

2021 Pre-budget Consultation Brief

Submitted by the École nationale de cirque

Montreal

August 4, 2020

Recommendations

- Increase the annual budget envelope for the Canada Arts Training Fund (CATF) by \$10 million. This contribution will increase funding from \$22.6 million to \$32.6 million, enabling current and future recipients to strengthen their operations, enrich their educational programs and offset the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, which have greatly affected schools and their students.

Regarding the federal government's COVID-19 economic measures to help the arts training industry, we propose that the CATF's budget envelope be indexed over three years as follows:

- 2021–2022: \$4 million;
 - 2022–2023: \$3 million;
 - 2023–2024: \$3 million.
- Maintain the annual budget envelope for the Endowment Incentives component of the Canada Cultural Investment Fund (CCIF) for 2021–2022 but, as part of the COVID support measures, cancel the applicant's obligation to match contributions.
 - Extend the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) until March 2021.
 - Provide infrastructure funding to support up to 80% of the cost of new constructions, expansions and projects to bring infrastructure up to code.

Introduction

The École nationale de cirque (ENC) would like to acknowledge and express its sincere appreciation for the government's economic support to Canada's arts industry throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The CEWS, Canada Emergency Response Benefit and Emergency Support Fund for Cultural, Heritage and Sport Organizations have been vital to maintaining our institution's activities, keeping our teams employed and providing basic financial support to our partners whose projects have been cancelled.

The pandemic has significantly affected our students, both those living in Canada and abroad. They share the same concerns about returning to school, living in residence, paying tuition and living expenses, and taking practice-based courses online. The ENC responded quickly to the crisis by putting part of its curriculum online, developing protocols for the safe return of students, staff and instructors, offering student bursaries for living expenses and launching a new entrepreneur support program for 2020 graduates, who have been hit hard by the pandemic.

Although the ENC has succeeded in keeping its team members, students and the organization afloat, it is worried about the future of the arts industry. The industry has been shaken by the pandemic; it was among the first sectors of the Canadian economy to be forced to shut down and it will undoubtedly be among the last to reopen. The ENC and all members of the arts ecosystem hope that the Department of Canadian Heritage and the federal government will develop a solid recovery plan to support all segments of the economy and the arts value chain.

The Canada Arts Training Fund at the Department of Canadian Heritage is one of the only sources of federal funding that Canadian arts training institutions can access to provide high-calibre national

arts training, ensure financial and administrative stability and train artists who are recognized for their excellence in Canada and abroad. This funding is critical to supporting artistic careers and rebooting the arts economy during and after COVID-19.

The CATF currently supports more than 35 training institutions and disburses close to \$22.5 million in grants. As funding has been frozen for the past decade, an additional investment of \$10 million annually (for a total of \$32.6 million) would relieve the current and pre-pandemic pressure on the program and allow for new training institutions from various communities and artistic practices to be added. An increase would help current recipients recover from the pandemic crisis, stabilize operations, adapt training, hire cultural workers, and support students through financial tools and easier, increased access to psychosocial services.

Background

The arts and culture industry was immediately affected by government measures to slow the spread of COVID-19, such as restrictions on international travel, the cancellation of mass gatherings, school closures and work-at-home arrangements.

The federal government's CEWS and the Emergency Support Fund for Cultural, Heritage and Sport Organizations have significantly helped our organization and arts training schools across the country to continue activities, provide training and support for students, maintain our staff, teachers and community, and retain administrative staff so that our schools could adapt, stay connected to our communities and be allowed to safely reopen.

As the economy starts up again, our organizations must have the right resources to respond effectively to our industry's needs. In addition to the federal COVID-19 support measures, the CATF is a key tool for providing informed and targeted support for arts training institutions. In the past, CATF support has enabled our institutions to

- offer new training programs;
- develop artistic practices;
- keep tuition fees accessible;
- hire skilled staff and instructors;
- ensure selection and application procedures support accessibility;
- ensure training cohorts are more diverse;
- explore and innovate in the areas of technology, creation, production and dissemination;
- support lifelong learning at all career stages;
- develop partnerships and dialogue with our international counterparts;
- conduct long-term planning;
- help our employees and students care for their health and psychosocial well-being;
- enable artists to participate in community and audience development;
- reflect the diversity of Canadian society through current artistic practice in order to respond to calls for action by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in cooperation with Indigenous peoples, and to support the fight against racism and the exclusion of marginalized artists and newcomers, for example.

Our institution wants to continue these important initiatives while mitigating the current and future negative impacts of the pandemic. Despite the difficult period we are going through, it is important for us to maintain our capacity to innovate, as this is key to supporting the creativity, renewal and vitality of the country's arts industry and promoting Canada on the world stage.

Although it is difficult to predict when the crisis will end, it is reasonable to assume that it may take some time before our industry can start up again. While this is not the purpose of the pre-budget consultations, we recommend that the CEWS be extended until March 2021 to help us continue activities and contribute to the recovery when it does arrive. If we cannot retain our highly skilled instructors, they could be forced to make a career change, causing us to lose valuable expertise that would be very hard to regain.

Our organizations maintain their financial stability through private fund-raising. However, the current crisis affects private foundations' fund-raising activities and eliminates corporations' sponsorship budgets. As this situation has a huge impact on our fund-raising ability, we are calling on the government to ease the matching funds criterion for applicants to the Endowment Incentives Component of the Canada Cultural Investment Fund (CCIF) in 2021–2022. Fortunately, as the program has sufficient assets to address annual applications, the budget could be maintained even if the matching funds criterion were temporarily removed during the pandemic.

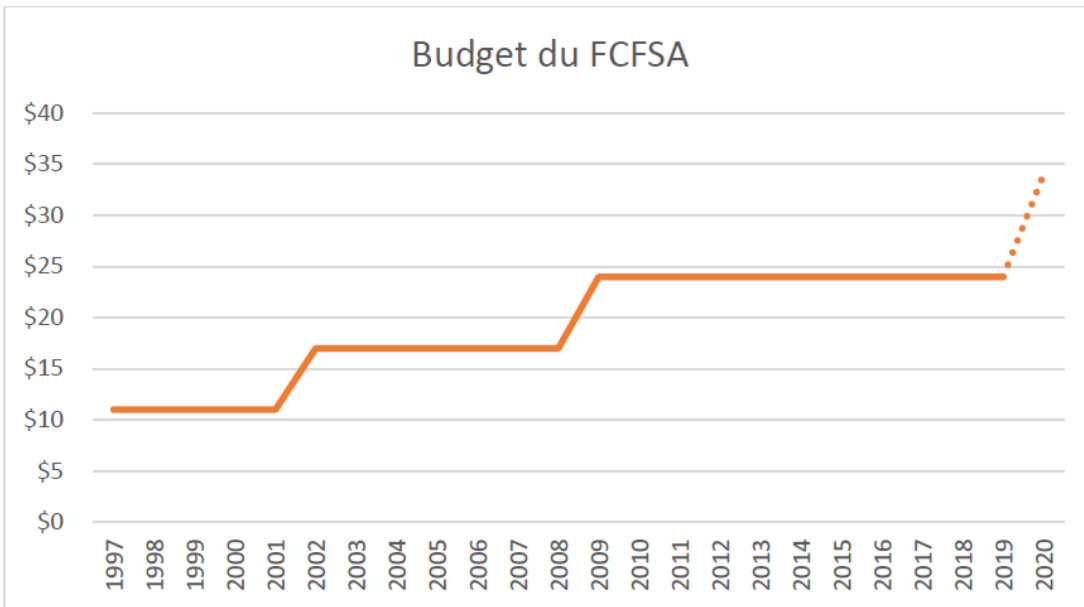
It should be noted that, apart from the COVID-19 emergency funds and CATF funds, arts training organizations have called for infrastructure funding to ensure that training facilities are equipped to respond to public health standards and protocols.

About the Canada Arts Training Fund

The 2019 departmental assessment of the CATF showed that the fund has operated efficiently and effectively since its creation. It supports government priorities and benefits Canadians and the economy through skill development and professional contribution to the cultural value chain.

The program currently allocates close to \$22.6 million annually in grants, and supports more than 35 schools offering high-quality national arts training. This assistance enables recipient organizations to be financially and administratively stable and to train artists recognized for their excellence in Canada and abroad.

In 2009, the CATF received a \$7.1-million increase through Canada's Economic Action Plan, bringing it to the current level of approximately \$24 million. A decade later, the lack of further funding meant that training institutions faced pressures and additional costs prior to the pandemic, and these pressures have increased tenfold since COVID-19.



[TRANSLATION: CATF Budget]

* \$ millions

** The graph includes the administrative costs of Canadian Heritage programs. Contributions to arts training organizations total \$22.6 million on average.

The evaluation of the CATF by the Department of Canadian Heritage found that

“...due to high program demand and fixed budgets, CATF did not fund all qualified organizations, did not increase funding to all high-performing schools, and decreased funding to lower performing organizations as well as to two national high-performing organizations.”

An additional and ongoing increase of \$10 million annually would help relieve existing pressure on the program and support arts training organizations as they reopen and get re-established. Additional funding will also help these organizations achieve the immediate, intermediate and ultimate results set out by Canadian Heritage.

The institutions funded by the CATF recruit, train and develop artists who have shaped our Canadian identity in the past and will continue to do so. The Olympic Own the Podium program shows that public investment in training can help Canadian athletes succeed internationally. A similar investment in the CATF would give Canadian artists the same opportunities and ensure a highly skilled cultural workforce both during and after the crisis.



[TRANSLATION: Training: Canadian Heritage, CATF; Creation & Production: Canada Council for the Arts; Dissemination (national): arts policy programs, programs encouraging citizen engagement, Canada Council for the Arts (Arts Across Canada); Dissemination (export): Creative Export Strategy, Canada Council for the Arts.]

About us

<https://www.ecolenationaledecirque.ca/fr>