



**artsPlace**  
Where community meets creativity

# Community Engagement 2018-2019

Final Report

# Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Engagement recommendations from the board sub-committee.....	3
Methods.....	4
Surveys.....	4
Postcard survey.....	4
Online survey.....	4
Focus Groups.....	5
Results.....	6
Participation.....	6
Surveys.....	6
Focus Groups.....	7
Current Programs of Interest.....	7
Focus Group Specific.....	9
Future Programs of Interest.....	11
Focus Group Specific.....	13
Programming Recommendations.....	15
Future offerings.....	15
Barriers to Attendance and Solutions.....	17
A lack of time.....	17
Financial Investment.....	17
Lack of awareness.....	18
Program Structure and Timing.....	20
Integrated Programming.....	21
Movies and performances.....	21
Culture nights.....	21
Youth productions.....	21
Final Thoughts.....	22

## Introduction

In the fall of 2018, the artsPlace board began considering potential changes to its programming suite to address strategies in the 2018 business plan. The artsPlace board struck a sub-committee to create and implement a community engagement strategy designed to assess support for existing and future programs. This final report details the approach and outcomes of community engagement from July 2018 to February 2019.




The board sub-committee defined three decision statements to guide this project. A decision statement reflects the purpose of the community engagement. The decision statements were:

1. artsPlace is reviewing its programming suite. What kinds of programs do Bow Valley community members want to see or experience here in the next 2-3 years?
2. artsPlace needs to understand the barriers to attendance and awareness of artsPlace programming. How can we expand our reach?
3. artsPlace is analyzing its current space. What kind of facilities, equipment, and tools does the Bow Valley need to realize their creative potential?

The intended outcome of this process was to obtain stakeholder feedback on analysis, alternatives and decisions. artsPlace is committed to its stakeholders and wants to keep them informed, listen to them, and acknowledge their concerns and aspirations for programming.

### Engagement recommendations from the board sub-committee

The board sub-committee settled on two approaches to address the defined decision statements:

-  Surveys – The board sub-committee recommended that two types of surveys be administered to the Bow Valley public and artsPlace stakeholders: a postcard survey with 10 basic questions assessing interest in artsPlace programming, and a longer online survey that delved deeper into program interests and barriers to attendance.
-  Focus groups – Focus groups were recommended to discuss survey results with targeted stakeholder groups. A focus group is a structured approach that explores a challenging situation by using a series of predetermined questions. Focus groups are a facilitated exercise where group discussion is encouraged and ideas among participants build on each other.
-  Other options – An open house was discussed by the board sub-committee to demonstrate programming options to the public. This option may still be pursued at a later date.

## Methods

### Surveys

#### Postcard survey

artsPlace staff developed and designed the postcard survey, which was reviewed and approved by the board sub-committee and public engagement contractor, Sarah Elmeligi. The postcard contained three sections with a total of six questions. Respondents were asked what kinds of artsPlace programs they had participated in, and what future activities they may be interested in. A simple multiple question asked respondents to define potential barriers to their participation. Respondents were also asked if they would be interested in participating in a longer online survey; emails were added to the artsPlace database.



Surveys were distributed at the Canmore Folk Fest from August 3-5, 2018. People attending the folk fest were incited to participate by the chance to win a \$250 gift certificate to artsPlace. The postcard was also available at public events at artsPlace for people to complete while participating in programs.

#### Online survey

artsPlace staff drafted the online survey to complement the postcard survey. Survey questions were reviewed and edited by the public engagement contractor and approved by the artsPlace executive director. The online survey contained 24 questions in total, which examined:

1. Attendance and interest in existing artsPlace programs by ascertaining:
  - ✍ Participation levels in existing programs
  - ✍ Level of interest and likelihood to attend existing programs
  - ✍ When respondents were most likely to participate in programs (i.e., time of day and year)
  - ✍ Potential barriers to attendance
2. Interest in potential future programs at artsPlace by investigating:
  - ✍ Interest in and likelihood of attending a list of new programs not currently offered
  - ✍ Programming types of importance to respondents
  - ✍ Programming types respondents would like to see more of

3. General satisfaction and marketing by asking:
  - ✍ Respondents' level of satisfaction with existing programming options and level of instruction
  - ✍ Assumptions people had about artsPlace and its operations
  - ✍ How respondents would best like to hear about artsPlace programming offerings
4. Demographic questions asked:
  - ✍ Where respondents were from, how often they visited Canmore, age, and gender.

The online survey was created and distributed via Survey Monkey. All email addresses contained in the artsPlace database received an invitation to complete the survey. A link to the survey was also distributed via social media platforms (e.g., Facebook), and was posted on the artsPlace webpage.

### Focus Groups

After examining the survey data, we found few responses from young people and men. artsPlace wishes to expand their reach to new audiences, but the perspectives of these audiences were not adequately represented in the survey results. To address this data gap and gain more fulsome understanding of these demographics, artsPlace hosted focus groups designed to build on the survey responses with detailed recommendations.

The last question on the online survey asked if the respondent was interested in participating in a focus group. People who responded positively, lived in the Bow Valley, and fit the targeted demographic were invited to attend the focus group and to invite a friend. Asking participants to invite a friend allowed us to include community members who did not complete the survey and may not have had previous experience with artsPlace. This helped us assess potential barriers to attendance and awareness.

The three focus groups hosted were:

- ✍ Men – January 15, 2019
- ✍ Youth aged 13-17 – January 22, 2019
- ✍ Young adults aged 18-34 – February 12, 2019



Focus groups questions and approach were drafted by the public engagement contractor and approved by the program manager and board members. Focus groups took place in the evening for two hours. artsPlace provided pizza, beverages, and free movie passes for all attendees.

# Results

## Participation

### Surveys<sup>1</sup>

In all, 369 short surveys and 770 long surveys were completed. Survey Monkey analytic tools summarized the survey results per question. For the long survey analyses, respondents under 18 of age were eliminated due to small sample size (n<10).

Survey respondents were mainly middle-aged, professional, and women who resided in Canmore (Table 1).

*Table 1: Demographics of respondents from the long online survey*

Demographic	Category	Number of Respondents
Age	<18 years old	6
	18-34 years old	116
	35-49 years old	204
	50-64 years old	264
	65+ years old	165
Gender	Female	640
	Male	113
	Non-binary	2
	Prefer not to say	11
Frequency of visit to Canmore	Daily (residents)	617
	Weekly	72
	1-2 times/ month	44
	Several times per year	23
	Annually	8
Profession	Hospitality/retail	63
	Trades	18
	Other professional	269
	Self-employed	111
	Artist	45
	Student	19
	Retired	231
	Other	14

<sup>1</sup> Survey results were presented to artsPlace as an interim report on November 24, 2019. For this final report, the survey results have been copied from the interim report and then combined with the Focus Group results for a comprehensive integrated discussion.

## Focus Groups

All focus groups were well attended; 12 in the men's group, 11 in the youth group, and 11 in the young adult group. Discussion was varied and productive and all participants were engaged in sharing recommendations to help shape future programming at artsPlace. One common result among all focus group participants was an interest in artsPlace as a community centre for creativity. Participants were interested in working together to create unique and functional pieces of art in our community; differences in how they envisioned that participation are described below.

## Current Programs of Interest

General trends found in the survey and focus group data were:

- ✍ Survey respondents who had not been to artsPlace in the past year were more interested in visual arts than other respondents, whereas respondents who had been to artsPlace in the past year were most interested in movies and live performances.
- ✍ Young adults in Canmore are interested in a diversity of programs. In the long survey respondents interested in youth programming and aged 18-34 were most interested in ceramics, visual arts, and indigenous programs. Yet, in the short survey and focus group this age group was most interested in live performances and movies.
- ✍ Respondents aged 35-49 were most interested in drama and family focused programs in the long survey. Short survey results showed they were also interested in live performances, movies, and ceramics.
- ✍ Both surveys found respondents aged 65+ were most interested in movies and live performances (Figure 1).
- ✍ Interest in programming type was dependent on profession:
  - 🌻 Professionals were most interested in ceramics and crafts
  - 🌻 Self-employed respondents most interested in drama and family programs
  - 🌻 Artists were most interested in visual, writing, and indigenous programs
  - 🌻 Retired respondents were most interested in movies and live performances
- ✍ Skill level was also related to interest in current programming:
  - 🌻 Beginners were interested in family programming and movies
  - 🌻 Intermediate artists were interested in ceramics, drama, crafts, and movies
  - 🌻 Advanced artists were interested in crafts and writing
  - 🌻 Professional artists were most interested in visual, drama, writing, and indigenous programs (Figure 2).

## Age and Interest in Current Programs

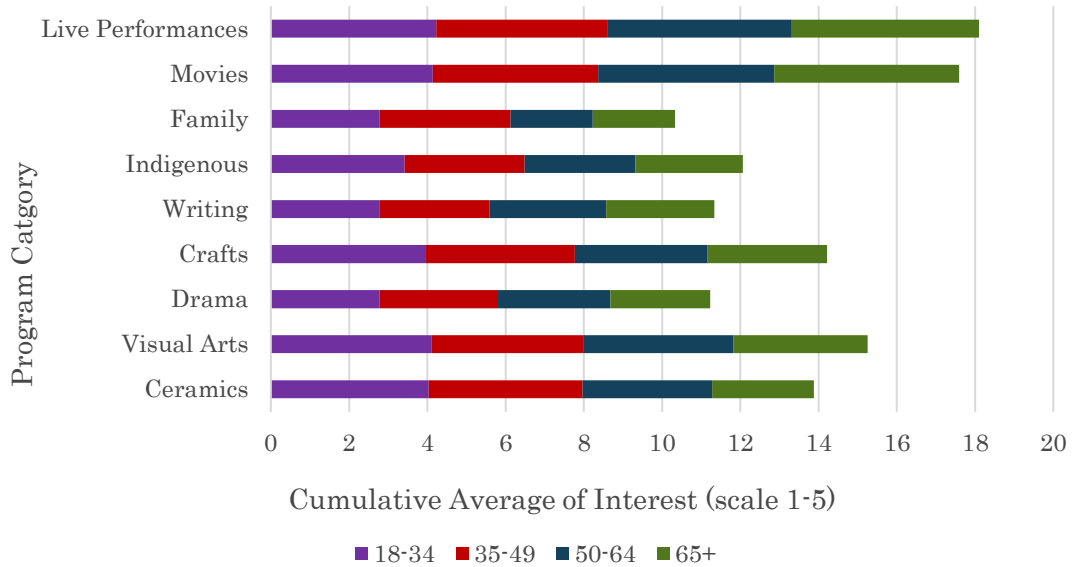


Figure 1: Respondents age category and interest in current programming

## Skill Level and Interest in Current Programs

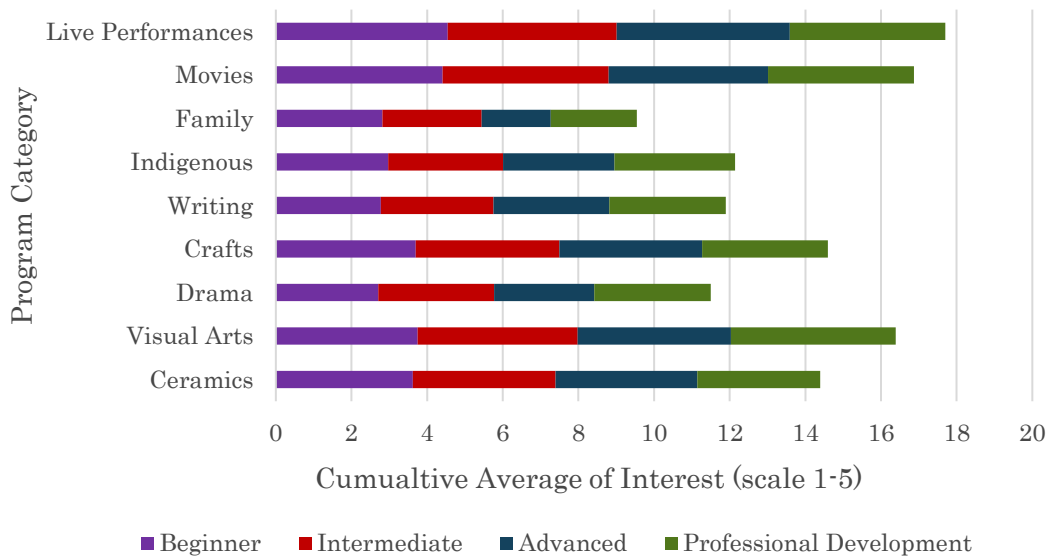


Figure 2: Respondents skill level and interest in current programming



In the open-ended survey question asking respondents what kinds of current programs were most important to them, movies, music performances, or professional theater screenings (e.g., National Theater, MetOpera) ranked the most highly. The second highest categories of most important programming were jewelry making and crafts, particularly fiber arts.

### Focus Group Specific

#### *Men*

Live performances, movies, and visual arts were the current programs of most interest to the men's focus group. Participants appreciated that the broad range of art films shown at artsPlace, particularly if they weren't shown elsewhere in the Bow Valley. They also stated that the viewing was better than other locations with a more relaxed theater space and better food and drinks available.

When it came to live performances, men again appreciated seeing performances that they couldn't see elsewhere in the Bow Valley. This included more classical and opera showings, local bands, and family friendly performances so they could bring their children.

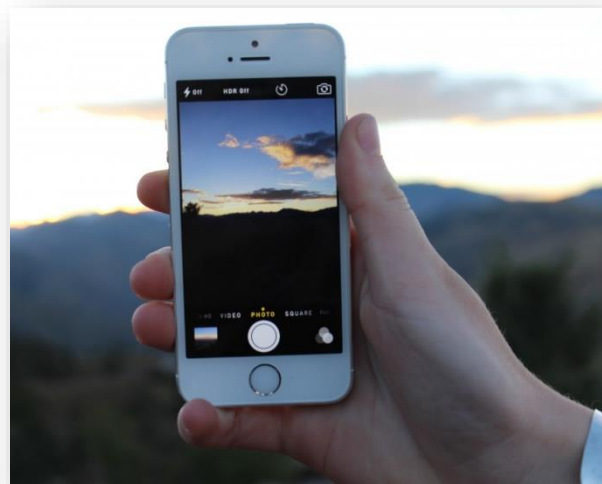
#### *Youth (<18 years old)*

With this small survey sample size in this age group, we rely heavily on the input from the focus group participants. Although the focus group help detail the perspective of this age group, it is difficult to generalize these results across the community.

The top three programs of interest for this age group in the focus group were crafts, ceramics, and visual arts, specifically photography and painting. They were interested in youth specific classes that were progressive.

In terms of existing programs, youth liked programs that fit within their daily lives and activities. Photography was popular because it is something they already do regularly with their phones and devices. They enjoyed learning how to take different photos outside with their phones, but they also expressed interest in specialized courses where they could practice with different lenses and cameras.

They enjoyed ceramics because they would create something useful that they could appreciate everyday. They also liked the hands- on nature of programs at artsPlace; they enjoyed "experiencing and feeling" the medium to create something.



### *Young Adults (18-34 years old)*

This age group is interested in a broad spectrum of activities, they are open to experimentation, trying new things, and then engaging in the activities that appeal most to them. Of the current programs, they were most interested in discussion live performances, movies, and visual arts. Overall, however, this group did not feel the current programming suite was representative of their interests. When it came to live performances, the group felt that the performances were not always attended by their peers, which led to them feeling out of place. They didn't always feel comfortable being themselves at artsPlace; they felt they might be judged if they didn't dress a certain way or if they spoke inappropriately. They wanted to know that they would be accepted and welcomed at artsPlace for who they are.

They would like to see more programming specifically targeting young adults. Heartburn was mentioned as an amazing art event that engaged and inspired this age group but was also fun! Having fun and participating in fun events was a big part of what attracts this age group to programs.

In terms of films, young adults were most interested in seeing movies that were not shown elsewhere, such as independent, award-winning, Canadian culture, and Indigenous films. They associated artsPlace with showing quality films, not Hollywood blockbusters. Some participants had attended films and programs at artsPlace to meet new people in town but were disappointed to find that they were the youngest participants by 20 years.



## Future Programs of Interest

General trends found in the data were:

- ✍ People who had never been to artsPlace were most interested in many programs not currently offered at Arts Place, including woodworking, graphic design and digital arts, film making, carving and sculpting, fiber arts, glasswork, and indigenous programming.
- ✍ Respondents who were interested in young adult programming and respondents aged 18-34 were more interested than average in all the proposed new programming options.
- ✍ In the open-ended question about what kind of program people had attended, many respondents stated a community connection or general gallery event (e.g., fundraiser). Respondents who had a general interest in community connection events were more interested in woodworking, film production, fiber arts, glasswork, and indigenous programming.
- ✍ Respondents with a general interest in technology programming were more interested in woodworking, graphic art and design, digital arts, film production, photography, carving/sculpting, and glasswork than average.
- ✍ People who came to Canmore 1-2 times per month were also more interested than average in most of the new types of programming being proposed, including new forms of painting, woodworking, graphic art and design, digital arts, photography, fiber arts, and glasswork (Figure 3).
- ✍ People who were professional artists were more interested than average in all new forms of programming proposed except woodworking and glasswork.
- ✍ Skill level also influenced what kinds of new programming respondents were interested in. Respondents looking for more advanced programs displayed higher levels of interest in most programs, except music recording and photography, than average (Figure 4).

When asked what kinds of programming categories they would like to see more of, several respondents requested programs targeted specific audiences, including singles or date nights, adult only programs, and teens only programming.

### Interest in Future Programming and Frequency in Canmore

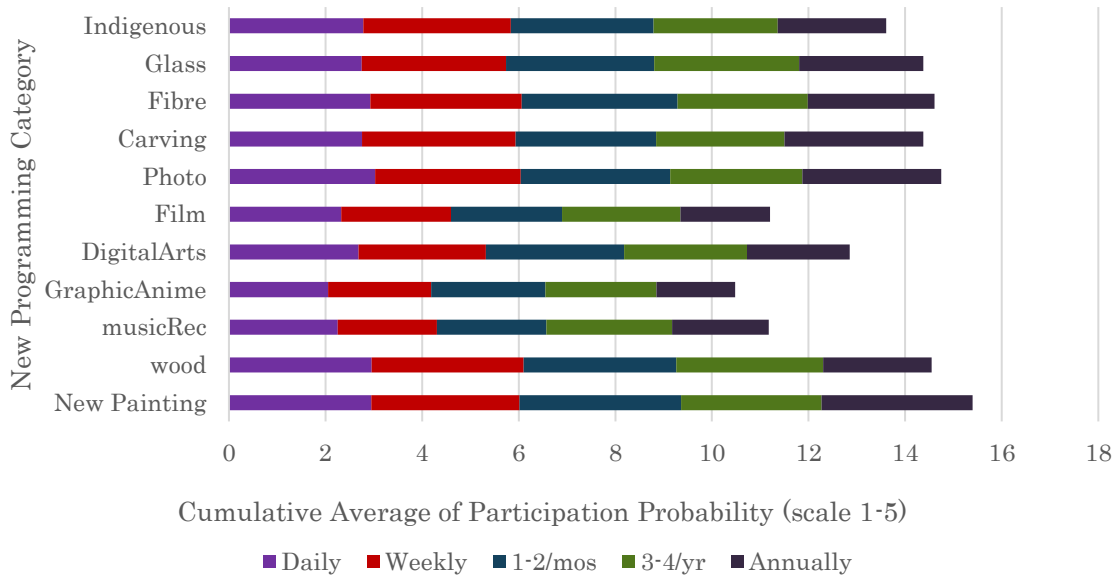


Figure 3: Likelihood of participating in future programming and respondents' frequency of being in Canmore

### Interest in Future Programming and Skill Level

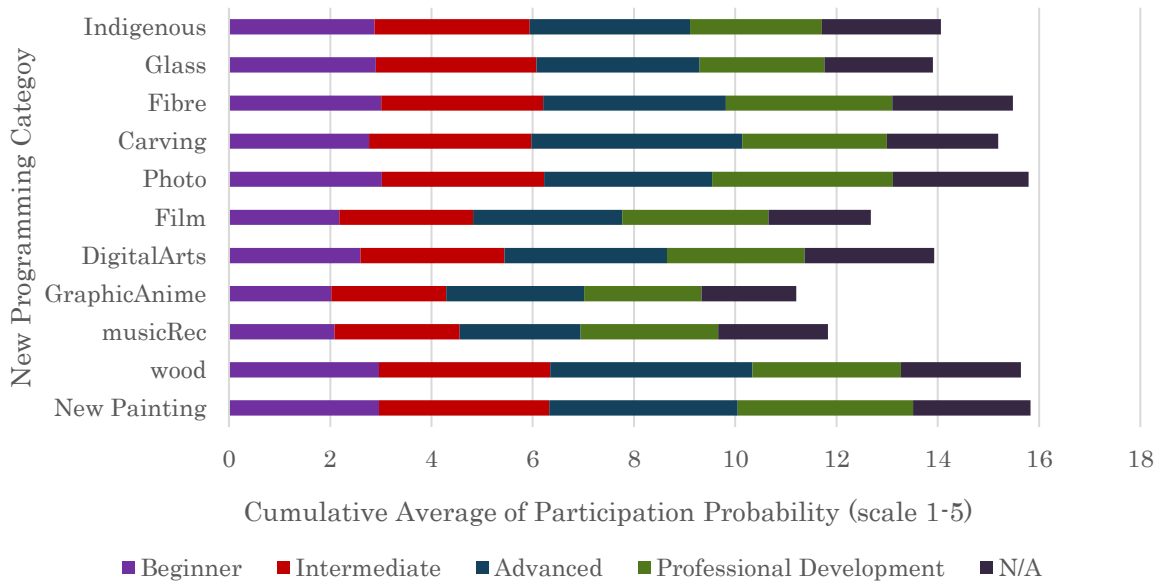


Figure 4: Respondents requested programming skill level and their likelihood in participating in proposed new programming categories.

## Focus Group Specific

All participants across focus groups were interested in new programming options. These discussions were rich and there was a definite enthusiasm in exploring new activities.

### *Men*

Of the new programming options, men were most interested in carving/woodworking/sculpting, glass work, photography, and film making/production.

There was a high level of interest amongst all participants in woodworking, particularly if it resulted in making something functional and practical. Men were interested in making small pieces of furniture, bowls (not utensils), and chess boards. They were also interested in furniture restoration. Carving was not an essential component for them but might have potential. There was interest in taking existing materials (e.g., driftwood, left over materials at home) and upcycling it into a small piece of furniture. These programs could involve gathering the materials as well as construction.



Men were interested in sculpting if a program existed that could introduce them to different mediums, which they would then be able to work with further on open studio time. They liked programs such as this being taught by local artists. Their interest in photography was broad and ranged from beginner classes to more specialized classes focusing on subjects (e.g., landscapes, wildlife) or techniques (e.g., night photography).

Participants were interested in all steps associated with film making from story-boarding to film production and editing. They requested an introductory course with more specialized courses to follow and a final showing in the artsPlace theater.

### *Youth (<18 years old)*

The youth focus group participants were interested in a diversity of activities. The idea of working together in their areas of interest to create something big, like a play or a mural, came up time and again.

Their top four future programs of interest were filmmaking, woodworking, glass, and digital arts, but there were programs of interest that were not presented as options. These included silversmithing and theater production.

Participants were interested in glass related programs, such as making jewelry, stained glass, or miniature figures. They liked the idea of a specific outcome, such as a Christmas ornament, that they could take home and share with their families.



They were also interested in learning from a course teacher about career paths, or motivations and inspiration to

create their art. One participant commented that a mental health/creativity night where an art teacher and a therapist could share how creative expression through art can help relieve stress or cope with challenging situations. They also liked the idea of courses being taught by high school students. This idea was seen as a win-win – the high school student gained experience teaching and the younger student was able to learn from a peer instead of an adult.

Youth were also interested in woodworking to make functional objects, such as chessboards and bowls. But they were more interested if woodworking could be combined with painting or carving and they could decorate their pieces. There was a high level of interest in working with the lathe or other power tools in a safe environment. They suggested partnering with the schools so that students could work on their projects at school and at artsPlace.

#### *Young Adults (18-34 years old)*


While young adults were interested in future art programs as something new and fun to do, there was definite interest in learning something new that could be related to a career. Their interest in digital arts focused on learning more about how to use the Adobe programming suite, photo editing, and web design. As such, they were also interested in programs that taught them how to market their skills or sell their art.

Young adults were also interested in carving, particularly soap stone or ice. There was also broad interest in woodworking and building furniture. Participants discussed functional programs, such as repair nights for small appliances, clothes, and bikes.

# Programming Recommendations


## Future offerings

While defining barriers to attending programs was difficult, it was clear that expanding the diversity of programs offered is likely to increase community participation in artsPlace.


-  Woodworking – This new type of programming was ranked highly in the surveys, particularly with people who have not been to artsPlace in the past year. This programming option was also highly interesting to young adults, people interested in community events, people interested in technology, and those only in Canmore 1-2 times per month. It was also discussed with a high level of interest in all focus groups.

Focus group participants wanted to create useful objects and were most interested in one-off workshops with a tangible outcome (e.g., a bowl). Although there was interest in longer courses around furniture building or upcycling. Focus group participants were very interested in open studio time associated with this craft and working with local artists to learn basic skills.

*Recommendation: offer several one-off workshops in woodworking designed to building something specific to pilot this programming type in the community. Explore designating a space for wood-working and purchasing a lathe and other specialized equipment. Another option is to explore a partnership with the school in Morley, that has an underutilized wood-working shop. Once community interest in woodworking is established, offer longer courses designed to build on the skills from the one-off workshops.*

-  Glass work – This form of programming did not rank highly in the surveys but was discussed in all focus groups. Youth and young adults were particularly interested in glass work. As with woodworking, participants were interested in one-off workshops to create something specific.

*Recommendation: offer a series of glass work classes that take place over a few hours and focus on different ways of working with glass, including jewelry making, stained glass, and even glass blowing and making (if possible). Using participant surveys determine what kinds of glass work are most supported and explore specific longer course to build on participant skills.*

-  Fiber arts – This was repeatedly stated of interest across several demographic groups in the surveys, but not in the focus groups. This may suggest that fibre arts are more interesting to existing artsPlace clientele. Therefore, these programs may meet an existing interest, but will not serve to attract new participants.

*Recommendation: investigate different options of fiber art programs of varying lengths. For example, a bi-weekly drop-in “stitch and bitch” for 2-3 hours on a weekend evening for people to learn how to knit or crochet could be popular with people looking for a casual experience. With the high interest in fiber arts, however, registered programs of varying lengths focused on weaving, sewing, dress making, etc. may also be popular among residents and people who have already experience programs at artsPlace.*

- ✍ Other forms of painting and visual arts – There is an interest in oil painting, which may lend itself to a longer weekly course. With the interest in singles, date nights, and adult programming, however, artsPlace should combining painting with socializing. Young adults specifically requested programs where they could meet new people in their age group, which could be addressed through these forms of programs.

*Recommendation: offer more “paint nights” for targeted audiences, such as youth, young adults, date or single nights. These nights can involve working with different kinds of pain or exploring sculpting different mediums.*

- ✍ Indigenous programming was again of interest to users not as familiar with the current artsPlace programming suite.

*Recommendation: offer more variety in Indigenous programming and improve marketing about these options. Most focus group participants were unaware these kinds of programs are being offered.*

- ✍ Digital arts – Focus group participants were interested in various forms of digital arts, including film editing. Again, participants were most interested in digital arts that were functional and could be combined with other skills to create something marketable.

*Recommendation: explore purchasing digital editing equipment for film making photo editing. Consider offering courses that combine these skills with marketing advice.*

- ✍ Professional development – Youth and young adults expressed interest in participating in programs that were sequential and built skills over time. They requested an array of programs with short workshop where they could be introduced to an activity and then have the option to increase their skills by participating in a longer, more structured class. They request open studio time to practice and refine their skills. Providing advice on career development and self-promotion is an essential component of this development.

*Recommendation: explore structuring program offerings to link better together in a progressive manner so that people can increase their skills over time. Link these progressive skills to marketing and entrepreneur advice.*



## Barriers to Attendance and Solutions

Assessing barriers to attending artsPlace programs was difficult as most respondents in the long survey (340/476) replied “Not Applicable” to the question. This suggests that either the barriers to attendance were not listed in the survey options or respondents don’t have an easy answer to the question. On the short survey, most respondents commented that they were not familiar with artsPlace (43/77). When examining survey respondents’ answers in the “other” category from the short survey, the main barriers stated were being unfamiliar with the programs at artsPlace (n=6), being new to town (n=10), or being a visitor (n=9). Schedule conflicts were also a concern (n=11). Barriers were discussed extensively in the focus group, however.

### A lack of time

In the long survey, a lack of time, including scheduling conflicts, was stated as a barrier for people less than 50 years old, those interested in mountain culture events, people living in Canmore, and working as professionals. This came up as a potential barrier in the youth and men’s focus groups.

Youth in the Bow Valley are busy and there are many activities competing for their free time. All the participants in the youth focus group were engaged in after-school activities multiple evenings a week. To position itself as more competitive for the limited time youth have, artsPlace should explore partnering with schools and other community organizations to offer unique programs that students can work on in various locations.

The Young adult and men’s focus group participants commented that a lack of child care was a potential barrier because they didn’t have child-free time. Programs targeting these demographics may choose to offer child minding for an additional charge. Another option is to have children and adult programs running concurrently with a discount for registering in both programs.

### Financial Investment

Programming being unaffordable was stated as a barrier to participation by survey respondents living in Canmore, working as professionals, under 50 years of age, interested in young adult programming, or interested in forming community connections. It also was discussed in all the focus groups. Focus group participants felt that there could be more variety in pricing options by changing the program length or level of expected commitment. Below are more specific recommendations that we explored in the focus groups.





### *An art pass*

Everyone liked the idea of a loyalty program or a 10-punch pass for artsPlace. All focus group participants were enthusiastic about a 10-punch pass for movies that provided the 10<sup>th</sup> movie free. Participants also discussed the idea of an “art sampler pack” where they could purchase a pass for a specific number of art classes across mediums and topics. This pass could be applied

to the afternoon/evening workshops that artsPlace offers. The purpose would be to expose people to several forms of artistic expression, which may encourage them to take a longer course.

### *Community partnerships*

Focus group participants largely saw artsPlace as a collaborative member of the Bow Valley community and they would like that to be reflected in pricing partnerships. Youth participants suggested that people with a membership at Elevation Place could get a discount at artsPlace. Other similar partnerships could include:

-  People with a ticket stub from another art event in town (e.g., a play or music) receive a discount for an event at artsPlace.
-  People who volunteer at particular organizations could get a discount based on their number of volunteer hours. This idea of a volunteer credit program was discussed extensively in the men's focus group.
-  Discounts for young adults who can't get community assistance from the Town of Canmore but demonstrate their commitment to our community by volunteering or showing initiative in other programs.
-  Partnering with schools to offer programs for students that can be advanced over the length of a school term in both locations.

### *Discounts for low income sectors of our community*

Youth and young adults discussed several discount scenarios to make programming more affordable. Some of them were not eligible for community assistance through the Town of Canmore but were interested in exploring new programs at artsPlace. artsPlace already offers a subsidy program for people below a certain income level, but most participants were unaware of this program. artsPlace should increase marketing efforts for that program, particularly when advertising programs targeted at young people in the Bow Valley Community. Another suggestion was to create a "share your art love" program where people buying tickets are asked to pay an extra \$2 to donate to a fund specifically to cover young adult and youth pricing.

### *Lack of awareness*

The data show a lack of awareness amongst the community regarding the diversity of programs offered at artsPlace. artsPlace currently advertises its program through many avenues. The focus group participants offered concrete ways to improve marketing to reach new audiences.

In the long survey, 69% of respondents said they would like to learn about what is happening at artsPlace through weekly email newsletters. The focus group participants said they appreciated the e-newsletter that artsPlace currently distributes. The men's focus group commented that a newsletter more personalized to individual interests may be better received. This could be done through programming more links in to the existing e-newsletter with shorter titles or altering

the design of the newsletter to encourage people to click on categories of interest. It would be helpful if the email is extremely short with many links so people can go exactly where they want to go and register for the programs that most interest them.

To reach new audiences, people suggested that artsPlace should have more posters at strategic locations around town with more programs listed on them. Focus group participants commented that they did see posters around town, but they typically focused on one particular program. A poster that used a calendar to showcase “this month at artsPlace” would be more useful to understand the breadth of programs being offered. Participants also commented that using a calendar on the artsPlace website and program book would be useful. As programs at artsPlace may fill up, this calendar could be released a month in advance.

Focus group participants also suggested artsPlace partner with other community organizations that do community announcements, such as Mountain FM radio and local schools who do various community announcements everyday. A regular newspaper spot in the Rocky Mountain Outlook could be another option to attract new participants.

Younger focus group participants stated that artsPlace should put more advertising on social media targeting specific age groups. For example, youth are most likely to use Snapchat, young adults use Instagram, and adults use

Facebook. artsPlace should create marketing materials designed for each of these social media platforms. All platforms can be used to upload images of art pieces participants have created or short videos of programs that have happened. These images and videos serve as teasers to get people interested. Young adults also commented that artsPlace should have a fun hashtag to accompany all social media and encourage users to share and like posts amongst their networks. Suggested hashtags were #canmoreart, #canmoreartsplace, or #artsplacecanmore. Participants felt it important the hashtag contained the words “canmore” and “art”.



## Program Structure and Timing

One of the questions in the long survey asked people to select their preferring length and timing of programming. Respondents were flexible in their time of day to participate in programs, but there was a preference for weekday evening programs (32% of respondents). Young adults stated they were most available on weekday evenings, particularly during the winter months. They were not at all interested in weekend programs during the summer.

Time of year was not a factor in decision making in the online survey (54% of respondents said they would attend a program any time of year), but the focus group participants were more interested in programs that were offered in the winter. Focus group participants said the winters in Canmore were long and dark and felt their evenings were more available, whereas on long summer days they were more likely to be outside until late in the evening. Scheduling conflicts were discussed in the focus groups and participants suggested that popular programs have more flexibility in attendance requirements (e.g., attend 7 out of 10 classes), be offered at various times, or have more open studio time. Program flexibility was supported by the young adult focus group participants whose schedules were more unpredictable making it difficult for them to commit to longer courses.

Survey respondents were most interested in workshop style programs that lasted for several hours in one session (35%) and somewhat interested in programs that took place for several hours 3-4 times (22%). Focus group participants echoed this result and added that they would like to participate in short programs that ended with a tangible result: "something you can start and finish in one session and take home with you". The participants in the youth focus group were interested in programs that took place every week after school over a term but also interested weekend workshop programs. There are also opportunities for youth to attend programs during school holiday weeks (e.g., family week, PD days, summer holidays) when their parents are at work.



## Integrated Programming

There was broad interest from focus group participants for combining art mediums and techniques in a program. The discussion in this area went from interactive movie evenings that are attended by the filmmaker to much more elaborate scenarios.

### Movies and performances

Most people who responded to a survey or participated in a focus group loved the artsPlace movie nights. Suggestions for improvement focused on making the evening more interactive where someone involved in the film making was present to answer questions or introduce the film. Participants suggested that a casual cocktail and mingling session after the film would be a good opportunity to talk to the film maker. They also suggested planning for a broader group discussion facilitated by a host when films present complex social or environmental topics. People were interested in involving local talent and showcasing more local films, particularly through a shorts film festival.

Focus group participants also discussed the involvement of local young performers, such as bands, comedians, and film makers to draw more young adults to live performances. Young adults were very interested in live performances with an interactive component. They wanted to be inspired, introduced to new potential careers, and to connect with the artists. They were also interested in outdoor performances, like Shakespeare in the park.

The youth focus group wanted to collaborate with actors to create a short film, or to make a film at the Elevation Place climbing gym and learn how to film sports. Youth also welcomed the idea of incorporating digital arts in the programming suite, saying it would broaden their understanding of art.

### Culture nights

The young adults were very interested in learning about and experiencing different cultures with all their senses. They discussed evenings where a foreign country was showcased with live music, catered food, dancing lessons, art pieces, and other interactive displays. These could be comprehensive culture evenings where all the senses are stimulated, and participants are immersed in all aspects of somewhere completely different.

### Youth productions

The youth focus group participants were keenly interested in large, community art projects that engaged multiple forms of art. They talked extensively about putting on a play or creating a movie in a large team where different people would play different roles based on their interest, including costume design/making, set design and construction, acting, producing, sound tech, directing, marketing, and writing. A project like this would require partnerships with the broader community and could part of their school options. Youth were very interested in then presenting the final piece to the community through a show or recital.

## Final Thoughts

artsPlace is doing a great job in its current programming offer. Respondents rated artsPlace very highly in all aspects of programming delivery. This suggests that the current programming suite is meeting the needs of people who are attending programs on a regular basis. This is important to keep in mind when planning future programming suite; there was not an easily identified stream of existing programming that needed to be replaced. The future programming suite should add to the existing program offers to expand the reach of artsPlace.

Movies and live performances are popular with all demographic groups; diversifying these program offers may further increase participation. A potentially easy way to expand the reach of artsPlace is to include more movie screenings and live performances with an interactive component. Respondents were particularly interested in more French or foreign language films (providing they were subtitled), and more adventure films that are not being shown elsewhere (e.g., the Banff Film Fest). In terms of live performances, artsPlace offers a unique experience in Canmore with a small theater and intimate performances. artsPlace should attract performers who are not playing in other venues in Canmore and are perhaps more on the fringes of mainstream music. The success of the comedy nights is an example of a new type of live performance that being positively received by people in the Bow Valley.

Ultimately, Canmore is a busy town and residents have many options of what to do with their free time. There is a definite interest in creating art and exploring creativity, especially if it can be done on a casual trial basis to try something new. The one-off workshops that artsPlace offers are great and can introduce people to new forms of expression and ways to spend their time. Building on these workshops with progressive programming may interest people to explore an art form more deeply.