

REGIONAL EXHIBITION TOURING BOOST

Regional Galleries Mapping & Needs Analysis Project

Initial Report April 2019

Steering group:

Kim Jameson (Chairperson), ART ON THE MOVE
Olivia Nichols, ART ON THE MOVE
Grace Traeger, ART ON THE MOVE
James Davies, Art Gallery of Western Australia
Fiona Sinclair, GalleriesWest
Julian Bowron, GalleriesWest
Kirstie Davies, WALGA
Anne Robertson, Public Galleries Association Victoria



GALLERIESWEST



Government of Western Australia

Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries
Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development

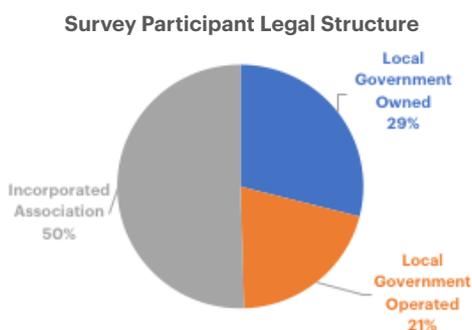
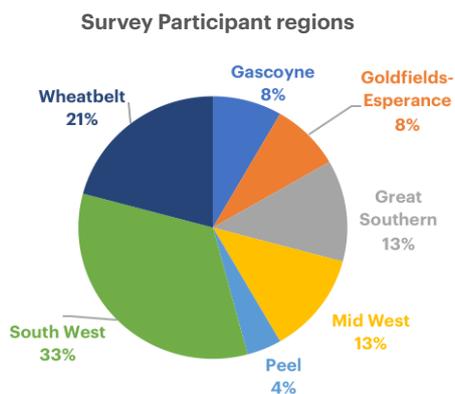
This project has been made possible through the Regional Exhibition Touring Boost managed by the Department of Local Government Sport and Cultural Industries, supported by Royalties for Regions and delivered in partnership by ART ON THE MOVE and the Art Gallery of Western Australia

ART ON THE MOVE would like to acknowledge Australia's First Peoples as the traditional custodians of this land and we pay our respects to the Elders both past, present and future for their unique contribution to the cultural life of communities across Australia. ART ON THE MOVE is supported by the State Government through the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Regional Galleries Mapping & Needs Analysis Project is an integral part of the Regional Exhibition Touring Boost (RETB). The aim of the RETB is to share Western Australian culture more widely within Western Australia and attract visitors, by touring more high-quality visual arts exhibitions. This includes providing advice, professional development, expertise and meaningful life-long learning and employment opportunities.

The data obtained from this project will help gather insight into the public gallery sector in Regional WA. Key issues identified from the sector will inform how best to improve access to the states collection managed by AGWA and increase touring of exhibitions to regional communities. The results collected will also be used to articulate and advocate the value of public galleries for potential investment needs to our Local, State and Federal investors.



METHODOLOGY

The survey was delivered through Survey Monkey and composed of 52 questions in relation to the gallery's governance, resourcing and capacity, programming, collections, facilities and equipment, redevelopment plans. The survey questions were developed in consultation with a cross organisational steering group and with reference to surveys delivered by national peer organisations, facility reports from major national & international galleries, and the National Standards for Museums and Galleries. The final survey was pilot tested with a select number of venues for feedback on content and functionality before being sent out to the full list for a 3-week data collection period.

The survey was delivered to 52 venues that were identified as a regional public gallery in WA. The participating venues are from across all regions of WA and of varying different sizes, functions and legal structures.

NOTES

- The survey was delivered to 52 venues, 36 venues partially completed the survey up to question 10 and 22 venues fully completed it.
- This report is based on the usable data from 36 venues, this is a small data set so large differences in percentages can represent only a small difference in the number of galleries.
- Whilst the survey was setup so as many questions as possible were compulsory for the participants to answer there are some anomalies with this functionality. This has resulted in gaps in the data where participants haven't fully completed their answers in the case of a multiple choice or ranking system.
- Questions asking for very specific information about the gallery (e.g building size, income, visitor stats) were largely answered in approximations or not at all. This data hasn't been reviewed in this report as it needs further investigation with the participants.
- When analysing the data from this survey there is no comparative existing set of accredited standards pertaining to the areas reported on regarding gallery capacity. The closest comparative document is the facility reports of the major Australian galleries and museums which reflects the conditions within their buildings. The high standards referenced are around specific and tightly controlled temperature and humidity levels, specific lux light levels (all which require a lot of technology to be in place), and stringent security measures and building envelope conditions. Largely these standards would not be met by regional public galleries in WA.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

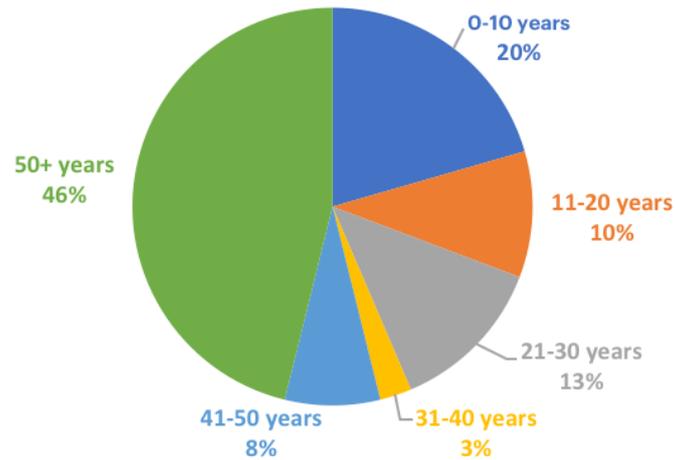
Initial analysis of the survey data reveals some key points that begin to demonstrate the capacity of WA regional public galleries and highlights their greatest areas of need for support and investment. Largely it shows that there is a professional sector operating with a volunteer infrastructure, without fundamental exhibition presentation equipment, and without a baseline understanding of their overall building and capacity. The current set of data is not completely clean or comprehensive due to the capacity and functionality of this initial stage of survey delivery, however the key findings in this report are based on clear results where significantly high or low percentages appeared which articulate without further analysis clear gaps in venue capacity.

KEY FINDINGS

1. 46% of participating venues have a building that is over 50 years old
2. 73% of unpaid/volunteer staff across all roles of participating venues
3. 48-69% of staff have never completed any relevant training to gallery management & operation
4. Curatorial and Governance training ranked the most desired training for participating venues
5. 73% of participating venues don't have a facility report
6. 77% of participating venues don't have the equipment to monitor temperature and humidity
7. On average 56% of participating venues don't own core AV equipment
8. Conservation advice overwhelmingly ranked greatest need in collection management for participating venues
9. Operational budget overwhelmingly ranked as greatest need for participating venues

1. BUILDING AGE

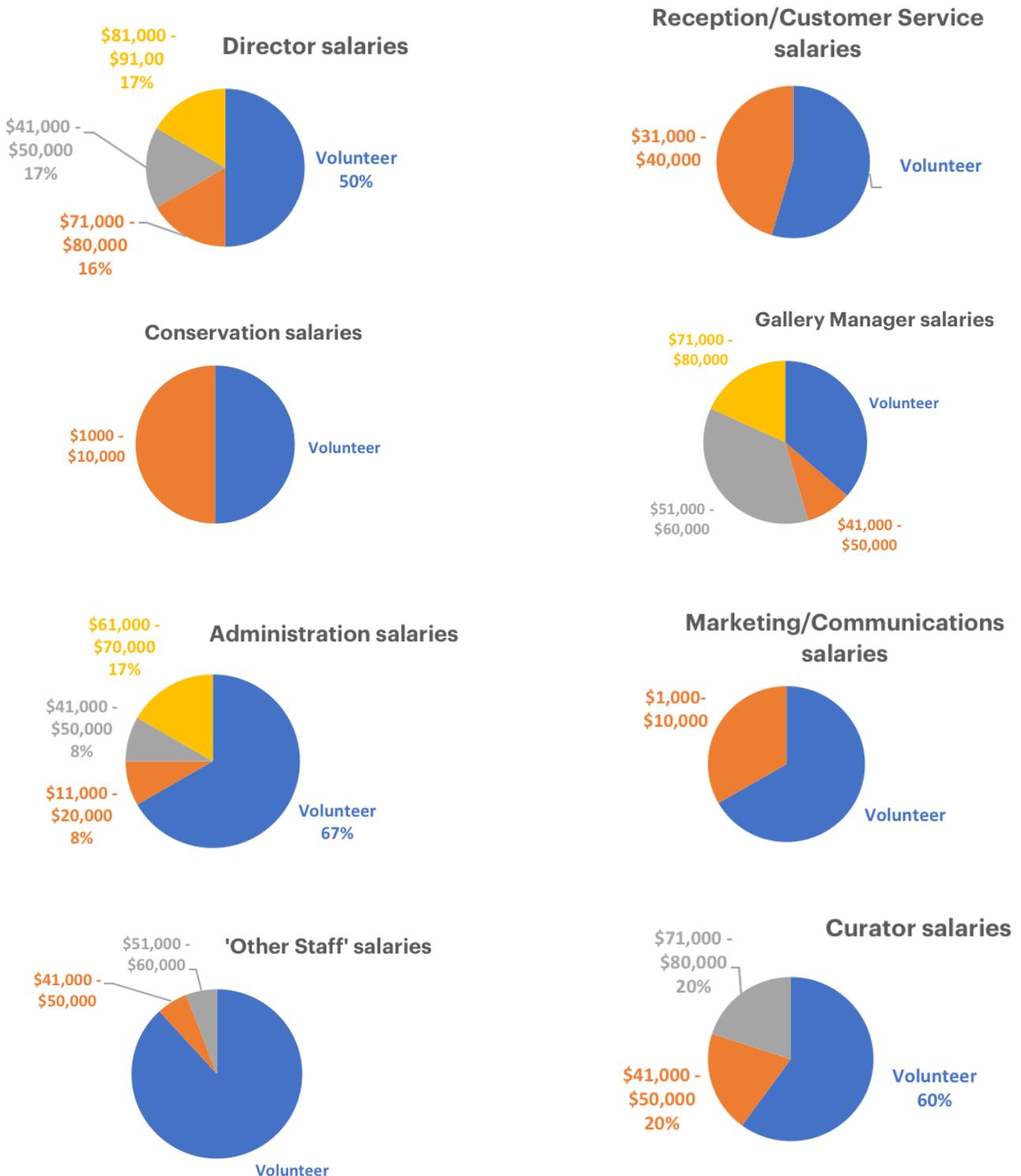
Nearly half of the survey participants reported having buildings that were over 50 years old, and 20% reported buildings that are 0-10 years old. This suggests that regional public galleries in WA are mostly in two categories, new developments with new infrastructure in place or historical buildings with significant maintenance needs. 60% of survey participants that are planning redevelopment in next 5 years answered that it was due to an ageing building.



2. VOLUNTEER STAFF

100% of staff in the following positions were reported as employed on an unpaid volunteer basis: Deputy Director, Business Development/Fundraising, Registration/Collection Management, Public Programming, Education, Install.

Across other roles the survey participants reported both paid and unpaid staff, mostly over 50% volunteer staff in all roles. In total there is a very high percentage (73%) of unpaid volunteers in key roles, this demonstrates that the regional public gallery sector is a professional sector largely running on a volunteer basis. A total pool of over 500 volunteers was reported by the participating venues. There is also a lack of specialised staff reflected in these results, in tandem with this 70% of participating venues reported being in a mixed-use building and organisation which could contribute to this lack of specific gallery management roles.

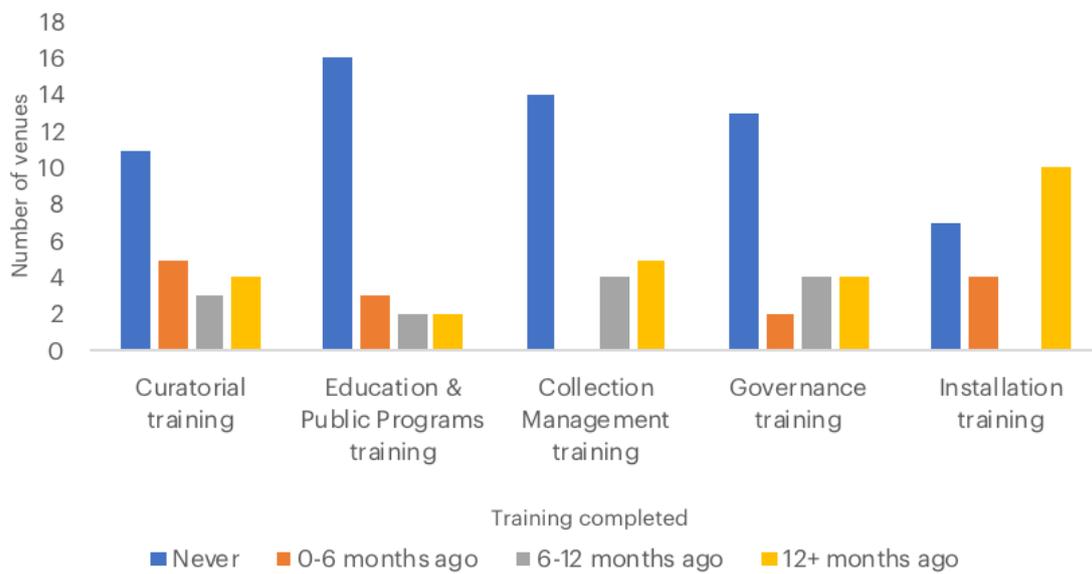


3-4. STAFF TRAINING

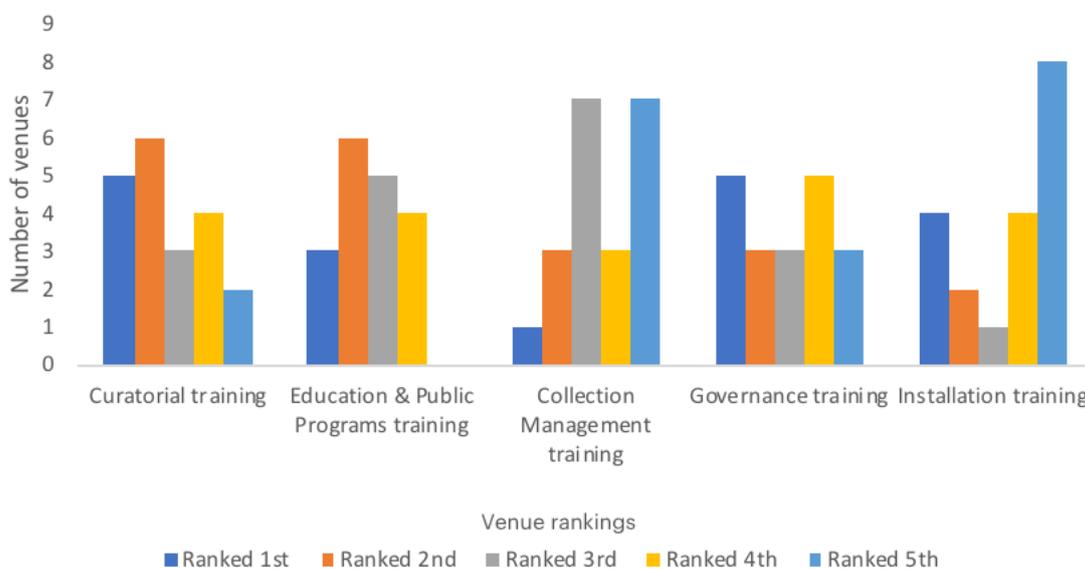
In all areas other than installation, 48-69% reported that their staff had never completed relevant training. Installation training shows slightly higher results with 66% completing the training (largely 12+ months ago), and only 30% never completing. When asked about the importance of training to venues, 55% ranked curatorial as most important, 27% ranked governance training as most important, and 32% ranked education and public programs training as the second most important. Installation was overall ranked as the least important which is interesting in light of the percentage of staff completing mostly installation training.

Overall this indicates a workforce of minimally trained staff in relevant areas and most training being around installation, it also demonstrates a need for and interest in other forms of training to support gallery operation and management.

Staff Training History

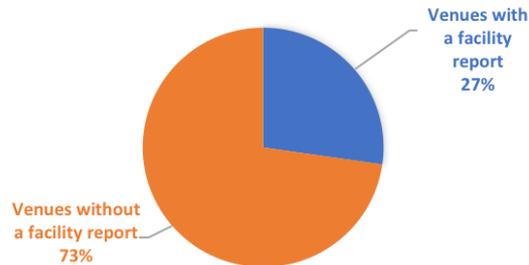


Training ranked by importance to venue



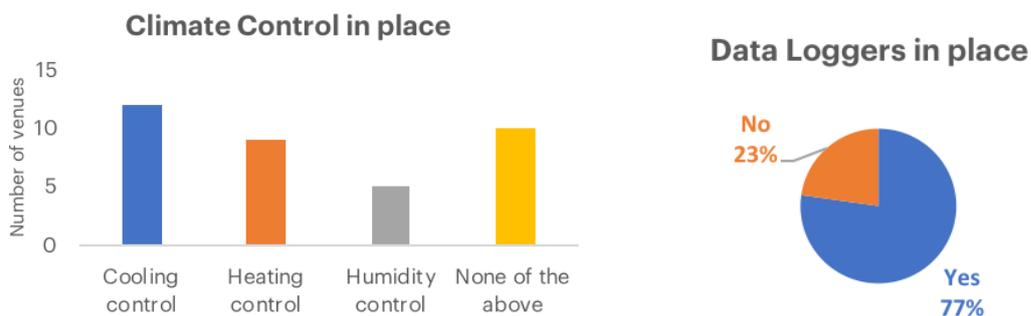
5. FACILITY REPORTS

73% of survey participants reported that their venue did not have a facility report, of the 27% that do have a facility report half have updated in in the last 2 years. This demonstrates that across the regional public gallery sector in WA there is a low level of knowledge and records in place of their building and it's capacity.



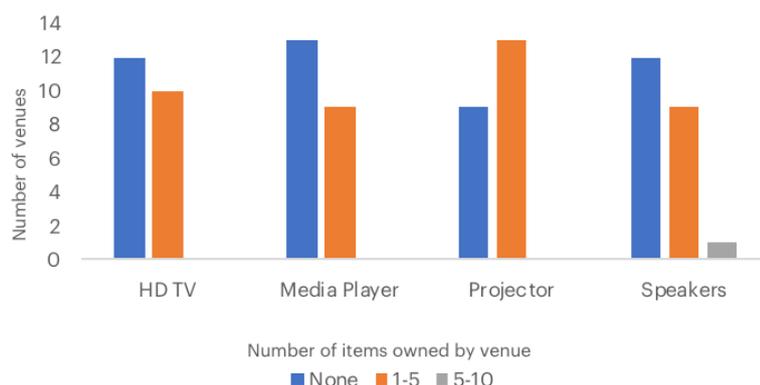
6. CLIMATE CONTROL

54% of survey participants reported they had cooling control in place in their gallery, and 45% reported having no climate control in place. 41% of venues that have climate control reported having data loggers with an overall 77% of participating venues without data loggers. These results highlight the high number of regional public galleries in WA that do not have the capacity to control climate in order to protect and preserve the state of artworks. Among those who are able to control their climate monitoring of these levels is minimal.



7. AV EQUIPMENT

On average 56% of participating venues don't own any key AV equipment for their gallery. This indicates the low capacity of regional public galleries in WA to present digital artworks without support in the form of equipment loans from exhibiting artists or touring organisations.

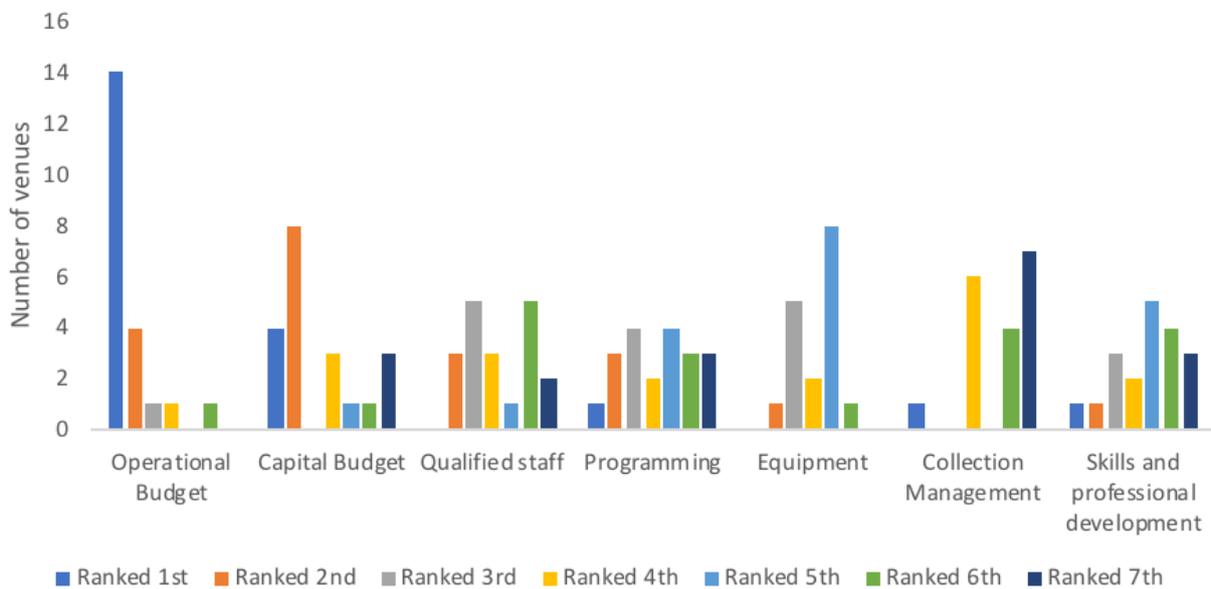


8-9. AREAS OF NEED

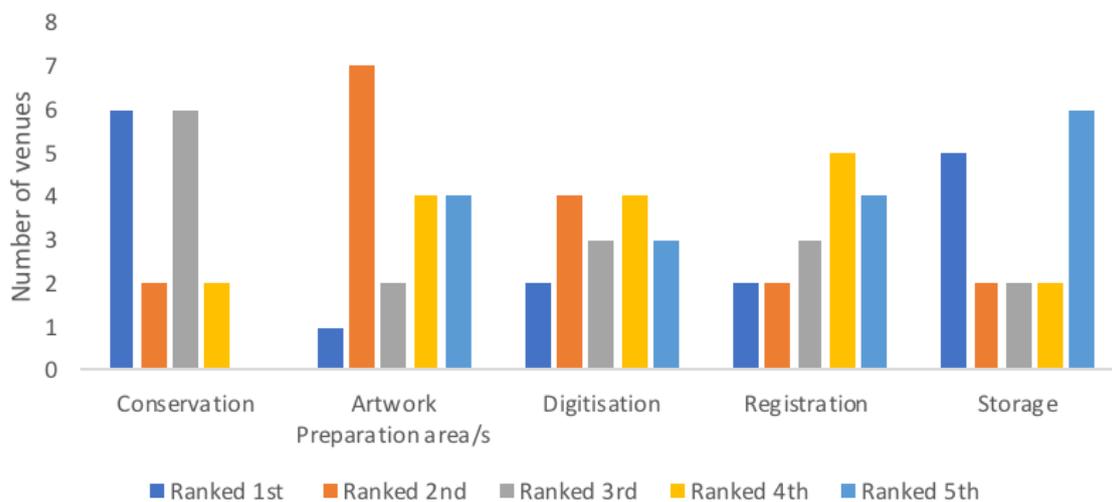
70% of survey participants ranked operational budget as the greatest area of need for their gallery, with capital budget ranked by 40% as the 2nd greatest need. These results support and quantify the perhaps obvious fact that greatest need for regional public galleries in WA is financial investment.

Specifically, in terms of collection management 55% of participating galleries ranked conservation and storage as their greatest needs and artwork preparation areas as 2nd. This would indicate both a need for conservation training, support/consultancy or staff in place, as well as a lack of functional building capacity to properly manage and care for collections.

Greatest area of need for gallery ranked



Greatest areas of need in collection management ranked



CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

While the data collected by this survey requires further interrogation to get a full picture of the regional public galleries sector of WA the need of the sector is evident. The next stage in understanding and validating this data would be to have in depth conversations with all 52 venues the survey was delivered to, going through the questions and interrogating the answers. Venues would need support and guidance in collating information about their galleries to answer these questions to get complete sets of data from each venue.

Alongside this research project it would be beneficial for the venues to complete a facility report for both the research project and the venues records. The results of this could assist in generating a comparative standards document for the sector that identifies the multiple categories of venue capacity and standards to be met by each category.