



DEPARTMENT OF ARTS & HISTORY

MAYOR: Lauren McLean | INTERIM DIRECTOR: Carrie Hall

AGENDA Arts & History Commission

Wednesday, October 1st, 2025
5:00-6:30 pm
Greenbelt Room, 3rd Floor, Boise City Hall
150 N Capitol Blvd, Boise ID 83702

Virtual and in-person attendance is offered.
Watch via Zoom Webinar: [Registration Link](#)

- I. **Call to Order** – Commission Chair, Melissa Thom
 - a. Land Acknowledgement – Commission Chair, Melissa Thom
- II. **Introductions**
 - a. Interim Director - Carrie Hall
- III. **Minutes Approval**
 - a. **ACTION REQUESTED:** Approve Minutes from August 6th, 2025 (**Exhibit A**)
- IV. **Presentations/Updates/Approvals** **Pursuant to Idaho Code Section 74-204(4), all agenda items are action items, and a vote may be taken on these items.*
 - a. Informational Item: Website Content Update – Megan Fox
 - b. Informational Item: FY25 Accomplishments & FY26 Initiatives – Tilley Bubb
- V. **Adjourn Meeting**



DEPARTMENT OF ARTS & HISTORY

MAYOR: Lauren McLean | INTERIM DIRECTOR: Carrie Hall

MEMO

TO: Mayor McLean, Courtney Washburn, Council Member Luci Willits, Arts & History Commissioners

FROM: Matilda Bubba, Cultural Planner

CC: Carrie Hall, Interim A&H Director

DATE: 9/26/2025

RE: Fiscal Year 2025 Accomplishments

FY25 STRATEGIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In FY25, the Department of Arts & History (A&H) completed several significant projects, improved processes, engaged the community, and made great strides towards strategic initiatives. Following is a summation of accomplishment highlights by division.

Administration FY25 Accomplishments:

Engaged the Community:

- Planned and implemented the 2025 Mayor's Awards for Excellence in Arts & History event, which included the appointment of Boise Philharmonic as the city's 2026-2027 Cultural Ambassador.
- Engaged stakeholders and collected data through the Cultural Master Plan survey and listening sessions.
- Partnered with Boise State University by participating in City-Uni strategic planning meetings and project prioritization.

Improved Processes/Applied Expertise:

- Provided oversight of the renovation of A&H office space, including providing for the temporary housing of staff in an alternate location during construction and moving back into remodeled offices.
- Completed development of division strategic plans.
- Streamlined the successful closeout of the FY25 Budget and build of the FY26 Budget.
- Oversaw division development of department handbook documents, which guide staff procedures.

Managed Human Resources:

- Managed hiring and onboarding for **nine** positions including History Programs Manager, Education and Public Programs Manager, Grants and Outreach Manager, Public Art Collections Program Manager, Public Art Collections Program

Coordinator, Cultural Sites Program Assistant, Communications Intern, and two Interpretive Tour Guides.

Communications, Grants, and Public Programs FY25 Accomplishments:

Communications Priorities:

- Provided research, communications and community engagement support, and facilitated selection committee for the City of Boise Flag Design initiative.
- In partnership with Boise Parks and Recreation, helped plan and implement the Boise Depot Centennial celebration through education and public programming, the creation of a press kit, and ongoing media relations.
- Provided support with communications, outreach, press and media relations, and event planning for the groundbreaking and opening of Kaixo Corner (521 W Grove St.)
- Managed nominations/applications, communications and outreach, press and media relations, and provided event support for the 2025 Mayor's Awards for Excellence in Arts & History.
- Currently serving as project co-lead and supporting the America 250 in Boise initiative alongside C.E. and partners across the city. Also, coordinated initial brand development and advertising strategy alongside C.E.
- Currently working alongside C.E. and IT to support the A&H Website Upgrade & Design Refresh project. This project aims to upgrade our content management system to a current version, remediate accessibility compliance to meet new federal requirements (compliant by April 2026), and enhance the website user experience while honoring the unique features of Arts & History's brand.

Applied Communications Expertise:

- Developed brand marketing and media strategy with Drake Cooper.
- Drafted and implemented annual communications plan.
- Developed and implemented an annual outreach plan.
- Led communications on cultural and creative industries survey and listening sessions.
- Managed communications and press and media relations for all department projects, programs, and events.

Publicly Funded Opportunities

- **Arts & History Grant Program**
 - Managed \$150,000 in competitively selected grants for individuals and community organizations working in the cultural fields benefiting Boise residents while managing completion of FY24 grants.
 - Launched FY26 grant cycle implementing a new grant management software (AmpliFund), including application intake, grant review panel facilitation, and awards and agreements management.
 - Facilitated grant writing workshop for community members.



- **Writer-in-Residence Program**
 - Alongside Boise Public Library and The Cabin, provided \$10,000 in competitively selected grants for the Writer-in-Residence Program and managed related public programming.
 - Launched FY26 Writer-in-Residence cycle, including application intake, review panel facilitation, selection, and awards and agreements management.
- **Cultural Ambassador Program**
 - Provided \$10,000 in competitively selected grants to Cultural Ambassador Story Story Night.
 - Launched FY26-27 Cultural Ambassador two-year cycle, including application intake, review facilitation, recommendations to Mayor, and award and agreement management.

Education and Public Programs

- Developed and implemented *City Steps* guided tours training two new staff. Alongside History/Archives and Public Art, developed and introduced two new tours.
- We continue to engage department-wide teams in monthly Public Programs Roundtable and program team meetings to review past and upcoming programs, propose, brainstorm, and workshop programming ideas, and identify opportunities for support and collaborations internally and externally.
- Contributing to the City of Boise Youth Roadmap, making recommendations directly aligning with a need to support arts education, arts entrepreneurship, and multigenerational arts experiences.
- Continuing the foundation laid for the department's Education Framework, meeting with Boise School District content supervisors to build art and history educational experiences to support student learning.

Relationship Mgt./Partnerships:

- Managed relationships and partnerships with Affinity Group (Library, Parks and Recreation), Enterprise (Airport, Public Works), Mayor's Office and Office of Community Engagement, Capital City Development Corporation, Boise School District content supervisors, and community organizations.

Improved Processes:

- With support from IT, implemented AmpliFund as the grant management software (the first at the city!).
- Developed and implemented department-wide strategy and work procedures for public programs.

Managed Human Resources:

- Updated positions to better reflect the department and city's business needs.



- Participated in the promotion and/or hiring of the Grants and Outreach Manager, Education and Public Programs Manager, two Interpretive Tour Guides, and a Summer Intern.

Archives FY25 Accomplishments:

Made Significant Acquisitions:

- Acquired the historic Neon Signs as artifacts for The Collection in partnership with CCDC

Improved Facilities:

- Merged the Records Center and Archives Facility including the remodel of a reading room allowing researchers onsite. This marks a significant step in building a transparent and publicly accessible record management and archive program as well as preserving thousands of delicate historical records.

Improved Processes:

- Drafted the City Records Manual
- Progressed with the digitization of high impact collections, such as the early City Council Meeting Minutes ledgers, obsolete City Council Meeting minute recordings, and the Burns Photography Studio Collection

History FY25 Accomplishments:

Engaged Community and Constituents:

- Developed and displayed exhibits in publicly accessible locations:
 - *Crossroads of Culture: Boise's Chinese History, 1863 to Today* – this exhibit was displayed at library branches during October and November; A&H partnered with the Idaho Chinese Organization to display this exhibit at their Lunar New Year celebration at JUMP in February
 - *City Without a Mayor: Boise's Early Government, 1863-1867* – displayed at two library branches in FY24 and at an additional library branch in FY25 to expand its community reach
 - *Boise Depot Centennial* – developed exhibit and displayed at City Hall between April-September 2025. This exhibit is scheduled to travel through three library branches between October-December 2025
 - *Voices of River Street: A History of Urban Change and Community Strength, 1940-1972*: developed exhibit and began displaying at City Hall in September 2025
- *Depot Centennial Celebration* – researched and developed a Depot walking tour for Parks & Recreation, and Arts & History staff acted as walking tour guides during the centennial event. The tour was also translated into Spanish and offered as a Spanish language walking tour during the event; developed object signage for the Barkalow Bros. newsstand display; managed contractors (HRA) who created a permanent exhibit for the Depot about the site's history
- Engaged a younger audience by sharing *Fighting Bob* publications at events such as the Depot Centennial and at the Library's Summer Reading & Learning Celebration
- Evaluated and addressed history research requests (23 internal and external requests handled in FY25)



- *Grove Street Storywalk Interpretive Sign Project* – researched and developed content for 16 interpretive signs and 6 plaques which were installed along Grove Street between 4th and 15th streets
- *City Steps Walking Tour Program* – Researched and developed two new walking tours which will premiere in September 2025: *Remembering Chinatown: Boise's Vanished Neighborhood* and *The History and Public Art of Grove Street* (developed in collaboration with Public Art staff)
- Workshop – Developed and presented a workshop to the One Stone High School student body focused on how to conduct research and evaluate source materials
- Boise State University, Department of History partnership – Working with Professor Bob Reinhardt and History 502 graduate students to help plan and develop public history programming for America 250

Applied Expertise:

- Collaborated with the Cultural Sites Team at the Erma Hayman House for the *Voices of River Street* exhibit
- Collaborated with other A&H divisions to help lead presentations about Boise history and the Arts & History Department at biweekly HR New Teammate Orientation events
- Undertook completion of the oral history transcription backlog

Improved Processes:

- Updated and implemented the latest version of the HR New Teammate Orientation presentation
- Completed history-related handbook documents

Public Art FY25 Accomplishments:

Completed Public Art Projects:

- *Confluence* an asphalt/cement mural on the Greenbelt at Warm Springs Golf Course, Public Works Enterprise Fund, partnership with Parks & Recreation
- *Reclaimed Majesty* and *One Man's Trash* ArtPort sculptures on Grove St. in partnership with CCDC and BSU sculpture students *16 New Traffic Boxes* in partnership with CCDC and ACHD
- *Dreamscape*, *Skyriver*, and *Ancestral Pillars & Storylines* sculptural elements integrated at Kaixo Corner in Partnership with CCDC, Parks & Recreation
- Repaired and refurbished *Boise Canal* on the corner of 9th and Grove St in partnership with CCDC
- Installed new turf ground surrounding *Gentle Breeze* in Cherie Buckner-Webb Park.
- *Passage* sculpture installed in Redwood Park in partnership with Energize our Neighborhoods
- *Viva la Causa* and *Daughters of the Dust* vinyl murals at Erma Hayman House and Main Library (plus associated programming) in partnership with CCDC
- *Flowers for J.J. Saldaña* mural off Capitol Boulevard
- *Crossroads of Boise* bronze medallions and *Clepsydra* sculpture in partnership with CCDC as part of the Old Boise Blocks streetscape redevelopment
- *Voyaging: in defense of slow travel*, a series of four new media projections as part of the Depot Centennial Celebration



- [The Walk Home from Work](#) Linen Fence Public Art Program
- *American Contradictions: A Boise Visual Chronicle Exhibition* featuring eight local artists at the Erma Hayman House, as part of the kickoff of America 250 and the bi-annual [Boise Visual Chronicle purchase](#)
- Deaccessioned and removed *Transport* public artwork from Boise Airport food court area
- Managed first new call for art at Boise Airport and successfully selected an artist for the ConRAC Mural
- Restored and reinstalled *Bicycle Trio* on the corner of 14th & Grove St., partnership with CCDC

Applied Expertise:

- Developed content relating to public art for City Steps tours
- Developed content related to public art process for EMT tour
- Collaborated with Parks & Rec and the Airport to conduct community surveys to source community input, feedback and support for projects
- Engaged the collections management team at a greater level in new commissions including conservation consultations: allowing for known maintenance and more experimentation from artists therefore expanding our collection
- Completed the revision of the Public Art Guidelines
- Collaborated with PDS staff on grant application

Established Process Improvements:

- Signed a new Boise Airport public art cleaning contract
- Aligned the deaccession of Traffic Boxes with new call for art
- Migrated art collection records to [Public Art Archive](#) in a phased approach to allow for web-based public access to our collection and information on the artwork.
- Created templates for signage/labels and installed new signs for several public artworks including *Botanica Industria*, *Gentle Breeze*, *Integration Mural*, *Idanha Canopies*, *Enviroguard Pipe Tree*, *Arbol de la Vida*, *"Bicycle Trio"* and *Cottonwoods*.
- Completed and implemented new public art display guidelines for interdepartmental artwork display (no longer in private offices) and establishing rotating program
- Installed the Arakawa Hanging System at all 5 branches of the libraries and City Hall – aiding in streamlining the rotation of portable works in public spaces
- Established predictable rotation schedule of portable art for public buildings in alignment with Linen Fence program schedule
- Implemented A&H review of PDS e-permit applications for projects near existing public art
- Let go of inefficient contractors and secured new ones that are a great fit
- Standardized the annual maintenance budget and related contracts
- Developed handbook documents for all public art processes and procedures
- Updated the Mural Permit process in partnership with PDS



- Worked with City Accessibility Manager to ensure accessibility is integrated into all public art processes
- Continually improved artist contract terms based on project experience
- Aligned construction phases with BPR and PW procedures
- Standardized and streamlined CCDC reimbursement procedures
- Continually establishing more effective relationships with BOI leadership and streamlining communication and review processes
- Established 5-year plan for upcoming public art projects at the Boise Airport and plan for public art integration in new Concourse A
- Established 5-year plan for upcoming public art projects through the Public Works Fund, aligning with Public Work's capital projects.

Conducted Professional Development for Community Artists & Public Art Staff:

- Implemented the artist series *Going Public* for artist professional development and networking
- Implemented information sessions at beginning of every call for art, thus improving project access for artists with increased professional development support on project applications
- Provided artist professional development through significant project support on all public art projects
- Public Art Staff participated in *Quarterly Treasure Valley Art Coordinator Meet Ups*; three staff attended *Americans for the Arts* conference; public art team traveled to Salt Lake City to meet with their public art colleagues and tour sites as a learning experience; local field trips to build relationships with colleagues and artist in our community

Cultural Sites FY25 Accomplishments:

Managed Facilities:

- Provided ongoing care of the JCH and EHH to ensure spaces are safe, clean, and accessible to the public in partnership with Boise City Facilities team and several contractors.
- Worked with FSO to update fire alarm systems at James Castle House to ensure accessibility to a Deaf visitor/resident.

Engaged Community:

- Collaborated with local groups on program and exhibition development (EHH: Redline Project, Voter Registration Drive, guest curator for upcoming exhibition, Living Legacies annual event, Speaking Volumes collaborative exhibition w/ Wassmuth Center and Albertsons Library) (JCH: Sage, Future Public, BSU, One Stone, Libraries: Be a Maker, and James Castle Community Celebration.).
- Partnered with A&H Team on BVC exhibition at EHH
- Partnered with libraries to raise visibility of cultural sites at nearby library branches (Between Two Murals program, James Castle display at Collister)
- Promoted CS as government model through presentations and tours (EHH: AASLH Presentation and Tour, Boise Neighborhood Interactive (x3), Meeting of Mayor's lunch, Valerie Balint/HAAS presentation) (JCH: AASLH Site Tour, Meetup with the Mayor).



- Increased collaborations with local and national institutions (EHH: ISM, Wassmuth, BSU, AAAM) (JCH: ICDHH, IAD, HAHS, BAM, BSU, CAN, BSD, AAC, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Communities, Where Art Begins, Family Museum Day)

Established Process Improvements

- Developed interpretive plan for EHH
- Developed annual program and exhibition calendar for EHH and JCH
- Implemented core and initiative programming (EHH: Race, Place, and Grace, First Fridays Boise, River St. Neighborhood Resource Fair, Mobile Market, Taste of River Street, Living Legacies) (JCH: Be a Maker, Family Museum Day, Future Public School, Collister Neighborhood Association, Castle Celebration)
- Expanded audiences (Youth Day, Speaking Volumes Transforming Hate programming, BVC programming, First Friday, Idaho Office for Refugees workshop)
- Revamped community-initiated programming by shaping host site/venue policies and coordinating with community partners to schedule (i.e. Supreme Mom's events, Watershed's Master Naturalists Roundtable).
- Completed informational handbook documents for EHH and JCH.

Developed revenue generation streams:

- Co-branded online store to represent both sites.
- Designed and produced new merchandise for EHH, JCH online and in-person sales venues at sites
- Identified current offerings that could generate revenue (EHH: Living Legacies, Taste of River Street, EHH venue rental fee, donations at sites, QR donation codes added to print materials) (JCH: Byron and Andrea Tour, Valerie Balint presentation, residency workshops)
- Set fees for workshops
- Promoted donations acceptance at both sites

Managed and Provided Training for Human Resources:

- Hired for the Cultural Sites Program Assistant
- Staff attended Association of African American Museums conference
- Hosted Cultural Sites Book Club for staff to learn from each other



FY26 A&H DEPARTMENT PRIORITIES

Policies, Plans, Ordinances

- Obtain approval for Public Art Guidelines
- Revise and obtain approval for the A&H Collections Policy
- Complete editing, design, printing, and release the General Fund Public Art Plan
- Revise and obtain approval for ordinances related to A&H business (Archives? Commission?)
- Write and release the Cultural and Creative Industries Master Plan
- Create the CCDC Public Art Partnership Guidelines & Developer Guidelines
- Develop an A&H department Education framework and work plan
- Develop a Strategic Partnership Guide

Core & Initiative Programs

- Conduct all things America 250 programs and projects
- Plan and implement James Castle residencies and related core and initiative exhibits and programming
- Plan and implement Erma Hayman House core and initiative exhibits and programming
- Conduct City Steps Tours
- Plan and implement Boise Airport 100 celebration with BOI
- Program and promote the Cultural Ambassador
- Plan and promote the Writers in Residence programming
- Initiate participatory archiving program
- Plan and implement the collection of Oral Histories
- Develop and build rotating history exhibits

Community Outreach & Collections Access

- Rollout the website refresh
- Implement the revised brand marketing strategy
- Update the A&H collateral with new brand strategies
- Manage the grant program
- Digitize the CCDC collection
- Process the City's historical records
- Continue to digitize and write interpretive text for public art collection and move to Public Art Archive

Process Improvements

- Develop and implement more targeted revenue generation opportunities (donor, sponsorships, services)
- Train staff on Dynamics 365 software
- Implement and train in new system of Team folders, SharePoint, and Planisware Orchestra

Human Resources Management

- Hire a director
- Reclassify staff positions as is possible



- Provide training and professional growth opportunities for all staff
- Onboard and train new staff
- Retain talented staff through team building and professional development opportunities





MEMO

TO: Mayor McLean, Courtney Washburn, Council Member Luci Willits, Arts & History Commissioners

FROM: Stephanie Johnson, Public Art Program Manager

CC: Carrie Hall, Interim Director

DATE: 9/25/2025

RE: Public Art Program Update

GENERAL FUND PUBLIC ART PROJECTS

Boise Visual Chronicle 2025

\$20,000; The BVC takes the form of an exhibition this year, **now on view** through January 2026 at the Erma Hayman House. The Jury has awarded 1st, 2nd, and 3rd awards, and a purchase award has been selected. Each artist selected for the exhibition by the jury received a small stipend for framing/display and their works are offered for sale during the exhibition. Eight artists in total are in the exhibition. Below is an image featuring artworks in the exhibition, the artwork by Margaret Pope on the far left in the image is the 2025 purchase award.





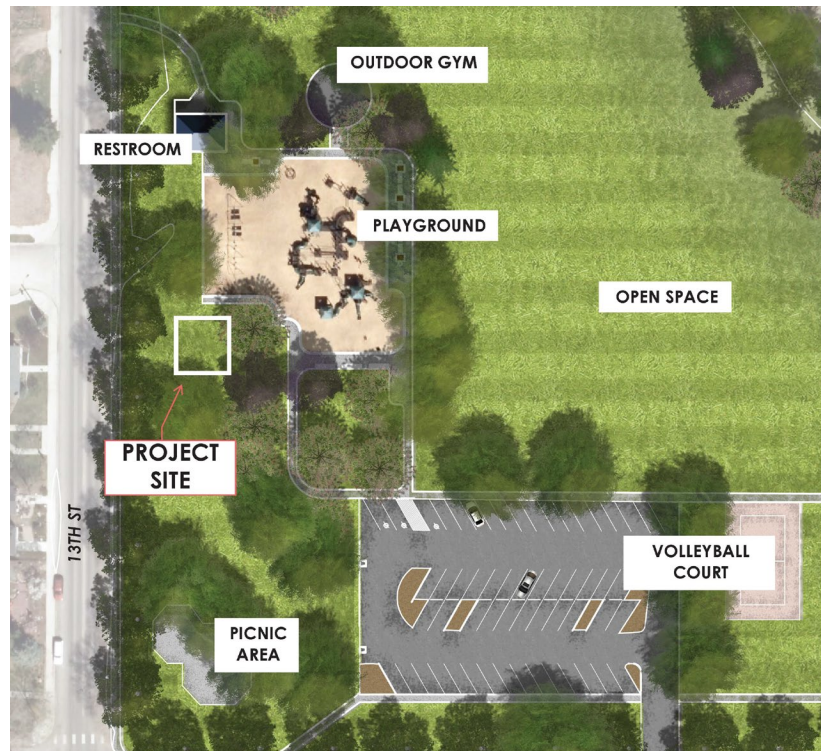
PUBLIC WORKS PUBLIC ART PROJECTS

2026 Traffic Box Art Program

\$30,000; Annual program and call. Up to 8 artists will be selected for installation in summer 2026. The call for artists has opened and will close on October 15, 2025. This year, artists are invited to explore the intersection of community and climate action in their artwork - inspired by one of the Climate Action Roadmap priorities, with a special focus on how shared action, collective resilience, and neighbor-to-neighbor connection shape our response to climate change, offering a hopeful or solution-oriented perspective.

Water Conservation & Resiliency Public Art Project

\$330,000; Public Art Project has been re-located at Camel's Back Park. There has been one selection panel meeting to discuss shared values relating to water and the foothills; including community stakeholders, Parks and Rec staff and Public Works staff. This project's purpose is to raise public awareness about the region's contemporary water challenges as well as conservation and resiliency efforts. We are seeking dynamic, experiential public art that will inspire thought, provoke discussion, and elicit action. Artists with experience in environmental design, kinetic, or haptic outdoor installation are especially encouraged to apply. The Request for Qualifications is set to release in October 2025. Installation expected Fall of 2027. Image below shows the site location for the project at Camel's Back Park.



AIRPORT PUBLIC ART PROJECTS

ConRAC (Consolidated Rental Car Facility)

\$308,700; Vinyl banner mural installation on façade of the ConRAC building, with installation to occur alongside opening of facility in Spring 2026. This will be the first iteration of rotating installation every 3-5 years. Images below shows where there will be artwork. Artist Chad Otis has been selected. His application and proposal best embodies the project goals and prompt: *In 2026, The Boise Airport will celebrate its 100-year anniversary, and the United States will celebrate its 250-year anniversary. We ask artists to consider: While acknowledging the past years of history, what could the future of air transportation in Boise look like? How would you represent that in your artwork?*



NEEDS FROM COMMISSIONERS

None this month





MEMO

TO: Mayor McLean, Courtney Washburn, Council Member Luci Willits, Arts & History Commissioners

FROM: Alaggio Laurino, Public Art Collections Manager

CC: Carrie Hall, Interim Director

DATE: 9/25/2025

RE: Public Art Collections Program Update

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENT UPDATES

New Staff Hire: Public Art Collections Coordinator

Matthew Thorley has accepted the position of Public Art Collections Coordinator. HR is currently in the final phases of the background check process, and his anticipated start date is the first full week of October. Matthew brings valuable experience from his role as Preparator at the Idaho State Historical Society and is also a practicing professional artist with an MFA from Boise State University. His expertise in the handling, creation, and interpretation of artwork will be an invaluable asset to the Collections Management team.



End of Year Cleanings & Repairs

The Collections Management program contracts with professional conservators and maintenance vendors to clean and repair many artworks in the City's Public Art Collection. These services are performed twice annually—once in the spring and again in early fall. With the fiscal year and peak maintenance season wrapping up in September, many of these contracts have now been completed.

- **Sculptures & Traffic Box Cleaning**

Primo Cleaners LLC completed inspection and cleaning of more than 30 public art sculptures citywide, along with all 220 vinyl-wrapped Traffic Boxes. While dirt buildup and vandalism occur year-round, it is essential that each



artwork receives at least one annual inspection and cleaning. Regular maintenance helps prevent long-term damage and identifies vinyl wraps that may have reached the end of their usable lifespan.

- **Bronze Sculptures Cleaning & Waxing**

Conservator Claire Dean has been inspecting, cleaning, and waxing several bronze works in the collection, including: *Cecil D. Andrus bust*, *Fallen Firefighters Memorial*, *Seated Lincoln*, *Keepsies*, *Spring Run*, *Julia Davis Memorial*, *The Aviator*, and *the Wildland Firefighter*.

Routine cleaning and waxing are essential to preserve the integrity of bronze sculptures, helping to prevent the formation of patina (such as green oxidation) that may be inconsistent with the artist's original intent.



- **General Repairs**

Jay Blackhurst conducted repairs to several public art sculptures including: *Gentle Breeze*, *Virgo*, *Heliotrope*, *Clepsydra*, *Litharacnium*, and the *Linen Fence frames*.

MAJOR ONGOING MAINTENANCE UPDATES

Boise Wings Lighting Repair

Alloway Electric recently inspected the *Boise Wings* installation at the Boise Airport. One of the neon bulbs had failed, disrupting the lighting sequence of the wings. The issue was traced to a faulty driver component. A replacement part has been ordered, with repairs anticipated early in the next fiscal year.



NEEDS FROM COMMISSIONERS

None this month.





DEPARTMENT OF ARTS & HISTORY

MAYOR: Lauren McLean | INTERIM DIRECTOR: Carrie Hall

MEMO

TO: Mayor McLean, Courtney Washburn, Council Member Luci Willits, Arts & History Commissioners

FROM: Matilda "Tilley" Bubba, Cultural Planner

CC: Carrie Hall, Interim Director

DATE: 9/25/2025

RE: Cultural Planning Activity

ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE MONTH

Report out on all-staff FY25 accomplishments. Please see attached memo.

Mayor's Arts Awards

Thank you for those who attended the Mayor's Arts Awards event. This was an all-team lift, and we were delighted that it went beautifully.

Division Strategic Plan Update

All division strategic plans have been updated.

2025-35 Cultural and Creative Industries Master Plan Update

In May we conducted nine listening sessions and three one-on-one interviews with the public, artists, and organizational leaders to deepen our understanding of current conditions. In August I completed three public presentations on the results of the survey and listening session. I am working internally with staff to identify the primary goals and then will work on plan drafting.

General Fund Public Arts Master Plan

Public Art staff and I are finalizing the draft text for the General Fund Public Arts Master Plan, which will guide the program moving forward. It will go to Community Engagement in the fall for design and be completed by December 2025.

Collections Management Policy

Staff representing public art and archives are working with me to revise and craft a comprehensive collections management policy. This is a year-long project that will carry us into the next decade of collections management processes.

Community Engagement

- I participated in an interview with ULI about A&H's activity to encourage place and belonging in the West Bench neighborhood.
- I participated in a Zoom call with the Smithsonian's Rural Partnership initiative to receive an update on their activity and how we might participate.

NEEDS FROM COMMISSIONERS

None this month.





DEPARTMENT OF ARTS & HISTORY

MAYOR: Lauren McLean | INTERIM DIRECTOR: Carrie Hall

MEMO

TO: Mayor McLean, Courtney Washburn, Council Member Luci Willits, Arts & History Commissioners
FROM: Kristen Hill, Cultural Sites Program Manager
CC: Carrie Hall, Interim Director
DATE: 9/25/2025
RE: Cultural Sites Division Update

ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Janhavi Khemka Residency

The James Castle House welcomed Fall 2025 resident Janhavi Khemka to the site on September 2nd. Born in Varanasi, India, Chicago-based artist Janhavi Khemka approaches acoustics through woodcut printmaking and experimental installations composed of animation, sound, performance, and vibratory material.

Throughout her residency, Janhavi will offer the community opportunities to engage with her and her work with two Open Studio events, two workshops, and a final presentation.



Coffee with Castle

Coffee with Castle is a new collaborative program series with the Dick Eardley Senior Center. This 4-event program brought people together to learn about James Castle and connect through conversation, art activities, and community.



James Castle Community Celebration

The James Castle House, in partnership with the Idaho Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Idaho Association of the Deaf, commemorated Deaf artist James Castle's birthday and Deaf Awareness Month with a community-centered day of activities and stories. The day was filled with activities and offerings from community partners Boise Art Museum, Boise State University, Boise School District, Collister Neighborhood Association, Library! At Collister and Idaho Hands and Voices.



Me Time, TeaTime

The Erma Hayman House has begun hosting Supreme Moms' monthly Me Time TeaTime series. This free event is designed to support moms and caregivers as they continue supporting others in their life. Participants celebrate and connect with like-hearted folks with shared values of joy, fun, and love. Hosted by Shannon McGuire, author of *To (M)others from the Hood: Conquering Fear, Uncertainty, and Chaos in Life's Most Difficult Hood* and founder of Supreme Moms.

NEEDS FROM COMMISSIONERS – Upcoming Cultural Sites Events

OCTOBER

Saturday, 10/4, 11:00am – 1:00pm (James Castle House): *Inside the Studio with Janhavi Khemka*

Join us at the James Castle House for an intimate studio visit with Fall 2025 Resident Janhavi Khemka. Learn more about Janhavi's creative practice and see the work she has created while living and working at the James Castle House.

Saturday, 10/4, 4:00-6:00pm (Erma Hayman House): *Taste of River Street*

Join us at the Erma Hayman House on Saturday, October 4 from 1–4 p.m. for a delicious afternoon honoring the diverse food traditions that shaped Boise's River Street neighborhood. This special gathering features a prix fixe menu created and curated by Chef Kevin Huelsmann of KIN, inspired by the River Street Center Cookbook, a compilation of former River Street resident recipes and culinary customs.

Thursday, 10/16, 5:00-8:00pm (Erma Hayman House): *Race, Place and Grace*

This interactive workshop is designed to build bridges across diverse perspectives. Expect an engaging session filled with self-reflection, hands-on activities, and opportunities to connect with others in a supportive and inclusive environment.



Saturday, 10/18, 11:00am – 1:00pm (James Castle House): *Workshop with Janhavi Khemka*

Join us at the James Castle House for a workshop with Fall 2025 resident Janhavi Khemka. Born in Varanasi, India, Chicago-based artist Janhavi Khemka approaches acoustics through woodcut printmaking and experimental installations composed of animation, sound, performance, and vibratory material.

Thursday, 10/23, 6:00-8:00pm (James Castle House): *Where Art Begins: Artists Creative Spaces Panel Conversation*

Join us at the James Castle House for an engaging conversation with several Boise artists about their creative practice and the spaces they create in. Doors open at 5:45, with a panel conversation from 6-7pm.

NOVEMBER

Thursday, 11/6, 6:00-8:00pm (James Castle House): *Janhavi Khemka Final Presentation*

Join us at the James Castle House for a dive into Fall 2025 resident Janhavi Khemka's experience and work onsite. The hour-long presentation will be followed by a casual reception with light refreshments.

Saturday, 11/15, 11:00am – 1:00pm (James Castle House): *Be A Maker*

Be A Maker is a series of hands-on, family-friendly workshops inspired by Boise artist James Castle and our current exhibition, *Where Art Begins*. Through guided activities led by Boise artist Amy Nack, families can expect a welcoming, inclusive space to experiment, play, and make art together.

Thursday, 11/20, 6:00-8:00pm (James Castle House) *Echoes of Home Opening Reception*

In this exhibition, we expand our exploration of James Castle by shifting the focus from the artist himself to the community members who have formed deep connections with his work. For decades, Boise-based collectors have been drawn to Castle's enigmatic and evocative creations — works that speak to a profound sense of place and personal resonance.

Echoes of Home highlights the powerful bond between Castle's art and the people who have chosen to live with it. Featuring pieces from private local collections, this exhibition reveals the diverse range of Castle's work that has found its way into Boise homes — and into the hearts of those who cherish it.



Monday, 11/24, 11:00am – 1:00pm (James Castle House): *Be A Maker*

Be A Maker is a series of hands-on, family-friendly workshops inspired by Boise artist James Castle and our current exhibition, *Where Art Begins*. Through guided activities led by Boise artist Amy Nack, families can expect a welcoming, inclusive space to experiment, play, and make art together.

- *Desired Action:* Please join us for any and all of our events and share with your networks!





DEPARTMENT OF ARTS & HISTORY

MAYOR: Lauren McLean | INTERIM DIRECTOR: Carrie Hall

MEMO

TO: Mayor McLean, Courtney Washburn, Council Member Luci Willits, Arts & History Commissioners

FROM: Jennifer Yribar, Communications Manager

CC: Carrie Hall, Interim Director

DATE: 9/26/2025

RE: Communications, Grants, and Public Programs

TEAM UPDATE

Sophie Cople, Arts & History Summer Intern, completed her internship program focusing on developing a social media plan to support next year's America 250 initiative, assisting Makenzi Dunstan, Grants and Outreach Program Manager, with preparations for the Arts & History Grant review panel, and served as a panelist for the 2026 Writer-in-Residence selection process. Sophie along with the city's intern cohort did a wonderful job presenting (and representing!) her work to City Leadership August 13.

COMMUNICATIONS

2025-2026 Communications Priorities

- FY26 – Q1
 - Mayor's Awards for Excellence in Arts & History and 2026-2027 Cultural Ambassador (Sept. 18)
 - James Castle Community Celebration (Sept. 27)
 - Arts & History Website launch
 - Preparation for America 250 and BOI 100
- FY26 – Q2 + 3
 - America 250 in Boise (programming: April – July 2026)
 - 25 years of the Percent for Art Ordinance (March 6, 2026)
 - BOI 100: Boise Airport's Centennial Celebration (April 6, 2026)

Arts & History Brand Marketing

In collaboration with our staff, the Office of Community Engagement, and Information Technology Department, we continue to work on applying many of the

recommendations provided by Drake Cooper in our messaging and across our outreach materials, including in our website upgrade and redesign project (planned for October).

Alongside the Office of Community Engagement, we have also completed work on a City of Boise x America 250 mark and are working on developing digital and print applications to support the city's commemoration and celebration of America's 250th anniversary. Jennifer Yribar is also serving as project co-lead alongside Lindsay Moser in the Office of Community Engagement.

Arts & History Website Upgrade & Design Refresh

We continue to work with the city's Office of Community Engagement and Information Technology Department on the A&H Website Upgrade & Design Refresh project (boiseartsandhistory.org). This project aims to upgrade our content management system to a current version, remediate accessibility compliance to meet new federal requirements (compliant by April 2026), and enhance the website user experience while honoring the unique features of Arts & History's brand. Project timeline is now October 2025. The James Castle House (jamescastlehouse.org) and Erma Hayman House (ermahaymanhouse.org) websites will be upgraded starting in the fall of 2025 through the spring of 2026.

Press Releases (Published)

- **August 4, 2025:** [Recipients of the 2025 Mayor's Awards for Excellence in Arts & History Announced sent](#)
- **Sept. 9, 2025:** [Janhavi Khemka Bridges Hearing and Non-hearing Worlds Through Art at James Castle House](#)
- **Sept. 19, 2025:** [Mayor McLean Names Boise Philharmonic as City of Boise Cultural Ambassador](#)
- **Sept. 23, 2025:** [City of Boise Announces Grant Recipients for Fiscal Year 2026](#)
- **Sept. 25, 2025:** [Kim Cross and Don Zancanella Named 2025-2026 Boise City Writers-in-Residence](#)

Media Coverage

- [Kaixo Corner opens in downtown Boise ahead of this week's Jaialdi](#) [Idaho Press]
- [Boise unveils Kaixo Corner park ahead of Jaialdi festival near the Basque Block](#) [KBOI Channel 2]
- ['Long time coming': Warm SpringsGrill + Golf facility opens its doors Thursday](#) [KTVB Channel 7]
- [After more than two decades and a \\$3.5 million donation, Warm Springs Golf Course community facility opens its doors](#) [Idaho Press]
- [Gene Harris All Star program wins City of Boise award](#) [Boise State University]



- [Hervochon receives Boise Mayor's Award for Excellence in Arts and History](#) [Boise State News]
- [Boise Philharmonic named Boise Cultural Ambassador](#) [KTVB Channel 7]
- [Boise Philharmonic named cultural ambassador for 2026-2027](#) [KBOI Channel 2]
- [Faculty receive Mayor's Awards for Excellence in Art and History](#) [The Arbiter]

GRANTS AND OUTREACH

Mayor's Awards for Excellence in Arts & History and 2026-2027 Cultural Ambassador

Mayor McLean recognized [award recipients for distinguished service in Arts & History](#) and [named the next Cultural Ambassador](#) at the [2025 Mayor's Awards for Excellence in Arts & History](#) on Thursday, September 18, 2025, at JUMP. Story Story Night will serve as the city's Cultural Ambassador through September 30, 2025, and Boise Philharmonic, Boise's newest appointee, will begin their two-year term on October 1, 2025.

Upcoming events:

- 9/30: [Slammer of the Year. REAP WHAT YOU SOW](#)
- 11/15: The Boise Philharmonic presents [The Boise Philharmonic Youth Orchestra](#) at Borah High School

Arts & History Grants Program

[FY26 Arts & History Grant award recipients](#) were announced on September 23, 2025. 44 recipients will receive funding to total \$120,000 for cultural projects that occur between October 1, 2025, and September 30, 2026, and benefit Boise residents. Grants and Outreach Program Manager Makenzi Dunstan facilitated an information session on September 25 to go over program requirements, payment, and final report and will meet one-on-one with individuals unable to attend. [Learn more.](#)

America 250 Grant: Opens in January 2026 (dates TBA) for awards between \$1,000 and \$5,000 totaling \$30,000. This funding will support individuals and organizations in established and emerging cultural fields with projects designed to support the City of Boise's commemoration and celebration of America's 250th anniversary between April and July 2026.

Boise City Writer-in-Residence

We announced the [City of Boise's 2026 Writers in Residence: Kim Cross](#) (October 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026) and [Don Zancanella](#) (April 1 – September 30, 2026).



Outreach

Upcoming outreach events (**Note:** This is a *tentative* schedule. Additional opportunities may be added throughout the year. Dates and events are subject to change.):

- October 2: First Thursday on the Plaza

EDUCATION AND PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Public Programs

We continue to engage department-wide teams in monthly Public Programs Roundtable, program team meetings, and Book Club discussions (optional), to develop shared language and best practices in public programming and community engagement. We met in September to go over the first quarter of fiscal year 2026 programming.

Education

Education and Public Programs Manager Christina Wilkens reviewed and provided feedback for the [City of Boise Youth Roadmap](#), an initiative sponsored by Council Member Jimmy Hallyburton. Many of the recommendations directly align with a need to support arts education, arts entrepreneurship, and multigenerational arts experiences.

Continuing the foundation laid for the department's Education Framework, Christina met with Boise School District content supervisors, Benji Simmonds and Dani Backer, to explore a path forward building art and history educational experiences to support student learning. Representatives from Cultural Sites (Cameron Sites-Stevens and Mónica Galvan), as well as our History division (Ashley O'Hara) also contributed to this meeting.

NEEDS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Cultural Program Guide

The October-December Cultural Program Guide is here! Learn more by visiting our [Events Calendar](#).

- *Desired Action:* Pick up a copy at our offices or at any city facility. Please consider attending any of the events listed and sharing widely!





DEPARTMENT OF ARTS & HISTORY

MAYOR: Lauren McLean | DIRECTOR: Jennifer Stevens

EXHIBIT A **Minutes** **Arts & History Commission**

Wednesday, September 3rd, 2025
5:00-6:30 pm
Greenbelt Room, 3rd Floor, Boise City Hall
150 N Capitol Blvd, Boise ID 83702

Virtual and in-person attendance is offered.

Watch via Zoom Webinar: [Registration Link](#)

Commissioners Present: Melissa Thom, Gaby Thomason, Camryn Lafrenz, Rachel Miller (virtual), Amanda Ashley (virtual)

Commissioners Absent: Trish Walker

Council Liaison:

Staff Present: Jillian Whitehill, Tilley Bubb, Lianna Hamby, Jennifer Yribar, Makenzi Dunstan, Tom Cruz, Stephanie Johnson

Public: Joanna Anguiano-Cisneros,

- I. **Call to Order** – Commission Chair, Thom called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m.
 - a. Land Acknowledgement – Commission Chair, Thom
- II. **Minutes Approval**
 - a. **ACTION REQUESTED:** Approve Minutes from June 4th, 2025 (**Exhibit A**)
 - i. Motion: Move to approve by Commissioner Thomason at 5:05 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Lafrenz at 5:05 p.m. All in favor. Motion approved.
- III. **Director's Update**
 - a. Jennifer Stevens was unable to join the meeting so the Director's Update was skipped.
- IV. **Presentations/Updates/Approvals** **Pursuant to Idaho Code Section 74-204(4), all agenda items are action items, and a vote may be taken on these items.*
 - a. Informational Item: Public Art Update on *Passage* and *Kaixo Corner* – Lianna Hamby
 - i. Commissioners asked the presenter questions.
 - ii. Motion: No motion, informational item only.

- b. Informational Item: Annual Grants Update – Makenzi Dunstan
 - i. Commissioners asked the presenter questions.
 - ii. Motion: No motion, informational item only.
- c. Informational Item: Cultural Survey & Listening Session Findings – Tilley Bubb
 - i. Commissioners asked the presenter questions and provided feedback on related topics.
 - ii. Motion: No motion, informational item only.

V. Adjourn Meeting

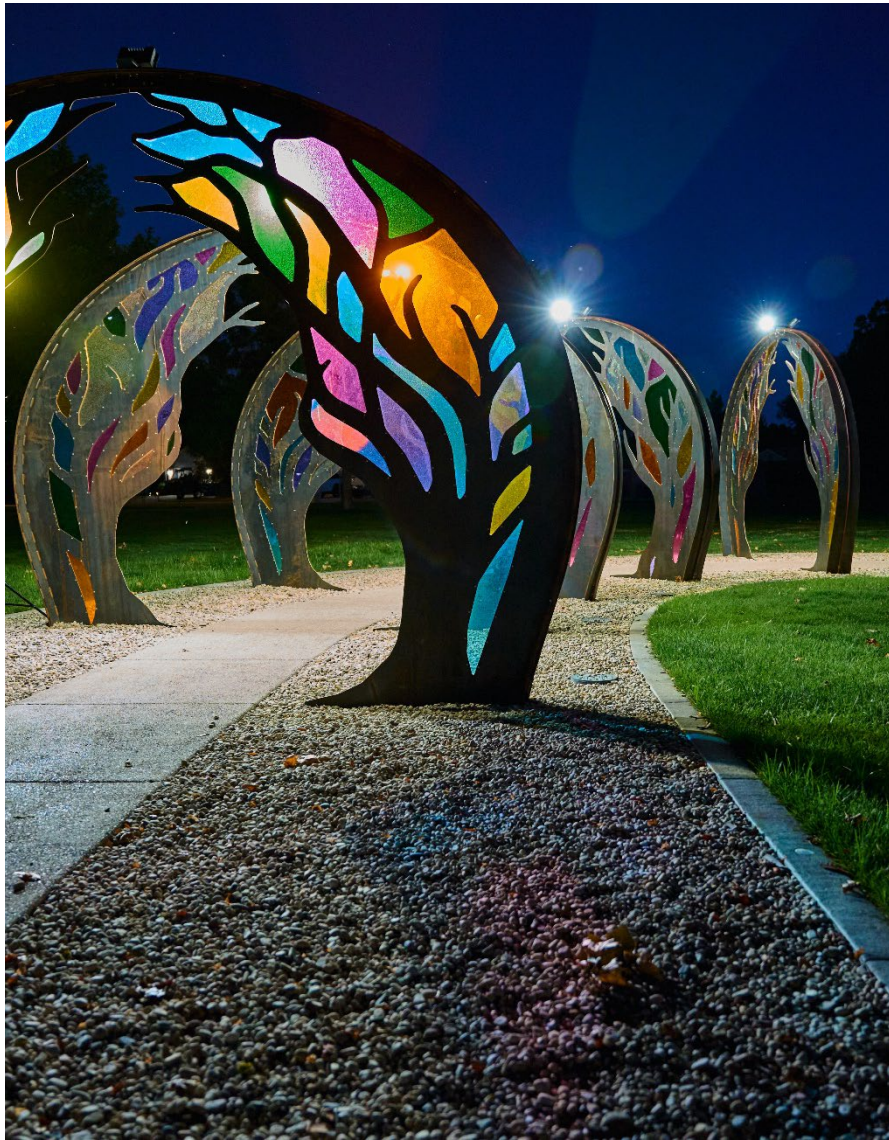
- a. Commission Chair Thom asks commissioners to offer a motion to adjourn.
 - i. Motion: Commissioner Thomason motions to adjourn, Commissioner Lafrenz seconds; all in favor. Moved at 5:58 p.m.



PUBLIC ART UPDATE ON *PASSAGE AND KAIXO CORNER*

Lianna Hamby | Public Art Project Coordinator, Arts & History





Photography by Brandon Loureiro

PASSAGE





Passage, a public artwork by James Peterson of Art + Contraptions is complete!

This work was funded by the Neighborhood Investment Program and the City of Boise Percent for Art Ordinance.

Passage is inspired by the agricultural heritage of the Ustick townsite.

The work was dedicated during Ustick in Bloom on June 7.

KAIXO CORNER



Photography by Daniel Olson



Photography by Debbie Chow

The public art installation at Kaixo Corner by Huameng Yu and Louis Chinn of Hua Studio is complete!

This work was funded Capital City Development Corporation.

The artworks at Kaixo Corner are inspired by the rich and storied history of Boise and celebrate the multitude of hands and cultures that shaped this place.

Kaixo Corner was dedicated on July 28, and the space was utilized throughout Jaialdi.

AMERICAN CONTRADICTIONS

A BOISE VISUAL CHRONICLE EXHIBITION



Photography by Wytske Van Keulen





This exhibition fulfills the 2025 Boise Visual Chronicle, a bi-yearly commission for work that depicts life and culture in Boise.

This year's theme (developed with a local jury) asked artists to explore contradictory values that make up American identity.

The jury selected eight artists as well as 1st, 2nd, and 3rd awards, and Arts & History selected a purchase award.

The exhibition opened on August 28, with over 100 attendees!



CITY *of* BOISE

FY26 Arts & History Annual Grant Selection Summary

Makenzi Dunstan | Grants & Outreach Manager, Arts & History

FY26 GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Total of \$150,000 distributed through two opportunities:

- **Annual Arts & History Grant:** Opened May 1 – Closed June 16, 2025. For awards between \$1,000 and \$5,000 totaling **\$120,000**.
 - This funding supports people in established and emerging cultural fields with projects designed to benefit Boise residents.
- **America 250 Grant:** Opens in Winter 2025/26 (dates TBA) for awards between \$1,000 and \$5,000 totaling **\$30,000**.
 - This funding supports people in established and emerging cultural fields with projects designed to benefit Boise residents and to support the City of Boise's commemoration and celebration of America's 250th anniversary in 2026.

ANNUAL ARTS & HISTORY GRANT

- Total Applications: **65**
- Total Funding Request: **\$250,000**
- Most applicants requested the max award of **\$5,000**
- 80% returning applicants, 20% new applicants
- Panel members: **7** (1 A&H Commissioner, 6 community members)
- Applicants were reviewed and awarded based on the criteria of quality, community benefit, alignment with the City of Boise's vision of A City for Everyone, accessibility, and management.

ANNUAL ARTS & HISTORY GRANT RESULTS SUMMARY

- Applications awarded: **44**
- Total funding awarded: **\$120,000**
- Mix of visual art, dance, theater, storytelling, film, music, educational, and community/cultural focused events and projects.
- FY26 **funding strategy** based on the panel's recommendations is as follows:
 - The top-scoring applicants (40 points and above) received their full requested amount.
 - Applicants with scores of 39 or lower who requested \$5,000 - \$2,500 received percentage adjustments to ensure an equitable distribution.
 - Applicants requesting \$2,000 or less were not subject to these adjustments.

NEXT STEPS

- Mayor and City Council are currently reviewing recommendations (review period ends Friday, September 5, 2025).
- All applicants will be notified of their award status during the week of September 8.
- FY26 Grant Recipients will be announced on September 16, 2025.



CITY *of* BOISE

COMMUNITY CULTURAL SURVEY & LISTENING SESSIONS

REPORT

Tilley Bubb | Cultural Planner, Arts & History

REPORT OUT

- **Community Cultural Survey & Listening Sessions**
 - Members of the Public
 - Individual Artists
 - Cultural Organizations

PURPOSE OF SURVEY/LISTENING SESSIONS



To assess Boise's cultural landscape from multiple perspectives in preparation of a city-wide Cultural Plan update.

FINDINGS WILL:

Inform the writing
of the cultural plan

Identify strategies
in which the City of
Boise and community
partners can invest

Strengthen Boise's
creative ecosystem for
artists, the public, and
cultural organizations



Opera Idaho, Opera in the Park, 2022

AGENDA

- Overview
- Financial Challenges
- Workforce
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Space Challenges/Venues
- Physical & Financial Accessibility
- Social Accessibility
- Marketing/Promotion/Audience Reach
- Partnerships & Networking
- Interactive: Strategy Prioritization
- Next Steps

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK INSIGHTS

SURVEY RESPONSE OVERVIEW

Public/Artist Survey

- **1,084 Responses**
(614 Artists + 470 public respondents)
- Survey ran November 4 -25, 2025
- Distribution:
 - City of Boise Press Release, Newsletters and web elements
 - Social Media
 - Direct emails to arts organizations, non-profits and community partners
 - Flyers and physical media
 - Radio and news media

Organizations Survey

- **127 Responses**
- Survey ran November 4 -25, 2025
- Distribution :
 - Press Release, Newsletters and web
 - Direct emails to arts organizations, non-profits and community partners

SURVEY RESPONDENTS ON TODAY'S ARTS & CULTURAL SCENE



SURVEY RESPONDENTS ON FUTURE ARTS & CULTURAL SCENE



LISTENING SESSIONS OVERVIEW

77 Participants

All sessions took place in **May 2025**

- 3 public sessions
- 2 artist sessions
- 4 cultural organization sessions
- 3 additional one-on-one interviews with organizational leaders (Morrison Center, BAM, Preservation Idaho)

PUBLIC MEMBERS WORDS TO DESCRIBE BOISE ARTS SCENE

A word cloud visualization of public member feedback for the Boise Arts Scene. The words are arranged in a circular pattern, with the most prominent words in the center and smaller words towards the edges. The colors of the words range from dark blue to light blue and grey.

Enthusiastic
Resourceful
expanding
Innovative
Varied
Scrappy
Fun
Diverse
Energetic
Beautiful
Underrated
Growing
Lively
Accessible
Summertime
Cultural
Inspired

VISUAL ARTISTS/PERFORMERS WORDS TO DESCRIBE BOISE ARTS SCENE



CULTURAL ORGANIZATION LEADERS WORDS TO DESCRIBE BOISE ARTS SCENE



BIG-PICTURE PERSPECTIVE INSIGHTS

Covid-19

Changed audience behaviors

Participant numbers have not returned to pre-covid closure numbers

Public members note preference for smaller events, less crowds

Artists + Arts Organizations

Highly Entrepreneurial

Earning income from a variety of sources and events

Challenged financially with rising rents/property values and limited venues

National + State Shifts In Arts Funding

Common concerns/ fears

Increased competition for grants and donations

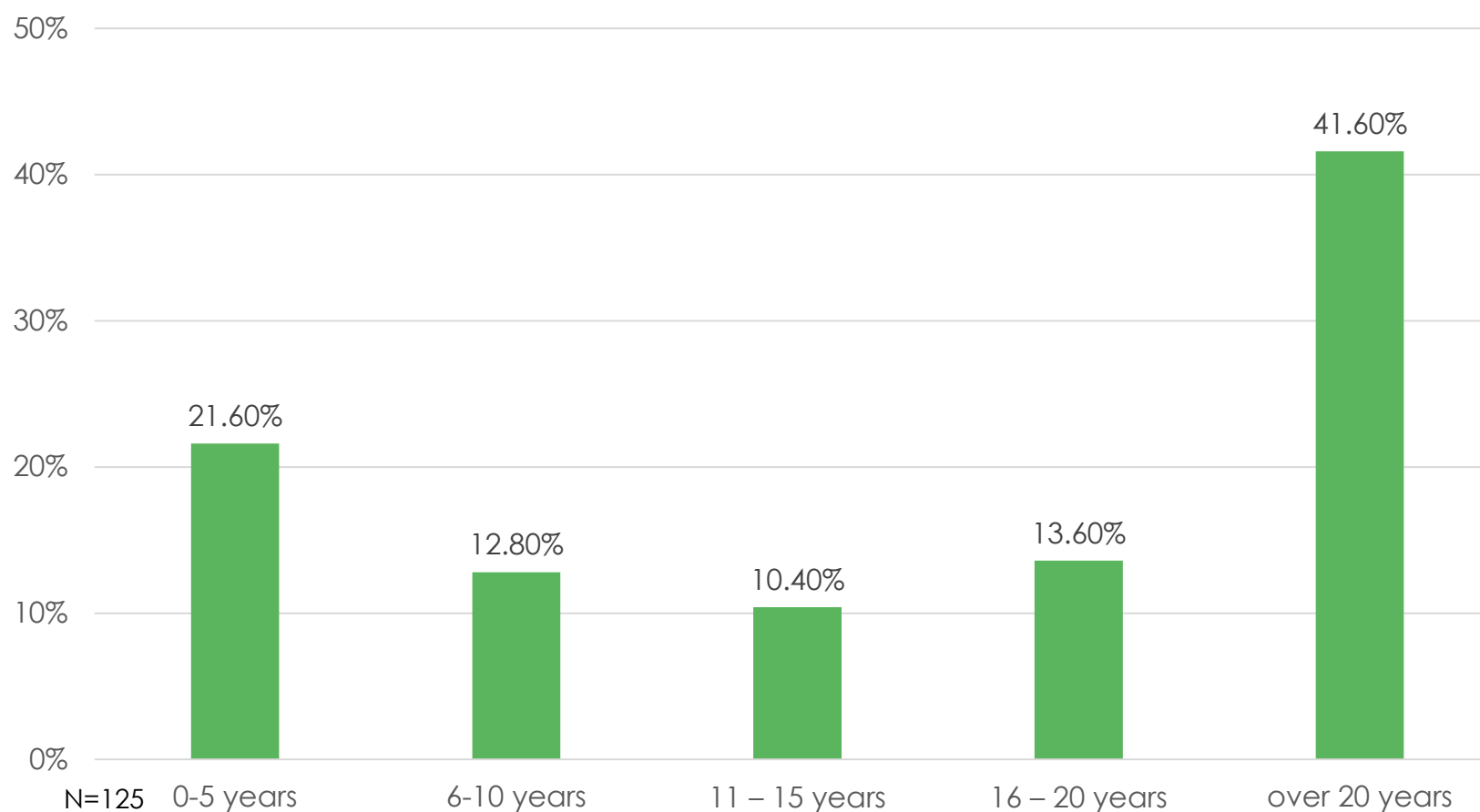
Private philanthropy not filling gaps

Boise's Cultural Scene is Maturing

Solid base of established organizations (over 15 years and older)

Several emerging arts and cultural organizations (under 5 years old)

HOW LONG HAVE ORGANIZATIONS BEEN IN BUSINESS?



55% of respondent organizations have been in operation for over 15 years.

What isn't captured here are the arts/cultural organizations that are no longer in operation.

FINANCIAL CHALLENGES

1

The arts are **under-resourced** and need more access to financial support.

2

Artists and organizations face **financial insecurity** due to changing audience patterns, patchwork funding, grant barriers, and limited philanthropic/donor engagement.

3

Operational support (rent/salaries) is most difficult to fund.

4

The arts compete with social services for philanthropy \$\$.

5

Low visibility and **lack of public understanding** of the economic and social value of the arts **hinders giving**.

FINANCIAL CHALLENGES

6

Artists and organizations need assistance in **cultivating a community culture of philanthropy for the arts.**

7

Many artists hold **multiple jobs** and struggle to sustain their practice due to **limited funding and support.**

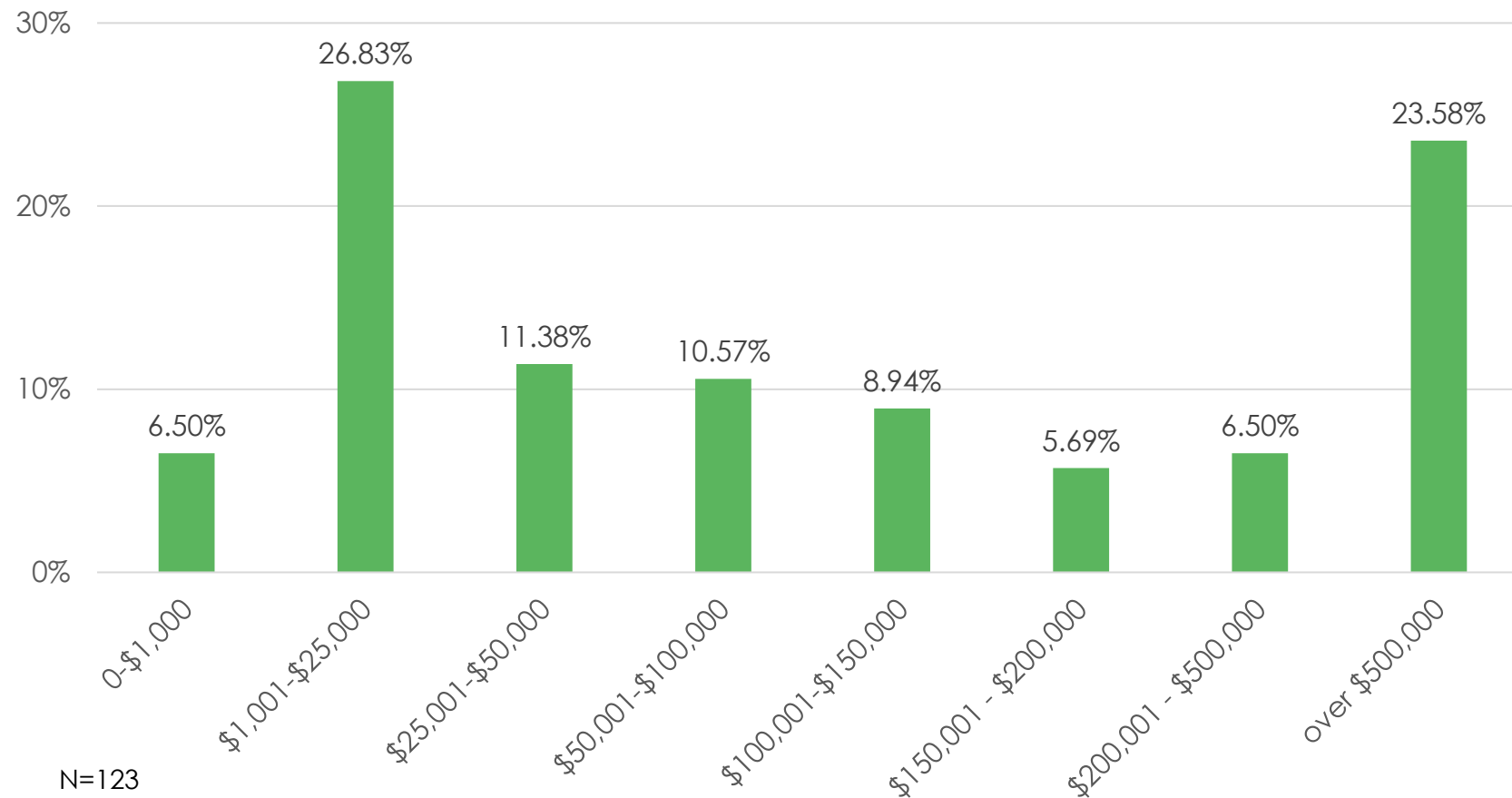
8

Artists perceive that civic leaders and the public **underestimate the value and labor** behind creative work.

9

Artists report receiving more recognition and compensation **in larger metro areas outside of Idaho**, which makes them consider moving to where there is more or better opportunities.

FINANCES: ORGANIZATIONS' ANNUAL BUDGETS

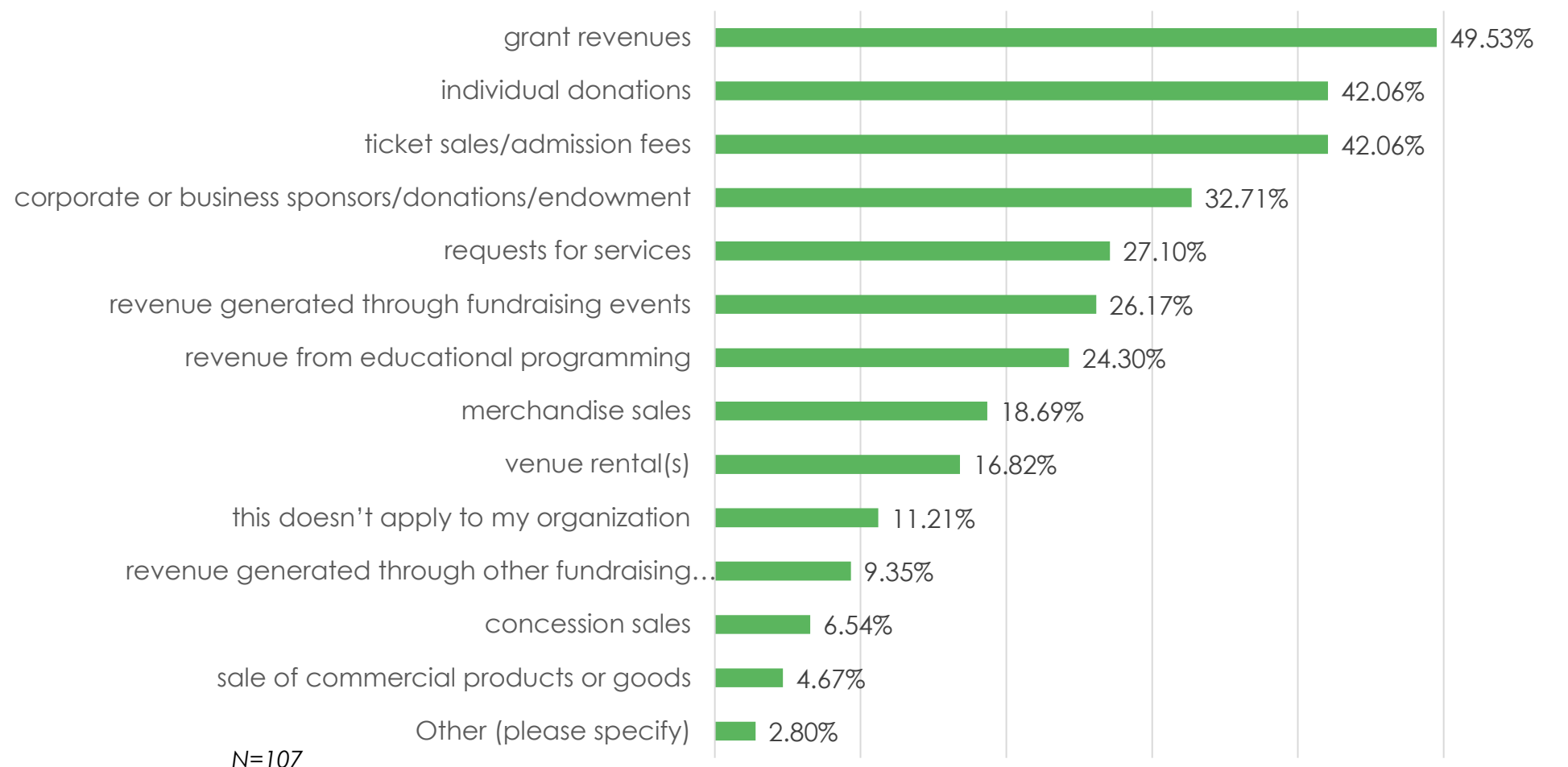


Respondent organizations have a wide range of annual budgets.

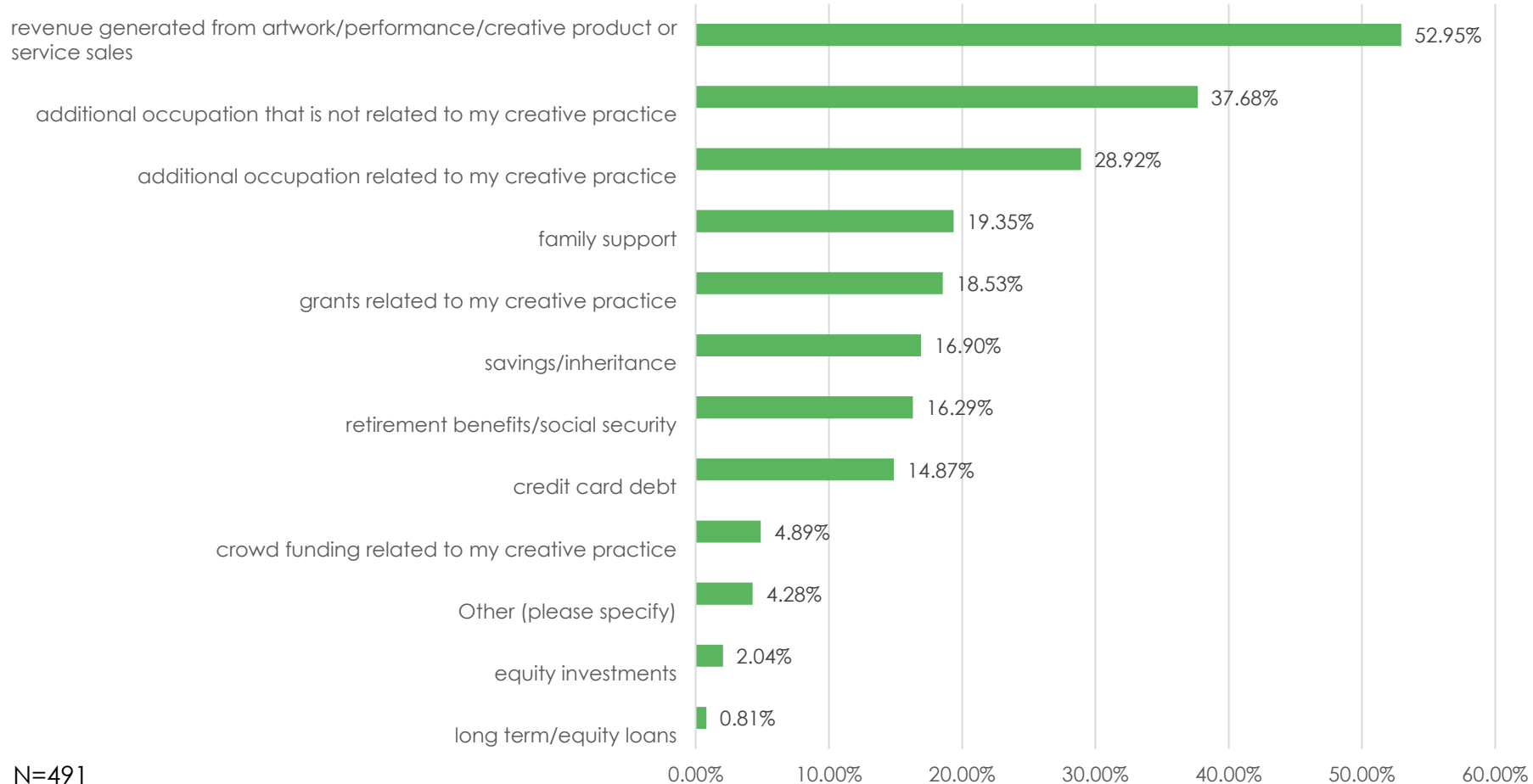
Spikes in responses under \$25,000 and over \$500,000 are indicators of organization size and scale.

FINANCES

ORGANIZATIONS' TOP 5 REVENUE STREAMS



FINANCING INDIVIDUAL ARTISTS' CREATIVE PRACTICES



Artists appear to be using a wide range of financing options to fund their creative practices, likely a combination of many methods.

WORKFORCE: CHALLENGES

1

Boise lacks structured pathways for creatives from education to employment in specialized technical, creative jobs that are available locally but often get filled regionally/nationally.

2

Many creative jobs are part-time, which makes it difficult to fill the roles with qualified local candidates.

Trained local talent often goes elsewhere for permanent work.

3

Many local artists work multiple part-time jobs, which gives them flexibility in their creative practice but does not provide the stability of health care or other benefits.

WORKFORCE: NEEDS

1

Artists need **business and entrepreneurial training** – marketing, taxes, contracts, pricing, use of AI.

2

Emerging artists in all disciplines **seek mentorship** to bridge the gap from education to professional practice.

3

Education/training tailored to Boise-specific opportunities and its creative economy are needed.

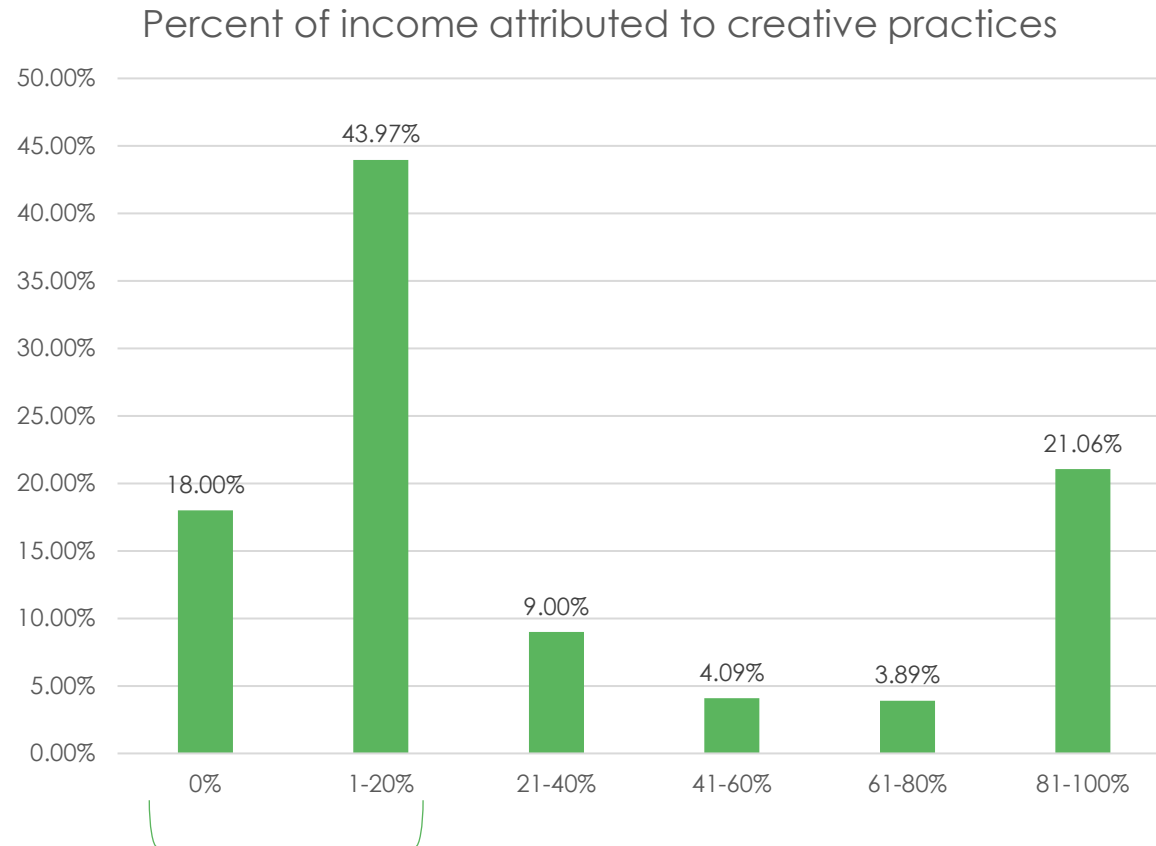
4

Artists want regular, structured **opportunities to network, collaborate, and learn from peers.**

5

Access to health care for artists working part-time is needed.

WORKFORCE: % OF INCOME FROM CREATIVE PRACTICE



Over 60% of artists are making less than 20% of their income from artistic practices

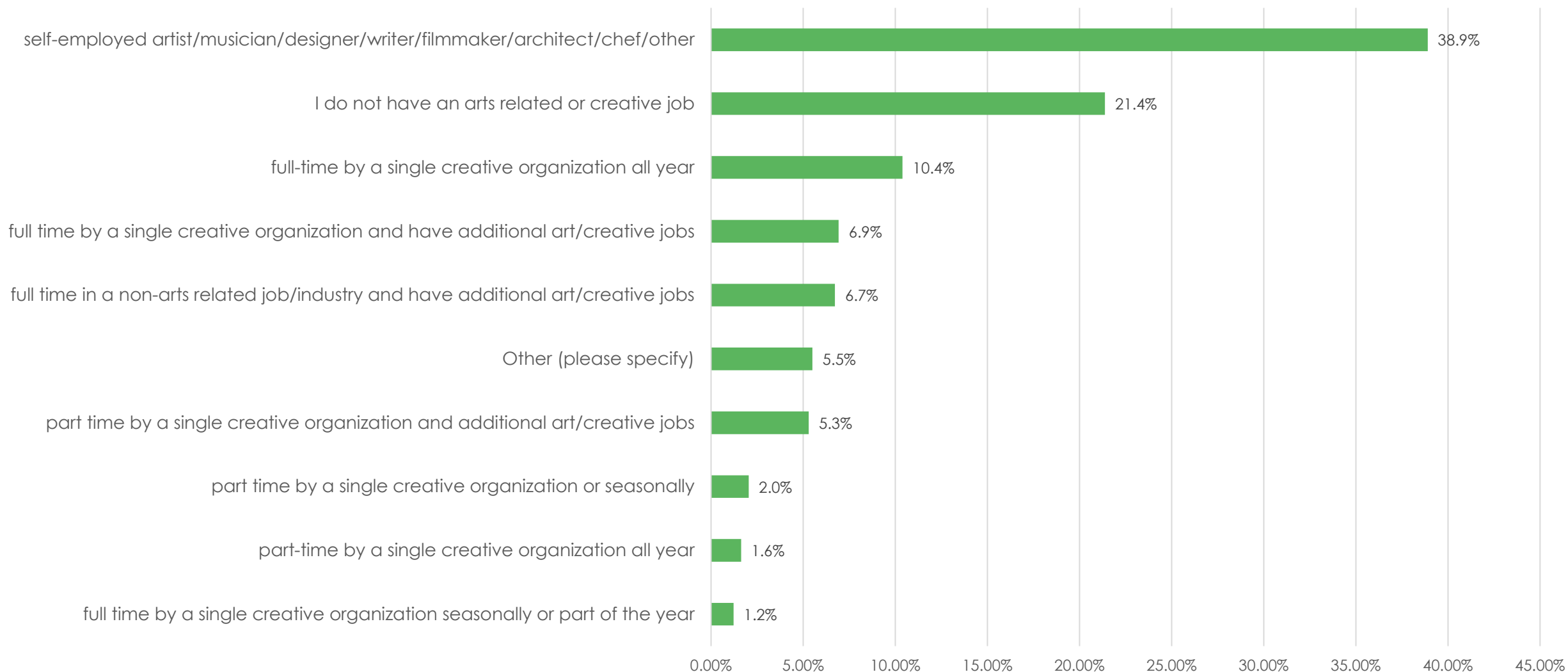
N=473

Income specifics related to creative practices:

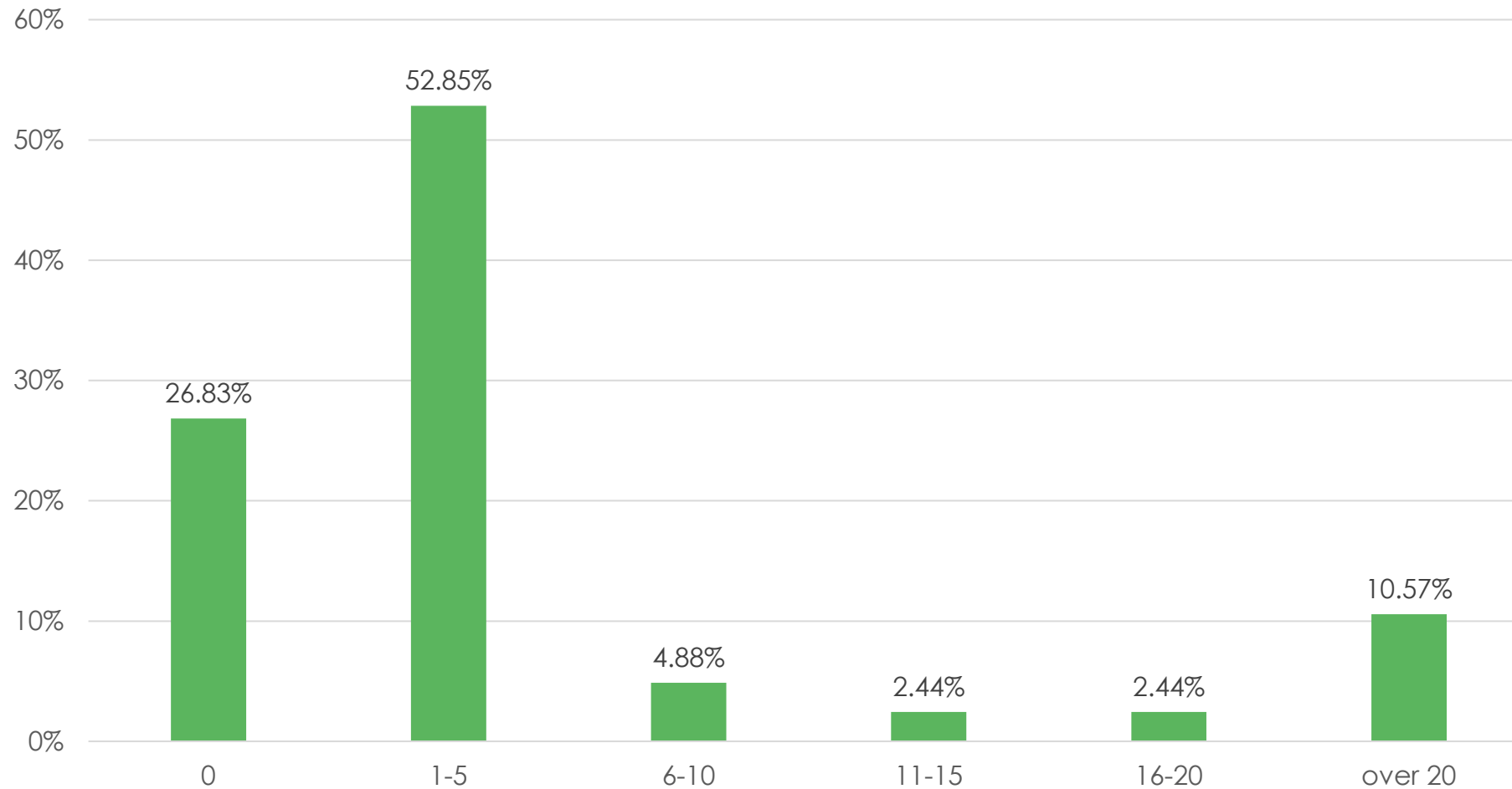
- **Average** - \$29,840
- **Median** - \$20,000
- **Highest Reported** - \$99,000

N=421

WORKFORCE: ARTISTS' EMPLOYMENT

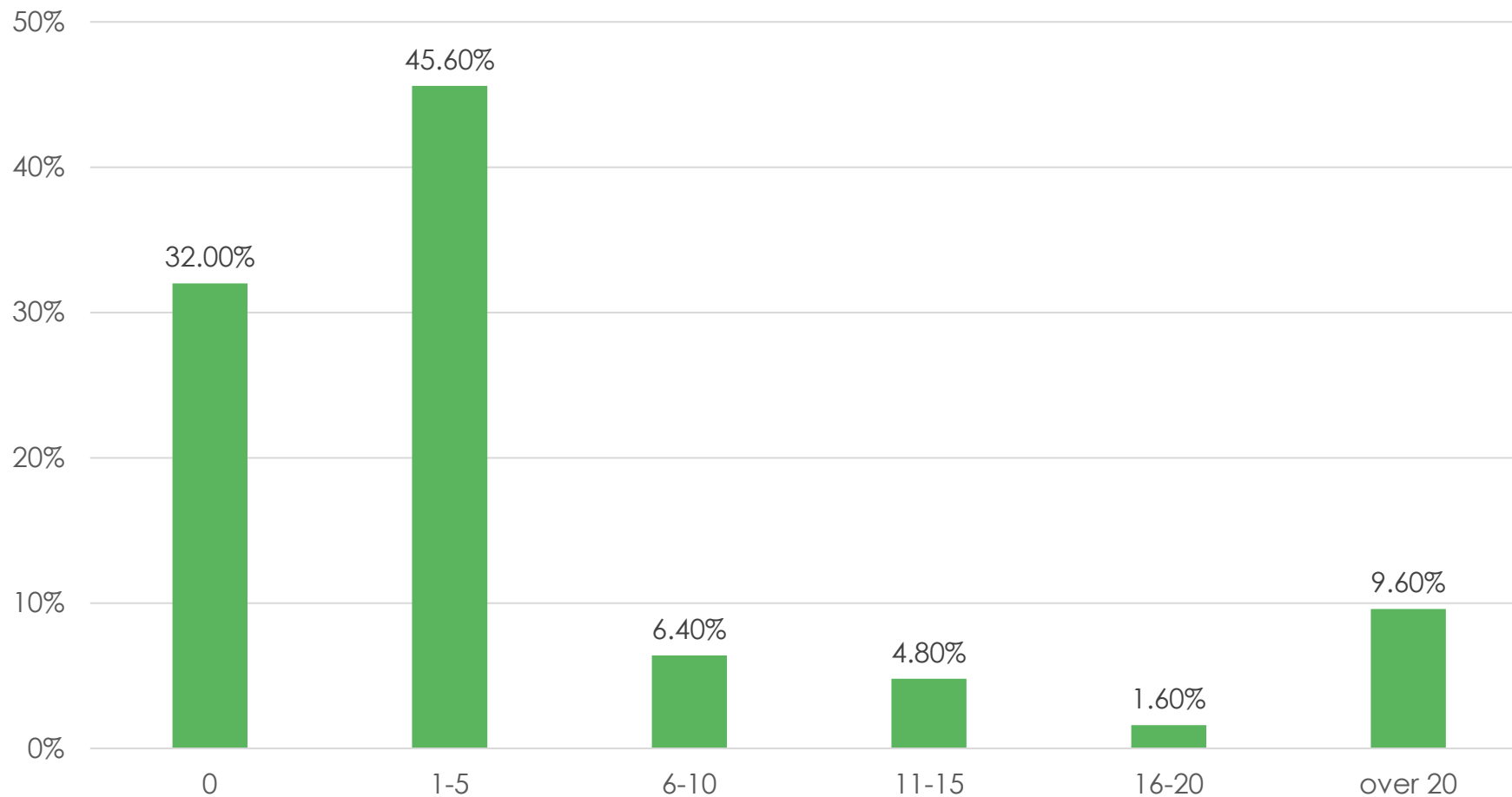


WORKFORCE: ORG FULL-TIME EMPLOYEE COUNT



N=123

WORKFORCE: ORG PART-TIME EMPLOYEE COUNT



N=125

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteers are vital to the cultural sector and are used in targeted ways (ushers at ISF, Art-in-the-Park support for BAM).

Unpaid student interns raise ethical concerns, but it is difficult for the organizations to come up with funding to pay interns.

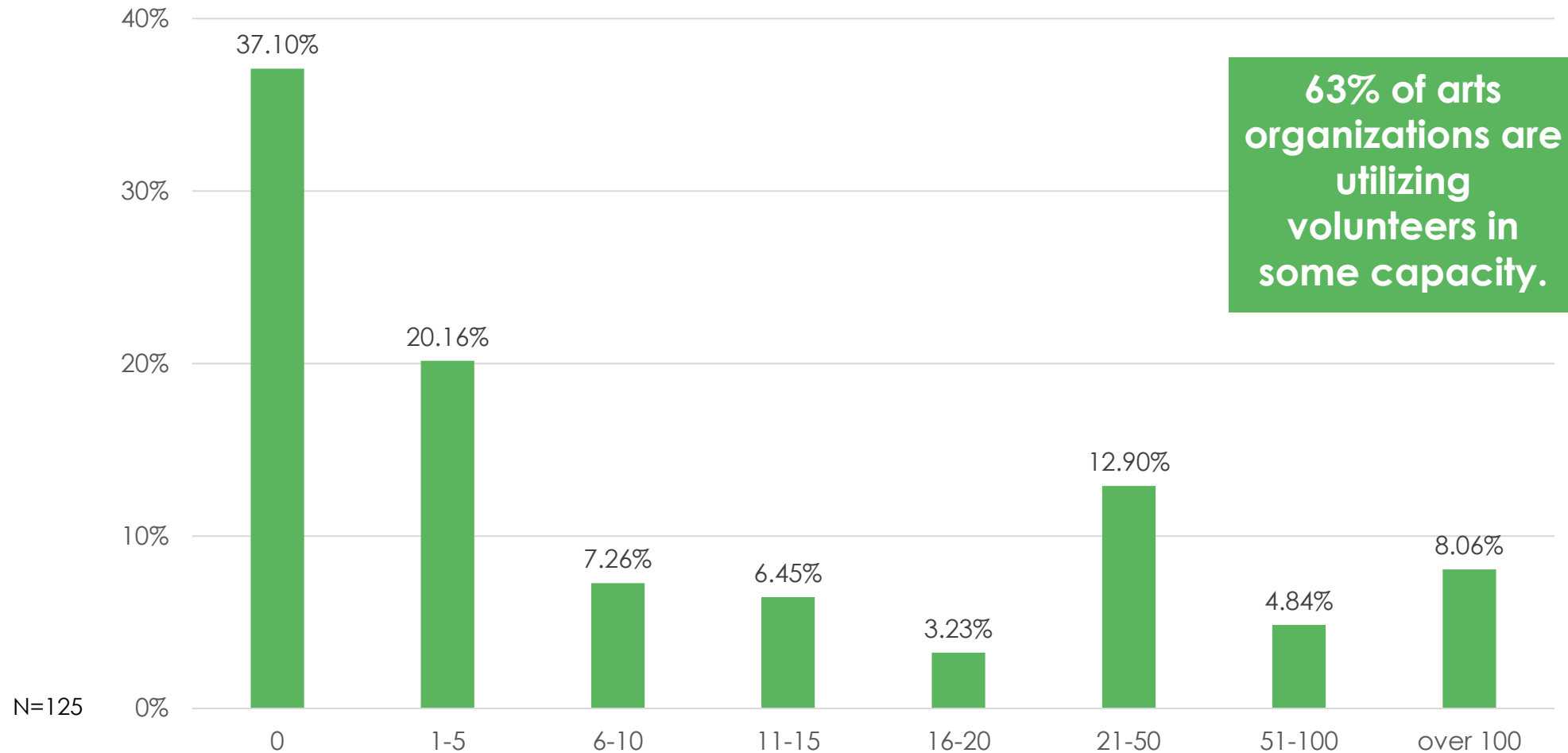
Many cultural organizations **lack systems for defining volunteer jobs** that are mutually beneficial.

Cultural orgs want volunteers to build organizational capacity and community support but have liability, supervision, and training challenges.

Community members want to volunteer to get access to events financially, to find belonging, and to support cultural organizations.

There is a desire to **facilitate mentorship and skill-building** for emerging talent, but staff capacity to do so is limited.

WHAT IS THE ANNUAL VOLUNTEER COUNT OF ARTS ORGS?



SPACE: CHALLENGES

1

Finding and keeping affordable, accessible, and appropriate space is the foremost concern of organizations that don't own buildings.

2

Rising rent is pushing artists out of creative spaces in Boise and can be prohibitive for rehearsals, performances, and exhibitions.

3

Limited venues make it hard to showcase work/build audiences.

4

Those that own their own buildings or are in city-owned buildings are concerned with **needed capital upgrades, renovation.**

5

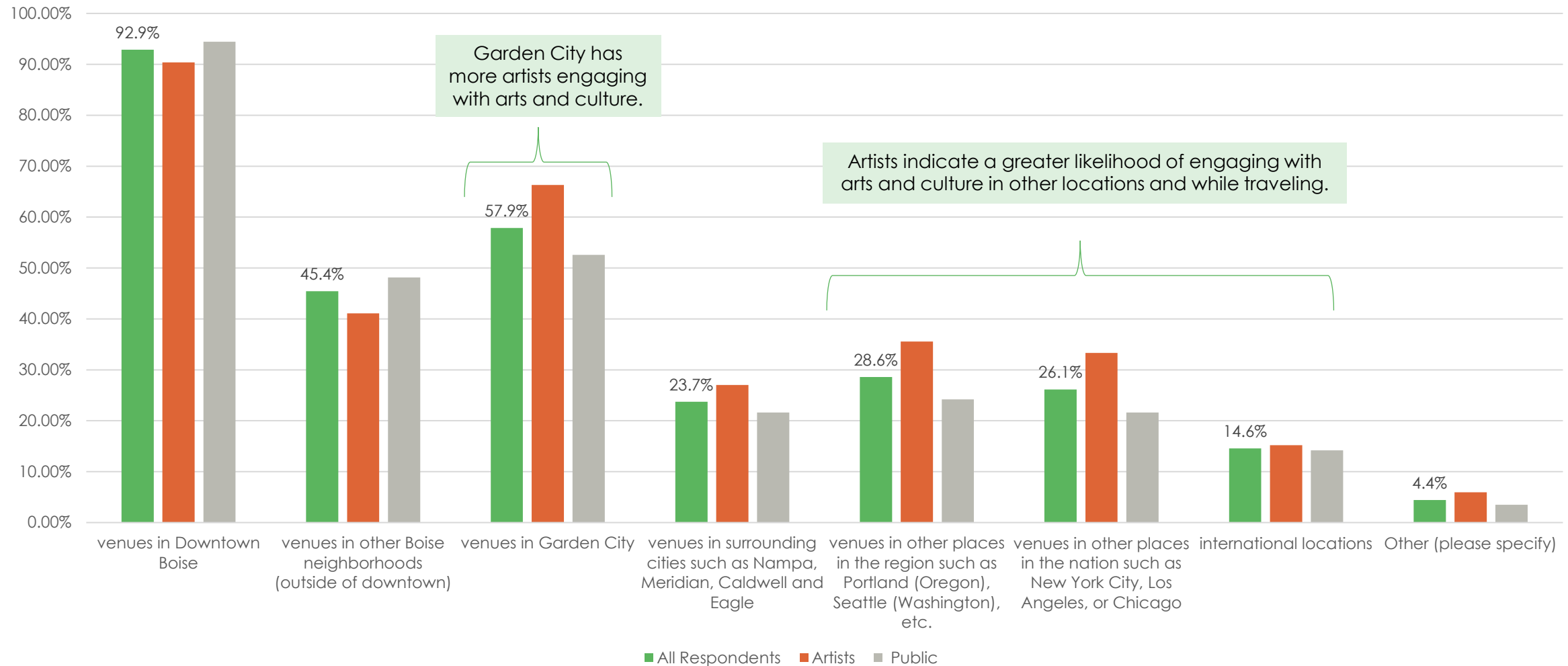
There is no central, consistent, inclusive and affordable space for collaboration, performance, and networking for artists.

SPACE: EXISTING VENUES

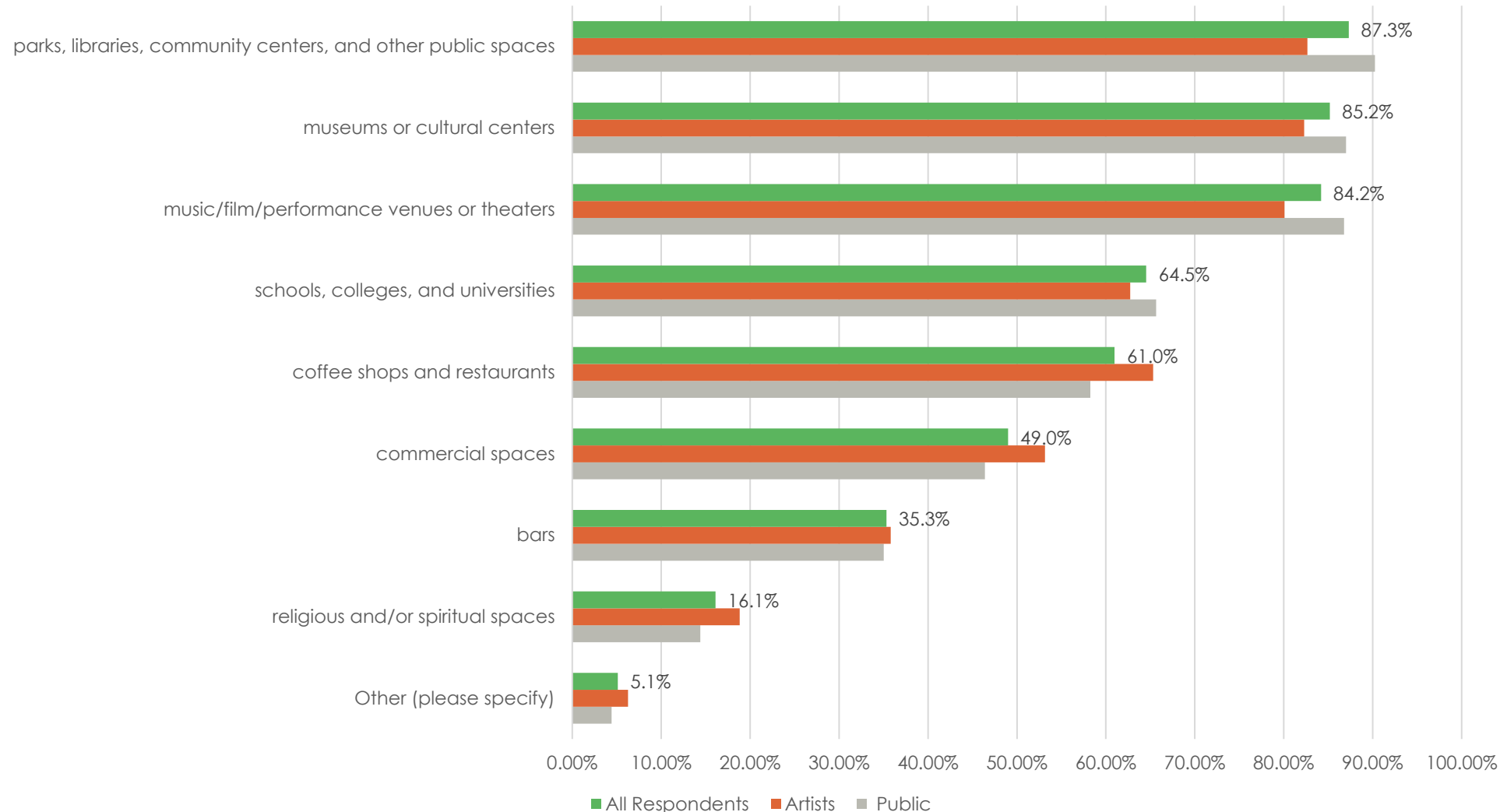
Cultural organizations with their own or housed in city-owned buildings/venues fill important community needs, but each space has its own mission upon which to focus and can't meet all community needs and gaps.

Boise Art Museum, Boise Contemporary Theater, Boise Hive,
Boise Rock School, Boise State University, The Cabin,
Catalyst Arts Space, CommonWell, Erma Hayman House,
Esther Simplot Performing Arts Academy, Flicks, Fort Boise Community Center,
Gem Center, James Castle House, JUMP, Idaho Film Foundation,
Idaho Shakespeare Festival, Library branches, Ming Studios, Surel's Place, Xanadu

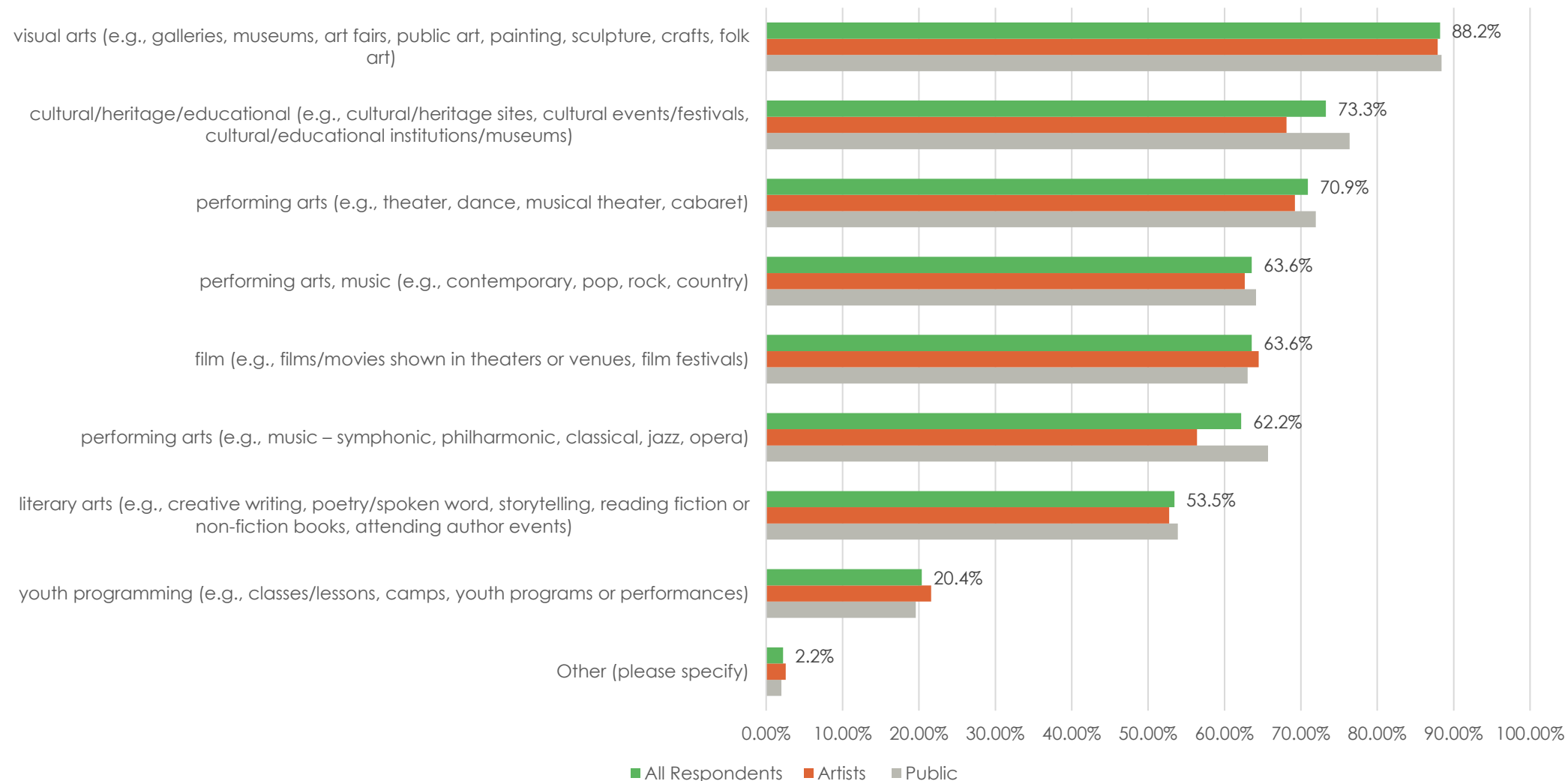
SPACE: WHERE DOES THE PUBLIC GO?



SPACE: WHERE DOES THE PUBLIC PREFER TO ENGAGE WITH ARTS/CULTURE?



SPACE: WHAT ACTIVITIES DOES THE PUBLIC ATTEND?



PHYSICAL + FINANCIAL ACCESSIBILITY

- Many venues **lack ADA compliance**, excluding artists and audiences with disabilities from full participation.
- **High ticket prices** limit access for families, retirees, teachers, and younger audiences, while **free or low-cost events** in public venues like parks and libraries and other neighborhood-oriented places are highly valued
- The public would like to see **same-day discounts, volunteer-for-entry opportunities, and subsidized tickets for seniors/youth**
- While highly accessed, downtown has **transportation/parking drawbacks**, particularly for seniors and families.

SOCIAL ACCESSIBILITY

Equity gaps persist in access to careers and creative opportunities for disabled and marginalized community members.

Seniors, people with disabilities, and parents with young children have **compounded obstacles to participation.**

Participating in cultural events is not just about artistic interest but the need for **social connection.**

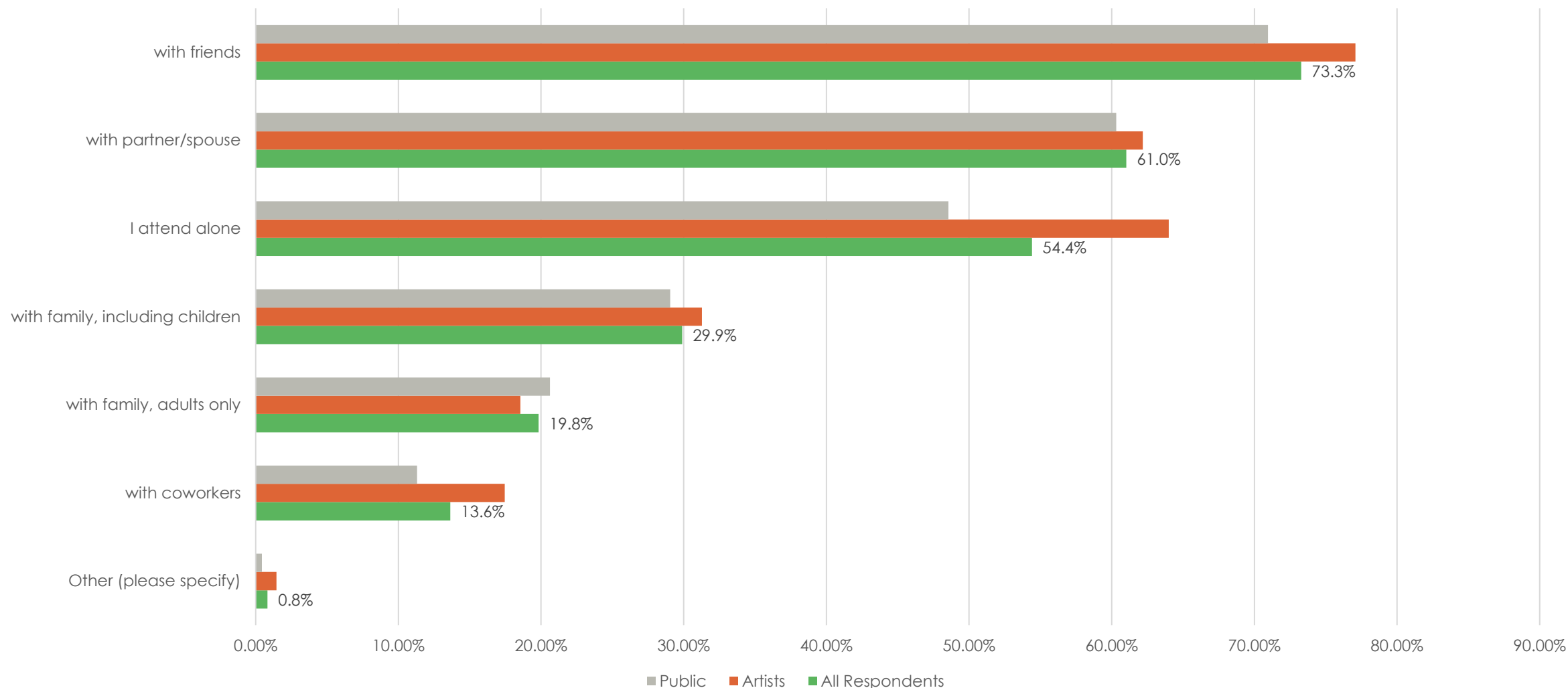
SOCIAL ACCESSIBILITY

Organizations strive to build more **inclusive, family-friendly, and accessible** cultural experiences to **promote a sense of belonging.**

Attendees seek environments where they **see familiar faces, feel represented, and build community.**

Respondents **seek smaller venues and events** with live music and local art such as neighborhood-based events that are frequent, social, and low-stakes.

SOCIAL ACCESSIBILITY: WHO DO RESPONDENTS ATTEND ARTS EVENTS WITH?



MARKETING/PROMOTION/AUDIENCE REACH

The **absence of centralized arts and event listings**, combined with weak social media returns and shrinking traditional press options undermines marketing efforts.

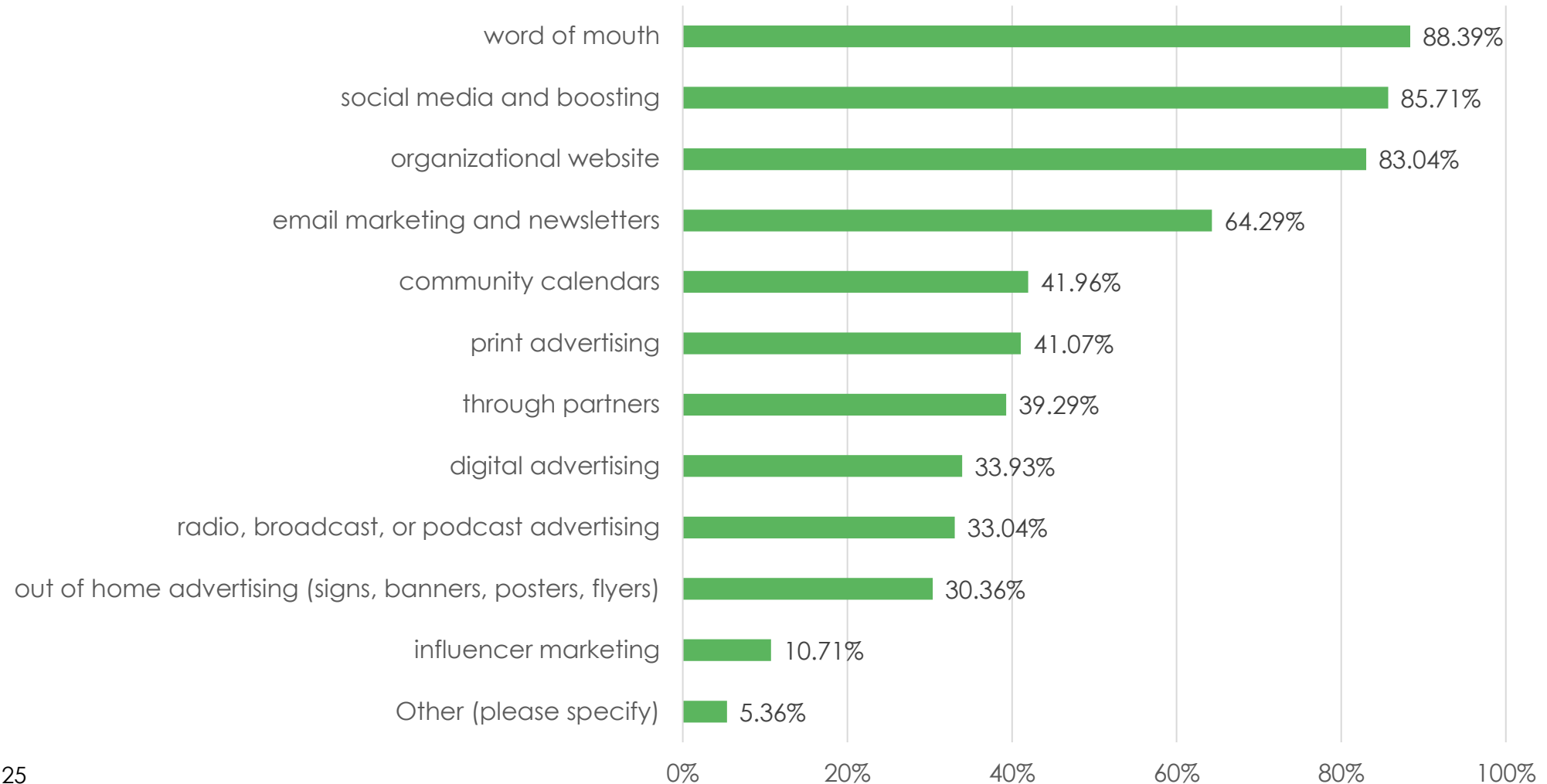
Social media platform **fluctuations in use and efficacy** make them an unreliable communication tool.

Word-of-mouth is effective but resource intensive.

New residents are **difficult to reach** due to fractured marketing and promotional methods.

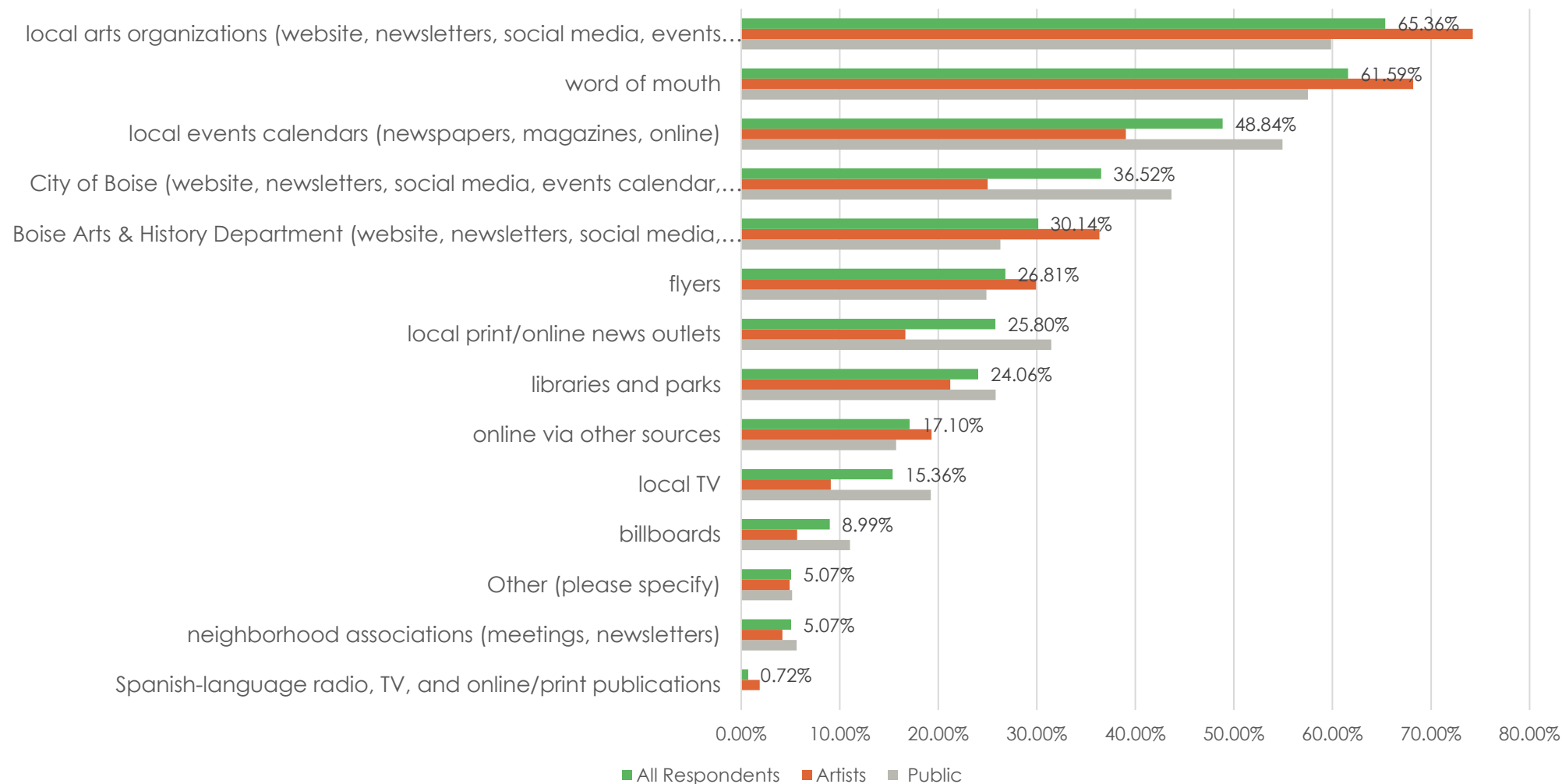
Promotion and marketing is **overwhelming**, and artists and organizations **lack resources** to do so effectively.

MARKETING: WHAT ARE ORGANIZATIONS' TOOLS?



N=125

MARKETING: HOW DO PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT EVENTS?



PARTNERSHIPS & NETWORKING



While desired, **cross sector partnerships** are hindered by time constraints, limited organizational capacity, scheduling issues, financial risk, and coordination issues.

Big/small organizations have different **cost/benefit scenarios** in partnerships.

While there are some director-to-director conversations, there is a desire for **more opportunities for staff at all levels** to engage with and learn from each other.

Artists and cultural organizations are **spread out through the Treasure Valley**; how can Boise partner with nearby cities to support creative communities?

Leaders, artists, and the public expressed **gratitude for the opportunity to network, hear from each other, and provide feedback.**

NEXT STEPS

- Presentation and reports on the survey/listening session available.
- Consider how this feedback informs your work, creative practice, or participation as an audience member.
- Staff is identifying strategies to meet challenges and drafting the cultural plan based on findings and city priorities.
- Contact me with any input:
Matilda Bubb, mbubb@cityofboise.org