



Americans Speak Out About The Arts: Arts Education & Government Arts Funding

About This Public Opinion Poll

This is the first of several releases of Americans for the Arts' new survey on the public opinion of the arts. The purpose of the survey was to gauge the public's personal engagement in the arts, their support for arts education and government arts funding, the personal benefits and well-being that comes from engaging in the arts, and if/how those benefits extend more broadly to the community.

The survey was conducted in December 2015 by Ipsos Public Affairs, the third largest survey research firm in the world. To add precision to the findings, a large sample size of 3,020 adults was surveyed, online. The poll has a credibility interval of plus/minus 2 percentage points.

This report focuses on two key areas of the survey: (1) the value and attitudes towards arts in K-12 education and (2) opinions about government funding for the arts at the local state and national levels.

Learn more and download data tables at www.AmericansForTheArts.org/PublicOpinion





Executive Summary of Findings

The American Public Overwhelmingly Supports Arts Education



- **The arts are considered part of a well-rounded education:** An overwhelming majority of the American public (89 percent) agrees that the arts are part of a well-rounded K-12 education—including 55 percent who “strongly agree” (versus just 7 percent who disagree).
- **Arts education is important at all grade levels:** Nine-in-ten American adults believe that it is important for students to receive an education in the arts -including dance, media arts, music, theater, and visual arts- as part of the curriculum in elementary school (88 percent), middle school (90 percent), and high school (89 percent). This is a change from past studies that have shown a drop-off in support for arts education as students enter high school.
- **Out-of-school arts experiences are important, too:** The value of arts education is not limited to just the in-school experience. 82 percent also agree to the importance of the arts to students outside of the classroom and throughout the community.
- **Not enough access to the arts:** Despite their importance, just 61 percent of Americans agree that students in their area have enough opportunities to “hear music, go to plays, visit museums, and attend cultural events, either in school or in the community.” 27 percent feel there is inadequate access to the arts for students, while 12 percent are unsure.
- **Parents actively support arts education:** Most parents (65 percent) say that they have taken action to support arts education during the past year, such as encouraging their child to participate in school/community arts programs (32 percent), and donating to (20 percent) or volunteering for (17 percent) a school/community arts program.
- **Barriers to parental action:** Too busy (27 percent), conflicting priorities (16 percent), and emphasizing other important subjects (15 percent) are common reasons given by parents for not taking more action to support arts education.

The American Public's Views Government Funding for the Arts



- **Government funding for the arts viewed favorably:** Among all Americans, the majority approve of both their local and state governments funding grants to artists and arts organizations (57 percent and 55 percent, respectively).
- **Support for varied arts programs:** Americans are especially likely to favor funding programs that beautify blighted or abandoned areas, create programs for the elderly, and promote pro-social behavior with at-risk youth (68 percent each); aid returning military personnel (69 percent) and provide art in public spaces (71 percent). Funding for programs seeking to create religious art in public spaces is seen as least favorable, though still supported 41 percent.
- **Majorities approve of doubling federal spending in the arts:** Only a quarter believe that current government funding is just right (26 percent), while 43 percent say that it is not enough. It comes as no surprise, then, that the respondents who approve federal government increasing spending from 45 cents to \$1 per person on grants to arts organizations greatly outweighs those who disagree (54 percent vs. 20 percent).
- **Funding sources:** Thinking again about arts and funding, one in five would be willing to pay more taxes (17 percent) in order to see arts funding increase, while similar proportions think the government should cut from other areas of the budget in order to fund the arts more (18 percent). Another 19 percent would like to pay less taxes, but still cut from other areas of the budget to maintain arts funding.
- **Federal candidates can feel safe voting to increase support for the arts:** All else being equal, Americans who are likely to vote in the 2016 presidential election are more likely to vote in favor (38 percent) than to vote against (19 percent) a candidate who wanted to increase federal spending on the arts to \$1 per capita. Millennials are especially likely to vote in favor of this increase—(47 percent) vs. 13 percent who oppose it.

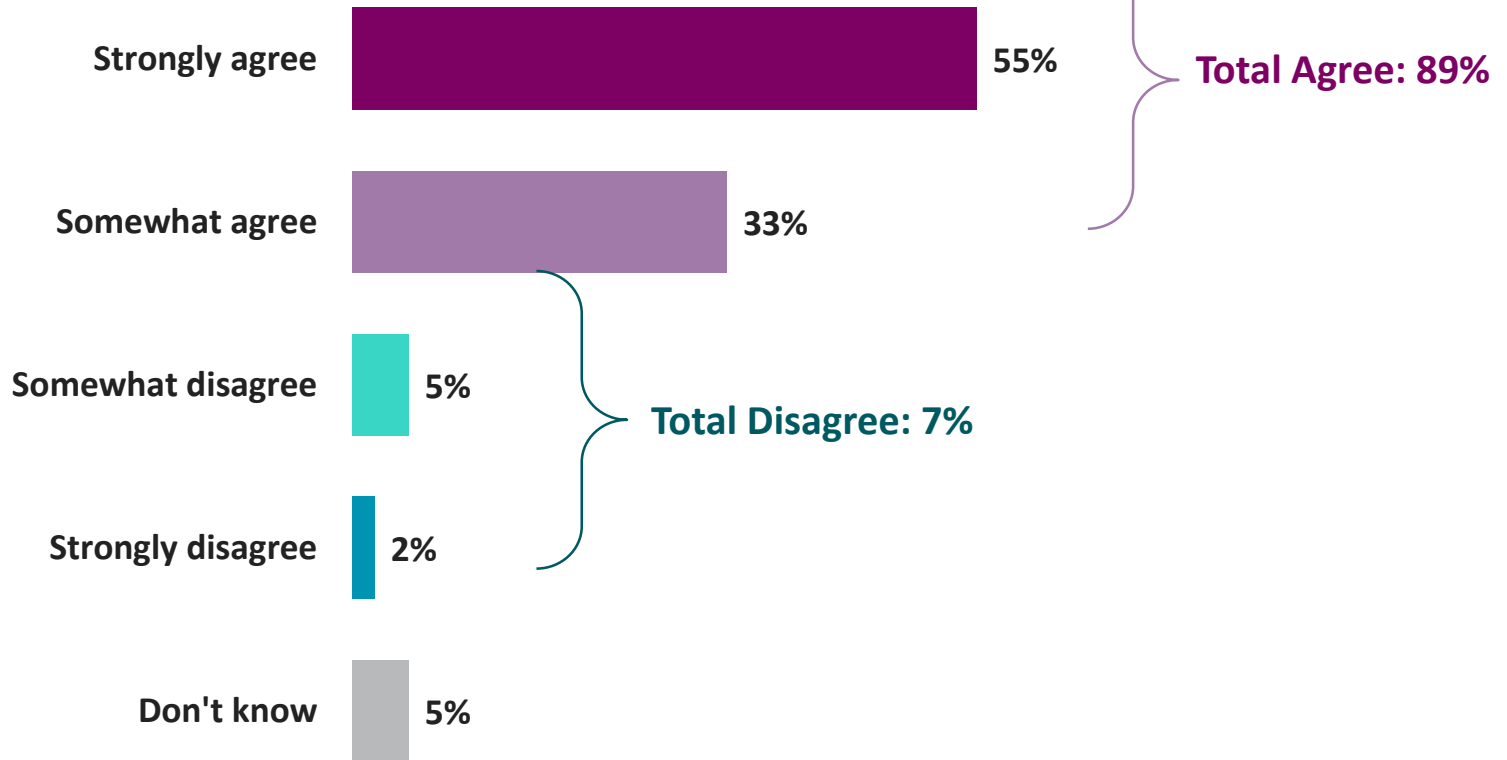


Americans Speak Out About the Arts: K-12 Arts Education

Americans Believe the Arts are Part of a Well-Rounded Education for K-12 Students

- Americans show unequivocal and overwhelming support for arts education. 89 percent agree that the arts are part of a well-rounded education for K-12 students, including a majority (55 percent) who strongly agree. Just 7 percent disagree about the role the arts play in creating a balanced education for children, and 5 percent were unsure.
- There was no difference between age, household income, and, interestingly, even if there were children in the household.

Arts are part of a well-rounded education for K-12 students

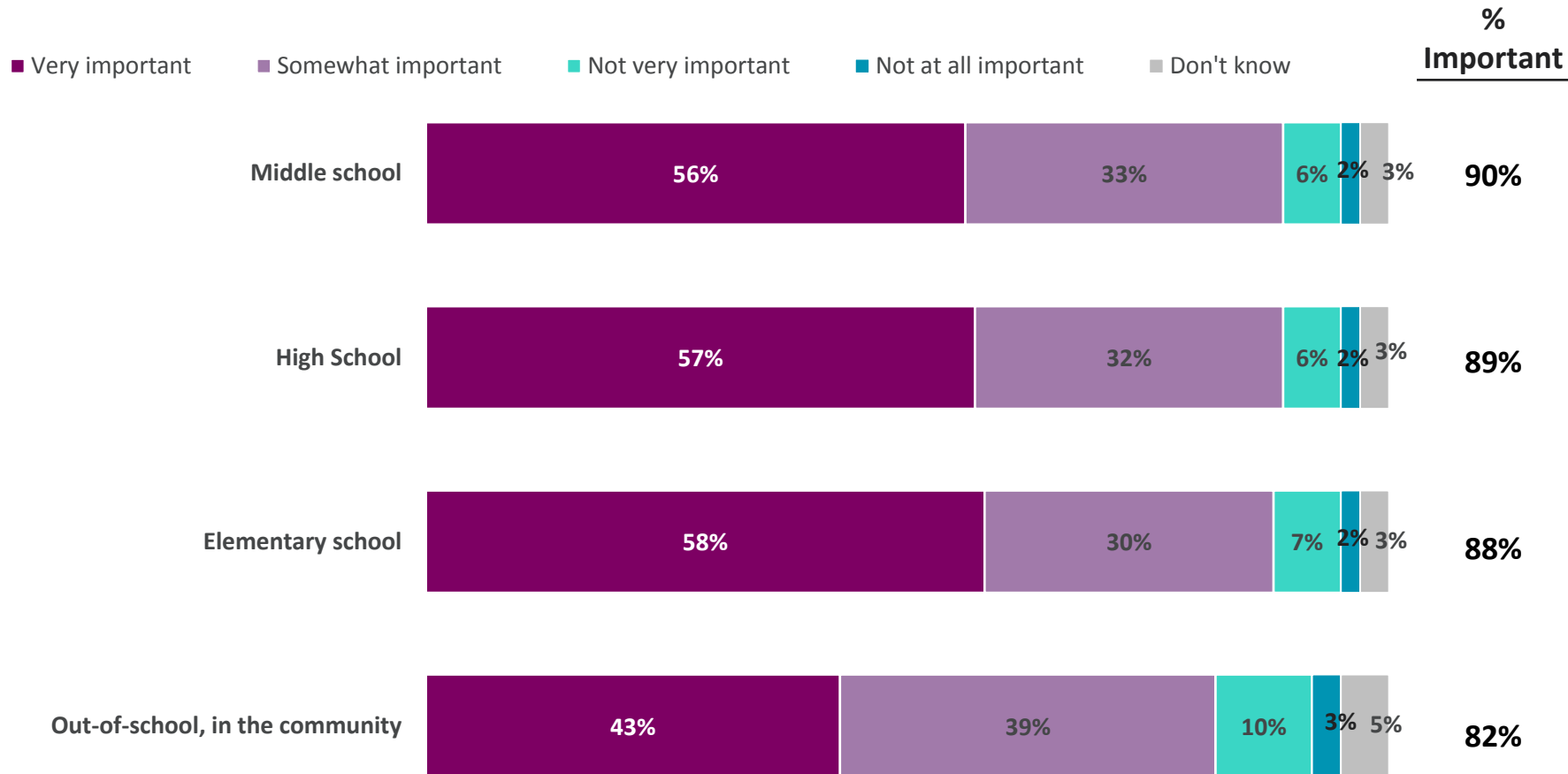


Q17. Do you agree or disagree that the arts are part of a well-rounded education for K-12 students?
Base: All Respondents (n=3,020)

Arts Education is Deemed Important at All Grade Levels



- Nine in ten Americans believe it is important for K-12 students to receive an education in the arts (including dance, media arts, music, theater, and visual arts), with nearly six in ten saying that art is “very important.” This remains true whether asked about elementary school, middle school, or high school education.
- The value of arts education is not limited to just the in-school experience. 82 percent also agree to the importance of the arts to students outside of the classroom and throughout the community.

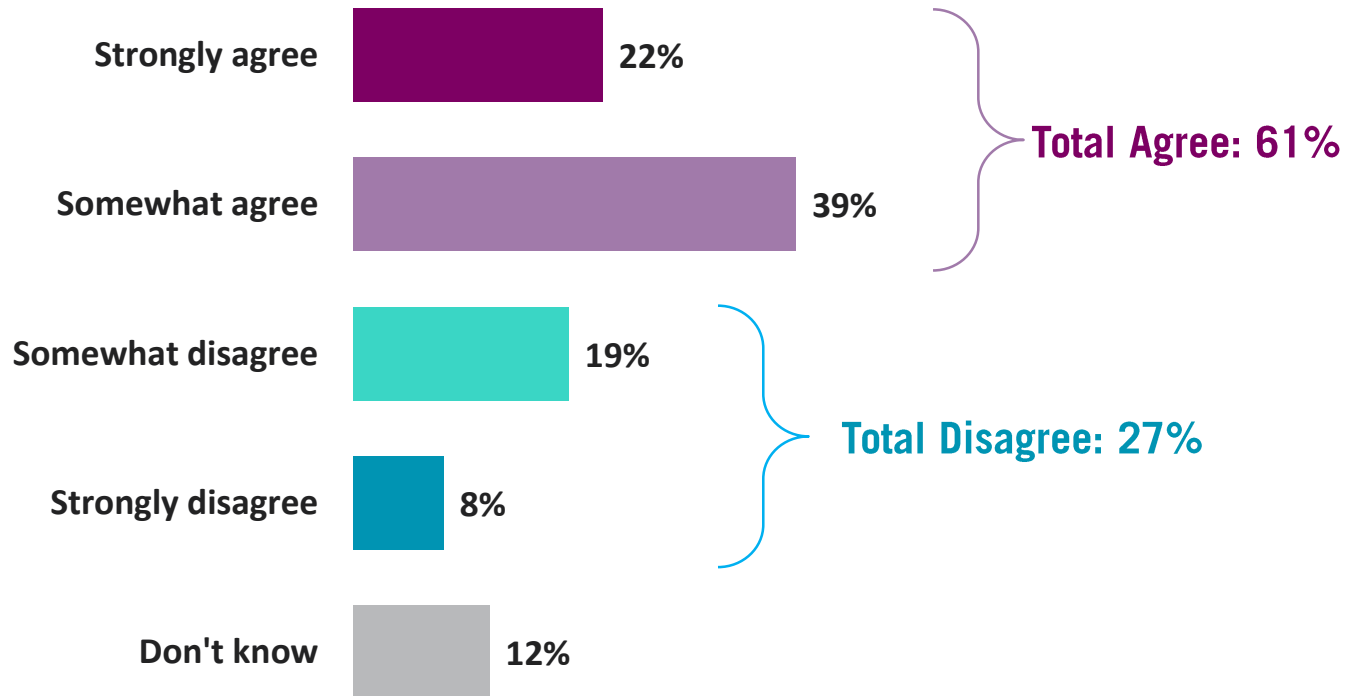


Q18. Thinking about K-12 students, in your opinion how important is it for them to receive an education in the arts (including dance, media arts, music, theater, visual arts) or other forms of creativity? Base: All Respondents (n=3,020). Middle school: ‘Very important’ = 56.32%, ‘Somewhat important’ = 33.44%, Important net = 89.76%

A Majority Agree That Students Have Arts Opportunities, But Access Remains a Concern

- 61 percent of Americans agree that students in their area have enough opportunities to “hear music, go to plays, visit museums, and attend cultural events, either in school or in the community.” Yet, 27 percent disagree that students in their community have enough opportunities to attend the arts, while 12 percent are unsure.
- There was no distinction between “white” and “non-white” respondents. Those who live in urban areas are significantly more likely to “Agree” than those living in suburban and rural areas.
- 41 percent of rural respondents disagreed as did those who are lower income (31 percent).

Students in my area have enough opportunities to hear music, go to plays, visit museums, and attend cultural events either in school or in the community



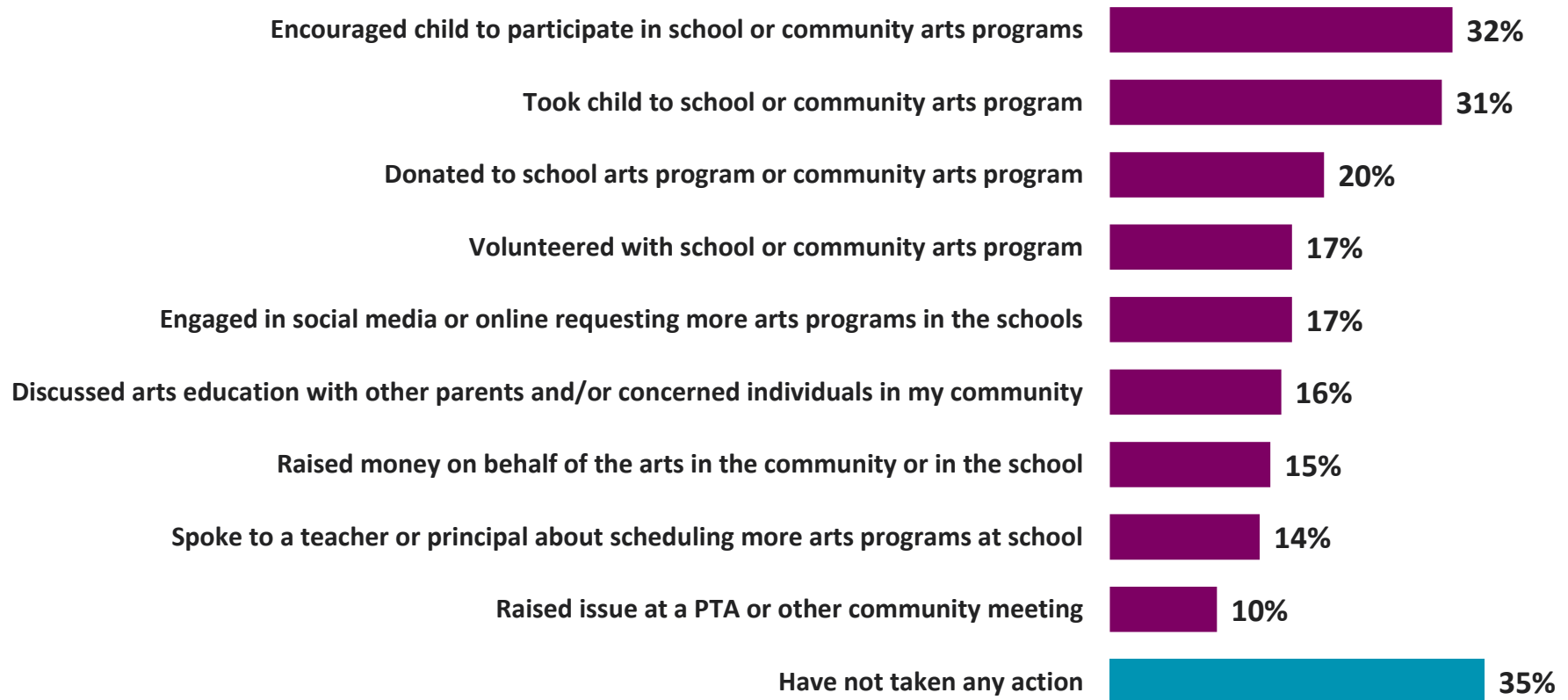
Q19. And from what you know or have heard, do you agree or disagree that students in your area have enough opportunities to hear music, go to plays, visit museums, and attend cultural events either in school or in the community?

Base: All Respondents (n=3,020)

Majority of Parents Have Taken Action to Support Arts Education



- We asked just the 24 percent of survey respondents who have children under the age of 18 living at home (738 of the 3,020) what actions they have taken to support arts education in the previous year.
- Two-thirds of parents (65 percent) say that they have taken action to support arts education during the past year—with the most common responses being encouraging their child to participate in school/community arts programs (32 percent), or donating to (20 percent) or volunteering for (17 percent) a school/community arts program.
- Slightly more than a third say that they have not taken any action.

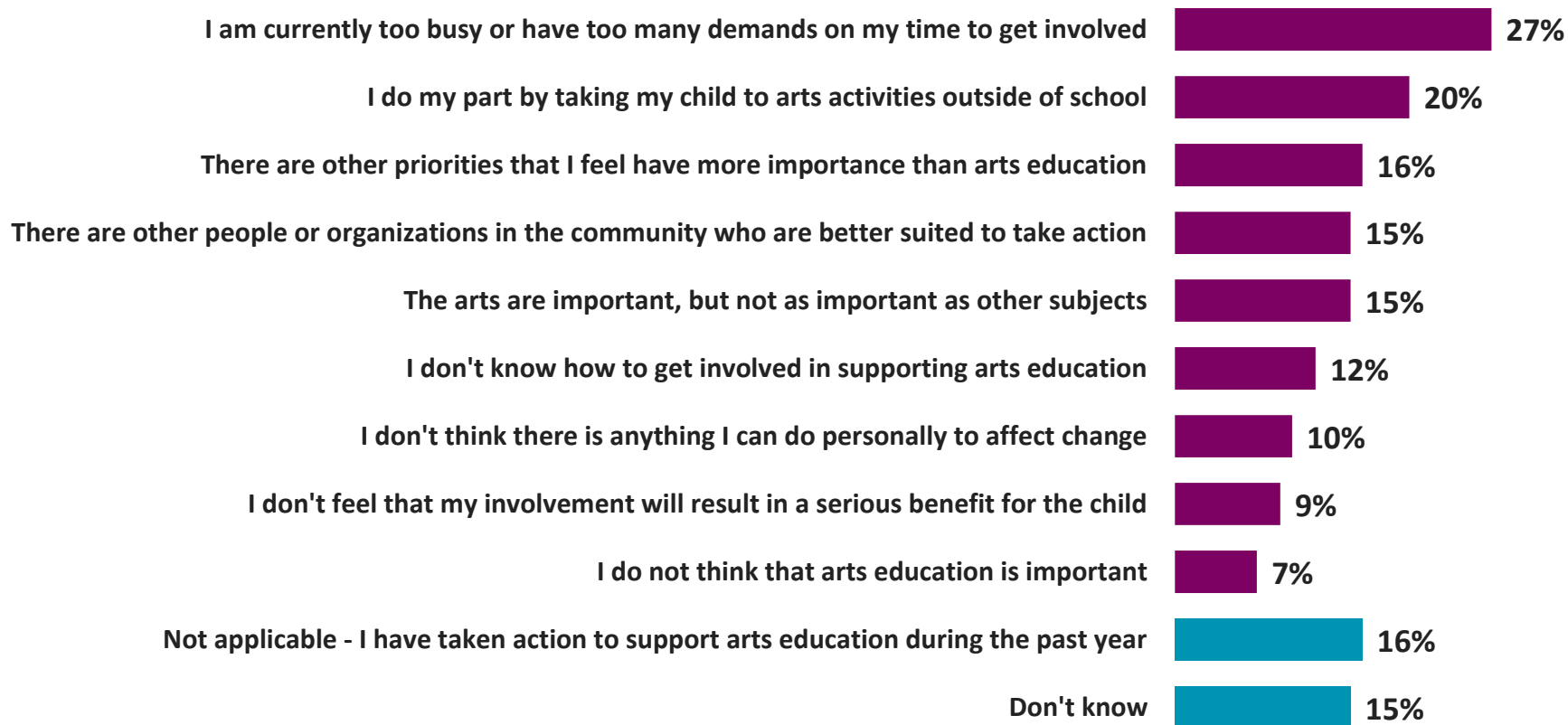


Q21. What actions have you taken to support arts education during the past year? (Select all that apply)
Base: Respondents who have children under the age of 18 living at home (n=738)

Reasons for Not Taking More Action to Support Arts Education



- While 65 percent is a strong percentage of parents taking action to support arts education, we wanted to know why they have not taken more action
- Too busy (27 percent) and conflicting priorities (16 percent), and emphasizing other important subjects (15 percent) remain among the top reasons given by parents for not having taken more action to support arts education.
- Just 7 percent say they have not taken more action to support arts education because they do not think that it is important.



Q22. Are there reasons you have not taken more action to support arts education?
 Base: Respondents who have children under the age of 18 living at home (n=738)

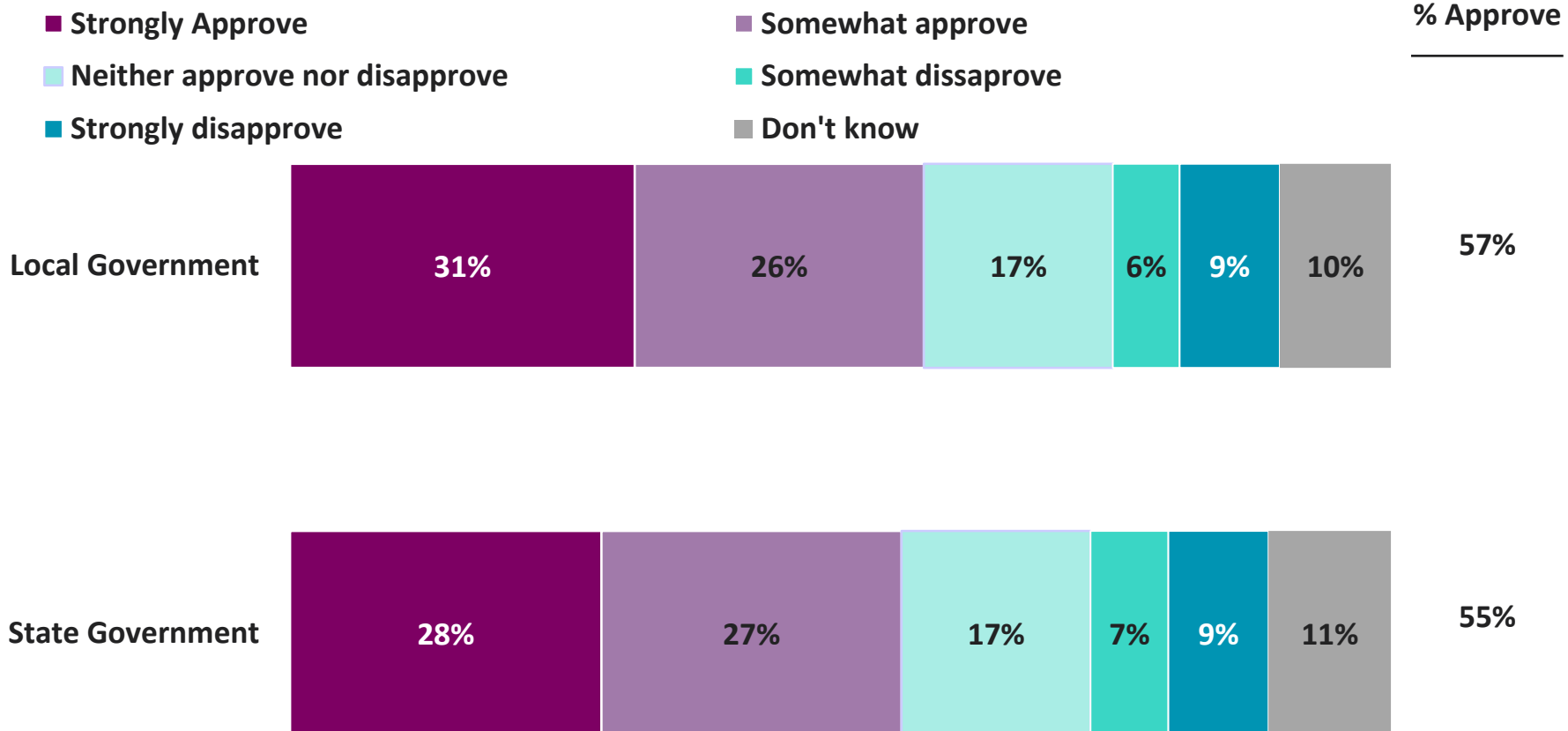


Americans Speak Out About the Arts: Government Funding for the Arts

By a 2:1 Margin, Americans Approve of Government Arts Funding



- Local and state governments providing grants to artists *and* arts organizations has a high level of support by the American public. In fact, more than twice as many approve than disapprove of the public sector's role in arts funding: local government (57 percent vs. 25 percent); state government (55 percent vs. 27 percent).
- Likely voters were significantly more likely than unlikely voters to approve both local (60 percent vs. 45 percent) and state funding (58 percent vs. 41 percent).



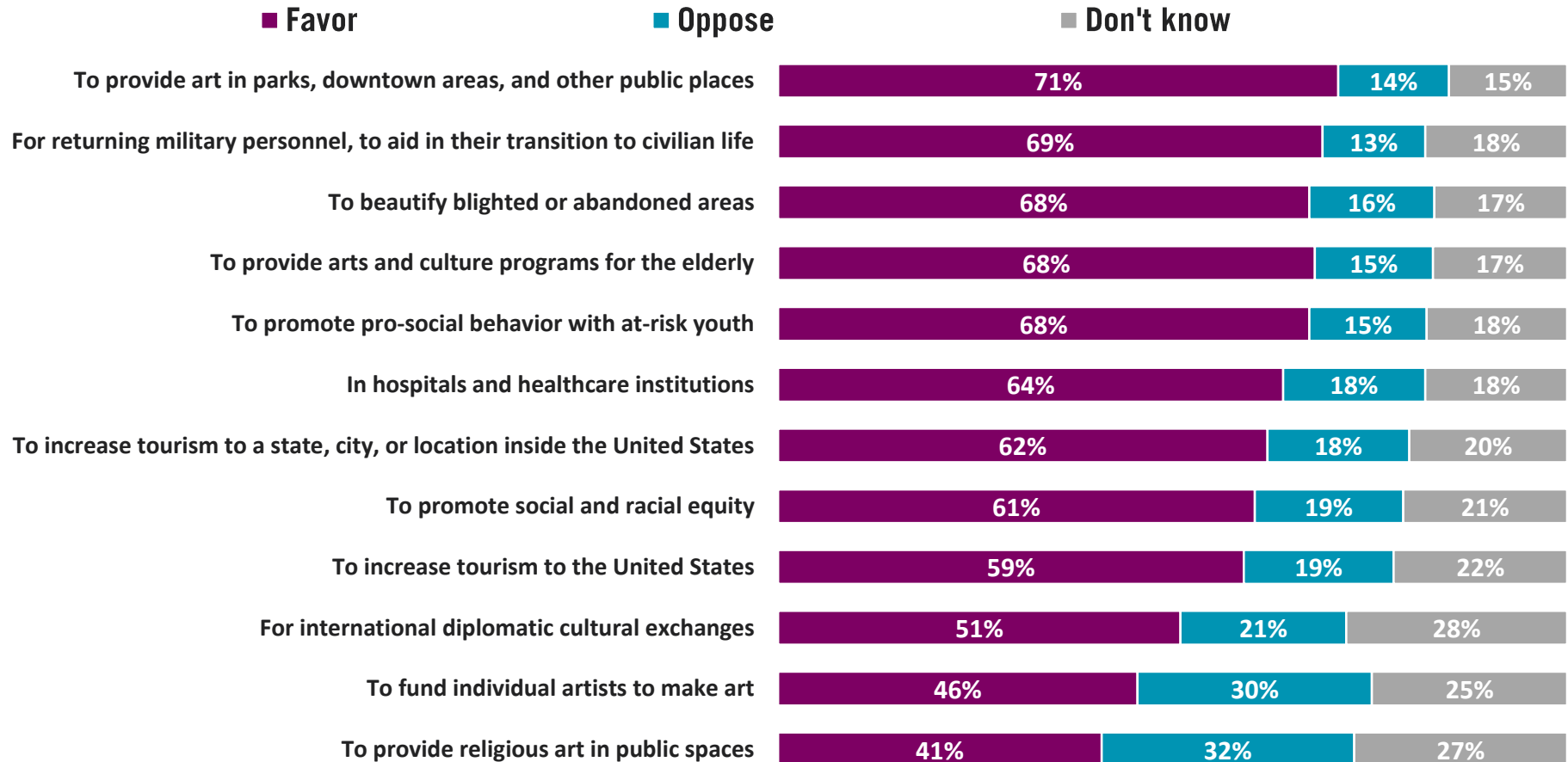
Q26. Do you approve or disapprove of your local and state governments funding grants to artists and arts organizations?

Base: All Respondents (n=3,020)

Community-Oriented Arts Funding has High Public Value



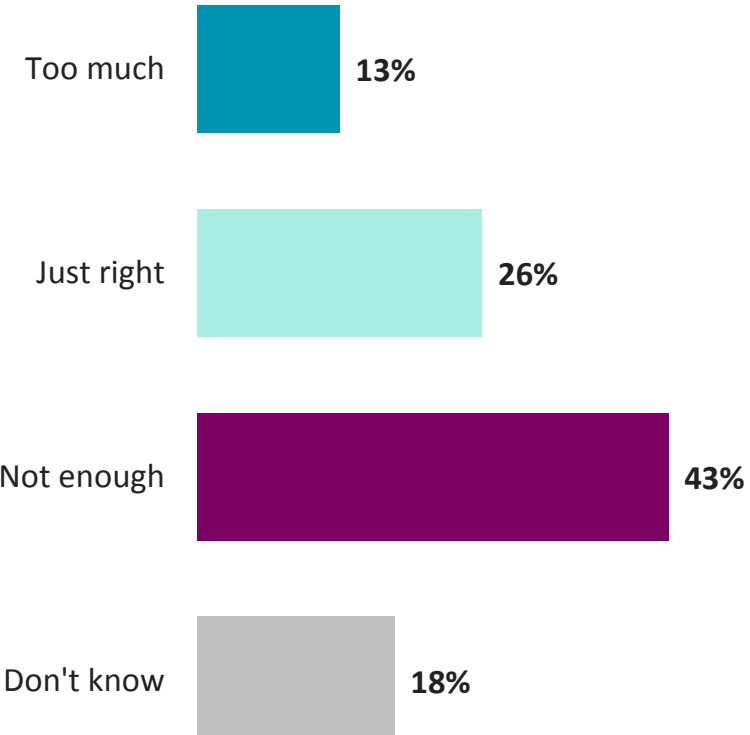
- American adults are especially likely to favor government arts funding for art in parks and public spaces (71 percent), and to aid returning military personnel in their transition to civilian life (69 percent). Sixty-eight percent favor using the arts to beautify blighted areas, create programs for the elderly, and promote pro-social behavior with at-risk youth.
- 46 percent support grants to individual artists; this was opposed by just 30 percent.



Q23. Do you favor or oppose the government funding the arts for the following purposes? Base: All Respondents (n=3,020)

More Americans Think Current Federal Spending on Arts Organizations is Not Enough

- Only a quarter believe that current federal arts funding is just right (26 percent), while 43 percent say that the current level of 45 cents per capita is an inadequate amount.
- In fact, the 43 percent who responded “not enough” are more than the combined responses of those who felt it was “too much” and “just right” (13 percent and 26 percent, respectively—totaling 39 percent).
- Those most likely to respond “not enough” include women (52 percent), the less affluent (48 percent), and those without children living at home (45 percent).

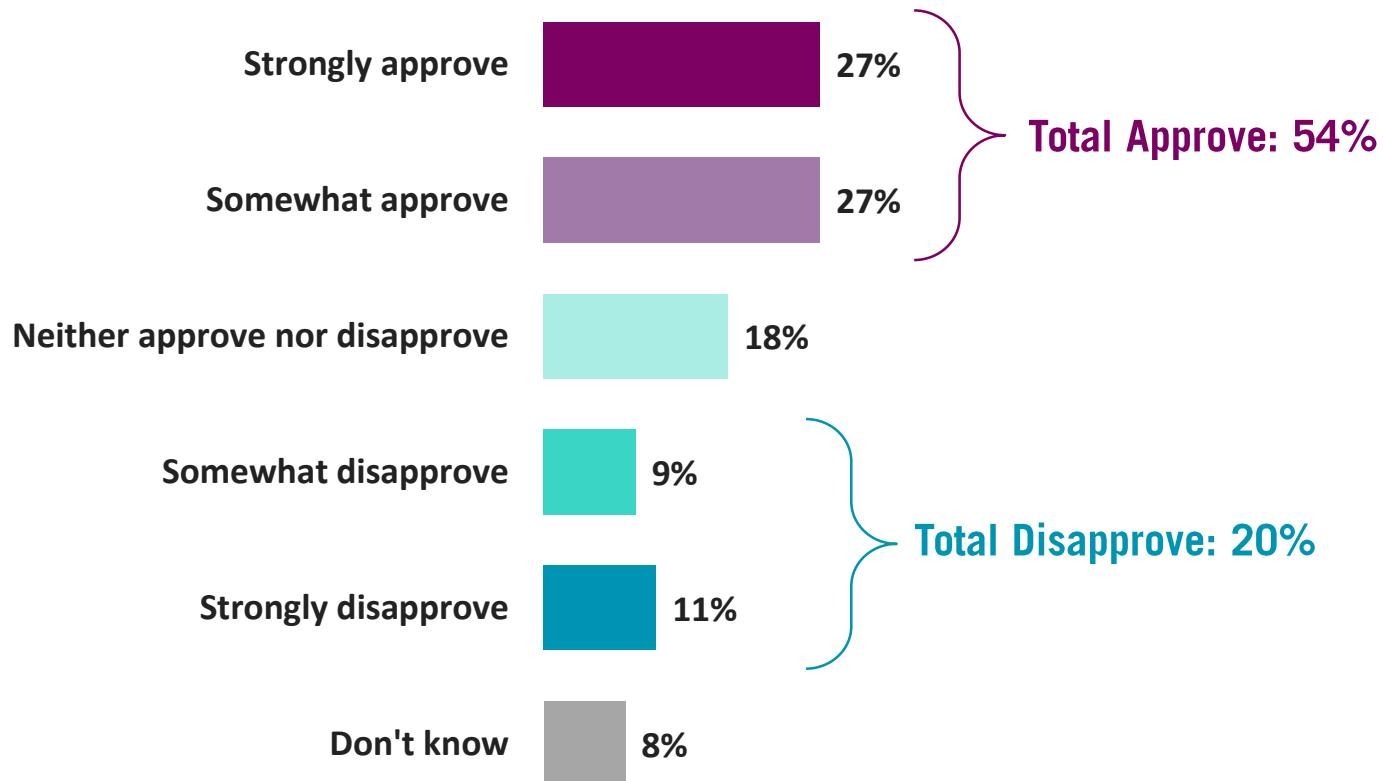


Q24. The federal government collects about \$4400 per person in revenue every year. Currently, it spends about 45 cents per person on grants to arts organizations (such as museums, theaters, and community arts centers). In your opinion, is this...
 Base: All Respondents (n=3,020)

A Majority of Americans Approve Increasing Federal Arts Grants to \$1 Per Capita

- A clear majority (54 percent) support an increase from 45 cents to \$1 per person (effectively doubling the NEA budget). Twenty-seven percent of American adults “strongly approve” of this increase—a share larger than the entire “disapprove” category.
- Likely voters are significantly more likely to approve than unlikely voters (56 percent vs. 34 percent).
- About one in five say that they neither approve nor disapprove.

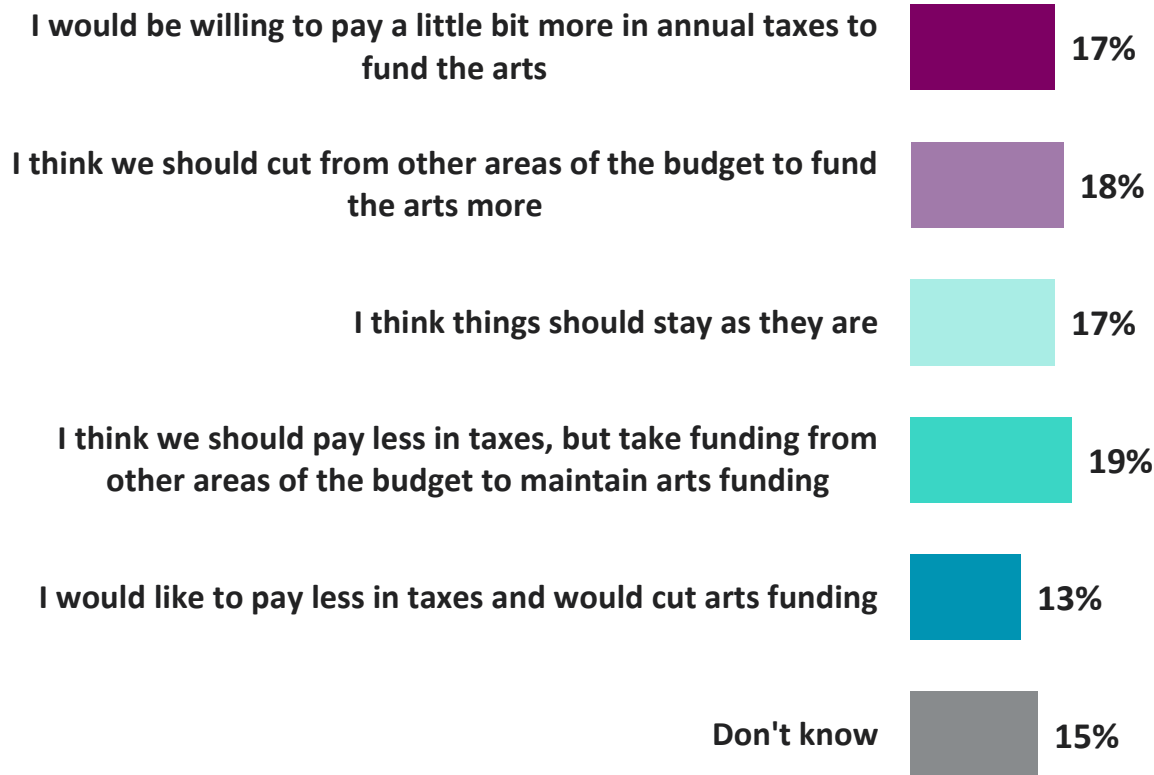
Approval of Federal Government Increasing Spending from 45 Cents to \$1 Per Person on Grants to Arts Organizations



Q25. Do you approve or disapprove of the federal government increasing spending from 45 cents to \$1 per person on grants to arts organizations?
Base: All Respondents (n=3,020)

Opinions are Mixed on How to Pay for Increases in Arts Funding

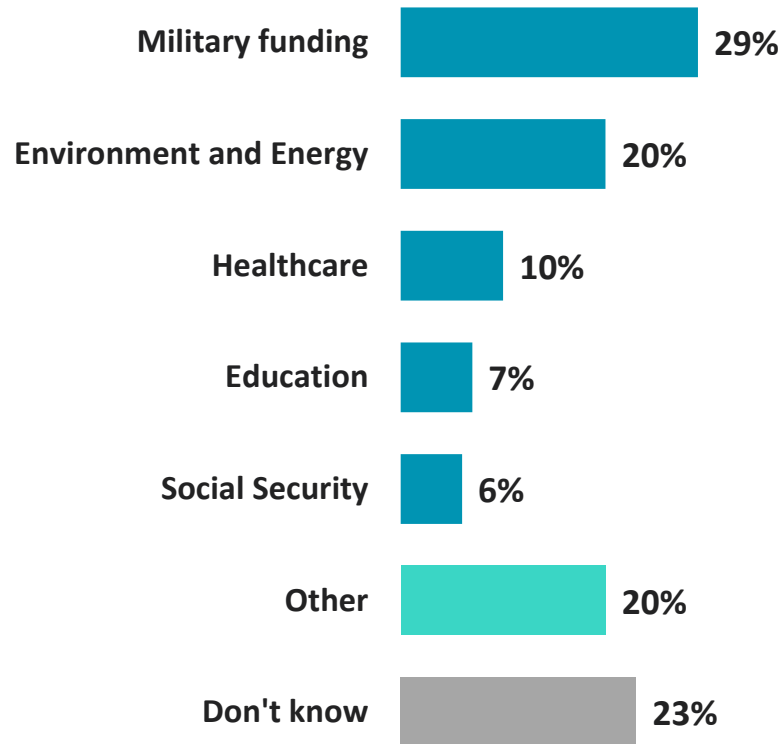
- 17 percent would pay more in annual taxes to fund the arts, 18 percent think we should fund the arts by cutting from other areas of the budget, and 19 percent want to pay less in taxes and pull from other areas of the budget to maintain arts funding.
- 13 percent would cut taxes and cut arts funding.
- Likely voters were significantly more likely “to pay a little bit more in annual taxes to fund the arts” than unlikely voters (20 percent vs. 7 percent).



Q28. Thinking again about funding for the arts and priorities for yourself and your community, which of the statements below comes closest to your opinion?
Base: All Respondents (n=3,020)

Military Funding is the Budget Area Most Respondents Think Should be Cut

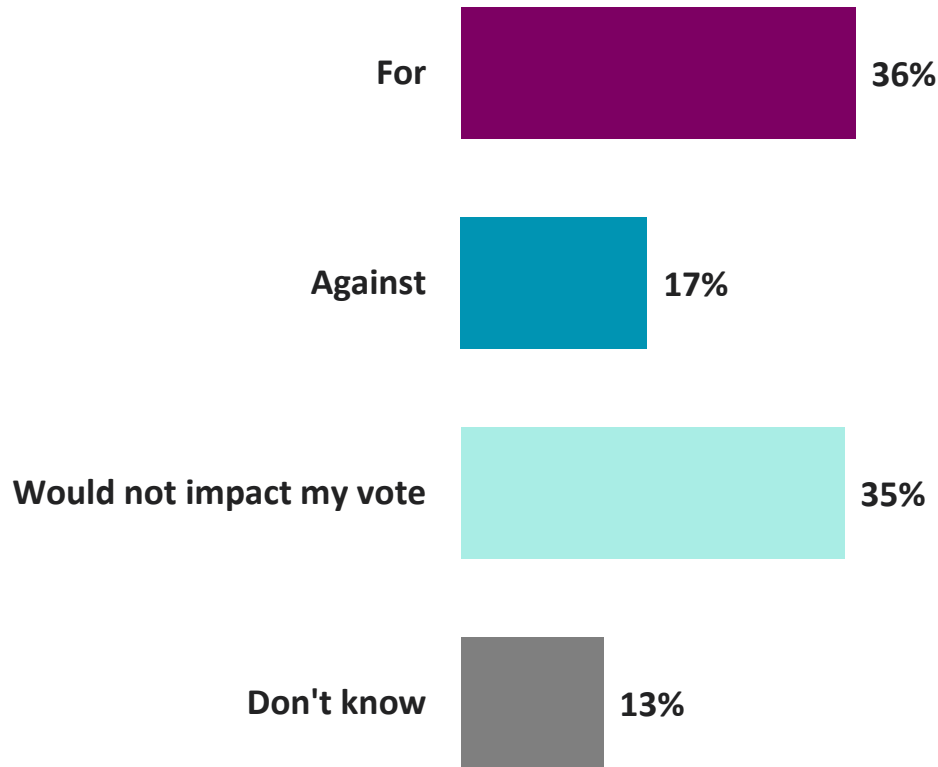
- Among those who said that they would ideally cut spending from other areas of the budget in order to fund the arts, military funding is the most common candidate, selected by 29 percent. Another one in five say that funds for the arts should come from environment and energy sectors, while one-in-ten would have cuts made to healthcare in order to supplement the arts.
- Men were statistically more likely than women to suggest cutting from the military (33 percent vs. 27 percent).



Q29. You said you'd like to cut spending from elsewhere in the budget to fund the arts. Where do you think we should cut from in order to spend on the arts?
 Base: Respondents Who Want To Cut From Other Areas Of The Budget (n=1,131)

Impact That Increase in Government Grants Would Have on Political Vote

- Thirty-six percent will vote FOR the candidate who makes the increase. Just 17 percent said they would vote against a candidate because of a vote to increase arts funding.
- One-third of the respondents (35 percent) say this part of the campaign would not impact their vote.
- Americans who are likely to vote in the 2016 presidential election are twice as likely to vote in favor of the arts supportive candidate (38 percent) than to vote against (19 percent).



Q27. All else being equal, would you vote for or against a political candidate who wanted to increase federal spending on the arts from 45 cents per person to \$1 per person?
 Base: All Respondents (n=3,020)

Methodology

- These are the findings from an Ipsos Public Affairs poll conducted from December 11 - 15, 2015 on behalf of Americans for the Arts. For the survey, a sample of 3,020 adults ages 18 and over was interviewed online.
- The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll has a credibility interval of plus or minus 2.0 percentage points for all respondents.
- All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error and measurement error. Where figures do not sum to 100 percent, this is due to the effects of rounding.



DEMOGRAPHICS

All Respondents

Gender

Male	48%
Female	52%

Age

18-34	30%
35-54	35%
55+	35%

Region

Northeast	18%
Midwest	21%
South	37%
West	23%

Household Income

Under \$50K	41%
\$50K +	59%

Education

No college degree	56%
College degree	44%

Marital Status

Married	55%
Other	45%

Employment

Full Time	48%
Part Time	12%
Not Emp.	20%
Retired	20%

Registered Voter

Yes	85%
No	13%
Don't know	2%

Likelihood to Vote

10 - Certain to vote	58%
9	12%
8	7%
7	4%
6	3%
5	5%
4	1%
3	1%
2	1%
1 - Certain to NOT vote	5%
Don't know	3%

All Respondents

Religious Affiliation		Religious Services – Attendance		Social Media Accounts	
Baptist	11%	Weekly or more often	31%	Facebook	77%
Methodist	5%	A couple of times per month	11%	Twitter	33%
Lutheran	5%	Once a month	6%	LinkedIn	29%
Presbyterian	3%	A few times a year	14%	Instagram	24%
Episcopal	2%	Once a year or less	17%	Snapchat	13%
Catholic	24%	Never	16%	Google+	26%
Mormon	1%	Prefer not to answer	5%	Pinterest	25%
Jewish	3%			YouTube	36%
Hindu	1%			Other	4%
Muslim	*			None of these	15%
Other Protestant Denomination	8%				
Other	13%				
None	18%				
Prefer not to answer	5%				



ABOUT AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS

Americans for the Arts is the leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education in America. With offices in Washington, D.C. and New York City, it has a record of more than 50 years of service. Americans for the Arts is dedicated to representing and serving local communities and creating opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts.

www.AmericansForTheArts.org

ABOUT IPSOS

Ipsos ranks third in the global research industry. With a strong presence in 87 countries, Ipsos employs more than 16,000 people and has the ability to conduct research programs in more than 100 countries. Founded in France in 1975, Ipsos is controlled and managed by research professionals. They have built a solid Group around a multi-specialist positioning – Media and advertising research; Marketing research; Client and employee relationship management; Opinion & social research; Mobile, Online, Offline data collection and delivery.

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GAME CHANGERS

At Ipsos we are passionately curious about people, markets, brands and society. We deliver information and analysis that makes our complex world easier and faster to navigate and inspires our clients to make smarter decisions.

We believe that our work is important. Security, simplicity, speed and substance applies to everything we do.

Through specialisation, we offer our clients a unique depth of knowledge and expertise. Learning from different experiences gives us perspective and inspires us to boldly call things into question, to be creative.

By nurturing a culture of collaboration and curiosity, we attract the highest calibre of people who have the ability and desire to influence and shape the future.

“GAME CHANGERS” - our tagline - summarises our ambition.

