Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming

Minister

6th Floor
438 University Avenue
Toronto, ON M7A 2A5
Tel: 416 326-9326

Ministère du Tourisme, de la Culture et des Jeux

Ministre

6e étage
438, avenue University
Toronto (Ontario) M7A 2A5
Tél : 416 326-9326

Ontario

November 5, 2024

Mr. Simon Foster
Chair
Ontario Arts Council
121 Bloor Street East, 7th Floor
Toronto, ON M4W 3M5

Dear Mr. Foster,

I am pleased to share our government's 2025-26 priorities for Ontario Arts Council. Agencies are a part of government and are expected to act in the best interests of the people of Ontario and ensure that they provide value for money to taxpayers. Agencies are also required to adhere to government policies and directives.

Per the requirements of the Agencies and Appointments Directive, agencies are required to align goals, objectives and strategic direction with our government's priorities and direction. As Chair, it is incumbent upon you to ensure that the Ontario Arts Council's business plan demonstrates the agency's plans in fulfilling the expectations and government priorities below and that progress and achievements are reported through your annual report. Compliance with these requirements is reported to Treasury Board/Management Board of Cabinet annually.

This letter sets out my expectations for 2025-26 that the Ontario Arts Council is innovative, sustainable and accountable through the following direction:

Innovative

1. Simplify client/customer interactions.
2. Expand and optimize digital service offerings.
3. Improve Client/ customer satisfaction.
4. Share data with Supply Ontario, when requested, regarding procurement spending and planning, contract arrangements and vendor relations to support data-driven decision-making.

…2

Sustainable

5. Strengthen public service delivery by optimizing organizational capacity and directing existing resources to priority areas.
6. Use Public Resources efficiently and
    a) Operate within agency's financial allocations.
    b) Prudently and responsibly manage workforce size. Where an agency requires a material increase in workforce size, the agency must provide the Minister with an HR plan for approval that provides the rationale based on government priorities and/or agency mandate.

Accountable

7. Develop and report on outcome-focused performance measures to effectively monitor and measure performance.
8. Protect individual, business or organization data by actively managing data and cybersecurity and reporting Artificial Intelligence uses.
9. Report all high risks including effective mitigation plans.
10. Align hybrid work policies with the OPS and identify and assess office optimization opportunities to reduce office realty footprint and find cost reductions.
    a) Collaborate with MOI to identify office space opportunities.
    b) Align with the MBC Realty Directive and the OPS Modern Office Space (OMOS) Standards.
11. Develop and encourage diversity and inclusion initiatives by promoting an equitable, inclusive, accessible, anti-racist and diverse workplace.

These are the government-wide commitments for board-governed provincial agencies. Please see the attached guide for further details of each priority and the accompanying performance measures that can be utilised if measurements are not currently in place

I am also sharing priorities specific to Ontario Arts Council:

1. Continue to play a vital role in promoting and developing the arts in all regions of the province.
2. Continue to deliver in accordance with the Ontario Art Council's 2022-2027 strategic plan.
3. Continue to maximize investments in grants that demonstrate value-for-money and foster sustainability and continue to improve administrative efficiencies.

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4. Continue to explore opportunities to ensure the Ontario Arts Council's programs are streamlined and provide appropriate support for the arts sector.
5. Work with the ministry on public communications opportunities including implementation of the Grants Communications Protocol.

Many thanks to you and your fellow board members for your continued commitment to the Ontario Arts Council. Your work and ongoing support is invaluable to our government and the people of Ontario.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Lisa LaVecchia, Assistant Deputy Minister, Agency Relations and Accountability Division at lisa.lavecchia@ontario.ca.

Sincerely,

Stan Cho
Minister

c. Michael Murray, Chief Executive Officer, Ontario Arts Council
Nancy Kennedy, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming
Lisa LaVecchia, Assistant Deputy Minister, Agency Relations and Accountability Division, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming

Attachment:
- Government and Agency Priorities 2025-26 Chart