Centering the Picture

The role of race & ethnicity in cultural engagement in the U.S.

An analysis of national survey data from the first wave of
Culture + Community in a Time of Crisis: A Special Edition of Culture Track

December 15, 2020

sloverlinett AUDIENCE RESEARCH

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In association with:
LaPlaca Cohen

Cover image: "Dance for George" protest in Harlem, New York City, June 2020. Courtesy of Deb Fong Photography (Instagram @deb_fong_photography; debfong.com).

Foreword

A View from the Field

Esther J. Washington

Director of Education, National Museum of African American History and Culture, Smithsonian Institution

Thirty years ago, a curious phrase made the rounds among Smithsonian Institution educators: "shoelace time." Before the advent of hook-and-loop closures, young children's shoelaces were constantly coming undone. So a seasoned educator had adopted the simple practice of wandering the exhibitions, finding a shoelace in need of tying and, while at eye level, asking the student, "So what do you think about…?" This simple act of curiosity and empathy was my introduction to the importance of soliciting constituent voices.

Today, seeking out a diversity of perspectives to inform one's work has become more critical than ever. This report, *Centering the Picture: The role of race & ethnicity in cultural engagement in the U.S.*, serves as an audience bellwether during this unprecedented time.

When the pandemic descended, museum professionals and other arts and culture practitioners nationwide scrambled to transition to digital formats. We relied upon past understandings of our audiences and insights from one another via online convenings. Slover Linett and Culture Track coordinated a large-scale national survey, Culture + Community in a Time of Crisis, in record time. Long-time audience advocate Kinshasha Holman Conwill, Deputy Director of the National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC), contacted me about participating alongside several sister Smithsonian museums. Here arose the opportunity to seek guidance directly from our audiences.

When results from the initial study were released in early July, one data point stood out for me: *People of color are disproportionately experiencing the physical and financial brunt of the crisis.* Articles from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and others cited the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on people of color and how the disease and systemic racism were linked. I learned new terms like "allostatic load," the damage caused by persistent stress, which overworks the body's many delicate regulatory mechanisms, and "weathering," biological aging caused by the chronic stress of racism. It was remarkable to see the Culture + Community data align with the medical data, while specifically pointing to how cultural organizations serve audiences and what audiences expect.

Because the original study took place just prior to George Floyd's senseless murder and the watershed calls for justice and equity that followed, Slover Linett re-analyzed the data and wrote this report to *amplify and understand the valuable perspectives and ideas of people in our communities who have been underrepresented in, or excluded from, such conversations in the past.* And they recognized that using empirical data is a powerful tool to help us answer self-reflective questions such as *What is my organization's responsibility toward equity?* Our communities have spoken. Take the time to let them be heard, and to listen. That's how we'll be able to provide offerings that address expressed needs, use new methods of inclusion and equity, and design programming that attracts new audiences.

At NMAAHC, our audience engagement team transitioned our meditation sessions, once offered only *in situ*, to an online format. Our early childhood education team prepared printed resources for distribution at food pantries. And our teaching and learning team offered a podcast series connecting teens with inspirational African Americans in STEM fields — resources designed to de-stress, inform, and inspire.

As I came to the conclusion of this report, I began to ponder what *additional* roles my museum might play and how our future programs might reach even broader audiences. This research had asked questions of the very audiences we all wish to serve more deeply, more consistently, and more sincerely. This new analysis provides a window into past behaviors and future opportunities for all of us at cultural organizations who are truly seeking change, truly wishing to make the world a better place.

If it feels overwhelming, you needn't go it alone. Reach out to like organizations or those that successfully attract audiences of interest. For smaller visitor attractions, reach out to larger ones and combine efforts. If you find a data-point that is particularly useful and want to know more, make use of the online tools to analyze the raw data. If you cannot hire a professional firm, seek out a graduate intern or local university partner. Learn as much as you are able. Take a step.

—Esther J. Washington
November 2020

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Executive summary

Overview

At the outset of the coronavirus pandemic in early 2020, Slover Linett and other researchers recognized the need for the arts and culture sector to listen, ask questions, and be in conversation with the communities it serves — including members of those communities who have long been underrepresented in direction-setting conversations. We began collaborating with our colleagues at LaPlaca Cohen on a national research initiative called *Culture + Community in a Time of Crisis* (CCTC), findings from which would be disseminated as a "special edition" of LaPlaca Cohen's longstanding Culture Track study. The first phase of the project, an online survey of 124,000 adults in all 50 states, had already been conducted but not yet analyzed when George Floyd was murdered on May 25, 2020. During the upswell of anger and activism that followed, we expanded the goals of the project to include informing the sector's racial reckoning and efforts to decolonize and democratize. We reconsidered our approaches, priorities, and team structure for the next two phases of the study, and we re-analyzed the Wave 1 survey data through the lens of race and ethnicity in order to develop this report. We hope that, by centering the perspectives of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) Americans, this analysis helps illuminate potential pathways toward equity, relevance, and service in the challenging months and years ahead.

The questions in the Wave 1 survey were designed to be applicable to Americans with a wide variety of relationships to the arts, culture, creativity, museum-going, etc., and they covered both COVID-related and longer-term questions about perceptions, priorities, behaviors, and desires — including desires for arts and culture organizations to change. Survey invitations were sent to both the general U.S. population (via NORC's Amerispeak panel) and the participants and audiences of more than 650 cultural organizations across the country. Responses from both samples were combined for analysis and weighted using advanced statistical techniques to more accurately represent the demographics, behaviors, and attitudes of U.S. adults. Overall findings were issued in a Key Findings report from Culture Track in July; readers may want to begin with that document before turning to this deeper analysis.

We recognize that race/ethnicity is just one component of identity. This quantitative analysis is not meant to reduce the Americans who participated in the research to their racial or ethnic self-categorizations, nor to ignore the many important differences and intersectional identities that acronyms like "BIPOC" and monolithic labels like Latinx or Asian or Black can sometimes obscure.

Findings

1. An Invitation to Change

The Covid-19 crisis opened new possibilities for fundamental change in the cultural sector, and one goal of the Wave 1 survey was to see how much and what kinds of change Americans desire. Most adults (72%) see one or more ways that arts and culture organizations could become better for them in the future, and the desire for change is even more common in BIPOC communities (ranging from 76%–89% across Asian or Pacific Islander, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latinx, multiracial, and Native American respondent-groups). While the majority of Whites/Caucasians also expressed interest in one or more kinds of change, they were the racial group most likely to say they *wouldn't* make any changes to arts or culture organizations (33%).

What does "better" look like? Analysis identified three broad categories of change that would make arts and culture organizations better for Americans: (1) Becoming more inclusive and community-centered, (2) becoming more casual and enjoyable, and (3) offering content that's more reflective of people's lives and more frequently refreshed.

- **Becoming more inclusive and community-centered** is the most widely desired category and includes greater diversity of voices and faces, greater focus on localness (local artists, local nonprofits, and the local community), more engagement with young people, treating employees fairly, and being friendlier to all kinds of people. More than half (55%) of Americans overall want one or more of those changes, and that desire is even higher for BIPOC groups (63%–76% across categories).

- **Becoming more casual and enjoyable** includes changes toward fun, informality, and child-friendliness, and is desired by more than a third of Americans overall (41%) and fully half of Hispanic/Latinx Americans (51%).

- **More reflective and dynamic content** includes "stories or content that connect to my life" and "more frequent new works or exhibits." Over a quarter of Americans (29%) want one or both of these changes, and this desire is strongest among Asian and Pacific Islanders (43%).

Americans of all racial/ethnic categories want cultural organizations to support their communities during a crisis like Covid-19 by helping people laugh, relax, and stay connected. In addition, Native American (41%), multiracial (39%), Black/African American (36%), and Hispanic/Latinx (32%) Americans are particularly likely to want arts and culture organizations to help their community "heal, grieve, and process our emotions" (32%–41% across those groups, compared to 27% of Americans overall).

2. Patterns of Participation & Inclusion

Despite the stereotype that Americans of color are less likely to participate in arts and culture than Whites, we found that Asian or Pacific Islander, Hispanic/Latinx, multiracial, Native American, and White/Caucasian Americans are all about equally likely to have participated in at least one type of

cultural activity in 2019, before the pandemic: Approximately 95% of those respondents checked one or more activities on the list in the survey, which was intentionally broad and included public parks, streaming television, video games, museums, plays, music festivals, etc. However, Blacks/African Americans were less likely to report doing at least one of the activities on the list, at 88%, and less likely than other racial/ethnic groups to have participated in most of the specific cultural activities we measured (see pages 20–21). This could indicate that we didn't cast a wide enough net in asking how and where Blacks/African Americans experience the arts, creativity, and culture — something we plan to explore in the next two phases of the study.

Importantly, among the vast majority of Americans who did participate in cultural activities in 2019, their frequency of participation and likelihood to be affiliated with a cultural organization (e.g., as a member, subscriber, volunteer, etc.) was consistent across races/ethnicities, including Blacks/African Americans. But the kinds of cultural activities people engaged in varied by race/ethnicity (see Figure 9 on page 21). We also found that:

- BIPOC Americans value arts and culture organizations as highly as, or higher than, Whites/Caucasians do — and for several BIPOC groups, that perceived value is higher during the crisis than in normal times. Over a third (37%) of Americans rated arts and culture organizations as important or extremely important to them before Covid-19, and a slightly greater proportion (40%) felt that way about such organizations "during a crisis like Covid-19." Importance at both points in time is significantly higher for Hispanic/Latinx Americans (44% before the pandemic, 48% during it) and multiracial Americans (48%, 50%).

- The things people miss most about in-person arts and culture experiences are the same across races and ethnicities: social connection and having fun. Black/African Americans are more likely to miss how arts and cultural activities help them relax and feel less stressed (48% vs. 39% overall), while Native Americans are more likely to miss celebrating their cultural heritage (37% vs. 6% overall).

3. The Bigger Tent of Digital Engagement

Has the proliferation of online arts and culture experiences during the pandemic helped expand access and diversify engagement? Awareness of digital arts and culture offerings was high in the early months of the virus: 72% of Americans knew of at least one type of digital arts and culture being offered. A little more than half of Americans had used one or more of those online offerings, with little variation by race/ethnicity.

We found that digital offerings from certain kinds of arts and culture organizations are serving not just people who had physically attended or visited those kinds of organizations recently (in 2019), but also many people who hadn't. The proportion of digital users during the pandemic who *hadn't* recently attended in person ranges from about a quarter (28%) for libraries to about three-quarters (74%) for cultural centers. Crucially, in many art-forms or content-areas, that "digital only" subset is much more diverse than recent in-person attenders, with significantly higher proportions of Blacks/African Americans and Hispanics/Latinx Americans in particular:

- In all the performing arts categories we measured (classical music, jazz music, theater, and dance) and several visitor-based categories (botanical gardens, natural history museums, and art museums), the "digital only" subset is significantly more likely to be Black/African American.

- In science or technology museums and libraries, the "digital only" subset is significantly more likely to be Hispanic/Latinx.

So online cultural experiences, many of which have been offered free during the shutdowns, may present lower barriers — logistical, financial, and perhaps social or behavioral — than the corresponding place-based experiences.

4. Impacts & Experiences of Covid-19

One of the most devastating realities of Covid-19 has been its disproportionate effects on communities of color. Like other studies, ours revealed that both the physical and financial impacts of the virus fall more severely on BIPOC Americans than on Whites/Caucasians. When the survey was conducted in April and May, 2020:

- The coronavirus was closer to home for Black/African Americans and Native Americans than other racial/ethnic groups, with 19% of Blacks/African Americans and fully 46% of Native Americans reporting having had a friend or family member sick with Covid or having the virus themselves, compared to 12% of the overall population.

- The financial impacts of the crisis were most acute for people of color, with 23% of multiracial Americans, 18% of Hispanic/Latinx Americans, and 15% of Blacks/African Americans having lost all their income due to Covid-19, compared to 11% of the overall population.

This may influence the needs expressed by BIPOC respondents and the ways they want arts and culture organizations to help in their communities. For instance, Blacks/African Americans are more likely than other groups to say that arts and culture organizations can help their communities stay informed with trusted information. This was the most-selected response to that question for Blacks/African Americans, and it was not even in the top three among other racial/ethnic groups. And Hispanic/Latinx Americans were more likely than other groups to engage in creative activities themselves during the pandemic, such as painting, drawing, or sculpting (30% of Hispanic/Latinx Americans had done this, compared to 20% of the overall population), dancing (24% vs. 16% overall), photography or photo editing (25% vs. 19%), and filmmaking (10% vs 5%).

Together, these disproportionate impacts, unique needs, and personal creativity may suggest ways that arts and culture organizations and funders could rethink programming and relevance to better serve BIPOC Americans.

Reflections

In the final section of the report (pages 47–54), we offer a few provisional, speculative thoughts about what the race and ethnicity differences revealed in this analysis may mean for arts and culture practitioners, funders, researchers, and policymakers. Those reflections, summarized briefly on this page, cover two areas:

Opening the window of "culture" wider

The Wave 1 survey asked about a wide, non-hierarchical variety of arts and culture experiences and invited respondents to use their own definitions of that category. The responses that emerged from that broad frame reveal that Americans use culture to meet a wide range of needs and purposes — emotional, social, cognitive, expressive, practical — in both good times and bad, and some BIPOC communities place a greater emphasis on the social or civic, emotional or therapeutic, and creative-expression roles of cultural organizations. If so, this analysis supports the kinds of programming, practice, and funding that leverage the arts and culture to meet a multiplicity of needs, strengthen communities, and improve lives. Since BIPOC Americans are particularly likely to want arts and culture entities to be more welcoming, casual, fun, locally focused, relevant, and dynamic, these findings also highlight links between those experiential changes and the field's efforts to become more inclusive and relevant — which may be prerequisites for contributing to equity in the wider world. For practitioners at both small, community-embedded cultural organizations and large "anchor" institutions, the data suggest ways to tighten the links between what people of color are going through, how they engage in culture in that broad sense, and how creativity, culture, and the arts could become an even more valuable, responsive human service.

Lessons from the digital moment

The finding that "digital only" audiences are more racially and ethnically diverse than recent in-person attenders is exciting. To the extent that this may be due to lower financial and logistical barriers in the online realm, it raises questions for funders and practitioners about how to preserve accessibility and inclusion as cultural organizations shift from free to paid or subscription models for their digital offerings. To the extent that it may be due to the absence of some of the social or cultural doubts and discomforts associated with in-person attendance for some Americans (*Will there be people who look like me? Will the norms of participation be congenial for me? Will I feel safe?*), then the question is what might we learn from online cultural experiences about how to make *in-person* experiences more accessible, especially for BIPOC Americans? The next two phases of CCTC will be an opportunity to explore what has changed in digital awareness and use since the early days of the pandemic and how innovation in online arts and culture experiences can meet human needs for connection, creativity, and belonging as part of that broader cultural frame.

Comments, questions, and suggestions?

Please email the research team at CCTC@sloverlinett.com. We welcome alternative interpretations and suggestions about the next two phases of the study, especially how to ensure that the Wave 2 survey is useful to small, BIPOC-serving arts and culture organizations.

Introduction

During times of acute challenge and rapid change, it can be helpful to listen, ask questions, and stay in dialogue with others in our communities. If we want the challenge and change to lead to a more egalitarian, just, and thriving world, then it's particularly important to listen to the perspectives and ideas of people who have been underrepresented in, or excluded from, such direction-setting dialogues in the past.

At the outset of the pandemic in early 2020, we began collaborating with our colleagues at LaPlaca Cohen on a national research project in the arts and culture sector called *Culture + Community in a Time of Crisis*, the findings from which would be disseminated as a "special edition" of LaPlaca Cohen's longstanding Culture Track study. We hoped that the COVID crisis would catalyze not just a short-term scramble of adaptation and innovation but a broader acceleration of currents that had already been flowing in the field — currents of critique and creativity meant to lead to greater belonging, relevance, equity, and service. We even hoped that, by making the cultural sector more pluralistic, those changes would enable culture and creativity to play a more vital role alongside other fields in the broader ecosystem of social change. After all, until cultural organizations engage and represent their communities equitably, they won't have the standing, trust, and creative capital to be able to contribute authentically to a healthier society.

The word "crisis" in our project-title soon took on new meaning. The first phase of this research — an online survey of 124,000 adults drawn from both a general-U.S.-population panel and the audiences and participants of more than 650 cultural organizations around the U.S. — had already been conducted but not yet analyzed when George Floyd was murdered on May 25. During the upswell of anger, activism, and advocacy that followed, we redoubled our commitment to informing the cultural sector's racial reckoning and supporting the work of systemic critique, decolonizing, and democratizing. Doing so forced us to confront our own shortcomings and blind spots. For example, despite our efforts at the outset to encourage small, BIPOC-led,[1] and community-serving cultural organizations to join the study, we weren't as successful as we'd hoped, so their participants, visitors, audiences, and supporters aren't as well represented in the survey sample than those of other organizations. Some of us also became more aware of the role of our own racial identities; several of the authors of this report identify as white, and as a firm Slover Linett is only a few steps

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[1] BIPOC is an acronym coined in 2013 referring to Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (http://nytimes.com/article/what-is-bipoc.html).

into its journey toward antiracism and equity. (The broader team of collaborators and advisors is more diverse and has considerable expertise in those areas.)

So we rethought our approaches, priorities, and team structure for the next two phases of the study. We started a conversation with transformation-and-equity leader Lisa Yancey, and we are honored that she and her colleagues at Yancey Consulting will be helping our team challenge our assumptions, embed equity and empathy in this research, and make the rest of the initiative more responsive and useful to BIPOC cultural leaders, organizations, and communities.

We also began to analyze the Wave 1 survey data through the lens of race and ethnicity, work that has taken several months and is summarized in this report. We hope it is a valuable addition to the field's increasingly rich and urgent discourse about identity, healing, place, justice, and power. As Lisa Yancey has reminded us, the problem has *not* been a lack of data about exclusion and inequity in the cultural sector; these have been documented and measured for decades with little effect. The problem has been one of capacity and will. It's worth recalling that, when we focus on exclusion and inequity, we're not talking just about the formal, institutional, nonprofit sphere and the large, often white-led and European-modeled institutions in our urban centers. We're also talking — though

This document is a follow-up to the Key Findings report from Wave 1 published by Culture Track in July and available at **culturetrack.com/research/reports**. Readers may want to begin with that overview before delving into this race and ethnicity analysis.

with a different emphasis — about the kinds of cultural enterprises and practices that *do* serve diverse communities, including vulnerable populations. These community-focused organizations and programs, often involving artists and culture-bearers and working through creativity and the arts to solve problems and meet needs, operate in a system defined by inequities and are often marginalized in crucial ways: They have never received the financial support,[2] social prestige, or civic visibility accorded to the formal arts and culture sphere. Then there are commercial and vernacular categories of culture, from music streaming to gaming, which have begun to grapple with their own dynamics of representation and social justice. The picture couldn't be more complex, and all its parts are moving at once.

So the need right now is for *research as a creative conversation with arts and culture's many participants and publics* — a conversation that centers BIPOC Americans and reveals possible paths forward. We have tried to help illuminate some of those paths in this report, within the constraints of what we asked, and of whom, in the Wave 1 survey.

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[2] See Helicon Collaborative and Surdna Foundation's 2017 report on funding inequities: https://heliconcollab.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/NotJustMoney_Full_Report_July2017.pdf; and Echoing Green and Bridgespan's 2020 report: https://www.bridgespan.org/insights/library/philanthropy/disparities-nonprofit-funding-for-leaders-of-color

About this analysis

When Slover Linett and LaPlaca Cohen developed the survey in March, we strove to ask questions that would be applicable to adults in America with a wide variety of relationships to the arts, culture, creativity, museum-going, etc., including people who participate seldom or not at all in organized or institutional forms of culture; people who engage informally or via personal expressive practice; people who consume more commercial than nonprofit culture; and people who join, subscribe to, or support the nonprofit cultural organizations in their communities. That breadth was necessary because we would be inviting responses from a sample of the U.S. general population as well as an unprecedentedly large sample of people on the contact lists of cultural organizations of all types and sizes around the country (see panel below and Appendix A for details). Based on the literature on cultural attendance and arts participation and our own firm's research for cultural entities and funders, we anticipated that the data we collected in this national study would reflect the same intractable disparities in engagement by race and ethnicity, education, and income that had been observed in those earlier studies. So we included several questions meant to help describe both the problem (*what* might those disparities be?) and potential solutions (what kinds of *change* might make cultural offerings and organizations more inclusive and relevant for more people?).

We also included both COVID-specific and longer-term, more structural questions about priorities, perceptions, and behaviors. From published research outside of the cultural sector during the early days of the pandemic, we expected that our study would confirm that BIPOC communities are disproportionately affected by the crisis. And we hypothesized that there might be important

METHODOLOGY
of the Wave 1 survey

Two sources of data...

We worked with the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) to survey to a carefully-crafted sample of Americans who are representative of the demographic diversity of the U.S. population, and with more than 650 arts and culture organizations around the country to send survey invitations to a portion of their email lists. A wide range of organizations participated, from museums, zoos, and gardens to performing arts ensembles and presenters, including small, rural, and culturally-specific groups.

We received more than 124,000 survey responses across the two sources, making this one of the largest studies of cultural engagement ever conducted in the U.S.

...One representative picture.

We then combined both sources into a single dataset for analysis. Collaborating with statisticians at The University of Chicago, we developed a set of statistical weights for every respondent based on demographic, behavioral, and attitudinal variables. The weighting makes the survey a more accurate reflection of the U.S. population and its subgroups — and amplifies the voices of respondents of color to their actual proportion in the country, correcting for their underrepresentation on the lists of those cultural organizations. The analysis offered in this report is based on the weighted, nationally representative data.

For details, please see Appendix A.

differences by race/ethnicity in the answers to those forward-looking questions: *Who* wants different kinds of change? What would relevance *look like* to people with diverse identities and lived experiences?

A few of those analyses were completed in time to be included in the Key Findings report developed with LaPlaca Cohen's Culture Track team and posted publicly in early July. In that document, we noted glaring difference in racial/ethnic diversity between the U.S. population and respondents from the contact-lists of participating cultural organizations: The lists appeared to be significantly whiter than the population, which we referred to as a "representation gap" in the audience and community networks of many U.S. cultural organizations (Figure 1).

Fig. 1 | **Self-reported race & ethnicity among Wave 1 list respondents compared to the U.S. adult population.** "List" responses came via invitations sent by arts & cultural organizations to a random sampling of their email lists: audiences, program and event participants, members, subscribers, etc.

	Organizations' List Respondents (unweighted n=111,557)		U.S. Adult Population	Representation Gap (before weighting)
Asian or Pacific Islander	4%	(n=4,002)	6%	-2%
Black or African American	3%	(n=3,092)	12%	-9%
Hispanic or Latinx	5%	(n=5,605)	16%	-11%
Multiracial Americans	2%	(n=2,271)	2%	none
Native American	<1%	(n=261)	1%	-1%
White or Caucasian	85%	(n=94,709)	63%	+22%

Some of that gap may be attributable to differences in survey response rates; it's possible that people who are more active and affiliated with the cultural organization that sent them the survey were more likely to complete it, and that such people are more likely to be White/Caucasian than less-affiliated people on the same lists. Similarly, the lists to which invitations were sent may not have been fully representative of the range of individuals and families served by the organization's programs; rather, they may have skewed toward people with high levels of affiliation such as members or subscribers. Since it's not possible to quantify those potential biases in the sample, and since previous studies have also found underrepresentation of BIPOC communities in many organized forms of cultural participation,[3] we viewed the gap as an important finding of the Wave 1 survey. As noted in the "Methodology" box on page 8, we weighted the data before analysis to make it a more accurate reflection of demographics, behavior, and attitudes in the U.S.

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[3] And not just by race/ethnicity, but also income and education. A forthcoming study, *The Intersection of Funding and Audience Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion* by Zannie Voss and colleagues at SMU DataArts, finds that performing arts organizations underrepresent the diversity of the communities in which they reside along all three dimensions (race, income, and education). The organizations are actually *more* representative on race/ethnicity than on the other two dimensions, though still low (39%). The research team found that BIPOC individuals comprise 44% of the population but only 17% of customers of these organizations. (Note: Dr. Voss has been one of the advisors to CCTC.)

The urgent need to provide that initial, presentation-style report to the field meant that we first focused largely on the "overall" figures — that is, the distribution of responses across the full, adjusted national sample. Since then, we've delved more deeply into the data to understand the role that race and ethnicity play in cultural engagement, needs, values, and perceptions and how race and ethnicity interact with other demographic and psychographic variables in the survey. The sheer size of the overall response base meant that we had large samples for analysis among racial and ethnic groups and ample statistical power for comparison (see "N"s in Figure 1).

So this report is a "first look" at the dynamics of race and ethnicity in this large, unique dataset. We share it in a spirit of inquiry and humility, and we emphasize that it is just a beginning: These analyses are not exhaustive, and our interpretation of them is provisional. We look forward to learning from other researchers and stakeholders who may view these findings differently and draw new or different conclusions or inspirations from them. The anonymized dataset is available as an open-source resource for the field; please email the authors at CCTC@sloverlinett.com to discuss data access or collaboration. We also welcome comments and ideas as we design and conduct the next two phases of CCTC: a qualitative study focusing on Black and African American adults, followed by the Wave 2 online survey (see page 54 for more details).
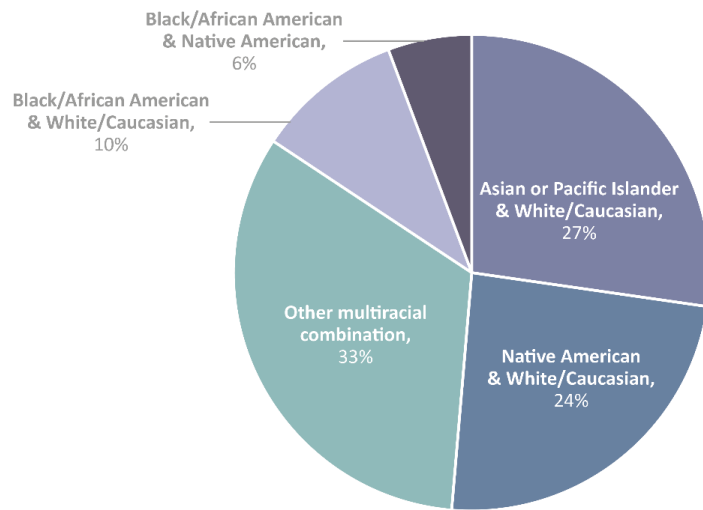
▶ **A note on language**

Race/ethnicity is just one component of identity, and identity itself is complex, intersectional, and potentially sensitive for many people. This quantitative analysis is not meant to reduce the Americans who participated in the study to their racial or ethnic self-categorizations — least of all the broad-brush categorizations required in survey research. We each contain multitudes. The authors acknowledge the many important differences that acronyms like "BIPOC" and monolithic terms like Asian, Black, African American, Hispanic, Latinx, Indigenous, Native American, and "people of color" can sometimes obscure.

In the demographics section of the Wave 1 survey questionnaire, we used a slightly modified version of the U.S. Census sequence to ask about ethnicity and race: First, a yes/no question about being "of Hispanic/Latino descent," then a select-all-that-apply question about identifying as Asian or Pacific Islander, Black/African American, Native American, White/Caucasian, and/or "Other (please specify)," with an additional option for those who "prefer not to answer." Like most researchers, we then combined the ethnicity and race variables for analysis. Any respondents who indicated Hispanic or Latino ancestry in the first question, regardless of which racial identity they selected in the second, are categorized as "Hispanic/Latinx." "Multiracial" includes any respondents who selected two or more races, unless they also indicated Hispanic/Latino; see Figure 2 for the diverse constellation within that category. The remaining race categories represent non-Hispanic/Latinx respondents who checked a single racial group; "White/Caucasian" in this report means those who checked that race category but didn't indicate Hispanic or Latino ancestry.

For the sake of clarity, we've carried that language into this report. The exception is that we used the traditional spelling "Latino" on the survey itself, in keeping with the Census, but opted for the

Fig. 2 | Composition of the "multiracial" category in this report. Approximately 2% of Wave 1 survey respondents (2,271 respondents) identified as multiracial by checking more than one racial category. (Note: All respondents who checked Hispanic or Latino in the separate ethnicity question were categorized as Hispanic/Latinx.)

Black/African American & Native American, 6%

Black/African American & White/Caucasian, 10%

Asian or Pacific Islander & White/Caucasian, 27%

Other multiracial combination, 33%

Native American & White/Caucasian, 24%

gender-neutral form "Latinx" in this report. We understand that this newer term is not yet in wide use in Hispanic communities in the U.S.,[4] but it has become the preferred term among many who want to err on the side of inclusion.

4   https://www.pewresearch.org/hispanic/2020/08/11/about-one-in-four-u-s-hispanics-have-heard-of-latinx-but-just-3-use-it/

Findings

This section summarizes our analysis of the CCTC Wave 1 survey responses by race and ethnicity. We present our findings in four thematic groups:

1. An Invitation to Change

2. Patterns of Participation & Inclusion

3. The Bigger Tent of Digital Engagement

4. Impacts & Experiences During Covid

We also offer some provisional interpretive comments and, where possible, context from other research studies that have been conducted during or before the pandemic.
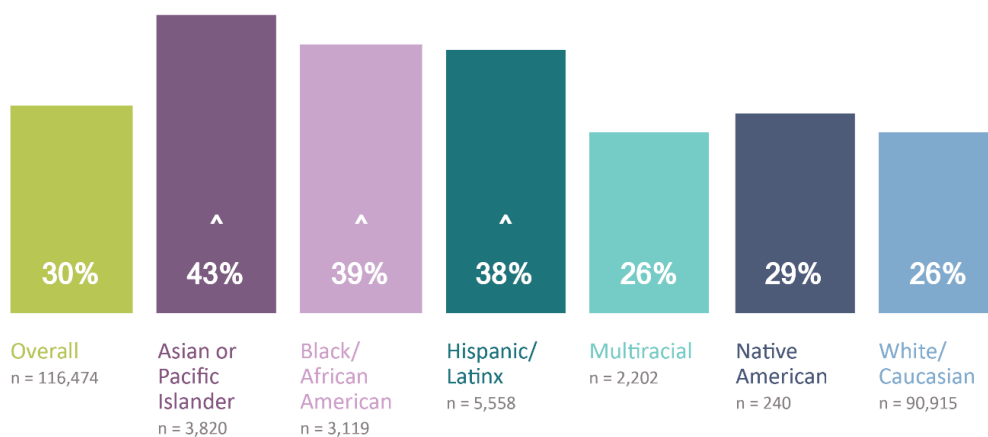
1. An Invitation for Change

▶ **Desire for change in the cultural sector is strongest among Asian or Pacific Islander, Black/African, and Latinx/Hispanic Americans.**

The unprecedented closures of arts and cultural organizations due to the pandemic have been devastating on many levels, but they have also offered a unique opportunity for practitioners and funders to interrogate and reimagine aspects of their work. The survey included several questions in the Wave 1 survey meant to inform the conversation by soliciting the views of the public and cultural participants/audiences. How much and what kinds of change do they want? Do those views vary by race and ethnicity or other demographic factors? Our hypothesis was that the desire for change might be strongest in communities of color that have long been underrepresented in some institutional, attendance-based types of arts and culture activities,[5] since their lower rates of attendance may indicate that such institutions are not yet meeting their needs. **The data confirmed that the level of interest in future change at arts and culture organizations is significantly**

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[5] The NEA's ongoing Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA) has repeatedly found racial disparities in attendance at the so-called "benchmark" arts (https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/2012-sppa-jan2015-rev.pdf), various versions of which have found that Black, Latinx attended artistic, creative, or cultural events at much lower rates than White respondents. See also next section for further discussion of participation rates.

influenced by race and ethnicity, with several BIPOC communities more likely to want change than White/Caucasian Americans. When asked how much they agree or disagree with the statement "I hope that arts & culture organizations in my area will change after the pandemic to be more relevant to people like me," respondents from three racial/ethnic groups — Asian or Pacific Islander, Black/African American, and Hispanic/Latinx — were more likely to hope change occurs than the overall population (see Figure 3).

Fig. 3 | Percent selecting a top-two-box response (4 or 5 on a 5-point scale) indicating agreement or strong agreement with the statement, "**I hope that arts & culture organizations in my area will change after the pandemic to be more relevant to people like me**." In this figure and all others, the ability to detect differences between groups is not equal for all groups given the varying sample sizes.

Overall	Asian or Pacific Islander	Black/ African American	Hispanic/ Latinx	Multiracial	Native American	White/ Caucasian
30%	43% ^	39% ^	38% ^	26%	29%	26%
n = 116,474	n = 3,820	n = 3,119	n = 5,558	n = 2,202	n = 240	n = 90,915

^ Statistically different than the overall

The data also indicated that the desire for change is influenced by income — but the influence runs in different directions for different racial/ethnic groups.[6] For Asians or Pacific Islanders, Black/African Americans, and multiracial Americans, desire for change is stronger among those with higher incomes; for White or Caucasian Americans, desire for change is stronger among those with *lower* incomes. Not surprisingly, Americans who report having an ongoing affiliation with a cultural organization (e.g., as a subscriber or member) are also less likely to hope arts and culture organizations will change. We wondered if education levels would play a similar role, but we found that, overall, education level had no impact on desire for change.

These findings support some longstanding concerns in the field about whom arts and culture organizations are serving and systemic bias or exclusion in the system. **Adults in the U.S. who feel that arts and culture organizations are *already* relevant to them are more likely to be white and have higher incomes**, whereas those for whom cultural organizations would need to change to

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[6] Based on regression analysis with the following demographic variables: income; education; race/ethnicity; live in a metro area or non-metro area; relationship to the arts (as an arts educator/teaching artist or a volunteer, employee, member or subscriber of an arts and culture organization); frequency of participation in cultural activities; range of cultural activities participated in; and interaction variables of race & ethnicity by income. See Appendix C for full regression model.
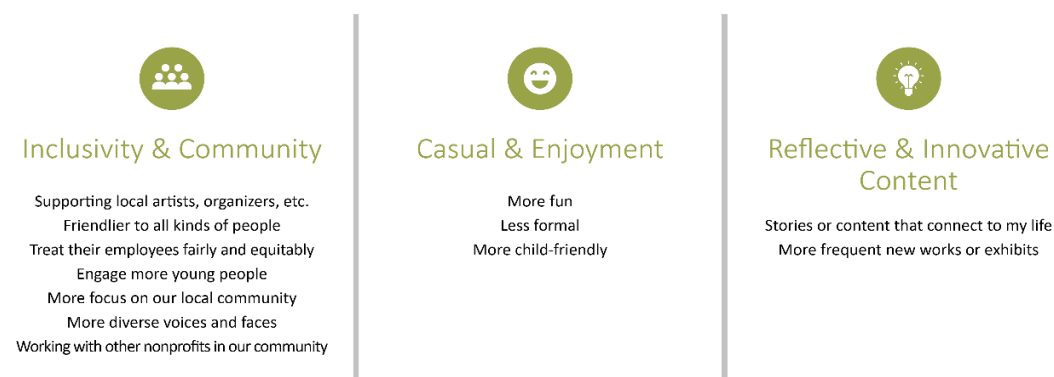
become more relevant are more likely to be Asian or Pacific Islander (particularly those with higher incomes), Black/African American (particularly those with higher incomes), Hispanic/Latinx, multiracial (particularly those with higher incomes), or *lower*-income whites. These differences are significant and largely consistent, and because they reflect disparities at the population level, they represent the desires of millions of Americans. We view this as an important finding and a general mandate for exactly the kind of rethinking and innovation that is now underway in the field.

▶ **Most Americans — especially BIPOC communities — would like to see cultural organizations become more community- and people-focused.**

In addition to that general question about change, the survey questionnaire asked respondents what *kinds* of change, if any, would make arts and culture organizations better for them in the future. We provided a list of 13 possibilities (including an "Other" option); we didn't define "better," and we sought to make that notion personal by emphasizing the phrase "better for you." **A sizable majority (72%) of Americans indicated desire for at least one of the changes asked about — and that figure is even higher among BIPOC Americans** (79% of Asians or Pacific Islanders, 76% of Black/African Americans, 82% of Hispanic/Latinx Americans, 74% of Native Americans, and fully 89% of multiracial Americans). The percentage of Americans agreeing somewhat or strongly with our more general question about change (Figure 3, above) is lower at 30% overall, but even that can be viewed as a robust level given the way the question was worded and the fact that it asks respondents to think counterfactually — that is, to set aside what they've learned to *expect* from arts and culture organizations and consider what they might *wish for* instead. As the title of this section suggests, we view this as a clear invitation to the field to prioritize change.

As described in the July Key Findings Report, our analysis showed that responses clustered into three categories of potential change (see Figure 4): becoming more community- and people-centered; offering more casual and enjoyable experiences; and providing more engaging and relevant content that is reflective of one's community. (These categories were generated via factor

Fig. 4 |Three main change groupings identified through factor analysis of responses to the question **"In general, what kinds of changes would make arts & culture organizations better for you in the future? Please check all that apply."**

Inclusivity & Community

Supporting local artists, organizers, etc.
Friendlier to all kinds of people
Treat their employees fairly and equitably
Engage more young people
More focus on our local community
More diverse voices and faces
Working with other nonprofits in our community

Casual & Enjoyment

More fun
Less formal
More child-friendly

Reflective & Innovative Content

Stories or content that connect to my life
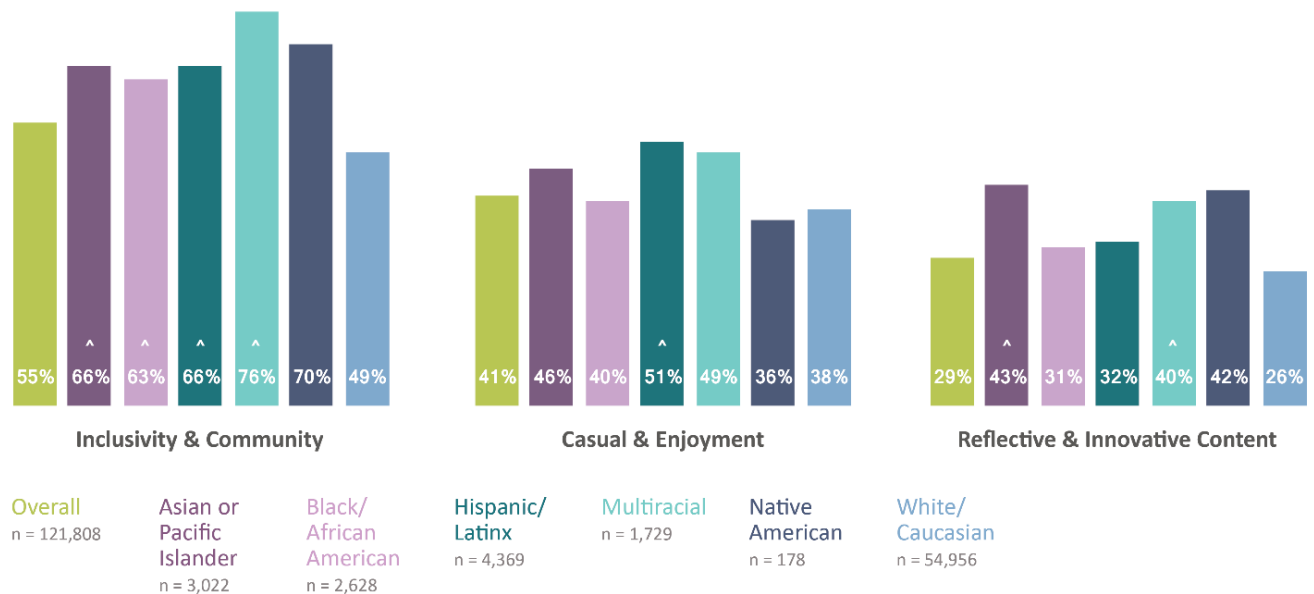More frequent new works or exhibits

analysis; the authors didn't create them *a priori*, though we did name them based on the underlying survey items.)

Analyzing based on those categories, the data indicated that **a majority of Americans (55% overall) want arts and culture organizations to become more inclusive and community- and people-centered in one or more ways — and the desire for this type of change is even higher among BIPOC Americans** (between 63% and 76%) and lower among White/Caucasian Americans (49%). This category included items about greater diversity of voices and faces; greater focus on localness (local artists, nonprofits, and the community); more engagement with young people; treating employees fairly; and being friendlier to all kinds of people. (See Figure 5 below, and Figure 31 in Appendix D for full response tables.) As with many important survey findings, this one raises a host of questions: Do Americans of color want more diversity, localness, fairness, and friendliness because they perceive that the arts and culture organizations in their areas are not currently emphasizing those values? Or because they've had different kinds of experiences or received different kinds of messages from such organizations than their White neighbors? Do White/Caucasian Americans feel that cultural organizations are already enacting those values and don't need to change in those ways? Or do they place less emphasis on those values, at least in the arts and culture domain? We hope to explore some of these questions in the next phases of the study.

Interest wasn't quite as strong in the other two categories of change, though there are some interesting differences in level of interest by racial or ethnic group. Overall, about two in five

Fig. 5 | Percent of respondents who selected at least one desired change in each of the three broader categories identified through factor analysis. **"In general, what kinds of changes would make arts & culture organizations better for you in the future?** Please check all that apply."

	Inclusivity & Community	Casual & Enjoyment	Reflective & Innovative Content
Overall	55%	41%	29%
Asian or Pacific Islander	66% ^	46%	43% ^
Black/African American	63% ^	40%	31%
Hispanic/Latinx	66% ^	51% ^	32%
Multiracial	76% ^	49%	40% ^
Native American	70%	36%	42%
White/Caucasian	49%	38%	26%

Overall
n = 121,808

Asian or Pacific Islander
n = 3,022

Black/African American
n = 2,628

Hispanic/Latinx
n = 4,369

Multiracial
n = 1,729

Native American
n = 178

White/Caucasian
n = 54,956

^ Statistically different than the overall

Americans (41%) would like to see arts and culture organizations offer more casual, enjoyable experiences: more fun, less formal, and more child-friendly. Hispanic/Latinx Americans are more likely than other groups to select items in this category (as were Asians or Pacific Islanders and multiracial Americans, though in those cases the differences aren't statistically significant). And 29% of Americans would like to see changes towards content that we're calling reflective and innovative: stories or content that connect to their lives, more newness or freshness of works or exhibits — and this category is especially important to Asians or Pacific Islanders and multiracial Americans (and to Native Americans, though this difference is not statistically significant).

▶ **Ideas about how cultural organizations can help their communities also vary by race/ethnicity.**

Most Americans see ways in which arts and culture organizations can help their communities during crises like the coronavirus: by helping people *laugh*, *relax*, and *stay connected* (Figure 6, next page). Those top items don't vary significantly by race/ethnicity, although some of the less-commonly selected ones do: Asian or Pacific Islander, Hispanic/Latinx, and multiracial respondents are more likely than the overall population to say that cultural organizations could help by *bringing people of different backgrounds together* (40% and 46% selected this vs. 34% overall). Black/African American, Hispanic/Latinx, Native American, and multiracial respondents are more likely to want arts and culture organizations to help the community *heal, grieve, and process our emotions* (36%, 32%, 41%, and 39% respectively, vs. 27% overall; due to small sample-sizes, the difference for Native Americans is not statistically significant despite being the highest response for this item). Hispanic/Latinx and multiracial Americans are also more likely than the overall population to say cultural organizations can help people *express themselves creatively* (34% and 37% vs. 28% overall) — which aligns with our finding that Hispanic/Latinx Americans report doing more creative activities themselves during the pandemic, such as painting, drawing, photography, etc. (The difference here for multiracial Americans is not statistically significant). **This greater emphasis placed by some BIPOC Americans on the social, civic, emotional, therapeutic, and creative-expression roles of cultural participation may help practitioners and funders think more broadly about service and relevance to communities of color during difficult times.**

Fig. 6 | "How would you ideally want arts & culture organizations to help your community during this crisis? Please check any that apply."

	Overall U.S. Population	Asian or Pacific Islander	Black/ African American	Hispanic /Latinx	Multiracial	Native American	White/ Caucasian
	n=96,640	n=3,245	n=2,485	n=4,553	n=1,882	n=196	n=75,534
Laugh and relax	53%	51%	50%	53%	63%	54%	53%
Stay connected	49%	54%	51%	52%	51%	33%	47%
Educate children while schools are closed	47%	40%	43%	50%	48%	63%	48%
Offer distraction and escape during the crisis	46%	48%	30% ▼	47%	47%	31%	48% ▲
Look ahead and plan for recovery	41%	40%	38%	40%	36%	46%	42%
Have hope	41%	42%	45%	40%	42%	24%	40%
Think or talk about important things other than Covid-19	36%	31%	30%	34%	36%	28%	38%
Bring people of different backgrounds together	34%	52% ▲	40%	40% ▲	46% ▲	20%	30% ▼
Know what's going on, with trusted information	29%	27%	28%	27%	27%	23%	29%
Express ourselves creatively	28%	27%	24%	34% ▲	37%	24%	26%
Heal, grieve, and process our emotions	27%	32%	36% ▲	32% ▲	39% ▲	41%	24% ▼
Reflect back on history or connect the past to the present	23%	26%	22%	24%	27%	18%	23%
Deal with financial and economic problems	21%	18%	26%	25%	36% ▲	16%	18% ▼
Meet our practical, everyday challenges	18%	15%	19%	19%	19%	11%	17%
Take collective action	14%	18%	15%	17%	14%	14%	12% ▼
Other	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	0%	2%
Arts & culture organizations shouldn't play those roles in times like these	4%	4%	5%	5%	1% ▼	1%	3%

▼ = statistically **lower** than the overall U.S. population

▲ = statistically **higher** than the overall U.S. population

2. Patterns of Participation & Inclusion

▶ **Arts and culture organizations are equally or more important to BIPOC Americans than to the general population — and for some groups, even more important during the pandemic.**
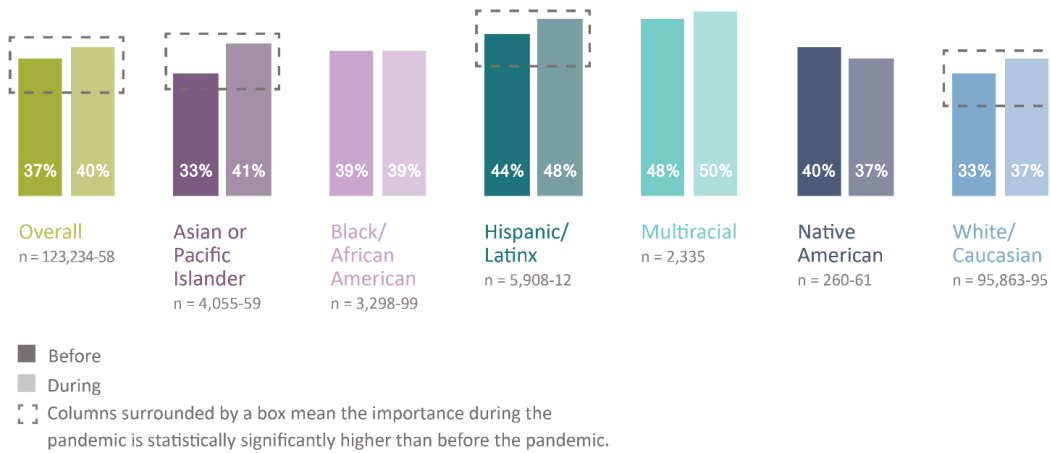
The survey questionnaire asked respondents to recall how important or unimportant arts and culture organizations were to them before Covid-19, then how important or unimportant such organizations are during a crisis like Covid-19. It's worth noting that, prior to these questions in the survey, the survey questionnaire encouraged respondents to think of "arts and culture" broadly and provided a few examples to indicate a wide range of activities and places, from small, local, and informal organizations or practices to institution-based, group experiences, then added, "Whatever you personally consider culture fits in here." That priming may have been important in these responses[7]; pushing some respondents to think beyond the large, traditional cultural institutions in their communities. Still, these responses valuably complicate the received wisdom in the field that the cultural sector is perceived as more valuable and relevant to white Americans.

Both sets of responses are notable (Figure 7). In the retrospective question, Hispanic/Latinx and multiracial Americans gave higher ratings of the importance of arts and culture organizations than the overall sample (44% and 48% gave a top-2-box rating for importance, respectively, compared to 37% overall). Black/African American and Native Americans also gave higher-than-overall ratings (39% and 40%, respectively), although these differences aren't statistically significant. Alternatively, these findings can be viewed as indicating that Whites/Caucasians and Asians or Pacific Islanders view cultural organizations as somewhat less important than other groups (33% each, vs. 37% overall).

Interestingly, income plays a complex role here, as it did with desire for change, described above. Hispanic/Latinx Americans with lower incomes (annual household incomes under $50,000) are more likely to say arts and culture organizations were important to them before the pandemic (49%, compared to 39% of Hispanic/Latinx Americans making $50,000 or more). Yet among Americans overall, it's those with *higher* incomes who are more likely to say that arts and culture organizations were important. Does this finding contradict our interpretation in the previous section about the stronger desire for change in arts and culture organizations among BIPOC Americans? Maybe not. Something can be both important *and* due for an upgrade — in fact, the perceived importance may drive a demand for change.

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[7] Unfortunately, we lack a comparable question from the research literature that would benchmark these percentages. Other national studies of cultural engagement, such as the NEA's ongoing Survey of Public Participation in the Arts, ask about behavior but not perceptions of personal importance.

Overall	Asian or Pacific Islander	Black/ African American	Hispanic/ Latinx	Multiracial	Native American	White/ Caucasian
37% 40%	33% 41%	39% 39%	44% 48%	48% 50%	40% 37%	33% 37%
n = 123,234-58	n = 4,055-59	n = 3,298-99	n = 5,908-12	n = 2,335	n = 260-61	n = 95,863-95

■ Before
■ During
⌐⌐ Columns surrounded by a box mean the importance during the
    pandemic is statistically significantly higher than before the pandemic.

As Figure 7 also shows, responses to the comparative question about importance *during* the crisis (lighter bars) are slightly higher than for the retrospective question in most racial/ethnic categories (Asian or Pacific Islander, Hispanic/Latinx, multiracial, and White/Caucasian); the current importance ratings are the same for Black/African American respondents and slightly lower for Native Americans (though this difference is not statistically significant). We asked these two questions to gauge whether cultural organizations might be considered a lower priority during a health and economic emergency, when other kinds of nonprofits might be viewed as higher priorities. That hypothesis was refuted, and **the ratings suggest that many Americans — and especially some BIPOC communities — expect the arts and culture sector to play important roles in their lives both in general and in times of crisis**. (We discuss some of those roles below.)

▶ **Among those with at least some recent cultural activity, the *frequency* of participation doesn't vary by race/ethnicity, but the *types* and *breadth* of participation do.**

Like many national studies of cultural participation, including LaPlaca Cohen's past Culture Track surveys, the survey questionnaire asked respondents what kinds of cultural experiences they had engaged in or attended in the previous year (meaning, in this case, during 2019, prior to the Covid closures). The survey included a broad, non-hierarchical, and randomly ordered list of 34 activities that included both informal and formal cultural settings and modes of engagement, from community festivals, public parks, and video games to libraries, museums, and arts performances. After inquiring which of these respondents had done in 2019, the survey questionnaire asked which they considered "cultural" activities, then asked them to characterize how often they engaged in those kinds of activities (ones they view as cultural) before the pandemic. Our analysis revealed nine broad categories of engagement, shown in Figure 8. (As with the categories of desired change, above, these groupings were generated via factor analysis rather than by the researchers.) The respondents were then assigned to each category if they had participated in any of the specific

Fig. 8 | Nine main activity-groupings identified through factor analysis of responses to the question, **"Did you do any of the following activities last year (2019)?** Please select all that apply." (Note: These groupings emerged from statistical correlations among responses; they weren't determined by the researchers.)

Festivals, Fairs, and Outdoor Engagement
Community festival/ Street fair
Food and drink experience
Music festival
Public park
Craft/Design fair

Pop Culture
TV program
Movies/Film
Video games
Pop music

Literature or Libraries
Library
Read books

Science, History, and Living Museums
STEM museum
Children's museum
Natural history museum
Zoo/Aquarium
Historic attraction/ Museum

Visual Arts & Design, Gardens, and Film
Art gallery/Fair
Art museum
Architectural tour
Cultural center
Public/Street art
Botanical garden
Film festival

Theater & Comedy
Musical
Play (non-musical)
Performing arts festival
Variety or comedy show

Classical Music and Opera
Opera
Classical music

Jazz & World Music
Jazz
World music

Dance
Regional dance
Contemporary dance
Ballet

activities within it, which allowed us to tabulate engagement both overall and for each racial/ethnic group (Figure 9).

As other studies have found, Black/African American respondents are less likely to participate in the activities included in the survey than the overall population: 12% indicated they had done none of the 34 activities on our list in 2019, compared to 5% of the overall population; and they reported lower participation in six out of the nine cultural categories identified. Yet we also saw that, among the 88% who *did* participate in one or more types of cultural activities, they participated at the same frequency as the overall population. It's just that their participation was more focused within a few categories (see page 22).

This finding about frequency of participation (among those participating at all) holds true across racial/ethnic groups: **Americans of color who participate in cultural activities do so with the same *frequency* as the overall population.** Likewise, they're statistically just as likely to have some formal

Fig. 9 | The nine broad cultural participation categories (identified via factor analysis) by race and ethnicity. Based on responses to **"Did you do any of the following activities last year (2019)?** Please check any that you did at least once in 2019."

	Overall U.S. Population	Asian or Pacific Islander	Black/ African American	Hispanic /Latinx	Multiracial	Native American	White/ Caucasian
	n=123,757	n=4,060	n=3,305	n=5,920	n=2,337	n=261	n=96,056
Festivals, fairs, and outdoor	80%	84%	▼ 68%	▼ 77%	78%	79%	▲ 83%
Pop culture	78%	80%	▼ 71%	80%	78%	64%	▲ 80%
Literature	56%	63%	▼ 49%	▼ 47%	55%	59%	▲ 60%
Science, history, and living museums	55%	57%	▼ 43%	56%	▲ 68%	50%	56%
Visual arts & design, gardens, and film	46%	▲ 60%	▼ 34%	▲ 50%	45%	47%	46%
Theater & comedy	40%	46%	▼ 34%	39%	35%	35%	41%
Classical music and opera	14%	▲ 23%	▼ 6%	15%	14%	15%	14%
Jazz & world music	12%	11%	▲ 20%	▲ 18%	6%	4%	▼ 9%
Dance	11%	15%	15%	13%	10%	6%	▼ 9%
Breadth index (average # of activities participated in)	7.6	8.57	6.06	7.76	7.99	6.96	7.71

▼ = statistically **lower** than the overall U.S. population
▲ = statistically **higher** than the overall U.S. population

affiliation with a cultural organization, such as being a member (ranging from 9%-20%), subscriber (ranging from 7%-11%), or volunteer (ranging from 3%-7%). So these responses both confirm and complicate some of the established views of cultural participation by people of color. (See Figures 32 and 33 in Appendix D for detailed data-tables.)

Not surprisingly, there are wide gaps in the overall rates of participation between free or low-cost, public, and popular-culture activities and more institutional, formal experiences (the kinds that the

National Endowment for the Arts' ongoing Survey of Public Participation in the Arts terms "benchmark arts activities"). Most Americans report having attended a festival, fair, or outdoor experience (80% overall) in the previous year, and almost as many attended a pop culture event (78%); far fewer attended in categories like classical music and opera (14%), jazz and world music (12%), and dance (11%). There are significant differences here by race and ethnicity:

- Asians or Pacific Islanders are more likely than the overall population to attend in visual arts/design/gardens/film (60% vs. 46% overall) and classical music/opera (23% vs. 14%) — categories that include more formal, immersive settings like art museums, botanic gardens, and concert halls.

- Blacks/African Americans are more likely than the overall population to attend jazz/world music (20% vs. 12%), which could be due to jazz's historical roots as an African American art-form and perhaps also the importance of the relaxed, often social settings and conventions associated with jazz performance in some venues.

- Hispanic/Latinx respondents are more likely to attend visual arts/design/gardens/film (50% vs. 46% overall) and jazz/world music (18% vs. 12% overall), a finding that aligns with past research about the importance to Latinx Americans of outdoor, self-guided, and family-friendly settings that allow for multigenerational engagement.

- Multiracial Americans are more likely to attend science, history, and living museums than the overall population (68% vs. 55% overall).

- There were no statistically significant differences for Native Americans, due to the relatively small sample sizes involved.

- Whites/Caucasians are more likely to attend festivals/fairs/outdoor cultural experiences (83% vs. 80% overall) and pop culture events (80% vs. 78%) and to read literature or visit the library (60% vs. 56%).

As the bottom row of Figure 9 shows, there are also differences in the breadth of cultural activities people participate in. Asians or Pacific Islanders participate more broadly than other groups, selecting an average of 8.57 of the 34 cultural activities in our retrospective participation question. At the other end of the range, Black/African American respondents participate in more focused ways, selecting an average of 6.06 activities — though higher-income Black/African Americans (those with household incomes over $50,000) participate more broadly than lower-income Black/African Americans (7.23 activities, compared to 5.33 for lower-income).

These findings raise the question of whether Blacks and African Americans in the U.S. are actually attending fewer cultural activities, or whether our list of activities constituting "culture" simply wasn't expansive enough. Should church-based arts and culture activities have been included? We know that faith-based activities play a larger role in the lives of this group — nearly half (46%) of Black/African Americans said they were eager to resume attending places of worship when they're able to go out again, compared to 32% of the overall population. What about rec centers, parks, libraries, comedy clubs, block parties, and other sites of connection and creativity? Did our analysis

miss the importance of commercially streamed music and television that engaged African Americans on political, historical, and cultural levels (think of HBO's *Watchmen* or Beyonce's single 'Black Parade')? We will explore this question of cultural frames and settings in the upcoming qualitative phase of this study. (See also Reflections section, below.)

▶ **Most people miss the social element of in-person arts and culture experiences, and Native Americans are especially likely to miss how those experiences celebrate their heritage.**

Since many of the arts and culture activities asked about were (and at the time of this writing, still are) unavailable due to the pandemic, we wondered what people miss about those in-person experiences. We found similar answers across racial/ethnic groups: most Americans (65% overall) miss the social, human interactions associated with cultural activities and the enjoyment they brought to their lives (53%). But some of the less-commonly selected elements varied by race/ethnicity (see Figure 10):

- Asians or Pacific Islanders are more likely to miss the opportunity to experience artworks, performances, or specific performers in person (39% vs. 29% overall). This aligns with the point on the previous page about this group's more-frequent attendance at formal, multisensory settings like museums, gardens, and concert halls, which offer experiences that can't easily be replicated at home.

- Black/African Americans are more likely to miss how cultural activities help them relax and feel less stressed (48% vs. 39%), which suggests the importance of culture as a form of emotional and psychological restoration or healing to these Americans.

- Hispanic/Latinx respondents are more likely to miss how cultural activities transport them to another place or time (25% vs. 19% overall). This seems congruent with our finding that this group is doing more creative activities themselves during the pandemic; perhaps they value the imaginative journey the arts can take them on.

- Multiracial Americans are more likely to miss feeling creative or creatively inspired by cultural activities (28% vs. 15% overall). Similarly to Hispanic/Latinx adults, multiracial Americans are more likely than average to report doing creative activities themselves, so it makes sense that they miss the inspiration that cultural activities often provide.

- Native Americans are more likely to miss celebrating their cultural heritage (37% vs. 6%), a marked difference that highlights the role of arts and culture experiences in celebrating and maintaining collective and individual identity — a dynamic that has received increasing attention in the Indigenous, folk, and community arts field.[8]

It's worth reflecting on how a desire to celebrate one's cultural heritage is connected to other desires; people who are interested in celebrating their cultural heritage are also more likely to want

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[8] See, for instance, the work of the Alliance for California Traditional Arts (ACTA), which focuses on cultural transmission. Slover Linett's forthcoming social-impact study for ACTA measured several cultural and ethnic identity variables.

Fig. 10 | **"Now that many of those cultural activities are shut down during the pandemic, what (if anything) do you miss most?** Please check up to 5."

	Overall U.S. Population	Asian or Pacific Islander	Black/ African American	Hispanic/ Latinx	Multiracial	Native American	White/ Caucasian
	n=122,913	n=4,037	n=3,263	n=5,881	n=2,329	n=258	n=95,625
Spending quality time with family or friends	65%	62%	62%	▼ 60%	65%	51%	▲ 69%
Having fun	53%	51%	57%	56%	53%	45%	53%
Relaxing or feeling less stressed	39%	46%	▲ 48%	40%	44%	31%	▼ 37%
Learning or experiencing something new	35%	40%	42%	34%	45%	31%	▼ 34%
Escaping the stress of the real world	32%	38%	34%	34%	35%	10%	31%
Experiencing artworks, performances, or specific performers in person	29%	▲ 39%	23%	28%	29%	28%	29%
Broadening my perspective	20%	23%	16%	21%	20%	16%	19%
Feeling transported to another place or time	19%	23%	18%	▲ 25%	17%	22%	▼ 17%
Feeling creative or creatively inspired	15%	13%	17%	19%	▲ 28%	21%	▼ 13%
Celebrating my cultural heritage	6%	7%	▲ 13%	▲ 13%	6%	▲ 37%	▼ 3%
Other	5%	5%	4%	4%	4%	6%	5%
None of these	5%	▼ 3%	6%	6%	▼ 2%	2%	5%

▼ = statistically **lower** than the overall U.S. population
▲ = statistically **higher** than the overall U.S. population

arts and culture organizations to feature "more diverse voices and faces," focus more on local artists and the local community, and offer stories that reflect one's life — all of which Americans of color are more likely to express than White Americans.[9] While most people in all groups *didn't* select "celebrating my cultural heritage" when asked what they missed about in-person cultural experiences, White/Caucasian and multiracial Americans were even less likely than others to select

[9] Those who miss connecting with their cultural heritage are significantly more likely to want arts and culture organizations to present more diverse voices and faces (43% vs. 17%), to be more engaged with the local community (41% vs. 18%), and to offer stories that connect to their lives (28% vs. 18%). Among most BIPOC Americans who say they miss connecting with their cultural heritage, these desires are even stronger; the exception is Native Americans.

this. Perhaps White Americans don't think of arts and culture activities or sites as places to do that kind of celebrating — or perhaps they don't recognize the extent to which some of those activities and sites do, in fact, celebrate and exemplify European cultural heritage. Might Multiracial Americans feel that their backgrounds and identities are too complex or nuanced to be celebrated in the arts? All of this begs for further research into *why* many people want more diversity, localness, and stories that reflect their experiences and whether they see those things as tied to their — or their community's — cultural heritage.

3. The Bigger Tent of Digital Engagement

▶ **Awareness of digital arts and culture offerings is high across all racial/ethnic groups — and about half of Americans used those offerings, with some variation by race.**

As the pandemic restricted people's ability to engage in culture physically and collectively, cultural organizations dramatically increased their online offerings. We wanted to know if this flowering of digital experiences was reaching and serving a broad cross-section of the U.S. population, and whether it might represent a more democratic and inclusive mode of engagement. The picture turned out to be complex but promising.

The majority of Americans (76%) were aware of the availability of one or more online cultural activities early in the pandemic, with modest (though statistically significant) differences by race/ethnicity: Asians or Pacific Islanders are more likely to be aware than other groups (85% were aware of at least one) and Black/African American adults slightly less so (72%, still a robust level). Looking at specific categories of digital culture offerings (Figure 11), Black/African Americans are less likely to be aware of some categories, while Asians or Pacific Islanders are more likely to be aware. This makes sense given Asian respondents' greater likelihood to have physically attended organizations in those categories recently, and Black/African American respondents' lower likelihood: the latter may not be as likely to receive communications about the new digital offerings. (We discuss the relationship between in-person attendance and digital use below.)

Over half of Americans (53%) reported not just being aware but also participating in one or more online cultural activities during the 30 days prior to taking the survey (i.e., March or April 2020; see Figure 12). **Despite their slightly lower awareness levels, mentioned above, Black/African Americans are just as likely as other groups to have participated in at least one digital cultural activity.** Within specific activities, though, there are different levels of usage across groups:

- Black/African Americans are more likely than Americans overall to have used online materials or activities for kids (58%, compared to 37% overall), taken online classes or courses (51% vs. 32%), and used an app from a performer, artist, museum, zoo, etc. (42% vs. 25%). The first of these is no doubt related to the fact that Black/African Americans are

Fig. 11 | **"Here are some online or digital cultural activities that are being offered during the pandemic**. Which of the following have you personally seen being offered?"

	Overall U.S. Population	Asian or Pacific Islander	Black/ African American	Hispanic /Latinx	Multiracial	Native American	White/ Caucasian
	n=122,933	n=4,049	n=3,290	n=5,900	n=2,329	n=260	n=95,601
Live-stream performances or cultural events	40%	42%	▼ 31%	39%	45%	53%	41%
Online classes, courses, or workshops	37%	▲ 49%	33%	42%	41%	37%	▼ 36%
Online materials or activities for kids	35%	31%	33%	35%	42%	12%	36%
Pre-recorded performances filmed before shutdowns	34%	35%	▼ 26%	▼ 28%	30%	16%	▲ 37%
Podcasts	32%	32%	▼ 24%	31%	▲ 49%	30%	33%
Virtual tours or VR experiences	30%	29%	▼ 22%	30%	41%	18%	31%
Live interactive events or performances online	28%	32%	30%	29%	32%	40%	▼ 26%
Online community meetings or discussions	24%	▲ 32%	19%	22%	▲ 39%	42%	24%
Online exhibitions or galleries	20%	▲ 28%	▼ 11%	23%	18%	16%	20%
Apps	17%	16%	17%	21%	20%	16%	16%
None of these	24%	▼ 15%	▲ 28%	23%	20%	24%	25%

▼ = statistically **lower** than the overall U.S. population

▲ = statistically **higher** than the overall U.S. population

more likely to be caring for children at home during the pandemic (40% are vs. 29% overall). The second may relate to this group's higher-than-average desire for trusted information during the crisis.

- Asians or Pacific Islanders are most likely to have participated in online classes or courses (46% vs. 32% overall), which corresponds with this group's higher likelihood (although not statistically significant) of learning something new during these activities (see Figure 18).

- Hispanic/Latinx Americans are most likely to have used an app (from performers, artists, museums, zoos, etc.; 35% vs. 25%), especially those with lower incomes (53% of those earning under $50,000, compared to only 20% of those earning more). So mobile apps may

Fig. 12 | "Have you done any of those online or digital cultural activities yourself in the past 30 days? Please check any that apply." Table truncated for the sake of clarity, showing only the rows/items with significant differences. See Figure 34 in Appendix D for full table.

	Overall U.S. Population	Asian or Pacific Islander	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latinx	Multiracial	Native American	White/Caucasian
	n=122,933	n=4,049	n=3,290	n=5,900	n=2,329	n=260	n=95,601
Online materials or activities for kids	37%	40%	▲ 58%	36%	36%	45%	▼ 33%
Online classes, courses, or workshops	32%	▲ 46%	▲ 51%	39%	25%	53%	▼ 25%
Virtual tours or VR experiences	30%	27%	▼ 17%	32%	36%	66%	30%
Apps	25%	20%	▲ 42%	▲ 35%	21%	50%	▼ 18%
Online exhibitions or galleries	23%	13%	18%	26%	18%	▲ 67%	22%
None of these	47%	▼ 38%	47%	45%	40%	37%	▲ 49%

▼ = statistically **lower** than the overall U.S. population
▲ = statistically **higher** than the overall U.S. population

be an important tool for cultural engagement for this group.

- Native Americans are most likely to have participated in an online exhibition or gallery (67% vs. 23% overall), a striking difference that could be linked to the importance of celebrating one's cultural heritage through arts and culture experiences.

It's worth remembering that, when this survey was conducted, many performers, groups, and organizations were scrambling to create new online content (or re-release archival content) and get the word out about it beyond their own lists. We may find wider awareness and use of digital arts and culture experiences when we conduct the Wave 2 survey in winter/spring 2021.

Interestingly, when respondents were asked how *frequently* they used those online cultural offerings,[10] Black/African American adults are more likely than other groups to have engaged multiple times with online performances, both live-streamed and pre-recorded, and with online community or discussion events (see Figure 35 in Appendix D). This reinforces the point made above about African Americans engaging culturally in more focused ways: depth rather than breadth, at least compared to other racial/ethnic groups.

[10] If a respondent indicated they used an online activity, they were shown a follow-up question asking if they participated in the activity once, a few times, or many times.

▶ **Is digital content reaching *new* audiences? Probably, but that's not a new-to-the-pandemic phenomenon.**

Like many practitioners and funders, we also wanted to know whether digital audiences during the pandemic are new to those art-forms and cultural content-areas, and if so whether the new audiences are more diverse with respect to race and ethnicity. Past studies like the Survey of Public Participation in the Arts, conducted most recently in 2017, have found that digital engagement in many art-forms is both larger and more diverse than in-person attendance at those forms.[11] So we expected to see that, within specific cultural-activity categories, online users would be a broader population. Our analysis confirmed this in several ways. First, while there is great overlap between those who had attended at least one in-person cultural event in 2019 and those who had participated in at least one digital cultural experience during the pandemic (see Figure 13), there is a small proportion of American adults who *hadn't* attended in-person in the previous year but *had* participated online. We'll refer to those as "digital only" respondents.[12] A much higher proportion had both attended in person in 2019 *and* engaged digitally during the shutdowns; we'll term these "recent in-person" respondents. (We won't focus on the "in person only" audience in this report.)

Second, the strongest predictor of having participated in one or more digital cultural activities during the pandemic is the *breadth* of one's in-person attendance before the shutdowns. But the data also indicated that, independent of past attendance, **Black/African American, Asian or Pacific**

Fig. 13 | **Overlap of digital and in-person cultural engagers**, showing populations being compared in this section of the report. Not to scale; the proportions differ depending on whether the analysis looks at those engaging in *at least one* form of culture or those engaging in a specific form.
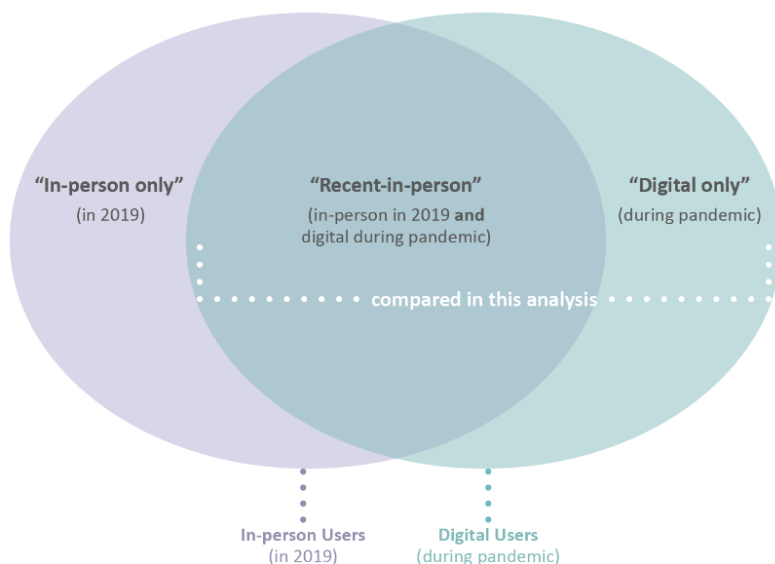
[11] Earlier in the decade, 54% (133 million) adults attended at least one arts and cultural event in the course of a year, 74% (176 million) adults used electronic or digital media to consume art (65% of this number is popular music). National Endowment for the Arts. (2017). U.S. Patterns of Arts Participation: A Full Report from the 2017 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts.

[12] However, these respondents may have attended that kind of cultural experience in person *prior to* 2019; we use "digital only" as a shorthand, but it doesn't mean "*never* attended in person."

Islander, and Hispanic/Latinx Americans are more likely than the overall population to have participated digitally, as are younger people (of any race) and people with higher education levels. (See Figure 23 in Appendix B for the full regression analysis.) This is an important finding, and it becomes even more striking when we look at specific cultural activities.

As Figure 14 shows, many categories of digital offerings are reaching people who hadn't attended that category in person in the year preceding Covid. The percentages of "digital only" users vary widely, from 28% for libraries to 74% for cultural centers (the latter figure may indicate that respondents thought of "cultural center" broadly, as a catch-all category.) As noted above, previous research suggests that this isn't a broadening due to the pandemic and the accompanying proliferation of online offerings; it's a continuation of the existing pattern in which more Americans engage with culture digitally than attend in person. Of course, it's possible that, even if digital

Fig. 14 │ Proportion of digital content users within specific arts and culture genres who reported *not* having been to an in-person institution or event in that genre in 2019 (before the pandemic).

Museums

Natural History Museum	Science/Tech Museum	Art Museum	History Museum
57% had not been	51% had not been	40% had not been	32% had not been
n = 8,154	n = 9,207	n = 36,383	n = 17,711

Performing Arts

Dance Group	Jazz Music Group	Theater Group	Classical Music Group
55% had not been	42% had not been	37% had not been	35% had not been
n = 11,397	n = 6,995	n = 25,678	n = 23,344

Other Organization Types

Cultural Center	Botanic Garden	Zoo/Aquarium	Public Park	Library
74% had not been	44% had not been	38% had not been	31% had not been	28% had not been
n = 13,938	n = 10,691	n = 16,112	n = 4,088	n = 15,795

culture has always been a bigger tent than physical attendance, it has become even more popular and valuable during the pandemic, when most live experiences are unavailable. Although our data doesn't allow us to make the necessary comparison,[13] it is broadly consistent with the anecdotal observations at many arts and culture organizations that their digital offerings during the shutdowns have reached surprisingly large audiences, as demand shifts from on-site to online modes of engagement.[14]

▶ **Those digital-only audiences are more diverse.**

Looking within each of those arts-and-culture categories and comparing the "digital only" users with "recent in-person" respondents, there are striking differences by race/ethnicity and other demographic factors. **Within some art-forms, digital-only users are much more likely to be Black/ African American and Hispanic/Latinx and more likely to have lower incomes and only a high-school education.**

Focusing first on Black/African American respondents who engaged online during the pandemic (Figure 15), there are significant differences in all of the performing-arts categories included in the survey (classical music,[15] dance,[16] jazz, and theater[17]) and several of the museum categories: Digital-only participants (represented by the darker purple circles) were more likely to be Black/African American than recent in-person participants (lighter purple). The magnitude of that difference is considerable: For classical music, those listening or watching online who haven't attended in person in the past year are *7.5 times more likely to be Black/African American* — though the raw percentages are still low, with 13% of African Americans participating digitally and only 2% having attended in person in 2019. For jazz, digital-only participants are 4.1 times more likely to be Black/ African American than recent in-person attenders (39% vs. 9%). Theater and dance showed more modest, though still statistically significant, differences.

In the museum categories, the difference is widest for botanic gardens, in which digital-only users were 5.7 times more likely to be Black/African American (27% vs. 5%). The differences are also large for natural history, with digital-only users 4.5 times more likely to be Black/African American (18% vs. 4%), and for art museums, with digital-only users nearly twice as likely to be Black/African American (12% vs. 7%). Note that in the library category and those below it the difference is actually negative, meaning that digital-only users are somewhat *less* likely to be Black/African American than recent in-person users. (See Appendix C for the full tables.)

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[13] This is because the participation periods we asked about were so different: a full year for the 34 (mostly) in-person activities we measured prior to the shutdowns, and only 30 days for the digital activities we measured during the pandemic.

[14] See, for example, https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/21/arts/music/concerts-livestreams.html and https://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/music/classical-music-covid-video-performances/2020/10/29/4fd2bb9a-153f-11eb-ba42-ec6a580836ed_story.html

[15] Includes those who attended a classical music or opera performance

[16] Includes those who attended a ballet, regional dance, or contemporary dance performance

[17] Includes those who attended a musical or a play

**Fig. 15 | Comparison of the percentages of <u>Black/African American</u> adults in the "recent in-person"
and "digital only" groups**, among those engaging with specific art-forms or institution-types.
(n=377–30,807)

^ Statistically different than the overall
○ Recent in person
● Digital only
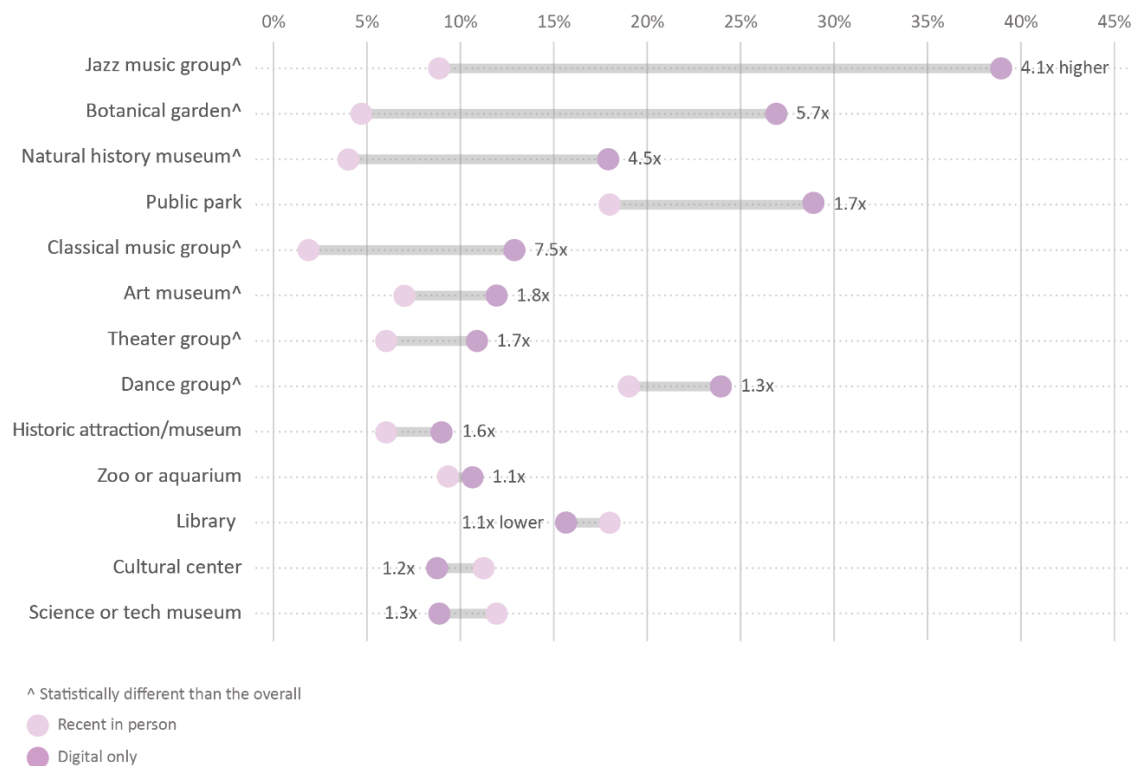
There are also differences among Hispanic/Latinx Americans between digital-only and recent in-person participants, although the differences were less pronounced and apply to fewer activity-categories than among Black/African Americans (Figure 16). Two categories showed statistically significant positive differences: Digital-only users of content from science and technology museums were three times as likely to be Hispanic/Latinx than recent in-person visitors to such museums (30% vs. 10%), and for libraries they were more than twice as likely to be Hispanic/Latinx (33% vs. 15%). Only jazz showed a significant negative difference: the digital-only audience was 1.5 times *less* likely to be Hispanic/Latinx than recent in-person users (18% digital-only vs. 33% recent in-person) — the opposite of the pattern among Black/African American's in this art-form.

There are a few notable differences for other racial/ethnic groups:

- Digital-only users of content from historic attractions or history museums were almost four times more likely to be Asian or Pacific Islander than people who had visited such sites or museums in 2019 (11% vs 3%).

- Digital-only users of zoo or aquarium content were twice as likely as recent in-person visitors to be multiracial (10% vs. 5%).

- Conversely, digital-only users were significantly *less* likely than recent in-person attenders to be White/Caucasian in several categories: theater (60% digital-only vs. 67% recent in-

Fig. 16 | **Comparison of the percentages of** <u>Hispanic/Latinx</u> **adults in the "recent in-person" and "digital only" groups**, among those engaging with specific art-forms or institution-types. (n=377–30,807)

^ Statistically different than the overall
● Recent in person
● Digital only
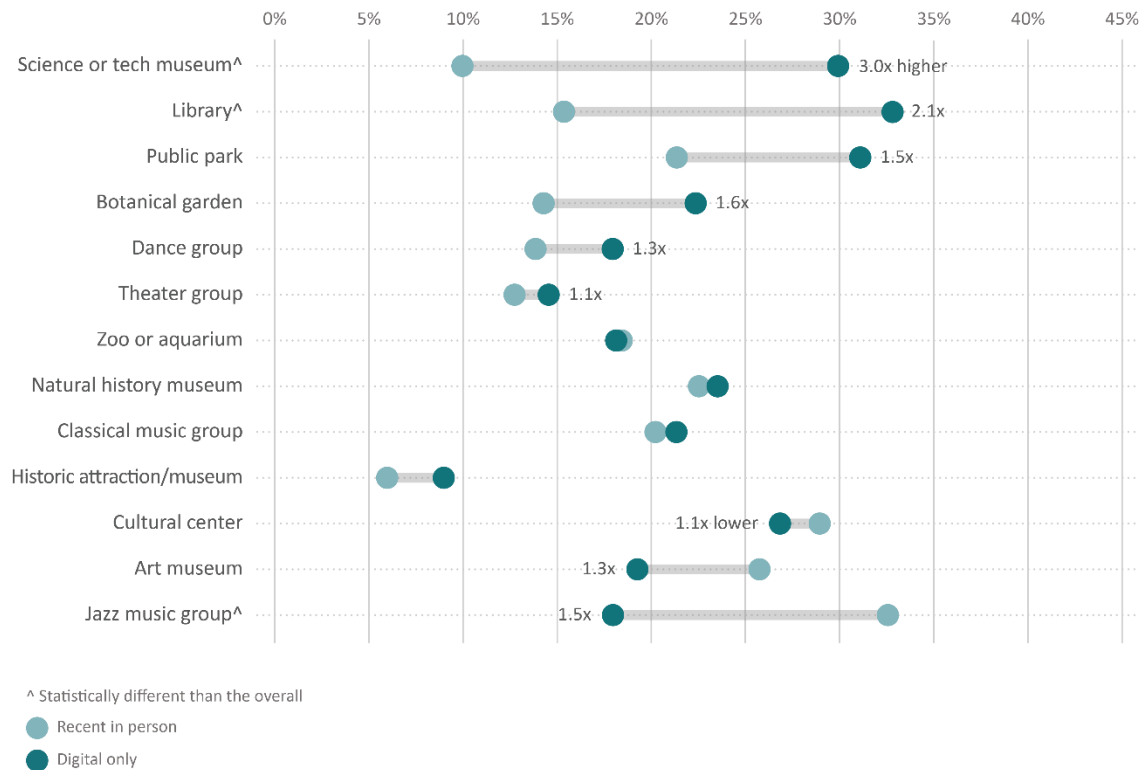
person), classical music (56% vs. 69%), historic attractions/history museums (56% vs. 69%), botanic gardens (46% vs. 71%), and natural history museums (46% vs 61%).

- There were no meaningful differences among Native Americans, primarily due to not having a robust enough sample size when looking into subsets of the data, as noted above.

We plan to explore other dimensions of digital diversity, such as income and education, in our final report after the Wave 2 survey is conducted in early 2021.

▶ Most users of digital culture find value in it, and different racial/ethnic groups derive distinct combinations of benefits.

Most Americans who engaged with online arts and culture activities during the pandemic found them valuable (a notion we didn't define for respondents). The top-two-box ratings ranged from a high of 76% (for online activities for children) to a low of 58% (for apps, which were used by comparatively few people). As shown in Figure 17, Hispanic/Latinx Americans found more value than others in pre-recorded performances (72% vs. 60% overall), and Asians or Pacific Islanders found more value in podcasts (86% vs. 63%) but less in live interactive events (41% vs. 71%). While there were large differences between Native Americans' value ratings and the overall rating on a number of activities, such as live interactive events (29% vs. 71% overall) and pre-recorded

Fig. 17 | **"How valuable to you personally were those activities?"** Among those who had indicated doing those activities (see Fig. 12), percent giving top-2-box-ratings ("valuable" or "super valuable"). Table truncated for the sake of clarity, showing only rows/items with significant differences; see Figure 36 in Appendix D for full table.

	Overall U.S. Population	Asian or Pacific Islander	Black/ African American	Hispanic /Latinx	Multiracial	Native American	White/ Caucasian
	n=97,050	n=3,254	n=2,497	n=4,567	n=1,892	n=197	n=75,836
Live interactive events or performances online	71%	▼41%	80%	75%	73%	29%	70%
Podcasts	63%	▲86%	61%	64%	69%	75%	60%
Pre-recorded performances filmed before the shutdowns	60%	61%	66%	▲72%	75%	83%	▼56%

▼ = statistically **lower** than the overall U.S. population

▲ = statistically **higher** than the overall U.S. population

performances (83% vs. 60%), these findings aren't statistically significant due to the small sample sizes involved (this question was asked only of the subset of respondents who had used each online cultural activity).

As noted in the Culture Track Key Findings report, the benefits that people derive from online cultural activities align well with some of the things they miss most about in-person engagement: fun, relaxation, learning something new, etc. The striking exception is social, human interactions, which was the most-missed quality of in-person arts and culture experiences but not something most Americans report getting out of these digital activities. **Yet Black/African American and Native American respondents were more likely than others to say they derived that social value from digital cultural experiences** (at 41% each, compared with 27% overall), a finding we hope to explore further. That and other differences by race/ethnicity are illustrated in Figure 18 (shown on next page).

Fig. 18 | "What (if anything) did you get out of doing those online activities? Please check up to 5." Each racial/ethnic group shown in colored radials, compared to U.S. population shown in the underlying gray area.

Overall

Had fun 54%
Relaxed 52%
Learned something 47%
Escaped 38%
Experienced artworks 33%
Felt creative 27%
Spent time with friends and family 27%

Asian or Pacific Islander

Had fun 53%
Relaxed 56%
Learned something 54%
Escaped 36%
Experienced artworks 31%
Felt creative 26%
Spent time with friends and family 19%

Black/African American

Had fun 48%
Relaxed 52%
Learned something 52%
Escaped 43%
Experienced artworks 32%
Felt creative 40%
Spent time with friends and family 41%

Hispanic/Latinx

Had fun 58%
Relaxed 54%
Learned something 47%
Escaped 37%
Experienced artworks 28%
Felt creative 31%
Spent time with friends and family 33%

Multiracial

Had fun 62%
Relaxed 71%
Learned something 25%
Escaped 37%
Experienced artworks 29%
Felt creative 25%
Spent time with friends and family 21%

White/Caucasian

Had fun 53%
Relaxed 51%
Learned something 48%
Escaped 38%
Experienced artworks 34%
Felt creative 25%
Spent time with friends and family 25%

Native American

Had fun 49%
Relaxed 44%
Learned something 46%
Escaped 11%
Experienced artworks 37%
Felt creative 19%
Spent time with friends and family 41%

Statistically different than the overall

34.

4. Impacts & Experiences of Covid-19

▶ **The physical and financial impacts of the coronavirus are more acute for BIPOC communities.**

As other studies have shown, BIPOC Americans are more likely than the overall population to be affected by Covid-19, both physically and financially. When our Wave 1 survey was fielded (April 29th to May 19th), almost half (46%) of Native Americans and one in five (19%) of Black/African American respondents indicated that they or a family member or close friend had been sick due to Covid-19, compared to 12% of the total U.S. population. Black/African Americans and Hispanic/Latinx Americans were also more likely to be caring for children at home, and Asians or Pacific Islanders were more likely to be under stay-at-home restrictions at the time of the survey (Figure 19).

Economically, some BIPOC communities have been hit harder than the overall population: Black/African American, Hispanic/Latinx, and multiracial Americans reported the greatest changes to their income during the pandemic: between 15% and 23% of respondents reported losing their incomes entirely, compared to only 11% of the population overall. This effect was even worse among Black/African Americans with lower incomes (under $50,000), who were more likely to lose their income entirely (20% of lower-income did, vs. only 6% of higher-income Black/African Americans). In the same vein, while Whites/Caucasians did not suffer as great a loss of income as other groups, lower-

Fig. 19 | COVD-19 impacts by race and ethnicity. Statistically significant differences were found in all items measured: health impacts, financial impacts, stay-at-home restrictions, and childcare burdens.

	Overall U.S. Population	Asian or Pacific Islander	Black/ African American	Hispanic /Latinx	Multiracial	Native American	White/ Caucasian
	n=116,221-122,167	n=3,823-4,038	n=3,112-3,281	n=5,582-5,882	n=2,245-2,332	n=246-261	n=92,223-95,815
% been sick or know someone who has been sick	12%	7%	19%	15%	12%	46%	11%
% with no income	11%	13%	15%	18%	23%	8%	7%
% under a stay-at-home order	79%	90%	72%	79%	79%	80%	80%
% caring for children at home	29%	32%	40%	35%	31%	16%	25%

▼ = statistically **lower** than the overall U.S. population

▲ = statistically **higher** than the overall U.S. population

income Whites/Caucasians were significantly more likely to have lost their income (10% vs. 6% of those with higher incomes). Tragically, the pandemic has made the most vulnerable Americans even more so.

We were intrigued to find that**, despite the disproportionate physical and financial impacts of the virus on Blacks/African Americans, this group reported lower levels the negative emotions** than the overall population: They weren't as worried or afraid, as sad or depressed, or as likely to feel disconnected from others due to the pandemic (see Figure 20). While these differences aren't statistically significant, taken together they raise complex questions about collective and individual context and resilience. Do the everyday, lifelong burdens of racism — what Esther Washington in her introductory note to this report calls "allostatic load"[18] — mean that Blacks/African Americans find the pain, fear, and struggle of the pandemic less of a departure from the norm than other groups and therefore less destabilizing? Has the legacy of slavery, violence, and discrimination been met by Black Americans in part through the development of an outsize capacity for resilience? Is

Fig. 20 | **"People are having different reactions to the current situation. Compared to before the pandemic began, how are you feeling these days?"** Percent giving top-2-box-ratings (those selecting 4 or 5 indicating "A lot more").

	Overall U.S. Population	Asian or Pacific Islander	Black/ African American	Hispanic /Latinx	Multiracial	Native American	White/ Caucasian
	n=123,394	n=4,057	n=3,302	n=5,915	n=2,335	n=261	n=95,960
Bored	45%	55% ▲	40%	47%	49%	52%	45%
Worried or afraid	45%	56% ▲	39%	46%	48%	33%	45%
Not connected to others	44%	55% ▲	35% ▼	40%	53%	15%	46%
Not calm	32%	34%	31%	34%	39%	42%	30%
Lonely	30%	32%	24%	33%	31%	34%	30%
Sad or depressed	29%	33%	21% ▼	27%	40%	32%	30%
Angry	25%	27%	20%	25%	37% ▲	49%	25%

▼ = statistically **lower** than the overall U.S. population

▲ = statistically **higher** than the overall U.S. population

[18] For a Covid-era discussion of "allostatic load" as a biological, social, and psychological result of racism, see "How the stress of racism can harm your health—and what that has to do with Covid-19," PBS NOVA blog, July 2020. https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/article/racism-stress-covid-allostatic-load/

there something more supportive and connected about Black/African American culture, compared to other racial/ethnic groups, that helps people get through a crisis like the coronavirus with a bit less emotional devastation? We hope to explore some of these questions in the upcoming qualitative phase of the project. Meanwhile, it's worth remembering that the Wave 1 surveys were completed before the murder of George Floyd and the resurgence of attention to the Black Lives Matter movement, police brutality, and structural racism in the U.S.; the data may look different in the next Wave.

We were also struck by an opposite dynamic among Asians or Pacific Islanders, who were *less* likely than other groups to have experienced those physical impacts of the virus but more likely to report the emotional impacts: They felt more bored, less connected to others, and/or more worried or afraid than before the pandemic. It could be that some of that emotional burden is linked to the xenophobic rhetoric used by President Trump and others who blame the virus on China, which led to an increase in racist aggression against Asian-Americans.[19]

▶ Black/African Americans are particularly likely to want more sources of trusted information and hope in their lives during the pandemic

The survey questionnaire also asked people what they wanted more of in their lives during the pandemic. Across race and ethnicity, the top three desires were to get outdoors, have fun, and connect with other people (see Figure 21). Black/African Americans also said they wanted more fun in their lives, but their top needs also included staying informed with trusted information (53% selected this, compared to 43% of the overall population), humor (50% vs. 42%); and hope (48% vs. 38%). In fact, those desires for trusted information and hope were highest among lower-income Black/African Americans than those with higher incomes (60% vs. 45% for trusted information; 55% vs. 37% for hope), highlighting the greater need for these qualities in the lives of more economically vulnerable African Americans.

These differing priorities may suggest that, at least in the early months of the pandemic, Black/African Americans felt a greater lack of clear, trustworthy information about the crisis than other racial and ethnic groups, which could be tied to the disproportionate impact of "local news deserts" on Black communities;[20] and that they were more likely to miss and value humor as a way of getting through difficult times. That duality of rational and affective needs points toward ways in which cultural practitioners could rethink relevance and outcomes in their efforts to serve and engage with African American communities.

[19] One example being the well-publicized racist encounter CNN anchor Amara Walker was subjected to in October, 2020 (https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/02/opinions/anti-asian-racism-airport-encounter-walker/index.html). See also the work being done by Stop AAPI Hate, an online tool tracking anti-Asian racism (https://stopaapihate.org/).

[20] https://www.cjr.org/analysis/deconstructing-the-news-desert.php

Fig. 21 | **"What do you want more of in your life right now?"** Please check up to five or tell us in your own words."

	Overall U.S. Population	Asian or Pacific Islander	Black/ African American	Hispanic/ Latinx	Multiracial	Native American	White/ Caucasian
	n=123,351	n=4,057	n=3,297	n=5,912	n=2,333	n=261	n=95,914
Getting outdoors	56%	50%	▼ 44%	58%	52%	78%	▲ 58%
Fun	54%	56%	51%	55%	56%	59%	55%
Connection with other people	54%	58%	▼ 36%	52%	56%	27%	▲ 58%
Staying informed, with trusted information	43%	42%	▲ 53%	44%	36%	39%	42%
Humor	42%	▼ 31%	▲ 50%	40%	48%	49%	42%
Hope	38%	42%	▲ 48%	39%	33%	32%	37%
Feeling like I'm part of something	28%	▲ 37%	26%	32%	32%	32%	27%
Expressing myself creatively	19%	23%	23%	▲ 25%	▲ 33%	39%	▼ 15%
Being challenged	15%	▲ 22%	14%	17%	16%	19%	14%
Distraction	15%	13%	▼ 9%	▲ 20%	19%	3%	15%
Other	8%	9%	▼ 4%	5%	▲ 17%	3%	8%
None of these	3%	3%	▲ 7%	3%	▼ 1%	1%	▼ 2%

▼ = statistically **lower** than the overall U.S. population

▲ = statistically **higher** than the overall U.S. population

▶ **Hispanic/Latinx and some other BIPOC communities are more likely to engage in creative activities during the pandemic**

To get a fuller picture of how Americans were getting through the pandemic and understand their relationships to arts, creativity, and culture, the survey questionnaire asked a broad question about what people were doing during the pandemic. Many Americans reported watching movies and/or television, socializing online or by phone, spending time outdoors, and listening to music, with few differences by race and ethnicity. When asked specifically about *creative* activities (see Figure 22), the top item was cooking a new recipe or baking something — and multiracial Americans were most likely to have done this (76% vs. 62% overall).

Fig. 22 | "Some people are doing creative things during the pandemic. Have you done any of these things in the past 30 days? Please check any that apply."

	Overall U.S. Population	Asian or Pacific Islander	Black/ African American	Hispanic /Latinx	Multiracial	Native American	White/ Caucasian
	n=122,655	n=4,038	n=3,289	n=5,877	n=2,326	n=260	n=95,351
Cooking a new recipe or baking something	62%	67%	60%	59%	76%	72%	62%
Making something by hand	27%	18%	20%	32%	24%	30%	29%
Painting, drawing, sculpting, etc.	20%	18%	18%	30%	27%	22%	18%
Photography or photo editing	19%	18%	18%	25%	21%	50%	17%
Dancing	16%	14%	34%	24%	18%	6%	11%
Creative writing, writing poetry, journaling	16%	17%	21%	20%	21%	16%	13%
Designing something	9%	15%	15%	14%	12%	14%	7%
Filmmaking or videomaking	5%	6%	8%	10%	4%	1%	4%
Other	9%	7%	4%	6%	14%	5%	10%
None of these	19%	19%	19%	17%	9%	8%	20%

▼ = statistically **lower** than the overall U.S. population
▲ = statistically **higher** than the overall U.S. population

The other creative activities were less frequent overall, and for many of them — painting or drawing, photography, dancing, designing something, making videos or films — Hispanic/Latinx Americans were more likely to report engaging. This was especially true of younger Hispanic/Latinx adults (and true of younger Americans in general, who were more apt to be doing creative activities than older people in our survey).[21] Moreover, Hispanic/Latinx Americans who did engage in creative activities had a closer relationship to the arts in general: they're more likely than the overall population to be a subscriber, member, volunteer, or employee or an arts organizations than those who had not been doing such activities, and to be a paid artist or arts educator (though the vast majority, 94%, are not). Interestingly, there was no difference by employment status; both working and under- or unemployed Hispanic/Latinx Americans were making room for creative activities in

[21] The Hispanic/Latinx population in the US skews younger than the overall population: In our weighted survey data, the average age for Hispanic/Latinx adults was 41 years old, compared to 49 for the population overall.

their lives. Other racial/ethnic groups also engaged at higher rates in some creative activities:

- Black/African Americans were more likely than the overall population to have danced (34% vs. 16% of the overall population), designed something (15% vs. 9%), and participated in a prayer, meditation, therapy or counseling session (38% vs. 29%). These activities could be manifestations of, or contributors to, the emotional resilience discussed above.

- Native Americans were strikingly more likely to have practiced photography or photo-editing (50% vs. 19%), a finding that calls for further research and discussion.

- Asians or Pacific Islanders were more likely to have learned something new or taken an online course (33% vs. 24% overall) and to have done something musical (28% vs. 19%). This ties with the previously mentioned findings about this group being most likely to have learned or experienced something new as a result of participating online (page 26).

- Hispanic/Latinx respondents were more likely to have played a videogame or online game (54% vs. 47% overall), used social media to tell a story (38% vs. 29%), and shared a playlist they had made (10% vs. 5%) — all of which can be highly social experiences.

- Multiracial Americans were more likely to have listened to a podcast or audiobook (40% vs. 27% overall).

- White/Caucasian Americans were *less* likely than the overall population to have engaged in many of these creative activities during Covid.

Music, not surprisingly, has also been important during the pandemic, and in some ways even more so for BIPOC Americans. Among respondents who had listened to music and/or done something musical themselves during the pandemic:[22]

- Asians or Pacific Islanders and Native Americans were more likely to have played an instrument than the overall population (28% of Asians or Pacific Islanders and 59% of Native Americans had, vs. 18% overall).

- Black/African Americans sang (48% vs. 37% overall), participated in an interactive online musical event (16% vs. 9%), and took an online lesson with a music teacher (10% vs. 4%) at higher rates than the overall population.

- Multiracial Americans also sang at higher rates than the overall population (53% vs. 37%).

Taken together, these findings reveal the importance of informal creative practice and cultural expression in the lives of many BIPOC Americans. We can't say from the Wave 1 survey whether that importance increased or decreased due to the pandemic, but we may be able to observe changes in the next wave of the CCTC survey.

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[22] We first asked respondents, of a list of 18 activities, which they had participated in during the last 30 days. If they indicated they "Listened to music, or watched a previously-recorded performance online" or "Did something musical themselves," they were shown a follow-up question asking which, if any, of eight musical activities they'd done in the last 30 days (which would have been entirely during the pandemic).

Snapshots
by race & ethnicity

In this section, we provide at-a-glance summaries of the most important findings for each main racial/ethnic group, organized in four main themes: desire for change, cultural engagement, digital participation, and community support. Please see Appendix E for responses to all survey questions by race and ethnicity.

Asian or Pacific Islander respondents

Desire For Change

Nearly 8 in 10 (79%) Asians and Pacific Islanders want to see arts & culture organizations change, and they care most about these organizations becoming friendlier to all people—more than any other racial/ethnic group.

Top 5 types of change:

Friendlier to all kinds of people (41%, ↑)

Being more fun (34%)

Having more diverse voices and faces (33%, ↑)

Having stories or content that connect to my life (30%, ↑)

Supporting local artists, organizers, etc. (26%)

Cultural Engagement

Asians and Pacific Islanders are very engaged in culture; they participate in the most cultural activities of any racial/ethnic group.

15% are a member of one or more museums, zoos, aquariums, gardens, or other cultural destinations

8% are a subscriber or season-ticket holder to one or more theaters, music groups, performing arts centers, dance companies, etc.

Asian and Pacific Islander respondents participated in more activities than the average American with a breadth index* of 8.57 (compared to 7.6 overall).

Top 5 activities attended in 2019:

Public park (68%, ↑)

Movies/film (e.g., documentary, independent, blockbuster)(64%)

Read books/literature (50%)

Television program (e.g., streaming or broadcast, non-news) (49%)

Food and drink experience (e.g., food festival, beer or wine tasting (45%)

Digital Participation

Asian and Pacific Islander Americans have the highest levels of combined awareness and participation in digital offerings.

85% are aware of and 62% participated in digital cultural activities

Top 5 digital activities:

Pre-recorded performances filmed before the shutdowns (55%)

Live-stream performances or cultural events (49%)

Online classes, courses, or workshops (from performers, artists, museums, arts groups, zoos, etc.) (46% , ↑)

Online materials or activities for kids (for home-schooling or just for fun) (40%)

Online community meetings or discussions (hosted or presented by artists, museums, arts groups, zoos, etc.) (38%)

Community Support

Asians and Pacific Islanders care deeply about arts & culture organizations bringing people of different backgrounds together—more than any other racial/ethnic group.

Top 5 types of support:

Stay connected (54%)

Bring people of different backgrounds together (52%, ↑)

Laugh and relax (51%)

Offer distraction and escape during the crisis (48%)

Have hope (42%)

↑↓ Significantly higher or lower than the overall U.S. population at p<.05

*   Breadth index is the number of different cultural activity-categories this population reports participating in during 2019.

Black/African American respondents

Desire For Change

Over three-quarters (76%) of Black/African Americans would like to see change in arts & culture organizations and find it particularly important that they engage diverse voices—more than any other racial/ethnic group.

Top 5 types of change:

More diverse voices and faces (35%, ↑)

Friendlier to all kinds of people (30%)

More fun (29%)

Supporting local artists, organizers, etc.; Engage more young people (↑) (27%, TIED)

Treat their employees fairly and equitably (25%)

Cultural Engagement

Black/African Americans are participating in fewer cultural activities than other Americans and are less likely, overall, to participate in the range of activities included in our survey – but those who do participate do so at the same frequency as other Americans.

9% are a member of one or more museums, zoos, aquariums, gardens, or other cultural destinations

7% are a subscriber or season-ticket holder to one or more theaters, music groups, performing arts centers, dance companies, etc.

Black/African Americans breadth index* was 6.06 (compared to 7.6 overall).

Top 5 activities attended in 2019:

Public Park (49%, ↓)

Movies/film (e.g., documentary, independent, blockbuster) (44%, ↓)

Food and drink experience (e.g., food festival, beer or wine tasting) (43%)

Television program (e.g., streaming or broadcast, non-news) (39%, ↓)

Library (36%)

Digital Participation

Black or African American respondents reported lower awareness of digital activities than any other group but similar levels of participation in online or digital arts and culture activities.

72% (↓) are aware of and 53% participated in digital cultural activities.

Top 5 digital activities:

Online materials or activities for kids (for home-schooling or just for fun); Live interactive events or performances online, where you can participate via chat, audio, or video (58%, ↑)

Online classes, courses, or workshops (from performers, artists, museums, arts groups, zoos, etc.) (51%, ↑)

Pre-recorded performances filmed before the shutdowns (50%)

Live-stream performances or cultural events (45%)

Apps (from performers, artists, museums, arts groups, zoos, etc.) (42%, ↑)

Community Support

Black/African Americans do not look to arts & culture organizations to provide an escape; instead, like multiracial Americans, they hope organizations will engage them emotionally and provide connections to other people.

Top 5 types of support:

Stay connected (51%)

Laugh and relax (50%)

Have hope (45%)

Educate children while schools are closed (43%)

Bring people of different backgrounds together (40%)

What They Want More of During Covid-19

Black/African Americans are unique compared to other racial/ethnic groups in their strong desire to stay informed via trusted sources.

Top 5 things people want more of in their lives right now:

Staying informed, with trusted information (53%, ↑)

Fun (51%)

Humor (50%, ↑)

Hope (48%, ↑)

Getting outdoors (44%)

↑↓ Significantly higher or lower than the overall U.S. population at p<.05

*   Breadth index is the number of different cultural activity-categories this population reports participating in during 2019.

Desire For Change

More than 4 in 5 (82%) Hispanic/Latinx Americans would like to see change in arts & culture organizations and they care more than any other racial/ethnic group about these organizations becoming more fun.

Top 5 types of change:

More fun (37%, ↑)

Supporting local artists, organizers, etc. (31%, ↑)

Friendlier to all kinds of people (27%)

Treat their employees fairly and equitably; Engage more young people (26%, ↑, TIED)

More diverse voices and faces (25%, ↑)

Cultural Engagement

Hispanic/Latinx respondents are participating in more cultural activities than the average American. They are more likely to play video/online games, go to art and natural history museums and listen to world music than other Americans.

12% are a member of one or more museums, zoos, aquariums, gardens, or other cultural destinations

11% are a subscriber or season-ticket holder to one or more theaters, music groups, performing arts centers, dance companies, etc.

Hispanic/Latinx Americans breadth index* was 7.76 (compared to 7.6 overall).

Top 5 activities attended in 2019:

Movies/film (e.g., documentary, independent, blockbuster) (60%)

Public park (59%)

Food and drink experience (e.g., food festival, beer or wine tasting (48%)

Television program (e.g., streaming or broadcast, non-news) (44%)

Community festival/street fair (42%)

Digital Participation

Hispanic/Latinx respondents are as aware, and participate as much in digital activities as the average American, although they are more likely to use in-app digital content.

77% are aware of and 55% participated in digital cultural activities.

Top 5 digital activities:

Pre-recorded performances filmed before the shutdowns (45%)

Podcasts (from performers, artists, museums, arts groups, zoos, gardens, etc.) (41%)

Live-stream performances or cultural events (40%)

Online classes, courses, or workshops (from performers, artists, museums, arts groups, zoos, etc.) (39%)

Online materials or activities for kids (for home-schooling or just for fun); Online community meetings or discussions (hosted or presented by artists, museums, arts groups, zoos, etc.) (36%, TIED)

Community Support

Like other Americans, Hispanic/Latinx respondents see a range of ways arts & culture organizations can help their community during the pandemic.

Top 5 types of support:

Laugh and relax (53%)

Stay connected (52%)

Educate children while schools are closed (50%)

Offer distraction and escape during the crisis (47%)

Look ahead and plan for recovery; Have hope; Bring people of different backgrounds together (↑) (40%, TIED)

Creative Activities

During the pandemic, Hispanic/Latinx Americans are participating in creative activities at a higher rate than other Americans.

Making something by hand (quilting, pottery, woodwork, ceramics, knitting, metalwork, etc.) (32%)

Painting, drawing, sculpting, printmaking, etc. (30%, ↑)

Photography or photo editing (as a creative activity, not for work or school) (25%, ↑)

Dancing (24%, ↑)

Creative writing, writing poetry, journaling (20%)

Designing something (e.g., animation, digital art, computer graphics, etc.—not for work or school) (14%, ↑)

Filmmaking or videomaking (as a creative activity, not for work or school) (10%, ↑)

↑↓ Significantly higher or lower than the overall U.S. population at p<.05

* Breadth index is the number of different cultural activity-categories this population reports participating in during 2019.

Multiracial respondents

"Multiracial" includes any respondents who selected two or more races, unless they also indicated Hispanic/Latino; see Figure 2 on page 11 for the diverse constellation within that category.

Desire For Change

Among the racial/ethnic groups, multiracial Americans are the most likely to want some kind of change – nearly 9 in 10 (89%) – in arts & culture organizations and see many ways in which organizations can change to be better for them in the future.

Top 5 types of change:

Friendlier to all kinds of people (40%, ↑)

Engage more young people (38%, ↑)

More focus on our local community (↑); Supporting local artists, organizers, etc. (35%, TIED)

Working with other non-profits in our community (33%, ↑)

Treat their employees fairly and equitable; More diverse voices and faces (↑) (30%, TIED)

Cultural Engagement

Multiracial respondents are participating in marginally more cultural activities than the average American and are most likely to have visited a zoo or aquarium when compared to other Americans (43% vs. 32% overall).

12% are a member of one or more museums, zoos, aquariums, gardens, or other cultural destinations

8% are a subscriber or season-ticket holder to one or more theaters, music groups, performing arts centers, dance companies, etc.

Multiracial Americans breadth index* was 7.99 (compared to 7.6 overall).

Top 5 activities attended in 2019:

Movies/film (e.g., documentary, independent, blockbuster) (65%)

Public Park (55%)

Television program (e.g., streaming or broadcast, non-news) (54%)

Food and drink experience (e.g., food festival, beer or wine tasting (52%)

Read books/literature (45%)

Digital Participation

Multiracial Americans were aware of and participated in a variety of digital activities during the pandemic; there are no major differences between them and the average American in this area.

80% are aware of and 60% participated in digital cultural activities.

Top 5 digital activities:

Live interactive events or performances online where you can participate via chat, audio, or video (47%)

Podcasts (from performers, artists, museums, arts groups, zoos, gardens, etc.) (46%)

Live-stream performances or cultural events (41%)

Pre-recorded performances filmed before the shutdowns (39%)

Online materials or activities for kids (for home-schooling or just for fun); Virtual tours or VR experiences (from performers, artists, museums, arts groups, zoos, gardens, etc.) (36%, TIED)

Community Support

Like Black/African Americans, multiracial Americans want arts & culture organizations to engage them emotionally by helping them laugh and relax as well as heal, grieve, and process their emotions (ranked 7th at 39% vs. 27% overall).

Top 5 types of support:

Laugh and relax (63%)

Stay connected (51%)

Educate children while schools are closed (48%)

Offer distraction and escape during the crisis (47%)

Bring people of different backgrounds together (46%, ↑)

↑↓ Significantly higher or lower than the overall U.S. population at p<.05

* Breadth index is the number of different cultural activity-categories this population reports participating in during 2019.

Native American respondents

Desire For Change

Nearly three-quarters (74%) of Native Americans would like to see change in arts & culture organizations and feel they can be made better by partnering with and supporting other nonprofits in their community.

Top 5 types of change:

Working with other nonprofits in our community (46%, ↑)

Supporting local artists, organizers, etc. (37%)

Stories or content that connect to my life (36%)

More fun (32%)

More diverse voices and faces (17%)

Cultural Engagement

Native American respondents are participating in fewer cultural activities than the average American and their engagement may be more focused around specific activities such as community festivals.

20% are a member of one or more museums, zoos, aquariums, gardens, or other cultural destinations

13% are a subscriber or season-ticket holder to one or more theaters, music groups, performing arts centers, dance companies, etc.

Native Americans breadth index* was 6.96 (compared to 7.6 overall).

Top 5 activities attended in 2019:

Community festival/street fair (59%)

Food and drink experience (e.g., food festival, beer or wine tasting) (51%)

Read books/literature (45%)

Television program (e.g., streaming or broadcast, non-news) (44%)

Movies/film (e.g., documentary, independent, blockbuster) (39%)

Digital Participation

Native Americans were aware of and participated in a variety of digital activities during the pandemic, and they were more frequently engaged with online exhibitions or galleries than the overall population.

76% are aware of and 63% participated in digital cultural activities.

Top 5 digital activities:

Live interactive events or performances online, where you can participate via chat, audio, or video (84%)

Pre-recorded performances filmed before the shutdowns (68%)

Online exhibitions or galleries (67%, ↑)

Virtual tours or VR experiences (from performers, artists, museums, arts groups, zoos, gardens, etc.) (66%)

Online classes, courses, or workshops (from performers, artists, museums, arts groups, zoos, etc.) (53%)

Community Support

Native Americans feel arts & culture organizations can play an important role in helping educate their children—particularly while schools are closed during the pandemic.

Top 5 types of support:

Educate children while schools are closed (63%)

Laugh and relax (54%)

Look ahead and plan for recovery (46%)

Heal, grieve, and process our emotions (41%)

Stay connected (33%)

↑↓ Significantly higher or lower than the overall U.S. population at p<.05

* Breadth index is the number of different cultural activity-categories this population reports participating in during 2019.

Desire For Change

While two-thirds (67%, ↓) of White/Caucasian Americans would like to see change in arts & culture organizations, Whites/Caucasians are the least likely to want organizations to change (when compared to other racial/ethnic groups).

Top 5 types of change:

More fun (25%)

Supporting local artists, organizers, etc., Friendlier to all kinds of people (20%)

More focus on our local community; Stories or content that connect to my life; Less formal (17%, TIED)

Treat their employees fairly and equitably (16%)

Engage more young people; More frequent new works or exhibits (14%, TIED)

Cultural Engagement

White respondents are participating in marginally more cultural activities than the average American.

13% are a member of one or more museums, zoos, aquariums, gardens, or other cultural destinations

9% are a subscriber or season-ticket holder to one or more theaters, music groups, performing arts centers, dance companies, etc.

White/Caucasian Americans breadth index* was 7.71 (compared to 7.6 overall).

Top 5 activities attended in 2019:
Public Park (63%, ↑)

Movies/film (e.g., documentary, independent, blockbuster) (58%)

Television program (e.g., streaming or broadcast, non-news) (55%, ↑)

Food and drink experience (e.g., food festival, beer or wine tasting (50%)

Read Books/literature (48%, ↑)

Digital Participation

Although White/Caucasian respondents are just as likely as the overall population to have heard of digital cultural activities during the pandemic, they are slightly less likely to have participated in them.

75% are aware of and 51% (↓) participated in digital cultural activities.

Top 5 digital activities:

Pre-recorded performances filmed before the shutdowns (48%)

Live-stream performances or cultural events (38%)

Podcasts (from performers, artists, museums, arts groups, zoos, gardens, etc.) (35%)

Online materials or activities for kids (for home-schooling or just for fun); Live interactive events or performances online, where you can participate via chat, audio, or video (33%, TIED)

Virtual tours or VR experiences (from performers, artists, museums, arts groups, zoos, gardens, etc.) (30%)

Community Support

While fewer White/Caucasian Americans hope arts & culture organizations will change, they are just as likely as other racial/ethnic groups to see ways in which these organizations can help their community during the pandemic.

Top 5 types of support:

Laugh and relax (53%)

Educate children while schools are closed (48%); Offer distraction and escape during the crisis (↑) (48%)

Stay connected (47%)

Look ahead and plan for recovery (42%)

Have hope (40%)

↑↓ Significantly higher or lower than the overall U.S. population at p<.05

* Breadth index is the number of different cultural activity-categories this population reports participating in during 2019.

Reflections

Good research generates not only useful answers but also useful questions to be explored in later studies. Throughout this report, we've highlighted questions that we plan to investigate in the next two phases of Culture + Community in a Time of Crisis (CCTC) as well as ones that will need to be explored in future work or by other researchers. We've tried *not* to provide closed interpretations of the data, much less specific recommendations for change; the evolutionary moment is so rapid and there's so much at stake that the meaning-making process around issues of identity and race in the cultural sector must be collective and iterative. Readers' perspectives on these findings will differ from the authors', and that's a strength. We look forward to seeing what others — cultural funders, practitioners in all kinds of settings, researchers and policy analysts, artists and culture-bearers, activists and community developers, educators — discover here and how it informs programming, practice, philanthropy, and policy.

In this final section of the report, we offer a few speculative comments on themes and questions related to the data. These fall into two broad areas: the usefulness of a broad definitional "frame" for cultural engagement, and the implications of the pandemic-era "all digital" moment for the field. Both topics take us beyond what the Wave 1 survey was designed to measure; we discuss them here in the hope of connecting these findings to the urgent, strategic, and courageous conversations about equity taking place across the cultural sector.

▶ Opening the window of "culture" wider

When it comes to studying human domains as complex as "culture" and "the arts," how you define them determines what you'll discover when you study them. Define them broadly enough and you'll find universal participation, since everyone does culture, has culture, lives within a culture. Define them narrowly, for instance by focusing on attendance-based, nonprofit, professionalized, and spectator-based or receptive forms of engagement — in other words, on a set of norms and definitions that arose in Europe and were adapted in nineteenth and twentieth-century America by White elites[23] — and you'll find narrower participation, racial disparities, and insiders and outsiders. That can hardly be a surprise.

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[23] See Levine, Lawrence W., "Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America," 1988, Harvard Univ. Press (https://www.amazon.com/Highbrow-Lowbrow-Emergence-Hierarchy-Civilization/dp/0674390776). Levine's influential work intersects meaningfully with later, more race-focused cultural histories, including Nell Irvin Painter's "The History of White People," 2011, Norton (https://www.amazon.com/History-White-People-Irvin-Painter/dp/0393339742/).

In the Wave 1 survey study, we used a broad frame of culture because we wanted to "meet people where they live" by asking about a wide range of practices, places, and pipelines of engagement, both physical and digital, and by encouraging respondents to use their own frames of reference when answering the questions. Previous studies conducted by our firm suggest that most people engage in culture without caring much about distinctions between nonprofit and commercial, institutional and informal, receptive and participatory, learning and play, art and entertainment. So if the cultural sector wants to serve and support people in a time of change and challenge, then funders and practitioners need to take a holistic, empathetic view of how culture works in Americans' lives.

Was the working definition of culture in the Wave 1 survey broad *enough*? We don't know, but the fact that Black/African American participation was lower than that of other groups raises the question of whether we failed to ask about the full range of places or forms of engagement, expression, and connection for Black Americans, as discussed on page 22. Of course, it's also possible that Black/African American adults are in fact less engaged in culture, on average, for reasons that could include the burdens placed on their lives by structural racism and its cumulative economic and other effects. The next phases of the research will be an opportunity to rethink both how we develop the questionnaire and how we invite Americans to participate in the survey to see if we can capture more of the lived experience of, and desired relationship to, arts and culture in Black communities and for other BIPOC Americans.

Yet we did see — and are heartened by — important commonalities *across* race and ethnicity (with some variation), including the frequency of cultural participation among those who participate at all; the value placed on arts and culture organizations, even (or especially) during a pandemic; the personal and informal participation in creative activities; the use and utility of online forms of culture; and the broad support for communitarian change and other shifts in the cultural sector. We might not have discovered those commonalities had we taken a narrower view. And we might have missed the bigger picture they form, in which arts and culture experiences of all kinds constitute a human service — emotional, social, cognitive, expressive, even practical — that people need and rely on, along with other services, in good times and bad and *to which they contribute* with their own creative assets, cultural identities, and problem-solving energies.

What possibilities does that wider frame offer to different kinds of stakeholders in the arts and culture sector?

For funders

Many foundations and public agencies have been redoubling their efforts to support cultural organizations in contributing to social justice and equity in their communities and art-forms, and becoming more diverse and equitable internally. Some funders have shifted support from large "anchor" cultural organizations to smaller, community-engaged ones that have long been working with communities of color and/or vulnerable populations. Because our frame for culture in this survey was broad, the findings about engagement lend support to both kinds of grantmaking: BIPOC

Americans are more likely than Whites to endorse social purposes in the arts and culture domain and more likely to see roles that cultural entities could and should play in their lives and communities. Our data show that some communities of color place more value on arts and culture organizations as a whole than Whites do *and* are more likely to want those organizations to change — to become more inclusive, relevant, local, and dynamic. Could this be because Americans of color are more conscious of, or feel a greater need for, some of those multidimensional human and social "services" mentioned above? If so, the funders already underwriting those priorities are helping cultural organizations become more meaningful and valuable in the eyes of BIPOC Americans.

Yet that wide frame also reminds us that culture is not just about *organizations*. It's about the purposes, pleasures, and outcomes of engaging, not all of which depend on institution-based or even organized experiences. Many funders understand this, and in principle many embrace the collective, participatory co-construction of culture and the idea of a porous boundary between the arts and other domains of action and change. Still, it's fairly rare to "fund the outcomes" however and wherever they may be generated, and even rarer for grantmakers to work from a fully inclusive and humanistic picture of the cultural ecosystem — a picture that doesn't privilege organized nonprofits or favor place-based engagement over domestic or digital pursuits. Doing so would not be easy: If culture is a self-generating and self-organizing phenomenon that emerges on various scales, then by definition it's hard to imagine a fixed strategy to foster it. But the question itself is generative: What if personal creative practice, community cultural expression and celebration, digital manifestations of art and identity, commercially produced and distributed experiences, nontraditional sites and contexts of participation, and partnerships in which arts or culture are elements within a matrix of other actors and goals — what if all of that counted as much, and were as prominent in grantmaking portfolios, as the major cultural institutions in our urban centers? Such a borderless, organic view might allow grantmakers to support culture not just more broadly but more directly and perhaps more efficiently and equitably: to fund the human purposes, needs, and assets associated with creativity and culture in addition to the formalized nonprofit programs and places that have long dominated the picture.

In the nearer term, listening to the values and needs amplified in this analysis can help cultural funders target their support in ways that will matter to many BIPOC Americans. These findings suggest ways to tighten the links between what people of color are going through, how they engage in culture in the broadest sense, what they need more of in their lives, and how creativity, culture, and the arts are — and could be — *of use*. As noted below, tightening those links may inspire funders to invest more heavily in digital culture, both to tap the democratizing potential of online engagement by subsidizing free or low-cost offerings beyond the pandemic period and to solidify the role of cultural providers in the online learning and public information ecosystems.

For small, community-based, and BIPOC-focused cultural organizations
Some practitioners have been using a broad frame for culture and centering the lives and needs of Americans of color for decades. For many working in small, community-based, BIPOC-led and BIPOC-serving arts and culture enterprises or at the myriad "arts *and*" intersections where artists

and cultural leaders partner with other entities to advance racial justice, public health, climate action, community development and "placetending,"[24] and other kinds of social change, George Floyd's murder was not the start of something but a painful continuation of, and catalyst for belated national attention to, violence and structural racism. Those arts and culture professionals have rarely had access to pertinent national, population-level social research data *specifically about cultural engagement and needs* (though they have had the benefit of data from other fields about related topics like racism, poverty, attachment to community, trust in institutions, etc.) The findings in this report bolster the kinds of programming and practice that leverage culture and the arts to meet a wide range of human needs and desires, both individually and at the community level — and the local embeddedness and co-creative work that place participants' needs and assets at the core of that practice.

We use the term "participants" rather than "audiences" here because for many community arts and culture organizations the programmatic offering is less about attendance or spectatorship and more about active participation or direct service. We hope these findings help those practitioners by providing a broad view of how BIPOC Americans engage with and feel about culture, creativity, and the arts during a time of stress and change, a view that might suggest new pathways to engagement and service. Are there opportunities to make programs more inclusive and community-connective? More casual and fun? More relevant and reflective of people's complex identities and communities? How might these organizations' missions be even better aligned with the unique needs of specific BIPOC communities and how each actually engages with culture? In light of this broad frame, are there new ways of partnering with other organizations or practitioners to collaboratively embrace and serve those communities beyond the confines of an existing mission or program?

We acknowledged earlier that small, BIPOC-serving organizations were underrepresented in the Wave 1 survey process, although a number of large "culturally specific" institutions were involved. Nonetheless, the carefully weighted data provides a strong approximation of the U.S. population on multiple dimensions of diversity. In the future, more focused studies among specific, intersectionally defined populations would be valuable to the field, and we'll be taking an important step in that direction in the upcoming qualitative phase of CCTC (in-depth, exploratory interviews with adults who identify as Black or African American). We invite readers whose organizations, networks, or cohorts include small, BIPOC-led or-serving, community-based, or "*arts and*" entities to consider participating in the Wave 2 survey by sharing the link with their participants/users/audiences. Please contact the researchers at CCTC@sloverlinett.com.

For large arts and culture institutions
The broad frame of culture poses a complex question for America's mid-sized and large cultural institutions: If strumming and jamming in the basement with friends, applauding and laughing at an open-mic hip-hop competition at a street festival, learning bachata dance moves at a VFW hall,

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[24] "Creative placetending" is one of several terms that have been proposed to extend or replace "creative placemaking," the original name of a movement for arts-led, equitable community development. Others are "placekeeping" and "placeknowing." See https://www.artplaceamerica.org/blog/artplace-book-commemorates-10-years.

making a K-pop playlist on Spotify, attending a ballet company's international choreographers program, and taking a VR tour of an Ancestral Puebloan archaeological site are viewed as equally worthy and legitimate modes of cultural engagement, what becomes of the prestige, primacy, and financial largesse those organizations once categorically enjoyed? Yet at many major arts and culture organizations, progressive staff, leaders, and trustees have been trying to dismantle the traditional hierarchies and inequities of the cultural sector, decolonize both the content and governance of their institutions, and collaborate authentically with diverse communities. At other institutions, of course, there is less comfort with those priorities or less of the skills and capacities necessary to implement them, as much as those leaders and staff may care sincerely about diversifying their audiences and art-forms.

By illuminating the lives and cultural-participation patterns of BIPOC Americans during the pandemic, this analysis can inform a wide spectrum of goals and practices at large cultural organizations, from the financial imperative of engaging larger and more diverse audiences to the social imperatives of equity and service. (The two imperatives overlap greatly.) The broad research frame helps shift the question from *"How do I advance my organization's mission and content-area?"* to *"How are the people in my community actually engaging in culture, and to what ends...and how can we contribute?"* Making that shift requires listening to Americans of color who don't often attend formal arts and culture organizations as well as those who do, and seizing the post-pandemic period as an opportunity to experiment with new ways of engaging and working with community members. Can the organization's existing programs and experiences be made more locally-centered and welcoming? More casual, fun, and family-friendly? More relevant and reflective of people's stories and identities? Can the organization itself become fairer and friendlier to all kinds of people and more connected to community assets and needs? More structurally, can large cultural organizations develop new skills by collaborating with and learning from smaller, community-embedded arts and culture entities in their areas that have already built authentic relationships with those audiences and understand the kinds of needs, identities, and cultural activity-patterns described in this report? Of course, such collaborations must be mutually beneficial rather than extractive; practitioners working in different parts of the cultural ecosystem need to invest in developing trust with *each other* in order to work together on behalf of their communities. A broad research picture like the current analysis offers common ground for a collective effort.

For researchers, scholars, and cultural policymakers
We hope the CCTC Wave 1 survey demonstrates the value of asking questions about the broadest possible range of arts and culture behaviors, needs, experiences, and outcomes, and asking them of the broadest possible cross-section of community members. Any narrower or more targeted frame inevitably begs the question about what culture is, what it's for, and who engages. Moreover, interweaving questions about cultural participation with questions about personal and community needs, aspirations, and assets shines light on the roles that culture is and isn't playing in contemporary life — and new roles it *could* be playing, whether or not members of the community

currently expect cultural organizations to do those things. Such research can go beyond tracking what's already occurring and actively inform new programming based on a humanistic understanding of culture.

More studies like this race/ethnicity analysis will be needed to better understand the relationships that Americans of color have with culture, including but not limited to their relationships with the large, traditionally White-led institutions in their communities. Researchers have long noted that education level is the strongest predictor of engagement with those institutions, and that racial/ethnic differences mostly disappear when education is statistically controlled for. This led to an unfortunate but long-lasting discourse about the need to educate people so they become more likely to participate in, and derive the benefits of, culture. Why should culture be relevant and accessible only to the educated? And isn't that a foregone conclusion when both "culture" and "education" are defined in formal, institutional terms? We didn't take that approach in this analysis, because our goal wasn't to understand how to encourage more people of color to attend large cultural institutions. It was to understand how engagement with culture, broadly defined, works in the lives of BIPOC adults and illuminate additional pathways and possibilities for the field at large — which includes but is not defined by those large institutions. The cultural research and cultural policy community can valuably inform the whole ecosystem of cultural provision by studying the whole ecosystem of cultural participation and consumption.

▶ Lessons from the digital moment

We were excited to find that, in certain art-forms and cultural content-areas, "digital only" audiences (those who had used digital content from organizations in those categories but hadn't attended such organizations in the previous year) are more racially, educationally, and economically diverse than digital users who *had* attended in person. The data suggests that, for Black/African American adults, in categories like the performing arts, art and natural history museums, and botanic gardens, the barriers to engaging digitally may be lower than the barriers to attending in person; and the same is true for Hispanic/Latinx adults in categories like science and technology museums and libraries. This makes sense: It's easier to do something that doesn't require leaving your home, especially if that activity is free to access online but costs money to attend in person.[25] So perhaps the question is how to preserve accessibility and inclusion as cultural organizations shift from free to paid or subscription models for their digital offerings. Yet previous research suggests that, in addition to logistical and financial barriers, people of color and people with lower incomes or education levels also face a range of social or cultural uncertainties when considering in-person

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[25] Several recent reports have explored the potential of charging for access to digital arts and culture, price levels, etc. See "Trends in Audience Behavior: Digital Performances," JCA Arts Marketing, 2020 (http://jcainc.com/blog/archive/tab-digital-performances) and "Monetizing Digital," Advisory Board for the Arts, 2020 (http://www.advisoryboardarts.com/monetizing-digital). We don't know the extent to which the greater diversity of online audiences is due to the fact that most such content was free during the early months of the pandemic. But to the extent that cost *is* a factor, then as cultural providers attempt to turn digital programming into revenue streams by shifting to paid models we may see diversity decline. So foundations may have a key role to play in supporting wide accessibility by subsidizing some digital arts and culture experiences.

arts and culture experiences.[26] *Will there be people in the room who look like me? Will the norms of behavior and participation (or non-participation) be comfortable for me? Will the performers/ artists/creators include people who share my identity, and will they be talking to me? Will the themes or stories be relevant to my life? Will I feel safe?* Some of those concerns don't apply in the digital domain, or may feel less important. So the current findings invite us to consider what might be learned from digital cultural experiences about how to make *in-person* experiences more accessible, especially for BIPOC Americans. Since Black/African American and Hispanic/Latinx respondents disproportionately *didn't* attend certain arts and culture categories in person but *did* engage with those categories digitally, is it possible that the barriers lie not in the content itself but in those other aspects of the live experience — the social, spatial, temporal, and behavioral "envelope" around the content? Perhaps the orchestral performance or natural history exhibition are relevant and accessible, and it's the rest of the attendance experience that feels irrelevant, uncomfortable, or challenging to some.

In recent months, of course, most practitioners and funders have been asking the opposite question: not "*How can in-person arts and culture experiences become more like digital ones?*" but "*How can digital experiences be made more like in-person experiences?*" Here, our findings about what people have been missing from in-person cultural experiences during the pandemic suggest that finding creative ways to make digital users and online audience members feel connected to others could add significant value (see pages 33 and 37). This may seem extraneous to some arts and culture professionals. If one views in-person, live cultural experiences primarily as ways of connecting many people at once to the content (i.e., performance, exhibition, presentation, etc.), then creating an online version is simply a matter of capturing that content in streamable or interactive form. But if one views such experiences as inherently collective and socially participatory, then it will be important to find ways of incorporating lateral connections among audience members as part of the digital version. The findings from this analysis point in that direction: Americans miss the ways cultural experiences used to connect them to family and friends — and BIPOC Americans miss the social and emotional aspects more than they miss "experiencing performers or artworks in person." Interestingly, Black/African American and Native American respondents are more likely to say that the digital arts and culture offerings they'd used during the pandemic did provide them the benefit of connecting with family or friends. Moreover, most BIPOC groups are particularly interested in cultural organizations bringing people of different backgrounds together, as one way they could help the community in the future.

Do those two possibilities contradict each other? How can the social norms and interactions of in-person cultural experiences be both a barrier to participation and a much-missed benefit to BIPOC Americans? Both dynamics are fundamentally social, and both could pertain to interactions with

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26 See, for example, the UK study "'Not for the Likes of You': Phase 2—How To Reach A Broader Audience," 2004. Arts Council England and Morton Smyth Limited (https://www.culturehive.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Not-for-the-Likes-of-You.pdf).

people you already know or people who may be very different from you.[27] Clearly, these dynamics call for further research, and we plan to explore them in the next phases of the study.

In keeping with the broad frame of culture discussed above, it may be important to see online consumption and participation as legitimate forms of engagement in themselves, alongside physical attendance, personal practice and informal activities, commercially produced culture, and the rest of the culture and creativity ecosystem. The Wave 1 survey doesn't answer this question, but it does suggest that digital experiences are a potentially powerful way of reaching and serving across the traditional lines of race and ethnicity, income, education, geography, disability, etc. This holds important implications for cultural funders, since, as mentioned above, organizations of all sizes will need support to continue investing in digital innovation after the pandemic and to offer those innovations at low or no cost in order to keep barriers low, even as they experiment with revenue, subscription, and loyalty models. Funders and practitioners should also reflect on the lessons of the Covid era about the importance of cultural institutions in the online learning and public-information ecosystems — particularly but not only museums, which have long thought of themselves as being in the "informal learning" business. If, as some experts have warned, the coronavirus is a harbinger of future pandemics and lockdowns, then it will be wise for the cultural sector to continue diversifying its range of "delivery systems" beyond place-based, physical gatherings and find creative, even disruptive ways of providing emotionally, aesthetically, socially, and cognitively valuable experiences at a distance.

▶ Other views, next steps

We hope these reflections inspire conversation, alternative interpretations, and fresh questions, and that this analysis centering the perspectives of BIPOC Americans will be a valuable tool for equity-focused practitioners, funders, and stakeholders across, and perhaps beyond, the cultural sector. Again, **we welcome comments and suggestions at CCTC@sloverlinett.com, including ideas about the next two phases of the study and how to involve more small, BIPOC-serving cultural organizations in the second wave of the survey.** Working in partnership with researchers Ciara Knight and Katrina Bledsoe, we're currently designing the qualitative study to further explore the place of culture and the arts (including digital experiences) in the lives of Black or African American adults. And we're planning the Wave 2 survey, which will aim to help the cultural sector as a whole become more inclusive and relevant as it emerges from the pandemic. Both upcoming phases will result in Culture Track reports and presentations from LaPlaca Cohen as well as Slover Linett reports like the current document, with input from Yancey Consulting, a range of expert advisors, and the project funders. We hope that Culture + Community in a Time of Crisis informs and empowers colleagues who are already traveling the road toward a more egalitarian and (in Lisa Yancey's coinage) "thrivable"[28] future, and encourages others to begin their own journeys.

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[27] Social scientists call the former *social bonding* and the latter *social bridging*. Bonding refers to people you already know or who are in your social group, network, class, family, etc. Bridging refers to people in different social groups or classes.

[28] In "What Are the Paradigm Shifts Necessary for the Arts Sector to Nurture More THRIVING Institutions of Color?" 2018. Yancey Consulting for Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and New York Community Trust.

Acknowledgments

Appendix list

The appendices to this report, referred to throughout the document, are provided separately online. The first four (A – D) are combined into one PDF. Please click on the links to view or download.

A. **Wave 1 Methodology & Limitations**

B. **Analytical Models**

C. **Digital Usage Gap Tables**

https://sloverlinett.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/CCTC-Centering-the-Picture-Appendix-A-D-Methodology-analytical-models-and-select-data-tables.pdf

D. **Other Responses — Full Tables**

E. **All Questions by Race & Ethnicity (Crosstabs)**

https://sloverlinett.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/CCTC-Centering-the-Picture-Appendix-E-All-tables-by-race-and-ethnicity.pdf

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