



Arts Data Profile #10: Results from the Annual Arts Basic Survey (2013-2015)

Research Brief #5: Job Analysis of Arts Participants

This research brief uses the 2014 and 2015 waves of the Annual Arts Basic Survey (AABS) to analyze the occupational characteristics of arts participants. To qualify as an arts participant, adults must have done one or more of the following activities at least once in the previous year: attend a live visual and/or performing arts event; read a novel or short story, a poem, or a play; or personally create and/or perform artworks.

In addition to showing participation rates, this brief reports an “index of representativeness,” which quantifies the degree of a particular group’s over- or under-representation in the total number of arts participants, relative to that group’s share of the U.S. adult population.¹

Summary

- Visual and performing arts attendees are more likely to be employed than the average U.S. adult.
 - * 68 percent of arts attendees were employed—versus 61 percent of the overall U.S. adult population.
- Arts attendees are highly represented by two occupational groups: management/business and professional workers.
 - * The index of representativeness for professional workers attending visual and performing arts events is 1.33. In other words, this group accounts for a disproportionately large share of arts audiences.
 - ◇ Adults in legal occupations, such as lawyers and judges, are highly represented at live concerts, plays, and dance performances.
 - ◇ Professional workers in community service occupations (e.g., social workers and clergy) are highly represented at live book-reading, poetry, and storytelling events.

- U.S. workers in all other job categories are underrepresented at visual and performing arts events.
 - * The index of representativeness for farming, fishing, and forestry workers among arts audiences is -1.52—meaning that disproportionately few adults in these occupations attend arts events.
- Adults who personally create or perform artworks are less likely to be employed than are adults who attend visual and performing arts events.
 - * 58 percent of U.S. adults who perform or create artworks are employed. That rate is 10 percentage points lower than the employment rate of arts attendees.
 - * Compared with arts attendees, adults who personally create or perform art are more likely to be students or homemakers or retired, or otherwise not in the labor force.
- Among adults who personally create or perform artworks, job categories are distributed in the same pattern as they appear in the U.S. workforce in general.
 - * Workers in office and administrative-support positions represent 13 percent of working adults who create or perform artworks. They are also 13 percent of all U.S. workers.
 - * Sales workers are 10 percent of those who personally create or perform artworks, and they are also 10 percent of the workforce.
- For certain types of art-making, there are exceptions to an even occupational distribution.
 - * Workers in arts, entertainment, and media occupations are highly represented among adults who play a musical instrument.
 - ◇ The index of representativeness for arts, entertainment, and media workers who play an instrument is 1.41.
 - * Construction, installation and repair, and production workers compose a disproportionately large share of adults who create leatherwork, metalwork, or woodwork.
 - ◇ The index of representativeness for workers in all three occupation groups who create these artworks is 2.0 and higher.

Index of Representativeness

The index of representativeness measures over- or under-representation of a particular group in a population of arts participants, compared with that group's share of the total population. An index of "1" indicates that the composition of arts participation exactly reflects the group's share of the population. **If the index is positive, the group is over-represented; if the index is negative, underrepresentation is evident.**

For example, professional workers compose 22.6 percent of all U.S. employed workers. Yet professionals make up 31.9 percent of visual and performing arts events attendees. In this case, the index of representativeness is:

$$[(31.9 / 22.6 * 100) - 1]$$

Professional workers, therefore, are overrepresented at visual and performing arts events by 1.414, or 41.4 percent.

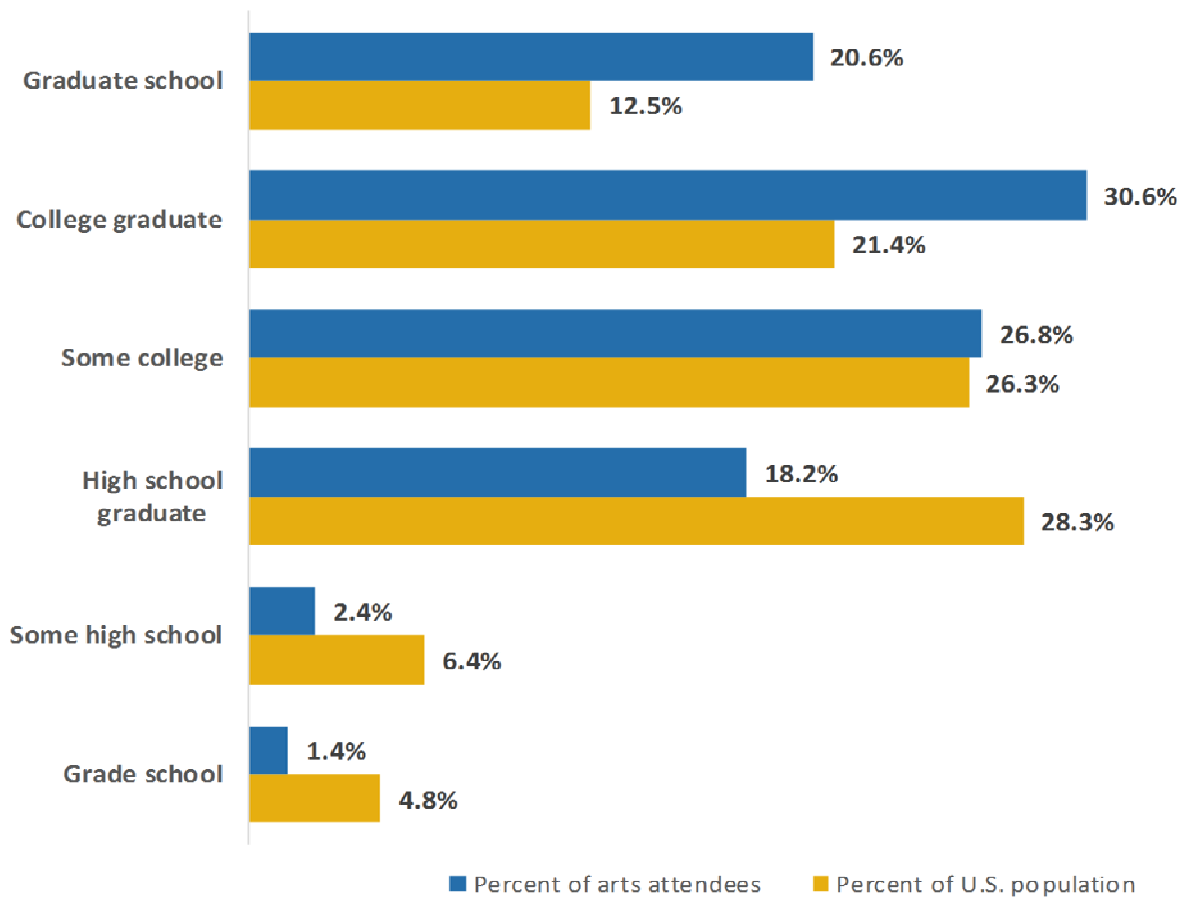
Occupations of Adults Attending Visual or Performing Arts Events

(Attendance at visual or performing arts events refers to adults who, in 2015, attended any one of the following: live music, theater, or dance performances; live book-reading, poetry, or storytelling events; art exhibits; or buildings, neighborhoods, parks, or monuments specifically for their historic or design value.)

Like the Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA), the Annual Arts Basic Survey (AABS) shows that arts attendance rises with educational attainment.² High levels of education among arts attendees are reflected in their occupations, which typically fall into the management and business and professional job categories.

In 2015, 44.3 percent of all U.S. adults attended a visual or performing arts event.³ However, among adults holding bachelor's degrees or higher levels of education, 67.2 percent attended.

Distribution of U.S. Adults Attending Visual or Performing Arts Events, by Highest Level of Educational Attainment: 2015



Adults represented in this graph were at least 25 years old.

Data source: Annual Arts Basic Survey (AABS), National Endowment for the Arts

Partly because of their higher education levels, arts attendees are more likely to be employed than are adults in general. In 2015, 68 percent of arts attendees were employed—versus 61 percent of the overall U.S. adult population.

These jobs are heavily concentrated in two broad categories: management/business and professional occupations, both of which are characterized by college-educated workers.⁴

In 2015, management and business and professional occupations composed 40 percent of

employed workers. Yet they were 51 percent of employed arts attendees. Among management and business workers (an occupation category that includes not only management jobs, but also financial positions such as accountants and auditors, marketing specialists, and fundraisers), the index of representativeness for attending visual and performing arts events is 1.26.⁵ The index for professionals—a broad occupational category that includes scientists, engineers, lawyers, artists, and teachers—is 1.33. In other words, management/business workers and

professionals exceeded their representation in arts audiences, relative to their share of the employed workforce, by 26 percent and 33 percent, respectively.

All other occupation groups are underrepresented at visual and performing arts events. However, for sales occupations and office and administrative workers, the underrepresentation is small—only -1.03 for both types of workers in 2015. The small indices for workers in both categories suggests they are represented at visual and performing arts events in close proportion to their respective shares of the labor force.

On the other hand, attendance at visual and performing arts events is strongly underrepresented by fishing, farming, and forestry workers; workers in transportation jobs such as truck drivers and taxi drivers; construction and extraction workers (e.g. miners); and production workers (e.g., assemblers, bakers, and machinists). For each of these occupation groups, the index of representativeness was -1.35 or lower.

Attendance at Visual and Performing Arts Events: 2015	
<i>Index of Representativeness by Occupation Group</i>	
Occupation group:	Index
Professionals	+1.33
Management, business, and financial	+1.26
Office and administrative support	-1.03
Sales	-1.03
Installation, maintenance, and repair	-1.23
Service	-1.23
Production	-1.35
Construction and extraction	-1.35
Transportation	-1.41
Farming, fishing, and forestry	-1.52
Data source: Annual Arts Basic Survey (AABS), National Endowment for the Arts	

Given the heavy concentration of professionals at visual and performing arts events, we now can examine the detailed occupational groups composing it. In 2015, the index of representativeness for legal workers (such as lawyers and judges) attending live music, theater, and dance performances was 2.00. In other words, legal workers were among performing arts audiences at twice the share of their representation in the U.S. workforce.

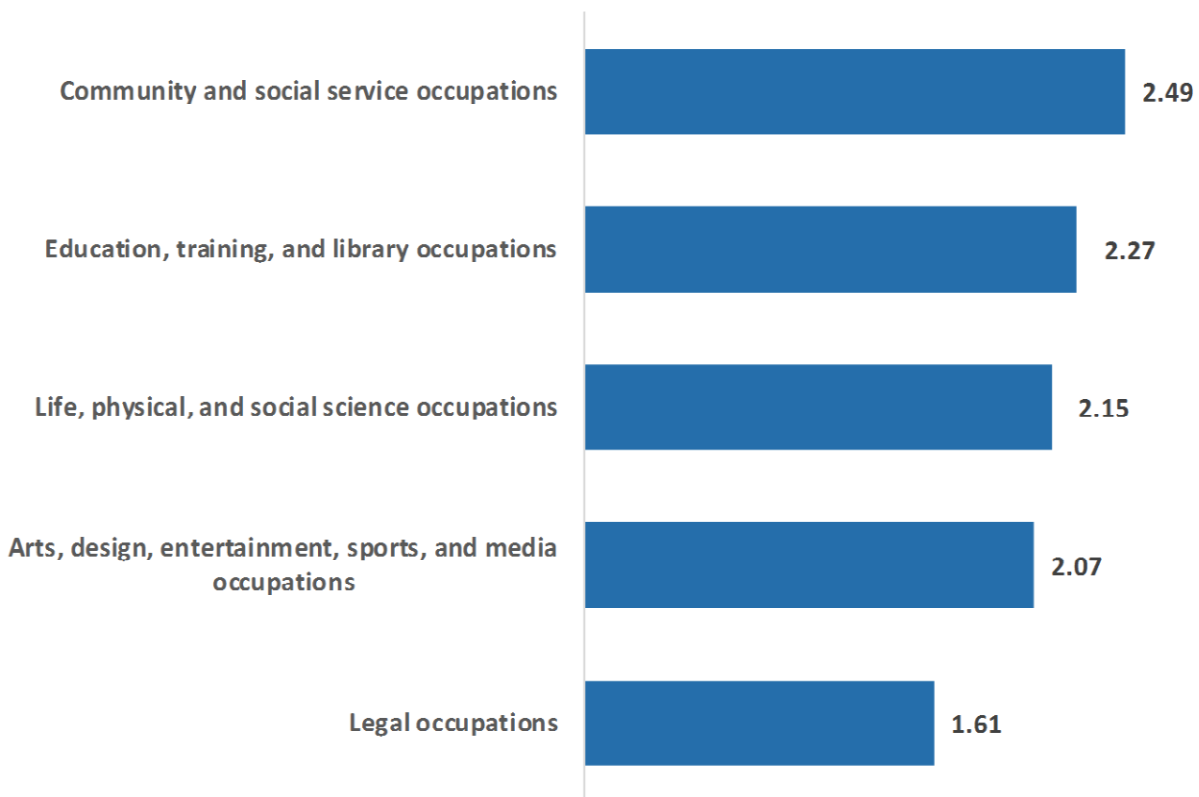
Other occupations highly represented at performing arts events include: scientists (life, physical, and social scientists); teachers and librarians; community and social service workers (an occupation that includes counselors, social

workers, and clergy); and artists, entertainers, and sports and media occupations. For workers in each of these occupation categories, the index of representativeness met or exceeded 1.50.

A similar group of professionals are highly represented at art exhibits. For example, the index of representativeness for artists and media workers was 2.43.

At live book readings, poetry, and storytelling events, the index of representativeness was greatest among workers in community and social service occupations and those in education and library occupations; the index was 2.49 and 2.27, respectively.

Occupation Groups Highly Represented at Live Book-Readings, Poetry, and Storytelling Events: 2015
Index of Representativeness



Data source: Annual Arts Basic Survey (AABS), National Endowment for the Arts

Occupations of Adults Personally Performing or Creating Art

(Personal creation or performance of artworks refers to adults who, in 2014, engaged in any of the following activities: did pottery, ceramics, or jewelry; created leatherwork, metalwork, or woodwork; did weaving, crocheting, or other textile art; played a musical instrument; did acting; performed or practiced dance or singing; created films or took photographs for artistic purposes; created other visual arts such as paintings or sculptures; or did creative writing.)

Like attendance at visual and performing arts events, rates of personal creation or performance of artworks generally rise with educational attainment.⁶ However, arts participation through these activities is not concentrated among workers in management and professional occupations. In fact, the occupations of workers who create or perform art generally show the same distribution as they do in the U.S. labor force.

An additional distinction is that adults who personally create or perform art are less likely to be employed than are arts attendees. In 2015, 58.4 percent of adults who created or performed artwork were employed. That rate was nearly 10 percentage points lower than the percentage of arts attendees employed. Alternatively, adults who personally create and perform art are more likely to be retired or not in the labor force; for example, they are more likely to be students or homemakers.⁷

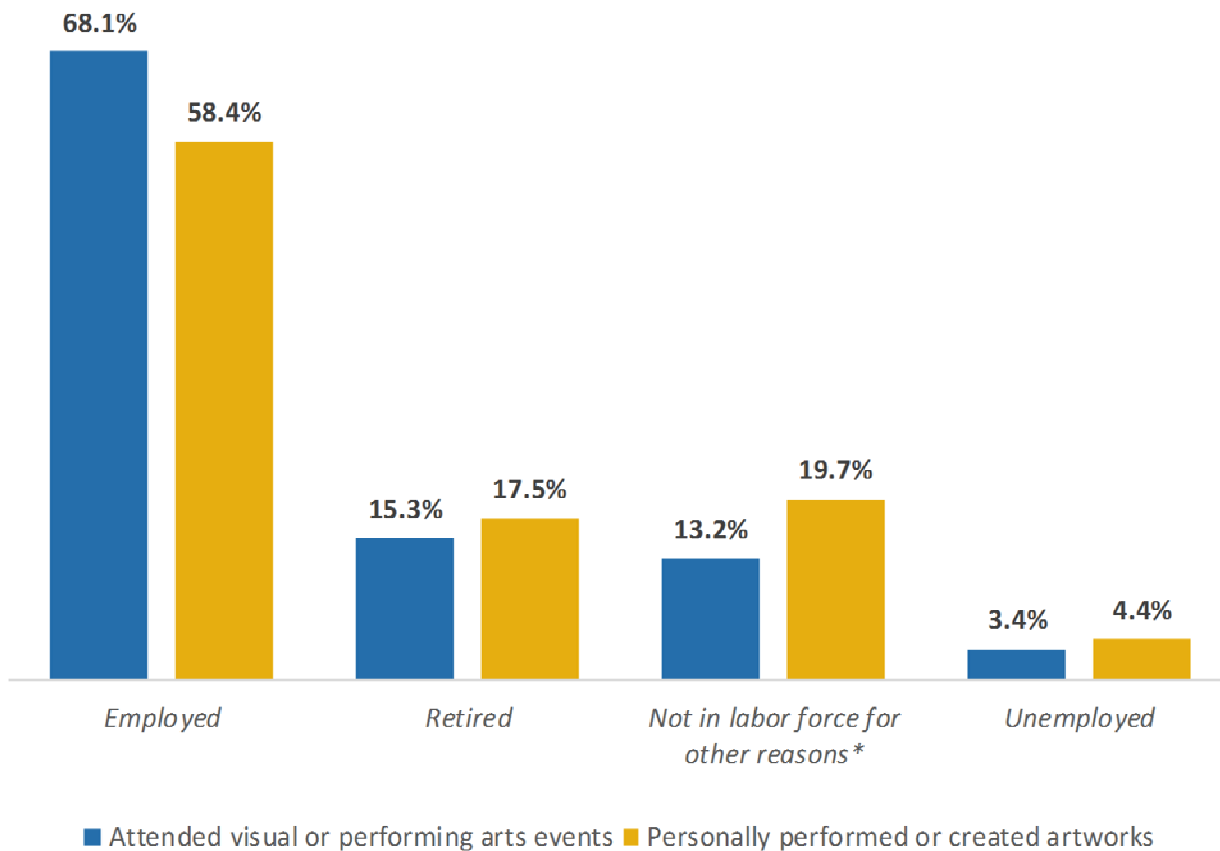
Among employed adults who create or perform art, the occupational distribution is similar to that of all workers in the U.S. labor force. For example, in 2014, just over 15 percent of employed persons

who created or performed art worked in management and business occupations. That was similar to the share of all employed U.S. workers in the management/business group—approximately 16 percent.

Notably, workers in a number of occupations that are underrepresented at visual and performing arts events are evenly represented among people who personally create or perform art. Approximately 10 percent of U.S. workers are in sales jobs, and 10 percent of those who create or perform art are employed in sales.

This parity is also evident among workers in office and administrative support occupations (13 percent of all art-makers and 13 percent of the U.S. workforce); construction and extraction occupations (5 percent of art-makers and 5 percent of the U.S. workforce); and production workers, including assemblers, bakers, and machinists (6 percent of art-makers and 6 percent of the U.S. workforce). Parity is even evident among workers in farming, fishing, and forestry occupations, a job group with disproportionately low representation at visual and performing arts events.

Labor Force Status of U.S. Adults Attending Visual or Performing Arts Events and Personally Performing or Creating Artworks: 2014-2015



* Including students and homemakers

Data source: Annual Arts Basic Survey (AABS), National Endowment for the Arts

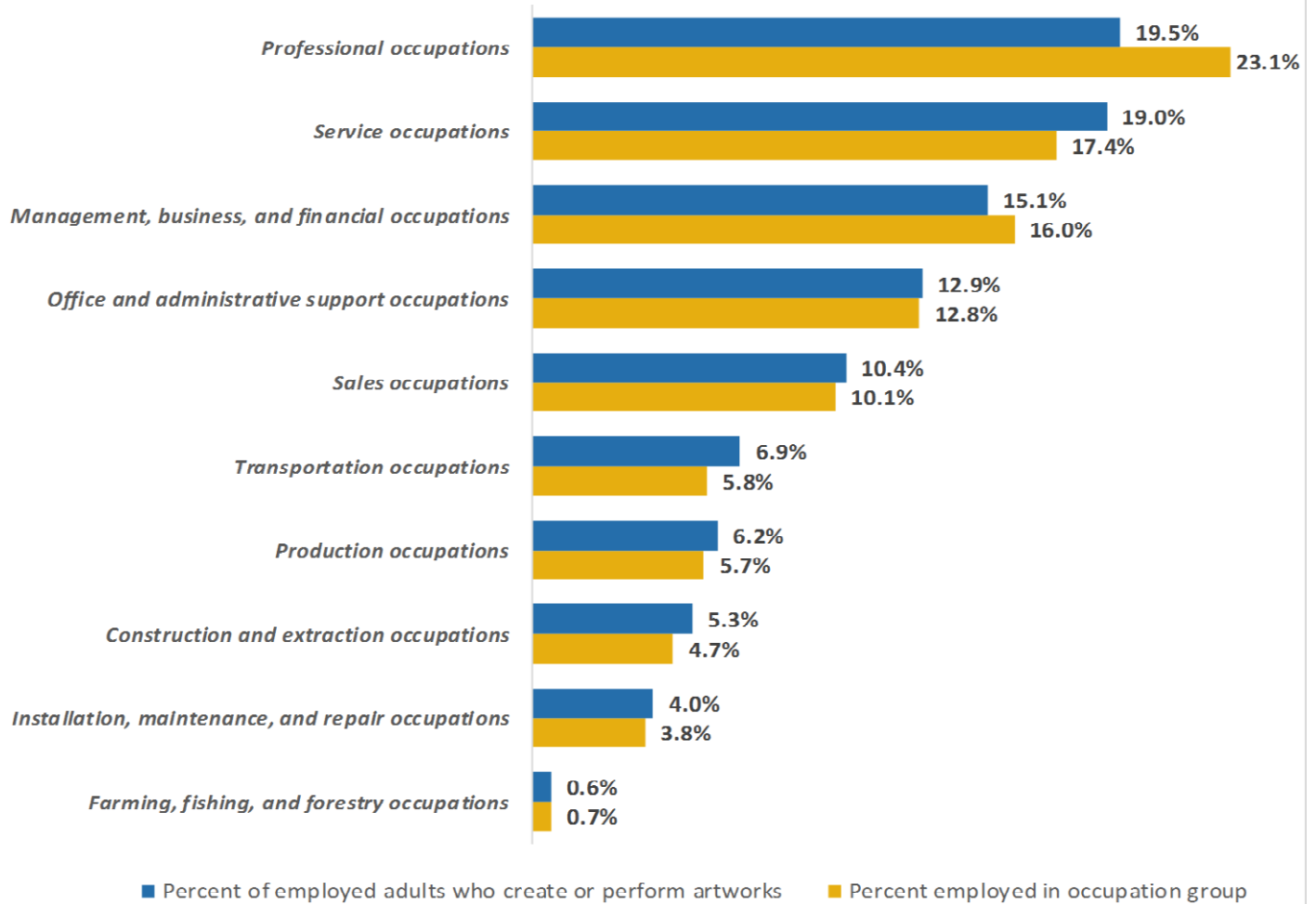
There are, however, exceptions to the even occupational distribution of adults who create or perform artworks. Professional workers, particularly artists, entertainers, and workers in sports and media occupations, as well as those in science occupations and in education and library positions, are highly represented among adults who play a musical instrument. In 2014, the index of representativeness for artists and media workers was 2.41.

Artists and media workers, as well as workers in education and library occupations, are also highly

represented among adults who do creative writing. For this activity, in 2014, the indices of representativeness were 4.00 and 1.95, respectively.

Nevertheless, among adults who create leatherwork, metalwork, or woodwork, strong overrepresentation is evident among construction and extraction workers, installation and repair employees, and workers in production jobs; the 2014 index of representativeness exceeds 2.00 for all three occupation groups.

Distribution of Adults Who Personally Perform or Create Artworks and Their Distribution Within Occupation Groups: 2014



Data source: Annual Arts Basic Survey (AABS), National Endowment for the Arts

Endnotes

¹For an illustration of the index of representativeness, see Stern, M., [Age and Arts Participation: A Case Against Demographic Destiny](#), also referenced in the Additional Readings section of ADP #10.

²See, for example, [A Decade of Arts Engagement: Findings from the Survey of Public Participation in the Arts, 2002-2012](#).

³Ages 25 and older.

⁴The 2015 AABS shows that 69 percent of employed workers in business or management occupations or in professional occupations (ages 25 and older) held bachelor's degrees or higher levels of education. Among all employed workers 25 and older, that share was 40.5 percent.

⁵For a detailed list of occupational groups, see [Occupation Employment Statistics](#), produced by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

⁶Adults who attend visual and performing arts events and adults who personally perform or create art are not necessarily mutually exclusive groups. However, the waves of the AABS alternate between surveys capturing arts participation through attendance, and surveys denoting participation through personal performance and creation. Therefore, this analysis presents participation through attendance and participation through personal performance or creation separately. For more information, see NEA Research Report #54, [Beyond Attendance: A Multi-Model Understanding of Arts Participation](#), by Jennifer Novak-Leonard and Alan Brown.

⁷The employment rate of adults who personally create or perform art is similar to that of all U.S. adults. Compared with all adults, however, art-makers are more likely to be homemakers, students, or others not in the labor market.