



Final Report to the Minnesota State Arts Board



FINAL REPORT

June 29, 2011

MN Arts Count

Prepared for

Minnesota State Arts Board
Park Square Court, Suite 200
400 Sibley Street
Saint Paul, MN 55101-1928



Prepared by

BBC Research & Consulting
3773 Cherry Creek N. Drive, Suite 850
Denver, Colorado 80209-3868
303.321.2547 fax 303.399.0448
www.bbcresearch.com
bbc@bbcresearch.com



MN Arts Count

Acknowledgements

The MN Arts Count project would not have been possible without the leadership of Sue Gens and the tireless work of Brian Strub, the Minnesota State Arts Board and Regional Arts Council Liaison Committee and the staff of each regional arts council. The study team is grateful for their support and commitment to the project.

Background

The Minnesota State Legislature directed the Minnesota State Arts Board (Arts Board) to conduct a census of artists and arts organizations in the state. Working with the state's eleven regional arts councils, the Arts Board developed a request for proposals to fulfill the legislative mandate and help the Arts Board examine the scope of creative expression in Minnesota in order to improve their service to the people of Minnesota. The Arts Board retained BBC Research & Consulting to conduct the project—the MN Arts Count.

No other state has attempted to count its creative community, much less understand the scope of engagement. In addition, prior arts census efforts conducted across the country have focused on professional artists and conventional arts organizations. Minnesota's project is the first to include individuals who engage in any form of creative expression, regardless whether the individual profits from the activity or shares the work beyond friends and family. Similarly, Minnesota's project is the first to engage with organizations outside of the usual arts mold.

Thusly defined, the MN Arts Count by no means includes every individual and every organization in Minnesota that somehow engages in creative expression. However, that more than 20,000 individuals and organizations participated is a tremendous response to this first ever effort.

Objective

The Arts Board sought to both fulfill the directive of the legislature while also obtaining information that would enhance the work of the Arts Board and its partners across the state—the primary project objective. The MN Arts Count was designed to characterize the scope of creative expression in Minnesota by developing a spectrum of creative engagement for both individuals and organizations. This allows the Arts Board to discern the diverse types of individuals and organizations involved in the state's creative community. The project allowed the Arts Board and regional councils to connect with new individuals and organizations, and this served as an opportunity to add to the Arts Board and regional councils' databases of contacts.

Developing the Spectrum of Creative Engagement

Prior to developing the spectrum of creative engagement, BBC reviewed other community surveys of artists and arts organizations, studies conducted by the National Endowment for the Arts, and other surveys of artists. As discussed previously, no other project classified nonprofessional artists and most efforts included only conventional arts organizations. As such, the spectrum developed for Minnesota is unique, while building on the methods of prior works. The survey instrument developed by BBC and the Arts Board balanced brevity with the elements needed to classify individuals and organizations on the spectrum of creative engagement.

Individuals. Figure 1 presents the foundation for the spectrum of creative engagement for both individuals and organizations.

Figure 1.
Foundation for the Spectrum of Creative Engagement

Source:
BBC Research & Consulting.



For individuals, placement along the spectrum of creative engagement hinges on three key questions:

- Whether or not the individual shares creative efforts beyond friends and family;
- Time spent per week on all creative efforts; and
- Share of income derived from creative efforts.

Figure 2, on the next page, presents the Individual Spectrum of Creative Engagement. As shown, individuals are classified into 12 categories, ranging from the Occasional Private Enthusiast to the Full Time Professional. The key difference between a Private Enthusiast and an Enthusiast is that Private Enthusiasts do not share their creative works beyond friends and family (if at all), while Enthusiasts share creative works publicly. Neither type of Enthusiast earns any income from creative expression, regardless of the amount of time spent per week on such activities. Earners are characterized by earning up to 50 percent of their income from their creative expression, and Professionals earn 50 percent or more of their income from creative expression.

Figure 2.
Individual Spectrum of Creative Engagement

Source:
BBC Research & Consulting.

	Occasional (0-19 hours)	Part Time (20-29 Hours)	Full Time (30+ Hours)
Private Enthusiast	Does not share creative efforts beyond friends & family		
Enthusiast	Earns no income from creative efforts		
Earner	Earns up to 50% of income from creative efforts		
Professional	Earns 50% or more of income from creative efforts		

Organizations. To the study team’s knowledge, no other project has attempted to classify organizations on a spectrum of creative engagement and no other study was as inclusive as the MN Arts Count. As such, the Organization Spectrum of Creative Engagement is entirely unique to Minnesota. With guidance from the Arts Board, BBC developed a spectrum of engagement oriented to how creative expression relates to the organization’s primary mission. This resulted in the six classifications summarized in Figure 3.

Figure 3.
Organization Spectrum of Creative Engagement

Source:
BBC Research & Consulting.



Create. Organizations classified in the Create segment have creation of art or creative expression as the primary organizational mission. Examples include performing arts companies, community bands, dance companies, bluegrass bands, etc.

Support. These organizations have supporting the arts or creative expression as their primary mission. Examples include regional councils, arts advocacy organizations, professional services firms providing services to artists, and arts funders.

Enhance. Organizations in the Enhance spectrum of creative engagement have a mission that is unrelated to the arts, yet creative expression enhances their mission. Examples include religious organizations with music worship programs; social service organizations that leverage creative expression to reach other social goals (e.g., programs teaching homeless women fabric arts as a gateway to transitioning off the streets); restaurants or coffee shops that display local artwork; cultural and community festivals that include the arts but do not have arts or creative expression as a primary focus; professional services firms that display and show local art; etc. For these organizations, their business or social goals are enhanced by creative expression.

Teach. These organizations have teaching creative expression as their primary mission. Examples include university theater departments, private music schools, dance schools, etc.

Sell. Organizations in the Sell segment have sales of arts-related goods as their primary mission. Examples include art galleries, art supply stores, musical instrument stores, arts and craft festivals and fairs, etc.

Present. These organizations Present creative expression and include art museums, concert venues, theaters, music festivals, etc.

Conducting the MN Arts Count

The MN Arts Count was available in online and paper formats from March 2011 through May 31, 2011. Paper surveys could be obtained by calling a dedicated toll-free number, and were available in English, Spanish, Hmong, Somali, Vietnamese and Lao. The Arts Board retained a graphic designer to create the MN Arts Count identity materials. The logos are shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4.
MN Arts Count
Identity Materials

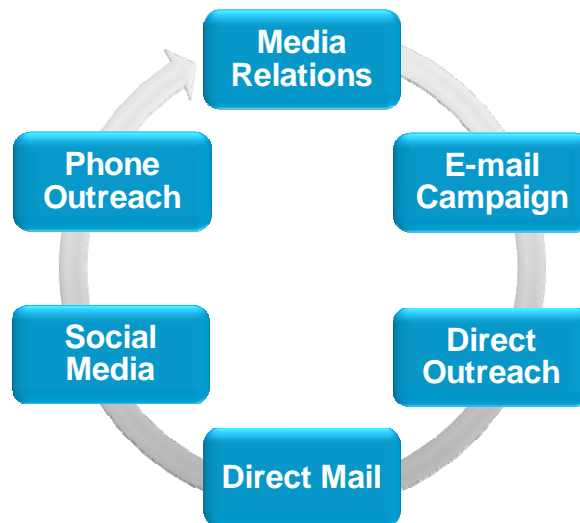
Source:
Minnesota State Arts Board.



Promoting participation in the project required a comprehensive public relations campaign that included the elements shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5.
MN Arts Count Outreach
Elements

Source:
BBC Research & Consulting.



Media Relations. The Arts Board retained the services of Renown Marketing Communications to supplement media relations activities conducted by Arts Board staff and the regional arts councils. The media relations component of the campaign was invaluable. These efforts, conducted over a one-month period, yielded more than 50 written articles in newspapers and blogs statewide. The reach of the campaign exceeded circulation of 2.3 million because blogs do not report circulation. In addition to earned media, ads were placed with a variety of greater Minnesota daily and weekly newspapers and Minnesota Public Radio.

E-mail Campaign. The Arts Board and regional councils sent five waves of e-mails over the course of the project. Before each e-mail was sent, individuals and organizations that had already responded were removed from the list. In addition to direct efforts to e-mail known contacts, other organizations (e.g., Springboard for the Arts, mnartists.org, Minnesota Citizens for the Arts, the Women's Art

Registry of Minnesota, and many others) promoted the MN Arts Count to their lists via e-newsletters and e-mail. The e-mail efforts generated many results from individuals known to the Arts Board and the regional councils.

Direct Outreach. A substantial component of the MN Arts Count campaign was direct outreach that included outreach in greater Minnesota, multicultural outreach, and event outreach. Over 6,000 surveys and 1,000 posters were distributed through outreach. These efforts are summarized in Figure 6.

Figure 6.
Direct Outreach Components



Source: BBC Research & Consulting.

Greater Minnesota outreach focused on promoting the MN Arts Count in 24 communities across the state. Regional council executive directors and staff connected the outreach team with individuals and organizations to contact in their region. In each community, the study team visited every business on main street or downtown to promote the MN Arts Count and to request that business owners hang a flyer in their window. In addition, surveys and flyers were distributed to retail businesses, grocery stores, churches, bars and restaurants, libraries, community centers, city government offices, chambers of commerce and any other community gathering places found. In smaller communities, the study team met with the local newspaper or radio station to encourage them to promote the project. Retailers selling local art and craft were asked to promote the MN Arts Count to their vendors. This element of the campaign was invaluable because it raised the visibility of the MN Arts Count outside of the Twin Cities and signaled to greater Minnesota residents and organizations that their participation in the survey was vital.

Multicultural outreach was a significant element of the direct outreach. Actively engaging the minority community and new Americans was extremely important to the Arts Board. The objective was to ensure that *all* residents of Minnesota were invited and encouraged to participate in the MN Arts Count. BBC and the Arts Board's approach to multicultural outreach had several key components:

- Public relations contact with ethnic and cultural publications, blogs and radio stations;
- Personal outreach to nonprofit organizations serving new Americans and residents of ethnically diverse neighborhoods in the Twin Cities;
- Personal outreach with ethnic and cultural organizations and associations statewide; and
- Business and community center outreach in selected ethnically-diverse neighborhoods.

There are many challenges associated with engaging diverse communities, particularly refugees and other new Americans. Some have a cultural mistrust of government and filling out forms; while for others, completing a survey about creative expression is low on their priority list. Organizations that work with these communities on a regular basis recommended that the surveys be conducted in person, by their staff in partnership with the Arts Board, at community events and holidays. For many of the communities, these events were not occurring during the census period.

Building relationships directly with service providers is very important. Many of these organizations would benefit from Arts Board opportunities, but either did not previously know about the Arts Board or do not have the technical or staff capacity to write a successful grant proposal. By building relationships within and outside of the grantmaking process, the Arts Board will have the opportunity to engage with diverse populations in ways that are meaningful to the community.

Event outreach included distribution of surveys and flyers at Cinco de Mayo, Art-A-Whirl and Duluth Dylan Days. The Arts Board retained an experienced field organizer, to add to the on-the-ground capacity for the final month of the project. Surveys were also distributed directly to event organizers who in turn provided them to participants. The event outreach was most successful when the study team was able to enlist the sponsorship and participation of the event organizer. This lent the project credibility. The outreach at Art-A-Whirl promoted goodwill towards the Arts Board, as most of these artists were familiar with the Arts Board's role in the state and appreciated the efforts made towards their being counted.

Direct mail. BBC purchased listings for 5,000 arts-related businesses and organizations, including artists, across the state as well as listings for coffee shops, bars, and restaurants in greater Minnesota. Each was mailed a letter explaining the MN Arts Count, a flyer, and an organization and individual survey. Among the tactics employed for outreach, this was the least effective, judging by the number of respondents who reported learning about the MN Arts Count via the mail (less than 1 percent of respondents indicated that they learned about the project via direct mail). However, the Arts Board now owns this list and can use it to supplement future outreach to nonconventional arts organizations (e.g., bookstores, musical instrument retailers).

Social media. BBC created a Facebook page and Twitter feed for the MN Arts Count. Each featured the MN Arts Count branding and details about the project. Figure 8 summarizes the social media campaign.

Figure 8.
Social Media Summary

Source:
BBC Research & Consulting.



The social media campaign allowed the MN Arts Count to reach new audiences at more than 400 organization or group pages as well as the MN Arts Count’s 311 fans on Facebook and more than 500 individuals and organizations on Twitter. The three-month campaign featured daily posts and tweets on the MN Arts Count sites as well as directly posting on the Facebook pages of organizations. These posts were viewed by the fans of the individual organization and were often shared more broadly. One in three respondents to the MN Arts Count learned about the project via Facebook.

The MN Arts Count social media network is an asset for the Arts Board and regional arts councils. Properly used, this is a cost-effective option for maintaining regular communications with the network as well as continuing to share Arts Board and regional council messages and opportunities to new segments of Minnesota’s creative community. The MN Arts Count brand has value, and the Arts Board and regional councils have the opportunity to put a new twist on the network, shifting the emphasis from MN Arts *Count* to MN *Arts* Count—this can be a channel for providing news and information about creative happenings in the state.

In addition to the MN Arts Count social media network, individual regional arts councils and the Arts Board supported the campaign on their individual and organization social networks. This support was invaluable for both supplying credibility as well as magnifying the impact of this outreach method.

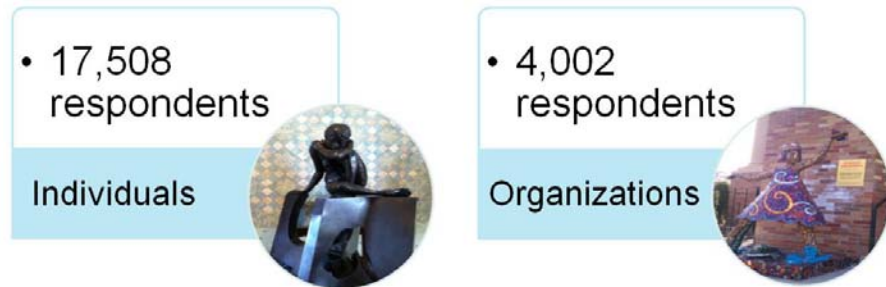
Phone Outreach. The final component of the MN Arts Count campaign consisted of phone outreach to national arts organizations (e.g., the National Endowment for the Arts, Dance/USA, etc.) to request that they promote the MN Arts Count to their Minnesota-based members. BBC also contacted every county health and human services office in Minnesota to discuss the project and to request that the agency display printed surveys in a public area of their offices. Those willing to participate were mailed a packet containing information about the project and printed surveys in the languages requested. We cannot directly gauge the effectiveness of this outreach, since all mail surveys looked the same, and none of the respondents specifically named a health and human services office as the source of the survey. Regardless of the yield, the Arts Board and the project team believed that it was important to reach out to those Minnesota residents who may lack access to the Internet or may not have been aware of the project and this was one tactic employed to address this.

Overall Results

More than *21,500 individuals and organizations* responded to the 2011 MN Arts Count. This is the largest response to any census of creative expression that the study team has been able to identify. Among individuals who provided their contact information 9,054 were previously unknown to the Arts Board or the regional councils. Similarly, the MN Arts Count added 1,475 new organizations.

Figure 9.
Overall Results
of the MN Arts
Count

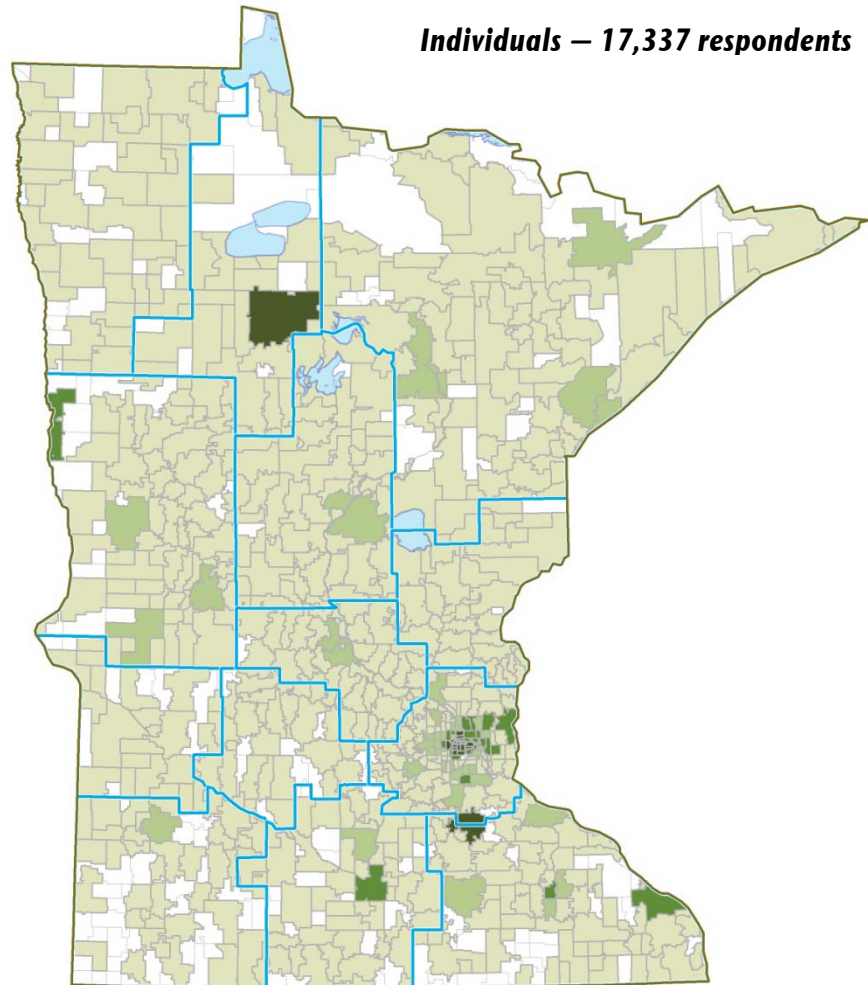
Source:
BBC Research & Consulting
from the 2011 MN Arts
Count.



The individual respondents to the MN Arts Count live throughout the state. Figure 10 on the next page shows the ZIP code of residence of all respondents who provided ZIP code information.

Figure 10.
ZIP Code of
Residence—
Individuals

Source:
BBC Research & Consulting
from the 2011 MN Arts
Count.

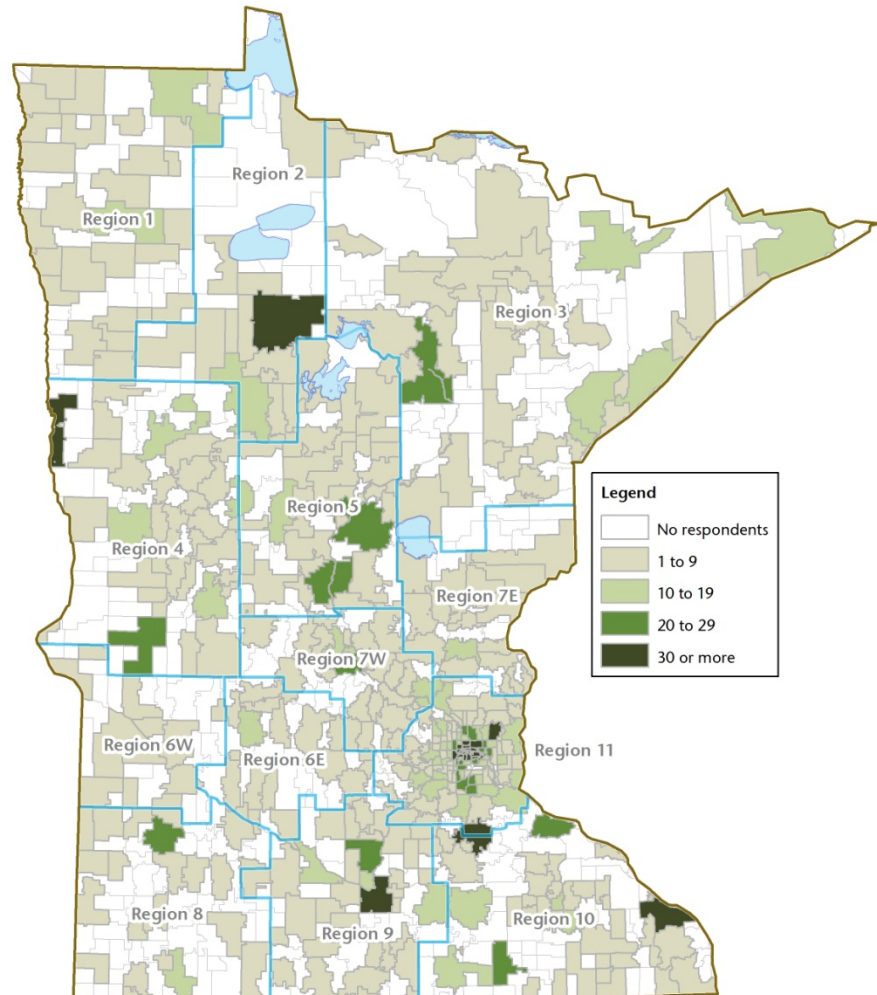


As with individuals, organizations represented in the MN Arts Count are dispersed throughout the state. Figure 11 maps the ZIP code location for organizations.

Figure 11.
ZIP Code of
Location—
Organizations

Organizations – 4,005 respondents

Source:
BBC Research & Consulting
from the 2011 MN Arts
Count.



How does the MN Arts Count further the mission of the Minnesota State Arts Board and the regional arts councils?

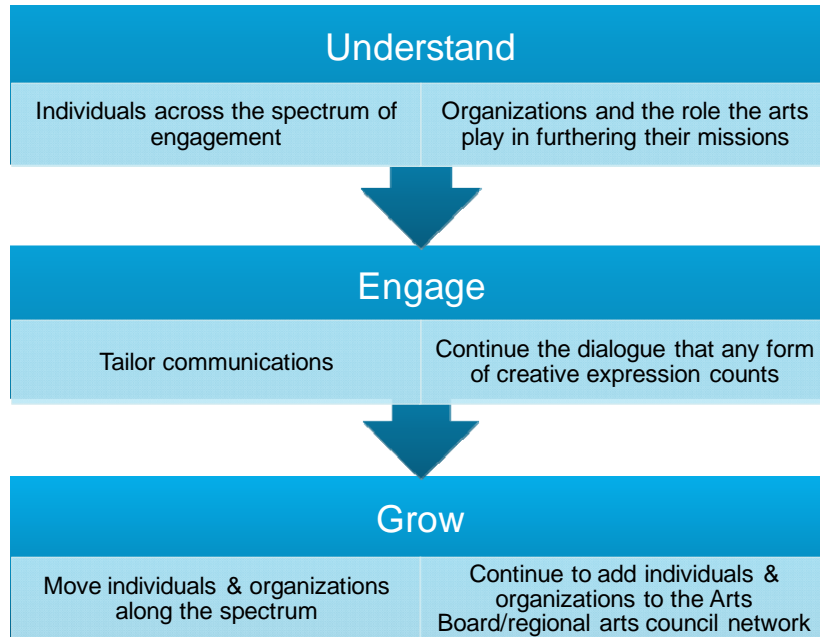
We envision the MN Arts Count being used to:

- **Understand individuals and organizations** across the spectrum of creative engagement;
- **Engage** individuals and organizations; and
- **Grow** the number and level of engagement of individuals and organizations.

Figure 12 depicts these concepts and provides examples of how to apply them.

Figure 12.
Applying the
MN Arts Count

Source:
BBC Research & Consulting.



Understand. The MN Arts Count results allow the Arts Board and the regional arts councils the opportunity to understand individuals and organizations across the spectrum of creative engagement and to delve into where and how they engage. This includes the types of creative expression; how creative expression relates to an organization’s mission; where the individual or organization is located and more. The data characterize individuals and organizations, and the inclusive nature of the project greatly expands the types of individuals and organizations that the Arts Board and regional councils have the opportunity to learn about.

Engage. Perhaps one of the greatest opportunities for the Arts Board and the regional councils is the ability to engage with individuals and organizations in new and targeted ways. Beyond tailoring communications, the MN Arts Count data, and the creation of the spectrum of creative engagement allows the Arts Board and regional councils to rethink programming and grantmaking to engage with individuals and organizations across the spectrum. Perhaps for Enthusiasts, this means supporting classes, groups and amateur venues. This is an opportunity to think outside the box and to evaluate which segments of the creative market are served well and which are not served at all.

Grow. The MN Arts Count provides the Arts Board and the regional councils with a framework to continue to grow the number of individuals and organizations that want to be connected with the Arts Board and the regional councils. Maintaining the MN Arts Count social media network is one aspect of continuing to grow the numbers. By adding a few questions to the process of obtaining contact information from individuals and organizations, the Arts Board and the regional councils can continue to place individuals and organizations on the creative spectrum. The thinking behind the MN Arts Count can continue, if desired. This effort could help maintain and expand the database for future use.

In addition to continuing to grow the number of individuals and organizations, the Arts Board and regional arts councils can develop strategies to help individuals move along the spectrum of creative

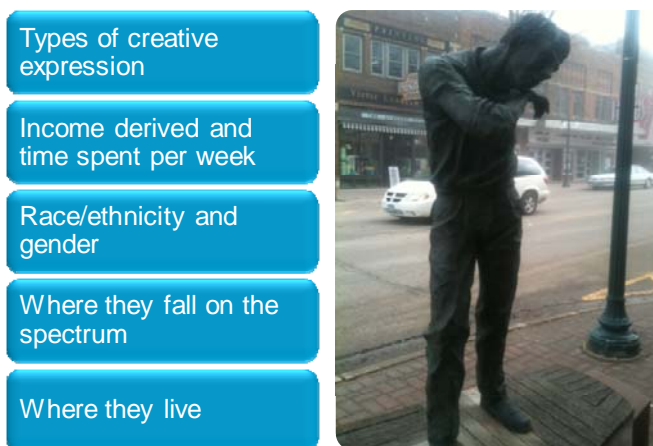
engagement—to help an Earner grow into a Professional or an Enthusiast to an Earner. Similarly, strategies can be developed to help all organization types recognize the benefits of engagement with the arts, whether it be to help a small business grow through the addition of art shows or helping nonprofit organizations use creative expression to help individuals improve their quality of life.

Understand—Individuals

Figure 13 depicts the types of information that can be used to *understand* individuals who engage in creative expression in Minnesota.

Figure 13.
Understand—Individuals

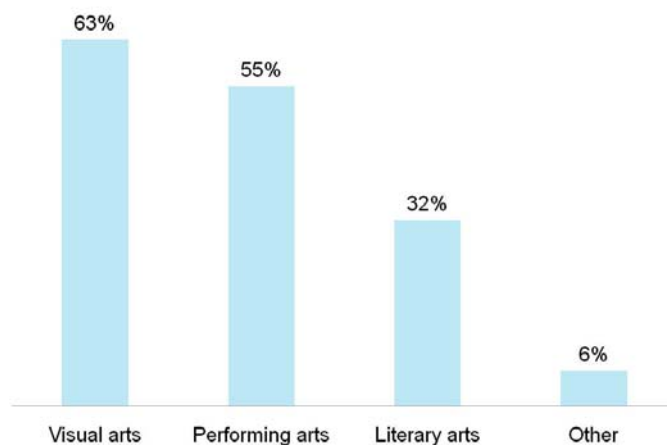
Source:
BBC Research & Consulting.



Type of creative expression. Minnesota individuals who engage in creative expression often engage in multiple forms. Figure 14 presents the high level types of creative expression in which individuals engage.

Figure 14.
Types of Creative Expression

Source:
BBC Research & Consulting from the 2011 MN Arts Count. Percentages add to greater than 100 percent due to multiple response.



Individuals had the opportunity to detail up to six of their creative specialties. More than 38,000 specialties were provided and these are summarized in Figures 15 and 16.

Figure 15.
Individual Creative
Specialties—38,000
responses

Source:
 BBC Research & Consulting from
 the 2011 MN Arts Count.



Figure 16 depicts the top 90 creative specialties.

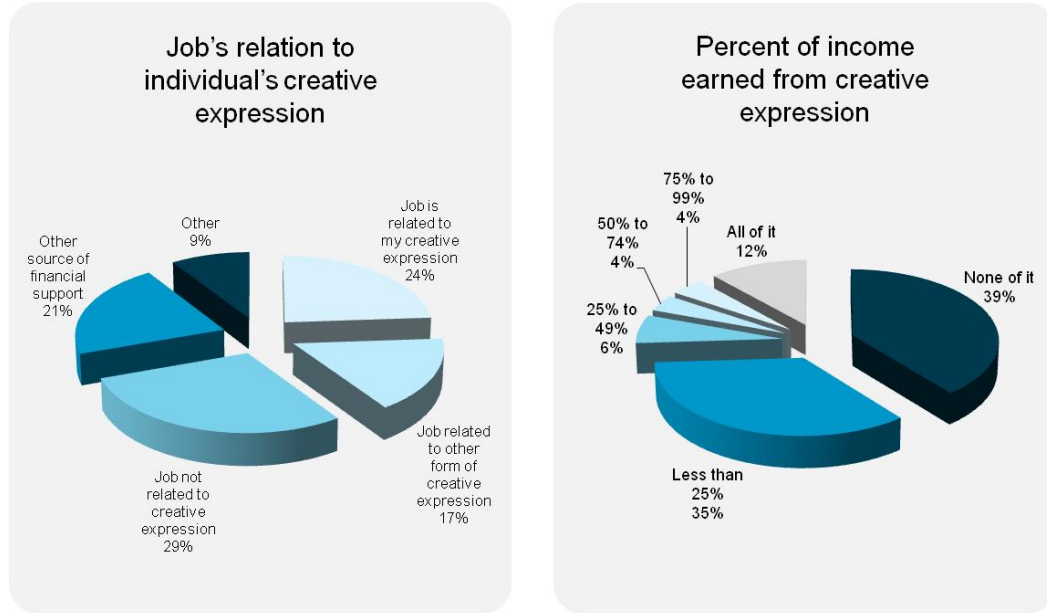
Figure 16.
Top 90 Creative Specialties—31,274 responses

Number	Specialty	Number	Specialty	Number	Specialty
2,684	Writing	242	Pottery	85	Acrylic painting
2,564	Painting	238	Crafting	83	Digital art
2,463	Photography	236	Choral music	79	Trumpet
2,056	Singing	223	Collage	75	Screenwriting
1,537	Drawing	215	Woodworking	74	Teaching
1,314	Dance	191	Playwriting	74	Children's books
1,120	Acting	175	Creative writing	71	Embroidery
998	Theater	167	Beadwork	62	Performance art
974	Poetry	166	Performing	61	Furniture design
965	Songwriting	159	Fiction	59	Short fiction
902	Sculpting	153	Violin	57	Clarinet
843	Music performance	145	Mixed media	53	Basketweaving
624	Storytelling	135	Costume design	51	Graphic arts
621	Visual art	128	Weaving	49	Needlework
610	Directing	124	Fabric art	49	Puppetry
579	Music	119	Stained glass	48	Music education
486	Piano	118	Oil painting	48	Viola
446	Filmmaking	111	Improv	46	Web design
406	Jewelry making	110	Textile art and design	43	Comics, graphic novels
391	Graphic design	110	Creative nonfiction	42	Animation
349	Knitting	108	Crochet	42	Poetry performance
324	Printmaking	103	Design	38	Needle arts
324	Quilting	102	Flute	37	Choir
307	Fiber arts	101	Installation	28	Music production/recording
305	Ceramics	98	Musical theater	27	Scriptwriting
298	Guitar	94	Choreography	27	Voice-over
289	Sewing	93	Scrapbooking	25	Writing music
269	Watercolor painting	92	Teaching music	22	Choral conducting
254	Book arts/Bookmaking	88	Nonfiction	20	Teaching dance
250	Illustration	86	Metalwork	17	Music improvisation

Source: BBC Research & Consulting from the 2011 MN Arts Count.

Employment and income. For 29 percent of individuals, their job is not related to any form of creative expression. Nearly two out of five individuals earn *no income* from their creative expression.

Figure 17.
Individuals Employment and Income



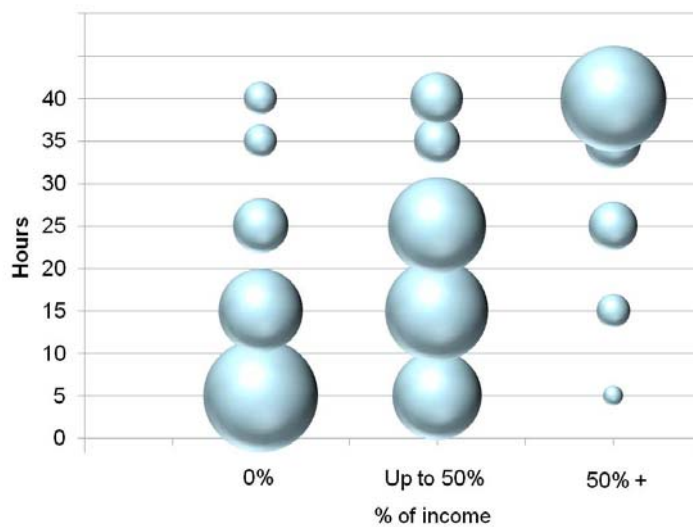
Source: BBC Research & Consulting from the 2011 MN Arts Count.

Hours and income. Figure 18 depicts the relationship between hours spent per week on creative expression and income derived from creative expression. Overall, as hours increase, income increases. There are many individuals who devote 40 or more hours per week to creative expression, yet some earn no income from the activity.

Figure 18.
Hours and Income

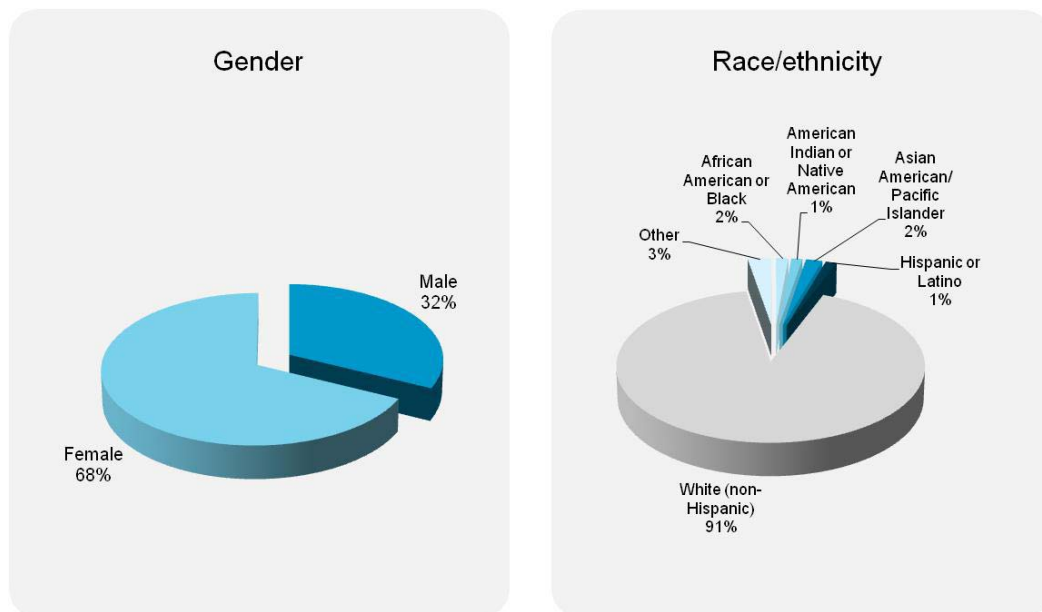
Note:
xxx.

Source:
BBC Research & Consulting.



Demographics. Figure 19 presents the gender and race/ethnicity breakdown of MN Arts Count respondents. Nearly 70 percent of the MN Arts Count respondents were female and 91 percent were white. The race/ethnicity breakdown is similar to what BBC found when applying the rates of creative engagement reported in the National Endowment for the Arts’ Survey of Public Participation in the Arts to the demographic of Minnesota. This result underscores the importance of building relationships with ethnic communities; as trust is built and the Arts Board and regional arts councils become better-known in these communities, we would expect participation to continue to increase. Despite there being room for improvement, that the MN Arts Count achieved response rates in line with the Survey of Public Participation in the Arts suggests that the project was effective in reaching diverse populations.

Figure 19.
Individual Demographics



Source: BBC Research & Consulting from the 2011 MN Arts Count.

Spectrum of creative engagement. The following figures present the ZIP codes for residences of individuals who are Private Enthusiasts, Enthusiasts, Earners, and Professionals.

Figure 20.
ZIP Code of Residence—
Private
Enthusiasts

Source:
BBC Research &
Consulting from the
2011 MN Arts Count.

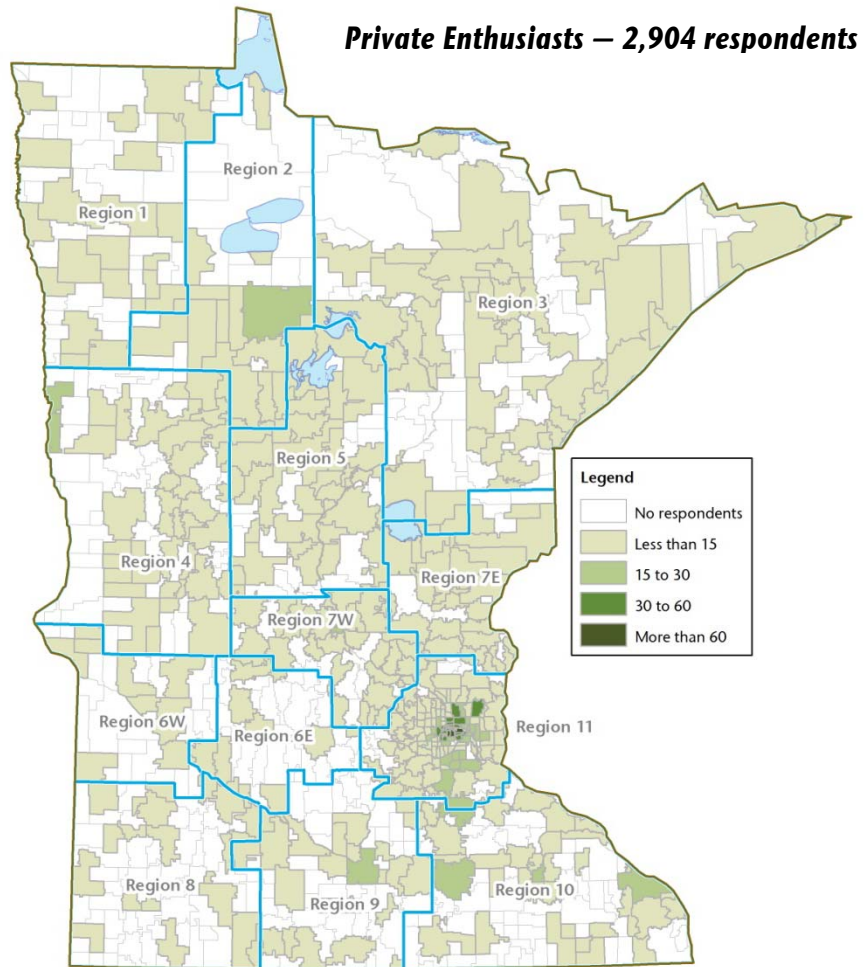
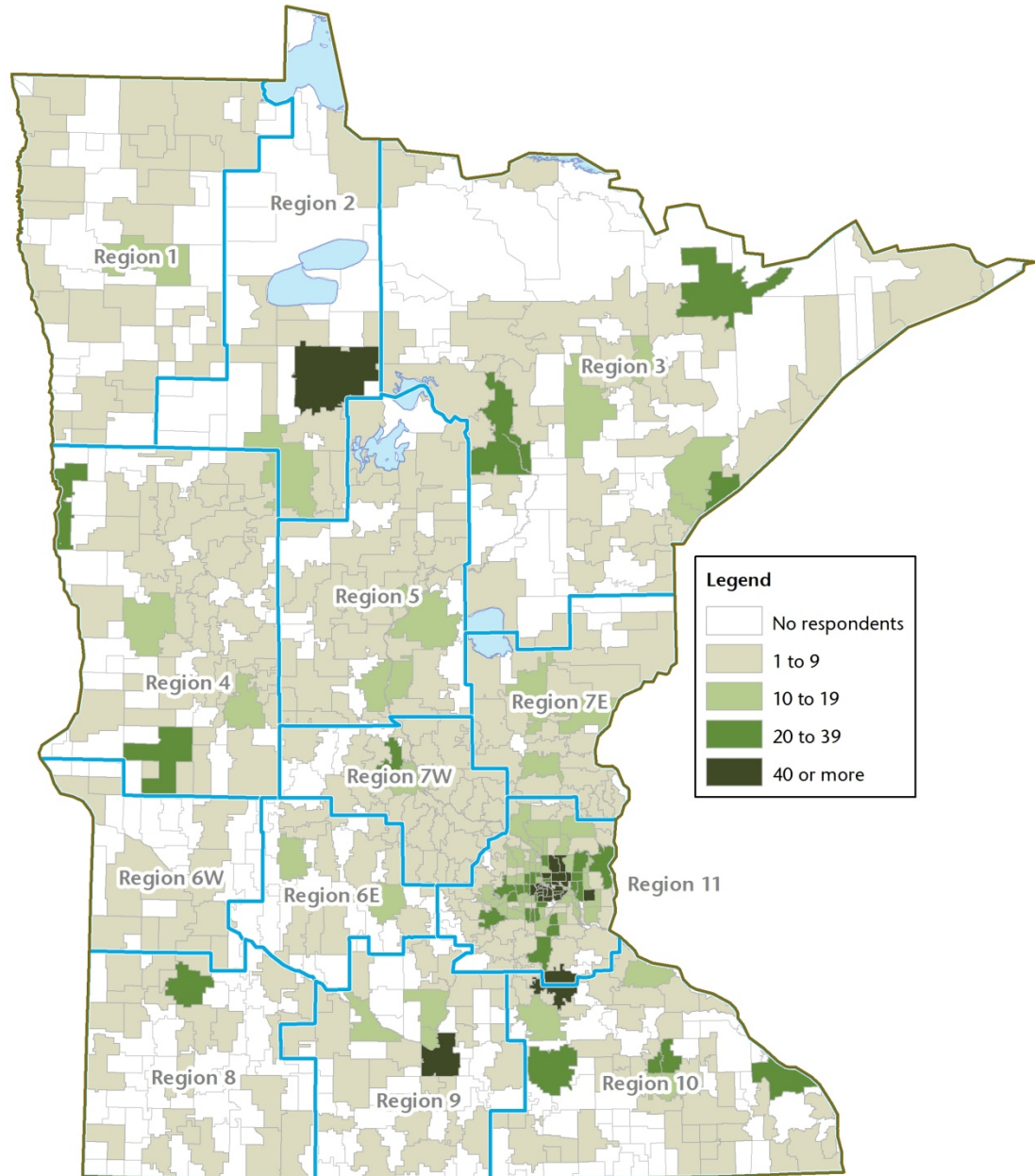


Figure 21.
ZIP Code of Residence—Enthusiasts

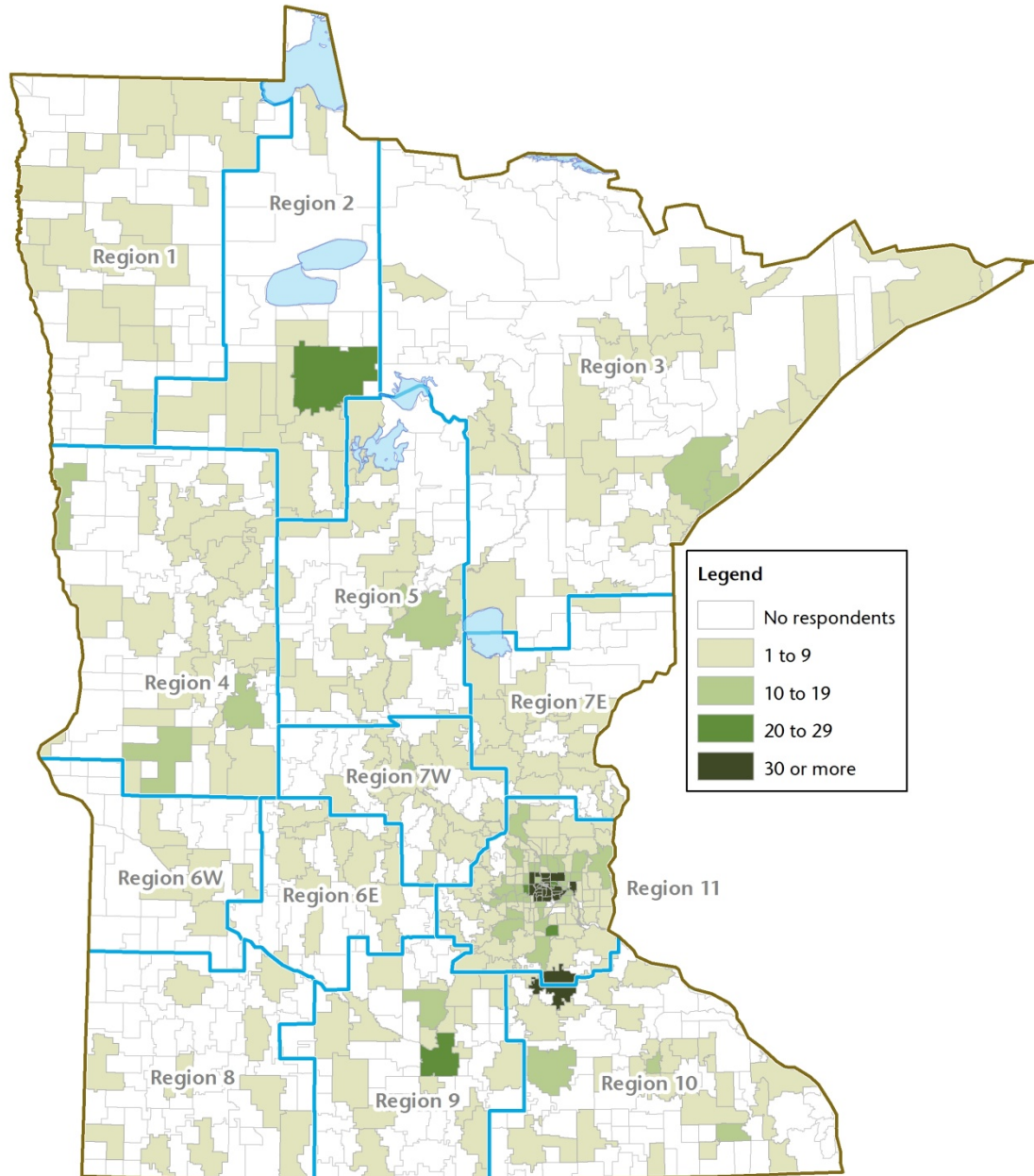
Enthusiasts – 4,569 respondents



Source: BBC Research & Consulting from the 2011 MN Arts Count.

Figure 22.
ZIP Code of Residence—Earners

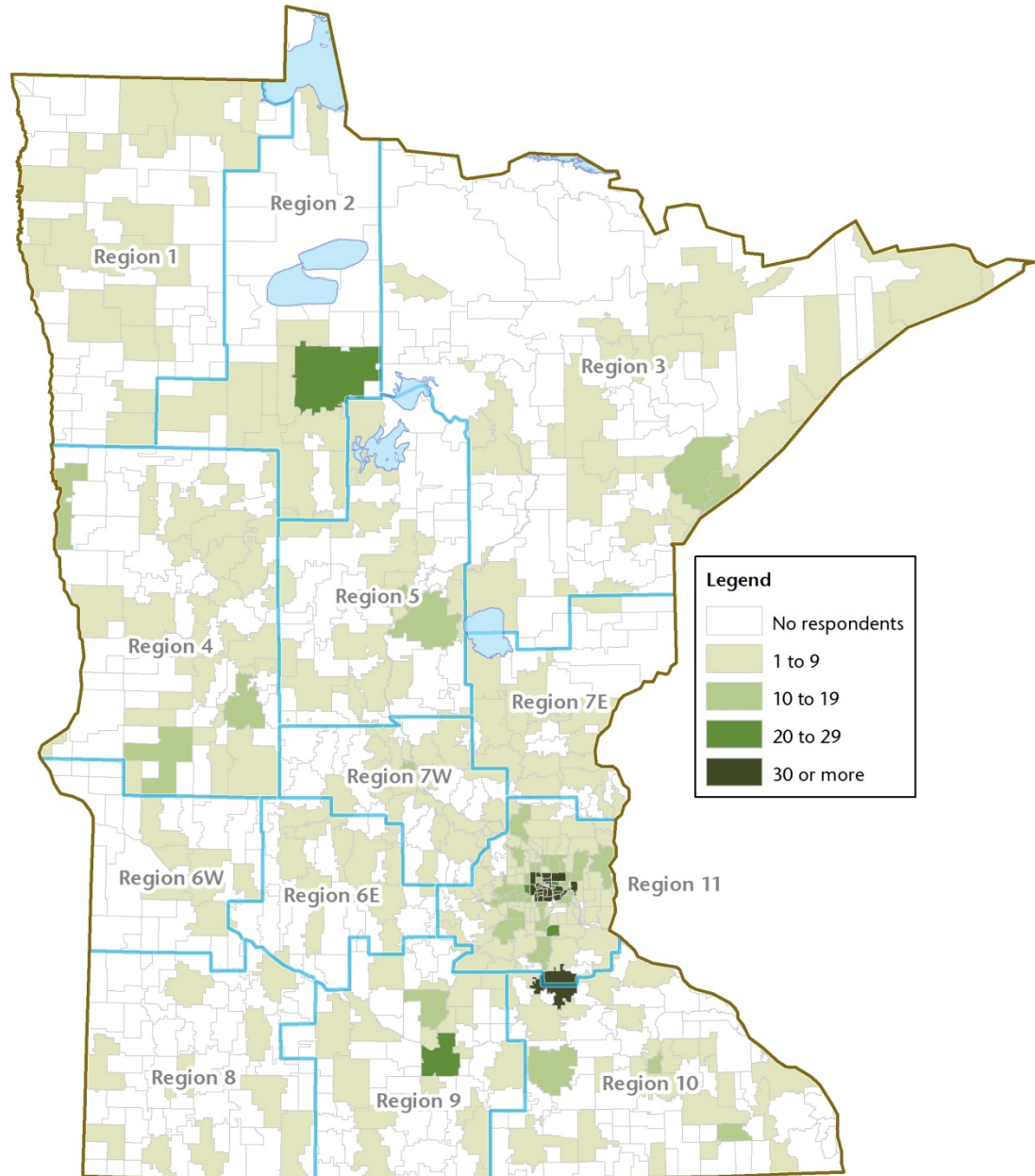
Earners – 7,197 respondents



Source: BBC Research & Consulting from the 2011 MN Arts Count.

Figure 23.
ZIP Code of Residence—Professionals

Professionals – 2,657 respondents



Source: BBC Research & Consulting from the 2011 MN Arts Count.

Engage & Grow—Individuals

There are myriad ways that the Arts Board and the regional arts councils can *engage* and *grow* individuals who engage in creative expression. The following ideas are meant to provide food for thought and to spark new ways of thinking about creative individuals. The MN Arts Count was the first effort that the study team could identify to include all types of individuals, regardless of where they fit on the spectrum of creative engagement. No longer are just self-identified professional artists counted, but all who engage in creative activities. As such, the Arts Board and the regional arts councils have the opportunity to review whether current programming and grant making are inclusive of all the different types of creatives living in the state.

Engage. The primary opportunities to *engage* with individuals segment into communications and programming.

Communications. With respect to engaging individuals through communications, several possibilities emerge.

- ***Targeted direct communications***—the new contact database developed through the MN Arts Count project allows the Arts Board and regional councils to target communications to individuals based on the spectrum of creative engagement.
- ***Continuing the inclusive dialogue of the MN Arts Count***—the MN Arts Count broadly announced that all individuals who engage in any form of creative expression, whether for personal pleasure or public enjoyment, count. This is a substantial departure from all other similar efforts that focused exclusively on professionals. Continuing to communicate this message will help engage broader audiences and will help support outreach to ethnic and cultural communities that may not consider their traditional forms of expression to be “art.” With the MN Arts Count message, that barrier is removed.

Programs. Broadly defined, programs may include initiatives, grants or other types of activities delivered or supported by the Arts Board and regional councils. By reviewing current program priorities and activities through the lens of the MN Arts Count the Arts Board and the regional councils have the opportunity to understand the segments that are currently served by or are benefiting from programs and those that are not. Arts Board and regional council discussions about programming based on the MN Arts Count might include:

- Which segments of the individual spectrum of creative engagement do current programs serve? Are there any segments that do not benefit at all? Should all segments benefit?
- What types of programs might appeal to Enthusiasts? Earners? Professionals?
- How should limited resources be prioritized with respect to the spectrum of creative engagement? What are the criteria to employ—number of individuals in a segment? Supporting individual artists versus organizations?
- What can the Arts Board and regional arts councils do to continue to engage and include all residents who participate in creative expression?

Grow. The Arts Board and the regional councils have the opportunity to *grow* the capacity of individuals along the spectrum of creative expression and to *grow* the total number of individuals that are a part of the MN Arts Count network. Continue to work with other organizations and gatekeepers to diverse communities to learn how to communicate with these individuals on their terms—i.e. getting more storytellers, ethnic artisans, etc. to engage with the Arts Board and regional councils.

Figure 24.
Understand—Organizations



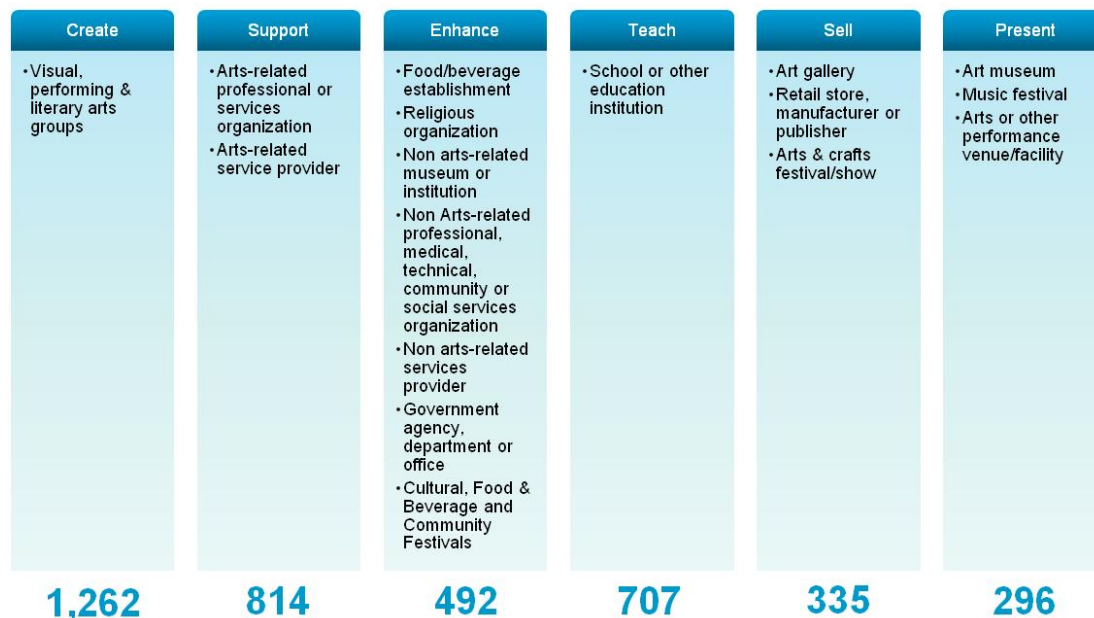
Source: BBC Research & Consulting

Understand—Organizations

Figure 24 depicts the type of information from the MN Arts Count that will enable the Arts Board and regional arts councils to *understand* organizations.

Figure 25 on the following page overlays the spectrum of creative engagement by the type of organization and shows the total number of organizations included in each segment. As discussed previously, organizations were placed on the spectrum based on how creative expression relates to the organization’s primary mission.

Figure 25.
Organization Spectrum of Engagement

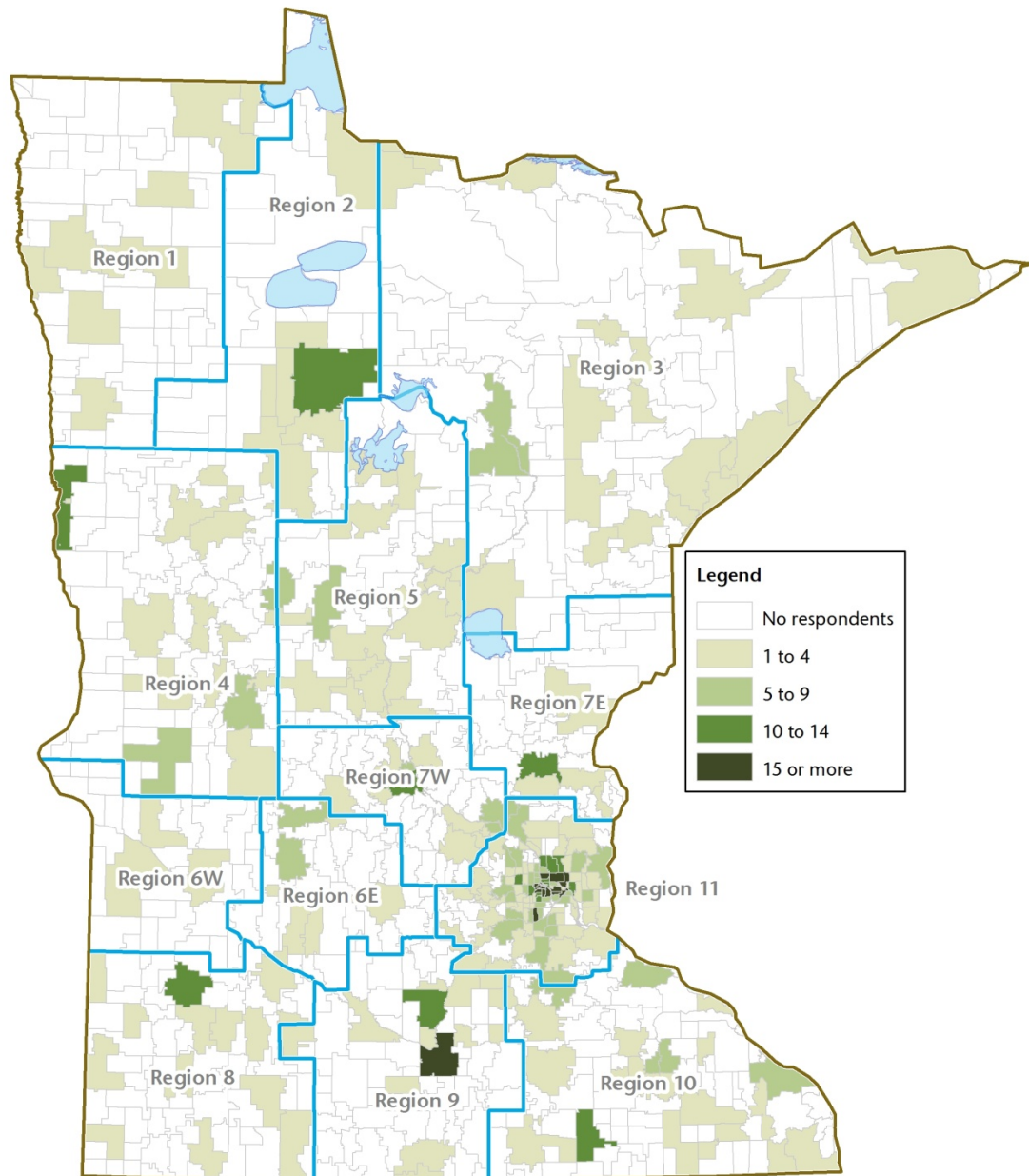


Source: BBC Research & Consulting from the 2011 MN Arts Count.

The following series of Figures maps organizations by ZIP code and by the spectrum of creative engagement for organizations.

Figure 26.
Organizations—Create

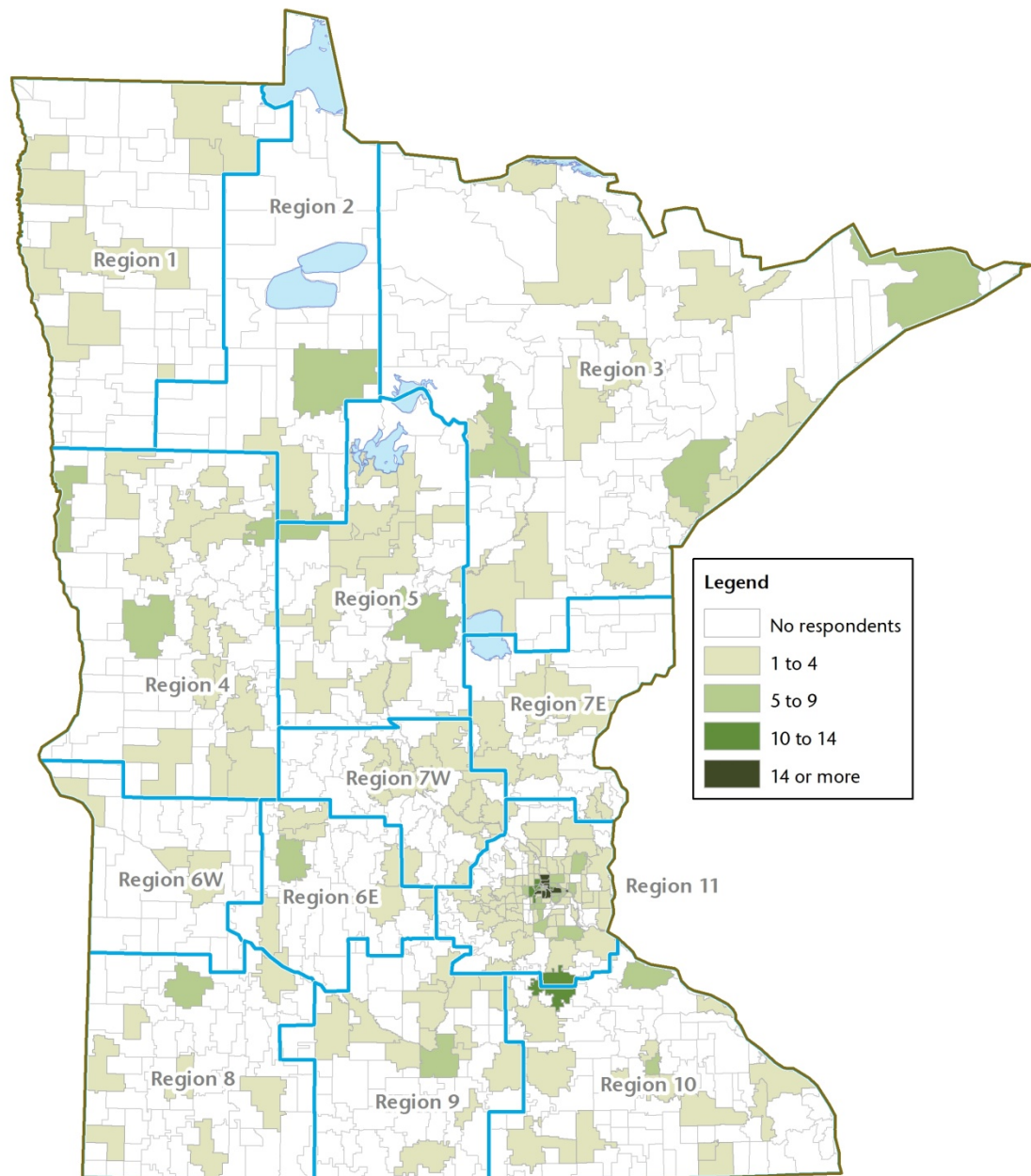
Create – 1,262 organizations



Source: BBC Research & Consulting from the 2011 MN Arts Count.

Figure 27.
Organizations—Support

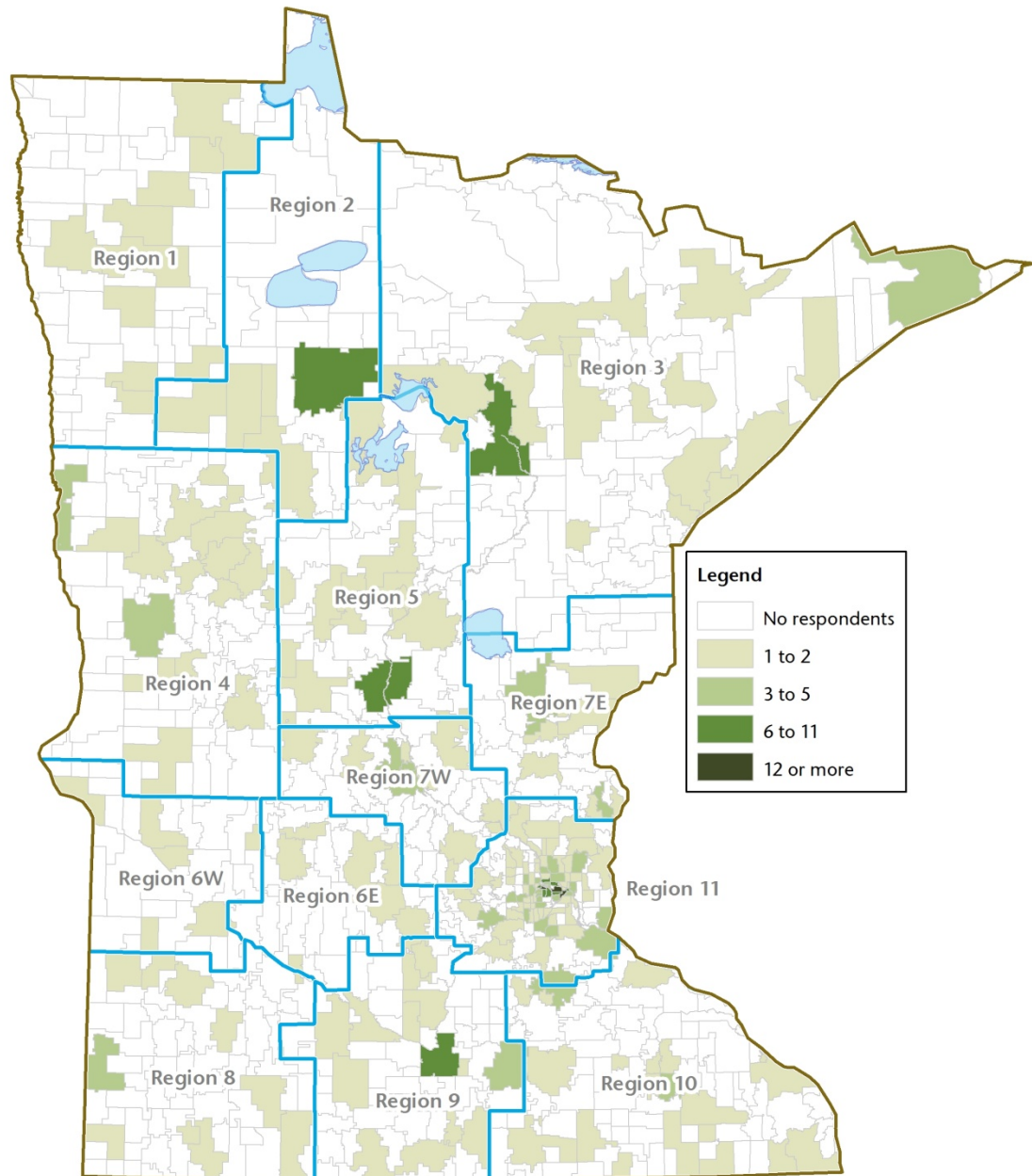
Support – 814 organizations



Source: BBC Research & Consulting from the 2011 MN Arts Count.

Figure 28.
Organizations—Enhance

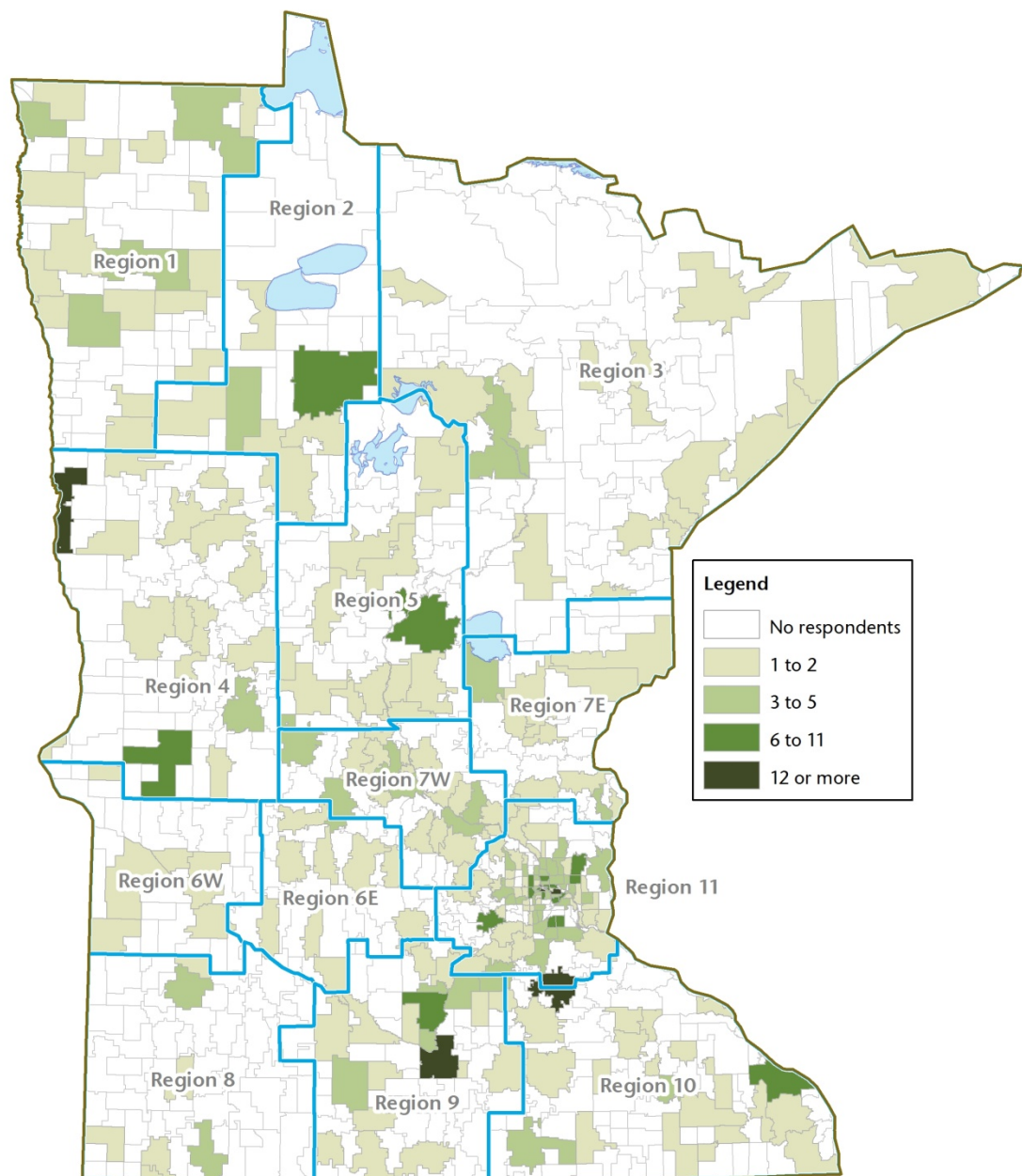
Enhance – 492 organizations



Source: BBC Research & Consulting from the 2011 MN Arts Count.

Figure 29.
Organizations—Teach

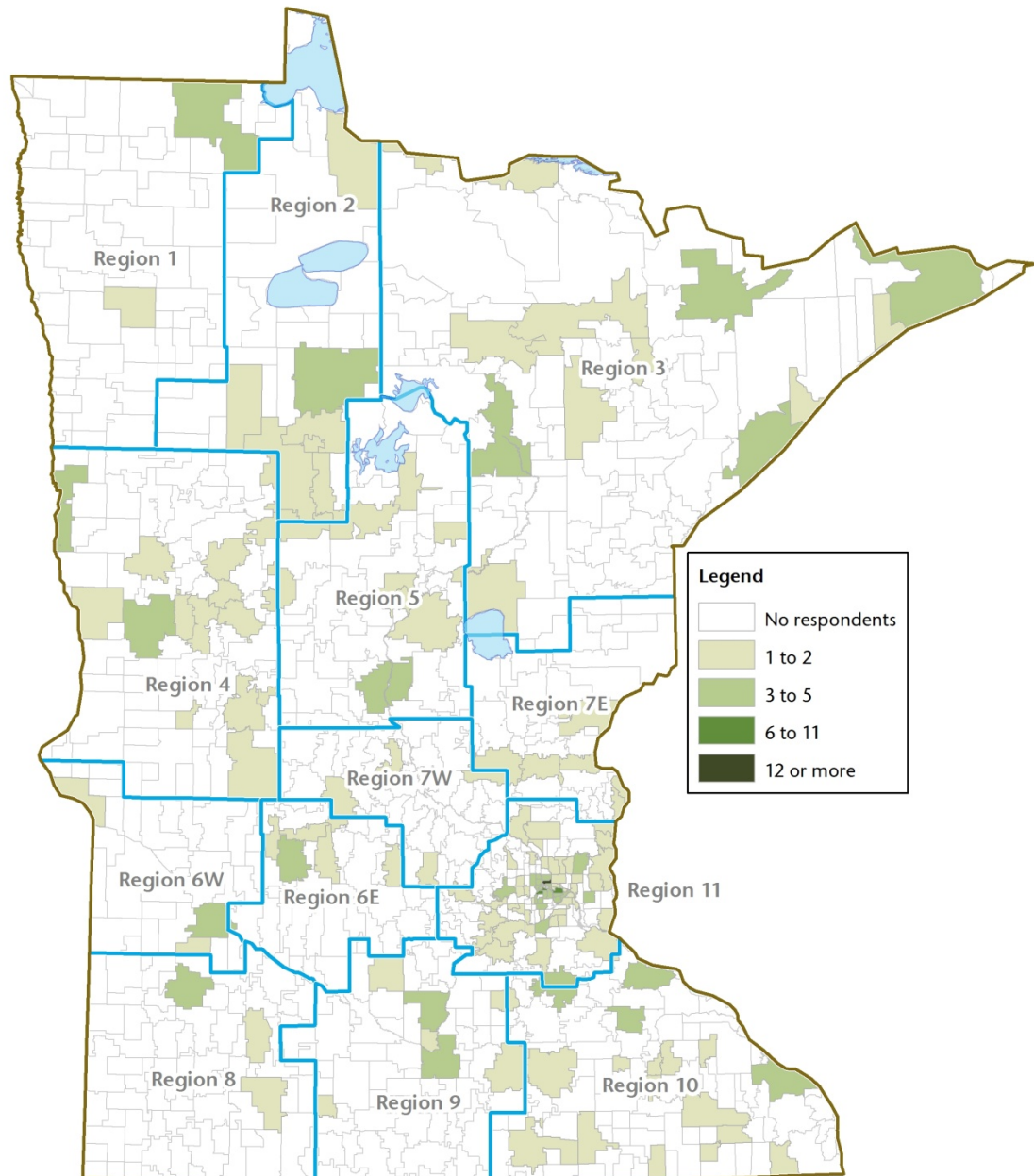
Teach – 593 organizations



Source: BBC Research & Consulting from the 2011 MN Arts Count.

Figure 30.
Organizations—Sell

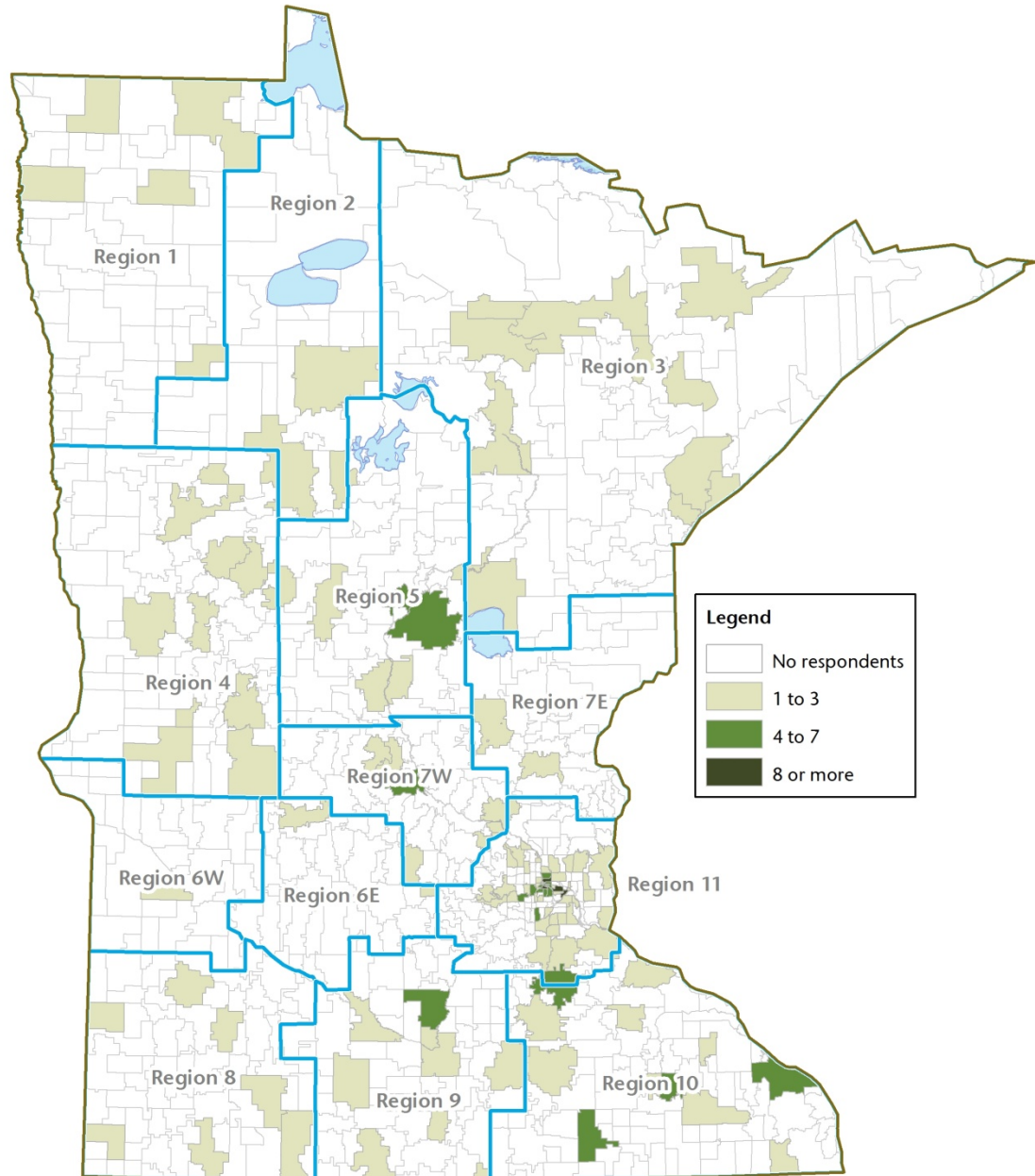
Sell – 335 organizations



Source: BBC Research & Consulting from the 2011 MN Arts Count.

Figure 31.
Organizations—Present

Present – 296 organizations

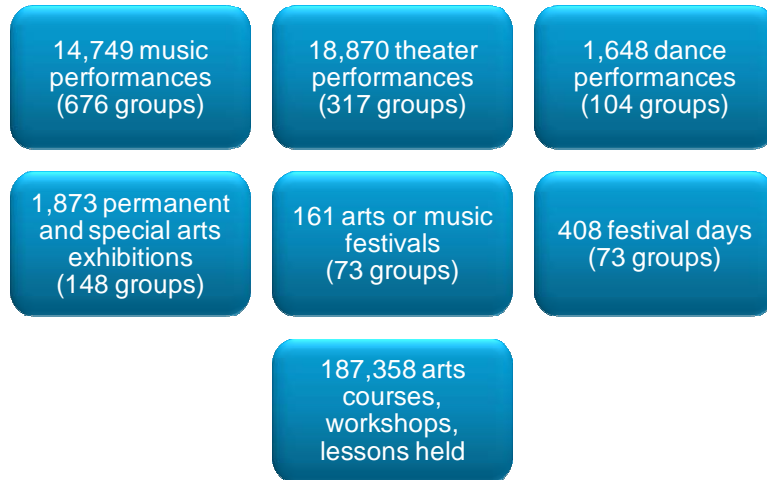


Source: BBC Research & Consulting from the 2011 MN Arts Count.

Regardless of their placement on the spectrum of creative engagement, organizations represented in the MN Arts Count engage with the arts in myriad ways. Figure 32 presents some of the ways in which organizations participate in or support creative engagement.

Figure 32.
Organizations’
Engagement with
Creative Expression

Source:
BBC Research & Consulting from the 2011
MN Arts Count.



Engage and Grow—Organizations

The inclusive nature of the MN Arts Count resulted in numerous nonconventional arts organizations being added to the Arts Board and regional arts council network. Examining these organizations through the lens of the spectrum of creative engagement will allow the Arts Board and regional councils to develop appropriate strategies to engage and grow organizations.

Engage. As with individuals, we envision engaging with organizations through communications and programs. In addition, there are opportunities for the Arts Board and the regional councils to facilitate connections between organizations within a segment of the spectrum and across the spectrum.

Communications. The placement of organizations on the spectrum of creative engagement allows the Arts Board and regional councils to tailor communications based on how creative expression relates to an organization’s mission.

Programming. The inclusion of nonconventional arts organizations in the MN Arts Count creates opportunities to consider developing new programs to include these organizations in Arts Board and regional arts council activities.

Connections. The MN Arts Count provides an opportunity for the Arts Board and regional councils to create connections between organizations and between individuals and organizations. Some topics to consider may include:

- Are there opportunities to connect organizations to individuals? For example, connecting organizations that Teach to Enthusiasts, Earners or Professionals or connecting organizations that Create to organizations that Present.

- Are there opportunities to connect organizations in the same spectrum to each other? Or to connect organizations across the spectrum but within a region?
- Should the Arts Board and regional arts councils facilitate bringing together organizations whose mission is enhanced by creative expression to encourage other organizations to understand the value creative expression adds to these organizations?
- Are there opportunities for organizations to connect individuals to the Arts Board and regional councils? This type of connection maintains the spirit of the MN Arts Count and would allow the Arts Board and regional arts councils to continue to connect with individual creatives across the spectrum.

Grow. With respect to organizations, there is an opportunity for the Arts Board and the regional councils to maintain the inclusive dialogue of the MN Arts Count that all organizations that support, facilitate or engage in creative expression count. Expanding the notion that creative expression adds value to nontraditional organizations, whether through increased revenues or improved outcomes, strengthens the overall support system for creative expression in Minnesota. By offering value to organizations, whether through programs, content, or connections, the Arts Board and regional councils have the opportunity to continue to add new organizations to their network.

Organizations that Create and Present tend to include the conventional arts organizations that are most familiar to and with the Arts Board and the regional councils. With respect to growth, organizations that Enhance have the greatest growth potential. By continuing to connect with and engage organizations that Enhance, the Arts Board and regional arts councils can raise their visibility across the state and increase awareness of the value that is provided to communities from their efforts.

2011 MN Arts Count Recommendations & Lessons Learned

The MN Arts Count is the largest and most comprehensive “count” of individuals and organizations that engage in or support creative expression in the country. That more than 21,000 responded is significant. The MN Arts Count began as an assignment from the Legislature to obtain two numbers—individual artists and arts organizations in Minnesota. The Arts Board and regional arts councils have the opportunity to use the MN Arts Count results and lessons learned to inform their work in the future.

Embrace the spectrum of creative expression for individuals and organizations. The spectrum of creative expression developed for the MN Arts Count is unique and creates the opportunity for the Arts Board and regional councils to orient their thinking and activities to the spectrum. This many include:

- Begin a dialogue internally about how knowing where an individual or organization falls along the spectrum of creative engagement informs the work of the Arts Board and the regional councils. This may include prioritizing funding to specific segments of the spectrum or deciding that all aspects of the spectrum should benefit.
- Educating the directors and staff of the Arts Board and regional councils about the spectrum and how individuals and organizations are classified;

- Tailor communications to engage particular segments;
- Develop programs to grow either the number of individuals and organizations or from one segment to another;
- Incorporating the spectrum into grantmaking processes (e.g., what types of individuals or organizations does the grant serve); and
- Use the spectrum to continue to engage new individuals and organizations in the inclusive spirit of the MN Arts Count.

Make the MN Arts Count a living database. Just because the official MN Arts Count has ended does not mean that the opportunity to continue to reach out and add new individuals and organizations to the Arts Board and regional arts council network has to end.

- For the Arts Board and regional councils, when adding a new individual to your database, ask the three key questions that place an individual on the spectrum of creative engagement—whether or not creative work is shared beyond friends and family; percent of income derived from creative acts; and hours spent per week on creative expression. This will allow the Arts Board and regional councils to better understand the individuals in the network.
- Similarly, when adding an organization, asking the type of organization will allow classification into the organization spectrum. In addition, asking other MN Arts Count questions, such as the types of creative activities conducted, supported or facilitated, will continue to enrich your understanding of organizations and how the arts relate to their mission.
- Encourage grantees to incorporate the spectrum into their own database building activities and how they think about the individuals and organizations with whom they engage.

Commit to building personal relationships with organizations serving ethnic communities and new Americans. The MN Arts Count opened doors for the Arts Board and regional arts councils with organizations that serve Minnesota’s culturally diverse populations (see Figure 7). The majority of these organizations do not have the promotion of arts or culture as their primary mission. As such, the Arts Board and regional councils should build personal relationships with the directors of these organizations to better understand how to include these populations in the work of the Arts Board and regional councils. These organizations are trusted entities and serve as the gatekeepers for these populations. While obtaining participation in the MN Arts Count was difficult, these organizations and populations could greatly benefit from the resources available from the Arts Board and the regional councils. By developing relationships, the Arts Board and regional councils will be able to understand the needs and wants of these organizations, allowing programming to be tailored appropriately.

Understand the importance of timing. One of the greatest challenges of the MN Arts Count was that it was conducted from March through May. The particular timing was a challenge for the following reasons:

- Large community events, such as festivals and fairs, primarily occur in the summer months and early fall. Had the MN Arts Count run through these months, the project could have had visibility at these events, thus reaching broader populations.
- Our conversations with organizations serving diverse populations and new Americans yielded the insight that one of the most effective ways to engage with these populations is during their cultural events and holidays. For nearly every population of interest these events occur from May through January.
- Fielding the MN Arts Count during the legislative session placed extra burdens on staff and volunteers during a time when organizational and individual priorities are focused on budget and policy issues.

Leverage the MN Arts Count brand and social network. Within the three month campaign, the MN Arts Count brand became recognized and a significant social network was developed on Facebook and Twitter. These social networks engaged new audiences in a cost-effective manner. The MN Arts Count social media network can be a useful communications and engagement vehicle for the Arts Board and regional arts councils in the future.