

The Honourable Neil Lumsden  
Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport  
438 University Avenue, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Toronto, Ontario M5G 2K8  
By email: [Minister.Lumsden@ontario.ca](mailto:Minister.Lumsden@ontario.ca)  
CC: [Minister.fin@ontario.ca](mailto:Minister.fin@ontario.ca)

RE: Ontario Arts Council funding

March 10, 2023

Dear Minister Lumsden:

On behalf of the Ontario Nonprofit Network (ONN), we are writing to you in regards to the Ontario Arts Council (OAC) and the upcoming provincial budget. As your government puts forth a plan for a stronger Ontario, we urge you to maintain the current funding level of the Ontario Arts Council for the next two years.

### **About ONN**

ONN is an independent nonprofit network for the 58,000 nonprofits and charities in Ontario, focused on policy, advocacy, and services to strengthen the sector as a key pillar of our society and economy. We work to create a public policy environment that allows nonprofits to thrive. The nonprofit sector offers many valuable programs and services, including arts and cultural programs. Our 2022 sector survey revealed that Ontario's arts organizations are struggling financially, impacting their operations and staffing.

### **Arts and culture are bringing communities back to life after COVID-19**

We understand that the Ontario government has many financial priorities with challenges from all sides. From healthcare to housing, the demands on the provincial pocketbook are many. With that being said, now is the time to support organizations like the OAC as they work to support artists, arts and culture to ensure Ontario is the best place to work, live and play.

The OACs funding programmes support employment and tourism across the province; the reach of the OAC is wide and varied. As just one example of its significant impact, according to data from the [Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport](#), every dollar invested in Ontario Festivals results in \$21 in tourism spending. The province recoups far more in sales taxes than the initial investment cost.

Furthermore, [Statistics Canada](#) reports that the cultural economy in Ontario generated a provincial GDP impact of \$28.7 billion in 2019. Of this, the sectors where the OAC is a primary support contributed over \$5.4 billion of provincial GDP – greater than the impact of Film & Television (\$2.0 billion) or Interactive Digital Media (\$4.3 billion).

While we believe the OAC could contribute even more to Ontario's economy with a fresh injection of new funding, we are cognizant of the financial uncertainty and mounting challenges facing the Ontario government. That is why we are supporting stable funding to the OAC for the next two years. By keeping this funding level, you can ensure the arts, culture, and tourism sector can work towards financial viability while it recovers from the lingering economic aftershocks of the pandemic.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Cathy Taylor,  
Executive Director  
Ontario Nonprofit Network