

[space]

Artist Awards 2021



Evaluation Report

SPACE Artist Awards Evaluation Report

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Executive summary

In the context of the COVID-19 global pandemic and the Black Lives Matter movement, SPACE felt an urgent need to refocus its work in order to provide support where it's most relevant, critical and essential to the artist community. In October 2020 the organisation was awarded a grant from the first round of Arts Council England's (ACE) Culture Recovery Fund which supported the organisation's refocus plan and activities including the brand-new programme **SPACE Artist Awards**.

SPACE Artist Awards was launched with the aim to help talented under-represented visual artists and those suffering from extreme financial hardship, to invest in their future at this challenging time. The programme consisted of 20 x £5k bursaries, three of which also included a one-year free studio and four the Programme Associate Award title. Awardees were also offered a range of 1-2-1 and group activities, including a group mentoring session with artist John Akomfrah, and a one-month residency in SPACE Ilford studio.

The programme evaluation follows the Theory of Change approach whereby four outcome areas were identified and measured through a range of research methods. SPACE Artist Awards met most of its outcomes making a difference for artists and generating organisational learning.

It can be said that SPACE Artist Awards **improved artists' ability to respond to challenging times**. Thanks to the 1-2-1s and group activities, awardees felt more aware of opportunities and fair options available such as funding and higher fees. The programme provided access to resources and tools that artists could not afford, such as finance management workshops with Remi Harris MBE,

or would not have known about otherwise such as the Artist Union. Artists felt more confident about their practice and recognised as professional artists.

SPACE Artist Awards **enhanced artists' career progression**, as through the monetary award it allowed artists the time and freedom to breathe, experiment with their practice, afford good quality materials, upgrade their equipment and make new work. Freedom was described by artists also as an ability to find a better life-work balance and a general shift of mindset to a more positive one. Artists felt validated by winning the award and highly valued the exposure coming with it. The award has put the artists in 'a better position' for gaining other opportunities and 'more on people's radar'.

Being connected with a community of peers was highly valued by awardees who felt positive about their future working as artists because of their community. SPACE Artist Awards aimed to **develop a supportive community** for artists. The award brought in a general sense of collectiveness, as awardees appreciated being able to relate to each other's challenges and to share knowledge. However, mostly due to the programme being run online, the programme was unable to provide many networking opportunities.

Since taking part in SPACE Artist Awards overall artists **felt more positive about the art world**, especially the side of the sector composed of artist-led and charity organisations, which SPACE is part of. The art world was perceived as a little more welcoming as the award enabled 'some place at the table' for artists who are often not recognised in this sector and still feel removed from it. **SPACE Artist Awards contributes to the diversity, inclusion and equality of the art world**, but an ongoing commitment

from arts organisations to make change is needed for longer-term impact.

Finally, SPACE Artist Awards **generated organisational change** as the programme activated new learnings and awareness within the organisation while contributing to making SPACE programmes more diverse. The Programme Associates element of the programme was for SPACE one of the newest ways of working with artists. Both awardees and staff recognised some challenges but also the value of this opportunity. Some reflections were made around the open call and selection process which proved to be challenging and will need revision in the future.

As agreed by 90% of respondents, SPACE Artist Awards was a **unique artist support programme** combining a monetary award with free activities, a one-month long residency, a one-year studio and the opportunity to shape SPACE's programmes as Programme Associates. The programme met and, in some cases, even surpassed artists' expectations. The size of the bursary with 'no strings attached' was particularly valued by artists as well as the easy application process and the range of activities available.

SPACE showed a caring approach to artist support and was commented on by artists as one of the few organisations which actually shows intentionality. The programme changed or developed artists' perception of the organisation who now are more aware of the range of opportunities and programmes available at SPACE. More programmes like SPACE Artist Awards are needed to support artistic practices and contribute to a more diverse, inclusive and equal art world.

01 Introduction & context

SPACE Artist Awards was a brand-new artist support programme by SPACE aimed at helping talented under-represented visual artists and those suffering from extreme financial hardship, to invest in their future at this challenging time. The programme was launched in November 2020 with an open call and started its delivery in February 2021.

Whilst some programme activities were completed in June 2021, others will be continuing until March 2022.

The programme comes at a unique time for SPACE and the entire art world. In the context of the COVID-19 global pandemic and the Black Lives Matter movement, UK arts organisations have started to reconsider their missions and positions in the sector and in relation to the themes of diversity, inclusion and equality.

SPACE's core mission is to support artists and small creative businesses in a changing urban environment by providing creative workspace, advocacy, support and promoting innovation. COVID-19 has revealed the vulnerability of the artist community and a need for the organisation to re-prioritise its support for and engagement with artists.

The most recent SPACE survey of its tenants shows that in 2020, 83% of respondents had lost income, with 37% losing 60-80%.

In October 2020 the organisation was awarded a total of £588,279 from the first round of Culture Recovery Fund from ACE. The bid supported SPACE resilience plan and activities including SPACE Artist Awards.

The programme was allocated £146,650 out of the total budget, aligning itself with the organisation's ongoing change and re-focussed attention on the artist communities. SPACE wants to provide support where it's most relevant, critical and essential to the artist community.

02 Programme & evaluation overview

2.1 Objective and rationale for intervention

SPACE Artist Awards objective was to support talented visual artists with their career progression at this particularly challenging time. The programme was specifically aimed at:

- Visual artists under-represented in the art world.
- Visual artists whose ethnicity, disability or socio-economic background may have affected their career advancement.
- Visual artists affected by extreme financial hardship.

As highlighted in the paper *Panic! It's an Art Emergency. Social Class, Taste and Inequalities in the Creative Industries*,² there is a significant exclusion of those from working class origins, women and those from Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME)³ backgrounds across the cultural and creative industries. To confirm this, in its annual report *Equality, Diversity and the Creative Case*⁴, ACE focuses the data on four protected characteristics, as defined in the Equality Act 2010⁵ — race (referred to as ethnicity), disability, sex (referred to as gender) and sexual orientation.

The report shows how ACE and the NPOs (National Portfolio Organisations) are still not representative of the country's demographic as a whole.

COVID-19 has had a dramatic impact on artists and freelance creative practitioners. SPACE tenants survey from January 2021⁶ registered that 74% of artists anticipated a decrease of their income due to the pandemic.

As reported in *Covid-19 and the experience of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Creative Entrepreneurs*, creatives from a BAME background can often ‘feel excluded or misunderstood by the market, funders, peers, even family and friends’.⁷

Structural disadvantages have been affecting BAME communities and therefore also affecting their experiences of navigating the art world. Quoting Jemma Desai’s research, *This Work isn’t for Us*:⁸

These realities show it is not yet possible to exist as a person embodied in difference, in any industry or institution in the UK, the fullest sense in the arts, in a hostile environment that increasingly seems to privilege self-interested individuals in a market economy rather than nurturing a network of relationships between people.

Within this context, SPACE felt the necessity to offer and deliver SPACE Artist Awards, a new programme aimed at those artist communities suffering from extreme financial hardship and who have been impacted by the pandemic the most. As an NPO, SPACE’s intervention was aligned with *Let’s Create*,⁹ ACE’s new strategy for 2020-30 to diversify the cultural sector including the leadership, the workforce, the audiences, the artists, creatives and producers.

2.2 Activities

The programme consisted of 20 × £5k bursaries; 3 of which also included a one-year rent free studio — referred to as a SPACE Studio Award; and 4 the opportunity to advise on and help shape SPACE’s public programme — SPACE Programme Associate Award. Additionally, a number of artists were offered a one-month residency in the studio space at SPACE Ilford. The total budget allocated to the whole programme was £146,650.

Open call and selection process

The opportunity was advertised through an open call, which was on SPACE’s website for one month, from 5 November to 1 December 2020. SPACE ensured that the open call reached new, targeted audiences via a successful social media campaign. The call received an overwhelming response with around 500 applications which were put through a two-step selection process.

The selection involved the wider SPACE Artist Development team for the first phase, senior professionals from the art world and members of SPACE Senior Management Team for the second and final phase. Artists applying to the SPACE Artist Awards open call were asked to send a statement explaining how they qualify for and would benefit from the award alongside a short biography, a link to images/their practice and their CV. Additionally, eligible artists needed to be within their first 10 years of practice and live or work in one of the boroughs surrounding SPACE’s 20 studio buildings (Camden, Colchester, Greenwich, Hackney, Islington, Newham, Redbridge, Southwark and Tower Hamlets).

Applicants who were put through the second stage of the process often met two of these characteristics (e.g. identifying as disabled and suffering from financial hardship). During the second phase, the selection panel assessed the talent of the applicants and quality of their practice/work on the basis of their portfolio, their statements and CVs. Talent was a complex concept which included a range of different considerations from the selecting panel.

1-2-1s and group workshops

The 20 artists awarded were notified at the start of February 2021 which followed a press release. All the awardees were paid £5,000 by SPACE in February and were involved in programme activities from February to June 2021. These included:

- 1-2-1s with one of two mentors (artists Harun Morrison or Sonya Dyer employed specifically for the programme).
- Group workshops with sector experts.
- A group session with artist John Akomfrah.

Programme Associate Award

SPACE Programme Associates have received an additional £13,750 split among the four awardees for 10 days of work including programming and research and travel cost to SPACE Ilford. The Programme Associates have been working in close contact with members of SPACE Programmes team to develop and deliver a series of activities as part of SPACE public programme.

One of the four awardees completed their work with the local youth service in Ilford this summer and contributed to an exhibition in the SPACE Ilford gallery. Currently the remaining 3 awardees are working on other projects involving the production of a zine and research around the theme of care, social prescription, environment and colonialism. The Programme Associate Award is ongoing and due to end in March 2022.

Residencies

9 artists have been invited to take part in one-month long residencies in the SPACE Ilford studio. So far 4 artists have completed their residency, the remaining 6 will be undertaking it between October 2021 and March 2022. Moreover, the residency artists have been featured in 'artist profiles' video interviews available on the SPACE website and Instagram takeovers on the SPACE Instagram account.

Figure 1. Summary of programme activities →

Input	Activities	Outputs
£146,650 budget allocated from ACE Cultural Recovery Fund grant		
Dec 2020 – Jan 2021		
£100,000 in bursaries £15,000 in studios	Open call and selection process	20 artists awarded £5k. 3 artists also receive a one-year rent free studio.
Feb – Jun 2021		
£14,000 in 1-2-1s and group activities	1-2-1 mentoring sessions Group sessions Group mentoring session with John Akomfrah	Each artist receives 3×1h sessions for a total of 60 1-2-1s. 7 group sessions.
Feb 2021 – Mar 2022		
£13,750 for Programme Associates	Programming activities with SPACE staff (Prog. Associates only)	4 artists additionally work on SPACE's public programme with SPACE staff.
June 2021 – March 2022		
£1,250 for one-month residencies £2,650 for artist profiles and Instagram takeovers.	One-month residency Online artist features Instagram takeovers	9 residencies at Ilford studio. 9 online artist profiles and Instagram takeovers.

2.3 Participants profile

As shown in Figures 2 and 3 below the majority of the awardees identify as female and are in the age group 25-30. A few of the artists are in the older age groups 50-54 and 55-59.

Figure 2. Participants' gender

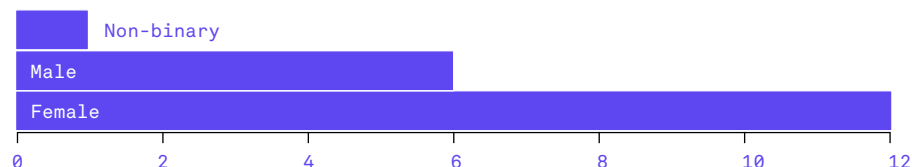
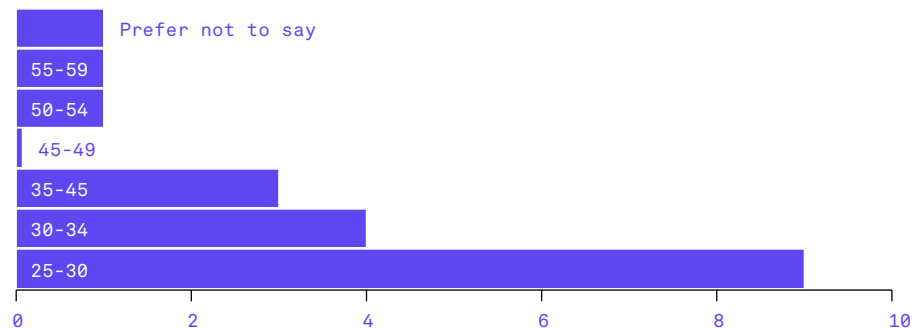
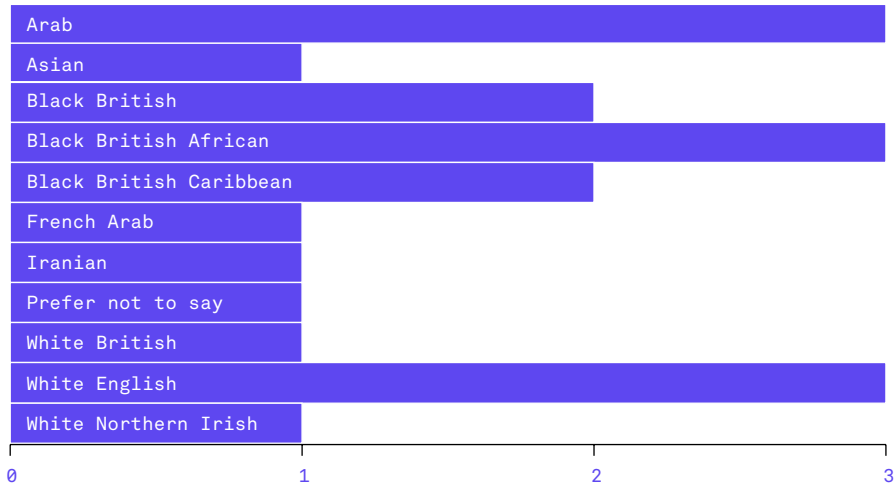


Figure 3. Participants' age



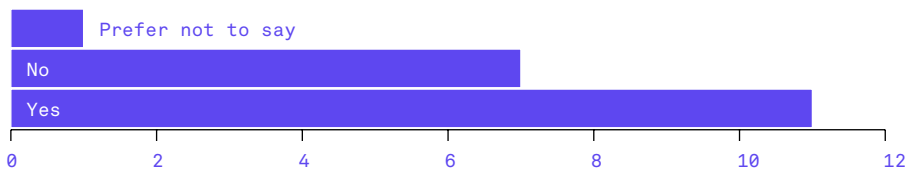
Most of the artists identify their ethnicity as Arab, Black British African and White English. The categories listed match those in the SPACE diversity and equality monitoring form.

Figure 4. Participants' ethnicity



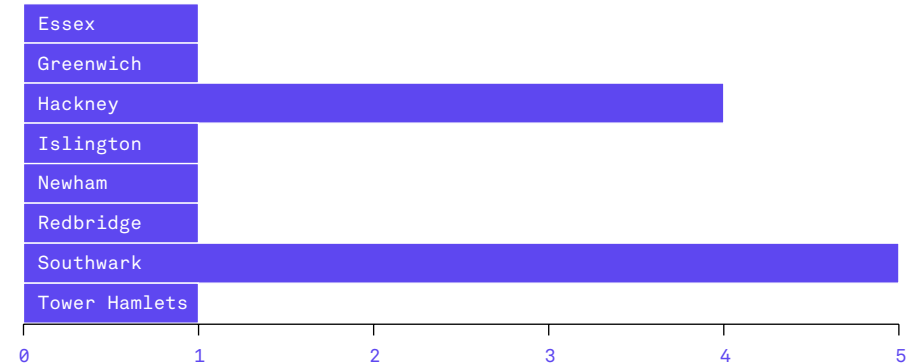
As shown in Figure 5 below the majority of artists awarded consider themselves to have a disability or a health condition.

Figure 5. Participants identifying as disabled or with health condition



Southwark and Hackney are the two London boroughs where most of the awardees work or live. Hackney, Colchester (Essex), and Redbridge is where 3 artists were awarded the one-year free studio.

Figure 6. Where participants work or live



2.4 Evaluation overview

The evaluation of SPACE Artist Awards followed a theory-based approach and specifically the Theory of Change. An evaluation framework of the programme was developed around the programme objective and evaluation questions. These were summarised in a Logic Model within four outcome areas:

- Improved artists' ability to respond to challenging times
- Enhanced career progression
- Development of a supportive community
- Organisational change

The following chapter reflects on the programme activities against each of these areas of outcome. The research involved both qualitative and quantitative methods including semi-structured interviews with a sample of 10 awardees,

a participant's feedback form and a focus group with 8 members of staff working in the programme. The feedback form was sent to all 20 participants with a response rate of 55%, which was good but lower than expected. This might be due to many factors such as the timings of the research - the survey was sent out in summer, and the level of engagement of participants with the evaluation process. More details about the evaluation questions, the research tools and data set can be found in the Appendices from page 54 on.

03 Outcome areas analysis

3.1 Improved artists' ability to respond to challenging times

The programme aimed to support artists' ability to respond to challenging times by increasing their confidence and awareness of opportunities available. The intended long-term impact is to increase the sustainability of artistic practices.

3.1.1 Awareness of opportunities

On average respondents scored 4.3 out of 5 when asked if they were more aware of funding opportunities and other sources of income for their practice; and scored 4.2 when asked if they were more aware of their opportunities and fair options available.

It's given me more tools to implement my practice. Now I've learned to have a plan for my online presence, things like that have opened up to a new level for me.

The finance workshop questioned personal beliefs around money which was eye opening. The workshop made me realise I can try asking more.

Awardees

Artists gained access to resources they either did not know about or could not afford to pay for. They felt more aware of resources such as the Artist Union and practical tools such as how to apply for Arts Council funding.

Activities such as the social media workshop led artists to have a 'more professional' online presence. Other group workshops such as those around finance management encouraged a 'push in the right direction' for some, encouraging artists to take steps they would not have done otherwise such as opening a business account and asking for higher fees. The 1-2-1 mentoring drove artists to change things while making them accountable.

Mentoring was amazing too — the first session I had an insane epiphany — it solidified my feelings as an artist.

Awardee

3.1.2 Vision

When asked if they had a clearer vision for their practice, on average awardees scored 4.1 out of 5. Thanks to the programme, artists felt more confident about their practices. The increase in confidence enabled artists to take their practices to 'a different level'. Many of the awardees had been struggling to be recognised as artists and in the art world. Winning the award made them feel validated and many experienced a change of mindset around their practices and what is possible.

My community is not in that world, so getting this award mentally has been a validation. It has transformed my mindset.

Awardee

Artists felt encouraged to think of their practice more as a profession. This change had a positive knock-on effect

on artists' mental health and all areas of their lives. Some artists used the time, space and money to experiment with their practices by trying out new ways of working, techniques and materials.

It's been supporting practical things, e.g. having your own laptop. It's a process of empowering yourself as an artist.

Awardees

The size of the award of £5k was highly appreciated and the fact that 'the money [came] with no strings attached'. The bursary allowed artists to buy good quality materials and upgrade their equipment, to feel more ambitious and gave them a general sense of freedom. Freedom was described by awardees as a space and time to breathe, an ability to find a better work-life balance and to make work on their own terms.

I have been able to find balance with my free time and use it to my full advantage. It has made me more ambitious — the money was amazing.

I feel like making work on my own terms now, especially experimenting.

Awardees

3.1.3 Sustainability

Sustainability of artistic practices is a long-term intended impact of SPACE Artist Awards. Since the programme, artists have moved forward with their practices, gaining more exposure and confidence.

Awardees have been able to experiment, make new work, gain new opportunities and in some cases make some new sales.

The moment you can support your practice, and a lot of it is financially, then you can see a future because you are producing work. I have not had that since my masters.

Awardee

However, artists continue to operate in a highly competitive sector, still characterised by structural inequalities, disadvantages and barriers. A concern raised by some awardees was whether things would return to the way they were pre-pandemic once the award and similar programmes finished.

Since Covid-19 there has been focus on disadvantaged people, even in a tokenistic way, so I've had the attention as never before. However, we all worry about when things will return as before. Will everyone care then?

Awardee

3.2 Enhanced career progression

The programme aimed to support artists with their career progression by increasing their access to opportunities and inviting the Programme Associates to contribute to SPACE's programming. The long-term intended impact is to make change in the art world by reducing barriers to career development for under-represented artists.

3.2.1 Access to opportunities

Overall, awardees felt in 'a better position' thanks to the SPACE Artist Awards and believed that having the award on their CV will increase their chances in future applications for funding and opportunities.

I am not sure if the residency opportunity I have got has a direct line with the award.

But now I know that I can put the award in an application and that can increase my chances.

Awardee

Since being awarded, artists have gained new opportunities such as other awards, new funding, commissions, residencies and exhibitions. For some awardees these were consequential to winning a SPACE Artist Award, in others cases the link between the new opportunity and the programme is not clear or not registered.

In general awardees highly valued the exposure coming with winning the award alongside other artists and since being awarded they have been feeling 'more on people's radar'.

3.2.2 Inclusion in SPACE programming

This outcome was specifically measured against one element of the SPACE Artist Awards: The Programme Associate Award. Four artists were invited to contribute to SPACE's programming as associates. So far only one of the artists has completed this part of the programme which is continuing until March 2022.

Artists felt included in programming activities and valued this aspect of the programme, although they didn't know what to expect from it. Since the open call stage of the programme there was no specification of what the Programme Associate Award would have involved, whether there would have been additional money and what was expected from the artists. Despite artists feeling they benefited from it, this element of the programme lacked structure and clarity.

I would like the opportunity to help with funding decisions and planning, to see that side of things.

Programme Associate Awardee

3.2.3 Perception of the art world

When asked if since the award they feel more supported by the art world, on average artists scored 3.8 out of 5. Overall the way that artists feel about the art world slightly changed since taking part in SPACE Artist Awards. The art world was perceived as a little more welcoming by awardees as they felt more aware of peers going through the same difficulties and of support available.

It's nice that someone has recognised my craft, this has given me faith in the art world which often makes you feel beaten up.

More confidence and money has allowed me a freedom that I have never had in my life before. I have been struggling to be recognised as an artist in the art world.

Awardees

Artists felt validated by the award and started to think of the art world as a 'little more possible', which led them to apply for other similar opportunities. The award enabled 'some place at the table' for artists who are often not recognised within a sector that is not yet inclusive.

It still feels like if you are from a certain background you are not included.

Awardee

Awardees still felt removed from the art world, especially the commercial side of it. The side of the sector composed of artist-led and charity organisations — which SPACE is part of — was perceived more positively.

3.2.4 Reduction of barriers to career development

Artists awardees generally expressed more faith in being an artist and in the art world. However, SPACE Artist Awards was only a start towards a more diverse, inclusive and equal art world for artists who have often been overlooked.

An ongoing commitment from the sector to support under-represented artists is necessary for a longer-term impact.

2020 has offered a good reflection on what's going on in the industry, but actual changes are yet to be seen.

Awardee

3.3 Development of a supportive community

A key aspect of SPACE Artist Awards was to support artists from under-represented backgrounds in the art world. The current COVID-19 crisis has made things worse for artists, resulting in isolation, lack of income and support. The programme aimed to support artists through these challenges by fostering a supportive community and a network within the art world.

3.3.1 Connection with a community of peers

Artists highly rated the importance of being connected with a community of peers, which overall was scored 4.8 out of 5. However, the awardees' sense of belonging to an artist community only changed slightly.

The award brought in a general sense of collectiveness for some as they appreciated being able to relate to each other's challenges and to share knowledge in a 'practical sense' on how to survive as artists. Awardees started to follow each other on Instagram, and some had conversations which would not have happened otherwise.

I didn't realise how important it was to have people you can speak and relate to.

Awardee

In general artists did not feel that the aim of the programme was to develop a network or found it hard to connect with other awardees online without meeting in person. Artists acknowledged that COVID-19 restrictions had impacted the format of the programme. Attending the activities online

allowed artists to focus on their work and took away the awkwardness of the initial in-person dynamic.

3.3.2 Connection with the art world

80% of respondents felt that the programme led them to develop new relationships with art professionals. However interestingly, when asked how connected to the art world they feel, on average they scored only 3.3 out of 5.

Some awardees commented that the programme provided access to resources that they did not know about before or they could not have afforded otherwise, such as workshops on finance management led by Remi Harris MBE. Artists also valued meeting the mentors and staff members at SPACE.

It can be observed that these new relationships resulting from the programme did not necessarily correspond to a change in artists' sense of belonging to the art world.

I still feel quite physically removed from the visual art [world] but I feel I got some kind of validation by having been in the programme...

Awardee

3.3.3 Confidence in the future because of their community

When asked how positive they feel about their future working as artists because of their community, artists scored 4.1 out of 5. This is an indicator of the importance of communities for the sustainability of artistic practices. Artists felt more

optimistic about the future and thanks to the award 'things feel more possible' than before for them.

I feel more optimistic, I still don't have everything figured out but it's great to know there are programmes like this out there.

Awardee

Although the programme didn't necessarily lead artists to feel more connected to a community of peers, this evaluation suggests an interesting reflection about the art world.

The relationship between artistic communities and the art world is not direct and obvious but implies many levels of complexity. The art world is perceived as an external system which artists operate - or might decide not to, and are often excluded from or objectified by.

I am very aware that it's easy for someone like me to be objectified in this industry [...]. I have rejected opportunities that perpetuate those structures.

Awardee

3.3.4 Diversity and inclusiveness of the art world

90% of respondents think that a programme such as SPACE Artist Awards contributes to improving the diversity, inclusion and equality of the art world.

As an NPO SPACE plays a part in making the art world more diverse, inclusive and equal. The art world is still characterised by many barriers for artists and artist

communities, proving that a long-term commitment for change and more programmes like SPACE Artist Awards are needed.

We are part of the system that is unhealthy for us, we often feel in competition with one another.

Awardee

3.4 Organisational change

SPACE Artist Awards was one of the projects developed as part of SPACE's ongoing refocus. The organisation has been rethinking its way of working with artists and providing support where most needed. Organisational change was measured through a series of indicators as described in the following paragraphs.

3.4.1 Awareness

SPACE Artist Awards led to a renewed awareness within the organisation around the themes of diversity, inclusion and equality.

Diversity, inclusion and equality were described by staff members in a number of ways including having multiple voices, recognising each other's differences and respecting them, as well as fairness and kindness. It was agreed that being diverse requires intentionality and redistribution of resources, and it shouldn't be a box ticking exercise. SPACE Artist Awards alongside other existing bursary and artist development programmes were identified as activities that contribute to diversity, inclusion and equality at SPACE.

There are two dimensions which emerged in relation to these themes: one is internal, SPACE staff and the organisational structure; the other one is external, the artistic communities which SPACE works with. With regard to the artistic communities, staff agreed on the importance of giving visibility to local communities, with particular focus on working with young people. By providing access to resources and opportunities, SPACE can contribute to making art possible as a career.

SPACE Artist Awards was a learning curve for SPACE staff generating new reflections and conversations within the organisation. The programme increased staff awareness around best practices for reaching out to under-represented groups and supporting artists. A series of challenges and learnings were also identified and discussed internally especially around the open call and selection process. Further details can be found in the Learnings section.

3.4.2 New ways of working with artists

SPACE Artist Awards involved new ways of working with artists for SPACE. These included the size of the bursary award, the combination of a bursary with support activities and the Programme Associate Award.

SPACE staff recognised the value of both the size of the bursary and the combination of the award with workshops and mentoring, which were also highly praised by the artists. With regard to the Programme Associate Award, a number of challenges were encountered by both artists and staff who recognised the lack of structure and direction of that element of the programme.

Despite these challenges, staff believe that the Programme Associate Award is valuable for both the organisation and the artists as it breaks the barriers to enter an institution and help shape its programmes.

3.4.3 Diversity of SPACE programmes

It can be said that SPACE Artist Awards contributed to organisational learning and increased the diversity of SPACE programmes.

Through the Programme Associates element of the programme artists have had a consultancy role within the organisation. Despite its challenges, the Programme Associate Award has impacted on the programme content of SPACE. The award is still ongoing until March 2022.

The impact of SPACE Artist Awards and other organisation activities on the diversity, inclusion and equality of SPACE programmes is an ongoing indicator and can be more accurately assessed in the mid-long term.

04 Success factors & learnings

4.1 Success factors

Uniqueness

When asked if they could have accessed the same type of programme from other organisations, 70% of respondents replied that nothing offers the same as SPACE Artist Awards and 20% that nothing else is free or specific to their practice. Artists particularly valued the size of the bursary of £5k, and the combination of a monetary award with a wider support offer that included one-year free studio, workshops, 1-2-1 mentoring, a one-month residency, online artist profiles and Instagram takeovers.

On average artists scored SPACE 8.4 out for 10 when asked if SPACE Artist Awards met the needs they had when they applied. Overall the programme met artists' expectations and in some cases even surpassed them. Artists did not expect the range of activities offered or to be paid additional fees to the bursary. SPACE ensured it paid artists for any additional activity they were involved in, such as travel costs to the Ilford studio, the artist profiles video interviews, the Instagram takeover and the evaluation interviews.

*Usually, artists' time is not valued
but SPACE catered for everything.*

Awardee

Highlights

Meeting with John Akomfrah was one of the highlights of the programme for many artists, alongside the monetary award and the financial workshop led by Remi Harris MBE. Awardees also valued the social media session led by Jessica Audsley and the 1-2-1 mentoring sessions.

To get £5,000 and speak to one of the most famous filmmakers in the UK was wild in essence [...]. It felt like it was breaking down boundaries which you often have in the art world as you feel you don't belong to it.

Awardee

Artists commented positively on the application form which they found easy and the freedom to spend the monetary award according to their own needs and with 'no strings attached'.

The one-year free studio and the one-month residency at the Ilford studio have been a good opportunity for artists to experiment, show their work, activate some collaborations and not worry about space for some time. Moreover, the artist profiles and the Instagram takeovers coming with the residency have been a good way to give artists a voice as well as easy to plan and organise for SPACE staff.

Perception of SPACE

The majority of awardees heard about SPACE Artist Awards through word of mouth. Artists either did not know SPACE before or were not aware of what the organisation does beyond studios provision. Taking part in the programme made them more aware of the range of programmes that

SPACE runs and opportunities available. Awardees felt looked after and perceived an openness in the organisation. SPACE's intentionality and commitment to support artists was highly appreciated.

SPACE is one of the few art organisations which says what they are actually going to do.

SPACE showed their duty of care for the participants.

Awardees

4.2 Learnings

Open call and selection process

Staff found the selection process challenging and laborious for the content and the number of applications received, over 500. Despite the application being perceived by artists as straight forward, staff and mentors recognised that some of the open call eligibility questions led artists to disclose personal trauma. The process put both the selecting panel and the delivery staff in a difficult position which they felt unprepared for or not supported enough. Going forward staff will review the application questions and clarify the eligibility requirements showing a greater intentionality about the questions they are asking.

The number of applications received didn't match the time available to assess them which resulted in a delay communicating the outcomes to artists. A better planning, structure and time schedule will be needed in the future.

Finally, an observation was made around the meaning of quality of the practice/work, a selection criteria which some felt was unclear. Staff agreed on the need to clarify what SPACE means by 'talent' and 'quality of the practice' in future open calls.

Programme Associate Award

It was observed by both awardees and SPACE staff that there has been a lack of structure and direction for the Programme Associate Award. That was probably due to the novelty of this way of working with artists for SPACE and that it also coincided with a transitional moment for the organisation with members of staff just starting new roles. Going forward SPACE will look into producing a brief for artists with clear expectations for the role as Programme Associates and a structure of potential activities.

Mentoring

Despite being a valued activity, artists would have preferred longer mentoring periods and more tailored sessions. Ideally 6-month or even one-year mentoring would have benefitted artists more, allowing them to access this resource more consistently. However, the Cultural Recovery Fund had a restricted timeline which meant that the budget needed to be spent by March 2021, impacting on the scheduling of activities.

Moreover, awardees would have enjoyed additional and longer sessions with inspirational speakers such as John Akomfrah.

Networking and online activities

Artists would have liked more chances to connect with each other through in person meet ups and sessions such as show and tell. The nature of online sessions meant that awardees did not always feel part of a group, included and engaged in the conversations. Going forward it would be good to rethink the networking element of the programme.

05 Conclusions

SPACE Artist Awards has been **a valuable programme for both the artist community and the organisation**. The programme fits with SPACE's refocus and mission to provide artist support where most needed and make change. The programme's activities benefitted artists in a range of ways meeting most of the intended outcomes and generating positive change. **70% of the awardees believe that the changes in their practice are due to the programme.**

Artists felt more aware of opportunities available and fair options. The programme provided access to resources that they could not afford or did not know about otherwise and allowed them the time and freedom to experiment and make work on their own terms. Thanks to the programme, **artists felt more confident about their practice and more positive about their future as artists.**

SPACE Artist Awards was **validating for awardees as they felt recognised as professional artists** and more on people's radar. Since the award some of them gained new funding, exhibition, commission and residency opportunities. Despite these not always being directly linked to SPACE Artist Awards, artists recognised that the programme has put them in 'a better position' and highly valued the exposure that came with winning the award. **A long-term commitment of arts organisations to support under-represented artists is needed for impact to develop.**

Being part of a community is highly important for artists. Awardees appreciated being able to relate to each other's challenges and to share knowledge and experiences. However, mostly due to the programme being run online, the

awardees' sense of belonging to an artist community only changed slightly.

Since the award, **artists felt more positive about the art world**, especially the part of the sector composed of artist-led and charity organisations, which was perceived as more welcoming. Artists still feel removed from the art world, especially the commercial side, which artists are often excluded from or objectified by. SPACE Artist Awards contributes to the diversity, inclusion and equality of the art world, but **more programmes like it are needed to make change**.

SPACE Artists Awards was **a unique programme** combining a £5k bursary with support activities, a free one-year studio and the opportunity to shape SPACE's programmes as Programme Associates for some. Artists highly valued the size of the monetary award with 'no strings attached' and found the application process easy. The programme changed artists' perception of SPACE or developed one which is about openness, care and intentionality.

The programme offered **opportunities for organisational learning and reflection** which will inform future programming. A series of internal challenges were identified around the open call, the selection process and the Programme Associates element which will be reviewed. The organisation showed a **great willingness to learn from processes** and a long-term commitment to support artists in the most relevant ways.

06 Recommendations

Drawing from the findings of this evaluation, the following recommendations can be made:

- Keep monitoring artists' trajectories for in-depth impact evaluation of sustainability of artistic practices.
- Carry out a follow up evaluation for more in-depth analysis of the Programme Associates Award, and monitor progress against initial feedback.
- Keep evaluating the diversity, inclusion and equality of SPACE programmes through solid monitoring systems and evaluation processes.
- Review the application questions and clarify the eligibility requirements.
- Implement an improved plan, timeline and structure ahead of the selection process and programme delivery.
- Write a brief for the Programme Associates setting clearer expectations, objectives and structure.
- Rethink the networking element of the programme, consider in-person events if possible and/or ad hoc networking events online.

Endnotes

- 1 In-house research, SPACE, January 2021.
- 2 Dr Brook O., Dr O'Brien D., and Dr Taylor M., *Panic! It's an Art Emergency. Social Class, Taste and Inequalities in the Creative Industries*. Create London, 2018.
- 3 Although we use the term BAME, we acknowledge that it's imperfect and it does not fully capture the racial, cultural and ethnic identities of people that experience structural and systematic inequality.
- 4 Arts Council England, *Equality, Diversity and the Creative Case*. A data report 2018-19.
- 5 *Equality Act 2010*. Gov.com. (last visited 4 May 21)
- 6 In-house research, SPACE, January 2021.
- 7 Osborne K., *MeWe360, Covid-19 and the Experience of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Creative Entrepreneurs*, December 2020.
- 8 Desai J., *This Work isn't for Us*, 2020.
- 9 Arts Council England, *Let's Create Strategy 2020-2030*. Artscouncil.org.uk (last visited 4 May 2021)

Appendix 01

Evaluation questions

Each evaluation question is matched with one of the evaluation criteria laid out for this evaluation: Relevance, Effectiveness, Impact, Process and Sustainability.

Relevance..... How does the project fit with SPACE refocus and mission to support artists, and the needs of artists?

Effectiveness What has and what has not changed for the awardees since participating in the programme, in relation to its activities and different awards?

Impact To what extent and how has the programme impacted on the change?

Process..... What has the SPACE team learned from designing, developing and running this programme?

Sustainability How has the project informed SPACE future programming, relationship with the artist community?

Appendix 02

Feedback form

Your details

Postcode.....

London Borough.....

What have you been awarded? Please tick as many as apply.

£5,000 bursary 12-month studio Programme Associate

Equality and diversity monitoring

Gender

Female Male Non-binary Prefer not to say

If you prefer to use your own term, please specify here:

.....

What is your sexual orientation?

Bisexual Gay Heterosexual Lesbian
 Prefer not to say

If you prefer to use your own term, please specify here:

.....

Are you married or in a civil partnership?

- Yes No Prefer not to say

Age

- Under 20 20-24 25-30 30-34 35-45
 45-49 50-54 55-59 60-64 65-69
 70-74 75-79 80-89 90+ Prefer not to say

What is your ethnicity?

Ethnic origin is not about nationality, place of birth or citizenship. It is about the group to which you perceive you belong. Please tick the appropriate box

- Arab
- Asian/Asian British Bangladeshi
- Asian/Asian British Chinese
- Asian/Asian British Indian
- Asian/Asian British Pakistani
- Asian/Asian British
- Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British African
- Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British Caribbean
- Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British
- Mixed White and Asian
- Mixed White and Black African
- Mixed White and Black Caribbean
- White English
- White Welsh
- White Scottish
- White Northern Irish
- White Irish

- White British
- White Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- White (please specify)
- Prefer not to say

If you prefer to use your own term, please specify here:

.....

Do you consider yourself to have a disability or health condition?

- Yes No Prefer not to say

What is your religion or belief?

- Buddhist Christian Hindu Jewish Muslim
 Sikh No religion or belief

If other religion or belief, please write in:

.....

Do you have any caring responsibilities?

- Yes No Prefer not to say

Relationship with the project

How did you hear about SPACE awards? (multiple choice)

- SPACE newsletter
- SPACE social media
- SPACE website
- word of mouth
- Other (please specify)

Did you already know about SPACE before applying to the award?

- Yes No Not sure

What activities did you take part in? (multiple choice)

- 1-2-1s mentoring
- Workshops
- John Akomfrah's session
- Programming
- Others (please specify)

Outcomes

Improved artists' resilience

From a scale from 1-5, how much do you agree with the following statements (1: not at all, 5: completely):
As a result of taking part in SPACE Artist Awards

- 01 I am more aware about funding opportunities and other sources of income for my practice
- 02 I am more aware of my opportunities and fair options available
- 03 I have a clearer vision for my practice
- 04 I feel more confident about my practice
- 05 I feel more supported by the art world
- 06 I feel more positive about navigating the art world

Enhanced career progression

As a result of SPACE Artist Award, have you gained any of these opportunities:

- Residency Commission Magazine feature/interview
- Exhibition Grant award Artwork sales
- Others (please specify)

If yes, please can you give us details?

.....

▲ Only for Programme Associates awardees ▲
Did you feel included in the programming activities at SPACE?

Yes No — If no, tell us why:

Development of a supportive community

Please answer the following questions using a scale from 1 to 5 (1: not at all, 5: completely)

- 01 How important is to be connected with a community of peers?
- 02 Since SPACE Artist Awards, how connected do you feel to a community of peers?
- 03 How connected do you feel to the art world?
- 04 Since SPACE Artist Awards, has the way you feel about the artworld changed?
- 05 How positive do you feel about the future as an artist because of your community?

Has SPACE Artists Awards led you to develop new relationships with art professionals?

Yes No

Impact

Have you taken part in other similar opportunities lately?

Yes No

— and if yes, which ones:

Do you think you could have accessed the same type of programme from other organisations?

- Yes, similar programmes out there
- Yes, but nothing for free
- Yes, but nothing near me
- Yes, but not specific to my practice
- No, nothing offers the same
- Don't know

Since being awarded SPACE Artist Award, has any aspect of your practice changed?

Do you think that any change is due to SPACE Artist Award?

Yes No Don't know

What aspects of SPACE Artist Award were most useful?

.....

From a scale from 1-10, to what extent has SPACE Artist Award met the needs you had when you applied?

(1 not at all, 10 completely)

Do you think that projects like SPACE Artist Awards contributes to improving the diversity, inclusion and equality of the art world?

Yes No Maybe Don't know

Do you have any further comments?

.....

Has the programme changed your perception of SPACE?

Yes No

— If yes, how?

.....

Appendix 03

Semi-structured interview questions

Intro

- 01 Why did you apply to SPACE Artist Awards?
- 02 How did you hear about the SPACE Artist Awards?
- 03 Did you already know SPACE before?
- 04 What activities did you take part in?

Improved artists' resilience

- 05 Has anything changed for your practice since taking part in SPACE Artist Award?
- 06 Do you feel it has been a positive change?

Enhanced career progression

- 07 Has the level of opportunities available to you changed since taking part in SPACE Artist Award?
- 08 Has the way you feel about the art world changed at all since taking part in SPACE Artist Awards?

09 Has SPACE Artists Awards led you to develop new relationships?

▲Only for Programme Associates▲

10 How would you describe your experience of contributing to SPACE programming as a Programme Associate?

Development of a supportive community

11 Has SPACE Awards changed how you feel about belonging to an artist community?

12 How do you feel about your future as an artist?

Programme feedback

13 What aspects of SPACE Artist Award were most useful?

14 Has the programme met your expectations?

Attribution

15 What do you think would have happened if you hadn't been awarded SPACE Artist Award?

Long-term impact on practice

16 Has the programme supported other aspects of your life? If yes, which ones?

Long-term impact on macro areas (diversity, equality and inclusiveness of the artworld)

17 Do you think that projects like SPACE Artist Award contributes to improving the diversity, inclusion and equality of the art world?

18 Has the programme changed your perception of SPACE? If yes, how?

Appendix 04

Focus group questions

Intro / Relationship with the project

What was your role in the project?

When did you get involved in the project?

Organisational change

What do diversity, equality and inclusivity mean

– For you?

– For SPACE?

What does SPACE do to contribute to these themes?

Learning

Which activities were more effective and which were less?

What challenges did you encounter in your work on SPACE Artist Awards?

What have you learned from SPACE Artist Award

– new ways of working with artists?

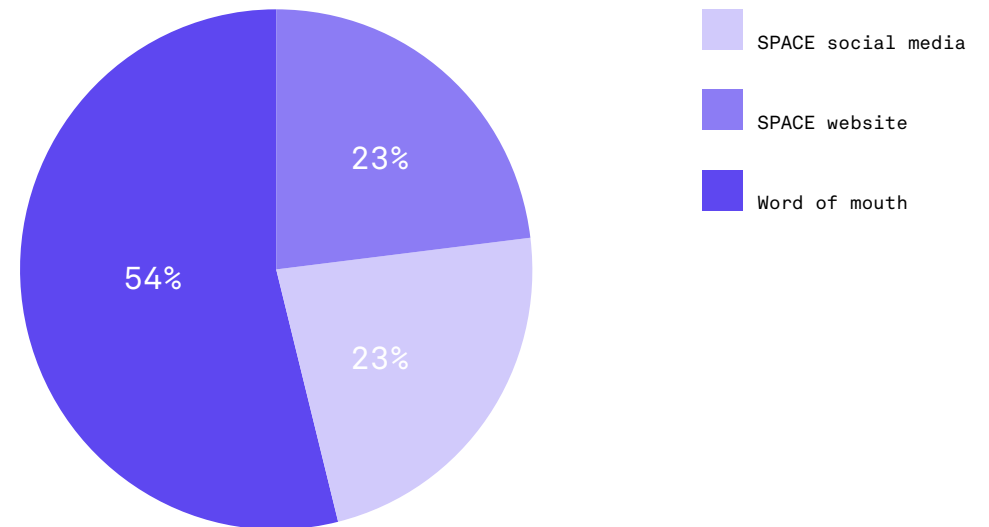
– new ways of operating internally?

If SPACE wanted to run SPACE Artist Awards, what should keep/change/improve in the future?

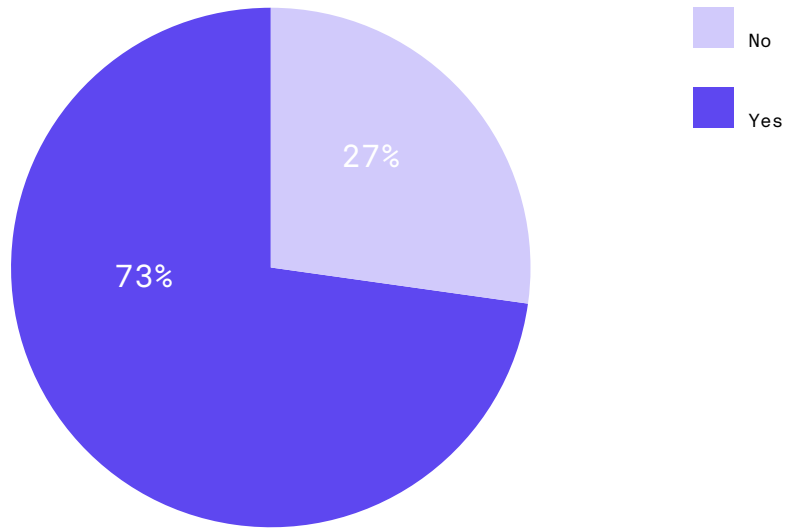
Appendix 05

Quantitative data set

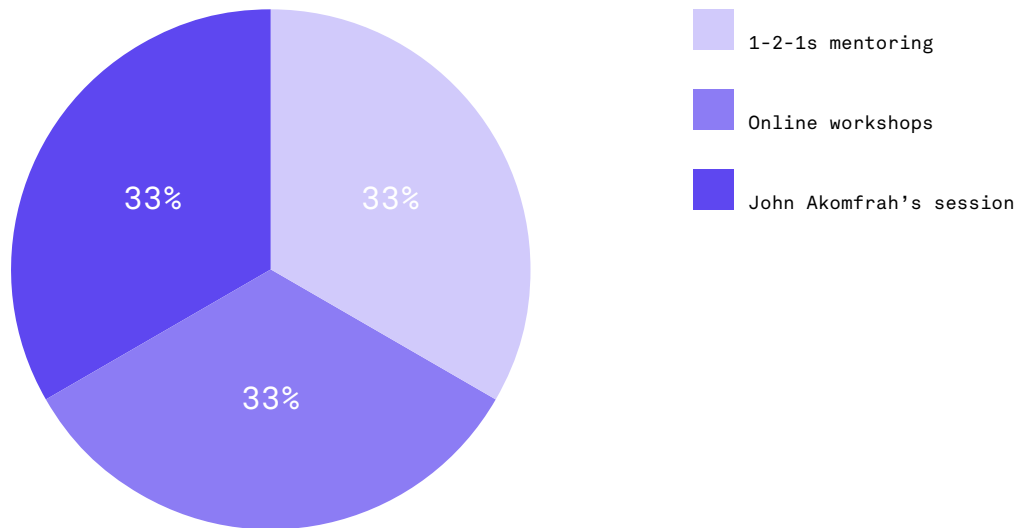
How did you hear about SPACE Artist awards?



Did you already know about SPACE before applying to the award?

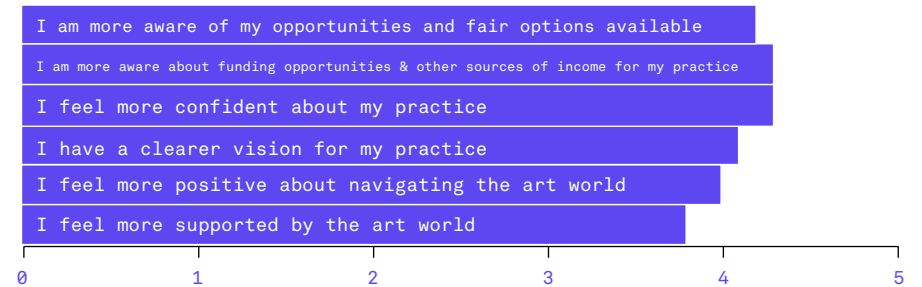


What activities did you take part in?



From a scale from 1-5, how much do you agree with the following statements (1: not at all, 5: completely):

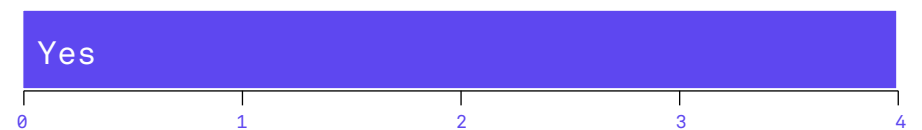
As a result of taking part in SPACE Artist Awards: (averaged)



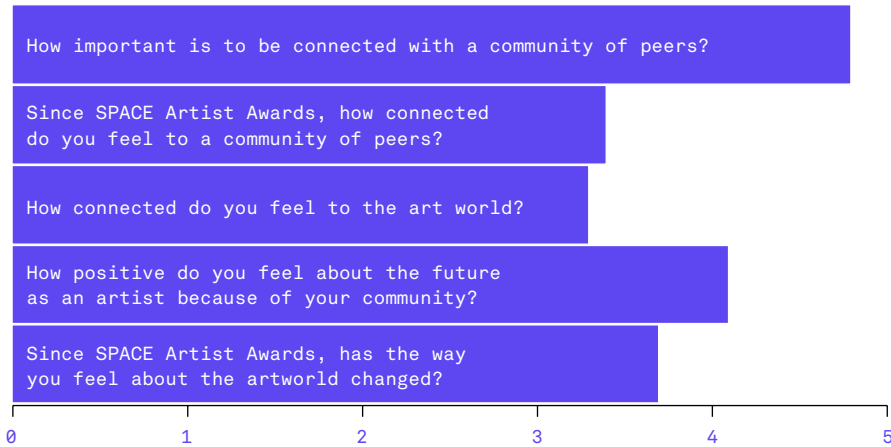
As a result of SPACE Artist Awards, have you gained any of these opportunities: ?



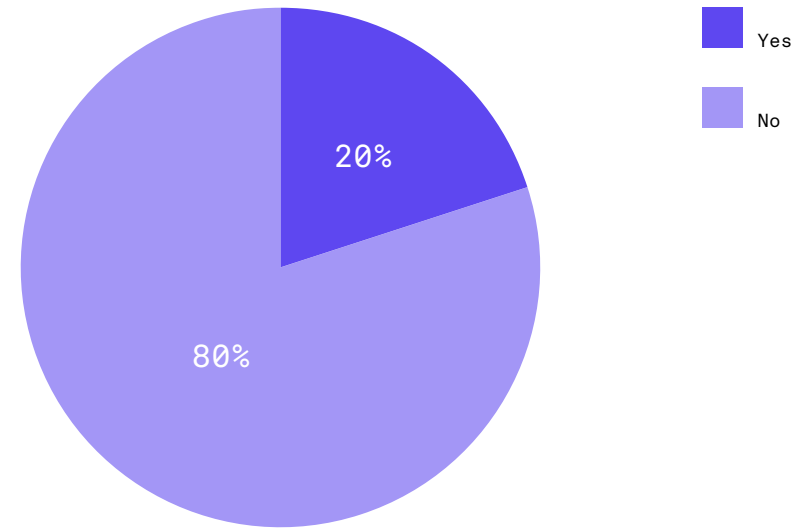
(Only for Programme Associates awardees)
Did you feel included in the programming activities at SPACE?



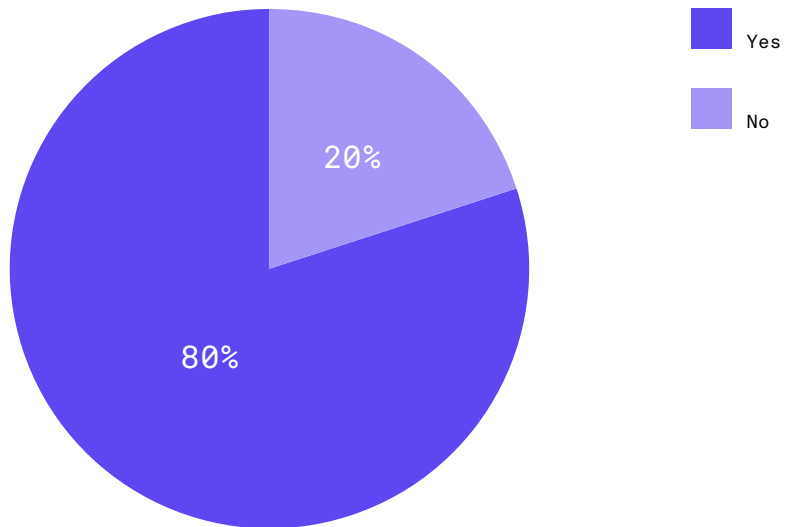
Please answer the following questions using a scale from 1 to 5 (1: not at all, 5: completely —averaged)



Have you taken part in other similar opportunities lately?

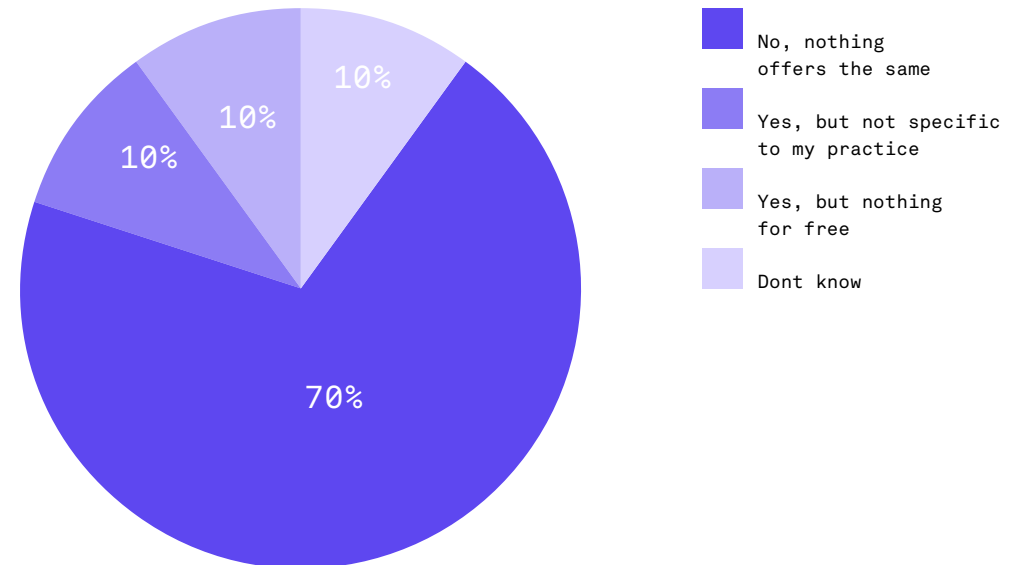


Has SPACE Artists Awards led you to develop new relationships with art professionals?



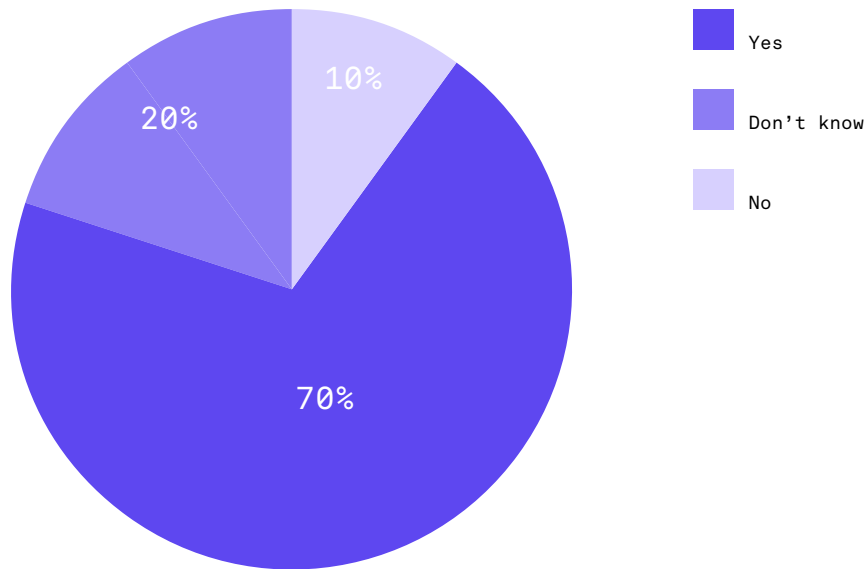
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Do you think you could have accessed the same type of programme from other organisations?

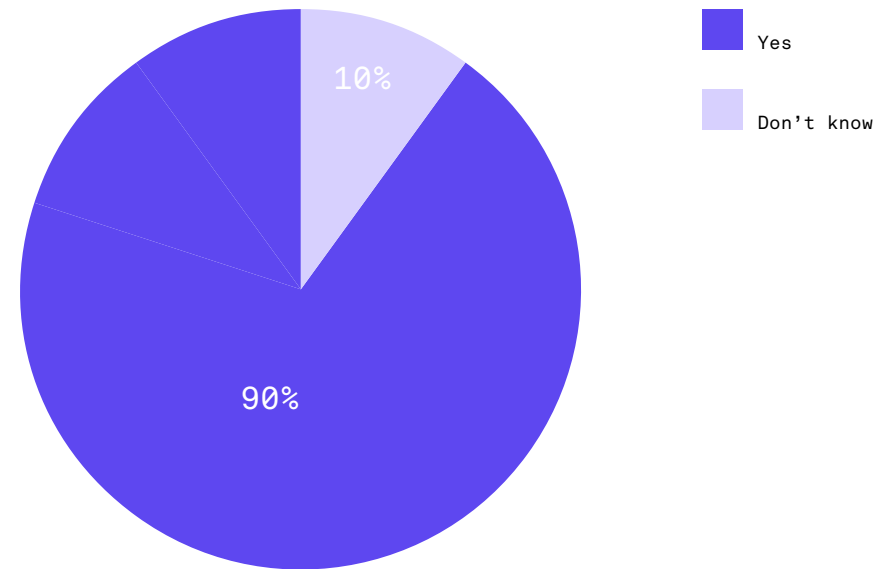


77

Since being awarded SPACE Artist Award, has any aspect of your practice changed? Do you think that any change is due to SPACE Artist Award?



Do you think that projects like SPACE Artist Awards contributes to improving the diversity, inclusion and equality of the art world?



From a scale from 1-10, to what extent has SPACE Artist Awards met the needs you had when you applied (1: not at all, 10: completely)



Has the programme changed your perception of SPACE?

