House of Commons
Chambre des communes
Canada

House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance – Pre-budget Consultations 2013

This brief is submitted by:

(•) **an organization** **Organization name:** Visual Arts Alliance

or

( ) **an individual** **Name:** _____

Topic: Arts and culture

*Recommendation 1: Please provide a short summary of your recommendation.

We support the Canadian Arts Coalition's request that the annual Parliamentary allocation to the Canada Council for the Arts be increased by 10% in 2014-15. This allows the Council to continue to provide long-term investments in programs that encourage the production, presentation and distribution of Canadian art, and to provide a sustainable job market within our sector. Public investment in the creative and entrepreneurial activity of the visual arts sector allows our industry to share our diverse culture with wider markets, and to improve the standard of life of artists and communities.

Expected cost or savings: From the pull-down menus, please indicate the expected cost or savings of your recommendation to the federal government and the period of time to which the expected cost or savings is related.

$10 million-$99.9 million

Immediately

Federal funding: Please provide a precise indication of how the federal government could fund your recommendation. For example, indicate what federal spending should be reallocated, what federal tax measure(s) should be introduced, eliminated or changed, etc.

The federal government provides a number of programs to support Canadian artists and institutions, but the funds allocated to such programs have not generally kept pace with inflation, nor does it reflect the return on investment that arts funding provides to the overall economy. Canada's culture sector contributes $46 billion to the GDP, and for every $1.00 directly or indirectly invested in cultural activities, $3.20 is generated in economic activity to the benefit of all Canadians. The taxes collected on this activity should, at least in part, pay for the increased costs of funding.

Intended beneficiaries: Please indicate the groups of individuals, the sector(s) and/or the regions that would benefit by implementation of your recommendation.

In 2011-12, the Council funded 2,000 artists and 2,200 arts organizations, benefiting 1,900 Canadian communities. More specifically, there are nearly 35,000 visual, media, and craft artists, who benefit directly from the employment and business revenues that public funding provides, thus improving the entrepreneurial skills of professional artists. According to the Conference Board of Canada, we employed 616,000 in the arts in 2003, representing 3.9% of national employment. At least 45% of all Canadians visit exhibitions of contemporary and historical Canadian art across Canada.

General impacts: Depending on the nature of your recommendation, please indicate how the standard of living of Canadians would be improved, jobs would be created, people would be trained, etc.

Increased funding to the Canada Council is vital in maintaining employment in the cultural sector. The visual and media arts contribute to the public understanding of our national culture and heritage, as well as a job market and local economy that promotes creative activity. Federal funding programs are crucial in allowing self-employed artists and museums to expand their business prospects, both in Canada and abroad. The Canada Council has proven to be an efficient and effective resource to invest funding. They are best positioned to further support and improve our industry's employability.

Topic: Arts and culture

Recommendation 2: Please provide a short summary of your recommendation.

We support the Coalition's recommendation to renew investment in the arts and cultural industries programs at the Department of Canadian Heritage, and to increase investment according to the cost of living. The DCH's mandate includes assisting arts and heritage organizations and institutions in the encouragement of creation, production, distribution, consumption, and preservation of cultural and heritage products and services. Programs of primary interest to the Visual Arts Alliance include the Museums Assistance Program, Official Languages Support, and various Young Canada Works programs.

Expected cost or savings: From the pull-down menus, please indicate the expected cost or savings of your recommendation to the federal government and the period of time to which the expected cost or savings is related.

$1 million-4.9 million

Immediately

Federal funding: Please provide a precise indication of how the federal government could fund your recommendation. For example, indicate what federal spending should be reallocated, what federal tax measure(s) should be introduced, eliminated or changed, etc.

We are asking that the complete suite of programs at the Department be maintained, and the cost increase relates to the cost of living, at a rate of 1.6%. This increased cost adds up to $1.92 million, which is a minimal impact in the overall federal budget. The increased cost of living reflected in other areas such as income tax collection, GST, etc. are likely to cover this increase. Without a cost of living increase, each of these programs would experience a cut, by default.

Intended beneficiaries: Please indicate the groups of individuals, the sector(s) and/or the regions that would benefit by implementation of your recommendation.

Programs such as MAP increase public access to Canadian arts and heritage, and facilitate the presentation and touring opportunities for museums to make cultural experiences more widely available. Internship programs allow emerging arts professionals to gain valuable experience through paid positions, which help to prepare them for more sustainable careers in cultural organizations. Translation funds allow arts organizations to make public events and conferences more accessible to more Canadians, and allows presenters to translate all print and online communications materials for public use.

General impacts: Depending on the nature of your recommendation, please indicate how the standard of living of Canadians would be improved, jobs would be created, people would be trained, etc.

Increased opportunities for project funding through these three programs and others means greater access to Canadian culture, to Canadians and visitors traveling from abroad. It also enables multiple job creation opportunities. MAP projects allow museums to hire curators, artists, historians, and other arts professionals to work on specific projects. Translation of new materials means greater availability of contracts for translators. Internships provide not only critical introductory work experience for emerging professionals, but also on-the-job training and mentorship in paid positions.

Topic: Arts and culture

Recommendation 3: Please provide a short summary of your recommendation.

We further echo the Coalition's request that additional funding be allocated in 2014-2015, towards a cultural diplomacy strategy, in line with Canada's Global Commerce Strategy. This would be the first step in expanding access to global markets for Canadian arts and culture. We recommend an initial and immediate investment of $5 million for 2014-15, and that an additional $5 million be added each year, over a period of 5 years - for an accumulated total of $25 million by 2019.

Expected cost or savings: From the pull-down menus, please indicate the expected cost or savings of your recommendation to the federal government and the period of time to which the expected cost or savings is related.

$10 million-$99.9 million

5 or more years

Federal funding: Please provide a precise indication of how the federal government could fund your recommendation. For example, indicate what federal spending should be reallocated, what federal tax measure(s) should be introduced, eliminated or changed, etc.

As indicated in Recommendation 1, investments in the arts provide a net benefit to Canadians, and increased funding does not just help the arts and cultural industries. While $7.9 billion is invested annually on cultural programs, approximately $25 billion is collected in taxes at all levels of government from those same activities. We are asking that a higher proportion of proceeds that come directly from cultural programs and services be redirected back into their further development.

Intended beneficiaries: Please indicate the groups of individuals, the sector(s) and/or the regions that would benefit by implementation of your recommendation.

This new investment helps to replace some of the significant programs at DFAIT and DCH that previously served this function, but were cut in recent years. It is fundamentally important that Canadian art is fostered. Canadian participation in international biennales, festivals, and art fairs situates Canadian artists and galleries on a world stage as leaders and innovators in the field of visual and media art, and fine craft. International recognition inspires audiences to visit Canadian cultural institutions, and allows our artists and institutions to serve as cultural ambassadors.

General impacts: Depending on the nature of your recommendation, please indicate how the standard of living of Canadians would be improved, jobs would be created, people would be trained, etc.

Artworks are presented in galleries, at art fairs, at major biennales and festivals, in embassies, and many other cultural centres. Canadian art is highlighted on a world stage at venues such as the Venice Biennale. Commercial galleries are able to open the Canadian art market to a wider international audience through foreign sales and exhibitions, and it is estimated that in 2006, exports of Canadian visual art amounted to $73 million. They are able to make this possible through the assistance of public support, which increases the Canadian GDP as well as job possibilities in this sector.

Please use this page if you wish to provide more explanation about your recommendation(s).

The Visual Arts Alliance is a consortium of national visual, media, and craft arts service organizations comprised of artists, curators, art museums, artist-run centres and art dealers, brought together by the Visual Arts Summit in November, 2007. The Alliance is a communication network of associations representing the interests of the visual arts milieu.

The Visual Arts Alliance recommends sustainable long-term investments in programs that encourage the production, presentation and distribution of contemporary and historical Canadian art. Adequate funding to the Canada Council for the Arts, the Department of Canadian Heritage, and to the further expansion of international market development for Canadian culture is fundamental to the future of the arts in Canada. We appreciate the support that this government has shown to such agencies as the Canada Council, and understand the challenges that the Finance Committee faces in balancing the needs of Canadians in a time of fiscal restraint. We believe that the Canadian arts and cultural industries can be instrumental in growing Canada's economy, increasing our industry's employability and entrepreneurial opportunities, and are eager to demonstrate how much we can accomplish in more communities with additional funding. We believe the return investment to the community in revenues as a result of public interest and spending in arts and culture is substantial, and benefits not only those who work in culture, but all Canadians as well, from coast to coast to coast.

*Please note that at least one recommendation must be provided