



**STAFF REPORT
ACTION REQUIRED**

2013 Local Arts Service Organizations (LASOs) Grant Allocation

Date:	April 22, 2013
To:	Economic Development Committee
From:	General Manager, Economic Development and Culture
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

This report seeks City Council approval on the recommended funding allocations for the six non-profit organizations that have applied for municipal support through the Local Arts Service Organizations (LASOs) Program.

The arts are an integral part of a healthy culture, nourishing creativity and providing social and economic benefit. Community arts provide significant value to both communities and artists. 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. As incorporated charitable organizations dedicated to community engagement through the arts, the existing four LASOs have sound financial management systems, governance structures, and solid, sustainable community outreach arts programming, activities and events. Public funding is necessary as the organizations are not fully self-supporting through private donations and self-generated income.

Two new LASOs, North York Arts (formed in 2011) and East End Arts (Working Group formed in 2011) are emerging as local arts catalysts in their respective geographic areas per Recommendation 2.3 "Establish Local Arts Service Organizations in North York and East York" in the *Creative Capital Gains: An Action Plan for Toronto*, adopted by Council in 2011. Currently being incubated by the Toronto Arts Foundation, an incorporated (1995) non profit charitable organization which aims to connect every Toronto neighbourhood with the transformative social economic benefits of the arts, the two new LASOs are also included within the 2013 Local Arts Service Organization grant program.

Allocation recommendations presented in this report are based on the review by Cultural Services staff and an external peer advisory panel. Cultural Services 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.

A total of \$533,410 is included in the Economic Development and Culture 2013 Approved Operating Budget to fund the existing four Local Service Arts Organizations.

Additional new funds in the amount of \$300,000 from the Third Party Sign Tax are included in the Economic Development and Culture 2013 Approved Operating Budget to enhance funding for the four existing LASOs as well as to support the two new ones.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager, Economic Development and Culture recommends that:

1. City Council approve the Arts and Culture funding allocations totalling \$833,410 to six LASOs as follows:

Organization	Funding Allocation
Arts Etobicoke	\$253,530
Lakeshore Arts	\$121,140
Scarborough Arts	\$138,105
UrbanArts Community Arts Council	\$120,635
East End Arts	\$100,000
North York Arts	\$100,000
Total	\$833,410

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

Financial Impact

This report recommends that the 2013 approved Operating Budget of \$833,410 for the Local Arts Service Organizations program within the Economic Development and Culture Division be allocated to the six above-mentioned Local Arts Service Organizations. There is no financial impact beyond the approved budget.

The amount of \$833,410 includes: \$533,410 for the Local Arts Service Organizations program approved by Council as part of EDC's Budget in January 2013 and the additional \$300,000 allocation from the Third Party Sign Tax reserve approved by Council in April (2013 Allocation for Arts and Culture [ED20.5]).

Funding for the additional \$300,000 will be drawn from the actual revenues from the Third Party Sign Tax in excess of budgeted revenue generated from 2009-2012 and will be available in July 2013 after the 2012 City of Toronto Audited Financial Statements are complete.

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 (formerly Scarborough Arts Council) and UrbanArts Community Arts Council (formerly Arts York). The two new LASOs, North York Arts and East End Arts, have been formed per Recommendation 2.3 "Establish Local Arts Service Organizations in North York and East York" in the *Creative Capital Gains: An Action Plan for Toronto*, adopted by Council in 2011.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The LASOs are Toronto's anchor community arts organizations that provide a wide spectrum of arts and cultural services and programming for their members and broader community with a focus to interact with communities using all forms of art as the catalyst. Focuses of their services and programming are: arts education and outreach in Toronto's inner suburbs; support for a wide range of arts programming in the community; facilitation arts and business partnerships, and providing direct services to residents through networking opportunities, workshops, free resources, meeting space, and connections with partner and community organizations. With one of its key programming focus on youth, their programs and services help program participants develop a creative voice, self esteem and employment skills.

COMMENTS

Summary of Recommendations:

Organization	2013 Request	2013 Recommendation	City Funding as a % of the organization's operating budget
Arts Etobicoke	\$283,030	\$253,530	37%
Lakeshore Arts	\$170,000	\$121,140	30%
Scarborough Arts	\$170,000	\$138,405	30%
UrbanArts Community Arts Council	\$230,000	\$120,635	15%
East End Arts	\$100,000	\$100,000	100%
North York Arts	\$100,000	\$100,000	31%
Total	\$883,200	\$833,410	Average: 28%*

*This represents the % for the existing LASOs only.

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. They provide services that are aligned with those of Cultural Services at both the policy and operational levels. They strongly support the City of Toronto's work in underserved communities and geographic areas providing inclusive opportunities for children and youth, newcomers, LGBTT individuals, seniors, and participants from a broad demographic spectrum through their services and programming customized to local needs.

Emerging new LASOs aspire to perform similar roles as the existing LASOs and are committed to enhancing access and opportunity for the general public, local residents, artists and arts organizations, by reaching out to diverse communities and building skills and capacity through the programs and service they will provide.

2013 Grant Application Review Process:

Cultural Services staff reviewed the applications received by the February 5, 2013 deadline with due diligence.

A peer review panel was set up to review and assess the applications through a peer assessment process. Cultural Services 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 Paul Kwaku Adomako, Project Manager, African and Black Diaspora

Global Network on HIV/AIDS, Live Arts Inc mentor; Marie Belanger, Branch Head, Kennedy/Eglinton Neighbourhood Branch; Angel Beyde, artist, writer, creativity coach and community organizer; and Patrice Njoh, member of the Grant Review Team, ArtReach, past Local Culture Coordinator on the Creative/Cultural Hub Project, Artscape Toronto.

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. At the end of the process, panel members rated the organizations from 1 – 5 (lowest to highest) against the two assessment criteria.

CONCLUSION

The Local Arts Service Organizations provide a variety of opportunities for residents of Toronto through the arts and contribute to a vibrant community arts infrastructure in Toronto. With the common goal of serving the diverse needs in their community and across Toronto, the LASOs make the arts, in all forms, broadly accessible and affordable. Through their programs and services, community arts become very much part of the daily fabric of community living. The forming of two new LASOs ensure a broader geographic coverage of arts programming and services across the city to further enhance access and opportunity in the arts for everyone in Toronto.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

1. Overview of Local Arts Service Organizations