

TORONTO LOCAL ART SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS (LASO)

Focused Priorities for new Funding 2018-2022

1. Invest in developing unified, collaborative LASO operations by developing the resources necessary to facilitate collaboration, build capacity, and access collective information and resources among the six LASOs.

2. Support business development for arts and culture communities. Invest funding to help LASOs provide local artists with the resources they need to advance their arts careers and succeed as arts-entrepreneurs. Support LASOs in developing a knowledge base to expand and extend arts programming to new communities and increase revenue channels.

Increased investments in these two areas will enable development and growth in the LASOs' ability to:

3. Increase participation and support for local cultural tourism by collaborating and participating in events that allow LASOs to forge new partnerships, establish new spaces for programming, draw audiences from outside the region, provide access to new and diverse audiences and measure the impact that cultural tourism has on local economies.

4. Facilitate civic engagement. Using arts as a catalyst for community-building and expertise on the underserved communities LASOs serve, bring diverse stakeholders together to collaborate on relevant issues and connect them with meaningful opportunities to deepen their involvement and become more actively engaged.

Priority 1: Invest in developing unified, collaborative LASO operations

Maintain existing funding and apply new funding to develop the resources necessary to facilitate collaboration, build capacity, and access collective information and resources among the six LASOs.

- Standardize organizational matrix, reporting methods, contracts, policies, artist fees, competitive salaries, benefits plans, roles and responsibilities across LASOs
- Create mentorship plan and professional development plan for LASO staff, participants, artists, and board members to support development of diverse skills
- Collaborate on a succession plan for LASOs' staff, their Boards, their Committees, and Executive Directors
- Build a platform to pool data and share resources among LASOs, specifically: space, professional development funding, assets, IT/online platforms, print collateral, vendors, program models, and LASO strategic plans
- Integrate capacity building opportunities into participant-driven programming
- Diversify funding and partnerships and increase revenues through a variety of streams (e.g. fundraising, earned revenue and social enterprise) to support stability of operating funds and generate reserve funds

Anticipated Outcomes:

- LASOs have a clearly defined, cohesive organizational structure to ensure they consistently meet the needs of their staff, artists, and communities
- Increased employment among LASOs' catchment areas with more youth becoming employment ready and more participants, staff, and volunteers progressing to leadership roles
- LASOs operate with maximum efficiency and eliminate service redundancies to make effective use of their resources and public funds
- A shared voice, vision and values are reflected in LASO's operating structures and governing body
- Able to attract and retain the talent, skills and operating funds necessary to achieve LASOs' sustained growth and reduce staff churn
- Diverse programming supports the needs of multi-generational communities

Priority 2: Support business development for the community arts sector

Invest funding to help LASOs provide local artists with the resources they need to advance their arts careers and succeed as arts-entrepreneurs. Support LASOs in developing a knowledge base to expand and extend arts programming to new communities and increase revenue channels.

- Provide artists with education and resources to develop their marketing avenues and business skills, access employment and funding opportunities, and facilitate knowledge sharing on best practices and standards
- Invest in collecting, evaluating and translating benchmark data related to arts and culture programming and artists throughout the city
- Strengthen and expand partnerships with city divisions, businesses, educational institutions, and non-traditional partners to attract cross sector funding, create crossover programming, consulting opportunities, leverage collective resources, and expand collaboration among partners and LASOs
- Foster connected communications and increase joint communications efforts among LASOs and partners
- Create common language to communicate LASOs' role, vision and value within the arts and culture ecology

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Improved awareness as the primary connection point for local artists seeking to develop their arts-entrepreneurial expertise and advance their career or business in Toronto's arts and culture sector
- Increased recognition as a trusted source of credible information demonstrating the socioeconomic importance, value and impact of arts and culture in Toronto
- Leveraged feedback on Toronto's arts and culture landscape to further develop programming

- Enhanced reputation as a critical collaborative partner in the development of strategic, integrated arts and culture programming
- Expanded number of arts venues, extended community reach, and deepened impact by leveraging and integrating partner resources
- Increased awareness of programming and maximized outreach outcomes
- Expanded and diversified revenue channels and developed sustainable arts entrepreneurship
- Improved artists' access to consistent employment/enterprise, fair pay and helped to raise their profile
- Created a clear understanding of LASOs' role in Toronto's arts and culture landscape among the public

Increased investments in these two areas will enable development and growth in the LASOs' ability to:

Priority 3: Increase participation and support for local cultural tourism

Collaborate and participate in events that allow LASOs to forge new partnerships, strengthen LASOs' community hubs, establish new spaces for programming, draw audiences from outside the region, and provide access to new and diverse audiences. Capture feedback that can be used to model other arts and cultural programming and measure the impact that cultural tourism has on local economies.

Funding will support marketing and communications efforts to engage and connect with diverse, new audiences.

- Partner with existing multidisciplinary events to expand partnership opportunities and access new audiences (e.g. offer value-added arts programming to food festivals, music nights, children/youth events as capacity allows)
- Collaborate with City to host satellite versions of major events in LASO areas (e.g. Nuit Blanche in Scarborough)
- Develop shared evaluation models for tracking social and economic data
- Facilitate long-term collaborative projects among LASOs that are not city-initiated
- Study, research, collect evidence and share it with partners/other municipalities
- Produce a joint marketing and promotions plan and explore establishing resources for a joint PR coordinator to raise LASOs' profile
- Increase accessibility to events and venues

Anticipated Outcomes

- Showcased LASO's arts and cultural programming among audiences that might not normally be exposed to it
- Activated cultural and recreation spaces outside the core for cultural tourism activities
- Put the City's inner suburbs on the map for cultural activities
- Captured feedback that can be used to model programming and events in other neighbourhoods
- Increased economic activity in local businesses in LASO areas
- Created a sense of connection with various city initiatives in LASO communities
- Attracted new and diverse audiences to participate in LASO events
- Drew people from outside of region to events in LASO communities
- Connected with underserved communities by reducing barriers to participation
- Generated more paying gigs for artists

Priority 4: Facilitate civic engagement

Using arts as a catalyst for community-building and expertise on the underserved communities LASOs serve, bring diverse stakeholders together to collaborate on relevant issues and connect them with meaningful opportunities to deepen their involvement and become more actively engaged. New funding will be used to increase communications and collect community input and feedback.

- Engage and support newcomers connecting them with residents to provide resources and opportunities
- Advocate for arts and culture data to be included in Neighbourhood Improvement Areas data collection to help inform decision-making
- Collect data on community members through surveys and feedback

- Congregate diverse stakeholders for decision-making processes on community and city issues and heighten quality of civic engagement
- Increase communications about what LASOs are doing and how to participate
- Build bridges with civic groups and community-oriented sectors within the city (e.g. Toronto community housing, public health, school boards, BIAs, NIAs) to understand and respond to community needs to deliver inclusive programming
- Represent artists in civic engagement opportunities
- Develop key partnerships between artists and settlement services

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Newcomers feel welcomed and included in communities
- LASOs are leaders in advocacy, they help amplify local voices and are looked upon for leadership and guidance provincially, federally and globally
- LASOs developed expertise on community needs
- United diverse cultural and cross-generational communities using arts as a catalyst for community-building
- Participants and members from LASOs are more involved with other civic groups (e.g. councils, committees, boards) and deepen their involvement with LASOs transitioning from participant to partner, donor or volunteer
- LASOs are more visible and involved in larger civic engagement initiatives
- Newcomer artists are supported and able to access information and opportunities for their practice
- Artists support LASOs' advocacy efforts through meaningful engagement opportunities
- Expanding impactful volunteer opportunities

HAVE YOUR SAY TORONTO 2020 BUDGET

On January 10, Toronto City Council launched the 2020 city budget process, presenting a recommended operating budget of \$13.5 billion for review and approval by City Council.

Included in the recommendations is an increase of \$2.5 million to arts and culture. Of this, Toronto Arts Council expects to receive an increase of \$500,000.

While municipal support for arts grants is always important, in 2020 there are more reasons than ever for City Council to approve this recommended increase to arts funding:

- Mayor Tory has declared 2021 will be Toronto's Year of Public Art (YPA). Increased arts funding will encourage strong participation by local artists, leading to lasting impact on both our artists and our city.
- Arts Stats 2019 - Going Without: Artists and Arts Workers in Our Creative City, published in November 2019, has made it clear that Toronto's artists face disproportionately high costs to live in Toronto (paying for both work space and essential training) while experiencing disproportionately low incomes. This has led as many as 73% of Toronto's artists to consider leaving the city. See a related Toronto Star article Time for Toronto to decide whether it wants to keep its Artists.
- 90% of Torontonians believe that the arts and culture benefit Toronto; top benefits are attracting tourists, highlighting cultural diversity, and making the city a better place in which to live. See Toronto Arts Stats 2018.

Budget Committee will hear directly from the public beginning next week on January 20 and 21. All Toronto residents are welcome to comment on the proposed Budget at these hearings.

Action:

- Register to speak at the Budget hearings being held January 20 or 21 at City Hall and Etobicoke, Scarborough, North York Civic Centres. Let City Council know what additional arts funding could mean for you. [Click here for information on the 2020 budget and speaking options](#).
- Call or email your City Councillor thanking them for Council's progress on arts funding to date and requesting that it be sustained in 2020 with this addition of \$2.5 million. For a sample email [click here](#) and scroll to *Email your City Councillor*. To find your Councillor's contact information in the 25 ward Council: [click here](#).

Letting your Councillor know what you think can be very effective. We continue to be confident that Toronto's Mayor and City Councillors understand the benefits arts funding bring to the city. Contributing to the livability of the city for residents in every neighbourhood while making Toronto an important international business and tourist destination gives arts funding a unique importance in budget deliberations.

Please don't hesitate to contact me any time if you have questions or would like additional information. susan@torontoarts.org; 416-392-6802 x211.

Thank you.

Susan Wright
Deputy Director
Toronto Arts Council

About Toronto Arts Council

Toronto Arts Council (TAC) is the City of Toronto's funding body for artists and arts organizations. Since 1974, TAC has played a major role in the city's cultural industries by supporting a very broad range of artistic activity. From the emerging artist to the most established, from celebrated institutions to arts that challenge convention, TAC is typically the first funder to offer support. Today, TAC grants lead to exhibitions, performances, readings and workshops seen annually by over 9.5 million people. Through its ongoing funding of over \$18 million annually, TAC cultivates a rich engagement between artists and audiences. It is proud to reflect Toronto's vibrancy through the diversity of the artists, arts communities and audiences that it serves. For more about Toronto Arts Council, visit www.torontoartscouncil.org

Visit our website



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Derek Spooner <derek@scarborougharts.com>

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 11:01 AM

To: Lila Karim <lila@northyorkarts.org>

Thank you!

[Quoted text hidden]

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Derek Spooner
Executive Director
(he / him, they / them)

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Original Deputation Verbiage Submitted to the City of Toronto Budget Committee on Monday January 20th, 2020 from 3pm - 5pm at Scarborough Civic Centre:

Prepared by: Derek Spooner, Executive Director, Scarborough Arts

Date: Tuesday January 21st, 2020

SCARBOROUGH ARTS DEPUTATION FOR BUDGET COMMITTEE – JANUARY 20th, 2020

- Good afternoon members of the budget committee. My name is Derek Spooner and I am the Executive Director of Scarborough Arts. Thank you for the opportunity to speak, and for your continued support of arts, cultural and economic development initiatives across Toronto.
- Many of you are familiar with Scarborough Arts, and since our inception in 1978, we have built **500,000** + audience attendees and participants to various programs, events and workshops in Scarborough.

What is a Local Arts Service Organization (LASO)?

- The Local Arts Service Organizations (LASOs) Program, which includes Arts Etobicoke, East End Arts, Lakeshore Arts, North York Arts, Urban Arts and Scarborough Arts, supports the City of Toronto's Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy in underserved geographic areas as well as the Economic Development and Culture Divisional Strategy of inclusion and equity in geographic areas outside the core. With the City's investment, we leverage partnerships and other funding sources to provide inclusive and affordable opportunities for local residents, artists, and arts organizations. As anchor community arts organizations in Toronto, we promote the arts at the local level, making culture a part of the daily fabric of community life.
- Our free arts programs offer something for all ages, skill levels and interests. We engage children, youth, families, seniors, members, volunteers and artists of all disciplines. We support under-served communities through arts programming, activities and events in **20** wards across the City of Toronto.
- In 2018-19, the LASOs made the following **impacts and contributions by the numbers:**
 - 300,708 attendees at our programs and events
 - 13,250 children, youth and senior participants
 - 1,125 artists employed
 - 376 donors
 - 430 community partners
 - 519 programs and events
- Council of the City at its meeting held on June 18 and 19, 2019 by its adoption of Item EC5.7, approved the allocation of one million eight hundred seventeen thousand and four hundred dollars (\$1,817,400) to six Local Arts Service Organizations
- In 2019, Scarborough Arts was awarded \$282,000 in operating funds from the City of Toronto which is approximately 15% of the total LASO funding. However, we serve the largest catchment area including Wards 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25 and an overall population in

Scarborough of 632,098 people (as of the 2016 Census Data). In order to serve such a large demographic, Scarborough Arts, for example, is in need of increased funding to develop our staff team and operational foundation to better meet the needs and demands of this rich and vibrant community, to continue to provide economic development opportunities for artists, and to provide meaningful community arts driven projects that are known to transform our local communities by creating connections, reducing isolation and loneliness, addressing the needs of Black/Indigenous/People of Colour (BIPOC) communities through artistic expression and exploration, and fostering personal development and growth.

- While the LASOs acknowledge our privilege and opportunity in being awarded this generous funding, in order to best serve communities across the City of Toronto, I ask you today to **seriously consider increasing the LASO funding portfolio by an additional \$250,000.**
- This funding will enable the LASOs to build their staff teams, to employ more artists to deliver unique and creative programming, and to increase and sustain operational capacities to better serve the artistic, cultural and economic development and tourism needs of the Toronto public.
- And, now I will show you highlights from the Scarborough Sign's in 2019 tour, which offers a brief glimpse into our work:

(SHOW REEL) - Scarborough Sign Highlight Reel unable to be viewed by Council due to technical difficulties.

- Thank-you for your time.

AMENDMENT TO SCARBOROUGH ARTS' ORIGINAL BUDGET DEPUTATION

Scarborough Arts wishes to put forth the following amendments to the City of Toronto's Budget Committee, in writing, on Tuesday January 21st, 2020:

Firstly, we wish to apologize for and acknowledge any confusion caused by our deputation and to provide clarity, as Councillor Shelley Carroll and Councillor Jennifer McKelvie had some questions that helped illuminate how to better posit deputation arguments more effectively for the future. We wish to thank Council for their insights and patience in this learning process.

Secondly, we wish to advise that, upon consultation and review with fellow LASO EDs, **that the request for a \$250,000 increase be stricken from the records. Instead, in alignment with the LASO Joint Business Plan 2018-22 (attached), and the request as put forward by the Toronto Arts Council and supported by fellow LASOs (see attached), we request that our ask and advocacy efforts be amended to reflect the following:**

- *Mayor Tory has declared 2021 will be Toronto's Year of Public Art (YPA). Increased arts funding will encourage strong participation by local artists, leading to lasting impact on both our artists and our city (TAC 2019).*
- *Art Stats 2019 - Going Without: Artists and Arts Workers in Our Creative City, published in November 2019, has made it clear that Toronto's artists face disproportionately high*

costs to live in Toronto (paying for both work space and essential training) while experiencing disproportionately low incomes. This has led as many as 73% of Toronto's artists to consider leaving the city (TAC 2019).

- *90% of Torontonians believe that the arts and culture benefit Toronto; top benefits are attracting tourists, highlighting cultural diversity, and making the city a better place in which to live. See Toronto Arts Stats 2018 (TAC 2018 & 2019).*
- **THE JOINT LOCAL ARTS SERVICE ORGANIZATION (LASO) ASK OF THE CITY OF TORONTO'S BUDGET COMMITTEE (ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURE):** Specifically, in order to continue to deliver high-quality, free, accessible and inclusive programming to multi-cultural and multi-generational people and communities outside the downtown core, **the LASOs request that the City of Toronto seriously consider a \$2.5 million increase to the arts and culture budget, including a meaningful, fulsome and impacting increase to the LASO funding portfolio to continue to support these important initiatives, including participation in the year of Public Art (YPA) and to sustain and provide initiatives aimed at retaining and strengthening artistic and creative talent across the GTA.** We want to see our artists continue to live, learn, earn and contribute to the cultural landscape of our great city, and we wish to enhance our operational capacities in order to accomplish these aforementioned activities. With this in mind, this fundamental increase to the LASO funding portfolio will enable enhanced delivery of our arts and cultural programs and advocacy work across the 20 Wards we collectively serve, and our Neighbourhood Improvement Areas (NIAs).

Thank you for your considerations in including this amendment to the original deputation. We appreciate your continued support and for championing arts, culture and economic development across Toronto.

Sincerely,



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Executive Director
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