



## STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

### Major Cultural Organizations – The Toronto International Film Festival Group

<b>Date:</b>	September 4, 2008
<b>To:</b>	Economic Development Committee
<b>From:</b>	Rita Davies, Executive Director, Cultural Services Economic Development, Culture and Tourism
<b>Wards:</b>	All
<b>Reference Number:</b>	P:/2008/Cluster A/EDCT/ECON DEV/ec0809-039 (AFS #8006)

#### SUMMARY

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City Council provides financial support to major cultural organizations that are recognized as essential cultural ambassadors for the City and whose programs have a significant impact on the regional economy by playing a major role in tourism attraction through the development of Toronto as a world wide cultural destination. The Major Cultural Organizations funding category includes Art Gallery of Ontario; Canadian Opera Company; National Ballet of Canada; National Ballet School; Toronto Symphony Orchestra; George Gardiner Museum of Ceramics; Pride Toronto and Festival Management Committee (Caribana).

The Toronto International Film Festival Group represents one of the most important cultural institutions in the City of Toronto. The organization is currently undergoing significant expansion that will continue to put Toronto on the international cultural map. For over three decades they have produced a film festival along with a full range of year round programming that has attracted international recognition for artistic excellence. They have also demonstrated sound financial management and a diverse and growing funding base.

The Toronto International Film Festival Group qualifies as a major cultural organization based on a review of the criteria for the funding category in the Community Partnerships and Investment Program. A proportionate grant to the TIFFFG through the CPIP would be in the range of \$800,000 to \$1 million based on the annual contribution to other existing major cultural organizations.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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### **The Executive Director of Cultural Services recommends that:**

1. the Toronto International Film Festival Group be deemed eligible for membership in the Major Cultural Organizations (Majors) funding category within the Community Partnerships and Investment Program (CPIP) based on the review of the eligibility criteria; and that funding responsibility for TIFFFG in 2009 be transferred to the Majors category in CPIP from the Toronto Arts Council Grant Program and the Economic Sponsorships Initiatives Program;
2. this report be referred to Budget Advisory Committee, as part of the 2009 Operating Budget process, to provide information for the consideration of an appropriate level of funding for the TIFFFG comparable to the funding of other major cultural organizations.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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There are no 2008 financial implications associated with this report.

A budget pressure would be created for the 2009 Operating Budget should Council decide to fund the Toronto International Film Festival Group at a comparable level to other Major Cultural Organization in the Community Partnerships and Investment Program.

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

## **DECISION HISTORY**

As part of the approval of the 2008 Operating Budget at its meeting on March 31, 2008, Council directed the Executive Director of Culture to report on the eligibility of the Toronto International Film Festival Group as a member of the Major Arts Cultural Organizations.

## **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

City Council provides financial support through the Community Partnerships and Investment Program to enhance major cultural organizations that are recognized as essential cultural ambassadors and infrastructure for the City, and for cultural attractions that have a significant impact for the benefit of Torontonians and towards cultural tourism enhancement. These organizations play a major role in enhancing a local cultural ecology, and in developing Toronto as a worldwide cultural destination. The Major Cultural Organizations funding category includes Art Gallery of Ontario; Canadian Opera

Company; National Ballet of Canada; National Ballet School; Toronto Symphony Orchestra; George Gardiner Museum of Ceramics; Pride Toronto and Festival Management Committee (Caribana).

In 2008, the City provided \$4,836,700.00 to the eight major cultural organizations listed above. On average, these Major Cultural Organizations receive between 4 and 5 per cent of their operating revenue from the City.

#### Program Criteria:

The following criteria are used to determine which cultural organizations are considered major cultural organizations for the purposes of city funding:

- a) Major cultural organizations are recognized as essential cultural ambassadors for the City and whose programs have a significant impact on the regional economy by playing a major role in tourism attraction through the development of Toronto as a world wide cultural destination;
- b) Toronto-based major cultural organizations with operating budgets in excess of \$2,500,000 annually and/or audiences of 250,000;
- c) Cultural organizations that are non-profit and have demonstrated:
  - o a consistent level of professional standards
  - o artistic excellence
  - o international achievement
  - o a sound financial management system
  - o diverse funding base
  - o board accountability and
  - o are not fully self-supporting through private donations and self-generating income.

## COMMENTS

The Toronto International Film Festival Group (TIFFG) is a charitable, not-for-profit cultural organization created in 1974 dedicated to transforming the way people see the world. Their vision is to lead the world in building markets and audiences for Canadian cinematic work and to foster creative discovery through the moving image. The TIFFG is currently undergoing significant change. For years they have produced not just a film festival every September but a full range of year-round programming augmented by education, library and archival activities.

Beginning in 2007, the Festival has broken ground on what will over the next few years, become the world's pre-eminent destination dedicated to the culture of the moving image. This landmark facility will serve as the home of all of the TIFFG's programs as well as community and industry events. It will offer an essential meeting place and

transformative experience for film professionals, educators and film lovers from around the globe.

#### International Achievement:

**The Toronto International Film Festival** is TIFFFG's flagship event and ranks among the most prestigious international festivals in the world. TIFFFG has established long-standing relationships with cultural centres, as well as domestic film groups and film festivals. They work regularly with guest curators to present unique and creatively stimulating exhibitions of Canadian and international cinema while working with arts organizations to share resources and collaborate on projects that foster the distribution of high-quality cinema.

#### Artistic Excellence:

Through its flagship event, The Toronto International Film Festival has become one of the world's most respected and well known film festivals. The TIFFFG operates year-round in Toronto and throughout the world and hosts the following cultural events:

- a) Canada's Top Ten, an annual event that celebrates, raises awareness for and demonstrates the exceptional vitality of contemporary Canadian cinematic achievements.
- b) Cinematheque Ontario is a year-round screening program dedicated to presenting the best of Canadian and international cinema through a meticulously curated balance of director retrospectives, national and regional spotlights, thematic programmes and exclusive limited runs.
- c) Film Circuit is a grassroots network of communities, domestic and abroad, that bring Canadian and international films and artists to audiences and film events around the world.
- d) The Film Reference Library is accessible to the public, boasts more than sixteen thousand book titles and sixty thousand film-related files, and holds the world's most extensive English-language collection of Canadian film-related material as well as unique special collection holdings from Canada's most esteemed filmmakers.
- e) Reel Talk, which has completed eight successful subscription seasons, combines TIFFFG's signature, high quality programming and hard-to-find international films to create one-of-a kind events.
- f) Sprockets Toronto International Film Festival for Children is a celebration of the best Canadian and international children's cinema. It has expanded to include the Sprockets Globetrotter Series and year-round outreach programming such as the Pocket Fund and Special Delivery.

#### Building Program:

Construction of Bell Lightbox began in earnest in spring 2007. Soon after, it received its naming logo, Bell Lightbox. Designed by world-renowned firm Kuwabara Payne

McKenna Blumberg, Bell Lightbox is set to join the ranks of the world's leading innovative cultural institutions. Structured around the dominant medium of the 20th century, Bell Lightbox will adopt multiple strategies for engaging a diverse public in their continued journey with film. Designed to appeal to adults and youth, it will serve as a jumping-off point for social networking.

#### Diverse Funding:

The Toronto International Film Festival Group's funding base of approximately \$20 million is diverse and includes ticket sales, corporate sponsorship, membership dues, and other earned revenue. The TIFFG also receives federal (\$1.48 million), provincial (\$1.7 million) and municipal support. To date, the support at the municipal level has been through a \$330,000 grant from the Toronto Arts Council and an \$85,000 grant from the City's Economic Sponsorships Initiatives Program.

#### Summary of Eligibility:

The Toronto International Film Festival Group qualifies as a major cultural organization based on the above noted criteria.

A proportionate grant to the TIFFG through the Community Partnerships and Investment Program would be in the range of \$800,000 to \$1 million based on the annual contribution to other existing major cultural organizations. Organizations of comparable size currently receive between 4 and 5 per cent of their operating budgets from the City of Toronto. Should the City decide to begin to provide proportionate funding to the TIFFG as a Major Cultural Organization through the CPIP budget allocation, funds cannot be taken away from the current envelope. Additional funding would need to be added to the 2009 CPIP budget for the Majors category.

## CONTACT

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## SIGNATURE

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