



ARTS- MAKING* 2025

TORONTO
ARTS COUNCIL
STRATEGIC
PRIORITIES





ARTS-MAKING

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contributing to a vibrant arts ecology by creating, presenting, supporting or attending works of art.

our vision: as arts-makers we are all city-builders; together we create a city alive to its potential.



TORONTO ARTS COUNCIL Since 1974, TAC has been mandated by the City of Toronto to offer city-funded grants programs to a broad cross-section of Toronto arts organizations and professional artists. Grants programs are governed by the two key operating principles: arm's length funding and peer review.

From the emerging artist to the most established, from celebrated institutions to arts that challenge convention, TAC is typically the first funder to offer support. By 2015, TAC's committees and juries were adjudicating over 2,000 applications and disbursing grants leading to exhibitions, performances, readings and workshops seen annually by 8.5 million people. Through our ongoing funding, TAC cultivates a rich engagement between artists and audiences. We are proud to reflect Toronto's vibrancy through the diversity of artists, arts communities and audiences that we serve.

TORONTO

ARTS

COUNCIL

Governed by artists, arts workers, arts supporters and civic leaders who are representative of Toronto's diverse cultural community and artistic practices, Toronto Arts Council:

INVESTS in artistic talent and organizational capacity to increase the city's vitality and engage Toronto audiences

CREATES opportunity for public access, participation and appreciation of art

ADVOCATES on behalf of the City's artists and works to increase public awareness of the value of art and to educate civic leaders on effective arts policy

COLLABORATES through its foundation (Toronto Arts Foundation) with public and private sector partners to increase resources and opportunities for artists

SUPPORTS cultural diversity and equity in arts creation and presentation



PEOPLE MAKE ART.

ART MAKES PEOPLE.

CITIES MAKE ART.

ART MAKES CITIES.



PEOPLE MAKE ART.

Each of us. Every day. In the big and small things that we do. It is how we express ourselves, bringing colour and depth to the choices we make that shape our world. Some among us have decided that making art should be their greatest calling. They are committed to living a creative life and work to propel their artistic impulses to special heights. Each of us benefits from the work of these dedicated artists as well as the arts organizations that support them. They enliven our city and refresh the soul. Great art is too important to be left to chance and so each of us is responsible for ensuring that any of us can develop our artistic talents and excel.

This is what ‘arts-making*’ is all about and it is central to our vision for investing in the arts throughout Toronto over the next decade. We believe passionately that the arts are for all, which is why we are determined to work proactively to unlock new spaces for artistic creation and performance. It is also why we are taking steps to ensure that Toronto artists and arts organizations have fair and equitable access to arts funding, and that our grant recipients represent the many diverse communities that call this city home.

An arts-making city makes room for all — from audience-members to emerging artists to award-winners. It does this by continually reinvesting in a wide array of endeavours and organizations and by seeking new ways to connect with more people.



ART MAKES CITIES.

It is here in Toronto that the collision of cultures and talents gives rise to new ways of seeing and living together. As an organization, Toronto Arts Council believes that all those involved in arts-making are in fact creating a city that is more dynamic, liveable and successful. With this plan, Toronto Arts Council becomes a stronger force for building this city by becoming a stronger partner engaged with many more organizations who believe Toronto's best years are just ahead.

We will work on those issues that affect artists and all Torontonians alike — meaning a city that is more inclusive and affordable. It also means a city confident in itself and capable of expressing through the arts contrasting stories that nourish our democratic culture. And because great cities need to lead and inspire, we will also work to increase our investment in artists ready to make a lasting mark.

OUR 2025 GUIDING STATEMENT

We **SERVE** Torontonians by serving artists, and creating the conditions in which artistic inspiration, excellence and participation flourish.

We **RECOGNIZE** the intrinsic role that all Torontonians play in creating a city where artists thrive. We celebrate the institutions and organizations that fuel the city's creative spirit.

We **CHAMPION** the rights of all people to express, make, and share their art — and also to earn a living wage from their creative endeavours.

Toronto is a city of arts-makers* — artists and residents, neighbours and friends, institutions and networks — that together make this an exciting, vibrant and creative city. Our 2025 plan gives force and brings new investment and actions to support our ideals.

FOUR AREAS OF
FOCUS FOR OUR NEXT
NINE YEARS

OPPORTUNITY

EXCELLENCE

WONDER

REACH

OPPORTUNITY



**DIVERSE VOICES.
EQUITABLE ACCESS.
DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH.**

We work to see that more voices have the opportunity to share and expand their artistic vision. We do this by recognizing and investing in Toronto artists through a broad range of granting streams and programs.

EXCELLENCE



**VIGOROUS
EXPERIMENTATION.
CREATIVE INSPIRATION.
CRITICAL ACCLAIM.**

We develop and celebrate excellence amongst all artists. We do this by creating a popular and professional arts-making culture that rewards innovation, risk and achievement.

WONDER



**REFLEXIVE ENGAGEMENT.
SURPRISING ENCOUNTERS.
SHARED STORIES.**

We believe in the power of art to inspire. We want an arts-making* culture that awakens and engages the spirit. We do this by helping artists create meaning by reflecting the stories that shape our lives.

REACH



**VIBRANT COMMUNITIES.
PARTICIPATORY CULTURE.
OPEN ACCESS.**

We cultivate the arts across Toronto, making artistic activity ubiquitous throughout the city by strengthening access to arts-making opportunities, for artists and audiences alike.

Current Strengths

TORONTO

2016



Strong city-building
Integration of diversity
Recent increased investment
Growing confidence

Future Aspirations

TORONTO

2025



City-wide artistic activities and infrastructure
Inclusive participatory culture
Increased profile and support for artists
Greater mobility and influence

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



NEW INVESTMENT

realizing the potential of Toronto's artists and arts organizations

STRONG PARTNERSHIPS

extend opportunities, reach and profile of Toronto artists

URBAN LEADERSHIP

speak with a compelling voice for a creative, equitable and thriving city

RESPONSIVE GRANTING

reflect the city, embrace technology and build on success

NEW INVESTMENT

Achieve \$40 million annually in municipal investment for Toronto Arts Council funded artists and arts organizations by 2025.

1. Create a compelling new case for municipal investment in TAC programs based on our ambitions, assets and strengths, that will secure \$30 million annually by 2020 and \$40 million by 2025
2. Allocate sufficient operations resources to support TAC's granting program
3. Demonstrate impact and communicate a broad account of Toronto's support for and engagement with the arts
4. Partner with the City to set a new target for overall municipal investment in culture by 2025

Support our granting program by developing new relationships with other funding bodies and institutions

1. Create a TAC partnership framework to help guide and accelerate successful cross-sector collaboration
2. Work with partners and funders such as ArtReach, Toronto District School Board and agencies of the City of Toronto to bring funding, space, resources and expertise to grant recipients

Champion affordable creation and presentation spaces on behalf of Toronto artists and arts organizations

1. Work with partners to develop a compelling, evidence-based account of affordability challenges facing Toronto artists
2. Provide targeted support to arts organizations operating creation and performance spaces
3. Collaborate with City departments and the private sector to access public space for arts programming including parks, libraries and local historic sites

STRONG PARTNERSHIPS

Establish new partnerships with major Toronto arts institutions and creative industries to expand professional opportunities and pathways

1. Create a culture of collaborative exchange with major Toronto arts institutions and creative industries
2. Work with local partners to strengthen intra-city touring opportunities, and collaborate to enable national and international touring
3. Create new cross-disciplinary artistic residencies with private and public sector organizations for Toronto artists
4. Collaborate with peers to create a network of municipal arts councils in Canada and abroad and promote artistic exchange and peer cities

Work with our Foundation to expand special initiatives and opportunities for Toronto artists and residents

1. Collaborate with the Foundation to develop and promote shared programs which help connect Torontonians to the value of the arts and strengthen participatory arts programming throughout the city
2. Support best practices in adjudication for the Foundation's awards programs

Create partnerships to make artistic creation a focus of significant local and national events and celebrations

1. Work with local partners to develop a plan to celebrate Canada's 150th
2. Look ahead to future major events and become more proactive in brokering opportunities for artistic creation and participation
3. Learn from other jurisdictions and arts councils with major events strategies

URBAN LEADERSHIP

Establish TAC as a widely-recognized and sought-after city-building partner

1. Seek opportunities to contribute programming to major city-building conferences and events
2. Publish periodic commentary linking arts with the city-building agenda and encourage Toronto artists to engage with urban issues
3. Affirm our support for CADAC and collaborate with city-building organizations to monitor the health of Toronto arts and the impact of our investments

Promote equity, diversity and cultural competence in all granting and management practices, and throughout Toronto's arts sector

1. Formalize TAC's equity policy to support the organization and apply this policy when selecting new board, jury and staff members
2. Increase visibility of TAC grants in diverse communities
3. Encourage applicants to self-identify as members of equity seeking groups and use this data to help ensure TAC grant recipients reflect Toronto's diversity.
4. Assist TAC-supported arts organizations to develop and report on equity goals

Champion the right of artistic participation for all Toronto residents

1. Identify under-served populations and communities lacking artistic programming and work with partners to address these needs
2. Be a strong, reliable voice on the benefits of artistic participation throughout Toronto
3. Continue to invest in artists working in schools and collaborate with the TDSB to identify other ways to increase student exposure to the arts

RESPONSIVE GRANTING

Encourage artistic ambition and achievement by strengthening successful granting programs

1. Continuously evaluate and renew our granting programs to meet the needs of Toronto artists and arts organizations
2. Strengthen granting programs that support innovation and collaboration
3. Actively broker support to accelerate the scaling up of successful artistic ventures
4. Empower artists and arts organizations to strengthen their business practices and diversify their funding sources

Increase grants that recognize and promote Toronto's diversity

1. Continue to strengthen our investments in youth and diverse voices
2. Provide targeted support for artists and arts organizations working outside of Toronto's downtown core
3. Highlight and invest in the artistic achievements of urban Indigenous peoples

Accelerate the development and use of new technologies for artistic creation and promotion

1. Support the use of new and emerging technologies by artists and arts organizations to enhance and promote their work
2. Assist organizations to upgrade core technologies to support the management and promotion of their work



ASSETS & RESOURCES

- ▶ Raise our profile by strengthening our communications and making the TAC mark a coveted designation
- ▶ Invest in leadership development opportunities for artists, arts managers and arts leaders
- ▶ Continue to support peer juries by recruiting new participants, and introduce internationally-recognized jurists
- ▶ Develop a senior leadership plan that will ensure continuity of operations
- ▶ Recognize and invest in our staff, volunteers and board members
- ▶ Establish and publish sustainable operating and living wage best practices for arts-workers in Toronto

ACHIEVING OUR PRIORITIES

Our “Arts-making 2025” Strategic Plan sets out a bold vision for re-imagining Toronto Arts Council as a city-building organization working actively to expand the range of its activities and the support it provides to Toronto’s artists and arts organizations. The Plan lists 12 priorities and associated actions which are intended to guide the organization as it evolves over the next nine years.

This Strategic Plan will be supported by annual operating plans which describe the objectives, tasks and resources required by management each year to advance the Council’s strategic goals. These annual plans will reflect our strategic priorities and actions. Cumulative progress towards these goals should be assessed every three years.

We recognize that a nine year plan must also be a living document. It should be referred to frequently and revised over time as the organization adapts to new contexts, acquires new governance and management leadership and makes steps towards achieving its vision.



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PHOTO CREDITS

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