



**City of Kingston
Report to Council
Report Number 25-089**

To: Mayor and Members of Council
From: Jennifer Campbell, Commissioner, Community Services
Resource Staff: Danika Lochhead, Director, Arts & Culture Services
Date of Meeting: Tuesday, March 18, 2025
Subject: Kingston Arts Council Service Level Agreement Renewal

Council Strategic Plan Alignment:

Theme: 5. Drive Inclusive Economic Growth

Goal: 5.7 Foster culture, history, education, arts and recreation (CHEAR).

Executive Summary:

The purpose of this report is to ask Council to approve the renewal of the annual Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the City of Kingston and the Kingston Arts Council (KAC). Since 2012, the City of Kingston has entered into an SLA with the KAC on an [annual basis](#). These agreements include financial support transferred to the KAC to support delivery of services.

The proposed 2025 SLA maintains the 2024 funding level; totaling \$151,375, which includes an operating grant of \$126,873 to support administration of the City of Kingston Arts Fund and funding of \$24,500 to support delivery of the Mayor's Arts Awards program. These amounts were included in the 2025 Arts & Culture Services operating budget. The 2025 SLA also includes the funding to be held in trust and distributed through the City of Kingston Arts Fund (CKAF) totaling \$612,790 in 2025, which has again been maintained at the 2024 funding level.

The renewal of the SLA in 2025 will include several deliverables, notably the administration of the City of Kingston Arts Fund (CKAF) in 2025 as well as implementation of changes to the CKAF based on a large-scale review that has now been completed. A new CKAF Framework

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and a 2025 CKAF Transition Plan, will be presented to the Arts, Recreation & Community Policies (ARCP) Committee at its meeting on April 24, 2025, and to Council on May 6, 2025 and any additional funding required to support implementation (as earmarked within existing budgets) will be noted then for approval and would be administered through an Amending Agreement to the SLA.

Recommendation:

That the Mayor and Clerk be authorized to execute a Service Level Agreement between the City of Kingston and the Kingston Arts Council that identifies the services to be provided by the Kingston Arts Council and the associated funding to be issued by the City of Kingston for those services, in a form acceptable to the Director of Legal Services; and

That Council approve the release of \$151,375 from the Arts & Culture Services Department's 2025 operating budget to support the Kingston Arts Council and the services identified as part of a Service Level Agreement between the City of Kingston and the Kingston Arts Council in 2025; and

That Council approve the release of \$612,790 from the Arts & Culture Services Department's 2025 operating budget to be held in trust by the Kingston Arts Council and distributed through the City of Kingston Arts Fund, pending Council approval of the 2025 City of Kingston Arts Fund Transition Plan.

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Authorizing Signatures:

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY COMMISSIONER

**Jennifer Campbell,
Commissioner, Community
Services**

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

**Lanie Hurdle, Chief
Administrative Officer**

Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:

Paige Agnew, Commissioner, Growth & Development Services Not required

Neil Carbone, Commissioner, Corporate & Emergency Services Not required

David Fell, President & CEO, Utilities Kingston Not required

Ian Semple, Acting Commissioner, Transportation & Infrastructure Services Not required

Desirée Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer

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Options/Discussion:

The existing 2024 SLA between the City of Kingston and the KAC expires on March 31, 2025, and requires Council's approval to renew; a process that happens on an annual basis since this relationship was formalized in 2012.

Background

The SLA between the City and the KAC provides key support to the KAC and outlines deliverables that align with the City's priorities and the KAC's mandate to function as a professional arts service organization that provides services and administers funding to artists, arts groups and arts organizations, in support of arts projects, programming, exhibitions and more that benefit the Kingston community. The City's support for the KAC is critical and enhances organizational capacity to secure additional funding opportunities through the Ontario Arts Council and other funding bodies.

Analysis

The KAC has submitted all required reports to the City, as per their 2024 SLA, which includes an Interim Report that was submitted in December 2024 (Exhibit A) and quarterly activity and financial reports for the CKAF. They also completed and published their [2023-2024 Annual Report](#), which includes a CKAF Impact Report section. At this time, it is being recommended that the City's SLA with the KAC be renewed again in 2025. It is anticipated the services to be included as part of the 2025 SLA will be as follows:

- Distribute CKAF grants in 2025, totaling \$612,790, based on the 2025 CKAF Transition Plan that was presented for feedback and review to the Arts, Recreation & Community Policies (ARCP) Committee at its meeting on February 27, 2025 ([Report Number ARCP-25-004](#)) and that will be formally submitted to the ARCP committee at its meeting on April 24, 2025 to recommend to Council to approve at its meeting on May 6, 2025;
- As per the 2025 Transition Plan, pending approval, oversee the application process for new applicants, receive submissions, coordinate the peer assessment and adjudication process, and distribute the grants;
- Prepare for and lead administrative implementation of proposed changes to the CKAF, coming out of the CKAF Review that has now been completed. An overview of these changes was presented to the ARCP Committee at its meeting on December 12, 2024 ([Report Number ARCP-25-002](#)) and are expected to be implemented, pending approval of Council, in 2026 with open calls for applications to begin in late 2025;
- Pursue strategies and expanded professional development opportunities to increase the profile of the CKAF, as well as its continuing growth and success that includes targeted efforts to attract an increased number of applications from across the community;
- Promote and raise awareness of the impact of the City's investment in the arts through the CKAF and increase the profiles of grant recipients;
- Provide quarterly CKAF reports to track administration and financial activity;

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- Provide key support for the delivery of the Mayor's Arts Awards program, including facilitating and promoting an open community call for nominations for award recipients, chairing the Nominations Subcommittee and overseeing the selection process, functioning as the main liaison for the award recipients on behalf of the City, providing key event planning support for the awards ceremony, commissioning profile videos of all award recipients, and promoting the awards ceremony and award recipients; and
- Support sector development through the provision of targeted professional development and training opportunities for professional artists, arts professionals and arts organizations, in alignment with Arts & Culture Services strategies and priorities.

As in previous years, the SLA will include language specifically related to the management and expenditure of the funding the KAC receives. It will also outline requirements related to reporting that includes providing quarterly reports as well as a year-end report and a 2024-2025 Annual Report. The SLA will also include general terms and conditions typical of all such agreements the City of Kingston uses when entering partnerships with external organizations like the KAC.

With Council's approval to renew the City of Kingston's SLA with the KAC, staff will meet with representatives of the KAC Board and administrative staff to review the outcomes of the 2024 SLA and to discuss any alterations, changes and/or additions that need to be made to finalize the 2025 SLA. Once that work has been completed, the 2025 SLA can then be executed by the Mayor and Clerk in a form that is acceptable to the Director of Legal Services.

Existing Policy/By-Law

Investing in the KAC through an SLA on an annual basis aligns with several recommendations originally identified in the Kingston Culture Plan approved by Council in September 2010. It also helps to fulfill various City-approved strategies as well as Council's Strategic Priorities.

Financial Considerations

Funding for the KAC in 2025 was included as part of the approved 2025 operating budget for the Arts & Culture Services Department. The total funding is \$151,373, which includes \$126,873 as operating funding and to support the administration of the City of Kingston Arts Fund and \$24,500 to support the KAC's administrative support of the Mayor's Arts Awards program. That funding will be paid out in two installments that include: (1) 25% to be paid out when Council approves the renewal of the SLA between the City of Kingston and the KAC; and (2) 75% to be paid out when the 2025 SLA has been signed by both parties.

The funding to support the CKAF in 2025 totaling \$612,790 will also be issued once the SLA has been signed by both parties and is required to be held in trust in a separate, interest-bearing account under the terms of the SLA.

Contacts:

Danika Lochhead, Director, Arts & Culture Services, 613-546-4291 extension 1277

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Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:

None

Exhibits Attached:

Exhibit A – Interim Report December 2024

Interim Report on the Activities of the Kingston Arts Council

18 December 2024

Danika Lochhead
Director, Arts & Culture Services
City of Kingston
216 Ontario Street
Kingston, ON K7L 2Z3

Dear Danika,

We wish to thank you and the City of Kingston for your ongoing support of the Kingston Arts Council (KAC) and continued investment in vital programs and services which support the arts sector in Kingston. Please find our year-end report on our activities in 2024, submitted as per the Service Level Agreement (Section 13) between the City of Kingston and the KAC. This report provides updates on the work described in Sections 2, 3, 4, 7, and 10 of the SLA, as well as an overview of the KAC's services and programs in 2024.

City of Kingston Arts Fund

In 2024, the City of Kingston Arts Fund (CKAF) was administered with no major updates made to the program and Plan for Administration. As reported in the City of Kingston [Report Number ARCP-24-005](#), these updates included: dates, deadlines, and language; total funding amounts administered through the program; annual review process in light of the City-led CKAF Review conducted by Saffy. As previously reported, the KAC opted to maintain the status quo with regards to CKAF administration in 2024 in anticipation of wider changes resulting from the CKAF Review to be implemented in 2025 and 2026.

Operating and Project Grant applications were launched on 21 February 2024, with a deadline of 22 April 2024. The KAC continued to distribute forms, receive applications, and host information sessions virtually. Jury meetings were held in hybrid and in-person formats for Operating Grants and Project Grants Committees, respectively. The KAC followed its outreach plan, distributing a press release, social media and website promotion, KAC's ArtsBuzz newsletter, and targeted emails. Additionally, the KAC office remained open to the public for regular office hours throughout 2024, welcoming walk-in visits, inquiries, and requests from potential applicants and community members. Meetings were held with potential and returning applicants in person and virtually, depending on their preference.

In 2024, CKAF jurors awarded 11 Operating Grants and 17 Project Grants, for a combined total of \$613,088 in funding. A total of 12 Operating Grant applications and 34 Project Grant applications were received, with all applications deemed eligible by KAC staff and shared with jurors for assessment. Following the approval of the Report from the Kingston Arts Council on the Adjudication of Applications to the 2024 City of Kingston Arts Fund, grant recipients were

publicly announced on 10 July 2024 via a press release, social media promotion, and on the KAC website, and were celebrated in KAC's ArtsBuzz newsletter. A complete list of recipients and funding amounts can be found on the [KAC website](#).

KAC excitedly awaits the final recommendations from the City-led CKAF Review. We look forward to planning and implementation for CKAF 2025 and 2026. As such, we have not developed a 2025 Plan for Administration for review by Council or its committees, but look forward to continued collaboration under the new framework to be reviewed by Council in early 2025. KAC staff are not currently meeting with potential applicants as the new program structure has yet to be finalized or announced, but we will strive to execute communications regarding the new framework and grant streams as soon as possible, pending approvals at the City.

The KAC continues to provide quarterly reports to the City with updates on the progression of the CKAF program and maintains a separate, interest-earning account for CKAF funds.

Mayor's Arts Awards

As outlined in an Amending Agreement to our 2024 SLA, the KAC took on an expanded role with regards to the 2024 Mayor's Arts Awards, supporting administration of the program as well as communications. The KAC Executive Director acted as Chair of the Nominations Subcommittee, facilitating the selection and providing support to the subcommittee in an ex-officio capacity. The City additionally introduced a public nominations process for the awards, which were woven into the selection process seamlessly and impactfully. The KAC Executive Director presented a [report on the selection process](#) to the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee on 14 November 2024.

By acting in an administrative role, the KAC was additionally able to act as the primary artist liaison, guiding the process of administering the program from start to finish. We have completed filming for all recipient profile videos and await drafts from videographer Josh Lyon. We look forward to launching communications for the event and supporting execution in January 2025.

Programming — City of Kingston Supported

The KAC provided programming in support of CKAF in accordance with the SLA. KAC Grants & Programs Coordinator, Violet Tang, hosted a CKAF Information Session on 18 March 2024. The CKAF Information Session was hosted virtually via Zoom at no cost for participants, with auto-generated captions and ASL interpretation provided. The session reviewed the CKAF objectives, eligibility criteria, application process, application details, adjudication process, assessment criteria, timeline, and general grant writing tips. 16 individuals attended and KAC staff were present to support as needed. The CKAF Information Session was promoted through targeted email outreach, KAC's ArtsBuzz newsletter, social media, and the press releases issued during the CKAF launch in February. No programming took place in support of the City's

Public Art Master Plan or the Creative Industries Strategy in 2024, but the KAC looks forward to potential collaboration opportunities with the City in 2025 and beyond.

Programming — KAC Programs

The KAC continues to provide programming in support of artists, arts organizations, and arts workers in Kingston and the surrounding region. KAC programming aims to create opportunities for networking, collaboration, professional development, and access to much-needed professional resources. Our programs are offered free of charge, with embedded accommodations and/or the option to request additional accommodations, based on the event. Throughout 2024, the KAC has worked to enhance its presence and impact in the community, and has significantly increased audience engagement.

KAC has engaged over 2,300 people in 2024 through programming and presentations both onsite at the KAC office and offsite. Some highlights:

- Over 180 participants have attended KAC events;
- An estimated 1,370 visitors have attended KAC exhibitions, including two participatory exhibitions;
- An estimated 570 participants have engaged with KAC through offsite participatory programs and presentations;
- KAC has welcomed approximately 230 visitors for onsite tours, visits, and presentations.

Programming in 2024 included:

Creating More Inclusive Practices: Relaxed Spaces & Access Notes — 10 April 2024

Creating More Inclusive Practices is a professional development workshop series designed for artists and arts workers. The series supports participants in developing and implementing more inclusive practices in their workspaces, events, and artistic practices, with a specific focus on accessibility. This workshop was presented in partnership with KEYS Newcomer & Employment Services, and facilitated by Disabled artists and accessibility coaches, Erin Ball (ze/zir) and Maxime Beauregard (they/them). Erin and Maxime introduced attendees to and modeled the concepts of relaxed spaces and access notes, two key approaches to making events and spaces more accessible. The Workplace Inclusion Charter (WIC) team at KEYS additionally demonstrated WIC services through a group exercise. With the guidance of KEYS staff, attendees analysed a job post using an EDI lens, examining practices that often create barriers to employment which are often easily removed (ex. Requiring applicants to have a G class license, or be able to lift a minimum of 50lbs, etc. for a job where these qualifications are not essential to the core duties of that position). The event was offered virtually via Zoom, with a relaxed format, free of charge, and with ASL interpretation and auto-generated captions.

UNIT 115 Exhibitions — May 2023–present

KAC continued to present UNIT 115 exhibitions utilizing our small gallery/exhibition space at the KAC office. Throughout 2024, we utilized the space for community-engaged installations, community-centred projects, and exhibitions from local arts organizations and community

groups. The following is a list of 2024 exhibitions:

- *IN BETWIN: Stories of Immigrants*, Sergio Jaua *
- *Thrift for Art's Sake*, Modern Fuel Artist-Run Centre
- *We Stand With You*, KAC x Limestone District School Board x Kingston School of Art ^
- *Pride Quilts*, Limestone District School Board x Kingston School of Art ^
- *Out of Frame*, Kingston Hidden Artist Collective
- *Circles, Squares, and Storms*, YarnGK Crochet & Knit Circle x Bridging Communities Project *^
- *Love Has a Home Here*, Hill Werth *

* Public exhibition reception hosted

^ Participatory installation

AGM + Talkback Session — 22 August 2024

The KAC hosted its 2024 Annual General Meeting (AGM) virtually via Zoom. Members of the public were invited to first learn about KAC's activities in 2023-2024 during our AGM, and then to ask questions and share feedback with KAC staff and board during a talkback session.

Doors Open / Culture Days — 28 September 2024

Tett Centre tenant organizations collaborated on a building-wide event for Doors Open / Culture Days 2024. KAC participated in the Doors Open event, welcoming visitors on a Saturday to view our *Out of Frame* exhibition by Kingston Hidden Artist Collective (KHAC).

Creating More Inclusive Practices: Creative Accessibility — 20 November 2024

The second workshop in this series, Creative Accessibility, introduced artists and arts workers to the concept of creative accessibility as presented by Disabled artists and inclusion coaches Erin Ball (ze/sir) and Maxime Beaugard (they/them). The workshop explored ways to build accessibility into the process of creating art and exploring new ways to engage with various dimensions of access, creativity, and presentation beyond traditional accessibility features. At the core of this concept is the idea of embedding access into the creative process rather than creating a work and later attempting to adapt it to different audiences. Erin and Maxime again utilized a relaxed presentation format, building on existing series themes. The event was offered free of charge via Zoom, with ASL interpretation and auto-generated captions provided..

Community Engagement Activities — dates vary

The KAC continued to emphasize and execute community engagement initiatives throughout 2024. Examples include:

- Skeleton Park Arts Festival, 25-26 June 2024 — KAC hosted a community booth, offering artmaking activities to contribute to our *We Stand With You* exhibition, discussion/engagement activities, and additionally allowing a CKAF Review Project Champion to utilize our booth for a community engagement pop-up
- Nan Yeomans Drop In Day, 8 November 2024 — offering a full day of dedicated drop-in office hours for potential applicants to the Nan Yeomans Grant for Artistic Development.
- Offsite presentations to school and community groups, including:
 - Grant writing workshop (and presentation re: KAC services and grants) for

- Queen's Theatre Practicum class — 29 January 2024
- Participation in Queen's Arts Leadership industry panel — 7 June 2024
- Participation in Queen's Bachelor of Fine Arts AGM — 3 September 2024
- Presentation and Q&A re: grant writing at LCVI Creative Arts Specialist High Skills Major class — 30 October 2024
- Onsite presentations, tours, and talks at KAC, including:
 - Artist talk with Sergio Jaua + presentation re: KAC services and Tett tour conducted by KAC staff for Kingston Literacy & Skills group — 18 January 2024
 - Presentations to high school groups (3)
 - Presentations to post-secondary groups (2)
 - Regular presentations to community groups, small groups of visitors, etc.
 - Artist Talkback with Hill Werth
- One-on-one meetings with potential grant applicants to CKAF and Nan Yeomans Grant

Nan Yeomans Grant for Artistic Development

The KAC administers the Nan Yeomans Grant for Artistic Development in partnership with the Community Foundation for Kingston & Area. This year, the grant amount was raised to \$4,000, marking a 60% increase in funding and the first increase to the fund since its inception in 2007. The grant is used to support the career development, focused training, and education for one artist annually (aged 17-40). The 2024 recipient (confidential / to be announced in January) is Alanna R. Hakim, a multidisciplinary artist and educator working primarily in stained glass and textile art.

Communications

KAC continued to administer key communications resources for the arts sector in Kingston throughout 2024, striving to strengthen our role as Kingston's go-to resource for all things arts. Such resources include the Arts Events Calendar, Arts Job Board, Opportunities Board, and Grants Board. We enhanced the Grants Board in 2024, launching a fully navigable, searchable database. This key resource allows artists and arts workers to search for grants at the local, provincial, and national level specific to their needs and interests; search filters include applicant type, artistic discipline, grant type, funder, and status (open, closed, rolling deadlines).

Our ArtsBuzz newsletter continues to be issued twice monthly, highlighting KAC news, KAC programs, key industry news, and information from our Arts Events Calendar, Arts Job Board, Opportunities Board, and Grants Board. We continue to seek new ways to increase engagement on social media, utilizing Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and X. After eight years, we have wrapped up the YGK Arts Project. We look forward to continuing promotional efforts for local artists through our forthcoming membership program, through which we plan to offer members' highlights and a members' database. We will continue to strive to expand and enhance our communications efforts, engage new audiences, and strengthen regional ties in 2025 and beyond.

KAC Staff

After two years as Grants and Programs Coordinator (FTE), Violet Tang departed the KAC team in May 2024. Following a highly competitive hiring process, the KAC onboarded B.C. Gorrie as Programs and Communications Coordinator in a part-time capacity in July 2024, transitioning to full-time in September 2024. Our other staff members, Nicole Daniels, Executive Director (FTE), and Katherine Dionne, Administrative Assistant (PTE) were both onboarded in early 2023 and continue to hold their respective roles on the KAC team. Within these roles, some duties have shifted, with Katherine no longer handling any communications-related tasks (previously the core focus of her role) and instead providing key administrative assistance for our grants programs, now acting as Administrative and Grants Assistant. Nicole and Katherine are presently acting as primary grants staff, splitting grants-related administrative duties as appropriate, with B.C. providing communications and marketing support for KAC's grants programs. We look forward to onboarding a Grants Officer (FTE) in 2025 to support the implementation of the CKAF Review recommendations and execute the CKAF program under Nicole's guidance.

KAC Board

The KAC Board continues to work hard to strengthen the organization and provide key operational, financial, and strategic guidance. In 2024 we introduced a new Vice Chair, Diane Black, and the other Executive members remain consistent: Clelia Scala (Chair), Amanda Baker (Treasurer), and Nevena Martinović (Secretary). Four directors completed their terms or stepped down from the KAC Board in 2024: Dave Rideout (former Vice Chair), Barbara Bell, Alyce Soulodre, and Jake Torrie. KAC onboarded two new board members in 2024: Patrick Cameron and Joe Pagnan. We now have a total of eight board members, with varied and strong competencies across key areas. In anticipation of major projects and the growth of KAC programs/services in 2025, including strategic planning, implementation of changes to the CKAF program, plus the launch of our new membership program and fundraising initiatives, the KAC board will return to a monthly meeting format in 2025.

Additional Funding

The KAC received an Operating Grant from the Ontario Arts Council in the amount of \$12,146. This represents the third year of a three-year Operating Grant cycle. The KAC is additionally supported by the Play! Charitable Gaming Association through our charitable gaming permit. Volunteers attend shifts at Play! Gaming & Entertainment Centre, and the KAC promotes this opportunity through social media on a monthly basis. We additionally received a project grant in the amount of \$7,890 through the Community Foundation & Area's Spring Community Grants Program. This grant supports the Artist Prosperity Project (currently underway), a pilot project centred on the collection, analysis, and publication of demographic and wage data for artists in Kingston and the surrounding region.

Thank you!

We deeply appreciate the support, trust, and investment in the KAC demonstrated by the City of Kingston throughout 2024 and our many years of collaboration. Your ongoing support is essential to ensuring we can continue to offer critical, high-quality programs and services to artists and their organizations in Kingston. Many thanks to City staff for their tireless work in support of our local arts sector! We look forward to continuing and growing our working relationship, and are excited to see what the next two years will bring to the City of Kingston Arts Fund and the broader Kingston community. Should you have any questions about this report, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Clelia Scala".

Clelia Scala
Chair, Board of Directors
Kingston Arts Council

Attached:

Trial Balance, 1 April 2023 – 18 December 2023
Profit and Loss Statement, 1 April 2023 – 18 December 2023
Audited Financial Statements, 2023–2024
KAC Annual Report, 2023–2024