# Kickstart my chart

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## executive summary

Over $2 billion has been raised using the massively successful crowdfunding service, Kickstarter, but not every project has found success. Of the more than 300,000 projects launched on Kickstarter, only a third have made it through the funding process with a positive outcome.

Obtaining funding on Kickstarter requires meeting or exceeding the project's initial goal, so many organizations spend months looking through past projects in an attempt to discover some trick for finding success. This summary attempts to show some of the trends that might occur in order for Kickstarter campaigns to be successful.

*“We'd love it if everybody had a Kickstarter project. I believe that everyone has some kind of creative project that they think about - whether it's something small they'd like to do over a weekend with friends, or it's the film they've always wanted to make, whatever.”*

***Perry Chen, Kickstarter Co-founder***

**Comparison of Parent Categories by Country**

To examine the success of Kickstarter campaigns, a set of data was examined using Microsoft Excel. Four thousand past projects were analyzed to determine success states of projects in four different categories: *canceled, failed, currently live*, and *successful*. These projects took place all over the world, and were identified by categories and subcategories, percent funded, average donation, and launched date compared to deadline.

At first glance, looking at worldwide data and parent categories, it appears that the top three most successful types of Kickstarter campaigns are in the categories of the arts, that is, theater, music, film & video, and sometimes photography (Figure 1). However, while the same holds true when analyzing the United States or Canada by themselves, the more successful categories can change depending on the country (Figure 2, Figure 3). For example, technology is a popular and successful Kickstarter campaign category in countries sampled within the European Union.

Several of these countries (Austria, Germany, Denmark, Spain, Ireland, Italy, and Sweden) appear to indicate that success in funding technology projects are on par or surpass those of the arts (Figure 4). For clarification on which countries are currently included in the European Union, please review Figure 5.

New Zealand and Australia are also most successful in artistic campaigns, but it should be noted that Australia has similar successes in games and technology as well (Figure 6).

I did not have many countries in the Asian region of the world in the dataset, but of those I did, Hong Kong and Singapore indicate very few Kickstarter campaigns or successes. Descriptive statistics conclude an attempt to garner interest in arts and technology, with successes only in the category of theater arts (Figure 7).

The only data collected for this study from South America was in Mexico, indicating difficulty in finding funding for Kickstarter campaigns of any sort (Figure 8).

**Comparison of Sub-Categories by Country**

I can dig a little deeper into the dataset to determine which areas of each parent category are most popular for Kickstarter funding. Worldwide, we can see that the three most successful campaigns were in subcategories of “plays”, “rock”, and “documentaries”. This is consistent with the initial analysis in parent categories, in that the arts seem to be most commonly funded and meet the goals set up for those campaigns overall (Figure 8). Note that “plays” far out-succeed any other subcategory on a worldwide scale. The United States and Canada show similar results, with Canada probably showing a higher success rate for desktop video games rather than documentaries (Figures 9, 10).

European Union countries again, with focus on the arts, had their most successful campaigns in subcategories of plays, photobooks, and music subcategories such as rock, classical, and metal. It should be noted, however, that technology showed to be successful for some of these countries in the areas of hardware and space exploration. Germany, Denmark, Italy, and The Netherlands had successful campaigns in hardware, and Italy notably also had successful campaigning in space exploration. Some countries appear to have special interest in technological wearables (France), nonfiction writing (The Netherlands), and Spain had successful campaigns in many areas, including theater, music, video, and technology hardware (Figure 11).

New Zealand and Australia had successful subcategories in the arts, as indicated by the parent categories, such as television, theater spaces, and plays. It is notable, however, that Australia’s sub-categories indicated successful campaigns technology, specifically in space exploration.

The Asian representative data indicate that Singapore and Hong Kong have had very few attempts with Kickstarter. The only successful campaign was in Singapore, related to plays.

Finally, the only South American country included in the dataset, Mexico, did not have many attempts either, and no successes, although there are currently live campaigns in the sub-categories of theater spaces and plays.

**Campaign Durations**

My final analysis from the dataset included looking at the duration of projects compared to success. It would be an obvious assumption that the longer the campaign existed, the better the campaign did. However, as mentioned above, the most successful fundraising occurred in the areas of the arts. Technology thrived in some years as well. The campaigns that were most successful generally gained funding in the first three to five months, while those unsuccessful campaigns might have received funding right away, then appeared to drop off immediately afterward, then sometimes improving funding the following month, and dropping off again. It seems the more erratic the funding was in support of the campaign, the less likely it was to be successful. Although this cannot be said across the board, the most popular campaigns in the arts and technology appeared to exhibit this trend (Figure 12).

**Conclusion**

This data analysis generally indicates that the most successful Kickstarter campaigns sit squarely in the area of art, theater, or music. It should be noted that over time, technology projects are also popular among donors. Geographic location may also have an impact on which types of projects are most popular, but our dataset is very limited in terms of sample sizes from specific countries and areas of the world. For example, we have no data from Russia or China, and very little from Asia at all. Kickstarter is not available to some countries, and therefore, projects that might otherwise be in different categories, showing different levels of success may indicate an overall different conclusion. However, where Kickstarter is available, it appears that the arts are the most successful fundraisers, and projects obtaining funds in the first few months of launching tend to be more successful than those that do not receive consistent funding.

With additional data to add to the set, current data, and even adding more categories and subcategories beyond the scope of the project, may help further investigate into why some campaigns are more successful than others. How each campaign was advertised to an audience is not clear in the dataset either, a detail that might hold information on differences between success rates. For example, were successful campaigns requesting funds from people with a higher socio-economic status than others? Where did they advertise their campaign? What options are there for those trying to obtain funding in other countries? These types of details would provide additional information.

Figure 1. All Countries Sampled by Category



Figure 2. United States by Category



Figure 3. Canada by Category



Figure 4. European Union by Category



Figure 5. European Union Countries

Map

Description automatically generated

Figure 6. Australia and New Zealand by Category



Figure 7. Hong Kong and Singapore (Asian Datasets) by Category



Figure 8. Mexico by Category



Figure 9. Worldwide Subcategories



Figure 10. United States by Subcategory



Figure 11. Canada by Subcategories



Figure 12. All Kickstarter Campaigns by Duration.

