House of Commons
Chambre des communes
Canada

**House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance – Pre-budget Consultations 2013**

**This brief is submitted by:**

(•) **an organization** **Organization name:** Opera.ca

**or**

( ) **an individual** **Name:** _____

**Topic:** Arts and culture

## *Recommendation 1: Please provide a short summary of your recommendation.

Opera.ca recommends that the Government of Canada stimulate job creation and local economic development by increasing the annual Parliamentary allocation to the Canada Council for the Arts by $18 million (10%) in 2014-15.

**Expected cost or savings:** From the pull-down menus, please indicate the expected cost or savings of your recommendation to the federal government and the period of time to which the expected cost or savings is related.

$10 million-$99.9 million

1 year

**Federal funding:** Please provide a precise indication of how the federal government could fund your recommendation. For example, indicate what federal spending should be reallocated, what federal tax measure(s) should be introduced, eliminated or changed, etc.

Spending on Canadian arts and culture is an investment that offers returns that boost the federal government's bottom line through increased tax revenue and local economic growth; this makes it possible to better fund the arts and other important social programs. Federal public investment also stimulates new private sector dollars and increases the impact for communities.

**Intended beneficiaries:** Please indicate the groups of individuals, the sector(s) and/or the regions that would benefit by implementation of your recommendation.

Investment in the Canada Council for the Arts provides stable operating funding for arts organizations ensuring a predictable base of support in an unpredictable world. Every major city in Canada is home to an opera company, and this investment would benefit Canadians in cities from coast to coast by stimulating job creation and local economic development.

**General impacts:** Depending on the nature of your recommendation, please indicate how the standard of living of Canadians would be improved, jobs would be created, people would be trained, etc.

Beyond culture`s economic importance and contributions to economic growth, investment in the Canada Council for the Arts enables opera companies to invest not only onstage, but also in the quality of life in their communities with programs such as Vancouver Opera In the Schools program, the Canadian Opera Company's free concert programming at the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre, and Calgary Opera's Community Opera, What Brought Us Here, telling newcomers' stories through opera, to name but a few.

**Topic:** Arts and culture

## Recommendation 2: Please provide a short summary of your recommendation.

Opera.ca recommends that the Government of Canada renew its investment in the complete suite of arts and cultural industries programs at the Department of Canadian Heritage, and in addition, that the investment be indexed to the annual cost of living.

**Expected cost or savings:** From the pull-down menus, please indicate the expected cost or savings of your recommendation to the federal government and the period of time to which the expected cost or savings is related.

$1 million-4.9 million

5 or more years

**Federal funding:** Please provide a precise indication of how the federal government could fund your recommendation. For example, indicate what federal spending should be reallocated, what federal tax measure(s) should be introduced, eliminated or changed, etc.

Inflation produces increased tax revenues; this government investment to keep pace with annual cost of living increases.

**Intended beneficiaries:** Please indicate the groups of individuals, the sector(s) and/or the regions that would benefit by implementation of your recommendation.

Canadian Heritage`s Canada Arts Investment Fund provides support for the Canada Arts Training Fund, which develops and prepares, the next generation of Canadian artists for a career in the arts. The Canadian Heritage matching program, Endowment Incentives, is an important program for opera companies in building their long term capital.

**General impacts:** Depending on the nature of your recommendation, please indicate how the standard of living of Canadians would be improved, jobs would be created, people would be trained, etc.

Endowment Incentives allows companies to leverage and build private sector support for their Endowments. These endowments contribute a steady stream of income, ensuring organizational stability, that in turn provides stable, predictable jobs for artists and those employed in the sector.

Investment in the Canada Arts Training Fund ensures Canadian artists remain one of our country`s finest and most coveted cultural exports. Canadian-trained opera singers and artists such as Russell Braun, Isabel Bayrakdarian, Measha Brueggergosman, and Robert Lepage are in demand on stages across the world.

**Topic:** Innovation and commercialization

## Recommendation 3: Please provide a short summary of your recommendation.

Opera.ca recommends that the Government of Canada consider a new cultural investment program, Innovation Incentives, an innovation program that will provide the necessary capital required to test new ideas and drive change in the sector. Such a program could be pilotted with key input from several National Arts Service Organizations.

**Expected cost or savings:** From the pull-down menus, please indicate the expected cost or savings of your recommendation to the federal government and the period of time to which the expected cost or savings is related.

unknown

1 year

**Federal funding:** Please provide a precise indication of how the federal government could fund your recommendation. For example, indicate what federal spending should be reallocated, what federal tax measure(s) should be introduced, eliminated or changed, etc.

Innovation funding provides a return on investment for arts organizations to test new ideas and improve their business model. An adaptive and resilient arts sector is one that can respond to changes in the field with new innovative programming and practices that can maximize revenues, grow audiences and increase value for Canadians.

**Intended beneficiaries:** Please indicate the groups of individuals, the sector(s) and/or the regions that would benefit by implementation of your recommendation.

Innovation onstage is essential to connect with new audiences and tell stories that resonate with Canadian culture and values, and yet it is risky business. A company is always on the fulcrum of box office success (i.e. meeting box office goals) or financial challenge. Opera.ca's Canadian Opera Creation Fund (2001-2011) was exemplary in mitigating the risk of doing new work and it resulted in the premiere of 24 new Canadian operas. Innovation is not only needed onstage but also on the business side to connect current and new audiences and to deliver value to Canadians.

**General impacts:** Depending on the nature of your recommendation, please indicate how the standard of living of Canadians would be improved, jobs would be created, people would be trained, etc.

Opera companies share the wider concerns of the performing arts sector such as increasing audiences, building deeper community connections, and engaging with Canadians. Understanding that past practices are no longer as effective in a post-consumer world, they have embraced the innovation imperative on the business side. Re-defining business models and finding new ways to deliver value to Canadians require a certain entrepreneurial approach, as well as innovation capital.

Please use this page if you wish to provide more explanation about your recommendation(s).

Additionally, Opera.ca recommends that the Government of Canada increase from 29% to 39% the federal tax credit for new and increased charitable donations.

Beneficiaries and Impact

The business model for opera is remarkable. Of all revenues, 47% is earned, 30% are private donations, and 23% is public funding. Within a climate of austerity, it is unlikely public funding can continue to match growth in the sector. While keeping ticket prices accessible, other measures are needed to close the revenue gap, particularly those that encourage growth in charitable giving.

*Please note that at least one recommendation must be provided