



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

The Honourable Pascale St-Onge
Minister of Canadian Heritage

December 9, 2024

RE: Urgent Need to Restore Public Arts Funding and Address Regional Inequities

Dear Minister St-Onge,

We are writing today – as MPs from every opposition party represented in Parliament – regarding the urgent need to restore public funding for the arts, and to address long-standing inequities in how funds are allocated across the country.

The arts play a pivotal role in our society, enriching our lives, fostering creativity, promoting cultural diversity, and providing a critical outlet for activism. However, artists and arts organizations across the country are grappling with significant financial challenges amidst often reduced government funding.

These financial challenges are made worse by regional inequities in federal funding: according to public data from the Canada Council for the Arts for 2022-23, while Montreal, Winnipeg, and Vancouver received an average of \$18.30 per capita, other communities fared dramatically worse. For example: Edmonton received \$5.56 per capita, the Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo area received a mere \$3.39 per capita, and Sarnia-Lambton received nothing at all. Additional examples are included in the attached table.

To address both these issues, we call for you to:

- 1. Restore the Canada Council for the Arts' granting budget to 2021 levels of \$500 million** to bolster artistic excellence and innovation across Canada, as called for by the Canadian Arts Coalition and the Canadian Dance Assembly to significantly alleviate the funding shortfall in the arts sector.

2. Immediately address the regional inequities in federal arts funding by directing restored funds towards underfunded communities. For example, this could be done by using the Regional Development Agency (RDA) model for funding allocation, ensuring equitable and proportionate distribution of resources across the country. The RDA model has been successfully implemented for other federal funding streams, suggesting artists could benefit from the adoption of a similar model for grant distribution.

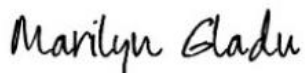
Taken together, these calls would contribute not only to the vibrancy of the arts in Canada but also to ensure more equitable opportunities for all regions to enrich the cultural fabric of the country.

We would appreciate your careful consideration of this matter and would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further with you. Thank you for your service to Canadians.

Sincerely,



Martin Champoux
MP for Drummond



Marilyn Gladu
MP for Sarnia—Lambton



Elizabeth May
MP for Saanich-Gulf Islands



Heather McPherson
MP for Edmonton Strathcona



Kristina Michaud
MP for Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia



Mike Morrice
MP for Kitchener Centre



Christine Normandin
MP for Saint-Jean

Canada Council for the Arts Funding Overview 2022-23

| Location | CCA Grant Amount Awarded | % of Total Grant Amount | Population | % of Canadian Population | Funding per person |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Montréal | \$93,739,121 | 26.01% | 4,378,796 | 11.25% | \$21.41 |
| Vancouver | \$41,847,499 | 11.61% | 2,842,730 | 7.30% | \$14.72 |
| Winnipeg | \$12,547,006 | 3.48% | 871,778 | 2.24% | \$14.39 |
| Toronto | \$81,809,775 | 22.70% | 6,685,621 | 17.17% | \$12.24 |
| Edmonton | \$9,046,654 | 2.51% | 1,516,719 | 3.90% | \$5.96 |
| Kelowna — Lake Country | \$622,590 | 0.17% | 136,290 | 0.35% | \$4.57 |
| Kitchener - Cambridge - Waterloo | \$2,111,764 | 0.59% | 622,497 | 1.60% | \$3.39 |
| Malpeque | \$130,200 | 0.04% | 39,731 | 0.10% | \$3.28 |
| Churchill—Keewatinook Aski | \$252,266 | 0.07% | 87,027 | 0.22% | \$2.90 |
| Drummond | \$110,600 | 0.03% | 107,965 | 0.28% | \$1.02 |
| Sarnia - Lambton | \$0 | 0.00% | 107,077 | 0.28% | \$ 0 |