



Canadian Museums Association Federal Budget Recommendations 2016

WHO WE ARE

The Canadian Museums Association (CMA) was established in 1947 as a registered charity, dedicated to the advancement and appreciation of Canadian museums as public non-profit institutions. We have close to 2000 members all across Canada.

The CMA offers professional development for museum staff and volunteers, key services, grants and contributions to support our museums, such as youth employment opportunities. We regularly consult with our members and can say with assurance they support our recommendations to you.

A number of provinces and territories increasingly recognize that heritage plays an important part in regional economic development: museums and galleries are popular attractions for tourists, who contribute an estimated \$ 17 billion to the Canadian economy. We think it is time for the federal government to pay similar attention to the economic impacts of our heritage institutions.

Museums also play an important part in forging Canadian identity, encouraging citizens' involvement, educating our youth and providing employment, notably for young Canadians. Canada's museums welcome more than 60 million visitors each year and engage over 100,000 volunteers. Museums are rated as extremely popular among Canadians and are perceived as highly respected, trusted places to learn about our country and other world cultures.

We are strong supporters in welcoming refugees to Canada and wish to offer museums as centres of education, orientation and support to these new and hopefully permanent citizens. Some years ago, we designed the free museums pass for new Canadian citizens, now administered by the Institute of Canadian Citizenship. This has been a very effective program to welcome new citizens at the time of their citizenship ceremony. In fact, many of these ceremonies are now held in museums across Canada.

Our organization and our members are intent to move forward to address and update aboriginal cultural policy following the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report. We have a game plan to do so, but we will require support to undertake this, in close consultation with major aboriginal partners.

Finally, CMA is one of a small handful of organizations approved for a National Signature Project for Canada 150. Our **CANADA KIDS** project will offer access and engagement with our national heritage, directly reaching over 3 million Canadians, as well as implementing a national communications/promotional campaign. We will be happy to explain this project at the hearing.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The Canadian Museums Association wishes to place before you the following recommendations for Budget 2016-2017. We respectfully request your serious consideration of these recommendations, many of which are long standing ones:

1. Creating Jobs for Young Canadians:

Youth unemployment remains a very serious issue for the future of our economy and nation. We were very happy to see that the Prime Minister has included the following priority in the Mandate Letter to the Minister of Canadian Heritage: “Increase funding for the Young Canada Works program to help prepare the next generation of Canadians working in the heritage sector.”

This program provides opportunities for youth to get started on the right career path and constitutes a long-term investment in youth, their education and our collective future. Administered by the CMA for the Department of Canadian Heritage, this program has been a remarkable success by all evaluations, but it is seriously oversubscribed. Each year we have to turn down close to 90% of all internship applications and some 50% of summer job applications from museum employers.

We request an immediate increase of \$5 million per year to this youth engagement program for museums and galleries, as per the new Government’s pledge in the election campaign.

2. Review and Increase of the Museums Assistance Program:

The Museums Assistance Program (MAP) was created in 1972 with a total annual allocation of \$7 million for grants to fund projects at non-federal museums. This is a valued program which supports exhibitions, conservation and preservation work, educational programs, and staff training at museums. Based on inflation, the 1972 investment would be equivalent to over \$38 million at today’s value. **MAP’s current allocation is only \$6.5 million per year** (in nominal dollars). It is also important to understand that in 1972, there were about 500 museums in Canada, whereas today Canada counts more than 2,600 museums. Clearly the vast majority do not receive any federal assistance. This is a further indication of the erosion of this program.

The many cutbacks this program has suffered are simply unconscionable. Canadians strongly support museums and yet the federal government has largely been ignoring these non-profit institutions for far too long. Some of our members felt the previous government redirected the program’s funds by placing different priorities upon it, such as to fund activities for the War of 1812 celebration, The Road to 2017, a national history agenda, etc.

It should also be noted that MAP includes a special component for aboriginal cultural heritage support. Two of the recommendations from the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* (recommendations #67 and 68) further affirm the need for immediate action to rebuild this valuable program.

We call upon the committee and the federal government to finally take action and to start restoring funding for MAP by at least progressively adding a percentage of the inflationary adjustment from 1972 dollars to current dollars.

3. International Cultural Support

For the past 10 years, Canadian cultural presence abroad has diminished significantly. At one time, culture was considered one of the 3 pillars of our foreign policy. That pillar was dismantled and is effectively inoperative at present.

We were therefore very happy to find the following in the Minister of Foreign Affairs' Mandate letter: "Increase Canada's educational and cultural interaction with the world. This would include: supporting the Minister of Canadian Heritage to restore the Promart and Trade Routes International cultural promotion programs, update their design, and increase related funding." A similar priority is to be found in the Mandate letter of the Minister of International Trade.

We submit to you that museums are an important component of any serious cultural diplomacy strategy, but due the precedent government's policies, they have been completely shut out. An example is the upcoming CANADA NOW program to be held in Beijing in April 2016, an initiative of the Canadian Fund for International Understanding through Culture (Can4Culture), a voluntary NGO, to showcase Canada's culture and heritage. Many Canadian cultural organizations participating in this program are being supported by China, with barely any funding from Ottawa. Unfortunately due to lack of any Canadian funding, the two proposed museum exhibitions have had to be cancelled for this festival.

We recommend the introduction as soon as possible of new funding programs to support international cultural initiatives by Canadian museums, galleries and other cultural organizations with eventual funding in the order of \$20 million per year.

4. Increase Museums' Self Sufficiency:

While museums and heritage organizations have relied heavily on government support in the past, our heritage institutions need to increase the diversification of their revenue sources by encouraging Canadians to become more active contributors to our heritage. Experience shows that programs such as a matching donation fund are a powerful incentive for existing private donors to increase their donations as well as for new donors to come on board.

By investing in a **federal program that matches each new dollar donated to museums (to an annual ceiling)**, excluding capital campaigns for the construction of new museums, the Government of Canada will create the right conditions to stimulate philanthropy and economic growth, help our museums become more fiscally strong, and develop the sector's fundraising expertise. With an annual fund of \$50 million, museums' operating budgets that come from private donations could be increased from 9% to 15-20% through this initiative.

The Department of Canadian Heritage has an existing matching donations program which is oversubscribed, restricted to endowment matching and only eligible to arts organizations; museums and galleries are excluded.

During the election campaign, the previous government supported the matching donation initiative, but their application was limited to endowments. By creating a new accessible program, museums with sustained revenues and a strong professional workforce will gain the capacity to restore more of Canada's heritage objects, enable their presentation to Canadians, create more exhibitions that promote our culture, and in turn stimulate the country's "cultural economy".

To enhance economic growth in Canada's heritage sector and encourage greater self-sufficiency for museums, we recommend the implementation of the Canadians Supporting their Museums Fund initiative, a matching donations program of \$50 million a year which will help diversify sources of support and increase the engagement of Canadian citizens with their heritage institutions.

5. Immunity from Seizure:

We would like to end this submission by drawing your attention as Parliamentarians to an important issue, even if it somewhat falls outside your immediate preoccupations. A common issue with international exhibitions or artifacts coming to Canada is the potential seizure of objects where ownership disputes may exist. Canada has immunity from seizure laws that apply to most countries and which are very effective. One exception is the absence of protection for art works from The Republic of China (Taiwan), which has much interest in sharing exhibitions with Canada.

One current example is China Global - The Vancouver Society for Promotion of Chinese Art and Culture, which intends to build a Museum of Chinese Art in Vancouver, BC. With support from The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation, China Global has already helped fund and organize a major exhibition from Beijing's Palace Museum in Vancouver. They have actively sought to bring precious artifacts from the National Palace Museum in Taipei to Toronto's Royal Ontario Museum as well as their gallery in Vancouver, however there remains a serious threat that these artifacts could be seized by a foreign government while in Canada. This is not an acceptable situation.

We strongly recommend that the government make arrangements with the Republic of China to ensure the safe loan and return of art works to and from Taiwan. Similarly, we request the same assurance for Canadian works when exhibited or loaned in Taiwan. We also recommend that Canadian legislation move forward to protect loans from other nations not currently included in our immunity from seizure legislation.

For more information, please contact

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