

ARTISTS THRIVE ACTIVITIES: BUILD YOUR OWN TOOL

WHAT: Create a customized tool that resonates with you and your peers by specifically describing the conditions for artists working in your community.

WHO: 2-10 people; could be a small group of artists or a team from an organization that works with artists (or wants to)

WHERE: Select a convenient, neutral venue with minimal distractions and enough room and seating for the expected number of attendees.

TIME: 1.5-3 hours (depending on number of rows discussed)

SUPPLIES:

- Print enough copies for each participant of the blank rubric (attached)
- Flipchart or whiteboard to capture the discussion (optional)
- Artists Thrive fliers (optional, can request free Artists Thrive materials on the website)
- Pens/pencils for participants
- Nametags (optional)
- Markers for nametags (and flipchart/whiteboard if using) (optional)
- Refreshments or invite potluck

HOW:

1. *Prep:* Before the gathering, review the relevant tool, either *I Am an Artist* or *I Work With Artists*. Decide whether you will create your own categories or use categories from the existing tools (e.g., “Artistic Life” or “Money” or “Valuing Artists”).
2. *Gather:* Greet people personally as they arrive and make them welcome. Offer refreshments or invite a potluck. Invite each participate to make a name tag (optional).
3. [Optional] *Welcome & Introductions* (5 min): If your group doesn’t already know each other, invite a creative introduction such as each person sharing their name, what they do, and a favorite recent arts experience (1 min each).
4. *Share about Artists Thrive* (5 min): Explain why you decided to host this gathering and respond to any preliminary questions about Artists Thrive. Pass out Artists Thrive fliers (if desired).

ARTISTS THRIVE

RAISING THE VALUE OF ARTISTS IN EVERY COMMUNITY.

5. *Dive in* (45-60 min): Using the blank framework, dive in and start filling out the grid with your own descriptions for the first category selected.
 - a. Start by discussing the intent behind the category and what thoughts it brings to mind. Decide whether your group would like to create a new or different category.
 - b. Begin crafting language for your grid.
 - c. Your goal is to describe, as specifically as possible, what that category looks like for artists in your network at each point on the spectrum, from feeling like “Silenced” to “Struggling” to “Surviving” to “Thriving.”
 - d. Feel free to use local examples, inside jokes, and other shorthand that articulates what matters to you.
 - e. You may want to reference the current *I Am an Artist* and *I Work with Artists* tools to build on this language or you might prefer to start fresh without that reference.
 - f. Consider taking a few minutes to brainstorm individually before starting to work together as a group.
6. *Keep going* (30-60 min): Depending on how much time you have and the engagement of your group, you can continue filling out additional rows and discussing new categories or just focus on the topic(s) that are most relevant right now.
7. [Optional] *Goals* (10 min): Now that you’ve identified common challenges and opportunities, invite participants to make any goals they might like to share for what actions they plan to take as a result of this conversation. Encourage people to be specific and timely.
 - a. Worksheets can be downloaded from the website:
<https://www.artiststhrive.org/set-goals>
 - b. Write down any group commitments on a flipchart or whiteboard if possible.
8. *Gratitude & closing* (10 min): Thank the artists for being vulnerable with each other and fostering a spirit of support. Go around in a circle and ask each attendee to share one word that captures how they are feeling after the session. Share any anticipated next steps or follow-up.

TIPS:

1. You don’t need an expert facilitator to have a great conversation. Check out our handy tips on how to be your best facilitator self on the attached facilitator guide.
2. Don’t feel obligated to accept the framework just as it is. You are encouraged to change the framework however you see fit. If a category doesn’t apply to you or some of the language bugs you, replace it with language that is meaningful to you.

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS

- Remain neutral and LISTEN actively
- Be comfortable with silence
- Be mindful of power and privilege imbalances
- All do not have to speak, but everyone should be given the chance
- Probe to clarify insights and learn more
- Encourage alternate viewpoints
- Be spontaneous and follow where the conversation goes
- Be prepared to hear (and value!) the unexpected
- Keep questions succinct, relevant, and open-ended
- Don't stay in the negative
- Maintain confidentiality
- Ask permission before you share another person's story

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ARTISTS SILENCED	ARTISTS STRUGGLE	ARTISTS SURVIVE	ARTISTS THRIVE

TAKE ACTION

To move up the rubric, what actions need to happen/by whom? What resources are needed?