



---

## OMA PRE-BUDGET SUBMISSION 2026

---

The Ontario Museum Association makes the following recommendations for the 2026 federal Budget.

1. The OMA supports the priorities of the Canadian Museums Association regarding reconciliation and specifically the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action 67 to 70 – this implementation is long overdue, and we believe the federal government should support these straightforward recommendations.

We believe provincial and territorial museum organizations should also be funded to support both community museums and Indigenous communities in repatriation and rematriation initiatives.

2. We also support the CMA's recommendations on funding for the Museums Assistance Program and on making the supplemental Young Canada Works funding permanent. We have some additional comments on these program recommendations, two operational and one more strategic.
  - a. We were pleased to see new funding for back-office IT improvements to cultural heritage programs announced in the fall budget. We hope this is the first step in modernizing both programs to be easier to apply for and to administer. While we have had excellent experiences with the MAP administrators we deal with as an organization, we think there is a real opportunity to make both programs more efficient for both applicants and administrators.
  - b. The YCW program is valuable for very early-career entrants, but, especially with very high youth unemployment rates and a generation struggling to enter the workforce, we think the federal government should consider extending the program to offer longer-term employment to early-career professionals.

- c. Finally, we believe that this is the wrong time for the federal government to make operational cuts to cultural heritage programs. Now is not the time to continue to starve the organizations that inform and define Canadian identity, in all its complexity. On the contrary, we think the federal government should create a new program to offer ongoing, multi-year operational support to community museums and Indigenous cultural centres across the country. The Department of Canadian Heritage has a deep knowledge of the sector, gained from its administration of the Museums Assistance Program; it could work with provinces and territories to develop parameters and standards for such a program, and should be directed to do so in the next federal Budget.

*As a provincial association, our work, and the work of our members, takes place in the territories (unceded and treaty) of Indigenous peoples in what is known as Ontario. As treaty people we acknowledge the complex colonial legacy of museums and our responsibilities to land and community in uplifting reconciliation, decolonization and Indigenous self-determination. We remain grateful to all the Nations, ancestors and individuals who guide us along this path towards humility, sustainability and reciprocity.*