



## REPORT FOR ACTION

# Grants to Specialized Collections Museums - 2019 Allocations

**Date:** May 8, 2019

**To:** Economic and Community Development Committee

**From:** General Manager, Economic Development and Culture

**Wards:** All

### SUMMARY

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This report recommends allocations for three not-for-profit organizations that have applied for funding through the Grants to Specialized Collections Museums (GSCM) program administered by Economic Development and Culture (EDC).

2019 marks the second year of the GSCM program following Council's approval of the program in November 2017. The total program funds for these allocations is \$682,848 as approved by City Council on March 7, 2019 as part of the 2019 Operating Budget, which is the same amount as for 2018. Allocation recommendations in this report are based on the review by EDC's Arts and Culture Services staff and advice from an external peer advisory panel.

A one-time allocation to the Design Exchange (DX) is also recommended in this report to support the organization's transition from a design museum to a festival, exhibition and event programmer with a focus on design, innovation and technology. Design Exchange was previously funded through the GSCM program. The funding will be used to continue public programs, operations, and planning towards the second edition of the EDIT festival in 2020.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

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The General Manager, Economic Development and Culture, recommends that:

1. City Council approve the allocations of Grants to Specialized Collections Museums program funding of \$682,848 to the following organizations:

Organization	Amount
Aga Khan Museum	\$200,000

Gardiner Museum	\$161,535
Museum of Contemporary Art Toronto (MOCA Toronto)	\$321,313
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$682,848</b>

2. City Council increase the Approved 2019 Economic Development and Culture Operating Budget by \$200,000 gross, \$0 net, fully funded from the Major Special Events Reserve Fund (XR1218), to provide a grant of \$200,000 to help fund the transition of the Design Exchange from a design museum to a festival, exhibition and event programmer with a focus on design, innovation and technology.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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This report recommends the allocation of program funding for the Grants to Specialized Collections Museums to the three above-mentioned cultural organizations. Funding of \$682,848 for the GSCM program is included in the 2019 Approved Operating Budget for the Economic Development and Culture Division.

The proposed allocation of \$200,000 to the Design Exchange will be fully funded from the Major Special Events Reserve Fund (MSERF) (XR1218). The current uncommitted balance of the MSERF is adequate to support this grant.

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

## **DECISION HISTORY**

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At its meeting of November 7, 8 and 9, 2017, City Council approved the establishment of the Grants to Specialized Collections Museums program.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.ED24.7>

At its meeting of May 22, 2018, City Council approved the first allocations under this program.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2018.ED29.6>

At its meeting of December 9, 2015, City Council approved the first payment of \$200,000 to the Design Exchange following the expiry of annual contributions from Cadillac Fairview that had been secured through a Section 37 agreement.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2015.ED8.4>

At its meeting of July 12, 2016, City Council approved an allocation of \$350,000 from the Major Special Events Reserve Fund to the DX for its first EDIT festival:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.ED13.7>

The Toronto Grants Policy was adopted by City Council in 1998. Amendments to the policy were made in 2008 and in 2013, when the policy was renamed the City of Toronto Community Grants Policy.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2008.CD16.6>

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.EX32.1>

## COMMENTS

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The City of Toronto provides support to a range of cultural institutions in recognition of their social and economic importance. Specialized collections museums foster both economic prosperity and community development, encouraging public engagement through programs, outreach, and educational activities. These institutions are an important feature of Toronto's cultural sector with the responsibility of interpreting, presenting, and preserving significant arts, design, and heritage collections.

Operating funding is granted to museums that are dedicated to providing Toronto residents and visitors with sustained cultural programming through unique collections, relevant programming, and accessible community activities. Museums accepted to the GSCM program demonstrate leadership in their field, excellence in community participation, sound financial management, and professional collections management and museum standards.

The objective of Grants to Specialized Collections Museums is to:

- Provide funding for cultural organizations to sustain their operating capacity;
- Encourage diversity within the sector and to support the development of relevant programming for Toronto residents and visitors;
- Foster networks and partnerships among Toronto cultural institutions, from grassroots organizations to cultural organizations; and
- Maintain and grow Toronto's culturally and historically significant collections.

All recipients are required to comply with the City of Toronto Community Grants Policy.

### Review Process

Economic Development and Culture staff reviewed applications and requested additional information and/or clarification where necessary. The applications were reviewed by both EDC staff and a group of peer reviewers. This Advisory Panel was asked to assess each of the applications based on the quality of their programming, community service, cultural and economic impact, financial management and governance. They were also asked to rank the organizations in terms of funding priorities and to identify long-term issues and trends. These rankings and the advice of the advisory panel were taken into consideration in determining the recommended allocations.

Advisors were selected to represent a broad base of experience and expertise and a general knowledge of the cultural sector. The 2019 Advisory Panel for the GSCM

program was comprised of Francisco Alvarez (Executive and Artistic Director, OCADU Galleries System), Wendy Rowney (General Manager, Black Creek Pioneer Village) and Gaëtane Verna (Director, The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery).

## **2019 Recommended Grant Recipients**

### **1. Aga Khan Museum**

The Aga Khan Museum was opened to the public on September 18, 2014. It is a museum of Islamic art, Iranian (Persian) art, and Muslim culture located at 77 Wynford Drive in Ward 15. The first museum in the western world dedicated to Islamic art, it houses more than 1,000 rare objects including artifacts from the private collections of His Highness the Aga Khan, the Institute of Ismaili Studies in London, and Prince and Princess Sadruddin Aga Khan. As an initiative of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, the museum is dedicated to presenting an overview of the artistic, intellectual, and scientific contributions that Muslim civilizations have made to world heritage. Through education, research, and collaboration, the Museum seeks to foster dialogue and promotes tolerance and mutual understanding among people. The Aga Khan reportedly chose Canada as a tribute to the country's pluralism.

In addition to the Permanent Collection, the Aga Khan Museum features several temporary exhibitions each year that respond to current scholarship, emerging themes and new artistic developments. The Museum collection and exhibitions are complemented by educational programs and an impressive roster of performing arts events, which are integral to the museum's mandate.

The jury lauded the museum's programming saying it was "strong across the board, cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary." In 2018, the Aga Khan presented Here: Locating Contemporary Canadian Artists, Arts of the East: Highlights of Islamic Art from the Bruschetti Collection, Listening to Art, Seeing Music, The World of the Fatimids, and Suspended Together. The museum also took part in special partner presentations with the CONTACT Photography Festival, Doors Open Toronto and Nuit Blanche.

In 2019, the Aga Khan Museum focuses on The Moon: A Voyage Through Time, recognizing the 50th anniversary of the first lunar landing in 1969. MoonVerse, is a complementary spoken-word series showcasing poetry that reflects the moon as muse. Performing arts focus this year explores The Other Side of Fear including a comedy series, a live podcast taping, a hip-hop concert, a celebration of National Poetry Month, and a partnership with Koerner Hall to present Museum-favourite DakhaBrakha.

2019 is the first year that the Aga Khan Museum has applied to the GSCM program.

### **2. The Gardiner Museum**

The George R. Gardiner Museum, in Ward 11 and established in 1984, celebrates the art of ceramics, presenting human history through clay. In addition to its collections, the Gardiner has a community arts space which hosts a number of activities from clay workshops, life drawing sessions, silkscreen printing, fort building, and artist-in-resident studio.

Prior to 2015, the Gardiner Museum received City funding under the Major Cultural Organizations (MCO) program. While the Gardiner continues to be an important feature of Toronto's cultural fabric, the museum was removed from the MCO program in 2015 when Council approved updated program eligibility criteria as the Gardiner Museum's operating budget did not meet the \$20M threshold for eligibility. In 2018, the Gardiner Museum received \$158,370 from the City to support its operations. The peer advisory panel noted many successful collaborations with other organizations, and recommended that the Gardiner be awarded a modest 2% increase in its 2019 grant, which had been requested as part of its application.

In 2018, The Gardiner focused on Japan with a variety of partnerships, including with the Japan Foundation and Japan Canada 90 Years. Yoko Ono: The Riverbed proved to be something of a blockbuster, and in October, the museum partnered with the Art Gallery of Ontario, Montreal's Museum of Fine Arts, and the Royal Ontario Museum to present *Obsession: Sir William Van Horne's Japanese Ceramics*, among other exhibitions.

In 2019, the Museum features *Ai Weiwei: Unbroken*, and *Savour: Food Culture in the Age of Enlightenment* in addition to continued ongoing partnerships with Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival, Victoria College at University of Toronto, Sheridan College's ceramics program, the RBC Emerging Artist Project, Craft Ontario, The 519 and Akin Collective.

### **3. MOCA Toronto**

In September 2018, MOCA Toronto (formerly known as the Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art [MOCCA]) opened its new 55,000 square foot home on Sterling Road in Toronto's Junction Triangle neighbourhood (Ward 9).

Established in 1999, MOCA originally began as the Art Gallery of North York before moving to the West Queen West Art + Design District in 2005. Following its move, MOCA became a program of EDC, until August 27, 2012, when the museum became an independent cultural institution, operating as a non-profit charitable organization. In 2018, MOCA Toronto received \$324,478 from the City through the GSCM program during its transition stage to the new location. Based on the peer advisory panel's review, a 1% reduction to MOCA's grant has been recommended for 2019.

In 2018, MOCA Toronto continued to experience some staffing instability and now has a two-pronged leadership approach with a Director of Programming and a Managing Director, an approach typical of cultural institutions.

Last year, MOCA Toronto launched its new home with a free grand-opening weekend September 20-23 that welcomed over 11,000 visitors to view the space and the inaugural exhibit, *BELIEVE*. During the remainder of 2018, the museum hosted artist events with Tim Whiten, Rajni Perera, Jeneen Frei Njootli, Andy Holden, Hiba Abdallah, and Justin Langlois. MOCA also welcomed onsite collaborators such as Art Metropole, Akin, the Ontario Science Centre, and the Toronto Biennial of Art.

In 2019, MOCA's first full-year of programming, the museum features exhibitions / installations by Basma Alsharif, Chantal Akerman, Mark Dion, Shezad Dawood and a group exhibition called Age of You.

### **Allocation of one-time funding to the Design Exchange**

In 2018, the DX qualified for and received \$200,000 in operating support through the GSCM program. The DX is no longer eligible for funding through the program as it is now transitioning from a design museum to a festival, exhibition and event programmer with a focus on design, innovation and technology. To assist with this transition, EDC is requesting a one-time transfer of funds from the MSERF to continue public programs, operations, and planning towards the second edition of the EDIT festival in 2020.

The operations of the Design Exchange have been supported by City Council for 28 years. In 2014, the final payment of a 24-year funding agreement between the City of Toronto and Cadillac Fairview which flowed \$500,000 annually to the DX was made. As of 2015, the City of Toronto has been supporting the operations of the DX at the level of \$200,000 per year. Additional exceptional funding of \$350,000 was granted over two years in 2016 and 2017 to support the inaugural edition of the Exposition of Design, Innovation, and Technology (EDIT) festival, which took place in September 2017 at the former Unilever site on the Lakeshore east of the Don River.

EDIT was part of DX's strategic plan to focus less on being a professional collecting design museum and more on being a cultural festival and presenter of events and exhibitions related to design thinking and technology. The first iteration of the EDIT festival incurred a significant deficit, and the business model under which the DX was operating was not sustainable. The Board of the DX decided to reorient the organization towards producing the EDIT festival once every two years, and close down the museum operations including the management of the material objects collection. EDC assisted with the wind-down costs in 2018, including the costs of deaccessioning the collection.

Recently, the DX and the non-profit technology organization, Elevate, have been sharing office space and plan for further collaboration. However, the DX remains a fully separate organization at this time and is in the midst of planning the second iteration of EDIT in 2020, as well as delivering public programs such as lectures, talks, and summer camps about design and technology.

In particular, the DX is deeply committed to engaging children and youth in design thinking and their public programming. The DX has demonstrated a commitment to reaching children and youth through its community outreach programs in Neighbourhood Improvement Areas, summer camps, and design competitions aimed at both secondary school and post-secondary school students. The DX seeks to ensure that design, innovation and technology and the confluence of these ideas that can offer solutions to global problems such as environmental sustainability, social inclusion, resource distribution, etc. are spread and exchanged across the segment of the population most likely to come up with new ideas, those from 6 - 36 years old. The DX's plans for public programming in 2019 meet the overall goals of EDC's cultural grants programs.

Staff will continue to monitor the organization closely, and recommend one-time funding in the amount of \$200,000 in 2019 in order to allow the organization to continue its public programming. Future operating funding for the DX will be considered through 2020 Budget process.

## **CONTACT**

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Sally Han, Manager, Cultural Partnerships, Economic Development and Culture  
[sally.han@toronto.ca](mailto:sally.han@toronto.ca), 416-392-4012

## **SIGNATURE**

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Mike Williams  
General Manager, Economic Development and Culture