



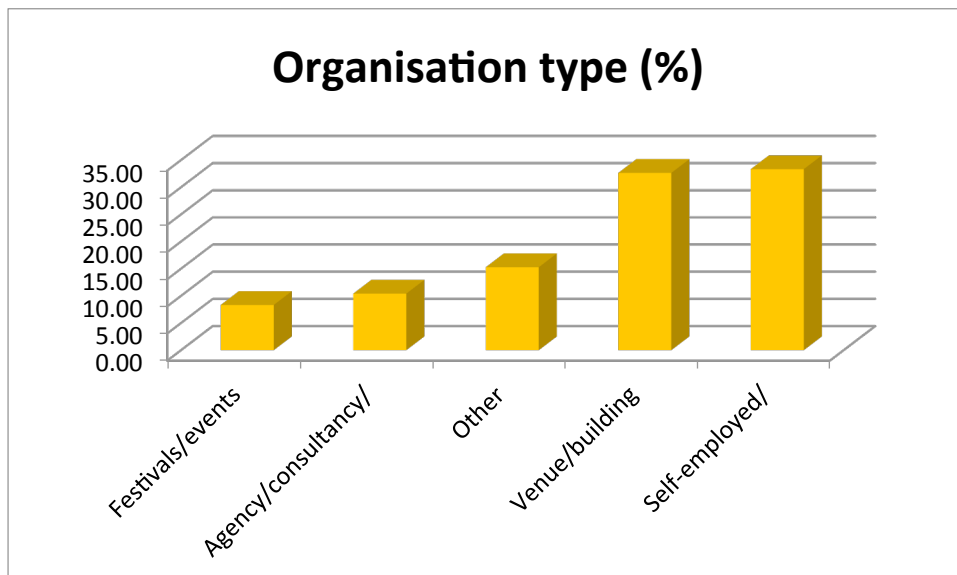
ANALYSIS OF NECP COVID-19 SURVEY ON ARTS & HERITAGE SECTOR

Introduction

NECP issued a Survey Monkey questionnaire on 30 March 2020 with a deadline of 14 April, with 17 questions, to find out how North East arts and heritage organisations and practitioners are coping with the Covid-19 pandemic, and to discover if there are practical ways in which NECP and other organisations can support the sector both during, and after the pandemic.

Question 1: Please tell us about yourself /your organisation

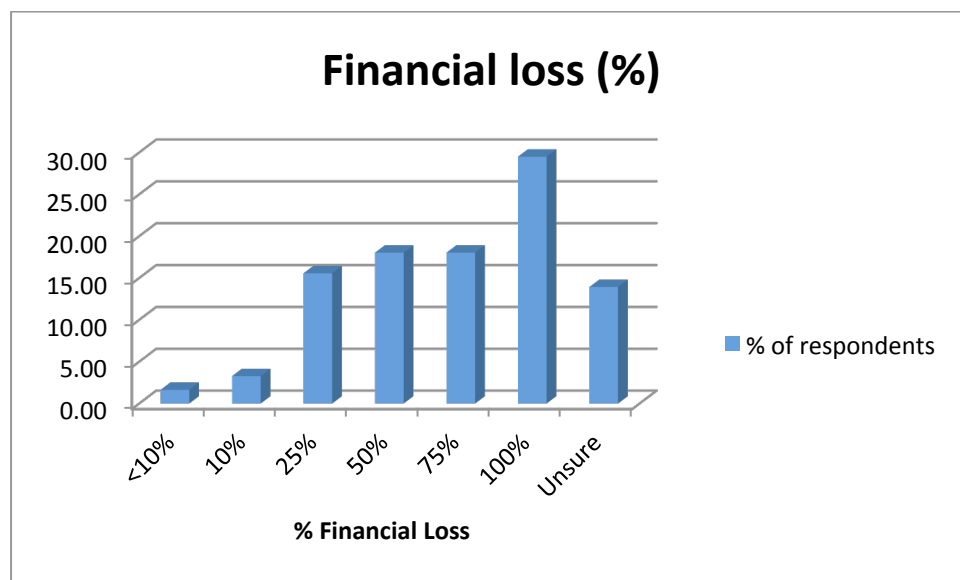
121 organisations answered the survey. Some fitted several categories, so the answers total 144. 33% of the responders are self-employed, and 33% are venue based.



Type of organisation	%
Festivals/events	8.33
Agency/consultancy/company	10.42
Other	15.28
Venue/building	32.64
Self-employed/freelance/creatives	33.33

Question 2: Over the next three months, do you anticipate that the impact of Coronavirus will lead to financial losses for you / your organisation of approximately:

122 responses received as one organisation entered two answers. Nearly 30% of respondents advised that they will expect financial losses of 100% over the next 3 months.



Financial loss	No. replying	% of respondents
<10%	2	1.64
10	4	3.28
25%	19	15.57
50%	22	18.03
75%	22	18.03
100%	36	29.50
Unsure	17	13.93
Total:	122	

In addition, 29 respondents provided additional comments: 10 (34.48% respondents) said that all of their work and events (including open-air events) had been cancelled. Some mentioned applying for ACE Covid-19 emergency funding.

Question 3: What are the top 3 practical things you would like the Government to do, to help you / your organisation deal with the consequences of Coronavirus?

Not surprisingly, the key request in the short term is financial support – whether from Central Government grants, ACE or local authorities in the form of rates relief. Many self-employed artists are finding that they do not fit the criteria for financial support from local or central government – some have been trading for under 3 years, or do not have financial reserves to wait until June. Others have asked for emergency grants for core funding for small charities and the self-employed, and a request for funding studio rent.

In the intermediate term, organisations are asking for the furlough scheme to be extended beyond 3 months.

Many are concerned to ensure that: all people are tested; that the Government provides clear guidance on the timetable for lockdown; the plan for recovery; and for help with funding staff after they return from furlough. There's a request of the Government, to allow furloughed staff to be allowed to continue to work for their organisations.

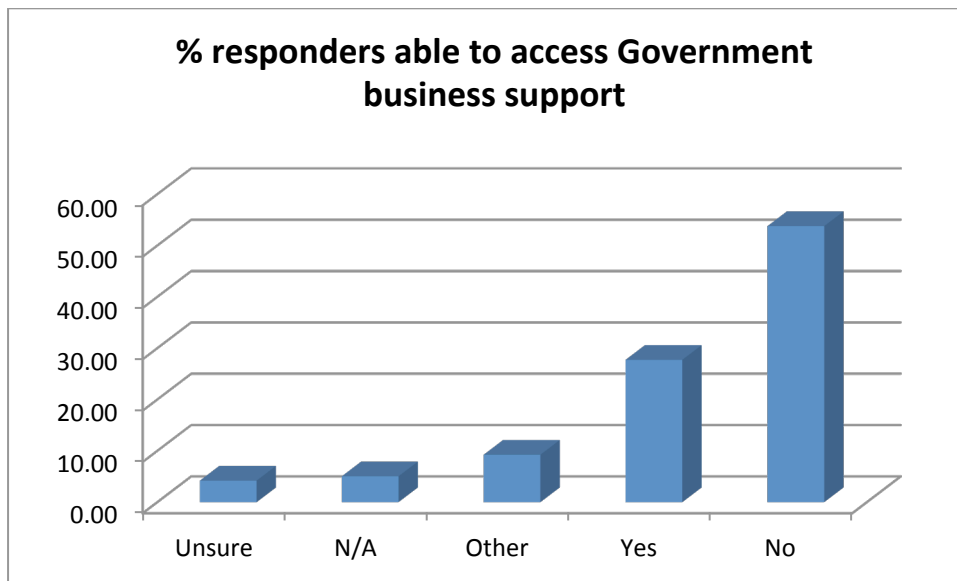
Practical steps include:

- Make funding applications for help as simple as possible
- Grants not loans
- Create a digital portal for all cultural organisations to publish Covid-resources
- Requests to be trained on using digital technology;
- Help with Council tax, rates, rent, utility bills
- Platform listing organisations who would like to explore working virtually
- For the North East to promote the value of arts and culture;
- For a website on funding for the creative sector;
- Access to free resources - software/free memberships;
- Offer grants for unrealised productions to help get them back on in the future
- Support organisational development and education
- Allow charities with rate relief to get the 25k grant
- Ensure an effective stimulus package is in place for the recovery phase
- Cancel any plans for post-brexit festival (£120M earmarked?) and use that money to support the arts now
- Local authorities to defer or write off rent/loans.

Question 4: Has your organisation been able to access any of the business support measures announced by the government? Please outline.

Of the 119 who answered this question, only 27% of self-employed/freelance advised that they would be able to access the Government’s financial support.

Concerns expressed included the requirement to wait until the end of June 2020 for payment; the Government’s loan scheme not recognising portfolio careers along self-employment. Others were not eligible as: they do not pay rates/have ratable businesses, , or their rates are part of the fee in managed workspaces. have only recently become self-employed.



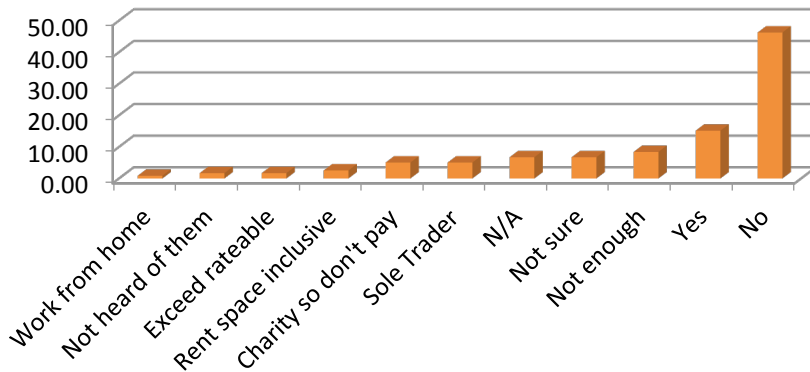
	No.	%
N/A	6	5.04
No	64	53.78
Yes	33	27.73
Unsure	5	4.20
Other	11	9.24
	119	100

Question 5: Is the advice around SME grants of £10,000 - £25,000 relevant to your organisation? Please outline

119 responses to this question. Over 46% said that the advice is not relevant to them/their organisation.

Is the advice around SME grants of £10,000 - £25,000 relevant to your organisation?	No.	%
Not heard of them	2	1.68
Not enough information/unclear/need to check/not seen/not sure	10	8.40
Charity so don't pay business rates	6	5.04
N/A	8	6.72
No	55	46.22
Rent space inclusive rates so can't claim	3	2.52
Sole Trader	6	5.04
Work from home	1	0.84
Not sure	8	6.72
Yes	18	15.13
Exceed rateable value	2	1.68
Total	119	100.00

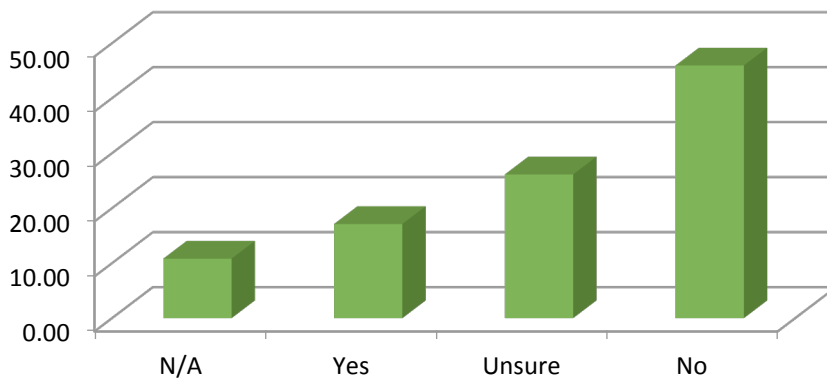
Relevance of advice on business grants (% responders)



Question 6 Are you able to benefit from the business rates relief?

111 organisations answered this question. 46% said that they cannot benefit from business rates relief.

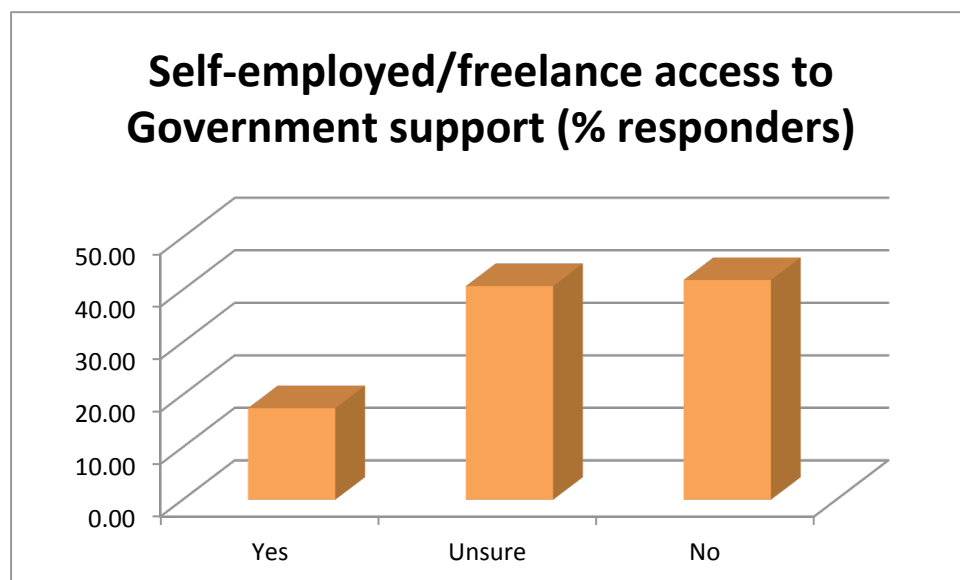
% responders on ability to benefit from business rates relief



	No.	%
No	51	45.95
N/A	12	10.81
Unsure	29	26.13
Yes	19	17.12
Total	111	100

Question 7. If you are self-employed or freelance, do you think you will be able to access support from the recently announced Government support package?

86 answered this question. Only 17% of self-employed/freelance workers are sure that they will be able to access support from the Government support package.



	No.	%
No	36	41.86
Unsure	35	40.70
Yes	15	17.44
Total	86	100

Question 8: What are the top 3 practical things which funding agencies (e.g.: Arts Council England, National Lottery Heritage Fund) and local authorities can do to help your organisation deal with the consequences of Coronavirus?

The replies centred around 3 main strands: funding, training, and lobbying.

Funding:

Numerous practical steps recommended:

- Provide light-touch emergency funds, and funding post lockdown;
- Pay artists to sustain themselves and make work.
- Shorter, easier to complete grant forms;
- Offer grants with less stringent criteria i.e.: just focused on maintaining a practice rather than the outcomes for people normally part of their criteria.
- Extend grant delivery dates.
- Allow artists to apply for larger grants than 2.5 k

- Make available small grants to tide creatives over a period with zero income
- Allow use of contingency
- Give those with grants some extra money (a percentage, perhaps 20% of grant money) to cover the extra costs of having to reschedule everything
- Quick decisions on grant approvals;
- Payment up front;
- Removal of grant conditions/flex grant conditions.
- Help with insurance costs, rent and loss of earnings.
- Interest-free loans.
- Provide local authorities with the revenue funding for arts organisations.
- Bring forward 2021 funding.
- Have a clear strategy communicated to the NPO portfolio on how they will support freelance creatives and artists in the future.

Training

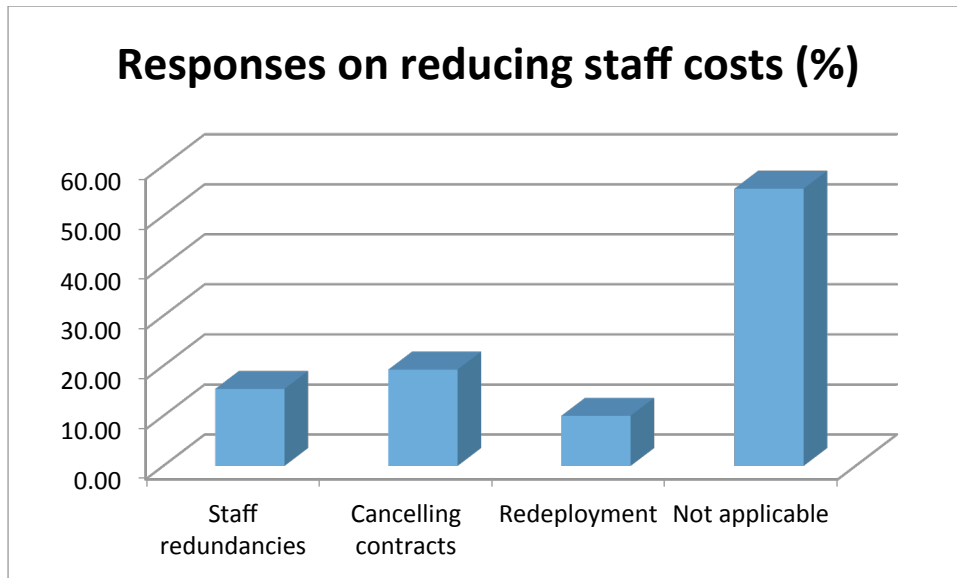
- Encourage organisations to think of corporate social responsibility;
- Grants/access to free vocational/study courses;
- Grants towards online development/web to show work ;
- Consider developmental work /support they can offer beyond funding, perhaps in relation to digital offer;
- Offer secondments / opportunities to staff on furlough;
- Connect creatives with experts to help us after closure;
- Campaign for critical importance of culture for people's wellbeing.
- Find creative ways artists can still work using online so that they can still get paid.

Lobbying

- Continue to lobby government to highlight importance of the arts and the necessity to fund creatives during this time;
- Lobby at a national level for continued support;
- Lobby government for more;
- Publicly recognise value of arts and culture sector during these times and rally support from general public.

Question 9: Are you considering any of these measures to reduce staff costs

130 answers were provided to this question. 45% of organisations are reducing staff costs via: staff redundancy/furlough/cancelling contracts/re-deployment.



NECP asked a supplementary question: If you are losing staff could you indicate a percentage figure which will help us understand the trends across the sector:

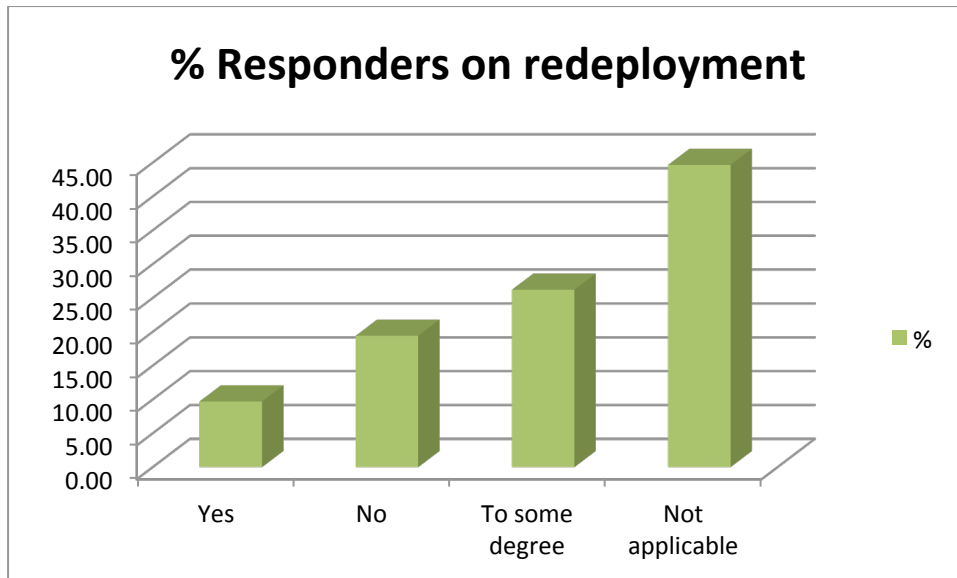
Of the 26 organisations who answered this question, the answers which can be quantified are as follows:

% effect by action	20%	30%	50%	100%
No. organisations – furloughing staff	1	2	2	3
Staffing reduction		1	1	
Cancelled contracts				1
Reduced hours			1	
Redundancy	1			

In addition, 3 organisations have had to cancel all of their contracts with freelancers, and 2 state that they will not survive beyond 3 months.

Question 10: Have you been able to redeploy or find alternative ways for staff to continue their roles?

103 responders answered this question. Only 35.92% of organisations have been able to redeploy or find alternative ways for their staff to continue their roles.



Answer	No.	%
No	20	19.42
Yes	10	9.71
To some degree	27	26.21
Not applicable	46	44.66
Total	103	100

Question 11: Do you / your organisation have the potential to offer its services or programmes to the public online? Could you tell us if this something you are actively exploring?

Of the 121 respondents who answered this question, 22 (18%) said “No” and 4 (3%) said N/A. The remaining 95 responses were varied, with some able to offer their content online, with some asking for advice on how to do this, or how to improve their website to make a digital offer possible. Respondents expressed concerns as to how to monetise an online offering and advised that online provision is now a crowded space during lockdown.

Question 12: Have you / your organisation been able to share ideas or work with other cultural organisations or colleagues to mitigate the current challenges? Please explain

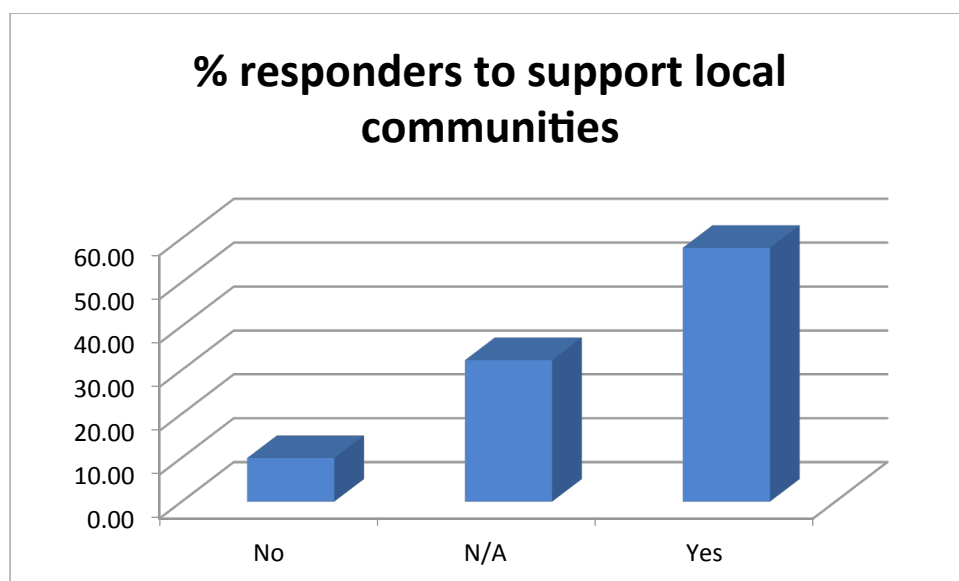
55% of responders said “Yes.” Many are using social media and virtual meetings such as via Zoom to share ideas. Some respondents who replied “No” advised that collaboration is currently limited as they are concentrating on core business.



	No.	%
N/A	4	3.33
No	47	39.17
Yes	66	55.00
Not sure	3	2.50
Total:	120	100

Question 13. Are you planning ways to support local communities, vulnerable people, mental health through your programme or by repurposing your facilities or buildings?

121 organisations responded. Over 57% of organisations responding said that they are planning ways to support local communities, vulnerable people, mental health through your programme or by repurposing your facilities or buildings.



	No.	%
No	12	9.92
Not applicable	39	32.23
Yes	70	57.85
Total	121	100

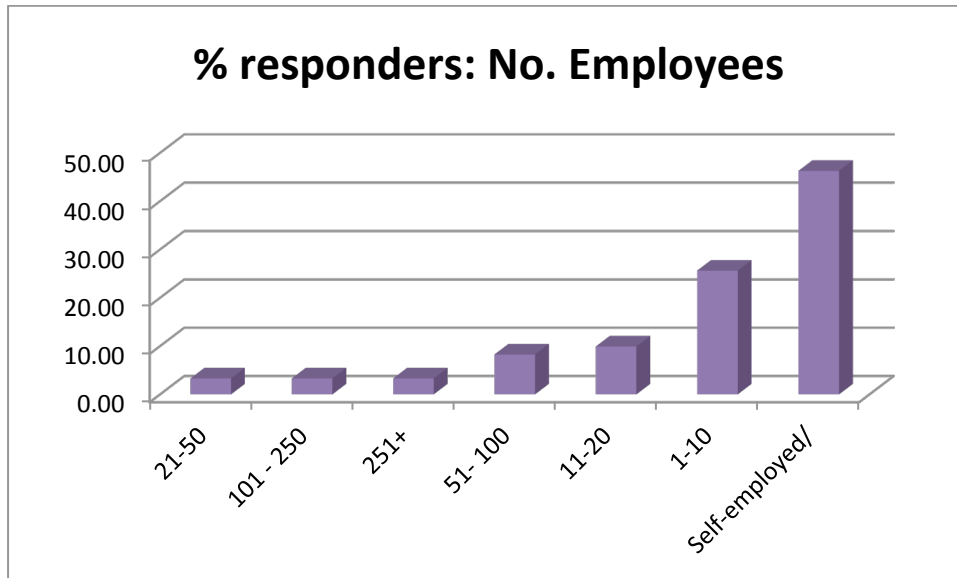
Question 14: Are there any ideas or other thoughts which you would like to share

Respondents also offered excellent additional thoughts:

- The need for funding to upgrade their online and computer facilities;
- Urging clients to postpone rather than cancel commissions.
- Emphasising that individual artists have different support needs to larger organisations.
- The need for a large programme of mental health support during and after lockdown.
- The requirement for grants now which involve minimal paperwork.
- Advice required on how to get “our voice heard” with all the Internet traffic during lockdown
- The request for NECP to narrate the regional impact and coordinate with other clusters like NGCV.
- A request for NECP to could better advocate for the large number of sole traders and orgs of less than 5 employees in the sector.
- The need for a long term strategy post lockdown.
- Encouraging signs that NPOs are starting to offer capacity and resource to support others.

Question 15: How many people do you employ?

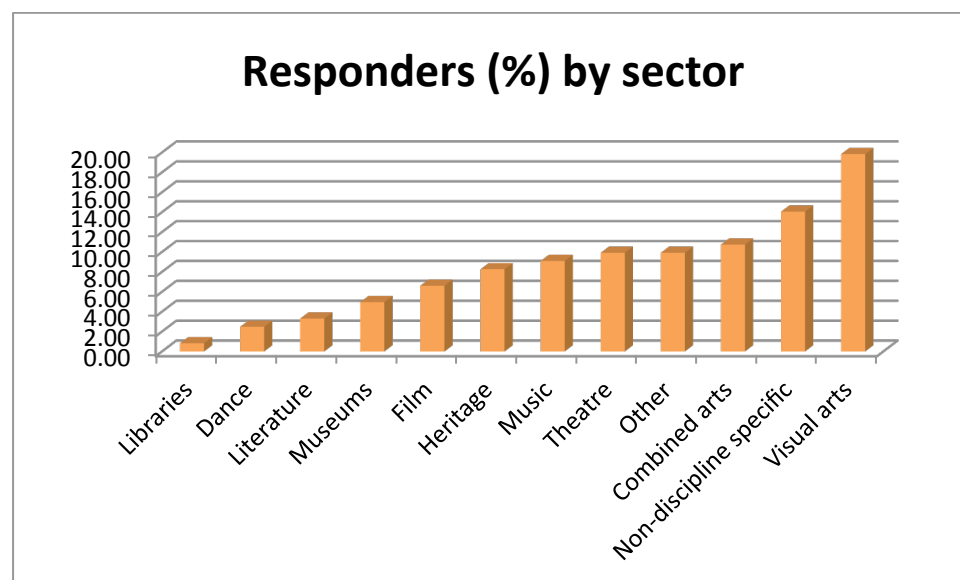
121 answered this question. Nearly 47% of responders are self-employed/freelance.



Type	No.	%
Self-employed/freelance	56	46.28
1-10	31	25.62
11-20	12	9.92
21-50	4	3.31
51- 100	10	8.26
101 - 250	4	3.31
251+	4	3.31
Total:	121	100

Question 16: Which sector do you predominantly work in?

121 responses, of which nearly 20% were from the visual arts sector.



Sector	No.	%
Libraries	1	0.83
Dance	3	2.48
Literature	4	3.31
Museums	6	4.96
Film	8	6.61
Heritage	10	8.26
Music	11	9.09
Theatre	12	9.92
Other	12	9.92
Combined arts	13	10.74
Non-discipline specific	17	14.05
Visual arts	24	19.83
Total:	121	100