March 7, 2023

Dear Minister Bethlenfalvy;

I am writing to you today from the Alliance of Arts Councils of Ontario in regards to the status of the Ontario Arts Council (OAC) in the upcoming budget. I understand that the Ontario government is in a tight fiscal situation with challenges confronting you from all sides. From healthcare, to transit, to housing the demands on the provincial pocketbook are many.

That should not mean that organizations like the OAC take a back seat. The work they do by supporting art and artists, new forms and old, our cities, our towns, and our villages, is absolutely critical.

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 true impact, according to figures from the [Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport](https://www.publications.gov.on.ca/CL30618), every dollar invested in our festivals results in $21 in tourism spending, meaning the government recoups far more in sales taxes than the investment cost. I would call this a very solid ROI.

Furthermore, [Statistics Canada](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3610045201) reports that the cultural economy in Ontario generated a provincial GDP impact of $28.7 billion in 2019. Of this, the sectors where 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 prove even more valuable 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 asking for 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.

Yours sincerely,

Shruti Ganapathy, Markham Arts Council - AACO Co-Chair

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**Alliance of Arts Councils of Ontario:**

Algonquin Arts Council

Arts Council - Haliburton Highlands

Arts Council - Windsor & Region

Arts Council of Northumberland

Arts Etobicoke

Arts Network Ottawa / Réseau des arts d'Ottawa

Arts, Culture & Creative Industry Development Agency

Chatham-Kent Arts & Culture Network

Conseil des arts Prescott Russell Arts Council

Electric City Culture Council

Guelph Arts Council

Hamilton Arts Council

Headwaters Arts

Haliburton Highlands Museum

Le Conseil des arts de Hearst

Kingston Arts Council

London Arts Council

Markham Arts Council

Mississauga Arts Council

Arts Council of Northumberland

North Perth Arts and Culture Council

North York Arts

Ottawa Arts Council

Prince Edward County Arts Council

Quinte Arts Council

Scarborough Arts

Scugog Council for the Arts

Smiths Falls and District Arts and Culture Council

Sudbury Arts Council

Toronto Arts Council

Town of Shelburne

Tweed and Area Arts Council

UrbanArts

Wallaceburg and District Council for the Arts

Westport Arts Council

York Region Arts Council

Your Arts Council Cornwall