

Ontario museums: A vital part of Ontario's future

Ontario's **700+** museums, galleries and historic sites are an important part of the province's **\$20 billion** cultural sector. Found in every corner of the province, museums employ over **10,000** Ontarians and attract **8.7 million** overnight trips.

Museums and galleries are the keepers of our history and the interpreters of our stories. They build stronger communities, bringing people together in shared cultural experiences. Through understanding our past, we shape our future.

Sustaining the vitality of Ontario's museums and galleries

Museums are part of a strong economy and strong communities.

Sustained, stable museum funding is critical to keeping our museums and galleries inviting and attractive to Ontarians and tourists alike. Currently the Government of Ontario invests in museums and galleries through programs at the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, and some of its agencies and related programs, like the Ontario Arts Council, the Ontario Trillium Foundation and the Ontario Cultural Attraction Fund.

It is vital that the Government of Ontario's investment in museums and galleries is stable and sustained, positioning our sector to seize the opportunities of the future.

Providing a jumpstart for youth employment: an enhanced stream for emerging museum and heritage professionals

Sustaining Ontario's museums also means investing in our people – the museum workers who preserve, curate and interpret the province's collections. Creating opportunities for **emerging museum professionals** is critical to our operations and success, adding value to the services and programs we offer.

At a time of high youth unemployment and underemployment for many educated Ontarians, job opportunities for emerging museum and heritage professionals are even more limited and dwindling due to the erosion of, and stress on, museum budgets and resources.

Through measures aligned with the Ontario Youth Jobs Strategy, Ontario's museum sector recommends allocating sector-specific support to emerging museum and heritage professionals currently facing limited job opportunities.

We recommend that the Youth Jobs Strategy be enhanced with a stream that can directly support youth employment in museums, galleries and heritage institutions across the province. This would improve the job prospects for our well-educated youth pursuing cultural jobs in Ontario.

In turn, this will lead to stronger museums, contributing to a stronger economy.

Looking ahead – harnessing the full potential of Ontario's museums

Ontario museums are looking to the future. The sector is engaged in a dialogue with its stakeholders to sharpen and strengthen its vision and plans for the future. The Ontario government is a key partner.

As we look forward to the 2015 Pan Am games, the 400th anniversary of *francophone presence in Ontario*, and Ontario and Canada's 150th anniversary in 2017, we invite legislators and the Government of Ontario to engage with the museum and gallery sector working towards an integrated approach to strengthen our programming, sustain important museum jobs and ensure the future of our institutions through a matching renewal capital program.

