

ELLSWORTH MAKERSPACE  
FEASIBILITY STUDY REPORT  
2022



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## FOREWORD

As the figurative heart of our city, Heart of Ellsworth enlivens civic and community life through creative placemaking which serves the public well-being and supports small business. We operate at the intersection of arts, culture and commerce. And, as members and leaders in both our downtown and artistic communities, we saw and heard a need for a shared working and making space. Heeding that need, we created a feasibility study in early 2021 to measure the practicality of such a space in our community.

We are pleased to share this Makerspace Feasibility Study Report. This report outlines our research into the viability of a makerspace in Ellsworth and charts next steps to bring a makerspace to fruition.

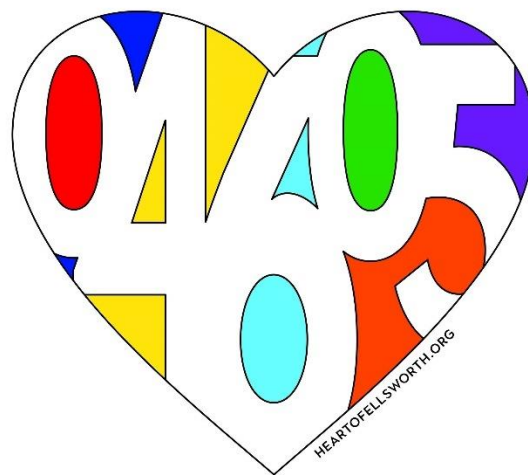
In Ellsworth, as in Maine generally, arts and culture are woven into the fabric of our community. An impressive number of amazing organizations contribute to the vibrancy and growth in downtown Ellsworth and the region, including Artsworth, Ellsworth Community Music Institute, and The Grand Theater. We envision a future makerspace as an opportunity to work together to fill gaps in the region, and provide support for current cultural outlets, rather than compete with established institutions.

We appreciate every individual, organization and business that dedicated time and resources to make this study and report possible, including everyone who answered the surveys and participated in our focus groups. We hope this document provides a path forward for anyone looking to spearhead such a resource for the community — in Ellsworth or a similar city — when an opportunity presents itself.

Thank you for taking the time to read our Makerspace Feasibility Study Report. If you would like more information or to talk about partnering on a potential makerspace, please reach out to [cara@heartofellsworth.org](mailto:cara@heartofellsworth.org).

Thank you,

Cara Romano, Karin Otto and Heidi Stanton-Drew, Makerspace Feasibility Study Group Leads



## ABOUT HEART OF ELLSWORTH

Heart of Ellsworth is a nonprofit organization focused on the ongoing revitalization of Downtown Ellsworth, Maine. Founded in 2016, Heart of Ellsworth develops and promotes artistic, cultural, economic, educational, environmental and historical activities in downtown Ellsworth to foster a vibrant community for all. The transformational strategies we use for community-based revitalization are recommended by the National Main Street Center Program. In 2020, Heart of Ellsworth was honored to earn status as the steward of Ellsworth's accreditation as an Affiliate Community of the Maine Development Foundation's Maine Downtown Center program, part of the prestigious National Main Street Center Program.

Downtown Ellsworth has experienced incredible success, despite the pandemic. In 2016, 50 percent of downtown buildings were vacant but, as of May 1, 2022, Main Street is near 100 percent capacity and 15 new businesses were launched in the downtown district since March 2020. Heart of Ellsworth contributed to this success through a combination of public events and programs offered to small business owners. These programs reflect our comprehensive approach to community building: we engage community members and business owners, and we acknowledge the critical relationship between arts and culture, community engagement and economic vitality. Our community development focus includes many activities, and our work emphasizes the power of the creative economy to build a thriving community.

Our current programming includes:

- Art of Ellsworth – held in concert with Maine Craft Weekend.
- Downeast Cider & Cheese Festival – celebrating our city's 200-year history of cider-making.
- Downtown Business Grants – offering micro-grants to downtown businesses to bolster their marketing.
- Water Street Mural – engaging the community in creating Ellsworth's first outdoor mural.
- Zoom@Noon – connecting business owners with government policymakers and resources.
- Bricks & Clicks – offering free, targeted assistance to business owners in one-on-one consultations with local professional experts.

We build trust by engaging the people we serve in meaningful roles — in the development, implementation, and evaluation of our events and programs. Ultimately, Heart of Ellsworth intends for our inclusive processes and project visibility to spur support for future arts and cultural experiences throughout the city. We demonstrate to the community that we serve them and give them a direct voice.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

<b>Feasibility Study Working Group Leadership Team:</b>
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Ruth Feldman, Program Director/Certified Business Advisor, Women’s Business Center, CEI
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Judy Sproule, Director of Strategic Initiatives, MDI Biological Laboratory
<b>Special Thank You:</b>
We would like to thank <b>Carla Pugliese</b> , former Pilot Project Director of the Cultural Alliance of Maine, for a site visit in Aug. 2019; <b>Crystal Hitchings</b> , Director of Community Infrastructure and Promotion Programs, Sunrise Economic Council of Maine; and the <b>hundreds of community members and artists</b> who participated in our surveys, focus groups and other engagement opportunities.
<b>Photo Credits:</b>
Heart of Ellsworth
<b>Supporting data research and report compilation by:</b>
Andrea Saunders

## METHODOLOGY

### **Quantitative Data Gathering**

Surveys were distributed to gather input from the state's creative community as well as residents and community members of the City of Ellsworth and Hancock County.

### **Qualitative Data Gathering**

Artist focus groups were conducted to gather feedback from area creatives, in addition to interviews with numerous existing regional makerspace organizations.

### **Research**

Heart of Ellsworth researched and reviewed information from academic sources, as well as art advocacy organizations, state economic and tourism studies, and more.

### **Plan Considerations**

Business plan and architectural considerations were outlined based on market research to provide guidance and a framework for these critical components.

### **Drawing Conclusion**

A conclusion was drawn on the feasibility of a makerspace, based on the collected data, community input and research.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Arts are a meaningful contributor to Maine's lifestyle and economy. In fact, in 2020, arts and culture contributed more than \$1.6 billion and 14,800 jobs to Maine's economy. And, in Ellsworth, the art scene has flourished with events like Art of Ellsworth: Maine Craft Weekend, programming at The Grand, performances at Ellsworth Community Music Institute, glass blowing demonstrations at Atlantic Art Glass studios, and workshops at Artsworth all seeing strong community support and participation. However, "Arts, Culture and Heritage" are areas for improvement and potential growth in the Downeast region, based on the 2017-2018 DestinationNEXT survey from Destinations International and the Maine Office of Tourism. The survey noted creative economy events, hands-on art making, and historical and heritage type of travel were features that could use more attention.

Arts and cultural offerings have significant positive effects on a community, both from a tourism and resident perspective. Cultural tourists spend more per trip than the traditional leisure traveler, and cities with arts and cultural offerings draw engaged residents and provide businesses with a strong workforce. Artistic and creative endeavors have also been shown to support innovation, improve school performance for students and provide a stress-reducing outlet.

Hancock County and Ellsworth's populations are growing, and a makerspace could provide a creative resource for long-standing and new members of the community. To determine the viability of such a space for the region, surveys, focus groups, and interviews were conducted. A downtown, or downtown-adjacent, makerspace was largely supported by both the artist community and local residents. Features like public parking and first-floor access, and resources like shared marketing and/or marketplace and community programming were also strongly favored. Community input as well as interviews with regional makerspaces helped us to develop business and architectural plan considerations that can be used to design a path forward for a makerspace.

Along with the business and architectural plans, recommended next steps for developing a makerspace include clearly defining the mission and vision of the space and conducting a gap analysis. Both would help the makerspace align with the unique personality of the community as well as understand unmet needs of the region and mitigate duplication of existing programming.

The study identified that most local creatives have their own workspace, yet the enduring interest in a shared makerspace demonstrates a pivotal quality of the space that should be kept in mind: community. An Ellsworth makerspace should be a place for sharing and collaboration, and programming for all members of the population.

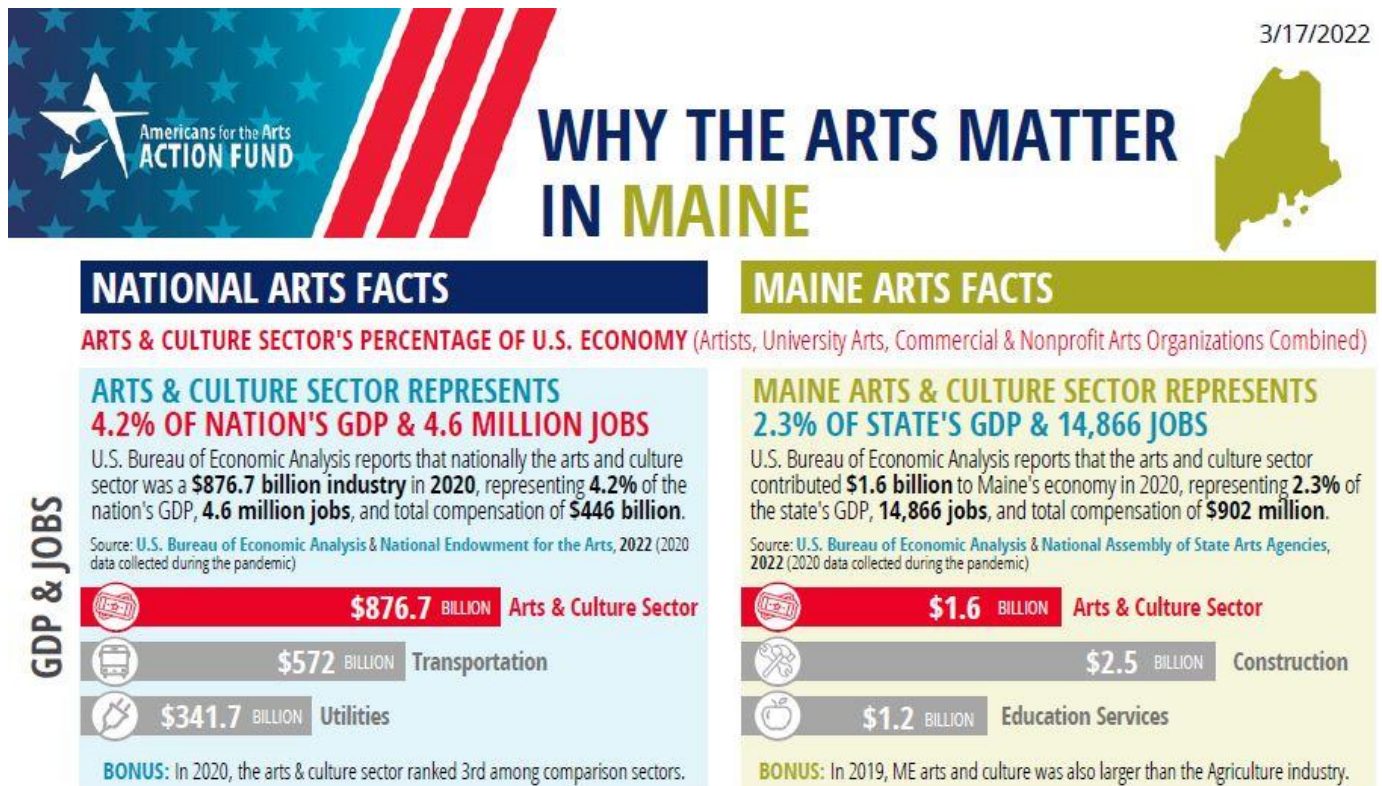
Based on the feasibility study, we can conclude that a makerspace in Ellsworth would indeed be a valuable addition to the city and, in particular, downtown Ellsworth. It could be an economic and cultural spark for the region as well as provide a resource for all members and visitors of the community. Heart of Ellsworth welcomes the opportunity to use our connections and experience to continue enhancing our city's vibrancy by supporting the creation of a makerspace if another group or organization would like to proceed with its development.

*This report is based on the results of artist and community surveys and may be subject to change if additional information becomes available.*

## MARKET RESEARCH

### Maine, The Arts & Ellsworth

Arts and culture are central principles to the way of life in Maine, prominently showcased by famous Maine artists and makers, and the creative, funky, and unique communities found throughout the state. Maine's downtowns are teeming with artists, galleries and showrooms, makers and craftspeople, delighting locals and visitors alike with their products and contributing greatly to the state's economy. The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis reports that in 2020 arts and culture contributed more than \$1.6 billion and more than 14,800 jobs to Maine's economy, accounting for \$902 million in compensation for workers.<sup>1</sup>



Source: *Why the Arts Matter in Maine*

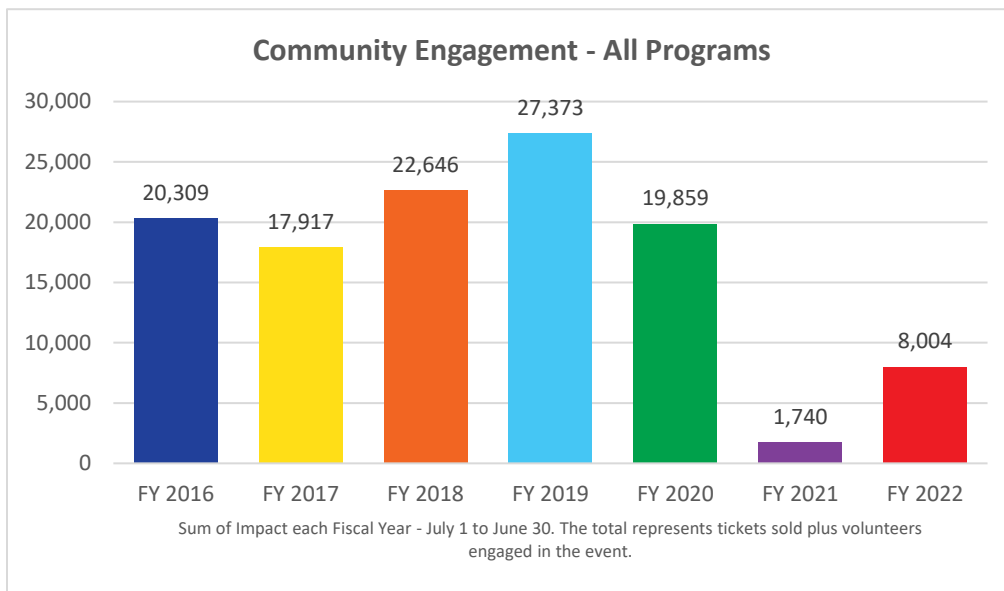


Ellsworth, Maine, has seen its own success in the arts. In 2017, Heart of Ellsworth began hosting Art of Ellsworth: Maine Craft Weekend as part of the annual, statewide Maine Craft Weekend event, held in conjunction with National Craft Week, to showcase Maine's artisan community. Over 2018 and 2019, Art of Ellsworth welcomed more than 1,200 event attendees. In 2021, after pausing the event in 2020 due to the pandemic, the event returned to Ellsworth and welcomed more than 550 attendees with eight program participants.

<sup>1</sup> *Why the Arts Matter in Maine*. Fact Sheet. Americans for the Arts Action Fund. Washington, D.C. 17 March, 2022, [www.artsactionfund.org/sites/artsactionfund.org/files/2022-03/Maine%202022.pdf](http://www.artsactionfund.org/sites/artsactionfund.org/files/2022-03/Maine%202022.pdf).



The town’s historic and anchor performing arts space — The Grand — also sees strong participation. Through 2020, the theater saw engagement (representing both tickets sold and volunteers engaged) ranging from 18,000 – 27,000 people each fiscal year (FY). A significant drop occurred in FY2021, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, with engagement noticeably on the upswing for FY2022.



Source: *The Grand*

Another local performing arts program, Ellsworth Community Music Institute’s free Midday Concerts, saw pre-COVID audience sizes of 50-100, with attendees ranging from children to seniors.<sup>2</sup> Woodlawn Museum, Gardens & Park is an additional cultural center in the city. The 180-acre historic estate and heritage museum located just a quarter mile from downtown Ellsworth offers house tours, concerts and performances featuring local artists, and other cultural events.<sup>3</sup>

The Maine Art Museum Trail winds its ways through the state, dotting the map with nine cultural institutions located in as many towns and cities. It’s important to note that Ellsworth is a gateway to one of those destinations — Bar Harbor, home to the Abbe Museum, Maine’s first and only Smithsonian Affiliate.<sup>4</sup> The Abbe Museum welcomed 30,000 visitors to the museum in 2019, a 33 percent increase in admissions over the previous year. The museum also saw a 31 percent increase in shop sales, with more than \$128,000 in merchandise sold.<sup>5</sup>

Although locals and visitors support the arts in Ellsworth, and it is located along the route to the Abbe Museum, there are no art museums within a 25-mile radius of downtown Ellsworth.

<sup>2</sup> Information provided by Ellsworth Community Music Institute, 2022.

<sup>3</sup> Woodlawn Museum, Gardens & Park. [woodlawnmuseum.org/](http://woodlawnmuseum.org/). Accessed 21 July 2022.

<sup>4</sup> *The Maine Art Museum Trail*. Maine Office of Tourism. [www.maineartmuseums.org/abbe-museum](http://www.maineartmuseums.org/abbe-museum). Accessed 9 May 2022.

<sup>5</sup> *2019 Annual Report At a Glance*. Abbe Museum. 2019, [static1.squarespace.com/static/56a8c7b05a5668f743c485b2/t/5fd3d8417dc3d80c32b8a3be/1607719016555/Annual+Report+2019+%281%29.pdf](http://static1.squarespace.com/static/56a8c7b05a5668f743c485b2/t/5fd3d8417dc3d80c32b8a3be/1607719016555/Annual+Report+2019+%281%29.pdf).

## The Arts, Tourism & Community

While the region has seen strong attendance and support for current arts offerings, the 2017-18 DestinationNEXT survey conducted by Destinations International and the Maine Office of Tourism found “Arts, Cultural & Heritage” was one of the top three markets that respondents believed had the most potential for growth in the Downeast region. Examples within that market include creative economy events, hands-on art making, and historical and heritage type of travel.<sup>6</sup>

“The quality of our recreational opportunities, historic places, and arts and culture are a draw for tourists and residents alike.”<sup>7</sup>

As Ettenger stated in his article *“The Other Maine Guides: How the Humanities Create Sense of Place and Enrich Tourism”*: “[C]reative arts enhance the overall experience of visitors by offering a rich variety of encounters involving multiple senses, perspectives, and sensations. In addition, the arts and humanities help create an image of Maine that acts as a magnet

to visitors. Stories, art, photographs, music, crafts, and other interpretations of Maine have created a sense of place that is at least as important to Maine tourism as the iconic natural places, wildlife, and scenic beauty that visitors often equate with the state.”<sup>8</sup>

More than 80 percent of U.S. tourists are categorized as cultural tourists and cultural tourists spend, on average, almost \$500 more per trip than the traditional leisure traveler.<sup>9</sup>

Along with attracting visitors, arts and culture add value to the community for local residents. “Painters and gallery owners, writers and booksellers, actors, musicians, theater managers, restaurateurs and chefs attract tourists, renovate old neighborhoods, draw media attention, and create jobs.”<sup>11</sup> The arts provide both a shot in the arm for a local economy (on average, every person that visits or attends an arts event spends \$31.47 beyond the cost of admission on ancillary products and services), as well as positive community experiences. Nearly 3 in 4 Americans believe “the arts unify our communities regardless of age, race, and ethnicity.”<sup>12</sup>

“To keep people and attract young people [small towns] have to have the amenities and activities that they want to be a part of,” says George Tzougros, executive director of the Wisconsin Arts Board.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Ouimet, Paul. “Destination Next Maine Statewide Assessment – Downeast Acadia.” Maine Office of Tourism. 6 June 2018, [motpartners.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/2018\\_MaineDestinationNEXT\\_Results\\_DowneastAcadia.pdf](https://motpartners.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/2018_MaineDestinationNEXT_Results_DowneastAcadia.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> *Maine Economic Development Strategy 2020-2029*. Maine Department of Economic and Community Development. 15 Nov. 2019, [www.maine.gov/decd/sites/maine.gov.decd/files/inline-files/DECD\\_120919\\_sm.pdf](https://www.maine.gov/decd/sites/maine.gov.decd/files/inline-files/DECD_120919_sm.pdf).

<sup>8</sup> Ettenger, Kreg. “The Other Maine Guides: How the Humanities Create Sense of Place and Enrich Tourism.” *Maine Policy Review* 24.1 (2015): 73-79, <https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/mpr/vol24/iss1/23>.

<sup>9</sup> Payne, Julie. “Insider Exclusive: Heritage Tourism: Facts & Figures.” American Bus Association. 30 Dec. 2018, [www.buses.org/news/article/insider-exclusive-heritage-toursim-facts-figures](https://www.buses.org/news/article/insider-exclusive-heritage-toursim-facts-figures).

<sup>10</sup> Starr, Stephen. “Can the Arts Save Rural America from the Recession?” *Ozy*. 15 Aug. 2020, [www.ozy.com/the-new-and-the-next/can-the-arts-save-rural-america-from-the-recession/277323/](https://www.ozy.com/the-new-and-the-next/can-the-arts-save-rural-america-from-the-recession/277323/).

<sup>11</sup> Dobelle, Evan S. “The Creative Economy in Maine.” *Maine Policy Review* 14.1 (2005): 8-9, <https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/mpr/vol14/iss1/3>.

<sup>12</sup> Cohen, Randy. “The Rebuilding Power of The Arts in Rural Communities.” Americans for the Arts. 29 Sept. 2020, [blog.americansforthearts.org/2020/09/29/the-rebuilding-power-of-the-arts-in-rural-communities](https://blog.americansforthearts.org/2020/09/29/the-rebuilding-power-of-the-arts-in-rural-communities).

## Intersection of Arts, Innovation & Business



Source: *Why the Arts Matter in Maine*

Chris Gallagher Jr. notes in his article “The link between art and innovation,” that arts are a driver of success and innovation in a number of areas, including increasing students’ school performance and graduation rates, as well as fostering creativity that’s critical in leadership and entrepreneurship. Not only does arts and creativity drive innovation — through fostering skills like imagination, resilience and collaboration — but it can also lower stress, allowing students, business leaders and community members the opportunity to concentrate on learning, launching and growing.<sup>13</sup> Additionally, local businesses and employers see the value of arts and culture in recruitment and retention. The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Economic Research Service conducted The Rural Establishment Innovation Survey (REIS) in 2014. As part of the survey, businesses were asked what local features were important in attracting and retaining a strong workforce. Two out of three businesses reported that arts and entertainment are important (either “somewhat” or “very” important) as a community feature in attracting workers.<sup>14</sup>

This connection between innovation and arts indicates a makerspace could be an excellent complement to existing programs and facilities in the area, including The Union River Center for Innovation, a business incubator and coworking space located in downtown Ellsworth near Harbor Park, which supports and encourages entrepreneurship and innovation in Hancock and Washington counties.

### Ellsworth/Hancock County

Hancock County, of which Ellsworth is the county seat, has a population of more than 55,000 residents, as of the 2020 US Census, an approximate 2 percent increase over the 2010 Census. That growth was driven by population gains in several cities and towns, including Ellsworth, which saw an 8.5 percent population increase (adding approximately 650 residents). Nearby towns — including Blue Hill, Surry and Trenton — added to their populations, as well. Even beyond the 2020 Census, it’s believed that populations have continued to grow in the area due to the COVID-19 pandemic, driven by those who left large cities for smaller towns that still boasted services, conveniences and walkable downtowns.<sup>15</sup> The entire state of Maine has seen a significant increase in population — with approximately 16,000 people moving to Maine from other states between July 2020 and July 2021.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Gallagher, Chris, Jr. “The link between art and innovation.” Politico. 7 April 2013. [www.politico.com/story/2013/04/the-link-between-art-and-innovation-089713](http://www.politico.com/story/2013/04/the-link-between-art-and-innovation-089713). Accessed 10 May 2022.

<sup>14</sup> *Arts Data Profile: Rural Arts, Design, and Innovation*. National Endowment for the Arts. Nov. 2017. [www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/Brief-4-LocalArtsEntertainmentAccess.pdf](http://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/Brief-4-LocalArtsEntertainmentAccess.pdf).

<sup>15</sup> Trotter, Bill. “Ellsworth-area growth drives Hancock County’s population increase.” Bangor Daily News. 17 Aug. 2021. [bangordailynews.com/2021/08/17/news/hancock/growth-in-ellsworth-area-drives-hancock-county-population-increase/](http://bangordailynews.com/2021/08/17/news/hancock/growth-in-ellsworth-area-drives-hancock-county-population-increase/). Accessed 26 April 2022.

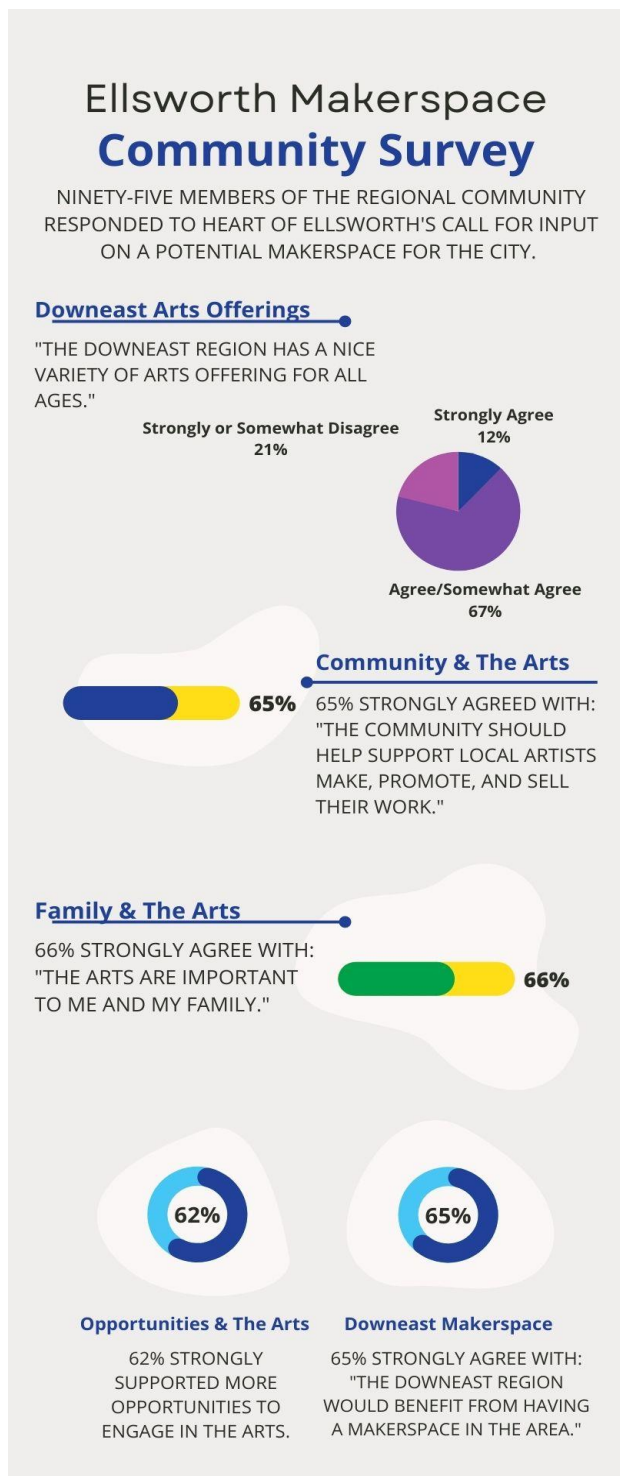
<sup>16</sup> Piper, Jessica. “Pandemic migration spurs Maine’s biggest population growth in 2 decades.” Bangor Daily News. 27 Dec. 2021. [bangordailynews.com/2021/12/27/news/pandemic-migration-spurs-maines-biggest-population-growth-in-2-decades-xoasqli29i/](http://bangordailynews.com/2021/12/27/news/pandemic-migration-spurs-maines-biggest-population-growth-in-2-decades-xoasqli29i/).

Ellsworth and Hancock County are centrally located within the geographic area of the newly formed Eastern Maine Life Sciences & Technology Hub of Excellence which was created in response to the state's 10-year economic development plan issued in late 2019. These Hubs are defined as areas with conditions present for strong economic growth, driven by talent and a convergence of research, higher learning, skilled workforce and business, and a livable, healthy space. In addition, these Hubs require infrastructure to support surrounding rural areas that include health, education, transportation and cultural services.

Given the population growth and influx of new residents looking to engage in a downtown environment, a makerspace could provide a much-needed creative outlet, resource and downtown destination for residents and visitors of the city. To explore this, Heart of Ellsworth conducted multiple market research projects to garner insight into the needs and wants of artists, residents and community members in Ellsworth and the surrounding Hancock County area. We conducted two surveys — one targeted to local community members and one targeted to members of the state's artist community. Maine Crafts Association's Former Executive Director, Sadie Bliss, provided the statewide list to help us gather essential information from artists on what would be beneficial in a makerspace, while the community survey was focused on gathering input from the Downeast region, specifically, regarding arts programming, interests, and needs.

## Hancock County Planning Commission Survey Analysis

Hancock County Planning Commission provided the following analysis of results from both surveys (see Appendix C for the full analysis).



## Community Survey Analysis

The general community survey was directed toward the consumers who would shop and benefit from the proposed makerspace, as opposed to the artists and creatives that would use it. The survey consisted of 21 questions that ranged from demographics and residency information to desired services and programming that the respondent would participate in, if available.

## Demographic Profile

The majority of respondents, 73 percent, indicated that they had lived in or been connected to the region for over 5 years. While 42 percent have been connected to the region for over 10 years. Over 90 percent were year-round residents, with 6 percent responding that they lived 6 or more months in the area, and only 3 percent were short-term residents. The median age of the respondents also aligned with the county-level data from the US Census Bureau. Women were largely represented in this survey, with 67 percent identifying as female, 30 percent identifying as male, and 1 percent each for transgender-male and transgender-female.

## Perceptions on Cultural Offerings

Only 12 percent of respondents strongly agreed that the region has a variety of creative and cultural offerings for all ages, while 67 percent agreed or somewhat agreed with this statement. Sixty-five percent strongly favored community support for artists to create and market their products, with 66 percent stating that arts were important to them and their family. Sixty-two percent strongly supported more opportunities to engage in arts and 65 percent supported the statement that "the Downeast region would benefit from a makerspace."

The types of activities that respondents reported participating in or attending over the previous two years, in order of highest ranking, include Free Concert (73 percent), Paid Concert (59 percent), Theater (56 percent), Gallery Exhibit (56 percent), Arts Class (44 percent), and then Artist Reception (37 percent). Dance Recital and Music Class were 13 percent and 15 percent, respectively.

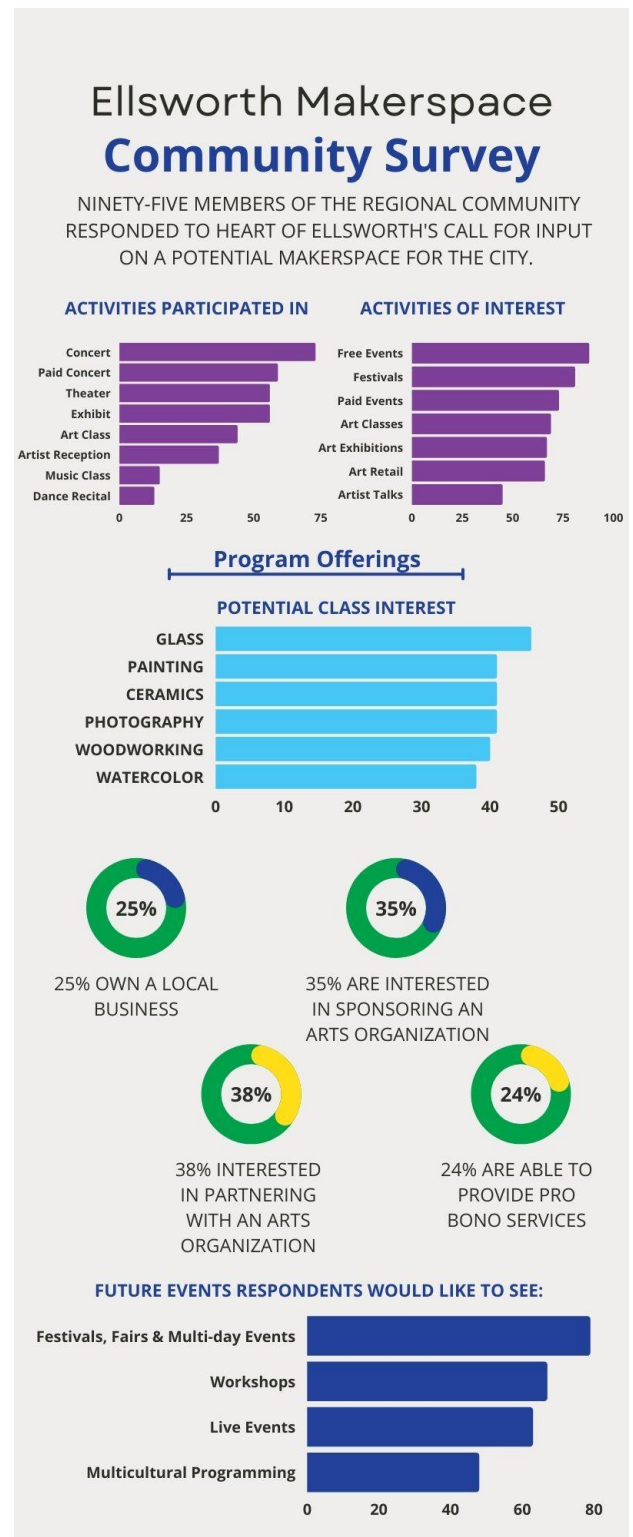
Respondents reported their willingness or interest in participating in various programs if they were available. In order of ranking: Free Events (88 percent), Festivals (81 percent), Paid Events (73 percent), Art Classes (69 percent), Art Exhibitions (67 percent), Art Retail (66 percent) and Art Talks (45 percent). Respondents were less interested in short-term rental and long-term rentals, telling us the makerspace’s function would be most beneficial as a community and education space.

### Program Offerings & Engagements

Question 10 covered potential classes and program offerings at the makerspace. Of the various potential class offerings, Glass (46 percent), Painting, Ceramics and Photography (each 41 percent), Woodworking (40 percent) and Watercolor (38 percent) were ranked the highest. Saturday had the highest favoring for attending an art class (66 percent), with a majority of respondents (59 percent), also preferring afternoons. Sixty percent indicated they would travel up to 30 minutes for the programs.

Roughly 25 percent of respondents indicated they owned a local business in Ellsworth and of those, 38 percent are interested in partnering with an arts organization, 35 percent are interested in sponsoring an arts organization and 24 percent are able to provide pro bono services.

Many respondents also wished to see more festivals, fairs and multi-day events (79 percent), Art Classes and Workshops (67 percent), Live Events (63 percent) and Multicultural Programming (48 percent) in Ellsworth. The remaining questions were open-ended responses.

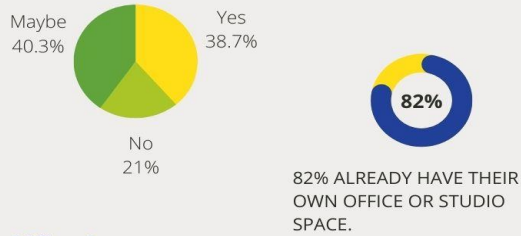


# Ellsworth Makerspace Artist Survey

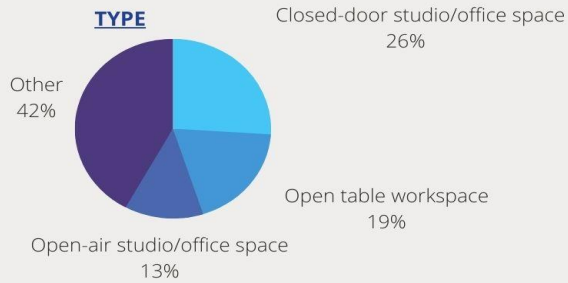
SIXTY-TWO MEMBERS OF THE STATE'S CREATIVE COMMUNITY RESPONDED TO HEART OF ELLSWORTH'S CALL FOR INPUT ON A POTENTIAL MAKERSPACE FOR THE CITY.

## Need for Makerspace

ARE YOU, OR ARTISTS/PROFESSIONALS YOU KNOW, LOOKING FOR AFFORDABLE STUDIO/OFFICE OR MAKERSPACE IN THE DOWNEAST REGION?



## Office Space

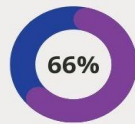


## FEATURES



## Shared Tools

66% DO NOT NEED ACCESS TO SHARED TOOLS.



## Artist Survey Analysis

Sixty-two people responded to the artist survey. The artist survey consisted of 25 questions, with the first three questions capturing name, zip code and contact information, and the last question an open-ended opportunity to comment.

## Survey Data Analysis & Interpretation

The two largest cohorts, by age, were 45-54 and 55-64 years old, totaling 48 percent of respondents. The next largest age demographic, with 23 percent of respondents, was 35-44 years old. This aligns with larger data for Hancock County, given the median age in 2020 per the ACS data was 48.8 years old.

When questioned about the types of medium the creatives work in, the largest responses were "Other-please specify" with 42 percent, "Paint" at 34 percent, and then "Mixed-Media" with 31 percent.

Question 7 asked whether respondents were searching for affordable studio space in the Downeast region. "Maybe" had the largest response, with 40 percent, then "Yes" with 39 percent. The next question asked if the creatives currently have studio space, with 82 percent saying yes.

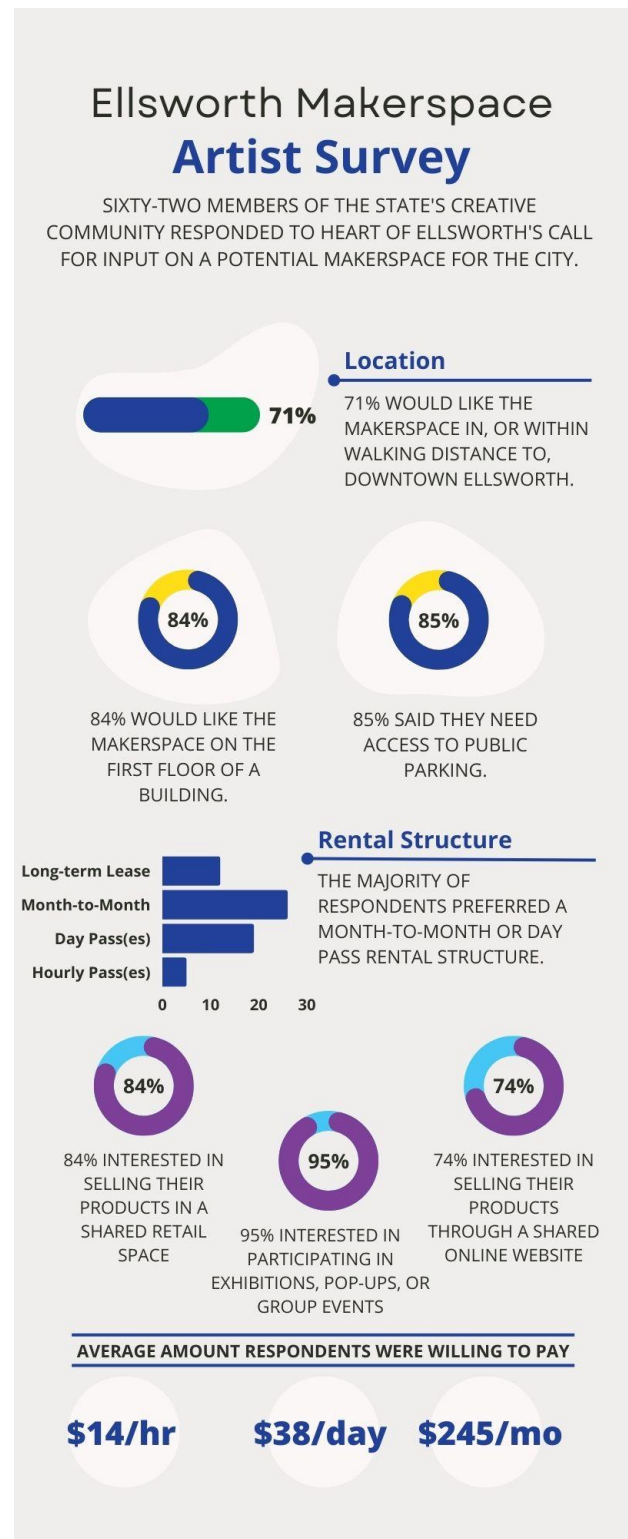
Questions 9 through 14 addressed the physical space and environmental demands of the creatives. With 26 percent preferring a closed-door studio/office space

and 42 percent seeking an “Other” in terms of the type of spaces of interest. Natural light, access to Wi-Fi and large utility sinks were also the next most important interior features and components for the space. Access to shared tools was not a priority for the respondents, with 66 percent saying they did not need access to shared tools in the space.

Locating the makerspace either in or near downtown was also a top priority for the respondents with 77 percent favoring such a location. They also favored (with 84 percent) the space being on the first floor of any location. Public parking access was also a priority with 85 percent of respondents saying it was a need for them.

Questions 15 through 24 covered financial and programming, including preferred rental rates, co-marketing opportunities and on-site workshops and learning events. The majority of respondents (42 percent) favored a month-to-month program followed by daily passes (31 percent). The least popular choice was hourly rates and long-term rental options. Surprisingly, more people selected access 3 to 4 days per week, 47 percent, versus 24/7 access, with 42 percent preferring this option. The overwhelming majority, more than 70 percent for the following questions, favored: selling their products on-site, or through a shared e-commerce platform associated with the makerspace, and participating in exhibitions and group events.

Regarding what survey respondents were willing to pay on an hourly, daily and monthly basis, the respective average amounts were the following: \$14.00 per hour, \$38 per day, and \$245 per month.





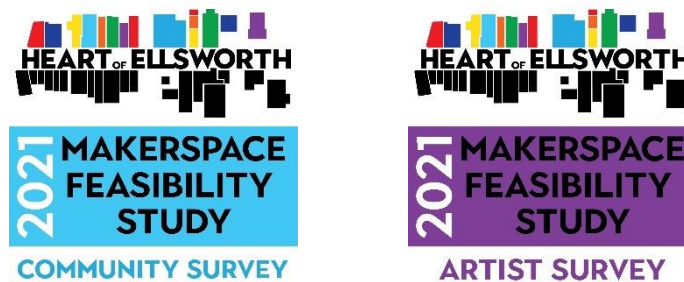
Question 19, which allowed for multiple selections, provided data on additional features of interest in a shared-use space. The most desired options were workshops/seminars (77 percent), marketing and business support (55 percent), professional development services (45 percent) and business planning and coaching services (33 percent).



The interpretation of this data supports the following planning decisions. Any makerspace would be best suited to succeed if it provides services and amenities beyond a studio setting. Marketing, professional development and the business side of the arts all were in demand for the survey respondents. Furthermore, the sharing of marketing would be a cost-beneficial approach as the upfront costs and ability to generate hits would be easier and more cost-efficient if distributed amongst a group.

The other obvious planning decision in this effort is the location. Downtown and within walking distance of downtown was a clear priority for the majority of respondents. From a land use planning perspective, the optimal location may be the “within walking distance” as Main Street storefronts face issues with access to parking during peak season and the operators may be competing with the customers for parking spaces. If the location is within walking distance, under 1 mile from downtown, the lessened visibility may be made up for with better parking, and potentially lower real estate costs. However, locating the facility within an industrial park is clearly not a desire of the potential users of the makerspace.

Community and Artist Surveys Summary



Respondents from the summer 2021 surveys, both Artist and Community, largely support a first-floor, easily accessed space that is within walking distance to downtown and has ample parking. This is complemented by providing opportunities for marketing and sharing the costs associated with online marketing and sales. In addition, the respondents highly supported programming that provided business and financial planning support to their creative fields.

## Artist Focus Groups

We ran two focus groups, in addition to the surveys, since they deliver “rich data” and allowed us to glean more in-depth information regarding individuals’ opinions and ideas.<sup>17</sup> A total of 12 people attended the two focus group sessions. Sadie Bliss, Former Executive Director, Maine Crafts Association, facilitated a discussion on the key aspects of the makerspace. The conversations were extremely helpful in understanding potential needs of area artists, as well as providing valuable information about makerspace experiences and expectations.

To facilitate the group discussions, a list of questions were thoroughly vetted to further explore space usage and needs, as well as desired programs and services. These questions were designed to dig deeper into how each person might use the space, opinions on how they thought others may use the space, and potential interest from the artist community and the greater population of Downeast Maine.

### Examples of Focus Group questions include:

- In a perfect facility, how many artists are part of the building/community?
- What is the role of the makerspace in the community/downtown?
- What is affordable?
- Tell us about your experience in another makerspace? What worked well? What would you improve?
- Would the nonprofit status of the entity make a difference to you?

*\*See Appendix D for a full list of questions.*

The sessions yielded some key points to consider when moving forward, including:

- All participants said they would use and/or participate in programming.
- Community connections and collaborations are an important feature of a space like this, with programs for the community a plus.
- There should be a combination of private/semi-private space and communal workspaces.
- Participants liked the idea of having specialized equipment in a communal space; equipment that is too expensive and/or too large for an artist’s home studio.
- Specialized equipment space should be managed by technically knowledgeable staff or volunteers.
- There should be space for 15 to 20 regular users (not including program participants), with 18 being the ideal number.
- The space should be able to accommodate at least 50 people during events.
- Preferred price-point to rent space monthly ranged across the group. One person said \$500 would be too much, but \$300 was just right. Yet, another said anything over \$200 would be a challenge. There was a suggestion that the study assess costs statewide for similar options.
- Gallery and retail space was well received, with participants believing it was an excellent idea that will attract visitors, help to build awareness of the space, and support artists.
- Business services/resource center options for artists were perceived as valuable.

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<sup>17</sup> Lee, Mie- Yun. “Conducting Surveys and Focus Groups.” Entrepreneur. 30 Sept. 2002. [www.entrepreneur.com/article/55680](http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/55680). Accessed 10 May 2022.

## Market Comparison

Based on survey results that indicated a makerspace could be viable in downtown Ellsworth and contribute to the economic vitality of the region, the team felt it would be of value to this feasibility study to compare some basic aspects of existing, successful makerspaces in the region. While a more comprehensive market research study will be essential to launch a makerspace in the area, the team was able to gather some key points about the business structure and operations of makerspaces which offer services that align with the priorities identified by this feasibility study.

To accomplish this, we conducted general research to identify qualities and attributes of makerspaces, used internet research to capture distinct profiles of a range of makerspaces throughout the Northeast, and conducted brief interviews with the owners/managers of six makerspaces in Maine and New Hampshire to capture a general overview of “lessons learned” and guidance from these experienced makerspace operators.

The interviews were particularly insightful and offered some useful information to any prospective operator of a makerspace looking for reference points.

Examples of questions asked include:

- How did the makerspace get started?
- How was it funded?
- What made the founding successful?
- Is there anything you would do differently if starting the makerspace today?
- How have you structured your membership?
- How many members/users/subscribers do you have?

*\*See Appendix E for a full list of questions.*

The following chart offers a high-level view of some key features gleaned from these interviews.

## Results of Regional Makerspace Interviews

Space Name	Bangor Makerspace	Factory 3	Open Bench Project (OBP)	Running With Scissors	Waterfall Arts	The Claremont Makerspace
Location	Bangor	Portland	Portland	Portland	Belfast	Claremont, NH
Business Model	501(c)(3)	LLC + 501(c)(3) Fiscal Sponsor	L3C	LLC	LLC + 501(c)(3) Fiscal Sponsor	501(c)(3)
Programs and Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Electronics</li> <li>· Hackers</li> <li>· Robotics</li> <li>· Tinkers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Studios</li> <li>· Wood shop</li> <li>· Metal shop</li> <li>· Bike shop</li> <li>· Community space</li> <li>· Programming</li> <li>· Storage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Wood shop</li> <li>· Metal shop</li> <li>· Spray booth</li> <li>· Laser cutter</li> <li>· Flex space</li> <li>· Programming</li> <li>· Storage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Private &amp; Semi-private studios</li> <li>· Wood shop</li> <li>· Print shop</li> <li>· Clay center</li> <li>· Media center</li> <li>· Storage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Private studios</li> <li>· Ceramic studio</li> <li>· Printmaking studio</li> <li>· Glass-blowing studio</li> <li>· Short-term rental space</li> <li>· Analog photo studio</li> <li>· Programming for all ages</li> <li>· Community collaborations</li> <li>· Gallery and exhibition space</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Private studios</li> <li>· Wood shop</li> <li>· Metal shop – machining &amp; welding</li> <li>· Jewelry studio</li> <li>· Fiber arts studio</li> <li>· Digital fabrication &amp; electronics lab</li> <li>· Computer lab</li> <li>· Programming</li> <li>· Storage</li> </ul>
Membership Structure	Membership	Membership + studio rental	Membership	Studio rental + membership	Membership	Membership
Membership Size	50+ members	40+ members	200+ members	70+ artists in residence	N/A	130+ members

## Makerspace Business Plan Strategy

While conducting the Heart of Ellsworth Makerspace Feasibility Study, the team identified several key factors and priorities to be considered when formulating a business plan for the establishment, implementation and sustainability of a makerspace in Downeast Maine.

Information gathered in the market research were central to the development of the business plan considerations. The market research gathered direct user feedback, community input and market comparisons to help determine elements of the makerspace — including the value and interest, size, budget, programs and population that would be served by the space. The information compiled can be used as a springboard for a more in-depth exploration.

### **Business Specifications**

The community and artist surveys suggest that, indeed, there is interest in a makerspace of some kind in Downeast Maine. The study also indicates which programs and services might be more desirable than others. Factors like distance willing to travel, fee thresholds, and space needs were also indicated. From this information, the group was able to formulate business specifications to estimate both facility and operating costs. In addition, this list will also help to guide the choice of space itself.

The following artist focus group results regarding space specifications and function could be used to inform the business plan (each option was assigned a percentage for a total of 100 percent for each category):

Primary Function	
Communal Workspace (Multi-use)	40%
Retail	20%
Individual Studios	15%
Shared Equipment	15%
Gallery	10%
Size	
1,000-3,000 sq. ft./4 to 8 studios/Shared Equipment	50%
1,000-3,000 sq. ft./4 to 8 studios	30%
1,000-3,000 sq. ft./8+ studios/Shared Equipment	20%
Primary Program	
Shared Work Sessions/Events	24.5%
Classes and Workshops	24.5%
Short-term Rentals	24.5%
Collaborations/Partnerships	24.5%
Exhibitions	.5%
Events	.5%
Long-term Rentals	.5%
Artist Support Services	.5%
Revenue Focus	
Grants	40%
Program Fees	15%
Membership	15%
Donations	9.5%
Art Sales	9.5%
Retail	9.5%
Key Donor(s)	.75%
Other - Sponsorships	.75%
Philosophical Priorities	
501(c)(3) Status	50%
Free Programs	12%
Accessible Programs	12%
Education Standards	12%
Exhibitions Open to All	4.4%
Retail Opportunities	4.4%
Historical Preservation	4.4%
Lower than Market Fees/Rent	.4%
Exhibition Opportunities Curated	.4%

These results, in combination with the survey results, generated a general description for the space.

An accessible public space, housing 4 to 8 individual studios/offices. The space should include a large, shared equipment space and/or dedicated areas for certain types of equipment; an entrance/communal space with a retail showcase; and a separate, flexible space for rotating exhibitions, events, and short-term rentals.

Key features of the space should include:

- Bottom floor access and one level, if possible
- A well-lit space with good natural light
- Flexible kitchen space
- Parking
- Moveable walls
- Neutral decor
- Retained/refurbished historical features (if applicable)

Usage assumptions:

- 30 to 40 sq. ft. per person in a communal/conference-type space.
- Expect 15 to 30 people active in the space daily (long-term renters, staff, communal equipment users/members, educators and class participants, retail store and gallery traffic, etc.).
- 30 to 100 people attending events.

Total space estimates for a potential makerspace fall between 2,590 and 3,150 square feet, given the estimates below:

Square Footage	Function
90-150 sq. ft.	4-8 studios
300 sq. ft.	Office space for staff
800-1,000 sq. ft.	Shared equipment space(s) — large open areas and some possible separate accommodations for certain types of equipment (e.g., ceramics or welding)
500 sq. ft.	Communal entrance space with retail area (possible security option)
500-700 sq. ft.	Rental space — exhibition, classes and workshops, events, short-term rentals, collaborations/partnerships, etc.
100-200 sq. ft.	All-access kitchen
300 sq. ft.	Storage — retail merchandise, artwork, chairs, tables, flexible walls, etc.

We would suggest that the following items are also considered when planning the makerspace:

- Possible 501(c)(3) options through one or more groups
- Energy efficiency
- Social distancing
- Special ventilation, plumbing, weight, safety for equipment area

## The Facility

Over the duration of the study, the working group discussed viable options to house the makerspace in Ellsworth. The focus to use a pre-existing building was a priority, however, consideration was given to options for a newly built space, historical preservation, and/or a shared space. Exciting examples of repurposed spaces in the area for similar use were reviewed. These included Schoodic Arts for All, which is located in a large, historic hall; Maine College of Art & Design in Portland transformed an old department store and renovated it for studios; and Waterfall Arts in Belfast is located in a refurbished elementary school.

From the market research it was abundantly clear features like handicap access, parking, access to or location in the downtown area, and public/visitor visibility would be ideal. The group collaborated closely with local architect Carla Haskell to address the likelihood of several options and the costs associated with these.

When considering a space, the following price per square foot was estimated at that time (Winter 2022):

Building Option	Estimated cost per square foot
New Build Commercial Space	\$300-\$400/sq. ft.
Remodel (modest adjustments to an existing space in fair to well condition, equipped with the basics already (bathrooms, standard ventilation, basic lighting, etc.)	\$150-\$200/sq. ft.
Total Gut Job (major adjustments to an existing space in poor condition, lacking basic needs for a commercial operation)	\$200-\$300/sq. ft.
Historic Space Remodel	\$150-200/sq. ft.

If repurposing a pre-existing building is selected, it is recommended that efforts be made to eliminate surprises. For example, an inspection of the building and a code study should be done before buying or renting. As a public space, it will be important to meet Life Safety and Accessibility Codes and any related costs should also be considered.



## Vision and Mission Considerations

Identifying the space's vision and mission will be a critical step in the business plan process. The market comparison, in addition to our research on the breadth of types of makerspaces in existence nationally, tells us that there's no single definition of space and functional requirements for a makerspace. However, our research also shows that thriving makerspaces succeed when their design and composition reflects the unique attributes, needs, and priorities of their community.

Some are ideally equipped for woodworkers, welders, machinists, or mechanics; some for electronic and technological endeavors, such as robotics. Others are well-suited for the fine arts, with facilities for painters, printmakers, and sculptors. Yet, most are a mix of all of the above. The six makerspaces we examined captured both this range of facilities and the personality of the organizations and communities where they're located.

While space allocations and features varied widely across makerspaces, all makerspaces in our research offered community-oriented programming such as classes, workshops, or "hackathons." Open Bench Project in Portland even offers a Maker Day Camp for youth in the summer months.

### A Look at Three Makerspaces in Portland

The Open Bench Project (OBP) is a "rough around the edges" but jam-packed-with-resources makerspace occupying an industrial warehouse space on lower Congress Street. OBP features a metal shop that's loaded (almost overloaded) with equipment, a well-appointed wood shop, an electronics/tech room, as well as several flex spaces. It's not messy, but it's space that invites you to get your hands dirty. And while some members have rented storage space for their work, there are no private studios. It is a very communal space and environment.

Across town, in the Bayside neighborhood, is Running with Scissors, a clean and well-organized artists workspace. While Running with Scissors also has a wood shop, it is smaller and features fewer tools than the wood shop at OBP. On the other hand, its print shop is better equipped than the print shop at OBP and it also has a clay center. While at OBP the shared shops are central to the function of the makerspace, at Running with Scissors, these shops serve almost as ancillary creative spaces in support of the 70+ artists in residence. Jake Ryan, founder and owner of OBP noted, "We often send people who need to do 'clean' work up to Running with Scissors and they send people who need to do 'dirty' work over here."

Factory 3 is a newer makerspace in Portland that resides both in function and personality in between OBP and Running with Scissors. It has a mix of studio spaces for artists in residence, but also has a metal and wood shop, both of which are immaculate and organized in a very intentional and spacious manner. It also features a fully appointed bike-repair shop and hosts creative social events, such as open-mics and poetry readings.

Ellsworth is in a unique position in that, unlike Portland where affordable creative space for artists is hard to come by, most creatives who responded to our survey indicated they already have creative space in their home. Even still, private studio space and collaborative shared workspaces emerged in the survey responses as desirable features of a makerspace in Ellsworth.

This appetite for a shared makerspace, even among a population with access to their own creative space, speaks to the #1 quality of makerspaces that is identified by their users, their managers, and in the research: **community**. Artists working in a communal space benefit not just from the access to space and equipment, but also from networking opportunities, idea exchange, potential career advancement and connecting with like-minded community members, as well as an opportunity for enhanced creativity. Many artists find that a shared space is freeing, engaging, and pushes the artist in a way that can evolve and/or shift their process in ways that it may not have when working alone. The draw of a makerspace becomes more than just the space and resources, it becomes the experience of being in that space.

Makerspaces that thrive all have a strong sense of community that is unique to that location. Any person or team who endeavors to create a makerspace would do well to focus first on the community that will bring it to life.

Another factor that also emerged as a quality of makerspaces is their distinct separation from the location of daily activities. In other words, they're not home. A makerspace would give makers a separate place to go. Locating a makerspace in downtown Ellsworth, where members can frequent local shops and cafes, would be a genuine asset to the city and county economy.

Finally, we see that makerspaces can be organized around different business models to suit the needs and capabilities of the organization creating and operating the space, with non-profit, commercial, and hybrid business models succeeding.

### Makerspaces and Community

When asked if he would do anything different, Patrick Russell, founder and owner of Factory 3 in Portland mused, "I wish I had invited people in sooner, even during construction, to be involved before we were ready to open. People want to be a part of something."

Over at OBP there are no paid staff, its members run the space and the few "shop stewards" they have are members who enjoy giving their time to help others.

### Gap Analysis

Before writing a detailed business plan, it will be crucial to further define the specifics of this space through a more in-depth gap analysis. This analysis will identify opportunities and interests in services and programs currently absent in the area. By addressing gaps, programs in the community will not be duplicated, there will be reduced competition for city and state support, and the expanded opportunities could drive community backing. All of these aspects will help ensure long-term sustainability of the makerspace.

Success will also depend on a dedicated group of individuals with a compelling desire to come together to design, manage, coordinate, promote, raise funds, and drive the implementation of such an endeavor. With this, in combination with proven interest in services and programs, a makerspace can emerge.

With vision and mission defined, gap analysis completed, and a passionate group of individuals in place, anything is possible. But, first, a business plan is essential when seeking funding and a successful rollout of an effort of this kind.

## Business Plan Checklist

The following are suggested considerations when putting together a business plan for the makerspace.

### Establishment Checklist

- Determine Business Model [i.e., 501(c)(3), LLC, etc.]
- Determine Legal and Financial Structure (must happen simultaneously)
- Define Vision and Mission
- Designate Management and Operations Structure
- Identify Community Connections and Partnerships
- Secure Funding
- Conduct Market Analysis
- Define Programs and Services (not only what types of programs will be available but which demographic groups will benefit most)
- Outline Operating Budget

### Implementation Checklist

- Specify Space Requirements
- Calculate Renovation Costs
- Determine Administrative Systems
- Recruit Staff and Volunteers

### Sustainability Checklist

- Create Reliable Streams of Revenue
- Establish Operations and Leadership
- Plan Marketing Programs

Additional Business Planning resources can be found at [www.nonprofitmaine.org/answer/business-planning/](http://www.nonprofitmaine.org/answer/business-planning/).

## Conclusion

“Makerspaces provide the physical and cognitive room for new enterprises and passions to take root.”

– Helena Fruscio Altman, *Gateways*<sup>18</sup>

Based on the feasibility study, we conclude that a makerspace in Ellsworth would be a valuable addition to the downtown landscape of the city, one that would benefit the local artists as well as residents, visitors and business owners. A makerspace would not only provide a community and collaborative space for creatives, but it would also provide an arts destination for regional residents and visitors to enjoy. Creating a communal artistic cultural space could help Ellsworth be a strong contender not only for tourism dollars — enticing visitors of Acadia and Bar Harbor to stop in Ellsworth, too, or making Ellsworth their ultimate destination — but as an even more desirable, well-rounded, and attractive city for residents, a place that provides a variety of unique and enriching cultural experiences and opportunities.

At Heart of Ellsworth, our work intersects with a wide range of community development activities, in addition to arts and cultural programming, and small business support. We collaborate with non-profits, government, businesses, and residents to support and enhance our city’s vibrancy. Our comprehensive partnerships in the region and position within the downtown community, as well as our extensive hands-on work with this feasibility study, give us a firm handle on the opportunity and options for a makerspace in the region. While, at least independently at this time, Heart of Ellsworth will not continue pursuing a makerspace in Ellsworth, we welcome the opportunity to partner on this project if the initiative were to be taken up by another group or organization.

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<sup>18</sup> Fruscio Altman, Helena. “MAKERSPACES: Hives of creative activity, makerspaces and co-working spaces are thriving.” *Gateways*. [gatewaysmag.org/makerspaces/](http://gatewaysmag.org/makerspaces/). Accessed 25 July 2022.

We'd like to close this report by sharing the success of a similar arts program in nearby Eastport, Maine:

*Saving Our Towns: The Social Impact of the Arts in Small Town America* researched similar arts and culture programs in Lake City, South Carolina, and Eastport, Maine, and the subsequent economic impact on the regions. In Eastport, two placemaking grants awarded to the owners of The Tides Museum were used to drive arts participation in the small, coastal town. In 2012, The Tides Museum received a \$250,000 grant from Artspace (which was matched by the state of Maine for a total of \$500,000) to develop Artsipelago, an initiative that's purpose was to strengthen connections between arts and culture. Artsipelago planned programming included an artist residency program, StudioWorks facility, art classes and workshops, artist installations, events, and restoration and preservation of historic buildings. The second grant, also from Artspace, was a \$150,000 grant awarded in 2014 for ARTIS(TR)EA, a program that "attempted to bring together the downtown and dockside areas of Eastport and embed the arts within them, connect with artists across the Canadian border, and map and document the area's natural and cultural resources."

When comparing the change in key indicators between 2011 and 2019, Eastport's changes are significant. Eastport realized a rise in median household income (despite population decline), a drop in poverty rate (while during the same timeframe Maine as a state saw a rise), a reduction in unemployment and a decrease in property crime rates.<sup>19</sup>

As stated in *Saving Our Towns*, examples like that of Eastport "are powerful evidence that **investment in the arts can provide a pathway towards economic and social recovery** for American communities devastated by the one-two punch of ten years of economic decline followed by a deadly pandemic."

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<sup>19</sup> Christiansen, Whitney. "Saving Our Towns: The Social Impact of the Arts in Small Town America." Be An Arts Hero. 20 April 2021, [drive.google.com/file/d/1pbOd7BUxedX6FWRB7yy17iLnOGmgWb3t/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1pbOd7BUxedX6FWRB7yy17iLnOGmgWb3t/view). Accessed 9 May 2022.

## Appendix A

### Art of Ellsworth: Maine Craft Weekend 2021 Report

#### **Art of Ellsworth: Maine Craft Weekend**

**2021 Program Date: Oct 1 - 3**

**Program Production Time: Aug - Oct 2021**

**Program Established: 2018**

**State-Wide Program Partners: Maine Craft Association, Maine Downtown Center**

Maine Craft Weekend (MCW) is an annual statewide celebration of craft, organized by the Maine Crafts Association (MCA). Each year Heart of Ellsworth (H of E) partners to present local offerings in fine, traditional, and homespun craft, including visual and performing arts, Maine-made specialty foods, craft beverages, artist talks, activities for kids, and live music.

In 2018 MCA partnered with H of E to expand the state-wide program to include Main Street organizations as Featured Cities. Ellsworth was the first featured city and lead the program's expansion to include six additional cities around the state by 2021. Featured cities are dedicated communities that partner with Maine Craft's Association to create and coordinate city-wide craft and related events. This creates hubs of activity which is promoted by Maine Craft Weekend, bringing locals and visitors together. Thanks to Ellsworth's leadership, the featured city program is now a cornerstone of the annual statewide celebration.

#### **Program Goals:**

- Expand the "Maine Made" local brand
- Boost sales and awareness of existing downtown businesses
- Encourage entrepreneurial collaboration making Ellsworth a destination through yearly events and programs
- Provide an educational platform for residents and visitors of all ages

#### **Ellsworth Program Participants:**

**Clothes Encounter** - Sale

**ShareStudios** - Demonstrations (**new business**)

**Ghost Rose Tattoo** - Demonstration (**new business**)

**Fogtown Brewery** - Tour, demonstration, fundraising concert

**Artsworth Studios** - Demonstration, sale

**Precipice Coffee** - Demonstration (**new business**)

**Downeast Railroad** – Tour

**The Grand Theater** - Tour

**Number of Attendees: 550 +**

- October 1st = 130 + people
- October 2nd = 400+ people at demonstrations, tours, sales
- October 3rd = 20 people

**Small Business Testimonials:**

**Maggie Iannuzzi of Precipice Coffee:** “Overall weekend sales were up by 25% over the prior 4 weeks. We believe the publicity of the event contributed to new customers. People from other towns commented how great it is to see downtown promoted with a theme. Two or three groups that stopped by the shop said that they came to Ellsworth just for MCW. It was a great opportunity to talk about the roaster, our business, and why we choose Ellsworth. Our overall new customer base was up by 25% as well.”

**Stephanie Hare of Share Studios:** “Our overall attendance was great but typically we don't get a ton of walk-in visitors, maybe one to two on an average weekend. MCW we had 20-30 visitors on Saturday and two on Friday.”

**Linda Perrin of Atlantic Art Glass:** “We experienced a 300% increase in sales and attendees over previous years. The 2021 event was a huge success. All in all, we hope to build on this type of event - thank you to Maine Craft Association for being such a great partner in developing these types of opportunities focusing on our local makers.”

**Suzanne Wood of Clothes Encounter:** Closed on Saturday due to staffing issues but the busyness of downtown over the weekend made the shop owner realize that she needs to be open 5 days a week in 2022.

**Jon Stein of Fogtown:** Over MCW sales increased - 9% higher than the average sales from the previous 4 weekends. We also saw a 24% increase in total customers over the weekend with a 14.6% increase in new customers over the weekend.

**Education:**

Downtown resident Henri got into the Maine Craft Weekend spirit this past weekend for our celebration of Art of Ellsworth: @maine\_craft\_weekend Henri’s mom reported that “He wanted to talk about the event. I told him crafts are things u make, so he said “I make Lego!” So he wanted to display them and sit out front to answer any questions. Henri needed his snacks to help him thru the sit.” Thank you to downtown resident Page Steele who shared this creative happenstance with us. Documentation like this solidifies that our programming is making a difference in the Ellsworth community!



## Appendix B

### Art of Ellsworth: Maine Craft Weekend 2021 Press Release

#### For Immediate Release, September 15, 2021:

CONTACT: Cara Romano, Director, Heart of Ellsworth  
cara@heartofellsworth.org

#### Outdoor Benefit Concert Kicks off the 4th Annual Art of Ellsworth: Maine Craft Weekend, October 1-3

ELLSWORTH, Maine: October 1<sup>st</sup> kicks off the **4th Annual Art of Ellsworth: Maine Craft Weekend (October 1-3)** being held in conjunction with Maine Crafts Association statewide celebration of craft and American Craft Week. Ellsworth will once again be at the forefront as a Featured City and will be promoted as a destination for cultural activities in Downeast Maine.

The celebration will begin with an outdoor benefit concert and fundraiser for Heart of Ellsworth's new [Downtown Ellsworth Mural Project](#). The benefit will feature the Fogtown Family Band performing live at Fogtown Brewing Company, starting at 5pm. Locally handcrafted selections of beer, cider, and seltzer as well as pizza from the wood-fired brick oven will be available for purchase in the beer garden from 3 to 8pm.

**Art of Ellsworth: Maine Craft Weekend** events welcomed over 1200 event attendees in its last two years. After a pandemic pause in 2020, Heart of Ellsworth is bringing the event back safely in 2021 by collaborating with downtown cultural partners holding smaller events and sales over the weekend.

#### Spotlight events include:

OCT 1: Live Benefit Concert Benefiting the Downtown Ellsworth Mural Project, Fogtown Brewing Company @ 25 Pine

OCT 2: Papermaking Demonstration, Share Studios @ 6 State

OCT 1-3 : Live Theater - Nunsense, The Grand Theater @ 165 Main Street (Show continues thu Oct 10)

OCT 1-17: Online Silent Auction Benefiting the Downtown Ellsworth Mural Project @ [heartofellsworth.org](http://heartofellsworth.org)

OCT 2-3: Glassblowing Demonstrations, The Glass Pumpkin Patch, Atlantic Art Glass @ 25 Pine

Event times, details and full calendar of events are listed on the Heart of Ellsworth's dedicated page on the Maine Craft Weekend website: <http://mainecraftweekend.org/ellsworth/> Additional events will be added regularly. For more information, please email: cara@heartofellsworth.org.

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#### About Art of Ellsworth: Maine Craft Weekend

Started in 2017, Art of Ellsworth: Maine Craft Weekend is an event celebrating the creative community in Ellsworth. Participants include galleries, artists, retail shops, eateries, breweries and non-profits in the urban core who offer studio tours, sales, artist demonstrations and live music. The event was created by Heart of Ellsworth, a 501c3 championing downtown Ellsworth through programs, events, and community engagement.

#### About the Downtown Ellsworth Mural Project

This project was born in 2019 by a group of seven community members, including local artists, business owners, and Heart of Ellsworth board members. The group formed a committee that has been meeting for nearly two years to develop the project. One committee member generously donated a 3,000 square foot exterior wall of their downtown business as the site for the future mural. The location is the site of Ellsworth's first settlement along the Union River and today anchors a bustling intersection that is passed by an average of 10,000 people daily according to Maine DOT.

Photo caption: Fogtown Beer Garden, location of the benefit concert



## Appendix C

### Hancock County Planning Commission Artist & Community Needs Assessment & Survey Analysis

## Introduction + Data & Planning

Planning relies on data as the basis for making most policy decisions. Often the most important data is the public opinion as it pertains to the actual needs or vision of the general public and what they desire for any infrastructure development, programmatic changes or financial policy. The term *vox populi* is never more applicable in the modern approach to planning. It could be said, *vox populi vox initium*, the voice of the people is the voice to start. Heart of Ellsworth's Makerspace Feasibility Study is a planning endeavor and the start of any good planning endeavor begins with the voice of the people. This document is an analysis of the maker/creatives' survey conducted online by Heart of Ellsworth (HoE) over the summer of 2021 along with the general community survey. This document will interpret and analyze the important data takeaways from the two surveys and communicate the data in a manner useful to inform the next phases of this planning process.

Data is used in planning to facilitate making as non-biased policy decisions as possible. While no planning document or process is ever value neutral, beginning with a data-based approach does filter out some of the ingrained perspectives that may limit the planning document and cause a myopic view and facilitate proposing the most sound policies or finding the best path forward through difficult topics. The public opinion survey is also a reliable method to ensure that the actual desires of the public or in this case the potential clientele and users of the planned makerspace are met. The planners may have one idea, the people another.

The results from the survey provided by HoE provide usable metrics to inform the next steps in the planning process. Over sixty persons responded to the survey from a total arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services industry population in Hancock County of 2,678 per the US Census Bureau's 2019 American Community Survey (ACS). This number is most likely higher as it included persons employed in non-creative industry fields such as restaurant servers etc. An estimate of the total number of persons employed in the creative industries in Hancock County, would best be done based upon a web search and listing of local artists, galleries and studios. The realistic figure for persons actively working as artists in Hancock County is between 300 to 400 based upon the season. With a total of 62 responses from an estimated total population of 300 ~ 400, this is a reliable sample size to make an informed decision.

This is the start of planning. What do the people want, and knowing what they want, how do we get it for them. The following is a breakdown of what the creatives said in their responses to the survey. For this purpose, we round to the nearest whole number to get the percentages. Thus, if the data shows 45.3% of respondents say they want a purple widget for a light switch, we would report it as 45% and if 67.9% say they want dolphin pattern wallpaper, we simply say 68%.

# Survey Data Analysis & Interpretation – Artists & Makers

The artist survey consisted of twenty-five questions, with the last question as an open-ended opportunity to comment as desired. The first 3 questions were simply name and zip code inputs and contact information and question 5 was a write in response. Beginning with question 4 quantifiable data was collected.

Question 4 covered the age range of the respondents. The largest two cohorts, 48% total, were 45-54 and 55-64. With the second largest age demographic being 35-44. This aligns with larger data for Hancock County. The median age in 2020 per the US Census – 2019 ACS data was 48.8 years old.

Question 6 collected the types of medium the creatives work in. The largest responses were “Other-please specify” with 42%, “Paint” at 34% and then “Mixed-Media” with 31%. The least popular medium was graphics at 5%.

Question 7 addressed the opinion on searching for affordable studio space in the Downeast region. With a Yes, No, Maybe input provided. “Maybe” had the largest response amount at 40%, with “Yes” at 39%. The following question, asked if the creatives currently have studio space, with 82% saying yes.

Questions 9 through 14 addressed the physical space and environmental demands of the creatives. With 26% preferring a closed-door studio/office space and 42% seeking an “Other” in terms of the type of spaces of interest. Natural light, access to Wi-Fi and large utility sinks were also the next most important interior features and components for the space. Access to shared tools was not a priority for the respondents, with 66% saying no they did not need access to shared tools in the space.

Locating the makerspace either near or within a downtown was also a top priority for the respondents with 77% favoring such a location. Only 5% were in favor of locating the facility within an industrial park. And this downtown or near downtown location was also favored (84%) on the first floor of any location. Public parking access was also a priority with 85% of respondents saying it was a need for them.

Questions 15 through 24 covered financial and programmatic topics such as amount willing to pay for renting the space, co-marketing products and on-site workshops and learning events. The majority of respondents (42%) favored a month-to-month lease program followed by daily passes (31%). The least popular choice was hourly rates and long-term lease options. Surprisingly, more people selected access 3 to 4 days per week, 47%, versus 24/7 access 42%. The overwhelming majority, above 70% for the following questions, favored: selling their products onsite, or through a shared e-commerce platform associated with the makerspace, and participating in exhibitions and group events.

Regarding what survey respondents were willing to pay on an hourly, daily and monthly basis, the respective average amounts were the following: \$14.00 per hour, \$38 per day, and \$245 per month.

Question 19, which allowed for multiple selections, provided data on additional features that would interest the respondent in a shared-use space. The most selected options were workshops/seminars (77%), marketing and business support (55%), professional development services (45%) and business planning and coaching services (33%).

The interpretation of this data supports the following planning decisions. Any makerspace that Heart of Ellsworth plans on developing would be best suited to succeed if it provides services and amenities beyond a studio setting. Marketing, professional development and the business side of the arts all were in demand for

the survey respondents. Furthermore, the sharing of marketing would be a cost-beneficial approach as the upfront costs and ability to generate hits would be easier and more cost-efficient if distributed amongst a group.

The other obvious planning decision in this effort is the location. Downtown and withing walking distance of downtown was a clear priority for the majority of respondents. From a land use planning perspective, the optimal location may be the “withing walking distance” as Main Street store fronts face issues with access to parking during peak season and the operators may be competing with the customers for parking spaces. If the location is within walking distance, under 1 mile from downtown, the lessened visibility may be made up for with better parking, and potentially lower real estate costs. However, locating the facility within an industrial park is clearly not a desire of the potential users of the markerspace.

What will need to be further interpreted is the actual types of interior amenities and architectural programming required for the space. While natural light and access to parking were priorities, the closed door versus open space layout and then other requires further investigation. What one creative likes for a studio space will hardly be shared by any two others. This will present the largest challenge for the planners of this project.

## **Survey Data Analysis & Interpretation – General Community**

The general community survey, directed towards the consumers that would shop and benefit from the proposed makerspace, not the artists and creatives, consisted of 21 questions. The questions ranged from basic demographics and residency to desired services and programming that the respondent would participate in and benefit from.

### **Demographic Questions**

The majority of respondents (73%) indicated that they had lived or been connected to the region for over 5 years. Of the total respondents (42%) for over 10 years. Over 90% were year-round residents, with 6% responding that they live 6 or more months. Only 3% were short-term residents. The median age of the respondents also aligned with the county level data from the US Census Bureau. 67% of respondents identified as female, with 30% male and 1% each for transgender-male and transgender-female. Women were largely represented in this survey, with a much lower amount of respondents identifying as male.

### **Perceptions on Cultural Offerings**

Only 12% of respondents strongly agreed that the region has a variety of creative and cultural offerings for all ages. 67% did somewhat or agree with this statement. 65% did strongly favor community support for artists to create and market their products. With 66% stating that arts were important to them and their family. 62% strongly supported more opportunities to engage in arts and 65% support the statement that the Downeast region would benefit from a makerspace.

The types of activities that respondents reported engaging in, in order of highest ranking include Free Concert (73%), Paid Concert (59%), Theatre (56%), Gallery Exhibit (56%), Arts Class (44%), and then Artist Reception (37%). Dance recital and music class were (13%) and (15%) respectively.

Then respondents also reported their willingness or interest in participating in various programs if they were available. In order of ranking Free Events (88%), Festivals (81%), Paid Events (73%), Art Classes (69%), Art Exhibitions (67%), Art Retail (66%) and Art Talks (45%). Respondents were less supportive of short-term rental and long-term rentals.

### **Program Offerings & Engagements**

Question 10 covered potential classes and programmatic offerings at the makerspace. Of the various potential class offerings, Glass (46%), Painting, Ceramics and Photography, each (41%), Woodworking (40%) and Water colour (38%) were ranked the highest. Saturday had the highest favoring for attendance. The majority of respondents, 59% also preferred afternoons. Sixty-percent also indicated they would travel up to 30 minutes for the programs.

Roughly 25% of respondents indicated they owned a local business in Ellsworth and of those, 38% supported partnering with an Arts Organization, 35% Sponsoring an Arts Organization and 24% provide pro bono services.

Many respondents also wished to see more festivals, multi-day events (79%), Art Classes (67%) and Live Events (63%) and Multicultural Events (48%) in Ellsworth The following questions, 19 – 21 were open ended responses.

## **Hancock County Demographic Data in 2020 & Macro-Economic Studies Pertaining to Arts and Humanities**

The 2020 United States Decennial Census shows a population of 55,478. A slight increase over the 2010 Census of 54,418. What is important to note is that the median age is reported to be increasing, with 48.8 in 2019 compared to 45.2 in 2010. While this is the official census data, looking to local school enrollments will help us better understand the age characteristics of Hancock County. If the population does trend younger, with more families with school age youths moving to the region, this could support the long-term viability of the makerspace. Without a replacement demographic any makerspace would not last without new users. At nearly 50 years of age for the median age of the county and also respondents of this survey, without a critical mass of younger creatives, the endeavor would not have enough users to sustain without significant outside financial support.

If there are enough young families with school-age members moving into Hancock County, and the median age trends younger, a very real possibility as many school districts report growth and exceeding current capacity associated with recent COVID migration to rural Maine, there is a possibility to have a sustaining occupancy. This would also require planning and outreach to counter larger misconceptions in the general public that a fine arts or humanities degree is not financially beneficial compared to STEM professions.

Several recent longitudinal studies refute the spurious claims that the only path to financial and job stability are STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) based disciplines. Inside Higher Ed, a publication of post-secondary school research in 2014 cited two longitudinal studies that tracked humanities and arts graduates against science and engineering graduates. The results showed that initial salaries were higher for

the STEM graduates, however over the course of the career reached a parity. The other interesting takeaways from the studies showed higher job satisfaction, and similar rates of employment.<sup>20</sup> Another study, the Zurich Study, showed that persons employed or self-employed in their respective creative fields also had higher reported levels of happiness and general life satisfaction, while still maintaining income parity with many of the STEM professionals<sup>21</sup>.

This presents an opportunity for the makerspace to not only be a space that is used for making and marketing creative wares, and also providing business and professional development support to the occupants, but also a conduit or hub of activism that promotes the creative path in life. This approach of also advocating and promoting creativity as a viable and lucrative career path for local youth would set the proposed makerspace up for long-term viability and also expand funding options.

## Summary

Respondents from the summer 2021 survey, both Artist and Community, largely support a first-floor easily accessed space that has within walking distance to downtown and has ample parking. This is complimented by providing opportunities for marketing and sharing the costs associated with on-line marketing and sales. In addition, the respondents highly supported programming that provided business and financial planning supports to their creative fields. While the population of Hancock County has grown, and the arts are an important component of the local economy, for a sustaining business model, the makerspace should consider further investigating the demographics and age cohorts for Hancock County. The 2020 US Census was conducted during a time of change and migration from urban centers to rural areas, and the younger cohorts could be under-counted. It may be useful in making any future plans to engage youth in art and creative fields as a career path option in order to sustain long-term and access further sources of outside funding.

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<sup>20</sup> <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2018/02/07/study-finds-humanities-majors-land-jobs-and-are-happy-them>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.theartcareerproject.com/link-between-happiness-art/>

Appendix D  
Artist Focus Group Meeting Plan and Questions

**Meeting Plan**

**Welcome - Cara**

- Explain link to MCA

**Introductions - Sadie / Cara / Karin**

**Purpose of Meeting /// Goals (Sadie)**

- Sadie introduce self more detail
- GOALS / Why we are here in ADDITION to the survey
  - This group more closely linked to the community
  - Moving from general to specific feedback + ideas

**Introductions around the room of all participants: what is your connection to this concept?**

- What do you do?
- Where do you live?
- Do you consider your participation in this meeting as an educated and interested ADVISOR to the facility but you will not ever personally use, or, as someone who is highly interested in using the space if it meets your needs?
- Imagine the DREAM maker space - even if you don't need a space - what 2-3 things would make it really amazing and special?

**Now, down to earth - we'd like to get into the nitty gritty details**

1. Are you or artists you know looking for studio and/or maker space in the Downeast Region? If so what have you concluded? (none available, too expensive, plenty, location is good / not good?)
2. What equipment should the maker space offer for shared use?
3. In a perfect facility somewhere how many artists are part of the building/community? And, is that the same number you would imagine for an Ellsworth based facility?
4. What is the role of the maker space in the community / downtown? Survey results indicated that public programming was valued - what specifically? What is too much to ask of artist / tenants?
5. What is affordable?
  - a. For ongoing monthly rent
  - b. For period use (day rate)
6. How important are the following features: Dealbreaker / Would be nice / Don't care
  - a. Semi-private spaces
  - b. Private spaces
  - c. Gallery - exhibitions
  - d. Retail shop
  - e. E-commerce on the facility website
  - f. 24 hour access
  - g. Locked doors - pin pad entry only

- h. Large open shared studio space to spread out in but not camp out in
- i. Storage
- j. Kitchen
- k. Conference room
- l. Shared office with computers / printers
- m. Dedicated parking lot
- n. Staff on site
- o. Strict studio artists only (no videographers, administrators, architects, builders, ect)
- p. Facility website with tenant/member profiles
- q. Tenant/member events - member meetings & parties, exhibitions, meals
- r. Trade options for lower rent: cleaning, servicing equipment, ect
- s. Hosting open studio events (Maine Craft Weekend, Holiday sale are examples)
- t. Membership creates access to a network of professionals who offer a discount: examples - graphic designer, accountant, lawyer, etc

Tell us about your experience in another makerspace? What worked well? What would you improve?

Would the nonprofit status of the entity make a difference to you? Do you perceive the entity differently if it is a for profit or a nonprofit?

Final feedback / questions

Cara - thanks / timeline + next steps / invite to participate more / opt-in for report

7. Are you or artists you know looking for affordable studio and/or maker space in the Downeast Region?
8. Are there shared tools to which you need access?
9. What is affordable?
10. What are you looking for/features of a studio space? (multi choice)
11. Open vs closed spaces - how many of each? Closed door space more in demand.
12. Are you interested in private or communal space?
13. Pref. of location, building, your space (general types of locations)
14. Accessibility - hours/security/access
15. Parking
16. Retail Space (individual and group)
17. Sliding scale survey - ex: how important are these features to you
18. On-line space to share work/contact (sales/retail/artist info)
19. Participating in Exhibitions/Group Events - short/long term/pop-up
20. Income generating - amenities vs business financials, shared office resources, equipment, kitchen, (what would inspire use of the space, recruit and retain)

21. Know all costs - format of fees - range of fees for different varieties of usage (full (long term lease, month to month, passes, shelf membership, day passes) (Running w/has a good list of categories)
22. Project vs more frequent use, equip use or long term tenants
23. Opportunities to try the space
24. Professional services, accounting, bookkeeping, legal, ecommerce, insurance, business advice, mentors
25. Media/full-time or part-time
26. Currently have studio space
27. Who are you? Will you use it? (target survey groups) - send the approp. survey



## Appendix E

### Makerspace Interview Questions

#### 1. Intro preamble: who I am, who I am working for, what the survey is for, how it will be used and not used, and confidentiality.

Our questions will touch on the following areas:

- The founding story of *[insert makerspace name]*
- The offerings and features of *[insert makerspace name]*, including what types of creative work your space caters to, the equipment available, its size and spaces within, and any programs you offer.
- The membership structure and fees
- Management
- Finances: Total cost or range of operations
- Income: Ball Park % grants, program fees, rental income, events, donations etc.
- The role of *[insert makerspace name]* in the community, including relationships with other organizations
- Collaborations and community partnerships
- Any insights and/or advice you are willing to share with the Heart of Ellsworth

If there are topics on which you prefer not to share details, we'll skip those.

Do you have any questions before we continue?

#### 2. Questionnaire

##### Founding Story:

- How did *[insert makerspace name]* get started?  
*Prompts:*
  - Who started it?
  - Where did it start?
  - How was it funded?
  - What types of makers were attracted to your space? Has that changed?
- What made the founding *[insert makerspace name]* successful?
- What were the challenges *[insert makerspace name]* faced when getting off the ground?
- Are there any facilities or features of *[insert makerspace name]* that required special attention or investment? (Permits? Infrastructure? Costs?)
- Is there anything you would do differently if starting *[insert makerspace name]* today?

##### Current Story:

- Who is your space for?
- What are people creating at *[insert makerspace name]* today?

- What do your users/members like about *[insert makerspace name]*?
- How is *[insert makerspace name]* different than other makerspaces in the area?

### **Facilities and Programs**

- What does your space offer for facilities, equipment, and programs?

#### *Prompts*

- Ask broadly about facilities
  - Ask about specific equipment
  - What programs are presented by or at the makerspace? Are these only open to members or to the public?
- How many square feet is your total space?
  - What types of spaces (workshops, studios, office space, etc...) do you have within that footprint?
  - What are the sizes of these spaces?

### **Membership**

- How have you structured access to *[insert makerspace name]*? Is it membership / subscription model, user-fees, a mix, or something else?
- What are the user/member/subscriber fees and studio rental fees, if any?
- How many users/members/subscribers do you have?
- Is that enough to sustain the organization or do you need more?

### **Management and Operations**

- Is *[insert makerspace name]* a non-profit or commercial organization?
- Who owns *[insert makerspace name]*?
- How is management of *[insert makerspace name]* structured?
- How many staff do you have and in what roles?
- What roles, if any, do volunteers have in the management and operation of *[insert makerspace name]*?
- What does your dream team look like if funding/costs were not an issue.

## Finances

- Does the ownership of *[insert makerspace name]* own the space / building it's in?
- How did *[insert makerspace name]* secure its current space?
- What were the costs to build out and open *[insert makerspace name]*?
- What is the operating overhead of *[insert makerspace name]*?
- Where do *[insert makerspace name]*'s revenues come from?
- How much does *[insert makerspace name]* generate in fees from: (are you willing to share an annual report)
  - Users/members/subscribers?
  - Program/event fees?
  - Fundraising?
  - Foundation/grant support?
  - Other income, ex space rental?
- Do you have any documentation or even a business plan and would you be willing to give us a copy?

## Community Place & Relationships

- What is the role of *[insert makerspace name]* within the community?
- What relationships with other organizations or enterprises does *[insert makerspace name]* have?
- If *[insert makerspace name]* has had to navigate or be sensitive to other established organizations or businesses in your community, would you tell me about that?
- What opportunities do you see for *[insert makerspace name]* in your community?

## Wrap Up

- Is there anything I missed that you would like to share that would be helpful to Heart of Ellsworth?
- Are you willing to share any documents or resources?
- Any words of wisdom

Thank you!