

24 May 2016

Re: Executive Committee item 2016.EX15.7

OCAD University support for Toronto's Expo 2025 Bid

Thank you to the committee for the opportunity to speak today in support of a Toronto bid for Expo 2025. My name is Miriam Kramer and I am speaking on behalf of Dr. Sara Diamond, President and Vice-Chancellor of OCAD University.

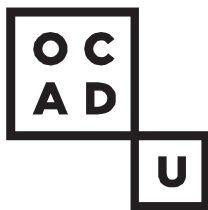
OCAD University—Canada's university of the imagination—currently enrolls more than 4,700 students in 15 undergraduate and seven graduate programs. Home to the Group of Seven, to inventors of industrial design, and an historic engine of Canada's advertising, graphic design and visual art industries, OCAD University prepares students and helps faculty and alumni to be cultural leaders, practitioners, educators, creative thinkers, strategists, inventors and innovators who take calculated risks and make strong contributions to the cultural, social and economic prosperity of Canada and the world.

In less than two more weeks, we will be celebrating the graduation of more than 900 artists, designers and digital media students, the next wave of creative thinkers, makers and collaborators.

It is with this legacy and vision in mind that OCAD University supports a bid to bring Expo 2025 to Toronto.

Cultural impact

Hosting an Expo provides an opportunity to inspire Canadians and secure Canada's reputation as a destination of arts, culture and innovation. As the 1967 Expo was formative for Canada in its first 100 years as a country, Expo 2025 has the opportunity to provide creatives like OCAD University students, faculty and alumni to produce lasting exhibits that will help explore and define what it means to be Canadian in the 21st century and to engage people in how to create a better society, better understanding and tolerance.



Cultural exhibits in Toronto have already proven to be incredibly popular and successful. We know from experience that large, public exhibits like Nuit Blanche and Luminato—or even OCAD U’s annual Graduate Exhibition that hosted more than 40,000 people over a five-day period this May—ignite peoples’ imaginations through engaging and challenging art and design. They are an opportunity for a first exposure to visual art for a younger audience and out-of-town visitors. They are also a social blender, drawing individuals, families and communities from the GTA and far beyond.

Economic impact

Large exhibitions also have economic impact. Hosting Expo 2025 in Toronto will grow the cultural and creative sectors and help them contribute further to the economic success of Toronto, Ontario and Canada. According to recent data from Statistics Canada, Canada’s cultural industries already contribute approximate \$47.8 billion to Canada’s GDP. Ontario’s arts, culture and heritage sector represents \$27.7 billion or 4.1% of the province’s GDP and almost 302,000 jobs.

We already know that large-scale exhibitions are economic drivers. Nuit Blanche’s impact since 2006 has grown from \$1 million to \$40.5 million last year, and that’s just one night. Think about that potential impact multiplied by 360 nights for an Expo 2025.

City building impact

In addition to providing opportunity for creativity and economic impact, Expo 2025 would be a catalyst for city building, namely for improvement of urban infrastructure and public art as well as for the acceleration of the implementation of urban policies and strengthening the international image of the host city. Further, Expo 2025 is an opportunity leverage existing infrastructure projects into a world-class waterfront destination with a modest incremental spend. The redevelopment of our waterfront and port lands will have long lasting impacts for the City of Toronto that will extend far beyond Expo 2025.

Canada’s innovation showcase

Toronto’s Waterfront already is an innovation district and an Expo will provide the opportunity to further showcase Toronto’s innovations to the



world. As well, an Expo can be a catalyst of innovation as we ready ourselves to showcase Toronto's best and brightest for the event.

OCAD University already sees the Waterfront as an important hub for innovation and will soon be expanding its campus—specifically our research, innovation and commercialization capacity—to the East Bayfront Precinct as part of the Daniels City of the Arts. This new Campus for the Connected World will also interface with the myriad of current and future companies in that precinct. An Expo in the neighbourhood would only provide an expanded opportunity for collaboration and amplify the innovation currently happening in the area.

For all these reasons: the cultural impact, the economic impact and the city building and innovation potential, OCAD University strongly supports bidding for Toronto to host Expo 2025. That being said, we understand that Toronto needs funding commitments from the Governments of Ontario and Canada, and those conversations have already begun. We have already seen broad and diverse support among business, labour, community and the arts in the city, and an endorsement from City Council would send a strong message to the other levels of government that Expo 2025 is an important investment, for the city, the province and the country.

Thanks you for the opportunity to speak today. I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.

For more information:
Miriam Kramer
Manager, Government Relations
x 3028
mkramer@ocadu.ca