

On Thursday March 28th, the Province of Ontario released their [18/19 Budget](#).

As anticipated there was no *new* news of a standalone Provincial Infrastructure fund that would support the infrastructure needs of our creative spaces province wide.

It did quietly acknowledge the Bilateral Agreement between the Feds and the Province that was announced back in summer 2016. This agreement, would see a joint fund created every year for the next ten years that would provide funds for cultural infrastructure. You can read the bilateral agreement in its entirety [here](#). ABO met with the Chief of Staff of MTCS on January 15th and provided them with these [recommendations](#), to inform the criteria of the fund.

Specifics about criteria and application should be released by fall of 2018. In the meantime, ABO is working with Ontarians for the Arts to communicate our recommendations to MTCS to ensure an accessible and relevant fund for our creative spaces province wide.

In addition to the bilateral agreement, they did announce that they will be allowing the City of Toronto to identify qualifying arts facilities, and provide them with up to 50% property tax reductions (see page 296 of the [Budget](#)). While this is Toronto specific, it does bode well in providing other cities and communities a precedent to advocate for similar reductions in their communities.

We are hopeful with the introduction of the bi-lateral agreement, but still believe strongly that the province should maintain, its own, capital infrastructure fund to continually support the infrastructure needs of our creative spaces province wide. ABO will continue to advocate for this fund.