

2022

# **ARTS CENSUS BRANTFORD/BRANT**



**Arts Census**

**Brantford/Brant**

Prepared by

**Arts Ecology of Brantford/Brant**

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# INTRODUCTION

**The Arts Census Brantford/Brant is a first of its kind long-form survey that captures how artists and creatives view the state of the arts, presently and into the future. This research sets a precedent in Brantford/Brant by collecting, synthesizing, and analyzing data which have not yet been collected at this scale and scope.**

**This report summarizes the results of the Arts Census that was conducted from 21 July to 22 Aug, 2022 in Brantford and Brant County. The goal of this report is to present these findings in a summation so that the principal threads of the Arts Census can be quickly understood and act as signposts for future decisions.**

**Our goal was to collect the disparate understandings of the arts community and distill them in such a way that we can imagine a vision for the arts, make cohesive an artistic collective, and to encourage the formalization of said vision and collective into a body that can take the results of the Arts Census and apply them.**

**We are excited to share the results of the Arts Census and look forward to the incredible advances and innovations that will result from disseminating this knowledge. This report is the first step of many that will lead to a bright future for the arts, one that can be seen on the horizon and, so, is within our grasp.**



*This Census is vital as we seek to nurture our creative ecology, at present and, more importantly, into the future.*

## From Our Researchers

We are facing both a bright and challenging future for the arts in Brantford/Brant. Decades of work have been invested in developing the arts in this region, and we are excited to work alongside others who realize that we are at the precipice of an exciting new reality.

We are experiencing a renaissance in arts and creativity in Brantford/Brant, specifically as we are emerging from the pandemic, are working to build a mid-sized performance space in Brantford, and are witnessing an influx of new citizens.

The results of the Census will provide a powerful tool for us to continue advocating the needs of our artists and creatives, and to continue working towards realizing an artistic and creative ecology within which they will thrive.

**Wiktor Kulinski**

Principal Researcher

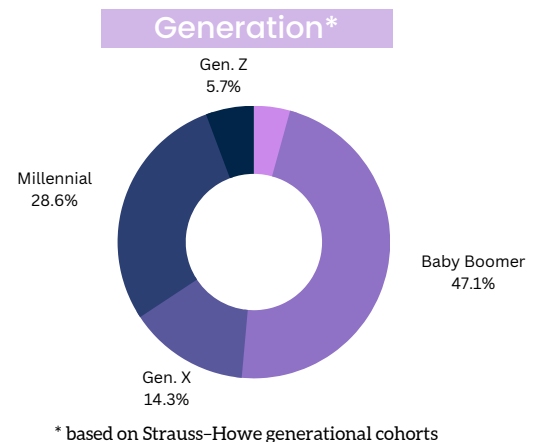
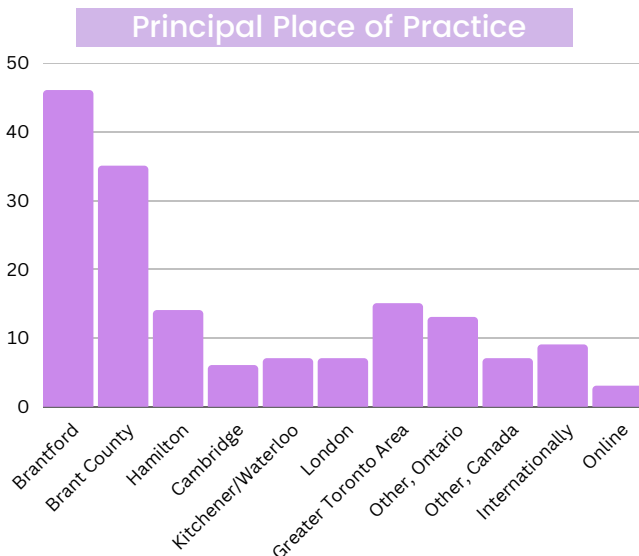
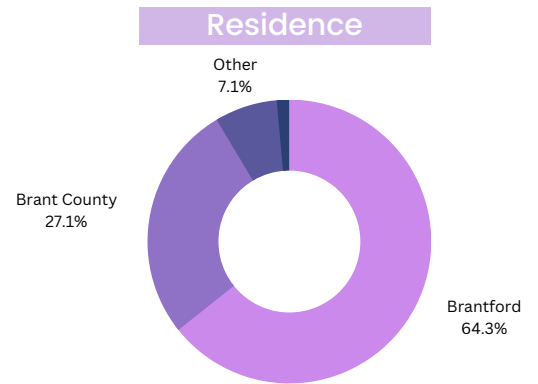
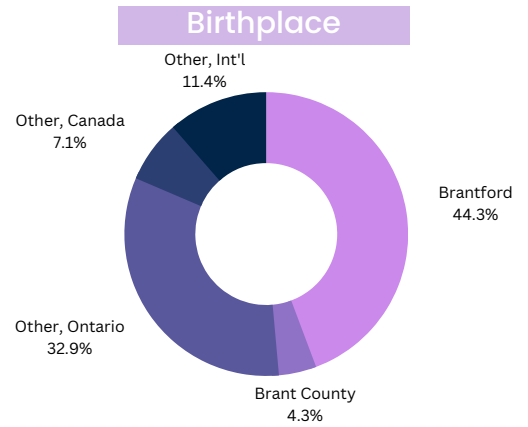
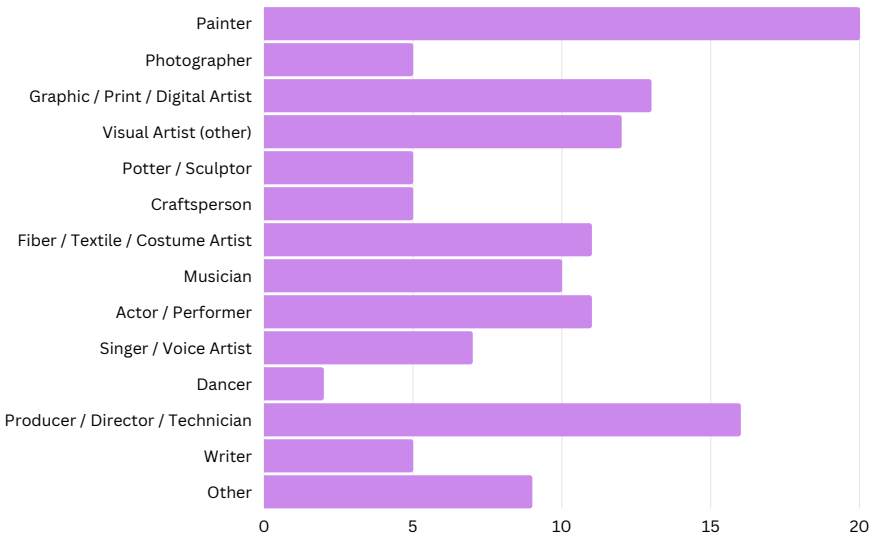
Arts Ecology of Brantford/Brant

# QUICK FIGURES

Respondents were recruited via stakeholders and other community partners, advertising on social media, and organic recruitment

**70**  
respondents

**3500+**  
data points  
**13,000+**  
words in long-form

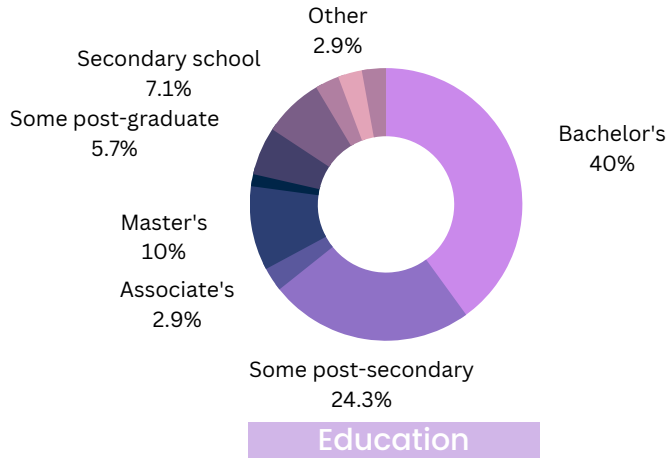
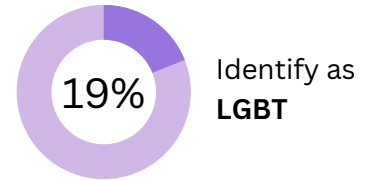
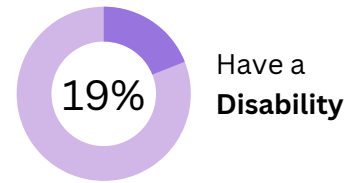
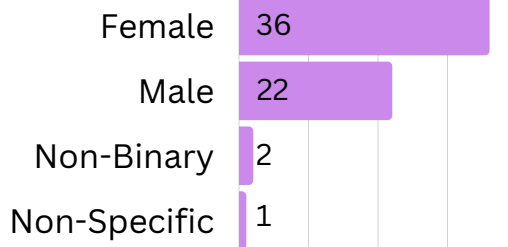
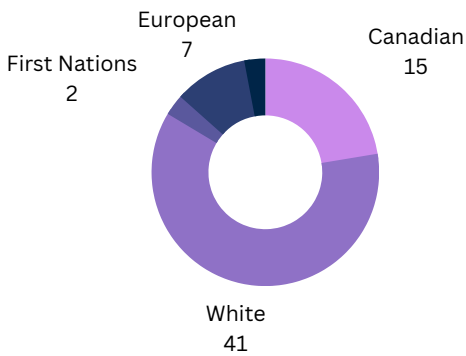



# Who are our artists and creatives?


How do your experiences and identities affect your life and work as an artist or creative?

## Identifications

How respondents described themselves



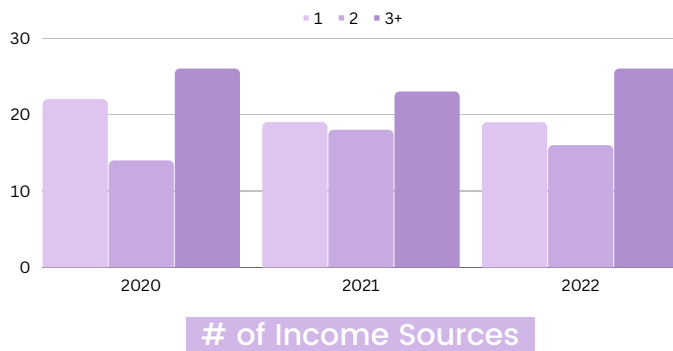
**67%**   
Say their education is related to their practice as an artist or creative

 **96%** *Have an active artistic or creative practice*

**What is your employment status and history?**  
**How are your work and labour being compensated and supported?**

## Work Experience & Labour History

How respondents described their work experiences, past and present



**30% say more than 1 income source is from an artistic practice**



*"More paid opportunities in Brantford according to CARFAC 2022 rates would be great."*

*"Nobody wants to pay for gigs and if they do it's peanuts. The volunteer gigs say they are going to get you something else and don't come through."*

*"Feel like I am 'bargained' down on commissions and work sales, but know I am charging less than standard rates for the work I'm doing."*

*"All of my artistic work is volunteer, so all of it is unpaid."*



**11 are primarily volunteers or do not make an income**

**24 make less than \$15,000 per year in income**

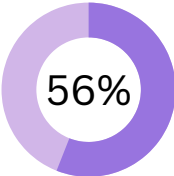
**35 say less than 10% of their annual income is from artistic or creative work**

# Do you feel that you have adequate access to opportunities and resources to do and excel at your artistic and creative work?

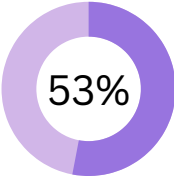
## Artistic Practice

How respondents view their ability to do and succeed at their practice

Are there enough opportunities to present, market, and sell your artistic works?



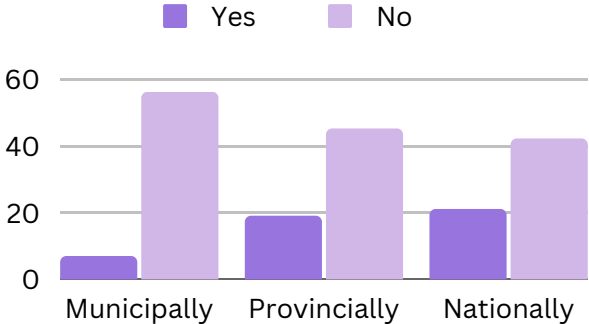
Believe they have the **opportunity to present or market their creative works**



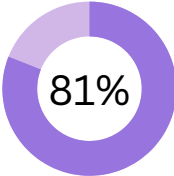
Believe they have the **opportunity to sell their creative works**

*“Lots of opportunity for artists and creatives but most need work ethic and discipline help. Being out worked or out hustled is not a lack of opportunity which is where most artisans are these days.”*

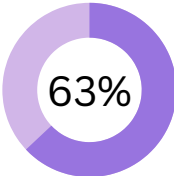
Are there enough opportunities to develop your artistic practice?



*“I am a senior Artistic Leader and the professional development resources are pathetic. I don't need advice on my taxes or how to run a computer. There is nothing to support artists at my level.”*



Want **more opportunities to engage in artistic or creative work**



Want **more opportunities to connect and network** with other artists

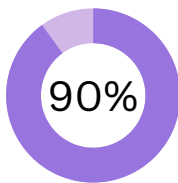
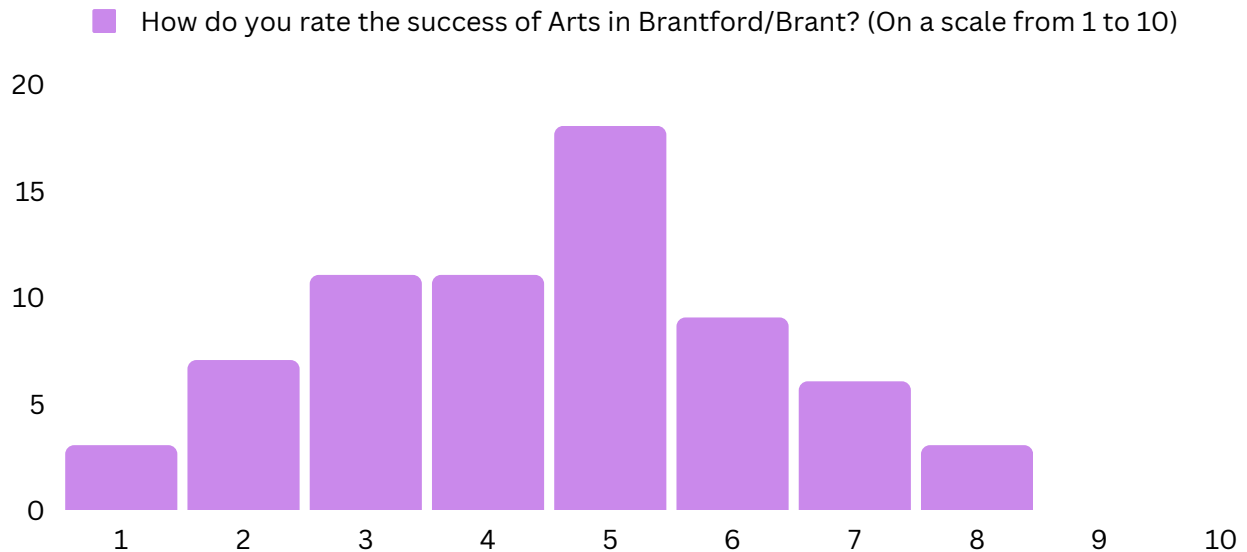
*“Having an Arts Council would provide artists with the opportunity to apply for financial resources to expand their practice.”*

*“It should be possible to access more funding on a national and provincial level, as well from corporate sponsors, foundations, and private donors. Our inaction is costing the local arts community countless dollars, money that is instead going to Arts Organizations in other communities.”*

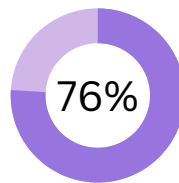


# FUTURE VISIONS

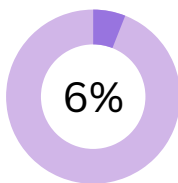
How respondents view an ideal future for the Arts in Brantford/Brant



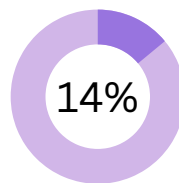
Think we need an Arts Council



Think we need **more space** for artistic and creative work



Think we succeed at marketing the Arts



Think we succeed at representing the Arts



*Respondents overwhelmingly identified that there are many opportunities to expand and improve the Arts in Brantford/Brant*

# TELL US MORE...

## How would you describe an ideal future for the arts?

*"A supportive pairing of both community and professional art scenes, that can cross over and support each other."*

*"Arts and Culture need to be adopted as the fourth pillar of Economic Development. This would push investment in the necessary infrastructure for arts, culture, and heritage to flourish."*

*"Arts and culture need a coherent voice in the community. This should be across both professional and community organizations and practitioners. There can be wonderful synergies across all."*

*"Brantford and Brant County should work together to promote the arts. We need a central location that is a go-to for artists to network, practice, and showcase their art. Look at Guelph and Owen Sound, both have a council, available studio space, supply resources, and galleries all within walking distance of each other."*

*"Vibrant. Inclusive. Accessible. Active."*

## How can we better tell our local stories and engage more of our citizens in those stories?

*"We need to establish a 'presence' for art and culture."*

*"The challenge is to get word out in the community. The local newspaper and radio station no longer serve that function as people have drifted to social media which has become more fractured."*

*"Engage by teaching what we know."*

*"Stronger promotion and support."*

## How can we use art and creativity to advance reconciliation with Indigenous peoples?

*"There needs to be Indigenous Consultation and a part of the space and administration that is there to increase the platform of reconciliation."*

*"Actually I see this as one place where the Arts have been having a positive effect. There has been lots of positive interaction between Brantford/Brant Artists and Six Nations Artists over the last 20 years."*

## How can we attract a larger audience to engage in arts and culture in Brantford/Brant?

*"Fund and create marketing materials for all in the Arts to have a cohesive presentation and brand awareness of Brant Arts and Culture."*

*"Improve the work by improving the functioning and professionalism of the Arts Organizations."*

*"Perhaps a county/city arts festival."*

*"I do not know what to do to attract an audience."*

## What is the most important thing we can do to improve the Arts?

*"A collective promoting body with a strong master plan that is fully funded and supported."*

*"Encourage artists to be proud of their community."*

*"Connection and organization."*

*"Establish a voice for Arts and Culture."*

# SWOT ANALYSIS

An overview of the internal and external factors identified by respondents as the most vital to the success of the Arts in Brantford/Brant

- High artistic disciplinary and variety
- Active and large community
- Rich natural, cultural, and industrial heritage
- Epicentre of Indigenous and Settler connection
- Artists frequent across geographical boundaries
- Central location in GTA–KW corridor

## Strengths

# S

- High disciplinary fragmentation
- Poor communication and marketing
- Overlapping events and efforts
- Lack of centralized leadership
- Underdeveloped vision and voice
- Thinly-spread resources

## Weaknesses

# W

- Strengthen organizational and institutional interconnections
- Increased professionalism
- Engage younger artists
- Brand and export rich local history and culture
- Build community pride

## Opportunities

# O

- Severe funding scarcity
- Difficulty in retaining and attracting talent
- Lack of purpose-built and affordable venues
- Competing organizational priorities

## Threats

# T

# PRINCIPAL THREADS

There are three (3) principal threads that can be drawn out and weaved together from the results of the Arts Census as identified by our respondents. We believe these threads should be the principal focus of our artists and creatives as they seek to further develop the creative industry in Brantford/Brant.



## **No. 01 – Vision**

A stronger vision that outlines an ideal future for the arts in Brantford/Brant and which outlines actionable short-term and long-term goals. This vision must be democratically imagined, actionable and reasonable, focused on growth, development, and innovation, and regularly reviewed or revised.



## **No. 02 – Communication and Cohesion**

Better communication in all directions. That is, between artists and the public, between artists and other artists, and between artists and the bodies in which they operate or that service them. As a paired thread, improving communication will bolster cohesion among the arts community resulting in a tighter collective that seeks to support, pursue and realize a shared vision.



## **No. 03 – Leadership / Arts Council**

Strong leadership to act as executors and managers of a shared vision and community of the arts in Brantford/Brant. This leadership would realize a mandate to improve the arts, act as shepherds to guide our collective action towards realizing that mandate, and work to secure the necessary resources, both financially and operationally. This leadership body needs to be grassroots and developed organically, work across geographic, social and political landscapes, and have the knowledge, resources and funding to achieve the vision of the creative community they would be servicing. Ideally this leadership body would take the form of an Arts Council separate from, but work in tandem with, current structures.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



*Thank you to the creative community of  
Brantford/Brant for sharing your voice.*

Arts Ecology  
Brantford/Brant

## Contact

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