

# CULTURE DAYS

**2019 Report**



# CULTURE DAYS IS A NATIONAL CELEBRATION OF ARTS AND CULTURE.

**10 years and counting!**

Over **30,000** Culture Days events have been organized since 2011.

Between **300 and 400** communities host Culture Days events annually.





# Message from the Chair

Culture Days marked a significant milestone in 2019 as we celebrated the organization’s 10th anniversary. When the first Culture Days weekend took place in 2010, few people anticipated that this ad-hoc initiative would become Canada’s largest cultural event. Along with affiliated organization *Les Journées de la culture* in Quebec, the two initiatives join forces on one weekend each year to demystify and raise awareness of arts and culture from coast-to-coast-to-coast. As a result, over 60,000 hands-on and participatory events have been presented between the two in the past decade. In a country as vast as Canada, this represents a remarkable collective effort.

Culture Days would not be what it is today without the dedication of thousands of incredible organizers and presenters, professional and amateur alike. Hats off to everyone who has joined in during the past decade—you have brought communities together in meaningful, engaging, and creative ways!

That communities large and small have embraced Culture Days speaks to a growing recognition that arts and culture play a fundamental role in building healthier communities and more resilient citizens. With this in mind, the 2019 Culture Days theme of *Creativity, the Arts, and Well-being* anchored our year-round communications. Many event organizers interpreted the theme in their own unique ways by presenting a range of arts and well-being events during the Culture Days weekend.

Some big changes took place for the organization this year including the launch of a new website and a fresh rebrand. We are delighted with the results, and the feedback we have received from the Culture Days community has been overwhelmingly positive. With the new website and look providing a solid foundation, we are ready for some exciting transformations.

In March 2019, the Canada Council for the Arts confirmed a three-year Digital Strategy Fund grant for Culture Days in the ‘Transformation of Organizational Models’ stream. In the first year of this project, Culture Days will be consulting widely with community and event organizers and evaluating how our platform can better serve the arts and culture sector as a whole.



Lucille Pacey, Chair  
Board of Directors

Our national media partners Pattison, Cineplex and CBC, along with creative partner BT/A, provided unwavering support again this year. Thanks also to Mercedes Findlay Consulting, and our research partner Maru/Matchbox. A huge thank you to the Government of Canada for their ongoing support through the Strategic Initiatives Component of the Canada Cultural Investment Fund.

In early 2019, we welcomed four new members to the Board of Directors—Brenda Leadlay, Rick Walters, David Pensato, and John Rider—and we are delighted to have them join us in our ongoing work. With the leadership from our Board of Directors, the collaboration of our provincial partners, the participation of thousands of organizers, and the hard work of our dedicated staff, we are charting an exciting vision for the future. Here’s to the next 10 years!

*Lucille Pacey*





# 2019 BY THE NUMBERS

**3,028**  
EVENTS

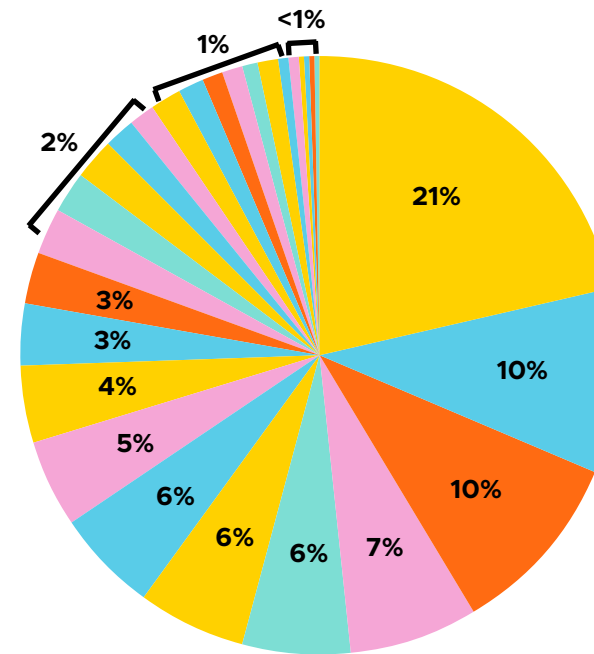
**110**  
HUBS

**1,089** ORGANIZERS  
IN **324** COMMUNITIES

**2,000,000+**  
ATTENDEES

**253,029,767**  
MEDIA IMPRESSIONS

## Organizers and Events



Who organizes Culture Days events?

**648** Arts, culture, heritage non-profit  
**304** Municipality or local government  
**303** Library  
**216** Non-profit / advocacy organization  
**174** Professional artist  
**167** Artist collective, studio, guild  
**146** Museum  
**123** Individual or community organizer  
**104** Community group or centre  
**85** Performing arts company  
**85** Business or business association

Events run the spectrum of art forms and cultural traditions, which are categorized by 40 searchable tags. The most commonly used tags include:

Visual Arts  
(956)

Crafts  
(584)

History/Heritage  
(560)

Music  
(557)

Performance  
(520)

Intercultural  
(334)

Storytelling  
(307)

Dance  
(304)

Indigenous  
(232)

Design  
(293)

The majority of Culture Days events are offered in English, though events were also offered in an additional **37** languages:

- French
- Mandarin
- Hindi
- Punjabi
- Spanish
- Korean
- Cree
- German
- Cantonese
- Urdu
- Gujarati
- Arabic
- Farsi
- Italian
- Polish
- ASL
- Stoney
- Portuguese
- Finnish
- Dene
- Tamil
- Tagalog
- Greek
- Estonian
- Swedish
- Romanian
- Lithuanian
- Hungarian
- Dutch
- Nepali
- Haitian Creole
- Filipino
- Ojibwe
- Indonesian
- Czech
- Ukrainian
- Kiswahili

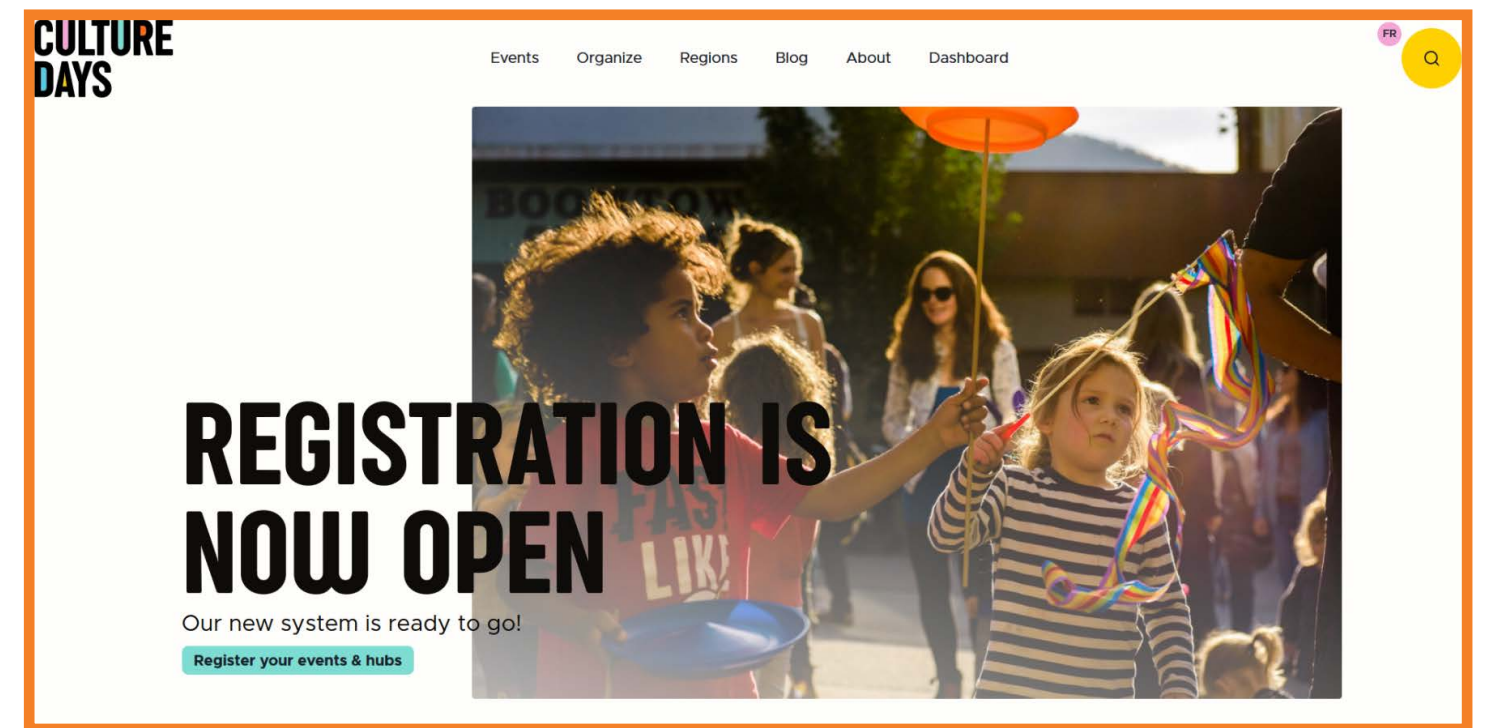


# CULTURE DAYS

While the Culture Days brand has evolved slightly over time, the 10th anniversary proved great timing to undertake a rebrand process. Culture Days' Communications Manager, Shannon Bowler, and creative partner BT/A led a collaborative brand evaluation with provincial partners, and the updated look was launched in the spring. Culture Days organizers embraced the new logo and took inspiration in creating their own local promotional materials.

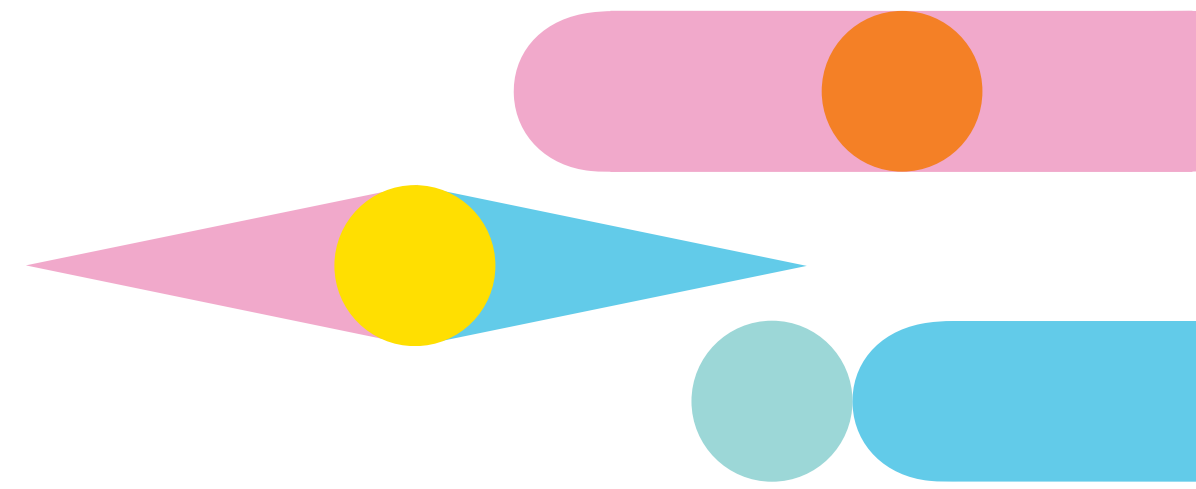


## Fresh look, new website



Topping the network's wish list was a full-scale redesign of the website. The new system needed to be sharp and beautiful—while also being easy for organizers to register events, and fun for the public to search for activities.

Culture Days' web developer, Jacob Baker-Kretzmar, began designing an entirely new website from the ground up in late 2018. The basic site launched in the spring, and registration soon followed. Improvements and new features were added over the summer including *Culture Days Hubs* and *My Collections*, a custom multi-use itinerary and promotional tool. With the new website as a solid foundation, Culture Days is now ready to expand further into improving discoverability and offering useful new web functions.







## Culture Days 2019

Over the weekend of September 27-29, millions of Canadians joined in celebrations that encompassed music, dance, theatre, crafts, visual arts, heritage programs, and so much more. From street festivals to intimate hands-on workshops, there was something for everyone!





# AMPLIFYING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF ARTS AND CULTURE BEYOND THE WEEKEND.

## Annual theme

### *Creativity, the Arts, and Well-being*

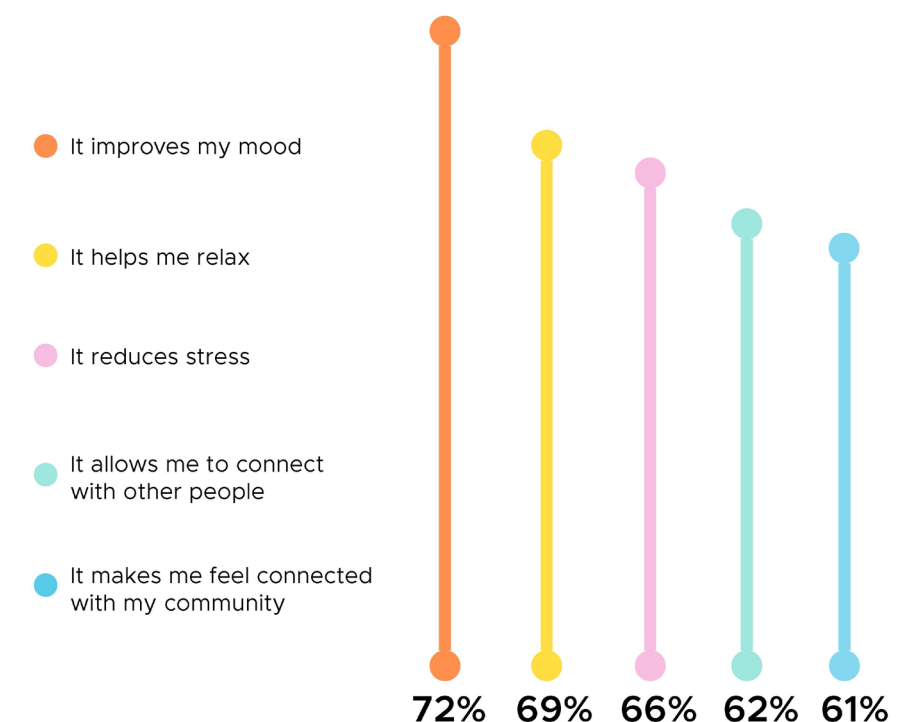
The 2019 theme examined how participating in arts and culture contribute to both individual and collective well-being. Events that took place over the 10th annual Culture Days weekend highlighted the importance of creative expression and how arts and culture benefit the public good.

Each year, Culture Days and research partner Maru/Matchbox survey both the general population and attendees to gain insights related to the annual theme. The results inform year-round initiatives, jumpstart online conversation, and inspire organizers' program planning.



OF 2018 CULTURE DAYS ATTENDEES SEE ARTS AND CULTURE AS VERY IMPORTANT TO BOTH THEIR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL WELL-BEING

Culture Days attendees say arts and culture positively affects their mental health in the following ways:





Culture Days extends the conversation year-round through the Culture365 blog, highlighting best practices and lessons from writers and contributors who represent non-profit cultural organizations, interdisciplinary artistic practices, and cultural creators from across Canada. 2019 posts included:

- **Living Solo / Being Social—Social Aspects of Arts Participation,** *Frédéric Julien*
- **Bridging Generations: The Value of Mentorship - Part 1 and Part 2,** *Kristen Lawson*
- **Putting in the Time - investigations in participation,** *Dave Dymant*
- **Weaving Reconciliation: Arts & Culture as a Catalyst for Change,** *Shelley Fayant*
- **Innovation on the Margins: Carving Out Space for Arts & Culture in the North,** *Taylor Basso*
- **Museums as Collaborative Spaces,** *Samuel Bernier-Cormier*
- **Concepts and Participation: Reflections on an Exhibition,** *Dave Dymant*
- **An Inspiring Legacy: Les Journées de la culture,** *Culture Days staff*

## Creativity, the Arts, and Well-being series

Prior to the weekend, Culture Days commissioned a special series by Canadian Art Magazine's Leah Sandals. The four posts were packed full of inspiring initiatives that highlight the growing links between the arts, physical and mental health, aging, and the health risks of being an artist.

- **When Art is the Best Medicine**
- **Building Mental Health Through Art**
- **Being an Artist Means Health Risks—And Better Care Is Needed**
- **Reframing Aging Through the Arts**

A second series examined the theme from a more personal perspective. In a stinging coincidence, Culture Days' Executive Director, Aubrey Reeves, was diagnosed with cancer in the late fall of 2018. Following her treatment, Aubrey wrote a three-part series about her experience, presented in partnership with The Princess Margaret Cancer Foundation.

- **Knit One, Purl One, Relax Some**
- **Music to Soothe**
- **Connecting to Colour**





# Webinar series

Culture Days webinars provide insight, skill development, and knowledge to help strengthen public engagement in arts and culture, featuring guest experts presenting current best practices and inventive new ideas. Each online session includes a question and answer period with downloadable related resources—all free of charge. In 2019, our series included:

**Arts Participation in Canada**  
*with Kelly Hill, President of Hill Strategies*

**Deepening Sense of Belonging Through Arts and Culture**  
*with Frédéric Julien, Director of Research and Development at CAPACOA*

**Culture Days and Get Creative Festival: Recent findings from across the pond on personal well-being and arts participation**  
*with Dr. Daisy Fancourt, UCL Senior Research Fellow, and Stephen James-Yeoman, BBC Arts*

**Art Education in the Digital Sphere**  
*with John Dalrymple from Canada’s National Ballet School, Jay Kimball at LiveArts Saskatchewan, and Douglas Friesen, teacher and arts educator*



# Video series



To celebrate the 10th anniversary, Culture Days produced a video series profiling five individuals and their respective organizations from across Canada. These artists and advocates make significant differences in their communities through their work and dedication—perfectly exemplifying why arts and culture are so fundamental to our lives and collective well-being.

- Multi-disciplinary artist **Kathleen Noelle Black** and **Artists in Healthcare Manitoba**, in Winnipeg, MB.
- Music artist and youth advocate **MAJE** and **Youth Art Connection**, in Halifax, NS.
- Stand up comic, counselor, and author **David Granirer** and **Stand-Up for Mental Health**, in Vancouver, BC.
- **Elder Duke Redbird** and **Wigwam Chi-Chemung**, presented in partnership with **Myseum**, in Toronto, ON.
- Performer and disability activist **John Loeppky** and **Listen to Dis’** theatre group, in Regina, SK.

Thanks to series videographer Pedro Miguez of Rebel Creative Media, with assistance from Bryce Zimmerman.



# Marketing campaign

Culture Days’ national media partners at Pattison, Cineplex, and CBC boost the profile of the weekend, encouraging Canadians to get out and participate. As a result, the Culture Days marketing campaign is valued at over **\$1.8 million** and delivers north of **250 million impressions**.

Promotions are complemented by the independent initiatives of organizers, many of whom tap in to the larger campaign by customizing marketing templates and coordinating on advertising. This strategy amplifies the national messaging at the grassroots level, creating a multi-tiered campaign reaching millions of Canadians.



30 and 15-second ads ran across Cineplex screens, CBC Television, and Pattison’s digital network during the month of September. Culture Days graced the back cover of Cineplex Magazine in the lead up.

With Pattison’s support, exterior and interior ads ran on subways, streetcars, and buses on eight major transit systems including those in Edmonton, Calgary, Regina, Winnipeg, and Toronto. Digital ads also ran on Pattison residential, office, and airport networks.





# Media coverage

Culture Days works with Mercedes Findlay Consulting to promote the weekend and engage the public, with provincial partners collaborating to boost events regionally. This collective approach achieves thousands of media hits leading up to the weekend and garners over **13 million media impressions**.

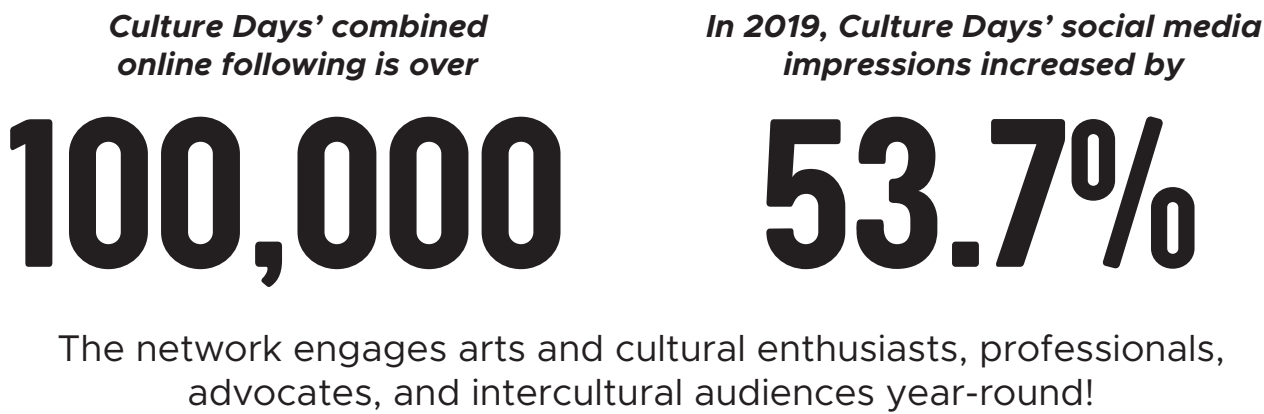
Culture Days was covered by hundreds of newspapers, radio, television, and online news sources in 2019, including:

- The Toronto Star
- National Post
- CBC and CBC Arts
- Canadian Art Magazine
- CTV News
- Winnipeg Free Press
- Global News
- Kingston Whig Standard
- Regina Leader-Post
- Sault This Week
- Edmonton Examiner
- Belleville Intelligencer
- Victoria News
- The North Bay Nugget
- Alaska Highway News
- Anishinabek News
- The Battleford News Optimist
- Vulcan Advocate
- Sarnia This Week
- Stratford Beacon Herald

# Online network

In addition to the nearly **700k** annual visits to the Culture Days website, social media is abuzz as organizers and participants post about their hands-on experiences over the Culture Days weekend. No matter where you are in the country, knowing that millions of people are out participating in arts and culture activities provides a great sense of connection!

Culture Days is active beyond the weekend on social media platforms, linking creators and inspiring audiences across a vast national digital network.





# CONNECTING AND EMPOWERING THOUSANDS OF ORGANIZERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

## Culture Days organizers

The network is growing—there were over 1,000 individual Culture Days organizers in 2019!



*“The most exciting aspect of Culture Days is seeing families discover activities together.”*

Kaitlyn from Milton, ON

*“I want to make community members more aware of how important this art is for our culture...”*

Vrunda from Regina, SK



**84%**

of organizers say they would recommend participating to other people.

**A majority of Culture Days organizers report high satisfaction with the following benefits of participating:**

**78%**

Strengthening ties to local community

**68%**

Increasing my work's profile

**73%**

Building new audiences

**78%**

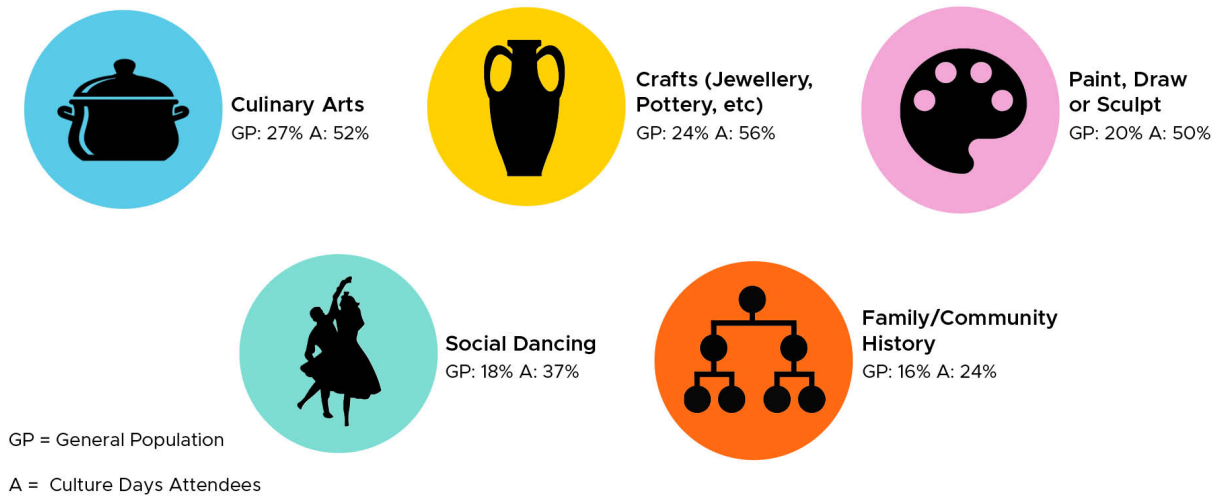
Showcasing my work



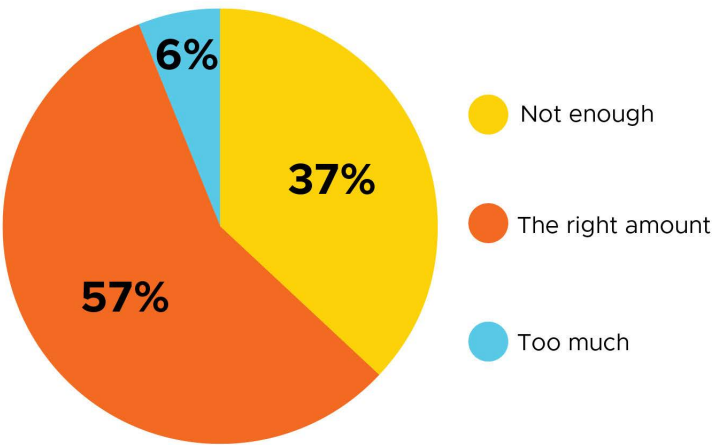
# Measuring impacts

Culture Days undertakes annual surveys aimed at understanding Canadians’ perceptions of and engagement with arts and culture. Through them, Culture Days also learns more about its audience and the impact of getting hands-on with arts and culture. The results are shared widely with organizers to encourage new strategies for building the sector.

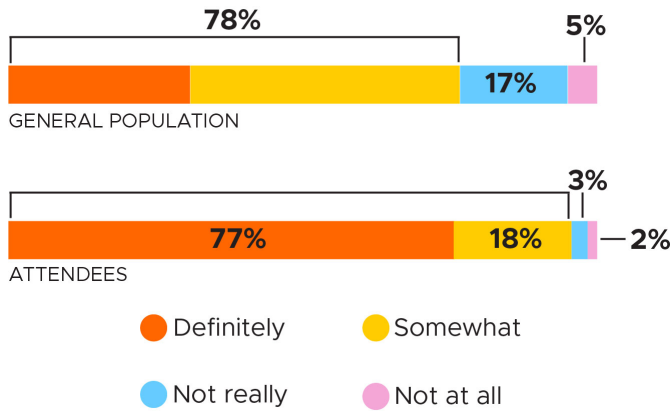
69% of Canadians and 98% of Culture Days attendees have participated in at least one arts and culture activity in the last year. The top five are:



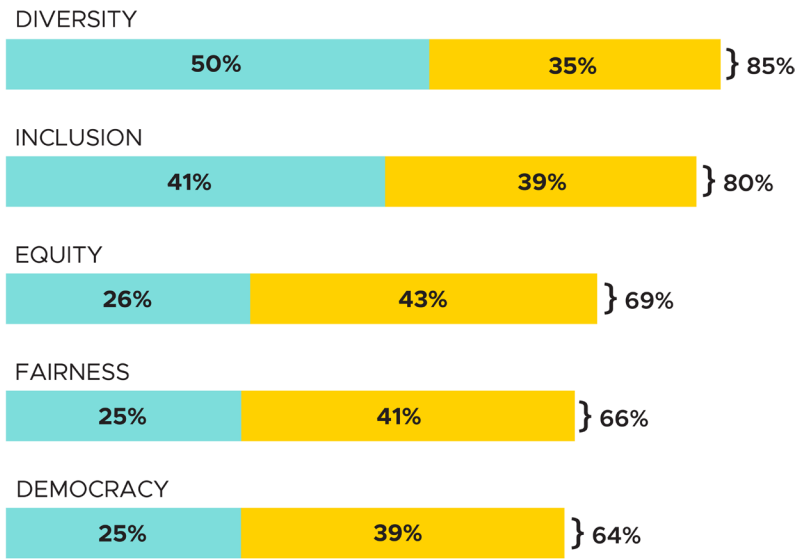
How much arts and culture education do Canadians perceive their children are receiving at school?



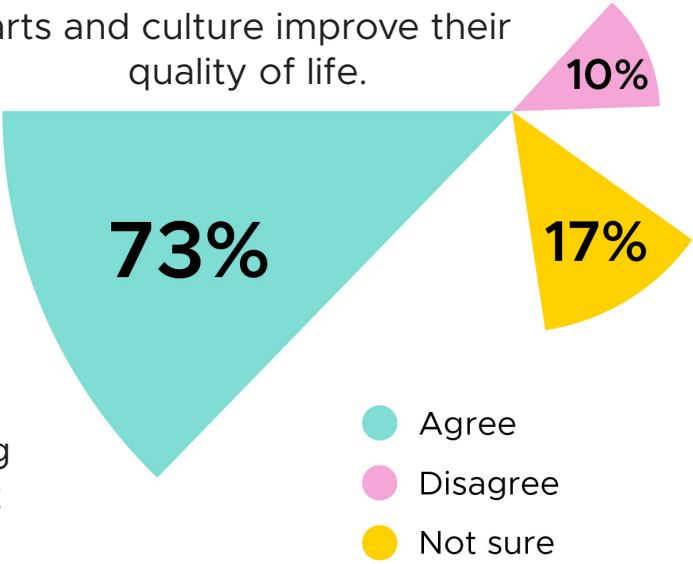
Do you see Culture Days as an opportunity to supplement children’s exposure to arts and culture outside of school?



A majority of Canadians see arts and culture as playing either a large role or some role in the following aspects of our culture:



Most Canadians think that arts and culture improve their quality of life.



85% of Canadians are interested in attending a new kind of cultural activity. They are most interested in the following:



Visit the Research section of the Culture Days website for more findings.



Culture Days Board of Directors

Our dedicated Board of Directors contribute a range of expertise in the arts and culture sector, working with government agencies, and managing businesses and non-profits.

**Lucille Pacey, Chair**  
Principal Consultant at PaceyGroup  
Consulting and Management Services

**Rose Gilks, Secretary**  
CEO, SaskCulture

**Antoni Cimolino**  
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**Rick Walters**  
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**Jacob Baker-Kretzmar**  
Website Developer

**Samuel Bernier-Cormier**  
Research and Communications  
Coordinator







## Photo Credits

**Cover:** *Heartbeatz* organized by the Halton Dance Network in Oakville, ON. Courtesy of the Town of Oakville.

**Pg 8:** *Living in the Hyphen*, by Living Hyphen at Toronto Public Library in Toronto, ON. Courtesy of Living Hyphen.

**Pg 10 (clockwise from top left):** Peruvian dancing at Kelowna Culture Days, BC. Courtesy of Glenna Turnbull; Milton Culture Days, ON. Courtesy of Sarah Arfan; Alberta Craft Council tours, Calgary, AB. Courtesy of Jeff Yee; Live drawing with TRIO ENSEMBLE, Etobicoke, ON. Courtesy of the Neilson Park Creative Centre; *Passage* by Serge Maheu at Nuit Blanche Winnipeg, MB. Courtesy of Sandeep Singh.

**Pg 11 (clockwise from top left):** Nuit Blanche Winnipeg in the Exchange District. Courtesy of Salvador Maniquiz; Sacred Circle Steppers perform at the BC Culture Days Launch, Vancouver, BC. Courtesy of Mary Matheson; South Asian Mommies of Milton at Milton Culture Days, ON. Courtesy of Sarah Arfan; Africa Dance Workshop at the Tett Centre for Creativity and Learning, Kingston, ON. Courtesy of Garrett Elliott.

**Pg 14:** Arts & Health: Healthy Aging Through the Arts dance program. Courtesy of the Vancouver Park Board, 2018.

**Pg 15:** Culture Days' Executive Director Aubrey Reeves. Courtesy of Stephen Dagg and the Princess Margaret Cancer Foundation.

**Pg 16:** *Collaborative Dreamcatcher* project by Jaene Castrillon at Toronto Public Library in Toronto, ON. Courtesy of Alejandra Higuera.

**Pg 18 & 19:** Opening remarks and volunteers at the BC Culture Days Launch, Vancouver, BC. Courtesy of Mary Matheson.

**Pg 20:** Sackville Culture Days with Mount Allison University, Sackville, NB. Courtesy of Mount Allison University.

**Pg 21:** *Passage* by Serge Maheu at Nuit Blanche Winnipeg, MB. Courtesy of Rein Cabalquinto.

**Pg 23:** Portraits courtesy of Kaitlyn Patience and Vrunda Upadhyay.

**Pg 27 (clockwise from top left):** The Big Draw Festival, Toronto, ON. Courtesy of Brendan Albert; Flamenco performance at the Tett Centre for Creativity and Learning, Kingston, ON. Courtesy of Garrett Elliott; Cedar Hill Culture Days, Saanich, BC. Courtesy of Kevin Light; The Big Draw Festival, Toronto, ON. Courtesy of Brendan Albert; Lorita Leung Dance Company performs at the BC Culture Days Launch, Vancouver, BC. Courtesy of Mary Matheson.

**Pg 28 (clockwise from top left):** *Allez Hop!* at Nuit Blanche Winnipeg, MB. Courtesy of John Medina; Writersfest at the Tett Centre for Creativity and Learning, Kingston, ON. Courtesy of Garrett Elliott; Dr. Elder Duke Redbird and his piece *Wigwam Chi-Chemung* in Toronto, ON. Courtesy of Myseum Toronto; Art Bomb Festival in Gananoque, ON. Courtesy of Pam Staples.

**Back covers:** Play with Clay event in Saskatoon, SK. Courtesy of Kevin Hogarth; Cedar Hill Culture Days, Saanich, BC. Courtesy of Kevin Light.



# A truly national initiative

## National Supporters

Our sincerest thanks to all of our funders and partners for their generous support in making this cross-country initiative possible.



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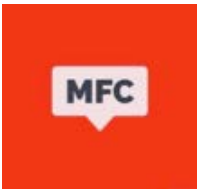
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