



(from left) Cllr. Dave Schneider, MP Mike Morrice, Shirley Madill, KWAG Executive Director, MPP Aislinn Clancy and MP Tim Louis. Photo by KWAG.

MEDIA RELEASE

22 August 2024

**Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery Celebrates \$106,627 in Federal and Provincial Funding
for dynamic digital programming**

Kitchener, ON — On Thursday, local representatives met with the team at the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery (KWAG) to celebrate \$106,627 in funding they received through grants from the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario. Thanks to this support, KWAG has been able to make major improvements to their online programming and website.

The COVID-19 pandemic fundamentally affected how KWAG's audiences were able to experience contemporary art exhibitions and programming. KWAG sought new initiatives to broaden its reach to the Kitchener-Waterloo community, pivoting to online programming, and later following a hybrid format of on-site, off-site, and online offerings.

In May 2023, KWAG was awarded a \$54,400 Resilient Communities Fund grant from the provincial government's Ontario Trillium Foundation, which funded consultations and assistance to invest in a major upgrade to the Gallery's outdated website infrastructure. The sleek, new website is a design-friendly, AODA compliant digital platform. Digital competency training was also implemented to ensure all staff and volunteers develop the software skills required to support the visitor the visitor experience.

Through the Community Services Recovery Fund, the Federal government awarded KWAG \$52,227 to further enhance the Gallery's digital capacity. This funding will allow for additional research to ensure a promising future of virtual programming and resources.

Together, the grants from the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario have allowed KWAG to enhance their digital capacity and offer new programs and services online to better serve their community.

Quotes

"Whether it's helping people learn new things, connect with their community, or simply have fun, organizations like the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery deliver experiences that make a difference," said Stan Cho, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Gaming. "That's why grant support through the Ontario Trillium Foundation is so important. This funding will help ensure they remain at the heart of the community for decades to come."

—Stan Cho, Ontario Minister of Tourism Culture and Gaming

"Our arts community is essential to us and they need these resources and recognition. KWAG has always given us more than just art. It connects and inspires our community. I am happy to celebrate this funding which will help KWAG innovate and create more accessible programs."

—Aislinn Clancy, MPP for Kitchener Centre

"We can serve people in the region who have expressed reliance on digital media as an integral part of their cultural lives particularly those who cannot physically visit the Gallery. By meeting a need for more accessible cultural experiences online, we can ensure that our community continues to access the art experience online."

—Shirley Madill, Executive Director, Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery

About Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery

As Waterloo Region's leading public art gallery, the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery (KWAG) connects people and ideas through art. Its nationally acclaimed exhibitions and programs welcome all to be inspired and challenged through a deepened understanding of ourselves, our cultures, and our communities. Admission is free.

About the Community Services Recovery Fund

As the long-term recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic continues, we welcome the Government of Canada's push for a more inclusive model of economic growth that creates opportunities for everyone in Canada. The Community Services Recovery Fund is being delivered through three National Funders - Canadian Red Cross, Community Foundations of Canada, and United Way Centraide Canada.

About the Ontario Trillium Foundation

The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) is an agency of the Ontario government with a mission to build healthy and vibrant communities across the province. Last year, OTF invested more than \$110M into 1,044 community projects and multi-sector partnerships. Projects aim to enhance economic well-being, foster more active lifestyles, support child and youth development, provide spaces for people to come together and connect, and create a more sustainable environment. Visit otf.ca to learn more.

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