Final Report

Making It Work 2026: Pathways to Sustainable Cultural Careers

Prepared for: Work in Culture

May 2026

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Acknowledgments

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Any opinions, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of Ontario Creates or the Government of Ontario. The Government of Ontario and its agencies are in no way bound by the recommendations contained in this document.

Executive Summary

In 2019, MakingItWork: Pathways Toward Sustainable Cultural Careers provided a labour market profile of the arts, culture and creative sector in Ontario. Today, the world and the conditions shaping cultural work have shifted considerably. Understanding how forces such as AI and economic precarity are having an impact on the sector is central to supporting a resilient and sustainable workforce. In this context, Work in Culture commissioned *Making It Work 2026: Pathways to Sustainable Cultural Careers* (“Making It Work 2026”), to provide an updated, evidence-based profile of the broad culture labour market in Ontario. The study examines how workers are entering the sector, the skills they need to advance, the barriers affecting career sustainability, and the supports required to strengthen professional pathways. It also considers how organizations are adapting to changing expectations, technological developments, and persistent capacity constraints.

Culture Sector Definition and Methodology

This study used a broad and inclusive definition of Ontario’s culture sector to capture the full spectrum of cultural work across the province. The “culture sector” includes the **arts** (such as music, dance, theatre, and visual and literary arts); the **cultural and creative industries** (including book and magazine publishing, film and television, music production, and digital media); **GLAMs** (galleries, libraries, archives, and museums); and **design** (such as interior, graphic, and fashion design).

In 2019, Nordicity developed a custom approach for classifying and estimating the size of the culture sector in Ontario, using a custom data tabulation from Statistics Canada’s *Census of Population* and built on best practices for defining and measuring the culture sector established by the Canadian Framework for Culture Statistics (CFCS)[1]. The analysis for Making It Work 2026 replicates the methodology deployed in the previous report, with minor adjustments to account for occupation and industry taxonomy changes.

Research Findings: Demographics, Income and Secondary Work

- There are an estimated **282,402** individual workers employed in Ontario’s culture sector based on the custom tabulation from the 2021 Census. This figure represents a **3% increase** from the 274,220 reported in 2019, based on a similar custom tabulation from the 2016 Census.
- Women make up **43% of the culture sector workforce**, a slightly lower share than in the provincial labour force overall (48%). In 2021, **non-binary people made up about 2% of the overall culture sector**, a very slightly higher share than across the overall population of Ontario.
- At **40.7**, the culture sector is slightly younger than the overall workforce in Ontario (42.1).

[1] Though CFCS was used as a key source of information to inform this methodology, Nordicity’s subsectors and specializations do not correspond exactly to domains and subdomains in CFCS.

- **The culture sector workforce is highly educated:** While 36% of workers across all Ontario sectors hold a university bachelor's degree, the share is substantially higher across every cultural subsector: 55% in the arts, 63% in the cultural and creative industries, 62% in GLAMs, 47% in design, and **55% across the culture sector as a whole.**
- **The sector is relatively diverse overall, though there are notable variations across subsectors and a lack of Indigenous representation:**
  - The share of workers who are a visible minority in Ontario's culture sector (35%) is broadly in line with the provincial workforce overall (34%), though there is notable variation across subsectors.
  - At 1.45%, Indigenous workers remain underrepresented across Ontario's culture sector. Across all sectors in Ontario, 2.31% of workers identify as Indigenous.
- Average income data was challenging to ascertain, as the census was undertaken during the COVID-19 pandemic. Various points of view suggest an average income ranging from $41,400 isolating for culture-related earnings to $59,700 (excluding the arts sub-sectors most affected by COVID-19 closures):
  - Average annual income from all sources (including wages, salaries and commissions) **for** workers in the culture sector was **$47,900.**
  - *Excluding* the arts sub-sector (as largely audience-facing specializations experienced major income disruption in 2020), sees the average income rise to **$59,700,** a figure in line with the average reported in the 2016 Census (across all subsectors) **of $58,400**.
  - Adjusting the results of the census analysis using results of the survey, **the average annual income from *culture-related activities* was $41,400, i.e., 69.4% of income from all sources.**
- Half (51%) of all survey respondents indicated that they have a secondary area of practice *within* the culture sector.
- Over a quarter of survey respondents (26%) stated they have jobs outside of the broad culture sector – most commonly in education (34%), followed by the not-for-profit and/or charity sector (24%). A smaller but notable share work in hospitality and tourism (14%), retail (13%), and technology (12%).
- An estimated 21,150, or **7% of workers in Ontario's culture sector possess a skilled trade**.

Research Findings: Skills Needs and Barriers to Sustainability

- Survey respondents ranked **Entrepreneurial, business, leadership and management skills** highest (59%), followed closely by **creation, artistic and curatorial skills** (57%) as critical for developing their careers in the culture sector.
- **Grant-writing and navigating the funding landscape** was the next most frequently cited need (34%), followed by **digital and technology literacy** (25%), **financial literacy and reporting** (22%), and **digital marketing and discoverability** (19%). The overall pattern reflects a workforce that must balance creative practice with administrative, financial, and digital capabilities.

- Cultural workers most often learn through conferences, workshops, seminars or lectures (56%), peer-to-peer learning (54%), independent research (51%), and online courses or materials (50%).
- For organizations, the skills considered most critical were **entrepreneurial, business, leadership and management skills** (60%), **creation, artistic and curatorial skills** (47%), and **digital marketing and discoverability** (30%).
- Some **31% of cultural workers** and **51% of organizations have begun using AI in their work**, while **47% of cultural workers** and **33% of organizations** reported that they **deliberately avoid AI** due to ethical, artistic, or labour-related concerns.
- Economic conditions are the most persistent constraint shaping cultural workers' day-to-day realities and long-term prospects. **Low and inconsistent income** (55%) and **lack of stable employment** (42%) were the two most frequently identified barriers to sustainable careers.
- Close to half (41%) of survey respondents identified **a lack of broader recognition or understanding of the value of culture sector work** as contributing to the sector's instability.
- **One third of cultural workers (32%) have considered leaving the culture sector in the past 3 years.** They would be more likely to stay with higher pay or more consistent income (71%), more stable or longer-term employment opportunities (46%), access to affordable health and mental health care (28%), and a clearer pathway for career growth and advancement (24%).
- Roundtable participants pointed to uneven access to mentorship, leadership development, and professional supports for equity-deserving artists and leaders. Participants also noted that equity-deserving leaders, including those working within Indigenous and community-based organizations, are often expected to represent or advocate for their communities without adequate organizational resources, compensation, or sustained support.

Opportunities for Action

The findings in this report serve as reminders of the extreme turbulence and insecurity faced by the broad culture sector over the past five years. The findings from the survey and roundtables point to several areas where coordinated action could strengthen the resilience and sustainability of Ontario's culture sector workforce and career pathways. Coordinated action would require input and commitments from funders, industry associations, arts services organizations, post-secondary institutions, unions and guilds and other core cultural networks:

1. **Support Broad Sector Advocacy**
2. **Support Shared Learning and Collaboration**
    a. Embrace Radical Sharing of Resources
    b. Foster Digital Literacy and Future Skills Training
3. **Support Whole Career Journeys**
    a. Strengthen Mid-Career Pathways

   b. Identify Opportunities for Formal Leadership Development

4. **Support Financial Transparency and Operational Sustainability**

   a. Establish a Common Set of Cultural Indicators

   b. Enable Greater Connections to Private Sector Fundraising

   c. Explore Shared Space and Infrastructure Access Network

As in 2019, the findings in this report highlight many areas of shared needs and common experiences spanning the cultural sector workforce in Ontario. There are nearly 300,000 cultural workers across Ontario's culture sector, spanning for-profit and not-for-profit businesses, sub-sectors and disciplines. A strong and vibrant cultural sector is one where all these areas are thriving, where labour crossovers and intersections are supported, and where shared needs are addressed through shared approaches. The report describes a broad culture sector facing a combination of resource pressures creating barriers to sustainable careers. There is a sense that, despite having survived the pandemic, even greater challenges may yet lie ahead. Many factors underpin these uncertainties but there are tangible, impactful, collective initiatives that can be taken to support the sector as a whole and reinforce its core value to the province.

1. Introduction

In 2019, MakingItWork: Pathways Toward Sustainable Cultural Careers provided a labour market profile of the arts, culture and creative sector in Ontario.

Today, the world and the conditions shaping cultural work have shifted notably. The intervening years brought a global pandemic that restructured labour markets and operating models, widened existing inequities, and accelerated the pace of digital adoption and reliance on digital tools. Lately, the rapid emergence of artificial intelligence (AI) and ongoing economic uncertainty have increased pressure on workers and organizations to operate with fewer resources. Understanding how these forces have reshaped cultural work is central to supporting a resilient and sustainable workforce.

In this context, Work in Culture commissioned Making It Work 2026: Pathways to Sustainable Cultural Careers ("Making It Work 2026") to provide an updated, evidence-based profile of the broad culture labour market in Ontario. The study examines how workers are entering the sector, the skills they need to advance, the barriers affecting career sustainability, and the supports required to strengthen professional pathways. It also considers how organizations are adapting to changing expectations, technological developments, and persistent capacity constraints. More specifically, Making It Work 2026 aims to:

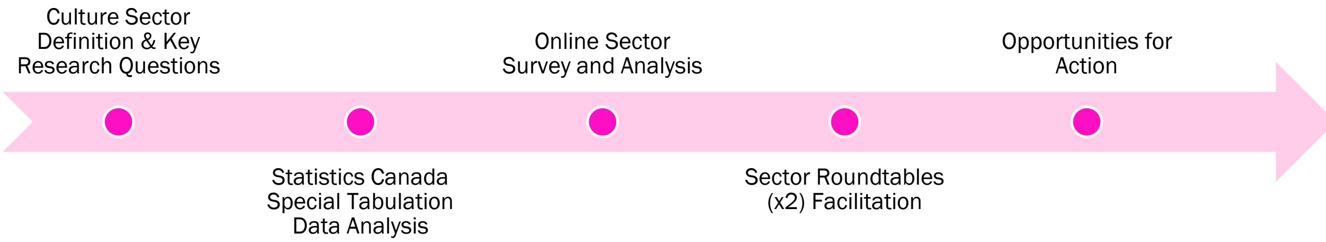
- strengthen understanding of the issues facing today's broad cultural workforce;
- identify gaps, priorities, and barriers in entrepreneurial and business skills development and training;
- recommend ways to improve the effectiveness of support programs and initiatives offered by Work in Culture and its partners; and
- directly inform future programs, policies, and supports that aim to create more sustainable, equitable careers in the sector.

Where possible and reasonable, the study aims to understand the changes in the sector since the last report.

The following section outlines the methodological approach, data sources, and parameters that guided the analysis to address these objectives.

1.1. Approach and Methodology

The approach for undertaking Making It Work 2026 was based on the successful methodology established for the 2019 report but reduced in scope as far as facilitated roundtables. Where the 2019 report included 13 in-person roundtables in culture hubs across the province, this study included just two. The Making It Work 2026 survey was conducted in fall 2025, and roundtables were held in winter 2025 to inform this 2026 report.



Culture Sector Definition

This study used a broad and inclusive definition of Ontario's culture sector to capture the full spectrum of cultural work across the province. The "culture sector" includes the arts (such as music, dance, theatre, and visual and literary arts); the cultural and creative industries (including book and magazine publishing, film and television, music production, and digital media); GLAMs (galleries, libraries, archives, and museums); and design (such as interior, graphic, and fashion design).

Culture Sector				
Subsector	**Arts**	**Cultural and Creative Industries**	**GLAMs**	**Design**
Specializations	Music Dance Theatre Visual art + others	Book publishing Magazine publishing Film and television Music Digital media + others	Galleries Libraries Archives Museums	Interior design Graphic design Fashion design + others

Making It Work 2026 considers the workforce from the perspective of different sector interest holders including independent artists, freelancers and creators; arts and cultural organizations; creative industry companies; owners and employers; government bodies; and professional services companies. It also includes for-profit and not-for profit organizations, as well as workers in the full range of employment arrangements from full-time, permanent employment to temporary or contract workers. For this report, the term "cultural" workers includes artists, freelancers, creators, and individuals working for cultural or creative organizations.

Statistics Canada Data: Analysis of Statistics Canada's Census of Population

For MakingItWork 2019, Nordicity developed a custom approach for classifying and estimating the size of the culture sector in Ontario, using a custom data tabulation from Statistics Canada's *Census of Population* and built on best practices for defining and measuring the culture sector established by the Canadian Framework for Culture Statistics (CFCS)[2]. The analysis for Making It Work 2026 replicates the methodology deployed in the previous report, with minor adjustments to account for occupation and industry taxonomy changes, to ensure as much continuity in results as possible and allow for longitudinal comparison of the culture sector workforce in Ontario between 2016 and 2021.

As in MakingItWork 2019, Nordicity used a custom tabulation of data from Statistics Canada's *Census of Population* to identify, isolate and classify workers in the culture sector. This section of analysis performs a parallel function to the survey response profile by describing the types of workers that are represented in findings drawn from census data, using the latest data available from the *2021 Census of Population*.

The analysis isolated statistical classifications of occupations (National Occupational Classifications, or NOCs[3]) and industry sectors (North American Industry Classification System, or NAICS[4]). It focused on the set of occupations and industries that are identified as being part of the culture sector in the Canadian Framework for Culture Statistics (CFCS).

While this 2026 report attempts to remain as faithful to the classifications of industry and occupations developed in the 2019 report as possible, the latest census data classifies workers by occupation and industry using updated NAICS and NOCs codes. Updates to the NAICS and NOCs are introduced periodically to reflect changes in the economy and labor market by adding new industries or jobs (such as technology) and merging old ones. The 2016 Census (and by extension the 2019 report methodology) used the 2017 NAICS codes to classify industry and the 2016 NOCs codes to classify occupation, while the 2021 Census used 2022 NAICS codes and 2021 NOCs.

When changes are made to the classification systems, Statistics Canada releases concordance tables to document and trace changes between the new and old codes. While the changes between the 2017 and 2022 NAICS were minor in the context of the culture sector, there were more relevant changes between the 2016 and 2021 NOCs. As such, Statistics Canada's concordance tables were used to inform updates to the assignment of NAICS and NOCs to the range of culture specializations and subsectors used in this analysis to quantify the culture sector workforce.

The custom crosstabulation obtained from Statistics Canada provided Nordicity with worker counts, income and demographics for every single combination of 5-digit NOCs occupations and 4-digit NAICS industries, allowing for granular isolation of the characteristics of all workers in Ontario in 2021. Nordicity then developed a classification algorithm to assign each NOCs x NAICS combination a cultural specialization and subsector (or to discount it from aggregation if not part of the sector). With this classification of the entire Ontario labor force, worker counts, income statistics and demographics were then aggregated by subsector, function or specialization and reported in the following sections of the report.

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[2] Though CFCS was used as a key source of information to inform this methodology, Nordicity's subsectors and specializations do not correspond exactly to domains and subdomains in CFCS.

[3] Canada's standardized system for classifying jobs based on their duties, training, education, and responsibilities. Every occupation in the Canadian labour market is assigned a NOC code.

[4] NAICS is an industry classification system developed by the statistical agencies of Canada, Mexico and the United States to classify businesses based on their primary economic activity. They are numerical codes, typically six digits long.

For a detailed description of how Nordicity mapped NAICS and NOCs codes for each culture subsector and the logic rules that formed the classification algorithm, please see:

- **Appendix E** for more details on the analytical approach; and
- **Appendices F and G** for the full lists of the NAICS and NOCs codes which are associated with each subsector and specialization, and the classification logic.

Survey

To complement the Statistics Canada data, Nordicity designed and launched a province-wide survey to the broad culture sector. The survey focused on understanding the current state of the culture sector, as well as the key issues it faces, including skills needs and barriers to success and growth. In addition, the survey covered key topics of relevance in 2025 including, for example:

- the impact and use of AI tools;
- increased precarity and emphasis on gig economics with rising inflation, cost of living, and unemployment;
- educational pathways into the cultural and creative industries and the effectiveness of post-secondary institutions;
- levels of awareness and engagement with Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) and environmental sustainability; and
- sector sustainability and resilience to future disruptions.

The survey received **539 usable responses from individuals (446) and organizations (43)** across the four subsectors, with the arts sector respondents making up the majority (68%) of the sample. The respondent group was highly educated, with nearly six in ten holding an undergraduate or graduate degree and was concentrated in urban areas of southern Ontario. Overall, respondents reported long careers in the sector, reflecting a workforce with substantial experience and tenure.[5]

Roundtables

Nordicity facilitated two roundtables (one virtual and one in-person) to dig deeper into current state of the culture workforce as well as emerging survey findings. Roundtable participants and interviews (in total 23 individuals) discussed and prioritized shared needs, and identified practical, actionable interventions, programs, and partnerships that would help address common challenges. Both roundtables were cross-sectoral and included a mix of individuals and organizations that are critical and established champions for the cultural sector in Ontario, as well as some mid-career artists and creatives. Participants represented

[5] The 2018 survey earned 1087 respondents, with the majority of responses representing the Arts, Heritage, Museums, and Libraries sub-sector.

both English-language and French-language organizations. The virtual roundtable was made up primarily of individuals located outside Toronto (e.g. Ottawa, Sudbury, London, Brampton), while in-person participants were Toronto-based.

Table 1: Participating Organizations and Individuals

▪ Benoit Roy - Alliance culturelle de l'Ontario (ACO) ▪ Alek Phan - Arts Etobicoke ▪ Katy Belshaw and Michael Vickers-Brampton Arts Organization ▪ Emily Scheer - Canadian Film Centre ▪ Patrick Breton - Centre franco-ontarien de folklore ▪ Robyn Wilcox - Craft Ontario ▪ Eileen Arandiga - East End Arts ▪ Cynthia Lickers-Sage - Indigenous Performing Arts Alliance	▪ Katie Wilhelm – RGD, Indigenous Designer and Consultant ▪ Michelle Yeung - Mass Culture ▪ Mike Douglas - Mississauga Arts Council ▪ Micheline Shoebridge - Multicultural Arts in Schools and Communities ▪ Miranda Mulholland - Music Canada ▪ Ruth Burns - Ontario Culture Days ▪ Kadon Douglas - OYA Black Arts Coalition	▪ Kelly Lui - ReelAsian ▪ Shawn Newman - Skills for Change ▪ Cyn Rozeboom - Tangled Arts ▪ Jaymie Lathem - Up Here ▪ Shulie Smolyanitsky - Wavelength Music ▪ Karen Tisch - Why Not Theatre ▪ Timea Wharton-Suri - Artist, Educator, Curator, Producer, Arts Executive

1.2. About this Report

This report is structured to provide both a high-level overview of sector-wide conditions and more detailed analysis across key themes affecting cultural workers and organizations. It draws on multiple data sources and perspectives, and findings are presented using a combination of quantitative analysis, survey results, and qualitative insights from the roundtables. Where possible, results are compared with earlier findings to identify continuity and change over time.

The report is structured as follows:

- **Section 1** introduces the report and outlines the methodology and overall approach adopted for the study.
- **Section 2** of the report draws from Statistics Canada data as well as survey data to look at Ontario's cultural workers, and describes the size of Ontario's culture sector and its subsectors, who is working in the sector in terms of their demographics, what incomes and benefits access look like across the sector, as well as the modes of employment prominent across the sector.
- **Section 3** draws on survey responses to explore an organizational perspective on the culture sector labour market. It covers topics such as approaches to managing human resources, benefits provided by employers, and the types of labour market information accessed by and most useful to culture sector organizations.
- **Section 4** draws on survey responses and roundtable discussions to identify the skills that matter most today, how cultural workers prefer to develop them, as well as how employers are supporting access to training. It includes both individual and organizational perspectives.

- **Section 5** also draws on survey responses and roundtable discussions to understand the issues and challenges facing the culture sector, particularly how economic precarity, resource limitations, and systemic barriers intersect to influence career satisfaction, workforce stability, and the overall health of the sector. It includes both individual and organizational perspectives.
- Finally, **Section 6** outlines opportunities for action - where coordinated action could strengthen the resilience and sustainability of Ontario's culture sector workforce and career pathways. These opportunities are organized into four interconnected areas: strengthening shared advocacy; expanding shared learning and collaboration; improving the clarity and support of career journeys; and addressing the financial and fundraising conditions that shape organizational stability and fair compensation.

2. Ontario's Culture Workers

This section draws on a special tabulation of Statistics Canada data to describe the size of Ontario's culture sector and its subsectors, who is working in the sector in terms of their demographics, what incomes and benefits access look like, and the prominent modes of employment across the sector.

2.1. Subsectors, Specializations and Occupational Functions

Based on an analysis of a custom data tabulation from Statistics Canada's 2021 Census, Nordicity estimates that there are:

> **282,402** individual workers employed in Ontario's culture sector.

This figure represents a **3% increase** from the 274,220 reported in 2019, based on a similar custom tabulation from the 2016 Census.

For the purposes of this report, employment is exclusively measured using headcounts.

Methodology Note

Readers well versed in LMI analysis of Ontario's culture sector may note the differences in headline employment figures detailed in this report and others, perhaps most notably Statistics Canada's Culture Satellite Account (CSA) and related analysis (e.g. Ontario Arts Council (OAC) Arts Across Ontario (AAO), 2025).

The employment figures presented in the OAC AAO report are drawn from the CSA, which are based on the definition of the culture sector in the Canadian Framework for Culture Statistics (CFCS) as in this report. However, CSA employment figures are estimated based on the Canadian Productivity Accounts (CPA), part of the Canadian System of Macroeconomic Accounts (CSMA). Therefore, the OAC AAO figures represent the number of jobs held by the self-employed, employees and unpaid family workers based on the creation and exchange of 'cultural products', rather than cultural occupations and industries as in this report. This approach is a fundamentally different way of establishing employment. The figures in this report represent a direct aggregation of headcount from the 2021 Census, whereas the jobs presented by the CSA and in the OAC AAO report are derived from the CSMA. Please also be aware that this report's analysis is based on data from the 2021 Census, whereas reports like AAO present data from later years.

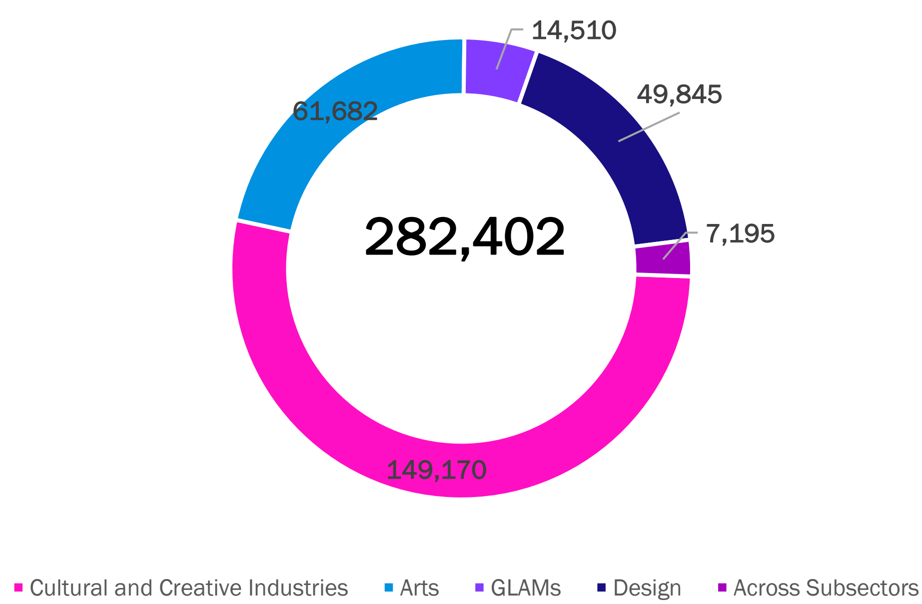
The approach in the CSA derives employment figures from economic accounts, which measure labour in terms of full-time equivalents. These units are used to quantify the amount of productive labour in the economy; however, they do not readily correlate to specific, identifiable workers for the purpose of demographic research. This report measures workers using headcounts, which simply represent the number of individual workers based on census data.

Headcount counts the number of individual workers. It is the simplest measure of employment and offers an intuitive metric for many types of analysis including understanding individual attributes of the workforce (e.g., financial wellbeing, job satisfaction, diversity). This approach differs from the use of full-time equivalents, which provides a common unit to quantify and directly compare workers that may have a variety of modes of employment (e.g., full-time, part-time, temporary, etc.).

Please note: Nordicity strongly cautions against making direct comparisons between the results of this research and Statistics Canada's CSA. In particular, be aware that each of these approaches measure employment on a different basis.

The following table presents top-line worker headcounts broken out by **subsector** (i.e., arts, cultural and creative industries, GLAMs (galleries, libraries, archives and museums), and design), and the **specializations** (i.e., the artistic disciplines, industries, and/or types of institutions) within those subsectors. The cultural and creative industries make up the largest portion of the culture sector (53%), followed by the arts, which includes independent artists, musicians and performers (22%), design (18%) and GLAMs (5%).

Figure 1: Ontario Culture Sector, worker headcount by subsector



Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population, Custom tabulation.

Table 2: Worker headcount by subsector and specialization

Subsectors and specializations	Worker headcount 2021
Arts	**61,682**
Visual Arts & Crafts	22,912
Dance, Music, Theatre	28,700
Literary Arts	10,070
The Cultural and Creative Industries	**149,170**
Digital Media	72,710
Film & Television	39,825
Advertising	12,815
Book and Magazine Publishing	21,410
Music Recording and Publishing	2,410
GLAMs (Galleries, libraries, archives and museums)	**14,510**
Libraries	12,115
Museums	1,855
Archives	540
Design	**49,845**
Employed across subsectors[6]	**7,195**
Total	**282,402**

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population, Custom tabulation.

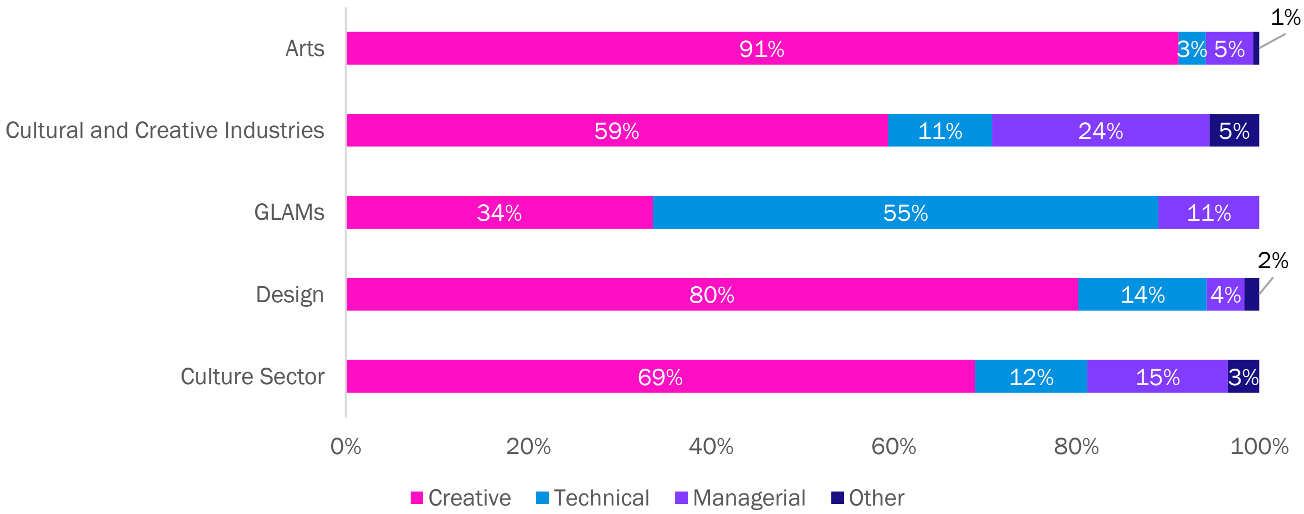
A note regarding "overall averages" for the culture sector as presented in this report:

The results in this report often present findings for each sub-sector as well as an overall culture sector average. The subsectors which employ the largest portion of the workforce contribute more strongly to this overall average. In this case, the largest subsector is the cultural and creative industries which **represents 53% of the overall culture sector workforce. Thus, the cultural industries exert a correspondingly large influence on the overall averages presented in this report**. Therefore, in some cases, the overall average is not necessarily a good proxy for the arts subsector average.

The subsectors outlined above include a wide spectrum of professional functions. Technical roles in areas such as sound engineering, digital animation or print production operate alongside creative positions including artistic directors and illustrators. The following figure illustrates the distribution of creative, technical, managerial, and other (which includes educational, governance and manufacturing support roles) functions within each subsector. At a glance, the distribution of occupational functions is consistent with the types of production in which each subsector engages.

[6] Due to limitations of statistical occupation and industry classification systems, "workers employed across subsectors" could not be associated with a particular subsector and/or specialization.

Figure 2: Culture sector workers, distribution of headcount by occupational function and subsector



Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population, Custom tabulation.

GLAMs: Galleries, libraries, archives and museums

The distribution of occupational functions varies across subsectors and reflects the distinct forms of work that characterize each part of Ontario's culture sector.

- In the arts, creative occupations constitute the overwhelming majority of employment (91%). This proportion aligns with the subsector's core activities, which centre on artistic creation and performance. Technical (3%) and Managerial (5%) roles form only a small share, indicating comparatively lean administrative and production infrastructures.
- Cultural and creative industries exhibit a more diversified occupational structure. Creative roles remain the largest component (59%), but they are complemented by notable shares of technical workers (11%) and managerial roles (24%). This mix is consistent with industries such as film, music production, publishing, and digital media, where creative development is tightly integrated with technical production workflows and formal management functions.
- GLAMs show a markedly different occupational profile. Technical occupations account for more than half of the workforce (55%), reflecting the specialized functions involved in collections care, cataloguing, digitization, preservation, and exhibition operations. Creative roles (34%) and managerial roles (11%) are present but comparatively smaller components of overall employment.
- Design maintains a predominantly creative workforce (80%), supported by technical occupations (14%) and a modest share of managerial roles (4%). This distribution mirrors the blend of conceptual development and technical execution that characterizes work in fields such as graphic, interior, and fashion design.
- Across the full culture sector, creative occupations represent approximately 69% of employment, followed by managerial (15%) and technical (12%) roles. This pattern highlights a sector driven by creative labour but supported by essential managerial and technical capacities that vary significantly by subsector.

2.2. Demographics

This subsection focuses on demographic characteristics of the cultural workers themselves.

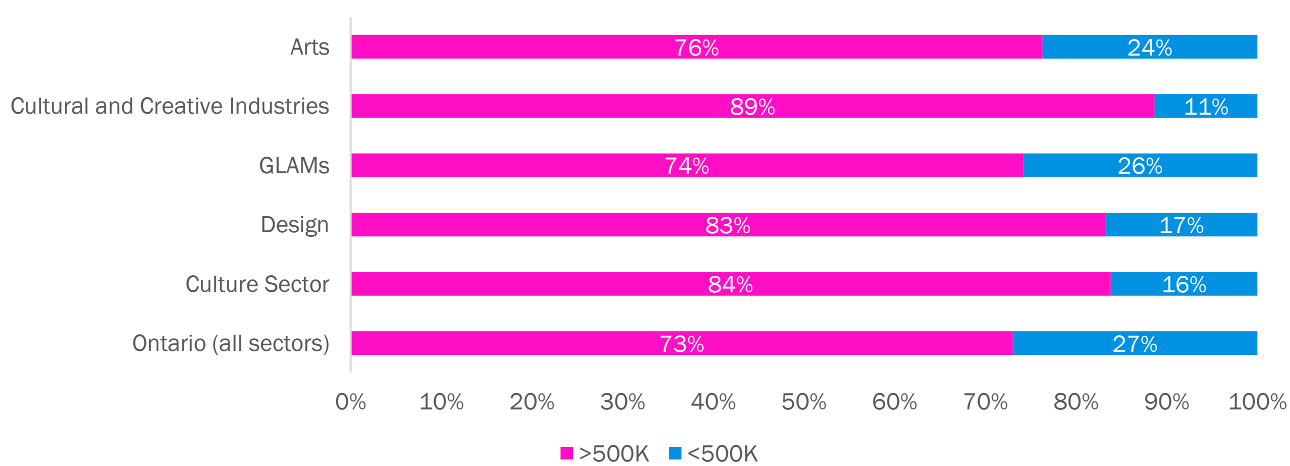
Geography

To learn about the geography of the culture sector, Nordicity developed classifications for the size of the Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) or Census Agglomerations (CAs) in which respondents reside. CMAs and CAs were broken out into those with a population[7]:

- Greater than 500,000, which includes Toronto, Ottawa, Hamilton, and Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo.
- Fewer than 500,000, which includes metropolitan centres such as Belleville, Peterborough, St. Catherines-Niagara and London, as well as smaller centres such as Chatham-Kent, Sarnia and Sault Ste. Marie, extending down to rural areas.

The following chart illustrates the distribution of cultural workers by the size of urban centre in which they reside and shows 84% of culture sector workers residing in CMAs and CAs with populations above 500,000 people.

Figure 3: Culture sector workers, distribution of headcount by size of urban centre and subsector



Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population, Custom tabulation.

GLAMs: Galleries, libraries, archives and museums

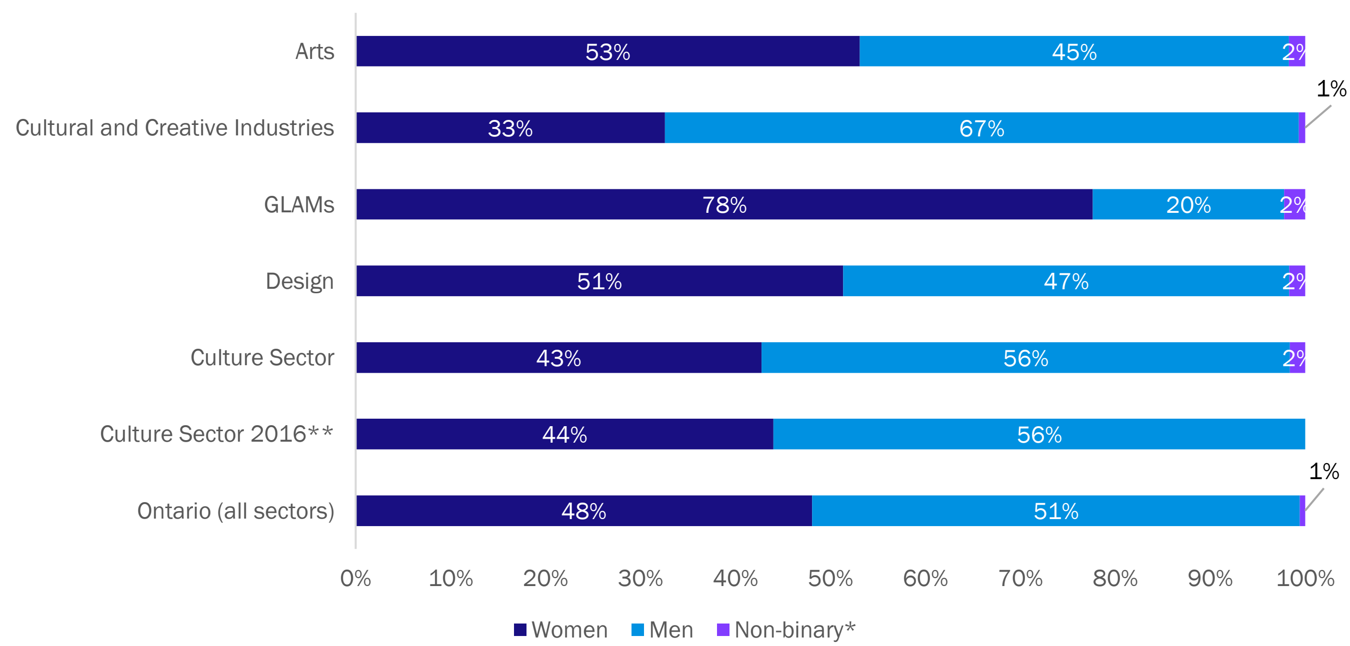
[7] In taking this approach to geography, this analysis focuses on the industry make-up of like-sized communities, rather than specific locations in Ontario. This approach has the benefit of breaking down the entire provincial population into two simple and relatable categories. Moreover, each category of “size of urban centre” addressed in the analysis is supported by a large sample in the census, which sidesteps the sampling limitations that might otherwise occur in an analysis of the most sparsely populated regions/municipalities in Ontario. Although this approach allows for a concise high-level description of the geography of culture sector workers in Ontario, this classification does not necessarily capture the unique regional differences that may exist within each geographical category or region.

Gender Representation

Across the culture sector, women make up 43% of the workforce, a slightly lower share than in the provincial labour force overall (48%). These results are similar to the 2016 Census and 2019 MakingItWork report, where women made up 44% of the culture sector as compared to the 48% across Ontario. In 2021, non-binary people made up about 2% of the overall culture sector, a slightly higher share than in the overall population of Ontario.

Gender representation varies sharply by subsector. GLAMs have the highest concentration of women, making up 79% of their workforce. The arts and design subsectors also show a majority concentration of women at 54% and 52% respectively. In contrast, the cultural and creative industries remain dominated by men, with women representing only 33% of workers.

Figure 4: Culture sector workers, distribution of headcount by gender and subsector



Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population, Custom tabulation.

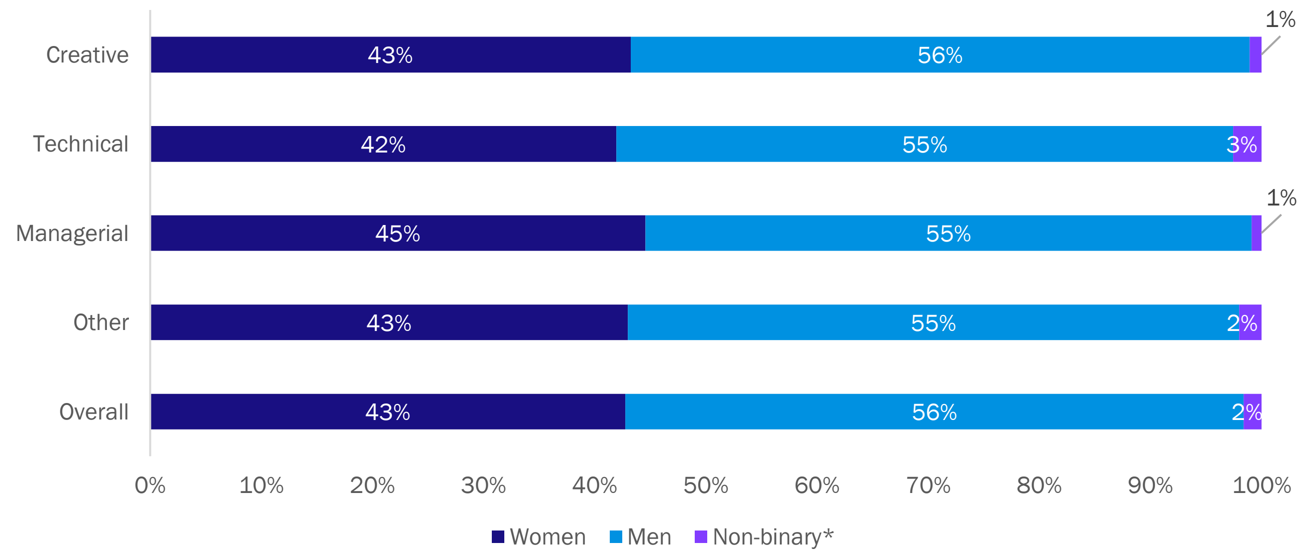
**In the 2021 Census, gender refers to an individual's personal and social identity as a man, woman or non-binary person (a person whose gender is not exclusively "man" or "woman"). Due to the granularity of data and to protect the confidentiality of responses, individuals in the 'non-binary persons' category may be distributed to the other two gender categories by Statistics Canada.*

***Non-binary estimates are not available for 2016.*

GLAMs: Galleries, libraries, archives and museums

When looking at women's participation across a range of functions, they remain less represented in technical roles (42%) and creative roles (43%), and their participation does not yet reach parity in any major occupational category.

Figure 5: Culture sector workers, distribution of headcount by gender and occupational function



Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population, Custom tabulation.

** In the 2021 Census, gender refers to an individual's personal and social identity as a man, woman or non-binary person (a person whose gender is not exclusively "man" or "woman"). Due to the granularity of data and to protect the confidentiality of responses, individuals in the 'non-binary persons' category may be distributed to the other two gender categories by Statistics Canada.*

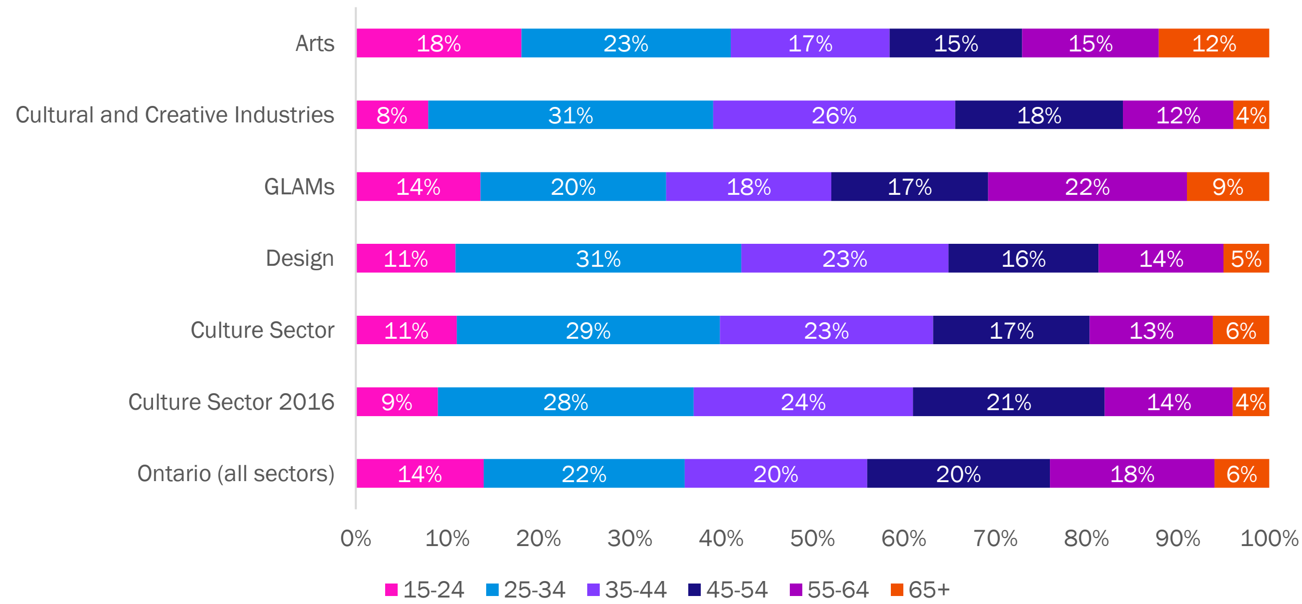
Age Profile

The age profile of Ontario's culture sector skews toward early- and mid-career workers, with the 25–34 and 35–44 age groups making up the largest shares of employment across most subsectors. Sector-wide, 29% of workers are between 25–34 and 23% between 35–44, both higher than their representation in the provincial labour force overall.

Patterns vary meaningfully by subsector. The cultural and creative industries have the strongest concentration of workers aged 25–34 (31%) and 35–44 (26%), producing the youngest overall age profile. The arts also show higher participation among younger cohorts, with 18% of workers aged 15–24 and 23% aged 25–34. Design follows a similar pattern, drawing heavily from the 25–34 (31%) and 35–44 (23%) cohorts.

GLAMs have a more balanced age structure. While they include notable shares of early-career workers (14% aged 15–24 and 20% aged 25–34), they have the highest proportion of workers aged 55–64 (22%), indicating a comparatively older workforce relative to other cultural subsectors.

Figure 6: Culture sector workers, distribution of headcount by age (years) and subsector

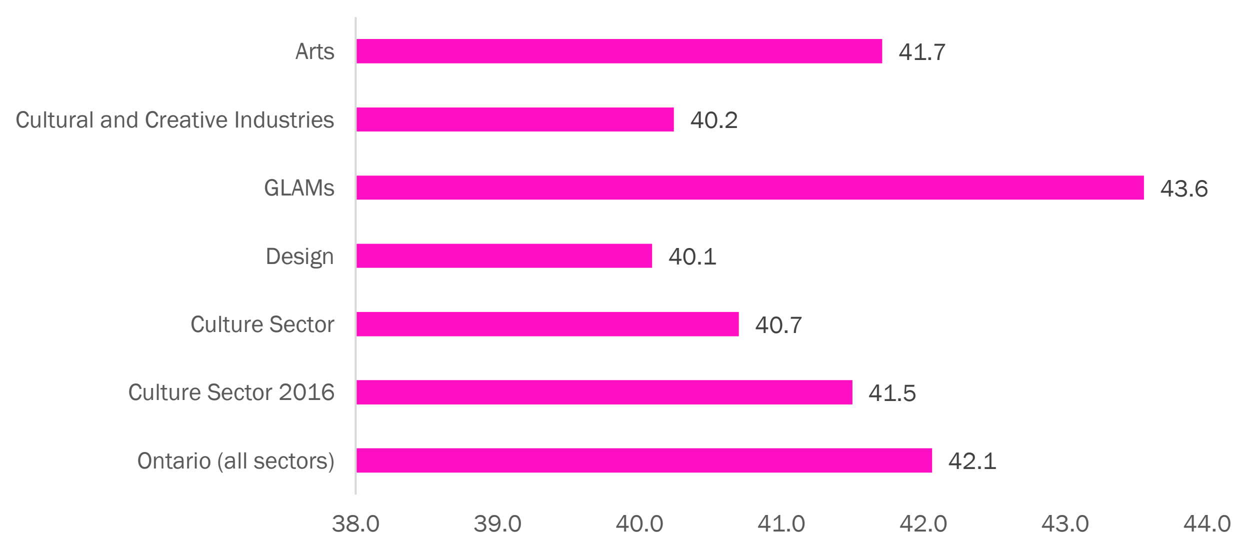


Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population, Custom tabulation.

GLAMs: Galleries, libraries, archives and museums

To provide another perspective on the data presented above, the following chart illustrates the estimated average age in each subsector. As a whole, at 40.7, the culture sector is slightly younger than the overall workforce in Ontario that has an average age of 42.1. This finding is similar to data in the 2016 Census and 2019 MakingItWork report, where the average age of the culture sector was also 41.5 years (as compared to 42.4 years for all of Ontario).

Figure 7: Culture sector workers, estimated average age by subsector



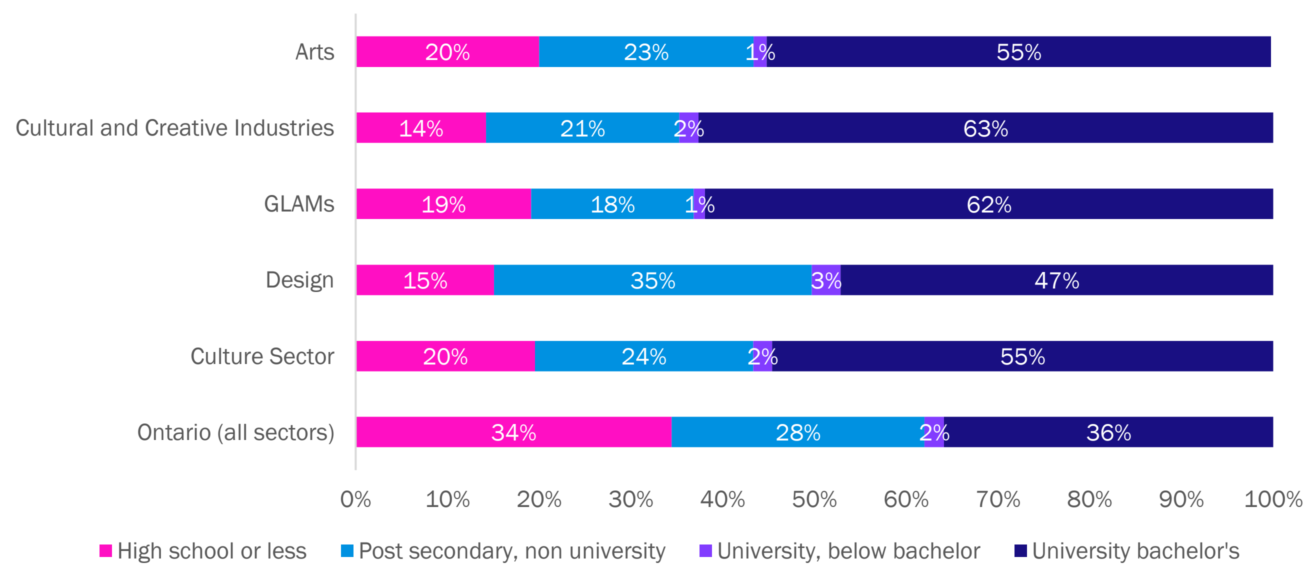
Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population, Custom tabulation.

GLAMs: Galleries, libraries, archives and museums

Educational Attainment

The chart below illustrates the highest level of educational attainment of the culture sector workforce by subsector.

Figure 8: Culture sector workers, distribution of headcount by highest level of educational attainment and subsector



Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population, Custom tabulation.
GLAMs: Galleries, libraries, archives and museums

It shows consistently high levels of formal education across all subsectors of Ontario's culture workforce, especially when compared with the provincial labour force overall. While 36% of workers across all Ontario sectors hold a university bachelor's degree, the share is substantially higher across every cultural subsector: 55% in the arts, 63% in the cultural and creative industries, 62% in GLAMs, 47% in design, and 55% across the culture sector as a whole. Participation among workers with only a high school education is comparatively low in every subsector, ranging from 14% to 20%, far below the provincial average of 34%. Post-secondary non-university credentials represent an important pathway in each subsector, particularly design, but remain a smaller share of the workforce overall.

Immigration Status

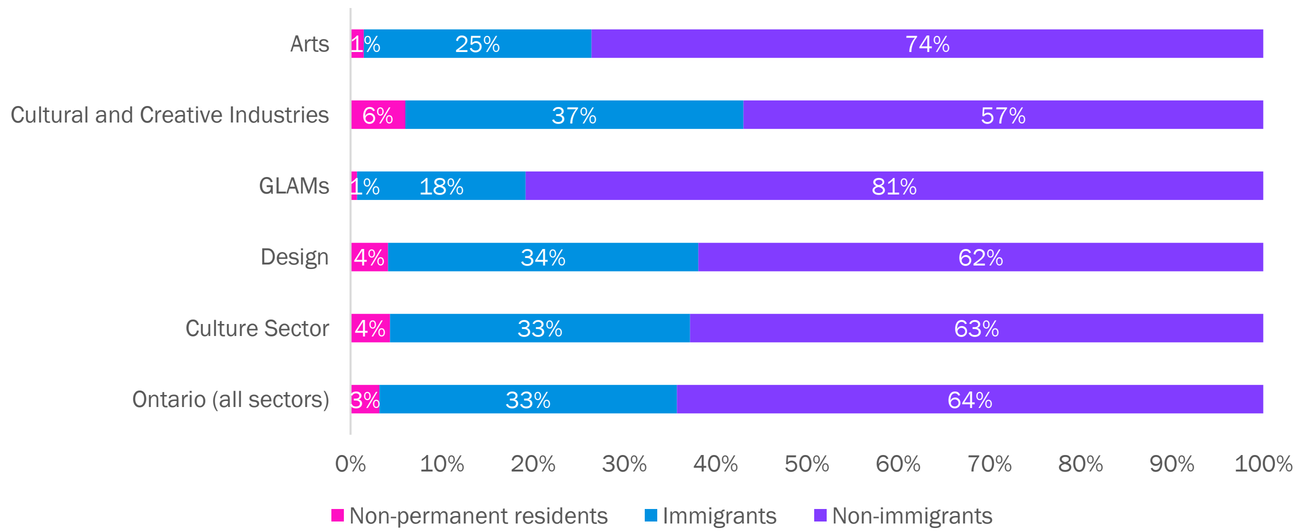
The following chart breaks out the culture workforce by immigration status. The three categories of immigration status are defined as:

- **Non-permanent residents** - includes persons from another country with a usual place of residence in Canada and who have a work or study permit or who have claimed refugee status (asylum claimants).
- **Immigrants** - includes persons who are, or who have ever been, landed immigrants or permanent residents. Such persons have been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by immigration

authorities. Immigrants who have obtained Canadian citizenship by naturalization are included in this category. In the 2021 Census of Population, "immigrant" includes immigrants who were admitted to Canada on or prior to May 11, 2021.

- **Non-immigrants** - includes persons who are Canadian citizens by birth.

Figure 9: Culture sector workers, distribution of headcount by immigration status and subsector

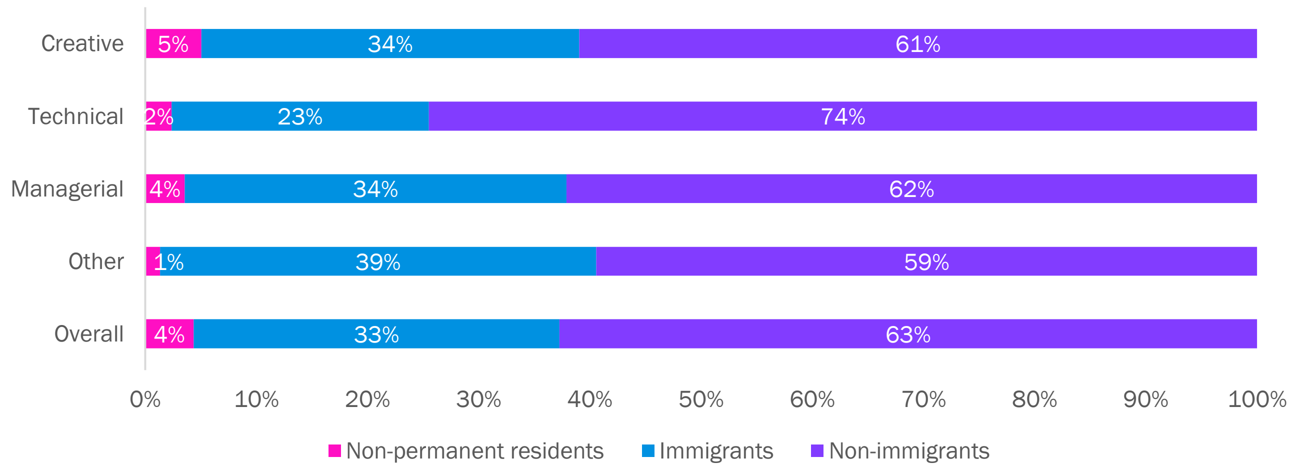


Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population, Custom tabulation.
GLAMs: Galleries, libraries, archives and museums

The chart shows that non-permanent residents make up a relatively small share of the workforce across all subsectors, ranging from 1% to 6%, and remain broadly comparable to the Ontario-wide figure of 3%. Ontario's culture sector has an immigrant share (33%) in line with the provincial workforce overall as well (33%), but with notable variation across subsectors. The cultural and creative industries (37%) and design (34%) show higher immigrant participation, while GLAMs (18%) have substantially lower representation. The arts subsector falls slightly below the sector average at 25%.

The following figure looks beyond subsectors to occupational roles and shows that immigrant workers are integrated across a wide range of roles in the culture sector, though levels of representation vary modestly by occupational function. Immigrants make up one-third of the culture sector workforce overall (33%), with relatively consistent representation across creative, managerial, and other roles, where immigrants account for roughly one-third of workers. Technical roles show a lower share of immigrant participation (23%). As in the subsector analysis, non-permanent residents represent a very small proportion of employment across all occupational categories (1-5%).

Figure 10: Culture sector workers, distribution of headcount by immigration status and occupational roles

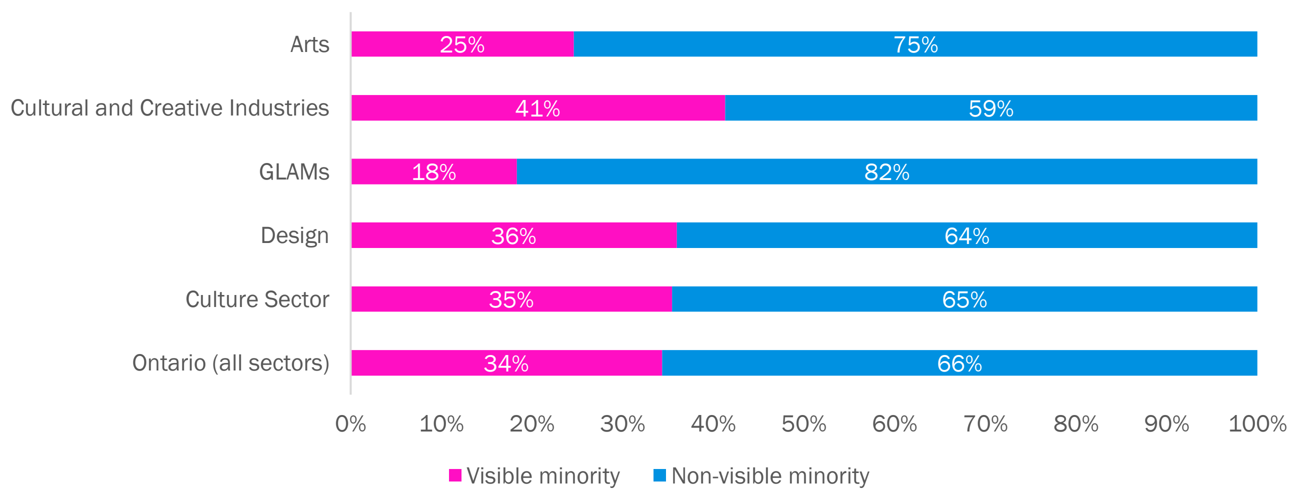


Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population, Custom tabulation.

Equity-deserving and Under-represented Groups

The following chart looks at the presence of visible minorities[8] in the culture sector.

Figure 11: Culture sector workers, distribution of headcount by visible minority status and subsector



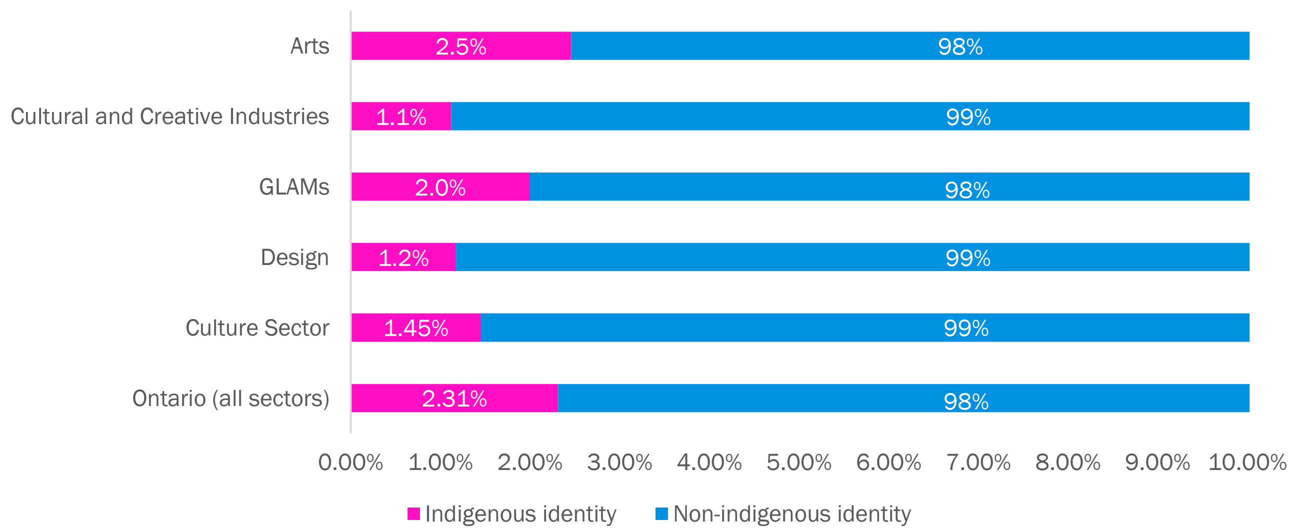
Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population, Custom tabulation.
GLAMs: Galleries, libraries, archives and museums

[8] The term “visible minority” is used by Statistics Canada and is retained here for consistency with official data sources. However, the authors acknowledge that the term is outdated and does not reflect how many individuals and communities self-identify.

The share of workers who are a visible minority in Ontario's culture sector (35%) is broadly in line with the provincial workforce overall (34%), though there is notable variation across subsectors. Cultural and creative industries exhibit the highest representation, with 41% of workers being visible minorities, followed by design at 36%. In contrast, the arts (25%) and GLAMs (18%) show substantially lower representation relative to both the culture sector as a whole and the Ontario average. Since the last report, the share of visible minority workers in the culture sector has increased by 9%.

As illustrated in the following chart, Indigenous workers remain significantly underrepresented across Ontario's culture sector, with levels largely mirroring the overall provincial workforce. Across all sectors in Ontario, 2.31% of workers identify as Indigenous; with a slightly lower proportion across the culture sector, at 1.45%.

Figure 12: Culture sector workers, distribution of headcount by Indigenous identity(ies) and subsector



Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population, Custom tabulation.
GLAMs: Galleries, libraries, archives and museums

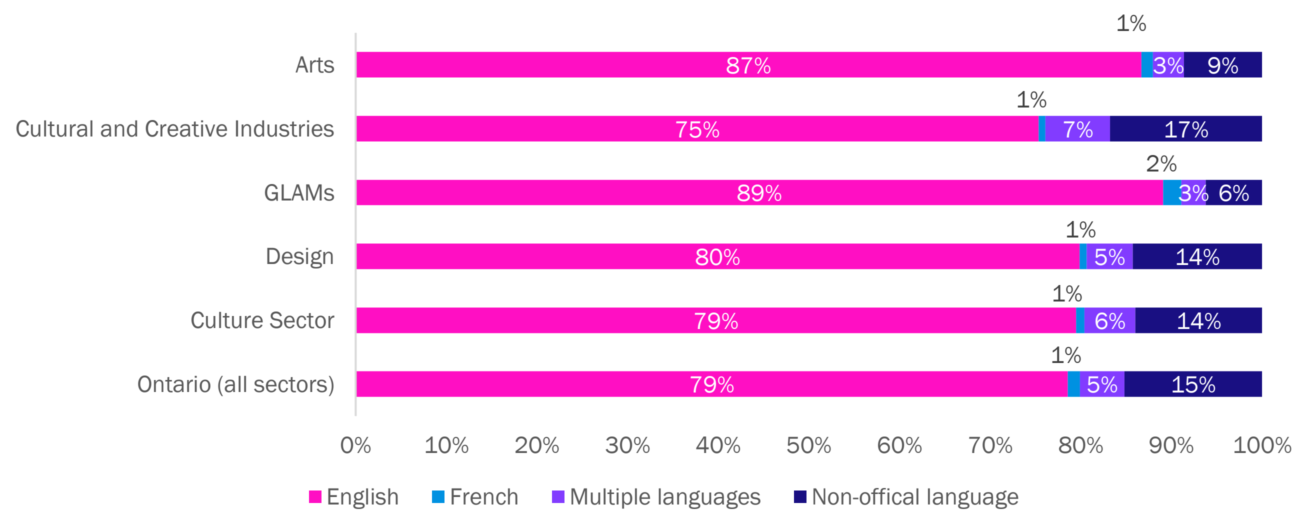
However, these figures capture only those counted through formal Statistics Canada mechanisms. Many Indigenous artists, knowledge keepers, and community cultural workers participate in the cultural economy through informal, community-based, land-based, or non-market practices that are not fully captured in standard labour-force surveys. In addition, some Indigenous workers may choose not to self-identify in official datasets, which can further contribute to under-representation in statistical outputs. As a result, while the chart reflects low Indigenous representation within conventional employment structures, it does not fully account for the breadth of Indigenous cultural labour that occurs outside formal systems.

While Statistics Canada's terminology has been updated since 2016, from Aboriginal identity to Indigenous, the share of cultural workers belonging to this demographic group has remained relatively consistent.

Languages Profile

The chart below illustrates the language most often spoken at home among workers in the culture sector.

Figure 13: Culture sector workers, distribution of headcount by language most often spoken at home and subsector



Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population, Custom tabulation.

GLAMs: Galleries, libraries, archives and museums

As the chart shows, the overall culture sector is relatively consistent with the Ontario workforce overall as far as languages most often spoken at home. For example, English is the language most often spoken at home by the majority of workers in Ontario's culture sector (79%), consistent with the Ontario workforce overall (79%). This pattern holds across all subsectors, with the highest shares observed in GLAMs (89%) and the arts (87%). The cultural and creative industries (75%) and design (80%) display comparatively greater linguistic diversity, with larger proportions of workers reporting a non-official language as the language spoken most often at home. Across the sector, French and multiple-language use account for relatively small shares of workers, generally ranging from 1% to 7%, though the arts and GLAMs show slightly lower multilingual representation than other subsectors.

Table 3: Average income of French-speaking Ontarian culture workers

Subsector	Average income of French speaking Ontarian workers	Average income of all workers
Arts	$15,876	$14,728
Culture and Creative Industries	$68,265	$68,559
GLAMs (Galleries, libraries, archives and museums)	$47,979	$42,704
Design	$41,381	$41,720
Total Culture Sector	**$45,760**	**$47,900**

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population, Custom tabulation.

Average incomes for Ontarians who primarily speak French at home and work in the culture sector, are very slightly less than the average incomes of all workers, apart from GLAMs, where incomes are notably higher for Ontarians who primarily speak French at home.

2.3. Income and Benefits

Income From the Culture Sector

> The average income, excluding arts, across the culture sector was **$59,700.**

Average annual income from all sources (e.g., wages, salaries, commissions) for workers in the culture sector was **$47,900**. However, this figure is a slightly misleading indication of the sector, as the 2021 Census was undertaken during the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result (see the table below), average income for audience-facing specializations, particularly in the arts, brought the average down (see Appendix D for breakdown of income by occupational function and specialization). Removing all specializations in the arts from the average brings the average annual income in the culture sector to **$59,700**. This figure is roughly similar to the average reported in the 2016 Census (across all subsectors) of $58,400, and consistent with the average income in 2022 as reported by 2025 survey respondents, $60,135.

Table 4: Average income in 2021 by subsector and specialization

Subsectors and specializations	Average income 2021
Arts	**$14,728**
Visual Arts & Crafts	$13,038
Dance, Music, Theatre	$15,460
Literary Arts	$17,767
The Cultural and Creative Industries	**$68,559**
Digital Media	$86,721
Film & Television	$44,250
Advertising	$67,912
Book and Magazine Publishing	$33,065
Music Recording and Publishing	$22,648
GLAMs (Galleries, libraries, archives and museums)	**$42,704**
Libraries	$45,269
Museums	$29,687
Archives	$23,986
Design	**$41,720**
Employed across subsectors[9]	**$52,326**
Total Culture Sector average	**$47,900**

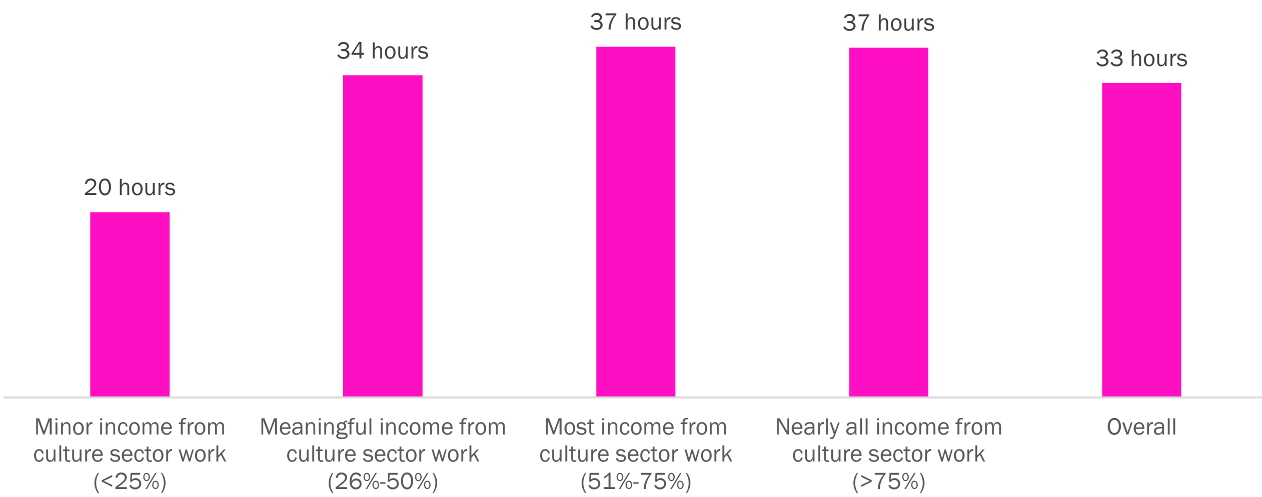
Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population, Custom tabulation.

[9] Due to limitations of statistical occupation and industry classification systems, "workers employed across subsectors" could not be associated with a particular subsector and/or specialization.

However, given what we know of the sector and how it works, this figure of $59,700 likely overstates the average income of culture workers because these workers do not (on average) make all their income from culture-related activities. In this context. Nordicity adjusted the results of the census analysis using results of the survey. So, although the $59,700 figure represents the overall annual income of culture sector workers, **the average annual income from culture-related activities was $41,400, i.e., 69.4% of income from all sources.**

To illustrate this balancing act, the following chart, based on survey responses, shows the portion of a 40-hour work week that workers spend on their cultural practices, broken out by the portion of their annual income generated from the culture sector.

Figure 14: Weekly hours spent on culture sector work (by % of income earned from culture) (n=490)

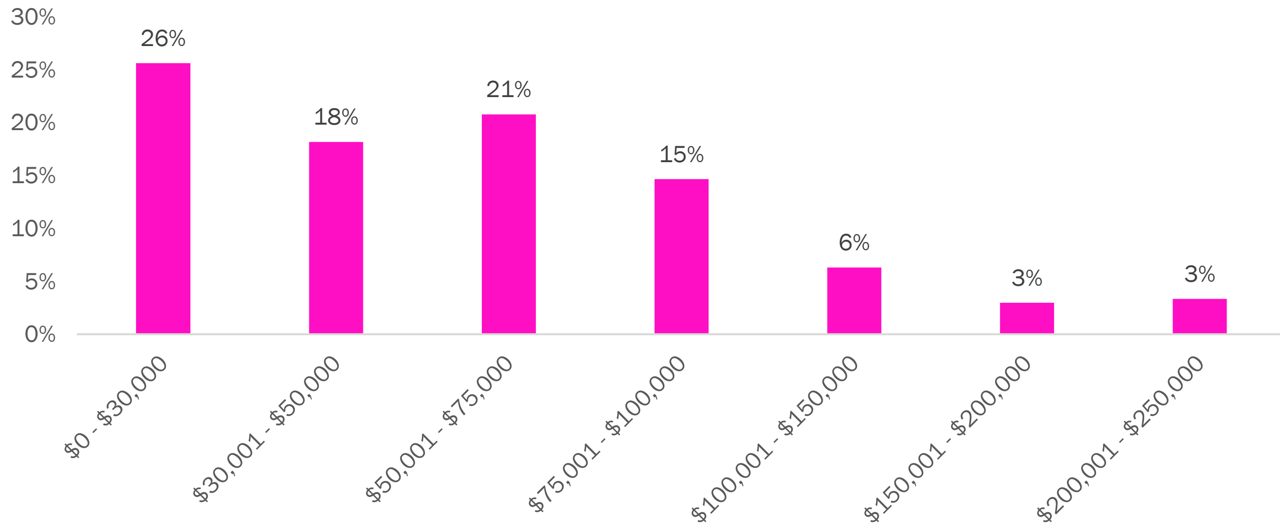


Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

The chart also highlights a **mismatch between time spent on cultural work and income earned from it.** Even respondents who derive less than 25% of their income from cultural work report spending an average of 20 hours per week, or roughly half of a standard 40-hour work week, on their cultural work. Weekly hours increase steadily as reliance on culture work income grows, reaching 34 hours among those earning 26–50% of their income from culture and 37 hours among those earning more than half of their income from culture work. Overall, respondents devote an average of 33 hours per week to cultural work, underscoring the extent to which cultural labour demands significant time even when it does not translate into proportional income.

The following chart illustrates how income from all sources is distributed among culture sector workers.

Figure 15: Income distribution (from all sources) (n=539)



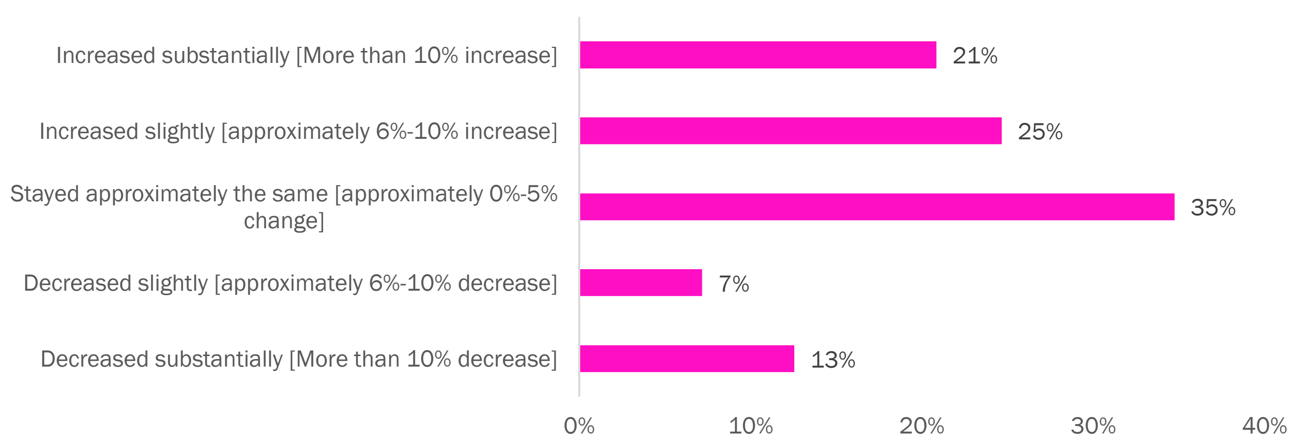
Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

The curve depicted above indicates the majority of culture workers (80%) are clustered earning less than $100,000 per year.

Income Change

The following figure shows how incomes changed over the period 2022–2024. On average, workers in the culture sector reported an average income increase of 3.5% from 2022 to 2024. Note, however, that there was a great deal of variation experienced at the individual level. The following chart shows the distribution of survey responses about workers' change in income.

Figure 16: Percentage income change from 2022 (n=490)



Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

Overall, income growth was more common than decline, likely reflecting ongoing recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic period. Just over one-third (35%) reported that their income stayed approximately the same, while 46% experienced some level of increase, including 25% with a slight increase and 21% with a substantial increase. At the same time, 20% reported income declines, with 13% experiencing a substantial decrease and 7% a slight decrease.

Income by Function

Shifting back to census data, the following table breaks out average income from all sources by creative and non-creative occupational functions in each subsector.

Table 5: Culture sector workers, average income from all sources by subsector and occupational function

	Creative	Technical	Managerial	**Overall Culture Sector**
Arts	$12,731	$25,404	$44,657	**$14,728**
The Cultural and Creative Industries	$66,250	$38,068	$90,336	**$68,559**
GLAMs (Galleries, libraries, archives and museums)	$65,111	$21,973	$78,398	**$42,704**
Design	$37,652	$48,399	$92,818	**$41,720**
Employed across subsectors	$46,843	$38,025	$88,982	**$52,326**
Overall	**$42,156**	**$35,777**	**$85,728**	**$47,900**

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population, Custom tabulation.

Above we can see that:

- The range spans from $12,720 for creative workers in the arts (likely lower due to impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on audience-facing artistic occupations as seen in Table 5) to $90,300 for managerial roles in the cultural and creative industries, and $92,820 in the design subsector.
- The income of creative workers varies significantly between culture subsectors, both in dollar terms and as compared to non-creative job functions.
- On average, creative workers earn 45% less than their managerial counterparts across the subsectors, with the disparity most stark in the design subsector.
- Average incomes vary significantly between subsectors when looking at differences between creative workers and technical workers. While creative workers in the cultural and creative industries and GLAMs earn significantly more than their technical counterparts, the opposite is true for the design and arts subsectors. The impact of the pandemic on audience-facing roles in the arts may account for the lower earnings in creative roles in the arts, with incomes from more technical roles being sheltered from 2021 declines in income.

- Those occupations earning the least in each subsector also represent the majority of the workers in that subsection. Across the culture sector, workers in creative occupations far outnumber those in managerial roles, 4.5 : 1.0 across the sector. However, this ratio is more heavily skewed towards lower paying creative occupations in the arts and design subsectors in particular, with 17.5 and 19.4 creative workers for every managerial worker respectively.

Another way that the census data can provide insight into average incomes is by the size of urban centre, as illustrated in the following table.

Table 6: Culture sector workers, average income from all sources by subsector and size of urban centre

	<500K	>500K	Overall
Arts	$13,339	$15,129	**$14,728**
The Cultural and Creative Industries	$62,817	$69,541	**$68,559**
GLAMs (Galleries, libraries, archives and museums)	$41,556	$43,571	**$42,704**
Design	$41,479	$42,060	**$41,720**
Employed across subsectors	$48,801	$54,004	**$52,326**
Overall	**$35,722**	**$49,207**	**$47,900**

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population, Custom tabulation.

The overall trend shown above is that incomes are higher in the larger centres, across all subsectors. In part, this likely reflects differences in the composition of occupational functions in the above table; for example, highly paid managerial roles are likely to be more clustered in the larger centres. In reviewing the data above, it is also worth noting that the higher percentage of workers in large centres overall means that the higher incomes in the >500K category tend to make the greatest contribution to the overall average for Ontario.

The disparity in incomes based on size of urban center is most stark in the cultural and creative industries, likely due to the traditionally higher paying specializations (e.g. digital media and advertising) included in this subsector, which again, tend to agglomerate in urban centers with higher populations.

Table 7: Average income for women and Equity-Deserving Groups, Ontario culture sector

Subsector	Women	Indigenous identity	Visible Minority	Overall Culture Sector
Arts	$13,788	$11,089	$14,628	**$14,728**
The Cultural and Creative Industries	$63,313	$54,344	$74,332	**$68,559**
GLAMs (Galleries, libraries, archives and museums)	$43,899	$42,817	$36,926	**$42,704**
Design	$39,010	$40,330	$43,890	**$41,720**
Employed across subsectors	$49,853	$56,800	$53,810	**$52,326**
Overall	**$42,633**	**$35,610**	**$58,323**	**$47,900**

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population, Custom tabulation.

**In the 2021 Census, gender refers to an individual's personal and social identity as a man, woman or non-binary person (a person who is not exclusively a man or a woman). It should be noted that due to the granularity of data analysed, data aggregation into a two-category gender variable is sometimes necessary to protect the confidentiality of responses. In these cases, individuals in the 'non-binary persons' category are distributed to the other two gender categories by Statistics Canada.*

Across the majority of the cultural subsectors, women earn less on average than the overall cultural workforce, with the exception of GLAMs. The same is true for culture sector workers with Indigenous identities. Although they also earn more on average in the 'across subsector' category, the sample size is comparatively extremely low so any conclusions should be drawn with care, with only 40 people of Indigenous identity working in this subsector according to the 2021 Census.

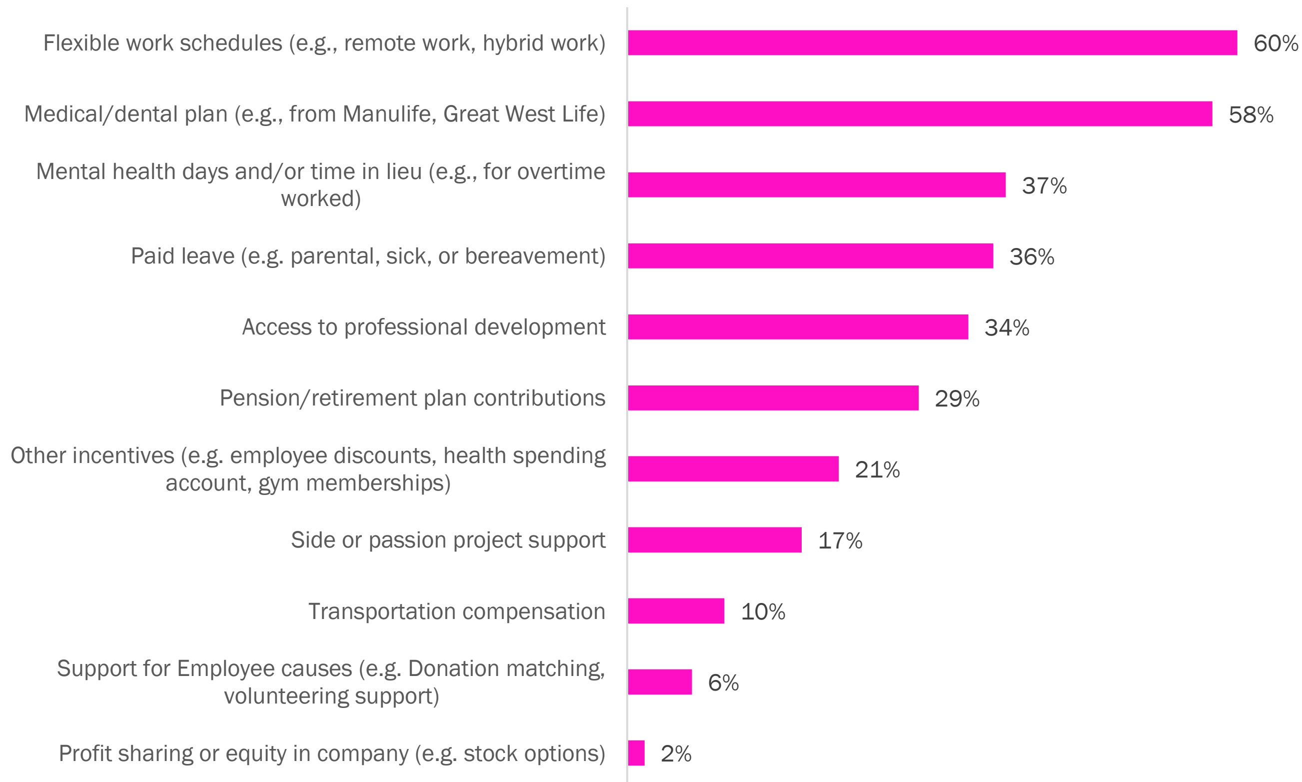
Conversely, culture sector workers belonging to a visible minority earn higher incomes on average than the total sector, except in GLAMs. This is driven by members of this demographic earning much higher on average in digital media and advertising roles in the cultural and creative industries, as well as in tech roles falling into the 'across subsectors' sector.

Benefits Held

The following chart illustrates the availability of employee benefits among workers in the culture sector. Flexible working schedules (60%) and medical and/or dental plans (58%) were the most prevalent, with around three fifths of culture sector workers having access to these benefits according to the survey.

In the next tier of prevalence down, over a third of all respondents to the survey reported access to mental health days or time in lieu (37%), paid leave for bereavement and sickness (36%), and access to professional development amongst their employment benefits (34%).

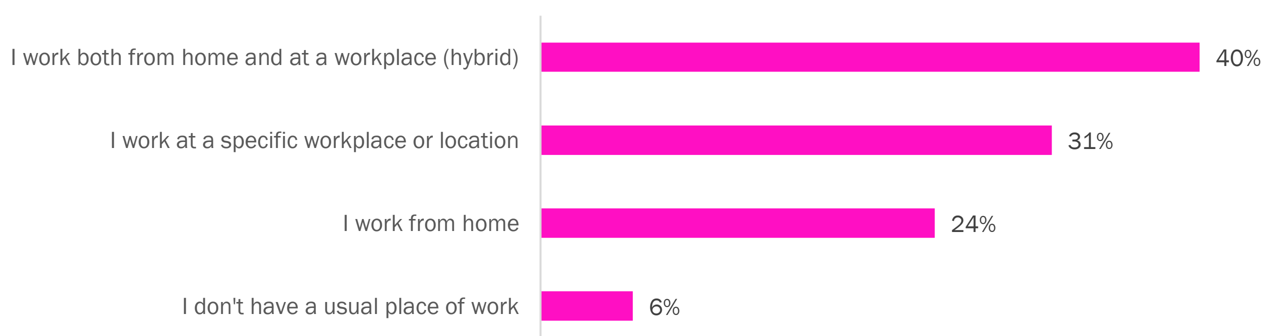
Figure 17: Benefits that cultural workers have access to (n=407)



Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

The types of flexible work arrangements were further explored in a separate survey question, which showed that hybrid work still accounts for the largest share (40%) of work arrangements. Nearly a third (31%) of respondents work at a specific workplace, and about a quarter (24%) work from home.

Figure 18: Where workers usually work (n=538)



Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

2.4. Secondary Work in Culture Sector

One intent of this report is to show the value and benefit of looking at the broad culture sector. While the study offers framing by sub-sector ("'arts", "cultural and creative industries", "GLAMs" and "design"), a strong and vibrant cultural sector is one where all these areas are thriving, and supportive of talent and labour crossovers. A quarter of survey respondents (26%) stated they have jobs *outside* of the broad culture sector. It is also important to understand how their work, art form or practice may overlap with other sub-sectors/disciplines *within* the culture sector.

> Half **(51%)** of all survey respondents[10] indicated that they have a secondary area of practice within the broad culture sector. Some **79%** of those respondents felt that their work spanned both the arts and creative industries.

The share of survey respondents who work primarily in the **arts** and indicated a secondary area of work or practice (n=179):

- About half (53%) reported that their secondary area of work or practice was predominately in another art form.
- Some 30% reported that their secondary area was predominately in the cultural and creative industries.

Of survey respondents who work in the **cultural and creative industries** and indicated a secondary area of work or practice (n=56):

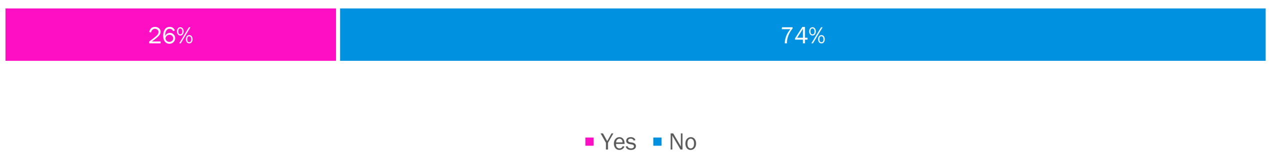
- About one-third (34%) reported that their secondary work was also within the cultural and creative industries.
- About half (54%) reported their secondary area was in the arts.

Taken together, these results suggest that funding silos and other external measures may not always apply to how cultural workers perceive the full array of their practice, work or creative output and the porousness across the sector.

As mentioned, many culture sector workers also have a job *outside* of their culture sector work or practice. About a quarter of survey respondents (26%) stated they have jobs outside of their work in the culture sector.

[10] All survey respondents including Design and GLAMs (n=272/538).

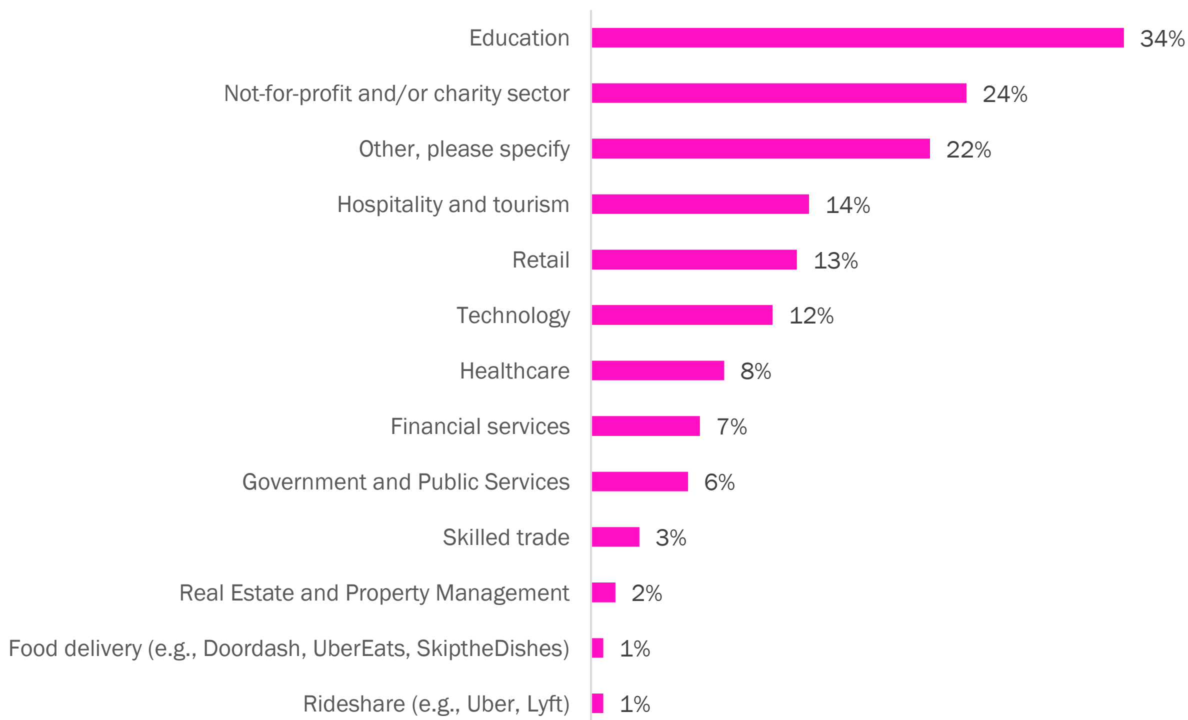
Figure 19: Cultural workers having a job outside of their work in the culture sector (n=495)



Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).
**New question in 2025 survey, not asked previously*

The following figure depicts in which industries these cultural workers hold jobs *outside* of the culture sector. Most commonly, they are employed in education (34%), followed by the not-for-profit and/or charity sector (24%). A smaller but notable share work in hospitality and tourism (14%), retail (13%), and technology (12%). Fewer respondents report employment in healthcare (8%), financial services (7%), or government and public services (6%), while only small proportions work in skilled trades (3%), real estate and property management (2%), or gig-based sectors such as food delivery and rideshare (each 1%).

Figure 20: Industries in which cultural workers have jobs (n=130)



Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

Intersection with Skilled Trades

An often-overlooked aspect of the culture sector is the extent to which it overlaps with other skills in the wider workforce, beyond creative or artistic disciplines. One area this is especially true is skilled trade occupations. Workers possessing highly specialized trade skills often play an important role in the wider culture value chain.

While many of these workers possessing a skilled trade are included in the categorization of cultural occupations as defined by the methodology used in this report (see Appendix F), there is a wider range of skilled trades that are not readily associated with the cultural economy but are nonetheless integral to the cultural value chain. For example, a craftsperson creating musical instruments would *already* be counted as a worker within the culture sector (i.e. in the 282,402 above) as their skilled trade occupation and industry is classified as cultural. However, an electrician in the film industry would not as their skilled trade is not classified as a cultural occupation according to this report's methodology.

Skilled Trades Ontario has developed a classification of these occupations[11], defining and coding 144 distinct 'skilled trades.' Therefore, to analyse the overlap and extent of workers with these trades, Nordicity mapped these trade codes onto 2021 5-digit NOCs codes.[12] This overlap is presented from two angles: the number and share of skilled trade workers within the Culture Sector as defined in this report, and the number of skilled trade workers operating within cultural industries but outside of the culture sector, in other words, in addition to the 'core' Culture Sector. This second, wider, group includes those skilled trades not considered to be a 'cultural occupation' but that work in industries considered to be a 'cultural industry.'

Table 8: Share of Culture Sector workers with a skilled trade

Culture Subsector	Worker count	Skilled Trade worker count	Share of subsector with a skilled trade
Arts	61,682	4,675	8%
Cultural and Creative Industries	149,170	10,690	7%
GLAMs (Galleries, libraries, archives and museums)	14,510	0	-
Design	49,845	5,380	11%
Across Subsectors	7,195	405	6%
Total Culture Sector	**282,402**	**21,150**	**7%**

Source: Skilled Trades Ontario, Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population, Custom tabulation.

[11] https://www.skilledtradesontario.ca/about-trades/trades-information/

[12] While many of the skilled trades defined by Skilled Trades Ontario directly map onto this level of the NOCs taxonomy, some are highly specialized and only correspond to occupations at the 6-digit level or below. As Nordicity's Statistics Canada custom cross tabulation used in this research does not go below the 5-digit NOCs level, Skilled Trade codes were assigned to the higher level 5-digit NOCs under which they appear. While this may result in an element of overestimation in the following worker counts, restriction of these mapped NOCs to cultural industry NAICS (as defined in Appendix G) provides a robust estimate of the overlap between the culture sector and skilled trades.

Overall, an estimated 21,150, or 7% of workers in Ontario's culture sector possess a skilled trade. The largest representation of workers with a skilled trade are found in the design subsector (11%), with between 6-8% in all other subsectors with the exception of GLAMs, where there are none.

> **21,150, or 7%** of workers in Ontario's culture sector possess a skilled trade.

However, this figure only considers those skilled trade occupations that were classified as being 'cultural occupations' and therefore fall into one of the cultural subsectors. Nordicity analysis of Statistics Canada data estimates that there are an additional **198,020** workers with skilled trades not classified as cultural occupations operating in cultural industries.[13] Restricting our analysis to include only those industries defined as relating to a particular primary specialization yields a more accurate estimate of **12,295** additional workers with skilled trades not classified as cultural occupations operating in cultural industries.

2.5. Mode of Work

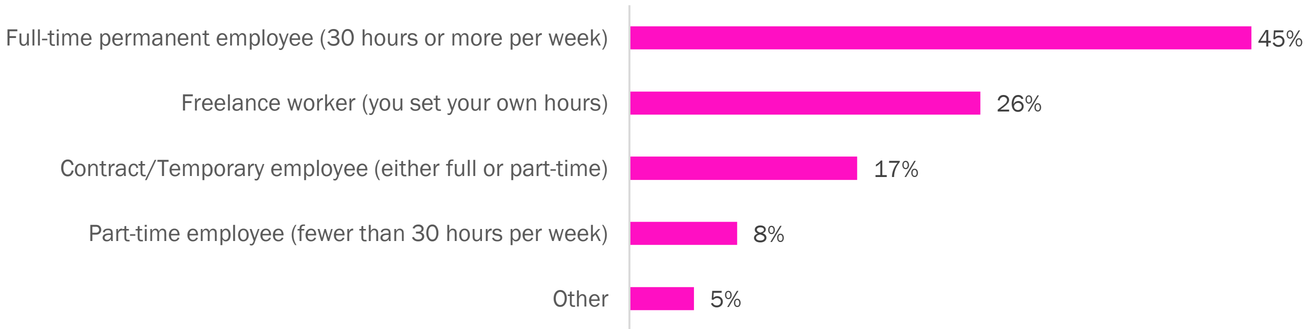
Understanding how cultural workers are engaged in their work is essential for interpreting broader labour-market conditions in the sector. Mode of work shapes income predictability, access to protections, and exposure to risk, and it influences how workers experience stability and career progression over time. The presence or absence of formal contracts, for example, provides insight into power dynamics, precarity, and accountability within working relationships.

Employment Arrangements

The following chart depicts how survey respondents currently work in the culture sector.

[13] A large proportion of these industries were included in the classification tables (Appendix G) due to the fact they were identified as including cultural roles, or being culture adjacent, for example education or digital technology industries. While these industries are important to include when trying to ascertain the total employment in the culture sector, it would, for example, be incorrect to attribute all teaching assistants as workers with a skilled trade operating in the culture sector.

Figure 21: Employment arrangements for culture sector workers in Ontario (n=409)

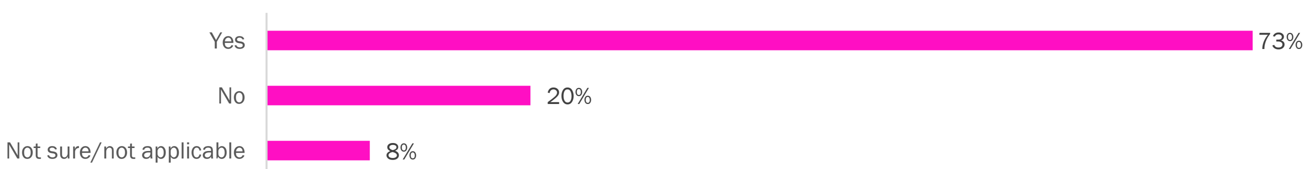


Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

Full-time permanent employment is the most common work arrangement among respondents, accounting for 45% of the workforce. However, a majority of workers report arrangements outside of full-time permanent roles, reflecting the continued prevalence of non-standard forms of work in the culture sector, as well as the common practice of combining multiple jobs within and outside the sector. Freelance workers make up just over one quarter of respondents (26%), while a further 17% work as contract or temporary employees. Part-time employment represents a smaller share at 8%, with 5% reporting other types of arrangements.

The following chart looks at survey respondents and whether they have formal agreements or contracts for their current work.

Figure 22: Presence of formal agreements or contracts for current work (n=446)



Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

Most respondents report having a formal contract in place for their work. Nearly three quarters (73%) indicate that they work under a formal contract, while one in five (20%) report that they do not. A further 8% are not sure or indicate that a formal contract is not applicable to their situation. These results suggest that while formal contracting is common, a substantial minority of cultural workers operate without clear contractual arrangements.

Summary of Findings

This section outlines the overall composition of Ontario's culture sector and reflects a broad culture sector that sustained its total employment between 2016 and 2021 while facing negative pressure on culture sector income as income stagnated or dropped depending on the inclusion of audience-facing specializations in the average. As in the previous study, the workforce is generally younger and more highly educated than the provincial average, with notable variation by subsector in age, gender representation, and cultural diversity. Patterns of representation suggest uneven levels of inclusion across roles and subsectors.

The findings also point to persistent structural challenges related to income stability, access to benefits, and modes of work. Cultural work often involves significant time commitments that are not consistently matched by income from cultural activities alone, contributing to reliance on mixed income sources. Employment is characterized by a high prevalence of freelance and contract work, uneven access to both benefits and formal contract agreements. Together, these patterns underscore a sector adopting flexibility to offset the deeper impacts of ongoing precarity.

3. Ontario's Culture Sector Organizations and Workplaces

This section draws on survey responses from approximately 40 organizations to explore an organizational perspective on the culture sector labour market. It covers topics including approaches to managing human resources, benefits provided by employers, and the types of labour market information accessed by and most useful to culture sector organizations. Responding organizations were largely not-for-profit (70%).

3.1. Organizational Capacity

The following chart illustrates how organizations administer their human resource-related tasks.

Figure 23: HR Practices (n=43)

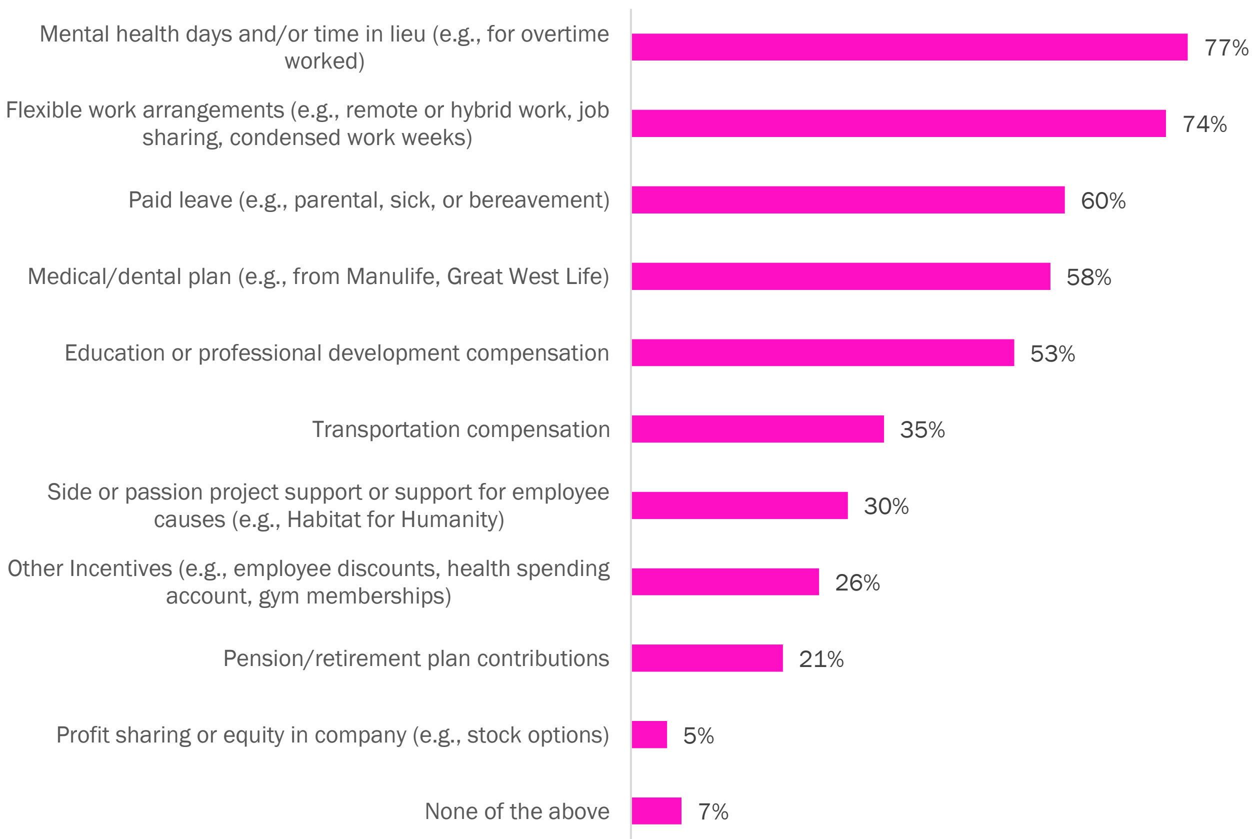
Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

Nearly two-thirds of organizations (63%) report that HR responsibilities are managed by senior management or executives. Far fewer organizations have formal HR structures, with 16% indicating they have an HR department. A similar share report outsourcing HR tasks (19%), while 19% indicate they have no formalized system in place to manage HR-related activities. A small minority (7%) report having no HR tasks at all. Overall, the distribution highlights a sector where HR responsibilities are frequently absorbed into leadership roles, with limited dedicated or specialized HR capacity across many organizations.

3.2. Benefits Provided

The following chart provides employers' perspective on benefits, which parallels a similar question asked of workers and shown in Figure 17. Employee benefits offered by culture sector organizations are concentrated in flexibility and short-term wellbeing supports rather than long-term financial benefits. Mental health days or time in lieu (77%) and flexible work arrangements (74%) are the most commonly offered benefits, followed by paid leave (60%) and medical or dental coverage (58%). Just over half of organizations provide education or professional development compensation (53%). Fewer organizations offer transportation compensation (35%) or support for side or passion projects (30%), while pension or retirement contributions are relatively uncommon (21%). Profit sharing or equity is rare (5%), and only a small minority report offering no benefits at all (7%).

Figure 24: Employee benefits offered by culture sector organizations (n=43)



Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

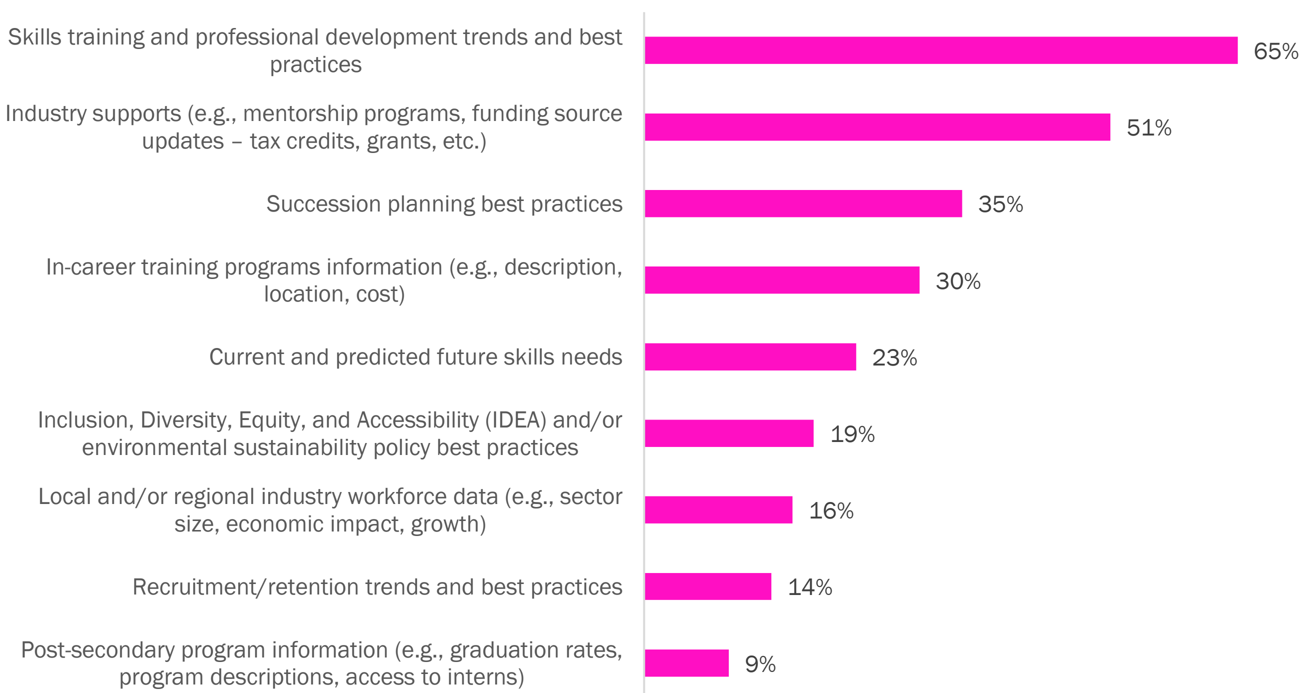
When compared with results from cultural workers in Figure 17, employers consistently report higher levels of benefit provision than workers report access to across most categories. The largest gaps are in mental health days or time in lieu and paid leave, which are reported by a majority of employers but by only about one-third of employees. Differences are also pronounced for transportation compensation, professional development, and flexible work arrangements, all of which employers report offering more frequently than workers report receiving. The reasons for this gap between what is offered and what is accessed are not clear (e.g., is it a lack of awareness or not clearly understanding what benefits are available?). The relatively small sample of organizations participating in the survey clouds the analysis somewhat and further investigation would be merited.

Medical and dental benefits are the main area of alignment, with identical shares reported by employers and employees. Pension or retirement contributions stand out as an exception, with a higher share of employees reporting access than employers reporting provision. Overall, while employers and employees identify similar types of benefits as present in the sector, the reported prevalence differs substantially for many benefits, particularly those related to leave, flexibility, and non-wage supports.

3.3. Labour Market Information

The following chart looks at the types of labour market information that are most useful for the operation of culture sector organizations.

Figure 25: Types of labour market information most useful in the operation of culture sector organizations (n=43)

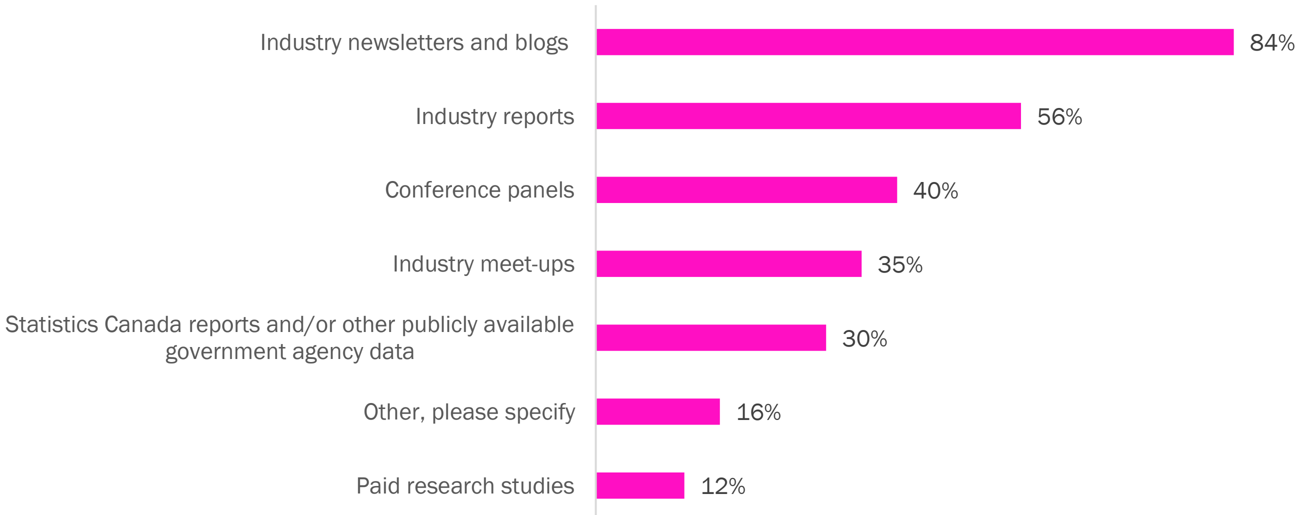


Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

Information related to skills training and professional development trends and best practices ranked highest, cited by nearly two-thirds of respondents (65%). This was followed by information on industry supports, such as mentorship programs and funding opportunities, including grants and tax credits (51%). Succession planning best practices (35%) and information on in-career training programs, including descriptions, locations, and costs (30%), were also identified as important areas of need. Best practices for supporting specific skills training, including navigating AI, would fit within the first category.

Perhaps surprisingly, lower proportions of respondents identified a need for forward-looking labour market intelligence, including current and predicted future skills needs (23%), as well as guidance related to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) and environmental sustainability policies (19%). Overall, the results suggest that organizations prioritize immediately applicable information that supports skills training, workforce development, and best-practice sharing.

Figure 26: Sources accessed by culture sector organizations to stay on top of management, best practices and/or labour market trends (n=43)



Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

Consistent with these preferences, organizations primarily rely on accessible, sector-specific channels to obtain information related to management, best practices, and labour market trends. Industry newsletters and blogs are the most commonly used source, cited by more than four in five respondents (84%), underscoring the importance of timely and curated content. Industry reports produced by sector organizations, research hubs, and consultancies are also widely accessed (56%), suggesting that longer-form analysis remains relevant when it is perceived as directly applicable to sector needs.

Peer-based and event-driven sources play a supporting role. Conference panels (40%) and industry meet-ups (35%) continue to function as important forums for knowledge exchange and professional learning. More formal data sources are used less frequently, with 30% of respondents reporting reliance on Statistics Canada or other publicly available government data. Paid research studies are accessed by a relatively small share of organizations (12%). Taken together, these findings indicate that culture sector organizations tend to favour low-cost, readily available sources that translate complex information into practical insights, reinforcing the demand for accessible and applied knowledge tools.

Summary of Findings

Findings from the survey indicate that Ontario's culture sector organizations operate with lean internal capacity, limited formal HR structures, and a strong reliance on flexible, short-term approaches to managing and supporting the workforce. HR responsibilities are most often absorbed by senior leadership rather than handled through dedicated or specialized roles, reflecting ongoing capacity constraints across many organizations. Benefits provision similarly emphasizes flexibility and wellbeing supports, such as mental health days, time in lieu, and flexible work arrangements, while long-term financial benefits remain uncommon. At the same time, organizations report providing a broader range of benefits than workers report receiving, pointing to gaps in access, consistency, or implementation.

In this context, organizations prioritize practical, immediately applicable labour market information, particularly related to skills development, funding opportunities, and succession planning, and rely heavily on accessible, sector-specific sources such as newsletters, industry reports, and peer-based forums.

4. Skills and Training Trends and Needs

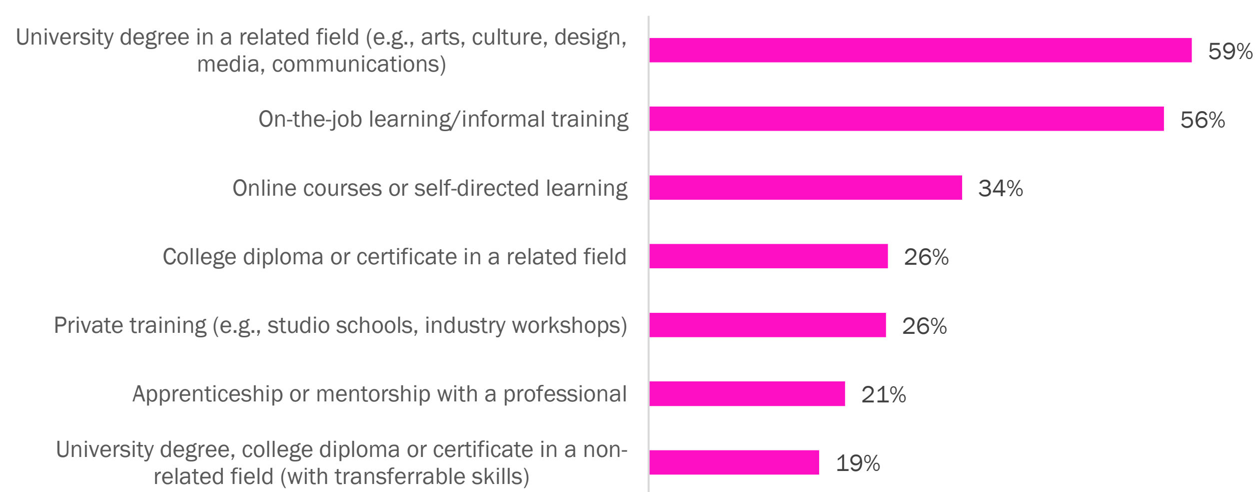
This section draws on survey responses and roundtable discussions to identify the skills that matter most today, how cultural workers prefer to develop them, and how employers are supporting access to training.

4.1. Sector Entry Pathways

Supporting pathways into the broad culture sector workforce is a factor in growing an inclusive and innovating sector. Access to formal and informal training and education opportunities is part of both the sector entry and career growth of the culture sector workforce in Ontario.

When asked what types of education or training helped individuals enter the culture sector, survey results (see figure below) show that most cultural workers (59%) found that a university degree in a related field such as arts, culture, design, media or communications helped them enter the sector. A similar share reported that on-the-job learning and informal training (56%) helped their entry. About a third of respondents found that online courses and self-directed learning (34%), a college diploma or certificate in a related field (26%), and private training (26%) were helpful to enter the sector. The combination of formal credentials and informal skill-building indicates that the sector continues to rely on mixed pathways, with structured education providing initial entry and work-based learning shaping early skills development.

Figure 27: Types of education or training that helped artists, freelancers, creators, and those working for cultural organizations enter the broad culture sector (n = 495)

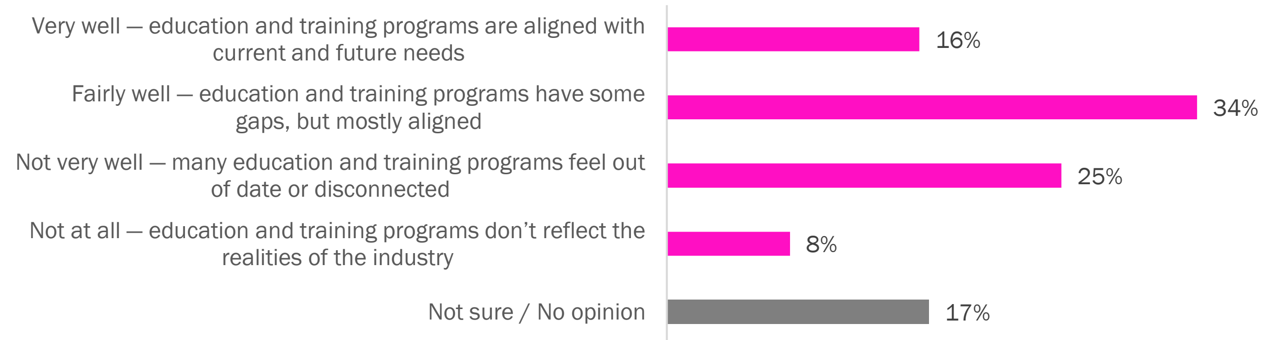


Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

Access aside, respondents expressed mixed views on how well post-secondary and training programs prepared them for work in the culture sector. Half (50%) felt that programs are aligned either "very well"

(16%) or "fairly well" (34%) with current and future needs. However, one quarter (25%) reported that programs are "not very well" aligned and feel "out of date or disconnected," and a smaller share (8%) indicated that programs do not reflect industry realities at all. Taken together, the results point to uneven confidence in existing education and training pathways, with many cultural workers perceiving gaps between formal preparation and the skills required once they enter the sector.

Figure 28: How well cultural workers think post-secondary education and training programs are preparing people for careers in the broad culture sector today (n = 495)



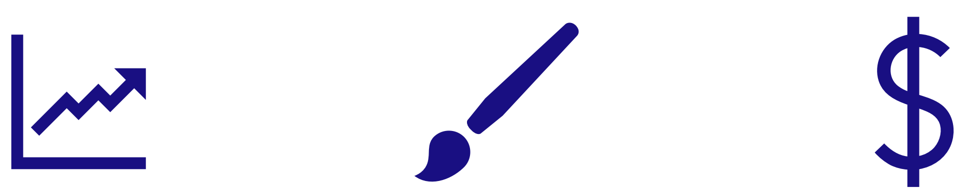
Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

4.2. Skills Needs

Skills and capacity needs remain a central issue shaping the sustainability of cultural careers in Ontario. Understanding where skills gaps persist, and how these needs differ across cultural workers and organizations, is critical to designing effective training, professional development, and support systems that strengthen both individual career pathways and overall sector resilience.

Survey respondents identified a broad mix of skills as critical for developing their careers in the culture sector. Entrepreneurial, business, leadership and management skills ranked highest (59%), followed closely by creation, artistic and curatorial skills (57%). Grant-writing and navigating the funding landscape was the next most frequently cited need (34%).

Figure 29: Top 3 most critical skills for cultural workers to develop their career in the sector (n=495)



Entrepreneurial, business, leadership and management skills (59%)

Creation, artistic and curatorial skills (57%)

Grant-writing and navigating the funding landscape (34%)

Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

Notably, skills needs for workers haven't changed substantially in the last five years. The first two of these skills were identified in the top three for MakingItWork 2019 as well, with "digital and technology literacy" being the third highest skills need identified. The appearance of grant-writing and navigating the funding landscape in the top three is potentially an indicator or symptom of the financial pressure the sector is facing. In this climate, fundraising skills are more critical and urgent, in a sense, than digital literacy.

Beyond these top skills areas, cultural workers pointed to digital and technology literacy (25%), financial literacy and reporting (22%), and digital marketing and discoverability (19%) as important but less widespread needs. The overall pattern reflects a workforce that must balance creative practice with administrative, financial, and digital capabilities. It is worth noting that in the survey, AI was positioned less as a standalone skills need and more as a tool that could underpin any of the core skills needs (marketing, grant-writing, management, and so on). The adoption of AI across the culture sector is explored in greater dimension in the next section.

A closer look at the specific entrepreneurial, business, leadership and management skills needs reinforces this pattern.

Figure 30: Specific entrepreneurial, business, leadership and management skills needs for cultural workers

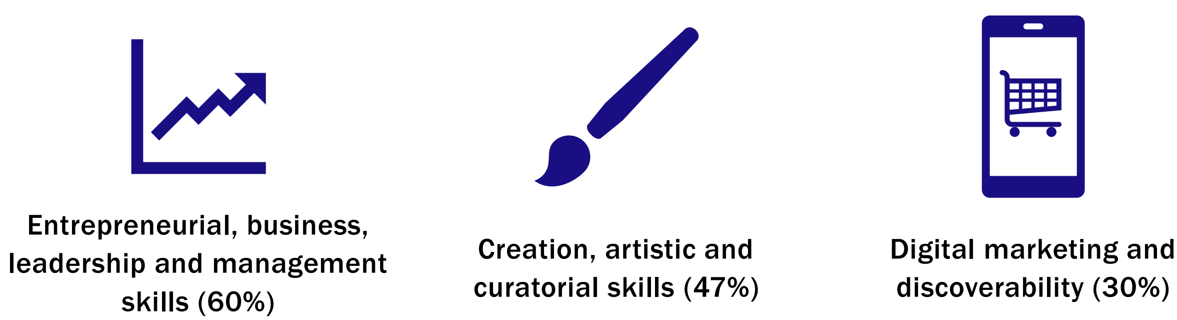
Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

As shown in the chart above, cultural workers most frequently identified budgeting, financial management, and navigating access to capital, alongside project and production management (both 54%), as skills needs. Nearly half (49%) of respondents also emphasized budgeting, planning and resource allocation, audience development and community engagement (47%), and effective grant writing and reporting (46%). Smaller but still notable shares of respondents pointed to:

- marketing and communications;
- strategic planning;
- leading teams and organizations;
- managing partnerships and collaborations; and
- business planning for creative practice.

For organizations, the skills considered most critical were entrepreneurial, business, leadership and management skills (ranked highest at 60%), creation, artistic and curatorial skills (47%), and digital marketing and discoverability (30%).

Figure 31: Top 3 most critical skills for organizations (n=43)



Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

For organizations, the highest ranked critical skills mirrored findings from MakingItWork 2019. Entrepreneurial, business, leadership and management skills were identified as the highest need (60%), with “marketing skills” more generally being second. The third most critical need at the time was creative, artistic and curatorial skills.

Beyond these top skills areas, in 2025 respondents on behalf of organizations pointed to digital and technology literacy (26%), financial literacy and reporting (26%), and grant-writing and navigating the funding landscape (26%) as critical skills. Roundtable discussions noted that these skills needs reflect broader pressures across the sector, where both cultural workers and leaders are expected to manage complex administrative and managerial tasks alongside creative work. They highlighted persistent gaps in leadership capacity and emphasized the need for stronger development supports such as coaching, mentorship, and peer learning. They also noted that AI may provide a practical tool to reduce administrative workload, freeing time for more strategic and creative tasks.

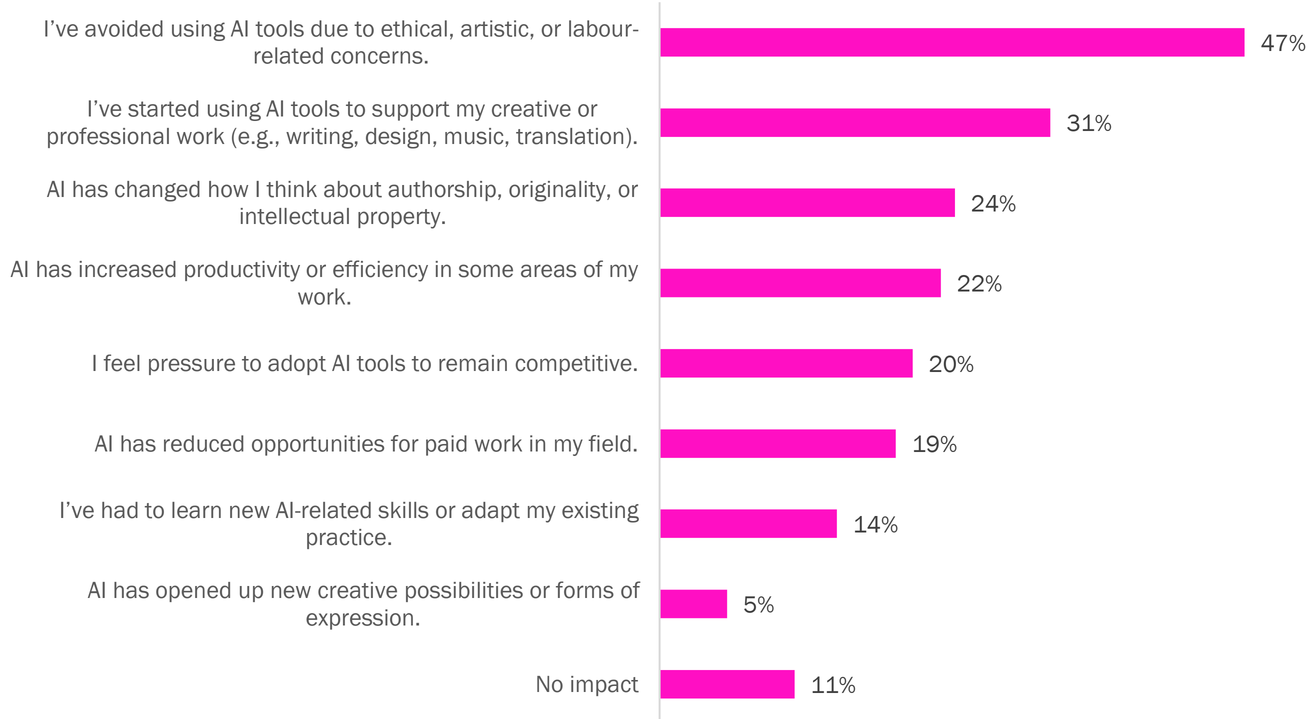
4.3. AI Adoption

AI is increasingly shaping creative practice and organizational workflows across the sector. Across disciplines and roles, AI tools are increasingly used to support a range of creative and operational tasks, including content generation, research assistance, and routine administrative work. At the same time, these technologies raise questions about creative agency, ethical use, labour impacts, and assessments of artistic value. This section examines how cultural workers and organizations are engaging with AI, what impacts they report, and how these patterns reflect both opportunities and concerns within the sector.

> **AI Adoption and Avoidance**
>
> **31%** of cultural workers and 51% of organizations have begun using AI in their work.
>
> **47%** of cultural workers and 33% of organizations deliberately avoid it due to ethical, artistic, or labour-related concerns.

Survey results (as shown in the figure below) suggest that AI is beginning to shape creative and organizational work in Ontario's culture sector, though adoption remains uneven and shaped by a mixture of curiosity, caution, and capacity constraints. Nearly one-third of cultural workers (31%) have begun using AI tools to support creative or professional tasks such as writing, design, or translation. A further 24% reported that AI is changing how they think about authorship, originality, and intellectual property, indicating that, for a quarter of the sector, their perspectives and viewpoints on AI are not fixed and continue to evolve. More tangibly speaking, nearly a quarter (22%) noted gains in productivity or efficiency. At the same time, concerns remain substantial with 47% of cultural workers avoiding AI tools due to ethical, artistic, or labour-related concerns, and 20% reporting feeling pressure to adopt AI to remain competitive.

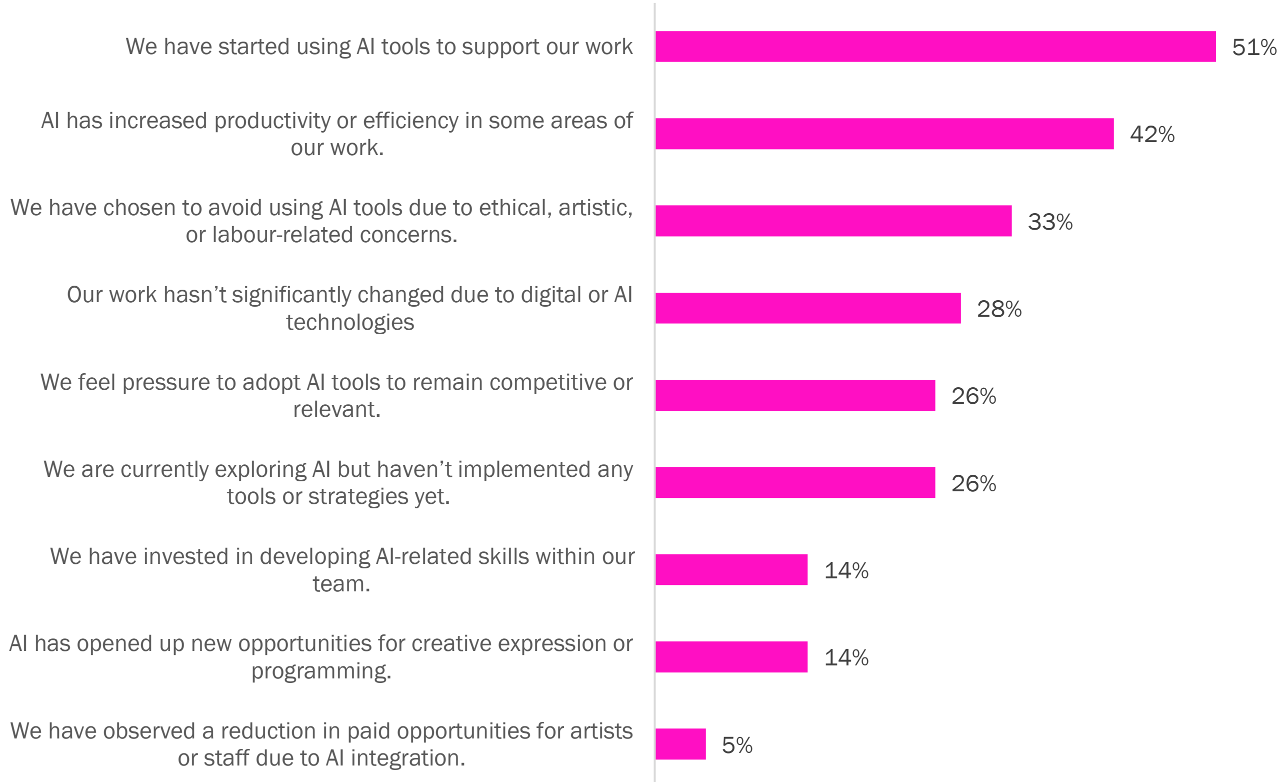
Figure 32: Impact of the rise of AI technologies on cultural workers' work in the culture sector (n=446)



Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

Among organizations, adoption is slightly higher. Over half (51%) reported that they have begun using AI tools to support their work, and 42% identified productivity gains. Yet one-third (33%) deliberately avoid AI, citing ethical, artistic, or labour concerns, and 26% reported pressure to adopt AI to stay relevant. A sizeable share of organizations are still in exploratory stages without formal implementation (26%), and only 14% have invested in developing AI-related skills within their teams.

Figure 33: Impact of AI on organizations' work in the culture sector (n=43)



Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

In tandem with the skills needs presented in the previous section, it is notable that the immediate pressures around funding and sustainability, within this survey sample, have risen above digital literacy skills needs, including AI-related skills development. While half of organizations have started using AI tools to support their work, at the point of this survey it suggests AI adoption is not yet a clear priority.

Roundtable participants described AI as a developing tool that could both alleviate and intensify pressures in the sector. Some highlighted interest in using AI to manage routine administrative tasks or "support us as virtual staff members" when capacity is stretched. Others noted practical uses already emerging in their workflows such as pulling leases or contracts into AI tools to verify specific clauses or help interpret dense documents.

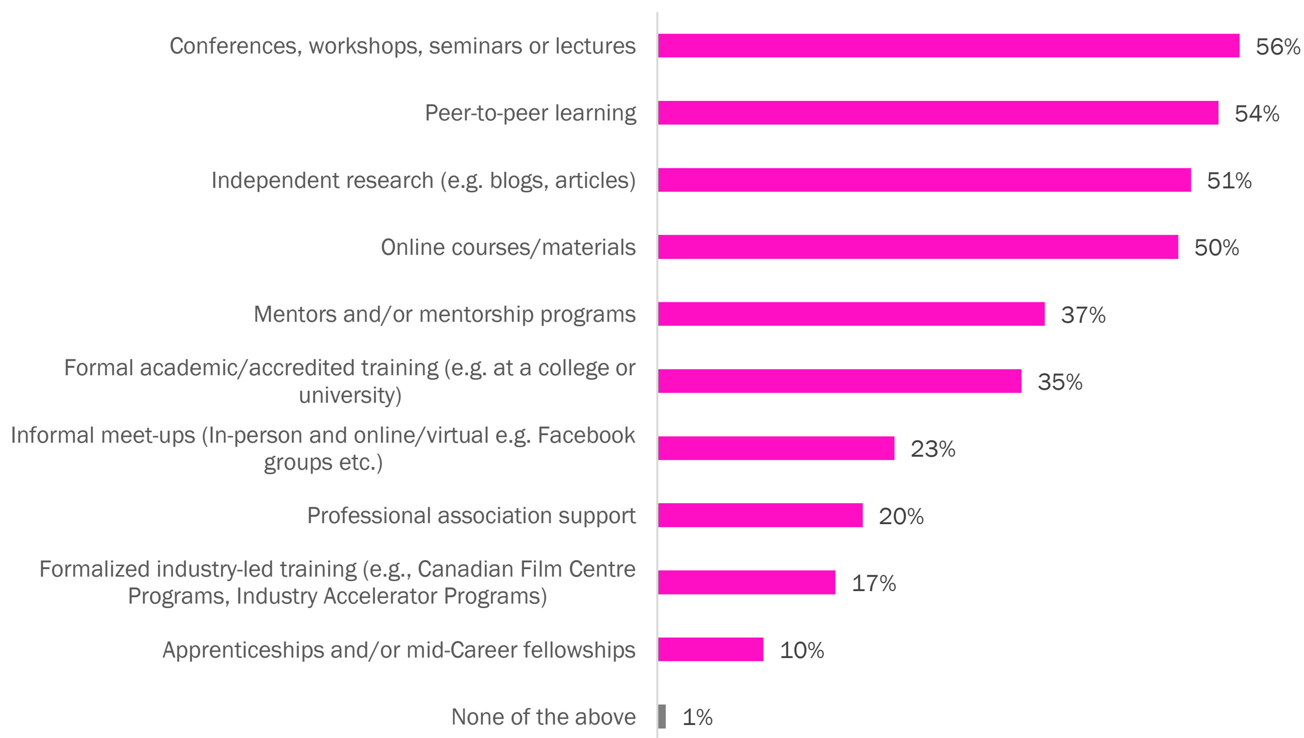
At the same time, participants raised several concerns tied directly to the nature of artistic work and sector sustainability. Music participants referred to AI as "an existential crisis," stressing that a system where "someone can write a prompt and write a song" bypasses the artistic process entirely. Others argued that licensing frameworks need to evolve so that artists "are paid for their work" when their material is used to train or generate AI outputs. Environmental concerns were also noted, including unease about the resource intensity of large-scale AI systems and whether these technologies align with sustainability priorities emerging across the sector.

Participants also pointed to uncertainty about responsible use, risks to creative integrity, and limited organizational capacity to train staff or develop internal guidelines. Some warned that AI could "push people out of the labour force," while others noted emerging shifts in expectations, including receiving "documents that are clearly just AI" or seeing government partners use AI tools to skim grant submissions. Together, these reflections suggest that while AI holds potential to ease capacity pressures, many cultural workers and organizations are navigating a complex balance between experimentation, caution, and values-driven decision-making.

4.4. Learning New Skills

The ways cultural workers build new skills reflect a mix of formal, informal, and self-directed learning. Cultural workers most often learn through conferences, workshops, seminars or lectures (56%), peer-to-peer learning (54%), independent research (51%), and online courses or materials (50%). Mentors and mentorship programs (37%) and formal academic or accredited training (35%) also play meaningful roles in skill development. Roundtable participants emphasized that collaboration, shared learning, and opportunities to learn from peers remain important to navigating the broad and evolving skill demands in the sector.

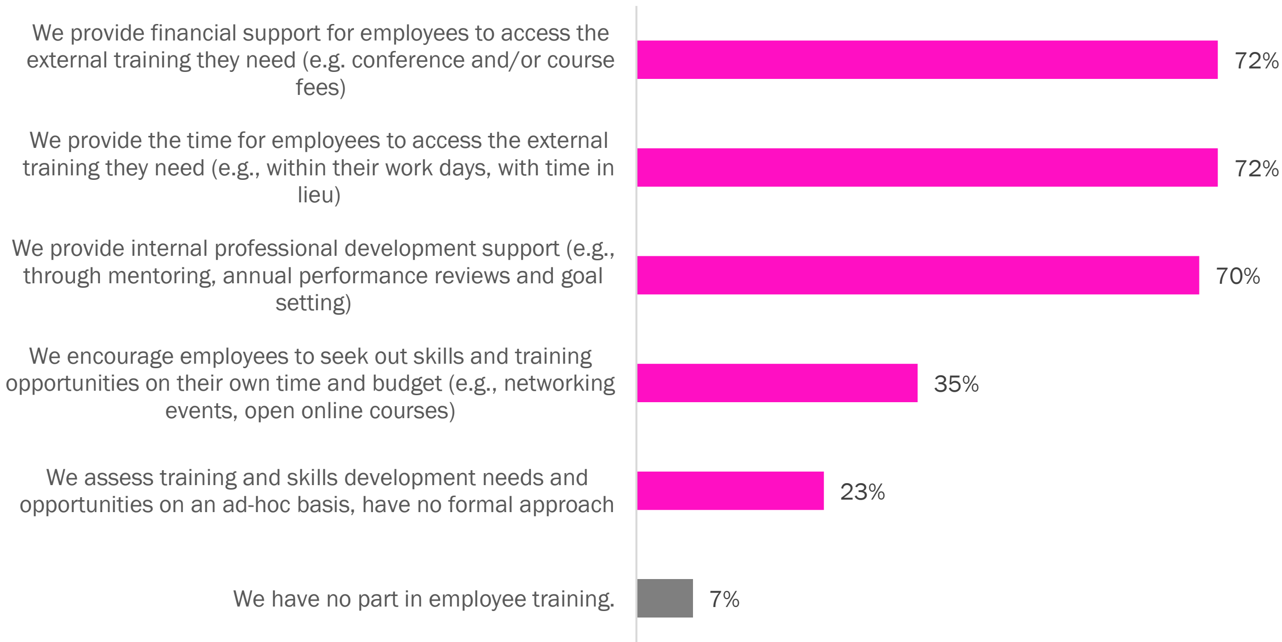
Figure 34: How cultural workers learn new skills (n=495)



Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

Those responding on behalf of organizations reported supporting skills development through several approaches, many of which complement the learning methods cultural workers use most frequently. Most provide financial support for external training (72%) and provide time for employees to access that training (72%), which aligns with cultural workers' strong reliance on conferences, workshops, and courses. Internal professional development such as mentoring, performance discussions, and goal setting (70%) also aligns with workers' interest in mentorship as a learning tool. Some organizations encourage employees to pursue training independently (35%) or identify training needs on an ad-hoc basis (23%). Roundtable discussions noted that, alongside these organizational supports, cultural workers continue to depend on peer knowledge exchange, networking, and informal collaboration, suggesting that both organizational and community-based learning environments play important roles in meeting the sector's evolving skill requirements.

Figure 35: How employers help employees access training and/or acquire new skills (n=43)



Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

While the alignment between employee preferences and organizational offerings is positive, 7% of organizations reported that they take no part in employee training, indicating that at least some portion of the employed workforce is not receiving support to bolster their professional skills. As access to training is constrained by time and money, organizations reported spending on average $7,439 per company on training (or 1% of the average annual budgets).

Summary of Findings

Survey respondents identified a broad mix of skills as critical for developing their careers in the culture sector. While cultural workers and organizations adapt to new technologies such as AI, notably, the most critical skills needs haven't changed substantially in the past five years. The overall pattern reflects a workforce that must balance creative practice with administrative, financial, and digital capabilities. AI adoption remains uneven and shaped by a mixture of curiosity, caution, and capacity constraints. About half of organizations have started using AI tools to support their work.

Entry into the sector continues to rely on a mix of formal education and informal, work-based learning, though confidence in how well training programs align with industry needs is uneven. In practice, many roles and leaders are expected to "do all the things," maintaining proficiency across a widening set of administrative, financial, creative, and digital tasks, often with limited resources. Skills development therefore depends heavily on flexible, practical learning approaches, supported where possible by employers.

5. Issues and Challenges Facing the Culture Sector

This section looks at the issues and challenges facing the culture sector as a whole, including career satisfaction and mobility; barriers to sustaining careers in the culture sector; workforce retention; Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA); and environmental sustainability.

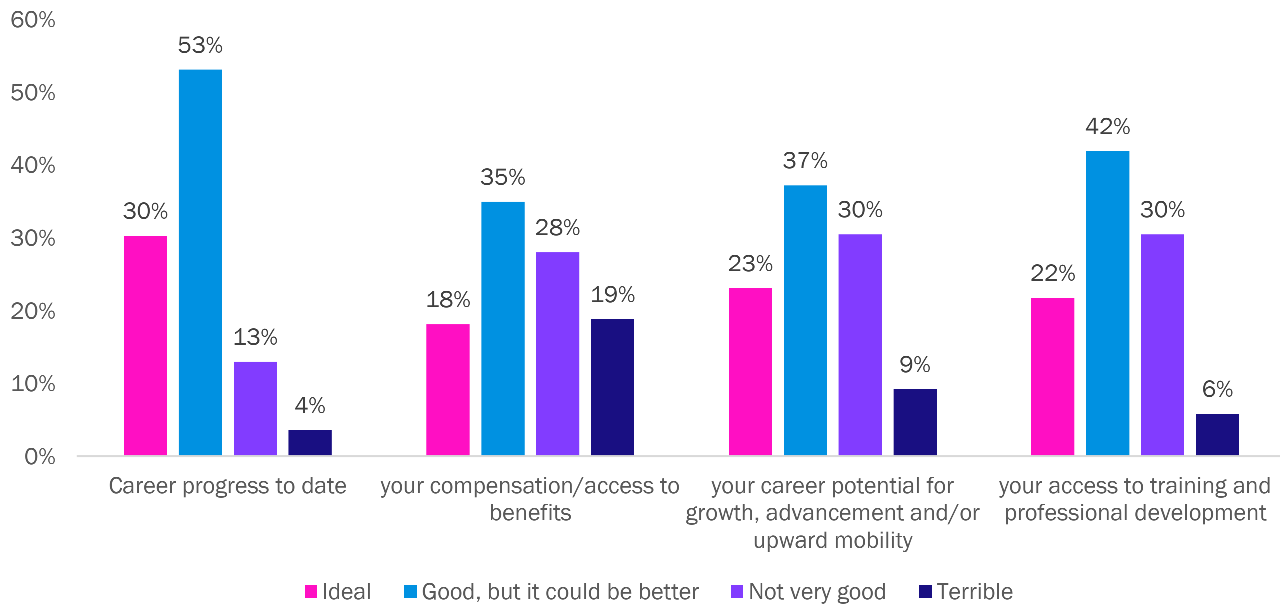
5.1. Career Satisfaction and Mobility

Career trajectories in the culture sector have long been described as non-linear and even non-traditional. Survey results show a mixed picture of how cultural workers view their career progress and outlook for the future.

> About half (53%) of respondents report that their career progress to date has been “good, but it could be better,” while about a third (30%) describe their career progress as “ideal.”

Looking at cultural workers’ satisfaction with their compensation and access to benefits, almost a fifth (18%) described them as “ideal” and over a third (35%) felt they were “good, but it could be better.” However, it should also be noted that this category was reported to have the highest rates of dissatisfaction, highlighting the continued impact of low wages and benefits as a barrier to career sustainability in the culture sector. A fifth (19%) felt their compensation and access to benefits were “terrible” in addition to over a quarter reporting that their compensation and access to benefits were “not very good.” Despite what can be seen as an overall picture of optimism, worker satisfaction does not extend as strongly to the future. Only 23% feel “ideal” about their potential for advancement, and 30% rate their prospects as “not very good.” Access to training and professional development shows a similar pattern: while 42% rate access as “good,” nearly one-third (30%) say it is “not very good,” and 6% report it as “terrible.”

Figure 36: Culture worker satisfaction with career progress, compensation/access to benefits, career potential for growth, advancement and/or upward mobility, and access to training and professional development (n=495)



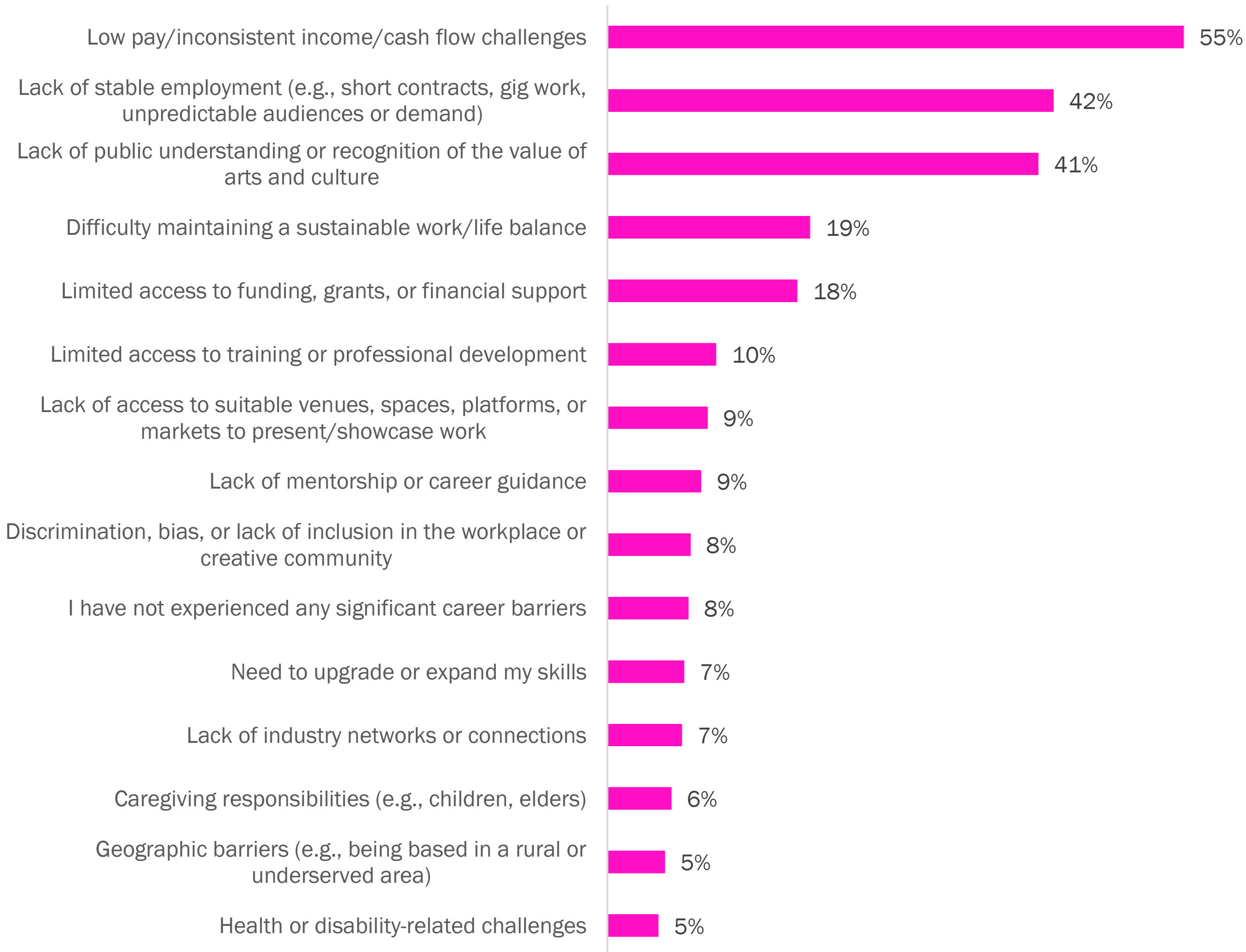
Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

Roundtable discussions help explain this shift from relatively positive reflections on past progress to a more uncertain view of the future. Participants consistently described limited opportunities for upward mobility, particularly in small and mid-sized organizations where senior roles are few and turnover is low. Several noted that the mid-career period in the culture sector can feel like a plateau, with cultural workers moving quickly through early-stage responsibilities only to encounter a lack of clearly defined next steps. Others emphasized that pathways into and through the sector are often informal or opaque, making it difficult for cultural workers to understand what skills or experiences will enable advancement.

5.2. Barriers to Sustaining Careers in the Culture Sector

Survey and roundtable findings point to several interconnected barriers that limit cultural workers' ability to build and sustain long-term careers in the culture sector. These challenges span financial insecurity, workload pressures, gaps in professional development, and broader structural and other systemic issues. The figure below presents the barriers identified by cultural workers in the survey.

Figure 37: Biggest barriers that have impacted cultural workers' ability to enter or sustain their career in the culture sector (n=495)



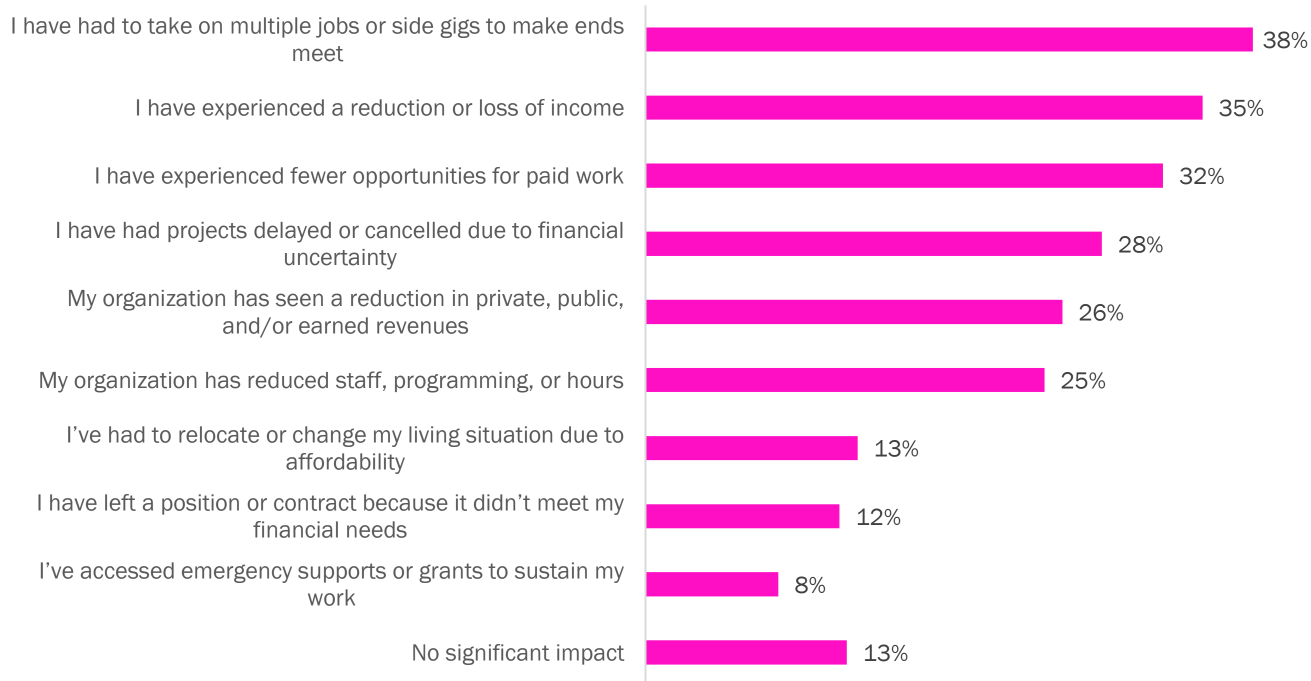
Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

Economic Conditions

Economic conditions are the most persistent constraint shaping cultural workers' day-to-day realities and long-term prospects. Low and inconsistent income (55%) and lack of stable employment (42%) were the two most frequently identified barriers. These challenges manifest in multiple ways in cultural workers' professional and personal lives (figure below), including:

- needing to take on multiple jobs or side gigs to supplement income;
- reductions or loss of income;
- fewer opportunities for paid work and delays or cancellations of projects due to uncertainty; and
- affordability pressures that, for some, require relocation or changes in living arrangements.

Figure 38: Impacts of recent economic instability on the work and careers of cultural workers in the culture sector in the last 3 years (n=446)



Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

Roundtable participants emphasized that these issues are long-standing and build on each other over time. They described relying on several different income sources, moving between short-term contracts, and taking on unpaid administrative or coordination tasks simply to keep projects and organizations functioning. Participants also noted that the administrative load has increased in recent years, with more reporting requirements, evaluation expectations, and funding-related paperwork absorbed by already overstretched staff. Organization leaders noted that even when organizations wish to improve pay equity or offer benefits, structural funding constraints often make this impossible, perpetuating the cycle of instability.

Recognition and Value Gaps

Close to half (41%) of survey respondents identified the lack of broader recognition or understanding of the value of culture sector work as contributing to the sector's instability. In the roundtables there was general consensus and excitement about the need for stronger sector advocacy, including uniting across the broad cultural and creative sectors around shared challenges, issues and goals, and showcasing the sector's interconnectedness and impact. Impact is not easy to quantify and measure, but one avenue for sector advocacy is, of course, access to current and reliable data. A complicating factor, however, was the feedback from some roundtable participants that there is near constant pressure on cultural organizations to demonstrate impact, justify funding, and compete for limited resources. Reporting was described as onerous to the point that energy was being diluted from core creative or strategic work. Participants wondered if there could be a way to capture and communicate the sector's impacts and contributions to community well-being, economic activity and social cohesion more efficiently and consistently, without placing further pressure on the individual organizations across the sector. Participants posited whether a simpler approach to data collection and impact assessments might be possible.

Workload Pressures and Capacity Constraints

Survey findings and roundtable discussions highlight ongoing workload pressures that affect sustainability. Some (19%) of respondents identified work-life balance as a barrier, and roundtable participants described environments where small teams manage grant writing, financial management, community engagement, programming, and evaluation simultaneously. Roundtable participants also pointed to growing compliance requirements from funders that disproportionately affect small organizations and independent artists and creators. These pressures contribute to burnout and limit time for creative work, skill development, and long-term planning. In fact, roundtable participants also spoke to the idea that “time” was the resource they needed most / were lacking the most.

Low Access to Mentorship, Professional Development, and Shared Learning Opportunities

Some (10%) of survey respondents identified limited access to training or professional development as a barrier, with an additional 9% noting a lack of mentorship or career guidance.

Roundtable participants pointed to limited access to leadership training or executive coaching, even as expectations placed on leaders have expanded. Many noted the difficulty of finding affordable, sector-specific training tailored to the realities of small organizations, interdisciplinary practice, or hybrid creative careers. They also emphasized the scarcity of structured mentorship pathways, particularly for mid-career workers, who often face the steepest expectations but the fewest supports. Beyond formal training gaps, participants described limited opportunities for peer learning outside informal networks and highlighted the absence of paid internship or early-career pathways in many areas of the sector.

At the same time, organizations face a parallel challenge. Many experience similar operational pressures but lack the capacity, infrastructure, or mechanisms to learn from one another. Participants described the absence of structured spaces to exchange practical tools such as budgets, compensation models, HR templates, governance documents, and operational workflows. They also emphasized the lack of a coordinated, sector-wide training calendar or shared professional development infrastructure that could support workers and organizations more systematically across their career stages.

Space, Infrastructure, and Resource Limitations

While 9% of survey respondents cited access to physical space as a barrier, roundtables suggest this issue is more widespread. Participants highlighted rising space costs across the province, with acute pressures in the Greater Toronto Area, where rehearsal, studio, fabrication, and administrative spaces have become prohibitively expensive or have disappeared due to redevelopment. Participants noted that:

- some organizations have downsized or vacated space because rental increases were unsustainable;
- groups with specialized technical needs (e.g., dance, interdisciplinary arts, media arts) face particular difficulties finding appropriate facilities; and
- community-based or equity-deserving groups often rely on temporary or borrowed spaces, which limits stability and programming continuity.

Several described a shift toward remote or distributed work models not because they are ideal, but because shared physical space has become inaccessible.

Barriers for Newcomers and Equity-deserving Groups

Roundtable discussions highlighted equity-related barriers including unclear or informal entry pathways for newcomer artists and cultural workers, limited recognition of international training and professional experience, and difficulty accessing established networks that are often critical for securing paid opportunities and advancing careers in the culture sector.

Roundtable participants also pointed to uneven access to mentorship, leadership development, and professional supports for equity-deserving artists and leaders. Mentorship was described as largely informal and inconsistent, leaving many newcomer and equity-deserving artists and cultural workers without clear guidance on navigating funding systems, organizational structures, or career progression. Indigenous participants raised additional concerns related to misrepresentation or falsely claiming Indigenous identity or ancestry, describing it as an ongoing issue within the sector, as well as ethical risks associated with the use of AI in relation to Indigenous cultural expression and intellectual property.

Participants also spoke to the difficulty of working within colonial funding systems while seeking to reclaim Indigenous cultural worldviews, noting tensions between funder requirements and values that feel misaligned with Indigenous ways of working, governance, and storytelling. More broadly, participants also noted that equity-deserving leaders, including those working within Indigenous and community-based organizations, are often expected to represent or advocate for their communities without adequate organizational resources, compensation, or sustained support.

Workforce Retention

The cumulative effect of these barriers is reflected in cultural workers' decisions about whether they can remain in the culture sector. Survey results indicate that a significant portion of respondents have considered leaving the sector in the last three years.

> **32%** of cultural workers have considered leaving the culture sector in the past 3 years.

Those considering leaving were asked what supports or changes would make them more likely to stay. Respondents pointed to higher pay or more consistent income (71%), more stable or longer-term employment opportunities (46%), access to affordable health and mental health care (28%), and a clearer pathway for career growth and advancement (24%). The low rank for Universal Basic Income (UBI) is puzzling, suggesting perhaps that the subset of respondents that indicated they have considered leaving the culture sector are not familiar with UBI pilot programs and initiatives that have been tested globally, or possibly an interpretation that the principles of UBI would be covered by indicating the need for “higher pay or more consistent income.”

Figure 39: Supports or changes that would make cultural workers more likely to stay in the culture sector (n=144)

Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

5.3. Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) and Environmental Sustainability

Representation

The composition of Ontario's culture sector continues to differ from the provincial labour force in important ways, with some areas of progress and parity and others showing persistent underrepresentation. Immigrants make up nearly one third of the culture sector workforce (32%), a share broadly in line with the Ontario average, though representation varies by subsector. Immigrant participation is highest in the cultural and creative industries and design, while remaining notably lower in the arts and particularly in GLAMs. Non-permanent residents continue to represent a small share of the workforce across all subsectors.

The share of workers identifying as visible minorities in the culture sector (35%) is broadly aligned with the provincial workforce. Representation is uneven across subsectors, with strong representation in the cultural and creative industries and design, and substantially lower representation in the arts and GLAMs.

Indigenous workers remain underrepresented within formal culture sector employment, accounting for approximately 2% of the workforce, consistent with the provincial average but not reflective of the full scope of Indigenous cultural labour, much of which occurs outside conventional employment structures.

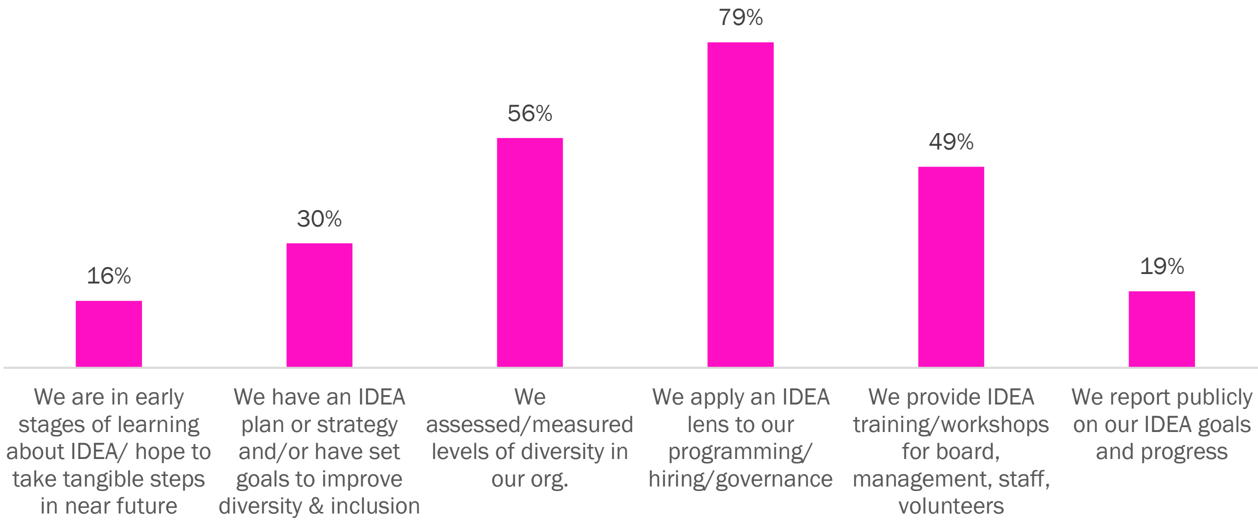
Women remain underrepresented in the culture sector overall, making up 45% of the workforce compared to 48% across Ontario. Gender representation varies sharply by subsector: women are highly represented in GLAMs and hold a majority in the arts and design, while the cultural and creative industries remain male-dominated. Across occupational functions, women continue to be less represented in creative roles and do not yet reach parity in any major functional category.

Awareness and Engagement

Survey results indicate that many organizations across the culture sector have begun to integrate Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) principles into their programming, hiring, and governance (79%). The question was posed differently from 2019, limiting the ability to track progress in this report. In 2025, about half of organizations surveyed have assessed or measured the level of diversity within their staff or boards (56%), and about half have provided IDEA-related training or workshops for board members, management, staff, or volunteers (49%).

A third (30%) of organizations have developed goals and/or have a strategy in place for improving diversity and inclusion. Just 19% indicated that they publicly report on IDEA commitments or progress – down from 35% in 2019. Some 16% noted that they are in the early stages of learning about IDEA but intend to take concrete steps in the future. Only a very small portion (2%) reported that their organization has not addressed IDEA at all.

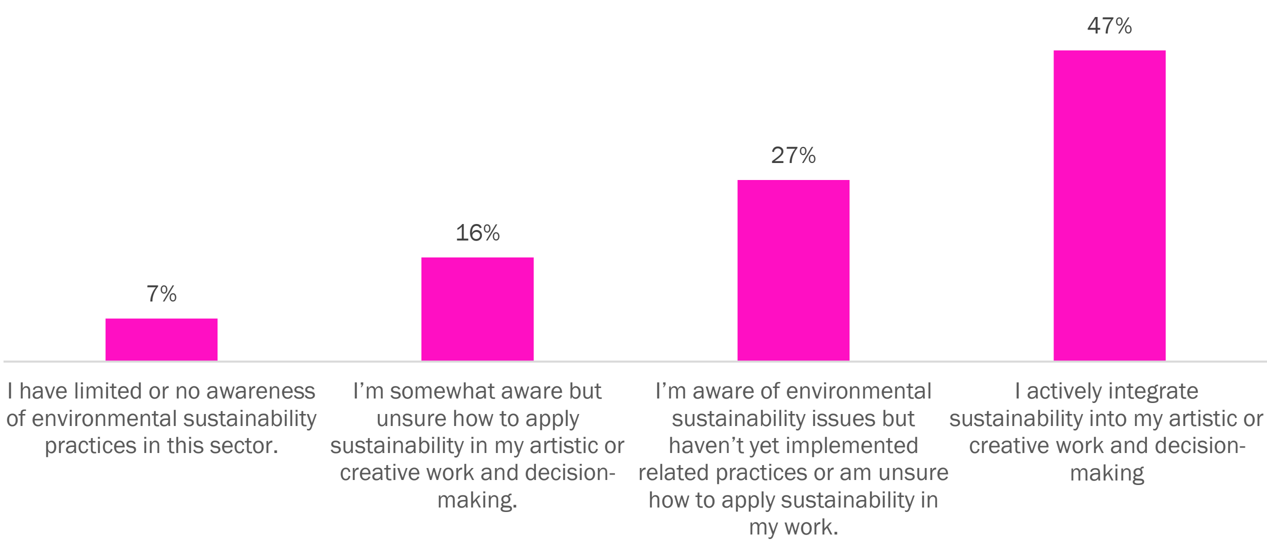
Figure 40: How organizations have addressed IDEA (n=43)



Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

Survey findings show that many cultural workers and organizations are beginning to engage with environmental sustainability, though levels of integration and capacity vary widely. Nearly half of cultural workers (47%) report actively incorporating sustainability into their artistic or creative decision-making. Another 27% are aware of sustainability issues but have not yet implemented related practices, often because they are unsure how to apply them to their work. A further 16% express only partial awareness and uncertainty about practical steps, while a small share (7%) report limited or no awareness of sustainability practices in the sector.

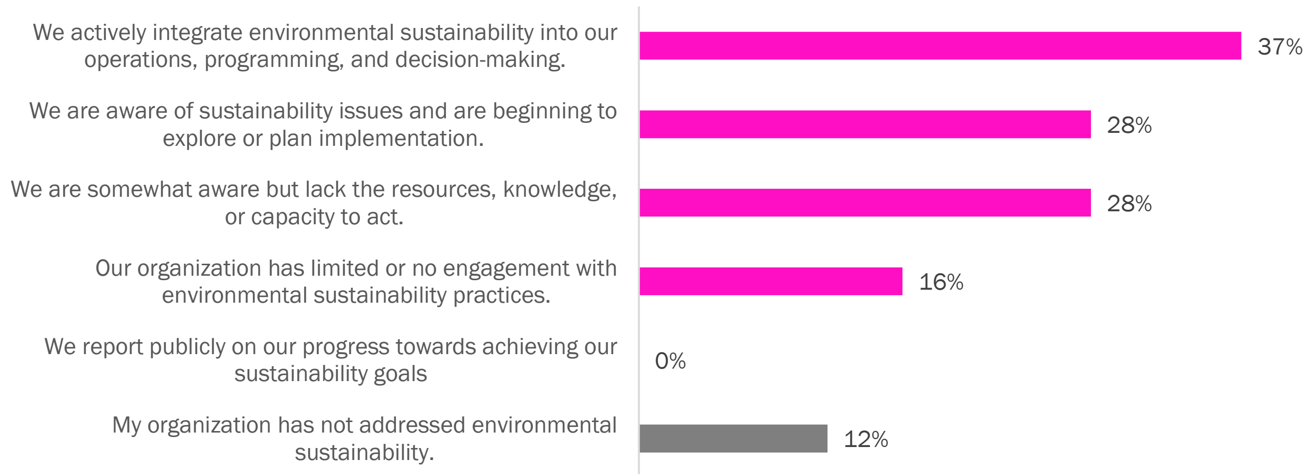
Figure 41: Culture worker awareness and engagement with environmental sustainability practices in their creative work or organization (n=446)



Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

Organizational responses reflect a similar pattern of uneven but emerging engagement. 37% of organizations report actively integrating sustainability into programming, operations, or decision-making. Another 28% are in early planning or exploratory stages, and an additional 28% say they have some awareness but lack the necessary resources, knowledge, or capacity to act. 16% report little or no engagement with sustainability practices, and less than 1% indicated formal public reporting.

Figure 42: Organization awareness and engagement with environmental sustainability practices (n=43)



Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

While survey data alone cannot fully explain the gap between awareness and implementation, findings from earlier sections suggest that many organizations operate with limited staffing and financial resources. These constraints could make it challenging to move beyond intention, particularly where sustainability practices require new expertise, additional time, or upfront investment. The proportion of respondents who are “unsure how to apply” sustainability or who are “beginning to plan implementation” may reflect this broader capacity context.

Summary of Findings

Workers and organizations across Ontario's culture sector face a combination of structural, financial, and organizational pressures that shape their ability to sustain careers and deliver programming. Survey results point to persistent challenges related to low and inconsistent income, limited employment stability, uneven access to training, and unclear pathways for advancement. Roundtable discussions reinforce these findings, highlighting mounting workload pressures, capacity constraints, and gaps in sector recognition that affect both day-to-day operations and long-term retention. Together, these quantitative and qualitative insights illustrate how economic precarity, resource limitations, and systemic barriers intersect to influence career satisfaction, workforce stability, and the overall health of the sector.

Ontario's culture sector shows mixed progress on workforce representation and organizational practices related to inclusion and sustainability. While immigrant and visible minority representation is broadly in line with the provincial workforce overall, participation remains uneven across subsectors, with lower representation in the arts and GLAMs. Indigenous workers continue to be underrepresented in formal employment, and women remain slightly underrepresented overall, particularly in creative roles and in the cultural and creative industries. Most organizations report some level of engagement with Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA), but fewer have formal strategies or publicly report on progress. Engagement with environmental sustainability is growing among both workers and organizations, though many remain in early stages due to limited resources, knowledge, and capacity, which appear to constrain movement from awareness to full implementation.

6. Opportunities for Action

Comparing the results presented in this report with the previous iteration presents some challenges – largely owing to the pandemic's impacts on employment and, particularly, income. Overall, the analysis reflects a broad culture sector that, remarkably, sustained its total employment between 2016 and 2021 while facing negative pressure on culture sector incomes. Income stagnated or dropped depending on the inclusion of audience-facing specializations in the average. In combination with the persistent barriers of low pay, lack of stable employment, and low value perception of the culture sector, the findings in this report serve as reminders of the extreme turbulence and insecurity faced by the broad culture sector over the past five years. Looking towards potential further instability ahead underscores the need for a collective mindset to reduce silos across sub-sectors and maximize impacts of action for the sector. The intent of this report is to show the value and benefit of looking at the broad culture sector as a whole. While the study offers framing by sub-sector ("Arts", "Cultural and creative industries", "GLAMs" and "Design"), a strong and vibrant cultural sector is one where all these areas are thriving, and supportive of talent and labour crossovers, knowledge, and resource sharing.

The findings from the survey and roundtables point to several areas where coordinated action could strengthen the resilience and sustainability of Ontario's culture sector workforce and career pathways. Coordinated action, in these instances, would require input and leadership commitments from funders, industry associations, arts services organizations, post-secondary institutions, unions and guilds, and other core cultural networks. Four interconnected areas emerged as offering the greatest potential for sector-wide impact: strengthening shared advocacy; expanding shared learning and collaboration; improving the clarity and support of career journeys; and addressing the financial and fundraising conditions that shape organizational stability and fair compensation. The following section highlights opportunities for action aligned with each of these themes, but further convening and consultation could help these opportunities shift from observation to an action roadmap.

6.1. Support Broad Sector Advocacy

The cultural sector in Ontario can, at times, have limited visibility and a fragmented voice. Workers and organizations described navigating financial instability, capacity pressures, and expanding expectations with little structural support, while also facing persistent challenges in communicating the value of cultural work to funders, policymakers, and partners.

Participants emphasized that many of the issues identified in this study **are systemic rather than organizational**. Addressing critical issues requires coordinated messaging, clearer sector-wide priorities, and mechanisms to collect shared evidence of value and impact and communicate that value effectively – efforts that must be sector-driven rather than led at the individual organization level. Coordinated action would benefit input and commitments from funders, industry associations, arts services organizations, post-secondary institutions, unions and guilds, and other core cultural networks.

Roundtable discussions also pointed to the need for greater visibility at provincial and federal levels, where policy decisions related to labour markets, funding frameworks, digital regulation, and AI adoption increasingly shape the conditions of cultural work. Steps could include:

- Build on the findings of this report, other cross-sectoral research, and global precedents (including new methodologies and approaches) to successfully demonstrate the impact, value and necessity of a thriving cultural workforce that understands its labour market needs and supports crossovers and knowledge sharing.
- Invest in ongoing labour market analysis to track the sector's shifts more closely, communicate impacts more efficiently, and respond more proactively (and collectively) to results.
- Encourage funders, industry associations, and arts services organizations to:
    - Convene around shared issues, alongside their individual sector responsibilities.
    - Collaborate on compelling broad sector impacts and narratives around job creation, competitiveness, intellectual property development, cultural tourism, health and wellness, community impact, ethical AI adoption, and more.
    - Collect data more efficiently and communicate results widely and with confidence.

6.2. Support Shared Learning and Collaboration

There is a structural gap and/or unevenness in how the culture sector supports learning, leadership development, and ongoing skills growth through one's career. Cultural workers responding to the survey reported limited access to mentorship and professional development, while organizations described similar constraints in their ability to share operational knowledge across the sector (between organizations) or create clear internal pathways for individual growth (within an organization). Roundtable participants suggested a disproportionate degree of support is provided at the emerging career and sector entry-points, while mid-career and leadership levels are under-supported.

Rapid changes in digital tools and the emergence of AI further amplify this need. Participants expressed shared uncertainty about responsible AI use, implications of AI for creative practice, and the necessary skills required to adapt. These shifts underscore the importance of an approach to AI and digital literacy learning that is both culture sector-specific *and* future-oriented. Opportunities to align with broader AI initiatives (e.g., Provincial, Federal), relevant to the culture sector, should be seized. The sector must support the design and delivery of AI skills training that is highly accessible and deeply aligned to the culture sector's needs and priorities.

Embrace Radical Sharing

- Roundtable participants described an opportunity for cultural organizations to consider radical sharing models. From budgets and pay scales to strategies and trusted advisors, participants asked if it would be possible to share, "*not just big ideas, but the tangible, concrete parts*" of cultural and creative businesses across the sector.
- Enabling such sharing could range from supporting more opportunities to collaborate, network and build trust amongst like-minded organizations. That said, many spoke to the frustration of "collaboration" alone being proposed as a solution, with no investment in the actual process of collaboration, which can be time consuming to move beyond superficial or surface-level impacts. In this context, resource sharing and collaboration alone are not a panacea, but would support and respond to some of the needs expressed in this report.
- If "radical" sharing was too aggressive, there was unanimous and immediate support for more culture and creative sector-relevant templates, tools and toolkits, and "how-to" guides on topics of relevance to careers and organizational management (e.g., "How to conduct your own compensation review"). These resources could also encompass guides on environmental stewardship and IDEA training. Access to vetted recommendations for third-party experts with specialized knowledge relevant to the culture sector (e.g., HR, legal, IDEA and accounting) was also in high demand. While these steps could exacerbate the pressure on certain cultural sector leaders to lead all aspects of the business, they would nonetheless be of immediate value. This step may require a skills mapping exercise to understand where needs and priorities overlap by seniority and sub-sector.

Foster Digital Literacy and Future Skills Training

- Digital literacy, future skills training, and AI were areas where culture sector-relevant policies, templates and toolkits are in high demand, as well as highly accessible training opportunities geared to the broad culture sector's needs, as outlined in this report.
- Roundtable participants called for cross-sector leadership and guidance on responsible AI use, as well as urgent access to professional development to help cultural workers adopt AI tools safely – appreciating the complexity of the relationship between the broad culture sector and AI adoption.
- Many participants expressed the vital need to further solidify and/or empower the broad culture sector's role in shaping ethical and transparent creative technologies.
- While survey results on skills needs seemed to reflect or react to financial precarity concerns, digital literacy skills were just behind the top 3. Note that 1 in 4 survey respondents are seeking support for digital and technology literacy (25%), and 1 in 5 (19%) are interested in digital marketing and discoverability support.

6.3. Support Whole Career Journeys

The cultural career journey is often non-traditional and non-linear, and yet, roundtable participants noted that there is much stronger support for emerging talent and entry into the sector, than there is for mid-career workers and senior leaders. Participants described the need for a "continuum of support" model, where cultural workers at any career stage can access relevant tools and guidance to support their next steps.

Participants spoke to burnout, lack of work-life balance, and occasional disconnects with emerging generations about previously accepted norms in the cultural workforce. One perhaps abstract question posed by participants was "How do we sustain ourselves as an organization and treat our employees in the manner in which we want to treat them?" alluding to demands and expectations of employees exceeding what some cultural organizations can feasibly support.

Strengthen Mid-Career Pathways

- "Whole Career" challenges included gaps in supports for mid-career culture workers and a general lack of resources at the mid-career stage. A "continuum approach" to career training, resource development, and access was proposed to better reflect the non-linear nature of culture sector careers and the distinct challenges that are faced at various career stages, namely in mid-career and by senior leaders. Ideas such as radical resource sharing, peer support programs, and flexible, targeted training opportunities were raised as appealing to roundtable participants.
- Participants were concerned that the support for "emerging talent" brings people into the sector, without organizations having options or the capacity to nurture, mentor and support those entrants into building sustainable careers. Participants questioned if there are ways to explore and enable talent retention at, specifically, the mid-career stage, while simultaneously recognizing the lack of senior opportunities and natural attrition that can occur at this stage as people leave the sector.

Identify Opportunities for Formal Leadership Development

- Participants observed that much of the learning and development across the sector remains informal and relies heavily on "learning by doing" and expressed appetite for more formalized and accessible opportunities for growth and leadership development, e.g., recurring calendar of training, or week-long training opportunities, access to executive coaching, management training and more.
- Support at the leadership level was posited as needed to address burnout and general pressures, as well as organizational capacity to tackle major strategic and resource-intensive concerns such as succession-planning. Exploring the concept of "leaders supporting leaders" through a peer mentorship model could be appealing, borrowing best practices from precedents in other sectors or jurisdictions.

6.4. Support Financial Transparency and Operational Sustainability

Roundtable participants described the ongoing pressure to sustain their cultural organizations amid economic challenges and funding uncertainty. Some described the increasing burden of financial reporting and assessments and measurement frameworks requested by funders as time consuming and resource-intensive.

Establish a Common Set of Cultural Indicators

- Roundtable participants noted that standard quantifiable measures or progress/evaluation are both time-consuming and ineffective when capturing the impact of different types of cultural organizations - including ones focused on equity-deserving groups.
- Participants called for funding models that support continuity, not just short-term projects; trust-based funding and indicator frameworks defined by organizations themselves; and sector-wide measurement frameworks that reflect cultural impact.
- In this context, participants discussed whether it would be possible to establish a common, consistent way of reporting an organization's very core results, impacts and reach indicators. In this model, all organizations could expand and adapt from this core set of cultural indicators. Participants posited whether a simplified and flexible evaluation playbook (and relevant instructions) could both satisfy the main funders in the eco-system and alleviate some of the reporting burden, particularly for smaller organizations.

Enable Greater Connections to Private Sector Fundraising

- One discussion focused on the growing need for strong networks and a better understanding of private sector fundraising opportunities. Participants pointed to the importance of Business / Arts' artsvest program, but also the need for many more introductions, networking opportunities, and overall guidance about navigating private sector fundraising and appealing to lesser-known funders, noting as well that these challenges may be heightened for newcomers and equity-deserving groups.

Explore Shared Space and Infrastructure Access Network

- Access to space and cost of space were recognized as barriers to cultural organizations' ability to sustain themselves, as well as forcing cultural organizations and workforces out of certain neighbourhoods and, in some cases, high-cost-of-living cities in general.
- Space and infrastructure challenges were exacerbated for newcomers and equity-deserving groups. Opportunities to match newcomers with seasoned leaders or relevant networks and existing services to support space access, should be explored.

- While shared spaces/sharing space alone is not the solution to rising rents, sharing physical, digital and support services infrastructure (e.g., studios, equipment, admin systems, digital platforms) is nonetheless a compelling offer and option for many broad cultural organizations. Explore ways to enable, match and possibly formalize (and/or simplify) these types of shared spaces and/or shared services agreements for cultural organizations.

Conclusion

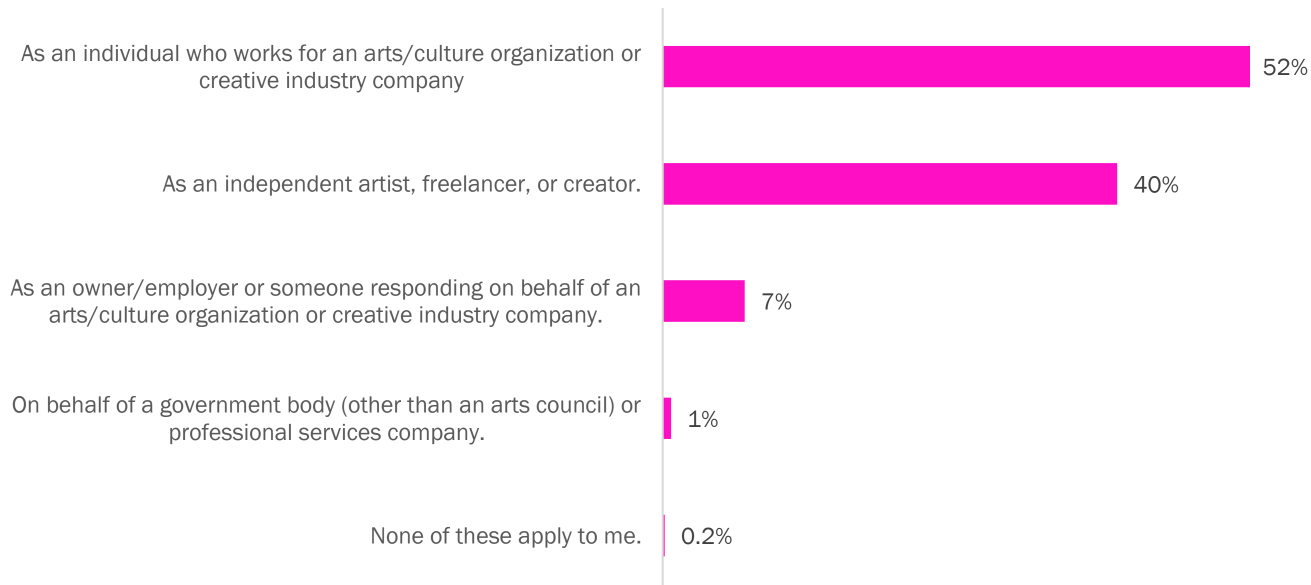
As in 2019, the findings in this report highlight many areas of shared needs and common experiences spanning the cultural sector workforce in Ontario. There are nearly 300,000 cultural workers across Ontario's culture sector, spanning for-profit and not-for-profit businesses, sub-sectors and disciplines. A strong and vibrant cultural sector is one where all these areas are thriving, and which is supportive of labour crossovers and intersections, and shared approaches to shared needs. The report describes a broad culture sector facing a combination of resource pressures that are creating barriers to sustainable careers. There is a sense that, despite having survived the pandemic, even greater challenges may yet lie ahead. Many factors underpin these uncertainties, but there are tangible, impactful, collective initiatives that can be taken to support the sector as a whole and reinforce its core value to the province.

Appendix A – Survey Response Profile

A portion of the data represented in this report was gathered through an online survey. The survey collected data from individual artists, freelancers, and creators, arts/culture organizations and creative industry companies, people working at these organizations and companies, as well as those working for government bodies and professional services companies. The questionnaire was made open to all potential respondents and was distributed via a variety of means including partner organizations' mailing lists, social media, and personal invitations. In the end, the survey collected usable responses from a total of 539 respondents.

The following chart illustrates the breakdown of those respondents by type. The majority of respondents (52%) are individuals who work for arts/culture organizations or creative industry companies, followed by independent artists, freelancers, or creators (40%).

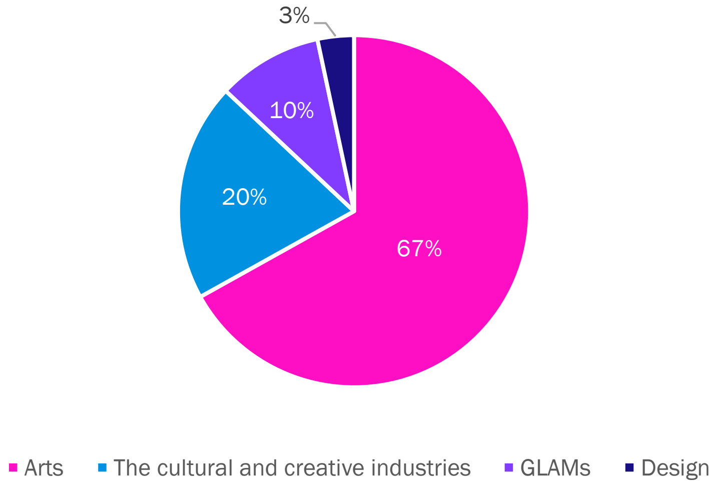
1. Type of Respondent (n=539)



Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

2. Survey response distribution by subsector (n=538)

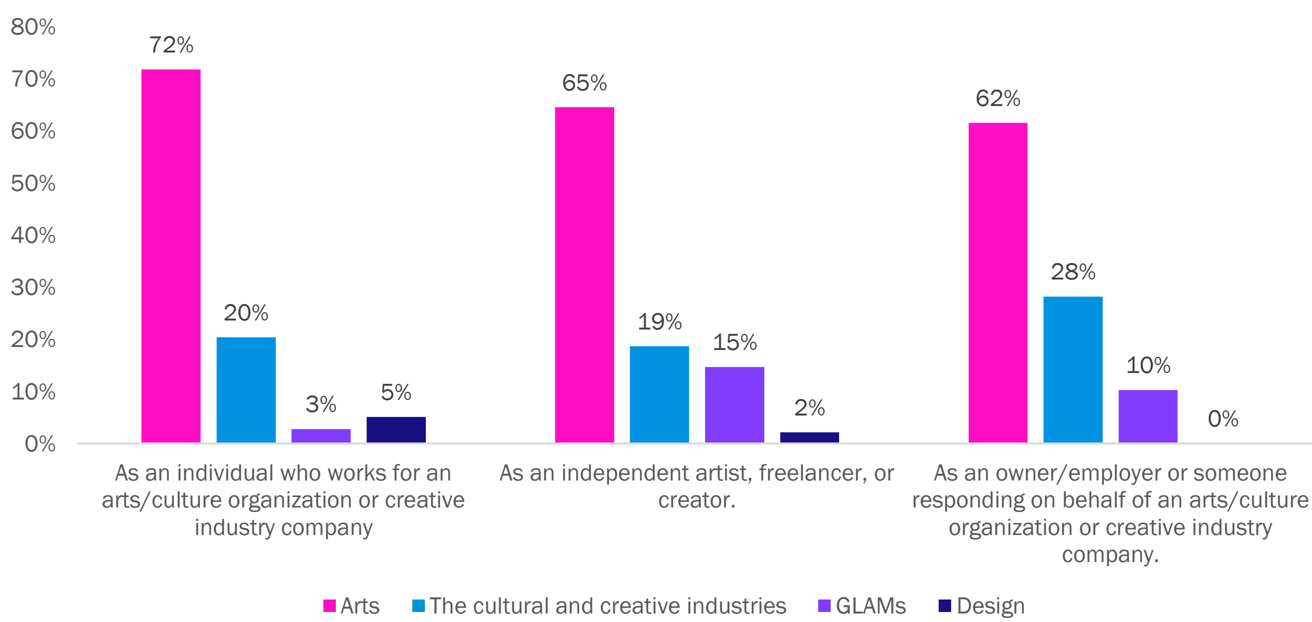
The arts account for the majority of responses at 67%. The cultural and creative industries represent 20%, followed by GLAMs at 10%, while design comprises a small share at 3%.



Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).
GLAMs: Galleries, libraries, archives and museums

Across all respondent roles, the arts dominate participation, ranging from 62% to 72%. Individuals working for arts or creative-industry organizations show the highest concentration in the arts (72%), with smaller shares in the cultural and creative industries (20%), GLAMs (3%), and design (5%). Independent artists and freelancers also primarily identify with the arts (65%), alongside a more notable GLAMs presence (15%). Owners or employers responding on behalf of organizations again skew toward the arts (62%), with a relatively higher share from the broader cultural and creative industries (28%), and minimal representation from design. There were too few data points for those responding on behalf of a government body.

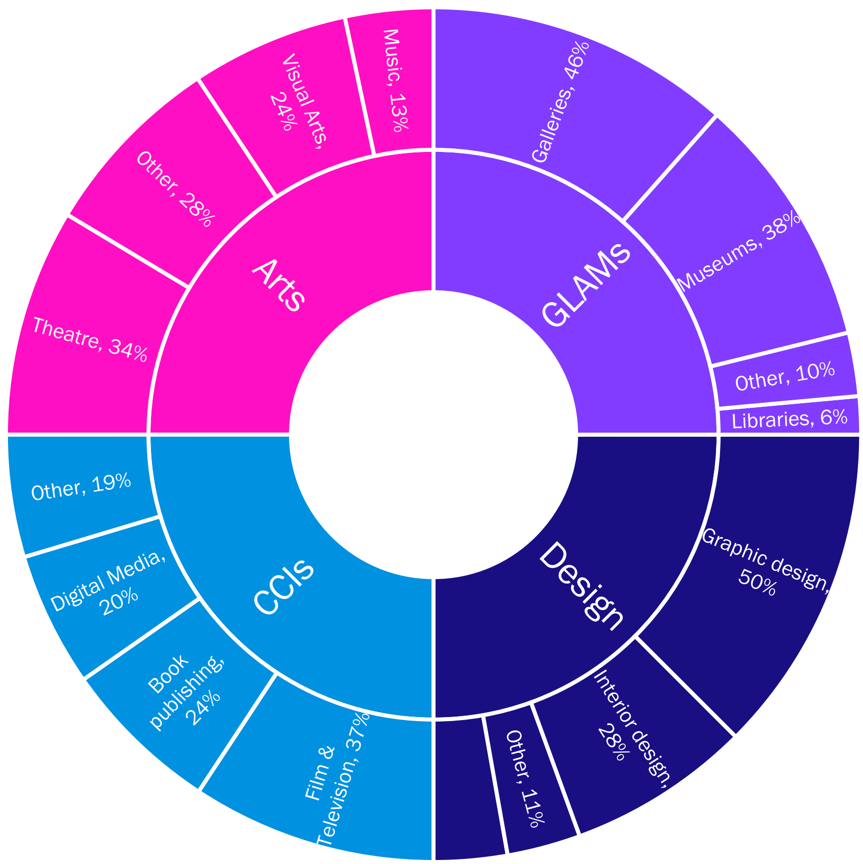
3. Survey response profile by subsector and role type (n=538)



Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).
GLAMs: Galleries, libraries, archives and museums

4. **Survey response profile by subsector and specialization (n=539)**

The chart breaks down respondents by subsector within the arts, cultural and creative industries (CCIs), GLAMs, and design. Within the arts, theatre represents the largest share (34%), followed by other arts disciplines (28%), visual arts (24%), and music (13%). The CCIs are led by film and television (37%), with book publishing (24%), digital media (20%), and other creative industries (19%) making up the remainder. In GLAMs, galleries (46%) and museums (38%) dominate, with smaller representation from libraries (6%) and other institutions (10%). Design respondents are primarily concentrated in graphic design (50%), followed by interior design (28%), fashion design (11%), and other design fields (11%).

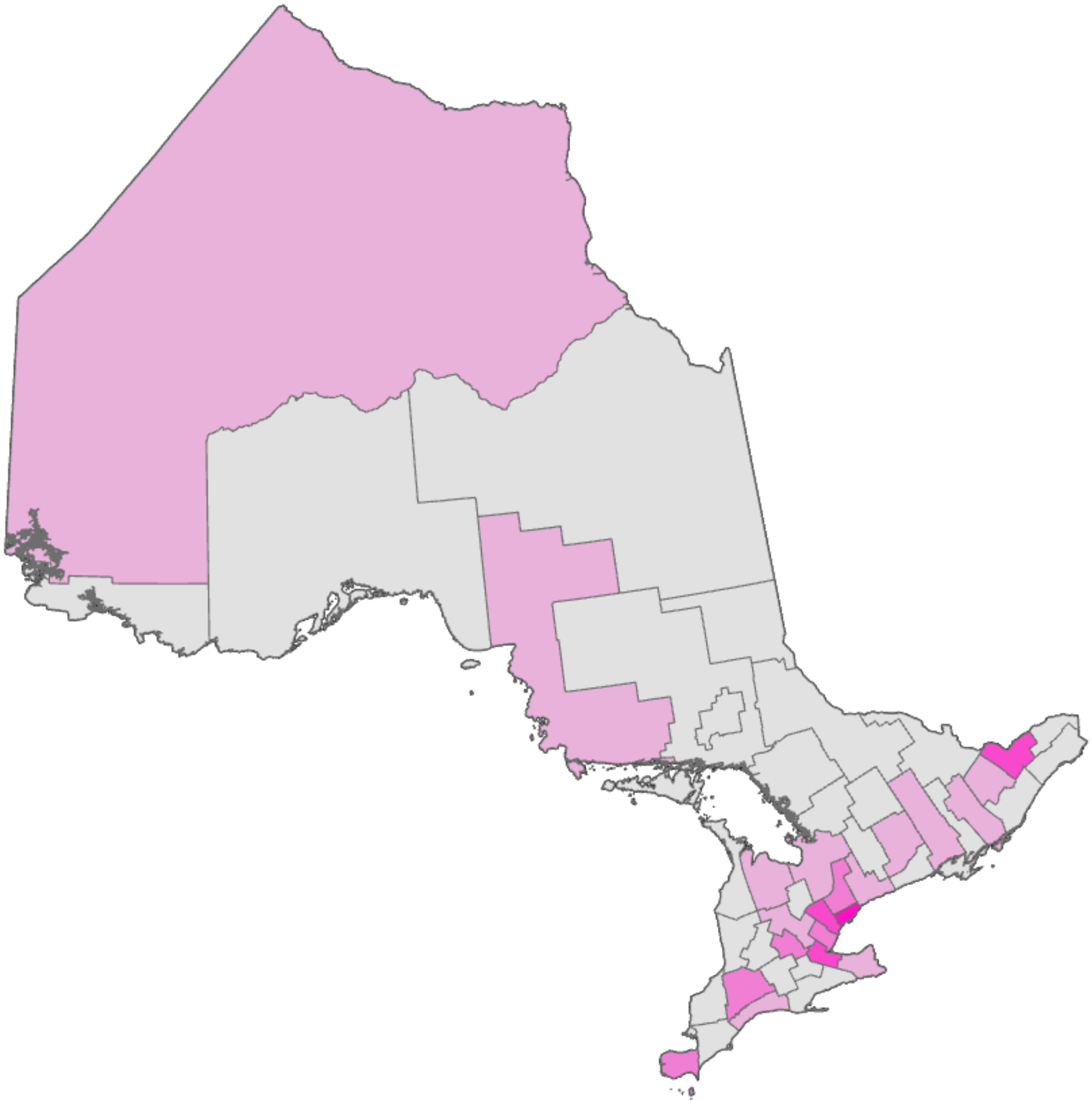


Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

GLAMs: Galleries, libraries, archives and museums

5. **Geographic location of survey respondents by postal code (n=211)**

Overall, the distribution of responses shows a strong concentration in Ontario's more urbanized regions, with more limited participation from rural and northern areas. The highest response volumes are clustered in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area and adjacent parts of southern Ontario, reflected by the darkest shading. Moderate representation is visible across portions of southwestern and eastern Ontario, while much of northern Ontario had relatively low survey participation.

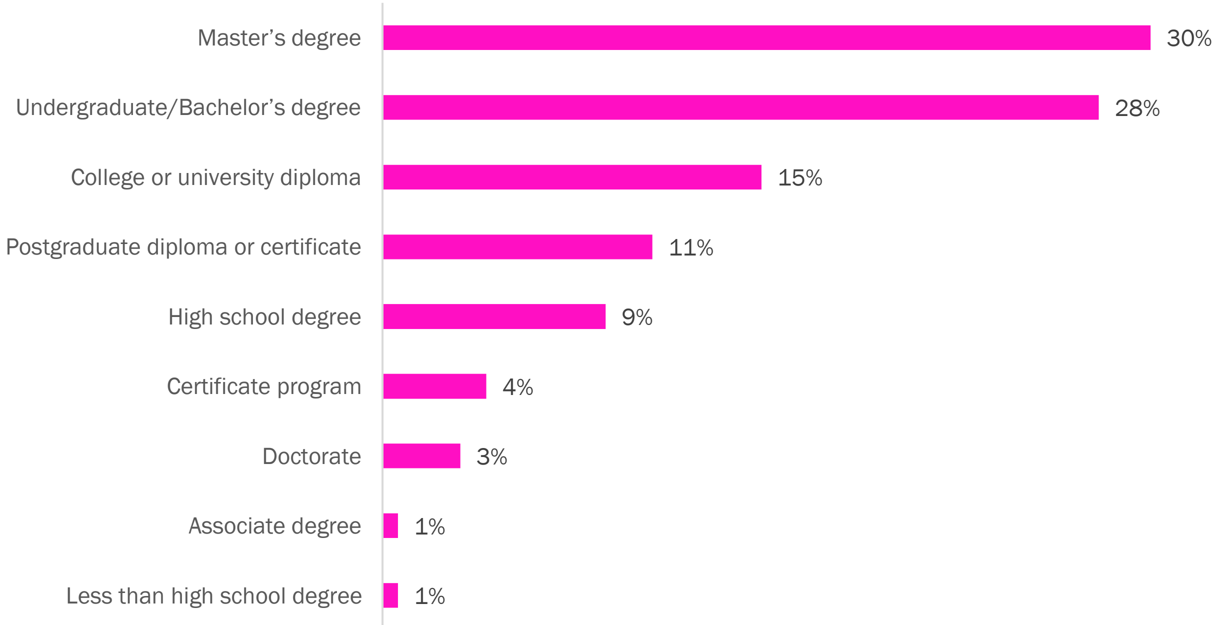


0-1	2-4	5-9	10-12	13-62

Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

6. Highest level of education (n=495)

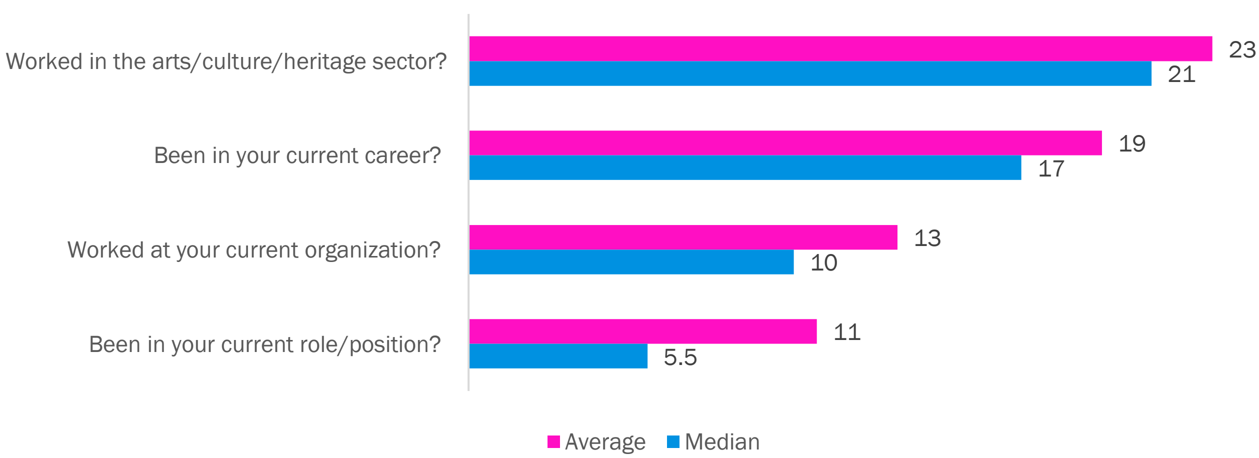
Nearly six in ten respondents hold a graduate or undergraduate degree, with 30% reporting a master's degree and 28% an undergraduate or bachelor's degree. An additional 26% hold a college or university diploma (15%) or a postgraduate diploma or certificate (11%). Smaller shares report a high school degree (9%) or lower levels of formal education, including certificate programs (4%), and associate or less than high school credentials (each 1%).



Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

7. Time worked in the sector, current career, current organization, and current role/position (n=495)

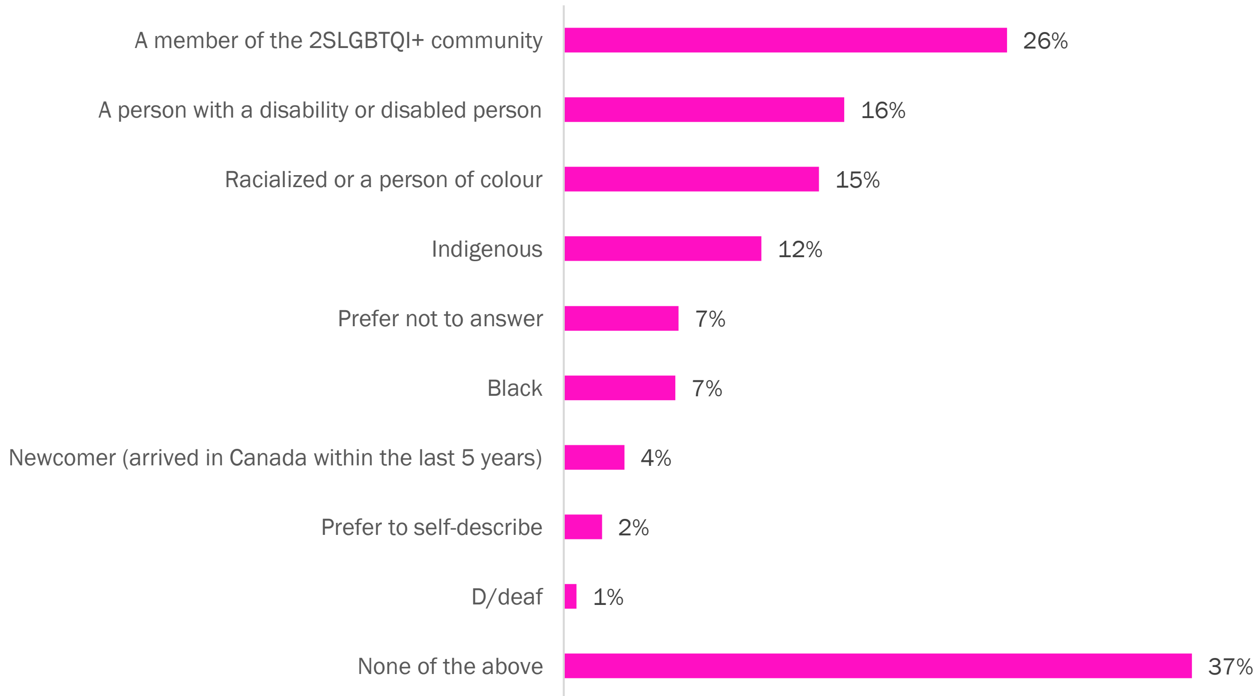
The chart shows that respondents have long tenures in the arts, culture, and heritage sector overall, with an average of 23 years and a median of 21 years. Time spent in their current career is similarly substantial, averaging 19 years (median 17 years). In contrast, tenure narrows at the organizational and role levels: respondents have worked an average of 13 years at their current organization (median 10 years) and 11 years in their current role (median 5.5 years). The widening gap between averages and medians at the role level suggests more frequent role changes within organizations compared to sector-level or career-level stability.



Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

8. Representation of equity-deserving groups (n=495)

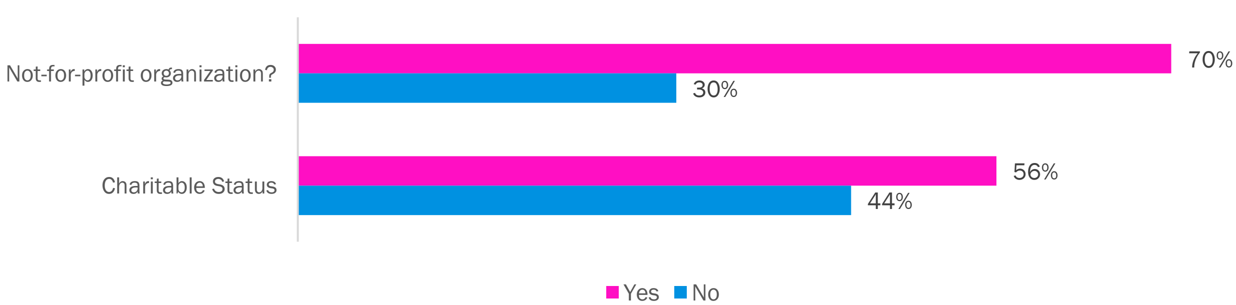
Just over one third (37%) indicated that none of the listed categories applied to them. Among those who did identify with an equity-seeking group, the largest share identified as members of the 2SLGBTQI+ community (26%), followed by persons with disabilities (16%), racialized persons or people of colour (15%), and Indigenous respondents (12%). Smaller shares identified as Black (7%), newcomers to Canada within the past five years (4%), or D/deaf (1%), while 7% preferred not to answer and 2% chose to self-describe.



Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

9. Organizational survey respondents – Not-for-profit org and Charitable status (n=43)

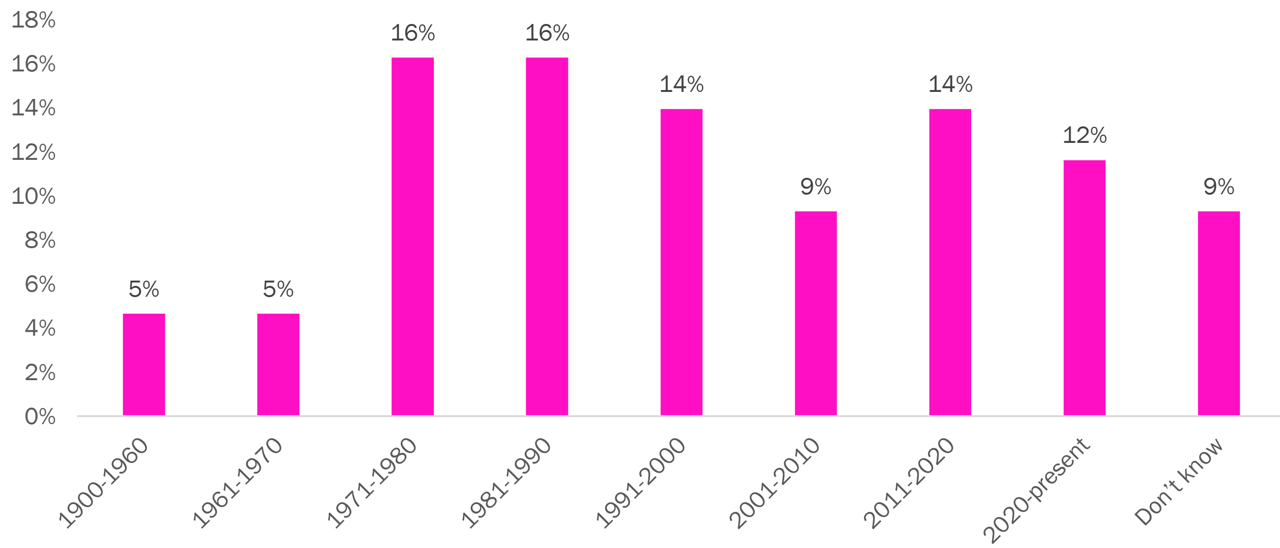
The majority of responding organizations operate on a not-for-profit basis, with 70% identifying as not-for-profit organizations and 30% indicating that they are not. A smaller majority hold charitable status, with 56% reporting that they are registered charities and 44% indicating they are not.



Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

10. Organizational survey respondents – Year incorporated (n=43)

There were a wide range of incorporation dates among organizational respondents. The largest shares were incorporated in the 1970s and 1980s (both 16%), followed by the 1990s and 2010s (each 14%). More recent organizations incorporated since 2020 account for 12%, while 9% report incorporation between 2001 and 2010 and another 9% are unsure of their incorporation year. Early incorporations prior to 1970 represent a relatively small share (5% in each of the pre-1960 and 1961–1970 periods).



Source: Nordicity, Making It Work 2026 Survey (conducted in 2025).

Appendix B – Sample Survey Questions

Introduction and Gating Questions

1. **In what capacity are you answering this survey?**
   Please choose the option that best suits your current situation.
   a. As an independent artist, freelancer, or creator.
   b. As an individual who works for an arts/culture organization or creative industry company
   c. As an owner/employer or someone responding on behalf of an arts/culture organization or creative industry company
   d. On behalf of a government body (other than an arts council) or professional services company
   e. None of these apply to me
2. **What is the name of the company or organization on behalf of which you are responding?**
3. **Which of the following sectors best describes your, or your organization's, primary area of work or practice?**
   If you (or your organization) are active in several areas, select the one on which you spend the most time.
   a. Arts (e.g., music, dance, theatre, visual art, etc.)
   b. The Cultural and Creative Industries (e.g., book publishing, film and television, music, digital media etc.)
   c. GLAMs (e.g., galleries, libraries, archives, and museums)
   d. Design (e.g., interior, graphic, fashion etc.)
4. **Which of the following arts disciplines best describes your primary work or practice?**
5. **Which of the following cultural and creative industries best describes your primary work or practice?**
6. **Which of the following types of GLAMs best describes your primary work or practice?**
7. **Which of the following types of design best describes your primary work or practice?**
8. **Is your work considered a skilled trade?**
9. **Do you have a secondary area of work or practice in the broader culture sector?**
10. **In which cultural or creative sub-sector are you also working (in addition to your primary selected above)?**
11. **Do you see your work as part of both the arts and the creative industries?**

12. **How long have you…**
    a. **Worked in the broad culture sector**
    b. **Worked in your current career**
    c. **Worked at your current organization**
    d. **Been in your current role/position**
13. **Please enter the first 3 numbers/letters of the postal code for where you are located or where your organization is located.**
14. **Where do you usually work / create / practice?**
15. **Do you identify with any of the following groups?**
    a. Indigenous
    b. Black
    c. Racialized or a person of colour
    d. Newcomer (arrived in Canada within the last 5 years)
    e. A member of the 2SLGBTQI+ community
    f. A person with a disability or disabled person
    g. D/deaf
    h. Prefer to self-describe
    i. None of the above
16. **How old are you?**
17. **Please select any of the following options that apply to you.**
    a. I am comfortable speaking, reading and writing for professional purposes in English
    b. I am comfortable speaking, reading and writing for professional purposes in French
    c. I primarily work or create in French
    d. I primarily work or create in an Indigenous language
    e. I primarily work or create in a language other than English, French, or an Indigenous language. If yes, please specify what language(s):

Artists/Freelancers/Creators and those working for Cultural Organizations

18. Please select the range that best describes your total income (from all sources including work outside of the broad culture sector) in 2024.
19. How did your income in 2024 compare to your income in 2022?
20. Approximately what proportion [%] of your income in 2024 came from your work in the broad culture sector?
21. Which of the following best describes how you currently work in the arts, culture, and heritage sector?
22. How many hours per week do you spend working on your broad culture sector work?
23. Do you have a formal agreement or contract for your current work?
24. Do you have a job outside of your work in the broader culture sector?
25. Which industry/ies are your other jobs in?
26. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
27. What types of education or training helped you enter the broad culture sector?
28. How well do you think post-secondary education and training programs are preparing people for careers in the broad culture sector today?
29. Which of the following skills do you consider most critical for developing your career in the sector?
30. What specific entrepreneurial, business, leadership and management skills are most necessary for success in the arts, culture, and heritage sector in Ontario?
31. How do you typically learn new skills?
32. How has the rise of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies had an impact on your work in the arts, culture, creative and heritage sector?
33. How would you describe your awareness and engagement with environmental sustainability practices in your creative work or organization?
34. What benefits do you have access to?
35. How satisfied are you with your:
    a. Career progress to-date
    b. Compensation/access to benefits
    c. Career potential for growth, advancement and/or upward mobility

d. Access to training and professional development

36. What are the biggest barriers that have impacted your ability to enter or sustain your career in your arts, cultural and creative career?

37. How has language affected your experience in the arts, culture, and heritage sector in Ontario?

38. How has recent economic instability (e.g., inflation, rising cost of living, funding changes) affected your work or career in the broad culture sector over the last 3 years?

39. Are you considering leaving the arts, culture, and heritage sector due to barriers you have faced?

40. What supports or changes would make you more likely to stay in the cultural and creative sector?

41. Are you a member of a union or guild?

42. Which union or guild are you a member of?

Organizations

43. Is your organization a not-for-profit organization?

44. Does your organization have charitable status?

45. Do you own all or part of the organization for which you are responding?

46. In what year was your organization founded/incorporated?

47. What is your organization’s approximate annual operating budget?

48. How many people work in your organization?

49. How many (if any) interns (paid) does your organization hire in a typical year?

50. How many (if any) co-op students does your organization hire in a typical year?

51. How do you handle human resources (HR) tasks at your organization?

52. Which of the following types of information are (or would be) useful in the operation of your organization?

53. In the past two years, what sources have you accessed to stay on top of managing best practices and/or labour market trends?

54. Which of the following benefits do you typically offer your employees?

55. How do your employees typically access training and/or acquire new skills?

56. Approximately how much was allocated to/did you spend on employee training in 2024?

57. Which of the following skills do you consider most critical for your organization?
58. How has the rise of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies impacted your organization’s work in the arts, culture, or heritage sector?
59. How has your organization addressed Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) (if at all)?
60. How would you describe your organization’s awareness and engagement with environmental sustainability practices?

Appendix C – Detailed Demographic Information

This appendix presents detailed demographic information that was not included in the body of the report. Note that the total number of workers stated in each table may not precisely match the totals presented in the body of the report, due to data suppression, data cleaning, and rounding practices employed by Statistics Canada. In addition, the categories presented for each demographic breakdown are not exhaustive of available options. For example, 'other' categories are not included in the tables below.

Due to the increased granularity in NOCs provided in the updated custom cross-tabulation (5-digit in 2021 vs 4-digit in 2016), the extent of suppression in particular is greater than it was in the previous report, extenuating the divergence in totals presented in the following tables and the main body of the report.

Table 9: Worker headcount by occupational function

Subsectors and specializations	Creative	Technical	Managerial	Other	Total
Arts	56,227	1,845	3,210	400	61,682
Visual Arts & Crafts	21,577	130	865	340	22,912
Dance, Music, Theatre	24,580	1,715	2,345	60	28,700
Literary Arts	10,070	0	0	0	10,070
The Cultural and Creative Industries	86,725	16,625	34,785	11,035	149,170
Digital Media	53,030	1,185	18,495	0	72,710
Film & Television	22,150	14,285	3,290	100	39,825
Advertising	1,450	0	11,365	0	12,815
Book and Magazine Publishing	8,555	450	1,470	10,935	21,410
Music Recording and Publishing	1,540	705	165	0	2,410
GLAMs	4,825	7,935	1,580	170	14,510
Libraries	3,930	6,605	1,580	0	12,115
Museums	650	1,205	0	0	1,855
Archives	245	125	0	170	540
Design	39,940	7,005	2,055	845	49,845
Employed across subsectors	4,530	970	1,295	400	7,195
Total	192,247	34,380	42,925	12,850	282,402

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population, Custom tabulation.

Table 10: Worker headcount by age

Subsectors and specializations	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Total
Arts	**11,016**	**13,924**	**10,571**	**8,813**	**9,081**	**7,351**	**60,755**
Visual Arts & Crafts	2,921	5,519	4,506	3,353	3,606	2,626	22,530
Dance, Music, Theatre	7,695	6,905	4,135	3,510	3,400	2,570	28,215
Literary Arts	400	1,500	1,930	1,950	2,075	2,155	10,010
The Cultural and Creative Industries	**11,770**	**46,275**	**39,255**	**27,275**	**17,885**	**5,835**	**148,295**
Digital Media	6,035	24,510	21,205	12,995	6,595	1,260	72,600
Film & Television	3,270	12,685	9,875	6,970	4,595	1,935	39,330
Advertising	615	4,965	3,830	2,055	1,020	320	12,805
Book and Magazine Publishing	1,640	3,360	3,790	4,915	5,405	2,155	21,265
Music Recording and Publishing	210	755	555	340	270	165	2,295
GLAMs	**1,940**	**2,885**	**2,565**	**2,440**	**3,090**	**1,280**	**14,200**
Libraries	1,480	2,170	2,195	2,215	2,830	1,140	12,030
Museums	440	555	325	140	230	140	1,830
Archives	20	160	45	85	30	0	340
Design	**5,365**	**15,380**	**11,140**	**8,095**	**6,715**	**2,460**	**49,155**
Employed across subsectors	**665**	**1,860**	**1,530**	**1,180**	**800**	**245**	**6,280**
Total	**30,756**	**80,324**	**65,061**	**47,803**	**37,571**	**17,171**	**278,685**

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population, Custom tabulation.

Table 11: Worker headcount by gender

Subsectors and specializations	Female	Male	Total
Arts	**32,749**	**27,881**	**60,630**
Visual Arts & Crafts	13,929	8,561	22,490
Dance, Music, Theatre	12,510	15,615	28,125
Literary Arts	6,310	3,705	10,015
The Cultural and Creative Industries	**48,575**	**99,595**	**148,170**
Digital Media	17,580	55,030	72,610
Film & Television	14,290	24,915	39,205
Advertising	7,280	5,530	12,810
Book and Magazine Publishing	9,035	12,240	21,275
Music Recording and Publishing	390	1,880	2,270
GLAMs	**11,265**	**2,925**	**14,190**
Libraries	9,875	2,150	12,025
Museums	1,130	700	1,830
Archives	260	75	335
Design	**25,610**	**23,405**	**49,015**
Employed across subsectors	**2,590**	**3,255**	**5,845**
Total	**120,789**	**157,061**	**277,850**

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population, Custom tabulation.

Table 12: Worker headcount by immigration status

Subsectors and specializations	Immigrant	Non-immigrant	Total
Arts	**15,237**	**44,990**	**60,227**
Visual Arts & Crafts	6,112	16,000	22,112
Dance, Music, Theatre	5,195	23,005	28,200
Literary Arts	3,930	5,985	9,915
The Cultural and Creative Industries	**55,115**	**84,715**	**139,830**
Digital Media	36,405	28,755	65,160
Film & Television	8,490	30,280	38,770
Advertising	3,240	9,215	12,455
Book and Magazine Publishing	6,565	14,565	21,130
Music Recording and Publishing	415	1,900	2,315
GLAMs	**2,665**	**11,670**	**14,335**
Libraries	2,315	9,680	11,995
Museums	215	1,630	1,845
Archives	135	360	495
Design	**16,870**	**30,675**	**47,545**
Employed across subsectors	**2,485**	**4,285**	**6,770**
Total	**92,372**	**176,335**	**268,707**

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population, Custom tabulation.

Table 13: Worker headcount by visible minority status

Subsectors and specializations	Visible minority	Not a visible minority	Total
Arts	**15,075**	**46,140**	**61,216**
Visual Arts & Crafts	5,450	17,105	22,556
Dance, Music, Theatre	6,580	22,040	28,620
Literary Arts	3,045	6,995	10,040
The Cultural and Creative Industries	**61,545**	**87,465**	**149,010**
Digital Media	40,815	31,880	72,695
Film & Television	9,995	29,710	39,705
Advertising	3,955	8,850	12,805
Book and Magazine Publishing	6,240	15,165	21,405
Music Recording and Publishing	540	1,860	2,400
GLAMs	**2,650**	**11,795**	**14,445**
Libraries	2,380	9,715	12,095
Museums	160	1,685	1,845
Archives	110	395	505
Design	**17,895**	**31,830**	**49,725**
Employed across subsectors	**2,565**	**4,375**	**6,940**
Total	**99,730**	**181,605**	**281,336**

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population, Custom tabulation.

Table 14: Worker headcount by Indigenous identity

Subsectors and specializations	Indigenous identity	Non-indigenous identity	Total
Arts	**1,508**	**59,817**	**61,325**
Visual Arts & Crafts	743	21,867	22,610
Dance, Music, Theatre	615	28,025	28,640
Literary Arts	150	9,925	10,075
The Cultural and Creative Industries	**1,670**	**147,320**	**148,990**
Digital Media	485	72,200	72,685
Film & Television	655	39,060	39,715
Advertising	150	12,655	12,805
Book and Magazine Publishing	330	21,050	21,380
Music Recording and Publishing	50	2,355	2,405
GLAMs	**290**	**14,205**	**14,495**
Libraries	225	11,880	12,105
Museums	65	1,795	1,860
Archives	0	530	530
Design	**585**	**49,200**	**49,785**
Employed across subsectors	**40**	**7,095**	**7,135**
Total	**4,093**	**277,637**	**281,730**

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population, Custom tabulation.

Table 15: Worker headcount by language(s) most often spoken at home

Subsectors and specializations	English	French	Multiple languages	Non-official language	Total
Arts	**53,052**	**784**	**2,100**	**5,261**	**61,197**
Visual Arts & Crafts	19,592	169	730	2,226	22,717
Dance, Music, Theatre	25,950	205	725	1,580	28,460
Literary Arts	7,510	410	645	1,455	10,020
The Cultural and Creative Industries	**112,005**	**1,115**	**10,580**	**24,915**	**148,615**
Digital Media	45,395	510	8,055	18,660	72,620
Film & Television	35,400	365	1,265	2,505	39,535
Advertising	11,315	85	390	1,010	12,800
Book and Magazine Publishing	17,660	155	790	2,710	21,315
Music Recording and Publishing	2,235	0	80	30	2,345
GLAMs	**12,865**	**290**	**390**	**895**	**14,440**
Libraries	10,715	230	335	810	12,090
Museums	1,705	50	45	55	1,855
Archives	445	10	10	30	495
Design	**39,605**	**375**	**2,520**	**7,060**	**49,560**
Employed across subsectors	**5,540**	**45**	**200**	**1,030**	**6,815**
Total	**223,067**	**2,609**	**15,790**	**39,161**	**280,627**

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population, Custom tabulation.

Appendix D – Detailed Income Information

This section provides more detailed information about average incomes (from all sources) by occupational function.

Table 16: Worker headcount and average income (from all sources), by occupational function

	Worker Headcount, by Function			Average Income, by Function		
	Creative Workers	Technical, Managerial , and Other	**Total**	Creative Workers	Technical, Managerial , and Other	**Overall**
Arts	**56,227**	**5,455**	**61,682**	**$11,464**	**$32,759**	**$14,728**
Visual Arts & Crafts	21,577	1,335	**22,912**	$10,746	$35,229	$13,038
Dance, Music, Theatre	24,580	4,120	**28,700**	$11,229	$31,958	$15,460
Literary Arts	10,070	0	**10,070**	$13,574	N/A	$17,767
The Cultural and Creative Industries	**86,725**	**62,445**	**149,170**	**$65,239**	**$69,302**	**$68,559**
Digital Media	53,030	19,680	**72,710**	$79,929	$105,023	$86,721
Film & Television	22,150	17,675	**39,825**	$46,332	$41,670	$44,250
Advertising	1,450	11,365	**12,815**	$49,200	$73,457	$67,912
Book and Magazine Publishing	8,555	12,855	**21,410**	$34,090	$51,715	$33,065
Music Recording and Publishing	1,540	870	**2,410**	$19,491	$28,237	$22,648
GLAMs	**4,825**	**9,685**	**14,510**	**$65,111**	**$31,435**	**$42,704**
Libraries	3,930	8,185	**12,115**	$69,822	$33,480	$45,269
Museums	650	1,205	**1,855**	$49,348	$19,082	$29,687
Archives	245	295	**540**	$31,367	$25,136	$23,986
Design	**39,940**	**9,905**	**49,845**	**$38,882**	**$56,928**	**$41,720**
Employed across subsectors	**4,530**	**2,665**	**7,195**	**$43,663**	**$51,582**	**$52,326**
Total Culture Sector average	**192,247**	**90,155**	**282,402**	**$43,524**	**$61,140**	**$47,900**

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population, Custom tabulation.

Appendix E - Census Analysis Methodology

In order to extract information about workers in the culture sector, this analysis relies on statistical classifications of **occupations** (National Occupational Classifications, or NOCs) and **industries** (North American Industry Classification System, or NAICS). As such, the data and estimates drawn from census data are limited to workers whose primary occupation and industry reported in the census matches a set of definitions informed by the **Canadian Framework for Culture Statistics (CFCS)**.

This appendix provides an overview of the specific definitions used in this analysis, limitations of the analytical methodology employed, and how these definitions have evolved from Statistics Canada's seminal work on the CFCS.

In broad terms, the census data referenced in this report was broken out for the employed workforce based on their primary source of employment, identified by occupational and industrial classification systems. For a detailed description of how census data was mapped to specializations (the lowest level of the taxonomy used to define the culture sector, as illustrated in section 1.1) and then aggregated into the subsectors which are the focus of analysis in this report, please refer to Appendix D in MakingItWork 2019.

Appendices F and G outline in detail the occupational and industrial classifications that have been used to identify the workers that have been presented in this analysis. As the following elaborates, some judgement was required to determine the extent to which workers of a certain occupation in any given industry were, in fact, employed in specific specializations or even the Cultural Sector as a whole.

"Is [specific occupation] included in the culture sector?"

A recurring question about this analysis is whether it includes a particular specialized occupation. The following four step process can be used to answer these questions, and we have illustrated these steps using the example of law librarians.

1. Look up the occupation at Statistics Canada's NOC 2021 reference documentation and find the unit group (i.e., five-digit) code that best matches the desired occupation and review the definition.

   For example, law librarians are listed among the examples of professions for unit group 51100 ("Librarians").

2. Locate the unit group in the list in Appendix F. The purpose of this step is first to ensure that the occupation has been included in the analysis at all, and second, to note any primary or partial specializations with which the occupation is associated.

   Unit group 51100 is included in Appendix F, and it is associated with the primary specialization, "Library."

3. Refer to the rules at the beginning of Appendix F to determine which of the industries in Appendix G match with the specialized occupation's unit group.

   In the case of unit group 51100's primary specialization, Appendix F states that "NOC codes associated with a primary specialization draw workers from all industries listed in the following appendix into the specified specialization. When there is a conflict between the primary specialization of the occupation and that of a given industry, the primary specialization of the industry takes precedence." As such, all industries listed in Appendix G, except those with a different primary specialization, are included.

4. Use Statistics Canada's 2017 NAICS reference documentation to determine whether the specialized occupation is likely to be present in each industry.

   Upon analysis, we find that NAICS 5411 ("Legal services") is not included; however, law librarians may be employed in 5191 ("Other information services") working in internet publishers that serve law firms. As such, there are likely to be some law librarians included in this analysis; however, it can be reasonably assumed that most law librarians are employed in legal services and are therefore not included.

As a final note, one of the most significant impediments to researching the culture sector (and one of the major catalysts for the development of the Canadian Framework for Culture Statistics in the first place) is that traditional industrial classification systems do not readily capture the full contribution of creative and cultural workers in the wider economy. Approaches such as the one described in this section and the previous report fundamentally seek to overcome this impediment using a defensible and replicable approach. Although any such synthesis of statistical data is invariably subject to a variety of limitations, the research conducted for this report provides a reasonable approach to identifying and extracting information about the culture sector from highly accurate census data.

Appendix F – NOC Occupational Classifications

The following table summarizes the occupational classifications that were used to identify and isolate workers in the culture sector. The table provides the NOC code/title, followed by the classification used to report on occupational function. These columns are followed by a column for each of the three levels at which an occupation could be assigned to a specialization (the lowest level of the taxonomy used to define the culture sector):

- NOC codes associated with a primary specialization draw workers from all industries listed in the following appendix into the specified specialization. When there is a conflict between the primary specialization of the occupation and that of a given industry, the primary specialization of the industry takes precedence.
  - In cases where primary specializations in this table are marked with an asterisk (*), the primary specialization associated with the occupation takes precedence over the primary specialization associated with the workers' industry. In other words, workers with occupations marked with an asterisk are never included in any other specialization.
- NOC codes that have been assigned a partial, high-priority specialization draw workers from industries listed in the following appendix that have either a high- or low-priority match to the same specialization.
- NOC codes that have been assigned a partial, low-priority specialization draw all workers from industries listed in the following appendix that have a high-priority match to the same specialization.
- Where workers have an industry and occupational classification that was classified as partial, high-priority with different specializations, the workers were classified as being employed across subsectors, which is represented at the subsector level of the taxonomy.

NOC code	Title	Function	Primary specialization	Partial, high priority	Partial, low priority
50011	Managers - publishing, motion pictures, broadcasting and performing arts	Managerial	NA	Film & Television	Dance, Music, Theatre; Visual Arts & Crafts; Book and Magazine Publishing; Digital Media; Music Recording and Publishing; Design; Advertising;
10022	Advertising, marketing and public relations managers	Managerial	NA	Advertising	Visual Arts & Crafts; Film & Television; Digital Media; Design; Advertising;
20011	Architecture and science managers	Managerial	NA	Design	Museum;
20012	Computer and information systems managers	Managerial	NA	Digital Media	Film & Television;
40010	Government managers - health and social policy development and program administration	Other	NA	NA	NA

40011	Government managers - economic analysis, policy development and program administration	Other	NA	NA	NA
40012	Government managers - education policy development and program administration	Other	NA	NA	NA
40019	Other managers in public administration	Other	NA	NA	NA
50010	Library, archive, museum and art gallery managers	Managerial	NA	Library	Visual Arts & Crafts; Museum; Archives;
12012	Supervisors, library, correspondence and related information workers	Managerial	NA	Library	Archives;
12103	Conference and event planners	Managerial	NA	NA	Dance, Music, Theatre;
12111	Health information management occupations	Technical	Archives	NA	NA
14112	Desktop publishing operators and related occupations	Other	NA	Book and Magazine Publishing	Literary Arts;
14300	Library assistants and clerks	Technical	Library*	NA	NA
14301	Correspondence, publication and regulatory clerks	Technical	NA	Book and Magazine Publishing	Literary Arts; Film & Television; Archives;
21200	Architects	Creative	Architecture*	NA	NA
21201	Landscape architects	Creative	Architecture*	NA	NA
21202	Urban and land use planners	Creative	Architecture*	NA	NA
21211	Data scientists	Creative	NA	Digital Media	Film & Television;
21231	Software engineers and designers	Creative	NA	Digital Media	Film & Television;
21230	Computer systems developers and programmers	Creative	NA	Digital Media	Film & Television; Museum;
21232	Software developers and programmers	Creative	NA	Digital Media	Film & Television; Museum;
21234	Web developers and programmers 50%	Creative	NA	Digital Media	Film & Television; Museum;
21233	Web designers	Creative	NA	Design	Film & Television; Digital Media; Advertising;
21234	Web developers and programmers 50%	Creative	NA	Design	Film & Television; Digital Media; Advertising
22110	Biological technologists and technicians	Technical	NA	Museum	NA
22112	Forestry technologists and technicians	Technical	NA	Museum	NA

22113	Conservation and fishery officers	Creative	NA	Museum	NA
22114	Landscape and horticulture technicians and specialists	Technical	Design*	NA	NA
22210	Architectural technologists and technicians	Technical	Architecture*	Design	NA
22211	Industrial designers	Creative	Design*	NA	NA
22212	Drafting technologists and technicians	Technical	NA	Design	Advertising;
41200	University professors and lecturers	Other	NA	NA	NA
41201	Post-secondary teaching and research assistants	Other	NA	NA	NA
41210	College and other vocational instructors	Other	NA	NA	NA
41220	Secondary school teachers	Other	NA	NA	NA
41221	Elementary school and kindergarten teachers	Other	NA	NA	NA
41401	Economists and economic policy researchers and analysts	Other	NA	NA	NA
41403	Social policy researchers, consultants and program officers	Other	NA	NA	NA
41407	Program officers unique to government	Other	NA	NA	NA
41409	Other professional occupations in social science	Other	NA	NA	NA
51100	Librarians	Creative	Library*	NA	NA
51101	Conservators and curators	Creative	NA	Museum	Visual Arts & Crafts;
51102	Archivists	Creative	Archives*	NA	NA
51111	Authors and writers (except technical)	Creative	NA	Literary Arts	Film & Television; Digital Media;
51112	Technical writers	Creative	NA	Literary Arts	Film & Television; Digital Media;
51110	Editors	Creative	NA	Book and Magazine Publishing	Literary Arts; Film & Television; Digital Media;
51113	Journalists	Creative	NA	Literary Arts	Book and Magazine Publishing; Film & Television; Digital Media;
51114	Translators, terminologists and interpreters	Creative	NA	Literary Arts	Book and Magazine Publishing; Film & Television;
51120	Producers, directors, choreographers and related occupations	Creative	NA	Film & Television	Dance, Music, Theatre; Visual Arts & Crafts; Digital Media; Music Recording and Publishing;

51121	Conductors, composers and arrangers	Creative	Music Recording and Publishing*	NA	NA
51122	Musicians and singers	Creative	Dance, Music, Theatre*	NA	NA
53120	Dancers	Creative	Dance, Music, Theatre*	NA	NA
53121	Actors, comedians and circus performers	Creative	NA	Dance, Music, Theatre	Film & Television; Digital Media;
53122	Painters, sculptors and other visual artists	Creative	Visual Arts & Crafts	NA	NA
52100	Library and public archive technicians	Technical	NA	Library	Archives;
53100	Registrars, restorers, interpreters and other occupations related to museum and art galleries	Technical	NA	Museum	Visual Arts & Crafts;
53110	Photographers	Creative	NA	Visual Arts & Crafts	Design; Advertising
52110	Film and video camera operators	Technical	NA	Film & Television	Visual Arts & Crafts; Digital Media
52111	Graphic arts technicians	Technical	Design	Advertising	NA
52112	Broadcast technicians	Technical	NA	Film & Television	Digital Media; Music Recording and Publishing;
52113	Audio and video recording technicians	Technical	NA	Film & Television	Digital Media; Music Recording and Publishing;
52119	Other technical and coordinating occupations in motion pictures, broadcasting and the performing arts	Technical	NA	Film & Television	Dance, Music, Theatre; Digital Media; Music Recording and Publishing;
53111	Motion pictures, broadcasting, photography and performing arts assistants and operators	Technical	NA	Film & Television	Visual Arts & Crafts; Digital Media; Design; Advertising;
52114	Announcers and other broadcasters	Creative	NA	Film & Television	Digital Media; Music Recording and Publishing;
52120	Graphic designers and illustrators	Creative	NA	Design	Visual Arts & Crafts; Digital Arts; Literary Arts; Book and Magazine Publishing; Film & Television; Design; Advertising;
52121	Interior designers and interior decorators	Creative	Design*	NA	NA
53123	Theatre, fashion, exhibit and other creative designers	Creative	NA	Visual Arts & Crafts	Dance, Music, Theatre; Film & Television; Digital Media; Design;
62010	Retail sales supervisors	Creative	NA	Visual Arts & Crafts	Dance, Music, Theatre; Film & Television; Digital Media; Design;

64100	Retail salespersons and visual merchandisers	Creative	NA	Visual Arts & Crafts	Dance, Music, Theatre; Film & Television; Digital Media; Design;
53124	Artisans and craftspersons	Creative	NA	Visual Arts & Crafts	NA
53125	Patternmakers - textile, leather and fur products	Creative	NA	Visual Arts & Crafts	Dance, Music, Theatre;
62029	Other services supervisors	Managerial	NA	NA	NA
65211	Operators and attendants in amusement, recreation and sport	Managerial	NA	NA	NA
72022	Supervisors, printing and related occupations	Other	NA	Book and Magazine Publishing	Visual Arts & Crafts; Literary Arts;
73401	Printing press operators	Other	NA	Book and Magazine Publishing	Visual Arts & Crafts; Literary Arts;
94150	Plateless printing equipment operators	Other	NA	Book and Magazine Publishing	Visual Arts & Crafts; Literary Arts;
94151	Camera, platemaking and other prepress occupations	Other	NA	Book and Magazine Publishing	Visual Arts & Crafts; Literary Arts;
94152	Binding and finishing machine operators	Other	NA	Book and Magazine Publishing	Visual Arts & Crafts; Literary Arts;
94153	Photographic and film processors	Other	Visual Arts & Crafts	NA	NA

Appendix G – NAICS Industrial Classifications

The following table summarizes the industrial classifications that were used to identify and isolate workers in the culture sector. The table provides the NAICS code/title, followed by a column for each of the three levels at which an industry could be assigned to a specialization (the lowest level of the taxonomy used to define the culture sector):

- NAICS codes associated with a primary specialization draw workers from all occupations listed in the preceding appendix into the specified specialization. When there is a conflict between the primary specialization of the industry and that of a given occupation, the primary specialization of the industry takes precedence.
  - In cases where primary specializations in the occupations table (in the preceding appendix) are marked with an asterisk (*), the primary specialization associated with the occupation takes precedence over the primary specialization associated with the workers' industry. In other words, workers with occupations marked with an asterisk in the preceding table are never included in any other specialization.
- NAICS codes that have been assigned a partial, high-priority specialization draw workers from occupations listed in the preceding appendix that have either a high- or low-priority match to the same specialization.
- NAICS codes that have been assigned a partial, low-priority specialization draw all workers from occupations listed in the preceding appendix that have a high-priority match to the same specialization.
- Where workers have an industry and occupational classification that was classified as partial, high-priority with different specializations, the workers were classified as being employed across subsectors, which is represented at the subsector level of the taxonomy.

NAICS code	Title	Primary specialization	Partial, high priority (requires occupation match in same specialization)	Partial, low, priority (requires a high-priority occupation match in same specialization)
313	Textile mills	NA	Visual Arts & Crafts	NA
314	Textile product mills	NA	Visual Arts & Crafts	NA
315	Clothing manufacturing	NA	Visual Arts & Crafts	NA
316	Leather and allied product manufacturing	NA	Visual Arts & Crafts	NA
321	Wood product manufacturing	NA	Visual Arts & Crafts	NA
323	Printing and related support activities	NA	Book and Magazine Publishing	NA
327	Non-metallic mineral product manufacturing	NA	Visual Arts & Crafts	NA
332	Fabricated metal product manufacturing	NA	Visual Arts & Crafts	NA
3343	Audio and video equipment manufacturing	NA	Music Recording and Publishing	NA

3346	Manufacturing and reproducing magnetic and optical media	NA	Music Recording and Publishing	NA
337	Furniture and related product manufacturing	NA	Visual Arts & Crafts	NA
339	Miscellaneous manufacturing	NA	Visual Arts & Crafts	NA
4143	Home furnishings merchant wholesalers	NA	Visual Arts & Crafts	NA
4144	Personal goods merchant wholesalers	NA	Visual Arts & Crafts	NA
4191	Business-to-business electronic markets, and agents and brokers	NA	Book and Magazine Publishing	NA
4422	Home furnishings stores	NA	Visual Arts & Crafts	NA
4483	Jewellery, luggage and leather goods stores	NA	Visual Arts & Crafts	NA
4511	Sporting goods, hobby and musical instrument stores	NA	Dance, Music, Theatre	Visual Arts & Crafts;
4513	Book stores and news dealers	NA	Book and Magazine Publishing	Literary Arts;
4532	Office supplies, stationery and gift stores	NA	Visual Arts & Crafts	NA
4539	Other miscellaneous store retailers	NA	Visual Arts & Crafts	Film & Television; Digital Media;
5111	Newspaper, periodical, book and directory publishers	NA	Dance, Music, Theatre	NA
5112	Software publishers	NA	Dance, Music, Theatre	NA
5121	Motion picture and video industries	Film & Television	NA	NA
5122	Sound recording industries	Music Recording and Publishing	NA	NA
5151	Radio and television broadcasting	Film & Television	NA	NA
5152	Pay and specialty television	Film & Television	NA	NA
517	Telecommunications	Film & Television	NA	NA
5191	Other information services	NA	Digital Media	Visual Arts & Crafts; Literary Arts; Book and Magazine Publishing; Film & Television; Music Recording and Publishing; Museum; Archives; Library; Design;
5269	Other funds and financial vehicles	NA	NA	NA
5322	Consumer goods rental	NA	Visual Arts & Crafts	NA
5331	Lessors of non-financial intangible assets (except copyrighted works)	NA	NA	NA
5413	Architectural, engineering and related services	Design	NA	NA
5414	Specialized design services	NA	Design	NA
5415	Computer systems design and related services	NA	Digital Media	Design;

5418	Advertising, public relations, and related services	NA	Advertising	Visual Arts & Crafts; Design; Film & Television; Digital Media;
5419	Other professional, scientific and technical services	NA	NA	Dance, Music, Theatre; Visual Arts & Crafts; Design; Literary Arts; Book and Magazine Publishing; Film & Television; Archives; Library; Advertising;
5619	Other support services	NA	NA	Dance, Music, Theatre; Visual Arts & Crafts; Design; Literary Arts; Book and Magazine Publishing; Film & Television; Archives; Library; Advertising;
611	Educational services	NA	Digital Media	Library;
7111	Performing arts companies	Dance, Music, Theatre	NA	NA
7113	Promoters (presenters) of performing arts, sports and similar events	Dance, Music, Theatre	NA	NA
7114	Agents and managers for artists, athletes, entertainers and other public figures	NA	Music Recording and Publishing	Film & Television;
7115	Independent artists, writers and performers	NA	NA	Dance, Music, Theatre; Visual Arts & Crafts; Literary Arts; Film & Television;
7121	Heritage institutions	NA	NA	Visual Arts & Crafts; Museum; Archives; Library;
8129	Other personal services	NA	Visual Arts & Crafts	Dance, Music, Theatre; Film & Television; Design; Advertising;
8132	Grant-making and giving services	NA	NA	NA
8133	Social advocacy organizations	NA	NA	NA
8134	Civic and social organizations	NA	NA	NA
8139	Business, professional, labour and other membership organizations	NA	NA	NA
9112 -9119	Other federal government public administration	NA	NA	NA
9120	Provincial and territorial public administration (9121 to 9129)	NA	NA	NA
9130	Local, municipal and regional public administration (9131 to 9139)	NA	NA	NA

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