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City Invests \$400,000 to Make Arts and Culture Venues Safer and More Accessible

VICTORIA, BC — Seventeen not-for-profit arts and culture organizations will benefit from \$400,000 in Cultural Infrastructure Grants from the City of Victoria.

This includes \$250,000 in annual funding to support upgrades to performance and rehearsal spaces, as well as one-time funding of \$150,000 for accessibility upgrades to make venues safer and more accessible for artists and audiences.

“The arts and culture sector was hard-hit by the pandemic and high market rents continue to make it challenging for these groups to thrive,” said Mayor Lisa Helps. “Affordable and accessible cultural facilities are an essential part of the community. The Cultural Infrastructure Grant program helps organizations make much needed infrastructure improvements and ensures all Victorians can benefit from arts in our city.”

The grants include funding to assist arts organizations to add elevators to much loved venues such as Open Space and White Eagle Hall to improve physical accessibility. They will also support upgrades to LED lighting systems in Baumann Centre and Alix Goolden Hall and staging and shared office improvements at Theatre Skam’s Arts Hub on Broughton. Technological improvements to lighting and sound equipment will greatly enhance the overall experience for audiences as well as reducing operating costs for organizations.

Several projects include improvements to exhibition standards at visual art and museum spaces. The Gage Gallery in Bastion Square will install new exhibition displays and Point Ellice House will install new digital displays to showcase local history. These improvements support artists in displaying their work in a professional and engaging manner and improves the experience of audiences in learning and interacting with the artwork.

Thriving arts and culture organizations are important contributors to community growth and well-being in Victoria. The sector contributes \$435.8 million to the local economy and employs 5,588 people in the city. The creative economy also attracts investments and tourists while creating jobs and business growth across other sectors.

A full list of grant recipients and projects is available at victoria.ca/cig.

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