TYAI Membership Survey Results, 2024

1. Survey overview

This is the third detailed annual members survey. A core set of questions were repeated across all three years. These include general questions on the profile of respondents, ones specifically focused on income both for individuals and organisations, and a set of questions aligned with the equality legislation framework.

The survey also offers respondents an opportunity to offer qualitative responses on barriers they may have experienced beginning or sustaining their careers making work for young audiences, the impact of income on their lives and ways in which TYAI might best support them.

In 2024 a new question on awareness of the ASSITEJ International network was added, this is reported on in Section 3. Also, more detailed questions on the type of funding that respondents were receiving were asked. The Basic Income for the Arts scheme was added as a new category of potential income. These are reported in Section 4.

The response rate in 2024 at 45 responses was less than half the previous year. As it cannot be ascertained if the same core group of respondents participate every year, drawing comparisons between years is not helpful. However, throughout the report 2023 comparisons are noted in brackets.

With that caveat, the theme of artists poverty remains dominant:

- The majority of respondents (74.5%) said their income impacted on where they could live, and other life choices they made (75%).
- Four in ten respondents earn below the minimum wage, and seven in ten earn less than €30K per year.
- While the overall number of respondents was down, the proportion of respondents - approximately half - offering detailed feedback on the challenges they face was higher than in previous years.
- As with previous years the 'open' questions elicited strong and compelling examples from respondents.

Additionally, there is some evidence to suggest that more artists from ethnic minority communities are making work for young audiences / connecting with TYAI. When 2023 and 2024 responses are taken together the TYAI survey has reached (at least) 1 person

from each of the following identities*:* Irish Traveller, Asian / Asian Irish, Chinese, Black/ Black Irish, Other Black background and Mixed background.

2. Insights from arts sector research

This section draws highlights from three recent research reports into the lived experience of artists in Ireland - the pilot research on the Basic Income Scheme, 'Open Up' on the experiences of Black and Black Irish Artists, and 'Amplify' on the experiences of LGBTQI+, disabled and ethnically minoritized artists and arts workers.

Together they offer a compelling insight into the challenges faced by those making work in the arts sector in Ireland. The benefits of having a baseline of financial security. both creatively and in terms of personal wellbeing are set out in the review of the Basic Income scheme. 'Open Up' offers compelling insights into the structural and cultural barriers faced by Black and Black Irish artists, and 'Amplify' reminds us that while people from specific minority groups are showing up and making work in the arts, their experiences are not always positive within the sector, and the burden of responsibility for action is falling disproportionately on their shoulders.

2.1 Basic Income

In December 2023, the Department of TCAGSM published *'Basic Income for the Arts Initial Impact Assessment (6-month)'*[1] , by the Irish Government Economic and Evaluation Service. It is first in a series of research studies designed to test the pilot basic income scheme. Among the key findings in the first six months operation of the pilot were:

- *Each week, BIA recipients spend one and a half hours more on research and experimentation, one hour more on management and administration, and one hour more presenting to audiences compared to the control group, i.e. 3.5 additional hours on their creative practice per week.*

[1] file:///C:/Users/Owner/Downloads/278306_10ae2240-851a-4411-af8d-064e21c322ca%20(1).pdf

- BIA recipients decreased the weekly amount of time spent working in another sector by 3 hours compared to the control group.
- BIA recipients are 12 percentage points more likely than the control group to be able to sustain themselves through arts work alone.
- Life satisfaction, measured on a scale of one to ten, increased by more than half a point for BIA recipients compared to the control group.
- Depression and anxiety experienced in the previous 4 weeks decreased by almost 10 percentage points for BIA recipients compared to the control group.
- BIA recipients were 3.6 percentage points less likely to have felt depressed or anxious "all of the time" compared to the control group.
- BIA recipients were 19.2 percentage points less likely to have difficulty making ends meet compared to the control group.
- The Enforced Deprivation Rate, as measured by the CSO, declined by 18.5 percentage points for BIA recipients compared to the control group.
- BIA recipients experienced a decline in material deprivation across all 11 SILC indicators, ranging from -3 percentage points to -19 percentage points.
- BIA recipients spent each month €353 more on equipment and materials, €18 more on advertising and marketing, €34 more on work spaces, and €24 more on work travel compared to the control group.

2.2 Black and Black Irish artists

In August 2023 the Arts Council published '*Open Up: addressing the barriers facing Black and Black-Irish artists'*[2] *access to funding and opportunities*', by Lucy Micheal Research, Training and Consultancy. The report notes that: 'In the Arts Council's 2021 Awards Data Report, Black or Black Irish artists made up 1.9% of applications, 1.5% of successful applications, 1.4% of unsuccessful applications, and 4.5% of applications deemed ineligible.' Research interviews with applicants and arts organisations resulted in the following insights:

2 https://www.artscouncil.ie/uploadedFiles/wwwartscouncilie/Content/Arts_in_Ireland/Equality,_Diversity_and_Inclusion/Open_Up_Research_Report_2023.pdf

- *The most common issues in application are complexity of application forms, and unclear language in questions and guidance. All agreed insufficient support is provided for first-time applicants. Just under half (47%) of the participants indicated they had no or little support starting out as artists and this was a barrier to their progression, particularly for migrant artists.*
- *Additionally, applications were routinely undermined by the difficulties Black artists routinely faced in finding opportunities for work and repeated lower- or no-pay contracts, and difficulties securing venues or support from organisations or groups to display or promote work. Arts organisations and venues were more likely to 'take risks' on White Irish peers who were seen as promising, while Black artists were commonly seen as unlikely to draw audiences and to be understood by White Irish audiences.*
- *Participants also commonly referred to the need to present excellence compared to their White Irish peers in order to be considered for even the most basic roles and opportunities.*
- *A lack of diversity is prevalent in positions of leadership, management, and decision-making within the arts sector.*
- *Arts organisations working with Black artists identified 3 types of barriers facing Black artists: a significant challenge in accessing artist networks; a lack of representation across many genres, and relatively fewer support and opportunities for minority artists in Ireland compared to other European countries.*
- *Two-thirds of participant artists felt their ethnicity affected opportunities and success overall, and half believed differential treatment based on ethnicity was a significant factor in obstacles faced.*
- *Almost all expressed caution in assigning racial discrimination as a factor, but were influenced by repeated and shared experiences with other Black artists.*
- *The barriers faced by Black artists in Ireland in identifying and securing funding are numerous and interconnected. These highlight systemic issues of institutional racism in the arts sector in Ireland, particularly in devaluation of Black genres, underrepresentation of Black artists, unrealistic expectations, and the socioeconomic challenges faced by migrants and second-generation individuals.*
- *A small minority of participants felt fully confident they could trust the fairness of the Arts Council funding application process. Four factors determined this: the*

artists' own success, poor or no feedback on applications, lack of ethnic diversity amongst funded artists, and concerns of bias within selection panels.

- *Irrespective of their own application outcomes and personal experiences, all participants felt it was important to increase participation by Black artists, and exhibited a strong commitment to promoting the Arts Council, encouraging others to apply and assisting fellow applicants.*

2.2 Experiences of disabled, LGBTQIA+, and ethnically diverse artists and arts workers

In July 2024, Safe to Create published 'Amplify, a Call for Transformative Action' . The report, based on the experiences of over 500 artists and arts sector workers, revealed that 'disabled, LGBTQIA+, and ethnically diverse artists and arts workers are experiencing discrimination, exclusion, and other harmful behaviours and challenging conditions in Ireland's arts and creative sector'.

Among the key findings set out in the report are:

- ***Identity-based discrimination is pervasive and takes many forms.*** *For example, 63% of disabled respondents experienced disability-related microaggressions; while 43% of LGBTQIA+ respondents reported facing micro-aggressions related to their sexual orientation, gender identity, or intersex status. Just over half (51%) of racially and ethnically minoritised respondents said they had experienced racial microaggressions, and a further 40% indicated they had experienced racial discrimination in their workplaces. Microaggressions include negative or non-inclusive language, comments, jokes, and other harmful behaviours.*
- ***A significant number of respondents feel they missed opportunities at work due to negative perceptions of them by others.*** *This was stated by 74% of disabled respondents; 43% of LGBTQIA+ respondents; and 54% of racially and ethnically minoritised respondents. Additionally, two-thirds of facilitators working with ID artists and all ID organisations surveyed reported that ID artists are 'often' or 'somewhat' discouraged from exploring certain arts practices.*
- ***Reporting structures and policies are not operating well, and many individuals are afraid to raise issues at work****. Specifically, 60% of disabled respondents; 55%*

of racially and ethnically minoritised respondents; and 45% of LGBTQIA+ respondents indicated that they fear reputational damage. Family members of ID artists also cited various reasons for not reporting issues.

- ***There is a lack of awareness and understanding of the lived experience of minoritised artists and arts workers and the burden of improving conditions falls on the minoritised artists and arts workers themselves.*** *For instance, 59% of disabled respondents highlighted a lack of understanding of disability-related issues in their workplaces, and 69% noted that disabled artists and arts workers are doing most of the work to improve conditions in the sector for this constituency. More than half (53%) of LGBTQIA+ respondents feel their colleagues lack awareness/sensitivity on LGBTQIA+ identity, with 73% stating that LGBTQIA+ artists and arts workers are doing most of the work to improve conditions. Two-thirds of racially or ethnically minoritised respondents said their colleagues lack awareness/sensitivity in respect of race/ethnicity, with almost half saying that racially or ethnically minoritised artists and arts workers are doing most of the work to improve conditions. Three-quarters of facilitators working with ID artists and half of ID artists' family members believe there is a poor understanding of intellectual disability within the sector.*

3. General Profile of Respondents to 2024 survey

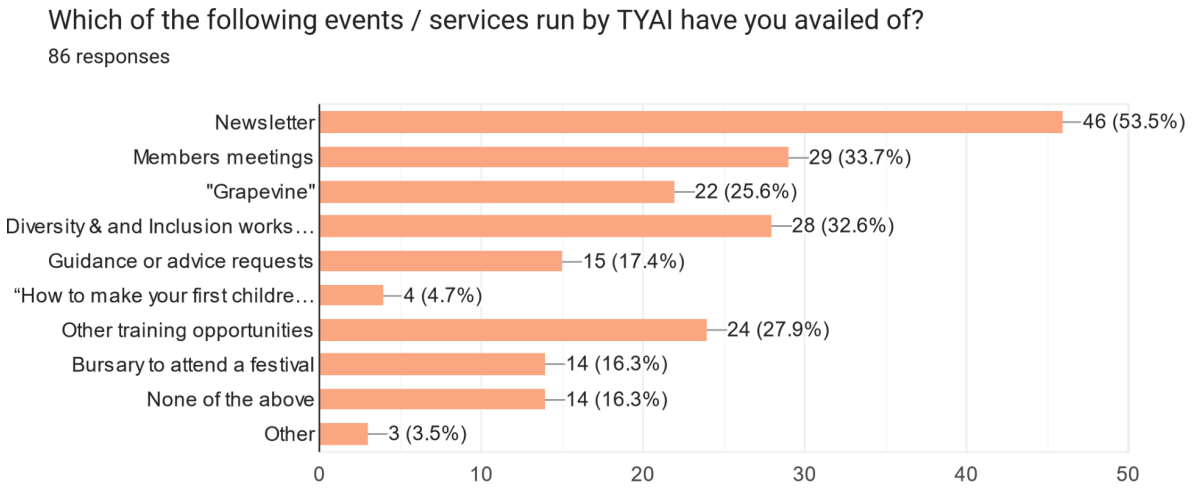
- 45 people responded to the survey, this represents a significant drop in response rates since 2023, which at 93 responses was more than double.
- 10 of the responses were from organisations, in the last two years this number was much higher (as a gross number, not percentage of respondents) with 17 responding in 2023 and 19 in 2022.
- Just over a third of respondents identify primarily as a 'Freelance artworker', and exactly one third identify as 'An artist making work for young audiences', with the next largest category being those 'Employed by an organisation / company / venue who are fully focused on young audiences' or a director of the same. See graphic below.
- 60% of respondents have worked in the sector for more than 5 years, and 40% for less than 5 years. (In the last two surveys this was evenly split).

- As with the last two years, the majority of respondents, 95.6%, live mainly in the Republic of Ireland. The remainder live in Northern Ireland.
- There were responses from 26 different counties, and the majority were from Dublin City or County, 35.7% (up on previous years) Cork City or County, 21% or Galway City or County, 21.4%.

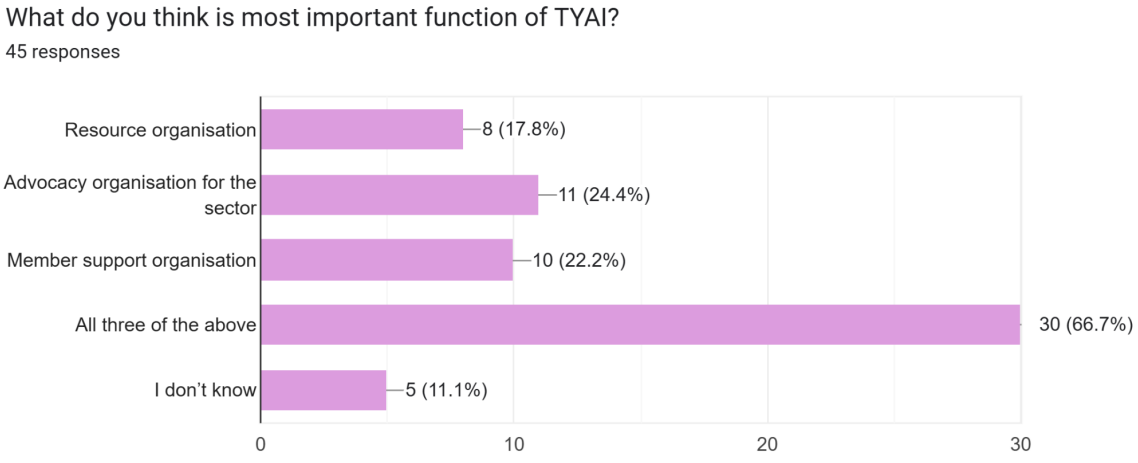
I would identify myself primarily as:
45 responses

4. Membership and perception of TYAI

- Almost two thirds of respondents, 62%, were TYAI members (the same as in 2023), 29% were not (23% in 2023). Just under 9% (15% in 2023) had been members in the past but had not renewed.
- 90% of respondents who are members were happy with the current membership fee. The actual number of those who were unhappy at 3 respondents was similar to previous years.
- Half of those who are not members said they were not aware of TYAI, compared with just under a quarter in 2023.
- 1 respondent who was not a member said the membership fee was a barrier.
- Respondents were asked which TYAI events or services they had availed of, with the Newsletter being the most common, followed by members meetings, 'grapevine' and the Diversity and inclusion workshops.



Members generally do not prioritize one aspect of TYAI’s role above others. The question on the most important function allowed people to offer multiple options, with most choosing to say all three functions were important.



- A new question was introduced this year: Are you aware of the ASSITEJ International Network? To which 63.6% answered Yes. Members of TYAI were more likely to be aware of ASSITEJ than non members.

- In response to the follow up question ‘Do ASSITEJ’s programs feel accessible to you? If not, is there a way we can help with this?’ - just four of the 23 responses were positive, three people said they didn’t get involved in international opportunities because of time and money constraints, and the remaining respondents had varying comments on their lack of understanding of ASITEJ, with helpful suggestions including:

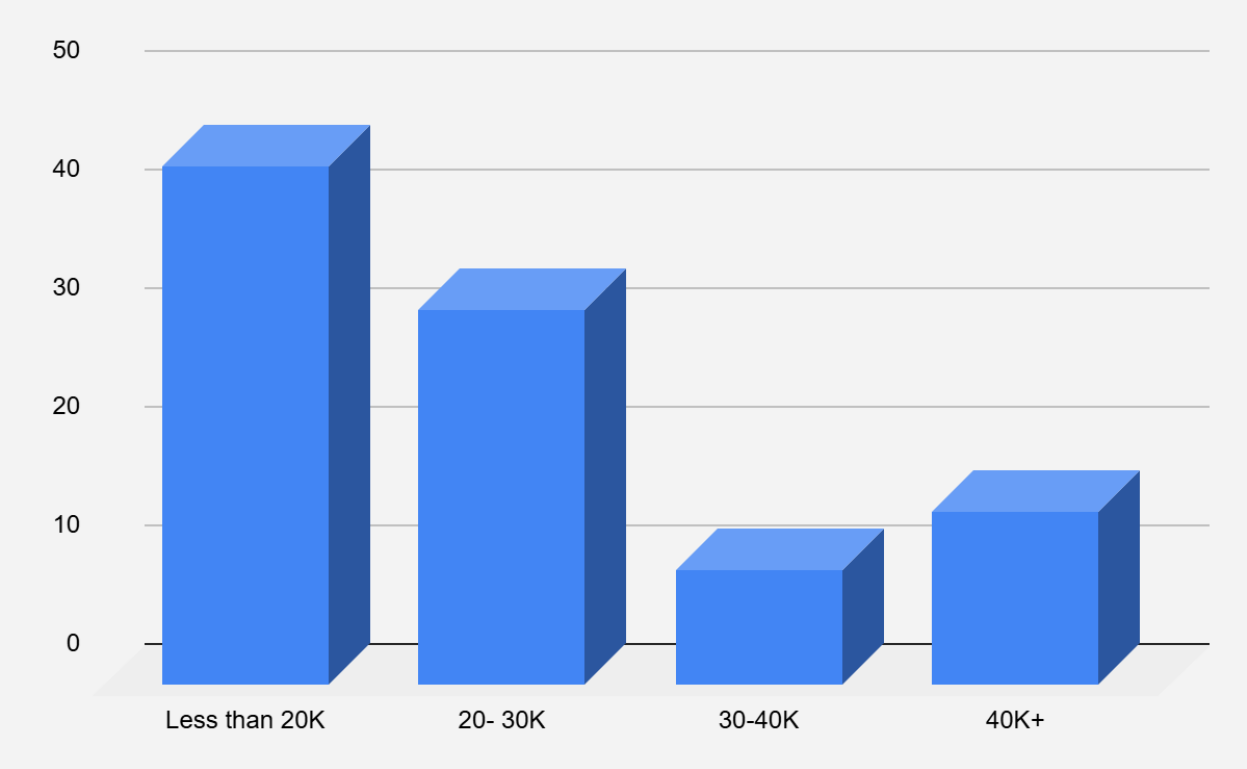
I feel a lot of the inaccessibility is beyond TYAI's control, but perhaps including more detailed, concrete examples on the website of how TYAI functions within ASSITEJ might be useful. This could also help explain TYAI's limits of support (such as TYAI not being able to fund people to attend the World Conferences).

I find their forms and call-outs a bit difficult to parse: I never feel like I really 100% know what they’re looking for. Perhaps some training or mentorship about that would be helpful?

TYAI could run an online clinic to explain it and answer questions.

5. Income and Funding, Individuals

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



- More than 4 in 10 earned less than 20K 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 = €1,647[3].

- 29% earned less than 15K. (11% in 2023, 20.2% in 2002)

- Just under a third / 31.7% (41.4% in 2023) said they earned 20-30K.

- Just under 1 in 10 / 9.8% (9.6%) reported earning between 30 and 40K, with 14.6% (12.2% in 2023 and 4.5% in 2022) earning over 40K per annum.

- 74.4% (77.8%) said their income impacted on where they could afford to live.

[3] This website was used to calculate minimum wage post tax https://salaryaftertax.com/ie/salary-calculator

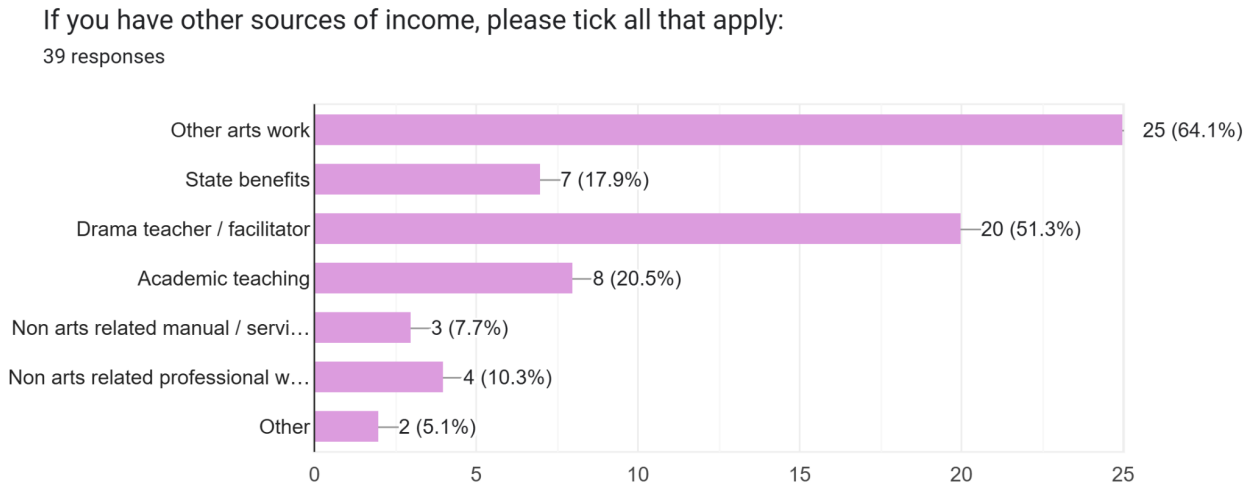
- 75% (65.1%) said their income impacted on other life choices they had made.

- Just over 1 in 5 respondents report getting paid less for their work for young audiences.

  50% (43.1%) of respondents said they got paid the same for work for young audiences as for other work, with 28.6 % (22.2%) being unsure and 21.4% (34.7%) saying they got paid less for this type of work.
  The 2024 answers directly replicate the 2022 answers.

- 64% of respondents made less than half of their income from work for young audiences.

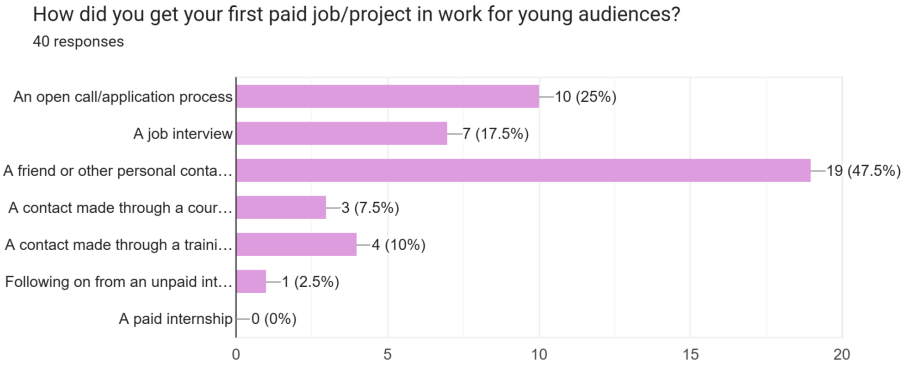
- The most common income sources were other arts work 64% (72.1%) and working as a drama facilitator / teacher 51% (33.8%).



- 16% / 7 out of 42 respondents were in receipt of the Basic Income for the Arts Scheme payment.

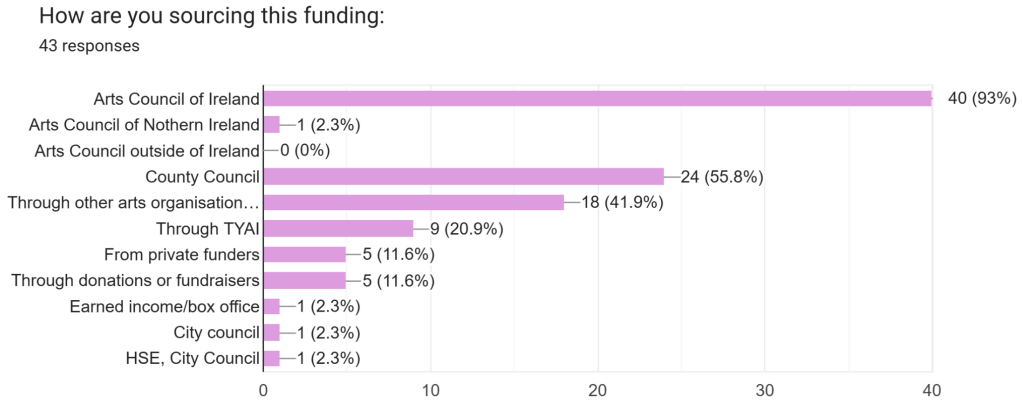
Almost half of all respondents said they got their first paid job or project making work for young audiences through a friend or other personal contact made through socializing or

networking, 49% (39%), followed by an open call / application process 25% (31%) and a job interview 17.5% (25%).

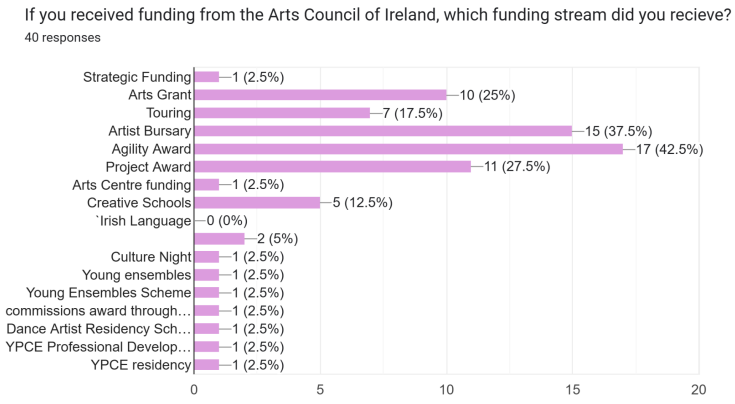


Funding Sources:

- 93% of respondents received some form of funding for their arts practice or projects over the last three years. And of those that did, a further 93% received funding from the Arts Council of Ireland.

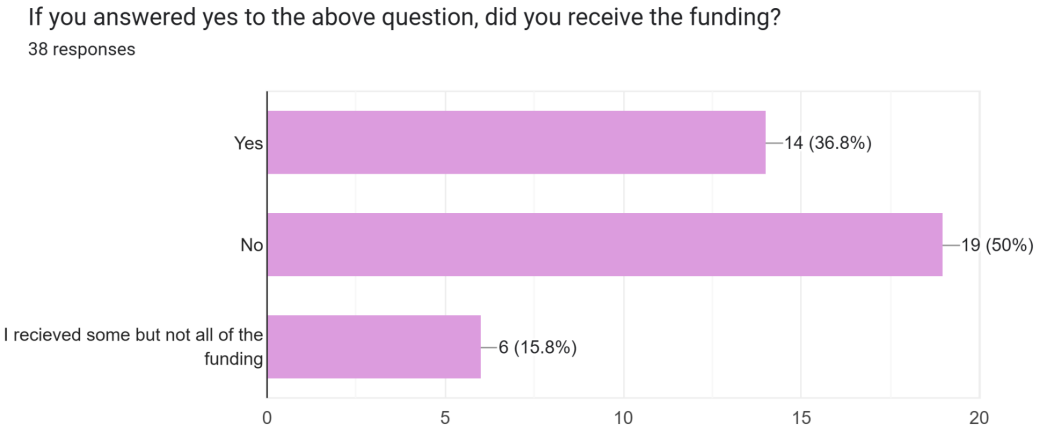


Of those that received Arts Council funding, the most common funding streams were the Agility Award, the Artist Bursary and the Project Award.

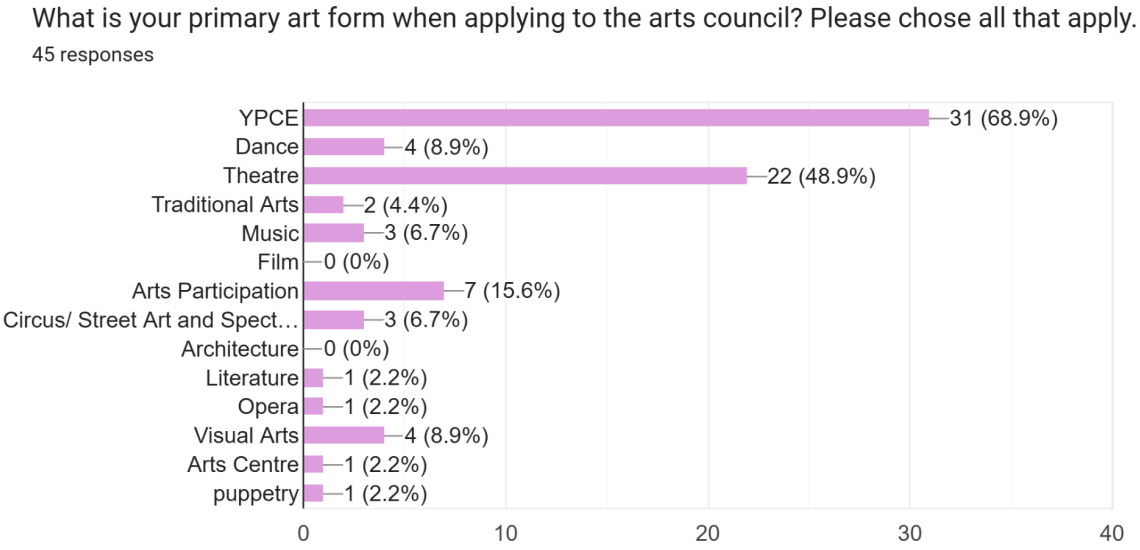


In addition to the above categories, three respondents mentioned other sources: culture night funding, Young ensembles scheme and YPCE residency at third level.

- 84% of respondents had applied for Arts Council Funding in the last 18 months. Half were unsuccessful, just over a third were successful, and the remainder received some but not all of the funding they requested.



The majority of respondents identify under YPPCE as their primary artform when applying to the Arts Council with theatre being the next most cited category.

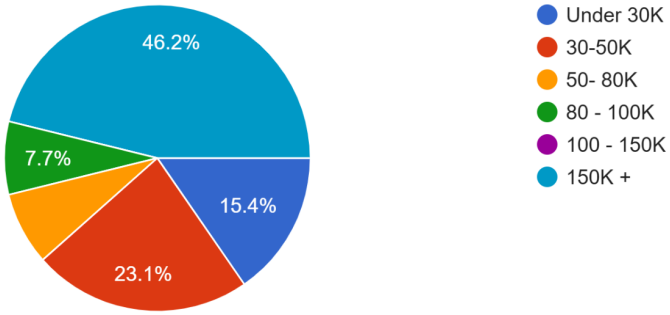


6. Organisations- staff numbers and turnover

- Ten respondents specifically stated that they were responding on behalf of an organisation.
- Half of the respondents had 3 or fewer staff. Two companies had between 44 and 7 staff, and three had between 8 and 12, with one citing 20 staff.
- No company has all staff in full time posts. The highest number of people employed full time in any company among the respondents was four, the same as in 2023.
- There were 13 responses to the question on turnover, suggesting that some respondents did not identify as ‘organisations’ but still answered this question.

What is your annual turnover?

13 responses



7. EDI questions

The majority of respondents were happy to answer questions on diversity, with 31% saying it depended on the question, as was the case in 2023, and 4.4% saying they were never happy to answer such questions.

7. 1 Gender

Currently in Ireland there are 99.7 men per 100 women, i.e. almost 50/50.
In response to the open question 'what is your gender' just over 70% identified as female, and 29.6 % as male, with the remainder 'questioning'.
The most recent figures from the Arts Council report a disproportionate amount of applicants who identify as female (56%), and this trend is replicated in YPCE.[4] Of note in Arts Participation, where females are 68.3% of applicants, they received just 39.6% of awards[5].

7.2 Sexual Orientation

72% of respondents identified as straight, with 28% identifying across a variety of self-selected identities including bisexual, queer, pansexual. These responses echo those from the 2023 survey.
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.

[4]Ibid '**Female applicants are over- represented** in the areas of Arts Participation, Circus, Dance, Literature (English), Visual Arts and **YPCE.'**

[5] Ibid

7.3 Civil or Family Status

The CSO notes that 'Between 2016 and 2022, the number of people providing regular unpaid care increased by over 50%, from 195,263 people in 2016 to 299,128 in 2022.' They also note that 61% of unpaid carers are women.[6]

- 27.9% (23.4%) 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. In Census 2022 5.8% of the population surveyed identified themselves as providing unpaid care for a friend or family member.

- 42.3% (44.9%) live in households with children.

7.4 Religion

In the 2022 census[7] the two most significant trends in religious affiliation noted by the CSO are the decline in the Roman Catholic population to a current low of 69% (78.3%)[8] and the growth in the proportion of the population who identify as 'No religion, atheist or agnostic' from 9.8% to 14% in the last four years. This is the largest grouping after Roman Catholics.

Largest religious identities	**% of National population**	**% TYAI 2024 Respondents**
Roman Catholic	69.14	14
No religion	14.48	69.8

[6] Ibid

[7] The CSO 2022 Census offered 23 options under religion, the ISACs survey offered eight, but the broad categorizations are comparable.

[8] Down from 78.3% in 2016. The highest was 94.% of the population in 1961.

The numbers of respondents identifying as Roman Catholic and 'No religion' were almost the mirror opposites of the national statistics.

Almost 10% of respondents replied as 'other', but no one identified as any specific faith beyond Catholicism.

7.5 Age

Ireland has an aging population. In Census 2022, 39.8% were aged 45 and over, compared with 37.2% in 2016 and 34.4% in 2011.[9] However, it is to be noted that the greatest ethnic diversity is among younger populations.

- There were no respondents under the age of 24, and only 17.8% of respondents were under the age of 34.
- The largest age group profile among respondents was those aged 35-44, at 38%, followed by those aged 45-54 at 33%.

7.6 Disability

In the 2022 Census the CSO reframed the questions on disability to allow people to self identify challenges that they face and also the extent to which these impact on their life. This question was replicated in the TYAI surveys.
In the 2022 Census In Ireland 22% of the population, over 1M people, self identified as living with a disability.

- Just over a quarter of respondents noted a psychological or emotional condition or a mental health issue.
- Just under a quarter noted a difficulty with pain, breathing or another chronic illness or condition.

[9] See Https://www.cso.ie/en/csolatestnews/pressreleases/2017pressreleases/pressstatementcensus2016resultsprofile3-anageprofileofireland/

Disability	Yes to a great extent	To some extent	As a percentage of those who responded to this question[10]
Blindness or vision impairment	3 (6)	1 (9)	9% (19%)
Deafness or hearing impairment	4 (5)	1 (9)	11% (18%)
A difficulty with basic physical activities such as walking, climbing stairs, reaching, lifting or carrying	3 (6)	3 (9)	13% (19%)
An intellectual disability	2 (5)	2 (5)	9% (13%)
Difficulty with learning, remembering or concentrating	1 (7)	4 (14)	11% (27%)
Psychological or emotional condition or a mental health issue	3 (6)	9 (19)	26% (32%)
Difficulty with pain, breathing or any other chronic illness condition	4 (7)	7 (10)	24% (22%)

7.7 Ethnic Background and Languages spoken

As of the 2022 Census almost 77% of the population identify as 'White Irish', with almost 11% identifying as 'any other white background' and 12% identifying as other backgrounds.

- Among TYAI survey respondents, 64.5% (78.2%) of respondents identified as White Irish, with 28.9% (16.7%) identifying as 'any other White background'. Two respondents identified as Black/ Black Irish or any other Black Background and one as Mixed Ethnicity.

[10] The average response rate to this question was 77 responses, which equates roughly to the number of people who responded to the survey as individuals.

- While 52% (65.4%) of respondents said they spoke Irish, only two respondents spoke Irish daily.

- 25.6% (14.3%)of respondents said they spoke a language other than English or Irish at home, with the languages identified as French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Romanian, Spanish and Shona.

- Over 95% of respondents report that they speak English 'very well'.

7.8 Socio Economic background

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

- 82.9% (84.4%) of respondents said they were currently 'working for profit or payment'.

- Almost three quarters of respondents 72% (89.3%) had at a minimum an ordinary university level degree, with 53.5% (55.2%) having a graduate diploma or Masters.

Of note, the number of people with an ordinary or higher level university degree in Ireland is increasing, with 34% of the population now having this level of education.[11] However, the income level of respondents is not comparable with average graduate incomes, for those with Arts/ Humanities qualifications.[12]

8.Barriers to starting and sustaining a career

[11] https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cpsr/censusofpopulation2022-summaryresults/educationandirishlanguage/

[12] The average salary for all graduates in 2020 was **€37,104**, while younger graduates reported an average salary of **€32,596.** Average salaries were highest for ICT graduates at **€42,562**, while Arts & Humanities graduates reported the lowest salaries (**€27,951**)Source Higher Education Authority.https://hea.ie/statistics/graduate-outcomes-data-and-reports/graduate-outcomes-2020/earnings-analysis/

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. The questions were a mix of closed and open questions. The answers to the closed questions are presented below.

- Over two thirds of respondents faced challenges getting started, of which over one in five said these were more difficult due to their gender, identity or background.
- Just under two thirds faced barriers to sustaining a living in the field, of which almost a quarter said they were more difficult due to their background.

Question	2024			2023		
	Yes	No	I don't know	Yes	No	I don't know
Have you faced challenges in getting started in creating work for young audiences?	67.5%	32.5%	-	47.6%	52.4%	-
Were these challenges as a result of or more difficult because of your gender, identity, or background?	21.9%	62.5%	15.6%	14.1%	67.6%	18.3%
Have you faced barriers to sustaining a living making work for young people?	61%	19.5%	19.5%	49.4%	41.8%	8.9%
Were these challenges as a result of or more difficult because of your gender, identity, or background?	24.2%	57.6%	18.2%	10.3%	76.5%	13.2%

8.1 What challenges did you face getting started?

Twenty three people, over half of the total number of respondents, responded to the question 'What challenges did you face in getting started in creating work for young audiences?'. Funding was the most frequent reply (as it was in 2023), with 19 respondents mentioning it specifically. Respondents also noted the challenges of having work for

young audiences valued, juggling their time when in other work, finding production funding and networking.

I spent many years either partially employed, unemployed and under the poverty line.

Insufficient funding. Impacts the scale and quality of the work: having to work with smaller teams and/or less qualified or experienced people, reduced production values, over-stretched team members at risk of burnout. Accommodation & transport provision are a serious challenge and often a barrier.

Finding time for my own work, getting into the correct state of mind after long hours at work, I do work for an arts organisation which take a lot of my energy

Primarily funding and an absence amongst practitioners to tackle work for young audiences as seriously as they apply themselves to work for adults.

Space to develop work, funding, unpaid development, not understanding the parameters of networking etc, getting taken advantage of while learning how things work.

If anything, I found more support as an "emerging" artist creating work for young audiences than I ever found in my efforts to create work for general audiences — whether with original projects or improvisational theatre…. Unfortunately, opportunities such as project funding at the "established" and "mid-career" artists level are much more difficult to attain. Bringing work to production has become the new challenge.

When asked about barriers that might be specific to one's identity, 6 (7) respondents gave specific examples with the issues of neurodivergence, language barriers and class and gender bias.

Being female and working class leads to challenges around leadership: there is an expectation that you will be pliant or motherly. When this behaviour is not forthcoming, some collaborators will react badly. This has resulted in my becoming very selective around who I will work with. I also find that there is a great expectation that I will work "for the love of the game," and thus a tendency to treat my labour as if it is not labour.

This is particularly obvious when dealing with directors and/or producers who aren't paying me but want me to create or change work without adequate recompense (or any recompense at all).

It is very difficult to access Arts Council Funding if English is not your first language

Networking and representing myself well took years and years to learn and I still mess up, sounding stupid because I learn some things slowly and can get a lot of adrenaline in conversations with people I don't know very well. Creating a team of trustworthy people seems impossible sometimes - they can't communicate honestly or be honest about their needs so the only person I can trust is myself. I suspect this has to do with funding but even now as I start to get funded, people don't answer in a timely manner or seem capable of working as a team. These struggles are all connected to being autistic, I often work with other NDs [neurodivergent people] cos we can communicate better but that comes with its own difficulties too.

8.2 What barriers do you face sustaining a living?

Twenty two (20) people, just under half of all respondents, responded to the question 'What were the barriers you faced in sustaining a living making work for young audiences?' . The dominant theme among respondents was the challenges of actually making a viable living along with the cost of production, of which the following quotes offer a sample of experiences shared:

Before receiving the Basic Income for Artists I had to work outside the sector.

It's impossible to make a decent living working in the arts until you are established.

There is no way to make a living sustainably in the sector: it is too small, and there are not enough opportunities to support as many workers as we have. I could have tried to do

freelance but I found it far too stressful, so now I have a job that supports me and which I can make work around.

Work takes a long time to write, and get off the ground, then there aren't sustained tours or audiences available to bring the work to more venues locally, nationally

Finding enough work to make a living. Balancing the time involved with the time needed to raise a young family, no sick days or holiday cover

Accessing childcare is even more difficult as the grandparents age out of helping so much.

I also experience burnout, so my capacity to earn is limited (being able to work freelance actually helps me to plan better). Admin can be really challenging, especially if I'm burned out.

I paid myself and the other artists with arts council bursaries and awards. Once those have finished i find it hard to look for other income to pay artists, rehearsing space, insurances, musicians etc etc

Four people offered additional commentary on how sustaining a living was more challenging due to their gender, identity or background. The quote below captures a number of intersecting challenges:

The assumption of family money to fall back on. The assumption of networking or social skills which I do not possess. The assumption that I can or will spend a great deal of time in pubs and other public events making "contacts," when I have trouble with those venues. The industry is getting better, but it is still very much geared towards the middle-class and neurotypical.

8.3 How is your income impacting your life choices?

As noted above 74.4% of respondents to the survey said their income impacted on where they could afford to live and 75% said their income impacted on other life choices they had made.

Again, more than half of respondents offered specific examples of how their income has impacted on their life choices. As can be seen from the sample of quotes below, TYAI respondents are, as in previous years, making significant life choices like limiting their families because of their income and experiencing material deprivation.

The amount of children I have.

One child only. Living in countryside for cheaper rent. Not home owner.

It has made my life very transient. I do not have children, I could never offer the security.

I can't fathom a world today where by choosing to make my living in the arts and in particular theatre, that'll I'll ever be able to afford a mortgage or have a family of my own.

My kids' hobbies are impacted. The various therapies we need for our disabilities have to be picked and chosen as we can't all afford to be well at the same time. This is a vicious cycle since we are all supporting each other. We adapt really well to this and are more privileged than most people in the arts. Apart from the sad fact above, most of our compromises are about leisure activities, holidays etc.

I can't invest in myself, in self-care, mental health, can't properly care for my mother.

Because we barely get by, I live with my parents.

There's no one place to discover opportunities or deadlines, and it feels like you need to actively keep an eye out and hunt stuff down. When I'm finally focused on developing / producing new work that has been supported, I miss opportunities to prepare proposals for future work. Therefore, I go through huge bouts of not having work in the industry,

having to make up for it elsewhere. I often need to rely too heavily on my facilitation practice, which throws me off balance and makes me feel removed from arts practice.

Twenty one respondents offered suggestions on what support would help in overcoming some of these barriers. Addressing the costs of making work, and an increase in work opportunities were among the dominant themes

Bursaries, workshops, but mostly work opportunities. Everyone expects produced work but how am I supposed to produce it with no money or an organisation to fund me? Many times funding depends on the work you have made but I can't seem to have the paid time to produce it

Having space to develop work and rehearse. I can't afford a studio but if I could access one from time to time, it would be wonderful. Having headspace around kids with additional needs can be impossible. Having a network for autistic people to share their difficulties in the industry could help demystify the processes that take me so long to learn.

I think just generally recognizing that, to accommodate rising costs, the sector as a whole may have to do less for better pay--we have to get good at saying no! Simply having organisational support behind this attitude would be helpful.

Five respondents specifically mentioned extending the criteria / accessing the Basic Income for the Arts Scheme:

If I was to receive the basic wage for artists this would probably help me to carve out more time to dedicate to creating work in this area without having the financial pressure of taking on other arts related work.

I think it would be helpful if the criteria for the basic income for the arts were changed to reflect the needs of the majority of freelancers; at the moment it seems designed to fit a very specific niche of artists who are just teetering on being able to live on what they make rather than people who are very far from making enough to live on. While the people it helps are of course deserving of that help, I suspect if it were means tested another section of the community would benefit from it more.

9. How can TYAI be more accessible or supportive?

Seventeen people responded to this question with specific suggestions, with five offering positive feedback on the work of TYAI. Suggestions for improvements included continued lobbying, more information on the website, the opportunity to vote for major decisions at AGMs, and ensuring that events are accessible to people who are neurodivergent and recognizing intersectionality within individuals.

More support lobbying the AC to make policies clear. Particularly those around YPCE vs theatre applications and what are the criteria and strategy around making applications for theatre productions. Also making more funding available for production

I appreciate that the committee is mainly people giving their time to try and help and fair play to them. All things considered, I think TYAI does a really good job giving support to artists.

Keep fighting to highlight theatre for young people as the high art form that it is.