



ONTARIO CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS FUND LE FONDS POUR LES MANIFESTATIONS CULTURELLES DE L'ONTARIO

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Ontario Cultural Attraction Fund Presentation to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs

June 30, 2020



The Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund is a program of the Government of Ontario through the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries and administered by the Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund Corporation.

Introduction

- OCAF established by Ontario Government under Premier Mike Harris in **1999**
- Objectives:
 - Increase **tourism** and local **attendance** at cultural events
 - Increase **earned revenue** for applicant organizations
 - Create **jobs** and **economic growth**
- OCAF achieves this by providing up front working capital directed towards the applicant's marketing and promotional costs, with the investment taking the form of a partially repayable loan.

Introduction (cont'd)

- Ontario Government investment of \$45.75 M over 20 years has funded 767 events across Ontario
- Program continued by the current government in 2019 budget:

“The Province will continue its support for arts and culture events through funding programs like the Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund, which will help arts and culture organizations drive cultural tourism spending and create new experiences that will make the entire province a more attractive place to visit.”

- 2019 Ontario Budget

Unique Characteristics

- Provides up-front working capital in the form of partially-repayable loans
- Repayments replenish the fund and support more events: Ontario Government's \$45.75 M investment is projected to result in over \$78 M of funded events when all repayments are complete:

\$1 Gov't = \$1.67 OCAF

- **Only provincial funding program for the marketing of cultural tourism events**
- Provides funding stream for provincial agency “**blockbuster**” exhibitions and events
- The unique “revolving fund” characteristic requires that the program be delivered at arm's length to maximize the repayment income.
- The Fund will require renewal in the 2021 budget

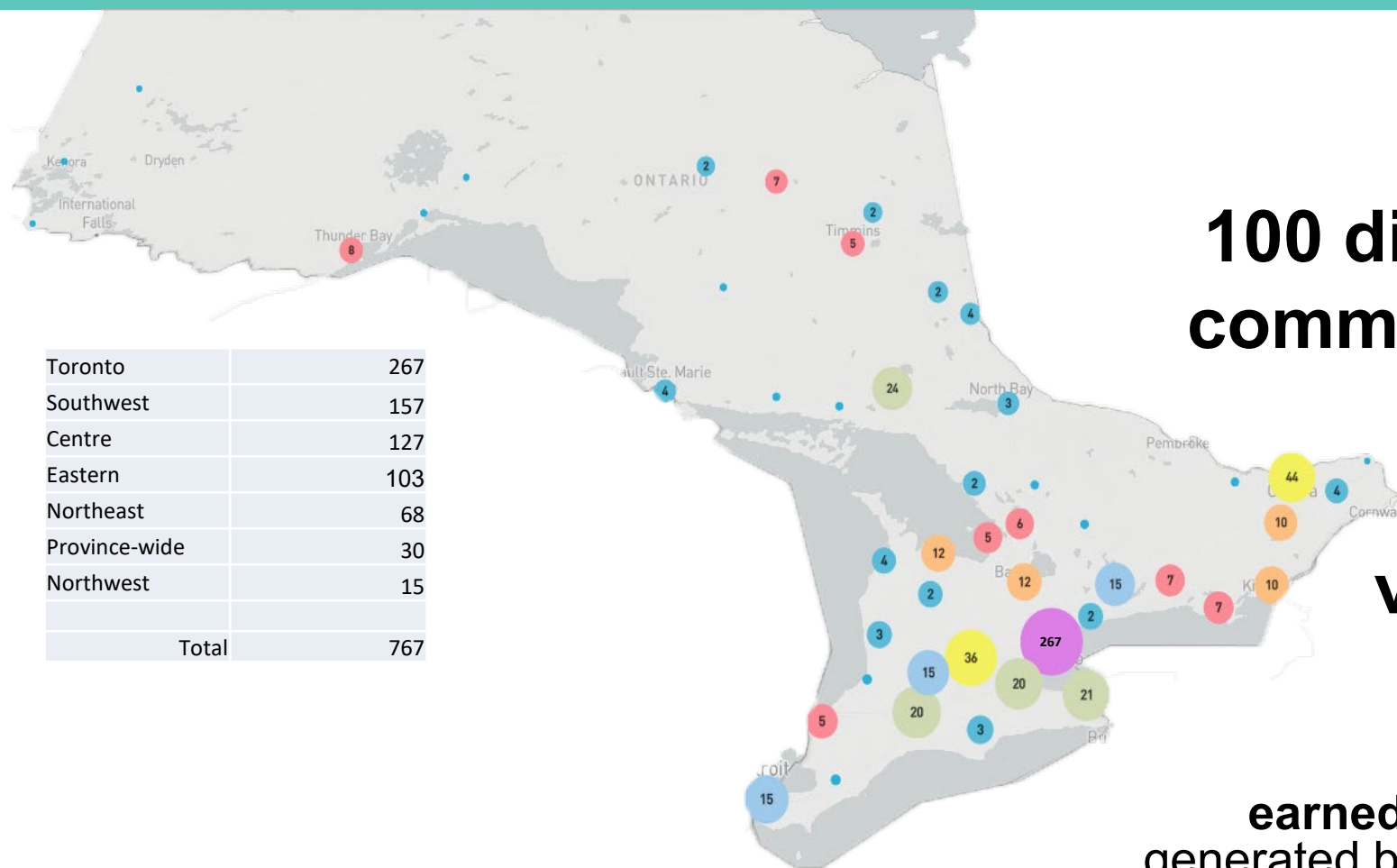


Accountability

- **Authority:** OCAF is a not-for-profit organization created by the Ontario Government and operating under a MOU with the Ontario Government, specifically to deliver this program for the government
- **Board of Directors:** 15 experienced volunteers with distinguished careers and standing in the cultural sector apply rigorous stewardship and expert financial advice
- **Staff:** Two full time employees
- **Administrative Costs:** Under 10% annually
- **Nature of funding structure:** prevents unnecessary end-of-year spending (“March Madness”) as funds simply roll over in to the following year
- **Community feedback:** Strong sector support for streamlined and timely program delivery for 20 years



Reach of OCAF-Funded Events



Over
**100 different
communities**

Over
**70 M
visitors**

Over
**\$235 M
earned revenues
generated by applicant
organizations**

Impact of OCAF Investment

- Fuels the creative economy
- Increases cultural engagement and inclusion
- On average, arts and culture tourists stay longer and spend twice as much during their visits as other tourists. In 2016, almost 12.9 million visitors participated in cultural activities in Ontario and they spent almost \$8 billion while here (Ontario Culture Strategy, 2016)

Success Indicator	1999–2020 (\$45.75 M)
Years of event funding	21
Approved amounts	\$78 M
Events funded	767
Event attendance	Over 70 M
Event earned revenue	Over \$235 M
Rural / Northern events	244 (over \$12 M)
Direct provincial taxes*	\$4.5 M per annum
Direct GDP*	\$45 M per annum
Jobs*	1,200 per annum

*Event spending only – does not include visitor spending (TREIM)

How Covid-19 impacted the Cultural Tourism Sector – OCAF Perspective

- All OCAF-funded events postponed as of March 16, 2020 (30 events effected)
- Most funded events will take place in some form in 2021 if public health regulations allow
- Examples:
 - Kingston Canadian Film Festival - cancelled mid-Festival, will be allowed to re-apply for 2021
 - Ballet Jorgen - tentatively rescheduled to the fall of 2020
 - Beaches Jazz Festival and Huron Waves (both postponed and will re-apply for sunk marketing costs)
 - Stratford Shakespeare Festival – Tom Patterson Theatre will now open in 2021
 - Why Not Theatre/Shaw Theatre Festival – 2022 season

OCAF Relief Measures in Response to Covid-19

- The OCAF Board has decided to implement the following relief measures:
 - Release approved funding to organizations which have either changed the dates of their events or are defaulting to the 2021 event;
 - Continue to accept applications for events, festivals and exhibitions (that can meet public health regulations) taking place fall 2020 or later;
 - Relax eligibility benchmarks where appropriate;
 - Allow organizations that have been penalized by COVID cancellations or postponements to reapply for lost OCAF marketing spending; and
 - Revisit repayment terms where appropriate;

(cont'd)

OCAF Relief Measures in Response to Covid-19

Sector Consultation:

- OCAF is in talks with Capacity Interactive to provide digital marketing consulting services to OCAF applicants
- Consulting the Ottawa Festival Network about its first baseline study (*Canada's Festivals Capital Pilot Baseline Study*) measuring the economic and social impact of festivals in the Ottawa region. OCAF hopes to replicate aspects of the study for OCAF applicants across the province

Conclusion

- **OCAF is poised to be part of the cultural tourism recovery solution**
- Working with its funding partners where possible on collaborative approaches
- Its unique funding model and arm's length structure are perfectly positioned to offer a potential conduit for a recovery platform and program
- OCAF board is eager and willing to help in any way
- The next six to 18 months are not going to be easy, especially for the performing arts; as funders we will need to be creative and aggressive in our support to first, persuade audiences to return, and then reach beyond local audiences to rebuild capacity more broadly



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For more information about OCAF
please visit www.ocaf.ca
or contact Kathleen Sharpe
(ksharpe@ocaf.ca)
or Thomas Vaughan
(tvaughan@ocaf.ca)

