

**YOUTH ENGAGEMENT: STRATEGIC
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE VANCOUVER
WRITERS FEST**

by
Akram Barabadi

M.A. (Hons., English), Hakim Sabzevari University, 2012

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Declaration of Committee

Name: Akram Barabadi

Degree: Master of Publishing

Title: Youth Engagement: Strategic Recommendations For The Vancouver Writers Fest

Committee:

Leanne Johnson
Supervisor
Lecturer, Publishing

Scott Steedman
Committee Member
Lecturer, Publishing

Lauren Dembicky-Polivka
Committee Member
Development Manager, Vancouver Writers Fest

Abstract

The Vancouver Writers Fest (VWF) has been a staple in Vancouver's literary community producing literary events since 1988. Recognizing that the profile of the Festival attendees is skewed older, in 2021, the organization embarked on building a strategy to attract younger audience members by developing the range and depth of the young audience, building a stronger base, and adding to its financial sustainability. The VWF's overall strategy is meant to be inclusive and engage young audiences from diverse communities in Vancouver.

This report analyzes the VWF's audiences, members, and volunteers and explores the challenges and barriers for young people to participate in events. The case study explores strategies to overcome these barriers.

Keywords: Vancouver Writers Fest; literary events; youth engagement strategy; festivals

Dedication

To my husband, Ali, for his endless support and encouragement

And my loving daughter, Maneli.

Acknowledgments

I am grateful for many people throughout the process of writing this report.

First and foremost, a big thanks to my husband, Ali, whose support has kept me going during this program.

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List of Abbreviations

Festival	The one-week festival held by the Vancouver Writers Fest
VWF	Vancouver Writers Fest
Writers Fest	Short for Vancouver Writers Fest

Chapter 1. Introduction

Literary festivals, as a medium, try to promote authors and books and foster a love of literature and writing. Currently, literary festivals, like many other art organizations, are grappling with the challenge of developing younger audiences. Reaching young audiences, especially from diverse communities, can be challenging and require more resources, commitment, and time. However, in a country as diverse as Canada, where more than one-fifth of the population are people of colour¹ and younger folks are even more diverse², literary and art organizations should take advantage of this opportunity to hire the young people from all backgrounds and include them as their audience. These organizations should include young people from diverse backgrounds to enrich the cultural and social space and allow them to integrate culturally, socially, economically, and civically more broadly.

Throughout its 34-year history, the Vancouver Writers Fest (VWF) has been a staple in Vancouver's literary community producing literary events throughout the year and during its week-long Festival in October. Wanting to broaden its audience in Vancouver, VWF has tried to include younger audiences and more communities in its events through programming different events with diverse authors in gender, age, and background at venues on and off Granville Island, trivia-style events, increased accessibility and offering discounted or free events. "I think the Festival can and should be connecting to all of Vancouver. And Vancouver is a diverse place," said Kaile Shilling, Executive Director, "and it is increasingly a younger place."³ Despite the Festival's efforts, the 2021 Festival surveys indicate that the participation of young people, especially from diverse communities, is still low (see Appendix 1, 2, 3 for surveys' summary). At the same time, many of its current audience, volunteers, and members are aging.

In 2021, the Festival embarked on building a strategy to attract younger audience members (defined in this instance as people under 40). The overall plan was meant to be inclusive and engage the young audience from diverse communities in Vancouver.

1 Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics, Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016190, Ottawa, November 29, 2017. <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed March 20, 2021).

2 Statistics Canada, A Portrait of Canadian Youth: March 2019 Update, Ottawa, Ontario, May 8, 2019. 150. [statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-631-x/11-631-x2019003-eng.htm](https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-631-x/11-631-x2019003-eng.htm) (accessed December 10, 2021).

3 Kaile Shilling, Personal Interview by Author, September 16, 2021.

According to Leslie Hurting, Artistic Director, “we want to have loyal members, loyal ticket buyers. People who return each year to us...any organization is going to benefit from the vitality, ideas, and energy that young people bring,” She goes on to say, “...youth engagement means you can see younger people in the audience, but also it has an effect on new volunteers, and new younger donors and ultimately you see a slow effect on every aspect of things.”⁴ Therefore, engagement for the VWF means not only younger audience members but also younger volunteers, donors, and members.

In September 2021, I was hired by the VWF and started my professional placement. My work included designing and developing youth engagement strategic recommendations for the organization. As a young, non-white, non-native speaker of English, and a newcomer to Vancouver who is interested in literature and has worked in the publishing industry, I could be considered a potential audience member for the organization. From this perspective, I felt connected to the project and the VWF’s purpose to develop the range and depth of young diverse audiences to add to the Festival’s financial sustainability by increasing ticket sales, membership, volunteers, and donations.

In this report, I examine the barriers for young people to engage with the VWF events and recommend strategies for overcoming those barriers. This work is based on a literature review and the study of Vancouver Writers Fest surveys.

This report is divided into four chapters. Chapter 1 is an introduction to the subject of this report. Chapter 2 introduces the Vancouver Writers Fest, including a SWOT analysis, information about the Festival’s audiences, members, and volunteers, and a look at the barriers to engagement. Chapter 3 presents five guiding principles and five youth engagement strategic recommendations for the VWF. Finally, this project concludes by addressing the limitations of the project and providing further recommendations for the VWF.

This project uses the VWF as a case study to examine youth's challenges and barriers to participating in art and literary events and provide audience engagement strategies to help organizations overcome these barriers. Hopefully, this report will serve as an example for other arts and literary organizations struggling to reach younger audiences.

⁴ Leslie Hurting, Personal Interview by Author, September 14, 2021.

Chapter 2. The Vancouver Writers Fest, Its Audience, and Barriers for Youth Engagement

2.1. About Vancouver Writers Fest

The Vancouver Writers Fest (VWF) hosts an annual literary Festival on Granville Island in Vancouver for one week in October. The events are generally referred to as the Festival.⁵ The Festival was founded in 1988 by Artistic Director, Alma Lee. During its 34-year history, the Festival has presented multiple award-winning writers from across Canada and the world.⁶

The VWF's mission is to "connect people to exceptional books, ideas, and dialogue through year-round programming that ignites a passion for words and the world around us." The organization delivers its mission through a variety of year-round programming, which includes four main components:

- Incite, a free bi-weekly event run in partnership with the Vancouver Public Library;⁷
- Youth Education Programs that connect students with celebrated writers with events such as the Festival events for young people, the Writers in the Classroom Program, and Youth Writing Contest;⁸
- Special Events, year-round events featuring celebrated names in the Canadian and international literary community;
- The flagship October Festival.

The other programs offered by the VWF include Books & Brunch, spring and summer events that consist of author conversations and a brunch at the Granville Island Hotel; Whisky & Words, an annual whisky-tasting fundraiser; and My Roots, a yearly writing workshop to encourage immigrants to develop and share their stories of place.⁹

5 Trenton Galozo, "Free Saturday: Accessible Programming at the Vancouver Writers Fest," (Research Project, Simon Fraser University, April 25, 2019), 5.

6 "About", Vancouver Writers Fest, accessed February 10, 2022, writersfest.bc.ca/about

7 Ibid.

8 "Youth", Vancouver Writers Fest, accessed February 10, 2022. writersfest.bc.ca/youth

9 "About", Vancouver Writers Fest, Accessed February 10, 2022. writersfest.bc.ca/about

Programs are run by a dedicated team of ten core staff, two seasonal staff, two interns, and over one hundred volunteers.

In 2021, the VWF featured 74 events, 37 online and 37 in-person. The VWF markets its Festival events online (website, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter), with its e-newsletter, by distributing print materials (program, posters, postcards, brochures) locally, through traditional media coverage, and via advertisement purchases in print and online. By increasing its investment in online advertisements, VWF doubled its impressions, reaching one million in 2021.¹⁰

Throughout its history, the VWF has tried new ways to open its doors to more people, including offering new events formats on varying topics of interest, ensuring accessible venue spaces for people with mobility and hearing issues, pay-what-you-can at its digital Festival week events, offering subsidized tickets for schools, free access to community organizations, discount tickets for seniors and people under-30, programming free events (Incite), and a Free Saturday initiative (a program of twelve free in-person events inaugurated in 2018 on the Saturday of the Festival to help transform VWF from an ostensibly boutique Festival to one of more actual equality)¹¹.

2.2. Summary: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT)

To know more about the organization, what will affect its future, how effective its programs are, who its audience and touchpoints with the community are, and have a better sense of the environment I'm going to build my strategic plan in, I did a SWOT analysis of the VWF. I focused on factors that have audience implications rather than on general issues for the organization as a whole. The results follow.

The Vancouver Writers Fest's strengths lie in its excellent reputation and brand presence with publishers in Canada, the U.S., and abroad. The organization is successful at having both world-class authors and featuring emerging artists. In addition, the organization has a lot of dedicated patrons who have a deep engagement with it. As Leena Desai, its outreach coordinator, said of VWF patrons, "they watch us, donate for

¹⁰ Vancouver Writers Fest, "2021 Festival Advertising".

¹¹ Galozo, "Free Saturday," 2.

us, and volunteer for us."¹² The other strength of the organization is that it has shown its flexibility in a time of crisis with loyal staff.

In the Festival's strength, there is a weakness. Based on 2021 surveys, most of those loyal, dedicated donors, members (60% over the age of 65)¹³, and volunteers (70% over the age of 55)¹⁴ are older and not from diverse communities and do not reflect the diversity of Vancouver (under 10% of audiences stated they are from BIPOC communities)¹⁵.

However, there is an opportunity for the Vancouver Writers Fest to attract a younger audience by deepening its partnership with universities, colleges, community centres, libraries, and other Metro Vancouver art and literary organizations working with younger audiences. As well as reaching more communities in Vancouver, VWF's online technological infrastructure provides the opportunity to reach out to a bigger audience geographically through virtual events.

As a nonprofit organization, VWF is aware of the threat of aging donors, volunteers, and patrons. It seeks to have an audience that ranges in age to continue to support the organization for years to come as its audiences, volunteers, members, and donors. Moreover, the VWF is actively trying to address its lack of young diverse audiences in order to best serve the community and have audiences that represent those who are part of its community.

2.3. Current Festival Participants, Volunteers, Members

To design a youth engagement strategy, it is important to analyze the entire organization to understand who is involved, not just attendees but the touchpoints the organization has with the community, and assess the real potential for the audience development. This analysis drew from Festival surveys and other organizational data. When coming up with strategies, I wanted to look at not only audience members but also volunteers, members, and donors to get a bigger-picture understanding.

¹² Leena Desai, Personal Interview by Author, September 17, 2021.

¹³ Vancouver Writers Fest, "2021 Member Survey".

¹⁴ Vancouver Writers Fest, "2021 Volunteer Survey".

¹⁵ Vancouver Writers Fest, "2021 Attendee Snapshot".

2.3.1. Current Participants' Snapshots

According to the 2021 post-festival survey, the majority of VWF participants are female (60%), educated (34% undergraduate, 45% graduate/postgraduate), white (around 80%), and over 50 (over 50%).

An important consideration of the survey data is that the number of survey participants (and presumably attendees) was reduced by half due to the pandemic down from 721 in 2019 to 331 in 2020 and 322 in 2021. In addition, there have been fewer new attendees over the last two years, with only 17% of respondents reporting first-time attendance in 2021, compared to 20% in 2020 and 25% in 2019. However, three times more people ages 31–40 attended the Festival in 2021 compared to 2019, an increase of 33%.¹⁶

Gender and Diversity

The make-up of the VWF audience has changed, with more gender diversity over the past few years. There is a more significant percentage of men attending and an increase in non-binary attendees in 2021 (Figure 1).¹⁷ Moving from a majority female Festival attendance to an audience with more diverse genders clearly shows the Festival has taken crucial steps in attracting audiences from all genders.

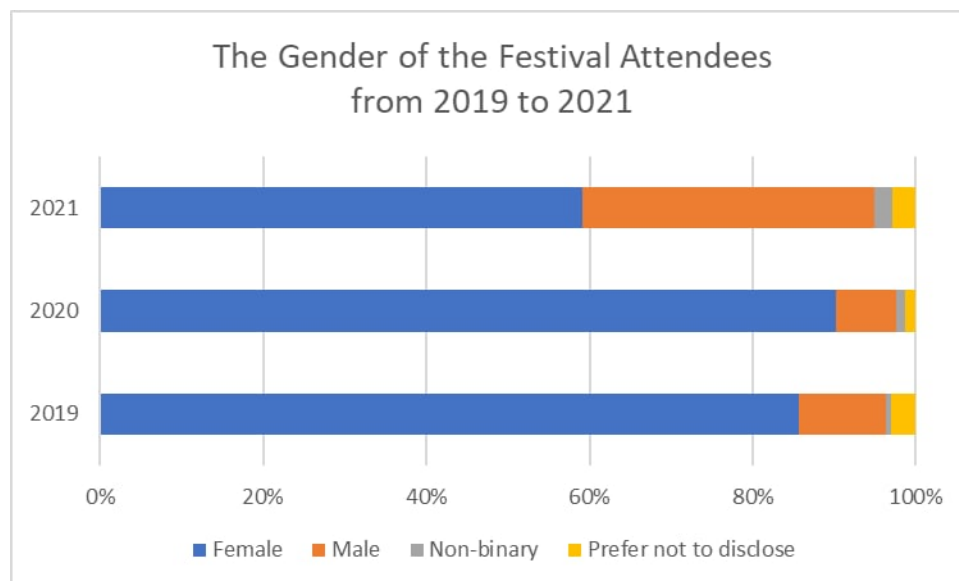


Figure 1: The Gender of the Festival Attendees from 2019 to 2021

¹⁶ Vancouver Writers Fest, "2019 Attendee Snapshot". Vancouver Writers Fest, "2020 Attendee Snapshot". Vancouver Writers Fest, "2021 Attendee Snapshot".

¹⁷ Ibid.

However, the percentage of people who stated they are members of underrepresented communities shows no significant difference (14% in 2020 and 15% in 2021).¹⁸ The data also indicates that the Festival has not made a substantial difference in its audience's racial, religious, linguistic, and ability diversity, even though it is located in Vancouver, a city where 52% of the population are members of a visible minority group (those who are not white or Indigenous), according to the City of Vancouver Profile 2020.¹⁹

Income

In terms of annual household income, when compared with the 2021 and 2019 surveys, in 2021, the number of attendees with the highest level of annual income doubled and reached 8.3%. On the other hand, the percentage of attendees with a lower annual income jumped to 29% from 17% in 2019²⁰ (Figure 2). However, in general, the average income level of the participants has shifted toward lower incomes.²¹

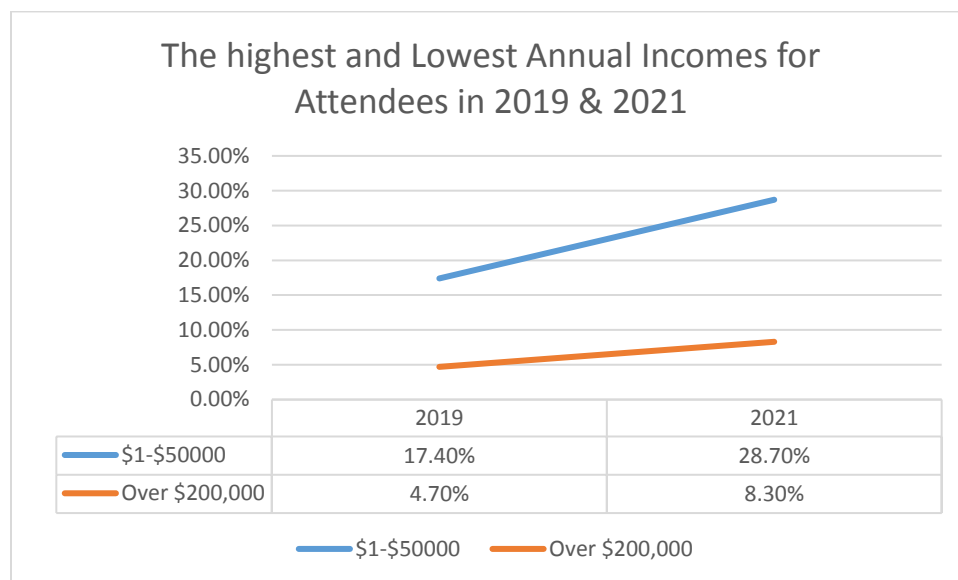


Figure 2: The Highest and Lowest Annual Incomes for Attendees in 2019 & 2021

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Social Policy and Projects Division, Arts, Culture and Community Services, Social Indicators and Trends: City of Vancouver Profile 2020, Vancouver, October 2, 2020. vancouver.ca/files/cov/social-indicators-profile-city-of-vancouver.pdf (accessed February 1, 2022).

²⁰ Vancouver Writers Fest, "2019 Attendee Snapshot". Vancouver Writers Fest, "2020 Attendee Snapshot". Vancouver Writers Fest, "2021 Attendee Snapshot".

²¹ Ibid

Social Media Usage

In 2021, the percentage of participants who follow the Vancouver Writers Fest on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram increased significantly from 26% in 2019 to 63%.²² This increase can be explained by the change in people's lifestyles after the pandemic, when the organization decided to increase its investments in online platforms, including social media pages. Its Instagram page now has 10.8k followers, with the highest engagement in the 25–34 age group²³, and its Facebook has 6.9k, with the highest engagement in the 35–44 age group (Figure 3).²⁴

	Total Followers	Women	Men	Highest Engagement Age Group
Instagram	10.8 k	69.10%	30.90%	25–34
Facebook	6.9 k	75.80%	24.20%	35–44

Figure 3: The VWF Instagram vs. Facebook Insight in 2021

2.3.2. Volunteers

Volunteers are a crucial part of a literary festival and usually attend the festival; manage events; are involved in the planning, promotion, and attendance of the festival; and consequently, reflect the organization. To better understand the current volunteers of the Festival and analyze their age groups, diversity, level of loyalty, and motivation in volunteering, I studied the 2021 volunteer survey.

According to the survey, many Festival volunteers are loyal, female, white, and older than 55.

Around 70% of volunteers are over the age of 55. On the other hand, only 8% of the volunteers are under 30, and even if we add 31 to 40-year-old volunteers to this age

²² Ibid.

²³ Instagram, "Vancouver Writers Fest Page Insights".

²⁴ Facebook, "Vancouver Writers Fest Page Insights".

bracket, the percentage of volunteers under 40 is only 17%.²⁵ This number is even lower than the percentage of under 40s attending the Festival (Figure 4).

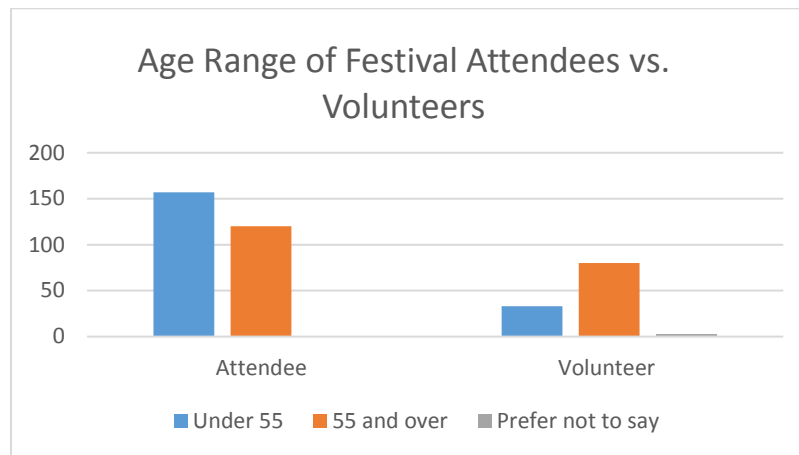


Figure 4: The Age Range of Festival Attendees vs. Volunteers 2021

Volunteers are mainly retired (67%), while some are working (37%) and a few are students (7%). About 5 out of 6 volunteers are women, over 80%.²⁶

Some 90% of volunteers stated their first language is English²⁷. By contrast, a 2016 census showed that in Vancouver, only 57% of the population's first language is English, 1.4% French, and 44% other languages.²⁸

People who find satisfaction in their volunteer experience will decide to continue volunteering if a match is made between their interests and the degree to which the volunteer experience fulfills those interests.²⁹ This is true of VWF volunteers, 80% of whom were returning volunteers in 2021.³⁰ All but one of the 119 volunteers stated they want to volunteer again next year.³¹ This data shows a high level of loyalty and commitment of the volunteers to the organization. However, from the perspective of

²⁵ Vancouver Writers Fest, "2021 Volunteer Survey".

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Statistics Canada, Focus on Geography Series, 2016 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-404-X2016001, Ottawa, Ontario, Data products, 2017. 12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/as-sa/fogs-spg/Facts-cma-eng.cfm?LANG=Eng&GK=CMA&GC=933&TOPIC=5 (accessed December 10, 2021).

²⁹ M. Ieshia West, "Understanding Volunteer Motivations: Recruiting and Retaining Youth and Young Adults," *Methodist University's Journal of Undergraduate Research and Creativity* 6 (2019-2020): 50-60. methodist.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/mr2020_west.pdf

³⁰ Vancouver Writers Fest, "2021 Volunteer Survey".

³¹ Vancouver Writers Fest, "2021 Volunteer Feedback".

diversity and age, the focus of this project, it shows a closed cycle of volunteers that may not be easily broken.

Finally, the Festival volunteers have different reasons for participating in volunteerism, which was significantly different when we compared the young people with the overall Festival volunteers. For example, 27% of the volunteers agreed and strongly agreed that their volunteer work has helped them develop their job-related skills. This percentage for young volunteers is 52%. Moreover, 49% of all volunteers agreed or strongly agreed that their volunteer work has increased their self-confidence and interpersonal skills, while this percentage for young volunteers is again almost, jumping to 74%.³² This shows the value for young people of volunteering with the VWF.

2.3.3. Members

Members of nonprofit organizations support the organization through membership fees while the organization provides engagement opportunities for its supporters. Members also serve as an important network for community outreach. If members are not young and diverse, then the organization's audiences are unlikely to be. To better understand the VWF's current members and donors, I analyzed the 2021 member survey, which received responses from 115 members.

According to the survey results, more than 60% of VWF members are over 65, and only 3% are under 40. In addition, 60% of members are retired and not working, and 86% are women. More than 70% of members have attended the VWF for more than ten years, with 65% residing in Vancouver and 24% in Metro Vancouver.

Only around 8% of members shared that they are members of an underrepresented community; five identified themselves as LGBTQ, two disabled, and two as South Asian. Around 50% of members do not donate to the VWF separately from purchasing a membership, and about 50% shared that they are not likely to donate to the VWF again. More than 50% of members have over \$80,000 annual household income. Around 70%

³² Ibid.

like to access the VWF digital recording archive as a benefit of their membership, and 40% would like to have pre-event gatherings with authors.³³

Based on the survey, more than 95% of members participated in three or more events at the Festival which shows the high level of engagement of members who make up the Festival's audience.³⁴

Overall, many VWF members are white women seniors living in Vancouver, and half of the members will donate now and in the future. The profile reflects the current organizational breakdown.

2.4. VWF Young Audience

In order to build a strategy for reaching younger audiences, I analyzed the data the Festival collected on the younger audience to examine how the VWF's programming impacts younger audiences. In this section, I carefully examine different facets of the Festival participants under 40 who answered the 2021 daily surveys (93) and post-festival surveys (119) (see Appendix 2 and 3 for the summary) to find out who and where they are, what trends may attract them, and what possible barriers to engagement may be.

Although it may be difficult to classify people in their third decade of life as young people, for a literary festival whose audience is generally middle-aged (+50), attracting 31-40-year-olds can be considered a success. So the young audiences are a mix of Millennials (born 1981–97) and Gen Z (born 1996–2012).³⁵

According to the post-festival survey, 61% of under-40 people only participated in in-person events, while this percentage was 40% for all participants.³⁶ Moreover, of 93 young people in daily surveys, 56 participated in in-person events, 27 in digital events, and ten in both.³⁷

³³ Vancouver Writers Fest, "2021 Member Survey".

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Heike Young, "Millennials vs. Gen Z: How Are They Different," Salesforce. January 29, 2021. salesforce.com/blog/how-millennials-and-gen-z-are-different/

³⁶ Vancouver Writers Fest, "2021 Attendee Snapshot".

³⁷ Vancouver Writers Fest, "2021 Festival Daily Feedback".

Moreover, the post-festival survey shows that a larger population of under-40 men attended the 2021 Festival events.

When annual income levels were compared to in-person versus online attendance, the numbers imply that the young attendees who participated in the in-person events have better financial situations than those attending digital events that offer pay-what-you-can pricing ³⁸ (Figure 5).

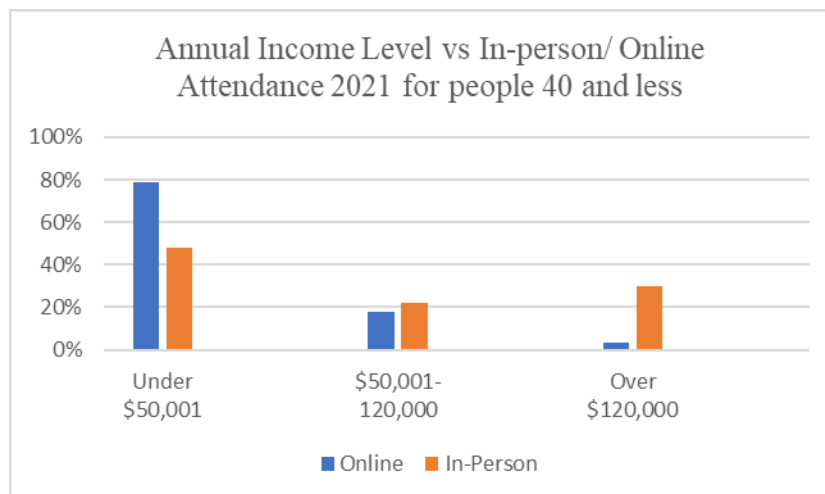


Figure 5: The Relationship between Annual Income Level and In-Person/Online Attendance 2021 for People 40 and Less

In daily festival surveys, 32% of under-30 respondents shared that they are members of an underrepresented community, which is more than respondents aged 31–40 (28%). Of the under-30 people who identified themselves as a minority, 16% identified themselves as LGBTQ, which is much higher than people ages 31–40 (5%).³⁹ Having such a large LGBTQ minority is significant compared to statistics showing that about 5% to 8% of Canadian youth (15–30) consider themselves homosexual or bisexual.⁴⁰

In addition, among the young people who stated they are members of underrepresented communities, around 16% of under-30 respondents and 10% of 31–40 respondents put themselves in the BIPOC category.⁴¹ This number shows that VWF is not serving a large

³⁸ Vancouver Writers Fest, "2019 Attendee Snapshot". Vancouver Writers Fest, "2020 Attendee Snapshot". Vancouver Writers Fest, "2021 Attendee Snapshot".

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Statistics Canada, "A Portrait of Canadian Youth".

⁴¹ Vancouver Writers Fest, "2021 Festival Daily Feedback".

portion of the population. Based on a report from 2016, almost 70% of youth aged 14 to 34 in Vancouver were immigrants (first generation) or had at least one parent who is an immigrant (second generation). Moreover, over 50% of youth in Vancouver are non-white people from different ethnic groups.⁴²

Of the young participants, post-festival survey results show that slightly less than a third live in Vancouver, the same number reside in other Metro Vancouver cities, and about a quarter in other B.C. cities. About 10% of participants were from other parts of Canada, and there were a small number of participants living abroad.⁴³

Out of 74 events at the Festival, these seven in-person events were the only ones that five or more young people took part: Matrix (7), Spine-chillingly Good (8), UBC Creative workshop (8), Alma Lee Opening Night (6), Freeman's (5), Short Stories, Great Tales (5), and A Night of Storytelling (5). Based on survey results, two events specifically targeting younger audiences, "Spoken Word for Adults" and "The Emoji Lit Pub Quiz," had only three and one people under-40 attend, respectively.⁴⁴ These numbers show that VWF is struggling to reach its young audience in spite of programming events targeting young audience.

Interestingly, out of 17 responses in the comments section, seven people described the events or their expectations of the Festival's future events as "fun" and "enjoyable."

To conclude, the current young audience of the Festival, especially those aged 18–30, its BIPOC audience members, and people with disabilities attending events, show that the VWF is still not engaging the diverse population of Vancouver. The VWF has successfully attracted the LGBTQ community in the last few years. However, to engage more young diverse audience members, it could overcome the barriers of engagement this community faces and work to make sure young people feel welcome and included in its events.

42 "Vancouver Population 2016," World Population Review, accessed January 23, 2022, worldpopulationreview.com/canadian-cities/vancouver-population

43 Vancouver Writers Fest, "2021 Attendee Snapshot".

44 Vancouver Writers Fest, "2021 Festival Daily Feedback".

2.5. Understanding Barriers to Participation

To reach younger audiences, the VWF needs to understand the barriers that make it difficult for young people to get involved and stay involved with the Festival. Some of these barriers could include scheduling, location, cost, representation, and lack of community.

Scheduling more evening and weekend events makes it easier for younger audiences to attend events. One Festival participant said, "I would have liked to do more, but daytime events are hard when you have to work!"⁴⁵

Another barrier is location. Daily festival surveys show that around one-third of under-30 Festival attendees surveyed in 2021 stated they used public transport.⁴⁶ For those who live in Metro Vancouver, distance likely plays a negative role in their ability to participate in events.

Another challenge is cost. One participant said, "Love this festival! I would like to participate in more events but a \$25 ticket price only allows for one, maybe two events for me."⁴⁷

Lack of community can be another critical barrier stopping young people from attending the festival. One participant said, "I really enjoyed the events I attended, and I was surprised that weren't more young people there." Lauren Dembicky-Polivka, the VWF Development Manager, confirmed that "another problem is [that] people feel that Festival is not for them."⁴⁸ There are a wide variety of attitudes, experiences, classes, and other factors among young people in Vancouver. Moreover, this lack of community can also be seen in the lack of presence of young people in its volunteering and membership. To tackle this challenge, the organization should provide better opportunities to create a sense of belonging for its young audience by involving them in membership and volunteering, and by offering specific programs.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Lauren Dembicky-Polivka, Personal Interview by Author, September 14, 2021.

Another main concern is that many young people may not engage with the events offered because they do not know much about them. Therefore, it is crucial for the VWF to provide enough information about the opportunities to young audiences and promote its programs so that young people know what is available and are inspired to participate.

Chapter 3. Young Engagement Strategic Recommendations for the VWF

Based on my time working with the Festival staff and volunteers, research, and my observations during the Festival week, I developed a set of guiding principles that the Festival should incorporate to serve the younger and more diverse audience in a meaningful way. Following these higher-level principles, I recommended five focus areas to help the Festival engage younger audiences. All these focus areas as strategic approaches should maintain the guiding principles. Each focus area is a plan developed through research and audience analysis that addresses the VWF's goals and barriers for younger people to engage as either audience members, volunteers, donors, or members.

3.1. Guiding Principles

Youth engagement is grounded in five guiding principles that inform how the Festival should work with young people to create meaningful engagement. The Festival should keep these higher-level principles in mind while building a youth engagement strategy to ensure they run the strategy plan successfully.

- **Influence:** Place young people in positions of influence: Youth representation in positions of influence helps embrace their views and interests. Successful arts/literary organizations embrace young people as decision-makers rather than simply as participants and consumers.⁴⁹
- **Geography:** Consider different geographies and income levels in Metro Vancouver since Vancouver is so geographically, culturally, and socio-economically diverse.
- **Long and short term:** Work towards both short-term and long-term change. The VWF should focus on not only quick actions like new programs, alternative venues, and ticket price reductions but also longer-term systemic change like shifting organizational mindset, reviewing organizational structures and processes, and acting on organizational diversity.⁵⁰ By having a long-term commitment and vision, the organization can grow organically through its engagement programs.

⁴⁹ Rachel Tait et al., "How can we engage more young people in arts and culture" (New Philanthropy Capital, October 2019), 23.

⁵⁰ Ibid, 43.

- **Accessibility:** Go to where young people are in the off-Festival period. The VWF could take events to young people and curate events in convenient venues for young audiences.
- **Foster partnerships:** Many other youth-focused community/art/literary organizations have a shared goal of doing good work with and for young people. Through collaboration and partnership with these organizations, the VWF can build familiarity and trust, overcome some barriers to participation and reach more young people.⁵¹

3.2. Focus Areas

Based on the evidence I gathered and my research, I recommend five focus areas as strategic approaches to help the Festival engage younger audiences. These focus areas reflect the VWF's goals and tackle the barriers I identified for the Festival to engage youth. Each focus area addresses specific goals and barriers for engaging youth at the Vancouver Writers Fest. Through the Youth Ambassador Program, the VWF can recruit young volunteers and engage young people in its community. The second focus area, Bursary and Scholarship program, helps the VWF reach out to younger people with financial needs and expand diversity. By running the third focus area, Young Professional Membership, the VWF can increase its membership, expand its contact network, and create a community of young people that could become Festival volunteers and donors. Through focus area four, Programming, the VWF can create a memorable experience for its young audience by offering events tailored specifically for young audiences. Finally, focus area five, Promotion, helps the VWF promote its offering more successfully by going to where its young audiences are and creating more audience-specific content on its social media pages.

3.2.1. Focus Area One: Youth Ambassador Program

A Youth Ambassador program will allow the VWF to advance its mission, increase its young volunteer corps, build an engaged fan base among young people, increase word of mouth marketing for its events, and help it create content by and for young people, especially for its social media pages.

⁵¹ Ibid, 29.

The 2021 post-festival survey revealed that more than half the first-year under-30 attendees learned about the Festival through their friends and word of mouth (WOM).⁵² Based on research from the University of Mississippi, Gen Z puts a high priority on peer-to-peer influence.⁵³ Positive influence from peers is essential for maintaining sustained engagement and enthusiasm and prompting initial involvement.⁵⁴

Young people generally believe that volunteering is the best way to impact an organization.⁵⁵ A Blackbaud Institute survey from 2019, asked where people in different generations thought they could make the most significant impact; 52% of individuals in the silent generation (born before 1946) believed that their most significant impact could be monetary, while Gen Z, Millennials, and Gen X believed that volunteerism would be their best way to impact.⁵⁶ Focusing on youth volunteers is an excellent way for the VWF to get younger people involved and provide an opportunity to cultivate relationships.

Aims and Objectives

In this program, the VWF Youth Ambassadors could be advisors, representatives in its community, and advocates to grow the young community at the VWF.

This program will help the organization to:

- Engage youth in supporting the goals, initiatives, and mandate of the Vancouver Writers Fest with suggestions on how to engage young audiences;
- Understand young people's interests and culture to introduce more variety in its programming that will connect with young people;
- Advance its mission of connecting people to exceptional books, ideas, and dialogue that ignites a passion for words and the world around us;
- Bring new energy into the VWF mission-based work while developing future leaders of its community;
- Expand its programs and connect with young literature/art enthusiasts from diverse communities;

⁵² Vancouver Writers Fest, "2021 Attendee Snapshot".

⁵³ Anna Kate Joyce, "Generational Marketing: an IMC Approach to Increase Nonprofit Awareness and Giving in North Mississippi Status" (Honors Theses, University of Mississippi, 2019), 8.

⁵⁴ Tait, "How can we engage more young people in arts and culture," 37.

⁵⁵ Joyce, "Generational Marketing", 36.

⁵⁶ Ibid, 3.

- Network with like-minded young professionals/young ambassadors in other organizations (in Vancouver, across Canada, and throughout the world);
- Grow its young volunteers and establish relationships with young donors and funders;
- Maximize its reach and increase awareness among young people in different communities through WOM.

The Details of the Program

The VWF could target a small group of people (six ambassadors and three advisors) who know the VWF and love its mission in the Youth Ambassador program. For ambassador positions, the best candidates are social-media-savvy teens aged 15–18 who love stories and are active current attendees of the VWF's events. For the advisor position, the best candidates could be 18–30. They might be winners of the VWF's Scholarship Program (Focus Area Two), young VWF staff, teachers involved in the VWF Youth programming, or post-secondary students interested in the Festival. Applicants would submit a cover letter and be interviewed to establish their fit for the program based on their interests, experience, and diversity (including gender, ethnicity, geography, and disability).

The VWF could form a long-term partnership with its ambassadors and advisors within the program. Mellissa Russon, a communications strategist, says that if youth are volunteering their time to help the organization better engage its target audiences, the process should be as easy as possible.⁵⁷ To better connect with its ambassadors, the organization could emphasize social opportunities, including forming connections with other ambassadors and advisors and an after-festival celebration with the ambassadors, advisors, staff, and board of directors. The organization could also offer ambassadors incentives like scholarships, internships, or job references for volunteer work. This is a voluntary program, and with grant funding and campaign fundraising, the ambassadors and advisors could be paid an honorarium for their work. In the future, when the VWF has the capacity, it can hire and pay them as part-time staff.

⁵⁷ Melissa Russon, "7 Keys to an Effective Social Media Ambassador Program," Nonprofit Tech for Good, last modified July 5, 2019, nptechforgood.com/2019/07/05/7-keys-to-an-effective-social-media-ambassador-program-2/

How to Involve Ambassadors and Advisors in the VWF's Activities

This program will involve ambassadors and advisors similar to other literary festivals. For example, the YALLFEST festival, the largest teen and middle-grade book festival in the United States, has a teen ambassador team who design social media content, especially for TikTok, help with merchandise, write book reviews and interviews for its website, make videos, swap books, and help plan the festival.⁵⁸ The VWF could provide opportunities for its ambassadors and advisors to be involved in different activities of the organization, such as:

- To participate in youth events of the VWF;
- To assist in creating content for the VWF's website and social media pages;
- To coordinate unique youth events outside of the regular youth education programming;
- To help with fundraising campaigns directed towards young people in the community;
- To wear the name or logo of the organization on their hat or shirt for VWF's youth programs and events;
- To invite a friend of their age when volunteering or attending the organization's events. This action will multiply their involvement and impact;
- To share posts on their social media pages about the VWF's events, retweet the VWF tweets, talk about their involvement with the organization, and share posts from the VWF Facebook and Instagram pages to let their friends learn about the VWF;
- To create and post snippet videos for Instagram reels or TikTok;
- To assist in creating content for the newsletter of its Young Professional Membership (Focus Area Three);
- To release reports highlighting accomplishments and lessons learned from this program, and then refine, and update that based on the results of the reports;
- To set up a presentation in their book club or local community club to let them know about the organization and its events, especially for the young generation;
- To serve as session presenters and moderators for the VWF youth events.

⁵⁸ "Yallwest Sponsors 2020," Yallwest, accessed February 10, 2022. yallwest.com/s/YALLWESTsponsor2020.pdf

Through the Youth Ambassador Program, the VWF can open new doors to attract program participants, raise funds, recruit young volunteers and leverage the power of WOM marketing.

The Youth Ambassadors and Advisors would receive valuable work experience, increased confidence, the possibility to interact with published authors, a fun experience they can share with their peers, and the chance to take part in literary events to deepen their understanding of writing and literature.

3.2.2. Focus Area Two: Bursary, Scholarship Program

Money is unsurprisingly a crucial factor for youth engagement. In their research, Tait and others (2019) confirmed that free or low-cost arts programs play a big part in young people's ability to take part. The result of the 2021 post-festival survey confirmed a significant relationship between those young audiences who have participated in digital and in-person events and their annual income level.⁵⁹ That is, those with higher incomes were more likely to attend in-person events and vice versa. Low entry costs for post-secondary students can be an enabling factor regardless of their backgrounds.⁶⁰ However, many organizations found that free or discounted tickets are not enough, and these organizations offer additional support through travel costs or careful scheduling.⁶¹ Discounts were essential to the young people in the Festival survey results. Around 70% of young people who are currently Festival members found that the 10% discount for Festival events is one of the most valuable parts of membership.⁶² Not only is the cost of the ticket a barrier for some young people, but other factors such as the cost of transport or lost income from choosing to take part in an art program rather than work can be hidden barriers.⁶³ These are the reasons I suggested the Bursary and Scholarship program.

59 Vancouver Writers Fest, "2021 Attendee Snapshot".

60 Tait, "How can we engage more young people in arts and culture," 14.

61 Ibid, 37.

62 Vancouver Writers Fest, "2021 Festival Daily Feedback".

63 Britain Thinks, Next Ten-Year Strategy: Evidence Review, England, July 18, 2018, artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/ACE_10YSEvidence%20Review_July18.pdf accessed November 4, 2021.

The Bursary and Scholarship program will aim at young people, especially those with financial needs. The VWF hopes these scholarships and bursaries will be helpful and make a difference for young people to access the opportunities the Festival offers.

Suggested Scholarship and Bursary Programs

This section looks at three initiatives that could bring in younger audiences and secure long-term support:

Scholarship for literature and book lovers

This could be offered to a young person living in Metro Vancouver who shows particular talent and passion in literature, writing, and/or storytelling. It offers the successful applicant an all-access Festival pass to the 2022 Festival and one-year free Young Professional membership (Focus Area Three). In addition, the scholarship covers the cost of seven days at the Festival, access to all workshops and talks, and a grant (maximum \$50) towards travel to and from Granville Island. This one could be open to anyone 18 to 30. Applicants will submit a two-paragraph “expression of interest” outlining who they are, why they would like to apply for this scholarship, and what they will receive.

BIPOC Writing Scholarship

This could be offered to a young BIPOC emerging writer who shows particular talent and passion for writing. The aim is to help people from underrepresented communities who are black, Indigenous, or people of colour (BIPOC) and are living in Metro Vancouver. This scholarship offers the successful applicant a choice of participation in the VWF writing workshops during the year like the My Roots workshop, writing workshop events in the Festival, and one-year Young Professional membership (Focus Area Three), free of charge. Applicants will submit a two-paragraph “expression of interest” outlining who they are and why they would like to participate in the workshop. In addition, they are asked to self-identify concerning their under-represented background.

Bursaries

The VWF already offers a reduced ticket rate for people under 30 at 50% of the regular ticket price. However, to make the program accessible to as many youths in its communities as possible, the VWF could consider offering bursaries to reduce the cost

further. In this initiative, booklovers in financial need can apply for a free weekend package at the Festival, including three to five events (similar to the Free Saturday initiative, which the VWF ran in 2018). The applicants should submit a letter explaining why they want to attend and what they will get out of it.

Scholarship and Bursary Programs Logistics

The VWF could fund the scholarship through a dedicated fund/campaign asking donors to cover the cost of setting up the program: scholarship administration, marketing and promoting the scholarships and bursaries, awarding the scholarship, and creating progress reports for the VWF website. With these factors in mind, the VWF can decide the amount of money it needs to allocate to each scholarship recipient and start the program on a scale it can afford before expanding. The scholarships will be awarded based on need and interest/impact. To help with the documentation, guidelines, applications, and selection of recipients, the VWF can consider partnership opportunities with specific institutions.

By tackling barriers to engagement through this program, the VWF will be able to reach out to younger people, especially from more vulnerable, underrepresented, low-income, or marginalized groups interested in literature, and this expand inclusion and diversity and sustain long-term engagement through word of mouth.

3.2.3. Focus Area Three: Young Professional Membership Plan

Members of arts and culture organizations are loyal supporters that help to strengthen the organization's network and financial stability. Based on 2021 member survey results, VWF members are mostly elderly white women, and 93% of the members said they are happy with their membership in the VWF.⁶⁴ However, based on 2021 daily surveys, only one under 30 (3%) and eight people 31–40 (13%) stated that they are VWF members. In addition, just 11% of people under 40 said they are interested in becoming a member, but around 54% stated, "Maybe, I need more information about its membership."⁶⁵ In a survey question about member benefits, 10% off for the Festival and early access to tickets are the most frequent choices by young members (around 70%) as the most valuable part of their membership. However, no young people chose "a vote at the VWF

⁶⁴ Vancouver Writers Fest, "2021 Member Survey".

⁶⁵ Vancouver Writers Fest, "2021 Festival Daily Feedback".

Annual General meeting" as a valuable benefit of membership.⁶⁶ These results imply that some membership benefits are not that valuable to young people, and with few young people interested in becoming members, VWF will face challenges building up and maintaining membership numbers. The VWF could create a new membership category targeted at young professionals to tackle this problem.

Many other art organizations have a Professional Membership. For example, Vancouver Art Gallery has a membership for young professionals ages 19–45 with benefits including educational lectures, social and networking opportunities with like-minded art enthusiasts, and behind-the-scenes access to artists.⁶⁷ Ballet BC, a Vancouver ballet company, also has memberships for professionals aged 21–45 interested in ballet. Membership benefits include exclusive access to Ballet BC Up events, including pre-show receptions, networking opportunities with other like-minded professionals, and a ballet class. In addition, members receive personalized ticketing services and invitations to Ballet BC events.⁶⁸

By running the Young Professional Membership plan at Vancouver Writers Fest, the organization can expand its contact network to source, other sponsors and benefactors, increase its membership, grow its young audience, and create a community of young people who could be its future potential volunteers and donors.

The Details of the Program

This program is tailored to individuals aged 18–40 who want to be in a dynamic group of young professionals and art and culture supporters. Therefore, this membership will offer some different benefits than basic membership. To make the benefits consistent and easy to understand, this plan has one membership level at a flat rate that can be upgraded and developed in the future based on the VWF budget, the variety of its services, and its members' feedback.

Based on the survey results, when the young audience (under 40) are asked when considering a Young Professional Program, what would be the biggest driver for you, their answers are: 60% events, 50% exclusive access, 43% membership, 40%

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ "Membership," Vancouver Art Gallery, accessed February 5, 2022. vanartgallery.bc.ca/membership

⁶⁸ "Ballet BC Launches Young Patrons Group to Full House," Ballet BC, accessed December 23, 2021. balletbc.com/balletbc-up-young-patrons/

discounts, and 20% network.⁶⁹ This confirms what will be discussed in Programming (Focus Area Four), that young audiences want events targeted to them and exclusive events for members.

Based on these results, some suggested benefits for the members would be:

- Some exclusive access to the digital recordings of recorded events. These give members the option to get content when they want it without having to attend events live. This option will be especially beneficial for young people who work or attend school and struggle to find a time to attend events that happen at a specific time of day;
- Special offers and promotions for an off-festival time, especially for young audience-targeted events;
- Social gathering and networking opportunities through informal drinks and appetizers events to allow for intimate discussions with like-minded people and possibly with celebrated and emerging writers or other members of the VWF;
- Invitation to young fundraising events;
- Allow young members to bring a guest of the same age for some promotional events.

These benefits are in addition to VWF's current membership benefits, such as 10% off tickets to the Festival events and early access to Festival tickets.

To keep members updated, the VWF could send a monthly e-newsletter with content produced by/for the VWF young audience, create a Facebook group for members to network, and engage its members by frequently sharing content on the VWF social media platforms, especially Instagram.

The VWF could promote it to donors, those who regularly volunteer, attend events, participate in advocacy, and encourage older audience members to buy Young Professional memberships for their children and grandchildren.

By creating the Young Professional membership, the VWF has the opportunity to engage its audience more deeply and encourage them to go from an audience member to a donor, supporter, and volunteer.

⁶⁹ Vancouver Writers Fest, "2021 Attendee Snapshot".

3.2.4. Focus Area Four: Programming

Festival programming is important because it is what the public sees and experiences.⁷⁰ Therefore, it is crucial for the festival organizers to make thoughtful programming decisions, especially when they want to engage new groups of people.

In festivals in general, based on the experience economy theory introduced by Pine and Gilmore (1999), satisfying consumers' needs, developing deeper consumer engagement, and forming a stronger connection between producers and consumers are really important. Based on this theory, creating memorable experiences at festival events is critical for audiences attending future festivals.⁷¹ The programming of a festival is the product audiences are buying into.⁷² The type of programming and scheduling of the events directly relates to the audiences who will attend. Audiences of literary festivals attend not only for the literature but also for social and cultural reasons. Literary audiences want to take an active part in the festival, meet writers, share knowledge and be part of the professional dialogue.⁷³ VWF has successfully created programming for the traditional literary Festival audience ages 50+ but has missed out on younger audiences.

The Festival of Literary Diversity (FOLD) is a model of diversity and inclusion for festivals across Canada. Its success shows that reflecting Canada's ethnic, racial, geographical, gender, ability, religious, and sexual diversity in its programming can allow diverse people to participate in literary events. Jael Richardson, FOLD's executive director, said, "a lack of diversity in the publishing industry ... I saw it at festivals and events over a decade ago when I didn't even have the language to articulate. When I started writing myself, I noticed that the problem wasn't driven by a lack of interest but more so by a lack of awareness on the part of readers (how do I find diverse books) and a lack of representation and understanding of the part of industry professionals, which makes for a problematic, systemic mix".⁷⁴ Therefore, if VWF wants to reach and engage a younger

70 Janja Ferenc, "Breaking Boundaries: European Poetry Festivals and their Audiences," (Master Thesis, Erasmus University Rotterdam, June 8, 2016), 28.

71 Ibid, 14.

72 Ibid, 27.

73 Ibid, 64.

74 Jael Richardson, "An Interview with Jael Richardson," Interview by Room Magazine. December 15, 2021. roommagazine.com/jael-richardson-and-the-industry-changing-fold-2/

audience from all backgrounds, it could try to create programming targeted at that specific audience to make them feel welcome and like they belong.

To satisfy its younger audience from diverse backgrounds and create a memorable experience for them, the VWF could pay attention to all these key aspects:

Diverse programming

The VWF already included diverse authors in its programming. However, it can reach a wider diverse young audience through programming more events that reflect the diversity and age of young audiences. For example, creating panels made up of young authors and moderators from diverse backgrounds whose thoughts are more relatable to young audiences. The VWF could also consider authors and moderators who are well-established on social media platforms and followed by young people.

Education

Education is crucial for young audiences. This is shown in past Festival events, such as the UBC Writing workshop, which was one of the most favorite Festival events for young audiences, and one that received a lot of positive feedback from young people in its surveys. Some of the positive feedback included: “It left me inspired, went to write after,” “I really enjoyed all exercises. I’m a writer, and each one was very helpful. I just wish there would have been a Q&A or some kind of participation from the audience, maybe get some feedback on our work,” and “found the exercises very interesting, would love to receive these via email as well, as it was sometimes hard to follow the instruction live.”⁷⁵

Learning from the UBC Writing workshop, VWF can increase its younger audience through strong educational programs like workshops on the craft of writing or publishing. The VWF has some educational programming like the My Roots workshops targeted at BIPOC writers, but by expanding that programming, the organization would provide more opportunities to support BIPOC writers.

Genre

Different age groups have different genre interests. Based on a report in 2020, Gen Z prefers fantasy the most, followed by young adult fiction, romance, horror, science

⁷⁵ Vancouver Writers Fest, “2021 Festival Daily Feedback-Thursday”.

fiction, short stories, and graphic novels. In non-fiction, they prefer humour, self-help, true crime, psychology, poetry, and science. Millennials prefer general adult fiction then classic literature.

In non-fiction, Gen Z prefers health/fitness/wellness over parenting, business/careers, sociology, or technology.⁷⁶ Since interest in genres varies in different age groups, it is important for the VWF to consider young audience interest when choosing genres for its events. For example, events like punk and poetry or authors in fantasy fiction would be a good option to reach a younger audience. This genre selection can be achieved through research or involving young people in decision-making.

Cross-genre

Including complementary activities in events can give the literary festivals the opportunity to provide a total experience for their audience. For instance, the organization can present literature in relationship with other arts, for example, music, dance, visual art, and cinema.⁷⁷ This strategy will attract audiences that are not primarily interested in literature but are interested in other art forms or activities.⁷⁸ The VWF already used this strategy in one of its flagship events, Literary Cabaret, which mixes live music with reading, and in its spoken word events. The organization can expand this strategy and plan cross-genre events that will appeal to, attract and engage younger audiences. For instance, if musicians speak at an event, invite them to perform. Or events could include illustrators, journalists, rap artists, slam poets, and songwriters to make a standout mix of theatre, music, and visual arts with literature. This allows them to make events more "fun" and "enjoyable," which is important for young people.

In some of its Festival events, the VWF combined literature with food and drinks to trigger other senses in its audience, for example, in the Afternoon Tea event. The VWF can broaden its program by including these sorts of events to engage a more diverse audience by, for instance, including foods from different cultures⁷⁹ in some events to make them more inclusive and maybe less Eurocentric (afternoon tea is very white).

⁷⁶ Andre Calihanna, "Reading Habits of Five Generations," Bookbaby Blog, February 10, 2020. blog.bookbaby.com/2020/08/the-reading-habits-of-five-generations-infographic/

⁷⁷ Ferenc, "Breaking Boundaries," 55.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 94.

⁷⁹ Ibid, 57.

Format

The pandemic provides the opportunity for the VWF to elevate its online platforms and reach its audience through online events. In 2021, the VWF piloted hybrid events due to the pandemic capacity restrictions. The organization can continue this model in its future programs. Online events will be great options for those who have busy schedules, have a lower income, and are unable to commute to the Festival, or live out of Vancouver.

Scheduling

Scheduling can be another barrier. The VWF already presented most of the non-youth events (except elementary and high school) in the evenings and on weekends. However, it is important for the VWF to think always about the timing of events to enable specific audiences to participate. For example, retired audiences prefer daytime events while those who work prefer evening events. This is reflected in the feedback from a post-festival survey respondent: "I would have liked to do more, but daytime events are hard when you have to work. I was pleased to see the conversations in person."⁸⁰

Place and space

Place includes both the geographic location and the type of venue. It is essential that venues are familiar, close to the target audience, a welcoming space, easy to reach by public transport, and physically accessible.⁸¹ This strategy is used by other similar organizations with more young people in their community. Vancouver Art Book Fair has successfully held events at Emily Carr University of Art + Design. Vancouver Poetry House held events like its Poetry Slam at a Café on Commercial Drive, known as the heart of Vancouver's spoken word community.⁸²

To manage place issues, the VWF could consider moving more events off Granville Island during the off-festival period and have more pop-up events in different geographical areas in Metro Vancouver. Going to places where young audiences already are, for instance, in theatre in neighborhoods, colleges, universities, libraries, community centres, and some art organizations familiar to young audiences, will help

⁸⁰ Vancouver Writers Fest, "2021 Attendee Snapshot".

⁸¹ Tait, "How can we engage more young people in arts and culture," 32.

⁸² "Video Gallery," Vancouver Poetry House, accessed February 6, 2022. vancouverpoetryhouse.com/video-gallery/

give a feeling of belonging. This way, the organization can tackle two problems simultaneously: distance and keeping the VWF alive in the off-festival period. One example of off-site programming might be some events hosted by the VWF at universities or colleges a few weeks before the Festival. This kind of event will help young people see what VWF events are like, while VWF can promote the upcoming Festival, create a strong connection, and convert young people to the active audience of the Festival.

Young professional-focused events for more active participation

Klaic (2014) has recognized festivals as an opportunity where many professionals gather in one place at the same time, share their knowledge, network and develop their professional expertise.⁸³ However, if they only see one person under 50 at an event, a young professional probably will not come back next time. By programming young professional-focused events such as "Spoken Word for Adults" and "The Emoji Lit Pub Quiz" only for its young audience, the VWF can give this social and cultural opportunity to its young audiences to spend their socializing time with their peers, take an active part in discussions after the event, network, create personalized experiences and actively participate in events. Active participation is important in the experience economy. When the audience is actively involved in the experience creation, they will remember the experience and have the tendency to return next year.⁸⁴

By following the principles of experiential marketing in its program, the VWF can create a memorable experience for its young audience through educational events, complementary activities, and young professional-focused events that encourage active participation. They can also tackle the barriers for the young audiences by offering events in a hybrid format, careful scheduling, and new locations.

3.2.5. Focus Area Five: Promotion

Promotion like programming is another critical variable that influences attendance.⁸⁵

Promotion is how the organization communicates its offering.⁸⁶ Without enough

⁸³ Ferenc, "Breaking Boundaries," 28.

⁸⁴ Ibid, 92.

⁸⁵ Ibid, 3.

⁸⁶ Ibid, 26.

information about the opportunities open to young audiences and attractive marketing for this target audience, young people cannot engage with events offered because they do not know much about them. Arts and culture organizations need to promote their programs so that young people know what is available and are inspired to take part.⁸⁷ Without active role of marketing and promotion, the VWF can hardly reach young audience. To successfully promote diverse programs, the VWF could go beyond traditional engagement methods, specifically target young people, promote events in places where young people spend time, and communicate engagingly.

To overcome the problems of not reaching young audiences and attracting a broader target audience, the VWF could follow these initiatives:

- Create content with young people. By embracing the co-creation role for its young audience, involve them in creating and disseminating promotional material. Working with VWF youth ambassadors can help promote events to other young people.
- Create more specific content for social media pages, including short videos, reels, and streaming targeted at this audience. This will especially help keep the Festival alive in the off-festival period. Survey results show that the VWF Instagram page is the most actively used channel by its younger audience, with the highest engagement demographic in the 25–34 age group. Another social media platform actively used by the young audience is TikTok. By being active in this platform, the VWF can engage a younger audience while gaining an advantage over other literary festivals that do not have an ambitious social media presence.
- The surveys show that word of mouth is one of the most powerful marketing tools, which Balter and Butman (2005) define as product storytelling.⁸⁸ So, the VWF could encourage its younger audience to share stories of their experiences on their social media pages.
- Go to where young people are, especially in the off-festival time. As I suggested in the Programming section, having a series of events hosted in different universities and colleges in Metro Vancouver before the Festival begins can be a great way to promote the Festival, increase awareness and attract more new young audiences. In addition, creating flyers, leaflets, or posters for places where young people frequently

⁸⁷ Tait, "How can we engage more young people in arts and culture," 36.

⁸⁸ Ibid, 77.

are, like universities, colleges, and other local cultural/art organizations, will help advertise events to young people.

- The other youth initiatives suggested in the past four focus areas add to VWF's promotional strategies. Youth targeted programming makes young people excited about events. Bursaries and scholarships help bring in audience members with more significant barriers to attending. Working with youth volunteers increases word of mouth and helps the Festival to create experiences that young people want to attend.

Overall, it is important for the VWF to promote its program so that young people know what is available and are inspired to take part. Moreover, to communicate better with its young audience and promote its offering more successfully, the VWF should be aware of young audience language, go to where young people are and create more specific content for/with them on its social media pages.

Chapter 4. Limitation and Conclusion

Each strategic plan has some limitations such as limitations of research, data, and budget. In this chapter, I explain the limitations of the project and provide some further recommendations for the VWF on how to create, run, and review the action plans for the engagement strategies recommended in the project. The chapter concludes with a summary of the report, my recommendations, and key takeaways from this project.

4.1. Limitations of Project

There are several limitations in this project that should be noted. This study lacks qualitative research methods, including focus groups and interviews with the young target audience to listen to their opinions, explore the underlying reasons for this demographics' views and build a clear picture of what they want to achieve by participating in its events. The other limitation is that not all the Festival participants filled out the Festival surveys, and those attendees who did may have only filled out either the daily surveys or the post-festival survey. Therefore, survey data shows an incomplete picture of Festival attendees.

The surveys also had another problem since teachers who participated in Festival events with their class through youth programming filled out the same survey as individual participants of the Festival and were unable to give feedback separately relating to their class's experience. The third problem is that the pandemic caused an immediate disruption to audience participation and normal Festival practices, which makes it difficult to study the changes in Festival audience demographic in recent years.

4.2. Further Recommendations for the Vancouver Writers Fest

In this strategic recommendation plan, I provided suggestions for programming and promotion, addressing the barriers of space, time, and price, and ways for deeper engagement of young people as audiences, members, donors, and volunteers. The next step for the VWF is to set more specific and measurable objectives for each strategy focusing on a three-to-five-year period to make the plan focused and deliverable, and not tackle too much at once. The organization should define the timeline, budget, and

resources for each action plan and outline the main work needed to achieve each of the objectives.

Action plans should be reviewed for progress. Collecting and using data is crucial to understanding what action plans work and the effectiveness of the various engagement strategies.⁸⁹ To ensure they achieve the objectives, the VWF could carry out ongoing research with its new and existing young audience to measure their responses to the changes the organization is making. It also could conduct research into young communities in Metro Vancouver to better know its potential audience.

Success in audience development and diversity stems from a commitment to changing cultural values throughout an organization.⁹⁰ At the organizational level, the VWF already did a great job at employing diverse young people as its staff. However, it is important for the VWF to also include younger people on its board of directors, whose current average age is around fifty.

To sum up, the VWF could take these further recommendations in order to create a strategic action plan for the engagement strategies recommended in the project.

4.3. Conclusion

Despite previous initiatives to attract a wider audience, the VWF has not seen the expected growth in the number of young people participating as audience members, donors, and volunteers. Based on the survey results and research, I found that young people might not attend VWF events because of inconvenient times or locations, prohibitive pricing, lack of community, and lack of information.

To tackle these barriers and build a strong base of support among its young audience, the VWF should not only consider geographies, income levels, and scheduling but also have a commitment to developing a sense of belonging for young people in the organizations' events, create memorable experiences, and build word of mouth among young people to aid in the promotion of future Festivals.

⁸⁹ Tait, "How can we engage more young people in arts and culture," 40.

⁹⁰ Ibid, 43.

To solve all these problems and engage more young people, I recommend five focus areas for the VWF. The first one is a Youth Ambassador Program to increase the VWF young volunteer circle, build awareness amongst young people about the VWF events and provide them the opportunity to engage with its events. The second is a bursary and scholarship program to help young people with financial needs attend the Festival and VWF events. The third is a Young Professional Membership plan that can increase VWF's young members and audiences, expand its contact network for sourcing sponsors and benefactors, and create a community of young people that may become potential volunteers and donors. The fourth focus area is programming. It is important for the VWF to program more educational and young-professional events as well as complementary activities. They also could offer events in a hybrid format with careful scheduling and go to locations frequented by young people for off-festival events. The last focus area is promotion, to create more specific content for a young audience, especially for the Festival's social media pages. Promotion could also take the form of a series of events hosted in different universities and colleges before the Festival to increase awareness and communication and promote not only Festival events but also the other recommended youth initiatives, including the Youth Ambassador Program, Bursary and Scholarship Program, and Young Professional membership plan.

This is not a short-term plan. The VWF should have young people in mind long-term. To make youth engagement work best, the VWF should place young people in positions of influence and take advantage of diverse young staff as decision-makers for the Festival's future. To be more connected to young people, the VWF could also foster partnerships with other youth-focused community/art/literary organizations.

All arts and literary organizations show their passion for art, culture, and literature, and it is crucial for them to give this passion and love to culture and art for future generations. I hope that by learning about the strategies in this project, other organizations can apply this knowledge to overcome barriers for young people in their communities. By expanding youth involvement, not only will organizations benefit from increasing their relevancy, longevity, and financial sustainability, but also young people will find new chances to enjoy literature and art and that is beneficial for society as a whole.

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Appendix A.

Table A1. The Summary of the 2021 Post-Festival Survey

ID	Years of Attendance	Numbers of Events	Type of Events	Follow VWF on Social Media	What is your age?	What is your gender?	Level of Education	Annual Household Income? (\$)	Where you Reside	Underrepresented communities	which underrepresented communities
3	4-6 years	1-2	Both	Yes	31 - 40	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	Under 30,000	City of Vancouver	Yes	
13	2-3 years	1-2	Online	Yes	41 -54	Female	Undergraduate	Under 30,000	Canada	Yes	disabled
14	4-6 years	3-5	Both	Yes	31 - 40	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	80,001 - 120,000	Metro Vancouver	Yes	South Asian
15	2-3 years	1-2	In Person	No	65-74	Female	Undergraduate	Prefer not to say	City of Vancouver	No	
16	10+ years	3-5	Both	No	41 -54	Female	Undergraduate	Prefer not to say	City of Vancouver	No	
17	2-3 years	1-2	Both	No	41 -54	Female	Undergraduate	120,001 - 200,000	City of Vancouver	Yes	Asian
18	7-10 years	1-2	Online	Yes	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	Prefer not to say	City of Vancouver	No	
19	10+ years	1-2	Both	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	50,001 - 80,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
20	10+ years	3-5	Both	No	55 -64	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	30,000 - 50,000	City of Vancouver	Yes	Deaf
21	7-10 years	6-10	Both	Yes	55 -64	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	120,001 - 200,000	British Columbia	No	
22	10+ years	6-10	In Person	No	65-74	Male	Graduate/Post graduate	120,001 - 200,000	City of Vancouver	No	
23	7-10 years	3-5	Online	Yes	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	80,001 - 120,000	City of Vancouver	No	
24	10+ years	3-5	Online	No	41 -54	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	Over 200,000	City of Vancouver	No	
25	10+ years	10+	Both	Yes	75 and over	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	30,000 - 50,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
26	4-6 years	3-5	Both	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	120,001 - 200,000	City of Vancouver	No	
27	10+ years	3-5	Both	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	50,001 - 80,000	City of Vancouver	No	
29	4-6 years	1-2	Online	No	75 and over	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	Prefer not to say	British Columbia	Prefer not to disclose	
32	2-3 years	1-2	In Person	Yes	65-74	Male	Undergraduate	80,001 - 120,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
33	2-3 years	1-2	In Person	No	41 -54	Female	Undergraduate	Prefer not to say	City of Vancouver	No	
34	10+ years	6-10	Both	Yes	65-74	Female	High school graduate	80,001 - 120,000	City of Vancouver	No	
35	4-6 years	1-2	Online	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	120,001 - 200,000	British Columbia	No	
36	4-6 years	1-2	Online	No	65-74	Female	Undergraduate	30,000 - 50,000	British Columbia	No	
38	4-6 years	3-5	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Graduate/Post graduate	Prefer not to say	Metro Vancouver	No	

ID	Years of Attendance	Numbers of Events	Type of Events	Follow VWF on Social Media	What is your age?	What is your gender?	Level of Education	Annual Household Income? (\$)	Where you Reside	Underrepresented communities	which underrepresented communities
39	10+ years	3-5	Online	Yes	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	Prefer not to say	City of Vancouver	No	
41	This was my	3-5	Online	No	65-74	Female	Undergraduate	30,000 - 50,000	City of Vancouver	No	
43	7-10 years	3-5	In Person	No	75 and over	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	80,001 - 120,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
45	7-10 years	6-10	Both	Yes	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	80,001 - 120,000	City of Vancouver	No	
46	This was my	1-2	In Person	No	31 - 40	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	Over 200,000	City of Vancouver	No	
47	10+ years	6-10	Both	Yes	75 and over	Female	High school graduate	Under 30,000	British Columbia	No	
49	4-6 years	1-2	In Person	No	55 -64	Female	Undergraduate	Prefer not to say	Metro Vancouver	Prefer not to disclose	
50	7-10 years	3-5	In Person	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	30,000 - 50,000	City of Vancouver	No	
51	10+ years	1-2	In Person	Yes	41 -54	Female	Undergraduate	120,001 - 200,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
52	4-6 years	3-5	Both	Yes	55 -64	Male	Undergraduate	Prefer not to say	Metro Vancouver	No	
53	2-3 years	6-10	Online	Yes	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	50,001 - 80,000	British Columbia	No	
54	2-3 years	1-2	Online	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	50,001 - 80,000	British Columbia	No	
55	10+ years	6-10	Both	Yes	55 -64	Prefer nc	Undergraduate	80,001 - 120,000	City of Vancouver	Prefer not to disclose	
57	This was my	1-2	Online	No	75 and over	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	80,001 - 120,000	Outside of Canada	No	
58	10+ years	3-5	In Person	No	75 and over	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	50,001 - 80,000	City of Vancouver	No	
59	2-3 years	6-10	Online	No	55 -64	Prefer nc	Graduate/Post graduate	80,001 - 120,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
60	10+ years	3-5	Online	No	75 and over	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	Prefer not to say	British Columbia	No	
61	This was my	1-2	In Person	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	80,001 - 120,000	British Columbia	Prefer not to disclose	
62	10+ years	6-10	Both	Yes	75 and over	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	Prefer not to say	British Columbia	No	
63	7-10 years	1-2	Online	No	41 -54	Prefer nc	Undergraduate	Prefer not to say	Metro Vancouver	Yes	
64	10+ years	3-5	Online	No	75 and over	Female	Undergraduate	80,001 - 120,000	British Columbia	No	
65	10+ years	6-10	Both	No	65-74	Female	Undergraduate	80,001 - 120,000	City of Vancouver	No	
66	10+ years	3-5	Online	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	Prefer not to say	City of Vancouver	No	
67	This was my	3-5	In Person	Yes	41 -54	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	80,001 - 120,000	British Columbia	No	
68	This was my	1-2	Online	No	31 - 40	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	Prefer not to say	City of Vancouver	No	
69	This was my	3-5	Both	No	55 -64	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	50,001 - 80,000	City of Vancouver	Prefer not to disclose	
70	10+ years	1-2	In Person	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	120,001 - 200,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
71	This was my	1-2	In Person	Yes	Under 30	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	Under 30,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
72	10+ years	3-5	Online	Yes	41 -54	Prefer nc	Graduate/Post graduate	120,001 - 200,000	City of Vancouver	No	
73	2-3 years	1-2	Online	No	75 and over	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	30,000 - 50,000	Canada	No	
75	2-3 years	1-2	In Person	No	Under 30	Female	High school graduate	Prefer not to say	City of Vancouver	Prefer not to disclose	
76	10+ years	1-2	Both	No	75 and over	Male	Graduate/Post graduate	50,001 - 80,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
77	10+ years	3-5	Both	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	50,001 - 80,000	Metro Vancouver	No	

ID	Years of Attendance	Numbers of Events	Type of Events	Follow VWF on Social Media	What is your age?	What is your gender?	Level of Education	Annual Household Income? (\$)	Where you Reside	Underrepresented communities	which underrepresented communities
78	7-10 years	3-5	In Person	No	55 -64	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	120,001 - 200,000	City of Vancouver	No	
79	7-10 years	6-10	Both	No	55 -64	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	Over 200,000	City of Vancouver	Prefer not to disclose	
80	7-10 years	3-5	Online	Yes	41 -54	Female	Undergraduate	Prefer not to say	City of Vancouver	No	
81	10+ years	3-5	In Person	No	55 -64	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	80,001 - 120,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
83	7-10 years	1-2	Both	No	41 -54	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	Prefer not to say	City of Vancouver	Prefer not to disclose	
84	7-10 years	3-5	Both	Yes	55 -64	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	120,001 - 200,000	City of Vancouver	No	
85	10+ years	3-5	Both	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	Prefer not to say	City of Vancouver	No	
86	10+ years	6-10	Online	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	50,001 - 80,000	City of Vancouver	No	
87	10+ years	3-5	Both	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	50,001 - 80,000	City of Vancouver	No	
88	4-6 years	6-10	Both	Yes	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	50,001 - 80,000	City of Vancouver	No	
89	10+ years	3-5	Both	Yes	55 -64	Female	Undergraduate	120,001 - 200,000	City of Vancouver	No	
90	2-3 years	1-2	In Person	No	41 -54	Female	Undergraduate	30,000 - 50,000	City of Vancouver	No	
91	4-6 years	1-2	In Person	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	Prefer not to say	British Columbia	No	
92	7-10 years	3-5	In Person	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	50,001 - 80,000	City of Vancouver	No	
93	10+ years	6-10	Both	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	80,001 - 120,000	City of Vancouver	No	
94	4-6 years	3-5	In Person	No	65-74	Female	Undergraduate	50,001 - 80,000	Metro Vancouver	Yes	visible minority
95	7-10 years	10+	Both	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	80,001 - 120,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
96	10+ years	6-10	Online	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	120,001 - 200,000	Metro Vancouver	Prefer not to disclose	
98	10+ years	3-5	In Person	Yes	65-74	Male	Graduate/Post graduate	Over 200,000	City of Vancouver	No	
99	4-6 years	3-5	Online	No	75 and over	Female	Undergraduate	Prefer not to say	Metro Vancouver	No	
100	10+ years	3-5	Both	No	75 and over	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	30,000 - 50,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
101	This was my	6-10	Both	No	65-74	Female	Undergraduate	80,001 - 120,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
102	10+ years	10+	Both	No	75 and over	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	50,001 - 80,000	City of Vancouver	No	
103	10+ years	6-10	Online	Yes	75 and over	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	30,000 - 50,000	City of Vancouver	No	
105	2-3 years	3-5	Online	No	31 - 40	Prefer not to say	Graduate/Post graduate	Prefer not to say	Metro Vancouver	Prefer not to disclose	
107	4-6 years	3-5	Both	No	41 -54	Female	Undergraduate	80,001 - 120,000	City of Vancouver	No	
108	10+ years	6-10	In Person	No	75 and over	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	80,001 - 120,000	City of Vancouver	No	
109	This was my	1-2	In Person	Yes	Under 30	Male	Graduate/Post graduate	Under 30,000	Metro Vancouver	Yes	Latinx
110	This was my	3-5	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Female	Undergraduate	80,001 - 120,000	British Columbia	No	
111	4-6 years	3-5	Both	No	31 - 40	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	Over 200,000	City of Vancouver	No	
113	10+ years	6-10	Both	Yes	41 -54	Male	Graduate/Post graduate	120,001 - 200,000	City of Vancouver	No	
114	10+ years	1-2	Online	No	65-74	Female	Undergraduate	Prefer not to say	City of Vancouver	No	
115	This was my	1-2	In Person	No	Under 30	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	30,000 - 50,000	British Columbia	Prefer not to disclose	

ID	Years of Attendance	Numbers of Events	Type of Events	Follow VWF on Social Media	What is your age?	What is your gender?	Level of Education	Annual Household Income? (\$)	Where you Reside	Underrepresented communities	which underrepresented communities
116	10+ years	3-5	Both	Yes	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	Prefer not to say	City of Vancouver	No	
117	10+ years	3-5	Both	No	75 and over	Female	High school graduate	Prefer not to say	City of Vancouver	No	
119	10+ years	1-2	Online	No	55 -64	Female	High school graduate	Prefer not to say	Metro Vancouver	No	
120	10+ years	1-2	In Person	No	75 and over	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	80,001 - 120,000	City of Vancouver	No	
121	10+ years	6-10	In Person	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	80,001 - 120,000	City of Vancouver	No	
122	7-10 years	3-5	Online	No	75 and over	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	30,000 - 50,000	City of Vancouver	No	
123	2-3 years	3-5	Both	Yes	41 -54	Female	High school graduate	50,001 - 80,000	City of Vancouver	No	
124	10+ years	6-10	Both	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	50,001 - 80,000	City of Vancouver	No	
125	10+ years	10+	Both	No	55 -64	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	Prefer not to say	City of Vancouver	No	
126	10+ years	6-10	Both	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	120,001 - 200,000	City of Vancouver	No	
127	2-3 years	3-5	Online	No	65-74	Female	Undergraduate	30,000 - 50,000	Canada	No	
128	10+ years	3-5	Both	No	55 -64	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	50,001 - 80,000	City of Vancouver	No	
129	2-3 years	1-2	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Female	Undergraduate	80,001 - 120,000	British Columbia	No	
130	10+ years	1-2	In Person	Yes	55 -64	Female	Undergraduate	80,001 - 120,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
131	7-10 years	1-2	Both	No	41 -54	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	Prefer not to say	City of Vancouver	Prefer not to disclose	
132	This was my	1-2	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Female	Undergraduate	30,000 - 50,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
133	7-10 years	3-5	Online	Yes	55 -64	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	80,001 - 120,000	City of Vancouver	Prefer not to disclose	
134	4-6 years	3-5	Both	Yes	55 -64	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	120,001 - 200,000	City of Vancouver	No	
135	10+ years	6-10	Both	No	75 and over	Female	Undergraduate	50,001 - 80,000	City of Vancouver	No	
136	10+ years	1-2	In Person	No	75 and over	Female	High school graduate	Prefer not to say	Metro Vancouver	No	
137	10+ years	6-10	Online	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	Prefer not to say	City of Vancouver	No	
138	10+ years	10+	Both	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	120,001 - 200,000	City of Vancouver	No	
139	10+ years	3-5	Both	No	75 and over	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	50,001 - 80,000	British Columbia	No	
140	4-6 years	3-5	Both	No	65-74	Male	Undergraduate	80,001 - 120,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
141	10+ years	6-10	Both	No	65-74	Female	Undergraduate	Prefer not to say	City of Vancouver	No	
142	10+ years	1-2	In Person	No	41 -54	Male	Undergraduate	Prefer not to say	City of Vancouver	No	
143	4-6 years	3-5	Both	No	55 -64	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	80,001 - 120,000	City of Vancouver	No	
145	4-6 years	6-10	Both	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Graduate/Post graduate	Over 200,000	City of Vancouver	No	
147	2-3 years	3-5	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Non-bina	Less than high school	30,000 - 50,000	City of Vancouver	Prefer not to disclose	
148	2-3 years	1-2	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Graduate/Post graduate	50,001 - 80,000	Canada	Yes	There is no
151	2-3 years	1-2	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	High school graduate	Under 30,000	City of Vancouver	No	
152	2-3 years	3-5	Online	Yes	Under 30	Male	Undergraduate	120,001 - 200,000	City of Vancouver	No	
153	2-3 years	1-2	Both	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Undergraduate	80,001 - 120,000	Outside of Canada	No	

ID	Years of Attendance	Numbers of Events	Type of Events	Follow VWF on Social Media	What is your age?	What is your gender?	Level of Education	Annual Household Income? (\$)	Where you Reside	Underrepresented communities	which underrepresented communities
154	2-3 years	3-5	Online	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Undergraduate	30,000 - 50,000	Metro Vancouver	Yes	
155	This was my	1-2	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Undergraduate	30,000 - 50,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
156	2-3 years	1-2	Online	Yes	Under 30	Male	Graduate/Post graduate	50,001 - 80,000	British Columbia	Prefer not to disclose	
157	4-6 years	3-5	Online	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Undergraduate	80,001 - 120,000	Outside of Canada	No	
158	4-6 years	3-5	Online	Yes	41 -54	Female	High school graduate	120,001 - 200,000	Outside of Canada	No	
159	2-3 years	3-5	Online	Yes	41 -54	Female	Undergraduate	80,001 - 120,000	Outside of Canada	No	
160	4-6 years	6-10	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Undergraduate	80,001 - 120,000	Outside of Canada	No	
161	4-6 years	1-2	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Undergraduate	120,001 - 200,000	Outside of Canada	No	
162	This was my	1-2	In Person	Yes	Under 30	Male	Undergraduate	50,001 - 80,000	British Columbia	Prefer not to disclose	
163	2-3 years	1-2	Online	Yes	Under 30	Female	High school graduate	30,000 - 50,000	Metro Vancouver	Prefer not to disclose	
164	This was my	1-2	Online	Yes	55 -64	Female	Less than high school	Under 30,000	British Columbia	No	
165	This was my	1-2	In Person	Yes	Under 30	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	50,001 - 80,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
166	This was my	3-5	In Person	Yes	Under 30	Prefer nc	Undergraduate	50,001 - 80,000	Metro Vancouver	Prefer not to disclose	
167	2-3 years	3-5	Online	Yes	Under 30	Male	High school graduate	50,001 - 80,000	British Columbia	No	
168	This was my	1-2	In Person	Yes	Under 30	Female	Undergraduate	Under 30,000	British Columbia	No	
169	2-3 years	3-5	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	High school graduate	Under 30,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
170	2-3 years	3-5	Online	Yes	Under 30	Male	High school graduate	30,000 - 50,000	Metro Vancouver	Prefer not to disclose	
171	2-3 years	1-2	Online	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Graduate/Post graduate	Under 30,000	Metro Vancouver	Yes	
172	This was my	3-5	Online	Yes	31 - 40	Male	High school graduate	30,000 - 50,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
173	This was my	3-5	Online	Yes	31 - 40	Male	High school graduate	50,001 - 80,000	Outside of Canada	Yes	Happy community
174	2-3 years	3-5	Online	Yes	31 - 40	Male	High school graduate	30,000 - 50,000	Metro Vancouver	Yes	
175	7-10 years	1-2	Online	Yes	31 - 40	Female	High school graduate	Under 30,000	Canada	No	
177	4-6 years	6-10	Online	Yes	41 -54	Male	High school graduate	Under 30,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
178	This was my	1-2	Online	Yes	31 - 40	Female	Undergraduate	80,001 - 120,000	Outside of Canada	Prefer not to disclose	
179	10+ years	10+	Online	Yes	Under 30	Non-bina	High school graduate	Under 30,000	Metro Vancouver	Yes	
180	2-3 years	1-2	Online	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Undergraduate	30,000 - 50,000	Metro Vancouver	Yes	yes
181	4-6 years	3-5	Online	Yes	55 -64	Male	Undergraduate	80,001 - 120,000	Outside of Canada	Prefer not to disclose	
182	2-3 years	6-10	Online	Yes	65-74	Male	Undergraduate	120,001 - 200,000	Outside of Canada	Prefer not to disclose	
183	2-3 years	3-5	Online	Yes	41 -54	Female	High school graduate	80,001 - 120,000	Outside of Canada	Prefer not to disclose	
184	This was my	6-10	Online	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Graduate/Post graduate	Under 30,000	Metro Vancouver	Yes	
185	7-10 years	6-10	In Person	Yes	Under 30	Male	Graduate/Post graduate	Under 30,000	Canada	Yes	yes
186	This was my	3-5	In Person	Yes	75 and over	Male	Graduate/Post graduate	Under 30,000	British Columbia	Yes	

ID	Years of Attendance	Numbers of Events	Type of Events	Follow VWF on Social Media	What is your age?	What is your gender?	Level of Education	Annual Household Income? (\$)	Where you Reside	Underrepresented communities	which underrepresented communities
187	4-6 years	3-5	In Person	Yes	65-74	Male	Less than high school	Under 30,000	Metro Vancouver	Yes	
188	10+ years	10+	In Person	Yes	65-74	Non-bina	Graduate/Post graduate	30,000 - 50,000	Canada	No	
189	2-3 years	3-5	Online	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Undergraduate	Under 30,000	City of Vancouver	Yes	
190	4-6 years	6-10	In Person	Yes	41 -54	Male	Undergraduate	80,001 - 120,000	City of Vancouver	No	
191	4-6 years	3-5	Online	Yes	31 - 40	Male	High school graduate	Under 30,000	Canada	No	
192	This was my	1-2	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Non-bina	High school graduate	30,000 - 50,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
193	7-10 years	6-10	In Person	Yes	41 -54	Male	Undergraduate	80,001 - 120,000	City of Vancouver	No	
194	This was my	1-2	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Undergraduate	30,000 - 50,000	Metro Vancouver	Prefer not to disclose	
195	2-3 years	3-5	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	High school graduate	Under 30,000	British Columbia	No	
196	This was my	1-2	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	High school graduate	Under 30,000	British Columbia	No	
197	This was my	1-2	Online	Yes	31 - 40	Male	High school graduate	30,000 - 50,000	British Columbia	No	
198	This was my	1-2	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Undergraduate	30,000 - 50,000	British Columbia	Prefer not to disclose	
200	2-3 years	3-5	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Female	Undergraduate	Under 30,000	City of Vancouver	No	
201	This was my	1-2	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	High school graduate	30,000 - 50,000	British Columbia	Prefer not to disclose	
203	2-3 years	1-2	Online	Yes	31 - 40	Male	High school graduate	30,000 - 50,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
204	4-6 years	1-2	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Female	Undergraduate	Under 30,000	Canada	No	
205	2-3 years	3-5	Online	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Undergraduate	30,000 - 50,000	Canada	Yes	
206	This was my	1-2	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Undergraduate	30,000 - 50,000	Metro Vancouver	Prefer not to disclose	
207	2-3 years	3-5	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	High school graduate	30,000 - 50,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
208	4-6 years	1-2	Online	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Undergraduate	Under 30,000	British Columbia	No	
209	This was my	1-2	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Undergraduate	30,000 - 50,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
210	2-3 years	1-2	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	High school graduate	Under 30,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
211	2-3 years	3-5	Online	Yes	31 - 40	Female	High school graduate	Under 30,000	Canada	No	
212	2-3 years	3-5	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Undergraduate	30,000 - 50,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
213	2-3 years	3-5	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Female	Undergraduate	80,001 - 120,000	City of Vancouver	Yes	
214	2-3 years	3-5	Online	Yes	31 - 40	Male	High school graduate	Under 30,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
215	2-3 years	1-2	Online	Yes	31 - 40	Female	Undergraduate	Under 30,000	Canada	No	
216	2-3 years	6-10	Online	Yes	31 - 40	Male	High school graduate	30,000 - 50,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
217	2-3 years	1-2	Online	Yes	41 -54	Male	High school graduate	Under 30,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
218	2-3 years	3-5	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Female	High school graduate	50,001 - 80,000	Metro Vancouver	Prefer not to disclose	
219	2-3 years	3-5	Online	Yes	31 - 40	Male	High school graduate	30,000 - 50,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
220	2-3 years	1-2	Online	Yes	31 - 40	Male	High school graduate	30,000 - 50,000	Metro Vancouver	Yes	
221	2-3 years	1-2	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Female	High school graduate	30,000 - 50,000	Metro Vancouver	No	

ID	Years of Attendance	Numbers of Events	Type of Events	Follow VWF on Social Media	What is your age?	What is your gender?	Level of Education	Annual Household Income? (\$)	Where you Reside	Underrepresented communities	which underrepresented communities
222	2-3 years	3-5	In Person	Yes	Under 30	Male	Undergraduate	Prefer not to say	City of Vancouver	Prefer not to disclose	
223	This was my	1-2	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Female	High school graduate	30,000 - 50,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
224	This was my	1-2	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Female	Undergraduate	120,001 - 200,000	Canada	No	
225	This was my	3-5	Online	Yes	Under 30	Male	Graduate/Post graduate	120,001 - 200,000	Metro Vancouver	Prefer not to disclose	
226	4-6 years	6-10	In Person	Yes	Under 30	Male	Undergraduate	50,001 - 80,000	City of Vancouver	Prefer not to disclose	
227	This was my	1-2	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Female	Less than high school	30,000 - 50,000	Canada	No	
228	4-6 years	3-5	Online	Yes	41 -54	Male	Undergraduate	80,001 - 120,000	Metro Vancouver	Prefer not to disclose	
229	2-3 years	1-2	Both	Yes	31 - 40	Female	Undergraduate	Prefer not to say	Metro Vancouver	Prefer not to disclose	
230	4-6 years	3-5	In Person	Yes	Under 30	Female	Undergraduate	80,001 - 120,000	Canada	Prefer not to disclose	
231	2-3 years	1-2	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Female	Undergraduate	50,001 - 80,000	City of Vancouver	No	
232	4-6 years	3-5	Both	Yes	31 - 40	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	30,000 - 50,000	City of Vancouver	No	
233	4-6 years	6-10	Online	Yes	41 -54	Prefer nc	High school graduate	50,001 - 80,000	Canada	Yes	
234	2-3 years	3-5	In Person	Yes	55 -64	Male	Less than high school	50,001 - 80,000	British Columbia	Yes	
235	This was my	6-10	Online	Yes	31 - 40	Male	High school graduate	120,001 - 200,000	British Columbia	Yes	
236	2-3 years	3-5	Both	Yes	31 - 40	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	50,001 - 80,000	City of Vancouver	Yes	
237	4-6 years	3-5	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Undergraduate	120,001 - 200,000	City of Vancouver	No	
238	2-3 years	3-5	Online	Yes	Under 30	Male	Graduate/Post graduate	30,000 - 50,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
239	2-3 years	1-2	In Person	Yes	Under 30	Female	High school graduate	30,000 - 50,000	City of Vancouver	No	
240	4-6 years	3-5	In Person	Yes	41 -54	Non-bina	Undergraduate	50,001 - 80,000	British Columbia	Prefer not to disclose	
241	2-3 years	3-5	In Person	Yes	41 -54	Male	Undergraduate	80,001 - 120,000	Metro Vancouver	Prefer not to disclose	
242	4-6 years	3-5	Online	Yes	31 - 40	Male	High school graduate	80,001 - 120,000	Metro Vancouver	Yes	It makes me very interested
243	10+ years	3-5	Online	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	50,001 - 80,000	British Columbia	No	
244	2-3 years	1-2	Online	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	50,001 - 80,000	British Columbia	No	
245	2-3 years	3-5	Online	Yes	41 -54	Female	Undergraduate	Prefer not to say	Metro Vancouver	No	
246	10+ years	3-5	Online	No	75 and over	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	Prefer not to say	British Columbia	No	
247	10+ years	6-10	Online	Yes	55 -64	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	120,001 - 200,000	British Columbia	No	
249	10+ years	3-5	Online	Yes	55 -64	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	Prefer not to say	Outside of Canada	Yes	Afrodescendant..
250	7-10 years	1-2	Online	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	80,001 - 120,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
251	7-10 years	6-10	In Person	Yes	41 -54	Male	Undergraduate	80,001 - 120,000	City of Vancouver	No	
252	2-3 years	6-10	Online	Yes	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	50,001 - 80,000	British Columbia	No	
253	10+ years	10+	Online	No	65-74	Female	Undergraduate	Prefer not to say	City of Vancouver	No	
254	This was my	1-2	Online	Yes	31 - 40	Female	High school graduate	30,000 - 50,000	City of Vancouver	No	

ID	Years of Attendance	Numbers of Events	Type of Events	Follow VWF on Social Media	What is your age?	What is your gender?	Level of Education	Annual Household Income? (\$)	Where you Reside	Underrepresented communities	which underrepresented communities
256	This was my	1-2	In Person	Yes	Under 30	Female	Less than high school	Prefer not to say	City of Vancouver	Yes	
258	2-3 years	3-5	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Undergraduate	30,000 - 50,000	Metro Vancouver	Yes	
259	2-3 years	1-2	In Person	Yes	Under 30	Female	High school graduate	30,000 - 50,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
260	2-3 years	3-5	Online	Yes	31 - 40	Male	High school graduate	30,000 - 50,000	City of Vancouver	No	
261	10+ years	10+	Online	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	50,001 - 80,000	City of Vancouver	No	
262	2-3 years	10+	Online	No	55 -64	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	Over 200,000	British Columbia	No	
264	10+ years	1-2	Both	No	65-74	Female	Undergraduate	30,000 - 50,000	City of Vancouver	No	
265	2-3 years	3-5	In Person	Yes	Under 30	Female	Undergraduate	30,000 - 50,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
266	2-3 years	3-5	Online	Yes	31 - 40	Male	High school graduate	30,000 - 50,000	City of Vancouver	No	
267	4-6 years	3-5	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Undergraduate	120,001 - 200,000	City of Vancouver	No	
268	4-6 years	3-5	Online	Yes	41 -54	Male	Undergraduate	80,001 - 120,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
269	2-3 years	3-5	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	High school graduate	30,000 - 50,000	British Columbia	No	
270	2-3 years	3-5	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	High school graduate	30,000 - 50,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
271	4-6 years	3-5	Both	Yes	41 -54	Female	Undergraduate	Prefer not to say	City of Vancouver	Prefer not to disclose	
272	4-6 years	1-2	In Person	Yes	41 -54	Male	Undergraduate	120,001 - 200,000	City of Vancouver	No	
273	2-3 years	1-2	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Female	Undergraduate	50,001 - 80,000	City of Vancouver	Prefer not to disclose	
274	10+ years	3-5	Online	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	Prefer not to say	City of Vancouver	No	
275	4-6 years	3-5	In Person	Yes	41 -54	Male	Undergraduate	50,001 - 80,000	City of Vancouver	Prefer not to disclose	
277	10+ years	10+	Online	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	80,001 - 120,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
278	10+ years	1-2	Both	No	55 -64	Female	Undergraduate	80,001 - 120,000	City of Vancouver	No	
279	10+ years	3-5	Online	Yes	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	80,001 - 120,000	City of Vancouver	No	
280	4-6 years	1-2	Online	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	120,001 - 200,000	British Columbia	No	
281	2-3 years	1-2	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Undergraduate	Prefer not to say	City of Vancouver	Yes	
283	10+ years	6-10	Both	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	50,001 - 80,000	City of Vancouver	No	
284	10+ years	10+	Online	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	120,001 - 200,000	City of Vancouver	No	
285	10+ years	3-5	Both	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	80,001 - 120,000	Metro Vancouver	Yes	LGBTQIA+
286	10+ years	6-10	Online	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	Prefer not to say	City of Vancouver	No	
287	4-6 years	3-5	Both	No	65-74	Female	Undergraduate	30,000 - 50,000	City of Vancouver	No	
288	10+ years	10+	Both	Yes	41 -54	Female	Undergraduate	80,001 - 120,000	City of Vancouver	No	
290	This was my	1-2	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Female	Undergraduate	50,001 - 80,000	Canada	No	
291	2-3 years	3-5	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Female	Undergraduate	50,001 - 80,000	British Columbia	Prefer not to disclose	
292	7-10 years	10+	In Person	Yes	41 -54	Male	Undergraduate	120,001 - 200,000	City of Vancouver	No	
294	10+ years	3-5	Online	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	50,001 - 80,000	City of Vancouver	No	

ID	Years of Attendance	Numbers of Events	Type of Events	Follow VWF on Social Media	What is your age?	What is your gender?	Level of Education	Annual Household Income? (\$)	Where you Reside	Underrepresented communities	which underrepresented communities
295	7-10 years	10+	In Person	Yes	41 -54	Male	Undergraduate	120,001 - 200,000	City of Vancouver	No	
296	10+ years	3-5	Online	Yes	65-74	Female	Undergraduate	Prefer not to say	City of Vancouver	Prefer not to disclose	
297	4-6 years	6-10	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Graduate/Post graduate	Over 200,000	British Columbia	No	
298	4-6 years	3-5	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Graduate/Post graduate	Over 200,000	British Columbia	No	
299	4-6 years	3-5	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Graduate/Post graduate	Over 200,000	British Columbia	No	
300	4-6 years	3-5	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Graduate/Post graduate	Over 200,000	British Columbia	No	
301	4-6 years	3-5	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Graduate/Post graduate	Over 200,000	British Columbia	No	
302	10+ years	1-2	Online	No	75 and over	Male	Graduate/Post graduate	Prefer not to say	Metro Vancouver	No	
303	4-6 years	3-5	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Graduate/Post graduate	Over 200,000	British Columbia	No	
304	10+ years	3-5	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Graduate/Post graduate	Over 200,000	British Columbia	No	
305	10+ years	3-5	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Less than high school	Over 200,000	British Columbia	No	
306	10+ years	3-5	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Less than high school	Over 200,000	British Columbia	No	
307	10+ years	3-5	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Less than high school	Over 200,000	British Columbia	No	
308	10+ years	10+	Online	No	65-74	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	30,000 - 50,000	Metro Vancouver	No	
309	10+ years	3-5	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Graduate/Post graduate	Over 200,000	City of Vancouver	No	
310	10+ years	3-5	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Graduate/Post graduate	Over 200,000	City of Vancouver	No	
311	10+ years	3-5	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Graduate/Post graduate	Over 200,000	City of Vancouver	No	
312	10+ years	3-5	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Graduate/Post graduate	Over 200,000	City of Vancouver	No	
313	10+ years	3-5	In Person	Yes	31 - 40	Male	Graduate/Post graduate	Over 200,000	City of Vancouver	No	
314	This was my	1-2	Online	No	65-74	Prefer not to say	Graduate/Post graduate	Prefer not to say	Metro Vancouver	Prefer not to disclose	
317	2-3 years	3-5	Both	No	31 - 40	Non-binary	Undergraduate	80,001 - 120,000	Metro Vancouver	Yes	neurodivergent, queer
318	4-6 years	3-5	Online	No	55 -64	Female	Undergraduate	50,001 - 80,000	Metro Vancouver	Yes	
319	2-3 years	1-2	Online	No	41 -54	Female	Undergraduate	Prefer not to say	Metro Vancouver	No	
320	This was my	1-2	Online	Yes	31 - 40	Female	Undergraduate	80,001 - 120,000	Canada	No	
322	10+ years	6-10	Online	No	75 and over	Female	Graduate/Post graduate	80,001 - 120,000	City of Vancouver	No	

Appendix B.

Table B1. The Summary of the 2021 Daily Surveys about the Festival Young Audience

ID	Day	Age	Underrepresented Communities	Which Community	How to Commute	In-person or Digital	Events	Member of VWF	Wants to be Member
1	20	31-40	No		NA	Digital	Entre Nous	No	Yes
2	21	Under 30	No		Car Share	In-Person	Word! Spoken Word For Adults	No	Maybe
3	22	31-40	Prefer not to say		Personal Car	In-Person	Ring	No	Maybe
4	23	31-40	No		Walked	In-Person	Binge	No	No
5	24	Under 30	Yes	Queer, South Asian	Public Transport	In-Person	Danny Ramadan Presents	No	Yes
6	22	31-40	Yes		Public Transport	In-Person	The Winter Wives	No	Maybe
7	19	31-40	Yes		NA	Digital	On Animals	No	No
8	19	31-40	Yes	South Asian - Bengali	Personal Car	In-Person	The Alma Lee Opening Night Event	Yes	
9	19	31-40	Yes		Walked	In-Person	Spine-Chillingly Good	No	Maybe
10	21	Under 30	Yes	Queer, BIPOC, sex worker	Car Share	In-Person	Word! Spoken Word For Adults	No	Maybe
11	18	31-40	Prefer not to say		NA	Digital	Kaleidoscope: Brian Selznick/When You Get The Chance/Walking in Two Worlds	No	Maybe
11	21	31-40	Prefer not to say		NA	Digital	The Great Bear	No	Maybe
11	19	31-40	Prefer not to say		NA	Digital	Word!	No	Maybe
12	22	Under 30	No		NA	Digital	The Intricate Craft of Poetry	No	Maybe
13	19	31-40	No		Personal Car	In-Person	The Alma Lee Opening Night Event	Yes	
14	20	Under 30	No		NA	Digital	Burt the Beetle	No	Maybe
15	19	31-40	Yes	Mental Illness	Personal Car	In-Person	The Alma Lee Opening Night Event	Yes	
16	21	31-40	Yes	Bisexual	Public Transport	In-Person	UBC Creative Writing	No	Maybe
17	23	31-40	No		Personal Car	In-Person	Float Like a Butterfly, Drink Mint Tea	No	Yes
18	22	31-40	Yes		NA	Digital	On Freedom	No	No
19	20	Under 30	No		Personal Car	In-Person	Hook, Line, and Sinker	No	Maybe
20	19	31-40	No		NA	Digital	Home Truths	No	Maybe
21	24	31-40	No		Public Transport	In-Person	The Afternoon Tea	No	Other
22	19	Under 30	No		NA	Digital	On Animals	No	No
23	19	Under 30	No		NA	Both	On Animals	No	Maybe
23	18	Under 30	No		Walked	Both	Matrix	No	No

ID	Day	Age	Underrepresented Communities	Which Community	How to Commute	In-person or Digital	Events	Member of VWF	Wants to be Member
24	20	Under 30	Prefer not to say		NA	Digital	Family Ties	No	No
25	21	Under 30	Yes	disabled, queer and POC	Personal Car	In-Person	UBC Creative Writing	No	Yes
26	21	31-40	No		NA	Digital	Heaven, Breasts and Eggs	No	Maybe
27	22	31-40	No		Personal Car	In-Person	The Poetry Bash	No	No
28	23	Under 30	No		Public Transport	In-Person	Poets in Conversation	No	Maybe
29	22	31-40	No		Public Transport	Both	The Power of Comics/ The Intricate Craft of Poetry	No	Maybe
30	20	31-40	Yes	LGBTQ	Walked	Both	Freeman's	No	Maybe
30	22	31-40	Yes	LGBTQ	NA	Both	On Freedom	No	Maybe
31	23	31-40	No		Personal Car	In-Person	Binge	No	No
32	21	Under 30	No		Public Transport	In-Person	UBC Creative Writing	No	Maybe
33	18	Under 30	No		Personal Car	In-Person	Matrix	No	No
34	22	Under 30	No		Public Transport	In-Person	It's Not Too Late	No	Maybe
35	18	31-40	No		Biked	In-Person	Matrix	No	Maybe
35	19	31-40	No		Biked	In-Person	Spine-Chillingly Good	No	No
36	21	31-40	No		NA	Digital	The Vanishing Half	No	Maybe
37	24	Under 30	Yes	Filipino	Car Share	Both	Blending Genres / The Afternoon Tea	No	Maybe
38	23	Under 30	No		Personal Car	In-Person	Short Stories, Great Tales	No	No
39	22	31-40	No		Walked	In-Person	The Winter Wives/ Ring	No	Maybe
39	23	31-40	No		Walked	In-Person	Unreconciled	No	Yes
40	19	31-40	No		NA	Digital	Word!	No	No
41	22	31-40	No		Personal Car	In-Person	Ring	No	Maybe
42	24	31-40	Yes		Car Share	In-Person	Danny Ramadan Presents	No	Maybe
43	20	31-40	No		Public Transport	Both	Freeman's	No	Yes
43	23	31-40	No		Public Transport	Both	Unreconciled/ Short Stories, Great Tales / The Threads of Family and Resilience	No	Yes
43	18	31-40	No		Public Transport	Both	Matrix	Yes	
44	21	31-40	No		NA	Digital	Linked	No	Maybe
45	22	31-40	Yes		NA	Digital	Complex Histories	No	Maybe
46	23	31-40	No		Personal Car	In-Person	Binge	No	Maybe
46	19	31-40	No		Personal Car	In-Person	The Alma Lee Opening Night Event	No	Maybe

ID	Day	Age	Underrepresented Communities	Which Community	How to Commute	In-person or Digital	Events	Member of VWF	Wants to be Member
47	18	31-40	No		Biked	In-Person	Matrix	No	No
48	21	31-40	No		Public Transport	In-Person	UBC Creative Writing	No	No
49	21	31-40	No		Walked	In-Person	UBC Creative Writing	No	Maybe
50	19	Under 30	Yes		Public Transport	In-Person	Spine-Chillingly Good	No	No
51	19	Under 30	Yes	LGBTQIAS2+; biracial	Public Transport	In-Person	Spine-Chillingly Good	No	Maybe
52	19	31-40	Yes		Personal Car	In-Person	The Alma Lee Opening Night Event	No	Yes
53	19	31-40	Yes	BIPOC - Korean Ancestry	Personal Car	In-Person	Spine-Chillingly Good	No	Yes
54	22	Under 30	No		NA	Digital	The Intricate Craft of Poetry	No	Maybe
55	19	31-40	No		Personal Car	In-Person	The Alma Lee Opening Night Event	No	Maybe
56	24	31-40	No		Car Share	In-Person	Danny Ramadan Presents	No	Maybe
57	22	31-40	Prefer not to say		Car Share	In-Person	Top Picks for Teachers	No	Maybe
58	20	31-40	No		Personal Car	In-Person	Freeman's	Yes	
58	23	31-40	No		Personal Car	In-Person	with/holding/ Short Stories, Great Tales	Yes	
59	22	31-40	No		NA	Digital	On Freedom	No	Maybe
60	19	31-40	Prefer not to say		NA	Digital	On The Trapline: David A. Robertson	No	Maybe
61	21	31-40	No		Public Transport	In-Person	UBC Creative Writing	No	No
62	22	31-40	No		Personal Car	In-Person	Top Picks for Teachers	No	Yes
63	20	31-40	No		Walked	In-Person	Freeman's	No	Maybe
64	19	31-40	No		NA	Digital	On The Trapline: David A. Robertson	Yes	
65	19	31-40	No		Personal Car	In-Person	Spine-Chillingly Good	No	Maybe
66	21	Under 30	Yes		NA	Digital	Linked	No	Maybe
67	24	31-40	No		Public Transport	In-Person	Danny Ramadan Presents	No	Maybe
68	18	31-40	No		Public Transport	In-Person	Matrix	No	No
69	20	31-40	No		NA	Digital	Family Ties	No	Maybe
70	22	Under 30	Yes	African communities	NA	Digital	Black Literature	No	Maybe
71	23	31-40	No		Personal Car	Both	Poets in Conversation	No	Maybe
71	22	31-40	Yes		NA	Both	The Intricate Craft of Poetry	No	Maybe

ID	Day	Age	Underrepresented Communities	Which Community	How to Commute	In-person or Digital	Events	Member of VWF	Wants to be Member
72	18	Under 30	No		NA	Digital	Sunny Days Inside	No	No
73	23	Under 30	Prefer not to say		Public Transport	In-Person	Float Like a Butterfly, Drink Mint Tea	No	No
74	20	Under 30	Prefer not to say		NA	Digital	Burt the Beetle	No	No
75	21	31-40	No		Public Transport	In-Person	☺☹️ The Emoji Lit Pub Quiz	No	No
76	20	Under 30	No		NA	Digital	Family Ties	No	Maybe
77	19	31-40	No		Personal Car	Both	Spine-Chillingly Good	No	Maybe
78	24	Under 30	Yes	trans/lgbtq	Public Transport	In-Person	Danny Ramadan Presents	No	Maybe
78	22	Under 30	Yes	trans/lgbtq	Public Transport	In-Person	The Power of Comics	No	Maybe
78	19	Under 30	Yes	trans/lgbtq	Public Transport	In-Person	Spine-Chillingly Good	No	Other
78	21	Under 30	Yes	trans/lgbtq	Public Transport	In-Person	UBC Creative Writing	No	Other
79	22	31-40	No		Public Transport	Both	The Power of Comics/ The Intricate Craft of Poetry	No	Maybe
80	22	31-40	No		Public Transport	In-Person	Defying Stereotypes in Memoir	No	Maybe
81	19	Under 30	No		NA	Digital	On The Trapline: David A. Robertson	No	No
82	23	Under 30	No		Public Transport	In-Person	Poets in Conversation	No	Yes
83	24	Under 30	No		Car Share	In-Person	The Afternoon Tea	Yes	
84	23	Under 30	Yes		Public Transport	In-Person	Short Stories, Great Tales	No	No
85	23	31-40	Yes	A racialized community	Car Share	In-Person	with/holding	No	No
86	20	31-40	No		Walked	In-Person	Freeman's	Yes	
87	23	31-40	Yes		Public Transport	In-Person	Short Stories, Great Tales	No	Maybe
88	20	31-40	Yes	immigrant, mental illness,	Personal Car	Both	Family Ties	No	Maybe
88	21	31-40	Yes	Mental illneaa	Personal Car	Both	UBC Creative Writing	No	No
89	18	31-40	No		Biked	Both	Kaleidoscope: Brian Selznick/ Matrix	Yes	
90	18	31-40	No		NA	Digital	Maria Stepanova in Conersation	No	No
91	21	Under 30	No		Walked	In-Person	Word! Spoken Word For Adults	No	No
92	22	31-40	Yes	Japanese Canadian	Personal Car	In-Person	Top Picks for Teachers	No	No
93	23	31-40	Yes	Haida/Ojibwe/	Personal Car	In-Person	Unreconciled	No	No

Appendix C.

Table C1. The Summary of the 2021 Post-Festival Survey about the Festival Young Audience

ID	Age	Gender	Residency	Attendance in Festival	Events Numbers	Events type	Annual Income (\$)	Daily Spending on GI (\$)
3	31 - 40	Female	City of Vancouver	4-6 years	1-2	Both	Under 30,000	0.00
14	31 - 40	Female	Metro Vancouver	4-6 years	3-5	Both	80,001 - 120,000	0.00
38	31 - 40	Male	Metro Vancouver	4-6 years	3-5	In Person	Prefer not to say	20 - 50
46	31 - 40	Female	City of Vancouver	First year	1-2	In Person	Over 200,000	50 to 100
68	31 - 40	Female	City of Vancouver	First year	1-2	Online	Prefer not to say	
71	Under 30	Female	Metro Vancouver	First year	1-2	In Person	Under 30,000	50 to 100
75	Under 30	Female	City of Vancouver	2-3 years	1-2	In Person	Prefer not to say	20 - 50
105	31 - 40	Prefer not to say	Metro Vancouver	2-3 years	3-5	Online	Prefer not to say	
109	Under 30	Male	Metro Vancouver	First year	1-2	In Person	Under 30,000	20 - 50
110	31 - 40	Female	British Columbia	First year	3-5	In Person	80,001 - 120,000	20 - 50
111	31 - 40	Female	City of Vancouver	4-6 years	3-5	Both	Over 200,000	0-20
115	Under 30	Female	British Columbia	First year	1-2	In Person	30,000 - 50,000	20 - 50
129	31 - 40	Female	British Columbia	2-3 years	1-2	In Person	80,001 - 120,000	20 - 50
132	31 - 40	Female	Metro Vancouver	First year	1-2	In Person	30,000 - 50,000	0.00
145	31 - 40	Male	City of Vancouver	4-6 years	6-10	Both	Over 200,000	20 - 50
147	31 - 40	Non-binary	City of Vancouver	2-3 years	3-5	In Person	30,000 - 50,000	20 - 50
148	31 - 40	Male	Canada	2-3 years	1-2	In Person	50,001 - 80,000	20 - 50
151	31 - 40	Male	City of Vancouver	2-3 years	1-2	In Person	Under 30,000	0-20
152	Under 30	Male	City of Vancouver	2-3 years	3-5	Online	120,001 - 200,000	
153	31 - 40	Male	Outside of Canada	2-3 years	1-2	Both	80,001 - 120,000	50 to 100
154	31 - 40	Male	Metro Vancouver	2-3 years	3-5	Online	30,000 - 50,000	
155	31 - 40	Male	Metro Vancouver	First year	1-2	In Person	30,000 - 50,000	20 - 50
156	Under 30	Male	British Columbia	2-3 years	1-2	Online	50,001 - 80,000	
157	31 - 40	Male	Outside of Canada	4-6 years	3-5	Online	80,001 - 120,000	
160	31 - 40	Male	Outside of Canada	4-6 years	6-10	In Person	80,001 - 120,000	Over 100
161	31 - 40	Male	Outside of Canada	4-6 years	1-2	In Person	120,001 - 200,000	50 to 100
162	Under 30	Male	British Columbia	First year	1-2	In Person	50,001 - 80,000	20 - 50
163	Under 30	Female	Metro Vancouver	2-3 years	1-2	Online	30,000 - 50,000	
165	Under 30	Female	Metro Vancouver	First year	1-2	In Person	50,001 - 80,000	50 to 100
166	Under 30	Prefer not to say	Metro Vancouver	First year	3-5	In Person	50,001 - 80,000	20 - 50
167	Under 30	Male	British Columbia	2-3 years	3-5	Online	50,001 - 80,000	
168	Under 30	Female	British Columbia	First year	1-2	In Person	Under 30,000	0-20
169	31 - 40	Male	Metro Vancouver	2-3 years	3-5	In Person	Under 30,000	0-20
170	Under 30	Male	Metro Vancouver	2-3 years	3-5	Online	30,000 - 50,000	
171	31 - 40	Male	Metro Vancouver	2-3 years	1-2	Online	Under 30,000	

ID	Age	Gender	Residency	Attendance in Festival	Events Numbers	Events type	Annual Income (\$)	Daily Spending on GI (\$)
172	31 - 40	Male	Metro Vancouver	First year	3-5	Online	30,000 - 50,000	
173	31 - 40	Male	Outside of Canada	First year	3-5	Online	50,001 - 80,000	
174	31 - 40	Male	Metro Vancouver	2-3 years	3-5	Online	30,000 - 50,000	
175	31 - 40	Female	Canada	7-10 years	1-2	Online	Under 30,000	
178	31 - 40	Female	Outside of Canada	First year	1-2	Online	80,001 - 120,000	
179	Under 30	Non-binary	Metro Vancouver	10+ years	10+	Online	Under 30,000	
180	31 - 40	Male	Metro Vancouver	2-3 years	1-2	Online	30,000 - 50,000	
184	31 - 40	Male	Metro Vancouver	First year	6-10	Online	Under 30,000	
185	Under 30	Male	Canada	7-10 years	6-10	In Person	Under 30,000	20 - 50
189	31 - 40	Male	City of Vancouver	2-3 years	3-5	Online	Under 30,000	
191	31 - 40	Male	Canada	4-6 years	3-5	Online	Under 30,000	
192	31 - 40	Non-binary	Metro Vancouver	First year	1-2	In Person	30,000 - 50,000	20 - 50
194	31 - 40	Male	Metro Vancouver	First year	1-2	In Person	30,000 - 50,000	0-20
195	31 - 40	Male	British Columbia	2-3 years	3-5	In Person	Under 30,000	20 - 50
196	31 - 40	Male	British Columbia	First year	1-2	In Person	Under 30,000	20 - 50
197	31 - 40	Male	British Columbia	First year	1-2	Online	30,000 - 50,000	
198	31 - 40	Male	British Columbia	First year	1-2	In Person	30,000 - 50,000	20 - 50
200	31 - 40	Female	City of Vancouver	2-3 years	3-5	In Person	Under 30,000	20 - 50
201	31 - 40	Male	British Columbia	First year	1-2	In Person	30,000 - 50,000	20 - 50
203	31 - 40	Male	Metro Vancouver	2-3 years	1-2	Online	30,000 - 50,000	
204	31 - 40	Female	Canada	4-6 years	1-2	In Person	Under 30,000	20 - 50
205	31 - 40	Male	Canada	2-3 years	3-5	Online	30,000 - 50,000	
206	31 - 40	Male	Metro Vancouver	First year	1-2	In Person	30,000 - 50,000	20 - 50
207	31 - 40	Male	Metro Vancouver	2-3 years	3-5	In Person	30,000 - 50,000	20 - 50
208	31 - 40	Male	British Columbia	4-6 years	1-2	Online	Under 30,000	
209	31 - 40	Male	Metro Vancouver	First year	1-2	In Person	30,000 - 50,000	20 - 50
210	31 - 40	Male	Metro Vancouver	2-3 years	1-2	In Person	Under 30,000	20 - 50
211	31 - 40	Female	Canada	2-3 years	3-5	Online	Under 30,000	
212	31 - 40	Male	Metro Vancouver	2-3 years	3-5	In Person	30,000 - 50,000	20 - 50
213	31 - 40	Female	City of Vancouver	2-3 years	3-5	In Person	80,001 - 120,000	20 - 50
214	31 - 40	Male	Metro Vancouver	2-3 years	3-5	Online	Under 30,000	
215	31 - 40	Female	Canada	2-3 years	1-2	Online	Under 30,000	
216	31 - 40	Male	Metro Vancouver	2-3 years	6-10	Online	30,000 - 50,000	
218	31 - 40	Female	Metro Vancouver	2-3 years	3-5	In Person	50,001 - 80,000	20 - 50
219	31 - 40	Male	Metro Vancouver	2-3 years	3-5	Online	30,000 - 50,000	

ID	Age	Gender	Residency	Attendance in Festival	Events Numbers	Events type	Annual Income (\$)	Daily Spending on GI (\$)
220	31 - 40	Male	Metro Vancouver	2-3 years	1-2	Online	30,000 - 50,000	
221	31 - 40	Female	Metro Vancouver	2-3 years	1-2	In Person	30,000 - 50,000	20 - 50
222	Under 30	Male	City of Vancouver	2-3 years	3-5	In Person	Prefer not to say	50 to 100
223	31 - 40	Female	Metro Vancouver	First year	1-2	In Person	30,000 - 50,000	20 - 50
224	31 - 40	Female	Canada	First year	1-2	In Person	120,001 - 200,000	20 - 50
225	Under 30	Male	Metro Vancouver	First year	3-5	Online	120,001 - 200,000	
226	Under 30	Male	City of Vancouver	4-6 years	6-10	In Person	50,001 - 80,000	20 - 50
227	31 - 40	Female	Canada	First year	1-2	In Person	30,000 - 50,000	20 - 50
229	31 - 40	Female	Metro Vancouver	2-3 years	1-2	Both	Prefer not to say	50 to 100
230	Under 30	Female	Canada	4-6 years	3-5	In Person	80,001 - 120,000	50 to 100
231	31 - 40	Female	City of Vancouver	2-3 years	1-2	In Person	50,001 - 80,000	50 to 100
232	31 - 40	Female	City of Vancouver	4-6 years	3-5	Both	30,000 - 50,000	50 to 100
235	31 - 40	Male	British Columbia	First year	6-10	Online	120,001 - 200,000	
236	31 - 40	Female	City of Vancouver	2-3 years	3-5	Both	50,001 - 80,000	20 - 50
237	31 - 40	Male	City of Vancouver	4-6 years	3-5	In Person	120,001 - 200,000	20 - 50
238	Under 30	Male	Metro Vancouver	2-3 years	3-5	Online	30,000 - 50,000	
239	Under 30	Female	City of Vancouver	2-3 years	1-2	In Person	30,000 - 50,000	0-20
242	31 - 40	Male	Metro Vancouver	4-6 years	3-5	Online	80,001 - 120,000	
254	31 - 40	Female	City of Vancouver	First year	1-2	Online	30,000 - 50,000	
256	Under 30	Female	City of Vancouver	First year	1-2	In Person	Prefer not to say	0.00
258	31 - 40	Male	Metro Vancouver	2-3 years	3-5	In Person	30,000 - 50,000	Over 100
259	Under 30	Female	Metro Vancouver	2-3 years	1-2	In Person	30,000 - 50,000	20 - 50
260	31 - 40	Male	City of Vancouver	2-3 years	3-5	Online	30,000 - 50,000	
265	Under 30	Female	Metro Vancouver	2-3 years	3-5	In Person	30,000 - 50,000	20 - 50
266	31 - 40	Male	City of Vancouver	2-3 years	3-5	Online	30,000 - 50,000	
267	31 - 40	Male	City of Vancouver	4-6 years	3-5	In Person	120,001 - 200,000	20 - 50
269	31 - 40	Male	British Columbia	2-3 years	3-5	In Person	30,000 - 50,000	20 - 50
270	31 - 40	Male	Metro Vancouver	2-3 years	3-5	In Person	30,000 - 50,000	20 - 50
273	31 - 40	Female	City of Vancouver	2-3 years	1-2	In Person	50,001 - 80,000	50 to 100
281	31 - 40	Male	City of Vancouver	2-3 years	1-2	In Person	Prefer not to say	20 - 50
290	31 - 40	Female	Canada	First year	1-2	In Person	50,001 - 80,000	20 - 50
291	31 - 40	Female	British Columbia	2-3 years	3-5	In Person	50,001 - 80,000	50 to 100
297	31 - 40	Male	British Columbia	4-6 years	6-10	In Person	Over 200,000	50 to 100
298	31 - 40	Male	British Columbia	4-6 years	3-5	In Person	Over 200,000	0.00
299	31 - 40	Male	British Columbia	4-6 years	3-5	In Person	Over 200,000	20 - 50

ID	Age	Gender	Residency	Attendance in Festival	Events Numbers	Events type	Annual Income (\$)	Daily Spending on GI (\$)
300	31 - 40	Male	British Columbia	4-6 years	3-5	In Person	Over 200,000	0-20
301	31 - 40	Male	British Columbia	4-6 years	3-5	In Person	Over 200,000	20 - 50
303	31 - 40	Male	British Columbia	4-6 years	3-5	In Person	Over 200,000	Over 100
304	31 - 40	Male	British Columbia	10+ years	3-5	In Person	Over 200,000	Over 100
305	31 - 40	Male	British Columbia	10+ years	3-5	In Person	Over 200,000	Over 100
306	31 - 40	Male	British Columbia	10+ years	3-5	In Person	Over 200,000	Over 100
307	31 - 40	Male	British Columbia	10+ years	3-5	In Person	Over 200,000	Over 100
309	31 - 40	Male	City of Vancouver	10+ years	3-5	In Person	Over 200,000	Over 100
310	31 - 40	Male	City of Vancouver	10+ years	3-5	In Person	Over 200,000	Over 100
311	31 - 40	Male	City of Vancouver	10+ years	3-5	In Person	Over 200,000	Over 100
312	31 - 40	Male	City of Vancouver	10+ years	3-5	In Person	Over 200,000	Over 100
313	31 - 40	Male	City of Vancouver	10+ years	3-5	In Person	Over 200,000	Over 100
317	31 - 40	Non-binary	Metro Vancouver	2-3 years	3-5	Both	80,001 - 120,000	0.00
320	31 - 40	Female	Canada	First year	1-2	Online	80,001 - 120,000	