

Arts and Cultural Participation in the Formal Education Landscape

This edition of Culture Bytes focuses on trends in student participation in the arts within formal education. Data is drawn from the 2025 Singapore Cultural Statistics Report, an annual publication on the state of the arts and cultural landscape in Singapore.

Executive Summary

Overall participation in the arts within formal education remained relatively stable from 2020 to 2024. The percentage of students involved in arts-related co-curricular activities (CCAs), enrolment in the School of the Arts (SOTA) and full-time tertiary arts courses were sustained. However, in all three areas, enrolment and take-up rates across art forms have shifted.



Students in Arts-related CCAs

From 2020 to 2024, the proportion of students in arts-related CCAs dipped by 2 percentage points (pp) – from 25% to 23%.¹

Fig. 1 Number of Students in Arts-related CCAs and Representation in Total Cohort across Primary and Secondary schools, Junior Colleges and Centralised Institutes

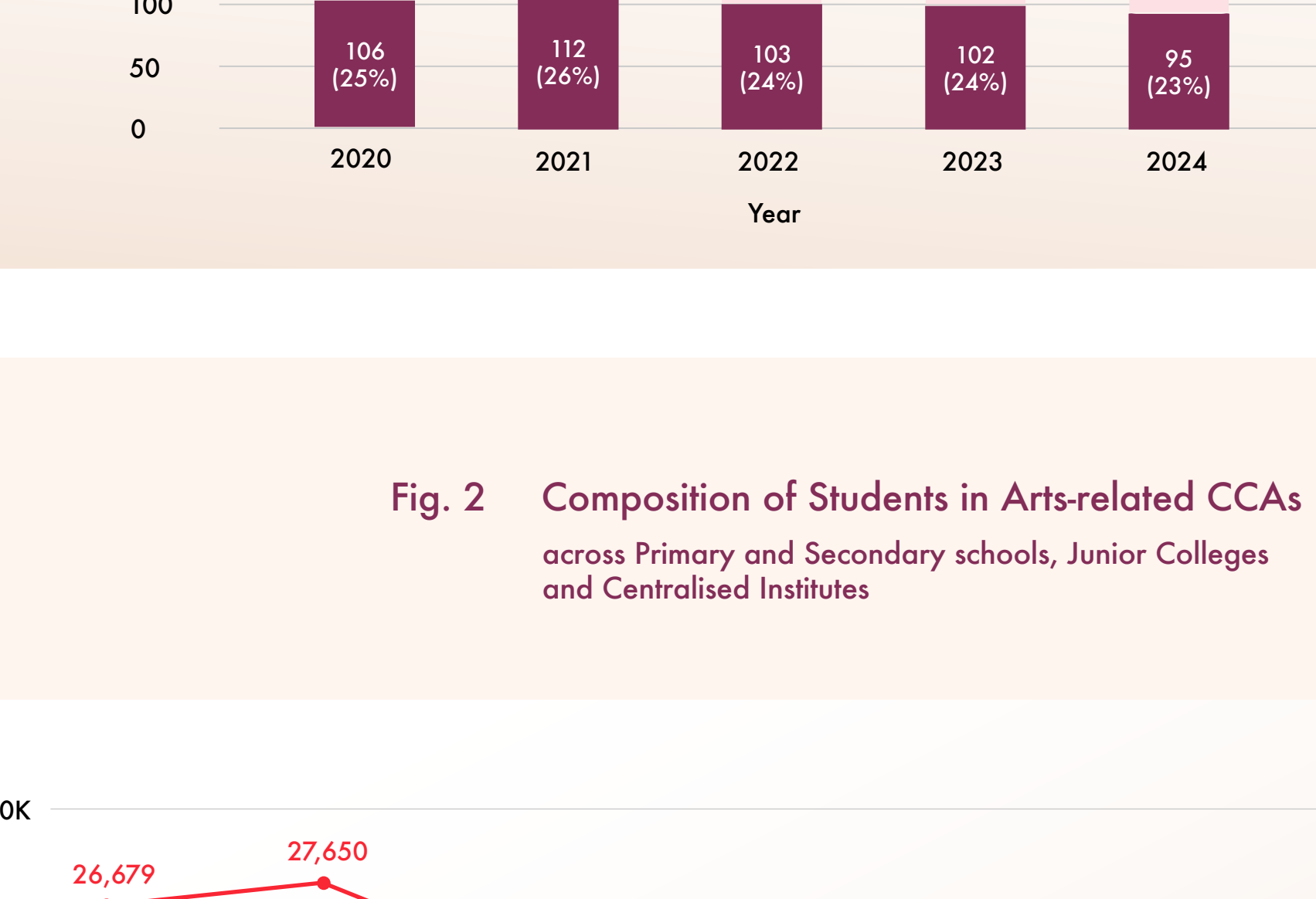
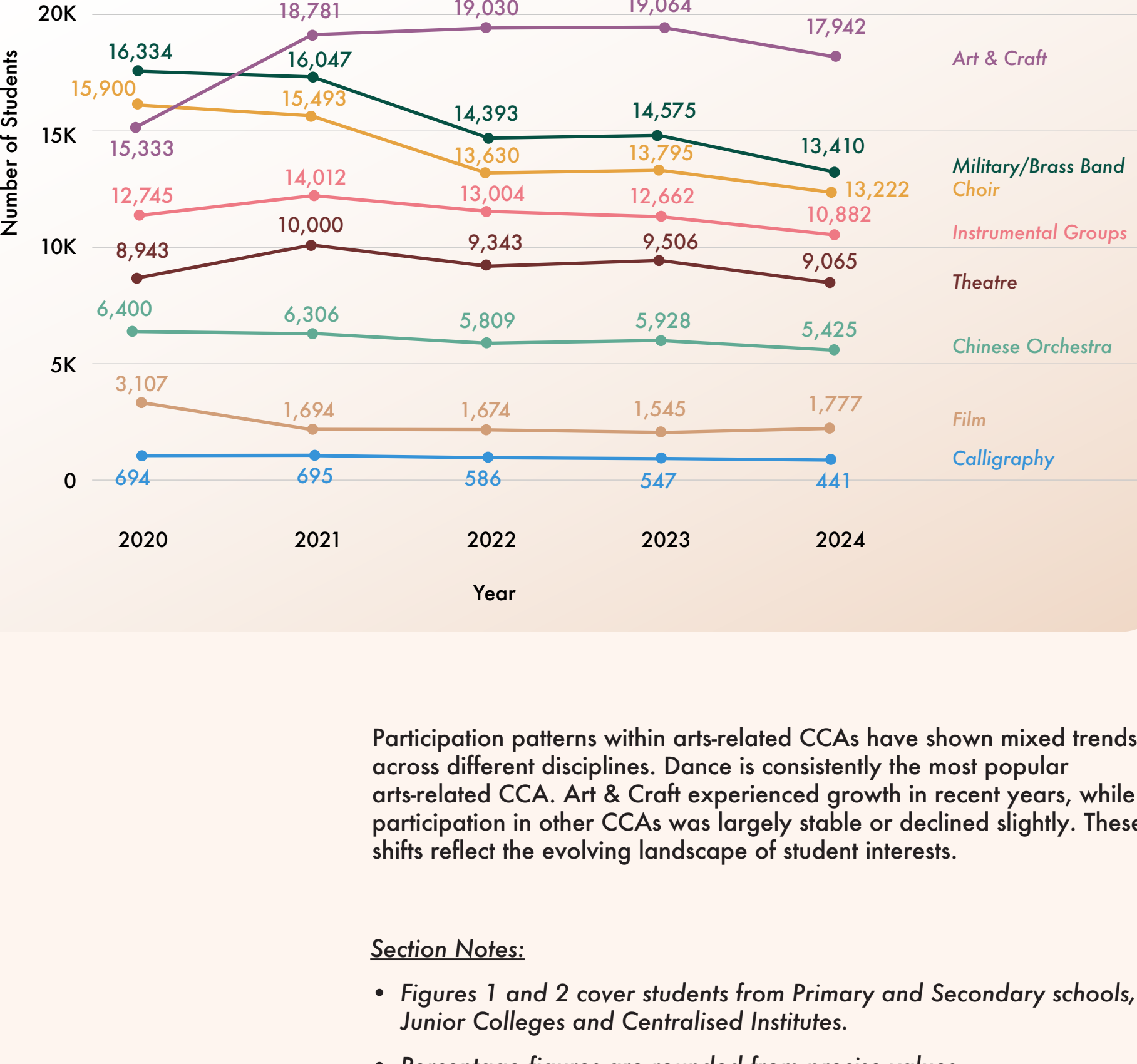


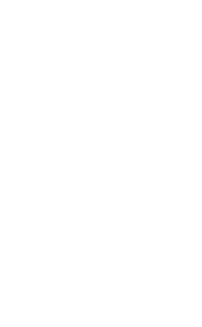
Fig. 2 Composition of Students in Arts-related CCAs across Primary and Secondary schools, Junior Colleges and Centralised Institutes



Participation patterns within arts-related CCAs have shown mixed trends across different disciplines. Dance is consistently the most popular arts-related CCA. Art & Craft experienced growth in recent years, while participation in other CCAs was largely stable or declined slightly. These shifts reflect the evolving landscape of student interests.

Section Notes:

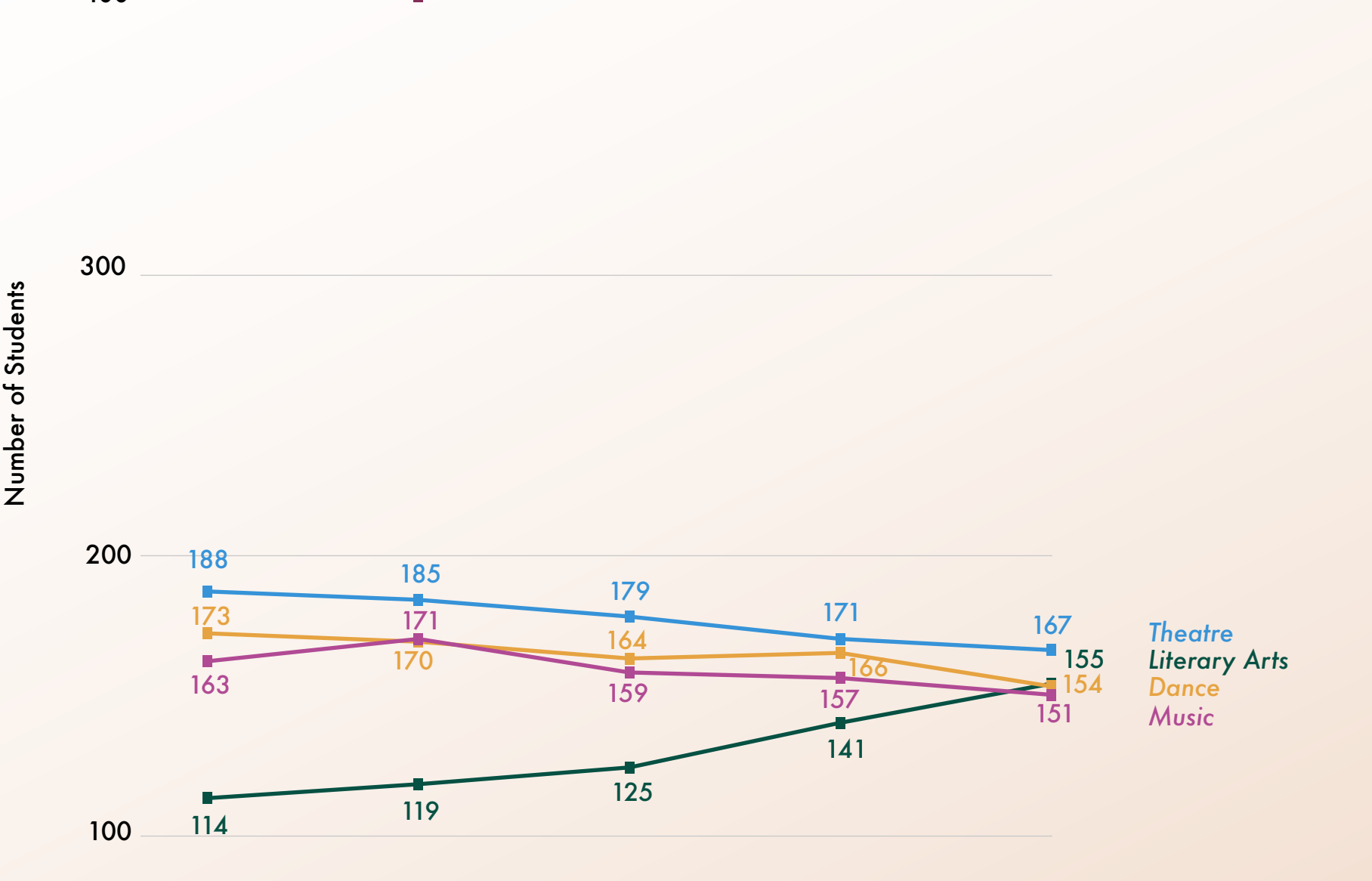
- Figures 1 and 2 cover students from Primary and Secondary schools, Junior Colleges and Centralised Institutes.
- Percentage figures are rounded from precise values.
- CCA offerings differ across school types and individual schools. The categories shown represent the full range of CCAs available across Primary and Secondary schools, Junior Colleges and Centralised Institutes, though not all schools offer CCAs in every category.



Enrolment in School of the Arts

Overall enrolment at SOTA held steady at around 1,100 to 1,150 annually. From 2020 to 2024, Visual Arts attracted the highest enrolment, while Literary Arts enrolment grew consistently (Figure 3).²

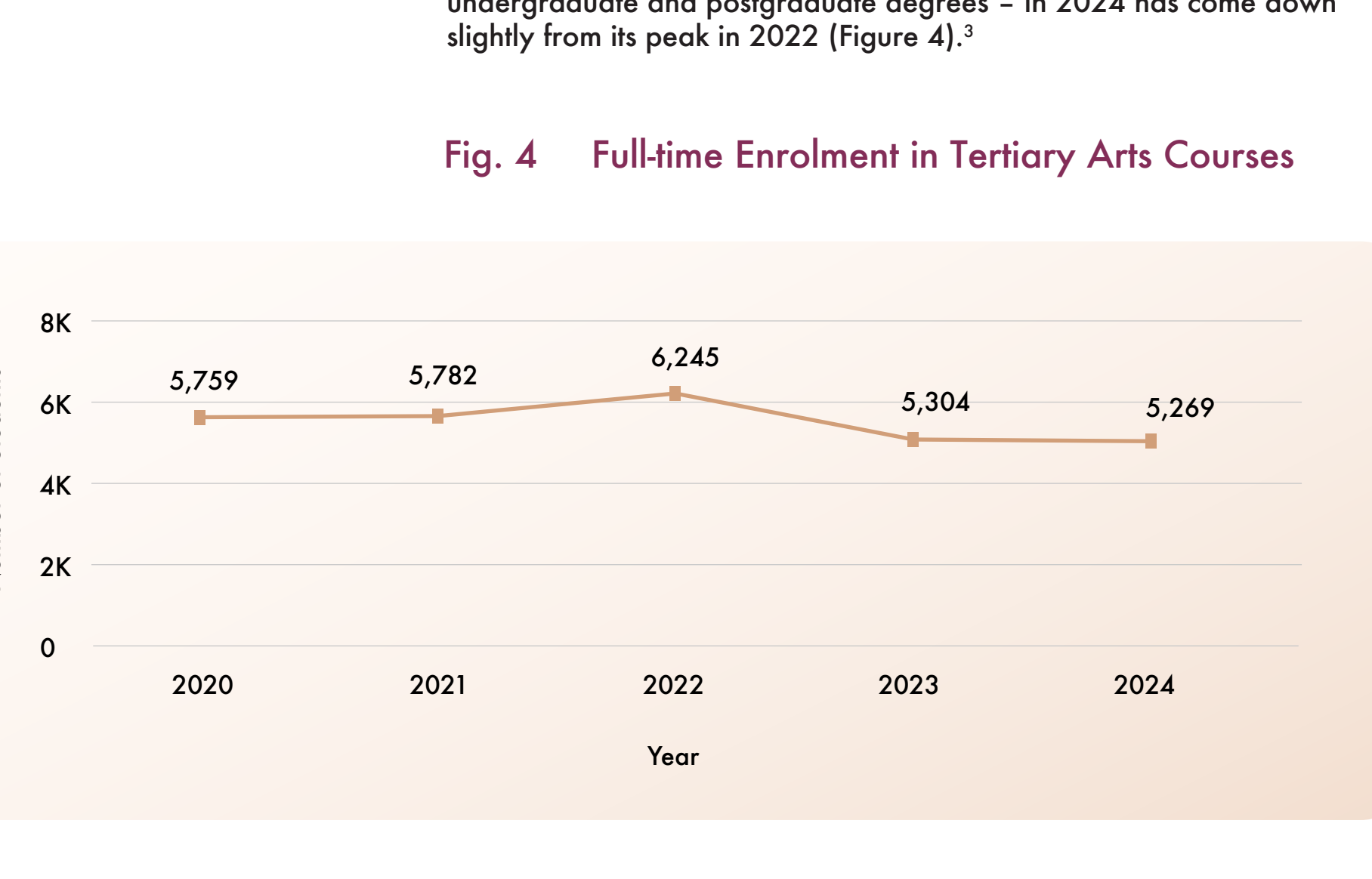
Fig. 3 Enrolment in School of the Arts



Full-time Enrolment in Tertiary Arts Courses

Full-time enrolment in tertiary arts courses – diplomas, graduate diplomas, undergraduate and postgraduate degrees – in 2024 has come down slightly from its peak in 2022 (Figure 4).³

Fig. 4 Full-time Enrolment in Tertiary Arts Courses



Compositional shifts in enrolment occurred across artistic disciplines and educational pathways, as shown in Figures 5, 6 and 7.

Educational Pathways from 2020 to 2024

Over 2020–2024, there appears to be a shift away from diplomas towards undergraduate programmes in tertiary arts enrolment.

- Diplomas**, while still the dominant pathway, saw their share decline from **64.7% to 59.6%**.
- In contrast, **undergraduate** programmes grew steadily, rising from **30.1% to 37.6%** of total enrolment.
- Postgraduate** studies remained the smallest segment and continued to shrink, dropping from **5.2% to 2.8%**.

Key Changes in Artistic Disciplines from 2020 to 2024

Diploma: At the diploma level, the most notable shift was in Visual Arts, which saw the largest gain in enrolment share, rising from 18.9% to 25.5% and overtaking both Film and Music. Film and Music, previously the leading disciplines at around 20% each, both declined to approximately 16%.

Discipline	2020 Share (%)	2024 Share (%)	Change (pp)
Music	20.0	16.0	-4.0
Dance	2.9	3.3	+0.4
Theatre	9.2	5.4	-3.8
Visual Arts	18.9	25.5	+6.6
Arts Administration	14.2	13.7	-0.5
Arts Education	2.5	5.3	+2.8
Film	20.5	16.4	-4.1
Others	11.8	14.4	+2.6

Undergraduate: At the undergraduate level, Literary Arts remained the most prominent discipline and extended its lead, recording the largest increase of 12.6pp to reach 56.4% of enrolment. Music held relatively steady at around 19%, while Visual Arts grew notably from 5.4% to 9.5%. Theatre, however, saw the sharpest decline, falling from 12.6% to 4.2%.

Discipline	2020 Share (%)	2024 Share (%)	Change (pp)
Music	19.7	19.0	-0.7
Theatre	12.6	4.2	-8.4
Visual Arts	5.4	9.5	+4.1
Literary Arts	43.8	56.4	+12.6
Arts Administration	10.8	9.0	-1.8
Arts Education*	0.2	0.0	-0.2
Film**	4.7	0.0	-4.7
Others	2.5	1.9	-0.6

* Undergraduate enrolment in arts education stopped from 2023.
** Undergraduate enrolment in film stopped from 2024.

Postgraduate: The postgraduate level demonstrated a shift away from single-discipline postgraduate study towards broader, multi-disciplinary programmes. Others (which includes multi-disciplinary programmes) recorded the largest gain, rising 16.8pp to 47.0%, while Music also grew strongly, up 11.1pp to 13.4%. In contrast, Literary Arts and Visual Arts' share of enrolment fell by 15.6pp and 14.2pp respectively.

Discipline	2020 Share (%)	2024 Share (%)	Change (pp)
Music	2.3	13.4	+11.1
Visual Arts	19.6	5.4	-14.2
Literary Arts	44.5	28.9	-15.6
Arts Administration	3.3	5.4	+2.1
Arts Education ⁴	0.0	0.0	0.0
Others	30.2	47.0	+16.8

Fig. 5 Diploma

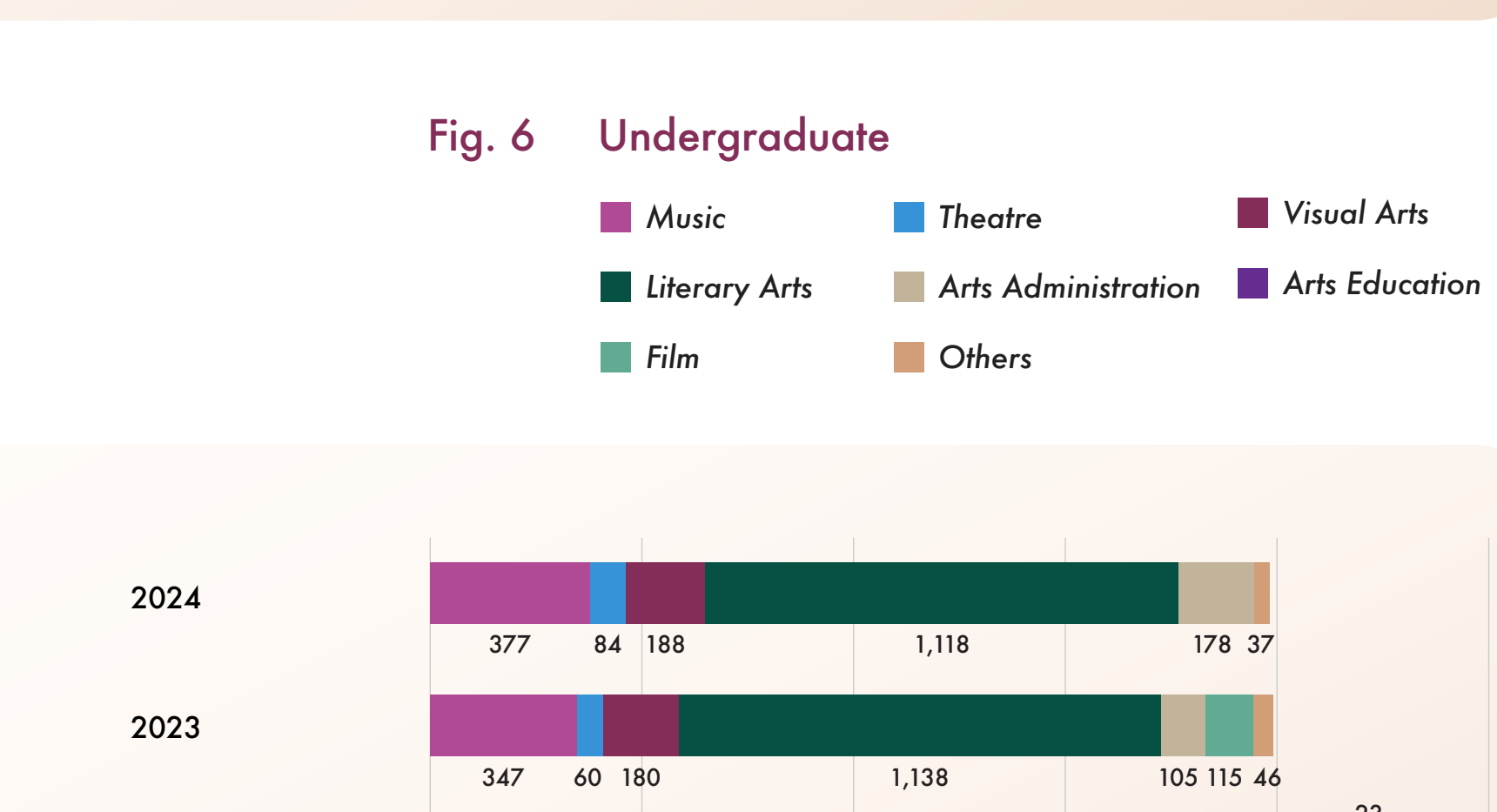


Fig. 6 Undergraduate

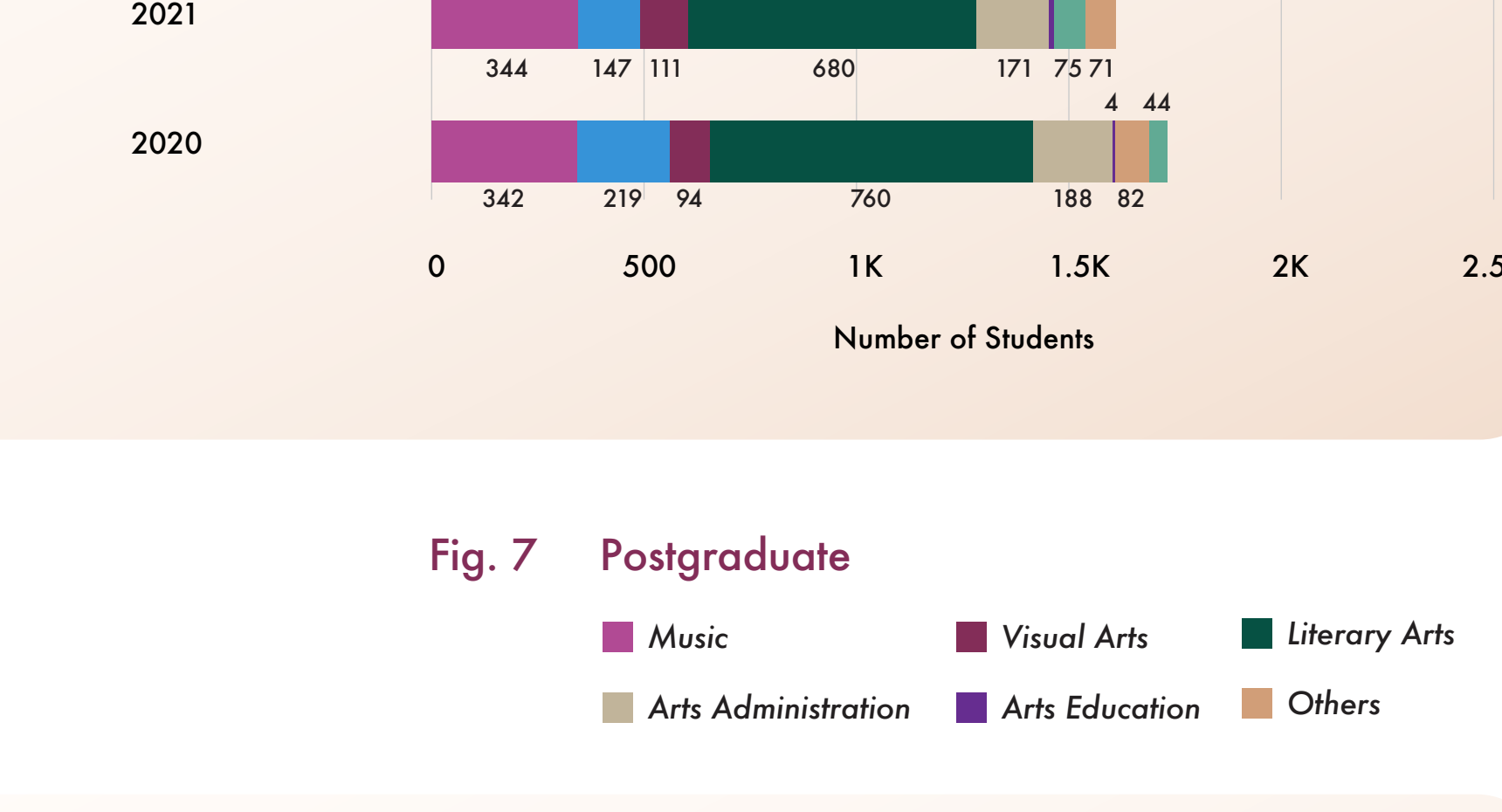
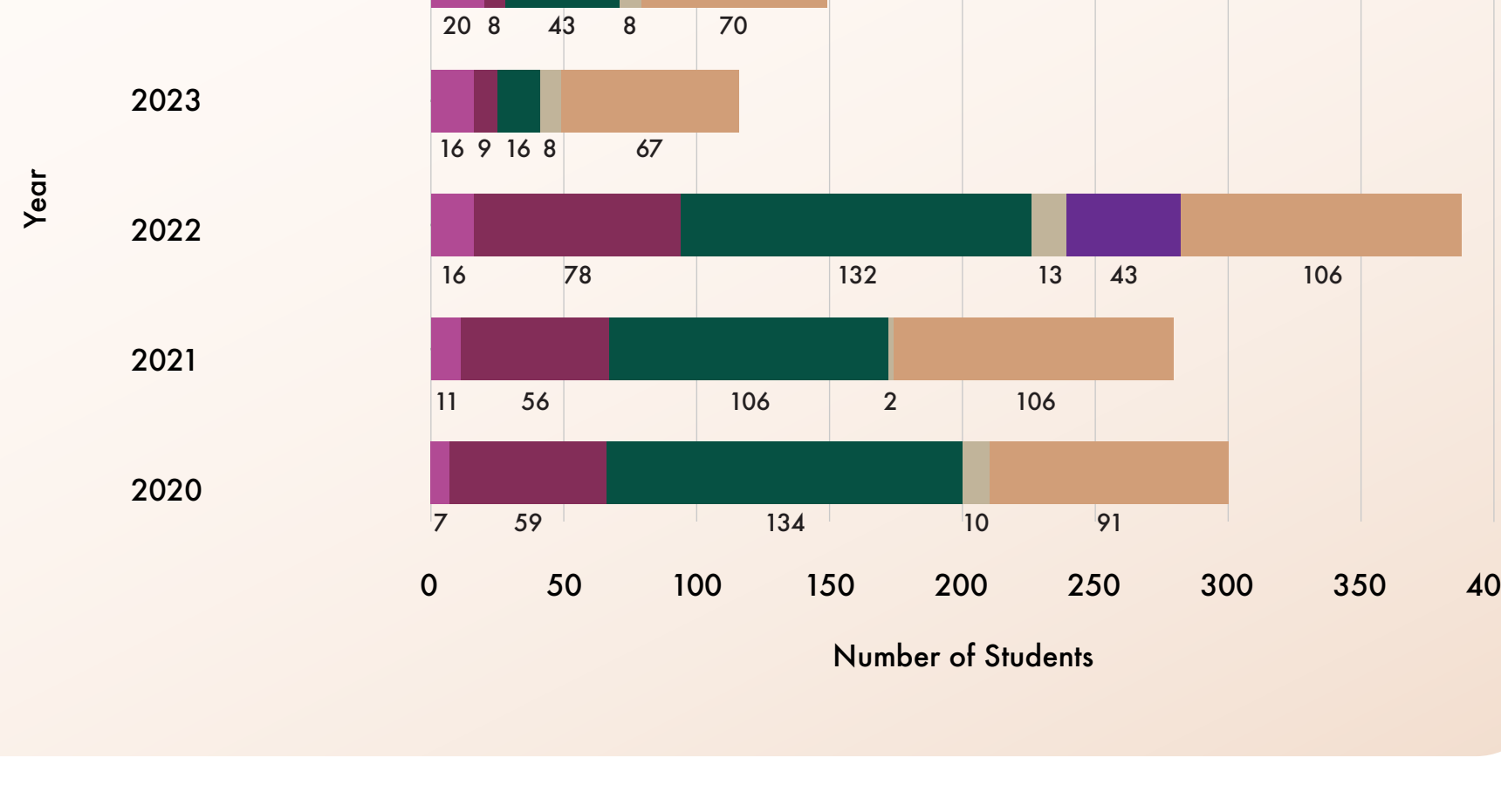


Fig. 7 Postgraduate



End Notes

- SCS Report 2025, Table 12: No. of Students in Arts-related Co-Curricular Activities. The Total No. of Students in Cohort, Total No. of Students in Arts-related Co-Curricular Activities (CCA), and Percentage (%) of Students in Arts-related CCA, enrolment students from Primary and Secondary schools, Junior Colleges and Centralised Institutes. Participation rates reflect total CCA enrolment across arts-related CCA, where students participating in multiple arts CCA are counted accordingly.
- SCS Report 2025, Table 21: Enrolment in School of the Arts
- SCS Report 2025, Table 20: Full-time Enrolment in Tertiary Arts Courses. Total enrolment refers to the aggregate sum of enrolled students from full-time arts-related courses as tracked by NAC. Data from 2016 onwards has been revised to include new full-time tertiary arts courses conducted by Singapore's 6 autonomous universities and 2 arts institutions – the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts and LASALLE College of the Arts. Data on full-time enrolment in diploma-level courses in the arts includes students in graduate diploma arts courses. Data on full-time enrolment in diploma- and degree-level courses in film has been included since 2013. Data on diploma and degree-level courses categorised as "Others" includes multi-disciplinary programmes and arts-related programmes not elsewhere classified.
- In 2022, 43 postgraduate students enrolled in arts education. There were no other intakes in the period 2020–2024.

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