



BUSINESS PLAN

For the Fiscal Year Ending March 31,
2025

McMichael

CANADIAN ART COLLECTION D'ART CANADIEN

An Agency of the Government of Ontario
Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

FISCAL 2025 BUSINESS PLAN

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Note: This report was prepared in accordance with the Ontario Government Management Board Secretariat Guide to Developing Business Plans for Provincial Agencies, June 2016, revised September 2019.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The McMichael is uniquely positioned in the Canadian art world for its touring exhibitions and the Cape Dorset archive digitization, making a very significant contribution from an Ontario provincial agency.

We are bringing art to people in important and inventive ways:

- As the plans for our curatorial program demonstrate, **touring of exhibitions** is solidly built into our business plan, and will continue to be a major source of new revenue. It is anticipated that this will contribute \$1.4M to the bottom line in Fiscal 2025. *Early Days: Indigenous Art from the McMichael*, highlighting historic and contemporary works from our collection, will be touring to three different museums in the US and to the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec (MNBAQ), garnering the lion's share of fees at \$450,000. The McMichael produces more travelling exhibitions than other major galleries combined. Our tours bring art to galleries not only in major centres, but also to more remote communities in the north, serving all Ontarians. The publications accompanying the exhibitions are extremely well received by the galleries and visitors. Moreover, our touring in the US helps to promote Ontario broadly.
- Digitization of the Cape Dorset archive is now complete, and the works can be found on our website portal **iningat Ilagit: a place for family** ᐃᐅᐅᐅ ᐃᐅᐅᐅ. This is a significant cause for celebration after 30 years of our holding the work in trust, in our vaults. In Fiscal 2025, a major Inuit-lead touring exhibition and multi-authored publication will be devoted to these rare and important drawings, under the leadership of our new Associate Curator, Indigenous Art and Culture.

We are highlighting two key initiatives for Fiscal 2025:

- We are working with the federal and provincial governments, along with donors to secure the necessary funding for the proposed capital renewal project. In Fiscal 2024 detailed plans for capital renewal were developed with our architects Harari Pontarini Architects (HPA) in order to upgrade them from the Class D to Class B costing. That level of detail was necessitated by our application for federal funding support from the Green and Inclusive Community Building program at Infrastructure Canada. We are currently awaiting the results of that application. **This support is crucial if we are to fully reap the benefits of the investment we have made in our curatorial and education programs.**
- After signing an **MOU with the City of Vaughan and Vaughan International Film Festival** in Fiscal 2024, we look forward in Fiscal 2025 to participating in the implementation of a Creative Industries strategy, playing our part as a community hub and a centre of excellence for culture in Vaughan.

Visitorship

- While Covid is now a permanent feature of our health and economic landscape, its impact on attendance and related revenues is now minimal; visitorship has rebounded to pre-pandemic levels. We have been cautiously optimistic about visitorship levels in Fiscal 2025. However, it is difficult to predict the popularity of the main summer exhibition *Impressionism on the St Lawrence*, so we will be stepping up our fundraising efforts to support this exhibition.
- We also need to take note of the increased visitorship made possible through our touring exhibitions, which brings the McMichael brand to people across North America. For example, *Uninvited: Canadian Women Artists in the Modern Moment* reached more than 250,000 visitors during its trans-Canada tour.
- **Family Sundays** continue to be a major success, with recent attendance cresting 1250 visitors. These programs for children and families are enthusiastically received, and we are pleased that the day attracts not just a younger and more diverse demographic, but also more local families.
- Another boost to our visitor numbers in Fiscal 2024 was the **Art Bus**, which was generously sponsored by a private philanthropist. We do not have the capacity to continue the Art Bus without a sponsor, which we are seeking for Fiscal 2025.

Marketing and Presence

- Marketing and Communications has delivered nuanced and targeted advertising across multiple channels in Fiscal 2024 to serve the needs of the curatorial offerings, fundraising, sales and Creative Learning. Those efforts will continue in Fiscal 2025, as we strive to reach the diversity of audiences represented by our exhibition program and acquisitions. Marketing campaigns draw audiences to the unique selling proposition of the extensive grounds and trails and the corresponding physical, cognitive and mental health benefits of spending time outdoors and viewing art. We also hope to finally complete the (again) deferred **Brand and Website Refresh**, which is essential to our continued success.
- Another innovative source of new revenue is our hosting of the **VIP Opening Night at Art Toronto**. Our business analysis identified this as a potential success, and it has proven to be the case, with profitability of \$230,000 in the first year of our hosting. We have contracted with Art Toronto to be the beneficiary of Opening Night again in 2025. Art Toronto builds our presence in Toronto, and with the art community across Canada, while also garnering much needed revenue.

Exhibitions

- The representation of the **diversity of Canadian art** continues to be a hallmark of the Exhibition Program. From *Cobalt*, to *Moridge Kitenge Banza: Topographies*, to *From the Watershed: The Photographs of John MacFie*, *Impressionism on the St. Lawrence*, and *Ghosts of Canoe Lake: New Work by Marcel Dzama*, our exhibitions will reflect on and speak to one another about our various Canadian and Indigenous identities. A series of publications will accompany our exhibitions, which is also key to our touring program.

Diversity, Accessibility and Sustainability

- **Diversity** is also a focus for visitor services, as we look to implement the recommendations of the Better Your Business Tourism Diversity Strategic Plan and update our accessibility plan.
- The Creative Learning department is responding to numerous issues, such as **children and youth and mental health, adult wellness and social issues, equity and inclusion, as well as social justice and environmentalism**. Two specific areas of focus are addressing the need for quality art education in struggling neighbourhoods through the expansion of our V.O.I.C.E.S. program and deepening our engagement with Indigenous communities through our curatorial initiatives and our planning for our site.
- A key development in our operations is the creation of an environmental '**Sustainability Policy and Plan**' in Fiscal 2024, covering the building, the landscape and our operations. A working group will be established this year to identify implementation for Fiscal 2025 within the parameters of our current infrastructure.
- In a related initiative, we are engaged in an **Indigenous Visioning** exercise to inform our landscape management plan as it relates to the proposed capital plan, and most importantly, to create resiliency in the face of climate change. Led by Elder Shelley Charles, we will continue the development of the plan with a group of engaged internal and external stakeholders.
- Fiscal 2024 saw the appointment of an **Associate Curator, Indigenous Art and Culture** to meet our growing presentation of Indigenous content and commitment to the tenets of Truth and Reconciliation. We will also focus on **succession planning** across all levels
- We have completed a seamless transition from the retirement of the Executive Director to the promotion of the Chief Curator to this role. Our Leadership team is equally strong and will be fortified with the new appointment of a Deputy Chief Curator.
- We continue to maintain fiscal responsibility by reducing the deficit projection for Fiscal 2025. With the recruitment of an Executive Director for the McMichael Canadian Art Foundation, we are augmenting our revenue generation expertise and professionalism of staff.

FISCAL 2024: A YEAR IN REVIEW

Here are the key achievements and activities for Fiscal 2024:

- Visitation has returned to pre-pandemic levels, while savings and successful fundraising have allowed us to present a \$450K reduction against the projected deficit in this financial year.
- Capital plans have been developed by HPA to a Class B estimate level. An inspiring ‘fly-through’ video has been prepared which will be an invaluable tool as we move into serious fundraising campaign mode in Fiscal 2025.
- Approximately \$10 million has been committed towards the Capital Campaign in private fundraising.
- The exhibition program included exhibitions by two BIPOC women artists: Rajni Perera and Meryl McMaster. Both shows joined the rota of touring exhibitions currently travelling across the country, as did the beautiful show of the work by Tahltan Tlingit artist Dempsey Bob.
- The blockbuster show of the year was undoubtedly *Tom Thomson: North Star*, which will tour onwards to Edmonton and the Audain Museum in Whistler in Fiscal 2025. Exhibitions dealing with the broader topic of environmental crisis were held simultaneously at the McMichael: Sandra Meigs and *Uses of Enchantment*, featuring six contemporary artists.
- As the McMichael touring exhibition *Uninvited* closed at its final venue at the National Gallery of Canada, it had been seen by approximately 250,000 people across its various venues in Canada.
- All of these exhibitions were accompanied by major catalogues.
- *Early Days*, featuring Indigenous works from the McMichael collection, opened in September 2023 to acclaim at the Heard Museum, Phoenix, Arizona, at the start of its American tour. The massive and important publication, edited by Anishinaabe artist Bonnie Devine, with 68 contributions largely from Indigenous writers, has hit the bookshops in time for the holiday season.
- One of the most important achievements of the past decade at the McMichael has finally been delivered, viz. the successful digitization of the complete archive of 89,000 original Inuit drawings from the Kinngait (Cape Dorset) collection, belonging to the West Baffin Eskimo Co-operative and held in trust here at the McMichael. As of November 2023, this entire archive has been made available to the public via our website portal Iningat Ilagit: a place for family, with a special low band version for northern users.
- An Indigenous Visioning Group was convened, led by Elder Shelley Charles, to focus on plans for the McMichael landscape.
- Thanks to generous sponsorship by a private philanthropist, the gallery was able to run an ArtBus from Toronto on three days – Friday, Saturday and Sunday – from June to

November of 2023. The bus set off from St George subway station, stopping at Vaughan Metropolitan Centre subway station, en route to the McMichael.

- Free Family Sundays have continued to be a triumphant success, attracting hundreds of new visitors to the Gallery every month, and inviting in a younger and more diverse audience.
- An MOU with the City of Vaughan and the Vaughan Film Festival was signed in the presence of several local MPS and the city's Mayor, the Hon. Steven del Duca.
- Over 200 new works were acquired for the Gallery in Fiscal 2024 as of December 2023.
- An Executive Director for the McMichael Canadian Art Foundation was appointed.
- Ian Dejardin retired on October 27th after nearly seven years as Executive Director. Sarah Milroy has been appointed to succeed him as Chief Executive and Chief Curator.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS: Response to Letter of Direction

In response to the Letter of Direction from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, here are highlighted some of our key strategic directions from the Fiscal 2025 business plan:

General Directives

1. Competitiveness, Sustainability and Expenditure Management

- Operating within the agency's financial allocations
- Identifying and pursuing opportunities for revenue generation, efficiencies and savings through innovative practices, and/or improved program sustainability
- Complying with applicable direction related to accounting practices and supply chain centralization, including leveraging Supply Ontario's bulk purchasing arrangement and working with Supply Ontario on strategic procurement initiatives
- Complying with realty interim measures for agency office space
- Leverage and meet benchmarked outcomes for compensation strategies and directives

Response

The budget that has been developed for Fiscal 2025 continues to reflect the McMichael's desire to operate as best it can within its financial allocations, with total expenditures decreasing compared to the prior year budget, despite the cost pressures present in the macro-economic environment.

The McMichael continues to be innovative and resourceful in endeavoring to diversify, expand, and maximize its self-generating revenue activities by focusing on the customer experience and optimizing pricing, engaging in all manner of fundraising, and producing exhibitions to be toured to venues across Canada for fees. Despite ongoing efforts to ensure all aspects of operations are efficient, cost-conscious, and sustainable, a deficit will still be recorded, albeit a smaller one compared to the prior year budget. A notable highlight of the budget is that the contributed revenue is projected to be approximate to the Provincial annual operating grant. Moreover, self-generated revenues are once again expected to increase and account for a greater percentage of overall revenues compared to the prior year budget. It is clear to us, though, that we could do so much more if the physical limitations of the current gallery facility did not preclude our ability to do so.

Fundraising events will continue to be anchored by the Moonlight Gala in the spring and Art Toronto Opening Night in the fall, with a moderate increase in the amount expected to be raised coming off a record amount in Fiscal 2024.

For corporate rentals, weddings, and other in-person events, we project revenue to remain

robust after what is shaping up to be another strong year in Fiscal 2024.

We have been working closely with Supply Ontario to ensure that our procurement is in line with provincial directives and will be following the direction for Bill 69 and ensuing legislation as it applies to our realty. Our compensation strategies are documented in this Business Plan.

2. Transparency and Accountability

- Abiding by applicable government directives and policies and ensuring transparency and accountability in reporting
- Adhering to accounting standards and practices, and responding to audit findings, where applicable
- Identifying appropriate skills, knowledge and experience needed to effectively support the board's role in agency governance and accountability, and providing the Minister with annual skills matrices to ensure boards have qualified appointees
- Reviewing and updating agency KPIs annually to ensure efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability

Response

We work closely with the Ministry staff to ensure that we abide by all government directives and polices and adhere to accounting standards and practices. We are committed to continuing to implement the recommendations of the Auditor General.

The Board of Trustees has developed an annual skills matrix to guide their recruitment.

In discussion with the Ministry, two new performance indicators have been added:

- Total number of school visits and total number of free school visits offered
- Total number of touring exhibitions and total number of visitors to our exhibitions offsite

3. Risk Management

- Developing and implementing an effective process for the identification, assessment and mitigation of agency risks, including cyber security, and any future emergency risks

Response

We use the risk register tool provided to us by the Ministry, which is updated quarterly. We also proactively identify risks that need to be added to the register, such as increasing risk from climate change in the form of fire, lighting strikes, and other potential environmental disasters. A lighting strike that affected our fire detection and security cameras in Fiscal 2024 is a clear

indication of the need to prepare for these increasingly concerning impacts.

In terms of financial risk, in order to achieve the budgeted deficit of just shy of \$0.6 million in Fiscal 2025, maintaining revenue from all aspects of Development activity at \$3.4 million is necessary. This represents a major risk, as the McMichael Foundation does not have sufficient financial reserves to fully guarantee this result and economic headwinds could impact the amount of support it receives.

Enhanced Development activity is dependent on continued support for the McMichael's strategic vision and buy-in to the capital renewal project. It also assumes the absence of "donor fatigue" and a continuation of financial stability for the corporate sector and individual donors despite anticipated subdued economic growth and potential investment market declines.

A focus on major gifts and building the pipeline for leadership level gifts will be the priority, and diversifying the contributed revenue stream amongst major gifts, corporate support, mid-level annual giving and patron circles, and membership.

Following on the major IT network upgrade work undertaken in Fiscal 2023 and 2024, we are ready to acquire cybersecurity insurance; this will be implemented in either late Fiscal 2024 or early Fiscal 2025.

4. Workforce/Labour Management

- Optimizing your organizational capacity to support the best possible public service delivery, including redeploying resources to priority areas, where needed
- Supporting the implementation of the Community Jobs Initiative (CJI) by identifying opportunities to relocate new or existing agencies to lower cost communities across Ontario (as per MBC Realty Directive, s. 5.4), as applicable
- Aligning Human Resource and Accommodations strategies with OPS directives and policy
- Adhering to TB/MBC labour and bargaining mandates
- Prudently and efficiently managing operational funding and workforce size

Response

We do not have a unionized workforce; nor does the CJI apply to our situation. However, staffing levels have been slightly reduced through reorganization of roles to prudently and efficiently manage operational funding and workforce size. Resources are being maintained in priority areas to ensure we do not jeopardize the positive momentum of our ambitious and far-reaching exhibitions, expanding collection, and significant publications.

Ongoing investment is required in human resources for retention in order to maintain current staffing levels and expertise. Some of this investment is statutory in the form of minimum wage increases. The budgeted increase in salaries, wages, and benefits costs is a moderate 3.5%, reflecting anticipated statutory minimum wage increases and related effects, escalation in the cost of providing employee benefits, and modest performance related salary increases.

5. Diversity and Inclusion

- Developing and encouraging diversity and inclusion initiatives by promoting an equitable, inclusive, accessible, anti-racist and diverse workplace
- Adopting an inclusion engagement process to ensure all voices are heard to inform policies and decision-making

Response

Our IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility) Committee continues to engage with the different teams at the gallery to look for opportunities for improvements in these areas and ensure all voices are heard. We will also seek to implement the recommendations of the *Better Your Business: Tourism Diversity Strategic Plan*, which was completed for us through Tourism Vaughan.

6. Data Collection, Sharing and Use

- Improving how the agency uses data in decision-making, information sharing and reporting, to inform outcome-based reporting and improve service delivery
- Increasing data sharing with Supply Ontario when applicable regarding procurement spending and planning, contract arrangements and vendor relations to support data-driven decision-making

Response

We continue to seek to use data effectively in marketing, retail, exhibitions, education, and visitor services to enable us to make informed decisions in these areas. For example, the Creative Learning department is producing reports with better collection of information from teachers about specific programs, enabling them to identify what enhancements or changes are required.

7. Digital Delivery and Customer Service

- Exploring and implementing digitization for online service delivery to ensure customer service standards are met

- Using a variety of approaches or tools to ensure service delivery in all situations

Response

We continue to provide classes, webinars, information and other services online for the general public, art students, schools and others. We have completed our transition to the ATMS system, and in Fiscal 2025 will be able to fully implement our room and school bookings on this integrated system along with admissions.

Specific to the McMichael:

1. Showcase Canadian and Indigenous art and increase access to the museum's collection in the gallery and through touring exhibitions.

Response

As the plans for Fiscal 2025 in this Business Plan illustrate, this is the core of what we do and are planning to do. The variety of exhibitions planned reflects our ambition to represent all of Canadian art, from historic to contemporary, from landscape to abstract, and inclusive of the diversity of Canadian voices and regions.

2. Continue to prioritize financial sustainability, including strategies that increase self-generated revenue.

Response

Touring exhibitions have been an important new source of revenue, and that trend continues in Fiscal 2025. In addition, the success of our sponsorship of Art Toronto has added another exciting fundraising event to our annual calendar that also enhances our presence and reputation.

The publications accompanying the exhibitions have also enhanced our presence in the Canadian art world and beyond. The completion of the digitization of the Cape Dorset Archive, which is being shared through the *Iningit Ilagiiit* website, is another opportunity to showcase not only the work held at the McMichael, but also our collaborative approach with other organizations and the Inuit community.

3. Continue to work with the Ministry to advance efforts related to capital repair and rehabilitation.

Response

We are truly appreciative of the Ministry's support for capital repair and rehabilitation. This support has ensured that the gallery can continue to operate, despite the aging infrastructure.

While major systemic problems persist, we have been able to ensure that the art and visitors are safe in the meanwhile before capital renewal can be undertaken. The improvement to the asset management system undertaken by the Ministry is an important tool for assessing and identifying the costs of capital work required.

4. Collaborate with industry stakeholders and other agencies and attractions to promote the growth of the tourism industry in Ontario.

Response

The McMichael participates in a wide network of other agencies and attractions, particularly in the City of Vaughan. Our MOU with them and the Vaughan International Film Festival holds exciting possibilities as we work together on a Creative Industries economic focus, and serve as an anchor for a cultural corridor along Islington Ave. This partnership will grow our presence and reputation in Vaughan, as our Free Family Sundays has been doing as well in attracting diverse local audiences. A transit solution in collaboration with Metrolinx is also under consideration, which will have a significant impact on our ability to attract younger audiences.

We are excited by the Impact of our initiatives for the people of Ontario, and the ways in which our strategies in this Business Plan demonstrate how we are claiming a leading place in the Canadian art landscape.

MANDATE, MISSION AND VISION

McMichael Legislative Mandate

The McMichael Canadian Art Collection is an agency of the Province of Ontario, an operational enterprise agency of the Government of Ontario. The governing legislation is the McMichael Canadian Art Collection Act, R.S.O. 1990, C.M. 4 as amended from time to time. The most recent amendment of the Act received Royal Assent on June 1, 2011.

In the language of the McMichael Canadian Art Collection Amendment Act, 2011, the acquisition and exhibition mandate of the McMichael is to:

- Acquire and preserve art works, objects and related documentary materials for the collection, by or about artists who have made or are contributing to the development of Canadian art, with a focus on the Group of Seven and their contemporaries and on the Indigenous peoples of Canada; and,
- Exhibit art works, objects and documentary materials, including but not limited to the collection.

The objectives of the McMichael are to:

- Acquire works of art, objects and documentary material for the collection
- Preserve and exhibit the collection
- Conduct research on and provide documentation for the collection
- Stimulate interest in the collection
- Conduct activities to enhance and complement the collection
- Hold, maintain and use the land described in the Schedule to the McMichael Canadian Art Collection Act

A Board of Trustees, appointed according to the Act, oversees the affairs of the corporation. The Board reports to the Legislature through the Minister of Heritage, Sport, Culture and Tourism Industries.

Mission

To interpret and promote Canadian and Indigenous art to attract local, national and international audiences.

Vision

To be recognized as an extraordinary place to visit and explore Canadian culture and identity.

The McMichael Canadian Art Collection is Canada's only museum devoted to the art of

Canada, in all its manifestations. Founded by Robert and Signe McMichael in 1966, we house the premier collection of the Group of Seven and their contemporaries, with rich holdings by great Canadian artists up to the present day. From the outset, the McMichael has held a leading collection of First Nations and Inuit art, and is also the repository of approximately 90,000 Inuit drawings from the collections of the West Baffin Eskimo Co-op.

STRATEGIC PLAN

The McMichael continues to be guided by the Strategic Plan of 2012 and the Artistic Vision of 2016. The strategic objectives from the 2012 Strategic Plan and the Artistic Vision of 2016 are:

1. Promote the art of Canada
2. Consistently deliver an engaging and exceptional visitor experience
3. Become a centre for knowledge creation and sharing
4. Build a sustainable organization delivering outstanding performance
5. Improve organizational capacity and performance

Plans in response to these objectives for Fiscal 2025 are described below.

Six key themes continue to animate our plans for Fiscal 2025 and beyond, which are highlighted in callouts throughout the main body of the plan:

Sustainability

IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility)

Indigeneity

Retention and Succession Planning

Capital Renewal

Partnerships

OVERVIEW OF CURRENT & FUTURE PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES

1. Promote our brand as the home to the art of Canada

Our curatorial plans for the coming year and beyond rely on the same recipe for success that has guided us over the past half-decade: staying true to our roots with projects like our present landmark exhibition *Tom Thomson North Star*, honouring the Group of Seven and their contemporaries – while also presenting contemporary artists, particularly women and artists of colour, as we strive to diversify the story we tell about Canada, and about Canadian art.

A good case in point is our current exhibition titled *Ghosts of Canoe Lake: New Work by Marcel Dzama*, which gathers recent watercolours by this famed Canadian New York-based artist, as he reflects on the Group of Seven legacy to which he is heir. The show is timed to overlap with *Tom Thomson: North Star*, providing a contemporary response to a treasured legacy at the McMichael. The exhibition is constituted of a suite of new watercolours and a film made for the occasion and will travel on to Plug In ICA in the artist's hometown of Winnipeg and to Contemporary Calgary, our partner in this project.

On our walls this winter and early spring is the historic exhibition *Cobalt: A Mining Town and the Canadian Imagination* (November 18, 2023 to April 21, 2024), curated by Dr Catharine Mastin, the former director of Art Gallery of Windsor, which plumbs the depths of the craze for painting Cobalt that held sway in the Toronto art world a century ago. As Mastin's show and accompanying catalogue illuminate, the iconography of this northern Ontario town spoke to audiences of a new Canadian identity, one distinctly modern and rooted in resource extraction, as our country took its place on the international stage. This identity continues both at home and internationally to this day, as our contributing essayist for the catalogue Edward Burtynsky makes clear. Some of the artists in this exhibition, like Franklin Carmichael and AY Jackson, remain well known to Canadian audiences. Others, particularly the women artists Yvonne McKague Housser and Isabel McLaughlin, are still deserving their due. This project demonstrates our intention to recontextualize the Group of Seven within their historical moment, mining (if you will) fresh meaning from their legacies. As well, the publication will include the testimony of writers from the Timiskaming First Nation, the traditional stewards of this land. At present the show is planned for touring to both Art Gallery of Sudbury and Art Gallery of Algoma, important venues for us as we export our high-quality content to our sister institutions to other parts of the province.

IDEA

Alongside *Cobalt*, we are presenting *Moridge Kitenge Banza: Topographies* (also November 18, 2023 to April 21, 2024), which showcases recent work by an

emerging Congolese-Canadian artist now living in Montreal. Banza's paintings speak of mining in his homeland of Congo and in his newfound home in Quebec. Drawing his imagery from topographical renderings, Google maps and the creases in the palms of his own two hands, Banza reflects on the personal, political and environmental impacts of mining, expressed through the fluid language of abstraction.

INDIGENEITY

The backdrop of Cobalt is relevant, as well, to our later exhibition *From the Watershed: The Photographs of John MacFie*, curated by Cree writer Paul Seesequasis (May 11, 2024 to November 17, 2024), which will explore the work of a settler photographer long employed by the Fish and Wildlife Branch of the province's Department of Lands and Forests. During decades spent travelling through the region, MacFie found himself deeply embedded in the Indigenous communities in Northern Ontario and has left behind a legacy that captures the life of Indigenous peoples in the 50s and 60s, a period of profound change and transformation. Through his research on MacFie, and his sensitive curatorial shaping of the material, Seesequasis gathers evidence of the enduring life of Indigenous communities in the north despite the incursions of industry and the harrowing interventions of colonialism. This show is also being planned for circulation to remote communities in Northern Ontario, as we extend the reach of our work to where it can have the most impact.

The early spring brings more revelations, with the opening of *Bertram Brooker: When We Awake!* (February 10 to June 2, 2024), an exhibition curated by Michael Parke-Taylor that champions an unacknowledged trailblazer and influential contemporary of the Group of Seven. Boldly articulating the way forward for Canadian art as an artist, writer, screenplay writer, art critic and impresario of the visual arts, Brooker connected the visual arts community in Toronto with international ideas and served as a sounding board for the most advanced Canadian artists of his day from coast to coast. Brooker is widely credited as having presented the first exhibition of abstract art in Canada, managing to work in multiple styles and themes -- from abstracts to penetrating portraits to radical nudes. His paintings and illustrations, which are the subject of this show, reveal his fascination with the contemporary ideas of spirituality and personal freedom, his deep grasp of literature, and his encyclopedic knowledge of creativity in all its manifestation. We look forward to sharing the art and ideas of this protean thinker and creator with the wider audience he has long deserved.

Summer of 2024 brings another exhibition of historic import: *Impressionism on the St Lawrence* (June 29, 2024 to January 5, 2025), which showcases the work of the founding fathers of Quebec landscape painting as they take us for a tour down the St Lawrence from Montreal through to Quebec City, Beaupre, Charlevoix and beyond. A sumptuous visual feast, this exhibition highlights artists — among them Maurice Cullen, Clarence Gagnon and Ozias Leduc — who were highly influential to the members of the Group of Seven, shedding fresh light on

the artistic formation of artists central to our collection. The exhibition is built around a core of major loans from the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec, which has agreed to tour its key treasures to us during their closure for construction. Leading this project is the respected art historian Anne-Marie Bouchard, Curator of Canadian Art at MNBAQ, with a host of leading specialists on Quebec painting from both French and English-speaking Canada contributing short essays on selected works. This will be the first dedicated exhibition on these exceptional and influential Quebec artists to be held in English-speaking Canada.

Concurrently, we have arranged a small exhibition highlighting early works made by AY Jackson prior to the formation of the Group, revealing his early Quebec period, his training in France and experiences as a war artist during WW1, before his return to Canada. Jackson was the living link between these Quebec artists and the Group, having grown up in Montreal and received his first training there.

INDIGENEITY & PARTNERSHIPS

Our next initiative (January to April 2025) is a major Inuit-lead exhibition and multi-authored publication devoted to the drawings from the Kinngait (Cape Dorset) Archive, which we have held in trust for the West Baffin Eskimo Co-op for more than 30 years. The task of digitizing this collection is now complete, a triumphant feat of technology that now makes these unique works available across Canada and internationally, as well as in a low bandwidth in the North, on our website Iningat Ilagiit. Until now, our knowledge of Inuit graphic art in Kinngait (Cape Dorset) has depended on the testimony of the famous prints made at the Kinngait Studio, long sold across Canada and around the world. With the airing of this collection of unique drawings, however, we will be able to see a half century of Inuit inspiration unmediated, as artists made these works in preparation for the printmaking process. New careers will be discovered as we look at the collection with the fresh eyes of today, while legendary and leading careers -- like those of Kenojuak Ashevak or Kananginak Pootoogook -- can be understood in more depth.

At the helm of this project is our newly appointed Associate Curator; Indigenous Art and Culture, Inuit writer and scholar Emily Henderson. This is a position that has been left vacant for more than 25 years, despite the fact that one third of the McMichael's collection has been made by Indigenous people. This hire corresponds to our steadfast commitment to empowering Indigenous voices at the McMichael.

Other key initiatives in this area include the publication of *Early Days: Indigenous Art from the McMichael*—a lush, multi-authored catalogue of our Indigenous collection, and the largest book in our institution's history, including 68 essays that respond to specific works in our permanent collection, written by a host of Indigenous writers and scholars from coast to coast. This project is being completed under the direction of Bonnie Devine, an Anishinaabe artist,

writer and scholar whose mural project *Water to Water: A Way Through the Trees* explores the history of the Carrying Place Trail, and the region's prior inhabitation by the Wendat people.

In Fiscal 2025, Devine will also be working with the Toronto photographer Robert Burley on a book capturing much of the research that underpinned this project, and a photo essay by Burley on the contemporary reality of this storied waterway as it wends its way north from Lake Ontario to Georgian Bay, right below the wooded bluff on which the McMichael stands. This project reflects the deep history of the land beneath our feet and signals our institution's respect for its original stewards.

We will also be continuing our project of bringing diverse Indigenous stakeholders to visit the McMichael collections and deepen our understanding of the Indigenous belongings that we hold. This initiative was initiated this year with a visit with William Wasden Jr, a Kwakwaka'wakw knowledge keeper who came from his home in Alert Bay, BC, to advise us on a totem pole and a house post that we hold at the gallery, as well as the host of masks and other cultural belongings that have been in our collection since the days of our founders. This work will be undertaken with the help of the Appleton Initiative, which has made a three-year commitment to funding Reconciliation projects at the McMichael.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

As we plan and mount our exhibitions at McMichael, we are also hard at work exporting our content to venues across Canada, and internationally, as touched on above, resourcing our exceptional exhibitions and publications through strategic fundraising, and by sharing them widely with new audiences. Our landmark exhibition *Uninvited: Canadian Women Artists in the Modern Moment*, for example, was seen by some 25,000 visitors at the McMichael, but by more than 250,000 viewers nationally, after its final closure this fall at the National Gallery of Canada. The impact of our institution across Canada and beyond has reached new heights, as we find audiences far from our home base in Kleinburg. But touring also allows us to resource these projects and publications to be their best. The financial impact of this is worth a closer look.

Early Days: Indigenous Art from the McMichael, highlighting historic and contemporary works from our collection, will be presented at the Albuquerque Museum of Art in New Mexico from January 27 to April 21, 2024; the Chrysler Museum in Norfolk, Virginia from May 24 to September 2, 2024; and the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec (MNBAQ) in Québec City from October 2024 to May 4, 2025. That tour, which began at the Heard Museum in Phoenix, Arizona this fall, is expected to yield profits in excess of \$500,000.

Meryl McMaster: Bloodline, co-organized with ReMai Modern in Saskatoon, will travel to its third touring venue, Glenbow in Calgary, in the summer of 2024 (June to August); it will then be

presented at the Heard Museum in Phoenix, Arizona from February to May 2025. We expect to book at least one other US venue on this tour, yielding over \$130,000 in rental fees over the course of the tour and an estimated \$50,000 in contributions to shared costs from our partner, ReMai.

In Fiscal 2025, *Generations: the Sobey Family and Canadian Art* will be closing its fifth touring presentation at the MNBAQ in Quebec City, in May 2024; we are in discussion with the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria and the Yukon Art Centre, in Whitehorse, Yukon, regarding two other presentations in Fiscal 2025. Five confirmed presentations over the course of the tour have yielded \$300,000 in rental fees; two more (\$60,000 each) are expected. Sobey's support for crating and shipping the show to and from McMichael will amount to approximately \$300,000. Sobey's is also paying for intra-venue shipping and assisting with insurance, which serves as an excellent value proposition for presenting venues. As well, the Sobey Art Foundation has provided free admission for all Nova Scotians while the show is at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia this fall and winter, which will do much to expand our institution's reach in this region.

Rajni Perera: Futures continues will be closing its third touring presentation in Fiscal 2025 at the McMaster Museum of Art in Hamilton in May 2024; will carry on to the Musée d'art de Joliette for a summer presentation from June 15 to September 8, 2024; and will close at the Art Gallery of Surrey in British Columbia from January to April 2025. Each venue yields \$15,000.

In Fiscal 2025 *Tom Thomson: North Star* will be closing at its first touring stop, the Art Gallery of Alberta, in Edmonton, in May 2024; it will carry on to the Audain Art Museum in Whistler, BC from June 29 to September 30, 2024; and finally, the Beaverbrook in Fredericton, NB from November 2024 to March 2025. We expect to yield over \$235,000 from this tour.

Ghosts of Canoe Lake: New Work by Marcel Dzama will be presented at Contemporary Calgary, our co-producer on the project, from late June to November 2024. It will carry on to Plug In Institute of Contemporary Art in Winnipeg for a November 2024 to mid-March 2025 presentation. At least one more venue is expected. The cost-share with Contemporary Calgary is expected to yield approximately \$40,000, and each subsequent venue will pay a rental fee of \$15,000.

As mentioned above, *Cobalt: A Mining Town and the Canadian Imagination* will tour to the Art Gallery of Sudbury from May 9 to June 30, 2024, followed by the Art Gallery of Algoma from mid-July to October 14, 2024. This tour yields a modest \$30,000 in rental fees but extends our reach to audiences in regions for which the content has exceptional relevance.

The fourth, fifth and sixth touring presentations of *Jon Sasaki: Homage* will take place in Fiscal 2025; it will be presented at the Judith and Norman Alix Art Centre in Sarnia from April 19 to September 1, 2024; the MacLaren Art Centre from October 4, 2024 to January 13, 2025, and the School of Art at the University of Manitoba from February 20 to April 26, 2025. Each presentation yields \$5,000.

In spring 2025, as mentioned, we plan to mount a major exhibition from the Cape Dorset archive of original drawings. This show is expected to tour to multiple venues across Canada with a rental fee of \$80,000. We are applying for major support from the federal Museum Assistance Program, administered by Department of Canadian Heritage, and are exploring venues in the USA and Europe as well for this important exhibition.

Early Days will be returning from its American tour in summer 2025, and we plan to re-mount this show at McMichael, as its first showing was mounted during COVID and seen by very few. This generates significant cost savings and eases pressure on our registration department. We are in discussion with the American exhibition brokerage firm that struck the 2023-2024 US tour about sending a smaller version of the show to Europe in 2026. We are in discussion with the same firm about touring a Group of Seven masterworks show, to be available during our anticipated building closure. This show will be flexible in size to be deployed in presenting venues of differing scales. Touring these three major collection shows will provide significant revenue during the museum's anticipated closure, as we work to prepare for our reopening exhibitions.

IDEA

Finally, we will be continuing to fund and acquire work for the collection that allow us to tell a more diverse story of Canadian art. Key emphasis is being placed on acquiring major works by historic contemporary women artists, and by artists of colour. Our core holdings reflect the mores of the Canadian art world a half century ago, but we must keep step with the present. Recent acquisitions of artists like June Clark, Abbas Akhavan, Krystle Silverfox, Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun, Alexa Hatanaka, Rajni Perera and Moridge Kitenge Banza have done just that, but we must go further. With our teeming school groups and our very popular Family Sundays we attract our most diverse audiences, and these works have a critical role to play in making the McMichael a welcoming space that represents all Canadians.

Outcomes

We continue to represent historic Canadian artists who are core to our collection at the McMichael, such as the members of the Group of Seven, but we provide an expanded context for those legacies by contextualizing them in meaningful dialogue with historical and contemporary art by women, and by artists of colour, in order to better reflect the diversity of Canadian art and culture.

The now robust touring program is fulfilling our plan to bring new audiences to appreciate the McMichael's collection across the country and abroad.

Acquisition of major works by historic and contemporary women artists, and by artists of colour, enables us to tell a more diverse story of Canadian art and ensure the McMichael is a welcoming space that represents all Canadians.

2. [Visitor Experience](#)

Diversity

IDEA

A key document developed in Fiscal 2024 with the support of the Tourism Vaughan was the Better Your Business Tourism Diversity Strategic Plan. Ontario has set a goal to “create an accessible and inclusive province where everyone can fully participate in everyday life” by 2025. In 2017, 22% of Canadians had a least one disability, and this number has no doubt grown with the aging population. We are all well aware of the issues of youth and mental health. In this environment, we must ensure we make the McMichael as accessible as possible within the confines of our infrastructure and financial resources. But the most important part of this effort is the visitor experience, for which front-line staff training is essential. For example, in Fiscal 2024, we completed training in Unconscious Bias, and are looking at other programs we can deliver. In Fiscal 2024, we are also required to update our Multi-year Accessibility Plan, which will help guide our efforts along with the Better Your Business Plan. Our goal is to deliver an exceptional and accessible experience for all visitors to the McMichael.

Investing in Digital Improvements

The McMichael urgently requires a functional, modern website if it is to continue to deliver an exceptional visitor experience, drive attendance, generate revenue from admissions and retail, and highlight and promote the art of Canada. The current website is outdated, difficult to navigate – particularly on a mobile device – and insufficient for our current needs. The existing backend requires a complete overhaul to be brought up to functionality, and the front end requires significant investment in design and user experience to help visitors find the

information they're looking for. In Fiscal 2025 the McMichael intends to undertake a complete website overhaul in order to improve functionality and deliver an exceptional online experience— one that will make it easy to discover and explore the art of Canada, find information about visiting the Gallery, register for events, view talks and videos, become a member and make a donation.

IDEA

Through virtual webinars and tours, curatorial and artist talks, and other digital experiences, we continue to make our permanent collection and special exhibitions accessible to audiences around the world. Access to these online resources will only be enhanced with a new website. The recent upgrade to fiberoptic cable is also helping to ensure that our collection is more accessible through the e- museum to students, researchers and the general public alike. The completion of the digitization of the full Cape Dorset (Kinngait) Archive of 89,000 works on paper by Inuit artists, and the upload of the final images to the Iningait Ilagiit website (iningatilagiit.ca) is another an example of our investment in making vast swaths of our collection, which in this case is held in trust for the West Baffin Eskimo Co- operative (WBEC), accessible. That website, which is linked to from mcmichael.com, can be accessed in French, English and Inuktitut, and in a low-bandwidth format better suited to users in northern communities.

Transportation

FINANCIAL & NATURAL SUSTAINABILITY

If the McMichael is to achieve sustained growth in visitorship, including broadening our core demographic, we need to remain focused on keeping the site accessible by offering a range of transportation options. With the pressure of inflation on gas prices, our net zero goals, and the increasing numbers of younger people, as well as seniors, who do not drive, the Gallery must find a convenient, low-cost mass transportation solution to bring visitors to the McMichael, which is effectively inaccessible by subway and bus. We continue to collaborate with other attractions in the region to address the issue through participation in various forums and partnerships and through advocacy. If we are to achieve a path towards net zero, the issue of transportation must be addressed. In Fiscal 2024 the McMichael received support through a private donor to run an Art Bus from downtown Toronto (St George Station) with a stop in Vaughan (VMC Station) on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from June through October. In Fiscal 2025 we will again seek support for this project and will continue to work with the Vaughan Department of Economic Development and the Kleinburg BIA to explore and advocate for additional public and private transportation options.

3. Knowledge Creation and Sharing

Balancing Act

In Fiscal 2024, attendance for the McMichael's in-person programs significantly improved.

The free programming such as curatorial talks, exhibition tours and our particularly popular Family Sundays led the way for attendance. This trend is not surprising taking into consideration the rising cost of living in the post-pandemic world and the heightened interest in meaningful activities that can be attended with family and friends.

IDEA The urge to address children and youth mental health issues related to COVID-19 isolation likewise guided increase of visitations to the McMichael's school programs and public ArtVenture children art classes and camps. After three years of uncertainty and complicated cohort restrictions, the attendance within these programs seems to finally have stabilized. We were particularly pleased with the great success of our community *Living with Art* program offered to vulnerable youth and young adults living with various physical and cognitive exceptionalities.

With the ticketed adult classes, a similar interest in wellness and social connection programming ensured the success of various post-pandemic programs such as *Sip & Create* Sunday's workshops, *Forest Therapy*, *Expressive Art Workshops* and *Yoga* classes, as well as of the new concert series delivered in partnership with Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra. This trend signifies that visitors are increasingly interested in more integrative experiences while attending art galleries.

Fiscal 2025 will be another year of close observation of new emerging visitation patterns and a balancing act of being relevant, competitive and sustainable, while maintaining affordability and accessibility.

Endorsing Equity & Inclusion

IDEA In Fiscal 2024, the department undertook a thorough review of the current programming to determine its relevancy within this time of new social and economic priorities.

This thematic reassessment and realignment of currently offered programs strongly echoed Fiscal 2024 curatorial projects focusing on social justice and environmentalism. These projects, and related new art acquisitions, not only enhanced the presence of racialized and marginalised

artists at the gallery, but also allowed our department to forge strong ties to schools and organizations within these artists' cultural communities.

In Fiscal 2025, we plan to continue to work closely with regional school boards and specifically with their equity, inclusivity, and anti-racism departments. In light of financial restraints at the McMichael, we will identify those programs most relevant to the current environmental and social context. This approach will allow our team to simplify selection, streamline art materials and training, while at the same time focusing on content enhancement.

PARTNERSHIPS

We are also very aware of the growing need for a quality art programming within the most disadvantaged neighborhoods. In response to a call from the Toronto District School Board school board, for Fiscal 2025 we have decided to expand the *Visual Outreach Initiative Creating Empowered Students* program to eight schools instead of six. To properly meet the board programming expectations within the Cultural Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy framework, we plan to work closely with the TDSB Equity, Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression team. Similar objectives will be integrated into the V.O.I.C.E.S. program offered to the York Region District School Board.

In Fiscal 2024, to increase diversity within the McMichael's staffing, we made a commitment to exclusively involve the artists from racialized communities to lead the *V.O.I.C.E.S* and *Leaders of Tomorrow* programming. Working with the artists such as Mo Thunder and David Strickland deeply enriched the program and enhanced students' experience. In the upcoming fiscal, we plan to continue this approach and work on attracting BIPOC and LGBT artists even though our challenging location and lack of public transport seriously affect our efforts. We also plan to increase the artist led studio within the update programming of V.O.I.C.E.S.

In Fiscal 2024, these various collaborations inspired a wide unconscious bias training for the entire organization. In Fiscal 2025 we plan to continue this training within Creative Learning & Programs with quarterly Visitor Engagement Best Practices sessions led by invited speakers sharing their experience related to equity and inclusivity.

Supporting Wellness & Mental Health

In Fiscal 2025, wellness and mental health will continue to strongly feature in our public programming. While we offer several children and adult classes directly addressing well-being, we strongly believe that our free access programming provides a unique opportunity for affordable yet meaningful social interactions, which relieve anxiety and isolation. The themes of these programs, which include Family Sundays, public tours and curatorial/artists' talks, actively address the environmental and social issues challenging our society, such as climate change, cultural exclusion etc. Partaking in storytelling sessions, or interactive tours, contextualises the

problems and offers a platform to creatively brainstorm solutions. In Fiscal 2025, we plan to continue with this approach and actively network within targeted communities.

We will also continue the distribution of Free Family Passes to the participants of our special educational programs, along with the various discounts authorized for schools from marginalised and racialized neighbourhoods.

Engaging Indigenous Communities

INDIGENEITY

For the last several years, the Creative Learning department has successfully collaborated with local Indigenous community for various programs and particularly for land-based education. Outdoor and in-gallery tours and art-making programs focusing on environmental issues and community events involving planting, weeding and other land-based activities, have become a signature of the McMichael school and public programming.

These initiatives could not be offered without the help of Elder Shelley Charles, from the Chippewas of the Georgina Island and her community, as well as other Indigenous artists and traditional teachers. In Fiscal 2025, we will continue to grow these relationships while envisioning the priority of programming within the new, expanded gallery. However, while we are successful in sharing Indigenous knowledge with no-Indigenous audiences, we would like to increase Indigenous communities' use the McMichael's spaces for ceremonies, cultural activities and social enjoyment. Strategizing with our Indigenous partners on how to create a welcoming environment and determining how best to serve their communities will be a priority in Fiscal 2025.

The successful *Leaders of Tomorrow* program is a very good example of our continuing efforts to involve Indigenous youth. This program offered in the last years to the local Morning Star Public School in YRDSB and Eastview Public Elementary in TDSB, originally, was developed with the aim of bringing students from the Chippewas of Nawash First Nation to the McMichael for a four-day program. While the pandemic interrupted the implementation of this initiative, we feel that it's time to revive the previous agreement with the Nawash Chief and Council, redevelop the program to better reflect the current needs and implement it. We hope that this project will establish a framework for virtual and in-person engagement for groups of Indigenous students in northern communities.

Sustainability & Its Challenges

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

With the success of the ArtVenture Summer camp and *Saturdays at The McMichael*, we reached operational capacity in these programs. We also increased the number of students in our children's art classes, while

keeping the pricing reasonable and within parents' financial means. In Fiscal 2025, we will further consolidate this offer and promote other ticketed activities including new Winter Art Workshop, perfect for parents who wish for a shorter yet still nurturing engagement for their children.

Other good revenue generating programs include adult art appreciation tours and workshops. Offered in combination with social gatherings around a cup of tea or coffee, during the past year these programs have quickly become popular with our visitors.

However, the scheduling of these programs becomes increasingly difficult, as they compete for space over the weekends with lucrative wedding events. The current unavailability of spaces for this kind of engagement seriously affects the sustainability not only of school and public programs, but also the sale of revenue-generating hospitality events at the gallery.

CAPITAL RENEWAL

In Fiscal 2025, our department will devote time to planning for a potential closure of the gallery to renovate and expand our facilities.

Based on the activation of current and new partnerships, we are looking forward to Toronto Region Conservation Authorities, York University, local colleges, and other educational institutions, to explore programming partnerships and/or rental of studio spaces. While we continue to increase school outreach programming and virtual tours and workshops, core programs such as V.O.I.C.E.S. and our summer camps must be continued to retain our connection to community. Meanwhile, robust virtual programming around our travelling exhibitions, combined with our social media campaigns, will allow us to maintain a vibrant connection to our members and set a tone of anticipation for the re-opening of the gallery.

Transparency & Accountability

In Fiscal 2024, Creative Learning consolidated departmental reporting, including evaluation of all the programs offered. Several procedures and policies were clarified and shared with staff.

In Fiscal 2025, Public Programs will go through the very same process to clarify procedures, polices and reporting schedules.

We also plan in this fiscal year to strategize on how to increase the rate of return on program evaluation surveys. While our registration system allows us to easily reach visitors to ticketed programs, the programming offered without registration such as Family Sundays, public tours etc. poses a significant challenge in targeting our outreach efforts due to the lack of data about these groups.

We fully understand that hearing from our visitors is the most important way not only to maintain the quality of our programming, but also to ensure its relevance. In Fiscal 2025 we will

concentrate our efforts on improving this system in a way that is creative and not cumbersome for visitors.

Outcome: collaboration with Indigenous artists and elders will create deeper engagement with Indigenous communities and integration of Indigenous ways of knowing into our education and programming.

Outcome: targeted programs will increase access for marginalized and vulnerable groups.

Outcome: digital and hybrid delivery of programming will continue to attract audiences to the McMichael's creative learning.

Outcomes: our diversified offerings in education and programming will create new revenue opportunities; evaluation and reporting will be strengthened; program delivery will be improved

4. [Sustainable Organization](#)

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Fundraising Executive Summary

The purpose of the McMichael Canadian Art Foundation is to raise and receive funds to support the McMichael Canadian Art Collection. All development staff roles and responsibilities align to our purpose to support the needs of the McMichael Canadian Art Collection (MCAC) as outlined in the business plan, thereby enabling the MCAC it to fulfill its mission.

We need the right people, in the right roles, doing the right work. The current MCAF staff, now fully into their roles, are running a solid development department. However, to both undertake a campaign and build sustainable annual funding, the team will need to develop in their current roles in the following areas: focusing on deliverables; embracing new and existing technologies; streamlining processes; exploring new and innovative ideas; and, improving collaboration both internal and external to the department.

This year will be about building our bench strength as a development operation and modeling what a best-in-class operation looks like. Our broader focus will be to create a 'culture of philanthropy' that will permeate the entire organization, its governance community, its members, volunteers, and other stakeholders. We will explore and implement new ways to meaningfully engage volunteers, committees, etc. to build

increased engagement and more recurring revenue streams.

Highlights

The key aspect of the business plan is to ensure that the Foundation is always fully and completely aligned with the needs, expectations, and aspirations of the Collection. With a full staff complement supporting each area of fundraising, we will provide all board members and volunteers with an opportunity to participate in raising funds, staying focused on our purpose. We will raise funds in support of:

- General operations of the organization
- Acquisitions
- Exhibitions (onsite, touring, and related publications)
- Education and outreach
- New opportunities / partnerships, etc.

At a high level, funds will be raised by:

- Aligning staff to the needs of the organization. A fully staffed department, with clearly defined roles and increased strategic administrative support will ensure senior front facing staff, board members, and volunteers are supported in cultivating and securing donations
- Identifying and recruiting new board members keen on helping to build a sustainable operation
- Identifying and recruiting new volunteers to serve on our boards, committees and in other capacities who are keen on embracing, celebrating and promoting the new leadership and new vision
- Building sustainable annual revenues by activating and engaging those closest to us and reimagining McMichael committees like Patron's Circle, Women's Art Council, Contemporary Art Circle to meaningfully connect members and providing with them compelling and interesting ways to participate
- Leveraging the gala's success, begin recruiting and engaging new volunteers to help secure new sources of gross revenue while more strategically aligning the organization for improved efficiency and net results
- Developing multi-year, multi event, corporate support championing both Art Toronto and the Moonlight Gala as our best sources of undesignated revenue
- Identifying and engaging key members of the Vaughan community at all levels. More strategic grass roots community engagement positioning McMichael as their cultural hub aligned with respected community leaders interested in more significant engagement
- Working to secure \$150M to redevelop the McMichael site, initially as a robust, major gift program focused on identifying and cultivating our top prospects, with

support conditional on government funding being secured. In addition, major gift donations will be sought to support the ongoing annual activities and priorities of McMichael

- Creating a ‘culture of philanthropy’ by providing every McMichael volunteer the opportunity to support our events, exhibitions, acquisitions, publications, and educational programs. Directly through financial contributions and/or using their network to raise funds for McMichael projects

Detailed Activity

1. Membership experience and growth

Membership at McMichael, at approximately 5000 annually, is an important financial driver for the gallery and impacts visitors to the gallery. With the return of our Manager, Membership & Database we will focus on renewing and upselling existing members while increasing overall membership numbers. Additional focus will be paid to investigating the use of ‘digital’ cards along with the use of more sophisticated technological solutions for our membership recruitment.

This year we will streamline the membership buy/renewal process, review and refresh marketing materials and membership packages, improve regular communication with members regarding special events or offerings for members and continuing the “concierge” type service that larger organizations may not be able to offer members. This past year we launched our first post-event survey and will be incorporating the feedback to ensure the best special event experience for our members.

We will work to actively re-engage lapsed members through targeted outreach and work collaboratively with Marketing and Communications to develop marketing efforts to reach new members in the York Region.

2. Increase donor numbers and prospect pipeline

McMichael needs to grow the annual sustainably generated revenue and to do this, we will focus on increasing; the size of gifts, the number of donors to the McMichael, and the number of prospects in the pipeline. Areas of focus will include:

- Ensuring members understand we operate as a non-profit and rely on support over and above membership and exhibition revenues
- Growing the donor pool through active solicitation, both by mail but primarily through e-communications, around key dates and end of year (for tax purposes)
- Creating more personal connections with larger annual donors by assigning a Relationship Manager to build rapport and working to increase their engagement and philanthropic support

- Engaging in effective stewardship to ensure donors feel valued, understand the impact of their gift, and believe the McMichael is a worthy recipient of their support

3. Corporate sector support and engagement

Main opportunities remain the Moonlight Gala and Art Toronto, both of which offer the greatest chance to secure significant, undesignated funding.

Focus on:

- Understanding funding gaps and potential opportunities for corporate support and sponsorship
- Building a database of corporate sponsors, highlighting their giving priorities and alignment with McMichael
- Utilizing board members /trustees, committee members, MCAC staff, and other volunteers to evaluate and refine the prospect lists
- Strengthening relationships with those that have provided support in 2022-23, and re-engage those who supported the McMichael in past years
- Exploring possibilities for multi-year or multi-event support to make the sponsorship offering more attractive
- Looking to engage new communities of supporters (Vaughan, broader York region)
- Building a strategy, process and pipeline to secure funding from foundations and granting agencies aligned with McMichael priorities

4. Strategic use of technology

- Advance opportunities from the audit of our Raiser's Edge/NXT database to improve overall efficiency, streamline daily activities, and utilize data to drive best practices in managing the cultivation and solicitation process
- Undertake additional training to best utilize available technological tools for prospect mining, evaluating, and strategizing

5. Campaign for Capital Renewal

AT \$150M, the redevelopment project is significant. Private philanthropy, provincial and federal support will all be critical to the success of the capital renewal.

We will create and implement engagement plans for McMichael's top prospects, with the objective of soliciting at or above the levels determined in the major gift prospect review conducted by the Offord Group.

This will be part of an adopted, robust, replicable, major gifts program, one that will help to ensure the McMichael Canadian Art Collection is in a sustainable financial situation, with forecastable future revenue and activated and engaged volunteers/ donors. The focus will

be the top 50 campaign prospects along with building the rigor, the process, the focus, and the replicable execution that is needed for success. We will adopt strategic use of a 'moves management' process for top prospects, ensuring the right prospects are being asked at the right time by the right people.

The key aspects of course will be:

- Recruiting and training key volunteer leaders to act as ambassadors for the McMichael
- Ensure that internal campaign processes and documents (numerous) are drafted or edited, and are ready to steer and shape the process
- Build and train the internal team for the challenge of a capital campaign
- Continue the identification and cultivation of potential donors
- Work with private philanthropists as well as provincial and federal governments to secure funding for capital renewal

Visitorship

Visitorship has returned to pre-pandemic levels, with the Tom Thomson exhibition's consistent popularity in the summer and fall months in Fiscal 2025.

The McMichael is open six days a week. This model has been cost efficient and economically beneficial, as it allows us to engage school tours and host corporate events on Mondays. We continually strive to grow visitorship, meet visitor expectations, respond to changing trends in visitorship and deliver superior customer service. Visits to the gallery and grounds are enhanced by a wide range of programs, free tours, concerts, events and shopping and dining options to serve as many audience segments as possible. We also offer a monthly free Family Sunday as well as subsidized transportation from Toronto and Vaughan through the Art Bus, which in Fiscal 2024 was supported by private funds. These initiatives ensure that we are removing barriers to entry so that the widest possible audience can visit the McMichael. The McMichael's brand recognition is also growing as more exhibitions from the McMichael travel nationally and internationally, allowing the marketing department to capitalize on accessing more tourism segments and drive on-site visitation.

With the post-pandemic documented changes in visitorship patterns and competition from multiple events, we have focused on advertising in multiple niche markets, and remaining nimble in our use of limited marketing resources.

Exhibitions and Creative Learning

IDEA

The Creative Learning and Programs department's specialized programming designed for vulnerable and marginalized communities has met with enthusiasm from the TDSB and YRDSB. The Creative Learning Department's close attention to the needs of the different school boards and communities ensures that their school courses are relevant to diverse audiences, and that their programming is well subscribed.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Touring exhibitions have proven to be a highlight of enhanced revenue, not only through touring fees, but also by enabling our access to federal government grants. Enhancing the McMichael's reputation not only onsite but throughout North America and internationally helps to attract the interest and support of prominent philanthropists across Canada.

5. [Organizational Capacity](#)

Quality of Life and Economic Development

PARTNERSHIPS

We continue to work closely with the Kleinburg Business Association, the City of Vaughan, Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) and Destination Ontario to position the McMichael as a cultural attraction in the region to help market the region as a destination, drive economic growth, and encourage cultural tourism and travel to Kleinburg. The McMichael continues to serve as an active member of the Toronto Attractions Council, Central Counties Tourism and York Region Arts Council.

The rapid growth in Vaughan creates an opportunity for the McMichael to attract new, local audiences. The success of Family Sundays, where 50% of the audience is local to Vaughan, is a demonstration of potential. Our plans for redevelopment are intended to capitalize on these opportunities. Our research has shown that there is substantial potential for growth in visitorship, corporate events, weddings, and other activities that can generate revenue with the planned capital expansion. But beyond those financial opportunities, the McMichael is poised to play a central role in the City of Vaughan's plan to become a centre of excellence for creative industries. With the MOU between the McMichael, the City of Vaughan, and the Vaughan International Film Festival in place, we are actively identifying opportunities to work together to promote Vaughan as a place for cultural businesses, and to position the McMichael as a key part of Vaughan's quality of life.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

The McMichael's Marketing and Communications department executes effective cross-platform advertising and outreach campaigns and develops targeted media strategies that raise awareness of the Gallery and its activities, drive attendance and generate sales. These strategies effectively form part of a "toolkit" that supports all areas of the McMichael including Curatorial, Development, Sales, and Creative Learning in achieving their strategic goals.

The goal of the department is also to ensure that its integrated marketing of exhibitions, public and educational programs, facility rentals and the Gallery Shop enables forecasted revenues to be achieved, while establishing the Gallery as a must-see tourism destination, a great place to visit with family and friends, a place to learn something new about Canadian art in a warm and welcoming environment, and a tranquil place to get outdoors for relaxation and physical activity in a forested, natural landscape.

In Fiscal 2025, the McMichael's marketing and communications team will continue to produce marketing campaigns that specifically target local, national and international audiences. At the local level, marketing campaigns will focus on growing our base of local families who love programs like free Family Sundays, children's art classes, and week-long camps and encouraging them to invest in family memberships. Nationally, our campaigns will highlight our many traveling exhibitions that can be seen from coast to coast to coast, and international travelers will be cultivated through the unique selling proposition (USP) of our beautiful all-Canadian landscape and venue where visitors can see world-class exhibitions such as *Impressionism on the St Lawrence*. We will continue to advertise with national airline carriers such as Porter and Air Canada to reach national and international audiences. With the hire in 2022 of a full-time Social Media Manager the department is also now able to fully execute a comprehensive social media strategy that can produce and share a higher volume of digital content through stories and reels to creatively engage with and grow various audiences, including on Tik Tok. The Social Media Manager is also able to analyze and act on insights from analytics more effectively.

The McMichael's marketing campaigns will continue to draw audiences to the unique selling proposition of the extensive grounds and trails and the corresponding physical, cognitive and mental health benefits of spending time outdoors and viewing art. In Fiscal 2025, marketing campaigns will continue to be primarily driven by the exhibition schedule (outlined elsewhere in this document). These exhibition-focused campaigns account for the majority of the

marketing budget and are executed on a rolling basis. In addition, the marketing team also activates smaller campaigns and special projects in support of the following initiatives or themes throughout the year:

- June: Moonlight Gala (Major Annual Fundraising Event)
- October: “Fall Colours” campaign to highlight the grounds and trails during our most popular season
- October: Art Toronto Opening Night. In Fiscal 2025, the McMichael will be the host and beneficiary of the Opening Night gala at Art Toronto, making this night in effect our second annual fundraiser, this time in downtown Toronto. At the fair, the marketing team works in collaboration with the Curatorial and Development departments to present an exceptional booth highlighting current and upcoming exhibitions, making the event an excellent opportunity for brand awareness, networking, and revenue generation.
- October/November: Membership Drive Campaign
- November/December: Membership Double Discount Days Campaign & Giving Tuesday
- December: “Holiday” campaign during the winter season / Annual Giving
- January: Canada’s Bridal Show
- March (folds into the following fiscal): Education Programs Advertising Campaign – a targeted digital advertising campaign to remind teachers and educators about the McMichael’s educational programs to push sales through the last few months of the school year

The effectiveness of these campaigns is evaluated according to the following performance measures:

- Attendance
- Visitor Satisfaction & Feedback
- Membership Growth and Retention
- Social Media Engagement
- Media coverage and reach (including AVE, Advertising Value Equivalent)
- Exhibition-related revenue generation (retail sales etc.)

The marketing team continues to use our strong base of market research to retain audiences by understanding the media habits of visitors and marketing to them accordingly. The McMichael has a large audience base of older adults and families who are well served by a wealth of on-site program offerings. However, with the historic museum visitor being replaced at a negative rate, the McMichael also must pursue new audiences including millennials who are almost twice as likely to express their personal commitment to an organization by engaging with it on social media, which the McMichael is actively growing through vibrant content and targeted digital

advertising and the introduction of a Tik Tok account. Additionally, millennial audiences are more environmentally and budget conscious and must be provided with a compelling reason and low-cost travel options if they are to visit. The institution must also be transparent and forthright in its commitment to the environment, including sustainability across our building and grounds, and in our efforts towards inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility in hiring, programming exhibitions and more.

Measurement of the results of digital advertising and social media campaigns that drive people to mcmichael.com will be critical in determining the most effective media mix. It will be important to determine if continued growth in digital marketing spending will continue to drive more traffic to the website, and to further analyze who our online visitors are and where they are coming from.

Objective data and analysis will provide insight into strategies to achieve the following:

- Build the McMichael brand.
- Extend brand awareness and reputation through:
 - Special and traveling exhibitions
 - Special events and programs
 - Philanthropy
 - Corporate partnerships
 - New interpretations of the permanent collection
 - Educational programs
 - Scholarly publications and exhibition catalogues
 - Enhanced digital programs and content
 - Children and family programs (building the local audience and catering to a sense of community for those looking for a cultural experience, per the Culture Track Study)
 - Facility rentals including weddings (see below for Corporate Sales strategy)
- Reach the McMichael's target audience cost-efficiently and effectively
- Focus marketing efforts on peak periods, contributing to the regional tourism market. during these times, and collaborate with local tourism partners to develop attractive campaigns for shoulder seasons
- Effectively market the use of the grounds and trails on days that the gallery is closed and during popular seasons for walkers
- Find ways to boost attendance during typically slow periods including Tuesdays and Wednesdays and slower months of January and February
- Build/maintain partnerships to extend reach and enhance brand image
- Sustainably embrace new media as audiences gravitate towards them in a way that fits with brand identity

Marketing and Communications Objectives

- Continue to build the gallery's mobile, digital and experiential channels, maintaining a multi-platform, integrated marketing and communications plan that includes traditional, digital and social media, and broadcast
- To reach the younger millennial market and arts audiences including those specifically interested in contemporary art, the McMichael will leverage social media tools, including stories, reels, and Tik Tok, with a focus on high-engagement video content and linking digital experience to both on-site and virtual engagement opportunities
- Deepen existing partnerships with other agencies, brands, and cultural institutions and pursue new ones that align with the gallery's mission and can help strengthen the brand image and boost retail and tourism
- Differentiate the gallery by featuring our unique selling feature of art and nature, highlighting our location on 100 acres of conservation land. This also positions the gallery as a place to de-stress from everyday life and cultivate mental and physical wellness both indoors and out
- Enhance relationships with media including CBC, Globe and Mail and major broadcasters, establishing regular interviews with the Executive Director
- Build long-lead stories to pitch to media for exhibitions throughout the year, strengthening relationships with key media
- Enhance the navigation of the website to enhance the visitor experience by undertaking a UX (user experience) review to inform necessary website upgrades
- Emphasize the McMichael's remarkable slate of touring exhibitions to build awareness of the McMichael as both a national destination and an incubator of the best Canadian art exhibitions

In addition to being served by RTO6, Central Counties Tourism, the McMichael is also an active member of the following local and provincial tourism bodies, with which we share information, resources and best practices and collaborate as appropriate on campaigns:

- Kleinburg BIA
- Tourism Vaughan Corporation
- York Region Arts Council
- Vaughan Attractions Council
- Toronto Attractions Council
- Tourism Industry Association of Ontario
- Destination Toronto
- Destination Ontario

Communications Plan

The Media Relations and Communications team's strategy is to effectively generate positive media coverage of the Gallery, its exhibitions, permanent collection, public programs and events, notable partnerships, key acquisitions and appointments, and other newsworthy items pertaining to "the art of Canada" across a wide a range of domestic and international media platforms. The team also endeavors to position the Executive Director and Chief Curator as a thought leader and area expert to print, digital and broadcast outlets.

The Communications team generates a communications rollout that is shared monthly with the Ministry. This document provides a six-month preview of planned communications, including press releases and media alerts, timelines and any stakeholder involvement. The timing of communications announcements is primarily driven by the upcoming exhibition schedule, which is outlined in detail elsewhere in this document.

The McMichael communicates directly with the public through monthly e-newsletters (one to members and one to a general audience), social media posts and the website. The public may communicate with the McMichael at any time through our general email address, social media channels, telephone or mail. Additionally, all visitors who purchase a timed ticket online are sent a visitor feedback form to leave a comment and satisfaction rating after their visit. Comments or other communications that require a response or resolution are addressed expediently and flagged to the ministry as necessary according to communications protocol guidelines.

In Fiscal 2025 the Communications team will continue to monitor news trends, coverage and competitive activity both in print and online, including on social channels. In-person media cultivation is also essential to building long-lasting relationships in a shrinking media landscape. National and international press cultivation also must be enhanced in order to support the McMichael's upcoming traveling exhibitions and to build brand awareness worldwide. To this end, the McMichael is actively collaborating with Destination Toronto and Destination Ontario and other Agencies and GTA-based museums, including the ROM, AGO, Power Plant and Gardiner museum, on international press trips.

Website Improvements

With a capital campaign on the horizon and a need to drive audiences, revenue, attention and donations, the McMichael website is increasingly out of step with the needs and expectations of contemporary audiences and must be fully functional, easy to use and attractive. Currently, the McMichael website is built on an outdated Wordpress framework that makes it difficult to find information, make purchases and register for programs. It also does not display well on mobile whereas 60% of our website users access the website from a mobile device. Working

closely with a full-service web design agency, the McMichael plans to undergo a comprehensive website redevelopment, moving off of an outdated Wordpress backend to a fully functional, adaptable and up-to-date infrastructure and CMS that can provide best-in-class service delivery to all users including visitors, members, donors and other partners.

The website redesign will prioritize usability, integration with other systems (POS, social media, TMS/e-museum etc.), mobile adaptability and the display of high-res video and images. The goals of the website will be to:

- Enhance the user experience and make it easy to:
 - Purchase tickets to the gallery and find visitor information
 - Register for classes, talks, events and camps
 - Make a donation, become a member or join a patrons circle
 - Find information on current, upcoming, past and traveling exhibitions
 - Find information on archives, library and other services to the public
- Foster excitement and awareness with audiences about Canadian art
- Be recognized as a “must-see” destination for Canadian culture locally, nationally and internationally

Success will be measured through the following metrics and KPIs:

- Unique visitors and total website traffic
- Time spent on pages
- Referral traffic
- Visitor comments
- Membership growth and online donations
- Newsletter signups

Corporate Sales and Events

In keeping with our mandate, the provincial government focus on financial sustainability, and the Culture Track identified factors for engagement, the McMichael will continue to focus on the below key business drivers or unique selling propositions for Fiscal 2025 with a focus on the return of large in-person events:

- Corporate events: proactive selling within the Vaughan community, reaching out to both businesses and prominent individuals and working closely with the Vaughan Chamber of Commerce
- Weddings: continue ongoing marketing and outreach initiatives, including the annual Wedding Show, with a particular focus on maximum-capacity events and revenue-generating photo permits
- Position ourselves within Vaughan as a host for community and civic events

through close engagement with the Vaughan Chamber of Commerce and Central Counties Tourism

- Continue to strengthen Adult Group Tours relationships with tour operators, notably in the French-speaking market for the upcoming Impressionism exhibition
- Work with local Regional Tourism Organization (RTO6, Central Counties) to participate in marketing plans to drive local tourism to the McMichael and Kleinburg area and increase shoulder season attendance
- Host a familiarization tour for meeting planners to come and view the events space, with assistance from the Vaughan Tourism Corporation
- Continue to network with meeting planners and contacts through Meeting Professionals International (MPI)
- Further relationship building with film industry contacts and location scouts
- Diversify event offerings such as Bridal Showers, Holiday Parties and Birthday Parties
- Attend major tourism conferences including Bienvenu Canada to increase group tour business from francophone regions and OMCA (Ontario Motor Coach Association)

The key business drivers outlined above will be supported by the following tactics:

- Use website homepage to promote event packages and seasonal offerings
- Social media posts to promote us as a venue on our social networks
- Email blasts to local business, tour operators, and wedding planners
- Continued networking with the City of Vaughan, tourism stakeholders and local community
- Improved paid search advertising
- Participation in tradeshow including the Wedding Show and conference travel to OMCA (Ontario Motor Coach Association) and Bienvenu (French-language tours), as well as out-of-city tradeshow and networking events
- Advertising for Holiday Season parties
- Maintaining industry memberships, such as Wedding Wire and Eventsource, which are important ways to market McMichael as a wedding venue

Digital Content Strategy

Insights from the various digital programs and offerings developed during the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrate that McMichael audiences across the country and around the world are interested in such virtual offerings. Although much of the focus in the year ahead continues to be on bringing audiences on site, continuing our virtual offerings will provide the Gallery with further opportunities to build brand awareness nationally and internationally.

The McMichael continues to program a range of digital offerings that include professionally

taught art classes, virtual exhibition tours, short videos on works with the Executive Director and Chief Curator, and webinars with and about Canadian art with scholars, artists, writers and thinkers from many disciplines. The popularity of and engagement with these programs has indicated that audiences are eager for this type of experience and find it a fulfilling and educational way to connect with the McMichael. The McMichael continues to post digital content including short and longform videos, interviews, webinars, programs, activities and events on the website and social media. Success will be measured by online views, engagement, attendance and registration for virtual classes and events and related revenue generation.

RESOURCES NEEDED TO MEET GOALS & OBJECTIVES

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

The Fiscal 2025 budget has been prepared reflecting a Provincial operating grant that is consistent with that received in Fiscal 2024.

Operating revenues included in the planned budget consist of:

- Provincial annual operating grant: \$3,328,800 (29%)
- Other government funding based on project support: \$375,000 (3%)
- Contributed revenue (individual/corporate giving, sponsorships and fundraising events) \$3,125,000 (27%)
- Self-generated revenue: Admissions, membership, touring fees, programs, retail and facility rental \$4,635,000 (41%)

A return to normalized operations has been observed in Fiscal 2024, including, most significantly, a rebound in the number of gallery visitors to pre-COVID levels and continuing robust rentals of the facility for social events. The McMichael continues to be innovative and resourceful in endeavoring to diversify, expand, and maximize its self-generating revenue activities by focusing on the customer experience and optimizing pricing, engaging in all manner of fundraising, and producing exhibitions to be toured to venues across Canada for fees. Despite ongoing efforts to ensure all aspects of operations are efficient, cost-conscious, and sustainable, a deficit will still be recorded, albeit a smaller one compared to the prior year budget. A notable highlight of the budget is that the contributed revenue is projected to be approximate to the Provincial annual operating grant. Moreover, self-generated revenues are once again expected to increase and account for a greater percentage of overall revenues compared to the prior year budget. It is clear to us, though, that we could do so much more if the physical limitations of the current gallery space did not preclude our ability to do so.

The budget that has been developed for Fiscal 2025 continues to reflect the McMichael's desire to operate as best it can within its financial allocations, with total expenditures decreasing compared to the prior year budget, despite the cost pressures present in the macro-economic environment. Staffing levels are being slightly reduced through a reorganization of roles (i.e., the new Executive Director is also the Chief Curator) to prudently and efficiently manage operational funding and workforce size. Resources are being maintained in priority areas to ensure we do not jeopardize the positive momentum of our ambitious and far-reaching exhibitions, expanding collection, and significant publications.

Classification	Number of Staff	FTEs
Senior Management	7	7
Full-time staff	43	43
Part-time staff	87	33.8
Total:	137	83.8
Security Services Outsourced	9	9
Volunteers	190	5

HUMAN RESOURCES

Human Resources objectives for 2024-25 will support the organization's and the Ministry goals in the areas of IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility), Retention and Succession planning, Sustainability, Digital Delivery, Transparency, and Customer Service within the Tourism Sector.

Underlying all the above goals, HR will strongly focus on and encourage communication. Communication in its various forms (written, verbal, visual) and means (in person and virtual), has helped the McMichael throughout the COVID and post-COVID years. Now, in the new-normal of Fiscal 2025 operations, the integration of virtual and non-virtual communications must be seamless. Communication supports the Ministry directive of transparency: as the McMichael grows and expands reach -- whether through a capital renewal or through the traveling exhibitions and publications -- communication will be a key ingredient to keeping and fostering the engagement of staff.

Competitiveness, Sustainability and Expenditure Management

The succession planning that was put in place for senior staff in Fiscal 2024 will be carried out within all departments for all levels of staff in Fiscal 2025. The economic environment, with a high and fast-growing cost of living, low unemployment, and change in demographics with Boomers retiring and Millennial/Gen Z compensation expectations, continues to make recruiting challenging and adds to the need for succession planning and competitive wages. Consequently, we will also be examining our compensation philosophy to better integrate performance metrics in compensation decisions. In addition, we will continue to identify the most critical jobs and conduct market comparisons for them, judging on the basis of value to the organization.

RETENTION & SUCCESSION

The McMichael did very well in retaining staff throughout the "Great Resignation" of the post-pandemic period. Turnover rate came in at 4.5% at the end of 2023 and is not expected to exceed 6-7% at the end of Fiscal 2024. The mitigation plans of engagement initiatives, health and wellness, work flexibility and compensation benchmarking carried out in Fiscal 24 helped ensure retention. Fiscal 25 will require the same strategic focus with the extended review of succession plans.

A Deputy Chief Curator was appointed via a promotion in Fiscal 2024; this position is now a member of the Leadership team. The Leadership Team will continue to use the performance management system, including written objectives for their team members (as outlined as a

focus in the Auditor General's Value for Money audit). Succession planning will continue to be tracked on a quarterly basis as a risk factor with oversight by the Human Resources Committee of the Board.

Workforce management

Communication initiatives and shared strategic goals are cornerstones of workforce management. Continued team and cross-departmental meetings will continue to be held, as will quarterly in-person all-staff meetings and monthly newsletter updates to all staff and volunteers. These regular communication initiatives have proven to be highly successful in keeping staff informed and involved, whether they are working remotely or on site.

Allowing staff to work remotely or offsite is based on the needs of the department, and what is required to carry out required duties and ensure continued, quality customer service. This flexibility supports staff retention, given our location in Kleinburg, as well as work life balance, health and wellness. It also decreases environmental impact by eliminating unnecessary driving time. The factors are valued by the diverse demographic group working at the McMichael, many of whom do not drive.

Health and wellness is a focus of Human Resources to ensure that both our workforce and work environment operate in a healthy manner. Wellness initiatives, including after-hours' yoga, EFAP support newsletters, a welcoming workplace, and quarterly social initiatives add to the culture of a healthy workplace. The Social Committee will continue to promote seasonal initiatives that foster a sense of belonging and enjoyment in the McMichael workplace, providing an additional incentive for retention.

Diversity and Inclusion

IDEA

The IDEA committee continually evolves to include new staff and new ideas. The annual staff and volunteer survey carried out by the IDEA committee, combined with core and new training initiatives on Inclusivity and Unconscious Bias, help to keep diversity top of mind. All new staff and volunteers complete mandatory training.

Fiscal 2024 brought with it a revised Multi-year Accessibility plan as a requirement under the AODA. Following this plan and the strategic initiatives outlined in the *Better Your Business: Tourism Diversity Strategic Plan* developed in conjunction with Tourism Vaughan will help the McMichael stay on the positive trajectory to support Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility.

All positions are posted on multiple job boards that expand the diversity reach of the McMichael and include salary range or hourly rates. As well, all positions are put through the

established salary band lens to ensure internal equity. The posting on various sites with salary specified supports the strategy of transparency and helps keep our levels at a benchmarked rate. In Fiscal 2025, Human Resources will work with Vaughan and York Regions in their Inclusive recruitment initiatives and resources.

INDIGENEITY

While the McMichael works to maintain and foster Indigenous relations, an Indigenous Curator has only recently been appointed after a hiatus of 25 years. This staff member will support the continued efforts to interpret the Cape Dorset Archive and will assist in developing other Indigenous exhibitions.

The McMichael Volunteer Committee will continue to work on the Indigenous Minokamik Garden, working with Elders, to ensure it is well maintained and respected.

Digital Delivery and Customer Service

A Human Resources hub for policies, procedures, and benefits--anticipated to launch in Q4 of Fiscal 2024--will help staff access information. Also, in Q.4 Human Resources will cease printing paper files and all files will be digitally retained. This supports a greener environment and ensures data and documents are available in the manner that stakeholders require, such as the auditors. The retention of electronic files will follow the same records retention management of paper files.

McMichael Volunteer Committee (MVC)

The Human Resources department works with the MVC in the role of MCAC Liaison, keeping the MVC engaged and informed on McMichael activities, while supporting the joint direction of the Committee.

Volunteer placement opportunities increased substantially in Fiscal 2024, although total contributed hours were down due to the fact that the MVC did not offer an Autumn Art Sale fundraiser in the Fall of 2023.

The McMichael staff and volunteers are working together to assess the best path forward, and there is much enthusiasm for the possibility of a holiday craft sale in early December to support our VOICES program, a project long supported by the MVC.

The MVC faces a challenge in Fiscal 2025 with the departure of long-term Executive members. While the Executive team focuses on succession planning, there are some points for which the appointment of new members will be a challenge (President, Past President, Treasurer).

The McMichael Youth Team (MYT) continues to encourage participation, primarily for ArtVenture art camp in the summer and winter months. The MYT is an excellent means of local community engagement. Human Resources works very closely with local high schools to meet students' volunteer and work experience opportunities, and the MYT provides a structured program to engage the local community. The McMichael is pleased that many MYT members apply for paid staff positions after volunteering and gaining experience.

Structure

All staff members report, directly or indirectly, to the Executive Director who reports to the McMichael Board of Trustees. The Executive Director of the Foundation participates on the McMichael Leadership team, providing direction to the Development and Fundraising department. All Trustees are appointed by the Premier's Office Appointments Secretariat and approved by the Lieutenant Governor-in-Council.

See McMichael Functional Organizational Chart, Attachment 3.

See McMichael Financial, Attendance, FTE, Performance Measures, Attachment 2.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The McMichael's strategic objectives are as follows and are guided by the 2012 Strategic Plan and the Artistic Vision of 2016. Below can be found the specific output-based performance measures that support each of these stated objectives. Outcomes for Exhibitions and Creative Learning have been highlighted above.

The strategic objectives from the 2012 Strategic Plan and the Artistic Vision of 2016 are:

- Promote the McMichael as the Home of the Art of Canada
- Consistently deliver an engaging and exceptional visitor experience
- Become a centre for knowledge creation and sharing
- Build a sustainable organization delivering outstanding performance
- Improve organizational capacity and performance

The following performance measures correlate to the McMichael's success in **promoting the Art of Canada:**

Performance Measure	2024-25 Target	2023-24 Projection	2023-24 Target	2022-23 Result	2021-22 Result	2020-21 Result
Total Attendance (includes virtual programs attendance)	122,600	120,000	122,600	104,900	71,643	49,006
Virtual Programs Attendance	3,000	2,000	10,000	8,000	10,720	22,177

Engaging and exceptional visitor experience:

Performance Measure	2024-25 Target	2023 -24 Projection	2023-24 Target	2022-23 Result	2021-22 Result	2020-21 Result
Visitor Satisfaction (FY24 to date)	3,300 comments 98.5% positive	2100 Comments 98.5% positive YTD: 514 comments 98% positive	3,000 comments 97% positive	1032 Comments 97.5% positive	1,468 comments 98% positive	1,504 comments 99% positive

Performance Measure	2024-25 Target	2023-24 Target	2022-23 Projection	2022-23 Target	2021-22 Result	2020-21 Result
Membership Growth	47% retention 1% conversion	45% retention 1% conversion	45% retention 1% conversion	50% retention 2% conversion	46% retention 0.85% conversion	34% retention 0.87% conversion

Social Media

Performance Measure	2024-25 Target	2023-24 Projection	2023-24 Target	2022-23 Result	2021-22 Result
Numbers of followers across social media platforms (FY24 to date)	Facebook: 36,500 Instagram: 30,000 Twitter: 26,000	YTD Facebook: 35,099 Instagram: 27,255 Twitter: 26,034	Facebook: 38,000 Instagram: 30,000 Twitter: 26,500	Facebook: 31,723 Instagram: 26,049 Twitter: 26,144	Facebook: 30,617 Instagram: 23,780 Twitter: 25,897

The following anticipated exhibitions, events and goals reflect the McMichael's ability to serve as a centre for **knowledge creation and sharing** for a wide range of audiences:

- Welcome around 16,000 students to the McMichael's site or engage them in virtual or Art2Go in-school outreach to discover curricular connection with the Art of Canada
- 700 children benefiting from children public art classes and camps
- Two 'main stage' exhibitions of loaned works, one permanent collection exhibition, one mid-size contemporary exhibition, one mid-size historical exhibition, one single-gallery historical exhibition, three single-gallery contemporary exhibitions, and an artist residency
- Eight exhibitions developed by the McMichael on tour to other Canadian galleries
- Five publications on Canadian art
- 15 virtual curatorial and artist talks and #McMichael at Home videos on Canadian art featuring artists, writers, curators, and scholars
- 10 in-person curatorial, artist talks and knowledge sharing events
- A selection of relevant acquisitions made to the permanent collection of works of art with significance to all Canadians
- Continue to promote Iningat Ilagijt broadly to Canadians to provide them with the opportunity to become immersed in the artistic legacy of Cape Dorset
- More than 1000 attendees of online webinars
- More than 4000 participants in virtual and in-person public gallery tours
- More than 1000 participants in virtual and in-person adult art and wellness classes

New indicator:

Performance Measure	2024-25 Target	2023-24 Projection
Total # of school group visits	350	313
Total # of free school visits	30	33

Performance Measure	2024-25 Target	2023-24 Result	2022-23 Result	2022-23 Target	2021-22 Result	2020-21 Result
Number of McMichael produced exhibitions on tour	8	7	8	8	4	2
Number of viewers of McMichael produced exhibitions at touring venues	TBA	400,000*	254,230	231,800	47,973	81,200

*Necessarily approximate, as many galleries are not yet reporting results. *Uninvited* was seen by 250,000 visitors, and *Generations: the Sobey Family and Canadian Art* is being offered to all residents of Nova Scotia for free admission, which will drive our attendance #s up in this fiscal.

The following performance measures reflect the McMichael's ability to build **a sustainable organization delivering outstanding performance:**

Performance Measure	2024-25 Target	2023-24 Result	2022-23 Projection	2022-23 Target	2021-22 Result	2020-21 Result
Dollar-per-visitor revenue in Gallery Shop	\$11.33	\$13.14	\$11.75	\$12.95	\$15.82	\$19.23
Percentage of administrative and operational costs compared to total costs	14%	13%	13%	13%	15%	12%

The following measures reflect the McMichael's ability to **improve organizational capacity and performance:**

Performance Measure	2024-25 Target	2023-24 Target	2022-23 Result	2022-23 Target	2021-22 Result	2020-21 Result	2019-20 Result
FTEs	83.8	84.9	81.7	78.4	69.11	56.8	67.8
Staff Turnover	7%	6%	5.7%	6%	3.7%	1.8%	4%
Number of volunteers, docents and board members	190	180	187	180	155	164	165
Number of volunteer hours	9,000	8,000	7,500	10,000	5,616	3,732	15,000

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

External Factors

Pandemic

While visitorship numbers have returned to pre-pandemic levels, we remain cautious about an ongoing impact on visitorship patterns. For example, research conducted in the US has indicated that people are spacing out their time between repeat visits. With a vibrant and changing roster of exhibitions, as well as activities for the whole family monthly on Family Sundays, we can encourage more frequent repeat visits.

Tourism

The Ontario Arts Council released the *Ontario Arts and Culture Tourism Profile* in August 2023, which identifies the substantial economic impact of the arts. The report's key findings include the following:

- The average arts and culture trip has nearly triple the economic impact of non-arts and culture trips; roughly \$11.4 billion were spent on arts and culture tourism in Ontario, resulting in \$5.7 billion in direct value-added to the province
- Arts and culture tourism not only spend more, but they also stay longer and more likely to be from overseas; 40% of Canadian arts and culture visitors made trips of three days or more, while only 13% non-arts and culture visitors did the same; arts and culture visitors made of the majority (55% of all overseas visitors)
- Arts and culture activities featured on one-eighth of all tourist trips
- Attending performances and visiting galleries are key activities
- Arts and culture tourists have a diverse demographic profile
- Arts and culture tourists are much more likely to be motivated to spend

The report provides weight to our marketing plans, and impetus for our involvement in tourism bodies for Vaughan and Ontario.

Local Community

Vaughan is one of the fastest growing municipalities in Canada, and one of the most diverse. This local community will continue to be of paramount importance to developing our visitorship, enhancing our community and organizational connections, and maintaining close relationships with the City of Vaughan Mayor and council. The MOU with the City of Vaughan and Vaughan Film Festival as part of the focus on creative industries for Vaughan is an important part of this local environment.

Diversity and the Arts

The arts have been playing a significant role in promoting diversity, inclusion, and social justice. This trend is expected to continue in 2024, with artists using their platforms to address social issues, challenge stereotypes, and amplify marginalized voices. The IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility) committee continues to forefront these issues throughout the organization. Creative Learning leads the way through its work with Indigenous Elders and artists as well as programming for BIPOC audiences, but the curatorial department is also deeply conscious of the need for diversity both in its programming and its acquisitions. In Fiscal 2025 we will also continue our engagement with Indigenous arborists and traditional teachers in landscape management through the Indigenous Visioning committee.

Demographics

The demographics are essentially unchanged in that the core audience of the McMichael is aging, and that the traditional museum visitor is being replaced at a negative rate. This presents both opportunities (as they have leisure time and disposal income available to visit galleries) and risks (accessibility challenges, programming and exhibitions choices). We strive to achieve a balance to engage both the older demographic, who are looking for more traditional art, as well as the younger demographic, who are more interested in contemporary exhibitions and a diversity of compelling events that engage in of-the-moment concerns. Additionally, younger audiences evaluate their cultural consumption through a range of factors – the exhibition offerings must not only be compelling, but the related programming must be relevant and timely, hours and transportation options must be easy to find and fit their lifestyle, and the café and giftshop must be well priced and offer a curated selection of items. This audience is budget conscious and eco-sensitive and ultimately must feel like they relate to the institution's tone of voice and values both online and on social media. If the institution is seen as being out of touch, or conversely of trying too hard or being disingenuous, this audience will see right through it and be less likely to engage or visit.

In response to these demographic shifts, we had created Free Family Sundays, which attracted a much younger demographic through providing targeted experiences for children and families. That successful venture will be continued.

Transportation

The need for a viable, reliable, low-cost transportation solution from the GTA to the McMichael continues to be urgent if the McMichael is to attract new audiences and cultivate new demographics. Environmental concerns as well as the reluctance of younger generations to drive remaining limiting factors that necessitate a public transportation solution. We are in current discussions with Metrolinx to identify the potential for a public bus route from the subway.

Digital Transformation

The increasing integration of technology and the arts is likely to continue in Fiscal 2025. This includes the use of virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), and mixed reality (MR) in art installations and performances, as well as the exploration of digital platforms for art distribution and consumption. While we have remained cautious in the use of VR and AR, we continue to invest in and use digital platforms, both for public engagement and education.

The use of AI and machine learning algorithms in the creation, curation, and analysis of art is expected to grow. AI-generated art, AI-assisted creativity tools, and AI-powered recommendation systems for art discovery are some areas that may continue to evolve. This is an area that we are watching closely.

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the adoption of virtual and hybrid experiences in the arts. These formats continue to be relevant, allowing us to reach global audiences, experiment with new formats, and create immersive digital experience.

Sustainability and Environmental Issues

Sustainability and environmental issues are likely to influence the arts in general in 2024. Artists look to increasingly incorporate eco-friendly materials and practices into their work, address climate change and ecological concerns, and explore the relationship between art and the environment. The unique location of the McMichael in a conservation area reflects the urgency of these concerns. The development of a Sustainability Plan seeks to address these concerns in a systematic way, including our work with the Indigenous Visioning committee specifically on land renewal.

Economic Situation

The threat of a recession continues to loom, along with persistent inflation and higher interest rates. While there is nothing we can do to influence these factors, we remain conscious of the need to keep our admission and parking prices in check so as to not drive away visitors.

National and International

Touring exhibitions will continue to be a key source of both presence and revenue, with approximately \$1.4 million expected in Fiscal 2025.

Internal Factors

Staffing

Retention, recruitment and succession planning are key issues for the McMichael, and indeed for many organizations in the arts and elsewhere. Those issues are exacerbated for us by our location. The opportunity to offer remote work has been a key to our ability to navigate the issues of retention and recruitment.

Facilities

The McMichael's aging facility is the key driver for our plan for capital renewal. In Fiscal 2024, we are addressing issues such as the cooling tower, boilers, backflow regulators and HVAC system repairs. We will also be carrying out building exterior repairs over the next two years. The ongoing challenge is to avoid replacements that will become redundant with the new building, while ensuring that climate controls and other environmental systems are maintained to Category A museum standards.

Achieving Financial Sustainability

While we have maximized current opportunities for earned revenue from events and weddings and identified new potential revenue in the form of touring exhibitions, we are ultimately stymied by our lack of space and our layout. We will continue to do our best to manage expenses but acknowledge that a balanced budget is not a reality within our current constraints.

FINANCIALS

Key Planning Assumptions

The McMichael bases its planning on the following assumptions:

- The Fiscal 2025 plan assumes continued normal operations as the worst of the pandemic's effects seem to be behind us. The McMichael's success continues to be dependent on planning and delivering exhibitions and programs that can be marketed strategically to targeted audiences and to public and private supporters, thereby diversifying revenue streams. As such, we continue to emphasize the creation of exhibitions that can generate increased visitation and touring revenue, as well as ensure our central role as the Home of the Art of Canada
- The gallery is not immune to inflationary cost increases being experienced by all organizations in the current economic environment. In such an environment, the McMichael's dedication to responsible financial stewardship will continue to focus on identifying opportunities and efficiencies through innovative practices and improved program sustainability
- An economic slowdown and potential recession is likely to constrain growth in revenues
- Ongoing investment is required in human resources for retention in order to simply maintain current staffing levels. Some of this investment is statutory in the form of minimum wage increases
- Continuing to lay the foundation for a capital renewal project. Initial capital costs of \$750K have already been incurred in order to obtain a Class B estimate. Further investment of \$200K is required for a site plan in Fiscal 2025 (note: we have secured pro bono service for an economic impact statement). \$60K is expected to be spent on capital fundraising campaign materials and related items through the end of fiscal 2024, with an extra \$10K budgeted for the same in fiscal 2025
- A significant investment of \$200K to refresh the McMichael brand in order to capture the McMichael's vision and future direction, align with its values, and support the major capital fundraising campaign
- Fundraising will focus on major gifts, both for annual needs and capital renewal. The McMichael is conscious that an economic downturn and/or recession may impact its ability to secure major sponsorships and other financial support
- Fundraising events will continue to be anchored by the Moonlight Gala in the spring and Art Toronto Opening Night in the fall, with a moderate increase in the amount expected to be raised coming off a record amount in Fiscal 2024
- For corporate rentals, weddings, and other in-person events, we project revenue to remain robust after what is shaping up to be another strong year in Fiscal 2024

See *Fiscal 2025 Budget and 2 Year Forecast, Attachment 2*

CAPITAL ASSET MANAGEMENT AND RENEWAL

In Fiscal 2024, we participated in a major asset valuation exercise to plan for capital assets repair and rehabilitation. This analysis is a “like to like”, and as such does not take into account the need to create a loading dock to safely accept the loan of large works of art, or the need to replace the wet sprinkler system in the galleries and vaults with a dry system. Even so, the asset valuation exercise by the province has identified approximately \$20M in necessary repairs alone for the main building.

CAPITAL RENEWAL

We continue to note that significant capital renewal and rehabilitation of the current building is required to prevent the failure of our aging building components and to bring the current building in line with current museum standards. It is critical that we move to the next phase in planning for essential capital rehabilitation or else we run the risk of expensive repairs due to the failure of systems, which could be more costly in the long run than wholesale renewal. As witness to this issue, we are replacing a boiler, repairing a cooling tower, and replacing a number of heat pumps in Fiscal 2024 to keep the aging mechanical and HVAC systems functioning. It is difficult to identify repairs for Fiscal 2025 without wholesale replacement of systems. We also continue to be concerned about the climate management systems, which are critical to the preservation of the art and our Class A status as a museum. In addition, through capital renewal, we will improve the resilience of the infrastructure for climate change adaptation, with the goal of achieving net zero.

As ever, we continue to fight for space between revenue generating operations such as weddings, conferences, classes and social functions, while continuing our core exhibition and education programs. The planned expansion will provide the opportunity to increase our revenue generation, which is at maximum capacity at present.

The landscape plan is integral to this renewal. The Indigenous Visioning circle initiated in Fiscal 2024 will continue to inform those plans in Fiscal 2025, identifying priorities and projects as part of a long-term strategy to create resiliency in the face of climate change. This includes replacing dying and aging trees with Carolinian forest species; removing invasive species to ensure that native species can flourish; and managing and mitigating erosion threats.

In order to minimize spending on repairs that may be redundant once the renewal of the current building is undertaken, we continue to keep repairs to a minimum. For example, the building envelope work completed in Fiscal 2023 and Fiscal 2024 has ensured the integrity of the structure, with the replacement of caulking and rotted logs. We will undertake more necessary external structural repairs in Fiscal 2024 and Fiscal 2025. As before, this strategy of

deferring capital rehabilitation may result in some emergency repairs funding requests being made to the Ministry.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY & ELECTRONIC SERVICE DELIVERY (ESD) PLAN

With the completion of the IT infrastructure upgrade, we are moving on to new projects that could not be done prior to the upgrade. In Fiscal 2024 and likely Fiscal 2025 as well, we will review our file systems and capacity with a view to archiving data and therefore reducing our backup and storage expenses.

In Fiscal 2025, we urgently need to update our website, which is built upon an outdated Wordpress model. The website is a critical entry point for visitors, students, teachers, and the general public. In Fiscal 2024, we completed a basic upgrade for the Gift Shop website, but more work may well need to be done once the new website branding is complete.

More work is ongoing in the areas of security and server upgrades, while electronic file management will be a significant priority for Fiscal 2025. We have implemented two-factor authentication and improved the firewall and software to reduce the number of phishing and hacking attempts through email. In addition, staff training in identifying security threats has been extremely successful. In Fiscal 2025, we will rationalize our storage of electronic files and bring them into line with our paper storage policies in order to ensure security and accessibility of data.

RETAIL STRATEGY

The Gallery Shop is an essential part of the visitor experience and destination, attracting our audiences to enjoy the art, the shop, and café as part of the enjoyment of our site. We will continue to boost our exposure and presence online, in paid advertising, street signage and on our website, to increase public awareness of the shop.

The shop has been working with our Development Department and our Programs Department to evaluate when the shop should be open for evening events. Some evenings have proven more successful than others, so we will continue to monitor.

Although the shop's footprint cannot grow, we can still maximize floorspace in a couple of ways. The back corner bench area is very rarely used, and we will modify part of this area for

revenue generating product and display. We will keep with the smart feel of the vision we had with the past renovation. Another way to increase our presence is to produce or purchase a books display cart, which can be wheeled into the lobby during opening hours. This can display some of our books, freeing up more space inside the shop. We can also consider poster displays that are neatly wall mounted.

The Gallery Shop is the place where visitors can purchase a bit of McMichael to take home. One of our biggest sellers is the exhibition catalogues, which visitors expect to purchase when they come to see an exhibition. The Gallery Shop continues to use environmentally friendly packaging. We use recycled paper for our bags, and reuse boxes and containers for our eShop and mail-order department. We do not use plastic bags. Customers also decline the use of bags when personally preferred. Packaging is expensive and we make choices daily to reduce and reuse and recycle to keep costs down.

The stockroom in our loft needs reorganizing, focusing on clearing the clutter and storing overstock and display fixtures neatly. We will devote time to this project in the coming year.

The products we offer continue to be carefully curated, for which we receive many positive comments. Our Indigenous offerings are all credited to an artist and their community whenever possible, and our purchasing and display is done with sensitivity and is always evolving. Strategic and focused buying along with store curating strategies results in a positive customer experience; some of our customers favourably compare our offerings to other major gallery shops worldwide. We endeavor to curate the shop with products which reflect the McMichael brand and its exhibitions, are high quality and unique while hitting all price points. Visitors expect products made in Canada, and in Fiscal 2025 the shop will continue to strive to meet our customers' expectation of high standards.

INITIATIVES INVOLVING THIRD PARTIES

PARTNERSHIPS

The McMichael continues its food services and catering contract with The Food Dudes, based in Toronto, which is due for renewal in Fiscal 2025. As part of this contract, The Food Dudes are also granted catering exclusivity at the McMichael.

In Fiscal 2025, McMichael Creative Learning and Programs will continue its partnerships such as with Toronto Region Conservation Authority, Ontario Parks, Canada Parks, Indigenous communities and community organizations.

The McMichael welcomed a new partner for the donation of wine in Fiscal 2024, Stratus Vineyards.

Our partnership with Dorset Fine Arts/West Baffin Eskimo Cooperative continues through *Iningat Ilagiit*, the virtual exhibition site of Cape Dorset art. We continue to participate in Collective North to bring art at the McMichael to remote and northern classrooms.

The Memorandum of Understanding signed with the City of Vaughan and the Vaughan International Film Festival to focus on the promotion of Creative Industries in Vaughan and a cultural corridor on Islington represents exciting potential for our future sustainability, increased visitorship, and other partnerships with cultural organizations in Vaughan.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The plan to implement the strategic goals and objectives referred to in this Business Plan over the next three years can be summarized as follows:

Promote our brand as the home of the Art of Canada

- As the plans for our curatorial program demonstrate, touring of exhibitions is solidly built into the roster of exhibitions, and will continue to be a major source of new revenue. It is anticipated that this will contribute \$1.4M to the bottom line in Fiscal 2025
- The representation of the diversity of Canadian art continues to be a hallmark of the Exhibition Program. From *Cobalt*, to *Moridge Kitenge Banza: Topographies*, to *From the Watershed: The Photographs of John MacFie*, *Impressionism on the St. Lawrence*, and *Ghosts of Canoe Lake: New Work by Marcel Dzama*, our exhibitions will reflect on and speak to one another about our various Canadian and Indigenous identities
- A series of 5 publications will accompany our exhibitions, which is also key to our touring program
- Important exhibitions to highlight that speak to our continued representation of historical Canadian art are *Impressionism on the St. Lawrence*, *Bertram Brooker: When We Awake!*, *Jackson's Wars*, and *Morrice in Venice*
- Marketing and Communications has delivered nuanced and targeted advertising across multiple channels in Fiscal 2024 to serve the needs of the curatorial offerings, fundraising, sales and Creative Learning. Those efforts will continue in Fiscal 2025, as we strive to reach the diversity of audiences represented by our exhibition program and acquisitions. Marketing campaigns draw audiences to the unique selling proposition of the extensive grounds and trails and the corresponding physical, cognitive and mental health benefits of spending time outdoors and viewing art. We also hope to finally complete the (again) deferred Brand and Website Refresh

Deliver an engaging and exceptional visitor experience

- While Covid is now a permanent feature of our health and economic landscape, its impact on attendance and related revenues is now minimal; visitorship has rebounded to pre-pandemic levels. We have been cautiously optimistic about visitorship levels in Fiscal 2025, however, as it is difficult to predict the popularity of the main summer exhibition *Impressionism on the St Lawrence*
- We also need to take note of the increased visitorship with touring exhibitions, which

brings the McMichael brand to people across North America

- Family Sundays continue to be a major success, with recent attendance cresting 1250 visitors. These programs for children and families are enthusiastically received, and we are pleased that the day attracts not just a younger and more diverse demographic, but also more local families
- Diversity is also a focus for visitor services, as we look to implement the recommendations of the *Better Your Business Tourism Diversity Strategic Plan* and update our accessibility plan
- Another boost to our visitor numbers in Fiscal 2024 was the Art Bus, which was generously sponsored by a private philanthropist. We do not have the capacity to continue the Art Bus without a sponsor, which we are seeking for Fiscal 2025
- Through virtual webinars and tours, curatorial and artist talks, and other digital experiences, we will continue to make our permanent collection and special exhibitions accessible to audiences around the world
- A refreshed and modernized website will improve our visitors' access to information

Become a centre for knowledge creation and sharing

- Continue to reflect diversity in school programs by involving BIPOC artists and relevant communities in the development of the programs
- By working with Elders, traditional teachers, and storytellers from diverse Indigenous communities across the country, the McMichael offers an ideal forum for knowledge sharing and ideas exchange. Close collaboration will also enrich the knowledge of our team and ensure that we properly interpret presented concepts and the works on view
- The Creative Learning department responds to numerous issues, such as children and youth and mental health, adult wellness and social issues, equity and inclusion, as well as social justice and environmentalism. Two specific areas of focus are addressing the need for quality art education in struggling neighbourhoods through the expansion of our V.O.I.C.E.S. program and deepening our engagement with Indigenous communities through our curatorial initiatives and our planning for our site

Build a sustainable organization

- An innovative source of new revenue is our hosting of the VIP Opening Night at Art Toronto. Our business analysis identified this as a potential success, and it has proven to be the case, with profitability in the first year of our hosting. We have contracted with Art Toronto to be the beneficiary of Opening Night again in 2025. Art Toronto builds our presence in Toronto, and with the art community across Canada, while also garnering much needed revenue

- We will continue to work with the provincial and federal government, as well as work to cultivate the support of private philanthropists to support the vision of the McMichael's capital renewal. This support is crucial if we are to fully reap the benefits of the investment we have made in our curatorial and education programs and ensure the security of the collection
- Fulfil the fundraising objectives in this plan, including build the donor pipeline, strengthen existing relationships with corporate sponsors and build new relationships through alignment of interests and priorities
- Improve use of the database to better understand our donors and members interests
- Prepare for the next phase of capital campaign by recruiting strong volunteer leaders, finalizing internal processes and documents, and cultivating/securing support
- Ensure we are responsive to the changing patterns of visitorship and work with other attractions and tourist bodies so that that we may present attractive options to increase visitorship
- As noted above, touring continues to be an important new source of revenue
- A key development in our operations is the creation of a 'Sustainability Policy and Plan' (attached) in Fiscal 2024, covering the building, the landscape and our operations. A working group will be established this year to identify implementation for Fiscal 2025 within the confines of our current infrastructure and looking forward to longer term implementation.
- In a related initiative, we are engaged in an Indigenous Visioning exercise to inform our landscape management plan as it relates to the proposed capital plan, and most importantly, to create resiliency in the face of climate change. Led by Elder Shelley Charles, we will continue the development of the plan with a group of engaged internal and external stakeholders

Improve organizational capacity and performance

- Continue to work closely with our partners such as the Kleinburg Business Improvement Association, the City of Vaughan, Toronto Region Conservation Authority and Destination Ontario to position the McMichael as a cultural attraction in the region
- Work with the City of Vaughan and Vaughan International Film Festival on the implementation of the MOU as part of the establishment of a Creative Industries focus in Vaughan
- Continue to invest in staffing to meet the needs of our strategic direction and prepare for capital campaign
- Mitigation plans for staff retention include a focus on communication, workplace

wellness, work flexibility in continued hybrid work, and competitive compensation through benchmarking

- Focus on diversity and inclusion through staff and volunteer committee, job postings, training, and ongoing relationships with indigenous elders and others
- Ensure we meet the benchmarks and performance key indicators as expressed in this Business Plan by revisiting and reviewing throughout the year