

# Erie County Cultural Plan

## Survey Summary Report

September 5, 2024



## Takeaways from Emerging Survey Results

As of September 3rd, we received a total of 1,681 survey responses, including:

...1,136 responses to the General Survey

... 209 responses in the Cultural Worker category

... 129 responses in the Artist category

... 46 responses in the Creative Business Owner category

... 11 response in Spanish

... 2 response in Arabic

... 2 response in Burmese



## Who answered the Survey?

### Demographics

Respondents are predominantly adults living with another person, without children and a deep-rooted connection to the area.



**56%** live with **another adult**, while **27%** are the only adult in their household. Additionally, **69%** report having **no children** at home, with 13% having one child and 12% having two. Notably, **75%** of respondents **have lived** in Erie County for **more than 20 years**, while 11% have lived there for 10-20 years



### 35-44 years old

22% of respondents fall within the 35-44 age range, followed by 18% in the 55-64 range, and 17% each in the 65-74 and 45-54 age ranges

### Female

Respondents were predominantly female, accounting for 75% of the responses, followed by 25% male and 3% non-binary

### White

86% of respondents identify as White, 8% as Black or African American, 2% as Asian or Native American, and 6% identify their ethnicity as Latino

### \$ 100,000 – \$149,000 annual household Income

24% of respondents reported a total household income of \$100,000-\$149,000, followed by 21% with \$50,000-\$74,999, and 19% with \$75,000-\$99,000

### Advance Degree

The highest level of education among respondents shows that 44% hold an advanced degree, 37% have a four-year college degree, 8% have a two-year college degree or some college experience, and only 3% reported having a high school diploma or GED.

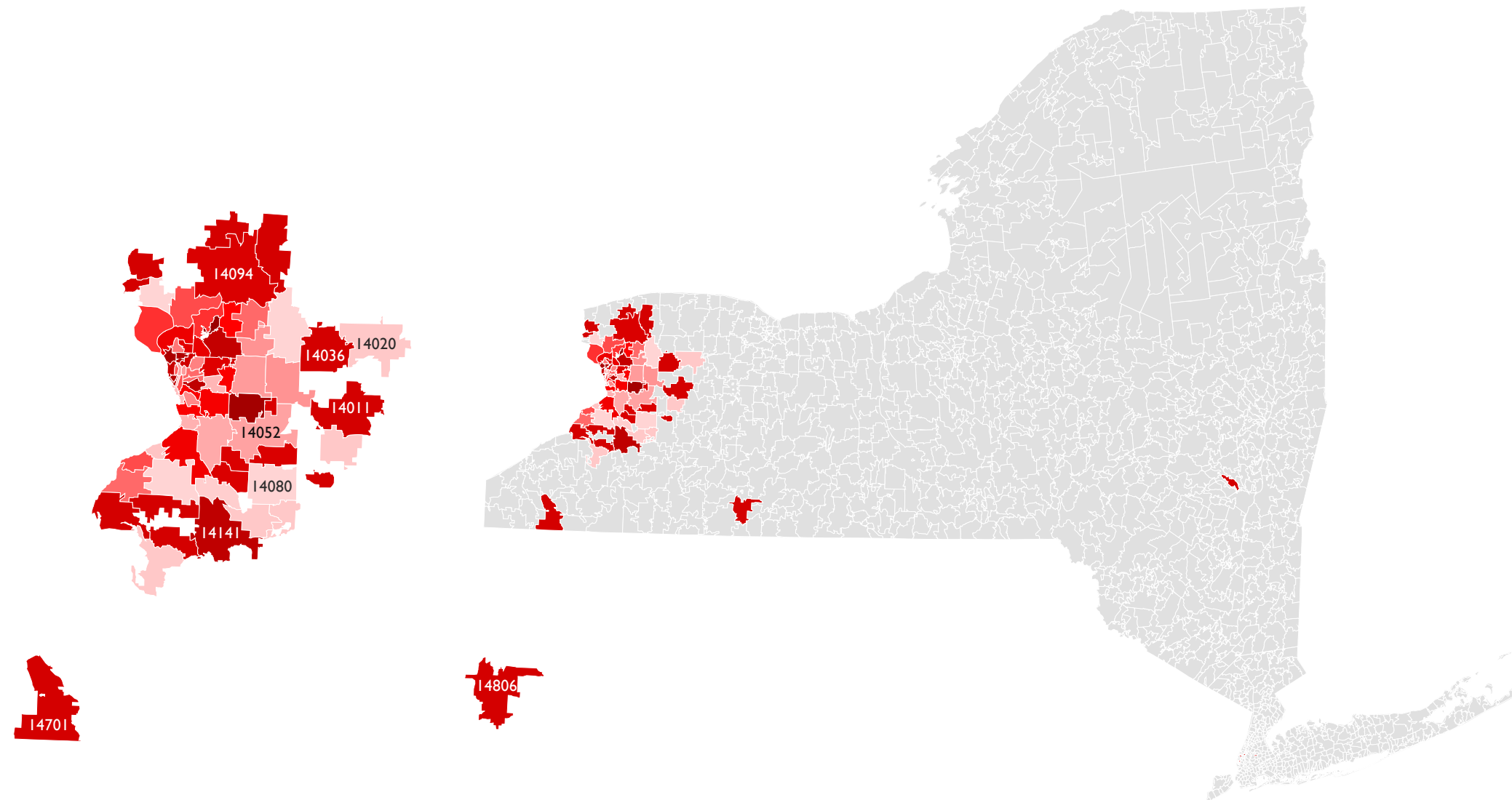
## Where do they live?

### Zipcode Mapping

This map illustrates the distribution of respondents by ZIP code. The following list highlights the top 10 cities with the highest number of respondents:

- **Buffalo:** 533
- **Hamburg:** 108
- **New York City:** 66
- **Orchard Park:** 41
- **Tonawanda:** 42
- **East Aurora:** 28
- **Springville:** 18
- **Clarence:** 16
- **Grand Island:** 15
- **East Amherst:** 14

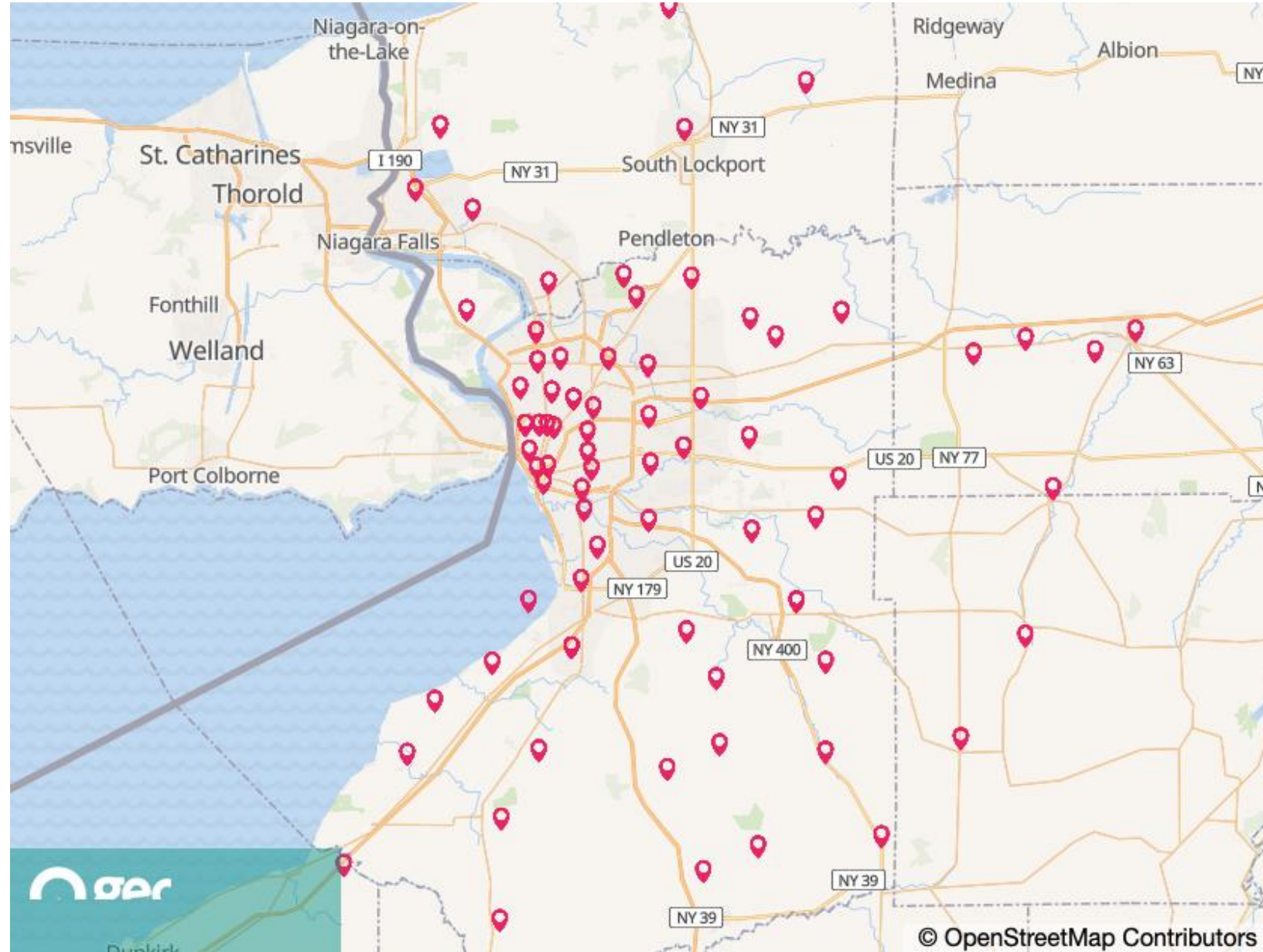
Number of respondents by zip code



Alignment with Survey Results

# Where do they live?

## Zipcode Mapping



4.

General Survey

1



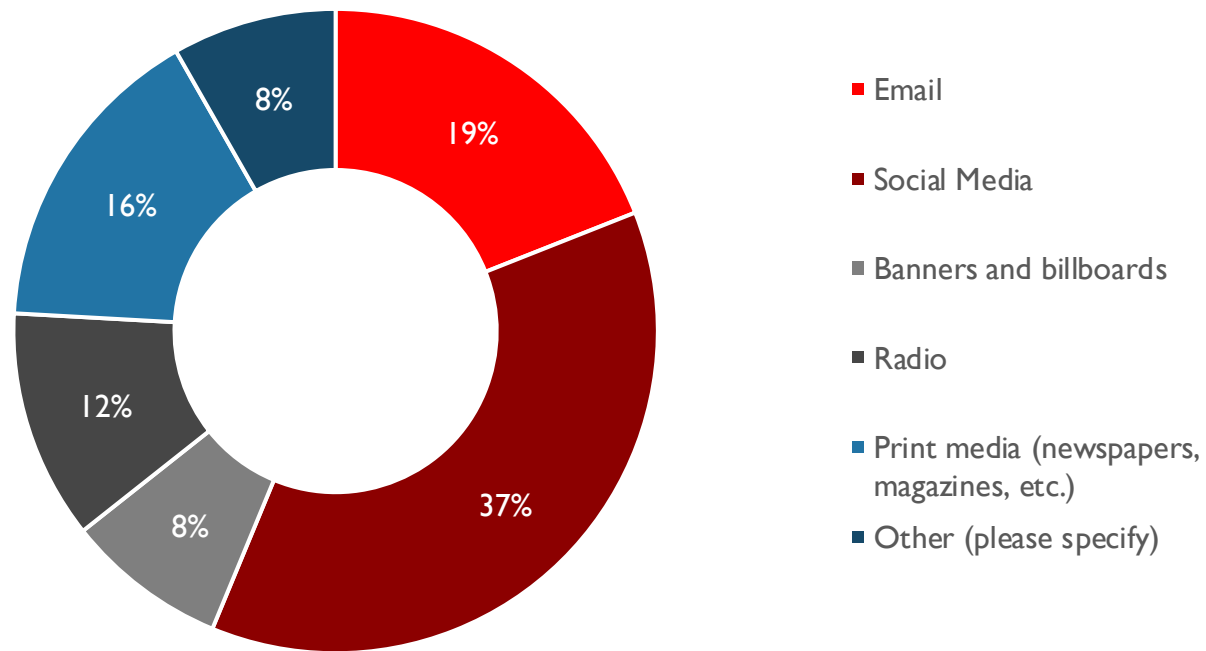
# Takeaways from Survey Results

## General Survey (n=1085)

*How do you most often hear about Erie County arts and cultural events?*

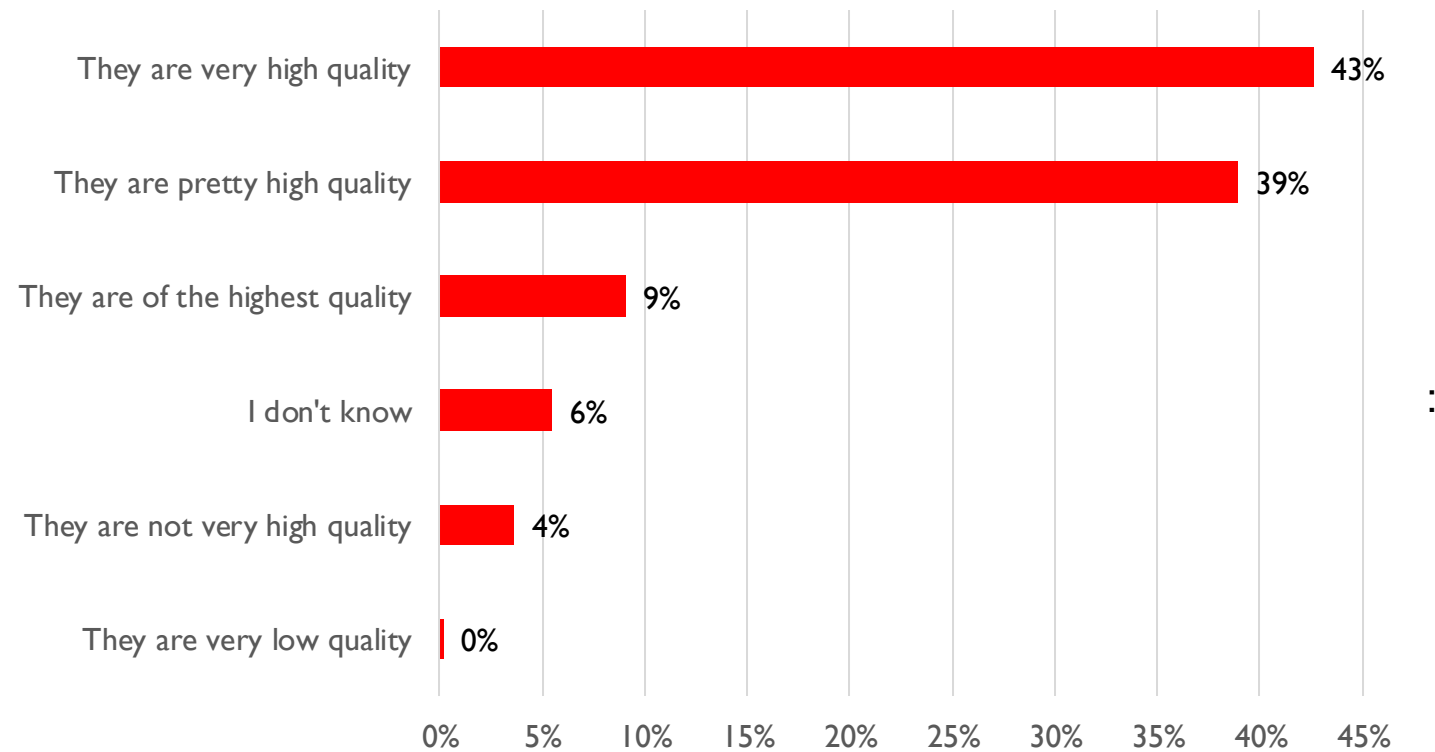
*Other includes word of mouth, TV, subscriptions.*

Most Frequent Communication Channels



*How would you describe the quality of the arts and cultural events in Erie County?*

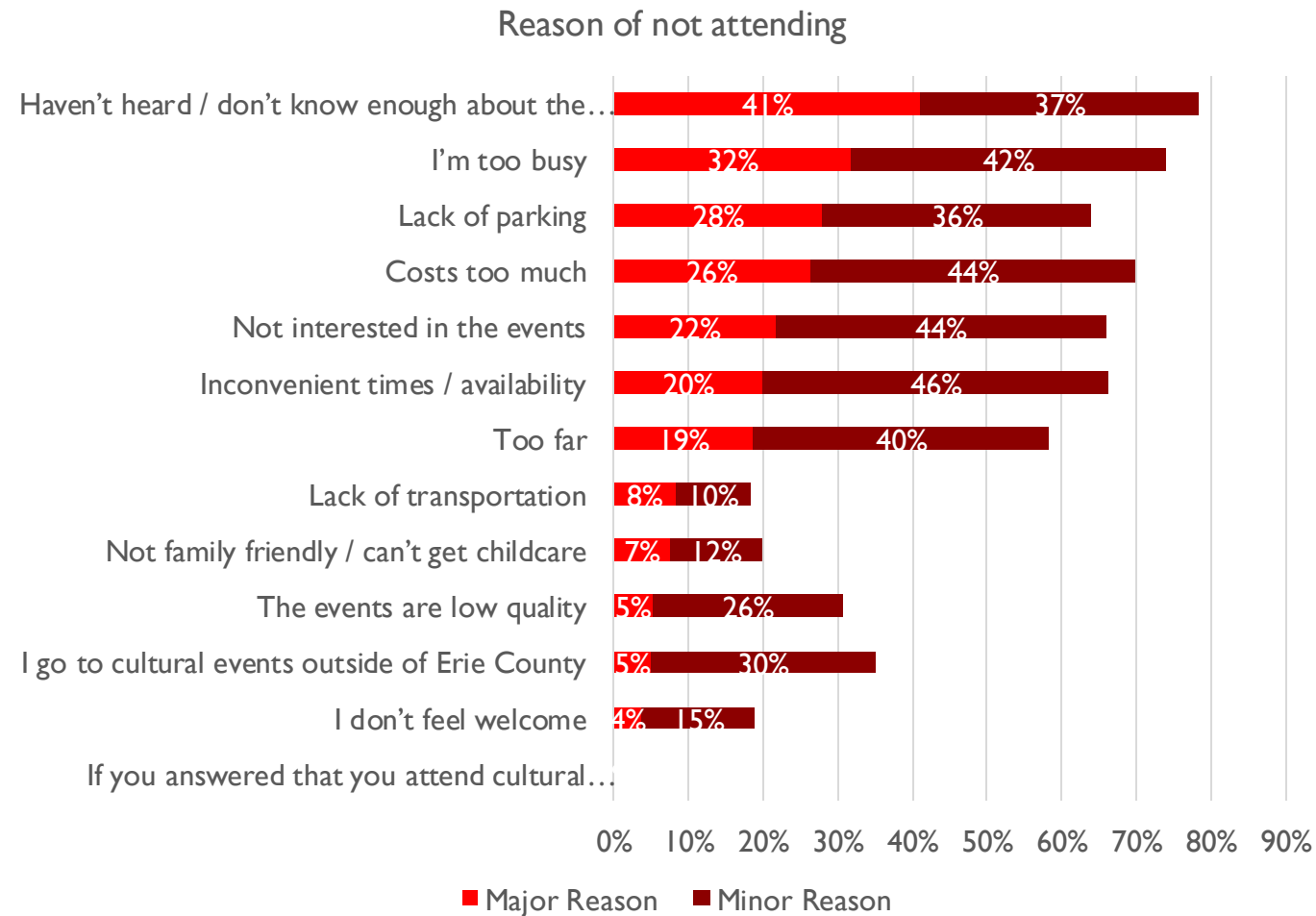
Quality Rating



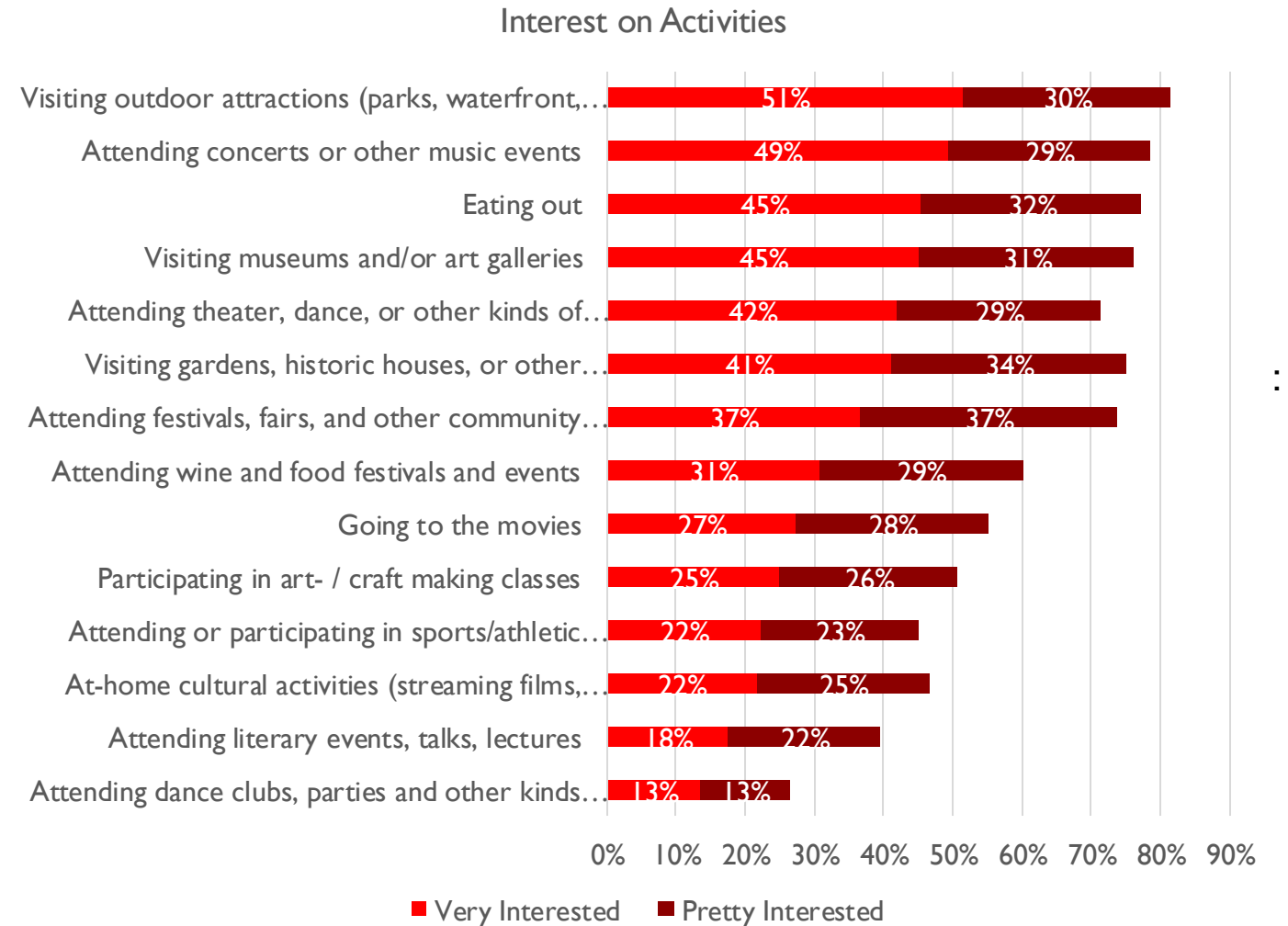
# Takeaways from Survey Results

## General Survey (n=984).

Please indicate whether each of the following is a major reason, minor reason, or not at all a reason you have decided NOT to attend an arts and culture event in Erie County in the past.



How interested are you in the following activities when you are in Erie County or the surrounding area?





# Do you have any suggestions as to how current arts and cultural events in Erie County can be improved? (n=463)



## Connections for Youth

- Funding for arts programs in schools, and arts organizations and schools.
- More, young musical/vocal groups.
- Promote arts classes and group activities.
- Work with K-12 public schools.
- Advertisement for free or low-cost kids' arts programming.
- More events for tweens/teens.



## Communications Support

- Historical context and narratives in arts promotion.
- One central resource for all cultural events , easy to navigate with a comprehensive event guide(e.g., weekly email and printed).
- Better advertising and widespread information about events.
- Improved communication about events, online calendars and updated listings.
- Better media coverage and more effective social media outreach and news letters.



## Creative County

- Increase accessibility, including for disabled and immunocompromised individuals.
- Increase public transportation options and parking solutions.
- Expand events into rural communities and various neighborhoods.
- Integrate arts into community spaces like parks, zoos, community spaces and waterfronts.
- Market arts as the county's greatest asset.
- More public art works that are identifiable to the area historically. Kaiser Town, Lovejoy, East Side, Fruit Belt.



## Arts Grants and Support Systems

- Increased County funding for arts and cultural initiatives.
- Financial support for cultural institutions and smaller not-for-profit organizations.
- Funding for queer artists and DIY music scenes.
- Support for diverse and emerging talents in the arts.
- Financial support for cultural institutions.



## Cultural Hub

- Develop a specific indoor arts center.
- Develop and maintain dedicated resources for arts coordination and support. Including the creation of an effective arts task force.
- Expand regional coordination to minimize competition and enhance collaborative efforts.
- Increased event availability and affordability, and access to various demographics
- More afternoon events and options for all ages.
- Promote local and international cultural exchanges (exhibitions, performances, and festivals)



# Building the Cultural Plan - Aligning the Framework with Survey Results

Category	Framework Initiatives	General Audience requests
Connections for youth	1. Develop incentives with a special focus on engaging Millennials and Gen Z by incorporating art as a tool for mental health support and community involvement..	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More, young musical/vocal groups.</li> <li>•Advertisement for free or low-cost kids' arts programming.</li> <li>•More events for tweens/teens.</li> </ul>
	3. Develop a comprehensive system to enhance collaboration between cultural organizations and school systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Funding for arts programs in schools, and arts organizations and schools.</li> <li>•Promote arts classes and group activities.</li> <li>•Work with K-12 public schools.</li> </ul>
Communications Support	7.Address the lack of awareness and communication around arts and culture by considering ideas such as adding street pole banners and 'free' ads at airports dedicated to 501(c)(3) arts organizations or by creating strategic alliances that provide in-kind ad space such as billboards or ads in magazines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Historical context and narratives in arts promotion.</li> <li>•One central resource for all cultural events , easy to navigate with a comprehensive event guide(e.g., weekly email and printed).</li> <li>•Better advertising and widespread information about events.</li> <li>•Improved communication about events, online calendars and updated listings.</li> </ul>
	8. Reintroduce media outlets and arts journalism (not simply listings) that cover the arts, including the willingness to offer appropriate critical analysis.Alliance with media to cover arts and culture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better media coverage and more effective social media outreach and newsletters.</li> </ul>
Creative County	4. Create opportunities to bring the entire community together for the arts. Examples include an EC Culture Weekend, a broader EC Festival, and similar events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand events into rural communities and various neighborhoods.</li> <li>• Integrate arts into community spaces like parks, zoos, community spaces and waterfronts.</li> </ul>
	5. Develop a symbiotic relationship between tourism marketing and the cultural sector to enhance Erie County's reputation as an arts and culture destination, with a focus on branding the region as a cohesive "museum district" through targeted strategies and investments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Market arts as the county's greatest asset.</li> <li>•More public art works that are identifiable to the area historically. Kaiser Town, Lovejoy, East Side, Fruit Belt.</li> </ul>
Arts Grants and Support Systems	9. Develop new public funding schemes, some ideas are: A tax support (ZAP, LART) Percent for Art Program Percentage of Hot Allocations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Increased County funding for arts and cultural initiatives.</li> <li>•Financial support for cultural institutions and smaller not-for-profit organizations.</li> <li>•Funding for queer artists and DIY music scenes.</li> <li>•Support for diverse and emerging talents in the arts.</li> <li>•Financial support for cultural institutions.</li> </ul>

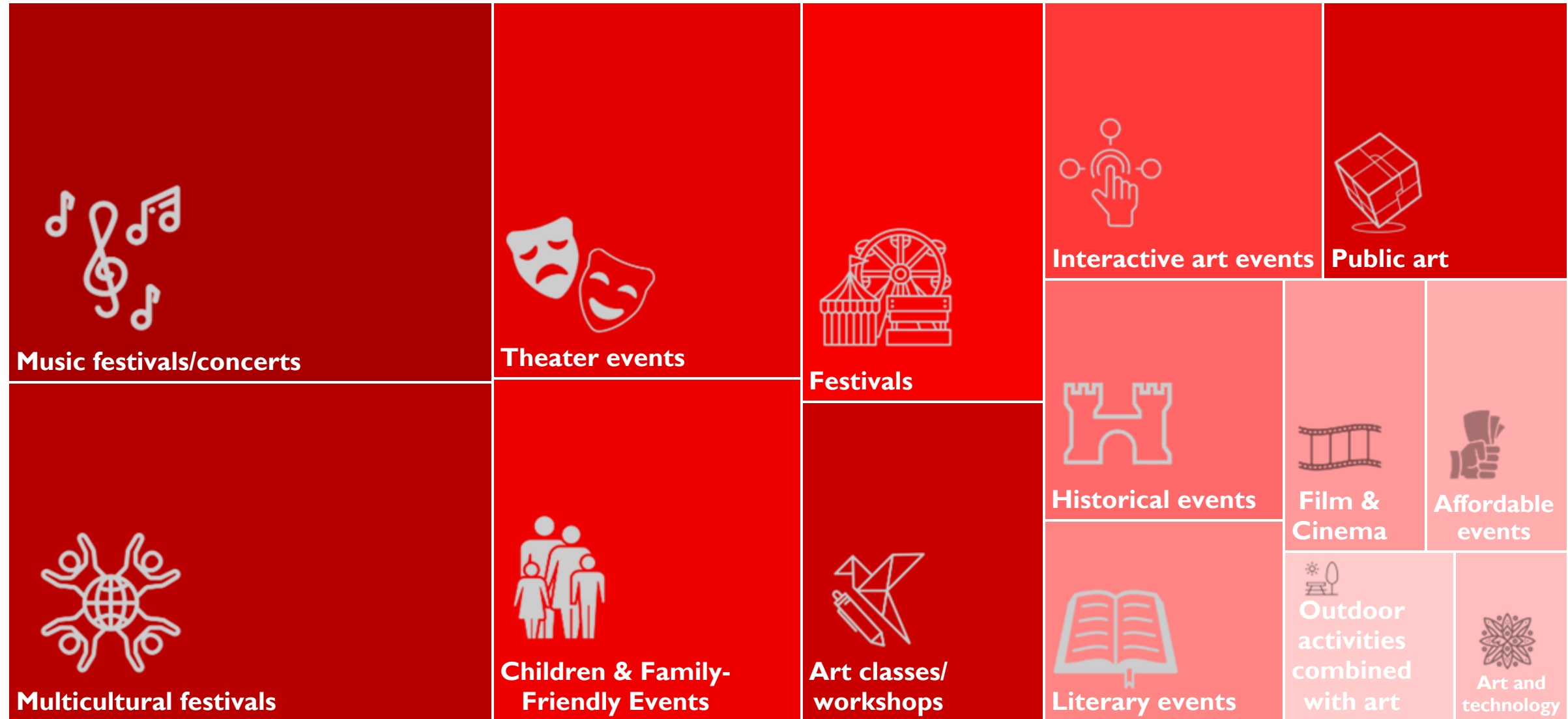
## Building the Cultural Plan - Aligning the Framework with Survey Results

Category	Framework Initiatives	General Audience requests
Cultural Hub	12. Create a cultural hub to coordinate the arts and culture sector in the region. This should be a business service organization. It should have full-time staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop a specific indoor arts center.</li><li>• Develop and maintain dedicated resources for arts coordination and support. Including the creation of an effective arts task force.</li><li>• Expand regional coordination to minimize competition and enhance collaborative efforts.</li><li>• Increased event availability and affordability, and access to various demographics</li><li>• Promote local and international cultural exchanges (exhibitions, performances, and festivals)</li></ul>



# Are there any arts and cultural events that you would like to see in Erie County?

(n=321)



4.

Cultural Worker

2



# Takeaways from Survey Results

## Cultural Worker (n=167)

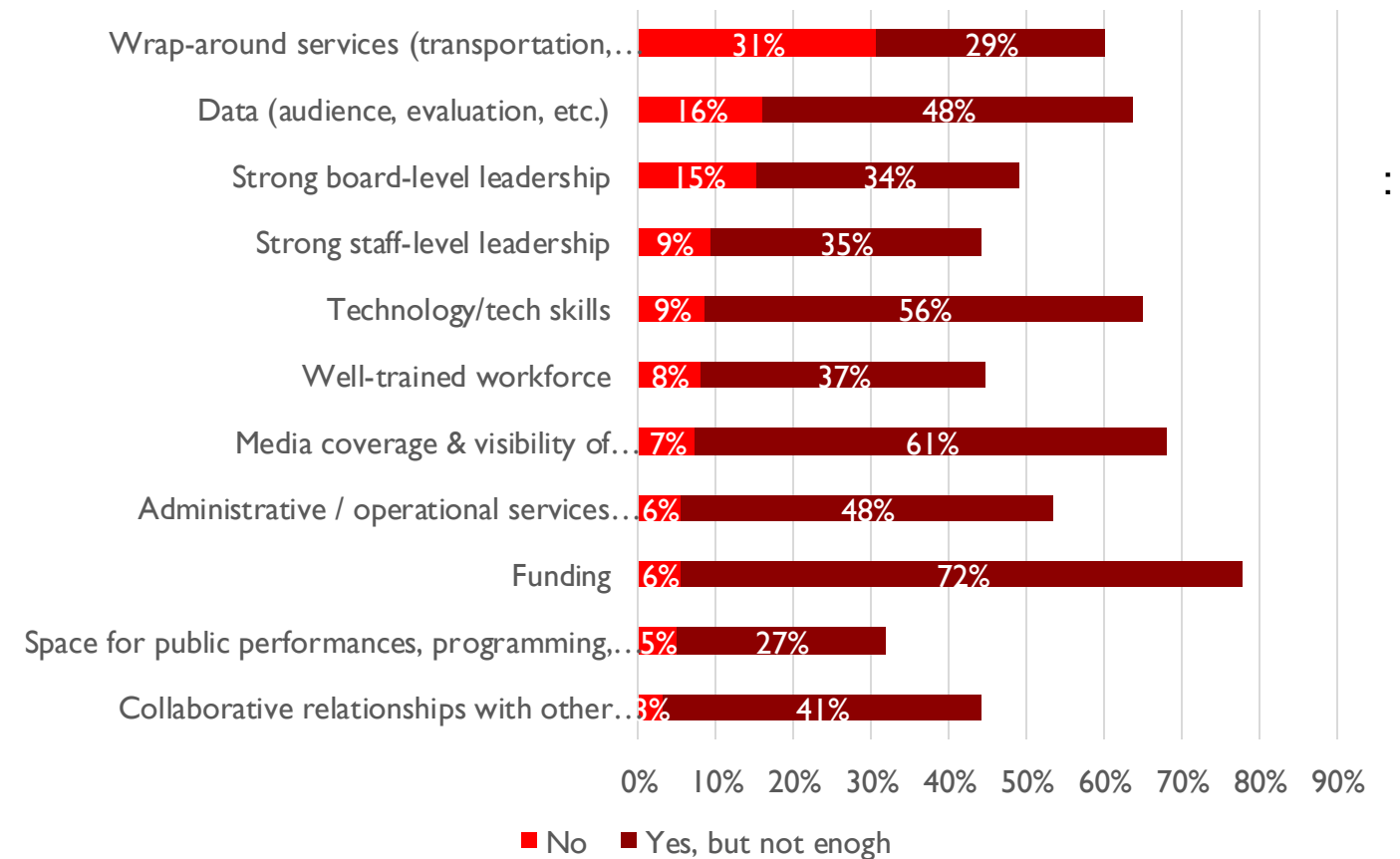
*Assess whether you have access to services/opportunities/resources to support your cultural sector career and professional development*

*Assess whether your organization has access to services/opportunities/resources to fulfill its mission*

Cultural Worker access to services, resources and opportunities



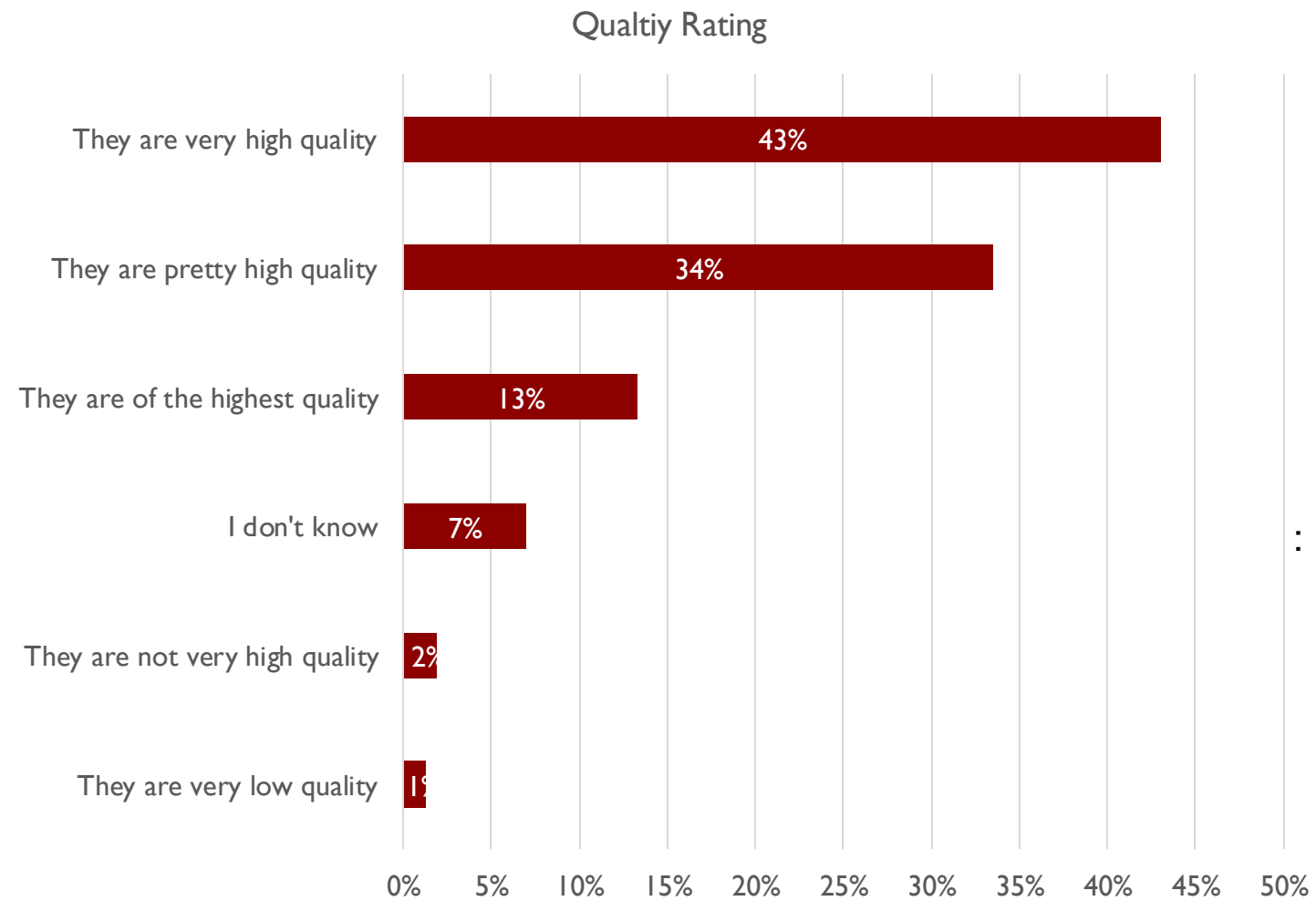
Cultural Org. Access to services, resources and opportunities



# Takeaways from Survey Results

## Cultural Worker (n=167)

*How would you describe the quality of the arts and cultural events listed above?*



# What are the strengths / unique assets of Erie County's arts ecosystem?

(n=104)



## Assets

- Supportive Audience, effective networking, and resource-sharing.
- Unique cultural events and world-class facilities.
- Diverse and Talented Arts Community
- A mix of historic and modern venues that enhance the cultural landscape.



## Challenges:

- Limited access to support and funding, with political issues impacting the process.
- Arts sector's potential for future growth and relevance.
- Concerns about ecosystem saturation and lack of uniqueness.



## Strengths

- Reasonable cost of living and affordability compared to other areas.
- Midsize Ecosystem: of the arts scene, this allows for broad participation and engagement without the overwhelming scale of larger cities.
- Strong passion and determination among artists and arts organizations resulting in supportive relationships.
- Diversity of Institutions and Programs



## Weakness:

- Perception that art groups receive funding based on connections rather than quality; focus on non-artistic costs.
- Segregation and Diversity Issues, within the arts community; systemic neglect of Black and Latino artists while there is a public focus on diversity.





# What's missing from Erie County's arts ecosystem?

## Key themes (n=100)

### Funding and Needs

- A strong emphasis on the need for more funding, especially for smaller and grassroots organizations. There is a lack of operational and programming funds, with many pointing out that current funding does not keep pace with inflation or the actual needs of the arts community.
- Concerns about inequity in how funding is distributed, with larger institutions receiving the bulk of support while smaller organizations struggle.

### Lack of Collaboration

- Respondents expressed a desire for more partnerships and shared efforts across the arts sector, as organizations often work in silos.

### Need for a Unified Approach

- There is a call for a more unified approach to promoting and organizing arts activities, including better communication and coordination among organizations and the need for a coordinated calendar of events.

### Access to Opportunities

- Concerns about accessibility, both in terms of geographic reach (e.g., rural areas being neglected) and for underrepresented communities. There is also a need for more affordable and accessible programming, particularly for those with limited resources.

### Visibility and Awareness

- A lack of visibility for arts opportunities and events.

### Quality of Arts Programming

- Respondents mentioned that while there are some standout moments, the overall quality of events could be improved, with more world-class offerings.

### Infrastructure and Sustainability

- There is concern about the state of arts infrastructure, including the need for better facilities, technological upgrades, and more resources to maintain and utilize spaces effectively.

### Education and Professional Development

- There is a noticeable gap in arts education within schools, with respondents calling for increased support to develop future artists and audiences.
- A need for more support for local artists, especially emerging professionals, was highlighted, with calls for better professional development opportunities and recognition of local talent.

# What thoughts or ideas do you have for Erie County's Cultural Plan?

(n=75)



## Connections for Youth

- A focus on youth arts programming that is well funded and has opportunities for youth to be paid and that considers transportation.
- More funding for educational opportunities/programs.



## Communications Support

- A database and a calendar for all art-related opportunities..
- Invest in quality professional productions and promote them far and wide.
- Promotion and Marketing Campaigns:. traditional and digital media to reach diverse audiences and promote the arts as a key element of Erie County's identity.
- County-wide promotional opportunities (banners, billboards, airport ads).
- Explore AI Image generation as a starting point for other media



## Creative County

- Open the Marina for artists/singers/crafts shows/bands.
- Bring more ideas to create engagement with attendees.
- A local arts festival of all disciplines. No one outside of WNY should be able to participate.
- Include rural areas and different demographics. Focus on infrastructure (i.e. facilities development), cultural districts, community engagement incentives/initiatives.
- Connect more organizations with one another.
- Unified tourism plan to promote the arts & cultural



## Arts Grants and Support Systems

- Increase funding amounts to artists, smaller arts and cultural organizations.
- There should be more collaboration to produce extraordinary events and festivals that combine all art forms.
- Support new or more equitable funding opportunities.
- Maintenance of existing public art projects should be critical.
- Provide additional funding and marketing opportunities. Get the tour buses from Niagara Falls to visit the cultural assets of Erie County



## Cultural Hub

- Include IATSE Local 10 and the other well-qualified entertainment unions in as many County-funded arts and performance-based opportunities as possible.
- Identify ways to collaborate and partner - to save costs on administrative staff/processes; promote programming; reduce government-created bureaucracy and duplication when receiving funds..
- Incorporate deliberate measures to support and raise awareness of smaller organizations and those outside of the City of Buffalo.



# Building the Cultural Plan - Aligning the Framework with Survey Results

Category	Framework Initiatives	General Audience requests
Connections for youth	1. Develop incentives with a special focus on engaging Millennials and Gen Z by incorporating art as a tool for mental health support and community involvement..	•A focus on youth arts programming that is well funded and has opportunities for youth to be paid and that considers transportation.
	3. Develop a comprehensive system to enhance collaboration between cultural organizations and school systems.	•More funding for educational opportunities/programs.
Communications Support	7. Address the lack of awareness and communication around arts and culture by considering ideas such as adding street pole banners and 'free' ads at airports dedicated to 501(c)(3) arts organizations or by creating strategic alliances that provide in-kind ad space such as billboards or ads in magazines.	•A database and a calendar for all art-related opportunities..
	8. Reintroduce media outlets and arts journalism (not simply listings) that cover the arts, including the willingness to offer appropriate critical analysis. Alliance with media to cover arts and culture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Invest in quality professional productions and promote them far and wide.</li> <li>•Promotion and Marketing Campaigns: traditional and digital media to reach diverse audiences and promote the arts as a key element of Erie County's identity.</li> <li>•County-wide promotional opportunities (banners, billboards, airport ads).</li> <li>•Explore AI Image generation as a starting point for other media</li> </ul>
Creative County	4. Create opportunities to bring the entire community together for the arts. Examples include an EC Culture Weekend, a broader EC Festival, and similar events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Open the Marina for artists/singers/crafts shows/bands.</li> <li>•Bring more ideas to create engagement with attendees.</li> <li>•A local arts festival of all disciplines. No one outside of WNY should be able to participate.</li> <li>•Include rural areas and different demographics. Focus on infrastructure (i.e. facilities development), cultural districts, community engagement incentives/initiatives.</li> <li>•Connect more organizations with one another.</li> </ul>
	5. Develop a symbiotic relationship between tourism marketing and the cultural sector to enhance Erie County's reputation as an arts and culture destination, with a focus on branding the region as a cohesive "museum district" through targeted strategies and investments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unified tourism plan to promote the arts &amp; cultural sector to visitors.</li> </ul>



# Building the Cultural Plan - Aligning the Framework with Survey Results

Category	Framework Initiatives	General Audience requests
Arts Grants and Support Systems	<p>9. Develop new public funding schemes, some ideas are:                      A tax support (ZAP, LART)                      Percent for Art Program                      Percentage of Hot Allocations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase funding amounts to artists, smaller arts and cultural organizations.</li> <li>• There should be more collaboration to produce extraordinary events and festivals that combine all art forms.</li> <li>• Support new or more equitable funding opportunities.</li> <li>• Maintenance of existing public art projects should be critical.</li> </ul>
	<p>11. Advocate for funding criteria that include both administrative overhead costs and grants for individuals or non-501(c)(3) entities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide additional funding and marketing opportunities. Get the tour buses from Niagara Falls to visit the cultural assets of Erie County.</li> <li>• More operational support for cultural institutions.</li> </ul>
Cultural Hub	<p>12. Create a cultural hub to coordinate the arts and culture sector in the region. This should be a business service organization. It should have full-time staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a specific indoor arts center.</li> <li>• Develop and maintain dedicated resources for arts coordination and support. Including the creation of an effective arts task force.</li> <li>• Expand regional coordination to minimize competition and enhance collaborative efforts.</li> <li>• Increased event availability and affordability, and access to various demographics</li> <li>• Promote local and international cultural exchanges (exhibitions, performances, and festivals)</li> </ul>
	<p>14. Create a comparative data set, including coordinated visitor surveys and studies, to provide sector-wide insights rather than relying on disparate data from individual organizations. Coordinating visitor studies across organizations will allow for comparative and aggregate data, potentially saving staff time and facilitating learning.</p>	<p>Incorporate deliberate measures to support and raise awareness of smaller organizations and those outside of the City of Buffalo.</p>
	<p>17. Develop a Creative Economy/Non-Profit Knowledge Sharing Cohort Program that includes administrative exchange initiatives to enhance capacity building and foster collaboration across sectors. This program will address the needs of small and emerging organizations by partnering them with larger, established entities that can provide management assistance, grant writing support, and collaborative project opportunities. By facilitating partnerships and taking initiatives on the road to other Erie County communities, the program will create a supportive network that promotes growth and development across all organizational sizes.</p>	<p>Identify ways to collaborate and partner - to save costs on administrative staff/processes; promote programming; reduce government-created bureaucracy and duplication when receiving funds.</p>

4.

Artist

3

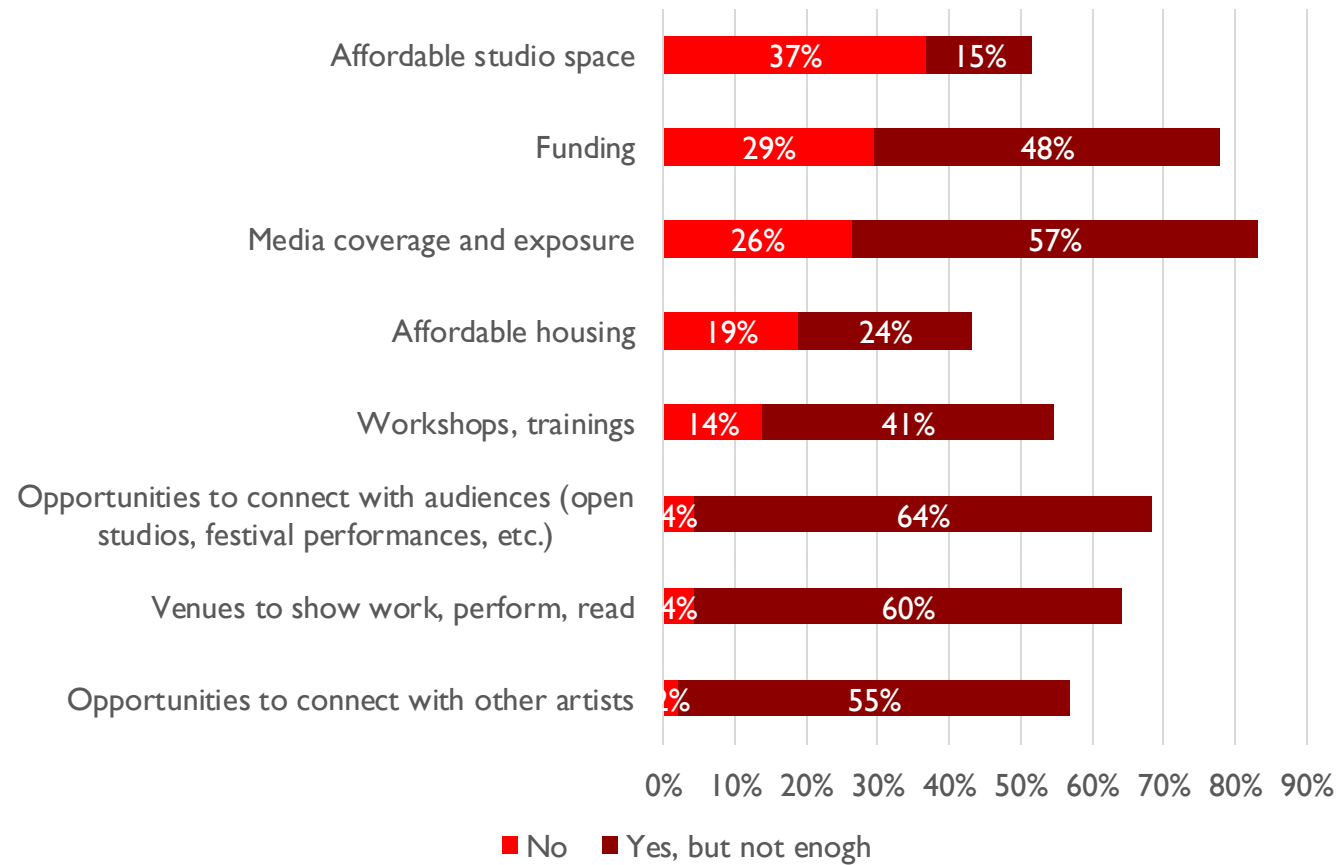


# Takeaways from Survey Results

## Artist (n=105)

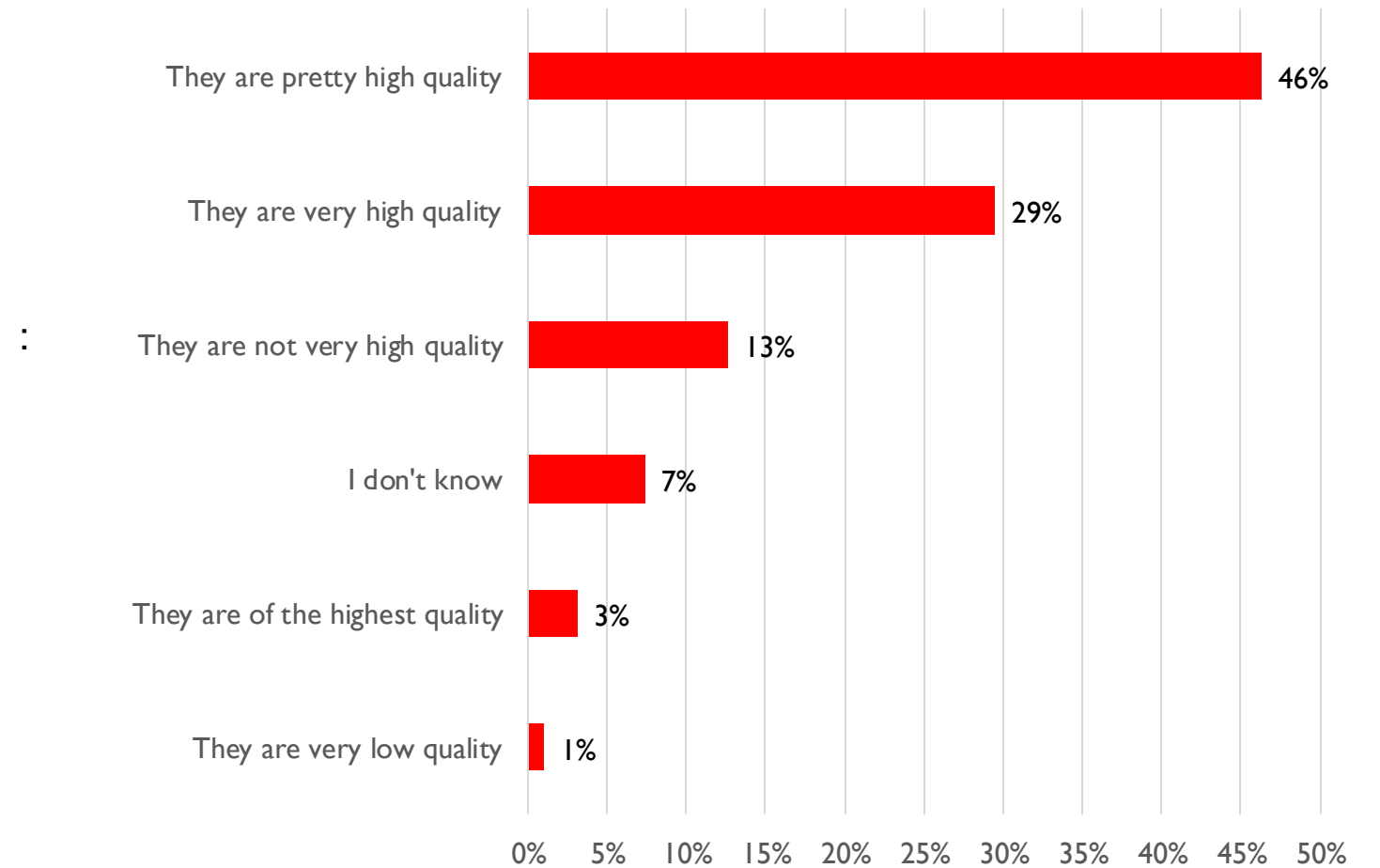
Assess the level of access you have to services/opportunities/resources to support your practices in Erie County.

Artist's access to services, resources and opportunities



How would you describe the quality of the arts and cultural events listed above?

Quality Rating



# What Erie County organizations (formal or informal) are most supportive of your artistic practice and/or career?

(n=74)

Of the 29 places mentioned, the survey's Top 10 most frequently cited are:

- Arts Services Inc. (ASI)
- Burchfield Penney Art Center (BICA)
- Buffalo AKG Museum
- Springville Center for the Arts
- CEPA Gallery
- WNY Book Arts
- Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra (BPO)
- Musicalfare
- Irish Classical Theatre
- Shakespeare in Delaware Park



Photo via Website



Photo via WKBW



Photo via Website



Photo by Ittiam Systems



Photo via Website



Photo via Website



Photo by Biff Henrich



Photo by Matt Digati



Photo by Marco Cappelletti



# What are the strengths / unique assets of Erie County's arts ecosystem?

(n=70)



## Assets

- Strong local support and a passionate network of artists.
- Low cost of living and affordable housing.
- Numerous events, festivals, and diverse artistic opportunities.
- High-quality theater community, full-time professional orchestra, and ample theater opportunities.



## Strengths

- Vibrant, less elitist art scene with professional and diverse opportunities.
- Easier to connect and collaborate due to a smaller, engaged community.
- Fewer artists create a less competitive environment.



## Challenges:

- Insufficient support and funding, with particular challenges for underrepresented artists
- Insufficient support for full-time artistic careers and limited equity contracts.



## Weakness:

- Barriers and systemic issues affecting sustainability and affordability.
- Lack of distinctive uniqueness or specific assets.





# What's missing from Erie County's arts ecosystem that would make it easier to be a working artist?

## Key Themes (n=75)

### Funding and Financial Support

- Increased funding for artists, including grants for individual projects and operational support for arts organizations.
- Accessible funding opportunities for emerging and independent artists.
- Support for specific art forms, such as film and poetry, as well as infrastructure for publication and media.

### Affordable Space

- More affordable housing and studio spaces for artists.
- Access to free or low-cost practice spaces and facilities.
- Cooperative ownership models for artist workspaces to prevent displacement due to gentrification.

### Promotion and Visibility

- Enhanced promotion for local artists and arts events.
- Improved media coverage and centralized arts calendars.
- Publicity and opportunities for artists to showcase their work more broadly.

### Infrastructure and Facilities

- Development and maintenance of physical artistic and cultural spaces.
- Investment in cultural infrastructure comparable to other major cities.

### Community and Networking

- More opportunities for artists to connect with each other and collaborate. Organized arts conventions and networking events to facilitate connections and job opportunities.

### Accessibility and Equity

- Affordable access to arts events and programs.
- Greater inclusivity in arts programs and opportunities for marginalized communities.
- Addressing barriers that restrict who can create, view, and participate in the arts.

### Arts Education and Professional Development

- More training and professional development opportunities for artists.
- Support for arts education programs to nurture future audiences and artists.



# What thoughts or ideas do you have for Erie County's Cultural Plan?

(n=68)



## Connections for Youth

- Support arts education in schools and provide access to arts education programs.
- Expand cultural workshops and demonstrations for schools and organizations.
- Support organizations like the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra and Buffalo Girlchoir in their youth outreach and education



## Communications Support

- Improve promotion and visibility of local arts and events.
- Create a comprehensive arts/show listing for easier access to event information.
- Develop better media coverage for local art galleries and events.
- Increase reviews and publicity for artistic events.
- Promote local arts organizations and education programs.



## Creative County

- Ensure all areas use parks for events to foster community connections.
- Develop a subsidized gallery district and support independent art galleries.
- Increase promotion of local art galleries and provide more public art installations.
- Create a large outdoor venue for the BPO and other arts events.
- Address housing issues impacting opportunities to live and work in Buffalo.



## Arts Grants and Support Systems

- Increase funding for the arts and improve the grant application process, including individual artists and theatre.
- Provide more funding for black artists and support for artists from diverse communities.
- Invest in artist-owned spaces and public performance spaces.
- Offer professional resources such as accounting and tax help for artists.
- Support small business funding, affordable studio space, and tool sharing.
- Explore film tax credits and other financial incentives for



## Cultural Hub

- Develop infrastructure for all forms of art, including literary arts.
- Foster collaboration and resource sharing among artists and organizations.
- Form a committee that includes diverse community representatives.
- Protect and support cultural resources and public arts spaces.
- Build connections between larger institutions and smaller galleries to elevate local art.
- Ensure true inclusion of both established and new artists, addressing barriers to entry.



# Building the Cultural Plan - Aligning the Framework with Survey Results

Category	Framework Initiatives	General Audience requests
Connections for Youth	3. Develop a comprehensive system to enhance collaboration between cultural organizations and school systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Support arts education in schools and provide access to arts education programs.</li> <li>•Expand cultural workshops and demonstrations for schools and organizations.</li> <li>•Support organizations like the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra and Buffalo Girlchoir in their youth outreach and education</li> </ul>
Communications Support	7. Address the lack of awareness and communication around arts and culture by considering ideas such as adding street pole banners and 'free' ads at airports dedicated to 501(c)(3) arts organizations or by creating strategic alliances that provide in-kind ad space such as billboards or ads in magazines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Improve promotion and visibility of local arts and events.</li> <li>•Create a comprehensive arts/show listing for easier access to event information.</li> <li>•Develop better media coverage for local art galleries and events.</li> <li>•Promote local arts organizations and education programs.</li> </ul>
	8. Reintroduce media outlets and arts journalism (not simply listings) that cover the arts, including the willingness to offer appropriate critical analysis. Alliance with media to cover arts and culture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Increase reviews and publicity for artistic events.</li> </ul>
Creative County	4. Create opportunities to bring the entire community together for the arts. Examples include an EC Culture Weekend, a broader EC Festival, and similar events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Ensure all areas use parks for events to foster community connections.</li> <li>•Create a large outdoor venue for the BPO and other arts events.</li> </ul>
	5. Develop a symbiotic relationship between tourism marketing and the cultural sector to enhance Erie County's reputation as an arts and culture destination, with a focus on branding the region as a cohesive "museum district" through targeted strategies and investments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Develop a subsidized gallery district and support independent art galleries.</li> <li>•Increase promotion of local art galleries and provide more public art installations.</li> </ul>
Arts Grants and Support Systems	10. Revise the cultural funding process and develop a new one. This new process should address the following: A multi-year funding model with a standardized application form (e.g., CFA) to reduce repetitive work when dealing with the same funder. Acknowledgment of differences in size, mission, and contributions among organizations. Clear and well-communicated criteria. A transparent process, including a portal to share the review process and provide feedback on all submitted information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Increase funding for the arts and improve the grant application process, including individual artists and theatre.</li> <li>•Offer professional resources such as accounting and tax help for artists.</li> <li>•Support small business funding, affordable studio space, and tool sharing.</li> <li>•Explore film tax credits and other financial incentives for the arts.</li> </ul>
	•Provide more funding for black artists and support for artists from diverse communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Provide more funding for black artists and support for artists from diverse communities.</li> <li>•Invest in artist-owned spaces and public performance spaces.</li> </ul>

# Building the Cultural Plan - Aligning the Framework with Survey Results

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Cultural Hub	<p>12. Create a cultural hub to coordinate the arts and culture sector in the region. This should be a business service organization. It should have full-time staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop infrastructure for all forms of art, including literary arts.</li> <li>• Form a committee that includes diverse community representatives.</li> <li>• Ensure true inclusion of both established and new artists, addressing barriers to entry.</li> </ul>
	<p>14. Create a comparative data set, including coordinated visitor surveys and studies, to provide sector-wide insights rather than relying on disparate data from individual organizations. Coordinating visitor studies across organizations will allow for comparative and aggregate data, potentially saving staff time and facilitating learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate deliberate measures to support and raise awareness of smaller organizations and those outside of the City of Buffalo.</li> </ul>
	<p>16. Enhance sector-wide awareness of available resources and funding opportunities by establishing a comprehensive grants clearinghouse and a centralized database of funding resources. This initiative will go beyond existing listings to provide a broader range of opportunities. Additionally, create a support organization dedicated to guiding arts organizations in effectively navigating and utilizing these resources, and encouraging innovative approaches to securing new funding,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and support cultural resources and public arts spaces..</li> </ul>
	<p>17. Develop a Creative Economy/Non-Profit Knowledge Sharing Cohort Program that includes administrative exchange initiatives to enhance capacity building and foster collaboration across sectors. This program will address the needs of small and emerging organizations by partnering them with larger, established entities that can provide management assistance, grant writing support, and collaborative project opportunities. By facilitating partnerships and taking initiatives on the road to other Erie County communities, the program will create a supportive network that promotes growth and development across all organizational sizes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build connections between larger institutions and smaller galleries to elevate local art.</li> <li>• Foster collaboration and resource sharing among artists and organizations.</li> </ul>
	<p>19. Forge strong partnerships with the for-profit sector to support non-profits through pro-bono services, expertise, and resources. Establish business incentives to encourage companies to provide in-kind support, such as volunteering time, offering space, or sharing professional services. Leverage the resources of both start-ups and established businesses to address capacity challenges faced by non-profits and foster cross-sector collaboration. Develop a framework that integrates for-profit and non-profit efforts, enhancing mutual support and creating shared value.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foster collaboration and resource sharing among artists and organizations.</li> </ul>



4.

Creative Business Owner

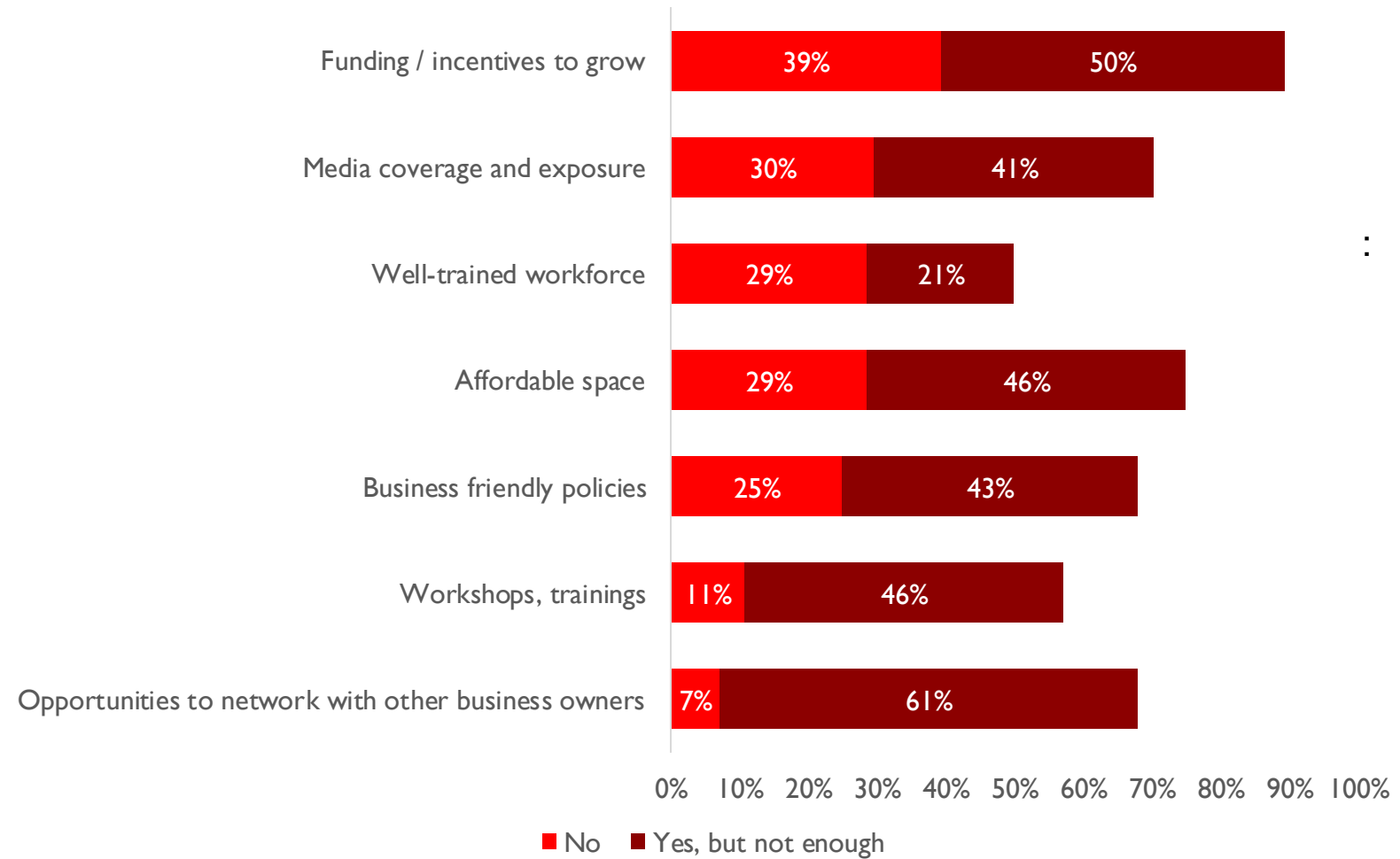
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# Takeaways from Survey Results

## Creative Business Owner (n=46)

*Assess the access you have to services/opportunities/resources to support your creative economy business in Erie County.*



# What are the strengths / unique assets of Erie County's arts ecosystem?

(n=22)



## Assets

- The community. Very supportive audience to attend events and share in the promotion of events.
- There is a wealth of opportunities for artists to promote and sell their work.
- Organizations like The Universities and Creative Mornings.

- Many arts and craft markets.



## Challenges:

- The process to get support or funding is too political.
- Ecosystem Saturation. Overabundance of artists with concerns about the uniqueness of the ecosystem.



## Strengths

- Comparative affordability, cost of living is still reasonable.
- Presence of unique cultural initiatives and facilities, indicating broader interest in similar initiatives.



## Weakness:

- "The arts ecosystem does nothing more than take resources and funnel them into non-artistic costs".
- "The arts in Buffalo need to return back to the blue-collar mentality".



# What's missing from Erie County's arts ecosystem that would make it easier to be a creative economy business owner?

## Key Themes (n=22)

### Affordable Space and Facilities

- Affordable, private office space
- More affordable storefronts.
- Better incentives for brick-and-mortar locations

### Funding and Financial Support

- Paid artist opportunities for for-profit companies:.
- Funding for programs and spaces made specifically to support art that aren't focused on overcharging facilitators.
- Need for more cultural funding, easily accessible processes especially for smaller organizations.
- Access to capital for women and BIPOC small business owner.
- Tax incentives and grants for businesses with low-impact, sustainable practices.

### Support and Opportunities

- More visiting artists.

More opportunity to grow and gain positive exposure as up-and-coming artists.

### Communication and Promotion

- Better communication and promotion for all to shop local.
- Dedicated, sustainable media coverage.

### Leadership and Advocacy

- Leadership: A need for visionaries and effective advocates for the arts

### Bureaucracy and Process

- More programs for up-and-coming businesses with fewer high stipulations.
- A more symbiotic relationship with taxpayers and less bureaucracy.
- Public transit, sidewalk and road upkeep, penalties for negligent landlords/better standardized features or services for commercial leases.
- Elimination of political interference: "Arts in this town is too elitist and too political"

### Community and Resources

- "I could benefit from more access and exposure to resources at UB".



# What other thoughts or ideas do you have for Erie County's Cultural Plan?

(n=15)



## Communications Support

- Improve media and marketing strategies.
- Enhance cultural experiences tied to local arts, such as interactive or educational elements.
- One website and strong social media presence to promote opportunities regularly:



## Creative County

- Promote local art fairs and talent festivals.
- Support local businesses and foster community inclusivity.
- Ensure representation of all cultures in arts initiatives.



## Arts Grants and Support Systems

- Increase availability of programs, grants, and networking for business and financial support.
- Support development of folk art and creative economy entrepreneurs.
- Focus grant planning on smaller organizations rather than larger ones.



## Cultural Hub

- Develop strategies to grow the audience base for cultural events.
- Engage diverse communities through forums and surveys.
- Ensure comprehensive action plans for cultural initiatives.
- Improve the public cultural service system to support and develop folk art teams, creating a conducive environment for creative economy entrepreneurs.

## Other

- Address and eliminate political connections influencing arts planning.
- Highlight the need for equitable opportunities beyond networking and connections.
- Acknowledge and thank contributors to the cultural planning process.



# Building the Cultural Plan - Aligning the Framework and Survey Results

Category	Framework Initiatives	General Audience requests
Communications Support	7. Address the lack of awareness and communication around arts and culture by considering ideas such as adding street pole banners and 'free' ads at airports dedicated to 501(c)(3) arts organizations or by creating strategic alliances that provide in-kind ad space such as billboards or ads in magazines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve media and marketing strategies.</li> <li>• Enhance cultural experiences tied to local arts, such as interactive or educational elements.</li> <li>• One website and strong social media presence to promote opportunities regularly</li> </ul>
Creative County	4. Create opportunities to bring the entire community together for the arts. Examples include an EC Culture Weekend, a broader EC Festival, and similar events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote local art fairs and talent festivals.</li> <li>• Support local businesses and foster community inclusivity.</li> <li>• Ensure representation of all cultures in arts initiatives.</li> </ul>
Arts Grants and Support Systems	9. Develop new public funding schemes, some ideas are: A tax support (ZAP, LART) Percent for Art Program Percentage of Hot Allocations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase availability of programs, grants, and networking for business and financial support.</li> <li>• Support development of folk art and creative economy entrepreneurs.</li> </ul>
	10. Revise the cultural funding process and develop a new one. This new process should address the following: A multi-year funding model with a standardized application form (e.g., CFA) to reduce repetitive work when dealing with the same funder. Acknowledgment of differences in size, mission, and contributions among organizations. Clear and well-communicated criteria. A transparent process, including a portal to share the review process and provide feedback on all submitted information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus grant planning on smaller organizations rather than larger ones.</li> </ul>

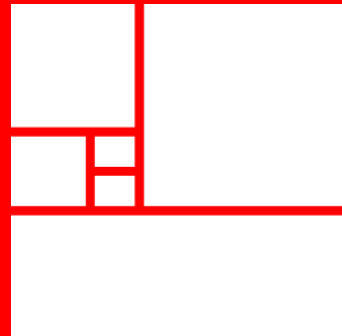


## Building the Cultural Plan - Aligning the Framework and Survey Results

Category	Framework Initiatives	General Audience requests
Cultural Hub	<p>12. Create a cultural hub to coordinate the arts and culture sector in the region. This should be a business service organization. It should have full-time staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Ensure comprehensive action plans for cultural initiatives.</li> <li>•Develop strategies to grow the audience base for cultural events.</li> </ul>
	<p>14. Create a comparative data set, including coordinated visitor surveys and studies, to provide sector-wide insights rather than relying on disparate data from individual organizations. Coordinating visitor studies across organizations will allow for comparative and aggregate data, potentially saving staff time and facilitating learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Engage diverse communities through forums and surveys.</li> </ul>
	<p>17. Develop a Creative Economy/Non-Profit Knowledge Sharing Cohort Program that includes administrative exchange initiatives to enhance capacity building and foster collaboration across sectors. This program will address the needs of small and emerging organizations by partnering them with larger, established entities that can provide management assistance, grant writing support, and collaborative project opportunities. By facilitating partnerships and taking initiatives on the road to other Erie County communities, the program will create a supportive network that promotes growth and development across all organizational sizes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Improve the public cultural service system to support and develop folk art teams, creating a conducive environment for creative economy entrepreneurs.</li> </ul>



Thank You!



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