



PRESS RELEASE

Toronto, May 17, 2016 – Museum professionals from across Ontario will gather at the Legislature today for the fifth edition of *Ontario Museums at Queen's Park*. This event provides an opportunity for museum leaders and volunteers to meet with their elected officials to discuss the vital contribution of museums in Ontario and, more importantly, how to strengthen it.

"Museums connect people to ideas, to information, to collections, and to each other. The sector wants to work with the government and partners to create new opportunities for museums to pursue their work in strengthening dynamic communities and a prosperous knowledge-based economy. Today is a wonderful opportunity to get provincial decision-makers more involved in our cultural institutions," says Marie Lalonde, the Executive Director of the Ontario Museum Association (OMA).

Today's discussions will focus on three key areas: a renewed funding model for Ontario museums; a province-wide coordinated approach to collecting; and the creation of shared spaces, delivery and resource models within the framework of community hubs. In addition, museums are poised to help celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Confederation.

Renewing funding models and developing new strategies for museum funding will ensure continued and strengthened support so that museums can thrive, effectively manage their operations, further engage with the public and contribute to economic growth and community building.

Reviewing current practices and developing a province-wide coordinated approach to collecting for Ontario museums will ensure that the province's diversity is embraced and that collections are relevant and accessible to all communities. It will also create efficiencies and maximize resources for our institutions.

Creating shared spaces, delivery and resource models will place museums at the centre of their communities and increase partnerships with other cultural institutions. This collaborative approach will foster civic engagement, increase access for citizens, and build strong community hubs.

"Museums Day could not have come at a better time," says OMA President Clark Bernat. "The Ontario government is finalizing a *Culture Strategy* and we know that collectively, our sector continues to outpace economic growth. Last week Statistics Canada released data that shows Ontario's arts, culture and heritage sector represents \$27.7 billion or 4.1% of the province's GDP. They further report that between 2010 and 2014, the GDP of Ontario's arts, culture and heritage sector increased by 16.4%, contrasted to 14.7% for the rest of the economy. These are strong numbers and affirmation of the important contribution museums and the cultural sector make."



Working towards these measures will ensure that Ontario museums can better contribute to the well-being and health of our communities, enhance participation for all Ontarians in cultural institutions and offer accessible and inspiring spaces for the public and visitors. At the same time, this will strengthen museums' contribution to jobs, tourism and Ontario's cultural economy.

Museums at Queen's Park Day is coordinated by the Ontario Museum Association.

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About the OMA:

The Ontario Museum Association speaks for more than 700 museums, galleries, and historic sites, 9,000 museum professionals, and 32,000 museum volunteers who hold the collections of the province in public trust. Our non-profit association contributes to the development of the museum sector in Ontario and promotes the role of museums within society. The OMA also raises awareness of critical issues facing the museum sector to all levels of government and offers programs, services, and resources to members of the museum community.

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