



## Building a Legacy for Canada's Heritage Sector

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### 1. Building a Legacy for Canada's Heritage Institutions

The federal government offers support to Canada's more than 2,600 museums and heritage organizations through a variety of very important although modest funding programs. These programs are extremely important for the recipients and we strongly recommend the development of a new National Museum Strategy and a review of the complete suite of heritage programs at the Department of Canadian Heritage, such as the Museums Assistance Program (MAP), the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund, and the Canadian Heritage Information Network, among others.

However these programs have slipped greatly over the past number of years. They are difficult to access and no longer meet the needs of today's museum community. They are in urgent need of updating and renewal. Funding has been eroded by years of cutbacks but these remain vital services to support our museums and our national patrimony.

In 2006 the Liberal Government of Paul Martin considered and approved a new museums strategy which was subsequently defeated in the general election of that year. It is now time for Canada's next government to renew that commitment to our museums which are major generators for our tourism and social sectors.

Canada's museums contribute significantly to a robust tourism industry (Canada's culture sector contributes \$46 billion to the GDP) as well as to the quality of life of Canadians; nearly 60 million people visit museums each year and learn more about their heritage, along with the 7.5 million students from kindergarten to post graduate levels. Canada's current National Museum Policy was established in 1972 and last reviewed in 1990; in 2006 it was approved to be renewed by the then Liberal government which went down in defeat. Today this long standing existing strategy no longer meets the needs of our museums and needs to be urgently updated and renewed.

The funding level of the Department of Canadian Heritage's Museums Assistance Program has declined significantly from \$18 million to less than \$7 million today, an investment in heritage programs will enable museums and galleries to properly preserve the past, offer public learning opportunities, and educate our youth on the history and culture of Canada.

This investment is crucial as museums and heritage organizations have an important role to play in the upcoming centennial of the First World War and the 150th anniversary of Confederation in 2017, and program planning must be initiated as early as possible, with the appropriate investment.

***We strongly recommend reviewing and modernizing the existing heritage programs that support Canada's museums and galleries, with appropriate investment of new funds, in order to stabilize cultural funding and make it relevant to and reflective of our country's heritage institutions.***

## 2. Building a Legacy for All Canadians

To enhance economic growth in Canada's heritage sector and encourage greater self sufficiency for museums, we recommend the implementation of a five-year initiative, the Canadians Supporting their Museums Fund, a matching donations program which will help diversify sources of support and increase the engagement of Canadian citizens with their heritage institutions. This project will help stabilize museums and encourage greater long-term self reliance. Implemented early, it would be a perfect legacy initiative leading to 2017.

While museums and heritage organizations have relied heavily on government support in the past, our heritage institutions need to increase the diversification of their revenue sources by encouraging Canadians to become more active contributors to our heritage. Experience shows that programs such as a matching donation fund are a powerful incentive for existing private donors to increase their donations as well as for new donors to come on board.

Private sector donations are a key source of stabilization. Despite an increase in tax incentives for private donations to charities, donations to museums have not seen a substantial growth. By investing in a federal program that matches each new dollar donated to museums (to an annual ceiling), the Government of Canada will create the right conditions to stimulate philanthropy and economic growth, help our museums become more fiscally strong, and develop the sector's fundraising expertise. With an annual fund of \$50 million, museums' operating budgets that come from private donations could be increased from 9% to 15-20% through this initiative.

Museums with sustained revenues and a strong professional workforce will gain the capacity to restore more of Canada's heritage objects, enable their presentation to Canadians, create more exhibitions that can promote our history both at a national and international level, and in turn stimulate the country's "cultural economy".

***We strongly recommend introducing a short term, national matching donations program which, with an annual investment of \$50 million, will stimulate public and private sector support in Canada's heritage field and help museums become more self sustainable.***

## 3. Building a Legacy for our Country's Youth

Job creation is an essential factor in our country's growth and the heritage sector is an important contributor in creating employment opportunities. At a national level, Canada's museums host an important number of summer jobs and internship opportunities through the Young Canada Works (YCW) program. This cost shared program focuses on education and training, and has become a major pillar in the federal government's support of youth engagement and employment. Funding reaches all provinces and territories and yearly job-creation targets are always surpassed. It is especially important in smaller communities with reduced resources. While employers gain access to a pool of enthusiastic young workers, students gain the opportunity to work in the field of culture and heritage, develop their employability skills, and gain concrete experience to further their career development.

The current program is highly over-subscribed with a turn-down rate of 50% of summer jobs and an alarming 85% for internships. With the increase support of the federal government, achieved by new funding or a re-allocation of existing youth employment funding to this program, we can maximise the number and types of employment opportunities for Canadian students that will lead to more full-time jobs for many of the program's participants.

***In order to stimulate job creation in the heritage sector, we recommend an increased investment of \$5 million per year in the Young Canada Works in Heritage program to create close to 1,000 new jobs and internships for students.***

## **Ancillary recommendations**

**Contemporary Art:** The CMA strongly supports the continued role of funding from the Canada Council for the Arts for contemporary art exhibitions through our museums, galleries and artist run centres. In addition the Art Bank plays a very significant and useful role and has been successful in raising new earned revenue. We applaud the success of the Canada Council for the Arts and its Art Bank.

**Copyright Amendments:** CMA calls for a new mechanism for “orphan works”. The current provisions under Canada’s Copyright Laws are outdated and do not work for museums. New means of granting permission for unlocatable copyright owners is urgently needed without the penalty of advancing fees. Reasonable due diligence should be required, this is a very much out dated procedure and in need of modernization.

**Firearms Legislation:** Canada’s current firearms legislation is a major hinderance to museums which are dedicated to collecting and preserving our entire heritage, including firearms and other items. We have repeatedly requested exemptions from this onerous legislation to permit bona fide museums to accomplish their job of collecting firearms. The current legislation is in serious need of updating to reflect this legitimate preservation work by museums.

**Cultural Property Review Board:** This is a very valuable tool for the acquisition of valuable works of art and artifacts for museums in Canada. There have been some changes recently which have concerned many of our members, eg. changes to donation schemes and also the transfer of the Review Board to a new Administrative Tribunal. The CMA appeared before the House of Commons Finance Committee on May 15<sup>th</sup> for assurances that these changes would not further denigrate the important role of this major program. No assurances have been received to date from the Government of Canada.

**Funding of Museum Associations:** There have been some major changes to how museum associations are funded. We believe there is an urgent need for a new component within the Museums Assistance Program for associations so they do not compete unnecessarily with their own members. The associations provide valuable services to a wide variety of members in each region of Canada. They deserve special recognition and a special support program to be fairly evaluated on their own terms.