

ACTION AREA: INSPIRED PEOPLE

Cycle 3 & 4 Granting Highlights - Summer 2016:



Investments in the Inspired People Action Area thus far in fiscal 2016-2017 are expected to result in 800 people engaging in community-based arts creation, over 26,000 people experiencing arts and culture projects, and more than 300 people gaining the skills and knowledge for success in the arts and culture sector. A large number of these individuals will become inspired through the culture and heritage sector.

The grant to Voice of the Vedas Cultural Sabha Inc. exemplifies this investment in the arts, culture and heritage sectors. Through expansion of its Sangeet Academy of the Voice, Voice of the Vedas will provide education in a number of traditional Indian musical and dance art forms. Through classes and performances, the program is expected to impact **7,000 individuals** in York Region through the preservation and animation of their cultural heritage.

OTF has invested \$18.6 million in 154 initiatives in the Inspired People Action Area since the 2015 introduction of the new Investment Strategy; \$2.6 million in 31 initiatives thus far in fiscal year 2016-2017.

Alignment with Government Priorities

The Inspired People Action Area is aligned with the Government of Ontario's recently launched Culture Strategy and Arts Policy Framework because it enables people to experience, participate in and engage with culture, heritage and the arts. Evidence-based investments in this Action Area will support Ontario's Culture Strategy through improved and expanded cultural infrastructure, building the skills and talents of the next generation of artists, fostering creativity in our schools, and telling our stories that value our diversity.

Background

The Inspired People Action Area is built on the recognition that culture, heritage and the arts have intrinsic value. We are hard-wired as human beings to experience creative acts, become authors of our own self-expression, and combine such experiences into a lived engagement as we find our place within society.

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Even though Ontarians enjoy an abundance of culture, heritage and arts offerings, the time spent on such activities declined by 12% between 1994 and 2010, according to the Canadian Index of Wellbeing (CIW). Communities benefit from a strong cultural infrastructure. However 72% of arts organizations report insufficient access to facilities and specialized equipment. There is an urgent need to develop young audiences for the future. Only 62% of elementary schools in the Greater Toronto Area have music teachers, and the numbers drop steeply for eastern Ontario (32%) and northern Ontario (26%). In 33% of elementary schools in Ontario, students do not have opportunities to work with artists, perform in a musical group, or play an instrument. Community arts programs are limited.

Evidence shows that arts-based learning models, such as "Learning Through the Arts" and "ArtSmarts," have many positive impacts on the intellectual and social development of young people. Students engaged through arts creation methodologies develop critical thinking, higher self-esteem and leadership skills. Research also shows significant benefits to the health and well-being of seniors participating in arts and heritage activities. As well, community-based arts and heritage initiatives engender inter-cultural understanding, belonging and civic pride.

It is for these reasons that OTF is focusing its investments in this Action Area on two priority outcomes: better quality programming and infrastructure to experience culture, heritage and the arts, and more people connect with culture, heritage and the arts.