



Australian Government

**Creative  
Australia**

## Australian Capital Territory factsheet

# Creating Value

## Results of the National Arts Participation Survey

***Creating Value: Results of the National Arts Participation Survey*** is the first survey of its kind to be released by Creative Australia and the fifth survey in the landmark research series from the Australia Council, following iterations in 2009, 2013, 2016 and 2019.

The research series provides a comprehensive overview of Australians' evolving relationships with arts, culture and creativity. By examining our engagement with creativity – both through the lens of self-expression and engagement with arts and creative activities – this series builds the evidence base on participation in the arts in Australia.

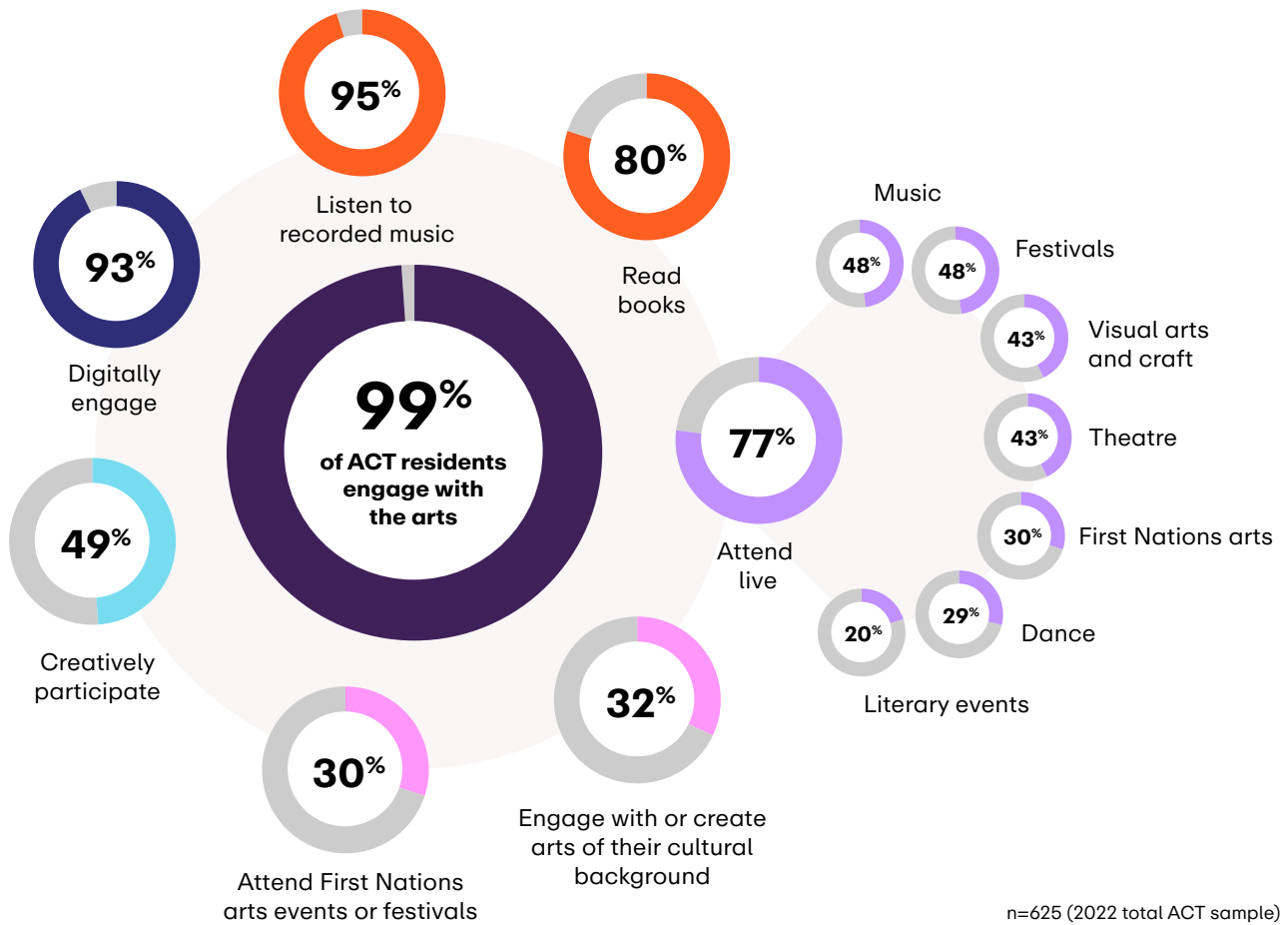
For the full report and online resources see: <https://creative.gov.au/advocacy-and-research/creating-value/>

This fact sheet provides an overview of results for the Australian Capital Territory (ACT).

## Overview of engagement with the arts and creative activities and events

The 2022 National Arts Participation Survey found that the arts have a place in the lives of almost all Australians living in the ACT (99% up from 96% in 2019). Australians living in the ACT are slightly more engaged with the arts than the overall Australian population (99% compared with 97%).

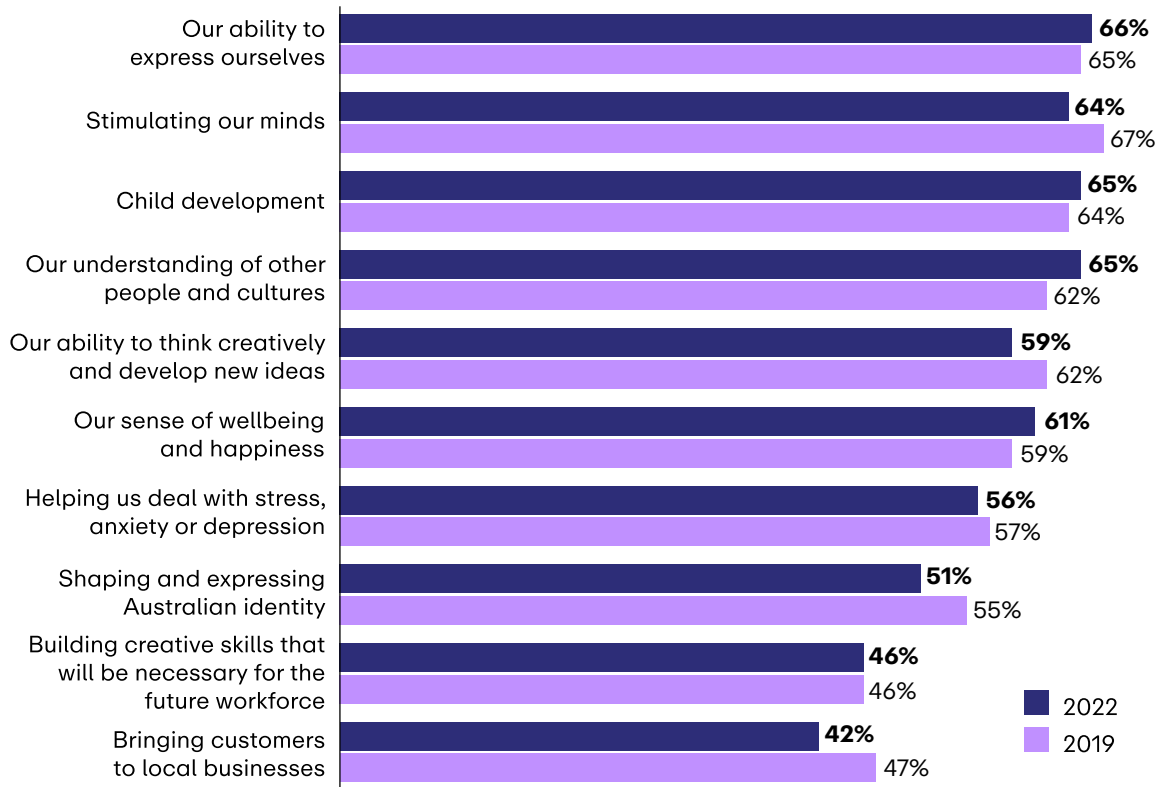
Figure 1: Australians in the ACT overall engagement in creative and artistic activities and events in 2022



## Valuing arts engagement

In 2022, 85% of Australians living in the ACT acknowledged the **significant positive impact of the arts on individuals, communities and the economy**. This is consistent with 2019 results (86%) and with the overall Australian population (84% both in 2022 and 2019).

**Figure 2: Proportion who felt the arts had a ‘big’ or ‘very big’ impact on various areas 2022 and 2019**



Q54. How much impact do you think creativity and the arts have in the following areas? Base: 2019 ACT data (n=130) // 2022 ACT data (n=625)

## Attitudes towards arts, culture and creativity

At least three quarters of ACT residents strongly agree or agree:

- **creative activities should be an important part of education** (81%, up from 76% in 2019)
- **artists should have freedom of expression** (77%, consistent with 76% in 2019)
- **artists make an important contribution to Australian society** (77%, up from 72% in 2019)
- **cultural and creative experiences help me to understand perspectives that are different to my own** (75%, up from 69% in 2019).

About seven in ten ACT residents strongly agree or agree that:

- **cultural and creative experiences make for a richer and more meaningful life** (73%, down from 77% in 2019)
- **cultural and creative experiences should receive public funding** (69%, consistent with 69% in 2019).

Among ACT residents, agreement is lowest for the following statements:

- **the arts in Australia reflect the diversity of cultures present in Australia** (66%, down from 70% in 2019).
- **cultural and creative experiences allow me to connect with others** (61%, up from 54% in 2019)
- **there are plenty of opportunities for me to get involved in cultural and creative experiences** (52%, consistent with 51% in 2019).

There has been a slight decrease in the proportion of ACT residents that feel disconnected from the arts, with one in five agreeing that **cultural and creative experiences are not really for people like me** (21%, down from 24% in 2019).

## Investment in arts, culture and creativity

Australians have clear priorities for investment in the arts. For those living in the ACT, priorities for public arts funding in order of importance are:

1. **Ensuring children and young people have access to art and creative experiences to support learning and development** (67% ranked in top 3).
2. **Ensuring free or low-cost events are available** (66% ranked in top 3).
3. **Ensuring art and creative experiences are available to support people's health and wellbeing** (51% ranked in top 3).
4. **Investing in the making of art so it can be widely shared and experienced** (35% ranked in top 3).
5. **Funding art in public spaces** (34% ranked in top 3).
6. **Ensuring there is more access to creative activities and experiences online** (27% ranked in top 3).

The high value that Australians place on the arts is reflected in the time and money they give to support artists, arts organisations and arts projects.

In 2022, 21% of residents living in the ACT gave back to the arts. This is at similar levels to 2019 (23%). Those living in the ACT are about as likely as the national average to give back to the arts (23%).

The leading ways ACT residents gave time or money to the arts include **unpaid work** such as helping artists or community groups with arts activities (8%, down from 11% in 2019) and **donating money to the arts** (8%, consistent with 10% in 2019).

## Our cultural connections

### Attitudes towards First Nations arts

In 2022, there was widespread agreement among ACT residents that **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts are an important part of Australia's culture**, with 80% agreeing. Agreement has remained steady since 2019.

However, less than half of Australians living in the ACT believe that **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts are well represented in Australia** (43%). This is a decrease from 49% in 2019.

**Interest in First Nations arts remains unchanged** for most ACT residents (69% both in 2022 and 2019). Among those interested, over half report a **growing interest** in 2022 (51%, down from 56% in 2019).

### Cultural diversity and arts engagement

In 2022, one in three ACT residents **engaged with their own cultural background, language group or community by attending events or festivals, or creating art** (32%, consistent with 33% in 2019).

In 2022, three in ten ACT residents **attended cultural and artistic events focused on their own cultural background, language group or community** (29%, consistent with 29% in 2019).

**Music** was the main form of arts event attended to engage with one's cultural background, language group or community (17%), followed by **theatre** (10%), **festivals or celebrations** (9%) at **dance events** (7%) and **visual arts and craft events** (6%).

## Live attendance

*Creating Value* shows that attendance is returning to pre-pandemic levels. In 2022, 68% of the Australian population **attended arts events or festivals**, consistent with 2019. Amongst people living in the ACT, attendance was at 77% in 2022, significantly up from 71% in 2019.

In 2022:

- almost half of Australians living in the ACT attended **live music events** (48%, up from 46% in 2019) and arts festivals (48%, from 44% in 2019), including **music festivals** (20%), **performing arts festivals** (14%) and **visual art festivals or fairs** (13%)
- over two in five ACT residents attended **visual arts and crafts events** (43%, consistent with 42% in 2019) and **theatre performances** (43%, up from 35% in 2019)
- three in ten ACT residents attended **First Nations arts or festivals** (30%, consistent with 29% in 2019) and **dance events** (29%, up from 22% in 2019)
- one in five ACT residents attended **literary events** (20%, down from 27% in 2019).

## Creative participation

In 2022, 44% of Australians in the ACT **created, produced or collaborated in the making of art** (down from 48% in 2019).

- One in four Australians in the ACT **create visual arts and craft**, including to engage with their own cultural background (26%, down from 30% in 2019).
- One in five **create music**, including to engage with their own cultural background (18%, unchanged since 2019).
- One in six **participate in community choir or community theatre** (16%, similar to 14% in 2019).
- One in seven **produce creative writing**, including to engage with their own cultural background (13%, consistent with 15% in 2019).
- One in ten are **involved in community arts and cultural development** (9%, consistent with 11% in 2019) and **participate in dance**, including from their own cultural background (9%, consistent with 11% in 2019).
- 5% of ACT Australians creatively **participate in theatre**, including from their own cultural background (similar to 6% in 2019).

## Listening to recorded music

In 2022, 95% of ACT residents **listened to recorded music**. This is an increase from 93% in 2019.

- Three in five ACT residents listen to **music on the radio or television** (62%) and **music they streamed for free** (eg, YouTube) (62%).
- **Significantly more ACT residents are streaming music through a paid subscription** (eg, Spotify, Apple Music, Amazon) (62% up significantly from 39% in 2019).
- Three in five ACT residents listen to **music they streamed for free** (eg, YouTube) (62%).
- Three in ten ACT residents listen to **music they paid for** (either downloaded or a physical copy, eg CDs/vinyl) (31%, down from 50% in 2019).

## Reading

In 2022, 80% of Australians living in the ACT **read at least one printed book, ebook or listened to an audio book** for non-work and study purposes. This proportion is slightly higher than in 2019 (75%) and is in contrast to the national results which show reading levels had declined in 2022 (69%, down from 72% in 2019).

The most popular types of reading material are **novels or short stories** (56%) followed by instructional non-fiction such as guidebooks or cookbooks (41%) and **creative non-fiction** such as biographies or history books (39%).

**Print books** are still by far the most popular reading format, read by 77% of the ACT population in the last year. Over one third of Australians in the ACT read a print book **at least once a week** (35%), with 14% reading in this format **daily**.

In the past 12 months, half of Australians living in ACT read an **ebook** (50%) and over two in five listened to an audio book (43%), up from 42% and 32% in 2019 respectively.

## Digital engagement

Most Australians in the ACT engage with the arts **online or through digital platforms** (93%).

More than four in five of Australians living in the ACT **listen to streamed music** (83%), and a smaller proportion **use a digital platform to engage with the arts** (74%).

Nearly half of the ACT population use the internet to **watch live or recorded performances or view virtual exhibits and museums** (46%), and over a third use the internet to **follow, interact or research artists or art communities** (37%). Just under one in five Australians in the ACT **create art or learn to create art online** (18%).

## Research approach

The 2022 National Arts Participation Survey was conducted in September–October 2022 and the results are based on a nationally representative sample of 9,396 people. The survey sample included 625 ACT residents.

The previous National Arts Participation Survey was conducted in 2019, prior to the disruptions of COVID-19 and provided a benchmark of Australians' arts engagement before the pandemic. The 2022 survey results, in comparison, provide an update on arts engagement in the wake of COVID-19.

The 2022 survey results provide critical insights into how Australians' arts engagement might be changing following the disruptions felt by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in relation to the role of the arts for our individual and collective wellbeing. The 2022 survey closely examined Australians' relationship with the arts throughout lockdown periods, providing insights into the impact of COVID-19 on mental health and wellbeing. It asked participants to reflect on their digital arts engagement throughout this time and to share their own perceptions of how their engagement might have changed.

Where a one or two percentage point difference is statistically significant, it has been reported as a change since 2019. However, if the same percentage point difference is not statistically significant (based on the sample size), this is reported as unchanged, or consistent with 2019.