

New report shows that 759,000 cultural donors gave a total of about \$101 million to arts and culture organizations in 2007

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Canadian arts and culture organizations rely on funding support from a range of sources. The roughly 14,000 arts and culture organizations in Canada have total revenues of \$3.4 billion, or 3.1% of all non-profit organizations in Canada. Compared with other non-profit organizations, arts and culture organizations receive much lower funding from government (28% for arts and culture vs. 49% for all nonprofits), much higher revenues from earned sources (50% for arts and culture vs. 35% for all nonprofits), slightly higher revenues from gifts and donations (17% for arts and culture vs. 13% for all nonprofits) and roughly similar revenues from other sources (5% for arts and culture organizations vs. 3% for all nonprofits).

Individual donors are an important component of the funding mix for arts and culture organizations. *Individual Donors to Arts and Culture Organizations in Canada in 2007*, the 30th report in the *Statistical Insights on the Arts* series from Hill Strategies Research, provides a picture of cultural fundraising in 2007 based on a survey of a representative sample of individual Canadians.

The report indicates that 759,000 cultural donors gave a total of about \$101 million to arts and culture organizations in 2007. This represents 1.0% of financial donations to all types of non-profit organizations in Canada.

The report examines data from custom tabulations that Hill Strategies Research commissioned from Statistics Canada based on the 2007 Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating (CSGVP). Between September and December 2007, Statistics Canada surveyed a statistically representative sample of Canadians 15 and older (20,510 people) about their financial gifts to all types of not-for-profit organizations in the 12 months preceding the survey.

In the survey, “arts and culture organizations” include those involved in visual arts, architecture, ceramic art, performing arts, museums, zoos, aquariums, media and communications as well as historical, literary and humanistic societies.

This information pre-dates the recent recessionary period in Canada, which has probably led to a decrease in donations. Preliminary research into the impacts of the recession on the cultural

sector indicates that fundraising revenues, especially endowments, foundations and business-related funding sources, might be the hardest hit by the recession.

Relatively high average donation levels

The \$101 million donated to arts and culture organizations represents, on average, \$132 per donor. This average annual donation ranks arts and culture organizations fourth out of 11 different types of non-profit organizations. Religious organizations rank far above all other non-profit organizations, with an average annual donation of \$469 per donor.

Strong competition for donors

There is certainly strong competition for donors from other non-profit sectors. With \$101 million in donations – 1.0% of total donations to all types of non-profit organizations – arts and culture organizations rank ninth out of 11 types of non-profit organizations with regard to the value of donations. Religious organizations receive nearly half of all donations (\$4.6 billion, or 47%), followed by health organizations (\$1.5 billion, or 15%) and social service organizations (\$915 million, or 9%). Arts and culture organizations receive less than law, advocacy and political organizations (\$130 million) but more than development and housing organizations (\$82 million).

Between 2004 and 2007, hospitals saw the largest increase in individual donations (37%), followed by other health organizations (a 22% increase). The change in the value of cultural donations cannot be reliably stated, given the margin of error of the 2004 estimate.

Donor development work in the cultural sector can have many obstacles. Although many Canadians recognize the value of culture in our communities, public awareness and support of fundraising needs are undoubtedly lower for arts and culture organizations than for other types of organizations, such as those focused on health care or social services. In addition, some cultural attendees and participants may not realize that a large portion of the revenues of arts and culture organizations is not covered by admission fees, other earned revenues or government funding. This may help explain why the 759,000 donors to arts and culture organizations comprise only 3.3% of all Canadian donors.

Among the 11 types of non-profit organizations covered by the survey, arts and culture organizations rank ninth with regard to the overall number of donors. Health organizations have the largest number of donors (15.2 million), followed by social services (10.5 million) and religious organizations (9.8 million). Development and housing organizations are closest to arts and culture organizations in terms of number of donors, with 583,000 donors.

High education and age are the most important demographic factors

Demographic analysis in the report shows that high education and age are the two most important factors in cultural donations. Those with a university degree are much more likely to donate to arts and culture organizations than the Canadian average (5.8% of university graduates vs. 2.8% of all Canadians 15 or older). The cultural donation rate is also relatively

high for older Canadians, as 3.5% of those between 45 and 64 and 4.3% of Canadians 65 or older donated to a cultural organization in 2007.

The Canadians who are least likely to donate to arts and culture organizations are those with household incomes under \$30,000, those with a high school education or less, younger Canadians (i.e., age 15 to 34), and single Canadians (who have never been married).

Other factors that have an influence on individuals' cultural appreciation cannot be analyzed from this survey. For example, it is not possible to examine individuals' previous experiences with the arts, particularly their arts education experiences.

British Columbia donors are most likely to give to arts and culture organizations

The fundraising success of arts and culture organizations, relative to other non-profit organizations, varies across the country. Compared with the cultural sector's 3.3% share of all Canadian donors, British Columbians are most likely to give to arts and culture causes, with 4.4% of all donors in the province doing so. In Ontario, arts and culture donors represent 3.5% of all donors, followed by the Prairies (3.0%), Quebec (2.9%) and the Atlantic provinces (2.7%). The full report also provides a summary of the reliable data on the number of donors and the value of donations to arts and culture organizations in each region.

Media contact

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