

OMP-C – Who’s going to lead Canada’s performing arts organizations?

Prepared for Client: National Theatre School of Canada



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**LESAGEARTS**  
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Author Note

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## **Who's going to lead Canada's Performing Arts Organizations?**

### **Executive Summary**

#### **The Client**

The client is the National Theatre School (NTS) – Canada's leading national institution preparing students for professional careers in the performing arts as directors, actors, playwrights, set and costume designers, and production personnel. NTS is developing an Arts Leadership program to add to its offerings to prepare the future leaders of arts organizations.

#### **The Sector**

The non-profit performing arts sector is made up of registered charities and non-profit organizations. The portrait of cultural workers in Canada's 2011 National Household Survey and Labour Force survey shows them as overeducated, underemployed, and underpaid in comparison with the overall Canadian labour force. An important dimension to the arts sector is the role and governance of volunteer boards of directors in non-profit organizations, particularly having the duty of hiring and firing the leaders of the organization. For the purposes of this study, performing arts leaders hold the Executive Director (ED) function and/or the Artistic Director (AD) function.

#### **Problem Statement and Research Question**

There are two major sector trends that are of concern to the future of Canada's performing arts leadership: the impending retirement of the current baby boomer generation, coupled with the increasing occurrence of international hires into the leadership positions of the large arts institutions in Canada. Meanwhile leaders of smaller organizations hit a 'glass ceiling', in that they are not being 'tapped on the shoulder' for these jobs at the larger

institutions, where the jobs are going to international hires. The objective of this study is not to curtail or dictate against international hires, but rather to take the opportunity to take this recent trend and examine two propositions. Firstly, that domestic arts leaders are not ready for these positions, or secondly that they are ready, but they are not being chosen in the current executive recruitment processes. The research question derived from this context is: What does Canada need to do to develop, select, and retain the future leaders of our performing arts organizations?

### **Literature Review**

The literature review is broken down into five areas: business leadership, non-profit leadership, arts-specific leadership, and Canadian arts leadership literature. While there is good foundational research to be found about executive functions and leadership attributes, there is very little academic research on artistic leadership and about Canadian arts leadership.

### **Research Methodology**

To address the gap in the literature, primary research was undertaken using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The first step in collecting research was to hold exploratory phone calls and meetings with colleagues in the performing arts sector to source Canadian arts data, identify contacts, and discuss current trends and challenges in the sector. The official primary research occurred in two parts: five telephone interviews with recruitment agencies and board members involved with searches and a concurrent online survey entitled “Canadian Performing Arts Leadership Audit” that garnered 90 eligible respondents.

### **Findings**

The data collected was quantitative, mixed quantitative / qualitative, and qualitative. The client was provided significant quantitative analysis of the demographics of the respondents,

breaking down ED and AD functions in most areas. The qualitative data provides detailed information to the client that informs the feedback and opinions of the respondents regarding their existing training and professional development practices, and what they think is important for themselves and the sector in the future.

## **Recommendations**

The results from this data directly contributed to the recommendations to the client in the areas of the research question:

1. Create a “National Leadership Development Network”
2. Create a Second-in-Command (2IC) Bursary
3. Create Board Development Certification
4. Create a Diverse Leadership Task Force
5. Advocate for Positive Conditions of Employment

## **The Result for the National Theatre School**

The sector needs to approach this systemic issue of arts leadership development on a platform of shared responsibility including: post-secondary institutions, arts leadership development providers, funders, and large arts organizations. NTS can rise as a national leader and act as the catalyst to bring together these partners and as a result aspire to be known as the centre of excellence for training arts leaders alongside their current programs. NTS will be the locus to bring them together to take part in this collaborative and strategic process to engender excellence in Canadian arts leadership.

By proactively implementing the recommendations now, NTS can directly contribute to the sector by preventing a leadership crisis and proactively creating strong, dynamic leaders who will stay for the long run to run Canada's performing arts organizations.

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## **Who's going to lead Canada's Performing Arts Organizations?**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this OMP-C paper is to outline the client's organization and wider industry, the problem statement, the research question, project scope, a literature review, research methodology, the findings from primary research, and finally a discussion and analysis that lead to strategic recommendations for the client.

The client for this OMP-C is the National Theatre School of Canada (NTS), working directly with its CEO, Gideon Arthurs. NTS was formed in 1960 and is the leading Canadian institution for students pursuing a professional career in theatre in the specific roles of directors, actors, playwrights, set/costume designers, and production (National Theatre School, n.d.-b). The high-level training programs are offered in both French and English, and boast a high level of employment, with more than 95% of NTS graduates obtaining professional contracts directly associated with their training upon finishing their programs (National Theatre School, n.d.-a). Arthurs has indicated that NTS is in the process of pursuing the development of an Arts Leadership program to add to its offerings to prepare the future leaders of arts organizations.

As defined by the Canada Council for the Arts, the entire arts sector refers to artists and arts organizations in music, theatre, writing and publishing, visual arts, dance, media arts and multidisciplinary arts (Canada Council for the Arts - Overview, n.d.). This study will focus specifically on the non-profit performing arts sector (NFPAS), including organizations that produce or present the performing arts disciplines of music, theatre, dance and multidisciplinary works. The legal designation of a not for profit organisation (NPO) is a club, society, or



association that operates for any other purpose except for generating profit (Canada Revenue Agency, 2012).

Hill Strategies (2014) provided a good picture of the average cultural worker and artist – overeducated, underemployed, and underpaid. The rate of artists with a degree or higher (44%) is nearly double the overall Canadian labour force rate (25%). 11% of artists hold multiple jobs and work fewer weeks per year than other workers, and had average employment income of \$27,600 (Hill Strategies Research Inc., 2014, p. 2-3, 5).

Another dimension to the sector that is important to understand is the governance role of boards of directors in non-profit organizations. As outlined in Community Literacy of Ontario's Board Governance Manual, "...the board of directors of an incorporated, non-profit organization is legally responsible for the governance of the organization" (Davidson, 2014, p. 1). The board effectively oversees and is responsible for policies that will allow the organization to carry out its work. In addition to these legal fiduciary requirements, Kaiser (2010, p. 15) asserted that non-profit arts boards should focus on five key responsibilities: approving the strategic plan; approving the annual budget; hiring, firing, and compensation for direct reports; developing resources; and serving as ambassadors for the organization in the community.

As outlined by Reid and Karambayya (2009), performing arts organizations can typically have dual leadership roles that distinguish artistic versus managerial responsibilities (p. 1080). The Artistic Director (AD) oversees programming, artist selection, and creative interpretation; while the Executive Director (ED) oversees finances, marketing, resource development and operations (Reid & Karambayya, 2009, p. 1080). For the purpose of this study, Arts Leaders are collectively the staff heads of an arts organization who oversee the ED and/or AD functions for the organization.

### **Problem Statement**

In recent years, a number of leadership roles in large arts organizations have gone to international hires including those at: Luminato (both the last two ADs & ED), the Art Gallery of Ontario, Shaw Festival, National Ballet of Canada, Tafelmusik, Royal Ontario Museum, the McMichael Canadian Art Collection, and Harbourfront Centre to name a few (Nestruck, 2015; Stolk, 2016). According to Stolk and Nestruck: “I can’t help, though, wondering what’s up with our nation’s Hiring Committees” (Stolk, 2016), and this “...is the latest sign that something has gone seriously wrong with the ways leaders are being hired at many of Ontario’s major artistic institutions” (Nestruck, 2015). In the provocatively titled “No Canadians need apply: the worrying trend in arts hiring”, Taylor (2016) not only outlined the frequency of international hires, but also surmised that this was a result of the increasing use of head-hunters with a focus on international searches, which will ultimately be to the detriment to the sector if it does not nurture domestic potential leaders.

Anecdotally, in discussion with the OMP-C client Arthurs, there are a number of Arts Leaders at small to mid-level organizations who experience a “glass ceiling”, in that they are not being considered for the leadership roles in the large organizations, nor is there anywhere for them to go within their own organization (personal communication, Gideon Arthurs). There is also rarely a “second” position within a large organization to groom the next leader – such as Associate Artistic Director or Associate Executive Director to ready them for these roles. Becoming frustrated with the lack of career progression, subsequently these developing and emerging Arts Leaders often leave the sector, or leave Canada. This exodus will be particularly problematic if a large number of baby boomers retire out of the system at once, thereby creating

a leadership crisis in that there will be no 'ready' talent to lead Canada's large performing arts organizations.

The objective of this OMP-C, on behalf of NTS, is not to curtail or dictate against international hires, but rather to take the opportunity to take this recent trend and examine two propositions. Firstly, that domestic arts leaders are not ready for these positions in that they have not had the proper training and/or experience, or secondly that they are ready, but they are not being chosen in the current executive recruitment processes.

### **Research Question**

In order to address the aforementioned Problem Statement, and to develop strategic recommendations for NTS, the research question that will be used for this OMP-C is: What does Canada need to do to develop, select, and retain the future leaders of our performing arts organizations?

### **Project Scope**

This OMP-C will address why this research question is important, the profile of current performing arts leaders in Canada, current formal and informal training and development, how the arts leaders are being chosen, and what efforts are in place to retain them.

It is valid to query if a proliferation of international hires is positive or negative for Canada's performing arts sector. On the positive side, international hires result in innovation and raised standards, "...finding the best candidate for the job regardless of passport or personal history" (Knelman, 2014). On the negative side, as Canada approaches its Sesquicentennial in 2017, it is productive to remind oneself of the foundation of Canadian cultural identity through the seminal 1949 Massey Commission which resulted in many significant institutions being

established such as: the National Film Board, the Public Archives, and the Canada Council for the Arts. And it is these cultural institutions, created to foster Canadian cultural identity, that fund the majority of organizations previously named and are now in fact helmed by international hires (Sirman, 2014). Beyond the issue of the provenance of the arts leaders, the importance of training these future leaders is asserted by Michael M. Kaiser, "...we spend so much money to train singers, dancers and painters, but we spend almost nothing to train and employ arts managers...and as arts funding becomes more complicated, the need for these programs increases" (Boyle, 2013, para.3). It is risky to rely on international hires without developing this talent pool domestically.

The scope of this OMP-C will aim to capture and quantify the current state of Arts Leaders with a representational pool across all sizes and disciplines of performing arts organizations in Canada. Data will be collected from current arts leaders, inquiring about their career path through their last two to three positions, looking at the size of the organizations, their role and the length of time in the position, and their anticipated future tenure in this position or the sector itself. Additionally, data will be collected on their demographics and asking what training, experience and attributes they perceive they already have and what they think they are missing.

Finally, this OMP-C will address the process of recruitment and selection of arts leaders. Since Boards of Directors are hiring and firing Arts Leaders, there needs to be an examination of their role in forming hiring committees, and what are the desired attributes, skills, and experience they are seeking in candidates for AD and ED roles, and ultimately what are the selection criteria. It would be productive to understand the process for the hire decision, and how it is undertaken.

## **Literature Review**

As this study embodies a review of leadership, but through the specific lens of the non-profit performing arts sector, a review of the literature will include research on leadership in the business realm, and then narrowed to non-profits, and then further narrowed to the arts.

### **Business Leadership Literature**

In looking at a 'textbook' definition of leadership suitable for the business student and scholar alike, Northouse (2013) outlined the complexity of the multiple meanings and definitions of leadership, and its evolution through the years (p. 2). From the 1920's through to the 1980's, the focus of leadership has moved from an emphasis on power and coercion, to an emphasis on influence, to regarding a leader's behaviour in the context of working with groups (Northouse, 2013). The working definition of leadership in this text is "...leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (Northouse, 2013, p. 5). This text goes on to examine leadership issues such as trait versus process leadership, assigned versus emergent leadership, the influence of power and coercion in leading people, and a number of theories outlining leadership models across the dimensions of skills, style, and situational contexts. (Northouse, 2013).

Kouzes and Posner (2012) continue the theme of focusing a definition of a leader by how they impact the work of their followers – "...leaders mobilize others to want to make extraordinary things happen in organizations" (p. 2). Building on research they began twenty five years ago, and updated to encompass emerging leadership trends, the evidence-based cases fed into the "Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership<sup>®</sup>", which show that when leaders do their

best, they: model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart (Kouzes & Posner, 2012, p. 15). Done together, these steps are those that are displayed by people, "...when they are at their personal best as leaders" (Kouzes & Posner, 2012, p. 24).

Collins (2001) started with the premise of taking companies who sustained materially 'great' results for at least fifteen years compared with companies with just 'good' results, then look back for the factors that distinguished the 'great' cohort from the 'good' (p. 3). This data-driven approach led to a model that overlays three phases of disciplined people, disciplined thought, and disciplined action, against what Collins calls "the Flywheel" which is the slow methodical process of attaining greatness, not by one big leap, but a continual flywheel of progress momentum (Collins, 2001). In the disciplined people phase, the two steps are 'Level 5 Leadership', followed by 'First Who...then What'. Collins' (2001) research portrayed that Level 5 Leaders, those that possessed all the skills and traits at the top of their five level executive capability hierarchy, were in fact not high-profile star leaders, but often self-effacing, shy, with a blend of humility and professional will (p. 12-13). The data showed that the majority of great companies had CEOs that came from within the company, and that, "...larger-than-life, celebrity leaders who ride in from the outside are *negatively* correlated with taking a company from good to great" (Collins, 2001, p. 10). The leader's next task is to follow the 'First Who...then What', with a focus on building the right team for the company, "...getting the right people on the bus (and the wrong people off the bus)" before one decides where to drive the bus (Collins, 2001, p. 63).

In his seminal 1967 book 'The Effective Executive', Drucker (2006) similarly looked to the personal effectiveness of a leader, through a learned process of disciplined practices and behaviours – but also noted that the leader is doing the right things for that particular organization. Drucker (2006) did not map out a specific personality or set of attitudes, values, and strengths; instead the effective executive was seen to follow the same eight practices: they asked what needs to be done, they asked what is right for the enterprise, they developed action plans, they took responsibility for decisions, they took responsibility for communicating, they were focused on opportunities and not problems, they ran productive meetings, and they focused on “we” rather than “I” (p. xi). Drucker (2006) then summarized that the essence of this is that effective executives “...get the right things done” (p. xxiii).

In looking beyond the individual and focusing on the organization, Drucker (2001) defined the purpose of a business, and in turn the specific management objectives to successfully run that business. Drucker's (2001) definition of a business is not principally about making a profit, but to fulfill “...a specific social purpose and to satisfy a specific need of a society, a community, or individuals” (p. 14). At the core of this definition is the customer, and with that, a business can be distilled down to the primary functions of marketing objectives and innovation objectives. In addition to these primary functions are the practical dimensions of delivering the marketing and innovation objectives, which together form the eight main areas that encompass management of the overall organization: marketing, innovation, human resources, financial resources, physical resources, productivity, social responsibility, and finally, profit requirements (Drucker, 2001, p. 30).

Charan, Drotter, and Noel (2011) portrayed the challenge in the U.S. corporate market of a lack of leaders to match the demand, and proposed that an organization should develop leaders from within, in order to "...keep their own leadership pipelines full and flowing" (p.1). Similar to Collins' (2001) negative results when hiring star hires externally, Charan, Drotter, and Noel (2011) noted that this aggressive race in the "war for talent" not only resulted in less than successful hires, but also served to underline a failure to develop an internal pool of potential leaders. The success rate for external hires in top positions is low, manifested in: a lack of organizational culture fit, demotivation of existing employees, lack of knowledge of the business, and a propensity for these star hires to lack loyalty and so are likely to leave after a short time (Charan et al., 2011, p. xiii). Instead, the organization should build leadership potential from within the organization, moving employees through the following 'career passages' in order: managing self, managing others, managing managers, functional manager, business manager, group manager, and finally enterprise manager – ultimately the CEO level (Charan et al., 2011). The final transition to enterprise manager should evolve from skills to values, and a strong sense of self-concept as one evolves into a visionary leader (Charan et al., 2011, p.26).

Tools involved in these passages include organizational interventions such as: performance management that clarifies roles and sets performance standards, succession planning, and coaching. While these processes can be perceived to take a significant amount of time and commitment at all levels of the organization to enact behavioural change and continuous improvement; the benefit of this approach is to create an internal culture of leadership development that results in higher retention of top talent, which aids the competitive position of the organization. As outlined by Charan et al. (2011), a collateral benefit of this program is to



create a strong pathway for CEO succession, which will ultimately assist the boards of directors, who have statistically not been successful at making strong CEO hires (p. 295).

Saporito and Winum (2012) also argued about the strong importance of succession and asserted that, "...CEO succession planning is arguably the most important responsibility of a board of directors" (p. xv). Their research found that even though good succession translated into value creation for stakeholders and the fact that increased public scrutiny in management financial practices calls for more rigour; there is actually very little in best practices surrounding CEO succession (Saporito & Winum, 2012). According to Saporito and Winum (2012), previous business environments meant that CEO's stayed with an organization for longer, and groomed their successors in a systematic planned way – but in the midst of economic downturns and chaotic markets, there have been sudden departures and instability in employment which have propelled businesses into succession without a plan. CEO succession should now be approached as a continuous process, and should be a shared responsibility of the CEO and the board of directors (Saporito & Winum, 2012, p. 15). Through the management consulting firm RHR International, LLP, ten key dimensions of effective succession are identified as a continuous cycle, which does not just end with the hiring of a new CEO (Saporito & Winum, 2012).

The Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada have issued a report that depicts much of the same considerations as outlined by Saporito and Winum (2012), but further provides pragmatic tools to assist a board of directors in carrying out the daunting task of CEO succession (Stephenson & Beaudin, 2008). The study's research showed that fewer than 50% of companies studied practiced CEO succession planning, and furthermore that only 46% of CEO

departures were planned retirements, with the balance being unplanned, resulting in a scramble for the board (Stephenson & Beaudin, 2008, p. 3). The resources and templates include: clear roles and responsibilities of all parties; and a sample CEO leadership profile including strategic imperatives, characteristics, and attributes (Stephenson & Beaudin, 2008).

In one of the few academic references on Canadian leadership, Henein and Morissette (2007) performed research across Canada and across all sectors, including the arts, to explore the specific brand of Canadian leadership style, the essentials of leadership, and the optimal methods of leadership development. The authors stated that as the baby boomers retire, there is going to be a dearth of quality and quantity of available leaders prepared to run Canada's organizations and it would behoove Canada to create a national leadership strategy to address this upcoming crisis (Henein & Morissette, 2007). Specific to this country, the Canadian leadership style is, "...effective, a quiet exercise of leadership with no flash or ostentation, but charisma... We like fair play and rules: peace, order and good government" (Henein & Morissette, 2007, p. 5). According to Henein and Morissette's (2007) research, the leaders surveyed categorized leadership into the following four categories: purpose, person, partnership, and process (p. 12).

### **Non-Profit Leadership Literature**

Moving to non-profit leadership literature, there are resources that address the notion of capacity building and organizational health, but not framed strictly as leadership development. One such example is the model outlined by non-profit consultant Susan Kenny Stevens (2008) by taking the product lifecycle concept and adapting it to a new 'non-profit lifecycle' that serves to diagnose an organization according to its development through the stages of idea, start-up, growth, maturity, decline, turnaround, and terminal; evaluated across the five dimensions of

programs, management, governance, financial resources, and systems (Stevens, 2008, p. 13, 58). Stevens' (2008) assertion is that non-profits should look at hiring not just for qualifications, experience, and/or an organizational culture fit, but also in alignment with which stage of the non-profit lifecycle the organization currently resides (p. 72). Appendix A displays sample leadership attributes according to each stage, for example a start-up stage would call for an energetic risk-taker; while an organization at the maturity stage requires very different attributes such as being respected in the field or being policy and procedures oriented.

Drucker (1990) also turned his management theories to the non-profit sector, and examined how to manage these organizations as distinct entities from the for-profit world. Drucker (1990) asserted that non-profits are significantly different not only in their mission-driven existence and the role of fundraising; but also that their resource-scarce state dictates a more urgent need for proper business management (p. xiv). As compared to his aforementioned theories, in the non-profit model Drucker (1990) explicitly put the leader's first role as putting the mission of the organization front and centre, then followed secondly by effective strategies for marketing, innovation, and fund development, third is managing for performance, fourth is managing the people and relationships with your staff, board, volunteers, and community, and fifth and finally developing yourself as a person, an executive and a leader (p. xviii).

In looking at the unique role of boards of directors in the non-profit sector, it is noted that, while they carry out an important organizational responsibility, these are volunteer positions whose membership may or may not have any experience in the performing arts sector, nor any training in non-profit board governance. In a 2015 survey on U.S. non-profit boards of directors, boards were found to be deficient in serving the needs of their organizations, primarily with not having a deep understanding of the mission and strategy of the organization, not possessing

formal governance structure, and a lack of engagement and true understanding of their fiduciary duties (Larcker, Donatiello, Meehan III, & Tayan, 2015).

### **Arts Specific Leadership Literature**

In shifting to arts specific leadership literature, one can find research in the realm of arts management textbooks, books outlining the effectiveness of arts organizations, and writing on the nature of artistic leadership. Stratford Festival's Director General Antoni Cimolino posited that, "...leadership is like art: the artist sees beauty where another person only sees reality. Likewise, the leader sees energy. His job is to capture this energy and to use and channel it for the task at hand. It's a transformational process, akin to alchemy" (Henein & Morissette, 2007, p. 1).

Geared to the student of arts management, Byrnes (2015) provided an overview of all aspects of running an arts organization: from strategic planning, earned and contributed revenue generation, marketing, operations, financial management, legal organizational entities, and building a career in arts management. The focus of this text is on an EDs role, as there is little information on the structure of an ADs role, except to display the role of arts creation at the centre of an arts organization's 'system' (Byrnes, 2015, p. 3). The description of management is portrayed as: planning, organizing, leading, and controlling; all in the aim of supporting the operational areas of: planning and development, marketing and public relations, personnel management, fiscal management, board relations, labour relations, and government relations and advocacy (Byrnes, 2015, p. 23-25, 26). Byrnes (2015) delineated the unique nature of leadership for an arts manager, in that, "...although it is true that an arts organization must

function in a businesslike way, arts managers must address the larger issues of the relationship of their organization to the larger society and culture” (p. 285).

Varbanova (2013) also outlined the unique proposition of arts leaders as depicted as a balancing act of the tensions between multiple stakeholders, including artists, boards, policy-makers, funders, collaborators, partners, audiences, communities, media, critics, technical staff, and more (p 15). Management processes in an arts organization will differ greatly from each other based on the two dimensions of: the size of the organization and the proportion of self-generated income versus contributed income (Varbanova, 2013, p. 2).

The trilogy of works by renowned U.S. arts consultant Michael M. Kaiser does not explicitly speak to specific traits or competencies of leaders, but instead provides a practical guide for arts leaders to build effective and dynamic arts organizations. In *The Art of the Turnaround*, Kaiser (2008) depicted his own process of turning around failing and beleaguered arts organizations. According to Kaiser, the ten rules for turning around an arts organization are: someone must lead, the leader must have a plan, you cannot save your way to health, focus on the future, extend your programming, marketing is more than brochures, there must be one spokesperson with a positive message, fund-raising must focus on the larger donor, the board must allow itself to be restructured, and the organization must have the discipline to follow these rules. While the premise of this book focusses on engaging a turnaround, the arts leader must be diligent to this approach at all times, as the narrow margins in non-profits can easily bring crisis to an arts organization (Kaiser, 2008, p. xi).

In *Leading Roles: 50 Questions Every Arts Board Should Ask*, Kaiser (2010) outlined the role of the board in the mission, governance, fundraising, and marketing of the organization, but

that a crucial job of the board is to hire the AD and/or ED, "...but boards are often so unaware of what it really takes to be successful in these positions that they do not necessarily do a very good job of engaging the best people" (p. 79). While Kaiser's (2010) definition of an ED is "an arts entrepreneur who can create great marketing programs, entice new donors, build large audiences, and...fulfill the wishes of the artistic leadership", the mistake often made by boards is to focus on finding a financial manager, without regarding these other dimensions (p. 79). The role of the AD, according to Kaiser (2010) is to, "...create new and adventuresome programming, select designers and technical staff, find joint-venture partners, develop young talent, and often create art themselves", all in keeping with the mission of the organization (p. 80). This position is even more challenging for boards of directors to hire, as board members generally do not have artistic experience and therefore often hiring decisions are made on the basis of personality of the candidates, and not on their artistic or curatorial ability to serve the organization (Kaiser, 2010, p. 80).

Kaiser's (2013) final book in the trilogy, *The Cycle: A Practical Approach to Managing Arts Organizations*, portrayed effective arts management ostensibly as a streamlined galvanization of his prior works and teachings. Successful arts organizations follow a cycle in that they: make great art; then market it aggressively; all the while raising the awareness of the organization; all of which builds a 'family' of patrons, donors, board members, and volunteers; which all produces additional revenue; which is then cycled back into making great art (Kaiser & Egan, 2013, p. 1). The concept may appear simplistic, but execution of the cycle is only successful if there is: a rigour of discipline, a strong board with appropriate staff support, a clarity of mission and how it drives artistic programming, and management attention in planning, marketing, and fundraising efforts (Kaiser & Egan, 2013, p. 4-5).

From a grass roots level, Clapp (2010) compiled an anthology of essays from arts leaders under the age of forty to discuss the future of arts and arts education. Borrowing from Heifetz, Clapp (2010) defined a leader as, "...one who challenges core assumptions, thinks adaptively about complex problems, incorporates knowledge from multiple domains, and empowers others to move towards conceptual change" (p. xxiv). In the current climate, Clapp (2010) foretold a pipeline problem in leadership, partially due to the fact that Baby Boomers are not exiting the leadership positions as the previous generation did, and it is perceived that boomers are under-utilizing and ignoring the emerging potential leaders in their Gen X and millennial ranks. While Boomers served as 'early pioneers' in the arts sector and shaped the major arts organizations in existence today, the new generations are not being made to feel a part of this institutional development, which, in combination with longer hours and low salary, has caused an exodus of emerging leaders from the field (Clapp, 2010). The solution, for Clapp (2010), is that "...the future of the arts sector lies in its ability to access the talents, skills, knowledge-base, and expertise of multiple generations working in concert with one another in order to exchange technical and cultural knowledge within and across age cohorts" (p. xxix).

There is minimal academic research on arts leadership in Canada, with the exception of the work of Reid and Karambayya (2009, 2015) exploring the definition and potential conflict inherent in the "two-headed monster" of the artistic and business accountabilities of arts leaders. As mentioned previously this study of work shows the dual nature of leadership in the non-profit arts sector, the executive role (ED), and artistic role (AD). Both positions are typically hired and supervised by the Board of Directors, but in some organizations both the ED and AD roles could be filled by one person, while in others it is two people. In terms of reporting structure, there is

no set configuration in Canadian performing arts organizations, the ED could report to the AD, or vice versa, or they could jointly report to the Board of Directors.

### **Artistic Leadership Literature**

There is a challenge in finding research that speaks specifically to artistic leadership and not artistic practice – but insightful information can be derived from examining memoirs and biographies of great artistic leaders of our generation. Examined here are the lives and work of: Joseph Papp, founder of the New York Shakespeare Festival and the Public Theater; Sir Peter Hall CBE, founder of the Royal Shakespeare Company and Director of the National Theatre in the United Kingdom; and Carey Perloff, artistic director of the American Conservatory Theater (A.C.T.) in San Francisco (Hall & Goodwin, 1983; Perloff, 2015; Turan & Papp, 2010). These works both describe the view of these leaders about artistic leadership, but also a description of their personalities and external attributes as seen by others.

The scope of work of an artistic director is portrayed in a glimpse into Hall's day to day work: from tending and placating stars such as Laurence Olivier or John Gielgud, calming more junior anxious company members, negotiating company salaries, wrangling boards of directors, struggling with budgets, casting, capital project construction timelines, all the while finding time for his own artistic practice as an actor and director (Hall & Goodwin, 1983). Perloff's memoir described much of the same as Hall, but also categorized the overall experience as "...the beautiful chaos of a life in the theater..." (Perloff, 2015, p. ix).

Artistic vision and a passion for the mission of the organization is a key factor for ADs. Papp is described as having an intense commitment, drive and passion for the theatre, including



the need to take part in advocacy for the sector (Turan & Papp, 2010, p. 37-38). Perloff self-described herself as having the 'fire in the belly' and passion for the mission of the organization, including, "...the daunting task of capturing the public's imagination and rallying its support" (Perloff, 2015, p. 16). These leaders are also described as visionary, having a firm view of the end goal, and directing all efforts to achieving that. Papp was a big picture visionary, who let the team carry out the ideas, and further noted, "...I learned there has to be a single idea by which a theater operates, otherwise you go here, you go there, you don't know where you're going" (Turan & Papp, 2010, p. 41, 238).

These works also speak to the leadership capabilities of these ADs with staff and artists. Papp described it thus, "...that ability to get people together and do things was a talent I always had. I never thought about having this kind of leadership thing about me, I just had it" (Turan & Papp, 2010, p. 39). Papp was described as able to command and lead others, be a morale builder, and doing his best to keep things steady, organized and happy. Hall is also described as inspiring others in how to make great work and how this trickles down to the audience, "...I believe in theatre as a community form. If the actors have enjoyed, then the audience will enjoy" (P. Hall & Goodwin, 1983, p. 14).

In addition to the creative work, ADs must involve themselves with the business in areas of board governance and fundraising. Perloff (2015) stated that boards now want to see quick, short-term results, instead of building steadily for the future, "...with a new artistic leader comes a new aesthetic, a new energy, and a new way of working, and often that can take several years to come into focus" (p. 57). ADs must also take part in fundraising for their non-profits to ensure financial viability. Papp was described as a brilliant fundraiser, "...in terms of funding,

Joe knew exactly where to go, where to move to, and who to move with” (Turan & Papp, 2010, p. 239). Perloff (2015) described it as thus, “I know what it is to run a cash-strapped theater and to fundraise as if my life depended on it.” (p. 6).

The attributes and personality traits of ADs is also described in these works. Perloff described the importance for a potential AD to have the, “...ability to engage with a community, appetite for public speaking, imagination and resilience in tough times, or, most important, aesthetic and artistry” (Perloff, 2015, p. 38). Papp also recognized the need to have ‘guts’, to be bold against adverse circumstances and to take risks both in creating new artistic endeavours and solving problems (Turan & Papp, 2010, p. 41). Papp was also described as having charisma, decisiveness, cockiness, and of being seemingly invincible, inquisitive, imaginative and creative (Turan & Papp, 2010, p. 46). There is also evidence of adverse personality traits, with mentions of rifts and arguments brought about by directness, personality clashes, and strong wills. Papp had “...towering disputes with everyone...but almost everybody ended up doing their best work for him.”(Turan & Papp, 2010, p. 2).

In summation of the literature review, there are strong examples of: research around general leadership, research about the definition of non-profit governance and organizational effectiveness, and examples from memoirs and biographies about the nature and attributes of artistic leadership, but very little in the way of data or research about Canadian arts leadership, and particularly about the main research question of what Canada needs to do to develop, select, and retain the future leaders of our performing arts organizations. The primary research in this study will aim to contribute to this dearth of information.

### **Research Methodology**

As outlined in the literature review, there is a gap of research and data to speak to the research question at hand, and primary research is optimal when there is no secondary data to answer the question (Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2005, p. 102). Research can have a quantitative or qualitative approach; with the former focussed on collecting and analyzing numerical data and the latter focussed on a subjective examination and reflection on things like values, attitudes, and perception (F. Jorgensen, personal communication, Unit 5, slide 5).

In terms of the methods of research, Merriam & Tisdell (2016) outlined valuable methods that are useful to this process: surveys to collect quantitative and qualitative data, interviews to collect qualitative data about personal experience, and focus groups to canvas people from similar backgrounds to discuss ideas (p. 5). Creating a survey with structured, semi-structured, and unstructured questions will allow for the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data, with the ability to present the quantitative data empirically, and to analyze the qualitative data for trends and pattern. While these research methods can garner valuable information, the challenge with performing this type of research is the length of time to reach out across Canada and relying on the willingness of the respondents to take part (Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2005, p. 103)

Using the secondary research acquired in the literature review as a base, primary research was conducted to fill in the gap in knowledge to answer the research question for this paper: “What does Canada need to do to develop, select, and retain the future leaders of our performing arts organizations?”. The aims of the research was to identify the ‘state of the nation’ of current Arts Leaders in regards to their demographics and past training, identify the method and values set by Board Chairs and Hiring Committees in selecting leaders, and the factors at play to keep valuable leaders in the performing arts sector.

## **Initial Process**

The process for collecting primary research began with informal 'exploratory' emails and approximately fifteen to twenty phone calls to colleagues in the performing arts sector to source the existence (or non-existence) of Canadian arts leadership data, trends in leadership development training, names of potential sources for follow-up, and some early ideas of the trends and opinions of current performing arts leaders. The content of these communications formed the basis of portions of the literature review and the official primary research process and questions. However, as these communications were not subject to the ethical review, the content is not included in this paper. This base information led to the devising of the official primary research as detailed, submitted, and approved by the Royal Roads University Ethical review process. The raw data will remain confidential with the author to protect individual identity, with the client and participants receiving aggregate information only. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected.

## **Primary Research**

As outlined in Appendix B the official primary research occurred in two parts: an online survey entitled "Canadian Performing Arts Leadership Audit", and concurrent telephone interviews with recruitment agencies and board members involved with arts leader searches. All participants for these two phases were subject to the preamble and informed consent as per the ethical review process of Royal Roads University.

**Canadian performing arts leadership audit (Current Arts Leaders).** In order to collect the data on current arts leaders and using the literature review and exploratory phone calls as reference, a survey was developed grouping questions into the topics of individual

demographics, organizational demographics, career path questions, education/formal training, likely job tenure, current and desired aptitude in functional areas and attributes, and desired future professional development. The goal was to collect quantitative data regarding their own demographics and past experience and training, while also collecting qualitative data on the opinions and impressions of the current leadership cohort.

Survey questions were prepared on Survey Monkey as seen in Appendix C, with the eligibility for participants to be defined as them being a current 'Canadian performing arts leader' - an individual who is the primary lead of the artistic and/or business functions of their organization. The organization could be of any size, and any performing arts discipline. The survey was live from February 8 – March 18, 2017, and the link was posted to the author's personal Facebook page, the LeSage Arts Management business Facebook page, and LinkedIn with a request for colleagues to forward on to eligible colleagues. Individual emails were sent to 58 colleagues as well as 19 Arts Service Organizations (ASOs) to ask them to share with their membership. Finally, online blogs/announcements were posted on the following websites: Cultural Careers Council of Ontario, Toronto Alliance for the Performing Arts, Arts Consultants of Canada Association LinkedIn group, and Calgary Arts Development – see Appendix D for a sample blog posting.

The survey garnered 128 responses, with 35 removed as incomplete/empty, three (3) deemed as ineligible as respondents were not arts leaders as per the definition, five (5) were partially complete including demographic information, and 85 were complete surveys. The latter 90 respondents are included in the data set. Respondents needed to click on 'agree' to the preamble and informed consent in order to proceed. Questions were both quantitative and qualitative, and what is shared here and for the client has had any identifiers stripped out to

protect the confidentiality of the respondents. When possible, quantitative information has been further categorized from all respondents (ALL), those that lead only the executive role (EDs), those that lead only the artistic role (ADs), and those that lead both artistic and executive functions (BOTH).

### **Interviews with recruitment agencies and board representatives (Recruiters/Board).**

Concurrent to the online survey, semi-structured interviews were carried out collecting qualitative data about opinions and observations regarding the recruitment process and current state of performing arts leaders: five interviews were held with recruitment agencies that have carried out searches for ADs and/or EDs, and two interviews were held with board representatives who have been responsible for leadership searches. It became challenging to seek out board chairs who had led searches under the scope of this academic assignment, and this area would warrant additional study. After informed consent was established, the interviews were carried out using the questions as listed in Appendix E as a starting point, but allowing the questions and discussion to evolve as the interviewee answered the questions.

Regarding the data collected from recruitment agencies, it is important to note that there are only two recruitment agencies in Canada whose primary work is in the arts, a third U.S consulting firm that has recently expanded into Canada and has added recruitment to their portfolio, and then the balance of the work is completed by corporate recruitment agencies that work on performing arts searches from time to time, often with a professional connection to a board member.

### **Limitations of this Study**

There are key areas not covered in this study which would further enhance the knowledge of the research question. These limits are representation of the survey respondents across certain dimensions, and further consultation with arts funders, board chairs and arts leadership training institutions.

Regarding the coverage of the online survey, while it is positive to have a respondent pool of 90, this does not represent all of Canadian performing arts leaders, and there are key areas that are not represented here. First, since the survey was only provided in English, this will not represent French-speaking Canada, which differs not just in language, but also in organizational structure. Second, noticeably absent are leaders from the larger performing arts organizations, with more than half of respondents representing organizations with budget sizes less than \$1 million. Third, as seen in Appendix F, there is fair representation of provinces within a range that matches the proportion of provincial populations, except for an under-representation of the province of Quebec, and no representation from New Brunswick, PEI and the three territories. This study also does not encompass small creative entrepreneurs and people working in unconventional arts institution models.

Due to the time constraint for the scope of this academic project, official primary research interviews with funders, more board chairs, and arts leadership training institutions did not occur beyond the exploratory phase, but it would be worthwhile to continue this work in a rigorous way in any subsequent studies.

## Results and Findings

The following section will provide information on the qualitative and quantitative data results derived from the primary research as it relates to the research question of what Canada needs to do to develop, select and retain future performing arts leaders. Full quantitative results can be found in Appendix G for the Leadership audit, and the following section will subsequently look at grouping the key findings from the current arts leaders and recruiters/board research into the themes of developing, selecting, and retaining leaders.

To provide a context before moving into the three themes, it is useful to examine the 'big picture' impressions of the current arts leaders regarding the research question. Overall, when asked if the sector was doing enough to select, develop, and retain the next generation of leaders, the vast majority of current arts leader respondents did not feel that this was the case. Current arts leaders saw that there was going to be a serious pipeline issue with a lack of good candidates, and that there were many systemic issues to be addressed. When asked to provide their comments on suggestions to the sector, there was a call to ensure there was, "...system wide thinking about the issue". Figure 1 shows the recommendations made by current arts leaders, in a grouping of the categories and the number of occurrences in the comments.

**Figure 1: Suggestions for the sector to select, develop and retain the next generation of leaders.**

Theme	Notes
Mentorships (14)	Including Mentorships, Job Shadowing, Apprenticeships, and Internships. Fully funded to allow both mentor and mentee to have time to participate fully. Salaries for mentees.
Post-Secondary Arts Leadership programs (10)	Support from funders and the postsecondary sector to create rigorous programs in arts leadership for both EDs and ADs.
Conditions of Work (8)	Including fair market compensation comparable to the for-profit sector, reasonable hours of work, extended benefits.



	This will curb strong leaders leaving the sector.
Board Governance (6)	Need for board to change leadership hiring processes, stronger board development.
Create 2IC positions (5)	Create more paid associate ED and AD positions.
Succession (5)	Create process to identify internal and external successors. Incentivize leaders to groom a successor.
Diversity (5)	Expand diversity in leaders and board members. Invest in culturally diverse and indigenous communities.
Intergenerational dialogue (3)	Reduce competition between generations, expand dialogue. Involve more young people.
Increased Operational Funding (2)	Increase in operational funding will bring more stability to organizations, and make leadership positions viable.
Others	Certification, international best practices, expand industry conferences, strike a new Massey commission, raise the level of respect and profile of the arts sector to that of other sectors.

As seen above, some of the recommendations are not about direct leadership development but encompass creating an atmosphere that is conducive to running an effective and successful arts organization. One such instance is the call for improving compensation and benefits levels, as noted by one respondent, "...public Funders need to recognize that performing arts organizations...are run with a high percentage of free labour, with leadership and staff putting in many hours for which there is no pay". There is also a call to provide additional funding resources in order to properly run an organization.

Respondents also noted the importance of engaging boards of directors in this process, as noted: "Boards need to be brought into this conversation as they are the ones who do hiring of many top leadership positions in the country".

There are also comments regarding the intergenerational divide amongst the leadership in the sector. To provide opportunities for emerging leaders and to prevent the competition between the existing and upcoming leaders, one respondent recommended, "...to provide an

appropriate level of support for the older generation of leaders so that they don't feel stuck or threatened". And one respondent expressed frustration in the current perceived complacency in the older generation not encouraging the next group of leaders:

Baby boomers don't invite younger leaders in to conversations/juries at conferences. Baby boomers dominate every decision made at certain conferences. And if the baby boomers do decide to allow younger leaders into conversations they skip over generation x and go straight to millennials, so that mid-career leaders from generation x don't get opportunities to shape conferences/juries.

This list of suggestions for the sector can be further distilled to the three themes of the research question of this paper, shaping how we develop, select, and retain our leaders, as seen in Figure 2.

**Figure 2: Current Arts Leader Suggestions aligned to themes.**

Develop	Mentorships, Post-Secondary Arts Leadership programs, Creating 2IC positions
Select	Board Governance, Succession, Diversity
Retain	Conditions of work, Intergenerational dialogue, Increased operational funding

The findings of the primary research from both Current Arts Leaders and Recruiters/Board will be presented under these three themes.

## **Develop Performing Arts Leaders**

### **Current Arts Leaders Responses.**

*Education and training undertaken.* The education and training of respondents show very high levels of formal post-secondary education with 78.6% possessing university bachelor's degree or higher. ADs skewed slightly higher on education, with a higher percentage of leaders who possess masters and/or PhDs. While this level of education is high, most of the arts specific programs are in performance, production or creative practice; there are only a few instances of

specific arts management programs such as a college certificate in arts management (five instances), MBA with arts specialization (one instance), university degree in arts management (one instance outside of Canada).

***Leadership training undertaken.*** When asked to identify specific leadership training in both formal and informal programs, the highest quantitative responses from the cohort was attendance at sector conferences, professional development for outside courses, formal performance reviews, and external leadership training not at a post-secondary school. Other comments relating to leadership training include: programs with Indigenous Elders, fellowships, voluntary sector programs (such as Vantage Point's LeaderShift), leadership courses with the Banff Centre and Business for the Arts, attending industry events, and experience.

***Current professional development practice.*** When asked what they do for continued professional development, quantitative answers of respondents' top priorities are networking, sector conferences, mentorship, with courses coming in last. When asked for additional comments on their current professional development activity, sector conferences and peer networking were most frequently listed, with members noting the importance of regional presenting networks (Pacific Contact, Atlantic Presenters Association), Arts Service Organization conferences (such as PACT, CAPACOA, LMDA, IAMA), industry programming at performing arts festivals (such as PuSh, Magnetic North), and sector conferences such as the Canadian Arts Summit<sup>1</sup>. Courses that were listed were about creative practice, technical skills, and one reference to an Executive MBA. Other notes from respondents include having the opportunity to provide mentorship to another leader, executive coaching, reading and research,

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<sup>1</sup> Note: The Canadian Arts Summit is run by Business for the Arts, and is by invitation only to arts organizations larger than \$5 million, plus invited speakers and guests.

and serving on other non-profit boards. Some respondents noted the challenge of professional development and indicated that they did not participate, with one respondent noting, "There are very few opportunities for courses at my level". Another noted that they participate by, "...reading, listening, trying, evaluating. I do everything I can to avoid attending conferences".

A number of respondents felt that formal education in the sector is largely ineffective, stating:

Post-secondary arts leadership training in arts management and producing in Canada is extremely poor. We need to be able to better articulate what the hard skill & knowledge base should be for an effective manager/producer, and design post-secondary courses that prepare graduates effectively for work in our sector.

Further noted by a respondent, "...the fact that post-secondary performing arts academies like the National Theatre School and Ryerson Theatre School do not have arts management programs that exist alongside artist training is just [sub-optimal], and a huge lost opportunity to develop young (or not) talented producers who can facilitate the work of artists meeting an appreciative audience down the track". Specific to AD work, it was noted that there was a particular lack of formal training for ADs, and there was a large jump from directing a show to understanding the full scope of the position and the inner workings of leading an arts organization.

There was a significant amount of feedback from respondents about the importance of informal training through mentorships, apprenticeships, and formalized networking. These forms of training provide peer expertise, on-the-job experience, and the "...ability to have the chance to make a mistake in order to learn". While these forms of training are important, there was also repeated mention of the value of experience itself, "...I don't know that artistic leaders can be trained. I think the road they take to arrive at leadership IS the training".

Respondents commented on systemic barriers to advancing arts leadership, in the form of low labour mobility, and the lack of 'second in command' positions. As noted by respondents, low labour mobility is occurring firstly because of low turnover due to arts leaders staying in positions far longer, and secondly because there are not enough mid-sized organizations in Canada to allow career progression to successively larger institutions. In addition to this, Canadian arts organizations often do not have Associate EDs or ADs, the 'second in command' (2IC) positions that would allow for direct experience under a leader. As noted by a respondent, "...we are too flat lined. There are the Leaders, then the lower managers and coordinators". Another respondent also noted, "...we don't have enough funding for bringing up and support [sic] the next group of managers – so there are senior managers and then the various department jobs which don't pay enough, so people leave the sector".

There were counterarguments to the majority who think the sector is in fact supportive in developing future leaders. Two respondents felt that there were more opportunities than in previous generations, particularly being offered by ASOs. Two respondents remarked on the nature of the generational shift in that the emerging leaders will actually be the ones that are best equipped to solve these problems, and that the "...next generation doesn't always seem particularly interested in being selected or developed!". There was also one respondent in support of continued international hires, detailing: "...even if Canada...provides strong formal training, I believe (and I hope) our sector will continue to benefit from 'outsiders'".

### **Recruiters/Board Responses.**

Respondents felt that there is not enough training for arts leaders available at a high level, and that "...it's amazing that Canadian arts leaders do as well as they do". There is an increasing

number of arts management programs, but the impression of the respondents is that these are for young people starting out, whereas what is needed is intensive training for the 34-year-old mid-career leader who has decided they would like to be an AD or ED. It was strongly felt that Canada needs to invest more in the future arts leaders, with a respondent using a military metaphor, "...it's good to have front line experience, but that's not enough to become a military leader – you need to be trained in this as well".

### Select Performing Arts Leaders

#### Current Arts Leaders Responses.

Before reviewing the primary research findings against the theme of selecting leaders, it is useful to understand the overall makeup of the 90 Canadian performing arts leader survey respondents. Figure 3 displays a 'snapshot' of the respondents across the dimensions of their positions, geographic location, gender identity, visible minority status, type of organization, and individual compensation.

**Figure 3:** Demographic Snapshot of 90 survey respondents:

Dimension	Results in survey
ED or AD functions	ED 37%, AD 15%, Both 48%
Provincial Representation	Ontario 46%, BC 27%, Saskatchewan 9%, then AB, QC, MB, NL, NS
Gender Identity	<b>Overall:</b> 57% female, 43% male; <b>EDs</b> 70% female, 30% male; <b>ADs</b> , 8% female, 92% male
Visible Minority	<b>EDs</b> – 90% are NOT a visible minority, <b>ADs</b> 100% NOT a visible minority
Organizational Entities	70% charitable non-profits, 23% non-profit, 1% commercial, 6% other
Artistic Discipline	Theatre 31%, Multi-disciplinary 25%, Dance 12%, Music 10%, Family 8%, Opera 8%, Circus 2%, Other 4%
Organizational Budget	Most respondents in \$100,000-\$499,000 range, followed by \$500,00 – 999,999 range
Individual	Most respondents in the \$40,000-79,999 salary range

Compensation	
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This data shows a high dearth of visible minorities in leadership roles, a strong preponderance for men in artistic director roles, and a low salary in the \$40,000-79,999 range.

***Perception of current and desired skills aptitude.*** Respondents were asked about their perception of their own current aptitude in leadership skills and were to assign a score from 1 (low) to 5 (high). For EDs, in looking at the average responses for each, the range is relatively small from 2.73 to 4.20, with highest aptitude toward managing staff, external communications, strategic planning, financial management, and operations. The lowest scores were on facilities management, labour relations, technology/digital, and legal. ADs showed a similar small range, from 3.12 to 4.46, with the highest aptitude towards artist relations, season planning, external communications, and working with creative staff; and the lowest aptitude towards fundraising, their own creative practice, board relations, and strategic planning. When asked to comment on what skills respondents wanted to develop to enhance their leadership abilities, Figure 4 charts the responses according to themes and the number of occurrences in the comments.

**Figure 4: Additional skills respondents would like to develop**

Theme	Notes
Human Resources (20)	Including overall HR best practices, managing others, delegation, recruitment, team building, staff motivation and retention
Leadership Self Development (19)	Including overall communications both public speaking and writing, networking skills, skills as social leaders, developing wisdom, access to personal coach
Fundraising (19)	Overall skills at leading strategic fundraising efforts
Strategic Planning (13)	Overall strategic planning skills, plus business development, and considering new and different models
Marketing and Audience Development (15)	Overall marketing and communication skills, including audience development, sales, social media, mining data, and digital marketing tools.

Business Skills (10)	Including financial (bookkeeping, budget, financial planning), Legal
Change Management (8)	Skills around sustainability and organizational change, leading change not just in a financial crisis
Board Relations (6)	Including board governance, recruitment and board development
Negotiation (6)	Mediation, facilitation, conflict resolution, contract negotiation
Creative Practice (6)	Balancing time to run the business with creative practice.
Technology / Innovation (5)	All things digital
Other (less than 5 each)	Communicating with youth, cross cultural and diversity practices, cultural planning, advocacy and governmental relations, building up staff skills, program impact studies, volunteer recruitment, entrepreneurship, labour leadership.

The top priorities for respondents were developing human resources skills, leadership self-development (including public speaking, networking, and access to a coach), and fundraising skills, strategic planning, and marketing.

***Important attributes of Arts Leaders.*** When asked the most important attributes for EDs and ADs from a selected list, respondents on average felt that all attributes listed were very important, and very few were marked as n/a or not applicable for the position. With a rating scale of one (1) as low, and five (5) as high, the average range for all attributes for EDs is 3.96 to 4.71, and for ADs is 4.07 to 4.79. The top five attributes for EDs are problem solving, being accountable for actions, good decision making, long term thinking, and collaboration. The least important attribute for EDs was being a risk-taker. For ADs, the top five attributes are collaboration, being creative, being accountable for actions, being committed to the mission, and motivating/empowering others. The least important attribute for ADs is delegation. Additional comments regarding ED attributes underlined the notion of all these attributes being equally important, "...I realize I said all are a priority. The truth is that all are critical and depending on the lifecycle needs of the organization, some are more important than others". In contrast, one



respondent noted, "...this seems to be the list of everything they should be good at. What can other people manage for them?". Additional comments from respondents added attributes such as resilience, working within diverse cultural communities, persuasion, courage, determination, and managing up to boards. Additional comments regarding AD attributes echo the need for ADs to possess all of these attributes, "...the leader must be adept at all of the above – falling short in any limits the vitality of the organization and its potential for sustainability through the ages". Additional attributes for ADs from respondents include a strong personal art practice, and the ability to think outside of the arts box.

***Career Path of Arts Leaders.*** Arts leaders were asked to detail their last three positions to collect data on their 'career path'. While individual careers vary widely, the aim was to see if any patterns emerge. For the ADs the paths of the respondents were very similar, as shown in Figure 5. First step is usually the creative practice of the individual on a freelance basis, then there may be an associate artistic director position, then artistic director, then moving to larger arts organizations.

**Figure 5: Artistic Director Career Path**

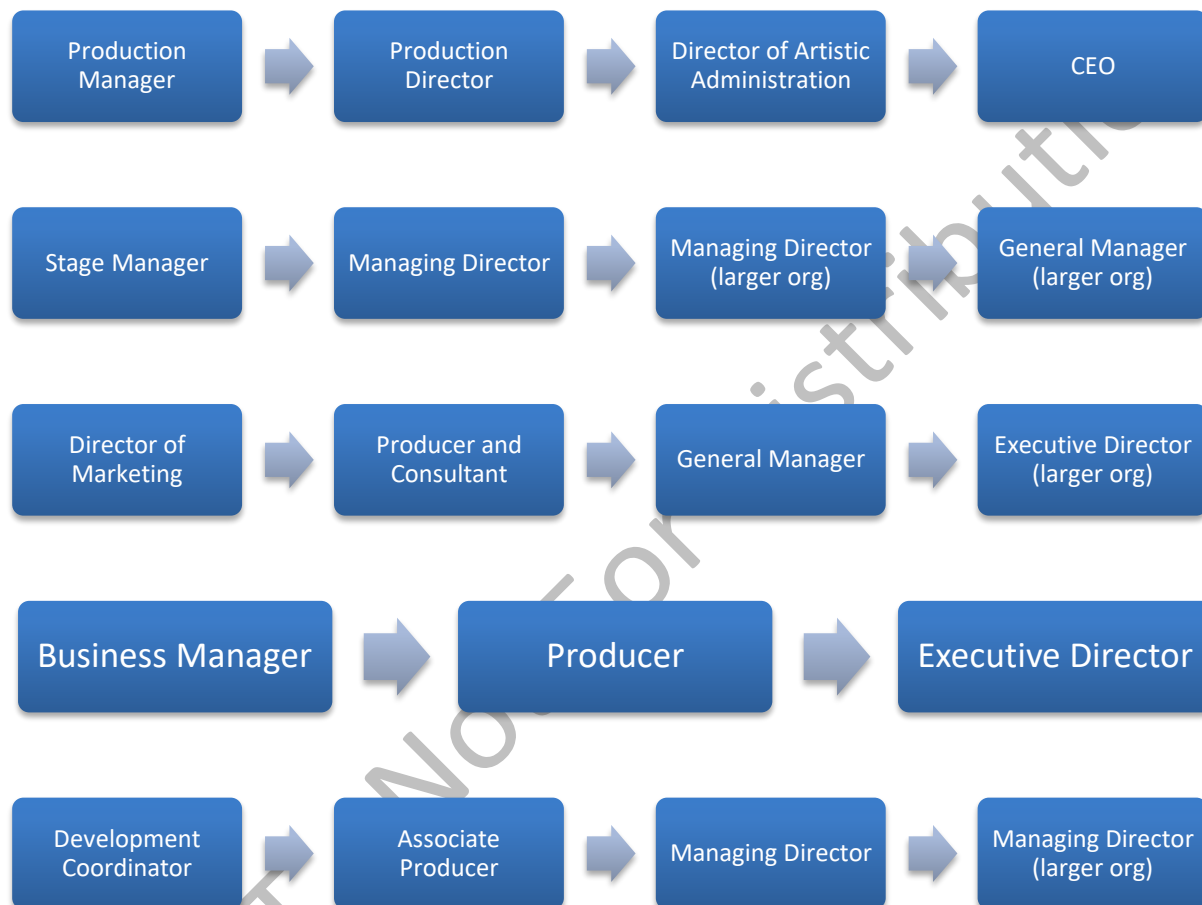


*Source: Primary Resource Data*

For EDs, the career path to their current position is far more diverse, and many options exist. Figure 6 shows some sample career paths as detailed by respondents, with early careers starting in stage management, production management, marketing, development, and producing;

with eventual moves towards leading a company, and in some cases moving to larger companies. There is also a consistency in artistic discipline.

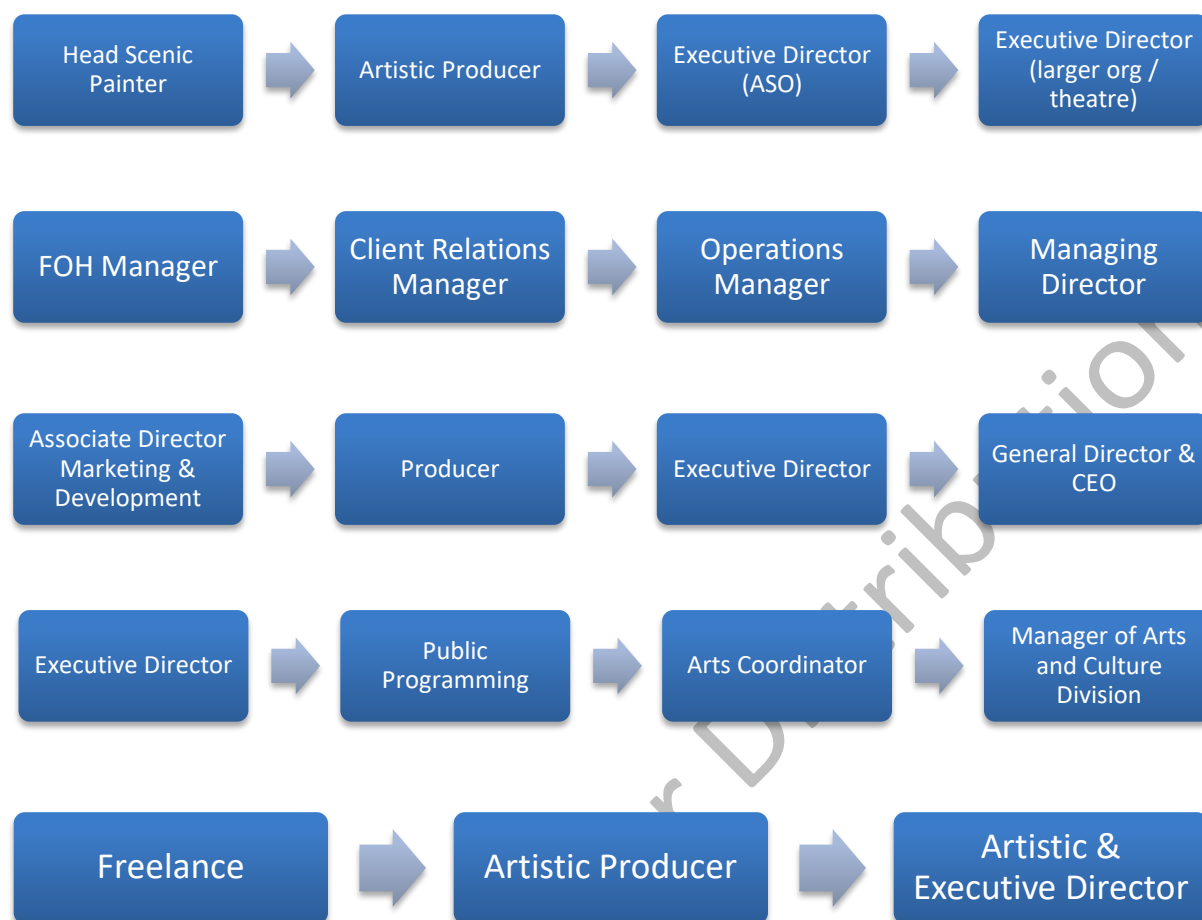
**Figure 6: Executive Director Career Path Samples**



*Source: Primary Resource Data*

For those whose positions are BOTH ED and AD functions, the career paths are yet again more diverse as show in Figure 7, with many titles and positions going into larger institutions and municipalities. These positions are more multi-disciplinary in art form, with respondents moving between different artistic disciplines and types of organizations.

**Figure 7: BOTH Career Path Samples**



Source: Primary Resource Data

**Optimal work experience for arts leaders.** Respondents were asked to provide comment on the experience that is optimal for EDs and ADs to possess to be successful in their jobs. Figure 8 and 9 below show a grouping of the themes and the number of occurrences in the comments.

**Figure 8: Work experience that an ED should have**

Theme	Notes
Specific Functional Areas (81)	Human Resources (27) including managing staff, hiring, team management, labour relations; Financial Management (21); Marketing & Communications (12) including public relations, sales, audience development, customer service;

	Board relations and governance (11); Fundraising (9) including grant writing; Volunteer Management (1)
Leadership & Management (21)	Including strategic planning, leading others, knowing how to run an organization, translating vision to reality
Organization Size or Type & Sector Type (25)	A balance of working in business and the non-profit sector, working in the overall arts sector, having previous roles such as stage manager or director, experience in different sizes of organizations, experience either as an ED, or directly working or shadowing under an ED.
Artistic / Mission Commitment (14)	Experience showing a commitment and passion to the artistic process, and mission of the organization. Having worked closely with artists to plan and implement creative projects.
Ability to be a generalist and have a breadth of experience (9)	Demonstrable and meaningful experience in multiple departments and working inside a number of different organizations.
Community and Sector (9)	Experience working with community groups, participating in advocacy, working with diverse cultures, and strong connections in the sector.

The respondents saw the need for EDs to have direct experience with all functional areas, followed by leadership and management experience. Specific comments from respondents underline the unique nature of an ED in the arts sector, "...budgets and grant writing are learned skills but a visceral understanding of the art is vital to every decision I make". Additionally, an ED will have more success with exposure to more positions, "...the wider the range of experience, the more effective an ED will be, with understanding of all levels of the organization".

**Figure 9: Work experience that an AD should have**

Theme	Notes
Artistic Knowledge and Practice (56)	Including a strong creative practice, exhibiting clear artistic vision, written and oral communication of artistic goals, working with artists, knowledge and curiosity about artistic trends and other disciplines, building an audience through programming choices.
Leadership & Management (46)	Including managing people and teams, long term artistic

	planning, leading change and taking risks, artist negotiations, leadership in creative environment, managing complex projects, commitment to partnership with ED.
Specific Functional Areas (40)	Marketing and Communications (14) including audience development, linking mission to audience to art, understanding the market; Financial (11); Production experience (9) including self-producing; "Running the Business" (6)
Organization Size or Type & Sector Type (16)	Experience working in a wide range of sizes of organizations, as well as a variety of artistic sensibilities and temperaments. Important to have both small and large scale experience. Experience working as an AD, or working directly under an AD.
Community and Sector (16)	Building relationships through partnerships and collaborations, participating in advocacy, international experience, deep understanding of the sector, community development.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the need for artistic experience is paramount for an AD, but closely followed by the need for leadership and management experience. Additional comments remarked on the balance required for an AD, "...being a strong leader and visionary of the art form, i.e.[sic]: being innovative, being quality oriented, and knowing what it takes to put on a show which will thrill an audience". Conversely, other respondents remarked on the existing typical career path for ADs and the potential to reconsider this: "It's time for us as an industry to reconsider if ADs all have to be directors or if we'd have a healthier sector with more diversity in gender, culture, if we also looked at writers, producers, dramaturges as potential ADs".

Four respondents detailed a concerning lack of diversity in the arts sector, especially in regards to representation of women and visible minorities in leadership positions both in management and the board. As noted, "...the boards of our largest institutions aren't working with a commitment to address sector change, like increasing diversity of gender, culture in

leadership, particularly in AD roles”. There is a call for boards to not just discuss these issues, but also act on them.

### **Additional comments on Leadership in the sector**

Regarding boards of directors, respondents found the legally required board structure to be often problematic and outdated and does not serve arts organizations as they exist today, with the opinion that, “...boards are for the most part out of touch with the sector, are working in silos”. Respondents felt that there needs to be a clarification of board and management roles, and board governance strategy would be improved if there were professional development to guide the board in leadership succession planning and recruitment. Considering the challenge of these structural complexities, arts leaders must be adept at managing this delicate relationship: “...the role of the Board of Directors is crucial in a performing arts organization, this factor can never be taken too lightly. There is a severe lack in our industry of knowledge and resources in how to cultivate and retain a good board member”.

Regarding ED/AD succession, respondents identified this as a key issue in arts leadership that is difficult to do, and often avoided by leaders and boards. As noted by one respondent, “...it is very difficult to do true succession planning for most organizations. This is partly because we don't plan for succession from within”. There were also a few comments regarding lack of career mobility contributing to succession challenges, “...of course there are few opportunities for ADs in particular to go to, so often they hang on in roles that they perhaps should have left”. One opinion was that there should be shorter term appointments for leaders, to encourage labour mobility and a more dynamic succession. With ED/AD recruitment, respondents felt that there are structural challenges in current leadership hiring practices, from

the challenge of a board's inexperience in the sector, to the need to include more artistic and management staff on hiring committees, and finally the challenge for candidates to be seriously considered for jobs at larger arts organizations when they have only led smaller entities. As queried by one respondent about choices that are made, "...why is there such a shortage of leaders? Boards must hire more daringly". In further support of this, one respondent put forward, "...hiring committees go for the shiny and tend to sit back and choose from who have applied rather than heading out and recruiting young (35-40) active and energetic talent. People who have shown entrepreneurial acumen and innovative producing".

**Recruiters/Boards.** A significant amount of discussion with this stakeholder group was regarding the process of selecting performing arts leaders. There was unanimous agreement that it is the responsibility of the board of directors to recruit the leaders of the organization, both EDs and ADs. There is also a consistent belief that boards of directors, with a few exceptions, do not possess the correct knowledge, ability, and processes to carry out this important task. Specific feedback includes the fact that boards are not involved in the day to day running of the organization, nor do they know enough about the arts field, and "...they don't value people doing the arts administration, so who do they hire?". When it comes to ED positions, boards may often think that the arts is not a specialized sector, and therefore a manager in any sector can transfer their experience to be a manager in the arts – but this is a wrong assumption. And for AD positions – the board has a challenge in critically assessing artistic merit in candidates, and can often be charmed by charismatic candidates without knowing what criteria to evaluate their candidacy. Unless boards have arts sector expertise, along with human resources expertise, they should avoid what a respondent called board 'hubris', and seek advice about how to make this important decision.

Regarding the trend of arts organizations using recruitment firms to assist them, respondents had very mixed experiences. With one respondent, the organization had developed a mature human resources department, and therefore was able to carry out leadership recruitment themselves, at the same quality as search firms could offer. Conversely, other respondents noted that the use of search firms is on the rise, as the sector is under more scrutiny and is being asked to both professionalize business practices such as recruiting and also be transparent and accountable in hiring. But the biggest barrier to engage a recruiting firm is cost, and most organizations with a budget of less than \$2 million could not afford the expense.

In terms of composition of the hiring committees, the respondents diverge in their feedback – on one end of the spectrum is the opinion that there should be only board members on the hiring committee, without any external stakeholders or staff, whereas the other respondents state that it should be a mix of stakeholders, according to the needs of the organization and the position. Important stakeholders to include are: staff - who provide key operational information and are important for the buy-in process; former board members - who know the organization and may have key expertise; external artistic leaders from similar organizations - who can, especially in the case of hiring ADs, provide key expertise on the creative side; and other stakeholders as appropriate, such as donors and community leaders. One respondent stated that setting the right balance on the hiring committee was the most critical part of this process.

After setting a hiring committee, the next process is arriving at selection criteria for the position. Whether a recruitment agency is utilized, the common feedback about setting selection criteria was to start with the priorities and needs as laid out in the organization's strategic plan, look at existing job descriptions, and work toward creating a new set of criteria bespoke for this position. The hardest to define are objective criteria surrounding an AD role: "...boards will be



hesitant to talk about the art, even when it's hiring an artistic director. They will talk around the topic, but won't talk meaningfully about the art". This process is generally the same for ADs and EDs, but with a different set of criteria. What has changed from a content point of view is that a new focus in recent years is for ADs to have to deal with fundraising, as opposed to previous eras when organizations could rely on more of their contributed income to come from government funding.

When it comes to the typical career paths seen for EDs and ADs in Canada, respondents did not necessarily see a clear path for these two leadership functions. For EDs – they may come out of general management roles within the same artistic discipline, or they may come from front line departments such as marketing. But more often, hiring committees are looking for sound leadership experience, business acumen including sound financial management, board relations and fundraising. For ADs the respondents said that usually the AD was a creative practitioner first, for example a director, choreographer, musician; but also need to have great passion and commitment to the art form. What was observed by respondents is the systemic challenge in the Canadian performing arts sector when it comes to available positions in increasing sizes of organizations. For example if you are running a \$2 million orchestra, you are not going to be ready to jump to the \$30 million Toronto Symphony Orchestra and there are not incremental steps in between available in Canada.

The other systemic issue observed by respondents was the lack of internal candidates moving up into leadership positions in the same organization, and a lack of "Second In Command" (2IC) positions such as Associate ED or Associate AD in order to train potential leaders. One respondent outlined the challenge that due to a scarcity of financial resources, there is often a big salary gap between the leaders of the organization and the next level of staff,

so there is not a lot of 'bench strength' to draw from with more junior staff. In other sectors, you would have a strong layer of vice presidents with generous compensation, so you are constantly training up the next level. It was mentioned by two respondents that in their memory, this had only ever happened in recent years with the Stratford Festival, where the current ED and AD were both internal promotions, and their impression was that both were groomed and prepared for these positions.

In discussion regarding the rise of international hires for arts leaders in Canada, there were strong opinions on both ends of the spectrum. One respondent felt that this was a good opportunity to bring in new ideas to Canada, while other respondents felt very strongly that this trend is a problem for the sector. There's a sense that Canadians need to leave the country to be seen as successful, and "...there's a lingering colonial attitude that we should attract a big international person to run our arts organizations". The reasons for concern range from the view that, as charitable entities who are subsidized by government and patrons, international hires, which take away a job from a Canadian, are not always justifiable; to a concern that this practice is perpetuating the lack of opportunities for existing leaders, who will never get developed to their full potential. International hires can be costly, as it takes a long time for them to understand the local market, and then they don't often stay long, which then starts the disruptive process of yet again hiring a new leader. When pressed why they thought this was happening, respondents gave two reasons: one is that boards often want to look at the 'exciting' star hire and two that boards think that Canadian leaders are not ready.

## **Retain Performing Arts Leaders**

### **Current Arts Leaders.**

***Current position information.*** For status of employment for the full cohort, 72% are full time, 20% are part time, and 8% other. EDs and BOTH roughly follow this pattern, but ADs show a distinct difference with only 54% being full time, and 46% part time. In looking at the number of years that respondents have been in their position, EDs show a smooth progression in years of tenure, and have the longer standing years of experience over ADs and BOTH. For ADs there is also a jump from three years to nine years. In terms of reporting structure, the majority of respondents report directly to the board, with a small minority reporting either to the other functional leader (for example ED reports to AD, or vice versa), or another title within a larger institution. The compensation of respondents skews very low, with the highest number of respondents (26, or 31%) in the \$40,000 - \$79,999 salary range and only seven respondents (9%) earning more than \$120,000 per annum.

***Next career step.*** When respondents were asked what their next position would be if they opted to leave their current jobs, the quantitative answers show that 34.2% chose 'didn't know yet', with the same amount choosing 'moving into the same position in a larger organization'; followed by retiring, leaving the sector, and moving into the same position in same size organization. When asked for additional comments, the frequent themes are about: transitioning out of the sector into a significantly different role (teaching, consulting, politics, social change), passion for the mission (moving to an organization whose mission they value more), moving away from full time work, moving to an organization that has more resources, being of retirement age but not being able to retire, better conditions of work such as compensation and less intense work hours, and an increased focus on art in the work. Regarding career mobility, one respondent commented, "There are few opportunities to 'move up' in [my artistic discipline]. As a result, I have tried to broaden my skills and profile...to position me for

future opportunities”. Outlining a rationale for not leaving their current position, another respondent stated, “If I were to leave my current position, it might be difficult to find a similar position in another organization of the same size. Boards may be looking for generational change”.

***Desired future professional development.*** When asked for comments on what specific professional development activities would further their career, respondents largely noted the same functional areas as previously noted in the skills they want to develop. In addition to these areas, respondents provided comments about wanting experience running a larger institution, experience with artistic collaboration, and a broader experience of other non-profit and social profit sector activities. Mentorships and job shadowing in similar or different sectors were also noted as key areas to help in training. Respondents also noted barriers to continued professional development including financial resources, and a concern about personal workload and the lack of a trained staff that could backfill work should the leader pursue opportunities. Some respondents also noted that it would be their preference not to have to learn all of these job functions in the first place. If they had trained staff working at a strong level, they wouldn't have to learn and do everything.

Another theme from the qualitative data showed that respondents feel there should be a look at the current organizational models in the arts sector, “...I think we need to step away from institution-building and entrenched structures, and think more about attracting resources around good ideas / projects in flexible, temporary ways”. One respondent posited that the ongoing lack of resources for positive working conditions and resources appropriate to activity will further limit the ability to advance the state of arts leadership. There was also a call to a larger review, “...nationally, we haven't looked at the arts sector in a holistic, contextual way since the

Massey Commission of 1951...the state of research, advocacy and policy development is sadly anemic”.

**Recruiters/Boards.** When asked if they perceived that there was an upcoming ‘leadership pipeline problem’, two respondents emphatically said that this was the case and has been in the works for several years. There is a lot of raw talent of potential arts leaders in Canada who are not being developed. In their view, it is the responsibility of the larger arts organizations and larger funders to start investing seriously in the future of the arts leadership.

## Analysis and Discussion

The objective of this section is to analyze and compare the literature review with the primary research findings. Again, the data will be presented in the three major themes, developing, selecting, and retaining performing arts leaders. The content of the findings of the primary research shows both alignment and divergence from the literature.

### Developing Performing Arts Leaders

**Analysis.** From the business leadership literature, there is a divergence in the process for developing leaders in the performing arts sector, as outlined in the business examples of Charan, Drotter, and Noel (2011), and Saporito and Winum (2012) to create strong internal leadership development. As shown in the primary research, while arts leaders are highly educated, very few have formal training in business or arts management. The bulk of training has been informal through conference activity and learning on the job. The impression of the majority of respondents was that the performing arts sector is not doing enough to formally and informally train future leaders.

**Discussion.** The training and professional development as identified by current arts leaders can be categorized into formal training (post-secondary institutions and high level training delivery, informal training (peer networking, conferences, mentoring, etc.), and experiential training (strong labour mobility and associate leadership positions). Regarding formal training, arts leaders have high levels of post-secondary training, but not in management or arts leadership. Current leaders identified informal training as a key part of their current professional development practice and this is something that is happening at a higher proliferation in the sector. Experiential training is not happening to the extent it needs to in the

sector due to systemic issues – lack of labour mobility with baby boomers not retiring, and the lack of associate positions to gain real on-the-job experience at a senior level. As seen in the career paths of the current arts leaders, it has been commonplace to see Associate AD positions, but rarely are there Associate EDs. It is also not known if the Associate AD positions were senior leadership positions, or filling a functional role (such as being a resident director or dramaturge on productions). Like Charan's (2011) notion of career passages starting with managing yourself up to enterprise manager, and CEO – since the levels are structurally missing in the performing arts organizations – it is important to create a new way to engender this type of career progression and training. The biggest gaps shown here which could be addressed are in formal training and experiential training.

### **Selecting Performing Arts Leaders**

**Analysis.** Amongst the business leadership literature, the primary results defining skills, traits and attributes of arts leaders shows similarities to the models displayed by Kouzes and Posner (2012), Collins (2001), and Drucker (2006), showing the leader's ability to influence a group with a common goal through a shared vision, building a collaborative environment to create art, and a need to show great personal effectiveness while balancing challenging obstacles amidst scarce resources.

The existing literature on non-profit leadership focusses on organizational health and capacity building, and not on leadership development as seen in the work by Drucker (1990) and Stevens (2008) – but can still provide valuable information on the skills required for arts leaders. As such, the findings show that performing arts leaders do align with these notions of Drucker's (1990) asserting that the leader must be mission driven, and the keen need to raise resources

because of the scarcity of earned income. Performing arts leaders are keenly aware of this and have identified this as skills that they possess.

Alternatively, where there is a gap from the business literature to the results is in the aforementioned works by Charan, Drotter, and Noel (2011), and Saporito and Winum (2012) to create strong executive recruitment practices and succession planning. According to the findings, there is a considerable gap in the performing arts sector regarding the process of ED/AD selection in regards to carrying out rigorous recruitment processes through boards of directors and developing succession plans to both groom internal candidates and source external candidates. And Kaiser (2010) discussed the problem about boards of directors making leadership hiring decisions even if they do not have sector expertise.

**Discussion.** The salient points to review to correlate the literature review and the findings are: the skills and attributes needed by arts leaders, the selection process as overseen by non-profit boards of directors and the lack of diversity in current arts leadership.

Regarding skills and attributes, current arts leaders have a strong sense of what is required for EDs and ADs to be successful in their jobs, which aligns nicely with the business literature regarding the makeup of a leader. The one difference however is the balance of strategic work with hands-on operational work for an arts leader. Due to the size and staffing levels of arts organizations, EDs and ADs end up doing less strategic work then advised by Kouzes and Posner (2012), Collins (2001), and Drucker (2006); and in fact have to do a little bit of everything and do it all well. The specific skills, attributes, and prior experience advantageous to EDs and ADs can be drawn from the results of the findings, and would be helpful for developing a leadership development curriculum.



The larger gap in the sector is the challenge posed regarding the role of boards of directors in their responsibility to hire, fire, and manage their direct reports, usually the EDs and/or ADs of arts organizations. Overall board training is required firstly to gain expertise in the sector and the unique nature of the machinations of arts organizations and secondly the skills required to recruit executives to run those organizations. If resources allow, boards can hire recruitment agencies with arts sector experience, but should not be released of the obligation to understand how to carry out this important duty. While there is no doubt from the findings that current arts leaders could benefit from improved training, there is already raw talent in Canada that needs to be recognized and it is not clear that it is being seen and valued by those doing the hiring.

While the initial problem statement, research question, and literature review did not plan on undertaking the discussion of diversity in Canadian performing arts leadership, the recurrence of this feedback in the results from Current Arts Leaders requires attention. The lack of visible minorities in leadership positions, and the lack of women in AD positions needs to be reviewed and addressed. Boards and management must begin to make tangible actions towards addressing the imbalance in arts leadership; particularly for women, people of colour, and indigenous people.

### **Retaining Performing Arts Leaders**

**Analysis.** Regarding the concern for the performing arts sector to retain its leaders, the arts specific literature provided the most compelling sources to analyze alongside the primary research. The research findings show an alignment with the arts specific literature in the

awareness and identification of challenges for performing arts leadership, though not the exact steps to solve the problem.

Respondents shared Clapp's (2010) observation of the impending leadership crisis with the retiring of the baby boomers, and the challenge of lack of intergenerational work to create the new leaders. Artistic leaders in the study noted similar challenges as seen in the work of Papp (2010), Hall (1983), and Perloff (2015); including the need for balance of creative practice while running an institution, managing boards, and creating a strong artistic vision which is relevant to audiences.

What is different from the literature review overall is the running pattern in the findings of the self-knowledge in the arts of gaps in how the sector is going to develop, select, and retain future arts leaders as well as the shared responsibility of this leadership development to be undertaken between boards of directors, current leaders, post-secondary institutions, funders and large arts organizations. While this self-knowledge in the sector about shortcomings is valuable, what is missing are tangible steps to address the challenges and create the conditions of success for the next generations of performing arts leaders.

**Discussion.** In order to retain skilled performing arts leaders, funders and boards first need to understand the value of skilled arts leaders and the conditions that contribute to the success of the arts leader. While improving the issues in developing and selecting arts leaders will help, there also needs to be work done to retain them. Organizational conditions that would contribute to success, according to the respondents, include strong board relations with clear governance, proper level of programming according to resources, and ample staff to do the work. Individual conditions include a reasonable work schedule and reasonable compensation/benefit packages.

## Two Additional Issues

**International Hires.** While there was significant mention in findings from interviews with recruiters and board members of the peril and potential damage of the extent of international hires, it was only mentioned explicitly in the leadership audit on a few occasions. This may be perhaps due to the high rate of respondents from smaller arts organization who wouldn't be 'in the running' for the jobs in the larger institutions and therefore not directly impacted, or that there were a number of other concerns and challenges more pressing to these respondents. While the catalyst for this study was the observation of the inordinate number of international hires into the 'big' jobs, this lack of explicit mention still underlines the need to focus all efforts on improving the status and quality of domestic candidates.

**A Shared Responsibility.** The sector needs to approach this systemic issue of arts leadership development on a platform of shared responsibility including: post-secondary institutions, arts leadership development providers, funders, and large arts organizations (through boards and management). NTS can, and should, be the catalyst to creating this shared responsibility reaching out to other national partners such as the National Arts Centre as a leadership performing arts organization, and the Banff Centre as a provider of advanced and innovative models of training.

## Recommendations and Implementation

With the secondary research and the valuable primary research data, strategic recommendations will contribute to answering the question of what does Canada need to do to develop, select, and retain the future leaders of our performing arts organizations. The following recommendations were prepared for NTS but are directed at the arts sector as a whole, with the optimal goal of NTS acting as the national leader in initiating these changes sector-wide by developing new curriculum and initiatives.

### Develop Arts Leaders

- **Develop a “National Leadership Development Network” to develop a framework of formal arts leadership training across the country.** NTS can act as a leader to facilitate existing formal training programs to coordinate efforts and align needs to be covered at all levels of delivery. This group will then determine the best way to deliver high level training to be available at different levels: beginner, emerging leader, mid-career, senior leaders, etc. For example, NTS can create and deliver beginner and emerging leadership programs, and then feed into and oversee the development of mid-career and senior leader training in partnership with other large training providers such as universities and national partners. The sector can also look at centralizing and standardizing current stand-alone smaller training programs in order to reduce duplication of effort. Bringing these together will result in the sharing of information, building on existing resources, and creating a national canon.
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- Formal training for mid-career and senior leaders needs to be of a high quality and be structured so that it can occur while they are working full time. Subject matter should include overall leadership training for both EDs and ADs, but also training in functional

areas as outlined in the findings, such as human resources, fundraising, strategic planning, marketing/audience development, business skills, etc.

**Implementation:**

- *Short Term – 6-12 months* – NTS to create new 'entry level' curriculum for ED / AD leadership courses to fit within current program cohorts. Deliver this through 1-2 years of cohorts, and once the training delivery is refined, NTS could then expand into a separate ED/AD program either as an extended semester to current students, or as a stand-alone. The resources required will be in curriculum development and instruction delivery. This step can happen independently from other recommendations.
- *Long Term – 1-3 years* - NTS to call a round table with key stakeholders including post-secondary institutions, large performing arts NFP's, and funders to create the **National Leadership Development Network** to discuss the long term plan to solve the impending issue of a leadership pipeline problem. The objectives of the national leadership development network are: to agree to the 'shared responsibility' and to take a systemic approach to the issue of creating more fulsome arts leadership training. First steps can be agreement on sharing information, aligning existing leadership development efforts, and shared advocacy to find the funding to support this effort. NTS will be at the centre of this advocacy. Initial resources will be the time and travel expenses for the leaders involved. Eventually funding will be required to implement the sector wide initiative. Work can begin now to create the network players involved and start the dialogue, but this will take a few years to come to fruition.

- **Create a Second-in-Command (2IC) bursary.** To recognize the value of experiential training on the job and the systemic dearth in the sector of senior level Associate ED and Associate AD positions, NTS shall create a bursary to create 2IC positions in organizations across Canada. This bursary would pay a market-competitive full salary and benefits for two years for a mid-level candidate to hold a newly created position of Associate ED or AD at a mid to large size arts organizations. These people will job shadow an arts leader and will be given responsibility within that leader's portfolio, but shouldn't take on an existing functional area such as marketing, fundraising, dramaturgy or company management. This position shall act as a true 2IC to the leader. The host organizations will be provided this staff member free of charge, but must agree to take on the process of mentoring and teaching the candidate.

#### **Implementation:**

- *Short Term – 6-12 months* – the main resources will be sourcing funds to pay the 2IC salary and finding arts organizations with the willingness to take on a 2IC. The concurrent work of the national leadership development network will assist in creating these resources within funders and mid to large arts organizations.
- *Long Term – 1-3 year* – with the establishment of the National Leadership Development Network, transfer the administration and overall responsibility from NTS to the network.

#### **Select Arts Leaders**

- **Board Development Certification** – NTS to partner with a national body such as the Banff Centre for Leadership and create board training and certification for performing arts board

members, particularly in the areas of leadership recruitment and succession. For ED/AD recruitment, train boards of directors and provide tools and resources to engage in the recruitment of performing arts leaders including: setting position criteria, hiring committee composition, and selection methods. For succession, create tools and templates and training in addition to incentivizing organizations to carry it out.

### **Implementation**

- *Short term – 1-12 months* – NTS to first develop partnerships and create buy-in with existing board chairs, perhaps through the Canadian Arts Summit. Demonstrate the value of the training for the proper functioning of boards and recommend that board leadership encourage new and existing board members to take the courses and pursue certification. Meet with funders to advocate for the need/request for grantees to demonstrate acumen at the board level in the key areas of ED/AD hiring and succession planning.
- *Long term – 1-4 years* – NTS to partner with a national body such as The Banff Centre for Leadership to create board development certification courses. The Banff Centre could deliver the training on a per-service fee charged to board members, and NTS would act in their role as advocates and leaders of the National Leadership Development Network. The resource required is the time to cultivate and propose the partnerships and program development.
- **Create a Diverse Leadership Task Force** – NTS to spearhead the creation of a diverse leadership task force – with link to the National Leadership Development Network, but with independent oversight. The objective of the task force is to take a deeper analysis of the current state and make recommendations to the national network in areas such as: diversity

'report card' reporting on representation in board and management leadership, creating bursaries and scholarships for training, and employment opportunities geared specifically to the underrepresented groups.

### **Implementation**

- *Short term – 1-12 months* – reach out to communities of underrepresented groups to set desired task force composition, objectives, and identify potential task force candidates. The resource required is time and potential travel for meetings.
- *Long term – 1-2 years* – create a staff member within NTS to coordinate the task force. Have task force set up and working, with regular reports and recommendations to the national network.

### **Retain Art Leaders**

- **Advocate for positive conditions of employment** – In order to retain the leaders that have now been developed and selected, attention must be paid to creating a base level of 'positive conditions of employment' for arts leaders. Areas such as compensation, benefits, staffing levels, hours of work, budget level to programming activity can be explored by first empirically measuring the breadth of the problem and then to raise awareness with funders and board members to move towards and accept 'livable' as well as competitive conditions for arts leaders in order to not lose them to other sectors.

### **Implementation**

- *Long term – 1-4 years* – it is recommended that this be addressed after the previous recommendations are in motion, both in terms of the available bandwidth of NTS, but also to build on the value added by the previous efforts in order to make the case.



## Conclusion

The purpose of this OMP-C is to provide the client (NTS) with research and recommendations to contribute to their current process of developing an Arts Leadership program and to answer the question “What does Canada need to do to develop, select, and retain the future leaders of performing arts organizations?”.

The literature review provided key foundational sources in business, non-profit leadership and arts leadership studies, but there was very little Canadian arts research, and no data on the state of our current leadership. The primary research undertaken looked at: the demographic data of current leaders, their organizations, and the opinions and feedback of both current leaders, recruiters, and a few board chairs about leadership skills and attributes, the recruitment process, and the state of arts leadership training. Considerable data were collected from current arts leaders and, along with the information from recruiters/boards, was analyzed along the themes of how to select, develop, and retain Canada's performing arts leaders. A clear picture arises about the current state of arts leaders and what current arts leaders feel are priorities in leadership development. From this, recommendations were derived for the client to assist in creation of their arts leadership program.

In terms of unresolved issues in this report and, as detailed in the findings, this study covers just English speaking Canadian arts leadership and does not represent all sizes and types of performing arts organizations. What needs further exploration is to bring boards of directors into the conversation, as well as leaders at the largest performing arts institutions. They are key partners to the success in an overall effort to improvement Canadian performing arts leadership. An additional theme that arose through the primary research was the current lack of commitment

by boards and managements in offsetting the current imbalance in the diversity of our board and staff leadership. But when implemented, the recommendations will be applicable to all arts leaders in Canada.

Performing arts leaders and their organizations are resilient, innovative, and skilled at managing near-impossible operational feats with scarce resources – all the while serving the all-important mission. But the sector also recognizes and names its deficiencies when it comes to its leadership. While this self-awareness is both perceptive and admirable, what will be important for the sector is to take action now to prevent a leadership crisis and proactively create strong, dynamic leaders who will stay for the long run. Implementing these recommendations will contribute greatly to the sector by working towards a stronger way to develop, select and retain the very best of performing arts leaders in Canada.

### **The Result for the National Theatre School**

Once these recommendations are implemented, the NTS can aspire to achieve the following:

- NTS will be known as the centre of excellence for training arts leaders alongside their current programs,
- NTS will be the leader, the advocate, and the mediator amongst: post-secondary institutions, arts leadership development providers, funders, and large arts organizations (both boards and management). NTS will be the locus to bring them together to take part in this collaborative and strategic process to engender excellence in Canadian arts leadership.

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## Appendix A: Lifecycle Management and Leadership Attributes

### Idea Stage

- Creative
- Free-thinker
- Opportunity-driven
- Not bound by time
- Good understanding of the marketplace
- Single-minded
- Committed to the cause
- Able to follow through

### Start-up Stage

- Energetic
- Able to balance multiple priorities
- Able to handle continual interruptions
- Multi-talented generalist
- Single-minded but adaptable
- Risk-taker

### Growth Stage

- Dynamic
- Strong base of personal reserves
- Able to inspire and motivate
- Energetic
- Able to plan and provide focus
- Able to appreciate, create and routinize systems to make certain functions easier
- Good judgement and instinct to know what opportunities to pursue and which to decline
- Comfortable with continual change
- Understand the servant/leader management model

### Maturity Stage

- Good manager who likes to manage people and processes
- Respected in the field
- Policy and procedures oriented
- Sees the value in stability, while always seeking ways to improve client/community service

- Capable of motivating staff
- Understands and values organizational structure

### Decline/Regeneration Stage

- Committed to mission
- Willingness to shake the status quo
- Capable of objective rather than subjective analysis
- Understands the dynamics of organizational renewal
- Highly responsible with no tendencies to blame or deny
- Able to motivate and lead others to status quo

### Turnaround Stage

- "Take Charge" personality
- Confidence builder
- Highly energetic
- Comfortable with bad news, confrontation, conflict
- Doesn't take things personally
- Problem solver
- Able to make quick decisions and think long term
- Doesn't need others approval

### Terminal Stage

- Good communicator
- Able to accomplish tasks in an orderly fashion
- Good negotiator
- Cares about what will happen to clients if organization terminates
- Respectful of process, but capable of some emotional distance.

Source: Stevens, S. K. (2008). *Nonprofit Lifecycles* (2nd ed.). St. Paul, MN: Stagewise Enterprises, Inc. Page 73-75.

## Appendix B: Primary Research Outline

### 1. Current Arts Leader Data:

- **WHO:** the AD and ED leads of performing arts organizations in Canada, who is not a functional department head but assistant or associate to the ED and/or AD.
- **HOW:** online survey, phone interview follow-ups to cover representatives from different sizes of organization and genres.
  - Note: In addition to reaching out to my own and the client's arts networks, I will seek out partners to help spread the word and help encourage participants to reply: Canadian Arts Summit, Professional Association of Canadian Theatre, Canadian Arts Presenting Association, Provincial presenting organizations, Canadian Dance Assembly, Dance Umbrella, Toronto Association for Performing Arts, Cultural HR Council, Generator. I will offer to provide them with aggregated non-confidential summary results.
- **WHAT TO ASK:**
  - Career path questions: Current title, do you oversee AD and/or ED role, how long in current position, how long at this organization, reporting structure, genre of organization, organization name, organization operating budget, salary (using the same salary ranges as the publicly available ranges on CRA website, (see Appendix B), city, age, nationality; and then same data for 2-3 previous positions.
  - Education and Formal training. Identify level of formal training, any arts specific training, what institution, what year they left school.

- Organizational questions: Existence of leadership development programs in the company: succession plans, formal performance reviews, professional development, networking opportunities, mentoring programs.
- How do you continue your own professional development?: networking, mentorship, study, travel to sector conferences/events
- Tenure – how many more years do you plan to stay in this position? If you leave, will it be a) to retire, b) to move into new position in same company, c) move to a larger organization in same position, d) leave the sector, e) leave the country.
- What is your comfort level and aptitude with the following functional areas in your organization (scale 1 to 5)?
  - ED list – financial, HR, board governance, operations, marketing, fundraising
  - AD list – season planning, artist relations, creative practice
- What training would you like to have for your current or future jobs.
- What skills and attributes do you think are needed for Arts Leadership (On Scale 1 to 5) (AD – list of skills and attributes, ED – list of skills and attributes) Qualitative questions what skills and attributes do you think are needed for arts leadership (create list to choose, with text box to add more)
  - Follow-up telephone Interviews with coverage from varying organization sizes.

2. **Board Members / Board Chairs** (who are charged with hiring arts leaders)

- Phone interviews



- What has been your organization's process for hiring Arts leader? Who has been involved (check all that apply): Board chair only, hiring committee of board members, hiring committee with external people, recruitment agency, any others?
- Do you have a formal succession plan?
- What skills and attributes do you think are needed for Arts Leadership (AD – list of skills and attributes, ED – list of skills and attributes)  
  
Qualitative questions what skills and attributes do you think are needed for arts leadership (create list to choose, with text box to add more)

### 3. **Recruitment Firms**

- Interview Recruitment firms working on non-profit Arts Leader hires. Ask for trends in what organizations are looking for, and what their approach has been to find shortlisted candidates, what have been selection criteria. Ask who has been sitting on committees. What has been priority in skills and attributes for hiring committees?

### 4. **Interviews with Funders and Sector Partners:** Canada Council for the Arts, Provincial Arts Councils, Canadian Heritage, Business for the Arts, Toronto Arts Council, Toronto Arts Foundation Creative Trust. Ask for trends in leadership issues coming forward in grant applications, ask for funders position on international hires. This was used in the initial “exploratory” process, and not in the official primary research.

## Appendix C: Canadian Performing Arts Leadership Audit Survey Questions



### Canadian Performing Arts Leadership Audit

#### MBA Research Study - Canadian Performing Arts Leadership Audit

Jeanne LeSage  
LeSage Arts Management  
MBA Student - Royal Roads University

Thank you in advance for taking part in this study. The objective of my research is to gather and interpret data about current performing arts leaders in Canada: demographic information, career path, formal and informal education, and your thoughts about traits and skills necessary to be a leader in Canada's performing arts sector. The aim is to have a better understanding of the profile and make-up of our current leadership across provinces, organization sizes, and artistic disciplines.

#### Topline Details:

##### *What is this for?*

I am gathering this primary research to write a research paper as a final component for my MBA in Executive Management at Royal Roads University, with a specialization in Management Consulting. I am not being paid to conduct this research, it is part of an academic requirement. I am grateful to Gideon Arthurs, CEO of the National Theatre School who agreed to act as my client, as required by the program.

##### *Who should complete this survey?*

For the purpose of this study, I define a performing arts leader as an individual who is the primary lead of the artistic and/or business functions of their organization. The organization can be of any size, and any performing arts discipline.

##### *What is being done with this information?*

As is described in detail on the consent page, the raw data will be kept confidential with myself. The findings and aggregate summary data will be shared with the client, and for any participant upon request.

##### *What if I don't want to answer all of the questions?*

You are welcome to refrain from answering any questions that you are not comfortable responding to.

On the next page, you will be taken through the Informed Consent information, as required by the Royal Roads University Ethics Review process for primary research involving live subjects. Please read it with care before clicking "Agree". Please contact me at the coordinates below, if you have any questions or comments about the survey.

Again, thank you for your time!

Best,  
Jeanne LeSage  
jeanne@lesagearts.com  
647-876-2265



## Canadian Performing Arts Leadership Audit

1. Consent Form - In order to take part in this survey - please read the following information which has been vetted and approved as part of the Royal Roads University Ethics Review Process. At the end please choose "Agree" if you would like to continue with the survey. If you choose "Disagree", you will be removed from the survey. Thank you in advance. My name is Jeanne LeSage, CHRL, of LeSage Arts Management Consultancy and this research project is part of the requirement for a Master of Business Administration in Executive Management at Royal Roads University. My credentials with Royal Roads University can be established by telephoning Dr. Frances Jorgensen at 250-391-2600 x 4517. The research will consist of this survey and is foreseen to take thirty minutes to complete. The foreseen questions will refer to collecting demographic, education, experience, and organizational information for current arts leaders in Canada. In addition to submitting my final report to Royal Roads University in partial fulfillment for a Master of Business Administration degree, I will also be sharing my research findings with my client, Gideon Arthurs, the CEO of the National Theatre School. An aggregate summary of the data will be presented to the National Theatre School, with possible future publication in journals, and potential presentations at conferences and panels. A copy of the aggregate summary of the survey data will be made available to any participant upon request. The raw data will be kept by myself confidentially for a period no longer than seven years for potential future publication of summary information and data. The information you provide will be summarized, in anonymous format, in the body of the final report. At no time will any specific comments be attributed to any individual unless your specific agreement has been obtained beforehand. All documentation will be kept strictly confidential. In addition to the privacy and ethics requirements of my program, I am a CHRL (Certified Human Resources Leader), and as such, I follow the ethics and code of my HR Certification. An electronic copy of the report, with no public access, will be held at Royal Roads University, unless the National Theatre School has indicated the report is to be returned for confidentiality reasons. In certain circumstances, the report may be reviewed by future MBA learners, provided permission has been obtained from the report writer. There are no foreseen actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest involved with this study. You are not compelled to participate in this research project. If you do choose to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without prejudice UP TO THE POINT that you submit the survey. Once you submit the survey, your information is included in the anonymous data set. Similarly, if you choose not to participate in this research project, this information will also be maintained in confidence.

I am using Survey Monkey's online survey instrument to collect the survey data. In the event that your survey response is processed and stored in the United States, you are advised that its governments, courts, or law enforcement and regulatory agencies may be able to obtain disclosure of the data through the laws of the United States. If you have any questions before completing this survey, please contact me at Jeanne@lesagearts.com or 647-876-2256.

Agree, Disagree

**INDIVIDUAL DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

2. Please fill in your name. (Reminder that no names or identifiers will be brought forward in the report, but it is optional to include your name)

3. Please choose your province.

4. Please fill in your city.

5. What is your gender?

Female, Male, Non-binary, Prefer not to say, Prefer to self-describe:

6. What is your age at the time of this survey?

Under 18 years, 18-24 years old, 25-34 years old, 35-44 years old, 45-54 years old, 55-64 years, old, 65-74 years old, 75 years or older, Prefer not to say,

7. What is your nationality?

8. What is your ethnic origin?

\*Note Below matches Statistics Canada's designations, which is: the ethnic or cultural origins of the respondents' ancestors. An ancestor is someone from whom a person is descended and is usually more distant than a grandparent. The list below matches groups that have surpassed the 1 million mark in Canada .Please check all that apply:

Canadian, English, French, Scottish, Irish, German, Italian, Chinese, First Nations, Ukrainian, East Indian, Dutch, Polish, Prefer not to say, Other: please list

9. Do you identify as a Visible Minority?

\*Please note that below matches Statistic Canada's designations plus adding First Nations.

Not a visible minority, First Nations, South Asian, Chinese, Black, Filipino, Latin American, Arab, Southeast Asian, West Asian, Korean, Japanese, Multiple visible minority, Prefer not to say, Visible Minority – not included elsewhere:

**ORGANIZATIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

10. What is the name of the organization you lead?

11. Home city and province of the organization (if different from the city and province listed above)?

12. What is the legal structure of your organization?

Non-profit (without charitable status), Charitable non-profit, For-Profit/Commercial, Other,  
Please indicate:

13. What is the artistic discipline of your organization?

Theatre, Music, Dance, Opera, Circus, Theatre For Young Audience/Family, Multi-disciplinary,  
Other (please specify)

14. What type of arts organization do you lead? Please check all that apply.

Presenter, Producer, Own and/or Operate a Performing Arts Venue, Arts Service Organization,  
Other (please specify)

15. What is your organization's budget? Please enter numbers only, without decimals, \$, or  
characters.

### **YOUR CURRENT POSITION INFORMATION**

16. What is your current title?

17. Do you lead the Artistic and/or Business function at your organization? Artistic = Artistic  
Director - oversees programming, artist selection, and/or creative interpretation, etc.; Business =  
Executive Director - oversees finances, marketing, resource development, and/or operations, etc.

Artistic Director, Executive Director, Both, Comments:

18. Do you work full-time or part-time in this position?

Full-time, Part-time, Other (please specify)

19. How long have you been in your current position?

20. How long have you been at this organization?

21. What is the title of the person you report to? (This could include the Board of Directors, or  
Board Chair)

22. Please indicate your current annual compensation, within the ranges below. \*FYI below are  
the same salary ranges as reported on Canada Revenue Agency charities website.

Less than \$40,000, \$40,000 - \$79,999, \$80,000 - \$119,999, \$120,000 - \$159,999, \$160,000 -  
\$199,999, \$200,000 - \$249,999, \$250,000 - \$299,999, \$300,000 - \$349,999, \$350,000 and over,  
Prefer not to say

23. Prior to your current leadership role, what were your last three jobs, where did you work, and  
how many years were you in each role? Please start with the most recent.

**EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

24. What is the highest level of formal education you have completed?

Less than high school, High school, Some college or university, College diploma, University Bachelor's degree, Master's or professional degree, Doctorate / PhD, Prefer not to say

25. Was any of your formal education arts-specific? If yes, please list the name of the institution(s) and name(s) of the program.

26. Have you received any formal and/or informal training specific to leadership? Check all that apply.

MBA, Executive Training at business school (non-degree-granting), External Leadership training (not at a post-secondary school), Internal leadership development program implemented in your organization, Mentoring Program, Formal Performance reviews with discussion about development goals, Succession planning, Professional Development support for outside courses, Attendance at sector conferences, Comments – please name other programs not listed here.

27. How do you continue your own professional development as a leader? Please choose all that apply:

Networking, Courses (please indicate in comments below), Mentorship, Sector conferences (please indicate in comments below), Other (please specify)

28. If you were to choose to leave your current position, what would your preferred next move be?

to move into same position in a larger organization, to move into same position in same size organization, to leave the sector, to retire, to leave the country, don't know yet, prefer not to say, Comments (optional)

**LEADERSHIP SKILLS, ATTRIBUTES, AND EXPERIENCE**

29. For those with EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR roles - What is your self-assessment about your own aptitude with the following functional areas in your current position? 1 = low aptitude, 5 = high aptitude

Strategic Planning, Marketing and Communications, Audience Development & Sales, External Communications / Acting as Spokesperson, Technology / Digital, Financial Management, Human Resources, Managing Staff, Legal, Facilities Management, Board Governance, Operations, Fundraising, Volunteer Management, Labour Relations (unions)

Comments (optional):

30. For those with ARTISTIC DIRECTOR roles - What is your self-assessment about your own aptitude with the following functional areas in your current position? 1 = low aptitude, 5 = high aptitude

Season planning (1 year out), Long term Artistic Planning (3-5 years out), Strategic Planning, Artist relations, Work with creative staff (i.e. designers), External Communications / Acting as Spokesperson, Industry networking, Your own creative practice, Fundraising, Board Relations, Comments (optional):

31. What skills would you want to develop or enhance to improve your leadership abilities?

32. What professional development would you like to access to further your career?

### **LEADERSHIP ATTRIBUTES**

33. \*\*\*FOR ALL TO ANSWER\*\*\* What attributes do you think are needed to be a successful EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR 1= Least important, 5= Most Important, n/a)

Creative, Problem solving, Opportunity driven, Understanding of the marketplace, Committed to the Mission, Follow-through, Energetic, Balancing multiple priorities, Risk-Taker, Personal Discipline, Leading Change, Motivating and empowering others, Delegating, Accountable for actions, Good decision maker, Thinks long term, Adept at crisis management, Collaboration, Other, Comments (optional)

34. \*\*\*FOR ALL TO ANSWER\*\*\* What attributes do you think are needed to be a successful ARTISTIC DIRECTOR. 1= Least important, 5= Most Important, n/a)

Creative, Problem solving, Opportunity driven, Understanding of the marketplace, Committed to the Mission, Follow-through, Energetic, Balancing multiple priorities, Risk-Taker, Personal discipline, Leading change, Motivating and empowering others, Delegating, Accountable for actions, Good decision maker, Thinks long term, Adept at crisis management, Collaboration, Other, Comments (optional)

### **EXPERIENCE**

35. \*\*FOR ALL TO ANSWER\*\* What work experience should EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS have to be successful in their roles?

36. \*\*FOR ALL TO ANSWER\*\* What work experience should ARTISTIC DIRECTORS have to be successful in their roles?

### **COMMENTS ON LEADERSHIP IN THE SECTOR**

37. Are there any additional comments regarding leadership in the performing arts sector that you would like to share? (For example, the role of Boards of Directors, succession planning, recruitment processes for ADs/EDs).

38. In your opinion, is the Canadian Performing Arts Sector doing enough to select, develop, and retain the next generation of leaders? If no, then what are the factors and/or barriers to this happening?

39. What suggestions do you have for the sector to select, develop, and retain the next generation of leaders?

### **CLOSING**

40. Would you be willing to take part in a follow up phone call for further discussion? If so, please provide email and/or phone # below, this information will only go to Jeanne LeSage.

41. Would you like to receive a copy of the aggregate summary data? If so, please provide your email below.

42. Email address

43. Phone #



## Appendix D: Blog Posts and Industry Advertising for Survey - example

<http://www.workinculture.ca/Our-Blog/WorkInCulture-Connects/February-2017/Request-to-Participate-in-a-Performing-Arts-Leader>

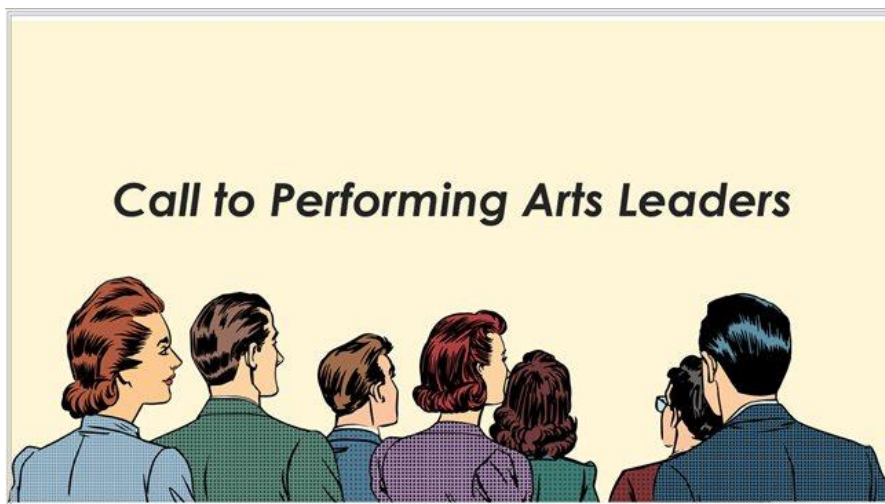
**WorkInCulture**



[Request to Participate in a Performing Arts Leadership Audit](#)

Posted: 2017-02-22 12:35:45 PM by **WorkInCulture editor** | with [0 comments](#)

*Written by Jeanne LeSage*



Are you a leader of a Canadian Performing Arts Organization? I would like to hear from you! Any size, any performing arts discipline, and across Canada - I am conducting primary research for my MBA final research paper - and want to build a profile of the leaders running both the artistic and business functions in the performing arts sector.

**Survey link:** <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ArtsLeader>

As a lifelong cultural worker, I have been very fortunate along the way to work with incredible arts leaders - and I'm happy now to be studying the topic for my masters.

Like most folks in our sector, I've had quite the 'hybrid' path to leadership - starting as a stage manager across Canada, working at TIFF for 10 years, then undertaking work on international arts projects; including the International Arts Management Fellowship at the Kennedy Center under Michael Kaiser, Managing Producer of the Abu Dhabi Film Festival and Deputy Interim CEO of the Royal Opera House Muscat. On my return to Canada I served as Executive Director of the Kay Meek Centre for Performing Arts in West Vancouver, and have since started my MBA and am working as an arts consultant under LeSage Arts Management.

The objective of my research is to gather and interpret data about current performing arts leaders in Canada: demographic information, career path, formal and informal education, as well as their thoughts about traits and skills necessary to be a leader in Canada's performing arts sector. The aim is to have a better understanding of the profile and make-up of our current leadership across provinces, organization sizes, and artistic disciplines.

If you are a performing arts leader please consider taking the 20-30 minute survey that will inform this research.

Many thanks to WorkInCulture for your ongoing work supporting the cultural sector!

### **Appendix E: Semi-Structured Phone Interview Questions for Recruitment Agencies and Board Representatives**

- 1) Recruitment Process for hiring ADs (artistic lead) and/or EDs (business lead)
  - a) What has been the composition of hiring committees?
  - b) Are these board led or management led?
  - c) Has there been a change over the years in use of recruitment firms?
  - d) What has been process for arriving at selection criteria? (particularly if there is not a recruitment firm in place)
  - e) Is there a different approach from ADs / EDs?
  - f) In your opinion, do boards have access to the correct resources (knowledge, ability, processes) to hire ADs and EDs?
- 2) Overall observations / trends in Canada
  - a) Career paths for EDs and ADs
    - i) FOR EDs - are they coming from certain job streams? (i.e. EDs coming from Development, Marketing, Production, Administration;
    - ii) FOR ADs - has the practice been to take just practitioners of their discipline (directors, choreographers), or do they need to have some leadership experience?
    - iii) Discuss Internal hires versus external hires. Are we (and/or SHOULD we) focus more on internal hires for succession? Is this different for EDs/ADs?
  - b) Over the last few years, there has been a fair amount of discussion in the media about the rise of international hires into the larger arts organizations in Canada. Discuss if this is an opportunity or a threat to the Canadian arts sector.
- 3) Leadership readiness - In your opinion, is there adequate training for EDs and ADs in Canada?
- 4) Anecdotally - at Canadian arts conferences, symposia, etc, there has been much discussion about concern about upcoming leadership pipeline problem. Do you think this is true? Does Canada have the right supply of future arts leaders?

**Appendix F: Comparing Survey response to Provincial Population**

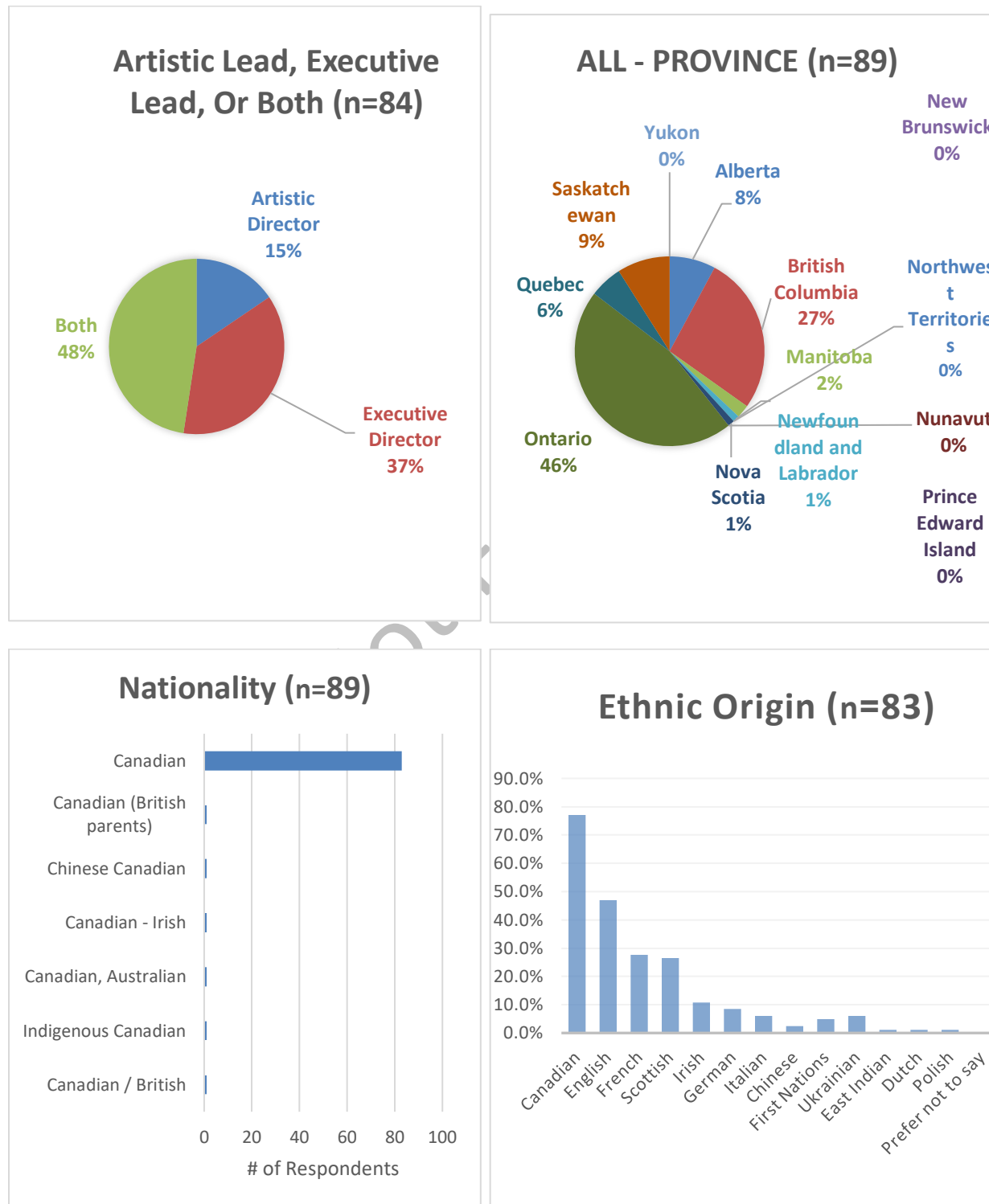
<b>Province</b>	<b>Survey %</b>	<b>Population %</b>	<b>Delta</b>
Ontario	46.1%	38.30%	7.77%
British Columbia	27.0%	13.20%	13.77%
Saskatchewan	9.0%	3.10%	5.89%
Alberta	7.9%	11.60%	-3.73%
Quebec	5.6%	23.20%	-17.58%
Manitoba	2.2%	3.60%	-1.35%
Newfoundland and Labrador	1.1%	1.50%	-0.38%
Nova Scotia	1.1%	2.60%	-1.48%
New Brunswick	0.0%	2.10%	-2.10%
Northwest Territories	0.0%	0.12%	-0.12%
Nunavut	0.0%	0.10%	-0.10%
Prince Edward Island	0.0%	0.41%	-0.41%
Yukon	0.0%	0.10%	-0.10%

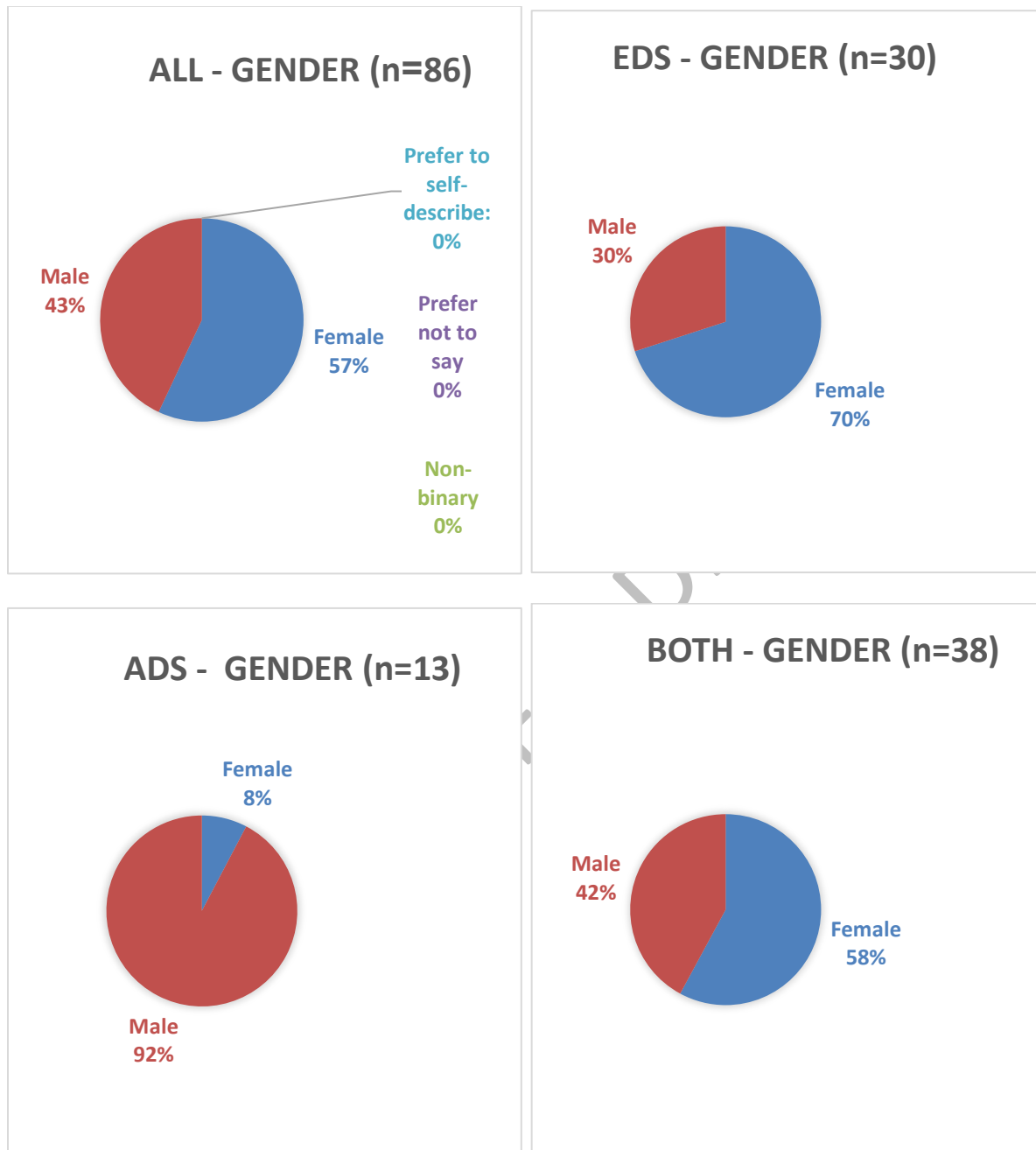
*Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Population.*

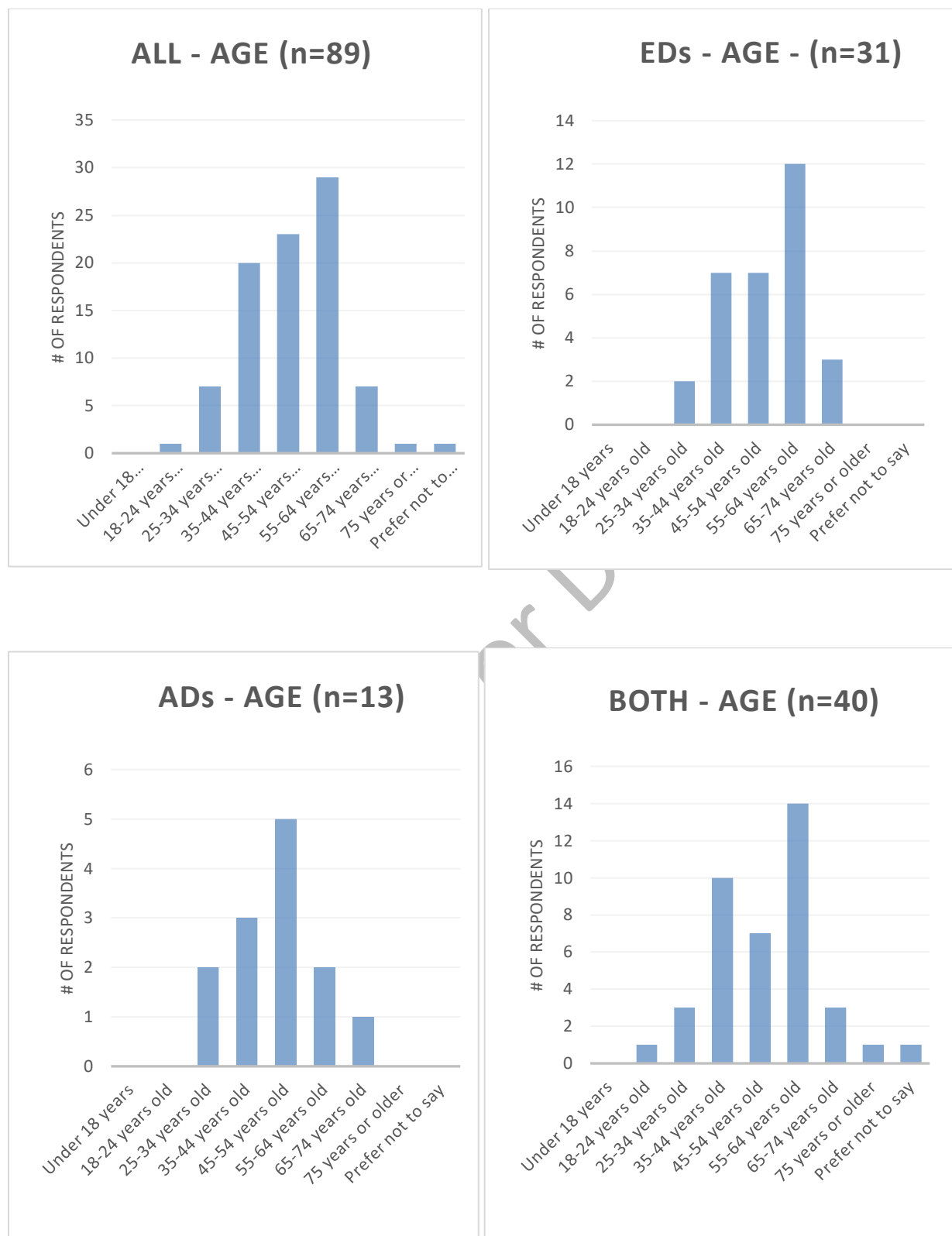
## Appendix G: Leadership Audit Quantitative Results

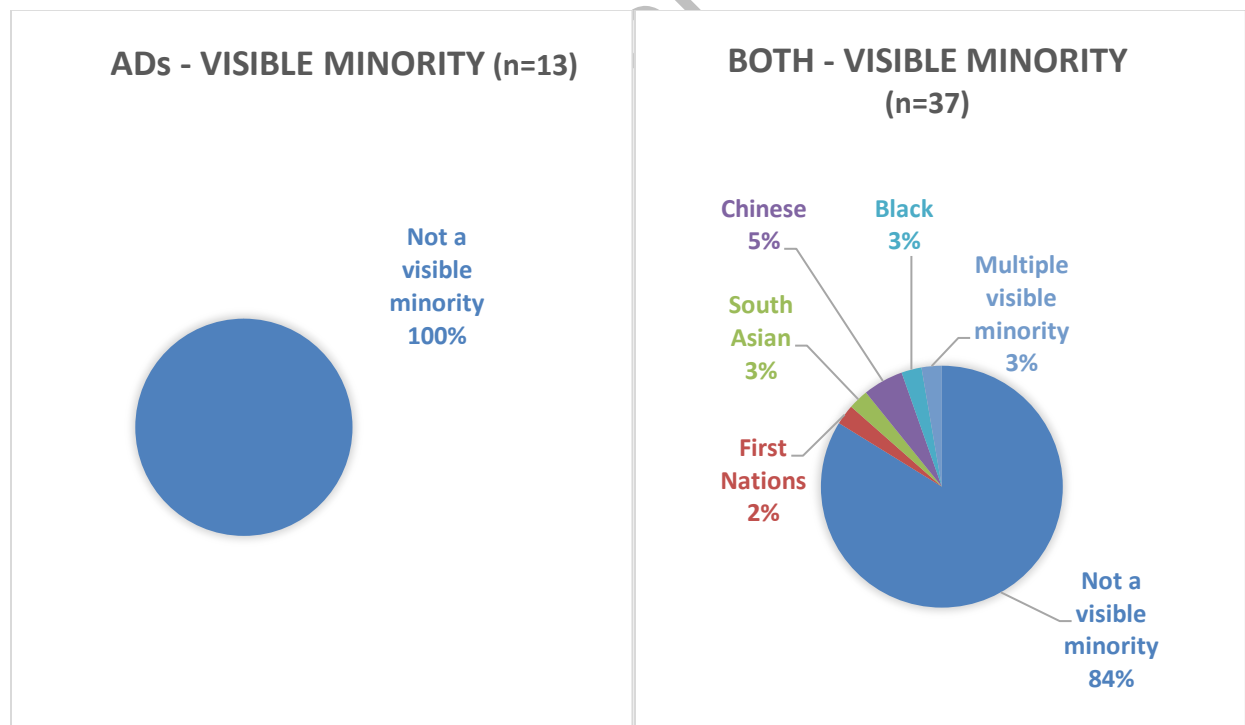
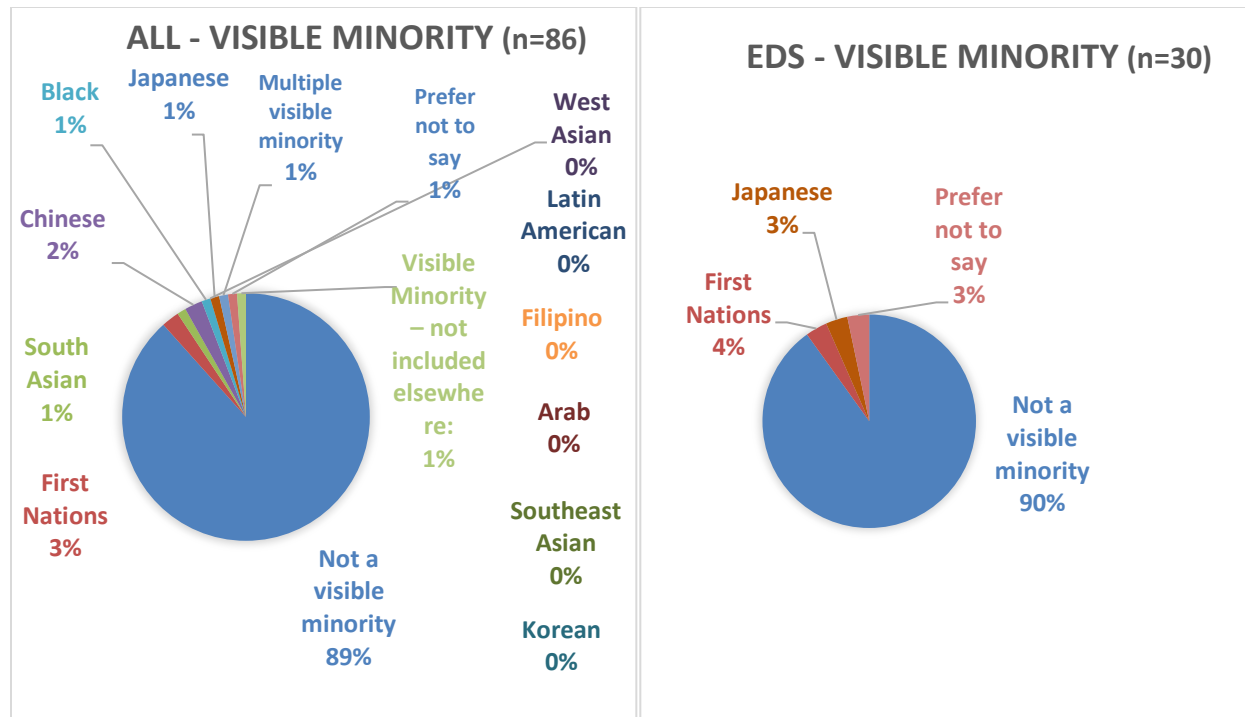
### Section 1 – Individual Demographic Information

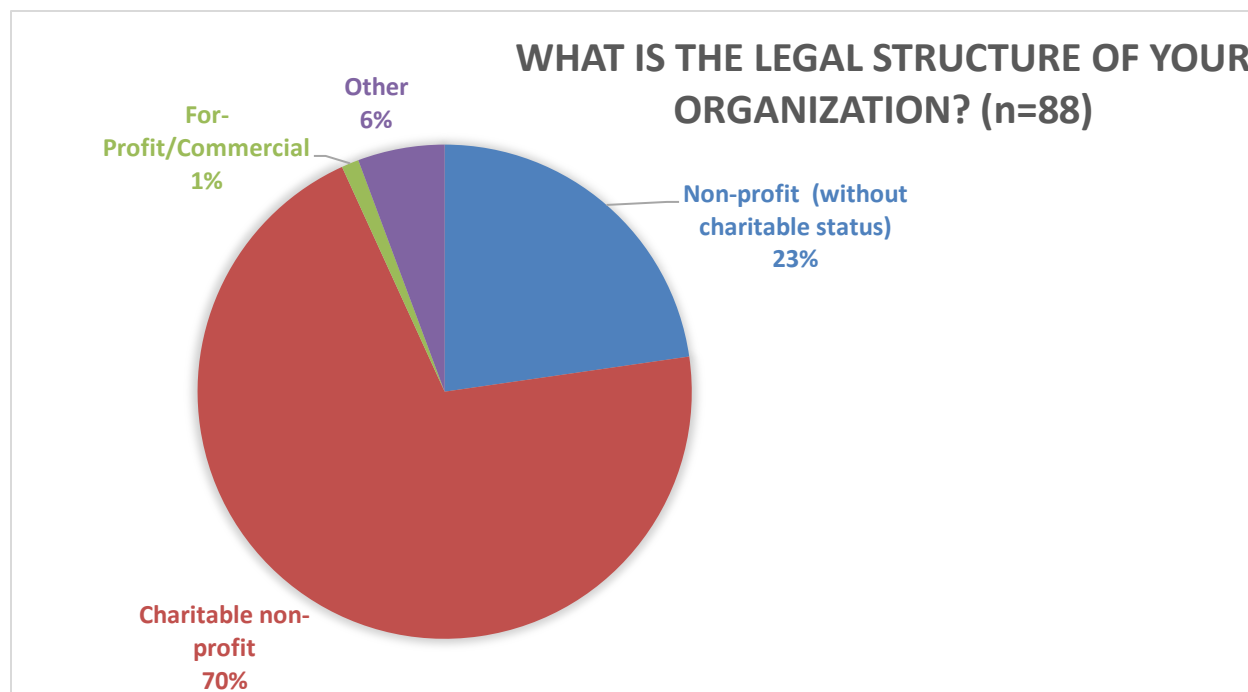
Note: (#) in brackets denotes the # of respondents for each question



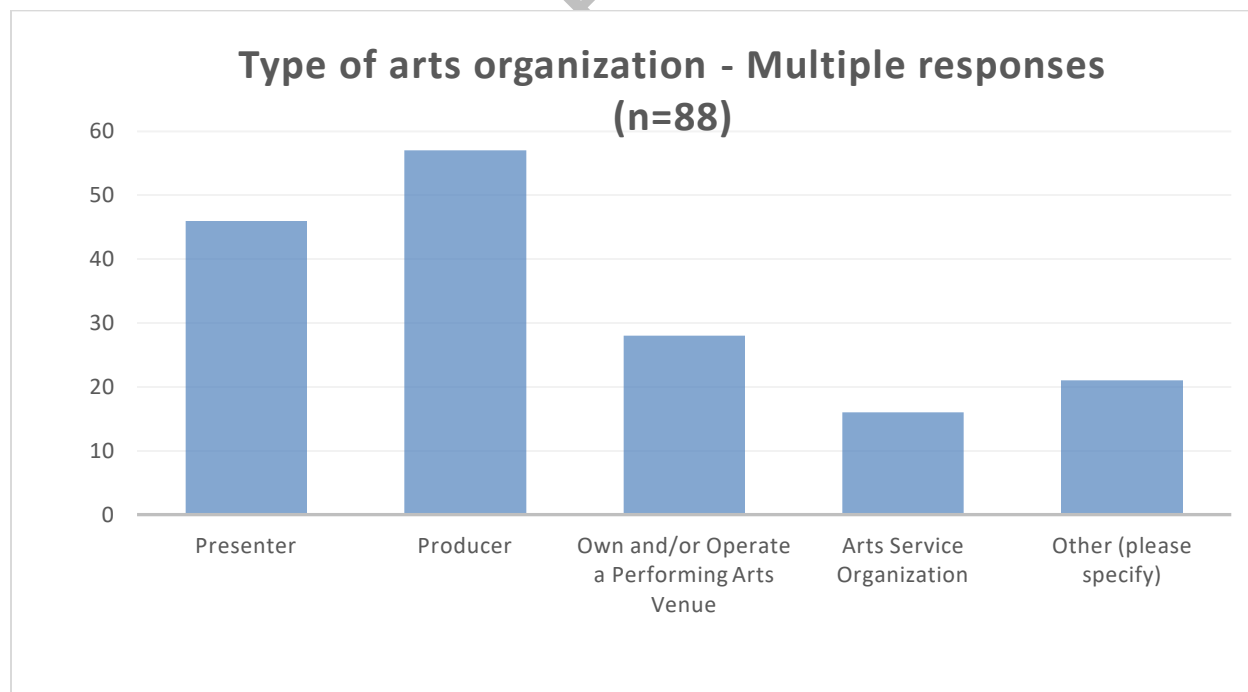




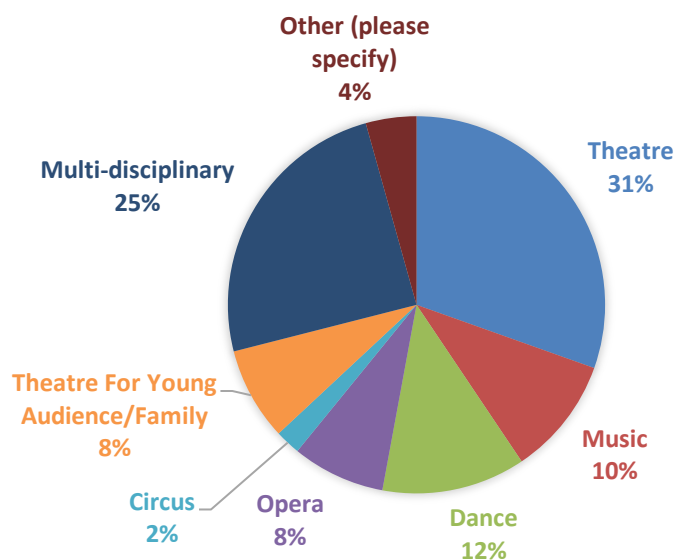


**Section 2 – Organization Demographic Information**

Other includes municipalities, higher education, and regional district entities with arts program and/or venue

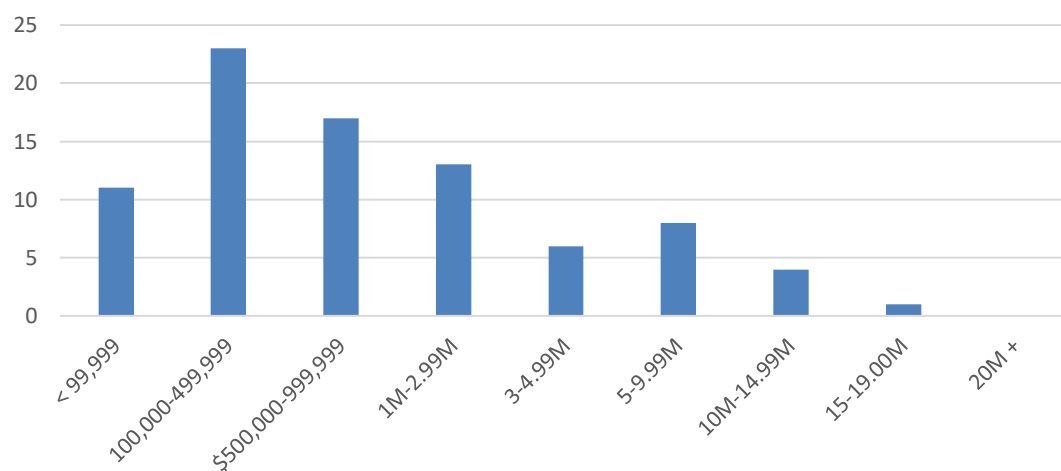


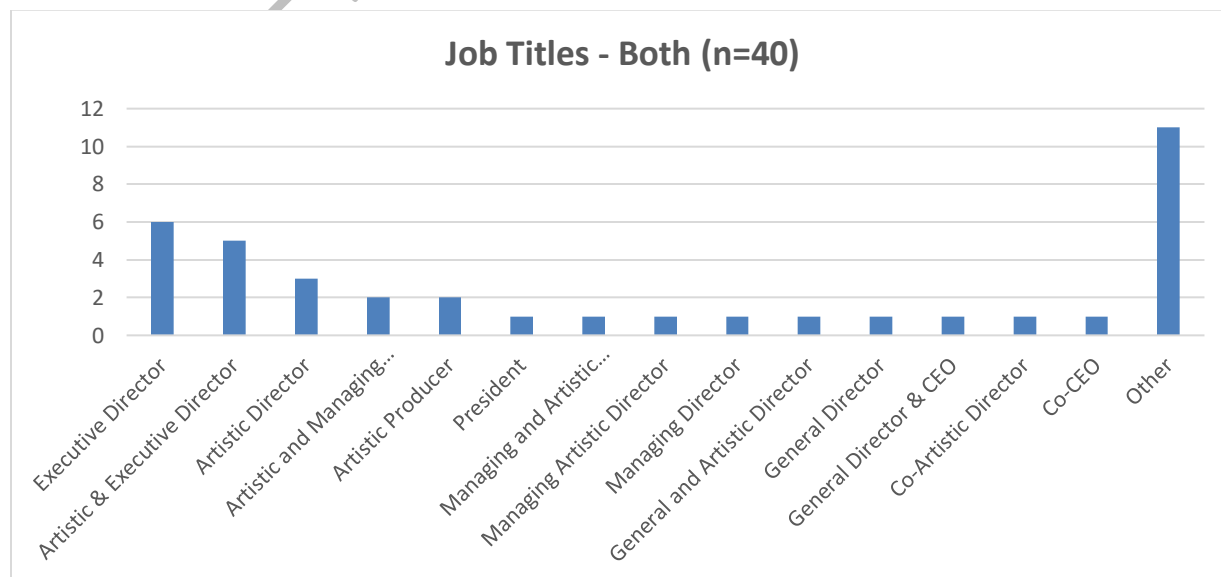
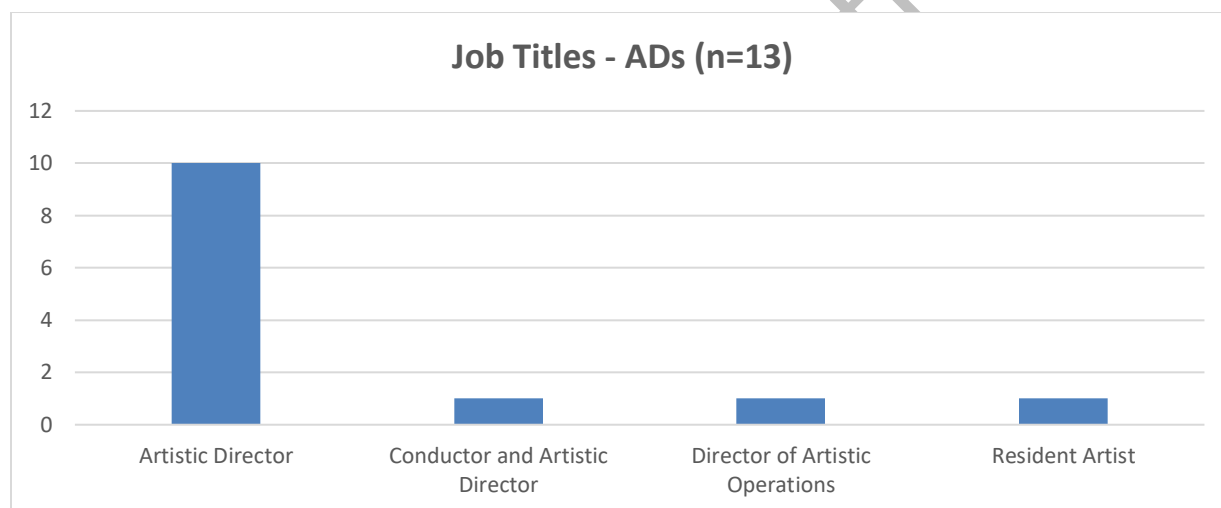
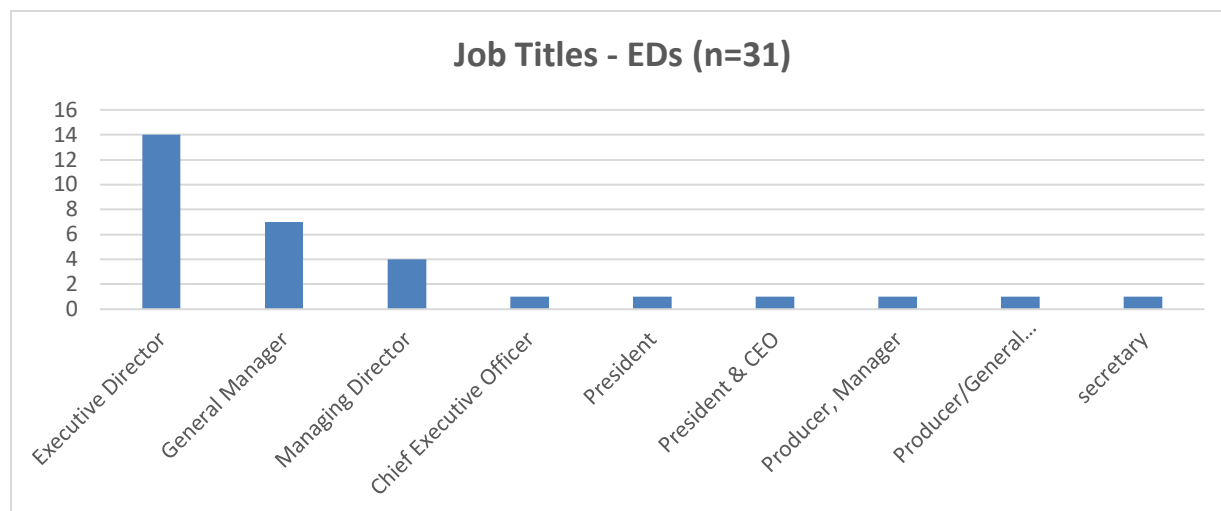


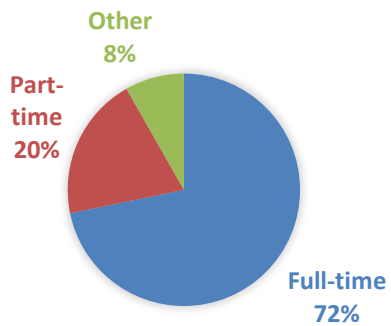
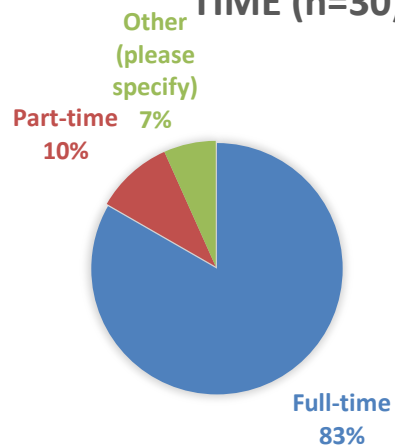
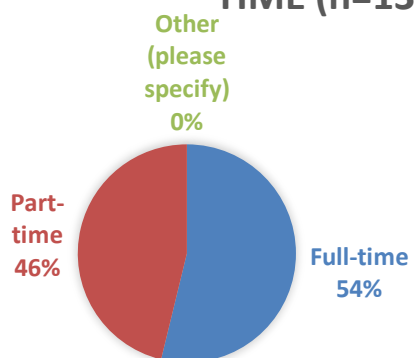
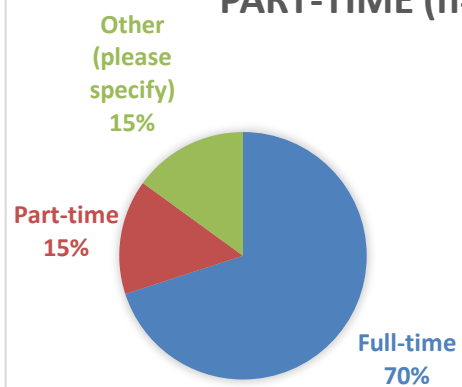


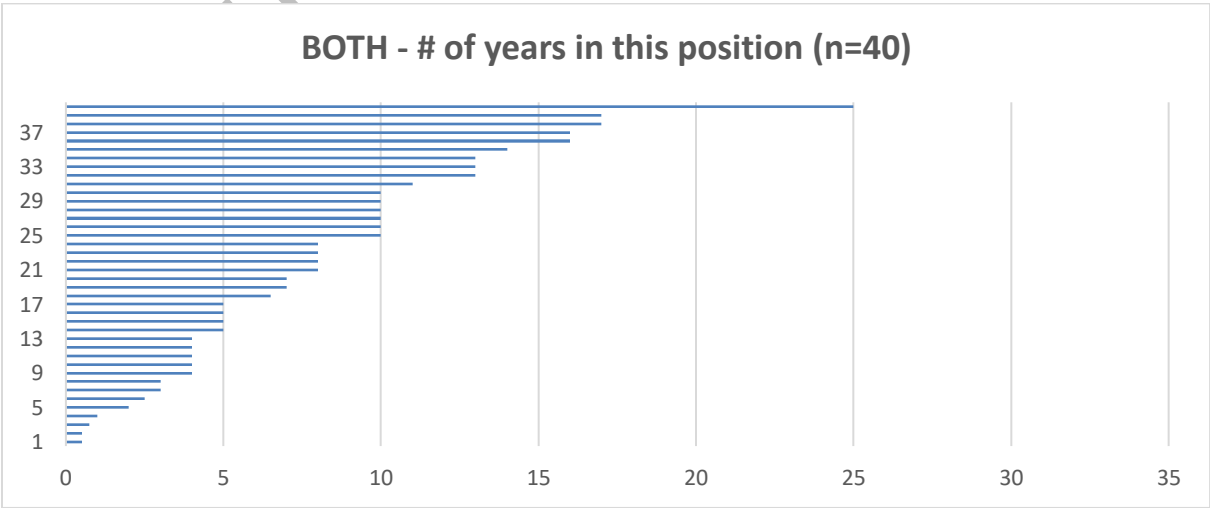
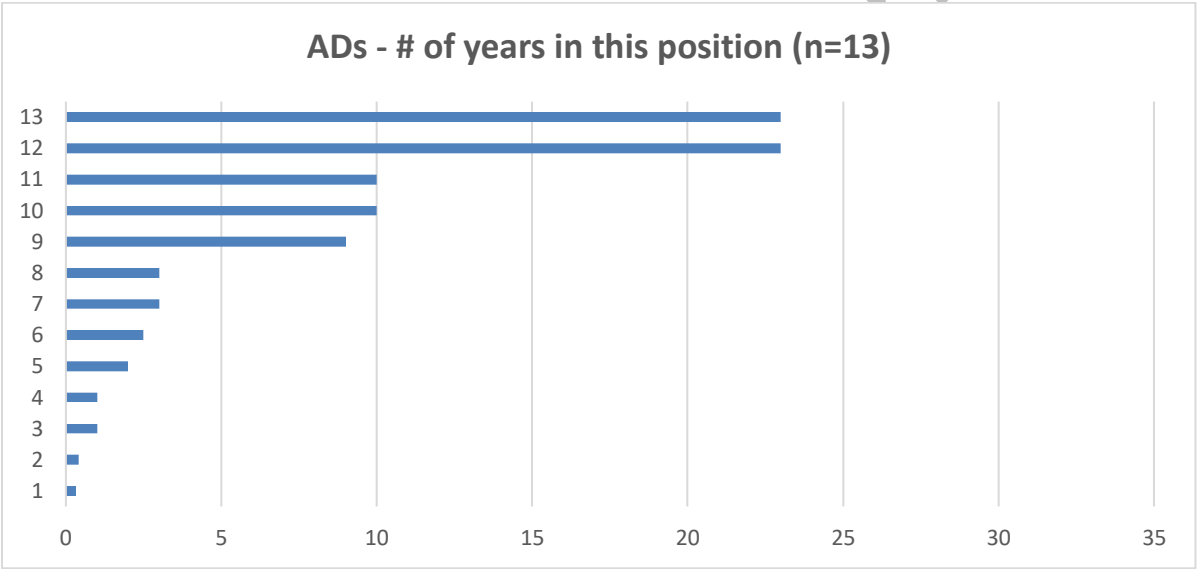
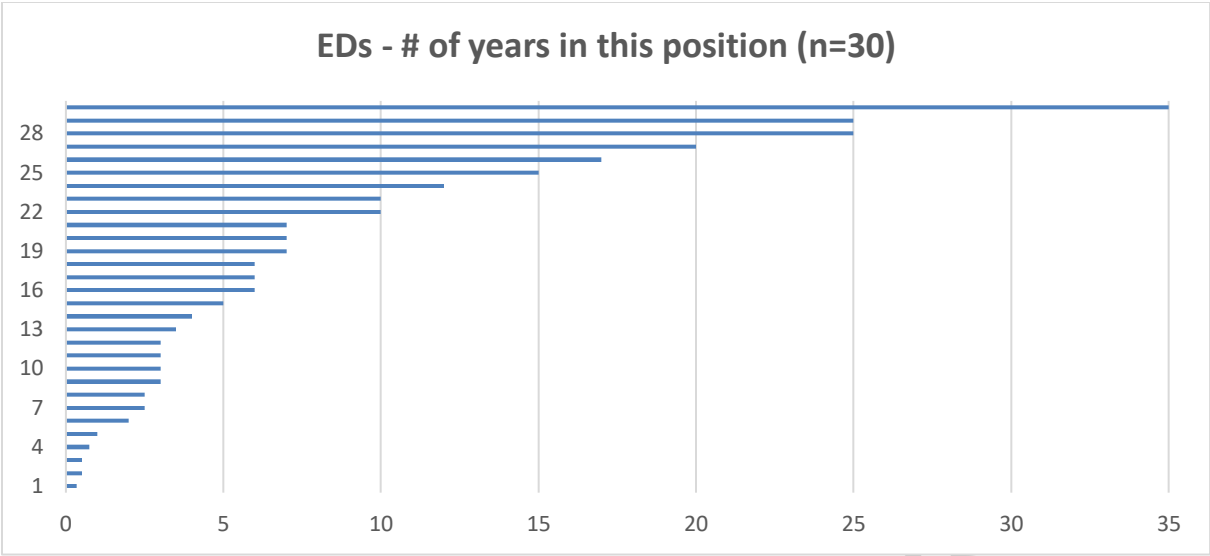
**What Is The Artistic Discipline Of Your Organization? (n=88)**

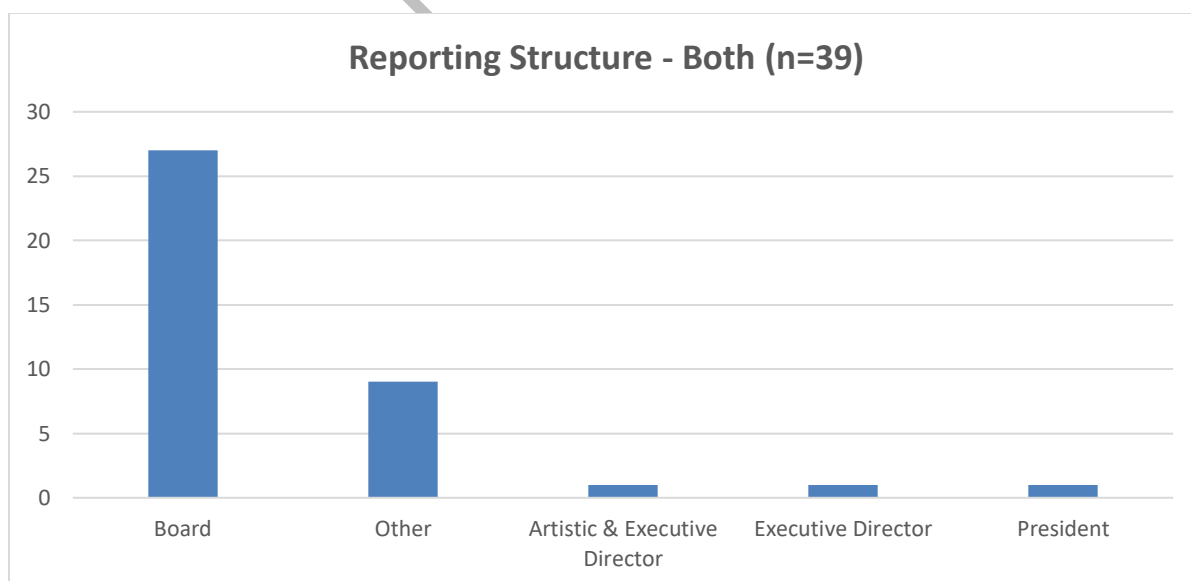
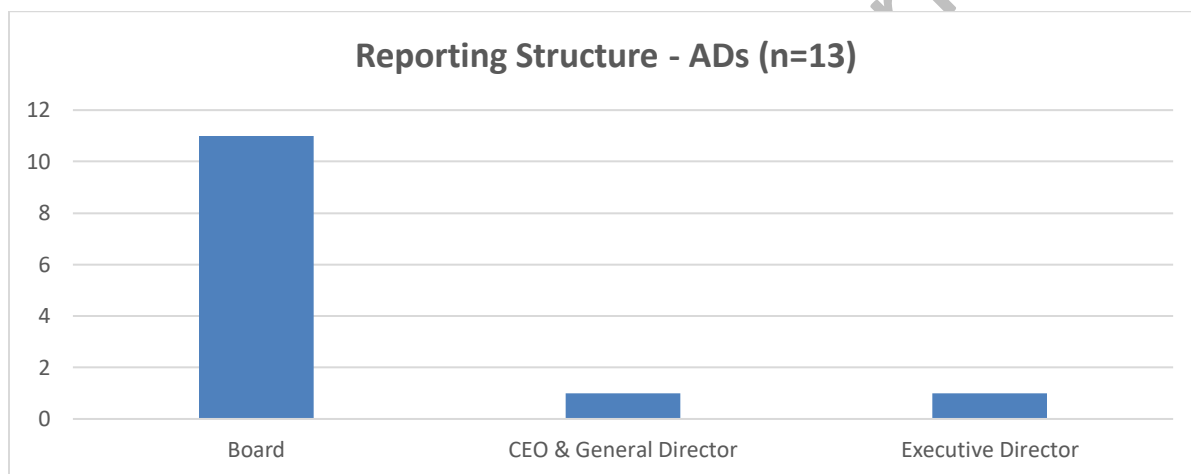
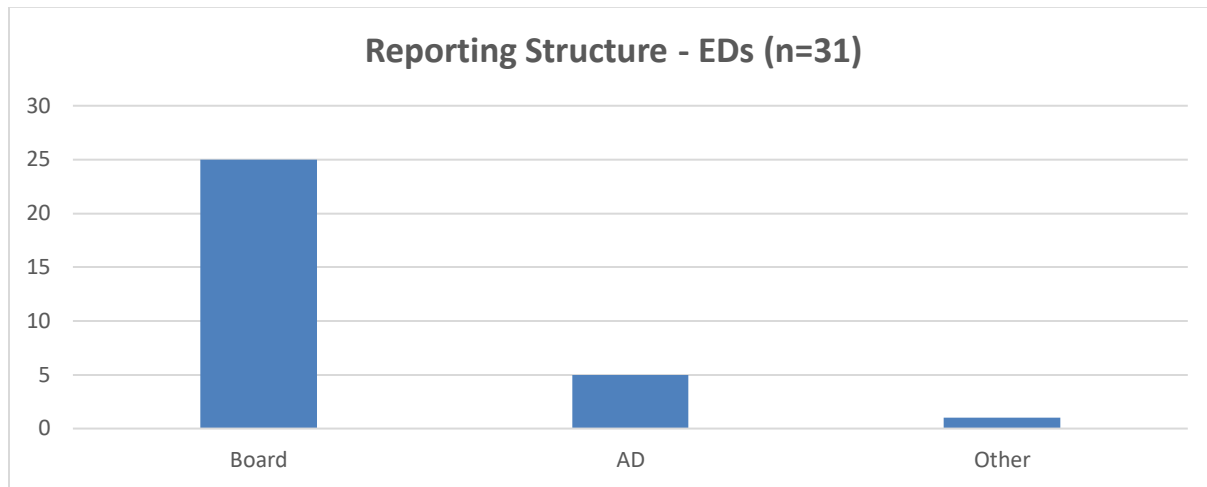
**Organization Budget (expenses) by # of respondents (n=85)**

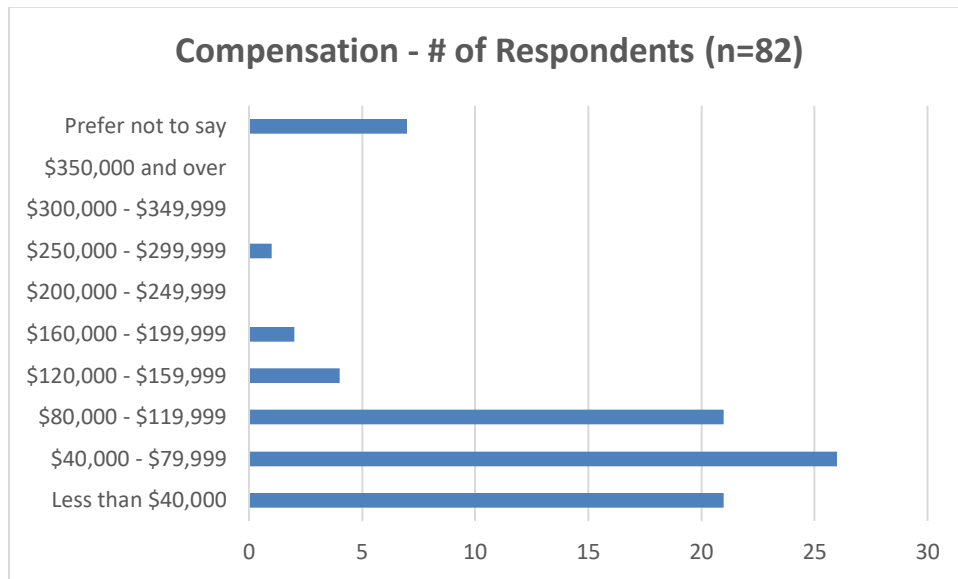


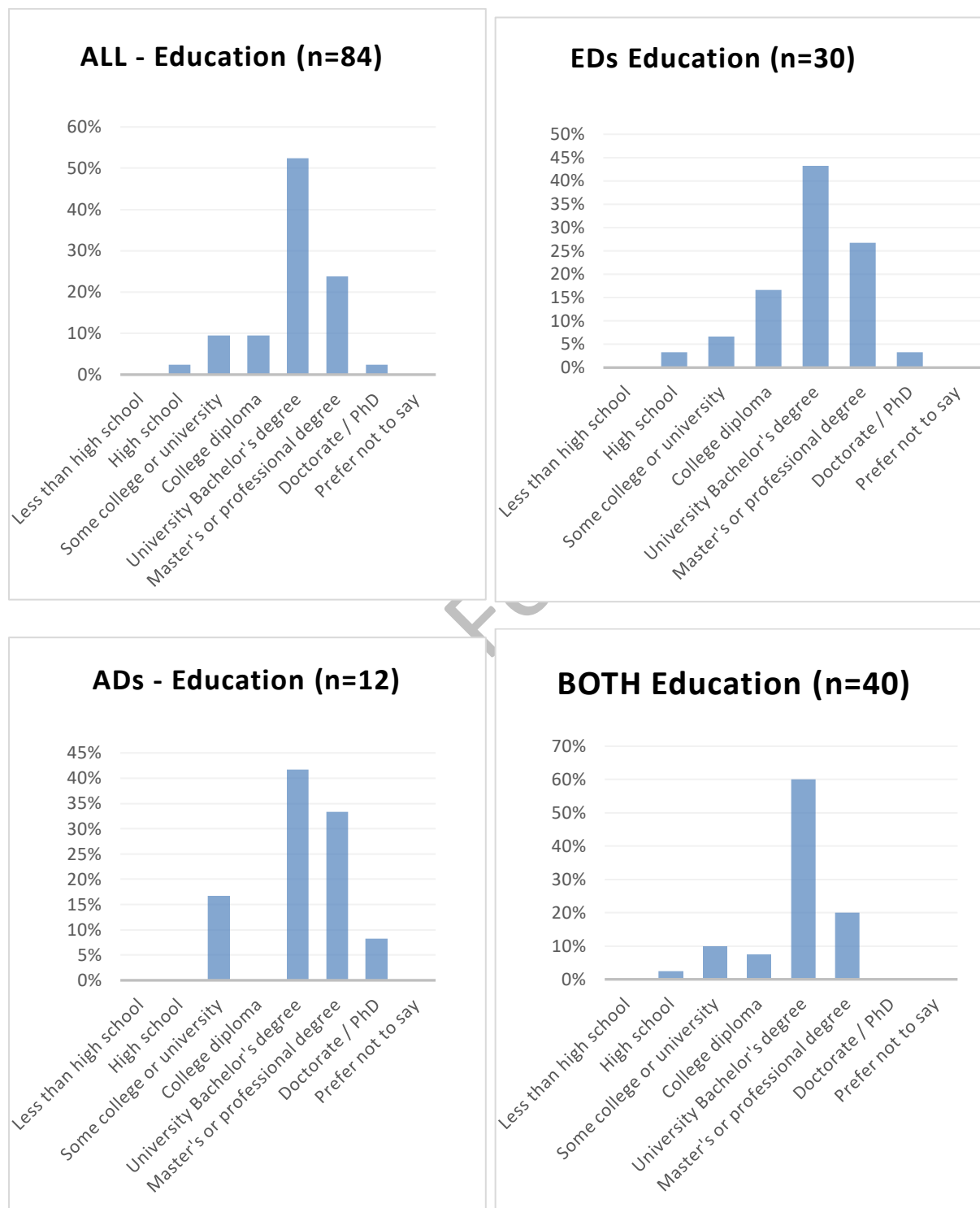
**Section 3 – Your Current Position**

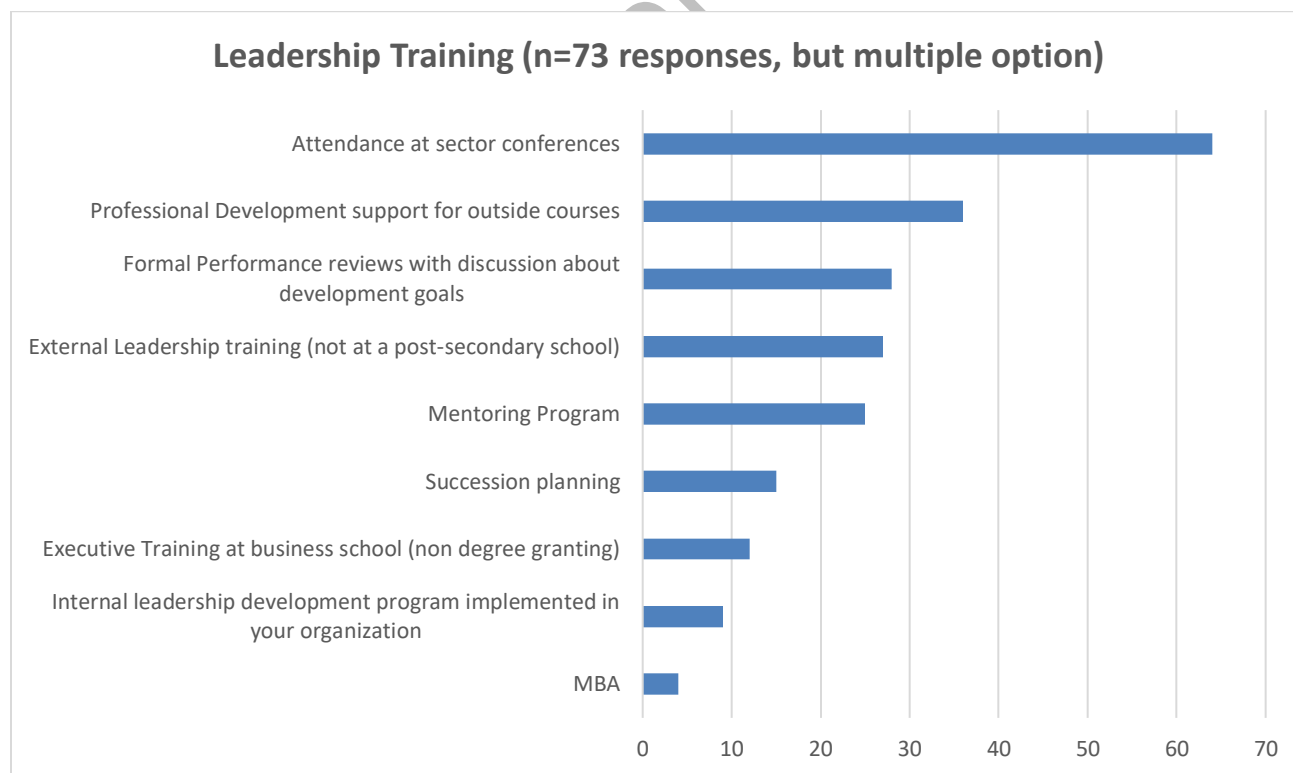
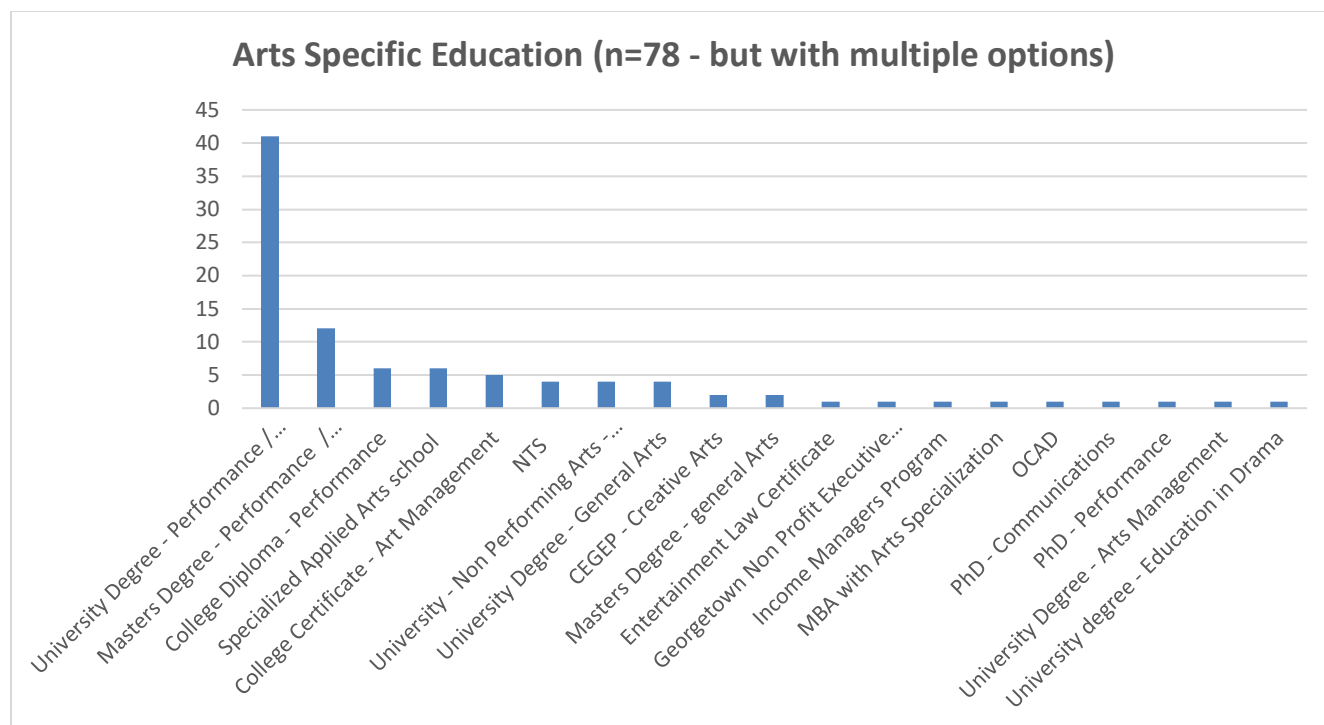
**ALL - FULL-TIME OR  
PART-TIME (n=85)****EDs - FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME (n=30)****ADs FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME (n=13)****BOTH - FULL-TIME OR  
PART-TIME (n=40)**



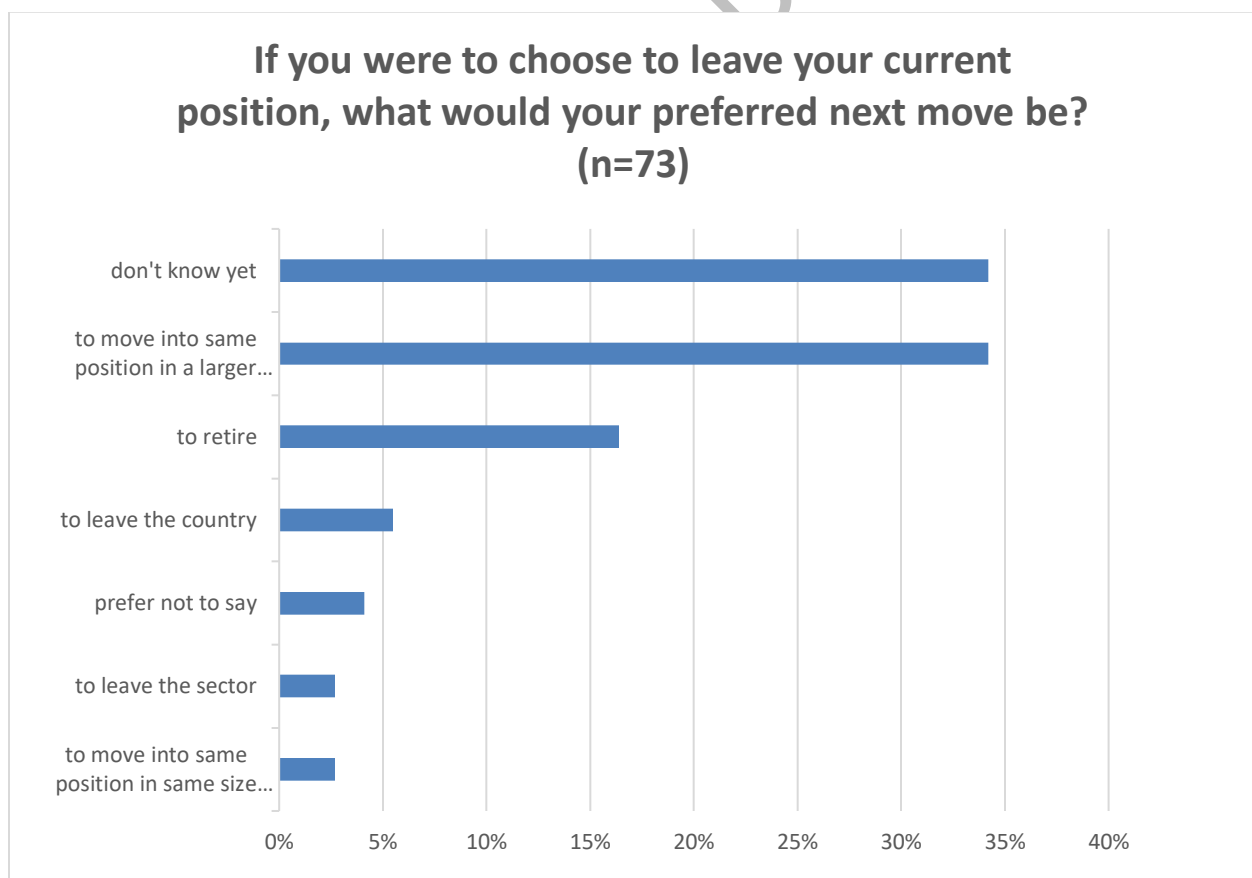
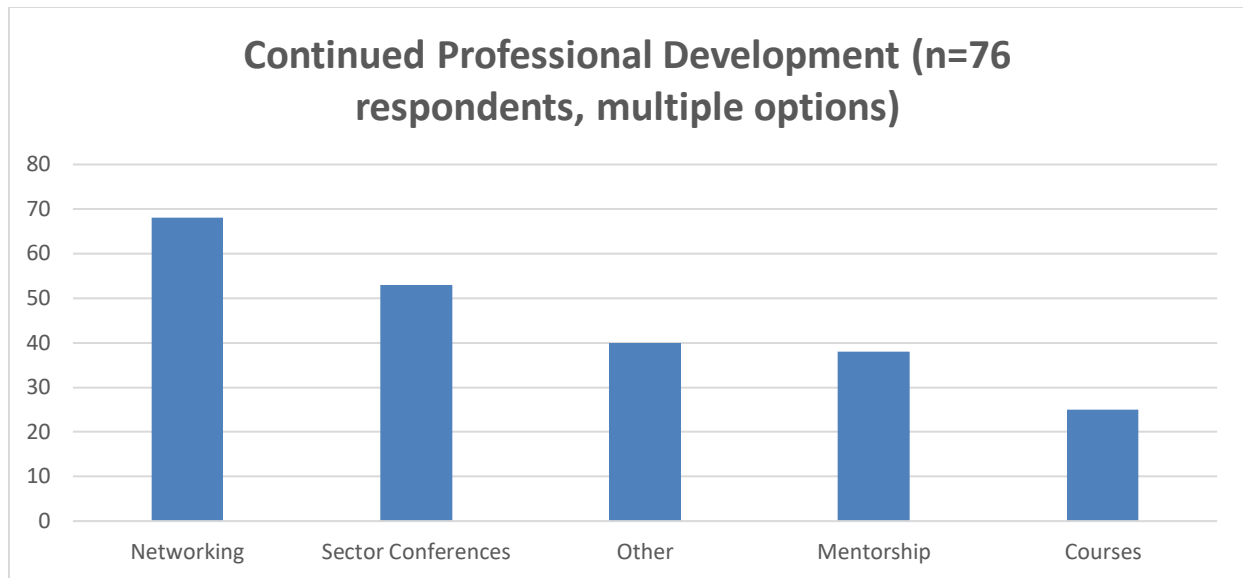




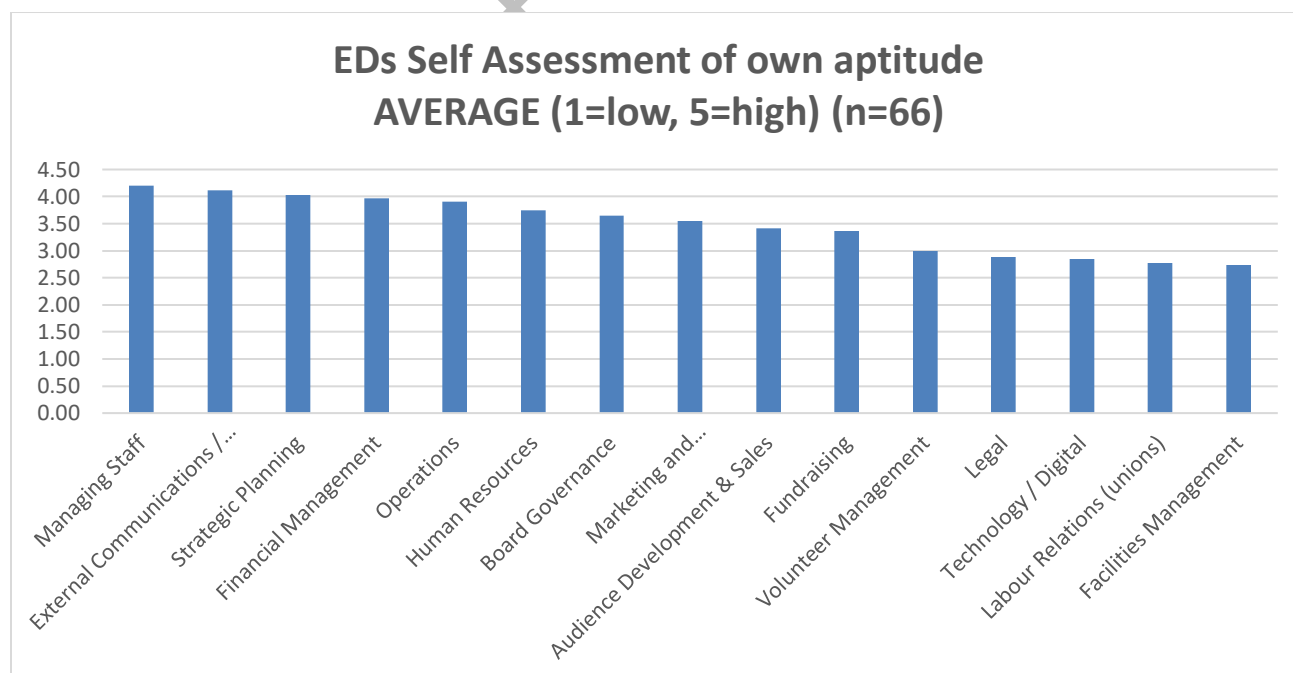
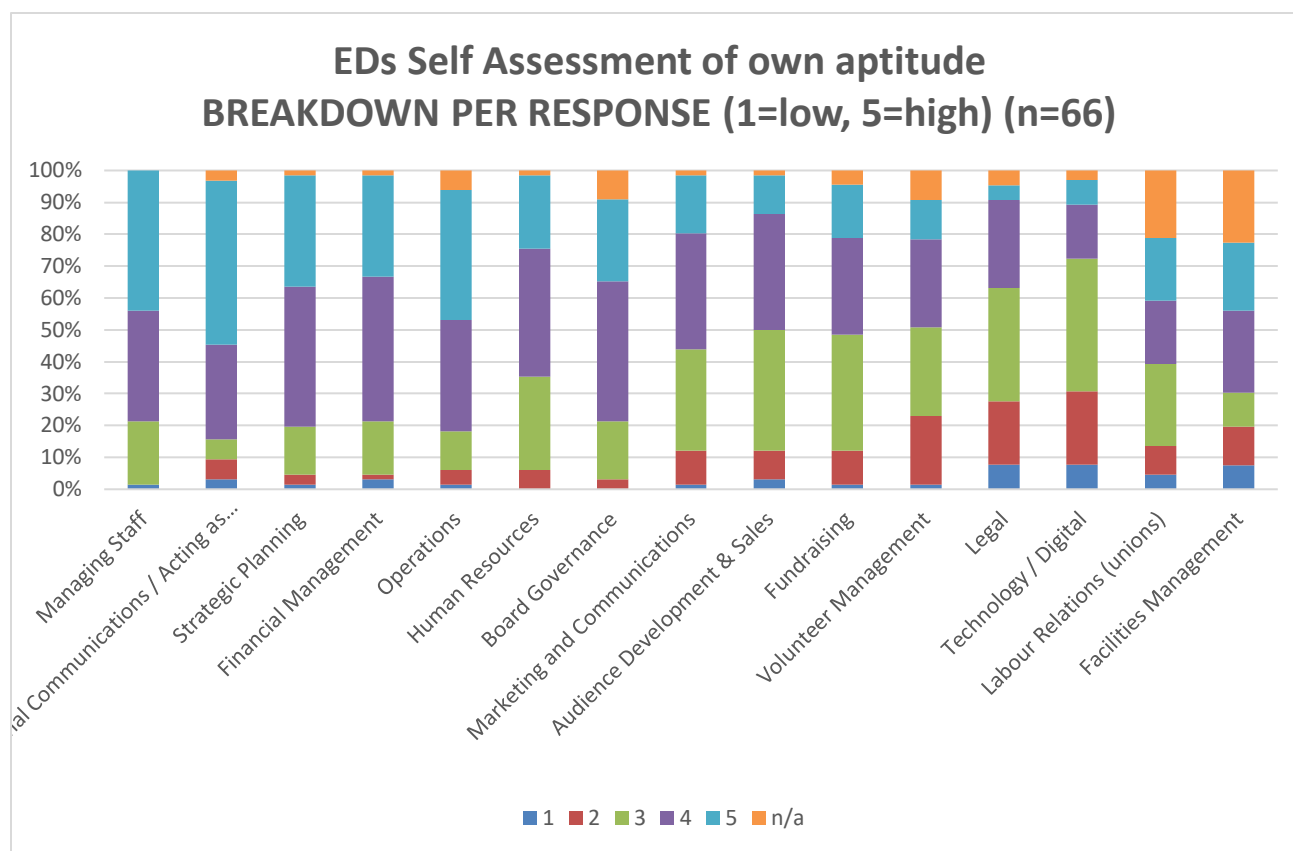
**Section 4 – Education and Training**

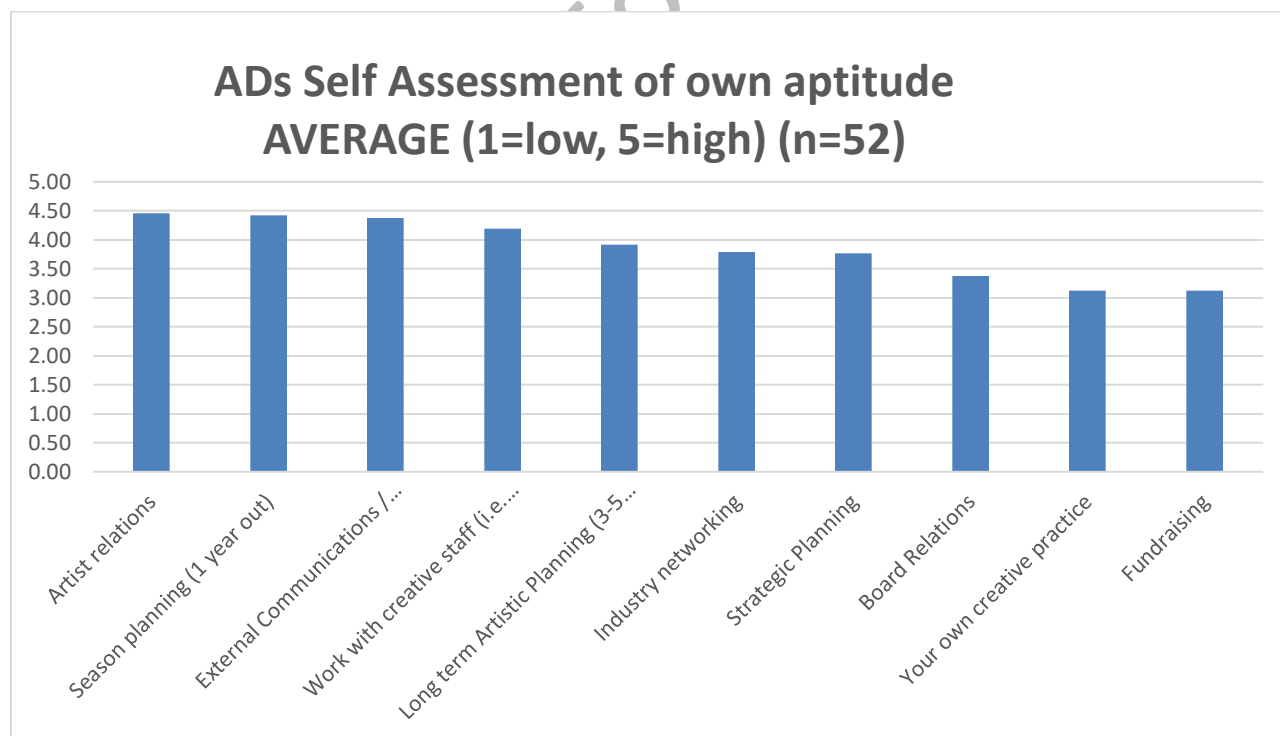
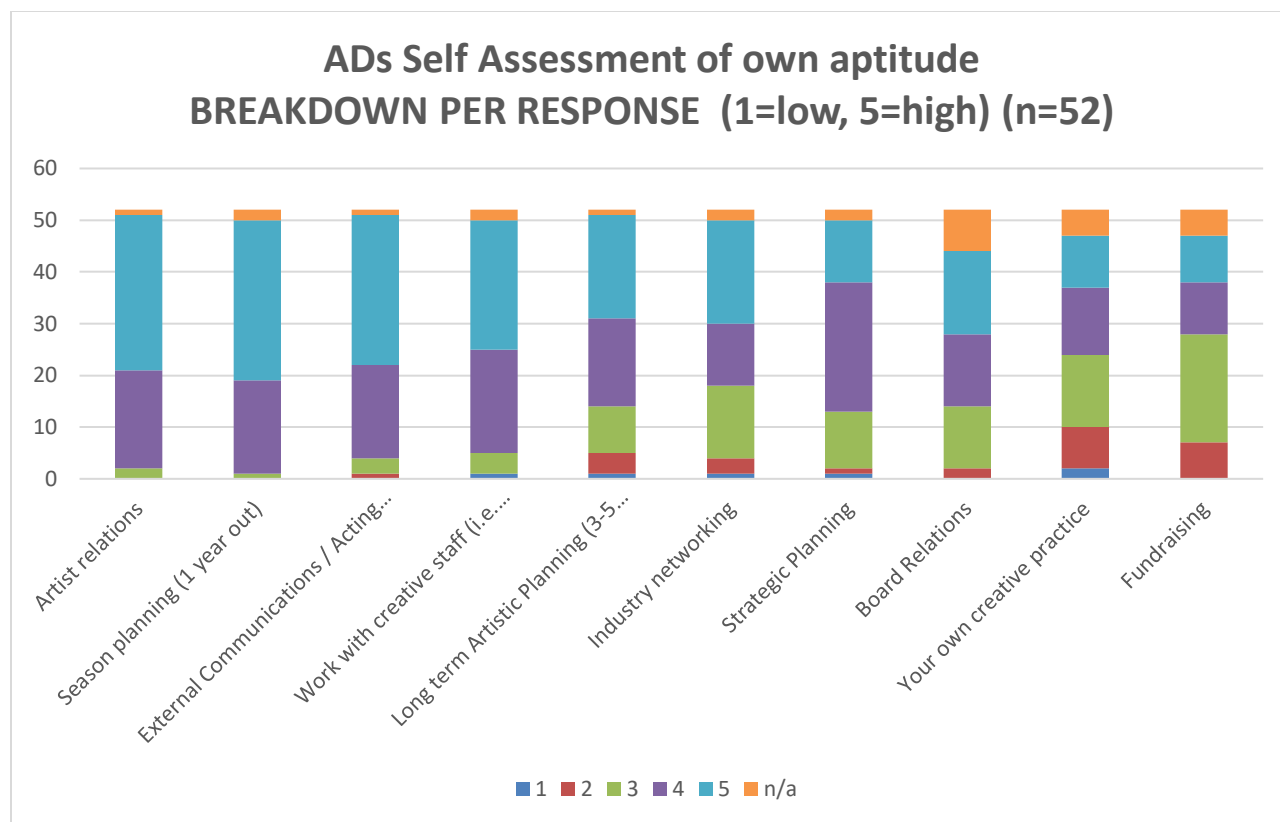


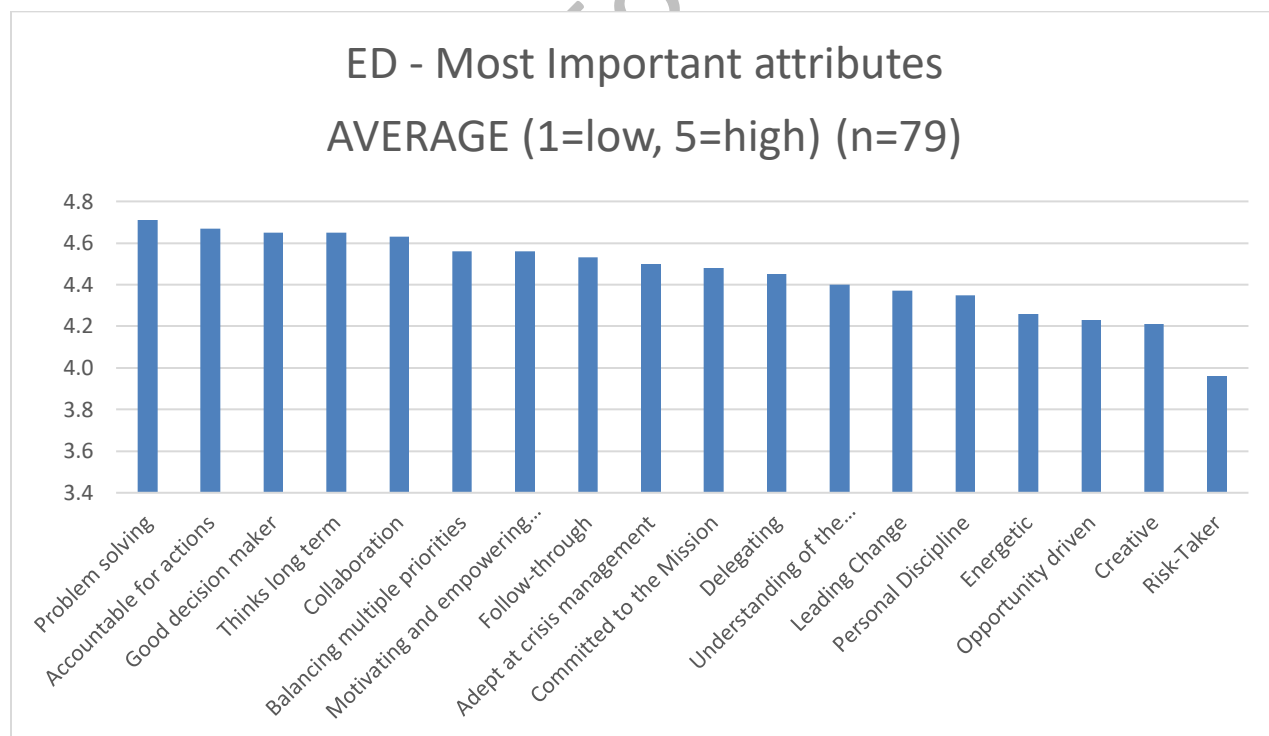
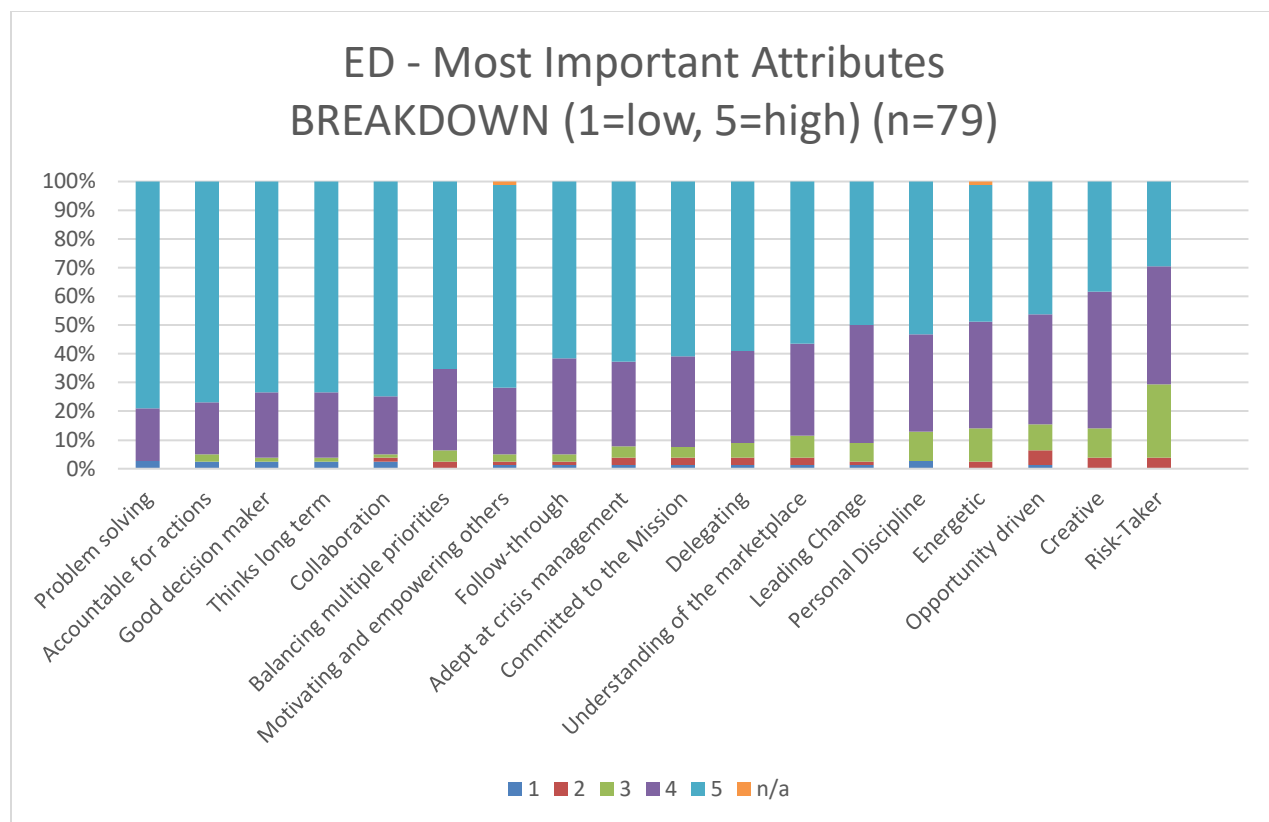




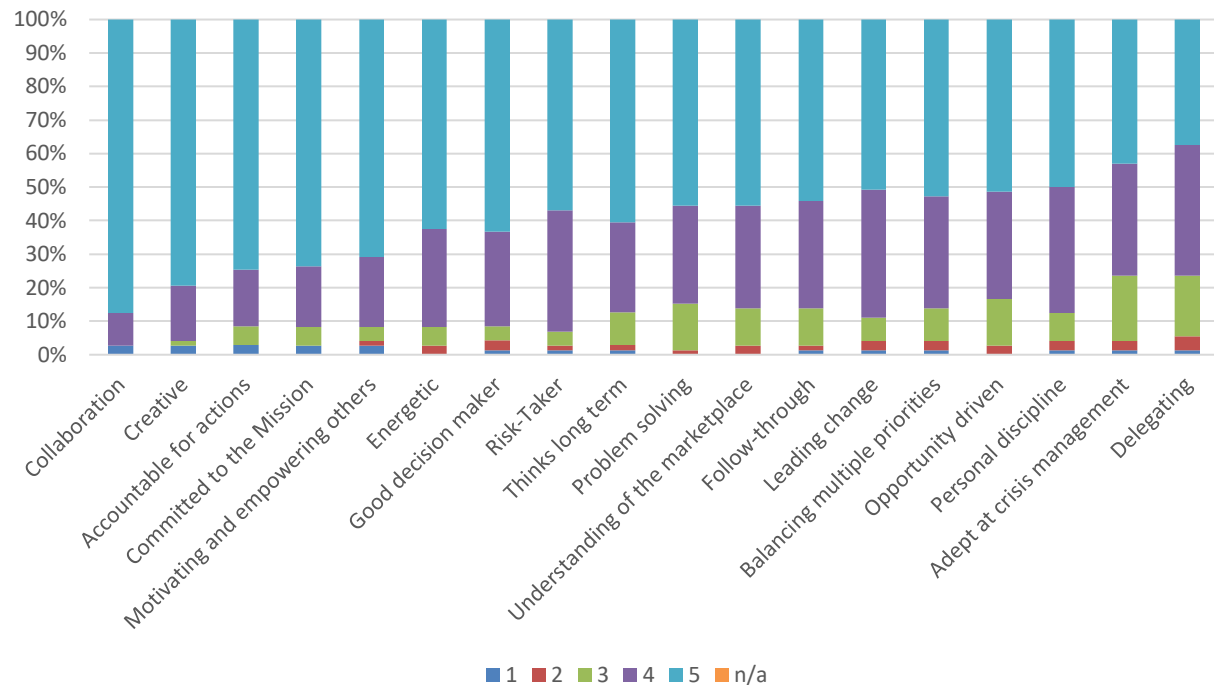
### Section 5 – Leadership Skills, Attributes, And Experience



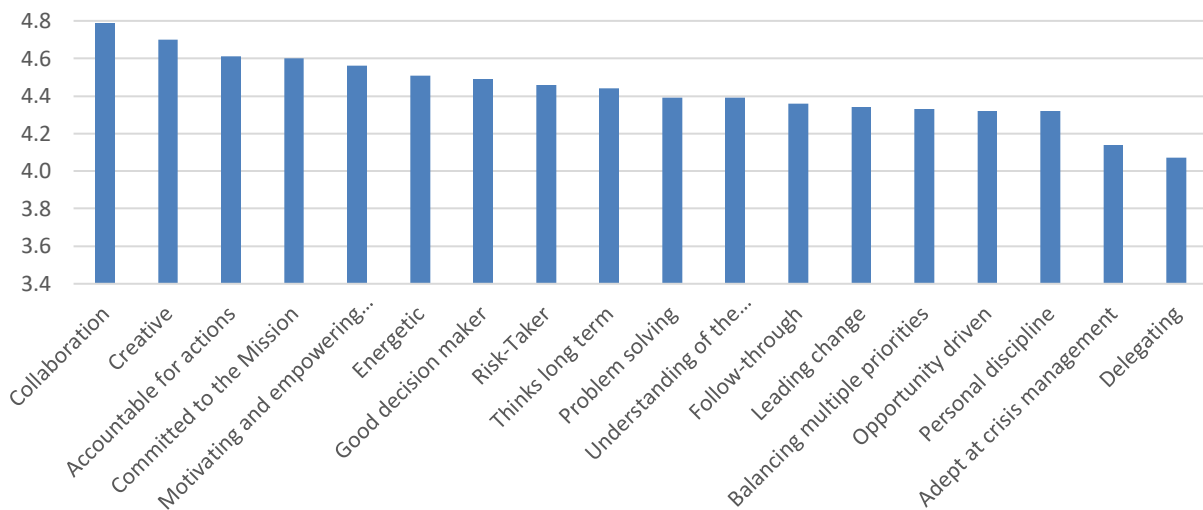




### AD Most Important Attributes Breakdown (1=low, 5=high) (n=73)



### AD Most Important Attributes AVERAGE (1=low, 5=high) (n=73)



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