

TEA Wellness Survey

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Authors:

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Executive Summary:

Purpose and Scope: The Wellness Council recently conducted a survey of TEA members to get a snapshot surrounding their individual current and overall wellbeing. The objective of the survey was to provide the TEA with a baseline of data that can be applied to advise the association and provide wellness support to the global membership.

This report serves to brief TEA leadership and members about the prevailing state of the industry.

The findings reveal several concerning trends that identify extremely high levels of burnout from participants. If left unaddressed, this burnout poses a significant risk to the sector.

Furthermore, it provides evidence-based recommendations tailored to the unique pressures of the themed entertainment sector that suggest these factors will inevitably result in:

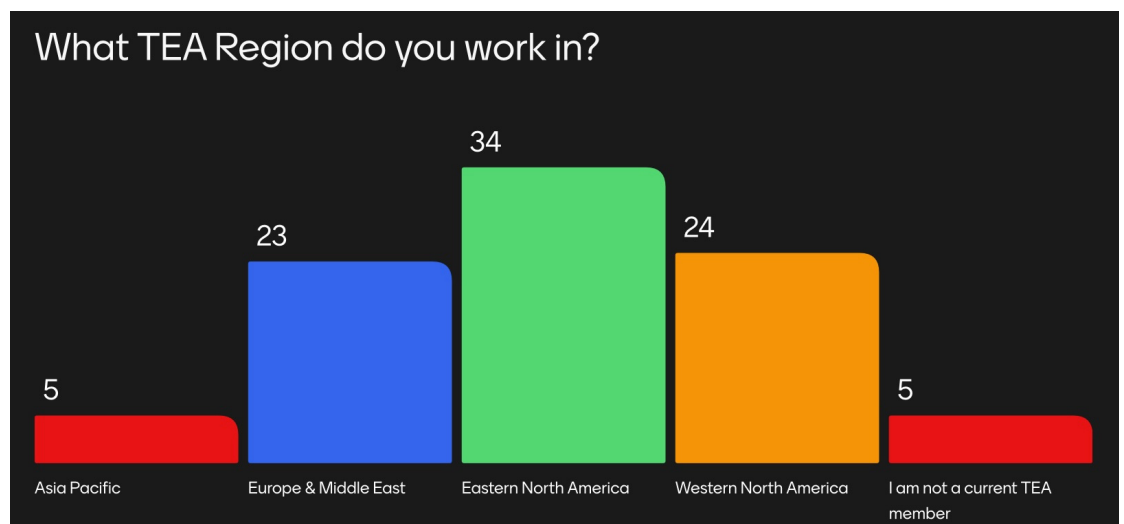
1. **Diminished productivity:** A direct correlation between declining member wellness and operational output.
2. **Stagnated long-term growth:** Potential systemic threats to the vitality and innovation of the broader Experience Economy.

The report outlines the proactive measures currently being facilitated by the Wellness Council.

The Wellness Council remains committed to fostering a resilient workforce that can sustain the creative and commercial excellence of the TEA for years to come.

Data Sample:

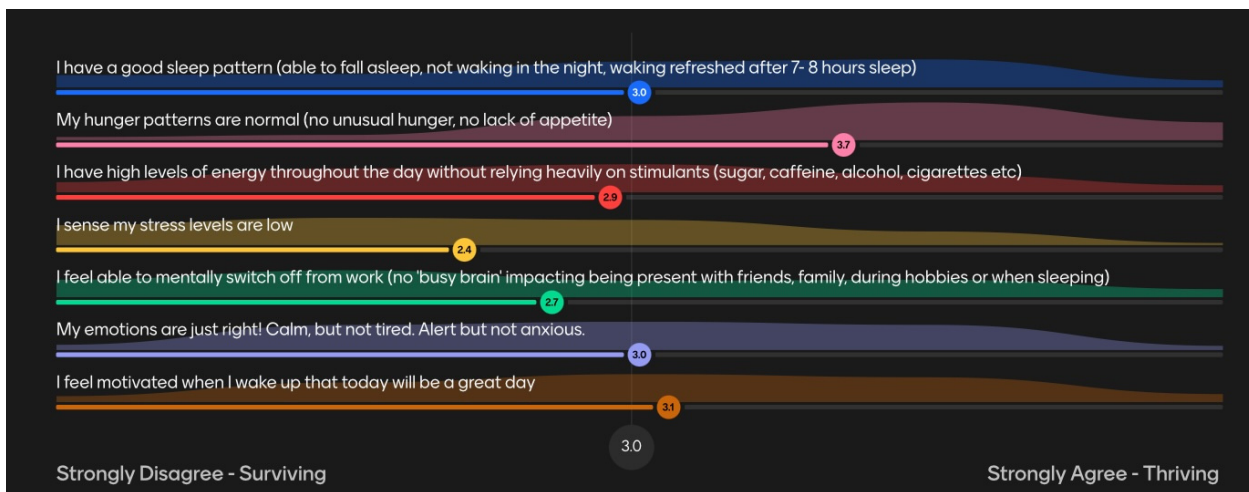
- 91 respondents from September to November 2025
- Most responses were from North America (63%)
- Over 70 comments (suggestions) on Wellness initiatives for the TEA



Individual Feedback



We asked for feedback on TEA member burnout and these were the results:



*the survey specifically asked for feedback on TEA Member's burnout over the last 3 months

What this shows us:

The overall picture **shows that participants are coping, not thriving.**

No survey category reaches "Good" or "Thriving" when results are averaged.

Lowest scores: stress, switching off, motivation on waking.

Coping indicates people are managing day-to-day demands, but with **insufficient energy, recovery, or resilience.**

Sustained coping is **commonly linked to chronic stress and burnout risk**, with implications for performance, engagement, and long-term mental health.

DIFFICULT EMOTIONS

34% said they are 'struggling' or 'surviving' with their emotions

MOTIVATION

38% only 38% of respondents said 'when they wake up, they feel motivated today will be a good day'

STRESS LEVELS

54% said they are 'struggling' or 'surviving' with their stress levels

SWITCHING OFF

51% said they are 'struggling' or 'surviving' when trying to switch off from work

"PRESENTATIONS ON MAINTAINING WORK-LIFE BALANCE"

"WEBSITE LINKS TO ASSISTANCE"

"MORE EVENT PRESENTATIONS"

"WEBINARS ON WELLNESS"

Why this matters: Chronic stress and low motivation are recognised burnout markers (**Khammissa et al., 2022**). Research shows that stress, emotional strain and disengagement are not just personal issues, they are linked with reduced productivity, higher absenteeism, lower performance and turnover risk, affecting organisational success. (**Chen et al., 2022; Gallup, 2021; Khammissa et al., 2022**)

TEA Events Feedback



When asking members about TEA events, it appears TEA events **provide good levels of network time** (3.6) with the **lowest scores associated with “rest time” and “intensity of the schedule”**

REST TIME

37% said that ‘rest time’ in between daytime and evening events were ‘very poor’ or ‘not so great’.

“LONGER DOWNTIME BETWEEN LAST AFTERNOON SESSION AND FIRST EVENING NETWORKING OR SOCIALISING”

“THE PACE IS RELENTLESS”

INTENSITY OF SCHEDULE

29% felt the intensity of the schedule was ‘very poor’ or ‘not so great’

“MORE BREAKS WOULD BE HELPFUL FOR ME AS I HAVE A DISABILITY THAT’S AIDED BY REST PERIODS.”

“TEA EVENTS ARE OVERWHELMING FOR INTROVERTS”

What this shows us: These scores indicate attending TEA events could contribute to burnout and feeling an **inability to meet their other personal or professional needs** whilst attending the events.

WELLNESS AT EVENTS

24% said that TEA events are ‘**Good – I am happy**’ in relation to Wellness.

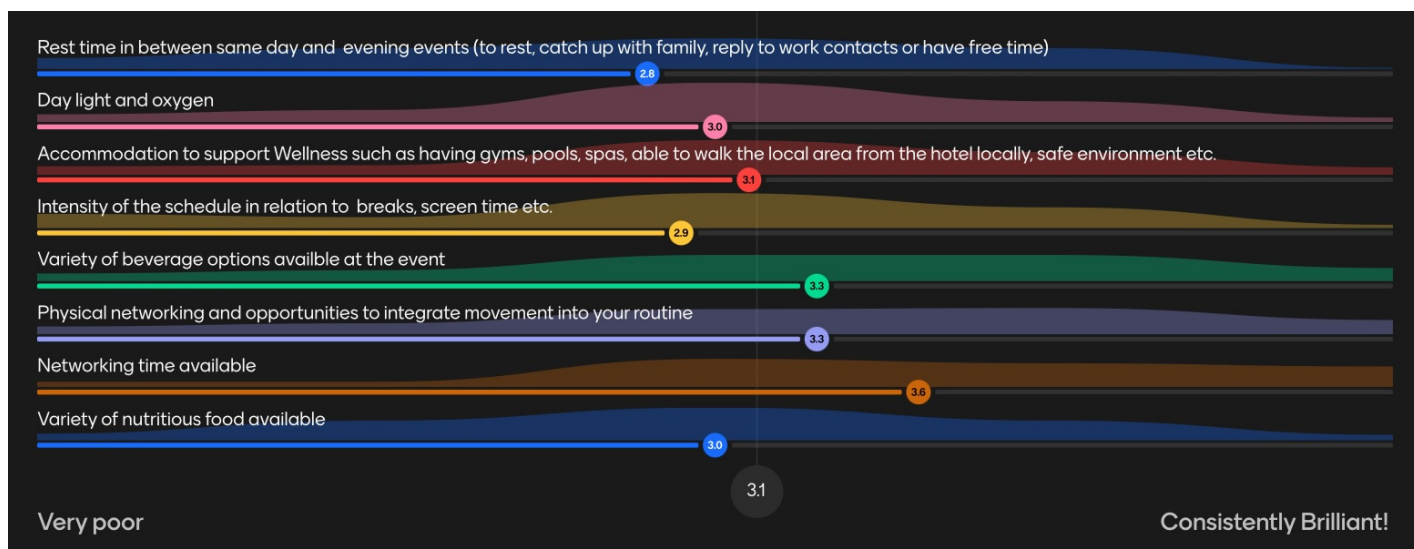
WELLNESS A EVENTS

24% “**very poor**” or ‘**not so great**’ in relation to Wellness

What this shows us: A wide variation, individual capacities and expectations among members, suggests different requirements that need future consideration.

Why this matters: Event fatigue and always-on cultures are increasing industry-wide (**Stadler et al., 2021; Yikilmaz - 2023**).

“I LOVE THE NETWORKING AND WOULD LIKE THAT TO BE MORE CONSISTENT. MORE “MINDFUL MOMENTS” AND “QUIET ROOMS AT EVENTS FOR INTROVERTS”



*The survey specifically referenced SATE, THEA's & INSPIRE

Leadership Feedback



COMPANIES

59%

said their companies are **taking steps to support their workforce**, but it appears inconsistent at times or has **only a minor positive impact**

GUIDANCE FOR MANAGERS WHO WANT TO DO MORE FOR EMPLOYEE WELLNESS BUT ARE CHALLENGED BY RESTRICTED BUDGETS AND INTENSE CUSTOMER EXPECTATION.

MANAGERS

51%

of managers said they are **taking only 'minor steps'** at present

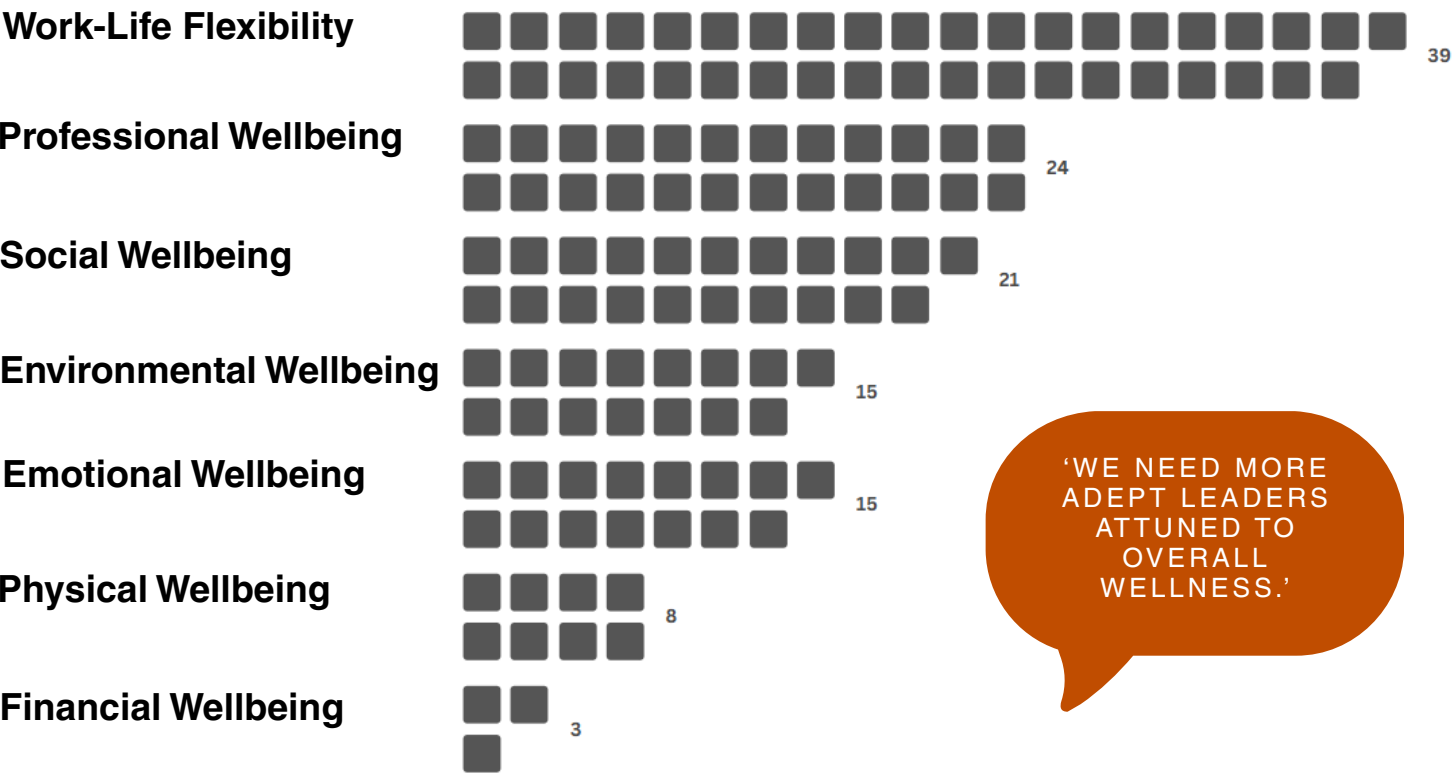
REAL, RESULTS-ORIENTED TRAINING, ESPECIALLY ON STRESS MANAGEMENT, BALANCE, AND LEADERSHIP WELLNESS.

WELLBEING AS A PRIORITY

44%

of managers actively see Wellbeing as a 'priority' in their roles

Key initiatives taking place by managers:



'WE NEED MORE ADEPT LEADERS ATTUNED TO OVERALL WELLNESS.'

What this shows us: Environmental, emotional, physical and financial wellbeing are the least considered initiatives in companies, yet they can have a profound impact on employee wellbeing and productivity.

Industry Findings



Summary:

If assumed that the **91 respondents** represents a **reasonably strong indication of the health of the themed entertainment industry** then there is a **cause for concern**. When an entire industry experiences widespread burnout, the long-term impact extends far beyond individual exhaustion. This **undermines productivity, innovation, talent retention and overall economic sustainability**.

The Themed Entertainment industry could be facing a **chronic and unsustainable burnout crisis**, as well as the perception by Generation Z to be an **unattractive work environment**

Why this matters: Research consistently shows that burnout reduces job performance and increases withdrawal behaviours (e.g., **Schaufeli & Bakker, Journal of Applied Psychology**), contributes to voluntary turnover (**Work Institute Retention Report**), and impairs creativity and problem-solving under chronic stress (**Byron et al., Journal of Business Research**). **Mavri & Karfakis (2025)** carried out empirical research showing that work-life balance significantly influences job satisfaction among Generation Z workers, implying that balance is a priority in shaping work preferences.

How this industry is different to others:

Looking through the lens of VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Ambiguous), we are able to see the the scale of crossing stress and pressure on the themed entertainment industry. **When these pressures occur at scale, industries face instability in the long term** if changes are not made, whether to the industry or how we react to that pressure. See the VUCA elements for the industry described below for context. These are not comparable to other industries.

Risk Factors:

- Reduced productivity and work quality
- Increased turnover and loss of institutional knowledge
- Decline in innovation and creative capacity
- Higher healthcare and absenteeism costs
- Long-term reputational and talent pipeline
- Negatively influences job satisfaction among Gen Z

VOLATILE

- Geographical Market
- Exchange rates
- Trade tariffs
- Country conflict

AMBIGUOUS

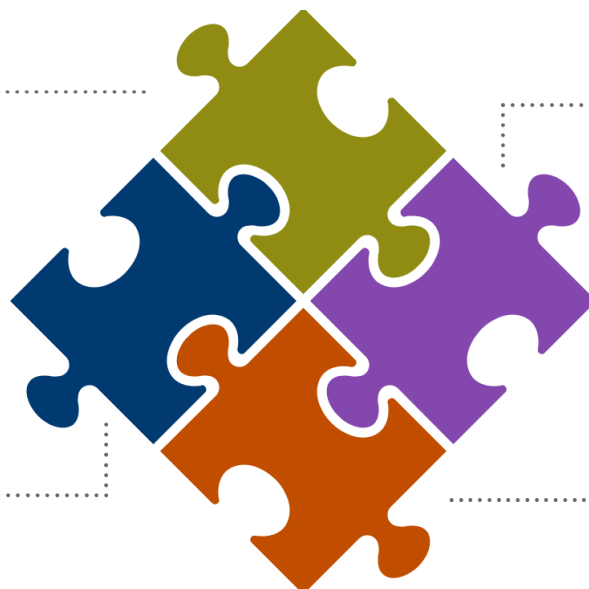
- Innovation that keeps evolving
- Unforeseen problems
- Project delays & bottlenecks

UNCERTAIN

- Lack of predictable revenue
- Reliance on cash reserves
- Large freelance population
- Currency Fluctuation

COMPLEX

- Multi layered projects with multiple stakeholders
- Multiple time zones
- Multiple languages



Wellness Council Strategy



Informed by the survey feedback and external studies, the Wellness Council has developed three key areas of focus to guide its approach:

Wellness Website ✓

Development of dedicated wellness pages on www.teaconnect.org, including a central landing page featuring curated and vetted links to external support services. A members-only section will provide practical resources such as short articles, manager toolkits, and concise “cheat sheets” to support wellbeing leadership across organisations.

Industry Events ✓

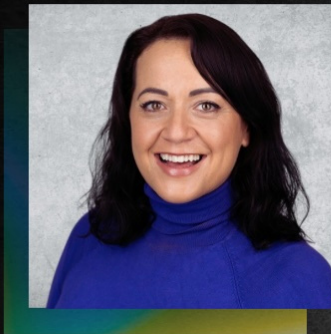
Wellness Council members who sit on Divisional Boards across APAC, Eastern North America, Western North America and Europe & Middle East will provide sounding-board advice to event leaders. This support will include guidance on high-level event design programming, session break considerations and attendee wellbeing, as well as design support and advisory input for wellness-focused sessions initiated by event leaders.

Virtual Wellness Events ✓

Leveraging the existing Round Table schedule, the Wellness Council will host three virtual wellness events annually. These sessions will be open to all members globally and will focus on priority wellbeing topics identified through member feedback.



TEA WELLNESS COUNCIL 2026 MEMBERS



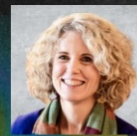
EMMA NEWELL

Chair

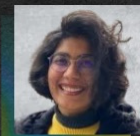
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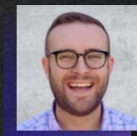
MICHAEL ACEVEDO
Eastern NA Board



LAURENCE BECKERS
EME Board



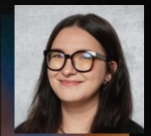
SAMEEKSHA BHATIA
EME Next Gen Committee



ERIK ESSIG
Eastern NA Board



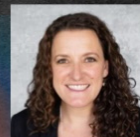
BJÖRN HEERWAGEN
EME Board



SYDNEY HOLT
Western NA Board



ENYA HUANG
APAC Board



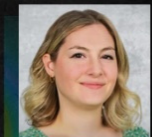
COURTNEY KLEINMAN
Based in Western NA



CLARA RICE
International Board



KATE MCCONNELL
Based in Western NA



DANIELLE LINTOTT
EME Board Past-President

Who we are:

- Facilitators of member conversations
- Advisors of TEA event design
- Providers of pre-published vetted information

What we are not:

- Mental health experts - instead we signpost
- Counsellors
- We don't talk about what we are not qualified to talk about

Our Mindset

The Wellness Council is an 'invitation' to focus on health, not a mandate.
We never assume all people and cultures are the same when it comes to Wellness.



**Supporting TEA
events & members**



**Impacting industry
change**



**Encouraging
health as a priority**

Authors:



Emma Newell - Strategy, Culture & Leadership Coach:

Emma studied Business Studies at Brighton University and is CIPD qualified, as well as a Level 7 ILM Leadership Coach.

With over 20 years' experience in People & Culture, driving employee engagement and organisational effectiveness and reducing team burnout, she now specialises as a Strategy Coach to small entrepreneurial companies within themed entertainment by developing clear company strategies and aligning them effectively with their people. <https://magneticmooncoaching.com/>



Laura Watson - Nutritional Therapist:



Laura is a qualified Nutritional Therapist with a First-Class BSc (Hons) degree from the Institute for Optimum Nutrition and the University of Portsmouth.

She works with both individuals and organisations, supporting energy, focus, and overall wellbeing through practical, sustainable nutrition strategies. Her work spans one-to-one clinical support, where she takes a personalised, in-depth approach to health, as well as corporate wellness, helping teams perform at their best in demanding environments.

Before training as a Nutritional Therapist, Laura spent over 20 years creating world-class visitor experiences, leading high-performing teams, and working within fast-paced, high-pressure environments. This experience underpins her approach today, allowing her to design realistic, effective solutions that truly support people in the context of their day-to-day lives. <https://www.watsonyourplate.co.uk/>

Academic References:

- **Chen, B. et al. (2022)** 'Work stress, mental health, and employee performance', *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1006580.
- **Gallup, Inc. (2021)** State of the global workplace report, Gallup.com. Available at: <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/349484/state-of-the-global-workplace.aspx> (Accessed: 02 February 2026).
- **Khammissa, R.A.G. et al. (2022)** 'Burnout phenomenon: Neurophysiological factors, clinical features, and aspects of management', *Journal of International Medical Research*, 50(9). doi:10.1177/03000605221106428.
- **Stadler, R., Walters, T. and Jepson, A. (2021)** Stress, mental health and well-being in the events industry: Report of key findings, University of Hertfordshire (Research Profiles). Available at: <https://researchprofiles.herts.ac.uk/en/publications/stress-mental-health-and-well-being-in-the-events-industry-report/> (Accessed: 02 February 2026).
- **Yikilmaz, I. (2023)** Burnout in hospitality sector: A focused review of the research literature, Research Gate. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/377576879_Burnout_in_Hospitality_Sector_A_Focused_Review_of_The_Research_Literature (Accessed: 02 February 2026).