

Economic Impact: Fact Sheet

CASE-MAKING STATS

89% of Canadians feel art and culture are important to community economic well-being.^[1]

79% of Ontarians support government funding for the arts.^[2]

76% of skilled Ontarians prefer moving to vibrant arts and culture communities.^[3]

78% of Ontarians agree that making the arts accessible is an important public investment.^[4]



Business / Arts, 2019.

Canada's arts and culture sector is a powerful economic engine, generating billions in GDP, creating jobs, and attracting tourism. In 2020, creative industries contributed \$55.5 billion to the economy, supporting over 600,000 jobs. Investments in the arts not only drive financial returns but also enhance community well-being, drawing in skilled workers, fostering innovation, and revitalizing neighbourhoods.

Federal and provincial programs, such as the Creative Export Strategy, have strengthened Canada's global cultural presence, helping over 1,900 businesses expand internationally since its creation in 2018. In Ontario alone, the culture sector accounted for 4.1% of provincial employment in 2022, outpacing industries like real estate and manufacturing.

While some argue that focusing on economic impact diminishes the arts' intrinsic value, financial stability enables artists to thrive. Policymakers, businesses, and communities benefit from recognizing the arts as a strategic investment: one that fuels both cultural enrichment and long-term economic growth.

MORE FROM THE RESEARCH CATALOGUE



→ Return on Investment

An ***Arts Across Ontario*** study found that for every dollar invested by the Ontario Arts Council in arts and culture programming, \$25 is generated in other sources of revenue.^[5]

→ Economic Boost

In 2020, ***Canadian Heritage*** found that creative industries provided 600,550 jobs, contributed \$55.5 billion (2.7% of GDP), and generated \$19.4 billion in exports.^[6]

→ Building Community

Research from the ***Federation of Canadian Municipalities*** states that arts, culture, and heritage help municipalities attract and retain a skilled workforce, boosting local economic development.^[7]

→ Cultural Tourism Impact

An ***Ontario Arts Council*** study found that arts and cultural tourists spend more, and stay longer, resulting in a \$5.7 billion in direct value-added to the province of Ontario.^[8]

MAKE THE CASE

AWARENESS + ANALYSIS → ACTION
MakeTheCase.ca

Explore more Themes • Research Catalogue • Case Bank & Snapshots • About MTC



Philip Maglieri, 2024.

FROM THE CASE BANK

Advocate for BAO **Brampton Arts Organization**

The "Advocate" program by Brampton Arts Organization supports local artists by promoting advocacy, providing resources, and fostering community engagement to amplify creative voices and strengthen Brampton's cultural landscape. The resources provided are grounded in the socioeconomic benefits arts and culture have on Canadian society.^[9]

Creative Export Canada **Canadian Heritage**

Creative Export Canada funds Canadian creatives in music, film, and performing arts through two streams: Export-Ready (up to \$2.5M) and Export Development (\$90K). It supports marketing, partnerships, and global expansion. By targeting industries like music, film, and performing arts, the project strategically positions Canadian content within the global cultural economy.^[10]

Tapping Local Arts and Culture to Revitalize Communities

Canadian Community Economic Development Network

This initiative by CCEDNet highlights how arts and culture can drive community development by strengthening local identity, fostering social cohesion, and promoting economic resilience. By leveraging creative resources, it supports vibrant, sustainable, and inclusive communities.^[11]

Creative Toronto: Harnessing the Economic Development Power of Arts & Culture **Ohio State University**

This paper explores Toronto's efforts during the 2000s to position itself as a global creative city through strategic cultural policy and economic development initiatives. It leveraged its vibrant arts and culture sector to boost economic growth, foster innovation, and enhance urban development.^[12]



Ontario Culture Days, 2016.

IN THE MEDIA

How to Save Canada's Arts Organizations

Macleans

This article discusses the challenges facing Canada's cultural sector, emphasizing financial strain, audience retention, and innovative strategies for long-term sustainability.^[13]

Canada's live music industry grew economy by more than \$10B in 2023: report

CBC

This article discusses the economic impact of live music on Canada's economy in 2023. The sector generated \$10.92 billion and supported more than 101,640 full-time equivalent jobs.^[14]

ORGANIZATIONS

Hill Strategies

Hill Strategies is a Canadian research firm specializing in arts and culture. It provides data-driven insights on trends, funding, and impacts, supporting policymakers, organizations, and cultural stakeholders.

The Canadian Arts Coalition

The Canadian Arts Coalition advocates for the arts sector in Canada, promoting policies that support artists, organizations, and cultural industries. It focuses on strengthening public funding, fostering cultural diversity, and enhancing the arts' role in Canadian society.

**Explore more:
Economic Impact**

MAKE THE CASE

Make The Case demonstrates how arts and culture permeate all aspects of Canadian society and civic life, creating more opportunities to articulate the sector's value and increase investment.

Founding Project Partners

Business/Arts

**CULTURE
DAYS**



Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des arts
du Canada

SOURCES REFERENCED

1. Government of Canada. (2017). Arts and Heritage Access and Availability Survey 2016-2017. Public Services and Procurement Canada. https://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/200/301/pwgsc-tpsgc/poref/canadian_heritage/2017/051-16-e/report.pdf
2. Ontario Arts Council. (2017). Impressions of the impact of the arts on quality of life and well-being in Ontario. https://www.arts.on.ca/oac/media/oac/Publications/Research%20Reports%20EN-FR/Social%20Impacts%20of%20the%20Arts/Quality-of-Life-and-Well-Being-Exec-Summary_Final_EN_Accessible.pdf
3. Business for the Arts. (2016). The arts and Canada's skilled workforce: Executive summary. <https://www.businessandarts.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/2016-733-Business-for-the-Arts-Skilled-Worker-Report-Tabs1.pdf>
4. Nanos Research. (2023). The arts and the quality of life: Final report. Ontario Arts Council. <https://www.arts.on.ca/oac/media/oac/Publications/Research%20Reports%20EN-FR/Social%20Impacts%20of%20the%20Arts/Nanos-The-Arts-and-the-Quality-of-Life-2023.pdf>
5. Ontario Arts Council. (2024). Backgrounder – Arts across Ontario: Preliminary results. Ontario Arts Council. <https://www.arts.on.ca/news-resources/updates-faqs-and-resources/updates-faqs-and-resources/2024/backgrounder-%e2%80%93-arts-across-ontario-preliminary-results>
6. Canadian Heritage. (2023, March 27). Helping Canada's creative industries succeed in global markets. Government of Canada. <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/news/2023/03/helping-canadas-creative-industries-succeed-in-global-markets.html>
7. Ontario Arts Council. (n.d.). Impact of the arts in Ontario. Ontario Arts Council. <https://www.arts.on.ca/research-impact/impact-of-the-arts-in-ontario>
8. Ontario Arts Council. (2023). Ontario arts and culture tourism has triple the economic impact of other tourism sectors. Ontario Arts Council. <https://www.arts.on.ca/research-impact/research-publications/ontario-arts-and-culture-tourism-has-triple-the-economic-impact-of-other-tourism-sectors>
9. Brampton Arts Organization. (n.d.). Advocate. <https://bramptonartsorg.ca/advocate/>
10. Government of Canada. (2025). Creative Export Canada. Canadian Heritage. <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/creative-export-canada.html>
11. Canadian Community Economic Development Network (CCEDNet). (n.d.). Tapping local arts and culture to revitalize communities. <https://ccednet-rcdec.ca/resource/tapping-local-arts-and-culture-to-revitalize-communities/>
12. Goldberg-Miller, S. B. D. (2015). Creative Toronto: Harnessing the economic development power of arts & culture. ResearchGate. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/357525670_Creative_Toronto_Harnessing_the_Economic_Development_Power_of_Arts_Culture
13. McLean, M. (2025, January 7). How to save Canada's arts organizations. <https://macleans.ca/the-year-ahead/how-to-save-canadas-arts-organizations/>
14. CBC News. (2025, March 30). Canada's live music industry economy is booming, but it's facing challenges. CBC. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/canada-live-music-industry-economy-report-1.7446252>

This Fact Sheet was last updated March 31, 2025

**MAKE
THE
CASE**

AWARENESS + ANALYSIS → ACTION
MakeTheCase.ca

Explore more Themes • Research Catalogue • Case Bank & Snapshots • About MTC