



BC ARTS COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25



Territory Acknowledgment

The BC Arts Council acknowledges it carries out its work on the land of Indigenous nations throughout British Columbia. We pay our respects to the Elders and Knowledge Keepers, past and present, descendants and custodians of these lands and waters. We are grateful for the continuing relationships with Indigenous Peoples that develop through our work together. We acknowledge and raise our hands to the ləkʷəŋən (Lkwungen) people, known as the Songhees and Xwsepsum (Kosapsum) Esquimalt Nations, on whose ancestral lands we operate our main offices.

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Message from the Minister and Parliamentary Secretary



On behalf of the Government of British Columbia, we are pleased to receive the BC Arts Council's 2024/25 Annual Report, celebrating the incredible achievements and resilience of B.C.'s arts and culture sector.

Since stepping into our new roles, we've been inspired by the conversations we've had with artists, arts organizations, and cultural leaders throughout B.C. These connections have reaffirmed just how vital the arts are – not only for building community and connection, but for shaping a more hopeful and inclusive future for everyone who calls B.C. home.

Here in B.C., with the highest share of artists in our workforce than anywhere in the country, we don't just believe in the arts – we invest in them, we support them, and we celebrate them. In recent years, our province has emerged as one of the leading provinces in Canada for public investment in arts and culture – a remarkable leap from where we once stood.

Since 2017, our government has significantly increased funding to the BC Arts Council. And in Budget 2025, we're proud to provide record support to ensure that artists and organizations across B.C. have the resources they need to thrive. With a cultural sector contributing billions to our economy, it's clear: when we invest in the arts, we're investing in creativity, well-being, and shared prosperity.

We have seen firsthand how resilient, resourceful, and inspiring this sector is. Through every challenge, this sector has shown incredible strength and spirit. Artists and arts organizations continue to create, inspire, and uplift communities in every corner of the province. Their work brings people together and keeps the soul of B.C. vibrant and alive.

We are deeply grateful to the BC Arts Council for your leadership and dedication. Your work ensures that equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, and reconciliation remain at the heart of arts and culture in B.C. As part of our work under the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, the Council is leading important efforts to support Indigenous self-determination in the arts.

Thank you for all that you do to make British Columbia a place where the arts are celebrated, cherished, and supported.

Sincerely,

Hon. Spencer Chandra Herbert
Minister of Tourism, Arts,
Culture and Sport

Nina Krieger
Parliamentary Secretary for
Arts and Film

Message from the Chair and Vice Chair



to share our progress over the past year in the strategic vision section of this report.

At the time of writing, we are preparing the new strategic vision and implementation plan for the BC Arts Council. It builds on the work already undertaken through *New Foundations* and *Extending Foundations* and incorporates input and feedback gathered directly from the sector. We are looking forward to sharing what we heard and the new strategy.

We are grateful for the opportunities we had to engage and connect with communities this year. We thank everyone who shared their valuable ideas and insights and opened their doors for BC Arts Council this past year. It is incredible to meet and learn from people who care so passionately about arts, culture, and community. It is the trust built through these relationships that fuels our work.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to outgoing council members Dana Claxton, Jake Anthony, Jai Djwa, and Simone Orlando for their invaluable contributions. We want to welcome Minister Spencer Chandra Herbert and Parliamentary Secretary Nina Krieger and thank Minister Lana Popham and former Parliamentary Secretary Bob D'Eith for their unwavering support. Additionally, we acknowledge the ministry staff, whose commitment and dedication to the arts community exemplifies public service.

Our deepest gratitude and respect to all the artists, arts administrators, cultural workers, organizations, board members, and volunteers that make up the diverse, beautiful and unique arts and culture communities in B.C. The BC Arts Council is looking forward to the next stage in our journey together as we build a thriving, stable, and sustainable arts and culture sector.

Sincerely,

Sae-Hoon Stan Chung
Chair, BC Arts Council

Kiran Dhaliwal
Vice Chair, BC Arts Council

The BC Arts Council is pleased to present our annual report for 2024/25. As we entered a new economic climate, artists and arts and culture organizations continued to demonstrate an extraordinary impact on citizens' lives and to ground arts and culture in meaningful ways in communities throughout British Columbia.

The BC Arts Council remains committed to supporting arts and culture in the province. This year, we distributed \$37 million in grants through our base budget to artists and organizations throughout B.C. Recognizing the need for stability, we endorsed a carryover of Operating Assistance and were pleased to again offer the Accelerate program for equity-deserving and regionally based arts and culture groups. We awarded \$4 million through the Arts Infrastructure Program to support 57 projects for the development and enhancement of arts and cultural spaces, including ten projects led by Indigenous organizations.

The BC Arts Council remains steadfast in our commitment to supporting Indigenous arts and culture. This year, we began to lay the groundwork for an Indigenous Arts Strategy for the BC Arts Council; this work is being supported by an Indigenous Arts Advisory Circle, who will guide the development and realization of the strategy. As part of this commitment, we were also able to provide over \$600,000 in additional funding across programs to bolster support for Indigenous applicants. This was the second year of Elder-in-Residence program with Roy Henry Vickers in his role of community mentorship.

Reconciliation, equity, diversity, inclusion, and access are foundational to the work of the BC Arts Council. The *Extending Foundations Action Plan* has been the embodiment of this commitment. Later this year we will report on the impact of the Action Plan and are proud



THE BELFRY THEATRE, VICTORIA Anand Rajaram and Ben Yoganathan in Behind the Moon by Anosh Irani. Leora Morris – Director; Anahita Dehbonehie - Set & Costume Designer; Logan Raju Cracknell - Lighting Designer; Chris Ross-Ewart - Sound Designer/ Composer. Photo by Peter Pokorny

Mandate, Vision and Values

OUR MANDATE

The BC Arts Council was created in 1995 as an agency of the Province of British Columbia under the *Arts Council Act* for the purposes of:

- Providing support for arts and culture in British Columbia;
- Providing people and organizations with the opportunity to participate in arts and culture in British Columbia; and
- Providing an open, accountable, and neutrally administered process for managing funds for arts and culture in British Columbia.

OUR VISION

The BC Arts Council has set its course toward an aspirational vision where:

- Artists and cultural organizations in British Columbia are well-supported, thriving, and able to reach their full potential under principles of equity, diversity, accessibility, and reconciliation; and
- Arts and culture are seen as fundamental to developing vibrant and resilient communities, where the people of British Columbia are highly engaged in the province's unique arts and culture sector and are recognized for their innovation and leadership in Canada and abroad.

OUR VALUES

Our values guide our decisions and activities, from program design to the peer review process. We strive for constant improvement under these values in how we serve artists and cultural organizations throughout B.C.

Artistic Development & Achievement

Supporting the development and achievement of diverse practices by artists and cultural organizations.

Equity, Access & Diversity

Striving for equitable access to arts and culture funding and programs for underserved artists, organizations, and audiences.

Indigenous Engagement & Cultural Vitality

Engaging with Indigenous artists and organizations guided by principles of cultural vitality and self-determination.

Engagement & Participation

Facilitating opportunities for all people in British Columbia to engage with and participate in arts and culture.

Collaboration & Partnerships

Collaborating and co-creating with arts and culture communities throughout the province to improve the council's programs and practices.

Recognition & Promotion

Improving access to and visibility of British Columbia's artists and cultural organizations locally, nationally, and internationally.

Fair & Transparent Governance

Using fair and transparent processes guided by principles of accountability, independence, merit, and equity.

Status of the Arts in B.C.

The BC Arts Council maintained support for the arts and culture sector in 2024/25 with a stable investment of \$37 million. This funding was distributed through grants to individual artists, cultural practitioners, and arts and culture organizations, as well as through community partnerships. These public sector investments in arts and culture amplify the BC Arts Council's commitment to reconciliation, equity, diversity, inclusion, and access.

Economic, political, and social upheavals have affected the arts over the past year. The cost of living continued to increase¹, and affordability issues were exacerbated by the uncertainty of U.S. tariffs² and their broader economic impacts.

Despite these challenges, we heard through community engagement sessions that collaborations, partnerships, and connections have continued to grow and thrive in arts and culture communities throughout the province, nurturing innovation, resilience, and strong networks for the sector.

01 British Columbia Statistics. "Consumer Price Index," Reference date: March 2025.
Issue: #25-03 "Premier announces new measures to defend B.C. from Trump tariffs."
Office of the Premier, March 6, 2025,

02 <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2025PREM0011-000174>. Press release.

ECONOMIC IMPACT DATA*

The cultural sector plays a significant role in British Columbia's economy. In 2023, estimates based on Statistics Canada data show that the arts and culture sector contributed \$10.5 billion to B.C.'s GDP, a projected 5.1% increase over 2022³. In the latter half of the 2023 calendar year, culture GDP figures in B.C. declined slightly from a post-pandemic quarterly peak of almost \$2.5 billion between April and June 2023. This mirrors the national picture, where there was a flattening or decline of cultural sector GDP in the same period.⁴

SECTOR TRANSFORMATION

The arts and culture sector has experienced complex challenges at a relentless pace since 2020. These challenges include financial insecurity and economic pressures, calls for systemic change to address social justice, equity, and access, and the emergence of new technologies. The sector finds itself in a position that requires innovation and transformative change to ensure continued access to arts and culture experiences and spaces through programming and infrastructure investment.



CAMPBELL BAY MUSIC FEST, MAYNE ISLAND, Square dancing in the forest. Photo by Wei Chong

*This section highlights the most recent data available from Statistics Canada and other sources.

03 Statistics Canada, Cultural Satellite Account (2025). Annual provincial-territorial indicators, 2023
04 Statistics Canada, Cultural Satellite Account (2024). National culture indicators, fourth quarter 2023



BARD ON THE BEACH SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL, Sen?á?w/VANIER PARK, VANCOUVER Volunteers. Photo by Sarah Race

Like all sectors and citizens across the province, artists and arts and culture organizations are dealing with affordability issues. As inflation continues to rise, the costs of living, and producing and sharing artistic and cultural experiences⁵ also rise. While historically the rate of inflation has been higher in Victoria and Vancouver, this year it was higher outside those areas.⁶

In addition to inflation, the arts and culture sector was pulled into a volatile international economic and political situation. As the Province began preparing with national partners to defend against unpredictable U.S. tariffs, B.C.'s arts and culture sector looked for ways to adapt. Faced with economic uncertainty, the sector considered new approaches for sustainable growth with heightened attention to the uniqueness and diversity of our cultural identities.

Across the sector, efforts have been made to make arts and culture more equitable. However, there is still work to be done to address and meet the needs of Indigenous and equity-deserving artists and organizations, who continue to face discrimination, racism, and barriers to self-determined advancement in arts and culture.⁷

The BC Arts Council remains committed to supporting a sector that flourishes in its diversity through this transformational time as it embraces the changes necessary to embody this.



THE VICTORIA CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC, VICTORIA Young Artists Collegium Program is an enriched program for talented young classical musicians. Photo by Jayden Eric Beaudoin

ADVOCACY IN A SHIFTING POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE

The past year saw an increase in sector advocacy coalescing around a shifting political landscape with the lead up to both the provincial and federal elections, as well as the U.S federal election in November 2024.

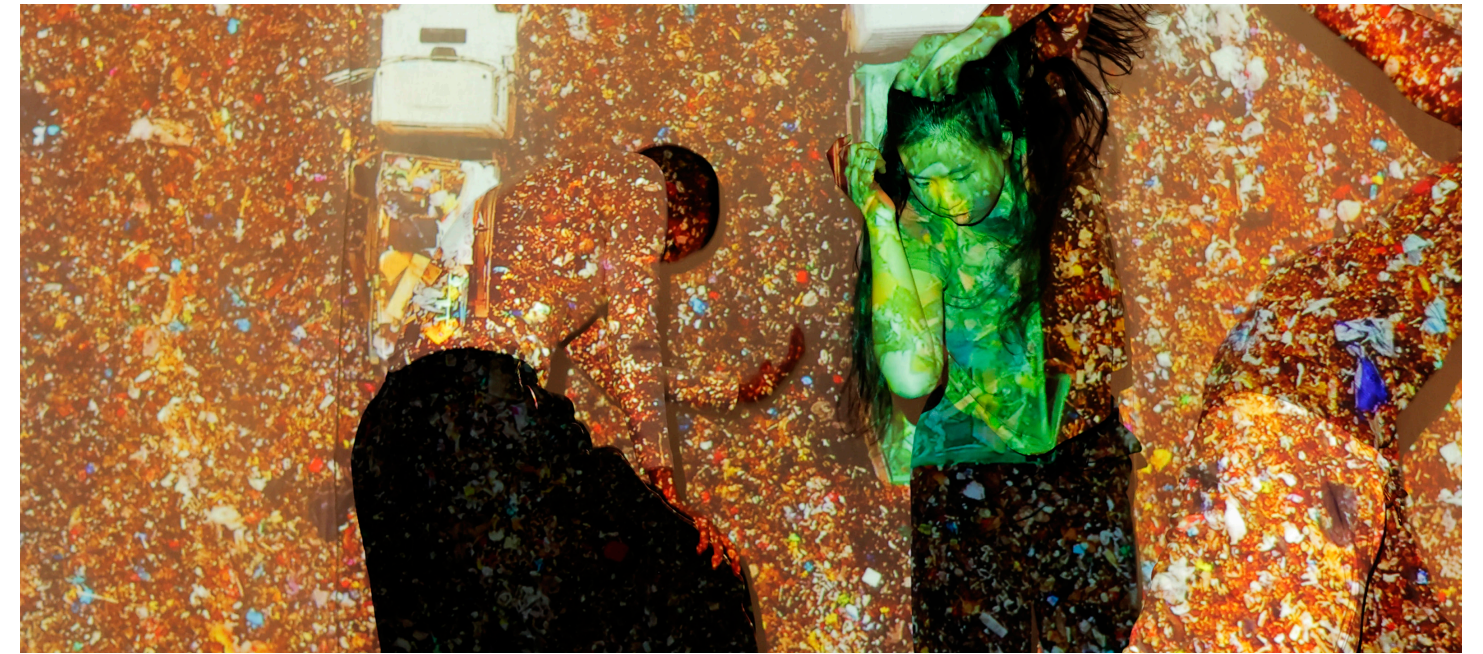
Provincially, there were clear calls to action for government to increase supports for arts, culture, and heritage, including additional investments and the development of a provincial action plan for the sector, building on the foundational principles of inclusive, green, and equitable growth.

Here in B.C., per capita provincial and municipal government and educational institution spending on arts and culture is the second highest in Canada after Quebec⁸. The enhancement, growth and long-term prosperity of arts and culture is a government priority.

How Legislation Guides and Supports the BC Arts Council

In addition to the *Arts Council Act* – the guiding Provincial legislation that created the BC Arts Council – our work is driven and contextualized by a robust legal framework that includes the Human Rights Code, the *Accessibility Act*, the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* and the *Anti-Racism Data Act*, among many others. Through the investments we make, and the implementation of clear policies and programs to support arts and culture, we ensure that our resources uphold our collective legal obligations, foster a society in which there are no impediments to full and free participation in the economic, social, political and cultural life of British Columbia, and promote a climate of understanding and mutual respect where all are equal in dignity and rights. This legal framework is upheld by our continued strategic focus of reconciliation, equity, diversity, inclusion and access in arts and culture.

05 British Columbia Statistics. "Consumer Price Index," Reference date: March 2025. Issue: #25-03
06 British Columbia Statistics. "Consumer Price Index," Reference date: March 2025. Issue: #25-03
07 Hill Strategies (2024), Representation of equity-deserving groups in the arts and culture.
08 Hill Strategies (2025), Government spending on culture in each province and territory in 2023-24

CO.ERASGA & THE DANCE CENTRE VANCOUVER Danielle Mackenzie, Juolin Lee & Samantha Krystal posing for *What on EARTH*. Photo by Yasuhiro Okada

ARTISTIC EXPRESSION AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

Arts and cultural activity and production in B.C. is part of the broader global context. Responses to national and international polarization and conflict, as well as adoption of new technologies continued to give rise to new questions about the role of arts and culture in addressing complex realities and assertions of identity.

At the same time, we saw a public assertion and recognition of the uniqueness of Canadian culture and identity in ways that are unprecedented in recent memory. Arts, culture, and the creative industries have vital roles to play in supporting Canadian sovereignty, furthering reconciliation, and contributing to a clean, sustainable, just economy, and robust social structures and cohesion.

Interwoven throughout conversations about artistic expression and cultural identity is the emergence of a dramatic increase in the use of Artificial Intelligence. Issues of copyright and intellectual property infringement are paramount for creators, but there is also excitement about AI as a tool in the creation of artistic works. Advocates for those working within the cultural sector have identified an imminent need for meaningful cultural policy action to ensure the responsible and ethical use of AI tools.⁹

Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence in Arts and Culture

The Government of B.C.'s draft artificial intelligence responsible use principles outline government's commitment to developing and using AI systems responsibly and transparently, governing with clear values and ethics, safeguarding privacy, fairness, and human rights, and ensuring security. These principles are in alignment with those proposed by the federal government and provide clear direction for cultural policy related to the ethical use of AI within arts and culture.



NIALL MCNEIL, VANCOUVER Family Portrait from **Beauty and the Beast: My Life**, featuring Kate Franklin, Billy Marchenski, Niall McNeil, Peter Anderson, Sophia Mai Wolfe. Photo by Tim Matheson

Our Strategies – Progress and Reflection

Launched in 2018 and renewed in 2022, the *New Foundations Strategic Plan* has guided the BC Arts Council for over six years. The plan provides four fundamental strategic directions which guide and prioritize the agency's work: sustainability and creative development; Indigenous arts and culture; equity, diversity, and access; and regional and community arts. In 2022, the *Extending Foundation Action Plan* put these directions to work, with an ambitious set of actions that Council has set about implementing over the past two years. Over the term of these plans, Council has concentrated on a commitment to reconciliation, equity, diversity, inclusion, and access as well as a recent focus on convening with community partners.

Strategic Visioning: Progress This Year

As these plans reached the end of their terms in 2024, Council continued our community engagement with the sector and embarked on a thorough review of the cumulative impact of the strategies. This period of listening and reflection is informing the development of a new vision for the BC Arts Council – a key action in the *Extending Foundations Action Plan*.

Within the past fiscal year, Council made progress on long-term strategies through program delivery, engagement and outreach, policy development and improved processes. Several of these – like supporting infrastructure and core reconciliation and equity initiatives actions – have become sustained activities since the plan was launched.



GENDER EQUITY IN MEDIA SOCIETY (GEMS), VANCOUVER GEMFest Award Recipient, for Industry Award for Emerging Changemaker, Doaa Magdy and friends at VIFF Centre. Photograph courtesy GEMS

Priorities

BC Arts Council's New Foundations Strategic Plan 2018-2022, outlines Council's four strategic directions:

- Sustainability and Creative Development
- Equity, Diversity and Access
- Indigenous Arts and Culture
- Regional Arts and Community Arts

The Extending Foundations Action Plan has seven action areas and associated priorities:

- Renew Strategic Visioning and Planning
- Modernize Peer Assessment
- Establish Diversity, Equity and Access Program Supports
- Rebalance Funding Distribution
- Implement Process and Procedure Improvements
- Deliver Arts Impact Grants
- Expand Arts Infrastructure Program



ROY HENRY VICKERS, Elder-in-Residence,TOFINO 2023. Image courtesy of Roy Henry Vickers. Photo by Elizabeth Snow

PROGRAMS & PARTNERSHIPS

Through the delivery of grants, as well as strategic partnerships, Council invested in a wide range of arts and cultural activities. In the past year, the BC Arts Council distributed 868 grants to organizations and collectives and 435 to individual practitioners.

As part of upholding Council's commitment to Indigenous arts and culture, a \$1.725 million investment was maintained to long-standing partner, the First Peoples' Cultural Council. This investment was part of the \$6 million in funding that was distributed to Indigenous recipients in the previous year (16% of all BC Arts Council funding) which included an additional \$600,000 across programs to support Indigenous practitioners.

Roy Henry Vickers entered his second year as the inaugural BC Arts Council Elder-in-Residence. Over the past year, emerging artists benefited from Roy's mentorship and wisdom through his participation in panel discussions, community conversations, interviews and providing students with individual guidance and advice. The Elder in the position fully determines the activities for the role.

In addition to the annual investment of \$2.12 million in support provided this past year through festival programs, the BC Arts Council provided \$431,240 of support for 81 festivals in recognition of their increasing challenges of complex emergency preparedness practices, safety measures, and increased costs.

Through careful management, the BC Arts Council was able to sustain the critical programming the sector has come to rely on. The \$4 million Arts Infrastructure Program again enabled organizations to develop and enhance arts and culture spaces. The Arts Impact Grant program supported meaningful community impact through the delivery of over \$2 million to 80 recipients.

Reconciliation, equity, diversity, inclusion, and access is a focus of Council. To put these core values into action, the BC Arts Council offered the Accelerate program for a second time. Accelerate improves access and enhances capacity for equity-deserving arts and culture groups throughout the province, providing flexible funding to support general operations over two years. Council also provided a second investment in the Pathways program. The Pathways program supports arts, culture, and heritage organizations and practitioners to learn, reflect and integrate equity and access principles into their work.

Program improvements and innovations are also used to uphold Council's core values. For example, Accelerate recipients can opt for video or oral reporting options. The new "Basic Training" component of the Early Career Development program supports practitioners in regions where formal professional arts training opportunities are limited to gain on-the-job education and skills development.



TSIMSHIAN ARTS AND CULTURE SOCIETY, PRINCE RUPERT Tsimshian Arts and Culture Society Community Roundtable October 28, 2024 at the Lax Kw'alaams Hall. Photo courtesy Joanne Finlay. Tsimshian Arts and Culture Society is building a Tsimshian Arts and Culture Hub in Prince Rupert. With their Accelerate grant the organization has hosted weekly artist drop ins, provided supplies for people to access and develop training opportunities. The funding has helped them grow and stabilize, hire staff, and expand programming to grow vibrant artistic and community engagement programs.

The Accelerate Program is a two-year initiative to improve access and reduce barriers to funding for equity deserving and regional arts and culture organizations and collectives.

ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

A core duty of the BC Arts Council is to support arts and culture through consultation and collaboration with the sector. There were important opportunities to convene and connect with artists and culture workers across the province over the past year, both to share information and to gather input.

Council continued its commitment to upholding the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, through convening an Indigenous Arts Advisory Circle. This circle continues to meet to advise on the development of an Indigenous Arts strategy, guided by principles of cultural vitality and self-determination.

A highlight of Council's work in the past year was hosting a Community Connections event in Nanaimo to collect input on the development of the strategic vision and hear stories of successes and challenges. The Minister and Parliamentary Secretary were in attendance. As part of a commitment to outreach, staff delivered two well-attended, in-person information sessions during Council's community visit to Nanaimo in May 2024.

Council members and Secretariat staff hosted a trade show booth at the Union of BC Municipalities convention the fall of 2024. This event, attended by over 2000 people, provided an opportunity for Council to engage directly with local government and First Nations leadership from across the province, sharing information about Council programs and hearing about local arts and culture issues and impacts.

Staff participated in 27 in-person and virtual outreach events to share the work of the BC Arts Council, reaching over 2500 people. These included large industry events such as Pacific Contact and Creative Industries Week, as well as contributing to small artist gatherings and educational sessions. In addition, Council added two American Sign Language (ASL) interpreted videos about BC Arts Council programs and accessibility supports to the online library of informational videos.

POLICY AND PROCESS

Through innovative policy development outlined in the *Extending Foundations Action Plan*, the BC Arts Council is working towards systemic change by reducing barriers, increasing accessibility and making space for emerging art forms and artists.

The BC Arts Council continued its support for designated priority groups, namely applicants and arts and cultural practitioners who are: Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit) Peoples; Deaf or experience disability; Black or people of colour; or located in regional areas (outside greater Vancouver or the capital region). Support has included funding prioritization, dedicated programs and outreach, and strategic investments. This past year increased support was provided through accessibility programs to increase artistic creation by artists and arts and culture practitioners who are Deaf or have a disability.

Meanwhile, process improvements have made it easier to participate in grant programs. Applications have been simplified by clarifying language in the assessment criteria, reducing the number of application questions, aligning questions to the criteria, and providing a scoring guide tool for applicants and assessors.



BC ARTS COUNCIL, NANAIMO Huu-ay-aht First Nations, Chief Councillor Sayaa'ath, John Jack shares ideas from table discussion at 2024 BC Arts Council Community Connections engagement event at the Nanaimo Museum. Photo courtesy BC Arts Council.

Partner Spotlight: First Peoples' Cultural Council

First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC) is a First Nations-led Crown Corporation established by the Province in 1990 through the *First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Culture Act*. The mandate of FPCC is to assist B.C. First Nations in their efforts to revitalize their languages, arts, cultures and heritage. The BC Arts Council has worked with FPCC for more than 27 years as a partner and funder of FPCC's Arts Program which supports artists, organizations and collectives through projects, mentorships, internships, micro-grants and sharing traditional arts and culture across generations.



2 RIVERS REMIX SOCIETY, KAMLOOPS Crowd shot from Kamloops 2Rivers Remix Festival 2024, Tkemlúps te Secwépemc. Photo by Shelanne Justice Photography

Based in Lytton, 2 Rivers Remix Society produces a travelling festival in different areas of the Province. The organization used an Arts Infrastructure grant to provide solar power upgrades and panel installations to power video equipment, charge EV batteries, and power utility trailers and mobile power stations. The organization said, "Through the fossil-fuel-free pilot project in 2024 we were able to prove it is possible to run an all-day festival event using battery systems fed by solar power."

The Arts Infrastructure Program enables eligible organizations to develop and enhance spaces that support the work of B.C.'s arts and cultural practitioners.

At a Glance Funding Across the Province 2024/25

Funding by location distributed in fiscal year 2024/25 through the BC Arts Council's base budget.*

Nechako

14 Grants
\$0.19M Total
1% of Funding

North Coast

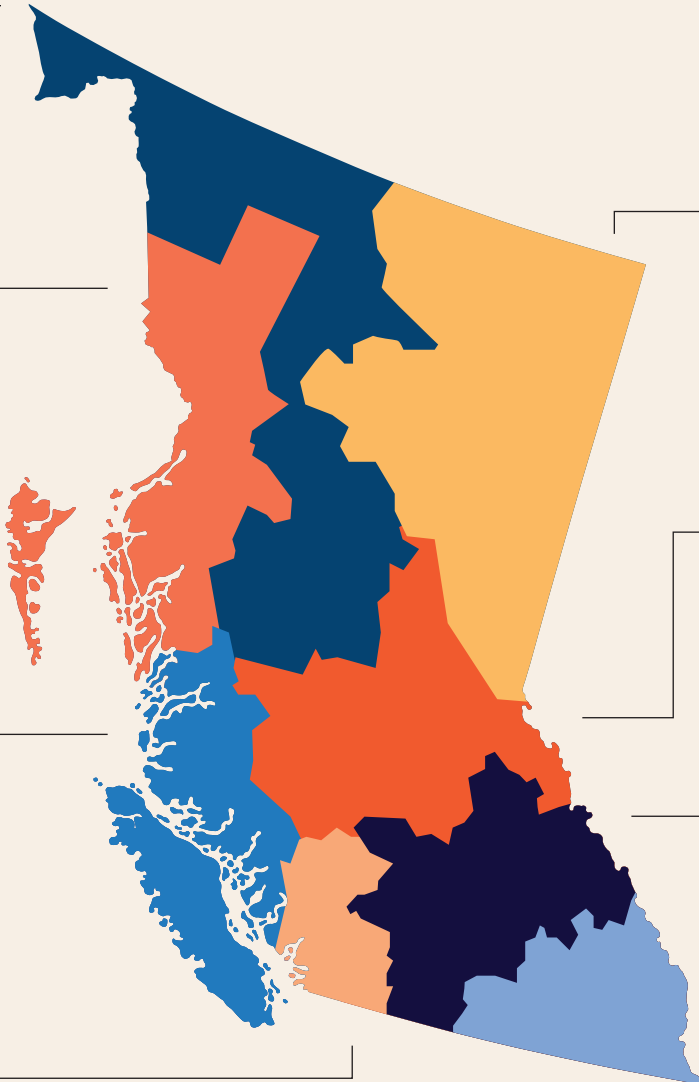
34 Grants
\$0.63M Total
2% of Funding

Vancouver Island-Coast

278 Grants
\$7.38M Total
23% of Funding

Mainland-Southwest

748 Grants
\$18.60M Total
57% of Funding



National Initiatives

1 Grant
\$0.10M Total
0.3% of Funding

North East

9 Grants
\$0.14M Total
0.4% of Funding

Cariboo

35 Grants
\$0.80M Total
2% of Funding

Thompson/Okanagan

118 Grants
\$2.68M Total
8% of Funding

Kootenay

66 Grants
\$1.84M Total
6% of Funding

GRANT FUNDING

25%

\$9,279,462
Strategic
Initiatives
Funding

13%

\$4,774,222
Partnership
Funding

12%

\$4,277,341
Individuals



1,303

Grants
delivered



868

Grants to
organizations
and collectives



3,289

Funding
requests



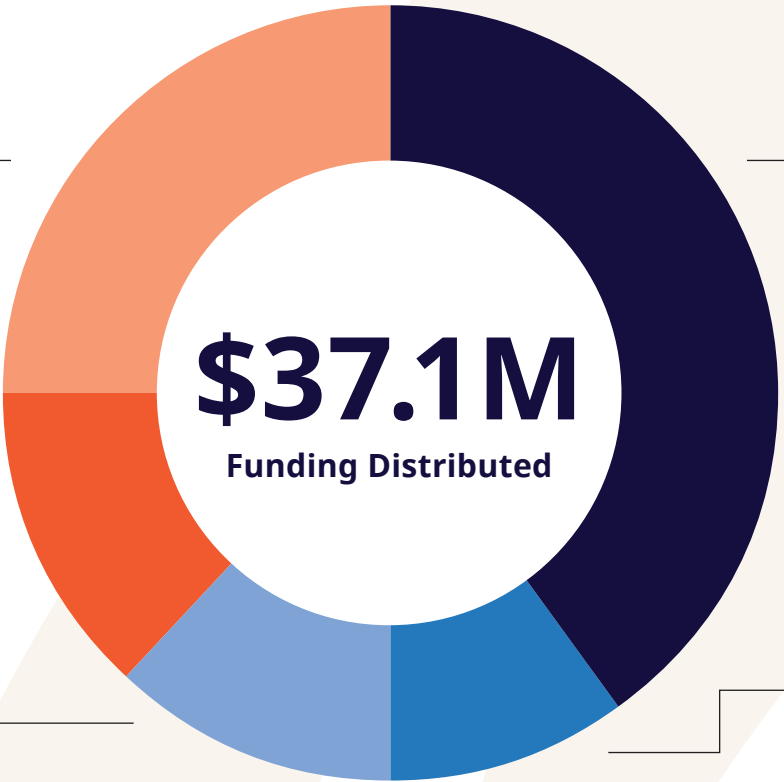
435

Grants to
individuals



\$37.1M

Total funding
delivered



40%

\$14,954,808
Operating
Assistance

10%

\$3,849,913
Projects
(Organizations)

PARTNER AGENCIES 2024/25

Partner agencies deliver grants and services on behalf of the BC Arts Council.

298 Grants Distributed

to individuals and organizations

86 Organizations Supported

through equity and access learning programs

5 Partner Agencies

- First Peoples' Cultural Council
- ArtStarts in Schools
- BC Live Performance Network
- Arts Service Organization Consortium
- Creative BC

*Map and figures do not account for regional distribution of partnership funding or funding delivered through partner agencies.

Key Figures

	2023/24	2024/25
Professional Arts Funding: Supporting professional arts activity		
Operating Assistance	\$13,531,710	\$13,489,550
Professional Projects	\$3,853,309	\$3,442,460
Individual Arts Grants	\$3,778,378	\$2,861,114
Scholarship Awards	\$783,000	\$723,000
SUBTOTAL	\$21,946,397	\$20,516,124

Strategic Initiatives Funding: Supporting time-limited or strategic development programs		
Arts Infrastructure	\$4,025,000	\$4,000,000
Arts Impact Grants	\$0	\$2,232,217
Accelerate Program	\$3,493,173 ¹⁰	\$2,501,115
Strategic Investments	\$544,200	\$433,500
Access Support and Application Assistance	\$105,283	\$112,630
Operating Assistance (one-time payments)	\$389,500	\$0
SUBTOTAL	\$8,557,156	\$9,279,462

Community Arts Funding: Supporting community arts activity		
Arts-Based Community Development	\$368,470	\$363,280
Community Arts Organizations Operating Assistance	\$1,468,285	\$1,465,258
Community Arts Development Projects	\$141,028	\$119,500
Community Festivals	\$343,450	\$617,900 ¹¹
SUBTOTAL	\$2,321,233	\$2,565,938

¹⁰ Total funding delivered for the Accelerate Pilot Program was \$2,501,924 per year in fiscal 2022/23 and 2023/24. 2023/24 Accelerate figure represents \$2,501,924 grants for the fiscal year, plus 2022/23 amounts of \$991,249 paid out in 2023/24.

¹¹ Total funding delivered includes a one-time investment of \$210,000 to the Community Festivals program in fiscal 2024/25.

	2023/24	2024/25
Partnerships Funding: Supporting programs delivered by partners that meet specific priorities of Council		
Creative BC - Interactive Fund	\$675,000	\$675,000
ArtStarts in Schools - Artists in Education & Artists in the Classroom	\$1,300,000	\$1,245,872
First Peoples' Cultural Council - Arts Program	\$1,725,000	\$1,725,000
BC Live Performance Network ¹² - Community Presenter Assistance & Into the Act	\$537,000	\$688,350
Arts Service Organizations Consortium - Pathways Program	\$440,000	\$440,000
SUBTOTAL	\$4,677,000	\$4,774,222
TOTAL BC ARTS COUNCIL FUNDING	\$37,501,786	\$37,135,746

BC Arts Council Budget

	2023/24	2024/25
Budget		
BC Arts Council - Base Budget ¹³	\$36,097,000	\$36,210,000
BC 150 Cultural Fund	\$3,795,000	\$3,795,000
Supplemental Funding ¹⁴	\$211,790	\$87,355
TOTAL	\$40,103,790	\$40,092,355

	2023/24	2024/25
Expenses		
Grants to organizations, individuals, and partnerships	\$37,501,786	\$37,135,746
Operations ¹⁵	\$2,602,004	\$2,956,609
TOTAL	\$40,103,790	\$40,092,355

¹² Formerly the BC Touring Council (BCTC), as of May 1, 2024, BCTC began to operate as BC Live Performance Network (BC Live).

¹³ An increase of \$113,000 was provided in 2024/25 as part of the BC Public Service salary increases.

¹⁴ Represents general recoveries, the Shared Recovery Mandate contingencies, and Ministry surplus delivered by the BC Arts Council at fiscal year-end.

¹⁵ External to the grants budget - staff salaries and benefits, peer assessment expenses, and all operational expenses.

Council Members

REPRESENTATIVES FOR BC ARTS COUNCIL

The *Arts Council Act* provides for up to 15 government-appointed representatives as BC Arts Council members. Collectively, they broadly represent the cultural and regional diversity of the province as well as a range of artistic practices and expertise.

We would like to thank the following outgoing members for their contributions and service:

Dana Claxton

Jake Anthony

Jai Djwa

Simone Orlando

APPOINTED MEMBERS 2024/25:

Sae-Hoon Stan Chung <i>Chair</i> <i>Cranbrook</i>	Nika Collison <i>Skidegate</i>	Tonya Martin** <i>New Westminster</i>
Dana Claxton* <i>Vice Chair (To July 2024)</i> <i>Vancouver</i>	Jai Djwa* <i>Vancouver</i>	Brian McBay** <i>Vancouver</i>
Kirandeep Dhaliwal <i>Vice Chair (From August 2024)</i> <i>Vancouver</i>	Carey Fouks** <i>Vancouver</i>	Mike Murray <i>Maple Ridge</i>
Jules André-Brown <i>Victoria</i>	Marnie Hamagami <i>Prince George</i>	Bukhosi Nkosi <i>Vancouver</i>
Jake Anthony* <i>Burnaby</i>	Miranda Huron <i>New Westminster</i>	Simone Orlando* <i>Kelowna</i>
Haley Bassett** <i>Groundbirch</i>	Toby Lawrence <i>Victoria</i>	Smokii Sumac** <i>?amak?is Ktunaxa – East Kootney</i>
Melissa Lee <i>Vancouver</i>		

INDIGENOUS ARTS ADVISORY CIRCLE

The Indigenous Arts Advisory Circle came together for the first time in February 2025 to work toward formalizing an Indigenous Arts Strategy for the BC Arts Council. This year’s Circle included Council members Haley Bassett, Nika Collison, Miranda Huron and Smokii Sumac and community member Cathi Charles Wherry.

For member biographies please refer to the BC Arts Council website:
www.bcartscouncil.ca

Grant Assessment

PEER REVIEW

Peer assessment of grant applications is the primary means of review and is used to uphold the *Arts Council Act* purpose of providing an open, accountable, and neutrally administered process. The peer assessment process also provides for transparency and is fundamental to the work of the BC Arts Council.

For each relevant program, we bring together panels of three to five artists and arts and culture practitioners to review applications and determine or recommend funding, based on how effectively applicants addressed the program criteria outlined in the guidelines.



DANCE WEST NETWORK, NANAIMO Brief Voices in My Body by MurMur Arts Collective, for Des Arts Dehors/Arts Outside program (DADAO). Photo by Mitch Miyagawa, taken in Nanaimo

Assessors are identified with consideration given to the diversity of artistic and cultural practice (representation of different artistic disciplines, approaches and fields of practice); a range of professional specialization (representation of different roles within the arts, such as creators, interpreters, administrators, directors, independent artists); geographic and regional representation; Indigenous perspectives; cultural perspectives; and stage of career. The goal is to have a panel of assessors who, through their diversity of experience and background, can evaluate the range of applications for each program intake.

We also use the opportunity of the panels to conduct consultations with assessors to inform policy and program development. Discussions cover the structure, intent, and outcomes of individual programs; application and assessment processes; the Council’s strategic plan; and ongoing and emerging issues in the sector. These consultations are essential to facilitate continuous improvement, address changing needs, research new initiatives, and maintain a high degree of responsiveness to important trends as they emerge.

Peer assessors are remunerated for their time, expertise, and labour.

We are grateful to those who served as assessors for our programs and for the programs offered through partnership with ArtStarts in Schools, BC Live Performance Network, Creative BC, and the First Peoples’ Cultural Council.

A full list of BC Arts Council panel members from 2024/25 is available on the website: www.bcartscouncil.ca

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Assessors	Program Advisors	Assessment Meetings

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

We are always looking for individuals with discipline and sector knowledge, open-mindedness, generosity of spirit, and the ability to work collaboratively through the assessment process.

Serving on a peer assessment panel provides a unique learning experience, valuable insight into how the funding process operates, and a broader understanding of the sector. By providing this support, assessors are participating in cultural policy in action. Assessors are remunerated for their services. Through our online grant management system, individuals can register their interest in becoming an assessor.

AWARDS LISTING 2024/25

For a complete list of award recipients and grant amounts please refer to our website:
www.bcartscouncil.ca

BC ARTS COUNCIL SECRETARIAT STAFF

Our work and this report would not be possible without the support of the dedicated staff who worked within the BC Arts Council Secretariat Branch of the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport during the timeline of this annual report.

Jodi Appleton

Secretariat Coordinator
(To August 2024)

Clayton Baraniuk

Program Advisor and
Accessibility Coordinator

Michelle Benjamin

Program Advisor

Keely Bland

Policy Analyst

Allison Bottomley

Executive Director

Nadine Carew

Senior Policy Analyst

Nicola Dunne

Program Advisor and
Accessibility Coordinator

Darb Erickson

Senior Director, BC Arts
Council Programs

Breanna Fabbro

Program Advisor

Natasha Farivar

Grant Program Administrator

Sheryl Jones

Senior Policy Analyst

Julie King

Team Lead, Finance and
Administration (to July 2024)

Erin Macklem

Program Advisor and
Outreach Coordinator

Jennifer Nichols

A/Senior Director, BC Arts Council
Secretariat & Strategic Engagement

Krista Patterson

Program Advisor

Anissa Paulsen

Program Advisor

Kaitlyn Reining

Program Advisor

Sarvenaz Ridley

Team Lead, Finance
and Administration

Justine Shore

Program Advisor

Sabrina Canhos

Montmorency Silva

Finance and Contracts Administrator

Paneet Singh

Program Advisor

Meagan Sugrue

A/Senior Policy Analyst (to June 2024)

Marina Van Wittenberghe

Secretariat Coordinator

Shelagh Vaux

Grant Program Administrator

A = Acting

Thank you to staff both past and present for contributing to a thriving arts and culture sector in B.C.



DANCEHOUSE / SEISMIC SHIFT ARTS SOCIETY, VANCOUVER The City of Others (La Ciudad de los Otros) by Sankofa Danzafo (Colombia) at The Vancouver Playhouse. Photo by by El Murey (Jeison Riascos), courtesy of Sankofa Danzafo



BRITISH COLUMBIA
ARTS COUNCIL



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

BC Arts Council

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COVER PHOTO CREDITS:

COMOX VALLEY ART GALLERY, COURTENAY Kumugwe Cultural Society during the opening event with artist Sonny Assu for his exhibition Assertion of Sovereignty. Photo by Taylor Robinson

PRINCE GEORGE FOLKFEST SOCIETY, PRINCE GEORGE Photo of St. Arnaud performing at a late show at the Prince George Legion as part of Coldsnap Festival 2025. Photo by Steven Dubas courtesy Prince George Folkfest Society

CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL SOCIETY, VANCOUVER Sichuan Face Changing Performance. Photo courtesy of Canadian International Dragon Boat Festival Society/Trifecta Productions

AXIS THEATRE, VANCOUVER Where have all the Buffalo gone. Photography by Javier Sotres Photography, featuring Issiah Bull Bear and Lynny Bonon, Costume design by Alaia Hamer, lighting design by Jack Goodison, and set design by Dusty Hagerüd. Photo by Javier Sotres

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA (MENA) FILM FESTIVAL, NORTH VANCOUVER Performance at the 2025 Festival after party. Photo by Elke Dick and Alger Liang