

SWAMP User Questionnaire: Report on User Survey Results

This report summarizes the findings of a voluntary questionnaire distributed to SWAMP users between August 5th and September 4th. The survey aimed to gather insights into the impact and value of SWAMP's services, exploring how the organization supports artists and creatives through access to reclaimed materials. Key questions focused on the estimated cost of materials if purchased new, the number of projects realized using SWAMP resources, how the materials were used, and the benefits SWAMP provides.

As of September 4th, **66 responses** indicated that a total of **241 projects** were realized using SWAMP materials. Respondents estimated a total cost savings of approximately **€24,272**, ranging from €5 to €3000 per person. The 212 visits reported by questionnaire respondents represent approximately **15.47% of the total 1370 visits** to SWAMP since its opening.

The survey revealed key themes regarding the benefits and uses of SWAMP. Specifically, respondents indicated that SWAMP supports them by providing financial accessibility, access to unique and diverse materials, environmental benefits, opportunities for creative experimentation, community and collaboration, convenience, and efficiency. In terms of material usage, key themes included art creation, exhibition and display building, studio and workspace improvement, workshop and event materials, crafts, and smaller projects. Further analysis in this report will focus on the responses to the questions "What does SWAMP help you do that would otherwise be difficult or expensive?" and "How did you use the materials?", providing detailed explanations for these themes.

The results of this questionnaire highlight SWAMP's significant and varied impact on the local art community. By providing affordable access to reclaimed materials, SWAMP empowers artists to realize their creative visions, promotes sustainable practices, and strengthens community bonds. This approach to resource management directly addresses the economic challenges faced by artists while fostering a more circular and environmentally responsible art ecosystem.

— What does SWAMP help you do that would otherwise be difficult or expensive?

The key themes in answers to the question "What does SWAMP help you do that would otherwise be difficult or expensive?" were **financial accessibility, access to unique and diverse materials, environmental benefits, creative experimentation, community and collaboration, convenience and efficiency**. Here is the summary for each theme:

1. Cost Savings/Financial Accessibility:

This is the most dominant theme. SWAMP enables artists and creatives to access materials they couldn't otherwise afford, especially given limited budgets.

2. Material Sourcing and Access to Unique/Diverse Materials:

SWAMP provides access to materials that are hard to find in regular stores, including specialty items, unconventional materials, and small quantities. These materials are often sourced from other exhibitions and custom-made by institutions specifically for art-related purposes. This opens up possibilities for experimentation and projects that wouldn't happen otherwise.

3. Sustainability and Environmental Benefits:

Many respondents highlight SWAMP's role in recycling, upcycling, and reducing waste. It allows them to create art in a more environmentally responsible way.

4. Creative Experimentation and Inspiration:

Access to a variety of materials allows artists to experiment without the risk of wasting expensive new supplies.

5. Community and Collaboration:

SWAMP fosters a sense of community, providing a physical and virtual space for sharing resources and ideas.

6. Project Realization and Enabling Creative Work:

SWAMP directly enables artists to realize their visions and complete projects that would otherwise be impossible due to financial or logistical constraints.

7. Convenience and Efficiency:

SWAMP simplifies the process of material sourcing, saving time and effort compared to searching for and purchasing materials individually.

Illustrative Quotes:

(In presenting direct quotations from survey responses, original spelling, grammar, and punctuation have been preserved to accurately reflect the respondents' voices.)

- "Swamp help me with very good materials during our project process, it makes more easy for us to develop our ideas and save money at this complicated times for artists"
- "I love to use recycled materials for my art, swamp helps making art more environmentally friendly and lower the costs of making it"
- "Source materials that would be cost prohibitive and also provide actress to materials of an unconventional nature or things I didn't think to use for my projects."

- "The free materials enable me to experiment more. I'd be more hesitant to 'fail' with expensive materials."
- "Source specialty materials, reuse valuable materials instead of buying virgin materials, browse different material options, tryout different materials risk free, receive advice about material options, and feel apart of a female-led community!"
- "Finding specific and obscure materials. Expanding material possibilities for small scale or short installations, that would otherwise not happen."
- "SWAMP offers possibilities for those who couldn't fulfill their plans through buying materials. SWAMP also plays a big role in making creative projects environmentally friendly."
- "Amazing selection of materials and gems that would be either difficult or too expensive to find"

According to the questionnaire responses, SWAMP provides crucial support to artists and creatives by offering free access to a diverse range of materials, fostering sustainability, and inspiring creative experimentation. It enables project realization, simplifies material sourcing, and builds a sense of community. The cost savings are significant, but the benefits extend far beyond financial assistance, empowering individuals to explore their artistic visions and contribute to a more sustainable creative ecosystem.

— How did you use the materials?

The key themes in answers to the question "How did you use the materials?" were art creation, exhibition and display building, studio and workspace improvement, workshop and event materials, crafts and smaller projects. Here is the summary for each theme:

1. Art Creation (General):

This is the broadest category, encompassing the use of SWAMP materials in various artistic projects without specifying the exact type.

2. Painting and Drawing:

Materials used as canvas, paints, or for drawing.

3. Sculpture and Installation Art:

Materials used for creating three-dimensional artworks, structures, and installations.

4. Exhibition and Display:

Construction of exhibition elements such as walls, podiums, and display stands.

5. Studio and Workspace Improvement:

Building or fixing up studio spaces, including constructing walls, shelves, and furniture.

6. Workshop and Event Materials:

Providing materials for art workshops, community events, and set props for performances.

7. Crafts and Smaller Projects:

Keychains and smaller decoration objects.

8. Other:

Including use in scientific experiments, sourcing packing materials for other types of projects, and such.

Illustrative Quotes:

(In presenting direct quotations from survey responses, original spelling, grammar, and punctuation have been preserved to accurately reflect the respondents' voices.)

- "All the materials I had used were, frames, canvas for painting and painting. So I use how it needs to be ☺"
- "For the construction of an art installation, the development of bidimensional projects and planning of other work."
- "Yarns for tufted artworks, wood for creating tufting frames, light wood for hanging"
- "I used materials in an exhibition; at using them in an ongoing project, used them for a print project and are using them in a long-term process/project as well. And somethings (like paint or screws, I will use on multiple projects going forward)... And that's just the beginning..."
- "Two workshops that I've held. For art and events."
- "Fixing up and constructing studio space, building structures for artwork storage, various use at the studio and as part of installation structures"
- "As a canvas, for drawing and painting, as a container to travel with liquids to an artist residency, part of a display."
- "Paints to paint large surfaces of a mural"
- "Communal art workshop. My own art projects."
- "We have built set props and other structures for Koekeittiö's events"

- "Structure for sculptures, construction elements and protective gear, canvas, etc."
- "Building frames and structures"
- "I made 2 keychains"
- "I used them as materials and parts of my artworks and in workshops."

According to the questionnaire responses, the materials sourced from SWAMP are used in a wide variety of projects. Predominantly, they are directly incorporated into art creation, ranging from painting and sculpture to installations and mixed media projects. A significant portion of the materials also supports the infrastructure of the art world, being used to build studios, exhibitions, and set up new art spaces.