



Stimulating and supporting contemporary visual arts practice
a-n The Artists Information Company
www.a-n.co.uk

Artists' work in 2011

How did artists' livelihoods and practices fare in 2011, a year in which cuts across the arts, further and higher education and the rest of the public sector began to bite? Artists were quick to tell us firstly that there seemed to be less work around to bid for, and secondly that the volume of unremunerated opportunities was growing. But was this actually the case?

This Research paper forms part of a series that looks specifically at the nature and value of openly-advertised work and opportunities for visual and applied artists. Drawing on data published on www.a-n.co.uk/jobs_and_opps, this series set out in 2007 to track on an ongoing basis the key categories of awards/fellowships, academic posts, art vacancies, commissions, exhibitions, residencies and competitions/prizes, and by doing so, to identify any trends arising, and provide commentary and contextual evidence and analysis from other related sources, to contribute to arts and cultural consultations and policy.

Key facts

- In 2011, the overall value of work on offer to artists was only marginally better than the 2008 recession year in which the total value of openly-offered work to artists dropped by 60% against 2007 figures.
- Only 36% jobs and opportunities in 2011 offered to pay anything to artists, in comparison with 57% doing this in the recession year of 2008.
- In 2011, commissions provided 18% of the value of all work, with an average budget of £20,961: comparator 2007 (pre-recession) figures were 62% and over £100K.
- Jobs in Higher and Further Education including lecturing, research and technical salaried posts amounted to 27% of all paid work on offer in 2011 (34% in 2010).
- Residencies that make up 2% of the value of all work offered in 2011 paid an average fee of less than £2,000, in contrast with £5,600 paid in 2010 and £6,342 in 2007.

- 10% of the value of all work in 2011 came through local authorities, mirroring 2010 figures.
- In 2011, nearly half of all work openly offered to visual and applied artists came from the public sector arts and higher or further education, all facing further cuts and squeezes in 2012.

Artists' livelihoods and employment status

The ecology of the arts seems to positively encourage portfolio working, with artists tending to rely for their livelihoods on a combination of projects and other income sources to maintain their practice. This was borne out by the 2008 study *Creative Graduates – Creative Futures* and also findings from the a-n and AIR Big Artists Survey in 2011.

ACTIVITIES ARTISTS USE WHEN CARRYING OUT THEIR PRACTICE

Activity	% use regularly or occasionally
Exhibitions/ Gallery Commissions	93
Private commissions	83
Selling/retailing	78
Teaching/lecturing	69
Arts research/ consultancy	52
Community Art	60
Fairs	60
Residency/engaged practice	52
Festivals	49
Public Art	48
Empty shops	35

This same survey also revealed a change in the employment profiling of artists. Where as 70% were self-employed and 25% a mixture of self-employed and employed in 2009, by 2011 only 50% was wholly self-employed and 31% a mixture of self-employed and employed.

Employment status	Big Artists survey 2011 %	AIR employment status survey 2009 %
Self-employed	50	72
Mixture self-employed and employed	31	25
Employed	7	1
Unemployed	5	1
Retired	7	2

The survey also noted that the likelihood of being self employed increased with stage of practice, with 42% of emerging artists surveyed self-employed, 49% of mid-career artists self-employed and 63% of established artists self-employed. In contrast, the likelihood of being a mix of self-employed and employed reduced with stage of practice in that 35% of emerging artists were self-employed and employed, 30% of mid-career artists self-employed and employed and 21% of established artists self-employed and employed.

Higher Education is a key employer of artists – providing a quarter of all paid work on offer in 2011. The AIR survey into the impact of cuts in HE published in March 2011 demonstrates that “51% of AIR members had worked in some capacity in HE in the past five years. 64% had contributed as a freelance or occasional lecturer. 39% had been employed on a part-time basis and 9% full-time.”

“Over half (56%) got up to 25% of their income from work in HE, whilst 16% got between 25-50% from this area. A further 29% earned 50% or more of their income from HE work, that included lecturing and technical positions. Significantly, half believed that their HE income was likely to reduce in the future.”

Other funding sources for artists

Alongside data provided in our analysis of openly-offered Jobs and opportunities in 2011, it is useful to consider other sources of arts funding that might have been provided to visual and applied artists during 2011. Historically, such grant schemes were published within a-n’s Jobs and Opportunities. However, as few are now deadline-based, there is a tendency for arts councils to announce and promote any schemes on offer predominantly on their own websites rather than to seek to actively place them within listings such as a-n’s.

Because grants awarded data is not easily available from the arts councils, the following evidence from 2009/10 is provided for illustrative purposes, as collected and analysed by Dany Louise for *A fair share: direct funding to individual artists from UK arts councils*, commissioned by a-n.

- In 2009/10, Arts Council of Wales' rolling funding scheme gave out £182,789 in individual grants to artists (average of £2,373 each).
- In Northern Ireland, the-small grants scheme awarded £207,900 in 2009/10 in sums of £1,300-£1,700.
- In England in 2009/10, 485 artists were successful in gaining £2.836m from the overall £54m Grants for the Arts (GFTA) allocation (average of £5,848 each).
- In Scotland in 2009/10, the Scottish Arts Council (forerunner to Creative Scotland) awarded £386,500 in grants to seventy-six artists (average of £5,085 each).

Funding forecasts

In the visual arts, Arts Council England's (ACE) National Portfolio Organisations (NPO) funding for 2012-15 has prioritised the galleries. Whilst ACE's NPO announcements in March 2011 stated the need for galleries to adopt strategies to support artists' professional development (other than showing artists' work), this imperative is unlikely to be set out in Funding agreements as it has not been enshrined within NPO Key Performance Indicators that focus on increasing audiences, digital products and the level of income gained from charitable and philanthropic sources and sponsorship. As described in a-n's *Ladders for development* and *Realising the value* reports, many of the smaller-scale artists' initiatives such as Artsway, Isis Arts, Castlefield Gallery and PVA that generated openly-advertised residencies and other fee-based opportunities did not gain NPO status. In terms of artists' access to Grants for the Arts (GFTA), as NPOs are no longer eligible to apply to this fund, ACE has estimated that "£12 million a year will be freed up, making it readily responsive to new ideas, and to spot and nurture new talent". A review of GFTA is underway and ACE in conversation with AIR has said it is keen to ensure more artists are aware of it (and make good applications to it). Individuals may apply for £1,000-£30,000.

The Artists' international development programme is a £750,000 fund, jointly funded by British Council and Arts Council England. It offers early stage development opportunities (small grants £1,000 - £5,000) for individual freelance and self employed artists based in England to spend time building links with artists, organisations and/or creative producers in another country and will have three rounds for applications in each financial year until February 2015.

Creative Scotland's fifteen new investment (rather than funding) strands launched last year include £1.1m to Creative Futures artists' residencies and £1.25m to professional development, both budgets covering all art forms. There is also a small grants scheme match

funded by local authorities awarding sums of £500-£1,500. No further major changes – other than to application assessment criteria – are expected in the near future.

Arts Council of Wales plans to continue the awards to artists programme. “We’re particularly looking to invest in talented and professional individuals who are at a tipping point in their careers, where a purposeful financial investment can assist them in taking their work to a new or different level of achievement.

Local authorities are in the early stages of managing cuts of around 7% each year for the next three years, with many arts budgets already affected. The May 2012 survey by Arts Development UK (AD:uk) should provide a clearer picture.

Opportunities compared

OPPORTUNITIES COMPARED 1

Volume and value of opportunities offered to artists 2007-2011:

Type	No 2007	Value 2007 (£)	No 2008	Value 2008 (£)	No 2009	Value 2009 (£)	No 2010	Value 2010 (£)	No 2011	Value 2011 £
Awards / fellowships	53	2,309,050	59	3,430,460	87	3,944,650	64	3,889,794	82	4,808,495
Academic			125	3,653,024	214	4,434,053	193	4,386,461	144	3,405,366
Art vacancies	230	3,502,097	147	1,859,818	173	2,355,696	201	2,354,192	190	1,954,602
Commissions	153	16,822,612	90	3,089,335	141	8,858,106	127	2,722,843	126	2,641,063
Exhibitions	403	2,150	346	39,238	524	530,445	417	476,500	418	455,996
Residencies	107	520,109	73	256,694	96	279,987	81	461,250	127	232,836
Competitions / prizes	82	584,400	68	458,762	140	1,808,595	123	628,801	127	933,983
other	484	3,090,784	265	1,164,407	125	312,157	271	207,572	345	303,162
Total	1512	26,831,202	1173	13,521,278	1500	22,523,689	1477	15,127,413	1559	14,735,503

OPPORTUNITIES COMPARED 2

Expressed as % of overall volume of opportunities offered to artists 2007-2011:

Type	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Residencies	7%	6%	6%	5%	8%
Commissions	10%	8%	9%	9%	8%
Exhibitions	27%	29%	35%	28%	27%
Awards / fellowships	4%	5%	6%	4%	5%
Competitions / prizes	5%	6%	9%	8%	8%

VOLUME OF OPPORTUNITIES WITH MONEY ATTACHED

Comparing 2007-2010

Year	%
2011	36%
2010	37%
2009	42%
2008	57%
2007	43%

MAJOR EMPLOYER CATEGORIES

Comparing 2009 -2011

Type	2009	2010	2011
HE/FE sector	23%	33%	27%
Arts organisations	11%	13%	10%
Local authorities	6%	10%	10%
Trusts	2%	3%	4%
Healthcare	2%	0%	0%

Top employers

TOP EMPLOYERS AND VALUE OF WORK

2011

Organisation	type	Location	Annual £ on offer to applicants
City of Calgary Public Art Program	City council	Canada	£471,000
Mall Galleries	gallery	London	£352,500
Nottingham Trent University	HE	Nottingham	£307,730
Sheffield City Council.	LA	Sheffield	£197,500
Royal College of Art	HE	London	£194,824
Slade School of Art	HE	London	£191,517
Creative Scotland	Arts Council	Scotland	£186,000
University for the Creative Arts	HE	South East England	£184,293
Centro Nacional de las Artes	festival	Mexico	£160,958
Elbow Room	arts org	Wales	£142,000

2010

Organisation	type	Location	Annual £ on offer to applicants
Mall Galleries	arts org	London	£357,000
Caerphilly County Borough Council	LA	Wales	£275,000
NTU	HE	Nottingham	£228,538
London Thames Gateway Development Corporation.	LA	London	£223,000
Slade School of Art	HE	London	£216,000
Staffordshire University	HE	Staffordshire	£198,000
Moyle District Council	LA	Ireland	£195,000
Burnley Borough Council	LA	Lancashire	£142,000
Centro Cultural Montehermoso Kulturnea	arts org	Spain	£118,500
The Making	arts org	Hampshire	£92,000

2007

Organisation	type	Location	Annual £ on offer to applicants
Working parts (Landmark Wales projects)	arts org	Wales	£8.5m
Essex County Council	LA	Essex	£2.14m
Safle	arts org	Cardiff	£1.2m
Omagh District Council	LA	Omagh	£340, 000
Goldsmiths University	HE	London	£166,411
University of Wales	HE	Wales	£152,000
Central St Martins, University of the Arts London	HE	London	£151,245
Glasgow School of Art	HE	Glasgow	£146,172
University of Wolverhampton	HE	Wolverhampton	£141,443
University of Huddersfield	HE	Huddersfield	£115,709

Exploring an Artist fund

Last year, a consortium instigated by AIR – Artists Interaction and Representation and DACS (Design and Artists Copyright Society) and including a-n, Artquest and Axis began discussions on strategies to support artists' development and practices. Within this, the group commissioned an initial research report to locate evidence for establishment of The Artist Fund: "A new and flexible fund for individual artists that is open application and distributed by artists through dedicated peer review, to provide grants of under £10,000". This short report is due to be presented to the arts funders, charitable trusts and potential sponsors to gauge interest in supporting further research into the viability and enabling mechanisms for such a fund.

References and resources

A fair share: direct funding for individual artists from UK arts councils, Dany Louise, September 2011

www.a-n.co.uk/a_fair_share

Ladders for development, Dany Louise, May 2011

www.a-n.co.uk/ladders_for_development

Realising the value, Dany Louise, February 2012

www.a-n.co.uk/realising_the_value

The Lost Arts website maintains details of visual arts cuts and closures www.lost-arts.org/losses/all/losses/all/filter/visual-arts -

Creative Graduates – Creative Futures, Linda Ball, CHEAD 2008.

AIR survey of artists and impact of HE cuts www.a-n.co.uk/air/document/1169000

The Big Artists Survey 2011 www.a-n.co.uk/big_artists_survey

Creative Scotland

Corporate Plan. www.creativescotland.com/resources/our-publications/corporate-plan

Creative Futures <http://creativefutureshq.com/>

Arts Council of Wales

www.artswales.org.uk/yr-hyn-a-wnawn/ariannu/cyngor-a-chanllawiau-ariannu/unigolion

International opportunities fund www.artswales.org.uk/what-we-do/funding/funding-advice-and-guidelines/international-opportunities-fund

Arts Council England

www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding/apply-for-funding/national-portfolio-funding-programme/

www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding/apply-for-funding/grants-for-the-arts/

British Council/Arts Council International programme

www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding/apply-for-funding/strategic-funding/grant-programmes/artists-international-development-fund/

Arts Council Northern Ireland

www.artscouncil-ni.org/subpages/funding.htm

Previous research reports and papers in this series include:

Art work in 2007 www.a-n.co.uk/publications/topic/411817

Art work: Artist's jobs and opportunities 1989-2003 www.a-n.co.uk/knowledge_bank/article/200221/193936

Art work analysed: Artists' jobs and opportunities 2003 – 2005

www.a-n.co.uk/knowledge_bank/article/278654/193936

Credits

Susan Jones is Director, a-n The Artists Information Company and a researcher and published writer on arts matters.

Data collection for this report was undertaken by Annie Padwick.