

# TORONTO ARTS STATS

PUBLIC OPINION 2016

#TOArts

# THE ARTS MEASURE UP ...

In 2013, Toronto Arts Foundation and Leger began a partnership to explore public opinion about the arts. What has emerged is a better understanding of the deep appreciation residents have for the arts.

Our message this year is that Torontonians want more arts in their own neighbourhoods and more opportunities to engage with art in public spaces including local parks. The numbers tell us that the arts have a positive influence on people and help to make Toronto a dynamic place to live.

**Art Stats 2016** asks questions about arts engagement. For the third consecutive year, the impact of the arts on quality of life in Toronto is supported by the research results.

The report touches on four themes:



Arts Builds Cities



Arts Connections



Arts Everywhere



Arts Support

Arts Stats 2016 reveals public opinion about the arts including how Torontonians see the arts as a way to attract tourists, improve the economy, create employment, and make the city more beautiful. The majority think professional artists have a job like anyone else and deserve appropriate compensation. They want to see children and youth have more opportunities to participate in the arts, they think the arts are a way to bring neighbours together, and they welcome opportunities for art in local parks. In short, they care about the arts and see it as an integral and valuable part of life.

Our companion booklet, *Toronto Arts Facts 2016* draws on a variety of local and national research studies including information from Statistics Canada, academic sources, and studies from a growing number of arts associations and organizations interested in uncovering the true size and impact of the arts. Together the booklets offer the reader a fuller picture of arts impact in Toronto.

An overwhelming 96% of Torontonians see at least one benefit of the arts to the City of Toronto. The results of *Toronto Arts Stats 2016* show that our vision of a Creative City: Block by Block is alive and well and supported by the residents of our city.



Margo Charlton  
Research Manager  
Toronto Arts Foundation



Claire Hopkinson  
Director and CEO  
Toronto Arts Foundation

# ARTS BUILDS CITIES



Torontonians see a benefit of the arts to their city. The majority perceive the arts as highlighting the city's diversity, strengthening neighbourhoods, and making the city a better place in which to live.

Responses from survey participants to the question:  
*Why do the arts matter to you?*

The arts ...

“increase excitement in the city.”

“reflect our diversity and multiculturalism.”

“are the soul of the city.”

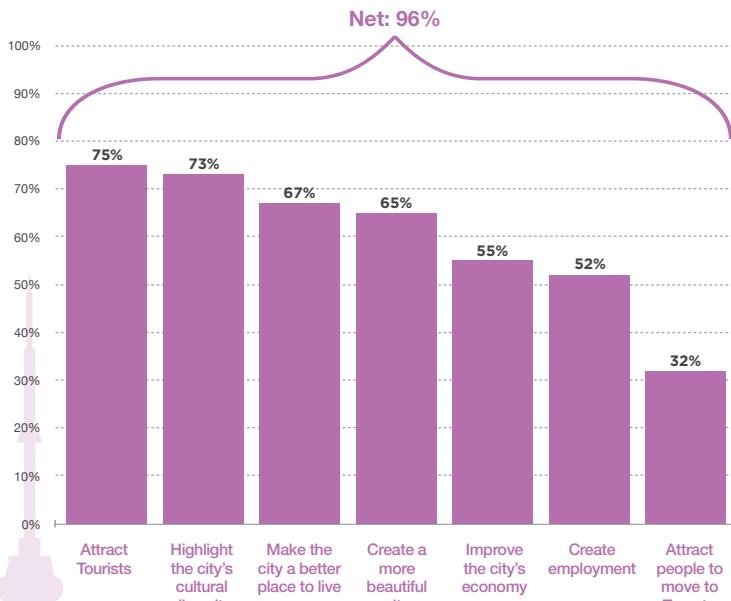
“are like green spaces in the city - they help bring it to life.”

“are an important barometer of how happy I am living in the city... (the arts) are a great venue to bring people together.”

“add richness to life... they provide lasting joy.”

# BENEFITS OF THE ARTS TO THE CITY

**96%** of Torontonians see at least one benefit of the arts to the city.

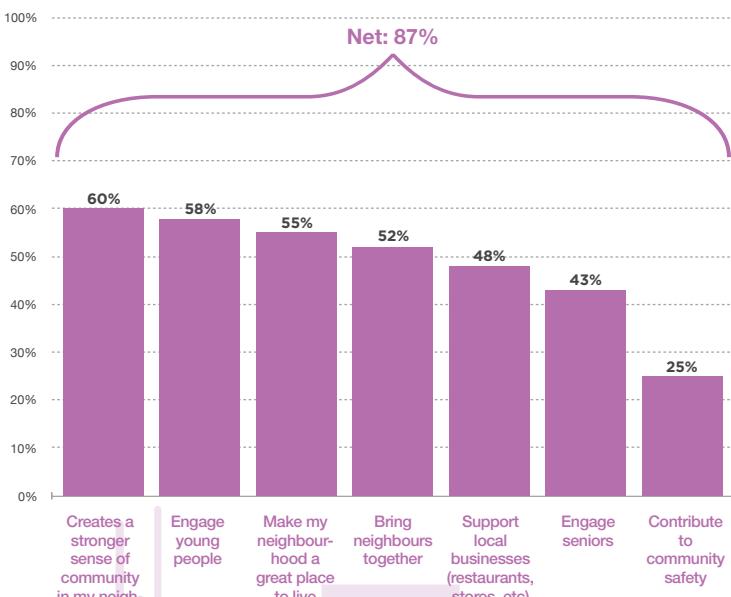


Torontonians see a wide variety of benefits that the arts bring to the city. Top benefits are attracting tourists, highlighting cultural diversity, and making the city a better place in which to live.

While these results are positive, we note that compared to 2015, 8% less Torontonians think the arts improve the city's economy.

# BENEFITS TO NEIGHBOURHOODS

**87%** of Torontonians see at least one benefit of the arts to their neighbourhood.



Toronto residents see significant benefits of the arts to the overall city but also see benefits to their own neighbourhood. 60% of Torontonians believe that the arts create a stronger sense of community in their neighbourhood, and a comparable number see the arts as engaging young people (58%).

↑ We note that compared to 2015, 10% more Torontonians think that the arts creates a stronger sense of community.

# WHERE DID YOU HEAR ABOUT ARTS IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD?

Just over half of Toronto residents hear about arts in their neighbourhood via local newspapers (53%) and word of mouth (52%).



**53%**  
local newspaper



**52%**  
word of mouth



**42%**  
posters



**31%**  
local centres  
(library, community centre, religious centre)



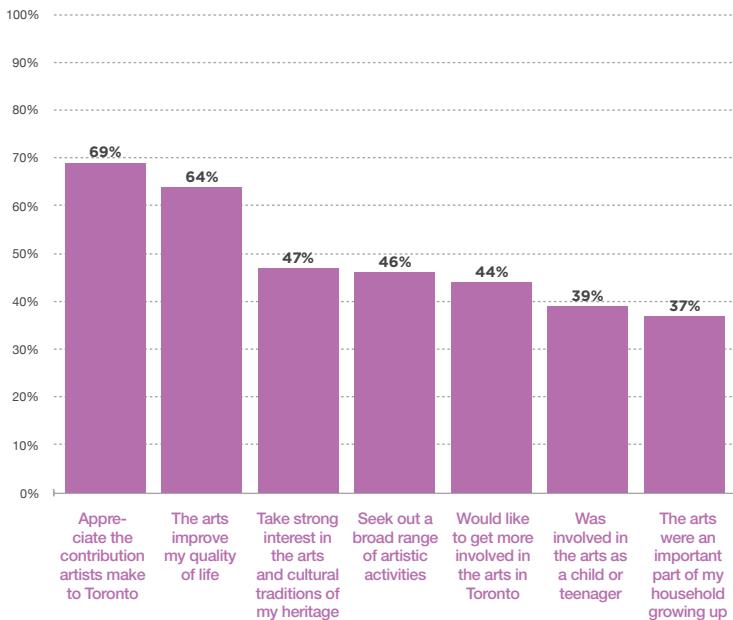
**31%**  
social media



**13%**  
Local BIA  
(Business Improvement Area)

# CONTRIBUTION OF ARTISTS

**69%** of Torontonians appreciate the contribution that Toronto artists make to the city.



While not all Torontonians are actively engaged in the arts (roughly one-quarter), nearly 7 in 10 Torontonians appreciate the contribution that Toronto artists make to our city.

We note that young Torontonians see the arts making a greater contribution in their lives. Torontonians aged 18-24 are significantly more likely to take a strong interest in the arts and cultural traditions of their heritage (71% vs. 45%), seek out a broad range of artistic activities including those from cultural traditions with which they are not familiar (66% vs. 43%), and want to get more involved in the arts in Toronto (72% vs. 40%) compared to those 25 and older.



# ARTS CONNECTIONS

Torontonians see the benefit of the arts to themselves. While the arts are a medium to provide entertainment, they also agree that the arts tackle important issues and ideas.

Despite the perceived benefits of the arts, many Torontonians see at least one barrier to attending arts activities – top barriers are cost, lack of awareness of what's going on, and being too busy.

Despite arts access initiatives, less than one-half of Torontonians are aware of special offers to increase affordability. While nearly three quarters of Torontonians agree that the arts reflect the diversity of the city's population, only 57% feel that the arts in Toronto are 'for people like them.'

Responses from survey participants to the question:  
***Why do the arts matter to you?***

The arts ...

"give me a  
balanced life."

"soothe  
my spirit."

"help me unwind."

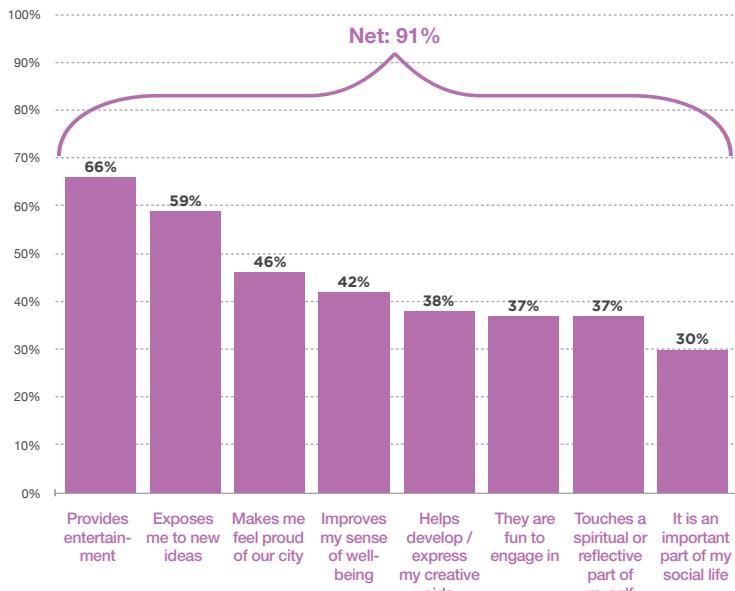
"are a source of thought,  
comfort and escape."

"make me feel  
part of the  
community."

"bring out my creativity  
that I haven't used in a  
very long time."

# BENEFITS OF THE ARTS TO INDIVIDUALS

**91%** of Torontonians see at least one benefit of the arts to them personally.



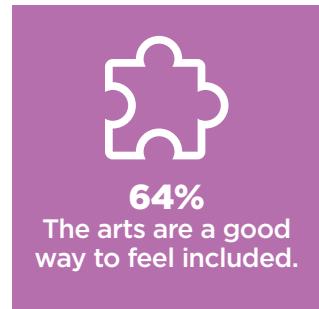
Torontonians express that the arts bring them personally a number of benefits from entertainment (66%), to exposure to new ideas (59%), to being an important part of their social lives (30%).

# IMPORTANCE OF THE ARTS

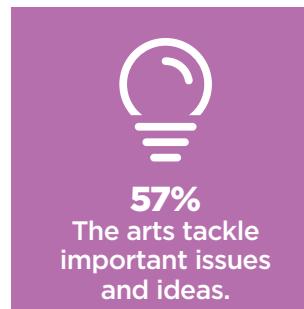
**71%** of Torontonians say the arts reflect the diversity of the city's population.



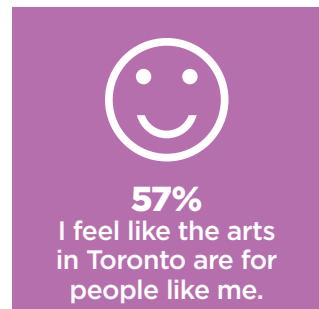
**71%**  
The arts in Toronto reflect the diversity of the city's population.



**64%**  
The arts are a good way to feel included.



**57%**  
The arts tackle important issues and ideas.



% agreeing or strongly agreeing

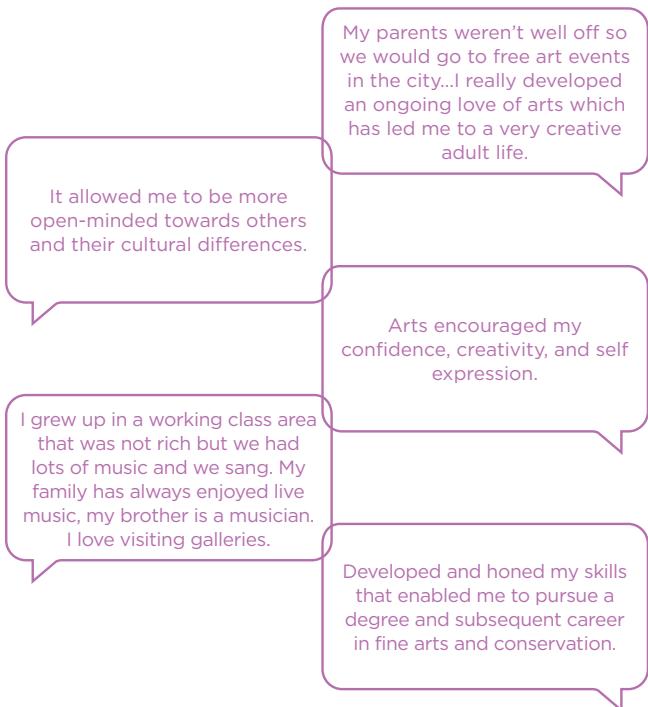
Seven in ten Torontonians agree that the arts in Toronto reflect the diversity of the city's population.

Regular attendees of the arts are significantly more likely to see the importance of the arts to their quality of life.

# IMPACT OF EARLY ARTS INVOLVEMENT

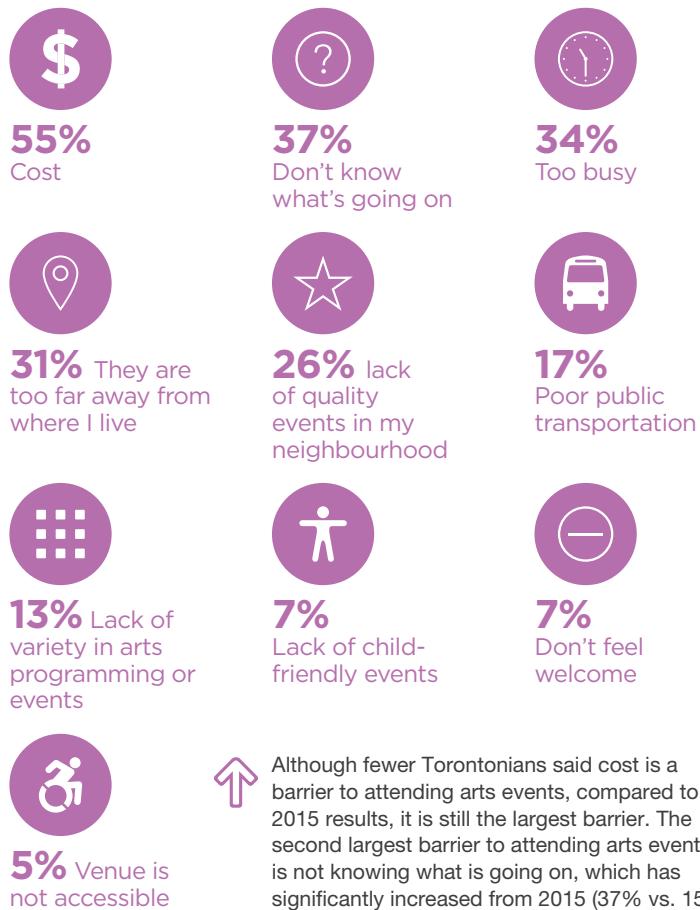
**39%** of Torontonians were involved in the arts when they were younger. Among them, 74% say early involvement in the arts had an impact on their lives.

Responses from survey participants to the question:  
*Did your early involvement in the arts have an impact on your life? How so?*

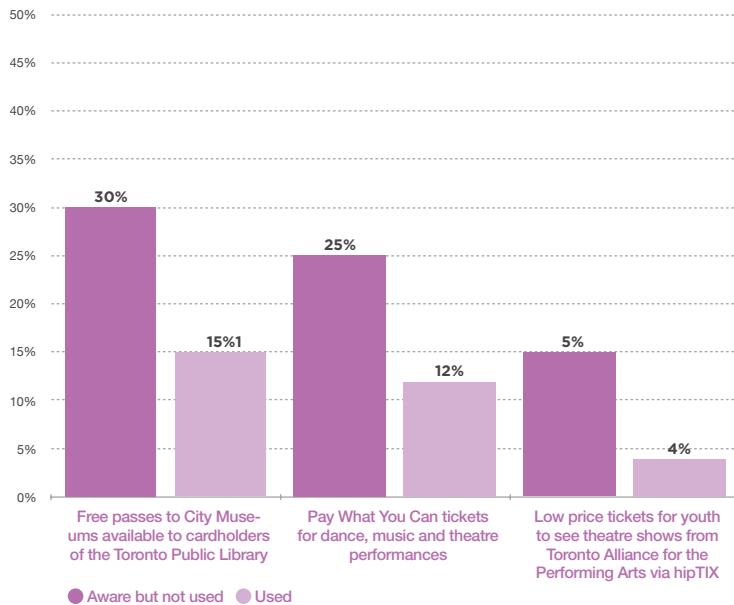


# BARRIERS TO ARTS ATTENDANCE

Nearly **9 in 10** Torontonians see one barrier to attending arts events (88%).



## AWARENESS OF AFFORDABLE OPTIONS

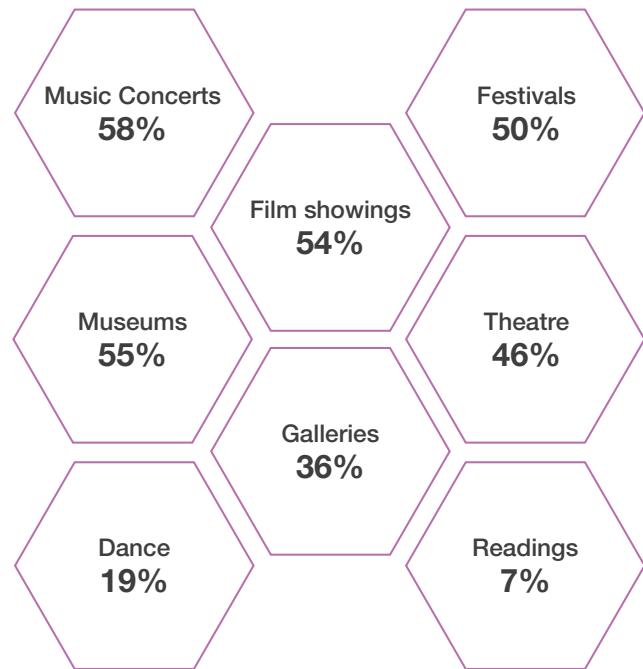


Torontonians who attend events are significantly more likely to be aware of, or have used, free and reduced admission offers than non-regular arts attendees.

Nearly half of Torontonians are aware that there are free passes to City Museums for Toronto Public Library cardholders.

Those with children under 18 in the household are significantly more likely to have used free passes to city museums via the library (27% vs. 11%).

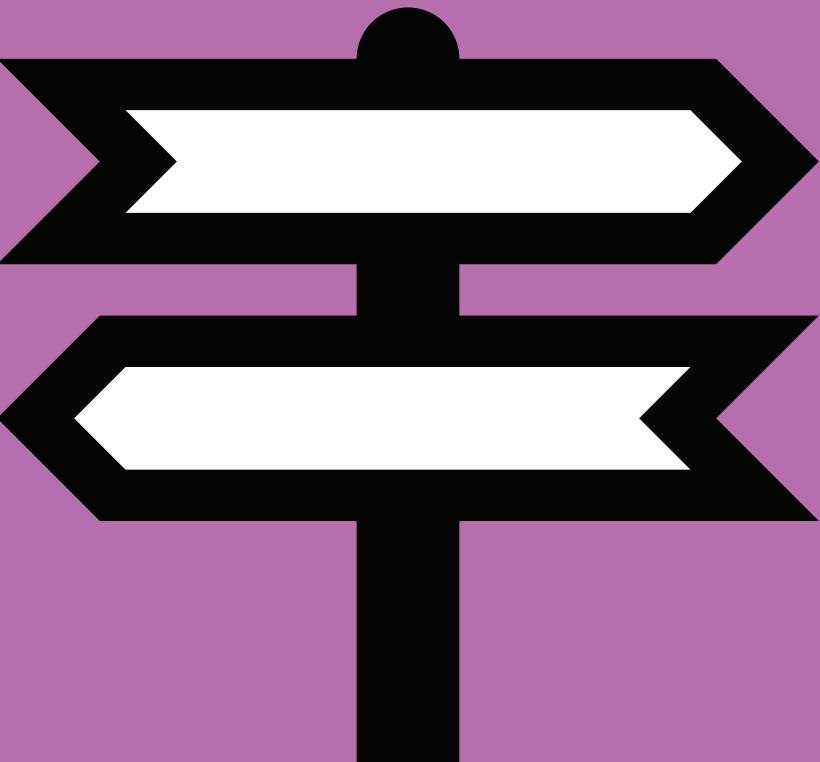
## EVENTS ATTENDED ON A REGULAR BASIS



Among Torontonians who regularly attend arts activities, more than half attend music concerts (58%), museums (55%), film showings (54%), and festivals (50%).

Theatre attendance is most popular among older Torontonians (55+) vs. festivals which have the most appeal for those under 55.

# ARTS EVERWHERE



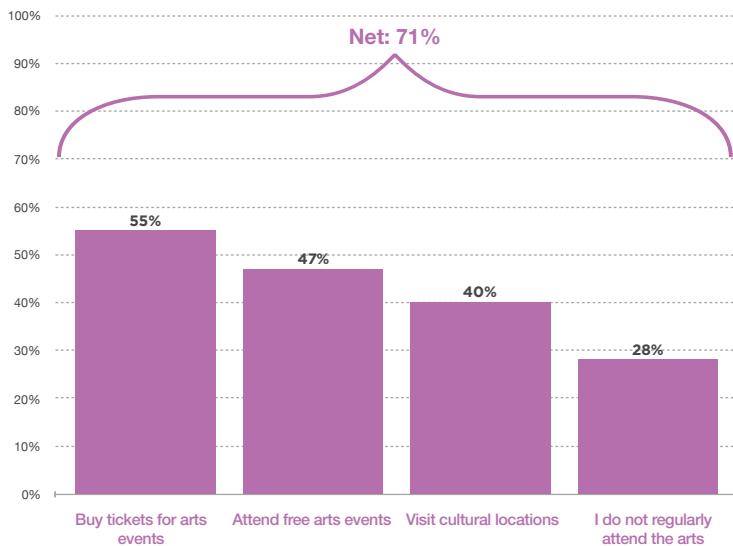
Torontonians value the importance of arts in schools and communities. The art of the city is not confined by the indoors – the majority of Torontonians have encountered art in a public space in the past year in Toronto and see ‘free arts in public outdoor spaces’ as important.

Most Torontonians see a personal benefit of having art in public spaces. Torontonians cite the value of art in public spaces as free (71%), as a way to introduce them (and/or their families) to new art experiences (61%), and a connection to the city in which they live (53%).

Torontonians would like to see art in their local parks – performances by professional artists (52%), visual arts by professional artists (52%) and community arts projects (48%) were the most highly coveted.

# ARTS ATTENDANCE

**71%** of Torontonians are regular attendees of the arts.



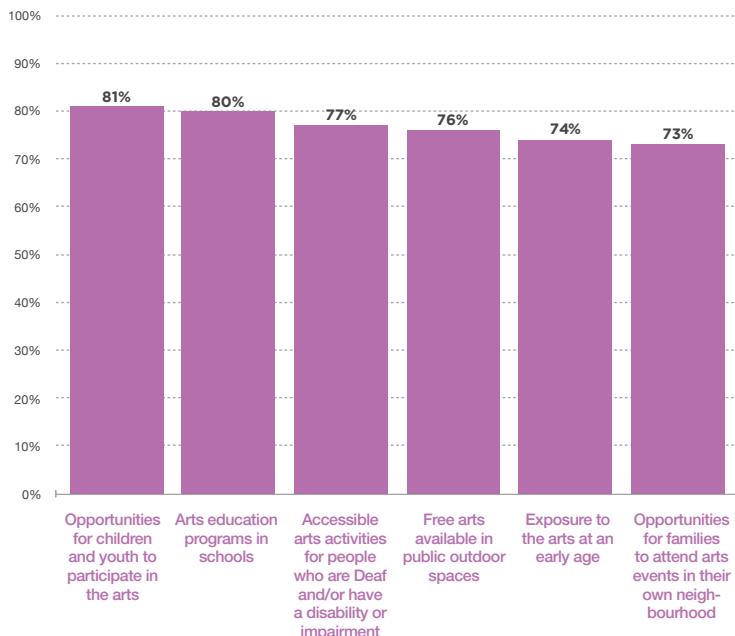
Similar to the 2015 results, in 2016 we found 7 in 10 Torontonians regularly engage in the arts.

Higher income households (\$100k+) are significantly more likely to buy tickets for arts events (70% vs. 49%) and visit cultural locations (52% vs. 37%).

Torontonians over the age of 55 are significantly less likely than younger Torontonians to regularly attend arts activities (61% vs. 75% among those 54 and under).

# ARTS OPPORTUNITIES

**81%** of Torontonians see opportunities for children and youth to participate in the arts as being important.

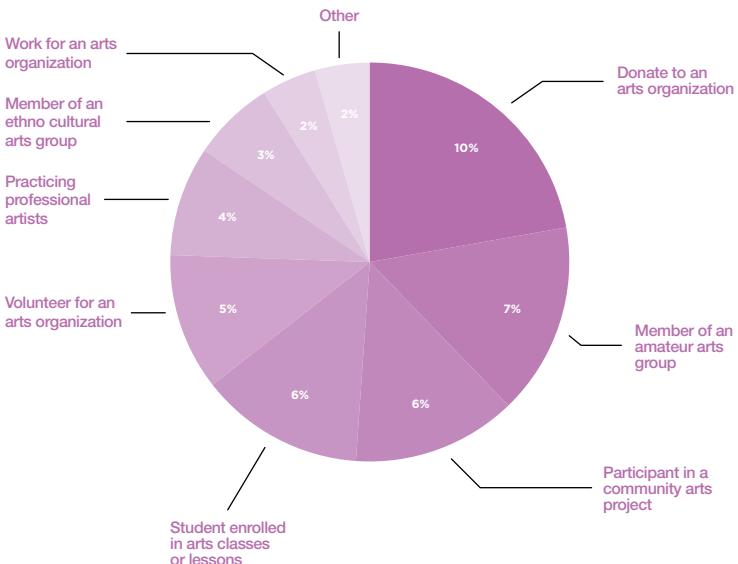


Similar to the 2015 results, Torontonians value the role the arts play in the lives of children and youth both in school and community settings.

77% of Torontonians view accessible arts activities as important and a comparable number rate free art in public outdoor spaces as important (76%).

# DEEPER ARTS INVOLVEMENT

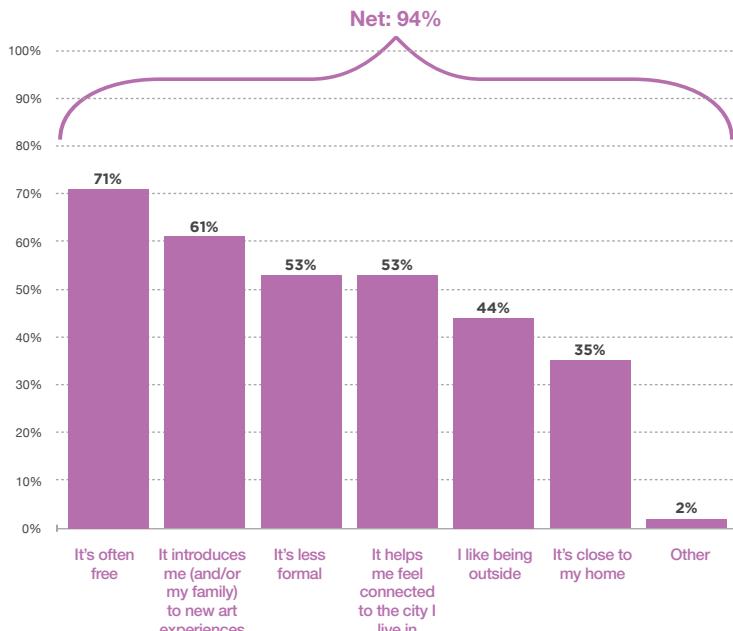
**29%** of Torontonians are engaged in the arts beyond attendance.



One in three Torontonians engage in the arts at a deeper level in a variety of ways including donating (10%) and volunteering for an arts organization (5%).

# ART IN PUBLIC SPACES

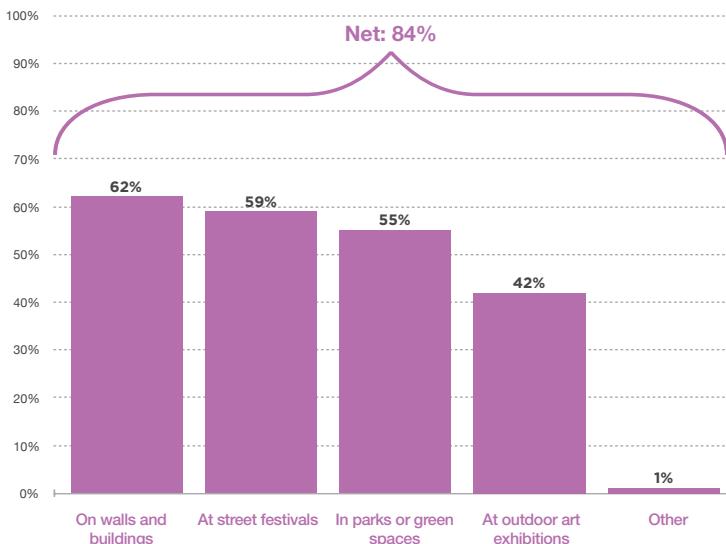
**94%** of Torontonians see a personal benefit of having art in public spaces.



The most common perceived benefit of art in public spaces is that it is free. That said, its low cost is not the only benefit in the eyes of Torontonians—other benefits are the introduction to new art experiences, less formality and helping create a connection to the city in which they live.

# FINDING ART IN PUBLIC SPACES

**84%** of Torontonians have encountered art in a public space in the past year in Toronto.



Responses from survey participants to the question:  
*Why do the arts matter to you?*

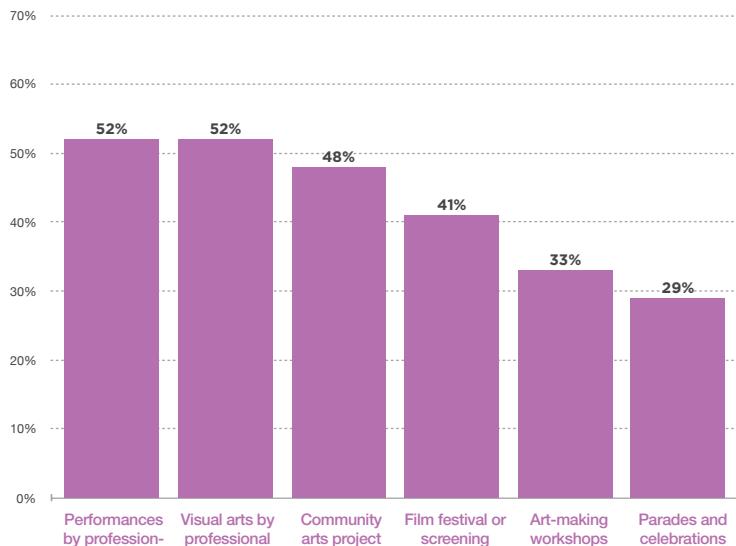
The arts get me out of the house to explore my neighbourhood and help me meet new people.

Participatory arts events are a great way for families, seniors and others to meet in their local parks or community centres to learn something new or share their experiences.

Torontonians report having seen art in public spaces in a variety of different areas and forms – on walls and buildings, at street festivals, in parks or green spaces or at outdoor art exhibitions.

# ARTS IN THE PARKS

Torontonians are interested in experiencing all kinds of arts in their local parks.



More than half of Torontonians would like to see performances and visual arts by professional artists in their local park, while 48% would like arts projects that involve community members.

Torontonians with children under the age of 18 in their households are significantly more likely to want parades and celebrations in their local parks (37% vs. 26%).



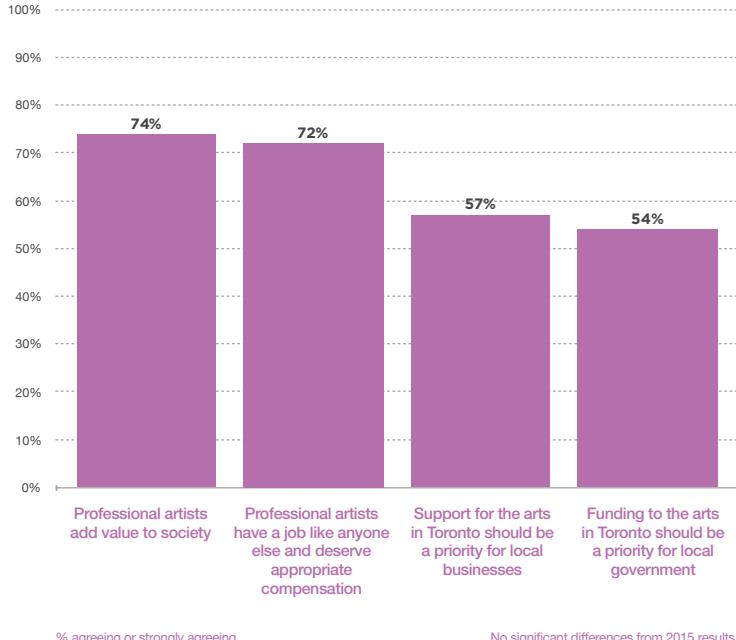
# **SUPPORTING ARTS**

Torontonians appreciate the contribution  
Toronto artists make to the City.

The majority of the city's residents see artists  
as adding value to society and feel that they  
should be appropriately compensated.

Over half think the arts should receive support  
from local businesses and from the local  
government.

# SUPPORT FOR ARTS AND ARTISTS



# WHY FUND THE ARTS?

Responses from survey participants to the question:

**Why do you think that funding for the arts should be priority for the City of Toronto?**

“It is vital that arts be a priority because so many people’s lives are enriched by it.”

“Arts add an exciting dimension to everyday life.”

“The world is becoming too technical and scientific...art is flexible and living....”

“The arts enriches our city and draws tourists, and gives our city its vibrancy.”

“There’s more to a city than making money and fixing potholes. Without the arts Toronto would be a pretty dull town.”

# METHODOLOGY

## QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

### INSTRUMENT

A survey of 500 Toronto residents was completed online January 12 to January 21, 2016 using Leger's online panel, LegerWeb.

A probability sample of the same size would yield a margin of error of +/-4.4%, 19 times out of 20.

### QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

In addition to collecting statistical data, the survey offered respondents an opportunity to share their ideas via written responses to the following questions:

- Did your early involvement in the arts have an impact on your life? How so?
- Why do you think that funding for the arts should be a priority for the City of Toronto?
- Why do the arts matter to you?

### ABOUT LEGER'S ONLINE PANEL

Leger's online panel has approximately 475,000 members nationally – with between 10,000 and 20,000 new members added each month, and has a retention rate of 90%.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*Toronto Arts Stats 2016* is a publication of Toronto Arts Foundation compiled and edited by Margo Charlton of Toronto Arts Foundation and Erin Deviney of Leger with assistance from Toronto Arts Foundation staff: Jennifer Green, Susan Wright and Michelle Parson.

Our thanks to Dave Scholz of Leger for his continued support of arts impact research.

**“The arts have really improved my life and shown me aspects of society that I would have never known without art and they have provided friendships for me that I would never have had...”**

Toronto Resident



THE RESEARCH INTELLIGENCE GROUP

[www.leger360.com](http://www.leger360.com)

**TORONTOARTSFOUNDATION.ORG/KNOWLEDGE**

