



ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF ART GALLERIES

401 Richmond Street West, Suite 395, Toronto, ON M5V 3A8

Phone: (416) 598-0714 Fax: (416) 598-4128

Website: www.aaag.org

Charitable Business Number 10779 6690 RR0001

OAAG/AOGA Advocacy Statement

28 May 2020

The Ontario Association of Art Galleries / Association ontarienne des galeries d'art (OAAG/AOGA) has a 50 year history as an Arts Service Organization (ASO) which represents over 270 members belonging to the public art gallery sector. Despite provincial origins, OAAG/AOGA's work is national in its scope and is currently Federally funded for national projects. Similarly, the majority of our constituent members are recipients of Federal funding.

Significantly, OAAG/AOGA has already **accomplished work on seven out of fifteen recommendations** made to the 12th Report to the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage (2018).

In its continued role of advocacy for the visual arts sector and public art galleries, OAAG/AOGA is deeply engaged with the national network of Arts Service Organizations (ASOs) representing cross-sectoral interests. We are working for the long haul towards a sectoral recovery despite the fact that **prior to the COVID-19 crisis, the prevailing precarity of the arts sector signalled a crisis and was amplified in multiple sub-sectors, especially public art galleries**. OAAG/AOGA is undertaking Impact Surveys, engaging stakeholders, as well as offering data input, expertise and advice to the government. This is part of the ongoing process of developing and understanding the ask for the sector from the federal government as part of recovery efforts. Our inputs are actively sought by the government. OAAG/AOGA has developed a digital portal created for its members and stakeholders, the [COVID-19 Response platform](#), to further augment this work and centralize information.

Amidst these efforts, OAAG/AOGA has learned of activities and claims of the newly formed One Voice for Arts & Culture (OVAC). Not three months old, this group is claiming "to understand and advocate on behalf of the sector, as well as to align with the work of Arts Service Organizations and Associations" – this without consultation with established ASOs including OAAG/AOGA, which has a longstanding service to its membership as well as to the sector. We view this as misleading to various stakeholders in the sector who work on an established principle of trust and tacit understanding of how the work is collaboratively undertaken in the sector as well as to serve its membership.

OAAG/AOGA wishes to clearly state that we have not been approached by OVAC, nor has there been any form of consultation with OVAC. OAAG/AOGA does not see or seek alignment with the work of this new group nor deem it an appropriate representative voice for OAAG/AOGA's broad membership base.



ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF ART GALLERIES

401 Richmond Street West, Suite 395, Toronto, ON M5V 3A8

Phone: (416) 598-0714 Fax: (416) 598-4128

Website: www.aaag.org

Charitable Business Number 10779 6690 RR0001

Numerous members of the ASO community have expressed strong reservations at such a claim and have deferred engagement.

As ASOs we offer a macro outlook. Our continuous work with our membership year-in-year-out offers us substantial detail of the sector's needs and gaps. This granularity of need has been addressed at different government levels including policy, legislation and funding asks in different avenues and fora. This work is complex as neither the Arts nor the whole Arts & Culture, or for that matter even sub-sector domains such as Public Art Galleries, are not homogenous, and one needs to avail the deep and nuanced knowledge of the ASOs, their work and their membership.

OAAG/AOGA supports and continues to work collaboratively under the wider umbrella of cross-sectoral National Arts Service Organizations (NASO) and Provincial Arts Service Organizations (PASO). In this crisis, OAAG/AOGA continues its national engagement with the Visual Arts Sector, and is the strong voice of public art galleries in actively engaging governments, their agencies and stakeholders.

York Lethbridge

President / Président

Ontario Association of Art Galleries / Association ontarienne des galeries d'art (OAAG/AOGA)

CC: Executive Director / Directrice exécutive (OAAG/AOGA)