

American Swedish Institute

Key findings from a craft and food programming field scan

From 2019-2021, Wilder Research (Wilder) partnered with the American Swedish Institute (ASI) on a number of audience- and community-focused organizational learning projects. These projects were intended to generate insights about how ASI can maintain connections to their current audiences as well as how they can make new, meaningful connections with people in their community and beyond.

Wilder conducted a field scan in early 2020 of craft and food programming from 20 organizations that provide programming that is similar to ASI's Nordic Handcraft and Nordic Table programs. Information was obtained from organization websites, their 990 forms (if accessible), and annual reports (if accessible).¹

ASI was the only organization with unique terminology for both craft and food programming. This allows ASI to stand out among organizations with similar programming. Other terms organizations used were: traditional northern craft, Nordic cooking, prairie living, handskills, and homemaking arts.

Organizations included in the scan:

- Aspire Artisan Studios · Center for Glass Arts · Chicago Avenue Fire Arts Center · Cooks of Crocus Hill · Duluth Folk School
- Grand Marais Art Colony · Highpoint Center for Printmaking · Ingebretsen's · Kitchen Window* · Land Alliance Folk School
- Milan Village Arts School · Minnesota Center for Book Arts · Minnesota Textile Center · Minnetonka Center for the Arts
- North House Folk School · University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum · Vesterheim · Villages Folk School
- Weavers Guild of Minnesota · White Bear Center for the Arts

*Kitchen Window closed permanently in December 2021

¹The majority of this research was completed prior to the COVID-19 pandemic; the report was completed in May 2020. As a result of the pandemic many organizations started to pull information off their websites in February and March of 2020. As of writing this summary, many of the organizations have reduced the number of programs they offer and number of participants per program, while also establishing virtual programming.

Programming organizations offered



Both food and craft programming
10 organizations

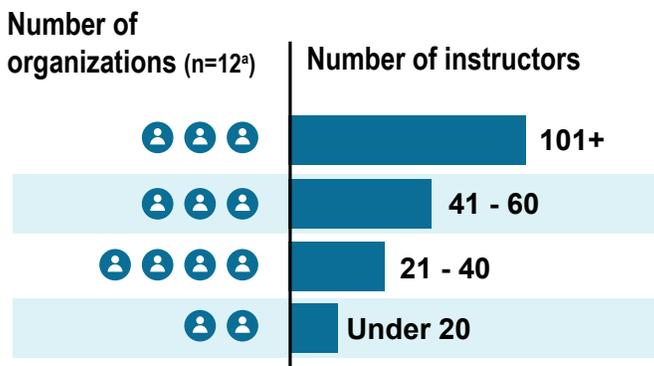


Only craft programming
8 organizations



Only food programming
2 organizations

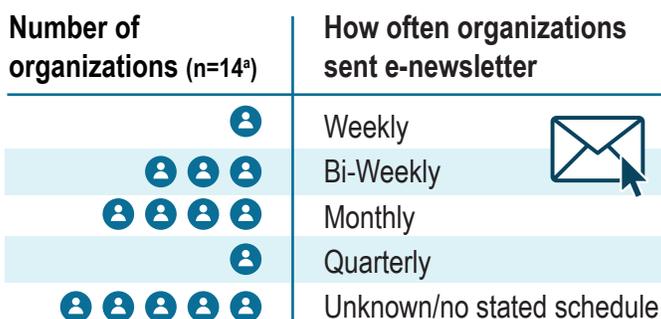
Instructor capacity



^a Of the 20 organizations included in the field scan, 12 included information about the number of instructors they contract with.

How organizations communicate with the public

Fourteen organizations sent electronic newsletters to members as well as subscribers. Of these fourteen, five organizations also sent print newsletters to members (in addition to the e-newsletters). Four organizations (Landscape Arboretum, Minnetonka Center for the Arts, White Bear Center for the Arts, and Grand Marais Art Colony) offered a free downloadable program catalog on their websites.



How organizations fund their work and who they partner with



75% of organizations received grants from foundations or granting agencies (n=16)



Foundations and granting agencies included: public granting agencies (such as the Minnesota State Arts Board and Regional Arts Councils) and private foundations (such as Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies)



69% of organizations listed corporate or for-profit sponsors (n=16)



Corporate and for-profit sponsors included: financial institutions, restaurants/cafes, large corporations like Target and Medtronic, grocery stores, medical and dentistry practices, hotels, and others



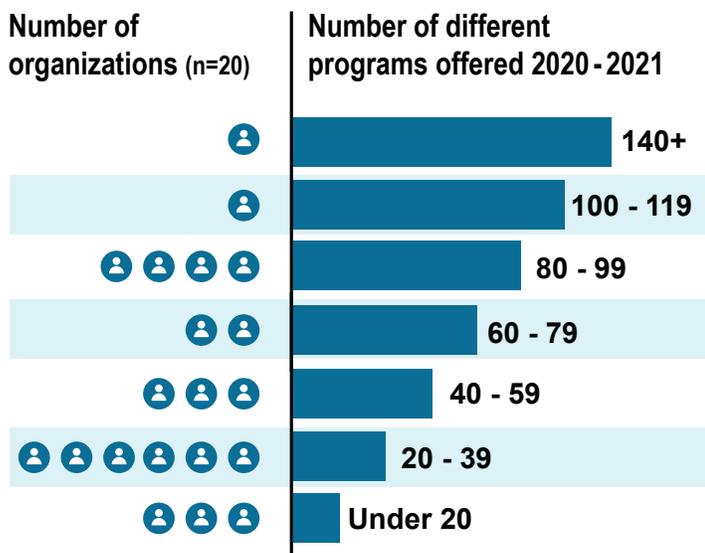
65% of organizations listed partners in their websites or through their annual report (n=20)



Partnerships included: restaurants/cafes, breweries/distilleries, libraries, community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, art and culture organizations

What organizations' programming looks like

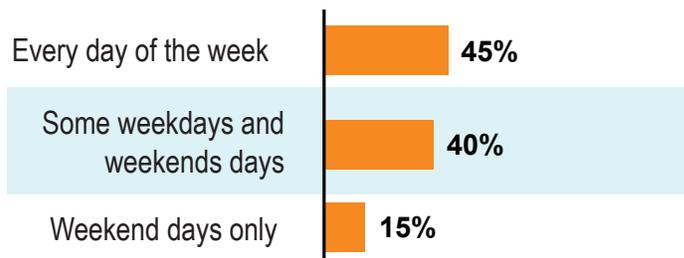
North House Folk School offered the most programs (240) while Kitchen Window offered the fewest (8).



Workshop logistics

Most popular times for offering programming were weekday evenings after 4pm or weekend mornings (9-12 am) and afternoons (12-4pm).

Day of the week programs were offered



Of the organizations...

75%

offer programs more than once

55%

offered adult only programming

65%

listed recommended skill levels for their programs

55+

Minnesota Textile Center provided programs specifically for people 55+



North House Folk School and Aspire provided programs specifically for people who identify as women



North House Folk School provided programs specifically for those who identify as non-binary

