



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

2008 Funding Allocation for Local Arts Service Organizations (LASOs)

Date:	May 12, 2008
To:	Economic Development Committee
From:	Rita Davies, Executive Director, Toronto Culture Economic Development, Culture and Tourism
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	P:/2008/Cluster A/EDCT/ECON DEV/0806-021 (AFS # 6498)

SUMMARY

This report seeks Council approval on the recommended funding allocations for the four non-profit organizations that have applied for municipal support within the Local Arts Service Organizations (LASOs) category of Arts and Culture, Community Partnership and Investment Program (CPIP).

Community arts are the bedrock of the city's cultural ecology. The LASOs are community-based arts and cultural organizations that are essential to a vibrant community arts infrastructure for the City and are an important building block for healthy and cohesive communities. These organizations have sound financial management systems and governance structures. Public funding is necessary as the organizations are not fully self-supporting through private donations and self-generated income.

Allocation recommendations presented in this report are based on the review by Culture staff and a peer advisory panel. Culture staff manage the program and reviewed the funding applications with due diligence and in compliance with the City of Toronto's Grants Policy adopted by Council on December 16 and 17, 1998. Renewed multi-year (2008-2010) funding agreements, which establish a structured link between the City and the four LASOs and guide funding allocations, are in place for this funding cycle.

A total of \$512,700 is approved for the LASOs within the 2008 Approved Operating Budget for CPIP. Toronto Culture recommends the \$512,700 be allocated to the four LASOs for the 2008 funding cycle.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Director, Toronto Culture recommends that:

1. City Council approve the Arts and Culture funding allocations totalling \$512,700 to four LASOs as follows:

Organization	Funding Allocation
Arts Etobicoke	\$218,700
Lakeshore Arts	\$ 94,040
Scarborough Arts Council	\$109,000
UrbanArts Community Arts Council	\$ 90,960
Total	\$512,700

2. City Council authorize the appropriate City officials to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

Financial Impact

There is no financial impact beyond what has already been approved in the 2008 Approved Operating Budget.

The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

Through Clause No. 3, Report No. 24 of the Strategic Policies and Priorities Committee, adopted by City Council at its meeting held on November 25, 26 and 27, 1998, the City established the role of Toronto Culture in the delivery of funding in the Arts and Culture category for LASOs, among other funding in the same category assigned to Toronto Culture.

The four LASOs are Arts Etobicoke, Lakeshore Arts, Scarborough Arts Council and UrbanArts Community Arts Council (formerly Arts York).

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The LASOs provide a wide spectrum of arts and cultural services and programming for their members and broader community with a focus on youth, and arts education.

COMMENTS

Arts and Culture Funding Service Envelope for LASOs

Of the 2008 net budget for the Arts and Culture funding service envelope, \$512,700 is designated for allocation to the LASOs. (See Appendix 1 for descriptions of the Local Arts Service Organizations).

Functions of the City's Arts and Culture Funding for LASOs

The Arts and Culture funding for the LASOs provides a vehicle for the City to collaborate with these organizations and direct public funds to City priorities. Signed multi-year funding agreements ensure that this program effectively addresses needs and service gaps.

2008 Grant Application Review Process

Culture staff reviewed the applications received by the February 5, 2008 deadline with due diligence, checking the applications for eligibility, completeness and accuracy.

A panel of advisors then reviewed and assessed the applications using a peer assessment process. Culture staff selected panellists based on their ability to represent a broad base of experience and expertise as well as their general knowledge of the cultural sector and their involvement in various, geographic communities of the city. The advisors were Heather Dick and Ruth Howard.

Heather Dick is the founder and artist director of the Sirius Theatre Company. A professional actress and director for over 28 years, Heather has worked across the country in summer stock, regional theatre and children's touring companies. Her expertise spans community arts programming, cultural management and teaching at Ryerson Polytechnic University, The New School of Drama, Theatre Ontario, The Brooke Studio and a variety of community theatres.

Ruth Howard is the founder and artistic director of Jumblies Theatre. Artist-in-residence at Davenport Perth Neighbourhood Centre, Ruth created one of her numerous original theatre events *Once a Shoreline* in 2004. She has extensive professional set and costume design experience across Canada and in England. Her varied interest and expertise include creating projects that combine visual imagery, performance, music, movement and story gathering and telling. Ruth was presented the "Vital People" award in 2005 by the Toronto Community Foundation.

As part of the review process, Toronto Culture invited LASO representatives to present their organizations' 2008 activity highlights and to respond to questions from the panel. Panel members reviewed and discussed the applications based on the following assessment criteria: 1) Organizational capacity including operations and service delivery; governance, membership and participation; access and equity; and financial management; 2) Program effectiveness including vision/mandate; artistic quality; community impact and development; monitoring and evaluation; and accountability.

Summary of Recommendations:

Organization	2007Funding Level	2008 Request	2008 Recommendation	City Funding as a % of the organization's operating budget
Arts Etobicoke	\$193,700	\$232,175	\$218,700	24.8%
Lakeshore Arts	\$72,040	\$96,000	\$ 94,040	24.1%
Scarborough Arts Council	\$87,000	\$120,000	\$109,000	27.5%
UrbanArts Community Arts Council	\$74,960	\$100,000	\$90,960	18.5%
Total	\$342,200	\$457,000	\$512,700*	

* The 2008 funding allocation in the Arts & Culture funding service envelope for the LASOs represents a 19.9% increase over the 2007 funding allocation for these organizations.

CONCLUSION

The Local Arts Service Organizations provide a variety of opportunities for residents of Toronto through the arts and are helping to build a dynamic, safe and creative city.

CONTACT

Rita Davies
Executive Director of Culture
Tel: 416-397-5323
Fax: 416-392-5600
Email: rdavies@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Rita Davies, Executive Director, Toronto Culture
Economic Development, Culture and Tourism

ATTACHMENTS

1. Overview of Local Art Service Organizations

Overview of the Local Art Service Organizations

Local Arts Service Organizations

1. Arts Etobicoke:

2008/9 marks Arts Etobicoke's 35th year of operation. Arts Etobicoke co-presented with Expect Theatre urbanNOISE, a 3-year multidisciplinary urban arts training program and festival for at-risk youth in Rexdale where top Canadian stars performed alongside youth performers who had been trained through the program. Programs that will be continued in 2008 include the following: a) urbanNOISE (3rd year); b) the Arts Discovery program that has expanded with in an initiative titled *This is My Neighbourhood* in partnership with the Toronto District School Board and the Art Gallery of Ontario. Students' artwork was exhibited at Neilson Park Creative Centre, Arts Etobicoke Gallery and Harbourfront Centre; c) 28th year annual student art show **smART stART** renamed from *Introspections Student Art Show*, where students from participating schools had the opportunity to meet one-on-one with professional artists; and d) a new literacy children's program *From 3 to 3* that uses iconic children's stories from diverse cultures to build language skills in partnership with the University of Toronto. The organization is also expanding its arts programming for senior at the Tapestry Seniors Residence.

2. Lakeshore Arts:

Lakeshore Arts has been in operation for 15 years. In 2007, Lakeshore Arts moved into a storefront facility with workshop and gallery space. The organization plays a vital role in using arts as a catalyst for change. Lakeshore Arts' (YAM) *Youth Arts Movement* involves youth at a decision-making level in the organization's artistic programming and governance. In 2008, YAM will hire a part time youth coordinator to take charge of the expanding youth programming. Its 16th annual juried art show *Through the Eyes of the Artist* will continue to feature works in various media by established and emerging artists. Lakeshore Arts is now into year 2 of *Shazaam!*, a comic book project that follows students through elementary and high school, opening opportunities for careers and education in the arts at the post-secondary level. As well, it launched a 4-week after-school program in collaboration with *Diaspora Dialogues* where youth worked with professional authors in a self-selected writing genre, opening up writing as a potential career option. Lakeshore Arts will continue to deliver these two programs in 2008. It will also enhance its Leadership in the Arts Camp and continue its community-building/revitalization activities in collaboration with the local BIA and the Mimico 20/20 initiative.

3. Scarborough Arts Council:

Scarborough Arts Council has been in operation for 30 years. In 2007, it successfully completed its *Shelter Confidential: Youth Documentary Film Project* that portrayed the realities of shelter life in collaboration with Second Base Shelter. The C.A.R.E.S Artist residency digital art program provided after school activities for children 6-12 in the Eglinton East-Kennedy Park priority neighbourhood. As a continuation of its 2006, *Kijimba Kind, Gentle Spirit* arts and environmental program for at-risk youth in the Kingston Galloway area, in 2007, a group of volunteers ages 14-20 created a native plant butterfly garden and a totem sculpture from a recycled hydro pole under lead artist Dorsey James installed in Morningside Park. In 2008/9, in-keeping newly implemented digital/media arts programming such as *I Wanna Make Electronic Art*, Scarborough Arts Council will launch the *East End Portal* which will provide and effective means for its members, participants and the general public to have an alternative experience of the arts. New initiatives include: 1) *Arts and Culture Out of the Core*, which will comprise roundtable discussions, a community mapping project online discussion forum made possible by the *East End Portal*, and 2) *The Borough Most Thorough* – six weekly workshops on urban music in collaboration with Beatz to da Streetz, which will include a live concert near Kennedy subway station.

4. UrbanArts Community Arts Council:

UrbanArts Community Arts Council (formerly Arts York) has been in operation for 20 years and welcomes a new Executive Director in May 2008. Its breakthrough program S.T.E.P.U.P. offered youth the opportunity to express themselves and learn the artistic skills of dub poetry. To further enhance *Dreambuilding*, a program that provided the opportunity for high-density occupants in Weston-Mt Denis, the organization introduced a community festival with a full set of acting workshops *Act On it!* Its After-School-Arts Program continues to provide arts opportunities for high needs communities in the Weston neighbourhood. In 2007/8, UrbanArts delivered a new mobile program *beats.mind.movement* in music production, education, non-profit management and networking for youth in the Weston-Mt. Dennis, Lawrence Heights, and Parkdale and other neighbourhoods in central-west Toronto. Over 100 youth produced their own beats and participated in live music performances. This initiative will continue in 2008/9.

Collaborative Efforts

These four LASOs are also collaborating to maximize their resources. In 2008, Arts Etobicoke, Lakeshore Arts and Scarborough Arts Council will revamp their city-wide initiative, *Toronto Poetry Contest*, into a live poetry contest *Rhymes with Orange* with an expanded youth focus. Arts Etobicoke and Lakeshore Arts will implement a new initiative *Art on the Move*, a multi-generational mobile arts project where buses will be painted by youth and community members under the guidance of a lead artist.