



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 12, 2014

PASO Coalition Meets with Ontario Arts Council CEO to Discuss Cuts to Arts Sector

Executive Directors representing the Coalition of Provincial Arts Service Organizations (PASO), met with senior staff at the OAC to better understand the nature of the cuts that were announced in a letter that was sent to operational clients of the OAC on October 22, 2014.

PASO asked key questions including:

- Why the OAC chose to combine the announcement of the cuts with the release of the new Strategic Plan?
- How the OAC is laying the foundation for a substantial ask of the Ontario Government to address the “significant pressures” that it cites in its letter to operational clients?
- What the relationship of the 5% cut to OAC operating clients was to its communication and direction from the Ministry and consultation with the arts community?

The Coalition has been supporting the work of the OAC over the last seven years and making the case to various Ministries about the fundamental social and economic value of the arts. As a result of this meeting, these efforts will be increased as PASO moves to more closely align its activities with the priorities of the current Government

PASO operates on the principle of voluntary contributions of time and travel from Coalition member organizations. Since 2007, member organizations have contributed almost \$120,000 in time and costs to PASO Coalition activities which has included supporting the OAC in the delivery of Arts Day at Queen’s Park.

The cuts were combined with the announcement of their new Strategic Plan. Titled [**Vital Arts and Public Value**](#), the OAC has done an effective job getting the word out about this document with Peter Caldwell, CEO, Carolyn Vesely, Director of Granting and Kirsten Gunter, Director of

Communications, holding a series of province-wide town hall meetings to begin a conversation about the plan and answer questions. Communities they visited included Sudbury, followed by Nipissing First Nation, Windsor, London, Kitchener-Waterloo, Six Nations, Hamilton, Kingston, Thunder Bay, Mississauga, Barrie, Peterborough, Ottawa (two sessions) and Toronto (three sessions). They are holding webinars in January for anyone who was too far or otherwise unable to attend any of these sessions.

PASO is a Coalition of Provincial Arts Service Organizations that strives to strengthen the environment for the individuals and institutions that create and disseminate the arts in this province and for public access to the arts. Its collective memberships are made up of individual artists as well as the performance and exhibition organizations that create and support artistic expression.

Feel free to connect with PASO by e-mailing Kristian Clarke at: kc@carfaontario.ca. Demetra Christakos can be reached at: oaag@oaag.org. Kristian can be reached by phone at: 416-340-8850.

What follows is a list of all the Coalition members.

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