

January 22, 2024



# City of Toronto Budget Committee Deputation



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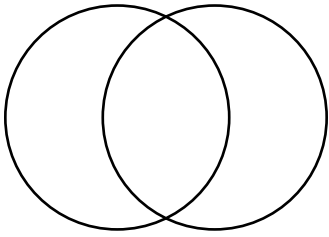
# Key Facts & Stats

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**Devyani Saltzman** President, Toronto Arts Council  
**Kelly Langgard** Director & CEO, Toronto Arts Council  
& Toronto Arts Foundation



## Public Support

Arts and Quality of Life for Ontarians. Nanos for the Ontario Arts Council, 2023

90%

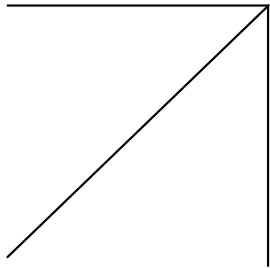
of Ontarians say that the arts make their community a better place to live.

87%

agree that participating in arts activities builds a shared sense of community identity.

78%

say that arts improves mental health.



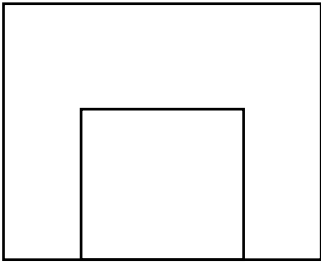
## Economy Boost

Ontario Arts and Culture Tourism Profile, Forum Research for the Ontario Arts Council, 2023.

<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2019/bu/bgrd/background-file-124721.pdf>

Arts and culture accounts for **\$11.4B** in tourism spending, generating **\$4B** in annual tax revenue and sustaining more than **100,000 jobs** in the province.

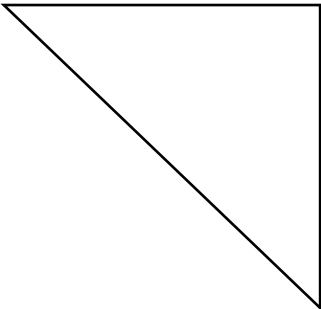
**The non-profit arts sector in Toronto contributes \$11B annually to the city's GDP.**



# Artists Live Here

More than 32,000 professional artists in Toronto. Hill Strategies, 2023.

**32K /** artists and arts workers live in Toronto. That's 40% of the Canadian total and twice as many as any other Canadian city.



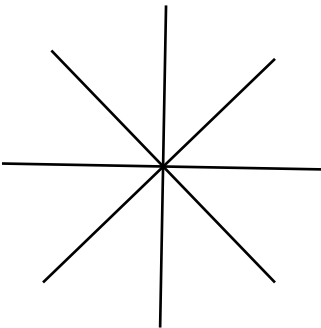
# TAC Support

Toronto Arts Council internal data

In 2023, TAC gave over **900 grants** to artists and arts organizations, totalling over \$23 million.

**247 organizations** receiving TAC operating support leverage every public dollar to bring in over \$3 in ticket sales, \$6 in donations and pay out \$5 in artist fees.

In 2022, over one-third of grants went to first-time recipients and almost **60% to TAC equity priority group applicants.**



# More is Needed

Toronto Arts Council internal data

**TAC peer assessors identified an additional 911 applications that they wish they could have funded - but to have done so would have required 11.6M more.**

**44% of the organizations that receive TAC operating grants posted a deficit in 2022, compared with 30% in 2019. The size of these deficits tripled from 2019 to 2022.**

# Devyani Saltzman

President, Toronto Arts Council



*Budget Chief, Committee members and City Councillors: Thank you very much for allowing us the opportunity to speak with you today. With your permission, Kelly Langgard and I would like to combine our times if that is possible.*

My name is Devyani Saltzman, I am a writer, curator, and arts leader, and I'm very proud to be current President of the Toronto Arts Council. I've grown up and worked in the arts in Toronto for over 20 years. Living in a city that supports arts and culture, across all our communities, is why I stay.

First, I want to express our deep appreciation for all that the Mayor, Budget Committee and City Council are doing to assist our artists and our city as we tackle housing affordability and income precarity for many, while continuing to revitalize our neighbourhoods following the pandemic. We know these are difficult times and we appreciate your support.

We also know that the arts are a sound investment in difficult times and an essential part of recovery - not only in the revitalization of Toronto's neighbourhoods and public spaces, but for a host of reasons including contribution to social cohesion and improving mental health. In a 2023 NANOS public opinion survey in Ontario, 90% of respondents said that the arts make their community a better place to live. 87% agreed that participating in arts activities builds a shared sense of community identity, 78% said that

it improves mental health, and 82% believe that arts in their communities attracts business.

Another study commissioned by the Ontario Arts Council found that arts and culture accounts for \$11.4B in tourism spending, generating \$4B in annual tax revenue and sustaining more than 100,000 jobs in the province.

In terms of the City's own investments, our data shows, on average, that the 247 organizations receiving TAC operating support leverage every public dollar to bring in over \$3 in ticket sales and \$6 in donations, and to pay out \$5 in artist fees. The non-profit arts sector in Toronto contributes \$11B annually to the city's GDP.

32,000 artists and arts workers live in Toronto, 40% of the Canadian total and twice as many as any other Canadian city (Hill Strategies, 2023). Toronto is also home to some of the most respected arts organizations in the world. These artists and arts organizations have shaped a cultural landscape in Toronto that reverberates globally and that has contributed to building a competitive city, block by block, that draws investment to it and drives innovation across all sectors.

The arts bring value to our city in so many ways, and yet artists and arts organizations are facing very challenging times. Long before the pandemic we began raising the alarm that artists are barely able to afford to live and work in Toronto. What was a dire situa-

tion then has become catastrophic now and, of course, the high cost of housing and transit affects artists as it does all Torontonians. Affordable arts space in which to create, rehearse, perform and exhibit is also a long-standing problem that is getting worse and leading to an exodus of artists because they have no place to develop their work and share it with the public.

## **Where does this leave us – and you, our civic leaders, as you finalize the City’s 2024 budget?**

Artists and arts workers are city builders, and their ability to live and work here is not only key to the revitalization of local business areas, neighbourhoods, and public spaces across the city, but to providing hope, and spaces for dialogue across difference. Like others, our essential sector is still in transition and recovery from the pandemic and needs help from the City to grow effectively and continue bringing value to local business and communities. The contribution of the arts to Toronto’s social and economic well-being is substantial, and we firmly believe that the arts, when properly resourced, can help to address the big challenges that I know you are focused on solving as our city’s political leaders.

As Toronto Arts Council’s President, I’m here to tell you that you can depend on us to be a partner in your objectives and priorities. For 50 years, TAC has been helping to build the capacity of the sector and ensuring that artists have access to support and the opportunities they need to be city builders. This includes delivering efficient and dynamic programs and working in collaboration with a wide range of public and private sector partners to leverage our funds most effectively.

Other cultural policy measures are also needed, and that’s why we are also pleased to be involved in the development of a new Action Plan for the Cultural Sector that will guide the City over the coming years.

I’m pleased to turn it over to Kelly Langgard, Director & CEO of the Toronto Arts Council, to speak further.

# Kelly Langgard

Director & CEO, Toronto Arts Council  
& Toronto Arts Foundation



*Thank you, Devyani. Budget Chief and Councillors: It's a great privilege to be here before you today, speaking on behalf of Toronto's artists and arts organizations.*

I'd like to share with you today how TAC has been supporting artists and arts organizations to create positive impacts across our city, and why it is deserving of the city's ongoing and increased support.

As Toronto's primary arts granting organization, TAC receives close to \$26 million in public funding, of which over 90% is invested directly in artists and arts organizations. We do this efficiently, transparently, and with an expansive and inclusive vision to make the arts accessible to everyone in Toronto. Five decades of public investment has resulted in an incredibly diverse arts sector active in every neighbourhood of the city. In 2023, we gave over 900 grants to artists and arts organizations, totalling over \$23 million.

TAC's leadership in equity and access drives the results we've been able to achieve. The Toronto Arts Council is a leader in equitable and inclusive funding practices that involve artists and communities in the decisions that directly impact them. We are the only arts council in Canada to have a dedicated Black arts funding program. This program launched in 2021 and expanded our portfolio of targeted funds which also includes a newcomer & refugee program and an Indigenous arts program. In 2022, over one-third

of grants went to first-time recipients and almost 60% to TAC equity priority group applicants.

In Toronto, equity and inclusion is also about where people live, and we work very hard to make sure every neighbourhood of the city benefits from our funding. Last year, grants were awarded in every single ward in the city. In areas where there are fewer arts facilities to fund, TAC has special initiatives and partnerships with libraries, parks, historic sites, settlement agencies, health facilities and schools to ensure that residents in every area of the city have access to quality arts experiences.

Our relationship with the Toronto Arts Foundation extends our reach even further through vital initiatives that match newcomers with networks of mentors and collaborators, connect young creatives with career-building opportunities, and offer free arts programming in parks outside the downtown.

Given all this, TAC is well positioned to work with the City to ensure a vibrant future for the arts in Toronto and, in so doing, for all of Toronto's residents and neighbourhoods. Working together is critical at the time because, as Devyani pointed out, the artists and arts organizations we fund and represent are vital to our city's recovery and yet they are deeply impacted by rising costs, income precarity, and lack of affordable space to live, create, produce and present

their work. Now is the time to invest and ensure their sustainability.

In the City's proposed 2024 budget, the Toronto Art Council's allocation remains steady, as well as the budgets of the Local Arts Service Organizations who are important partners for TAC across the city. Given the challenging economic times, we appreciate the effort to maintain these budgets and are grateful for your ongoing support to artists.

That said, considering inflation and the rising cost of living and doing business, the overall granting power of the Toronto Arts Council has significantly declined in the last four years. A grant is worth less now than it was five years ago, and there is increased demand on our programs. TAC peer assessors identified an additional 911 applications that they wish they could have funded - but to have done so would have required 11.6M more. In terms of the outlook for arts organizations, 44% of those we fund with operating grants posted a deficit in 2022, compared with 30% in 2019. In dollars, the size of their total deficit more than tripled. Clearly, their sustainability is at risk.

Today, I humbly request that the

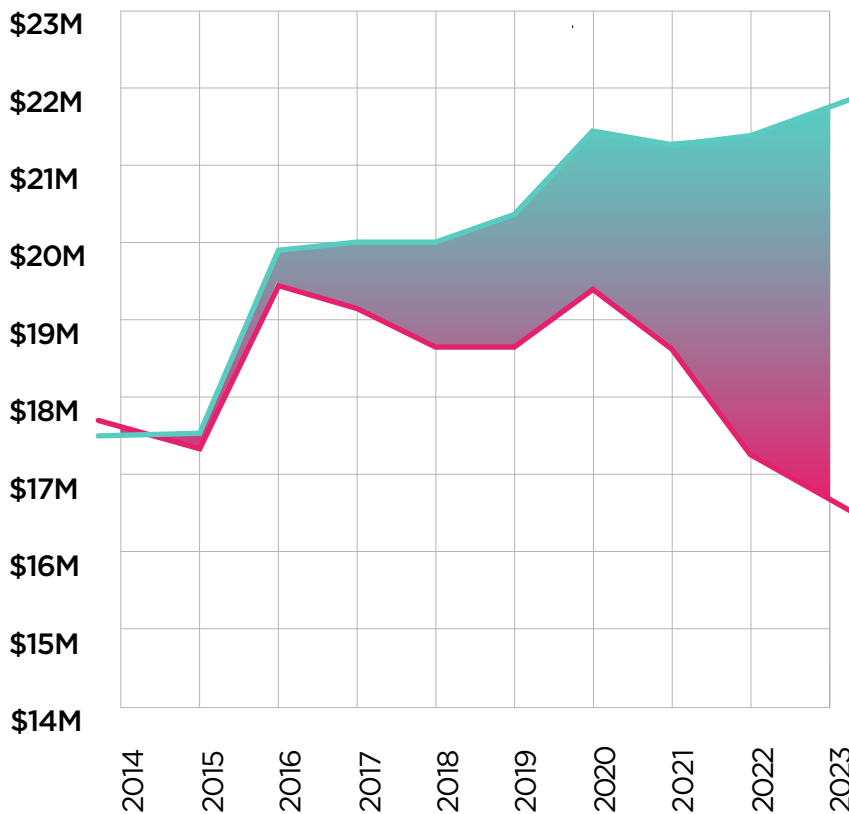
committee consider Mayor Chow's election commitment and recommend increasing TAC's 2024 budget allocation by \$2 million so that we can adequately invest in the current and future strength and diversity of the arts across the city. This increase alone would allow us to give grants to about 160 more worthy applicants and generate \$30 million in economic value for the city.

As we consider 50 years of Toronto Arts Council impact, it's crucial that we proactively vision what we need today to make the next 50 years possible. We need to work together with the strong conviction that the arts meet a vital need. They attract investment and support the revitalization of neighbourhoods and public spaces. They also help us to make sense of our world, build bridges, break isolation, generate hope and opportunity, and imagine better possible futures.

We are grateful for the City's partnership in the work that lies ahead. Looking forward to a bold new Action Plan for the Cultural Sector, I feel confident that together we can take on the challenges the city is facing and make a better future for everyone in Toronto.

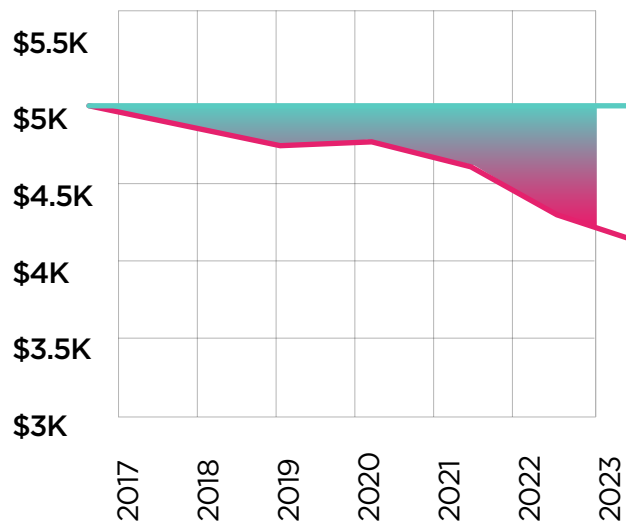
THANK YOU.





TAC allocation from the City actuals vs. adjustment for inflation\*

— Actual TAC allocation<sup>1</sup>  
— Adjusted for inflation



TAC Newcomer & Refugee Mentorship grant actuals vs. adjustment for inflation\*

— Actual grant amount  
— Adjusted for inflation

These graphs do not account for the \$4.11M added to the budget of Toronto Arts Council as flowthrough for the National Ballet, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, and the Canadian Opera Company as these were not an allocation increase to support the core budget of Toronto Arts Council.

In 2023, Toronto Arts Council received an additional \$300,000 of funding to support the city through targeted programming for youth-serving culture organizations focused on underserved youth. This was not core funding.

<sup>1</sup> Without majors transfer in 2020  
\* Based on [Statistics Canada data for Consumer Price Index for Toronto](#).

[torontoartscouncil.org](http://torontoartscouncil.org)

