



# Artists INMind

A REPORT ON ARTISTS' MENTAL  
HEALTH & WELLBEING IN NOVA SCOTIA



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# INTRODUCTION

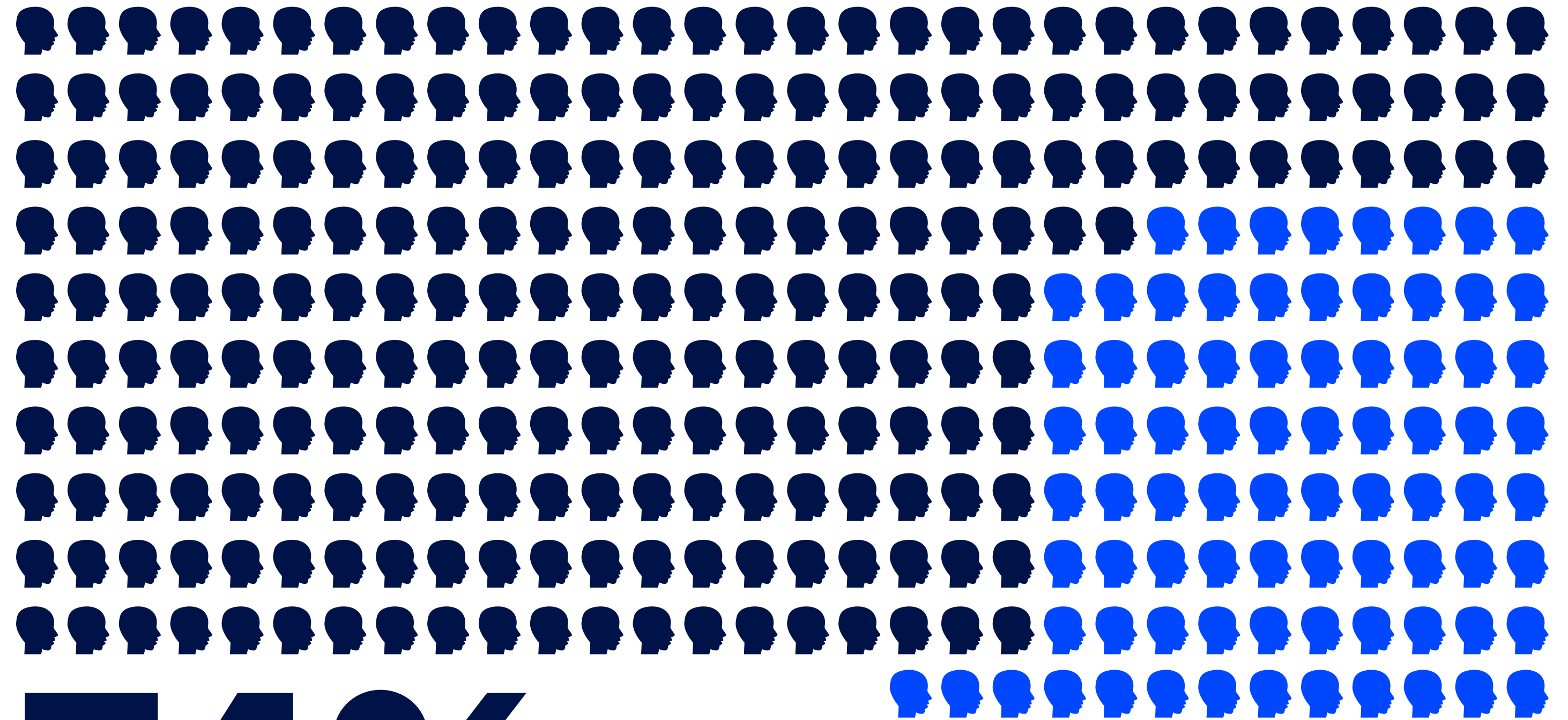
In January, 2021, Visual Arts Nova Scotia launched Artists in Mind, a research initiative that examines the mental health experiences of artists of multiple disciplines (including visual and media arts, craft, theatre, music, dance, writing, circus, and others) living within the province. The aim of this initiative was to gather information so that we could have a more informed understanding of the challenges that affect artists' mental health and how these challenges impact Nova Scotian artists' lives both professionally and personally. We also wanted to identify and recommend mental health services, supports and resources needed by artists living in this province.

As part of our research, we conducted a Nova Scotian artists' **mental health experience survey**, we interviewed individual artists about their personal mental health experiences and we spoke to members of various Nova Scotia based arts and mental health organizations to gain insights and perspectives on the issue of artists' mental health. We also interviewed arts workers, multi-disciplinary health care practitioners and members of artist-centred health clinics across Canada to gain insights into how other communities across the country are supporting artists' mental and physical health and wellbeing.

This report summarizes our findings and also provides **considerations and recommendations** for artists' mental health supports in Nova Scotia. This document highlights ongoing systemic issues affecting artists in the province and how these issues impact artists' careers and wellbeing. We recognize that by no means does our research encapsulate the wide and diverse breadth of all artists' mental health experiences in Nova Scotia and we also recognize the need for continued research as well as prompt action moving forward.



**313** respondents participated in the Artist in Mind survey:



**74%** said that they have at some point in time needed mental health supports or services.

[Click here to see the full survey results](#)



## Why should artists' mental health be a priority in Nova Scotia?

If we want a robust and thriving arts and cultural sector in Nova Scotia, we need to first have robust and thriving artists. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted just how precarious and challenging it is for artists living and working in this province. In order for Nova Scotia to effectively build a strong and sustainable arts sector, we must first look at how we can better support and sustain the wellbeing of those who make up the sector.

Based on what we have learned from the stakeholders who took part in our research, we can confidently assert that if artists had access to more affordable and appropriate mental health supports, services and resources, their personal lives and professional careers would benefit greatly. This, in turn, would contribute to a more stable, resilient and diverse arts sector.

Tied to this is the greater issue of privilege and the ways in which socio-economic status often determines who gets to meaningfully participate, as well as succeed, as artists. **In order to create a more inclusive and diverse arts sector in Nova Scotia, we must recognize the ways in which having or not having privilege affects one's ability to survive and thrive within their artistic endeavours.**



**Content Warning:** This report contains information, statistics, and real life experiences of those experiencing adverse mental health conditions in the arts sector in Nova Scotia. Content may be triggering to some readers including topics such as, but not limited to, oppression, racism, misogyny, and homophobia in the mental health and cultural sectors. Reader discretion is advised.

**To access public, institutional mental health services in Nova Scotia please visit:**  
[mha.nshealth.ca/en](https://mha.nshealth.ca/en) or call the mental health crisis line at **1-888-429-8167**.

*“ I live in isolation. Not sure where to find a community that will help support me and my creative projects all the way through. ”*

*“ I have developed body dysmorphia due to a lifetime of having to look a certain way to be on stage and to be taken seriously. ”*

*“ The mental health services for anxiety, PTSD, and grief counselling are either unavailable or inadequate, and that's if you can find them. If you have money you can find them in the private sector, artists generally don't have this kind of money, especially young artists. ”*

*“ I don't have the financial stability to access mental health services on a regular basis (which is what I need). ”*



**73%** said that **financial insecurity** most affected their wellbeing and mental health.

## What are the risk factors and adverse life conditions impacting artists' mental health in Nova Scotia?

As part of our research, we wanted to have a better understanding of what risk factors and adverse life conditions are experienced by artists in Nova Scotia, and how these play a role in affecting individual mental health and wellbeing. What we heard, most consistently, from our stakeholders was how challenging and destabilizing it is to work in a sector where there is so much precarity, particularly in relation to financial precarity and having little to no safety net throughout their lives and careers as artists.

Connected to this is also:



the **rising cost of living**;



**growing personal and professional debt**  
(often originating as student loans);



**increased lack of sustainable and affordable housing**  
and **available creative/work and presentation spaces.**

A high number of research respondents also pointed to **exhaustion and burnout** as serious factors affecting their mental health and also, a **lack of meaningful (paid) professional opportunities** available to them in the province. What was confirmed in our research is just how many life stressors artists experience, and how these stressors profoundly impact artists' ability to live and work sustainably in their fields of practice.

“It is the instability of contract-to-contract work and having to do multiple jobs at once, and then, taking on too much because it is “good for my art career”. But it all leaves me too depleted to do everything I want to do-let alone make the actual art.”

“I can't make a living wage despite being overqualified for my work. My wage is not close to comparable to peers doing the same work in other fields.”

“I have housing insecurity and having to move multiple times because of renovictions is one of many challenges I face as an artist.”

“As a visual artist, studio space is necessary and hard to access or afford. More effort goes into finding a space than working in it- then it's time to move again. There are a scarcity of resources for artists in NS, artists are undervalued.”



**58%** said their employment had been negatively impacted by their mental health issues or challenges.

## Other significant life stressors among stakeholders worth noting include:

- **living with experiences of trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder** and **other forms of mental health issues**;
- **not having access to appropriate medical care** (mental and physical);
- **lack of community or a support network**;
- **lack of professional/career opportunities where they live**;
- **having ongoing feelings of isolation and loneliness in the world**;
- **lacking feelings of self-worth and self-confidence**;
- **not feeling a sense of being valued** (specifically in relation to their careers as artists);
- **living with disabilities and not having the necessary supports for work and life**;
- **ongoing experiences of systemic issues related to racism, sexism, ageism, ableism, homophobia and gender-based discrimination.**

“ I have PTSD and I can't get access to trauma-informed therapies as well as the cost being prohibitive. ”

“ I don't have a family doctor and I can't get a proper mental health diagnosis. ”

“ I identify as neurodivergent (ADHD) and I also have mental health issues (c-PTSD) and this makes it extremely difficult to meet grant and call for entry deadlines. Often there is not enough notice to get it altogether. ”

“ It is depressing living in a place where it feels like the work [art] I do is not valued. ”

“ There is poor appreciation and recognition of the importance of arts/culture/creative industries. ”

“ I experience a lot of tokenism as a Black, Indigenous and Queer artist that ticks all the boxes. ”



We also took note of how different artistic disciplines often carried with them **unique lifestyle stressors** that may also have tremendous impact on artists' mental health. For example, writers and visual artists frequently commented on experiencing isolation as well as not feeling like they were part of a community. Musicians, dancers, theatre and circus performers indicated how their professions involved a constant cycle of burnout due to living a lifestyle of contract-to-contract gigs, low-paying jobs and touring. Dancers and other performance-based artists spoke as well as having significant physical issues including pain, exhaustion and body dysmorphia which negatively impacts their mental health and wellbeing. Artists coming from all disciplines spoke of the challenges of moving past "gatekeepers" in their fields of work, and how detrimental this is to their confidence and overall mental health as creative professionals.

“ My work responds to a diaspora community that is lacking in Nova Scotia. I feel disconnected but process these ideas and feelings through my art. The creation process can be difficult because it centres around my home studio, further heightening my feelings of isolation. ”

“ On days when my mental health is not good, there's just no way to dig myself out of the hole and into any kind of meaningful artistic practice. ”

“ There is little to no promotion for artists living in NS. ”

“ As a musician, to be productive and abide by the NS musician professional system (grants etc) I have to spend so much money to just take part in an extremely unhealthy lifestyle. It is just too much hustle for too long. And I am what would be considered a successful musician. ”

“ Being alone in my studio for months on end causes depression. We need more affordable group studio spaces. ”

“ Writing is a space where there are deep divisions and lots of isolation. Publishing is really hard if you don't have deep connections already in the sector. And if your work straddles disciplines, it can really feel difficult to support. ”

“ As a black visual artist and graphic designer, my work is often used and shared by white orgs and groups without my consent and without being credited. ”

“ As a playwright, I do find that solo work can be very isolating, especially when I'm digging deep into myself to try and find ideas. At the same time, it can be difficult to be part of a large-scale, fast-paced rehearsal process when your mental health makes you just want to retreat. ”

“ My craft is very physically demanding and I have already sustained injury from it. ”



## How do these risk factors and adverse life conditions impact the professional work of artists in Nova Scotia?

A substantial number of our survey respondents and interviewees indicated that their experiences of mental health challenges have had a negative impact on both their work as creative professionals and employment outside of the creative sector. Several of these artists expressed feelings of being overwhelmed, exhausted, debilitated and unable to perform their work consistently. Many commented on how motivation is a struggle for them, along with the ability to focus and feel productive in their creative pursuits. Several also described feeling as though they did not have the mental or physical capacity to meet goals and to live up to their potential as artists.

 **70%** said their mental health issues or challenges **negatively impacted their work** as an artist.

Mental health issues and the life stressors associated with them interrupt day-to-day workflow often causing feelings of creative and personal stagnation. It is the hand-to-mouth existence, as well as living in a constant state of survival, tension and hyper-vigilance, that profoundly affect an artists' ability to experience wellbeing, and to perform at their best creatively and professionally. In many cases, this leaves artists feeling as though their lives are without purpose, further contributing to ongoing cycles of depression, anxiety, stress and a variety of mental and physical health conditions.

“ In the past three months (during the pandemic) my mental health has suffered to the point that being “creative” feels like a pressure that I just want to run away from. My self-doubt has increased and the voice that says “be productive” had gotten louder. I feel extremely frustrated being told to do my work “online” and I take unnecessary risks that I would not normally take at other jobs to fulfil financial stability. ”

“ I often have a severe lack of motivation, and the ability to focus what little energy I do have on creative work because I have to work so many jobs, go to school full-time and also deal with a large amount of family stress and trauma. It never feels like there is enough time to create or access that side of myself. This leaves me feeling worse mentally, unproductive and undeserving of the title “artist”. ”

“ Because I work full-time and have mental health issues, I’m not able to prioritize my professional art practice. My mental health issues also prevent me from applying for opportunities because I feel inadequate. ”



## What is the level of need among artists for mental health services and supports in Nova Scotia? What prevents artists from accessing help?

The need for mental health services among artists in Nova Scotia is high. Close to three quarters of our survey respondents indicated that at some point they have needed mental health supports or services. What we also confirmed through our research, is how many obstacles there are for artists who wish to access these supports and services. The most significant barrier is, unsurprisingly, cost as most supports and services are not within financial reach for most artists. A large majority of artists living in Nova Scotia do not have access to benefits or health plans and because of this, most can't afford the prohibitive cost of most therapies, conventional and otherwise.

Other obstacles preventing access to mental health supports and services include: not knowing where to find or look for supports, the supports they did find did not meet their needs or were not appropriate for them;

- there was too long a wait list for free/low-cost supports or services;
- they did not have the capacity to navigate the provincial mental health system to assess and address their needs;
- some artists reported how they had negative experiences in the system that were unhelpful or made their mental health worse.



**33%** of respondents said that **wait time was an obstacle** for them.

*“ I’m overwhelmed by information, references would be helpful. ”*

*“ Services were not helpful to me and made everything worse because I was assessed poorly. I was released while very unstable, I felt unsafe and abandoned by the medical/mental health system. ”*

*“ The supports I need are not wheelchair accessible. ”*

*“ There is immense racism and I felt complete dismissal of my experience with those I saw in the mental health care system. ”*

*“ I found that the one therapist I was able to see who was covered by MSI did not understand my career as an artist. They also lacked the understanding of queer relationships. I know I’m lucky to have finally found a therapist who is fully covered but it was not a good match for me. ”*



## What kinds of supports and services are needed among artists?

When we surveyed artists and cultural workers, we wanted to know what kinds of mental health supports, services and resources would be most helpful to them. The majority of respondents indicated that having access to individual counseling sessions with a talk therapist or a psychotherapist, would be of great benefit to their mental health. Several also commented on the importance of therapy being accessible to them for a medium to long-term period of time, and that most of the current provincial programs available through the department of health are short term with a limited number of sessions regardless of the person's mental health situation. Many of those who said they would like to see a therapist also indicated that the cost of accessing it on their own is prohibitive.

Stakeholders also talked about how challenging it is to find therapists who "understand the artist's brain" and also have some degree of knowledge, or experience in understanding the conditions and challenges artists face. Some artists and cultural workers who identified as being part of an equity seeking community, also highlighted the frustration of not being able to access a professional who understood their experience and cultural background. For example, a number of respondents commented on how difficult it is to find therapists who themselves were LGBTQ+ or who had the ability to fully appreciate the associated challenges of living as a LGBTQ+ creative person in Nova Scotia. There were also a number of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour) identifying respondents who articulated how hard it was to find BIPOC therapists and mental health resources in the province. What we know from our research is how essential it is for people, regardless of their background, to have access to mental health support and services that are able to recognize and respond to their unique human experiences.



**24%** said they **could not find or access** the resources they needed.

*“Clinical therapists are too clinical. There is no alternative thinking and very little support for indigenous people in the mental health care system.”*

*“Individual appointments with a therapist who understands what it is like to work in a creative field, that would be very beneficial to me.”*

*“I would like to see a program that provides neurodivergent artists with coaches to help them stay the course. If I had an ADHD coach who is familiar with how an artists works, that would be absolutely life changing for me.”*

*“More opportunities to meet up with artists. Sessions or meet-ups with artists who also experience mental health issues. A positive and safe environment that encourages and inspires creation.”*



Artists and cultural workers also expressed interest in participating in different kinds of group therapies. There were a few different perspectives on group therapy and what kinds might be the most helpful. Some felt that they would benefit most from group therapy that involved other members of the creative community. However, it is important to point out that encountering colleagues, and other members of one's professional community in a therapy type setting can be unfavourable. Some of those artists we heard from were more interested in the idea of professional peer support groups, either peer-led or with a facilitator. The focus of these peer support groups would not be so much focused on personal "therapy" per se, rather supporting each other as artists and creative professionals.

Some individuals shared with us how previous experiences in the mental health system have caused them increased trauma and stress. Non-clinical types of therapies are also needed as well as access to non-conventional forms of mental health modalities (i.e. somatic therapies, yoga, Qigong, massage, acupuncture, etc). It is also important to mention the need for trauma-informed therapies to be offered. Unfortunately for some, the act of getting therapy itself can be triggering and it is vital that practitioners have an understanding of this. Trauma informed care looks at the person's whole picture, rather than just the events that lead to them seeking therapy.

For some artists who participated in our research, they felt that having access to a kind of life/creative coach would be helpful. Because an artists' work is so often intertwined with who they are as a person, it would be helpful for them to work with someone who also understands this, or has had a relatable experience.

One very common need among many of our survey respondents and interviewees is navigation and referral services to mental health supports and resources. Many of our stakeholders shared how frustrating and overwhelming it is trying to find their way through the system. Several also commented on how helpful it would be if there was a navigation service specific to Nova Scotia based artists and those working in creative careers.

We also asked respondents what types of tailored mental health programs would benefit them as artists and some responses included: residencies or retreats combining with wellness with creative development, motivational speaker series for artists, an artists health clinic offering multiple modalities of care, mental health support services for artist parents and caregivers, and artist life-skills workshops.

*“ I like the idea of peer support groups as well as closed spaces for racialized artists and creatives. ”*

*“ Low cost, queer friendly, trauma informed therapy, peer support for artists focused on surviving/thriving as freelance artists, coaching support groups for neurodivergent artists (ADHD, autism, etc). ”*

*“ I think a program that has bursaries for artists who may have low income, or perhaps even a mutual fund option so you can pay a set rate each year and use it when you need it to help evenly ease the cost. A sliding scale would also be helpful. Whatever model is chosen, it must be made with consideration that most independent artists exist out of a typical employee health plan model, and can't afford or easily pay into a plan as sole proprietors. ”*



“ Consider the needs of those who do not have a family doctor in NS. So much of navigating the system depends on seeing a consistent doctor. If you don't have that, there are only drop in services that don't keep long-term records. The system is only designed to intervene when you are at risk of harming yourself or others and it doesn't care otherwise. ”

“ Free counselling would be amazing, as well as programming to achieve better work/life balance. Also more supports for parents, single parents, and sole earners working in creative fields. ”

“ An artists clinic with a variety of health and mental health practitioners who take a mind-body-spirit approach, something like a wellness centre for artists? ”

# OUR RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUPPORTING ARTISTS' MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING:

We are very well aware that a solution to improving the mental health and wellbeing among artists in Nova Scotia is not one size fits all. We believe that providing mental health supports, services and resources for artists must be a multi-prong approach. In response to our research, we have identified six strategies that we believe, if implemented, could offer substantial assistance to those in the arts who are seeking help. We also believe that these strategies, if implemented, could bolster the arts sector and provide new and stronger foundations for artists to build their careers.

## These strategies include:

- 1 **Artists' Mental Health Navigation & Referral Service**
- 2 **Funding for Individual Artists to Access Mental Health Services, Supports and Resources**
- 3 **Funding for Organizations & Groups to Develop Mental Health Related Programming for Artists**
- 4 **Support to Artists & Arts Organizations in the Shape of Opportunities**
- 5 **Increased Recognition & Acknowledgement for Arts & Cultural Workers in Nova Scotia**
- 6 **Additional Recommendations**



# 1

## Artists' Mental Health Navigation & Referral Service

### WHAT THIS WOULD LOOK LIKE:

- the building of an online navigation/referral program (outside of the current Provincial NSHA system) to assist individual artists and artists groups in NS so they are able to find and access the supports and services they need. It may be overseen by an advisory committee and perhaps would involve various partnerships among arts groups, artists as well as other groups in across the province who are invested in mental health advocacy and education;
- self-referrals should, most importantly, have an online/web-based component that would make it easier for people to find mental health information, services, supports and resources; a graphic designer should be employed to ensure the information easy to access and navigate;
- a navigational service would be best if it also included vetted practitioners, therapists, doctors, etc. who have knowledge and experience working within the arts sector;
- the navigational service should also include a personalized component where artists could discuss their needs with a "service connector", a person who could help individuals determine what/where they should go for services, or help to find an appropriate and vetted service provider; it would be best if this service connector was either a social worker, or someone with the mental health background to assist most effectively;
- accompanying this navigation/referral service would be a communications and social media component; this would help to share information among those within the arts sector, and also provide additional mental health related education, training and related special events within and outside of the arts sector;
- an example of a highly successful navigation and referral system for artists is one offered through the AFC, an organization that serves members of the entertainment industry. A link to their Navigator program can be found here: <https://afchelps.ca/navigator/>



**24%** of respondents said **they were overwhelmed** by the mental health system and this was an obstacle for them.



## 2

# Funding for Individual Artists to Access Mental Health Services, Supports and Resources

### WHAT THIS WOULD LOOK LIKE:

- funding given directly to artists so they can access services in support of their mental health, wellbeing and professional growth;
- in addition to helping artists access psychologists, therapists, and other mental health professionals, this funding could be used to access a gym membership, work with a personal trainer, work with a career counselor, see massage therapists, somatic practitioners, take yoga classes, or access any type of activity that would benefit their mental and overall health;
- application process needs to be very easy; need a designated support person who can assist with process, application info, details, etc.
- funding would be most effective if artists could choose what kind of therapy or programs would work best for them; funding should also allow for medium to long term access to these supports and services.



**61%** of respondents said that **cost was an obstacle** for them.



# 3

## Funding for Organizations & Groups to Develop Mental Health Related Programming for Artists

### WHAT THIS WOULD INCLUDE:

- multi-year funding to arts organizations who are interested in developing programs and projects that address artists' mental health and wellbeing; this funding could support new programming as well as ones which may have already been running without significant funding or support;
- funding to support organizations, collectives and groups (arts, mental health, medical, etc) who wish to form partnerships for research, development and the creation of artists' mental health programming in communities;
- programs could be residencies or retreats that support artists and arts workers and address personal resiliency, stress, burnout etc.
- programs that support all types of artists and artists' practices at all levels; programs should additionally support artists who identify with historically under-served communities: BIPOC artists, LGBTQ+ artists, artists with Disabilities, neurodivergent artists, and Mad artists.
- programs should also help to build community and connectivity between artists within and outside of their own communities; programs should be accessible and relevant to artists living in rural as well as urban communities;
- this funding could help to cultivate leadership and opportunities for those who would like to work within the areas of arts, culture and mental health.
- part of this strategy would also include supporting artists' mental health and wellbeing through social determinants of health which could include: community building, professional development, and career coaching;
- it would be important to allow organizations and groups to determine what type of programming is the best fit for their community members;
- allow ad hoc groups to also apply, not just formalized artists organizations and groups;



# 4

## Support to Artists & Arts Organizations in the Shape of Opportunities

### WHAT DO WE MEAN BY OPPORTUNITIES?

- recognizing the ability to work in one's field of expertise as an integral component to mental health and wellbeing, this strategy would involve supporting artists to work and create in Nova Scotia;
- initiate a campaign to employ individuals in the arts and culture; when work is available, Government and other institutions in NS should make it a priority to hire NS artists; incentives should be created for businesses to hire NS based graphic designers, creative entrepreneurs, etc.
- Government would focus on developing more opportunities for artists to connect with audiences in, and outside of Nova Scotia; This may include support for projects that facilitate engagement between artists and members of the public in their local communities as well as others across the province, the country and abroad;
- professional development activities that facilitate career growth for artists at the regional, national and international level;
- bringing in artists/creative thinkers as consultants on non-arts specific projects, think tanks etc. contributing to the value artists offer and the ways in which their creative abilities can be employed;
- increasing funding support and expanding eligibility for artists to grow and develop their careers through professionalization; this may involve being able to access funds to build websites, take courses, and access professional services;



# 5

## Recognition and Acknowledgement for Arts & Cultural Workers in Nova Scotia

### WHAT DO WE MEAN BY RECOGNITION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT?

- a large majority of artists in NS feel undervalued and unrecognized for the work they do; in response to this, Government needs to do more to acknowledge and communicate the importance and value that arts and cultural workers bring to the province;
- throughout the pandemic, particularly through lockdowns, people relied on artists, performers, creative producers to address isolation and connect people; there needs to be more recognition of how artists contribute to their communities in NS and how essential they are to the life and vitality of the province;
- this recognition could be multi-faceted, whether in the form of media and sharing news and information about NS artists with larger public, or expanding on provincial awards programs to further recognize artists contributions in NS;
- this could also mean helping artists to build their own creative profiles locally, nationally and internationally with the assistance of media specialists (website developers and designers, social media consultants and strategists, etc).



## 6 Additional Recommendations

### WHAT WOULD ALSO BE BENEFICIAL:

- continued funding for research, development and advocacy for arts groups and community partnerships to engage in long-term planning and project development-such as the building of a national artist benefits program, an artist-focused medical clinic, etc.
- continued funding for programs that support artists mental health and wellness on an ongoing basis;
- more funding for scholarships and financial assistance for arts training to make artistic practices more equitable and accessible;
- develop an educational training program that helps artists train to work in their fields as counsellors; also helps non-artists learn skills that will be of assistance to those working in the arts;
- assistance to schools and training programs to develop curriculum that helps students learn life and mental health skills training, to help prepare them for the realities of working in the arts;
- develop more professional work opportunities (in or outside of the arts) that can be compatible with those working in creative practices; i.e. universal basic income, or jobs with a living wage allow artists enough time to pursue their own work.





# CONCLUSION

As a province, if we wish to “grow our creative economy, achieve cultural excellence through innovation and hard work, and find ways to be more inclusive while honouring our diverse population and the Mi’kmaq<sup>1</sup>” then we must first prioritize the mental health and wellbeing of artists living in Nova Scotia. By helping artists access supportive mental health resources and services, this will enable them to thrive, and not just survive as creative workers in this province. As a result, this will lead to a stronger and more sustainable arts sector in Nova Scotia.

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<sup>1</sup> Nova Scotia’s Culture Action Plan: Creativity and Community (2017)



## Models for Artists' Mental Health, Wellness & Multi-disciplinary Care across Canada

Throughout the course of our research, we have also identified a number of notable programs across Canada that provide mental health/wellbeing related supports or services to artists and those working within the arts and cultural sector. For those interested in further research, we have provided a list below of ones that feel are most relevant to the Artists in Mind research initiative.

### AFC

The AFC (previously known as the Actors' Fund of Canada) is the lifeline for Canada's entertainment industry. The AFC is an expression of the community's good will, helping entertainment professionals when they are at their most vulnerable due to injury, illness or other personal hardship.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, hundreds of industry members have turned to The AFC for help to keep a roof over their heads and food on the table. During this challenging time, The AFC has responded to the need in the community with \$1.4 million (and counting) in emergency financial aid and other crucial support programs and services. All their programs are focused on supporting the health and well-being of arts and entertainment professionals working in all aspects of film & TV, music, theatre and dance.

For more information about AFC's programs and services, visit: <https://afchelps.ca/>







## THE AL AND MALKA GREEN ARTISTS' HEALTH CENTRE

The Al & Malka Green Artists' Health Centre is a facility in the Family and Community Medicine Program at Toronto Western Hospital. Equipped with an Acoustic Studio and Movement Assessment Studio with a sprung floor to aid in diagnosis and treatment. The Centre is the only clinic of its kind in Canada that specializes in serving the entire artistic community.

The Centre is an integrative outpatient clinic offering both medical and complementary care. Clinic services include acupuncture, chiropractic medicine, craniosacral therapy, registered massage therapy, MBCT group programs, naturopathic medicine, physiotherapy, psychotherapy, group psychotherapy, and shiatsu therapy. There is also a Nurse Practitioner to care for all patients and access to a family physician.

The Centre's team specializes in addressing the specific healthcare needs of artists providing a holistic approach to health within an evidence-based framework. Their patients include students and staff of post-secondary arts institutions and professional creative and performing artists of all ages. Through the Joysanne Sidimus Fund, services are subsidized for artists in financial need so they only pay a small fraction of the cost.

For more information about the Al and Malta Green Artists' Health Centre visit:

[https://www.uhn.ca/Medicine/Clinics/Artists\\_Health\\_Centre](https://www.uhn.ca/Medicine/Clinics/Artists_Health_Centre)

## DANCER TRANSITION RESOURCE CENTRE (DTRC)

Founded in 1985, the Dancer Transition Resource Centre (DTRC) is a national, charitable organization dedicated to helping dancers make necessary transitions into, within, and from professional performing careers. They also operate as a resource centre for the dance community and general public and support activities that improve the socioeconomic conditions of artists across the country.

As a world leader in dancer transition, they are active participants in international conferences and research initiatives and help drive change within the dance community.

They recognize that dance is one of the most challenging professions, physically, emotionally and financially, and that transitions are inevitable. Their goal is to ensure that dancers have the tools they need to reach their potential throughout their dance career and after retirement from dance performance.

For more information about the Dancer Transition Centre visit: <https://dtrc.ca/>







## UNISON BENEVOLENT FUND

Unison Benevolent Fund is a non-profit, registered music industry charity that provides counselling and emergency relief services to the Canadian music community. They are here to help professional music makers in times of hardship, illness or economic difficulties.

For many, a career in music is a dream come true; however, the reality is that many members of the Canadian music community do not have access to the services that can make all the difference in a time of need: sick leave, medical benefits, pension plans, and unemployment insurance. Music makers can easily find themselves unprepared to deal with the financial and emotional burdens of an unforeseen emergency or illness. The Unison Benevolent Fund provides a lifeline in these times of crisis, and is there to ensure the health of our friends, colleagues and collaborators.

The Unison Benevolent Fund is an assistance program – created and administered for the music community, by the music community – designed to provide discreet relief to music industry professionals in times of crisis. There are two distinct types of support available through the fund.

For more information about the Unison Benevolent Fund visit: <https://unisonfund.ca/faq/>

## MUSICIANS CLINIC OF CANADA

Founded in 1985, the Musicians' Clinics of Canada has served thousands of performing artists with state of the art assessment, treatment, and products. Medical doctors Dr. John Chong and Dr. John McMillan assess and treat a wide range of issues. Being specialists, a medical referral is required from your family physician in order to access health coverage through the Ontario Ministry of Health (OHIP). Marshall Chasin is a Doctor of Audiology, and the Director of Auditory Research, and no medical referral is required to see him.

*Note: Although the Musicians Clinic does not offer programs or services specifically for mental health, their information has been included in this document for a couple of important reasons. Firstly, this organization offers an interesting example of how a stand-alone medical clinic responds uniquely to the needs of artists. As we have come to learn, mental health may often be treated in connection with, or as part of, other artists' health issues. Sometimes, by addressing these other health-related issues that artists experience, interconnected mental health issues may also be addressed. The Musicians Clinic of Canada does have a focus towards hearing and hearing loss, but this is also seen holistically as part of the musician's life, work and overall health as a performing artist.*

For more information about the Musicians Clinic of Canada visit:

<https://www.musiciansclinics.com/>





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