



## **Artists, Connections, and the Place of the University in the Arts Ecology of Saskatchewan**

**Mary Blackstone, Sam Hage, and Ian McWilliams**

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### **Today's Outline:**

- Talk (45 mins) presented by SPAR researcher Ian McWilliams, including:
  - Brief intro to the SPAR project
  - Project Data and Findings
    - With particular attention to Universities
    - Issues, Opportunities, and Challenges
- Questions & Discussion led by SPAR Director, Mary Blackstone

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### **Project Introduction**

The Saskatchewan Partnership for Arts Research (SPAR) was formed in 2012 for research to support evidence-based programming and policy-making for the arts. Its partners are: Saskatchewan Arts Alliance (SAA), Saskatchewan Arts Board, SaskCulture, and the University of Regina. These partners are vital to the project providing leadership and direction as well as resources such as funding, in-kind support, and staff-time. These partners also critical for disseminating our work throughout their organizations and beyond.



## SPAR's Mandate

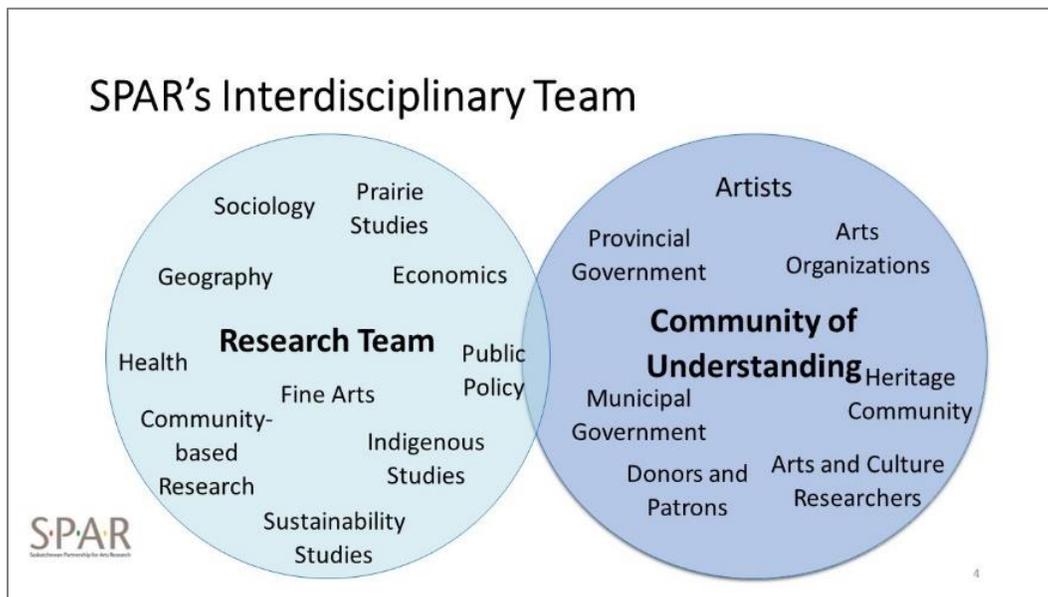
SPAR's mandate is to scientifically gather primary data on Saskatchewan, starting by studying the arts as an ecosystem in Saskatchewan (including artists and the public) in hopes of better understanding how artists create and work on a daily basis (their community interactions, needs and access). The work involves a wide range of artists and other stakeholders in the arts ecology.

Gathering primary data on Saskatchewan is challenging for various reasons, including its relatively small and geographically diverse population. Studying *individual* artists is also tough, but valuable. Studying *organizations* is easier; they are nicely grouped, keep records and reports, etc. Studying artists in their communities, their daily work and networks is challenging but crucial in order to start understanding the many intricate & interconnected ways artists work and live.

So, the work is messy.

## SPAR's Interdisciplinary Team

The project needs a wide range of artists and other stakeholders in the arts ecology. Both our research team and our community of understanding provide perspectives as well as help shape research questions and practice.



## Understanding the Arts Ecology of Saskatchewan (UAES).

SPAR's first project is *Understanding the Arts Ecology of Saskatchewan* (UAES). It is funded by a \$200,000 grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) and contributions from the SPAR partners. This project brought \$200,000 of essentially non-arts-funding into the province to study artist and the arts.

## Defining Arts Ecologies

A useful definition of Arts Ecology comes from Ann Markussen, the lead author of a 2011 paper, *California's Arts and Cultural Ecology*:

An arts and cultural ecology encompasses the many networks of arts and cultural creators, producers, presenters, sponsors, participants, and supporting casts embedded in diverse communities. Forty years ago, scientists and policymakers realized that treating plants, animals, minerals, climate, and the universe as endlessly classifiable, separate phenomena did not help people understand or respond to environmental problems. So they created the integrated field of environmental ecology. In similar fashion, arts producers, advocates, and policymakers are now beginning to strengthen the arts and cultural sphere by cultivating a view of its wholeness and interconnectedness... *We define the arts and cultural ecology as the complex interdependencies that shape the demand for and production of arts and cultural offerings* (9, italics added).

SPAR's focus on individuals rather than organizations includes artists, other cultural professionals, as well as consumers of culture, as John Holden observes, "All of these people engage with other parts of the ecology to perform, sell, buy, share, and enjoy culture" (Ecology of Culture, 2015).

The work is timely and important both within the Canadian context, and internationally.

Canada Council CEO and Director, Simon Brault, asked:

How can we nurture a healthy ecosystem for the arts... and a better world for us all? .... How can we help creativity to thrive locally – for the benefit of all Canadians? How can we support Canada to become a leader in this regard on the world stage? (Creative City Network of Canada 2015 Creative City Summit, Kelowna, October 2015)

John Holden, author of *The Ecology of Culture* observed:

There is merit in analyzing how [local ecologies] operate, and how they integrate with the localised infrastructure, investment and economy. Understanding and analyzing local cultural ecologies would be of great help to local authorities and help them to see where their investment is best deployed (*The Ecology of Culture*, Arts and Humanities Research Council, UK 2015).

In its first three years (2013-2016) SPAR's activities have included the first comprehensive survey of artists across the spectrum of the arts in Saskatchewan (2014), a survey of the public (2014), as well as qualitative consultations, including focus groups and interviews. These have resulted in reports and papers; articles & presentations; mapping and other outputs available on the [SPAR website](#).

## How well is the system sustaining creativity?

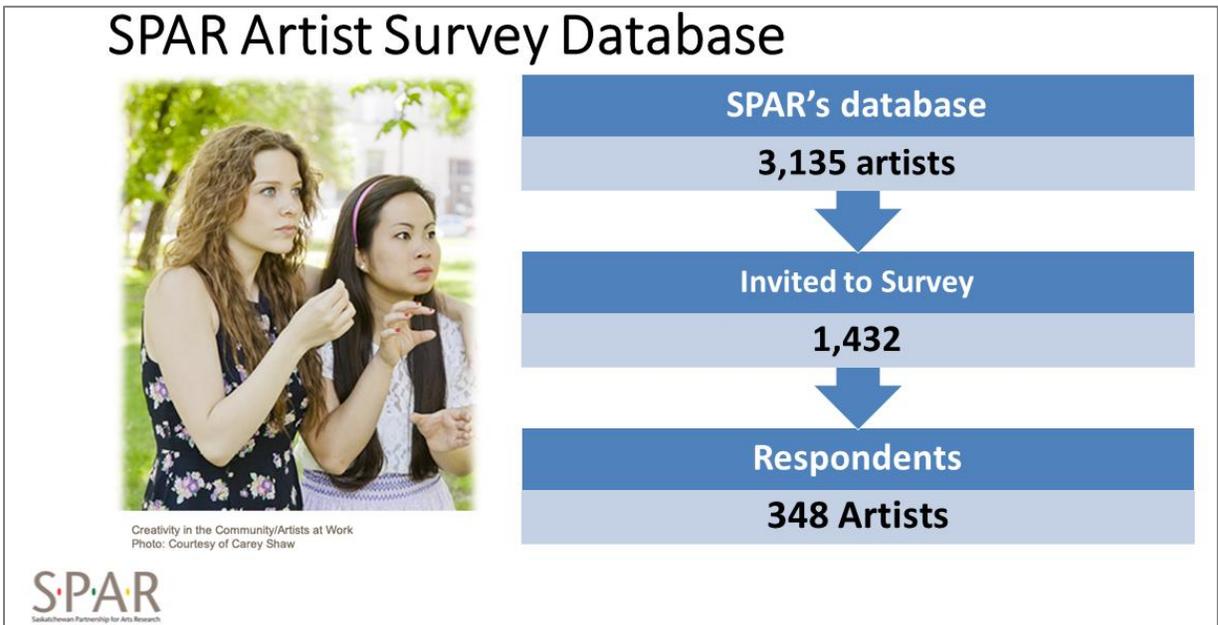
### Where does the university (& EMAP) fit in this ecosystem?

Today, we'll be focusing primarily on the artist survey results, with particular attention to how artist-respondents are living, working, creating, and connecting in Saskatchewan. If particular interest today is the question, "Where does the university (& EMAP) fit in this ecosystem?"

A lot of this work is about *connections* – specifically the nature of professional connections and networks made by artists among themselves and with their community (or communities). Are these connections contributing to a healthy and sustainable arts ecosystem? Are they contributing to the cultural, social and economic dimensions of Saskatchewan?

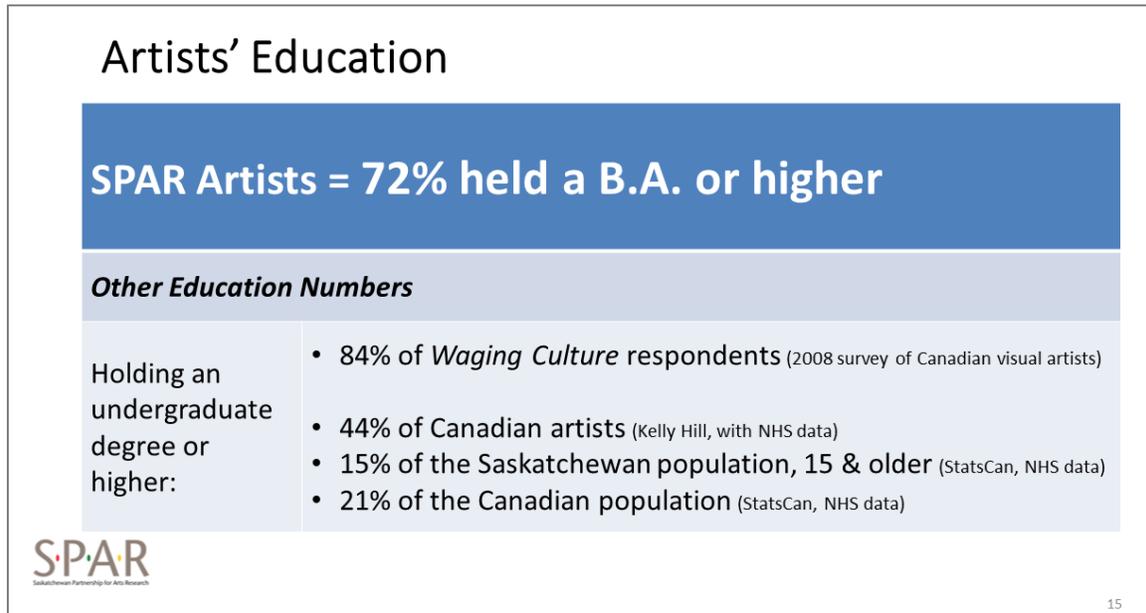
### SPAR Artist Survey Database

Every effort was made to develop a database, with help from our partner-orgs. While a comprehensive listing of all Saskatchewan artists is unattainable, SPAR's database included over 3,000 individuals. Of these, over 1,400 were invited to participate in an online survey. Of these, 348 individuals completed the survey. For a complete project methodology, see the [SPAR website](#), specifically [Reports and Resources: SPAR Surveys and Methodology](#).



## Artists, Organizations, and the Prominence of Universities

Universities were prominent in many ways in the responses to the SPAR Artist Survey.



### *Artists' Education: SPAR artist-survey respondents and other groups<sup>1</sup>*

SPAR artist-survey respondents reported a high level of formal education, with 72% holding an undergraduate degree or higher. This result is similar to other surveys of artists (e.g. *Waging Culture*), but quite different than what StatsCanada/NHS surveys find. This might be a result of the different definitions of “artist” being used – which I will come back to later.

Respondents were also asked to list their highest degree. While a significant number were arts-related, they were not *always* the *highest* degrees reported by respondents. There were, for example, advanced science degrees, business training, diplomas & certificates and more. Some respondents were clearly pursuing careers as professional artists without a degree in their creative field.

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<sup>1</sup> Kelly Hill, Artists and Cultural Workers in Canada's Provinces and Territories Based on the 2011 National Household Survey and the Labour Force Survey, 22 October 2014; <http://www.hillstrategies.com/content/artists-and-cultural-workers-canada-s-provinces-and-territories>; (accessed 17 Feb. 2015).

Michael Maranda, *Waging Culture: A Report on the Socio-economic Status of Canadian Visual Artists* (The Art Gallery of York University, [2009]), p. 14; <http://www.torontoartscouncil.org/Publications/Publications-by-Others> (accessed 7 Feb 2015):

[http://www.torontoartscouncil.org/TAC/media/tac/Reports%20and%20Resources/Reports%20by%20outside%20organizations/AGYU\\_WagingCulture.pdf](http://www.torontoartscouncil.org/TAC/media/tac/Reports%20and%20Resources/Reports%20by%20outside%20organizations/AGYU_WagingCulture.pdf).

Statistics Canada. 2013. Saskatchewan (Code 47) (table). National Household Survey (NHS) Profile. 2011 National Household Survey. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 99-004-XWE. Ottawa. Released September 11, 2013.

<http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed 11 Feb 2015).

Statistics Canada. 2013. Canada (Code 01) (table). National Household Survey (NHS) Profile. 2011 National Household Survey. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 99-004-XWE. Ottawa. Released September 11, 2013.

<http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed 11 Feb 2015).

## Artists' Education

Artists' Highest Level of Education (n=344)	Percent
Graduate/Professional Degree (e.g., PhD, MA MFA, MD, DVM...)	33.4
Undergraduate University Degree	38.4
College, Technical or Trade School Diploma, Certificate...	15.1
Current or Otherwise Incomplete Undergraduate Studies at...	7.6
High School Diploma	4.9
Less than a High School Diploma	0.6
Total (n=344)	100

### Arts (&) Education & Innovation

The value of the connecting the arts across disciplines and faculties is worth exploring – for students already at university as well as those still in primary and secondary school. Of course, the arts are inherently valuable. Their value is also clear beyond specific realm of Fine Arts, as Brooke Dobni notes in [\*Achieving Growth through Innovation: The Role of Arts Education in Supporting Economic Sustainability\*](#):

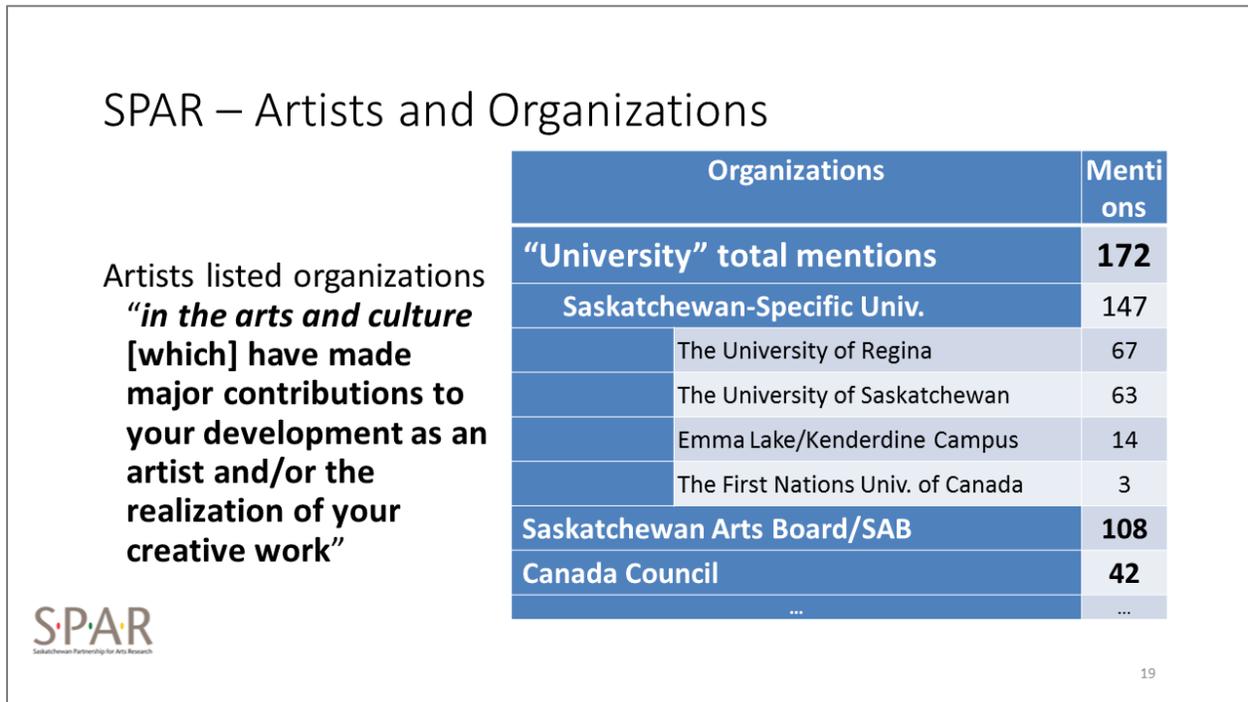
Innovative and high quality arts education programs have a direct impact on students' ability to learn, and to be creative.

Individuals who are successful innovators have higher than normal exposure to the arts.

Do university arts-programs make the most of potential connections beyond their faculty?

## Artists, Organizations, and the Prominence of Universities

The survey asked artists to identify organizations important to their creative work. Respondents reliably pointed to Universities.



When artist respondents were asked to specifically list “arts organizations, arts agencies, educational institutions or businesses in the arts and culture [which] have made major contributions to your development as an artist and/or the realization of your creative work.” Universities *dominated* responses:

- General references to “universities” = 172
  - Of these, specific references to Saskatchewan universities totaled 147, for example:
    - The University of Regina received 67 mentions;
    - the University of Saskatchewan received 63 mentions

For comparison’s sake, the Saskatchewan Arts Board was identified 108 times. The next-most mentioned Canada Council was a distant 42.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Responses also included:

- Various, specific organizations, listed 2-5 times = 147
- Various, specific organizations, listed once = 557

## Some Initial Numbers

### *Artists by Discipline*

The SPAR Artist Survey asked artists to identify their general arts disciplines and allowed them to identify as many disciplines as they wished.

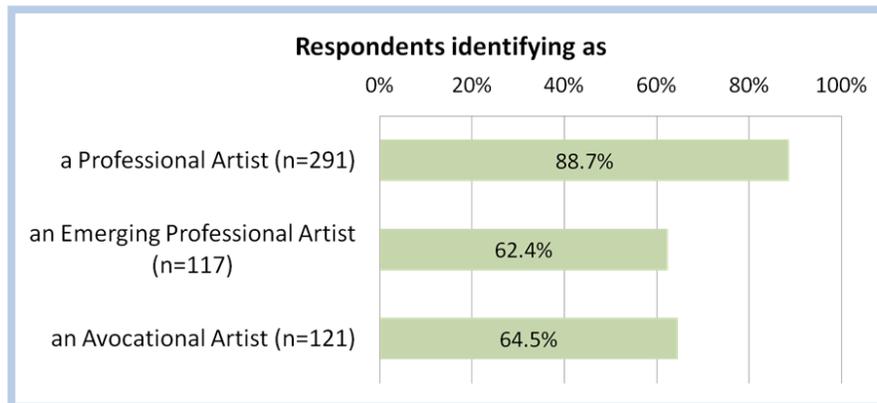
The results revealed a highly cross-disciplinary community with an average 2.77 disciplines identified per person. In fact, 74% of respondents cited more than one discipline.

This complex only got more so.

We also asked artists to self-identify as Professional, Avocational, and/or Emerging Professional. Given the option to choose as many of these identifiers as they wished, many artists did so.

By allowing self-identification, we included in SPAR respondents a full range of artists – not just artists as defined by Statistics Canada (or labour force survey, etc.). Relying only on Stats Canada data gives a flawed/limited picture of how artists are working in a given place, since the identifications are based upon one occupational identifier – usually what you spend the majority of hours doing – or how you earn the majority of you money

## How do Artists identify in Saskatchewan?



Artists could self-identify in any or all of the three categories. Many did.

## **The importance of *the arts and artists' work***

We asked respondents to both the artist survey and public survey to rank the importance of “the arts and artists’ work” across a variety of topics. Artist respondents and respondents to our public survey found art and artists’ work important to education at all levels. Specifically, “formal or informal education at the elementary, secondary and post-secondary levels” was ranked as important by 87% of artist-survey respondents. Public survey respondents rated the same as 96% important.

Over 80% of respondents (to both surveys) ranked “the arts and artists’ work” as important to:

- cultural diversity and development
- knowledge and understanding of human behaviour
- the formation of personal identity, values and beliefs

Over 80% of Public Survey Respondents ranked “the arts and artists’ work” as important to

- a community’s shared sense of place, health, well-being and sustainability.

Over 70% ranked “the arts and artists’ work” as important to:

- the economy and development of the creative and innovative capacity of business or other professionals

The arts and artists’ work was also rated as being important to:

- cultural diversity and development
- knowledge and understanding of human behaviour
- the formation of personal identity, values and beliefs
- a community’s shared sense of place, health, well-being and sustainability.
- the economy and development of the creative and innovative capacity of business or other professionals

These statistics suggest Saskatchewan artists are broadly in-line with the findings of a 2012 cross-Canada survey of the public which found over 90% agreement with most statements ascribing similar importance to arts and culture.<sup>3</sup>

Artist-respondents, like the following example, also spoke to arts-importance in open questions:

Arts are so important to every part of society. In the past Saskatchewan has been an amazing place to be a creative person. I have always been proud to say I am from Saskatchewan, mostly because of the amazing writers, artists and other creative people and work that have come from here... I have been alarmed to see the support and understanding of the importance of the arts in Saskatchewan eroding. Along with everything else the arts do, it is the way we communicate our story, to ourselves, to the world. What does it matter if we make billions from resources and agriculture if the society being built does not value our story or storytellers? Art is life and we need it to be properly supported.

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<sup>3</sup> Phoenix Strategic Perspectives, Inc. [Arts and Heritage in Canada: Access and Availability Study. Department of Canadian Heritage](#), 2012, p. 17.

References to boom-times reflect that the survey was taken in early 2014 before the latest resource-price crash.

### Connections and Networks are Important to Artists

Artist respondents were complex unto themselves. It also soon became clear that respondents were part of complex, extensive networks within and beyond the university. Artists ranked networking/informal connections as important to their *overall evolution as an artist* (78%) and their *ability to create/interpret work* (68%).

One artist specifically listed local businesses that were part of a network:

I have worked with a number of Saskatoon businesses to produce work, most recently: Don's Photo, Mondrian Hall, Globe Printers, Laser Impressions, Art Placement. I purchase materials and supplies from hardware stores (Home Depot, Rona, COOP) as well as Art Placement and Michaels.

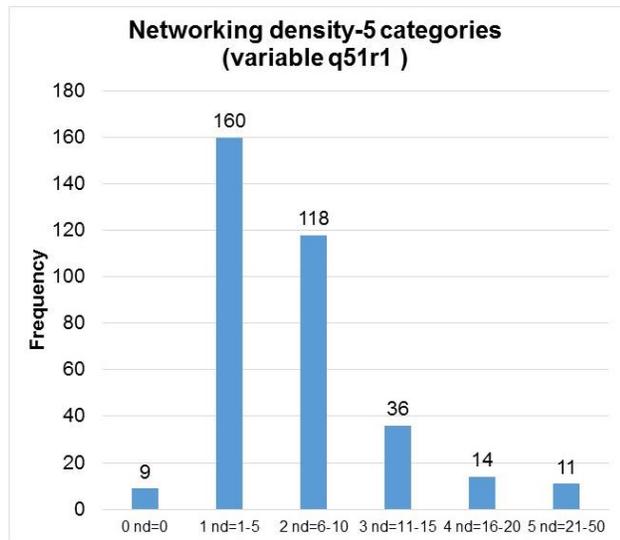


Generally, artist respondents also ranked networking & informal-connections as important. The survey asked several questions regarding artists’ connections, networks, and important connections (including groups, people, entities within and beyond the arts). Respondents provided many examples.

We developed a new variable: “networking density.” It was calculated based on respondents’ listed connections within the arts and beyond. The more connections identified, the higher the network density. Now that we could compare network density to other variables, we started seeing a few interesting things.

## Network Density

Calculated based on respondents' listed connections within the arts and beyond.

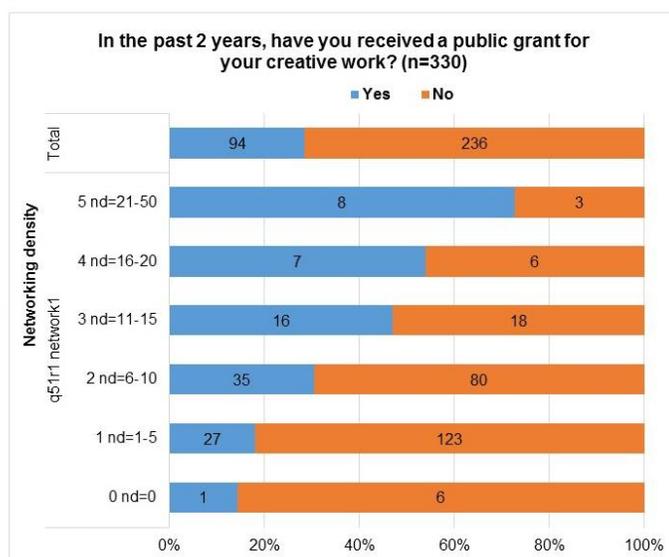


Greater networking density correlates with a higher *likelihood of having received a grant*. This is *correlation, not causation*. We don't even know if there is a chicken or egg, here. Artist respondents who reported having received a public grant for creative work in the previous 2 years = 28.5%.<sup>4</sup>

## Network Density

**Greater Network Density** correlates with a higher *likelihood of having received a grant*.

**28.5%** of artist respondents recently received a **public grant for creative work**.



Higher networking density was also associated with both higher incomes, and residence in Regina or Saskatoon. It is still not possible to name a cause and effect relationship; this is something we need to look into further.

<sup>4</sup> Note: in several disciplines, the primary funding comes indirectly (through salaries, stipends, and fees) from arts organizations which are directly funded by their municipalities and/or agencies such as the Saskatchewan Arts Board, and/or Canada Council.

Regarding specific connections between Networking Density and universities, SPAR research Sam Hage observed, “It's clear that higher networking is correlated with higher levels of education but we can't determine what is affecting what... [it is] also worth mentioning, newly-graduated had the highest networking density.”

**Network Density**

“It's clear that **higher networking is correlated with higher levels of education** but we can't determine what is affecting what...  
Also worth mentioning, **newly-graduated had the highest networking density.**”

- Sam Hage, SPAR researcher

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Saskatchewan Partnership for Arts Research

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One artist respondent identified a need for connections between emerging artists and established artists outside of the University: “I wish there were more ways for established artists to connect with emerging artists outside of a university setting.” They identified the value/need-for such connections. This comment also appears to speak to the existing connection opportunities on-campus, which will come up again shortly.

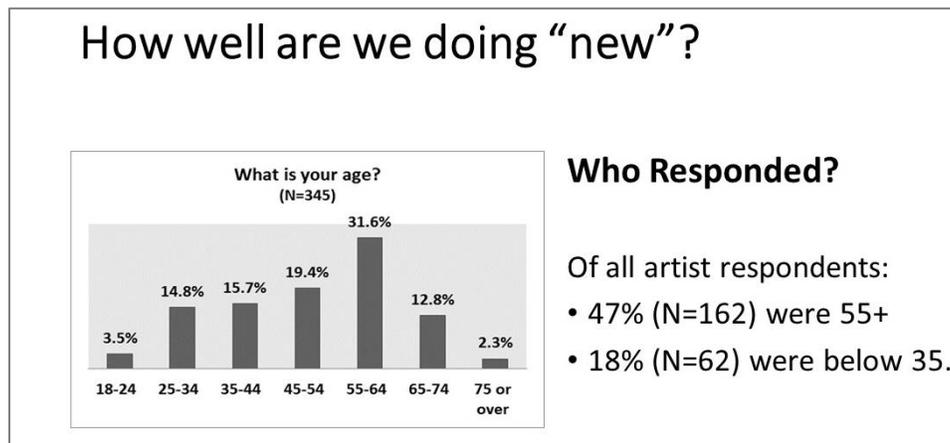
One way of answering the question, “How can universities help foster even more complex networks and interdependencies?” is by asking “How well are we doing ‘new’?” First, we can ask about new, emerging, and young artists.

### **How well are we doing “new”? – Young and Emerging Artists**

SPAR needed to study not only *responses* but also *who responded*. Since our database was developed with help from our partner orgs, it is likely that the artists in that database have some connection to these orgs. Under-represented among artist respondents were newcomers to province as well as young and emerging artists.

In the Artist Survey, nearly 47% (N=162) of respondents were 55 and over. Only 18% (N=62) were below 35. In the General Public Survey, just 32% (N=41) were 55 and over and over 26% (N=34) were

below 35. Within Saskatchewan's population (2012), it was reported that 27% (N=280,100) were 15-34 and 27% (N=280,705) were 55 and over.<sup>5</sup>



Younger demographics are either not connected/engaged with the groups driven to this survey or not *here*. Based upon information earlier, this survey did tap-into a segment of artists who are connected to universities. If it is true that young artists they are not connecting *here*:

- Are they skipping traditional, formal educational opportunities?
- Are they seeking educational opportunities elsewhere? If so, will they come back, having established their networks elsewhere?

The idea that young/emerging artists could be better connected to existing orgs and structures has come up in focus groups and interviews. A now-established artist looking back on their own younger/emerging practice questioned the accessibility of existing structures (funding, governance, cultural policy) that impact artists' lives/practice:

How many 18 year-olds can you go and be like, "Hey do you know who the head of the Saskatchewan Arts Board is? Can you name one person that works for them?" No, you won't be able to find anybody.

But you go and ask any arts educator in the faculty of fine arts... "Oh yes, I can name so and so, I can name so and so." I think it is the lack of connection...

I didn't even know what the Arts Board was, really, until probably 2005... Regina was the multicultural capital of Canada and I performed in City Hall... there was a Mayor's event or something...

It was like, "Here is a cheque from the Arts Board."

I am like, "What is the Arts Board?"

And you know I would have really been interested in knowing what the Arts Board was prior to that (SPAR interviewee).

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<sup>5</sup> Statistics Canada. 2012. Saskatchewan (Code 47) and Canada (Code 01) (table). Census Profile. 2011 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-XWE. Ottawa. Released October 24, 2012. [www12.statcan.gc.ca](http://www12.statcan.gc.ca) (accessed September 30, 2014). Note: Statistics Canada data is provided with the advice to review the source-charts and tables with their various notes regarding "data quality indicators" as provided by Statistics Canada.

This artist identifies how being included in a project organized by an established artist began a basic first connection (knowledge of its existence) to an established arts funder.

In responses to open-questions, some respondents highlighted the need for opportunities for emerging and mid-career artists and makers to collaborate, learn, and inspire together, for example:

There is a severe lack of opportunities for emerging and mid-career artists and makers to get together in collaborative settings. The transfer of knowledge, ideas and learning is immense in those settings. Increased opportunities for collaboration and learning may also encourage young artists to see potential for careers in the arts (SPAR artist survey respondent).

### **How well are we doing “new”? Are newcomers included?**

Newcomer-artists were not- or under-represented in survey responses. The SPAR artist respondents revealed very “Canadian” and “European” origins:

- Canadian 81.2%
- British 6.3%
- German 4.6%
- French 4.3%

(According to the 2011 NHS, 76% of Saskatchewan’s total population of European ancestry)

SPAR artist respondents were also fairly homogeneous according to birth country:

- Canada 93.6%
- United States 2.7%
- United Kingdom 2.4%

(According to the 2011 NHS, 92% of Saskatchewan’s total population born in Canada)

Artist respondents, in open-response questions, observed that it might be hard for newcomers to Saskatchewan to break into the arts community successfully without a strong network in place:

- “The arts community in Saskatchewan is very much a word-of-mouth, networking community.”
- “There is no cohesive place to find opportunities and access to auditions and artist related information. It is very hard to get 'in'.”

SPAR is conducting qualitative research to reach specifically newcomer and emerging artists. To date, focus groups & interviews indicate newcomers and young and/or emerging artists might indeed face challenges connecting with existing structures, organizations, and groups. It could be that Saskatchewan’s arts ecosystem is perceived as difficult to “break into.”

This topic came up at a focus group of newcomer-artists this fall, where several participants spoke of the value of established, experienced artists “taking them in” or helping them connect. Instructors, professors, teachers at the university were specifically cited as important in this role.

Focus groups & interviews indicate (so far) that newcomers and young and/or emerging artists might face challenges connecting with existing structures, organizations, and groups. The possible gaps between formal-training and practice bears more attention.

## **How accessible/diverse is the system? How can we foster a more robust system?**

Our ongoing work will continue to examine the question, “How generative is the system?” More specifically, perhaps, how can the arts become more accessible and equitable as well as more representative of the diversity of the provincial population?

We also hope to find out more ways to continue addressing issues like access, equity, and diversity which were raised by several respondents to the artist survey, e.g.: “I think there is always room for improvement; more funding to the arts on a local and provincial level, more funding to the arts at the university, more public art and presentations, a greater focus on first nations art and artists, female artists, lgbtq artists.”

### **Aboriginal Identification (First Nations, North American Indian, Métis or Inuit)**

When asked “Are you an Aboriginal person? (First Nations, North American Indian, Métis or Inuit)?”, 9% of SPAR artist respondents answered “yes” (by location: Regina = 2%, Saskatoon = 4%, and other places = 3%). While this is less than the overall percentage of the Saskatchewan Population of Aboriginal identity (16%<sup>6</sup>), these response-rate for this group was higher than, e.g. newcomer or young artists. This could be due to a specific effort to recruit indigenous artists into the SAA’s Saskatchewan Artist Registry in the years leading up to the survey.

When exploring “How generative is the system?” it is important to note the apparent gaps among our respondents, e.g.: newcomer artists, artists from non-European and Indigenous backgrounds, and specifically Indigenous artists outside of major cities. SPAR is already working to involve such individuals and groups through focus groups, interviews, and case studies.

## **Returning to our question, “How well is the system sustaining creativity?”**

### **Artists’ Incomes**

Most artist respondents, 96.8% (n=334), reported income from creative work. Many didn’t receive much. On average over the past two years 42.5% (N=138) reported “Under \$5,000.” Less than 10% (N=30) of respondents reported earnings of more than \$40,000/yr. from their art practice. SPAR’s calculated *average* artist income *from creative work* was \$15,380.<sup>7</sup>

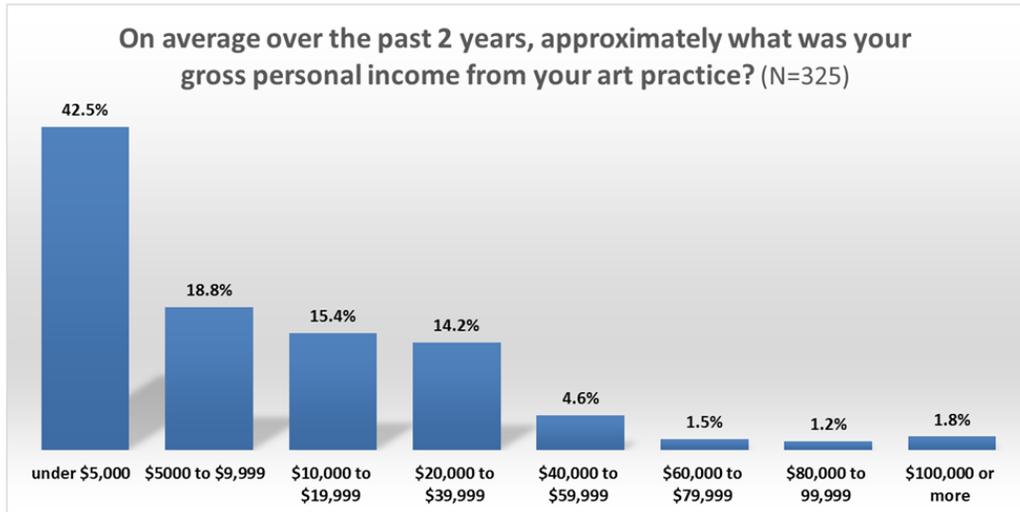
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<sup>6</sup> Of the *Saskatchewan population*, those self-identifying as having Aboriginal identity are as follows: Aboriginal = 157,740 or 15.6%; First Nations = 103,205, 10.2%; Métis = 52,450, 5.2%; Inuit = 290 (Saskatchewan Bureau of Statistics, Saskatchewan Population Reports from the 2011 National Household Survey [www.stats.gov.sk.ca/pop/](http://www.stats.gov.sk.ca/pop/). Released 8 May, 2013. Accessed 23 September 2014).

<sup>7</sup> Rose Olfert 2014; Labour Force Survey, 2012.

Artist average incomes in Saskatchewan (2006 census) = \$15,400 as cited by K. Hill, [Saskatchewan Arts & Culture Statistics and Data Gaps](#), presentation at the University of Regina, March 2, 2013; accessed October 4, 2014.

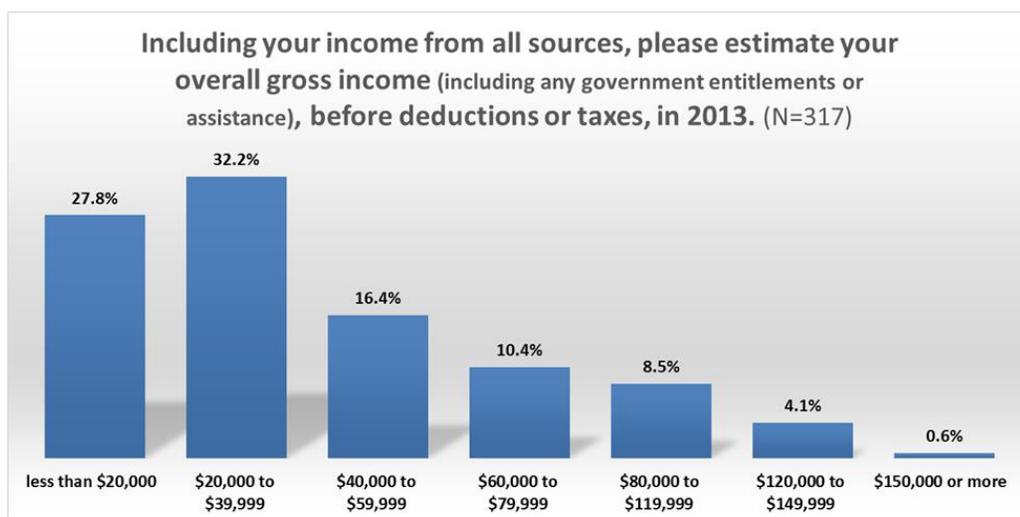
## How well is the system sustaining creativity?



Of artist respondents, 55.3% (n=188) of derived income from employment *outside the arts and culture*:

- approximately 60% reported total income under \$40,000;
- 10% of artists reported incomes of \$60,000-\$79,000; and
- another 12% reported income of \$80,000 or more.

## How well is the system sustaining creativity?



SPAR Artist respondents average income *from all sources* = \$44,335. This is approximately \$4,000 less than the average Canadian income of \$48,100 for 2010 and \$11,535 *above* the average 2010 income of Canadian artists derived from Stats Can data (which excludes artists who teach or work more hours at other occupations than they do as artists).<sup>8</sup>

### **Artists' Work Weeks**

Artists were clear: work times vary widely from week to week.

- 57% (N=194) of respondents devoted 20 hours or more per week to their creative work
- 38% (N= 129) devoted 20 hours or more a week to work outside their creative practice
- 51.6% (N=176) devoted up to 9 hours a week to teaching or mentorship in their creative discipline

Overall, SPAR calculated an “average” respondent work week of 48.5 hrs:

- 24.5 hours/week devoted to creative practice,
- 8 hours/week devote to teaching or mentorship in a creative discipline, and
- 16 hours/week devoted to work outside their creative practice.

A workweek for the *average* Saskatchewan worker is 38.8 hours.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> From K. Hill, *A Statistical Profile of Artists and Cultural Workers in Canada Based on the 2011 National Household Survey and the Labour Force Survey*.

<sup>9</sup> Rose Olfert; Artists' Comparisons with some Provincial Benchmarks, and Artists' contribution to the economy, report prepared by Rose Olfert for SPAR, 2014; Statistics Canada. Table 282-0028 - Labour force survey estimates (LFS), by total and average usual and actual hours worked, main or all jobs, type of work, sex and age group, annual (hours), CANSIM (database): The Questionnaire categorized hours worked into ranges. For purposes of these calculations to produce aggregate hours worked and then the average, the following assumptions were made: <5 = 4, 5-9 = 7, 10-19 = 15, 20-19 = 25, 30-39 = 35, 40+ = 45.



Respondents also indicated a wide range of education: not only in the fine arts but rather in fields such as agriculture, commerce, education, humanities, journalism, law, nursing, psychology, and various sciences.

Respondents reported a variety of advanced/professional degrees and certifications, and the occupations they pursued outside the arts reflected this diversity in fields such as secondary and postsecondary education, research, agriculture, communications, business and consulting, administration and management.

Is this a strength or success? Artists working part-time or full-time outside the arts contribute effectively to arts ecology – to what degree do they want to receive their primary income from their creative practice?

Note the prominence of “University” and “Teaching” in the wordcloud.

### **What can make the system more sustainable?**

In the Artist Survey, we asked: “Are there any resources that you consider to be necessary for the realization of your creative goals as an artist to which you do not currently have access?”

SPAR respondents identified a wide range of resources/ways-to-bolster the system, e.g.:

- Professional development opportunities
- Arts Infrastructure
- Human Resources training
- Organizational development
- Funding
- Critical discourse
- E-resources/information

Can universities help address some of these needs?

Answers to this question often mentioned networking opportunities (or Infrastructure for connections):

- Social *as well as* Physical
- Within the Arts
- Within the Wider Community
- Beyond the Province

Artist respondents identified the importance of virtual spaces, for example: “Virtual space is important as is physical space,” and “The world has grown smaller and is now on our very doorstep... We have to open up more, work together, and stop being so closed off. As artists and as a people.”

Artist respondents also identified the importance of physical spaces, “I see the internet as a great way to still find opportunities, but *I have made the greatest leap forwards with my career when I have been able to collaborate and be inspired by local people* doing the same thing as I am or that I aspire to do.”

## How well is the system sustaining creativity?

Universities are important to SPAR's artist respondents, who also expressed concerns/doubts about the Universities ongoing ability to maintain that importance. We found references to collective perceptions and individual experiences. Funding was often mentioned. SPAR Artist Survey respondents' perceptions/anxieties included:

- "The universities are consistently weakening the ARTS in favour of the sciences, etc., and in-vain efforts by groups such as SSHRC are relatively inadequate to support practicing artists."
- "Funding cuts to the University of Saskatchewan and the closing of the Emma Lake Kenderdine Campus has very negatively affected my creative practice as *[identifying information removed]*."
- "Funding has been cut, university programs in the arts being cut or disappearing not growing."
- "More funding to the arts on a local and provincial level, more funding to the arts at the university."

These concerns shows up in anecdotal observations from the SPAR Artist Survey. We can also look to some of the numbers.



The SAA hired Paul Gingrich to look into [Fine Arts and Arts Education Resources at Saskatchewan Universities, \(1995-2015\)](#). The following data is from his report (available on the [SAA website](#)). It is a detailed report of some 60 pages. Paul was tireless, thorough, and conscientious – being determined to stick to the facts and not over or under state them. I'll be presenting some select data from this report – without all of the context – for which I apologize to Paul.

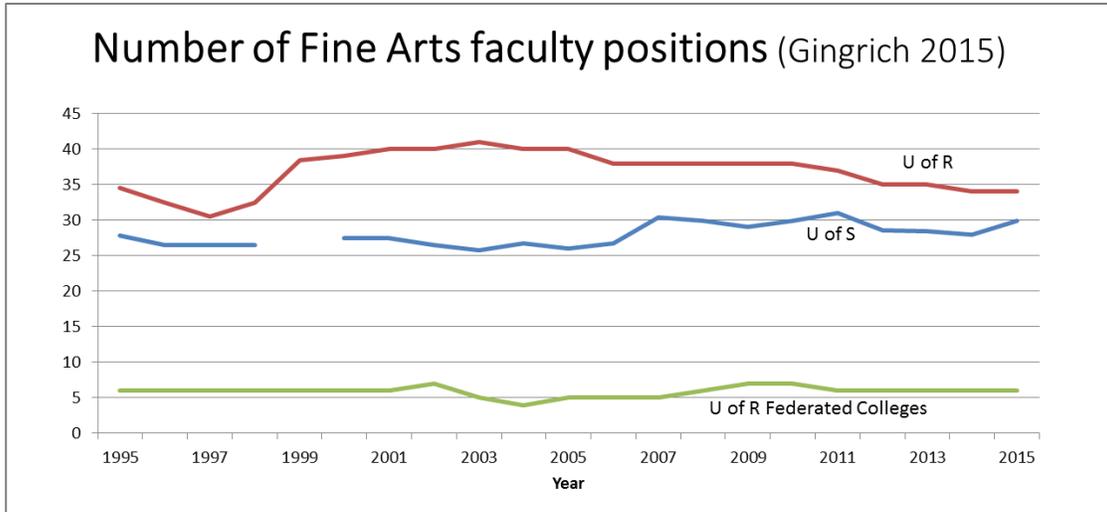
Identified Research Issues included:

- Incomplete data
- Data for some years being missing or unavailable
- Information often not publicly accessible
- Non-comparable data
- Differences in definition and production of data
- Data requests of institutions
- Institutional research units and faculties/departments
- Freedom of information requests (Gingrich, 2015).

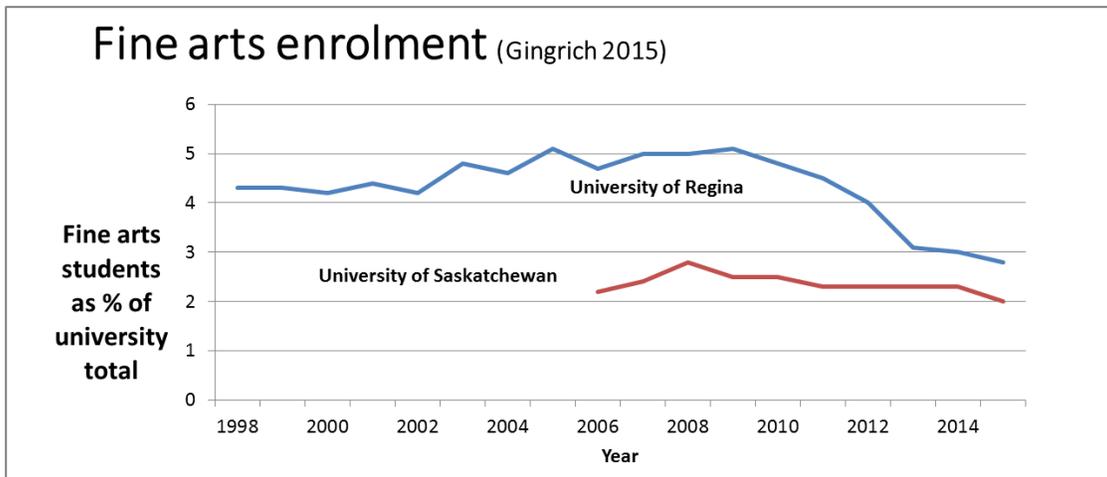
## Number of Fine Arts faculty positions (Gingrich 2015)

First, regarding Faculty Positions:

- UofR saw gain through 2002 and decline since then. Note, this does not include Arts Education (steady) and Creative Writing.
- US – small growth in number of faculty members



Regarding Fine Arts enrolment, Gingrich found student enrolment steady, then declining after 2008. The more acute declines were at the UofR. This graph FA students as a percentage of the University total. Gingrich's report does look into these numbers more thoroughly.



## Budget – Fine Arts, University of Regina

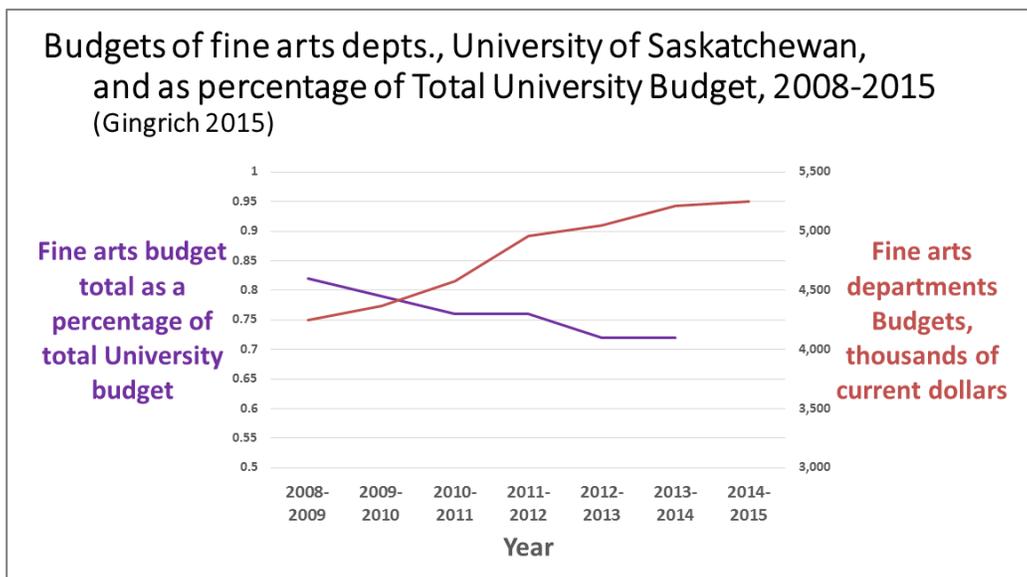
Spot-checking over the last 20 years at the UofR, the report found the budget for the Faculty of Fine Arts (now Media, Art, and Performance or MAP) has *increased* but has declined relative to growth of University of Regina overall budget. There has been a shift in resources *away from*: Fine Arts, Arts, Education, and Science and resources *to*: Business Administration, Engineering, and Kinesiology and Health Studies. (Nursing is not included since it was established only in 2009.)

**Budget – Faculty of Fine Arts and URegina** (Gingrich 2015)

Budget year	Faculty of Fine Arts budget in millions of dollars		University of Regina, millions of current dollars	Fine Arts percentage of U of R budget
	Current dollars	Constant 2002 dollars		
1995-1996	3.6	4.2	72.4	<b>5.0</b>
2001-2002	3.7	3.8	80.7	<b>4.6</b>
2015-2016	6.3	4.8	192.5	<b>3.3</b>

At the UofS, where records were somewhat spotty over the 20 period of the report, Gingrich observed:

Over the last seven years, the three fine arts departments have lost relatively little in comparison with the budget for the College of Arts and Science. But over these same years, the budget for the three departments relative to the University of Saskatchewan budget *declined by twelve per cent*. The apparent stability, or even small growth, in employment and budgets for fine arts units at the two universities masks their decline in resources relative to the resources for the universities as a whole.



Gingrich's report identified the following, overarching concerns:

- Decline in fine arts undergraduate enrolments
- Shift of budget away from fine arts
  - Decline in U of R Fine Arts faculty numbers and enrolment
  - Emma Lake Kenderdine campus closed

**Before opening the floor to discussion, I'll return to our original question. *How well is the system sustaining creativity?***

A sustainable arts-ecosystem depends upon Universities, and their ability to respond to concerns and issues raised. How can it do so?

- Networking
- Disciplinary diversity
- Young/emerging artists
- Newcomers
- FN artists
- Incomes

The sustainability of the arts-ecosystem depends greatly upon the ability of Universities to respond to these concerns.

**Thank You**

## Future Planning

SPAR will continue to conduct research (especially focus groups and case studies), produce more reports and policy papers, and is in the process of applying for a multi-year SSHRC Partnership Grant of \$2.5 million over 7 years.

## Thank You

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