



Submission to the Ontario Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs

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Submitted by

Orchestras Canada/Orchestres Canada

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On behalf of Ontario's sixty-nine orchestras, the audiences they serve, the musicians they engage, and the enterprises they work with, Orchestras Canada is pleased to participate in the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs' pre-budget consultations. We appreciate this opportunity and look forward to a continued and constructive dialogue with legislators in the coming months.

Orchestras are part of Ontario's not for profit arts sector and a key element of the province's creative economy. Ontario's creative sector sustains over 286,000 jobs and contributes \$25 billion to the province's GDP. According to recent Statistics Canada data, the sector is over three times larger than either agriculture or mining (respectively contributing \$7.4 and \$6.9 billion to the province's GDP).

Orchestras contribute to jobs and the economy in towns and cities across the province, a key priority for the Government of Ontario. It's a good news story: every dollar invested by the Ontario Arts Council in operating grants to not-for-profit arts organizations (such as orchestras) is complemented by an average of \$15.58 in private sector revenue (ticket sales, fees, donations, and sponsorship); furthermore, every dollar invested by the Ontario Arts Council in operating grants enables \$21.60 in spending, including \$12.26 on fees and salaries to Ontarians. The economic multiplier effect associated with the not-for-profit arts in Ontario has been conservatively estimated as 1:1.23.

Orchestras in Ontario

The Province of Ontario has had a long and mutually beneficial relationship with Ontario's orchestras, demonstrated by thoughtful investment through the Ontario Arts Council (OAC). This investment (though proportionally small at 5.2% of Ontario orchestras' overall revenues in 2018-19) plays an important role in the viability and success of our orchestras: the timing of grant announcements allows groups to plan responsibly, and the thoroughness of the grant review processes ensure that applicant organizations are addressing critical issues and are well-placed to succeed on-stage and in their communities, as well. Public support is seen as a vote of confidence in an organization, helping to leverage private sector investment.

From Thunder Bay to Owen Sound, from Windsor and Timmins to Ottawa, Toronto, and Kitchener-Waterloo, orchestras and the musicians they engage touch the lives of our citizens in meaningful ways that create impact: economically, socially and culturally.

- Orchestras **support jobs** in communities around the province, directly through fees paid to musicians and related personnel, and indirectly, in their relationships with concert venues, media, print media, IT professionals, marketing firms, hospitality, and tourism industries.
- The musicians that orchestras engage are the same people that perform in long-term care facilities, churches, and community centres. They offer music lessons, and support education programs in the schools and community. If there's no orchestra, the musicians disperse, and these many contributions are lost.
- Through their public performances, education and community engagement programming, and extracurricular activities by their musicians, orchestras **make cities and communities more active and attractive places**, leading to happier, more engaged and more productive citizens. Tourism operators call orchestras “destination enhancers”. Additionally, orchestras have developed programs that specifically address important facets of our lives, like health and wellness, healthy aging, better learning outcomes, social integration, and newcomer welcomes.
- Orchestras are an acknowledged **part of Ontario's civic infrastructure**. If a community is not large enough to support an orchestra, its residents still benefit from orchestras' activities, through touring performances, teaching programs, or digital dissemination.

The diversity of Ontario's orchestras (ranging from internationally-renowned ensembles that engage skilled professionals to perform at home in Ontario and on the world stage, volunteer-driven groups performing for neighbours and friends, our vibrant youth orchestras, seniors' groups, big-city and small-town orchestras alike) is unique in Canada. Each one of these groups is a source of pride to its community.

The power of leveraging Ontario's investment in orchestras

In 2018-19, grants to smaller-budget orchestras from the Ontario Arts Council ranged between \$8000 and \$17,000. These relatively modest investments might make the difference between an organization's ability to mount a community engagement program, or not; might cover a part-time wage to an administrator to coordinate the orchestra's activities, or not; might allow the orchestra to engage a

skilled professional music director, or not. Relatively modest investments have major impact at the community level.

OAC investment in larger-budget orchestras in 2018-19, while greater in dollar amount, still represented on average well under 10% of the funded groups' annual revenues. These larger orchestras create a significant number of jobs for professional musicians across the province, and reported attendance of over 820,000 people in 2018-19.

Looking forward

Orchestras, like any other business, thrive when they have access to stable, adequate resources to plan with confidence, develop long-term relationships, and make meaningful commitments to workers, whether artists, administrators, or production personnel. In turn, they contribute to communities, our education system and economy.

In 2018-19, the Ontario government reduced the OAC's funding in-year by \$5 million, as part of an overall reduction to government spending. Reduced funding to the OAC means that orchestras – along with the rest of the arts community – are re-shaping their activities to match the resources available, resulting in less arts activity, less ability to invest in long term developmental initiatives, reduced capacity for strategic risk-taking, and less economic spin-off. This affects their contribution--economically, socially and culturally--to the fabric of Ontario.

Building alternative models

Between 1998 and 2008, the Ontario Arts Endowment Fund (launched by a prior Progressive Conservative government and administered by the Ontario Arts Foundation) matched a remarkable \$60 million in private sector contributions to arts organizations of all sizes in communities across the province. The combined funds have been invested in perpetuity, and income from these investments provides unrestricted revenue that arts organizations (including orchestras) are using to sustain and develop important programs, including arts education, community engagement, and accessibility-focused programs. While the Ontario program ended in 2008, donors' enthusiasm for this kind of matching

funds program remains high: an equivalent federal program, in place since 2001, has been consistently over-subscribed.

Alternative approaches to financing such as the Ontario Arts Endowment Fund can strengthen the long-term sustainability of arts organizations, including orchestras, in times of fiscal restraint. We would welcome the opportunity to explore this and other approaches to resourcing the arts.

Our recommendations

Earlier this month, OC consulted our Ontario member orchestras on key messages and issues. Here's what we heard, and here's what we recommend:

1. Stable, adequate investment from a trusted arms-length agency like the Ontario Arts Council is vital for orchestras. Without it, their capacity to serve their communities effectively is diminished, as is their ability to leverage funding at the federal level and from the private sector.

Recommendation: We ask the Government of Ontario to increase its investment in the arts through the Ontario Arts Council by \$5 million in fiscal 2020-21, to work with the OAC to measure the impact of this investment, and to sustain and increase the investment over time.

2. There is an integral connection between the quality of arts education (including music) in the province's publicly-funded schools and the vitality of local musical culture. Orchestra leaders acknowledge that strong school music programs (with relevant and visionary curricula, qualified teachers, and collaboration between local arts organizations and school arts programs) are necessary for strong community-based music organizations, today and in the future. Orchestras are eager to play their part in introducing students to the power of live performance, thereby strengthening school programs, reducing barriers to arts access and participation, and expanding the work that they are already doing in their communities.

Recommendation: We ask the Government of Ontario, through the Ministries of Heritage, Sport, Tourism, and Culture Industries *and* Education *in collaboration with* the Ontario Arts Council to pilot and evaluate a program (over a three-year period, in different jurisdictions across the province) to fully subsidize student attendance at live performances by Ontario professional arts groups. Modeled on a highly successful program in the province of Quebec, a relatively modest investment – to be determined between Ministries - could yield significant results.

3. Orchestras would welcome measures to leverage existing private sector investment and help diversify revenues. One such model was successfully introduced in Ontario in the late 1990s as the Ontario Arts Endowment Program, matching private sector contributions to arts organizations' endowment funds dollar for dollar up to a capped amount. According to the Ontario Arts Foundation (administrator of the program), during the program's existence, arts organizations across Ontario attracted \$60 million in matching funds. And over the last 20 years, the investment has yielded more than \$87 million in income to participating Ontario arts organizations.

Recommendation: We ask the Government of Ontario to explore with the Ontario Arts Foundation the feasibility of revising, re-investing in, and re-launching the Ontario Arts Endowment Program.

4. Orchestras are keen to expand their use of digital tools to expand their reach and serve their communities more effectively. Yet, lacking capacity for the required investments in new technology and expertise, they often lag behind. Relatively small investments in digital transformation (modeled on the Digital Main Street partnership between the Ontario government and the Ontario BIA Association) will make a significant difference in the not-for-profit arts sector, and complement the targeted investment the province has already made in revitalizing the digital footprint of small businesses.

Recommendation: We ask the Government of Ontario to explore the feasibility of piloting a Digital Main Street-style program for not-for-profit arts and culture organizations.

Investment in orchestras and the arts is an investment in the people of Ontario that will drive economic growth and cultural development. Arts investment provides a return in investment that can be measured by economic growth, social cohesion and well-being, and cultural engagement – all elements important to making Ontario a fair and welcoming province.

Thank you for considering Orchestras Canada's recommendations for Budget 2020. We sincerely appreciate the opportunity to participate in this process.

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Orchestras Canada – Ontario Member Orchestras 2019-20

Ardeleana Chamber Music Society/Whispering River Orchestra (Parry Sound, ON)
Brantford Symphony Orchestra
Burlington Symphony Orchestra
Cambridge Symphony Orchestra
Cathedral Bluffs Symphony Orchestra (Scarborough)
Counterpoint Community Orchestra (Toronto)
Deep River Symphony Orchestra
Dundas Valley Orchestra (Dundas)
Durham Chamber Orchestra (Port Perry)
Durham Youth Orchestra (Oshawa)
Esprit Orchestra (Toronto)
Etobicoke Philharmonic Orchestra
Georgian Bay Symphony (Owen Sound)
Guelph Symphony Orchestra
Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra
Huronian Symphony Orchestra (Barrie)
International Symphony Orchestra (Sarnia)
Italian Canadian Symphony Orchestra (Toronto)
Kanata Symphony Orchestra (Ottawa)
Kawartha Youth Orchestra (Peterborough)
Kindred Spirits Orchestra (Markham)
Kingston Symphony
Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber Orchestra (Waterloo)
Kitchener-Waterloo Community Orchestra (Kitchener)
Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony (Kitchener)
Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Youth Orchestra (Kitchener)
London Community Orchestra
London Symphonia
Milton Philharmonic Orchestra
Mississauga Symphony Orchestra
Music4Life Ensemble (Ajax)
National Arts Centre Orchestra / Orchestre du Centre national des Arts (Ottawa)
National Youth Orchestra of Canada (Toronto)
Niagara Symphony Orchestra (St. Catharines)
North Bay Symphony Orchestra
Northumberland Orchestra & Choir (Cobourg)
North York Concert Orchestra
Oakville Chamber Orchestra
Oakville Symphony
Oakville Symphony Youth Orchestra
Ontario Philharmonic (Oshawa)
Orchestra Brevia (Harrow)
Orchestra Kingston
Orchestra Toronto
Ottawa Pops Orchestra (Casselman)
Ottawa Symphony Orchestra
Ottawa Youth Orchestra Academy
Parkdale United Church Orchestra (Ottawa)

Pembroke Symphony Orchestra
Peterborough Symphony Orchestra
Quinte Symphony (Belleville)
Richmond Hill Philharmonic Orchestra
Rose Orchestra (Brampton)
Sault Symphony Orchestra
Scarborough Philharmonic Orchestra
Sinfonia Toronto
Stratford Symphony Orchestra
Strings Attached Orchestra (Toronto)
Sudbury Symphony Orchestra
Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra (Toronto)
Thirteen Strings Chamber Orchestra (Ottawa)
Thunder Bay Symphony Orchestra
Thunder Bay Symphony Youth Orchestra
Timmins Symphony Orchestra
Timmins Youth Orchestra
Toronto Symphony Orchestra
Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra
Windsor Symphony Orchestra
York Chamber Ensemble (York Region)

Associate Organizations, 2019-20:

Ars Musica (Toronto)
Brott Music Festival/National Academy Orchestra (Hamilton)
Canadian Federation of Musicians (Toronto)
Dean Artists Management (Toronto)
Domoney Artists Management (Toronto)
Music Toronto
National Ballet Orchestra (Toronto)
Sultans of String (Burlington)
University of Toronto Faculty of Music