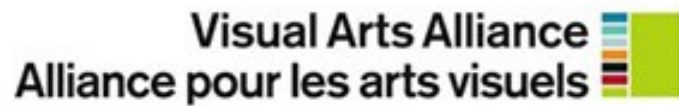


Submission for the Finance Department Pre-Budget Consultations 2023

By

The Visual Arts Alliance – Alliance pour les arts visuels (VAA-AAV)



Artist-Run Centres and Collectives Conference | Conférence des collectifs et des centres d'artistes autogérés — Association des groupes en arts visuels francophones — Canadian Artists' Representation | Le Front des artistes canadiens — Canadian Art Gallery Educators — Canadian Art Museum Directors Organization | Organisation des directeurs des musées d'art canadiens — Canadian Crafts Federation | Fédération canadienne des métiers d'art — Canadian Museums Association | Association des musées canadiens — Independent Media Arts Alliance | Alliance des arts médiatiques indépendants — Galeries Ontario | Ontario Galleries — Regroupement des artistes en arts visuels du Québec — Royal Canadian Academy of Arts | Académie royale des arts du Canada

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List of Recommendations:

Operational Supports

1. Provide funding through Canadian Heritage and the Canada Council for the Arts to help arts organizations employ and retain a larger workforce to address the current labour shortage in the cultural sector.
2. Provide funding to arts organizations that is directed toward increasing day-to-day operational costs as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and higher inflation rates.
3. Expand eligibility requirements so visual artists and arts organizations can apply to programs that support digital activities through the Canada Council for the Arts and Canadian Heritage.
4. Increase the amount given to the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund (CCSF) to account for infrastructure projects now deemed necessary because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Federal Basic Income Guarantee Implementation

5. Provide a Federal Basic Income Guarantee for all Canadians which will reduce poverty, stabilize incomes and simplify the complex web of benefits and programs available to Canadians. Statistics show artists generally earn 46% less than general labour.

Endowment Incentives Program Expansion

6. Expand the existing Endowment Incentives of the Canada Cultural Investment Fund (CCIF) through Canadian Heritage to further support performing art recipients and to include visual art museums/galleries as eligible recipients; and increase the total annual budget of the CCIF by \$40 million.

Cultural Tourism Investments

7. Provide funding to Canadian arts organizations to help promote tourism through the ongoing COVID-19 recovery period.

New National Museums Strategy

8. Review and update the National Museum Policy to reflect the significant new realities the visual arts sector is facing, as well as to support the sector-wide implementation of UNDRIP and support for Indigenous self-determination in the heritage sector.
9. Renew the Exhibition Transportation Service (ETS) to help alleviate the increasing costs associated with travelling art exhibitions and generate increased visitation/tourism.

Context for Recommendations:

1:

When the pandemic hit in 2020, museums and galleries had to close their doors, and cultural events were cancelled. As a result, many working in the visual arts sector left to pursue a more stable income.

As cultural spaces across the sector are opening their doors it is becoming increasingly difficult to find and retain staff. This would also enable the hiring and retaining of Indigenous staff to bolster this under-represented population in museums, galleries and other types of arts organizations.

We recommend the government provide additional funding through Canadian Heritage and Canada Council for the Arts, specifically towards salaries to help museums, galleries and other types of arts organizations hire and retain necessary staff during this labour shortage.

2:

As a result of COVID-19, the visual arts sector has faced loss of revenue as well as increasing costs when having to implement additional measures, such as heightened cleaning protocols.

While many visual arts organizations have been very grateful to have renewed multi-year funding confirmed, it again often does not include any increases in keeping with rising Consumer Price Index (CPI) or Cost-of-Living-Adjustment (COLA) adjustments and escalating operational costs.

Like all cultural support programs, the Museums Assistance Program (MAP) is not adjusted for inflation so functions as decreased support for an important and oversubscribed program. We ask that all program numbers be adjusted accordingly to fulfill their purpose properly.

The VAA is recommending the government provide funding to public museums, galleries and other arts organizations specifically for increased operational costs. This funding would provide practical financial support to organizations that are facing increased financial strains because of the pandemic. Additional funds would also help to support the review of the implementation of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) at all levels of museum operations.

3:

During COVID-19 related closures, museums, galleries, arts organizations and artists had to transition to the digital environment. Responding quickly, 95% of galleries shifted to online programs. As facilities have opened, artists have maintained the use of digital equipment. We recommend that eligibility be extended to individual artists and not just arts organizations, and that equipment costs are eligible expenses.

The Canada Council for the Arts does have funding targeted towards digital projects, such as the Digital Strategy Fund. When this Fund was available, larger organizations were the main recipients of funding, rather than individual visual artists. As visual art is increasingly being developed using technology, establishing a permanent funding stream through the Canada Council for the Arts would help further Canadian art and artists. This would enable access to

programming for marginalized communities. This funding should be targeted toward visual artists who want to acquire the technology and equipment needed to produce and share their works in the digital age.

4:

As a result of COVID-19, galleries, museums, and other arts organizations have made significant investments to make their facilities safer for the public. This includes new air filters to ensure the air quality is clean for visitors. These retrofits are expensive and have contributed to museums and galleries increasing facility costs due to the pandemic.

Making these infrastructure investments in their facilities have allowed museums and galleries to re-evaluate the climate efficiency of their buildings. Creating a sustainable future is a priority for the visual arts sector however for some, it is not financially feasible to pursue these green infrastructure projects.

Increasing funding to the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund (CCSF) would provide the necessary funding to arts organizations that want to make green improvements to their facilities. These sustainable infrastructure changes align with government initiatives. The creation of a core funding arm of CCSF to support on-going capital costs for infrastructure maintenance for organisations demonstrating financial need is also recommended. The funds provided under CCSF should not be used to replace or stand-in for investments in infrastructure in Indigenous communities to fulfil fiduciary obligations.

5:

The need for a Federal Basic Income Guarantee (FBIG) was raised by many panelists and delegates at the Minister's National Culture Summit in Ottawa May 2022.

As workers in other sectors return to their jobs, arts and gig workers remain highly unstable. The arts sector is expected to take the longest to recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, Indigenous arts and gig workers have cited widespread tokenism to many shades of exploitation, and a marginalized subclass of Indigenous, Black, and racialized contract workers and freelancers, all of which have become amplified during the COVID-19 pandemic. Most self-employed and contract-based workers in the arts sector cannot afford to pay into the current EI model. Canada's overall labour force rebounded to pre-pandemic levels in 2021, however visual artists and other freelance workers in the sector did not. **On average, visual artists' earnings are less than half of the average Canadian worker**, a situation that has been further exacerbated by the pandemic.

Federal basic income guarantee would act as a safety net for Canadian arts workers by providing unemployed, underemployed, and precariously employed workers with income support, especially as the arts sector is expected to take the longest to recover from the impacts of COVID-19.

6:

The CCIF – Endowment Incentives component encourages private donors to contribute to endowment funds for not-for-profit professional arts organizations, so they can access new sources of funding in the future and have greater capacity for realizing artistic expression by supporting their long-term stability. However, the fund criterion excluded visual arts organizations such as museums/galleries.

The VAA was pleased to see that the Standing Committee on Finance made the following recommendation to the Minister of Finance during their pre-budget 2022 report.

Recommendation 221:

Expand the Endowment Incentives of the Canada Cultural Investment Fund to include museums and heritage organizations.

This recommendation is also supported by a collective of leading performing arts organizations, as reflected in their submission to you.

Changes to tax incentives for philanthropy and matching endowment programs run through the federal government help foster greater resiliency and reduce reliance on government funding. Endowments ensure that events such as the COVID-19 pandemic do not devastate Canada's cultural sector. Endowments are a widespread, permanent, and sensible means to assist organizations immediately, and offer a cushion against future crises. During the pandemic recovery period, endowments will help museums/galleries face the uncertainty that lies ahead.

An increase of \$40M would effectively double the \$19M funding leveraged by existing performing arts recipients and add \$20M for visual arts recipients to leverage further. The strong response to this established program to date reflects the demand for its expansion and certainty for its continued success.

7:

Tourism will play a significant role in Canada's economic recovery from the pandemic and the cultural sector has already been a draw. Art organizations are increasingly hubs for innovation for their communities, and function as tourist destinations.

The Tourism Relief Fund through ISED has provided tourist destinations across Canada with funding to create new/enhance existing tourism experiences and attract more visitors from across the country. Some museums and galleries received financial support from this Fund, which was incredibly useful when the tourism sector picked up however some arts organizations, including artist-run centres are not receiving support.

Through this period of economic recovery, we recommend the government provide ongoing funding to the cultural sector directed towards tourism, specifically for supporting and promoting the cultural tourism experiences museums and galleries have to offer.

8:

During the National Culture Summit held in Ottawa this past May, Minister of Canadian Heritage the Honourable Pablo Rodriguez promised to renew and update the National Museum Policy to reflect changes the visual arts sector faces. Additionally, a review of Canada's National Museum Policy was included in the 2019 Mandate Letter from the Prime Minister to the former Minister of Canadian Heritage.

Much has changed since the last review over 30 years ago. This policy must reflect a contemporary Canada and consider the current realities faced by Canadian museums. It must address the pivotal issues of our time, namely equity, diversity, UNDRIP implementation and promotion of Indigenous self-determination and anti-racism, digital outreach and relevance, and climate change concerns.

As foundational planning and funding streams for museums in Canada, the National Museum Policy and Museums Assistance Program must be revised to support and enforce the Principles of UNDRIP in their structures and delivery.

Recognizing that sustainable core funding for museums will strengthen the capacity of museums to be supportive partners in the decolonization process, all National Museum Policy initiatives, including policy development and funding structures, must be informed by the authoritative guidance of Indigenous peoples in the sector to ensure the National Museum Policy adequately addresses UNDRIP implementation and pivotal issues from Indigenous perspectives.

9:

The Exhibition Transportation Service (ETS) was created in the 1970s and cancelled in 2007. The ETS provided shipping services to public art galleries and museums across Canada using climate-controlled vehicles and trained “art handlers”.

Over **54% of all art transportation between museums in Canada was conducted by ETS**, compared to **28% for all other fine-art carriers combined**. In some isolated regions, ETS was the only fine-art carrier available, as others refuse to service outlying regions where the profit-margin is slim. For instance, **in the Atlantic provinces, over 65% of exhibitions were delivered by ETS**.

Travelling exhibitions are a collaborative way to share important and impactful stories across Canada and foster artistic dialogues and discoverability. It is critical to amplify the voices of artists – their messages need to be seen, shared and heard. For Indigenous communities—in particular remote communities—this enables access to works and exhibits created by or about their Nations.

Renewing the ETS would be instrumental during COVID-19 recovery, creating efficiencies while increasing the number of travelling exhibitions across Canada and creating more opportunities for artists to share their work. This would positively contribute to national and regional visitation/tourism and related employment and other tertiary spending.

VAA-AAV looks forward to discussing this submission with you further. We also support the priorities identified and submitted by our member organizations.