

Performing arts, 2018

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Performing arts benefited from Canada 150 celebrations

Following the publicity of Canada 150—both domestically and abroad—the performing arts industry saw a larger increase in operating revenues from 2016 to 2018 than what was observed in previous years. Total operating revenues reached \$2.4 billion in 2018, up 11.3% from 2016. Operating expenses increased 10.9% to \$2.1 billion, resulting in an operating profit margin of 12.8%.

Geographically, four provinces accounted for 92.9% of total operating revenues. These provinces—Ontario (37.2%), Quebec (34.0%), British Columbia (13.3%) and Alberta (8.4%)—all posted an increase in operating revenues from 2016 to 2018.

Musical groups and artists continued to account for the largest proportion of the performing arts industry, contributing 39.5% of total operating revenues. The remainder was generated from theatre (except musical) companies (22.5%), other performing arts companies (17.9%), musical theatre and opera companies (11.4%), and dance companies (8.7%).

From 2014 to 2018, the performing arts industry saw salaries, wages, benefits and commissions increase at a slower rate than total operating expenses, with subcontracts increasing at a faster rate. The share of salaries, wages, benefits and commissions in total operating expenses decreased from 28.7% in 2014 to 26.2% in 2018, while subcontracts grew from 12.6% to 14.1%.

Non-profit performing arts companies rely on volunteers and grant funding to enrich the cultural lives of Canadians

Volunteering is integral to Canadian culture, and the non-profit sector of performing arts includes individuals who provide their time without monetary compensation to help with anything from day-to-day operations to showcasing their talents in performances. In 2018, 48,587 volunteers contributed an average of 41.3 hours each. This is more than a week's worth of full-time work.

To maintain their operations, non-profit establishments continued to rely heavily on public and private funding, which comprised 51.7% of total revenues (sales, public and private funding, and licensing rights combined). As detailed in the 2016 federal budget, the Canada Council for the Arts received \$70 million more in funding in 2018 than in 2016, contributing to a 28.2% increase in federal grants for performing arts companies.

Individual donations remained the top source of private sector funding, at 37.6%. Compared with 2016, individual donations increased 11.5% to \$82.2 million. Corporate donations and sponsorships combined made up the second-largest source of private funding, at 21.5%.

Performing arts companies are embracing the digital world

The use of digital technology is increasing in the world of performing arts. In 2017, the Canada Council for the Arts launched a communications campaign for its Digital Strategy Fund, hosting information sessions across Canada and posting a series of tips online. E-commerce sales rose 54.2% for the industry as a whole from 2016 to 2018, and accounted for nearly one-fifth of total sales.

Note to readers

Data for 2014 and 2016 have been revised.



Available tables: [21-10-0007-01](#), [21-10-0182-01](#) to [21-10-0190-01](#) and [21-10-0245-01](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [3108](#).

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca).