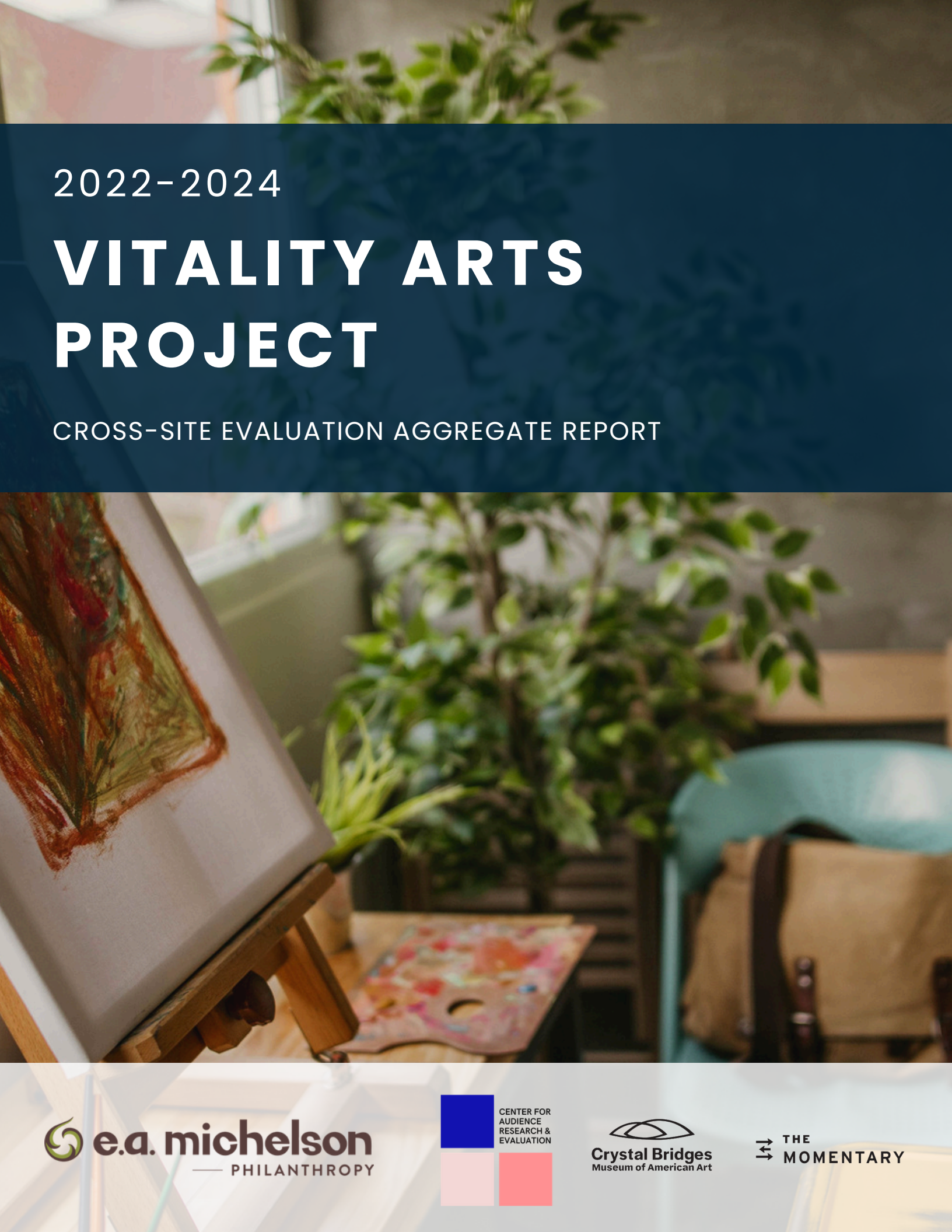




2022–2024

VITALITY ARTS PROJECT

CROSS-SITE EVALUATION AGGREGATE REPORT



CONTENT

Project Background	03
Methodology & Sample	04
Summary of Findings	08
Findings	
Motivations	11
Experience Ratings	13
Wellbeing Outcomes	16
Connection with the Museum	22
Suggestions for Improvement	24
Favorite Aspect	27
Demographics	31
Appendix	
Survey & Interview Instruments	33
Bibliography	42

PROJECT BACKGROUND

In 2022, E.A. Michelson Philanthropy launched the **Vitality Arts Project for Art Museums**¹, a funding initiative focused on providing programming for older adults. The foundation stated that “this new initiative will help art museums strategically reframe their relationships with older adults – to understand them as essential, competent, creative and contributing participants in the life of the museum – and to create Vitality Arts programs designed for them.” Each funded museum provided at least six workshops, each lasting at least eight sessions.

The **Center for Audience Research & Evaluation**² (CARE), based at Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, led a cross-site evaluation of this initiative, which included 25 museums across two funded cohorts. The evaluation of the public workshops included survey and interview methods, and measured whether the Vitality Arts workshop series met the foundation’s goals across the cohorts, and determined what, in particular, attributed to the programs’ outcomes. Built into the evaluation design for the first cohort was the concept of rapid reporting, enabling each museum access to relevant workshop data that would enable ongoing learning and quick decision-making.

“Overall, across all demographic groups, people are living longer and staying mentally and physically healthy as they age. Yet the number of inspiring programs and activities for older adults is not expanding at the same rate.

Investing in these creative aging programs is about recognizing this major demographic shift, and leveraging the power of art and art museums to do so.”

-Ellen Michelson
July 26, 2022 Press Release

¹ <https://eamichelsonphilanthropy.org/vitality-arts/for-art-museums/>

² <https://crystalbridges.org/care>

METHODOLOGY

EVALUATION OBJECTIVES

Through surveys and interviews, CARE measured participants’:

1. Motivations for participating
2. Overall experience and the perceived value of engaging in workshops
3. Social, emotional, cognitive, and physical wellbeing
4. Perceptions of the museum as an inclusive and welcoming space
5. Demographic and psychographic characteristics

COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

To launch the evaluation in fall 2022, CARE conducted a literature scan to gain an understanding of the research on this topic conducted to date.

The process of instrument development was also informed by calls with participating museums. In these conversations, museum representatives expanded on their objectives for the workshop series and shared what they hoped the instruments would measure.

Through this collaborative process, the instruments were informed by existing research and relevant publications, but also tailored to the needs of the cohort and the foundation.

The survey and interview instruments as well as summary of the literature review are included in this report. (See Appendix)

METHODOLOGY

(continued)

1. SURVEYS & INTERVIEWS

- Workshops used a consistent survey instrument and interview protocol, which included measures to protect participant confidentiality.
- A digital and paper version of the survey were available in both English and Spanish. The survey took approximately 5 minutes and was given to all workshop participants.
- 30-minute interviews were collected with 1-2 individuals per workshop. Participants were invited to be interviewed via email and were compensated with a \$25 Visa giftcard. Interviews were collected in English and Spanish.

2. ANALYSIS

- Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic coding with the support of NVivo, a qualitative analysis software.
- Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive (e.g. percentages and means) and inferential statistics (e.g. chi-square (χ^2) and t-tests). SPSS, a quantitative analysis software, was used and results were deemed statistically significant at $p < .05$.

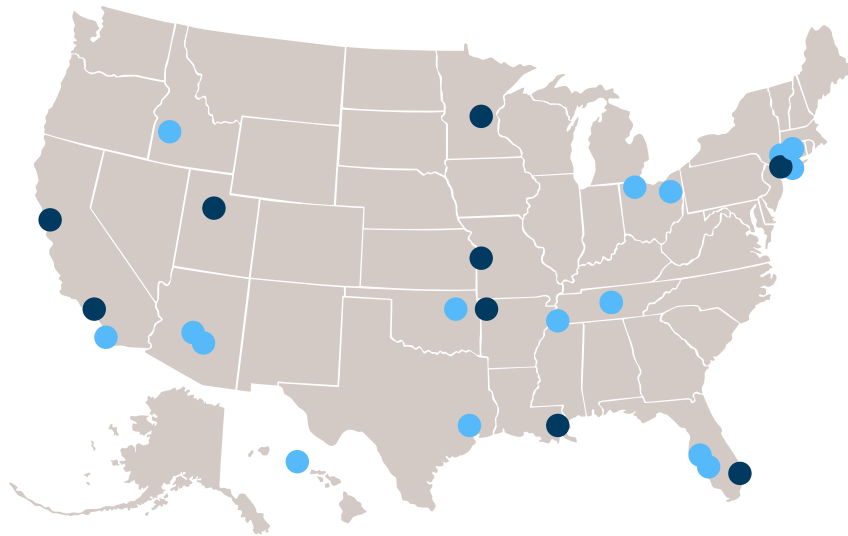
3. SITE-SPECIFIC REPORTING

- Following analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data, each site in the first cohort received a custom report synthesizing the findings, and providing demographic information of the workshop participants.
- For both cohorts, once all workshops were completed, museums received a site-specific report synthesizing findings across all of the workshops.

4. COHORT REPORTING

- Collaborative meaning-making occurred informally in cohort calls and formally through two presentations to cohort members:
 - In November 2023, CARE participated in a national convening of all 25 Vitality Arts museums to share emergent evaluation findings, and to support the discussion about museums' learnings to date.
 - In November 2024, after all sites had received a site-specific report, all 25 museums were invited to a virtual presentation of findings.

SAMPLE



9 MUSEUMS

Cohort 1
Launched 2022

16 MUSEUMS

Cohort 2
Launched 2023

COHORT #1

- Brooklyn Museum
- Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art
- Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco
- Los Angeles County Museum of Art
- Minneapolis Institute of Art
- Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art
- New Orleans Museum of Art
- Pérez Art Museum Miami
- Utah Museum of Fine Arts

COHORT #2

- Akron Museum of Art
- ASU Art Museum
- Boise Art Museum
- The Bronx Museum
- Frist Museum
- Heard Museum
- Honolulu Museum of Art
- The Ringling Museum of Art
- Memphis Brooks Museum of Art
- Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego
- Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
- Neuberger Museum of Art
- Philbrook Museum of Art
- Queens Museum
- Tampa Museum of Art
- Toledo Museum of Art

SAMPLE

Data collected between March 2023 and September 2024, across 25 museums.

132

Workshops

998

Survey Responses

637 online (51% response rate)

361 in person (response rate unknown)

153

Interviews

Workshop characteristics in the dataset

Offsite

23%

77%

Onsite

Paid

38%

62%

Free

2 hours or less

73%

27%

More than 2 hours

Weekend

12%

88%

Weekday

Morning

39%

61%

Afternoon

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Vitality Arts workshops fostered connection between participants and with the museum.

Through the Vitality Arts Project for Art Museums, E.A. Michelson Philanthropy sought to foster social connection for adults ages 55 and better. This was a critical goal, given the research that says older adults are at risk of negative health impacts resulting from social isolation and loneliness.³ To combat social isolation, program funding stated that workshops include elements to connect participants, such as frequent opportunities to meet with at least eight sessions per series, community-building components, and a final celebration. Data collected across the 25 participating art museums provide evidence that this workshop format was an effective method for achieving this goal.

While evaluation participants reported generally active social lives outside of the workshops, data suggest that the program positively impacted social connection and relationships. Participants reported gains in social wellbeing (average of 4.29 of 5), which centers on making new social connections, staying engaged in one's community, and relating to peers. Additionally, the social aspect of the workshops was one of respondents' favorite elements, with participants mentioning in follow-up interviews how they continued to connect with classmates outside of the workshop. For example, one articulated the program goal saying, "I've made friends that I still stay in touch with, which I think was part of the reason for actually supporting this initiative, which I'm so grateful for." Participants, who were often frequent visitors to the host museum, shared that the workshops increased their knowledge and awareness of museum offerings and made them more interested in attending future programs.

For further detail, see Motivations (p. 11), Social Wellbeing (p. 20), Museum Relationship (p. 22), and Positive Feedback (p. 27).



I have a much warmer feeling towards the museum in my heart. I really appreciate that they care about us older people and are making an effort to give us something like this to grow and to keep us stimulated."

³ <https://www.nia.nih.gov/news/social-isolation-loneliness-older-people-pose-health-risks>

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Vitality Arts workshops impacted participant wellbeing, with even greater gains reported by individuals with incomes under \$100,000 or those identifying as BIPOC.

Fostering wellbeing was identified as a primary goal of the workshops by the initial funding as well as host museums. This study drew on measures developed by the [Humanities and Human Flourishing Project](#) at the University of Pennsylvania to study participant wellbeing across cognitive, emotional, social, and physical domains. To understand the extent to which these outcomes were appearing across participant experiences, data analysis included comparison by demographic and workshop characteristics.

Participants reported increased wellbeing across all survey items, the majority of items averaging over 4 on a 5-point scale. The highest gains were reported in cognitive wellbeing (average of 4.65 of 5), where participants rated the extent to which workshops provided an opportunity to try new things, offered intellectual stimulation and, increased participants' art knowledge. Physical wellbeing received the lowest average at 3.94, likely corresponding to the kinds of workshops available in the dataset, which included only a few movement-based workshops.

When comparing across demographic and workshop characteristics, statistical differences emerged providing evidence of greater impact among an already positive experience. Race and income (specifically individuals identifying as Black, Indigenous, or a Person of Color and those with incomes under \$100,000) correspond with greater gains across all four domains of wellbeing. Those with lower education levels or individuals reporting a disability reported increased social and physical wellbeing because of the workshops. Finally, free and offsite workshops appear to have greater wellbeing outcomes than their paid or onsite counterparts. Altogether, these statistically significant differences for groups who have been historically underrepresented in museum visitation indicate the benefits of Vitality Arts workshops in a museum's portfolio of programs. Further research with a sample less familiar with the museum would be helpful in understanding the potential for impact.

For further detail, see Wellbeing Outcomes (p. 16) and Appendix sharing the survey with corresponding literature (p. 33).



I love it. I came away with a sense of community and I've made friends and I've learned a lot more things about art. I got to see the museum. I got to see other ways of expression. I mean, it's just been an incredible experience and one that I'm incredibly grateful for."

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Vitality Arts workshops were overwhelmingly positive experiences, with participants most enjoying series that provided structure and supported their learning.

Across the 25 art museums, Vitality Arts workshop participants rated their experience positively (90% in the top two categories of a 5-point scale). Teaching artists received the highest satisfaction ratings among the aspects included on the survey with many respondents offering additional praise for their instructor's encouragement, patience, and artistic skill. Organization and clear planning were important, with participants expressing appreciation for those elements or requesting they be emphasized. When asked for suggestions, participants shared a desire for agendas, goals, and a session length that corresponds with the needs of the art project. Participants were primarily attracted to the workshops to learn and try something new, and expressed that these program elements supported their learning.

Workshop logistics, which included survey questions on topic, workshop length, time of day, and cost, received generally high levels of satisfaction but did not pinpoint many consistent opinions on these core decisions for a museum. Rather, this suggests that participants found the offering that supported their interest and schedule. Across responses, these data provide the following considerations when planning future workshops:

- Workshop topic: Some respondents chose topics because they had existing knowledge whereas some gravitated to workshops that were a completely new artform or topic. However, topic was also identified as the number one thing that would dictate future workshop participation. Museums should clearly communicate information about the workshop artform, any additional program goals such as social connection, and the level of prior knowledge required, if any.
- Length/Time/Cost: Respondents expressed preferences for a range of program characteristics, with no single solution identified. One theme true across museums was the request that programs end before dark to enable car or public transit travel during daylight hours.

For further detail, see Experience Ratings (p. 13), Participant Recommendations (p. 24), and Positive Feedback (p. 27).



I thought the instructors were fabulous. I was really impressed with the quality of their presentations, the quality of their teaching. These instructors knew how to teach and that meant a great deal."



There was no pressure to be perfect."

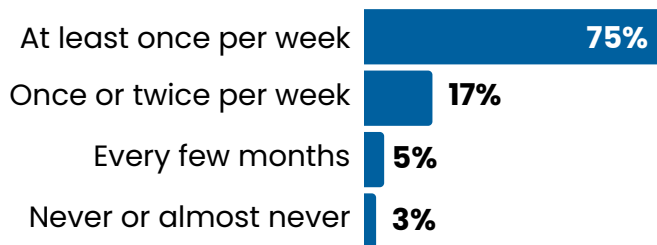
FINDINGS

WHAT MOTIVATED PARTICIPANTS TO CHOOSE VITALITY ARTS WORKSHOPS?

Vitality Arts workshop survey respondents represent an active population. Prior to registering for the workshop, **75% reported participating in social activities at least once a week** and the majority have visited a museum or had another cultural experience in the past few years. Participants were motivated to attend Vitality Arts workshops because they wanted to **try something new and to learn**.

Engagement in Social Activities

n= 912



Social Activities in Past Few Years

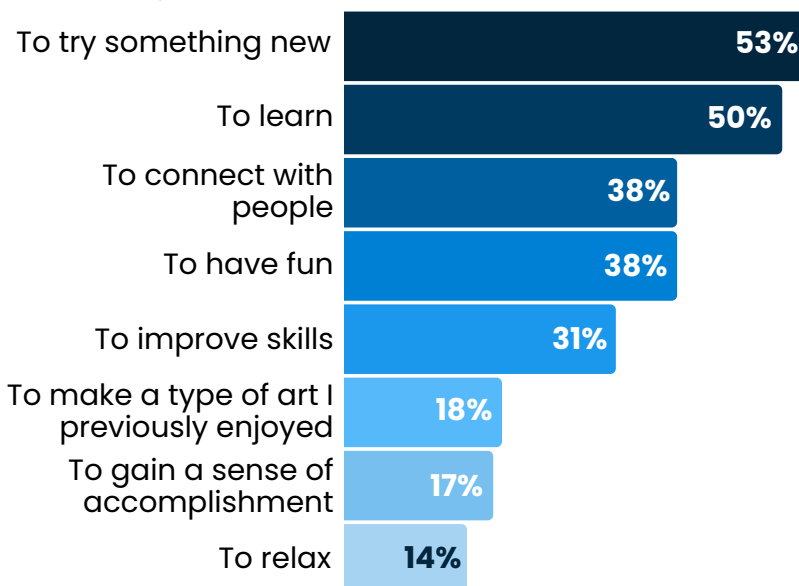
n= 907

87% Museums

- 76%** Zoos, aquariums, botanical gardens
- 71%** Theater performances or films
- 65%** Musical performances
- 61%** Fairs and festivals
- 61%** Historic site visits or tours

Motivation for Workshop Participation

n= 903



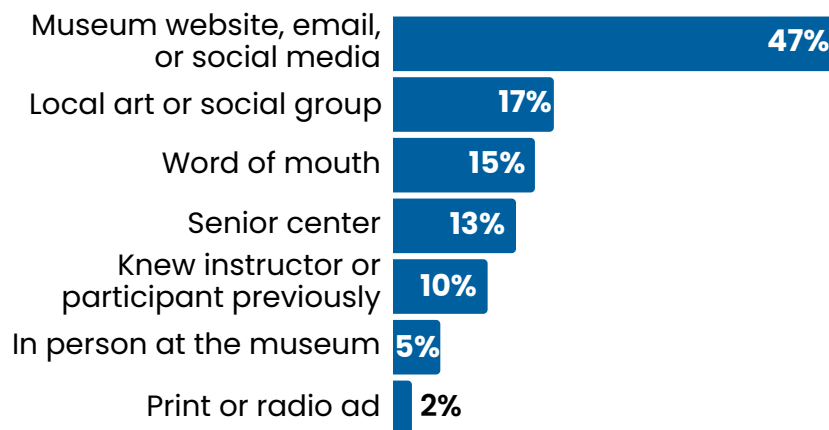
“*I love the whole process of being a student. I love the whole process of learning and collaborating and especially when it deals with the arts. So I took that class and I took another couple of classes around in the area at other arts organizations just to, you know, get my feet wet and be involved.*”

WHAT MOTIVATED PARTICIPANTS TO CHOOSE VITALITY ARTS WORKSHOPS? (continued)

Interviews shed light on how this active group heard about the workshop and the role it played in their social calendars. The majority of interview respondents **learned about the Vitality Arts workshops through museum-related channels** (website, email, social) signaling an existing connection to these institutions.

Methods for Hearing about the Workshops

n= 129



*"I heard about the workshops because I'm a **member** and therefore I get a weekly automatically generated email of what's going on... I am constantly on the lookout for ways to turn my hobbies and interest into social moments because I'm trying to get to know people. And this seemed like a great way to refresh basic art skills."*

While many interviewees looked for art experiences in their free time, they also spent leisure time being active through group fitness classes, pickleball leagues and gardening clubs; connecting with community through support groups and volunteering; and learning about topics outside the arts such as computer class and book club. **Only a quarter of interviewees reported focusing on arts activities in their leisure time** which suggests museums can further their engagement with adults 55+ by partnering and weaving art into other contexts and content areas. This also aligns with research stating that adults are staying more mentally and physically active than previously considered.

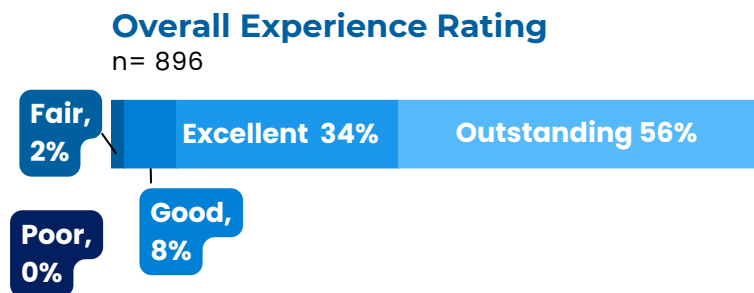
"My career was basically gardening, and I do what I can with that. I'm 69, and we've been retired, both of us, for some time. We try to keep busy. This seemed like a very fascinating way to learn, and it's something we want to pursue. The whole idea of doing these types of workshops is good for our brains."

"I have never done a workshop like this before. Other things that I do is participate in the Lifelong Learning Institute through the university, which provides classes and other learning opportunities for older adults."

HOW DID PARTICIPANTS RATE VITALITY ARTS WORKSHOPS?

OVERALL EXPERIENCE

Overall, the workshops were highly rated, with **90%** of participants rating them "excellent" or "outstanding".



All I can say is thank you. Whoever started doing these workshops, I thank them. Otherwise, in retirement, I had no idea what I was going to do. Sitting on the couch wasn't my thing. And, working on the yard is great, but this just took it to another level. I feel like a teenager again, to be honest. Emotionally, it's just been wonderful."

SATISFACTION WITH WORKSHOP ASPECTS

On the survey, participants were asked to rate their satisfaction with the following aspects of the workshop: length, time of day, topic, teacher and cost. Interview respondents provided context for what impacted their satisfaction.



Satisfaction with Teaching Artist

n= 874



Teaching Artist satisfaction ratings were the highest rated aspect among all workshops (94% rating 4 or 5). Interview respondents shared the qualities that contributed to success, including: encouragement, patience, adaptability, planning and structure, good demonstrations, and artistic skill.

He could relate to all levels. There were all levels of artistry in there. So he could be in depth with a real artist and basic like with me, where I understood but didn't feel patronized."

She was super prepared. She had everything organized for us. And, she had thought through alternative things we could do. I have a lot of arthritis, and she was really respectful and and was great at helping me kind of work around stuff."

HOW DID PARTICIPANTS RATE VITALITY ARTS WORKSHOPS? (continued)

SATISFACTION WITH WORKSHOP ASPECTS

(1-5 Satisfaction Scale)

■ 1 - Not at all satisfied ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 - Extremely satisfied

Satisfaction with Workshop Topic

n= 880



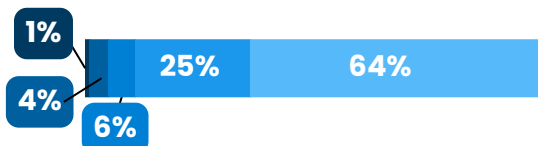
“The topic was great and that was the same class I just took at the college. So it was perfect for me because I already knew a little bit about acrylic painting.”

“I have never used those techniques before... and that's what I really enjoyed about it: just completely new techniques.”

35 different workshop topics and artistic media were represented in the dataset with generally high satisfaction (96% rating 4 or 5). Interview responses indicated that participants sometimes sought unfamiliar topics while others chose a workshop because they had existing experience. In addition, **interviews identified that workshop topic was the primary driver in determining whether they would take another workshop.**

Satisfaction with Length of Workshop Series

n= 888



“I thought the timing was just right. It was long enough that we got a lot of information, but not so long that it was redundant or we were getting bored or tired.”

Participants reported high levels of satisfaction with the length of the workshop (89% rating 4 or 5). High satisfaction was consistent across shorter and longer workshops. Interview respondents who felt satisfied with the workshop length said it was just enough to not get bored, and some wished it was even longer so they could work on their projects. This highlights the importance of ensuring program length takes pace and experience levels into consideration.

“I always felt like we were a little bit short on time. Once I started making [the art], we were rushing to sort of finish and get out of there.”

HOW DID PARTICIPANTS RATE VITALITY ARTS WORKSHOPS? (continued)

SATISFACTION WITH WORKSHOP ASPECTS

(1-5 Satisfaction Scale)

■ 1 - Not at all satisfied ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 - Extremely satisfied

Satisfaction with Time of Day

n= 888



“10:30 to 12:30 is after rush hour, after breakfast, after the grandbabies have gone off to school or nursery. It gave us time to do the things that we have to do in the morning and then get to class without feeling hurried or rushed.”

“I'm an older woman. I have to be careful going out at night when it's dark. But I felt totally safe because 5 to 6:30 is very much daylight here.”

While the majority of participants experienced afternoon workshops, workshops across morning and afternoon time periods received high levels of satisfaction (93% rating 4 or 5).

Interview responses indicated that participants appreciated mid-morning because they were able to take care of other errands beforehand, and looked for workshops that did not extend after sunset. Discomfort with travel at night was mentioned across geographic settings, including those driving or taking public transit.

Satisfaction with Cost

n= 784

*some participants attending free workshops chose not to answer



“I'm not rolling in the dough, but [the workshops] were something that I wanted to do. I didn't find it exorbitant, especially since I'm a member.”

“It is very important for me that these are free. If I had to pay for it, I could not participate. We seniors live from the money we receive, and this is an extra we couldn't afford even if we would love to do it.”

The majority of workshops were free with high levels of satisfaction (91% rating 4 or 5). Interview respondents were of mixed opinion regarding whether cost impacted their attendance, and referenced limitations of fixed incomes.

HOW DID VITALITY ARTS WORKSHOPS IMPACT PARTICIPANTS' WELLBEING?

WELLBEING OUTCOMES

Wellbeing was included in the evaluation in order to determine the extent to which the workshops were successful at achieving the critical aim of supporting participants' cognitive, emotional, social, and physical wellbeing. Museums across the country grapple with how to implement and measure these constructs and this report's survey appendix includes further detail of these survey items and their development.

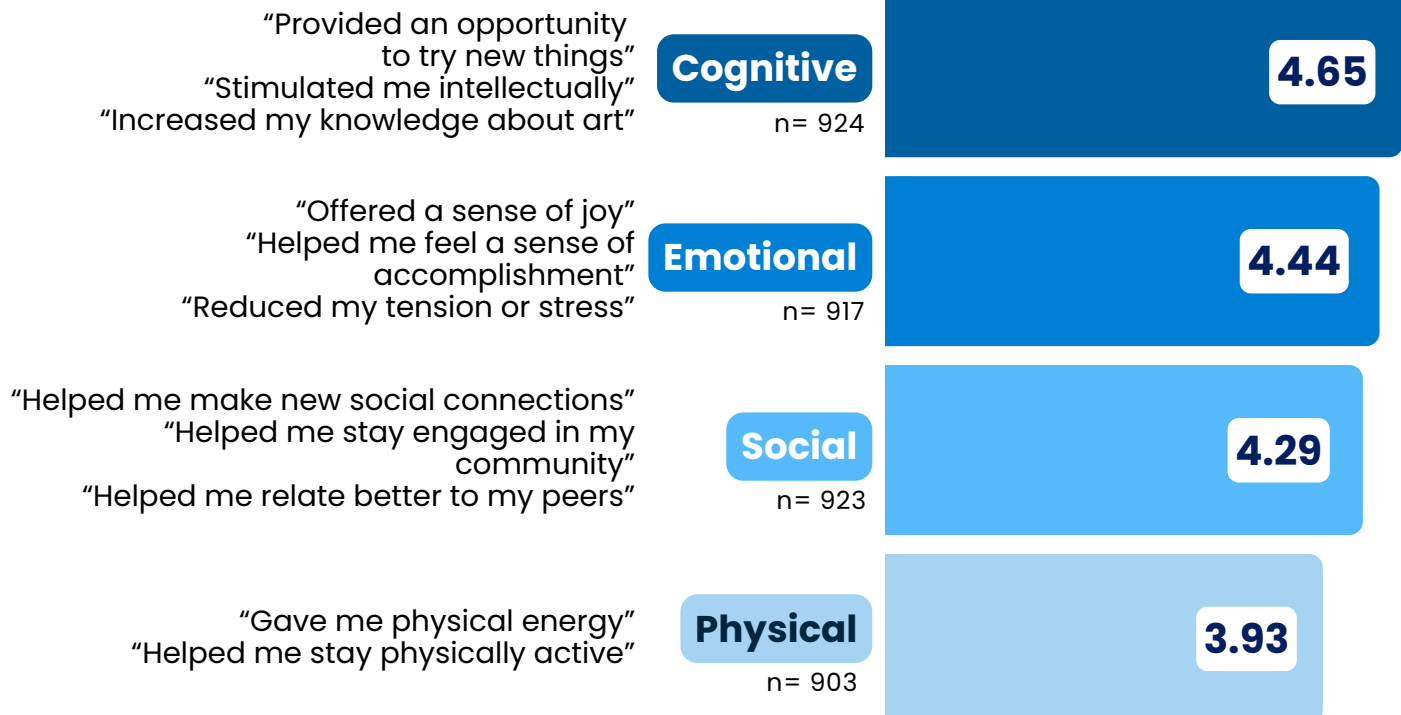
Across the items measured in this evaluation, **participants reported increased wellbeing with the highest gains in the cognitive domain.**

Responses were generally positive, even when analyzed by group characteristics.

(1-5 agreement scale):

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

These workshops...



HOW DID VITALITY ARTS WORKSHOPS IMPACT PARTICIPANTS' WELLBEING? (continued)

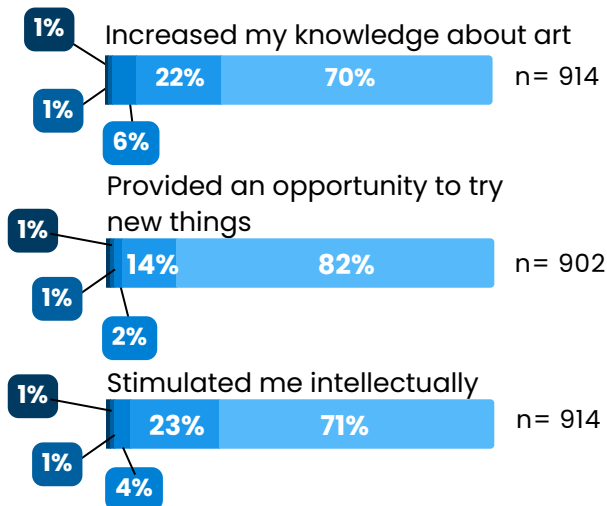
WELLBEING OUTCOMES

Responses for each item are included below across the four wellbeing domains, with subsequent pages providing further analysis comparing group experiences. While statistical differences emerged, it is important to note that even those reporting lower gains represent high levels of agreement.

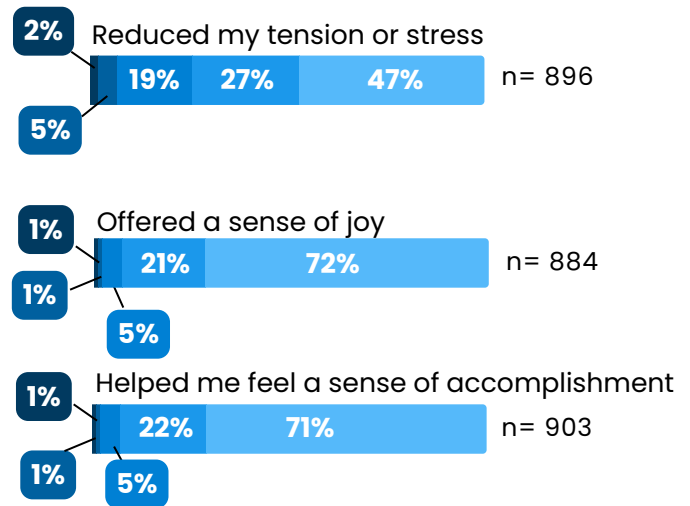
(1-5 agreement scale):

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

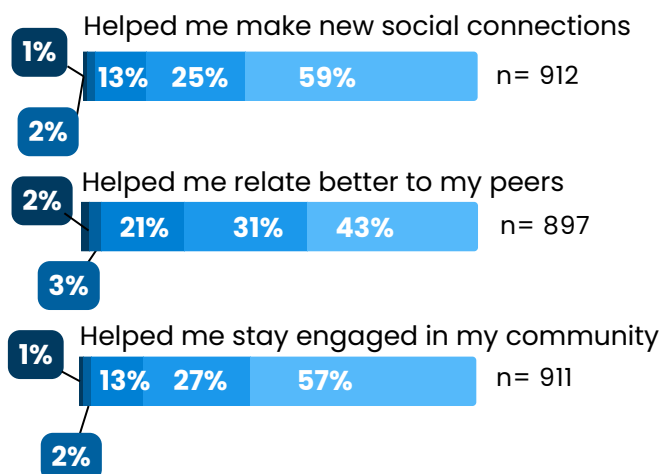
COGNITIVE



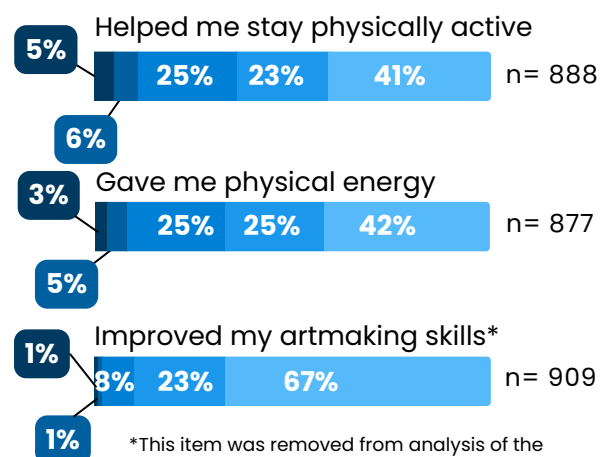
EMOTIONAL



SOCIAL



PHYSICAL

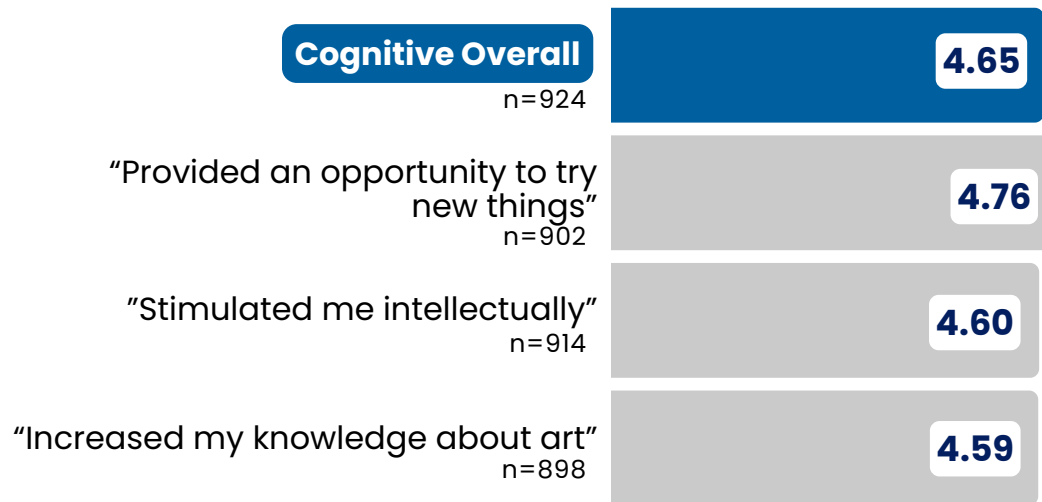


*This item was removed from analysis of the physical domain because it reduced the internal consistency of the component.

HOW DID VITALITY ARTS WORKSHOPS IMPACT PARTICIPANTS' WELLBEING? (continued)

WELLBEING OUTCOMES | COGNITIVE

The **cognitive** domain of wellbeing had the highest outcomes, with an average of 4.65 out of 5.



Participants with incomes under \$100,000, identifying as BIPOC, or attending free or offsite workshops reported greater cognitive wellbeing.

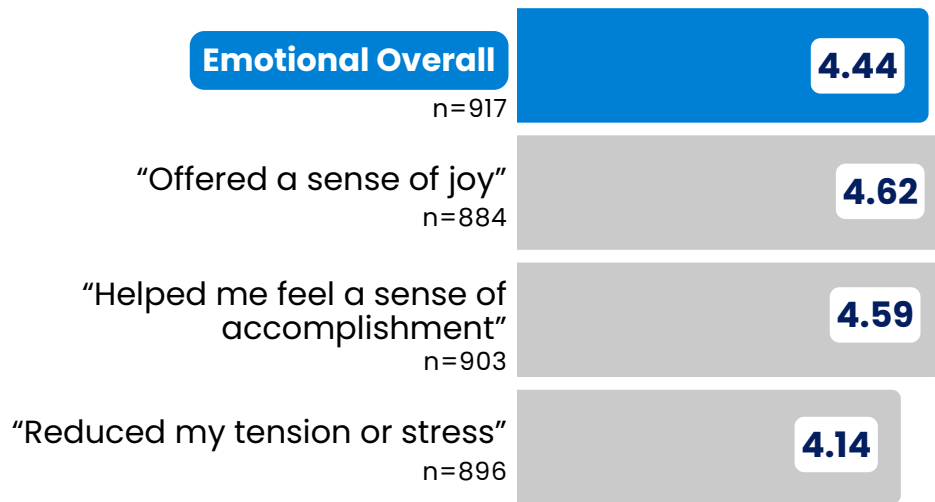


⁴ $t(145)=2.36, p=.01$
⁵ $t(759)=-3.45, p<.001$
⁶ $t(601)=4.14, p<.001$
⁷ $t(892)=-2.11, p=.017$

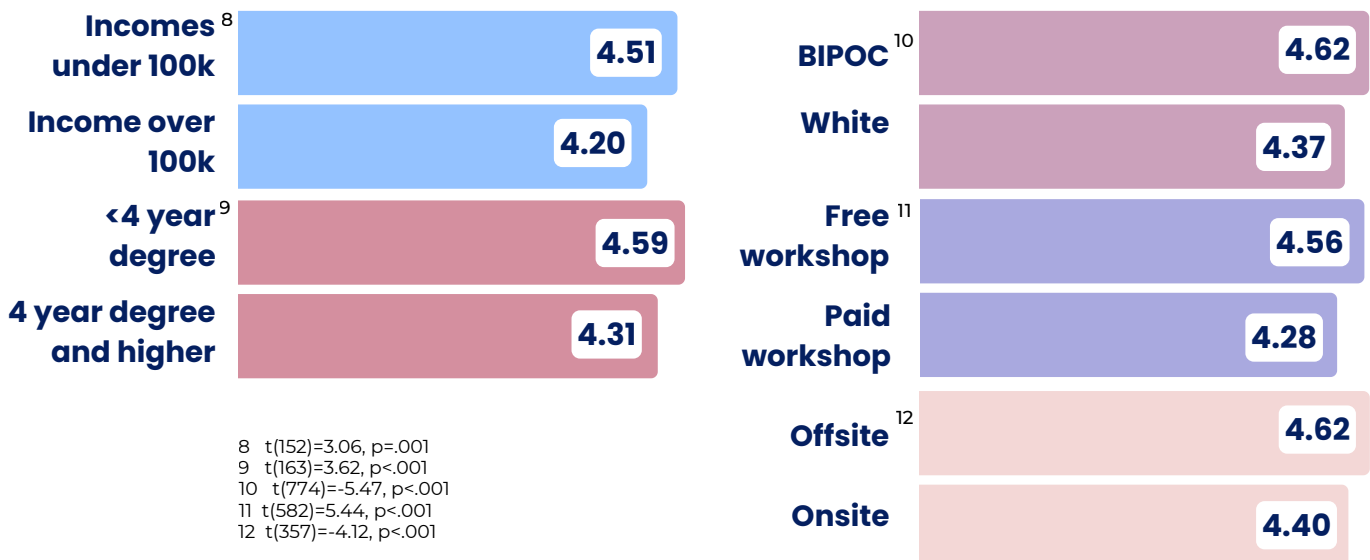
HOW DID VITALITY ARTS WORKSHOPS IMPACT PARTICIPANTS' WELLBEING? (continued)

WELLBEING OUTCOMES | EMOTIONAL

The **emotional** domain of wellbeing had the second highest outcomes, with an average of 4.44 out of 5.



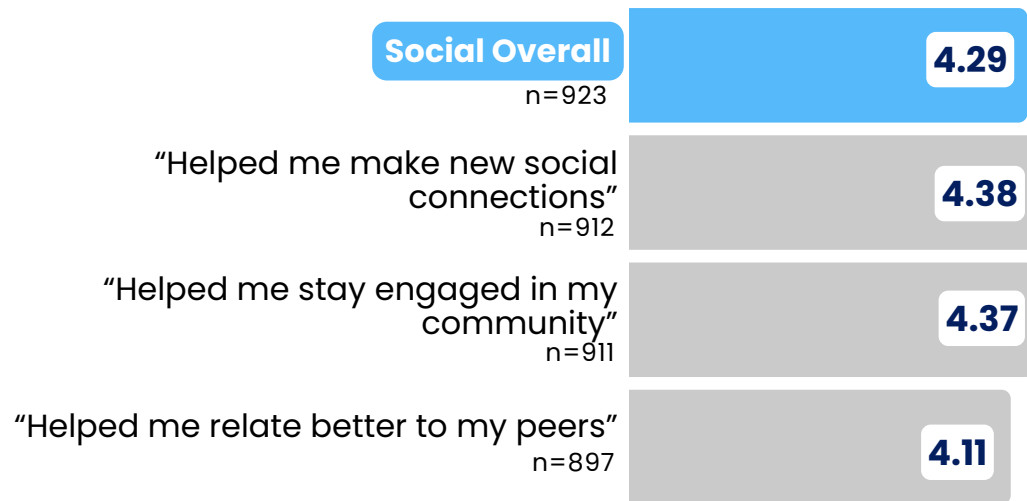
Participants with incomes under \$100,000, holding less than a four year degree, identifying as BIPOC, or attending free or offsite workshops reported greater emotional wellbeing.



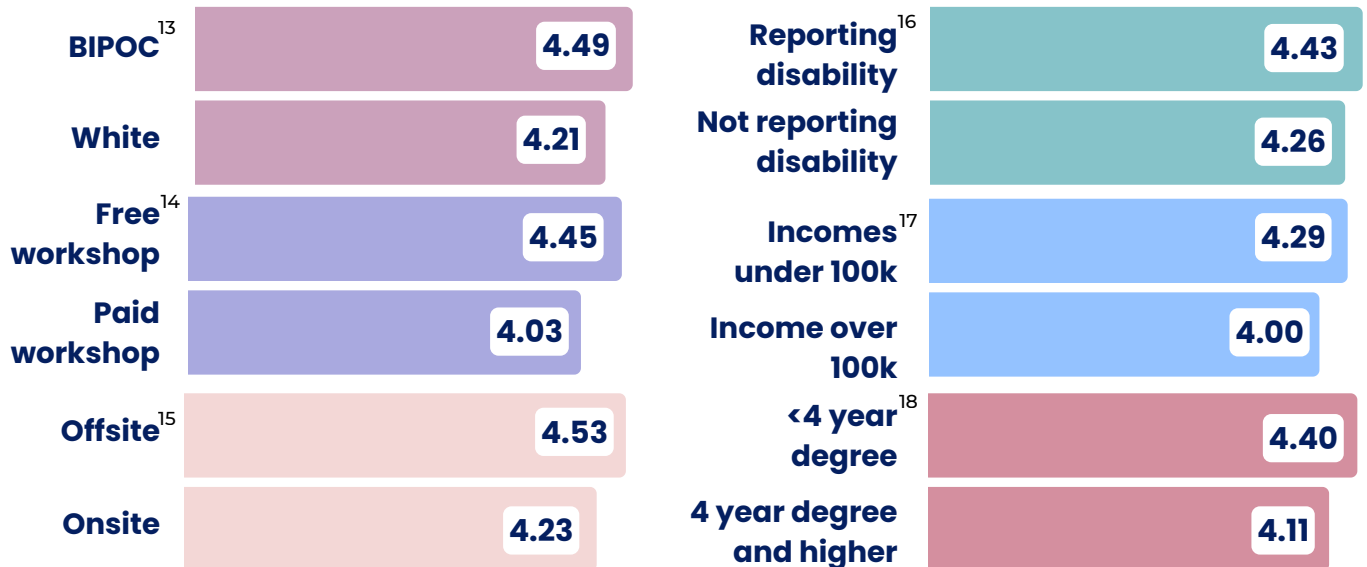
HOW DID VITALITY ARTS WORKSHOPS IMPACT PARTICIPANTS' WELLBEING? (continued)

WELLBEING OUTCOMES | SOCIAL

The **social** domain of wellbeing had the third highest outcomes, with an average of 4.29 out of 5.



Participants with incomes under \$100,000, holding less than a four year degree, identifying as BIPOC, reporting a disability, or attending free or offsite workshops reported greater social wellbeing.



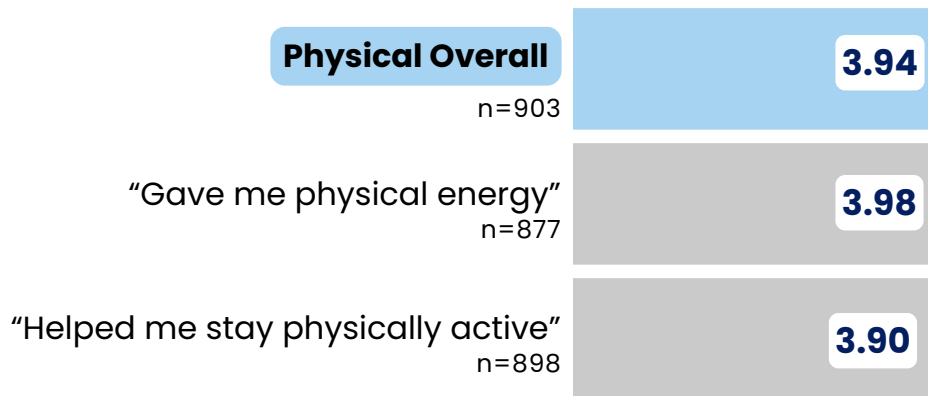
13 t(726)=-5.41, p<.001
 14 t(611)=7.435, p<.001
 15 t(334)=-4.92, p<.001

16 t(806)=2.48, p=.007
 17 t(159)=2.61, p=.005
 18 t(406)=3.10, p=.001

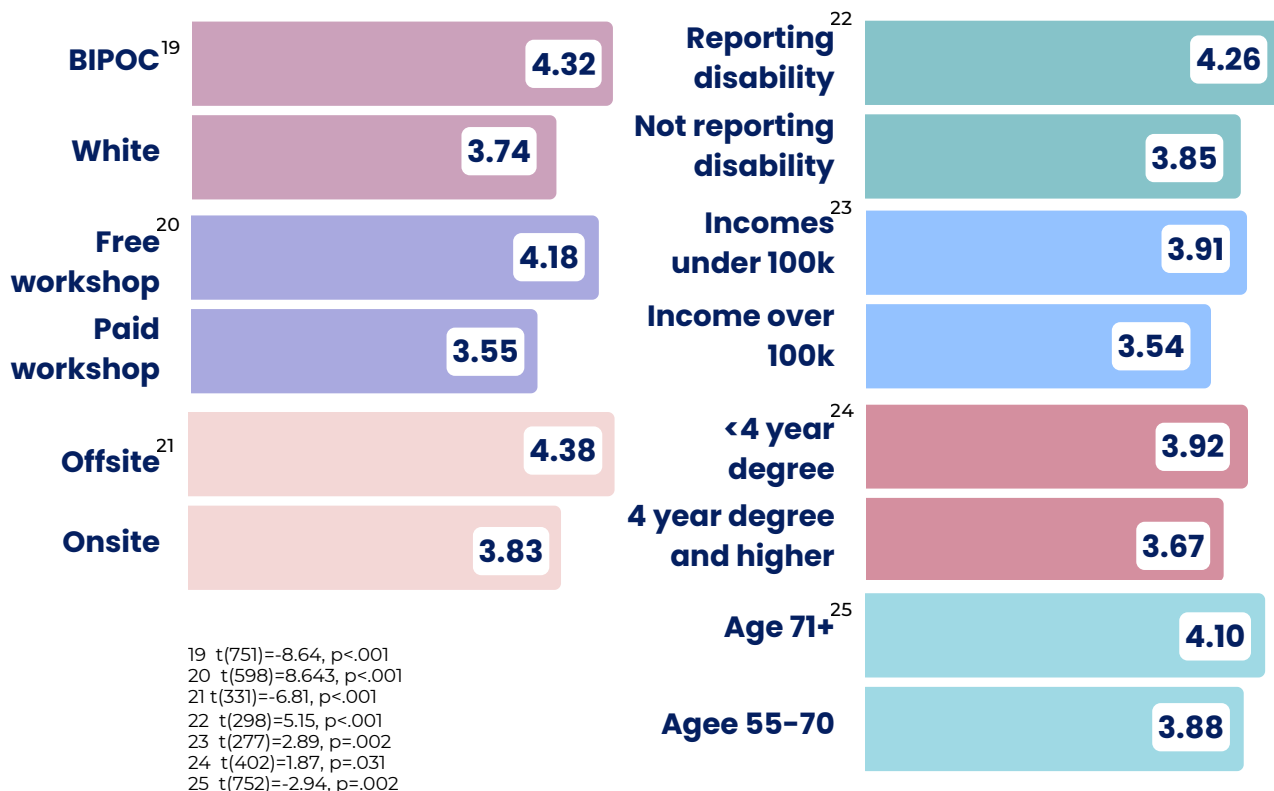
HOW DID VITALITY ARTS WORKSHOPS IMPACT PARTICIPANTS' WELLBEING? (continued)

WELLBEING OUTCOMES | PHYSICAL

The **physical** domain of wellbeing had the lowest outcomes, with an average of 3.94 out of 5.



Participants with incomes under \$100,000, holding less than a four year degree, identifying as BIPOC, reporting a disability, age 71 and up, or attending free or offsite workshops reported greater physical wellbeing.



HOW DID VITALITY ARTS WORKSHOPS IMPACT PARTICIPANTS' RELATIONSHIP WITH THE MUSEUM?

As mentioned, the majority of Vitality Arts workshop participants had active social lives prior to the workshops. In fact, **94% of participants had visited the host museum before the workshops** -- 75% having visited in the last year.²⁶ With an average of 5 museum visits per year, attendees were often familiar and well acquainted with the museum before experiencing Vitality Arts workshops.

The museum has many things that can help to develop one's mind. You can take a look at the story of each drawing you find there. When you are in the Museum it is like... going to the moon and seeing something you didn't even know existed before."

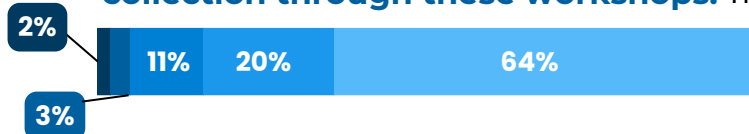
"Typically I visit to see certain exhibits, particularly I'm going because I have somebody in town visiting... You could go there thinking, 'Oh, we just could be an hour or so,' and then four and a half hours pass because you just start looking and you start getting drawn in."

Given this existing relationship, it is notable that **95% of participants reported an even stronger connection because of the workshops**. In addition, 84% reported learning about the museum's collection. Interviewees expanded on this saying they became more aware of museum programs, ways to visit for free, and specific connections between their workshop project and collection objects. In short, participating in the workshops seemed to demystify aspects of the museum and made people feel more confident and comfortable visiting in ways they had not before.

Attending these workshops made me feel more connected to the museum. n= 888



I learned something new about the museum's collection through these workshops. n= 886



(1-5 agreement scale):

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

"It really gave me a sense of what the potential is with the [museum]. I feel very much more connected to the museum than I did before."

"I'm definitely going to way more exhibitions since I started taking the workshops there. This is partly from getting a glimpse of them when we do the gallery visits, so I'm more aware of what's going on."

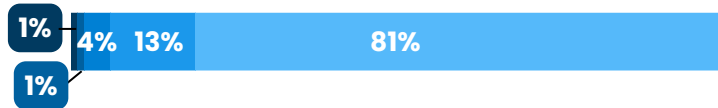
²⁶ This is true across onsite and offsite workshops. 91% of offsite workshop participants had visited the host museum before.

HOW DID VITALITY ARTS WORKSHOPS IMPACT PARTICIPANTS' RELATIONSHIP WITH THE MUSEUM? (continued)

Workshop participation also influenced respondents' desire to attend future museum programs. When asked what would impact their decision to consider another workshop, interviewees said the potential topic of the workshop was critical. Because workshop participants attended their preferred topic and were satisfied across all workshops evaluated, there is no single topic identified as the best choice. Some participants wished to try something new while others sought familiar topics. Rather, to reach a range of people, it might be important to provide a variety of topics.

I want to participate in future museum programs because of attending these workshops.

n= 867

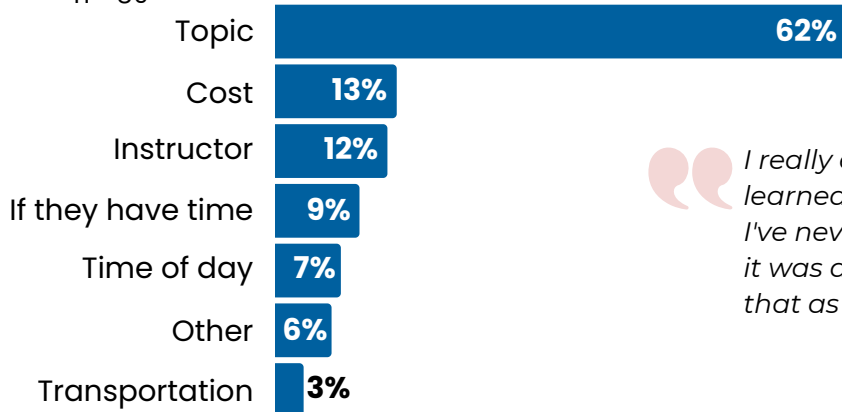


(1-5 agreement scale):

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

What Would Impact Future Workshop Participation

n= 89



I really enjoyed the techniques that we learned in painting as well as the printing. I've never done model printing before and it was a little scary at first and I so enjoyed that as well. I never used oil paints."

WHAT IMPROVEMENTS DID PARTICIPANTS REQUEST?



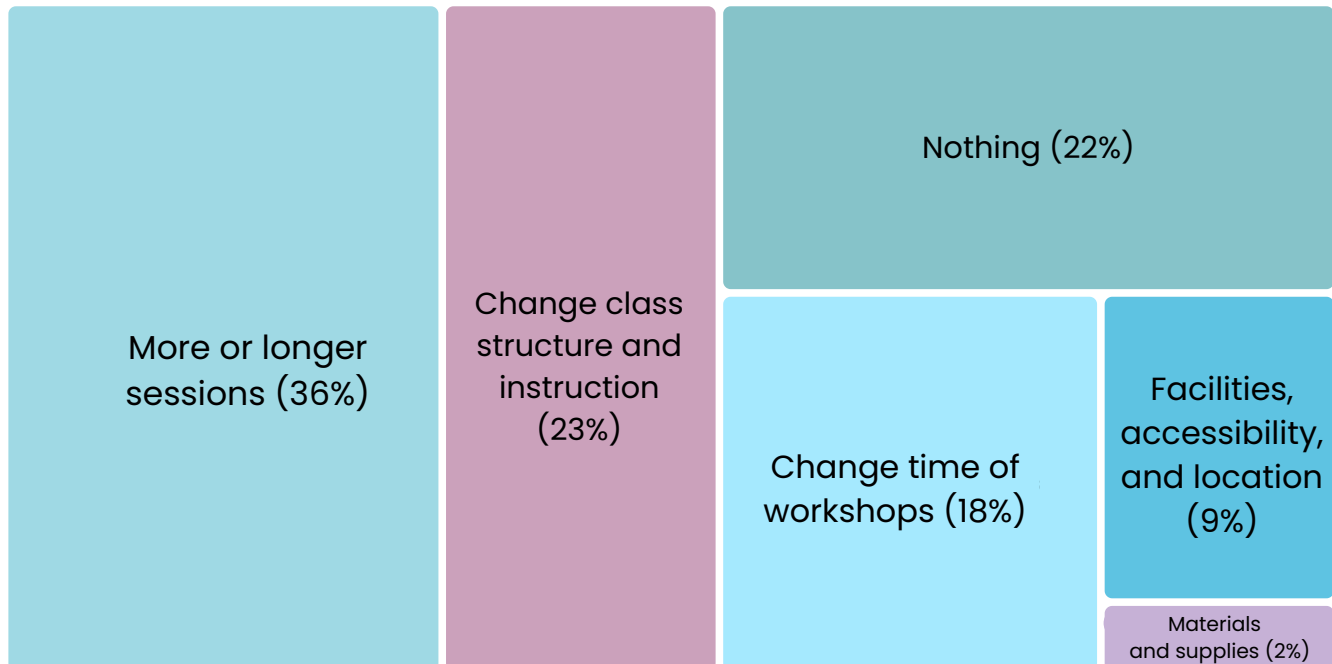
Across the surveys and interviews there were 957 comments providing reflections about workshop challenges and possible improvements. This qualitative data was coded thematically into the categories outlined below, with representative quotes provided for each category.

The suggestions mirror the overwhelmingly positive responses shared thus far, with many people saying no improvements were necessary (22%) and others reporting such satisfaction they wished to experience more. Some comments centered on changing the time of the workshops, but offered mixed opinions on whether morning or afternoons were preferable. The consistent theme for timing was the recommendation to avoid the evening.

The key area for improvement identified by evaluation participants lies in the combination of classroom instruction and amount of time to complete projects. Because some felt they were not able to complete their project in the workshop, **participants shared a desire for agendas, goals, and a session length that corresponds to the needs of the art project.**

Themes of Suggestion Feedback and Recommendations

n= 957



WHAT IMPROVEMENTS DID PARTICIPANTS REQUEST? (continued)

36% More or longer sessions

"Two or three more workshop periods to complete our projects would have been appreciated."

"There should be a follow up series (even if a cost basis is associated with follow up)."

"Sessions need to be three hours rather than two hours."

"Longer time. Didn't want to stop."

23% Change class structure and instruction

"It would have helped immensely to have a course syllabus."

"The instructor needs to create goals - long and short term, and make them more obvious to the students."

"Increase amount of time for application of techniques learned; decrease number of techniques offered; more thorough exploration of the workshop theme."

"Sometimes the pace felt slower than I wanted. Sometimes I felt there was too much talking."

22% Nothing

"Can't imagine. Every detail was attended to."

"I really can't think of anything. It was well organized, materials provided, great learning experience, fun time was had by all!"

18% Change time of workshops

"Offer in the morning vs. late afternoon. Late day traffic is precarious."

"Some live a great distance from the museum....if [the workshops] could be scheduled 1-3pm it would avoid driving in the dark."

WHAT IMPROVEMENTS DID PARTICIPANTS REQUEST? (continued)

9% Facilities, accessibility, and location

"I have a bad knee so walking to the class and walking away from the class was challenging for me."

"The chairs at the museum in that classroom are terrible for older people. They're like stools. So, I happened to throw my back out the three weeks in. I had to stand for four classes."

"The space was a little crowded, either a bigger classroom or fewer students would have helped."

2% Materials and supplies

"Maybe we can have more materials, because I know that there were limited materials and something we had to think about."

"Whatever grants they're getting include money for supplies. So I'm wondering why is it that we never have enough in the supply area?"

WHAT DID PARTICIPANTS ENJOY MOST?

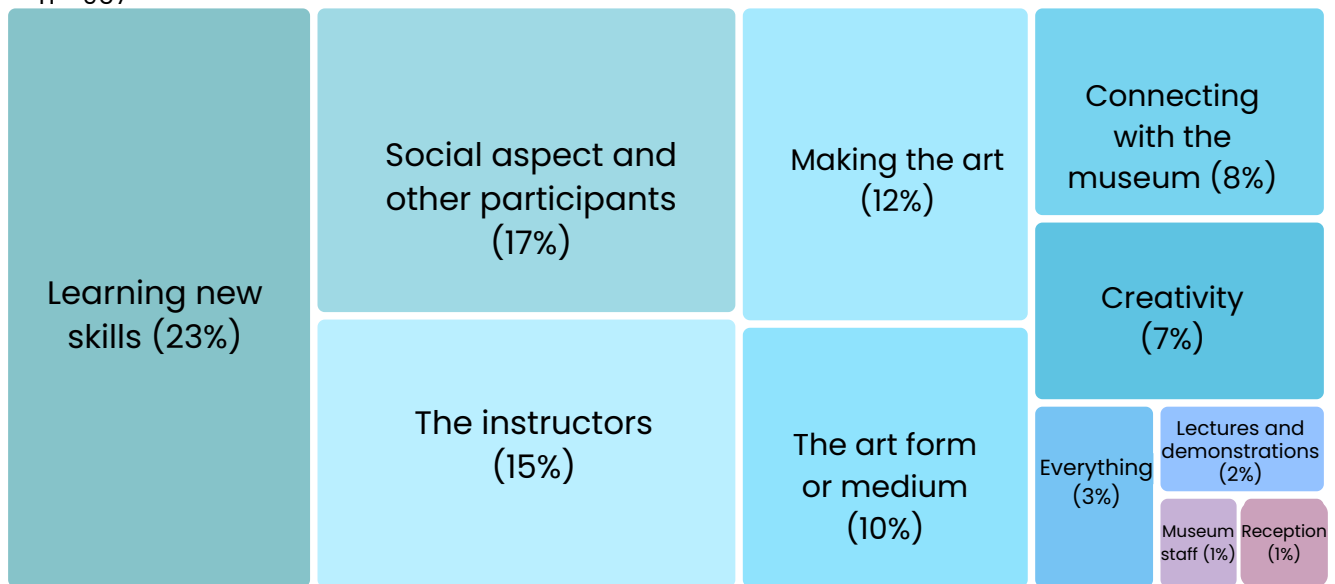


Across the surveys and interviews there were 1336 comments with reflections on participants' favorite and most significant aspects of the workshops. This qualitative data was coded thematically into the categories outlined below, with representative quotes provided for each category.

Similar to their motivations for participating, respondents enjoyed learning new skills and connecting with fellow participants and the museum. Survey comments and interviews illustrate the positive impacts of the experience, with attendees mentioning specific teachers and moments in the gallery. Workshops were often described as organized and professional.

Themes of Positive Feedback

n = 957



WHAT DID PARTICIPANTS ENJOY MOST? (continued)

23% Learning new skills

“The opportunity to explore different ways to use art to complement my writing as well as to improve my previously meager artistic skills.”

“I had no active skills, but now I am more confident.”

17% Social aspect and other participants

“My favorite moment when when we worked as a team. I like to socialize.”

“There's half a dozen of us that are still drawing together. We get together since the class ended... We just keep getting together and I suspect we're going to continue that. [The class] was perfect for socializing.”

15% The instructors

“The artist-instructors! In this workshop all the teachers were very helpful to made we all succeeded.”

“The expertise offered by the artist/instructors.”

12% Making the art

“Making things with my hands and mind.”

“Making art with my peers and great instruction and equipment.”

10% The art form or medium

“Learning more about cultural reasons for this art form.”

“For me it was identifying a medium that I can work on at home.”

WHAT DID PARTICIPANTS ENJOY MOST? (continued)

8% Connecting with the museum

"One of the best parts of this program was the access to the museum.... Having gallery talks every time before we go into the gallery was so beneficial and great when trying to understand techniques."

"Going to the museum because [the workshops] were off-site meant we saw the art in a different way because we weren't like in a hurry. We were part of a tour. We actually isolated around one or two images or pieces of art.... Very inspiring."

7% Creativity

"The creative energy! Walking the room and seeing what everyone was making inspired my own creativity."

"Creativity and helping with dexterity."

3% All or everything

"Everything! But the professional way it was organized start to finish was just outstanding. The instructors also brought such a tremendously positive and fun energy."

"No improvements are needed. Everything was perfect."

2% Lectures and demonstrations

"I loved the lectures as I am interested in art history. Loved learning new skills as I am not technically an artist. I loved it because it's fun, keeps me engaged and I've met some great folks."

"Demos and lecture from instructor. Visiting the museum and hearing about the paintings and artists."

WHAT DID PARTICIPANTS ENJOY MOST? (continued)

1% Museum staff or coordinators

"The enthusiasm of the... staff was really wonderful. It kind of set a tone."

"I loved the coordinator. She was wonderful, encouraging. And very helpful in anything we needed if we talked to her."

1% Reception, final event or show

"There was a culminating event and we had a luncheon that was provided by the museum. We all got together and had lunch and then we went to look at the exhibit."

"They've offered to take our art to make the show, and it'll be on display in the museum. They really treated it really well."

WHO PARTICIPATED IN VITALITY ARTS WORKSHOPS?

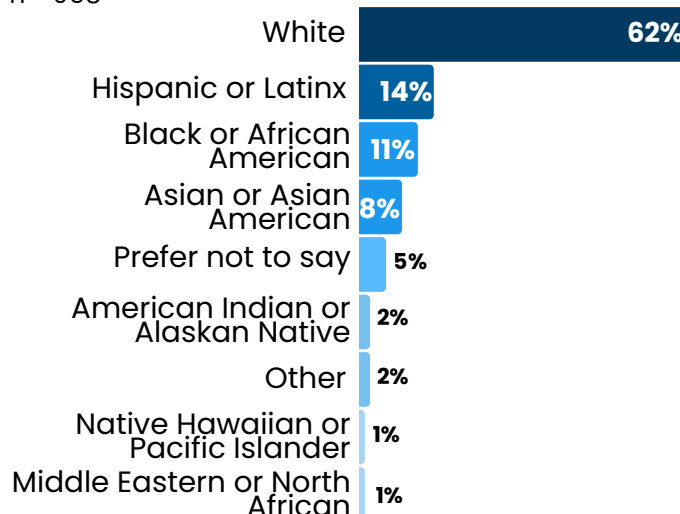


Demographic questions were included in the survey to support museums in understanding who was being reached by Vitality Arts workshops. Additionally, individual characteristics were used in the study's analyses to understand the extent to which outcomes were achieved equitably. Data shown includes only responding individuals, though all questions on the survey were optional and many included an additional "prefer not to say" option.

When compared to museum visitation collected by a national collaborative of art museums, this evaluation sample represents greater diversity in terms of race, disability, education, and income.²⁷

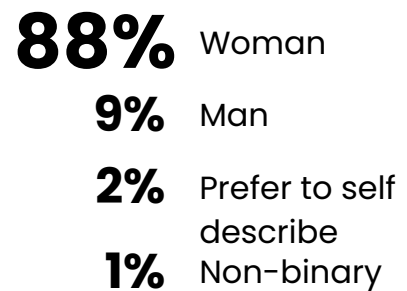
RACE/ETHNICITY (Select all that apply)

n= 958



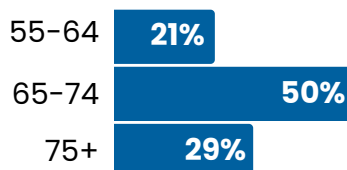
GENDER

n= 972



AGE

n= 775



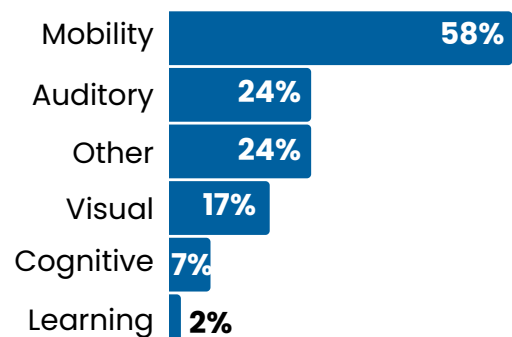
MEDIAN AGE



DISABILITY (Select all that apply)

n= 862

20% of participants self-identified as having a disability. Among this 20%:

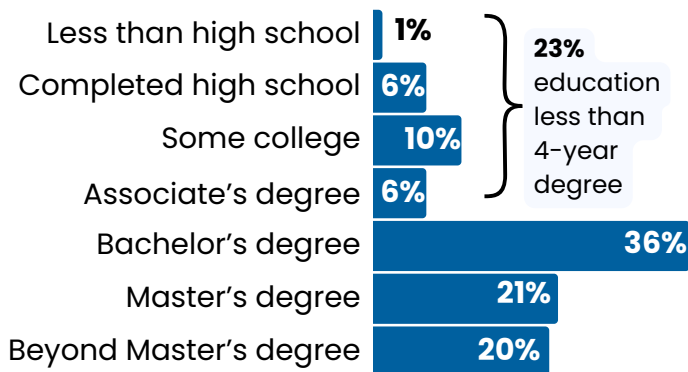


²⁷ https://understandingvisitors.org/articles/aggregate_FY24

WHO PARTICIPATED IN VITALITY ARTS WORKSHOPS? (continued)

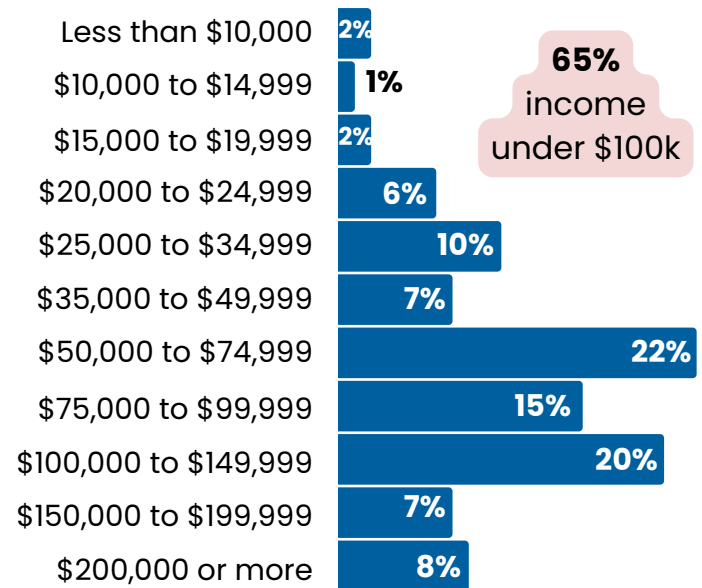
EDUCATION

n= 485



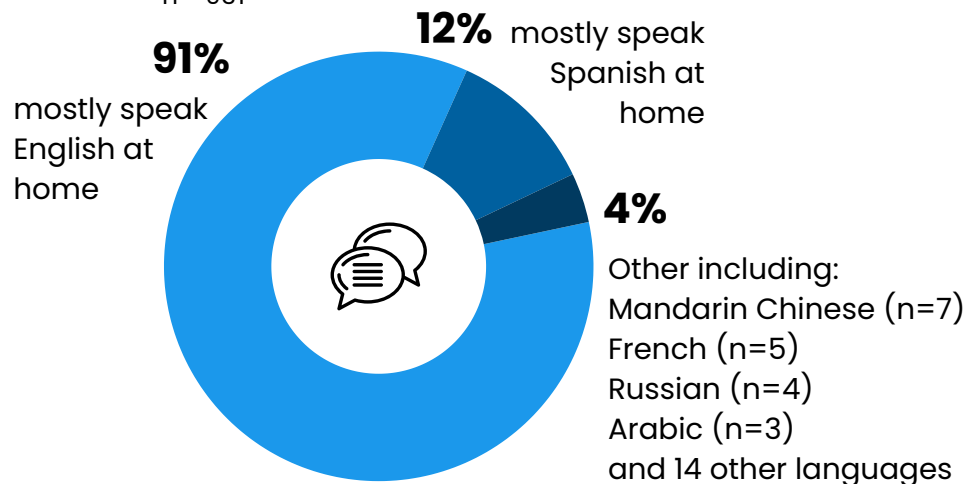
INCOME

n= 400



LANGUAGE

n= 931



APPENDIX

SURVEY & INTERVIEW INSTRUMENTS

The following section includes both survey and interview instruments, thematically organized, as well as the rationale behind including each question.

When condensed for spacing, the survey was two pages, or 10 minutes or less when taken online. Interviews were 30 minutes or less.

MOTIVATIONS

Culture Track (2021), a joint study by LaPlaca Cohen and Slover Linett, examined what inspires people in the United States to pursue creative outlets. The study gave an unprecedented understanding of what experiences people seek from art-based engagements, and determined that older adults 55+ chiefly sought to relax, have fun, and seek a sense of accomplishment. Given the importance of this study, we opted to include a question on motivations drawing on the Culture Track instrument. Our conversations with the museum stakeholders helped expand the response options to include re-engaging with an artform participants already liked or were familiar with.

Survey	Interview
Please share some of the reasons you chose to participate in the workshops? (select up to two) ☐ To relax ☐ To have fun ☐ To gain a sense of accomplishment ☐ To improve skills ☐ To try something new ☐ To make a type of art I have previously enjoyed ☐ To connect with people	What motivated you to participate in the workshops? Did you have any hesitations about participating? • If so, would you share what they were?

PREVIOUS ENGAGEMENT

Cornwell and Waite (2009) identified a number of studies that link low participation in social activities to isolation and loneliness (e.g. Benjamins, 2004; Ellison & George, 1994; Thoits & Hewitt, 2001). Suragarn et al. (2021) also noted the importance of engagement in “diverse activities”, as these activities enable new or maintain social networks with others. To understand if workshop participants were already leading active lives, we added a question about levels of social activity.

The secondary question pertains to engagement in cultural activities more specifically. Drawn from the Culture Track study (2021), this question helped us understand the different ways in which older adults engage in culture.

Survey	Interview
How often do you engage in social activities (e.g., club or association meetings, group classes, games, volunteering, social activities with friends or family etc.) ● Never or almost never ● At least once per week ● Once or twice per month ● Every few months Have you done any of the following activities in the past few years? ☐ Visited fairs and festivals ☐ Attended parks, zoos, aquariums, or botanical gardens ☐ Saw a musical performance ☐ Visited a historic site or took a tour ☐ Saw a theater performance ☐ Visited a museum (before these workshops)	Do you participate in group activities like these workshops? ● If so, what kinds of activities are they? ● How often do you participate?

OVERALL EXPERIENCE

Data on visitors' experiences in museums tends to skew positive. Our review of existing Vitality Arts Project reports and similar publications revealed that the prevalence of overly positive experiences may also be the case in programs geared towards older adults. By asking the participant to specify the Overall Experience Rating (OER), on a scale from Poor to Outstanding, it becomes possible to distinguish between experiences that are Excellent and those that are Outstanding. The OER is commonly used to gauge visitor experience in museums and has been established as a credible and stable measure (Pekarik, Schreiber, and Visscher, 2018).

Survey

Rate the overall experience with the workshops you attended:

- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Fair
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Excellent
- ☐ Outstanding

Interview

How do you feel the workshops went overall?



Image courtesy of E.A. Michelson Philanthropy

OUTCOMES

Generally, arts programming and interventions seek to produce outcomes related to mental and social well-being (Daykin & Joss, 2016). The University of Pennsylvania's "Humanities and Human Flourishing Project" explores the ways the arts and humanities relate to well-being. Project researchers Cotter and Pawelski (2021) associated 'well-being' with 'engagement in life and activities', 'having interesting and perspective-changing experiences', and attaining a 'feeling of achievement and competence'. Their research demonstrated that art museum visitation can improve visitors' emotional well-being by decreasing stress and helping people form connections with others. The New Economic Foundation developed a model of well-being with two personal dimensions and a social context and found that well-being includes "developing [individuals'] capabilities, fulfilling their potential, and leading socially useful lives" (New Economic Foundation, 2004). The importance of a multidimensional approach, including developing skills and gaining a sense of accomplishment, alongside socialization to combat isolation in older adults, has also been measured in Thomson et al. (2018).

In preparing for this evaluation, we have consulted a number of well-cited measures used in the field, such as the Warwick-Edinburgh mental wellbeing scale (WEMWBS) and the General Anxiety Disorder Scale (GAD-7). However, most of these measures were difficult to adapt in their entirety. During this review process, the Humanities and Human Flourishing Project team generously shared their survey question bank, and permitted its use in this project. We worked with them to adapt the questions in their validated codebook to align with the Vitality Arts Project while still reflecting the cognitive, emotional, social, and physical functions of well-being cited by HHF and elsewhere.

Survey

These workshops... (randomized)

(1- Strongly Disagree; 2-Somewhat Disagree; 3-Neither agree nor disagree; 4-Somewhat Agree; 5-Strongly Agree)

COGNITIVE

- ☐ Increased my knowledge about art
- ☐ Provided an opportunity to try new things
- ☐ Stimulated me intellectually

EMOTIONAL

- ☐ Reduced my tension or stress
- ☐ Offered a sense of joy
- ☐ Helped me feel a sense of accomplishment

SOCIAL

- ☐ Helped me make new social connections
- ☐ Helped me relate better to my peers
- ☐ Helped me stay engaged in my community

PHYSICAL

- ☐ Helped me stay physically active
- ☐ Improved my artmaking skills
- ☐ Gave me physical energy

Interview

As you reflect, what was the most significant thing you experienced as a result during this workshop series? What stood out the most?

- Tell me about your experience with the artmaking in this workshop.
- What was your experience with the other workshop participants?



Image courtesy of E.A. Michelson Philanthropy

WORKSHOP ASPECTS

It was important to determine if the workshop structure and logistics met the needs of the participants. Having insight of participants' perspectives on workshop length, timing, and cost of participation (if applicable) would help museum staff make improvements, and learn how to better serve older adults with future offerings.

Lastly, museum stakeholders were keen on learning how well the particular artform aligned with the participants' interests. Since the workshops will focus on vastly different forms of art, we chose to limit this inquiry to one satisfaction question.

Survey

Please rate your satisfaction with the following workshop aspects.

(1 - Not at all satisfied to 5 - Extremely satisfied)

- Length of workshop series
- Cost (if applicable)
- Timing of the workshop
- Art form
- Effectiveness of the teaching artist

Interview

What did you think of the class format and set up (length; timing; cost)?

What did you think of the artform that this workshop series explored?

What was your experience with the teaching artist?



MUSEUM VISITATION & RELATIONSHIP WITH THE MUSEUM

Museum stakeholders were interested in learning whether the workshop participants were already familiar with the museum, or whether they were frequent visitors. The question structure below was adapted from the Collaboration for Ongoing Visitor Experience Studies (COVES) instrument, a nationwide collaborative studying museum visitor demographics and experiences (COVES, 2024). Museum stakeholders were interested in learning about how the workshops changed participants' experiences or perspectives about the museum.

Survey	Interview
Prior to these workshops, when was the last time you visited the museum? ● Within the past 3 months ● 3-6 months ago ● 6 months to within the last year (Follow-up if the first three options are selected: "Not counting the workshops, how many times in the past 12 months have you visited the museum?" ____) ● 1-2 years ago ● More than 2 years ago ● Never (Follow up if 'Never' is selected: "What prevented you from visiting the museum in the past?") ● Not sure Rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements... (1- Strongly Disagree; 2-Somewhat Disagree; 3-Neither agree nor disagree; 4-Somewhat Agree; 5-Strongly Agree) ● I learned something new about the museum's collection through these workshops ● I want to participate in future museum programs because of attending these workshops ● Attending these workshops made me feel more connected to the museum	What does visiting the museum mean to you? What is your perception of the museum? Did your perception of the museum change as a result of these workshops? ● If yes, "In what way did it change?"; if no, "What is your perception of the museum?" ● How do you feel about the museum's collection following these workshops? How do you feel about seeking out more activities like this in the future (whether at the museum or elsewhere)? What would encourage you to take another workshop series in the future?



(Image courtesy of E.A. Michelson Philanthropy)

OTHER FEEDBACK

Because of the wide range of workshop structures and artforms across the twenty-five cohort museums, the evaluation tools included open-ended questions at the end of both the survey and interview. The inclusion of a space to express freely the positive aspects and challenging parts of the workshops ensures participants have the opportunity to discuss anything regarding their museum's workshops that was not covered in the developed tool, or expand upon anything they responded to earlier in the evaluation. Learning what worked and the barriers help the cohort museums plan for sustainable future programming of these workshops in the coming years after this grant.

Survey

What was your favorite part of the workshops?
(open-ended response)

How, if at all, could the workshops be improved?
(open-ended response)

Please provide any additional feedback you
would like to share. (open-ended response)

Interview

What was your biggest challenge while participating
in these workshops?

- How else might the workshops be improved?

Is there anything you haven't discussed yet that you'd
like to mention?



Image courtesy of E.A. Michelson Philanthropy

SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

We included demographic questions in order to better understand the workshop audience and differences therein. The questions are informed by the COVES instrument and align with the current US Census (COVES, 2024). The survey instructions stated that the participant may skip any question they do not feel comfortable responding to, or may choose the 'prefer not to say' response.

What is your age? _____

What is your gender?

- ☒ Man
- ☒ Woman
- ☒ Non-binary
- ☒ Prefer to self-describe: ____
- ☒ Prefer not to say

With which racial or ethnic group(s) do you identify? (Select all that apply.)

- ☐ American Indian or Alaskan Native
- ☐ Asian or Asian American
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ Hispanic or Latin/a/o/x
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- ☐ White
- ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ Prefer not to say

What language(s) do you mostly speak at home? (Select all that apply.)

- ☐ English
- ☐ Spanish
- ☐ Other: _____

Do you have a permanent or temporary disability?

- ☒ Yes
 - How would you describe the disability? (Please select all that apply.)
 - ☐ Mobility
 - ☐ Visual
 - ☐ Auditory
 - ☐ Learning
 - ☐ Cognitive
 - ☐ Other: _____
 - ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☒ No
- ☒ Prefer not to say

SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

Which of the following best describes your total household income before taxes for last year?

- Under \$24,999
- \$25,000 to \$34,999
- \$35,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$74,999
- \$75,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$149,999
- \$150,000 to \$199,999
- \$200,000 or more
- Prefer not to say

What was the last grade or year of school that you attended?

- Less than high school
- Completed High School or GED equivalent
- Some college or vocational program
- Completed Associate degree (2-yr program)
- Completed Bachelor's degree (4-yr program)
- Completed Master's degree
- Beyond Master's degree
- Prefer not to say

The survey questions are available in English and Spanish.

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