



TYAI 2022 Survey Results

1. Context

The survey was devised by Ursula McGinn and Sadhbh Barrett Coakley with professional support on data collection, survey design, and question design from Noeleen Hartigan. This survey was made possible with support from the Arts Council of Ireland through Capacity Building funding. It was issued on Google Forms, live for two weeks in October 2022 and promoted by TYAI Committee members and TYA sector. The purpose of the survey was to establish members' needs in relation to TYAI priorities and also to get a sense of diversity among the membership in order to inform to respond to the Arts Council imperative namely:

‘...to promote equality of opportunity, access and outcomes for all those living in Ireland regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, civil or family status, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the Traveller community (that is, the nine protected characteristics under the Equal Status Acts 2000–2018). Furthermore, the Arts Council notes the ground of socio-economic background as a further basis for which equality of opportunity, access and outcomes must be guaranteed.’¹

A set of general questions about work status were asked, and then a set of questions about TYAI membership. This was followed by questions on diversity reflecting the grounds of discrimination covered by equality legislation and Arts Council policy, with Census questions used where possible so that the data can be compared to the next Census. The survey included a section for organisations to fill in their annual income and advised those individuals who were filling it in on behalf of an organisation to answer the questions about diversity on their own behalf, i.e., not on behalf of others or a group.

This analysis of the results was prepared by Noeleen Hartigan.

2. Headlines

- 81 people responded to the survey, of which 62 filled it out in an individual capacity and 19 on behalf of their organisation.

¹ Arts Council EDI Toolkit 2022.

- Almost half (49.9%) identify primarily as a 'freelance arts worker', almost 1 in 5, (19.8%) were employed by or Director of a company that is fully focused on making work for young people, with a further 12.3% of respondents working for venues that include work for young people.
- Approximately half have worked in the sector for less than 5 years and half for 5+ years (represents a good spread of responses).
- The vast majority of respondents (96.3%) live mainly in the Republic of Ireland.
- There were responses from 16 different counties, and the majority were from Dublin City or County (31.1%), Cork City or County (19.5%) or Galway City or County (16.9%).

3. Membership and perception of TYAI

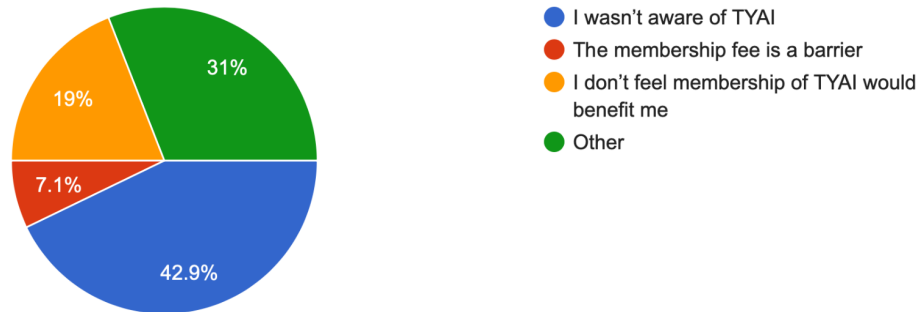
- 39 respondents are current TYAI members (representing a response rate of 56% among members), 39 are not, and 3 had been members in the past.
- Just 3 of the 81 respondents said they were unhappy with the membership fee.
- Just under 43% of those who are not members said they were not aware of TYAI (but note, more people answered this question than said they were not members, so there may be a small discrepancy).
- Respondents were asked what they thought was the most important function of TYAI:
 - Acting as a resource organisation
 - Advocacy
 - Member support.

The majority 63% said that all three were equally important. Advocacy and members' support were matched in terms of importance by those who prioritized just one.

- Respondents were asked which TYAI events or services they had availed of. The most availed of in order of 1 to 4, with 1 being the most availed of is as follows:
 1. Newsletter
 2. members meetings
 3. 'Grapevine'
 4. Diversity and inclusion workshops.

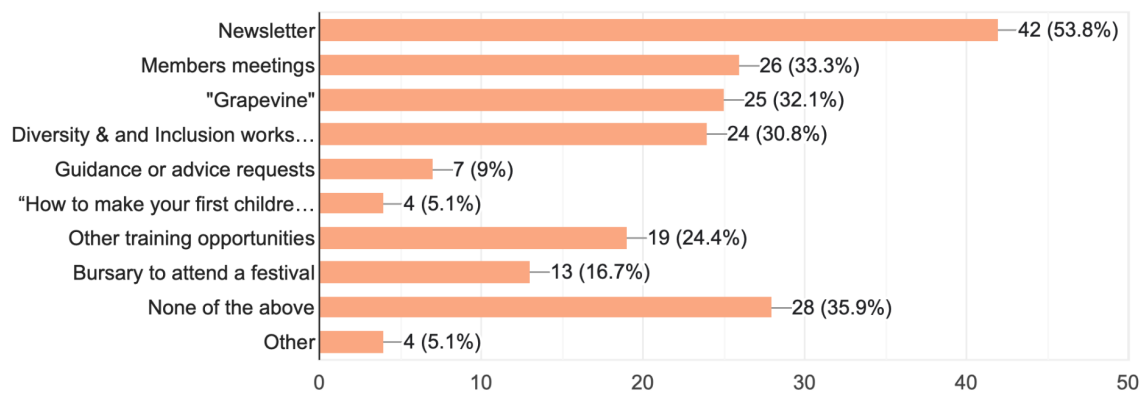
If you are not currently a member can you detail why?

42 responses



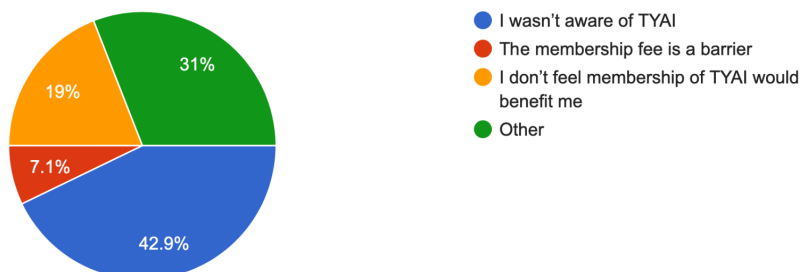
Which of the following events / services run by TYAI have you availed of?

78 responses



If you are not currently a member can you detail why?

42 responses



4. Income:

Individuals

Respondents were asked to estimate their average annual income (after tax).

- 45.4% of respondents said they earned less than 20K per annum after tax, of which 20.2% earned less than 15K. Almost 40% said they earned 20-30K.
- Just 10.1% reported earning between 30 and 40K, with only 4.5% earning over 40K per annum.

By way of comparison - the monthly income of a TYAI member earning 20K a year after tax = €1,666, the minimum wage for over 20-year-olds after tax = €1,647².

- 78.1% said their income impacted on where they could afford to live.
- 84.9% said their income impacted on other life choices they had made. (See below).
- Half of the respondents said they got paid the same for work for young audiences as for other work, with 28.6% being unsure and 21.4% saying they got paid less for this type of work.
- Most respondents did not earn all their income making work for young audiences. The most common additional income sources were other arts work (81.5%) and working as a drama facilitator / teacher (36.9%).
- When asked 'how did you get your first paid job / project making work for young audiences' 47.7% said 'a friend or personal contact made through networking or socializing'. A further 20% said 'a contact made through a course at college / university'. Just 35.5% got their first paid work through a job interview or open call process.

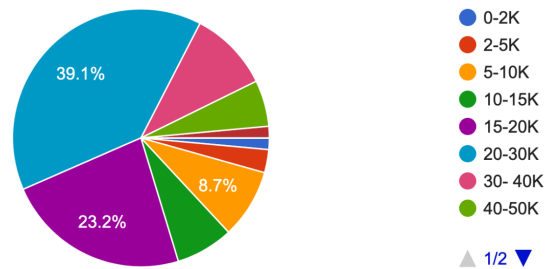
Organisations:

- Numbers employed: 23 companies / organisations responded to the question 'how many people do you employ' - 30% employed just 1-3 people, and 26% said they employed 20+. When asked how many staff were full time the average response was 3.5.
- Annual turnover: 24 companies / organisations responded to the question on annual turnover, with 14 reporting a turnover of over 150K per annum, 4 earning 80-100K and 4 earning less than 30K.

² This website was used to calculate minimum wage post tax <https://salaryaftertax.com/ie/salary-calculator>

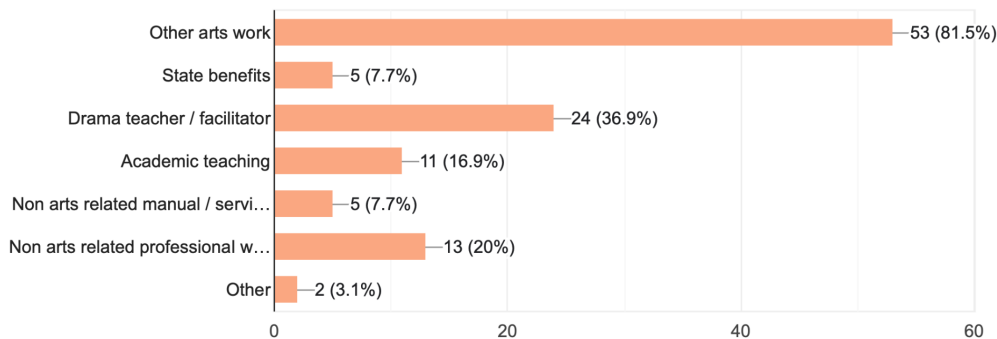
What would you estimate is your average annual income (after tax)?

69 responses



If you have other sources of income, please tick all that apply:

65 responses



5. EDI Questions:

The majority of respondents were happy to answer questions on diversity, with 23% saying it depended on the question and 4.9% saying they were never happy to answer such questions.

Gender:

Of 78 respondents, 58 identified as female (74.3%), 18 as male, 1 as non-binary and 1 as gender queer.

Nationally there are 98.1 men per 100 women in Ireland, i.e., almost 50/50.

Sexual Orientation:

68% of respondents identified as straight, with 32% identifying across a variety of self-selected identities including bisexual, queer, pansexual.

There are no official stats on sexual orientation in Ireland, the Oireachtas Library and Research unit estimate that between 1.9% - 10.9% of the population do not identify as straight.

Civil or Family Status:

- 17.7% of respondents said they provide regular unpaid care for a friend or family member with a long-term illness, health problem or disability including those due to old age.
- 57.2% live in households with children.

Religion:

67% identified as No Religion, and 18.5% as Roman Catholic. No respondents identified as Muslim, Hindu or Orthodox.

In the 2016 Census 78.3% people identified as Roman Catholic. In the 2022 Census a note was included clarifying that the question was about your current religious status, as opposed to the religion you were born into.

Age:

While there was a good mix of age ranges among the respondents, the majority being between the ages of 25 – 44. 2 respondents of 79 were under the age of 24.

Disability:

Disability	Yes, to a great extent	To some extent	Total
Blindness or vision impairment	1	3	4
Deafness or hearing impairment	1	1	2
A difficulty with basic physical activities such as walking, climbing stairs, reaching, lifting or carrying	2	1	3
An intellectual disability	1		1
Difficulty with learning, remembering or concentrating	3	10	13
Psychological or emotional condition or a mental health issue	9	11	20
Difficulty with pain, breathing or any other chronic illness condition	4	5	9

With the caveat that respondents could self-identify under any category / multiple categories:

- Only a few respondents have a physical disability.
- One in four respondents said they experience a psychological or emotional condition or a mental health issue.
- A further 12% experience difficulty with learning, remembering or concentrating.

In Ireland the cost to the individual of living with a disability can be between €8,700 to €12,300 per annum³.

In Census 2016 13.5% of the population was identified as living with a disability, the question has been reframed in the 2022 census to allow for great self-identification, and we replicated the question in our survey.

³ <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2022-07-06/8/>

Ethnic Background and Languages spoken:

84.6% of respondents identified as White Irish, with 14.1% identifying as 'any other White background'. Only 1 person identified as 'other including mixed'. There were no respondents who identified as Irish Traveller or Roma, Black / Black Irish, or Asian / Asian Irish.

In the 2016 census 82.2% of the population identified as White Ireland and 9.5% as any other white background.

In addition to the Census categories respondents were invited to self-identify if none of the categories was adequate, 2 respondents availed of this option.

- While 65.4% of respondents said they spoke Irish, only a fifth (20.8%) noted that they spoke it 'daily outside of the education system'.
- Just 10.3% of respondents said they spoke a language other than English or Irish at home, with the languages identified as French, Spanish, Welsh, German, Maltese, Italian, and Romanian.
- The vast majority of respondents reported that they speak English very well, with just 1 respondent identifying as speaking it 'well' and 1 'not well'.

Socio Economic background:

Two proxies for this area were used, current employment status and highest level of educational attainment.

- An overwhelming majority of respondents 93.5% had at a minimum an ordinary university level degree, with 57.2% having a graduate diploma or Masters.
- Almost 90% of respondents said they were currently 'working for profit or payment'.

6. Barriers

In the final question respondents were asked if they had faced challenges in getting started making work for young audiences and if they had faced barriers to sustaining a living.

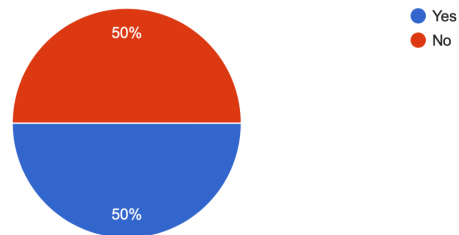
They were also asked if their income had impacted on their life choices.

And finally, they were asked what would help them in overcoming some of these barriers, addressing the issues outlined and what would make organisations more accessible to them or more responsive to their needs.

The answers to the closed questions are presented below in a combination of pull quotes and word clouds.

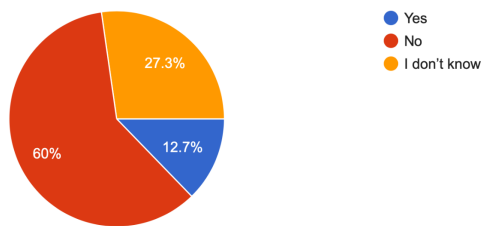
Have you faced challenges in getting started in creating work for young audiences?

76 responses



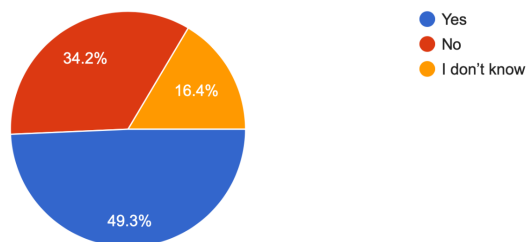
Were these challenges as a result of, or made more difficult because of your gender, identity or background?

55 responses



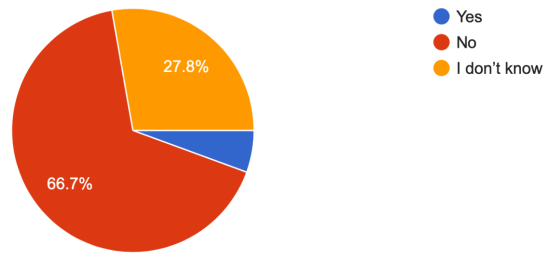
Have you faced barriers to sustaining a living by creating work for young audiences?

73 responses



Were these challenges as a result of, or made more difficult because of your identity or background?

54 responses



Thirty-eight people answered the question - 'What challenges did you face in getting started in creating work for young audiences?' Funding was the most frequent reply.



"Yes, starting out there was a lack of funding to create ambitious work. This has changed with the introduction of YPCE within the Arts Council, but it is still difficult as less funding is available for work for young audiences. I also found it difficult to find collaborators my own age interested in the area of TYA, I feel this has also changed and younger artists are drawn to the sector now thanks to training opportunities. I find the pressure and unspoken model of spending less time rehearsing a play for young audiences than you would for adults within the industry incredibly difficult and challenging. There seems to be an attitude that you can create the same

work as it is shorter (not always the case) in less time. I think this affects the quality of the work and people's attitude to it."

"Some companies not holding open auditions for performers or directors and working with the same people or perhaps a closed off system of applications that is not accessible to me"

"Don't know where to start, who to work with, or how the sector works in the Republic."

"Balancing paid work and time to create, understanding that it is OK to take time to create, Getting established so that people would give me work"

"Finding a community, technical guidance in production, being a migrant, visibility."

When asked about barriers that might be specific to one's identity, 8 respondents gave specific examples with the issues of disability, sexism, childcare and a lack of connections:

"As an artist with a disability, I am at a disadvantage compared to non-disabled peers."

"A lot of spaces are inaccessible to me sensory wise."

"I think childcare challenges are not recognised universally."

"It was impossible to fund childcare due to the precarious/unpredictable nature of income earned from theatre work, therefore creating a track record in the area of TYA during this time wasn't feasible."

"...I will just say that sexism still definitely exists. It has made making new work difficult for me as a woman as I don't feel like I am trusted to get funding."

"I wasn't very plugged into the communities and wasn't well known so people were hesitant to take a chance on me."

"Nobody knows me."

"Back home it was my primary source of income, albeit a low one. Since I am not from Ireland, I haven't been able to network as well as I would have liked (starting now post-pandemic closure) and so do not have the support here."

Twenty people responded to the question ‘what were the barriers you faced in sustaining a living making work for young audiences?’ See examples below:

“Funding precarity, lack of capacity for future planning, multi jobbing making it hard to create”

“Having to work a "normal " job to make ends meet and let my arts practice take a back seat.”

“The work is expensive to make and hard to come by. It doesn't pay particularly well and is so irregular.”

“Unpredictable earnings and workload mean it's hard to turn down work but also hard to take on additional work due to childcare limitations and family responsibilities”

“It's the irregular nature of project income that challenges the sustainability of making a living.”

“Having to constantly make large investments of time and energy to seek funding in order to create work with no guarantee of success in receiving it. Burnout and stress due to instability of income affecting my ability to go forward with work.”

“Unfortunately, I must work other jobs - which means I can't always give my full energy and focus to any of my jobs. I have to spread myself pretty thin - I adore the arts, but simply couldn't survive primarily working for them.”

“Until this current position I was a freelance arts worker, unsustainable and precarious financially. Also, in general working in the arts is very challenging if you are a parent - childcare, unusual hours etc.”

“Training to maintain the quality of the work in the face of economic pressures”

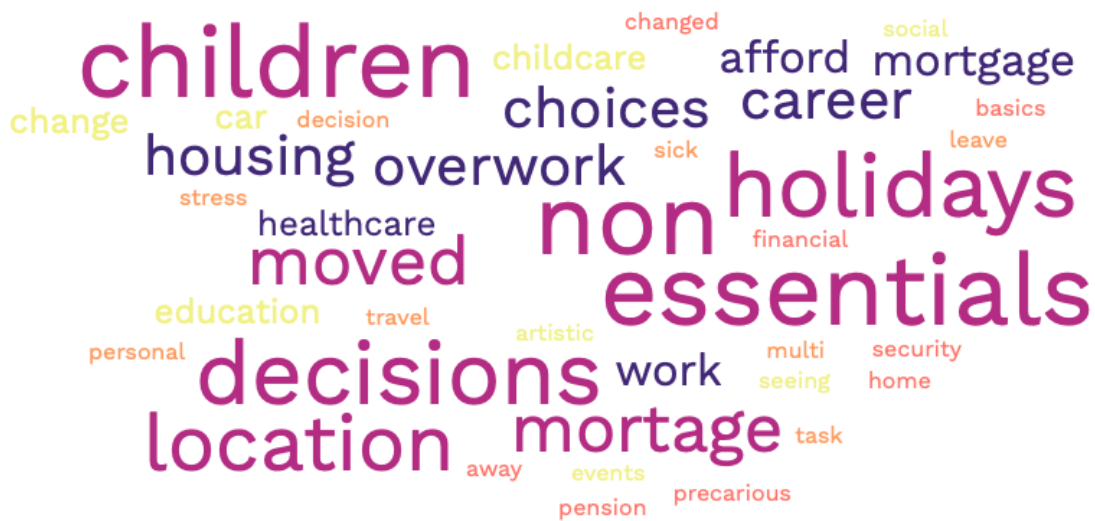
Just 6 people offered examples of specific barriers to maintaining a living in the sector that may be attributable to identity, among these were the following insights:

“Neurodivergent arts workers like me face challenges around networking and other "soft" skills needed to progress our careers”

“Learning about opportunities, being considered for opportunities, or being looked over because of age and nationality.”

“No job offers when nobody knows you”

As noted above 78.1% of respondents to the survey said their income impacted on where they could afford to live and 84.9% said their income impacted on other life choices they had made. Fifty respondents offered examples of how their income has impacted on their life choices. Among the key themes to emerge (note these were not prompted) were decisions about whether or not to have a family, the lack of housing security / choice and the workload stress / not being able to afford time for creative work.



“I often don't have the money to travel, e.g., for weddings or other family occasions. I can't afford to have children or drive a car. Healthcare and therapy costs have to be factored in, not to mention the opportunity costs of unpaid labour. I intend to complete my third level education but that will involve further outlay and opportunity costs around the work I can make and the funding I will be eligible for.”

“I decided to put off having a family and now I feel like I'm a bit too old to start.”

“I am a 36 yr old female and I would like to start a family of my own but the lack of financial security as a freelance artist has made this decision a difficult one.”

“We delayed starting a family until we could buy our own house, now that I have a baby, I can't afford childcare so am trying to juggle freelancing with childcare responsibilities”

“Moved abroad. Trying to survive diluted work. Unable to sustain a career in children's theatre and also afford own family. No eligibility for stamps as have been overseas. No accessibility to public support. Ultimate stress”

“While caring for my children, I trained as an accounts technician in order to obtain a skill set which allowed for more steady income. Although it has broadened my earning prospects, between earning the qualification and caring for my children I have not have the time/resources to progress in the area of theatre”

“I have to take more work than I am able for, I have to teach to cover costs as well as freelance”

“I choose to live outside of the city, in shared accommodation due to the housing crisis. I work at an additional professional job as a contractor in order to continue to support myself as an artist as it is not sustainable yet for me to work only in the arts. This leads to working on multiple projects at once - no time for days off!”

“I've overworked and taken too much on to afford to live. This has negatively impacted my mental health, and my work. I've missed out on a lot of social time, and regularly my schedule is disrupted or changed so I don't look after my physical and mental health as much as I would like. I currently have no savings.”

“I have no prospect of ever owning a home (this goes without saying) but more currently, the standard of shared accommodation I can afford is heavily influenced by the lack of funding in the arts and the precarious nature of it.”

“Ability to afford basic things”

“When you are poor you have limited life choices”

Finally, respondents were asked how TYAI could be more accessible or more responsive to their needs. The importance of TYAI as a network was highlighted, as was the need to consider the specific needs / circumstances of freelancers and the issue of advocacy.



"I think advocacy is key; securing funding from the arts council for bursaries and projects and making spaces available for artists to meet other artists from diverse backgrounds as it is difficult to network with performers for example- we usually meet in an audition context or see the work, but don't have time to develop and sustain relationships with each other and widen the pool of interesting people we can collaborate with."

"It's tricky to act as an advocacy group for artists when TYA is made up of artists who are beholden to funding organisation relationships. Aligning with an advocacy group would be useful, ITI and Theatre Forum come to mind, also NCFA. Praxis is a union to be aware of as well."

"Advocacy that all children in Ireland have access to the theatre/performance at least once a year. Art is for everybody in the same way that education is for everybody..."

"More voices from the independent and freelance sector on the committee - also more awareness and sharing of international opportunities through assitej"

"Payment for time. As a freelancer, I know meetings such as Grapevine are valuable, but I can't afford to attend them unpaid."

"TYAI has been of great value to me and my work. Keeping up opportunities for workshops, networking and other support would be great. Reviving opportunities for work in progress sharing and facilitating links with venues and producers would be wonderful. Thanks."