



11 January 2016

Councillor Gary Crawford  
Chair, Budget Committee  
100 Queen Street West, Suite A11  
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2  
VIA EMAIL: [councillor\\_crawford@toronto.ca](mailto:councillor_crawford@toronto.ca)

**Dr. Sara Diamond**  
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Dear Councillor Crawford:

I am writing to thank City Council for maintaining its commitment to reaching the \$25 per capita funding for the arts goal by 2017 and to encourage you to uphold your commitment in the 2016 budget.

As you may already know, OCAD University—Canada's University of the Imagination—is the nation's leading art, design and media institution and the only institution of its kind in Ontario. Since 1876, we have been located in downtown Toronto, Canada's largest centre for art, design, culture and business. Home to the Group of Seven, inventors of industrial design and an engine of the Canadian advertising and graphic design industries, we have and continue to be a vital force for bringing together a diversity of creativity and innovation as well as \$258M in economic impact annually.

OCAD University currently enrolls 4,700 students in 16 undergraduate and seven graduate programs. We employ just over 1,000 faculty and staff—84% of whom live in the City of Toronto—and have 19,000+ alumni. Our faculty and alumni rely on an economy of art market sales, commissions, participation in institutions funded by the City of Toronto and grants from three levels of government, including the Toronto Arts Council (TAC). Such programs provide transformational support to communities and ensure that Toronto is a leading cultural city.

The City of Toronto's continued and strengthened funding for arts and cultural organizations—in particular TAC and events such as Nuit Blanche—is exemplary. These institutions create jobs directly in the cultural sector and through tourist and ancillary dollars they attract.

I know there are many competing demands on the City's funds, but want to emphasize the value of increased arts funding. Funding increases to programs like TAC directly support OCAD University students, faculty and alumni.

As you move forward in the budget process, I urge you to maintain your commitment to arts funding in Toronto by maintaining the grant increase to Toronto Arts Council. Indeed, this year's commitment to a \$5 million increase is a relatively small expenditure in the context of the City's budget that will bring huge benefits to the entire city and help other sectors achieve their goals. In addition I hope you will reconfirm your support of Nuit Blanche, ensuring its successful return in 2016.

Thank you for your support and commitment.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Sara Diamond, O. of Ont., RCA  
President and Vice-Chancellor, OCAD University

cc: Joe Cressy, City Councillor, Ward 20  
Michael Thompson, Chair, Economic Development and Culture Committee  
City of Toronto Budget Committee and Committee Clerk  
Toronto Arts Council Board of Directors