



FACT SHEET:

AUSTRALIAN MUSICIANS' CAREER MOTIVATIONS AND VALUES

The Australian study *Making Music Work: Sustainable Portfolio Careers for Australian Musicians* (2016-2019) explored the conditions and strategies needed for musicians to sustain successful portfolio careers. The project team mapped the creative, social, cultural and economic realities of the portfolio music career and delivered recommendations to address the realities this presents for musicians. The study conducted a national survey of 592 musicians and 11 in-depth interviews with a diverse group of musicians. This fact sheet examines musicians' career motivations and values.

What motivates Australian musicians to be musicians?

Australian musicians tend to draw their career motivation from intrinsic and goal-directed factors such as "doing what I love / enjoyment of music" (97% agree or strongly agree) and "developing my music-related skills and capabilities" (92% agree or strongly agree).

Many musicians identify strongly with their musician identities, as is the case with educator, performer, producer and composer Rhonda Davidson-Irwin (Queensland):

There was a time when I woke up in the morning and went, "This is the direction for me"!

Musicians are also motivated by their ability to contribute to their artform (80% agree or strongly agree) and to their community and culture (81% agree or strongly agree), and by the desire to develop the skills of others (72% agree or

strongly agree). Singer, composer and educator Lisa Young (Victoria) was among many musicians who spoke of the desire to leave a legacy:

I'm so happy to be leaving a legacy of choral music that is being performed. That's a really good feeling.

The musicians report being least motivated by financial security and stability (17.6% agree or strongly agree) and by financial rewards (31% agree or strongly agree). Many musicians, including Indie folk musician Paddy Mann (Victoria), quoted below, are open about the need to support their music practice with income derived from outside of music.

My life is just "doing music" and having a lot of strange part-time jobs to support the music, because it doesn't make enough money to do it by itself.

This is not to say that musicians don't care about security, stability or their earnings – in fact, 67% of musicians report finances as a source of career difficulty and 55% report a lack of job security as a source of career difficulty.

Career motivation	Mean 1-5 score	SD
Enjoyment of music/doing what I love	4.84	0.52
Developing my music skills and capabilities	4.59	0.73
Contributing to my artform	4.28	0.93
Contributing to my community/ culture	4.26	0.96
Collaborating with others	4.24	0.96
Helping others	4.13	0.98
Developing the skills and capabilities of others	4.05	1.04
Meeting difficult or complex challenges	4.03	1.06
Being independent and having control over my career	3.99	1.12
Maintaining a balanced lifestyle	3.61	1.23
Seeking peer recognition	3.56	1.03
Seeking audience recognition	3.50	1.02
Being enterprising and entrepreneurial	3.36	1.26
Seeking critical recognition	3.32	1.1
Financial rewards	2.90	1.15
Security and stability	2.32	1.15

(1 = not at all, 5= to a very great extent, N= 555)

Australian musicians are resourceful. Many musicians choose to earn an income outside of music in order to protect their musical brand and authenticity. Over half of Australia's

portfolio musicians receive income from non-music related sources; non-music work accounts for approximately 90% of musicians' income overall. Musicians also take music work that is not their preference. For example, both Lisa Young and Danielle Bentley have undertaken 'standards' or 'background' performances in order to make money. In such instances they performed work composed by others, sometimes in settings where music was provided as an ancillary entertainment option for an event such as corporate function. Young no longer engages in such work but she recognises that these opportunities provide crucial income and learning for emerging artists. For Bentley, standards or background performances remain a regular and valued source of income:

It's bread-and-butter; a lot of people do it [...] It's just something that we do as part of how we earn money.

Bentley's skills in being able to engage in this kind of work, and her willingness to do so, has afforded her the financial means to engage in other kinds of creatively fulfilling work.

Overall, the study findings show that satisfaction with a portfolio career in music concerns the music and non-music work which combine to create a financially satisfying career, the factors which contribute to creative satisfaction, and those which align with the musician's identity.

Do career motivations change over time for Australian musicians?

Musicians' responses were analysed according to the number of years they had practised as a musician: less than 5 years; 5-10 years; 11-20 years and more than 20 years. There was some variation in the age at which musicians began their practice, but reports of more than 20 years' experience tended to come from musicians aged 40 years and older.

Musicians with 5-10 years and 11-20 years of experience rated financial rewards as less of a motivator (M=2.62, SD=1.20 and M=2.76, SD=1.23 respectively) than did musicians with more than 20 years of professional experience (M=3.11, SD=1.09). (*financial rewards* $F(3,542)=6.87, p=.001$).

To read more about these findings, you can download the full report, summary brochure, and musician profiles at www.makingmusicwork.com.au

Making Music Work was funded by an Australian Research Council Linkage grant and led by Queensland Conservatorium Research Centre (QCRC), Griffith University, with industry partners, Australia Council for the Arts, Create NSW, Creative Victoria, Western Australian Government – Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC), and institutional partner Curtin University. The research team included Professor Brydie-Leigh Bartleet, Professor Dawn Bennett, Professor Ruth Bridgstock, Professor Scott Harrison, Professor Paul Draper, Professor Vanessa Tomlinson and Research Fellow Dr Christina Ballico.



FACT SHEET: **HOW AUSTRALIAN MUSICIANS DESCRIBE CAREER SUCCESS**

The Australian study *Making Music Work: Sustainable Portfolio Careers for Australian Musicians* (2016–2019) explored the conditions and strategies needed for musicians to sustain successful portfolio careers. The project team mapped the creative, social, cultural and economic realities of the portfolio music career and delivered recommendations to address the realities this presents for Australian musicians. The study employed a national survey of 592 musicians and 11 in-depth interviews with a diverse group of musicians. This fact sheet examines how musicians describe their career success.

How do Australian musicians define career success?

The 594 musicians who responded to our survey were asked to provide their own definition of career success. They were then asked to rate their success based on their given definition.

In their definition of success, the musicians mentioned an average of 1.95 different themes. The four most common of these were:

1. Financial sustainability through music work (26.44% of responses):

- “being able to earn enough money to live on”
- “being able to support my family”
- “regular income”

2. Achieving career goals and outcomes (10.24% of responses):

- “artistic achievement”
- “creative fulfillment”
- “achieving your music goals”

3. Being recognised by peers and audience members (8.38% and 7.64% of the responses)

- “critical recognition, airplay and streaming”
- “being known and respected in the field”
- “mainstream visibility and recognition”
- “peer acceptance, radio airplay, [a] growing audience”

4. Intrinsic satisfaction (7.64% of responses)

- “being happy or excited about the music I’m making”
- “creating the music that you love and making a living from it”

To what extent do Australian musicians consider themselves to be successful?

Based on their own definition of success, the musicians in this study were asked to rate their success on a Likert-style scale where 1 = not at all successful and 5 = very successful.

On average and based on their own definitions, the musicians considered themselves to be 'somewhat successful'. More experienced musicians (>10 years in the industry) rated themselves more highly on career success than musicians with less experience.



Self-defined career success ratings, mean (n = 291)

“Overall, the musicians were more satisfied with their progress in terms of developing new skills, meeting artistic goals, and achieving career goals. They were least satisfied with their progress towards goals relating to income.”

How satisfied are musicians with their career progress?

The musicians also indicated how satisfied they were with different aspects of their careers, again using a 1-5 Likert-style scale where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree.

Overall, the musicians were more satisfied with their progress in terms of developing new skills, meeting artistic goals, and achieving career goals. They were least satisfied with their progress towards goals relating to income.

Career satisfaction items (N=290)	Mean	SD
<i>I am satisfied with the progress I have made towards:</i>		
Meeting my goals for the development of new skills	3.81	0.89
Meeting my artistic goals	3.72	0.95
Meeting my overall career goals	3.61	0.98
Meeting my goals for advancement	3.37	1.01
Achieving a career balance	3.27	1.11
Meeting my goals for income	2.88	1.23

Musicians' responses were analysed according to the number of years they had practised as a musician: less than 5 years; 5-10 years; 11-20 years; and more than 20 years. There was some variation in the age at which musicians began their practice, but reports of more than 20 years of experience tended to come from musicians aged 40 or more.

Musicians at each career stage reported fairly neutral ratings in relation to *meeting goals for income* (M = 2.88, SD = 1.23). This suggests that there is little change across the career lifespan.

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FACT SHEET: HOW AUSTRALIAN MUSICIANS FIND OR CREATE WORK

The Australian study *Making Music Work: Sustainable Portfolio Careers for Australian Musicians* (2016–2019) explored the conditions and strategies needed for musicians to sustain successful portfolio careers. It mapped the creative, social, cultural and economic realities of the portfolio music career and delivered recommendations to address the realities this presents for Australian musicians. The study employed a national survey of 592 musicians and 11 in-depth interviews with a diverse group of musicians. This fact sheet examines how musicians find or create work.

The *Making Music Work* study asked musicians to identify the strategies they had used to find, acquire or create music or music-related work over the past 12 months, and to rate the effectiveness of these strategies. Effectiveness was measured on a 1–5 scale ranging from 1 = 'not at all effective' to 5 = 'very effective'. Musicians selected from a list of strategies:

- **formal strategies** such as using a job search agency, job boards, agents / managers, and attending an open call to audition
- **informal strategies** such as through work experience and social networks
- **work creation strategies** such as establishing or continuing an enterprise, band or ensemble.

On average, participants had used 2.9 different kinds of strategies over the preceding 12 months.

Musicians typically used a combination of all three kinds of strategies, although work-creation and informal strategies were more commonly used than formal strategies.

Musicians largely build their careers through informal strategies (particularly through their social networks) and by creating their own work.



The three most common ways for Australian musicians to find or create work were found to be:

- 1. running their own band, ensemble, or collective**
(79% in the last 12 months)
- 2. informal social networking face-to-face**
(70% in the last 12 months)
- 3. informal social networking online**
(65% in the last 12 months)

The four most effective strategies were:

- answering a call for work (3.94/5)
- using an agent/manager (3.85/5)
- establishing/continuing an enterprise, band or ensemble (3.83/5)
- using informal social networks (3.62/5)

**This is based on a 1–5 scale.*

As explained by Australian singer-songwriter and musician Emily Smart (South Australia),

Without connections, you're on your own. There's no-one really thinking about hiring you or getting you involved in their projects, so it's pretty pivotal to expand your creative reach. If you're not actively getting involved with the industry, or getting out there and talking to people, then most people won't know about what you do or how you do it, and it's less likely that you're going to get the opportunities that you need to help you generate more work and sustain what you're doing.

The musicians reported that the least successful strategies for finding or creating work had been:

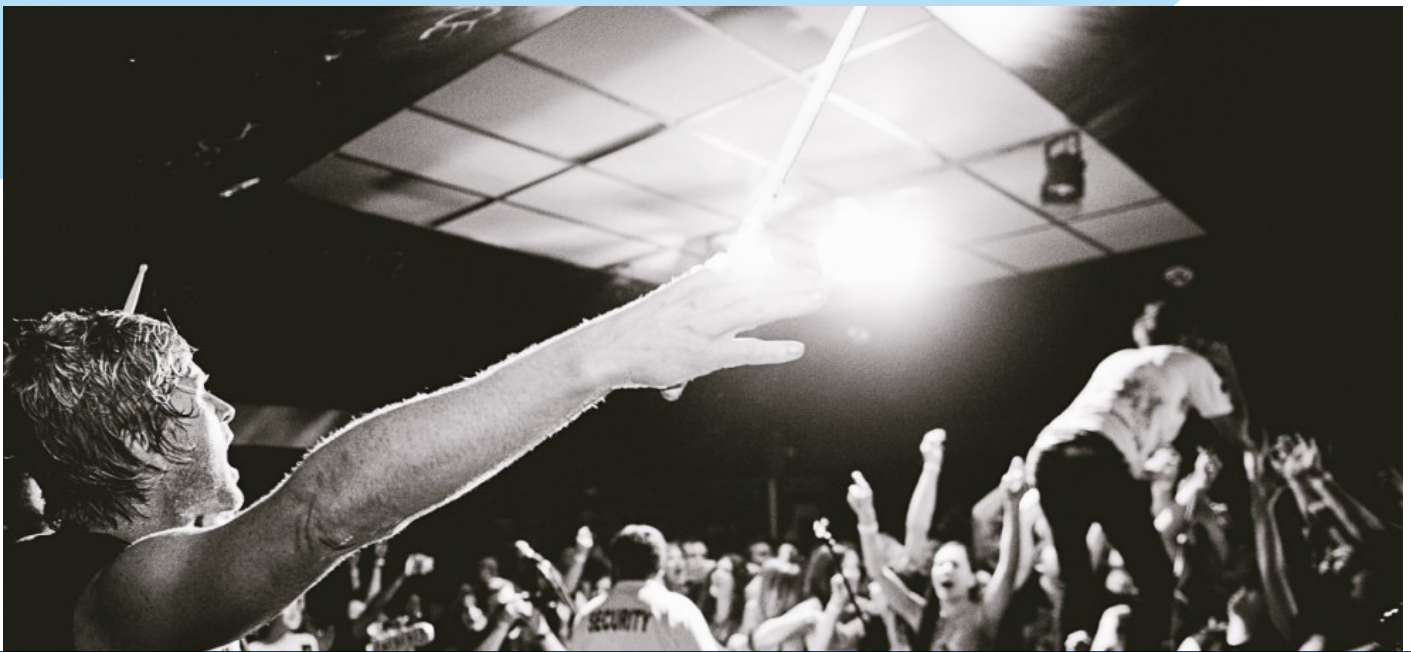
- using a job search agency (1.27/5)
- advertising on job boards (1.67/5)
- searching job boards (music-specific – 1.71/5, general – 1.78/5)
- establishing or continuing an online enterprise (2.86/5)
- applying for grants (2.71/5)

**This is based on a 1–5 scale.*



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FACT SHEET:

WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE MAKING MUSIC WORK STUDY?

The Australian study *Making Music Work: Sustainable Portfolio Careers for Australian Musicians* (2016–2019) explored the conditions and strategies needed for musicians to sustain successful portfolio careers. It mapped the creative, social, cultural and economic realities of the portfolio music career and delivered recommendations to address the realities this presents for Australian musicians. The study employed a national survey of 592 musicians and 11 in-depth interviews with a diverse group of musicians. In this fact sheet we examine the gender distribution, age range and location of the *Making Music Work* survey participants.

The *Making Music Work* survey reached near gender parity and featured a spread of ages from 18 – 75+. Working across classical and contemporary musics, there were on average 2.44 specific genres per musician.

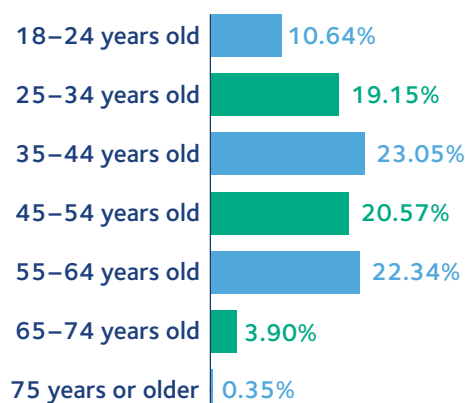
Genres

Musicians listed the music genres in which they practised. Many responses were very specific: for example, *Art Music, Experimental, Inter/Multi-cultural, Meditation and Healing, Soundscapes, Gospel / Sacred / Worship, Drum and Bass, New Music, Swing, and Fusion*.

From the specific responses, we used higher-level genre coding to categorise musicians' practice into classical, contemporary, and mixed classical/contemporary (for participants where responses contained both classical and contemporary elements). The majority of musicians (59.03%) worked only in contemporary genres, with 14.98% working only in classical genres and 25.99% working across classical and contemporary genres.

Age and gender

As shown below, the musicians who responded to the survey were evenly distributed across the age groups between 18 and 64 years, with a much smaller proportion of participants indicating that they were 65 years or older (4.25%). The most common age range for the participants was 35–44 years (23.05% of participants).

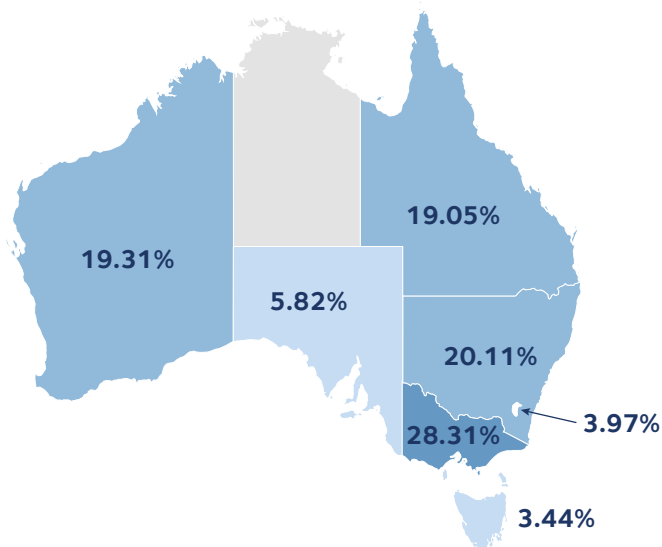


N = 282

Of the musicians surveyed, 53.54% identified as male and 45.74% identified as female. Two participants (0.71%) identified as gender non-binary, transgender, or gender non-conforming.

State and region of residence

Slightly more than two-thirds (69.84%) of participants lived in metropolitan areas, with 30.16% living in regional or rural areas (see below).



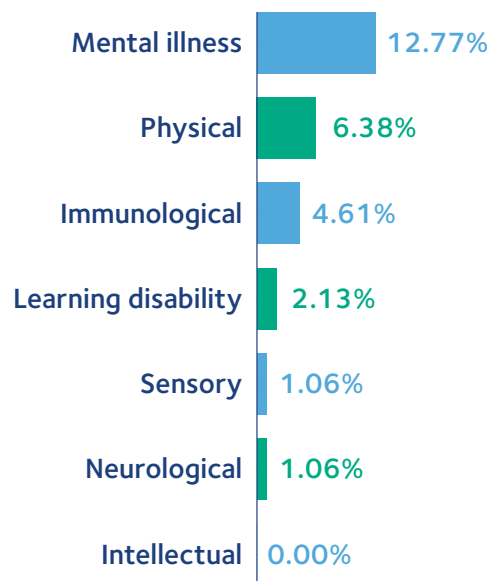
N = 378

Of the 282 musicians who provided information on ethnicity, 76.6% listed one ethnicity, 14.89% listed two, 6.38% listed three, and 2.13% listed four. Overwhelmingly, musicians indicated that they were 'Australian' (86.17%) with 22% of musicians indicating another ethnicity in addition to Australian. 'British Isles' was the second most common ethnicity provided (22.34%), followed by 'East/South East' Asian (4.26%). 2.13% identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people.

Disability

A total of 23.40% of participants indicated that they were living with a disability, with 3.19% of participants indicating that they had two or more disabilities.

As shown below, the most common type of disability reported was mental illness, at 12.77%. By comparison, Australian Bureau of Statistics 2015 data for the general population indicates that 18.3% of Australians were living with a disability of some kind. The 2015 Australian Health Survey (Australian Bureau of Statistics) indicates that the prevalence of mental illness in the population in general is about 17.5%.



N = 378

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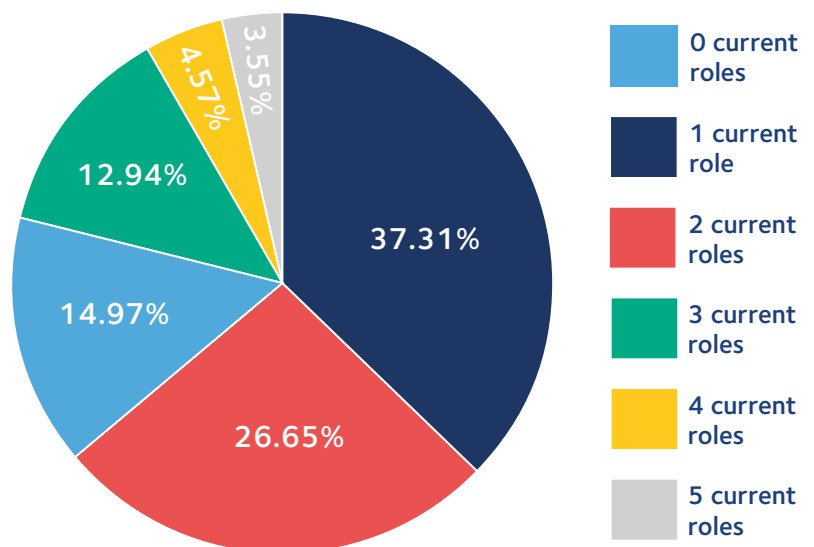


FACT SHEET: THE PORTFOLIO CAREERS OF AUSTRALIAN MUSICIANS

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The vast majority of Australian musicians undertake a portfolio career, which encompasses a variety of concurrent and often impermanent roles. This was also the case with the majority of musicians who participated in the *Making Music Work* study.

As shown below, most musicians reported either one (37.31%) or two (26.65%) current roles, but 21.06% held either three, four or five current roles and 14.97% indicated that they were not currently working.



N = 394

The job roles held were coded into ANZSCO¹ categories. The most common codes were:

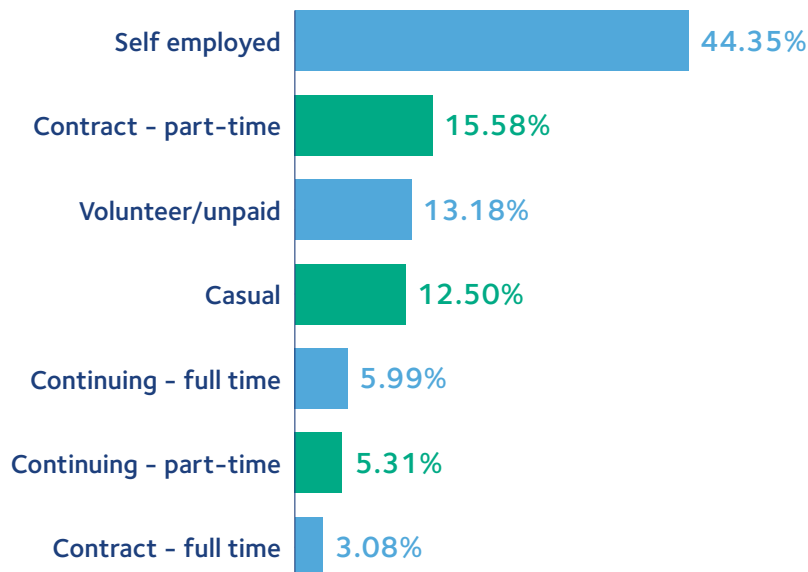
- **Musician (instrumental)** – 28% of role titles listed
- **Music teacher** – 23% of job titles listed
- **Actors, dancers and other entertainers (various)** – 7.91% of job titles listed
- **Composer** – 7.11% of job titles listed
- **Music director** – 7.11% of job titles listed
- **Singer** – 5.34% of job titles listed
- **University lecturer** – 3.56% of job title listed
- **Sound technician** – 3.16% of job titles listed
- **Media producer** – 2.57% of job titles listed
- **Artistic director** – 1.98% of job titles listed

Mode of employment

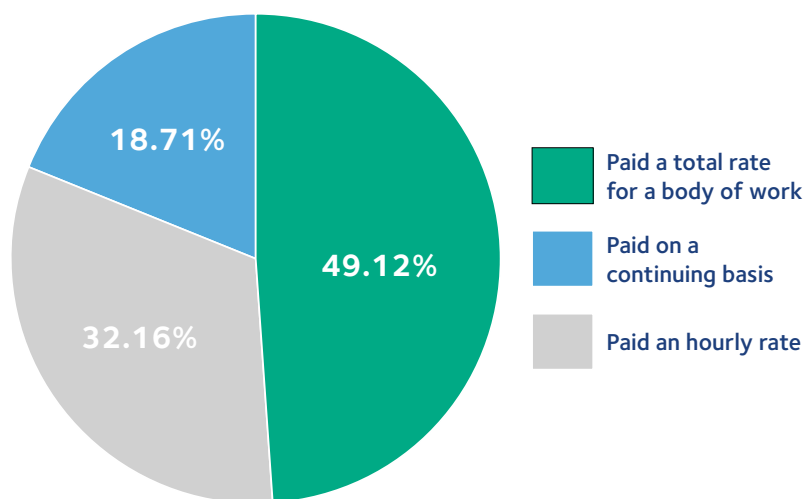
Self-employment was the most common mode of employment across the current roles, accounting for 44.35% of the 584 responses (see below). Part-time contract roles accounted for a further 15.58% of the roles, with volunteer / unpaid roles and casual roles accounting for another 13.18% and 12.50% respectively.

For almost half the current paid roles (49.12%), musicians were paid a total rate for a body of work, with less than a fifth (18.71%) of all current work being paid on a continuing (salaried) basis.

¹ Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) 6 digit codes - <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/1220.0>



N = 584



N = 513

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FACT SHEET: THE PSYCHOLOGY BEHIND MUSICIAN'S CAREER DEVELOPMENT

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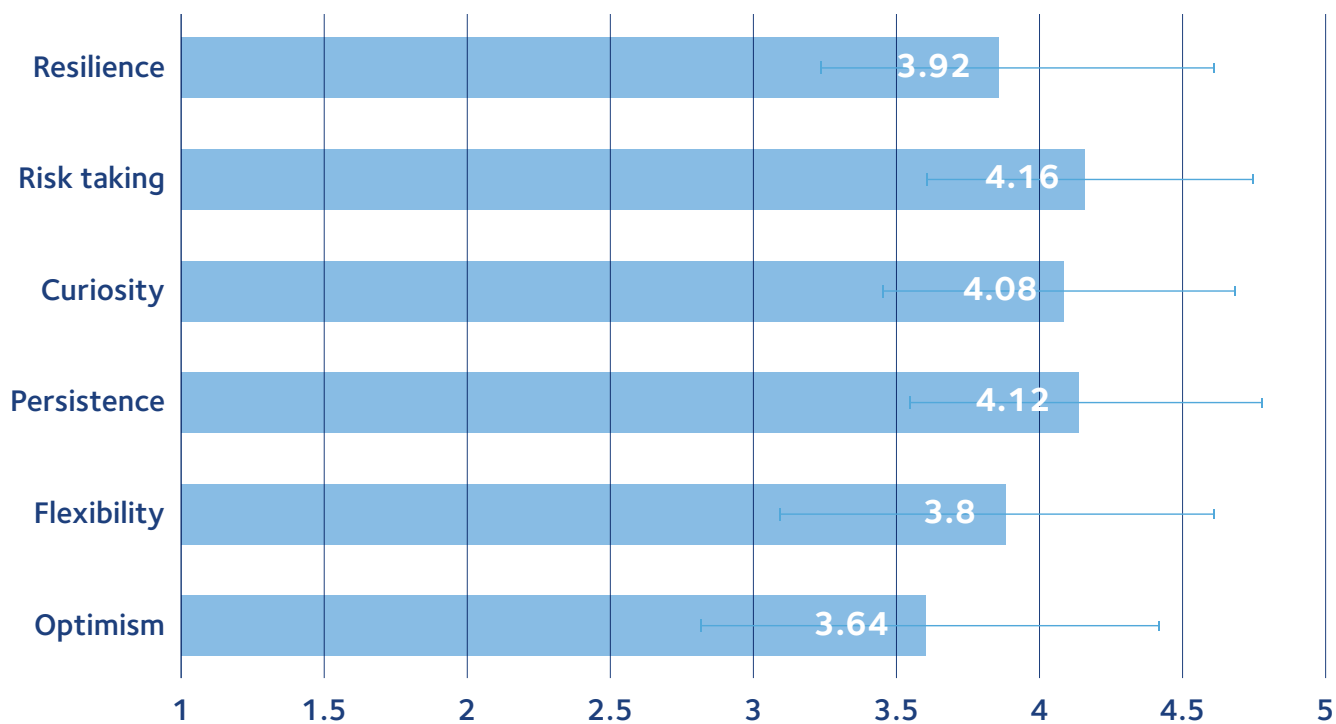
The *Making Music Work* survey contained the Career Planned Happenstance measure (Mitchell et. al., 1999), which asked musicians to rate their abilities to make the most of chance events (both positive and negative) in career development.

We included six different dimensions in the survey:

1. **Optimism** – 'my future career is bright'
2. **Flexibility** – 'I think that my career could change at any point'
3. **Persistence** – 'I persist in my career plans even if I encounter challenges'
4. **Curiosity** – 'I am interested in new industry trends and possibilities in my career'
5. **Risk taking** – 'even though there is no guarantee of job success, I will still take on challenges'
6. **Resilience** – 'when things don't turn out as I'd hoped, I bounce back well'.

Overall, the research indicated that Australian musicians are:

- persistent in the face of challenges
- curious and open to opportunities
- willing to take calculated risks
- reasonably resilient in the face of setbacks



(1 = strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree, N = 520)

The findings suggested that Australian musicians take calculated risks and they are both curious and persistent, all hallmarks of an entrepreneurial mindset. Musicians assigned the highest mean ratings to *risk-taking* items ($M = 4.16$, $SD = 0.62$) and persistence items ($M = 4.12$, $SD = 0.61$), mostly agreeing and strongly agreeing to these items. Their curiosity mean rating was also above 4 ($M = 4.08$, $SD = 0.61$).

The mean ratings for *resilience*, *flexibility* and *optimism* all fell between 'neutral' and 'agree', at 3.92 ($SD = 0.67$), 3.80 ($SD = 0.75$), and 3.64 ($SD = 0.84$). Overall, the career planned happenstance profile for the musicians suggests persistence in the face of ongoing challenges. No differences were found by genre, location, career stage or gender.

Reference

Mitchell, K. E., Al Levin, S., & Krumboltz, J. D. (1999). Planned happenstance: Constructing unexpected career opportunities. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 77(2), 115–124.

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