

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.



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.¹
- There are more than **269,000 culture jobs** in Ontario or **3.8%** of total Ontario employment.¹

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.²
- 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."³
- **88%** of Ontarians agree that arts and cultural activities are important to a community's economic well-being.⁴

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.⁵
- **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.⁶
- **80%** of Ontarians agree that an active local arts scene helps communities attract business.⁷

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.⁸
- 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**.⁸

...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.⁷

Ontarians link the arts with improved quality of life

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

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.⁴
- Over **280,000** Ontarians volunteer in arts and culture organizations.⁹
- Over **380,000** Ontarians donate money to arts and culture organizations annually.⁹

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.¹⁰
- **97%** of Ontarians agree that engaging children in the arts is important to their overall development.⁷
- **78%** of Canadians believe that the arts help children from disadvantaged communities succeed.¹⁰

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.⁷
- **90%** of Ontarians agree that arts experiences help bring people from diverse backgrounds together as a community.⁷
- **86%** of Ontarians agree that the arts help us express and define what it means to be Canadian.⁷

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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