

Folk Arts Partnership Survey Results

December 2020

National Assembly of
State Arts Agencies

KNOWLEDGE ★ REPRESENTATION ★ COMMUNITY

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Introduction

As part of its Partnership Agreements with state arts agencies, the National Endowment for the Arts supports folk and traditional arts through Folk Arts Partnerships (FAP). These programs are managed by leaders within each state. Over time, the field realized these leaders could be more representative of the nation's diversity. In conjunction with a fieldwide effort to transform the demographics of FAP leadership, the FAP planning committee worked with the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies to conduct and analyze an online survey for all state folklife or folk arts directors/coordinators, additional staff and partner organizations of FAPs.

The primary directives for the survey were to gather baseline demographics for FAP positions, staff and partners and to better understand the structure of state and regional FAPs. Findings from the survey will inform a future FAP professional development institute and will provide underlying statistics for a long-term path to more diversity and inclusion in the field.

Over the course of four weeks in September and October 2020, the survey was sent to all FAP directors, coordinators and partnership staff. The instrument was divided into two sections. The first was for all respondents and focused on individual demographics and staffing. The second was for FAP directors or coordinators at state arts agencies and regional arts organizations and focused on folk arts program structure and activities.

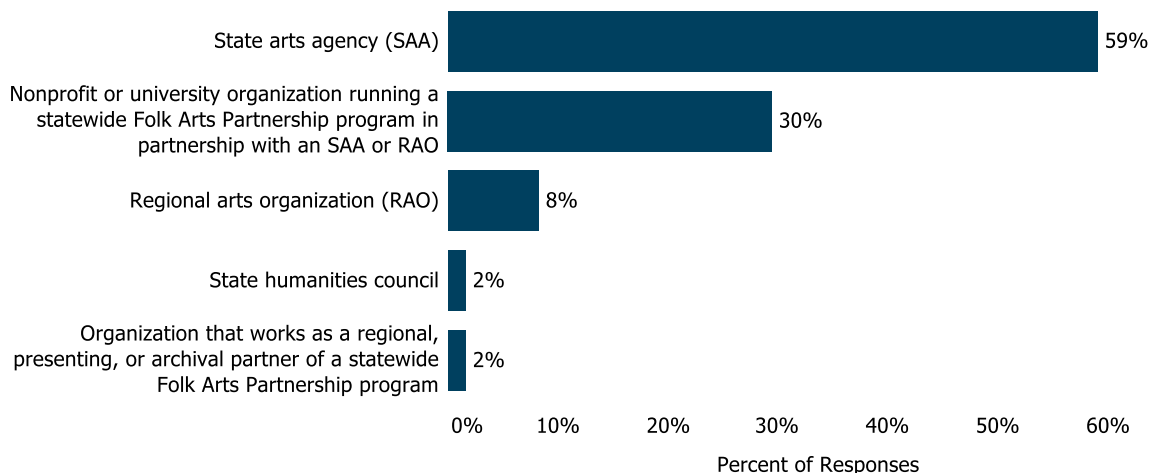
This report contains both an overview of key findings and an analysis of each survey question. Individual charts detail responses to each question.

About the Respondents

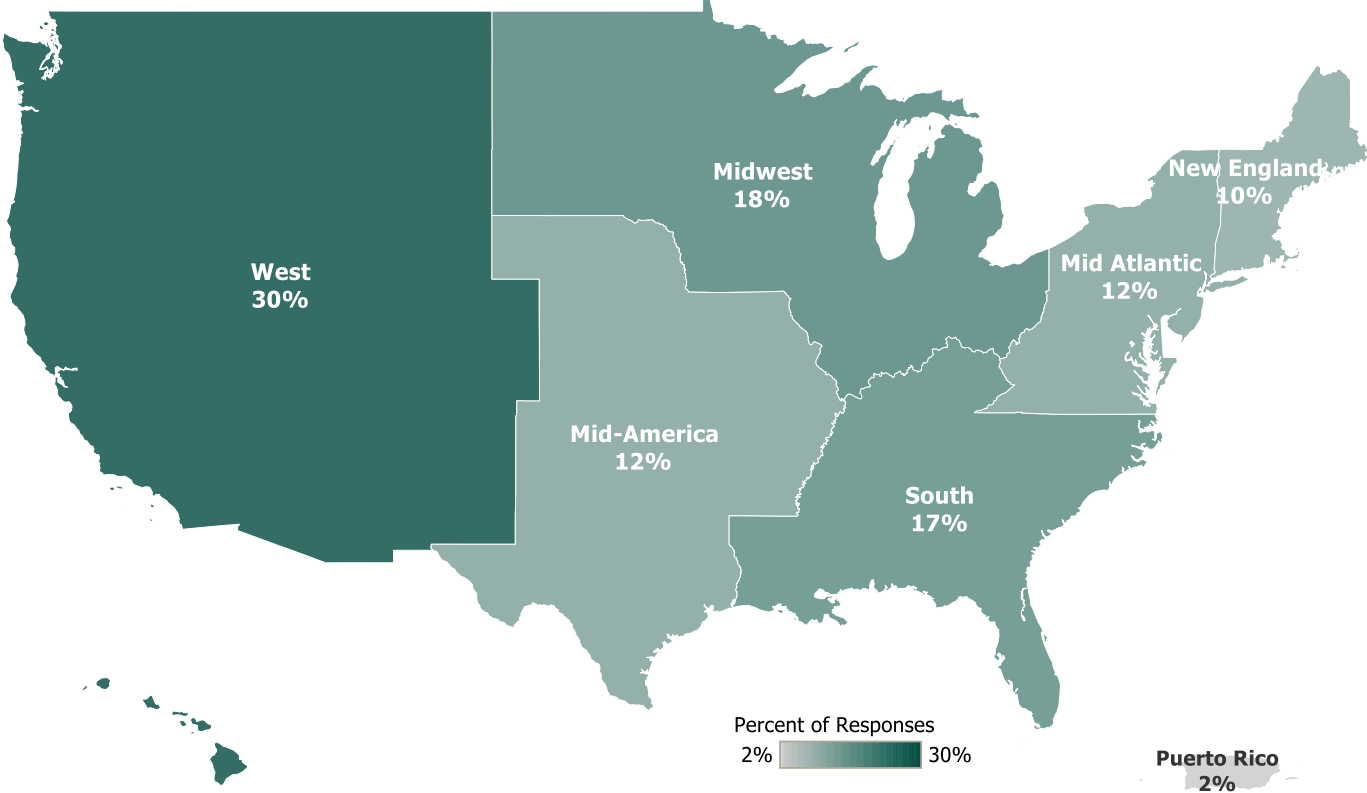
The majority of respondents, 59%, were from a state arts agency and another 30% were from an FAP partner organization. Responses were received from across the country. When looking at regions (mirroring [regional arts organization](#) regions), more responses came from the western states, which is proportional to the U.S. population.

61 individuals responded to the survey from 49 distinct states or jurisdictions, or 88% of all states and jurisdictions and all of those with active FAP programs.

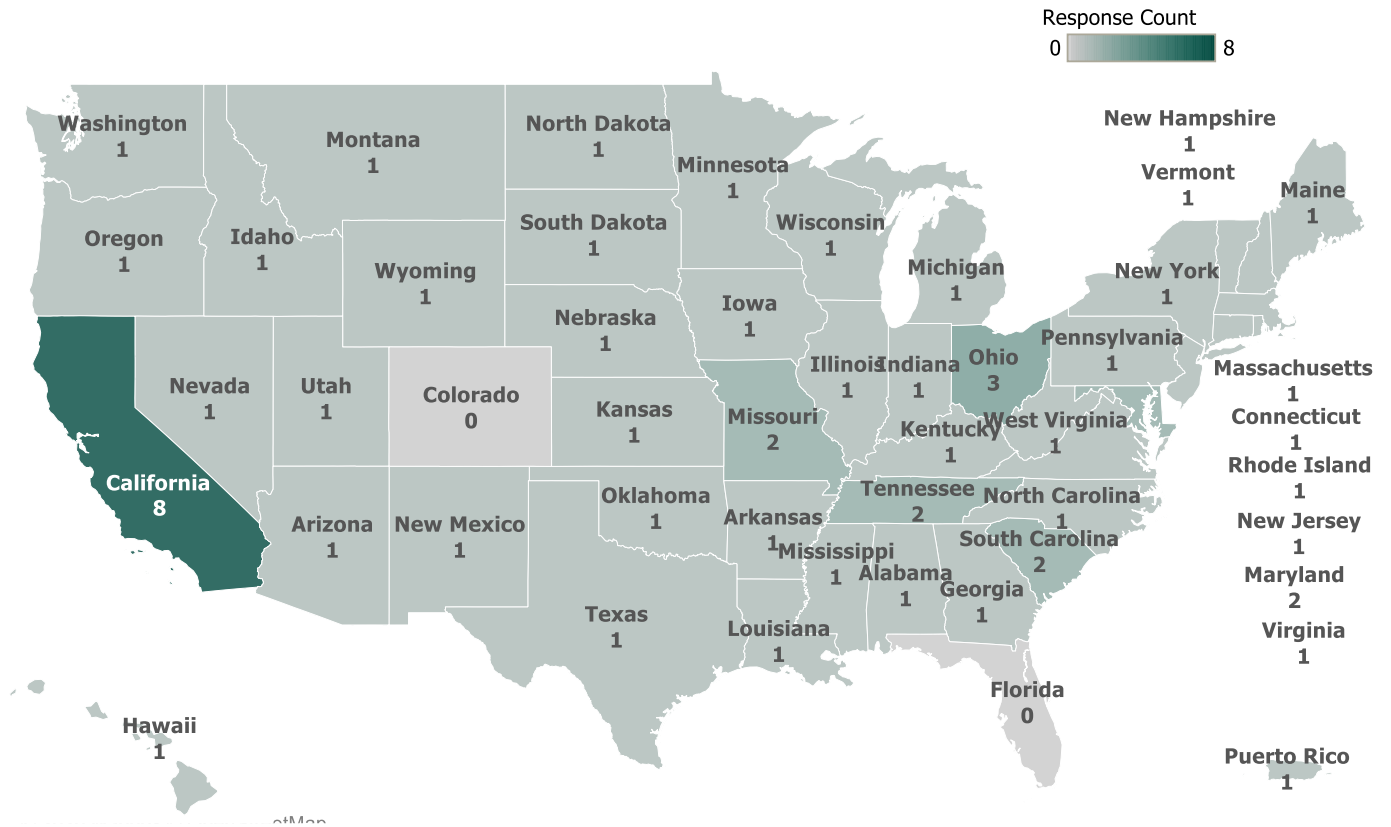
Respondents by Organization Affiliation



Percent of Respondents by Region



Number of Respondents by State



Key Findings

Identity

- 75% of respondents identified as white, with many indicating European heritage.
- Black and Hispanic respondents represented 10% and 7% of the respondent cohort, respectively.
- 75% of respondents identified as female.
- 47% of respondents identified with no religion or as agnostic or atheist.
- One-third of respondents are likely to retire over the next decade.

Education and Experience

- 81% of respondents reported holding a post-bachelor's degree.
- About three-quarters of respondents attended a training related to diversity, equity and inclusion within the past five years.
- More than 50% of respondents indicated they had done field, volunteer and documentary work; 48% selected they had experience in a cultural practice.

Current Positions

- One-third of all respondents had position titles that explicitly included folk/traditional arts.
- Respondents mostly came from state arts agencies (59%); 30% came from nonprofits or universities running a statewide FAP program.
- 93% of respondents were full-time employees (three respondents were contractors) and more than half of respondents said they spent more than 75% of their time on folk and traditional arts.
- 64% considered themselves public folklorists.
- 49% of respondents made between \$50,000 and \$74,999 annually.

Hiring Practices and Job Stability

- When hiring for a new folk arts position, respondents posted on an organization's website (67%), on social media (57%) and on listservs (56%).
- Most respondents agreed or strongly agreed they have adequate benefits (79%).
- 57% agreed their position is secure in the long run and 27% said there is potential for growth in their current position.
- Only 12% of respondents said they could recommend methods to increase diversity in a candidate pool.

FAP Programs (Questions for FAP directors/coordinators)

- 34% of respondents said their programming budget was between \$20,000 and \$50,000 per year, while another third had program budgets between \$100,000 and \$500,000.
- Folk arts programs produced a variety of activities; most included apprenticeships (79%) and performances (63%).
- 33% of the 39 director/coordinator respondents reported that their programs employ additional staff members and 72% employ additional contractors.

Partnerships

- 66% of respondents said that their FAP program had at least one formal partnership (defined as a partnership for which there is a written or fiduciary agreement).

- Of the respondents with formal partners, 52% had a partnership with a folk arts alliance/center nonprofit, and 48% had a formal partnership with a culturally specific nonprofit.
- 75% of respondents said their FAP program had at least one informal partnership. Of those with at least one informal partnership, 77% had a partnership with a culturally specific nonprofit.

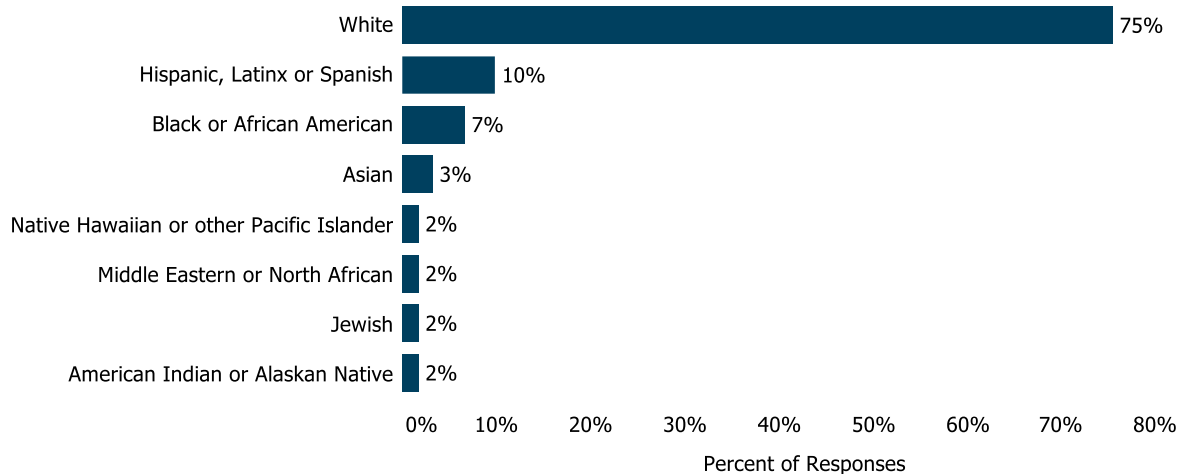
Results: Section 1

Identity

The survey addressed demographic and staffing questions of all Folk Arts Partnership program directors/coordinators and partners. These questions collected information about individual identity, education and training as well as information about the type of positions and work respondents have. Three-quarters of respondents were white (75%) and 75% identified as female. 57% of respondents identified as both white and female. Many respondents reported a European ethnicity or cultural heritage. About a quarter of respondents identified as Christian; when combined, 47% of respondents identified as not religious, agnostic or atheist. The respondent cohort has a fairly evenly distributed age range: 57% are 44 or younger, and another 33% are 55 or older. The latter figure indicates that over the next 10 years, a third of the field will reach retirement age.

1) What is your race?

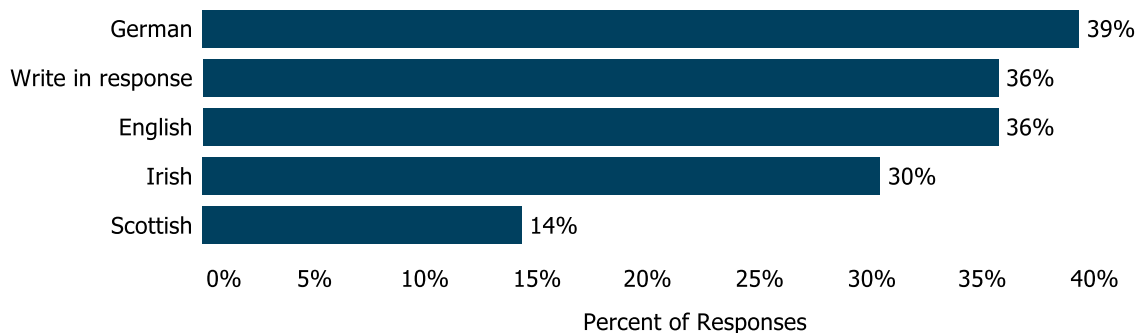
N = 61



2) What is your cultural heritage or ethnicity?

N = 56

Top 5, including the respondents who chose to write in an answer



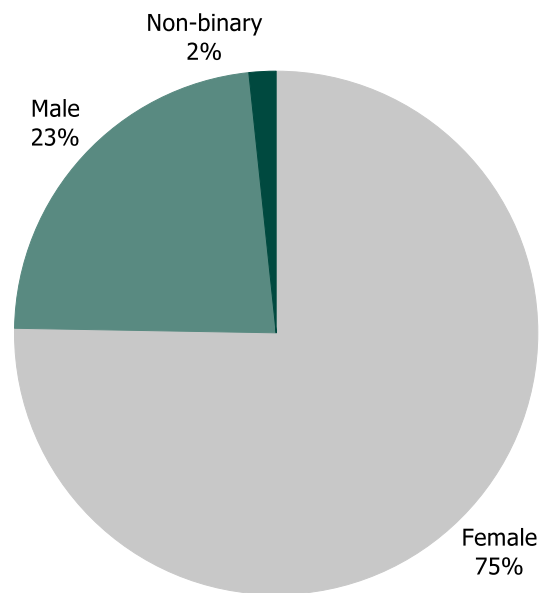
All Ethnicities

German	39%
English	36%
Irish	30%
Scottish	14%
Norwegian	9%
French	9%
Dutch	7%
Mexican or Mexican American	5%
African American	5%
Welsh	4%
Swedish	4%
Jewish	4%
Italian	4%
Vietnamese	2%
Ukrainian	2%
Swiss	2%
Southern Anglo-American?	2%
Slovak	2%
Russian, Jewish	2%
Russian	2%

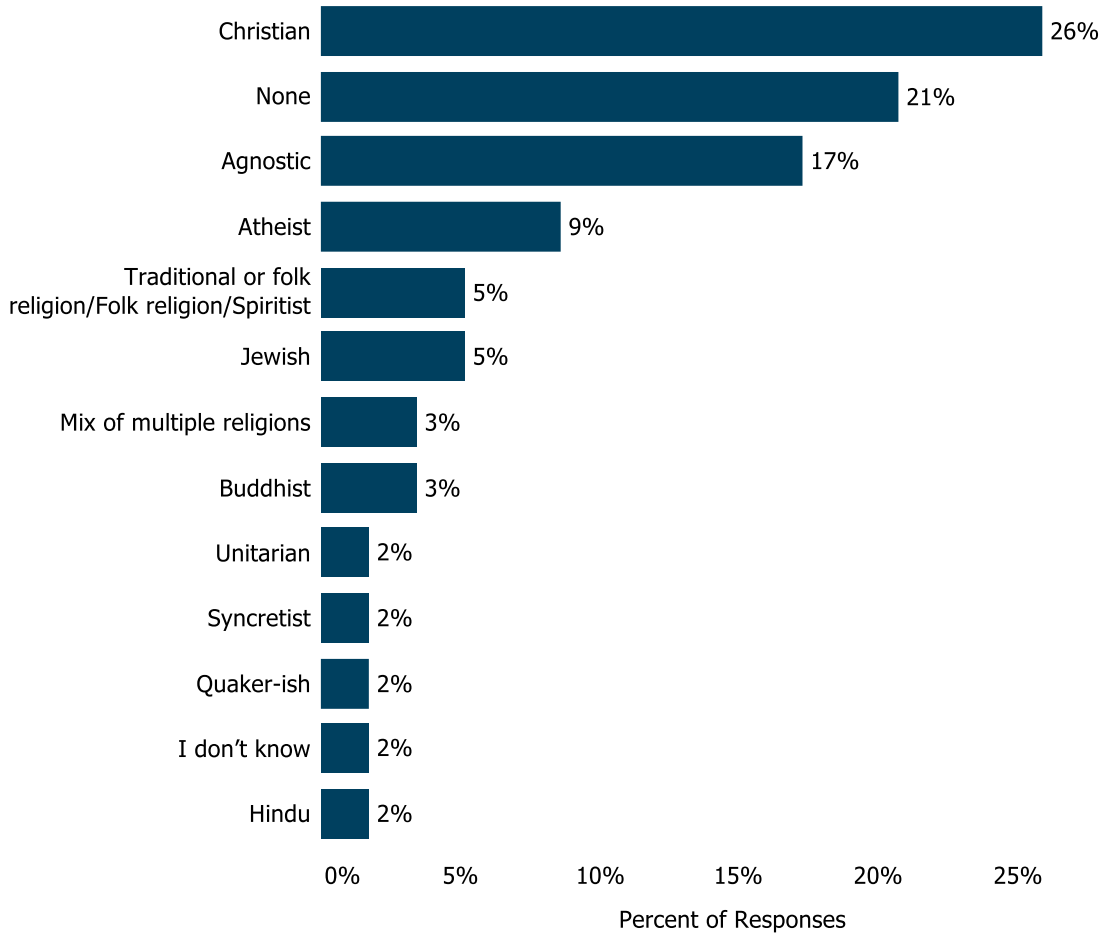
Romanian, Jewish	2%
Puerto Rican	2%
Polish	2%
New York, Texas as native state	2%
Native Hawai'ian	2%
Japanese	2%
Iranian	2%
Heritage: Louisiana French/Cajun	2%
German-from-Russia	2%
Ethiopian	2%
Czech	2%
Costa Rican	2%
Chinese	2%
Chicano	2%
Canadian	2%
Belgian	2%
Asian Indian	2%
Ashkenazi Jewish	2%
Armenian	2%
Anglo	2%
Acadian	2%

3) With what gender identity do you most identify?

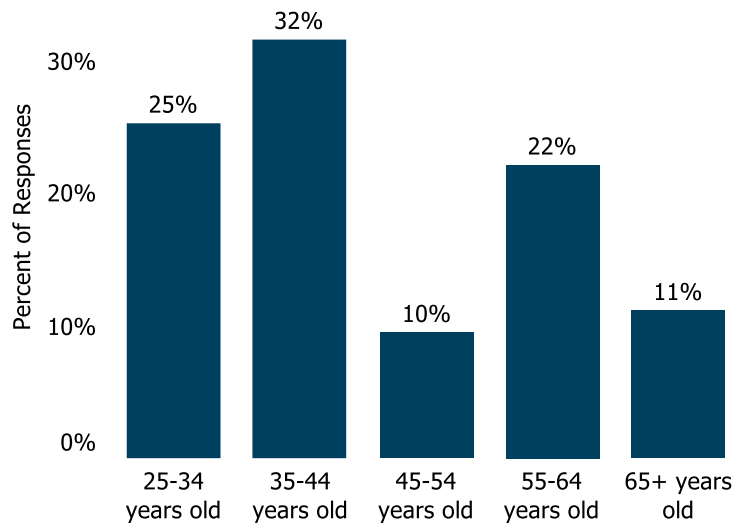
N = 61



4) What is your present religion, if any?
N = 58



5) What is your age?
N = 63



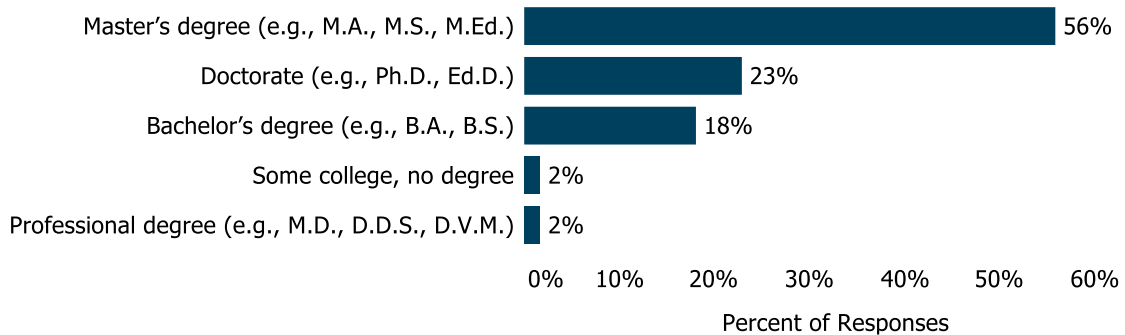
Education and Experience

The majority of respondents hold a master's degree and about one-quarter (23%) hold a Ph.D. Together, 81% of respondents hold a post-bachelor's degree. About 13% of individuals hold post-bachelor's degrees in the general U.S. population according to the [U.S. Census Bureau](#). While folklore was a common subject of study (43%), respondents reported studying a wide range of other academic fields such as anthropology/archeology, arts administration and various cultural studies.

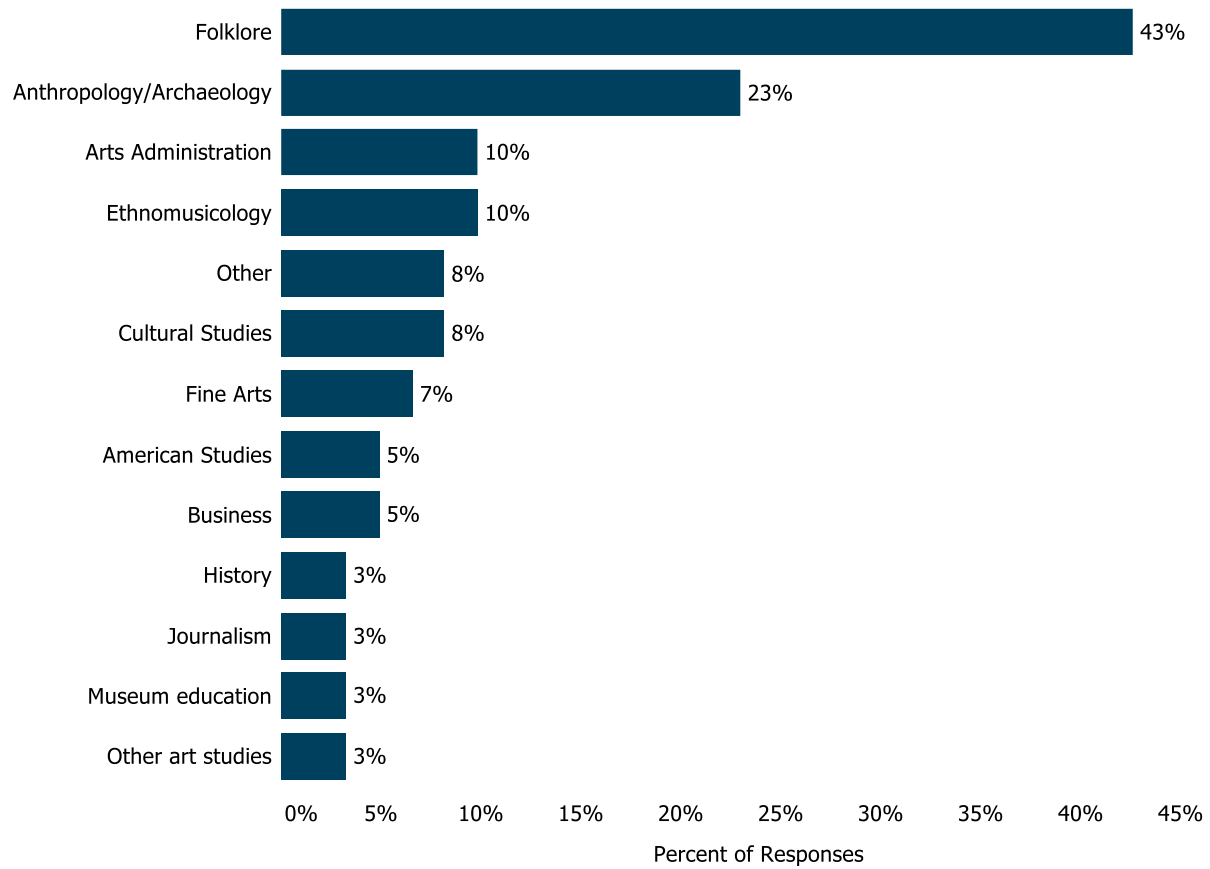
Additionally, the survey inquired about respondents' training and other professional experiences. Three-quarters of respondents reported attending a training related to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) within the past five years. More respondents attended DEI trainings within the past three years. More than 40% of participants had professional training in ethnographic field school and/or broadcasting. The survey asked respondents about other related professional experiences that contributed to their work. More than 50% of respondents indicated they had done field, volunteer and/or documentary work. 48% selected that they had experience in a cultural practice.

6) What is the highest degree or level of school that you have completed?

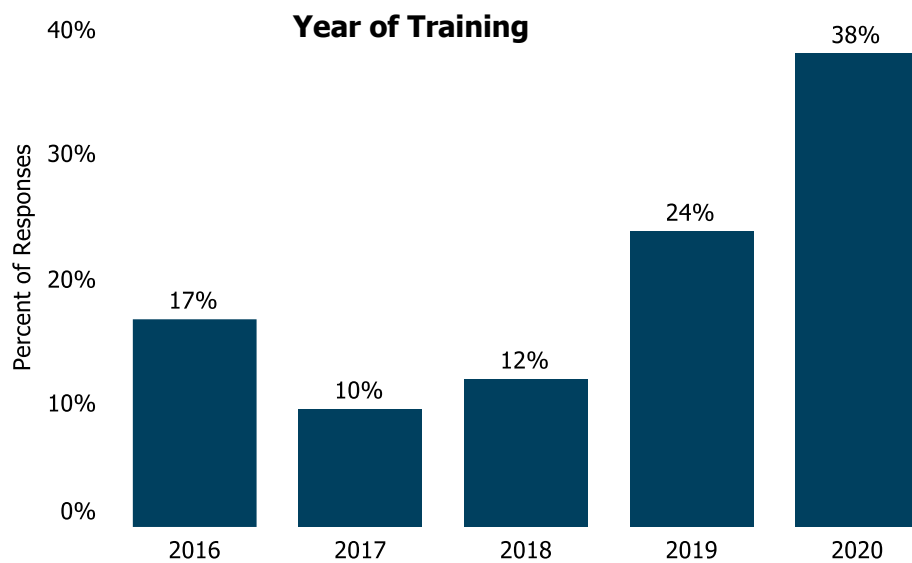
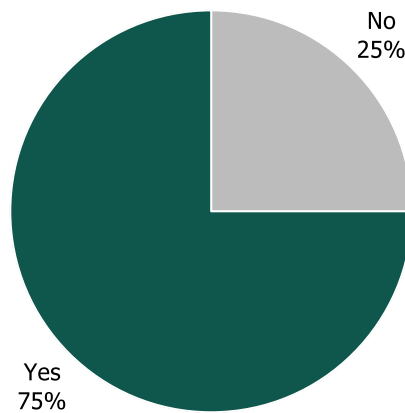
N = 61



**7) What was your subject/major/concentration for this degree?
N = 61**



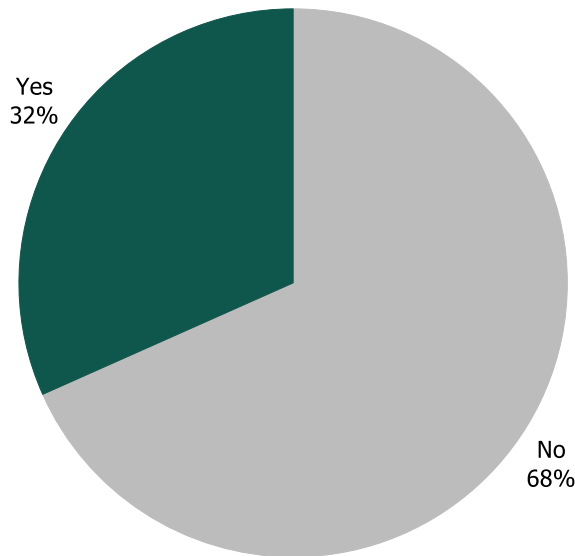
8) Have you participated in equity training in the past five years?
N = 60



Names of consultants, consulting organizations and programs for these trainings can be found in the [Appendix](#).

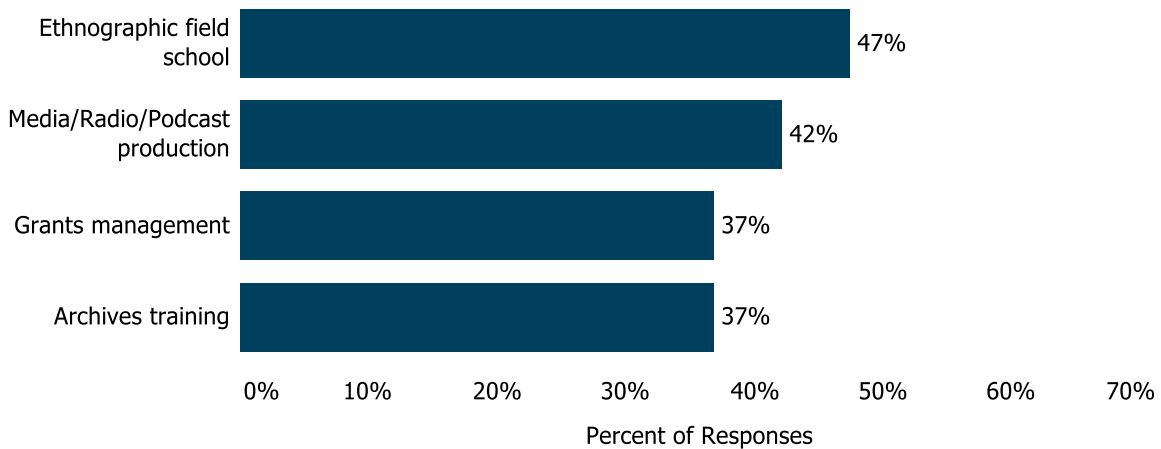
10) Aside from equity training, have you completed any professional training programs/certificates that are specifically relevant to your work as a folk arts professional?

N = 60

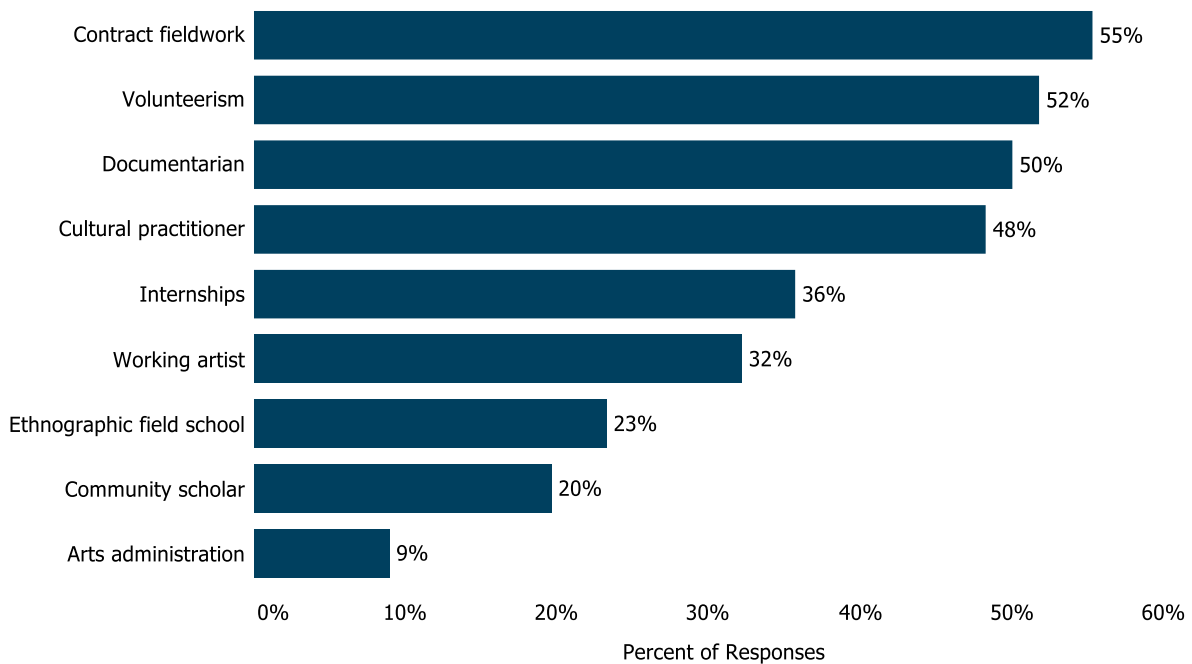


11) What was the subject for any training program(s)? (graph excludes Other)

N = 19



**12) What other experience do you have that is relevant to your work as a folk arts professional?
N = 56**



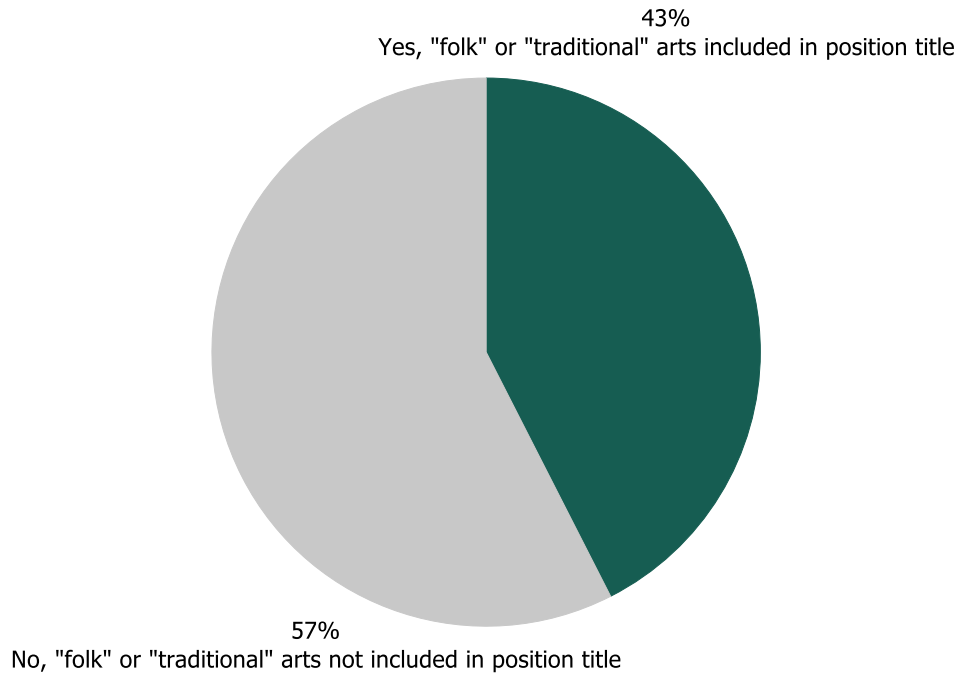
Current Position

One-third of all respondents have position titles that explicitly included folk/traditional arts. 90% of respondents come from state arts agencies or a nonprofit/university running a statewide FAP program and 93% are employed full-time. 64% said they consider themselves public folklorists. When accounting for race and ethnicity, the majority of non-white respondents do not consider themselves a public folklorist, while the majority of white respondents do. Just over half of respondents say they spend more than 75% of their work hours devoted to folk and traditional arts. Respondents indicated that they devote part of their time administering grants (61%) and managing other programs (49%). When asked about salaries, about half of respondents (49%) said they make between \$50,000 and \$74,999 a year, with another 30% making between \$35,000 and \$49,999. 53% said they found out about their current positions through friends or colleagues.

Contractors: Three respondents are contractors, two have year-long contracts and another has a contract lasting between six months to a year. All three work between 10 and 19 hours per week. Two make less than \$20,000 and the third makes between \$20,000 and \$34,999.

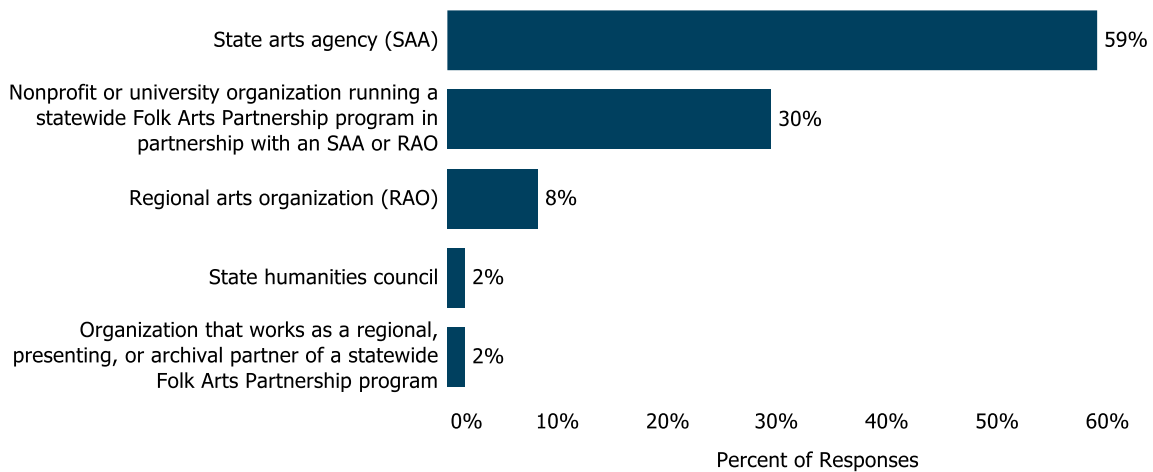
13) Number of positions containing "folk" or "traditional" in title. (See all position titles in the [Appendix](#)).

N = 61



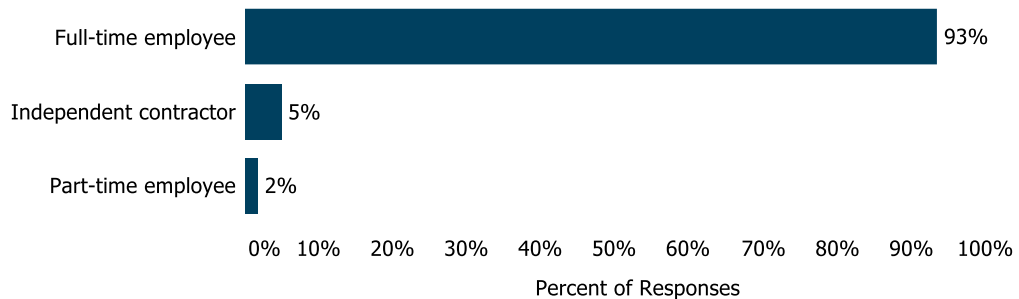
15) What type of organization do you work for?

N = 61

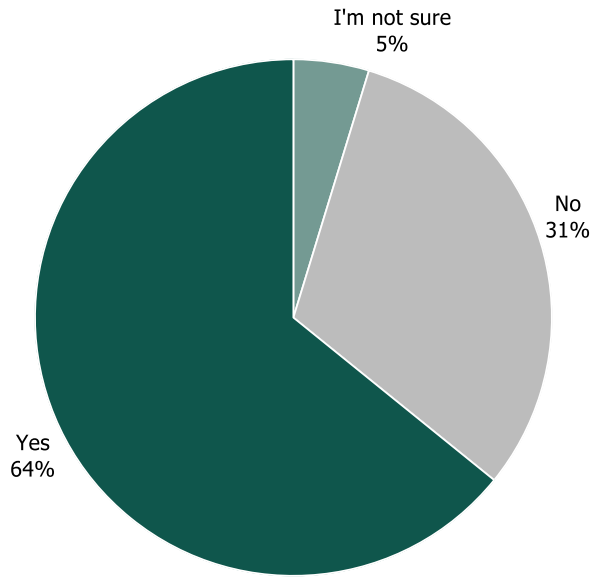


16) What is your current employment status?

N = 61



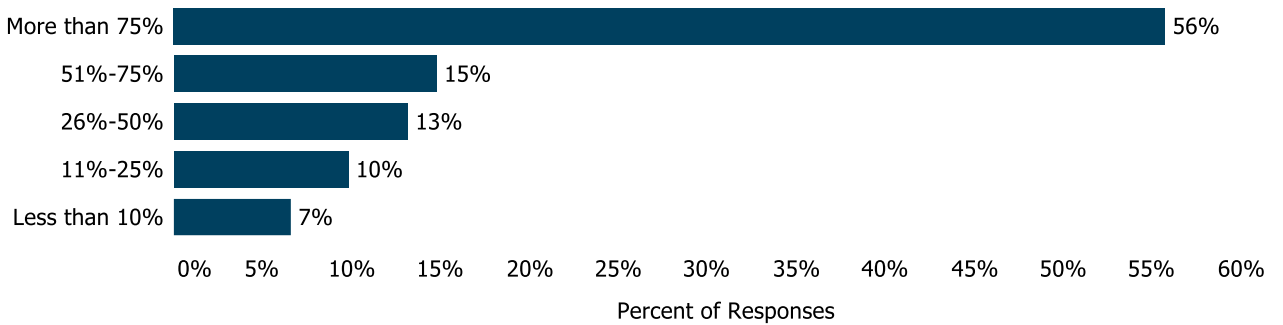
**19) Do you consider yourself a public folklorist?
N = 61**



Public folklorists by race

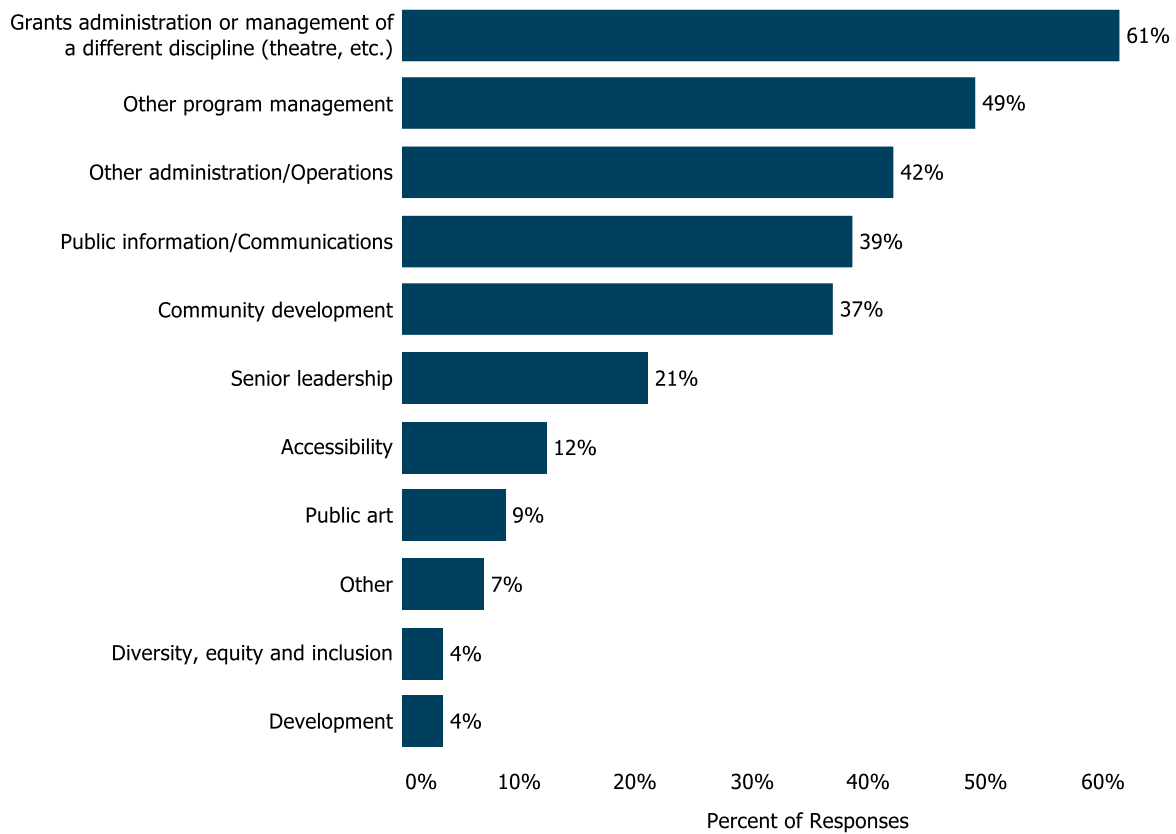
	Yes	No	I'm not sure
Non-White	3	9	2
White	34	10	1

**20) Please estimate the percentage of time in your current position that is devoted to folk and traditional arts.
N = 61**



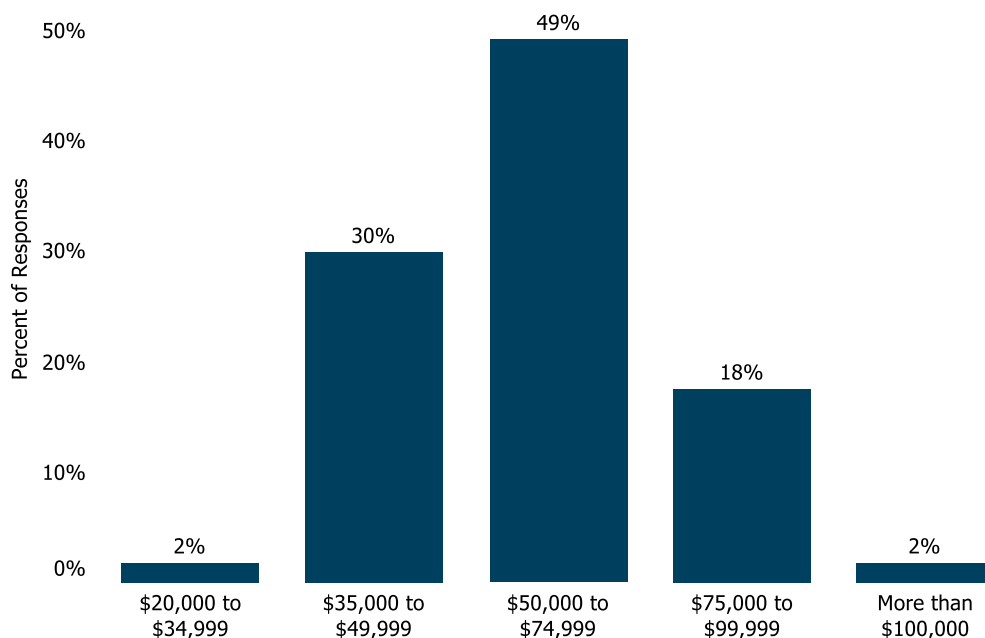
21) What other job functions, other than folk arts, do you spend time on during a typical week?

N = 57



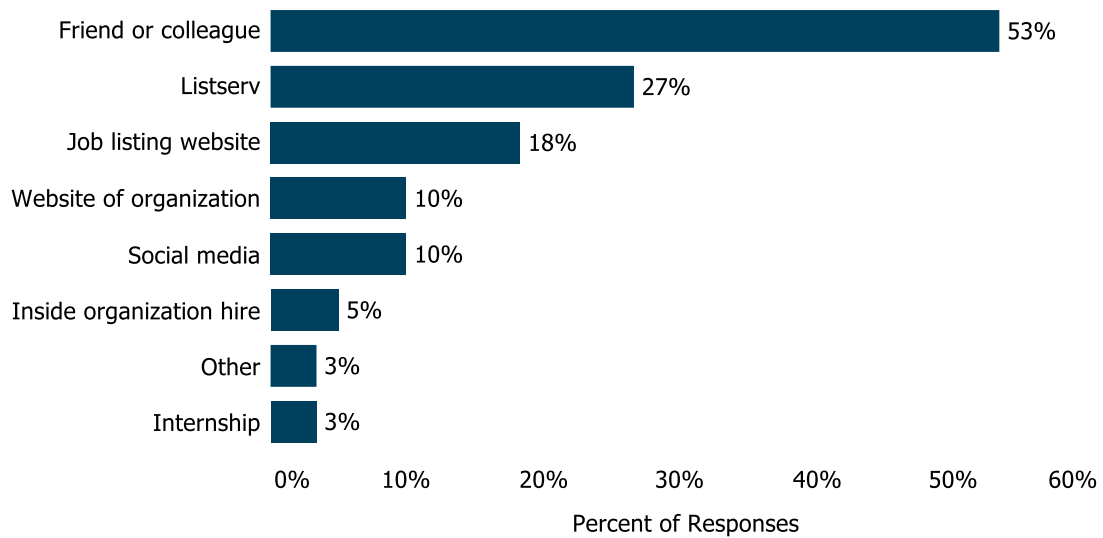
22) If you are employed, what is your current salary, excluding fringe benefits?

N = 57



24) How did you find out about your current position?

N =

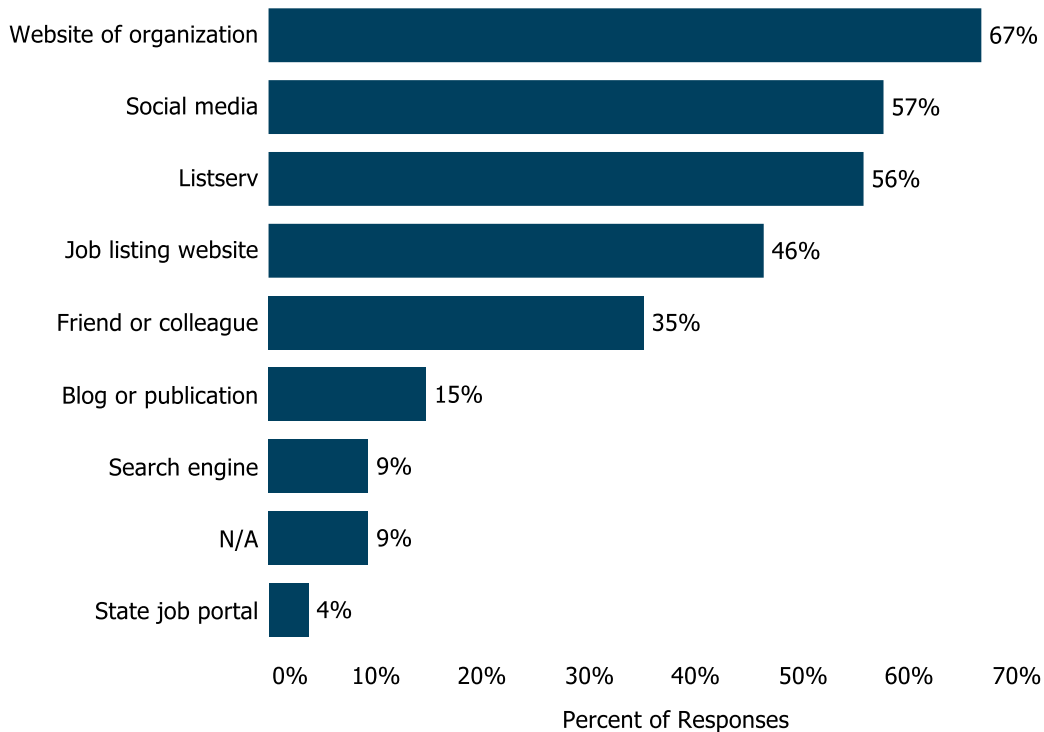


Hiring Practices and Job Stability

When posting for a new folk position, respondents typically post on an organization's website (67%), on social media (57%) and on listservs (56%). When asked if they could recommend job posting methods for hiring diverse professionals, 88% of respondents said "no" or "not sure." Five left comments and suggestions on how to reach a more diverse pool of applicants. Respondents also were asked to rate their level of agreement with statements related to job stability. 79% said their position has adequate benefits and 27% said that there is potential for upward mobility (more than half of respondents disagreed that they had potential for upward mobility or increased opportunity in their current position).

25) Where do you typically post for open folklorist positions?

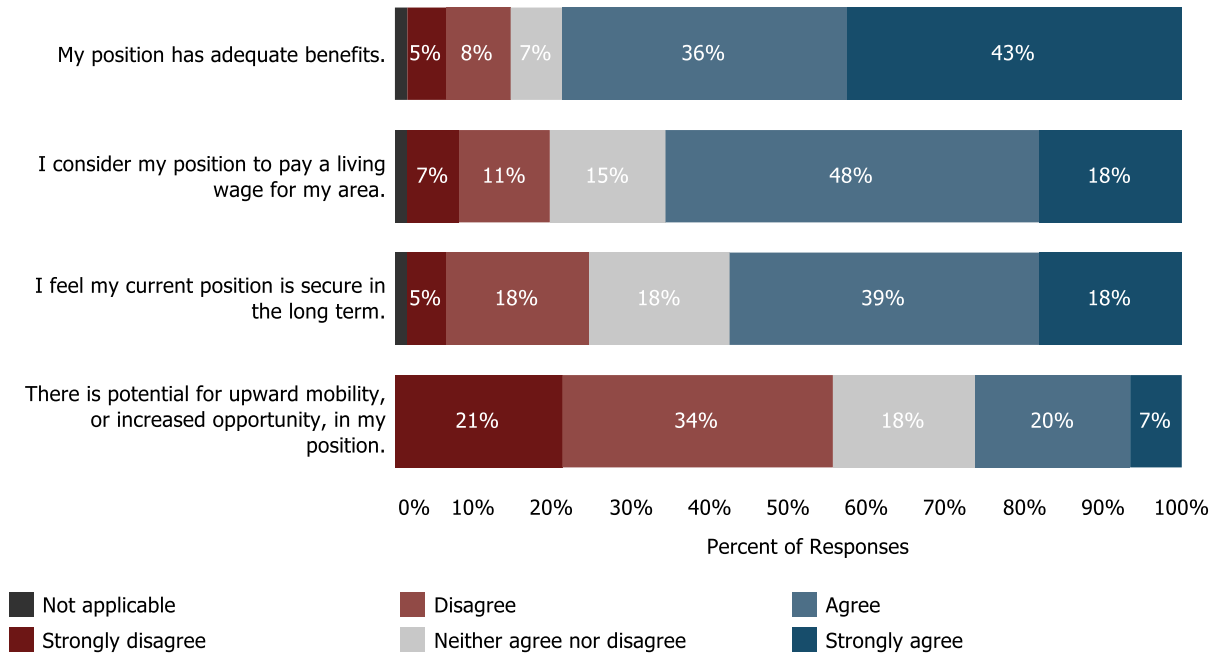
N = 54



26) Are there sites or methods that you would recommend that have increased the diversity of your candidate pool when hiring folklore professionals? Write-in responses:

- Go to communities of color, ask them what they want, and do that.
- Posting our most recent job opening to AAA wielded [*sic*] a more diverse candidate pool than previous searches only posted to publore or SEM, AFS listservs.
- Sharing the opportunity within the field via local, regional and national contacts and networks
- We loosed the requirements for fieldwork contractors in our most recent search and made it clear the respondent did NOT need to be a folklore professional. We opened it up to anyone with folk arts experience (including as practitioners), experience in interviewing human informants, community organizing/mapping, and basic skills in audio and visual recording, since we don't need a super high quality archival product. The RFP was then sent out via agency listserv to all our statewide constituents. Applicant pool was much more diverse that previous search, and we ended up with a contractor team comprised of two contractors of color with backgrounds as artist/practitioners who also work in education and evaluation & assessment. Our project isn't traditional fieldwork, for us this combination is ideal.
- Yes, I think do presentations in person, when safe, in rural communities. Sending mailers too.

**28) Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements:
N = 61**



Results: Section 2

Folk Arts Partnership Programs

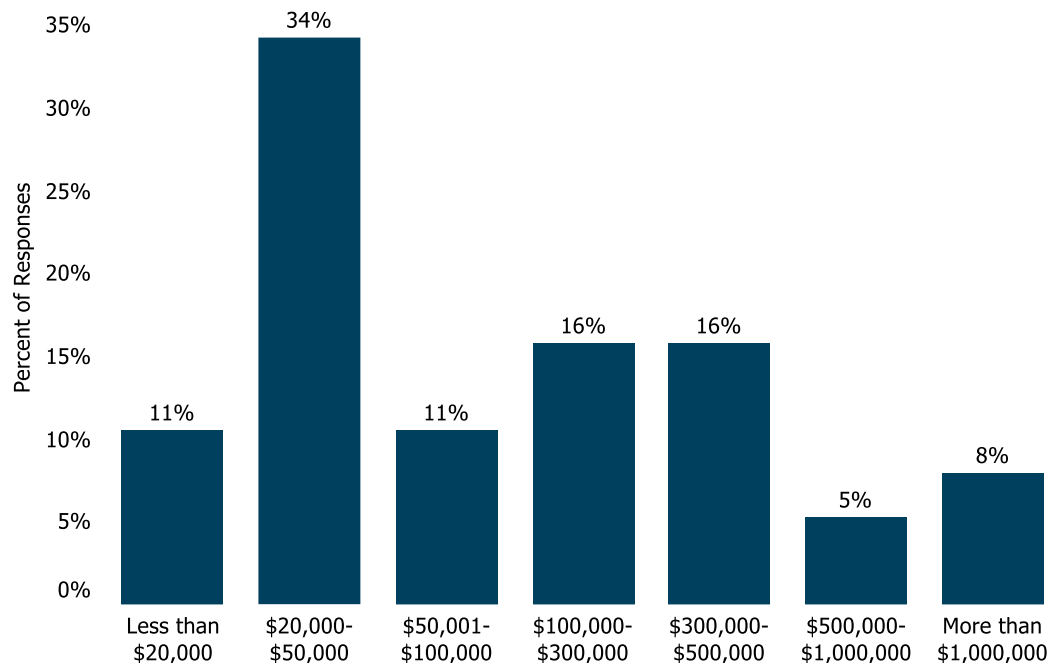
The second section of the survey focused on describing Folk Arts Partnership programs and discovering the types of formal and informal partnerships FAP programs cultivate. Only respondents from state arts agencies or regional arts organizations answered questions in this section.

About a third of respondents said that their programming budget is between \$20,000 and \$50,000 per year, while another third have program budgets between \$100,000 and \$500,000. These programs have varied activities: apprenticeships (79%), performances (63%), lectures/discussions (53%) and exhibitions (53%). More than half of the programs spend between one and five days doing fieldwork.

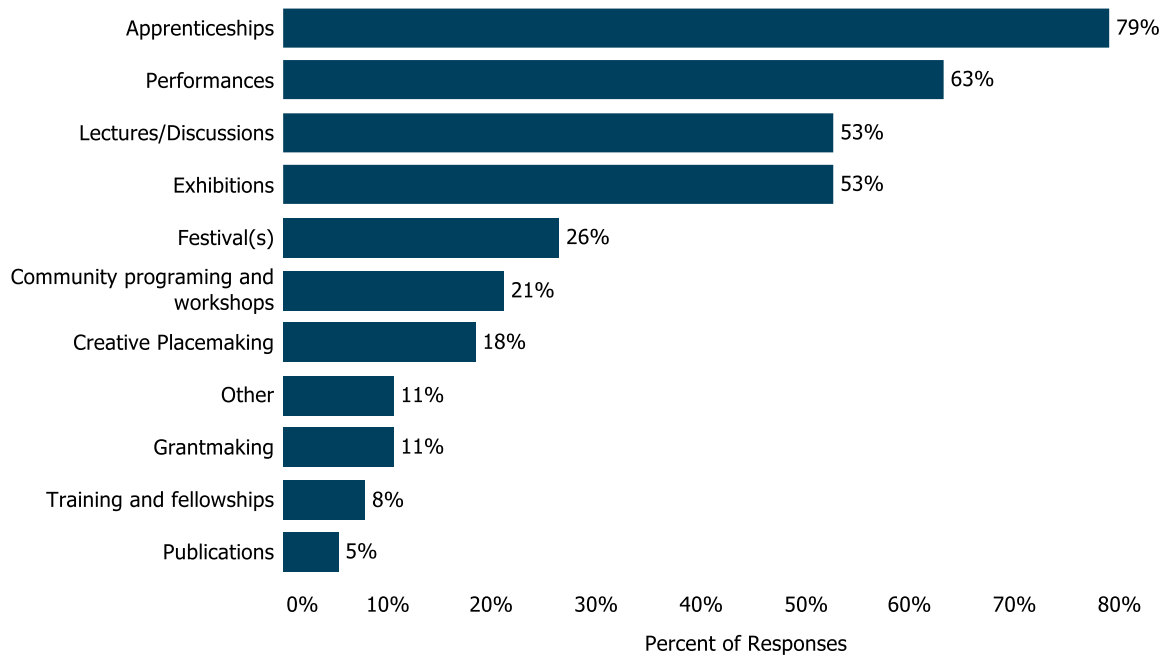
Additional Staff: 12 out of 39 total respondents said that they had additional staff working on folk arts programming. The median number of additional staff was 1.62 (part-time employees were listed as decimals). Programs reported a range of staff numbers, from a part-time staff member working 30 hours to 10 full-time staff members. Respondents said that of those additional staff members, there 9 folklorists. 28 out of 39 respondents said the program employed contractors, with a median of 2 and a range of staff from a part-time contractor working 10 hours to 6 full-time contractors. Of those contractors, 21 identified as folklorists.

29) What is the size of your programming budget (including public programs, grants, and contracts; excluding salaries and benefits)?

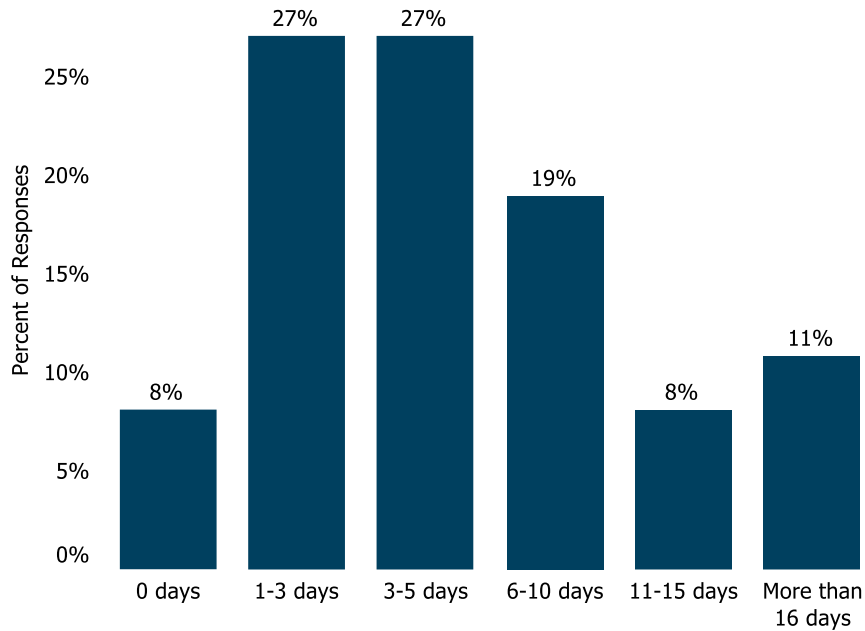
N = 38



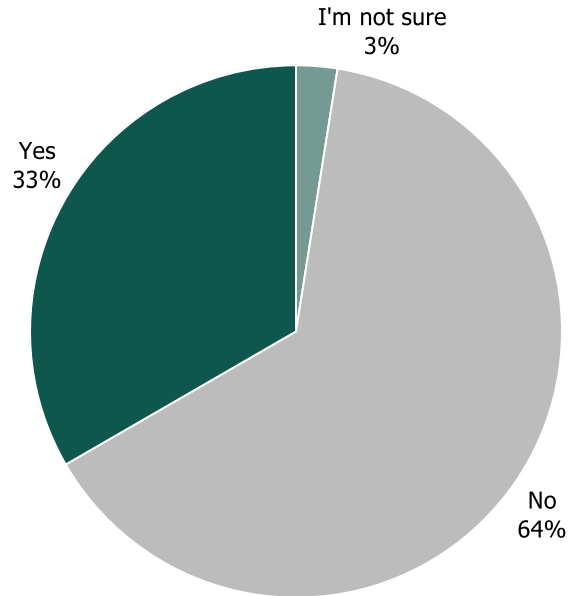
**30) What types of activities has your folk arts program produced in the past 3 years?
N = 38**



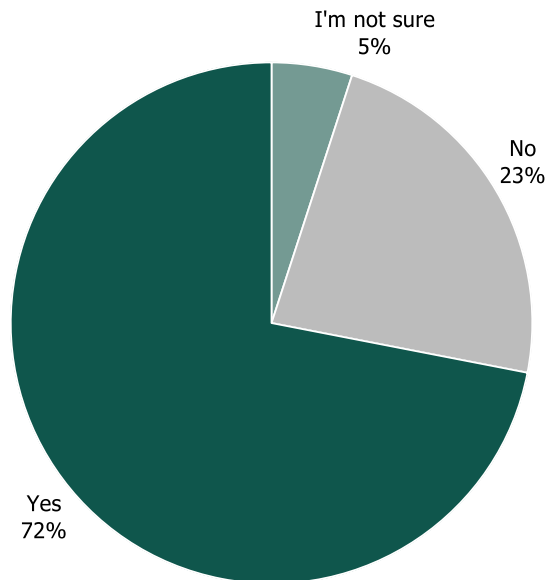
**31) What is the average number of days per month your program spends doing fieldwork?
N = 37**



32) Are there additional staff at your organization affiliated with the folk arts program?
N = 39



35) Does your program employ independent contractors?

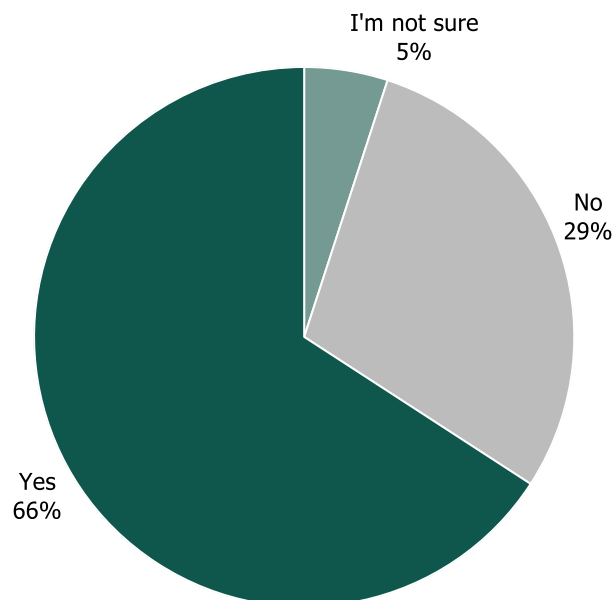


Program Partners

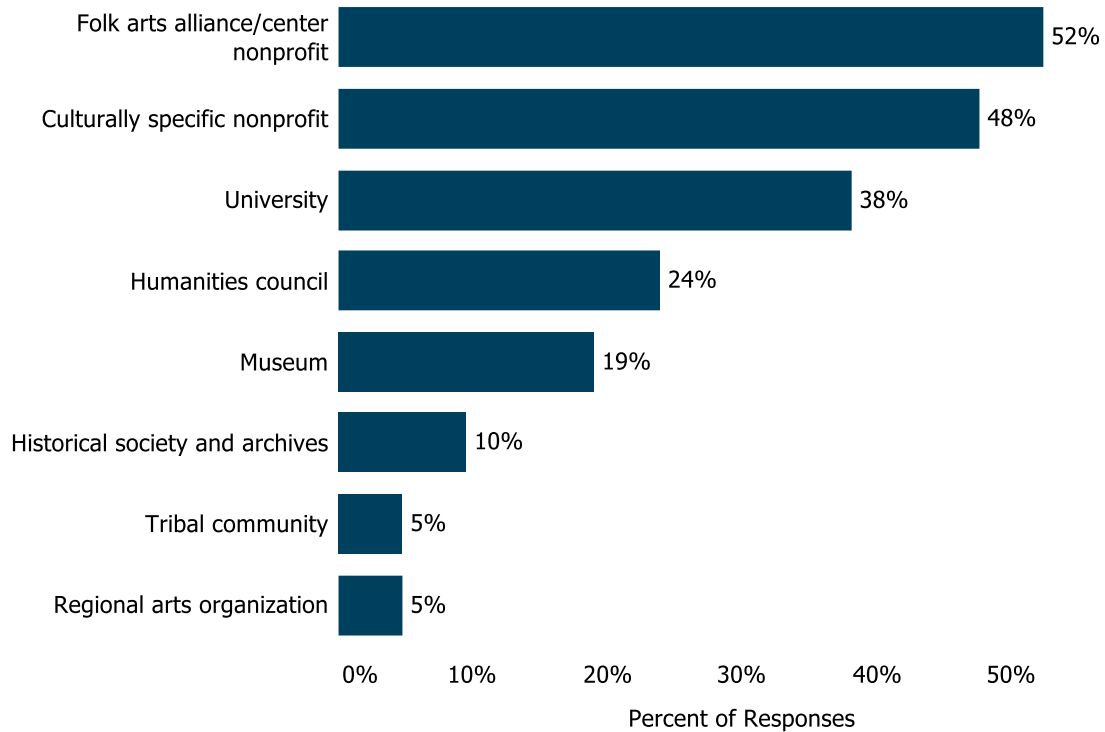
Two-thirds of respondents identified at least one formal partner, defined as a partnership with a written or fiduciary agreement, memorandum of understanding (MOU) or cooperative agreement. Many of these partners are folk arts alliances/centers (52%), culturally specific nonprofits (48%) and universities (38%). Many are grantees (48%), contractors (39%), and presenting or archival partners (35%). Respondents indicated that there is a range of financial support from partners, from less than \$10,000 to more than \$100,000. Three-quarters of respondents have informal partnerships, most with culturally specific nonprofits (77%), as well as universities (41%), state folklife nonprofits (41%) and museums (36%).

38) Does your folk arts program have formal partnerships (partnerships for which there is a written or fiduciary agreement, MOU, cooperative agreement, etc.)?

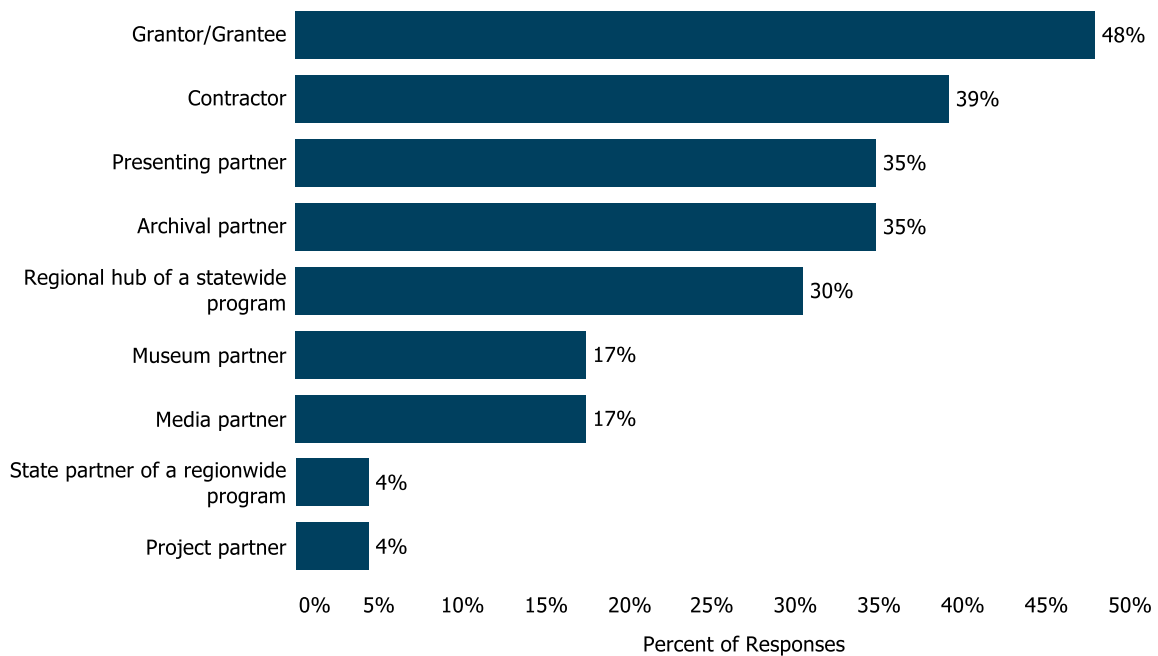
N = 38



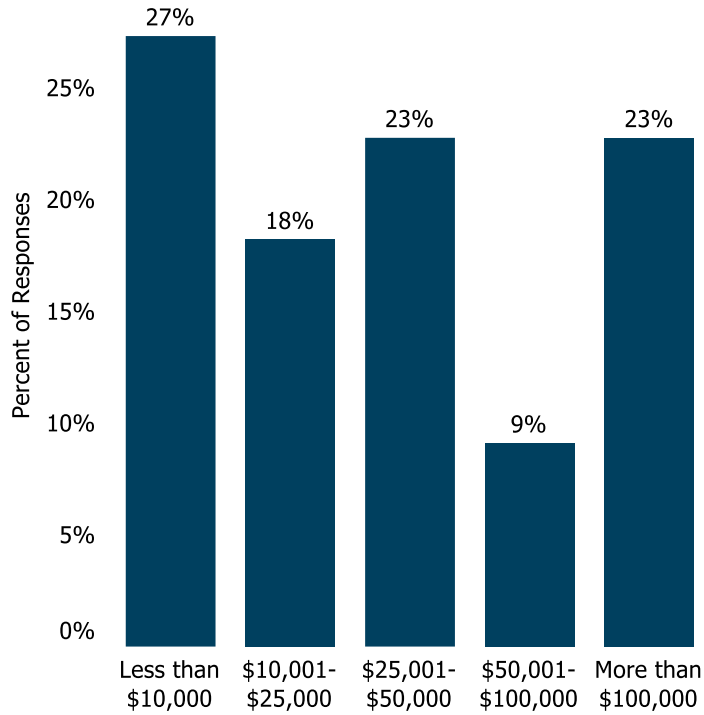
**39) With which of the following organization types does your program have formal partnerships?
N = 21**



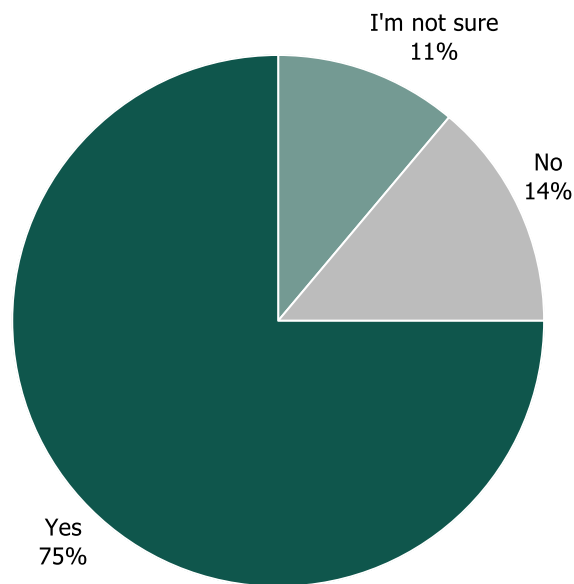
**40) What type of relationship(s) to you have with your formal partner(s)?
N = 23**



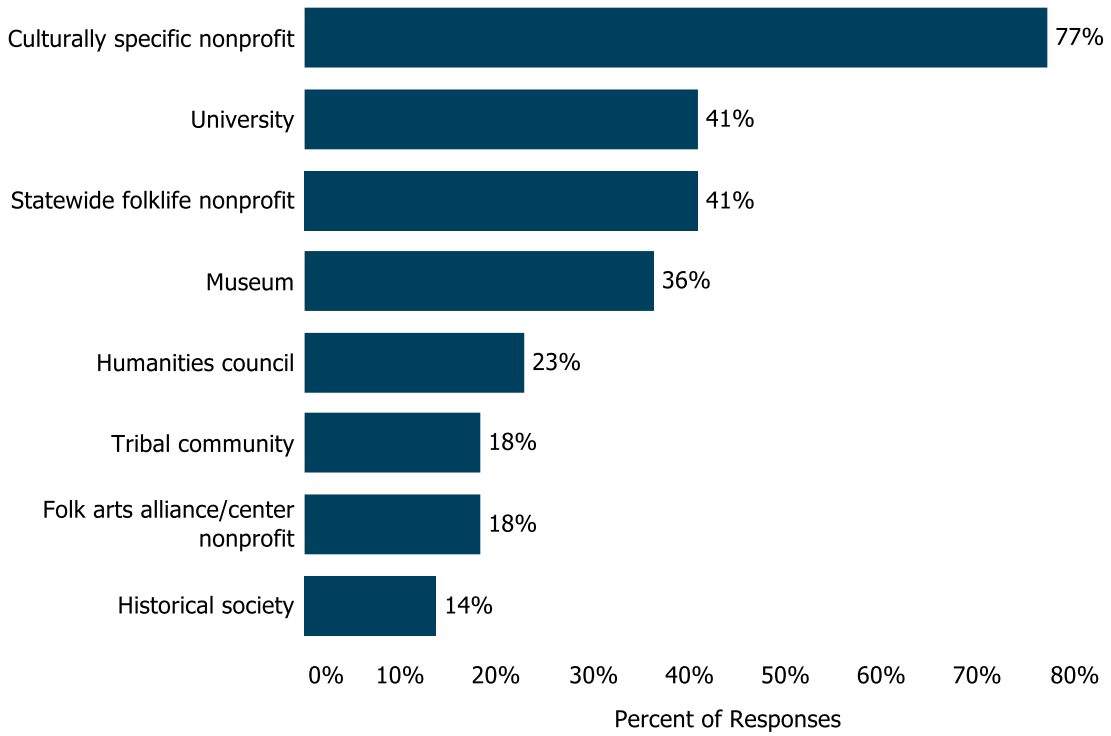
41) Please estimate the financial resources you contribute to the partnership(s).
N = 22



42) Does your folk arts program have informal partnerships (working partnerships for which there are no written or fiduciary agreements)?
N = 27



**43) With which of the following organization types does your program have informal partnerships?
N = 22**



Appendix

Numbers below correspond to survey question numbers.

8) Diversity, Equity and Training Programs

- 2016, William Winter Institute; 2019, Race Forward
- A variety of readings led by SURJ materials, nonprofit inclusion and all staff workshops with readings.
- Adaway Group
- Annual training University of Missouri
- AORTA
- CELC
- Cultural Equity Learning Community (CELC)
- Cultural Equity Training
- Donna Walker-Kuhne
- Endowment for Health
- Harp and Sword
- I don't remember name/at NASAA and online
- Kyana Wheeler, Diana Falchuk
- Merrique Jensen, Social Scope Productions, getwokekc.com
- Michigan State University Office of DEI
- Mid-America Arts Alliance
- NASAA Arts Educators PDI
- NASAA Grand Rapids
- Online training module
- People's Institute for Survival and Beyond
- People's Institute for Survival and Beyond - Undoing Racism; previously participated in Highlander Workshops
- State of Illinois/Institute for Training & Development
- T. Marie King
- Tammy Johnson- Artwork Practice
- The People's Institute for Survival
- Third Eye; Deep
- Unitarian Beloved Conversations, Mark Hicks, Meadville Lombard Theological School. Dialogue on Race has been active in Baton Rouge for about 20 years and has been done in other locales. I participated in their first series twice, their advanced dialogue, and special topics. It has had a profound impact in Baton Rouge.
<https://dialogueonracelouisiana.org/>
- United Way's Equity Challenge for Schenectady
- University of Oregon
- Virtual interactive training
- WESTAF
- WOCA
- Worked with the William Winter Institute in 2015, but no formal equity training in the last 5 years.

13) What is your current position title?

- Arts Learning Manager
- Arts Program Specialist
- Arts Programs/Percent for Art Director
- Chief Program Officer
- Cultural Development Director
- Director
- Director
- Director of Center for Washington Cultural Traditions
- Director of Folklife
- Director, Alabama Center for Traditional Culture
- Director, Community Arts Program
- Director, Connecticut Cultural Heritage Arts Program
- Director, Film & Traditional Arts
- director-dei initiatives, diverse cultures & heritage
- executive director
- Executive Director
- Executive Director
- Executive Director
- Folk & Traditional Arts Coordinator
- Folk & Traditional Arts Manager
- Folk and Traditional Arts Contractor
- Folk and Traditional Arts Director
- Folk and Traditional Arts Director
- Folk and Traditional Arts Director
- Folk Arts & Heritage Program Manager
- Folk Arts Director
- Folk Arts Specialist /TAAP Coordinator
- Folklife Director
- Folklife Program director
- Folklife Specialist
- Folklife Specialist
- Folklore Specialist
- Folklorist & Health and Wellness Specialist
- Heritage & Traditional Arts Coordinator
- Individual Artist Coordinator
- Interim director
- Managing Director
- Media and Development Manager
- Program Coordinator
- Program Coordinator
- Program Coordinator
- Program Coordinator
- Program Coordinator
- Program Coordinator- Arts in Corrections
- Program Director
- Program Director and Adviser
- Program Manager
- Program Manager

- Program Manager
- Program Manager
- Program Manager and Media Director
- Program Officer
- Program Officer
- program officer
- Program Officer
- Program Specialist for Community Arts & Folklife
- State Folklorist
- State Folklorist
- state folklorist/folk arts director
- Traditional Arts Consultant
- traditional arts specialist
- Traditional Arts Specialist

44) Do you have any other comments relevant to FAP programs that you would like to convey at this time? Write-in responses:

- As part of the community arts program, I manage the Atrium Gallery (which showcases work of folk Artists) The Folk & Traditional Arts Fellowship and Apprenticeship Grant Programs and the Rhode Island Expansion Arts Program which is a capacity building program for culturally specific organizations that support folk artists. All three programs work together as a support system for Folk and Traditional Art in Rhode Island.
- Folk & Traditional Arts field needs to be promoted to more non-Folk Arts staff in order to combat myths and bias.
- I am very optimistic about public folklore. We are at a critical time when workers like myself are retiring. A clearinghouse for upcoming job openings would be great. I worry that my replacement may not stay long enough to promote continued stability. Vetting and matching the right people with the right positions is critical.
- I hire about 4-5 contractors per year, and I also hire about 9-12 contributors per year for the MS Folklife journal. Most of my contractors do folklore-adjacent work, but it has been difficult to hire trained folklorists who live and work in Mississippi.
- I think that you also have to look at the programs offered in the field of Public Folklore, Anthropology etc. to learn about why there is a lack of diversity in this field of work. In my undergraduate and masters programs 98% of my professors were white/caucasian. And I only had BIPOC professors teaching in my masters programs but they only taught the classes that were electives or only offered a certain time each year. I say this because access to education for BIPOC is also a contributing factor in diversity and inclusion in this work and who has access to study it. You need a degree to work in most of these positions, while BIPOC peoples are already doing ethnographic work, oral history, preservation within their communities without a degree. Also, when you do not see yourself represented in the field of public sector folklife jobs. It can be difficult in many ways for BIPOC to make space for themselves in a white dominant academic and job space. You must also think about considering community members, cultural bearers, traditional artists as candidates for these roles. Nevertheless, we are here and I'm glad this is a survey to allow voices to share thoughts and ideas to consider for this data capture.

- I tried to explain this before but, while our budget is large, all but \$20,000 of that budget is legislatively mandated to be awarded as grants each year. So we really have barely any funding to actually do our own programming or fieldwork, but we do have a fairly large amount of funding to distribute to grant program applicants.
- Keep in mind that infrastructure as commonly understood is vastly different between the coasts, urban areas, the South, and the Northern Great Plains. There is a lack of 501c3 organizations in the area and it would be enormously helpful if NEA [National Endowment for the Arts] funds were lax enough for an agency to work with or grant funds to non-501c3 organizations without impacting match requirements. Lack of infrastructure in New York, for instance, is vastly different than lack of infrastructure in North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Wyoming, etc.
- Most of the independent contractors I contract with recently do identify as public folklorists, but over the years, I've had many that were in affiliated fields. It depends on the subject and scope of the fieldwork.
- My Folk Art Program is potentially at risk due to our state budget crisis.
- Not at this time
- Our Folk & Traditional Arts Program is completely dependent upon receiving NEA SAA FTA partnership funds. My FT position is not paid for out of that, but it is NEA funds. I am able to conduct my work, and I do believe successfully, because of the old and new relationships with individuals and organizations in the state. Without those, it would be impossible to have a solid FTA Program.
- Our folk arts programming and fieldwork are implemented via our regional partner organizations.
- Our program, based at our SAA, is a partnership with the Folklife & Traditional Arts program at our flagship university's museum. They hold folklife exhibits, public programs, publish, etc.
- We had 2 FT folklorist positions from 2002-June 2019. It remains unclear whether the 2nd position will be filled again, or not. The SAA may allocate it to another program or to a social media/website/marketing position instead. There is steady pressure for the remaining position to increase services to the agency in more generalized capacity such as outreach/collaboration with underserved, accessibility, diversity/equity issues and initiatives. Remains to be seen.