

The Impact of COVID-19 on Arts Organizations in Centre Wellington

A REPORT OF FINDINGS FROM AN ONLINE SURVEY
NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2020



Survey Methodology

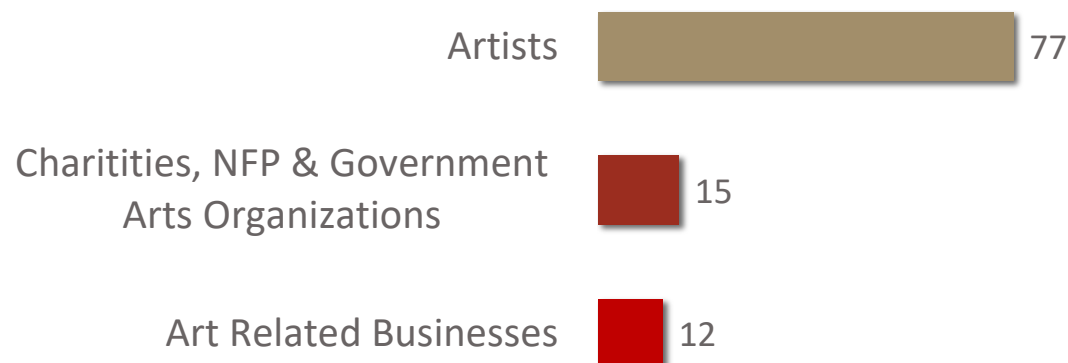
In the fall of 2020 the Elora Fergus Arts Council surveyed artists, arts organizations and arts related businesses to determine the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Township of Centre Wellington.

Responses were collected through an anonymous online questionnaire from November 1 to December 31, 2020.

The arts community was informed of the survey by email, social media, newspaper, radio and word of mouth.

This report provides results from the 15 Arts Organizations that responded to the survey. Two separate reports give results from the artists and arts related businesses that responded.

RESPONDENTS



Charities, NFP & Government Arts Organization Demographics



- ^ 15 Arts Organizations responded to the survey:

5 registered charities

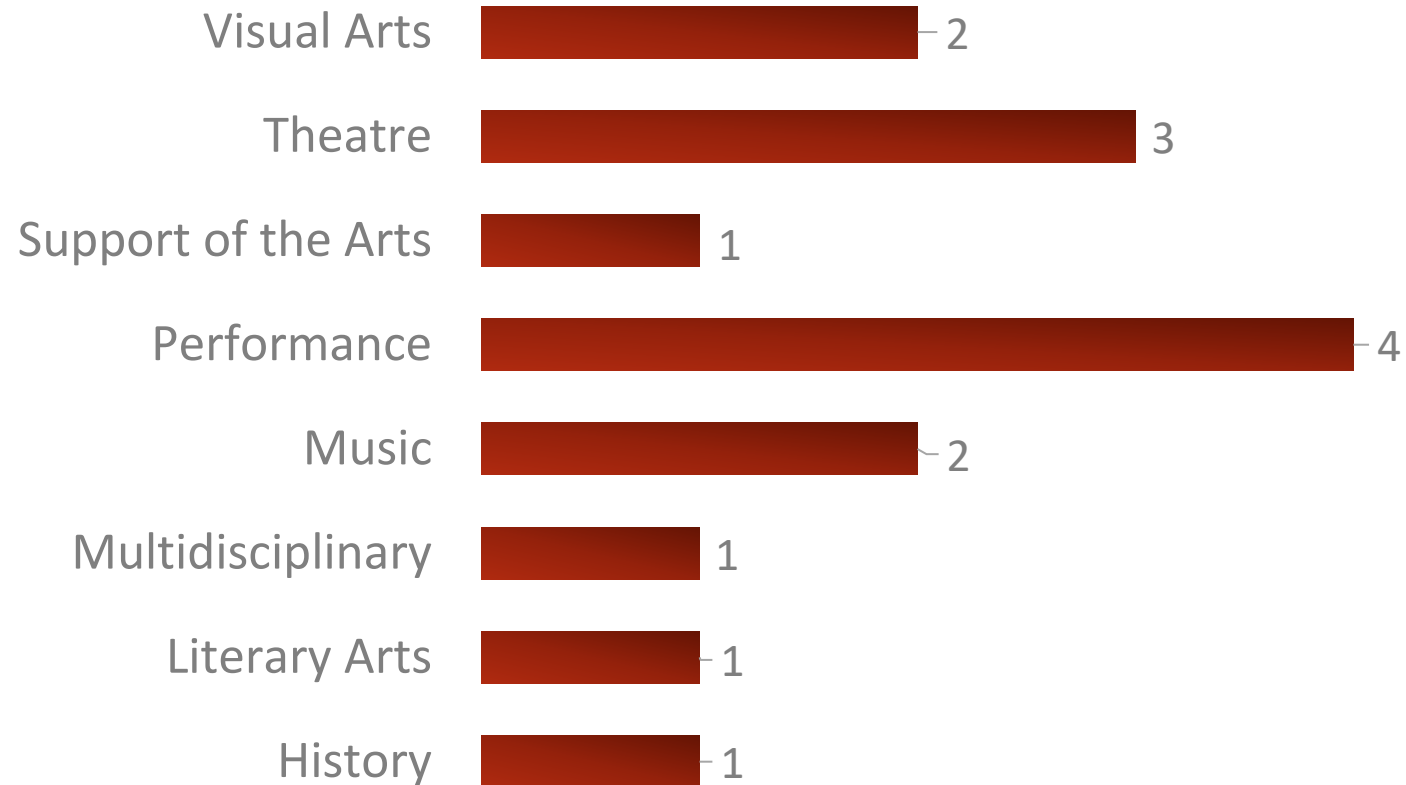
7 incorporated Not-for-Profits

1 non-incorporated Not-for-Profit

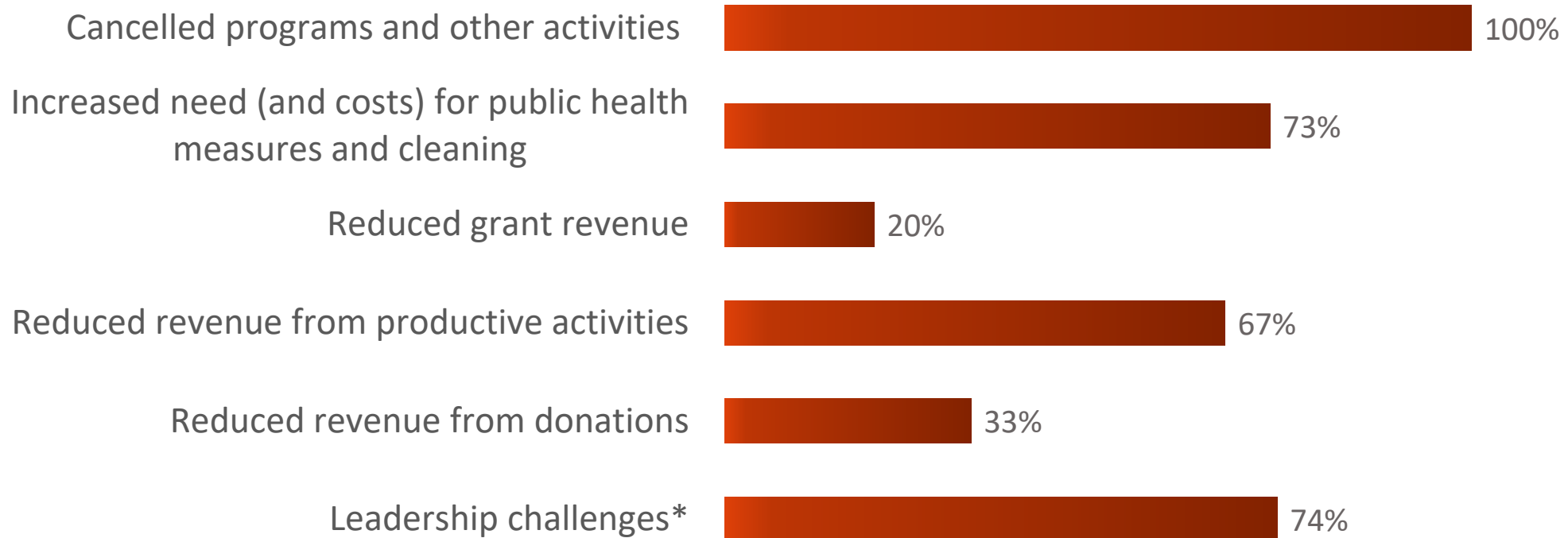
2 governmental organizations.

- ^ Many Arts Organizations undertake several types of activity, such as art education, art sales, creation of art, publishing, and offering studio and performance space.
- ^ All but one of the 15 organization respondents presented performances and events.
- ^ All the respondents had been in existence for over 10 years.

Primary Purpose of Arts Organizations



Impact on the Activities on Arts Organizations

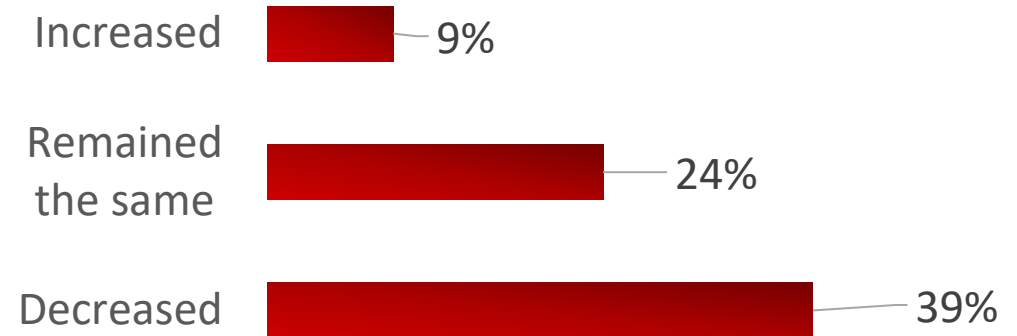


* Meetings sporadic, technical difficulties with online meetings, ad hoc decision making, reduced engagement of board, director resignations, difficulty recruiting board members.

Impact on Volunteers

- ^ With a reduction in activities, the need for volunteer opportunities declined, just at a time when many people may have had time on their hands to volunteer.
- ^ 8 organizations reported a decline in the volunteer activities they could offer to the community
- ^ 3 had no change in number of volunteer positions and reported volunteer resignations, including board members.

Volunteer Opportunities



Impact on Leadership of Arts Organizations



There was a significant impact on the leadership of Arts Organizations. The challenges reported will impact the ability of the organizations to survive, should the restrictions on activities and events continue for an extended period.

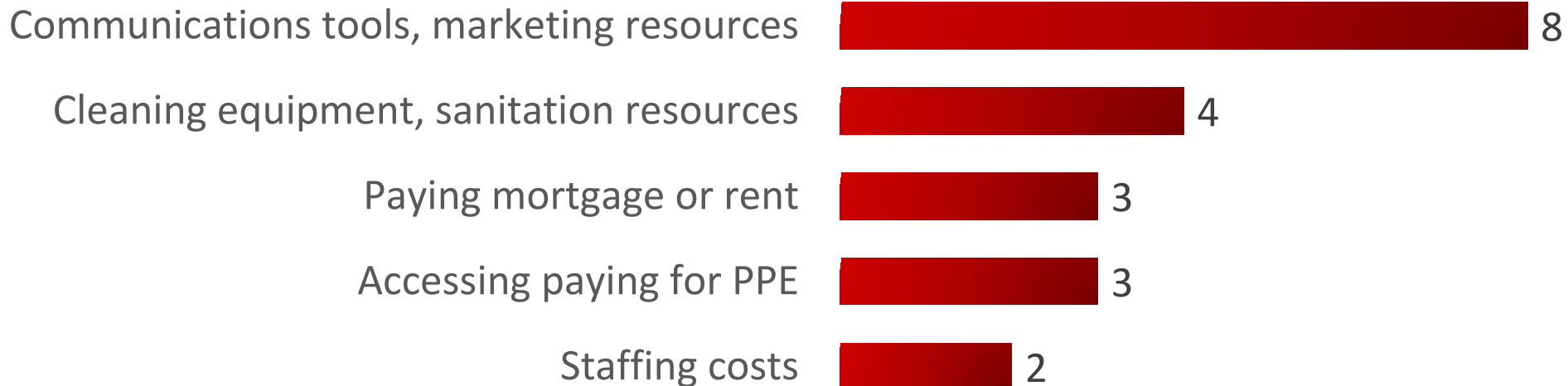


Arts Organization Needs Right Now



All but three Arts Organizations reported that they had current needs that are the result of dealing with the pandemic.

Most of the Arts Organizations were entirely volunteer managed: only 2 organizations reported issues paying wages.



Other issues reported include: recruiting new staff and volunteer board members, and technical support.

Major Themes Identified

The prognosis for Centre Wellington's Art Organizations was mixed.

- ^ 8 (53%) said they felt confident they could meet financial obligations for the foreseeable future.
- ^ 3 (20%) expected they would be unable to meet financial obligations by the end of June 2021.
- ^ 2 (13%) stated they were unable to do so when they completed the survey

Since the majority of Centre Wellington's Arts Organizations are entirely dependent of volunteers, there were few job losses.

One area of significant need for the majority of the organizations was for support with communications and marketing. This perhaps offers an opportunity for cooperative action to meet the common need.

Major Themes Identified (cont'd)

The Arts Organizations were feeling considerable stress:

- ^ Their activities had stopped or completely closed down at times.
- ^ Revenues, including donations, had been drastically reduced.
- ^ Volunteer opportunities had been reduced, resulting in reduced community profile, engagement and support for the organizations.
- ^ Many boards were disengaged and experiencing difficulty meeting regularly and following normal decision-making practices.

The small size and limited financial obligations of much of the sector provided natural resiliency for at least some of the Arts Organizations. It is hoped that those that have been able to pivot their activities will succeed and along with those who were hibernating the time of restrictions and rise again when our community is able to open up.



The online survey was conducted by the Elora Fergus Arts Council, a non-profit organization committed to the encouragement and promotion of the arts in Centre Wellington.

The objectives of the EFAC are:

- ^ to advance the understanding and expansion of arts in the community
- ^ to support artists, both amateur and professional
- ^ to work with other organizations to provide information, funding and promotion opportunities for the arts.

We believe that the arts are essential to human development and well-being of society, and that artistic expression is a powerful transformative element in the community, building identity, cohesion and prosperity.

In support of these objectives the EFAC applies for funding from municipal, provincial and private sources and is in part supported by membership fees and fundraising activities.

For more information on these arts programs and more visit elorafergusartscouncil.ca