

November 21, 2016

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To Mrs. Rowe,

On October 4, 2016, Brittany Fritsch, Manager, Public Policy and Community Engagement from Imagine Canada, along with Bruce MacDonald, CEO and Bill Schaper, Director of Public Policy and Community Engagement, met with you and your colleague Maya Borgenicht. After the meeting, Imagine Canada reached out to ArtsBuild Ontario, to inform us that questions were raised during the meeting regarding cultural infrastructure spending and they suggested we might be able to continue the conversation.

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. As a non-profit charitable organization, ArtsBuild provides tools, training and resources that support the development and sustainable creative spaces such as theatres, galleries, concert halls, and museums.

We believe that access for small to mid-sized arts organizations to infrastructure funding for culture projects is necessary to sustain our cultural assets nationally. Below we have included some general recommendations regarding the funding and how Infrastructure Canada can structure a strong fund that will support small to mid-sized organizations nationally.

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. This includes but is not limited to **state of good repair, accessibility improvements, retrofitting facilities to reduce energy consumption and necessary renovations** that will allow these organizations to meet the needs of their audience and their artists.

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.

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...**”¹ 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.

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, as there is no other *significant* funding source available in Ontario. While we are very familiar with the resources in Ontario, we have requested information from partner organizations in other provinces that have also echoed the lack of significant provincial capital fund they can access.

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.

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, and so we are using this as one example.

For Ontario organizations requiring more than \$150,000 of additional funding, 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).

We scanned three provinces below for provincial level funding that is available through a granting program;

Alberta – Alberta Culture and Tourism; Community Facility Enhancement Program – **\$125,000 per facility**
BC – BC Creative Spaces Program; for co-working spaces – **\$50,000**, Gaming; projects under **\$20,000 per project**
Ontario – Ontario Trillium Foundation – **\$150,000 per project**

We believe that there is a role for Infrastructure Canada to play in leading conversations with provincial and territorial ministries from both a funding and policy level, 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

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

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 Ontario², that may not be eligible for CCSF.

RECOMMENDATION: REVISE THE MATCHING FUND REQUIREMENT TO ACCOMMODATE PROJECT SIZE

WHY? As indicated previously, significant funding programs for cultural infrastructure projects at most provincial levels do not exist. While government departments do have infrastructure budgets, those funds are not always accessible to small to mid-sized organizations or projects.

We would recommend two options to consider;

1. For projects under an identified amount (up to \$250,000 as an example) do not require matching funds – full contribution from Infrastructure Canada.

For state of good repair projects or renovations

2. For projects over an identified amount (over \$250,000 as an example) require matching funds – 75% / 25% contribution

To compare to an existing fund, Canada Cultural Spaces Fund (CCSF), requires a 50/50 match. While we understand this is standard across most federal programs, in the absence of significant provincial level support for cultural infrastructure projects, this will make it extremely difficult for small to medium sized organizations to leverage available federal funding. Under exceptional circumstances, CCSF will consider funding beyond 50%.

In this case if new funds become available through Infrastructure Canada we believe that increasing the matching from 50% to 75% will allow small to medium sized organizations to access federal funding for their infrastructure projects.

IMPACT: Providing full contribution of funds under a specified amount will provide more opportunities to more small to medium sized organizations.

Increasing the matching level from 50% to 75% will allow small to medium sized arts organizations nationwide to leverage federal funds that are available, thus increasing the impact of the federal investment.

CONCLUSION

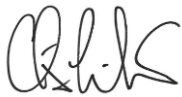
ArtsBuild Ontario believes that the following are all steps that Infrastructure Canada is able to take towards supporting cultural infrastructure in Canada and all will make a significant impact on our cultural infrastructure nationwide:

- Extending and sustaining the current arts investment in Canada Cultural Spaces at \$84 million per year, will support current and new infrastructure; with an emphasis on greening, accessibility and state of good repair
- 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;

- Increasing the federal contribution amount to 75% from 50% and providing a full contribution to projects under a certain amount, will provide more opportunities to small to medium sized organizations

ArtsBuild Ontario is available to discuss any of these recommendations in more detail and would be interested in participating in any consultations and discussions to develop these recommendations further.

Thank You,



**Chris Loreto
Board Chair**



**Lindsay Golds
Executive Director**

Cc: The Honorable Amerjeet Sohi, MP, Minister of Infrastructure and Communities