

March 26, 2026

Re: Support for renewal of the Creative Export Strategy

The Honourable Marc Miller
Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture

Dear Minister Miller:

On behalf of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres (PACT), I am writing to express our support for the renewal of Creative Export Canada, which is currently set to sunset at the end of March 2026.

Over the past eight years, Creative Export Canada and the broader Creative Export Strategy have become important tools in helping Canada's theatre and performing arts sector build international relationships, access new markets, and bring Canadian creative work to audiences around the world. The program has delivered on its goals of helping Canadian creative works achieve financial success abroad and heighten exposure in international markets. These goals feel incredibly timely and aligned with this Government's commitment to rebuilding international trade relationships. As the current program approaches its conclusion, renewal is essential to ensure that the progress made to date is not lost and that Canadian artists and companies can continue building on the momentum the program has created.

For theatre and the performing arts, export development is not a short-term direction. International success in these sectors depends on sustained investment in relationship building, market development, touring preparation, co-production opportunities, and repeated engagement with presenters, festivals, and partners abroad. Creative Export Canada has helped make that work possible. Through its Export-Ready and Export Development streams, the program supports both projects expected to generate export revenues and earlier-stage work to build capacity, enter international markets, and strengthen business networks.

This matters deeply to theatre companies, producers, presenters, festivals, and artists across Canada. International opportunities generate earned revenue, create employment, expand audiences, and open long term pathways for Canadian productions and artists to develop resilient careers. They also reinforce Canada's reputation as a source of world class artistic excellence, innovation, and diverse cultural expression. In theatre especially, international engagement helps Canadian stories travel, strengthens creative collaboration, and ensures that Canadian voices remain visible and competitive in a crowded global environment.

Creative Export Canada has also provided an important platform for organizations at different stages of export readiness. That flexibility is particularly valuable in the performing arts, where some organizations are developing initial market relationships while others are ready to scale touring, partnerships, and international market presence. Continued support for both kinds of activity is essential if Canada wants a performing arts sector that is globally competitive and capable of long-term growth.

At a time when theatre and performing arts organizations continue to face rising costs, constrained revenues, and intense pressure on sustainability, Creative Export Canada remains a practical and strategic federal investment. It helps organizations diversify their income sources, expand audiences, and build resilience. Just as importantly, it enables the sector to contribute to Canada's cultural diplomacy, trade objectives, and broader international presence.

Allowing Creative Export Canada to sunset would put that progress at risk. It would weaken a program that has delivered real value over the last eight years and undermine the sector's ability to maintain and deepen the international relationships that are essential to long term success.

PACT therefore urges the Government of Canada to renew Creative Export Canada beyond March 2026 and to provide the stability needed for the program to continue supporting Canada's theatre and performing arts sector in a meaningful and sustained way. Renewing the program would send a strong signal that Canada remains committed to promoting its artists and cultural organizations abroad, while strengthening the economic and creative future of one of the country's most vital sectors.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,



Brad Lepp
Executive Director