

INCREASED INVESTMENT IN CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE

ARTSBUILD ONTARIO

ArtsBuild Ontario is the only organization in Ontario dedicated to realizing long-term solutions for building, managing and financing the sustainable arts facilities needed in Ontario communities. ArtsBuild provides tools, training and resources that support the development and sustainable creative spaces such as theatres, galleries, concert halls, and museums.

On behalf of our arts facilities across the province ArtsBuild Ontario is submitting this brief to ensure that investment in cultural facilities remain a priority and that small to mid-sized cultural/arts facilities will have access to this increased investment.

WHY IS INVESTING IN CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPORTANT?

Investment in cultural infrastructure is necessary to maintain the health of our arts organizations. When the needs of their physical structure are unmet or left to degrade, the results can be catastrophic for an organization, resulting in programming resources being put towards unforeseen repairs and upkeep. This has often resulted in unsafe conditions for staff, artists and collections.

Arts organizations have few areas to turn to for renovations/ upgrades/improvements and virtually no avenues for ongoing maintenance/operations. If an Ontario organization is in need of a renovation or significant repair their following options are (but may not be limited to):

1. Ontario Trillium Foundation
2. Municipality
3. Canada Cultural Spaces Fund
4. Capital Campaign (private donors)

Timing, lack of resources, **cost of renovation/build** and competing priorities can all play a factor in whether any of the above options are appropriate for an organization or its owner (municipality/private landlord). In many cases they may only be able to turn to one of these sources.

We believe that the Federal and Provincial governments can play a role in providing much needed support in the area of arts infrastructure **through increased investment in a capital funding**. Additional investment in capital through a grant for the purposes of repairs, replacements and renovations will allow our organizations to move forward with necessary projects that support their art.

It is important to note that Canada Cultural Spaces is the only grant program available to most Ontario organizations requiring more than \$150,000 of additional funding. When Ontario cultural organizations are approaching new builds or significant renovations they have not been able to approach the Province of Ontario for support. Again, we believe that there is a role for the Province of Ontario in addition to the Federal government to play in filling funding need.

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ArtsBuild Ontario is committed to improving the health of Ontario’s non-profit arts and culture facilities. This mandate has led to the development and creation of Bricks&Mortar, a dynamic database that houses arts and culture facilities information from across the province.

Bricks&Mortar is Ontario’s first and only centralized database containing vital and relevant information about the state of Ontario’s arts and cultural facilities focusing on their needs and plans. It is a flexible tool that is able to expand and accommodate new information, as required.

The information represented in Bricks&Mortar is gathered from various art disciplines such as dance, music/opera, museums, heritage, theatre, visual and media arts. Our primary focus is to collect information from organizations identified in the following user groups:

- Non-profit arts organizations
- Arts organizations using ArtsBuild’s programs and services
- Culture and heritage organizations
- Art Service Organizations/Arts Councils
- Performing Arts Venues

Bricks&Mortar is able to track and quantify the collective needs and plans of our sector and house this vital information, where it can be refreshed, as needs and plans change. Organizations have the ability to update their information at any time and if properly resourced, ArtsBuild can ensure that profiles are updated yearly.

ArtsBuild Ontario’s mandate centers on the improvement and long-term health of the capital infrastructure needs of non-profit arts organizations in Ontario. As such, our objective is to present our findings taken from Bricks&Mortar to both funders and Arts Service Organizations so they are better equipped to understand and address the state and needs of arts facilities in Ontario. Our goal is that the data captured in Bricks&Mortar can provide provincial, federal and private funders with specific information that will aid in their investment process, instigating further action and support in addressing the needs of our arts facilities.

Through contacting organizations one on one, ArtsBuild has attained registration of **370 arts organizations**, detailing the needs and plans of **446 facilities** province wide, as of December 2015. We collect information on the following;

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| <p>Organization</p> <p>This section focuses on obtaining a brief synopsis of various organization details from location, primary role, building and/or financial operations and management structure..</p> | <p>Facilities</p> <p>This section focuses on obtaining a detailed overview of the facility. Questions range from number of facilities, location, physical description, and condition assessment of the facility including details about capital improvements completed in the past five years or those needed in the future.</p> |
| <p>Facility Needs</p> <p>This section focuses on the facility needs of the organization.</p> | <p>Facility Plans</p> <p>The final section in Bricks&Mortar focuses on understanding upcoming facility plans if applicable and anticipated sources of funding.</p> |

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While there are over 100 unique fields in this database pertaining to the organization and their facilities needs and plans, for this brief we have chosen to highlight to be the most relevant and impactful for the purpose of the Culture Strategy.

ArtsBuild has pulled key statistics from Bricks&Mortar that demonstrate the needs and plans of our organizations and how this might direct a granting stream for infrastructure for the sector. For the purpose of the brief, the following statistics only highlight the top responses. The statistics are pulled from **370 arts organizations**, detailing the needs and plans of **446 facilities** province wide, as of December 2015.

ORGANIZATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS (*who responded*)

REGIONAL BREAKDOWN

- **20%** - Tourism Region 5-Greater Toronto Area
- **44%** - Tourism Regions 2, 3, 6,7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13

TYPES OF FACILITIES IN BRICKS&MORTAR

55% of the facilities are galleries/museums, while **12%** were theatres.

69% of the facilities are 0-10,000 sq. feet, and **56%** of the facilities are **76 years or older**.

35% own their building, while another **35%** are owned by their municipality and the other **30%** lease their space.

15% of respondents have facility operating expenses of \$60,001-\$100,000 per year.

[Our small to mid-sized facilities are aging.](#)

FACILITY NEEDS

DOES THIS FACILITY MEET ALL THE NEEDS OF ITS USERS / YOUR ORGANIZATION?

51% of organizations indicated that their facility did not meet all its current needs. Areas of most concern were exhibition at **21%**, storage at **19%** and education and public presentation both at **13%** each. **80%** of organizations needed to address these needs in the next one-two years.

[Our organizations have improvements in their facility that they need to get done immediately.](#)

FACILITY PLANS (types of plans needed for improvements)

37% plan on renovating an existing facility, while **31%** are planning on building a new facility.

WHAT BUILDING CHANGES ARE PLANNED?

The top three areas of focus for our organizations are **11%** - Accessibility, **9%** - Expansion/Addition/Reconstruction **9%** - Lighting Systems.

ESTIMATED PROJECT BUDGET

32% - Under \$100,000, **15%** - Over \$5 Million, **14%** - \$100,000 - \$500,000

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HOW WILL YOU PAY FOR THIS PROJECT?

16% - Fundraising, **14%** - Ontario Trillium Foundation, **12%** - Municipal Grant Program, **12%** - Canada Cultural Spaces

The majority of our organizations need over \$100,000 to complete necessary facilities projects, while still a significant number at 15% need OVER 5 MILLION

IMPACT OF PROJECT ON THE ARTS COMMUNITY (COMMUNITY IMPACT)

17% - Increased Audience / Attendance, **16%** - Improved Working Conditions for Staff, **15%** - More Programming /Shows

Improvements to their facility will impact staff, programming and audience attendance.

IN SUMMARY

Bricks&Mortar data demonstrates the need for increased infrastructure investment for our arts facilities province wide and we can assume that this is indicative of arts facilities nation-wide. Our organizations are in need of additional avenues of funding support to continue as strong and healthy arts organizations. We believe **increased capital funding at the Federal and Provincial level is crucial in supporting the health and vitality of our organizations and their facilities.**

In addition to funding for capital projects and renovations, organizations also need **access to funds for necessary ongoing capital maintenance/repairs** that;

- a) Has a quick turnaround (Canada Cultural Spaces can take a year +) and
- b) Will take into consideration the need and/or urgency

We believe that in addition to increased investment there are other ways that to support arts infrastructure and we welcome the opportunity to discuss these further.

- **Support for an Asset Management Program for our small and mid-sized facilities.** Asset Management planning and software is widely used across all sectors, except the arts. Our organizations are often running their facilities blindly without proper planning or understanding of their facility. ArtsBuild is currently running a program that provides 22 facilities with asset management software and training that is otherwise unaffordable by most facilities. By providing Asset Management software and training to our facilities we are providing them the necessary tools to better plan and manage their building, in the long term. Additionally, we can access and collect more precise data on the cost of operating and maintaining these assets. We think there is a role for funders that are providing capital grants to provide a subsidy towards Asset Management program and/or mandate its use, with continued support.
- **Ongoing support for Bricks&Mortar database.** This data set is powerful in identifying the needs and plans of our organizations moving forward. It is the only growing list of arts facilities in Ontario. With ongoing support, ArtsBuild can provide funders and the sector valuable data on the state of facilities every year to help support ongoing initiatives. This can become a great reporting tool for completed projects funded under this new grant as well as an advocating tool. ArtsBuild has begun this conversation at the program level with Department of Canadian Heritage.

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- **Making registration in Bricks&Mortar mandatory** for organizations receiving a capital grant. Many of our organizations register in Bricks&Mortar as they wish to see an improvement in the investment of their infrastructure. Without any guarantees except the promise of advocacy, many organizations decline to participate. Our hope is that all funders that provide a capital grant for arts facilities will eventually see the value in collecting all applicant data, as it serves us all.

ArtsBuild welcomes the opportunity to **continue the conversation on the investment needed in arts infrastructure and other strategies** to better support the health of our organizations and their facilities. We hope that you will contact our Executive Director Lindsay Golds, lindsay@artsbuildontario.ca to move forward with this conversation.