



Responses to a SurveyMonkey questionnaire issued by Cumbria Community Foundation (CCF) as part of a review of its Cultural Fund and its cultural funding overall

In addition to one-to-one consultations, an online survey was distributed in August/September 2024 through Cumbria Arts and Culture Network, Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership’s cultural network, those in receipt of grant funding from CCF’s Cultural Fund, and others.

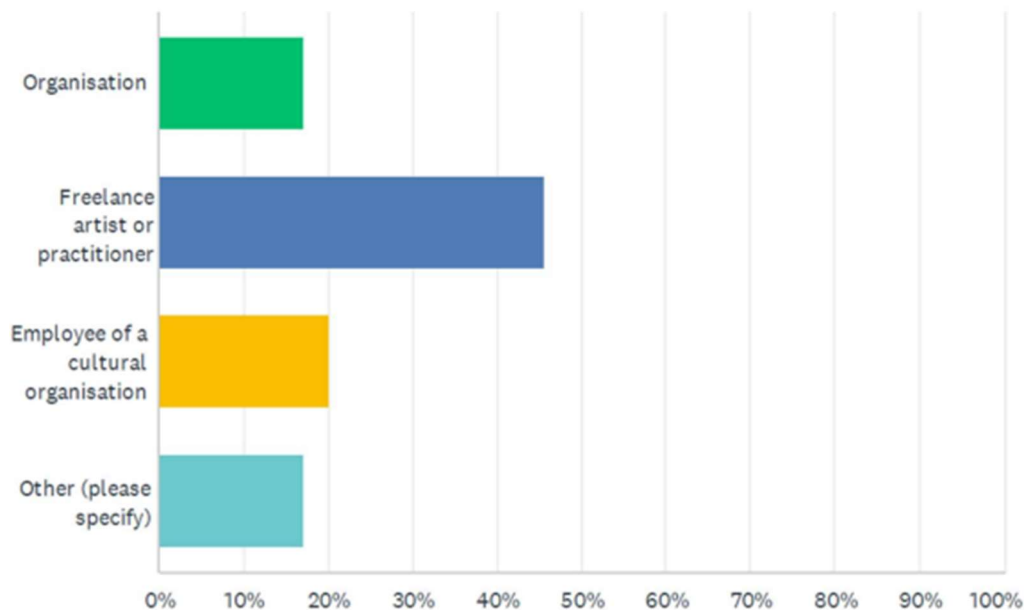
35 people/organisations responded to 20 questions. Some of these questions are answered by graph, link below, and some by text box answers given below.

These responses are mainly verbatim with a few tweaks and minor omissions.

Qs1-7 relate to organisational/personal information.

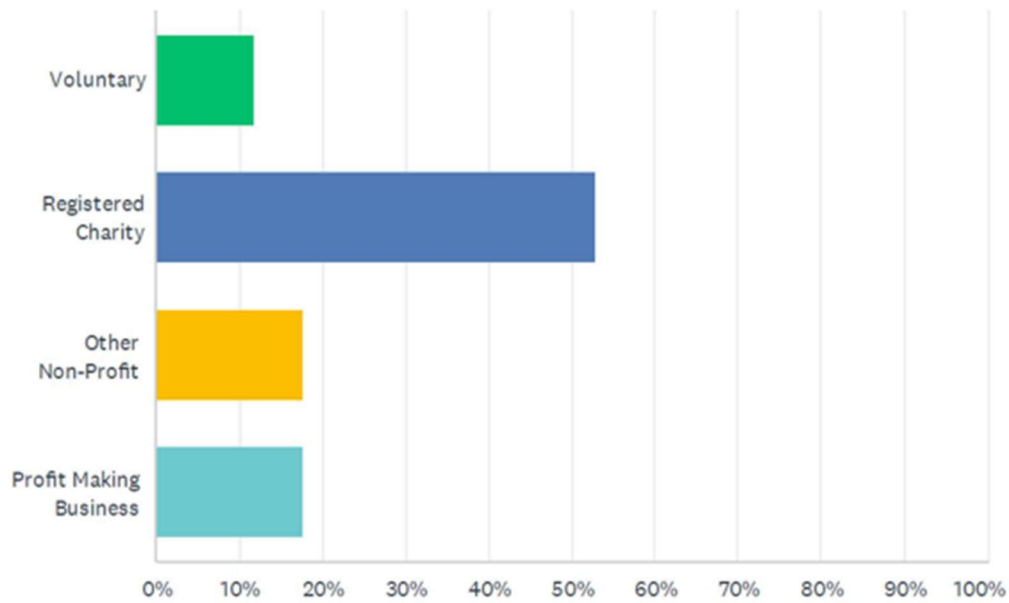
Q2 Please select if you are an

Answered: 35 Skipped: 0



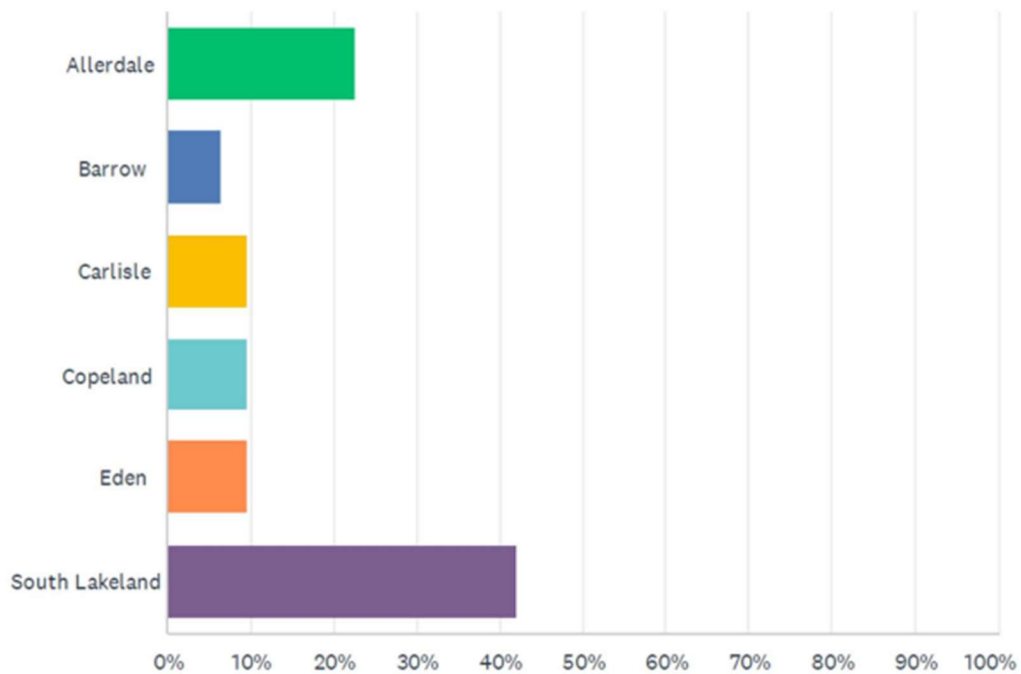
Q3 If an organisation, are you

Answered: 17 Skipped: 18



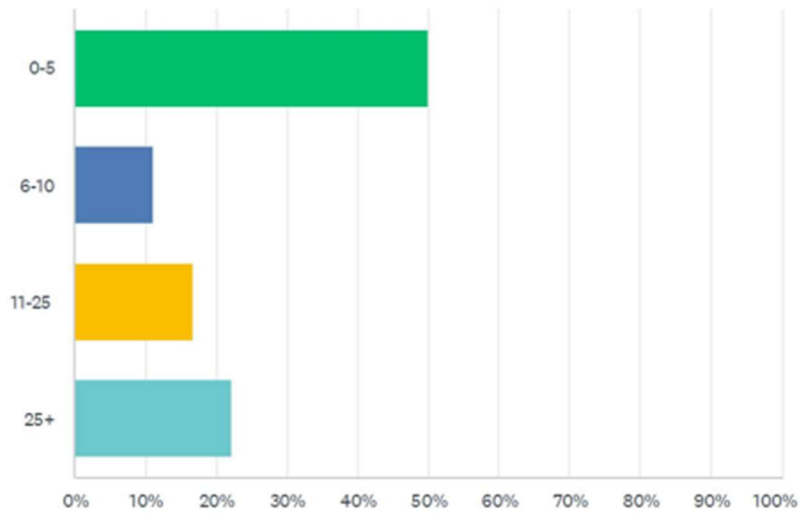
Q5 Where are you or your organisation located

Answered: 31 Skipped: 4



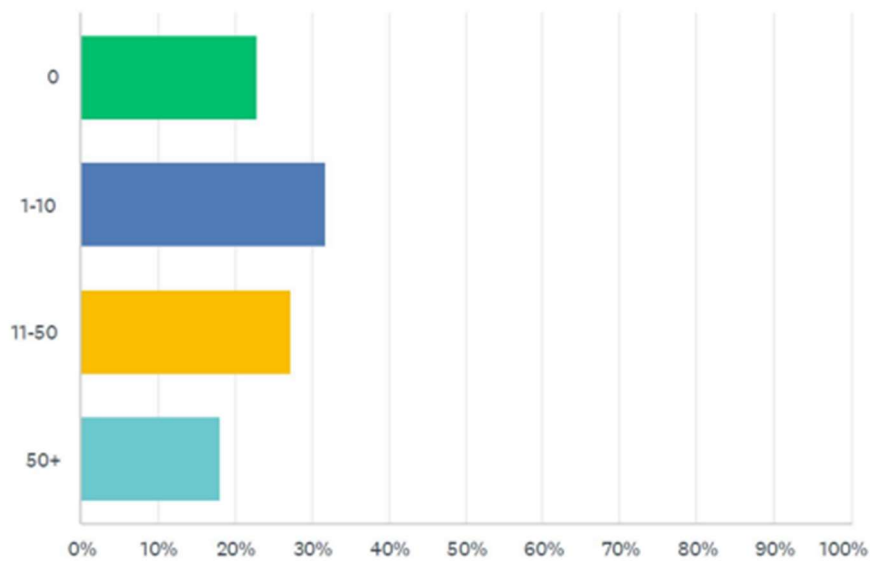
Q6 If an organisation, please outline the number of team members

Answered: 18 Skipped: 17



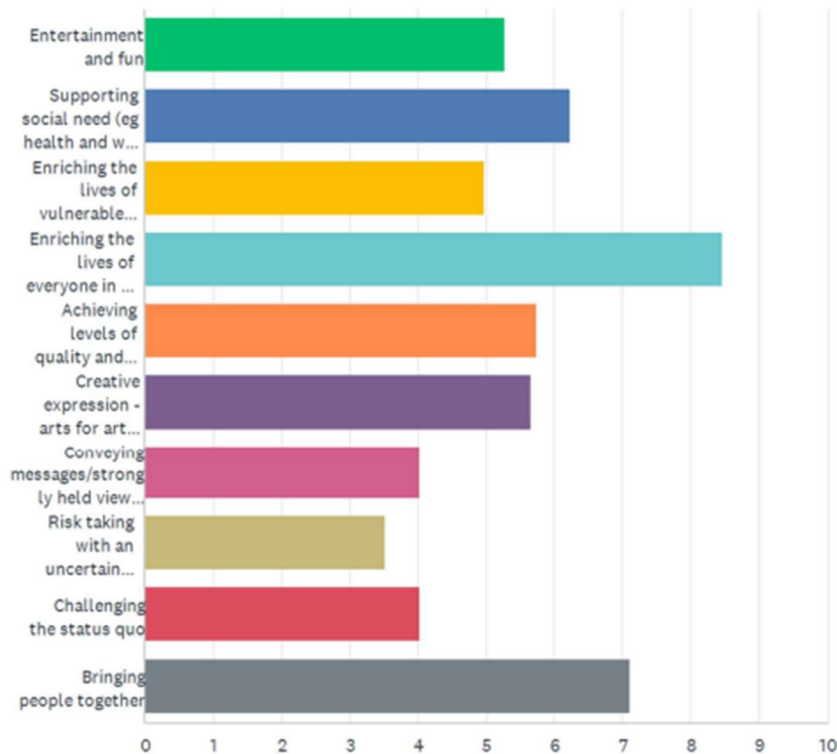
Q7 How many people regularly volunteer for your organisation

Answered: 22 Skipped: 13



Q8 Please rank the purpose of culture in order of importance for you
(please rank in order where number 1 is the most important)

Answered: 35 Skipped: 0



Q8: The purpose of culture in order of importance is covered in the graph above, with these further comments made at Q9.

To:

1. develop a sense of local identity
2. present local stories and heritage from a broad and inclusive perspective
3. support and encourage a dynamic local cultural education offer for the region
4. provide an accessible platform for artists to be programmed at
5. help the world, in however small a way, to re-evaluate, define, and promote human responsibility for the global and social environment
6. offer opportunities for paid employment
7. allow young people to dream a little
8. provide inspiration through creativity and ingenuity
9. contribute to problem solving and delivering positive change
10. understand where we have come from
11. care for our heritage
12. advocate for creative approaches to big issues for connection to ourselves, others and our communities
13. bring a smile to Cumbria to inspire the next generation of performers and future stars

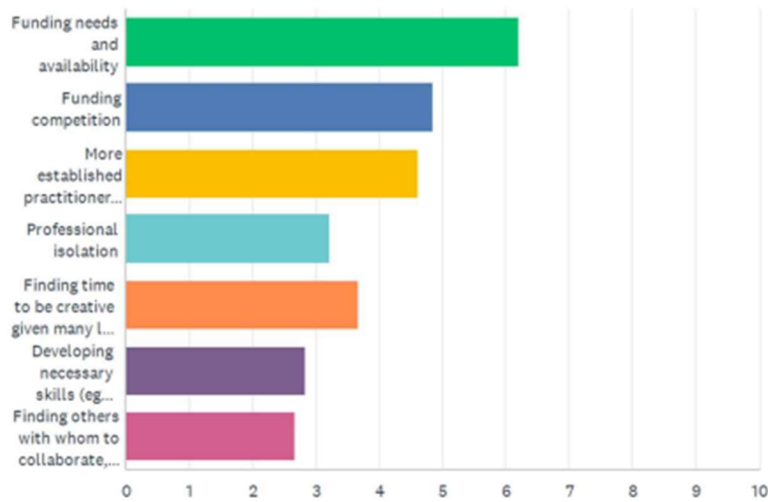
14. encourage the arts back in Cumbria
15. support health & well being, economic impact, cultural identity, indigenous skills
16. educate the next generation - share stories, experiences
17. to support self-development and provide mentorship
18. reach a desired goal in an art form/musicianship
19. help others reach their personal goals
20. raise money for the charitable sector
21. grow social bonds
22. help heal and offer some distraction to those in pain
23. find greater depth in spirituality
24. share social history or personal stories of endeavour and overcoming obstacles to inspire others
25. provide learning, innovation and education
26. take people out of their 'comfort zone' and explore new possibilities
27. provide a reminder of shared cultural heritage
28. provide an insight to other lifestyles, stories, and imaginations
29. strengthen communities
30. provide the means for escapism and a chance for positive experiences
31. be totally inclusive
32. help people achieve and be the best that we can be

Further comments made at Q9:

1. I wouldn't say that creative expression is for its own sake, I would say that expressing a subject of your interest, done with criticality and rigorously, also helps with self-awareness, self-growth, sense of identity, ability to navigate in the world - this is different to well-being, but it is as essential to being a human
2. All culture is political with a small 'p'. It empowers and builds resilience, and these are 'political' outcomes.
3. We are a literary society which has the purpose of celebrating the life and work of the Cumbrian poet and author, Norman Nicholson. His writing was ahead of its time in terms of his response to the environment and locality. He was published by the leading publisher Faber and Faber and received many honours in his lifetime, including the Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry and an OBE. He was the first Freeman of the Borough of Copeland. We work with all elements of the community, from school children, to universities and the general public, to celebrate creativity, the local environment and the environment in general, as well as local and Cumbrian language, culture and social history. Nicholson's work is a great treasure which still speaks to contemporary people.

Q10 What do you consider to be the greatest challenges of working in the cultural sector (please rank in order with 1 being the most important)

Answered: 35 Skipped: 0



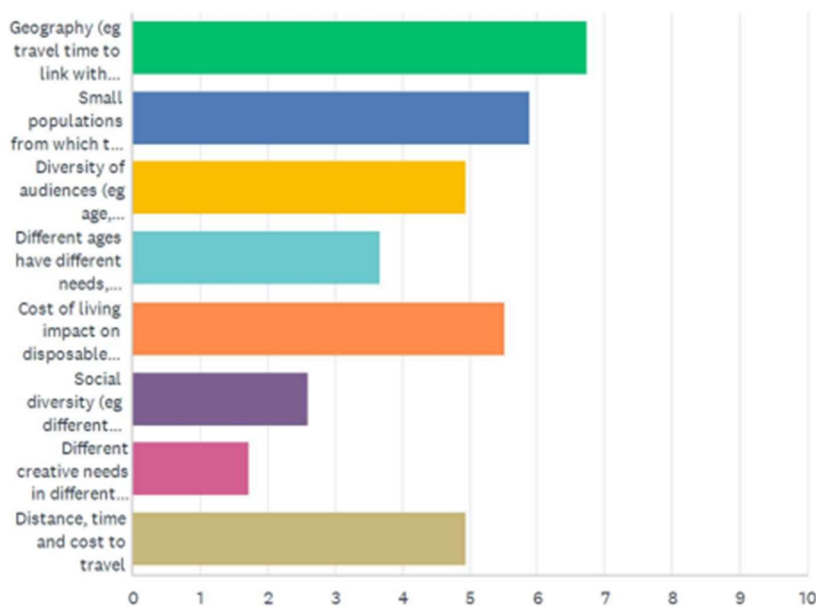
Q10: The greatest challenges of working in the cultural sector are covered in the graph above, with these further comments made at Q11:

1. Lack of support from the Arts Council
2. Delivery - in terms of suitable venues
3. Lack of pathways into creative careers
4. Woeful lack of creative subjects in training and education locally
5. The general perception of Barrow is now that the place is stuffed with money. This is deterring some funders. Of course this is not factually correct
6. The perception of what I do vs. what I actually do and being able to effectively communicate that
7. Demands of the sector and parenthood can conflict
8. I am excluded regularly from events <3 miles from my house as are other very experienced professionals
9. There is a disgraceful/ridiculous culture here of people believing everyone is a hobbyist even when they are professionals, some with decades of experience in the music industry!
10. The arts centres in the area are not serving the local needs properly and continually cite risk management as a difficulty for them, which leaves them permanently stuck never taking the first steps to develop concepts which require an element of risk to get established
11. The geography does make things tricky for locals to access events and venues but that is easy to overcome with some thought, planning and funding
12. Enough volunteers to support the operations and develop new ideas
13. Transport issues in rural areas
14. Lack of trustee support for development of charity

15. Difficult to find volunteers prepared to work on administrative side, eg treasurer, secretary, fundraising
16. Convincing people of the current importance of this brilliant writer [Norman Nicholson] and making sure that people really do know about his work. Cumbrians should be very proud of his work and reputation [not identified in this report]
17. Finding fair rates of pay and job roles that are not stretched or have been combined to save on funds but not on time or resource

Q12 What do you consider to be the main challenges of working in Cumbria (please rank your answers where 1 is the greatest challenge)

Answered: 33 Skipped: 2



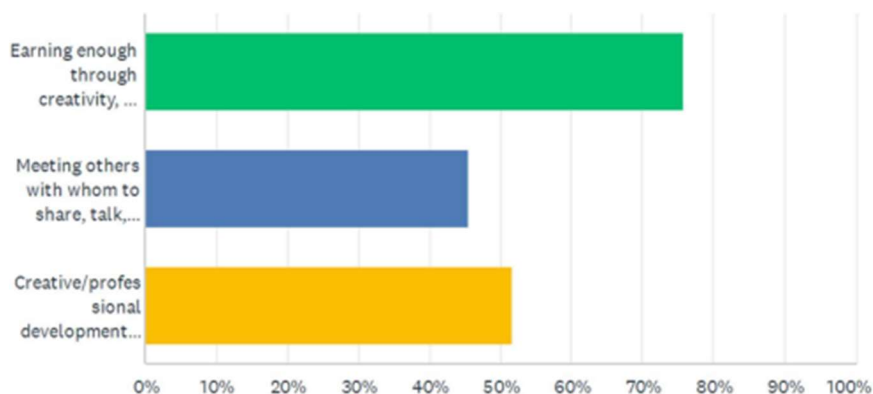
Q12: The main challenges of working in Cumbria are covered in the graph above, with these further comments made at Q13:

1. Lack of ambition amongst those who have potential to support arts/culture; one local authority becoming two has held up funding decision making.
2. Under development of audience
3. Lack of new and digital arts offer
4. Arts not seen as relevant
5. Terrible public transport links for rural audiences
6. Terribly middle-class approach to delivery and offer
7. Over reliance, particularly in West Cumbria on volunteers at all levels undermines professional status of artists, producers and organisers and feeds into an offer for older middle class (because that's who the volunteers are)
8. High cost and availability of housing and studio space
9. Lack of funding and funding opportunities

10. Under resourced local authorities with little or no understanding of culture and how it can deliver on many council priorities
11. Finding match funding for projects when applying to organisations such as Arts Council when participants can't afford to contribute
12. Lack of theatre and live performance opportunities
13. Closed door politics of local theatres and their main functions being receiving houses not interested in producing and creation
14. I think realistically you can create audiences in any setting but you have to give people something high quality, easily affordable but with options to give more if they can afford to
15. Those who don't drive have a huge challenge to get to the theatres or arts centres - and they may not even attempt to try to figure out logistics
16. A huge challenge at present is to get the message out to people that there are events on
17. To encourage people to try things new to them (less money means they are less able to spend on things they don't know if they like or not)
18. Many of the events that the Society [not identified] holds are based in Millom. It is quite difficult to persuade people to travel there
19. We put a lot of effort into our [not identified] events, but they are not always as well attended as we would like

Q14 Please prioritise your needs in developing as an individual or organisation. (please tick all boxes that apply)

Answered: 33 Skipped: 2



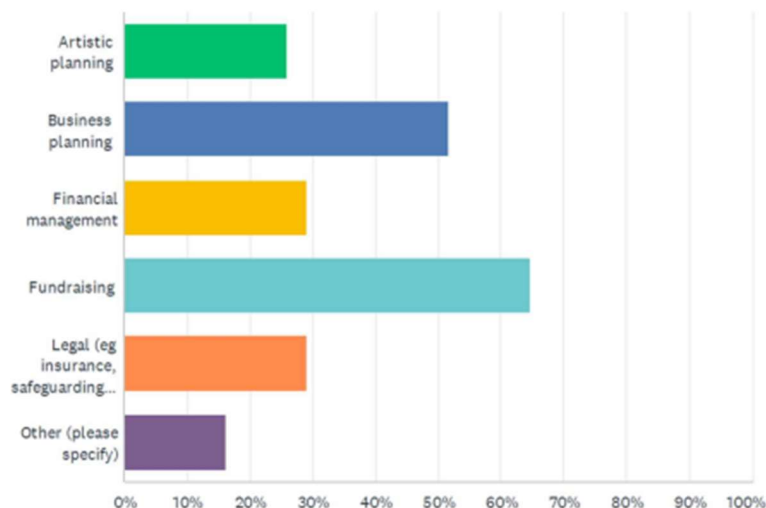
Q14: Prioritising needs in developing as an individual or organisation is covered in the graph above, with these further comments made at Q15:

1. Lack of inspiration in terms of high quality, contemporary theatre and performance storytelling - need to travel much further afield to find this
2. CACN doesn't "make" anything but we hugely support building the cultural infrastructure in many, many ways - we need more people to understand why that's important. (an example being - disseminating this survey on behalf of CCF to relevant people in the county!)

3. Apprenticeships into creative careers for locals from major organisations rather than recruit from universities. Higher apprenticeships if necessary. Also no current training or opportunity for career changes. Adult learning diminished or too expensive.
4. Connection to national and international debates and conversations
5. Finding the funding to develop projects.
6. It is finding long term income streams in order to be able to keep key staff in place
7. All are really important, without local support I can't generate a living wage from culture and arts, being constantly excluded from the sector is disappointing, I know I can help get things going here - I have delivered on that now! I enjoyed the training I did with CACN but we need a general forum where people can meet in person to generate discussion and plans.
8. Involving more people, both as audiences or participants and as volunteers.
9. More funding to support additional staff. This will benefit the organisation as there is more resource, skills and time available. It will benefit me as an individual because I can help train, develop and delegate so that I can progress my own duties and lead the organisation rather than doing day-to-day operations

Q16 Please tick those areas that would be beneficial to the development of your practice or organisation

Answered: 31 Skipped: 4

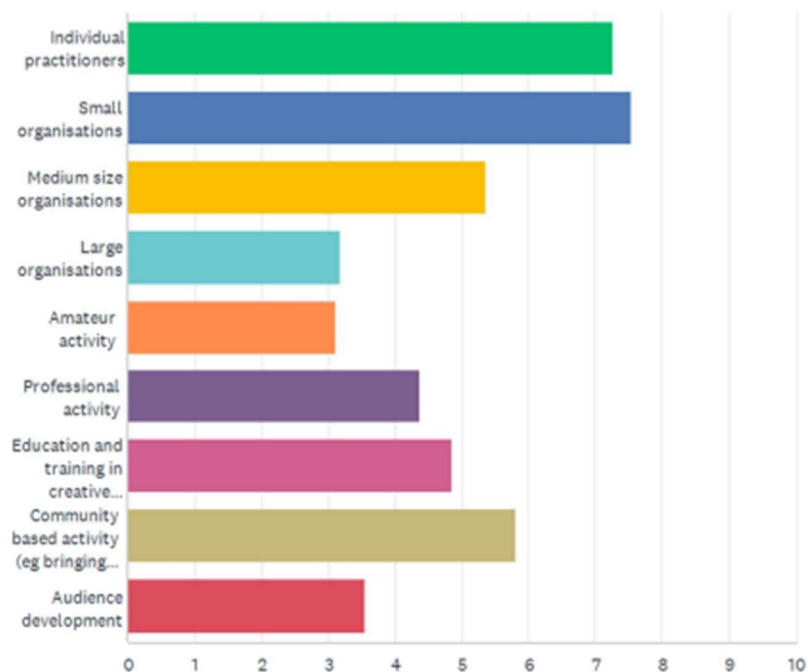


Q16: Areas that would be beneficial to the development of an individual or organisation is covered in the graph above, with these further comments made under “other”:

1. Coaching
2. Being included in discussion about future plans for events [not identified]
3. Grant access

Q17 Which type of practitioner/organisation activities should be prioritised for Cumbria Community Foundation's Cultural Fund. (please rank in order with 1 being the your highest priority)

Answered: 34 Skipped: 1

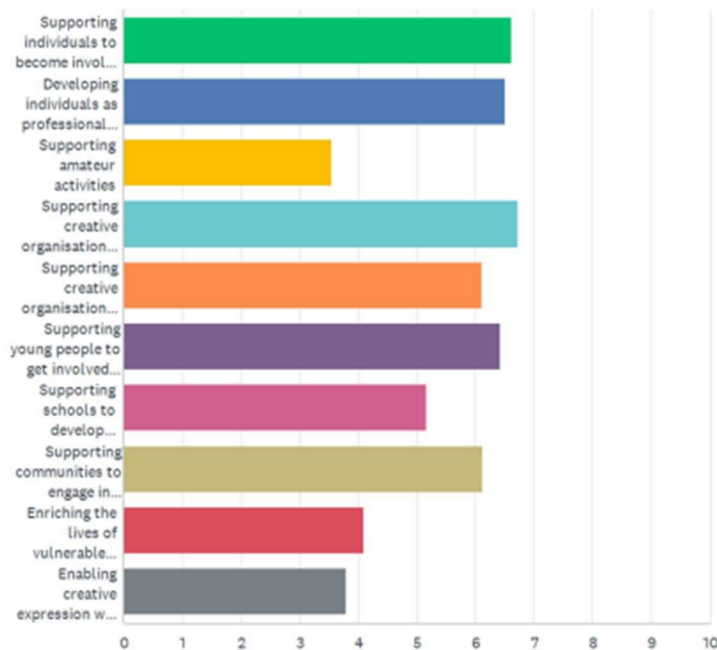


Q17: The type of practitioner/organisation activities that should be prioritised by CCF's Cultural Fund is covered in the graph above, with these further comments made at Q18:

1. It's all relative. For example, priority should be given to cultural organisations in Millom or the former Eden district area as there aren't many there - these could be small, medium or large.
2. Prioritise organisations which are embedded in their communities, can work in partnership with other organisations and that are not replicating the work of others. I would also look at organisations that innovate
3. Schools
4. I was also involved in healing arts at the hospital and would like some help in finding ways to establish that again

Q19 What activities and organisations should be prioritised by the Cumbria Community Foundation's Cultural Fund. (please rank in order with 1 being your highest priority)

Answered: 34 Skipped: 1



Q20 – This question invited any additional comments beyond those already provided in the survey

- Hard to rank this last question (Q19), as probably all could be viable reasons to fund
- It's great that CCF is looking to reignite its Cultural Fund. Support for "culture" and the arts is a natural bedfellow to help with philanthropy across the county, and to assist with people's welfare and quality of life. I believe that the Cumbria Arts and Culture Network could be an ideal partner in helping with this (I know Richard Elder has spoken with Kate Parry already), and also a potential beneficiary (and to avoid duplication of effort etc). I look forward to seeing the outcomes of the review and launch. I am hugely invested in the development of the arts and culture in the county and feel that this is one more potential step in the right direction.
- Please can the application process be as simple as possible?
- I believe that there are three factors restricting the development of culture in Cumbria:
 - 1. The small and ageing resident population means developing audiences can be challenging
 - 2. The small population also means that the Local Authorities have small budgets are unable to prioritise non-statutory services such as culture. The flipside is that there are 40m + tourists to the county and they all use local services (but don't pay for them!)

- 3. The geography of Cumbria can be problematic (it could with imagination be turned into a positive) and leads to cultural and creative isolation - Cumbria needs to be attract quality cultural practitioners.