



2018 CHORUS OPERATIONS SURVEY

Chorus America's Chorus Operations Survey Report (COSR) is the most comprehensive source of data available on choruses and the choral field. With the 2018 Chorus Operations Survey Report, this important resource begins a new chapter. Through a partnership with DataArts, the leading arts and culture research organization, the COSR is now an even more powerful tool.

This new report continues to track information about programming, budgeting, staffing, and other management practices, using an increased number of charts to display that information in new ways. It contains more comprehensive detail about finances and staffing and how choruses compare to other kinds of arts organizations. With this partnership, we are proud to join colleagues at Opera America, the National Guild for Community Arts Education, and other national service organizations in contributing to research that will benefit the arts in communities everywhere.

Reading the COSR is a great start, but I encourage you to also think about how this data can be put to work for your chorus. Look through with a close eye at how your chorus's management practices compare to other choruses of your type and budget size. If you're considering a change, like an updated board giving policy or raising ticket prices, the information inside can help guide you.

The report is also a great opportunity to start conversations with some of your organization's key stakeholders. Share a section of the report with your board before your next meeting to spark a discussion, or pull out three interesting facts to share with choristers at an upcoming rehearsal. The more your supporters understand about how your organization operates, the more invested they will be in your work.

At Chorus America, we believe that research and data empower us all to make better, more informed decisions. I hope the 2018 Chorus Operations Survey Report helps your chorus do just that.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Catherine Dehoney". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Catherine Dehoney
President and CEO, Chorus America

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This analysis provides summaries of key metrics for choruses who completed the Cultural Data Project and the Chorus Operations Survey. The findings present a “snapshot,” or one-year analysis to capture the broadest view of organizations.

All of these choruses have entered financial and programmatic data into the online data collection system of DataArts (formerly the Cultural Data Project), an independent nonprofit organization, as well as the custom survey module for Chorus America. For the 122 choruses in the dataset, DataArts used the latest Cultural Data Profiles (FY2016 or FY2017) available as of April 2017.

ABOUT DATAARTS

DataArts’ mission is to empower the nonprofit arts and cultural sector with high-quality data and resources in order to strengthen its vitality, performance, and public impact. DataArts serves as an important catalyst for data-driven decision-making, resulting in stronger management for arts and cultural organizations, better informed funding policy for grant makers, and a rich information resource for advocates and researchers. Visit us at culturaldata.org

The DataArts platform provides all participating organizations with free analytic reports that paint a clear picture of both your organization and your sector. Want to see how your fundraising is stacking up or report on your organization’s financial health? Our easy-to-read reports help you do that. You will also be able to monitor trends over time, compare your organization to others like it, and identify ways to improve your results.

To access DataArts free reports, just log in to your account and select “Analytics” on the menu. Our Support Center is available to help Monday through Friday, 9.00am to 8.00pm ET at help@culturaldata.org or 877-707-DATA (877-707-3282).



HIGHLIGHTS

- 122 organizations participated in this report, the first instance of data for this study solely being collected in the DataArts platform. Chorus America members completed a Cultural Data Profile (CDP), and in addition a set of questions in a custom module built for Chorus America which asks questions specifically about chorus composition, ticket pricing, board members, and other areas of particular concern for choruses
- Earned and Contributed revenue is split 50/50 among all budget categories except those with budgets of \$1Million+, for which contributed revenue represents a higher proportion of the mix.
- The importance of revenue related to people (admissions, membership & subscription, individual support) is clearly shown, as these revenue items comprise over 50% of total revenue for many organizations. Individual contributions are extremely important for organizations of all sizes - ranging from 21% to 36% of total revenue.
- Foundation revenue is also important for choruses in general, representing 12% of income overall. It is highly impactful, particularly among organizations with budgets above \$250,000, representing on average greater than 12% of revenue.
- Choruses spend the greatest portion of their money on programmatic expenses, with 74 cents of every dollar going directly to expenses around producing and performing shows, materials needed for programming, educational programs, etc.
- Deficits are always a concern for nonprofit arts and cultural organizations, as they can affect an organization's ability to fulfill its mission. 40% of participating choruses are showing some level of deficit. Most of these deficits (25% of the 40%) come in under 10% of total budgets by expenses, meaning their deficit is not currently significant.
- Ticket prices for participating choruses typically range from \$17 to \$46. As chorus size increases, prices tend to cluster at the higher end of this spectrum. Pricing remains fairly consistent across chorus types, with the exception of Volunteer choruses, which offer tickets at lower costs on average.
- Overall, 45% of board members are singers in participating choruses. However, the percentage differs significantly by size and type of chorus. In the smallest choruses, with budgets under \$50,000, 90% of board members are singers whereas for choruses with budgets over \$1Million 11% are singers. For Professional choruses, 11% of board members are singers and for Children choruses only 10% are singers (perhaps not surprisingly, since very few minors would be board members).

HIGHLIGHTS (continued)

- Overall, 61% of choruses explicitly asked or made direct suggestions to board members for support. “Give and get” policies, where directors are expected to solicit funds to support the chorus, are in place among 1 in 5 participating choruses. Suggested amounts vary significantly based on chorus size, with the average suggested amounts for the smallest choruses being \$150 and averaging over \$3,000 for the largest choruses.
- The median audience size for the responding choruses was 1,542 paid attendees and 329 free attendees over the course of a season. The number of attendees increases with budget size. Choruses in the smallest budget category saw approximately 575 paying attendees while the largest budget category served nearly 10,000 paying attendees in 2016/17.
- Over half of participating choruses (57%) reported at least one full or part-time paid staff person, with 23% of choruses reporting part-time staff only and 35% reporting at least 1 full-time staff member¹.

¹ Percentages do not add exactly due to rounding.

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THE SURVEY POPULATION

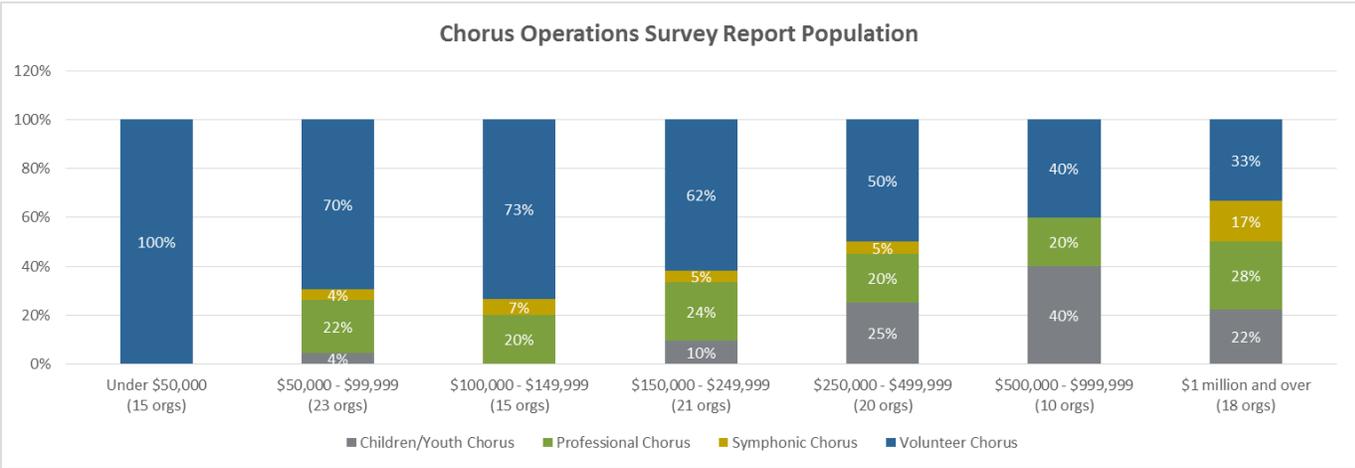
The data for this report was collected via DataArts Cultural Data Profile winter 2017 and spring 2018. In total, 122 chorus organizations completed the Cultural Data Profile with the Chorus Operations Survey add-on. The 122 choruses represent four main constituency types² and seven budget categories³. Most of the chorus organizations represented in this report (48) have annual budgets above \$250,000. Volunteer choruses are more than half of all respondents; the overall distribution of membership types is lacking in the Symphonic category. 13 choruses responded as Umbrella Choruses, meaning they considered their chorus to be made up of multiple ensembles from different membership categories. Umbrella choruses were asked to answer an additional question in the survey asking for the category that best describes their primary chorus.

	Count	Column N %
Children/Youth Chorus	16	13%
Professional Chorus <i>Including 2 umbrella choruses</i>	24	20%
Symphonic Chorus <i>Including 2 umbrella choruses</i>	7	6%
Volunteer Chorus <i>Including 9 umbrella choruses</i>	75	61%
TOTAL	122	100%

	Count	Column N %
Under \$50,000	15	12%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	23	19%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	15	12%
\$150,000 - \$249,999	21	17%
\$250,000 - \$499,999	20	16%
\$500,000 - \$999,999	10	8%
\$1 million and over	18	15%
TOTAL	122	100%

² Choruses were asked to self-classify. Some reclassifications were applied to choruses for data analysis purposes.

³ Organizational categorizations for size are based on total expenses as reported in the Cultural Data Profile.



The fact that this data represents responses primarily from mid-sized to large choruses and lacks a significant amount of data from symphonic choruses calls for caution when extrapolating these results to wide-ranging conclusions about Chorus America’s membership or the choral field in general. In some cases, group averages can be pulled some distance up or down by a single outlier. In our analysis, we removed some outlier numbers in the data to provide the best picture of the dataset possible. There is, especially, a self-selection and resource bias: this report is based only on choruses who choose to and have the resources to complete the lengthy DataArts Cultural Data Profile and Chorus Operations Survey add-on. The DataArts system does have a “short form” for organizations under \$50,000, and organizations below this threshold are asked fewer than 60 questions. In future years, Chorus America hopes to grow the number of smaller budgeted choruses completing the Cultural Data Profile and Chorus Operations Survey through increased messaging about the benefits of participating.

COMMON CHORUS ATTRIBUTES

This section is a top-level view of important financial and operational issues across the four types and seven budget categories. For many of these items, further detail will be provided in later sections.

The tables below look at group averages for the different chorus types, with data for all respondents in the first column. The next table shows the same chorus attributes, but the group averages in each column refer to the particular budget category. An item with an asterisk represents a data point where an outlier was removed.

	Mean - Overall	Children/Youth Chorus	Professional Chorus	Symphonic Chorus	Volunteer Chorus
		Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Organizations Year Founded	1974	1984	1977	1954	1972
Number of Singers	173	679	46	129	110
Number of Board Member Singers	6	1	2	6	8
% Board Member Singers	45%	10%	11%	33%	68%
Total In Person Paid Attendees	4158	6795	5739	8933	2623
Total Productions	9	26	7	6	7
Total Performances	15	43	16	7	9
Performances Ticket Price Range High*	\$45.98	\$55.27	\$55.92	\$58.00	\$38.98
Performances Ticket Price Range Low*	\$17.05	\$11.60	\$19.21	\$17.57	\$17.45
Total Earned Revenue Operating	\$208,082	\$442,745	\$325,449	\$334,456	\$108,667
Total Operating Revenue	\$588,211	\$1,016,000	\$897,970	\$1,503,187	\$312,429
Earned Share of Operating Revenue	35%	44%	36%	22%	35%
Marketing Expense as Percent of Total Expenses	7%	3%	8%	7%	8%
Total Operating Expenses Program	\$429,254	\$728,802	\$601,521	\$1,242,981	\$226,012
Total Operating Expenses Fundraising	\$64,672	\$122,218	\$116,120	\$120,459	\$28,251
Total Operating Expenses General Administrative	\$81,544	\$109,037	\$139,643	\$166,194	\$51,560
Total Operating Expenses DataArts Update	\$575,470	\$ 960,056	\$ 857,284	\$1,529,634	\$ 305,822
Total Operating Expenses Program	75%	76%	70%	81%	74%
Total Operating Expenses Fundraising	11%	13%	14%	8%	9%
Total Operating Expenses General Administrative	14%	11%	16%	11%	17%
Full Time Employees Permanent	2.5	5.2	3.2	2.3	1.2
Part Time Employees Permanent	2.8	7.5	1.9	4.4	1.5
Board Members Number	13	14	14	19	12

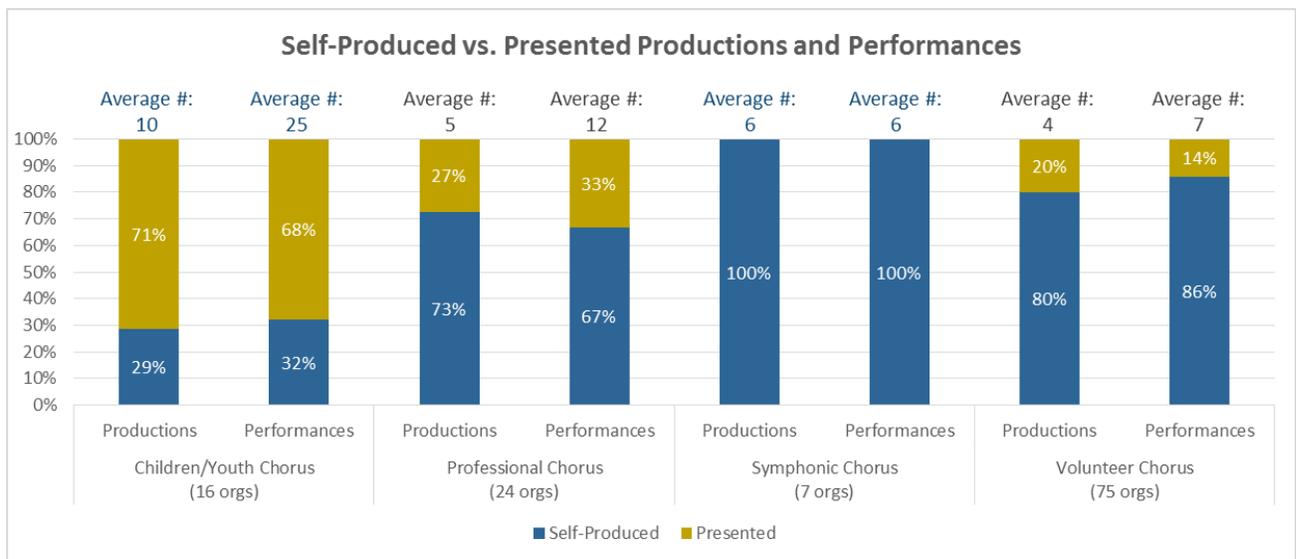
	Mean - Overall	Under \$50,000	\$50,000 - \$99,999	\$100,000 - \$149,999	\$150,000 - \$249,999	\$250,000 - \$499,999	\$500,000 - \$999,999	\$1 million and over
		Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Organizations Year Founded	1974	1984	1983	1971	1975	1965	1990	1954
Number of Singers	173	50	59	75	87	165	342	520
Number of Board Member Singers	6	8	7	8	7	5	2	3
% Board Member Singers	45%	90%	73%	72%	54%	44%	19%	11%
Total In Person Paid Attendees	4158	638	1045	1185	2600	2675	7413	15485
Total Productions	9	4	4	4	6	6	22	21
Total Performances	15	6	8	6	10	13	31	38
Performances Ticket Price Range High*	\$45.98	\$29.11	\$28.48	\$32.00	\$36.00	\$46.74	\$50.44	\$99.24
Performances Ticket Price Range Low*	\$17.05	\$14.56	\$16.22	\$21.64	\$15.95	\$14.89	\$13.67	\$21.29
Total Earned Revenue Operating	\$208,082	\$15,151	\$35,520	\$59,735	\$87,965	\$141,771	\$356,107	\$844,553
Total Operating Revenue	\$588,211	\$31,389	\$78,697	\$125,230	\$201,546	\$331,637	\$705,376	\$2,760,193
Earned Share of Operating Revenue	35%	48%	45%	48%	44%	43%	50%	31%
Marketing Expense as Percent of Total Expenses	7%	6%	7%	6%	8%	7%	6%	7%
Total Operating Expenses Program	\$429,254	\$23,004	\$57,359	\$96,391	\$142,551	\$243,864	\$496,545	\$1,989,034
Total Operating Expenses Fundraising	\$64,672	\$772	\$3,210	\$6,127	\$13,121	\$30,588	\$44,499	\$344,153
Total Operating Expenses General	\$81,544	\$6,730	\$10,813	\$19,272	\$41,792	\$59,254	\$146,840	\$330,917
Total Operating Expenses DataArts Update	\$575,470	\$ 30,505	\$ 71,382	\$121,791	\$197,465	\$333,707	\$687,884	\$2,664,104
Total Operating Expenses Program	75%	75%	80%	79%	72%	73%	72%	75%
Total Operating Expenses Fundraising	11%	3%	4%	5%	7%	9%	6%	13%
Total Operating Expenses General	14%	22%	15%	16%	21%	18%	21%	12%
Full Time Employees Permanent	2.5	0	0.0	0.1	0.2	1.4	2.9	8.7
Part Time Employees Permanent	2.8	0	1.8	1.2	1.9	4.6	3.5	4.7
Board Members Number	13	9	10	12	12	12	12	25



PERFORMANCES, AUDIENCES, & TICKETS

The typical chorus performed 5 different productions in 2016/17. Children/Youth choruses have the highest level of performance activity (10 productions and 25 performances) while Volunteer choruses perform four productions in a typical year. The tally of performances is slightly different than productions, as performances indicate the actual number of times an individual program is performed. As a group (122 responding), a typical responding chorus gave eight concert performances. The median number of productions and performances can be seen in the blue and grey text above each corresponding bar across chorus types in the graph below.

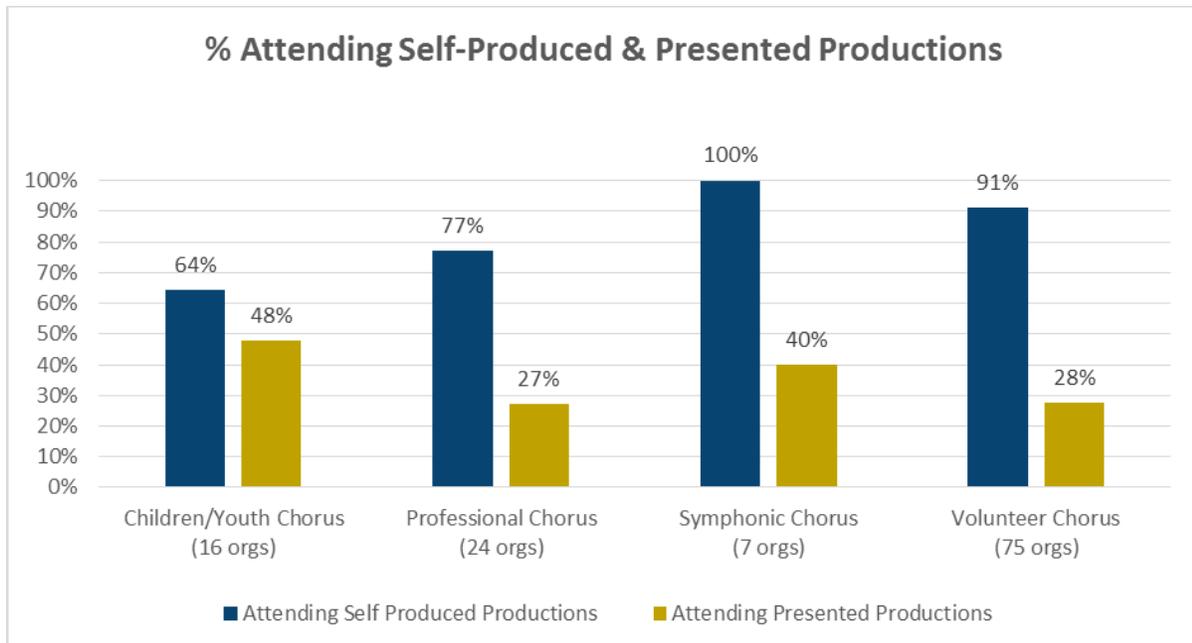
In the Chorus Operations Survey, choruses specified which of their concert programs were self-produced, and which were presented by another group, such as when an orchestra or performing arts series invites a chorus to perform. As shown in the chart above, one can see that self-produced productions and performances are common across most choruses. However, the 16 Children/Youth choruses are more likely to be invited to perform by other sponsors (71% presented productions and 68% presented performances).



	Under \$50K			\$50K – Under \$100K			\$100K-Under \$150K			\$150K-Under \$250K			\$250K-Under \$500K			\$500K – Under \$1M			\$1M+		
	Avg	Min	Max	Avg	Min	Max	Avg	Min	Max	Avg	Min	Max	Avg	Min	Max	Avg	Min	Max	Avg	Min	Max
Self-Produced Productions	4	1	9	4	1	10	3	0	5	4	0	7	4	2	7	10	2	37	14	2	114
Self-Produced Performances	5	1	9	6	2	16	5	0	8	7	1	16	9	2	25	17	2	55	26	4	120
Presented Productions	1	0	5	1	0	2	1	0	6	2	0	10	2	0	11	17	0	37	4	0	55
Presented Performances	2	0	6	4	0	10	2	0	9	4	0	18	9	0	49	19	0	38	12	0	80
Total Productions	4	2	9	4	2	10	4	2	10	6	0	14	6	2	14	22	3	74	6	2	169
Total Performances	6	2	13	8	3	16	6	3	16	10	2	22	13	4	51	31	8	76	18	5	196

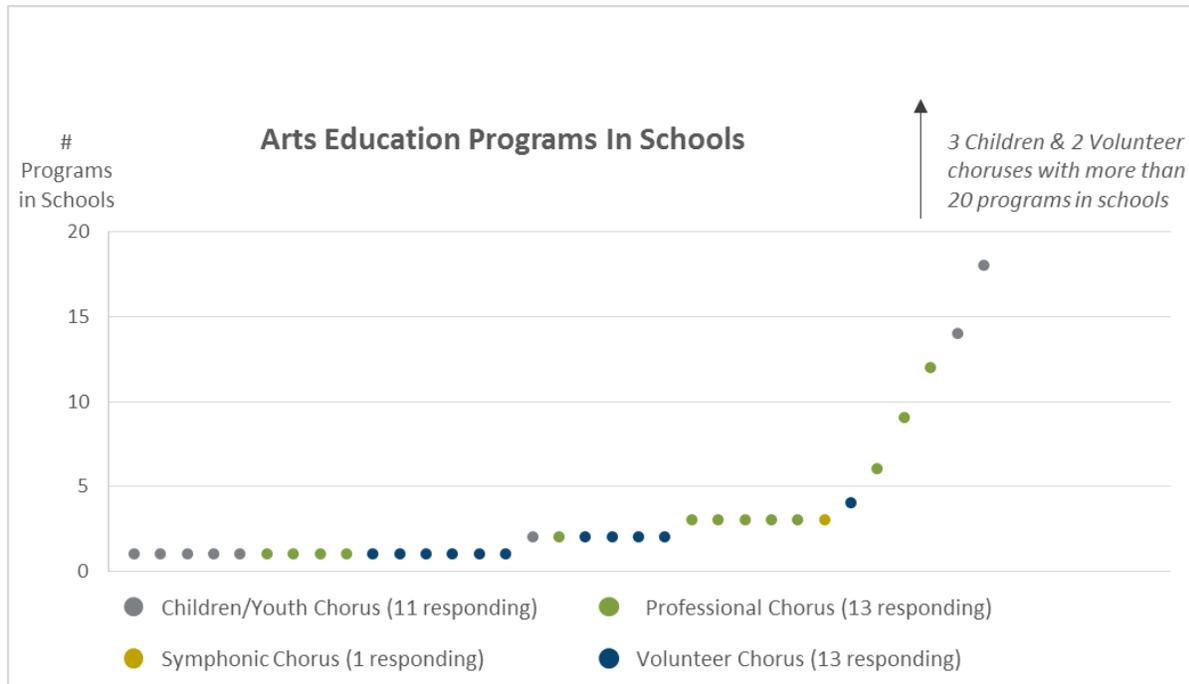
Attendees to Self-Produced & Presented Productions

The Chorus Operations Survey asks organizations for the percentage of attendees as reported in the Cultural Data Profile who attended self-produced productions versus presented productions. Generally speaking, the typical chorus sees most of their attendees at self-produced productions (85% of total attendees). This rings true across chorus types and budget sizes, and also corresponds to data shown in the chart above which indicates that, with the exception of Children/Youth choruses, most choruses do more self-produced than presented performances. Additionally, another possible reason for lower presented performance attendance numbers may be the difficulty of reporting attendees going to programs housed under a different group.



Education Programming

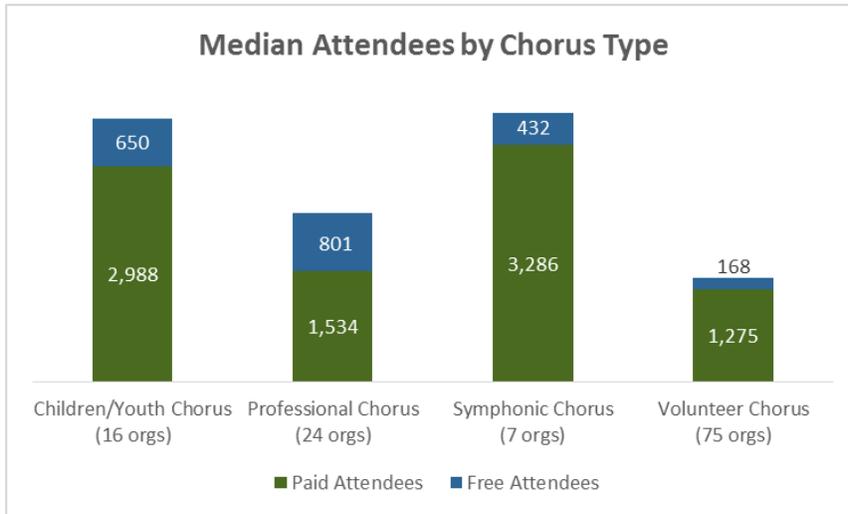
The Cultural Data Profile allows organizations to indicate the types of activities they may engage in. An optional section for details around programs in schools appears to any organization who indicates that they have programs⁴ related to arts education or teaching classes. Among the 122 participating choruses, 38 indicated that they hosted arts education programming in schools. The chart below shows the number of programs an organization offered in 2016/17. Two programs is typical of the 38 responding choruses, which is primarily composed of organizations with budgets over \$250,000.



⁴ The Cultural Data Profile asks “How many types of classes or other programs did you provide in schools? Count workshops, lessons, and lectures above in addition to including them here if they took place in schools. Indicate the unique types of programs, not the number of occurrences for these programs.”

Audiences

The median audience size for the responding choruses was 1,542 paid attendees and 329 free attendees over the course of a season. Note that this number may be inflated by some festival attendees that were reported in the survey. As expected, the number of total attendees increases with budget size. The smallest budget category saw approximately 575 paying attendees while the largest budget category served nearly 10,000 paying attendees in 2016/17. However, those with budgets greater than \$1Million report 44% of attendees as non-paying, while the proportion of free attendees is much smaller amongst smaller sized organizations. A typical chorus offered free admission to 18% of their attendees.

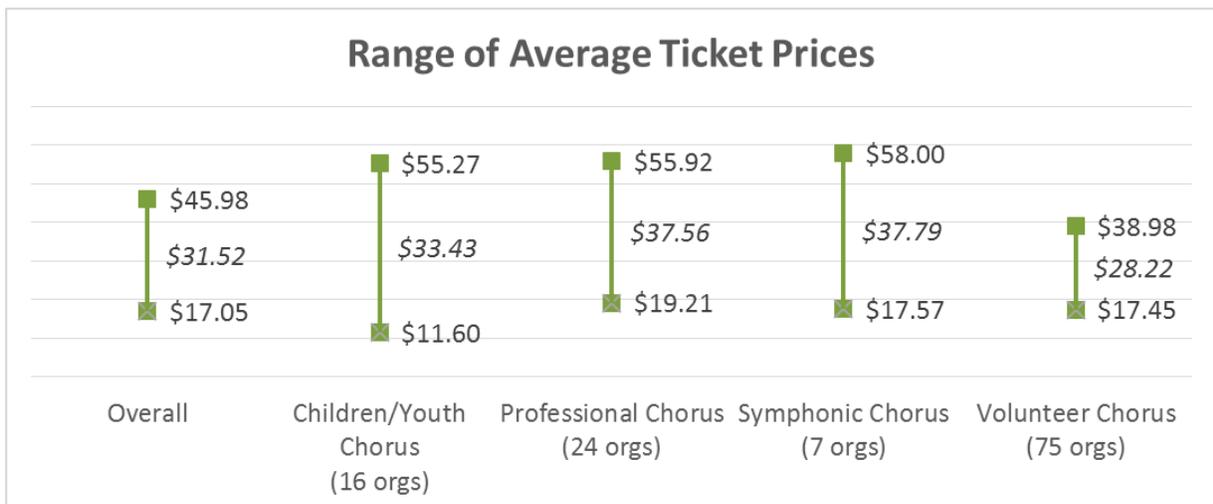
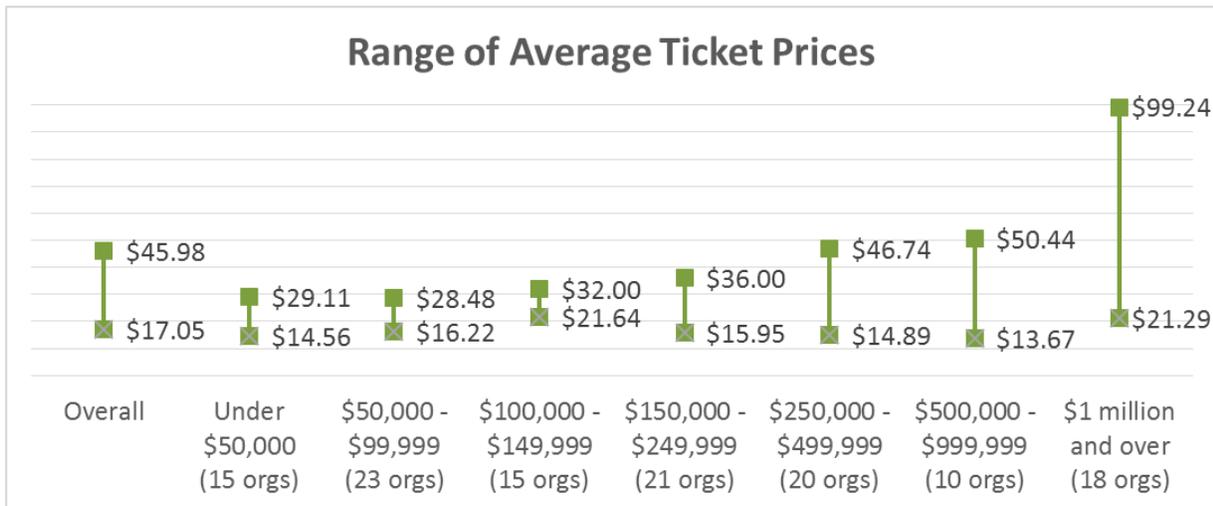


	Under \$50,000 (15 orgs)	\$50,000 - \$99,999 (23 orgs)	\$100,000 - \$149,999 (15 orgs)	\$150,000 - \$249,999 (21 orgs)	\$250,000 - \$499,999 (20 orgs)	\$500,000 - \$999,999 (10 orgs)	\$1 million and over (18 orgs)
Median In-Person Paid Attendees	575	800	1,015	1,650	2,670	4,766	9,886
Median In-Person Free Attendees	40	200	128	471	315	2,095	7,922

Pricing

Price ranges average from \$17 to \$46. The below charts show minimum and maximum prices charged for tickets for all choruses (first line), and also choruses within each of the seven budget categories, from smallest to largest as well as across chorus types. Note that these charts are displaying the average high price and average low price for each grouping.

The range of possible ticket prices increases with chorus size, with choruses in the largest budget category reporting ticket ranges from \$21 to \$99. This is most likely due to the variety of programming a large sized chorus may offer - for example, they may give some concerts in a large venue, such as a symphony hall or large commercial theater. Ticket prices remain fairly consistent across types, with the exception of Volunteer choruses, which offer tickets at lower costs on average. The narrower range of ticket prices among Volunteer choruses may mean these choruses have fewer types of tickets available – i.e., they may not have top multiple price tiers for tickets.



OPERATING FINANCES

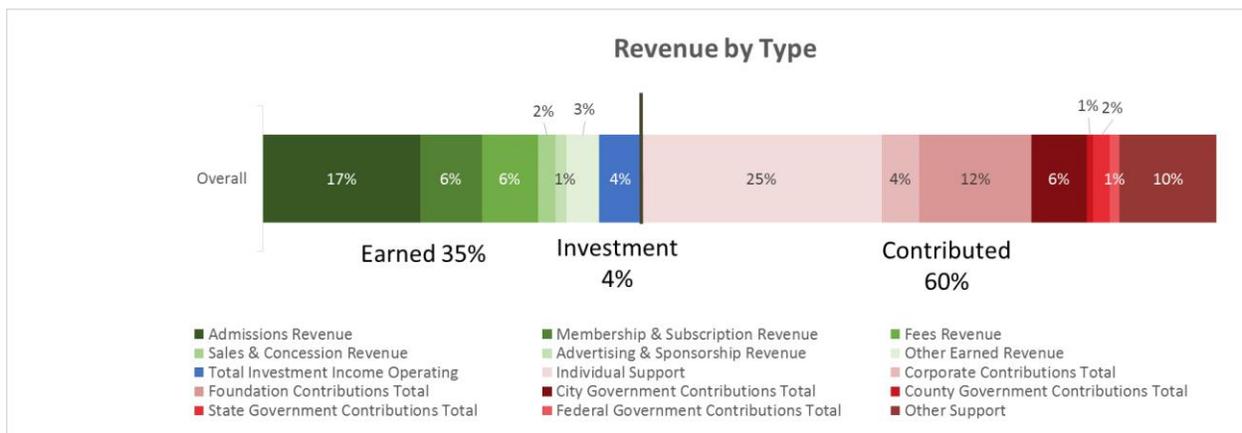
The following information is taken from the Cultural Data Profile (CDP). The CDP collects detailed information on a variety of revenue and expense types. These line items are then bucketed for analysis, allowing one to have a better picture of the types of revenue or expenses a grouping of organizations may have.

Revenue

Median total operating revenue is \$184,866 across the 122 organizations analyzed. For choruses under \$50,000 the median total operating revenue is \$32,937. The median total operating revenue across budget categories is shown in the table below.

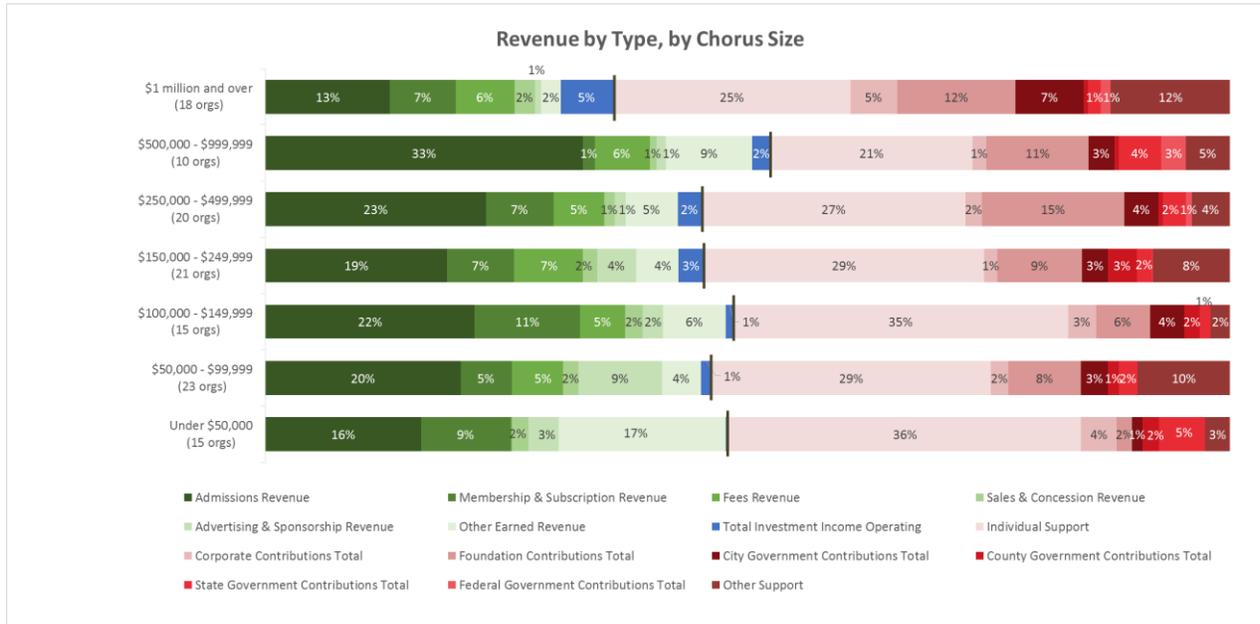
	Under \$50,000	\$50,000 - \$99,999	\$100,000 - \$149,999	\$150,000 - \$249,999	\$250,000 - \$499,999	\$500,000 - \$999,999	\$1 million and over
	Median	Median	Median	Median	Median	Median	Median
Total Operating Revenue	\$32,937	\$74,139	\$121,545	\$191,600	\$317,122	\$706,471	\$2,171,368

Overall, arts and cultural organizations have a 50/50 split between earned and contributed revenue. The split between earned and contributed income among arts and cultural organizations generally shifts with organization size – as budget size increases, so does the proportion of earned revenue. Overall, the revenue picture for choruses in this dataset is one in which a chorus typically raises 60% of revenue through Contributed sources, 35% through Earned sources, and 5% through Investments. This has been seen as a long-running trend among choruses, meaning a heavier reliance on revenue from contributed sources exists in the choral world, compared with other types of arts and cultural organizations. This may be in part to the fact that, generally speaking, choruses tend to be smaller sized organizations when compared to the larger arts and cultural field. These smaller organizations are likely to rely more on contributed revenue when compared to larger organizations, which have the resources necessary to generate more income through earned sources. The most significant types of funding across all choruses are Individual Contributions (25%) followed by Admissions (17%), Foundation Giving (12%) and Other Support (10%).⁵



⁵ Other Support may include revenue from special events and fundraisers or galas, as well as specific types of one-time donations.

When broken down by budget category in the chart below, the earned vs. contributed revenue picture remains consistent for the most part, which tells us that choruses may have similar revenue pictures no matter the size. The importance of revenue related to people (admissions, membership & subscription, individual support) is clearly shown, as these revenue items comprise over 50% of total revenue for all budget categories except \$1Million+. Individual contributions are extremely important for organizations of all sizes - ranging from 21% to 36% of total revenue.



Sources of Support

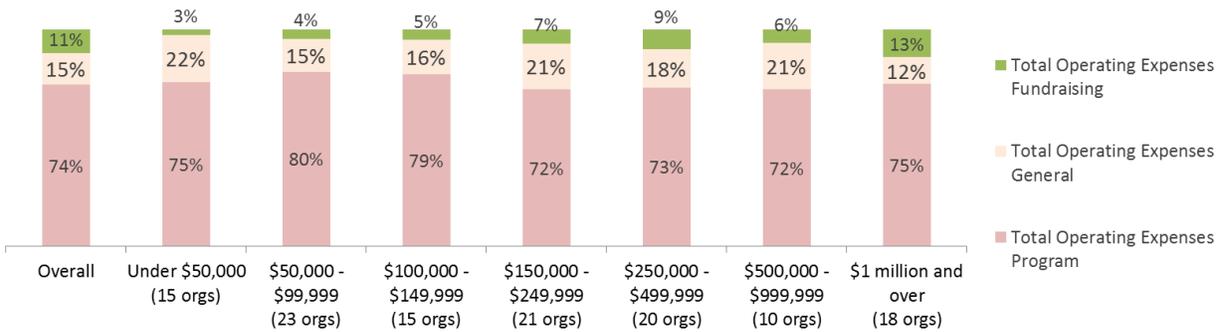
As noted above, support from individuals, by way of Admissions Revenue and Individual Support is a primary source of revenue across choruses in this dataset, no matter the size of their operating budget or earned vs contributed revenue makeup. This type of support is important for most arts and cultural organizations, and choruses are no different. As contributed revenue comprises the majority of revenue among choruses, the charts in this report show details around where contributed revenue comes from. Corporate contributions are on par with what is generally seen among other arts and cultural organizations in the DataArts dataset. Foundation support is highly impactful, particularly among organizations with budgets above \$250,000. For the smallest budget category, the next largest source of contributed revenue besides Individual Support is through State Government Contributions. As all of the organizations within this budget category are Volunteer choruses, this shows the importance of local government support to volunteer-based choruses.

Expenses

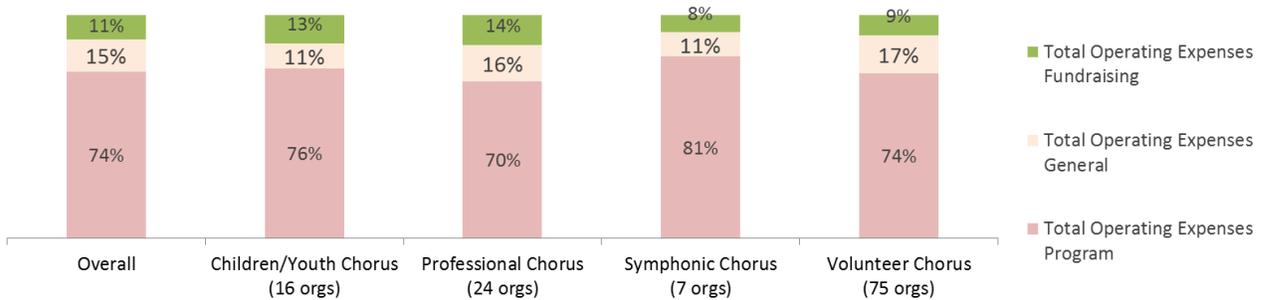
The choruses in this dataset spent an average of \$185,190 in 2016/17. To help understand expenses, DataArts data allows those expenses to be examined in two different ways – by purpose and by type. In looking at expenses by purpose, we split each type of expense (e.g. rent for rehearsal space is apportioned to “program” while office rent would be split between “fundraising” and “general”). In looking at expenses by type, rent, for example, would be grouped with other physical plant costs (e.g. utilities).

By purpose, the largest expense category by far is for programmatic activity (dark pink bar in the chart below), which is consistent with the missions of these choruses. This category encompasses expenses around producing and performing shows, materials needed for programming, educational programs, etc., while 11 cents of every dollar is dedicated to fundraising purposes.

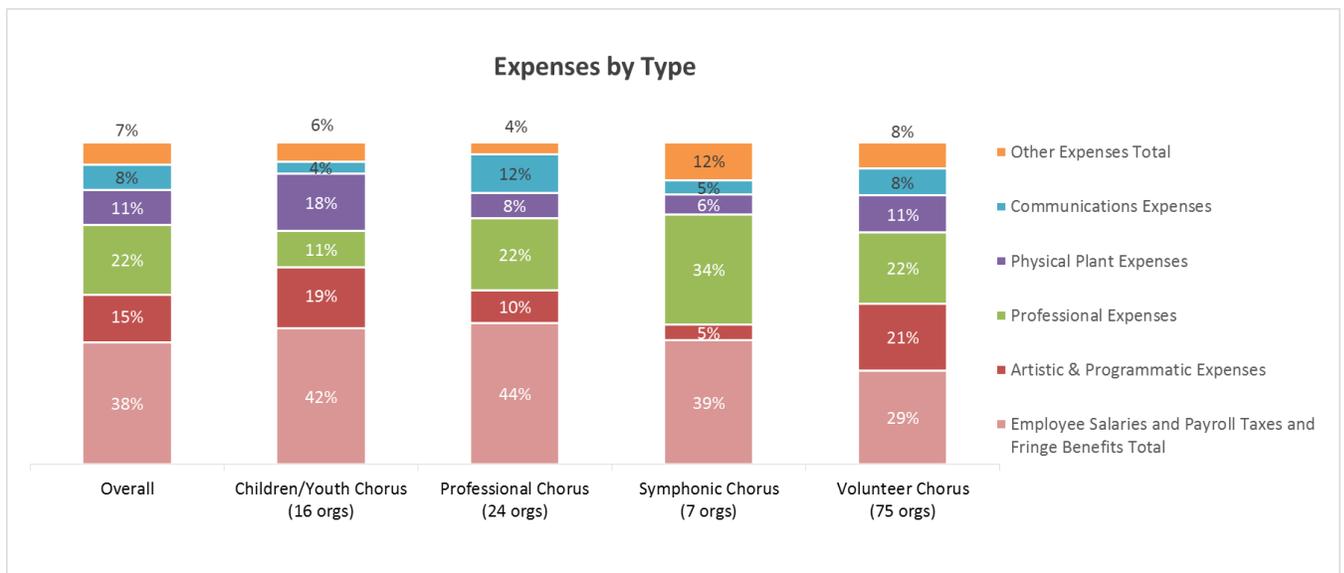
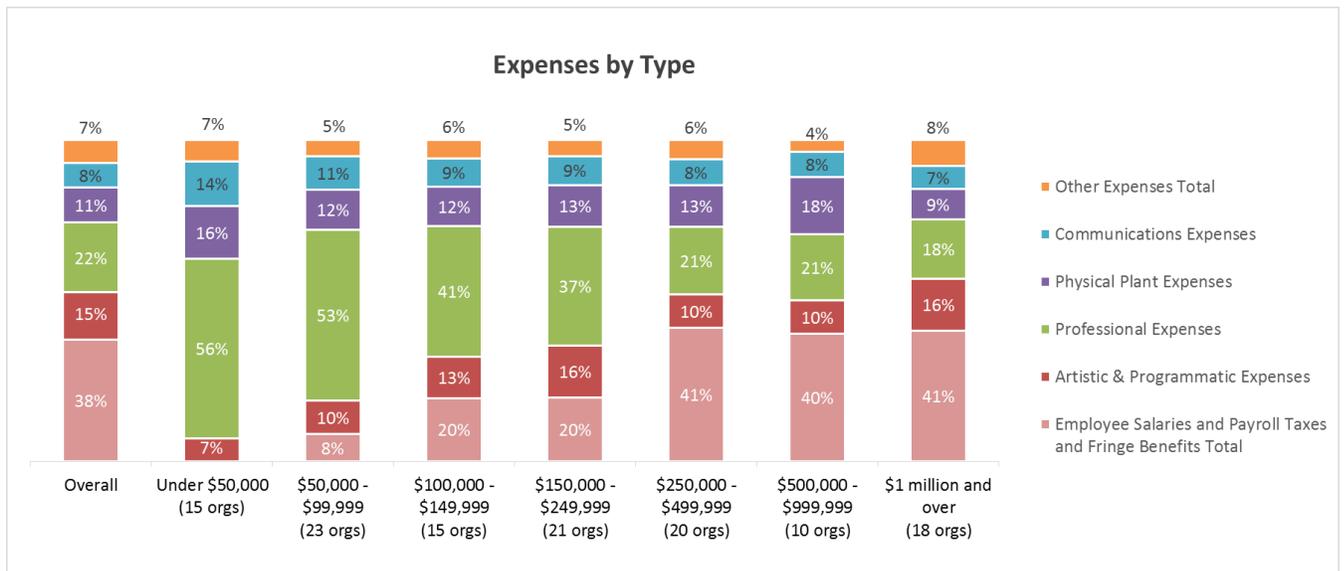
Overall Expenses by Purpose



Overall Expenses by Purpose



In looking at expenses by type, the largest category varies based on the size of organization. For organizations with budgets below \$250,000, Professional Expenses – which includes any fees paid to companies or organizations for services, and payments to independent contractors - is the largest expense category, making up more than half of total expenses for organizations with budgets under \$100,000. For larger sized choruses, Professional Expenses are still significant, but Salary & Benefits comprise at least 40% of total expenses. For Children/Youth choruses, nearly a fifth of their budget is on Physical Plant related expenses (18%). This may be indicative of the fact that Children/Youth choruses are more likely to own their own space. Note that 87% of Children/Youth choruses in this analysis have operating budgets of over \$250,000.



Net Income - Overall

Unrestricted Net Income is calculated as total operating unrestricted revenues less total operating expenses. Unrestricted Net Income uses unrestricted revenue rather than total revenue because the focus of the metric is on funds that can be used right away, and not on funds restricted for use in a future time period or for a long-term endowment. This metric indicates whether an organization generated a surplus or deficit over a period of time.

The presence of surplus or deficit is shown below as percentages. Surpluses increase reserves and allow for future flexibility and sustainability. Although making a profit is not the chief goal of mission-driven organizations, generating regular surpluses is key to an organization’s health and longevity. Just like there is no one right revenue mix or functional expense mix, there is no specific dollar amount (or percentage) that’s the right amount of surplus for all organizations. Instead, choruses can think about the goals and needs of their organization, both in the near term and in the future, and consider whether the Net Income values are sufficient. If choruses have a sufficient surplus, they can think about whether they can sustain that level over time. For organizations running a deficit, they can consider what they might need to do to reverse that trend.

The margins for overall net income are a bit thin at -1%. As seen in the second chart below, the overall operating margin of -1% is driven by the organizations in the larger budget sized categories, primarily those in the largest (\$1Million and over) category. The reason for a lower net income among larger sized choruses may be due to the fact that larger organizations tend to place their money in restricted endowments or investment accounts. These organizations are also more likely to carry various debts and lines of credits for large projects such as a building renovation.

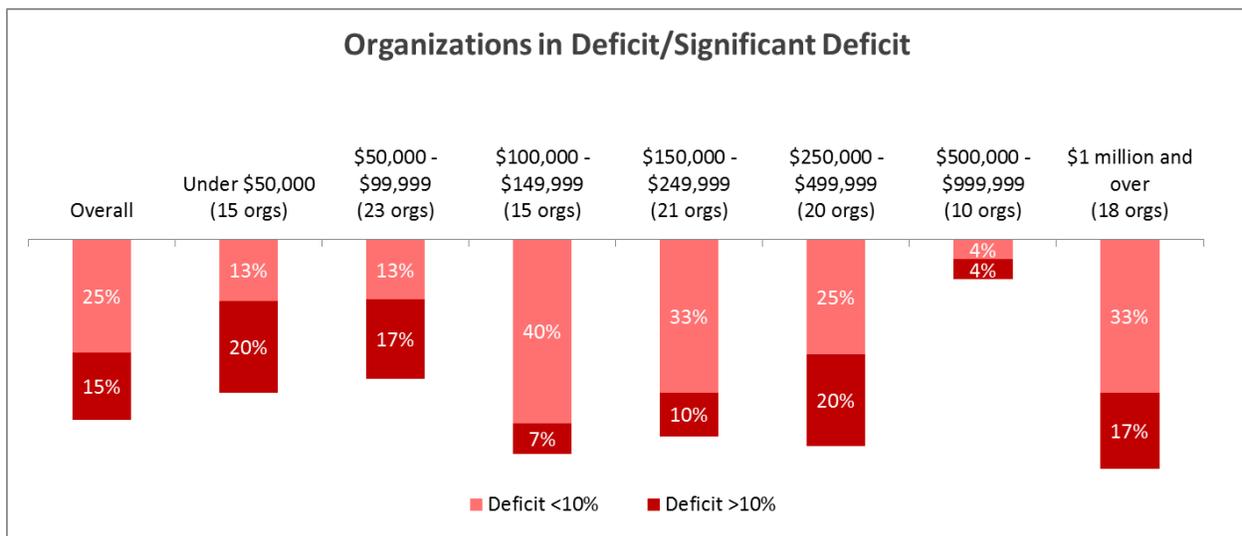
	Overall	Children/Youth Chorus	Professional Chorus	Symphonic Chorus	Volunteer Chorus
Net Income (Unrestricted)	-1%	1%	-2%	2%	-2%

	Overall	Under \$50,000	\$50,000 - \$99,999	\$100,000 - \$149,999	\$150,000 - \$249,999	\$250,000 - \$499,999	\$500,000 - \$999,999	\$1 million and over
Net Income (Unrestricted)	-1%	2%	6%	2%	1%	-0.02%	0.04%	-1%

Net Income - Individual Organizations

Deficit is the difference between money taken in (receipts) and what is spent. When there is a deficit, an organization may need to borrow money in order to pay bills for the year. Money borrowed is seen as accumulated deficits or debt. Deficit is measured here as the amount by which total expenses exceed total unrestricted revenue, as a percentage of total expenses.

40% of choruses are showing deficits, with most of these deficits (25% of the 40%) coming in under 10% of total budgets by expenses (pink bar), meaning their deficit is not significant. These levels of deficits are fairly comparable to other arts and cultural organizations. We can see that choruses in the \$1Million and over budget category have more choruses in deficit overall. However, the choruses in the smaller budget size categories (below \$100,000) show more instances of choruses being in significant deficit (over 10% of budget, red bar). This may be related to the fact that it is often easier for smaller sized organizations to find themselves in deficit that is at or above 10%, as any unforeseen expenses can have a significant impact on budget. For example, an unexpected expense of \$3,000 for an organization with a budget of \$25,000 would put them beyond this threshold.



CAPITALIZATION: OPERATING CASH & WORKING CAPITAL

Operating Cash (i.e. cash-on-hand) and Working Capital are important metrics for understanding financial health. Operating Cash differs from Working Capital, as Working Capital includes certain types of liquid assets beyond cash, generally types of assets that could be readily sold. Both Operating Cash and Working Capital are calculated using entries from organizations’ balance sheets.

In general, the recommendation for organizations is to have about 3 months of Operating Cash or Working Capital to cushion against unexpected expenses and provide for cash outlays. Having 3-6 months of Operating Cash or Working Capital is a level at which the organization is generally considered to be protected from a possible cash-flow problem or fiscal shock (e.g. an anticipated grant is delayed). Individual organizations may check to see how many months of Operating Cash/Working Capital they have by utilizing the Balance Sheet Trend Report on the DataArts platform.

Operating Cash

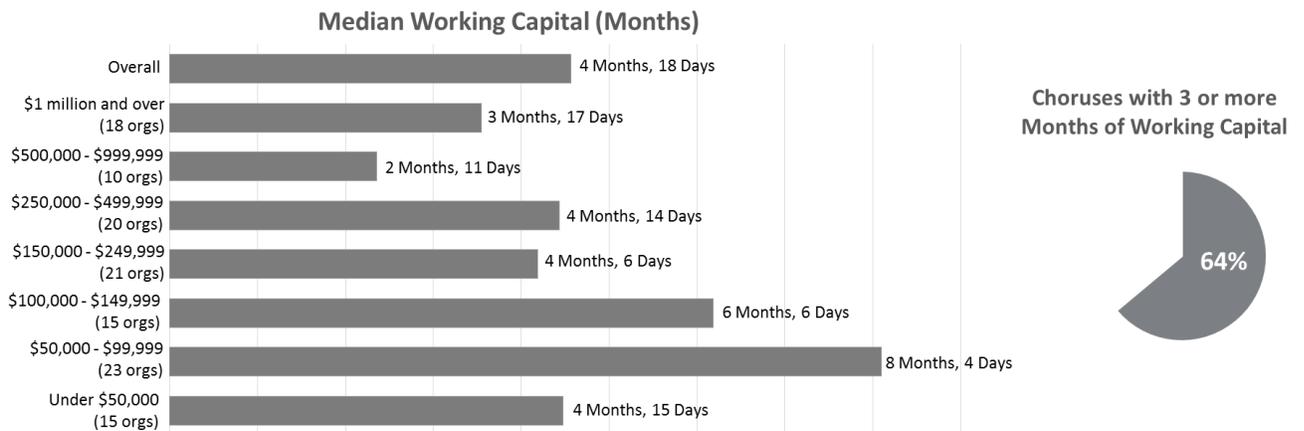
43% of choruses reach this 3 month level when looking at Operating Cash (money in the bank). As noted above, deficits may be indicative of some fluidity in cash when looking at a given year. Organizations can struggle sometimes to meet the 3 month Operating Cash threshold which has been generally used as a standard. Since they do not spend money in neat one-month increments, organizations can easily find themselves having to pay a bill or debt that is in excess of the revenue that is brought in over a one month timeframe. In particular, arts organizations can find that they take in revenue in waves – for example, selling many tickets during the first month a performance is announced and fewer tickets in the following months, given that most were sold in that initial period. Maintaining a pool of Operating Cash allows organizations to avoid difficulties that can result from these characteristics.

Generally speaking, even with some choruses in deficit, the Operating Cash levels across budget categories seem healthy, when paired with the Working Capital chart in the next section.



Working Capital

Working Capital is generally a more stable financial health metric to track when planning over time, as it indicates whether or not the organization has ample resources to fund regular operations, as well as its ability take advantage of new opportunities that come along and innovate. 64% of choruses reach the 3 month threshold when looking at Working Capital. It is worth noting that Working Capital analyses frequently show lower levels of Working Capital for larger organizations, which may seem counter-intuitive, given their relatively stronger financial positions. However, it may also indicate that they have resources (e.g. lines of credit) which obviate the need for larger short term reserves.



How do we reconcile the above Working Capital figures with the percentages of organizations in deficit? The Net Income (Deficit) chart is showing this on a per-organization basis, as opposed to totals, averages, or medians, which look at these aspects by grouping organizations. For example, the 20% of organizations with budgets of \$250,000-\$499,999 that are in significant deficit represent 4 organizations. In addition, many of the organizations with deficits under 10% may be at 1% or 2% deficit.

Financial Reserves

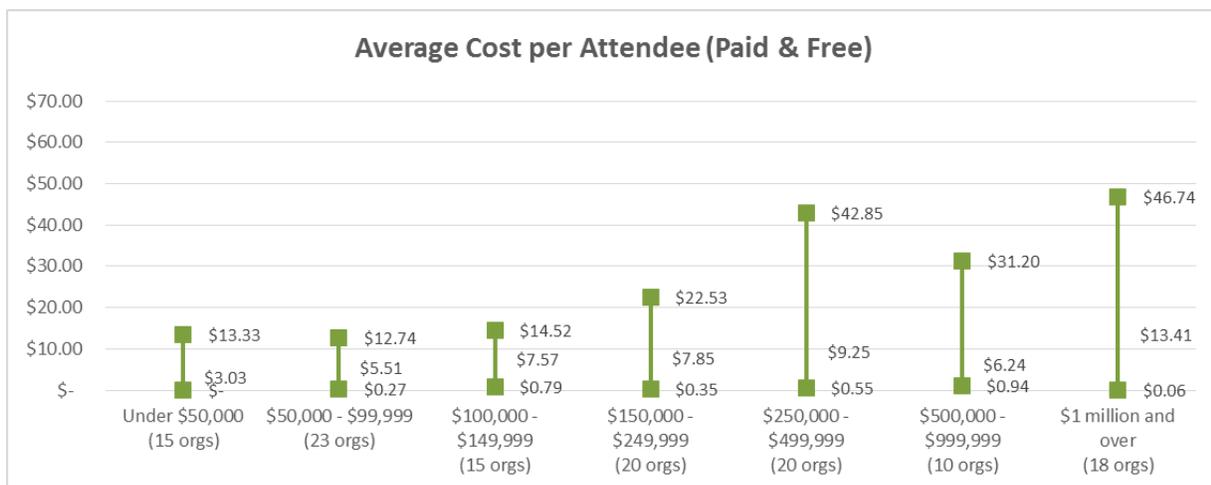
In unstable times, reserves and endowments offer some measure of safety, as well as dollars to invest in future opportunities. 62 choruses reported having an endowment or reserve fund in their 2016/17 Cultural Data Profile. The table below shows the types of reserves choruses had, by budget size and chorus type.

	Under \$50,000 (1 org)	\$50,000 - \$99,999 (10 orgs)	\$100,000 - \$149,999 (5 orgs)	\$150,000 - \$249,999 (9 orgs)	\$250,000 - \$499,999 (14 orgs)	\$500,000 - \$999,999 (7 orgs)	\$1 million and over (16 orgs)	Overall
Reserve Fund	1	3	0	3	9	2	6	24
Permanently restricted endowment	0	4	0	2	3	5	10	24
Board designated endowment	0	1	1	3	4	0	8	17
Term endowment	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	4

	Children/Youth Chorus (11 orgs)	Professional Chorus (11 orgs)	Symphonic Chorus (7 orgs)	Volunteer Chorus (33 orgs)	Overall
Reserve Fund	7	5	1	11	24
Permanently restricted endowment	5	6	4	9	24
Board designated endowment	2	0	3	12	17
Term endowment	0	0	1	3	4

MARKETING EFFICIENCY

Marketing Efficiency tells us how much it costs to place one patron in a seat. Data provided in the Cultural Data Profile allows us to see how choruses spent marketing dollars in 2016/17 to attract audiences. Marketing Efficiency is calculated as total marketing dollars divided by total attendance (paid plus free attendees). This is an incomplete measure of marketing effectiveness, because marketing dollars often have purposes beyond selling tickets, but it does provide some guidance for setting marketing budgets. Median spending per ticket overall is \$7.42. Larger choruses tend to spend heavily, incurring greater costs to attract audiences (the exception to this are the 10 choruses in the \$500,000 to \$999,999 grouping). A chart with low and high marketing efficiency rates, as well as median rates across budget categories can be found below.



Overall	Children/Youth Chorus (16 orgs)	Professional Chorus (24 orgs)	Symphonic Chorus (7 orgs)	Volunteer Chorus (74 orgs)
\$ 7.30	\$ 2.50	\$ 8.53	\$ 10.89	\$ 6.94

Fundraising Efficiency

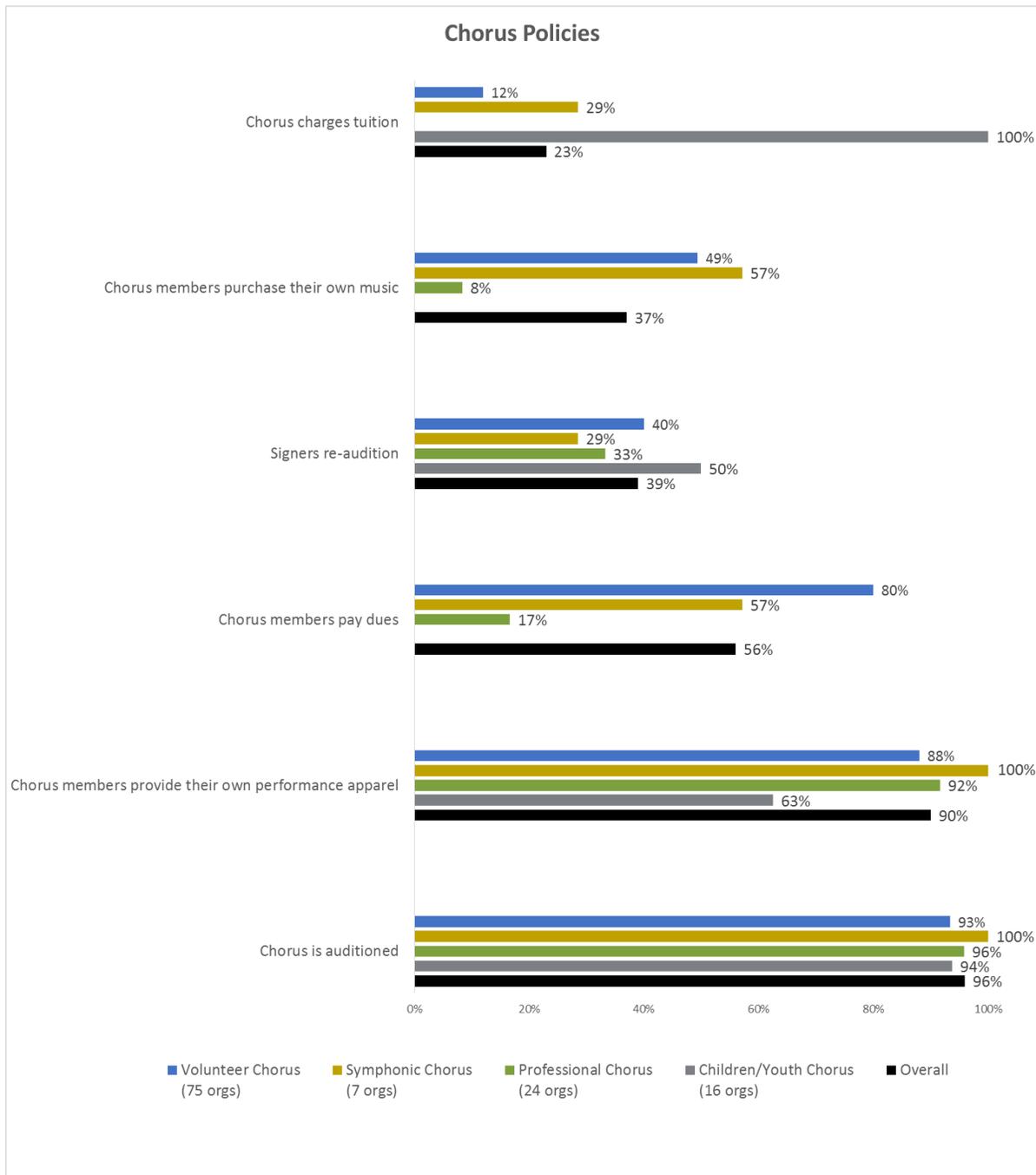
The efficiency of development efforts also helps to measure the success of fundraising efforts for organizations. Here it is measured as expenses for development or fundraising purposes divided by total contributed support. The median chorus spent 13 cents to raise every dollar. In fact, the median is generally 10 or 11 cents, except for Children/Youth choruses, which spend 22 cents per dollar. This is a great return on dollars raised. Reasons for this may be utilizing technology to reach and attract donations and a wide interest placed on development resources. A chart with low and high fundraising efficiency rates, as well as median rates across budget categories can be found below.



	Overall	Children/Youth Chorus (16 orgs)	Professional Chorus (24 orgs)	Symphonic Chorus (7 orgs)	Volunteer Chorus (75 orgs)
Fundraising Efficiency	\$ 0.13	\$ 0.22	\$ 0.11	\$ 0.10	\$ 0.10

CHORUS ORGANIZATION & MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

The chart below shows the data collected on various yes/no questions asked in the Chorus Operations Survey module. Over half of the choruses analyzed asked choristers to pay dues; all of the Children/Youth choruses analyzed charge tuition. Annual auditions are standard in nearly all choruses (96% overall) and re-auditions standard in over a third of choruses (39% overall).



The table below shows the average, minimum, and maximum amount paid by choristers in dues and tuition across all choruses participating. Average tuition was around \$700 (charged most often by Children/Youth choruses). Average yearly membership dues for participating choruses was around \$175 in 2016/17.

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
Yearly Dues Amount	\$174.10	\$50.00	\$525.00
Yearly Tuition Amount	\$678.22	\$65.00	\$2,850.00

Governance

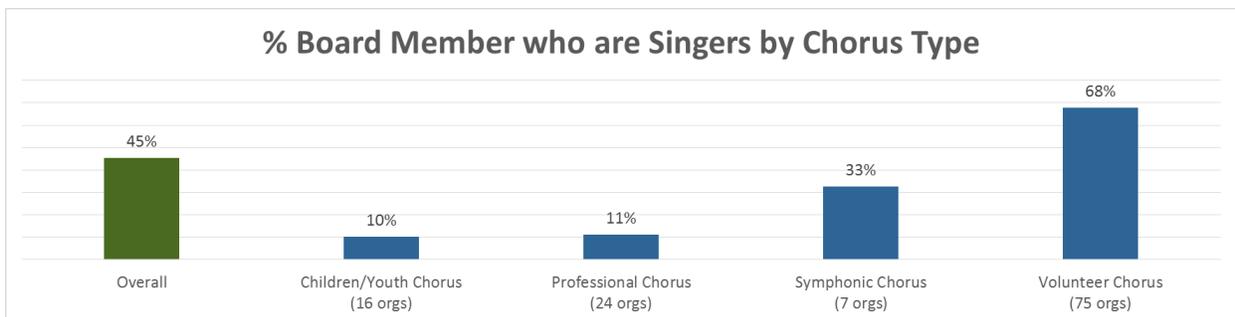
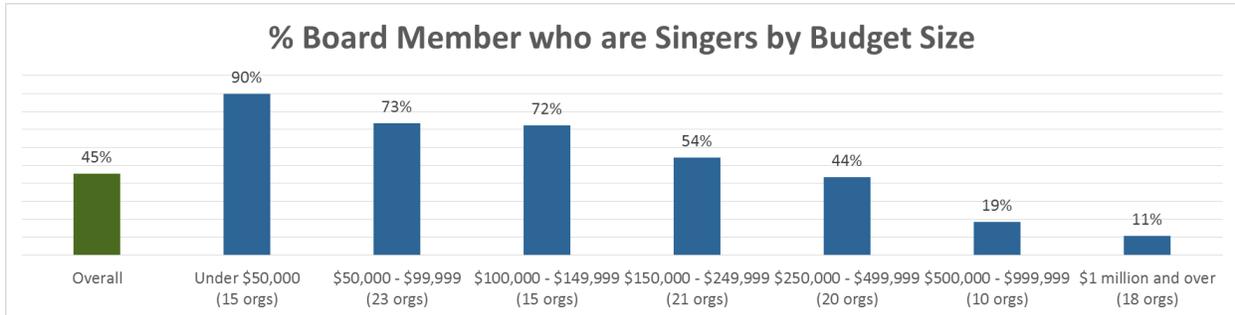
This section covers board activity and other governance matters, including singer participation and practices around contributions from the board.

	Overall	Children/Youth Chorus (16 orgs)	Professional Chorus (24 orgs)	Symphonic Chorus (7 orgs)	Volunteer Chorus (75 orgs)
Average # Board Members	13	14	14	19	12

	Overall	Under \$50,000 (15 orgs)	\$50,000 - \$99,999 (23 orgs)	\$100,000 - \$149,999 (15 orgs)	\$150,000 - \$249,999 (21 orgs)	\$250,000 - \$499,999 (20 orgs)	\$500,000 - \$999,999 (10 orgs)	\$1 million and over (18 orgs)
Average # Board Members	13	9	10	12	12	12	12	25

Board Practices & Singer Participation on Boards

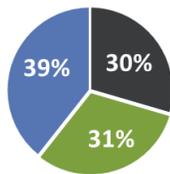
The boards of responding choruses ranged in size from 4 to 77 members, and generally served for 3 years. One may recall from the beginning of this report that the average number of singers in a typical chorus was 173 in 2016/17. In looking at the percentage of board members who are also singers in a chorus, this is most common among smaller sized choruses. The chart below shows a steady decline of board members who are also singers in the chorus as the chorus increases in size. Generally speaking, two out of every three board members at Volunteer choruses also sing in the chorus.



Board Member Contribution Policies

The pie charts below show the percentage of choruses asking board members to give an annual personal contribution or a “give and get” amount. Overall, 61% of choruses explicitly asked or made direct suggestions to board members for support. “Give and get” policies, where directors are expected to solicit funds to support the chorus, are in place among 1 in 5 participating choruses. Board members solicit funds from others to meet the “get” goal, which supplements their own “give.”

Does your chorus ask board members to make an annual personal contribution?

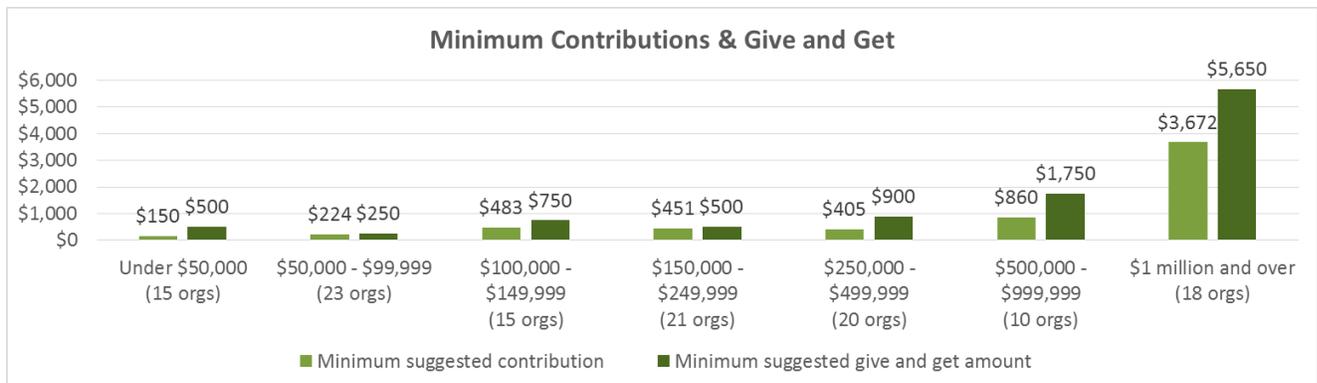


■ No specific ask ■ Required ■ Suggested

Does your chorus ask board members for a “give and get” amount?



The chart below shows the averages for minimum suggested contributions and “give and get” amounts across budget categories. As expected, the general trend is to increase contribution values as an organization increases in size. Overall, the minimum suggested contribution skews towards the larger organizations at \$1,125 (“give and get” amount is on average \$2,197).



As the reader may recall from the *revenue* section of this report, Individual Support accounts for a majority of revenue. In taking a look at what comprises Individual Support, we see that trustee and board contributions make up 30% of that category.

Chorus Staffing

This section summarizes chorus responses within the Cultural Data Profile regarding paid and volunteer staff with part or full-time work status. Over half of choruses (57%) reported at least one full or part-time paid staff person. For all respondents, staff configurations were:

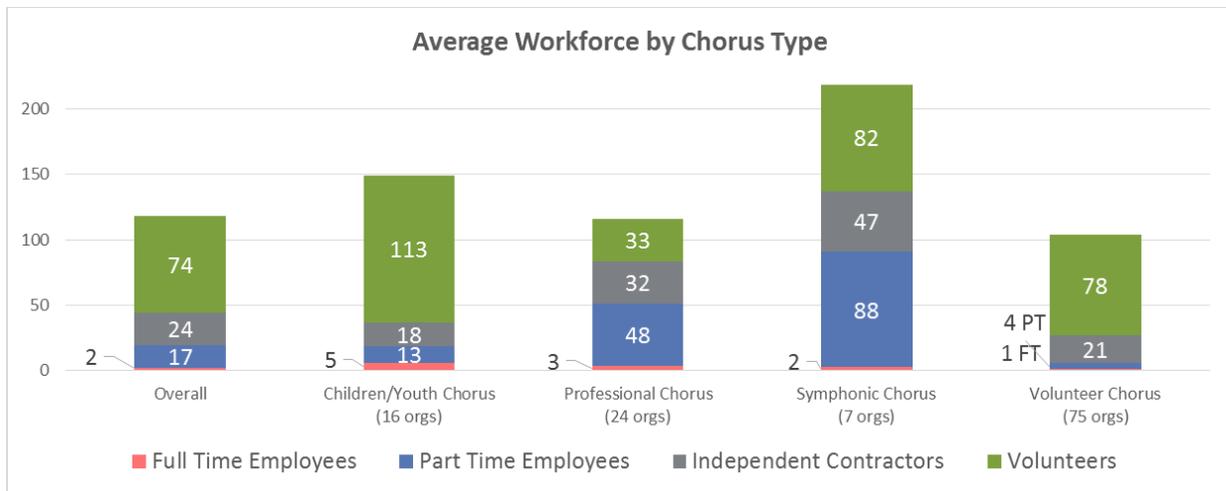
Zero paid staff: 43%

Full-Time only: 5%

Part-Time only: 23%

Full and Part-Time staff: 30%

The chart below displays average numbers of full-time and part-time employees, as well as Independent Contractors and Volunteers by chorus type, budget size, and overall:



	Overall	Under \$50,000 (15 orgs)	\$50,000 - \$99,999 (23 orgs)	\$100,000 - \$149,999 (15 orgs)	\$150,000 - \$249,999 (21 orgs)	\$250,000 - \$499,999 (20 orgs)	\$500,000 - \$999,999 (10 orgs)	\$1 million and over (18 orgs)
Full Time Employees	2	0	0	0	0	1	3	9
Part Time Employees	17	0	2	1	2	20	5	78
Independent Contractors	24	8	16	24	34	20	31	41
Volunteers	74	16	30	64	79	88	83	168

The Chorus Operations Survey also captures compensation information for administrative and artistic leaders, singers, and accompanists.

Chorus America provides compensation information for artistic and administrative leaders of choruses within general budget ranges, as well as accompanist and singer information in aggregate, to our members. Chorus America can also provide a customized report targeted more closely to your budget range. This report also includes benefit information provided to compensated employees.

For more information about our compensation reports, visit <https://tinyurl.com/2018cosr>

