ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL
CONSEIL DES ARTS DE L'ONTARIO

an Ontario government agency
un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

# ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL
# 2026 – 2029 BUSINESS PLAN

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# Executive Summary

The Ontario Arts Council (OAC) is an agency of the Government of Ontario with a longstanding mandate to foster the creation and production of the arts for the benefit of all Ontarians. The 2026–2029 Business Plan presents a strategic vision to create a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable arts sector – one that delivers artistic, economic, and social returns on investment for Ontario. Building on OAC's commitment to enriching communities, this plan ensures the arts sector remains a key contributor to economic growth and social belonging.

OAC holds a unique position as Ontario's leading public arts funder. Guided by its mandate to foster the creation and production of art for the benefit of all Ontarians, OAC bridges government priorities with the needs of a diverse arts community. Through its core values—mission-driven service, adaptability, accountability, equity, and regional representation—OAC ensures inclusive access to the arts and strengthens cultural vitality across the province.

## OAC's Current Core Objectives

**Alignment with 2026 Letter of Direction and 2026-27 Government Priorities for Provincial Board-Governed Agencies**

OAC fulfills its mandate and the objectives outlined in the 2026 Letter of Direction from the Minister of Tourism, Culture, and Gaming, aligning with to OAC's 2022–2027 strategic plan, Reset. Renew. Revitalize. OAC's work fulfills all three priorities stated in the 2026-27 Letter of Direction, which are:

- **Promoting and developing Ontario arts:** OAC plays a vital role in promoting and developing the arts in all regions of the province, while improving administrative efficiencies.

  *Organizations that receive annual funding from OAC welcome 36.4 million audience members from across Ontario and around the world each year.*

  *A 2023 Nanos report found that 90% of Ontarians agree that an active local arts scene helps make a community a better place to live.*

- **Maximizing impact of investments:** OAC maximizes public investment by prioritizing artistic projects that generate audience demand and value for money, as well as prioritizing Indigenous and Francophone artists.

  *Organizations that received annual OAC operating funding generated an economic impact of $1.1 billion from direct spending and contributed significantly to an annual $11.4 billion in arts and culture tourism visitor spending in Ontario.*

  *These organizations also generated over $109 million in direct and indirect tax revenues from their spending and contributed significantly to the $1.9 billion in provincial tax revenue for the province from arts and culture tourism.*

- **Streamlining support:** OAC explores opportunities to streamline programs and efficiently provide appropriate support for the arts sector.

  *91% of applicants report satisfaction with OAC's grant process*.

  *In 2026-27 OAC will streamline 17 operating funding programs into a single program with 8 categories*.

OAC's strategic direction and operations are also aligned with the Government of Ontario's 2026-27 themes and priorities for the agency sector, as established by the Treasury Board Secretariat. OAC's initiatives in these areas are detailed throughout this Business Plan.

- **Theme 1 – Protect Ontario**: Supporting Ontario families and businesses, and helping build the province's economic resilience.
  - **Priority 1**: Expand domestic partnerships within Canada to promote the development of supply chains and economic opportunities across Canada.

    *All of OAC's granting and partnership work is completed in partnership with Ontario artists, arts organizations, and key organizations from broader sectoral points of view (for instance Ontario Chamber of Commerce)*.

  - **Priority 2**: Procure from Ontario and Canadian businesses whenever feasible.

    *OAC implemented changes to its procurement policy to align with government buy Ontario provisions as of January 1, 2025*.

  - **Priority 3**: Provide economic relief for Ontario families, consumers and businesses by freezing government fees and fares, unless approved by oversight Minister.

    *OAC provides its key services provision of applications and grants to arts community, at no cost to the arts community or Ontarians. OAC grants lower the cost to access the arts for all Ontarians.*

- **Theme 2 – Deliver Better Services**: Improve service delivery and optimize operating processes. Provide service in an innovative and accessible manner, prioritizing customer satisfaction and simplifying interactions.
  - **Priority 4**: Centre client/customer experience by simplifying interactions, improving satisfaction, and expanding/optimizing digital service offerings.
  - **Priority 5**: Identify opportunities to enhance efficiency, improve services, drive innovation and achieve cost savings, including through use of AI and other advanced technologies.
  - **Priority 6**: Eliminate unnecessary bureaucracy and red tape by applying Lean methodologies or other modalities to achieve operational efficiency.

    *91% of applicants report satisfaction with OAC's grant process*.

*In 2026-27 OAC will streamline 17 operating funding programs into a single program with 8 categories*.

- **Theme 3 – Drive Innovation & Value for Money**: Use public resources responsibly and provide value for money by focusing on highest-priority areas (inc. redeployment, reskilling, scaling back on lower-value activities).

    - **Priority 7**: Find innovative solutions to effectively deliver on agency mandate while operating within financial allocation. Ensure accurate financial reporting, effective internal controls, proactive fraud management practices.
    - **Priority 8**: Prudently and responsibly manage workforce size.
    - **Priority 9**: By March 31, 2026, create span-of-control policy recognizing different streams of work within organization, setting minimum span-of-control benchmarks.
    - **Priority 10**: By October 1, 2025, submit amended human resource policy/guideline/directive re: OPS in-office standard.

    *OAC complies with all Provincial directives in its role as an employer and has delivered on its mandate without ever going beyond its available resources, and has never occurred accumulated deficit or debt to deliver on its mission*.

**Performance Measure Areas**

In 2025 OAC updated its approach to focus on achieving four key measure areas: Artistic impact, Economic impact, Social impact, Operational effectiveness:

- **Artistic impact:** OAC fosters a dynamic and inclusive arts ecosystem by investing in artists and arts organizations for creation, production, and presentation of highly impactful artistic work and services – supporting innovation, wide audience appeal, and amplifying Ontario's artistic voices both at home and abroad

- **Economic impact:** OAC drives economic growth by investing in sustainable arts employment, activating local economies, attracting cultural tourism, and contributing to Ontario's GDP.

- **Social impact:** OAC strengthens community well-being and social cohesion by supporting inclusive, culturally relevant, and accessible arts that foster meaningful participation and a sense of belonging, ultimately improving quality of life.

- **Operational effectiveness:** OAC and the arts organizations it supports enhance sector sustainability through efficient, accountable, and responsive service delivery. By streamlining processes, fostering strategic partnerships, and ensuring equitable access to continuously improve public trust.

## Financial Overview

In the 2025–2026 fiscal year, OAC leveraged its operating allocation of $59.9 million from the province to support arts funding and services, maintaining a budget aligned with its mandate and government objectives. Organizations that received annual OAC operating funding generated an economic impact of $1.1 billion from direct spending and 2.7 billion in arts and culture tourism visitor spending in Ontario.  OAC continues its track record of prudent fiscal management and will explore new avenues for financial sustainability, including partnerships and self-generated revenues, to further its mission.

## Summary

The 2026–2029 Business Plan positions OAC to amplify the impact, benefits, and value of the arts across Ontario. Through strategic direction and measurable objectives, OAC will ensure the arts continue to enrich communities, foster innovation, and contribute to a thriving province.

# Section 1: Introduction

OAC grounds its plan in its mandate, values, and vision to ensure equitable, high-impact arts support for all Ontarians.

## Background

The Ontario Arts Council (OAC), established in 1963, is an agency of the Government of Ontario with a mandate to foster the creation and production of art for the benefit of all Ontarians. OAC serves one of Canada's largest populations, and arts communities, with over 40% of artists residing or working in Ontario.

## Mandate

OAC's objects in its founding legislation are to "promote the study and enjoyment of and the production of works in the arts" and OAC's longstanding interpretation of these objects is its mandate to **foster the creation and production of art for the benefit of all Ontarians**.

### Statement of Accountabilities

In fulfilling its mandate to foster the creation and production of art for the benefit of all Ontarians, the Ontario Arts Council (OAC) operates within a clearly defined accountability and governance framework. The legal authority of OAC is established by the Arts Council Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. A.30, which sets out the agency's objects and powers. Additionally, OAC exercises authority under the Not-for-Profit Corporations Act, 2010 and the Federal Income Tax Act as a registered charity.

The OAC is accountable to the Government of Ontario through a structured reporting relationship:

- Minister: The Minister is accountable to the Cabinet and the Legislative Assembly for the agency's fulfillment of its mandate and compliance with government policy. The Minister reports on OAC's affairs and performance, and ensures alignment with government directives.
- Chair of the Board: Acting on behalf of the Board of Directors, the Chair is accountable to the Minister for the agency's performance and compliance. The Chair ensures timely communication of significant matters to the Minister and confirms OAC's compliance with relevant legislation and government directives.
- Board of Directors: The Board is accountable, through the Chair, to the Minister for the overall oversight and governance of OAC. The Board sets the agency's goals, objectives, and strategic direction, and oversees the implementation of the mandate as outlined in the annual letter of direction and in accordance with applicable legislation and government policies.
- Chief Executive Officer (CEO): The CEO reports to the Board of Directors and is responsible for the management and administration of the agency. The CEO oversees agency staff, implements Board policy and operational decisions, and reports on OAC's performance results to the Board through the Chair.

- Deputy Minister: The Deputy Minister supports the Minister in the effective oversight of provincial agencies and is responsible for providing administrative and organizational support to OAC, as well as attesting to the agency's compliance with government directives.

This accountability structure ensures that OAC's operations are transparent, responsible, and aligned with its legislated mandate and government expectations. Through these defined roles and reporting relationships, OAC maintains its commitment to effective governance and public trust.

## Vision, Mandate, Operating Principles

Grounded in this mandate, OAC has renewed its vision and values to enhance sector impact, operational excellence, and public value.

**Vision**

OAC leads the way for all Ontarians to access and embrace the arts as vital to life, the economy, and community.

**Values**

- **Mission-Driven:** We are committed to our mandate, ensuring our actions align with the needs of Ontarians and the arts sector. We recognize the arts as vital to the lives of Ontarians.

- **Adaptability:** We achieve our goals by partnering and collaborating to serve the evolving needs of Ontario's arts community and public.

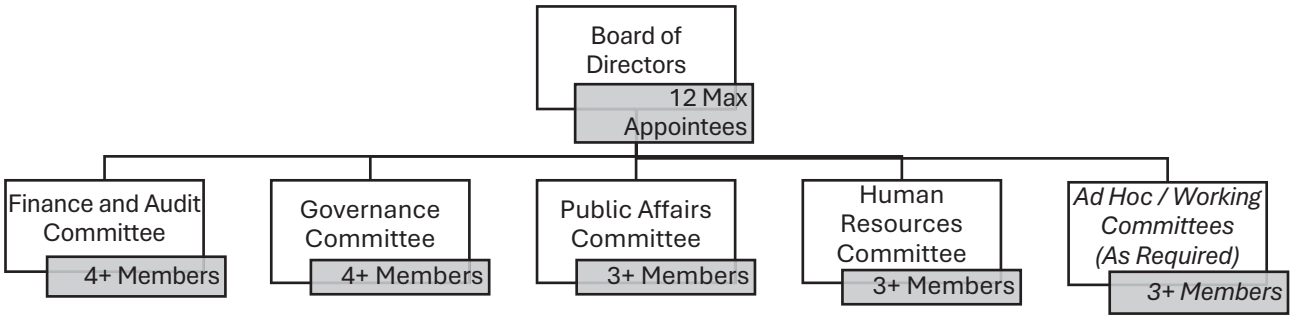
- **Accountability:** We prioritize effectiveness, clear communication, and responsible decision-making while delivering exemplary professional service.

- **Equity, Diversity, Accessibility & Inclusion:** We remain committed to ensuring all artists and communities can fully participate in the arts. We promote artistic expression across Ontario's diverse demographics, and are committed to equitable access to funding, resources, and opportunities.

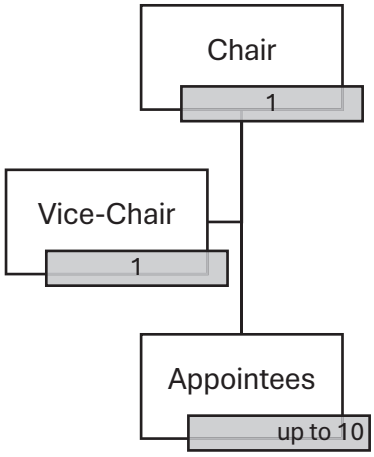
- **Regional Representation:** We are committed to artists and communities across all regions of Ontario.

## Board of Directors

### Board of Directors & Committees Governance Structure




### Board of Directors Appointee Role Structure



**Voting Membership Structure for Board of Director Committees**

| **Committee Type** | | **Standing Committees** | | | | **Ad Hoc / Working Committees** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Committee Name** | | Finance and Audit | Governance | Human Resources | Public Affairs | (Optional / As Required) |
| **Board Chair (ex-officio on ALL committees)** | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| **Committee Chair (1 per committee)** | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| **Regular Committee Members** | Appointees from the Board of Directors | 2+ | 2+ | 1+ | 1+ | 1+ |
| | Community Representatives (OPTIONAL with a maximum 2 per committee) | | | | | |
| **TOTAL VOTING MEMBERS** | | 4+ | 4+ | 3+ | 3+ | 3+ |

## Section 2: Government Priorities and Letter of Direction

In accordance with the **2026–27 Letter of Direction issued by the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Gaming**, OAC's strategic direction, operations, and performance measures are aligned with the government's priorities to **Protect Ontario**, **Deliver Better Services**, and **Drive Innovation and Value for Money**. OAC assesses progress against these priorities using **existing outcome-based performance indicators** described throughout this Business Plan, including client satisfaction, service delivery efficiency, administrative cost ratios, workforce stability, and policy compliance measures.

**A. Protecting Ontario** To address expectations in the Letter of Direction, OAC's work serves to support Ontario families and businesses while helping build the province's economic resilience.

- **Priority 1**: Expand domestic partnerships within Canada to promote the development of supply chains and economic opportunities across Canada.

  **OAC's response:** All of OAC's granting and partnership work is completed in partnership with Ontario artists, arts organizations, and key organizations from broader sectoral points of view (for instance Ontario Chamber of Commerce).

  **Performance measurement:** Progress is assessed through existing indicators related to the geographic distribution of funded activities, partnership-based delivery models, and sector-wide participation, as reflected in program monitoring and reporting.

- **Priority 2**: Procure from Ontario and Canadian businesses whenever feasible.

  **OAC's response:** OAC implemented changes to its procurement policy to align with government buy Ontario provisions as of January 1, 2025.

  **Performance measurement:** Compliance with Buy Ontario procurement requirements is monitored through procurement oversight and reporting processes described in the administrative and financial sections of this Business Plan.

- **Priority 3:** Provide economic relief for Ontario families, consumers and businesses by freezing government fees and fares, unless approved by oversight Minister.

  **OAC's response:** *OAC provides its key services provision of applications and grants to arts community, at no cost to the arts community or Ontarians. OAC grants lower the cost to access the arts for all Ontarians.*

  **Performance measurement:** Affordability is assessed through confirmation that applicant-facing services remain free of charge, as well as broader indicators of access and participation in OAC-funded activities.

**B. Delivering Better Services** To address expectations in the Letter of Direction, OAC embraces innovation and sustainability, as discussed in the Values and Environmental Scan sections.

- **Priority 4**: Centre client/customer experience by simplifying interactions, improving satisfaction, and expanding/optimizing digital service offerings.

  **OAC's response:** We are modernizing service delivery by streamlining processes and leveraging digital platforms, increasing both accessibility and efficiency for Ontario's diverse arts sector.

  In 2026-27 OAC will provide a single operating program with 8 categories in place of 17 previous operating funding programs. In 2027-28 OAC plans to provide 9 project programs in 8 categories and partner with recommenders in order to efficiently deliver support currently provided through 44 mostly direct delivered granting programs.

  OAC is focused on continuous digital improvement, including tracking client satisfaction, expanding online services, and making data-driven enhancements.

  Our adaptability enables rapid response to changing needs in the arts sector, as highlighted in the Environmental Scan with references to economic and social trends.

  **Performance measurement:** Client experience is measured using existing client satisfaction scores, service delivery timelines, and project completion rates, as outlined in the "Meeting Provincial Performance Measures" subsection below.

- **Priority 5**: Identify opportunities to enhance efficiency, improve services, drive innovation and achieve cost savings, including through use of AI and other advanced technologies.

  **OAC's response**: Within and complementary to the grant modernizations initiatives listed above OAC is exploring where AI can ethically and responsibly be applied to administration processes to deliver with increased efficiency.

  **Performance measurement:** Given OAC's service model, AI-driven public services are not currently applicable. Efficiency outcomes are measured through existing indicators related to administrative cost control and service delivery performance.

- **Priority 6**: Eliminate unnecessary bureaucracy and red tape by applying Lean methodologies or other modalities to achieve operational efficiency.

  **OAC's response**: In 2026-27 OAC will provide a single operating program with 8 categories in place of 17 previous operating funding programs. In 2027-28 OAC plans to provide 9 project programs in 8 categories and partner with recommenders in order to efficiently deliver support currently provided through 44 mostly direct delivered granting programs.

  **Performance measurement:** Reductions in administrative burden are assessed through program consolidation outcomes, application pathway simplification, and service delivery efficiency indicators already tracked by OAC.

### C. Driving Innovation and Value for Money

OAC's response to the LOD directly supports the accountability framework described in our Values and referenced in program and operational sections in this document.

- **Priority 7**: Find innovative solutions to effectively deliver on agency mandate while operating within financial allocation. Ensure accurate financial reporting, effective internal controls, and proactive fraud management practices.

  **OAC's response**: OAC establishes clear, outcome-based performance measures and reports regularly on progress, ensuring accountability to both government and the public.

  OAC monitors key industry indicators—such as GDP and employment trends, as described in Section 3—to ensure that our programs are both innovative and sustainable. Responsible decision-making, effective risk management, and prudent use of resources are integrated into financial planning and operational reviews.

  OAC demonstrates sector-leading efficiency through comparative analysis of non-granting expenditures as a percentage of total budget and non-granting cost per application processed as described in the Provincial Granting Agencies and National Arts & Culture Agencies and detailed in the tables below.

  OAC recognizes the administrative spend compared to the number of applications processed as the best measure of a granting agency's efficiency given the time that must be spent reviewing all applications, not just those that receive grants. On that measure OAC is a national leader, five to ten times more efficient at $600 to $800 spent per application versus $3,000 to $6,000 per application in other Provincial granting programs.

  As illustrated in the chart below this same comparative performance carries through to peer arts councils across the country.

| | Total budget ($) | Total support to the arts ($) | Non Grating budget | Non-Granting as % of Budget | Total grant applications (#) | Non-Granting $ per application |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | **Ontario Arts Council** | | | |
| 2016-17 | $61,279,071 | $53,489,390 | $7,789,681 | 12.71% | 11,743 | $663.35 |
| 2017-18 | $70,044,791 | $60,758,261 | $9,286,530 | 13.26% | 11,466 | $809.92 |
| 2018-19 | $70,367,411 | $63,241,064 | $7,126,347 | 10.13% | 12,116 | $588.18 |
| 2019-20 | $61,292,349 | $53,259,597 | $8,032,752 | 13.11% | 10,587 | $758.74 |
| 2020-21 | $87,002,905 | $79,416,389 | $7,586,516 | 8.72% | 12,056 | $629.27 |
| | | | **Other Arts Councils in Canada** | | | |
| 2016-17 | $440,166,191 | $378,534,262 | $61,631,929 | 14.00% | 32,324 | $1,906.69 |
| 2017-18 | $523,132,455 | $409,939,308 | $113,193,147 | 21.64% | 26,971 | $4,196.85 |
| 2018-19 | $546,403,140 | $480,076,921 | $66,326,219 | 12.14% | 28,094 | $2,360.87 |
| 2019-20 | $591,351,284 | $501,166,673 | $90,184,611 | 15.25% | 33,849 | $2,664.32 |
| 2020-21 | $832,186,260 | $745,743,234 | $86,443,026 | 10.39% | 38,133 | $2,266.88 |

OAC is 1 to 2 percentage points more efficient in non-granting expenditure as a percentage of budget than the average member of the Canadian Public Arts Funders network in any year, with one year OAC being 8 percentage points more efficient. More starkly, measuring by "Non-granting $ per application" received / processed, OAC is the leader in the country as indicated by being **two to four times more efficient** than the national norm.

Further as can be seen in the 2020-21 year, when OAC receives increased support from the Provincial Government it transfers that investment to the community by ensuring non-granting expenditures are controlled, in this case decreased, even as investment in the community is increased at a much greater rate.

**Performance measurement:** Value for money is assessed through administrative cost ratios, comparative efficiency benchmarking, and financial oversight indicators already in place.

- **Priority 8**: Prudently and responsibly manage workforce size.

  **OAC's response**: Continuous improvement of administrative processes, including regular review of office utilization and staff deployment. OAC has not increased its workforce size in seven years despite increased or maintained applicant volume and increased complexity of risk management in a constrained fiscal environment.

  **Performance measurement:** Workforce management outcomes are assessed through workforce size stability and alignment of staffing levels with operational demands.

- **Priority 9:** By March 31, 2026, create span-of-control policy recognizing different streams of work within organization, setting minimum span-of-control benchmarks.

  **OAC's response**: OAC will have completed and submitted a compliant span-of-control policy by the required date and addressed span-of-control opportunities through organizational restructuring in 2023-24.

  **Performance measurement:** Progress is assessed through policy completion and implementation milestones.

- **Priority 10**: By October 1, 2025, submit amended human resource policy/guideline/directive re: OPS in-office standard.

  **OAC's response**: OAC's approach to in office work standard and office optimization aligns with Provincial directions and OPS guidelines and is further detailed in the administrative planning sections.

**Performance measurement:** Compliance is assessed through alignment with OPS in-office work requirements and related administrative reporting.

**Meeting Provincial Performance Measures**

OAC follows MTCG key agency operations performance indicators, including **project completion rates, client satisfaction scores, and service delivery timelines**, all of which are tracked and shared transparently.

OAC also contributes to ministry-wide policy performance indicators, including:

- GDP leverage of public investment
- Tourism attraction
- Attendance at arts and culture events and organizations

**Agency-Specific Priorities and Strategic Plan Implementation**

The OAC's 2022-2027 strategic plan, referenced throughout this document, is the foundation for our response to the government's priorities for board-governed agencies, LOD and ongoing delivery of value for Ontarians.

OAC's fulfillment of the Directions in its 2022–2027 Strategic Plan is evident in how its grant-making and outreach strategies are being updated to more flexibly and specifically address unique Ontario challenges and opportunities, ensuring that arts funding is equitably distributed and consistently aligned with local needs. Direction 1's mandate—to further develop OAC's funding approach for greater strength and relevance—comes to life as the organization renews its granting programs and policies with a centering on artistic practices. The emphasis on adapting to the Province's diverse contexts is reinforced through close tracking of demographic shifts and sector trends, strategies that keep OAC's funding responsive and impactful throughout Ontario.

Direction 3's call to renew program design and service delivery is fulfilled through the major updates coming to OAC programs and administrative processes in the next two years as well as their continuous evaluation and improvement. Also featured is an increased engagement with a reprioritized set of stakeholders, and an increase to our leading commitment in transparency and accountability. The transition from demographic-based Strategic Priority Groups to a comprehensive suite of performance measures—encompassing Artistic, Economic, and Social Investment Performance, and Operational Efficiency—reflects the organization's revised holistic approach. Demographic outcomes remain central, but now exist alongside other vital performance areas; this integration will be complete for operating funding by 2026 and organization-wide by 2027.

Achievement of Direction 2 is apparent in OAC's robust communication and public engagement efforts. By partnering with government to amplify the stories of Ontario's artists and arts organizations and systematically gathering and sharing data on the impact of the arts, OAC has made the value, benefits, and reach of arts activity clear to all stakeholders. Strategic and operational communication keeps the public and ministry informed, aligns external engagement

with government priorities, and regularly highlights the broad impact of public arts funding across the province.

Direction 4 finds fulfillment in OAC's collaborative work with municipal, regional, and non-profit third-party partners—efforts that strengthen community connections and reinforce a province-wide approach to sector development. Through these partnerships, OAC supports meaningful collaboration, leverages resources, and amplifies its impact, ensuring that no region or community is left behind as Ontario's arts sector continues to evolve and thrive.

In summary: OAC focuses on maximizing investments in grants, supporting both emerging and established artists and arts organizations, and demonstrating value-for-money in all programmatic decisions.

- OAC is committed to continuous program evaluation and administrative efficiency, as outlined in our strategic and operational planning sections.
- Close collaboration with the ministry ensures that all public communications and external engagement reflect government priorities and OAC values.
- Progress on strategy is measured and reported regularly to stakeholders, as detailed in our performance measurement and stakeholder engagement sections.

**Further LOD Integration**

OAC's response to the Minister's Letter of Direction is integrated across the entire business plan:

- Environmental Scan: Economic, social, and policy trends—such as GDP contribution and employment statistics for the culture sector—influence our strategies to build sector resilience and responsiveness.
- Financial and Operational Measures: Fiscal responsibility, workforce planning, and outcome measurement are woven into both our response to the LOD and our broader operational planning.
- Stakeholder Engagement and Sector Partnerships: Sector feedback and collaborative initiatives ensure an inclusive, province-wide approach.
- Program Delivery and Impact: Commitment to innovation, and sustainability is present across all program descriptions and performance measurement sections.

**Looking Ahead**

Through this comprehensive, integrated approach, the Ontario Arts Council demonstrates its dedication to fulfilling the expectations set out in the Agency Letter of Direction. By embedding government priorities and OAC values throughout all sections of this document, OAC continues to deliver exceptional service, foster artistic excellence, and support a thriving, accessible, and sustainable arts sector for all Ontarians.

# Section 3: Environmental Scan

This section provides an overview of the business, policy, economic, social, and technological environment in which the Ontario Arts Council operates and highlights broader sector trends that will inform future planning. A comprehensive look at economic, social, technological, and policy trends shaping risks and opportunities for Ontario's arts sector.

Key points in this scan include:

**Internal**

- OAC's internal environment is defined by flat provincial funding, a stable but recently restructured workforce with moderate experience and upcoming retirements, high administrative costs driven by compensation and facilities, and the provincial government assuming lease management as of 2024–25.

**External**

- Ontario's culture sector is a major economic engine, showing strong post-pandemic resilience and consistently outperforming overall GDP growth.
- Despite recovery, organizations face real pressures from inflation, rising costs, changing audience behaviours, and broader economic uncertainty.
- Population growth, demographic shifts, and regional dynamics are reshaping cultural demand and creating new opportunities for inclusive, locally grounded programming.
- Cultural tourism, creative occupations, and digital innovation—especially AI—are driving new forms of growth but also introducing skills gaps and ethical challenges.
- Trade tensions, labour-market challenges, and evolving federal and provincial policy directions highlight the need for strategic investment, diversification, and long-term sector resilience.

## Internal Environmental Analysis

OAC's base funding from the province will remain flat, with approximately 84–85% allocated to program spending. Compensation, office rent, and facilities costs will account for approximately 90% of total administrative expenditures.

OAC's headcount is expected to remain at 59 regular salaried positions in future years, with slight variability in the upcoming years with additional temporary staff brought on board to support key business critical work or projects, such as the granting modernization and performance measures.

The organization has a moderately experienced workforce, with an average tenure of nine years, though nearly half of employees (45%) have fewer than five years of service, which is an indication of significant recent hiring in association with an organizational restructuring.

The workforce is predominantly female/women (65%), and the average age is 46.5, suggesting a mature employee population. Looking ahead, 12% of employees are projected to retire within the next five years, highlighting a need for succession planning in key roles.

Annual turnover sits at a relatively stable 9%, pointing to steady retention with manageable levels of employee movement.

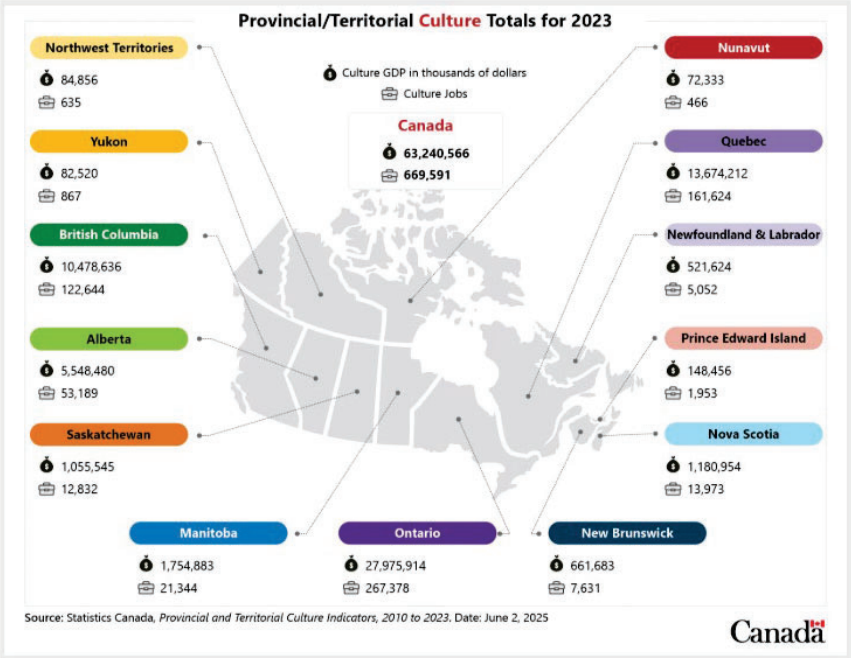
Beginning in 2024–25, OAC transferred its lease to the provincial government, which now manages and controls OAC's rent and facilities.

## Economic and Industry Context

### Ontario's Culture Sector: Economic Indicators and Trends

Ontario's culture sector is a major economic engine, generating nearly $28B in GDP and supporting over 267,378 jobs—outpacing many traditional industries. Ontario's culture sector has demonstrated resilience and responsiveness within a rapidly changing environment as the 12th largest employer in Ontario—surpassing industries such as real estate, auto manufacturing, forestry, and mining combined.[1] Ontario's arts and culture sector generates nearly half of Canada's total arts and culture GDP and jobs, accounting for 44% of arts and culture GDP and 40% of arts and culture jobs.[2]

***Provincial/Territorial Culture Totals for 2023***




## Ontario Arts & Culture GDP Growth: 5-Year Comparative Analysis

This section presents an inflation-adjusted comparative analysis of Ontario's arts and culture real GDP growth over the past five years (2020–2025). The analysis benchmarks Ontario's performance against Quebec, British Columbia, Alberta, and key international peers—the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia. By comparing arts and culture sector growth rates to overall real GDP growth in each jurisdiction, this report offers policymakers, sector leaders, and analysts a clear

understanding of the sector's relative recent performance and its implications for strategic planning.

**Ontario Arts & Culture Real GDP Growth: 2020–2025**

Over the most recent five-year period, Ontario's arts and culture sector real GDP grew by approximately 10%, reflecting a robust recovery following the pandemic downturn when adjusted for inflation. This growth underscores the sector's resilience and its critical role in driving economic renewal. Ontario's arts and culture GDP grew by roughly 10% between 2020–2025, signaling a strong inflation-adjusted recovery.

**Comparison to Overall Real GDP Growth: Ontario and Other Jurisdictions**

Across all jurisdictions, arts and culture GDP growth outperformed overall economic growth, confirming the sector's resilience. To contextualize the sector's performance, the arts and culture real GDP growth rates are compared to overall real GDP growth in each region for 2020–2025:

- Ontario: Arts and culture real GDP increased by 10%, outpacing the overall real GDP growth of 6%.
- Quebec: Sector real GDP grew by 8%, compared to overall real GDP growth of 5%.
- British Columbia: Sector growth reached 11%, versus overall real GDP growth of 7%.
- Alberta: Arts and culture real GDP expanded by 6%, compared to 4% for overall real GDP.
- United States: Arts and culture real GDP rose by 12%, outperforming overall real GDP growth of 8%.
- United Kingdom: Sector growth reached 9%, compared to overall real GDP growth of 6%.
- Australia: Arts and culture real GDP increased by 11%, surpassing overall real GDP growth of 7%.

| Jurisdiction | Arts & Culture Real GDP (5-Year) | Overall Real GDP (5-Year) | 5-Year Premium (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ontario | 10% | 6% | +4% |
| Quebec | 8% | 5% | +3% |
| British Columbia | 11% | 7% | +4% |
| Alberta | 6% | 4% | +2% |
| United States | 12% | 8% | +4% |
| United Kingdom | 9% | 6% | +3% |
| Australia | 11% | 7% | +4% |

**Key Insights**

Across all jurisdictions, the arts and culture sector's real GDP growth over the past five years consistently outperformed overall economic growth. Ontario's sector exhibited strong resilience and expansion, with growth rates exceeding those of the broader provincial economy and closely mirroring leading international peers. This trend is also evident in other provinces and countries, underscoring the sector's role as a driver of economic vitality and innovation during a period of recovery and transformation.

### Conclusion: Implications for Strategic Planning

The sector's consistent outperformance underscores its strategic importance for investment and long-term planning in a creative economy strategy. Ontario's inflation-adjusted arts and culture real GDP growth over the last five years highlights the sector's robust contribution to both provincial and national economies. The comparative analysis reinforces the sector's ability to outperform overall economic trends, making it a strategic priority for future investment and policy development.

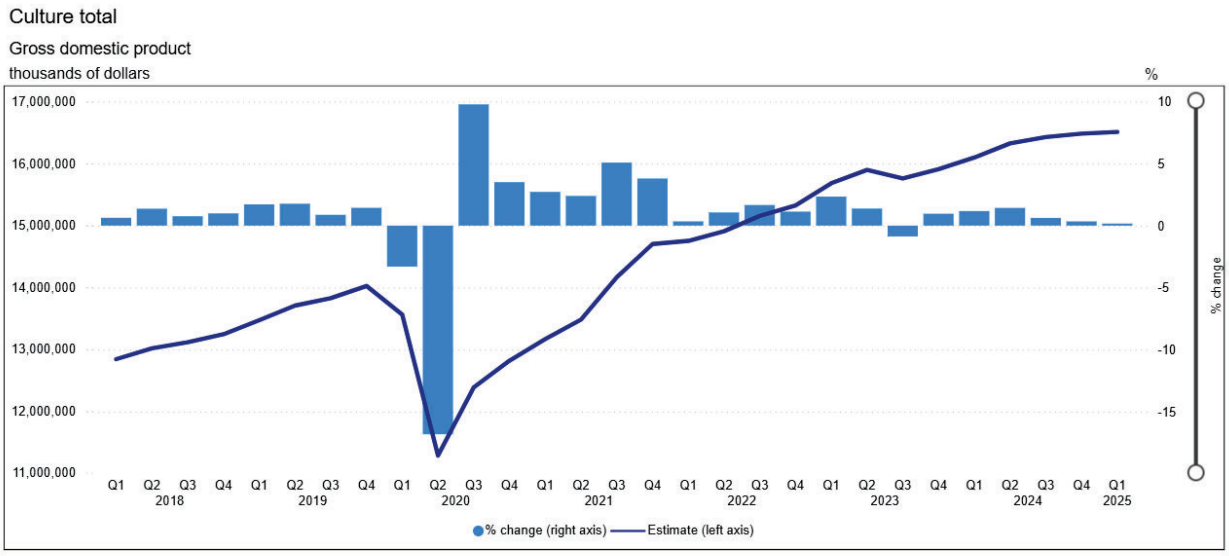
Sources: Statistics Canada, Provincial Economic Accounts (2020–2025); U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account; UK Office for National Statistics, Culture Satellite Accounts; Australian Bureau of Statistics, Cultural and Creative Activity Satellite Accounts. Data compiled as of Q2 2025.

## National Quarterly GDP and Jobs Statistics

National culture-sector GDP experienced a steep pandemic drop but rebounded strongly, surpassing pre-COVID levels by 2025. Quarterly figures reflect national trends, where the economic impact of Canada's arts and culture sector is highest in Ontario, Quebec, and British Columbia, with Ontario as a leading contributor.[3]. Among them, Ontario stands out as a leading contributor to Canada's cultural economy.

Nationally, the culture sector's quarterly GDP grew steadily from $12.8 billion in Q1 2018 to $14 billion in Q4 2019, underscoring its role as a consistent driver of economic activity. The culture sector, reliant on in-person engagement and public gatherings, experienced severe disruptions during COVID-19 due to government-mandated restrictions. GDP fell to $11.2 billion in Q2 2020. After emergency measures were lifted, the sector rebounded, rising from $14.7 billion in Q1 2022 to $16.5 billion by Q1 2025. This represents a 47% increase from the low point, and a 12.2% rise from Q1 2022, averaging roughly 3% annual growth over four years.

***Quarterly GDP Change in Canada's Culture Sector[4]***




**Source:** Statistics Canada, Table 36-10-0652-01.

2018 2025

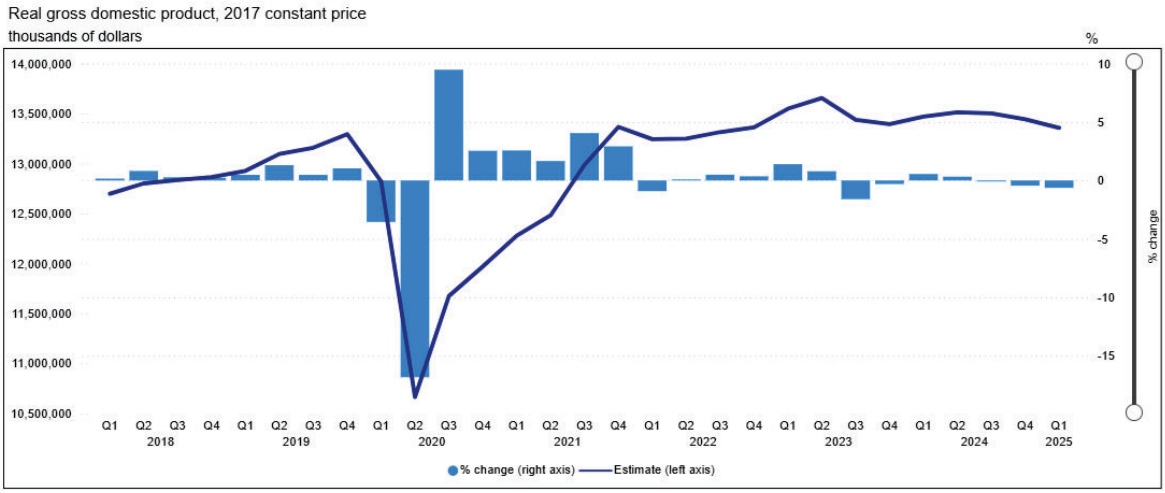
Understanding the broader economic conditions in Ontario during this post-pandemic period is essential for contextualizing the performance of the province's culture sector. Between 2022 and 2025, Ontario's economy experienced slowing GDP growth, rising unemployment, persistent inflation, and elevated interest rates, reflecting a challenging post-pandemic environment. In 2022 – 2023, Ontario saw moderate recovery post-COVID, with real GDP growth hovering around 2-3% annually, driven by consumer spending and government stimulus. In 2024, growth slowed to 1.4% reflecting global economic uncertainty and tightening monetary policy. In 2025, GDP growth is projected to decelerate further to 0.8% impacted by U.S. trade tariffs and weaker export performance.[5]

Between 2022 and 2025, Ontario experienced its highest inflation in four decades, with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) peaking at over 8% in mid-2022 before declining to under 2% in 2025. This surge prompted the Bank of Canada to implement aggressive interest rate hikes to stabilize prices. The CPI spike in 2022 – 2023 eroded household purchasing power and prompted the Bank of Canada to raise interest rates to nearly 5%[8], which cooled inflation but slowed economic growth and increased unemployment. Inflation eroded household purchasing power, putting pressure on discretionary spending.

These figures provide a high-level view of the sector's performance yet overlook the more nuanced realities that artists and cultural organizations faced in navigating this post-pandemic recovery period. Reopening delays, inflation-driven cost pressures, higher borrowing costs, shifting audience behaviours, and an uncertain business environment and new trade and tariff barriers continue to challenge organizations seeking stability.

Looking at real GDP in the chart below shows these pressures more clearly by removing inflation effects and revealing whether changes reflect real output recovery or merely higher prices.

**Quarterly Real GDP Change in Canada's Culture Sector** *[9]*

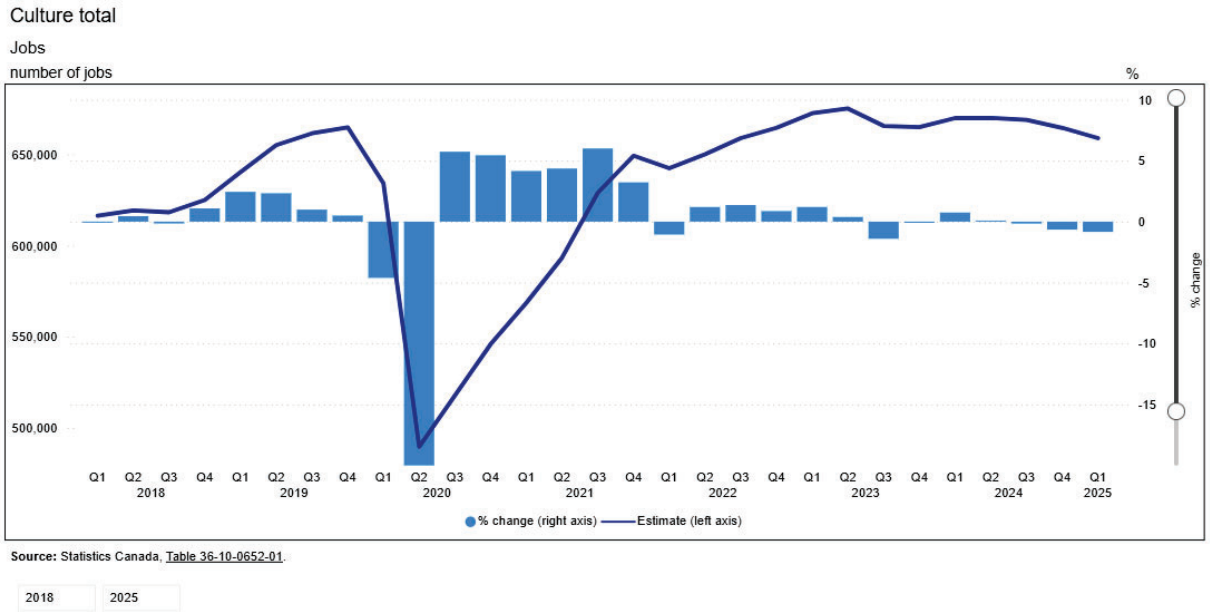



**Source:** Statistics Canada, Table 36-10-0652-01.

2018 2025

In real terms[10] Canada's culture sector GDP grew from $12.7 billion in Q1 2018 to a peak of $13.65 billion in Q2 2023, then declined slightly to $13.36 billion in Q1 2025. The most significant disruption occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a sharp 16.8% drop between Q1 and Q2 2020, falling from $12.82 billion to $10.66 billion. Recovery began in Q3 2020 with a 9.5% rebound, and growth continued through 2021, reaching pre-pandemic levels by Q4 2021. While early years saw modest quarterly increases (0.2 – 1.3%), post-pandemic growth was more volatile, with gains up to 4%. Recent quarters indicate stagnation and a slight contraction, suggesting the sector has stabilized and faces challenges sustaining a growth momentum.

***Jobs, Culture Total, Canada[11]***




**Source:** Statistics Canada, Table 36-10-0652-01.

2018 2025

Jobs in the culture sector, defined by the Canadian Framework for Culture Statistics, include all full-time, part-time, and contract positions across cultural industries and occupations, covering the creative chain from creation to distribution of cultural goods and services. Employment followed a trajectory similar to real GDP between Q1 2018 and Q1 2025. Jobs grew steadily before the pandemic, rising from 616,434 in Q1 2018 to 664,845 in Q4 2019, then fell sharply during COVID-19, dropping 22.8% in Q2 2020 to 489,701. The sector peaked at 675,141 jobs in Q2 2023, mirroring GDP's high point, before easing in 658,958 in Q1 2025. This pattern underscores a strong link between cultural employment and output, with both indicators showing severe pandemic disruption, robust rebound, and recent signs of plateauing.

Broader labour market conditions remain challenging for younger Canadian, with youth unemployment at 14.1% nationally[12] and 17.8%[13] in Ontario in late 2025, signaling barriers for new entrants. However, continued investment in skills development, digital innovation, and inclusive

hiring practices positions the culture sector to remain a dynamic contributor to Canada's economy and a magnet for creative talent.

## Ontario Culture Sector Conditions

### Largest Franco Community Outside of Quebec

Ontario hosts Canada's largest Francophone population outside Quebec, with over 650,000 Franco-Ontarians concentrated in Eastern and Northeastern Ontario, Ottawa, and urban centers like Toronto. This community is supported by the French Language Services Act, ensuring access to cultural and educational services. Francophone cultural industries—publishing, music, and performing arts—are integral to Ontario's creative economy, contributing to GDP and fostering bilingualism. Recent trends emphasize Francophone immigration growth and cross-provincial collaborations with Quebec, creating opportunities for cultural exchange and market development. Challenges include sustaining cultural identity amid assimilation pressures and ensuring equitable funding for Francophone arts organizations.

### Indigenous Community

Ontario's Indigenous arts ecosystem is shaped by commitments to reconciliation, cultural preservation and developing contemporary Indigenous art.

Central to Ontario's culture sector is the leadership of Indigenous communities. Crossing over with the lands referred to as Ontario are over 100 distinct First Nations and Métis communities representing approximately 13 Indigenous languages spoken across the province. Prominent Indigenous languages in Ontario include Ojibwe (Anishinaabemowin), Cree, Oji-Cree, Mohawk (Kanien'kéha), Odawa, Potawatomi, Oneida, Delaware (Lenape), Algonquin, and Michif (Métis language), among others. These languages are actively used in community life, education, and cultural programming, sustaining both heritage and contemporary Indigenous identities.

The 2024 Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres report estimates there are over 400,000 First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people residing in Ontario, a number significantly higher than federal census counts. These communities are represented throughout the province, with urban Indigenous populations in centers such as Toronto, Thunder Bay, Sudbury, and Ottawa, as well as strong ties to First Nations and traditional territories in Northern and Southwestern Ontario. This demographic reality underscores Ontario's role as home to the largest number of Indigenous persons of any province in Canada and highlights the ongoing importance of language preservation and cultural revitalization.

Ontario is home to 46 treaties between the Crown and First Nations, including historic agreements such as the Robinson-Huron Treaty, the Williams Treaties, and Treaty 9, which continue to influence land, resource, and cultural relationships. Indigenous art plays a vital role in reconciliation by preserving culture, history, and language, while also advancing contemporary Indigenous stories and perspectives. Key examples include the Woodland School of Art and the thriving Indigenous music scene, which showcase both traditional and modern creative expressions. The importance of Indigenous art lies not only in celebrating heritage but also in fostering dialogue, healing, and a

deeper understanding among all Ontarians, ensuring that Indigenous voices remain central to the province's evolving cultural narrative.

**Arts Across Ontario – Regional Economic Impacts**

Arts and culture generate major regional economic benefits across Ontario, reinforcing the value of targeted regional support. The Arts Across Ontario report[17], prepared by Nordicity for the Ontario Arts Council, provides a regionally grounded snapshot of the province's cultural economy, showcasing how arts and culture thrive across Ontario's vast and diverse geography in 2022. This report revealed how public investment in the arts fuels economic impact across every region of the province – generating millions in local economic activity, in the year the study was completed, totaling $26.4 billion province-wide.

This data reveals both regional strengths and opportunities, underscoring the need for tailored investments. It also highlights how arts and culture are deeply embedded in Ontario' communities, economies, and identities across varied landscapes.

***Arts Across Ontario, regional economic impact, OAC Regions, 2022***

| OAC Region | Population | Employment | Culture Jobs | Culture share of employment | Culture GDP ($000) | Culture GDP per capita ($) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| South Central | 4,135,792 | 1,827,455 | 69,590 | 4% | 6,693,695 | 1,618 |
| Southwest | 3,918,638 | 1,632,420 | 50,104 | 3% | 3,898,312 | 995 |
| Toronto | 2,985,228 | 1,308,115 | 100,217 | 8% | 11,382,797 | 3,813 |
| East | 2,012,550 | 873,565 | 26,826 | 3% | 2,674,785 | 1,329 |
| Central | 1,256,407 | 519,085 | 15,901 | 3% | 1,075,836 | 856 |
| Northeast | 589,614 | 233,955 | 5,748 | 2% | 481,176 | 816 |
| Northwest | 173,737 | 71,575 | 1,896 | 3% | 143,263 | 825 |
| Far North | 73,040 | 26,715 | 247 | 1% | 15,637 | 214 |
| **Total** | **15,145,006** | **6,492,885** | **270,529** | **4%** | **26,365,500** | **1,741** |

Source: Statistics Canada, Cultural Satellite Account, Nordicity Regional Economic Model

## Ontario Population Projections

Rapid population growth and aging demographics will drive increased demand for inclusive and accessible cultural programming. Ontario's population is projected to grow from 15.7 million in 2024 to approximately 21.1 million by 2051, with the most rapid expansion expected in Eastern Ontario and largest increase in the Greater Toronto Area.[20] This demographic shift, driven largely by immigration and interprovincial migration will significantly reshape demand across sectors, including arts and culture. Ontario's population is also projected to see a significant increase in the number of seniors aged 65 and over. As communities grow and diversify, interest in inclusive, accessible and regional representative cultural programming is likely to intensify. An aging population will require tailored cultural experiences that reflect evolving interests and public engagement opportunities. These trends underscore the importance of strategic investment in new cultural programming to meet the existing infrastructural investments by the province and the needs of a larger and more varied audience base.

### Cultural Tourism Sector Perspectives

Cultural tourism is surging, with strong local travel and high visitor spending benefiting arts and heritage organizations. Ontario's tourism sector rebounded strongly in the past year, with nearly 90% of residents planning overnight trips within the province.[21] This surge in local and regional travel has boosted arts and culture tourism, as cultural tourists spend nearly three times more than the average visitor and stay longer.[22] According to the May 2025 Arts Response Tracking Survey by Business / Arts and Nanos Research, cultural tourism in Ontario is showing strong momentum. Nearly half of Canadian culture-goers are likely or somewhat likely to travel out of town (over 40km) to attend arts and culture events, with Ontario seeing a net increase of 9.4% in expected attendance.

Performances and heritage sites are top draws, especially among older audiences, while younger visitors show stronger interest in museums and music festivals. Importantly, 22% of respondents say it's more important now to attend events that feature Canadian artists or content, reflecting a preference for locally rooted experiences. These trends suggest that arts organizations and cultural tourism businesses in Ontario can benefit by programming innovative, Canadian or Ontario-focused offerings.[23]

### Trade Policy Trends and Implications

U.S. tariff uncertainty threatens cultural export stability, prompting the need for market diversification and sector resilience. In 2025, U.S. trade and tariff policies created significant uncertainty for Ontario's culture sector, particularly the imposition of up to 35% on Canadian goods.[24] While cultural products like books, films and digital media were initially exempt, the threat of future inclusion in tariff regimes has disrupted cross-border licensing and distribution agreements.[25] Ontario's cultural exports valued at over $24 billion nationally, face rising costs and reduced competitiveness in U.S. markets. The Ontario Chamber of Commerce warns these trade tensions, combined with labour shortages and limited access to capital, could stall growth in a sector that contributes over $26 billion to the province's GDP. Looking ahead, Ontario's culture sector has an opportunity to focus on strengthening cultural tourism offerings, expanding cultural exports to new international markets, and enhancing inter-provincial trade networks. Diversifying audiences and distribution channels will be essential to building resilience and sustaining growth in a changing trade environment.

Sub-sectors—film, music, publishing, and interactive digital media—are expanding through **digital transformation and export strategies**, while AI adoption is reshaping administrative and creative workflows. Despite strong performance, challenges persist: **labour shortages, rising costs, and underinvestment** threaten resilience. Policy briefs call for **bold action to enhance competitiveness**, emphasizing innovation, diversity, and regional development. The global creative economy, valued at **USD $985 billion**, is projected to grow 40% by 2030, positioning Ontario for significant opportunity if strategic investments continue.

### Creative Occupations Growth and Market Trends

Creative occupations continue to expand across multiple industries, underscoring the sector's deep economic linkages. The cultural workforce includes people who work in culture jobs within the culture sector; support staff in those industries providing management, administrative and accountancy work; and individuals working in culture occupations in other industries not defined as "creative" for example, a graphic designer working in a bank. A report prepared by the UK agency NESTA found that there are more people working in creative occupations working outside the creative industries than within them, in other words, that culture jobs are also prevalent outside of the cultural sector. [26]

In the UK, embedded creative employment is greatest in manufacturing, real estate, business activities, wholesale and retail trade and financial intermediation. This points to significant linkages between the culture sector and the broader economy, and the crossover of creative occupations between many important economic industries. Further research is required to determine the extent of Ontario's creative workforce in other sectors.

In Canada, cultural occupations are defined using the National Occupation Classification (NOC) system at the 5-digit level. Creative occupations are those that place emphasis on the individual creator or artist.[27] A report prepared by the University of Toronto, Department of Geography and Planning, demonstrates the long-term growth of creative work in Ontario's economy.

***Toronto CMA Employment growth: Creative occupations vs. employed labour force, 1991-2021[28]***

*Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 1991-2021 [Custom tabulations, Author's calculations; 3-year moving average]*

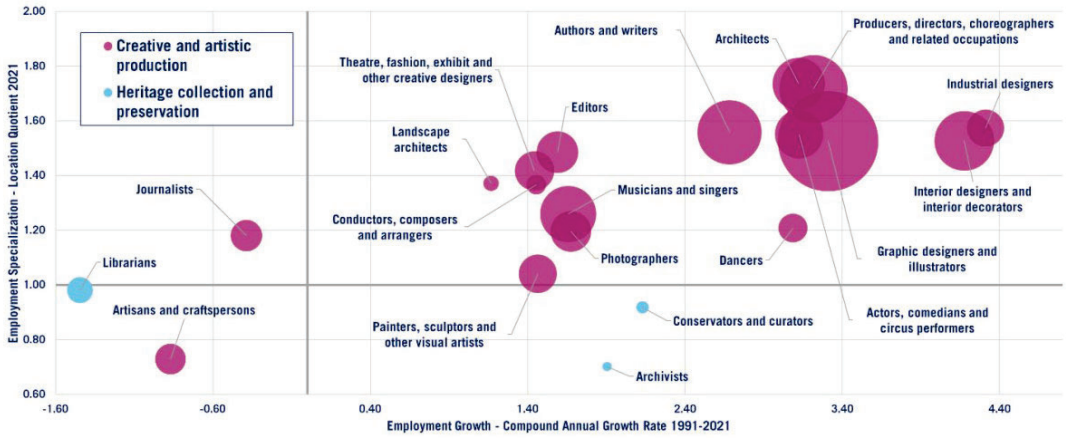
Creative employment in Toronto has grown faster than the overall labour force over the last three decades. The chart above shows that in the Toronto CMA, over a 30-year period, growth in creative occupations outpaced the growth of the overall employed labour force. Note, it is likely that the number of people employed in creative occupations is under-reported due to the challenges of capturing data on artists through statistical surveys, for reasons that include the definition of

professional artists and the amount of part-time and cross-over work that takes place in artists' labour markets.

The following chart, from Statistics Canada's *Toronto Cultural Sector* report, illustrates three measures simultaneously:

1. The number of employees in cultural occupations within the Toronto region (indicated by the relative size of the "bubble")
2. The average annual job growth rate of the cultural occupations in the region (horizontal axis), and
3. The relative employment concentration – or location quotient (LQ) – of the cultural occupation in the region to the national average (vertical axis).

***Growth and specialization in Toronto's cultural occupations, 1991-2021***[29]




*Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 1991 and 2021 [Author's calculations]*

This shows Ontario's strength through the Toronto CMA region in high-value and highly skilled cultural work. The largest occupation group is graphic designers and illustrators, followed by authors and writers; producers, directors, choreographers and related occupations; interior designers and decorators; and musicians and singers.

Cultural jobs and GDP impact by CMA, CA level is featured in the Arts Across Ontario report.

## Navigating AI Impact on Arts and Culture Work

AI adoption is rising across the creative sector, but skills gaps and policy gaps remain substantial. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is rapidly transforming creative sector jobs across Canada and globally. The *AI for Administration in Ontario's Creative Industries* report by Work in Culture and Nordicity found that 79% of Ontario creatives use AI tools like ChatGPT, Grammarly, and Canva's Magic Write for writing, marketing and administration tasks.[30] However, most lack formal policies and training. In the UK, national efforts are underway to close a major AI skills gap in the arts.[31] Australia is

emphasizing ethical use and artists rights, positioning AI as a tool to support, not replace, human creativity.[32]

**Policy Landscape**

In 2025, new federal and provincial policies are reshaping Canada's culture sector with a focus on resilience, inclusion and economic growth.[33] The Government of Canada's Budget 2025 includes increased investments to strengthen arts and culture as pillars of national identity and innovation, while also expanding access to and digital capacity. In Ontario, the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming continues to prioritize creative industries and regional development. The recent Ontario Chamber of Commerce's recent policy brief called for bold action[34] to enhance competitiveness and community impact through arts and culture, shows Ontario's culture sector has a vital role in fostering a strong economy, social cohesion and prosperity in the province.

## Outlook: Ontario's Culture Sector, 2026 -2029

Over the next three years, Ontario's culture sector is poised for dynamic growth and transformation, driven by demographic shifts, digital innovation and evolving consumer expectations. The sector's economic contribution, already exceeding $26 billion annually, is expected to grow as arts and arts organizations embrace new technology and global markets. As Ontario's population is projected to exceed 16 million by 2028, demand for diverse, engaging and regionally responsive cultural programming will grow, particularly in urban and rapidly growing communities, and northern communities. Audiences will seek out Indigenous arts, Francophone arts, fresh, innovative and inclusive experiences in theatre, dance, music and visual arts, new books and stories, that reflect Ontario's evolving stories. This shift underscores the importance of investing in expanded content creation that deepens public engagement. However, challenges persist, including rising operational costs, uneven recovery from the pandemic, and ongoing funding gaps. Policies prioritizing digital capacity building, cultural tourism, workforce development and export readiness will be key to unlocking the sector's full potential in a rapidly evolving cultural and economic environment.

**Ontario's Identity and Cultural Sovereignty**

Cultural production is increasingly recognized as a strategic asset that strengthens Ontario's economy, identity, and global presence. Ontario's cultural sector operates at the intersection of creativity, community, and competitiveness. Broader shifts across Canada and the United States — including rapid digital change, evolving public expectations, and heightened attention to civic trust — are reshaping how culture is created, shared, and valued. Within this environment, the Government of Ontario's focus on building a strong, resilient province under the "Protect Ontario" and "Ontario Strong" frameworks underscores the importance of the arts as both an economic driver and a cornerstone of community identity.

Cultural production in Ontario is increasingly recognized as a strategic asset that supports the province's prosperity, social cohesion, and international reputation. The creative industries contribute more than $27 billion to Ontario's GDP and sustain hundreds of thousands of jobs across the province. At the same time, artists and cultural organizations play a vital civic role by strengthening inclusion, dialogue, and shared understanding — qualities that underpin strong and confident communities.

Looking ahead, Ontario's opportunity lies in continuing to align cultural investment with economic growth and community resilience, while supporting innovation and access in a rapidly changing digital landscape. By ensuring that Ontario's creative voices are diverse, visible, and globally competitive, the province can reinforce both its economic strength and its cultural vitality — protecting what makes Ontario strong today while preparing it for the opportunities of tomorrow.

## Methodology

### Culture Sector Data and Definitions

The Canadian Framework for Culture Statistics (CFCS) was developed in 2011 and updated in 2021 by Statistics Canada, working with the Department of Canadian Heritage and other stakeholders. It establishes the conceptual framework that outlines the standard concepts, definitions and classifications for comparable and consistent statistics on culture using the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) and the National Occupational Classification - Statistics (NOC-S).

For statistical purposes, the culture sector is defined in Canada as the "creative, artistic activity and the goods and services produced by it, and the preservation of heritage."[14] Statistics Canada uses the conceptual construct of the economic "creative chain" as the series of steps by which a culture good or service is created, developed, and perhaps manufactured and distributed. Within the culture sector, cultural activities include heritage and libraries, live performance, visual and applied arts, written and published works, audio-visual and interactive media, and sound recording.[15] The full picture of the culture sector reveals an interconnected value creation chain of creators, distributors and promoters, arts educators, suppliers of goods and services, consumers and audiences, and donors and funders.[16]

[1] *Arts Across Ontario*, preliminary findings. October 2024. Source: Statistics Canada. Table 36-10-0402-01 and Table 36-10-0452-01 and Culture Satellite Account Statistics for Ontario.

[2] Culture Satellite Account - Canada.ca

[3] CBC, *Arts sector contributes billions to Canadian economy, but funding challenges remain*, by Muriel Draaisma and Tyler Cheese, October 30, 2025. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/arts-culture-sector-report-economic-growth-canadian-chamber-of-commerce-9.6961048

[4] Statistics Canada. Table 36-10-0652-01 National culture and sport indicators by domain and sub-domain (x 1,000)

[5] 2025 Fall Statement | Chapter 2 Economic Performance and Outlook

[6] Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a statistical measure of inflation based on the price change of a fixed basket of goods and services.

[7] Inflation: Definitions, graphs and data - Bank of Canada

[8] Bank of Canada raises its key interest rate to 5% | CBC News

[9] Statistics Canada. Table 36-10-0652-01 National culture and sport indicators by domain and sub-domain (x 1,000)

[10] Adjusted for inflation.

[11] Statistics Canada. Table 36-10-0652-01 National culture and sport indicators by domain and sub-domain (x 1,000)

[12] Labour Force Survey, October 2025 https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/251107/dq251107a-eng.htm

[13] Ontario Labour Market Report, https://www.ontario.ca/page/labour-market-report-september-2025

[14] Canadian Framework for Culture Statistics

[15] Domains and sub-domains of the Canadian Culture Satellite Account adapted from Canadian Framework for Culture Statistics

[16] Deaken, Jonathan et al. The arts in the UK: Seeing the big picture: A perspective on how to gauges and sustain the UK arts sector's full impact. McKinsey & Company. November 2023.

[17] Arts Across Ontario: Impact Report by Nordicity, 2025. ARTS Across Ontario

[18] Franco-Ontarian history | ontario.ca

[19] Francophone arts and culture, https://www.destinationontario.com/en-ca/articles/francophone-arts-and-culture

[20] Ontario population projections | ontario.ca

[21] Travel Pulse Canada, by Natasha Lair-McKenty, April 3, 2025. https://www.travelpulse.ca/news/destinations/survey-almost-90-of-ontarians-plan-to-take-homegrown-trips

[22] Ontario Arts and Culture Tourism Profile, August 2023. Forum Research. ONTARIO ARTS AND CULTURE TOURISM PROFILE AUGUST 2023

[23] National Survey, May 2025, Nanos for Business / Arts https://nanos.co/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/2025-2823-BAA-NAC-Populated-report-FINAL.pdf

[24] The U.S. bumped its tariff on Canadian goods to 35%. How big of an impact will it have? | CBC News

[25] Trump, tariffs and trade: What's at stake for the arts and creative industries? by Kelly Wilhem, 2025. OCADU Cultural Policy Hub. https://culturalpolicyhub.ocadu.ca/news/trump-tariffs-and-trade-whats-stake-arts-and-creative-industries

[26] Higgs, Peter, et al. Beyond the creative industries: Mapping the creative economy in the United Kingdom. Technical report. February 2008.

[27] Statistics Canada's definition of creative occupations includes: actors, architects, archivists, artisans and crafts persons, authors and writers, conductors, composers and arrangers, conservators and curators, dancers, editors, graphic designers and illustrators, industrial designers, interior designers, journalists, landscape architects, librarians, musicians, singers, other performers, painters, sculptors and other visual artists, photographers, producers, directors and choreographers, technical writers, theatre, fashion, exhibit and other creative designers.

[28] Vinodrai, Tara. TORONTO'S CULTURAL SECTOR: Economic Dynamics and Change, 1991 to 2021. July 2024.Page 4.

[29] Ibid, page 11.

[30] AI Use for Administrative Tasks in Ontario's Creative Industries, by Work in Culture and Nordicity, 2025 Work in Culture Releases New Report on AI Use for Administrative Tasks in Ontario's Creative Industries - Work in Culture

[31] AI skills for the UK workforce AI skills for the UK workforce - GOV.UK

[32] Creative Australia Principles: Generative Artificial Intelligence and creative work Creative Australia Principles: Generative Artificial Intelligence and creative work | Creative Australia

[33] Government of Canada announces budget measures to protect our Canadian culture, values and identity - Canada.ca

[34] Ontario Chamber of Commerce, Ontario's Arts, Culture and Creative Industries: Strengthening Competitiveness and Communities (2025) The Culture Sector: An Economic Powerhouse In Need of Bold Action | OCC

# Section 4: Overview of Current and Future Programs and Activities

## Core Operations

OAC details its core operations and key priorities, highlighting upcoming changes to strengthen services and responsiveness.

**Operating and Project Programs**

The Ontario Arts Council (OAC) invests in Ontario's vibrant and diverse arts sector through a range of granting programs that support professional artists, arts organizations, and communities across the province. OAC's programs have been organized across 16 distinct operating funding streams, and more than 40 project programs, serving multiple art forms and communities. Beginning in 2026, the 16 operating programs will be streamlined into a single Ontario Arts Operating Fund that brings together the core elements of the operating programs, and during 2026 project programs will be streamlined into nine  funds to be implemented in 2027.

The nine funds will continue to support: arts education and the creation, production and presentation of art across arts disciplines and communities, while also investing in new areas of growth and innovation with funding for skills development, capacity-building, collaboration and multi-sector partnerships. For 2026, current project programs will be maintained.

This consolidation will simplify the funding process and increase transparency for both applicants and OAC, while maintaining robust support across disciplines and regions and equity-deserving communities. The new approach will enable greater alignment between artistic activity, community impact, and OAC's broader strategic goals, ensuring resources are allocated to maximize reach and relevance.

These changes will make the system easier to navigate, and ensure that professional artists and organizations can access support that best fits the scope and impact of their work, regardless of discipline or scale.

**Awards**

The Ontario Arts Council (OAC) administers 18 distinct awards programs, each on its own annual or multi-year cycle, meaning only some are active in any given year.

Since 1963, OAC has used private donations and bequests to establish endowments and trust funds that support prizes, grants, fellowships, and awards for Ontario artists.

Many awards are perpetual, honoring donors who are/were passionate about the arts.

The OAC Awards section oversees adjudication, communications, and logistics for all awards endowed at OAC, and also manages peer assessment for awards funded externally by the Ontario Arts Foundation and the Government of Ontario.

**Major Organizations**

OAC supports 12 major not-for-profit, professional arts organizations across Ontario through long-term contribution agreements, replacing the previous operating grant assessment model as of 2024.

Using contribution agreements for OAC's 12 Major Organizations is a strategic approach because it provides a stable and predictable funding relationship for institutions that anchor Ontario's cultural ecosystem. The Majors generate substantial economic impact through job creation, tourism, and local spending while advancing artistic excellence, innovation, and national cultural leadership. They also strengthen social cohesion and community well-being, build organizational capacity across the sector through partnerships and professional development, and serve as anchors that support a vibrant, sustainable cultural ecosystem.

Over the current 5-year period of the agreements (2024-2029), they are projected to generate a total combined impact of:

- 23 million audience members and visitors
- 3.4 million arts education participants
- $682.6 million in private sector revenue
- $484.4 million to artistic fees and salaries

Contribution agreements create a structured framework for long-term planning, clearer accountability, and measurable outcomes, allowing both OAC and the Major organizations to focus on impact rather than annual administrative cycles. This model also enables deeper partnership: OAC can set shared priorities, support organizational sustainability, and monitor risks more effectively, while major organizations can confidently make multi-year artistic, operational, and community commitments. Overall, contribution agreements strengthen stewardship of public funds and reinforce the sector's stability and growth.

These organizations meet rigorous criteria, including minimum revenue and national/international significance. The 12 organizations are:

- Aga Khan Museum
- Canada's National Ballet School
- Canadian Opera Company
- Harbourfront Centre
- National Ballet of Canada
- Ottawa Bluesfest
- The Royal Conservatory
- Shaw Festival
- Stratford Festival
- Toronto International Film Festival
- Toronto Symphony Orchestra
- University of Toronto Press

This funding model aligns with OAC's 2022–27 strategic plan, Reset. Renew. Revitalize, focusing on evolving funding approaches, enhancing arts impact, redesigning programs, and fostering

partnerships.

**Outreach**

We deliver outreach initiatives across the province to support applicants at every stage of their grant journey, offering practical guidance on grant writing, tips for strengthening applications, and clear information about our programs. Through workshops, information sessions, and community engagements, we help ensure professional artists and organizations have the knowledge and confidence to navigate our processes and access the funding opportunities available to them.

**Process:**

We uphold a rigorous and transparent granting process grounded in integrity and fairness. Applications are reviewed through a peer assessment model that brings together experienced artists and arts professionals with deep knowledge of their disciplines and communities. Their evaluations are complemented by multiple layers of internal review and approvals to ensure consistency, accountability, and alignment with program criteria and public mandate. This combination of peer expertise and structured oversight strengthens trust in our decisions and ensures that grants are awarded based on merit, impact, and equitable consideration.

## Key Priorities

The Ontario Arts Council's key priorities reflect a commitment to sustaining a strong, inclusive, and forward-looking arts ecosystem that delivers clear public value across the province.

- **Simplifying access and delivery:** Streamlining programs -- moving from 16 operating programs to one, and from 40+ project programs to a smaller number of comprehensive streams -- to make funding simpler, clearer, and more responsive for applicants.

- **Enhancing performance measurement:** Integrating new performance measures that combine quantitative and qualitative data to better track outcomes and demonstrate the value of the arts to Ontarians. These measures inform decision-making, strengthen accountability, and provide compelling evidence of the arts' social, cultural, and economic impact.

- **Demonstrating public benefit:** Building on studies such as the Arts and Quality of Life Survey, the Ontario Arts and Culture Tourism Profile, and Arts Across Ontario to provide evidence-based insights that show how public investment in the arts contributes to Ontario's quality of life, tourism, and regional development.

- **Advancing equity and inclusion:** Continuing to dedicate funding to Indigenous, Francophone and Deaf and Disability communities through targeted programs in 2027 and embedding EDIA considerations across funding streams.

- **Strengthening regional reach and collaboration**: Ensuring that funding and partnerships reflect the needs and opportunities of all regions, while fostering collaboration between artists, organizations, communities, and other funders.

**Ethical AI Adoption in Arts and Culture**

OAC aims to promote ethical, equitable AI adoption that strengthens the sector while safeguarding public trust. The Ontario Arts Council recognizes that artificial intelligence is rapidly reshaping the cultural and creative sectors, influencing artistic production, audience engagement, and resource allocation. As an arm's-length agency responsible for stewarding public funds, OAC must balance innovation with equity, ensuring that technological adoption strengthens cultural ecosystems without amplifying inequities or ethical risks. Our approach prioritizes independence, credibility, and sector-wide benefit.

In October 2025, OAC co-hosted an online Global Gathering on AI in Arts and Culture, convening international peers to examine AI's impacts on creativity, funding, and cultural participation. This dialogue reinforced the urgency of proactive leadership in shaping fair and ethical AI ecosystems. Building on these insights, OAC will focus on three pillars:

**Balancing Innovation and Equity**
Support AI adoption in the arts while safeguarding public resources and cultural values. Ensure equitable access for remote and rural communities and mitigate risks such as algorithmic bias, intellectual property challenges, and data consent issues.

**Learning and Collaboration**
Advance sector capacity through AI literacy programs, bias mitigation frameworks, and partnerships with technology firms, universities, and cultural networks. Explore regulatory versus guidance models to maintain flexibility while promoting accountability.

**Strategic Roles and Next Steps**
Position OAC as a thought leader by providing guidance rather than rigid rules, fostering safe spaces for innovation, and managing reputational and ethical risks. Key recommended actions include:

- Commissioning an international scan of arts councils on AI adoption and ethics.
- Piloting capacity-building programs (workshops, labs, fellowships).
- Developing an ethical guidance framework for AI use in the arts.
- Establishing monitoring mechanisms for funded AI projects.
- Convening peer agencies to share case studies and best practices.

Through these initiatives, OAC will enable responsible experimentation, strengthen sector resilience, and ensure that AI serves as a tool for creativity and inclusion rather than a source of inequity. This dual commitment, to internal engagement and external leadership, positions OAC to shape the future of arts and culture in Ontario and beyond.

## Continued Prioritization of Francophone Arts

OAC remains committed to supporting Ontario's vibrant Francophone arts sector by launching the Francophone Arts Organizations category within the Ontario Arts Operating Fund. This new category ensures dedicated support for Francophone organizations, recognizing their unique contributions to the province's cultural landscape. Furthering this commitment, OAC will introduce the Ontario Francophone Arts Fund for project applicants, scheduled to launch in 2027, expanding opportunities for professional Francophone artists and organizations to access resources and showcase their work.

### Continued Prioritization of Indigenous Arts

OAC continues to prioritize Indigenous arts through the inclusion of Indigenous Mandated organizations across all funding streams. In alignment with this commitment, OAC will develop the Indigenous Arts Ontario Fund, a new funding initiative set to launch in 2027. This fund will expand access and dedicated support for professional Indigenous artists and organizations, ensuring their voices and perspectives are supported within Ontario's arts ecosystem. Ongoing engagement will guide program development and foster equitable access to resources.

### Emphasizing Wide Audience Appeal

As part of its enhanced performance measurement framework, OAC places significant emphasis on organizations that program work with wide audience appeal. By prioritizing these organizations, OAC aims to maximize public engagement and ensure that funded activities resonate with diverse communities across Ontario. This strategic focus reflects OAC's commitment to broadening the reach and impact of the arts sector, demonstrating public value and fostering cultural participation.

### Exploring Grant Minimums and Maximums

OAC will explore the implementation of minimum operating grants based on organizational expenditure size and other sources of Province of Ontario funding. Additionally, OAC will consider introducing an upper limit on operating grants to ensure that each grant leverages the required earned and private revenue. These measures will help us create clear, performance-linked incentives by tying the size of a grant to an organization's ability to generate or leverage its own revenue. The framework will signal that growth and sustainability are recognized by OAC where minimums ensure participation is worthwhile while maximums prevent dependency.

## Notable Changes

OAC is modernizing its funding and performance measures to ensure that its programs remain responsive, efficient, and aligned with the needs of Ontario's arts sector. The consolidation of 16 operating programs into one unified Operating Fund, along with a reduction of over 40 project programs into a smaller set of comprehensive, flexible streams, marks a significant structural shift.

This change simplifies access for applicants, reduces administrative complexity, and allows OAC to view and support the arts ecosystem more holistically. Simultaneously, OAC is strengthening its performance measurement framework by integrating data from grant applications, Canadian Arts Data (CADAC), and sector studies, to better track outcomes, demonstrate public value, and inform future decisions.

Together, these changes reflect OAC's value of clarity, accountability, and impact, ensuring that public investment in the arts continues to serve Ontarians effectively and sustainably.

# Section 5: Implementation Plan

Through a structured, phased approach, OAC will modernize its funding delivery, enhance performance measurement, align with government priorities, and support Ontario's vibrant arts ecosystem. The commitment to clarity and accountability will ensure that public investment in the arts continues to serve Ontarians effectively, fostering creativity, innovation, and community well-being across the province.

## Details of Key Priorities

**Modernizing Funding Delivery**
OAC is consolidating 16 operating programs into a single Operating Fund and streamlining over 40 project programs into nine flexible funding streams. This transformation simplifies access for applicants, reduces administrative complexity, and fosters a holistic approach to supporting the arts sector. Key steps include process redesign, stakeholder engagement, and digital platform upgrades to support the new funding structure.

**Enhancing Performance Measurement**
OAC will strengthen its performance measurement framework by integrating data from grant applications, the CADAC, and sector studies. The enhanced system will track outcomes, demonstrate public value, and inform strategic decision-making. The rollout will include updating key activity maps and logic models, aligning with government outcome measures, and establishing regular reporting cycles.

**Alignment with Government Priorities**
All initiatives will be mapped to government priorities as outlined in the annual letter of direction. OAC will ensure TB/MBC approval for any significant changes to government spending and maintain ongoing communication to ensure compliance and responsiveness to emerging directives.

**Supporting the Arts Ecosystem**
OAC will continue overseeing the delivery of public funding to arts organizations and artists across Ontario, with renewed focus on fostering opportunities, innovation, and recognition. Revised programs will prioritize inclusivity, regional equity, and sector resilience.

**Commitment to Clarity and Accountability**
OAC will emphasize greater clarity in program guidelines, transparent reporting, and robust accountability mechanisms. This includes regular stakeholder consultations, enhanced documentation, and public dissemination of results and impacts.

## Implementation Timeline: Year 1 (2026-27)

The first year focuses on foundational activities, including program consolidation, framework development, and stakeholder engagement. The following illustrates

the major milestones and deliverables for Year 1:

| Quarter | Key Area | Activities / Actions |
|---|---|---|
| **Q1** | Program Consolidation Implementation and Planning | Implement Ontario Arts Operating Fund and develop transition from 40+ project programs to nine flexible project funds |
| | Launch of Alternative Revenue Feasibility Study | Initiate the study, engage consultants, and begin data gathering on potential revenue streams |
| | RMS Development Work | Advance system build, refine requirements, and implement priority improvements |
| | Annual Audit and Annual Report Preparation | Coordinate audit activities, compile financials, and start drafting the Annual Report |
| | Preparation of Performance Measures Report | Collect data, validate results, and prepare the draft performance measures summary |
| **Quarter** | **Key Area** | **Activities / Actions** |
| **Q2** | Program Consolidation Implementation and Planning | Conduct stakeholder consultations and gather feedback from arts organizations, artists, and sector partners |
| | Alternative Revenue Feasibility Study | Analyze initial findings, refine research focus, and develop preliminary revenue model options |
| | RMS Development Work | Test new features, resolve issues, and prepare for broader user rollout |
| | Performance Measures Survey Development | Develop survey instruments, test questions, and prepare deployment plan |
| | Franco-Ontarian Arts Partnerships | Initiate partnership discussions and identify collaboration priorities with Franco-Ontarian arts groups |
| **Quarter** | **Key Area** | **Activities / Actions** |
| **Q3** | Program Consolidation Implementation and Planning | Finalize program guidelines and prepare communications and training for the updated project fund structure |
| | Alternative Revenue Feasibility Study | Develop final recommendations and prepare feasibility study report for leadership review |
| | RMS Development Work | Launch updated digital platform and complete user onboarding and support materials |
| | Performance Measure Area Training | Deliver staff training sessions and prepare community-facing learning materials |
| | Franco-Ontarian Arts Partnerships | Implement early partnership activities and support collaborative project development |
| **Quarter** | **Key Area** | **Activities / Actions** |
| **Q4** | Program Consolidation Implementation and Planning | Implement new project fund structure and monitor early uptake and user experience |
| | Alternative Revenue Feasibility Study | Begin planning for implementation of approved revenue strategies |
| | RMS Development Work | Integrate RMS with performance framework and complete year-end system updates |
| | Performance Framework Integration | Complete baseline data collection, conduct strength and gap analysis, and finalize annual performance measures report |
| | Franco-Ontarian Arts Partnerships | Evaluate partnership impact and plan next-year collaboration priorities |

## Implementation Timeline: Three-Year Horizon (2026-2029)

The next three years will build on foundational work, with a phased approach to scaling, refining, and embedding new practices. The graphic below depicts major milestones and deliverables across this period:

| Year | Milestone | Deliverable |
|---|---|---|
| 2026-27 | Launch of Modernized Funding Model | Single Operating Fund launch and development of flexible project streams |
| 2027-28 | Performance Measurement Expansion | Comprehensive outcome tracking and reporting aligned with government priorities. Launch of nine project funds to replace 40+ current project programs |
| 2028-29 | Sector-Wide Impact Assessment | Evaluation of arts ecosystem support, innovation initiatives, and public value delivered |

## Roles and Responsibilities

- OAC Leadership: Oversee implementation, ensure strategic alignment, and report to MTCG/ and TB/MBC as required.
- Associate Directors and Managers: Lead program consolidation, stakeholder engagement, communications strategies and digital transformation.
- Analysts: Develop and maintain performance measurement frameworks, analyze outcomes, and prepare reports.
- MTCG & TB/MBC: Approve significant changes to government spending and provide oversight for compliance.
- Stakeholders: Participate in consultations, provide feedback, and help shape responsive programming.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

OAC will regularly collect and analyze performance data through grant applications, CADAC, and sector studies. Progress will be tracked against key activity maps and the revised logic model, ensuring alignment with Government Priorities for Provincial Board-Governed Agencies. Annual reviews and stakeholder feedback will inform ongoing adjustments. The evaluation process will focus on evidence-based planning, effectiveness, efficiency, and public value creation.

# Section 6: Performance Measures

### Contribution to Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming Key Performance Indicators

As outlined in MTCG's Published plans and annual reports 2024–2025.

The ministry's KPIs are structured around its strategic priorities and outcomes. The following outlines overlapping areas of focus on economic impact, participation, and agency performance as OAC:

**MTCG Strategic Priority: Tourism (**KPI: Ontario tourism receipts)

- OAC-funded arts and cultural events were a driving force behind Ontario's $2.7 billion in tourism visitor spending (Arts & Culture Tourism Profile, Executive Summary), making a substantial contribution to tourism receipts and sector growth. OAC grantees hosted thousands of events annually, attracting both domestic and international visitors and supporting jobs in every region.

**MTCG Strategic Priority: Culture** (KPI: Contribution to total culture GDP from Ontario)

- OAC investments are a cornerstone in Ontario's culture sector, with supported organizations and artists accounting for a significant portion of the province's cultural GDP. The cultural industries, notably those supported by OAC—such as live performance, literature, visual arts, and digital media—collectively contributed billions to Ontario's economy and sustained tens of thousands of jobs in 2024–2025. In addition to the $2.7B GDP contribution from visitor spending, organizations funded by OAC collectively generated over $1.1 billion in total GDP impact from their own expenditure, underscoring the significant economic footprint of the sector and the multiplier effect of public investment in arts and culture. This figure reflects both earned and contributed income streams, and highlights the essential role that OAC support plays in sustaining vibrant cultural activity throughout Ontario.

**MTCG Strategic Priority: Agencies** (KPI: Annual attendance)

- OAC-supported agencies organizations consistently drive high attendance at public-facing attractions, contributing to increased self-generated revenues. In 2024, OAC's network facilitated events attended by:
    - 30.6 million attendees in Ontario
    - 4.5 million arts education participants in Ontario
    - 2.7 million attendees for touring Ontario work outside of Ontario

## OAC Performance Towards Provincial Government Wide Commitments for Agencies – Mapping to OAC Performance Measures and Custom Measures

### Key Performance Indicators from Letter of Direction

| 2026-27 Letter of Direction | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Agency Specific Directions** | | | |
| **Agency Priority** | **Outcome** | **Performance Measures** | **Performance Tracking** |
| Priority 1 – specific to OAC<br><br>Continue to play a vital role in promoting and developing the arts in all regions of the province while improving administrative efficiencies. | Promote Ontario and the arts for artistic, economic and social impact through the implementation of OAC's grant modernization and performance strategy and public engagement to drive greater awareness of the value and impact of the arts.<br><br>Enhance financial and administrative systems through improved data management, grants tracking, financial performance and operational efficiencies.<br><br>Continue to ensure that investments yield maximum value by streamlining processes to improve efficiency and leveraging technology to optimize service delivery. | **MEASURE 1: Funding of artists and arts organizations in all parts of the province** | A1.1 % of Ontario counties/districts where resident artist or arts organization received OAC funding<br><br>A1.2 % of total # grants in each geographic region |
| Priority 2 – specific to OAC<br><br>Maximize the impact of our grant investments and prioritize artistic projects that generate audience demand and value for money. Our commitment to prioritizing Indigenous and Francophone artists remains unchanged. | Maximize the arts sector's economic return on investment by strategically directing funding and fostering partnerships that support job creation, economic growth and tourism through strategic partnerships and stakeholder engagement. | **Custom Measures:**<br>Gross Domestic Product: Tourism Regional Economic Impact Model (TREIM) for OAC operating organizations<br><br>Ratio Return: a calculation of the total revenues minus the total OAC grant (awarded amount) divided by the total OAC grant (awarded amount)<br><br>**MEASURE 2: Diversity and inclusion in OAC applications and funding** | 2024-25: OAC-funded organizations contribute approximately $1.1 billion to Ontario's GDP.<br><br>2024-25: Additionally, every dollar invested by the OAC generates $25.5 in other sources of revenue.<br><br>A2.1 % of # applications to OAC from artists/arts organizations who identify as member of |

| 2026-27 Letter of Direction | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Agency Specific Directions** | | | |
| **Agency Priority** | **Outcome** | **Performance Measures** | **Performance Tracking** |
| | | **MEASURE 5: Opportunities for Ontarians to experience and participate in the arts**<br><br>**MEASURE 6: Opportunities for Ontarians to participate in arts learning** | priority group(s): Artists of colour, Deaf artists or artists with disabilities, Francophone, Indigenous, New generation (18-30 years), Regions outside Toronto.<br><br>A2.2 % of total # OAC grants to artists/ arts organizations who identify as member of priority group(s): Artists of colour, Deaf artists or artists with disabilities, Francophone, Indigenous, New generation (18-30 years), Regions outside Toronto.<br><br>C5.1 # public activities and events produced by OAC-funded artists & organizations in their home communities<br><br>C5.2 # total audience for home community events in Ontario<br><br>C5.3 # public activities and events produced by OAC-funded artists & organizations touring in Ontario<br><br>C5.4 # total audience for touring events in Ontario<br><br>C5.5 % of operating organizations touring in Ontario<br><br>C6.3 # events that offer opportunities for |

| 2026-27 Letter of Direction | | | |
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| **Agency Specific Directions** | | | |
| **Agency Priority** | **Outcome** | **Performance Measures** | **Performance Tracking** |
| | | | arts learning by OAC-funded artists & arts organizations<br><br>C6.4 # participants (adults/ youth) in all arts learning events by OAC-funded artists & arts organizations |
| Priority 3 – specific to OAC<br><br>Continue to explore opportunities to streamline the Ontario Arts Council's programs and provide appropriate support for the arts sector. | To enhance overall efficiency and satisfaction, OAC will simplify its grant processes through the OAC grant modernization and performance strategy**.**<br><br>Grant applications processes will be simplified to make it easier for applicants to access opportunities for funding and support.<br><br>**Enhanced digital tools and services** will offer a more intuitive and efficient application experience. | **Custom Measure:**<br>Total Number of Grant Applications<br><br>**MEASURE 8: Administrative efficiency in assessment process**<br><br>**MEASURE 9: Stakeholder satisfaction with OAC processes and decisions** | OAC received 11,706 grant applications in 2024-25<br><br>D8.1 % of applications meeting the stated service commitment turnaround from program deadline to decision.<br><br>D9.1 % applicants who report satisfaction with OAC grant process |
| **Protect Ontario** | | | |
| **Agency Priority** | **Outcome** | **Performance Measures** | **Performance Tracking** |
| Priority 1<br><br>Expand domestic partnerships within Canada, to promote the development of supply chains and economic opportunities across Canada and support economic resilience, particularly in light of ongoing U.S. tariff | Increased number of strategic partnerships between Canadian businesses supporting economic resilience domestically | **MEASURE 3: Employment and income for arts professionals in Ontario**<br><br>**MEASURE 5: Opportunities for Ontarians to experience and participate in the arts** | A3.1 # artists & arts professionals paid (fees or salaries) through OAC-funded activities<br><br>A3.2 $ value of income paid to artists/ arts professionals through OAC-funded activities<br><br>A3.3 # FTE jobs for artists and arts professionals in |

| 2026-27 Letter of Direction | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Agency Specific Directions** | | | |
| **Agency Priority** | **Outcome** | **Performance Measures** | **Performance Tracking** |
| threats and economic uncertainty. | | | organizations receiving operating grants from OAC<br><br>C5.3 # public activities and events produced by OAC-funded artists & organizations touring in Ontario<br><br>C5.4 # total audience for touring events in Ontario<br><br>C5.5 % of operating organizations touring in Ontario |
| | Increased domestic partnerships within the public sector | **Custom Measure:**<br><br># of key domestic public sector partnerships. | 2025-26 Nine key domestic public sector partnerships:<br><br>Canadian Arts Database<br><br>Canada Council (Social Impact Investing & Data Project)<br><br>National Research Group<br><br>Canadian Public Arts Funders Network<br><br>OCADU Policy Hub<br><br>Business/Arts ArtsVest<br><br>Ontario Culture Days<br><br>National Arts Centre Mission to Osaka<br><br>Office of the Lieutennant Governor of Ontario / Alliance Culturelle de l'Ontario – 50th Anniversary of the |

| 2026-27 Letter of Direction | | | |
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| **Agency Specific Directions** | | | |
| **Agency Priority** | **Outcome** | **Performance Measures** | **Performance Tracking** |
| | | | Franco-Ontarian Flag |
| Priority 2<br><br>Procure from Ontario and Canadian businesses whenever feasible. | Increased economic activity and job creation (procurement, removal of barriers, etc.,) for Ontario businesses/organizations as a share of overall procurement spend | **Custom Measure:**<br>*Percentage of procurement spend to Ontario Businesses.* | *2024-26: 90.77%* |
| | Increased economic activity and job creation (procurement, removal of barriers, etc.,) for Canadian business/ organizations as a share of overall procurement spend | **Custom Measure:**<br>*Percentage of procurement spend to Canadian Businesses outside of Ontario.* | *2024-26: 2.33%* |
| | Increased supplier diversity | *In Development* | |
| | Reduced reliance on foreign vendors to strengthen Ontario's and Canada's economic resilience | **Custom Measure:**<br>*% of non-Canadian companies contracted.* | *2024-26: 18.60%* |
| | Increased opportunities for small and medium-sized businesses in Canada | *In Development* | |
| Priority 3<br><br>Provide economic relief for Ontario families, consumers and businesses by freezing government fees and fares, unless approved by the oversight minister. | Provide economic relief through increased affordability and access to government services | **Custom Measure:**<br><br>$ of revenues from fees charged to Ontarians for accessing OAC Services.<br><br>**MEASURE 5: Opportunities for Ontarians to experience and participate in the arts** | 2025-26: $0 of fees charged to access OAC services.<br><br>C5.1 # public activities and events produced by OAC-funded artists & organizations in their home communities |

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| **Agency Specific Directions** | | | |
| **Agency Priority** | **Outcome** | **Performance Measures** | **Performance Tracking** |
| | | **MEASURE 6: Opportunities for Ontarians to participate in arts learning** | C5.2 # total audience for home community events in Ontario<br><br>C6.3 # events that offer opportunities for arts learning by OAC-funded artists & arts organizations<br><br>C6.4 # participants (adults/ youth) in all arts learning events by OAC-funded artists & arts organizations |
| | Increased transparency and accountability of fees and fares | **Custom Measure:**<br><br>$ of revenues from fees charged to Ontarians for accessing OAC Services. | 2025-26: $0 of fees charged to access OAC services. |
| | Reduced financial burden on Ontario families, consumers and businesses | **Custom Measure:**<br><br>$ of revenues from fees charged to Ontarians for accessing OAC Services. | 2025-26: $0 of fees charged to access OAC services. |
| **Deliver Better Services** | | | |
| **Agency Priority** | **Outcome** | **Performance Measures** | **Performance Tracking** |
| Priority 4<br><br>Focus on a user-centered client/customer experience by simplifying interactions, improving satisfaction and expanding and optimizing digital service offerings. | Simpler and more intuitive service offerings and interactions | **MEASURE 8: Administrative efficiency in assessment process**<br><br>**MEASURE 9: Stakeholder satisfaction with OAC processes and decisions** | D8.1 % of applications meeting the stated service commitment turnaround from program deadline to decision.<br><br>D9.1 % applicants who report satisfaction with OAC grant process<br><br>D9.2 % of complaints responded to within three business days |

| 2026-27 Letter of Direction | | | |
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| **Agency Specific Directions** | | | |
| **Agency Priority** | **Outcome** | **Performance Measures** | **Performance Tracking** |
| | | | |
| | Increased customer satisfaction and trust | **MEASURE 8: Administrative efficiency in assessment process**<br><br>**MEASURE 9: Stakeholder satisfaction with OAC processes and decisions** | D8.1 % of applications meeting the stated service commitment turnaround from program deadline to decision.<br><br>D9.1 % applicants who report satisfaction with OAC grant process<br><br>D9.2 % of complaints responded to within three business days |
| | Increased adoption and usage of digital services | **Custom Measure:**<br><br>% of OAC grant applications submitted digitally. | **2025-26:** 99.9% digital applications submitted. |
| | Inclusive and accessible service design | **Custom Measure:**<br><br>% Compliance with AODA Accessibility Report Requirements<br><br>**MEASURE 8: Administrative efficiency in assessment process**<br><br>**MEASURE 9: Stakeholder satisfaction with OAC processes and decisions** | 2025-26: 100% compliant.<br><br>D8.1 % of applications meeting the stated service commitment turnaround from program deadline to decision.<br><br>D9.1 % applicants who report satisfaction with OAC grant process<br><br>D9.2 % of complaints responded to within three business days |

| 2026-27 Letter of Direction | | | |
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| **Agency Specific Directions** | | | |
| **Agency Priority** | **Outcome** | **Performance Measures** | **Performance Tracking** |
| | Reduced service delivery times and errors | **MEASURE 8: Administrative efficiency in assessment process**<br><br>**MEASURE 9: Stakeholder satisfaction with OAC processes and decisions** | D8.1 % of applications meeting the stated service commitment turnaround from program deadline to decision.<br><br>D9.1 % applicants who report satisfaction with OAC grant process<br><br>D9.2 % of complaints responded to within three business days |
| Priority 5<br><br>Identify opportunities to enhance efficiency, improve services, drive innovation and achieve cost savings for the people of Ontario, including through the use of AI and other advanced technologies. | Improved operational efficiency and reduced manual workload | **MEASURE 8: Administrative efficiency in assessment process**<br><br>**MEASURE 9: Stakeholder satisfaction with OAC processes and decisions** | D8.1 % of applications meeting the stated service commitment turnaround from program deadline to decision.<br><br>D9.1 % applicants who report satisfaction with OAC grant process<br><br>D9.2 % of complaints responded to within three business days |
| | Increased innovation in public sector processes | **MEASURE 8: Administrative efficiency in assessment process**<br><br>**MEASURE 9: Stakeholder satisfaction with OAC processes and decisions** | D8.1 % of applications meeting the stated service commitment turnaround from program deadline to decision.<br><br>D9.1 % applicants who report satisfaction with OAC grant process<br><br>D9.2 % of complaints responded to within three business days |

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| **Agency Specific Directions** | | | |
| **Agency Priority** | **Outcome** | **Performance Measures** | **Performance Tracking** |
| | | | |
| | Demonstrated cost and time savings | **MEASURE 8: Administrative efficiency in assessment process**<br><br>**MEASURE 9: Stakeholder satisfaction with OAC processes and decisions** | D8.1 % of applications meeting the stated service commitment turnaround from program deadline to decision.<br><br>D9.1 % applicants who report satisfaction with OAC grant process<br><br>D9.2 % of complaints responded to within three business days |
| | | | |
| Priority 6<br><br>Eliminate unnecessary bureaucracy and red tape by applying lean methodologies or other modalities to achieve operational efficiency. | Reduced process complexity and administrative burden | **MEASURE 8: Administrative efficiency in assessment process**<br><br>**MEASURE 9: Stakeholder satisfaction with OAC processes and decisions** | D8.1 % of applications meeting the stated service commitment turnaround from program deadline to decision.<br><br>D9.1 % applicants who report satisfaction with OAC grant process<br><br>D9.2 % of complaints responded to within three business days |
| | Cost and time savings through streamlined operations | **MEASURE 8: Administrative efficiency in assessment process**<br><br>**MEASURE 9: Stakeholder satisfaction with OAC processes and decisions** | D8.1 % of applications meeting the stated service commitment turnaround from program deadline to decision.<br><br>D9.1 % applicants who report satisfaction with OAC grant process |

| 2026-27 Letter of Direction | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Agency Specific Directions** | | | |
| **Agency Priority** | **Outcome** | **Performance Measures** | **Performance Tracking** |
| | | | D9.2 % of complaints responded to within three business days |
| | Reduce red tape for faster and more efficient service delivery | **MEASURE 8: Administrative efficiency in assessment process**<br><br>**MEASURE 9: Stakeholder satisfaction with OAC processes and decisions** | D8.1 % of applications meeting the stated service commitment turnaround from program deadline to decision.<br><br>D9.1 % applicants who report satisfaction with OAC grant process<br><br>D9.2 % of complaints responded to within three business days |
| | Increased client satisfaction | **MEASURE 8: Administrative efficiency in assessment process**<br><br>**MEASURE 9: Stakeholder satisfaction with OAC processes and decisions** | D8.1 % of applications meeting the stated service commitment turnaround from program deadline to decision.<br><br>D9.1 % applicants who report satisfaction with OAC grant process<br><br>D9.2 % of complaints responded to within three business days |
| | A culture of continuous improvement | **MEASURE 8: Administrative efficiency in assessment process**<br><br>**MEASURE 9: Stakeholder satisfaction with OAC processes and decisions** | D8.1 % of applications meeting the stated service commitment turnaround from program deadline to decision. |

| 2026-27 Letter of Direction | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Agency Specific Directions** | | | |
| **Agency Priority** | **Outcome** | **Performance Measures** | **Performance Tracking** |
| | | | D9.1 % applicants who report satisfaction with OAC grant process<br><br>D9.2 % of complaints responded to within three business days |
| **Drive Innovation & Value for Money** | | | |
| **Agency Priority** | **Outcome** | **Performance Measures** | **Performance Tracking** |
| Priority 7<br><br>Find innovative solutions to use public resources efficiently and to effectively deliver on the agency's mandate while operating within the agency's financial allocation, supported by accurate financial reporting, effective internal controls, and proactive fraud management practices. | Innovation that leads to tangible benefits | **Custom Measure:**<br>Total Number of Grant Applications<br><br>**MEASURE 8: Administrative efficiency in assessment process**<br><br>**MEASURE 9: Stakeholder satisfaction with OAC processes and decisions** | OAC received 11,706 grant applications in 2024-25<br><br>D8.1 % of applications meeting the stated service commitment turnaround from program deadline to decision.<br><br>D9.1 % applicants who report satisfaction with OAC grant process |
| | Increased responsiveness and effectiveness of fraud detection and resolution | **Custom Measure:**<br>*# of fraud cases and # resolved satisfactorily.* | ***2025-26:*** *No cases of fraud.* |
| | Increased financial discipline across the agency | **Custom Measure:**<br>Operating within annual operating allocation and available resources. | **2025-26**: Yes, operating withing annual operating allocation and available resources. |
| | Increased accuracy and timeliness of financial management | **Custom Measure:**<br>*Percentage of financial reports submitted on time and without errors* | **2025-26**: 100% |
| Priority 8<br><br>Manage agency workforce with careful responsibility to stabilize expenditures | Workforce size is managed and connected to government priorities | **Custom Measure:**<br>*Annual Percentage Change in permanent Workforce Size* | ***2025-26:*** *0% change* |

| 2026-27 Letter of Direction | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Agency Specific Directions** | | | |
| **Agency Priority** | **Outcome** | **Performance Measures** | **Performance Tracking** |
| and preserve long-term financial viability by:<br><br>• strictly adhering to the hiring control parameters, including ceasing hiring for non-business critical and non-public-facing positions, including the use of consultants;<br><br>• operating within a defined maximum workforce size (including consultants);<br><br>• ensuring compliance with the *Broader Public Sector Executive Compensation Act, 2014*; and<br><br>• enhancing productivity and efficiency by using technology wherever possible. | | | |
| Priority 9<br><br>Create a span of control policy that recognizes different streams of work within the organization and sets minimum span of control benchmarks, and provide it to the minister for approval by March 31st, 2026. | Ensures timely delivery of the policy | **Custom Measure:**<br>*Span of control policy submitted to the Minister by deadline* | ***2025-26:*** *Yes will be submitted by March 31, 2026.* |
| | Ensures comprehensive application of the policy | **Custom Measure:**<br>*Percentage of departments or units assessed for span of control* | ***2025-26:*** *100%* |
| | Measures preparedness for operationalizing the policy | **Custom Measure:**<br>*Percentage of units with implementation plans aligned to the new policy* | ***2025-26:*** *no data* |
| | Increased alignment of internal span of control benchmarks with the Minister approved policy | **Custom Measure:**<br>*Ratio of leadership (management and executives) to employees* | ***2025-26: 1:4 Leadership to employees.***<br>Exactly as requested |
| Priority 10<br><br>Provide to your oversight minister by October 1, | | **Custom Measure:**<br>*Amended policy submitted.* | ***2025-26:*** *Yes, in office standard policy submitted to Minister.* |

| 2026-27 Letter of Direction | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Agency Specific Directions** | | | |
| **Agency Priority** | **Outcome** | **Performance Measures** | **Performance Tracking** |
| 2025, the amended human resource policy, guideline or directive that adheres to the OPS in-office standard of four (4) days per week effective October 20, 2025, and five (5) days per week effective January 5, 2026, and work with your oversight ministry to address any office space constraints. | | | |

## OAC Performance Measurement Framework

Over the next three years, OAC will be rolling out a new logic model and performance measurement framework developed in alignment with OAC's new grant program structure. These are being introduced in phases, in tandem with the introduction of the new operating funding program in 2026-2027 and project funding programs in 2027-2028. The primary data source for the new performance measures is application forms and supporting material, and this data will be submitted over the course of the 2026-27 fiscal year. So, the updated OAC logic model and performance measures will be the basis for reporting and forecasting beginning with the 2027-2028 business plan and annual report.

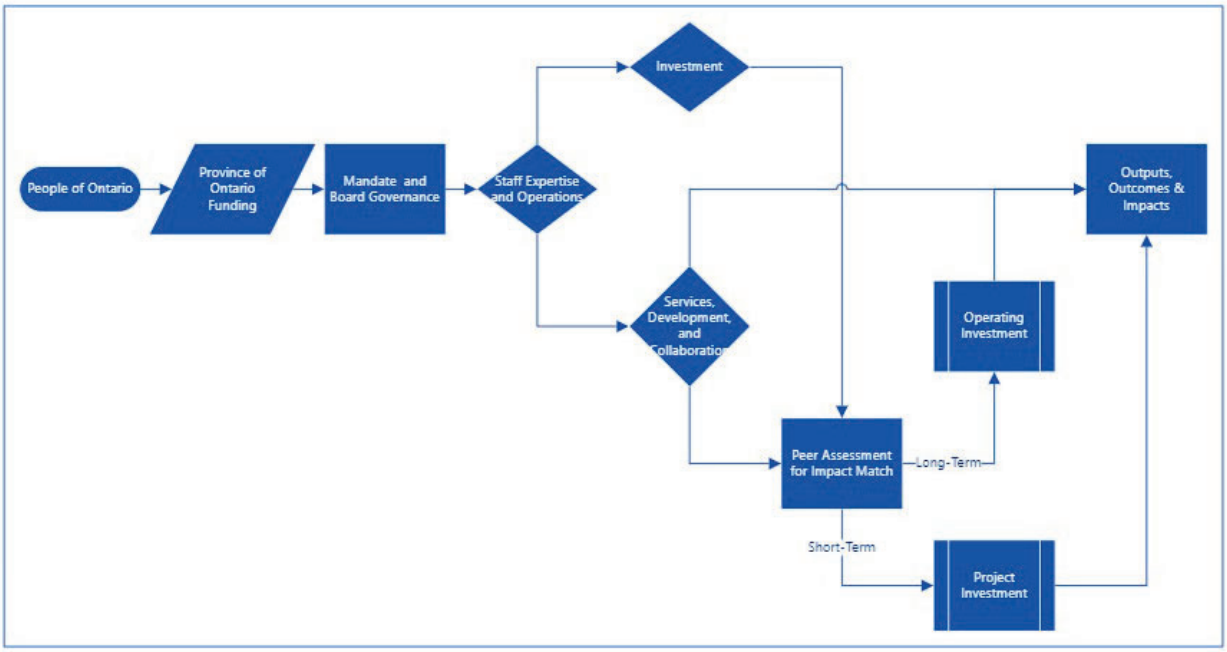
OAC's performance measures framework is transitioning from current to an updated framework and logic model.  Most of the section utilizes the current framework and the updated framework is summarized at the end of the section.

OAC's current performance measures framework is based on a key activity map and logic model that link public investment activities to output-based and outcome-based measures, as well as related impacts on Ontario's arts sector, economy, and communities. By collecting performance measurement data, OAC gains evidence about its progress and contribution to longer term goals. OAC's future performance measures will be updated with the rollout of the program redesign and will align with the 2025–2026 Government Priorities for Provincial Board-Governed Agencies.

### OAC Key Activities Map

OAC's activities begin with the people of Ontario, reflecting its mandate to foster the creation and production of art for the benefit of all Ontarians. Each year, OAC oversees the delivery of provincial public funding to arts organizations and artists in every riding across the province. OAC manages more than 11,000+ applications annually, assessed through peer review. OAC also supports opportunities and innovation in the arts sector and manages an awards program recognizing outstanding accomplishments. Through its work, OAC contributes to a thriving arts sector, economic growth, healthy communities, and vibrant places across Ontario.

## OAC Activity Map

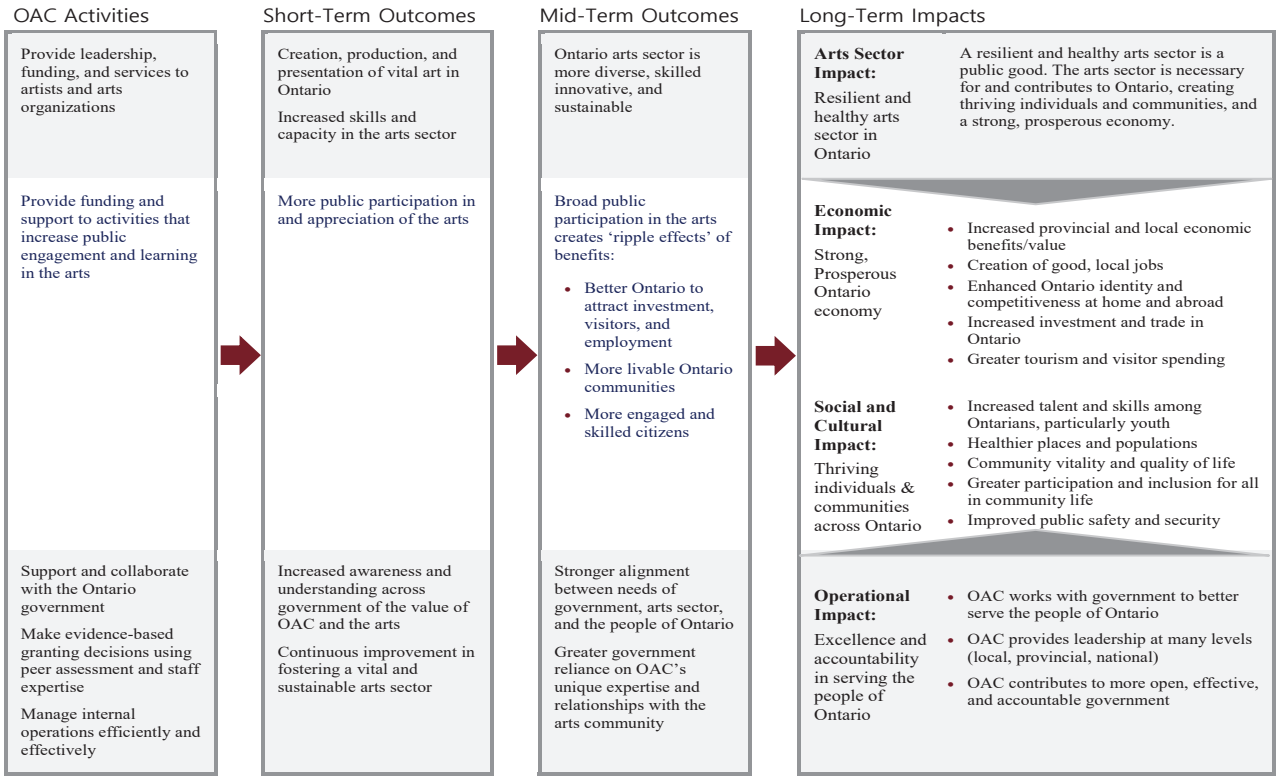



## OAC Current Logic Model

Logic models are graphical representations that demonstrate the sequence of events on how a community benefits through the resources invested. The logic model is a tool that supports evidence-based program planning, program design, and program management. The logic model is also the first step in evaluation and program measurement to ensure resources are used efficiently and effectively. [1] OAC's logic model is a high-level summary of the interdependent results of OAC's work at each stage of its roadmap for results.

[1] 1.2: Logic modeling is a way of thinking – Enhancing Program Performance with Logic Models

## Logic Model




## OAC Current Performance Measures

OAC's performance measures are short-term outcomes that (1) can be clearly attributed to OAC activities, (2) can be feasibly measured annually, and (3) help guide decisions and build understanding of how OAC is achieving its goals. By collecting performance measurement data on short-term outcomes, OAC gains evidence about its progress and contributions to long-term impacts.

OAC's four key Outcomes and nine performance measures are:

**A) Outcome: Creation, production, and presentation of vital art in Ontario**

MEASURE 1: Funding of artists and arts organizations in all parts of the province
MEASURE 2: Diversity and inclusion in OAC applications and funding
MEASURE 3: Employment and income for arts professionals in Ontario

**B) Outcome: Increased skills and capacity in the arts sector**

MEASURE 4: Funding of grants and services that increase skills and capacity

**C) Outcome: More public participation in and appreciation of the arts**

MEASURE 5: Opportunities for Ontarians to experience and participate in the arts
MEASURE 6: Opportunities for Ontarians to participate in arts learning
MEASURE 7: Opportunities for people outside Ontario to experience Ontario artists and arts organizations

**D) Outcome: Continuous improvement in fostering a vital and sustainable arts sector**

MEASURE 8: Administrative efficiency in assessment process

MEASURE 9: Stakeholder satisfaction with OAC processes and decisions

These measures were developed as part of OAC's previous strategic plan, *Vital Arts, Public Value* (2014). In the context of this publication, the word "vital" reflects qualities essential to a healthy arts sector including artistic merit, relevance, impact, risk-taking and effectiveness. These attributes are the basis for OAC's grant assessment evaluation rubrics.

## Key Outcomes, Measures and Indicators

OAC examines its performance from several perspectives, while keeping the number of indicators manageable. By using a variety of indicators to describe OAC's performance, it is possible to understand relative performance (%), as well as specific values (# and $).

OAC's four (4) key Outcomes and nine (9) Performance Measures are tracked by a further twenty-five (25) Indicators.

OAC Performance Measures and Indicators

| OUTCOME | MEASURE | INDICATOR |
|---|---|---|
| **A) Creation, production, and presentation of vital art in Ontario** | 1 - Funding of artists and arts organizations in all parts of the province | A1.1 % of Ontario counties/districts where resident artist or arts organization received OAC funding<br><br>A1.2 % of total # grants in each geographic region |
| | 2 - Diversity and inclusion in OAC applications and funding.<br><br>3 - Employment and income for arts professionals in Ontario | A2.1 % of # applications to OAC from artists/arts organizations who identify as member of priority group(s): Artists of colour, Deaf artists or artists with disabilities, Francophone, Indigenous, New generation (18-30 years), Regions outside Toronto.<br><br>A2.2 % of total # OAC grants to artists/ arts organizations who identify as member of priority group(s): Artists of colour, Deaf artists or artists with disabilities, Francophone, Indigenous, New generation (18-30 years), Regions outside Toronto.<br><br>A3.1 # artists & arts professionals paid (fees or salaries) through OAC-funded activities<br><br>A3.2 $ value of income paid to artists/ arts professionals through OAC-funded activities<br><br>A3.3 # FTE jobs for artists and arts professionals in organizations receiving operating grants from OAC |
| **B) Increased skills and capacity in the arts sector** | 4 - Funding of grants and services that increase skills and capacity. | B4.1 # artists & arts professionals who attend activities/events for training and skill development supported or provided by OAC |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | B4.2 # activities/events for training and skill development supported or provided by OAC<br><br>B4.3 % of total # grants provided by OAC for training and skill development |
| C) **More public participation in and appreciation of the arts** | 5 - Opportunities for Ontarians to experience and participate in the arts<br><br>6 - Opportunities for Ontarians to participate in arts learning<br><br>7 - Opportunities for people outside Ontario to experience Ontario artists and arts organizations | C5.1 # public activities and events produced by OAC-funded artists & organizations in their home communities<br><br>C5.2 # total audience for home community events in Ontario<br><br>C5.3 # public activities and events produced by OAC-funded artists & organizations touring in Ontario<br><br>C5.4 # total audience for touring events in Ontario<br><br>C5.5 % of operating organizations touring in Ontario<br><br>C6.1 % of total # OAC grants that provide funding specifically for arts learning<br><br>C6.2 % of operating organizations that offer arts learning as part of ongoing activities<br><br>C6.3 # events that offer opportunities for arts learning by OAC-funded artists & arts organizations<br><br>C6.4 # participants (adults/ youth) in all arts learning events by OAC-funded artists & arts organizations<br><br>C7.1 # public activities and events produced by OAC-funded artists & organizations and toured nationally (outside Ontario) and internationally<br><br>C7.2 # total audience for events toured nationally (outside Ontario) and internationally<br><br>C7.3 % of operating organizations touring outside Ontario |
| **D) Continuous improvement in fostering a vital and sustainable arts sector** | 8 - Administrative efficiency in assessment process<br><br>9 - Stakeholder satisfaction with OAC processes and decisions | D8.1 % of applications meeting the stated service commitment turnaround from program deadline to decision.<br><br>D9.1 % applicants who report satisfaction with OAC grant process<br><br>D9.2 % of complaints responded to within three business days |

## Report on 2019 – 2024 Performance Results

From 2018-2019 to 2024-2025, arts organizations in Ontario faced significant challenges and worked to overcome them. These challenges were largely driven by external factors beyond their control, including COVID-19–related shutdowns and the secondary impacts of rapid interest rate increases by the Bank of Canada aimed at reducing inflation.

Governments responded quickly to this challenge by developing new one-time funding programs. This includes the following key Government of Ontario investments, delivered by OAC, that were introduced to support arts jobs, new generation artists and funding for Indigenous arts programs:

- 2022-2023 figures include an additional $4.6 million from the Ontario Diversity, Equity & Growth Investment and the Ontario Arts Jobs & Opportunities Investment
- 2021-2022 figures include additional $4.6 million from the Indigenous Arts Support Fund and Career Catalyst: Project Grants for New Generation Artists programs
- 2020-2021 figures include an additional $25 million in emergency COVID-19 funding, including the Arts Recovery Support Fund and the Arts Response Initiative project grant programs

Altogether, this reflects OAC's sustained commitment to funding arts and cultural activity across the province, while increasing support for artists of colour, deaf artists, and artists with disabilities, and significantly expanding the number of grants for skills and career development. Overall, 2022-23 marked a recovery across multiple program areas, with notable increases in activities, attendance, and touring compared to previous years, signaling renewed engagement following the pandemic.

Moreover, OAC managed to exceed its targets for continuous improvement in fostering a vital and sustainable arts sector. This is evident through the results from the administrative efficiency in assessment processes and stakeholder satisfaction with the OAC. It is anticipated that in the coming years, public participation and civic engagement in the appreciation of the arts in Ontario will continue to grow as arts organizations stabilize and develop new artistic products and experiences for Ontarians. This anticipated growth builds on the recovery following the pandemic, as organizations adapt and expand opportunities for audiences to reconnect with the arts.

**OUTCOME A: Creation, production, and presentation of vital art in Ontario**

**MEASURE 1: Funding of artists and arts organizations in all parts of the province**

**Results Analysis**: OAC funding currently supports arts in 48 of Ontario's 49 census divisions. There is potential for additional investment in the Muskoka census division, which is the only census division that did not receive funding in 2024-25.

| **Share of 49 Census Divisions with OAC Support** | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ID | **Indicator** | **Target** | Baseline 2018-19 [1] | Results 2019-20 | Results 2020-21 | Results 2021-22 | Results 2022-23 | Results 2023-24 | **Results 2024-25** |
| A1.1 | % of Ontario counties/districts (census divisions) where resident | **100%** | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | **98%** |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | artist or arts organization received OAC funding | | | | | | | | |

| **Share of OAC Applications by Region** | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ID | % of total # applications in each geographic region | = % of artists (2021 census) [2] | Baseline 2018-19 **Target**[1] | Results 2019-20 | Results 2020-21 | Results 2021-22 | Results 2022-23 | Results 2023-24 | **Results 2024-25** |
| A1.2a | Central | 7% | **5%** | 4% | 5% | 5% | 5% | 5% | **4%** |
| | East | 11% | **12%** | 11% | 11% | 12% | 12% | 10% | **10%** |
| | Far north | 0.1% | **0.5%** | 0.6% | 0.3% | 0.6% | 0.5% | 0.4% | **0.3%** |
| | Northeast | 2% | **5%** | 4% | 4% | 6% | 5% | 4% | **4%** |
| | Northwest | 0.6% | **1.9%** | 1.5% | 1.4% | 1.9% | 1.4% | 1.1% | **1.3%** |
| | South central | 20% | **8%** | 8% | 10% | 11% | 10% | 10% | **12%** |
| | Southwest | 20% | **14%** | 14% | 15% | 16% | 15% | 17% | **15%** |
| | Toronto | 39% | **54%** | 56% | 54% | 49% | 51% | 51% | **53%** |

| **Share of OAC Grants by Region** | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ID | % of total # grants in each geographic region | = % of artists (2021 census) [2] | Baseline 2018-19 [1] **Target** | Results 2019-20 | Results 2020-21 | Results 2021-22 | Results 2022-23 | Results 2023-24 | **Results 2024-25** |
| A1.2b | Central | 7% | **5%** | 4% | 5% | 4% | 4% | 5% | **4%** |
| | East | 11% | **12%** | 12% | 12% | 12% | 13% | 11% | **12%** |
| | Far north | 0.1% | **1.0%** | 0.8% | 0.7% | 0.8% | 1.0% | 0.6% | **0.6%** |
| | Northeast | 2% | **7%** | 6% | 5% | 7% | 7% | 7% | **6.8%** |
| | Northwest | 0.6% | **2.2%** | 2.1% | 1.9% | 2.3% | 2.3% | 2.2% | **2%** |
| | South central | 20% | **6%** | 7% | 8% | 9% | 8% | 9% | **9%** |
| | Southwest | 20% | **15%** | 15% | 14% | 15% | 16% | 15% | **15%** |
| | Toronto | 39% | **50%** | 53% | 53% | 49% | 49% | 49% | **49.6%** |

[1] The 2018-2019 baseline was chosen because it is the last complete fiscal year not impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Figures from CADAC (for operating grant recipients) and final reports (for project grant recipients) are sourced from applicant data, many of whom had activities in 2020 interrupted by COVID-19 and reported this as part of their 2019-2020 data.

[2] The census figure represents the regional distribution of individual artists only and does not reflect the high concentration of arts organizations located in Toronto. For this reason, this census target, while useful as a general benchmark, is imperfect as an absolute goal, as it likely underestimates the proportion of Ontario's arts sector located in Toronto. Therefore, this number is included as a contextual reference point.

### Data Insights Summary for Outcome A1 - Funding in all parts of the province

Ontario Arts Council has largely achieved the outcome of supporting the creation, production and presentation of vital arts across Ontario, with OAC funding reaching 98% of Ontario census divisions in 2024-25, maintaining virtually comprehensive census division coverage since 2018-

2019. The absence of funding in Muskoka signals a gap in provincial reach. While Toronto has the most applicants (53%) and grants (49.6%), regions such as South Central, Southwest, and the Far North are underrepresented compared to their artist population share. Note the share of artists in a region is one indicator of demand, and that is why the target is based on maintaining the 2018-2019 baseline investment as this also considers concentration of organizations. These results also suggest challenges in access and engagement in the arts outside major urban centres.

### MEASURE 2: Diversity and inclusion in OAC applications and funding

**Results Analysis**: OAC is exceeding its target in attracting grant applications from equity-deserving artists and arts organizations. Areas for potential further grant investment are regions outside of Toronto and funding for New Generation artists. The increase in Indigenous applications in 2021-2022 is a result of a government investment through OAC in a one-time program called the Indigenous Arts Support Fund.

| **Share of Number of OAC Applications from Artists and Arts Organization by Priority Group** | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ID | **Indicator** | **Target** | Baseline 2018-19 | Results 2019-20 | Results 2020-21 | Results 2021-22 | Results 2022-23 | Results 2023-24 | **Results 2024-25[4]** *(Target for A2.2)* |
| A2.1 | % of # applications to OAC from artists/arts organizations who identify as: | = % of artists (2021 census) [2, 3] | | | | | | | |
| | Artists of colour | **≥ 23%** | 29 % | 29 % | 33% | 31% | 31% | 37% | **39%** |
| | Deaf artists/artists with disabilities | **≥ 8%[1]** | 12 % | 15 % | 16% | 17% | 20% | 21% | **23%** |
| | Francophone | **≥ 5%** | 8 % | 7 % | 6% | 7% | 6% | 6% | **6%** |
| | Indigenous | **≥ 2%** | 10 % | 7 % | 7% | 13% | 9% | 7% | **6%** |
| | New generation (18-30 years) | **≥ 25%** | 30 % | 27 % | 28% | 31% | 26% | 26% | **26%** |
| | Regions outside Toronto | **≥ 61%** | 46 % | 44 % | 46% | 51% | 49% | 48% | **47%** |

| **Share of Number of OAC Grants to Artists and Arts Organization by Priority Group** | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A2.2 | % of total # OAC grants to artists/ arts organizations who identify as: | **Target** ≥ % applications same year *(A2.1 data from 2024-25)* | Baseline 2018-19 | Results 2019-20 | Results 2020-21 | Results 2021-22 | Results 2022-23 | Results 2023-24 | **Results 2024-25[4]** | **$ Value[4] (million) 2024-25** |
| | Artists of colour | **≥ 39%** | 28% | 29% | 33% | 34% | 32% | 37% | **39%** | **$8.3** |
| | Deaf artists/artists with disabilities | **≥ 23%** | 11% | 12% | 13% | 16% | 17% | 17% | **19%** | **$3.1** |
| | Francophone | **≥ 6%** | 10% | 8% | 8% | 9% | 8% | 8% | **9%** | **$4.0** |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Indigenous | **≥ 6%** | 16% | 11% | 12% | 14% | 15% | 11% | **11%** | **$3.9** |
| | New generation (18-30 years) | **≥ 26%** | 22% | 21% | 21% | 32% | 21% | 19% | **20%** | **$4.0** |
| | Regions outside Toronto | **≥ 47%** | 50% | 47% | 47% | 51% | 51% | 51% | **50%** | **$22.2** |

[1] Percentage of Ontario's experienced labour force with a moderate/severe/very severe disability. (Source: Canadian Survey on Disability 2017 Statistics Canada custom request.). Note, the target for Deaf artists/artists with disabilities reflects the overall population rather than artists population.

[2] Collection of data on support to Deaf artists and artists with disabilities began in 2015-16.

[3] The census figure on which this target is based represents the regional distribution of individual artists only and does not reflect the high concentration of arts organizations located in Toronto. For this reason, this census target, while useful as a general benchmark, is imperfect as an absolute goal as it likely underestimates the proportion of Ontario's arts sector located in Toronto.

[4] Note that percentages do not add up to 100 and that total dollar value does not add up to total OAC grant dollars because (1) some artists/organizations identify as being part of more than one priority group and (2) not all applicants choose to self-identify. As such, individual dollar figures included here will likely underestimate the actual support provided to the various groups.

### Data Insights Summary for Outcome A2 – Diversity and Inclusion

OAC is exceeding its target for attracting applicants from equity-deserving artists and arts organization, although it is important to understand this data context. All applicants are invited to respond to a voluntary priority group questionnaire with an average response rate of 91% in 2024-2025. This data represents these voluntary responses. Applications from artists of colour (39% applications vs. 23% of artists 2021 census) and Deaf artists/artists with disabilities (23% applications vs. 8% of Ontario labour force with a moderate/severe/very severe disability) are well above targets, showing strong engagement. Indigenous applications peaked at 13% in 2021-22 due to a one-time program but have since declined to 6%. Francophone representation remains steady at 6%, meeting targets, while New Generation artists have stagnated at 26%, indicating challenges in sector renewal. Grant funding rates generally align with application shares within priority groups, but gaps persist for Deaf artists/artists with disabilities and younger artists. There is a need for targeted outreach to rural regions and with emerging artists.

The share of grants awarded to priority groups shows mixed progress against targets. OAC grants to Artists of colour have steadily increased from 28% in 2018-2019 to 39% in 2024-2025, meeting its target. The share of grants to deaf artists and artists with disabilities has improved from 11% to 19% but remain below the 23% goal. Francophone and regional applicants consistently exceed targets, maintaining strong representation. The share of grants to Indigenous artists, though above target, declined from 15% to 11% in recent years, and new generation artists (18-30 years old) fell short of the 26% target, dropping to 20% after a peak in 2021-22.

**MEASURE 3: Employment and income for arts professionals in Ontario**

**Results Analysis**: The 2021-22 results showed an increase in the number of artists and arts professionals due to an additional 8,700 reported by publishers, who were previously excluded from these figures because they did not report data through CADAC (as noted in the footnotes). Publishers accounted for $42 million in salaries and fees; even when this amount is subtracted from the 2022-23 results, the total still meets the baseline target of $433.4 million. Similarly, after removing 537 publisher full-time equivalents (FTEs) from the 2022–23 results, the A3.3 value would be 5,377 FTEs, which still exceeds the baseline target of 4,882 FTEs.

| **Income and Jobs for Artists and Arts Professionals Supported by OAC** | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ID | **Indicator** | **Target** (> Baseline over 5 years) | Baseline 2018-19[1] | Results 2019-20[3] | Results 2020-21 | Results 2021-22 | **Results 2022-23[2]** |
| A3.1 | # artists & arts professionals paid (fees or salaries) through OAC-funded activities | **> 69,201** | 69,201 | 52,348 | 53,628 | 74,540 | **78,430** |
| A3.2 | $ value of income paid to artists/ arts professionals through OAC-funded activities | **> $433.4 million** | $433.4 million | $363.0 million | $343.8 million | $504.4 million[4] | **$580.9 million** |
| A3.3 | # FTE jobs for artists and arts professionals in organizations receiving operating grants from OAC | **> 4,882** | 4,882 | 4,276 | 4,623 | 5,730 | **5,908** |

[1] The 2018-2019 baseline was chosen because it is the last complete fiscal year not impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Figures from CADAC (for operating grant recipients) and final reports (for project grant recipients) are sourced from applicant data, many of whom had activities in 2020 interrupted by COVID-19 and reported this as part of their 2019-2020 data.

[2] Presented here and elsewhere in this document are actual figures for 2022-2023 as submitted through 2024-25 OAC operating applications/CADAC, or through 2022-2023 project grants' final reports, and represent the most currently available data. 2021-2022 is the first year that publishers' financial and statistical data included in figures; this was previously unavailable as publishers did not enter data into CADAC.

[3] Grant recipients report this data to OAC based on their own fiscal years, which may not be the same April to March fiscal year that OAC uses. As such, the data used to obtain the 2019-2020 figures reflects 12-month periods with several different start dates (including April 1, 2019; January 1, 2020; or another date in 2020). Accordingly, the impact of Ontario's COVID-19 related restrictions on arts activities can already be seen in 2019-2020 results, when compared with 2018-2019 results.

[4] 2021-22 data revised to align with the 2024-25 annual report.

**Data Insights Summary for Outcome A3 – Employment of Arts Professionals**

OAC has successfully met and exceeded its baseline targets for employment and income for arts professionals over the five-year period. The number of artists and arts professionals paid through OAC-funded activity rose from 69,201 at baseline to 78,430 in 2022-23, despite pandemic related declines in earlier years. Similarly, full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs grew to 5,908, surpassing the target of 4,882. While nominal income for artists and arts professional rose from 34% (from $433.4 million to $580.9 million), inflation-adjusted income only increased13.6% (to $492.3 million in 2018 dollars). This means that much of the apparent growth reflects rising costs rather than substantial improvements in real earning or purchasing power.

**OUTCOME B: Increased skills and capacity in the arts sector**

**MEASURE 4: Funding of grants and services that increase skills and capacity**

**Results Analysis**: The increase in artists and arts professionals attending skill development training in 2020-2021 is a result of 348 grants awarded through the one-time program Arts Response Initiative: Project Grants for Individuals program, which included funding for training and skill development activity. The number of artists that participated in professional training was maintained in 2021-2022 as a result of 500 grants that were supported through the one-time Career Catalyst: Project Grants for New Generation Artists program. 2022-23 saw an increase in the corresponding figures.

| **Training and Skills Development Supported by OAC** | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ID | **Indicator** | **Target** (> Baseline over 5 years) | Baseline 2018-19 | Results 2019-20 | Results 2020-21 | Results 2021-22 | **Results 2022-23**[1] | Results 2023-24 | Results 2024-25 | **$ Value 2024-25** |
| B4.1 | # artists & arts professionals who attend activities/events for training, skill development supported or provided by OAC | **> 158,774** | 158,774 | 129,145 | 162,923 | 162,817 | **196,263** | | | --- |
| B4.2 | # activities/events for training and skill development supported or provided by OAC | **> 6,693** | 6,693 | 5,180 | 7,509 | 9,912 | **11,530** | | | --- |
| B4.3 | % of total # grants allocated by OAC for training and skill development | **> 8%** | 8% | 6% | 14% | 19% | 5% | 5% | **6%** | **$5.6 million** |

[1] For indicators B4.1 and B4.2, these are actual figures for 2022-2023 as submitted through 2024-25 operating applications/CADAC, or through 2022-2023 project grants' final reports, and represent the most currently available

data. 2021-2022 is the first year that publishers' financial and statistical data included in figures; this was previously unavailable as publishers did not enter data into CADAC.

B4.3: 2020-2021 figures include 348 grants from the one-time program Arts Response Initiative: Project Grants for Individuals. This program included funding for training and skill development activity including: creating and adapting workspaces; developing knowledge and/or skills in administration, technology and digital platforms; and/or artistic practice, documenting artistic work, upgrading technology, research and planning, and website development. These figures are not included in Measure B4.1 as this includes individuals who attended a training and skill development activity supported or provided by OAC. Arts Response Initiative: Project Grants for Individuals program recipients were not attending events, but rather completing training and skills activity projects.

B4.3: 2021-2022 figures include 500 grants from the one-time program Career Catalyst: Project Grants for New Generation Artists. This program included funding for training and skill development activity including: professional development and training; marketing and promotion; purchase of art materials and supplies, software and hardware upgrades; and artist studio or workspace enhancements.

## OUTCOME C: More public participation in and appreciation of the arts

### MEASURE 5: Opportunities for Ontarians to experience and participate in the arts

**Results Analysis:** The number of public activities and events produced by OAC-funded artists and organizations in their home communities has been gradually increasing toward 2018-19 levels, with 2022-23 reporting 38,064 activities and events. In comparison, attendance in 2022-23 exceeded 2018-19 levels by 43%, representing a significant increase following the COVID-19 period. This growth is likely attributable to organizations expanding engagement platforms and offering hybrid or online events.

OAC's Touring Projects program was reduced to one deadline in 2020-2021 and suspended in 2021-2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The percentage of operating organizations touring within Ontario increased from 2021-22 to 2022-23, along with the number of activities and attendance. Both activities and attendance related to touring events surpassed 2018-19 levels, indicating a positive trend.

| **Public Events and Audiences Engaged through OAC Grants** | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ID | **Indicator** | **Target** (> Baseline over 5 years) | Baseline 2018-19 | Results 2019-20 | Results 2020-21 | Results 2021-22 | **Results 2022-23**[1] |
| C5.1 | # public activities and events produced by OAC-funded artists & organizations in their **home communities** | **> 43,104** | 43,104 | 25,565 | 20,885 | 35,180 | **38,064** |
| C5.2 | # total audience for home community events in Ontario | **> 21.4 million** | 21.4 million | 12.3 million | 12.4 million | 20.4 million | **30.6 million** |
| C5.3 | # public activities and events produced by OAC-funded artists & organizations **touring** in Ontario | **> 4,998** | 4,998 | 2,467 | 2,633 | 4,739 | **6,171** |
| C5.4 | # total audience for touring events in Ontario | **> 1.1 million** | 1.1 million | 469,645 | 196,555 | 564,298 | **1.3 million** |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| C5.5 | % of operating organizations touring in Ontario | **>36%** | 36% | 25% | 17% | 23% | **26%** |

[1] Presented here and elsewhere in this document are actual figures for 2022-2023 as submitted through 2024-2025 OAC operating applications/CADAC, or through 2022-2023 project grants' final reports, and represent the most currently available data. 2021-2022 is the first year that publishers' financial and statistical data included in figures; this was previously unavailable as publishers did not enter data into CADAC.

### MEASURE 6: Opportunities for Ontarians to participate in arts learning

**Results Analysis:** Since 2020-2021, grants through OAC's Artists in Residence (Education) program have been counted in figure 6.1 – prior to this, the program was classified as an initiative rather than a grant. Because the program only approves a small number of grants, the percentage of grants to arts education was not impacted by this shift.

The percentage of organizations offering arts learning as part of their ongoing activities has remained relatively steady with a gradual increase but has not returned to the 2018-19 level of 83%.

Similarly, the number of events increased in 2022-2023, but not to 2018-2019 (i.e. pre-COVID-19) levels. The number of participants has declined since 2019-20, likely due to many of these activities taking place in schools that were either closed or required to shift to online classes. However, a recovery trend is now evident as a result of 4.5 million participants in 2022-23, indicating renewed engagement.

| **Arts Learning Supported by OAC** | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ID | **Indicator** | **Target** (> Baseline over 5 years) | Baseline 2018-19 | Results 2019-20 | Results 2020-21 | Results 2021-22 | Results 2022-23[1] | Results 2023-24 | Results 2024-25 | **$ Value 2024-25** |
| C6.1 | % of total # OAC grants that provide funding specifically for arts learning | **> 4%** | 4% | 5% | 5% | 3% | 3% | 3% | 3% | **$2.2 million** |
| C6.2 | % of operating organizations that offer arts learning as part of ongoing activities | **> 83%** | 83% | 78% | 73% | 74% | **78%** | | | --- |
| C6.3 | # events that offer opportunities for arts learning by OAC-funded artists & arts organizations | **> 86,912** | 86,912 | 54,288 | 44,738 | 62,507 | **70,939** | | | --- |
| C6.4 | # participants (adults/ youth) in all arts learning events by OAC-funded artists & arts organizations | **> 5.1 million** | 5.1 million | 2.8 million | 4.2 million | 3.9 million | **4.5 million** | | | --- |

[1] For indicators C6.2, C6.3 and C6.4, these are actual figures for 2022-2023 as submitted through 2024-2025 OAC operating applications/CADAC, or through 2022-2023 project grants' final reports, and represent the most currently available data. 2021-2022 is the first year that publishers' financial and statistical data included in figures; this was previously unavailable as publishers did not enter data into CADAC.

[2] 2020-2021 was the first year that OAC's Artists in Residence (Education) program grants were counted in figure 6.1. Prior to 2020-2021, this program was classified as an initiative; it was reclassified as a grant starting in 2020-2021.

## MEASURE 7: Opportunities for people outside Ontario to experience Ontario artists and arts organizations

**Results Analysis:** OAC's Touring Projects program was reduced to one deadline in 2020-2021 and suspended in 2021-22 due to COVID-19. The percentage of operating organizations touring in Ontario increased from 2021-2022 to 2022-2023. In 2022–23, both the number of activities and overall attendance substantially exceeded the 2018-19 target levels, reflecting a strong upward trend.

| **National and International Touring Supported by OAC** | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ID | **Indicator** | **Target** (> Baseline over 5 years) | Baseline 2018-19 | Results 2019-20 | Results 2020-21 | Results 2021-22[2] | **Results 2022-23[1]** |
| C7.1 | # public activities and events produced by OAC-funded artists & organizations and toured nationally (outside Ontario) and internationally | **> 3,558** | 3,558 | 2,262 | 2,236 | 3,628 | **6,049** |
| C7.2 | # total audience for events toured nationally (outside Ontario) and internationally | **> 1.6 million** | 1.6 million | 2.4 million | 651,851 | 1.3 million | **2.7 million** |
| C7.3 | % of operating organizations touring outside Ontario | **> 27%** | 27% | 21% | 14% | 22% | **24%** |

[1] These are actual figures for 2022-2023 as submitted through 2024-2025 OAC operating applications/CADAC, or through 2022-2023 project grants' final reports, and represent the most currently available data. 2021-2022 is the first year that publishers' financial and statistical data included in figures; this was previously unavailable as publishers did not enter data into CADAC.

[2] 2021-22 data revised to align with the 2024-25 annual report.

**OUTCOME D: Continuous improvement in fostering a vital and sustainable arts sector**

**MEASURE 8: Administrative efficiency in assessment process**

**Results Analysis**: OAC continues to exceed its stated service commitment target, efficiently turning around applications from program deadline to decision.

| **Grant Decision Turnaround Performance** | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ID | **Indicator** | **Target** | Baseline 2019-20[1] | Results 2020-21 | Results 2021-22 | Results 2022-23 | Results 2023-24[1] | **Results 2024-25[1]** |
| D8.1 | % of applications meeting the stated service commitment turnaround from program deadline to decision. | **85%** | 90% | 96% | 88% | 96% | 89% | **98%** |

[1] Service commitment revised to 4.5 months in 2022-2023. Excludes programs with open intake (i.e. no fixed deadlines).

**MEASURE 9: Stakeholder satisfaction with OAC processes and decisions**

**Results Analysis:** OAC also continues to exceed its target goal for the percentage of applicants who are satisfied with OAC's grant process.

| **Satisfaction with OAC Service** | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ID | **Indicator** | **Target** Over 5 years | Baseline 2019-20 | Results 2020-21 | Results 2021-22 | Results 2022-23 | Results 2023-24 | **Results 2024-25** |
| D9.1 | % applicants who report satisfaction with OAC grant process | **85%** | 86% | 87% | 87% | 91% | 91% | **91%** |
| D9.2 | % of complaints responded to within three business days | **90%** | 90% | 100% | 95% | 95% | 95% | **95%** |

## OAC's Future Performance Framework

The chart below highlights key changes in the OAC's performance framework, showcasing an evolution from a program-specific model toward a more integrated, strategic approach. The updated 2025 model emphasizes broader, cross-cutting lenses and a more comprehensive set of

indicators, reflecting a shift to align with public value, return on investment, and long-term societal goals. These changes aim to improve transparency, responsiveness, and the overall impact of service delivery.

The impacts of the arts has connected to many aspects of public life, however have not been formally measured or integrated in the agency's approach to performance measures. The OAC is excited for its future revised logic model, KPI's, and indicators to now connect aspects that have been informally reported on in a more structured and comprehensive way. These efforts are to modernize and recognize the importance of the arts to Ontario.

| Dimension | Current Performance Framework | Future Performance Framework |
|---|---|---|
| **Strategic focus** | Program-specific outcomes: creation, capacity, participation, administration | Cross-cutting strategic lenses: artistic, economic, social, operational |
| **Measurement** | 25 indicators tied to each outcome; Primarily short-term outcomes with some mid- and long-term goals | 65 indicators aligned with public value and return on investment; Covers short-, intermediate-, and long-term outcomes with broader strategic and societal alignment |
| **Artistic impact** | Focused on funding distribution, diversity, and public engagement | Emphasizes support for art with wide audience appeal, innovation, recognition, partnerships, and artistic transformation |
| **Economic impact** | Measured through employment, income, and skills development | Expanded to include GDP impact, tourism impact, job quality, and cultural infrastructure |
| **Social impact** | Centred on attendance as well as participation and arts learning | Continued emphasis on attendance, participation, and arts learning with broader lens that includes quality of life, community partnerships, and public opinion |
| **Operational impact** | Focused on efficiency and satisfaction | Adds grant impact ratings, accessibility for persons with disabilities, outreach, and cost-efficiency |
| **Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Accessibility (EDIA) and Regional Reach** | Addressed through demographic and regional group funding and participation indicators | Transition from Strategic Priority Groups to performance measures approach to be developed through an EDIA and Regional methodology outlining structure around data collection, action, and outreach. |

# Section 7: Communications Plan

## Strategic Focus

OAC continues to build strategic capacity to increase emphasis on amplifying the many positive impacts of publicly funded arts activity in Ontario (as funded by OAC) for defined stakeholder groups, who in turn amplify these benefits among their own constituencies further from OAC's immediate sphere. This includes initiatives designed for stakeholders at various points in the "awareness-to-support" spectrum – with the key stages as:

**Chart 1: Awareness-to-Support Conceptual Model**

If the outlined strategies and initiatives are successfully implemented, OAC will significantly enhance the visibility and impact of the arts across Ontario. This success will lead to more Ontarians who will recognize and appreciate the value of the arts in their communities. Ontarians will have enhanced participation in arts activities, leading to more vibrant and cohesive communities reflective of diverse communities. The arts sector will contribute more robustly to the provincial economy, creating jobs and attracting tourism and investment. Ontario's arts and culture will gain greater international visibility, fostering cultural exchange and collaboration.

## Approach and Key Audiences

OAC ensures its continued relevance by listening to its stakeholders and by responding to evolving needs. This, along with OAC's long history and expertise in the professional not-for-profit arts sector, makes it a trusted and informed resource for the arts community, the government, and a variety of other key audiences.

### Government

OAC regularly reports to MTCG through documents and requests pertaining to compliance and accountability. OAC also develops and shares materials around the impact of the arts sector both across the province, and in specific constituencies.

OAC also works to highlight how the activities of arts funding recipients contribute to achieving the goals of other ministries and the government as a whole.

### Ontario's Arts Sector

OAC works with grant recipients to drive connections through engagement in their communities, including through recognition of government support. In 2023, OAC changed its recognition policy to foster more connections between grant recipients and MPPs, including by introducing a defined moment for funding recognition (in-person at an event or online on social media). OAC has continued to expand its resource offerings and guidance opportunities to the support the arts sector in delivering this recognition.

OAC will continue to modernize its recognition policy and the program redesign rolls out over the coming years.

**Other Sectors**

OAC builds connections with other sectors where there are opportunities to leverage the unique strengths of the arts to achieve mutual goals. This includes OAC's 2025 collaborations with organizations such as the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, the Tourism Industry Association of Ontario, Destination Ontario and the Association Municipalities of Ontario – all of which centred on the unique draws of arts and culture for local tourism, economic growth, and municipal revitalization.

OAC looks to partner with sectors grounded in its new performance measures and logic model to further drive its mandate.

**The Public (Audiences, Participants and Volunteers)**
OAC engages with the public through the activities that we fund – which taken together attract tens of millions of audience members and participants each year. In fact, OAC requires all funding recipients to publicly recognize the OAC and the Government of Ontario in their events and promotional materials, as it's through the work of grant recipients that we're able to deliver the message that the arts activities Ontarians enjoy are made possible through taxpayer investment. This, in turn, helps ensure that the arts continue to be seen as relevant and valued for continued support. OAC board and staff members regularly amplify this message at events through speaking opportunities, program letters, and networking with community members and stakeholders.

One way that members of the public show their support for and appreciation of the arts is by volunteering with an arts organization – as a board member, a grassroots volunteer, or in another capacity. **In 2021-2022, an estimated 1,032,800 hours were contributed by 44,758 volunteers at OAC's annually funded organizations all across the province**.

## Key Communications Themes for 2026-2029

**1. Mission-Driven**
**We are committed to our mandate, ensuring our actions align with the needs of Ontarians and its arts sector.**

- Enhance awareness and understanding of what OAC sets out to achieve, and how we achieve it, in a way that's meaningful to our wide and diverse network of stakeholders
    - Emphasize the establishment of a through-line between OAC's updated vision, values, logic model, performance measures and programs – ensuring that they're all now connected, and designed help us to explain the above
- Demonstrate how OAC continues to evolve to benefit the arts sector, and in turn Ontario, in keeping with our longstanding mandate to benefit all Ontarians
- Decode OAC for potential and existing applicants for ease of access and experience

**We recognize the arts as vital to cultural expression, identity, well-being, relevance, and economic prosperity.**

- Showcase how the arts contribute to public goals, including economic development, community building, and education, including how:
    - The arts sector contributes to a strong Ontario economy, creates jobs, and drives financial value locally
    - The arts build strong, healthy communities in Ontario and create good places in which to live and do business
- Healthy Ontario communities need the arts to retain their identity and their attraction to citizens and visitors. Tell new stories about the value of the arts in society and OAC's role in supporting them

**2. Adaptability**

**We strategically change, partner and collaborate to serve the evolving needs of Ontario's arts community and public, ensuring effectiveness, innovation, and responsiveness.**

- Develop strategic communications initiatives to bring awareness of changes under the OAC grant modernization and performance strategy project effectively to community and partners
- Make the connection for stakeholders between upcoming changes and the directions outlined in OAC's strategic plan for 2022-27, particularly for the sustained growth and vitality of Ontario's arts sector
- Effectively communicate how performance measures and indicators, as well as the forthcoming EDIA & Regional Methodology, will allow us to evaluate what we're doing and adjust where we see gaps

**3. Accountability**

**We uphold professionalism, ensuring clear and responsible decision-making that serves the arts sector and the public.**

- Leverage OAC's unique position at the intersection of arts and government to collect and share credible and reliable data about the sector
- Demonstrate how program changes (especially the adoption of more detailed performance measures) will help OAC invest strategically and deeply to build strong and longer-lasting impact; maximize impact per dollar; and demonstrate wise use of public funds
- Detail how performance measures and the forthcoming EDIA & Regional Methodology will allow us to transparently share the rationale for our decisions
- Proactively provide data on how funding patterns shift following the implementation of program changes (including which groups, if any, were impacted)
- Share how this modernization strategy contributes to a broader goal of lean, efficient, and accountable public service delivery

**4. Regional Representation**

**We ensure that artists and communities in all regions of Ontario – urban, rural, and remote – have access to arts funding, resources, and opportunities.**

- Guide grant applicants and recipients throughout the transition in a way that builds trust, encourages engagement, and maintains continuity of service and equity
    - Underline how changes are informed by community consultations and are built for sustainability
- Demonstrate how performance measures serve as an evolution of OAC's concept of priority groups (including the maintenance of all existing performance indicators and targets related to regional reach)
- Amplify the diverse stories of Ontario's artists and arts organizations

**5. Equity, Diversity, Accessibility & Inclusion**

**We are committed to ensuring all communities can participate fully in the arts. We champion artistic voices across Ontario's diverse demographics, prioritizing equitable access to funding, resources, and opportunities.**

- Guide grant applicants and recipients throughout the transition in a way that builds trust, encourages engagement, and maintains continuity of service and equity
    - Underline how changes are informed by community consultations and are built for sustainability
- Demonstrate how performance measures serve as an evolution of OAC's concept of priority groups (including the maintenance of all existing performance indicators and targets related to EDIA)
- Amplify the diverse stories of Ontario's artists and arts organizations

## Key Areas of Activity

| Activity Area | 2025-2026 Achievements | 2026-2029 Plans |
|---|---|---|
| **Marketing Infrastructure** | Launch of website redevelopment and redesign process, from scoping and RFP development through vendor selection and initial building stages.<br><br>Completing first half of OAC's rebranding project, including finalization of new logo, visual branding, and brand voice guidelines, along with needs assessment for redeveloping materials.<br><br>Maintenance and expansion of new lexicon and style guide to bring consistency to (and reduce questions about) standard OAC terms for external written communications in both English and French. | Completing website redevelopment and redesign process, including full build, alignment with all recent changes (program structure, visual brand, brand voice), user testing, and soft launch in fall 2026.<br><br>Finishing rebranding project, including staggered production and rollout of new print and digital assets beginning in April 2026, taking into account organization needs and careful resource management.<br><br>Review of lexicon and style guide to adjust to new brand voice. Launch of external glossary to facilitate pared-down and simplified website content. |
| **External Communications Strategy for OAC Grant Modernization** | Developing and implementing communications strategy for onboarding current recipients of operating funding into the new Ontario Arts Operating Fund in a strategic, intentional and audience-centered | Doing the same for OAC's new project funding programs, which have a much broader audience than operating funding programs do, beginning in summer 2026, in anticipation of program launches in early 2027. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **and Performance Strategy** | way that builds trust, encourages engagement, and maintains continuity of service and equity.<br><br>Equipping staff with resources to be able to confidently connect with their clients and communities about upcoming changes. | Collaborating on report-back projects offering transparency into the impacts and outcomes of program changes.<br><br>Developing and implementing communications strategies to guide grant applicants and recipients along the awareness-to-support continuum for OAC's new conceptual frameworks, including:<br>• The bridging of OAC's existing performance metrics and priority group strategies<br>• How changes in these areas will be decided and implemented via the EDIA and Regional methodology |
| **Social Media** | Continued growth on all social media platforms where OAC is active, led by a 16% increase in followers on Instagram and 13% on LinkedIn.<br><br>Following the launch of a query-able database of photos received from grant recipients, transitioning visuals in all OAC social media posts from abstract illustrations to photos of actual grant recipients from the programs being advertised. For prospective applicants, this makes the opportunities available feel more "real," while also offering a better idea of what kinds of activities can be supported. For non-applicant audiences, the use of photos demonstrates what OAC makes possible in a much more tangible and appreciable way.<br><br>Beginning to collect data on OAC funding recognition and MPP engagement on social media, feeding into new monthly reports for both comparative and cumulative tracking.<br><br>Successful rollout of social media campaign for OAC's Arts Across Ontario project, with regionally targeted posts generating close to 75,000 views, 400 shares and 1,500+ likes across platforms. | Continued analysis of ROI of various social media platforms, with consideration given to sunsetting accounts that are no longer performing well among key audiences, and exploring new platforms as they emerge.<br><br>After the transition to OAC's new program structure, the volume of application deadline–related posts will decrease (which will happen in early 2027), leading to enhanced capacity for other types of social media content (e.g. recognition of key calendar dates for specific arts activities, practices, and sector initiatives; expansion to video or engagement-oriented content).<br><br>Continued building and refinement of photo database, with an overall goal of ensuring stakeholders can visually understand the impact of OAC's work across the province.<br><br>Expanding data analytics and beginning to share results with key stakeholder audiences.<br><br>Annual campaigns, once again centering on Ontario's regions, sharing updated data from regional economic model. |
| **E-marketing** | Following the activation of an application programming interface (API) between OAC's e-marketing and grant management platforms (together with IS&T team), completing onboarding and training phases. Automated, dynamically updated segmentation now used for the majority of OAC's email contacts.<br><br>Continued production of bi-monthly newsletter, enabling OAC to share more diverse information with a wider stakeholder group on a more regular basis, with | As many of the current segmentation features are aligned with OAC's existing program structure, updating segmentation architecture progressively in line with program structure updates.<br><br>Continued adaptation and iteration of newsletter, including modifications related to branding (visual and brand voice updates). |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | adjustments based on feedback from its first full year over fiscal 2024-25. | |
| **Impact Reporting** | Expanding recognition-related resources for grant recipients, including:<br>• New templates developed in response to user feedback and requests; and<br>• Training on how to effectively communicate about the impact of funding, including tips for connecting with stakeholders.<br><br>Continued development of new vehicles for synthesizing and sharing OAC impact – including OAC's first-ever Year in Review publication, plus reports to ministries who have goals that overlap with OAC's activities, to help establish and build on relationships. | Revisiting recognition requirements in tandem with program structure updates, modifying them in line with newly available opportunities, and offering new resources and training as needed.<br><br>Continued development of impact-reporting vehicles, including regional reports combining local impact data with local grant recipient testimonials.<br><br>As new programs and processes are built, collaborating internally to enhance OAC's ability to capture impact-related content from grant administration processes (including from grant recipient final reports, presentations to OAC's board of directors, etc.). Accountability and transparency to community about performance measure tracking and reporting will require design and regular updates. |
| **Community Engagement** | Ongoing refinement and analysis of system and process for staff to log and manage community outreach opportunities for board, leadership and staff members.<br>• Reviewing data from the first year of the new system, it became clear which types of events staff were most aware of and adding most frequently, and which OAC-supported activities were comparatively under-represented.<br>• Based on this, development of preliminary mechanisms to identify under-represented events and activity areas.<br><br>Introduction and implementation of Regional Grant Recipient Celebration events – an initiative developed in tandem with local arts councils to connect grant recipients with elected officials, community representatives and other arts professionals within a geographic area larger than an electoral district (ward/riding) but smaller than one of OAC's eight provincial regions. Four events held in 2025 (in York Region, Prince Edward and Hastings Counties, Hamilton and Brantford, and London-Elgin-Middlesex). | Collaborating internally to develop a robust and technology-supported solution for rapid compilation of complete data on OAC-supported public events, to facilitate various types of stakeholder engagement opportunities.<br><br>Continued collaboration with the Alliance of Arts Councils of Ontario and local arts councils to facilitate and further evolve these events in regions across the province. |
| **Customer Service** | Following introduction of feedback reporting templates for frontline staff in the communications area (i.e. those working in | Broadening feedback reporting mechanisms to include feedback and analysis received via staff members in other departments. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | reception and social media), creation of models to synthesize and track patterns in queries on weekly, monthly and annual basis. | |

### Other Ongoing Activities

- Managing announcement and supporting presentation of OAC-administered awards (five annual, four biennial, one triennial).
- Fulfilling grant recipient requests for OAC letters of welcome, video greetings, program advertisements and speeches at events.
- Writing, translation and publication of written content across OAC's website and system interfaces.

By focusing on these activities and themes, while proactively shaping and evolving key structures, OAC will enhance its communication efforts, increase public and stakeholder engagement, and support the arts sector in Ontario effectively.

### External Outreach

OAC's external outreach strategy centers on building robust connections with diverse communities, arts organizations, and stakeholders throughout Ontario. By engaging in collaborative initiatives, hosting regional events, and maintaining open channels of communication, OAC ensures that the voices and needs of local artists are heard and addressed. This ongoing outreach not only strengthens the provincial arts network but also fosters greater inclusivity and access to resources for artists across all regions.

OAC's outreach to the arts community in the coming year will center on introducing a new, streamlined program structure and simplified processes designed to better serve artists, organizations, and stakeholders across Ontario. By leveraging collaborative initiatives, regional events, and open channels of communication established through our ongoing external outreach efforts, OAC will ensure that these changes are clearly communicated and accessible to all. Special attention will be given to frontline communication through enhanced feedback reporting and analysis, enabling us to respond rapidly to queries and concerns as the new structure is rolled out. This approach will help demystify application procedures, making it easier for artists from diverse backgrounds and regions to participate and benefit from OAC's programs.

Furthermore, OAC will engage staff across departments to gather direct feedback and insights from the arts community, ensuring that the transition to the new program structure is responsive to real needs and challenges. By streamlining feedback mechanisms and fostering greater inclusivity, OAC aims to strengthen relationships with local and regional partners, increase transparency, and build sustained trust within the sector. These efforts will not only support artists in navigating program changes but will also reinforce OAC's commitment to equity, access, and capacity-building in the arts throughout Ontario.

## Stakeholder Engagement

### Stakeholder Engagement at OAC: Building a Connected and Responsive Arts Ecosystem

The Ontario Arts Council (OAC) is deeply committed to fostering a vibrant, inclusive, and resilient arts sector across Ontario. Our comprehensive stakeholder engagement approach ensures that all voices—funded and non-funded artists, arts organizations, government partners, and cross-industry collaborators—are heard and valued. This section outlines the multi-layered strategies and relationships that underpin OAC's engagement with its broad network of stakeholders.

### Staff Engagement with the Arts Community

OAC staff play a pivotal role in connecting with the arts community across the province. Through regular outreach, consultations, and open communication channels, staff engage with both funded and non-funded artists and organizations. These interactions, which include regional events, information sessions, and direct feedback opportunities, ensure that OAC remains responsive to the evolving needs of Ontario's diverse arts ecosystem. Enhanced feedback mechanisms, such as targeted surveys and issue-specific forums, allow staff to rapidly identify and address emerging challenges, demystify application processes, and ensure equitable access to OAC programs for all communities.

### Assessment Panels: Engagement and Sector Insights

Assessment panels are a cornerstone of OAC's commitment to transparency and sector engagement. Composed of peers from across the arts community, these panels provide a forum for robust discussion, knowledge-sharing, and decision-making on funding allocations. Panelists contribute valuable insights on sector trends, challenges, and opportunities, ensuring OAC's programs remain responsive and relevant. Participation on panels also serves as a professional development opportunity for artists and arts workers, strengthening sector capacity.

**Leadership Engagement with the Professional Public Service**

At the leadership level, OAC maintains strong, ongoing connections with the professional public service. The OAC CEO and executive team engage regularly with the Deputy Minister and senior officials in the Ministry of Tourism Culture and Gaming, and semi-regular contact with key aligned ministries, including Francophone Affairs, Indigenous Affairs, Education, Multiculturalism, Labour, Economic Development, Finance, and the Treasury Board. These relationships facilitate alignment of OAC's strategic priorities with government objectives, enable timely policy input, and support coordinated responses to sector-wide challenges.

**Board Engagement with Members of Provincial Parliament and Cabinet**

OAC's Board, led by the Chair, plays a central role in representing the arts sector to government decision-makers. The Chair maintains an active relationship with the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Gaming, and together with the full Board of Directors regularly engages with MPP's, including cabinet ministers and the Premier's Office to connect the interests of Ontario's arts community with the strategies of government for all of Ontario. Board members are supported by OAC staff and leadership in building relationships with all Members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs), ensuring that the value and impact of public investment in the arts are clearly communicated across the political spectrum.

**Partnerships with Major Organizations**

OAC supports and maintains direct connections with twelve major arts organizations that serve as anchors within the provincial arts landscape. These organizations, along with other partners at the regional, provincial, national, and international levels, are engaged through regular meetings, joint initiatives, and collaborative planning processes. These partnerships strengthen sector infrastructure, facilitate shared learning, and amplify the reach of OAC's programs.

**Cross-Sector Connections**

Recognizing the interconnectedness of the arts with other sectors, OAC actively cultivates relationships with cross-industry partners such as the Ontario Chamber of Commerce and the Tourism Industry Association of Ontario. These collaborations support sector growth, drive economic development, and highlight the arts as a key contributor to Ontario's cultural and tourism offerings.

**Inter-Provincial and National Arts Councils**

OAC's engagement extends beyond provincial borders through active participation in the Canadian Public Arts Funders (CPAF) network, fostering dialogue and collaboration with peer arts councils in other provinces. Partnership with the Canada Council for the Arts further enables the sharing of best practices, joint initiatives, and advocacy on national issues affecting the arts sector.

**Municipal and Agency Networks**

OAC collaborates with other Ontario government agencies and municipalities, both directly and through arms-length bodies such as the Toronto Arts Council (TAC) and the Association of

Municipalities of Ontario (AMO). These relationships enhance local arts development, promote policy alignment, and support capacity-building at the municipal level.

**International Peer Engagement**

OAC is an active participant in international networks, including the International Federation of Arts Councils and Cultural Agencies (IFACCA). These connections facilitate global knowledge exchange, showcase Ontario artists on the world stage, and position the province as a leader in arts innovation and cultural diplomacy.

### Public Affairs

OAC partners with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming (MTCG) to ensure that government officials, arts organizations, stakeholders from other sectors, and media outlets are kept informed about important developments at OAC and across the broader arts sector. Through regular communications, joint initiatives, and collaborative planning, OAC and MTCG work together to disseminate timely updates, promote awareness of sector achievements, and address emerging issues that impact the arts in Ontario. This partnership strengthens sector infrastructure by facilitating shared learning and amplifying the reach of OAC's programs, while also supporting advocacy efforts and informed policy development. By leveraging these connections, OAC helps to position the arts as a vital contributor to Ontario's cultural, economic, and tourism offerings, ensuring that key audiences remain engaged and supportive of the arts community.

## International Communications

OAC's aims to foster collaborations with international arts organizations, councils, and governments to support cultural and knowledge exchange, as well as capacity-building. OAC's goals in this area include increasing visibility of Ontario based artists and cultural organizations on global stages, along with increasing access for Ontarians to international art practices. OAC achieves this by leveraging digital and hybrid platforms as well as in-person opportunities for increased interaction.  We believe in the promotion of cultural innovation through global collaborations, particularly in emerging fields such as digital arts, AI, and multimedia.

OAC supports Ontario artists and organizations to export work globally and collaborate with international partners. For example, in 2024, OAC participated for the first time in the **International Sommet de la Francophonie** (in collaboration with l'Alliance Culturelle de l'Ontario and the provincial Ministry of Francophone Affairs), to showcase Ontario as a growing destination for Francophone arts tourism, and to drive touring and market development opportunities for Francophone Ontario artists. In 2025 OAC participated in the **World Summit on Arts and Culture hosted by International Federation of Arts Councils and Cultural Agencies (IFACCA).**
Also in 2025, OAC contributed to curating the **World EXPO Canadian Pavillion Osaka, Japan**, with arts and cultural performances from Ontario.

Moving forward, we are aiming to provide increased platforms for ON based artists and organizations to gain access to international markets leveraging our networks and relationships with the international community and also through Major organization and their existing networks.

# Section 8: Initiatives Involving Third Parties

OAC forms partnerships by investing financial, human, and other resources with organizations to achieve strategic outcomes. These partnerships help OAC extend support to artists and arts activities across Ontario, including local, regional, and rural communities, and build connections with other sectors such as education, tourism, and business.

The following third party partnerships extends the impact of OAC while being resource conscious including the following third parties

**Key features of OAC partnerships:**

- Formal agreements define roles, responsibilities, and shared investment
- Partners jointly work toward specific projects or ongoing initiatives
- Partnerships are pursued when objectives are being explored or can be better met through partnerships as compared to existing ongoing OAC grants or services

OAC typically partners with non-profit organizations and government agencies, and businesses. Proposals are assessed for strategic alignment, and resources for partnerships are limited.

**To qualify, potential partners must:**

- Demonstrate alignment with OAC's strategic directions
- Provide a clear project outline and timing
- Meet criteria for collaboration, shared risk, and unique value

## Partnerships and Special Projects

OAC engages a select group of third-party organizations to help deliver programs and sector initiatives. In 2025–26, active partners include:

- **Alliance culturelle de l'Ontario (ACO):** Supporting Francophone arts and sector development, including joint work on the initiative described below with the Office of the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario.

- **Alliance of Arts Councils of Ontario (AACO)** Driving regional capacity of local arts councils

- **Business / Arts – artsvest**: Collaborating on corporate and other funding opportunities to enhance program delivery and engagement with regional and equity-deserving groups.

- **Ontario Chamber of Commerce** Building connections between the arts and business communities to support economic growth and advocacy.

- **OCADU Cultural Policy Hub**: Strengthening cultural policy research and collaboration, focusing on topics such as community cultural spaces and the status of artists and arts

workers.

- **Work In Culture:** Supporting sector research and capacity-building for creative organizations.

- **Shvilim**: Shvilim delivers arts-based programs, like Bridging Worlds, to foster intercultural dialogue and combat antisemitism by uniting artists, educators, and communities in creative collaborations and public forums.

- **Black Screen Office**: Dedicated to advancing Black representation in Canadian cultural industries, the Black Screen Office partners on initiatives that specifically align with anti-Black racism policy frameworks in arts and culture.

- **Ministry of Francophone Affairs**:

  **Canada-Ontario Agreement on Minority Language Services:** Recognizing OAC's long-standing commitment to Francophone arts, providing a matching financial contribution to support micro-grants for Francophone artists and outreach initiatives.

- **Office of the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario**: In celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Franco-Ontarian flag, collaborating on a special grant program culminating in an exhibition at the 2026 Sommet de la Francophonie in Cambodia.

With the development of OAC's updated logic model, performance measure areas, and indicators, the future of partnerships will be grounded in training and resourcing for applicants. This training and selection of offerings will include joint IP for continual use and updates.

Planned activity in this area for 2026-27 Includes

- **Asynchronous Training for Operating Organizations:**
  OAC will deliver standardized online training modules, both mandatory and optional, for grant recipients. Topics include financial accountability, governance, revenue generation, community engagement, marketing, and tourism. These modules offer consistent, accessible support, enhance organizational resilience, and align sector-wide practices, with the goal of broadening impact and reducing risks.

- **Alternative Revenue Strategies:**
  OAC will assess and pilot innovative ways to generate income beyond government allocations. This initiative identifies promising revenue sources, evaluates their practicality, and lays groundwork for future launches, strengthening the financial sustainability of programs and engaging new stakeholders.

- **Survey Infrastructure for Performance Measures:**
  To improve data collection for program evaluation, OAC will develop new survey tools and collaborate with external experts. These surveys will measure public opinion, artist and audience experience, and inform funding decisions, accountability, and long-term strategy.

Benchmarks will be drawn from national and international best practices.

- **Francophone Affairs Partnerships:**
  Marking the 50th anniversary of the Franco-Ontarian flag, OAC will partner with cultural organizations to support new artistic works and a collective exhibition. Artists from across Ontario will participate, with mentorship and regional support provided, culminating in a major showcase at a global Francophonie summit.

- **Business Leaders Forum & OAOF Announcements:**
  OAC will host events to announce new operating grants and engage leaders from business, government, and the arts. These forums offer opportunities for public recognition, strategic communication, and direct connection with Ontario's arts community.

- **Staff Professional Development:**
  Targeted workshops will build staff expertise in key areas such as tourism's economic impact, partnership-building, and assessment of artistic practice. These sessions ensure OAC's team can effectively evaluate and report sector outcomes, driving measurable progress.

- **Internal Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Action Plan:**
  OAC will run staff initiatives to promote workplace equity and inclusion, including training in constructive feedback and comprehensive demographic surveys. These actions inform future policy and foster a culture of respect, continuous learning, and accountability.

- **Support for Franco-Ontarian Arts Sector:**
  OAC continues to prioritize access, innovation, and sector growth for Franco-Ontarian artists through workshops, outreach, and collaborative projects. These efforts build on existing supports and aim for sustained engagement and cultural exchange.

- **Branding & Signage Update:**
  OAC will finalize its rebranding with updates to onsite signage, ensuring visual consistency and alignment with modern standards.

- **Website Redesign:**
  OAC will launch a new website with improved navigation, accessibility, and interactive features. The redesign aims to deliver a user-focused experience, support grant applicants, and centralize resource management, ensuring long-term technological relevance and ease of use for nearly one million annual visitors.

# Section 9: Budget

## Budget Summary

### Financial Forecast Summary

| REVENUE | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2024-25 | 2025-26 | 2025-26 | 2026-27 | 2027-28 | 2028-29 |
| | *ACTUAL* | *Budget* | *Forecast* | *Forecast* | | |
| **PROVINCE OF ONTARIO** | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| MTCS Operating (including maintenance) | 59,937,400 | 59,937,400 | 59,937,400 | 59,937,400 | 59,937,400 | 59,937,400 |
| MTCG (CANON - French Language Services) | 437,158 | 184,551 | 209,051 | 190,389 | 251,663 | |
| **TOTAL PROVINCIAL FUNDING** | **60,374,558** | **60,121,951** | **60,146,451** | **60,127,789** | **60,189,063** | **59,937,400** |
| **OTHER GOVERNMENT** | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| **TOTAL OTHER GOV'T FUNDING** | **0** | **0** | **0** | **0** | **0** | **0** |
| | | | | | | |
| **SELF GENERATED REVENUES** | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Investment Income | 3,114,848 | 2,667,230 | 2,704,962 | 2,605,585 | 2,608,000 | 2,608,000 |
| Non-Government Grants | | | | | | |
| Other (specify source e.g. fund transfers, reserve/restricted funds): | | | | | | |
| Fund administration | 143,037 | 165,000 | 165,000 | 165,000 | 165,000 | 165,000 |
| Recovery of prior years' grants | 63,347 | 61,000 | 80,872 | 61,000 | 61,000 | 61,000 |
| Miscellaneous* | 102,143 | 767,145 | 267,145 | 72,145 | 267,145 | 72,145 |
| **TOTAL SELF GENERATED** | **3,423,375** | **3,660,375** | **3,217,979** | **2,903,730** | **3,101,145** | **2,906,145** |
| **TOTAL REVENUE:** | **63,797,933** | **63,782,326** | **63,364,430** | **63,031,519** | **63,290,208** | **62,843,545** |
| | | | | | | |
| **EXPENDITURES** | | | | | | |
| Awards and expenses | 1,195,525 | 1,407,352 | 1,407,352 | 1,385,584 | 508,000 | 508,000 |
| Grants / other programs | 53,472,603 | 53,475,488 | 53,012,671 | 52,482,200 | 52,373,096 | 51,342,465 |
| Services | 902,385 | 702,161 | 806,662 | 662,162 | 602,162 | 602,162 |
| Administration | | | | | | |
| Salaries & Benefits | 6,780,943 | 7,166,073 | 7,267,990 | 7,583,285 | 7,962,449 | 8,360,572 |
| Occupancy / Lease | 672,819 | 729,297 | 614,144 | 808,580 | 839,423 | 914,390 |
| Travel | 68,745 | 78,100 | 54,248 | 81,132 | 82,755 | 84,410 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Communications** | 54,088 | 51,892 | 51,892 | 69,093 | 70,475 | 71,884 |
| Other*** | 646,210 | 737,984 | 715,492 | 723,743 | 738,218 | 752,982 |
| **TOTAL EXPENDITURES** | **63,793,318** | **64,348,347** | **63,930,451** | **63,795,779** | **63,176,578** | **62,636,865** |
| | | | | | | |
| **Net Income Surplus** | **4,615** | **-566,021** | **-566,021** | **-764,260** | **113,630** | **206,680** |
| **Amortization of deferred capital contributions** | | | | | | |
| **Amortization of capital assets** | **-232,162** | **-235,784** | **-235,784** | **-92,630** | **-92,630** | **-92,630** |
| **Total amortization** | **-232,162** | **-235,784** | **-235,784** | **-92,630** | **-92,630** | **-92,630** |
| **Net Income Surplus/(Deficit) After Amortization** | **-227,547** | **-801,805** | **-801,805** | **-856,890** | **21,000** | **114,050** |
| | | | | | | |
| **Net assets (deficit), beginning of year** | **36,283,969** | **37,575,394** | | **36,773,589** | **35,916,699** | **35,937,699** |
| **Excess of Revenue Over Expenses** | **-227,547** | **-801,805** | | **-856,890** | **21,000** | **114,050** |
| **Net remeasurement gains** | **1,518,972** | | | | | |
| **Net assets (deficit), end of year** | **37,575,394** | **36,773,589** | | **35,916,699** | **35,937,699** | **36,051,749** |

* Property tax rebate and private donations

** Communications, Media Monitoring, Accessibility, Typesetting and Design, Electronic Distribution and Subscription & Publication

*** Insurance, information systems and technology, legal, office supplies, translations costs, CADAC, human resources, etc.

Notes:

| Funds that comprise the Net Assets | |
|---|---|
| Invested in Capital Assets | 119,607 |
| Restricted and Endowment Funds | 25,256,746 |
| Unrestricted | 2,854,835 |
| Accumulated Remeasurement Gains | 9,344,206 |
| | **37,575,394** |

**Variances Between 2025-26 Budget and 2025-26 Projected**
**Revenue**

MTCG (CANON - French Language Services) – greater funding received as per partnership and other discussions with MAFO and MTCG

Investment Income – projected slightly higher due to marginally better interest rate environment than expected

Recovery of prior years' grants – slightly higher due to more recovery

Miscellaneous* - $500K is expected to book as credit to the granting expenses instead of revenue per auditor's recommendation

**Expenditure**
Grants – Please see comments on Miscellaneous Revenue, forecasted granting expenses include $500K credit (reduction) moved from revenue

Services – Services higher due to increased needs for assessment of grants
Salaries & Benefits – Higher due to exceptional one-time unexpected pension and benefits expense increase from the providers
Occupancy / Lease – Lower due to better than expected lease expense under new MOI controlled format
Other – Normal varia

### Funding from the Government of Ontario

MTCG will provide OAC with an annual operating allocation of approximately $60 million for the fiscal year 2026-27. Additionally, Ontario's Ministry of Francophone Affairs, through MTCG, has approved funding of $1,063,761 for four years through the 2024-2028 Canada-Ontario Agreement on Minority Language Services (COAMLS).

### Self-Generated Revenue

The current budget includes property tax rebate, interest and investment income and small service charge on the restricted funds managed by OAC. Total self-generated revenue is accounted for approximately 5% of the total revenue. OAC is developing strategies on how to complement the operating allocation from the province by entering additional funding arrangements and/or drawing revenue from new sources and activities. OAC has a goal of developing the capacity and partnerships needed to realize additional self-generated within the three-year period of this plan but cannot yet forecast what additional revenues will be yielded, if any, within this period.

### Administrative, Service and Strategic Expenditures

OAC is a leader in effectiveness among Tourism & Culture funders in Canada, as measured by administration expenditure per application processed. (See details in above section on u Section 2: Government Priorities and Letter of Direction under Operational Efficiency and Stewardship).

OAC monitors its expenditures closely to ensure that no large variances occur. To fund unplanned expenses, OAC examines under-spending in other areas to make sure it will support expenditures within its budget. Larger expenditures are budgeted as part of the annual budget process.

OAC's capital assets consist of computer hardware, software, system, leasehold improvements, as well as furniture and office equipment.

OAC also records accumulated remeasurement gains as a part of its fund balances following public sector accounting standards for government not-for-profit organizations.

**2026-27 Administrative, Service and Strategic Expenditures**

In 2026-27, grants, awards and program expenditures are projected at $53.4 million and services to the arts community at $652 thousand. Combined, they are projected to be 85.5% of expenditure, a small decrease from the budgeted 86.2% of expenditure in 2025-26. Administration expenditure will be $9.2 million, accounting for 14.5% of total expenditure. Administrative expenses are expected to rise by approximately 5%, mainly due to compensation and office rent and facilities costs, which account for about 90% of administrative spending, resulting in an approximately $400K reduction in program funding.

# Section 10: Human Resources Plan

## Summary of Staff Numbers

OAC's headcount is expected to stay stable for fiscal year 2026-27 with 59 FTE for regular permanent salaried positions and 4 FTE for business-critical temporary contract positions to support the implementation, transition and public relations work required for revised grant programs and performance measures.

At the time of this business plan OAC does not, not plans to, engage consultants as defined under the Agencies and Accountability Directive. Therefore there are no consultants reported on below.

The following are the staff categories:

- Executive 5 FTE
- Management 7 FTE
- Exempt 2 FTE
- Unionized 45 FTE
- **Total Regular 59 FTE**
- Temporary Unionized 4 FTE
- **Total Headcount 63 FTE**

AMAPCEO is the bargaining agent for all employees of OAC, save and except persons exercising managerial functions or employed in a confidential capacity in matters related to labour relations.

| **Staffing Numbers – Actuals and Three-Year Forecast for Regular Salaried Positions** | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **FTEs** | **2023-24 Actuals** | **2024-25 Actuals** | **2025-26 Actuals** | **2026-27 Forecast** | **2027-28 Forecast** | **2028-29 Forecast** |
| | 59 | 59 | 59 | 59 | 59 | 59 |

## Organization Structure

### Organizational Chart 2026-27

Details on the structure of the Board of Directors are included in Section 1: Introduction of the business plan, and are shown in the org chart as the governing body to the CEO and the organization.

## Human Resources Plan over the Upcoming Three Fiscal Years

### Organizational Design for OAC's grant modernization and performance strategy

Throughout 2026 – 27 the changes to granting program structure and processes will become clearer as to how they may require shifts in organizational structure, roles and responsibilities. HR will partner with leads from impacted departments to determine any associated plans of action required for implementation most likely in 2027 – 28. It is not anticipated for there to be a headcount reduction, and where efficiencies are gained that may result in the modification of role numbers or responsibilities OAC would focus on ensuring any gaps in public-facing engagement and business-critical responsibilities are well supported, as well as any support for self-generated revenue activities.

### Collective Bargaining

It is anticipated that bargaining of the successor agreement to the 2022 - 2025 collective agreement will be completed for implementation in 2026-27.

### Compensation and Benefits

OAC works closely with MTCG and Treasury Board secretariat to ensure compliance and alignment with provincial compensation directives and strategies.

OAC has a conservative compensation strategy that aligns with the current limitations of our annual operating budget while considering the cost of inflation. Compensation increases reflect negotiated across-the-board increases for unionized staff and also the provision of merit increases for employees who meet or exceed employment standards.

OAC's benefits through Canada Life Assurance are under the Province of Ontario umbrella plan, with all OAC staff having the same set of benefits. There are currently no anticipated changes to our benefits plan in this planning horizon.

OAC provides a defined benefit pension plan through the Public Service Pension Plan administered by Ontario Pension Board.

### Human Resources Policies and Procedures

Streamlining access through improvements and increased functionality of HRIS and other platforms, with a focus on updating and keeping only the most necessary, critical and impactful policies and procedures that support employee onboarding is a goal over the next three years.

### Employee Engagement Plan

Following the employee engagement survey that took place in 2025-26, we have the data to support where organizational investment and focus will be prioritized in 2026-27 and beyond to advance employee engagement.

### EDIA Training and Development

In addition to ongoing training and staff capacity building initiatives in diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility, in 2026 - 27 we will launch a new virtual learning series to support core EDIA learning outcomes as part of staff onboarding and ongoing professional development.

### Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

In alignment with OAC's 2023-2028 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP), OAC is committed to advancing accessibility in all operations. By working across departments, OAC is building more responsive systems that support equity and access for both staff and the public. Currently, this work includes:

- **Ensuring Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) compliance and digital accessibility**: Ongoing review of OAC's websites including development of new site and the Nova platform is underway to ensure both compliance with the AODA and enhanced digital accessibility for all users.

- **Improved feedback channels**: OAC is developing more streamlined systems for channeling accessibility feedback, enabling better identification and addressing of gaps,

and driving continuous improvement across programs and services.

- **Collaborative initiatives**: OAC is exploring strategies, including strengthened partnerships with Deaf and disability service organizations, to identify and address access gaps in granting systems.

**Planned MYAP Initiatives**

- **Deaf and Disability Advisory Group**: In alignment with the OAC grant modernization and performance strategy**,** renewed collaboration with a Deaf and Disability Advisory Group will help shape OAC's approach to accessibility and ensure that diverse perspectives and lived experiences inform development in policies, practices and programs.

## Section 11: Realty

OAC supports the Ontario government's initiative to modernize its approach to real estate used by government agencies and no longer controls realty. In 2024-25 OAC transferred the lease of its Toronto office to the Ontario government, as managed by Infrastructure Ontario, and continues to realize operational gains through efficient service delivery. The OAC continues to work closely with the Ministry of Infrastructure and Infrastructure Ontario to actively assess its current use of office space and to determine the best model to unlock any potential to increase its potential.

## Section 12: Information Technology (IT) / Electronic Service Delivery (ESD) Plan

OAC's Information Systems & Technology (IS&T) area is responsible for supporting OAC's business objectives and innovation. OAC's grants management system, Nova, enables OAC to provide reliable online services to applicants across the province. The IS&T team plays an important role in ensuring the Nova system efficiently supports OAC's programs, follows all regulations and directives, and maintains robust data security.

Concurrently, the team also provides effective information management to support the continuing efforts of finding operational efficiencies and to support data-driven, evidence-based decision making processes. IS&T also continuously updates and upgrades technology platforms with modern, agile, and secure platforms.

In the next several years, as OAC continues to enhance its technology infrastructure and improve its digital service delivery, IS&T will be instrumental in supporting the organization to achieve its objectives. Initiatives in IS&T include work in the following areas:

### IT Infrastructure, Systems, Services & Security

**Innovation**

IS&T has been implementing cloud technologies at OAC from service providers such as Amazon and Microsoft. Most of OAC's systems are now cloud-based and IS&T continues to migrate other systems to the cloud.

The benefits of cloud technologies are:

- Ecosystem optimization
- System and Application rationalization
- Digital acceleration and transformation
- Reduced cost in system management
- Value-added cybersecurity and privacy
- Improved technology scalability and redundancy
- Mobility
- Better disaster recovery plans and business continuity solutions

These enhancements have provided OAC with a technologically competitive advantage, while drastically reducing cost and risk. The enhancements will also provide critical support as OAC continues to implement its strategic plan.

IS&T plays a critical role in OAC's AI exploration and potential adoption phases. IS&T will be responsible for evaluating AI technologies to ensure they meet security, compliance, and ethical standards, while also providing technical support for any AI projects. In 2026–2027, IS&T will continue evaluating and exploring AI technologies while ensuring that OAC remains compliant with all applicable government AI directives.

**Infrastructure**

IS&T will continue its work upgrading OAC's onsite hardware and software to provide modern and secure services. In 2025-2026, IS&T upgraded printers and continued to monitor and apply security patches to servers. In 2026-2027, IS&T plans on upgrading the corporate Wi-Fi infrastructure as well as upgrade the network area storage (NAS).

**Cybersecurity**

As OAC moves more and more of its services to digital, cybersecurity continues to be an important consideration for IS&T as it develops infrastructure and IT services. In 2025-2026, IS&T continued to review and improve security within OAC's electronic services.

User training is also an important part of cybersecurity awareness. IS&T will provide training and/or tests throughout the year to help users be aware of the cybersecurity threats and maintain a sense of vigilance. Every October for Cybersecurity Awareness Month, IS&T develops articles and presentations to share with staff to expand their awareness and knowledge of cybersecurity.

**Applications and Systems**

IS&T plans to provide all OAC services digitally to all Ontarians. So, IS&T will further adopt and roll out applications to launch web portals, collaboration platforms and web/cloud applications to improve services, streamline workflows and processes. At the same time, IS&T will continue to improve existing systems and services by integrating new and existing systems, including OAC's grants management system.

- IS&T will build on the Microsoft 365 platform and develop software applications and systems to improve OAC's internal processes and workflows.

- In 2025-2026, IS&T started to work with the Public Affairs, Communications and Research (PARC) team on the OAC's new public website RFP and vendor selection. The new website development and implementation of will begin in November. In 2026-2027, IS&T will continue to work with PARC and other departments to ensure all technical aspects are implemented.

- In 2025-2026, IS&T in collaboration with Finance and Operations, launched the Request Management System for the management of purchase and payment requests. Training and materials were created and shared with all staff. IS&T continues with the development of the translation service request management. This is expected to launch by the end of this fiscal year. In 2026-2027, IS&T will begin the development of personal expense claims and is expected to launch within the fiscal year.

- In 2025-2026, IS&T began research and evaluation with several departments for a system of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) to ensure all requirements are documented. In 2026-2027, a solution will be selected that satisfies the requirements and early development will begin.

- In 2025-2026, Business Central for OAC's financial system was launched, and the data migration was completed from Great Plains. An audit is currently being conducted by a third-party vendor and is expected to be completed by the end of the year. In 2026-2027, IS&T will continue to work with Finance to determine additional business needs and implement solutions based on those requirements.

- In 2025-2026, IS&T made a few enhancements to OAC's intranet including adding a new section for the OAC grant modernization and performance strategy project. In 2026-2027, IS&T will continue enhancing the intranet by adding department pages and integrating the deadline calendar.

## Information Governance & Business Continuity

**Enterprise Architecture**

IS&T will work to improve integration and interoperability between disparate systems and shift to a business-focused enterprise architecture. IS&T will enable the elimination of technology silos and improve agility of technology platforms so that other areas at OAC can effectively apply changes to processes and capabilities.

**Data Governance**

IS&T will work with Research, Granting and other teams on a data governance program to define a strategy and a set of procedures, plans and policies to oversee the management of the confidentiality, availability, usability, integrity and security of enterprise data at OAC.

**Business Continuity**

OAC has developed and implemented a Business Continuity Plan (BCP) and Cyber Incident Response Plan (CIRP). IS&T services are an important part of the OAC BCP and CIRP. IS&T will regularly test the plans and ensure services to Ontarians and staff can be provided in emergency situations and scenarios.

**Disaster Recovery**

IS&T will work on eliminating major infrastructure dependencies by migrating services to cloud based solutions. IS&T continues to review and improve its backup configurations and geographical redundancy, failover and high availability, which ensures that OAC services are independent of OAC's physical location.

## Business Intelligence & Risk Management

**Business Intelligence**

IS&T is working across departments on a plan to manage all data from the Nova system, OAC's public website, its finance system and other third-party services used by OAC. The data solution will support better analysis, build business intelligence, and improve data-driven decision making. Building on the work already underway to support data sharing with MTCG, IS&T will also manage systems to facilitate the governance of the greater data sharing to add value to the business. Furthermore, it is important to manage and control the proper flow of information between different systems so that data accuracy, integration, and security can be managed. The focus of IS&T in this area will be to manage the security, privacy and encryption of data.

In 2026-2027, IS&T continued to support Research with Microsoft Power BI and explored new features for future enhancements.

**Enterprise Risk Management**

IS&T is an important contributor to and enabler of proper enterprise risk management practices. IS&T will continue to focus on data security and privacy, and to provide tools to support enterprise risk management practices. IS&T will continue working towards securing OAC's infrastructure and services using single sign-on, encryption and multi-factor authentication while providing flexibility, mobility and ease of access to users externally and internally. In addition to raising awareness of data security and privacy, and building a culture of cybersecurity at OAC, IS&T will also continue to provide regular training in these areas for staff.

## Section 13: Inventory of the Agency's Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Cases

Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to computer systems that perform tasks typically requiring human intelligence, such as data analysis, pattern recognition, and decision-making. By automating complex processes, AI has the potential to increase efficiency, improve accuracy, and support better decision-making across various functions. As OAC explores AI's possibilities, it is essential to consider not only its benefits, but also the risks and responsibilities associated with its use.

IS&T plays a critical role in OAC's AI exploration and potential adoption phases. IS&T will be responsible for evaluating AI technologies to ensure they meet security, compliance, and ethical standards, while also providing technical support for any AI projects. Additionally, the IS&T team will work to establish secure data management protocols and advise on best practices for integrating AI with existing systems. By partnering with other departments, the IS&T team will help ensure that any AI solutions adopted are effective, reliable, transparent and compliant.

At this stage, IS&T is thoughtfully exploring AI applications, with an emphasis on understanding the implications for data privacy, ethical standards, compliance requirements, and operational integrity. Any future implementation will prioritize these considerations, ensuring that AI solutions align with OAC's goals and values as well as compliance with Government directives.

As of 2024, Microsoft Copilot Chat with Commercial Data Protection is the only government approved generative AI chat tool for Ontario Public Service staff. IS&T will focus on exploring Microsoft Copilot as a potential AI solution for OAC. IS&T will also continue to monitor AI trends and government directives to ensure OAC's approach remains current and compliant.

At this time, OAC has no AI use cases that meet the reporting, publication, and risk assessment requirements set out in Section 6.3 of the Responsible Use of AI Directive. Future areas OAC would be interested in pursuing related to AI include automating administrative processes, compliance-specific automation of final reports, or drawing on trends from mass data, like sentiment analysis or other framework analysis. OAC is not looking to use AI for evaluation or replacement of peer-to-peer panel assessment.

# Section 14: Key Risks and Mitigation Strategies

## Risk Register

### Mitigating Risk: Risk Identification, Assessment and Mitigation Strategies

| # | Risk | Related Strategic Priority / Objectives | Impact & Scope Description (Consequences) | Likelihood and Impact | Mitigation Strategies (Action Plans) | Overall Risk Assessment | Risk / Mitigation Funded | Risk Owner | Target Dates for Mitigation Strategies |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Risk Category:** | **Strategic / Policy / Performance – risk that strategies and policies fail to achieve required/targeted results and do not properly support business needs; including stakeholder and public perception / reputation risks; potential underachievement of performance targets; and program objectives whose achievement is highly dependent on other initiatives.** | | | | | | | |

| # | Risk | Related Strategic Priority / Objectives | Impact & Scope Description (Consequences) | Likelihood and Impact | Mitigation Strategies (Action Plans) | Overall Risk Assessment | Risk / Mitigation Funded | Risk Owner | Target Dates for Mitigation Strategies |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Possibility of inappropriate use of grant money by grant recipients; the risk is loss of credible reputation of OAC. | OAC's policies that guide the conditions which must be adhered to by grant recipients would be affected. | Public perception that one case is not isolated could result in the generalization that grants are not monitored properly. May result in reduced confidence in OAC by government. | Likelihood: Rare<br>Impact: Moderate | Review of applications and final reports by Program Officers, peer assessment review process, internal grant review process (Officers with senior management) for review of grant recommendations, the imposition of conditions before funds are released, requirement of Board approval for all grants over $30,000. Follow-up by Program Officers with grant recipients to assess how the granting was utilized. | Low; Risk Can be Managed Through Existing Oversight/Routine Procedures | Yes | CEO | Ongoing |

| # | Risk | Related Strategic Priority / Objectives | Impact & Scope Description (Consequences) | Likelihood and Impact | Mitigation Strategies (Action Plans) | Overall Risk Assessment | Risk / Mitigation Funded | Risk Owner | Target Dates for Mitigation Strategies |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | Possibility of low investment returns on the operating fund and on private funds which have been donated to create restricted and endowment funds. | This risk may affect OAC's strategic priority of investing in Ontario's vital artists and arts organizations. | Loss of investment revenue in the operating fund could result from delayed receipt of funding from the government. This in turn would lead to reduction in program spending; awards and programs that depend on restricted and endowment fund returns could be reduced significantly. | Likelihood: Possibly Impact: Minor | Stronger operating cash flow management; the Board's Finance and Audit Committee reviews its investment policy, asset mix, and meets with investment managers annually; a long-term approach is adopted in determining annual disbursements; strict budget controls are in place. | Low; Risk Can be Managed Through Existing Oversight/Routine Procedures | Yes | Finance and Audit Committee / Director of Finance & Corporate Services | Ongoing |
| 3 | New economic risks of inflation, labour shortages, and potential recession may undermine the viability of arts organizations. | All strategic priorities would be affected, making the government's investment in the professional arts sector make Ontario a better place to live, work, visit and invest in less impactful. | Many OAC-funded organizations have described how inflation and supply chain issues have affected their ability to reopen and recover economically. For example, organizations are reporting higher costs for rent, | Likelihood: Likely Impact: High | For organizations prioritized under OAC strategic plan, there is a possibility of increased investment, but for others this risk may be exacerbated by stagnant or decreased funding. Partnership activities to support cost sharing, and research into policy which supports the arts sector. | High; Funding Framework and Partnership Development | Yes | Board and CEO | Ongoing |

| # | Risk | Related Strategic Priority / Objectives | Impact & Scope Description (Consequences) | Likelihood and Impact | Mitigation Strategies (Action Plans) | Overall Risk Assessment | Risk / Mitigation Funded | Risk Owner | Target Dates for Mitigation Strategies |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | transportation, and insurance which affects the organizations' ability to achieve financial stability. The arts sector is being impacted by the labour shortage crisis that is occurring in the larger society. Many artists and arts workers have left the sector and/or the province and now the sector is facing a shortage of experienced, talented artists and arts workers. | | | | | | |

| # | Risk | Related Strategic Priority / Objectives | Impact & Scope Description (Consequences) | Likelihood and Impact | Mitigation Strategies (Action Plans) | Overall Risk Assessment | Risk / Mitigation Funded | Risk Owner | Target Dates for Mitigation Strategies |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Risk Category:** | **Governance / Organizational - include risks related to the organizations structure, accountabilities, or responsibilities; risks that culture and management commitment do not support formal structures, include controllership / accounting risks; and issues raised by staff, partners, stakeholders.** | | | | | | | |
| 4 | Failure to have appropriate representation on OAC's 12-person Board of Directors – geographically, and with regard to skills, expertise and the diversity of Ontario, including racialized and Indigenous communities. | This risk would affect OAC's objective of strong Board effectiveness and governance. | As OAC evolves its vision, values, and logic model, as under its strategic plan and the Letter of Direction of the Minister, OAC will require matching skill sets at the Board Level to best govern the agency. | Likelihood: Possibly<br>Impact: Moderate | Encourage government to ensure appropriate board representation when filling vacant positions; Update and deliver board skills matrix. Conduct Board effectiveness and self-identification surveys, which are reviewed by the Governance Committee and Board not less than biannually. | Medium; Limited Management Review Required | Yes | Board Chair* | Ongoing |

| # | Risk | Related Strategic Priority / Objectives | Impact & Scope Description (Consequences) | Likelihood and Impact | Mitigation Strategies (Action Plans) | Overall Risk Assessment | Risk / Mitigation Funded | Risk Owner | Target Dates for Mitigation Strategies |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | Risk of inadequate succession planning for senior management. | This risk would affect OAC's objective of strong leadership, management and support of the organization. | Challenges in knowledge transfer and corporate history; inefficiencies, errors and delays. Risk associated with an unexpected absence of key personnel. Organizational structure is increasingly lean. | Likelihood: Possibly Impact: Moderate | OAC reorganization addressed this risk in the short term while setting up for long term mitigation. Directors now have supporting managers which also serve as succession candidates. | Low; Limited Management Review Required | Yes | CEO | Ongoing |
| 6 | Potential failure to establish and maintain proper controls in financial and operational management. | This risk would affect OAC's business objective of maintaining appropriate financial reporting and controls. | Increased risk of fraud, weak business workflows and segregation of duties, inappropriate recording and reporting of financial / operational transactions; decreased transparency and accountability. | Likelihood: Rare Impact: High | Ongoing assessment of current control environment; evaluation of workflows and responsibilities; improvement of job designs to support strong organizational controls and risk management; Implementation of upgraded systems and controls in conjunction with IS&T. | Low; Risk Can be Managed Through Existing and Updated Oversight/Routine Procedures | Yes | Director of Finance & Corporate Services | Ongoing |

| # | Risk | Related Strategic Priority / Objectives | Impact & Scope Description (Consequences) | Likelihood and Impact | Mitigation Strategies (Action Plans) | Overall Risk Assessment | Risk / Mitigation Funded | Risk Owner | Target Dates for Mitigation Strategies |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Risk Category:** | **Legal / Compliance - include risk of litigation, risks from non-compliance to applicable laws, acts, and policies, and risks related to contract management** | | | | | | | |
| 7 | Potential failure to establish and implement proper policies and organizational structures to comply with FIPPA and records management requirements. | This risk would affect OAC's business objective of ensuring strong compliance with legislation and government regulations. | Potential of FIPPA and Records Management policies not covering all areas of business; inadequate organizational resources and training to implement FIPPA policies and respond to FIPPA requests; possibility of privacy breach. | Likelihood: Unlikely Impact: Moderate | Continuation of the development work of strong FIPPA policies to cover all business areas; development of organizational framework to manage FIPPA requests; development of policies and procedures for records management; allocation of resources to records management system development; provision of training and ongoing support to staff. | Low; Risk Can be Managed Through Existing Oversight/Routine Procedures | Yes | CEO | Ongoing |

| # | Risk | Related Strategic Priority / Objectives | Impact & Scope Description (Consequences) | Likelihood and Impact | Mitigation Strategies (Action Plans) | Overall Risk Assessment | Risk / Mitigation Funded | Risk Owner | Target Dates for Mitigation Strategies |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | Terms and conditions of OAC grant applications and payments could be challenged by applicants. | This risk would affect OAC's business objective of ensuring strong administrative compliance with laws and regulations. | Risk of legal dispute relating to various laws and statues and the terms and conditions demanded by OAC along with the activities of recipients. | Likelihood: Rare<br>Impact: High | Periodic review of OAC terms and conditions, implementation of new government regulations and directives; legal review of OAC agreements to ensure compliance; development of policies and procedures for changes in granting applications and grant payments; development and implementation of procedures for deletion of sensitive information as defined by the records retention policy; monitoring of information collection and management. | Low; Risk Can be Managed Through Existing Oversight/Routine Procedures | Yes | Director of Granting | Ongoing |

| # | Risk | Related Strategic Priority / Objectives | Impact & Scope Description (Consequences) | Likelihood and Impact | Mitigation Strategies (Action Plans) | Overall Risk Assessment | Risk / Mitigation Funded | Risk Owner | Target Dates for Mitigation Strategies |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | Political activity of OAC recipients. | Reputational risk from different stakeholder groups, at times in opposition to each other. | OAC Reputational risk with public and stakeholders. | Likelihood: Likely<br>Impact: Moderate | OAC has the following policies in place in specific relation to applicants:<br>OAC Freedom of Artistic Expression Policy<br>Terms and Conditions, Receipt of OAC Operating Grant Funds<br>Guide for Operating Grant Applicants and Recipients on Engagement with Social Issues | Low; Risk Can be Managed Through Existing and Renewed Policy, Oversight/Routine Procedures | Yes | CEO | On-going |

| # | Risk | Related Strategic Priority / Objectives | Impact & Scope Description (Consequences) | Likelihood and Impact | Mitigation Strategies (Action Plans) | Overall Risk Assessment | Risk / Mitigation Funded | Risk Owner | Target Dates for Mitigation Strategies |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10 | Liability exposure to OAC for individual artists (grant recipients) working with vulnerable persons in community settings, schools, etc. | This risk would affect OAC's business objective of having strong administrative compliance with laws and "duty of care." | Legal and reputational risk. | Likelihood: Rare<br>Impact: Moderate | Individual artists, collectives and organizations applying to OAC programs to deliver arts programs in educational or community settings are required to confirm to OAC that the required police background check or vulnerable sector verification has been obtained; provision of relevant information on OAC website. | Low; Risk Can be Managed Through Existing Oversight/Routine Procedures | Yes | Director of Granting | On-going |

| # | Risk | Related Strategic Priority / Objectives | Impact & Scope Description (Consequences) | Likelihood and Impact | Mitigation Strategies (Action Plans) | Overall Risk Assessment | Risk / Mitigation Funded | Risk Owner | Target Dates for Mitigation Strategies |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11 | Failure to comply with all government directives such as the Travel, Meal and Hospitality Directive; Procurement Directive; Memorandum of Understanding, etc. | Business Priority - strong administrative compliance with government policy and direction. | Inappropriate use of public resources; negative reporting in the media. Government could lose confidence in OAC. | Likelihood: Rare Impact: Moderate | Ongoing management reports to Board Committees and to the full Board; orientation of new Board members and new staff includes relevant information about directives; rigorous review of expense claims by Finance Office and signing officers; public disclosure of Board and CEO travel expenses. Ongoing education of existing employees and orientation of new OAC personnel in processes and procedures. Continuous dialogue with government representatives to adjust and modify measures and directives to best support OAC. | Low; Risk Can be Managed Through Existing Oversight/Routine Procedures | Yes | CEO | On-going |

| # | Risk | Related Strategic Priority / Objectives | Impact & Scope Description (Consequences) | Likelihood and Impact | Mitigation Strategies (Action Plans) | Overall Risk Assessment | Risk / Mitigation Funded | Risk Owner | Target Dates for Mitigation Strategies |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Risk Category:** | **Operational / Service Delivery - include risks that products or services will not be completed or delivered as expected; capital or other project delays; level of program efficiency, effectiveness, customer.** | | | | | | | |
| 12 | Nova, OAC's online granting application system, may not function as expected, and may not support current and future business needs or the needs of applicants. | This would affect OAC's business objective of making the OAC grant application experience a simple and efficient one, and provide an excellent standard of service to applicants and other system users. | Applicants and staff may not have all the system tools available in Nova; poor customer experience may affect demand and quality of applications; other systems may need to be developed to support business operations. | Likelihood: Possibly<br>Impact: Moderate | Continuous monitoring of and improvements to Nova to add necessary functions and programs; increased resources to the Nova Help Desk for applicant support. Review of additional/alternate systems in the marketplace. | Medium; Limited Management Review Required | Yes | Directors' Committee | On-going |

| # | Risk | Related Strategic Priority / Objectives | Impact & Scope Description (Consequences) | Likelihood and Impact | Mitigation Strategies (Action Plans) | Overall Risk Assessment | Risk / Mitigation Funded | Risk Owner | Target Dates for Mitigation Strategies |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 13 | Nova's reliability and performance may be negatively affected by external factors. | This would affect OAC's business objective of making the OAC grant application experience a simple and efficient one, and to provide an excellent standard of service to applicants and other system users. | Applicants and other system users may not receive services at a level which meets their expectations; the potential downtime or low performance of Nova may delay applications and require temporary alternative resources to support the system. | Likelihood: Unlikely Impact: Moderate | Working with system vendors to strengthen the Nova platform; development of a business continuity plan so that steps can be taken in the event of poor system performance. Maintenance of sufficient backup of the system. | Low; Risk Can be Managed Through Existing Oversight/Routine Procedures | Yes | Directors' Committee | Ongoing |

| # | Risk | Related Strategic Priority / Objectives | Impact & Scope Description (Consequences) | Likelihood and Impact | Mitigation Strategies (Action Plans) | Overall Risk Assessment | Risk / Mitigation Funded | Risk Owner | Target Dates for Mitigation Strategies |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Risk Category:** | **Workforce - include workforce compensation, labour relations and human resources risks; workforce data showing high turnover, imminent retirement, high illness rates, staff complaints** | | | | | | | |
| 14 | Workforce retention due to legislated pay limitations, and guidance on hybrid work. | All strategic priorities would be affected as well as the business objective of maintaining administrative efficiencies. | The active employment market impacts OAC as it does other areas of government and other sectors, including the arts sector OAC serves. Turnover in positions cause succession, training, knowledge transfer and culture risk. | Likelihood: Possibly<br>Impact: Minor | OAC reorganization intended to build in more risk mitigation in this area and succession. Increased use of technology to engage processes and knowledge also mitigates. Consideration of alternative factors to offset financial limitations. Use of internal reviews like employee satisfaction and additional feedback mechanisms to gather information for mitigation. | Medium: There is risk of loss of valuable employees and challenge in recruiting their replacements.<br>Risk can be somewhat managed through existing oversight/routine procedures | Yes | CEO | On-going |

| # | Risk | Related Strategic Priority / Objectives | Impact & Scope Description (Consequences) | Likelihood and Impact | Mitigation Strategies (Action Plans) | Overall Risk Assessment | Risk / Mitigation Funded | Risk Owner | Target Dates for Mitigation Strategies |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 15 | Risk of not having the right number of staff, or the right mix of staff levels and skills to achieve strategic goals and manage OAC business. | This would affect OAC's business objective of maintaining administrative efficiencies. | Inadequate staffing in some areas; work not done as efficiently and effectively as expected; difficulty in recruiting staff with necessary skills. Organizational structure is increasingly lean. | Likelihood: Unlikely Impact: Moderate | Development of staffing plan to address an ever-changing environment, e.g., gathering information to identify changes and evaluate demand and workload; reallocation of resources to better meet demands. A granting process review was done in 2019-20. | Low; Risk Can be Managed Through Existing Oversight/Routine Procedures | Yes | Human Resources Director; Human Resources Committee | Ongoing |

| # | Risk | Related Strategic Priority / Objectives | Impact & Scope Description (Consequences) | Likelihood and Impact | Mitigation Strategies (Action Plans) | Overall Risk Assessment | Risk / Mitigation Funded | Risk Owner | Target Dates for Mitigation Strategies |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Risk Category:** | **Information Technology & Infrastructure - include capital project delays, risks related to organizational assets, physical safety and security risks** | | | | | | | |
| 16 | Risk of IT network failure. | This would affect OAC's business objective of maintaining strong administrative efficiencies. | Loss of productivity and potential loss of valuable data; applicants and other users may not be able to access information. | Likelihood: Rare<br>Impact: High | OAC performs regular network maintenance and testing; use of redundancy where possible; conducts proper data backup and restoration procedures. Most OAC systems have been moved towards cloud-based platforms, which will allow for better business continuity and disaster recovery planning. | Low; Risk Can be Managed Through Existing Oversight/Routine Procedures | yes | Director of Finance & Corporate Services | Ongoing |

| # | Risk | Related Strategic Priority / Objectives | Impact & Scope Description (Consequences) | Likelihood and Impact | Mitigation Strategies (Action Plans) | Overall Risk Assessment | Risk / Mitigation Funded | Risk Owner | Target Dates for Mitigation Strategies |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 17 | Risk of IT network breach and security compromise. | All strategic priorities would be affected as well as the business objective of maintaining administrative efficiencies. | Potential loss of confidential data and information; breach of privacy; reputational damage for OAC; financial cost as a result of any security breach. | Likelihood: Rare<br>Impact: High | Development of a strong IT policy; providing ongoing user training; proper data backup and restoring procedures; use of third party to improve network security where appropriate; development of Nova audit processes and procedures review of user onboarding / offboarding processes with HR; taking strong and appropriate actions as required to safeguard security. Adoption of two-factor authentication for VPN, Office 365 and Nova; implement more complex password requirements. | Low; Risk Can be Managed Through Existing Oversight/Routine Procedures | yes | Director of Finance & Corporate Services | Ongoing |

| # | Risk | Related Strategic Priority / Objectives | Impact & Scope Description (Consequences) | Likelihood and Impact | Mitigation Strategies (Action Plans) | Overall Risk Assessment | Risk / Mitigation Funded | Risk Owner | Target Dates for Mitigation Strategies |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 18 | Risk of inadequate IT management systems that may not support information management needs. | This would affect OAC's business objective of maintaining administrative efficiencies. | Ineffective information classification, storage, index, search, and backup system; potential loss of information; may not support FIPPA or other requirements. | Likelihood: Possibly Impact: Moderate | Maintenance of a robust IT management system; proper data backup and restoring procedures; development of procedures for handling and storage of information on various forms of media; development of an information classification system. | Medium; Limited Management Review Required | yes | Director's' Committee | Ongoing |

| # | Risk | Related Strategic Priority / Objectives | Impact & Scope Description (Consequences) | Likelihood and Impact | Mitigation Strategies (Action Plans) | Overall Risk Assessment | Risk / Mitigation Funded | Risk Owner | Target Dates for Mitigation Strategies |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 19 | Risk of inadequate control of user access of IT systems and insufficient documentation of system level functions and controls. | This would affect OAC's business objective of maintaining strong administrative efficiencies. | Potential loss of confidential data and information; breach of privacy; potential network breach. | Likelihood: Rare<br>Impact: High | Development of a strong system access policy with access approvals in place; ensuring functions and authorizations assigned to users match their roles and responsibilities; improving system documentation; ongoing user training; proper data backup and restoring procedures; use of third party to improve network security where appropriate; maintenance of IT audit logs on critical IT systems, implementation of a review process; review of user onboarding / offboarding process with HR. | Low; Risk Can be Managed Through Existing Oversight/Routine Procedures | yes | Director's' Committee | Ongoing |

| # | Risk | Related Strategic Priority / Objectives | Impact & Scope Description (Consequences) | Likelihood and Impact | Mitigation Strategies (Action Plans) | Overall Risk Assessment | Risk / Mitigation Funded | Risk Owner | Target Dates for Mitigation Strategies |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 20 | The risk of improper adoption/use of AI technologies due to lack of knowledge, skills, and guidance from Ministry | This would affect OAC's business objective of maintaining strong administrative efficiencies. It would also affect OAC's Business Priority of strong administrative compliance with government policy and direction. | Risk of bias results and unintended outcomes; security vulnerabilities and privacy breaches; legal accountability if AI is used to make decisions. There is also risk of failure to comply with government policies and guidelines if we move too fast in adopting AI before the policies are set. | Likelihood: Likely<br>Impact: Moderate | Develop internal policies and controls on what AI technologies will be used for and how we will use it. Proper training for staff that will be using the AI technology. | Low; As we are in the planning stages. Management review and discussion required | Yes | Directors' Committee | Ongoing |

| # | Risk | Related Strategic Priority / Objectives | Impact & Scope Description (Consequences) | Likelihood and Impact | Mitigation Strategies (Action Plans) | Overall Risk Assessment | Risk / Mitigation Funded | Risk Owner | Target Dates for Mitigation Strategies |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Risk Category:** | **All other Risks - Risks that do not fit in any of the above categories. Corporate Social Responsibility concerns - Environment, Climate Change, Energy Management , Health Promotion, Waste Reduction. Include risks relating to third parties such as service or goods providers.** | | | | | | | |
| 21 | Risk of physical threat, injury or security issues, or damage caused by environmental factors, that may impact staff or facilities. | All business objectives would be affected. | Financial impact due to staff absence and insurance costs. Morale would be affected. There would be an operational impact while restoring work environment and a financial impact due to repairs, replacements and the closure of facilities. Operational and service delivery may be impacted if staff cannot work. | Likelihood: Rare<br>Impact: High | Operations conduct a regular safety audit that is reviewed by the Joint Health & Safety Committee. Emergency procedures have been in place since OAC moved to its new premises in 2016, and in September 2019 safety measures were implemented to secure the Reception area of the OAC office. The office now requires security card access.<br><br>See Business Continuity Plan in Section 12. | Low; Risk Can be Managed Through Existing Oversight/Routine Procedures | yes | Director of Finance & Corporate Services, and Director of Human Resources | Ongoing |

| # | Risk | Related Strategic Priority / Objectives | Impact & Scope Description (Consequences) | Likelihood and Impact | Mitigation Strategies (Action Plans) | Overall Risk Assessment | Risk / Mitigation Funded | Risk Owner | Target Dates for Mitigation Strategies |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 22 | Risk of potential failure of vendors of critical services. | All strategic priorities and business objectives would be affected. | Service delivery in granting, finance, operations, HR, research and communications could all be affected. | Likelihood: Unlikely Impact: Very High | Working with service providers, e.g. Microsoft, SmartSimple, ADP, etc. to understand potential risks in their service delivery; service agreements are reviewed regularly; developing business continuity plan; conducting regular vendor reviews. | Medium; Limited Management Review Required | yes | Directors' Committee | Ongoing |

| # | Risk | Related Strategic Priority / Objectives | Impact & Scope Description (Consequences) | Likelihood and Impact | Mitigation Strategies (Action Plans) | Overall Risk Assessment | Risk / Mitigation Funded | Risk Owner | Target Dates for Mitigation Strategies |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 23 | Risk of major disasters which could interrupt OAC operations. | All strategic priorities would be affected. | Service delivery in Granting, Finance, Operations, HR, Research and Communications could all be affected; in an extreme situation, OAC's physical premise and network could become inaccessible. | Likelihood: Rare<br>Impact: High | Ongoing review of business continuity plan to ensure adequate response to potential disasters; working with service providers to improve service availability in case of such events; developing communication protocols in the event of disasters; maintaining adequate insurance coverage. Continue to enhance systems that fully support work from alternative sites. | Low; Risk Can be Managed Through Existing Oversight/Routine Procedures | yes | Directors' Committee | Ongoing |

| # | Risk | Related Strategic Priority / Objectives | Impact & Scope Description (Consequences) | Likelihood and Impact | Mitigation Strategies (Action Plans) | Overall Risk Assessment | Risk / Mitigation Funded | Risk Owner | Target Dates for Mitigation Strategies |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 24 | Deterioration of socio-economic status of artists and arts workers. | This risk would affect all of OAC's strategic priorities. | The combination of inflation and possible recessionary pressures leaves individuals working in the arts at risk for poor social and economic outcomes. Whether through exit from the sector or ongoing financial issues, Ontario could lose artists and arts workers. Without artists and arts workers, the arts and culture industries lose their driving force, creators and labour. | Likelihood: Possibly Impact: High | Increased emphasis in funding policies on fair compensation for artists and arts workers. Discussions with Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming and other ministries regarding their plans towards improvement of housing, labour relations, intellectual property, financing, taxation, and other measures for artists, arts workers, and the companies and organizations that engage them. | Medium - High; Necessity for Ongoing Management Review and Discussion | Yes | Directors' Committee | Ongoing |

| # | Risk | Related Strategic Priority / Objectives | Impact & Scope Description (Consequences) | Likelihood and Impact | Mitigation Strategies (Action Plans) | Overall Risk Assessment | Risk / Mitigation Funded | Risk Owner | Target Dates for Mitigation Strategies |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 25 | Potential important external issues / factors affecting OAC-funded arts organizations such as: economic outlook and/or shifts in the funding environment, legislative or policy changes, other general or arts-sector specific trends – see environmental scan. | This risk would affect all OAC's strategic priorities. | Impact varies on individual organizations and may have common issues in particular sectors. | Likelihood: Possibly Impact: Moderate | Through consultation and discussion, OAC decides if and how we assist arts organizations in these areas. OAC may convene groups of organizations together in facilitated discussion, conduct research, etc. | Medium; Limited Management Review Required | yes | Director's' Committee | Ongoing |

| # | Risk | Related Strategic Priority / Objectives | Impact & Scope Description (Consequences) | Likelihood and Impact | Mitigation Strategies (Action Plans) | Overall Risk Assessment | Risk / Mitigation Funded | Risk Owner | Target Dates for Mitigation Strategies |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 26 | Risk of high demand on OAC with flat operating budget | This risk would affect all OAC's strategic priorities | Increase in Artist population along with the ease of creating applications using AI has increased the volume of applications being submitted. This increases competitiveness among the applicants and increases allegations of discrimination. This will put a strain on OAC admin/staffing required to deal with this, additional the customer service is lowered due to increase turnaround. There is also potential legal risk associated with this. | Likelihood: Possibly Impact: Moderate | Continued efforts for modernization of granting programs and annual review of funding frameworks. Clear transparency with applicants about funding rates. Robust escalation process | Low; Risk Can be Managed Through Existing Oversight/Routine Procedures | Yes | Directors' Committee | Ongoing |

| # | Risk | Related Strategic Priority / Objectives | Impact & Scope Description (Consequences) | Likelihood and Impact | Mitigation Strategies (Action Plans) | Overall Risk Assessment | Risk / Mitigation Funded | Risk Owner | Target Dates for Mitigation Strategies |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 27 | Risk of OAC not being able to achieve its performing measures | This risk would affect all OAC's strategic priorities | If OAC is not able to achieve its performance measure, then it runs the risk of not meeting its obligations as set out in the Ministry's Letter of Direction. OAC would also not be able to meet the 3 major key performance indicators from the Ministry: 1) GDP, 2) Tourism, 3) Attendance. | Likelihood: Possibly Impact: Moderate | OAC focuses on the artistic, social, economic and operational outcomes of our grant investments to ensure Ontario has a strong and resilient arts sector. OAC will track the Ministry's KPIs on attendance, GDP and cultural tourism closely to adjust strategies quickly in response to any external sector changes. | Low; Risk Can be Managed Through Existing Oversight/Routine Procedures | Yes | Directors' Committee | Ongoing |