



**Submission
for the Pre-Budget Consultations in Advance of the 2021
Budget**

**OUT OF COVID-19:
CREATING A TRULY REPRESENTATIVE, EQUITABLE AND
INCLUSIVE ARTS ECOLOGY**

Submitted By: the Canadian Arts Coalition

Recommendations for the Federal Government to:

1. Dedicate funds to enable a safe, green re-opening of arts venues and encourage the public to return to the live arts.
2. Address systemic racism in arts funding by providing funds to ensure enhanced interim, ongoing operational and project funding for Indigenous, racialized, deaf and disabled and community based arts organizations.
3. Extend income support programs, including EI and CEWS and develop a Universal Basic income.
4. Invest in innovations in digital creation that enhance financial stability
5. Engage the private sector in the recovery by increasing the charitable tax credit.

About the Canadian Arts Coalition

The Canadian Arts Coalition is a collaborative non-partisan movement spearheaded by a group of national arts service and membership organizations, with a volunteer Steering Committee comprised of artists and arts administrators. We are united in the belief that a strong arts and culture sector contributes to economically vibrant, liveable, and innovative communities, and that strong federal cultural policy and investment frameworks leverage arts and culture's contribution to the Canadian economy, Canadian communities, and Canada's standing internationally.

Canadian Arts Coalition's member organizations collectively represent thousands of artists and thousands of arts organizations. The list of members can be found on the Canadian Arts Coalition's website: canadianartscoalition.com

Executive Summary

Covid-19 has effectively upended the day-to-day life of Canadians and those around the world. The Canadian Arts Coalition (CAC) is acutely aware of the effect the pandemic has had on artists and arts organizations across Canada. We are particularly aware of its impact on Indigenous, racialized, deaf and disabled artists, community-based artists and arts organizations who were already at risk.

We are concerned about how the arts and the broader Canadian society will rebound and how we need to work together to build a truly inclusive society, one in which the arts play a prominent role as they have during these past few months with Canadians passing their time reading, listening to music, watching movies as well as online performances; and one that resolutely includes timeframes and goals to rebuild the arts ecology to be fully inclusive and representative, rectifying historical exclusions and barriers many artists, organizations and their communities continue to face and which have become more evident during this crisis.

We are aware of the economic benefits of the arts as in 2016 \$1.7 billion was spent on culture and sport tourism in Canada and, as such, support to the arts is critical to the re-emergence of Canadian society post-Covid-19. Beyond economic benefits, the CAC wishes to underline the importance of the values that the arts promote and support in our communities. These values of inclusiveness, engagement and representation have contributed to a growing understanding of who we are as peoples living on this land, Turtle Island, and support social cohesion of our constituents, particularly Indigenous, racialized, deaf and disabled as well as community-based artists and arts organizations who were already at risk and

need focused support now to ensure they survive and can contribute to a vibrant and equitable arts ecology.

The CAC has surveyed our membership to gain insight on these issues and received responses representing over 5,900 arts and culture organizations, and an additional 58,650 individual artists. The survey provides insights into the issues across many arts disciplines and highlights indicate that:

- 85% believe they will be unable to recover from the effects of the pandemic for another 18-24 months; 87% perceived gaps in the ability of the current relief programs to meet the needs of their members, citing the need for income support programs and encouraging the Federal government to consider providing a Universal Basic Income. *Of particular concern is the current precarity of Indigenous, racialized, the deaf and disabled and other marginalized artists. 69% of respondents also felt that the funding channeled through the Canada Council for the Arts and Department of Canadian Heritage failed to fill these gaps.*
- 77% want the government to provide increased support for Canadian Heritage's arts programs which were already underfunded before the pandemic.
- 74% see the need to develop and support a coordinated marketing strategy to draw audiences back by amplifying the importance of arts and culture in supporting mental health and community connectedness, encouraging social cohesion at a time of social distancing.
- 87% are looking to the federal government to strengthen support for digital creation to ensure artists are fairly compensated and that their work finds an audience.
- 56% of respondents suggest incentives to encourage private donations.

The CAC considers it critical for the Federal Government to ensure the arts play a necessary role in the national recovery from the pandemic. We are grateful for the \$500 million in Emergency funding dedicated to the arts, culture and sports sector to date and are aware that other governments are putting considerable new resources into the arts, e.g., Germany (\$54 billion Euros), the U.K. (1.57 billion pounds).¹ In addition to these financial commitments, these governments are also putting into place long-term strategies to assist the arts in their recovery efforts.² We encourage Canada's federal government to make similar long term commitments, in concert with the provinces.

Recovery Supports Needed:

The CAC Survey demonstrates that many arts organizations are very concerned about the impact of Covid-19 on their operations, how they will survive this crisis, the timelines for re-opening and the assistance they will need to reassert themselves, including the provision of safe spaces and the promotion of the arts to the public.

The CAC recommends dedicated infrastructure funding for arts venues to enable them to contribute to a sustainable green recovery. Funds are also needed to cover the increased costs associated with

¹ <https://www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-53302415>;
<https://archinect.com/news/article/150191060/german-government-offers-50-billion-aid-package-to-artists>

² <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/covid-19/covid-19-response-reset>;
<https://www.artsprofessional.co.uk/magazine/article/systemic-funding-failures-its-time-fix-fault-lines>;
<https://www.giarts.org/racial-equity-arts-funding-statement-purpose>

implementing practices to minimize the risk of transmission of infection among attendees, performers, production crew, and front of house, including the purchase of PPE and other safety items.

The cost of regaining audience trust is that all cultural organizations need to be consistent across all platforms so that the public will be safe and feel comfortable. The Federal government has an important role to play in acknowledging how the arts have soothed anxieties through shared experiences during the Covid Crisis, highlighting the immense social value of the arts as important forces for recovery. For this reason, the CAC recommends that the Federal government create an “Arts for All” campaign and subsidize the cost of admissions for the first year of venues opening via a tax benefit up to a set amount of \$300.

An Inclusive Tomorrow Needs Equity Now:

The arts have always had a role to educate, enlighten and entertain but they also promote empathy and understanding as society grapples with the issues of racism and prejudice. The CAC is particularly aware of the impact Covid-19 is having on Indigenous, racialized, the deaf and disabled and other marginalized artists and arts organizations who were already at risk.³ Yet, while those from Indigenous and racialized communities consume arts at the same rate as others, they are severely underrepresented in decision-making roles within the arts, are perilously behind White artists in their earnings and their organizations tend to exist on project or low-levels of operating funding.⁴ Further, there are high needs for legal services to support these artists.⁵ This affects the framing, commissioning, and funding of the arts in Canada and their presentation to Canadians.

The CAC recommends that the federal government address issues of systemic racism in arts funding and require implementation of equity actions with clear goals and timetables to achieve equality of outcomes to ensure operational and project funding are provided to Indigenous, racialized, the deaf and disabled as well as community-based artists and arts organizations. Although there is some funding for this now, there needs to be more money allocated to these artists, their arts organizations.

As part of this, the CAC recommends that the federal government enhance by \$50 million the Canadian Heritage arts programs that were already underfunded before the pandemic. These programs (CATF, CAPF, etc.), support the production chain of the arts from training through presentation, and need more to meet the needs not only of existing clients but also those who were not clients before, particularly to ensure operational and project funding is provided to Indigenous, racialized, the deaf and disabled as well as community-based artists and arts organizations. Equally, the federal government should increase the allocation to Canada Council by \$50 million to ensure interim, operational and project funding as well as other resources are provided to arts organizations that have been severely impacted by the pandemic, particularly Indigenous, racialized, the deaf and disabled as well as community-based artists and arts organizations

³ <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1XdK4y92RVwEqqkQL-uCDVgEWqeGv2UIp/view>

⁴ <https://hillstrategies.com/resource/demographic-diversity-of-artists-in-canada-in-2016/>

⁵ <https://www.pacificlegaloutreach.com/national-network-of-legal-clinics-for-the-arts?rq=now%20more%20than%20ever>

From CERB To UBI:

With the July 31st announcement that CERB will end in September, we appreciate that the government will include independent contractors in its overhaul of the EI program.

The CERB has been a financial lifeline for artists, allowing them to avert bankruptcy and poverty. However, as artists and cultural workers are not able to return to a fully functioning cultural economy until all restrictions on public gatherings are lifted, they will not have access to many markets for cultural engagement. The vast majority of programs have been cancelled to the end of the calendar year with no confirmation of rescheduled dates, effectively cutting artists off from revenue-generating activities. Recognizing that the return to income is a long way off for artists, any new program must continue to support those who cannot return to work until at least the end of March 2021, one year out from the first impacts of COVID-19.

An adaptation of CERB and its successor into a permanent Basic Income program would ensure a stable and effective future that recognizes the changing nature of employment for all Canadians. Furthermore, a Basic Income program would create equity and reduce poverty while continuing to support a thriving cultural economy. It would address the long-standing painful truth that those who contribute the most, who are truly the lifeblood of this \$53.1 billion industry - the artists - are paid the least for their contributions to an unquestionably essential service.

Enhanced Capacity for Digital Creation:

From the onset of the pandemic Canadians have increasingly turned to digital experiences with the arts. This has exposed the challenges faced by artists and arts organizations to meet the demands of their fellow citizens, while being fairly compensated for their own work. The development and use of digital technology in the arts should assist all aspects of arts presentation and administration as well as support artist fees and licensing.

The transition from live performances to digital experiences during this pandemic has also highlighted the severe technology gaps, data access, and poor infrastructure that racialized and Indigenous communities are experiencing. It has demonstrated that many organizations require significant investment in basic technology and training. It has also highlighted the need for the current copyright, licensing and royalty regimes to be updated and to make a rapid adjustment to digital art.

As a result, the CAC recommends that the federal government invest funds in the technologies, training and supports required to develop accessible digital arts experiences that fairly compensate the creators.

Engage the Private Sector in Recovery:

Those organizations that have been able to build endowments and develop strong relationships with donors have a better chance of survival after the pandemic. By providing an increase to the charitable tax credit, the government can provide an incentive to the private sector to participate in the recovery.

Request to Appear

The Canadian Arts Coalition would welcome the opportunity to appear before the Standing Committee on Finance. An invitation to appear can be emailed at info@canadianartscoalition.com.