

Taranaki*arts*trail



2024 Co-ordinators **REPORT**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Taranaki Arts Trail 2024 was a vibrant celebration of the region's creativity, showcasing the work of artists across Taranaki and engaging a diverse audience of visitors. This report highlights the event's key outcomes, addresses challenges encountered, and outlines recommended improvements to enhance both artist and visitor experiences.

Key achievements include the participation of 81 artists on the trail and a successful collaboration between new and existing committee members, following a *Special Meeting* called in December 2023 to ensure the event's continuation. Despite the economic recession reported by Stats New Zealand, the Taranaki Arts Trail forged ahead. New and returning patrons travelled, art was purchased, and meaningful connections were made between visitors and artists.

A notable achievement was the establishment of the HUB, located in Centre City, which served as the trail's gallery and information point. This centralised space provided visitors with an accessible starting point and valuable resources for navigating the trail. Our sincere thanks go to Centre City management for generously providing the space, which played a key role in enhancing the event's success and visibility. We also extend our gratitude to the dedicated volunteers who staffed the HUB, offering invaluable support to both our artists and visitors.

Challenges identified during the event included inconsistent visitor distribution in areas outside New Plymouth and confusion arising from booklet markings, such as distinguishing between weekend and full 10-day participants. These issues have been noted for future brochure revisions along with other design features. Feedback showed interest in the trail regaining its independence away from other events and possibly moving it to a different time of year to avoid overlap. Additionally, targeted adjustments to marketing efforts are recommended, with a focus on reaching art enthusiasts and investors from across Aotearoa.

Looking ahead, this report offers a fact-based data collection and recommendations to strengthen the event further, aiming to ensure the continued growth and success of the Taranaki Arts Trail in future years.

EVENT OVERVIEW

Justification Statement

The Taranaki Arts Trail 2024 spanned 10 days, offering an open-studio experience where visitors could engage directly with artists in their creative spaces. This unique format allowed for a deeper appreciation of the artistic process and fostered personal connections between artists and their audiences. While most artists welcomed visitors into their studios, some were grouped in galleries and open working art environments, which provided opportunities for collaboration and a centralised experience for visitors.

The trail encompassed a wide geographical area, showcasing the diverse talents of Taranaki's creative community and encouraging regional exploration through urban and rural landscapes to discover the art and stories that make Taranaki distinctive.

Dates and Times

Option 1 - 10 Days

Friday, 1st of November to Sunday 10th of November 2024

Option 2 - Weekends

Friday, 1st - Sunday 3rd and Friday, 8th - Sunday 10th of November 2024

Daily Times: 9:30 am – to 4:30 pm

Locations

- **North Taranaki Trail (57 Artists)**
Bell Block, Blagdon, Ferndale, Fitzroy, Frankley Park, Glen Avon, Hillsborough, Hurworth, Mangorei, Merrilands, Mimi, Moturoa, New Plymouth, New Plymouth CBD, Port Taranaki, Strandon, Vogeltown, Westown, Whalers Gate
 - **East Taranaki Trail (12 Artists)**
Inglewood, Kaimiro, Norfolk, Stratford
 - **South Taranaki Trail (3 Artists)**
Manaia, Ōpunake, Pātea
 - **West Taranaki Trail (9 Artists)**
Ōākura, Ōmata, Pukeiti Gardens
-

RESULTS & KEY METRICS BASED ON ARTIST FEEDBACK FORMS

Artist Participation

- **Total artists:** 81
- **Evaluation Forms Completed:** 51 (61.73%)
- **Art Mediums Represented:**
 - Painting
 - Jewellery
 - Sculpture
 - Mixed media
 - Ceramics
 - Photography
- **Venues Included:**
 - Individual setups in private studios
 - Collaborative setups in working studios, community halls and shared gallery spaces.

Sales Overview

The following data is based on the 51 evaluation forms submitted by artists out of 81 participants. While some artists chose not to share their sales figures, others indicated their primary focus was on connecting with people rather than making sales. Although this does not represent all participants, the responses provide valuable insights and highlight important trends and feedback.

1. Sales Overview

Category	Number of Artists
No Sales (\$0)	5
No comment on Sales	16
Category	Total
Sales Reported without a \$ value	36
Total Sales (amount given in \$)	\$96,670.00

2. Sales Per Artist by Price Range

Range	Number of Artists	Percentage of sales
\$ 160 - \$ 1,000	7	25.93%
\$1,001 - \$ 5,000	14	51.85%
\$5,001 - \$15,000	6	22.22%

3. Commissions Overview

Commissions Reported	Number of Artists	Percentage of responses
	28	61.36 %

Key notes: Visitor spending patterns reflecting varied purchasing behaviour across the event. These patterns were not specific to area. Many artists reported reconnecting with returning customers while also welcoming new visitors to their studios.

Visitor Overview

The following data is based on the 51 evaluation forms submitted by artists, out of a total of 81. Please note that some artists did not submit visitor numbers, and a percentage of artists were in groups and submitted their combined totals. Many visitors may not have been recorded. These visitor numbers do not represent the total count of individual visitors, as many people visited more than one studio. The recorded numbers reflect the total visits reported by each artist or group.

Weekend Artists

Recorded Visitor Counts	Number of Artists Who recorded within this count range
39 - 100	7
101 - 200	8
261	1
1227 (<i>Pukeiti Gardens</i>)	1

TOTAL Number of Combined Visitors Recorded for Weekend Artists : 3,239

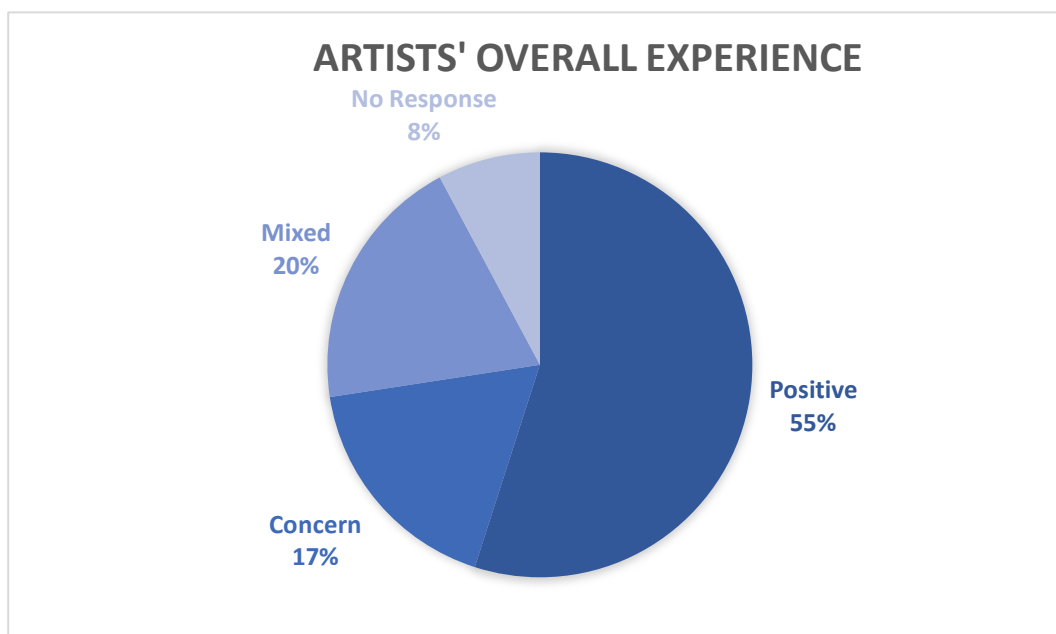
10 Day Artists

Recorded Visitor Counts	Number of Artists / Groups who recorded within this count range
31 - 99	4
100 - 199	10
200 - 299	0
300 - 399	2
400 – 499 (<i>3 Artists in one venue have been counted as 1 group</i>)	2
500 - 599	0
600 – 699 (<i>3 Artists in one venue have been counted as 1 group</i>)	2
700 – 799 (<i>4 Artists in one venue have been counted as 1 group</i>)	1
800 – 899 (<i>7 Artists in one venue have been counted as 1 group</i>)	1

TOTAL Number of Combined Visitors Recorded for 10 Day Artists : 6,448

Artists Overall Experience

The following data is based on the 51 evaluation forms submitted by artists, out of a total of 81 participants. It is important to note that some artists provided multiple suggestions and feedback points, reflecting a range of thoughts and ideas for the future of the Taranaki Arts Trail. As a result, the total number of suggestions may exceed the number of individual responses.



Artists' Positive Feedback

Feedback Points	Number of Artists
Excellent experience / Loved It	6
Good / Very good / Great / Positive / Enjoyable	12
Motivated to get work done	1
Busy, rewarding, fun / Good feedback from visitors	7
Sales up	2
TOTAL	28

Artists' Concern Feedback

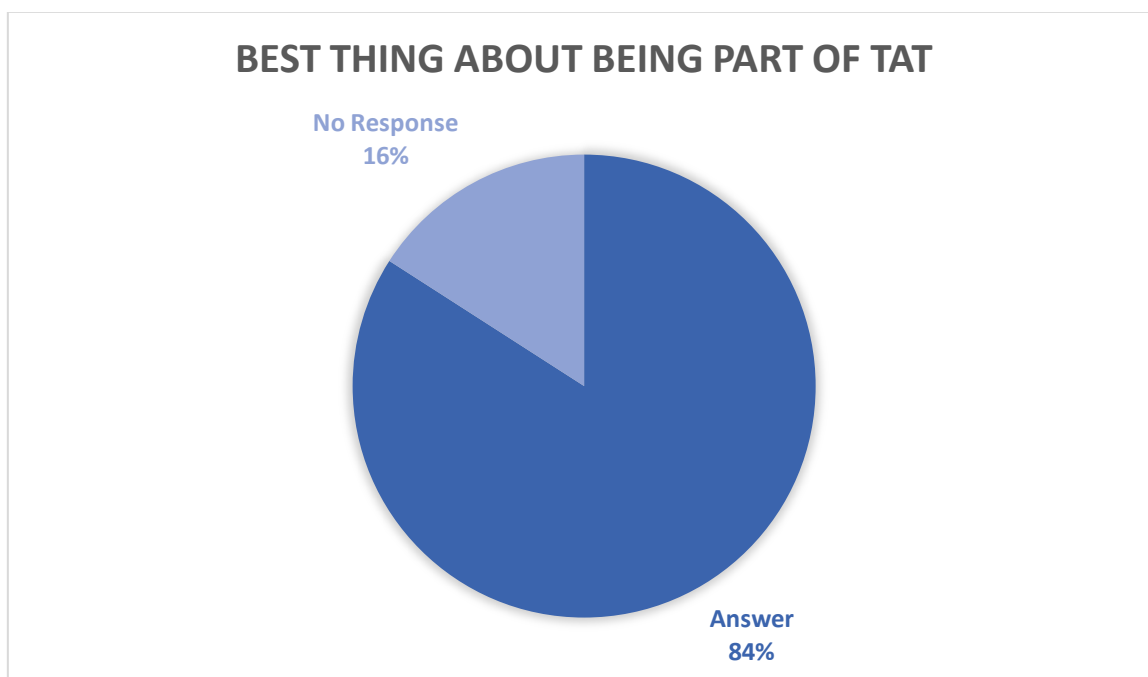
Feedback Points	Number of Artists
Fewer visitors than 2023 / Low sales	5
Overall disappointing / slow year	2
Visitors but not art buyers / collectors	2
TOTAL	9

Artists' Mixed Feedback

Feedback Points	Number of Artists
Low turnout but visitors sought out and showed genuine interest in work	2
Quiet, biggest sales from existing clients	1
Good but low turnout	7
TOTAL	10

Best thing about being part of the Taranaki Arts Trail 2024

The following data is based on the 51 evaluation forms submitted by artists, out of a total of 81 participants. It is important to note that some artists provided multiple suggestions and feedback points, reflecting a range of thoughts and ideas for the future of the Taranaki Arts Trail. As a result, the total number of suggestions may exceed the number of individual responses.



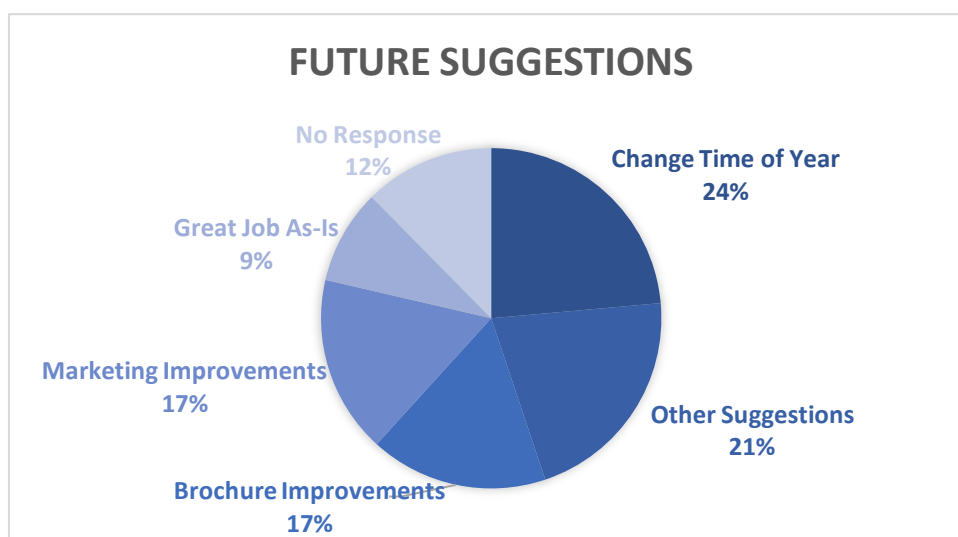
Artists' Feedback

Feedback Points	Number of Artists
Connecting to other artists / new people / friends / out of town visitors	13
Loved being in a studio with other artists	4
Amazing feedback from visitors	4
Being part of the Taranaki Art Community and TAT	9
Loved the HUB gallery opening night at Centre City	3
Sharing knowledge	1
Selling	2
People seeing my work / Exposure	5
Gained Confidence	2
TOTAL	43

What would Artists' like to see for the future of Taranaki Arts Trail

Many of the comments shared similar themes, allowing us to group them into key categories. The five largest points raised by artists have been summarised and represented in the pie chart below:

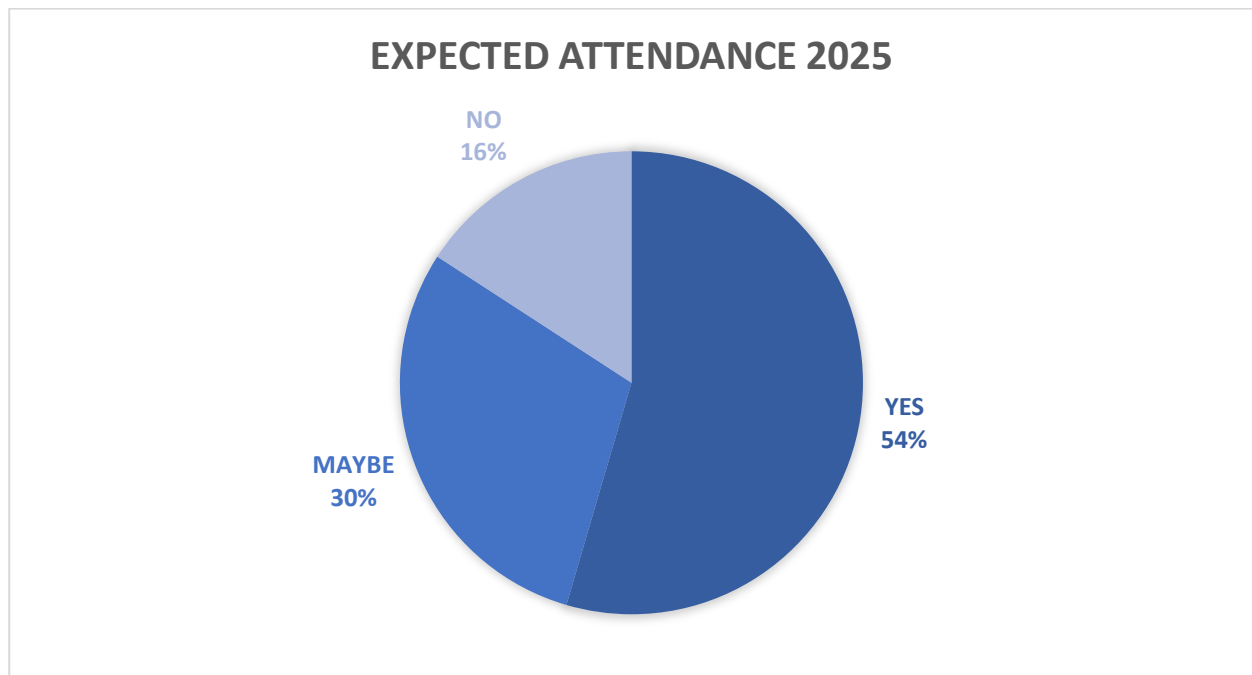
The data is based on the 51 evaluation forms submitted by artists, out of a total of 81 participants.



Suggestion Category	Number of Artists
Change the time of year	
Become Independent Again / Is this the right time of year?	9
Less Crowded time / Better coordination with other art trails nationally	8
Gardeners browsing giving numbers of visitors but not there to buy art	4
Other Suggestions	
Economic climate was dismal	2
Getting back to the TAT roots of visitors seeing artists in their studios at work	3
Reduce Gallery style exhibitions. Make 1 large gallery instead	1
I enjoy being with the Garden Festival	2
More artists out of New Plymouth	2
Preview day prior to opening where artists can visit each other	1
Go back to one weekend only / or a time change finish at 3pm	2
A single online point where people can go to plan their trip, including gardens	1
Have lost too many established artists this needs to be addressed	1
Planned tour with walks, demonstrations, workshops and the likes	4
Brochure Improvements	
Bigger and clearer symbols showing WEEKEND ARTISTS. Many people did not understand that there were weekend visits and so many artists had visitors in the week when they were not expecting people.	11
Name of venues included in the address	2
Brochure needs to be modernised and map easier to read. Issues around what is North, South, East & West.	2
More Marketing / Target Art Buyers	
More online exposure / longer build up to the event	3
Marketing is driven towards business in the market for purchasing art / More Art Buyers / Targeting the right market for sales	9
More promotions outside of Taranaki	3
Great Job As-Is	
More of the same stuff / keep doing what you are doing	8

Attending TAT 2025

The data is based on the 51 evaluation forms submitted by artists, out of a total of 81 participants.

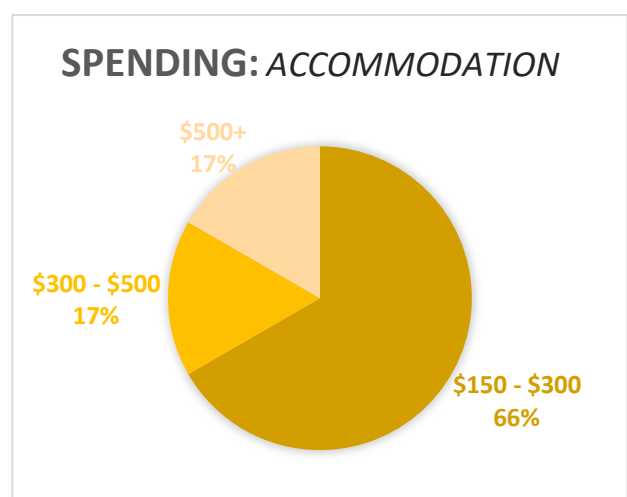
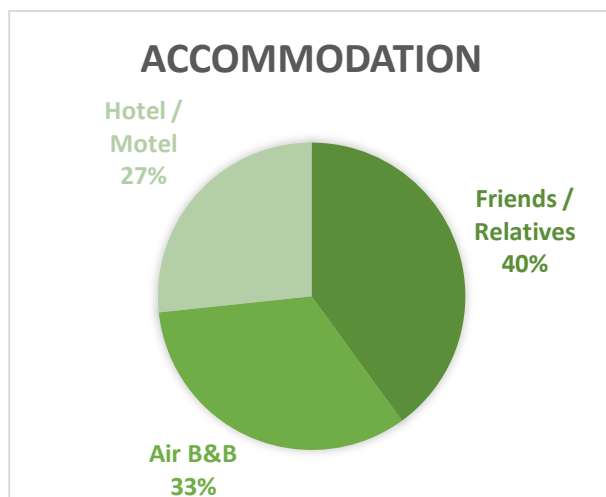
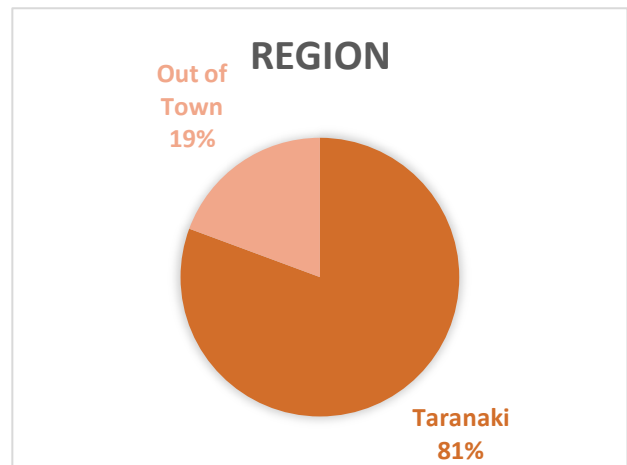
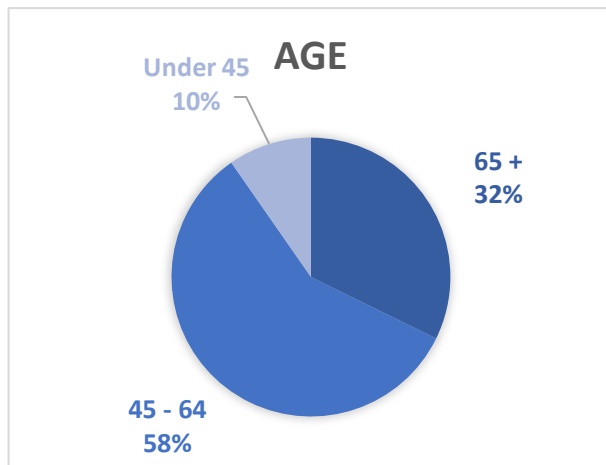


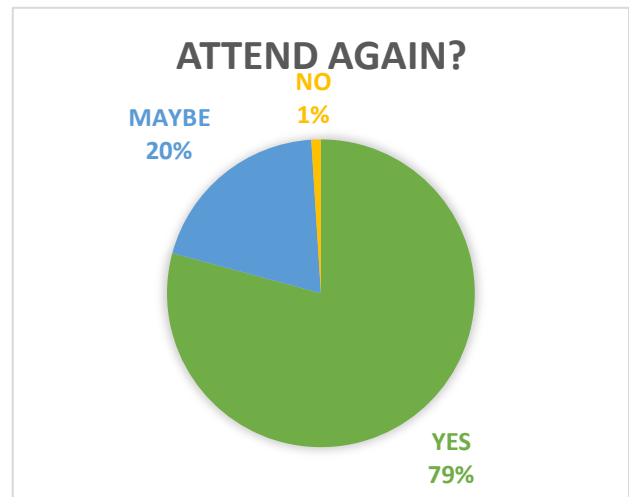
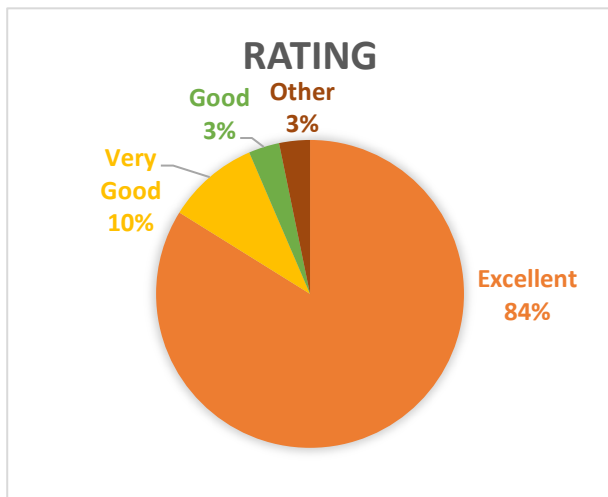
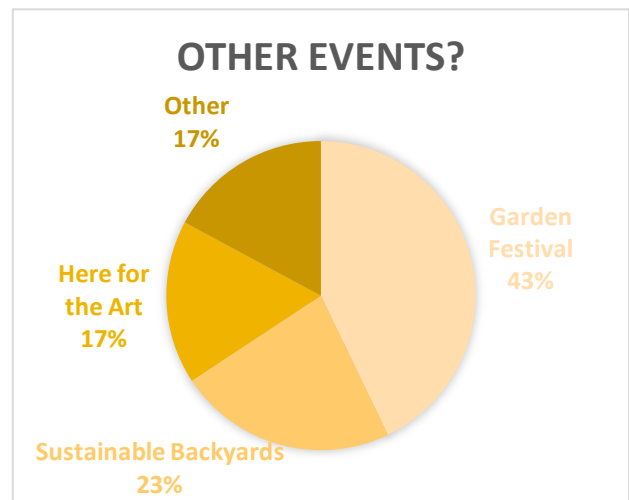
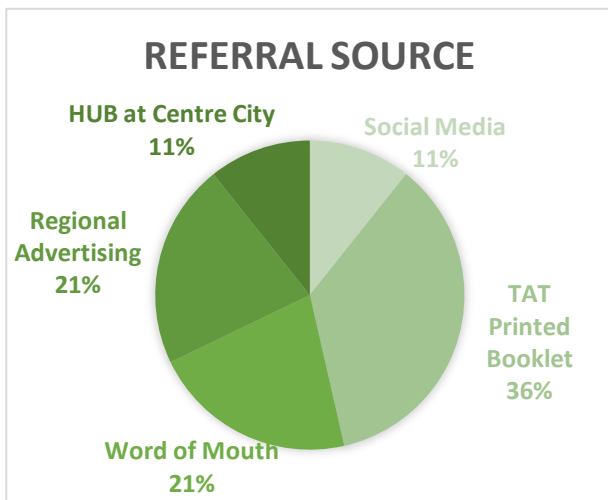
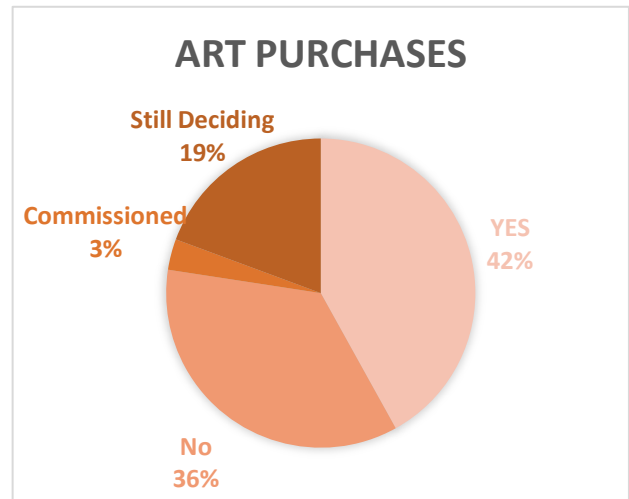
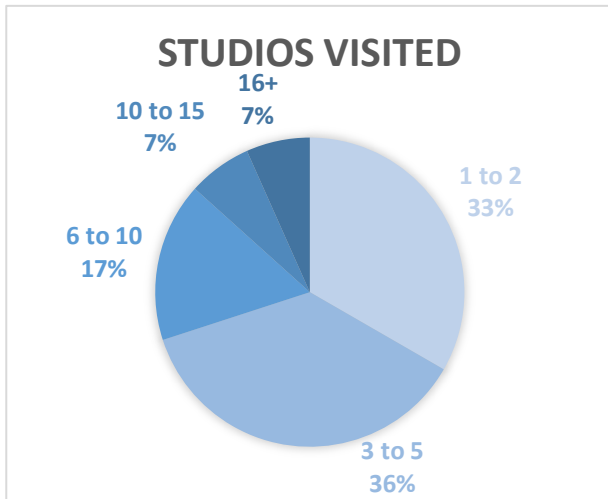
YES	Number of Artists
Yes	28
MAYBE	
Depending on venue availability	2
Depending on time of year	6
Depending on marketing	4
Focus on Art Shows	1
No Reason	2
NO	
Numbers were too low / sales too low	4
Won't participate unless marketing is driven towards art investors	1
I only do the trail every second year	1
Need a personal break	1

VISITOR FEEDBACK RESPONSES

The following data is based on the 31 evaluation forms submitted by visitors. Artists have left written comments from visitors which include:

- Online feedback form was too long and not easily navigated by non-technical people.
- Frustration around the brochure, not understanding the full 10-day artist studios vs the weekend studios.
- Overwhelmed around where to go and what to do with too many options to choose from around the region.
- Loved seeing art in more than one place, others loved going to galleries and seeing art in one place.
- Many people offered to pay as they did not realise the trail was free.





Visitors Comments

"Blown away by the amazing work"

"Another excellent trail. The exhibitions at Centre City were great"

"Beautiful experience looking at all the different arts, definitely an eye opener"

"Enjoyed – not sure why I hadn't been before"

"It was fantastic to meet artists I follow on social media and discover new artists"

"Wonderful event and so great to be able to talk to the artists"

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE EVENTS

1. Reaffirm Core Values

The Taranaki Arts Trail was established to celebrate connection and creativity, inviting visitors into artists' spaces to hear their stories, understand their processes, and form meaningful connections with their art. These personal interactions often lead to greater appreciation and support, fostering long-term engagement. Keeping this foundational purpose at the forefront will ensure the trail continues to offer an experience that resonates deeply with both artists and visitors.

2. Communicate Mission and Values Clearly to Artists

Ensure that participating artists understand the mission and values of the Taranaki Arts Trail. Clear communication will help align expectations and foster a shared sense of purpose.

3. Marketing: Increase Visitor Engagement and Support Economic Growth

Focus on attracting a broad and diverse audience of art enthusiasts, collectors, and tourists. Offer enhanced engagement opportunities, such as workshops, guided tours, and artist talks, to deepen the visitor experience and draw new audiences to the trail. Collaborations with regional tourism boards and local enterprises can amplify these efforts, therefore, creating a positive economic impact on our region.

4. Invest in National Marketing Campaigns

Allocate funding towards a robust national marketing strategy, including a "Save the Date" campaign to give visitors ample time to plan. Taking the opportunity to incorporate the additional programming such as workshops or themed events.

5. Enhance Booklet Design and Clarity

Future event booklets should be clearer and more user-friendly, particularly in distinguishing between weekend-only and full 10-day participants. Improved design and information will reduce confusion and enhance the visitor experience.

6. Consider a Biennial Schedule or shorter event

Shifting the Taranaki Arts Trail to a biennial event / every two years could generate greater anticipation among visitors, fostering higher attendance and injecting fresh energy into the event. However, we run the risk of not starting up again and this needs to be carefully considered. An alternative is to go back to a long weekend only.

7. Assess Independence from Overlapping Events

Evaluate the pros and cons of running the trail independently from events like the Garden Festival, Sustainable Backyards, Taranaki National Art Awards, and Kapiti, Hawkes Bay, and Waikato Arts Trails. Establishing a clear calendar slot could help avoid visitor dilution and reinforce the trail's identity as a stand-alone event.

8. Introduce a Feedback Mechanism

Implement a real-time feedback system during the trail to address issues promptly, enhance visitor satisfaction, and capture insights while the event is ongoing. This could include paper surveys and use a new purchased program to support the QR codes at venues, or a dedicated contact point for concerns or suggestions.

These recommendations aim to balance the trail's foundational values with new strategies to ensure its continued growth, sustainability, and success as a key cultural event for Taranaki.

CONCLUSION

The Taranaki Arts Trail 2024 demonstrated the resilience and creativity of the region, providing a platform for artists to showcase their work and for visitors to engage with Taranaki's vibrant arts community. Feedback from participants and patrons highlighted the trail's many successes, including the impactful addition of the HUB and the meaningful connections fostered during the event.

At the same time, challenges discussed will be addressed by implementing strategies within our budget and means. The Taranaki Arts Trail has the opportunity to enhance its appeal and accessibility, ensuring it continues to thrive as a flagship cultural event.

With a commitment to continuous improvement, the Taranaki Arts Trail is well-placed to build on its achievements, delivering even greater value to artists, visitors, and the wider community in the years to come.

THANK YOU

I joined the Taranaki Arts Trail as Coordinator one week before the event, on an eight-week contract. The data presented in this report is based on the feedback forms from artists and visitors during the 2024 Taranaki Arts Trail.

I have been truly inspired by the hard work and dedication of the entire committee. People stepped forward, collaborated, and problem-solved to make this event a success for our region. The countless hours and unwavering commitment behind the scenes are something only those who have served on a committee can fully appreciate.

While not everyone may be able to contribute in this way, I encourage you to take a moment to consider the incredible effort that goes into events like this and to feel gratitude for the amazing individuals in our community who believe in Taranaki and its potential. Their passion and teamwork make this region shine.

It has been a pleasure to support the Taranaki Arts Trail. Thank you to the committee, our sponsors, the artists, volunteers and patrons.

Kerilyn Douwes

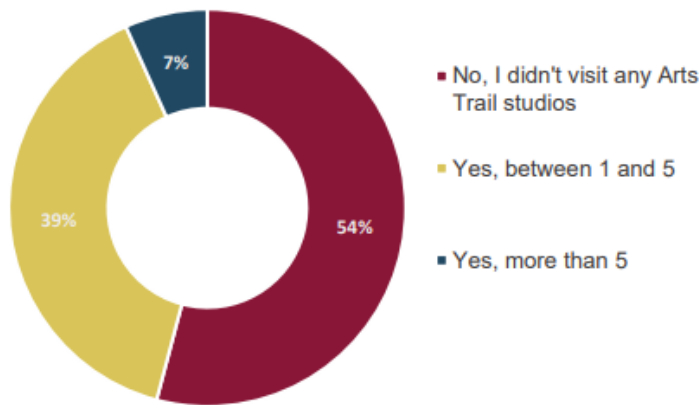
APPENDIX

The following information is from 2022

4.10 Taranaki Arts Trail studios

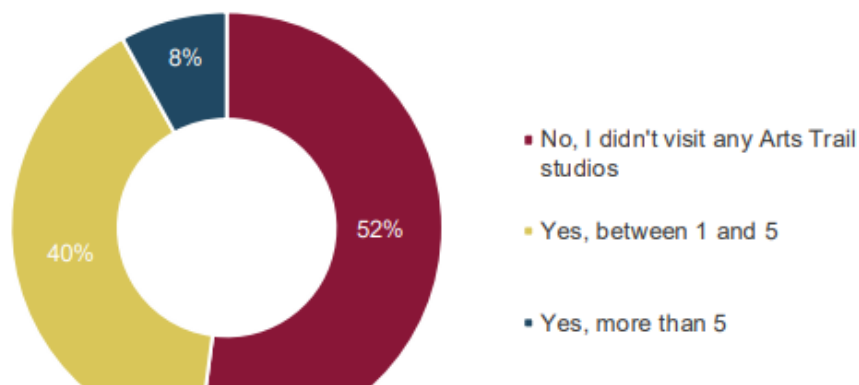
The Taranaki Arts Trail event was established in 2014, and after successfully joining forces in 2020, the arts trail event again in 2021, was run jointly with the Garden Festival. This event provided a unique opportunity for attendees to meet with the artists in their studios/workshops. In 2021, 40 percent of respondents had visited between one and five art studios, while a further eight percent had visited more than five.

Figure 4.12 - Visited Taranaki Arts Trail studios, 2022



Economic Impact Assessment
January 2022

Figure 4.13 Visit Taranaki Arts Trail studios, 2021



4.11 Purchasing of art works during the trail

In total, almost half of all respondents had visited at least one art studio/workshop during the 2021 Garden Festival. In 2021, 25 percent of all respondents had spent at least \$1 purchasing art works. This is almost half of all respondents who visited an art studio/workshop during the Festival. Of the respondents who did purchase an art work, over half spent up to \$100, while a further 20 percent spent between \$101 and \$200. At the other end of the scale, 13 percent of respondents who did purchase an art work spent more than \$500.

Figure 4.14 How much was spent purchasing artists' works, 2021

