Findings from
Artists U’s Next Steps Project

How do Baltimore artists survive and thrive?
How can we build relevant, lifelong professional development resources for all Baltimore artists?

This work was supported by a grant from the Robert W. Deutsch Foundation.
Background

Since 2011, Artists U/Baltimore has offered workshops and conversations on building a sustainable artistic life. We wanted to look beyond our specific programs to the broader artist community. In this project, Next Steps, we worked to build a grounded, inclusive, strategic conversation about professional development.

1. We brought together artists and organizations focused on professional development for a series of four roundtable conversations.

2. We surveyed 400 Baltimore artists about artistic practice, survival strategies, challenges both professional and personal, and definitions of success.

3. We hosted a focus group with fourteen artists to dig more deeply into issues raised by our survey data.

4. We partnered with Dr. Brea Heidelberg, arts researcher and professor at Drexel University, to analyze the survey and focus group responses.

This is not an artist census or a comprehensive portrait of Baltimore artists. The goal of our survey and focus group was to uncover actionable findings, things we in Artists U and the professional development sector can use to build new programs, partnerships, and networks. Our guiding question was: How will this help us make better decisions?

This was not a random sampling. In Artists U, we believe strongly that artists are everywhere, in every community and on every block. The artists who are typically reached by surveys like this are a small subset. For this survey, we used the “snowball” method to get responses: we invited artists in our networks to complete the survey and to share it with their networks. This technique builds a cohort of respondents who are linked to the networks we’re using. More on this below, but the important thing to remember is: Most respondents have a direct connection to, or are one or two degrees removed from, a professional development program like Artists U.
It’s important to be cautious when reducing artists’ lives and experiences to a collection of statistics. Numbers can be useful in uncovering trends and tendencies, but they can also mask complexities within a group or even within one artist. We used the Focus Group to add depth and texture to the data. Most importantly, we in Artists U continue to ground our understandings in the lived experiences and testimony of the artists we work with. We believe data is useful only in the context of embodied connections and community.

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Overall Findings

Artists make their lives, livings, and impact across multiple disciplines and roles. Disciplinary categories, even as open-ended as “Performing Arts” or “Visual Arts,” do not capture the wide-ranging practices of Baltimore artists.

"Most of the artists that responded to the survey are navigating additional roles as teachers (40%), entrepreneurs (30%), and activists (25%). All artists are operating at the intersection of being an ‘artist and . . . ’ No one responded that they were just an artist and nothing else.”

Regardless of which broad category is set as a filtering parameter (i.e. “Visual Arts” in Q2), all of the artistic disciplines in Q3 are represented. This indicates a continued need for programming and resources that speak across artistic discipline.

[Dr. Brea Heidelberg, Next Steps analysis]
Q3 What artistic discipline(s) do you currently work in? Check all that apply.

- Dance 8.5%
- Music 20.8%
- Opera/Musical theater 6.3%
- Theater 18.5%
- Storytelling 18.0%
- Painting 31.8%
- Drawing 27.8%
- Sculpture 23.3%
- Installation 28.6%
- Design Arts 18.5%
- Crafts 19.3%
- Photography 23.8%
- Media Art: film, video 28.6%
- Literature 23.3%
- Screenwriting 5.3%
- Playwriting 9.8%
- Poetry: spoken word, written 13.3%
- Interdisciplinary 25.3%
- Tradition or folk arts 7.3%
- Humanities 9.5%
- Multidisciplinary 27.3%
Artists’ definitions of success reach beyond the “fine arts” world into issues, intrinsic values, and community.

This is likely not news to Baltimore artists: Definitions of success focus less on external validation and gatekeepers and more on impact, community, and political and social issues.

Q4 How do you define success in terms of AUDIENCE? What you want your art to do? What impact matters to you? Rate each of the following from 1 (Unimportant to Me) to 5 (Extremely Important to Me).

- **Events in the fine arts world**
- **Events in communities**
- **Publication**
- **Teaching artists**
- **Teaching non-artists**
- **Depth of connection**
- **Breadth: # of audiences**
- **Reach: beyond Baltimore**
- **Length: over years**
- **Audiences with expertise**
- **Exposure: new audiences**

“Depth of connection” scored highest by far, followed by “Events in communities,” choices that point away from “prestige” venues and toward meaningful local engagement.

“Presentations that result in conversations are the most important.”

[Survey artist comment]
Open festival settings such as Light City and Artscape draw very diverse audiences with a range of experiences with art. These are very important to our community, and to the artists who participate.

I describe what I do as an ‘expanded art practice.’ The output of work can show up anywhere. It could be that my participation shifts a policy, changes a science experiment, or, among various public audiences, changes a perception and/or provides an aesthetic and meaningful experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q6 How do you define success in terms of DISCUSSION? What impact matters to you?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical discussions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community discussions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Broad/media discussions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recognition and validation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Influencing art world</td>
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<tr>
<td>Influencing my discipline</td>
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<tr>
<td>Influencing Issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Being a thought leader</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

“**Influencing issues**” scored highest, followed closely by “**Influencing my discipline**,” both far outsoring “**Recognition and validation**.”
Q7 How do you define success in terms of PRACTICE? What impact matters to you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Success Indicator</th>
<th>Response Distribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Challenging myself</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connections with artists</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connections outside art</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating a body of work</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being curious and inspired</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a studio</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residencies and retreats</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Success in practice for respondents across race/ethnicity is most often defined by intrinsic measures such as “challenging myself” and “being curious and inspired.” Both categories were rated “extremely important to me” by 70+% of artists surveyed.

Black and Hispanic/Latinx artists were in agreement that “connections with artists,” “connections outside [the] arts,” “having a studio,” and “residencies and retreats” were relatively important – evidenced by “extremely important to me ratings” routinely within 5% of each other. In each case, Black artists rate these items slightly higher.

A standout in this area is “creating a body of work.” Black artists overwhelmingly (77%) categorize this indicator of success as “extremely important to me,” while artists from other races/ethnicities rated it “extremely important” at significantly lower rates (Asian: 42%, Hispanic/Latinx: 40%; White: 38%). Focus group information did not offer additional insight into why this difference in definitions of success exists, making this area ripe for further investigation.

[Dr. Brea Heidelberg, Next Steps analysis]
Artists find Baltimore a welcoming place, but believe funding is not equitable.

Do you find the broader community of Baltimore artists supportive and welcoming?
Rate from 1 (Entirely Unsupportive) to 10 (Entirely Supportive).  
**AVERAGE: 6.47**

Overall, do you find Baltimore arts organizations supportive and welcoming?
Rate from 1 (Entirely Unsupportive) to 10 (Entirely Supportive).  
**AVERAGE: 6.18**

Do you feel optimistic about your future as an artist in the Baltimore region?
Rate from 1 (Completely Pessimistic) to 10 (Completely Optimistic).  
**AVERAGE: 6.41**

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**On average, artists view the Baltimore arts community (both individuals and organizations) as relatively welcoming and supportive.** However, the actual number rankings vary widely and should be investigated further to determine if there are additional insights to be gained about the broader arts community.

Artists largely view the funding landscape in Baltimore as inequitable across race/ethnicity and education level, with presumptions of inequity being slightly higher among people of color. Reasons for this inequity (as stated by respondents) are: racial/ethnic bias, lack of a transparent process—which privileges those with insider networks and personal connections with decision makers—and a preference toward a particular vernacular.

One rationale for uneven artist funding mentioned in the survey and echoed in the focus group is a lack of awareness of the variety of opportunities available to artists. In both the survey and the focus group, it was indicated that there is a significant difference between artists that are native to Baltimore and “transplants.” This sentiment was expressed in individual open-ended statements, but comments were vague and did not rise to the level of significance within the data regarding artists’ perception of the arts ecosystem in Baltimore other than as an indicator that this is an area for further investigation. It is unclear whether the native/non-native perception is false attribution of other attributes (e.g. education level), or if there is an innate difference in the two groups of artists that requires different considerations with regard to programming and resources.”

[Dr. Brea Heidelberg, Next Steps analysis]
I think knowledge of what’s available is limited - people don’t always have access to hearing about the opportunities.

Grant applications are a skill in themselves and require prerequisite skills.

My sense is that Baltimore groups try harder to do this well than in most regions, but that it’s still far from perfect.

I don’t feel as though many local arts funding organizations have a very transparent process when awarding grants.

I feel there is a “gatekeeper” mentality in Baltimore. It’s not about the quality of the art but who knows the artist. I feel those in positions of power select their friends and their “in group” rather than the people who are most qualified. As a result, we get the same artists receiving all of the major awards and opportunities over and over again. Especially with Black artists. It seems that there can only be one or two Black Artists that get access to major opportunities and exhibits at a time, while other artists of color who are equally skilled get overlooked.

The grant process is inaccessible and unempathetic, and unrealistic outcomes are desired.
I feel like they tend to support the same artists over and over instead of giving others funding, with Ruby’s etc. (Though I have never applied for it, I know others who have repeatedly applied and are strong artists but don’t get it.)

Inequality in Baltimore has deep systemic roots of disadvantage that begin at home, and continue throughout the education system, access to health, venues and countless other factors.

Once an artist wins a grant they tend to win more grants, so it feels hard to “break in” to the grant cycle.

Avant garde or cutting edge work seems favored over traditional arts; social issues dominate over craft.

Artwork that doesn’t engage a kind of social practice is harder to get funded. This is a national trend. Art for beauty or for its sake or just to bear witness in a quieter more contemplative way is harder to find support for. It is sad, but not a fault of artists or funders but of our time.
I can't imagine being an artist without accessible technology / internet / mentors to help guide me through grant and film festival processes.

Grant funding has grown and is excellent, however there’s too many restrictions on funds. Artists are vetted but not trusted.

There are concepts of what constitutes “good” art that are rooted in historical power structures that don’t apply to everyone.

Information about grants is not widely dispersed outside of Facebook or email newsletters.

There are many funding opportunities which are accessible, but the competition is so high for the few funds available to individuals that it often feels like a discouraging process to apply.
Artists receive little formal training in how to make a life and a living.

Q50 If you had training as an artist, did you get any professional development, that is, education about making a life as an artist? Please slide to rate from 1 (None) to 10 (A Lot).

This low number (3.7) affirms what many of us artists know: Most institutions do little to prepare artists to survive and thrive.

Q49 How have you learned about making a life as an artist (earning money, putting your art out of the world, finding opportunities, etc.) Check all that apply.

The most popular answers by far were “Trial and error” (78%) and “Other artists” (74%), followed by “Mentors” (50%). Looked at one way, these are sobering numbers, a critique of institutions that have failed to prepare artists. In Artists U, we see these numbers as a strength to build on. If artists learn through experimentation and conversations with other artists, we have a built-in learning community. We can connect to and strengthen the ways artists learn from each other and “pass it on.”
We received survey responses across artistic disciplines (see above), ages, and years living in Baltimore, but respondent’s racial and ethnic diversity was not in line with Baltimore’s demographics.

Q17 What is your age?

- 17 or younger: 0.3%
- 18-20: 0.5%
- 21-29: 14.7%
- 30-39: 30.1%
- 40-49: 22.9%
- 50-59: 14.4%
- 60 or older: 17.3%

Q28 How many years have you called the Baltimore region home?

- Born and raised: 18.1%
- 1-2 years: 5.6%
- 3-5 years: 10.4%
- 6-10 years: 17.9%
- 11-15 years: 12.3%
- 16+ years: 35.7%
The methodology used to collect responses relied mainly on Roundtable organizations’ networks and those of its current participants. This partially accounts for the disproportionate responses that resulted in respondents’ self-identified demographics that differ from the overall demographics of Baltimore:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Baltimore Demographics (%) (as of 12/2018)</th>
<th>Survey Respondents (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>63.7</td>
<td>19.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>69.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous*</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>2.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or More Races/Other**</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>5.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic, Latino or Spanish of any race</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This category was names American Indian or Alaska Native in the original source
**This category is a combination of two separate categories – Two or More Races (2.1%) and Other race (1.8%).

These discrepancies, specifically the differences between Black respondents and the overall Black population in Baltimore, are common in survey research. In general, there are harder to reach populations, and Black people are commonly harder to reach and have differential response rates. There are a number of methods for increasing survey participation among underrepresented groups, but it is important to note that these methods have tradeoffs.

While it was possible that the survey responses could have been weighted in order to more closely reflect Baltimore demographics, this would not have been a true reflection of Black and Latinx artists’ needs across Baltimore because it is likely that those that did respond are already connected to these networks in one or more ways. This means that it is likely that Black and Latinx artists not connected to professional development networks may have different needs, which would not be reflected by a mere scaling of preexisting responses.

[Dr. Brea Heidelberg, Next Steps analysis]

1 Based on Baltimore Demographic information from worldpopulationreview.com
Findings We Are Acting On

Below are actionable findings Artists U and the Roundtable are using to develop new programming in four areas that our survey and focus group identified as crucial: Pathways, Time, Reach, and Debt.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PATHWAYS

Professional development work in Baltimore does not reach all artists.

As evidenced by the racial demographics of our survey respondents (see above), professional development is not available equally to artists in Baltimore. Another indicator is the zip codes of our survey respondents. Below are responses mapped by Baltimore City zip code. More than half of the Baltimore City responses came from four zip codes: 21218, 21211, 21202, and 21217.

This map points to the limited geographic reach of the Roundtable’s professional development networks. On the other hand, the map shows some responses from nearly every zip code in the city, suggesting that we have the connections to begin intentional network building city wide.
Professional development in Baltimore is often fragmented and siloed.

Resources have been built piecemeal, with artists and organizations responding to needs in their artist communities. All the professional development programs on the Roundtable agreed that the long-term challenge is to build integrated, relevant resources accessible to all Baltimore artists.

+ **IDEA:** Host more in-person information sessions, especially in neighborhoods beyond those already well served.

+ **IDEA:** Schedule and cross-promote existing programming. Many artists never hear about opportunities, and many professional development providers are unaware of each other’s programs and calendars. Cross-promoting existing resources can broaden and connect our networks.

+ **IDEA:** Link programming into “pathways.” Most professional development opportunities are “one-offs.” By connecting existing programs, we can create pathways to success for artists. An artist in a strategic planning workshop could be referred to a financial planning class, and then to a creative entrepreneurship program.

+ **IDEA:** Build a 12-month professional development calendar. By planning in advance and sequencing our offerings, we could build and promote robust, year-round programming.

+ **IDEA:** Artist Resource Fair. Modeled on GBCA’s grantmakers fair, the fair will be a one-day gathering of Baltimore artist resources with workshops, tabling, and panel discussions. The fair could be held outside of the four “most served” zip codes, possible at an HBCU.

+ **IDEA:** Choose venues thoughtfully. Spaces have reputations and levels of access. Moving beyond the “usual spots” can build connections with new artists.

+ **IDEA:** Raise up artists and leaders working in under-served communities. Rather than “outreach,” connect resources to artists and organizations already serving artists across the city.

+ **IDEA:** Teach the foundational vocabulary and tools for pursuing artistic opportunities. Rather than presuming all artists are familiar with artist statements, project proposals, work samples, etc, offer trainings and support for artists to build these toolkits.

+ **IDEA:** Build artist networks intentionally over time. In Artists U, we call it “slow communications.” If there are artists under-represented in our workshops (by discipline, racial or ethnic identity, age, neighborhood, etc), we cultivate relationships with artist alums who are connected with those artists and who can bring them to future workshops. This work is slow, grounded in authentic relationships, and best done face to face, rather than through digital communication like email or social media.
**TIME**

**Artists want more studio time.**

SURVEY: On average, artists reported spending 16.6 hours per week making art; they reported wanting to spend 28.8 hours per week making art, a difference of 12 hours.

Q16 “I could have more impact and deepen my work if I had __________.” A huge pile of money? Yes, we agree. What else? Please choose 3 items from the list below that would have the biggest impact.

- More hours for making art: 41.6%
- Concrete goals and plans: 15.3%
- Residences and retreats: 43.4%
- Sustainable day jobs: 19.5%
- Studio or office space: 23.3%
- A local artist network: 13.5%
- A national artist network: 20.1%
- Conversation about my work: 19.0%
- Access to markets to sell: 27.3%
- Connection to presenters: 43.1%
- Stronger promotion: 18.5%
- Community connections: 14.3%

Two of the top three answers involve time for art: 43% chose “residencies and retreats” and 42% chose “More hours for making art.”
FOCUS GROUP: Artists spoke of a virtuous cycle: when they have time to make strong, excellent work, opportunities and resources come.

+ IDEA: Workshops on time management with a specific eye on getting more studio time.

+ IDEA: Create a “get your 12” campaign among artists and arts professionals to prioritize studio time. Social media posts, stickers, and studio posters could remind artists to get their art-making hours each week.

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Q40 How balanced do you feel in these seven areas? Please rate each from 1 (Totally Out of Balance) to 10 (Perfectly Balanced).

- Tied for lowest scores (4.8) are “Art time” and “Time off.”

Artists want residencies, dedicated weeks in the year to focus on art.

SURVEY: 43% said they want dedicated weeks in the year to focus on making art.

+ IDEA: Get the Darn Residency workshops: a three-class series focused on crafting strong applications to residencies that are a good fit with your practice.

+ IDEA: More local residencies, spaces that give artists months of work space.

+ IDEA: Need-based travel and stipend funding for artists who receive out-of-town residencies.
Artists want administrative help.

**FOCUS GROUP:** Every focus group artist said they would hire a studio or administrative assistant if they could afford it. None of the artists had such help. Many said they would hire “expertise” such as a manager, agent, or marketing/PR help. Barriers included: paying the person, finding a qualified person, and managing that person.

“**In the focus group, the desire to have an assistant to help alleviate some of the business-related stressors of managing a career was noted – but the need to then delegate the work and effectively communicate with that person was articulated as a concern. Additional information gathering is suggested in this area as focus group information indicates the need for skill development around articulating career needs to potential support networks. This is especially true for Black artists and self-taught artists, who mainly rely on their personal networks and “trial and error” (Q 49) in order to figure out how to make a living as an artist.**

[Dr. Brea Heidelberg, Next Steps analysis]

**IDEA:** Artists Hiring Help panel discussion and workshop. Artists who have successfully hired in the past share their stories and experiences. Artists do a workshop on identifying specific needs, budget, and a path to hiring.

**IDEA:** Meet-ups for artist managers, assistants, and administrators. An informal “hiring bank” for artist support could connect artists to potential employees.

**IDEA:** Artists Assistant Boot Camp. Generalists could be trained to support artists and could gather to exchange ideas, connections, and challenges.

**IDEA:** A funding program for artists to hire help. It could be a matching program, a grant matching every dollar up to $X that you use to pay an assistant or administrator.
REACH
Artists want audiences and opportunities beyond Baltimore.

Q15 Who do you want to add to your network, circle of support? Check all that apply.

- Artists in my discipline: 60.7%
- Artists, other disciplines: 58.1%
- Thinkers beyond the arts: 66.4%
- People in arts organizations: 54.6%
- People who know business: 57.4%
- Audiences in Baltimore: 70.2%
- Audiences beyond Bmore: 81.7%
- Scholars, critics: 57.9%

→ 82% of artists want more “audiences beyond Baltimore.”

Investing time, money and capacity are key to generating opportunities beyond Baltimore.

FOCUS GROUP: Those who found opportunities nationally and internationally invested time and money at first. Risk capital and risk tolerance often led to paid engagements later.

“Artists are interested in presenting their work outside of Baltimore, but consider a lack of financial resources, a lack of skills – particularly the ability to write about their own work and the ability to fundraise, and a lack of network that includes artists, critics, and presenters outside of Baltimore – as barriers to this goal.”

[Dr. Brea Heidelberg, Next Steps analysis]
Findings from Artists U’s Next Steps Project

IDEA: Get the Darn Residency workshops.

IDEA: Get Out of Town panel and workshop: local artists share stories of getting beyond Baltimore, then a workshop on tools and tactics for generating opportunities.

IDEA: Funding program to cover travel, shipping, per diem, etc for out-of-town opportunities. Simple application, quick turnaround, minimal reporting.

Artists want to expand their networks within and beyond Baltimore.

SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUP: Artists learn about and attain opportunities through their networks. But many artist networks are limited, local, and don’t extend beyond the arts, (something many artists indicated they want).

IDEA: Events to connect artists with arts organizations and relevant non-arts partners in Baltimore.

IDEA: Bring curators, presenters, and funders from elsewhere to Baltimore; host events, artist talks, and studio visits.

I do not have the resources to attend festivals or residencies but my work is shown consistently around the world.

I started attending conferences and stayed in touch with people I met, cultivated relationships. There was a long term payoff as I now get shows in other cities. It can take ten years to bear fruit!

I borrowed money to do a tour overseas, made great connections, and earned enough to pay back the loan.

You need to budget time and money upfront, pay a fee to apply for things or pay for your travel to a conference. In the long run, it can pay off.

I know everyone in my sub-community but not the larger local arts community.
Artists want to get better at promotion.

Artists want to learn skills and build networks to promote their work. Many, especially older artists, want to learn more about social media and online promotion.

+ **IDEA:** Connect artists to existing resources and trainings on promotion.
+ **IDEA:** More artist-led workshops on promotion and social media. Artists share success stories and tools for building your online presence.

"I need help not with marketing materials but with marketing strategies, especially when I’m organizing an event."

Universally, respondents noted a need for skill development in self-promotion, especially with regard to engaging audiences and getting exposure through shows and gigs. This need to market oneself and build a network was echoed multiple times throughout the results. Across educational level (self-taught, high school, undergraduate, and graduate) artists want to broaden their network to include audiences both within and outside of Baltimore, “thinkers beyond the arts,” and presenters.

[Dr. Brea Heidelberg, Next Steps analysis]
DEBT

**Debt is a major financial challenge for Baltimore artists.**

**SURVEY:** Artist debt-to-income ratios are unsustainable, and more so for artists who identified as black. Artists reported debt across all categories (student loans, credit cards, consumer loans such as a car, and personal loans), with student loans and credit cards by far the largest. (We do not include mortgages in this, as home ownership is an asset.) Artists surveyed reported carrying debt equal to 67% of their annual income. Artists who identified as black reported an average debt of 162% of annual income.

67% of respondents reported they are working toward or want to be working toward getting out of debt.

**IDEA:** Group workshops on debt management and asset building followed by one-on-ones with a consultant who specializes in debt management.

**IDEA:** Grants (maybe matching grants) for artists who complete a debt management workshop.

**IDEA:** Workshops on generating income streams and building revenue.
Appendix: Survey Questions

1. I am... Check all the apply.
2. Which broad category is currently the main focus of your work? Please choose one.
3. What artistic discipline(s) do you currently work in? Check all that apply.
4. How do you define success in terms of AUDIENCE? What do you want your art to do? What impact matters to you?
5. How do you define success in terms of COMMUNITY and TRADITION? What impact matters to you?
6. How do you define success in terms of DISCUSSION? What impact matters to you?
7. How do you define success in terms of PRACTICE? What impact matters to you?
8. Are you succeeding on your own terms? Please rate from 1 (I am not having any impact or success that matters to me) to 10 (I consistently achieve impact or success that matters to me).
9. What else do you like to do? Check your preference for each item below.
10. Do you find the broader community of Baltimore artists supportive and welcoming? Please rate from 1 (Entirely Unsupportive) to 10 (Entirely Supportive).
11. Overall, do you find Baltimore arts organizations supportive and welcoming? Please rate from 1 (Entirely Unsupportive) to 10 (Completely Optimistic).
12. Do you feel optimistic about your future as an artist in the Baltimore region? Please rate from 1 (Completely Pessimistic) to 10 (Entirely Supportive).
13. How often do you share your work beyond Baltimore?
14. What skills do you want to learn or strengthen? Please rate each of the following from 1 (No interest) to 5 (Urgent Interest).
15. Who do you want to add to your network, your circle of support? Check all that apply.
16. “I could have more impact and deepen my work if I had ____.” A huge pile of money? Yes, we agree. What else? Please choose 3 items from the list below that would have the biggest impact.
17. What is your age?
18. How do you self-identify your gender(s)?
19. What is your sexual orientation?
20. How do you self-identify in terms of your race/ethnicity?
21. We acknowledge that racial categories are constructed and often inadequate. But in order to understand how resources and power are working in Baltimore, we ask you to check the category or categories that best describe you.
22. What is the highest level of education you have received?
23. Do you have a spouse or long-term partner?
24. How many children are you raising or have you raised?
25. Are you an artist living with a physical or cognitive challenge / disability?
26. If you answered Yes to the previous question, on a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate the overall accessibility of the Baltimore art scene? Please rate from 1 (Not at all accessible) to 10 (Very accessible).
27. How many years have you been making your art (including training)?
28. How many years have you called the Baltimore region home?
29. How do you make a living? Please include both artistic work and work not related to your art. Check all that apply. NOTE: Money can be a stressful topic for artists, provoking self-doubt, embarrassment, and confusion. This is a shame-free zone. We deeply appreciate your candor and
Findings from Artists U’s Next Steps Project

openness to confidentially answer these questions about money. Understanding the financial situation of artists will help us better support artists.

30. What is your annual "individual" income? Your best guess is fine. Please enter numbers only (no commas, dollar signs, or words).

31. If you share expenses with a partner or family, what is your annual "household" income? Your best guess is fine. Please enter numbers only (no commas, dollar signs, or words).

32. Not including teaching art, about how much of your annual individual income do you make from your artistic practice? (including selling work, commissions, grants and fellowships, touring, royalties)? Please choose one.

33. About how much of your annual individual income do you make from teaching art? Please choose one.

34. About how much debt do you currently owe (approximately)? Please enter zero if you have no debt in a category.

35. Many artists seek out ways to live and work affordably, using community, barter, and trade. Which of the following have you done in the past year? Check all that apply.

36. In the past year, about how many hours per week did you spend making art?

37. In the past year, about how many hours per week did you spend working on the business work of your art life (promoting your work, writing grants, getting gigs, etc)?

38. In the past year, about how many hours per week did you spend on income-earning work NOT related to your art?

39. Given how your life is currently, how many hours per week would you like to spend making art?

40. How balanced do you feel in these seven areas? Please rate each from 1 (Totally out of Balance) to 10 (Perfectly Balanced).

41. How in control do you feel of the business work of your art life (promoting your work, writing grants, getting gigs, etc)? Please rate from 1 (Completely Out of Control) to 10 (Perfectly in Control).

42. Overall, how balanced do you feel your life is in terms of work, personal life, art, and time off? Please rate from 1 (Totally out of Balance) to 10 (Perfectly Balanced).

43. In the last year, where did you get funds and other resources to support your artistic projects? Check all that apply.

44. In the last 3 years, how many of the following have you applied for, and how many of your applications were successful? If the category doesn’t apply to you, leave it blank.

45. Have you been funded by a foundation or public agency from outside of the Baltimore region?

46. Do you find that grant funding is available fairly and equitably to everyone in the Baltimore region?

47. How did you, or do you, learn to make art? Check all that apply.

48. Have you taken part in any of these Baltimore professional development trainings? Check all that apply.

49. How have you learned about making a life as an artist (earning money, putting your art out in the world, finding opportunities, etc)? Check all that apply.

50. If you had training as an artist, did you get any professional development, that is, education about making a life as an artist? Please rate from 1 (None) to 10 (A Lot).

51. Do you have any of the following? Check all that apply.

52. How often are you able to meet payments on your bills? Please choose one.

53. Overall, how in control of your finances do you feel? Please rate from 1 (Entirely Out of Control) to 10 (Entirely in Control).

54. What is your zip code?

55. We would like to share the results of this survey with you. What is your email address?
Appendix: Focus Group Questions

1. When you think about how you made your life as an artist, what were key touchstones? What people, events, and resources shaped your practice?
2. Currently, are there things you want to do but don’t know how to do it? What skills and connections are needed?
3. Has anyone hired someone to help with your art practice or art career?
4. Have you developed deep connections with your audience over time? If so, how?
5. How do you define success? How do you know the impact you are having?
6. Who do you want to add to your network?
7. Who here has built audience beyond Baltimore? How did it happen?
8. Why is it hard for Baltimore artists to get outside of Baltimore?
9. What are some things you think would help Baltimore artists?