

DOORS OPEN

Culture & Communities Study Visitors to Public Gardens

WINTER 2026



DOORS
OPEN

4 CULTURE


Wilkening Consulting
audience research | knowledge curation

© 2026 Wilkening Consulting, LLC

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?



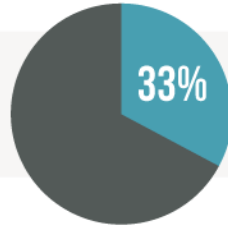
This is intended to enable cultural organizations to focus on emotional touchpoints and behaviors that are more meaningful to their audiences *in addition to those of the overall findings*, as well as to understand where greater concentrations of potential new audiences might be found.

VISITORS TO PUBLIC GARDENS

KEY TRAITS



33% of King County Residents Participating*



How they Participate

By visiting a botanical garden or arboretum

Leisure Time Patterns

- More likely to pursue crafts and/or maker activities, participate in outdoor nature experiences
- Motivated by curiosity, spending time with family/friends

How they hear about community events

Word-of-mouth, Facebook, emails

Barriers to participation

Time, cost, distance

Cultural Activities Most Likely to Visit/Participate in

More avid visitors/participants of:

Art museums, cultural festivals, history/heritage activities (family history, historic preservation activities, watching documentaries, historic sites)

Desired Outcomes from Cultural Organizations

- Stimulation/support of cognitive health
- Inclusive
- Bring joy/beauty/wonder to their life
- Greater empathy

Demographic Characteristics

- More likely to identify as women
- No significant differences by age, accessibility needs, race or ethnicity



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