

The Impact of COVID-19 on Arts Related Businesses in Centre Wellington

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



Survey Methodology

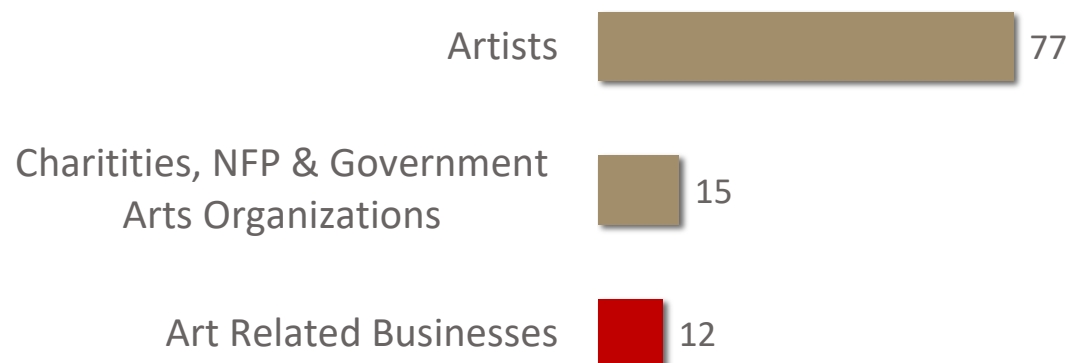
In the fall of 2020 the Elora Fergus Arts Council surveyed artists, arts organizations and arts related businesses to determine the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Township of Centre Wellington.

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 12 Arts Related Businesses that responded to the survey. Two separate reports give results from the artists and organizations who responded.

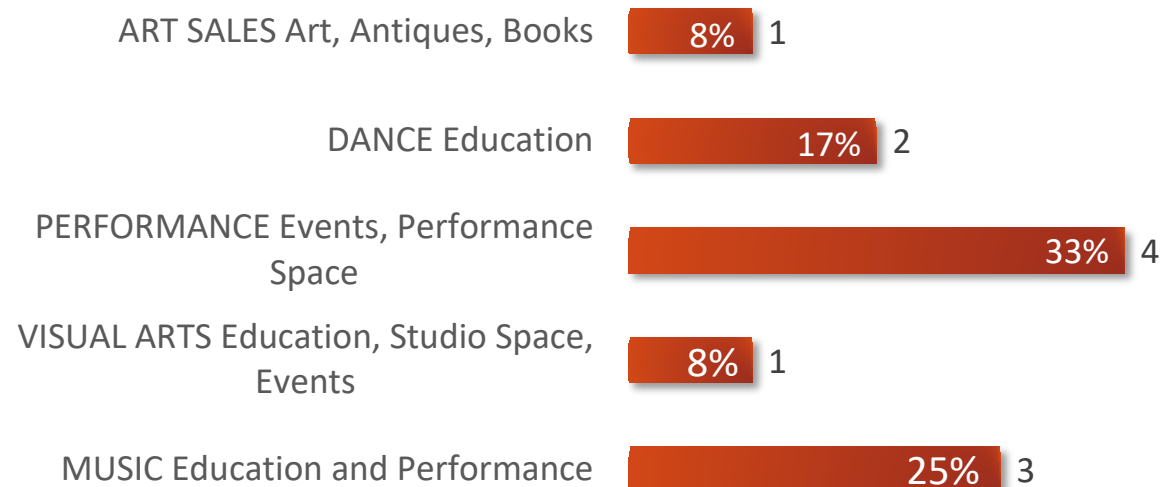
RESPONDENTS



Demographics & Activities

- ^ 12 Arts Businesses responded to the survey.
- ^ Many Arts Businesses undertake several types of activity, such as art education, art sales, creation of art, and offering studio and performance space.
- ^ Four of the Arts Business respondents had been in operation for 6 to 10 years.
- ^ The remaining 8 businesses had been in operation for more than 10 years.

ARTS BUSINESS ACTIVITIES



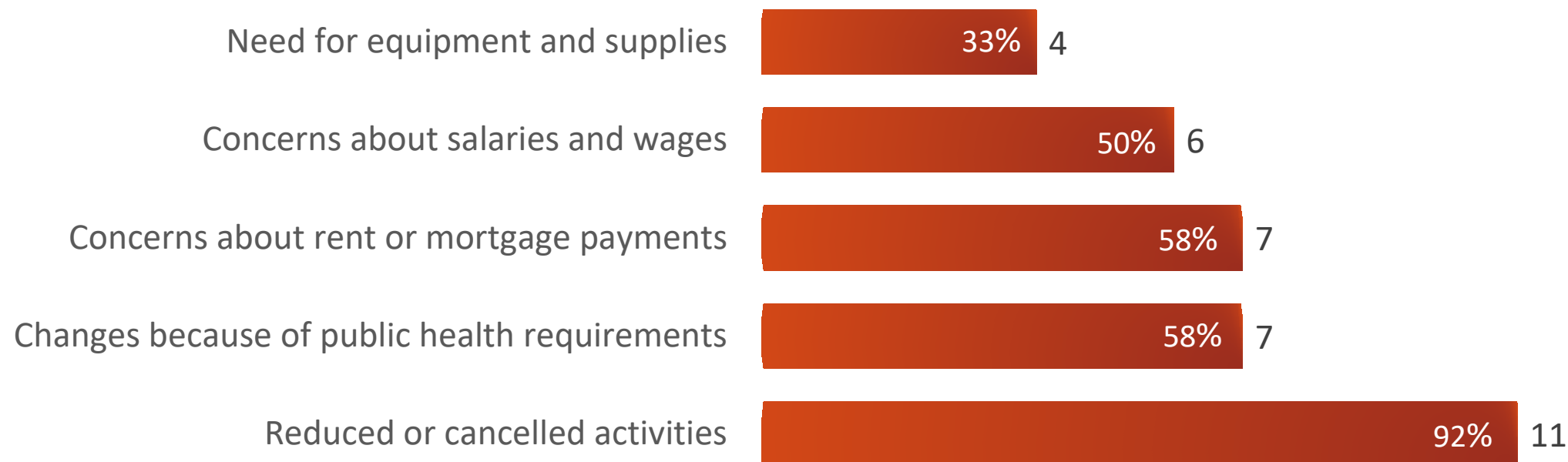
Impact on Arts Business Activities

The pandemic had considerable impact on the Arts Businesses:

- ^ 11 businesses reported reduced business and some cancelled all activities
- ^ One business maintained the same activity level.
- ^ Reduced activities resulted in decreased revenue.
- ^ Two businesses noted that the workload had increased but revenues fallen.
- ^ Five businesses reported moving their activities online.
- ^ No respondents reported laying off staff.

Impact on Arts Business Activities

Arts Businesses were impacted in a number of ways by the government imposed restrictions:

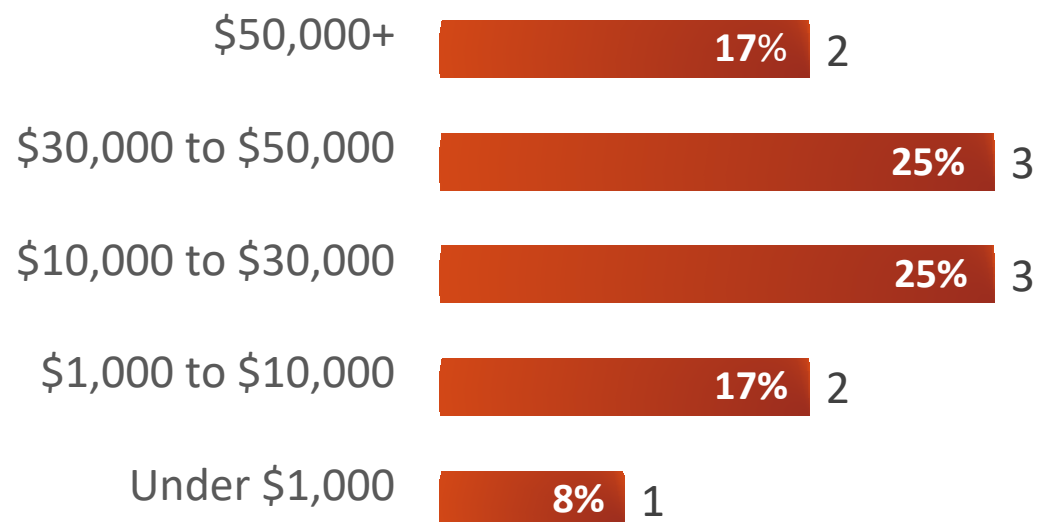


Only 2 businesses mentioned needs regarding tech support and studio access.

Financial Impact

Shutdowns, event restrictions and physical distancing due to COVID-19 have reduced the revenue of Arts Businesses.

LOSS OF REVENUE



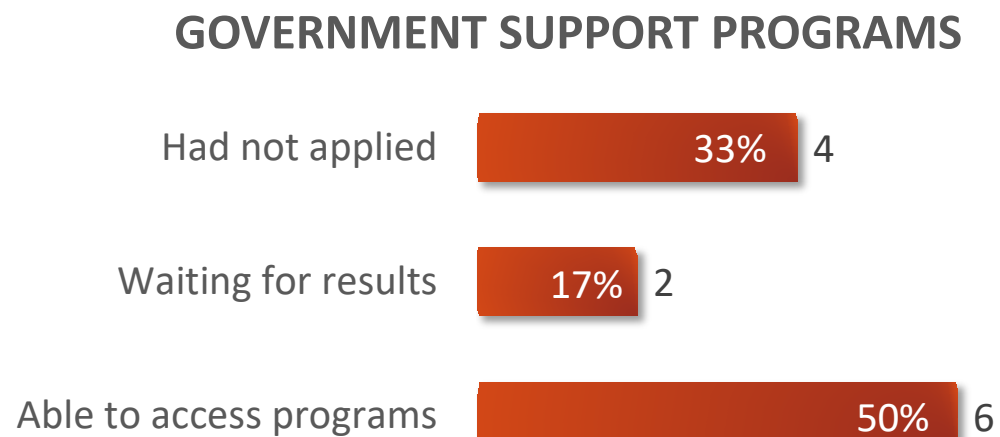
Slightly more than half of the respondents had confidence in their ability to weather the pandemic in spite of loss of income and uncertainty. Not all were so optimistic.

- ^ 8 (58%) said they felt confident they could meet financial obligations for the foreseeable future.
- ^ 3 (25%) expected they would be unable to meet financial obligations by the end of June 2021.
- ^ 1 (8%) stated they were unable to do so when they completed the survey.

Government Support Programs

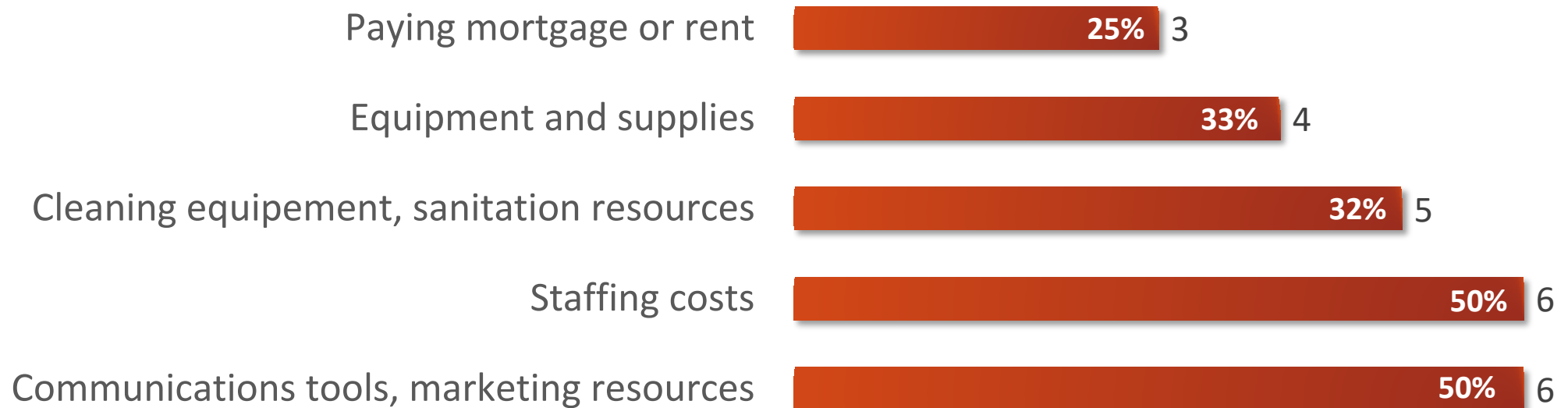
Overall, recipients were pleased with the support they had been able to receive:

- ^ 6 (50%) of respondents were able to access government COVID support programs.
- ^ 2 (17%) were waiting to hear the results of their applications at the time they completed the survey.
- ^ 4 (33%) had not applied.



Needs of Arts Businesses Right Now

All but one Arts Business reported current needs as a result of dealing with the pandemic. Some listed only one or two challenges at the moment; others listed up to six issues.



Other issues reported include: accessing and paying for Personal Protective Equipment, recruiting new staff, and technical support.

Major Themes Identified

The ability of Centre Wellington's Arts Businesses to survive the pandemic was unclear.

- ^ Over 50% of the businesses felt they could meet their financial obligations for the foreseeable future.
- ^ All businesses reported cancelling activities and loss of revenue as a result.

All the respondents saw reductions in revenue but surprisingly none reported laying off staff, perhaps because they are small and have small staff compliments.

Arts Businesses made use of government assistance programs put in place to assist small businesses. Almost 2/3 applied and had been successful in accessing this support. Many had been able to access more than one program.

Some of the Arts Businesses had been able to pivot to provide their services virtually.

The Arts Related Businesses in Centre Wellington contribute greatly to the atmosphere and quality of life of those living here and visiting. We hope that they will be able to bounce back when we return to normal.



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