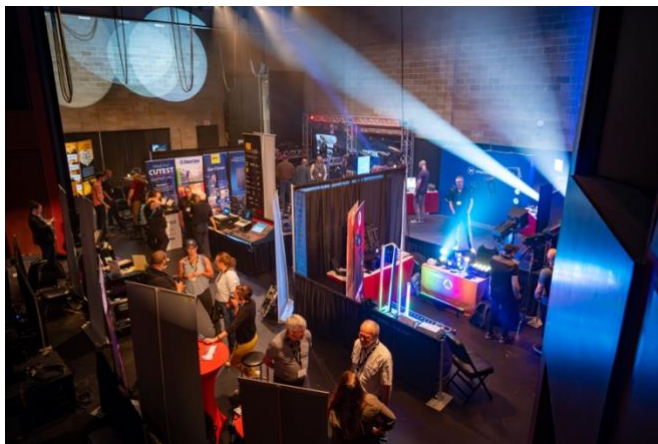




*Connecting the Canadian Live Performing Arts Community
Réunir le milieu canadien des technologies scénographiques*

Written Submission for the Pre-Budget Consultations in Advance of the Upcoming 2026 Federal Budget

**By: Canadian Institute for Theatre Technology /
Institut canadien des technologies
scénographiques (CITT/ICTS)**



RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recommendation 1:** That the Government of Canada invests in and implements the Live Performing Arts Accelerator, a labour-based live performing arts tax credit for performing arts organizations (both nonprofit and commercial), to increase capacity, cultural sovereignty, and economic growth in the Canadian live performing arts industry.
- **Recommendation 2:** That the government of Canada provide an additional \$140 million annual investment to the Canada Council for the Arts, starting in the 2026-2027 fiscal year, to stabilize and strengthen Canada's arts sector.

INTRODUCTION:

[CITT/ICTS \(Canadian Institute for Theatre Technology / Institut canadien des technologies scénographiques\)](#) is a national, member-based, not-for-profit arts service organization. Its mission is to actively support the development of technical arts professionals within the live arts and performing community across Canada, ensuring a vibrant, sustainable, and safe environment for all involved. CITT/ICTS has five regional sections (Alberta, Quebec, the Prairies, British Columbia, and Ontario) and offers accessible professional development opportunities across the country in English and French.

CITT/ICTS members represent a wide range of expertise that spans the technical side of the performing arts sector (e.g., production managers, stage carpentry, lighting, sound, video, wardrobe design and architecture). Technical artists are often unseen by audiences attending events, but the roles they play are essential. Whether it's sound engineers enabling audiences to hear each note, lighting designers creating immersive atmospheres, or set designers building the world in which a performance unfolds, the contributions of CITT/ICTS' members are vital to the success of any live performing arts production.

CONTEXT FOR LIVE PERFORMING ARTS ACCELERATOR & CANADA COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS:

Tariffs, economic downturn, cuts to college programs, and a shifting political climate are collectively placing strain on Canada's live events and performing arts sector. As a result, there is an increased need for capacity-building initiatives to strengthen the sector, particularly from a labour perspective. Ensuring a pipeline of properly trained backstage professionals is crucial to addressing the current labour shortage and maintaining the high quality of productions presented across Canada, from coast to coast to coast.

The Live Performing Arts Accelerator Program would enable commercial and non-profit organizations to receive a tax credit on labour, that they would then commit to reinvesting back into Canadian productions, thereby creating more jobs for Canadian backstage professionals and creating a better pipeline for creative and technological talent that is desperately needed.

Canada's arts and culture sector generated \$65 billion in direct GDP to the Canadian economy in 2024, growing faster and supporting more jobs per dollar than other key sectors like oil and gas, manufacturing or agriculture. These findings come from **Artworks: The Economic and Social Dividends from Canada's Arts and Culture Sector**, a report conducted by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce's Business Data Lab. Investing in the LPAA and the Canada Council for the Arts would further contribute to the GDP and job growth, delivering both immediate and lasting impact in the sector.

CITT/ICTS is not alone in its support of the LPAA and of the investment into the Canada Council for the Arts. The LPAA has support from a group of organizations representing a cross section of the sector, that sees the LPAA as the next great step of supporting arts organizations and workers in Canada. Investing into the Canada Council for the Arts has wide support across the

country as many organizations and artists are struggling with inflation and drops in private funding and sponsorships.

RECOMMENDATION 1:

The Government of Canada implements the Live Performing Arts Accelerator, a labour-based live performing arts tax credit for performing arts organizations (both non-profit and commercial), to increase capacity, cultural sovereignty, and economic growth in the Canadian live performing arts industry.

The Live Performing Arts Accelerator would offer both eligible non-profit and commercial organizations a 25% tax credit rebate on Canadian artistic, creative, and production-related labour expenses - provided that those organizations commit to reinvesting the rebate in more Canadian productions within 12-months of receipt.

With a total stimulus investment of \$400M from the Government of Canada, the LPAA is projected to generate 45,312 new job opportunities in the live performing arts sector and inject an additional \$9.2 billion of economic activity into our communities within a 3-year period.

In the mid-1990's, the Canadian government implemented the Canadian Film or Video Production Tax Credit and turned a struggling market into a \$12 billion industry - earning the global nickname "Hollywood North".

Similarly, a new Live Performing Arts Accelerator (LPAA) can stimulate an economic and cultural boom on stages across the country. An LPAA will meet the objectives of the Canadian government to build economic resilience as we strive to meet our stated ambition to be the strongest economy in the G7, while protecting our unique Canadian cultural identity and ensuring Canadian artists can compete on the global stage.

The infrastructure and framework for this program already exists within the federal government, with a strong foundation built on three-decades of experience from the Canadian Film or Video Production Tax Credit and other creative industries programs.

The Economic Rationale:

In the live performing arts, every new show equals new Canadian jobs - backstage technicians, carpenters, costume designers, musicians, stage managers, and performers, plus tourism, retail and hospitality workers in supporting industries. And, it has never been more important to tell stories from a Canadian perspective and showcase Canadian artists and our unique identity, nor has been more important to invest in the labour that helps to create the visions audiences see on stage. With a shortage of labour due to multiple factors including the closures of training institutions and with a retiring generation, this investment into the labour that drives these performances is critical.

This initiative will also help to retain Canadian talent, with similar systems in UK and several US states and with Australia launching a program in the coming month, Canada is losing talent, revenue, programming opportunities, and capital investments to these other jurisdictions. At a time when we want to highlight our cultural sovereignty this initiative could not be more important.

The LPAA is projected to generate 45,312 **NEW** job opportunities, generate \$1.47B in taxes and inject \$9.2B of economic activity into our communities from coast to coast within a 3-year period.

The arts and culture sector generated \$65B in direct GDP to the Canadian economy in 2024, add in the LPAA to that and we can then ensure that Canadian companies will be able to sustain great production volume and quality and the sector will continue to boost GDP, along with international and national tourism, at a time when Canada's place in the world holds great value.

Those Canadian owned and controlled arts organizations who are eligible will be able to build more security for arts workers, strengthen their companies and gain a greater profile both nationally and internationally.

The time to implement LPAA is now, with the success of the Film and TV Tax credit as a basis for this, we know it works and drives Canadian content and jobs. We need to ensure that our Live Performing Arts Companies and Artists are supported in the same way and that they are supported by government. This will create a generational change in the industry and will fuel the next Canadian success story. Let our stages shine as bright as our screen.

RECOMMENDATION 2:

The Government of Canada provide an additional \$140 million annual investment to the Canada Council for the Arts, starting in the 2026-2027 fiscal year, to stabilize and strengthen Canada's arts sector.

The Canada Council for the Arts is the primary federal tool for supporting artistic creation and public access to arts across the country. For artists and organizations, the Canada Council provides funding that allows for season planning, hiring artists, technical workers, administrators and for developing new works and community programming.

New investment is urgently needed. Organizations and artists are struggling with higher operational costs, while at the same time private funding and sponsorships have decreased, putting more pressure on the organizations but also on the Canada Council, as artists and organizations look to them to fill the financial gap. For some theatres whose funding is stagnating or who cannot access funding due to high demand, it may mean the folding of the company or downsizing in staff or programming, creating an immediate issue for the sector but also for long-term sustainability.

A permanent increase to the Canada Council would help to stabilize the sector and have an immediate impact to those whose funds have stagnated and to those who could not access the financial support in the past. They will go on to hire staff, produce programming, ensure access to art in their communities and those communities will also benefit from tourism dollars, the spending by the arts organization in their community and access to quality programming. The economic case is clear. The Canada Council investment has a strong return with [every dollar the Council invests in core-funded organizations, those organizations spent \\$6 dollars in their communities.](#)

At a time when we are looking to reinforce our Canadian identity, supporting Canadian artists and organizations, through an investment in the Canada Council will ensure that the Canadian experience is shared locally, nationally and internationally.

Thank you for your consideration,

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