



Toronto Arts Council
Priorities for New Funding
2013-2016

March 2013

TORONTO ARTS COUNCIL

Priorities for New Funding, 2013–2016

In April 2013, Toronto City Council approved a funding increase of \$4 million to Toronto Arts Council's Grants Program budget (total 2013 grants budget: \$14.2 million). This is a major first step towards City Council's commitment to increase the city's per capita arts funding to \$25, which is expected to result in a doubling of Toronto Arts Council's grants budget by 2016.

Toronto Arts Council's Board of Directors has been preparing for this development for years.

In 2009, in response to the potential for increased funding as well as to the City's changing demographics and arts practices, TAC hosted a series of public consultations, undertook a visioning exercise and developed a Visioning Document, which provided direction and response to the following new realities:

- ▲ The changing demographics of the city; 50% of residents are visible minorities, as defined by Stats Canada; although TAC has long had a commitment to supporting culturally diverse artists and art forms, to date funding has fallen far short of growth
- ▲ The growing financial disparity between the inner suburbs and downtown, leading to under serviced artists, neighbourhoods, and audiences
- ▲ The growth of community engaged art and the huge increase in the number of artists working in this developing art form
- ▲ The growing recognition by civic leaders and the public that artists make a positive contribution to community building

The visioning document included three funding priorities to ensure that TAC would be prepared to respond quickly if and when new funds were allocated.

In December 2012, as it became apparent that City Council was planning new arts funding, TAC's Board reaffirmed the document and its funding priorities.

Grants Program

Toronto today is a constellation of major festivals, internationally renowned arts institutions, mature and vibrant mid-size arts organizations and smaller, emerging arts organizations that combine with energetic community arts practices to establish the city as an internationally respected arts centre.

Toronto Arts Council's grants programs support artists and arts organizations and concurrently leverage increased investment from other levels of government, increase local employment in the arts sector, generate more performances, festivals, screenings, readings and exhibitions produced in Toronto and ensure greater arts accessibility for residents of all ages and incomes across Toronto neighbourhoods.

Priorities for New Funding:

1. Increase support to Toronto's artists and arts organizations through TAC's established grants programs
2. Enhance support for community engaged art initiatives with a focus on youth arts and expanded audience access
3. Develop new and innovative funding programs and partnerships offering artists and organizations the opportunity to embrace new ideas

Priority 1: Growth and Sustainability

Increase support to Toronto’s artists and arts organizations through TAC’s established grants programs.

Maintain existing funding and apply 50% of all new funding to current grants envelopes¹:

- ▲ Increase core funding to arts organizations meeting highest standards of excellence; including organizations working in all disciplines, in all neighbourhoods and practicing all art forms
- ▲ Increase project funding to arts organizations and individual artists in all disciplines meeting highest standards of excellence
- ▲ Create and implement strategies to address funding inequities arising from historic causes or divergent growth patterns among arts organizations; recognizing that there have been insufficient funds for those organizations created most recently; many of which are led by artists of colour or based in non-European art practices

Anticipated Results

- ▲ Stronger and more sustainable arts organizations
- ▲ Attraction and retention of talent and expertise
- ▲ More and higher quality arts performances, exhibitions, screenings, festivals, and readings
- ▲ Greater access to high quality arts events and programs for Toronto residents
- ▲ Increased capacity in Toronto arts community
- ▲ Increased and improved physical space in Toronto for arts use – performance, rehearsal, workshop, administrative

Priority 2: Community Connections

Enhance support for community engaged art initiatives with a focus on youth arts and expanded audience access.

Apply 30% of all new funding to support community engaged art initiatives including programs involving youth and diverse communities in all Toronto neighbourhoods, especially the inner suburbs¹.

TAC’s adjudication process reveals that, while the vast majority of TAC funded organizations (80%) offer outreach and/or youth engagement programs, the scope of this work is limited due to lack of funding. New revenues will mean that TAC is better able to respond to new initiatives, groups and artists as well as be a catalyst for increased activity among existing organizations.

- ▲ Youth led arts projects will be a funding priority
- ▲ Community engaged art projects in inner suburbs will be a funding priority
- ▲ Culturally diverse youth arts organizations will be given enhanced opportunities to enter the funding stream
- ▲ Outreach and community revitalization projects will be eligible for additional funding
- ▲ Partnerships with Toronto’s civic institutions (libraries, heritage, housing, parks, tourism, immigrant settlement agencies, education, neighbourhood and community centres) will be forged or strengthened to ensure greater neighbourhood access to arts programming

Anticipated Results

- ▲ increased support to arts groups and artists from inner suburbs
- ▲ increased support for culturally diverse arts groups and individual artists
- ▲ increased youth engagement through the arts
- ▲ increased numbers of arts projects and events outside downtown core increased audience participation rates from communities located in inner suburbs
- ▲ increased free and affordable arts activities

¹ Percentages for application of new funding are estimates which may vary during implementation; budgets are approved annually by TAC’s Board of Directors.

Priority 3: Innovation and Partnerships

Develop new and innovative funding programs and partnerships offering artists and arts organizations the ability to respond to exceptional opportunities and incubate new ideas, projects and initiatives.

20% of all new grants funds will be directed to developing and implementing new and innovative funding programs and collaborations. Funds will be strategically allocated to act as a catalyst for increased provincial and national investment in Toronto from all levels of government and the private sector. TAC's Board of Directors, in consultation with the arts community, will consider options for targeted funding that:

- ▲ responds to exceptional one-time events and opportunities
- ▲ builds local arts community capacity
- ▲ provides opportunity for funding interdisciplinary work
- ▲ provides seed or development funds for new and innovative artistic initiatives develops new platforms for national and international recognition of Toronto artists
- ▲ facilitates mentorship and professional development opportunities for arts professionals
- ▲ stimulates increased investment in Toronto arts through strategic inter-sectoral partnerships