

## **Ipsos Reid & CCCO research reveals significant findings on professional development in Ontario's cultural sector**

### **First-ever research documents cultural sector's extensive self-employment, need for business skills, and gaps in investment in professional development**

March 31, 2008, FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Cultural Careers Council Ontario (CCCO) and Ipsos Reid announced the results of an important research study, *Enriching Our Work in Culture: Professional Development in Ontario's Cultural Sector*. The qualitative and quantitative studies, as well as an executive summary, are downloadable from CCCO's website [www.workinculture.ca](http://www.workinculture.ca).

The research presentation was held on March 31<sup>st</sup> at the Ontario Heritage Centre in Toronto. At the well-attended event, which attracted interest from all areas of Ontario's cultural community, CCCO president Micheline McKay hailed the research as the first to document the realities of working in culture. Ms. McKay said that culture is a vibrant sector contributing \$1700 in economic return for every resident of Ontario. She stressed the need to invest in professional development "to ensure that people employed by the cultural sector have the skills, opportunities and resources they need."

*Enriching Our Work in Culture* is a multi-disciplinary study focusing on professional development in Ontario's cultural sector. The comprehensive survey represents a wide spectrum of employment in the sector, including self-employed individual artists and contract workers, as well as people working full-time or part-time in cultural organizations.

Key findings from *Enriching Our Work in Culture: Professional Development in Ontario's Cultural Sector* include:

- Extensive self-employment in the cultural sector; 79% of professional artists in Ontario are self-employed or sole proprietors
- Artists have high levels of education and low levels of pay: 66% have university degrees (compared to 19% of Ontario adults overall); 49% make less than \$20,000 a year from their artistic practice
- Artists want more business skills such as marketing and promotion, contracts and negotiating, proposal and grant writing
- 62% of arts organizations in Ontario have 4 or fewer full-time employees
- In the past year, cultural organizations spent an average of \$43 per worker on professional development (in contrast, the Conference Board figures show that in 2005 Canadian business invested \$914 per worker)
- More than 80% of artists feel that professional development benefits career advancement, creativity and income growth; more than 84% participated in professional development (compared to 35% of Ontario's workforce overall); artists usually pay for their own professional development
- Data on financial investment in professional development by both individual artists and cultural organizations is also included in the study

In response to the research findings, participants at the event on March 31<sup>st</sup> provided feedback and recommendations for next steps. Many of these recommendations echoed those already made by CCCO's board of directors and the research steering committee, including:

- CCCO to encourage cultural organizations and artists to budget for professional development (recommended target 1% of annual fees and salaries)
- CCCO to communicate results of research and continue cross-sectoral initiatives in business skills in collaboration with existing professional development providers
- CCCO to create a network of like-minded organizations in Ontario, Canada and internationally to explore and share research and best practices

#### BACKGROUND

In June 2007 CCCO commissioned Ipsos Reid, the internationally acclaimed market research firm, to undertake an investigation of the professional development practices in Ontario's cultural sector, exploring attitudes and perceptions as well as financial investment. The survey involved both qualitative and quantitative research; the qualitative (a literature search and selected interviews) looked at themes and trends in professional development in arts organizations in and outside of Ontario and Canada; the quantitative (an online questionnaire and telephone survey) surveyed Ontario artists and arts organizations about individual and organizational professional development practices and spending.

The research *Enriching Our Work in Culture: Professional Development in Ontario's Cultural Sector* was an Employment Ontario project funded in part by the Government of Canada.

#### ABOUT CCCO

Cultural Careers Council Ontario (CCCO) supports work in culture through HR and professional development programs, resources and its website [www.workinculture.ca](http://www.workinculture.ca). Past and present CCCO programs include a widely used job board, the Income Managers Program, downloadable HR Tips and publications, business of art courses for self-employed artists, annual HR Swap Meets, peer learning programs for cultural sector leaders and 'train-the-trainer' workshops.

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