

Local Authority Funding

Arts Professional Pulse
Survey 2024



Welcome

Our thanks to the more than 500 people who showed an interest in the survey by completing a full or partial response. The results have been illuminating.

The survey was in the field throughout March 2024 and early April 2024. The sample leans towards performing arts organisations, though just under a third work in museums, heritage, or libraries. Freelancers account for just under a quarter of all responses.

The overall picture is stark – local authorities are the largest funders of arts and culture in the UK, and more than three quarters of respondents have seen their funding cut, or expect it could be cut soon. The cutbacks are affecting not only direct funding, but the number of officers working to promote and develop arts and culture in our communities.

Our responses are clear – partial cuts are preferential to funding being removed entirely. The sector would like to see local authorities work with them to attract funding from other sources. There is a resistance to outsourcing / spinning off culture into trusts as a solution.

Some organisations have turned to trusts & foundations to plug the gap, but we know that capacity from those funds is limited. There is an increasing reliance on earned income.

Welcome

For the quickest snapshot into what respondents had to say, our semantic differential scale question, where respondents were asked to choose between two opposing statements, told us that the majority felt:

- Funded organisations should be commercially savvy
- The impact of cuts is being felt at all levels
- Neither communities nor private business can be expected to step in to bridge the funding gap
- The arts have nowhere to turn for alternative funding
- Funding cuts will cause long-term damage to arts and culture

Opinion was divided on whether this was affecting the current appetite for creative risk-taking.

Welcome

Narrative responses are included at the end of this report, where the respondent gave permission for their thoughts to be shared.

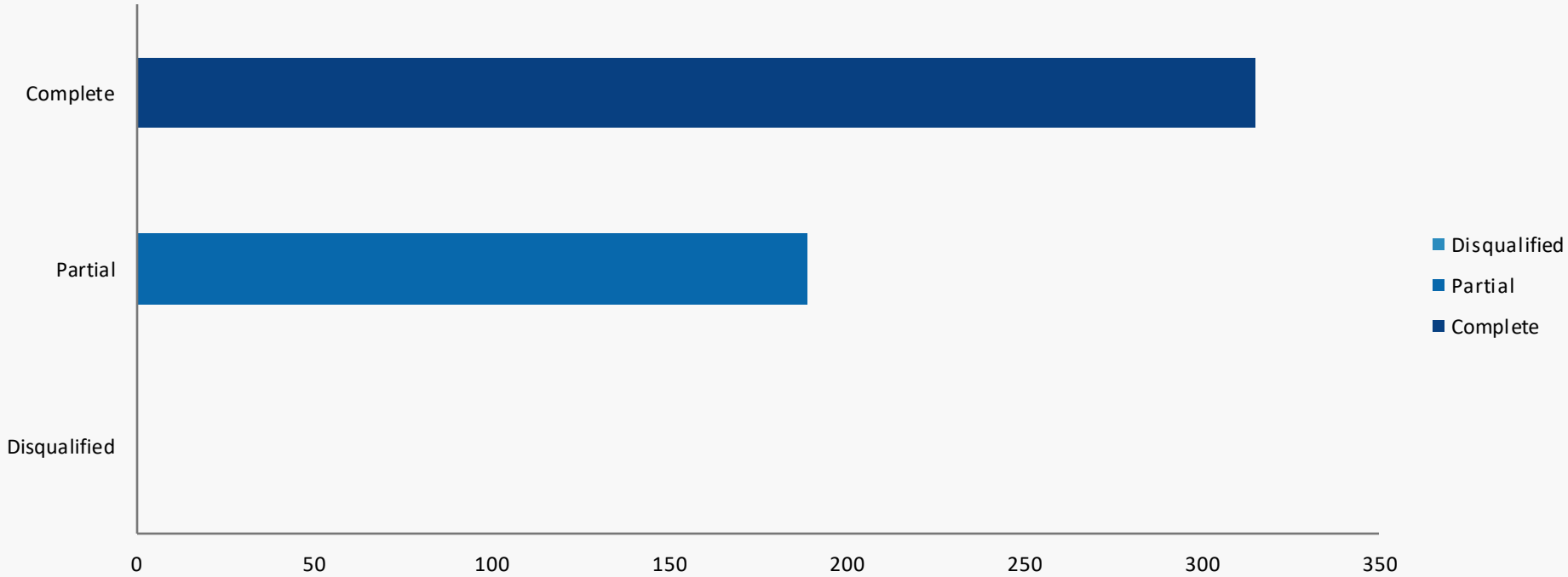
These free-text provides a fascinating glimpse into the attitudes and perceptions of the sector to the current funding situation – there you will find practical suggestions, empathy for local authorities and the decisions they have to take, constructive criticism, fatalism, a touch of despair, and a splash of anger.

Above all, the call from the sector is that local authorities seriously reflect on what will be lost if they continue on their current trajectory of cutting arts, culture and heritage budgets to help fund statutory services. But some respondents had hope. As one response said:

“Local authorities always have faced difficult choices when choosing to fund arts and cultural services but the current situation is unprecedented and with budgets for statutory services up against the wire there is no longer any flexibility. Funding cuts are inevitable. However, we as a creative sector will always find innovative and collaborative ways to continue delivering cultural services which are essential to economic growth and community wellbeing.”

About the responses

There were 315 complete responses to the survey, and 189 partial responses.



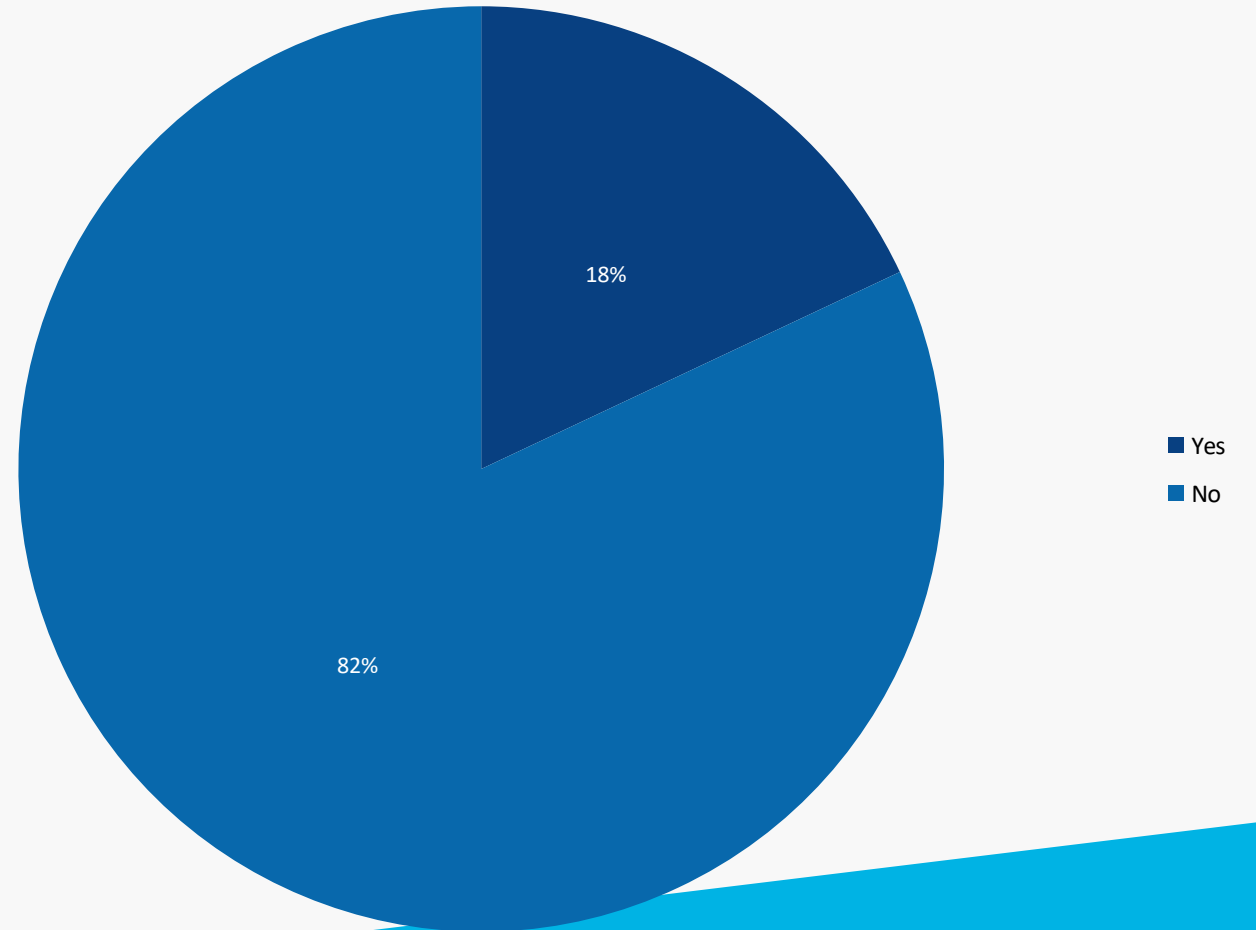
	Count	Percent
Complete	315	62.5
Partial	189	37.5
Disqualified	0	0
Totals	504	

Do you work for a local authority?

18% of respondents are directly employed by local authorities.

These respondents were filtered out of later questions relating to funded organisations.

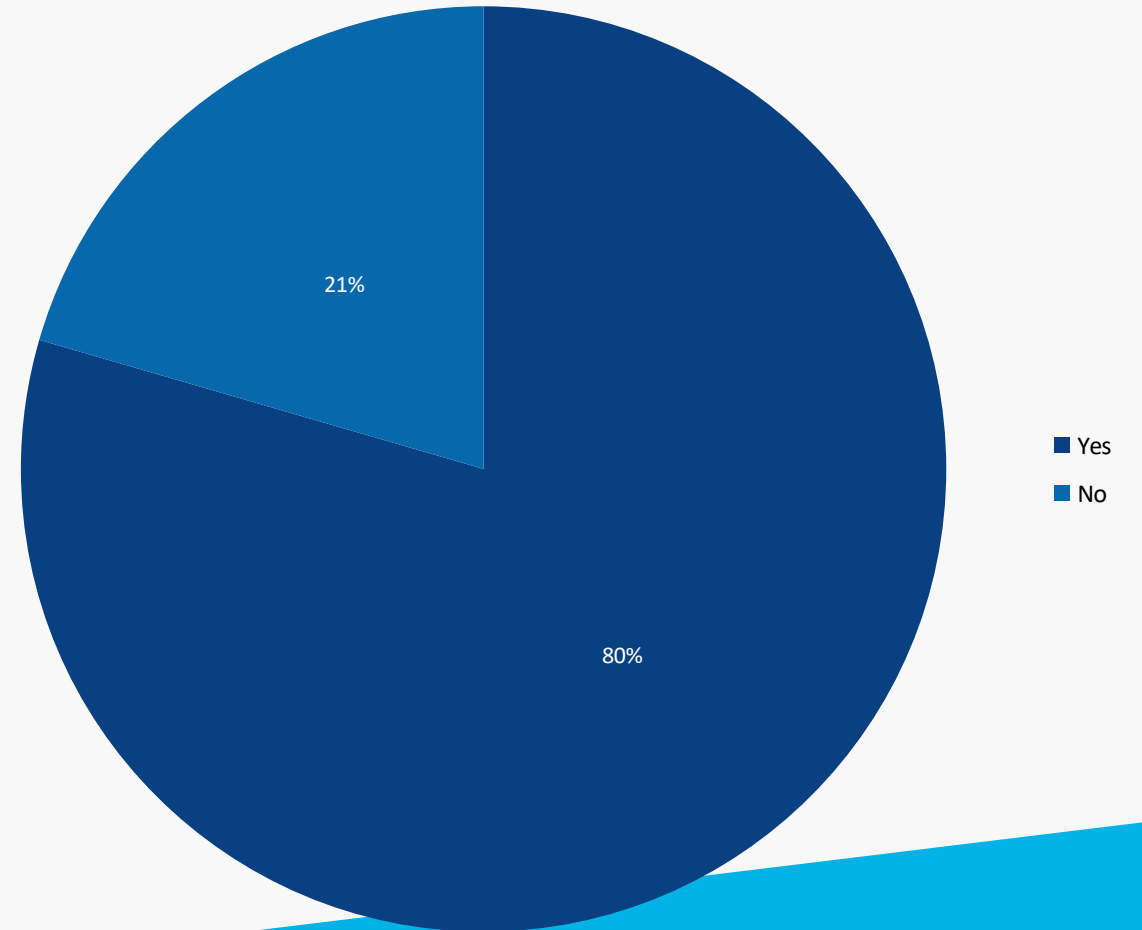
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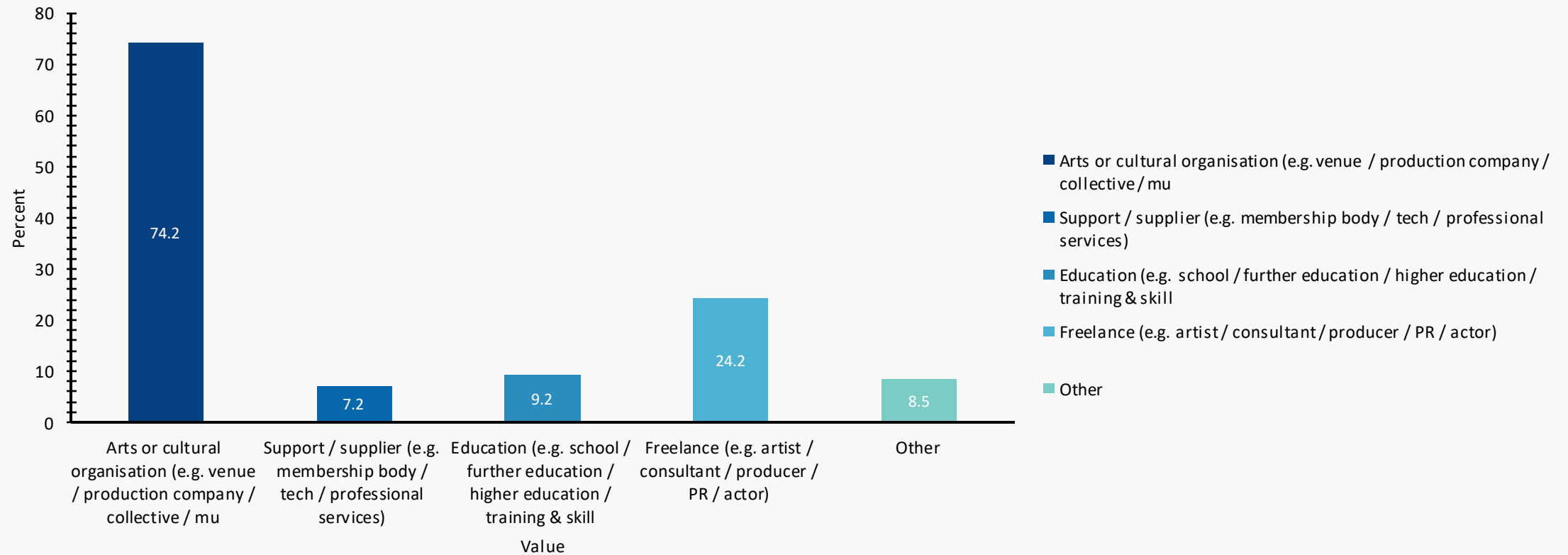
Do you work for an arts organisation?

80% of respondents work for an arts organisation.

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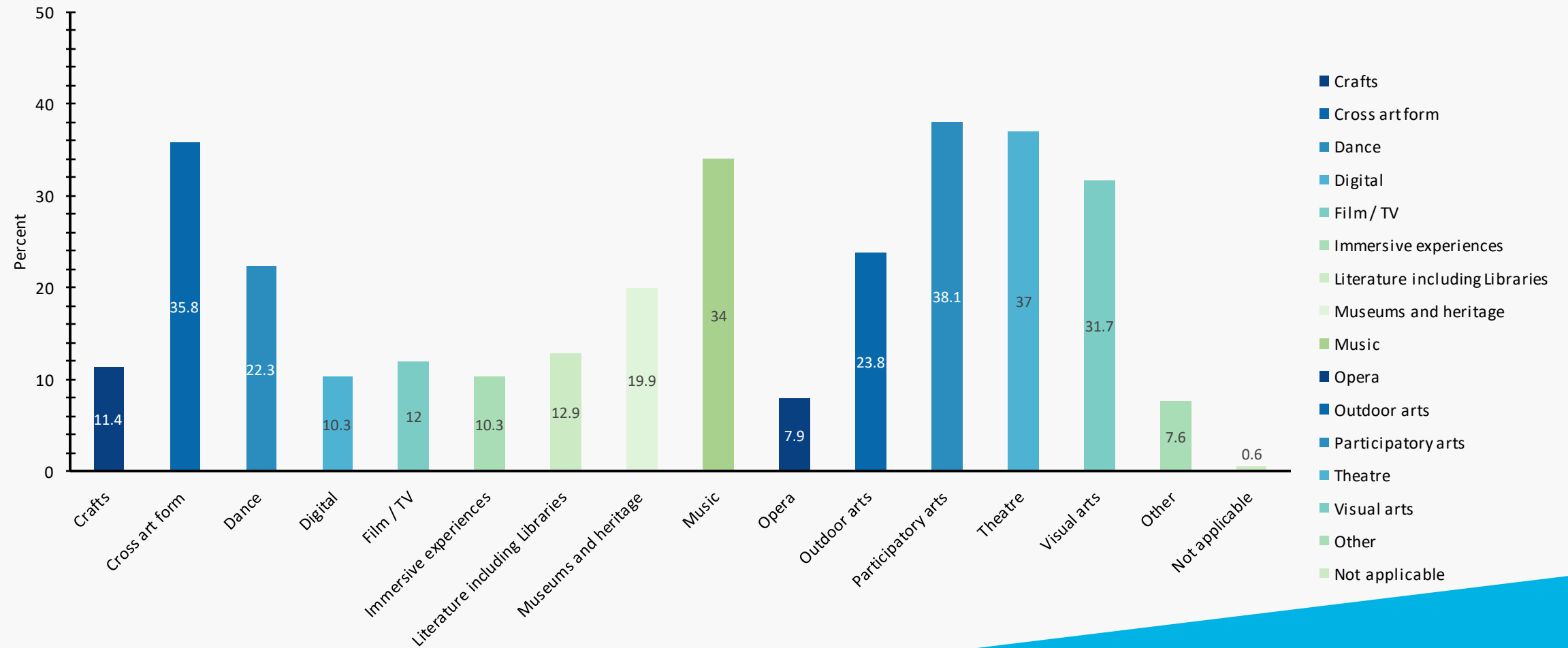


What type of organisation do you work for?



n. 377

Which artform/area of culture do you primarily work in?

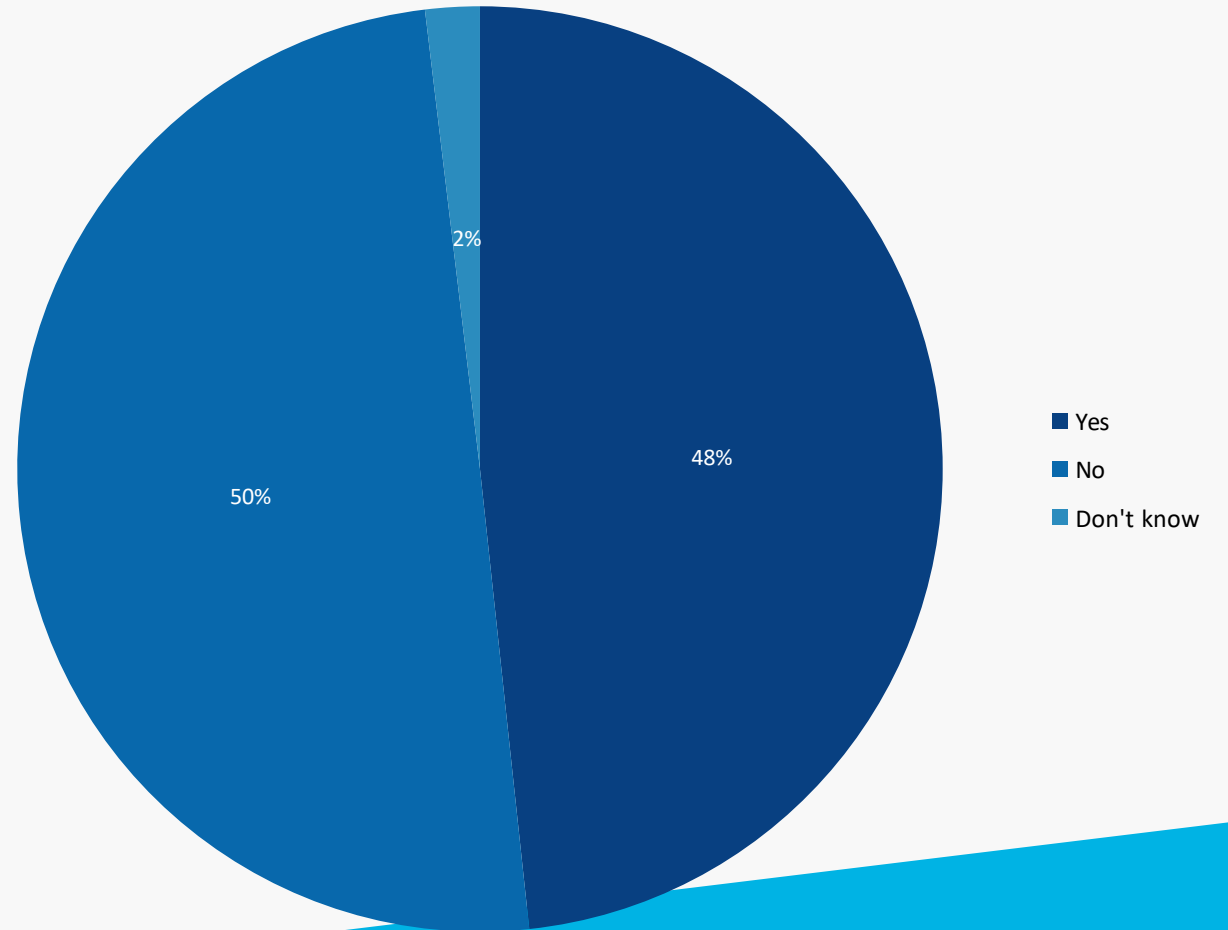


Prevalence of regular and project funding from local authorities

Do you currently receive core / regular funding from a local authority?

The respondents split roughly 50/50 when asked if they currently receive regular (i.e. multi-year) funding from one or more local authorities.

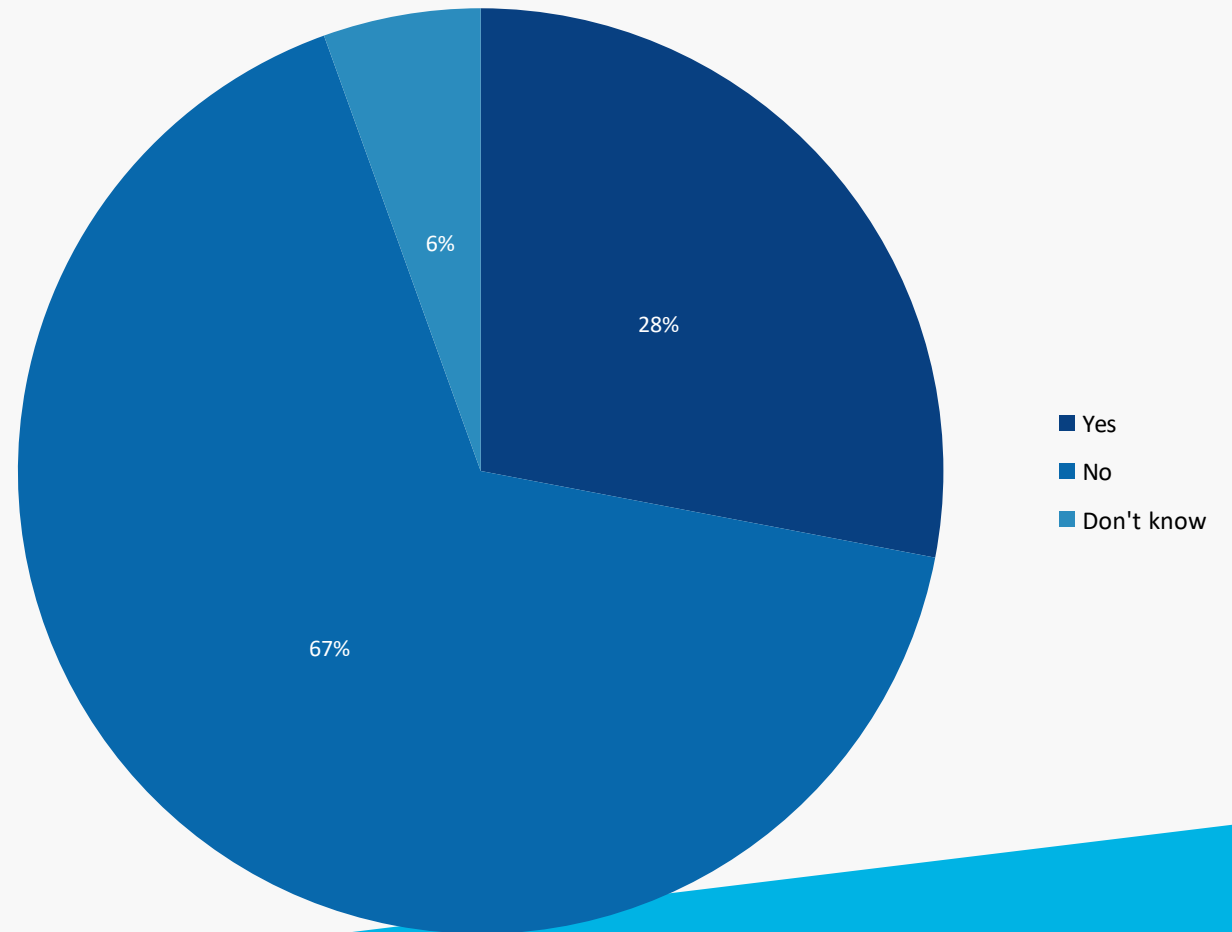
n. 321



Have you ever received core/regular funding from a local authority?

This question was only asked of respondents who chose “no” or “don’t know” to the previous question, to understand if they have received such funding in the past. Over two thirds had not ever received regular funding.

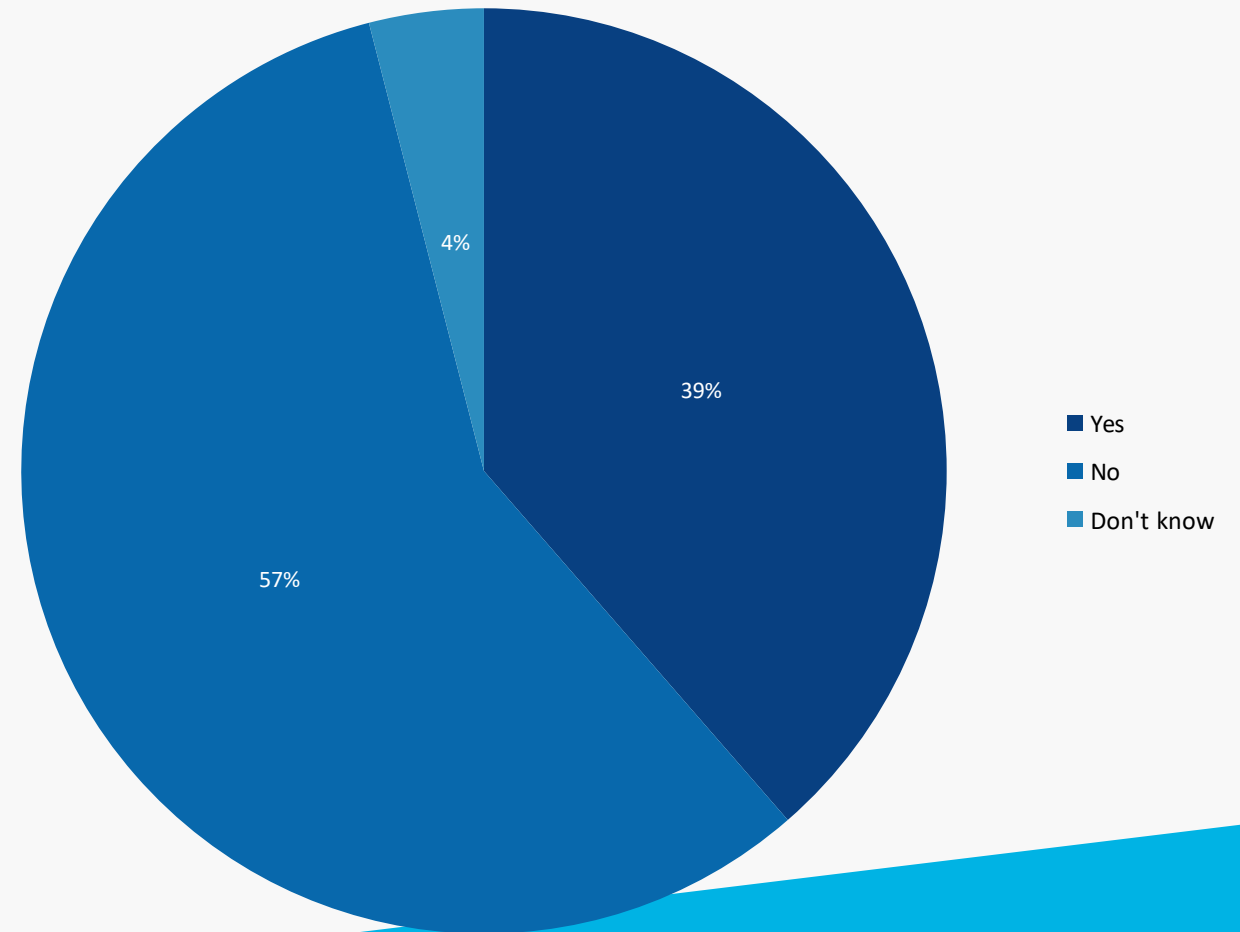
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Do you currently receive project funding from a local authority?

Distinct from regular funding, we asked if respondents currently receive specific project funding. A smaller proportion – 39%, replied that they were in receipt of these funds.

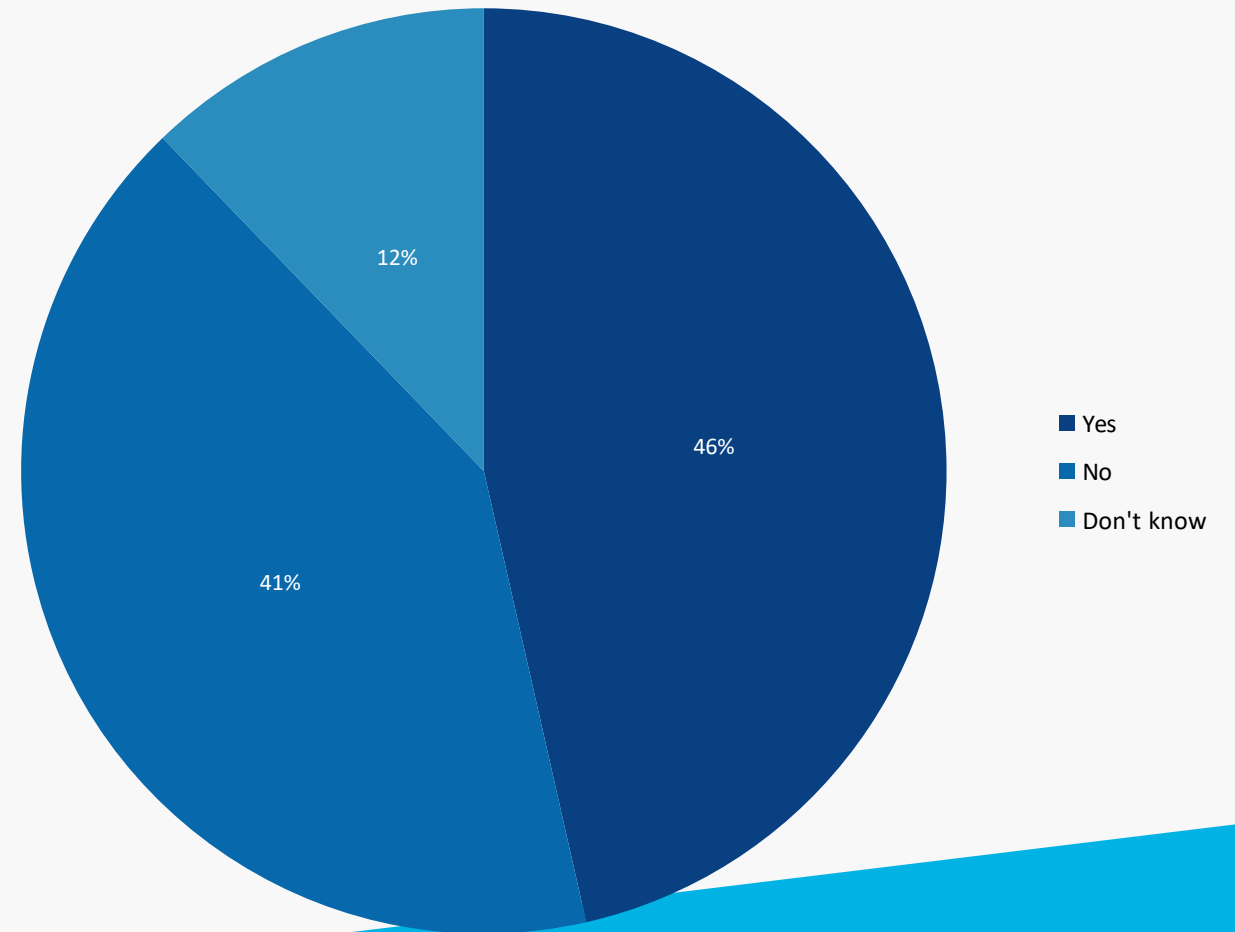
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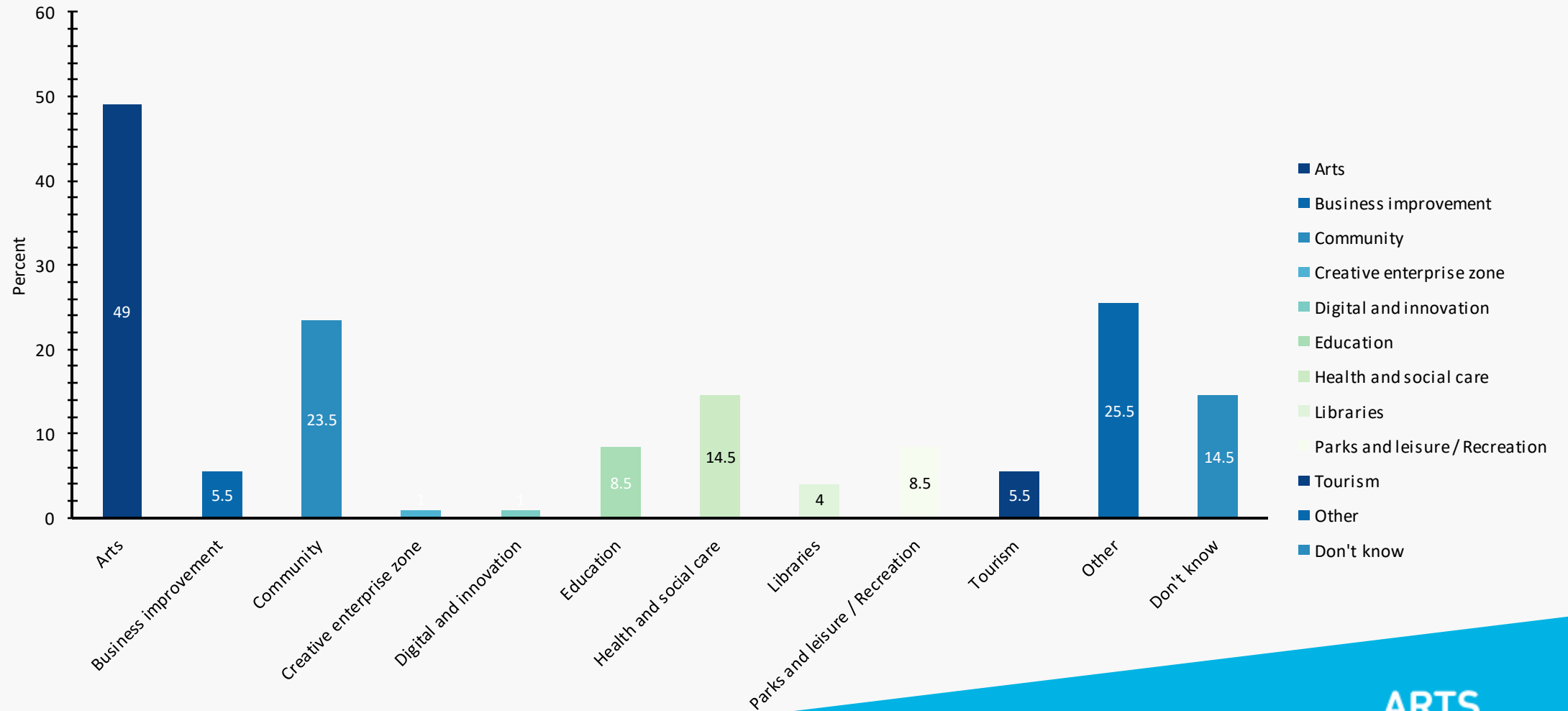
Have you ever received project funding from a local authority?

This question was only asked of respondents who chose “no” or “don't know” to the previous question. 46% had previously received project funds.

n. 196



Do you know which local authority budget your funding comes from?



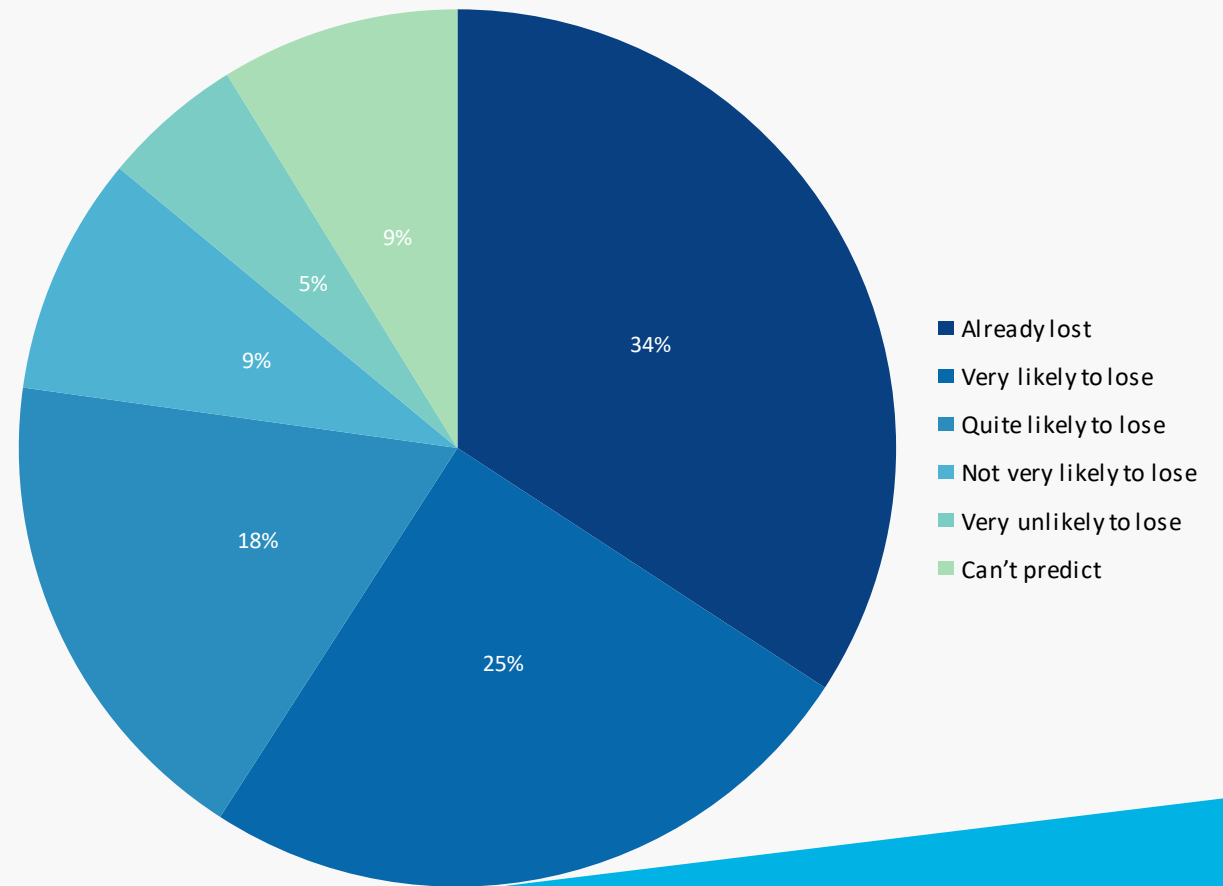
Most mentioned 'other' were Shared Prosperity Fund, Economic Development, and Heritage

Future funding expectations and adaptations

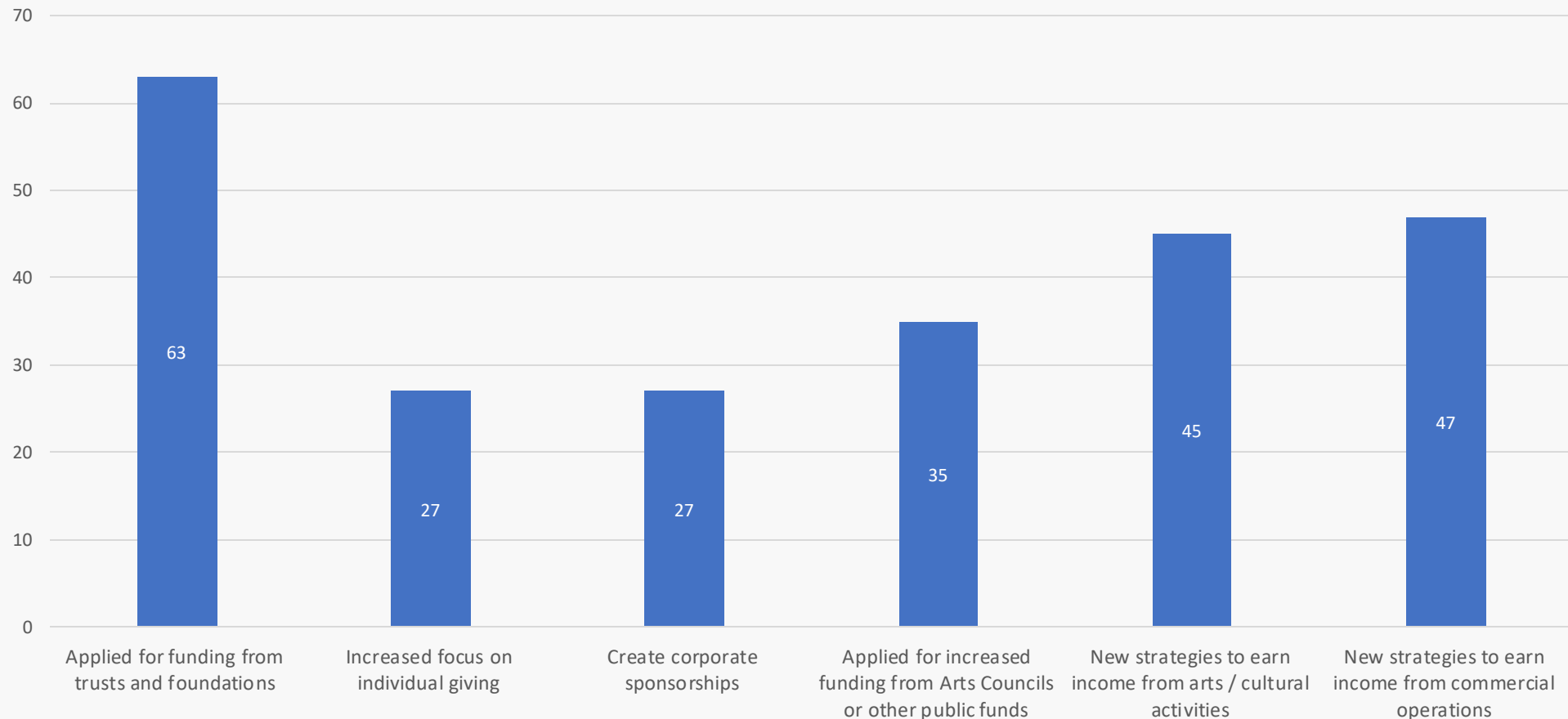
How likely is it that you / the organisation you work for will see reduced funding due to local authority arts cuts in the foreseeable future?

Taken together, those who have already lost, are very likely to lose, or quite likely to lose funding account for 77% of respondents.

n. 193



Has your organisation done any of the following to generate income in response to actual or expected local authority funding cuts?

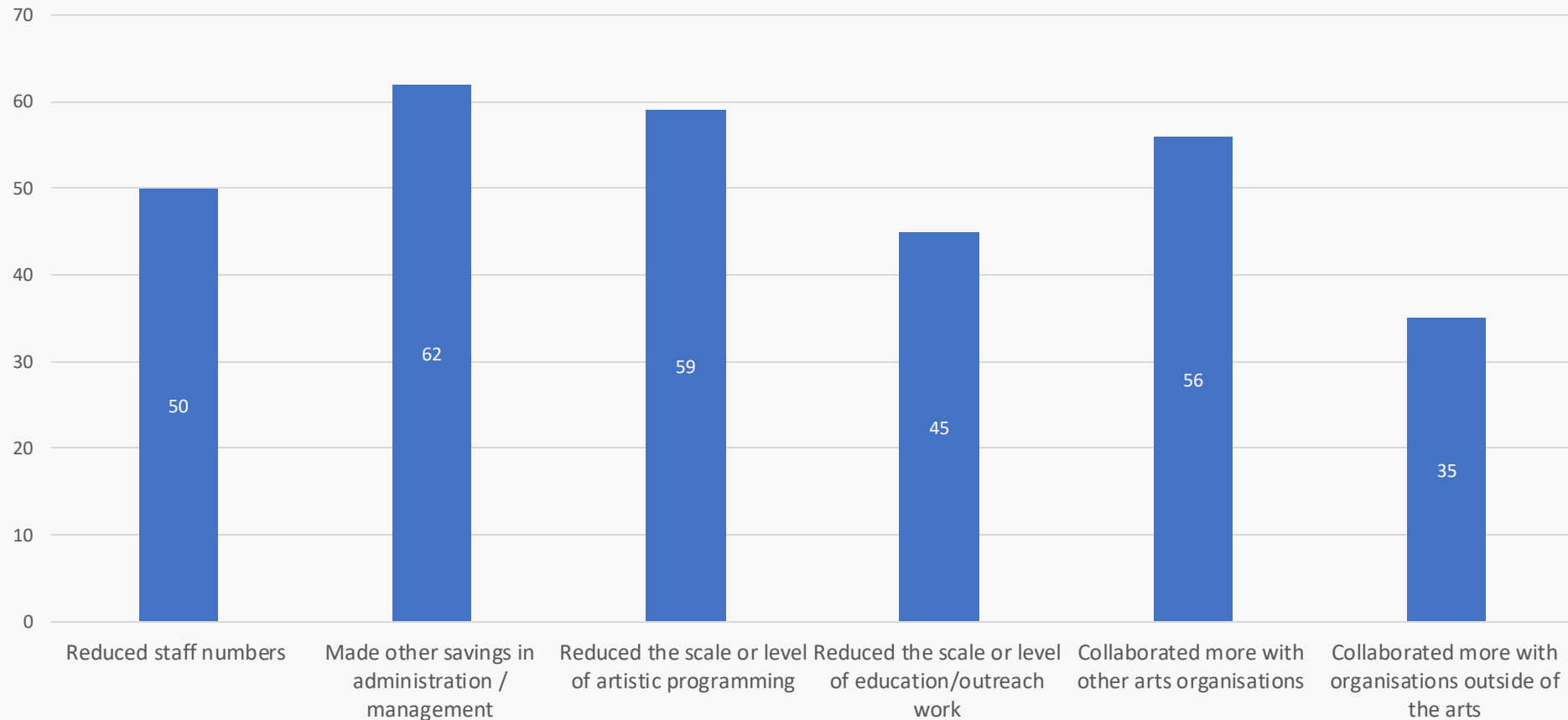


Respondents could select multiple tactics.

The chart shows count of respondents who selected they had "succeeded" with the chosen tactic.

Check count: 244

Has your organisation done any of the following to reduce expenditure in response to actual or expected local authority funding cuts?



Respondents could select multiple tactics.

Chart shows count of respondents who selected they had "succeeded" with the chosen tactic.

Check count: 307

Has your local authority responded to budget cuts in any of the following ways?

	Has already done this	Is planning to do this	Has not done this	Don't know	Responses
Cut the number of arts and culture officers it employs Count Row %	104 39.0%	26 9.7%	62 23.2%	75 28.1%	267
Cut direct funding to arts and culture Count Row %	148 53.8%	42 15.3%	40 14.5%	45 16.4%	275
Offered other types of support, other than direct funding Count Row %	63 23.9%	40 15.2%	81 30.7%	80 30.3%	264
Helped individuals/organisations find funding from other sources Count Row %	45 17.4%	23 8.9%	111 43.0%	79 30.6%	258
Sold-off venues / organisations to commercial operators Count Row %	49 18.7%	45 17.2%	75 28.6%	93 35.5%	262
Spun-off venues / organisations into independent entities Count Row %	74 28.4%	24 9.2%	60 23.0%	103 39.5%	261

Totals

Total Responses

275

Local authority adaptations

Which of the measures below do you believe local authorities should adopt in relation to the arts? (1/2)

	Definitely	Probably	Possibly	Probably not	Definitely not	I don't know	Responses
Prioritise arts and culture funding, making cuts elsewhere							
Count	91	58	72	67	18	16	322
Row %	28.3%	18.0%	22.4%	20.8%	5.6%	5.0%	
Focus arts and culture funding on participatory projects							
Count	53	69	100	54	27	14	317
Row %	16.7%	21.8%	31.5%	17.0%	8.5%	4.4%	
Make small cuts across the board to all those they fund							
Count	41	77	97	45	37	25	322
Row %	12.7%	23.9%	30.1%	14.0%	11.5%	7.8%	
Cut all funding from some of those they currently fund							
Count	7	25	50	72	135	26	315
Row %	2.2%	7.9%	15.9%	22.9%	42.9%	8.3%	
Totals							
Total Responses							322

Which of the measures below do you believe local authorities should adopt in relation to the arts? (2/2)

	Definitely	Probably	Possibly	Probably not	Definitely not	I don't know	Responses
Fund arts and culture through different departments, such as social care Count Row %	77 24.7%	52 16.7%	94 30.1%	43 13.8%	42 13.5%	4 1.3%	312
Partner with other funders to try to make up for the shortfall Count Row %	145 46.3%	83 26.5%	63 20.1%	10 3.2%	8 2.6%	4 1.3%	313
Run income-generating arts and culture services in-house Count Row %	74 23.7%	52 16.7%	73 23.4%	52 16.7%	45 14.4%	16 5.1%	312
Contract out arts and cultural services / help set up independent charities Count Row %	33 10.7%	52 16.9%	110 35.7%	66 21.4%	31 10.1%	16 5.2%	308
Totals Total Responses							313

Which of these statements do you most agree with?

	←	Neither	→		Responses
Funded organisations should not be run commercially Count Row %	32 10.6%	52 17.3%	217 72.1%	Funded organisations should be commercially savvy	301
Fewer artistic risks are being taken Count Row %	145 47.5%	41 13.4%	119 39.0%	Arts and culture organisations are risk-takers	305
Grassroots arts are suffering the most Count Row %	108 34.8%	19 6.1%	183 59.0%	The impact of cuts is being felt at all levels	310
Communities will step up to fill the gaps Count Row %	73 25.7%	187 65.8%	24 8.5%	Businesses will step up to fill the gaps	284
Other sources of funding are available Count Row %	56 18.6%	93 30.9%	152 50.5%	The arts have nowhere to turn for alternative funding	301
Arts and culture will survive funding cuts and adapt Count Row %	26 8.6%	22 7.2%	256 84.2%	Funding cuts will cause long-term damage to arts and culture	304
Totals				1805 100.0%	

Narrative responses

Do you have any additional comments on measures that should be taken in response to budget cuts?

The responses to this question reflect a widespread concern and frustration regarding the impact of budget cuts on the arts and cultural sector. Many respondents emphasise the importance of arts and culture for community wellbeing, mental health, social cohesion, and economic growth. They argue that the value and contribution of the arts should be recognised and protected from funding cuts. Some point out that the arts are often an easy target for cuts, despite their crucial role in society.

Several respondents acknowledge the difficult financial situation faced by local authorities, who are struggling to maintain essential statutory services such as adult social care and child protection. They suggest that central government should provide adequate funding to local authorities to support both essential services and arts and culture. Some propose alternative funding sources, such as sponsorships, collaboration with education departments, or a more commercial operating model for arts organisations. Others call for a change in attitude and a long-term perspective that recognises the wide-ranging benefits of investing in arts and culture.

Respondents also offer suggestions for mitigating the impact of funding cuts. These include conducting thorough impact assessments before making funding decisions, providing alternative unrestricted funding to allow organisations to use their expertise effectively, fostering cross-sector collaboration, and exploring innovative and efficient ways of delivering cultural services. Some emphasise the need for honest communication between local authorities and arts organisations, adjusting programming expectations in line with available resources. Additionally, respondents highlight the importance of advocacy, with arts officers, politicians, and the public actively demonstrating the value of arts and culture to society.

Respondents gave their permission for the following quotes to be published.

Do you have any additional comments on measures that should be taken in response to budget cuts?

- Better recognise the value and impact of the arts for wellbeing and social cohesion.
- If organisations haven't got a funding audience, either close up or find funding from sponsors.
- I think we need a change of government and a change in attitude ... we should not be at a point where there is funding for nothing at all and yet the rich get richer ...there should not be tax cuts but ways to put ... I don't know ... idealistic waffle! Sorry for taking up your reading time! Just frustrated that we live in a rich country that cannot support itself or have ambition for the future.
- I'm sure we should be having to argue for the contribution of the arts all the time, its rather exhausting, it just always feels like an easy cut the artist, like they are not necessary however wander around London museums and galleries and they are where the 'public' flock too.
- Please don't cut the arts .. and definitely not libraries!
- Unfortunately can understand why arts cuts happen. LAs are on their knees and have to provide statutory services such as adult social care and looked after children. Too many arts organisations rely on funding and not operating a commercial model. No artist or freelancer should expect to earn a living from a LA when children are living in poverty. Don't necessarily agree in just operating participatory arts - middle class arts earning a living from poor deprived neighbourhood. Maybe work more with education departments in LAs and directly with schools and colleges.

Do you have any additional comments on measures that should be taken in response to budget cuts?

- Local authorities always have faced difficult choices when choosing to fund arts and cultural services but the current situation is unprecedented and with budgets for statutory services up against the wire there is no longer any flexibility. Funding cuts are inevitable. However, we as a creative sector will always find innovative and collaborative ways to continue delivering cultural services which are essential to economic growth and community wellbeing.
- It's so important that other routes are found to support arts and culture - a range of department budgets can support different organisations i.e. neighbourhoods, social care, health, education
- Just to note, the reason our local authority hasn't cut arts & cultural officers/services, is because they weren't funding them anyway. Lots of local authorities have never had a cultural budget. Yes local authorities could be run better, more efficiently, and there can be a better approach to supporting arts & culture within most local authorities. BUT the problem here is that central government has been chronically underfunding local authorities for years. We shouldn't have to choose between libraries and hospitals, central government should provide the money they need to serve the people.
- Local Auths: Constantly talk to them, understand their processes, timings, personalities, political balance, budget situation (it varies enormously) Gather relevant data. Then assess risk regularly... rinse and repeat. Its a constant risk analysis coupled with PR and communications at ALL levels.

Do you have any additional comments on measures that should be taken in response to budget cuts?

- Clearly arts and culture needs to be made part of statutory duties of local authorities. Government needs to increase LA spending grants. Need to stop making arts v health alternatives.
- The contribution of the Arts to wellbeing, mental health and community development should be acknowledged by refraining from budget cuts
- Government funding to LAs should be proportional to the number of residents supported - Birmingham is the largest local authority in Europe so why do London boroughs seem to receive so much more money per capita?
- Consult properly and fairly with the orgs and freelancers they effect and make decisions with them not about them.
- I think some of the questions are too simplistic to answer effectively. Decisions on cutting funding to organisations needs to be based on the creative, economic and social impacts of organisations. There are some organisations that have received regular funding that simply don't deliver consistently and a quality service, and others that receive barely any that aren't being supported by local authorities. There almost needs to be recognition too of arts as creative health and how fostering creativity reduces spend on other departments and enhances their work. Arts and culture is one of the few local authority departments that impacts on most of the others.
- Provide unrestricted funding that can be most effectively used by the organisations with the knowledge and expertise in how to make it 'work' the hardest i.e match funding / paying for leadership etc

Do you have any additional comments on measures that should be taken in response to budget cuts?

- Cuts to arts and culture are devastating and will have long-lasting effects but it is really hard to advocate for keeping this funding when other vital services are being shut down and there are also devastating cuts to things like adult social care and housing.
- From working as a consultant with local authorities, arts cuts can be seen by some councillors as demonstrating they are being hard on the budgets - "cutting off their nose to spite their face". Sadly contracting out arts and cultural services is often a dishonest strategy as they reduce the funding afterwards disrupting viability e.g. Cambridge City Council and their Corn Exchange.
- This is not about cuts its about how they view the short term and the position and importance of culture. Due to institutional misunderstanding and in our case a councillor who is not interested in her portfolio we have no one to shout about all the fantastic work we do. If the mind set from a young age (education) is culture and art as valued it will as they progress through their future careers be given more weight and support behind it. Also the short term binge funding model has failed and needs an overhaul.
- Why can't councils see the wider impact on health and wellbeing with deliverance of arts and cultural activities. Recent announcements of budget cuts of up to 50-100 percent are devastating for communities and businesses. Surely the revenue generated from an event such as Norfolk Open Studios brings benefits that far outweigh the costs.
- Authorities need to be honest and adjust their programming expectations of the arts organisations they support or have previously supported. They should not expect them to fill a social care gap.
- More noise need to be made by officers within local authorities.

Do you have any additional comments on measures that should be taken in response to budget cuts?

- I'm retired but spent 14 years as a local authority arts officer. Hampshire had an excellent record as a funder and development partner. It then went in for empire building, culminating in abandoning policy to a 'cultural trust' which is an ongoing disaster
- Local authorities and mayors need to lead conversations around alternatives to local authority funding. Unless there is a dramatic change in funding from central government, local authorities such as Birmingham are squeezed to the extent that they are dramatically cutting all services, not just arts and culture. But they can use their leverage around inward investment and secondary spend to ensure that the wider local economy recognises and supports. And there needs to be greater recognition and value amongst politicians at all levels and the public about the impact of the cuts - the things they will miss and perhaps not realise are only possible because local authorities have been the largest public funder of culture and library services (music provision in local authority schools delivered by funded organisations, talent development that makes it possible to have British-made world-class movies and TV etc).
- Each case needs to be considered separately so it is difficult to give accurate answers to this knowing the genuine difficulty LAs have keeping up with inflation as well as reducing levels of income. The biggest risk to sustainability comes from having to maintain multiple buildings where income is unlikely to match inflationary increases to staffing, maintenance and insurance, therefore a place based approach to funding needs to be adopted to ensure provision is as evenly distributed as possible whilst accepting the situation as it stands currently.
- It is sad that we're even having to talk about this - I don't feel that the Arts and its benefits are taken seriously by some local authorities ..and certainly don't feel they are being transparent.

Do you have any additional comments on measures that should be taken in response to budget cuts?

- We do not receive any annual grants from our borough or county council and actually have to pay the county council for park hire, grass resurfacing and parking suspensions at a substantial annual cost. We are sometimes supported via grant calls e.g. we have secured project funding via the borough council's successful UK Shared Prosperity Fund bid.
- I wouldn't say our local authority has ever prioritised arts and culture or had a budget or staff, so there isn't really anything for them to cut.
- Increase taxes on the upper 2% of the income bracket, tax tobacco and vaping, increase contributions from the Lottery, and increase taxes on those who own 2+ homes or operate either a 'holiday let' or a 'buy to let' property, and increase taxes on landlords who own the property of any 'leasehold' properties. But most importantly: create tax incentives for people who donate to ANY type of charity (IE pound for pound income tax benefit against any charitable donation). Problem solved.
- Promising to assist cultural organisations to find alternate funding when local authorities plan to eliminate theirs isn't very helpful when considered against the national backdrop of dwindling arts funding. Elimination of core funding, in light of the declining sources of funding generally, greatly increases the chance of permanent arts organisations going defunct.
- While our council invests in culture, they also run their own cultural initiatives, fundraise and deliver - which they prioritise over funding arts organisations in the region. This should not be the council's main focus.

Do you have any additional comments on measures that should be taken in response to budget cuts?

- I see so much waste in local authority - usually by over-complicated compliance that costs time, therefore money. Too much concentration on ticking the boxes (easy to do at the top) rather than seeing what actually works and doing that! Devolve authority to the front line in ALL council areas ...
- Art and culture are always first to be cut. This is short-sighted as arts and culture contribute to people's lives in a variety of ways that enable them to gain confidence, find community and give them practical life skills.
- Merging the operational costs of venues in close proximity to each other without actually physically merging would help - ie technical support (in IT as well as arts based), HR & Legal, Box office, marketing etc
- I work across the UK. The local authority where I live does the least in terms of cultural provision. There are plans but I have been here 7 years. Still waiting. I live in a small mining town called [REDACTED] where there are many social issues and poverty. It is an oversight not to think that culture could support this community.
- In my authority- [REDACTED] everything has been cut. There is no option for funding any organisations.

Do you have any additional comments on measures that should be taken in response to budget cuts?

- The funding the arts receive should be based on the income they also bring to an area. This includes not only going to the theatre, but also increased travel and hospitality boosts, as well as the many workers from graphic design to set builders it employs. Were this the case, the funds would boost an area's economy. This is not to mention the improvement of mental health that the arts gives to many people
- Other funders (inc. potential funders); ACE and audiences need to understand impacts and also impact of the granular approach to postcode funding - it's sometimes quite a blunt instrument to reach target communities.
- Fight back. The budget cuts are an outrage. Spending on arts and culture is an investment in a better society, it generates more revenue for the area.

Do you have any final comments on the effect of changes to local authority funding?

The final thoughts shared by respondents in the survey about local authority funding to the arts reflect a deep concern for the future of the sector and the far-reaching consequences of local authority budget cuts. Many emphasise the vital role that arts and culture play in nurturing creativity, fostering community cohesion, supporting mental health, and providing opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds. They argue that the perception of the arts as frivolous or elitist is misguided and that the sector's contribution to society and the economy should be recognised and valued.

Respondents express frustration with the short-sightedness of funding cuts, warning that the damage inflicted on the arts and cultural sector will be long-lasting and, in some cases, irreversible. They highlight the interconnectedness of the arts with other areas, such as education, health, and tourism, and stress that the impact of cuts will be felt far beyond the sector itself. Some point out that the current funding model, which relies heavily on grants and subsidies, may need to be re-evaluated, with arts organisations exploring alternative sources of income and more efficient ways of working.

Despite the challenges posed by funding cuts, many respondents remain committed to advocating for the value of the arts and finding innovative ways to adapt and survive. They call for greater collaboration within the sector, increased engagement with communities, and a concerted effort to demonstrate the positive impact of arts and culture on society. Some suggest that the current crisis should serve as a catalyst for change, prompting a re-evaluation of priorities and a renewed commitment to supporting the arts at both the local and national levels. Ultimately, the respondents emphasise that the arts are not a luxury but an essential part of a thriving, vibrant society, and that their survival depends on sustained investment and support from all stakeholders.

Do you have any final comments on the effect of changes to local authority funding?

- Arts is seen as a frivolous area, where really it is a rich area of nurturing - using English/maths etc to create, especially in schools, it gives people a safe place to express, helping to relieve mental health issues and it is open to all ages and abilities.
- There's too much driftwood.
- Our taxes pay for Local Authorities, and as a tax payer I expect a % of my council tax and other taxes to support the arts so why not ask people if they want to fund them rather than allowing LA staff to assume otherwise.
- The arts are vital to community cohesion. Cutting support will affect the quality of life for everyone
- Difficult decisions to be made so can fully understand the decisions. In my opinion the arts sector in the UK too reliant on grants etc and need to develop other models of income raising. Ideally the arts should be high on the funding list but given its still generally elitist maybe they need to come together more to reduce costs e.g. Do they need the spaces /buildings can't they share same with other resources such as HR, finance. They aren't smart in how they work. Sometimes cheaper to employ people on fixed term contracts and stop employing freelancers long term. Any LA funding should guarantee entry level apprenticeships opportunities for young people who are being excluded from the sector too
- Cuts will undoubtedly necessitate changes to the funding landscape as we know it but the sector survives on being innovative and collaborative. We saw this in the pandemic where artists and cultural organisations were quick to adapt and resilient to the seemingly impossible.

Do you have any final comments on the effect of changes to local authority funding?

- The current state is likely to have catastrophic impacts, many of which will be irreversible. Not recognising the value of arts and culture on so many aspects of life is too short sighted, and work needs to be done immediately to illustrate and promote the value: e.g. contribution to a LA income via tourism, employment and GDP; reduction in other service costs by supporting well-being & health of residents, thereby reducing demand on NHS and other social services.
- Q13 [[Which LA budget does your funding come from?](#)] was impossible to answer as we deal with 31 funding authorities. The largest funder has not reduced our funds. However, it does it through an arm's length body that was 'spun' out of the authority a good few years ago and is effectively their library service. This has protected some of the arts spend in the county to good effect.
- Tory Councillors still don't understand or support the arts and see it as a frivolous department. Labour Cllrs are stymied by budgets and concern for health and social care. Hence arts and culture need statutory protection.
- Rethink the systems. Devolve power. Give the money directly to the organisations working with and led by artists and not to local authorities who spend it on layers of overpaid and overblown council managers. Elitists who think they own culture and who make badly informed top end decisions to save their own skins without considering grass roots impact. But who are out of touch and know nowt about the needs of artists.

Do you have any final comments on the effect of changes to local authority funding?

- Having worked as a freelancer with local authorities I am seeing the impact on staff, communities and culture in general due to the cuts. Projects bringing social cohesion, increasing access and potential careers in the arts and health and wellbeing are all being impacted due to the cuts in funding. Changes in trusts and foundation funding with some major players changing how they are going to fund in the future or completely closing down, and having a knock on effect. Charities are being left to pick up the gaps from cuts in local authority funding already. How can this be sustained? An arts & health client is bending under the weight of referrals from clinical care and mental health organisations yet receives no funding from its local authority, despite being one of the three strategic goals and the lead deliverer in the council's cultural strategy.
- I think we need to focus on recovery and what the long-term plans are. It is all too easy once the cuts are made to never bring back this kind of funding. Once councils have recovered (and we have a new government), will this funding be reinstated? Will councils ever fund arts and culture again?
- Fundamentally, arts organisations exist based on business models from the past, especially if buildings created by Housing the Arts or Lottery funding. The scale of cuts today is existential for those reliant on those previous models, with huge overheads needing subsidy, before marginal cost programming is possible.

Do you have any final comments on the effect of changes to local authority funding?

- To the last one, 'Arts and culture will survive funding cuts and adapt', we will adapt because we have to, however in doing so we are losing fantastic people to careers that can sustain them more and provide sustainability for the reality of having to meet the demands of every day living. We are facing a brain, ability and creative drain in the industry due to lack of opportunity, fair pay, demoralising conditions and behaviour. Some of the behaviour and subtle threats to potential cuts amongst demands such as in our case councillor demanding events for their own personal gain when we are in the midst of a funding crisis screams indulgent individuals who have entered local politics for their own good and not that of the people who voted them in.
- The effect will be a ripple effect. The damage to communities will be irrevocable. Displacement loneliness and mental health issues are all symptomatic of a fractured society and sadly with arts and culture/heritage once again being placed at the bottom of the list will only serve to undermine our values and future.
- This is the worst I have ever known it in 25 years. Almost as bad as the cuts to funding is the lack of expertise within officers in LAs so they don't make good decisions or arguments.
- The loss of support grant + non-statutory status spells disaster. With ACE centralised since 2001 and having responsibility for the Lottery funding (another predictable disaster) the strong local links that existed have been destroyed and access to funding for anything other than high level clients no longer exists

Do you have any final comments on the effect of changes to local authority funding?

- There are other funding sources and earned income, but everything has been suppressed for a long time: cash standstill from ACE for best part of 10 years; high inflationary costs that we cannot control e.g. insurance etc; flat box office due to cost-of-living pressures and behaviour changes post-pandemic; slow re-engagements of schools and hospital sectors which are also under huge financial stress
- Arts and Culture is likely to return to being the domain of the wealthy and inclusion is likely to suffer long term. Project funding is papering over the cracks to give the illusion of parity but core costs are real and money coming in and out of the organisation is not a sustainable way of supporting provision.
- I'm just heartbroken that we're even discussing the need for funding for Arts and Culture for this country.
- It has made the funding landscape increasingly difficult. There is much more competition for already oversubscribed trusts & foundations now, and we're feeling the struggle. T & F's have been changing their response times which greatly impacts project timelines
- I want to be part of positive change

Do you have any final comments on the effect of changes to local authority funding?

- Cuts to funding affect wages first by prompting employers to commit wage theft. Arts makers will not cut production, instead they ask and expect workers to foot the bill by working for free. This is rampant in the arts industry already due to insufficient funding and attention to wage theft violations by funding organization, law enforcement and the courts oversight; but funding cuts have this immediate impact on day one. In short: cuts mean workers work for free. When an entire industry relies on illegally unpaid labour, the products suffer, leading to audience disappointment in the quality of products, and ultimately to loss of markets. The government and funding authorities MUST pay attention to how the money is spent, and MUST spend more to ensure market value survival.
- We are consistently told to find alternative sources of funding. Trusts are overwhelmed, and are stuck in a model where the organisation can fill funding shortfalls if the budget is not secured. Corporates have their own agendas, and increasingly want to shape the projects they are involved with, to the extent that the largest just run their own activity. This is good for freelance creatives, but does not plug the budget gaps faced by institutions.
- Local authority funding has always been seen by others (particularly ACE) as a 'seal of approval' and so can lever other funds. If there's no local authority support then getting money from other sources is difficult as the perception is that there isn't such a strong need.
- We will all be poorer as a direct result!

Do you have any final comments on the effect of changes to local authority funding?

- Even if an organisation is not based in a LA area immediately in danger of funding cuts, the ecology of the Arts in the UK means every Arts Org will lose out. Touring will be eviscerated for companies across the UK with the loss of venues not just operated by LA's but often owned by them with low rents to orgs.
- The wider impact to infrastructure - tourism, vibrant cities, well-being, freelance work opportunities, economic infrastructure, safe and warm spaces - is short sighted vandalism. Removing culture on a large scale takes cornerstones from a local area which will not be replaced and the resulting collapse will be swift and disastrous.
- Don't even get me started on what this government has done to art and culture in this country. It is heartbreaking.
- There should be a separate fund for arts and culture to make a place a vibrant place to live and not compete arts and culture funding against childrens services etc
- When the arts are part of the local government and not commercially run, they bring much more financial and well being benefits to an area.
- I believe funded organisations will have a major funding gap and have to either self generate or rely more heavily on unpaid support. Business will not step in as they only do so if it benefits them

Do you have any final comments on the effect of changes to local authority funding?

- In some ways I think there's a 'squeezed middle' with a current focus on grassroots and freelance arts for funding and the profile and possible income-generating options (commercial activity, sponsorship etc.) for larger organisations - what about the mid-sized organisations?
- I am a (formerly) successful freelance writer. Today I have had a project cancelled due to local authority funding cuts affecting the organisation that was due to hire me. I do not know how long I can continue to live so precariously.
- Just because we will adapt does not mean that we will survive. Many organisations will be lost, the staff will burn out and our wellbeing will be significantly impacted. COVID saw so many people leave the sector and another exodus is around the corner
- Infrastructural damage to the culture sector will take many many years to recover from - the sector has been delivering more for less for a long time and whilst will for survival will always be strong, the means to survive have a limit.
- We work in outdoor arts, and many outdoor festivals are funded by local authorities and are being affected. Media tends to just focus on buildings, but the ecology is wider than that.
- I imagine this is a positive change. Art and community go hand in hand

Do you have any final comments on the effect of changes to local authority funding?

- It comes to something when as a large arts centre supported by local authority, we are relieved to have only had a 10% cut in funding for 2024/2025. The clear impact of this will be that Artists requiring subsidy will be programmed less, audiences will not have access to the breadth of programme we have worked so hard to bring them, and audiences will need to pay more. Cultural participation activities will reduce and our civic role as the creative centre of the region could very well diminish as we need to make all of our activities work harder financially.
- The local NPOs have come together and worked hard over the past 2 years to make the case for culture and our Local Authority has listened and prioritised us despite incredible pressure on their budgets for which we are hugely grateful. But the threat to Public Services is the biggest one we face at the moment as a country and we desperately need a change of govt to stop and then reverse the cuts to ACE, local govts, and all the publically-funded services like schools and youth centres that we work with. No one has any money and the pressure on Trusts & Foundations is unsustainable. It's not just the arts ecology that's facing an existential threat and we are all interconnected so the domino effect of a collapse feels very real.
- I think some arts organisations regularly overplay cuts and this builds a incorrect picture of the arts
- There is no quick fix or alternative to cutting public funding budgets for the arts. Arts orgs are already super savvy and well-used to looking to all sorts of alternative income streams. The squeeze is so tight now, there is nowhere else to turn. Only entirely commercial ventures will survive if this trend continues, further exploding those who are already most excluded from the arts.

Do you have any final comments on the effect of changes to local authority funding?

- The value of organisations and funding should not be based on the loudness of their voice but on the impact and influence they have through the quality of their work, engagement and ability to bring inward investment into the arts from arts and non-arts sectors. There is a culture of entitlement and there are examples of continually throwing cash at organisations that work to their own tune, rather than collectively.
- Bad management often to blame
- What the hell are those arrows? [\[In the question asking with which statement respondents were more inclined to agree\]](#) USE WORDS.
- I think it will devastate communities and deprive people from working class backgrounds from participating and working in the arts.
- Cuts have been felt for 10+ years in our LA, we are on our knees trying to cope with increasing demands -well meaning and rightly important - governance, equality , compliance measures. We have not received any additional funding for these- just expected to fit them in amongst programme delivery and increasing core costs. We are expected to turn on a sixpence to accommodate new 'commissions' and become 'commercially viable'. Local authorities need to think carefully about how they REALLY partner and support the sector, not their own politically- led initiatives- so that the sector can respond creatively to 'commissions.' if they do value a vibrant arts sector.
- Zero value of arts and culture is creating deep and long term damage
- It's a tragedy, but seems to be inevitable given the state of council's budget. A huge amount will be lost.

Do you have any final comments on the effect of changes to local authority funding?

- It is a direct result of lack of central government funding.
- Re the final point in terms of funding cuts causing long term damage to arts and culture. I believe this damage happens sustainedly, with a long lead time and impacts felt long after the cuts have been made. The cuts damages public perception of the value of arts and culture - along with its interconnectedness with other areas such as healthcare - and discourages engagement, becoming a vicious circle.
- The damage to well-being, community and health from defunding arts and culture will cost in the long run.
- National funding e.g. Arts Council is generally dependent on match funding - without Local authority funding arts orgs will increasingly turn to philanthropic funders who will not be able to service the increased need. many orgs will fail to meet match funding requirements and will lose out on all three funding sources and be forced to close,
- Most funding organisations are oversubscribed. Attempted sponsorship has failed over the years. Senior political Leaders don't use the arts so don't think anybody else should have access.
- I am extremely concerned at the state of culture in the country and the complete lack of any intellectual understanding of what culture represents on the part of any political party - it's the 'ministry of fun', isn't it?

Do you have any final comments on the effect of changes to local authority funding?

- Everyone talks about the organisations facing cuts. But no one is advocating for the hugely damaging affect that this will have on freelancers, including artists, producers, and technical production crew who will feel the blade of the cuts the sharpest, with nothing to stop the bleed of work being immediately lost.
- Without well-funded arts and music education and performance participation in our schools, we will, if not already happened, lose the future generations of creators and listener/observers
- Local councils such as [REDACTED] outsourced all their arts and leisure facilities to be managed by organisations that don't have any idea of how Theatres and arts centres are run. All they do is take the secondary spend do not re-invest and use the management fees to support their other interests outside of the arts.
- LAs are in a terribly tough spot - really this is about government priorities and long-term structural issues in the way culture is handled nationally.
- You cannot expect communities to step and fill the gaps in all areas. Quality is an important aspect. The sector is already significantly under-paid, directors being paid led that £20K more than the living wage but with all the responsivity and accountability of our peers earning three to four times more in the private sector. Often senior leaders will take a lesser pay condition in order to secure the future operations of an organisation. Funders cannot expect to get the same level of delivery when costs to services have gone up by more than 15% in the last two years and salary costs by more 14%. It takes time to find alternative sources of funding and capacity that has already been cut out of the sector.
Access will be compromised as we move to more commercial models.