

DOORS OPEN

Culture & Communities Study

Visitors to History-Based Museums

WINTER 2026



DOORS
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4 CULTURE


Wilkening Consulting
audience research | knowledge curation

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RESULTS BY SELECTED DISCIPLINES



While most people participate in more than one type of cultural consumption, audience traits by different disciplines do vary *to some degree*.

For example, people who participate in history-related content often have similar traits, as do people who are interested in literary events. Some activities, such as STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) activities, are more closely tied to life stage, in this case the needs of parents and guardians of minor children.

To help individual cultural organizations better understand their specific audiences, this study examined the key traits of eleven cultural disciplines.



KEY TRAITS BY DISCIPLINE

Because most cultural consumers participate in a variety of cultural activities, audiences by discipline have far more in common than they differ.



For these results, overall points of agreement were set aside in order to identify more unique traits of individual audiences by discipline. What sets visitors to botanic gardens apart from concert audiences?



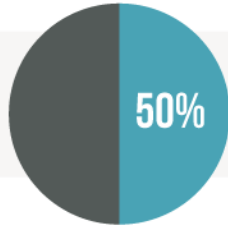
This is intended to enable cultural organizations to focus on emotional touchpoints and behaviors that are more meaningful to their audiences *in addition to those of the overall findings*, as well as to understand where greater concentrations of potential new audiences might be found.

VISITORS TO HISTORY-BASED MUSEUMS

KEY TRAITS



50% of King County Residents Participating*



How they Participate

By visiting history museums, historic sites (such as historic houses, forts, battlefields, etc.), or local history museums and landmarks

Leisure Time Patterns

- More likely to participate in outdoor nature experiences, visit county or local/municipal parks
- Motivated by learning, curiosity, and connecting with their cultural traditions or heritage

How they hear about community events

Word-of-mouth, Facebook, Instagram

Barriers to participation

Time, cost, distance

Cultural Activities Most Likely to Visit/Participate in

More avid visitors/participants of:

Culturally or ethnically specific museums, natural history museums, history/heritage activities (family history, historic preservation activities, watching documentaries, historic sites), STEM activities

Desired Outcomes from Cultural Organizations

- Trusting the public can handle difficult content
- Greater connection to their history and cultural background
- Greater connection to, trust, and understanding of people in my community

Demographic Characteristics

No significant differences by demographic characteristics



* Participation rates within this segment vary from frequent to sporadic, but all indicated previous participation