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Cultural Crowdfunding: Does Experience Matter?

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Abstract

Despite increasing interest in crowdfunding as an alternative source of, or supplementary, funding, there is still limited adoption of this new digital practice among artists. The current study explores the variety of funding sources that artists use for their projects and the position of crowdfunding in relation to traditional sources. In addition, this study discusses how artists who embrace crowdfunding differ from those who have not tried it. The results indicate that favorable attitudes toward crowdfunding, subjective norms, self-efficacy, and perceived behavioral control are exhibited at higher levels among artists with crowdfunding experience compared to those without it. To enable greater adoption, efforts need to be directed toward communication about the benefits of crowdfunding for artists, as well as the promotion of success cases. The endorsement of crowdfunding by cultural authorities (e.g., through match

funding) may further boost its uptake and unlock additional resources for cultural workers in a time of digital disruption and increased uncertainty.

Keywords

cultural crowdfunding, artists, Norway, fundraising, culture sector, alternative finance, cultural policy

Introduction

Since 2011, cultural crowdfunding – when artists obtain funding from a large pool of backers who provide small amounts of money for the financing of the production, distribution, and consumption of cultural expressions (Demattos Guimarães and Maehle, 2022; Rykkja, Maehle *et al.*, 2020) – has been growing both in Norway and internationally. This development is associated with ongoing growth in the cultural and creative sector leading to increased pressure on established support schemes, as well as the emergence of digital platforms that facilitate alternative network-based production and distribution models. Indeed, these changes enable crowdfunding initiatives to be realized on a different scale than before (Bannerman, 2013). In this article, we discuss the current position of cultural crowdfunding in Norway in relation to traditional sources of funding for art and cultural production. In addition, this study discusses how artists who embrace crowdfunding differ from those who have not tried it.

Crowdfunding is a fundraising mechanism that implies the collection of small sums from many backers. Its modern online manifestation is platform-based, where digital platforms function as multi-sided marketplaces facilitating transactions between different user groups while leveraging network effects, across or within these user groups (Bacache-Beauvallet and Bourreau, 2020). The crowdfunding platform is used to present and communicate a time-limited

fundraising campaign (usually 30 days), while facilitating interaction between the campaign promoters and supporters (Krokan, 2016; Heggernes, 2016).

Crowdfunding may either replace or supplement traditional funding sources. For example, a musician can replace the record company's funding with crowdfunding by covering production costs with income from a crowdfunding campaign where supporters contribute funding in the form of advance purchase of streaming access or physical formats (CDs or LPs). There are several key crowdfunding models differentiated along the type of benefits offered to prospective backers (Shneor and Vik, 2020). The model presented in the example is called "reward-based crowdfunding" and represents, alongside "donation-based crowdfunding" (giving a gift based on non-profit, altruistic, or religious considerations) and "subscription-based crowdfunding" (giving a fixed monthly amount to support an artist without explicitly defined returns) the non-investment-based forms of crowdfunding. In addition, there are two investment-based forms of crowdfunding including equity-based (sales of shares in the form of shares or profit sharing) and loan-based (repayment of the debt amount with interest) crowdfunding.

Despite increasing interest in crowdfunding as a source of funding within the cultural and creative industries, there are still several thematic gaps in the literature. Earlier research has focused primarily on the project/campaign and backer/patron levels of analysis, while only a few studies have looked at the creators of campaigns (Rykkja, Maehle *et al.*, 2020). Hence, to address this gap, the current paper turns its attention to promoters of these campaigns: artists or employees of cultural and creative organizations acting as cultural entrepreneurs (Hausmann and Heinze, 2016).

Earlier research on this topic is largely anecdotal. Here, studies suggest that cultural actors may be uncomfortable with crowdfunding dynamics that force them to engage in activities they may feel less skilled at, such as marketing and sales (Leyshon *et al.*, 2016). While

having people with business competence on boards is associated with greater success in cultural institutions' fundraising (Betzler, 2015), many artists express limited interest in developing commercial skills and even develop an anti-entrepreneurial mindset (Lee *et al.*, 2018). Indeed, one of the few studies that did focus on the adoption of crowdfunding by artists has highlighted that it may only fit those with extrovert personalities, who feel comfortable with the required direct interactions and public expression of emotions throughout the crowdfunding process (Davidson and Poor, 2015). Such concerns are manifested in the need to control and set boundaries for exposure to and influence by fans, as well as fears of reputational damage in the event of failed campaigns (*ibid.*; Gleasure, 2015).

The publications are also largely based on empirical evidence and statistics from platforms in the United States (Rykkja, Maehle *et al.*, 2020). We know almost nothing about crowdfunding in the field of art and culture in Norway (or the Nordic region). This context is interesting because despite relative generous and stable public-sector support, growth in absolute number of artists is increasing at a fast rate, while most of them end up either fully or partially self-employed (Heian, Kleppe, and Løyland, 2015; Heian and Hjellbrekke, 2017). Therefore, there is a need to study the status of cultural crowdfunding in Norway from an artists' perspective, as a potential funding source in an increasingly competitive landscape for traditional financing.

Our analysis is based on a survey among Norway-based artists and cultural entrepreneurs. Data was collected by distributing the survey via several channels. First, we contacted members of national artists' organizations or trade unions. Second, we reached to creators, performers, and producers through a combination of targeted advertising on social media (LinkedIn and Facebook), personal inquiries to relevant contacts in our own social networks, and email inquiries to addresses collected through internet searches. Third, we invited students at universities and colleges who study arts, art management, and media production

(music, film and television). We received 170 responses, of which 126 included complete information. The latter forms the basis of the analysis.

In the remainder of the paper, we outline the origins of crowdfunding and its emerging position in digital funding and dissemination for art and cultural expression. Next, we provide a snapshot of the current position of cultural crowdfunding in Norway based on a review of research literature, media coverage and cultural policy. Later, we present findings from our survey among Norwegian artists. Our analysis takes a closer look at what differentiates artists with and without crowdfunding experience. Finally, we discuss the main findings, as well as their potential contributions and limitations.

From Subscription to Cultural Crowdfunding

Crowdfunding as a model of funding originated in the cultural and creative sectors before spreading to other industries over time (Dalla Chiesa and Handke, 2020). This may be because crowdfunding is considered a digital successor and further development of the subscription type of funding. In its original form as a model for publishing books or periodicals, subscription-based funding served as a form of collective patronage. Similar to crowdfunding, publication was dependent on a sufficient number of interested readers pre-purchasing a book or subscribing to a specified number of issues (Swords, 2017). The difference between crowdfunding and subscription is the medium, or platform, used to convey the campaign. Crowdfunding is based on the use of digital platforms, while analog media, such as newspapers and magazines in printed format, or radio, were used for subscription.

The start of cultural crowdfunding is usually dated to 1997. That year, the British band Marillion used their own website for a fundraising campaign through which around \$60,000 was collected directly from fans to finance a US tour (Hemer, 2011). At the same time as Marillion launched their campaign, sales of music records began to decline (Throsby, 2002),

which is a possible reason why the music industry was the first to adopt cultural crowdfunding. The record industry was in fact the first cultural industry in the US to suffer major turnover losses due to digitalization. The reasons were a combination of increased internet use, a gradual transition from physical (CD) to digital music formats (MP3), and illegal file sharing. Consequently, record labels had less capital to invest in new artists and releases. In response, musicians and bands began experimenting with various forms of digital financing and distribution, such as *ex ante* fundraising and *ex post facto* payment (Kappel, 2009). The latter form is “freemium” access to music in the form of digital tipping (pay what you want for downloads) combined with selling physical copies or effects directly from the artist without intermediaries. Nine Inch Nails and Radiohead used the *ex post facto* business model by offering free album downloads (*Ghosts I–IV* and *In Rainbows*, respectively), while selling physical album copies at a significant markup. The issue with *ex post facto* models is that recording and distribution expenses must be covered prior to the release. Therefore, the alternative is less attractive for artists and bands who lack access to advance funding. In contrast, the *ex ante* model, which is closer to what we today associate with reward-based crowdfunding, entails a backer providing financial support to a creator in advance of the production of, for instance, a record, book, film or computer game.

Early cultural crowdfunding platforms, such as ArtistShare (2003) and Sellaband (2006), were exclusively reserved for musicians and recording projects. The first US-based general reward-based (not industry-specific) crowdfunding platforms came with Indiegogo in 2008 and Kickstarter in 2009, where cultural and creative projects made up a large proportion of fundraising projects (Bannerman, 2013). A similar pattern of development in Europe saw early platforms (e.g., Sellaband in 2006; My Major Company in 2007) catering exclusively to musicians emerging some years before generalist platforms (e.g., Voordekunst and CrowdCulture in 2010).

A report published by the European Commission estimates that €247 million was collected in the member states through 75,000 cultural crowdfunding campaigns between 2013 and 2016 (European Commission *et al.*, 2017).¹ The average sum collected per campaign is €6,200 for reward-based and €4,000 for donation-based campaigns. The most important thing, however, is that the statistics point to a latent funding gap of over €3 billion, as the funding raised equals only 7% of a total fundraising goal of €3.4 billion. The report explains the funding gap by noting that half of the campaigns for these relatively modest initiatives fail to meet their funding targets. The large number of campaigns is an indirect result of the financial crisis and the ensuing reduction in public funding for the cultural sector in many European countries (Bonet and Sastre, 2016). The situation may also explain why, in the majority of instances, cultural crowdfunding serves as a supplement to traditional forms of funding. The numbers show that it is difficult to fill funding shortages solely through crowdfunding.

Cultural Crowdfunding in Norway

In 2022, the crowdfunding volume in Norway surpassed NOK 2 billion for the first time, representing a growth of 19% from 2021 (Shneor, 2023). However, it is the investment-based forms – which are not widely adopted in the cultural and creative industries – that are growing the fastest and account for the main share of the total volume. Non-investment-based crowdfunding accounted for only 12.8% of the 2022 volume.

In Norway, as internationally, the music industry was an early adopter of crowdfunding, while computer games and design campaigns collected the most money (Rykkja, Munim, and Bonet, 2020). Market data up to 2014 show that four of the five Norwegian campaigns with the highest fundraising were linked to the financing of computer games (Festøy, 2016).

¹ Reward-based campaigns constitute 88% of the campaign volume, while donation-based campaigns make up 8%.

There are only a few Norwegian studies on crowdfunding. As an example, an open search on idunn.no using “crowdfunding” as a search term in April 2023 returned 11 results. Most of these discuss what crowdfunding is or describe the rise of crowdfunding using international empirical evidence (Heggernes, 2016), while there has been limited research on cultural crowdfunding in Norway. Two studies (Jónasdóttir, 2019; Jónasdóttir and Bygstad, 2019) looked at Norwegian game developers’ use of crowdfunding, and crowdfunding’s value and function as a relational tool for networking and marketing. Another study (Lem, 2016) explored how crowdfunding can be used for financing “niche culture” defined as smaller cultural projects with limited market potential. Other studies discussed campaign planning, presentation, and dissemination. They showed that in order to succeed project creators should not underestimate the effort required for the campaign and effective communication with their supporters (Festøy, 2016). Moreover, a quantitative study explored the relationship between platform use and cultural crowdfunding campaigns in the Nordic countries (Rykkja, Munim, and Bonet, 2020). For Norway, two hypotheses were confirmed. First, campaign promoters of literature, music, and performing arts projects prefer to use national platforms because language or industry-specific export barriers naturally limit the campaign’s digital reach. Second, productions with higher financing needs such as computer games, feature film production, design and fashion have a preference for using international platforms.

When discussing cultural crowdfunding in Norway, it is important to consider what tradition it has for funding art and culture. Historically, the cultural and creative sector in Norway has a strong orientation toward accessing finance through public grants (Henningsen, 2015; NOU 2013: 4, 2013; Mangset *et al.*, 2008). This may have to do with cultural policy’s position as part of welfare policy. What this implies is that access to art and cultural experiences is equal to access to education and health services (Henningsen and Blomgren, 2017). A welfare policy orientation implies, according to Bakke’s document analysis of the joint program (1945),

the Labour Party's cultural program (1959), and parliamentary reports on culture (up to St.meld 61 1991-92), a special governmental responsibility for cultural funding (Bakke, 2001). Market elements, in the form of supplementing public funding with private sources, was first discussed and introduced with St. meld. 23 1981-82 Cultural policy for the 1980s. The emphasis on private funding is formulated more explicitly in the latest white papers on culture (2002 and 2019) (Meld. St. 48 (2002-2003); Meld. St. 8 (2018-2019)). The rhetoric does not, however, change the fundamental features of cultural funding. The Norwegian financing model, as in the other Nordic countries, is still characterized by a high element of public subsidies, a low element of private financial support, a weak tradition of commercial sponsorship and a cultural sector that is skeptical of market solutions (Mangset *et al.*, 2008).

In the government papers and reports, crowdfunding was first mentioned in the action plan "From entrepreneur to cultural enterprise" as a tool to reach supporters and stakeholders who can invest their own money in a project, e.g., a feature film (Kommunal- og regionaldepartementet *et al.*, 2013). The document does not refer to the earlier use of limited partnership financing – which is similar to equity-based crowdfunding – to finance around twenty Norwegian feature films in the 1980s (Helseth, 2020). In the 1980s, rising production costs and stricter requirements for self-financing in order to access public loans prompted the Norwegian film industry to adopt a model for obtaining risk capital, earlier used in the shipbuilding industry. This model is based on the injection of capital into a limited partnership (similar to a stock-based company) by private investors (limited partners) to finance a project (in this case a film production) in exchange for an ownership stake. The ownership share afforded the limited partners advantageous tax deductions for the total costs of production, including government subsidies. The scheme was widely used between 1985 to 1987, but was discontinued when the rules for tax deductions were changed in 1987.

More recently, the Gift Reinforcement Scheme for monetary gifts to arts and cultural activities in museums, music, literature, performing arts, visual arts and cultural venues emerged as a useful public funding intervention. The scheme was founded on a mechanism for public grants known as “reverse matching grants” (Schuster, 1989). The underlying principle is that the government allocates an annual budget. Artists and organizations that have received private funding were able to apply to the fund and expect to receive a proportional share (for example from 1:1 to 1:4) of additional public funding. Precisely for this reason, the model is described as a “reactive” public reinforcement scheme, as the public subsidies follow private investments. In Norway, the applicant received an automatic public grant of 25% of the value of a private gift, provided the amount was over NOK 100,000 and the nature of the gift matched the scheme’s criteria. However, the introduction of the program was contested and proved to be highly partisan as a policy intervention. The scheme, initially implemented by a conservative coalition government (2013–2021) was terminated by the subsequent Labour-Centre Party government. According to Culture Minister Anette Trettebergstuen, the justification was that public funding should not be allocated based on an ability to attract private capital. Despite the somewhat contentious nature of the scheme, it is unlikely that the criteria would have actually permitted crowdfunded projects to receive gift reinforcement. This is inferred from the fact that no crowdfunded projects received grants from the scheme.

Norwegian Artists’ Use of Cultural Crowdfunding

Over the years, a number of studies in Norway² and internationally have been conducted in efforts to measure artists’ income or employment situation (Throsby, 1994; Menger, 1999;

² Some of these characteristics are also evident in the survey of artists’ income carried out in Norway at irregular intervals (2006, 2013, and 2019). However, due to methodological differences it is difficult to compare the findings of the studies. The latest report (cf. Kleppe and Askvik, 2023, p. 122) acknowledges this. However, a positive finding for artists is that percentage increase in income over time for a majority of categories is higher than for the population in general. Still, this does not take away from the fact that income for many artists on average is lower than for workers with a similar education.

Mangset *et al.*, 2018; Askvik, Jacobsen, and Kleppe, 2022; Feder and Woronkowitz, 2022). These studies tend to concur that a generic socio-demographic profile of artists and cultural entrepreneurs are that they are well-educated, urban-dwelling professionals who earn, on average, less than other individuals with a comparable level of education. In many instances, it is difficult to find permanent or fixed employment. Artists are frequently forced into self-employment as a result of having to balance multiple artistic and non-artistic occupations throughout their careers. Due to the fact that artists do not define “success” solely in terms of monetary profits, they share a passion for independence and non-routine work with entrepreneurs in general. Last, it is difficult to discuss general conditions because there are substantial context-dependent differences and variations between artist types and industry classifications.

These challenging conditions related to work and income situation of artists make cultural crowdfunding even more important. There is however little previous research on the role of artists as campaign promoters, and there is a need for better understanding of artists’ attitudes toward crowdfunding. To explore the use of cultural crowdfunding among artists, the current study takes a starting point in Ajzen’s theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991). According to this theory, the best predictor of behavior is the intention to engage in it, and that such intentions are influenced by the person’s attitudes toward the behavior, their perceived behavioral control over their ability to engage in the behavior, and the extent to which the behavior is encouraged by a close social circle manifested in subjective norms. Specifically, following recommendations in earlier research, we distinguish between perceived behavior control (perception about control over behavioral choices) and self-efficacy (perception about own skills and capabilities).

Such an approach is in line with earlier research on the adoption of crowdfunding by fundraisers more generally (i.e., not specifically within the cultural and creative industries).

Here, a study in Iran revealed that skeptical attitudes toward crowdfunding (attitudes), lack of crowdfunding knowledge and skills (self-efficacy), and low uptake by other organizations in the industry (subjective norms) were all barriers to the adoption of crowdfunding (Bagheri, Chitsazan, and Koolaji, 2020). On the other hand, several studies have suggested that positive attitudes such as those associated with expectations for enhancing brand awareness, extending network circles, and achieving market validations were positively linked with the adoption of crowdfunding in various businesses (Estrin, Gozman, and Khavul, 2018; Junge, Laursen, and Nielsen, 2022).

Moreover, to these we have added aspects specifically related to creative and artistic work, including the extent to which the artist considers their work to be disruptive or non-conventional, as well as the extent to which the artist already has a fanbase of dedicated followers via social media. Non-conventional works, i.e., works that are considered to be innovative or ground-breaking within their respective fields (Becker, 1974), are often associated with greater reliance on public funding, while more conventional works rely more on ticket sales and business sponsorships (O'Hagan and Neligan, 2005; Pompe, Tamburri, and Munn, 2011). In crowdfunding, it remains unclear whether conventionality may increase the use of crowdfunding due to broad appeal or whether the internet allows the scaling of niche interests in non-conventional works into a sufficient funding base. The size of an online fanbase reflects the importance of an artist's habit and experience with engaging fans and developing a following through social media interaction. In other words, having many followers constitutes a factor that can explain campaign success (Davidson and Poor, 2015; Davidson and Poor, 2016), often associated with notions of developing stronger and wider social capital.

However, and unlike earlier studies, we focus on identifying the extent to which artists who have used crowdfunding, and those who have not, differ with respect to the various

antecedents, both those adopted from the theory of planned behavior and those incorporated for better contextualization in the cultural and creative sectors.

Data Collection

To explore what affects artists' adoption of crowdfunding, we conducted a web survey among practicing artists in Norway. In the absence of a comprehensive country-wide list of artists, we reached prospective respondents by tapping into the mailing lists of relevant artist associations, targeted advertising via LinkedIn and Facebook, manual search for contacts on relevant online industry listings, as well as by reaching out to relevant contacts in our own social and professional networks. We reached a total of 547 potential respondents from the culture and creative industries in Norway who opened the survey, but only 203 initiated a response, a retention rate of about 37%. After removing the incomplete responses, 127 observations remained for analysis, a response rate of about 23%.

The majority of the respondents reported having knowledge of crowdfunding (73.23%). About 54.33% of the respondents were female and 45.67% male. About 85% of the respondents have a bachelor's or master's degree. The respondents work as artists and cultural entrepreneurs, and represent different types of creative and performing activities. Music is the most heavily represented activity with 57 respondents (45% of the sample). Note that the respondents were able to identify themselves as working in multiple industries. For instance, the first respondent represents three categories: performing arts, visual arts, and television and radio. In the survey, we listed 12 cultural categories and 'other' as the 13th alternative. Figure 1 presents a detailed overview of the percentage of respondents representing 12 cultural categories.

Insert Figure 1 about here

In terms of employment status, the majority of the respondents in our sample are employed – 25% fully employed at an organization and 22% fully self-employed. About 33% of the respondents are partially employed. Again, the percentage adds up to more than 100 as 17 respondents had more than one employment status.

Insert Figure 2 about here

In the questionnaire, we used a multiple-items measurement for the latent constructs. These were mostly adapted from previous studies (see Table 1 for details). The scale for all questions runs from 1 to 7, where answer option 1 corresponds to “strongly disagree” or “to a very small extent” and 7 indicates “strongly agree” or “to a very large extent.” A score equal to 4.00 corresponds to a neutral (neither/or) value. The same scale is used for all variables, with the exception of gender, followers on social media (categories), and professional experience (number of years).

Insert Table 1 about here

Data Analysis and Results

Funding sources for artistic and cultural projects. To begin with, we analyzed the funding sources that artists use for their artistic or cultural projects and how they themselves evaluate the ease of access to these sources. The eleven different categories are shown in Figure 3, which also displays the average score for use (blue circle) and perceived ease of access (orange circle) for all funding sources. The majority uses various combinations of self-financing and public grants in line with what earlier studies have found about the use of private funding sources

(NOU 2013: 4, 2013; Borgar Hansen *et al.*, 2010). The findings otherwise show significant discrepancies between self-perceived degree of ease of access and actual use. Only for self-financing is there a close match between perceived availability and actual use of funding sources (scores 3.91 and 3.80 respectively).

Insert Figure 3 about here

A surprising finding is that family and friends score low on actual use (2.00 for use and 4.64 for access). Surveys in Sweden show that 25 percent of artists have received funding from family or friends at one point in time (Myndigheten för kulturanalys, 2013). In the international crowdfunding literature, early support from friends and family during a campaign is also considered a factor contributing to success as it signals popularity and quality to people who are considering supporting the campaign, but do not know the campaign promoter or the project themselves (Shneor and Vik, 2020). Furthermore, a recent study of cultural crowdfunding in Iceland has revealed that pre-existing relations contribute to a greater extent than previously unknown backers, and that those that have stronger relations with the fundraiser make higher contributions (Shneor, Zhao, and Goedecke, 2023).

Comparison of artists with and without crowdfunding experience. To understand the effect of crowdfunding experience, the respondents were divided into two groups depending on whether they had (N: 34) or did not have (N: 93) previous experience with crowdfunding. The characteristics of the groups were then compared using mean comparison analyses. Table 2 presents the results.

Insert Table 2 about here

The findings show no significant differences between the groups related to gender, years of professional experience, or use of funding sources.

However, we find several significant differences. The artists who have tried crowdfunding have higher social capital – more followers on social media – which is identified in the literature as an important success factor for crowdfunding (Shneor and Vik, 2020). It is therefore not surprising that artists with larger social networks choose to run a campaign. Moreover, one of the benefits of crowdfunding is increased exposure (Belleflamme, Lambert, and Schwienbacher, 2014) and “word of mouth” buzz (Lehner, 2013), which at the end will lead to further expansion of one’s base of followers.

The results also show that the artists with crowdfunding experience define their artistic practice as more unconventional. One of the reasons might be that digital platforms and networks make it easier to reach out to various niche audiences with an interest in narrower art expressions, while reaching critical scale thanks to digital access. Furthermore, unconventional artists are also more used to working hard to gain acceptance and attention for their work. This effort may have contributed to building up communication and marketing skills through time, which can be particularly beneficial in running a crowdfunding campaign and may assuage concerns about engaging in such practices as part of the crowdfunding process.

Finally, it seems that attitudes toward crowdfunding, subjective norms, self-efficacy and perceived behavioral control are stronger among respondents with crowdfunding experience compared to those without. This particularly applies to positive attitudes in the closest social circle (subjective norms) and belief in one’s own abilities and skills (self-efficacy). These insights may be indirectly linked to earlier research (Davidson and Poor, 2015) highlighting the value of an extroverted personality when it comes to presenting oneself to others, as required in crowdfunding practice.

Discussion

The current paper explores cultural crowdfunding in Norway, while focusing on the fundraiser perspective. While unlikely to replace traditional funding sources, cultural crowdfunding represents a potential complement to existing ones. As a supplementary fundraising channel for the cultural and creative sectors, cultural crowdfunding warrants attention from researchers and practitioners. Its novelty has led some to claim that cultural crowdfunding may, to a certain extent, alter some of the fundamental practices of traditional, private, and public funding models (Bonet and Sastre, 2016; Bernard and Gazel, 2018) and the artist's perception of their role and position within systems of cultural production. Specifically, cultural crowdfunding provides access to funding directly from audiences alongside other benefits such as valuable and timely feedback about concepts under development (Gerber *et al.*, 2012), legitimation (Frydrych *et al.*, 2014), and market access without negotiating or collaborating with traditional intermediaries, e.g., record companies, book publishers, film and game studios (Kappel, 2009; Barbieri *et al.*, 2019).

The international research therefore makes a point – which appears less clearly in the Norwegian literature – that artists can use cultural crowdfunding to work “on the side” of the established industry structures and production systems. Supporters of this view believe that the platform will be a “new” intermediary replacing the record company, the publisher or public funds as financiers by raising money directly from the public. In other words, cultural crowdfunding is positioned as a “space of opportunity” that opens up new, network-driven ways of working (Bannerman, 2013). The positive effect that comes with cultural crowdfunding is that it lowers the threshold for trying to finance projects.

The question that this literature illuminates to a lesser extent is who will make use of cultural crowdfunding (Dalla Chiesa and Dekker, 2021). Positioning and maneuvering on

crowdfunding platforms require skills that are slightly off-center of the basic competence of artists. In crowdfunding, artists become entrepreneurial project promoters and perform downstream activities (financing, sales, marketing, and management) they may lack time, competences, or interest in performing (D'Amato, 2016). At the same time, it provides audiences with an outlet to influence the production of artistic meaning (Galuszka and Brzozowska, 2017). However, while some artists feel capable and willing to adopt cultural crowdfunding based on their wish for producing disruptive work or independence (ibid.), this freedom is not necessarily a solution for all (Davidson and Poor, 2015).

Nevertheless, our findings confirm that more favorable attitudes toward crowdfunding, subjective norms, self-efficacy and perceived behavioral control are exhibited at higher levels among artists with crowdfunding experience compared to those without it, which indicates that when assessing expected outcomes from campaigns favorably, experiencing support from peers and social circles as well as having a sense of ability to engage in crowdfunding are both associated with its adoption. In this sense, our findings provide support to earlier research on barriers and drivers of crowdfunding adoption in other industries and national contexts (e.g., Bagheri, Chitsazan, and Koolaji, 2020; Estrin, Gozman, and Khavul, 2018; Junge, Laursen, and Nielsen, 2022). Accordingly, creating such favorable conditions may be of interest for players in both the cultural and crowdfunding industries.

Furthermore, the findings from our survey confirm this. The artists with crowdfunding experience differ from the ones without experience in that they have higher social capital (more followers on social media) and experience their own artistic activities as more unconventional. Nevertheless, on a general basis, it is not likely that crowdfunding has changed or will change the art funding system in Norway. The respondents indicate that they use the same combination of funding sources that the other Norwegian studies (e.g., Heian and Hjellbrekke, 2017) find: public funding and self-financing.

Finally, from a wider policy perspective it may be worth considering the legitimacy of cultural crowdfunding in Norway. The position of crowdfunding in a country is usually evaluated by the spread and number of operational platforms, existing regulations, and historical usage patterns (Dushnitsky *et al.*, 2016). Here, the situation for cultural crowdfunding in Norway differs from other countries. The use of cultural crowdfunding in Norway as of today is still marginal. Investment-based forms of crowdfunding are growing, while there are only a few, small cultural crowdfunding platforms. At the same time, the window of opportunity for easy money via cultural crowdfunding is closing, and success requires hard work in heavy competition for a larger but also more experienced audience (Festøy, 2016). As long as Norway has good public subsidy schemes, it will probably take time to establish crowdfunding as an alternative. One in five respondents in the current survey had no earlier knowledge of crowdfunding, and it is reasonable to assume that simply knowing about crowdfunding may not imply knowing how to actually use it effectively and responsibly.

Conclusion

To change the position of cultural crowdfunding, our findings suggest some implications for anyone wishing to encourage crowdfunding uptake by players in the cultural and creative industries, whether they be crowdfunding platforms driven by own economic interests, or public cultural authorities that wish to extend the scope and scale of cultural production in their respective communities. Here, efforts may be directed toward improving communication about the benefits of crowdfunding for artists in particular, as well as the promotion and profiling of success cases. Such actions may serve both to enhance favorable attitudes through inspiration, as well as to signal social approval for crowdfunding practice.

Platforms may more effectively engage in recruiting artists to use their services, when targeting artists already engaged in communicating with their fanbase on social media.

Furthermore, they can direct their product development efforts to help artists better tap and mobilize their existing fanbases, while extending them in parallel. These efforts are likely to translate into more favorable attitudes toward crowdfunding overall.

Finally, endorsement of crowdfunding by governments at various levels may increase its uptake. Such endorsement can come in the form of offering educational training in crowdfunding practice to the artist communities. Alternatively, cultural agencies and funding organizations may incorporate crowdfunding into policy and market development discussions, as well as certain policy implementation programs (i.e., match-funding programs, etc.). Such efforts are likely to result in more favorable attitudes toward crowdfunding as well as serve as an important signal of social acceptance.

Implications for Research

While our study provides interesting and theoretically anchored insights, it presents the first steps toward understanding the crowdfunding use by actors in the cultural and creative industries. Future studies are encouraged to verify our findings in different national contexts characterized by different cultural funding policies and environments, as well as different maturity levels of the crowdfunding industry. Such efforts will test the scope and limitations of generalizability of our findings.

Other efforts should be directed toward further development of understanding of cultural crowdfunding. Such approaches may either suggest other factors related to cultural and artistic production that can influence the antecedents of the theory of planned behavior, and consequentially artists' crowdfunding intentions and behavior. Here, it may be particularly valuable to trace what impacts artists' positive attitudes toward crowdfunding, or what impacts those surrounding them to encourage artists to use crowdfunding. These may include issues of preferences for autonomy/independence (Banks, 2010), levels of emotionality and affect

intensity (Botella, Zenasni, and Lubart, 2015), etc. It may also be valuable to consider other theoretical frameworks that aim to explain the adoption of crowdfunding, which may include (but are not limited to) the Technology Acceptance Model (Venkatesh and Davis, 2000) or self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan, 1985), to name a few.

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Figure 1. Number of respondents by cultural industry categories.

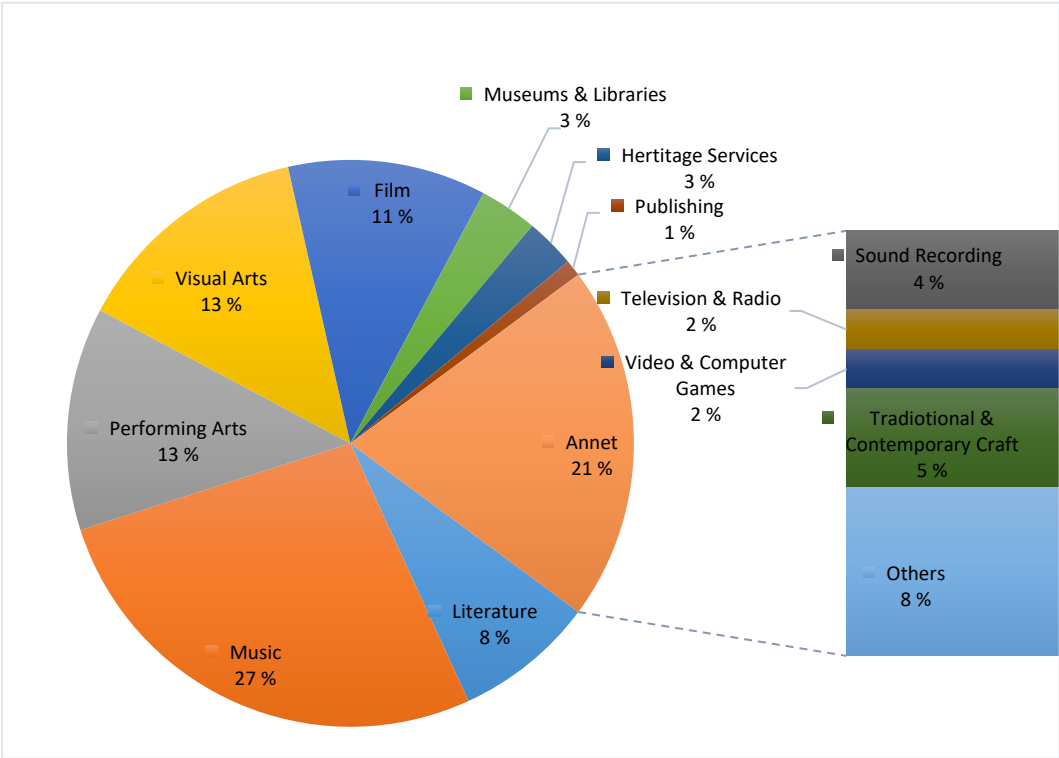


Figure 2. Respondents' employment status.

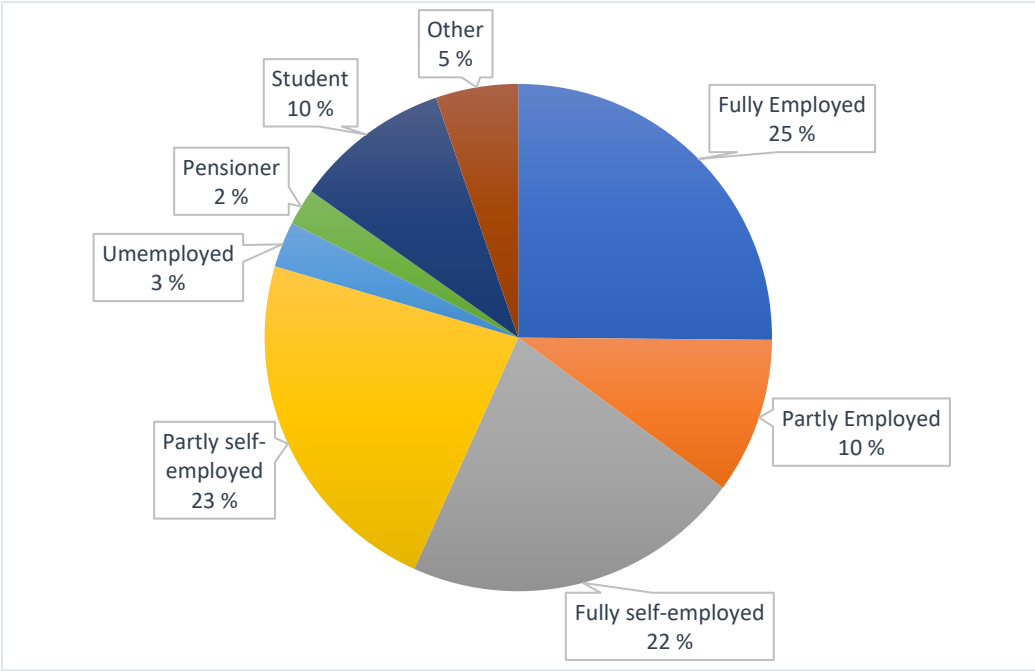


Figure 3. The discrepancy between sources of funding and easiness to access.

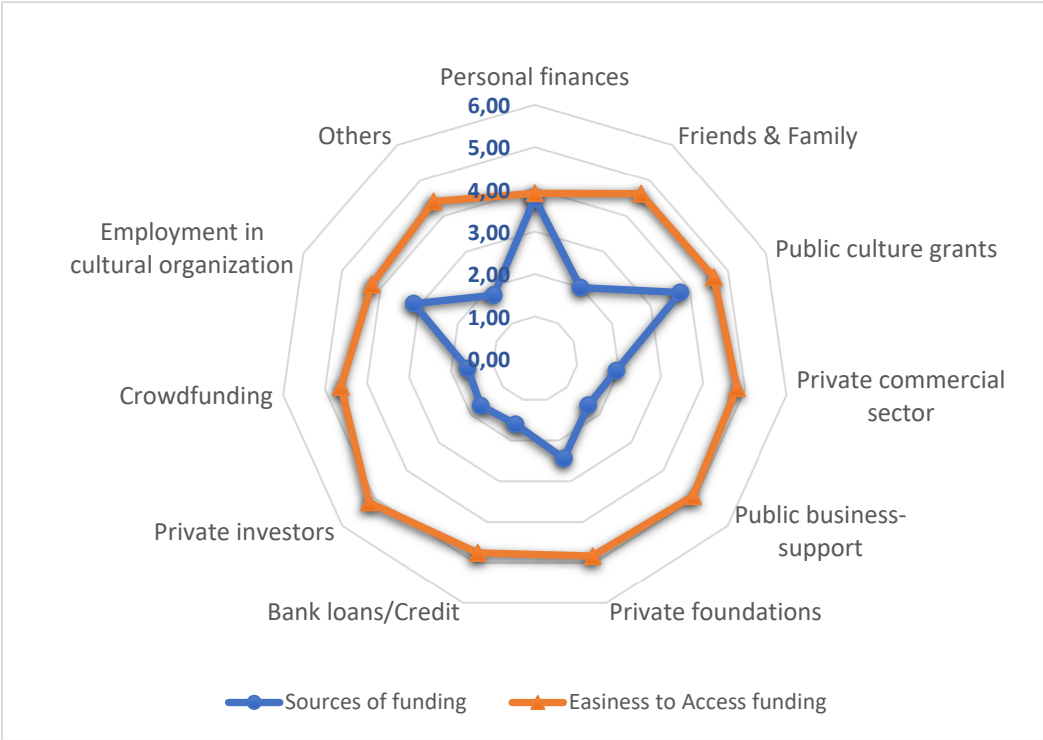


Table 1. Operationalization of measurement items.

Variable	Measurement items	References
Subjective norms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who are important to me think that I should run crowdfunding campaigns. • People who influence my behavior encourage me to run crowdfunding campaigns. • My colleagues think that I should run crowdfunding campaigns. • My friends think that I should run crowdfunding campaigns. 	Adapted from Hsu and Lin (2008) and Hsu et al. (2006)
Perceived behavioral control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My engagement in running crowdfunding campaigns is within my control. • I would be able to run crowdfunding campaigns (if I wanted to). • The decision to run crowdfunding campaigns is entirely mine. • Whether or not I run crowdfunding campaigns is entirely up to me. • I very much feel that whether I run or don't run crowdfunding campaigns is beyond my control. 	Adapted from Casaló et al. (2010) and Hsu et al. (2006)
Self-efficacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have confidence in my ability to run crowdfunding campaigns. • I have the expertise needed to run crowdfunding campaigns. • I am confident in my ability to navigate and use crowdfunding platforms' websites. • I am confident in my ability to run campaigns through crowdfunding platforms' websites. • I have sufficient knowledge in order to run crowdfunding campaigns 	Adapted from Cheung and Lee (2012) and Hsu and Chiu (2004)
Attitude towards running a cultural crowdfunding campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think I would like to run a crowdfunding campaign. • I am likely to feel good about running a crowdfunding campaign. • I think running crowdfunding campaigns is good for me. • I think running crowdfunding campaigns is appropriate for me. • I think running crowdfunding campaigns is beneficial for me. • I have a positive opinion about running crowdfunding campaigns. 	Adapted from Hsu and Lin (2008) and Hsu et al. (2006)
Intention to run a cultural crowdfunding campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given the chance, I intend to launch a crowdfunding campaign. 	Adapted from Pavlou (2003) and Algesheimer et al. (2005)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given the chance, I predict that I would run a crowdfunding campaign in the future. • It is likely that I will launch a crowdfunding campaign in the near future. • I have the intention to launch a crowdfunding campaign. • I intend to actively manage a crowdfunding campaign. 	
Degree of disruptiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In my opinion, my artistic or cultural projects during the past 5 years have been unconventional. • My artistic or cultural projects rarely introduce elements that are unconventional in nature. • During the past 5 years, the artistic or cultural projects that I introduced were very attractive to a different audience segment compared to my past projects. • My artistic or cultural projects do not strive to introduce unconventional elements. • I consider my artistic or cultural projects to represent unconventional elements. • I often use unconventional elements in my artistic or cultural projects. 	Adapted from Govindarajan and Kopalle (2006)
Followers in social media	Number of followers/friends/fans following artistic or cultural work on social media (e.g., Facebook page, Twitter account, Instagram, YouTube channel, Snapchat, etc.).	
Funding sources	<p>To what extent have you relied on the following sources of funding for your artistic or cultural project work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal finances/savings (including employment in other sectors). • Friends and family. • Public culture grants (e.g., municipality, county and national grant schemes such as Art Council). • Public business-support schemes (e.g., Innovation Norway). • Private commercial sector (e.g., record companies, book publishers, festival organizers, galleries, film producers, etc.). • Private foundations (e.g., gifts from banks, philanthropic organizations, etc.). 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bank loans/credit. • Private investors. • Crowdfunding • Employment in a cultural organization (e.g., theatre, opera, orchestra, TV channels, etc.) 	
Ease of getting funding	<p>To what extent is it easy for you to access funding from the following sources for your artistic or cultural project work? The same sources as in the previous question.</p>	
Professional experience	<p>Number of years of work experience in arts and culture sector:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 • 1 to 3 • 4 to 6 • 7 to 10 • More than 10 	

Table 2. Differences between artists with and without experience of cultural crowdfunding.

Variables	Artists with experience of cultural crowdfunding	Artists without experience of cultural crowdfunding.	Significant differences between the groups
Gender	Males: 16 Females: 18	Males: 42 Females: 51	No
Years of professional experience as an artist	4 years	4.06 years	No
Degree of access to own funds	3.59	3.87	No
Degree of access to commercial funds	2.32	1.81	No
Degree of access to business grants (e.g., Innovation Norway)	1.91	1.58	No
Degree of access to cultural grants (e.g., the Art Council)	3.94	3.72	No
Number of followers in social media	ca. 501–1000	ca. 101–500	Yes
Own perception of whether artistic practice is conventional or unconventional	4.8235	4.4247	Yes
Subjective norms, i.e., the belief that significant others will approve and support an artist’s decision to run a crowdfunding campaign	3.9265	2.9624	Yes
Perceived behavioral control, i.e., the perception of the level control in enacting a crowdfunding campaign	5.6397	5.1022	Yes
Self-efficacy, i.e., artist’s confidence in being able to carry out a crowdfunding campaign	5.3941	4.3699	Yes
Positive attitude towards running a cultural crowdfunding campaign	4.1691	3.6371	Yes
Intention to run a cultural crowdfunding campaign	4.6118	3.4237	Yes