

# Who Is Founding Arts Organizations? How do They Impact the Community? Some Findings from the Strategic National Arts Alumni Project

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Angie L. Miller, Ph.D.

Amber D. Lambert, Ph.D.

Center for Postsecondary Research, Indiana University



**STRATEGIC  
NATIONAL ARTS ALUMNI  
PROJECT**

# Introduction

- Many criticize arts majors for their lack of “usefulness” and claim they will not help graduates find gainful employment or be able to make any money
- However, those with arts degrees might be able to carve out a niche for themselves through the founding of arts-related organizations
  - AND these organizations can benefit their communities in multiple ways
- This study investigates the characteristics of arts alumni who found arts-related organizations, and the ways in which they contribute to the arts community



# The Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP)



# SNAAP

- To address the research questions, we will present findings from the Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP)
- What is SNAAP?
  - Online annual survey designed to assess and improve various aspects of arts-school education
  - Investigates the educational experiences and career paths of arts graduates nationally
  - Findings are provided to educators, policymakers, and philanthropic organizations to improve arts training, inform cultural policy, and support artists



# Who does SNAAP survey?

- Participants drawn from:
  - Arts high schools
  - Independent arts colleges
  - Arts schools, departments, or programs in comprehensive colleges/universities
- Cohort Year Sampling
  - 2008 and 2009 Field Tests: 5, 10, 15, & 20 years out
  - 2010 Field Test: 1-5, 10, 15, & 20 years out
  - 2011 and forward: all years to generate the most comprehensive data possible



# Increasing Numbers...

- 2011 Administration
  - More than 36,000 respondents
  - 66 institutions
- 2012 Administration
  - More than 33,000 respondents
  - 70 institutions
- 2013 Administration
  - More than 27,000 respondents
  - 48 institutions
- Now able to combine 2011, 2012, and 2013 respondents to create a “SNAAP Database” with over 92,000 respondents



# Types of Respondents

## Alumni Level:

- Undergraduates 74%
- Graduate level 22%
- Arts High School 4%

## Recent\* Alumni = 20%

\*received an undergrad or grad level arts degree no more than 5 years prior to the date that they completed the SNAAP survey; no more than 10 years for arts high school grads.

## Top Five Undergraduate Majors of SNAAP Respondents:

- Fine & Studio Arts
- Design
- Media Arts
- Theater
- Music Performance

# Questionnaire Topics (2011,12,13)

1. Formal education and degrees
2. Institutional experience and satisfaction
3. Current Work
4. Career
5. Arts engagement
6. Income and debt
7. Demographics





# Organization Founder Questions

In the careers section, alumni are asked...

Are you now or have you ever been a(n):

	Yes	No
Founder of a nonprofit or for-profit organization	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Paid intern	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Unpaid intern	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

And those who say “yes” are then asked...

Was any of your work as a founder of a nonprofit or for-profit organization arts-related?

- Yes
- No



# Organization Founder Questions

Combined responses from both questions to create three categories of respondents:

- 1) Alumni who founded an arts-related organization: 14%
- 2) Alumni who founded a non-arts organization: 6%
- 3) Alumni who did not found any organization: 80%



# Community Arts Involvement Questions

In the arts engagement section, alumni are asked whether they have (in the past 12 months)...

- Volunteered at an arts organization
- Served on the board of an arts organization
- Volunteered to teach the arts
- Donated money to an arts organization or an artist
- Attended an arts event (including exhibits, concerts, performances)

And also...

Do you make or perform art in your personal (not work-related) time?

- Yes
- No



# Demographic Questions

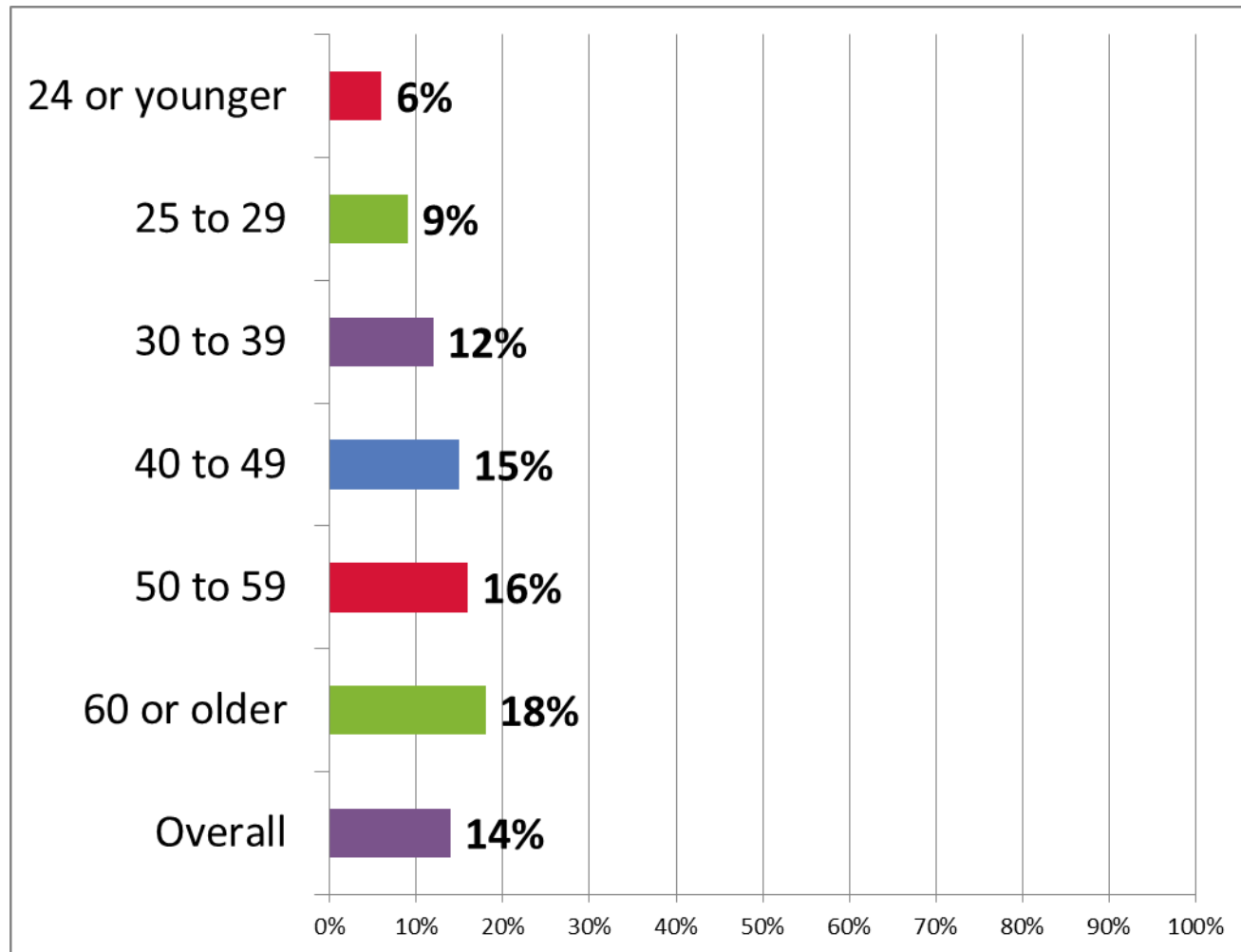
In the demographics section, alumni are asked about...

- Gender
- Age
- Parental education
- Parental artist status
- Major
- And many other demographic items



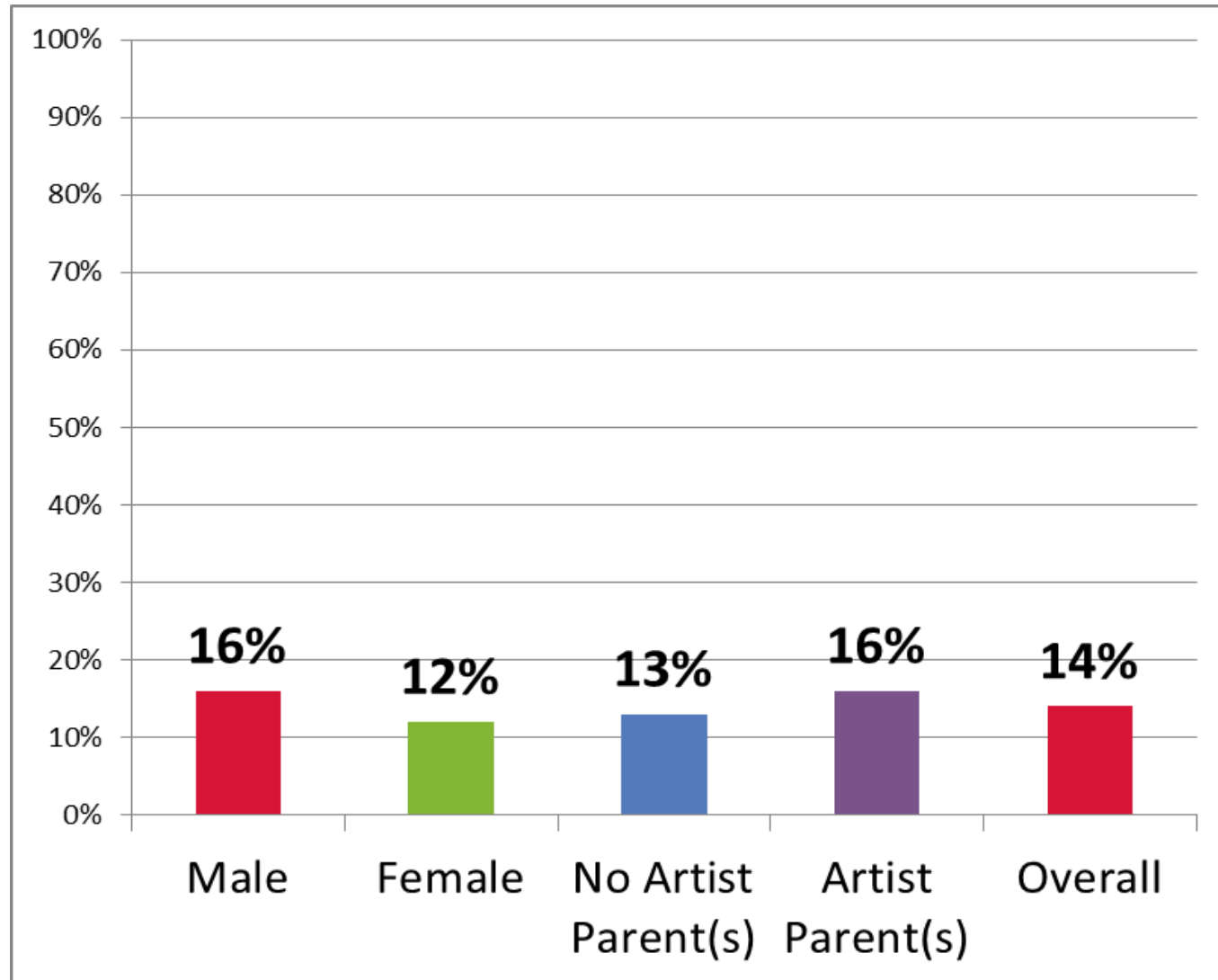
# Who Is Founding Arts Organizations?

## Findings by Age



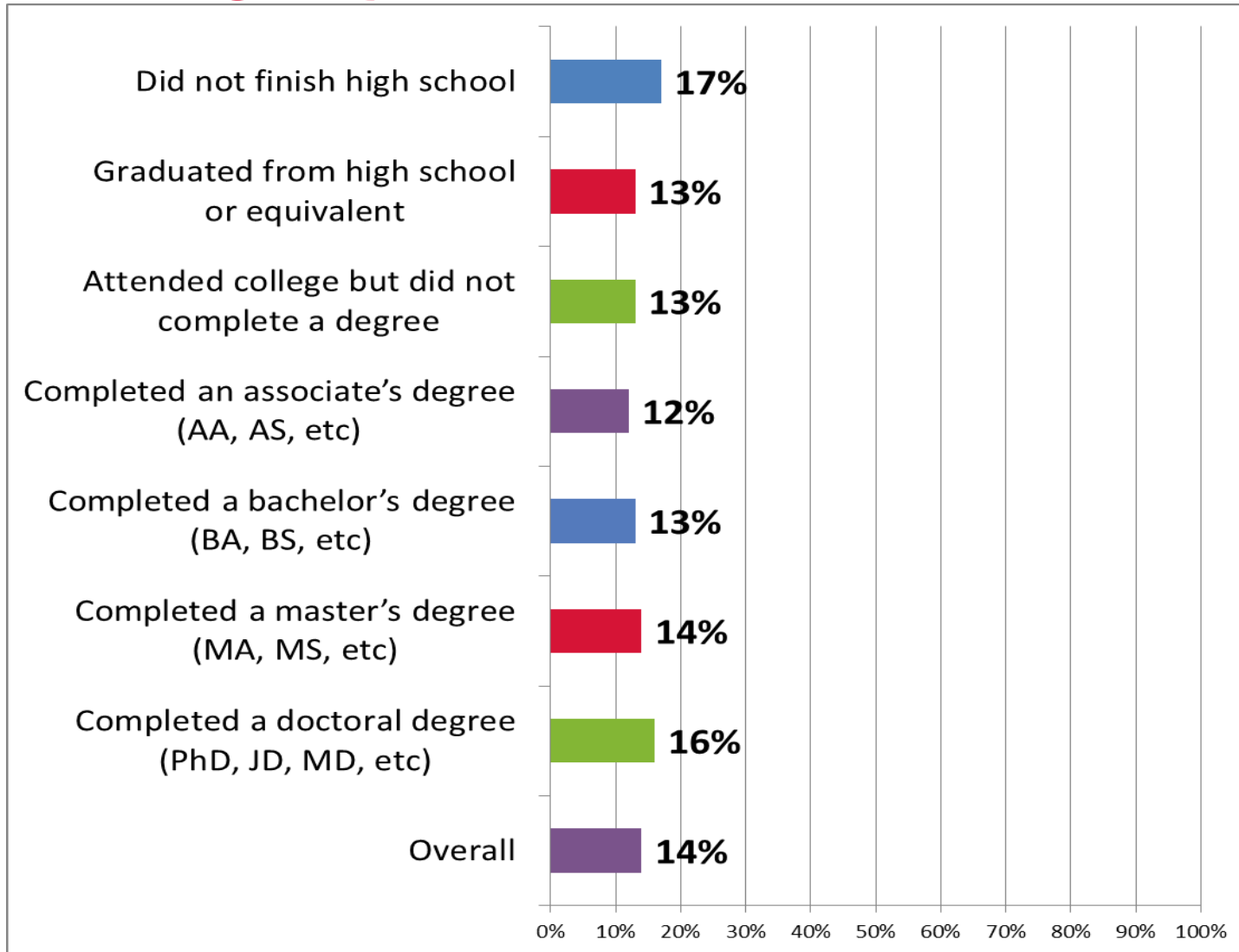
# Who Is Founding Arts Organizations?

## Findings by Gender & Artist Parent



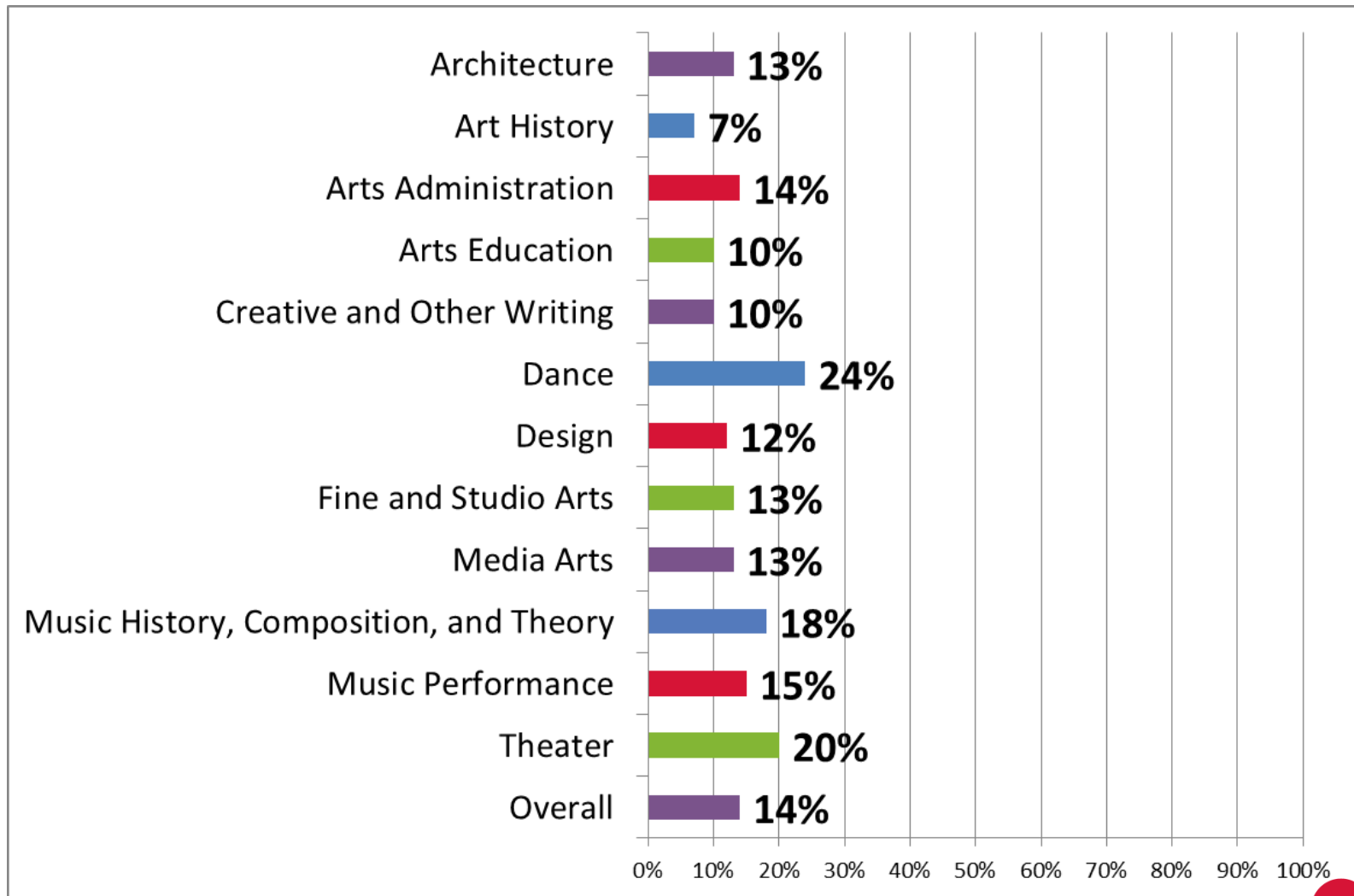
# Who Is Founding Arts Organizations?

## Findings by Parental Education



# Who Is Founding Arts Organizations?

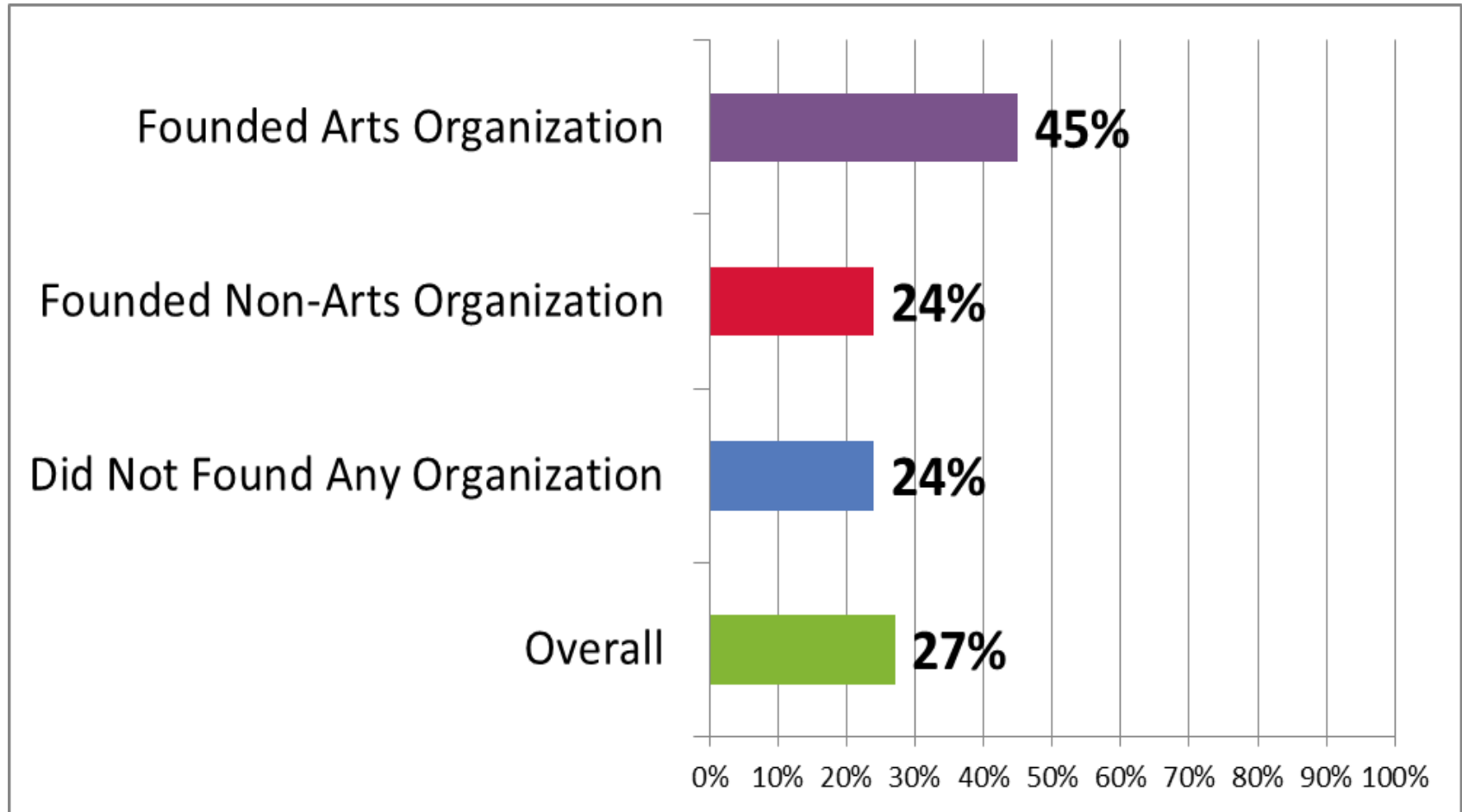
## Findings by Major Field





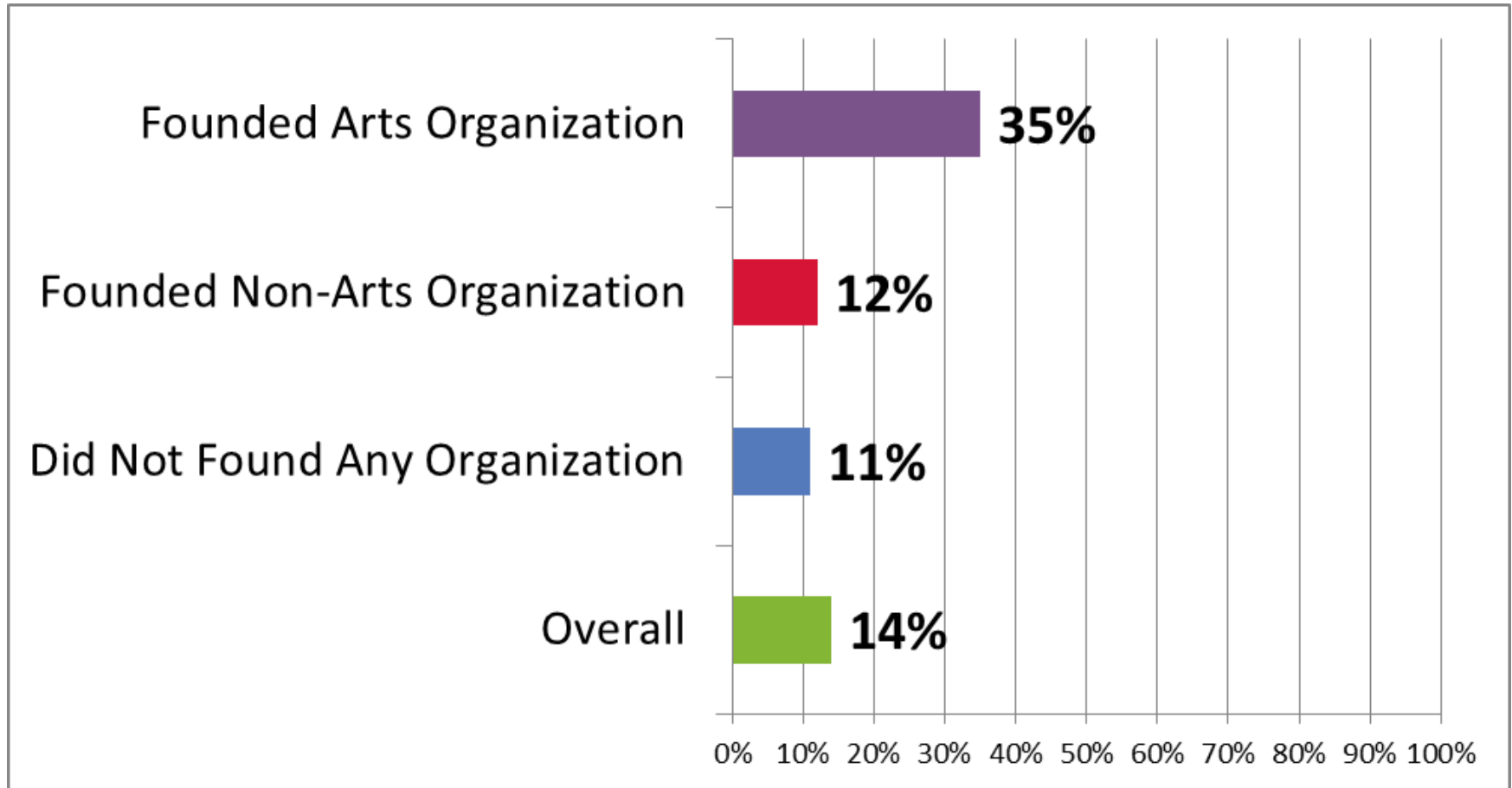
# How do They Impact the Community?

## Volunteered at an arts organization



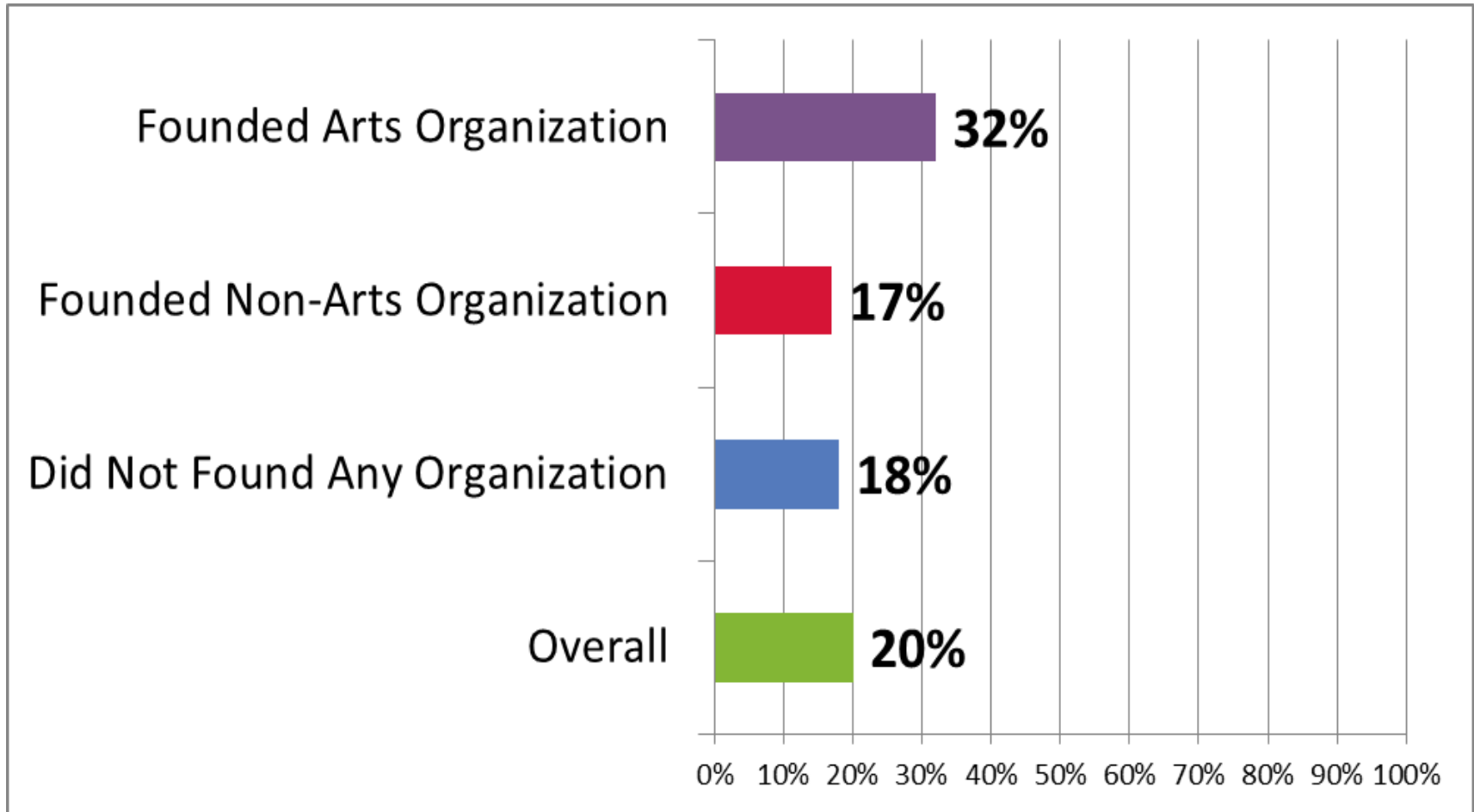
# How do They Impact the Community?

## Served on the board of an arts organization



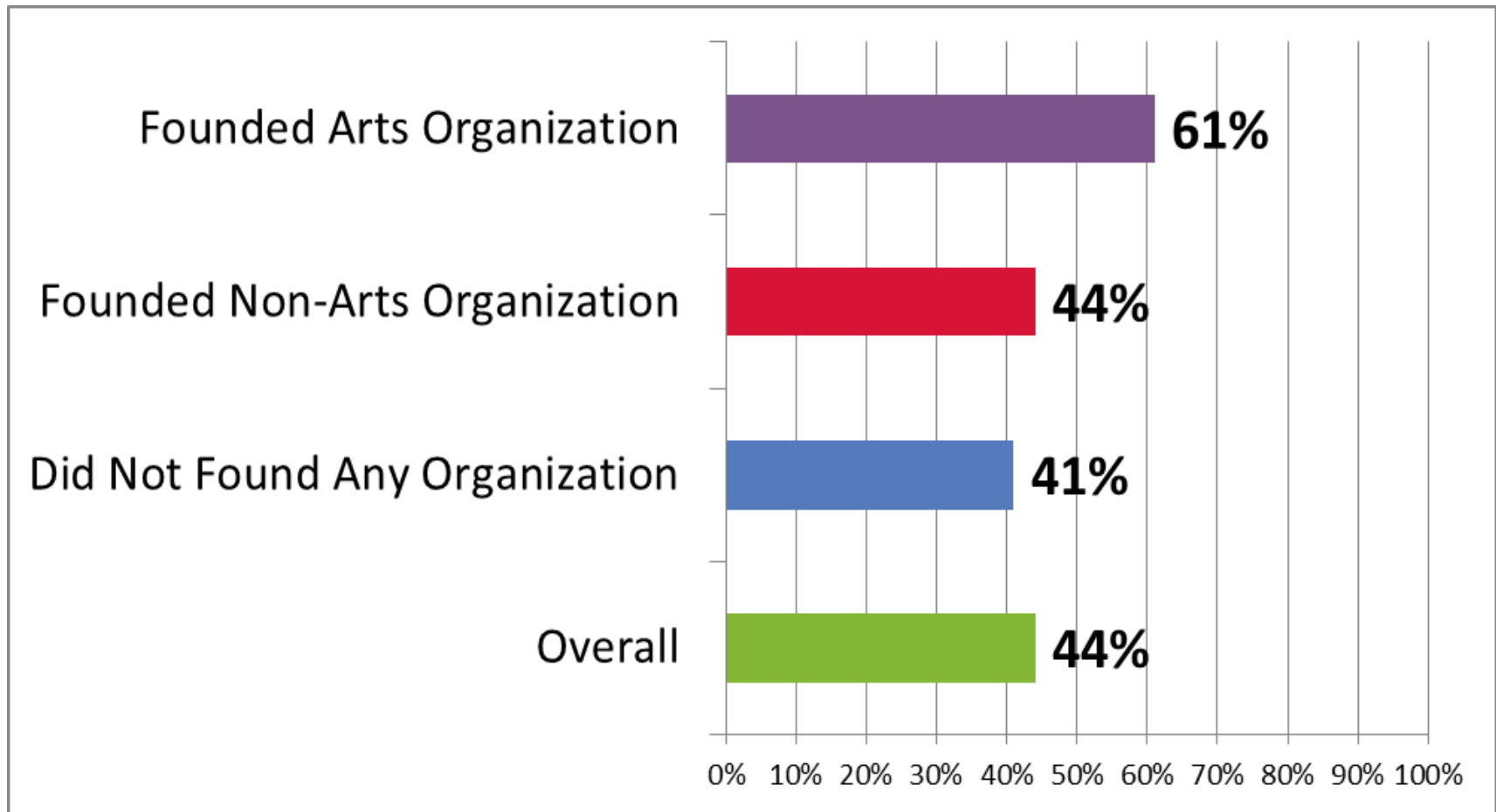
# How do They Impact the Community?

## Volunteered to teach the arts



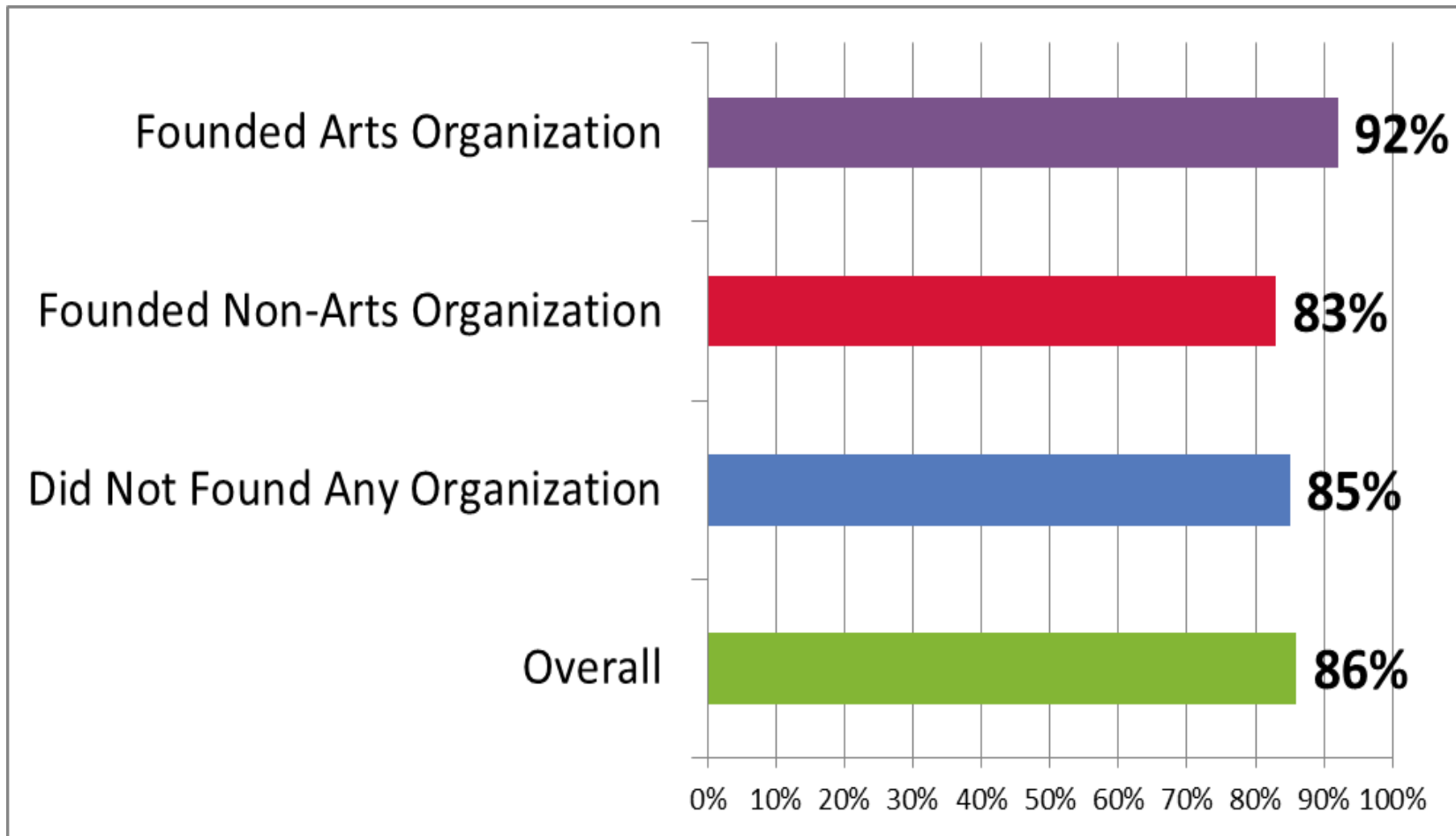
# How do They Impact the Community?

## Donated money to arts organization/artist



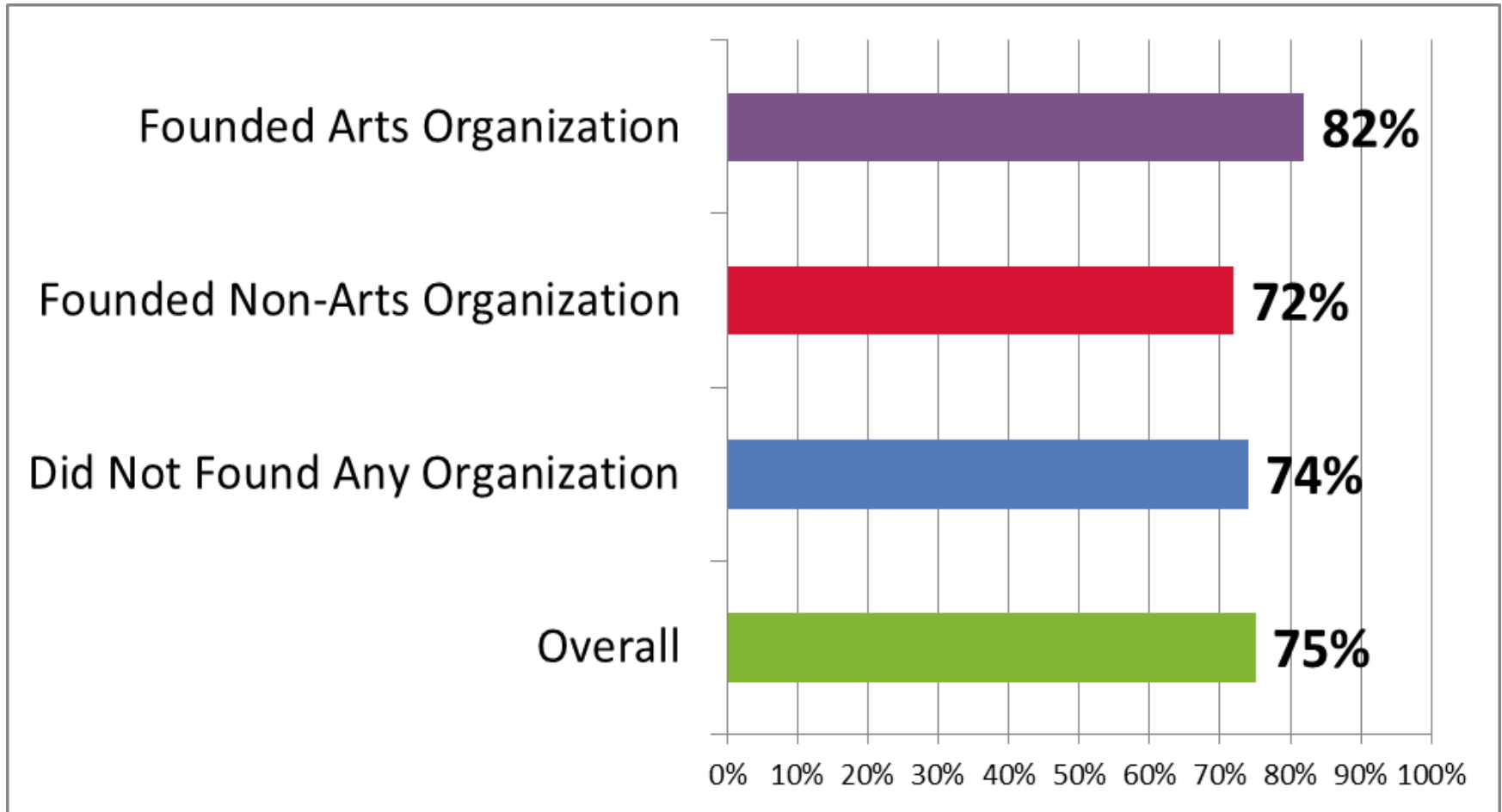
# How do They Impact the Community?

## Attended an arts event



# How do They Impact the Community?

## Make/perform art in personal time



# Community Arts Involvement: Odds Ratios <sup>1</sup>

Comparing those who founded arts organizations to those who founded:

	Non-Arts Org.	No org.
Volunteered at an arts organization	.410	.412
Served on a board of an arts organization	.298	.276
Volunteered to teach the arts	.481	.499
Donated money to an arts organization or artist	.543	.504
Attended an arts event (including exhibits, concerts, performances)	.462	.526
Made or performed art in your personal (not work-related) time	.704	.668

<sup>1</sup> Controlling for gender, age, race/ethnicity, parents' education, whether or not parents were arts, and whether the job in which they spend the majority of their time is an arts related field.



# Conclusion

- Certain groups are more likely to found arts-related organizations
  - Older, male, having artist parent(s), having parents with either very high or very low education levels, and having a performing arts major
- Those who found arts organization are more likely to contribute to the arts communities in a variety of ways
  - Volunteering, serving on boards, teaching, donating, attending events, and making/performing art in their personal time
- This pattern remains even when controlling for demographic variables





# Questions or Comments?

- Contact Information:
  - Angie L. Miller [anglmill@indiana.edu](mailto:anglmill@indiana.edu)
  - Amber D. Lambert [adlamber@indiana.edu](mailto:adlamber@indiana.edu)

Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP)

[www.snaap.indiana.edu](http://www.snaap.indiana.edu)

(812) 856-5824

[snaap@indiana.edu](mailto:snaap@indiana.edu)

