

Arts Strategy Public Engagement Executive Summary

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Background | 1 |
| Notification Methods for Engagement | 2 |
| Engagement Methods..... | 3 |
| Art Survey Engagement Events, September 8- November 5, 2016 | 3 |
| Focus Groups Events..... | 4 |
| On Line Survey Results..... | 4 |
| Focus Group results | 22 |

Background

The new Arts Strategy (2017-2022) will replace the existing Arts Strategy to reflect the cultural growth of the City. It will be a guiding document that will renew, refresh, and re-envision plans for the development of the arts in New Westminster.

Since Council’s adoption of the Arts Strategy Work plan on February 29, 2016, the following milestones have been completed:

- The Arts Strategy community launch was held on April 28 at Anvil Centre. At that launch, 48 participants from different art sectors of the city took part in a SWOT analysis. The event also included a cultural program at Anvil Theatre and tours of the Community Art Space, New Media Gallery and New Westminster Museum.
- An Arts Strategy Task Force was formed made up of dedicated community members who are cultural stakeholders in the city. There are representatives from the Arts Council, New Westminster Library, New Media Gallery, New Westminster Secondary School, Massey Theatre, practicing artists, business sector, a representative of the Public Art Advisory Committee, youth and a multicultural representative as well as a member of Council. This committee meets monthly and is the driving force behind the Arts Strategy.

- A City staff Arts Strategy committee was formed to guide the process internally. The committee will ensure that the proposed recommendations can be implemented efficiently and are interdepartmentally connected with other City strategies and policies. Having a staff team would enhance inter-departmental ties and help identify gaps and opportunities in the holistic cultural development of the city. It will also assure a successful implementation of the Arts Strategy once it is adopted. Senior staff from Parks and Recreation, Planning, Communications, Economic, Museum and Archives Services departments are representative on this Task Force.

The public launch of the Arts Strategy survey was on September 8, 2016 at 7pm in conjunction with the WITNESS exhibition opening of the New Media Gallery at Anvil Centre. It closed on November 5, 2016. The survey took an inventory of the cultural stakeholders and audience demographics in the city, identified gaps in services, catalogued the current arts facilities, surveyed the arts information, and assessed the public value and social benefits of the arts in our community. There were different ways that the community could participate in the survey, including: on line, in person, and at various cultural and other community events in the city. Information about the survey was available at local art galleries, schools, cultural organization offices, community centers and other public facilities.

In addition to the survey, a series of specific focus groups will be held throughout the city to further examine issues, trends and gaps in services with specific stakeholders in the community. These focus groups included members of the following sectors: Economic, Social and Health Services, Media and Communication, Arts Organizations and Artists, Schools, Educators and Library.

Notification Methods for Notification for Survey and Engagement Events

Newspaper ads

Email lists

Social Media

Billboards

Magazine ads

Newsletters

Social Media Campaign

Cultural Services monthly newsletter

City of New Westminster website

Anvil Centre website
Postcards
Posters

Engagement Methods

On line survey

Focus groups

Art Survey Engagement Events, September 8- November 5, 2016

WITNESS Opening at New Media Gallery September 8, (Launch of Survey)
VIBE, September 10
Sundown Youth Festival, Westminster Pier Park, September 16
Lantern Festival, Port Royal Park, September 18
Hyack Homecoming, Mercer Stadium, September 23
RiverFest, Saturday, September 24
Art to Go, Arts Council of New Westminster Saturday, September 24
Artist and Artisan Market Saturday, September 24
Royal City Farmers Market, September 29
Culture Days, September, Anvil Centre, September 30 – October 2
Seniors Day Festival, Century House, October 1
Momentum Youth Festival, October 14-18
Sound of Music Sing-a-Long, Massey Theatre, October 16
New Westminster Film Festival, October 20-22
Mediated Visions, Anvil Theatre, October 18
Douglas College Awards, Anvil Centre, October 19
Uptown Unplugged, Sundays and Saturdays, until October 3
New West Craft, October 1 and October 15
Diwali Festival, Queensborough Community Centre, October 23
Art Opening at Gallery at Queens Park, October 5
Art Opening at Gallery at Queens Park, November 2
Last Monday at the Movies, September 26 and October 31
PechaKucha, November 5

Focus Groups Events

Economic, October 12, 5-6pm, Anvil Centre

Social and Health October 14, 10:30am, City Hall

Arts and Art Organizations, October 13, Old Crow Coffee, 2pm - 3pm

Plaskett Gallery at Massey Theatre, 7pm - 8:30pm

Schools and Education, October 27, 5-6pm, Anvil Centre

Communications and Networks, November 1, 7-8pm, Gallery at Queens Park

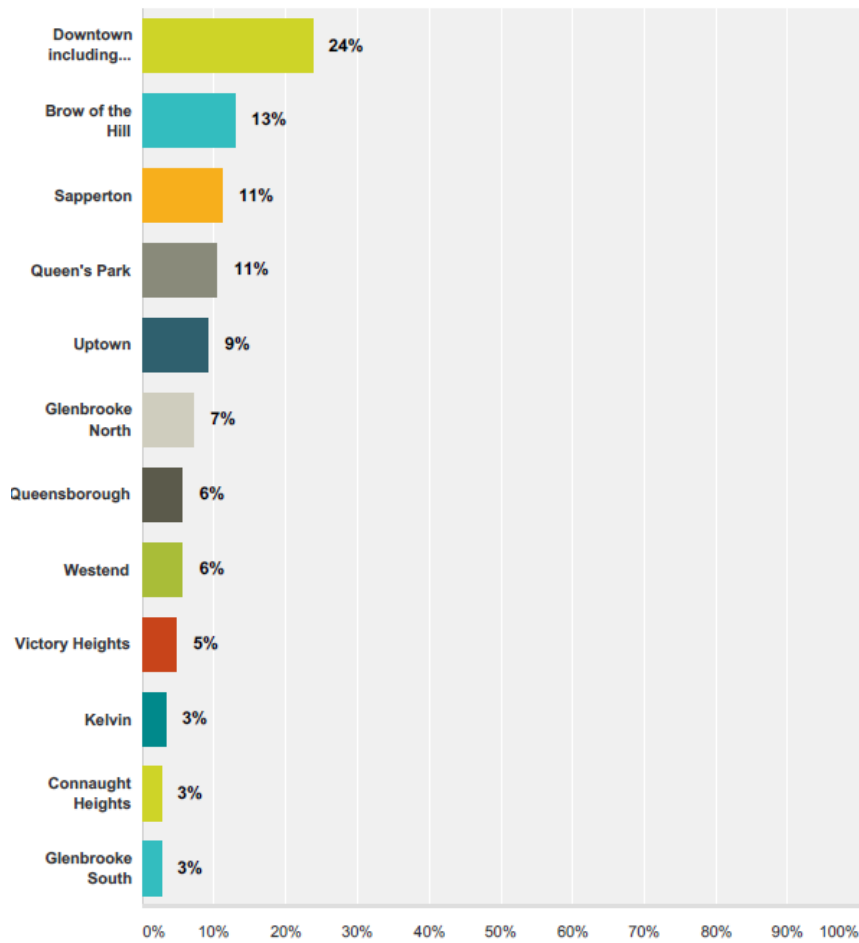
Parks and Recreation Leadership Session, October 27, 1-2pm, Anvil Centre, room 417

On Line Survey Results

The following results are from the 508 completed online feedback survey responses received.

Q1 Are you a resident of New Westminster? Please choose your neighbourhood

Answered: 370 Skipped: 138



Q2 Are you a visitor? Where are you from?

Answered: 152 Skipped: 356

The most common answers for survey participants from outside of New Westminster were:

Vancouver

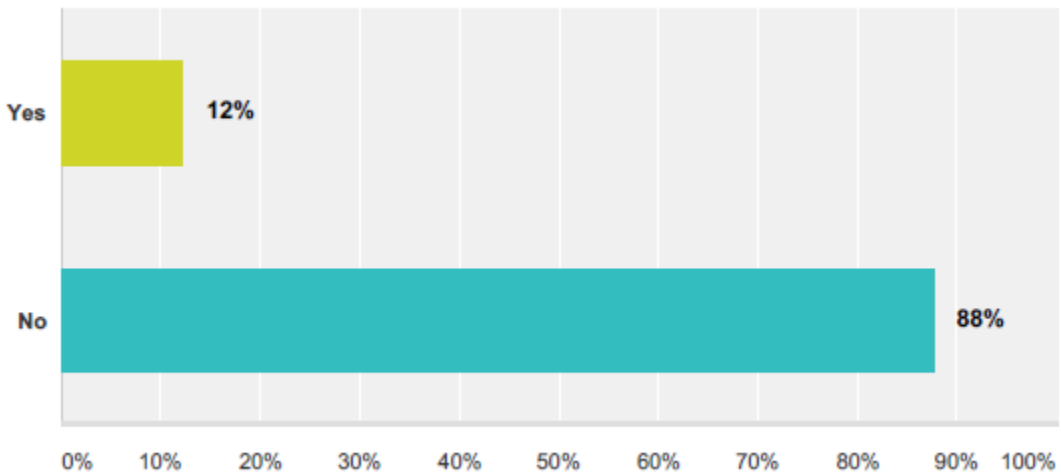
Surrey

Burnaby

North Vancouver

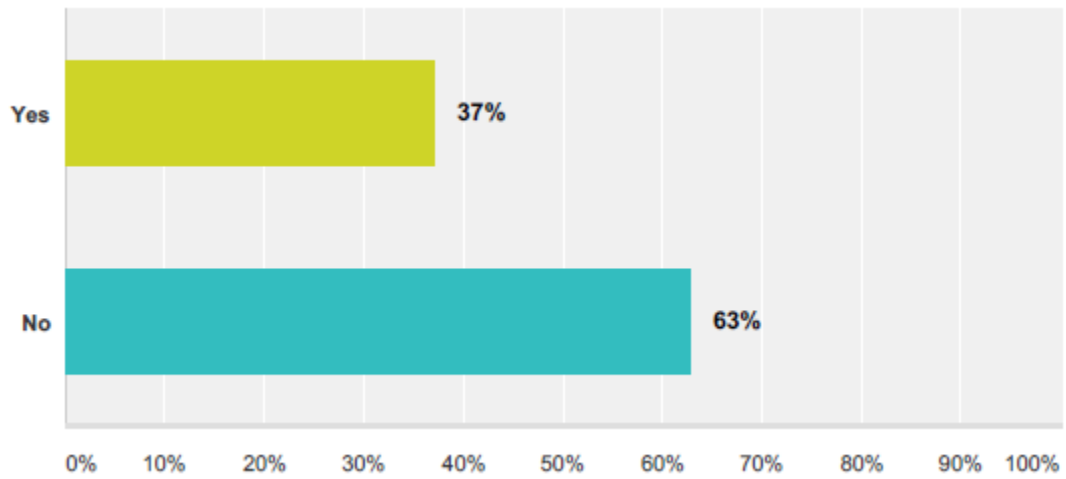
Q3 Are you a business owner in New Westminster?

Answered: 494 Skipped: 14



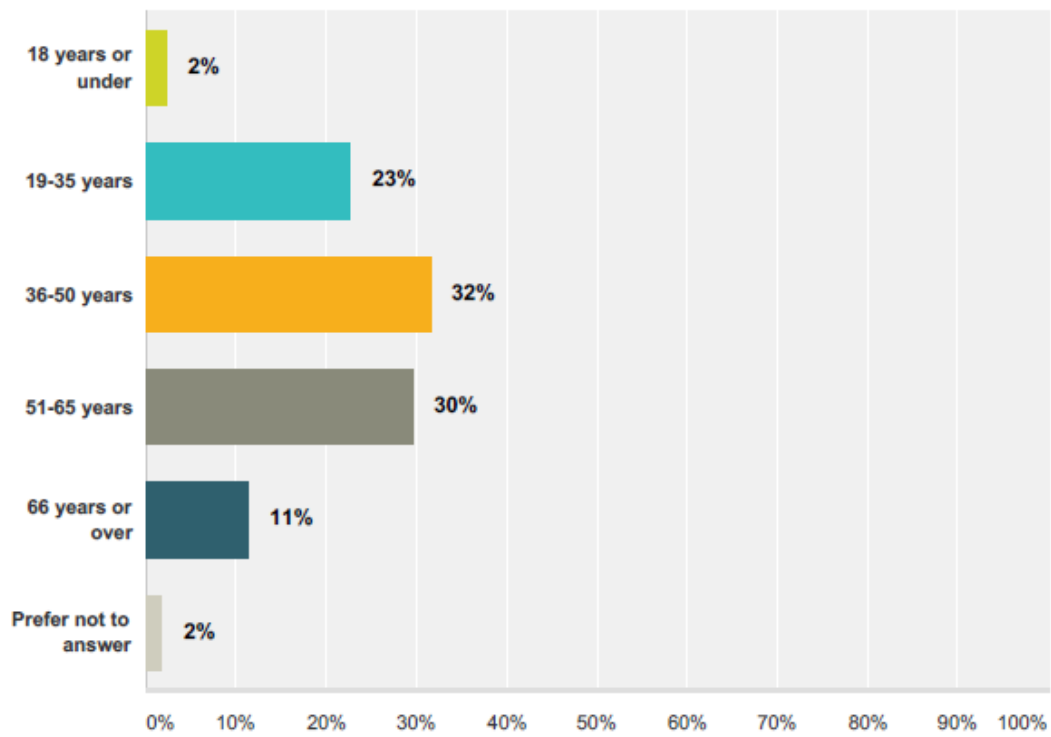
Q4 Are you employed in New Westminster?

Answered: 493 Skipped: 15



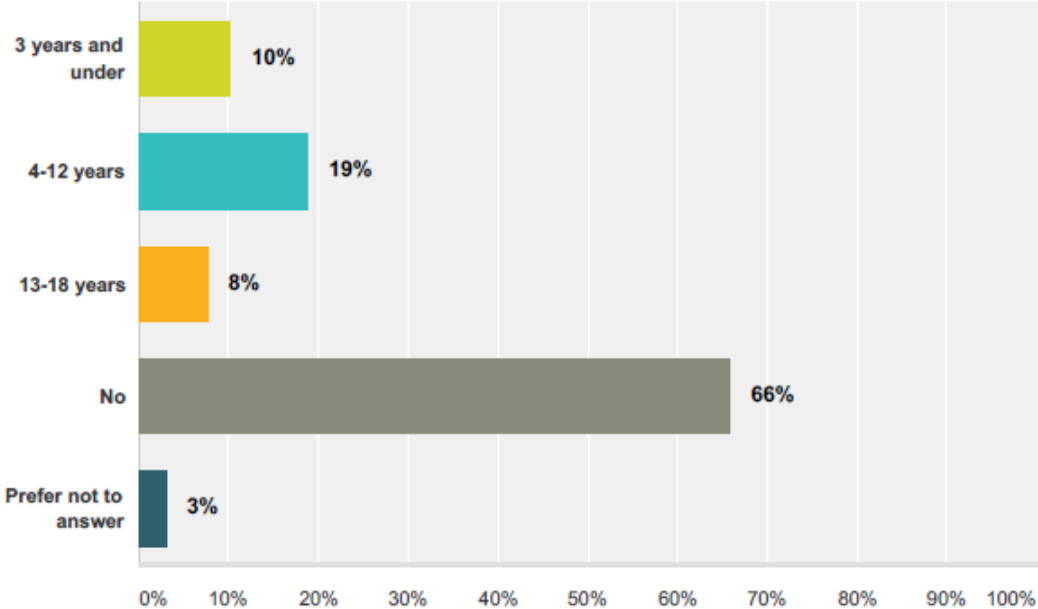
Q5 Please select your age range:

Answered: 506 Skipped: 2



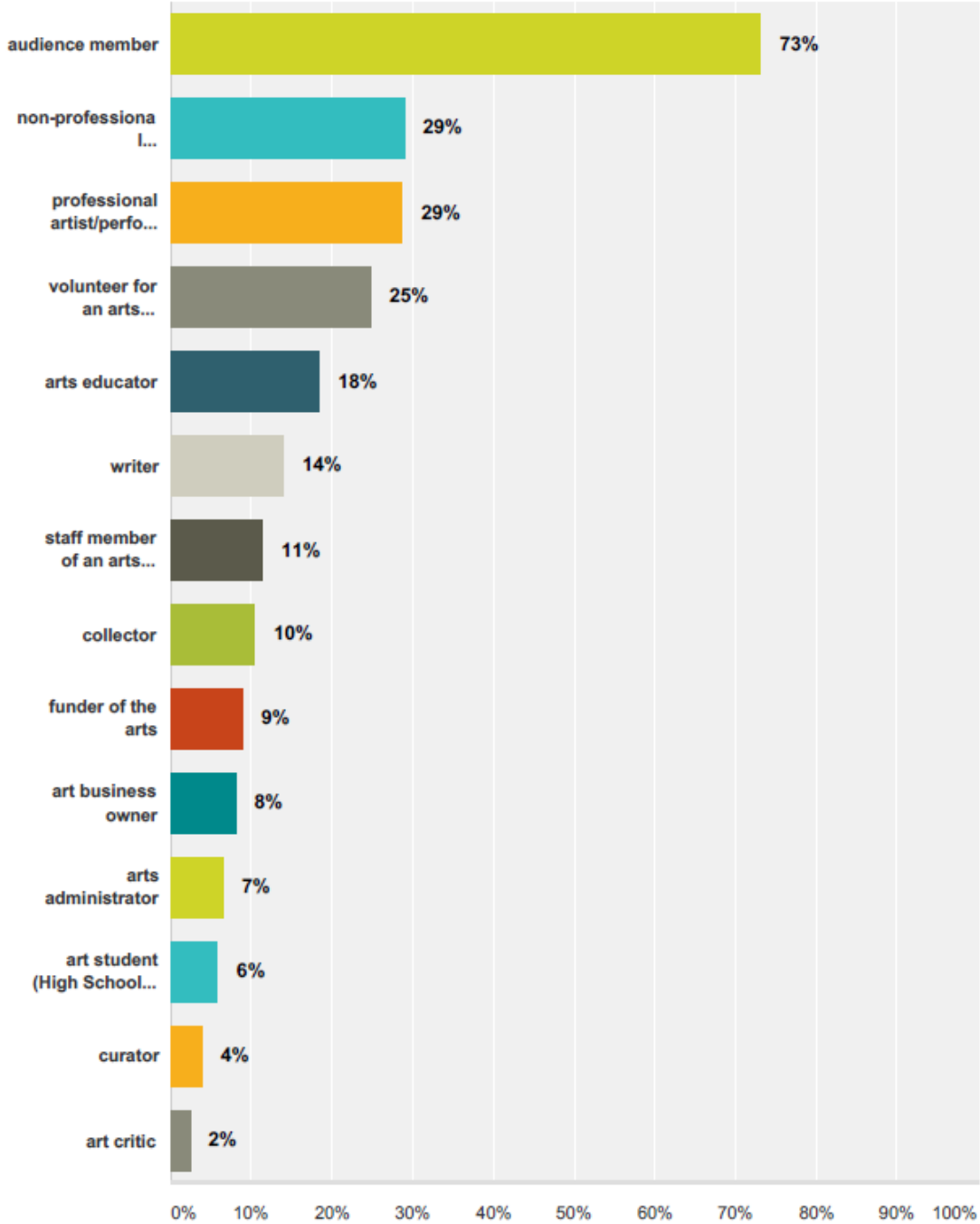
Q6 Do you have children living at home?

Answered: 495 Skipped: 13



Q7 What best describes your interest or involvement in the arts? (check all that apply)

Answered: 498 Skipped: 10



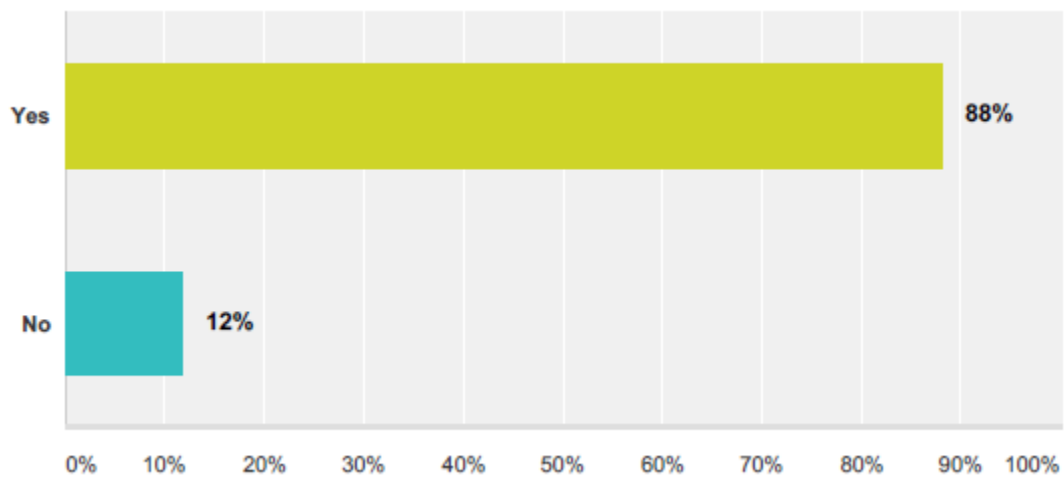
Q8 Choose up to 6 art disciplines that are of most interest to you. Please rank them in order of importance to you, with 1 being the most important.

Answered: 501 Skipped: 7

| | |
|-------------|----------|
| Music | 11.93/14 |
| Theatre | 11.83/14 |
| Visual Arts | 11.77/14 |
| Performance | 10.58/14 |
| Public art | 10.25/14 |
| Film | 10.25/14 |

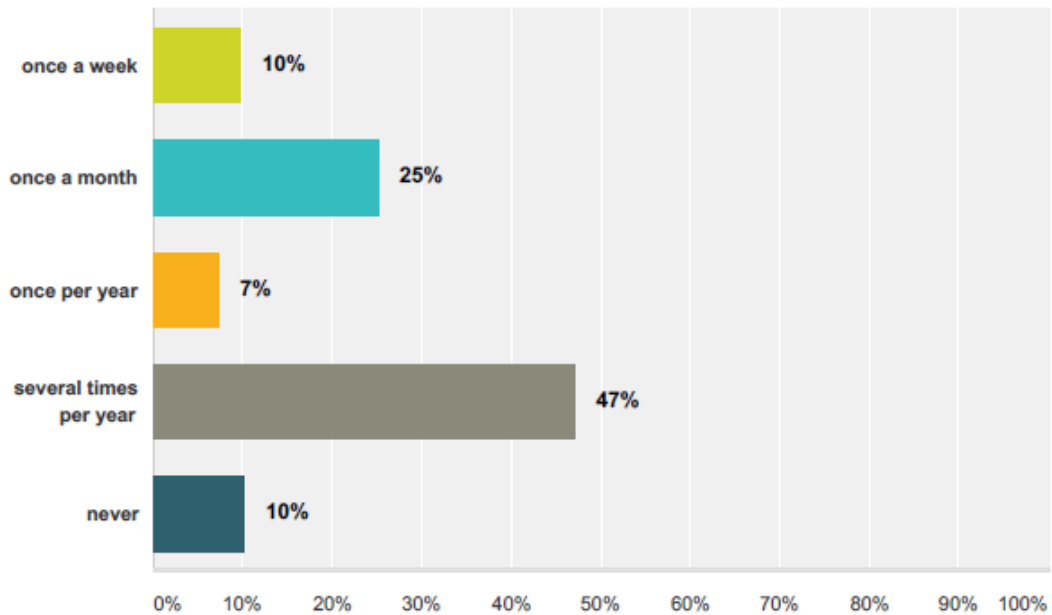
Q9 Do you attend art activities in New Westminster?

Answered: 500 Skipped: 8



Q10 How often do you attend?

Answered: 496 Skipped: 12



Q11 What art activities do you attend in New Westminster?

Answered: 425 Skipped: 83

Themes from 425 responses

Top five responses: Anvil Centre, Massey Theatre, New Media Gallery, Community Art Space, Gallery at Queens Park.

Other popular responses: Public Art, 100 Braid St Studios, Last Monday at the Movies, New West Film Fest, Cultural Crawl, Royal City Musical Theatre, Old Crow, Uptown Unplugged, Poetry readings, Live Music Events, Bernie Legge Theatre, Royal City Youth Ballet, Momentum Youth Festival, Cultural Performances at St. Barnabas Church, Craft Markets, Pecha Kucha, Music at Pier Park, Uptown Live.

Q12 What are the barriers to your participation?

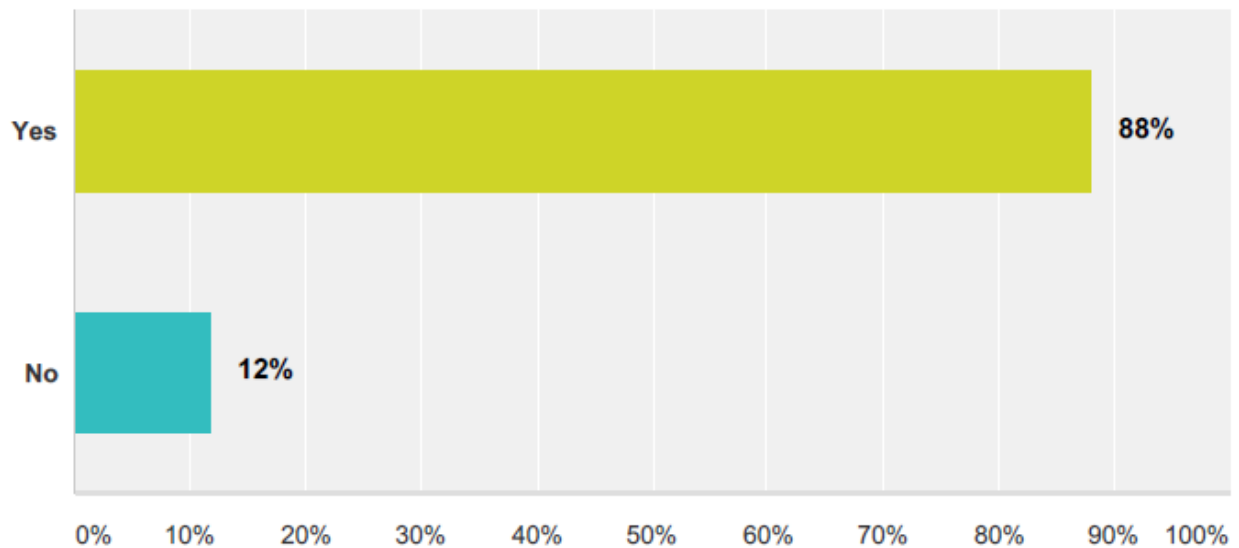
Answered: 385 Skipped: 123

Most common themes from 385 responses

- Time (work full time, not able to come out on weekends, lack of time, scheduling with other events, personal time, hours of operation, too busy)
- Accessibility (cost)
- Variety (lack of diversity, new voices, socially relevant programs, quality of work, critical and contemporary engagement)
- Marketing and communication awareness (not enough notice, not much info on events, di-centralized marketing, lack of publicity, arts activities insulated from general public)
- Distance (too far from home/work, not on transit route, transportation, parking, too far, geographic location)
- Age (too many programs for kids and seniors, not enough offerings for adults 18-35)
- Childcare (access to childcare, cost)

Q13 Do you attend art activities outside of New Westminster?

Answered: 501 Skipped: 7



Q14 What makes you attend art activities outside of New Westminster?

Answered: 419 Skipped: 89

Most common themes from 419 responses

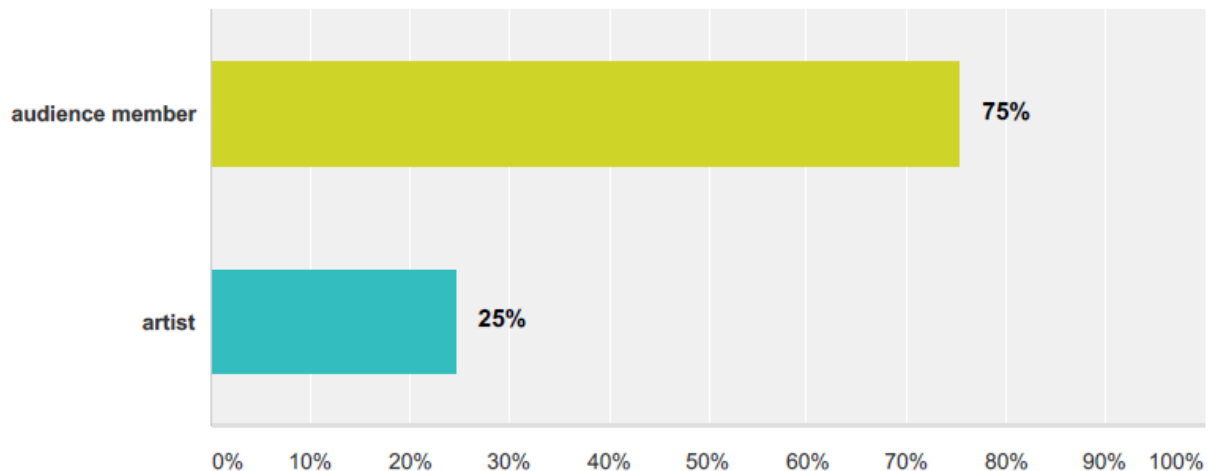
- Variety of programming and art events (challenging exhibitions and productions, new artists, professional productions, critical and experimental programming, quality of offerings, variety of content, new and contemporary works, quality of excellence, subject matter, innovative, boundary pushing, imaginative, international or national programs)
- Marketing, promotion and awareness
- Location, proximity to home or work
- Networking possibilities

Other themes included:

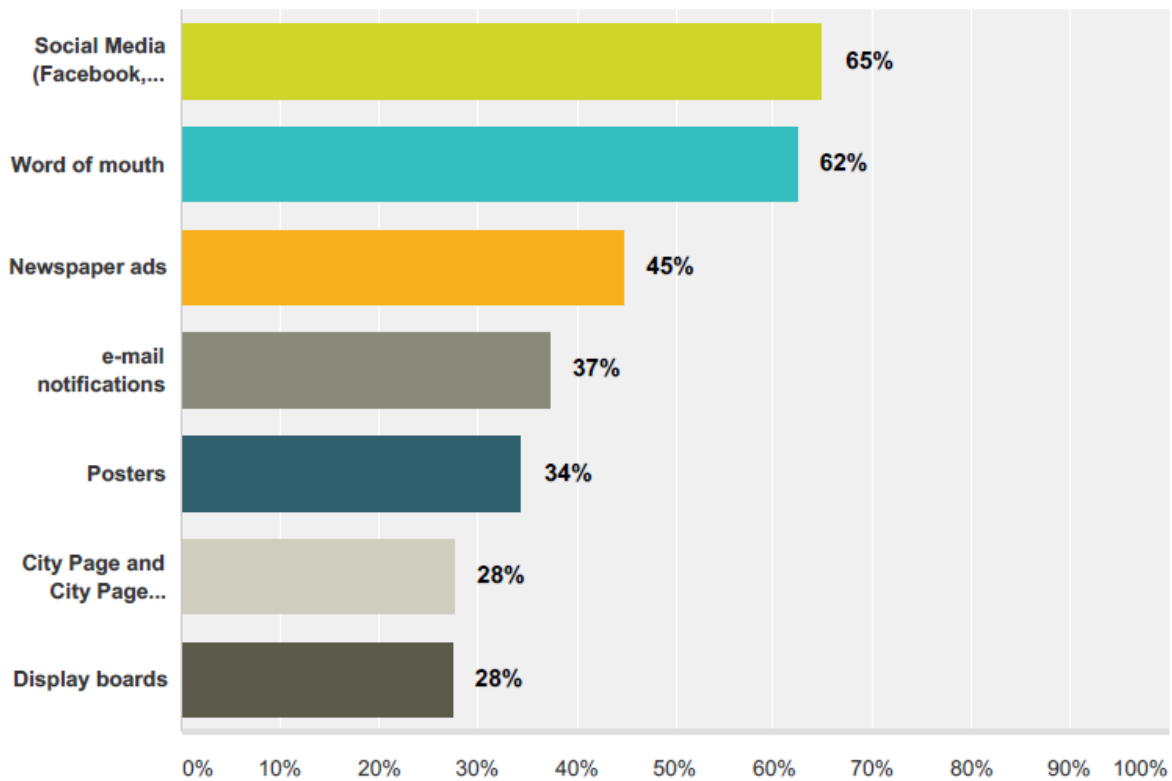
Live theatre, larger theatre productions, live music, shows that don't come to New Westminster, quality of galleries (Contemporary Arts Gallery, Vancouver Art Gallery, Burnaby Art Gallery, Surrey Art Gallery), Jazz festivals, Mural Festival, Harmony Arts Festival.

Q15 Do you participate as an audience member or artist?

Answered: 496 Skipped: 12



Q16 Where do you find information about the arts in New Westminster? Choose all that apply.
Answered: 487 Skipped: 21



Q17 If you find out about the arts in New Westminster through a cultural newsletter, website or publication, please tell us which one(s):
Answered: 167 Skipped: 341

Themes from 167 responses

- Arts Council Newsletter
- Cultural Services Newsletter
- Tenth to the Fraser
- Old Crow
- Opus Art Newsletter
- Alliance for the Arts
- New West Artists
- 100 Braid Street
- Georgia Straight

- Receive very little information
- I don't get information

Q18 How important to you are the arts in New Westminster?

Answered: 450 Skipped: 58

16/20

Q19 Please evaluate the quality of art activities in New Westminster:

Answered: 464 Skipped: 44

5 Excellent

4 Very Good

3 Good

2 Average

1 Poor

Average number 3.5/5

Q20 Please evaluate the quantity of art activities in New Westminster:

Answered: 457 Skipped: 51

5 Excellent

4 Very Good

3 Good

2 Average

1 Poor

Average number 4/5

Q21 Please evaluate the level accessibility of art activities in New Westminster:

Answered: 440 Skipped: 68

5 Excellent

4 Very Good

3 Good

2 Average

1 Poor

Average number 3.5/5

Q22 Please evaluate the level of inclusion in art activities in New Westminster:
Answered: 436 Skipped: 72

5 Excellent
4 Very Good
3 Good
2 Average
1 Poor
Average number 3.9/5

Q23 What impact do you believe a vibrant and diverse arts community has on:
Answered: 370 Skipped: 138

| | |
|------------------------|--------|
| Economic Development | 88.11% |
| Community Well Being | 92.70% |
| Tourism | 86.22% |
| Education | 87.57% |
| Quality of Life | 90.00% |
| Neighbourhood Identity | 83.51% |

Economic Development

Themes from 326 responses

- Arts and Culture build relationships
- Crucial impact
- Brings tourism dollars
- Very important to local businesses
- Art related activities create jobs and promote consumer spending where events are executed
- Encourages investment and new business developments
- Communities exposed to arts are more innovative and engaged and more likely to invest back in their community
- It is the core of a vibrant city
- Encourages sponsorship
- Makes New Westminster a destination

- Could have but likely not yet given the types of activities currently taking place in the city
- Somewhat

Quote from a participant:

“The quality of a community’s cultural infrastructure has a direct impact on quality of life and therefore on the competitiveness of communities in attracting people and investment. Cultural development plays a central role in urban revitalization and community renewal strategies. The arts attract businesses, visitors and new residents, contributing to increased tax revenues. Cultural offerings enhance the market appeal of an area. In the new economy, business success depends on an ability to recruit skilled knowledge workers. The arts and cultural offerings of a region are often considered by companies and workers when deciding where to relocate. The arts attract tourism dollars. Public support of cultural tourism plays a critical role in community revitalization as well as the expansion of tourism – one of the fastest-growing economic markets in the country today. Like many other knowledge industries, the cultural sector is a dynamic one that depends above all on a creative and productive workforce, rather than on specialized equipment. Expenditures in this sector constitute a very valuable investment, as they contribute to the development of lasting expertise that is both highly sought-after and exportable. Further, investment in the arts and culture results in maximum impact on the Canadian economy because the sector consumes primarily domestic goods and services.”

Community Well Being

Themes from 343 responses

- Engages public
- Creative experiences are very important to a healthy and inclusive community
- A great impact, if enough people are involved
- Important for the community to gather, share and enjoy common experiences
- Reduces crime, increases quality of life
- Provides people with leisure options and a balanced lifestyle
- Only impacts when accessible and welcoming
- Best way to achieve a well-rounded community
- People become isolated if they don’t have an arts outlet

Quote from a participant:

“In an important analysis of the effects of civic participation in arts activities British researcher François Matarasso demonstrates that participation in an arts activity can have a whole range of positive effects on the autonomy of a community. The Arts have a positive impact on how

people feel. They are an effective means of community education. They contribute to a more relaxed atmosphere in the community. They help improve the quality of life of people with poor health. They provide a unique and deep source of enjoyment. Increased self-confidence and sense of self-worth. Extend involvement in social activities, Give people influence over how they are seen by others. Stimulate interest and confidence in the arts at an increasingly more sophisticated level. Provide a forum to explore personal rights and responsibilities. Contribute to children's educational development. Encourage adults to take advantage of education and training opportunities. Help build new skills and work experience. Contribute to people's employability. Help people begin or develop careers or an interest in the arts. Participatory arts projects are essential components of successful social policy. The Arts can open critical dialogue between service users and providers. They involve people missed by other initiatives and introduce creativity, meaning and communication into the equation."

Tourism

Themes from 319 responses

- Public art has an important connection to tourism in the city
- Moderate impact
- Very important to local businesses
- What drives art policy - tourism dollars or community health
- Diverse and accessible public events and festivals
- Only for events that cannot be experiences elsewhere
- Difficult with a large neighbour next door
- The arts is a major driving force for tourism
- The greatest attractions we can offer are arts, arts facilities and the companion activities of food and cultural celebrations. At the centre of the region, NW is singularly placed to draw visitors from all over the region through exceptional facilities, awareness and reputation of long term arts institutions and regional transit connectivity.
- The arts attract tourism dollars. Public support of cultural tourism plays a critical role in community revitalization as well as the expansion of tourism – one of the fastest-growing economic markets in the country today.

Education

Themes from 324 responses

- Those who participate in the arts as audience/observers/spectators/viewers are often inspired to explore their own creativity. Even if one does not create art for a living, an

appreciation for and partaking in art-making enhances creativity, communication, critical thinking, empathy, leadership skills, teamwork and many other human assets.

- The arts help cultivate values and promote culture change
- Essential and incredibly significant impact
- Arts should be incorporated into the public education more
- The arts tell stories, makes information available, records life
- Many studies show the benefits of music and art in education. The arts teach dedication, perseverance, team work (often), etc. They can also lead to self-discovery, build self-confidence, facilitate positive interpersonal relations, and has many, many more positive effects. Not just for developing minds, either.
- Cross boundary thinking

Quote from a participant:

“The relationship between the arts and academic success has been the focus of several studies. Numerous works, in the United States primarily, show that the arts play a unique and vital role in schools and more generally, they influence the development of youth. Educational research shows that children who study the arts demonstrate stronger overall academic performance. With education a top public policy priority, the role of the arts in learning is of increasing interest to parents, educators, legislators, civic leaders and business owners. Arts programs improve students’ self-confidence, build communication and problem-solving skills in children and teens, and prepare young people to be the resourceful and creative problem solvers that employers seek for today’s work force. The arts develop the kinds of innovative minds and creative skills drawn upon by the entertainment, advertising, design, technical, scientific and other industries that enable businesses to compete successfully in the 21st century workplace. Researchers found students with high arts involvement performed better on standardized achievement tests than students with low arts involvement. Development of literacy skills among pre-kindergarteners was fostered when the children were allowed to act out their favourite stories. Dramatic play also helped motivate them to learn. Those who were involved in orchestra or band were more than twice as likely to perform at the highest levels in math as their peers who were not involved in music. Students at risk of not successfully completing their high school educations cite their participation in the arts as reasons for staying in school. The arts teach judgement. From the arts students learn we should celebrate multiple perspectives. To learn in the arts, students need to be able and willing to surrender to the unanticipated possibilities of the work as it unfolds. The Arts traffic in subtleties. How to say what cannot be said. When children are asked what a work of art helps them feel, they must reach into their poetic capacities to find the words that will do the job. The arts’ position in the school

curriculum symbolizes to the young what adults believe is important. The arts are an effective outreach tool to engage youth.”

Quality of Life

Themes from 333 responses

- Inspires, soothes, informs, connects and supports
- Improves only if it is diverse, inclusive and accessible
- Provides community pride

Quote from a participant:

“The arts can be a source of mental, emotional, and even physical improvement. They can often bring stress relief, too- focusing one's mind on creating something helps insulate one from negativity. It has been demonstrated that amateur art activities promote the development of sociability, creativity, judgment, self-esteem and communications skills. Along with education, health is area with the greatest number of studies that make positive connections with the arts.”

Neighbourhood Identity

Themes from 309 responses

- Builds a strong sense of community and connections to neighbors and unique neighbourhoods
- Public art contributes to neighbourhood identify
- Can be a major attraction if properly promoted
- Contributes to creating an identity
- Art and collaboration can bring diverse neighbourhoods and arts groups together
- Creates a sense of place

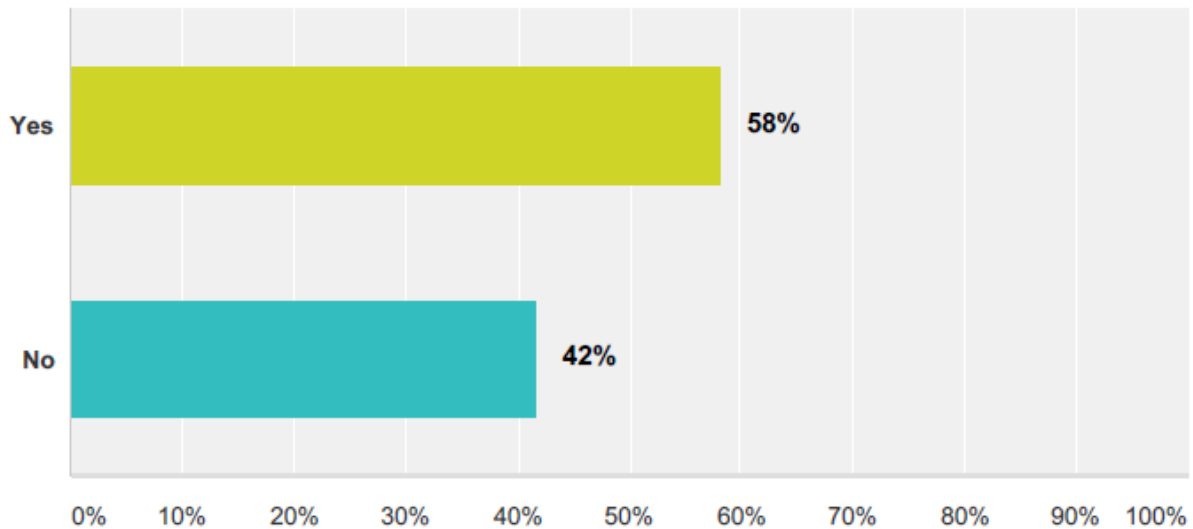
Quote from a participant:

“Cultural development plays a central role in urban revitalization and community renewal strategies. The arts attract businesses, visitors and new residents, contributing to increased tax revenues. Cultural offerings enhance the market appeal of an area. In the new economy, business success depends on an ability to recruit skilled knowledge workers. The arts and cultural offerings of a region are often considered by companies and workers when deciding where to relocate. The effects of participation in artistic projects can lead to a series of useful consequences for public planning for neighbourhoods: Help people develop their creativity and think broadly about community. Transform the range of public art and public arts offerings in a

neighbourhood. Encourage people to accept risk positively. Help community groups extend their vision beyond the immediate. Challenge conventional service delivery and expectations. Raise expectations about what is possible and desirable.”

Q24 Do you or your business invest/sponsor/donate to the arts?

Answered: 482 Skipped: 26



Q25 Arts activities and programs in my community promote diversity and inclusion in the arts

Answered: 421 Skipped: 87

27/50

Q26 Arts activities and programs in my community are inclusive and diverse

Answered: 425 Skipped: 83

33/50

Q27 Arts activities and programs in my community are reflective of our diverse city

Answered: 427 Skipped: 81

36/50

Q28 Arts activities and programs in my community are inclusive of the age ranges in our city

Answered: 430 Skipped: 78

36/50

Q29 Arts activities and programs in my community provide opportunities for those with developmental and social challenges

Answered: 425 Skipped: 83

43/50

Q30 Arts activities and programs in my community contribute to the economic development of the city

Answered: 405 Skipped: 103

30/50

Q31 Comments and feedback: Answered: 156 Skipped: 352

Themes from 156 responses

Need for better communication, marketing and promotion for the arts

Need for experimental and critical programming

Need for maker's spaces, pop up spaces

Affordable live work spaces

Small black box studios

Anvil Centre Theatre too expensive

More indigenous/inclusive programming

More programming opportunities for younger demographics 18-35

Cultural diversity, contemporary multicultural representation

More music concerts at Anvil Centre

Build capacity of arts organizations to further animate and engage the community

Not enough support for contemporary art community, currently more support for community driven and craftsperson market

Anvil Centre is not used to its full capacity for arts and culture

Need for professional theatre

Focus Groups Results

Art Strategy Focus Group – Business Sector

October 12, 2016

Hosted at Anvil Centre

Facilitators:

Biliana Velkova, Kristina Fiedrich, Ruby Campbell, Eden Fine Day, Jacqueline Buchanan

In Attendance:

| | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Laura Drummond | Self Employed |
| Lizz Kelly | New West Chamber |
| Susan Cartwright-Coates | UBA |
| Cindy Oxenbury | Canopy Privacy |
| Patricia Jecks | CNW |
| Kendra Johnston | Downtown NW BIA |
| Jorden Foss | Steel & Oak |
| Blair Fryer | CNW |
| Tej Kainth | Tourism NW |
| Maegan Matthews | Tourism NW |
| Judy Hamilton | Terratap Tech |
| Peter Jorgensen | Patrick Street Productions |
| Susan Greig | 100 Braid Street |

Executive Summary

The main points brought up at the Business Sector Focus group were around the need for a marketing and communication strategy, better promotion of the arts, need for private and public partnerships to create support of the arts in sustainable ways, creation of spaces for collaboration and experimentation. Lack of funding, affordable spaces for creation, education around the arts and not enough events and programs for younger demographics (18-35) was also mentioned.

1. From your perspective, what is the current impact of the arts in New Westminster?

Summary

The key points raised around the current impact of the arts were that they are a tourist draw, good for the local economy, create local partnerships, attract investment and keep people longer in New Westminster.

- New Media Gallery good for tourism; city exposure; attractive to business & employees
- Public art good for business & employment, iconic place making – eg. WOW
- Arts full of potential; a rapidly growing employment sector
- Engages residents; brings residents of all ages together
- Art creates discussion – engages people
- Lack of good marketing
- Direct economic spinoffs from theatre eg. Massey
- Art facilities such as Massey used for education opportunities for youth
- Keeps people in New West longer
- Big tourist draw
- Strongest sector right now in the city
- Because of the work the City and community has done
- Outside opinions of NW have shifted as a result of the increase in art activities
- Affordability of the city is helping change the demographics
- Arts have developed
- Low impact for regional draw for events
- Hard to quantify how many people are attracted by events
- Hard to measure the economic impact for events
- Massey Theatre – Royal City Theatre impact is positive from region

2. From your perspective, what is the potential impact of the arts?

Summary

From a business perspective, the potential impact of the arts is huge; it could create destination places, innovation hubs, brings vibrancy, innovation and energy to a community, generate educational opportunities and brings people together. It helps the community members experience each other's cultures, and builds diversity.

- Huge
- If theatre is developed, significant positive economic impact eg. restaurants, hotel
- City could become a destination for the arts
- Need a walking map for public art – potential for increased tourism and visitors
- Walking tours for schools, families – a low or no cost activity for families
- Increased economic activity, engagement by residents, and educational opportunities
- Involve other City departments
- City's culture department needs funding for marketing and marketing strategy
- Opportunities for arts groups to collaborate and create strategies
- People learn about different cultures – increased culture awareness and engagement
- Creates more successful children
 - Arts in the schools
 - Programs

- Long-term benefit to promote early childhood development
- Building community; cooperation; business & people connect
- People visit cities with more art
- Being more cohesive with neighboring communities
 - International travel
- Cross promotion/cross-neighborhood projects
- Local art is a draw for tourism
- Creates “hubs” “destination” places
- Vibrancy
- Collaborative community
 - Mental health + art
 - Arts community can help in numerous sectors including health
 - “bereavement friendly” city; compassionate community with business sector
- Challenge: separated into tiny communities
 - Competition versus collaboration/cooperation
- History runs deep
- Arts can bring people together and help with historical---contemporary knowledge transfer
- Development and activity that can evolve around a culture space ie. Restaurants
- Eg. Stanley Theatre in Vancouver – once arts club programmed it revitalized area
- Arts can help create unity in our city of distinct neighbourhoods
- Focus on community to create a sense of connection to the community that supports the business
- Helps to experience other diverse communities/cultures
- It’s about reinforcing healthy neighbours, healthy communities. Healthy communities=healthy businesses
- Substantial benefits to the boutique shops

3. From your perspective, what are the barriers in participating, contributing or otherwise engaging in the arts New Westminster?

Summary

From a business perspective, some of the main barriers are around marketing and communication for the arts, time constraints for participation, the need for more collaborations, lack of funding, lack of programs for younger demographics and the need for more inclusive and diverse engagement. Another reoccurring theme was being stuck in “the way it has always been done” approach and lack of innovation.

- Time constraints
- Promotion, marketing and communication
- “naysayers” or “nimbys”
- Lack of funding – ex. benefactors
- Need more collaboration among arts groups

- Test space; pop-up spaces, space to perform; unique accessible space
- Quirky; weird; grit; need to attract more “weirdness”
- Communication/educating/understanding the arts
- Language; programming is not inclusive
- Immigrants/new residents inclusion
- Stuck in “the way it’s been done”, “checklist” approach
- More engagement through diversity of experience/education inclusivity
- Divisiveness to cultural events; should merge together
- Too many competing events
- City’s speed is too slow to get ideas going
- Seniority runs the community; new demographic coming & creating disconnect
- A place to play; experiment; collaborate
- NW is fighting stereotype of suburb – don’t think NW has professional quality art
- Limited risk taking options outside the traditional arts
- Opportunity to package to NW experience ie. WOW, Truffles etc perhaps more events that integrate activities – tour – dinner – etc.
- Hard for artists to know where to go for support ie. Grants
- Find creative ways to partner private funds with city funds to support the arts in a sustainable way

Art Strategy Focus Group – Arts Sector

October 13, 2016

Hosted at Old Crow by:

Facilitators

Biliana Velkova, Kristina Fiedrich, Sarah Joyce, Eden Fine Day, Stephen O’Shea

In Attendance:

| | |
|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Peter Jorgensen | Patrick Street Productions |
| Marilyn Norry | |
| Renee Bucciarelli | |
| Greg Freedman | |
| Laura Drummond | Self Employed |
| Cindy Oxenbury | Self Employed |
| Aglika Ivantcheva | EC Educator |
| Tasha Hefford | |
| Cole Bazin | BRPW Collective |

Executive Summary

The main points brought up at the Arts Sector Focus Group were around affordability for work spaces, need for better marketing and promotion of the arts, untapped potential for collaboration, old vs new approach, underutilized venues and resources, and the need for more inclusive and diverse programming.

1. From your perspective, what is the current impact of the arts in New Westminster?

Summary

From the arts perspective, the current impact is developing and in a process of transition. It has potential for collaborations and partnerships, but there is a need for more marketing, promotion and funding support for the arts.

- Contentious
- Very encouraged – visual arts
- Great impact on community as a whole
- Strengthening the community
- Arts were for children and that was it – nothing for grown-ups
- We have venues now – hard thing to get people out to events
- NW Arts Council, NW Artists “Great Energy”
- No good examples for young artists early in their career to see how things are done
- Art Gallery Queen’s Park – mentorship – study – if artists can give talks
- NMG is one of the shining lights – bringing great opportunities & benchmarks
- Petri dish
- “The Environment” + “The Audience”
 - Audience – How do you get to them? The audience has to believe in what NW can do
 - Population – Ultimately you need to broader audience but how do you get them?
- Unaffordable rates at Anvil Centre
- Different mindset needed
- Impact of Arts scene, trickledown – building a critical mass
- NW has become Tribeca or Greenwich Village back in the day and the artists are coming.
- City has to provide the rich soil to grow in.
- Would like to see continued support
 - ARCS show spaces
 - Funding
 - Support drops off
 - Not a lot of structure for that support
- Craftsmanship, flea markets
- Not reach full potential of contemporary work
- Keeping momentum going

- Balance between craft & fine art
- Stronger with fine arts than with performing arts – groups who make theatre and music
- Consistent high quality performances in theatres does not yet exist
- Still going elsewhere for more diversity and consistency in the arts
- Has great impact in a small town
- Well attended events
- Should operate more closely with school district for their networks
- Easier to draw in children than seniors or middle aged community
- Enough artists in this community but go to Vancouver for events and activities
- Let's make NW a centre for the arts
 - Consistent & clear
 - Need infrastructure in place
 - Integrate into education
 - Start at younger ages to bring art into people's lives
- Setting a tone & example; actively showing support
 - Marketing
 - Opportunities
 - Encourages participation
- Growing pains – an era of transition and infancy
- Vision is beyond capacity
- Old vs new – groups in the city
- So much potential for collaboration
- Strong community, strong sense of pride in local community
- Underutilized venues
- Strong grassroots
- Passionate
- Transition & change

2. *From your perspective, what is the potential impact of the arts?*

Summary

The potential impact of the art from the arts perspective is unlimited; there are economic benefits and educational opportunities to the arts. The arts could also improve medical systems, brings communities together, engage with history in a contemporary way and nurture new and expand current audiences.

- That's the city I want to live in
- NW must be the place to go again – we need to be the destination
- When I imagine the place I want to live arts, economic centre, contribution of small businesses
- A vibrant environment, bring the energy to do everything (dinner, show, arts etc.) whatever you need
- "grit" – NW has that and I don't want to lose that

- The parts are all here – Keys –
 - City – core principle is supporting the arts
 - NW cannot rely on industry anymore or history, what is there then?
 - What are the boundaries of NW? Stories, geography, life etc.
 - Using arts to identify neighbourhoods – home character, identity – good thing?
- Unlimited – potential doesn't have an end
- Organic growth – connecting different disciplines
- Interconnected with drawing people from outside
- Connection + communication
- Has the potential to progress humanity
- Social cultural impacts
- Related to quality of life; change way of living
- Generally very institutionalized; people could turn to art forms to expand ways of thinking
- Beneficial for community pride; liking where you live
- Economic benefits
- Educational impact
- Physical spaces can breed connectivity and aid in the creative conversation
- As a tool, to push us out of our comfort zone – facilitation of conversation in a creative manner
- Improve medical systems
- Aging population; art is proven to support those who are aging; avenue to communicate between generations
- Creative problem solving
- Art can begin to provide connections between separate communities to bring NW together
- Interdisciplinary – with art forms and communities
- Engage with history that is eye-opening and heartfelt but bringing it into the present moment
- Art is an activator
- Gets people talking; brings passion; get a conversation going
- Opportunities to network
- Just about to jump off to a new level
- Reaching through the schools
- New density in the community
- New people are coming – new audiences
- Regional hub – centre of the region
- Collaboration among artists
- Arts venues/events revitalize neighbourhoods/residents/businesses
- Investing in youth

3. From your perspective, what are the barriers in participating, contributing or otherwise engaging in the arts New Westminster?

Summary

The main challenges from the arts perspective are around marketing and promotion, creating and maintaining audiences, historical perception of the city, financial barriers, not enough contemporary engagement, lack of networking opportunities and access to affordable spaces.

- Better promotion, communication; centralized information
- Venues where you can do something creative for free – “test venue”
- Artists often undersell themselves
- The audience needs to be educated and engaged
- In last 5 years, dramatic change in demographics – who connect with the arts
- NW has reputation as a crime train lingers – the arts will change that
- Distance barrier – perception is wrong
- Vancouver Central snobbery is a barrier
- Historical perception
- Important “if you build it they will come”
- Financial difficulties
- Spaces for studios; pop-up galleries; exhibition spaces
- Contemporary scene doesn’t have a stronghold here
- Outside of social circle/network hard to find or make connections
- Layout of city creates a physical barrier
 - Sections that are being developed
 - Movement around the city
 - Prioritized creative spaces
 - Walkability
- Want opportunities for less expensive spaces but it is a double-edged sword – the “cool” factor makes for difficult continuation of art pop-up
- Risk bad art/performance
- Not “risqué” enough
- Hard to introduce new ideas and have people attend
- Prioritizing the arts to generate interest
 - Teaching appreciation
 - Learn to be part of it
 - Not enough ambassadors for the arts
- “art” being considered as an elective in schools
- NW is like a small island
- Art is the first activity/discipline to lose funding essential to live
- Changing the status quo
- “Art is not the icing on the cake it is the flour”- Laura Drummond

- Recognizing that the structure we currently have does not work; how can we adapt/change the system to better suit arts development
- Can't be self-sustaining
- Not so hyperlocal
- Burnout
- Convincing arts audiences to invest here – stay in NW, play here
- Need to reach audiences beyond NW
- Connecting Anvil conferences to local professional artists for presentations
- Lack of connection between artists
- Diversity
- Increased access to the Anvil Centre
- Need for studios – off-business hours – rates in line with other municipalities
- Adequate rehearsal space – performing arts theatre
- Lack of live/work spaces

Art Strategy Focus Group – Arts Sector

October 13, 2016

Hosted at Plaskett Gallery

Facilitators

Biliana Velkova, Sarah Joyce, Jessica Schneider, Eden Fine Day, Stephen O'Shea

In Attendance:

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Julie Gaudet | Royal City Swing |
| Alfonso Silveira | Royal City Swing |
| John Davies | Royal City Musical Theatre, New West Symphony |
| Colleen Winton | Theatre Professional |
| Karen Justice | Artists in the Boro, New Westminster Photography Club |
| Chelsea Carlson | Royal City Musical Theatre |
| Alison Chisholm | Pacific Theatre, Vancouver |
| Trudy Van Dop | Van Dop Gallery |
| Katey Wright | Patrick Street Productions |

Executive Summary

The main points brought up at the Arts Sector Focus Group were around the impact of the arts in connecting communities, the communication and promotion challenges in the arts community, lack of spaces to rehearse, perform and work in, funding barriers and the conservative culture of the city.

1. From your perspective, what is the current impact of the arts in New Westminster?

Summary

The current impact from the arts perspective was of a growing and developing arts and culture environment, creation of new audiences, and emerging visibility, but with communication challenges present.

- Growing awareness & inclusiveness, informative
- More in loop – communication is increasing
- Increasing opportunities for youth – opening of Anvil & classes – brochure – facilities are great for Anvil
- Massey has increased engagement with students & tech program with professionals in club type situation
- A lot of things happening quietly but not everyone knows
- Businesses like Circus School & Music Box
- Art as a business becomes viable
- Artists are proud and not anonymous – this also impacts the parents
- New Media Gallery out of box and we have it
- Percolation is starting
- Developers want to build here because of the arts and creative services
- Award winning novelists
- New audiences
- Companies come here for economic reasons and find arts groups they can support
- Artists beginning to find the spaces that might be out of their reach financially
- Kick-off NW Crawl: all levels embraced it “we built that over the years”
- Endorsement, validation of what has been going on in the arts
- Community is understanding what is there ex Food Truck Festival
- Austerity to Anvil
- NW has a tendency to take things for granted. Now they are feeling the vibrancy but we really need to invite them in
- Opportunities to perform here don’t exist
- There are things going on but people need to see things by just walking out the door
- Need to collaboratively market our arts organizations together
- Makes it a better place to live
- Galvanizing impact
- Connecting community
- Grassroots effectiveness
- Adds colour to life
- Wonderful surprises
- Something to share with others
- Diverse relationships
- Community building

- Many festivals
- Arts are key gatherings and attractions for citizens, business & neighbourhoods
- Makes the city vital and creates opportunities
- Identity
- Best kept secret
- Emerging visibility
- Provides a complete city experience
- Participation is desired and valued
- Economic spinoffs
- Public art opportunities are positive
- Family activities are critical to urban families
- Community pride
- Rich, lively community based arts activities
- Lots for kids
- Worth relocating for
- Communication challenges
- Vibrant
- Collaborative
- Compact
- Growing
- Many long standing groups and newly formed
- Funding challenges – private sector
- Artisanal businesses

2. *From your perspective, what is the potential impact of the arts?*

Summary

The main points brought up by the arts sector were that the arts create a better place to live, work and play, generate a boost to local economy, create health benefits, can give a voice to underserved communities, and create a culture of understating and empathy.

- It makes it a better place to live
- Enriches quality of life
- It makes us better people, kinder people and more open-minded, more understanding
- Cathartic – for both levels – the act of creating and the audience
- Important for children to see themselves in the art around them
- It's had to be an artist – what drives an artist is not what drives other people
- Validates creative avenues
- Economic revival in neighbourhoods if landlords keep rents low, restaurants would open up
- It has to have a positive economic affect for city

- Mental health – people not so isolated – safe, bite-size bits of the arts. Join a choir, join dance, join gallery
- Having artists display work @ farmers market
- Doing anything that requires something creative – if people with mental health issues can do this – reengage with the community
- Self-expression = self esteem
- If artists would receive subsidized housing and expected to do things, the impact would be huge
- To change the world!
- To attract new citizens for their arts interests
- To create a vibrant night life
- Boost local economy
- Self-expression
- Health benefits
- Less loneliness
- Create understanding and empathy
- Gives rise to voices
- Happy citizens
- Share stories
- Community building
- Really engages people with each other
- Passion
- Safer communities
- Lifelong benefits
- Opens people’s hearts, minds, lives to the new and the local
- Moving from community to professional based arts hub
- Refined arts audiences
- Large and growing community of artists
- Arts festivals! Uptown – streets closed – multi discipline – especially theatre
- More than a bedroom community
- An animated Anvil Centre
- Greater collaboration
- Art as a leverage to community development
- A new defining culture for NW
- A sense of community where people come together

3. *From your perspective, what are the barriers in participating, contributing or otherwise engaging in the arts New Westminster?*

Summary

The main points around current challenges were lack of communication and awareness for the arts, space affordability, lack of support for capacity building of local organizations and the conservative culture in the city.

- Lack of affordable, useable, safe work spaces
- Lack of awareness of what's going on
- Lots of spaces in NW that could be used. People are not aware that the spaces exist
- Bureaucracy is a barrier
- Messaging:
 - What are our values are we art positive, do we want to make it an art destination?
 - What is the cultural messaging?
 - Lower the gate – go over the moat, provide opportunities for artists to live and work
 - The city should provide the environment, the climate that allows the arts to flourish
 - Champion the arts
 - Provide the space, funding, grants
- Conservative culture
- Lack of coordinated entertainment district with appropriate bylaws
- Opportunities not visible
- Lack of promotion
- Need multiple arts grants & intakes
- Lack of framework to utilize infrastructure
- Lack of networking
- Capacity building is not supported
- Not clear how to grow, create new events, share ideas
- City not inviting activities from local organizations
- Unclear guidelines to access public space
- Cool things rise and then fade away
- Public participation should grow
- Not enough investment in artists and organizations
- Capacity challenges for local arts organizations
- Access (off hours) – Anvil Centre
- Need to get away from preaching to the converted
- Anvil Centre Theatre – access/rental rates
- Subsidized theatre costs
- Arts audiences unaware of local quality
- A centralized communication service – calendar or newsletter
- Competitiveness – artist to artist

Hosted at City Hall

Facilitators

Biliana Velkova, Kristina Fiedrich

In Attendance

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| Betina Wheeler | NW School District |
| Janet Goosney | Purpose Society |
| Cheryl Hewitt | |
| Nimmi Bangert | Connections |
| Alison Ching | CNW P & R |
| Renee Chadwick | CNW P & R |
| Moroi Matsukura | Purpose Society |
| Peter Wilkins | Douglas College |
| Ling Chu | SUCCESS |
| Saleem Spindari | MOSAIC |
| Zarghona Wakil | MOSAIC |
| Annette Oakes | Century House |
| Ghada Shawil | MOSAIC |

Executive Summary

The main points brought up by the Heath & Social Services Sector were around the need to reach out to diverse artists and audiences, the need for cultural collaborations, the impact of the arts in creating a healthy and socially engaged society, the need to activate public spaces with art and the language barriers that some of the diverse artists and audiences have. There were themes around lack of mentorship opportunities and barriers in navigating established systems.

1. From your perspective, what is the current impact of the arts in New Westminster?

Summary

The perspective of the Heath & Social Services sector was that the current impact of the arts is developing but needs more collaboration. There are a number of meaningful activities but public art is not representative of diversity.

- Anvil Centre events & drop-ins – Wait for me Daddy Redux – meaningful activities
- Pop-up galleries are great to attend
 - Helping members of the community showcase their work
- More visible in the City
- Public art is not representative of our diversity

- Can't always go back to our earlier history. Need to reflect the current community and embrace diversity/too much emphasis on history
- Reaching out to more diverse artists
- Many artists here today from different places; need to provide positive opportunities
- Offers expression for other groups/citizens
- Present more diversity
- Access to people's work that is not part of "commercial" system – how to get people more access (free music; accessible)
- Self-expression is a part of people's spiritual well-being. Self-care; work & leisure doesn't necessarily encompass the whole person
- Open up ideas, concerns, issues
- Appreciate what is happening/community of artists – a lot to offer
- Food/music/art unite people
 - Multicultural
 - Festivals
 - As a layman, haven't seen much out in the public realm
 - Recent developments – can we make it more visible
- Parks are providing space
- Excited to work with Massey Theatre; multicultural art troupe
- Collaboration
- For young people to bring their artistic expression to the public
- A lot of great artists, but don't always know who they are.
- Bring out more information about the artists lives; profiles about their experience

2. *From your perspective, what is the potential impact of the arts?*

Summary

The main points expressed around the potential impact of the arts were: building of community, empowerment through art, art's ability to bring people to the city, art's potential to alleviate stress and daily life, and art's place-making ability.

- Alleviating stress
- Having new experiences/expressions
- Take you outside of your daily concerns
- Builds community; artists coming together and out into the city
- Not just comradery
- Important for balance for life/brain
 - Use another part of thought process
 - Not a habit; bring that energy
- Not as much appreciation for "outsider" art
- Alternative spaces for display/exhibition can support economy
- Multicultural contexts/contents
- Changes the energy

- Makes “place”
- Activated spaces
- Open up culture/identity
- Build community – inclusion/diversity/multigenerational
- Freedom of expression; nonverbal creative process
- DLS pottery studio
- Empowering
- Changes perceptions of capacities/people/changes mindset
- Moving society into community
- Learn through the journeys people have taken
 - People are more than what we see
 - Welcoming expression
- Support from public
 - Marketing
 - Flow
 - Space
- Displays for art in public spaces
- Brings people from other cities into NW
- Make it a “must see” space
 - Beneficial for tourism

3. *From your perspective, what are the barriers in participating, contributing or otherwise engaging in the arts New Westminster?*

Summary

Main points around challenges were in regards to cost accessibility for the arts, a lack of mentorship opportunities, difficulty in navigating established systems, language barriers and a lack of support to artists who are new to the community.

- Accessibility through cost – entrance fee
- Welcoming spaces for people with children
- Struggling artists looking for spaces to show their work
- Affordability
- Lack of mentorship opportunities
- Support for artists who are new to the community
- Inclusivity, newcomers not connected
- Navigating the established systems
- Confidence when coming to a new place
- Need opportunities to network, market and build audience
- Opportunities to showcase different art works
- Disconnection because of the “whiteness” of the art scene
- Free programs; outdoor “art in the park”
- Language barriers

Hosted at Anvil Centre

Facilitators:

Biliana Velkova, Kristina Fiedrich

In Attendance:

| | |
|------------------|-----|
| Renee Chadwick | CNW |
| James Doan | CNW |
| Ramona Manzer | CNW |
| David Creighton | CNW |
| Jay Young | CNW |
| Cid Martin | CNW |
| Hilary Knowles | CNW |
| Jerome Oregas | CNW |
| Alison Ching | CNW |
| Robyn McGuinness | CNW |

Executive Summary

Main points discussed by the Parks & Recreation Department were that art could be present in all City facilities, there are untapped opportunities for cross-departmental collaboration, outdoor spaces are underused, there is a positive dialogue about art and that art brings a sense of community and improves quality of life.

1. From your perspective, what is the current impact of the arts in New Westminster?

Summary

Parks and Recreation Department participants noted that art is not present in all facilities, but there are opportunities for better inter-departmental collaboration.

- Not felt in all facilities and venues including public art
- Opportunities coming up with newer spaces and moving forward
- Not deliberate/incorporated
- Can bring life and colour but hasn't been integrated or visible enough
- QCC has a lot of artistic spaces/opportunities/displays – new building
- Budgets going toward maintenance and updates
- Can consider alternative spaces; not typical spaces for display etc.
- Opportunities for “lounge space”; creative use of funding to create innovative community gathering places
- Outdoor spaces under used (art related)

- Art/installations as deterrent to graffiti/vandalism
- Art blending with other spaces
- Opportunities for inter-departmental collaboration
- Places that offer artists spaces to exhibit
- Culture of arts embedded in current programming in facilities
- Positive dialogue about arts; with more opportunities could continue upward swing to ensure art is incorporated across the city
- More local encouragement
- Tap into local talent
- Eco art project in parks
- Younger artists have opportunities to participate – should be more accessible

2. *From your perspective, what is the potential impact of the arts?*

Summary

The main points expressed around the potential impact of the arts were: art brings a sense of community and belonging, art can contribute to reconciliation, art is intergenerational and multicultural, and art improves the quality of life.

- Sense of community brings community together
- Art can teach the community about history & future
- Brings conversations re: values & pride
- Art can animate the community
- Art outside the white box
- Art is experience
- Art is accessible
- Multicultural and intergenerational
- Inclusion
- Improving quality of life
- Inspire others to come out and be part of community
- Connect with resident associations
- Bring local groups together
- New West is a proud community
- Contributing to reconciliation

3. *From your perspective, what are the barriers in participating, contributing or otherwise engaging in the arts New Westminster?*

Summary

The main points expressed around the barriers were: access to information, intimidation, perception of cost and ability to participate in art, limited time, and the need for more stimulation for community based and public art projects.

- Access to information
- Visibility of programming/opportunities
- Reasons to participate
- Perception of cost/ability to participate
- More inviting
- Intimidating
- Better sense of belonging
- More stimulation of community based and tangible projects/public art
- The “myth” of art – if you are not an artist you aren’t able to participate
- “what’s in it for me?” inspiration to attend is lacking
- Benefits of art beyond early childhood education – convey this message better
- Limited time
- Accountable to the money we spend – arts impact on social, health, economic
- Cooperation – administrative hurdles, budgetary hurdles
- Fear of participating – being “wrong”
- Not working through barriers rather than quitting

Proposed Initiatives:

- Public art for new buildings
- Painting sidewalks, roads, round-abouts, other city assets/space
- Working interdepartmentally – AiR
- Mural projects
- Animal shelter – murals etc.
- Looking at staff resources – do they want to work within their practice
- Pop-up spaces – for art/performance etc.
- Art pods
- Alleyways – opportunity for place-making
- Intention; vision; mandate – works across disciplines and departments

Art Strategy Focus Group – Education Sector

October 27, 2016

Hosted at Anvil Centre by:

Facilitators:

Biliana Velkova, Eryne Donahue, Kelly Proznick, Eden Fine Day

In Attendance:

Eryne Donahue
Stefanie Swinnard
Eden Philp

Stage New West

Eden Fineday
Kelly Proznick
Gabe Forsythe
Heather Hancock

Purpose Independent
Secondary School
Patrick Street Productions
Richard McBride Elem
Music Teacher

Peter Jorgensen
Shannon Lange

Executive Summary

Main points discussed by the Education sector were around creating opportunities for mentorships, affordable spaces, building the elements for lifelong education, the profound social and emotional impacts that the arts have and the need for better communication channels and accessibility to programs.

1. *From your perspective, what is the current impact of the arts in New Westminster?*

Summary

From the education perspective, the current impact of the arts were that art creates opportunities for mentorship, work experiences, and lifelong learning, builds identity in the community, and brings motivation for new and innovative endeavors.

- Secondary school's proximity to arts institutions
- Builds physical sense of community
- Profound social and emotional impacts
- Mentorship
- Inspiration
- Brings students back to local arts industry – cyclical relationship
- Small scale spaces – affordable
- Therapeutic opportunities
- Work experiences
- Creating unique opportunities
- Lifelong education
- Grass roots
- Shows & businesses
- Legacy
- Community and identity building
- Building motivation and courage to start new arts endeavors in the community

2. From your perspective, what is the potential impact of the arts?

Summary

From the education perspective, the potential impact of the arts was profound; art helps emotional development, creates safe space for personal expression, makes for a healthy community, nurtures and develops better future leadership, brings a common language, builds local identity and revolutionizes community.

- Therapy
- Healing
- Emotional development
- Safe space for personal expression
- Building empathy exploring authenticity and individuality
- Authentic communication and connection
- Engagement with the world around you
- Emotional, social, physical, relational health
 - Building a healthy society
- Building relationships around the arts
- Quality of life
- Healthy community
- Shared experience
- Revolutionize community
- Common language = connectedness
- Building identity for New West
- Strong arts education community now – unlimited opportunity for future arts & culture
- Youth – adult audience/consumers + producers
- A connecting force/bridge between feelings and other issues – language
- Problem solving skills
- Better leadership in any field
- Arts infused city
- One large high school with strong arts program – great future organizations

3. From your perspective, what are the barriers in participating, contributing or otherwise engaging in the arts New Westminster?

Summary

The main points around barriers in the arts were: communication and promotion, space accessibility, lack of funding opportunities, access to community groups and businesses and finding opportunities for local artists to give back.

- Accessibility
- Know-how
- Communication

- Directory of arts assets
- Old vs. new New West
 - Different modes of communication
 - No glue
 - Nothing centralized
- Connecting organizations & people
 - Schools need connection to artists & vice versa
- Teachers overwhelmed
- Funding opportunities not met
- Opportunity for local artists to give back
- Support for artists from educators on what to expect
- Barrier – professionals connecting with educators – like a “New West Art Starts”
- Local professionals need to be sourced
- Difficulty in finding students who need support & a voice
- Connecting business sponsors with arts organizations to support disadvantaged youth
- How do businesses connect with underprivileged youth?
 - Referral system
 - Need for city ambassador for communicating with community for arts
- Shoulder Tappers – people who look for interest, make others aware of funding
- Affordable space
 - Storage
 - Work space
 - Larger spaces
 - Diverse spaces appropriate for different scale activities
 - No darkroom space
- Equipment
 - Replacing used equipment in schools
 - How can city assist with funding large equipment
- Access to community groups & businesses – old vs new
- How do we identify who (ie. Small community group, business) can access space at an affordable price

Art Strategy Focus Group – Communications Sector

November 1, 2016

Hosted at ACNW by:

Facilitators

Biliana Velkova, Stephen O’Shea, Leanne Ewen

In Attendance

| | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| Bjorn Ulfsson | Video & Education |
| Terri Casella | Video & Education |
| Valerie Easton | RCMT |
| Patricia Jecks | CNW |
| Lizz Kelly | NW Chamber |
| Erin Jeffery | Uptown |
| Blair Fryer | CNW |
| Katey Wright | Theatre |

Executive Summary

The main points brought up at the Communication Sector Focus group were around support for galleries and public art, local artists and attracting new ones, need for better communication, access to pop up and affordable spaces, how to bring in new audiences and how to cultivate business and arts partnerships.

1. From your perspective, what is the current impact of the arts in New Westminster?

Summary

The Communication sector brought up key points around the impact of the arts to attract new communities, the need for more informal networking and to finding ways of changing the general perception of the arts. The impact is still growing but it is significant.

- Significant, room for growth
- Anvil Centre as a focal point – bringing people out to NW
- Strong galleries/public art
- Need to strengthen performing arts
- Many talented artists
- Need to support artists in order to stay here
- Influx of artists moving out of Vancouver
- Attracting artists who value community
- Communications & networks
- Limited
- More going on than what we know about
- Flyers & posters
- Communicate more with schools
- Centralized calendar – Vancouver has calendar tourism
- More networking – informal
- How to change perception of how valuable the arts are
- Press – very good
- Funding – how can we communicate?
- Support for emerging artists – grant writing

- Philanthropy? How to access? How do we find out who might be in the city
- Cultural round table

2. From your perspective, what is the potential impact of the arts?

Summary

The main points brought up by the Communication sector were that the arts have the ability to bring new and innovating ideas to the city, increase livability, bring people from outside New Westminster, and create a sense of belonging.

- The arts is a vehicle to modernize
- Increase livability
- New and innovative ideas and activities to celebrate the arts
- Neighbourhoods coordinating a city wide celebration of the arts
- Free places to exhibit in the public realm
- A linear arts festival along our riverfront to display and observe
- Increase value – property and land
- Pop-up shops
 - Visual arts
 - Performing arts
- Arts activities go to where people are
- Ideas to identify potential new venues
- More arts studios like 100 Braid Street
- A community with a sense of belonging
- Business & the arts matching campaigns
- Look where we wouldn't normally look for collaborations
- Continuity to the timing eg. Sing-a-long happens every October – RMT happens etc.
- Meeting with restaurant owners – how to connect with them to help each other
- People – how to advertise arts events? Who attend productions, rehearsals come to restaurant
- Something families can come & do
- Bring people in from outside of NW

3. From your perspective, what are the barriers in participating, contributing or otherwise engaging in the arts New Westminster?

Summary

The main points discussed around barriers were access to facilities, communication and promotion, time constraints and breaking down silos in the arts community.

- Access to facilities

- Support to artists
- Silos in neighbourhoods
- Accessibility (parking) – relaxing parking fees during events
- Bylaws around sound
- Bylaws preventing innovative and new forms of arts activities and festivals
- Administrative costs that prevent organic expressions of arts and culture
- Need to develop audiences
- Comparing ourselves to other cities
- Need opportunities to participate, to create, to consume
- Zoning – live/work spaces
- A central arts resource/communication source
- Too many avenues to communicate to different segments of the community
- Be mindful of consumption habits as they change, to reach community
- Lack of time/availability
- Knowing what's going on
- Develop app that goes to individual calendars that pulls info from all the city calendars and centralizes it
- Searchable and accessible information
- One central website/hub
- Template for submitting events so all info is the same
- Different groups operate in silos