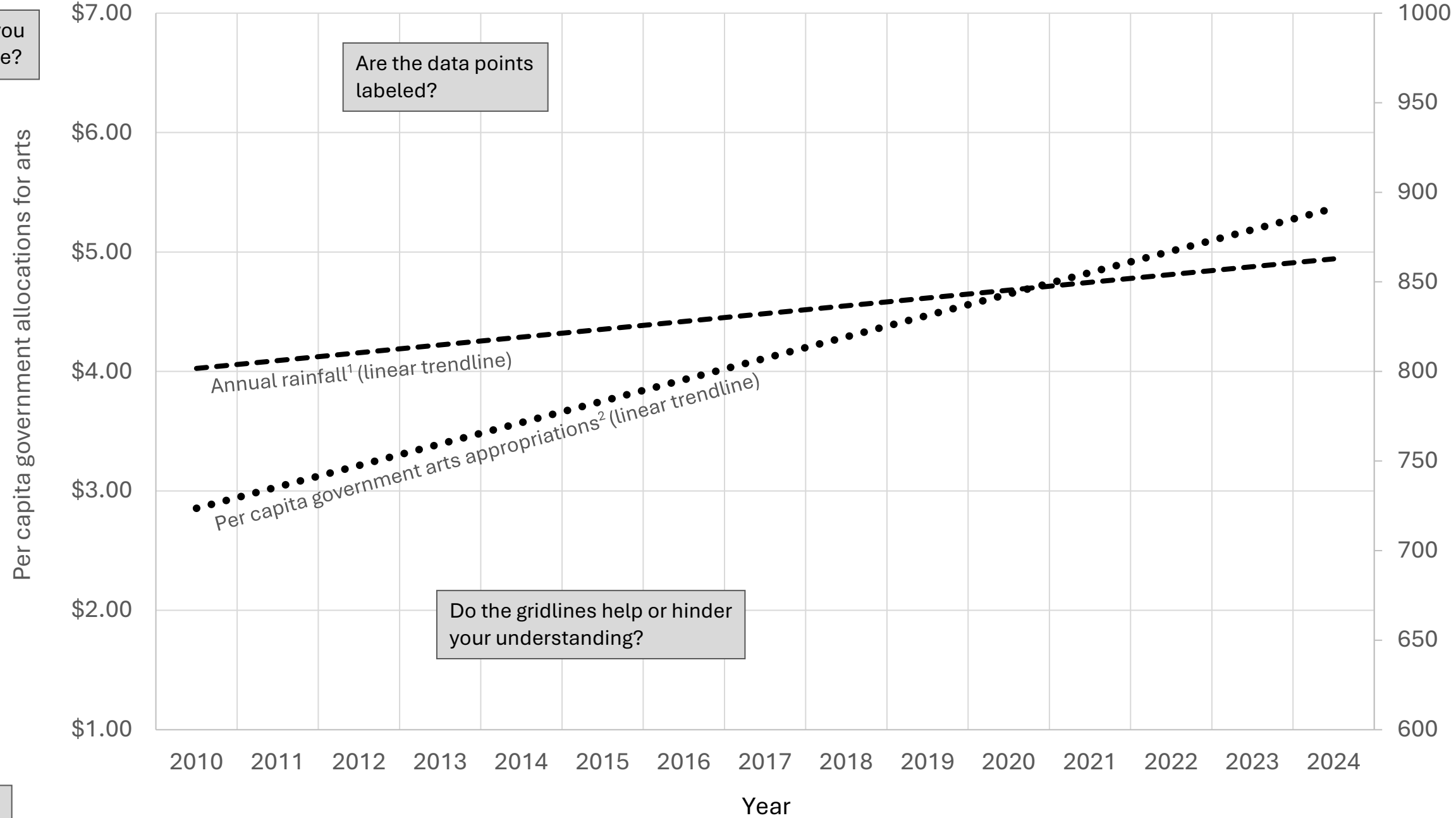


TELLING A LIE WITH TRUE DATA AND INFO-AESTHETICS

Does the chart title summarize its key point(s)?

Is your source where you found the chart reliable?



Are the data points labeled?

Do the gridlines help or hinder your understanding?

Is the secondary Y-axis scaled to the primary Y-axis?

Are the axis labels clear?

Do the units and increments on each axis make sense?

Can you find and check the original data?

Does the relative size of all elements compared to each other help you interpret the chart?

What story is told by the visualization? Does it seem plausible?

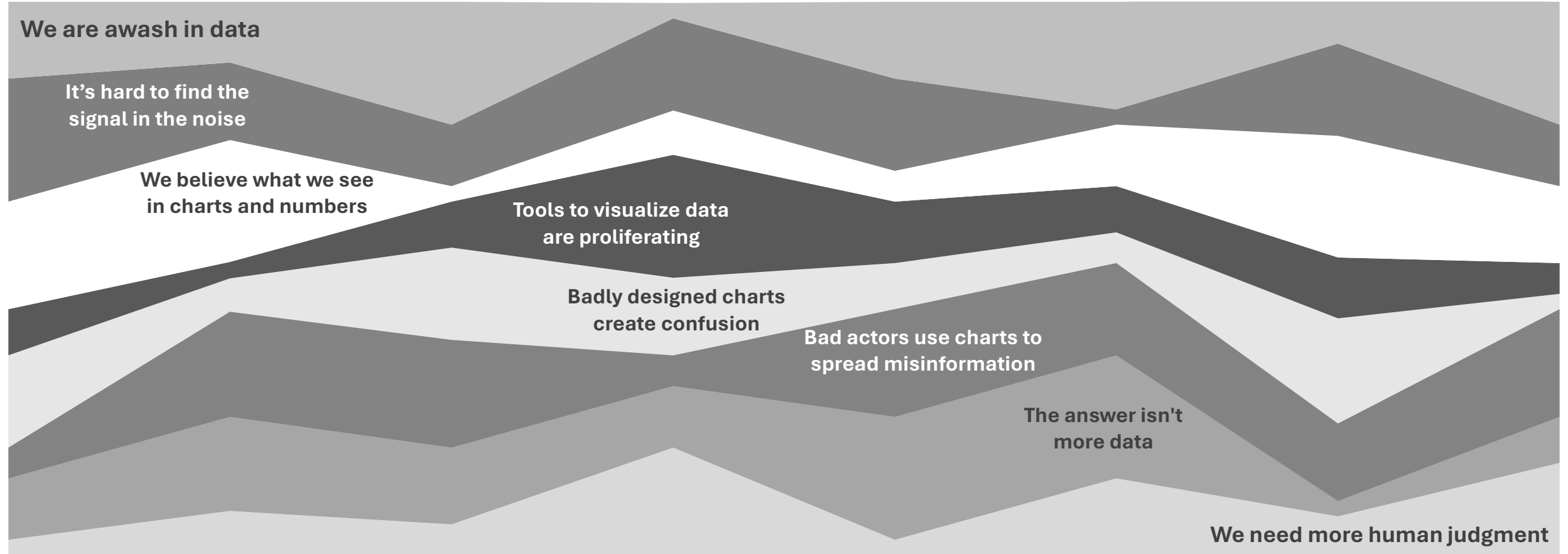
Data sources

¹ Hersbach, H., Bell, B., Berrisford, P., Biavati, G., Horányi, A., Muñoz Sabater, J., Nicolas, J., Peubey, C., Radu, R., Rozum, I., Schepers, D., Simmons, A., Soci, C., Dee, D., Thépaut, J-N. (2023): **ERA5 monthly averaged data on single levels from 1940 to present**. Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) Climate Data Store (CDS), DOI: 10.24381/cds.f17050d7 (Accessed 07-Jan-2025).

² Rhoads, M., & Rhee, N., (2026): **Public Funding for the Arts 2025**. National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA). <https://reader.giarts.org/read/public-funding-for-the-arts-2025> (Accessed 23-Mar-2026).

If it seems like it's getting harder to navigate all the data and charts you encounter in the wild...

...that's because it is.



TRUTH IN VISUALIZING

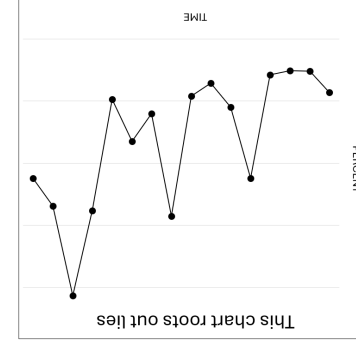
MAINTAINING HEALTHY SKEPTICISM
WITHOUT LOSING YOUR MIND

by Bronwyn Mauldin



lacountyarts.org/learning/arts-datathon

BAD NEWS: It can be hard to tell truth from fiction when it's communicated in a well-designed chart or graphic.



GOOD NEWS: You have the capacity to figure out when you're being lied to or misled.

EVEN BETTER NEWS: This zine will help you build skills to put your good judgment to work so you don't get fooled next time.

Data Visualization and Society

Alberto Cairo

"Data visualizations may seem to reflect reality in a more direct way than words because they are based on numbers, which seem trustworthy. But this does not mean that they are more true, in the sense that they offer a more objective representation of the world."

Effective Data Visualization

Stephanie Evergreen

"We visualize to add legitimacy or credibility. People are persuaded by numbers and these things and tell stories with numbers, we have a communication powerhouse."