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Opera.ca
Written Submission for the Pre-Budget
Consultations in Advance of the 2019
Budget

Submitted to:
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Recommendation 1

Opera.ca recommends that the Government of Canada fulfill the commitment made in Budget 2016 to increase the budget of the Canada Council for the Arts by \$180 million by 2021, by following through with the remaining new investments of \$110 million in 2018-19, \$145 million in 2019-20, and \$180 million in 2020-21.

Together with the \$40 million and \$75 million investment in 2017 and 2018 respectively, the government will have fulfilled its proposal to invest \$550 million in the Canada Council for the Arts over five years.

Recommendation 2

Increase Canadian Heritage's Endowment Incentives component of the Canada Cultural Investment Fund (CCIF) by \$6.5 million to bring it up from its current state of \$19 million to \$25.5 million.

Opera.ca appreciates the opportunity to submit a brief to the Standing Committee on Finance as part of its pre-budget consultations 2019.

Opera.ca is the voice of Canada's opera sector: the companies, artists, businesses and organizations that bring opera to Canadians, and indeed beyond. Our members are an important part of their community, be that community a large urban centre or a smaller town or city. Through partnerships and collaborations, we reach out to Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

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The Government of Canada's announcement in 2016 to double the Canada Council's budget over five years created a historic opportunity for the Canada Council to make reinvestments to the sector in support

Key to the opera sector is the commitment to achieving a reinvestment target of a 55% increase to Core Funding. Core funding, also known as operating funding, creates stability for organizations and their communities.

The promised increased investment in the Canada Council for the Arts will ensure that arts organizations, like opera companies, are able to increase their civic engagement, be reflective of an increasingly diverse public, and develop the best of artistic creation and practice.

Following through with this commitment means that the Canada Council is able to affirm its historic commitment to providing Canadians with affordable access to diverse cultural experiences, while catalyzing local and regional economic growth through increased engagement in the arts.

Recommendation 2

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Canadian Heritage's Endowment Incentives component of the Canada Cultural Investment Fund (CCIF), is an important program for opera companies in building their long-term capital.

Endowment Incentives allows companies to leverage and increase private sector support for their Endowments. These endowments contribute a steady stream of income, ensuring organizational stability, that in turn provides stable, predictable jobs for artists and those employed in the sector. Many opera companies in Canada are still building their endowment capital or are just beginning to build endowments, and leveraging private funds with matching public contributions is powerful mechanism for increasing endowments.

The intent of Endowment Incentives is to provides matching funds – of up to one dollar for every dollar raised from private donors – to create endowment funds or to increase existing ones. However, the growing demand for the program has meant that this component of the Cultural Investment Fund has been able to grant only 66% of requested matching funds. An increase of \$6.5 million will bring the granting ratio closer to 100%, more fully leveraging contributions from Canadians who support the arts through private donations for greatest benefit.