a-glance/population/#:~:text=There%20were%202%2C728%2C000%20women%20in%20Scotland%20and%202%2C567%2C400,a%20decrease%20of%205%20percentage%20points%20since%202001.

46 pec.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Arts-Culture-and-Heritage-Audiences-and-Workforce-Creative-PEC-State-of-the-Nation-report-May-2024.pdf

47 google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&opi=89978449&url=assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5f494064e90e071c78ff79ad/Attitudes_towards_STEM_subjects_by_gender_at_KS4.pdf&ved=2a-hUKEwi48uz2ipePAxWpUkEAHaFGLuQQFnoECDYQAQ&usg=AOvVaw079LNoKCtYLMNQ0Vu1XV

48 womeninstem.co.uk/campaign/breaking-stereotypes/

49 pec.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Arts-Culture-and-Heritage-Audiences-and-Workforce-Creative-PEC-State-of-the-Nation-report-May-2024.pdf

50 tuc.org.uk/news/women-7-times-more-likely-men-be-out-work-due-caring-commitments

51 kcl.ac.uk/news/new-report-reveals-stark-gender-disparity-in-the-visual-arts

52 ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/ethnicity/bulletins/ethnicgroupenglandandwales/census2021

53 scotlandscensus.gov.uk/2022-reports/scotland-s-census-2022-ethnic-group-national-identity-language-and-religion/#section3

54 www.nisra.gov.uk/system/files/statistics/census-2021-main-statistics-for-northern-ireland-phase-1-statistical-bulletin-ethnic-group.pdf

55 pec.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Arts-Culture-and-Heritage-Audiences-and-Workforce-Creative-PEC-State-of-the-Nation-report-May-2024.pdf

56 trustforlondon.org.uk/data/geography-population/

57 pec.ac.uk/state_of_the_nation/arts-cultural-heritage-audiences-and-workforce-2/

58 [creativeindustriesfederation.com/sites/default/files/2017-06/30183-CIF%20Access%20&%20Diversity%20Booklet_A4_Web%20\(1\)\(1\).pdf](https://creativeindustriesfederation.com/sites/default/files/2017-06/30183-CIF%20Access%20&%20Diversity%20Booklet_A4_Web%20(1)(1).pdf)

59 cep.lse.ac.uk/pubs/download/cepcovid-19-030.pdf

60 sheffield.ac.uk/city-region/enhancing-cultural-vibrancy/covid-research/freelancers

61 pec.ac.uk/blog_entries/how-covid-19-is-impacting-the-cultural-sector-with-the-loss-of-55-000-jobs-in-the-arts/#entry:2100:url

62 commonslibrary.parliament.uk/income-inequality-by-ethnic-group

63 culturallearningalliance.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/CLA-2025-Report-Card_AW.pdf

64 tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10286632.2022.2058497

65 culturallearningalliance.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/CLA-2025-Report-Card_AW.pdf

66 culturallearningalliance.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/CLA-2025-Report-Card_AW.pdf

67 publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld5803/ldselect/ldcomm/125/12502.htm

68 pec.ac.uk/news_entries/new-research-points-to-a-looming-creative-economy-skills-shortage-across-the-uk/

69 artistsunionengland.org.uk/from-hand-to-mouth-to-bread-and-roses

70 whatworkswellbeing.org/blog/how-and-why-does-creativity-support-wellbeing-new-learning/

71 arts.ac.uk/about-ual/press-office/stories/harnessing-creativity-to-build-cohesive-communities-new-research

72 assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/685943ddb328f1ba50f3cf15/industrial_strategy_creative_industries_sector_plan.pdf

73 reports.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Future_of_Jobs_Report_2025.pdf

74 universitiesuk.ac.uk/latest/news/creativity-and-critical-thinking-craved

75 assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/685943ddb328f1ba50f3cf15/industrial_strategy_creative_industries_sector_plan.pdf

ual:

ARTQUEST



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

Social Purpose Lab
Research, Knowledge Exchange and Enterprise
University of the Arts London

socialpurposelab@arts.ac.uk
arts.ac.uk/about-ual/social-purpose

Artquest
artquest.org.uk

camberwell college of arts	central saint martins	chelsea college of arts	london college of communication	london college of fashion	wimbledon college of arts
-------------------------------	--------------------------	----------------------------	------------------------------------	------------------------------	------------------------------

