

Submission to Infrastructure Canada re: #infraconsults, Phase 2 consultations

ArtsBuild Ontario

September 16, 2016

WHO WE ARE

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

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 allocated for necessary repairs and upkeep. Lack of funds or a delay of repairs can result in unsafe conditions for staff, artists and collections.

We are at a critical point for our cultural infrastructure nationwide as it ages and we need to provide resources to ensure not only that we do not lose our facilities to age and neglect, but that we demonstrate the importance that culture plays in the health and vibrancy of our community fabric by investing in both small-medium as well as national institutions.

Surveys and research conducted by service organizations, funders and governments nationwide reveal the importance and urgency of investing in our capital infrastructure, as they impact not only those in the facility, but visitors and the communities in which they reside.

In a survey conducted by Canadian Heritage in 2012, it was revealed that 86% felt that live performance spaces in their community contribute to quality of life as do museums, facilities combining several arts and cultural activities and heritage centres (80% each). In addition, 78% said “public art galleries and spaces for artists to create and do their work (73%) contribute to the peoples’ quality of life.”¹ Canadians believe that performing arts venues provide community-wide benefits, such as improved quality of life (66%), fostering a sense of community pride (61%), and contributing to economic development (59%).²

Released in 2016, the Ontario Museum Association conducted a survey of 184 museums. This survey revealed that Ontario museums received nearly 5 million visitors in 2014.³ Another survey at the same time revealed that 68% of museums surveyed (91 respondents) were at least 75 years old.⁴ This statistic

¹ Phoenix Strategies Perspectives, *Arts and Heritage in Canada: Access and Availability Survey 2012* (Ottawa, 2012) 28.

² EKOS Research Associates, *Survey of the General Public, The Value of Presenting: A Study of Arts Presentation in Canada* (Ottawa, 2012), 21

³ Hill Strategies Research, *Ontario Museums 2014 Profile: Highlights* (Toronto: Ontario Museum Association, 2016), 3.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

is reflects findings from a survey conducted by ArtsBuild that revealed 55% of organizations surveyed indicated that at least one building they occupy is 76+ years old (324 respondents).⁵

We know that our cultural industries have always had a significant impact on our economy, but in a recently released report in May 2016, Statistics Canada revealed that Canada's culture job count had reached 700,120.⁶ Jobs in the cultural sector cannot be sustained and grow without investment in basic needs such as infrastructure.

RESOURCES

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 options are (but may not be limited to):

1. Ontario Trillium Foundation¹
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 available 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 government can play a role in providing much needed support in the area of arts infrastructure **through increased investment in capital funding programs and investing in resources to support the management of these facilities**. Additional investment in capital for the purposes of repairs, replacements and renovations, and the management tools and capacity to sustain these investments over time will allow our organizations to reinvigorate the facilities that support their art.

THE NEED

ArtsBuild Ontario has spent the past several years collecting valuable data from the arts sector on the state of their arts facility, and their needs and plans to ensure their facility is meeting their needs and remains in a state of good repair.

Our proprietary system, **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 – allowing organizations to update their needs and plans as they arise.

⁵ ArtsBuild Ontario, *Bricks & Mortar: Ontario's Arts and Culture Facilities Database Report Summary* (Kitchener, 2016), 27.

⁶ Eric Desjardins, "Provincial and Territorial Culture Indicators, 2010-2014," *Statistics Canada Income and Expenditure Accounts Technical Series*. Catalogue no. 13-604-M (2016) 18.

Through this database that contains information of over 400 arts and culture organizations and the needs and plans of their cultural infrastructure, 191 provided us data on how much they would need to complete their current or future capital project. Out of only 191 responses this number equates to more than **\$300 million**.⁷ 51% of respondents felt unsatisfied with their facilities, with 24% indicating they are in fair or poor physical condition.⁸

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION: EXTEND AND SUSTAIN THE CURRENT TWO-YEAR ARTS INVESTMENT, FROM BUDGET 2016, IN THE CANADA CULTURAL SPACES PROGRAM.

WHY? The reinvestment in the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund (CCSF), as part of Phase 1 of the Government of Canada’s infrastructure plan, is a timely recognition of the aging infrastructure at many arts organizations. Currently, one of the pressing needs is to make these older facilities fully accessible for the Canadian public. Considering the preparations necessary for a large-scale renovation such as feasibility studies, the timeline of just two years will significantly limit the eligibility to only shovel-ready projects in 2016. Extending the CCSF program into Phase Two of the Infrastructure plan will have a positive impact on the arts sector. Notably, with the increases to the Canada Council for the Arts beginning in 2016, the federal government has taken the first step by investing in the artists and organizations. Those artists need more and better functioning arts facilities in order to reach Canadians. A sustained investment **\$84 million annually into the Canada Cultural Spaces program** is necessary at this time.

IMPACT: CCSF is the only significant capital fund available for arts and culture organizations nationwide. Sustaining this level of funding will provide our arts sector with a reliable source of funding, that they can count on for repairs, renovations and new builds. Cultural infrastructure is aging and requires the resources to ensure they can attain a state of good repair for its audiences, visitors, employees and Canadians.

RECOMMENDATION: MAKE INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDS AVAILABLE TO COMMUNITY BASED ARTS AND CULTURAL FACILITIES INCLUDING COMMUNITY/CULTURAL HUBS AND SHARED SPACES

WHY? Canada Cultural Spaces Fund is the only available federal capital fund for the arts but it is not available to all arts organizations nationwide. Only arts organizations that are deemed “a not-for-profit arts and/or heritage organization operating in a **professional manner...**”⁹ are eligible. This stipulation could deem many community-based organizations ineligible, as well as less traditional projects that may partner with other sectors (social services, health or recreational), including the cultural/community hubs.

Community hubs contribute to “...improved health, social and economic outcomes for individuals... better social investment and stronger communities...”¹⁰ Unfortunately examples of tight funding

⁷ ArtsBuild Ontario, *Bricks & Mortar: Ontario’s Arts and Culture Facilities Database Report Summary*, 53.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 38.

⁹ Canadian Heritage, *Canada Cultural Spaces Fund (CCSF): Application Guidelines* (Ottawa: The Government of Canada, 2015), 1.

¹⁰ Karen Pitre et al., *Community Hubs in Ontario: A Strategic Framework & Action Plan* (Toronto: The Government of Ontario, 2015), 66.

restrictions, and siloed funding have been roadblocks¹¹ in further developing these cultural and community spaces.

By restricting funds in this manner, organizations and projects that could have a strong impact on their communities and the arts sector may not qualify. For organizations in Ontario that are not eligible to apply to CCSF this has had a negative impact,¹² as there is no other *significant* funding source available in Ontarioⁱⁱ.

IMPACT: Opening up the criteria of the CCSF to ALL arts organizations (community, professional or as part of a consortium of organizations), would make these funds more accessible to the arts community. It would also align itself more strongly with the less traditional arts spaces that are being developed across the country including, community hubs, arts hubs and co-working spaces that are energizing our arts community. When surveying Canadians about where they took in live performance 39% indicated a community space such as a community centre or cultural centre.¹³ A strong indicator that more than a third of our performing arts is being experienced at a non-traditional space.

A national study of cultural infrastructure undertaken by Simon Fraser University for Canadian Heritage identified a growing trend across Canada towards cultural facilities designed to leverage the benefits of collaboration and co-location.¹⁴ This trend includes: multi-use hubs, cultural or creative incubators, multi-sector convergence centres, artist live/work or studio, and integrated community projects that include cultural, environmental and social uses (hubs).¹⁵

“This emerging landscape of infrastructure leads to a complex and evolving array of partnerships, models and purposes that requires a cross-pollination of thinking, greater openness to risk-taking, nimble partnerships, and compelling solutions that bridge the many traditional silos of city-building.”¹⁶

RECOMMENDATION: WORK WITH EACH PROVINCE/TERRITORY TO ENSURE THERE IS ACCESS TO A PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL LEVEL FUND FOR CAPITAL FOR ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS.

WHY? While Canada Cultural Spaces Fund received a recent boost in funds, it remains a matching fund. It is difficult for many organizations to leverage CCSF in the absence of a significant provincial capital fund that it can leverage. As an Ontario-based arts service organization, we are keenly aware of the lack of matching funds available in Ontario at the provincial level for capital projects.

For Ontario organizations requiring more than \$150,000 of additional fundingⁱⁱⁱ, there is no significant provincial level fund they can leverage for support, to match CCSF. Similarly, for organizations in Ontario that are not eligible for CCSF they are limited to the \$150,000 in support and what they can raise through their municipality and fundraising. This has a direct and negative impact on organizations including facilities in remote, rural and small communities who are unable to access matching resources through other means (donors, sponsors, and/or municipal support).

¹¹ Ibid., 74.

¹² Centre of Expertise on Culture and Communities, *The State of Cultural Infrastructure: Policy and Issues Dialogue from the Ontario Regional Roundtable*, (Vancouver: Simon Fraser University, 2008), 2.

¹³ EKOS Research Associates, *Survey of the General Public, The Value of Presenting: A Study of Arts Presentation in Canada*, 11.

¹⁴ “About Artscape DIY” Artscape, accessed September 12, 2016, <http://www.artscapediy.org/About.aspx>

¹⁵ Nancy Duxbury et al., *Under Construction: The State of Cultural Infrastructure in Canada*, (Vancouver: Centre of Expertise on Culture and Communities, 2008) 82-83.

¹⁶ “About Artscape DIY”

We believe that there is a role for Infrastructure Canada to play in leading conversations with Infrastructure Ontario and Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport as well as other provincial and territorial ministries from both a policy level and for funding,¹⁷ to ensure that organizations (small to large) can leverage resources made available at all levels of government.

IMPACT: A significant capital fund at the provincial level will ensure that organizations across all provinces and territories (including organizations in remote, rural, and smaller communities) could leverage CCSF funds, that they otherwise would not be able to access (for lack of matching funds). It also would support small to mid sized projects that exceed the available funds in Ontario^{iv}, that may not be eligible for CCSF.

RECOMMENDATION: INVEST IN TRAINING AND ASSET MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE FOR ORGANIZATIONS MANAGING THEIR FACILITY

WHY? Managing and maintaining cultural infrastructure requires skills, training and experience. In our **Bricks&Mortar** database, out of 334 respondents, only 7% have a dedicated Facilities/Building/Operations Manager. The rest identify their Executive Director, General Manager, municipality or “other” as managing their facility.¹⁸ Skills relating to facilities, capital and infrastructure has been a constant need sector wide.¹⁹

To bridge this gap of on the job training of our cultural leaders in the area of facilities management and development, ArtsBuild has developed programs, resources and tools. These programs are designed to assist our organizations in leveraging the resources they do have and to increase their capacity. We believe there is a role for Infrastructure Canada to play in investing in these necessary tools, programs and resources, so our organizations can continue to increase their capacity in managing the diverse challenges that they are faced with.

Our programs include:

- Asset Management Software – through our **Asset Planner for the Arts** program, ArtsBuild provides more affordable asset management software for cultural facilities. This allows our organizations to better plan for their facilities needs, run real time financial reporting, and forecast needs out 30 years.²⁰
- Mentoring – through our **Arts Facilities Mentoring Network**, ArtsBuild provides one on one mentorship for organizations needing extra support in a facilities related area.²¹
- Data Collection – through **Bricks&Mortar**, ArtsBuild collects relevant data on Ontario arts facilities – including their needs and plans.²²

¹⁷ Duxbury, *Under Construction: The State of Cultural Infrastructure, Policy and Issues Dialogue from the Ontario Regional Roundtable*, 99

¹⁸ ArtsBuild Ontario, *Bricks & Mortar: Ontario’s Arts and Culture Facilities Database Report Summary*, 32.

¹⁹ Centre of Expertise on Culture and Communities, *The State of Cultural Infrastructure: Policy and Issues Dialogue from the Ontario Regional Roundtable 5*

²⁰ “Asset Planner for the Arts.” ArtsBuild Ontario, accessed September 12, 2016, <http://www.artsbuildontario.ca/managing/asset-planner/>

²¹ “Arts Facilities Mentoring Network,” ArtsBuild Ontario, accessed September 12, 2016, <http://www.artsbuildontario.ca/learning/mentoring-network/>

²² “Bricks & Mortar,” ArtsBuild Ontario, accessed September 12, 2016, <http://www.artsbuildontario.ca/bricksandmortar/>

- Matching underused space with artists – through our **SpaceFinder** program, we have been able to assist organizations in increasing their rental revenues while matching artists to space in their community.²³

We estimate that these programs will impact over 1,000 Ontario-based organizations in 2016/17.

These programs for Ontario-based organizations are valued at a minimum of \$150,000 yearly. These programs can be made available to our organizations nationwide at a minimum \$300,000 annually.

IMPACT: Investing in established training and resources can support the investment made through CCSF and other capital funds. It allows organizations to increase their capacity while supporting the needs of their facility. Ensuring that these facilities are properly managed and funded will contribute to their longevity and state of good repair.

CONCLUSION

ArtsBuild Ontario believes that:

- Extending and sustaining the current arts investment in Canada Cultural Spaces at 84million per year, will support current and new infrastructure;
- Making infrastructure funds available to community based arts and cultural facilities including community/cultural hubs and shared spaces, will support the types of facilities that are becoming more commonplace and inclusive nationwide;
- Working with the provinces to ensure they all have a significant source of capital funding to assist orgs in leveraging funds at different levels of government, will support more facilities and projects nationwide and;
- Investing in training and asset management software for organizations managing arts facilities is necessary to protect capital investments and to increase the capacity of our organizations

These are all steps that Infrastructure Canada is able to take towards supporting cultural infrastructure in Canada and all will make a significant impact on our cultural infrastructure nationwide. ArtsBuild Ontario is available to discuss any of these four recommendations in more detail and would be interested in participating in any consultations and discussions to develop these recommendations further.

ⁱ Ontario's capital fund source comes from the Ontario Trillium Foundation capital fund (maximum grant of \$150,000), which is currently suspended by a one time Ontario150 capital grant. At this time a public announcement about the reinstatement of funds for 2017 has not yet been made.

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²³ "SpaceFinder Canada," ArtsBuild Ontario, accessed September 12, 2016, <http://www.artsbuildontario.ca/managing/spacefinder-canada/>