



# Americans Speak Out About the Arts

An In-Depth Look at Perceptions and  
Attitudes about the Arts in America

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**The American public is more broadly engaged in the arts than previously understood, believes that the arts play a vital role in personal well-being and healthier communities, and that the arts are core to a well-rounded education.**

## Introduction

*Americans Speak Out about the Arts* is national public opinion survey conducted by Ipsos Public Affairs (the third largest survey research firm in the world) on behalf of Americans for the Arts. The poll was conducted in December 2015. To ensure precision in the findings, a sample of 3,020 adults were interviewed online (by way of comparison, the typical national political poll has a sample size of just 1,000 adults).

The arts are a fundamental component of a healthy society—one that provides myriad benefits to the individual, community, and the nation:

- Aesthetic: The arts create beauty and preserve it as part of culture
- Creativity: The arts encourage creativity, a critical skill in a dynamic world
- Expression: Artistic work lets us communicate our interests and visions
- Identity: Arts goods, services, and experiences help define our culture
- Innovation: The arts are sources of new ideas, futures, concepts, and connections
- Preservation: Arts and culture keep our collective memories intact
- Prosperity: The arts create millions of jobs and enhance economic health
- Skills: Arts aptitudes and techniques are needed in all sectors of society and work
- Social Capital: We enjoy the arts together, across races, generations, and places

Because of the significance of the arts to American life, there are many studies that document the social, educational and economic impacts of the arts on communities. What makes this study different is that it measures, from the public's perspective, (1) personal engagement in the arts as attender, collector, and creator; (2) support for arts education and government arts funding; (3) opinions on the personal and well-being benefits that come from engaging in the arts; and (4) if and how those personal benefits extend to the community.

The 3,020 respondents self-identified by race and Hispanic ethnicity. For the report, the “white” category is non-Hispanic whites. Included in the “people of color” category are blacks, Asians, all Hispanics, and others.

## 15 Survey Highlights: What Americans Believe About the Arts

The American public is more broadly engaged in the arts than previously understood—believing that the arts not only play a vital role in personal well-being and healthier communities, but that the arts are also core to a well-rounded education.

1. **“The arts provide meaning to our lives.”** 63 percent of the population believe the arts “lift me up beyond everyday experiences,” 64 percent feel the arts give them “pure pleasure to experience and participate in,” and 73 percent say the arts are a “positive experience in a troubled world.”
2. **“Most of us seek out arts experiences.”** Seven in 10 American adults (68 percent) attended an arts event in the past year, like going to the theater, museum, zoo, or a musical performance.
3. **“We often experience the arts in unexpected places.”** An even greater proportion of Americans (77 percent) say they experienced the arts in a “non-arts” venue such as a park, hospital, shopping mall, or airport.
4. **“Across demographic groups, the arts are part of our lives.”** People of color were more likely to attend an arts event than their white counterparts (71 percent vs. 66 percent). Higher rates of attendance for people of color were noted for multiple art forms, including dance, museums, and theater.
5. **“Arts institutions add value to our communities.”** Regardless of whether people engage with the arts or not, 87 percent believe they are important to quality of life, and 82 percent believe they are important to local businesses and the economy.
6. **“We donate to the arts.”** 27 percent of the population (more than 1 in 4 Americans) made a donation to an arts, culture, or public broadcasting organization within the past year. Donors were typically younger and had higher incomes and education.
7. **“We will support candidates who want to increase arts funding.”** Americans are more than twice as likely to vote in favor of a candidate who increases arts spending from 45 cents to \$1 per person than to vote against them (37 percent in favor, 16 percent against).

## 15 Survey Highlights: What Americans Believe About the Arts

8. **“We believe the arts are part of a well-rounded education.”** Nine in 10 American adults (88 percent) agree that the arts are part of a well-rounded K-12 education.
9. **“We believe the arts should be taught in grades K–12.”** 90 percent believe students should receive an education in the arts in elementary school, middle school, and high school. 82 percent say the arts should also be taught outside of the classroom in the community.
10. **“We are making art in our personal time.”** Half of all Americans are personally involved in artistic activities (49 percent) such as painting, singing in a choir, making crafts, writing poetry, or playing music.
11. **“We engage in the arts because it makes us feel creative.”** Among those who are personally involved in making art or displaying art in their home, 60 percent say that “arts and music outside of the home” makes them feel more creative—a rate that jumps to 70 percent for Millennials.
12. **“Social media increases our exposure to the arts.”** 53 percent of social media users say that they are more exposed to the arts thanks to connecting online. 59 percent agree that art created on social media is a legitimate form of art.
13. **“Yes! Tattoos are art.”** 27 percent of Americans boast a tattoo (12 percent have more than one). Three-quarters believe that tattoos are a form of art (73 percent).
14. **“The arts unify our communities.”** The personal benefits of the arts extend beyond the individual and to the community. 67 percent of Americans believe “the arts unify our communities regardless of age, race, and ethnicity” and 62 percent agree that the arts “helps me understand other cultures better.”
15. **“Despite the benefits the arts provide, not everyone in our communities has equal access to the arts.”** Despite the individual and community benefits, just 45 percent believe that “everyone in their community has equal access to the arts.”

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# Executive Summary of Findings

# Americans Are Experiencing the Arts throughout the Community



The American public engages in the arts in many ways—as attendee, arts maker, art purchaser and decorator, and arts advocate. We consume and share art through technology and are more likely to experience the arts outside of the traditional arts venues than inside.

- **Americans are attending the arts:** Two-thirds of the American adult population attended an arts event in the past year (68 percent), such as the theater, zoo or botanical garden, historic home, or musical performance.
- **YET, more Americans experienced the arts at a “non-arts” venue:** The public is also enjoying the arts beyond the traditional arts institutions—and at remarkable levels. 78 percent experienced the arts in a “non-arts” venue such as a park, hospital, shopping mall, or airport. This remarkable finding suggests local arts agency efforts to integrate the arts deeper into the fabric of their communities are having measurable impacts.
- **People of color are more likely to attend the arts than whites:** People of color were more likely to attend an arts event than their white counterparts (71 percent vs. 66 percent). Higher rates of attendance were noted for people of color for multiple art forms, including dance, museums, and theater.<sup>1</sup>
- **The public finds high value in arts institutions:** Regardless of whether they attend or not, when asked about museums, theaters, and concert halls, a decisive 82 percent of Americans believe these institutions are “important to business and the economy.” 87 percent believe they are “important to quality of life” (49 percent rated this “very important,” a figure five times greater than those who said they are “not important.”)

<sup>1</sup> In both online and phone surveys, Hispanic, Asian, and black participants skew slightly higher in income and education compared to the actual population—both of which are associated with higher rates of arts participation. The large sample size of this study still makes this a significant finding.





## The Arts and Our Better Selves

We are better people with the arts in our lives. We are healthier, more creative, and actively engaged citizens who feel better about today and more optimistic about tomorrow. In a society struggling to find equity and social justice, Americans believe the arts improve the quality of our communities—they unify us and help us understand other cultures.

These quality-of-life and well-being benefits are not limited to the affluent, educated, or a particular racial group. Rather, they cut across all socioeconomic strata, with low-income individuals being the cohort most likely to “strongly agree” with these benefits.

- **The arts provide meaning to our lives:** In a society struggling to find meaning and hope, 63 percent of the population believe the arts “lift me up beyond everyday experiences,” 64 percent feel the arts give them “pure pleasure to experience and participate in,” and 73 percent say the arts are a “positive experience in a troubled world.”
- **The arts unify our communities:** 67 percent of Americans say “the arts unify our communities regardless of age, race, and ethnicity” and 62 percent agree that the arts “helps me understand other cultures better.”
- **Everyone benefits:** These findings are made even more powerful by the fact that they cut across all socioeconomic strata. In fact, low-income communities are most likely to ‘strongly agree’ with these statements.
- **Improving quality of life:** Regardless of whether they attend or not, when asked about museums, theaters, and concert halls, a decisive 87 percent of Americans believe they are “important to quality of life.”
- **Unequal access:** For all these benefits to the individual and the community, just 45 percent believe that “everyone in my community has equal access to the arts.” Both whites and people of color share this perception (44 and 45 percent, respectively).

## Jobs and the Economy

In addition to the personal and community benefits the arts bring to people, Americans also identified the arts as important to businesses and their local economy. Businesses gain a competitive advantage in attracting a skilled and creative workforce by being located in a culturally vibrant community with abundant creative opportunities. Creative workers, especially Millennials, want to be creative—not just in the workplace, but at home and in their community as well—and consider this in their career choices and where to live.

- **The public finds high value in arts institutions:** Regardless of whether they attend or not, when asked about museums, theaters, and concert halls, 82 percent believe they are important to business and the economy, including more than a third (39 percent) who say that this is “very important.”
- **Using the arts to attract workforce talent:** Half of people with a college degree (49 percent)—a majority of Millennials (52 percent) and Gen X (54 percent)—say they would strongly consider whether a community is rich in the arts when deciding where to move for a job.
- **“Feeling creative.” The #1 reason people make art:** Among those who are personally involved in making art or displaying art in their home, 60 percent say that “arts and music outside of the home” makes them feel more creative—a rate that jumps to 70 percent for Millennials. This is good news for business leaders seeking a skilled and creative workforce.<sup>2</sup>
- **Arts help drive tourism:** Two-thirds of Americans included an arts event on their last vacation (65 percent). Nearly half of Americans (43 percent) say that when they plan a vacation, they strongly consider whether the destination is rich in the arts when deciding where to visit.
- **Arts as image building:** 60 percent believe that the “arts improve the image and identity” of their community. Related, 35 percent of those on social media use art to “cultivate a specific image or look on social media.”

<sup>2</sup> According to the [Ready to Innovate](#) report, by the Conference Board, creativity has soared into the top five applied skills that business leaders seek in candidates.

## The Arts in Contemporary America

Americans are making art, buying art, displaying art in their homes (and sometimes on their bodies), and using social networking to share art and communicate about their arts experiences. “Feeling creative” is the number one reason people get personally engaged in the arts.

- **Americans are making art:** Half of all Americans are personally involved in artistic activities (49 percent) such as painting, singing in a choir, making crafts, writing poetry, or playing music. Women, Millennials, those with children living at home, and those with a college degree tend to be more involved in the arts, when compared to their respective demographic counterparts.
- **Two-thirds of the public displays art at home:** 69 percent of respondents display art in their home, with more than half displaying paintings, followed by tapestries, ceramics, crafts, and sculptures.
- **Tattoos are art:** While 27 percent of Americans boast a tattoo (12 percent have more than one), three-quarters of American adults believe that tattoos can be a form of art (73 percent). This includes 31 percent who feel that all tattoos are a kind of art and 42 percent who say that some tattoos are art, but others are not. In contrast, just 22 percent do not consider tattoos as a form of art.
- **Social media increases our exposure to the arts:** 85 percent of the survey respondents use social media. Just over half of social media users (53 percent) agree that they are more exposed to the arts thanks to social media. Related, posts that contain information about art, such as trailers and reviews for movies, information about local art happenings, and articles about art and artists are posted by about 15 percent of social media users.
- **Social media as artistic canvas:** 59 percent of social media users agree that art created on social media is a legitimate form of art. In addition, similar proportions (52 percent) say that the photos they take and post online are a kind of art. 30 percent of respondents say they create and post art on a regular basis.

# The American Public Overwhelmingly Supports Arts Education



Americans show unequivocal and overwhelming support for arts education at all levels, K-12 as well as out of school in the community. While the public is decidedly bullish on the value of arts education, they are bearish on whether all students in their community have equal opportunities to engage.

- **The arts are considered part of a well-rounded education:** An overwhelming majority of the American public (88 percent) agrees that the arts are part of a well-rounded K-12 education—including 56 percent who “strongly agree” (versus just 7 percent who disagree).
- **Arts education is important at all grade levels:** Nine in 10 American adults believe that it is important for students to receive an education in the arts—including dance, media arts, music, theater, and visual arts—as part of the curriculum in elementary school (88 percent), middle school (90 percent), and high school (89 percent). This is a change from past studies that have shown a drop-off in support for arts education as students enter high school.
- **Out-of-school arts experiences are important, too:** The value of arts education is not limited to just the in-school experience. 83 percent agree to the importance of the arts to students outside of the classroom and throughout the community.
- **Not enough access to the arts:** Despite their importance, just 61 percent of Americans agree that students in their area have enough opportunities to “hear music, go to plays, visit museums, and attend cultural events, either in school or in the community.” 27 percent feel there is inadequate access to the arts for students, while 12 percent are unsure.
- **Parents actively support arts education:** Most parents (66 percent) say that they have taken action to support arts education during the past year, such as encouraging their child to participate in school/community arts programs (33 percent), and donating to (22 percent) or volunteering for (20 percent) a school/community arts program.
- **Barriers to parental action:** Too busy (27 percent), conflicting priorities (18 percent), and emphasizing other important subjects (15 percent) are common reasons given by parents for not taking more action to support arts education.

# The American Public Views Government Funding for the Arts Favorably



Americans approve of the government's role in funding the arts and support a per capita increase from 45 cents to \$1. The survey also shows that politicians can feel secure increasing government arts funding as voters won't penalize candidates at the ballot box.

- **Government funding for the arts viewed favorably:** The majority of Americans approve of both their local and state governments funding grants to artists and arts organizations (58 percent and 57 percent, respectively).
- **Support for varied arts programs:** Americans are especially likely to favor funding programs that beautify blighted or abandoned areas, create programs for the elderly, and promote pro-social behavior with at-risk youth (69 percent each); aid returning military personnel (70 percent); and provide art in public spaces (72 percent). Funding for programs seeking to create religious art in public spaces is seen as least favorable, though is still supported by 43 percent.
- **Majorities approve of doubling federal spending on the arts:** 43 percent believe that current government funding of the arts is not enough, while 26 percent believe it is just right. It comes as no surprise, then, that the respondents who approve federal government increasing spending from 45 cents to \$1 per person on grants to arts organizations greatly outweighs those who disagree (55 percent vs. 19 percent).
- **Funding sources:** One in five would be willing to pay more taxes (16 percent) in order to see arts funding increase, while similar proportions think the government should cut from other areas of the budget in order to fund the arts more (19 percent). Another 20 percent would like to pay less taxes, but still cut from other areas of the budget to maintain arts funding.
- **Federal candidates can feel safe voting to increase support for the arts:** All else being equal, Americans who are likely to vote in the 2016 presidential election are twice as likely to vote in favor (40 percent) than to vote against (18 percent) a candidate who wanted to increase federal spending on the arts to \$1 per capita. Millennials are especially likely to vote in favor of this increase—48 percent vs. 13 percent who oppose it.



## Millennials: The Most Active Arts Generation

The Millennial generation—those born after 1980 and the first to come of age in the third millennium—are highly engaged in the arts as attendees, donors, collectors, and practitioners.

### Millennials...

- **Consider the arts when relocating for work:** If they were moving for a job, 52 percent of Millennials would strongly consider whether a community is rich in the arts when deciding where to move—significantly higher proportion compared to Gen Xers (44 percent), Baby Boomers (34 percent), and Elders (32 percent).
- **Participate in the arts at higher rates:** 82 percent of Millennials attended an arts event last year and 68 percent were personally involved in arts making (such as ceramics, painting, quilting, writing poetry, dancing)—both significantly higher than Gen Xers, Baby Boomers, and Elders.
- **Purchase art more frequently:** 47 percent of Millennials have purchased a piece of art for their home in the past year, significantly more than Gen Xers (30 percent), Baby Boomers (18 percent), and Elders (13 percent).
- **Are benefited by arts participation:** 70 percent of Millennials agree that the arts help them understand other cultures better, higher than other generations and the national average of 62 percent.
- **Consider the arts when traveling:** When planning a vacation, 57 percent of Millennials strongly consider whether the destination is rich in the arts, compared to the national average of 43 percent.
- **Are exposed to art thanks to social media:** 70 percent of Millennials say they are more exposed to art thanks to social media, significantly more than Gen Xers (55 percent), Baby Boomers (38 percent), and Elders (30 percent). The national average is 53 percent.
- **Support increased funding for the arts:** 66 percent of Millennials support increasing spending from 45 cents to \$1 per person on grants to arts organizations.
- **Participate in philanthropy:** In the past year, 33 percent of Millennials or someone in their household donated money to an arts or cultural organization—significantly higher than Gen Xers (27 percent), Baby Boomers (23 percent), and Elders (24 percent).

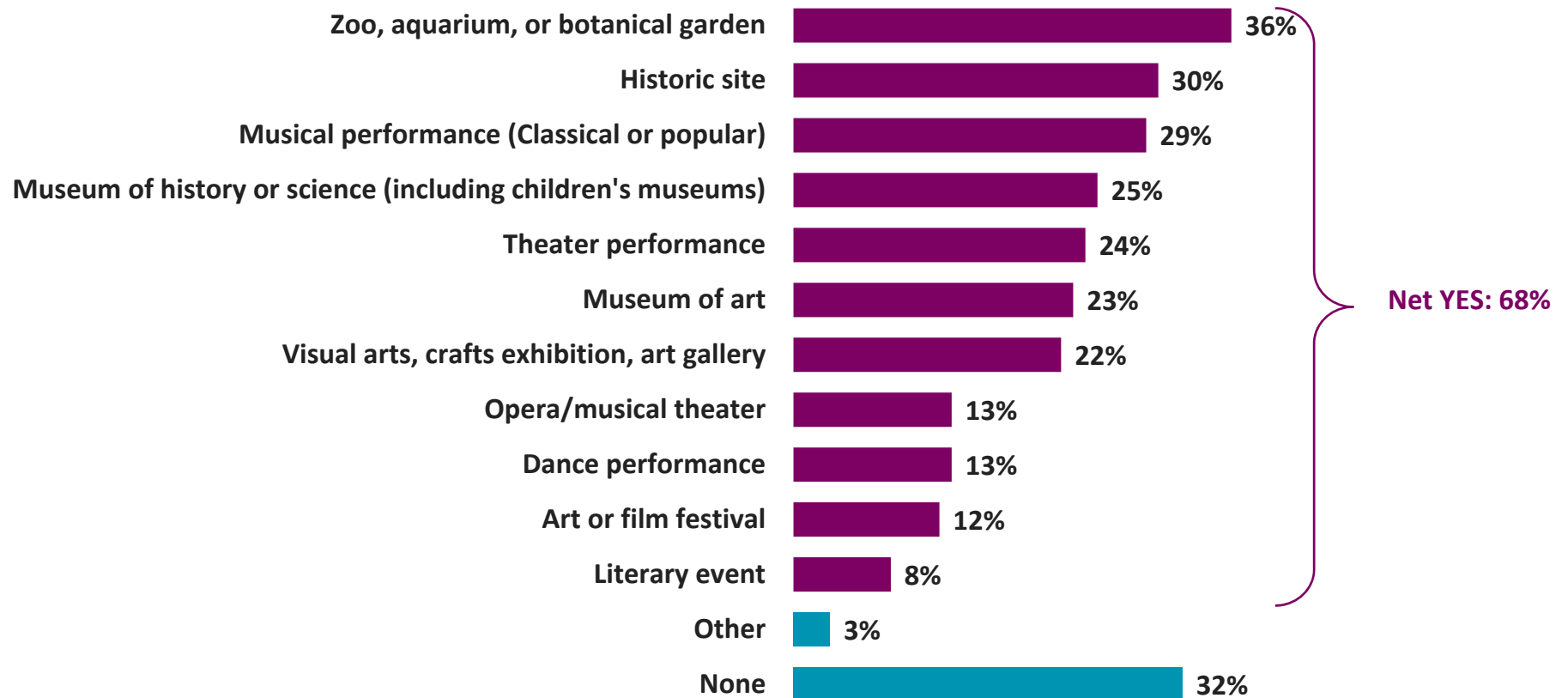


# Personal Engagement with the Arts

# Seven in Ten Adults Attended At Least One Arts Event in the Past Year



- Seven in ten Americans attended at least one arts and culture event in the past year (68 percent).
- Most popular were living collections—zoos, aquariums or botanical gardens—followed by historic sites and musical performances.
- Consistent with previous studies, higher attendance rates are found with higher education and income. Residents of urban areas are more likely to attend (69 percent) than suburban (62 percent) and rural (49 percent).
- People of color were more likely than whites to attend at least one arts event (71 vs. 66 percent).



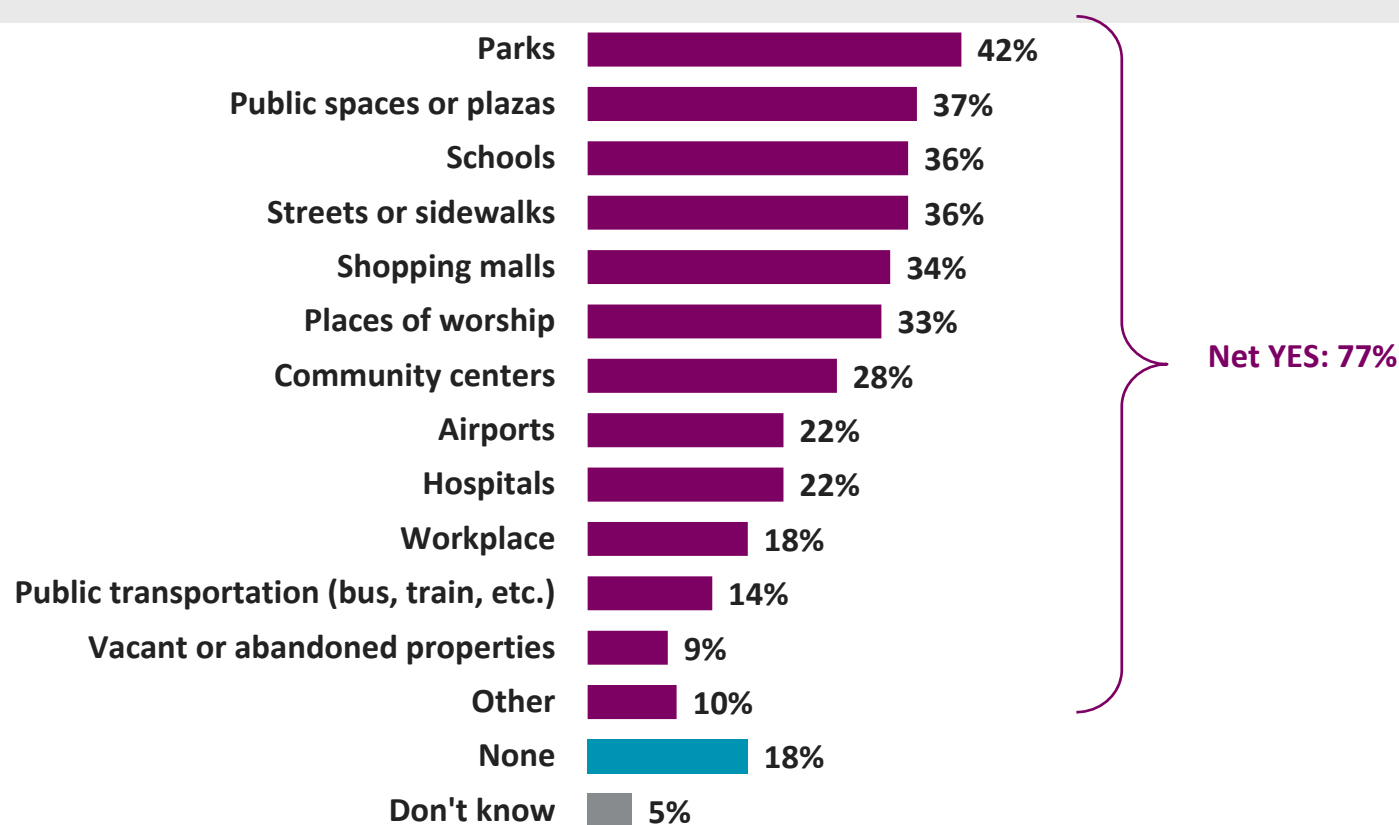
Q1. Thinking about “the arts” (as defined on the previous screen), have you visited or attended any of the following in the past year?

Base: All Respondents (n=3,020)



## We Are More Likely to Enjoy the Arts at “Non-Arts” Venues

- The public is enjoying the arts beyond the traditional arts institutions—and at remarkable levels. 77 percent experienced the arts in a “non-arts” venue such as a park, hospital, shopping mall, or airport. This is a higher proportion of the population than those who attended at more traditional venues such as theaters, zoos, and museums.
- Not surprisingly, older Americans were more likely to experience the arts in a hospital, the unemployed in a shopping mall, higher income at an airport, and regular religious service attenders at a place of worship.
- Residents of rural communities were less likely than their urban and suburban counterparts to have an arts experience in these venues.

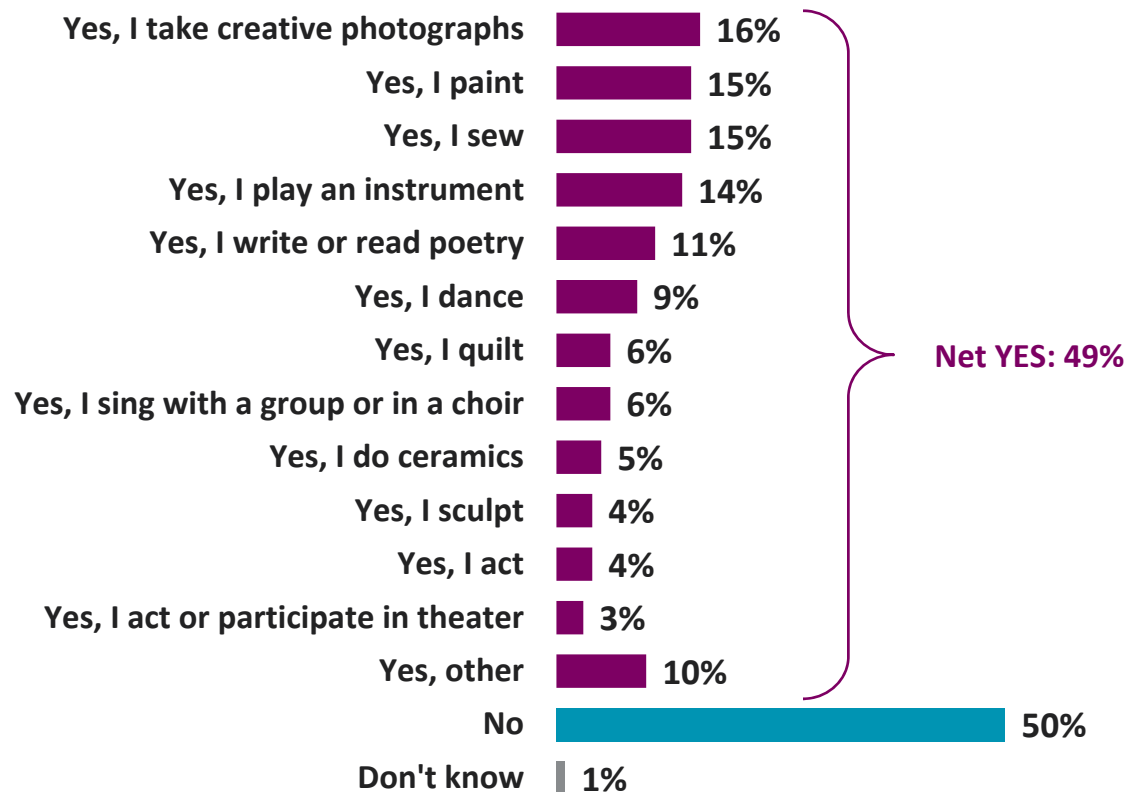


Q8. There are many places in a community to engage in art and music. Have you ever enjoyed the arts in any of the places below?  
Choose all that apply. Base: All Respondents (n=3,020)

# Half of Americans Are Active as Arts Makers



- Half of all Americans are personally involved in artistic activities (49 percent) such as painting, singing in a choir, making crafts, writing poetry, or playing music. Women, Millennials, those with children living at home, and those with a college degree tend to be more involved as arts doers, when compared to their respective demographic counterparts.
- Rural residents are significantly more likely to sing in choirs. People of color are significantly more likely than whites to be art makers (54 vs. 46 percent).

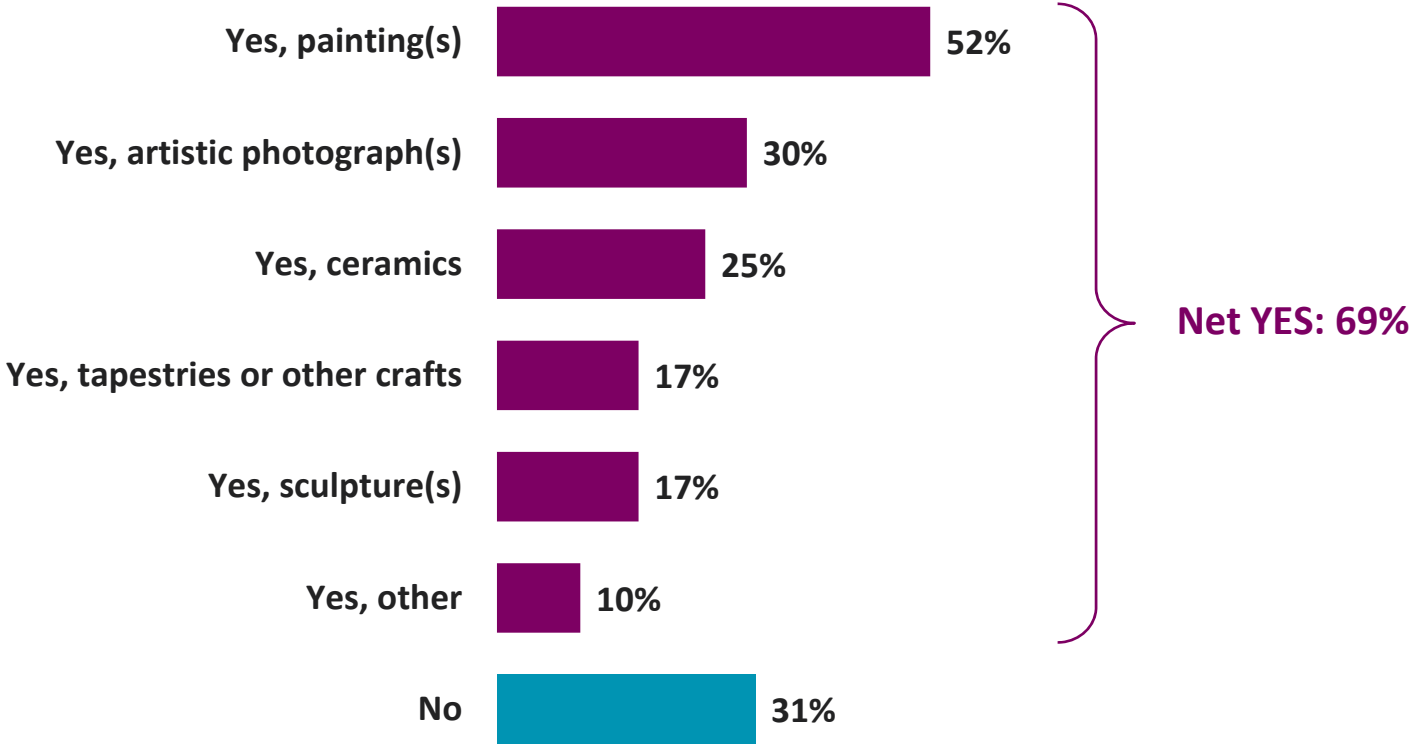


Q4. Are you personally involved in any artistic activities such as ceramics, painting, quilting, sewing circles, acting, writing poetry, dancing, or singing in a choir (either at home or in the community)? Base: All Respondents (n=3,020)

# Seven in Ten Americans Display Art in Their Homes



- 69 percent of respondents display art in their home, with more than half displaying paintings. While tapestries, ceramics, crafts, and sculptures are less common, about one in five Americans say that they display these in their homes as well.
- Women (72 percent), higher income (73 percent), and those with college degrees (74 percent) are most likely to display art in their home.



Q2. Do you have any art displayed in your home, such as a painting, sculpture, artistic photography, or decorative ceramics? Choose all that apply. Base: All Respondents (n=3,020)

# Three in Ten Americans Purchased Art for Their Home in the Past Year



- 29 percent said they purchased art in the past year—notably men (32 percent), respondents aged 18-34 (47 percent), those of higher incomes (34 percent), and a college degree (35 percent).
- Those who are personally involved in artistic activities are also significantly more likely than those who are not to say that they have purchased a piece of art for their home in the past year (46 vs. 13 percent).

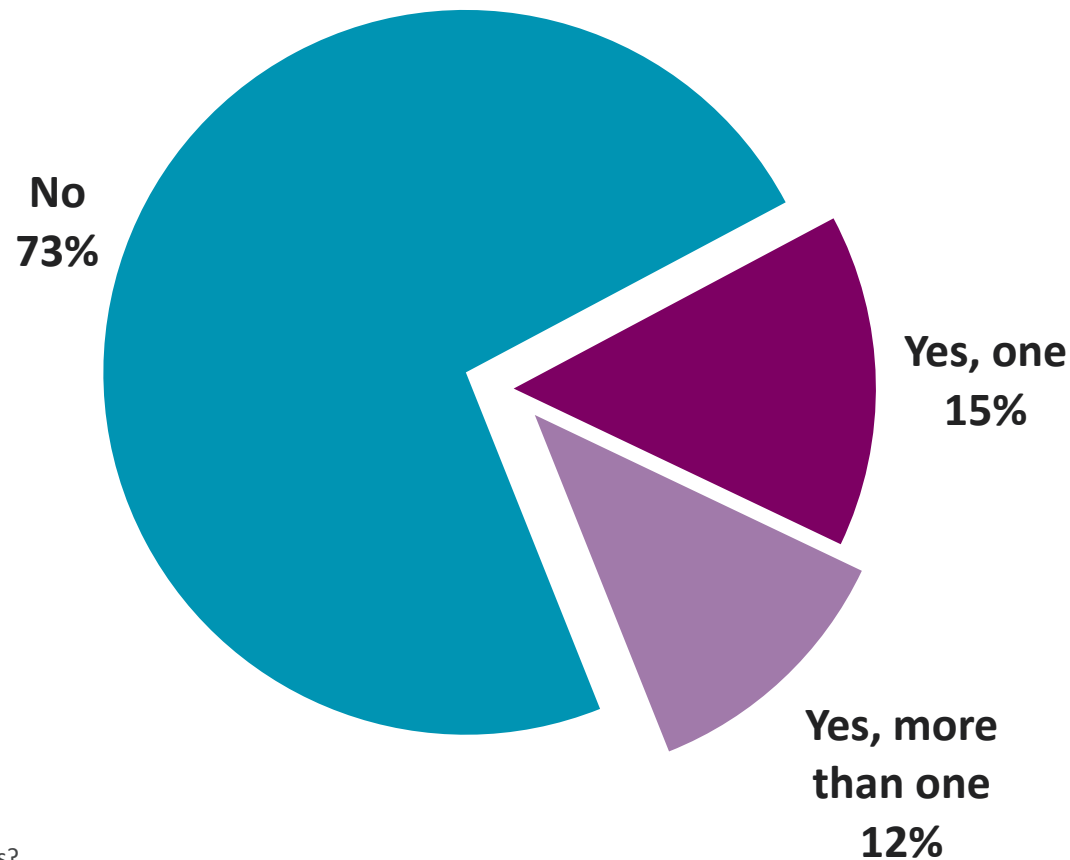


Q3. In the past year, have you purchased a piece of art for your home (for example a painting, sculpture, artistic photograph, ceramics, or something else)? Base: All Respondents (n=3,020)

# A Quarter of Americans Have Tattoos



- 27 percent of American adults have a tattoo—including 15 percent who say that they only have one tattoo, and another 12 percent who say that they have more than one tattoo. Those with one tattoo are most likely to be age 18-34 (26 percent), men (17 percent), earning more than \$50,000 annually (17 percent), and those with a college education (18 percent). 22 percent of those who are personally involved in the arts have a tattoo.
- Those with more than one tattoo are likely to be women (13 percent), those earning less than \$50,000 (15 percent), and those with no college degree (15 percent).

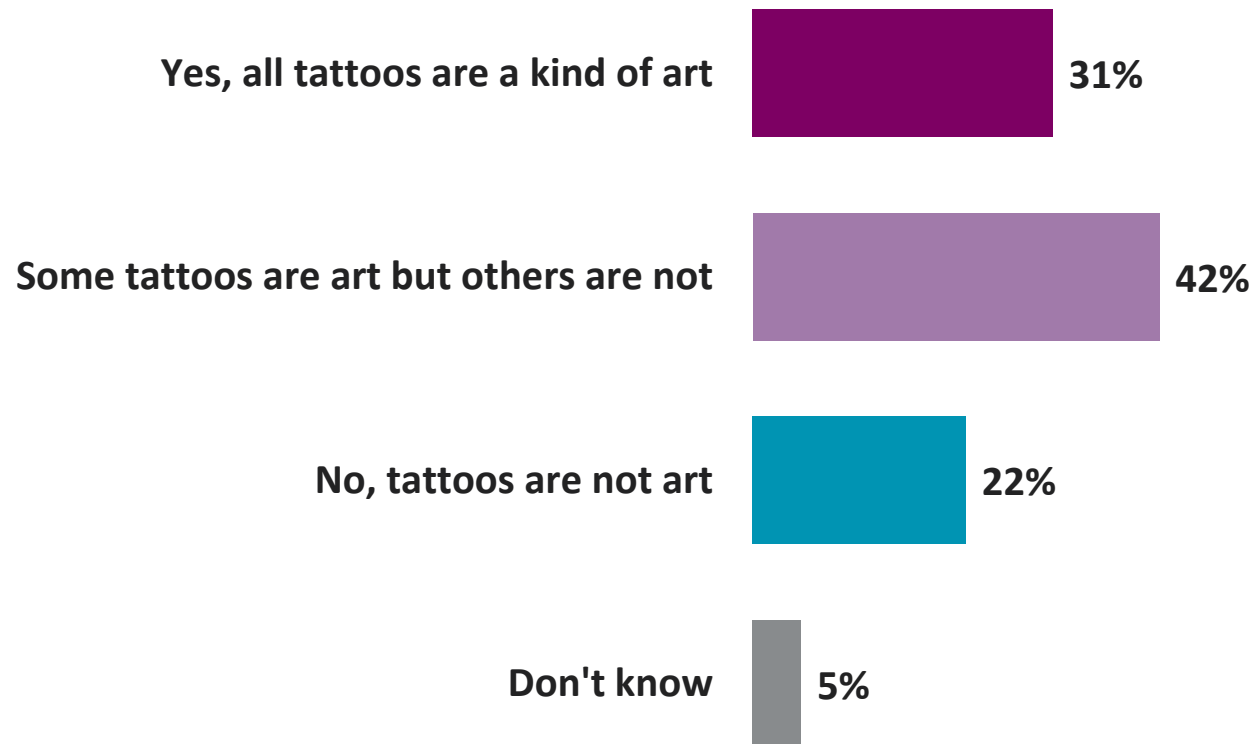


Q15. Do you personally have any tattoos?  
Base: All Respondents (n=3,020)

# Americans Believe That Tattoos Are Art



- Three-quarters of American adults believe that tattoos can be art (73 percent). This includes 31 percent who feel that all tattoos are a kind of art and 42 percent who say that some tattoos are art, but others are not. In contrast, just 22 percent do not consider tattoos as a form of art.
- Among those significantly more likely than their demographic counterparts to agree that all tattoos are art include those under the age of 35 (49 percent), earning less than \$50,000 (35 percent), with children living at home (46 percent), no college degree (34 percent), and people of color (36 percent).

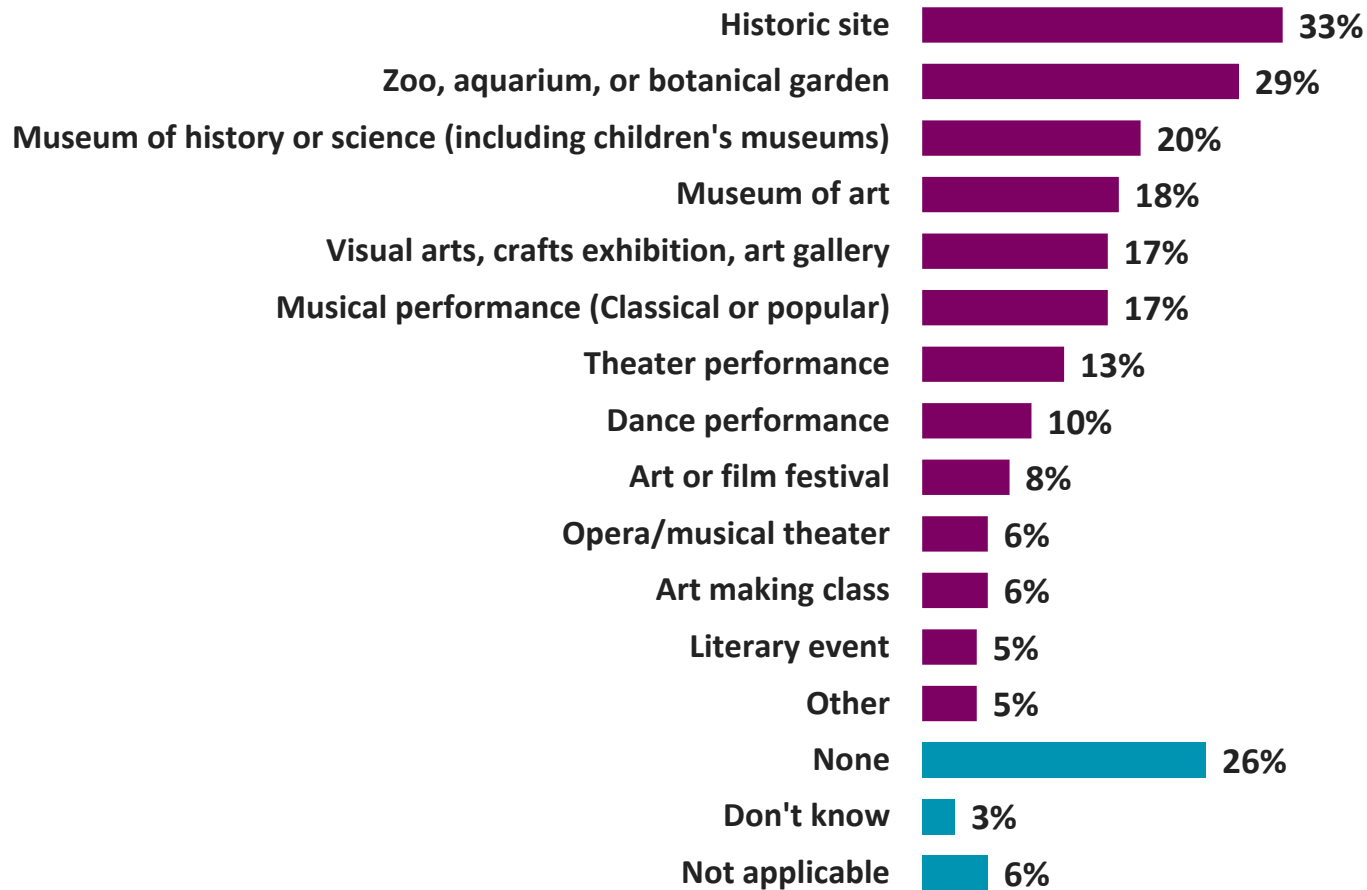


Q16. In your opinion, are tattoos art?  
Base: All Respondents (n=3,020)

# Americans Are Cultural Tourists



- Two-thirds of respondents (65 percent) said they included an arts or cultural event on their last vacation.
- About three in ten visited historic sites or went to a zoo, aquarium, or botanical garden. Another 20 percent visited a museum.
- Those with higher education and income were more likely to have included an arts or cultural event. People of color were more likely to attend than whites (70 vs. 63 percent). There was little difference in gender.

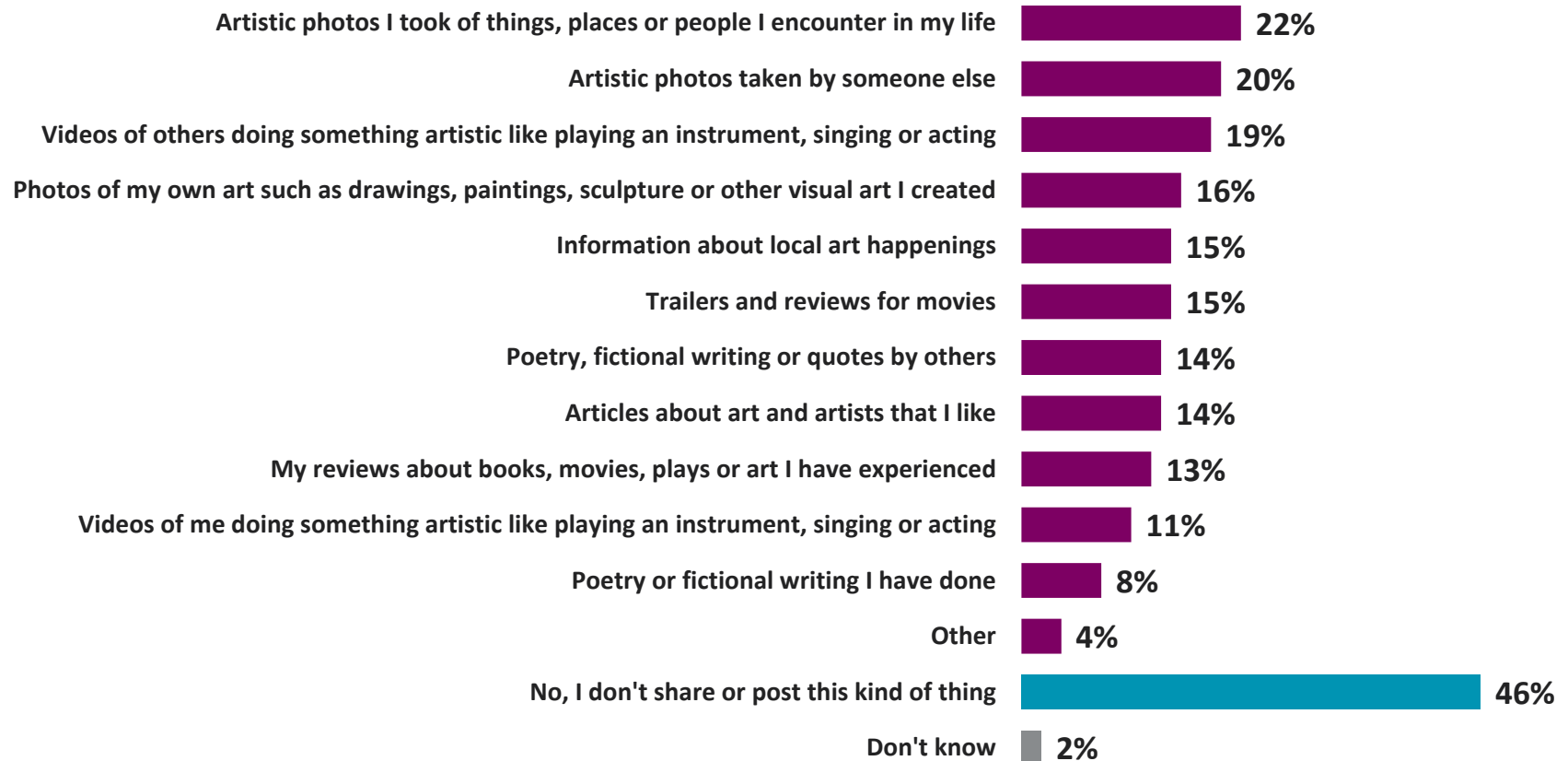


Q10. Thinking about the arts, and the last time you went on vacation, did you visit or attend any of the following? Choose all that apply. Base: All Respondents (n=3,020)

# Sharing Art and Culture Via Social Media



- 85 percent of the survey respondents use social media. Of those, 53 percent agree that they are more exposed to the arts thanks to social media. Related, posts that contain information about art, such as trailers and reviews for movies, information about local art happenings, and articles about art and artists are posted by about 15 percent of social media users.
- The most common type of art posted or shared on social media platforms is artistic photos.
- Younger respondents (73 percent), those with a college degree (55 percent), and those with children living at home (45 percent) are most likely to say that they post art online.



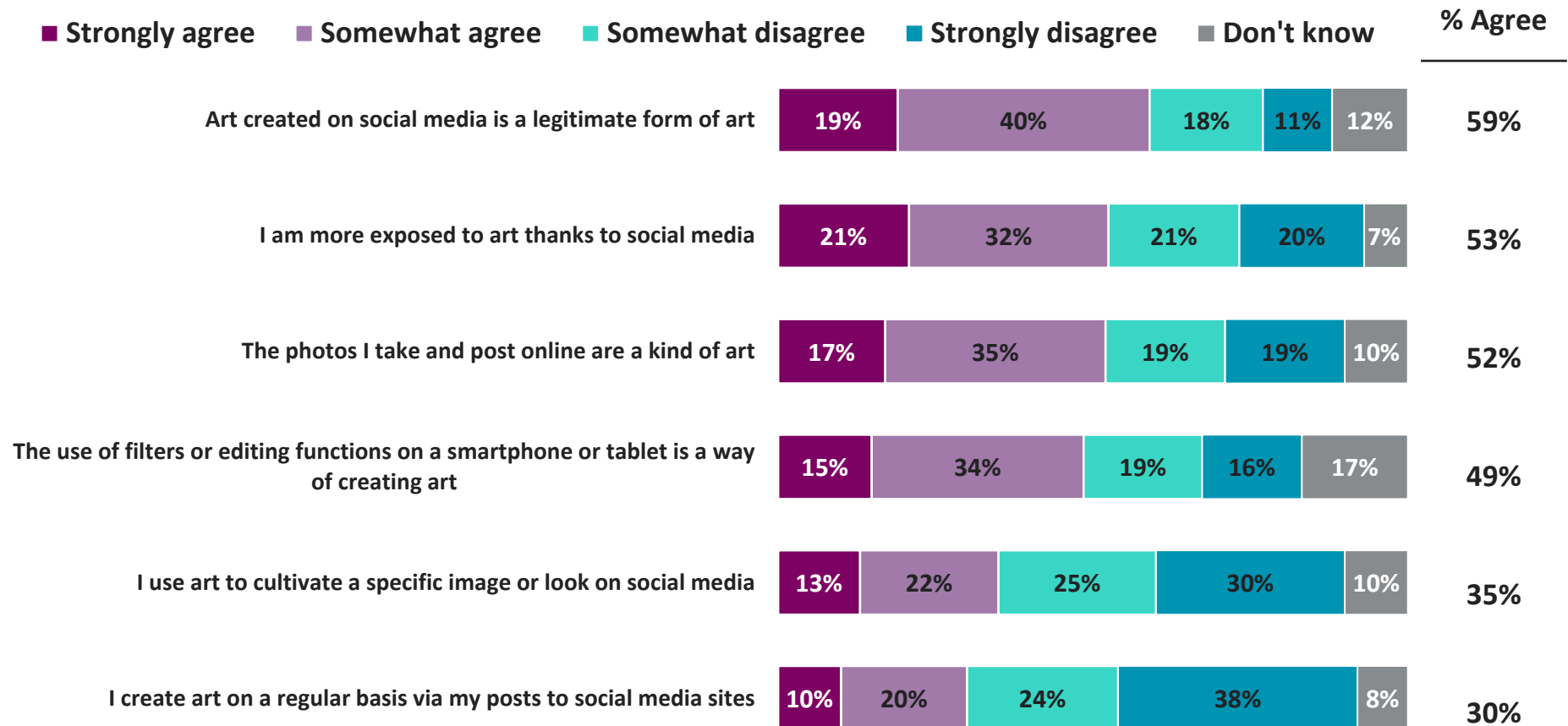
Q13. Do you personally share or post any kind of art on social media platforms? What kind? Base: Respondents who have/ use social media (n=2,561)



# Attitudes and Opinions Toward Art and Social Media



- Six in ten social media users agree that art created on social media is a legitimate art form (59 percent). About half believe that the photos they take and post online are art (52 percent) and that the use of filters or editing functions on smartphones/tablets is a way of creating art (49 percent).
- 52 percent say they are more exposed to the arts thanks to social media.
- 35 percent use art to cultivate a specific image or look on social media.



Q14. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement below:

Base: Respondents who have/ use social media (n=2,561)

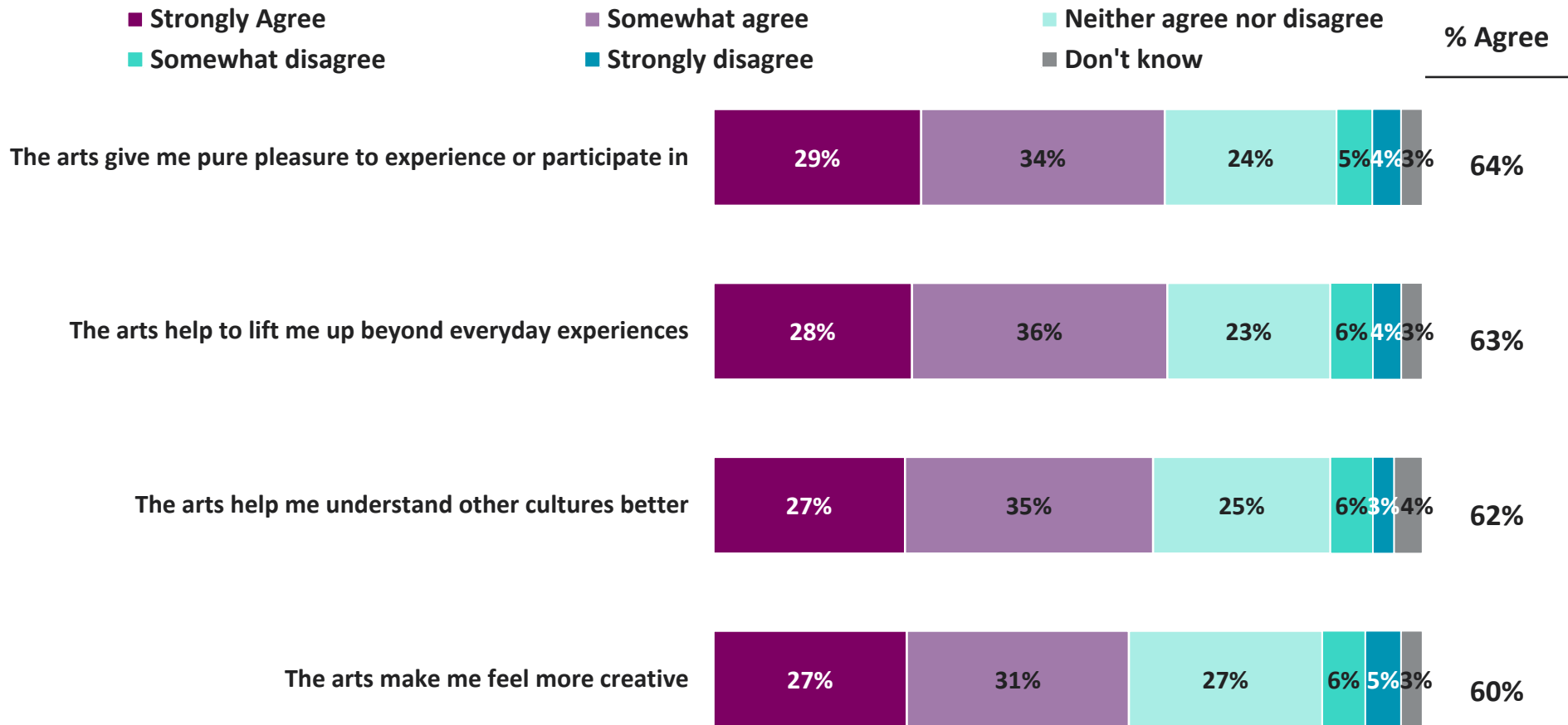


# American Sentiments toward the Arts

# Two-Thirds of Americans Tout the Positive Effects the Arts Have on Them Personally



- More than six in ten respondents agree that they experience “pure pleasure” when they participate in the arts, including three in ten who strongly agree with this statement (which exceeds all those who disagree). Similar proportions agree that the arts help lift them up beyond everyday experiences, make them feel more creative, and better understand other cultures.
- Those who are personally involved as art makers are more likely to agree with these individual benefit categories, as are women, those with a college degree, and people of color.

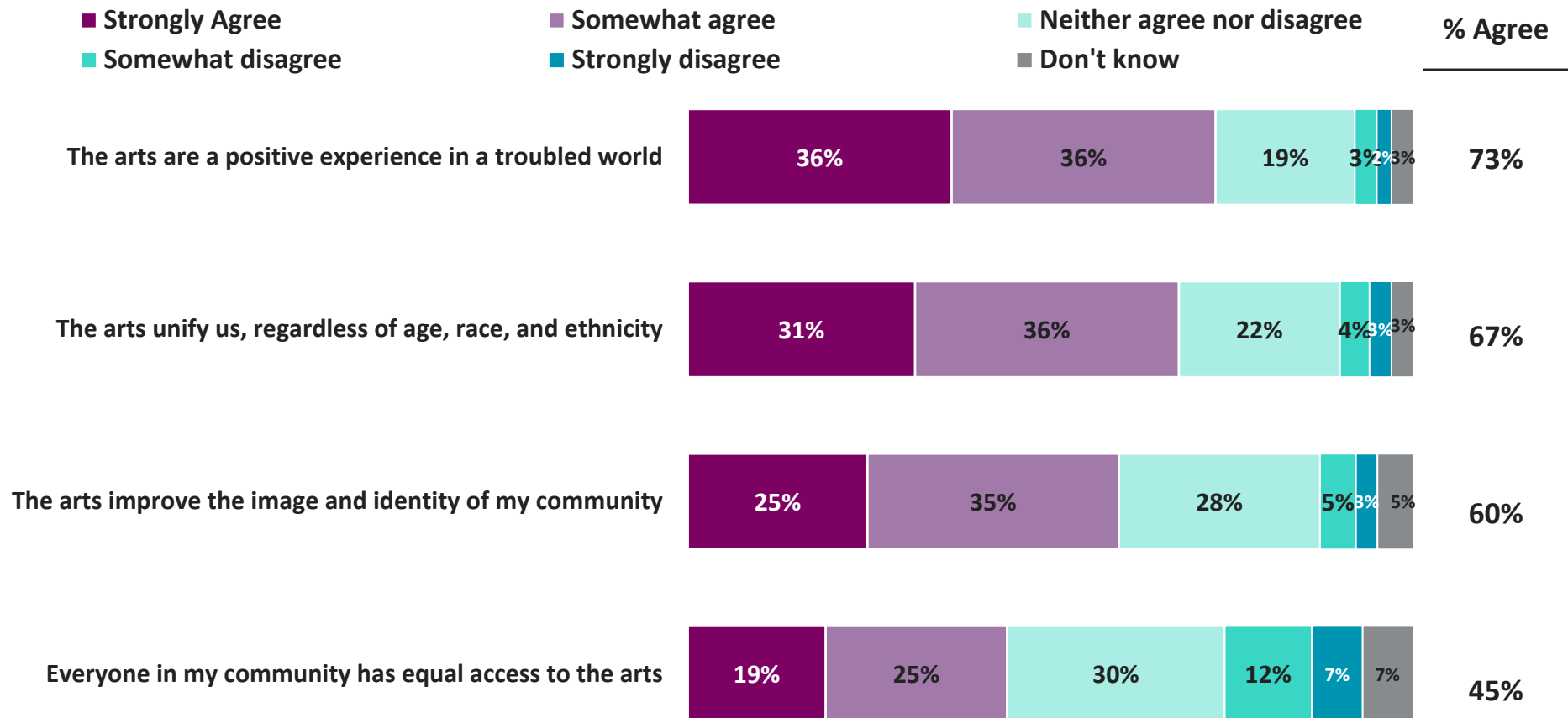


Q7. Now thinking about arts and music outside of your home, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Base: All Respondents (n=3,020)

# Majorities Believe Positive Effects the Arts Have on Communities



- More than seven in ten Americans agree that the “arts are a positive experience in a troubled world,” and a majority also feels that the “arts unify people regardless of their age, race, and ethnicity.”
- For all these benefits to the individual and the community, just 45 percent believe that “everyone in my community has equal access to the arts.”
- These findings are made even more powerful by the fact that they cut across all socioeconomic strata. In fact, people of color with household incomes under \$50k are more likely to ‘strongly agree’ with these statements.



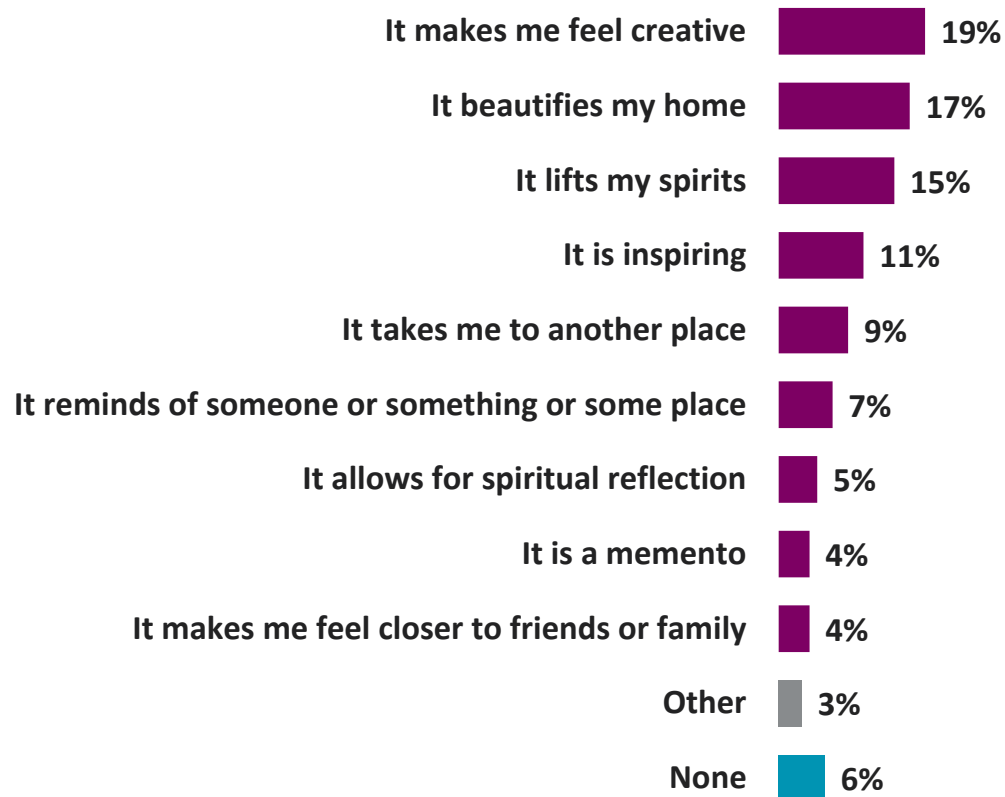
Q7. Now thinking about arts and music outside of your home, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Base: All Respondents (n=3,020)

# Feeling Creative: Most Valued Emotional Aspect of Art



The 73 percent of survey respondents who (1) display art in their homes or (2) are personally involved in making art were given a list of emotional responses that are often generated by the arts—and asked to **SELECT ONLY ONE**.

- The most valued emotional reason for being actively involved in the arts is that “it makes me feel creative.”
- Older and higher-income individuals were more likely to say “it beautifies my home.” Women and those earning less than \$50,000 were more likely to say “it lifts my spirits.”
- Six percent do not personally value any of these reasons the most when thinking of why they have or make art.

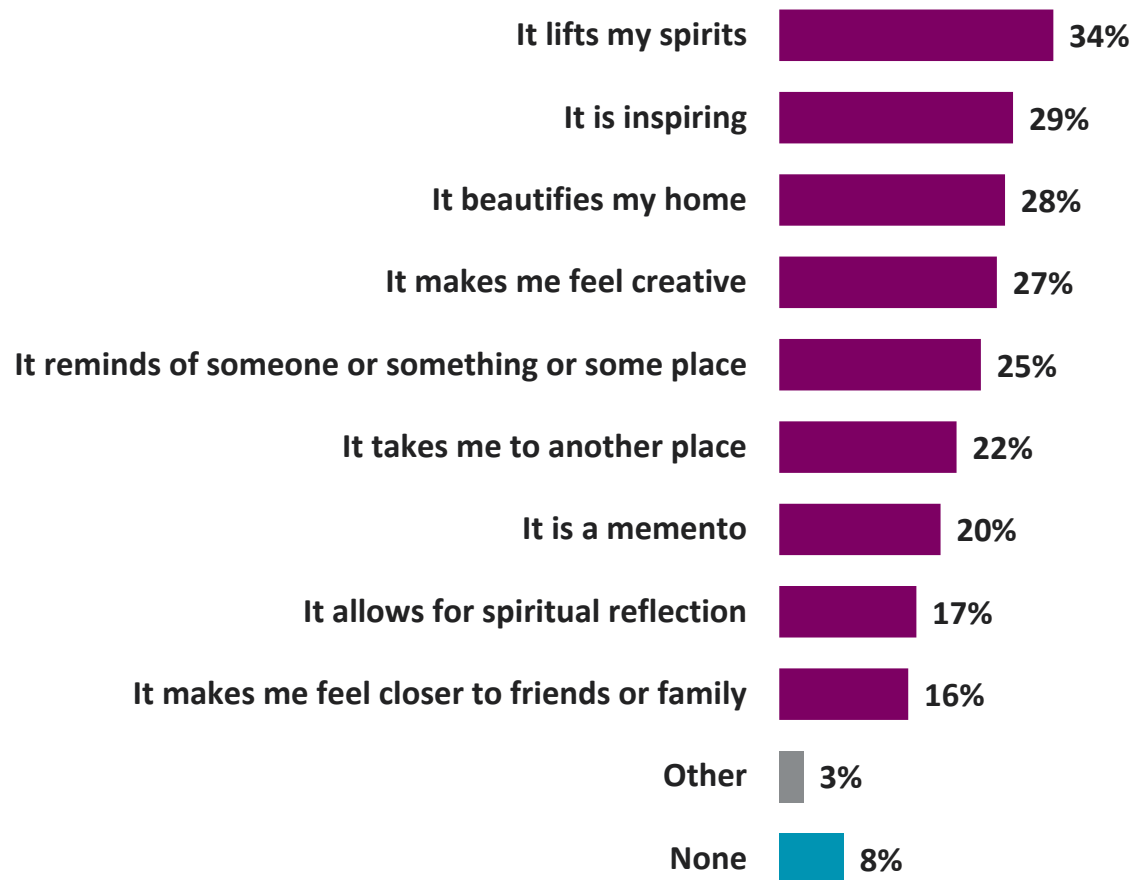


Q5. Thinking now about why you have or make art, what emotional aspect of art is most valuable to you personally? Please choose one. Base: Respondents who display art in home and/ or are personally involved in artistic activities (n=2,219)

# The Arts Lift Our Spirits, Inspire, and Beautify



- In the previous question, the 73 percent of survey respondents who (1) “display art in their homes” or (2) are “personally involved in making art” were given a list of emotional responses that are often generated by the arts and asked to select just one (the top choice was “makes me feel creative”).
- In this question, respondents are asked to choose as many as apply. The ability of the arts to “lift my spirits” is top ranked, selected by more than one-third. Art as inspiration, beautifying the home, inciting creativity, and stoking a memory follow closely behind.



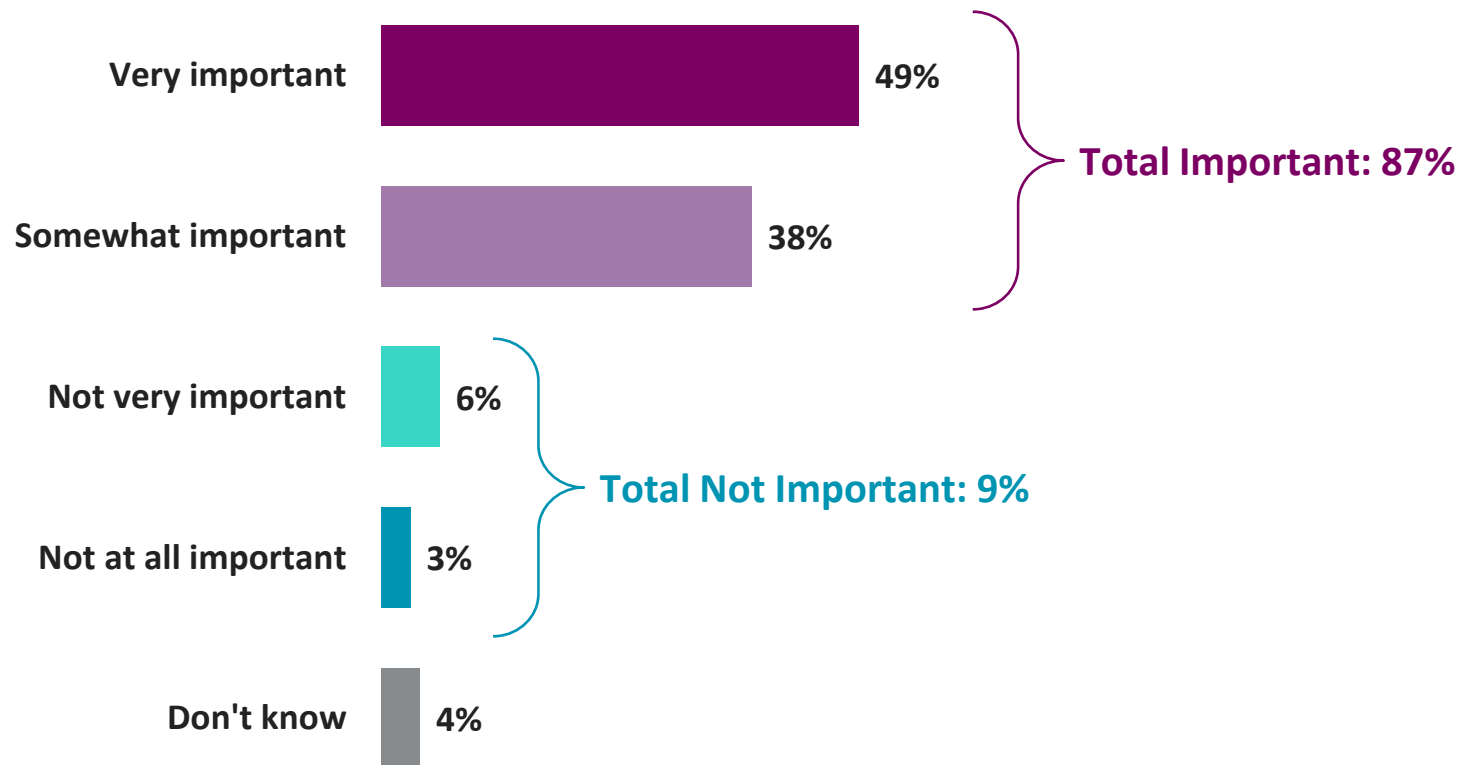
Q6. And again thinking now about why you have or make art, what other emotional aspects of art are valuable to you personally? Choose as many as apply. Base: Respondents who display art in home and/ or are personally involved in artistic activities (n=2,219)

# Museums, Theaters, and Concert Halls Seen as Important for Community's Quality of Life



- Nearly nine in ten respondents believe that it is important for their community's quality of life to have facilities such as museums, theaters, and concert halls available. 49 percent rated this as being "very important." Just 9 percent said this is "not important."
- Millennials and women were significantly more likely to say cultural facilities are "very important" as well those who live in urban areas.

*It is important for my community's quality of life to have facilities such as museums, theaters, and concert halls available*



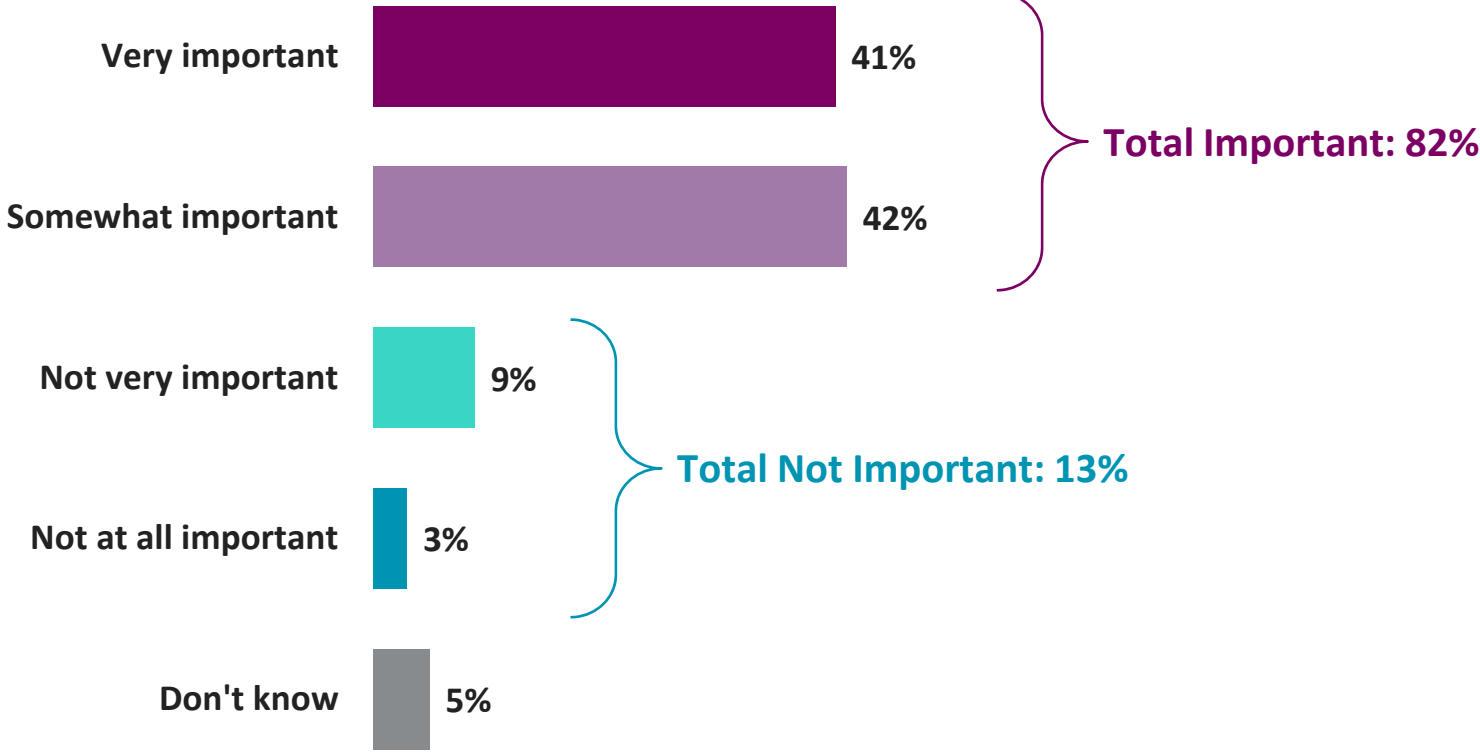
Q9. How important, if at all, do you think it is to your community's quality of life to have facilities such as museums, theaters, and concert halls available. Base: All Respondents (n=3,020)

# Museums, Theaters, and Concert Halls Seen as Important for Local Businesses and the Economy



• When it comes to a community’s businesses and economy, 82 percent believe that it is important to have facilities such as museums, theaters, and concert halls available. 41 percent said that this is “very important,” tripling the number who said this is “not important.”

*“It is important for my community’s businesses and economy to have facilities such as museums, theaters, and concert halls available”*



Q12. How important, if at all, do you think it is to your community’s businesses and economy to have facilities such as museums, theaters, and concert halls available? Base: All Respondents (n=3,020)



# Americans Consider the Arts When Moving for Work or Planning a Vacation



- 43 percent of Americans say that when they plan a vacation, they strongly consider whether the destination is rich in the arts when deciding where to visit. Similarly, another two in five say that if they were moving for a job, they would strongly consider whether a community is rich in the arts when deciding where to move.
- Such considerations are much more relevant among younger respondents (under the age of 35), higher income earners (over \$50,000), those who have a college degree, and those with children living at home than their respective demographic counterparts.

■ Strongly agree

■ Somewhat agree

■ Neither agree nor disagree

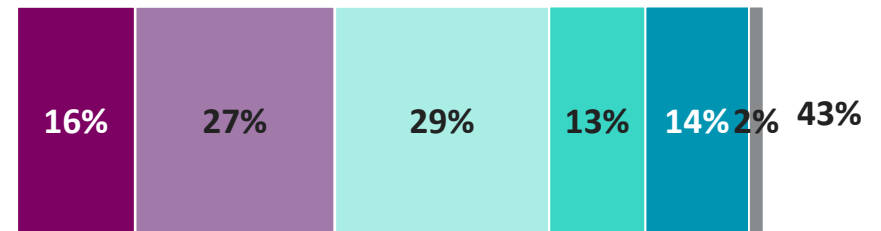
**% Agree**

■ Somewhat disagree

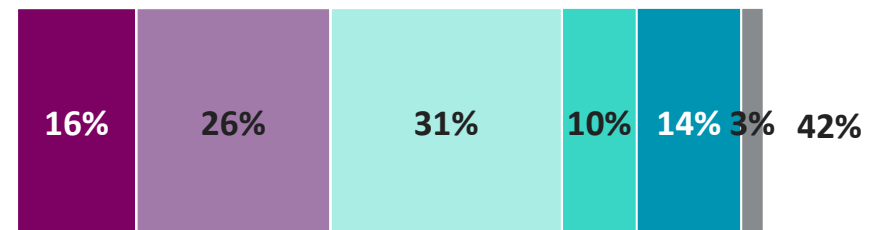
■ Strongly disagree

■ Don't know

When I plan a vacation, I strongly consider whether the destination is rich in the arts when deciding where to visit



If I were moving for a job, I would strongly consider whether a community is rich in the arts when deciding where to move



Q11. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement below.  
Base: All Respondents (n=3,020)



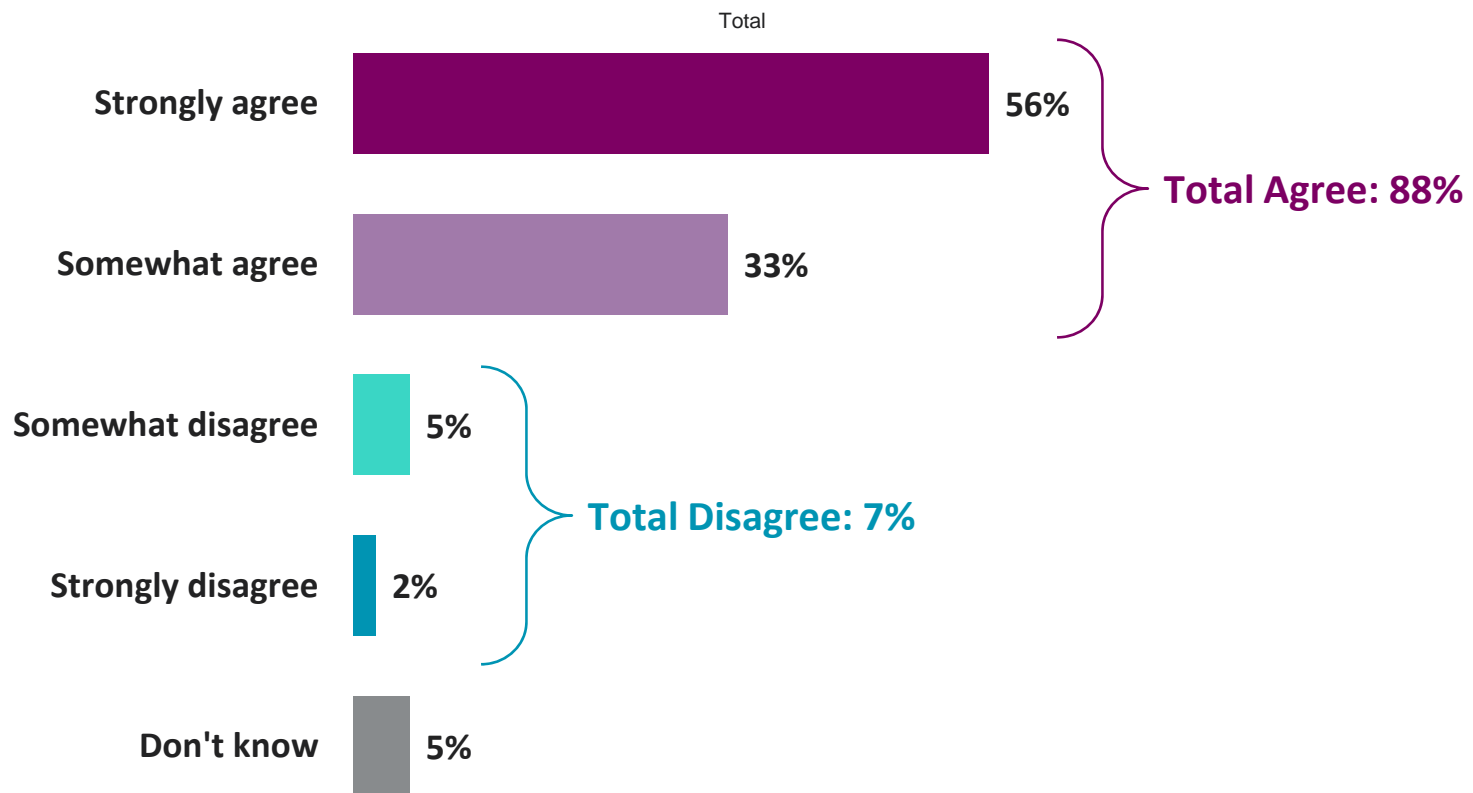
# K-12 Arts Education

# Americans Believe the Arts Are Part of a Well-Rounded Education for K-12 Students



- Americans show unequivocal and overwhelming support for arts education. 88 percent agree that the arts are part of a well-rounded education for K-12 students, including a majority (56 percent) who strongly agree. Just 7 percent disagree about the role the arts play in creating a balanced education for children, and 5 percent were unsure.
- There was no difference between age, household income, and, interestingly, even if there were children in the household.

**“Arts are part of a well-rounded education for K-12 students”**

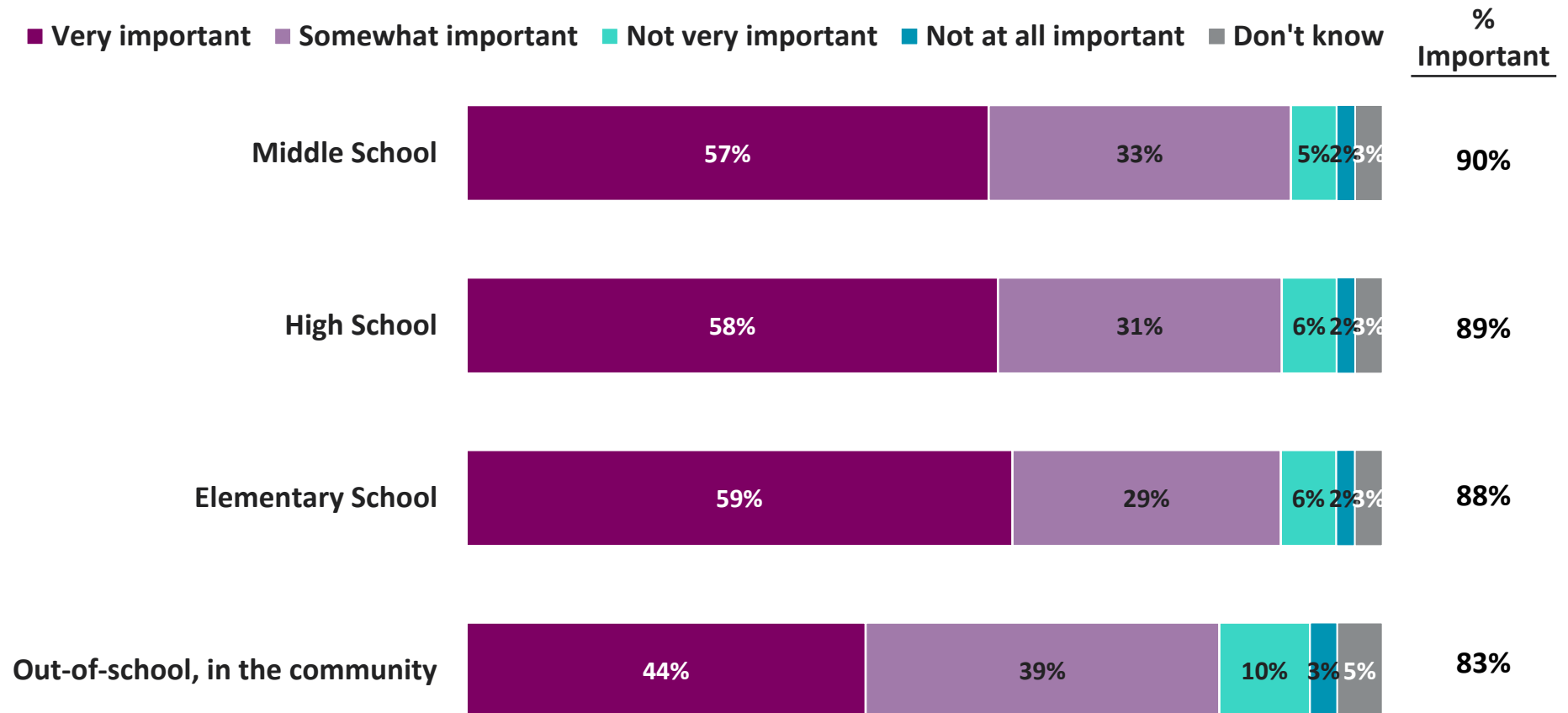


Q17. Do you agree or disagree that the arts are part of a well-rounded education for K-12 students?  
Base: All Respondents (n=3,020)

# Arts Education Is Deemed Important at All Grade Levels



- Nine in ten Americans believe it is important for K-12 students to receive an education in the arts (including dance, media arts, music, theater, and visual arts), with six in ten saying that art is “very important.” This remains true whether asked about elementary school, middle school, or high school education.
- The value of arts education is not limited to just the in-school experience. 83 percent also agree to the importance of the arts to students outside of the classroom and throughout the community.

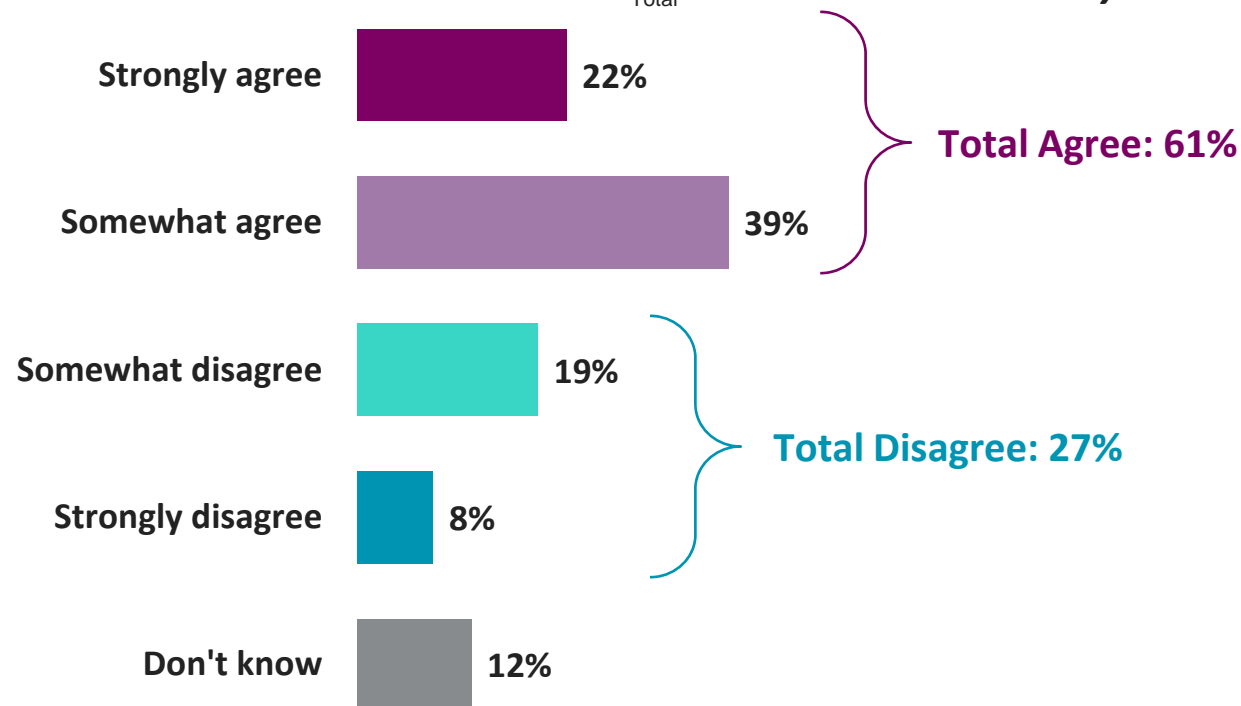


Q18. Thinking about K-12 students, in your opinion how important is it for them to receive an education in the arts (including dance, media arts, music, theater, visual arts) or other forms of creativity? Base: All Respondents (n=3,020)

# A Majority Agree That Students Have Arts Opportunities, But Access Remains a Concern

- 61 percent of Americans agree that students in their area have enough opportunities to “hear music, go to plays, visit museums, and attend cultural events, either in school or in the community.”
- 27 percent disagree that students in their community have enough opportunities to attend the arts, while 12 percent are unsure.
- Rural (43 percent) and suburban (31 percent) respondents were more likely to disagree that their students have enough arts opportunities urban respondents (26 percent). Those who are lower income were also more likely to disagree than higher income households (30 vs. 25 percent). There was no distinction between whites and people of color.

**“Students in my area have enough opportunities to hear music, go to plays, visit museums, and attend cultural events either in school or in the community”**

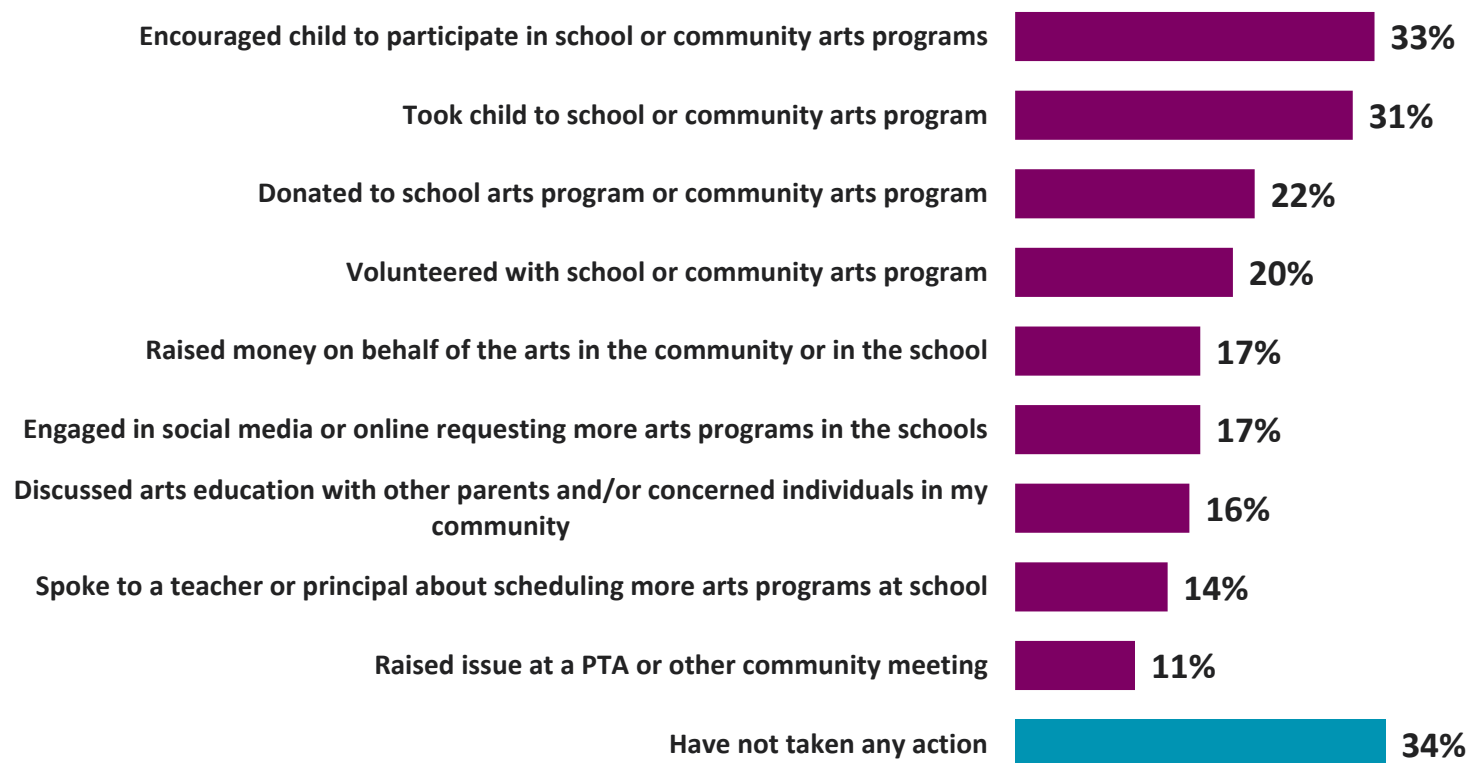


Q19. And from what you know or have heard, do you agree or disagree that students in your area have enough opportunities to hear music, go to plays, visit museums, and attend cultural events either in school or in the community? Base: All Respondents (n=3,020)

# Majority of Parents Have Taken Action to Support Arts Education

We asked just the 24 percent of survey respondents who have children under the age of 18 living at home (738 of the 3,020) what actions they have taken to support arts education in the previous year.

- Two-thirds of parents (66 percent) say that they have taken action to support arts education during the past year—with the most common responses being encouraging their child to participate in school/community arts programs (33 percent) or donating to (22 percent) or volunteering for (20 percent) a school/community arts program.
- One-third say that they have not taken any action.



Q21. What actions have you taken to support arts education during the past year? (Select all that apply)

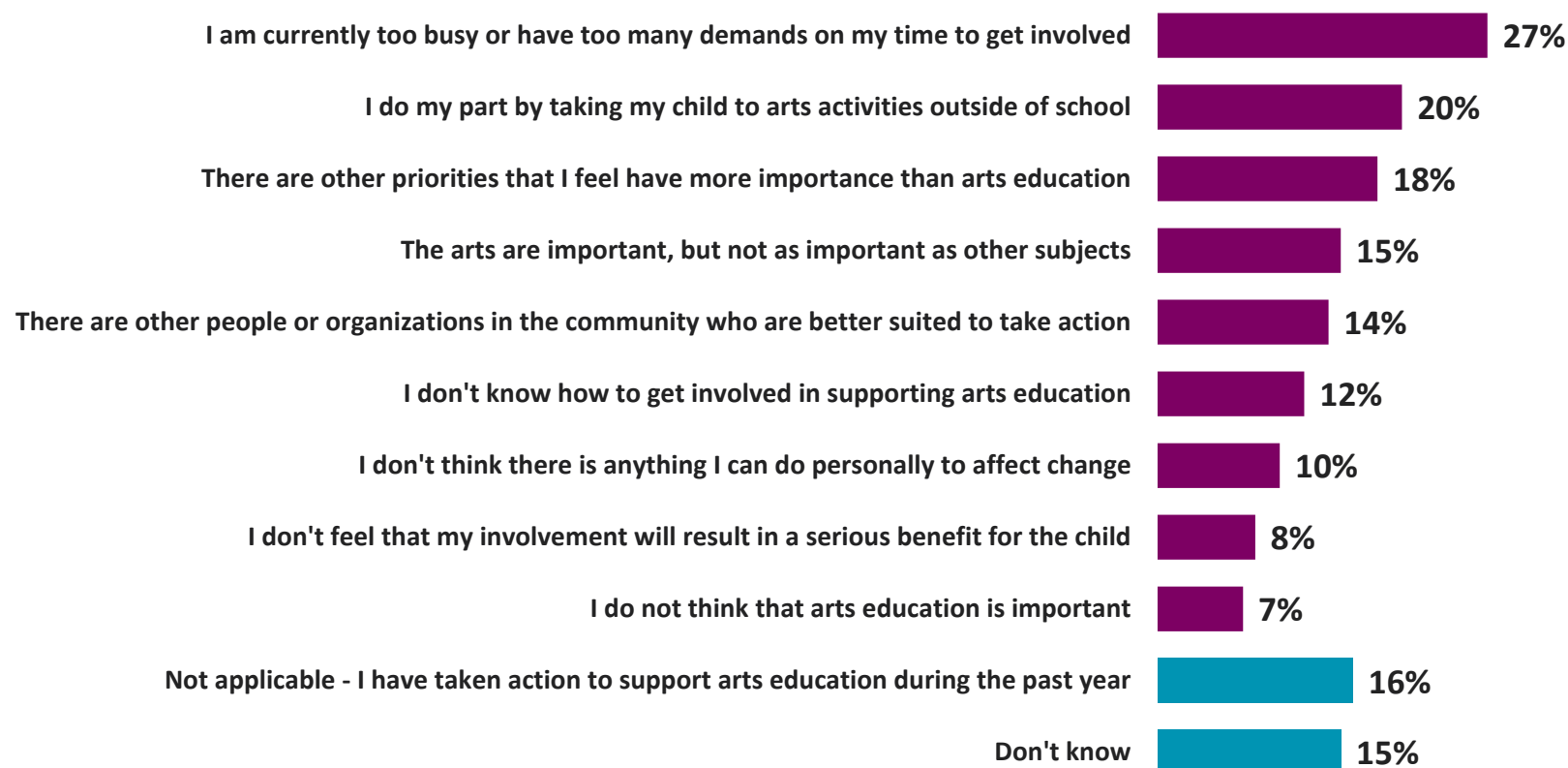
Base: Respondents who have children under the age of 18 living at home (n=738)

# Reasons for Not Taking More Action to Support Arts Education



While 66 percent is a strong percentage of parents taking action to support arts education, we wanted to know why they have not taken more action.

- Too busy (27 percent), conflicting priorities (18 percent), and emphasizing other important subjects (15 percent) remain among the top reasons given by parents for not having taken more action to support arts education.
- Just 7 percent say they have not taken more action to support arts education because they do not think that it is important.



Q22. Are there reasons you have not taken more action to support arts education?  
 Base: Respondents who have children under the age of 18 living at home (n=738)

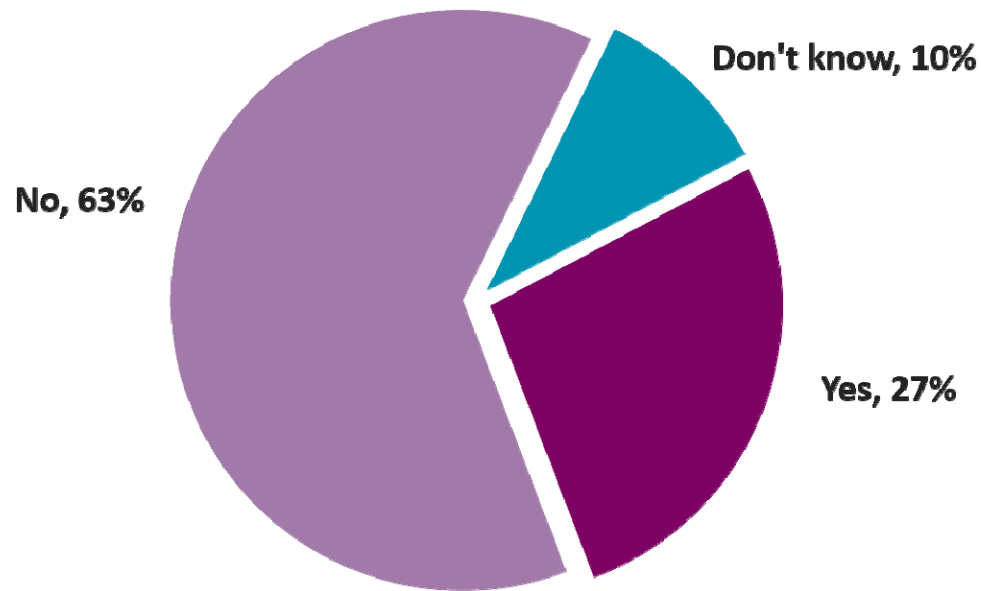
# Cash Donations to Arts and Culture Organizations



27 percent of the population made a donation to an arts, culture, or public broadcasting organization within the past year. Donors were typically younger and had higher incomes and education.

- 33 percent of Millennials (or someone in their household) made a donation to the arts and culture in the past year. A significantly higher rate than Gen Xers (27 percent), Baby Boomers (23 percent), and Elders (24 percent).
- People of color with annual incomes over \$50k were the most likely to have made a donation (40 percent), followed by whites with incomes over \$50k (31 percent), people of color earning under \$50k (20 percent), and whites with income under \$50k (15 percent).

**Have donated money to arts and culture organizations in the past 12 months.**



Q30. Within the past 12 months, have you personally or has anyone in your household donated money to an arts or cultural organization, such as a museum or a public broadcasting station? Base: All Respondents (n=3,020)





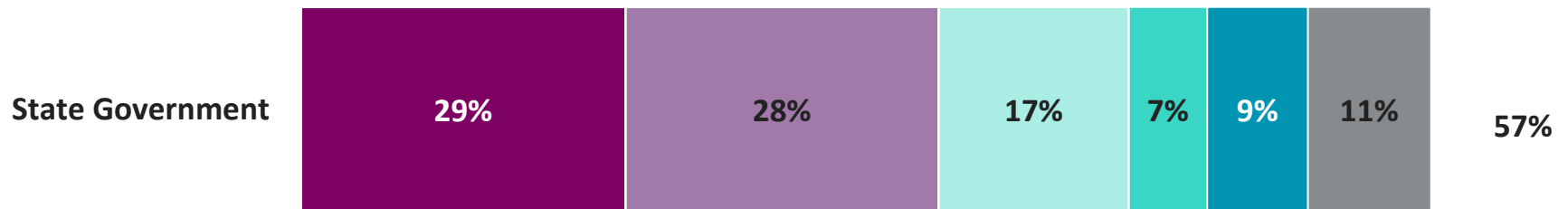
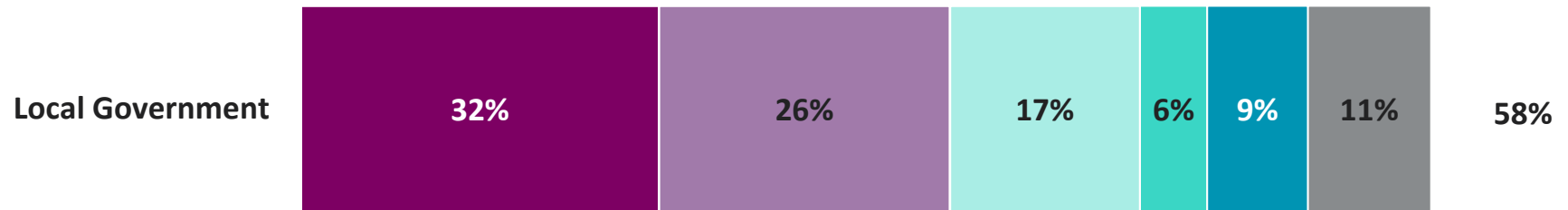
# Government Funding of the Arts

# By a Three-to-One Margin, Americans Approve of Government Arts Funding



- Local and state governments providing grants to artists and arts organizations have a high level of support by the American public. In fact, respondents are three times more likely to approve of the public sector's role in arts funding than disapprove: local government (58 percent vs. 15 percent); state government (57 percent vs. 16 percent).
- Likely voters were significantly more likely than unlikely voters to approve both local (62 percent vs. 47 percent) and state funding (60 percent vs. 42 percent).

■ Strongly approve     
 ■ Somewhat approve     
 ■ Neither approve nor disapprove     
 % Approve  
■ Somewhat disapprove     
 ■ Strongly disapprove     
 ■ Don't know



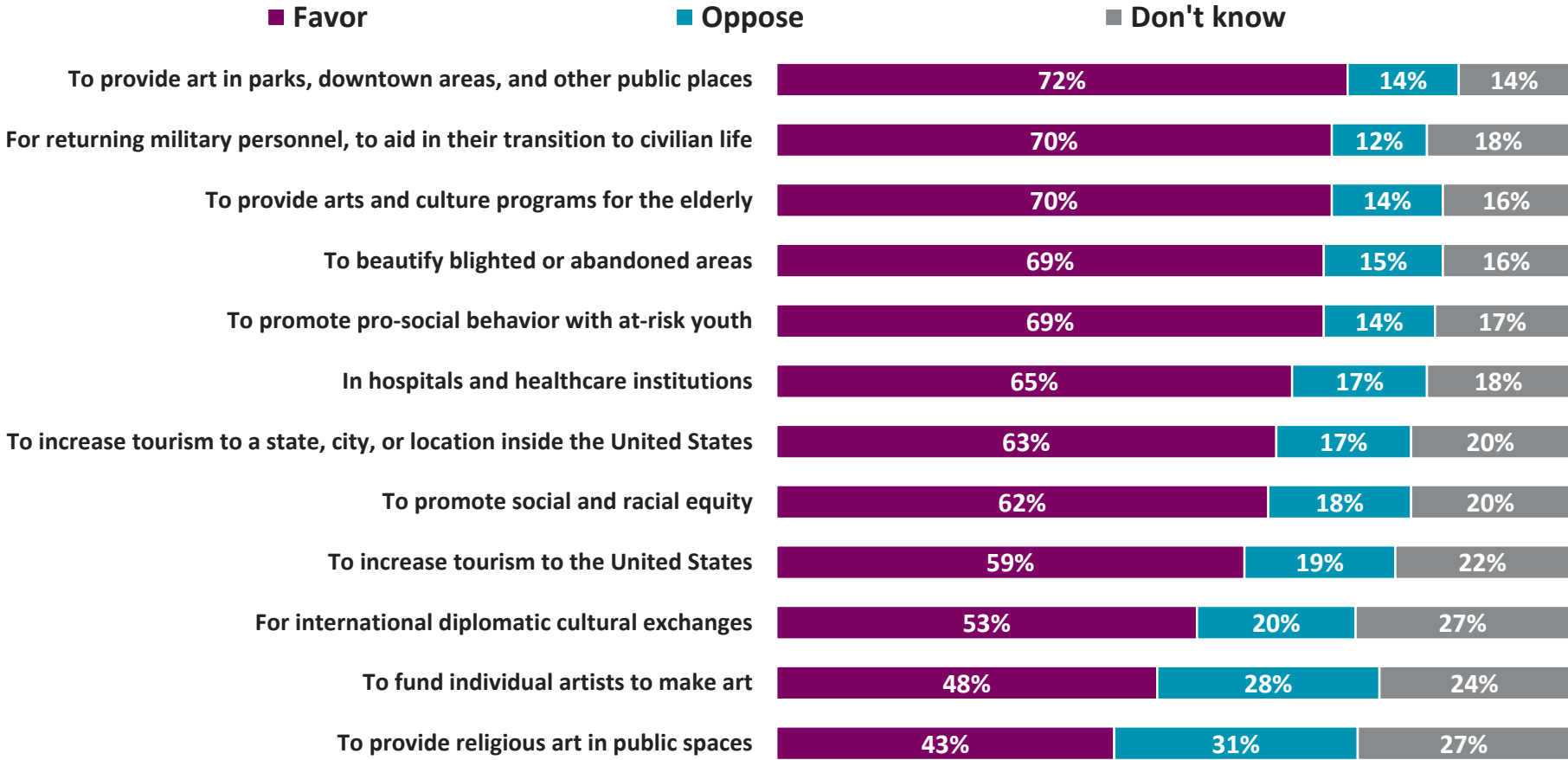
Q26. Do you approve or disapprove of your local and state governments funding grants to artists and arts organizations?

Base: All Respondents (n=3,020)

# Community-Oriented Arts Funding Has High Public Value



- American adults are especially likely to favor government arts funding for art in parks and public spaces (72 percent), and to aid returning military personnel in their transition to civilian life (70 percent).
- 69 percent favor using the arts to beautify blighted areas and promote pro-social behavior with at-risk youth, and 70 percent to create programs for the elderly. 48 percent support grants to individual artists; this was opposed by just 28 percent.

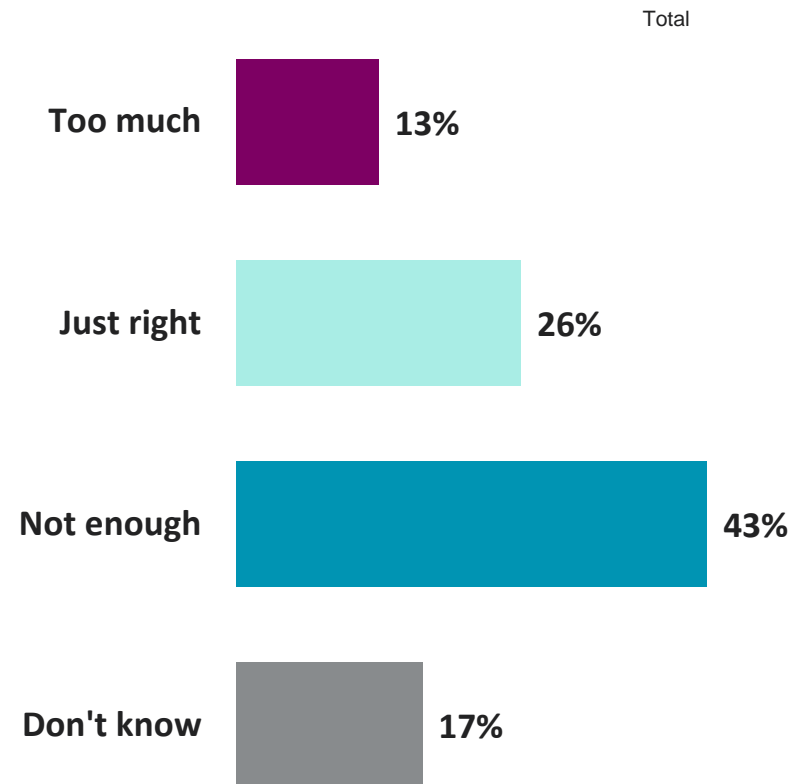


Q23. Do you favor or oppose the government funding the arts for the following purposes?  
 Base: All Respondents (n=3,020)

# More Americans Think Current Federal Spending on Arts Organizations Is Not Enough



- 43 percent say that the current federal government arts funding level of 45 cents per capita is an inadequate amount.
- Only a quarter believe that current federal arts funding is just right (26 percent), while 43 percent say that the current level of 45 cents per capita is an inadequate amount. In fact, the 43 percent who responded “not enough” are more than the combined responses of those who felt it was “too much” and “just right” (13 percent and 26 percent, respectively—totaling 39 percent).
- Those most likely to respond “not enough” include women (51 percent), the less affluent (47 percent), and those without children living at home (46 percent).



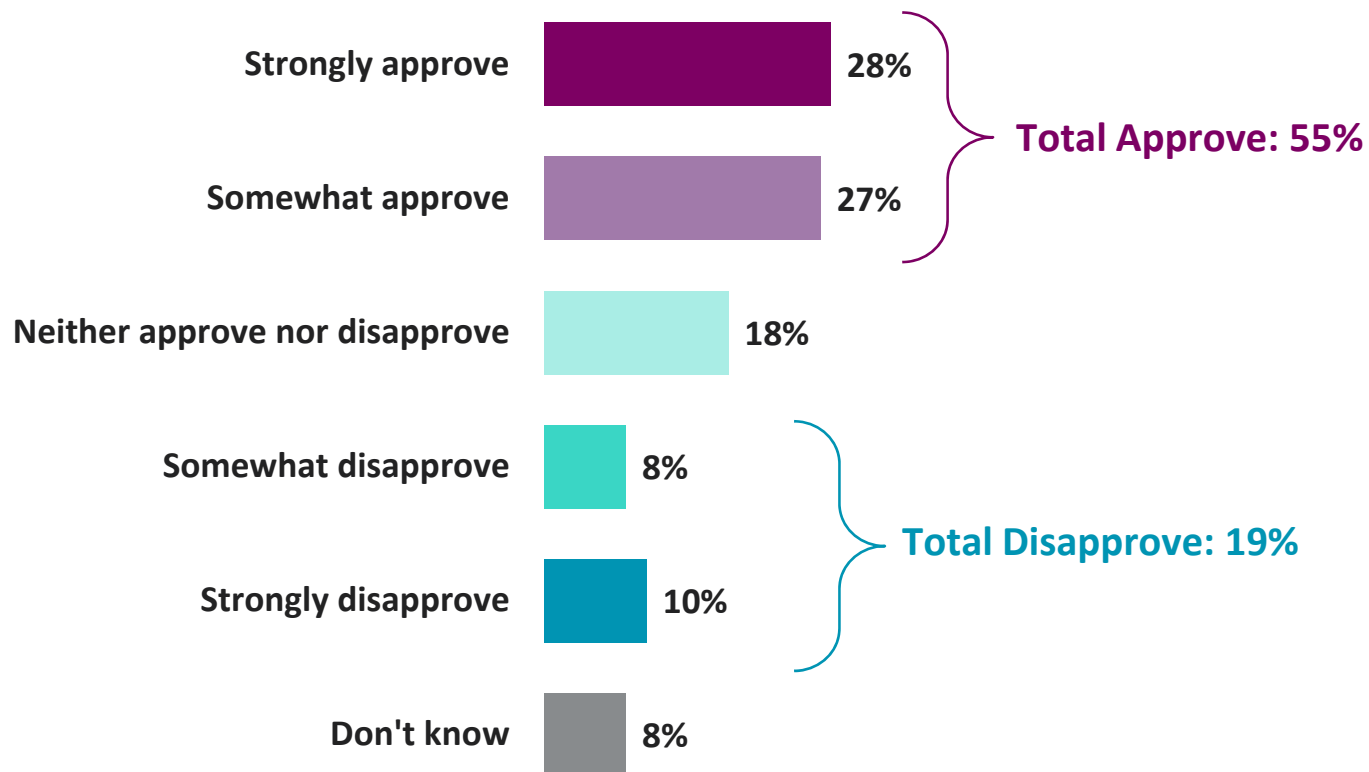
Q24. The federal government collects about \$4400 per person in revenue every year. Currently, it spends about 45 cents per person on grants to arts organizations (such as museums, theaters, and community arts centers). In your opinion, is this...

Base: All Respondents (n=3,020)

# A Majority of Americans Approve of Increasing Federal Arts Grants to \$1 Per Capita

- A clear majority (55 percent) support an increase from 45 cents to \$1 per person (effectively doubling the NEA budget). 28 percent of American adults “strongly approve” of this increase—a share larger than the entire “disapprove” category.
- Likely voters are significantly more likely to approve than unlikely voters (58 percent vs. 33 percent).
- About one in five say that they neither approve nor disapprove.

## Approval of Federal Government Increasing Spending from 45 Cents to \$1 Per Person on Grants to Arts Organizations

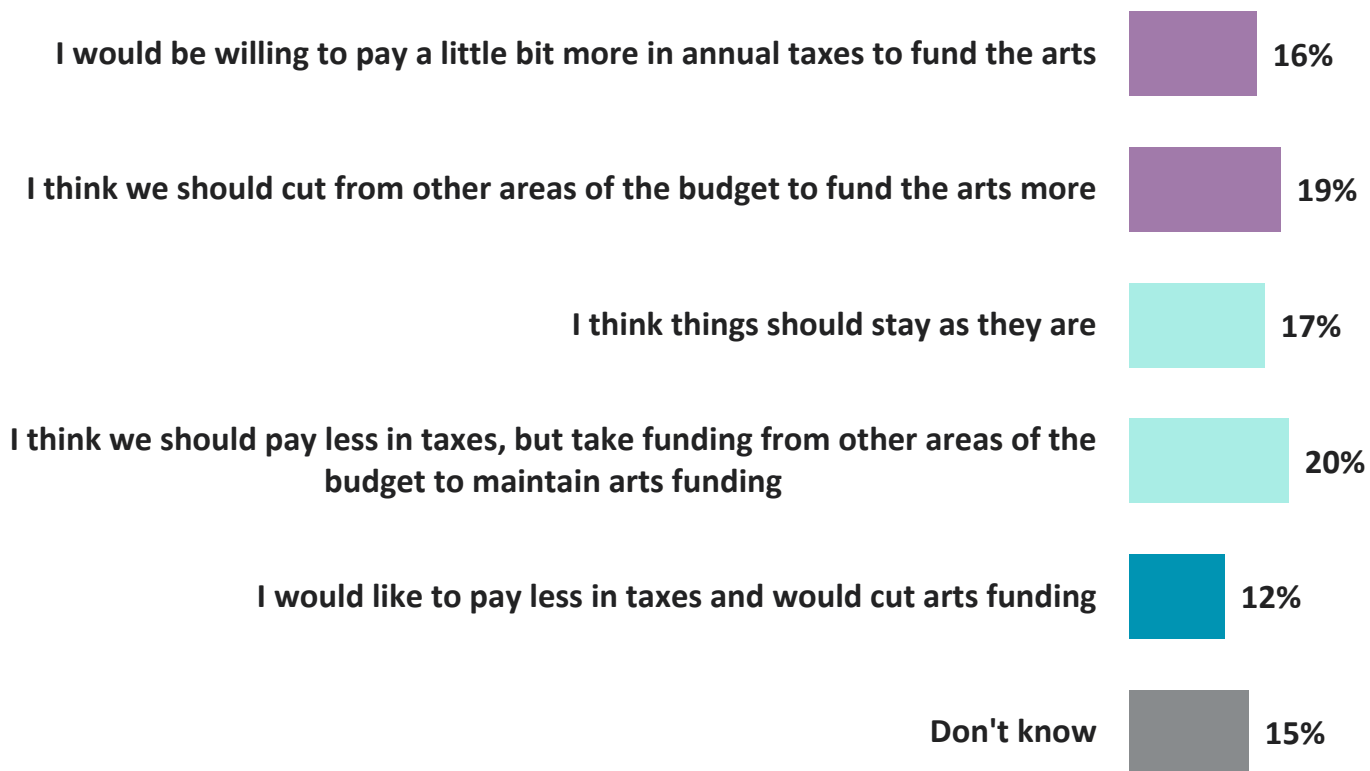


Q25. Do you approve or disapprove of the federal government increasing spending from 45 cents to \$1 per person on grants to arts organizations? Base: All Respondents (n=3,020)

# Opinions Are Mixed on How to Pay for Increases in Arts Funding



- 16 percent would pay more in annual taxes to fund the arts, 19 percent think we should fund the arts by cutting from other areas of the budget, and 20 percent want to pay less in taxes and pull from other areas of the budget to maintain arts funding.
- 12 percent would cut taxes and cut arts funding.
- Likely voters were significantly more likely “to pay a little bit more in annual taxes to fund the arts” than unlikely voters (20 percent vs. 6 percent).

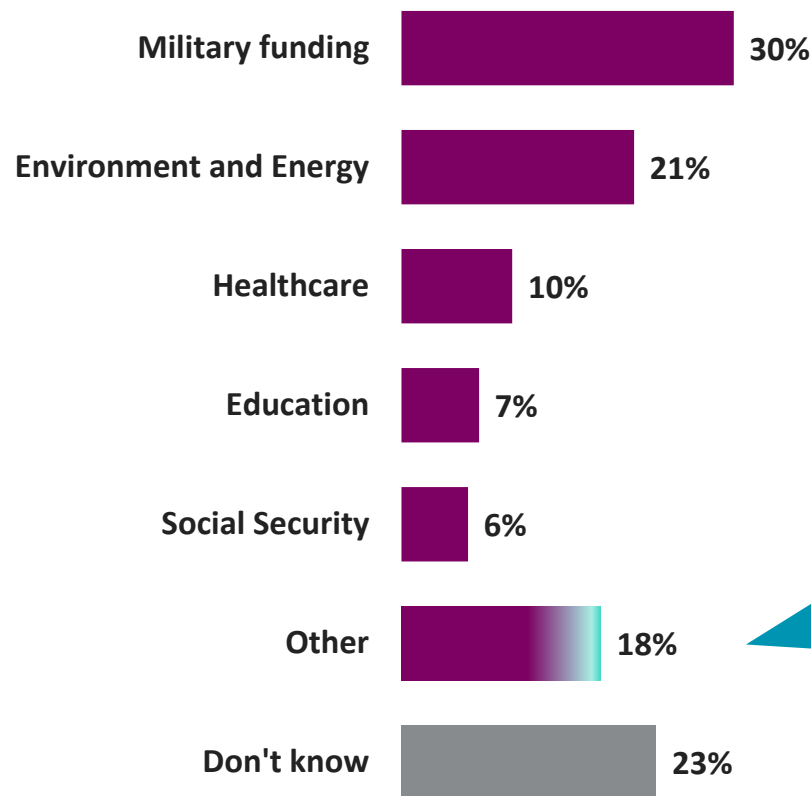


Q28. Thinking again about funding for the arts and priorities for yourself and your community, which of the statements below comes closest to your opinion? Base: All Respondents (n=3,020)

# Respondents Identify Cuts to Military Funding as a Potential Funding Source for Arts



- Among those who said that they would ideally cut spending from other areas of the budget in order to fund the arts, military funding is the most common candidate, selected by 30 percent. Another 21 percent say that funds for the arts should come from environment and energy sectors, while one in 10 would have cuts made to healthcare in order to supplement the arts.
- Men were more likely than women to suggest cutting from the military (33 percent vs. 28 percent).



“Immigration”, “Foreign Aid”, “Government Salaries”, “Welfare”, and “Tax breaks”, were some “other” departments mentioned here that respondents would want to cut from budget in order to fund the arts.

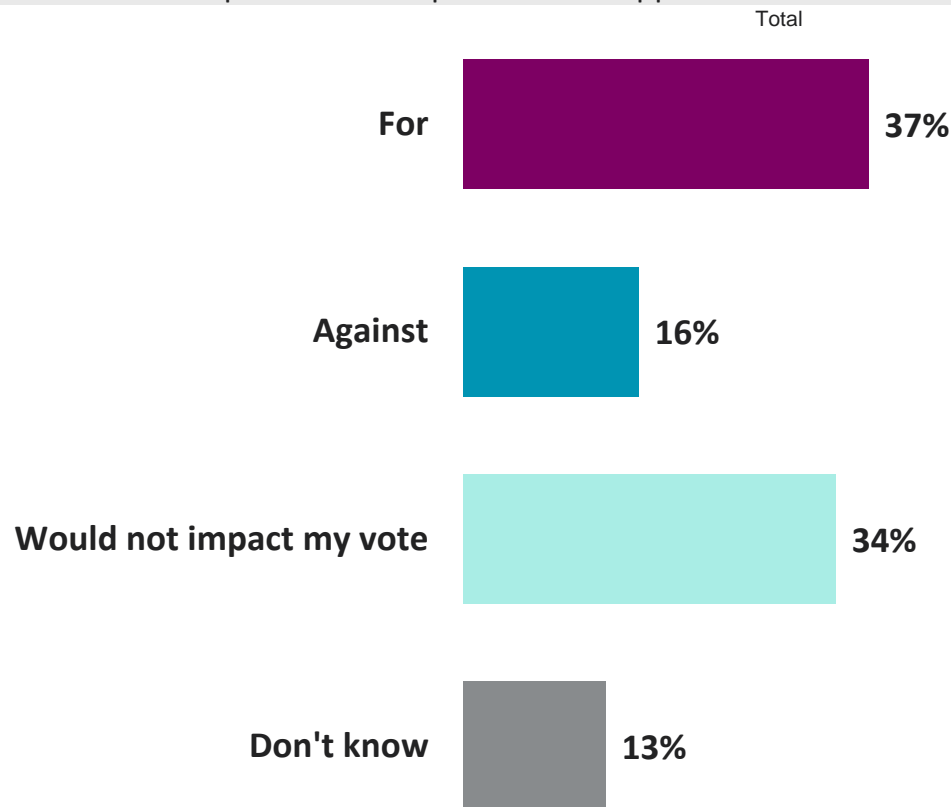
Q29. You said you'd like to cut spending from elsewhere in the budget to fund the arts. Where do you think we should cut from in order to spend on the arts?

Base: Respondents Who Want To Cut From Other Areas Of The Budget (n=1,131)

# Impact that an Increase in Government Grants Would Have on Political Vote



- 37 percent will vote FOR the candidate who makes the federal spending on the arts to \$1 per capita increase. Less than half that (16 percent) said they would vote against a candidate because of a vote to increase arts funding.
- One-third of the respondents (34 percent) say this part of the campaign would not impact their vote.
- All else being equal, Americans who are likely to vote in the 2016 presidential election are twice as likely to vote in favor (40 percent) than to vote against (18 percent) a candidate who wanted to increase federal spending. Millennials are especially likely to vote in favor of this increase—48 percent vs. 13 percent who oppose it.



Q27. All else being equal, would you vote for or against a political candidate who wanted to increase federal spending on the arts from 45 cents per person to \$1 per person? Base: All Respondents (n=3,020)



## About This Survey

- The findings in this report are from a national poll conducted by Ipsos Public Affairs (the third largest survey research firm in the world) from December 11 - 15, 2015, on behalf of Americans for the Arts.
- For the survey, a national sample of 3,020 adults ages 18 and over was interviewed online. Industry standard is to survey a sample of approximately 1,000 individuals. The larger-than-average sample adds greater reliability to the findings.
- The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll has a credibility interval of plus or minus 2.0 percentage points for all respondents.
- These data are weighted to reflect the racial diversity of the United States using population targets from the U.S. Census American Community Survey. Research suggests that African Americans and Hispanic Americans who participate in phone and online surveys tend to skew slightly higher in education and income than average, and may not perfectly represent their groups as a whole. This is relevant for this survey as education and income both correlate with increased arts participation rates.
- All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error and measurement error. Where figures do not sum to 100 percent, this is due to the effects of rounding.
- The 3,020 respondents self-identified by race and Hispanic ethnicity. For the report, the “white” category is non-Hispanic whites. Included in the “people of color” category are blacks, Asians, all Hispanics, and others.

Learn more and download data tables at [www.AmericansForTheArts.org/PublicOpinion](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/PublicOpinion)



# Demographics

# All Respondents

Gender		Age		Race*	
Male	48%	18-34	30%	White (includes white Hispanic)	77%
Female	52%	35-54	35%	Black	12%
		55+	35%	Asian	6%
				Other	5%

Household Income		Education		Hispanic Ethnicity*	
Under \$50K	41%	No college degree	55%	Yes	15%
\$50K +	59%	College degree	45%	No	84%
				Don't know/No answer	1%

Employment		Registered Voter		Likelihood to Vote	
Full Time	48%	Yes	84%	10 - Certain to vote	57%
Part Time	12%	No	13%	9	12%
Not Emp.	20%	Don't know	3%	8	7%
Retired	219%			7	4%
				6	3%
				5	5%
				4	1%
				3	1%
				2	1%
				1 - Certain to NOT vote	5%
				Don't know	3%

\*The 3,020 respondents self-identified by race and Hispanic ethnicity. In the comparative analyses, the “white” category is non-Hispanic whites (65.4 percent). Included in the “people of color” category are blacks, Asians, all Hispanics, and others (34.6 percent).

# All Respondents

Religious Affiliation		Religious Services – Attendance		Social Media Accounts	
Baptist	12%	Weekly or more often	32%	Facebook	76%
Methodist	5%	A couple of times per month	11%	Twitter	33%
Lutheran	5%	Once a month	6%	LinkedIn	29%
Presbyterian	3%	A few times a year	14%	Instagram	25%
Episcopal	1%	Once a year or less	17%	Snapchat	14%
Catholic	24%	Never	15%	Google+	27%
Mormon	1%	Prefer not to answer	5%	Pinterest	25%
Jewish	3%			YouTube	37%
Hindu	1%			Other	4%
Muslim	1%			None of these	15%
Other Protestant	8%				
Other	13%				
None	17%				
Prefer not to answer	5%				



## **ABOUT AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS**

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Americans for the Arts is the leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education in America. With offices in Washington, DC and New York City, it has a record of more than 50 years of service. Americans for the Arts is dedicated to representing and serving local communities and creating opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts.

[www.AmericansForTheArts.org](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org)

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## GAME CHANGERS

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At Ipsos we are passionately curious about people, markets, brands and society. We deliver information and analysis that makes our complex world easier and faster to navigate and inspires our clients to make smarter decisions.

We believe that our work is important. Security, simplicity, speed and substance applies to everything we do.

Through specialisation, we offer our clients a unique depth of knowledge and expertise. Learning from different experiences gives us perspective and inspires us to boldly call things into question, to be creative.

By nurturing a culture of collaboration and curiosity, we attract the highest calibre of people who have the ability and desire to influence and shape the future.

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