



Professional Association of Canadian Theatres

2025-2026 YEAR IN REVIEW

CONNECTING ■ LEARNING ■ LABOUR ■ ADVOCACY ■ ADVANCING

PACTcon 2026. cinq à sept. Photo by Erik Pinkerton

OUR VISION ■ We envision a Canada where theatre thrives as vital civic infrastructure—nurturing empathy, belonging, and democratic engagement—where theatre practitioners and audiences imagine boldly, gather safely, engage critically, and contribute to a culture of flourishing.

PACT will serve as the essential hub making this vision possible: a trusted convener, effective advocate, and inclusive community that strengthens professional theatre practices from coast to coast to coast.

OUR MISSION ■ We serve as an inclusive hub connecting, supporting, and advocating for professional theatre across Canada. We facilitate collaboration, advance equity and accessibility, and champion the essential artistic and cultural value of live performance in Canadian society.

WHAT IS PACT?

CONNECTING building relationships

LEARNING growing skills & knowledge

LABOUR supporting healthy sustainable workplaces

ADVOCACY strengthening our collective voice

ADVANCING moving the sector forward



MESSAGE FROM PACT PRESIDENT

2025-26 has been a year of implementation and focus: bringing the strategic plan online and starting to actively mobilize some new membership offerings; having important discussions with various sections of our membership to learn about how we can be even more responsive to their needs; activating peer-to-peer discussions and townhalls on pressing issues like AI and sustainability; and an incredible PACTcon in Whitehorse which allowed us to breathe and learn and be inspired.

We continue to be a loud voice of advocacy for the sector, ensuring that theatre is top of mind in the government, when they make decisions, particularly around cultural policy and the tax credit.

This year reaffirmed that PACT is not just a representative body, but a connected and responsive community. Thank you to our incredible board, staff and membership, for showing up, sharing your work, and shaping the narrative of Canadian theatre—together.

-Kathryn Westoll



Brad Lepp & Kathryn Westoll with the Honourable Marc Miller, Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture

MESSAGE FROM PACT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

"Let's try it. Let's give ourselves permission to experiment this year".

I shared those words with the PACT staff at our retreat last year, as we began the planning for the 2025-2026 year. And so we did. We tried new offerings, new programming streams, new scheduling, new ways of gathering. We approached this past year with a sense of service, curiosity, and 'game-ness'. Let's try it.

We aimed to do it responsibly, in dialogue with our members and community, and alive to outcomes and feedback. Some initiatives were a success, some less so – all of them were learning opportunities that we will carry forward. I am proud of the PACT staff and board volunteers who danced with that spirit of possibility throughout the year. Thank you.

PACT is made up of many parts - parts comprised of our membership, our staff, our mission, our communities, and many other considerations. There are parts of PACT for whom this has been a very hard year. There are parts of PACT for whom this has been a year of accomplishment and pride. There are parts that took a step forward, and others that feel mired. We hold all these parts in balance. These pages offer one lens on the past year at PACT, and while we know it can never tell the story of all our parts, it is useful to take a moment to reflect on part of what we accomplished together.

-Brad Lepp

CONNECTING

This year, we continued to connect online and in person with colleagues from across the country.



172 Members
& **53** Colleagues



86 Region
& Caucus
Meetings



129
Committee
Members



56 Committee
Meetings



134
emails sent



395 social media
posts made

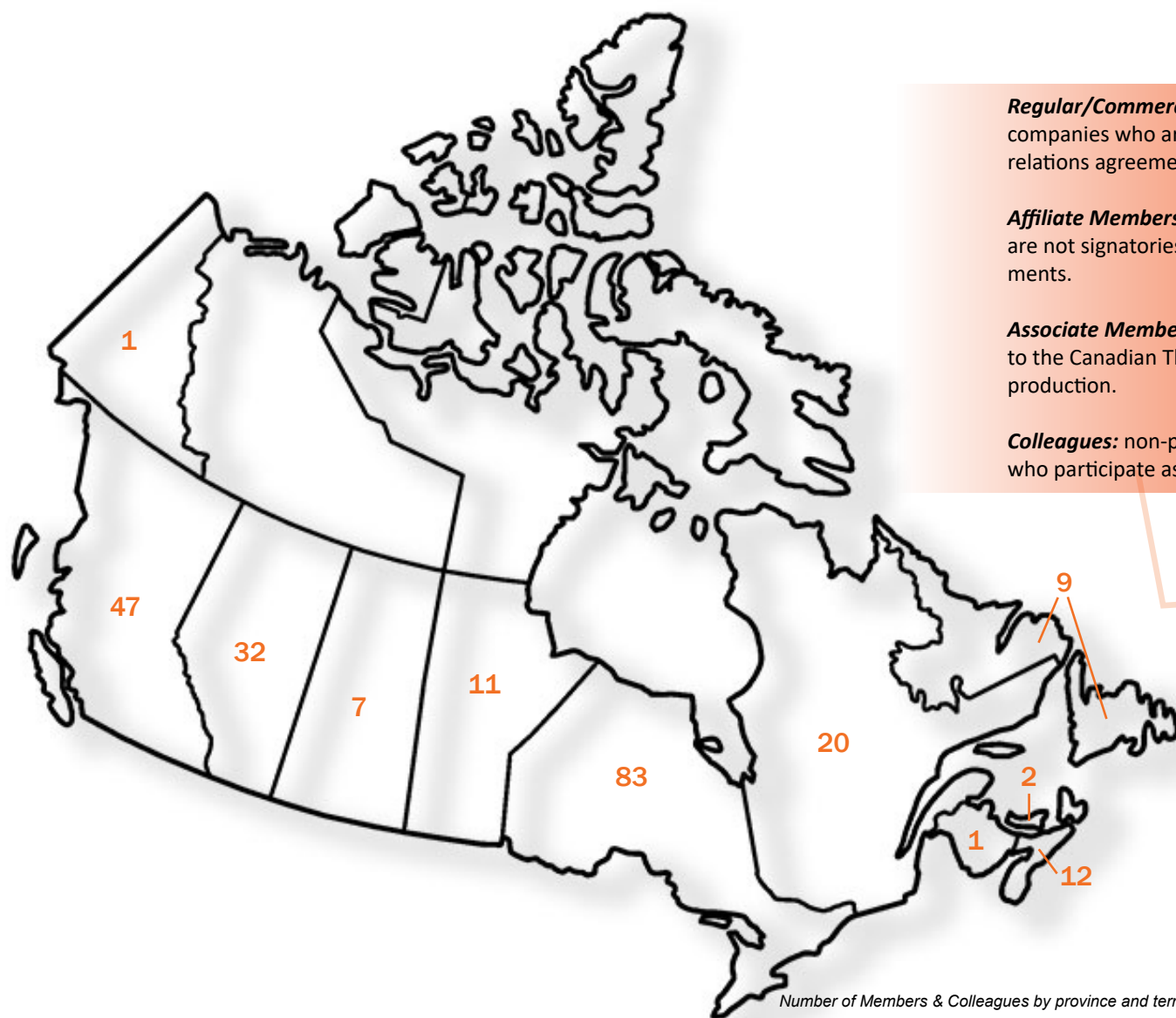


PACTcon 2026. Yukon Arts Centre. Photo by Erik Pinkerton

CONNECTING ■

MEMBERS & COLLEAGUES

PACT's network includes a range of PACT Members and Colleagues across the Canadian theatre sector.



Number of Members & Colleagues by province and territory.

Regular/Commercial Members: producing theatre companies who are signatories to negotiated labour relations agreements and work under their parameters.

Affiliate Members: producing theatre companies who are not signatories to negotiated labour relations agreements.

Associate Members: organizations that require access to the Canadian Theatre Agreement (CTA) for a specific production.

Colleagues: non-producing companies or individuals who participate as part of the PACT network.

REGIONS & CAUCUSES

Regions continued to bring together companies and individuals who reside in the same geographical region throughout the year. Last year all eight regions met for a total of **44 times**. These gatherings provided arts workers the opportunity to come together and build relationships, share resources, receive support and ensure their voices and concerns are heard, strengthening PACT's ability to advocate on their behalf.

Caucuses continued to provide a space for companies and individuals with similar mandates or areas of practice to connect throughout the year. These gatherings brought colleagues from across the country together to build relationships, share resources, and discuss opportunities and challenges unique to their work. Together the nine Caucuses held **42 meetings** over the past year.



CONNECTING ■

CELEBRATING IMPACT & LEADERSHIP IN CANADIAN THEATRE



GREEN AWARD ■ Honouring projects that inspire the theatre community to engage with the climate crisis and environmental stewardship in creative and exciting ways.

Recipient: Newworld Theatre, *Eyes of the Beast: Climate Disaster Stories*, 2025

Runner up: Mulgrave Road Theatre, Centre for The Arts building project



MALLORY GILBERT LEADERSHIP AWARD ■ Recognizing outstanding administrative and managerial leadership within the Canadian theatre community.

Recipient: Tim Jennings, Executive Director, Shaw Festival

Protégé: Melissa Novecosky, Associate Executive Director, Shaw Festival

CONNECTING ■

LEARNING

PACT supported learning and connection across the sector through a wide range of programs and events.



3169 Attendees
at Networking &
Learning Events
(excluding PACTcon)



146 Networking
& Learning
Opportunities
(excluding PACTcon)



113
Resources shared



PACTcon 2026. Pitch Party. Photo by Erik Pinkerton

PROGRAMMING

AI Fundamentals & Developing an Ethical AI Framework ■ Board of Directors Sessions
■ Conflict Management Workshop ■ Connected Currents ■ Executives Circle ■ Feel Good Fridays ■ Fundraising Fundamentals ■ How to Pitch ■ Human Resources Question Salad
■ Industry Welcome Event (new graduates) ■ International Relations Touring ■ Intro to the Practical Ecodesign Guide for the Performing Arts ■ Labour Learning ■ New Leaders Series ■ PACT Membership 101 ■ *Peer to Peers* ■ PGC Agreement Book Club ■ Refreshers
■ Soft Mentorship Pilot Program ■ Town Halls

Developing an Ethical AI Framework for Your Organization

There is no shortage of pressure to figure out AI right now. Most organizations respond by either rushing in without a plan or waiting until someone else goes first. This session offered a third option. Led by AI Educator Avery Swartz, it gave 48 participants a practical, grounded, and realistic framework they could apply in their own organizations.

“Great speaker. It was a lovely session thanks for hosting this kind of webinar”— Developing Ethical AI Framework for Your Organization Participant

Peer to Peers

Peer to Peers connect colleagues from across the country through member-led conversations supported by peer facilitators and PACT staff. These sessions offer a casual and conversation forum to share ideas, discuss common challenges, and build on successes. This year, sessions spanned a range of focus areas and expanded to include a new Peer to Peer for Multi-Hyphenate Leaders and Staff.

“These are great as a check in with others in similar roles across the country. Please keep them coming!”
— Peer to Peer Participant



LEARNING ■

Theatre Passe Muraille. A Taste of Hong Kong. Photo by Jae Yang, 2025

PACTcon 2026

Shifting Grounds ■ April 22 – 25, 2026 ■ Whitehorse, YT

"The opportunity to gather in person is so necessary to a stronger sector, and creates deep connection and partnership."

– PACTcon participant



9 Venues



47 Sessions



197
Attendees



23
Local Learners



33
Travel
Subsidies Given



16
Pitch
Party
Pitchers



PACTcon 2026. Opening & Welcome. Photo by Darragh Mondoux

CONNECTING ■ LEARNING ■

LABOUR

PACT engaged and negotiated with labour partners on behalf of Members, including ratifying a new agreement with the Associated Designers of Canada 659.



5 core negotiation team members

1 parachute team

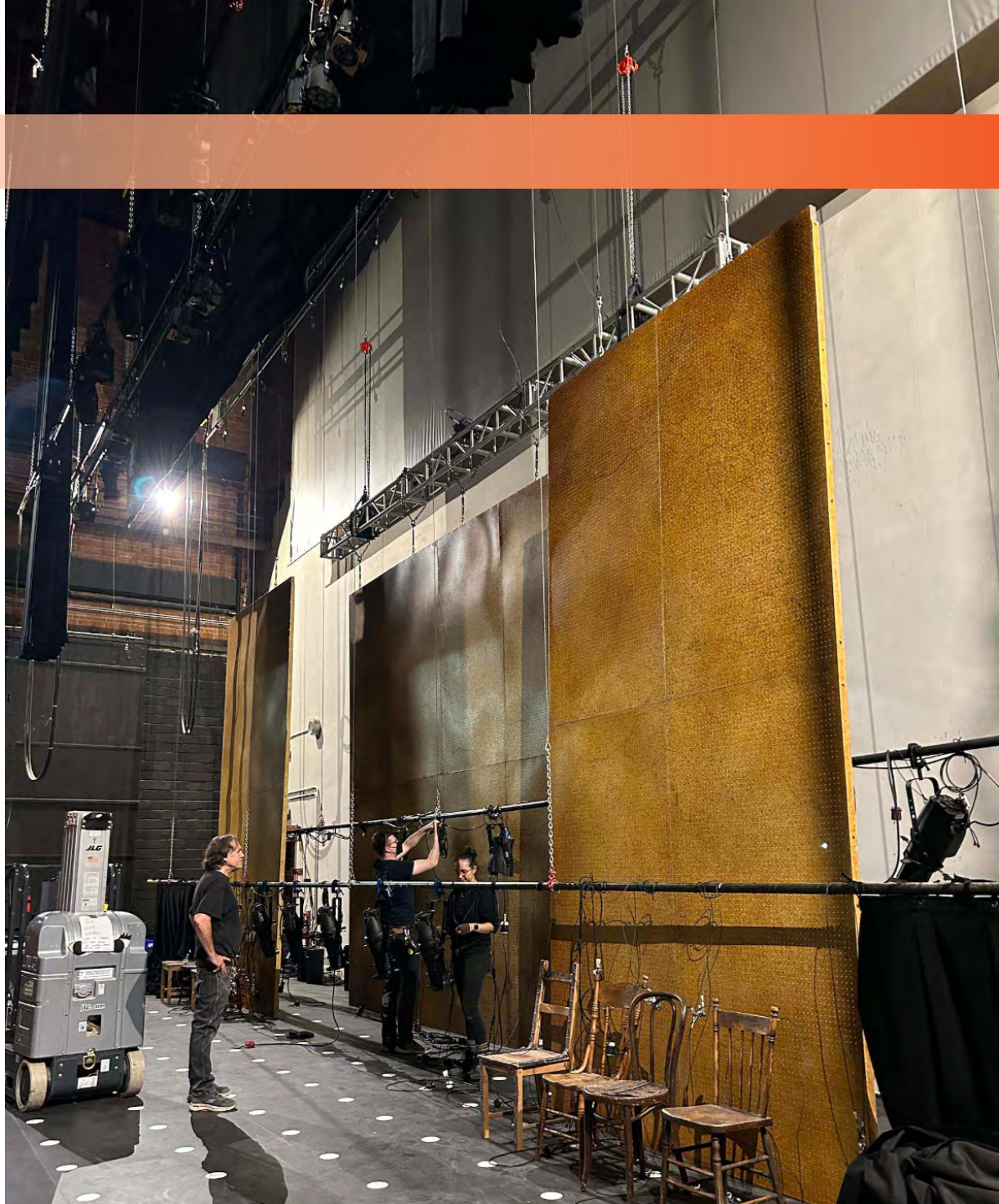


6 months of core team planning & meetings

36 hours of active negotiation



32 of 33 PACT/ADC 659 articles saw changes through negotiation



LABOUR

Catalyst Theatre. Set Install for The Invisible, 2024

NEGOTIATION INTENSIVE

Following last year's successful Negotiation Masterclass, PACT offered the Negotiation Intensive, an all-day specialized training session that offered participants a deeper understanding of negotiations. Participants explored negotiation prep, how to negotiate partnership agreements and participated in a 4-hour master class on IATSE negotiations. The Intensive gave **14 participants** hands on experience and featured seven session leaders.



ADVOCACY

We advanced advocacy efforts for funding and programs that support our sector's sustainability and growth.



2 Receptions
sponsored by PACT in Ottawa
to connect with decision makers

3 PACT Members participated
in Arts Day on the Hill



56 Meetings with
elected representatives
and decision makers



Arts Day on the Hill Delegation 2025



Arts Day on the Hill Reception: 2025

LIVE PERFORMING ARTS ACCELERATOR PROGRAM

On November 25, PACT and the Creative Industries Coalition led a day of advocacy to support the proposal for the Live Performing Arts Accelerator Program (LPAA). It was a day of robust conversations with politicians and decision makers on all sides of the aisle. It was capped off with an energetic reception featuring Alan Doyle. Thank you to MP Chi Nguyen for hosting our reception, to PAA for coordinating so many moving parts, and all the industry champions that gave of their time to participate.



PACT & Creative Industries Coalition Reception. 2025

Projected Job Creation & Impact: The LPAA is projected to generate 45,312 new job opportunities, generate \$1.47B in taxes, and inject an additional \$9.2 billion of economic activity into our communities – from coast to coast to coast - within a 3-year period.

WORLD THEATRE WEEK

In partnership with L'Association des théâtres francophones du Canada (AFTC) and the International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People Canada (ASSITEJ Canada), we celebrated World Theatre Week from March 20 with World Theatre Day for Children and Young People to World Theatre Day on March 27.

"There are forty-one million voices that can tell forty-one million stories in this nation of ours, each story no less valid or no less vital than any other. Collectively they tell our Canadian story; without them our story remains incomplete."

– Walter Borden, Canadian World Theatre Day Ambassador 2026.



1626 resource downloads



33,000+
social media accounts reached



600+ views
on YouTube of Walter's address

5 in person and online World Theatre Day events



World Theatre Day Address Behind the Scenes. Photo by Brad Lepp



Saskatchewan Association of Theatre Professionals' World Theatre Day Gala, 2025

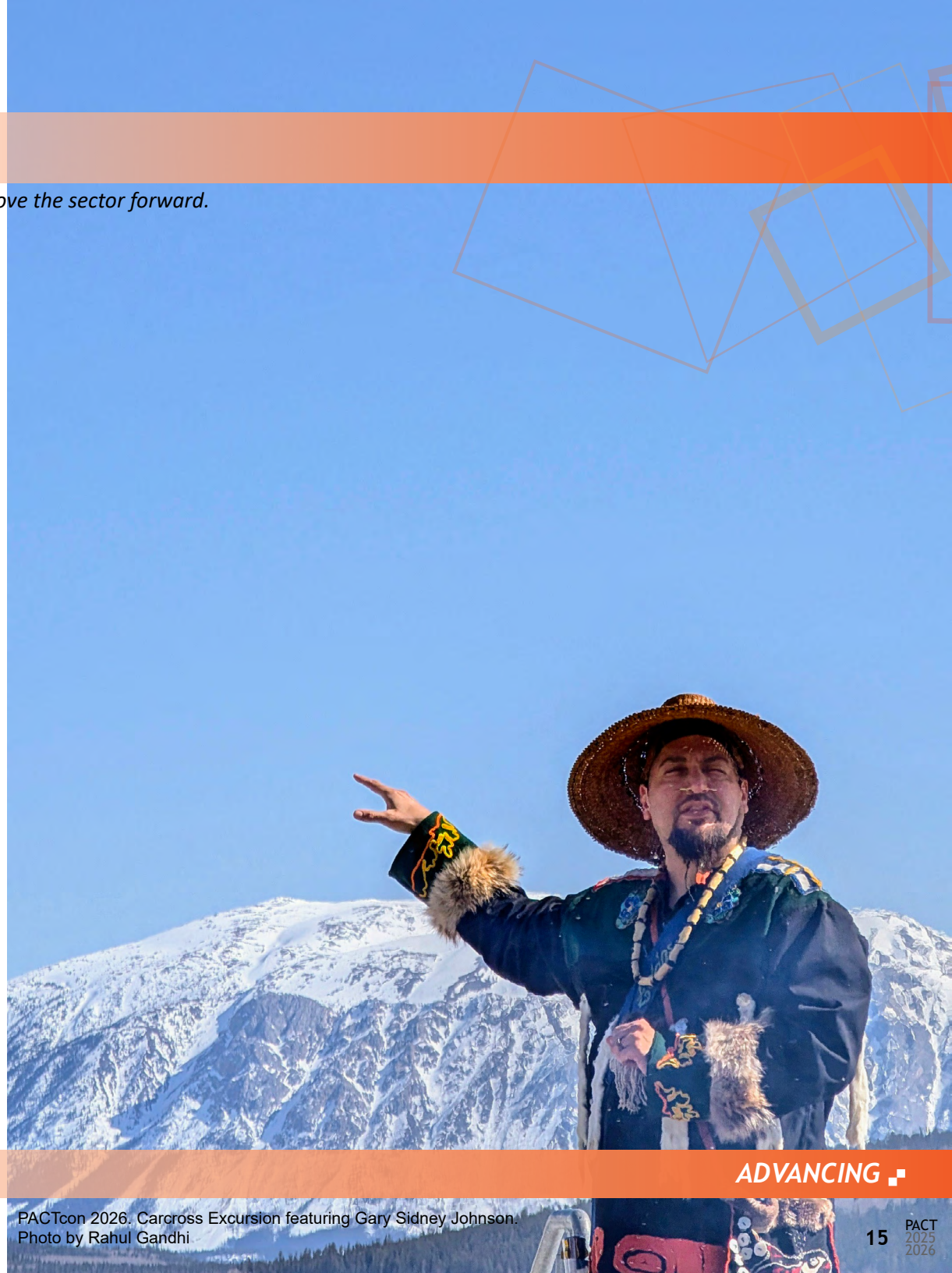
ADVOCACY ■

ADVANCING

This year, we continued to build partnerships and initiatives that move the sector forward.

PARTNERSHIPS

- Arts Boost
- Association for Opera in Canada (AOC)
- Balancing Act
- Canadian Arts Coalition
- Canadian Association for the Performing Arts / l'Association canadienne des organismes artistiques (CAPACOA)
- Canadian Institute for Theatre Technology / Institut canadien des technologies scénographiques (CITT/ICTS)
- Creative Connector
- Creative Industries Coalition
- L'Association des théâtres francophones du Canada (AFTC)
- Opera Canada
- Orchestras Canada
- Staging Better Futures
- The Black Pledge
- The International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People Canada (ASSITEJ Canada)

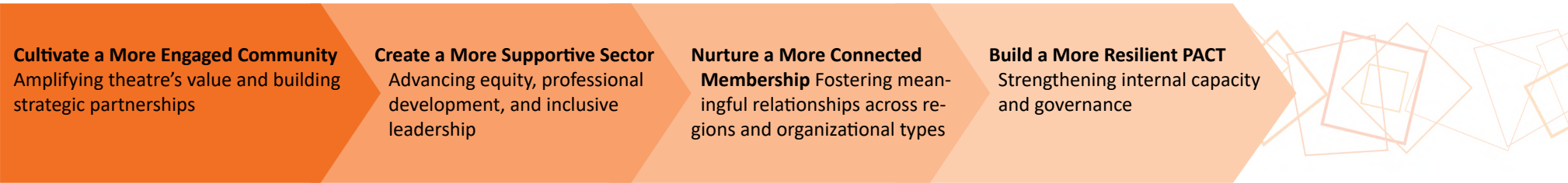


ADVANCING ■

PACTcon 2026, Carcross Excursion featuring Gary Sidney Johnson.
Photo by Rahul Gandhi

STRATEGIC PLAN

In December 2025 the PACT Membership adopted their new 2026-2029 Strategic Plan. The new plan focuses on four interconnected pillars:



PACTcon 2025. Strategic Planning. Photo by Memo Calderón

RISING TIDES

This year's cohort of Rising Tides mentees consisted of **five up-and-coming arts administrators** from Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, and British Columbia. Throughout the program, they met 1-on-1 with established senior leaders from across Canada who helped them navigate current career challenges and guide them towards their desired future paths. Alongside these personal mentoring sessions, the mentees participated in peer-to-peer and expert discussions on governance, community engagement and impact, producing, alternative company structures, and more.

"Rising Tides was a transformative experience. It reshaped the way that I think about Arts Leadership, and left me feeling incredibly empowered by the arts community across Canada."

— Ian, Rising Tides Participant



2025-2026 Rising Tides participants. Photo By Keira Ash

ADVANCING 

NATIONAL THEATRE TRAINING SUMMIT

On March 27, 2026, PACT and the Canadian Institute for Theatre Technology / Institut canadien des technologies scénographiques (CITT/ICTS) hosted a national conversation, bringing together **more than 40 education and arts leaders** from across the country, to address the current state of theatre training in Canada.

Led by facilitator Jeanne LeSage, participants explored potential solutions and pathways forward, with a focus on sustaining programs, strengthening internal and external advocacy efforts for arts education, and engagement strategies that begin earlier in high school. Participants committed to continuing the dialogue and working together.

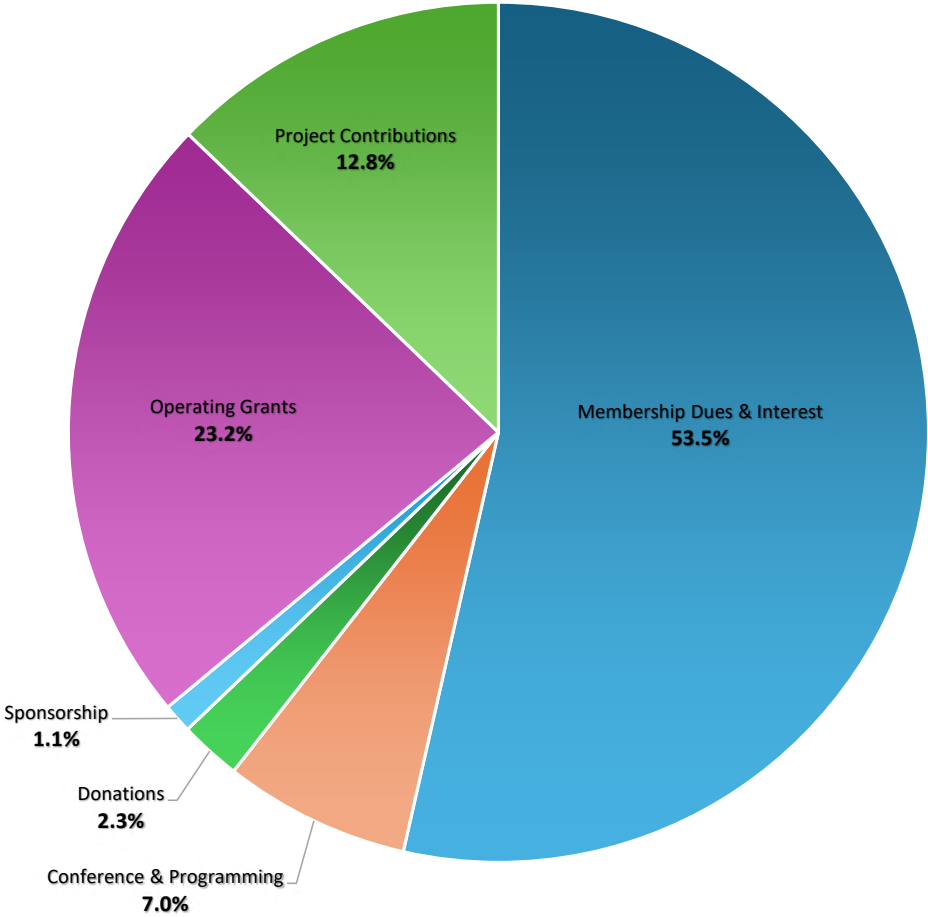


THE ACCESS PLAYBOOK WITH CREATIVE CONNECTOR

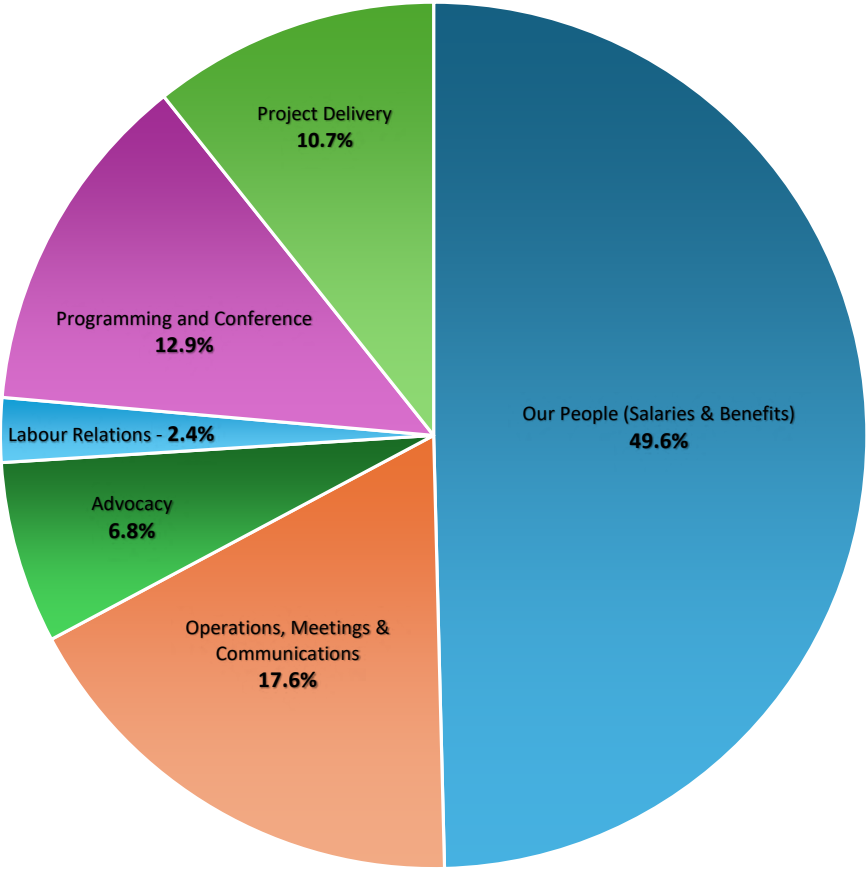
PACT supported **five organizations with a 75% subsidy** to participate in the Access Playbook with Creative Connector. This foundational disability-led program helps arts presenters and organizations working to increase the representation of Deaf and Disabled artists on their stages.

FINANCE

PACT REVENUE



PACT EXPENSES



OUR TEAM



PACT Staff at PACTcon 2026



PACT Board at PACTcon 2026

STAFF

- Brad Lepp – Executive Director
- Ainslee Jessiman – Membership & Communications Manager
- Alison Peddie, CHRP – Labour & Employment Relations Manager
- Patricia Cerra – Program Manager
- Panthea Vatandoost – Program Associate
- Andrea Demars – Program Coordinator, Rising Tides
- Darragh Mondoux – Communications & Membership Associate
- Matthew Rhodes – Labour Relations Associate

BOARD

- Kathryn Westoll (Geordie Theatre) – President
- Sarah Kitz (Great Canadian Theatre Company) – Vice President
- Nine-Lee Aquino (National Arts Centre, English Theatre) – Co-Past President, Co-Chair Governance & Nominating
- Michael Payette (Tarragon Theatre) – Co-Past President, Co-Chair Governance & Nominating
- Evan Klassen (Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre) – Treasurer
- Breanne Harmon (Vertigo Theatre) – Advocacy
- Rahul Gandhi (Quebec Drama Federation) – Advocacy
- Alex Currie (Theatre Calgary) – Caucus Advisory
- Laura Caswell (Stephenville Theatre Festival) – Environmental Stewardship
- Pragna Desai (Shaw Festival) – Health & Safety
- Shannon Maung (Green Thumb Theatre) – Health & Safety
- Danny Everson (Mermaid Theatre of Nova Scotia) – Human Resources
- Kevin Matthew Wong (Why Not Theatre) – International Relations
- Lisa Li (Tarragon Theatre) – Labour Relations
- Pat Rundell (Kaleidoscope Theatre for Young People) – Membership & Engagement
- Marnie Hamagami (Theatre NorthWest) – Regional Advisory

REGION & CAUCUS REPS

Celebrating our new, continuing and departing reps for all their work this past year.

REGION REPS

- Amy Cornish (Urban Ink) – Region 1: BC
- Fabian Aspell Morales (Urban Ink) – Region 1: BC
- Mark DuMez (Chemainus Theatre Festival) – Region 1: BC
- Matt Eger (Western Canada Theatre) – Region 1: BC
- Melanie Yeats (Playwrights Theatre Centre) – Region 1: BC
- Morgan Benedict (Western Canada Theatre) – Region 1: BC
- Tracy Carroll (Catalyst Theatre) – Region 2 North: Edmonton and surrounding area, YT, NT & NU
- Megan Jovie (Alberta Theatre Projects) – Region 2 South: Calgary & southern AB
- Patti Niece (Lunchbox Theatre) – Region 2 South: Calgary & southern AB
- Dan Petrenko (Winnipeg Jewish Theatre) – Region 3: SK & MB
- Jacqueline Harding (Rainbow Stage Theatre) – Region 3: SK & MB
- Brett Christopher (Thousand Islands Playhouse) – Region 4: ON outside of Toronto
- Michelle Yagi (National Arts Centre - Indigenous Theatre) – Region 4: ON outside of Toronto
- Aidan Morishita-Miki (Buddies in Bad Times) – Region 5: Toronto
- Laura McCallum (Outside the March) – Region 5: Toronto
- Mark Aikman (Factory Theatre) – Region 5: Toronto
- Gabriela Saltiel (Segal Centre for the Performing Arts) – Region 6: QC
- Ken Schwartz (Two Planks and a Passion) – Region 7: NB, NS & PE
- Santiago Guzmán (Playwrights Atlantic Resource Centre) – Region 7: NB, NS & PE
- James Richardson (Artistic Fraud of Newfoundland) – Region 8: NL

CAUCUS REPS

- Jeremy Smith (Driftwood Theatre) – Affiliates & Non-Members
- Maria Zarillo (Rumble Theatre) – Affiliates & Non-Members
- Alex Currie (Theatre Calgary) – Category A
- Bridget Norris-Jones (Citadel Theatre) – Category A
- Gideon Arthurs (Soulpepper Theatre) – Category A
- Heather Lewis (Neptune Theatre) – Category A
- Jessie van Rijn (Citadel Theatre) – Category A
- Jonathan Hepner (Soulpepper Theatres) – Category A
- Kimberlee Stadelman (Neptune Theatre) – Category A
- Maya Choldin (Theatre Calgary) – Category A
- Angelica Schwartz (Newworld Theatre) – Creator Centric Companies
- Gloria Mok (Nightswimming) – Creator Centric Companies
- Jay Dodge (Boca del Lupo) – Creator Centric Companies
- Cheyenne Scott (Independent) - Indigenous
- Brit Johnston (National Arts Centre - Indigenous Theatre) – Indigenous
- Indrit Kasapi (Theatre Passe Muraille) – New Works Architects
- Lara Lewis (Playwrights Atlantic Resource Centre) – New Works Architects
- Mélanie Dubois (Tapestry Opera) – New Works Architects
- Barbara Tomasic (Gateway Theatre) – Regional Theatre
- Caitlin Fysh (Gateway Theatre) – Regional Theatre
- Kristen Leboeuf (County Stage Theatre) – Rural Theatre
- Emily Oriold (The Foster Festival) – Summer Theatre
- Kate Smith (a Company of Fools) – Summer Theatre
- Tyler Seguin (Guild Festival Theatre) – Summer Theatre
- Annie Slade (Carousel Players) – Theatre for Young Audiences
- Dave Deveau (Carousel Theatre for Young People) – Theatre for Young Audiences
- Randi Edmundson (Project X Theatre) – Theatre for Young Audiences
- Sehar Bhojani (Young People's Theatre) – Theatre for Young Audiences

THANK YOU!

*A huge thank you to our funders, partners, and donors for their generous contributions throughout the year.
We couldn't do it without you!*

GOVERNMENT FUNDERS



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Soulpepper Theatre Company
Stratford Festival
Tarragon Theatre
Theatre Alberta
Theatre Calgary
The Grand Theatre
Vertigo Theatre
Young People's Theatre



THANK YOU!

PRODUCTION PHOTO CREDITS

Page 1 ■ MT Space. Fecha Limite (Expiration Date). Produced by Sankofa Danzafro, presented at IMPACT 25. Choreographer: Rafael Palacios, Lighting Designer: Álvaro Tobón, Costume Designer: Diana Echandía. Artists Pictured (from left to right): Marieris Mosquera Batista, Yndira Perea Cuesta, Piter Alexander Angulo Moreno. Photo by: Only1AndyWrightPhoto by Only1AndyWright, 2025.

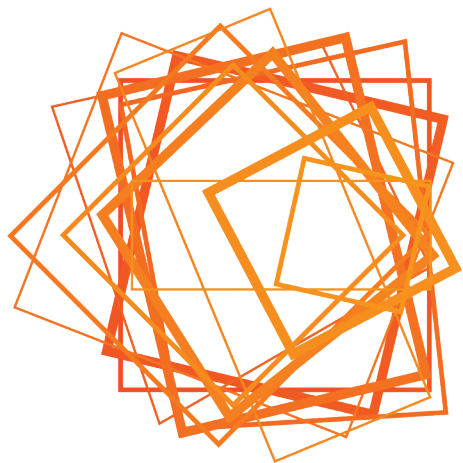
Page 5 ■ Gateway Theatre. Lionel Bart's Oliver!. Director: Josh Epstein, Music Director: Sean Bayntun, Choreographer: Nicol Spinola, Set & Props Designer: Ryan Cormack, Lighting Designer: Sophie Tang, Costume Designer: Donnie Tejani, Intimacy Director: Lisa Goebel, Co-Fight Directors: Mike Kovac & Sylvie La Riviere. Artists Pictured: Lucas Gregory, Grayson Besworth, Allison Leia Wall, Quinlan McDonald, Mana Nakamura, Aldryn Saplala, Anthony Santiago, Ashley Chung, Rickie Wang, Joya Bevacqua, Elle Hanson, Helena Ayas, Mela Pietropaolo, Danica Kobayashi Powel Nobert. Photo by David Cooper, 2024-2025.

Page 8 ■ A co-production by Pi Theatre and fu-GEN Asian Canadian Theatre in association with vAct, presented by Theatre Passe Muraille. A Taste of Hong Kong. Director: Richard Wolfe, Video Designer: Andie Lloyd, Lighting Designer: Sophie Tang, Set Designer: Jergus Oprsal. Artist Pictured: Derke Chan. Photo by Jae Yang, 2025.

Page 10 ■ Catalyst Theatre. The Invisible. Set installation. 2024.

Page 18 ■ Artistic Fraud of Newfoundland. I Forgive You. Director: Jillian Keiley, Set & Costume Designer: Alison Helmer, Sound Designer: Don Ellis, Lighting Designer: Bonnie Beecher, Musical Director: Kellie Walsh, Ottawa Music Director: Robert Fillion. Photo by Fred Cattroll, 2023.

Page 23 ■ Drayton Entertainment. Crazy for You. Director & Choreographer: Michael Lichtefeld, Set Designer: Doug Paraschuck, Costume Designer: Rachel Berchtold, Lighting Designer: Jeff JohnstonCollins, Stage Manager: Paul Pembleton, Assistant Stage Managers: Grace Batten & Nadene Riehl. 2025.



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