



2018-19 Business Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Throughout 2017-18, the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO) continued to deliver on its mission to “bring people together with art”. The guiding principles of art, access and learning provided the foundation for our exhibitions, programs and activities.

We continued to share our remarkable collection with the public, with approximately 4,700 works on display. Our program also included a robust schedule of exhibitions, featuring three specially ticketed shows:

- *Georgia O’Keeffe* (April 22, 2017 to July 30, 2017)
- *Guillermo del Toro: At Home with Monsters* (September 20, 2017 to January 7, 2018)
- *Yayoi Kusama: Infinity Mirrors* (March 3, 2018 to May 27, 2018)

2017 was Canada’s 150th anniversary. Our major initiative, the exhibition *Every. Now. Then: Reframing Nationhood*, was a multi-media installation that featured close to 50 artists – both emerging and established from across Canada participated, with many creating new works specifically for this exhibition. The exhibition explored the theme that our nation is a dynamic work in progress anchored by strong Indigenous voices and a complexity of cultures and identities. This project has also demonstrated the importance of diversity and inclusion in our workforce and has expedited planning for a strategy to incorporate these strengths on a more permanent basis. The exhibition was generously supported by the province’s Ontario150 fund.

The year also presented a full schedule of programs and activities that engaged diverse audiences, including families, children, youth, adults, students and teachers.

The 2017-18 year was the third and last year of the AGO’s current three-year strategic plan (2015-2018), which is based on four goals:

- **Shape our content:** Present an integrated and forward-looking program that balances creative vision, global visibility, local appeal and fiscal stability.
- **Grow our audience:** Increase our attendance by deepening our relationships with our existing members and visitors and attracting new and diverse audiences.
- **Build donors and advocates:** Build and retain a community of donors and advocates who believe in the AGO’s position locally and internationally.
- **Support our people:** Become a passionate, progressive, achievement-driven institution supported by the right structure, culture, people and processes.

Initiatives undertaken during 2017-18 towards the achievement of the strategic plan included:

- The reinstallation of our Collection galleries on the first floor – the program celebrates the excellence of our collection, deepens our visitors’ engagement with art and responds to the interests and perspectives of our changing audiences
- Development of a digital technologies strategy with a focus on developing an accessible and mobile-first website; making key works from the AGO’s collection accessible online; and building a digital approach to visitor engagement.
- Official opening of the Grange Park revitalization project on July 8, 2017
- Completion of the AGO south entrance for public access to our Library & Archives

We are in the process of developing a new multi-year strategic plan that will build on the foundation and principles of the current plan with a continued focus on art, people and the communities that we serve.

Total operating revenues for 2017-18 are projected to be \$62,920,395; total operating expenditures are projected to be \$62,620,395 after amortization.

For 2018-19, a full program of activities is scheduled. We will continue to offer a robust schedule of exhibitions, programs and activities that focus on the guiding principles of art, access and learning.

Plans are underway to give the AGO's Collection even more prominence. In 2018-19, the AGO will continue to implement its strategic initiative to reinstall our collection galleries on the 2nd floor. This initiative will include new digital technologies that will enable individuals to create and share their own personal experiences with art.

Three major exhibitions are included in the 2018-19 schedule:

- *Yayoi Kusama: Infinity Mirrors* (March – May 2018)
- Kenojuak - Pitsiulak (June – August 2018)
- Anthropocene (September 2018 - January 2019)

The AGO will also continue its strategic initiative to implement an institutional marketing and communications strategy that reinforces a consistent AGO brand to targeted audiences.

Total operating revenues for 2018-19 are projected to be \$64,365,838; total operating expenditures are projected to be \$64,365,837 after amortization.

The Government of Ontario is a vital partner in the AGO's operation, providing annual operating support of approximately \$21 million. In 2017-18, the gallery received notification of a one-time funding reduction of \$500,000. This unexpected shortfall was managed internally by deploying mitigation strategies. A long-term and stable base of government support sustains many of the non-discretionary costs required for the AGO to fulfil its legislated mandate; protecting and preserving our collection, managing a safe and secure environment for storage and public display, and making the AGO an accessible destination for all.

We are also grateful to receive capital repair and rehabilitation support from the Government of Ontario in the amount of \$1.87 million for 16 projects. We are very mindful that parts of our physical plant were built as early as 1925 (1820, in the case of our historic house, The Grange). Ensuring the ongoing safety of our visitors, staff and volunteers is paramount. As an art museum, we must also keep current with recent developments in security systems and temperature/ environmental controls to safeguard the collection.

The Fiscal 2018-19 Plan anticipates that the annual Provincial operating grant will be restored to the 2016-17 levels. We look forward to continuing to work in partnership with the Government of Ontario to enable Ontarians to fully benefit from the many programs and resources provided by the Art Gallery of Ontario.

MANDATE

As cited in the Art Gallery of Ontario Act, the objectives of the Gallery are

- (a) To cultivate and advance the cause of the visual arts in Ontario;
- (b) To conduct programs of education in the origin, development, appreciation and techniques of the visual arts;
- (c) To collect and exhibit works of art and displays and to maintain and operate a gallery and related facilities as required for this purpose;
- (d) To stimulate the interest of the public in matters undertaken by the Gallery.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission statement of the Art Gallery of Ontario is:

We bring people together with art to see, experience and understand the world in new ways.

VISION STATEMENT

The vision statement of the Art Gallery of Ontario is:

We will become the imaginative centre of our city and province. We will be welcoming to our visitors, inspiring for our audiences and innovative in the ways we gather people together to create community through art. We will become a preferred cultural partner for artistic visionaries from all over the world.

VALUES

The Art Gallery of Ontario's operation is grounded in the following values:

- *We believe the experience of our visitor is paramount.*
- *We commit to excellence in the acquisition, collection, preservation and presentation of art in our care, in our time and for future generations.*
- *We commit to the highest standards of scholarship while engaging new methodologies and welcoming new points of view.*
- *We celebrate art and artists as central to our sense of who we are.*
- *We listen and contribute to our communities.*
- *We foster respect and recognition for all who visit and work here.*

SUPPORTING MINISTRY OBJECTIVES

The AGO is proud to support the priorities of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport by:

- Promoting cultural engagement and inclusion.
- Strengthening culture in communities.
- Fueling the creative economy.
- Promoting the value of the arts throughout the government.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

External Factors:

- Visitor leisure spending: Unpredictable visitor leisure trends continue to make it difficult to accurately predict revenues from admission and visitor spending.
- Private sector support: Private sector support is becoming a less stable source of revenue, making it more difficult to project future year budgets.
- Public awareness: Growing competition to be “top of mind” for leisure activities is driving increased investment in communication and marketing strategies.
- Growing consumer use of digital technologies: Digital technologies provide a wider and more versatile spectrum of vehicles to connect with audiences, both on-site and virtually.
- Insurance for major travelling exhibitions: rapidly increasing values of artworks are dramatically increasing insurance costs for major travelling exhibitions. The Canada Travelling Exhibitions Indemnification Act sets a per exhibition indemnification limit of \$600M. This covers less than half the value of some of our major exhibitions. The AGO must purchase commercial insurance to cover the remaining value of the exhibition.

Internal Factors

- Protection/preservation of art: The AGO’s primary asset is its collection of 95,000 works of art. We must continue to invest resources to ensure that security control systems, temperature/environmental control systems and management protocols provide the optimal protection and ongoing preservation of this asset.
- Investment in future programming: An ongoing challenge to allocate funds in major exhibitions and other programs that require multiple years to plan and develop.
- The AGO’s collective agreement with UNIFOR ends on March 31, 2018
- Digital and Information Technology: These applications have the potential to be our most effective tools in reaching larger, more diverse audiences. We are seeking avenues of support to develop these significant and sustainable links with the public.
- The AGO will be closing a number of galleries in our McLean Centre for Canadian Art in 2018/19 as part of our reinstallation project. The recently refreshed Thomson Collection of Canadian Art, our major exhibition in the summer and contemporary programming in our contemporary galleries will ensure that we continue to share Canadian art with our audiences.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The AGO is in the last and final year of the current three-year strategic plan (2015-2018) that provides a clear path forward to help us grow as an institution that is ambitious, forward-looking and impactful.

The strategic plan is centred on four goals and two important “enablers” that are embedded in and cut across the entire plan. Our plan confirms a dynamic programming direction to guide our planning over the next three years and includes an ambitious fundraising campaign.

Goal #1: SHAPE OUR CONTENT:

We will present an integrated and forward-looking program that balances creative vision, global visibility, local appeal and fiscal stability. Our artistic offerings of exhibitions, public programs, collection galleries and publications will attract higher attendance, shape the conversation about art in Toronto, connect us to the world and facilitate exceptional visitor experiences.

Goal #2: GROW OUR AUDIENCE:

We will increase our attendance by deepening our relationships with existing members and visitors, attracting new audiences and diversifying our audiences, presenting a consistent brand across all elements of our business and flexibly responding to our changing competitive environment.

Goal #3: BUILD DONORS & ADVOCATES:

We will build and retain a community of donors and advocates who believe in the AGO’s position locally and internationally, and who demonstrate their commitment through increased investments and donations to support our content, audience growth and capital development aspirations.

Goal #4: SUPPORT OUR PEOPLE:

We will be a passionate, progressive, achievement-driven institution supported by the right structure, culture, people and processes to fulfill our mandate and achieve our mission, vision and values.

We will leverage technology and make key capital investments to support all four strategic goals. This plan will be integrated into to our operational plans and budgets over the three-year period to ensure the successful completion of the plan.

2018-19 STRATEGIC DIRECTION

As one of the Canada's leading art museums, the AGO strives to utilize our extensive collections and knowledge to inspire creativity and to make an impactful contribution to the Ontario tourism and culture economies.

The AGO board will meet in early 2018 to develop a new multi-year strategic plan that will build on the foundation and principles of the current plan with a continued focus on art, people and the communities that we serve. For fiscal 2018-2019, our robust and strategic operational plan presents an overview of our objectives and activities for the year ahead with extraordinary exhibitions, such as *Yayoi Kusama: Infinity Mirrors* and *Anthropocene*, and an ongoing suite of engaging public programming and learning initiatives.

Strategic Objectives

We strive to bring people together with art to see, experience and inspire creativity in the following ways:

- To provide our guests an excellent visitor experience and increased access to our collections, both physically and digitally
- To explore and develop national and international partnerships as the world's leading art museum of choice
- To promote, develop and contribute to the Ontario tourism and culture economies by building strategic partnerships with private and public sector
- To operate with financial and organizational efficiency and maintain a balanced budget

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES – 2017-18

Throughout 2017-18, the AGO continued to deliver on its mission to “bring people together with art”. The guiding principles of art, access, and learning provided the foundation for our exhibitions, programs and activities.

We continued to share our remarkable collection with the public, with about 4,700 works on display. Our Canadian galleries documented lives and times in our city, province and nation through art, with a growing inclusion of indigenous works to provide new perspectives on our past and present. Contemporary galleries showcased works by Canadian and international artists. Our visitors were able to experience European masterworks dating from the early Middle Ages through to the 20th century. Our growing photography collection showcased the early pioneers in the field from the mid 1800’s to contemporary artists.

Our program also included a robust schedule of exhibitions, featuring three specially ticketed shows:

- *Georgia O’Keeffe* (April 22, 2017 to July 30, 2017)
This exhibition was a rare opportunity to experience the beautiful innovative art of Georgia O’Keeffe, a trailblazing figure in American modernism. Making its only stop in North America at the AGO, Georgia O’Keeffe features more than 80 works of art capturing the essence of her deeply personal connection to the landscape, architecture and nature that inspired her iconic style. The exhibition was organized by Tate Modern in collaboration with the AGO and Bank Austria Kunstforum.
- *Guillermo del Toro: At Home with Monsters* (September 20, 2017 to January 7, 2018)
From the fantastic to the frightful, this exhibition offered a rare glimpse into the world of renowned filmmaker Guillermo del Toro and his cabinet of curiosities. Taking inspiration from del Toro’s extraordinary imagination, *At Home with Monsters* revealed his creative process through his personal collection of art, artefacts, books, and props, all culled from Bleak House, del Toro’s creative haven located in Los Angeles. Select works from the AGO’s Collection provided a unique experience for our visitors. This exhibition was organized by the AGO, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and Minneapolis Institute of Art.
- *Yayoi Kusama: Infinity Mirrors* (March 3, 2018 to May 27, 2018)
Yayoi Kusama: Infinity Mirrors is unlike any exhibition the AGO has presented before. Guided by her unique vision and unparalleled creativity, critically acclaimed artist Yayoi Kusama has been breaking new ground for more than six decades. In 1993, she became the first woman to have a solo presentation at the Venice Biennale’s Japanese Pavilion, and in 2016, Time magazine named her one of the world’s most influential people. In addition to the paintings, sculptures, drawings and environments, viewers will encounter posters, letters, cards, and invitations that relate to Kusama’s early exhibitions and events—including her first solo show, which took place in Seattle—a slideshow of Kusama’s performances as well as an interview with the artist filmed on the occasion of this exhibition.

A wide variety of programs and exhibitions boldly told stories about Canada with both a critical lens and an eye for the extraordinary - stories we already know, stories that have been hidden, and stories about our future. With five exhibitions, two innovative digital projects and one marquee live event, the AGO’s sesquicentennial line-up had something for everyone.

The Gallery explored urgent questions about Canada through some of the country's best emerging and established artists with the Ontario150 funded exhibition, *Every.Now.Then: Reframing Nationhood*. The AGO also moved further into the digital sphere, making highlights from the Gallery's remarkable collection of Canadian art available online, and presenting *reBlink*, a special augmented reality installation.

A full schedule of family and youth programming continued through 2017-18, including a Halloween Bash, Family Sundays, Family Day, March Break, and weekly youth drop in activities. The AGO Youth Council gathered weekly throughout the year, plus they travelled to Estonia for an international youth symposium and produced two art installations in the Community Gallery's dedicated Nook Space. A new program was introduced – AGO Art Cart, a roving family activity station offered on weekends and selected PA days with activities for children and their caregivers.

The popular "First Thursday" program continued to draw adult audiences with unique interactions with art, contemporary artists and artmaking experiences.

The AGO's new website was completed and migrated over to www.ago.ca.

Work also continued on the strategic initiative to develop a new institutional marketing and communications strategy, to ensure the AGO speaks with one voice to all of our audiences.

Grange Park, a two-hectare urban park located behind the AGO re-opened to the public in the summer following a community-led, \$15 million revitalization project. This stunning transformation of an inner city green space is the result of an unprecedented partnership and shared vision between the AGO, the City of Toronto, the local community. The project was made possible by the generous support of The W. Garfield Weston Foundation and the City of Toronto. The involvement of other supporting donors ensured the project's successful and timely completion, and generated the creation of a special endowment fund that will sustain the park's maintenance for years to come.

In October, AGO appointed Julian Cox its new Chief Curator after an international search. With 25 years of museum experience, Cox, who is currently the Chief Curator and Founding Curator of Photography for the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco (FAMSF)—began his tenure in January 2018. Cox leads the Gallery's curatorial team in designing meaningful art experiences that embrace multiple—and often challenging—points of view. He will focus on exhibition planning in addition to developing the AGO's significant collections, positioning Toronto and Ontario's rich artistic landscape in the widest context possible to ensure the Gallery is inclusive and welcoming, and better reflects the diversity of the communities it serves.

In October, we appointed Georgiana Uhlyarik its Fredrik S. Eaton Curator, Canadian Art, while Wanda Nanibush was appointed Curator, Indigenous Art. The department of Canadian and Indigenous Art builds upon the strength of the Thomson Collection of Canadian Art, the Sarick Collection of Inuit Art and the Gallery's renowned collection of art ranging from historic to contemporary, with a strengthened commitment to Indigenous art, including First Nations, Inuit and Métis. The team will continue to focus on bringing Canadian and Indigenous art to the world, adding to successes including presenting Emily Carr at the Musée d'Orsay in Paris and David Milne at the Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, Brazil.

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES – 2018-19

A full program of activity is scheduled for 2018-19. We will continue to offer a robust schedule of exhibitions, programs and activities that focus on the guiding principles of art, access and learning.

Plans are underway to give the AGO's Collection even more prominence. In 2018-19 the AGO will continue its strategic initiative of a major new installation for our Collection. The overarching goals for this strategy are to:

- Celebrate the excellence of our Collection, enabling our public to get reacquainted with “old favourites” and introducing them to “new favourites”
- Deepen our visitors' engagement with art
- Respond to the interests and perspectives of our changing audiences.

Thanks to strong community and government support, in 2017-18 we launched virtual field trips for teachers and students who are not able to visit the AGO in person, or who want to augment the AGO experience in class. Online school group programs and teacher resources will continue to get refined and improved in 2018-19.

The following exciting exhibitions will bring works from around the world to the AGO:

- *Yayoi Kusama: Infinity Mirrors (March – May 2018)*
- *Kenojuak-Pitsiulak (June – August, 2018)*
- *Rebecca Belmore: Facing the Monumental (July – October 2018)*
- *Anthropocene (September 2018 – January 2019)*
- *Christiane Pflug WT (November 2018 – March 2019)*
- *Mickalene Thomas: Mentors, Muses, and Celebrities (November 2018 – March 2019)*

Our active schedule of youth and family programming will continue, including Family Sundays, March Break and Family Day activities.

Our active school group visit program will offer curriculum-related themes from junior kindergarten through Grade 12. Professional development workshops and programs will also be available to teachers.

We will continue to partner with 250+ community organizations throughout the GTA to make the AGO an accessible and welcoming destination for marginalized individuals. Our community organization partners are important ambassadors in raising awareness that the AGO is a fun and safe place to visit.

The AGO will also proceed with its strategic initiative to implement an institutional marketing and communications strategy that reinforces a consistent AGO brand to all audiences.

RESOURCES NEEDED TO MEET GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The AGO's annual operating revenues come from three main sources:

- Government funding: The Government of Ontario is a vital partner in the AGO's operation, providing annual operating support of approximately \$21 million, representing 33% of our total operating revenues. Financial support from other levels of government includes an annual operating grant of \$698,312 from the City of Toronto and an annual programming grant of \$240,000 from the Canada Council. All other government funding is project based. Funding from all levels of government represent approximately 35% of the AGO's total operating revenue.
- Self-generated revenues: Admissions, food and beverage, retail and program sales represent approximately 33% of total operating revenues.
- Private sector revenues: Memberships, individual/corporate giving, sponsorships, and fundraising events represent approximately 32% of total operating revenues.

The combination of public, self-generated and private sector revenues provides a strong and diversified revenue base for the AGO's operation. A number of external factors can negatively impact self-generated revenues and private sector revenues, ranging from economic instability, to increased competition for leisure activities and world issues/events that interfere with normal tourism and local consumer activity. For this reason, the base operating support from the Government of Ontario provides the AGO with a level of stability that is particularly critical during times when other sources of revenue are unpredictable.

The AGO's most essential resource is our collection of 95,000 works of art. The AGO is constantly challenged to maintain the most modern and innovative systems to protect works of art. Theft prevention systems must be kept at the most current and secure levels. Temperature/environmental control systems must also be continually upgraded to prevent deterioration to the works. Any shortcoming in either system could result in theft or damage to the works, ruining the AGO's reputation as a top calibre art museum and compromising its ability to compete for international travelling exhibitions.

We must also ensure that the 700,000+ visitors who come through our doors each year are provided with a safe and accessible experience. We must provide our 600 staff and 800 volunteers with a safe and accessible work environment. With areas of the AGO's building dating back to the 1920's, (and in the case of The Grange house – a national heritage building – back to 1820) unscheduled capital repairs are an ongoing challenge. Provincial capital renewal funding is a key resource for the AGO to respond to capital repairs in a timely fashion, and keep our security and environmental control systems up to date.

HUMAN RESOURCES

The AGO employs 600+ staff, representing 459 FTE's. We also manage 600-800 volunteers, who work in partnership with our staff to augment and enhance our visitor experience.

The AGO has a collective agreement with two unions – OPSEU and Unifor:

- OPSEU collective agreement has a term of December 1, 2016 to November 30, 2019. The agreement was ratified on February 1, 2017.
- Unifor collective agreement has a term of April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2018. Bargaining for the next collective agreement is anticipated to begin in late 2017/early 2018.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The AGO is committed to the following performance measures that reflect our guiding principles of art, access and learning:

- **Access to art:** The AGO will make great works of art available to the public on an ongoing basis, through installations of our collection and temporary exhibitions of works from private and public collection around the world.
- **Protection and preservation of the collection:** The AGO will continue to maintain its high standards of excellence to protect its collection and preserve it for future generations.
- **Access to learning:** The AGO will provide programming that will enable audiences of all ages to engage with and learn about art.
- **Visitor satisfaction:** The AGO will continue to monitor the satisfaction level of our visitors.
- **Staff satisfaction and engagement:** The AGO will continue to monitor the satisfaction and engagement levels of its staff.
- **Fiscal prudence:** The AGO will maintain a balanced operation.

FINANCIAL BUDGET

In 2018-19, the AGO will manage an operating budget of approximately \$65M.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PLAN

As identified in our strategic plan, technology is a key enabler to achieve our goals. Our priorities for Information Technology focus on the following areas to shape our content and grow our audiences:

Digital Strategy

Develop an organization-wide digital strategy that includes:

- Upgrading the AGO website to make it easier to navigate
- Making our collection accessible online in meaningful ways
- Leveraging technology to help visitors engage with the AGO

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System

Develop a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, beginning with the creation of an integrated customer data platform that will support:

- Customer journey mapping
- Life cycle management customization by segment and communication channel

Preliminary exploration for a new ticketing system was initiated by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport for provincial agencies and attractions. The AGO is pleased to be invited to the discussion and we look forward to the partnership and potential benefits of this project.

INITIATIVES INVOLVING THIRD PARTIES

The AGO partners with other art museums to bring exhibitions to the AGO – either as a borrower of an exhibition organized by another art museum, or as a co-organizer. These partnerships are carefully defined by contractual agreements that clearly specify the responsibilities and deliverables of each institution.

The AGO also partners with organizations and individuals to develop and deliver programs. Written agreements signed by all parties define responsibilities and deliverables of each partner.

Partnerships with individuals and corporations who commit financial support towards AGO exhibitions, programs and capital initiatives are also defined in detail with written agreements.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The AGO runs a year-round operation, with an ongoing schedule of collection displays, exhibitions, programs and activities for the public. The 2018-19 year also includes the implementation of the following strategic initiatives:

- Continuation of the reinstallation of the collection galleries: to be phased throughout the entire 2018-19 year
- Development and implementation of a comprehensive marketing and communications plan that ensures the AGO speaks with one voice to all of our audiences

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

The AGO maintains ongoing communications with the public about its programs and activities through the following mechanisms:

- Weekly “AGO Insider” email sent to 100,000+ subscribers, highlighting stories that reinforce the AGO’s brand.
- Weekly “What’s On” email sent to 100,000+ subscribers, listing exhibitions, programs, events and activities
- “Art Matters” members publication is produced three times a year and mailed to all AGO members.
- The AGO website (www.ago.ca) provides comprehensive information about the AGO, including history, how to plan your visit, current and upcoming exhibitions, programs and events.
- The AGO regularly issues releases, listings and PSA’s and cultivates close working relationships with members of all genres of media (tv, radio, print, social media) to ensure media coverage of the AGO’s exhibitions, programs and activities, as well as promoting the AGO as a key tourism and leisure destination to local, national and international media.
- Advertising campaigns using print, TV, radio and social media for major exhibitions.
- Social media: The AGO operates a Facebook page (118,000+ followers), a Youtube channel (1,700+ subscribers), Twitter (306,000+ followers) and Instagram (80,000+ followers) accounts. A variety of blogs are active through the AGO’s website.