



Core Elements of Ontario Culture Strategy

Draft for Public Comment

Background and Purpose of this Document

The process of developing Ontario's first Culture Strategy began with the September 2015 release of "Telling Our Stories, Growing Our Economy," a discussion paper to stimulate a conversation about culture in Ontario. In the fall of 2015, we held public town halls and community conversations with smaller groups and met with representatives from Indigenous communities. We also encouraged people to submit ideas online or post them on an interactive discussion forum.

We heard from a wide range of culture sectors, communities and individuals, including artists, educators, youth, seniors, people with disabilities, newcomers, Indigenous communities, Francophone communities and people living in urban, rural and northern communities. We reported back with "Culture Talks: A Summary of What We Heard from Ontarians" and published an environmental scan describing culture in Ontario and other jurisdictions.

We used the input we received through the public consultations to develop the core elements of Ontario's Culture Strategy. Now, we invite your comments and ideas on them. They include a vision statement, guiding principles, and three overarching goals, along with strategies, actions and expected results. This document also includes a brief description of the Arts Policy Framework we will be developing as part of the implementation of the Culture Strategy.

Your comments on this document will be considered as we develop the final Ontario Culture Strategy. When complete, it will contain more context on the importance and impacts of arts and culture and more detail on Ontario's vibrant culture sector.

A Vision for Culture in Ontario

An Ontario where every person has the opportunity for creative expression and cultural participation, and where the diversity of our stories and communities is reflected and valued.

Principles to Guide Government Support for Culture

Creativity and Innovation

Culture exposes us to new ideas, inspires new ways of thinking, and fosters creativity and innovation. Support for culture should help to enrich our lives, animate our communities and build a dynamic business environment in Ontario.

Quality of Life and Economic Development

Culture contributes significantly to both quality of life and economic development in Ontario. Support for culture should maximize the social and economic benefits of culture for individuals and communities.

Diversity and Inclusion

Ontario's rich diversity is one of our greatest strengths. We should all have the opportunity to participate in Ontario's diverse cultural life, regardless of age, background, language, ability or where we live in the province.

Respect for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples

First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures, languages and heritage represent distinct identities, histories and ways of life. Ontario is committed to reconciliation by strengthening and transforming its relationship with Indigenous communities and by implementing changes that reflect their own priorities.

Collaboration and Partnerships

The talents and contributions of many people and organizations make our culture sector strong and vibrant. Support for culture should encourage collaboration and partnerships among them, including provincial ministries and agencies; municipal, provincial/territorial, federal and Indigenous partners; culture and not-for-profit organizations; the private sector and all communities and individuals.

Public Value and Accountability

Government investment in culture should be guided by what Ontarians value and by what makes a positive difference in the lives of individuals and communities. The Ministry, its agencies and the organizations we fund are accountable for achieving the best possible outcomes within available resources.

GOAL 1: Strengthen Culture in Communities

Focus on strengthening community-based arts, culture and heritage

Strategies and Actions

Help build strong community-based culture organizations

- Work with government partners and culture stakeholders to maximize the use of public libraries and other culture facilities as community hubs, and explore opportunities to integrate arts and culture activities and spaces into schools and other community hubs.
- Review and update provincial funding programs for public libraries to build the capacity of libraries serving rural and remote communities, improve digital services, and support leadership and innovation.
- Work with First Nation public libraries to better understand their unique needs and identify how we can respond through improved supports.
- Review and update provincial funding programs for community museums and heritage organizations to build capacity, strengthen leadership, and support more diverse organizations.
- Collaborate on the continued implementation of the Ontario Volunteer Action Plan, and promote the Partnership Grant Program, which helps build the capacity of the not-for-profit sector, including culture organizations.

Conserve and promote Ontario's diverse cultural heritage

- Develop additional tools to help communities identify and protect their cultural heritage, including guidance on cultural heritage landscapes, cultural planning and the interests of Indigenous communities in conserving cultural heritage to support municipalities in implementing the Provincial Policy Statement (2014).

- Work with Indigenous partners, archaeologists, museums and other stakeholders to develop a framework to improve conservation of archaeological artifacts so that current and future generations can learn about and understand our past.
- Review the “Standards and Guidelines for Consultant Archaeologists” to reflect the evolving practice of archaeology in the land use and development contexts, including the engagement of Indigenous communities and the care of artifacts.

Connect people and communities by sharing and celebrating our diverse heritage and cultures

- Provide online access to information about Ontario’s cultural heritage, including designated heritage properties and provincial heritage properties.
- Bring together culture and tourism agencies and attractions and Indigenous partners to increase public awareness and understanding of Indigenous histories and contributions to arts and culture in Ontario.
- Collaborate with sport and recreation partners to strengthen opportunities to integrate cultural engagement into community recreation and sport, and encourage cultural celebration as a part of multi-sport games held in Ontario.

Goal 1 Expected Results

- Funding more targeted to support a greater diversity of organizations and key priorities (e.g. digital services)
- More recognition and use of public libraries and other cultural facilities as community hubs
- Greater understanding of cultural heritage conservation and more tools to assist in conserving Ontario's unique cultural heritage
- Greater involvement of Indigenous communities in cultural heritage conservation
- More awareness of Indigenous contributions to arts and culture in Ontario

GOAL 2: Fuel the Creative Economy

Focus on maximizing the contributions of culture and creativity to a strong and competitive knowledge economy

Strategies and Actions

Make Ontario a culture leader at home and internationally

- With the permanent Ontario Music Fund as its foundation, further develop the Ontario Live Music Strategy to set a vision and directions to continue to build Ontario as a leading North American centre for production and performance.
- Continue to work with Ontario's growing interactive digital media companies to build a globally competitive industry that can innovate and succeed in the next generation of interactive digital media products, including video games, mobile content and transmedia storytelling.
- Establish a public/private film and television industry advisory panel to examine priority issues facing the industry and collaborate on strategies to promote the growth, innovation and global expansion of Ontario's film and television sector.
- Help ensure Ontario's competitiveness as a top production jurisdiction by modernizing provincial supports to the screen-based industries.
- Seek opportunities to grow the culture sector within the framework of the Business Growth Initiative by working with partner ministries to foster innovation and help scale up companies in the arts and cultural industries:
 - Explore the development of entrepreneurship and commercialization programs designed for the arts and cultural industries.
 - Explore the development of risk capital programs designed with an entertainment focus and reflecting the rapid product development cycle of the arts and cultural industries.
 - Attract investment that increases Ontario's productivity, creativity and global competitiveness in the culture sector.

- Accelerate the creation and adoption of new disruptive technologies¹ to strengthen the culture sector’s role in the knowledge economy.
- Work collaboratively with the Ministry of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure and other ministries across government to inform the development of a long-term infrastructure plan for Ontario.
- Collaborate with government partners and the tourism industry to identify opportunities to grow cultural tourism in Ontario, including Francophone tourism and Indigenous-led tourism, and offer authentic and compelling visitor experiences.
- Continue to engage with the federal government on issues impacting Ontario’s Entertainment and Creative Cluster to help ensure the health of the province’s broadcasting and production industries.

Build the talent and skills of Ontario’s cultural workforce

- Develop a better understanding of the impact of the digital transformation on culture and, as a first step, work with partners to organize a digital culture symposium to bring together stakeholders from all culture sectors to share experiences and expertise, build capacity to address digital challenges and take advantage of new opportunities.
- Increase awareness and uptake of the Canada-Ontario Job Grant among employers in the culture sector to assist them in developing their workforces through employer-led digital skills and other training.
- Help ensure that Ontario’s cultural workforce is positioned to succeed in the knowledge economy by fostering experiential learning opportunities and creating opportunities to enhance business skills training for the people who work in the arts and culture sector.
- Explore ways that provincial and federal immigration programs can contribute to the growth and success of Ontario’s culture sector and eliminate barriers to the successful integration of cultural workers.
- Engage federal, provincial and territorial culture partners on strategies to improve the socio-economic status of artists and to improve support for cultural infrastructure.

¹ A “disruptive technology” is an innovative product or process that displaces established technology and may challenge existing firms or create a completely new industry.

Goal 2 Expected Results

- More effective government tools to help Ontario's cultural industries compete in a digital world
- More opportunities for government/industry collaboration to drive cultural industry productivity, innovation and exports
- Better coordination across government to integrate the cultural industries into Ontario's broader economic agenda
- More Ontarians equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to contribute to the creative economy

GOAL 3: Promote Cultural Engagement and Inclusion

Focus on removing barriers and increasing opportunities for cultural participation

Strategies and Actions

Inspire the next generation and help youth build careers in the culture sector

- Continue to identify opportunities for collaboration and partnerships between the culture and education sectors to increase opportunities for participation in arts and culture and learning through the arts.
- Continue to support Ontario's culture agencies, attractions and organizations in offering exciting opportunities for children and youth to engage with arts and culture.
- Build new community partnerships through Student Success to support high school students who are interested in further learning or exploring careers in arts and culture.
- Promote youth engagement in the heritage sector by continuing to support programs offered by culture agencies and provincial heritage organizations and by identifying new ways to engage youth in the sector.

Reduce barriers and allow for greater participation in culture

- Bring together cultural granting partners to share best practices and increase access and inclusion throughout the grant application and assessment process for Indigenous communities, Francophone communities, ethno-cultural communities, people with disabilities and others who may face barriers to accessing culture funding.

- Continue to support culture agencies, organizations and other partners to remove barriers for people with disabilities and people who are Deaf² to increase opportunities for participation in arts and culture.
- Identify ways to increase opportunities for Ontario’s seniors to engage with arts and culture in their communities.

Strengthen our relationship with Indigenous communities and work toward reconciliation

- In collaboration with First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples, establish a forum for ongoing dialogue to address shared culture priorities, such as preservation of Indigenous cultural heritage and languages.
- Help facilitate cross-cultural understanding between First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities and museums and other culture organizations to create stronger relationships and partnerships.

Goal 3 Expected Results

- Fewer barriers to accessing culture funding
- More opportunities for Ontarians of all ages and abilities to engage with arts and culture
- More information and supports to help youth pursue careers in the culture sector
- Stronger relationships with Indigenous communities to address culture priorities

² The Canadian Hearing Society’s definition of “Culturally Deaf” refers to individuals who identify with and participate in the language, culture and community of Deaf people.

Arts Policy Framework

Developing an Arts Policy Framework will be part of the implementation of the Ontario Culture Strategy. The Framework will build on the *Status of Ontario's Artists Act*, which recognizes the invaluable contributions artists make to Ontario's economy, quality of life and sense of identity.

Jurisdictions around the world have recognized the arts, not only for their intrinsic value, but also for their contribution to achieving broader policy goals, like improving health and wellness, supporting better academic outcomes for children and youth, and decreasing isolation for seniors and others in the community.

The Framework will help increase awareness within government of the size, scope and diversity of Ontario's arts sector, and of the many opportunities available to creatively integrate the arts into other policy and program areas. In turn, this will create new opportunities for artists and arts organizations to engage with other sectors. The Framework will also encourage and support government ministries and agencies to consider the needs of artists and arts organizations when they develop or review programs.

The Arts Policy Framework will provide a toolkit of information: key facts about Ontario's art sector, key sector organizations and associations, best practices and case studies for successfully integrating the arts into policy development and program delivery, information on monitoring use and measuring outcomes and links to additional resources.