



Saskatchewan Partnership for Arts Research

Saskatchewan Partnership for Arts Research (SPAR)

REPORTS ON SPAR ARTIST SURVEY DATA, No. 3:

INDIGENOUS RESPONDENTS

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**Saskatchewan
Arts Alliance**



FUNDING
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**University
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Introduction

This report contains original data obtained by the Saskatchewan Partnership for Arts Research, a research partnership formed in the fall of 2012 by the Saskatchewan Arts Alliance, the Saskatchewan Arts Board, SaskCulture and the University of Regina. The research project for which this data was gathered, "Understanding the Arts Ecology of Saskatchewan," was funded by the SPAR partners and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. When referencing this data please acknowledge both SPAR and SSHRC.

This report is a supplement to SPAR's initial report: [Understanding the Arts Ecology of Saskatchewan from the Artist's Perspective: An Overview of Results from the Artist Survey of 2014](#).

It summarizes responses to the Artist Survey by individuals who identified themselves as an "aboriginal person (First Nations, North American Indian, Métis or Inuit)"¹ in comparison with the responses of all other respondents. **These responses are not presented as being representative of the general population of artists in Saskatchewan who identify as Aboriginal. See the [Process and Methodology](#) section at the end of this report for further explanation of this point.**

This report includes data from the more quantitative (closed-ended) survey questions. These along with the richness of responses from the qualitative (open-ended) questions will inform the SPAR project's upcoming consultations (see: Topics for Further Inquiry). For a more complete overview of the SPAR survey data and related reports, refer to the SPAR website: www2.uregina.ca/spar

Data Summary

Out of 348 respondents to the SPAR Artist Survey, 30 or roughly 10% identified themselves as an "aboriginal person (First Nations, North American Indian, Metis or Inuit)." When viewed as a percentage of our total respondents this constitutes a reasonable response from Indigenous artists, but in digesting the comparisons between Indigenous and other survey respondents it is important to consider that the 30 respondents constitute a comparatively small number of artists. Of these respondents, 25 listed Regina or Saskatoon as their residence, and only one respondent listed fluency in an Indigenous language, so one of the objectives of upcoming qualitative consultations will be to diversify the location and language of consultation (particularly on reserves) to discover the degree to which our survey respondents were representative of the wider Indigenous artist population.

As with other Saskatchewan artists, the range of disciplines in which Indigenous artists worked characterized them as strongly cross-disciplinary in their creative practice. They saw collaboration and networking as being as important to their creative practice and in some cases more important than other artist respondents, and they placed considerably more emphasis on the importance of collaboration and networking at the national and international levels and within their extended cultural communities. This difference was especially true for collaboration and networking involving businesses and organizations outside the arts. Indigenous respondents, however, registered very similar levels of dissatisfaction with their access to opportunities for such collaboration and networking as did other artists. 48% indicated a lack of such opportunities within the arts community and 66% lacked such opportunities with entities outside the arts.

¹ Following the example of Statistics Canada, SPAR's survey used the term "aboriginal person" (as defined by the *Constitution Act, 1982*) when asking respondents whether or not they self-identified as such. This report identifies survey data with the terms "Self-Identified Aboriginal Artists" and "All Other Artists." Out of respect for individuals who prefer the word "Indigenous" rather than "aboriginal", this report uses that term when not citing directly from SPAR's survey instrument.

In comparison with other respondents, Indigenous respondents placed greater importance on the following as catalysts for collaboration and networking: readings, artist talks, residencies, visiting artist positions, public galleries, temporary performance or gallery spaces, independent/not-for-profit film theatres, screenings or festivals, and arts or multi-purpose facilities in educational institutions or managed by branches of government. As with other respondents they showed the strongest preference for electronic communication and face-to-face contact.

All artist respondents listed a wide variety of important arts organizations to which they belonged. Of thirty Indigenous respondents who answered this question, six included comments explaining why they either do not belong, or no longer belong, to arts organizations. These included, for example: “there [are] none concerning aboriginal arts and crafts,” “I had no voice there,” “I have yet to find a really great organization that keeps me involved,” and “sadly most of the organizations I have been involved in seem self-serving and unimaginative in some ways.”

In comparison with other respondents, a greater percentage (80% vs 70%) of Indigenous artist respondents saw their local context (e.g. immediate natural environment, particular community or neighbourhood) as important to the facilitation of their creativity and/or art practice, and they reported greater engagement in their community in contributing to such things as teaching and mentorship, economic and innovative capacity, social cohesion, sense of place, exploration of important issues and especially cultural diversity and development. In comparison with other artists, they ascribed an even greater importance to the arts generally as contributing to these dimensions of society.

While Indigenous artist respondents reported income from their creative practice as roughly on par with that of other artists, that average income was very low (@\$15,000), and when it came to overall gross income, 72% of Indigenous artist respondents reported an income under \$40,000 vs 51% of other artists. In this context it is important to note that 69% of the Indigenous artists (vs 72% of other artists) reported having completed at least one university degree, and the largest number of Indigenous respondents were clustered in the 45-54 age group vs the 55-64 age group for other respondents.

Finally, 34% of Indigenous artist respondents reported having received a grant in the past two years (vs 28% of other artists), and they identified the following as being more important as a direct source of income during their careers than did other artists: Canada Council, Department of Canadian Heritage, Saskatchewan Arts Board, municipal and provincial governments and private foundations.

Topics for Further Inquiry

The Understanding the Arts Ecology of Saskatchewan study is moving into a more qualitative phase of consultations and case studies beginning in the Fall of 2015. A wide variety of consultations are planned. While Indigenous artists and individuals will be invited to participate in all consultations, specific consultations focusing on Indigenous artists and communities will also explore questions raised by the initial round of surveys.

- What are the roles of artist/creator and culture in the community?
- Considering that Euro-centric definitions and disciplinary divisions might not necessarily contribute to the best understanding of art-making in indigenous communities, can we learn from Indigenous cultures better ways of classifying and describing what artist/creators do and how they contribute creatively and culturally?
- How important are the arts and creativity to the quality of life a community can offer (health and well-being, social cohesion, cultural identity, education, etc.)?
- Are there adequate supports for both traditional and contemporary creative approaches?

- Are there any gaps or obstacles to creative work/connecting with a community? What kinds of connections are most helpful and productive in supporting creative work? What factors might determine the desirability of engaging in part- or full-time creative work?
- To what extent do survey responses, mostly from urban-dwelling Indigenous artists, reflect or contrast with the experiences of artists living outside of urban centres (in rural areas, on reserve, etc.)

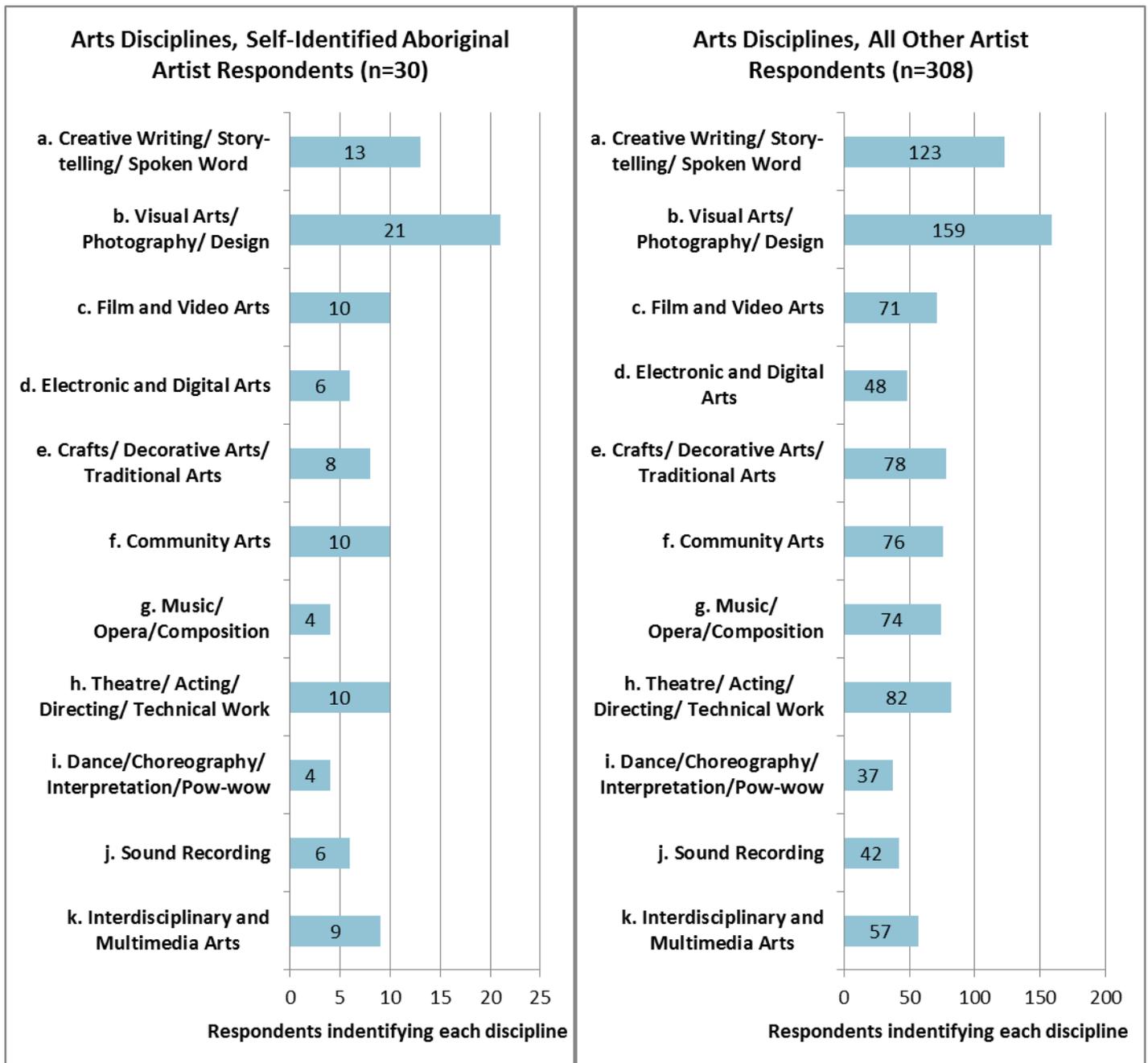
Further to this last point, since most Indigenous survey respondents were based in urban centres, the project will conduct consultations on two or more reserves involving Indigenous artists and community members. The consultations will involve Indigenous researchers and individuals familiar with appropriate Indigenous languages.

One example of specific SPAR survey findings that warrants further discussion arose from Indigenous artists' responses when asked about the importance to creative practice of collaboration, networking and informal connections at various levels. Indigenous respondents ascribed significantly different levels of importance than did all other respondents:

- Indigenous respondents attributed greater importance to collaborations, etc. with their extended cultural community both within and outside the arts.
- The importance of collaboration *within the arts* at local and provincial levels was given less importance by Indigenous respondents than all other artists.
- At the local and provincial level collaboration *outside the arts* was rated more important by Indigenous respondents than all other artist respondents.
- Indigenous respondents also ranked national and international collaboration, etc. as being more important to their creative practice than did all other artist respondents. (See charts on pages 7-11.)

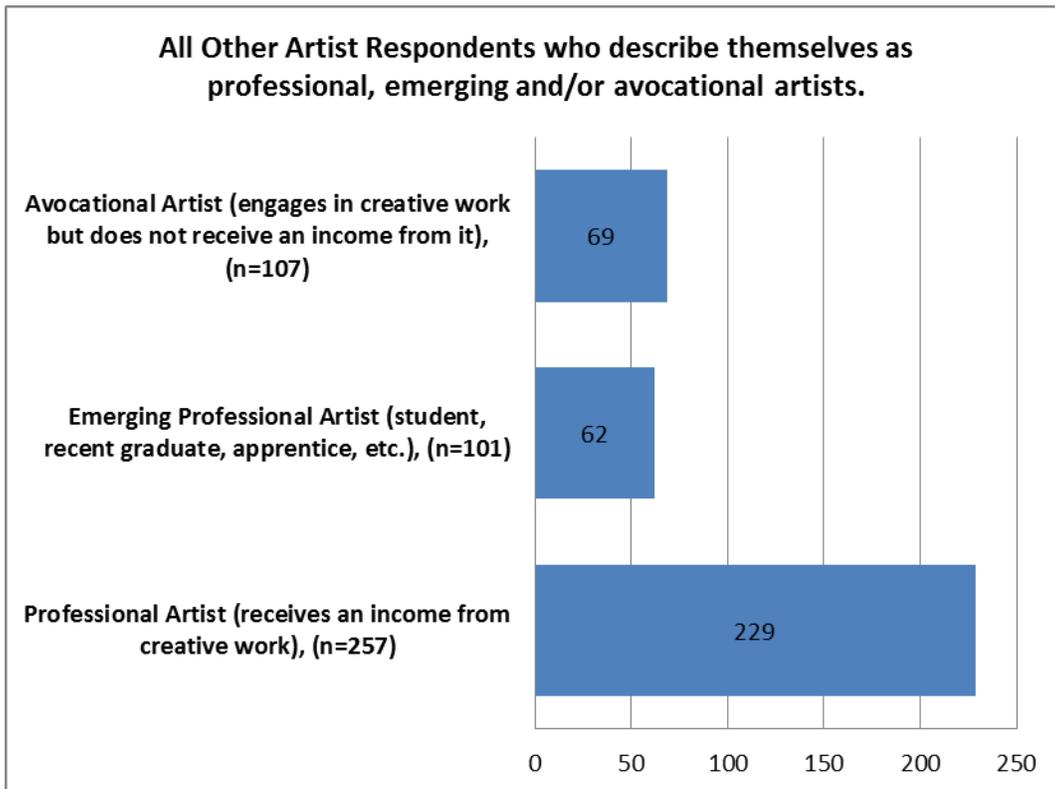
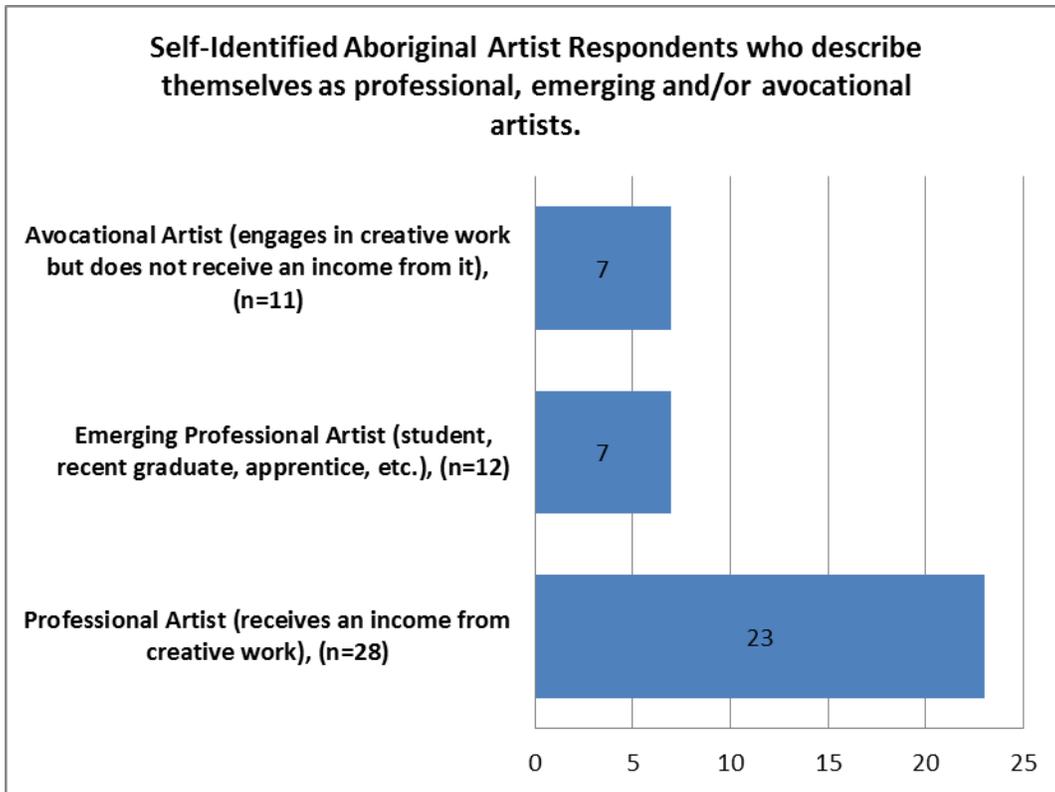
SPAR Survey Results (select)

Question 01: In which of the following general arts discipline(s) are you engaged? Choose more than one if applicable.²

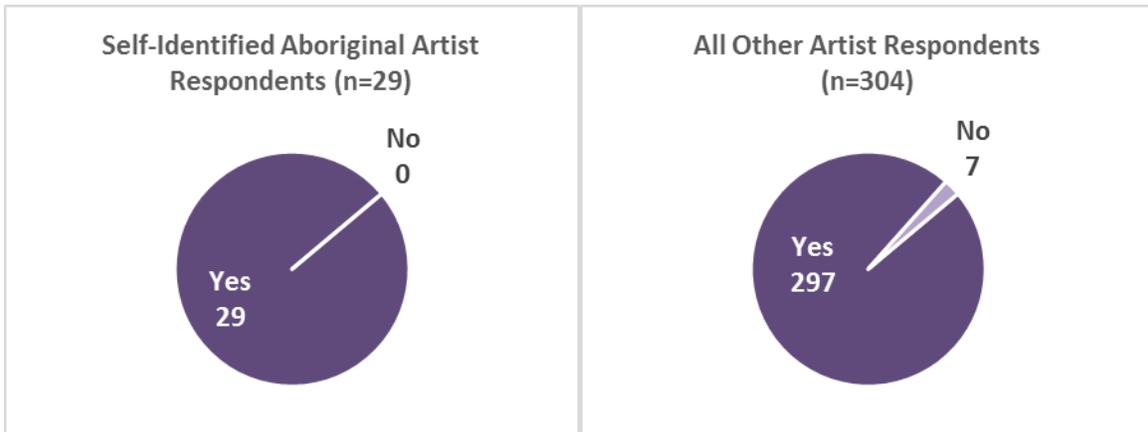


² This report is a summary of responses by the subset of SPAR Artist Survey respondents who self-identified as being Aboriginal. This summary is not presented as being representative of the general population of artists in Saskatchewan who identify as Aboriginal. See the [Process and Methodology](#) section at the end of this report for further explanation of this point.

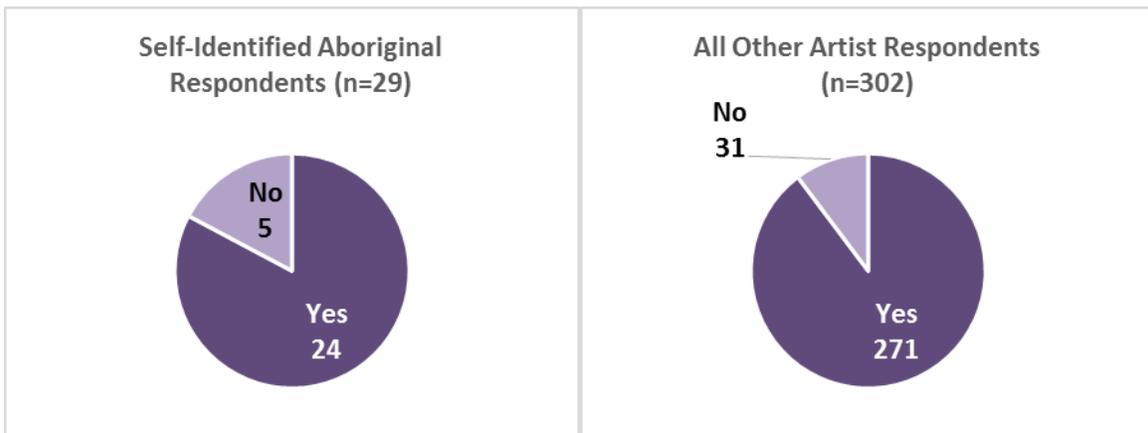
Question 03: Do you describe yourself as a professional, emerging or avocational artist?



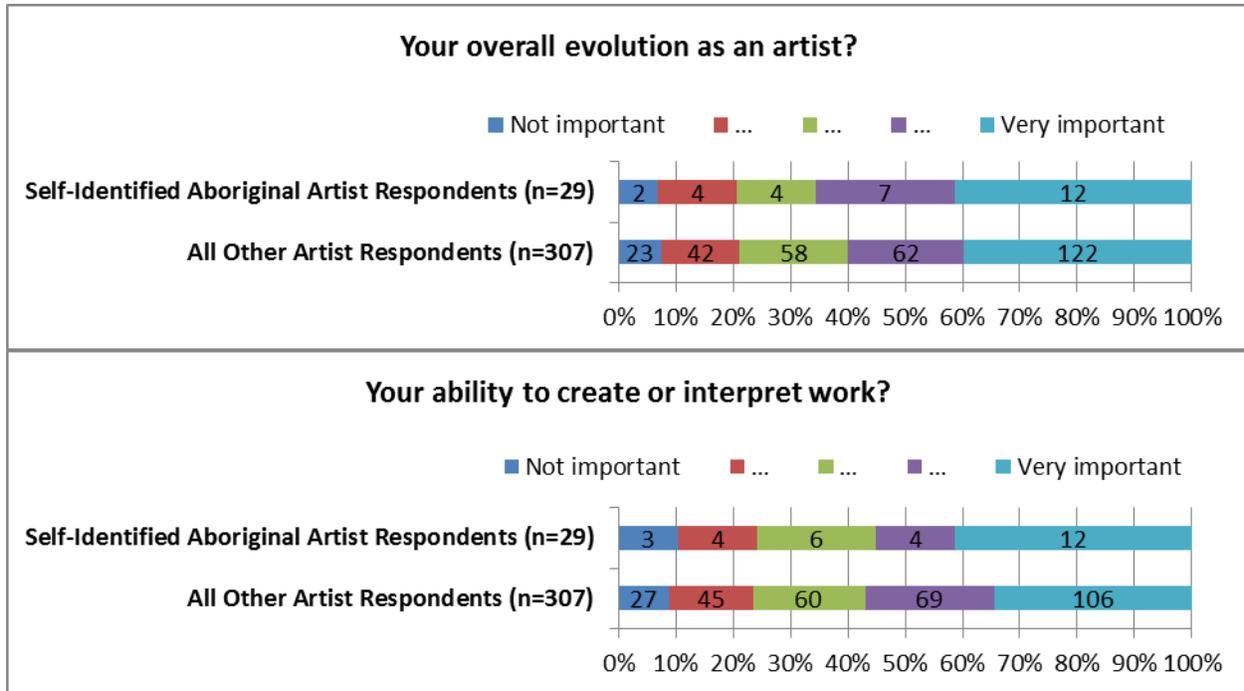
Question 4: Has your creative work been presented to the public through exhibition, publication, performance, readings, screenings, etc.?



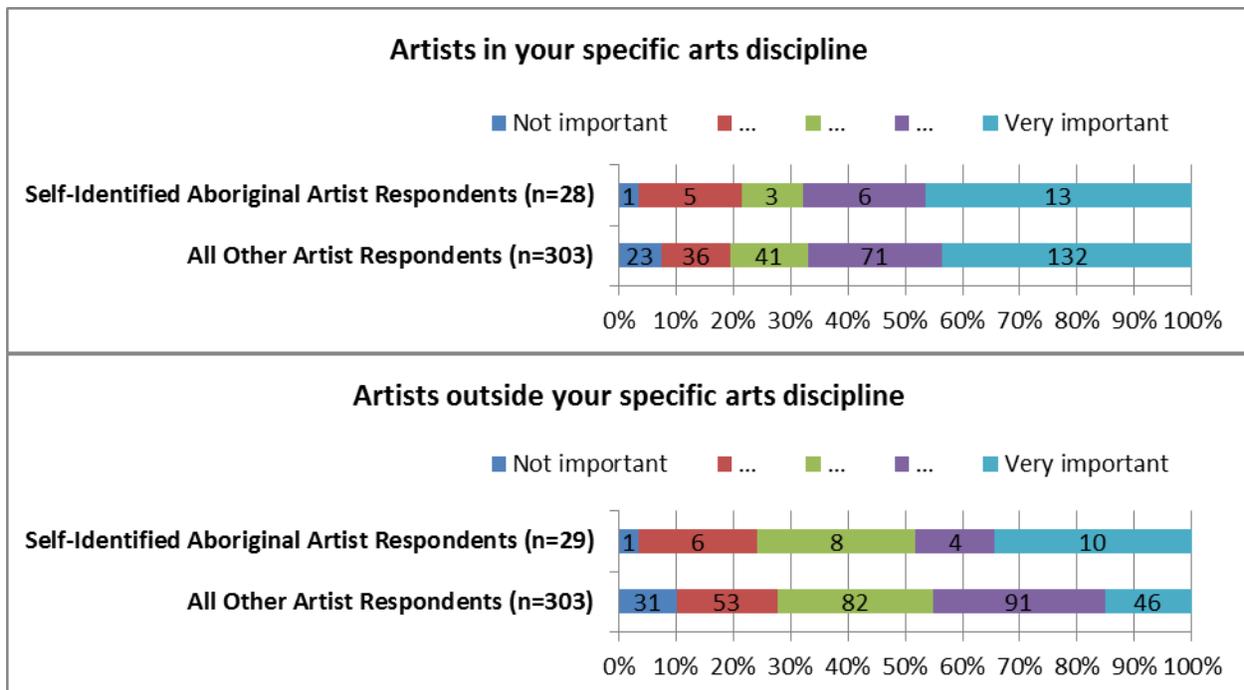
Question 5: Has your creative work received public or peer recognition (e.g., awards, prizes, scholarships, invitations to exhibit, perform or adjudicate, etc.)?"



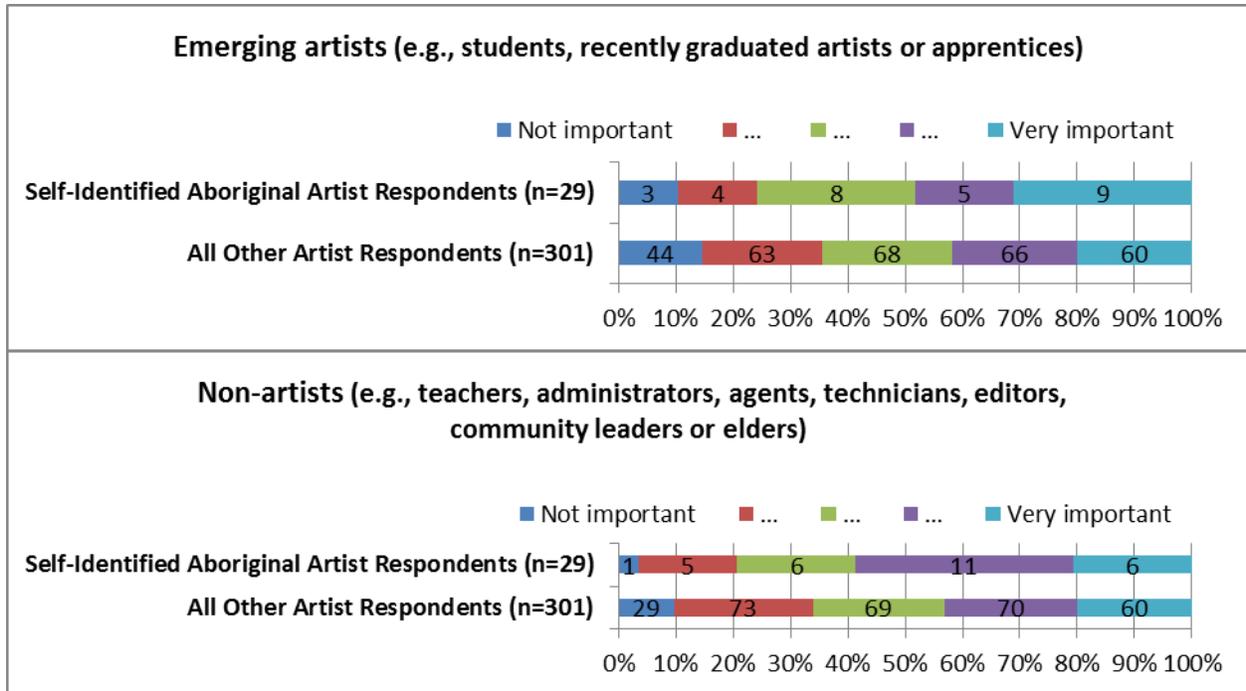
Question 09: How important have collaborations been to:



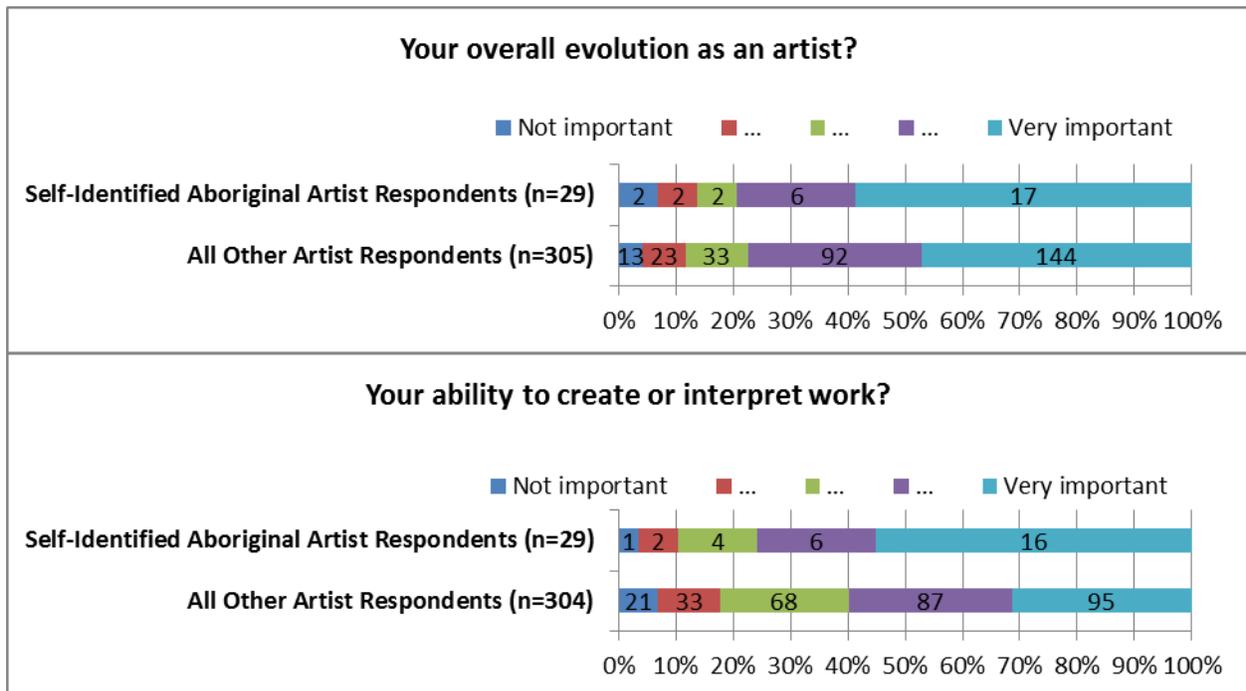
Question 10: How important to your creative practice is collaboration with the following?



Question 10: How important to your creative practice is collaboration with the following? (cont.)



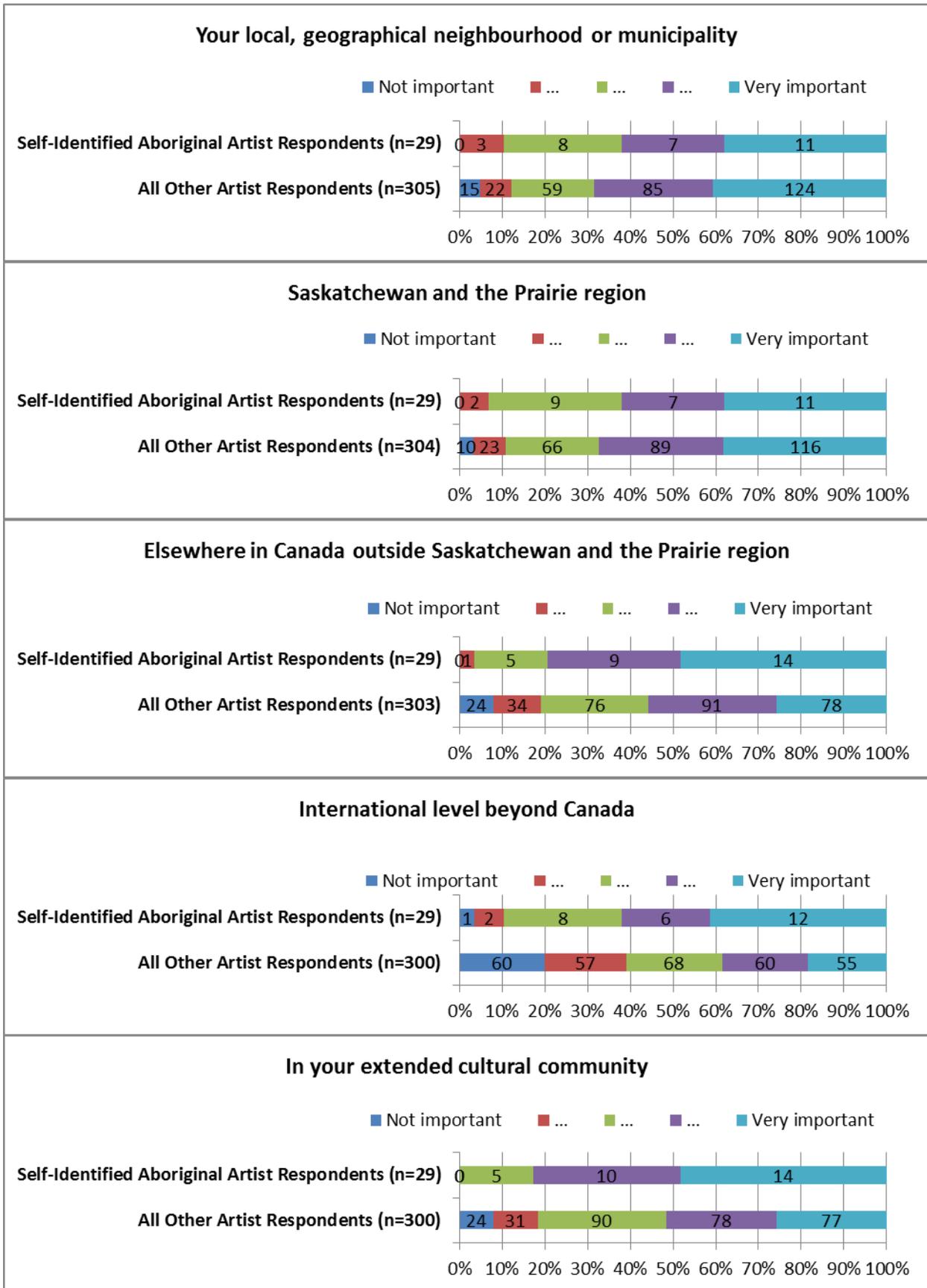
Question 11: How important have networking/informal connections been to:



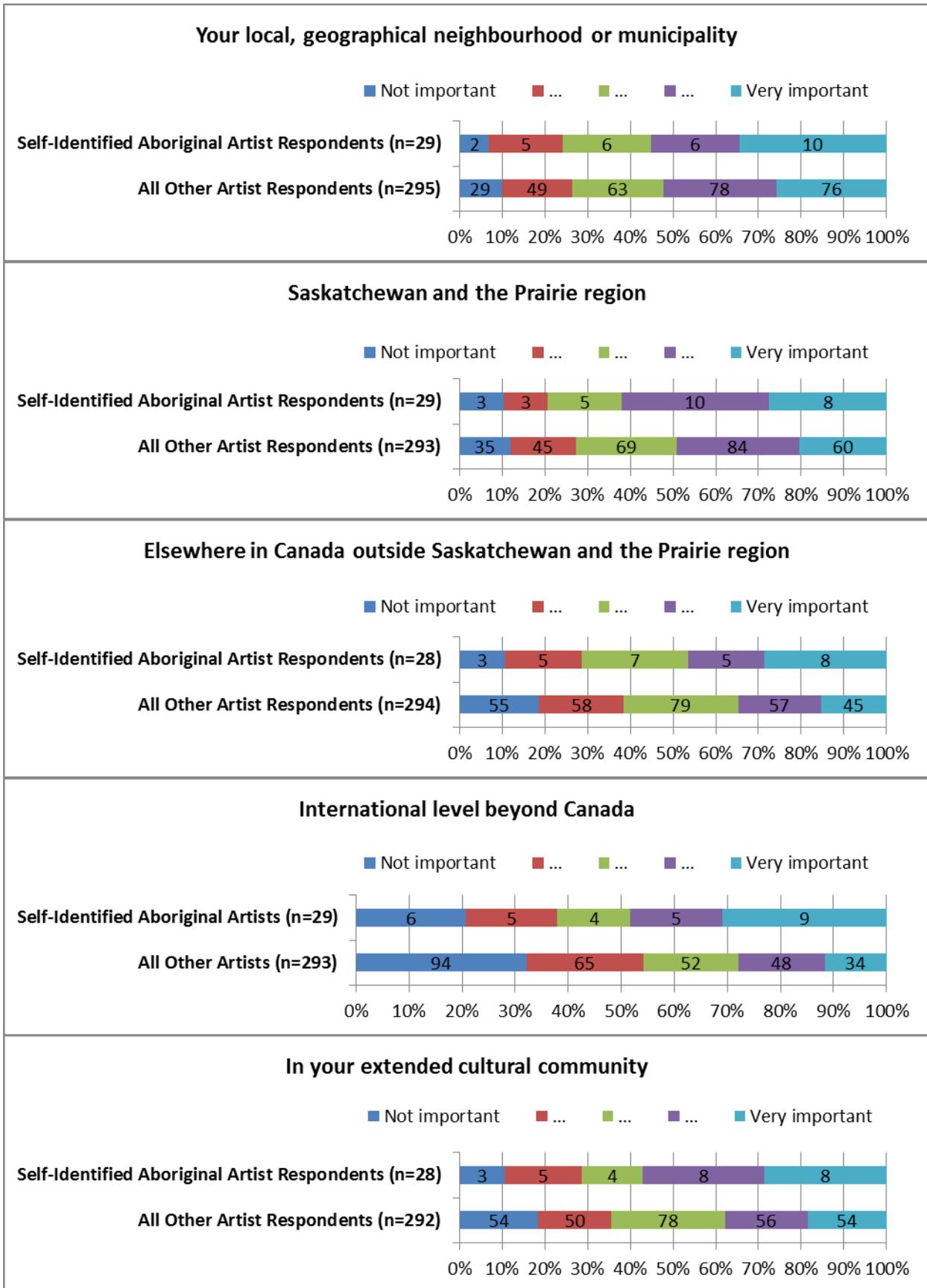
Question 12: How important to your creative practice are networking/informal connections with the following?



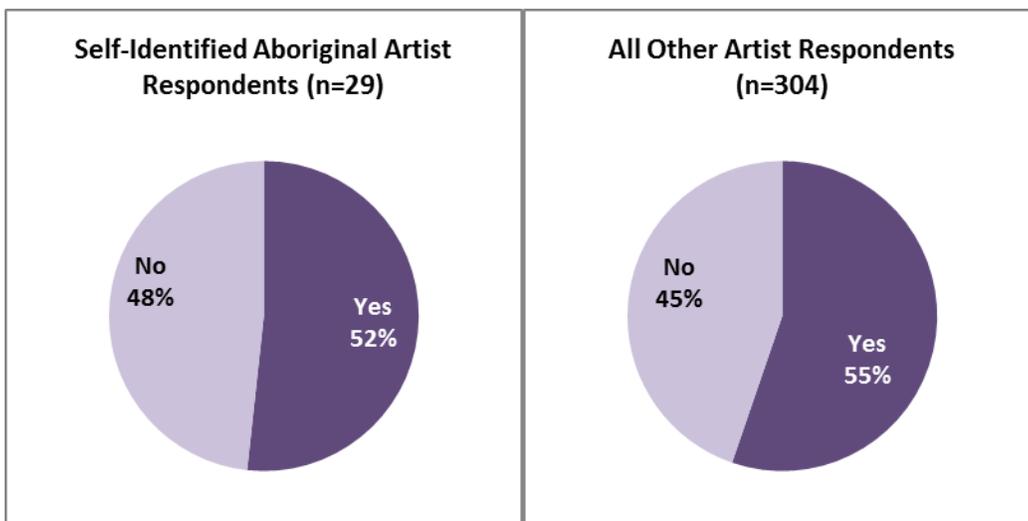
Question 13: How important to your creative practice is collaboration, networking or informal connections with artists, arts organizations and/or businesses in the arts or culture at the following levels?



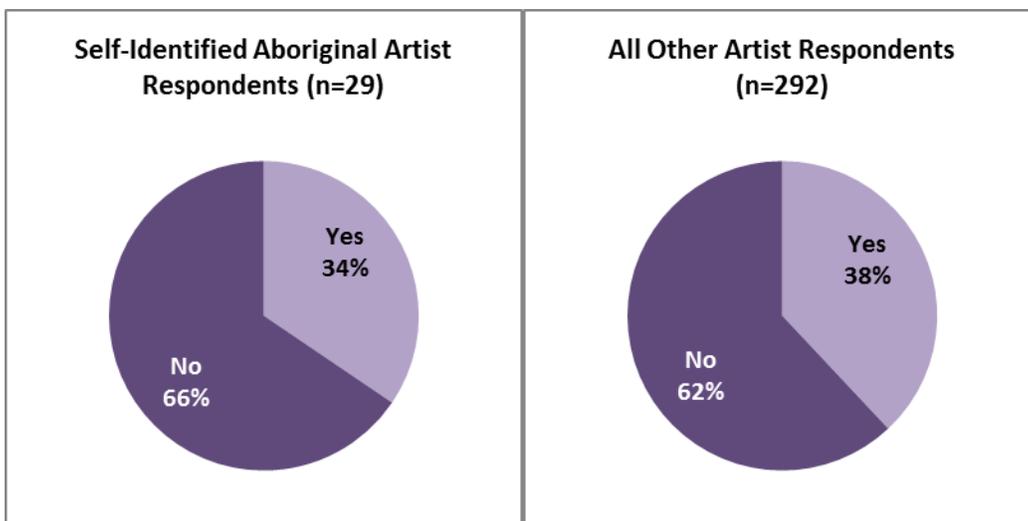
Question 14: How important to your creative practice is collaboration, networking or informal connections with individuals, organizations or businesses outside the arts at the following levels?



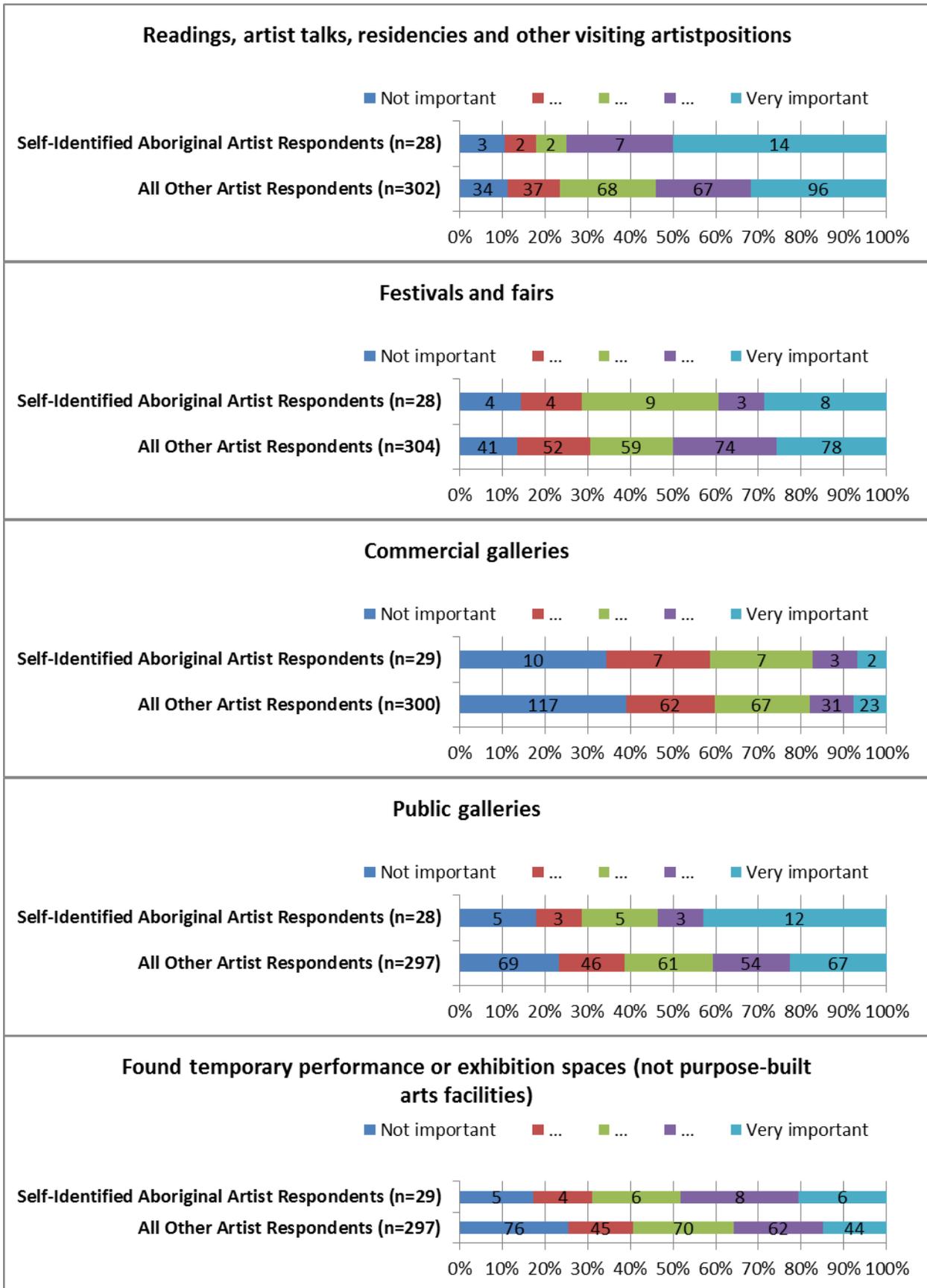
Question 15: Do you have adequate access to mechanisms or opportunities for collaborating or networking with individuals, organizations or businesses in the arts?



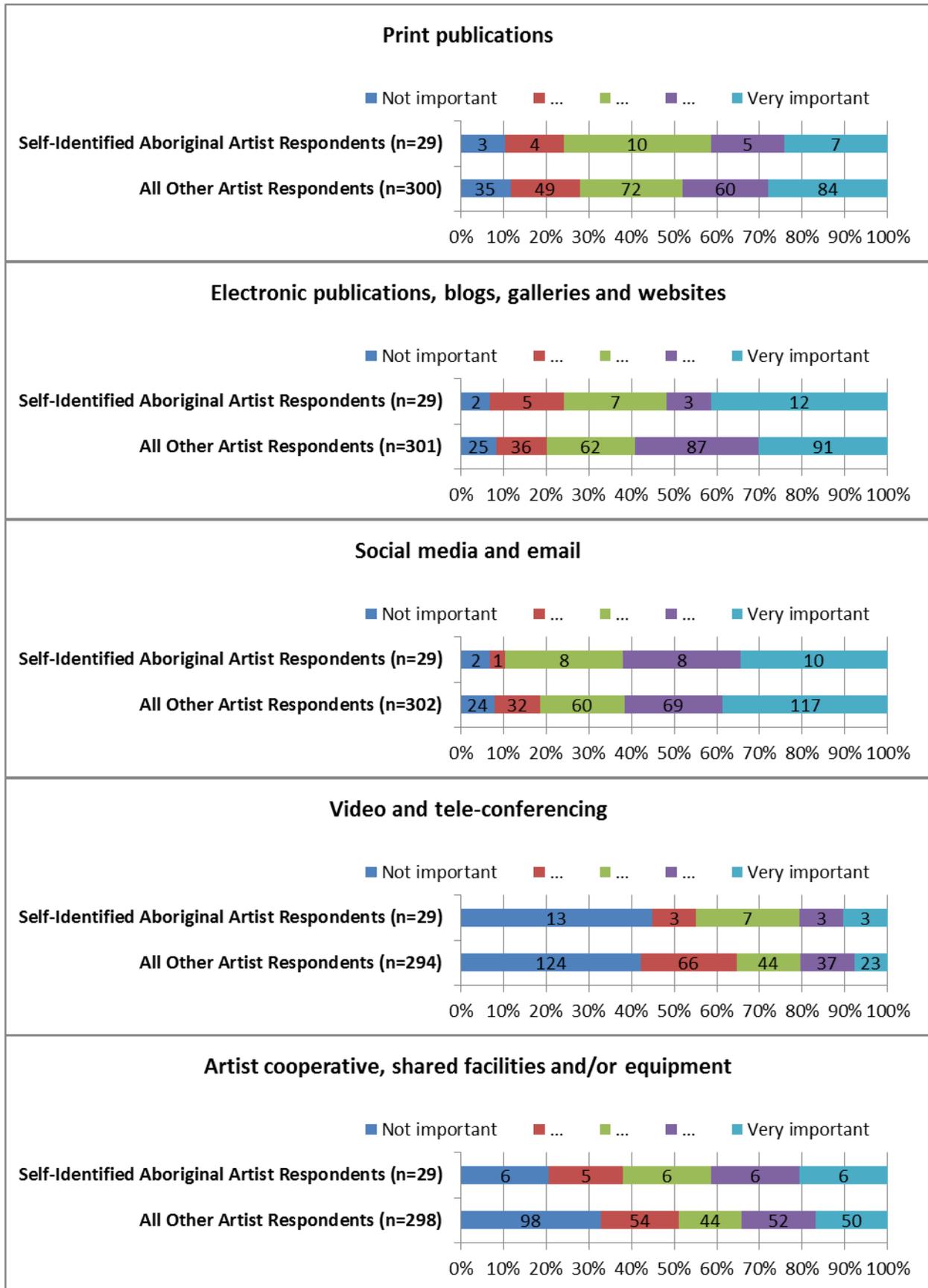
Question 16: Do you have adequate access to mechanisms or opportunities for collaborating or networking with individuals, organizations or businesses outside the arts?



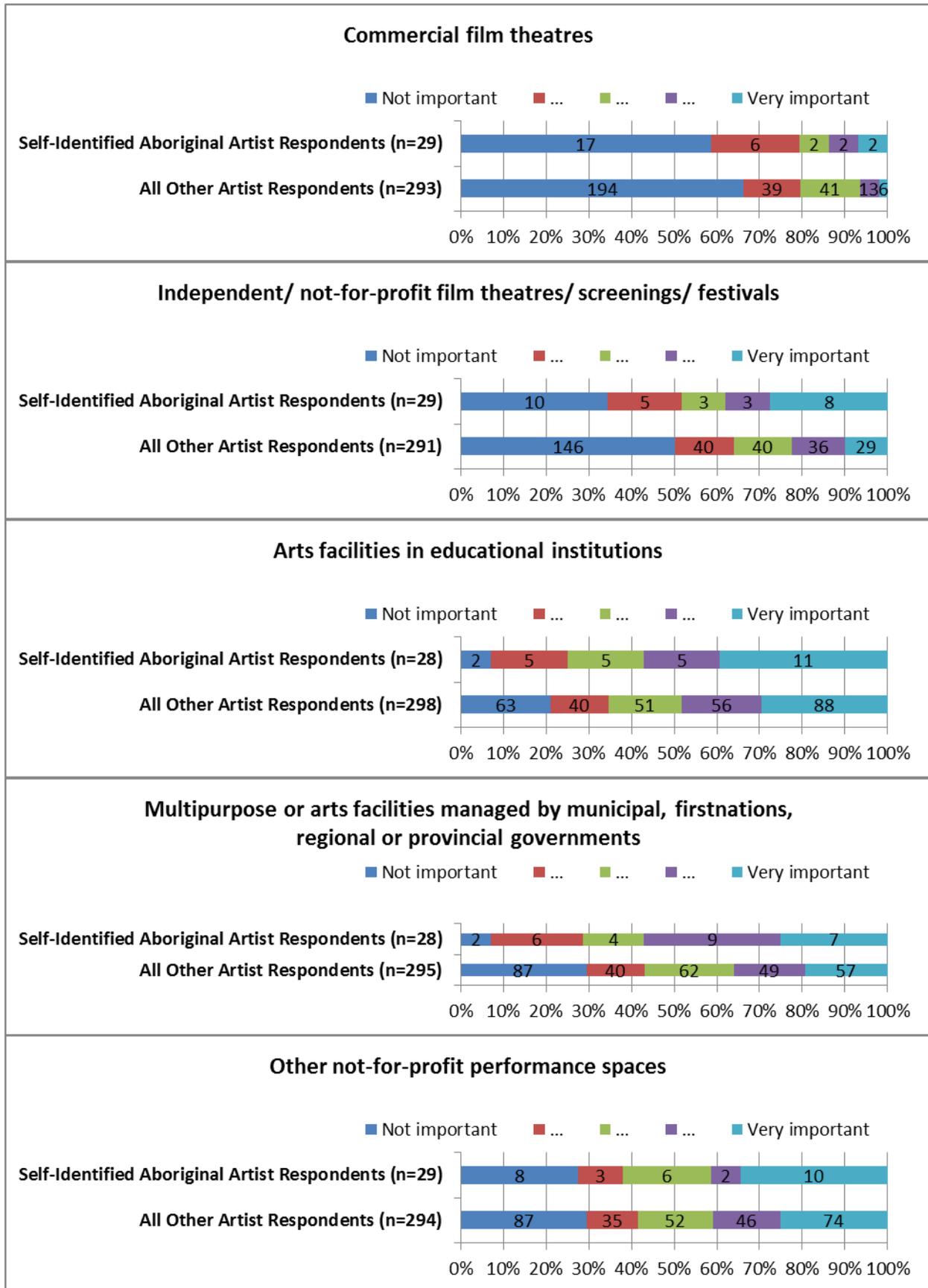
Question 17: How important have the following been in helping you make connections necessary to your creative work?



Question 17 (continued): How important have the following been in helping you make connections necessary to your creative work?



Question 17 (continued): How important have the following been in helping you make connections necessary to your creative work?



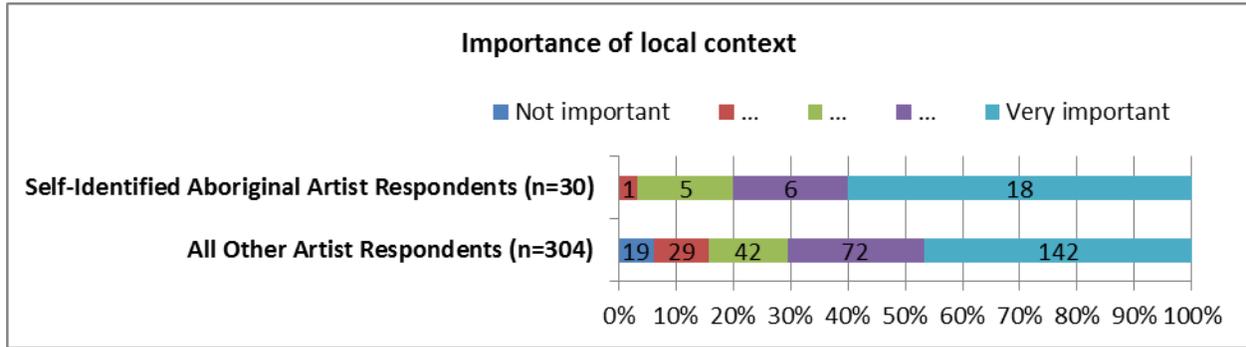
Question 17 (continued): How important have the following been in helping you make connections necessary to your creative work?



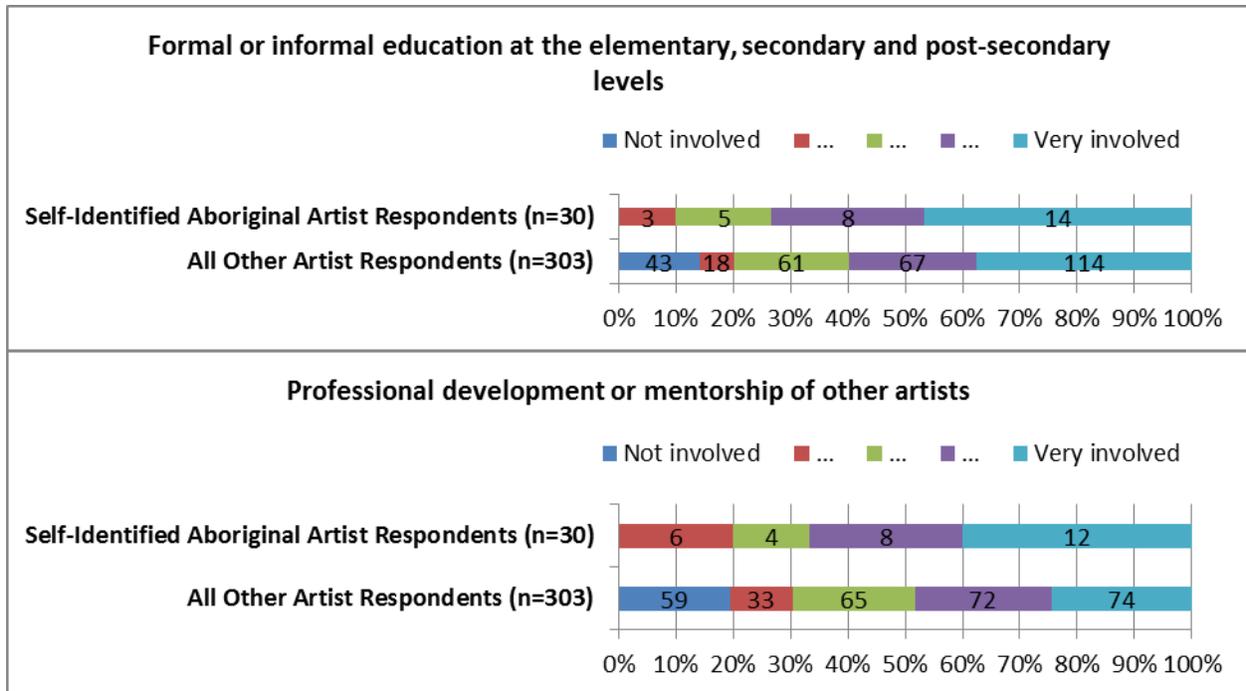
Questions 20 & 21: regarding typical types of communication and access to high-speed internet service.

Like all other artists, Indigenous artists most-often identified that they typically communicated with a variety of people and organizations³ via either face-to-face or electronic media communications. Phone conversations were usually the third-most identified means of communications. Most artists also identified having access to high-speed internet service at home and at their studio or work space.

Question 22: How important is your local context (e.g., your immediate natural environment, your particular community or neighbourhood, etc.) in facilitating your creativity and/or your art practice?

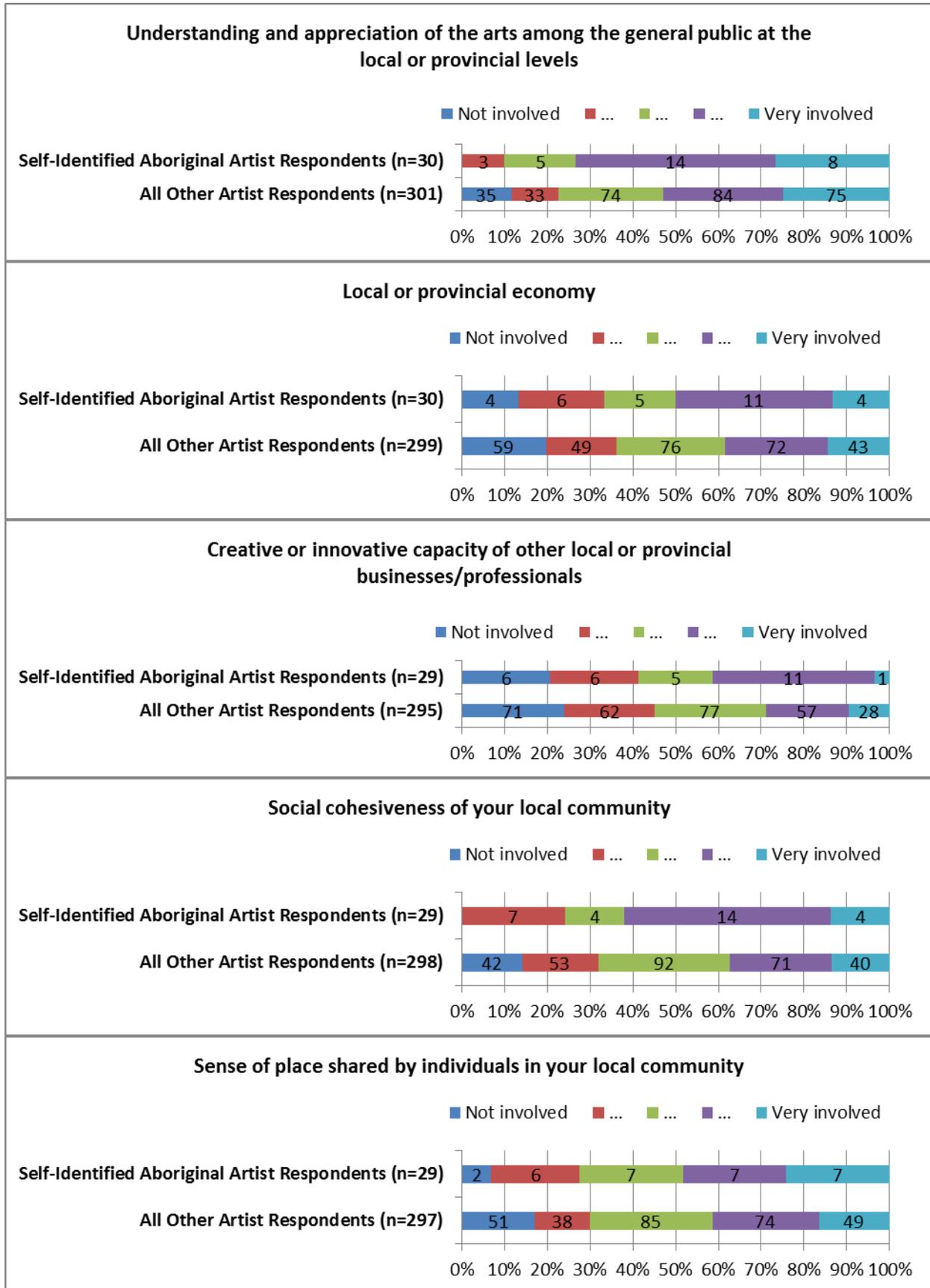


Question 23: Have you been involved in contributing to any of the following?

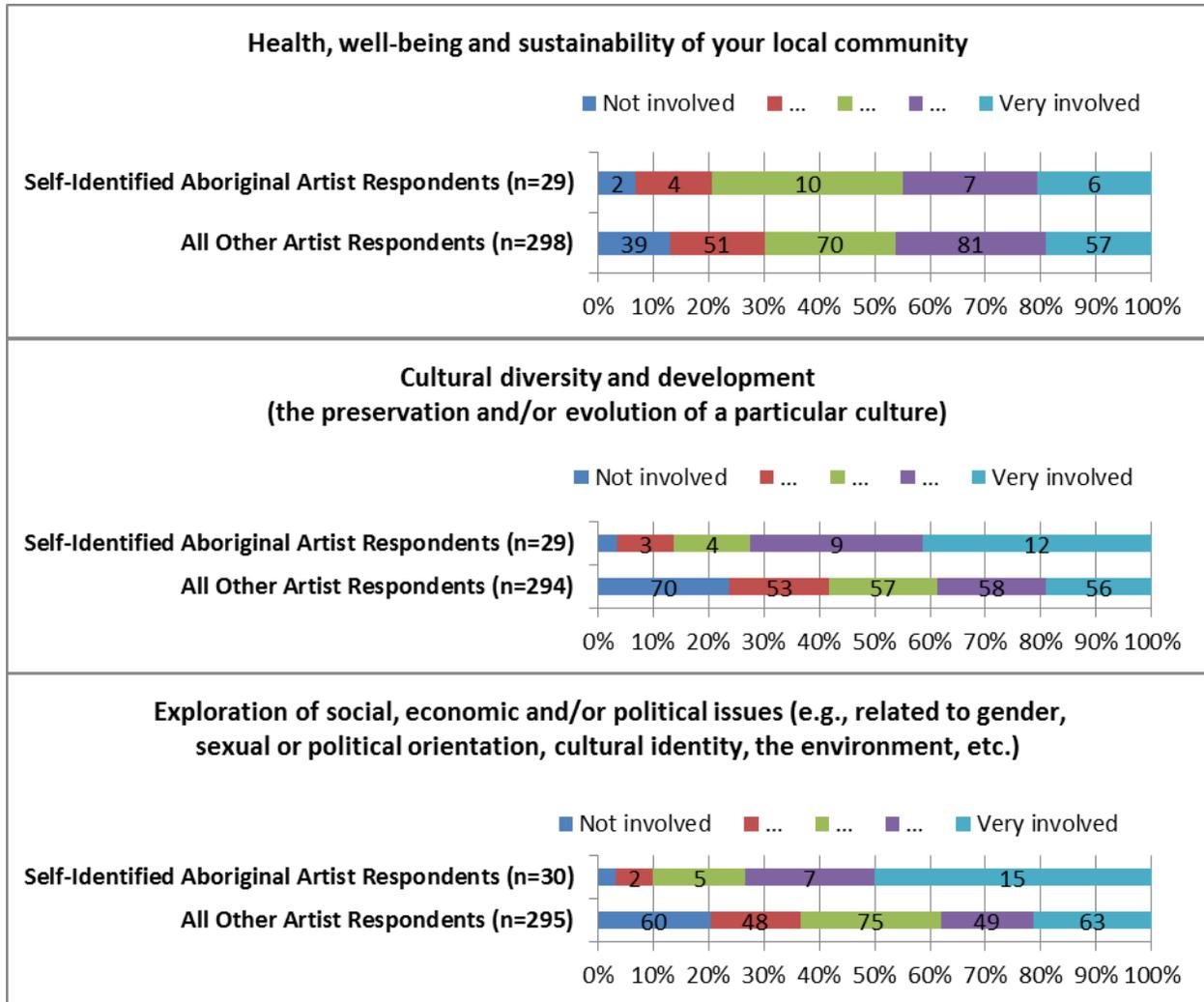


³ Artists were specifically asked about communications with: 1) Other Artists; 2) Arts agencies, organizations, publishers, galleries, producers and distributors, agents, etc.; 3) Partner/ Collaborating organizations or businesses outside the arts sector; and Patrons, sponsors, potential audiences, and the public.

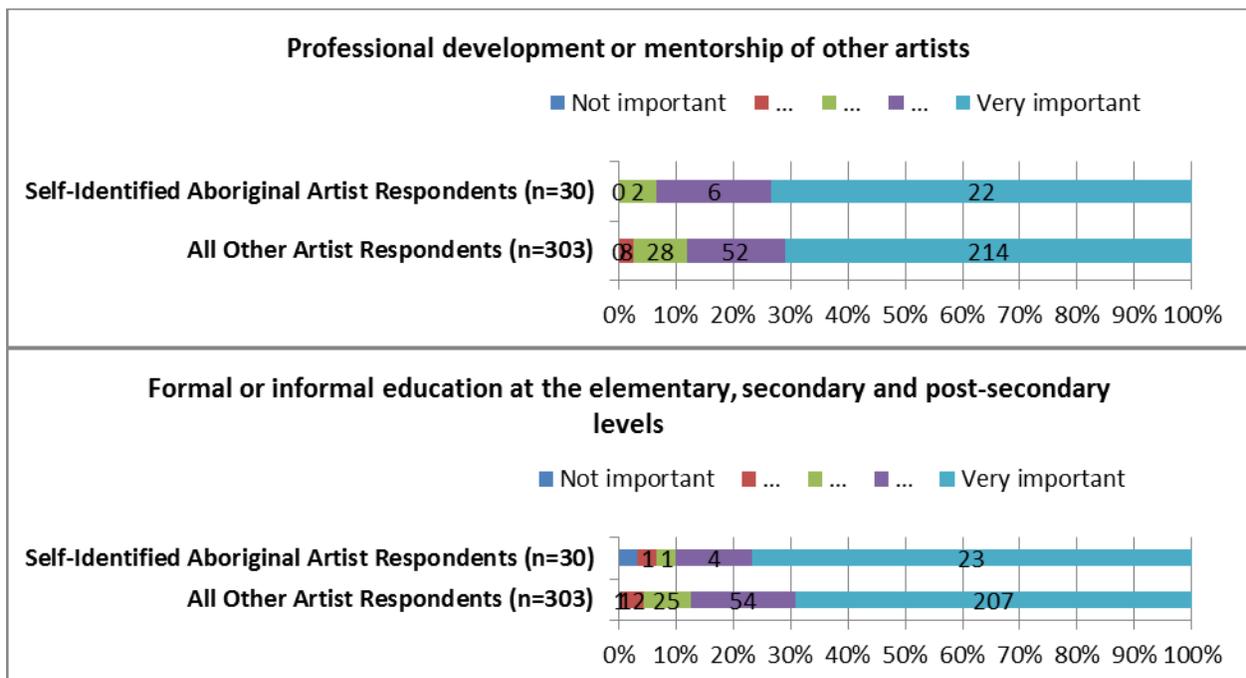
Question 23: Have you been involved in contributing to any of the following? (continued)



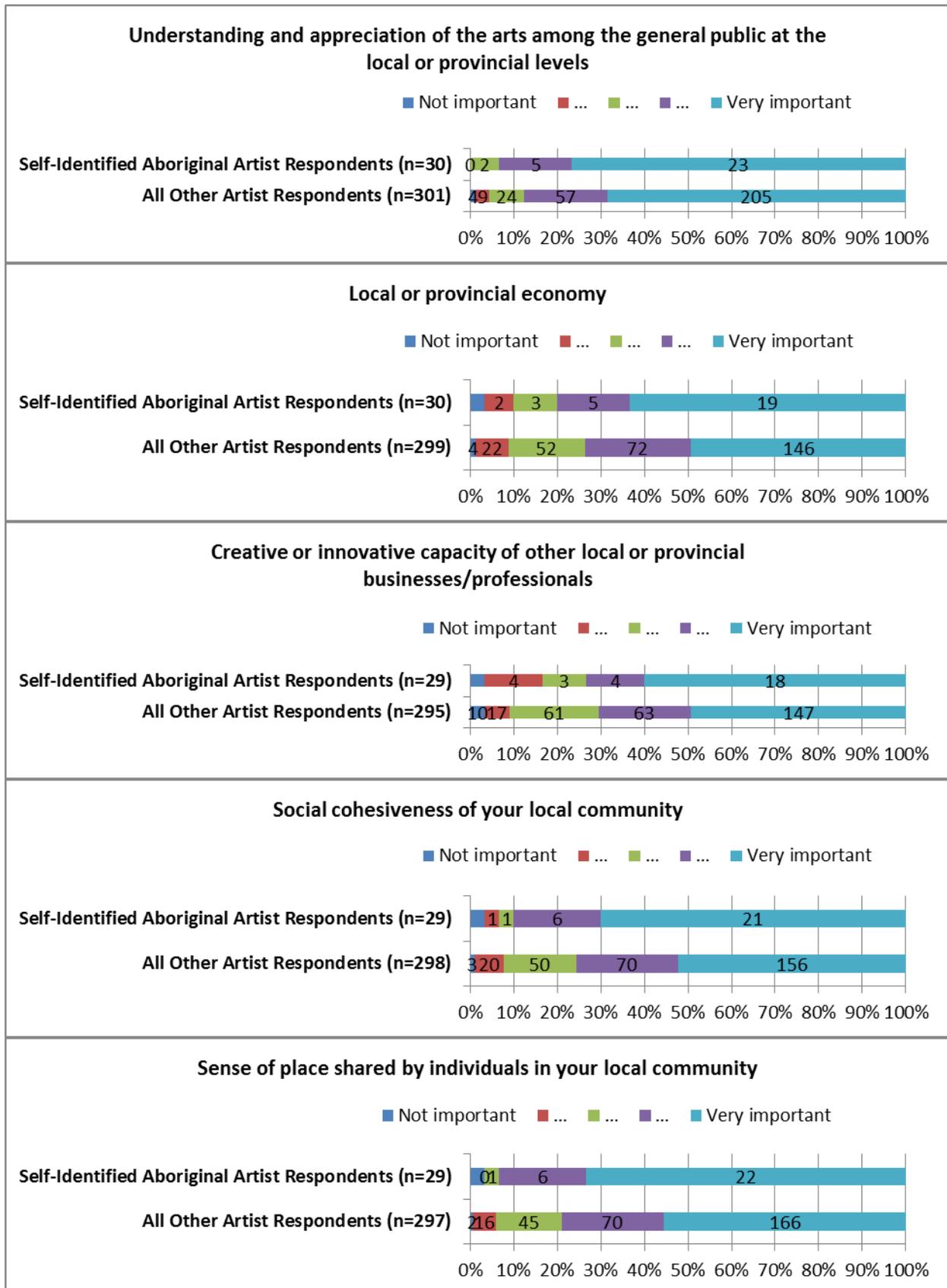
Question 23: Have you been involved in contributing to any of the following? (continued)



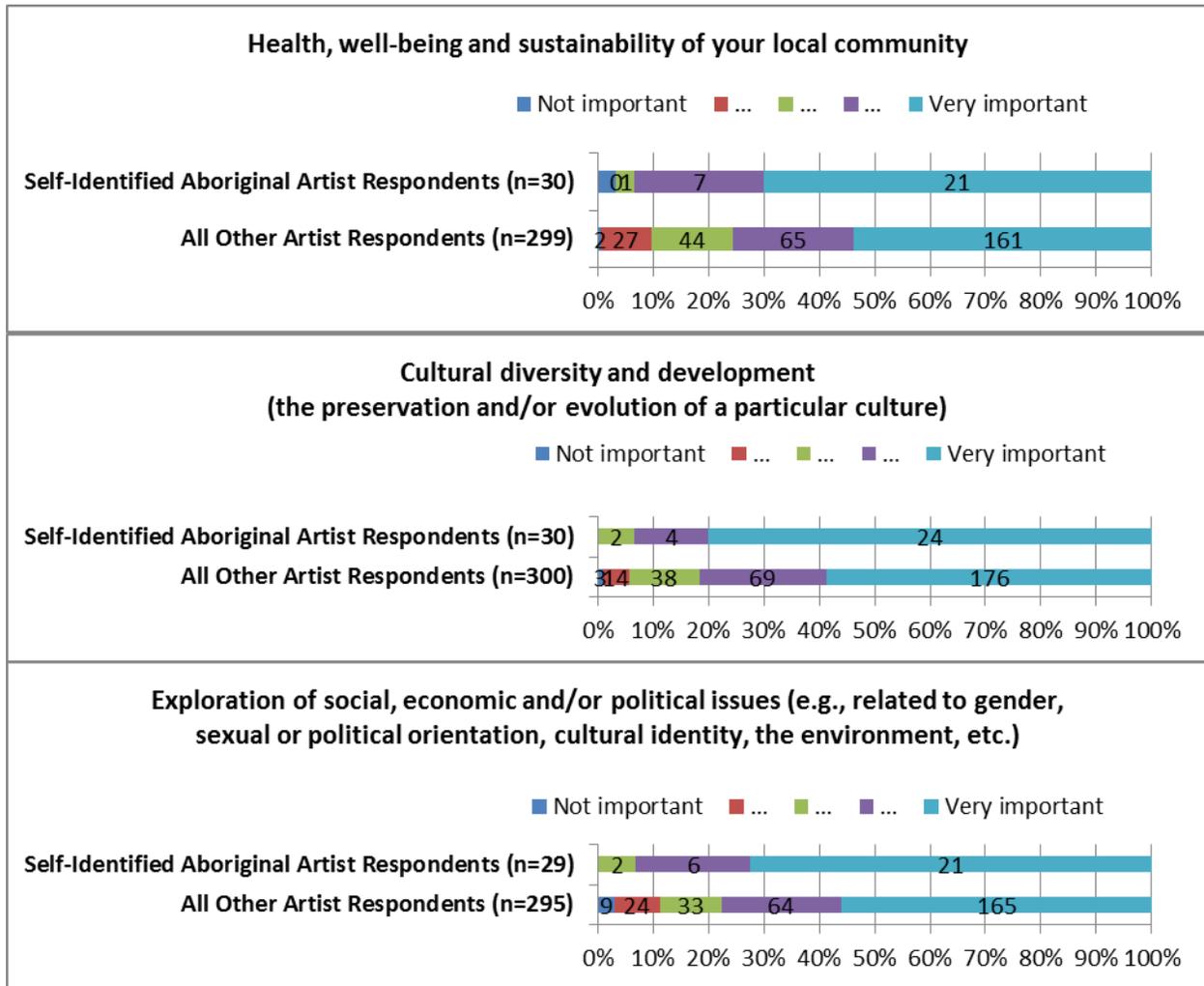
Question 24: In general how important do you think artists and arts organizations are in contributing to the following?



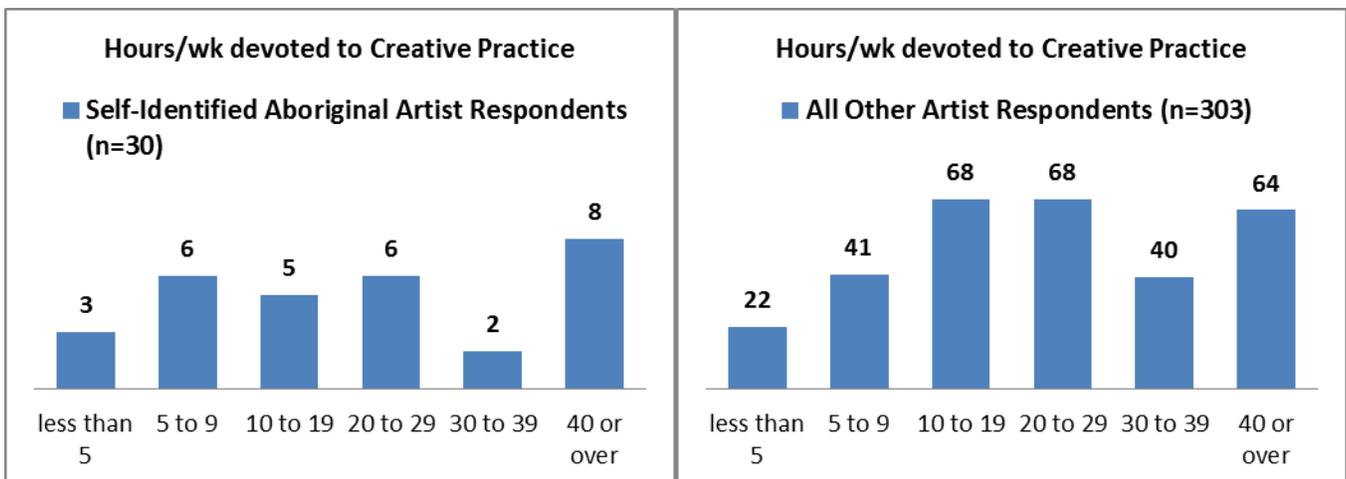
Question 24 (continued): In general how important do you think artists and arts organizations are in contributing to the following?



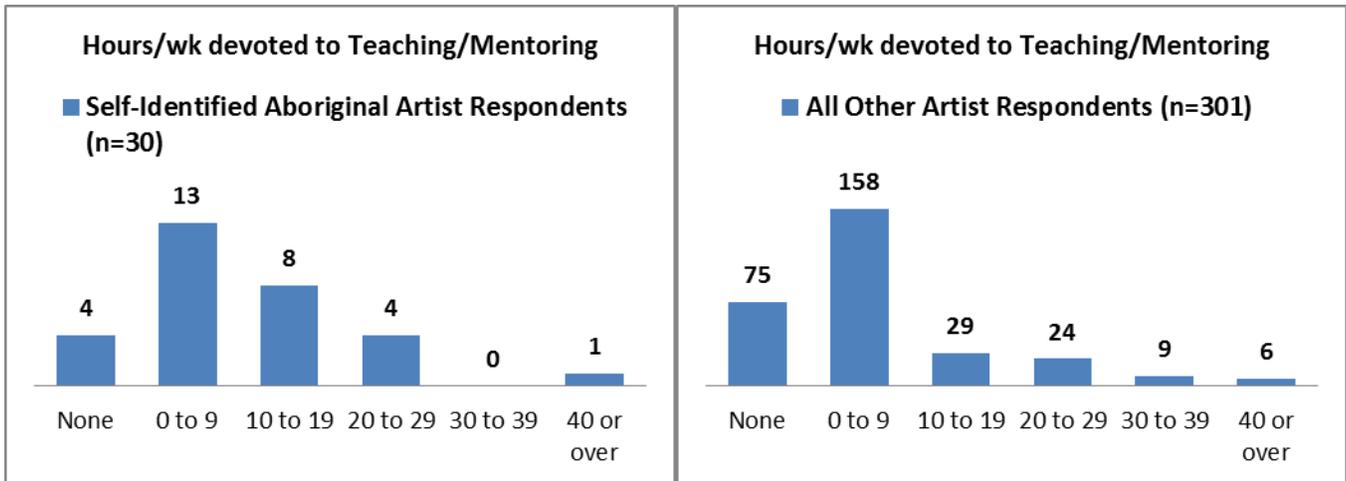
Question 24 (continued): In general how important do you think artists and arts organizations are in contributing to the following?



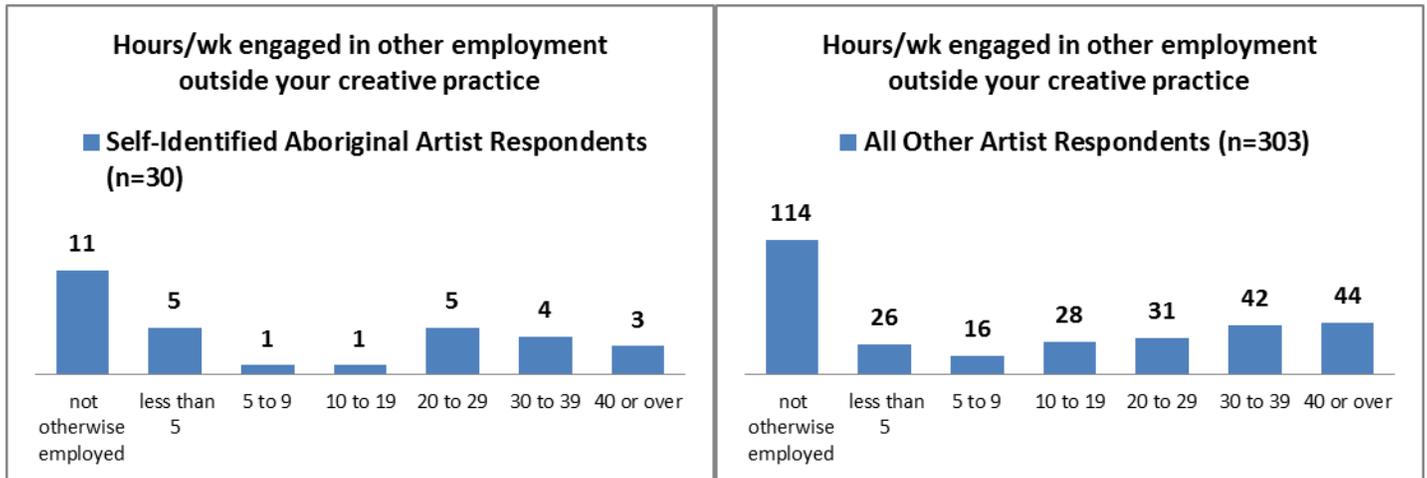
Question 26: In an average week, approximately how many hours do you devote to your creative practice? (e.g., not only creating or performing but also rehearsal and practice, research, experimentation, professional development, formal or informal training, promotion of your work). Please exclude any hours spent teaching.



Question 27: In an average week, approximately how many hours do you devote to teaching or mentorship (formal or informal) in your creative discipline?



Question 28: In an average week, approximately how many hours are you engaged in other employment outside your creative practice?



Question 29: Do you or an agent, dealer, publisher, etc. actively promote your creative work or your creative skills?

Approximately 60% of both Self-Identified Aboriginal Artists (n=30) and all other artists (n=305) answered “yes.”

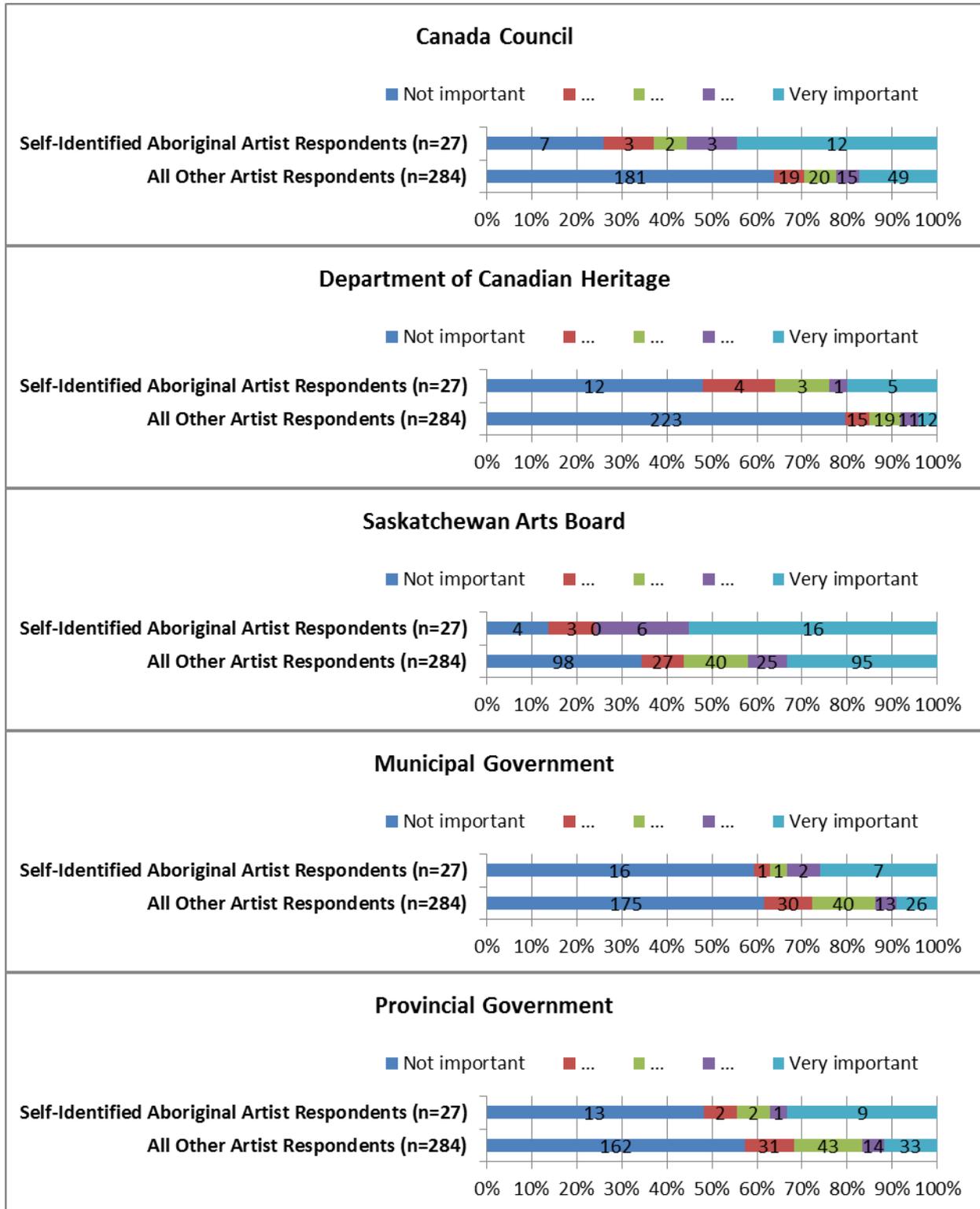
Question 30: Do you hold a municipal business license associated with your creative practice?

Approximately 14% of Self-Identified Aboriginal Artists (n=28) answered “yes” – compared to 16% of all other artists (n=306).

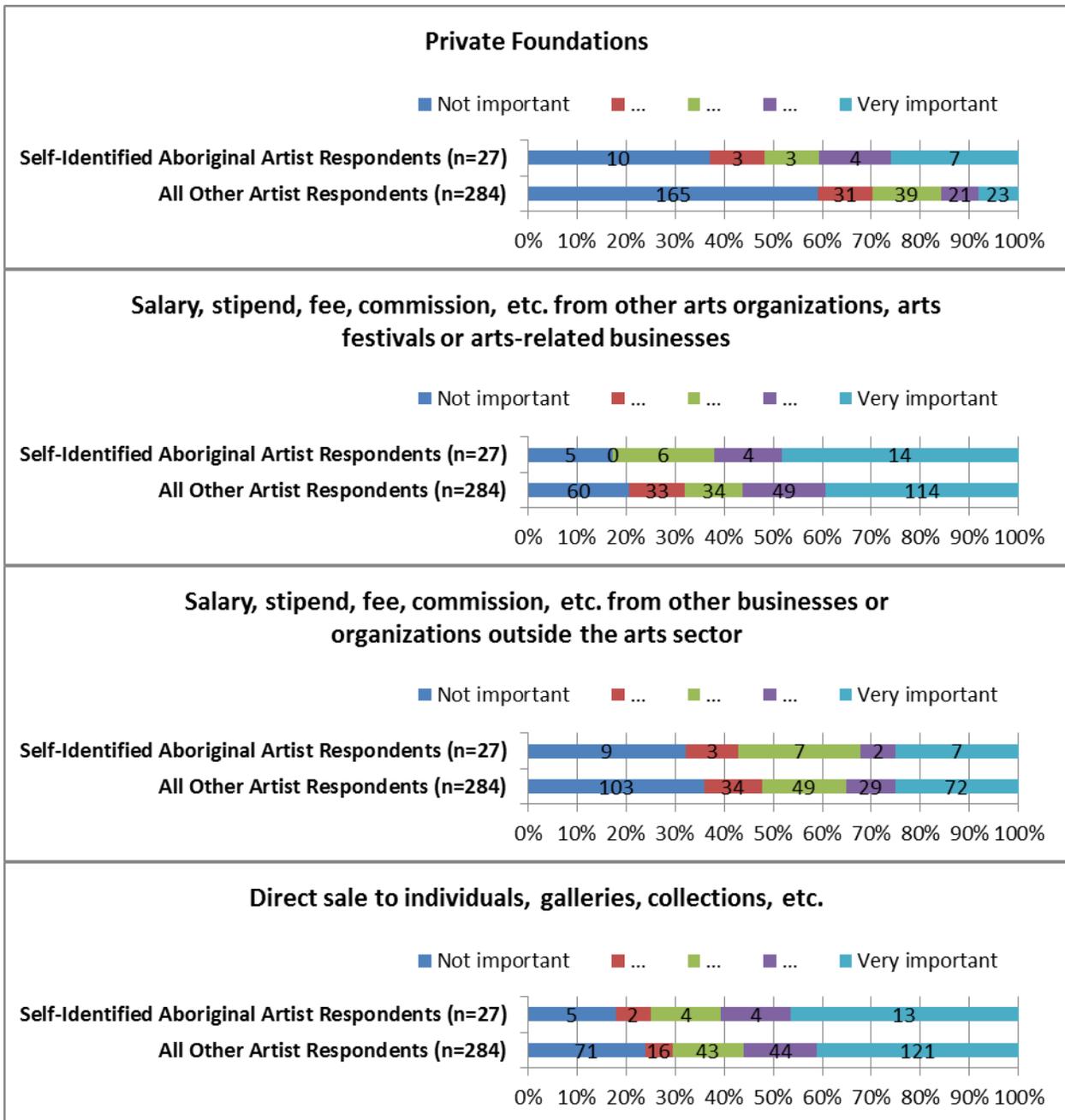
Question 31: During your artistic career, have you received income from your creative work?

“Yes” responses were almost equal with 97% of both Self-Identified Aboriginal Artists (n=30) and all other artists (n=307).

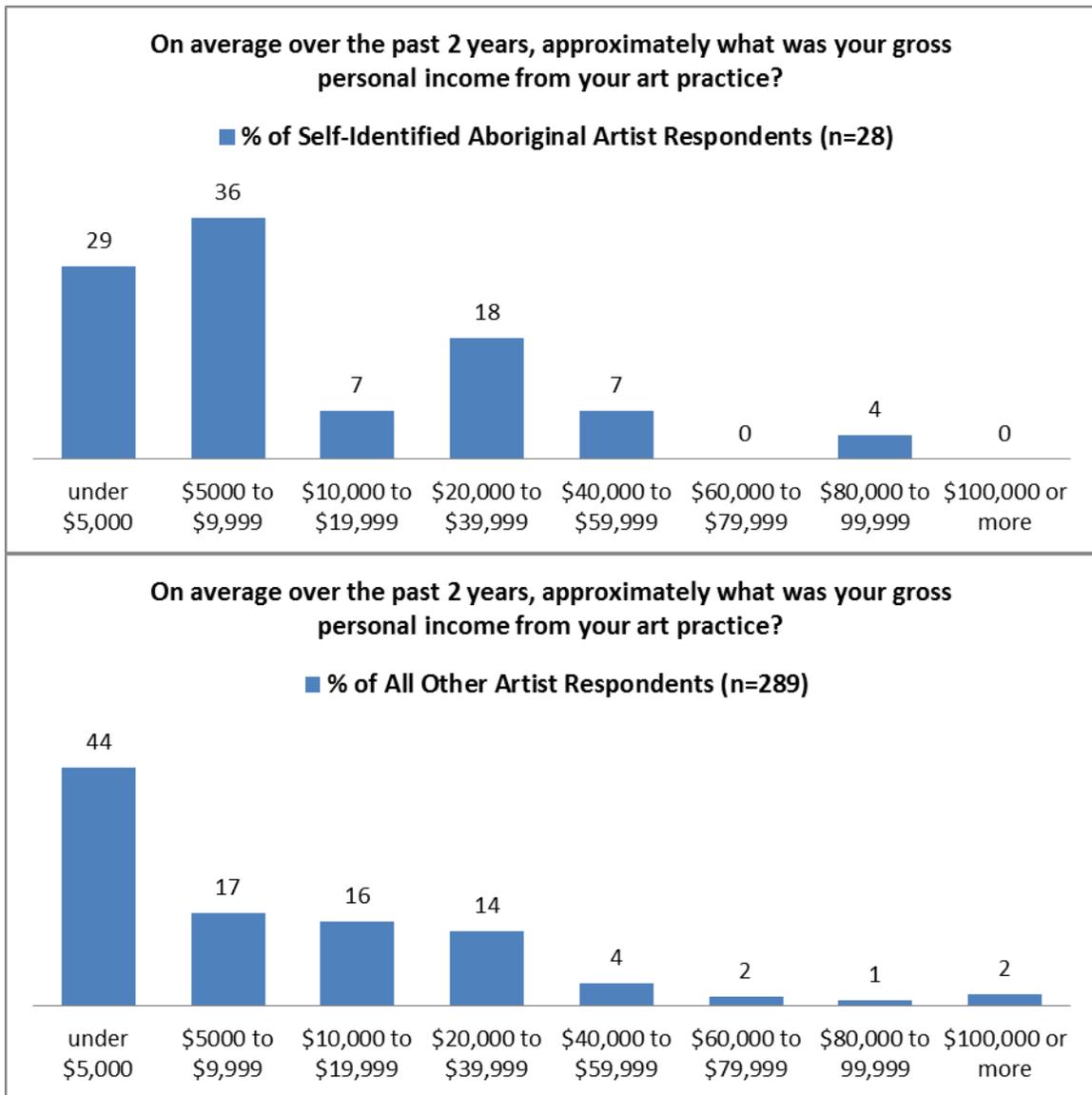
Question 31.1: Please indicate the relative importance of each of the following as a DIRECT source of income for you during your career as an artist.



Question 31.1 (continued): Please indicate the relative importance of each of the following as a DIRECT source of income for you during your career as an artist.



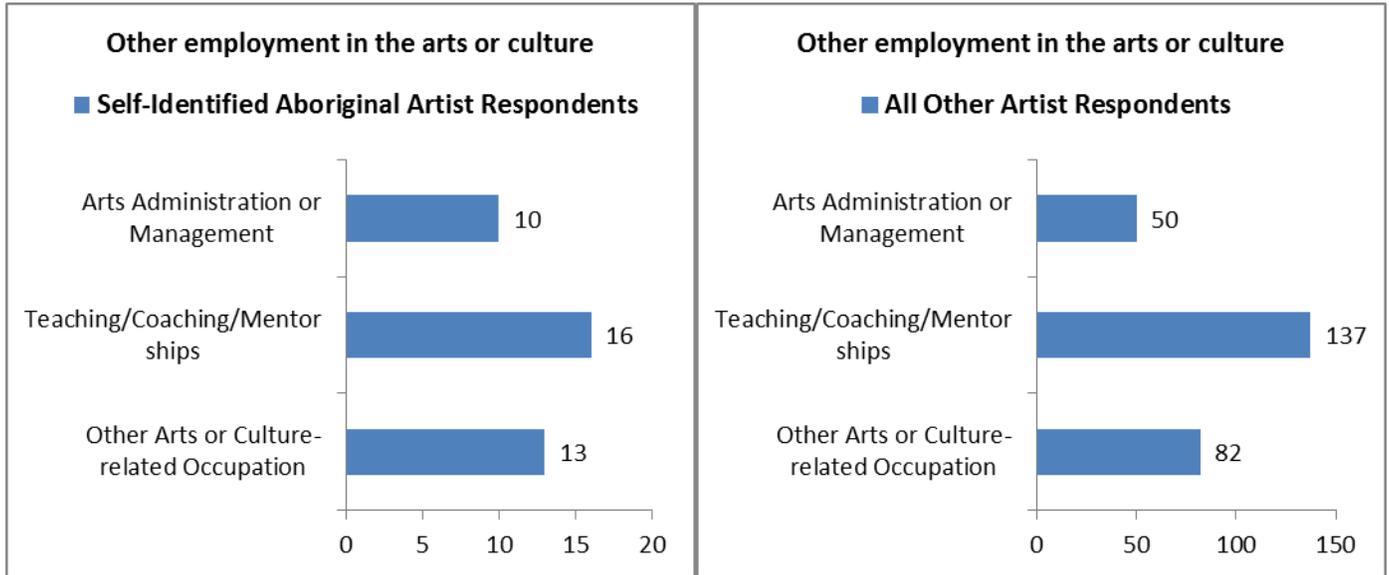
Question 31.2: On average over the past 2 years, approximately what was your gross personal income from your art practice?



Question 31.3: In the past 2 years, have you received a public grant (funding from a publicly funded agency, a branch of government, or a charitable foundation) for your creative work?

“Yes” responses were 35% of Self-Identified Aboriginal Artists (n=29) compared to 28% of all other artists (n=293).

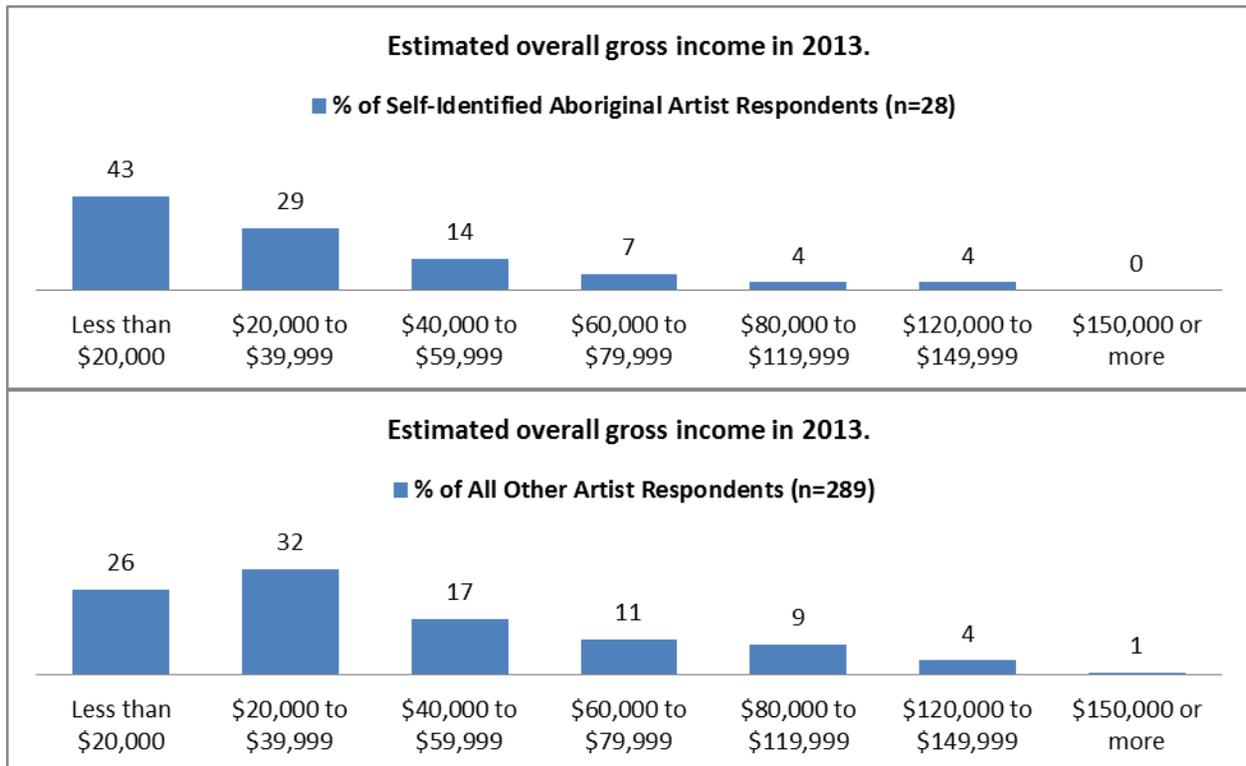
Question 33: Over and above any income from your personal art practice and/or creative work, have you derived income in the past 2 years from other types of employment in the arts or culture? Please identify any of the following that apply.



Question 34: In the past 2 years, have you derived income from other types of employment outside the arts and culture?

“Yes” responses were 62% of Self-Identified Aboriginal Artists (n=29), compared with 55% of all other artists (n=303).

Question 36: Including your income from all sources, please estimate your overall gross income in 2013 (including any government entitlements or assistance), before deductions or taxes).



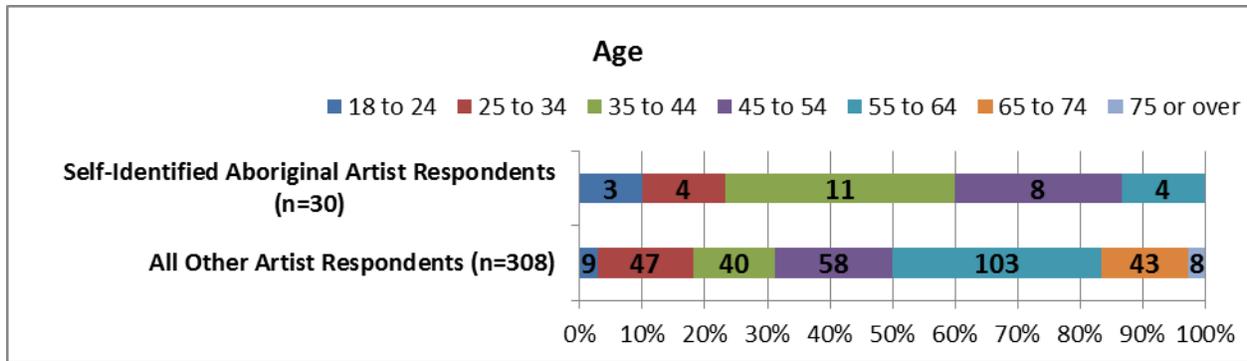
Question 37: Have you contributed to any of the following types of local groups or organizations in the past 12 months? Please identify any that apply.

Have you contributed to any of the following types of local groups or organizations in the past 12 months?	Type of Donation:	Self-Identified Aboriginal Artist Respondents	All Other Artist Respondents
Business Development, including Tourist Associations	Volunteer Time	3	32
	Charitable Donation	0	14
Business Mentorship, Chambers of Commerce	Volunteer Time	1	14
	Charitable Donation	1	2
Sports and recreation	Volunteer Time	7	63
	Charitable Donation	0	29
Social services, emergency relief, income support	Volunteer Time	1	32
	Charitable Donation	4	71
Education and research	Volunteer Time	9	88
	Charitable Donation	2	32
Health (including outpatient, rehabilitation and support services)	Volunteer Time	3	36
	Charitable Donation	2	48
Community development, housing and employment/training	Volunteer Time	4	29
	Charitable Donation	0	23
Law, advocacy, politics	Volunteer Time	6	19
	Charitable Donation	2	24
Arts and culture	Volunteer Time	24	198
	Charitable Donation	10	109
Hospitals	Volunteer Time	0	7
	Charitable Donation	4	37
Environment, conservation, animal protection	Volunteer Time	4	47
	Charitable Donation	5	72

Question 39: Are you Male, Female, Other?

Of Self-Identified Aboriginal Artists (n=30), Male = 40% and Female = 60%, compared to all other all other artists (n=306) where Male = 39%, Female = 61%, Other = less than 1%.

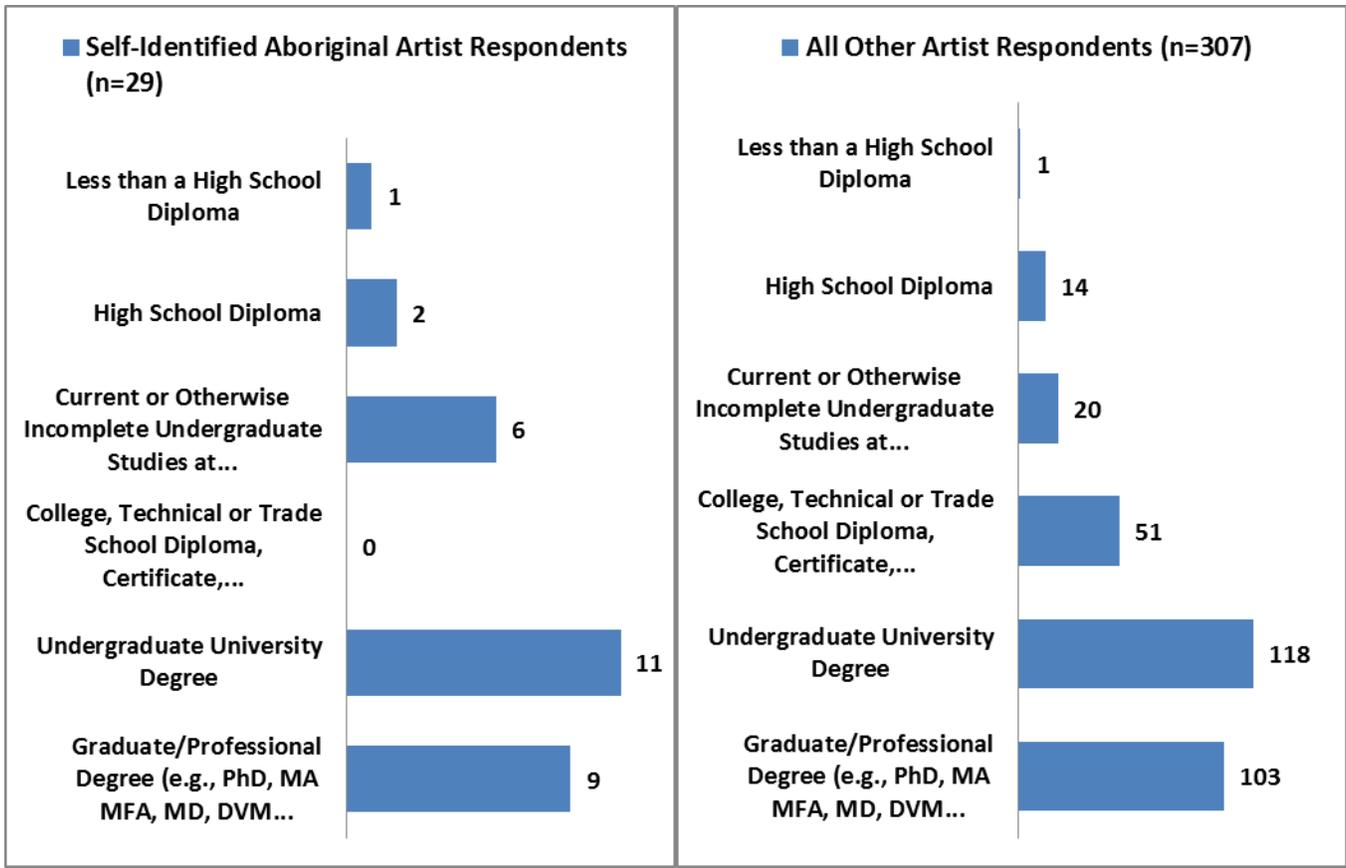
Question 40: What is Your Age?



Question 41b: What is your Postal Code?

Community of Residence, by Postal Code	Self-Identified Aboriginal Artist Respondents (n=26)	All Other Artist Respondents (n=264)
Central Saskatchewan		9
Eastern Saskatchewan		2
Lloydminster		1
Moose Jaw (total)		6
North Battleford		5
Northeastern Saskatchewan		1
Northern Saskatchewan	2	5
Northwestern Saskatchewan		2
Prince Albert	1	4
Regina (total)	8	95
Regina and White City East		2
Saskatoon (total)	13	100
South Central Saskatchewan		5
Southeastern Saskatchewan	1	3
Southern Saskatchewan		6
Southwestern Saskatchewan	1	4
Swift Current		7
Western Saskatchewan		4
Weyburn		2
Yorkton Region		1

Question 47: What is the highest level of formal education that you have completed?



Indigenous respondents described a wide variety of degrees.

Bachelor-level degrees listed were BA, BEd, BA(Hon), and BFA and ranged in area, including: English; Visual Arts; Fine Arts; Visual Art; English; Drama; Indigenous Studies; Dance; Visual Arts; Film and Video; Fine Arts; Intermedia; and a minor in Fine Arts.

Graduate degrees listed included MA, MFA, MLS, MSc, and PhD with areas including Literature, Playwriting, Librarianship and Information Science, and Agricultural Economics.

Process and Methodology

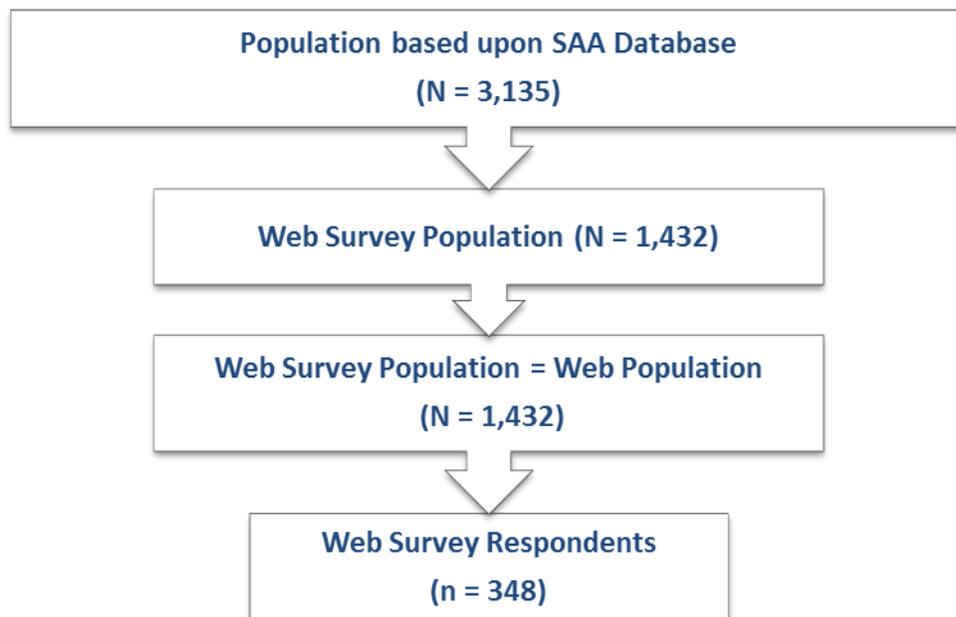
Artist Survey:

SPAR conducted the online survey of artists from April 23 through May 14, 2014 using the Class Climate software provided by the Faculty of Kinesiology and Health Studies at the University of Regina. The Saskatchewan Arts Alliance (SAA) provided a database of 3,135 individuals who were identified as artists (see the “Population based on SAA Database” in Chart 1, below). The database was aggregated by the SAA using its Artist Registry, online resources, as well as input from its member organizations. From this population based on the SAA database, 1,343 individuals had active email addresses. All members of this subset were contacted via their email addresses and they were provided with individual passwords and a URL that led to the survey location on the University of Regina website. Of these, 309 individuals responded to the survey questionnaire with a participation rate of 23% and missing values below the 10th percentile. A lottery incentive in the form of an iPod mini was offered to the participants.

A follow up survey was conducted from May 16 through May 25, 2014. This subset was comprised of 89 individuals who expressed their interest in responding to the survey directly to SPAR or by registering for the Artist Registry on the SAA website after the initial launch on April 23rd. Of these, 39 individuals responded to the survey questionnaire with a participation rate of nearly 44% and missing values below the 10th percentile.

The total web survey population was 1,432. The total number of respondents was 348 individuals⁴ (the “Web Survey Respondents”). The overall response rate was just above 24%. Given a Response Distribution of 50% the Margin of Error would be +/-5% to the 95% Confidence Level.

Chart 1: Web Survey Respondents



⁴ Random sampling is a probability statistical method that gives a certain population an equal and independent chance of being selected. For a better understanding of related social research methodologies, please see Neuman and Robson (2012), p. 137.

Given the numbers above it is worth noting that the subpopulation of this web survey may not represent the general population of artists. We need to assume that coverage error and nonresponse error may be present and data bias is always a possibility. In fact, even simple random sampling with equal selection probability is not immune to sampling error since only a subgroup of the population is selected. A verifiable data registry that accounts for a complete listing of the population of artists in Saskatchewan does not exist, and is likely not possible. So far, the SAA data is the best and maybe the only reliable source for such data.

As a result, making general assumptions and drawing inference or projecting to the wider population of artists is not possible. Consequently, when considering the results of a subgroup of respondents – in this case those who identified themselves as aboriginal artists – we are faced with the same limitations; making general assumptions about the general population of artists who identify as Aboriginal is also not possible. This report presents the responses of the 30 respondents who identified themselves as Aboriginal. They should be considered as a sub-group of the web survey and not as a randomly selected sample of the general populations of artists in Saskatchewan who identify as Aboriginal.

Consequently, the results of the statistical analysis undertaken with our survey results should be treated as an effort to make comparative sense of the experiences and perspectives of individuals drawn from our web survey population with respect to their own position in and understanding of the arts ecology of Saskatchewan. This is a first quantitative step in a broader research project that is now moving into a qualitative phase of consultations that will extend beyond the web survey respondents to further test and extend our understanding of the role of the arts and creativity in the social, cultural and economic fabric of the province.

The challenges of identifying and accessing verifiable artist populations and others connected with arts and cultural ecologies have too often functioned as an obstacle and impediment to studies of artists (e.g. how they work, what networks they form and how these networks foster and support the realization of their creative work), and this is especially true of subgroups such as Indigenous artists. However, SPAR's partners and research team regard such research as essential to strong evidence-based policy and programs and to a better understanding of how the arts ecology is working that will benefit artists and other members of the community as well as policy makers. By making a start with such a study and analyzing these results in the context of other data derived from current and future studies, over time we should be able to derive a much clearer understanding of the provincial arts ecology than we currently have.