

**Written Submission for the Pre-Budget
Consultations in Advance of the Upcoming
Federal Budget**

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List of Recommendations

- **Recommendation 1:** That the government implement an Arts and Culture Public Works Program in relation to COVID-19 recovery.
- **Recommendation 2:** That the government implement Universal Basic Income in relation to arts and culture professionals.

Body of Submission

• **Recommendation 1:** That the government implement an Arts and Culture Public Works Program in relation to COVID-19 recovery.

The program would employ arts and culture workers to undertake projects to help the country recover from COVID-19.

It would be administered by the Department of Canadian Heritage using existing funding mechanisms.

The goals of the program would be to maximize community involvement in arts and culture (especially in underserved or under-represented communities) and to provide employment for arts and culture workers to offset losses due to COVID-19.

Eligible projects would include: public performances, public art, free art classes, community-engaged art making projects, etc.

Projects would run for a full year to allow them to make a lasting impact and to provide stable income for arts and culture workers.

A minimum of 80% of project funding would need to be allocated to wages.

There would be a separate funding program for venues that would compensate them for hosting Arts and Culture Public Works projects. This would help offset their losses due to COVID-19.

Projected cost of a program employing 10,000 artists and supporting 1,000 venues would be approximately \$400 million.

Up to 10 million Canadians could be impacted by the program.

• **Recommendation 2:** That the government implement Universal Basic Income in relation to arts and culture professionals.

Arts and culture professionals would be significant beneficiaries of a Universal Basic Income program.

It is deeply ironic that core creatives - artists, writers, musicians, artisans - who originate the new ideas that drive Canada's creative economy are the most poorly compensated for their work. The average income for all cultural workers in 2016 was \$41,000. For artists it was \$24,300. (Hill Strategies).

Not only is the compensation low, it is also highly variable. Most core creatives are self-employed, surviving on sales, short term contracts, project grants and side hustles.

For these front line workers, the COVID-19 disruption has been catastrophic.

Universal Basic Income would provide a safety net for these essential workers to allow them to commit more fully to their professions without constantly worrying about financial disaster.