

# A New Creative Vision for Canada



Each year, 150 arts leaders, chairs, and chief executives from Canada's foremost institutions join funding partners to be inspired and re-imagine our contribution to the future of Canada. Concluding the 2026 Canadian Arts Summit in Banff, we offer a clear message: **Canada must act now to strengthen its arts and culture sector as a cornerstone of civic engagement, social cohesion, national identity, sovereignty, resilience and global influence.**

## What Canada Needs: Identity, Sovereignty and Resilience

In an era of geopolitical uncertainty, economic disruption, and rising pressure on public trust and social cohesion, Canadians are seeking clarity and confidence. In this context, art is not a luxury. It is a basic human need and one of the most powerful tools in which we discover, debate, and celebrate those values.

Our sovereignty is expressed not just through trade or defense, but through our stories, the histories we preserve and the creativity we project to the world. The arts sector is uniquely positioned to meet this moment, reflecting the diverse voices that define us, in both official languages, and advancing reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, and helping to strengthen the shared civic fabric that underpins a confident and resilient Canada.

## The Solution: the Arts are a Critical Resource Sector

Culture is one of our most effective national resources to foster understanding, build trust, and create enduring connections both within our country and on the global stage. Through engagement grounded in artistic collaboration and storytelling, Canada can strengthen both civic engagement within our local communities, reinforce social cohesion, deepen longstanding alliances and build emerging global partnerships. This approach recognizes that our global influence and domestic resilience are rooted in the strength of our character, the clarity of our culture, and the confidence we have in our own voice.

The arts are a powerful tool for key areas of development:

- **Social Cohesion:** Culture strengthens social bonds and enhances civic engagement, providing the social glue necessary for a stable democracy and a more connected society.
- **Economic Vitality:** The sector is a powerhouse, contributing \$65 billion of direct impact to Canada's GDP and employing hundreds of thousands of Canadians while driving innovation and growth.
- **Vital Workforce Skills:** As AI takes over computational and routine tasks, workers will need distinctly human skills: critical thinking, creative problem-solving, empathy, and communication. These are the skills the arts cultivate, and they will determine whether the Canadian workforce thrives in the decades ahead.
- **Global Diplomacy:** Cultural exchange builds trust and creates enduring connections, serving as one of our most effective tools for diversifying international partnerships and projecting Canadian values abroad.



## A Call for Strategic Investment

Ambition must be matched by investment. To realize this potential, we must strengthen our foundations:

- **Support for Creators:** Provide sustained support for the artists, performers, and professionals who bring our stories to life beyond the granting systems.
- **Infrastructure Modernization:** Strategically invest in community, by building education and digital technology capacity to ensure access for all Canadians, while modernizing the physical performance venues, theatres, galleries, and museums that serve as the physical foundations for growth, community connection and long-term resilience.
- **Market Reach and Discoverability:** Canada produces world-class content, proven with such hits as *Come From Away* and *Heated Rivalry*, and talent such as Yannick Nezet-Seguin and Kent Monkman. In order to reach domestic and international audiences, we must invest in robust marketing budgets and distribution networks, promoting the discovery of our artistic content by Canadians and around the world.
- **Private-Sector Partnership:** Strong partnerships between businesses of all sizes and the arts build vibrant and safe communities, which in turn leads to the attraction and retention of top talent, workforce well-being and reinforces Canada's competitiveness.

## Commitment to the Future:

**This is a moment for clarity and commitment.**

We call on all levels of government to **commit unequivocally to a thriving, globally competitive Canadian arts and culture sector** and for the Government of Canada to build on recent progress **by increasing funding to the Canada Council for the Arts, and supporting cultural infrastructure projects** by ensuring sustained, long-term investment across the broader cultural sector.

We invite you to engage with us in re-imagining arts at the forefront of nation-building. The world is watching.