



2020 All Member Survey Member Report



About the Results

What was the member response? SAQA members showed up! 1,365 members from 29 countries and speaking 11 languages responded to the survey. The response rate of 37.6% is significantly higher than the typical 20% response rate for general surveys. The strong response rate provides confidence that the overall results are a good representation of SAQA members. Members also gave us details – 9,001 comments with suggestions, ideas, and questions.

What were possible impacts on survey results? The 2020 SAQA all-member survey was developed before the COVID-19 pandemic and was launched shortly after the world was dealing with the challenges of living through a pandemic. A careful review of the comments will help us better understand the impact of the pandemic on member responses.

How is member feedback being used? For member privacy, all results shared from the survey are anonymous. Scores are aggregated and never shared for any individual and, the comments quoted in this and other reports are never attributed to a specific individual. Within a few weeks of the survey close, the team started sharing survey results “snapshots” in the weekly SAQA Member-News emails,

on the SAQA website and in the members-only Facebook Group. Articles about the survey appeared in *SAQA Journal* Vol.4 in 2020 and Vol. 1 in 2021.

What's the same and what's different since 2012? Demonstrating consistency in SAQA membership opinions and interest over the years, the results of this survey are very similar to those gathered in the 2012 survey. Members continue to express broad overall satisfaction with SAQA and high awareness of the organization's mission and vision, as well as surprise at all of the SAQA benefits available and high ratings of the ones used. Members continue to express a strong need for networking/connection opportunities. SAQA's publications and conferences continue to be very highly rated.

What's new? Though all types of exhibition opportunities are important to members, regional exhibits have grown in importance, and international respondents expressed concern about shipping and customs. Survey respondents showed interest in learning new techniques such as 3D and digital imagery. Members indicate a strong attachment to their regions for communication, connecting, and learning.

Why and How the Survey Was Created

Why have a survey in 2020? In 2019, the SAQA board considered how members' needs might have changed since our last all-member survey in 2012. They approved conducting a survey in 2020 to achieve the goals, below.

2020 All Member Survey Goals

To understand and assess:

- Members' perceptions of SAQA and the art quilt as fine art
- Members' art quilt practices and preferences
- Members' current demographics

How was the survey team selected? SAQA members with expertise in survey design and analysis, testing, reporting, and marketing volunteered for the survey team. This enabled the team to focus on getting actionable information that could help SAQA make informed, data-driven decisions to meet member needs.

How was the survey rolled out? The team sought to make the 2020 all-member SAQA survey as comprehensive and open-ended as possible. Their goal was for all members to have an opportunity to share what mattered to them. The team obtained input from SAQA leadership and committees on what information was needed to plan future programming. The team also reviewed the 2012 survey to identify topics that might provide a meaningful comparison of SAQA membership over the years.

From this information, the team drafted a survey and tested the draft in two ways. First, the team conducted user acceptance testing with a representative group of members from different countries. After revisions, they beta-tested the final version. The team publicized the survey through many SAQA channels hoping to achieve the highest possible response rate.

The survey team worked with regional representatives in non-English speaking regions to offer opportunities for Zoom meetings with members who could provide translation.

Section 1 • SAQA Members and the Art Quilt

This section asked members how they identify in relation to art quilts, what kinds of work they are creating, and whether they are aware of SAQA’s vision and definition of the art quilt.

Members rate satisfaction high. Members rated their satisfaction with SAQA an average of 4.3 stars out of 5.



SAQA’s goals are well-known. Almost all (92%) members responding are aware that SAQA’s vision is for the art quilt to be respected as a fine-art medium, with slightly fewer (88%) aware of SAQA’s definition of the art quilt.

Members identify as artists. Most respondents described themselves as fiber or quilt artist, followed by art quilter, artist, and textile artist. In addition, a significant number of respondents identified as quilters.

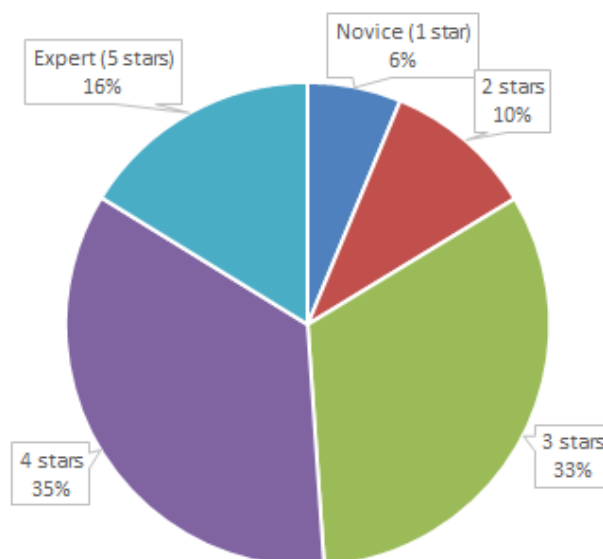
Members are exhibiting and selling their art. A sizable 72% of respondents sold art to individuals in the last three years. And selling art was one of the top three member interests. A solid core of respondents exhibited in an all-media art exhibition, taught a workshop, or had work published in a book or magazine. A small percentage authored a book, received an artist grant, or was a visiting artist.

“Trying to earn a living from the art you make is a different thing. And finding the category that will sell without compromising your style is the task I am addressing now.”

Member rating of their art-quilt expertise. Over half of respondents rated their art quilt expertise as a 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale.

Expertise of Members

When you consider your role with art quilts, how would you describe your level of expertise related to art quilts?



What SAQA members create. The average art quilt made is most likely to be semi-representational, between 24-47 inches, include surface design, appliqué, piecing, collage, and/or extensive stitching. It is least likely to be representational, less than 24”, 3-d, whole cloth, or with digital images.

Section 2 • SAQA’s Educational Resources

SAQA members value education. Respondents rated all of SAQA’s educational resources about the same. On a 5-point scale, the highest and lowest ratings were just over 1 point apart. When asked about possible innovations in education resources, again, respondents showed much interest in all of the new education programs, with not much point spread in the responses. It is interesting to note that the lower-scoring items such as special interest groups, individual mentoring, etc., are all resources that are typically used by fewer members, which may result in the slightly lower rating.

Educational Resource Interest



4.37	SAQA Website
4.34	SAQA Journal
4.21	Regional Newsletter/Blog
4.07	Art Quilt Quarterly
4.01	Fiber Art Friday
4.0	Member News
3.95	Webinars
3.86	SAQA Seminar
3.54	Special Interest Groups
3.38	Mentoring
3.22	Juried Artist Mentoring

Members are interested in virtual learning. Perhaps because of the need for social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic, online learning options (video tutorials, workshops, interactive presentations) rose to the top of the rankings. Respondents who generally prefer in-person opportunities may have given higher scores to online instruction because of current conditions.

“Usually I would select ‘Very Interested’ in in-person workshops. However, due to medical issues and COVID, I am uninterested [in those] until there is a vaccine/cure.”

Members love attending SAQA annual conferences. Nearly one-third of respondents have attended annual SAQA conferences, which is a large number considering that the conferences are designed for about 200 members. A larger proportion of members reported attending in this survey vs the 2012 member survey. The survey questions about conferences were developed in collaboration with the Special Events Committee before the 2020 Toronto conference was transformed into an online format. SAQA's first virtual conference opened up a host of new opportunities. Survey respondents provided their take on new virtual experiences as well as past in-person conferences. Many of the additional comments were from first-time attendees.

“Living in Australia, the virtual conference this year was perfect for me. I wouldn't be able to attend otherwise due to work commitments so I'm really looking forward to next year too. Maybe for future physical conferences there could be an option to join virtually too.”

Costs are important. When asked about factors in deciding whether to attend a conference, conference location and overall costs continue to top the list. The comments provide a hint that the conference location consideration might also be related to cost, especially travel cost from members' home locations.

Conference content is important. Members also focus on conference programming when making their decisions (57%). They show a slight preference for artistic development opportunities (44%) over connecting with other artists (36%), but those who provided additional comments expressed solid enthusiasm for making connections at conferences. Conference-related activities (hands-on workshops, field trips, and sight-seeing) were not a particularly strong motivator when deciding to attend a conference (28%). When asked about conference innovations, members liked the idea of hands-on workshop offerings. Lastly, respondents rated professional development opportunities at conferences lower than other features (19%).

Seeing art is important. According to the rankings, respondents were most enthusiastic about being able to see art quilt exhibitions at conferences.

Virtual vs in-person conferences. The survey questions were developed with the idea that some virtual offerings could perhaps be added to in-person conferences. Though respondents liked the idea of hands-on workshops, they also expressed interest in video recordings and live streaming of conference sessions, indicating a high receptivity for future virtual conferences. The comments also suggest that eliminating the need for travel makes it possible for more members to attend a conference.

Popular Topics from the Comments about Education Programs

more workshops • increased opportunities to connect with other members • work with universities • outreach programs for youth • more activities in non-US locations

Section 3 • Member Learning Interests

This section of the survey, “Your Learning Interests,” asked members about 55 potential learning topics in five areas of practice: Professional Skills, Marketing and Exhibitions, Studio Practices, Business Management, and Art Practices.

Professional Skills

Two-thirds of respondents are interested in professional development and ranked the following topics most highly.

- 35% interested in professional art opportunities (juror, gallerist, curator, etc.)
- 30% interested in developing and teaching workshops
- 27% interested in writing for magazines, other publications

Marketing and Exhibitions

The area of marketing and exhibitions most closely reflects SAQA’s vision, and notably, the questions in this section generated a strong member response - Only 9% of respondents responded “N/A.” Respondents are quite interested in learning more about all aspects of marketing and exhibiting; the following topics received the highest responses.

- 40% interested in entering exhibitions, selling art, creating a portfolio
- 37% interested in preparing art for viewing, writing statements, photographing work
- 31% interested in gallery representation, social media, website design

Studio Practices

Of all the general areas for educational development, questions about studio practices elicited the most interest including the following topics.

- 70% interested in surface design
- 60% want to learn a broad array of skills
- 51% interested in digital imagery (use is low but interest is high)
- 50% interested in general artistic development
- 50% interested in learning about new tools and techniques
- 43% interested in 3-D construction and finishing touches
- 36% want to learn about print-on-demand
- 34% interested in critique and peer review
- 32% asked for info on documentation and organization

“I have already learned, researched and applied various techniques. But I am still evolving and searching, so a lot of evolution is still possible.”

Business Management

Generally, interest in this area was low. We did not identify “working artist” as a category, and their specific concerns might be a subject for future inquiry. Those that responded noted interest in the following.

- 54% interested in pricing
- 34% interested in intellectual property (copyright, trademarks, licensing)

Art Practices

Respondents indicated that they feel comfortable with their art knowledge. Popular topics included:

- 48% Elements and principles of design
- 43% Trends in art
- 42% Different styles such as abstract, portrait, etc.
- 42% Color theory

“Some days I feel like I have considerable experience and then other days I feel like such a novice. So much to learn, to try, to develop into my own.”

We also asked members about how they use SAQA resources for development. Members had widely differing views on resources they are most likely to use.

- 75% use the SAQA website
- 72% prefer short videos (<10 min.)
- 63% look to articles in the *SAQA Journal*
- 55% join webinars
- 52% like emails with links to resources
- 51% get development at regional conferences or regional group meetings
- 51% watch longer videos (>10 min)
- 42% prefer classes / workshops

**Popular Topics from
Comments about
Member Aspirations
and Learning
Interests**

personal artistic development • thank you SAQA • exposure to other artists • goal to become a professional and exhibit widely • need a mentor • expand online workshops in basic topics and new techniques

Section 4 • SAQA's Exhibitions

The survey asked members about their preferences for seeing art quilts, from in-person exhibits, print publications, to online venues. Respondents appreciate all the ways SAQA presents art quilts to the world, and the scores were not far apart. A close look at the rankings indicates that members seem to have a slight preference for in-person exhibits and print publications.

“Kudos to the exhibition committee! I have been able to see so many shows because of their traveling to various venues. ... I willingly try to support these endeavors whenever I can!”

Members like regional exhibitions. Respondents are very satisfied with both regional and global exhibitions. Regional exhibitions slightly out-ranked global exhibitions (4.54 and 4.35, respectively, on a 5-point scale). Comments indicate that newer members could use more information about regional exhibitions, and some regions are not as active as others.

“I find regional exhibits more to my liking. I have a better chance of getting in them, I get to go see them in person and they are full of incredible art!”

Members like seeing published artwork. Respondents ranked SAQA Journal second highest, and Art Quilt Quarterly tied with global exhibitions for third place. Artwork on SAQA's website received nearly the same score. Virtual exhibitions in SAQAs website galleries ranked highly (4.17); however, high “neutral” ratings indicate that members have not yet formed strong opinions on these types of exhibitions.

Members are interested in partnerships. Despite indicating low interest in collaboration in general, respondents were much more enthusiastic about the specific types of collaboration opportunities listed in this section of the survey. Respondents were especially interested in exhibitions in partnership with other organizations and artists. Significant interest is indicated for working with artists in other media, and for creating art in collaboration with other professions.

Art quilts in nontraditional venues. Respondents showed interest in virtual exhibitions, creating art for specific spaces, selling artwork in the online SAQA store, and participating in high-end art fairs.

“I attended a local traditional quilt guild meeting before joining SAQA when I was looking for my tribe. At that meeting a SAQA rep shared the 'Trunk Show' [and it] had a big impact on my decision to become a member as I was quite bedazzled by all the tiny artworks.”

Interest in exhibitions with fewer restrictions. When asked about the idea of creating an international exhibition with no theme or other restrictions, response was positive. Respondents were also intrigued by having exhibitions travel for shorter durations. Respondents also liked the idea of exhibitions providing access to video interviews with artists and curators.

Changes in the art itself. Members were also interested in the possibilities of increasing the amount of three-dimensional and installation work in exhibits. The fewest number of respondents

are interested in 3-D exhibits that incorporate nontraditional materials and techniques (video, electrical, movement, etc.)

“I have attended ... dozens of shows annually in which the SAQA sponsored and displayed works have opened viewers' eyes to the fact that quilts have come off the bed. Exhibitions are crucial to SAQA's mission, and I have been thrilled to have my work represented in several.”

Popular Topics from Comments about Motivations for Entering SAQA Exhibitions

exposure and visibility • personal recognition and validation • artistic growth, personal challenge, motivation, resume-builder • community of artists, networking, sharing • challenging, motivational theme • publicity, marketing, potential for sales

Popular Topics from Comments about Challenges Entering SAQA Exhibitions

concerns about theme • time constraints, ability to meet deadline • intimidated to enter • size requirement issues • shipping costs • entry costs

Section 5 • Connecting Through SAQA

Members were asked how they prefer to get information about SAQA programs, projects, events and member benefits. They were also asked to rate the importance of the various ways members can connect with each other through SAQA.

Members prefer email. Most respondents strongly prefer getting information about SAQA programs, projects, events and member benefits through weekly email messages (86%). The average open-rate of Member News is 54.5% which is far higher than the industry average for similar member-organization email statistics.

Members love the SAQA Journal and SAQA website (58% and 50%, respectively) as information resources. Members also like regional communication. Sixty-one percent of respondents prefer getting SAQA information from their regional representative, regional newsletter, regional Facebook page or regional blog.

Opportunities to connect with other members are valued. Respondents gave high ratings to all the ways SAQA provides for connection including Facebook groups, virtual meetings, regional events, special interest groups and conferences.

“SAQA Members Only Facebook Group is FANTASTIC. Loved the recent day by day color challenge for sharing work during coronavirus. Love the fact that I can get input on ANY question within an hour or two. The moderators deserve loads of credit for establishing tone and sparking discussion.”

Members like to connect through regional groups. Again, regional activities were very important, ranked in the top three. Respondents connect through their local groups and regional meetings or events, both in person and through Zoom. The survey comments reveal a wealth of information pertaining to regional groups, from the difficulty posed by long distances, the preference for in-person meetings, and a like/dislike of Facebook as a regional connector. There are likely specific factors in each region that affect how members can best connect.

Section 6 • Juried Artist Member Program

All members, not just Juried Artist members, were asked for their perceptions and interest levels in the Juried Artist program. Just under half of respondents are interested in applying for the Juried Artist program. Those who are not interested at this time, some indicate they do not believe their work merits the status (24%), and some are not ready to incur the higher fee (22%). However, more than 25% of members surveyed are likely to apply in the future. Juried Artist members and Artist members are both equally interested in professional development.

Juried Artist Benefits There are many member benefits for Juried Artists. Respondents indicated “evaluating and focusing my work for the jurying process” as the most important with 63% calling the process important or very important.

Members value opportunities for exposure. Other highly-ranked benefits focused on those that provide exposure for artwork including the following.

- Having my art included in Art Quilt Quarterly
- Having my art in SAQA’s online galleries, emails and slideshows
- Having an artist page on the SAQA website

Motivations for applying. The difference in scores for the various motivations to apply were not particularly significant, but we can look at the rankings for subtle preferences.

- 30% Want to increase perceived quality and value of their work
- 25% Want peer-reviewed approval of their work
- 21% Want to prepare a professional portfolio
- 20% Want to network with other Juried Artists

<p>Popular Topics from Comments about Juried Artist Program</p>	<p>valuable program • need more education • elitist program • celebrate Juried Artists • might apply someday • more activities by region • consider value of local currency • more access to meetings across time zones</p>
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Section 7 • SAQA Support

Members are highly satisfied with their membership. Overall satisfaction is high; 82% of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with their membership. Alternately, 4% call themselves unsatisfied or very unsatisfied.

Members express satisfaction with fees. When asked to rate satisfaction with the value of SAQA membership in relation to the annual fee, 63% are satisfied or very satisfied. Alternately, 9% are unsatisfied or very unsatisfied. A significant number of respondents (28%) expressed neutrality about the value of membership in relation to the fee.

SAQA is volunteer driven. When asked about the many ways to volunteer with SAQA, 59% of respondents indicated that they had donated their time to support the organization. Those who choose to volunteer take on multiple tasks, responsibilities, and roles.

“I have always thought you get back many times over what you put into an organization by volunteering and my time working with SAQA as a volunteer has born that out.”

Volunteer Motivation. The leading motivation for volunteering is the opportunity to connect with other members.

- 54% connect with other members
- 37% support the organization
- 35% helping SAQA members
- 30% giving back to SAQA
- 30% make a positive impact on the organization

Volunteers feel acknowledged. When asked about their satisfaction with SAQA’s acknowledgment of their volunteer efforts, respondents gave a weighted average score of 4.14 out of 5.

“Have only been a member for 1 year. Unaware of opportunities to volunteer.”

SAQA members are generous with donations of time, art, and money.



59% donated time



49% donated artwork



34% donated funds

Donors believe in SAQA’s mission and are very generous. The leading motivation for donating is to support SAQA’s mission (57%) followed by wanting art quilts to be shared with broad audiences through exhibitions, publications and other programs (41%).

Section 8 • SAQA Membership

To help guide decisions on how SAQA might grow membership, the survey collected information on where members first heard of SAQA, their ideas on outreach, length of membership, and basic demographic information.

Members discover SAQA from other members. The primary way new members learn of SAQA is from existing members (56%), followed by discovering SAQA at quilt shows (31%). Sixteen percent learned of SAQA from magazine advertisements, but all other methods of discovery were below 10%.

“I met a SAQA member at a quilt show we were both attending. She told me about SAQA and invited me to a meeting.”

“I think I googled ‘art quilt’ and SAQA popped up. It seemed like a good idea to join.”

SAQA membership is demographically homogeneous. When looking at the demographic questions, we find the average respondent is 60-74 years old, Caucasian, female, lives in U.S., speaks English, has a Master’s degree, is retired, and has been a member for 2 to 5 years.

Most (67%) survey respondents fall into the 60 – 74 age bracket. The results suggest that 97% of SAQA members are most likely between 45-89 years of age. SAQA’s survey respondents are overwhelmingly white (84%) and female (97%). Most respondents are retired (59%), 25% are self-employed, and 10% are working full or part time.

Survey respondents hailed from 48 SAQA regions in 29 different countries. About 20% of respondents were from outside the US, mirroring the percent of non-US resident members.

Respondents were predominantly English-speaking (95%). Those for whom English is not the primary language have a high level of English fluency (4.3 on a 5-point scale). Eleven languages are spoken fluently. After English, the three most-spoken languages reported are French, Spanish, and German.

Popular Topics from Comments about Engaging New Members

be inclusive not exclusive • support college programs and grants for textile students • advertise with colleges of art and design • reach out to traditional and modern quilt guilds • market to art societies • be active on social media

What's Next?

SAQA's Board, Staff, Regional Representatives and leaders of the Development Committee, Education Committee, Executive Committee, Exhibition Committee, Finance Committee, International Advisory Panel, Juried Artist Representative, Regional Grants Review Committee, and Special Events Committee are reviewing survey results to enhance SAQA programs. They are reporting their progress to the SAQA Board and are building enhancements into upcoming SAQA programs. We look forward to sharing an annual update about how the survey results will impact SAQA programs and projects.

2020 All-Member Survey Team

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If you have questions about any aspect of the 2020 SAQA All-Member Survey, please reach out to the survey team at membersurvey@saqa.com