



## STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

### 2014 Local Arts Service Organizations (LASOs) Grant Allocation

<b>Date:</b>	April 22, 2014
<b>To:</b>	Economic Development Committee
<b>From:</b>	General Manager, Economic Development and Culture
<b>Wards:</b>	All
<b>Reference Number:</b>	

#### SUMMARY

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This report seeks 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 newer LASOs, North York Arts (formed in 2011) and East End Arts (formed in 2013) 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 part of the 2014 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 grant applications with due diligence and in compliance with the City of Toronto's Community Grants Policy adopted by Council at its July 16, 2013 meeting,

A total of \$1,333,410 is included in the Economic Development and Culture 2014 Approved Operating Budget to fund the six Local Service Arts Organizations.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager, Economic Development and Culture recommends that:

1. City Council approve the Arts and Culture funding allocations totalling \$1,333,410 to six LASOs as follows:

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Funding Allocation</b>
Arts Etobicoke	\$374,805
Lakeshore Arts	\$232,430
Scarborough Arts	\$209,000
UrbanArts Community Arts Council	\$232,935
East End Arts	\$110,000
North York Arts	\$174,240
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,333,410</b>

## Financial Impact

This report recommends that the 2014 approved Operating Budget of \$1,333,410 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 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 newer LASOs, North York Arts (2011) and East End Arts (2013), were 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.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2011.ED3.3>

## **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, interacting with communities using all forms of art as the catalyst. LASO services and programming focus on: 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. Youth programs and services that help participants develop a creative voice, self esteem and employment skills are a key focus of LASOS.

## **COMMENTS**

### **Arts and Culture Funding Service Envelope for LASOs**

Of the 2014 net budget for the Arts and Culture funding service envelope, \$1,333,410 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. 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, LGBTTT 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.

### **2014 Grant Application Review Process:**

Cultural Services staff reviewed the applications received by the February 5, 2014 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 panellists were Margie MacDonald, independent artist; Femi James, Director, The S.P.O.T. - Success Power Opportunity Teamwork – Malvern; Sherri Helwig, Program Director of the Arts Management Specialist Programs at the University of Toronto, Scarborough; and Erika Pulfer, ArtReach Grants Review Team, Weston King Neighborhood Centre, Program Planning Coordinator.

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.

### **Summary of Recommendations:**

<b>Organization</b>	<b>2014 Request</b>	<b>2014 Recommendation</b>	<b>City Funding as a % of the organization's operating budget</b>
Arts Etobicoke	\$386,313	\$374,805	48%
Lakeshore Arts	\$291,140	\$232,430	37%
Scarborough Arts	\$209,000	\$209,000	41%
UrbanArts Community Arts Council	\$281,540	\$232,935	25%
East End Arts	\$110,000	\$110,000	47%
North York Arts	\$210,500	\$174,240	35%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,488,493</b>	<b>\$1,333,410</b>	<b>Average: 38.8%</b>

## **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 addition 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**

Michael H. Williams, General Manager  
Economic Development and Culture

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Overview of Local Arts Service Organizations