Professional Association of Canadian Theatres

PACT welcomes Budget 2026 investments in the cultural sector and looks ahead to Canada 160

November 6, 2026 — The Professional Association of Canadian Theatres (PACT) and its members welcome the investments in arts and culture proposed in yesterday's federal budget. Alongside support for film, music, publishing and journalism, Budget 2026 proposes $20 million over three years for the Canada Council for the Arts to help professional artists and arts organizations create, produce and present live performances, including theatre. This investment will help companies bring new Canadian work to the stage, even as demand for support continues to exceed available funding and access varies across regions.

"When we think of celebrating sovereignty and nation building, Canadian theatres have a frontline role to play. conversations about who we are as a country start in a theatre, as a shared communal experiences that build empathy, belonging, and civic engagement," said Brad Lepp, Executive Director of PACT. "We welcome this investment as building on last year's budget foundation. While our sector has welcomed back audiences, our members tell us of the precarity and challenges involved with developing new Canadian work and giving it the production it deserves to position it for success. We are committed to keep working with the government to provide Canadian theatres with the tools they need to tell our stories at home, and abroad."

A ROLE FOR THEATRE IN CANADA 160

The $300 million proposed for Canada's 160th anniversary offers an opportunity for communities across the country to come together through live theatre. As plans for Canada 160 take shape, PACT looks forward to working with Canadian Heritage on how professional theatres and their audiences can take part.

EQUIPMENT FOR CANADIAN STAGES

The budget identifies lighting, sound equipment and stage rigging as purchases that could qualify for the proposed Productivity Mega Deduction. For theatres that are exempt from income tax, a deduction provides no direct savings on that equipment. PACT welcomes the opportunity to work with the government to ensure all theatres can benefit from federal support when they need to replace or upgrade equipment.

MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THEATRE WORKERS

PACT welcomes the consultation on the proposed Canada Creative Credit ahead of the 2027 Spring Economic Update. Theatre artists often take on several roles over a season and earn income in different ways. Our members can help the government define qualifying income in a way that reflects how playwrights, performers, designers and technicians earn their living.
It is our hope that the Canada Creative Credit will help artists hold on to more of what they earn through tax exemption. However, that outcome is predicated on having work opportunities in the first place. A live performance labour tax credit (similar to the tools already in place for film and

television) would help theatre organizations to hire additional performers, retain local technicians and crew, offer extended contracts, and bring more ambitious Canadian shows to the global stage. PACT and our industry partners will continue to work with the federal government to advance this important part of the equation.

ROLLING UP OUR SLEEVES

PACT and its members stand ready to collaborate with all Parliamentarians and officials across government to ensure these investments deliver maximum impact. Together, we can build on this momentum to support a dynamic, innovative, and resilient theatre industry that champions Canadian stories, cultivates Canadian voices, and connects Canadian communities from coast-to-coast-to-coast.

For more information contact:

Brad Lepp
Executive Director
416.595.6455 x 1516 | BradL@PACT.ca
PACT.ca