



Creative Capital Artists Look Back: 1999-2015

Creative Capital
INVESTING IN ARTISTS WHO SHAPE THE FUTURE

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Creative Capital Artists Look Back: 1999–2015

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Cover image: Faye Driscoll, *Thank You for Coming*

All pull quotes in report have been excerpted from survey responses.

“There are so few resources for individual artists out there. I believe that Creative Capital has had a truly huge impact on creative activity in the United States.”

Executive Summary

Creative Capital, a venture capital-inspired nonprofit, has funded artists individually and in teams to create innovative, impact-driven work since 1999. Each multi-year award offers artists up to \$50,000 in direct funding and the equivalent of \$45,000 in career development services. To date (2016), Creative Capital has committed \$40 million to 511 projects, involving 642 artists in five disciplines: Emerging Fields, Literature, Moving Image, Performing Arts and Visual Arts.

In the summer of 2015, Creative Capital, in conjunction with the authors, launched a survey of artists who received awards from 2000 to 2013 to explore the impact of its support on the artists’ creative work and professional success. Of the 508 artists targeted, 157 took the survey, a response rate of 31%. The survey takers are broadly representative of Creative Capital’s award fields and years.

Creative Capital awardees overwhelmingly report that receiving the award and access to services have increased their overall visibility and their relative position within their artistic fields. Artists who received awards in earlier years were more likely to report highly significant visibility gains (63%) compared with those in the last three award rounds (41%), suggesting that award benefits may be cumulative over time. Lower rates for recent award years may also reflect the impact of the Great Recession (2008-2012) that fell particularly hard on artists.

The vast majority (79%) of artist respondents have increased their annual incomes since their awards, some substantially, from both arts and non-arts activities. A majority (57%) have increased their financial patronage of the arts, albeit mostly modestly, by contributing more generously to arts nonprofits, purchasing art, and patronizing performances and screenings. However, the majority report persistent challenges in initiating or enhancing retirement savings—only 28% have succeeded in doing so. On balance respondents have modestly increased time committed to payroll jobs—some have sought and achieved teaching positions in higher education. Of the 37% of respondents for whom this has been a goal, 44% have earned teaching positions since their award. Of these, 45% affirm that the award was important to this outcome.

When asked to share how much revenue they had raised in total through their arts projects and practices since the Creative Capital award, respondents report an average of \$257,000—collectively, \$29.3 million. These revenue streams include grants, fellowships, donations, sales, royalties, performances, commissions and art-related wages. **Assuming these responses are representative of the whole group of awardees, the total additional revenue raised by all Creative Capital awardees is on the order of \$94.5 million.** Since many of these artists will continue to raise funds to support themselves, their families and the creation of their artworks, the returns to Creative Capital investments in these artists will continue to accrue into the future.

When asked to evaluate Creative Capital’s services, responding artists gave the Artist Retreats offered by Creative Capital their highest rankings. A community-building effort, the Artist Retreats bring together new awardees, some who are in their second and third years, as well as alumni, professionals, and Creative Capital staff who provide services and act as ongoing consultants. Awardees present their projects to the larger group and participate in an array of workshops introducing career-supporting services. Responding artists praised the Artist Retreats as opening up many serendipitous avenues of connections, information flow and support that have had powerful impacts on their career development.

Awardees value highly the connections they have made through their Creative Capital experiences. When asked if they have made person-to-person career-enhancing connections through Creative Capital, 85% responded “yes.” More than half of respondents have collaborated with other awardees. Emerging Fields artists were more likely than others to frequently collaborate, while performing artists were most likely to collaborate occasionally. The arts professionals who Creative Capital makes available to awardees as part of its suite of services have made significant contributions to the careers of 28% of respondents and modest contributions to another 57%.

Heightened visibility and field stature often result from access to new forums, presenting work in new formats and reaching new audiences. Since their awards, 50% of respondents have presented in new venues/formats often, and another 45% occasionally. Most responding artists have reached new audiences: 42% often, and another 50% occasionally.

A solid majority of artist respondents (61%) affirm that gaining representation and/or management has been a goal of theirs. Creative Capital offers artists coaching to help find galleries, agents and managers who will further their careers. Some 40% have succeeded in gaining representation since their Creative Capital award.

***“Creative Capital is a mark of distinction.
It gets foundations and venues to notice.”***

Creative Capital convenings encourage artists to expand the character and impact of their work by aligning it with efforts in non-arts fields such as science, social work, health care or criminal justice. Some 49% of responding artists report that they have pursued this goal, and of these, 85% have been successful. Artists in Emerging Fields were most likely to seek such alignments.

Creative Capital awardees also participate in their fields by serving on grantmaking panels, participating in relevant conferences and supporting nonprofit organizations. Of artists responding, 73% report increasing such involvement, with performing artists more likely to do so than those in other disciplines.

Artists report that their awards have enabled them to alter their distribution of work and personal time. About half of respondents have increased the shares of time they devote to creative practice and career maintenance, the latter including grantwriting, negotiating contracts and other arts administrative tasks. Some 43% are spending more time building audiences, including marketing, branding and social media efforts. **Overall, these variations reflect the freedom and tools afforded to artists by their Creative Capital awards to shift time towards what matters most to them for career building and quality of life.**

Creative Capital’s investments in artists have important payoffs beyond those reported by individual awardees. Many respondents reported sharing what they’ve learned with other artists, institutions, colleagues, family and friends, producing a leavening effect on the art worlds in which they participate.

Creative Capital is an ambitious and successful experiment. The awards offer financial support to pursue creative work as well as opportunities to learn from colleagues and collaborate with artists and others in non-arts fields. The Retreats help them develop career-planning strategies bolstered by an array of services and professional staff available to them over the period of their awards. The findings of the survey offer insights for other nonprofit and public sector artist support initiatives. They may also inspire artists everywhere to pursue their dreams and to find partners, audiences and patrons for their work.

“The financial support from Creative Capital helped me sustain my practice. The philosophical issues it churned up made me a more thoughtful creator.”

I. Creative Capital: Overview of mission and survey

Creative Capital, modeled on venture capital approaches and launched in 1999 to counter the implosion of arts funding, offers integrated financial and advisory services for innovative and adventurous artists individually or in teams. It is, in many ways, a full-force response to the U.S. Culture Wars that have deeply eroded public, foundation and corporate support for artists since the mid-1990s.¹

Since 2000, Creative Capital has awarded multi-year support of up to \$50,000 in direct funding and \$45,000 in career development services to support artists' projects, offering them skills for pursuing creative and professional success. They also aspire to build community among artist awardees and encourage them to engage the public. The awards are not given as lump sums but in response to specific requests by artists for project funding, services and technical assistance. In total, Creative Capital has committed \$40 million to 511 projects, representing 642 artists.

In 2003, Creative Capital launched its Professional Development Program to share the career skills-building tools developed for awardees with a wider audience. The program has now reached nearly 12,000 artists in 600 communities through workshops and webinars.² Creative Capital also manages three affiliate programs that provide support to writers and artists: The Creative Capital | Warhol Foundation Arts Writers Grant Program, The Doris Duke Performing Artist Awards and The Multi-Arts Production Fund (MAP Fund).

In 2014, Creative Capital began its 15th anniversary celebration. Its leaders convened focus groups in a number of cities and initiated an online survey of artists to explore the impact of awards on their creative work and professional success. The survey also probed the value of professional services offered, both to reflect on past experience and to improve on current offerings and design new programs going forward.

Following extensive design work and a test on a small group of Creative Capital awardees, the survey was launched in late June of 2015 and closed in late July. The request to take the survey was sent to all living artists (508) who won awards from 2000 to 2013. A total of 157 artists took the survey, representing a 31% response rate, good for online surveys. The survey was anonymous: the anonymity of survey takers was guaranteed and their identities were not accessible to researchers or Creative Capital.

In this report, we first present a brief portrait of respondents by Creative Capital discipline, year of initial award, extent of formal collaboration in their artwork, and where they live and work. We then explore their evaluations of Creative Capital services and their responses to questions about financial, visibility and field position impacts. We recount their success in presenting in new venues and formats and to new audiences. For some of these, we explore differences in experience by artistic discipline and length of time since award, if relevant.

A subsequent section explores changes in artists' engagement with both the art world and the larger society, the latter including whether they have explored linking their work to non-arts endeavors in fields such as science, social work, health care and criminal justice. We report on the extent to which they have shared what they have learned through Creative Capital with other artists, institutions, colleagues, family and/or friends.

We then turn to financial outcomes, summarizing changes in income, revenue-raising, savings, property ownership, contributions to the arts and finding tenure-track jobs. We show the extent to which respondents' disciplines and length of time since award differentiate their experiences from other Creative Capital awardees. We also summarize their answers on how their work, family and leisure patterns have changed since the award.

In a final section, from responses to the question "How much revenue have you raised through your art projects/practice since you received your Creative Capital award?" we sum up the totals across respondents. Assuming

¹ Maria-Rosario Jackson, "Investing in Creativity: A Study of the Support Structure for U.S. Artists." *The Journal of Arts Management, Law, and Society*, 34 (1), 2004: 43-57.

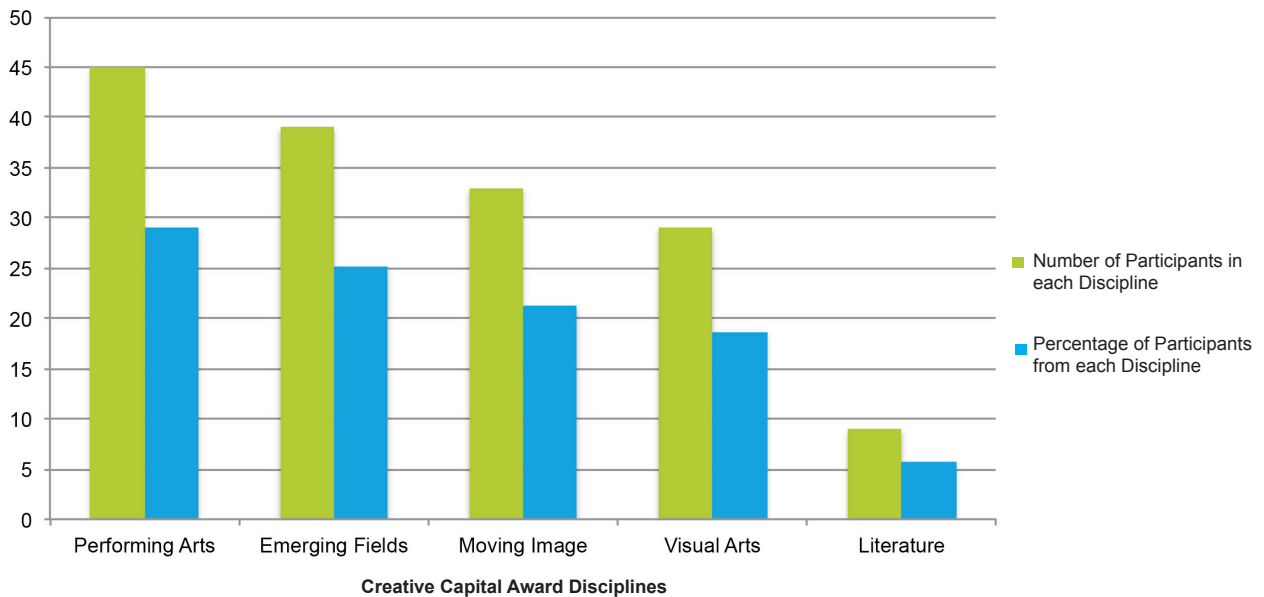
² For an excellent chapter-length documentation of Creative Capital's trajectory, see Paul Bonin-Rodriguez' *Performing Policy*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014: Chapter 4: Accounting for Capital: The Creative Capital Foundation (1999-Present).

that these respondents are representative of all awardees, we estimate total revenue raised by Creative Capital artists through 2013 to be \$94.5 million. These financial returns complement artists' difficult-to-quantify intrinsic outcomes such as beauty, innovation, and contributions to the cultural arena and non-arts fields.

II. Who are Creative Capital's survey respondents?

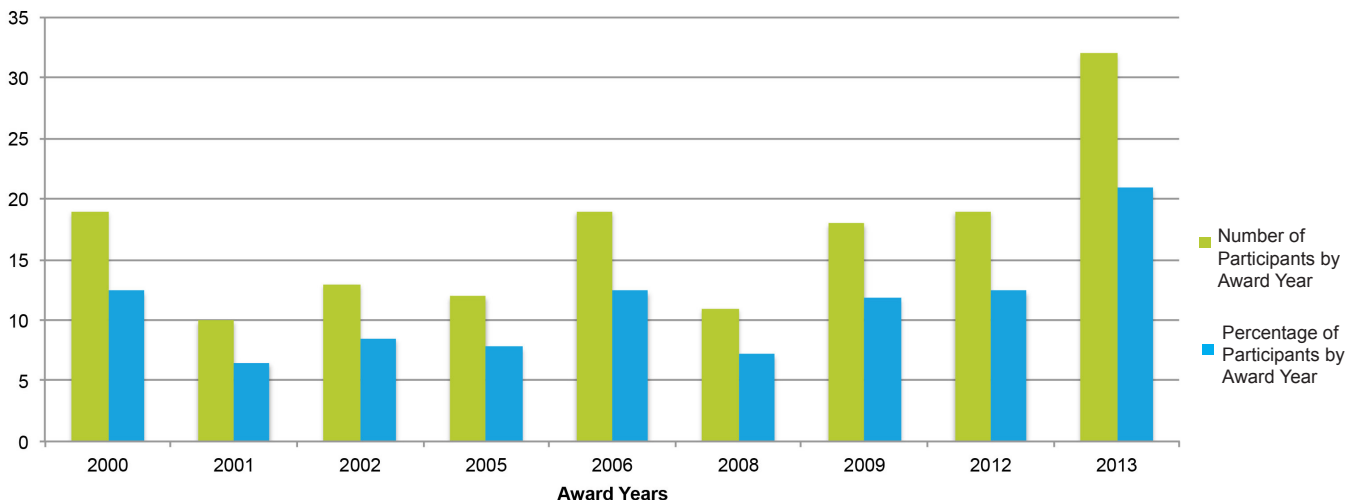
Creative Capital offers awards to artists in five disciplines: Emerging Fields, Literature, Moving Image, Performing Arts and Visual Arts. Emerging Fields includes architecture/design, digital arts, gaming, interdisciplinary projects, social practice, sound art and new genres. The distribution of survey respondents among the disciplines varied from 29% in Performing Arts to 6% in Literature (Figure 1). These percentages reflect the overall distribution of awards among the funded disciplines.

Figure 1: Survey Participation by Discipline



Creative Capital does not offer awards every year. Artist respondents competed for and won awards in 2000, 2001, 2002, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2009, 2012 and 2013, and were fairly evenly distributed across these award years (Figure 2). For most award years, Creative Capital made between 40 and 44 awards, with three exceptions. In 2000, they awarded 75, and in 2012 and 2013, 46 each, contributing to higher response shares for those years.

Figure 2: Participation by Award Year



Artists' work structures

Creative Capital invites collaborative proposals, and its awardees include teams of artists working together in formal structures such as collectives, formal or informal partnerships, ensembles or companies. The survey asked awardees about their work structures, and respondents reported a broad mix. One in five works in an established group, another 16% work with other artists but outside of formal structures, and another 39% occasionally collaborate. Only 25% of artists reported working alone in their arts practices.

Among respondents, more writers (67%) and visual artists (46%) report working alone in their art form. In contrast, those in Emerging Fields (36%) and Performing Arts (27%) were less likely to be working alone and more likely to be working in formal structures. Those winning awards in Moving Image are more apt to work occasionally with artistic collaborators (53%).

Changing or expanding art forms

Creative Capital awardees report often changing or expanding the art forms in which they are working: 62% noted that they are working in an artistic discipline other than the one in which they applied for and received their awards. Qualitative responses suggest that exposure to awardees in other disciplines through the Retreats has helped artists expand their expertise and integrate across disciplines in positive ways.

Where Creative Capital artists live and work

Award respondents, all of whom are American citizens or permanent residents, currently (2016) live and work in cities large and small across the U.S., with a handful in other countries. Their distribution reflects roughly that of artists as a whole, in that more are found in metro areas with very high overall artist concentrations, as estimated from the most recent American Community Survey. We distinguish among four location groups. Some 58% of respondents live and work in the top three U.S. metros (Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco), ranked by shares of working (including self-employed) artists in the overall workforce, or in major European capitals. Another 23.5% live and work in the next 30 largest U.S. metros: of these, 9.4% live in metros with higher than average artist concentrations, and 14% live in metros with concentrations below the national average. The remaining 27% of awardee respondents live outside of the top 30 metros in the U.S., including a few abroad.

III. Artists' experience with Creative Capital awards and services

From the start of their relationship with Creative Capital, awardees have access to a suite of services designed to help them plan strategically and acquire professional skills. The latter include Artist Retreats, public relations, marketing, branding, web design, art publishing, legal services, tax planning, one-on-one coaching, artist advisors, workshops and consultations. A community-building effort, the Artist Retreats bring together new awardees, some who are in their second and third years, some alumni, and professionals and Creative Capital staff who provide services and act as ongoing consultants. At the Retreat, awardees are asked to present their projects to the larger group. Beyond the first Retreat, artists are invited to a second one over the subsequent three years. They are also given ongoing access to staff, professionals, Artist Advisors and website training tailored to their individual challenges.

Artists stressed how the award enabled them to experiment, explore new art forms, devote more time to their practices, and validated their work.

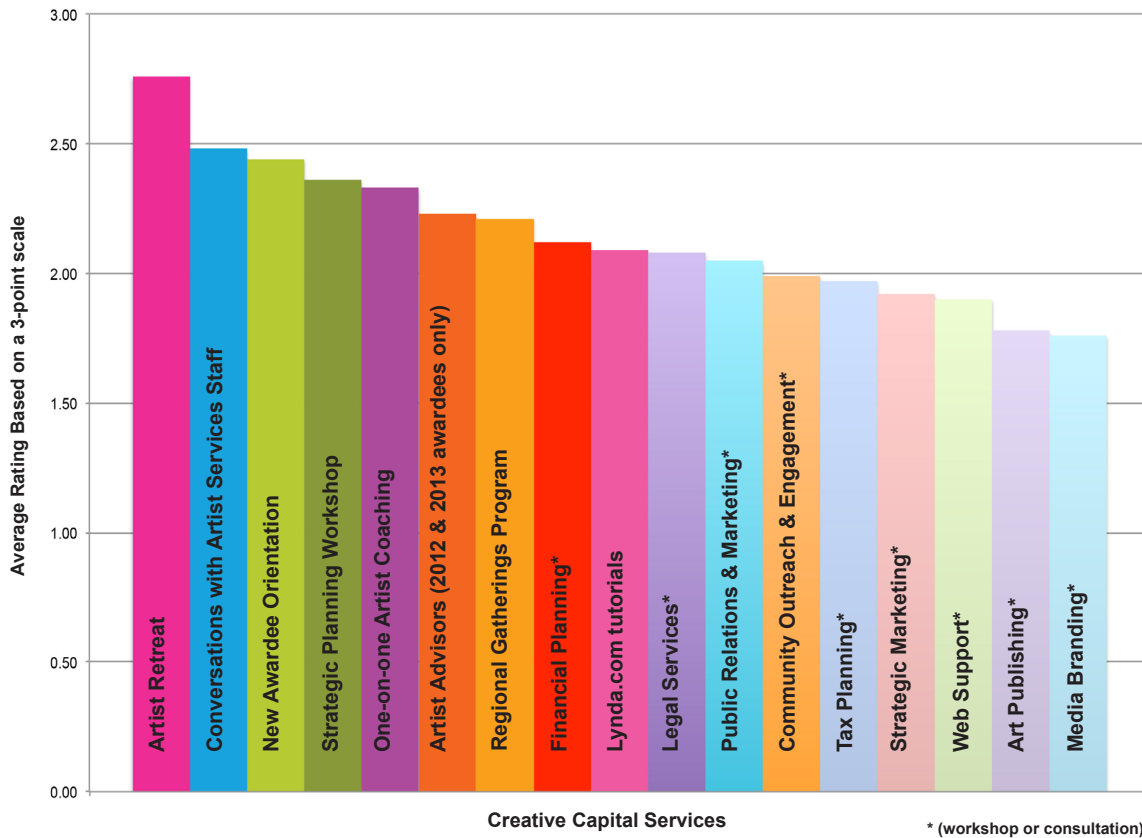
Financial support matters!

In their open-ended responses, artists often stressed how the award enabled them to experiment, explore new art forms, devote more time to their practices, and in general validated their work. One wrote: "Without Creative Capital's support, I would have made small steps, but the grant allowed me to experiment on a grand scale." Another penned: "Support from Creative Capital allowed me to finish my film to the standards I felt it deserved. The subsequent success the film enjoyed is a direct result of the financial support of Creative Capital at a crucial moment." Some praised the fact that the money wasn't just given to them, but that they had to make requests, often multiple and staged, for specific purposes: "The parsing out of the financial support created a very interesting relationship between the project and its needs. The financial support was responsive to the changing needs of the project."

How respondents rate Creative Capital's services

The survey asked artists to rank service offerings on the basis of their usefulness (Figure 3). Since some artists did not need or use particular services and thus responded “not applicable,” their rankings are not included on those services. So, for instance, Artist Advisors were only offered beginning in 2012 and though fewer respondents accessed them, their services were relatively highly ranked.

Figure 3: Awardees' Ratings of Services



Almost all artist respondents participated in the Artist Retreats (98.5%) and 77% of these ranked them as “very useful,” the highest ranking in the set. In open-ended responses and focus groups, artists frequently testified to the extraordinary impact of the Retreats that offer artists the chance to hear other artists present their projects and share their challenges. Moving Image (83%) and Visual Arts (81%) respondents rated the Artist Retreats “very useful” more often than others.

Conversations with Artist Services staff received the second highest (52%) “very useful” ranking, with another 44% responding “somewhat useful.” In open-ended responses, artists often praised them. For instance: “For artists working between fields, the access to staff and consultants friendly to and interested in alternative practices has been invaluable.”

“I found a new path as an artist through my Creative Capital award, and being connected to the organization has given me the inspiration and courage to embrace that journey. Creative Capital reinforces that artists are integral to society, and worthy of support and respect.”

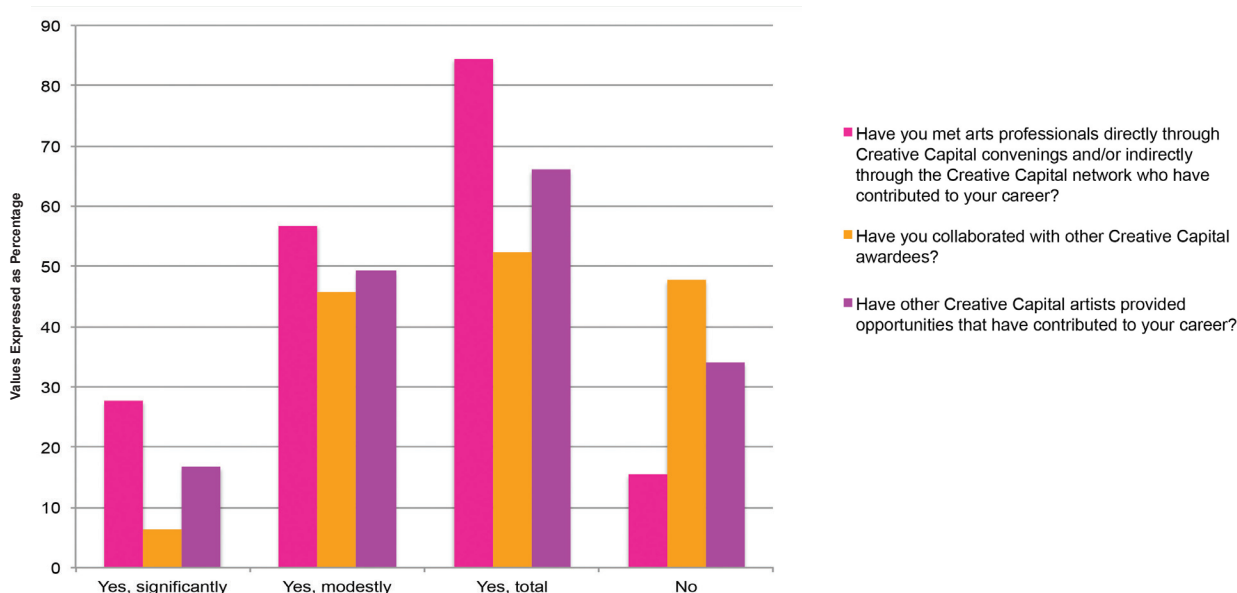
Other services that received high ratings from more than a third of all of respondents include new awardee orientation and strategic planning workshops, both with “very useful” rates of 43% or more. One wrote: “The emphasis on ongoing financial solvency throughout the lifetime of the artist has been valuable,” and another reflected: “The strategic planning combined with the grant has helped to better organize and plan the financial aspect of my activity.”

Awardees took advantage of some Creative Capital services in smaller numbers. However, for a service like Lynda.com tutorials, those who did use it (27%) gave it a good rating. Small numbers of respondents took advantage of workshops or consultations on media branding and art publishing, and were less apt to rate them “very useful.”

Value of connections with Creative Capital artists and professionals

Responding artist awardees highly value the connections they have made through their Creative Capital experiences. When asked whether, through Creative Capital, they have made person-to-person connections that have enhanced their careers, 85% of responding artists answered “yes.” The art professionals that Creative Capital makes available to awardees as part of its suite of services have made significant contributions to the careers of 28% and modest contributions to another 57% (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Career Consequences of Connections via Creative Capital



More Emerging Fields artists (35%) ranked professional advice and support as very significant than those in other award categories (24-26%). However, 71% of performing artists report that connections with professionals met through Creative Capital have been modestly important, with only 5% responding negatively, fewer than for other disciplines. More than 25% of artists in the Moving Image and Literature fields responded negatively. Some artists underscored these benefits: “Being a part of the community of Creative Capital artists, staff and advisors has been extremely rewarding. It has helped me in every professional artistic situation since receiving the grant to have the support of this community.”

Creative Capital, responding to feedback over the years, has altered and expanded its services. They have also improved their descriptions of services and the ways that they market them to artists. Responding artist awardees in the most recent round (2013) were much more likely to value the contributions of professionals (42% significantly, 52% modestly) than those in earlier award years, likely due to these improvements.

More than half of Creative Capital artist respondents have collaborated with other awardees. Some 6% have collaborated frequently (this includes team members where funding is joint), and another 46% have done so occasionally. Among those confirming collaborations, 30% worked with other awardees in the same discipline. Another 30% worked mostly with those in other award categories, and 40% worked in part with those outside of their own discipline. Such collaborations were highest among the 2001, 2002, 2006 and 2013 award groups with 55% or more reporting collaborations of either significant or moderate scale.

Emerging Fields artists were more likely than others to affirm frequent collaboration, while performing artists were most likely to collaborate occasionally. While no Literature awardees reported frequent collaboration, 44% did occasionally collaborate. Visual artists were the least likely to collaborate with other awardees, with 69% responding in the negative.

Artists affirmed the fruits of these collaborations. Some expressed gratitude that Creative Capital makes awards to teams, working with artists as both individuals and teammates: “It’s tricky to be recognized both as a company and as individual artists that work within the company. Somehow, Creative Capital has made this possible for us, in spite of our anxiety about it.” Another artist spoke to Creative Capital’s help in negotiating partnerships: “I am very grateful for your support, and especially for hanging in there through the difficulties of figuring out how to support collectives and collaborators, despite it always being a can of worms.”

“I have consciously developed a team of support around my project that I would not have done without the guidance of Creative Capital.”

Beyond collaboration, many awardees report benefiting from opportunities that Creative Capital staff, specialists and cohort colleagues have provided. One wrote: “I have consciously developed a team of support around my project that I would not have done without the guidance of Creative Capital.” Artists report that such “weak ties” as sociologists coin them—informal ways that others offer advice, act as role models, pass on grant and presentation opportunities, mentor, share knowledge—are making significant (17%) and modest (49%) contributions to their careers.

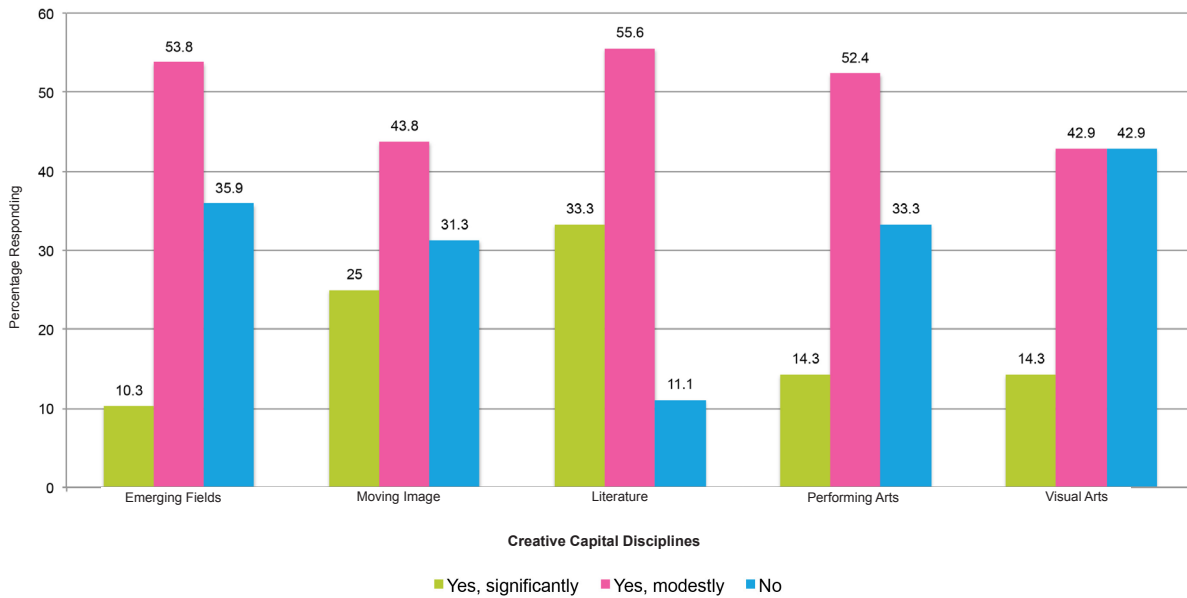
In open-ended responses and on Creative Capital service rankings (Figure 3), awardees praise the Artist Retreats as opening up many serendipitous avenues of connections, information flow and support that have had a powerful impact on their career development. One wrote: “I feel connected to a wider artistic community of like-minded people. My own practice is reinforced simply by seeing what others are doing. This may not seem significant, but it is.” Another wrote: “The financial support was not at all the most significant thing we got from Creative Capital. We regularly got larger grants, but Creative Capital connected us to conversations in the contemporary art world that fed our practice.”

“The financial support was not at all the most significant thing...Creative Capital connected us to conversations in the contemporary art world that fed our practice.”

In some cases, artists are earning income by working with Creative Capital as service providers. One explained, “I have led workshops in the Professional Development Program. For a few years the income from this consulting was critical for not having to take a more regular job. It also enables me to ‘give back’ to the artistic community, teaching skills that I personally find tremendously valuable and essential for all artists.” Others noted enhanced earnings by doing project work with fellow awardees. One wrote: “I have worked as an editor for numerous filmmakers who have been funded by Creative Capital.”

By discipline, a higher share of awardees in Literature (89%) reported greater Creative Capital collegueship contributions, both significant and modest, than did those in other funded disciplines, underscoring the benefit of networking to this group whose members generally work alone. In contrast, respondents in the Visual Arts, another discipline with high rates of solo work, were most likely to report “no” (43%) (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Artists Reporting that Fellow Creative Capital Artists Have Provided Career Opportunities



Several artists expressed appreciation for the regional mix of their award cohorts. Those who live in rural areas or small cities gained visibility and market intelligence from colleagues. “Working primarily in a rural area,” wrote one, “my involvement with Creative Capital helps keep my work on people’s minds. Every time I show up at events, I meet incredible new people. Being around the Creative Capital family/organization after my grant period continues to be one of the most rewarding parts of my life.” Some who live in artist-dense cities wrote that their horizons were expanded by meeting artists from far-flung places. “Growing up in New York, I didn’t have much access to the breadth and diversity of artists from all over the country. I know that sounds strange, but I thought only of a particular community of New York artists that was fairly exclusive—even insular at times—with rules of engagement. Perhaps this is the inverse of what most people experience, but Creative Capital helped me to understand that more ‘normal people’ could be artists too—one didn’t have to live downtown to have a life and a practice.”

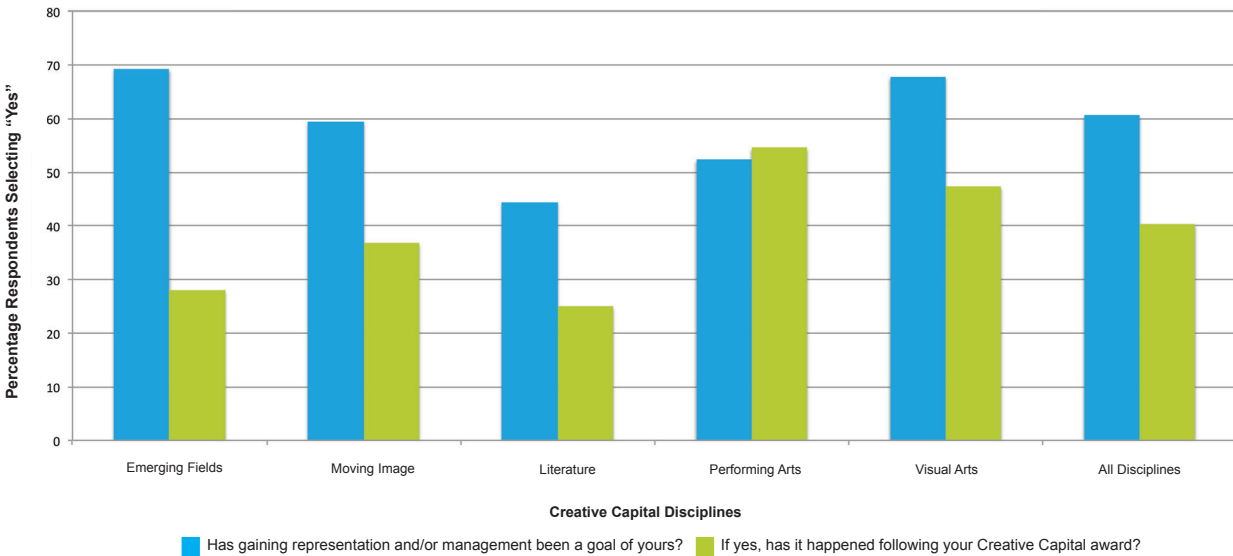
“Being around the Creative Capital family continues to be one of the most rewarding parts of my life.”

IV. Acquiring representation and management

As part of its suite of services, Creative Capital offers artists coaching on how to find agents and managers to help further their careers and take time off their hands. A solid majority of artist respondents (61%) affirm that gaining representation and/or management has been a goal of theirs. Some 40% of those have succeeded in doing so since their Creative Capital award. Since other factors could have influenced this success, the survey asked if receiving the award was important to this outcome. Almost all those artists who reported gaining these services confirmed that the Creative Capital award was important to this outcome.

Awardee respondents in Emerging Fields (69%), Visual Arts (68%) and Moving Image (59%) were most likely to seek agents and/or managers, with awardees in Literature least likely to do so (41%) (Figure 6). Though a smaller share of performing artists sought representation, they were more successful than other awardees, with visual artists also batting better than average when making the effort. Though more artists in the Emerging Fields and Moving Image categories sought agents and/or managers, they were less likely to secure these relationships.

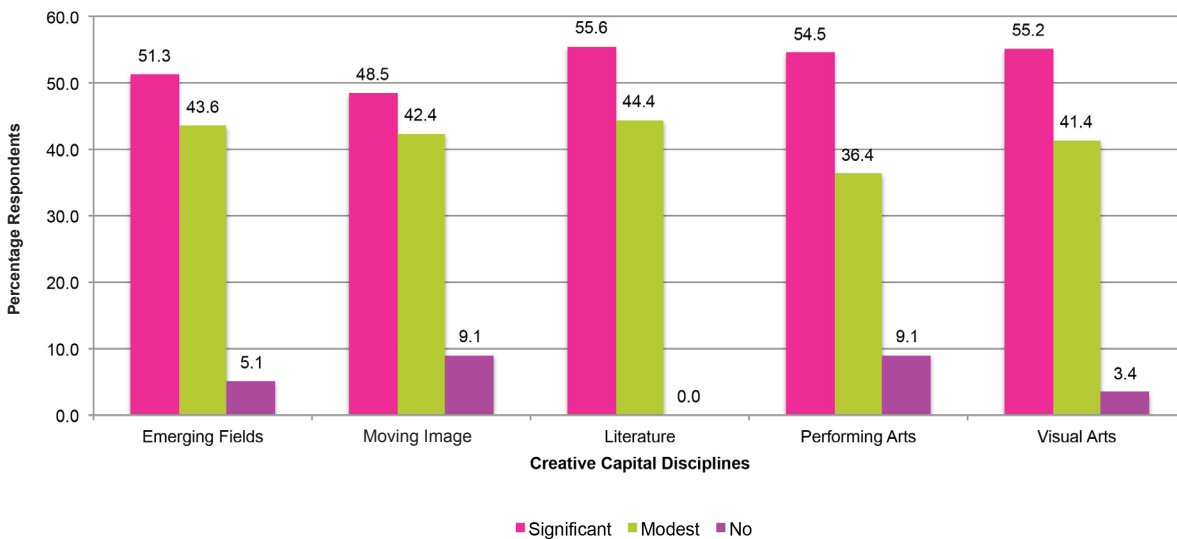
Figure 6: Awardees’ Ability to Gain Representation and Management



V. Gains in artists’ visibility and field stature

Creative Capital awardees overwhelmingly responded that their awards and services have increased their overall visibility and their relative position within their artistic fields. Asked if their opportunities to present work, their online presence and other forms of visibility had increased following receipt of their Creative Capital award, 53% responded “yes, significantly” and another 41%, “yes, modestly,” while only 6% reported “no.” These responses were similar across disciplines: a high of 56% of writers and a low of 49% of Moving Image awardees reported significant increases in visibility (Figure 7).

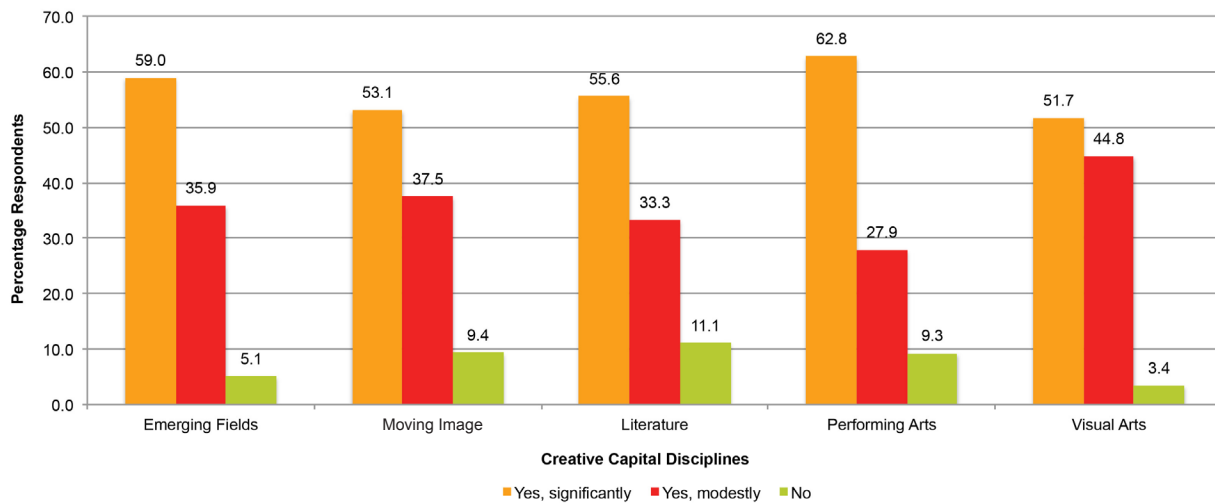
Figure 7: Artists Reporting Increases to Visibility by Discipline



Artists who received awards in earlier years were more likely to report highly significant visibility gains compared with those in the last three award rounds. The average for artists receiving grants between 2000 and 2008 (63%) is significantly higher than for those receiving grants from 2009 to 2013 (41%). This could reflect the way that awards' benefits are cumulative over a long time period as well as that artists in general may gain visibility over time. Lower rates for the later awardees may also reflect the impact of the Great Recession, during which artists' income and ability to support themselves primarily from their artwork fell markedly.³ However, 55% of recent period grantees reported modest increases in visibility, suggesting that artists begin to feel the impact of awards relatively rapidly. Only 6% of awardees in the latest round (2013) reported no increase in visibility.

On average, 57% of Creative Capital awardee respondents feel significantly better positioned in their fields than before they received their award. Another 36% feel modestly better positioned, with 7% responding “no.” As a group, artists in Emerging Fields, Moving Image and Performing Arts report stronger gains in field position than they do for visibility, while visual artists reported the opposite (Figures 7 & 8).

Figure 8: Artists Reporting Increases to Positioning within their Field by Discipline



As with visibility, artists whose awards were made before the Great Recession report higher levels of significant gains in field position than those receiving awards from 2009 onward. The brunt of the recession fell on artists (and those in most occupations) in 2009 and following years, though artists in the 2012 and 2013 cohorts report better gains than the 2009 cohort. Though their awards may have enhanced visibility, the tightness of labor markets and cutbacks in artist funding nationwide generally may have so far precluded better gains in visibility and field status for awardees in recent cohorts.

“A career as a public artist and 17 public artwork commissions would not have happened without the Creative Capital grant.”

³ Alexis Frasz, Holly Sidford, and Princeton Survey, “Artists and the Economic Recession Survey: A Summary of Findings,” New York: Helicon Collaborative, 2010. http://www.lincnet.net/sites/linc/images/3828/LINC_Artists-and-the-economic-recession.pdf

VI. Presenting artworks: New venues, formats, audiences

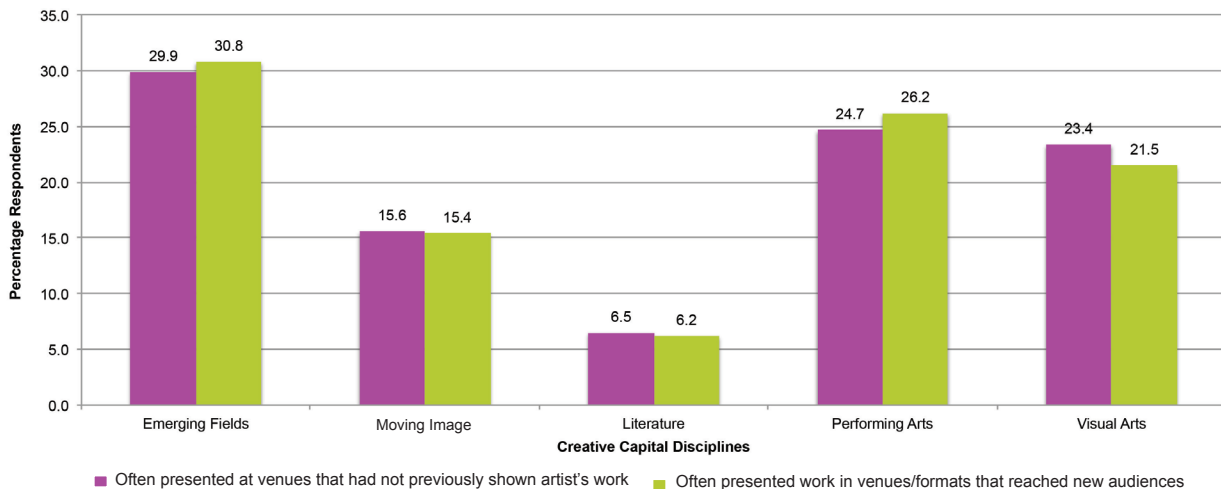
Gains in visibility and field stature may stem from gains in access to new venues, presenting work in new formats and reaching new audiences. Respondents' answers suggest that presenting in new venues and formats does not necessarily enable them to reach new audiences, even though artists may enjoy boosts in income and stature.

Some 50% of respondents indicate that they have been able to present in new venues/formats often. Another 45% report that they have done so occasionally, and only 5% have not. Most responding artists have been able to reach new audiences. Some 42% responded "yes, often;" another 50% "yes, occasionally;" and 8% "no."

Many artists articulated these breakthroughs in their open-ended comments. For instance, "We gained incredible opportunities for exhibitions and projects that would not have been offered if it weren't for Creative Capital." And another: "The Creative Capital services and resources allowed me to take some chances with my online presence, and to fund the kind of website I wanted." And another: "A career as public artists and 17 temporary and permanent public artwork commissions would not have happened without the Creative Capital grant."

Among the award disciplines, Emerging Fields respondents (30%) have most often presented in new venues, followed by those in Performing Arts (25%) and Visual Arts (23%) (Figure 9). Moving Image (16%) and Literature (7%) artists reported lower access. Respondents in Emerging Fields (31%) were most likely to have reached new audiences, while those in Literature (6%) were least likely to do so.

Figure 9: Artists Reporting Frequent New Venue/Audience Outcomes



The state of the economy over this period may also have boosted or restrained artists' ability to reach new audiences—the Great Recession of 2008-2012 lowered arts public participation rates markedly.⁴ Respondents who won Creative Capital awards in the period 2003 to 2008 are much more likely to have enjoyed frequent new venue exposure, on average 69%. Artists in the initial award group (2000) and those in the 2009-2013 cohorts respond more cautiously, with only 35% reporting frequent access. With the exception of cohort year 2012 (26%), less than 6% of those winning awards in the other years report no new venue presentations.

⁴ National Endowment for the Arts, *A Decade of Arts Engagement: Findings from the Survey of Public Participation in the Arts, 2002-2012*. NEA Research Report #58. Washington, DC: National Endowment for the Arts, January, 2015. <http://arts.gov/publications/decade-arts-engagement-findings-survey-public-participation-arts-2002-2012>

Artists receiving their awards in the years 2001 through 2008 were most likely to report often reaching new audiences (59%) while those winning awards in 2000 and from 2009-2013 averaged only 33%. More than 10% of artists in the 2009 and 2012 cohorts responded that they had not reached new audiences. But the 2013 cohort reported high rates of audience expansion, with 41% responding “yes, often” and another 56% responding “yes, occasionally.”

“The Creative Capital award was a crucial opportunity to jumpstart my career internationally and led me to significant professional opportunities as an artist.”

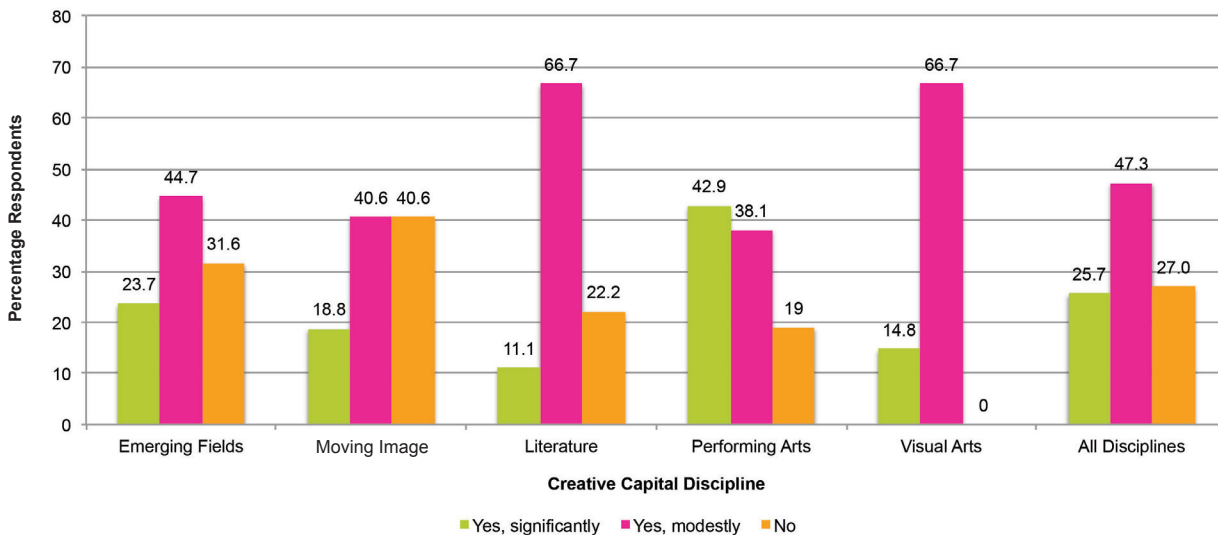
VII. Enhanced connections with art worlds and society

Creative Capital artists were asked whether they had participated in field-building roles since their award. We also asked whether they had aspired to and succeeded in connecting their work with other societal endeavors outside of the arts, and if so, if they have succeeded.

Participation in arts field-building roles

Creative Capital encourages artists to be active in their fields by serving on grantmaking panels, participating in relevant conferences, and supporting nonprofit organizations. Of artists responding, 73% report increasing such involvement (26% significantly so and 47% modestly), with 27% reporting that they did not. Performing artists by far were most likely to have participated significantly (43%) compared with 11% for those in Literature and 15% in the Visual Arts. Yet artists in the latter two award groups reported the largest rates of modest increase in participation (67% each). Moving Image (41%) and Emerging Fields (32%) awardees most often reported no increase. Participation does not vary systematically by the length of time since Creative Capital award (Figure 10).

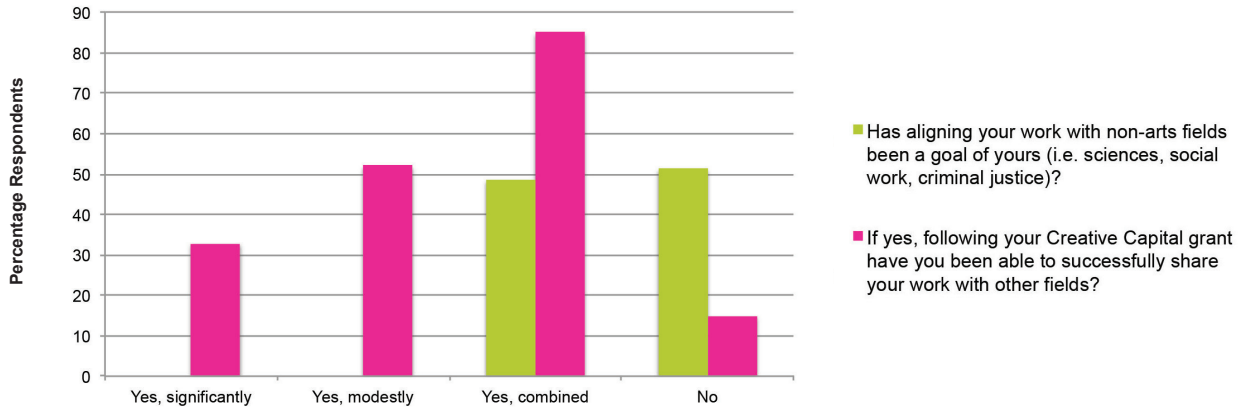
Figure 10: Artists Reporting Increases to their Participation in their Artistic Field by Discipline



Working with non-arts fields

In Creative Capital convenings, when relevant, artists are encouraged to expand the scope and impact of their work by aligning it with efforts in non-arts fields such as science, social work, health care or criminal justice. Some 49% report that they have pursued this goal, and of these, 85% have been successful (Figure 11).

Figure 11: Awardees' Interest in Ability to Share Work with Non-Arts Fields



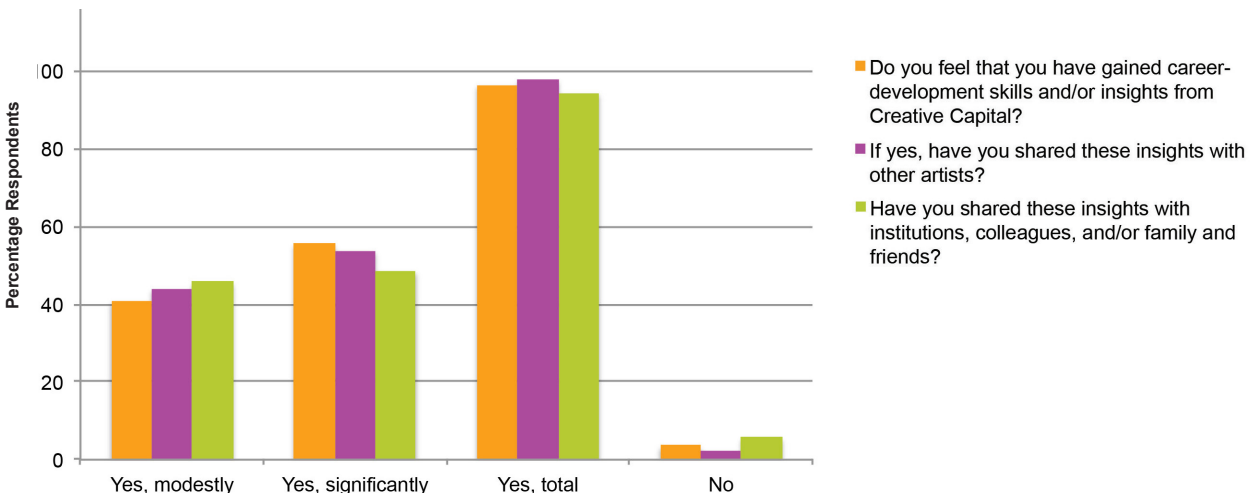
By discipline, artists in Emerging Fields (66%) were most likely to seek such alignments, as have 50% of visual artists and 48% of performing artists. Those in Moving Image (32%) and Literature (33%) were much less likely to do so. Among those pursuing alignment, significant sharing varied little across disciplines (from 27% for Performing Arts to 40% for Visual Arts). Performing artists (23%) and visual artists (29%) who aspired to work with others in non-arts fields were least successful in doing so. Success is not systematically related to length of time since award.

Career insights gained and shared

Creative Capital’s investments in artists have important payoffs beyond those reported by individual awardees. When artists gain skills, they often share them. The survey asked whether artists had gained career-development skills and insights from the Creative Capital experience, and if so, if they had shared these with others.

Overall, Creative Capital’s artists report that they have gained career-development skills and insights, with only a small number dissenting. Some 56% of respondents felt these gains are significant, and another 41% rank them as modest (Figure 12).

Figure 12: Awardees' Ability to Gain and Share Career-Development Skills



Many also have shared what they've learned with other artists, institutions, colleagues, family and friends, producing a leavening effect on art worlds in general that Creative Capital can't easily trace or document. A majority of respondents (54%) have shared their expanding knowledge with other artists, and almost as many (49%) have done so with institutions, colleagues, and family and friends.

“Creative Capital has improved the arts in so many ways. It is a radical and successful funding body.”

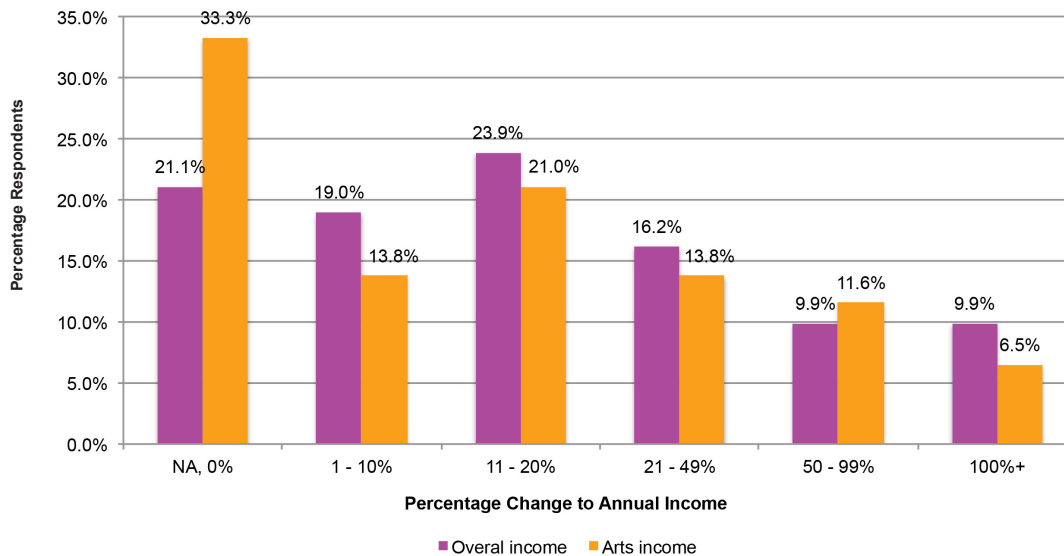
VIII. Financial outcomes: Income, revenue, savings, property, arts patronage

An investment the size of a Creative Capital award should have strong financial outcomes for recipients, even if the results take a number of years to materialize. The survey asked about income gains (from arts and non-arts sources), how much additional resources each has been able to raise since the award, and whether awardees had pursued and landed tenure-track teaching jobs. Responding artists have raised their incomes substantially from both arts and non-arts sources. As a group, they have raised a considerable amount of additional revenue to sustain their arts practices.

Income outcomes

The survey results found that 79% of Creative Capital artist respondents have increased their annual incomes since their award, from both arts and non-arts activities, some substantially. Two-thirds have increased their arts income, but only 53% by more than 10%, though this varies by length of time since award. One in five respondents reported no income gains, while a third reported no arts income gain. Emerging Fields awardees (42%) were most likely to report no increased income from their arts practice, and yet 11% reported gains of more than 100%. Large minorities of Visual Arts (39%) and Moving Image artists (37%) also reported no arts income gains. Half of all awardees in Literature reported gains of 21% to 49% in arts-related income—as a group, they were more likely to make 20% or greater gains than for other disciplines.

Figure 13: Changes to Artists' Personal and Arts-related Annual Incomes

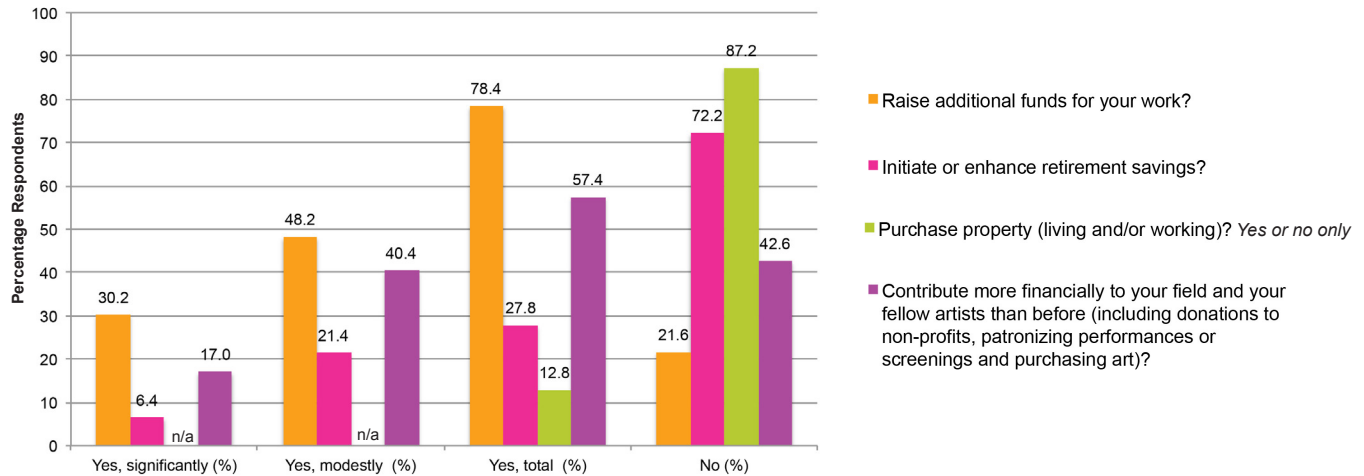


Artists articulated the ways that Creative Capital support has enabled improvements in their finances. “Creative Capital has been great at getting artists to take their overall and long-term financial health seriously and think of creative ways to leverage skills,” wrote one respondent.

Raising additional funds, improved retirement savings, property acquisition and contributions to the field

More than three-quarters of award respondents report success in securing additional funds for their work. Almost a third (30%) have done so significantly, and another 48% modestly (Figure 14).

Figure 14: Financial Outcomes, Post-Award



Respondents report greater challenges in initiating or enhancing retirement savings since their award. Almost three-quarters have not done so, with only 6% reporting significant gains. A modest 13% have purchased property for either living or work space since receiving their award (Figure 14).

A majority of Creative Capital respondents (57%) have been able to increase their financial patronage of the arts since receiving their award. They have done so by contributing more generously to arts nonprofits, purchasing art, and patronizing performances and screenings: 17% significantly, 40% modestly (Figure 14).

“Creative Capital gave me license to slow down and consider my options.”

Attaining tenure track teaching jobs

Many artists hold or aspire to hold tenure-track teaching jobs where a portion of their time can be devoted to their artwork and art studios are provided. Some Creative Capital respondents noted that they already had tenure-track jobs when they won awards, but others have been able to land them since the award. One artist wrote, “Although I don’t have a graduate degree, the recognition of my Creative Capital project led to my position as a full tenured professor!”

In short, for respondents for whom this has been a goal, 37% of them have achieved such a position. Of these, 43% have attained their tenure-track job since their Creative Capital award, and among these, 45% reported that receiving the award was important to this outcome. Others in their open-ended responses commented on the significance the award held when they were being considered for tenure.

IX. Work, family and leisure outcomes

Generous support of the kind offered by Creative Capital would likely change how recipients reallocate their time among work, family and leisure pursuits. Without having preferences about such changes, Creative Capital was interested in knowing how their awardees have made such changes. As a group, respondents report that they are more likely to shift their time allocations towards creative activity, administration and building audiences, and many also reshape their home and work lives.

About half of responding Creative Capital artists have increased the shares of time they devote to creative practice and career maintenance, the latter including grant-writing, negotiating contracts and other arts administrative tasks. Some 43% are spending more time building audiences, including marketing, branding and social media efforts. Many are spending more time on friends and family (38%), life maintenance and chores (35%), and rest and renewal (31%). For some, these have been extraordinary shifts. As one artist wrote, “The first and probably most important thing for me, is that Creative Capital gave me license to slow down and consider my options in regards to my project.” Another shared, “I have decreased the amount of overall stress I am willing to live with on a daily basis, and feel that Creative Capital gave me the tools to better manage my time.”

Fewer respondents (28%) have increased time devoted to professional development (workshops, coaching, conferences) than for any other activity, perhaps due to the infusion of Creative Capital services. While nearly a third (31%) have increased time commitment to payroll work, another 23% have lowered their reliance on such jobs. In open-ended comments, many reported being energized by better arts prospects following the award and thus willing to devote more time to creative and entrepreneurial work. They have been least likely to shift time away from life maintenance and friends/family time, and most likely to spend less time on rest and renewal.

Overall, these variations reflect the freedom and tools that Creative Capital awards give artists to shift time towards what matters most to them for career building and quality of life. Non-related events such as aging, changes in family commitments, and health also bear on these choices.

***“I am so grateful, years later, for this grant.
It truly changed my life and career.”***

X. Overall returns on Creative Capital investments

Creative Capital is curious to know how its financial support and services have enabled its awardees to raise additional funding for their artwork. The survey posed this: “Approximately how much revenue have you raised through your art projects / practice since you received your Creative Capital award? Please include grants, fellowships, individual donations, sales, royalties, performances, commissions and art-related wages.”

The single-sum response includes money raised to cover living expenses for artists as well as amounts that are paid out to other artists and support people, and for equipment, training, services, and rentals. Given the positive responses in the survey to artists’ gains in visibility, field position, venues and audiences, and given their testimonials in open-ended responses, we can assume that these returns are much greater than would have been likely without the awards. As noted above, 78% responded that the Creative Capital award has helped them raise additional funds for their work.

***“The impact of the Creative Capital grant on
my art practice and professional life is not
measurable. It was a total game changer.”***

When asked to share how much revenue they had raised in total through their arts projects and practice since the Creative Capital award, responding artists collectively reported \$29.3 million, an average of \$257,000 for each respondent. These revenue streams include grants, fellowships, donations, sales, royalties, performances, commissions and art-related wages. The estimates vary by discipline. Artists in Performing Arts, Emerging Fields and Visual Arts averaged \$300,000 each, with those receiving awards in Moving Image (\$194,000) and Literature (\$46,000) somewhat less, likely reflecting lower investments in space, the labor of others, and equipment (Figure 15 & 16).

Creative Capital’s investment has helped artists raise an additional \$94.5 million.

Assuming these responses are representative of the whole group of awardees, Creative Capital’s investment has helped artists raise an additional \$94.5 million for their artwork over the fifteen years of the organization’s work. This estimate understates the full impact, for most of these artists will continue to raise funds to support themselves, their families, and the creation of their artwork well into the future.

Figure 15: Awardees’ Post-Award Art Practice Revenue, By Year (Average)

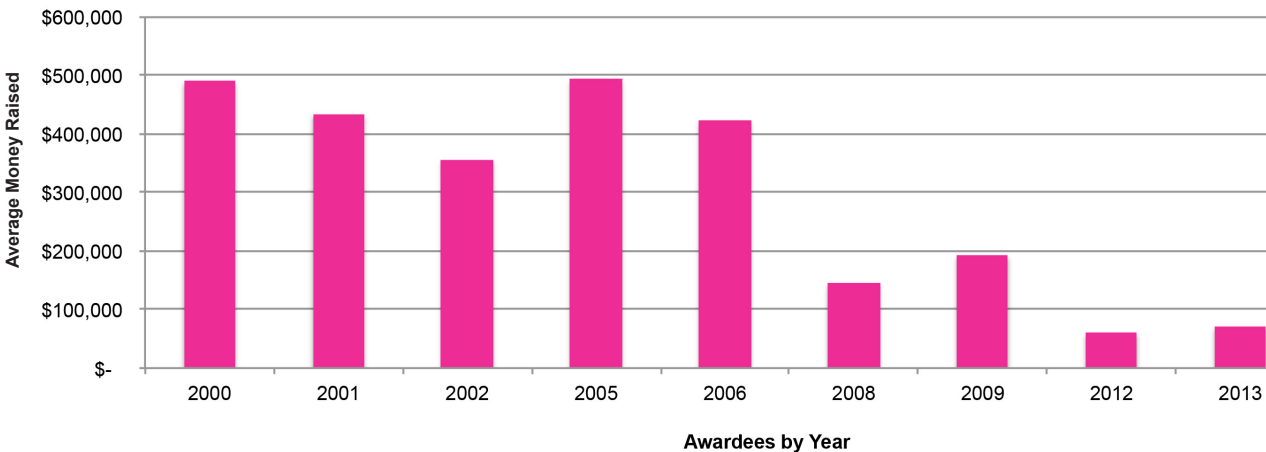
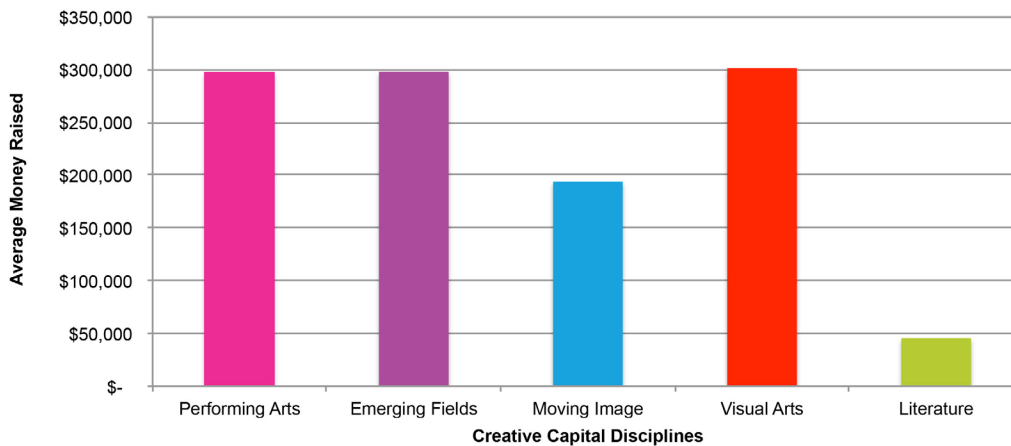


Figure 16: Awardees’ Post-Award Art Practice Revenue, By Discipline (Average)



XI. Closing thoughts

These responses, both quantitative and qualitative, by Creative Capital awardees demonstrate the value of the multiple types of support offered to artists and shows what they have accomplished in very specific ways. They also help Creative Capital understand how its financial support and services have produced innovative work, reached broader audiences, and bolstered artists' careers. They cast light on how responding artists have deepened their commitment to their work, experimented more adventurously, and to devoted more time and skills to the business side of their practices.

The survey findings confirm Creative Capital's tangible outcomes for artist awardees. The awards offer financial support to pursue creative projects and opportunities to learn from colleagues and collaborate with artists and others in non-arts fields. The Retreats help them develop career-planning strategies bolstered by an array of services and professional staff available to them over the period of their awards. The findings of the survey offer insights for other nonprofit and public sector artist support initiatives. They may also inspire artists everywhere to pursue their goals, to think about their creative work strategically, and to find partners, audiences and patrons for their work.

“Creative Capital stands out as the most dynamic funder that has supported me. I hope they will continue to challenge other institutions to keep artists at the forefront of their agendas.”

Creative Capital 

INVESTING IN ARTISTS WHO SHAPE THE FUTURE

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