

CONNECTIONS AND RESILIENCE THROUGH THE ARTS

Arts Policy Discussion Paper



ONTARIANS | ONTARIENS
FOR THE ARTS | POUR LES ARTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

On October 12, 2017, a group of artists, arts workers, and arts supporters met in Toronto to discuss how to convey the power and impact of the arts in Ontario to decision makers in time for the next provincial election. A Steering Committee of nine dedicated volunteers was struck to get the work started.

Ontarians for the Arts is an inclusive non-partisan movement intent on promoting the benefits of the arts in every city, community and reserve in every corner of the province.

This arts policy discussion paper was developed to encourage dialogue on a range of relevant issues with various stakeholders in the arts and culture sector, including everyday Ontarians and politicians of every stripe. Consultative reviews from November 2017 through February 2018 produced insightful and thoughtful ideas, which informed a variety of positions herein for consideration through 2021-22 and beyond. It is our wish to unleash the potential of the arts and cultural sector to benefit all Ontarians.

The arts are essential to our ability to build a dynamic, inclusive, integrated, healthy and productive society. 270,000 Ontario jobs are in culture (4% of the workforce) and the sector contributes \$25B GDP annually. Arts and culture animate communities and make Ontario an attractive place to invest. We can think of no better way to connect our citizens to one another and promote the distinctiveness of our province and its many peoples than through arts and culture. We must build bridges to promote cross-cultural understanding, citizenship, social participation and engagement. In a province as diverse as Ontario, it's an important way of ensuring that all Ontarians feel a real sense of belonging here.

In the lead-up to the provincial election on June 7, Ontarians for the Arts will engage with as many MPPs and Candidates in as many ridings as possible, while engaging with Ontarians and promoting the many intrinsic, social, cultural and economic benefits of the arts.

The Ontarians for the Arts Steering Committee

March 2018

RECOMMENDATIONS

INVEST IN THE ARTS

- 1** Follow through on the current increases planned for the Ontario Arts Council (OAC) to \$80M base by 2020-21 and commit to increasing the OAC's funding base to \$160M by 2025-26 to ensure greater accessibility to the arts for Ontarians. Changing demographics and substantial population growth over recent decades require the OAC to adapt to shifting cultural paradigms.
- 2** Create an infrastructure investment program that facilitates Ontarians' access to arts and culture, and helps leverage federal investments, with a \$30M annual base allocation for the next 10 years. Such a program should include components for: (a) infrastructure revitalization for state of good repair & energy efficiency; (b) new builds & facility expansions; and, (c) Indigenous reconciliation & cultural renewal.
- 3** Renew the Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund (OCAF) for the next four years, with progressive increments to its funding base from \$2.5M in 2018-2019 to \$4.5M in 2021-22.
- 4** Revitalize the Ontario Arts Foundation (OAF) by reintroducing a matching endowment incentives program with a \$25M strategic investment to encourage greater self-reliance.
- 5** Support the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) in improving accessibility to funding for the non-profit arts sector.

ARTS DEVELOPMENT & ARTS EDUCATION

- 6** Review the Ontario culture strategy every five years to ensure ongoing innovative artistic and cultural development is reflective of Ontario's many peoples.
- 7** Deliver the arts curriculum consistently and ensure access is the same across the province.
 - Resource the education system adequately to reach this goal.
 - Set and monitor benchmarks accordingly.
 - Set achievement and development guidelines in the arts to ensure they are prioritized and complement STEM (Science, Tech, Engineering and Math) goals.
- 8** Update the arts education curriculum to ensure it better reflects Ontario's evolving and pluralistic reality, including a respectful incorporation of Indigenous knowledge and worldviews as well as contemporary and historical art practices that reflect the diversity of nations on this land.

ONTARIO'S PLACE IN CANADA AND THE WORLD

- 9** Work with the Federal Minister and Department of Canadian Heritage, as well as crown agencies like the Canada Council for the Arts, to ensure historic inequities faced by artists and arts organizations based in Ontario are addressed.
- 10** Develop ways and means of consistently leveraging federal cultural infrastructure and cultural export investments. Complementary provincial programs will attract more federal investment.

HOW THE ARTS BENEFIT ONTARIANS

ACCESS AND ENGAGEMENT

Participating in the arts contributes to healthier, happier and better integrated communities.

Everyone should have access to the arts at any stage in life. Arts activities enrich quality of life.

Whether it's...

- a six-year old being soothed by a parent reading a short-listed Canadian children's book,
- the adolescent's self-discovery through art that results in empathy, motivation and improved grades,
- the single parent's pride watching her daughter sing in the local choir as she finds her voice,
- the tourist reading a book by a Francophone author from Hearst on the beach in Muskoka,
- or the seniors home animated by an afternoon of dance for differently-abled residents,

... the arts are essential to our ability to build a dynamic, inclusive, integrated, healthy and productive society.

ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

Ontario is at a critical juncture. With substantive changes to international trade agreements, sluggish growth, and an aging population, we can find resilience through sectors that support innovation, creativity, and future growth. Ontario is shifting toward a service and knowledge-based economy, while resource-based and manufacturing jobs are reduced or automated. The resiliency of the arts and culture sector may help us weather the shocks ahead and adapt to change. Creativity is at the core of innovation.

270,000 Ontario jobs are in culture (4% of the workforce) and the sector contributes \$25B GDP annually. Arts and culture animate communities and make Ontario an attractive place to invest. *65% of Ontario business leaders¹ say that a thriving arts and culture scene makes it easier to attract top talent to their communities.* Our vibrant cultural scene helps ensure Ontario is at the top of the list for many Canadian and trans-national corporations to relocate and conduct business from here.

CULTURAL BENEFITS

Ontario is celebrated for its progressive nature, inclusivity and civility. We embrace diversity, take in migrants from all over the world, and encourage cross-cultural exchange in the face of demographic change. Many jurisdictions in the world look to Canada as a model of tolerance. Ontario takes it further by demonstrating that cultural understanding is the fabric of our society.

We are getting better at celebrating a plurality of cultural expressions, all while we work to honour the principles and calls to action outlined in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The arts can be a powerful and effective medium to build increased understanding and more meaningful relationships with the original peoples of this land. The arts increasingly reflect these evolving cultural realities and there is much more work to do. The future is more diverse, more culturally rich, than any of us can fully imagine.

We must build bridges to promote cross-cultural understanding, citizenship, social participation and engagement. In a province as diverse as Ontario, it's an important way of ensuring that all Ontarians feel a real sense of belonging here. We can think of no better way to connect our citizens to one another and promote the distinctiveness of our province and its many peoples than through arts and culture. Promoting socio-cultural resilience is in the interest of all the people who share this land.

IMAGINE AN ONTARIO WHERE...

Everyone has access to and participates in arts and culture as part of daily life - in a more conscious and experiential way. As a result, people are more connected to one another and feel at home on this land and on these shores. Arts and culture enhance social and economic success for all.

For most of us, that moment when we reflect upon the incredible architecture before us, a beautiful sculpture, or during a provocative film - those are the moments that can be transformative. Culture is like taking in a deep breath; few people realize how refreshing it is until they miss it, or at least bring it into focus.

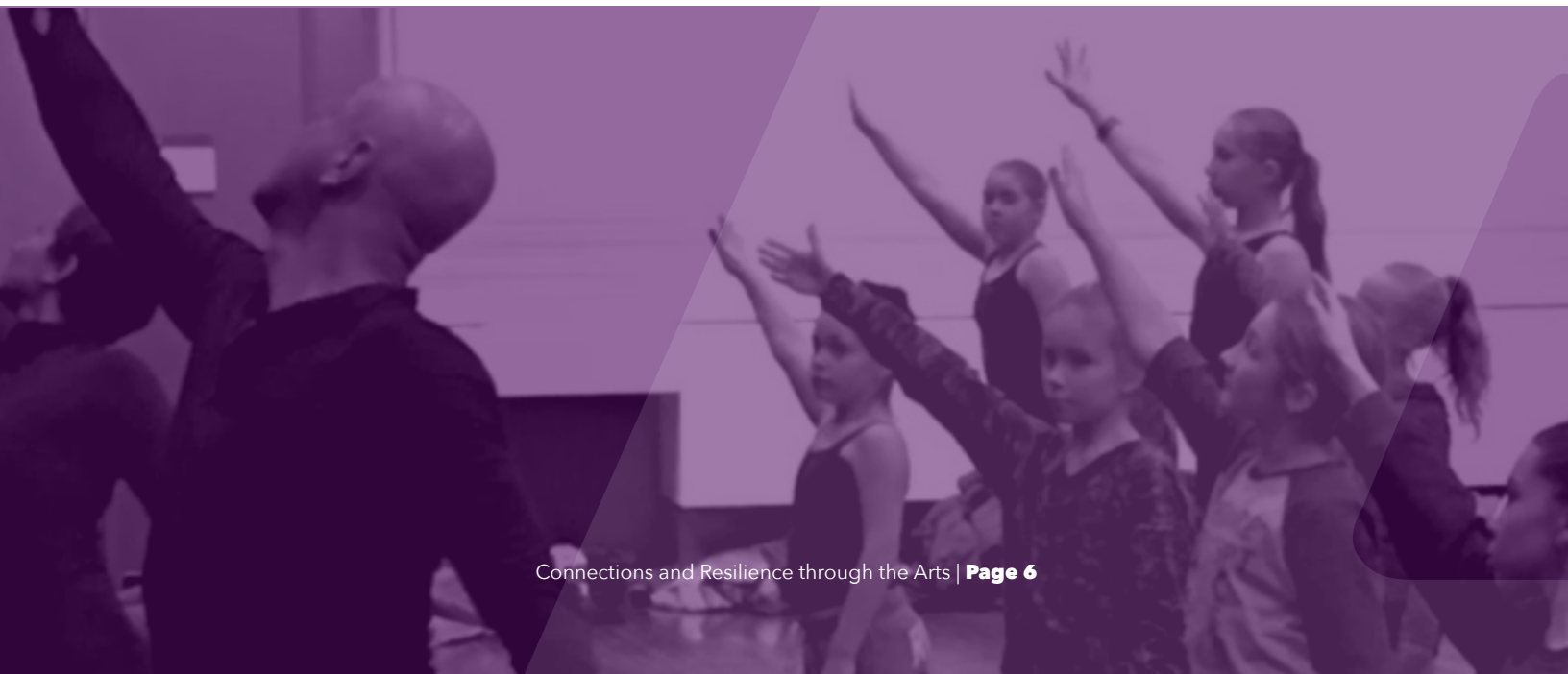
Culture is integral to human interaction. We all need to breathe.

INVEST IN THE ARTS

There is a seismic shift happening in Ontario's economy. As we move from a resource and manufacturing based economy, we increasingly rely on service industries (tertiary sector), as well as intellectual services (R&D: research & development, ICT: information and communication technologies; i.e. quaternary sector). Opportunities abound.

The work of artists and those working in creative industries drives a healthy economy and underpins tertiary and quaternary activity, none of which is possible without the innovation that comes from the broader understanding of creativity, based on human imagination. A full range of activities in the arts sector in communities across the province are supported through the Ontario Arts Council, Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund, Ontario Arts Foundation and the Ontario Trillium Foundation. We wish to stress their continued importance.

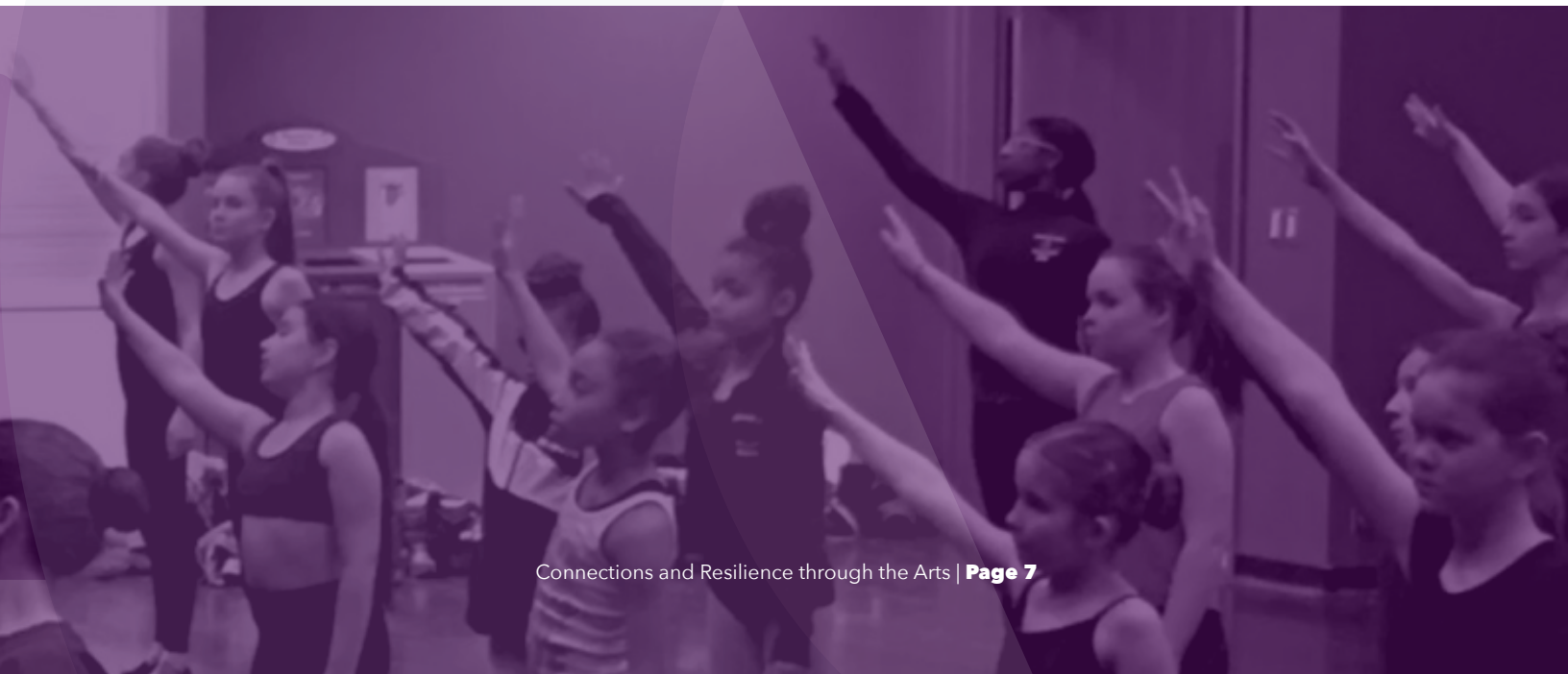
Modest public support of the arts helps generate \$25B annually for Ontario's economy. Investing in the arts fuels the creative economy. Incremental investments will help ensure continued economic growth and creative innovation. Ontario's future success depends on the creativity of our peoples. Ontario arts organizations are good at partnering with government and the private sector to maximize the government's return on investment. In the City of Toronto, for example, where 1 in 10 jobs is based in culture, every \$1 invested by the City in the non-profit arts sector generates \$8.25 in earned revenues plus an additional \$11.77 from other levels of government and the private sector.²



We call on the Government of Ontario to...

Follow through on the current increases planned for the Ontario Arts Council (OAC) to \$80M base by 2020-21 and commit to increasing the OAC's funding base to \$160M by 2025-26 to ensure greater accessibility to the arts for Ontarians. We are far behind when it comes to arts funding. Changing demographics and substantial population growth over recent decades require the OAC to adapt to shifting cultural paradigms. Indigenous, racialized and under-represented populations, which are integral to our province's very essence, deserve equitable opportunities to fully engage in the artistic and cultural life of Ontario, all while we continue to sustain artistic practices and infrastructure that have been funded historically. The OAC is vital to the development of the arts for all Ontarians across artistic disciplines and cultural expressions, further to its crucial role supporting the delivery of arts education across the province. Unleashing our full creative potential would benefit all Ontarians.

Commit to closing the funding gap to address inequities in arts access and funding, particularly for diverse arts practices by Indigenous peoples, people of colour, Francophones, and people from differently-abled and deaf communities, throughout arts and cultural agencies and programs. The potential for cultural development, just on the cusp of being unleashed, is incredible and necessary.



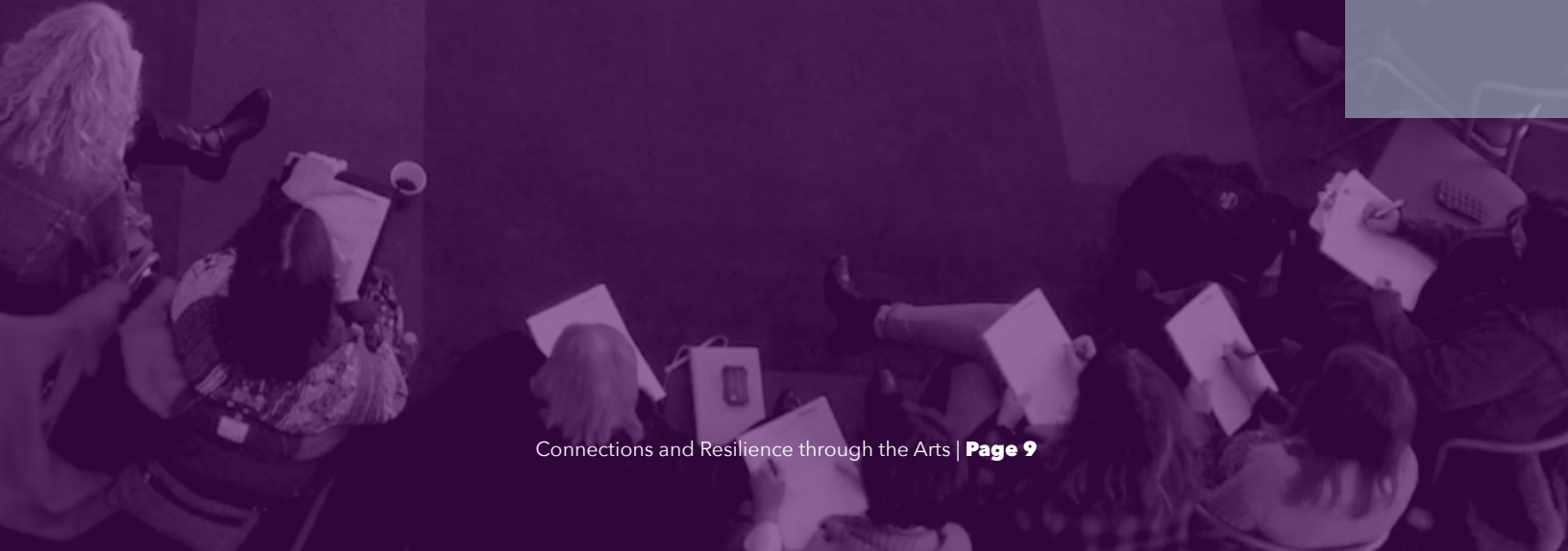
Create an infrastructure investment program that facilitates Ontarians' access to arts and culture, and helps leverage federal investments, with a \$30M annual base allocation for the next 10 years. Ontario's \$300M cultural infrastructure deficit³ would be reduced substantially as a result, particularly with matching funds from the federal government, while also providing room for new builds and facility expansion, as well as cultural renewal in Indigenous, racialized, and other under-represented communities. To this end, such a program should include components for: (a) infrastructure revitalization for state of good repair & energy efficiency; (b) new builds & facility expansions; and, (c) Indigenous reconciliation & cultural renewal. Different approaches may be required to improve upon cultural infrastructure owned by government (internal process) and to serve the needs of non-profit arts and culture organizations (accessible program).

N.B.: The need for Indigenous spaces (or Indigenizing existing spaces) cannot be understated. Existing infrastructure may reinforce institutionalized colonialism and/or be unsuitable for specific cultural practices such as smudging. Workspaces and institutions that understand, reflect, respect and honour Indigenous worldviews can be safe places for cultural expression.

Renew the Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund (OCAF) for the next four years, with progressive increments to its funding base from \$2.5M in 2018-2019 to \$4.5M in 2021-22. OCAF plays a key role in promoting cultural tourism, connecting Ontarians, and visitors to Ontario, to great experiences. 9.5 million Tourists participate in Ontario arts and culture activities annually.

Revitalize the Ontario Arts Foundation (OAF) by reintroducing a matching endowment incentives program with a \$25M strategic investment. The OAF facilitates private giving to the arts in Ontario and helps arts organizations become more self-reliant, freeing-up resources for those who need it most.

Support the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) in improving accessibility to funding for the non-profit arts sector, thereby enhancing both the strength of its investments, which are essential to the health of our arts ecology, as well as their social impact across all Ontario communities.



ARTS DEVELOPMENT

POLICIES & PROGRAMS

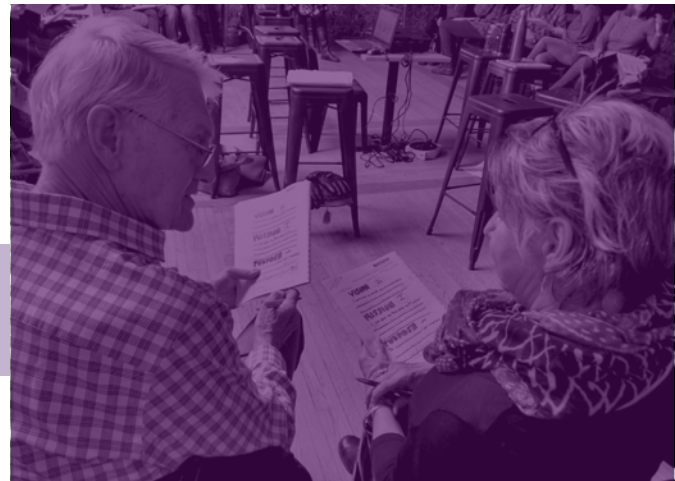
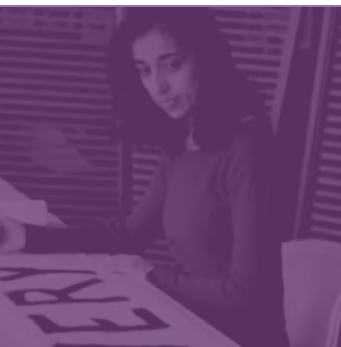
Arts and culture contribute toward our oft-celebrated quality of life and the well-being of Ontarians. The Ontario culture strategy has helped set a new path forward for Ontario's thriving culture sector. The implementation of the strategy is well underway and was informed by a robust consultative process.

The creative sector is underpinned by the innovative, quality work of Ontario artists. Our pluralistic culture makes Ontario a great place for creatives, and for creative industries, to invest and work.

We call on the Government of Ontario to...

Review the Ontario culture strategy every five years to ensure ongoing innovative artistic and cultural development is reflective of Ontario's many peoples. Considerations may include:

- Inter-Ministerial collaboration (Seniors Affairs, Education, Health, etc.)
- Inter-governmental relations
- Province-wide arts engagement in a plurality of cultural expressions.
- Cultural economic development
- Skills training and career development to strengthen the cultural workforce
- Specialized pre-professional training for artists
- Policy renewal: Indigeneity, Franco-Ontarian, Racialized populations, diverse abilities, etc.
- Status of the Artist review and renewal
- Digital adaptation, etc.



ARTS EDUCATION

ARTS AND THE ONTARIO CURRICULUM

Arts education prepares our young people for a future where creativity underpins economic innovation and growth. Creativity starts with exposure to the arts. Arts education also instills compassion, courage and empathy while promoting interpersonal effectiveness, emotional intelligence and intuitive skills that cannot be objectively quantified. Further, arts and cultural education promotes cross-cultural literacy and understanding, social inclusion, social cohesion, and community engagement.

Ontarians expect our government to do its best in delivering practical and appreciable skills for the next generation. This includes the capacity to adapt to complex relationships in increasingly diverse contexts.

We call on the Government of Ontario to...

Deliver the arts curriculum consistently across the province and ensure access is the same whether students are in Timmins, Tweed, or Toronto:

- Resource the education system adequately to reach this goal.
 - Set and monitor benchmarks accordingly.
- Not only does arts education need to reach all Ontario students, the depth of this experience needs to be delivered in ways that can be quantified as well as qualified. Measurement may include “time spent” and “experience quality/type” as depth of exposure outweighs “scores” in these subject areas.
- Set achievement and development guidelines in the arts to ensure they are prioritized and complement STEM (Science, Tech, Engineering and Math) goals - our kids deserve STEAM to unlock their potential. Creative skills gained through arts education will support future innovation, allowing future generations to adapt to Ontario’s changing economy.

Update the arts education curriculum to ensure it better reflects Ontario’s evolving and pluralistic reality, including a respectful incorporation of Indigenous knowledge and worldviews as well as contemporary and historical art practices that reflect the diversity of nations on this land.





ONTARIO'S PLACE IN CANADA AND THE WORLD

Ontario is home to 39%⁴ of the Canadian population (14,279,196 people). The \$25.7 billion GDP impact of culture in Ontario is 47.8% of Canada's total culture GDP and the 269,082 culture jobs in Ontario represent 41.2% of total culture jobs in Canada.⁵ This could be a point of pride. Yet, Ontario can do much better at promoting its place within Canada and around the world.

To this end, the Ontario government needs to improve inter-governmental cooperation in culture and ensure Ontario gets a fair and demographically proportionate share of federal investments in arts and culture. The numbers above are not reflected in current federal cultural investments; perception hasn't caught up with reality. It is time for a greater appreciation of Ontario's contributions to Canada's cultural landscape and the creative economy so we can put our best foot forward.

We call on the Government of Ontario to...

Work with the Federal Minister and Department of Canadian Heritage, as well as crown agencies like the Canada Council for the Arts, to ensure Ontario gets its fair share. Old funding models created historic inequities for artists and arts organizations based in Ontario; this challenge is particularly pronounced in historically marginalized communities (Indigenous, racialized, deaf, disabled, etc.). It is time for the Canada Council for the Arts to level the playing field regionally and culturally according to population trends. We must close the gap. Ontario is Canada's most populous province, its primary cultural hub, as well as its most culturally complex and diverse province. Develop ways and means of consistently leveraging federal cultural infrastructure and cultural export investments. Complementary provincial programs will attract more federal investment.

Cultural Infrastructure:

Ontario currently does not have a way to consistently leverage federal cultural infrastructure investments. The infrastructure program referred to on page 7 would help leverage federal investments through the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund (Canadian Heritage), among other infrastructure programs available to municipalities, etc. In due course, Ontario's \$300M cultural infrastructure deficit would be reduced substantially, thus facilitating Ontarians' access to arts and culture experiences, while promoting reciprocity on provincial, national and global scales.

Cultural Exports:

Ontario should develop and adequately fund an arts and culture export strategy to promote the work of Ontarians abroad, to improve market access and development, and to strengthen Ontario's brand in the world. Additional investments would bolster cultural exports, leverage federal support, and strengthen Ontario's economy.

Societies are best known by the work of their artists: writers, musicians, actors, dancers, film makers, sculptors and architects. Incorporating the arts and artists into Ontario's trade promotion strategy would help build bridges beyond business and strengthen the relationships that produce long-term productive exchanges nationally and internationally.



PHOTO CREDITS

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Students align their breathing pattern with an arm extension. Photo by Chris Mei.

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In Sudbury, participants engage in a communication exercise. Photo by Mona Afshari.

Megan Laursen with Kulbinder Saran Caldwell and other colleagues at a Women in Film and Television event during the Toronto International Film Festival

Participants in Hamilton learn how to manage a company. Photo by Mona Afshari.

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Kanika Gupta, photo by Amit Kehar.

Entrepreneurs in Owen Sound learn the three pillars of a business platform. Photo by Mona Afshari.

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Robert Glumbek with local students at the FirstOntario Milton Arts Centre. Photo by Chris Mei.

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Michael Fraser

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Philip Akin

Robert Glumbek and Yvonne Ng in "Stone Velvet". Photo by Cylla von Tiedemann

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Participants in Hamilton learn how to manage a company. Photo by Mona Afshari.

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Raymond Helkio

ENDNOTES

1 Nanos Research for Business for the Arts, Businesses' thoughts on attracting employees through arts and culture, May 2016.

2 Toronto Alliance for the Performing Arts, Arts Day at City Hall fact sheet, November 2017

3 Arts Build Ontario, Bricks & Mortar: Ontario's Arts and Culture Facilities Database, 2016

4 Statistics Canada, Table 051-0005 - Estimates of population, Canada, provinces and territories, quarterly (persons), December 2017

5 Statistics Canada, Provincial and Territorial Culture Indicators, February 2018



ONTARIANS FOR THE ARTS

is an inclusive non-partisan movement intent on promoting the benefits of the arts in every city, community and reserve in every corner of the province.

STEERING COMMITTEE

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This discussion paper was developed in consultation with leaders from across Ontario to encourage dialogue on a range of relevant issues with various stakeholders in the arts and culture sector, including everyday Ontarians and politicians of every stripe.

In the lead-up to the provincial election on June 7, Ontarians for the Arts will engage with as many MPPs and Candidates as possible, in as many ridings as possible.

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BENEFITS OF ARTS & CULTURE IN ONTARIO

Improve individual well-being

Engage and connect diverse communities

Plays a vital role in the Reconciliation process with Indigenous peoples

Build social cohesion

Enhance healthcare, mental health, accessibility, healing and building empathy

Empower youth by improving academic performance and social harmony from early education through to careers

Create forums for discussion and shine a light on social issues

Encourage socialization through communal activities

Improves quality of life

ARTS & CULTURE ALSO...

Strengthen the economy

Are good for businesses

Attract investment

Represent 4% of Ontario's workforce (270,000 jobs)

Contribute \$25B to Ontario's GDP

Drive tourism

Are an export industry

Trigger creativity and innovation

