



PATTERNMAKERS



Audience Outlook Monitor

Queensland Snapshot

March 2022



Queensland
Government

Cover image: Teatro Alla Scala Ballet Company's Don Quixote as part of QPAC's International Series 2018. Photographer Darren Thomas

Key Facts: March 2022

Attendance Outlook



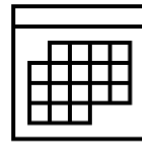
1,261

QLD arts attendees responded to the March 2022 survey



-21%

decline in QLD audiences attending since November 2021



75%

are making firm plans to attend cultural events in future



75%

of those planning are opting for events in their local area

COVID-safety



41%

say the risk of transmission still prevents them attending as they used to



#1

vaccine passports are the most encouraging COVID-safety measure



48%

feel encouraged by mandatory masks for attendees aged 12+ at cultural events



78%

of QLD arts attendees have had three doses of a COVID-19 vaccine

Key findings: March 2022

QLD audiences are becoming cautious, as floods and rising cases impact live attendance

- ▶ In March 2022, data from 1,261 past attendees of cultural events in Queensland (QLD) suggests that attendance has declined following local flooding events and a significant increase in case numbers.
- ▶ The proportion attending has declined to the lowest level in a year, falling from 76% in November 2021 to 55% in March 2022 – although most (69%) QLD audience members are eager to get things back on track, saying they are ready to attend cultural events ‘whenever permitted’.
- ▶ While the majority of QLD audiences have received three shots of a COVID-19 vaccine (78%), this rate is lower than the national average of 87%. Some say their attendance continues to be inhibited by the risks of transmission (41%) or being a close contact (33%).
- ▶ Commentary from QLD audience members suggests while many want to attend, concerns remain around transmitting the virus to those at-risk in their community – and 46% identify as being vulnerable to COVID-19 themselves or having someone in their household or network who is.
- ▶ Some audience segments in QLD remain especially cautious, particularly those at risk of a serious health outcome (52% ready to attend) and those with a disability (47% ready to attend) – confirming the importance of the cultural sector to consider the varying needs of its audiences.

2 in 3 QLD audiences find vaccine passports encouraging, and masks still have a role in some settings

- ▶ As the uncertainty amid recent outbreaks lingers, data from QLD audiences suggest COVID-safety measures will continue to play an important role in building confidence.
- ▶ Most of those attending are satisfied overall with COVID-safety measures applied at recent cultural events they attended (79% satisfied), confirming the view of arts venues as relatively safe spaces. But with 1 in 10 attendees dissatisfied, and more yet to return, there is a need for care as restrictions ease.
- ▶ Audiences continue to be most encouraged to attend cultural venues by requiring proof of vaccination at entry (64% say they are encouraged by this) – while only 42% are encouraged by the option of a Rapid Antigen Testing (RAT).
- ▶ Although mask wearing is no longer mandatory, 48% of QLD audiences say they still find mandatory mask policies encouraging – and some consider the absence of this safety measure a ‘dealbreaker’ in certain settings, when cases are rising.
- ▶ As state guidelines allow for relaxing of restrictions, and Queenslanders have the opportunity for greater freedom of movement, cautious attendees will be relying more upon the COVID-safety policies of individual venues to mitigate the risks of transmission.
- ▶ Some audience members will be looking to cultural organisations to adopt a robust approach to COVID-safety in order to communicate inclusivity and care for those who are more vulnerable.

QLD audiences are inclined to stay local, and 1 in 5 are inhibited by financial barriers

- ▶ The data shows that most QLD audiences are optimistic about attending in 2022, with three-quarters (75%) making firm plans to attend an in-person cultural event (down from 83% in November 2021).
- ▶ However with disruptions continuing in Queensland, it appears that economic recovery is still some way off, and cautious optimism is wise.
- ▶ When asked about where they are planning to head to events, three-quarters (75%) of those making plans intend to stay in their local area, a higher proportion than the national average (70%).
- ▶ Cultural tourism may take more time to recover, and right now QLD audiences are currently three-times more likely to be planning regional travel to attend events (42%) than interstate travel (14%).
- ▶ While in the minority, the proportion who say financial reasons are inhibiting their attendance has almost doubled, from 12% to 22%, suggesting that the recovery process is going to take time.
- ▶ The arts continue to be perceived as vital to community recovery, providing an avenue for healing, joy and social connection during challenging times. While some audiences are yet to return, they are firm in wanting to support artists and help cultural activity to flourish in new ways.

Introduction

This March 2022 report shares insights from over 1,200 past attendees in Queensland

This Queensland (QLD) Snapshot Report outlines key findings from the March 2022 phase of the Audience Outlook Monitor in Australia (Phase 7), based on data collected from 1,261 audience members living in Queensland.

Launched in May 2020, the Audience Outlook Monitor is tracking audience sentiment in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic. Each phase involves a cross-sector collaborative survey process involving around 100 arts and culture organisations, including museums, galleries, performing arts organisations and festivals.

On 9 March 2022, participating organisations simultaneously sent the Phase 7 survey to a random sample of their audience – defined as those who had attended an arts or cultural event in person since January 2018.

This report compares the new results with data collected previously in March 2021 (Phase 4), July 2021 (Phase 5) and November 2021 (Phase 6), to examine how things are changing over time.

In addition to this Snapshot Report, the March 2022 results are accessible in a free interactive dashboard. Users can explore the data for different artforms, types of events and demographic groups in all parts of Australia. For more information about the study, and to access resources such as the dashboard, visit:

www.thepatternmakers.com.au/covid19.

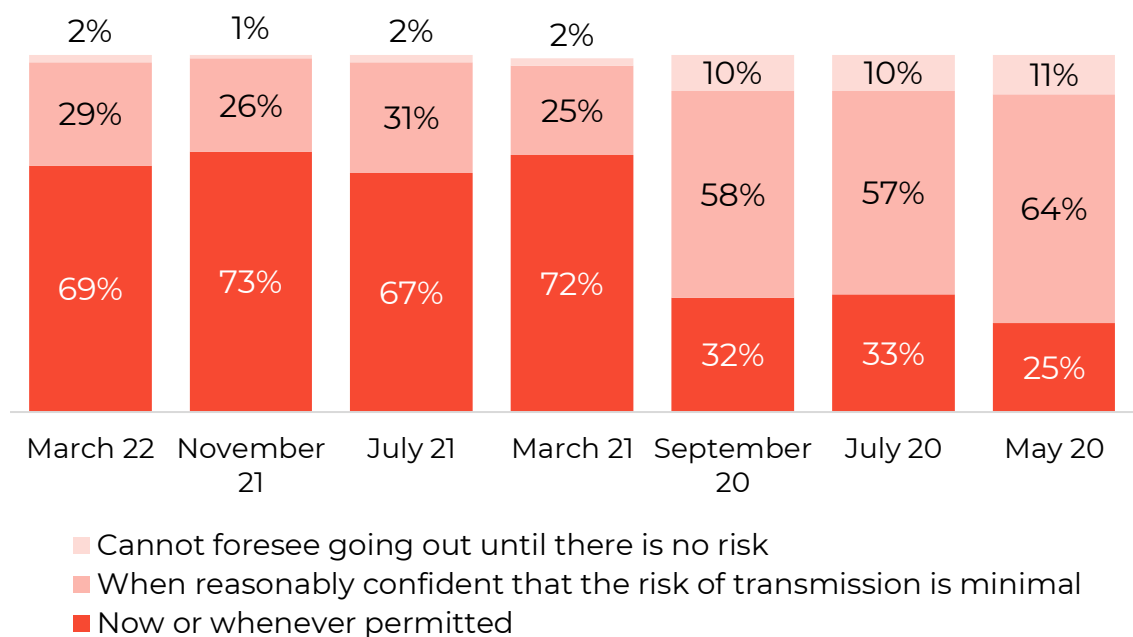
Current conditions

Confidence has dropped slightly in QLD, but 7 in 10 remain ready to attend 'whenever permitted'

With case numbers in QLD increasing significantly [following the easing of restrictions on 4 March](#), confidence among QLD audiences has decreased marginally since November 2021.

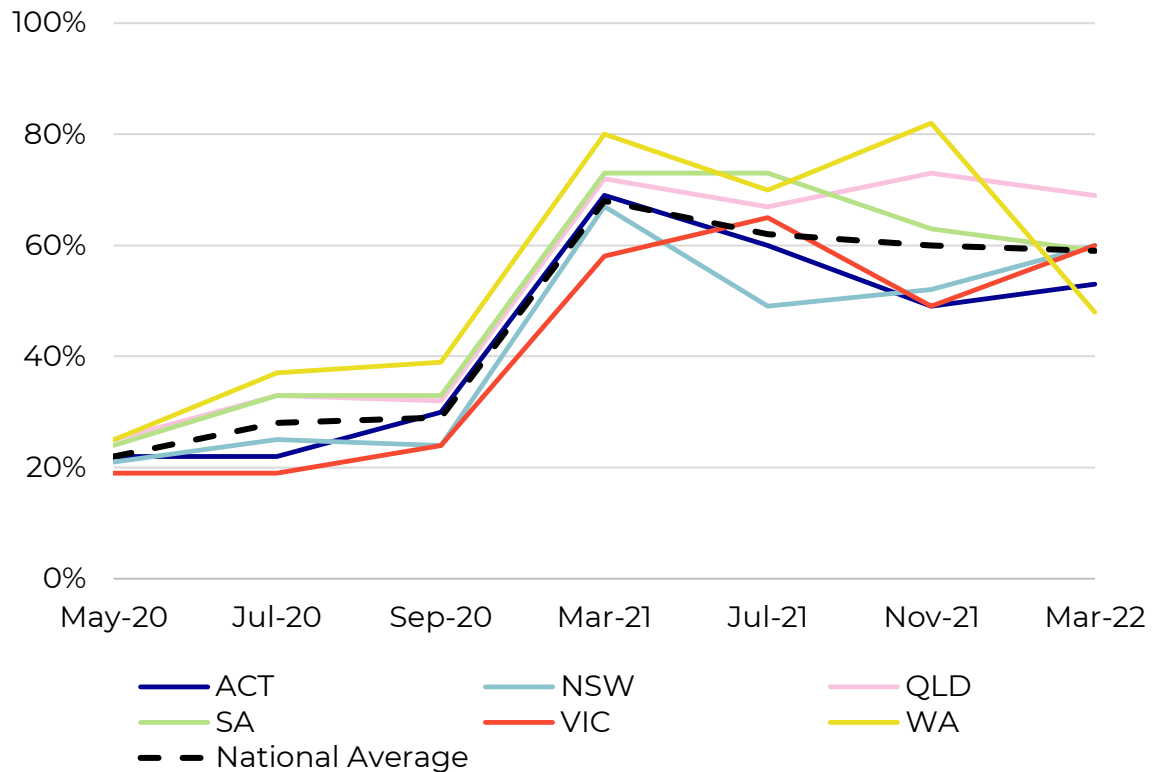
7 in 10 (69%) are ready to attend arts and cultural events 'now or whenever permitted', decreasing slightly from 73% in November 2021, to a level most similar to the Delta outbreak period in July 2021 (67%).

Figure 1: Proportion of audiences who are 'ready to attend now or as soon as permitted', QLD audiences, May 2020 to March 2022 (n=1,257)



After being much higher compared to the national average in November 2021, confidence in QLD is now closer to national sentiment (59% 'ready to attend'), as outbreak conditions and restrictions become more alike in the different states and territories. (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Proportion of audiences who are ‘ready to attend now or whenever permitted’. By state/territory, May 2020 to March 2022 (n=8,369)



Sentiment among the QLD audience members who are ‘ready to attend’ suggests that some are becoming more comfortable with the prospect of ‘living with the virus’ and attending arts and cultural events, while taking necessary precautions. One QLD audience member said,

‘As long as we can reasonably socially distance and people are encouraged to continue to wash their hands, have access to sanitiser and refrain from touching everything or that very regular cleaning of public spaces occur, I feel like we should be able to get back to normal.’

One-third remain cautious and there will be varying needs to consider as QLD adjusts to the ‘new normal’

As audiences become accustomed to ‘living with the virus’, One-third (29%) of past attendees in QLD say they’ll only attend when the risk is minimal, and 2% won’t tolerate any risk at all.

For many of these audiences, feelings of readiness appear to be linked closely with their personal circumstances. The survey asked

respondents if they, or anyone in their network is vulnerable to a serious health outcome from COVID-19. Around half (46%) of QLD audience members answered yes – with 13% vulnerable to a serious health outcome themselves, 15% living with someone vulnerable and 22% connected to someone vulnerable in their extended/family network.

When asked about their readiness to attend, 52% of QLD audiences who were themselves vulnerable to a serious health outcome were ready to go to arts and cultural events – and equally, 52% of audiences who had a vulnerable person in their immediate family/household.

One audience member said,

‘I am immunocompromised, but a lover of live theatre, so there is a balance between protecting my own health and well-being, and supporting local arts.’

Readiness to attend somewhat decreases with age, with older audience members more likely to report vulnerability to COVID-19. QLD attendees over 75 were the least likely to be ready to attend (60%), and audiences aged 35-54 the most likely (77%).

Compared to non-disabled audience members (70% ready to attend), audience members with a disability were also less likely to be ready to attend right now (47%).

Comments from audience members in these cohorts suggest some are anxious about being ‘left behind’ as restrictions ease – and their needs will be an important consideration for QLD arts organisations going forward. One audience member said,

‘I am COVID vulnerable due to pre-existing medical issues and would like to feel more assured I would be safe.’

Most arts venues continue to be seen as safer than common public activities, like using public transport and going to the gym

Across the country, comfort with public activities and arts attendance is following the same broad trends as readiness.

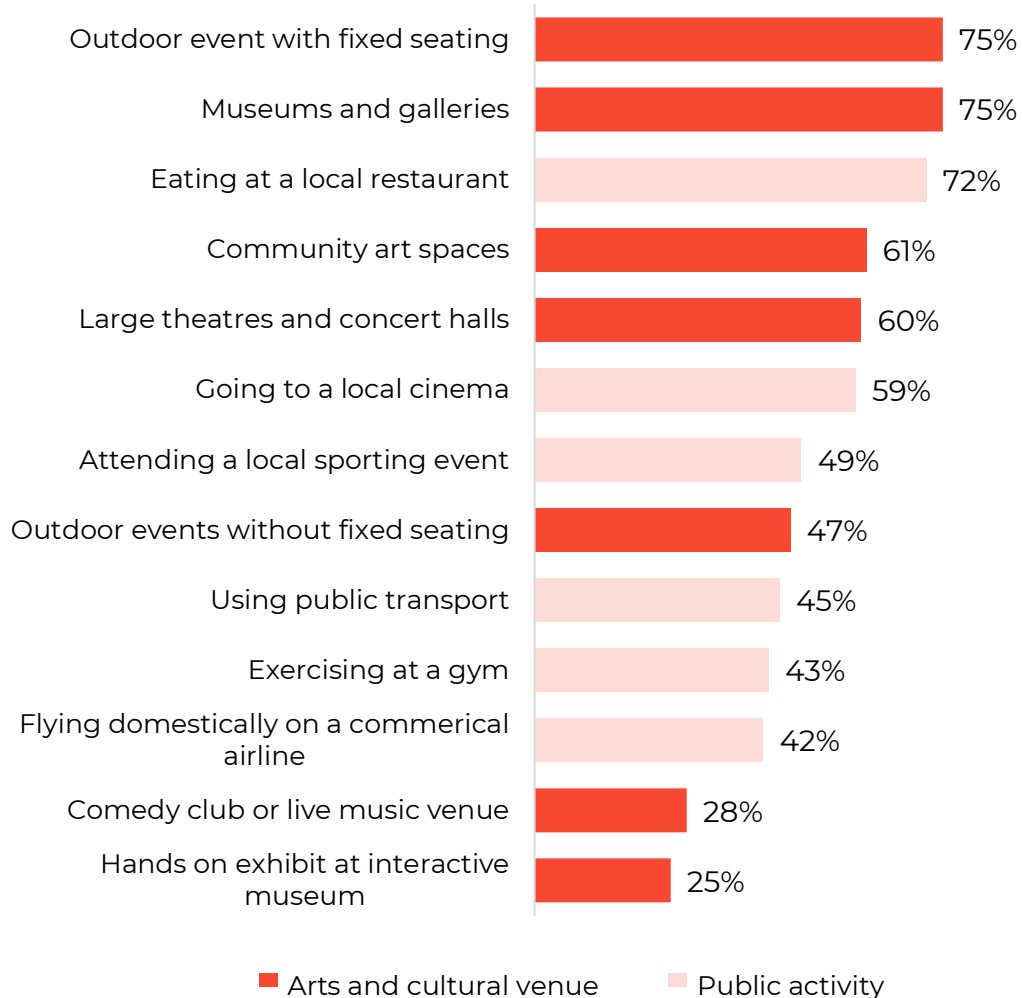
Comfort decreased in QLD, along with South Australia (SA), where case numbers have been increasing again in March 2022, for the first time since cases peaked in mid-January 2022.

By comparison, audiences in states like New South Wales (NSW), the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) and Victoria (VIC) – which were recovering from outbreaks of the Delta variant in November 2021 – have demonstrated an increase in comfort levels at both cultural venues and public activities in general. Comfort has decreased most significantly in Western Australia (WA), where cases are currently on the rise.

As a general rule, comfort at most arts venues remains higher than many other common public activities – including exercising at a gym, flying domestically on a commercial airline, and using public transport (Figure 3).

The exceptions to this rule are hands-on interactive exhibitions and comedy club or live music venues, which attract the lowest levels of audience comfort. Feedback from audiences suggests that crowded environments or those involving tactile experiences tend to feel the least COVID-safe.

Figure 3: Proportion of audiences 'very comfortable' attending the following public activities and arts and cultural venues. Queensland audiences, March 2022 (n=1,257)



Live attendance

Attendance in QLD declined in March, with rising cases and floods impacting public activity

In March 2022, 55% of QLD audiences said they attended an in-person cultural event in the fortnight before data collection (9-13 March), decreasing from 76% in November 2021.

QLD audiences are the least likely to have attended a cultural event in the fortnight before data collection, with the state [reaching high levels of community transmission in early March](#). Additionally, arts venue closures following the recent floods in south-east Queensland are likely

to be impacting cultural attendance for some communities. One person said,

‘The only thing stopping me or slowing me down at present is the flooding clean up and my own lack of energy.’

Attendance has reached a similar level to that seen in July 2021, when the Delta outbreak led to the tightening of restrictions in the country’s eastern states.

Patterns of actual attendance are also linked with audiences’ risk tolerances. QLD audiences who say they are ‘ready to attend, whenever permitted’ are the most likely to have attended recently (60%), while those who will only attend when the risk of transmission is minimal are slightly less likely to have attended recently (47%).

3 in 4 QLD audience members are making firm plans to attend cultural events

While national trends show a majority of audiences making firm plans to attend arts and cultural events in future, the proportion of audiences making firm plans has decreased slightly among QLD audiences.

In March 2022, 3 in 4 (75%) QLD audience members reported making plans for in-person attendance in the future, demonstrating a decrease since November (83%) and July 2021 (78%).

The proportion making plans is significantly higher among very frequent performing arts attendees (87%) and very frequent museum and gallery attendees (82%).

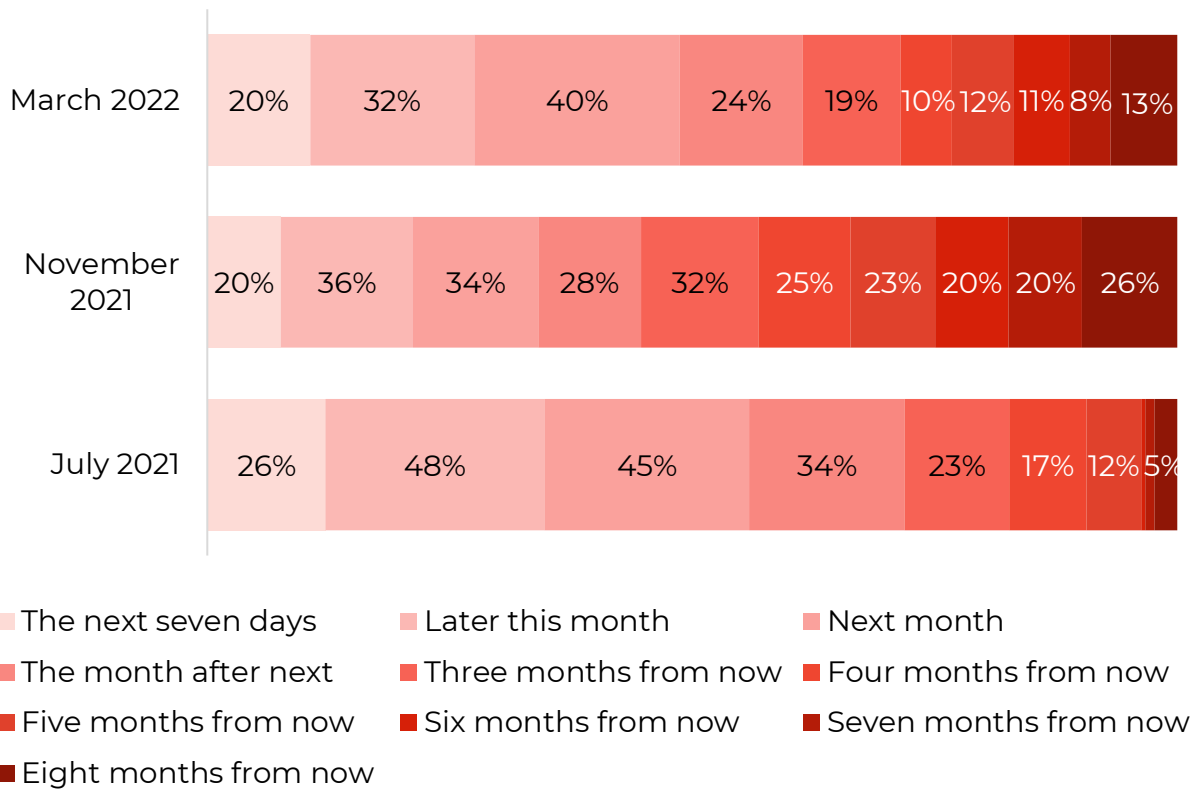
QLD audiences continue to book events in the short-term, as uncertainty persists

When asked about the timing of scheduled events, QLD audiences continue to book events in the short term – similar to national trends.

As the uncertainty of climbing cases takes hold in QLD, the proportion booking events within the next seven days has remained consistent since November 2021, at 20%. Meanwhile, a larger proportion of audiences are purchasing tickets to events happening later in the month (32%), with even more booking for next month (40%).

The findings suggest that audiences are focusing on events taking place in the near future, compared to those scheduled months ahead – with the availability of events and lingering uncertainty around outbreak conditions likely playing a role.

Figure 4: In the past fortnight, did you purchase tickets for one or more live shows or performances that are scheduled for...? QLD audiences, March 2022 (n=612), November 2021 (n=632) and July 2021 (n=660)



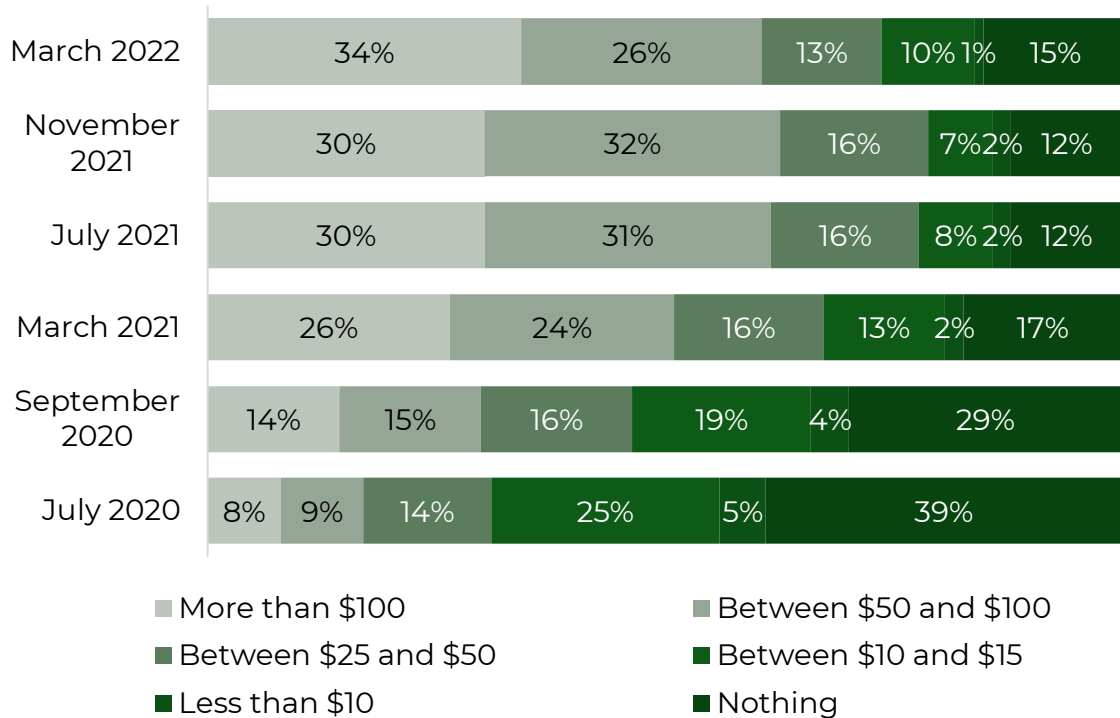
Recent QLD attendees are reporting high levels of spending – but with disruptions expected, cautious optimism is wise

When asked about the amount they have spent on tickets to in-person live events in the fortnight before data collection, audiences in QLD are spending more than in earlier stages of the pandemic.

Among audiences who are attending live performances, March 2022 saw the largest proportion spending more than \$100 (34%) since the study began, a promising sign of stronger economic recovery of the sector, as shown in Figure 5.

However, with fewer audiences attending overall, there is a way to go before full recovery of the sector is achieved.

Figure 5: In the past fortnight, how much did you spend on tickets to in-person live events and cultural activities? QLD audiences, March 2022 (n=695), November 2021 (n=1,116), July 2021 (n=839), March 2021 (n=1,835), September 2020 (n=807) and July 2020 (n=632).



Cultural tourism is still in the early stages of recovery, with 3 in 4 QLD audiences opting for local events

In March 2022, audiences who made firm plans to attend a cultural event(s) were asked where those events were located. Among QLD audiences, 75% said they made plans to attend an event in their local area — a higher proportion than the national average (70%).

QLD audiences are among the most likely to be opting for local events, along with those in WA (75%), a state where uncertainty surrounding rising case numbers persists.

QLD audiences are beginning to travel to attend cultural events, but are three times as likely (42%) to be attending events within Queensland, rather than travelling interstate (14%). In terms of COVID-

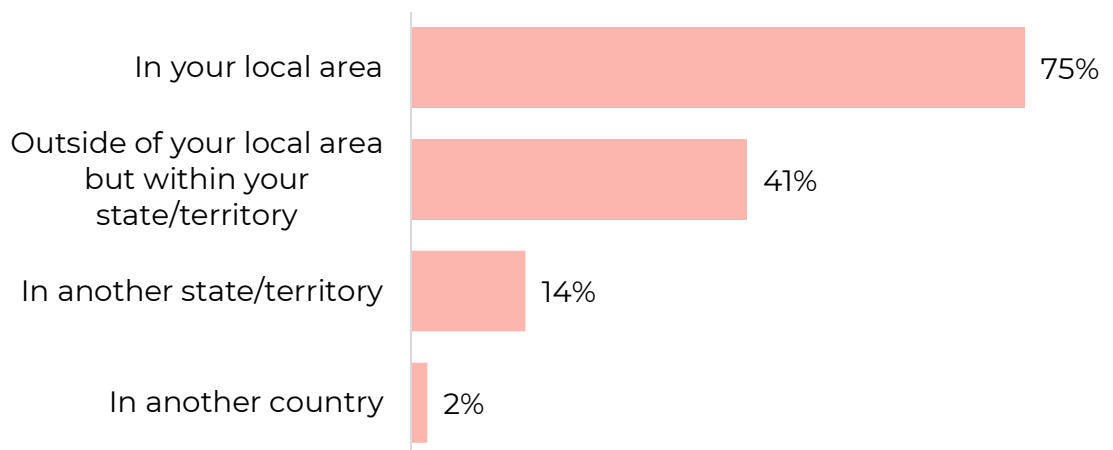
safety, 4 in 10 (42%) feel very comfortable flying domestically on a commercial airline right now.

Qualitative data suggests local travel is generally seen as safer and more reliable than intra- or inter-state travel – with some audiences also developing a greater awareness of the need to support local artists, or show greater appreciation for offerings in their local area, over the course of the pandemic. One audience member said,

‘Very happy to become active and engaged with local arts and cultural events again and want to support local artists.’

Regional and remote audiences in QLD are more likely to be attending events within the state but outside of their local area (53%), compared to those in major cities (40%).

Figure 6: Were those plans for attending a venue or event ... (select multiple). QLD audiences, March 2022 (n=939)



1 in 10 are changing their attendance patterns due to lifestyle changes or COVID-risks

Audiences were asked whether their preferred attendance times had changed, in light of COVID-19. The majority of QLD audiences (81%) say that their preferences have not changed, while 1 in 10 (10%) say they have. Another 10% are not sure.

Audiences in QLD, along with SA (11%) and WA (8%), are the least likely to say their attendance patterns have changed – whereas it is highest among audiences in states that have had more time to grow

accustomed to 'living with COVID', such as the ACT (16%), VIC (15%) and NSW (14%).

Among the group that say their attendance patterns have changed, there are mixed views surrounding attendance times. Some QLD audiences report lifestyle changes and work arrangements affecting their decisions, as some shared,

'My workplace flexibility has increased and I would like more show offerings on weeknights now.'

And,

'I am now more likely to attend at times I have childcare. That varies but less likely to go on weekends in daytime now.'

QLD attendees who are more risk-averse are more likely to say their preferred times have changed (16%) compared to those who are 'ready to attend' now (7%). Some expressed an inclination towards weekday, daytime events, where they feel COVID-safety is better upheld. One said,

'Prefer matinees and weekdays which are likely to be smaller audiences.'

Another said,

'I like daytimes now, more oldies, and they are more careful!'

For some attendees, the ability to travel to and from events has been impacted by the availability of public transport. One said,

'For me it's not a COVID thing, it's a public transport kind of thing. Since COVID it's hard to get public transport or even an Uber so I don't like the idea of being stuck in the middle of town in the middle of the night unable to get home.'

COVID-safety and vaccination

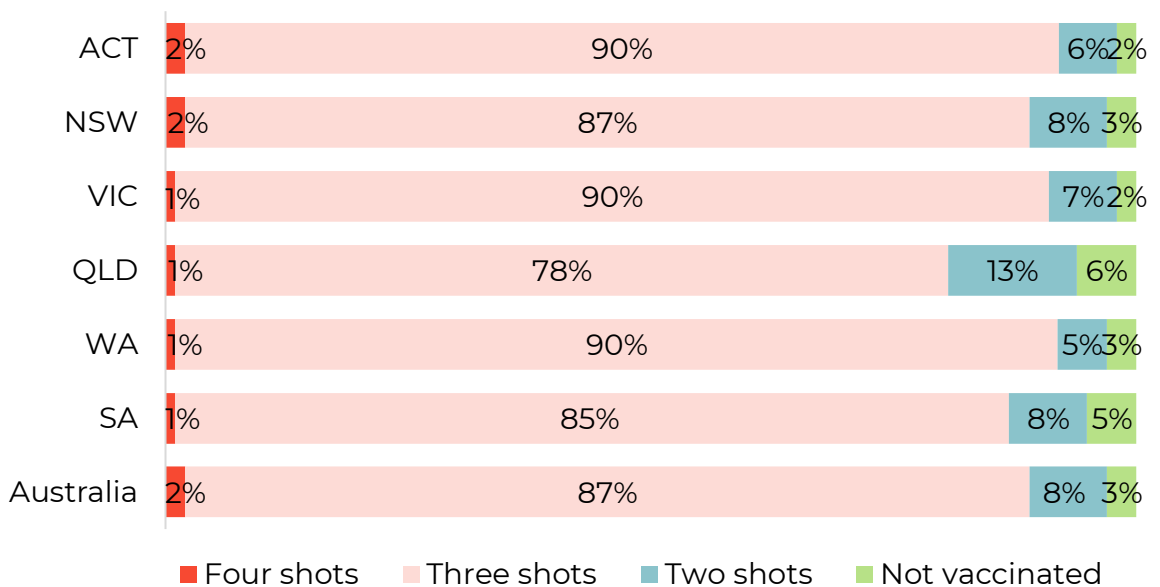
Arts audiences continue to lead the way on vaccination – with 8 in 10 in QLD having received three shots

As of March 2022, 78% of QLD arts audiences have received three shots of the COVID-19 vaccine (up from just 2% in November) – compared to [around 62% of the general Queensland population as at 13 March](#).

Audiences in QLD are the least likely nationally to be triple-vaccinated, compared to a national average of 87% (Figure 7).

Vaccination rates increase with age, with 92% of QLD audiences aged 75+ having received three shots, compared to 59% of audiences under 35 and 62% of audiences aged between 35 and 54.

Figure 7: Proportion of audiences who are vaccinated March 2022. By state/territory (n=8,309)



When asked if they have been infected with COVID-19 in the past, just 1 in 10 (12%) QLD audience members said they have – consistent with the national average (10%).

Consistent with national trends, younger audiences in QLD were also more likely to have had COVID-19 in the past than older audiences – with 24% of those under 35 having had the virus, compared to 4% of those aged 75+.

Some audiences remain concerned with the risk of transmitting the virus or becoming a close contact

When asked what is preventing them from attending arts and cultural events in the next year, the risk of contracting or transmitting the virus continues to be the primary concern for QLD audiences (41%, compared to 45% in November 2021).

While vaccination rates are high among arts attendees, some remain concerned about transmitting the virus to vulnerable people within their network. One QLD audience member said,

‘I work in healthcare and am a little concerned about being in extreme close proximity with others, even if it does not meet the government's definition of close contact.’

Another said,

‘I am relatively comfortable but don't want restrictions eased too much just for convenience or to appease the vocal minority, given the vulnerability of immunocompromised individuals, those unable to be vaxxed, and children under 5.’

One-third of QLD audience members (33%) continue to be concerned with the risk of being a close contact and needing to isolate, though this has dropped from 38% in November 2021.

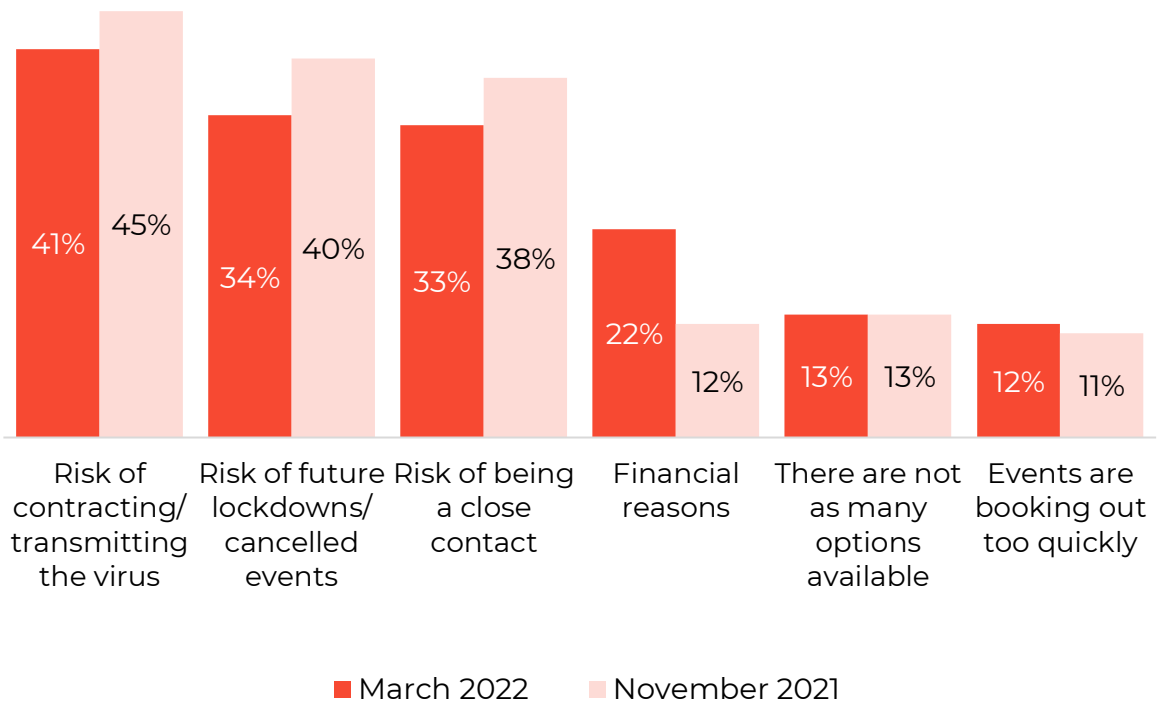
With the country entering its [post-vaccination phase of the national policy](#), QLD audiences are less likely to be concerned about the risk of lockdowns (34%) compared to November 2021 (40%). However, this remains equally concerning to QLD audiences as the risk of being a close contact (33%).

Commentary from some QLD audiences highlights a reluctance to attend events where they feel COVID-safety measures are not always adhered to, as one said,

‘I would like to know the venue has made an effort to provide a safe environment and encourage all patrons to follow the guidelines.’

While in the minority, a larger proportion of QLD audience members are now naming financial reasons as inhibiting their attendance (22%, up from 12% in November 2021) – a trend that is consistent nationally

Figure 8: Proportion of audiences who say these factors will preventing them from attending in-person arts and culture events as they used to in the past. QLD audiences, March 2022 (n=1,251) and November 2021 (n=1,472)



Proof of vaccination and masks are the most important COVID-safety measures for arts audiences

Despite changes to outbreak conditions and COVID-19 restrictions in QLD in early March 2022, safety measures like masks and vaccination requirements remain priorities for many audiences.

While they are [no longer mandated in Queensland](#), proof of vaccination requirements (64%) and masks for attendees aged 12+ (48%) continue to be encouraging to many QLD audience members. (Figure 9).

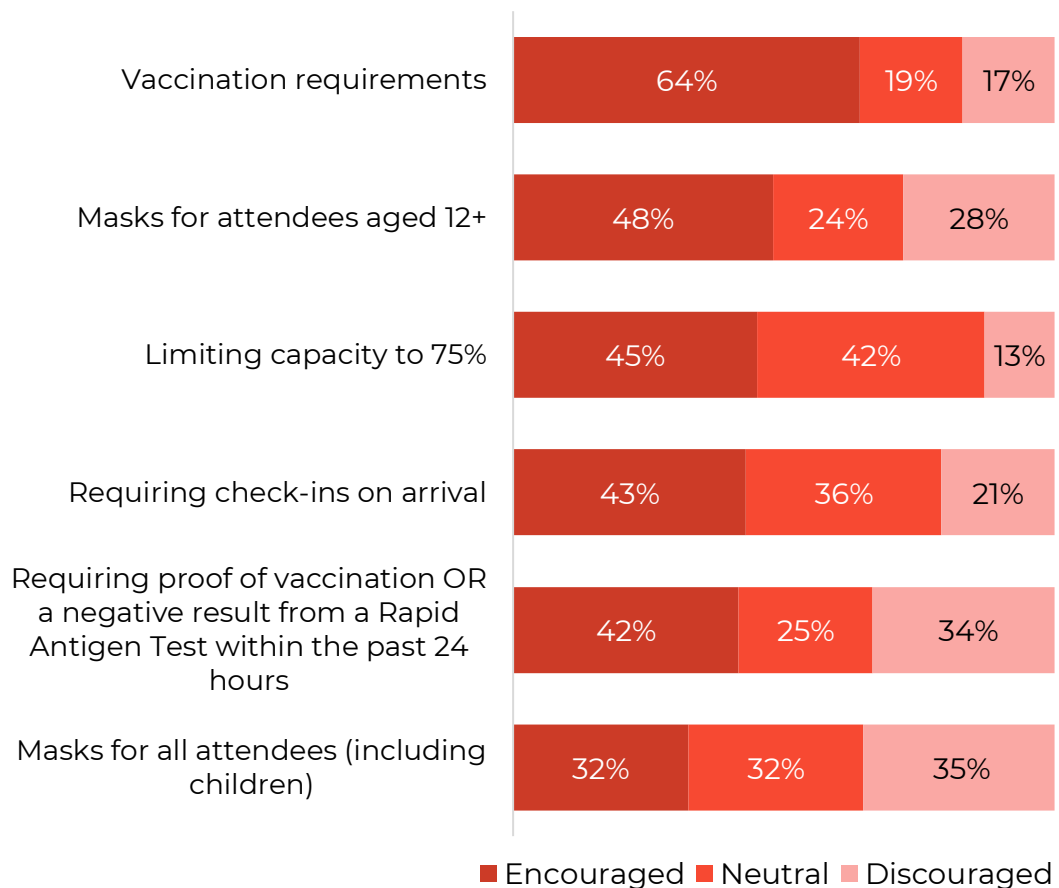
For some people, the absence of these measures are ‘dealbreakers’ and are necessary conditions for attendance in some settings – with one QLD attendee saying,

‘I want to know that those around me are practicing the same safety measures that I am. I am not interested in attending events that are open to unvaccinated people or people without exemptions from vaccination. This is our problem – we must all contribute to its solution.’

While mask-wearing has become slightly less important to QLD audiences, following the removal of a state-wide mask mandate (48% encouraged, down from 61% in November), some continue to see masks as ‘dealbreakers’. One said,

‘Things like people not wearing masks or being flippant about mask policy would absolutely make me feel uncomfortable or would make me want to avoid an event.’

Figure 9: How much would each of the following steps discourage or encourage you to attend? QLD audiences, March 2022 (n=1,243)



Check-ins have become less important to audiences as the viability of contact tracing decreases

Despite being one of the most encouraging COVID-safety measures in November 2021 (81% encouraged), now less than half (43%) of QLD audiences are encouraged by check-ins in March 2022, with another 36% neutral.

Qualitative data from some audience members suggests that high case numbers and the decreased viability of contact tracing have made check-ins feel superfluous.

One QLD audience member said, 'Check in only makes sense with contact tracing and testing occurring.'

Another mentioned,

'Unnecessary checking and paper filling would put me off especially when the data collected is not being passed forward any more.'

However, some audience members continue to see check-ins as essentials or 'dealbreakers', with one saying,

'I would not attend an enclosed venue at full capacity yet. I might attend at 75% with masks, check-ins, and proof of vaccination required.'

Another said,

'I one-hundred per cent like having COVID check-ins and full vaccination certificates sited by event staff. We are all use to it now and allow enough time to get to an event early.'

24-hour rapid antigen testing won't encourage the majority of QLD audiences

Although proof of vaccination is widely encouraging to QLD audiences, less than half (42%) are encouraged by the option to provide proof of vaccination OR a Rapid Antigen Test (RAT).

Some expressed concern about the accuracy of Rapid Antigen Tests taken 24 hours prior, with one saying,

'Don't believe all RAT tests are accurate. Proof of vaccination is "Gold Standard".'

Another said,

'RAT do not appear to be significantly accurate with Omicron. I would still mask.'

Others were concerned about the practicalities of enforcing a RAT requirement, with one saying,

'I'm not sure if it is possible to police RAT testing – I would feel comfortable if everyone had to bring along their negative RAT test to show upon arrival ... but is this at all able to be implemented?'

And another saying,

'Rapid testing is too expensive. Whether the person pays or the event pays is irrelevant – the cost shouldn't occur.'

8 in 10 of those who attended recently are satisfied with COVID-safety protocols at arts events

As mentioned previously, arts and cultural venues are generally perceived as COVID-safe spaces.

When QLD audience members who had recently attended a cultural event were asked how satisfied they were with the COVID-safety procedures in place, 8 in 10 (79%) responded that they were satisfied, with only 8% dissatisfied.

Satisfaction among QLD audiences is consistent with the national average (79%).

QLD audiences are the most confident that vaccination will allow normal activities to resume

Compared to November 2021, audiences are just as likely to be 'very confident' that the vaccination effort will allow normal activities to resume within a year (43%, compared to 41%). The proportion 'not at all confident' remains stable (10%, stable with 9% in November).

QLD audiences are the most confident of any state or territory, compared to a national average of 28%, while those in SA (33%) and the ACT (32%) are the least confident.

Some QLD attendees say that the transmissibility of the Omicron variant has made them more conscious of the need for COVID-safety measures alongside vaccination. One says,

'As we are still in the midst of an outbreak I would not be comfortable with no masks and/or no social distancing in place.'

Outbreaks related to new variants is also a factor for many audience members, with one saying,

'If another variant virus appears in the environment, [I'm] not confident but would wear masks and distance from people if possible.'

Role of arts in recovery

Uplifting content will attract QLD audiences over the next year – while many are eager to return to the things they love

Looking ahead over the next 12 months, QLD audiences are most interested in engaging in the same kinds of cultural activities they used to attend, pre-pandemic (92%).

Light-hearted content continues to be more attractive to QLD audiences (46%), compared to works that help to make sense of the pandemic (11%) – a trend that has remained consistent throughout the study. The proportion that disagrees that they'll be attracted to works

that make sense of the pandemic has increased slightly since November (48%, up from 43%).

QLD audiences are the most likely to be attracted to light-hearted content, of any state or territory, compared to a national average of 40%. It can be expected that audiences will continue seeking uplifting content through cultural experiences in 2022, in light of 'pandemic fatigue', combined with general anxieties surrounding the recent floods and global events.

Audiences see an enduring role for arts and culture in facilitating healing and connection

Audiences were invited to share examples for how arts and culture organisations can play a role in the recovery from the pandemic.

Consistent with the [Visions for Culture](http://www.thepatternmakers.com.au/visions-for-culture) (www.thepatternmakers.com.au/visions-for-culture analysis), audiences shared a vision for arts and culture to provide avenues for healing, joy and escapism. As one QLD audience member said,

'You provide such a source of comfort and a way to unify humanity, uplift our spirits, teach us about other people's experiences, shared fun to be had with family and friends. We need you now more than ever and appreciate you very much.'

Many people advocated for arts to continue doing what they are doing, as one said,

'Keep on doing what you do. Only thing keeping me and many others sane in the face of flood, war and pestilence.'

The arts can play a leading role in rebuilding trust and advocating for safety and inclusion

While many audience members would like to see a return to 'normal', some envision a role for arts and culture organisations to advocate for needs within the community, brought to light by the pandemic.

Promoting COVID-safety at events is seen as a way to provide opportunities for re-engaging in public life in a safe way, after a long period of disrupted activity. One QLD audience member said,

‘We definitely need more performances and options for people to be able to attend engagements. The arts are vital to living a holistic life and now more than ever, people are turning to the arts as a way of reconnecting with people, their community and the world around them. I so wish that funding was given to the arts – its desperately needed. It would be great to instigate more channels for sponsorships/ donations etc.’

A similar sentiment was shared by respondents who see a need to prioritise inclusive practices and safety for all attendees, artists and staff. One suggested,

‘Realistically we are still in the pandemic, so it's still a matter of minimising the risk to audience and performers/other staff. Sector can only recover if audience feels comfortable about attending, and that is difficult.’

Another said,

‘I think accessibility – not just physical – would be welcome. There has been for a while an exclusivity building up, making creative endeavours out of reach to many. It would be lovely to see more combined events that don't compete with each other, but are perhaps staged in an area at similar times to encourage engagement.’

Many audience members see a role for the sector to facilitate trust and inclusivity among organisers, artists and attendees, and the broader community. One person commented,

‘I wish all artists the very best going forward. Organisations should continue to take precautions against COVID – vulnerable [people] should feel safe to visit theatres etc. even if restrictions for most other things are being lifted. Arts should be accessible to all and patrons should be protected where possible.’

Audiences consider the arts as essential and want to support as best they can

Audiences were asked to share suggestions of messages for artists and cultural organisations, as they look to the recovery process.

Many people shared heartfelt messages that showed their appreciation for art and culture in times of hardship, to remind artists and organisations of their vital role. One QLD audience member said,

‘Thank you for providing small, safe events and online options. I am delighted to be returning to live performances and hope you continue to have full house attendances as financially it has been difficult for you.’

Another said,

‘The arts, and particularly theatre in all its forms, is a vital, essential part of life. It's been tough over the last couple of years – but keep going and keep growing.’

Importantly, some audience members encouraged artists and organisation to invite more community support, as they recuperate from the economic impact of cancellations and lockdowns. One QLD audience member said,

‘Hang in there! You are incredibly valued. Don't be afraid to keep asking for donations – we care and want you and your artists to survive this.’

Another shared,

‘Thank you! You have been through so much and are so important to our city and country. Please continue advocating for yourselves and pitching for funding/public support, you deserve to be protected as a vital industry and we see you and support you. Let us the general public know how we can support you, how we can pressure governments, corporates, the general public to keep you running.’

What's next

To read about the story so far, visit the study's Australian homepage at: www.thepatternmakers.com.au/covid19.

There, you can also access a dynamic dashboard, to help you explore the results by location, artform and other variables. Instructions and tips for using the dashboard are available in a short video.

To receive future Snapshot Reports, Fact Sheets and resources in your inbox, as soon as they are available, you can opt in to receive Audience Outlook Monitor news at the link above.

If you have a question, or an idea to put forward, relating to this study, you can contact info@thepatternmakers.com.au.

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Patternmakers acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional custodians of our land — Australia. We acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation as the traditional custodians of the place where Patternmakers is based, and we pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.



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