

ARTS BUILD ONTARIO
Creative Spaces Case Study Series
Ottawa Art Gallery



This Creative Spaces Case Study Series is Supported by:

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Introduction

These in-depth case studies serve as a resource for arts and heritage organizations embarking on a capital project to learn from the successes and challenges of others in the sector.

In these case studies, we analyze the **why** (why they took on this capital project), the **what** (what were they building and creating), the **who** (who are they serving, who supported this project, who led this project and who they hired), the **how** (how was the project financially supported and what positions were created/how were they funded), and the **ongoing** (what happened after? How is the building maintained/operated? Is it sustainable? How is revenue generated?) behind each project.

We looked at a wide range of spaces from across the province with varying operational models, sizes, locations, project sizes and artistic disciplines. The case studies focus on each organization's process for completing their project; from the planning phase, to the building phase, to the operations and maintenance phase. Following the completion of all 19 case studies, a Best Practice Summary released on ABO's website, free for all to access.

The case study series is supported by the Learning Series, which is a collection of webinars and workshops that support ABO's core programs. Webinars that highlight the capital projects featured in the 2018-2020 case studies series are available on the ABO website. Please check <https://www.artsbuildontario.ca/learning/webinars/> for more information.

The case study series is supported by the Department of Canadian Heritage and Canada Council for the Arts.

ArtsBuild Ontario

ArtsBuild Ontario is the only organization in Ontario dedicated to realizing long-term solutions to building, managing and financing the sustainable arts facilities needed in our communities.

ABO offers tools, resources and programs that support arts organizations with their creative space projects. ABO's core programs include Asset Planner for the Arts, the Creative Spaces Mentoring Network, and the Learning Series.

Ottawa Art Gallery

Interviewees

- Alexandra Badzak, Director and Chief Executive Officer
- Jennifer Gilliland, Collections and Building Project Manager

Vision and Mandate

The Ottawa Art Gallery's (OAG) mandate is to be the most vital visual arts institution in Ottawa. As a leader in the arts community, we present new ideas and provide a cultural meeting place to actively promote relationships and exchanges between artists and various diverse facets of our community. We explore and reflect on diversity and social change through a spectrum of visual arts practice, focused on but not exclusive to the region in a national and international context.

Historical Background

The OAG is an independent, not-for-profit, charitable organization governed by a volunteer board of directors. It was founded in 1988 as the Gallery at Arts Court by a group of local artists and community leaders and renamed the Ottawa Art Gallery in 1992. That same year, the City of Ottawa transferred custodianship of the Firestone Collection of Canadian Art to the OAG. In taking on this nationally significant collection of 1,600 works of 20th century Canadian art, the OAG also received designation as Ottawa's municipal art gallery. Over time, the OAG has built a significant permanent collection that now numbers more than 1,020 works including paintings, sculpture, graphic arts, photographs and new media.

OAG Expansion and Arts Court Redevelopment

The Ottawa Art Gallery Expansion and Arts Court Redevelopment project has been part of a long-standing vision for the revitalization of Ottawa's downtown, highlighted in *A Renewed Action Plan for Arts, Heritage and Culture in Ottawa*. It is intended to provide a proper home for the designated municipal art gallery in Ottawa and raise the profile of the complex as the City of Ottawa's downtown arts centre, located on Daly Avenue in the heart of the retail, arts and theatre district.

Construction on this multi-phase project began with the expansion of the OAG in summer of 2015. The new six floor, purpose-built OAG utilized land next to the heritage Arts Court facility. In addition to the new OAG, existing spaces vacated by the OAG from their former home in Arts Court were renovated intending to improve the facilities of some of Ottawa's leading artist-run centres currently programming at Arts Court, including Saw Gallery, Club Saw, Saw Video, Independent Filmmakers Co-Operative (IFCO).

Project Summary

The first stage of the \$38.8-million OAG Expansion and Arts Court redevelopment project was a four-year build with a project history spanning over a decade. Through strong advocacy efforts

and feasibility studies to confirm the need, the OAG expansion was embedded into municipal cultural plans and policies, and brought forward by leaders within the OAG and municipal champions including mayor Jim Watson.

This building project saw the OAG grow five times in size from 12,000 to 55,000 square feet and introduced a variety of facility upgrades. The new OAG now includes: the Firestone Collection Permanent Gallery, an OAG Permanent Collection Gallery, large changing exhibition spaces, project galleries, an educational studio, a gallery shop, café, banquet space and terraces. Leveraging a 3-P partnership, the gallery is also connected to a newly constructed 23-storey tower that's home to both Le Germain Hôtel and ArtHaus condos by DevMcGill. With the inclusion of a new theatre facility for the University of Ottawa connected to the gallery, the OAG serves as community hub to a variety of users.

The “What”

[What is the operational model of the Ottawa Art Gallery?](#)

The Ottawa Art Gallery is designated by The City of Ottawa as the municipal art gallery but is an independent not-for-profit with its own board of directors appointed from the membership. OAG negotiated a 25-year agreement, which articulates that the City is responsible for building maintenance, security and utilities, while the OAG manages the art gallery.

[What was the Ottawa Art Gallery building and creating?](#)

Prior to expansion, the OAG occupied approximately 12,000 square feet in the Ottawa Arts Court, inclusive of their vault and circulation space. There were limitations that came with operating out of a former county courthouse. The OAG was one of the smallest municipal galleries in Canada, with space limitations greatly impacting operations. While they were bursting at the seams in terms of attendance, there was a lack of storage and display areas for their art collections as well as public programs and educational activities.

The OAG's new facility now spans five floors, with more than 55,000 square feet of programmable space, addressing the limitations of their previous space. Storage space at the OAG increased from approximately 1,250 to 4,845 square feet. It now includes Art racks, bins for smaller painting, rolled storage and moveable storage features. Notable features of the new building include; a dedicated gallery for the Firestone Collection of Canadian Art; a gallery for OAG's Permanent Collection; two outdoor rooftop terraces; a large multi-purpose room with retractable seating for 250, or standing capacity for 380 people; the OAG Studio for school programs, artist-led and community-led workshops, and intimate screenings; expanded OAG retail store and ART rentals space; the Jackson Café.

The new OAG is a certified Category A Organization. Under this Department of Canadian Heritage distinction, Category A facilities demonstrate the ability to ensure the long-term preservation of cultural property and ensure cultural property is available to the public through

exhibitions, programming or research. This designation considers everything from how art can move through your space to environmental controls and the thickness of walls. Organizations are designated for specific classes of cultural property. For the OAG, these cultural property classes include objects of fine arts and archival material.

Implementing a public–private partnership model, the OAG expansion project resulted in the development of three new partners. They include; the University of Ottawa; Le Germain Hôtel and ArtHaus Condos through developers DevMcGill. In regards to building, the University of Ottawa built an attached 120-seat black theatre and four classrooms, and the private partners built a multi-purpose residential building, also connected to the gallery. The hotel occupies the first twelve floors and the condo occupies the remaining eight. The OAG remains connected to the Arts Court on four levels. It is now connected to the new University of Ottawa space on three levels and there is one point of entry to the hotel and condos, which is on the main concourse level. All connecting points create fluidity and cohesion between each partner space and the OAG.

What type of involvement did partners have in the project?

As OAG’s expansion was the first phase of the larger Ottawa Art Gallery Expansion and Arts Court Redevelopment project, the other arts organizations operating out of Arts Court were involved as stakeholders in discussions around the larger project. Considering OAG development and project plans would affect their subsequent building, frequent meetings were held and input was gathered from the other Arts Court tenants. The City of Ottawa established a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with project stakeholders indicating structure of decision-making.

As the building is municipally owned, the project was ultimately City led. They facilitated the 3P partnership, provided and secured additional funding for the project, had the final say in approving designs for the facility and secured contracts.

The OAG embraced a public–private partnership (PPP, 3P or P3), which can be understood as a cooperative arrangement between two or more public and private sectors that vary within projects. When the outline of this partnership agreement was developed by the City of Ottawa, the purpose of tower, which now hosts the condos and hotel, was not yet established. It was decided however, that whoever bid on the project would be responsible for managing all aspects of construction for the dedicated space and bring in the tenants as required. The private sector components, which are defined by development rights purchased by the consortium of EBC Inc. contractors, DevMcGill condo developers and Group Germain Hotels, include an underground parking structure, a mixed-use hotel and condominium tower, and a portion of the infrastructure upgrades on the site. The contributions they made to the shared services include the loading dock and on site parking.

The University of Ottawa was another key partner that initiated the design of their dedicated spaces and helped fund the development of the project. They contributed to the common spaces during the capital project, and currently contribute to operations.

The “Why”

Why did the Ottawa Art Gallery take on this capital project?

In 2003, the City of Ottawa enacted the *Ottawa 20/20 Arts & Heritage Plan*, which defined a 20-year vision for the municipal Arts and Culture sector with strategies, policy statements and actions for implementation. This report substantiated the OAG’s ongoing claims that they had outgrown their space at Arts Court. Most notably, the report identified that constraints around configurations of the building and size of exhibition space were severely limiting. Vault and storage space was lacking, which meant growing their permanent collections was challenging. Similarly, without substantial programming space, it was difficult for the OAG to offer significant public programming or partner with other organizations to host large exhibitions in their galleries.

In 2004, the OAG produced a Feasibility Study entitled *The Ottawa Art Gallery: Connecting Artists and Community*, undertaken by LORD Cultural Resources. Along with providing details on OAG’s requirements for expansion, the study identified problems with the visibility of the OAG, both within the Arts Court facility and in the community at large. The report cited that a new building space with at least 40,000 square feet would be required to effectively support operations. The footprint was expanded to 55,000 square feet to include a bigger multipurpose room than was originally envisioned to accommodate not only the OAG but the needs of the film and media community, as well as add another gallery space and more public gathering areas.

In 2012, City Council unanimously approved *the Renewed Action Plan on Arts, Heritage and Culture*. Assembled by leaders within the municipal government and cultural organizations including the OAG’s Director and CEO Alexandra Badzak, and community members, it was created to build on the accomplishments of the *Ottawa 20/20 Arts & Heritage Plan* and address outstanding goals. Within this plan, the need to expand the OAG and redevelop Arts Court was reinforced under the strategy: Preserve and Develop Cultural and Creative Places and Spaces. When this plan was approved, The Ottawa Art Gallery Expansion and Arts Court Redevelopment project was solidified as a priority for the City.

Why did the Ottawa Art Gallery decide to implement a 3P Partnership?

Following the development of the culture plan and feasibility study, the City of Ottawa worked with the OAG within the scope of the Arts Court Redevelopment Project, to assist in developing a solution for their pressing need for more space. Considerations included building a designated

gallery space on top of the pre-existing Arts Court, as well as relocating the OAG to Lansdowne, just outside of the downtown core, where they would have their own designated building.

The idea of a private/public partnership came about as primarily a method to finance the project and densification of the core on one of the last undeveloped sites in the downtown of Ottawa. Understanding the challenges that come with fundraising in a region saturated with national institutions, the OAG and the City of Ottawa were looking for a creative solution that would enable them to reach their financial goal and build a facility to meet their needs.

Why did the OAG choose to consult their users?

To confirm that the 2004 feasibility study remained relevant, the OAG gathered community input on their expansion project and held two visioning sessions. The first session was held in 2011, and facilitated by Donna Walk-Kuhn. It invited the greater community of Ottawa to share what they would like to see in the new gallery. From this session, the OAG learned the community wanted a place to gather and that having a restaurant or café in the gallery was desired.

When they held a subsequent visioning session in 2013, the OAG refined the questions from the initial session to gain specific feedback on the design and operations of the gallery. A key piece of feedback from this session was that the community favoured the inclusion of smaller gallery spaces, in addition to large spaces, to foster experimentation and allow for exhibitions from an artist or two at a time. Through these visioning sessions, the OAG actively consulted with future users of the space and incorporated feedback into their final design.

The “Who”

Who does the space serve?

With a major increase in square footage and facility upgrades, the OAG is able to effectively serve a wide variety of audiences. Accessibility was a major consideration in this project, and the OAG strived to ensure all felt welcome in the space. The OAG aspired to be more than an art gallery; a place where people felt comfortable to gather and socialize in the café, study between classes or simply walk through on their way to another destination. The OAG also opens up their spaces to rent, enabling the community to host special events, meetings and weddings throughout the building.

With the new space, the OAG can better serve their local elementary and secondary schools to host guided tours and workshops, designed with the Ontario and Quebec curricula in mind, and tailored to suit the needs and interests of students/participants.

In terms of the arts community, artists benefit through smaller exhibition rooms that foster experimentation and enable single artist exhibitions. The expansion of their ART Rentals and

Sales program has enabled the program to grow and successfully connect featured artists with clients.

Who led the project within the OAG?

The expansion of the Ottawa Art Gallery began as an internally driven project by gallery staff, including the OAG's former Director Mela Constantinidi, who recognized the need for expansion and began early advocacy efforts. With the board's support in 2009, the OAG's strategic priorities were re-oriented to reflect the drive towards expansion. Newly appointed Director and CEO, Alexandra Badzak along with OAG Board Chair, Lawson Hunter were the leads on advocating to the municipal government to include the expansion project in the City of Ottawa's Arts and Heritage 2020 plan.

To support the expansion project, the OAG Expansion Committee was established. Members included:

- Lawson Hunter, Board Chair
- Alexandra Badzak, OAG Director and Chief Executive Officer
- Jennifer Gilliland, OAG Collections and Building Project Manager
- Ben Gianni, Architecture Professor, Carleton University
- Sarah Murray, Architect
- Louis Ranger, former federal Deputy Minister of Transport and Infrastructure
- Victor Duret, former OAG Board Treasurer

Throughout the construction of the project, Director and CEO Alexandra Badzak along with Collections and Building Project Manager Jennifer Gilliland, managed the project on a day-to-day basis on behalf of the OAG.

Who were the partners in the project?

Within this project, a significant number of public and private partners were involved. Public partners included the City of Ottawa, the Federal Government through the Department of Canadian Heritage's Canada Cultural Spaces Fund, the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport and all of the organizations in Arts Court. The private partners that came as a consortium included the general contractor from EBC Inc.; condo developers DevMcGill; and the hotel Group Germain Hotels. Partners also included the University of Ottawa in the development of their designated theatre spaces. In order to keep all those stakeholders aligned, the OAG Director and Board Chair were constantly touching base with various stakeholders to ensure everyone was moving in the same direction. Partners were constantly meeting and having conversations about all aspects of the project.

Who was hired to support this project?

As the City of Ottawa acted as the lead on this project, they provided staffing resources from their Infrastructure Department to support the project through project management,

stakeholder relations. They developed all the agreements with public stakeholders, led approval processes with regards to variances and urban design approval, as well as provided financing and legal support. The City also hired the project management company, Vera Terra, to structure and oversee the project as their representatives.

Similarly, the OAG looked to Jennifer Gilliland, Collections and Building Project Manager, to act as the project manager on the gallery's behalf. Her previous experience, knowledge of the technical requirements of a gallery, and project management skills enabled her to thrive in the role. As this project entailed actively working with a variety of partners, from trades to technical experts, her ability to keep up with technical language and effectively communicate was instrumental in the success of the project.

The OAG also relied on the support of hired consultants to fill knowledge gaps. Hired consultants for this project include:

- Gabriel Mackinnon Lighting Design, to help OAG select the lighting fixtures and track for all gallery spaces
- MCLD Lighting Design, to design the structure of the Multipurpose room
- Capital Projections, to offer insight into film equipment needed for the multipurpose room
- Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI)
- Susan Dunlop, to develop the Gallery shop business plan

Rather than hiring consultants for a specific period of time, most of these consultants were held on a retainer. This enabled the OAG to ask questions when they came up, and offered the OAG freedom to consult them throughout the project.

The CCI played a major role in the development of the design of the facility and collection storage at the OAG. In order to ensure the OAG met Category A facility requirements, Simon Lambert assembled a checklist for the contractors to follow while they developed their drawings. The checklist included points such as the appropriate places to install sensors or security cameras, and the proper sealing of a washroom if it is located above a gallery. Lambert walked OAG staff through the requirements and attended meetings with the contractors to ensure they were included in the design. Accordingly, CCI was another partner along with the architect advocates and the OAG staff that gradually signed off on 50%, 75%, then and 95% of the construction drawings.

[Who was contracted for this project?](#)

EBC Inc. was contracted by the City of Ottawa for the design-build of the Ottawa Art Gallery Expansion and Arts Court Redevelopment project.

The Design Build team includes:

- Régis Côté et associés (Architect of record);
- LEMAYMICHAUD architecture design (joint venture with Régis Côté for private tower)
- Dupras Ledoux, (Engineering consulting firm)
- Pasquin St-Jean, (Engineering consulting firm)

Throughout the OAG Expansion and Arts Court Redevelopment project, the project team worked with Barry Padolsky Associates and KPMB Architects. As an expert in heritage buildings, Padolsky was involved in the Arts Court redevelopment, while Mitch Hall from KPMB was the lead on the OAG Expansion and served as an architect advocate.

Who opposed the project?

Securing public funding was an initial barrier to this project. The OAG was working to secure public funding in a community where national arts institutions receive significant public support from all levels of government. As the city's professional art gallery, the gallery spent a few years refining this message and building up municipal champions to support this project. The first form of major political support was seen in the election of Jim Watson as mayor of Ottawa.

On a provincial level, the OAG had to advocate for why \$6 million in funding from the Ottawa Chamber Music Society's (OCMS) un-realized concert hall (Festival Hall) project should be reallocated to the OAG Expansion and Arts Court Redevelopment Project. With support from their MPP Madeleine Meilleur, council approved this decision.

The greatest challenge for the OAG may have been at the Federal level, when the City of Ottawa's application to the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund was rejected under the previous government. This grant was a major condition to the success of the project, and not being approved was a large set back. In order to compensate for the lack of funds, the City of Ottawa generously raised their contribution. When the current Government was elected in 2015 and there was an increase in funding to the Department of Canadian Heritage's Canada Cultural Spaces Fund, the City successfully submitted a second application. The City received \$5.25 million to fund the expansion of the gallery and the redevelopment of the Arts Court building. The gallery also received an additional \$1.3 million for specialized equipment for the new space from the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund.

The "How"

How did the project move from concept to construction?

Following the comprehensive feasibility study done by LORD consulting in 2004 and an anniversary event Celebrating 35 Years of the Firestone Collection of Canadian Art in 2008, the timing was right to share with the public their intentions to expand the gallery. The appointment of a new Board Chair and Director and CEO brought on in 2010 to move this project forward, the pieces were beginning to fall into place to move the project from conception to construction. Two years of searching for a suitable site, including a year of testing

Lansdowne as a suitable location, enabled the OAG to move forward on the functional design planning.

The OAG consulted with architects to illustrate priorities for the new build, including the scale of the building, how each space should be connected, and their budget expectations. This enabled the OAG to establish a general understanding of the overall conceptual design of the building project quite early on. With this vision articulated, they secured approval from City Council and the City went out to tender and secured contracts.

When the City of Ottawa released the Requests for Qualifications (RFQs) in 2013 for the project, which now hosts the condos and hotel, the new scale of The OAG had already been established. Approximately 40% of the drawings for the gallery were made, and there was an understanding of what the University of Ottawa space would entail. While they knew they wanted a tower to serve as a type of residential building and were looking to for a private partner to support the project, they did not know who would place a bid or what the end use of the space would be.

As a design-build method was chosen to complete this project, construction began before all design plans were finalized. Construction began in summer 2015 once the partnerships were established, drawings were finalized and made public, and private partners were identified.

[How was a construction plan formed?](#)

The Ottawa Art Gallery Expansion and Arts Court Redevelopment was a contractor led design-build project. This meant while the architects, engineers, and contractors worked as an integrated team to take the project from design development through construction of the facility, the contractors EBC Inc. led most aspects of building and were responsible for subcontracting.

Throughout the project, Mitch Hall from KPMB Architects was fundamental in advocating for the OAG and artists' needs throughout the design process. They initially worked with the OAG on establishing the big pieces of the design, including the types of programming and storage spaces, and how they should relate to each other. These plans were increasingly refined and became the functional design plan, which then became the exemplar design that the construction drawings were based on. As stakeholders engaged early on in the project to support planning and designing, the City hired them to ensure that the general contractor was complying with the exemplar designs they initiated. The OAG and the advocate architects gradually signed off on 50%, 75%, then and 95% of the construction drawings.

The OAG also worked with partners and stakeholders in developing the design their new facility. For example, they worked very closely with the Canadian Film Institute (CFI) on the development of the Alma Duncan Salon located in the OAG. This room was designed as a cinema, as well as an exhibition and event space. The CFI was consulted throughout the design

planning to ensure the film and media arts needs for this specific mixed-use space were met. As a result, the technical abilities of the space enable them to showcase 35 films in various formats. The OAG now features screenings for the Canadian Film Institute and hosts the Ottawa International Animation Festival.

Ottawa's Urban Design Review Panel (UDRP), which is an independent advisory panel of volunteer professionals, reviewed and provided feedback on the design of the OAG Expansion and Arts Court Redevelopment Project in an effort to enhance the City's ability to achieve architectural and urban design excellence.

[How was accessibility and inclusion incorporated into the project?](#)

Accessibility was a major component in the OAG expansion project, and is reflected in the design and operations of the building. The OAG made major investments to accessibility, ensuring physical and social barriers were broken down. Notably, the City of Ottawa hired and accessibility consultant to work on the design of the space, and the OAG performed market research to determine their main audience, and tailor the operations of the gallery to accommodate them. The OAG engaged ACART to conduct market research utilizing enviro-nics big data to create "profiles". As a result, the major accessibility features of the OAG include:

- Free entry to all
- Extended hours of operations. The OAG is open from 9 AM to 9 PM, seven days a week and the OAG's Jackson Cafe is open from 8 AM to 11 PM
- All of the gallery spaces and entrances are physically accessible to wheelchair users
- There is a designated accessible drop off location for Para Transpo
- Multi-user washrooms on every floor
- Free childcare services are offered during exhibition opening receptions and from 3 PM – 7 PM on Fridays

Prior to the opening of the new building, OAG staff participated in all gendered training as well as Indigenous relations training and conflict management to encourage inclusion on all aspects of their offerings. The OAG also worked with non-visual learner Carmen Papallia to explore radical accessibility and how a visual arts institute can be more engaging to individuals with sight impairment.

[How was energy efficiency and the environment incorporated?](#)

As the facility is municipally operated, the City of Ottawa managed the energy efficiency retrofits. The OAG is a LEED Silver Certified facility.

[How were contingencies managed?](#)

The most notable contingency the OAG faced was the yearlong delay in the project timeline. This delay proved to be very challenging for the OAG staff in their planning of the inaugural exhibition and opening event, as well as forming complementary marketing and media plans.

As the building timeline was continually pushed back, the opening date was repeatedly shifted and plans had to be adjusted. This required staff and partners to be flexible to the unpredictable nature of such a large-scale expansion project. To facilitate this flexibility, the OAG project leads remained transparent with their staff and partners, providing frequent updates so all could stay informed and adjust accordingly. The OAG Director led many capital campaign announcements and did tours of the construction site in order to keep momentum going.

While the OAG and the City requested to have the pipes and HVAC tight to the ceiling in the Spencerville Gallery, these comments were missed during the design phase. This was noticed by the OAG during one of their daily site visits, and the developer fixed the mistake. Similarly, the OAG also installed a false wood ceiling in the Firestone Gallery to help cover up last minute conduit that was missed during the design phase.

[How were day-to-day operations impacted?](#)

In order to better manage the increase in workload, the OAG was closed to the public during the last year of construction. For the first three years they managed operations as usual and planned for how operations would have to shift with the growth of the gallery. Undoubtedly, there was quite a significant increase in hours worked every week. In order to keep staff focused on their current roles, and be able to stay motivated when their workloads would increase after the project was completed and the gallery footprint increased, the Director and Project Manager took on most of the daily responsibilities related to the project. Considering the contractor began work at 6 AM, by the time their workday began at 9 AM, their inbox was already flooded with emails from the contractor, and immediate answers were required on building related decisions. This was a very challenging time for the Director and Chief Financial Officer who were managing three large projects, gallery operations in Arts Court, ramping up operations for the new gallery, running a capital campaign and managing a building project. Balancing competing priorities of cash flow as well as staff, board and community expectations was ongoing throughout the project.

[How were programs managed during construction?](#)

For the first two years of construction, the OAG managed programs as per usual. When the OAG closed for the final year of construction from 2017 to 2018, they operated under the banner of OAG Out There. Programming was held offsite and the OAG did not hold large-scale exhibitions. Instead, they focused on community partnerships to offer community based programming and exhibitions. For example, the OAG partnered with embassies such the French Embassy and the British High Commission on a joint exhibition for 2017 celebrations, as well as had an ongoing partnership with the Czech Embassy. The OAG also held activities such as the Flash Mob with the Korean Cultural Centre. These programs ensured the OAG was still active in the community and remained relevant to their audiences.

How was the project funded?

The OAG expansion project was funded through municipal, provincial and federal public funds as well as a capital campaign and financial support from their private partners. The OAG Expansion and Arts Court Redevelopment is a \$38.8 million project that is funded by the City of Ottawa, the Province of Ontario, and other partners including the Ottawa Art Gallery and the University of Ottawa.

Public funding:

For this project the City of Ottawa contributed \$17 million.

In 2010, the OAG Expansion and Arts Court Redevelopment project received \$6 million in provincial funding after the Ottawa Chamber Music Society's (OCMS) project to build a concert hall (Festival Hall) was no longer feasible due a lack of supplementary funds from other sources.

When a 2011 application to the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund for a \$9 million grant was unsuccessful, the City of Ottawa stepped in to supplement this loss in funding. However, when the subsequent application to the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund in was submitted in 2016, the redevelopment project received \$5.25 million to fund the expansion of the gallery and the redevelopment of the Arts Court building. The gallery also received an additional \$1.3 million for specialized equipment for the new space from the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund. These funds were matched with private and corporate donations through the OAG's capital campaign.

Capital Campaign - ART NOW:

To develop their capital campaign, ART NOW, the OAG consulted Susan Doyle of SD Coaching. Doyle guided them through the process of determining the scale of their capital campaign, based on their previous successes and the anticipated building timeline. The OAG wanted to remain modest in their goal, recognizing that Ottawa is a city with a wide array of other prominent cultural organizations and nongovernmental organizations that also look for support. In the end, the OAG decided on a \$3.5 Million goal for their capital campaign.

With their goal set, the OAG established a fundraising committee lead by the Board Chair, Lawson Hunter and the Director and CEO, Alexandra Badzak. The committee was primarily made up of board members as well as community members with a commitment to contribute to the campaign and support fundraising initiatives. A fundraising package was assembled and shared with targeted stakeholders and previous donors.

ART NOW Fundraising Committee Members included:

- Lawson Hunter (Chair)
- Alexandra Badzak (OAG Director & CEO)
- Dr. Rebecca Baker
- Rachel Baxter

- Tom Houston
- Richard Roth
- Barbara Uteck
- Sue Wood

The capital campaign had a soft launch in 2013 before construction began, and a hard launch in 2015, once fundraising efforts had some momentum and pledges confirmed. In October 2015, a breakfast launch was held at The Westin Hotel, where the OAG shared design plans and presented their goal for the campaign. Key stakeholders and anticipated donors were invited and able to speak directly to the project team and contractor. Following this event, the OAG held their groundbreaking ceremony.

The OAG's fundraising efforts proved to be successful and their capital campaign raised over \$5 Million.

Private Partners:

In return for the construction of performance and teaching spaces in support of its Theatre Department programming, the University of Ottawa made a \$6 million contribution to the project.

As indicated in the RFQ, the hotel and condo developers were responsible for financing the build of the tower, and received air rights. Accordingly, there was a \$60 million investment from condo developers DevMcGill; and the hotel Group Germain Hotels.

The "Ongoing"

[How did the Ottawa Art Gallery project new financials?](#)

When the OAG projected financials for the new facility, they used their 2013 budget as a base line and tripled certain core areas such as their exhibition space. For the areas that were new to their budget, including the gallery shop and rentals program, they looked to outside advisors to create projections. For the OAG gift shop, they worked with retired LORD consultant, Susan Dunlop to create the Business Plan. Students from the Telfer School of Management also headed a study as a master's project to determine rates for the rentals and catering.

[How is the Ottawa Art Gallery accounting for increases in expenses?](#)

Throughout the building process, the OAG and the City of Ottawa negotiated an increase in the operational grant provided by the City to support their increase in expenses due to occupying a larger space and program expansion. The City almost tripled their operational grant, and increased their funding to display and store the Firestone Collection. The OAG was able to grow substantially over a period of time and achieved this increase by embedding their growth on a capital and operational basis within The Ottawa 20/20 Arts and Heritage Plan, ensuring the expansion project was a priority in the City's cultural plan.

The OAG also receives a small rental fee from the Jackson Cafe and a percentage of their profits. They are also increasing their annual fundraising efforts and will be implementing a second fundraising event to support their annual Le Party Art Auction.

The OAG rentals program has been greatly successful and profitable. While they originally anticipated their spaces would be used for internal or Arts Court programming initiatives, there has been a high demand for private and corporate rentals, generating significant revenue.

How has staffing evolved?

Prior to the expansion, the OAG had a full time staff of seven individuals. Following the expansion, 22 staff members now support their operations. The OAG chose to onboard staff gradually when they were confident the positions were justified in their new operations plan, and these positions were included in business plans that articulated the growth of OAG. Staffing has grown in all departments at the OAG, including Development, Marketing and Curatorial.

How is the Ottawa Art Gallery being maintained?

As a municipally owned building, the City of Ottawa is responsible for ongoing maintenance of the facility. Due to the extended operational hours and event rentals that often end at 3 AM, there is now dedicated City maintenance staff that is available on call at all times to support any facility requests. The lines of communication are open, cell phone numbers have been shared between the OAG staff and the City's facility maintenance staff to ensure requests and last minute needs are effectively managed. The OAG worked extensively on negotiations – and on an ongoing basis throughout and after the project – with the City of Ottawa to secure a 25-year agreement to cover maintenance and increased operational funding to support the gallery's efforts in operating their designated space in Arts Court.

The City of Ottawa manages the buildings assets through their own asset management system. In order to finance future equipment replacements and upgrades not covered by the City, the OAG maintains a reserve fund.

What lessons were learned in the first 90 days?

Within the first few months of opening, the OAG staff quickly learned they had created a space that resonated well within the community. By considering the needs of their users and deliberately providing space that is open and free to all, the OAG was able to successfully maintain community buy-in and build inclusion into all aspects of the project. The result is a building that has on average 30,000 visitors a month. They also learned how to respond to the success of the building. This included problem solving a staffing shortage by increasing the number of front facing staff members and better managing the increase in facility maintenance such as a developing a more intensive cleaning and restocking schedule.

What lessons were learned in the first year?

Within the first year of operations at the newly expanded OAG, staff underestimated the demand they would receive for the use of their rental spaces and the increase in revenue that would result. With this increase in demand, the OAG also learned more advanced planning was required for their programming calendar. Programming initiatives had to be organized and dates had to be established very early on to ensure they had prioritized their own needs over rentals. Similarly, as their staff team grew three times in size, the office dynamics shifted and roles and responsibilities were adjusted to reflect the change in the facility. Staff learned to communicate within and across departments more frequently, to ensure all were properly informed of gallery initiatives.

This project also taught the OAG Project Manager to be more flexible with unexpected changes and needs. Even with careful planning and consideration, contingencies occur in all building projects. Being understanding and prepared to react to change is instrumental for a successful capital project.

Case Study Summary

This unique capital project can be understood as project successfully backed by collaboration and perseverance. By integrating the new OAG facility with complementary building partners in the private sector and at the University of Ottawa, a truly multi-faceted space was realized. With inclusion and accessibility embedded into the vision for the space from the beginning of this project, the OAG's enhanced spaces for collections and programming will better serve artists and the community at large. Operating as a creative gathering place that is open to all, the new OAG will undoubtedly play a role in forging the next chapter of Ottawa's cultural history.

Resources

The following resources below have been provided as additional information for readers.

Websites

- [Ottawa Art Gallery Website](#)
- [Ottawa Art Gallery \(OAG\) Expansions and Arts Court Redevelopment - City webpage](#)
- [Art Now - Capital Campaign Webpage](#)

Documents

- [Ottawa 20/20 Arts & Heritage Plan](#)
- [City of Ottawa's: A Renewed Action Plan for Arts, Heritage and Culture in Ottawa](#)
- [OAG "Connecting Artists and Community" Feasibility Study - Phase 2 Report](#)
- [OAG Expansion Press Kit](#)
- [OAG Inaugural Exhibition Press Kit](#)
- [About the Project – Construction Brochure](#)
- [City of Ottawa – Project Update](#)

ArtsBuild Ontario Webinar

- Working Together: Multi-Partner Creative Space Projects
 - [Recording](#)
 - [Transcription](#)

Media

- [The New Ottawa Art Gallery Promises to Welcome All](#)