



CANADIAN
ARTS PRESENTING
ASSOCIATION

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Written Submission on Culture Infrastructure Government of Canada's Infrastructure consultation

Submitted September 16th, 2016

"[The arts] are like green spaces in the city – they help bring it to life"

Léger Research Intelligence Group, Toronto Arts Stats 2016, commissioned by the Toronto Arts Foundation, 2016

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Canadian Arts Presenting Association (CAPACOA)

Support to the Canadian Arts Coalition and ArtsBuild Ontario

The Canadian Arts Presenting Association (CAPACOA) wishes to express support for the recommendations brought forth in the written submissions of the Canadian Arts Coalition and of ArtsBuild Ontario. CAPACOA was consulted by both organizations and believes their recommendations are in keeping with both our sector's needs and the Government's objective of building stronger communities.

Additional Information on the Needs of the Performing Arts Sector

As mentioned in the Coalition's submission, many performing arts venues were built in the 1960's, 70's, and 80's. These venues are now old, their specialized equipment is out-of-date, they do not meet accessibility standards (both in the theatre and backstage), and they need to be adapted to the changing needs of a changing population.

Older infrastructures need major renovations and sometimes need to be entirely rebuilt. The video of the Fredericton Playhouse, shared on the INFRAconsults website, provides an excellent depiction of the challenges experienced by aging arts infrastructure. Such major capital projects will be excellent candidates for infrastructure funding under provincial-territorial agreements.

However, the vast majority of anticipated capital projects in the arts presenting sector will be of smaller scope. A Survey of Presenters conducted in 2011 revealed that anticipated capital projects are mainly to adapt or renovate the space (60 per cent) or to acquire specialized equipment (60 per cent). Half of presenters in the sample expended their projects to cost to be \$180,000 or less, while the other half expected to spend upwards of \$180,000.ⁱ These small to medium scale projects will be perfect fits for the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund.

Expanded Audiences; Expanded Practices; Expanded Capital Funding

As mentioned above, most performing arts venues were built more than 30 years ago, at a time when immigration – and performing arts practices – were primarily European. Today's populations are much diverse and so are the expectations for a performing arts experience.ⁱⁱ Moreover, today's audiences expect different degrees of arts engagement beyond spectation.

The Value of Presenting Study affirmed that performing arts presenters are poised to solidify their position as community builders.ⁱⁱⁱ In order to do so, they develop community-engaged arts programs, they open up their venues to community activities, and they present performances and cultural mediation activities in a range of alternative venues beyond their main performing space.

“The way that cultural organizations deliver programming today is different than when the infrastructure was build. We need cultural centres that can deliver a wide array of programming beyond presentation. It is substantially more complex today.”

Quote from a participant at a consultation led by CAPACOA, August 24, 2016

The Canada Cultural Space Fund is a crucial program for the performing arts presentation sector. It has a solid track record of supporting small to mid-scale capital projects. The extension of additional funding to the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund over ten years represents a unique opportunity to expand this track record and to align the program with the current needs and practices of the sector.

CAPACOA therefore supports recommendations made by the Canadian Arts Coalition and ArtsBuild Ontario, in particular:

- **Extend two-year investment to the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund over the entire duration of Phase 2 of the Infrastructure Plan.**
- **Maintain tourism, culture and recreation as eligible categories in future provincial-territorial agreements during Phase 2 of the Infrastructure Plan.**
- **Design guidelines that will allow culture projects of diverse scope and nature to emerge amid competing priorities and to receive adequate funding.**

About CAPACOA

The Canadian Arts Presenting Association/l'Association canadienne des organismes artistiques (CAPACOA) serves the performing arts touring and presenting community through its commitment to integrate the performing arts into the lives of all Canadians. CAPACOA represents 120 professional for-profit and not-for-profit presenters, festivals, presenter networks, artistic companies, agents, managers and other stakeholders working across the presenting and touring sector in Canada. Collectively, our network members represent nearly 2000 professional and volunteer organizations, associations and companies. According to Statistics Canada's Provincial and Territorial indicators, the live performance domain served by CAPACOA has a GDP of \$2.5 billion and provides employment to 55,000 Canadians.

ⁱ EKOS Research Associates, Survey of Presenters, *The Value of Presenting*, 2012.

ⁱⁱ "Municipal Performing Arts Centres have a central role in their respective communities to support the growth and acceptance of cultural diversity. By presenting the work of artists from around the world that attracts diverse audiences to working with the different community based cultural organizations, diverse communities will feel recognized and accepted in their new homes."

Brian McCurdy, "The Evolution of Presenting Practice", blog post published by Ontario Presents, June 24, 2016.

ⁱⁱⁱ Strategic Moves, Final Report, *The Value of Presenting*, 2013.