

# Vital Arts Vital Communities

For more than 50 years, public funding of the arts through the Ontario Arts Council (OAC) has helped establish a strong and valued arts sector in communities across the province.

## What is the return on Ontario's investment in the arts?

Remarkable  
public value.

Remarkable  
public impact.



**ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL**  
**CONSEIL DES ARTS DE L'ONTARIO**  
an Ontario government agency  
un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

## The arts provide value to Ontarians...

### The arts contribute to a strong economy

- Arts and culture in Ontario directly contribute **\$25.7 billion** annually to the provincial economy, representing **3.5%** of Ontario's GDP.<sup>1</sup>
- There are more than **269,000 culture jobs** in Ontario or **3.8%** of total Ontario employment.<sup>1</sup>

### The arts revitalize Ontario communities and build local economic development

- In a 2010 survey of 18 mid-sized Ontario cities, **all municipalities** reported using cultural and recreational amenities as a tool for downtown revitalization. **83%** deemed this strategy to be an effective tool.<sup>2</sup>
- According to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, "arts, culture and heritage improve the ability of municipal governments to **influence local economic development** by attracting and retaining a skilled and talented workforce."<sup>3</sup>
- **88%** of Ontarians agree that arts and cultural activities are important to a community's economic well-being.<sup>4</sup>

### The arts help communities attract and retain employees

- **65%** of Ontario business leaders say that a thriving arts and culture scene is something that would make it easier to attract top talent to their community.<sup>5</sup>
- **65%** of skilled workers agree that a thriving arts and cultural scene is something they would look for when considering moving to a new community.<sup>6</sup>
- **80%** of Ontarians agree that an active local arts scene helps communities attract business.<sup>7</sup>

### The arts help drive tourism across Ontario

- **9.5 million overnight tourists** participate in arts and culture activities while visiting Ontario, generating **\$3.7 billion** in GDP province-wide.<sup>8</sup>
- Arts and culture tourists spend more and stay longer: the average Ontario arts/culture tourist **spends twice as much** per trip as a typical tourist and **stays more than one night longer**.<sup>8</sup>

## ...and Ontarians value the arts.

### Ontarians support public funding of the arts

- **79%** of Ontarians believe that the government should spend public dollars to support the arts.<sup>7</sup>

### Ontarians link the arts with improved quality of life

- **93%** of Ontarians believe that arts activities help enrich the quality of our lives.<sup>7</sup>
- **90%** of Ontarians agree that an active local arts scene helps make a community a better place to live.<sup>7</sup>
- **88%** of Ontarians believe that if their community lost its arts activities, people living there would lose something of value.<sup>7</sup>
- **92%** of Ontarians agree that exposure to arts and culture is important to individual well-being.<sup>4</sup>

### Ontarians show their support for the arts in many ways

- **86%** of Ontarians attend live arts events or performances (such as music concerts, plays or visual arts exhibits) at least once a year.<sup>4</sup>
- Over **280,000** Ontarians volunteer in arts and culture organizations.<sup>9</sup>
- Over **380,000** Ontarians donate money to arts and culture organizations annually.<sup>9</sup>

### Canadians recognize how arts education can foster creativity and positive outcomes

- **84%** of Canadians agree that engaging children in the arts helps them be more creative and expressive.<sup>10</sup>
- **97%** of Ontarians agree that engaging children in the arts is important to their overall development.<sup>7</sup>
- **78%** of Canadians believe that the arts help children from disadvantaged communities succeed.<sup>10</sup>

### Ontarians believe that the arts enhance shared community identity and belonging

- **88%** of Ontarians agree that participating in arts activities builds a shared sense of community identity.<sup>7</sup>
- **90%** of Ontarians agree that arts experiences help bring people from diverse backgrounds together as a community.<sup>7</sup>
- **86%** of Ontarians agree that the arts help us express and define what it means to be Canadian.<sup>7</sup>

## About the Ontario Arts Council

The OAC is the province's primary arts funder. It plays a vital role in promoting and assisting the development of the arts for the enjoyment and benefit of Ontarians.

The Government of Ontario invests **\$4.93 per person** in public funding for the arts through OAC. In **2016-17**, OAC funded **1,657 individual artists** and **1,098 organizations** in **212 communities** – small and large, all across Ontario – for a total of **\$50.8 million**.

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### Sources

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