

Widening The Lens

Social inequality and arts participation



Acknowledgements

The Australia Council for the Arts proudly acknowledges all First Nations peoples and their rich culture of the country we now call Australia. We pay respect to Elders past and present. We acknowledge First Nations peoples as Australia's First Peoples and as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters on which we live. We recognise and value the ongoing contribution of First Nations peoples and communities to Australian life, and how this continuation of 75,000 years of unbroken storytelling enriches us. We embrace the spirit of reconciliation, working towards ensuring an equal voice and the equality of outcomes in all aspects of our society.

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Foreword

As we navigate the emerging socio-economic stresses following the COVID-19 pandemic, arts, culture and creativity are more important than ever – to our productivity, prosperity and wellbeing.

Creativity is a resource that can power our social, cultural and economic success, but increasing inflation and cost of living pressures are exacerbating barriers to arts participation. Financial reasons have now overtaken the COVID-19 virus as the main barrier to attending arts and cultural events, as we saw in the final stages of the 2022 Audience Outlook Monitor which tracked audience sentiment on attending events in the context of the pandemic.

Barriers to equity and creative participation hold us back from drawing on our full range of talent and experiences. There is a continuing need to remove systemic barriers and centre equity in the arts and cultural sector – including in leadership and arts practice – to ensure an industry in which everyone can participate and thrive. The Australia Council is committed to improving equity of access for audiences, and opportunity for artists and creative workers.

This report aims to identify the ways in which socio-economic inequalities impact Australians' access to arts and culture. It sits within a body of Australia Council research on arts participation and diversity, adding the consideration of economic and educational background to audiences' capacity to engage with the arts.

In particular, this research complements our recent report, *Towards Equity: A research overview of diversity in Australia's arts and cultural sector*, which examined the relationship between factors such as gender, age, cultural background, disability and geographical position, and arts engagement. Together, these projects establish significant baselines for tracking access to arts and culture and provide a framework for future research in this area.

Important work is being done across the sector to address systemic barriers and build equity and social cohesion through the power of creativity. This activity builds on decades of work of committed artists and creative workers, embracing difference and bridging social divides through arts and culture. Recognising the urgency of this work, the Australian Government's national cultural policy for the next five years, *Revive*, is underpinned by a commitment to drive connection and access to creative work.

This report, along with the wider body of research it sits within, will be instrumental in informing the Australia Council's work and broader sector activities and strategies towards achieving creative participation equity. To unleash the full potential of creativity, every Australian must have equitable access to arts and culture.



Adrian Collette AM
Chief Executive Officer
Australia Council for the Arts

Executive summary

Cultural participation is a human right, and every Australian has the right to participate in the cultural life of the nation. However, socio-economic disadvantage and inequalities in Australian society create systemic barriers, preventing equitable access to arts and culture.

Widening The Lens: Social inequality and arts participation provides a picture of the socio-economic factors that shape people's engagement with arts and culture. Analysing data from the Australian Consortium for Social and Political Research Incorporated's (ACSPRI) 2019 Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA), it identifies the ways in which income, education, occupation, geography, self-identified class and trust in society interact with cultural participation. Cultural participation is defined here as reading for pleasure, listening to music, making art and attending arts events and venues.

Widening The Lens was prepared by the Australia Council for the Arts with support from the News and Media Research Centre at the University of Canberra. In partnership with the University of Canberra and RMIT, further insights from ACSPRI's 2019 AuSSA will be explored and published across the course of 2023.

Main findings

- **Almost every respondent – 96% – identified that they were engaging with the arts**, either by reading for pleasure, listening to music, attending arts and cultural events and venues, or by making art themselves. This insight aligns with the findings from the Australia Council's National Arts Participation Survey which indicates 98% of Australians engaged with the arts.¹
- **Lack of interest is the most commonly cited reason for not engaging in the arts**. 'Because I'm not really interested', was the most frequently chosen main reason for not participating across each type of creative activity. This finding is contextualised by other research that suggests Australians may be socially conditioned to see 'the arts' as a specialised pursuit, even while we have high rates of participation in cultural activity.²

¹ Australia Council 2020, *Creating Our Future: Results of the National Arts Participations Survey*.

² Australia Council 2020, *Creating Our Future: Results of the National Arts Participations Survey*. Fielding K, Trembath JL 2020, *A View From Middle Australia: Perceptions of arts, culture and creativity*, produced by A New Approach think tank with lead delivery partner the Australian Academy of the Humanities, Canberra.

- **Cost and time are also key barriers to engaging with the arts.** The second most common reasons for not participating in the arts were ‘because it’s difficult to find the time’ and ‘because it’s too expensive’.
- **A person’s level of arts and cultural engagement increases with higher levels of education.** Findings show those with no post-school qualifications had lower levels of participation across each type of creative activity. Those with university qualifications had the highest levels of participation.
- **People in occupations that are generally associated with using more skills, and more complex skills (requiring more formal education or professional training), have stronger rates of arts and cultural participation.** These occupations are usually understood to be of higher status or higher socio-economic positions.
- **People with greater household incomes have stronger rates of participation across all arts activities.** Low-income respondents had lower rates of attendance, creation and reading, and were more likely to select ‘because it is too expensive’ as their main reason for not attending.³ Making ends meet is also an important condition for attending arts events or venues and for participating in arts and cultural activities.
- **Those who self-identify as ‘lower class’ or ‘working class’ have significantly lower participation rates across all four creative activity types.** Those who self-identify as ‘upper-middle’ and ‘upper-class’ have significantly higher rates of arts participation.
- **Inner-city dwellers are more likely to participate in arts and cultural activities** than those living in suburbs or regional areas. Almost four out of five respondents living in big cities attend arts events or venues (78%), compared to 70% of respondents who live in outer city suburbs or outskirts, and just over half (54%) who live in regional areas. Listening however was equally popular regardless of region, with 94% of city dwellers and 91% of regional respondents reporting that they listened to music.
- **Those who trust other people are more active in arts participation,** particularly in attending or creating.

3 20% of the low-income group chose this answer, as compared to 12% overall.

Introduction

Creativity connects us – to ideas, to each other, to new perspectives and to the world. Engagement in arts and cultural activities is proven to improve quality of life in myriad ways, including addressing loneliness, mental health and ageing,⁴ decreasing anxiety and depression and increasing wellbeing and social inclusion.⁵

Creativity enables adaptability, experimentation and innovative thinking in an increasingly automated world. It is key to the 21st century professional skillset and research repeatedly identifies creative skills as essential in generating a resilient labour force.⁶

In an ever more polarised social landscape, arts and cultural activities build empathy and human connection. They have the capability to address systemic barriers and build equity and social cohesion in our communities.

Every Australian has the right to participate in the cultural life of the nation and experience the benefits of creativity, no matter their socio-economic background. However, due to socio-economic inequalities, not every Australian is granted the same access to arts and culture.

In recent years, Australia's socio-economic landscape has become more complex. Rising inflation, the surge of precarious work, cost-of-living pressures and other economic concerns following the COVID-19 pandemic are threatening to entrench a gap between rich and poor.

To experience the full potential of arts, culture and creativity – in our daily lives, communities and economy – there is a need to address barriers that hinder access to creativity. Underpinned by a commitment to drive connection and access to creative work, the Australian Government's national cultural policy, *Revive*, recognises the urgency to tackle systemic barriers in our cultural landscape.

4 All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing 2017, *Creative Health: The arts for health and wellbeing*.

5 Slawson N 2017, 'It's Time to Recognise the Contribution Arts Can Make to Health and Wellbeing,' *The Guardian*, 11 October.

6 World Economic Forum 2016, *New Vision for Education: Fostering social and emotional learning through technology*. Easton E and Djumalieva J 2018, *Creativity and the Future of Skills*. Cunningham S, Theilacker M, Gahan P, Callan V and Rainnie A 2016, *Skills and Capabilities for Australian Enterprise Innovation*, Australian Council of Learned Academies.

About this report

Widening The Lens provides a picture of the socio-economic characteristics of Australians' engagement with the arts by identifying the ways in which income, education, occupation, geography self-identified class and trust in society impact cultural participation.

It analyses data on arts engagement from the Australian Consortium for Social and Political Research Incorporated's (ACSPRI) 2019 Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA), and situates these findings within other research on arts participation and social inequality. More details on the AuSSA are given below.

This report has been prepared with analytical support from the News and Media Research Centre at the University of Canberra. Throughout the course of 2023, we will explore further insights from ACSPRI's 2019 AuSSA on how income, education and occupation impact cultural participation. This work will be conducted in partnership with the University of Canberra and RMIT and will be published in a series of fact sheets across the year.

Context

The Australia Council supports and conducts a body of research that investigates the relationship between diversity and attitudes towards and engagement with the arts. This research seeks to understand who has access to arts and culture and why. To date, this work has primarily focused on the relationship between factors such as gender, age, cultural background, disability and geographical position, and engagement with the arts.

In 2020, the Australia Council published *Creating Our Future: Results of the National Arts Participation Survey*, the fourth study in the landmark series that explores Australians' engagement with and attitudes towards the arts.

Findings from the 2019 National Arts Participation Survey, published in *Creating Our Future*, show that nearly every Australian – 98% of us – engages with the arts in some way, whether it be listening to music, reading, engaging online, attending arts events or engaging with the arts of our cultural background.⁷

However, the results from the 2019 National Arts Participation Survey highlighted that socio-economic inequalities remain in Australians' engagement with the arts. Findings show that arts engagement decreases with lower household income and education;⁸ cost and location are the main barriers to arts attendance; and while digital technology has made the arts more accessible, Australians want public or private investment in arts and creativity to prioritise the availability of free or low-cost arts events.⁹

Results also showed a slight increase in the proportion of Australians who are feeling disconnected from the arts, with almost three in ten agreeing that 'the arts are not really for people like me' (29% up from 26% in 2016).

In 2020 the Australia Council published *Towards Equity: A research overview of diversity in Australia's arts and cultural sector*. Contributing to the Australia Council's evidence base and commitments to centring equity in our work, the report brought together data and

7 Australia Council 2020, *Creating Our Future: Results of the National Arts Participations Survey*.

8 Four in five Australians in the highest household income bracket (more than \$200,000) attend arts events and festivals (77%), compared to half of those on a household income of under \$40,000 (52%), and over three quarters of those with a university degree or post-graduate qualification attend arts events and festivals (79%), compared to 62% of respondents with a lower level of education. Australia Council 2020, *Creating Our Future: Results of the National Arts Participations Survey*.

9 Australia Council 2020, *Creating Our Future: Results of the National Arts Participations Survey*.

research on representation within the arts and cultural sector and engagement with the arts in Australia. It aimed to inform future data collection, research, discussion and action to achieve equity and vibrancy in our arts and culture.

While *Towards Equity* focused on First Nations people, age, cultural background, disability, gender, LGBTIQ+ people and geography, there remained a need to take a closer look at the socio-economic factors that shape people's engagement with arts and culture, including education, occupation and income, and self-perceptions of class.

Widening The Lens seeks to identify the ways in which income, education, occupation geography, trust in society and self-identified class impact cultural participation.

To further our understanding of who in Australia has access to arts and culture, and why, and to identify what measures can be taken in the Australia Council's work to address the full range of systemic barriers hindering access to creativity, we will continue to build on this body of research.

In 2023, the Australia Council will publish results from the next National Arts Participation Survey, which was conducted in 2022. Preliminary findings show that arts engagement continues to decrease with lower household income and education. Cost and location also remain key barriers to attending arts events.

Results from the October 2022 Audience Outlook Monitor – a project on which the Australia Council partners with Patternmakers and WolfBrown to pulse check audience behaviours and sentiments – highlighted financial reasons had overtaken the COVID-19 virus as the main barrier to attending arts and cultural events.¹⁰ Findings from the April 2023 Audience Outlook Monitor highlight economic uncertainty is taking root in the post-pandemic context, with the heightened cost-of-living pressures impacting consumer confidence around the country.¹¹ Across 2023, the Audience Outlook Monitor will consider economic pressures affecting arts attendance.

The AuSSA

The Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA) is an annual national survey, which generates Australia's main source of data for the study of the social attitudes, beliefs, and opinions of Australians.¹² AuSSA is overseen by the Australian Consortium for Social and Political Research Incorporated (ACSPRI), a consortium of universities and government agencies, established in 1976 to support and promote social science. The Australia Council is a member of ACSPRI.

Each year the survey includes questions that explore a specific topic alongside demographic questions that enable comparisons over time and internationally. ACSPRI member organisations can also fund their own questions to feature in the survey.

In 2019, the topic for AuSSA was social inequality. The survey asked a range of questions designed to explore respondents' views on the overall fairness of society and their place within it. The survey also asked for demographic information such as age, income and occupation, living situation and education level.

10 Patternmakers 2022, *Audience Outlook Monitor: Live Attendance Update fact sheet, October 2022*, Patternmakers and WolfBrown.

11 Patternmakers 2023, *Audience Outlook Monitor: How rising inflation is impacting audiences, April 2023*, Australia Council.

12 ACSPRI, *The Australian Survey of Social Attitudes*, acsprri.org.au/aussa viewed 20 February 2023.

The 2019 AuSSA offered an opportunity to consider the connection between arts participation and social background and attitudes. The dataset from AuSSA allowed the Australia Council to focus on socio-economic dimensions and attitudes, rather than purely demographics such as gender, age, cultural background or geographic location.

The Australia Council added four questions to the 2019 AuSSA, aligned with those from the National Arts Participation Survey, and making use of the wider survey data while tailoring the research to the Australia Council's research needs and strategic priorities. These questions invited respondents to say whether they had or had not participated in four types of arts activities, and to provide one main reason why or why not, see 'Arts participation questions and response options' below.

Undertaken in 2019, this AuSSA survey collected data before the disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic. While it is important to update this research over time, the timing of this survey has the benefit of stepping clear of the event cancellations and uncertainty that characterised 2020–22, providing a longer-range view on the relationship between social background and arts and cultural participation in Australia.

Arts participation questions and response options

Have you done any of these activities over the past year? Why or why not?

1. Went to: live music (eg, music or community venue, concert, club, pub), art exhibition, performance, festival or other arts venue or event?
2. Made art such as painting or pottery, creative writing or theatre, played music, sang or danced (eg, social dance, community or cultural activity, classes or performance)?
3. Listened to music (eg, streaming, CDs, radio/TV)?
4. Read a book, e-book, poetry or graphic novel (but not for study or work)?¹³

Respondents could select one answer for each of the four arts activities:

1. Yes, because it helps me to understand other perspectives and cultures
2. Yes, because it helps me socialise and connect with others
3. Yes, because it makes me happy and/or healthy
4. Yes, because it helps me with my job/to get a job
5. Yes, because it helps me express myself
6. Yes, because it helps me to become immersed in another world
7. No, because it's difficult to find the time
8. No, because it's too expensive
9. No, because it's not for people like me
10. No, because I'm not really interested
11. No, because there is a lack of/limited opportunities
12. No, because of disability and/or mental or physical illness

¹³ For brevity, these categories will be referred to as: 1. 'attend', 2. 'create', 3. 'listen' and 4. 'read'.

Sample and methodology

A random sample of 5,000 people were selected from the Australian Electoral Roll and invited to participate in the AuSSA. They were subsequently sent the questionnaire booklet and a pre-paid return envelope, which was followed up with up to three reminder letters for those who had not returned their booklet.

The sample size achieved was 1,089. Older age groups were overrepresented, and so the data was weighted to bring it in to line with 2016 census distribution for gender, age and employment status.

The 2019 AuSSA was largely completed before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, and so this data does not reflect the significant impacts of this period.¹⁴

Details of the methodology are in Appendix 1.

Other research on social inequality and arts participation

The relationship between cultural participation and socio-economic dimensions is a well examined topic in international and local research settings.

Arts councils around the world administer audience participation surveys that explore the relationship between income, education and occupation and creative engagement. For example, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Survey of Public Participation in the Arts records the ways Americans engage with the arts, and where and why they participate. The survey illustrates the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of who participates in arts activities.

Creative NZ, the arts council of New Zealand, have published insights on New Zealanders' relationship with arts and culture every three years since 2011. The United Kingdom's Taking Part survey collects data on how and which adults and children engage with the digital, culture, media and sport sectors. In addition, the National Arts Council Singapore's biannual Population Survey of the Arts provides a comprehensive overview of who is or isn't engaging with the arts.

Academic literature has also explored the relationship between cultural participation and socio-economic characteristics. Such literature includes Western Sydney University's 'Australian Cultural Fields' project which assesses the influence of transnationalism, digitalisation, migration and multiculturalism, and the distinctive presence of Indigenous culture, on the relations between culture, class, gender, ethnicity and nation.¹⁵ *Culture is Bad for You: Inequality in the cultural and creative industries* by Orian Brook, Dave O'Brien and Mark Taylor examines the intersection between race, class and gender as it relates to access to and inclusion in arts and culture.¹⁶

Some of this research and literature is referenced throughout this report. The Australia Council's work on diversity and arts participation aims to add to this field of knowledge.

14 For analysis of the impact of COVID-19 on arts participation see Australia Council 2022, *Impacts of COVID-19 on the Cultural and Creative Industries*.

15 Bennett T, Carter D, Gayo M, Kelly M, Noble G (eds) 2020, *Fields, Capital, Habitus: Australian culture, inequities and social divisions*.

16 Brook O, O'Brien D, Taylor M 2020, *Culture Is Bad For You: Inequality in the cultural and creative industries*.

Overall arts participation

The 2019 AuSSA found high levels of arts participation: 96% of people who answered the arts questions said they participated in at least one of the four categories during the previous year. This demonstrates that the arts are part of the lives of most Australians and supports the findings from the 2019 National Arts Participation Survey, which found that 98% of Australians engaged in the arts.¹⁷

There is, however, significant variation in participation levels by type of arts activity. See Figure 1 below.

Listening to music was the most popular activity: 93% of people said they listened to music. Reading was the next most popular activity, with three quarters of respondents saying they read (not for study or work). Almost two thirds of people attend arts events or venues. The category with the lowest level of participation, but still including almost half of those surveyed, was creating art, which includes painting, writing, playing music, singing, or dancing.

Figure 1: Arts participation by activity type

	AuSSA 2019	NAPS 2019
Attend arts events or venues	64%	68%
Create art	47%	45%
Listen to music	93%	92%
Read (not for study or work)	75%	72%

These headlines are broadly similar to the participation rates found in the 2019 National Arts Participation Survey, where 92% of respondents reported listening to music, 72% read books, 68% attended live arts events and 45% participated creatively.¹⁸

¹⁷ Australia Council 2020, *Creating Our Future: Results of the National Arts Participations Survey*.

¹⁸ As above.

Motivations and barriers

ACSPRI's 2019 AuSSA survey invited respondents to choose one of 12 options to indicate their main reason why they did or did not participate in each arts activity. These options are listed in figure 2 below. As each respondent was only able to select one option for each arts activity, the results reflect only their main reason for participating/not participating.

Each individual's motivations may have been more complex, made up of a bundle of multiple factors including some not listed as options. However, the 12 options gave a variety of factors to choose from and most survey participants were able to identify their main motivation.

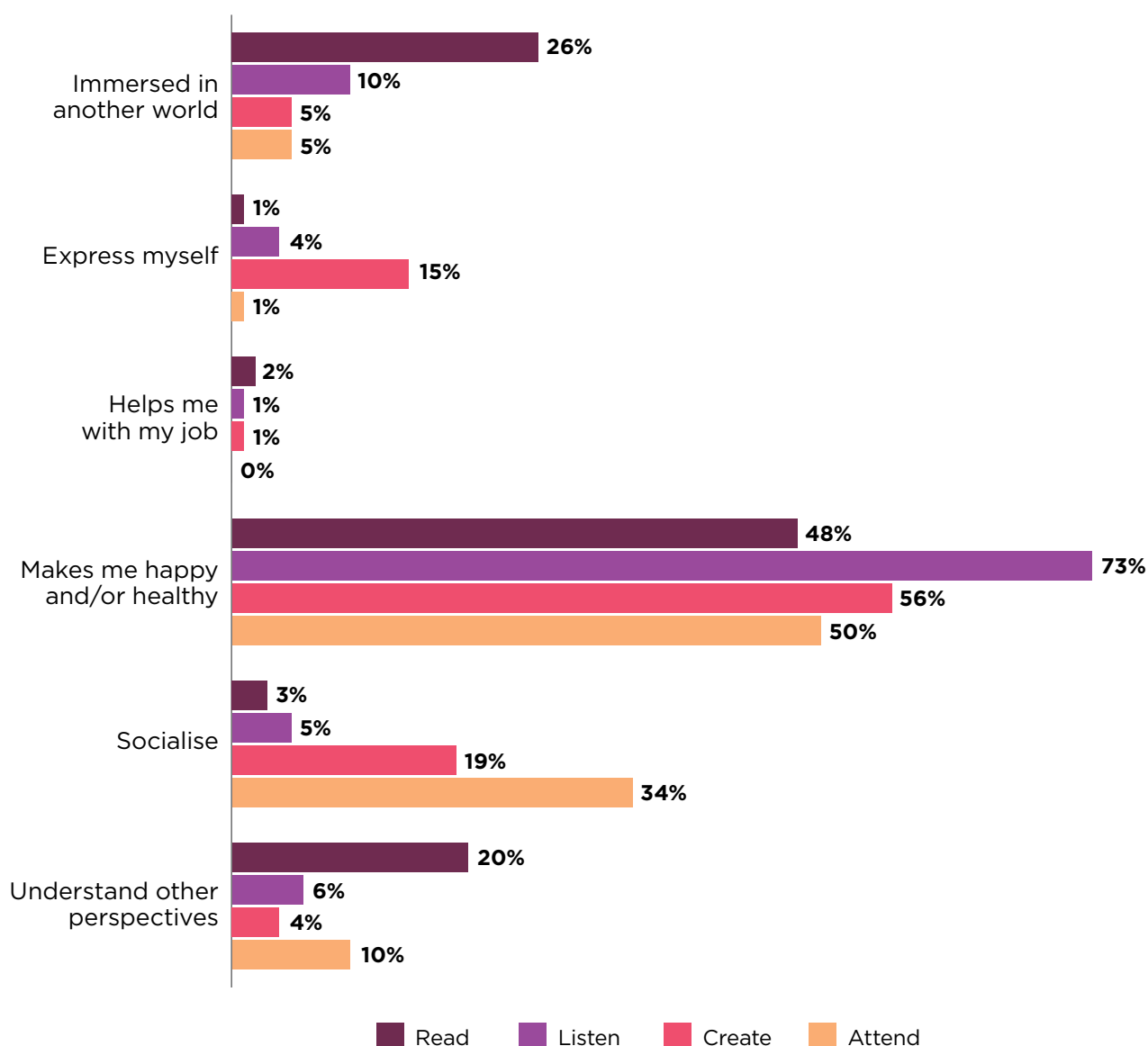
Figure 2: Options for main reason for participating or not in arts activity

1. Yes, because it helps me to understand other perspectives and cultures
2. Yes, because it helps me socialise and connect with others
3. Yes, because it makes me happy and/or healthier
4. Yes, because it helps me with my job/to get a job
5. Yes, because it helps me to express myself
6. Yes, because it helps me to become immersed in another world
7. No, because it's difficult to find the time
8. No, because it's too expensive
9. No, because it's not for people like me
10. No, because I'm not really interested
11. No, because there is a lack of/limited opportunities
12. No, because of disability and/or mental or physical illness

The most frequently chosen main motivation for participating was consistent across all four arts activities: 'because it makes me happy and/or healthy'. 73% of respondents selected this as their motivation for listening to music, 56% for creating, 50% for attending arts events and venues, 48% for reading. See Figure 3.

The second most frequently chosen reasons for attending and creating was 'because it helps me socialise and connect with others' (with 34% of people selecting this as their main reason for attending arts events and venues and 19% for creating). On the other hand, the second most frequently chosen reasons for listening and reading was 'because it helps me to become immersed in another world' (with 26% of respondents selecting this motivation for reading and 10% for listening to music).

Figure 3: Main motivations for participation by arts activity (%)



[Base: Those who participate in attending (n=652), creating (n=476), listening (n=945) and reading (n=765)]

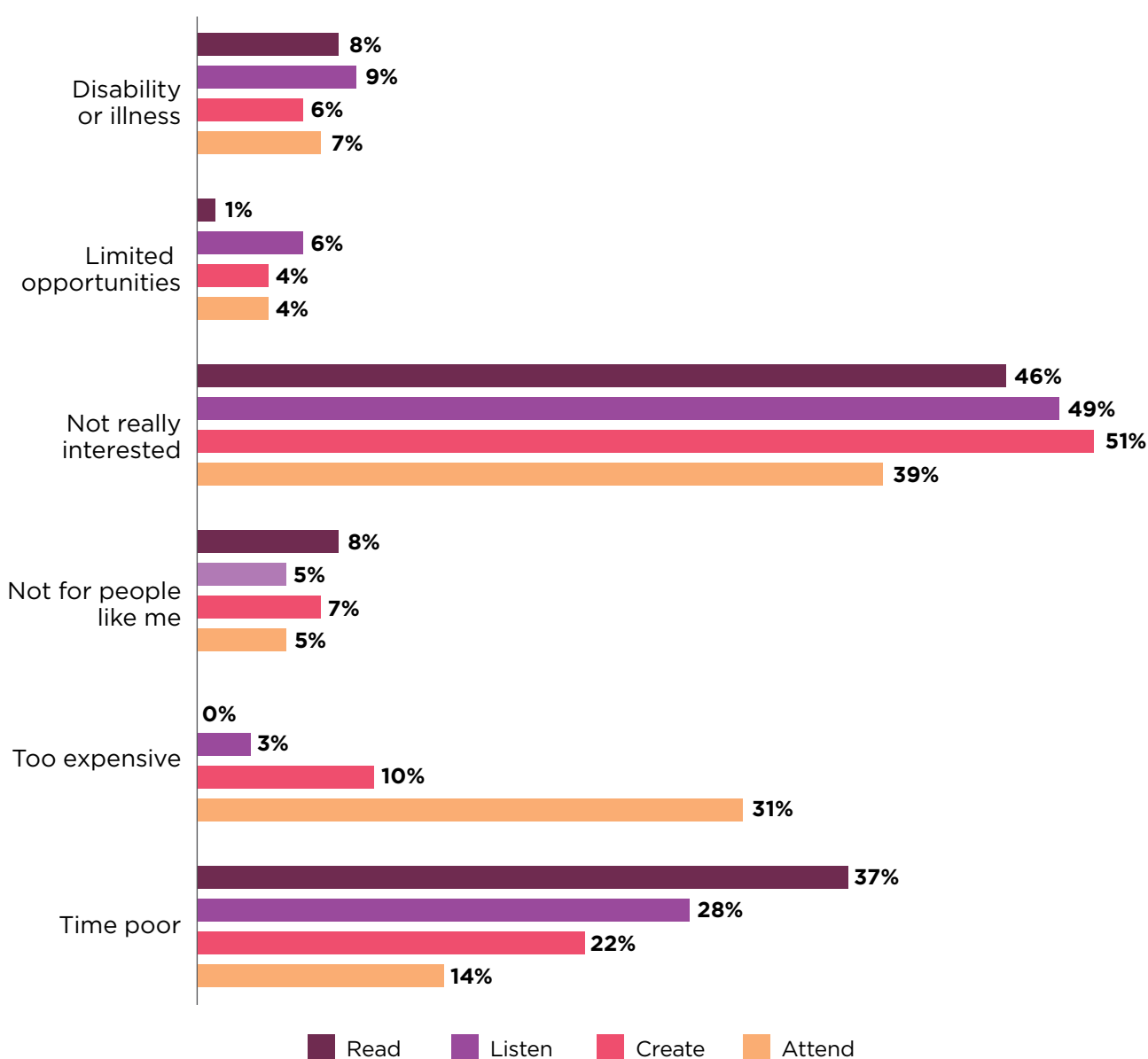
The most frequently chosen main reason for not participating was also consistent across all four arts activities: ‘because I’m not really interested’. 51% of respondents said this is why they do not participate creatively, 49% for listening to music, 46% for reading and 39% for attending arts events and venues. It is worth noting that the number of respondents who did not participate in listening to music was very small: fewer than 7%, as seen in Figure 4.

This finding is both supported and contextualised by further Australia Council research that suggests that Australians are often socially conditioned to see ‘the arts’ as a specialised pursuit, even while we have high rates of participation in cultural activity. In the 2019 National Arts Participation Survey, three in ten people (29%) agreed that ‘the arts are not really for people like me’, while almost all respondents (98%) indicated they engage with the arts in some way, whether it be through listening to music, reading, engaging online, creatively participating, attending in person or engaging with the arts of their cultural community.

Separate research by think tank A New Approach has explored the views of middle-aged, middle income swing voters from suburban and regional Australia, and found that using the terms ‘arts and culture’ together broadened the emotional response and imagery from participants, rather than using the words ‘arts’ or ‘culture’ separately. The report also found that use of the word ‘arts’ suggested ‘high arts’ which for middle Australians is associated with wealth, exclusivity and not for people like them.¹⁹

The second most frequently chosen barriers to reading, listening and participating creative arts activities was ‘because it’s difficult to find the time’, with 37% saying this is why they do not read, 28% for listening and 22% for participating. On the other hand, 31% of respondents do not attend ‘because it’s too expensive’. Of the respondents who did not read, none reported ‘too expensive’ as the main reason for this lack of engagement.

Figure 4: Main barriers to participation by arts activity



[Base: Those who did not participate in attending (n=367), creating (n=545), listening (n=73) and reading (n=257)]

19 Fielding K, Trembath JL 2020, *A View From Middle Australia: Perceptions of arts, culture and creativity*, A New Approach and the Australian Academy of the Humanities, Canberra.

Measuring the impacts of arts engagement across government portfolios

The benefits of arts and cultural participation can go beyond traditional health services to address the social determinants of health, that is, the wider set of forces that shape the conditions of our daily life. Creative experiences facilitate engagement with, and connections for, people with diverse lived experience.

There is a growing body of evidence recognising the vital role that arts and creativity can play in promoting positive outcomes for mental health and wellbeing.²⁰ We know that arts and cultural interventions address the social determinants of health,²¹ facilitate human flourishing across the life span,²² and are the foundation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing.²³

Engaging with arts and creativity generates economic outcomes for Australians, with creativity enabling experimentation, adaptability and innovative thinking in an increasingly automated world. It also builds social cohesion through the fostering of human connection and empathy – this is critical to building bridges across social divides.

Measuring arts engagement enables insight into who is engaging in the arts, and why they may or may not be engaging. It supports the development of industry-led and policy strategies to support growth opportunities and remove barriers to accessing the arts. It can help us better understand the reasons why Australians want to engage in the arts and address the reasons why those who would like to participate more are unable to do so.

Keeping abreast of cultural participation arms the arts and cultural sector with information on participants, audiences and markets and builds the evidence base about the value of the arts to Australians and to our nation's future. It helps to ensure there is an informed conversation about the arts.

The Australian Government has recognised the urgent need for the contribution of culture to Australia's resilience, wellbeing and recovery. The government's national cultural policy, *Revive*, recognises culture as a crucial ingredient to capabilities that are essential to our future economic and social wellbeing.

A key commitment of the national cultural policy is to drive connection and access to creative work, recognising the urgency of removing systemic barriers in our cultural landscape. *Revive* seeks to harness culture's impact on Australia's resilience and wellbeing by providing a pathway for arts and culture to contribute to whole-of-government outcomes.

20 See Australia Council 2023, *Connected Lives: Creative solutions to the mental health crisis*.

21 Fancourt D and Finn S 2019, *Cultural Contexts of Health: The role of the arts in improving health and well-being in the WHO European region*. Parkinson C 2018, 'Weapons of Mass Happiness: Social justice and health equity in the context of the arts', *Music, Health and Wellbeing*. Chandler M 2018, 'Cultural Wounds Demand Cultural Medicines', *Determinants of Indigenous People's Health in Canada: Beyond the social*.

22 Boydell KM et al 2021, 'Graffiti Walls: Arts-based mental health knowledge translation with young people in secondary schools', *Creative Approaches to Health Education: New ways of thinking, making, doing, teaching and learning*. Baird A, Garrido S and Tamplin J 2020, *Music and Dementia: From cognition to therapy*. Lee J, Davidson JW and Krause AE 2016, *Older People's Motivations for Participating in Community Singing in Australia*. Cohen GD et al 2006, *The Impact of Professionally Conducted Cultural Programs on the Physical Health, Mental Health, and Social Functioning of Older Adults*.

23 Salmon M, Doery K, Dance P, Chapman J, Gilbert R, Williams R and Lovett R 2019, *Links Between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture and Wellbeing: What the evidence says*, Mayi Kuwayu. Commonwealth of Australia, Department of Health 2017, *My Life My Lead – Opportunities for strengthening approaches to the social determinants and cultural determinants of Indigenous health: Report on the national consultations*.

Socio-economic conditions and arts participation

The connection between socio-economic disadvantage and lower rates of arts participation is well established.

Analysis from a United Kingdom longitudinal study, Understanding Society, concluded that ‘there is a social gradient in arts and cultural engagement that appears to be in parallel to the gradient in health, with the most privileged individuals enjoying more opportunities to engage in the arts’.²⁴ Markers of privilege include income, education, occupation and current employment, and housing situation.

Research by Australian independent think tank A New Approach aligns with international insights: Australians with higher levels of income and education, and those from professional and management occupations, are more likely to show strong levels of engagement with ‘high arts’ and Indigenous culture.²⁵

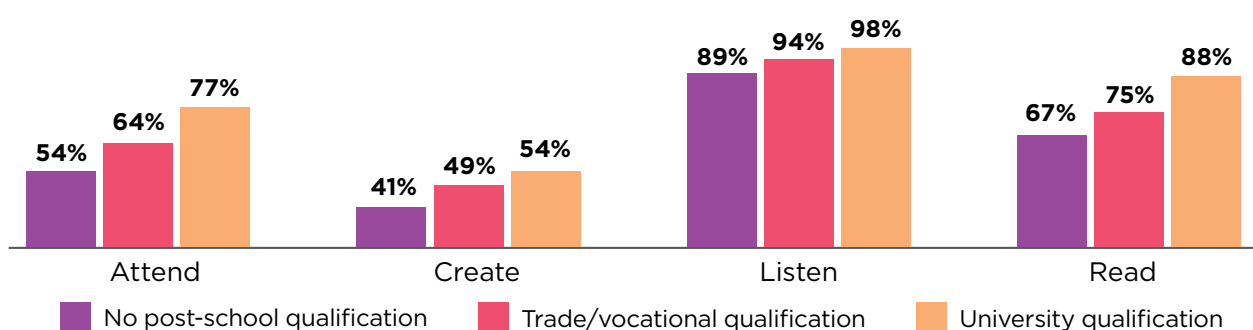
In this report, we explore the relationship between arts participation and key socio-economic and social indicators: education, income, financial situation, region, employment status, self-identification of class and trust in other people.

Education

A person’s level of arts engagement increases with higher levels of formal education.

This study looked at the relationship between a person’s level of formal education and their level of arts participation. It identified that a person’s level of engagement with the arts across all activities – reading, listening, creating and attending – increases with higher levels of education. That is, respondents with no post-school qualifications had lower levels of participation across all types of arts engagement, compared with those with university qualifications who had the highest levels of creative participation. See Figure 5.

Figure 5: Arts participation and highest level of education completed (%)



24 Mak HW, Coulter R and Fancourt D 2020, ‘Patterns of social inequality in arts and cultural participation: Findings from a nationally representative sample of adults living in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland’, *Public Health Panorama*, 6:1.

25 A New Approach 2020, *A View From Middle Australia: Perceptions of Arts, Culture and Creativity*.

The AuSSA results align closely with the Australia Council's 2019 National Arts Participation Survey which found that significantly more people with a university degree or postgraduate qualification attend arts events, creatively participate in the arts, and read books for pleasure.²⁶

Further analysis of reasons for not attending shows that there are different barriers between those with greater or lower levels of formal education.²⁷ The biggest barrier among those with lower levels of formal education (no post-school qualification) is lack of interest (44%). Another main barrier is cost (31%).

Among those with a university qualification, however, only 33% report that their lack of interest is a barrier and 27% report cost as an issue. On the other hand, the percentage of respondents reporting 'lack of time' (25%) as the main barrier is much higher among highly educated respondents than those with lower levels of formal education (9%) and medium levels of formal education (17%).

Figure 6: Main barriers to participation by education level and arts activity: Attending (%)



Compared to those with trade/vocational or university qualification, respondents who had no post-school qualification reported cost and relevance to be relatively important barriers to participating in creative activities. One in ten said 'it is too expensive' (12%) or 'it is not for people like me' (10%), whereas only 5% of those with higher levels of formal education report cost and a lack of relevance as the main issue. Instead, one third of those with university qualification say they don't have time.

Figure 7: Main barriers to participation by education level and arts activity: Creating (%)



²⁶ Australia Council 2020, *Creating Our Future: Results of the National Arts Participations Survey*.

²⁷ This deeper analysis of participation according to educational background was only conducted for attending and creating. This was due to the small sample size of non-participants among those with a university qualification in reading and listening activities.

What can other research tell us about the relationship between education and arts participation?

Multiple studies that have examined the factors that contribute to arts participation have emphasised the importance of education.

A report using data from the United Kingdom's Taking Part survey, for example, found that socio-demographic factors such as age, gender, ethnicity, health, family structure, region of residence, social status and education have 'a significant impact on individuals' likelihood of engaging in the arts. Of these factors, levels of education have the strongest and most consistent effect'.²⁸ The report found encountering arts activities at school, such as learning an instrument, attending an art class or acting in a school play, makes a child much more likely to participate in arts as an adult.²⁹

Results from the United States' National Endowment for the Arts' (NEA) Survey of Public Participation in the Arts shows a clear pattern when examining arts participation and levels of education. Findings show 'the percentage of adults reporting participation in arts events increased by education level'.³⁰

NEA's Survey of Public Participation in the Arts showed levels of education have strong impacts for attendance and reading. Adults with 'higher levels of education attended any performing or visual arts event at higher rates than adults with lower levels of education' and 'larger percentages of adults with higher levels of education read books'.³¹ These patterns were generally the same, however less so, when examining participation rates in making art.

However, there are complexities when looking at education and arts participation. One complexity is that university education does not necessarily lead to equal outcomes. Western Sydney University's 'Australian Cultural Fields' project found that although more people have access to higher education, the types of higher education available to Australians varies. The study showed that the massification of higher education has led to 'continued inequities' due to certain universities and types of education being more accessible than others. Low-socio-economic status (SES) students are less likely to attend the Group of Eight (Go8) – the most prestigious universities – and socio-economic background impacts 'the fields of study that students pursue and the type of schools they attend'.³²

The thematic fact sheets that will follow this report across 2023 will further investigate the complexities of education and socio-economic position, considering parents' occupation as a determining factor in people's arts and cultural participation. This more focused analysis will acknowledge the unevenness of educational opportunities, both formal and informal, and will account for the social and cultural education that might occur in the home.

28 Oskala A et al 2009, *Encourage children today to build audiences for tomorrow: Evidence from the Taking Part survey on how childhood involvement in the arts affects arts engagement in adulthood*, Arts Council England.

29 As above.

30 National Endowment for the Arts 2019, *U.S. Patterns of Arts Participation: A Full Report from the 2017 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts*.

31 As above.

32 Watkins M 2020, 'The Persistence of Inequality', *Fields, Capital, Habitus: Australian culture, inequities and social divisions*.

Occupation

People in occupations that are generally associated with using more skills, and using more complex skills, have stronger rates of creative participation.

A person's occupation is often closely tied to their overall socio-economic status, as well as specific factors such as their level of education.

Comparing occupations, as defined by the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO), with arts participation illustrates that occupations that are generally associated with more skills and more complex skills – and so usually higher status or socio-economic positions – have higher rates of arts participation. See Figure 8 below.

Occupations can be defined and categorised in a variety of ways. The AuSSA collects information on respondents' occupation which are then classified using the ANZSCO groups. This is a skills-based classification system, developed to classify all occupations in the Australian and New Zealand labour market. Occupations are categorised using concepts of skill level (the amount of formal education or training, experience or on-the-job training required to competently perform the tasks required for that occupation) and skill specialisation (defined as a function of knowledge required, tools and equipment used, materials worked on, and goods or services produced or provided).³³

Figure 8: Arts participation by ANZSCO occupation categories

	Attend	Create	Listen	Read
Managers	59%	41%	92%	65%
Professionals	76% ↑*	53%	98%	84%
Technicians and trades workers	55%	47%	95%	68%
Community and personal service workers	71%	56%	95%	83%
Clerical and administrative workers	75%	45%	97%	86%
Sales workers	66%	55%	98%	88%
Machinery operators and drivers	47%	29%	75% ↓*	51% ↓*
Labourers	55%	46%	91%	69%

* Statistically significant to 95% confidence level ($p < .05$)

Note: small sample sizes for sales workers, machinery operators and drivers, and labourers categories.

33 Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Conceptual basis of ANZSCO*, abs.gov.au viewed 22 February 2022.

What can other research tell us about the relationship between occupation and arts participation?

Studies, both in Australia and internationally, have found occupational classifications to be useful when exploring arts participation.

For example, the United Kingdom's Taking Part survey grouped respondents based on occupational status classifications set out in the UK's National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC), as well as based on their level of arts participation ('consistent', 'never', 'former', 'new' and 'occasional').

The results were that 'consistent' engagers were more likely than other groups to be in the upper socio-economic group (65% compared with 43% of other respondents). For those who 'never' participated, 60% were from the lower socio-economic group, with 35% from the upper.³⁴

Western Sydney University's 'Australian Cultural Fields' project found that occupational class had the highest 'explanatory power' when it came to types of participation in their chosen visual art, music and literary categories.³⁵ In other words, occupational class was the variable that had the greatest impact when it came to identifying the types of arts participation people engaged with, within chosen art form categories.

By converting ANZSCO skills-based classifications into NS-SEC status-based groups, eight groups were further distilled and mapped onto three classes: 'professional and managerial', 48%; 'intermediate' class', 21%; and 'working class', 28%. Converting skills-based occupation classifications to status-based groupings revealed that the 'professional class had the highest level of arts participation as well as the most association with high cultural orientations'. The 'working class' had the lowest levels of participation.³⁶

34 Department for Culture, Media & Sport (United Kingdom) 2016, *Taking Part: Findings from the longitudinal survey waves 1 to 3*.

35 Bennett T, Carter D, Gayo M, Kelly M, Noble G (eds) 2020, *Fields, Capital, Habitus: Australian culture, inequities and social divisions*.

36 As above.

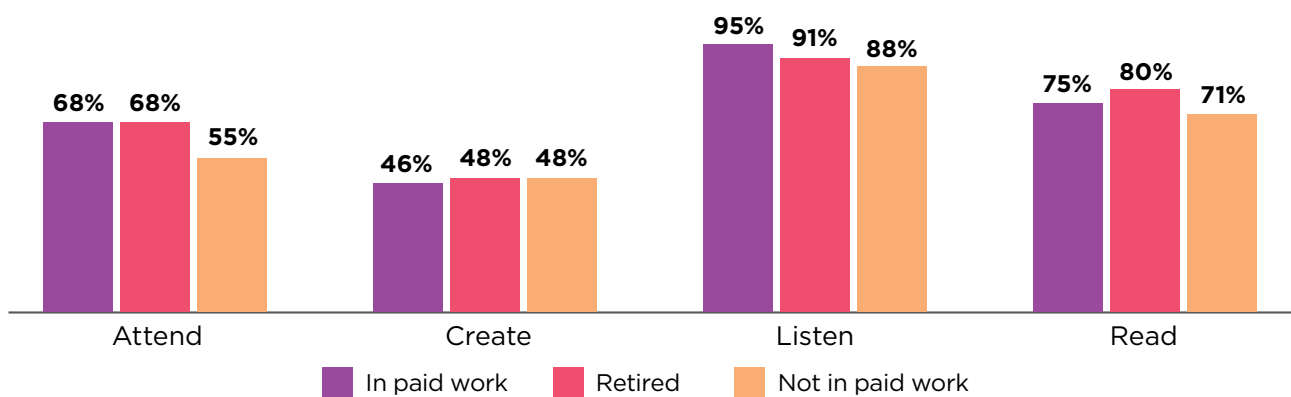
Employment status

People who are not in the labour force are less likely to participate in ‘attending’, ‘listening’ or ‘reading’.

Employment status is related to arts and creative participation. Those who are currently in the labour force or retired are more likely to attend arts venues and events (68%) compared to those who are not in paid work (55%). These people are also more likely to listen to music (paid workers 96%; retirees 91%), compared to those who are not in paid work (88%). Retirees are most active participants in ‘reading’ (80%), followed by those who are in paid work (75%). There were little differences among the three groups in ‘create’.

Employment status has been broken down by whether the respondent is in paid work, retired or not in paid work. ‘Not in paid work’ includes those who are unemployed and looking for a job, in education (not paid for by employer), in school/student/pupil even if on vacation, permanently sick or disabled, doing housework, looking after the home, children or other persons.

Figure 9: Arts participation by employment status (%)



Income

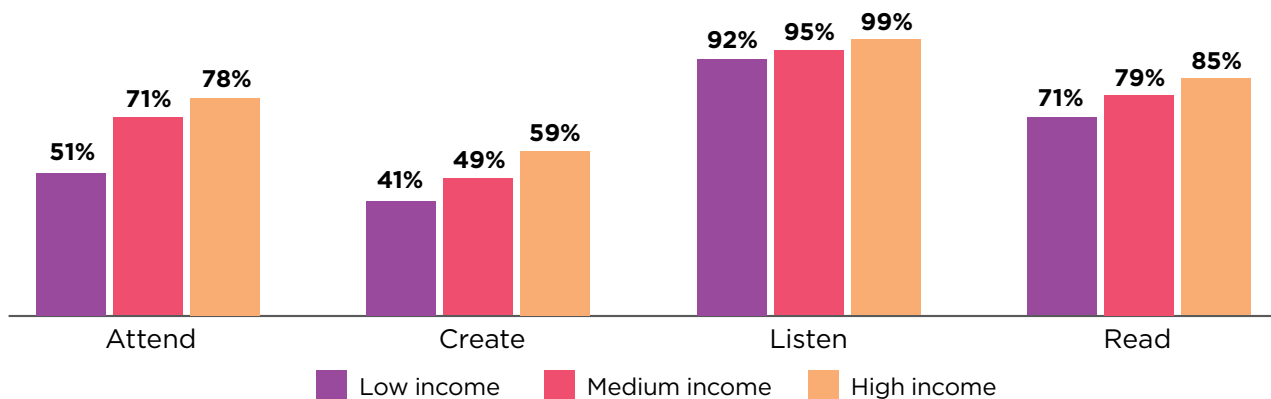
People with higher household incomes have stronger rates of creative participation across all arts activities.

Income is an important factor when examining arts participation, with participation rates increasing with higher income across all arts activities.

The low-income group had lower rates in the attend, create and read categories (the lower rate for 'listen' was not a statistically significant result), see Figure 10 below. People from the low-income group were also more likely to choose 'because it is too expensive' as their main reason for not attending.³⁷

Here household incomes have been broken down by the eight ABS income categories, then grouped to create three categories as evenly sized as possible: low (under \$78,000 per year), medium (\$78,000 to \$156,000) and high (more than \$156,000 per year).

Figure 10: Arts participation by household income



Note: more than 25% of respondents declined to provide income information.

³⁷ 20% of the low-income group chose this answer, as compared to 12% overall.

Financial circumstance

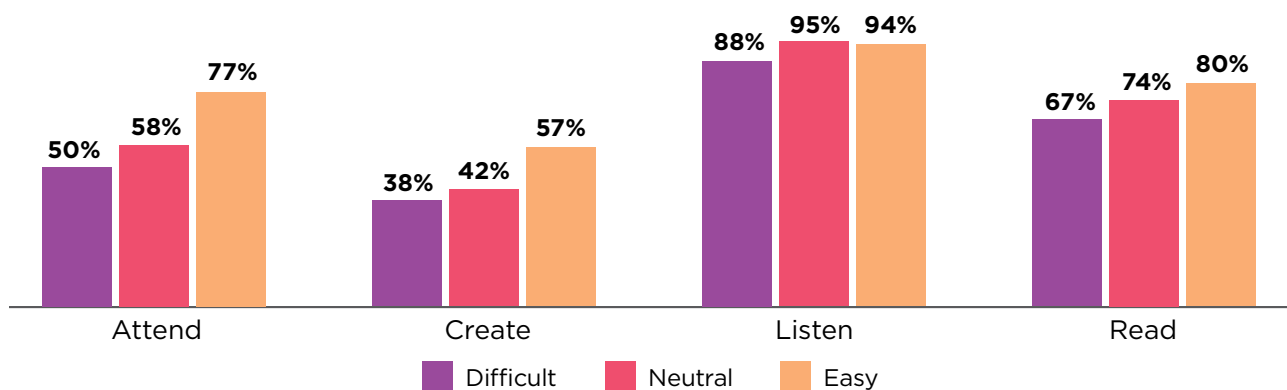
Making ends meet is an important condition for arts and creative participation.

A related factor to income is a person's subjective perception of their financial situation. Respondents were asked to think of their household's total income, including all the sources of income of all the members who contribute to it, and say how difficult or easy is it to make ends meet. This perception has a significant impact on their arts participation, particularly when it comes to attending and creating.

Only half of the respondents who reported that it was difficult to make ends meet reported attending arts events or venues (50%), compared to 77% of respondents who found it easy to make ends meet (at the time of the survey was conducted). Over one third of the respondents who expressed financial difficulty participated in creating activities (38%), compared to 57% of respondents who did not.

On the other hand, the impact of financial situation is less prominent for listening and reading. Attending arts events or creating art may be too expensive for those who are experiencing financial difficulty, whereas listening to music or reading can provide a cost-effective way of engaging with arts. See Figure 11.

Figure 11: Arts participation by subjective financial situation



What can other research tell us about the relationship between income and arts participation?

Most arts participation surveys and studies suggest that arts and cultural participation decreases with income, but deeper analysis also indicates that it is more complicated than a simple cause-and-effect relationship.

Like the AuSSA, the Australia Council's 2019 National Arts Participation Survey results show that higher incomes lead to higher rates of arts attendance, along with higher rates of creative participation (ie art-making) and reading.³⁸

Creative NZ's New Zealanders and the Arts survey in 2017 found that people from low-income households were less likely than average to engage with the arts – 75% as compared with 80%.³⁹ The 2020 survey results indicate 'Māori with lived experience of disability and from low-income households find affordability an even greater issue, with 37% and 38% respectively agreeing that they can afford to participate'.⁴⁰

A study using data from the United Kingdom's Understanding Society survey, however, found 'little evidence of a relationship between household income and arts participation' – 'arts participation' here corresponding with the AuSSA's 'create' category. For 'cultural engagement', here corresponding to the AuSSA's 'attend' category, they found that 'monthly income was a clear predictor of engagement'.⁴¹

38 Australia Council 2020, *Creating Our Future: Results of the National Arts Participations Survey*.

39 Creative NZ 2017, *New Zealanders and the Arts: Attitudes, Attendance and Participation in 2017*.

40 Creative NZ 2020, *New Zealanders and the Arts: Attitudes, Attendance and Participation*.

41 Mak H, Coulter R and Fancourt D 2020, 'Patterns of social inequality in arts and cultural participation: Findings from a nationally representative sample of adults living in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland', *Public Health Panorama*, 6:1. World Health Organization. Regional Office for Europe.

Geography

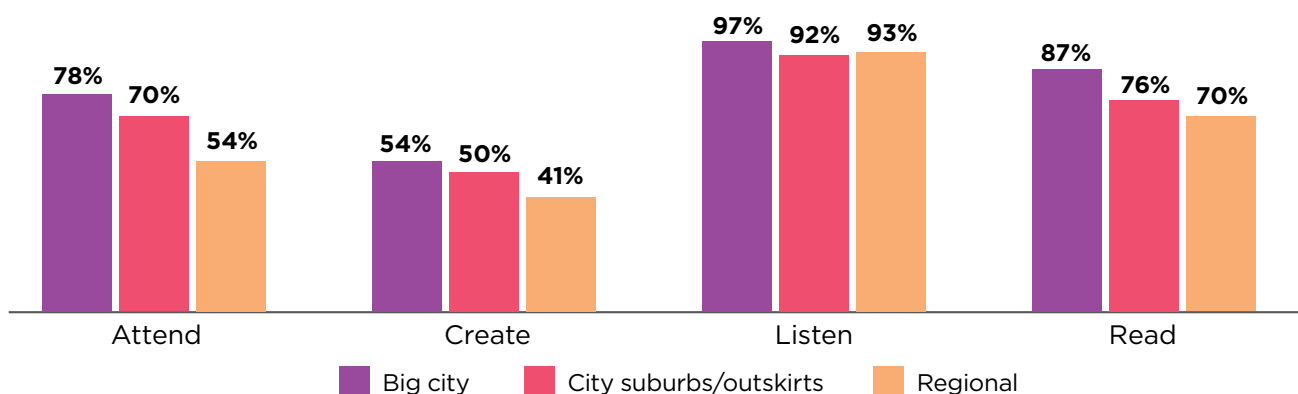
City dwellers are more likely to participate in arts activities than those living in suburbs or regional areas.

A significant geographical gap in arts participation was found in attendance at arts events or venues. Almost four out of five respondents living in big cities attend arts events or venues (78%), compared to 70% of respondents who live in outer city suburbs or outskirts, and just over half (54%) who live in regional areas. These results align roughly with those from the 2019 National Arts Participation Survey which suggested that Australians living in metropolitan areas are more likely to attend arts events and festivals than those living in regional and remote areas (70% compared to 64%). However, the comparison of arts participation of inner city to outer city/suburban dwellers is in this case instructive, revealing the social and economic differences that exist within metropolitan areas.

Similar distinctions can be seen in the rates of reading across people living in big city, suburban or regional areas. Almost nine in ten respondents of respondents living in big cities read for pleasure (87%), compared to three quarters for those living suburban areas, and 70% for those living in the regions (76%).

In contrast, listening was similarly popular among respondents regardless of urban, suburban or regional environment, with 97% of big city respondents, 92% of suburban dwellers, and 93% of regional respondents reporting that they listened to music. See Figure 12.

Figure 12: Arts participation across metro, suburban and regional areas (%)



Measuring arts and cultural participation by the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA)

Socio-economic circumstances can also be understood using the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Socio-Economic Indexes For Areas (SEIFA) which rank areas based on their relative levels of socio-economic advantage and disadvantage.⁴²

The SEIFA consists of 4 indexes:

1. Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSD), which covers disadvantages only (ie, most disadvantaged to least disadvantaged)
2. Index of Relative Socio-economic Advantage and Disadvantage (IRSAD), which covers the full spectrum (ie, most disadvantaged to most advantaged)
3. Index of Economic Resources (IER), which looks at economic resources of households in the area (ie, household income, expenditures, wealth)
4. Index of Education and Occupation (IEO); which reflects the general level of education and occupation-related skills of people.

In a previously unpublished analysis, the Australia Council used the SEIFA indexes to explore the results of the 2019 National Arts Participation Survey, considering the correlation between accessing and attending arts and location-based advantage/disadvantage. This analysis was based on the IRSAD index (No. 2 above) as it reflected the most comprehensive data set.

ABS population statistics suggest that between 16%–28% of Australians fall into each of the ten SEIFA decile groups. The 2019 National Arts Participation Survey data showed a similar pattern, indicating the research data was a representative sample. The ten deciles were then combined into five index groups: 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-10.

This analysis revealed that engagement with recorded music was consistent across all SEIFA decile groups, with nine in ten (92%) listening to and/or watching across both free and paid sources. While engagement with free recorded music was similar across the ten decile groups indexes, those in the highest SEIFA index groups were more likely than those in the lowest to listen to and/or watch recorded music they have purchased (60% and 54% respectively).

Live attendance of creative, cultural and artistic events or festivals was relatively consistent across the lower deciles (1-2, 61%; 3-4, 63%; 5-6, 65%), with a significant increase of live attendance seen among the higher deciles. At least three quarters of Australians with a SEIFA index of 9-10 had attended a live event or festival in the past 12 months (76%).

42 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016, Postal Area Indexes
<https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/2033.0.55.0012016?OpenDocument>.

Reading for pleasure was also consistent across most decile groups, increasing significantly in the highest decile. Excluding reading for work or study, around seven in ten people in the 1-2, 3-4 and 5-6 decile groups had read at least one text in the last 12 months (69%, 69% and 70% respectively). However, almost four in five (78%) in the highest SEIFA index group (9-10) had read at least one text in the last 12 months – a notable jump.

Creating art was most likely among people Australians in the highest SEIFA index group, with 45% of people having created at least one art form within the last 12 months (compared to 40% for groups 1-2 and 3-4; and 39% for groups 5-6 and 7-8). A quarter of Australians in the 3-4 index group had created in the visual arts and craft space within the last 12 months (25%) – the most prevalent art form across all index groups.

Self-identification of class

Those who self-identify as 'lower class' and 'working class' have lower rates of creative participation than those who self-identify as more upper class.

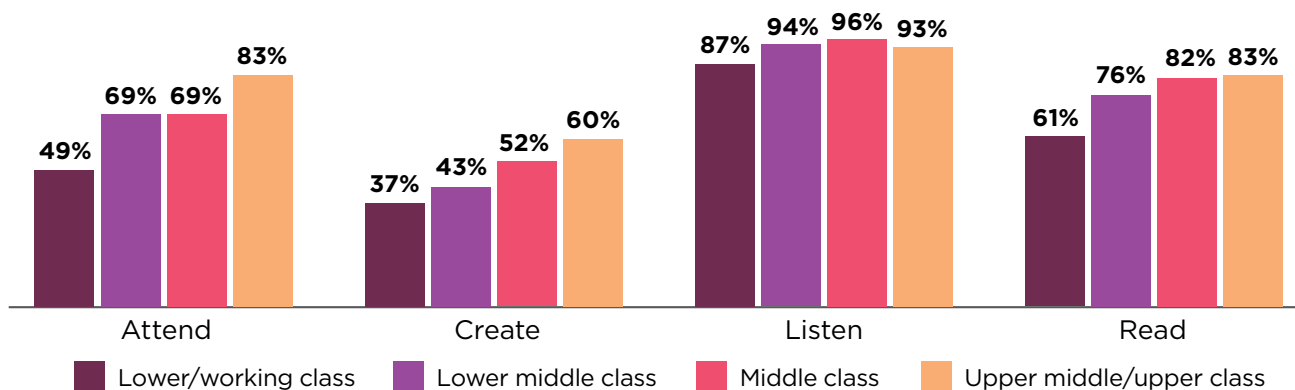
Self-identified 'lower class' and 'working class' respondents have significantly lower creative participation rates across all four creative activity types, and respondents who self-identify as 'upper middle' and 'upper-class' have significantly higher rates of creative participation.

The AuSSA contained a question about class groupings: 'Most people see themselves as belonging to a particular class. Please tell me which social class you would say you belonging to: lower class, working class, lower middle class, middle class, upper middle class, upper class'.

Most people put themselves in the middle – 46% chose middle class. If lower middle class and upper middle class are added to that, the figure becomes 72% (with 23% identifying as working class, 5% lower class and 1% upper class). Merging the very small groups (lower and upper class) with neighbouring groups creates more evenly sized groups for analysis (although lower middle is still too small to produce statistically significant results).

The participation rates for those identifying as lower class or working class were significantly lower across all four activity types, and those identifying as upper middle class or upper class were significantly higher, as in Figure 13 below.

Figure 13: Arts participation and self-identified class (%)



This chart indicates that ideas of class work differently for different creative activities. For attendance, there is a greater difference in participation rates between those who identify as upper/upper middle, the middle groups, and the lower/working class group. For create and read, the self-identified class groups are more closely arranged, but still with a 20 percentage point difference between the lower participation rates of the lower/working class and upper middle/upper class groups. With listening to music, participation rates are higher and more similar across all four self-identified class groupings.

How accurate are we at self-identifying class?

Research has found that examining self-perceived status or position in society produces similar results to other methods of classifying people within class structures.

Using data from a 2015 survey of a random sample of Australian citizens, researchers from the Australian National University (ANU) found that 'across the population generally, Australians are quite acutely aware of their class identity, with self-assessed class membership reflecting the relative capital and mobility of the objectively measured classes'.⁴³

Self-perceived class may give more information than current occupation because it reflects a person's understanding of their position in society over a longer term. For example, this same survey found that retired people who had worked in occupations traditionally classified as 'working class' retained these affiliations even when no longer working in those occupations.

While working class identification is strong, the ANU researchers also found that wealthier people have trouble placing themselves in the upper levels of society: 'If self-described class membership is to be believed, there are only two classes in Australia: working and middle'.

43 Sheppard J and Biddle N 2017, 'Class, Capital, and Identity in Australian Society', *Australian Journal of Political Science*, 52:17.

Trust in other people

Those who trust other people are more active in arts participation.

Figure 14 shows that those who believe that people can be trusted are more likely to participate in arts activities than those who do not.

The participation gap was widest for attending and creating. Among respondents who believe that people can be trusted, 70% reported attending arts events or venues, while only 56% of those who are distrusting attended arts events or venues.

Among respondents who believe that people can be trusted, 51% of respondents create, while only 40% of those who are distrusting participate in creative activities.

Why ask about trust in society in an arts participation report?

Trust in society is an interesting factor to consider in relation to social inequality and arts participation, particularly given existing research on the role of arts and culture in promoting social cohesion.

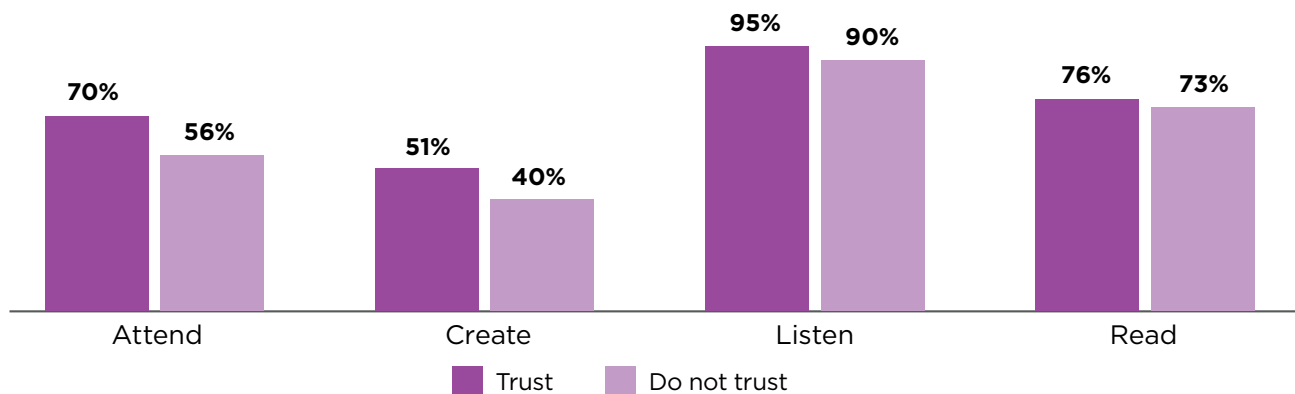
A series of research projects led by the independent think tank, A New Approach, has inquired into attitudes towards the arts from middle income swing voters from suburban and regional Australia. This research reveals that, among these groups:

- Young Australians see arts and culture as community-building tools that help to mitigate loneliness and social isolation.⁴⁴
- Middle-aged Australians believe that arts and cultural activities bring us together and help build community (when asked ‘why arts matter’ this was the most common reason given by this group).⁴⁵
- Baby boomer Australians (those between 58–75) believe that cultural participation helps us test opinions, negotiate, listen, compromise, see others’ points of view and have healthy disagreements – in other words, it encourages ‘pro-social’ behaviours and skills.⁴⁶

44 Trembath JL and Fielding K, 2021, *The Next Generation of Voters: Young middle Australians talk arts, culture and creativity*, A New Approach.

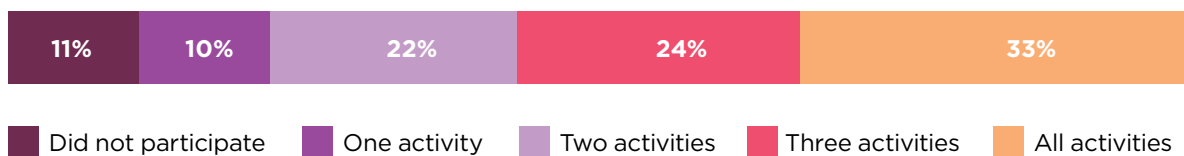
45 Fielding K and Trembath JL 2020, *A View from Middle Australia: Perceptions of arts, culture and creativity*, A New Approach and the Australian Academy of the Humanities, Canberra.

46 Vivian A and Fielding K 2022, *Lifelong: Perceptions of arts and culture among Baby Boomer Middle Australians*, A New Approach.

Figure 14: Arts participation by trust (%)

Participation across different types of arts activities

When looking overall at the four types of arts participation measured in the AuSSA survey, we can see that the majority of respondents (79%) participated in two or more. One third (33%) of the respondents participated in all four arts activities in the past year.

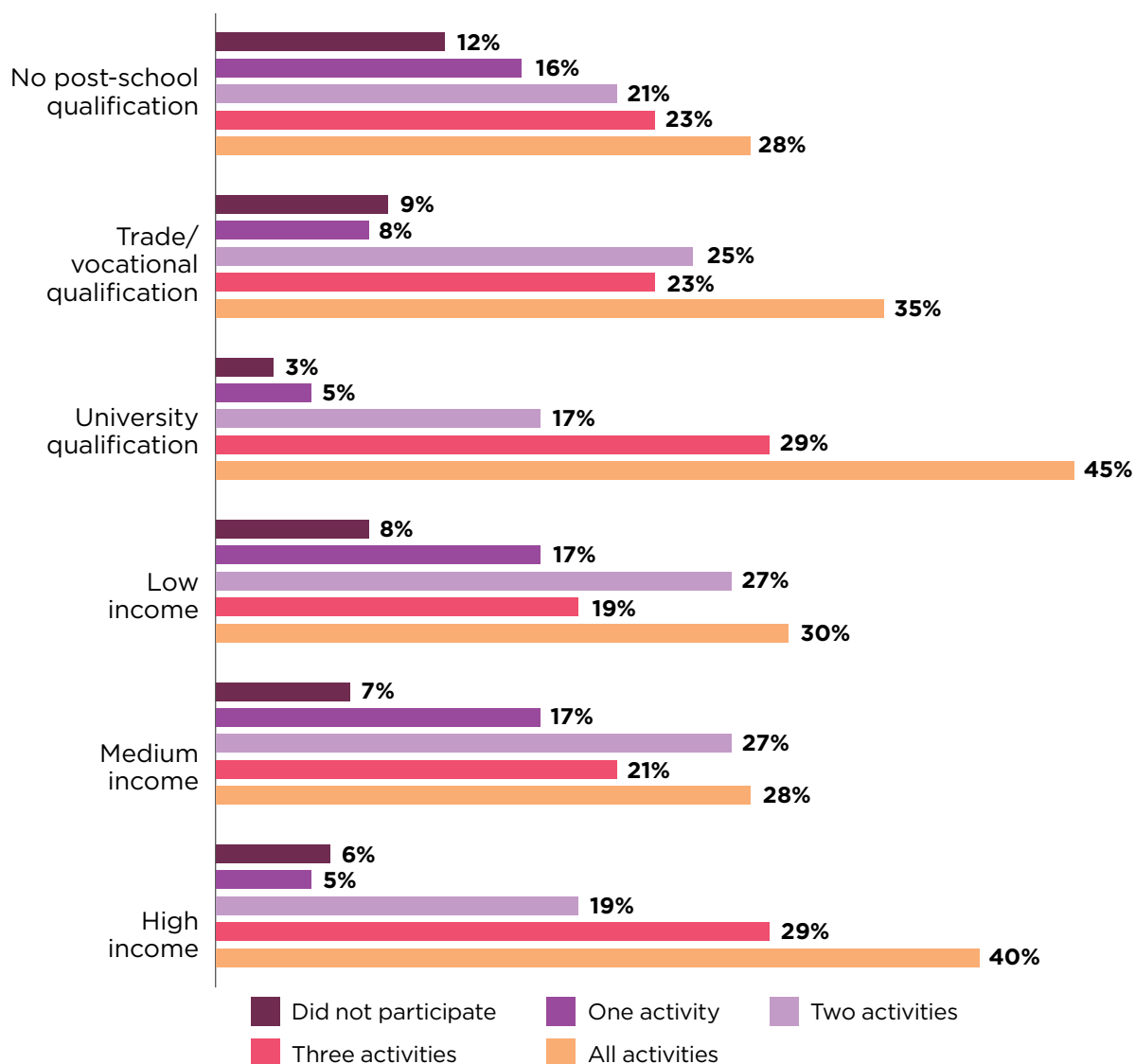
Figure 15: Participation across different types of arts activities (%)

Respondents with high education and high income are much more likely to participate in all four activities compared to other respondents. Almost half (45%) of respondents who have university qualifications participated in all four arts activities compared to 28% of respondents with no post-school qualifications and 35% of respondents with trade/vocational qualifications.

Forty percent of respondents with high income participated in all four arts activities whereas less than one third of respondents with low income (30%) and medium income (28%) participated in all four arts activities.

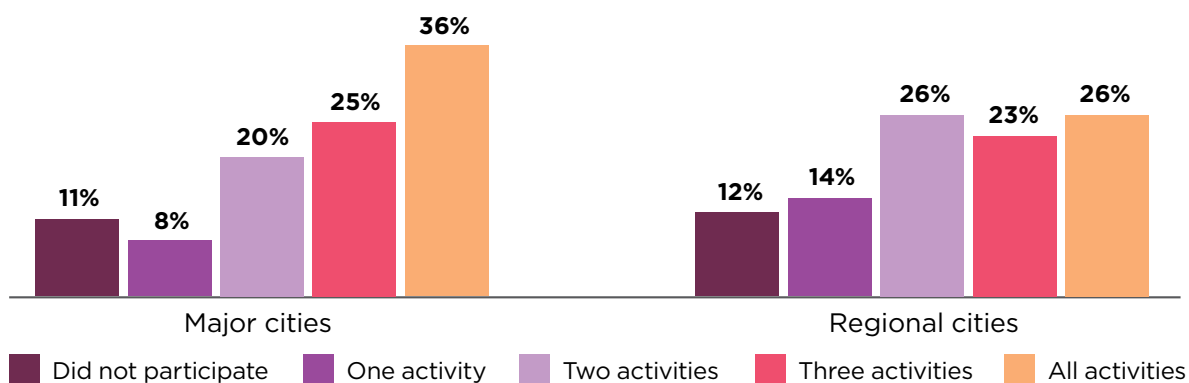
It is worth noting that while arts activity participation is generally higher among high education and high-income groups, the gap in the number of arts activities is also more pronounced in these groups than in others. See Figure 16.

Figure 16: Participation across different types of arts activities, by education and income (%)



City dwellers are much more likely to participate in all four arts activities compared to respondents in regional areas. More than one third of respondents in major cities participated in all four arts activities (36%) compared to only 26% of regional respondents. See Figure 17.

Figure 17: Participation across different types of arts activities, by region (%)



Appendix 1: Detailed methodology

Variables

- **Education:** Educational attainment was categorised into three groups; post-school qualifications (40%), trade or vocational qualification (35%) and university qualification (25%).
- **Employment status:** Employment status has been broken down by whether the respondent is in paid work (57%), retired (22%), or not in paid work (21%). Not in paid work includes those who are unemployed and looking for a job, in education (not paid for by employer), in school/student/pupil even if on vacation, permanently sick or disabled, doing housework, looking after the home, children or other persons. Non responses were excluded from the analysis.
- **Income:** Household incomes have been broken down by the eight ABS income categories, then grouped to create three categories as evenly sized as possible: low (under \$78,000 per year) (24%), medium (\$78,000 to \$156,000) (16%), and high (more than \$156,000 per year) (60%).
- **Financial circumstance:** A subjective measure of respondents' financial circumstance was measured by asking how difficult or easy it is to make ends meet. Those who responded 'very' or 'fairly' difficult were grouped into 'difficult' (26%) and those who answered 'neither easy nor difficult' as 'neutral' (33%), and those who responded 'fairly' or 'very' easy as 'easy' (42%). Those who chose 'can't choose' were excluded from the analysis.
- **Geography:** A self-assessment of where the respondent lives was asked by giving them five options: A big city, the suburbs or outskirts of a big city, a town or a small city, a country village or a farm or home in the country. These categories were recoded into 'big city' (13%), 'city suburbs/outskirts' (45%) and 'regional' (42%).
- **Self-identification of class:** Respondents were asked a question 'Most people see themselves as belonging to a particular class. Please tell me which social class you would say you belonging to. Based on the responses, they were grouped into 'lower or working class' (27%), 'lower middle class' (18%), 'middle class' (46%) or 'upper middle or upper class' (9%).
- **Trust in other people:** Respondents were asked if people can be trusted or not. Those who said 'people can almost always be trusted' or 'people can usually be trusted' were categorised into 'trusting' (60%) and those who answered 'you usually can't be too careful in dealing with people' or 'you almost always can't be too careful in dealing with people' were grouped as 'distrusting' (40%). Those who chose 'can't choose' were excluded from the analysis.
- **Number of arts activity participation:** The total number of arts activity participation was calculated by adding up the four categories, ranging from 0 to 4.

Statistical testing

For percentages reported in this report, we can apply a margin of error of +/-3% at 95% confidence level.

The reported mean differences among different demographics and social indicators are significant at $p < 0.05$, unless stated otherwise. For categorical variables where we report a difference between groups, a Chi-square test was conducted and significant at $p < 0.05$, unless stated otherwise.

