



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Business for the Arts awards \$350,000 in matching incentives and sponsorship training to 55 Saskatchewan arts and culture groups

First-round participants to benefit from artsVest™ program encouraging local business investment in the arts

(TORONTO, ON – March 5, 2012) Business for the Arts announced today the first round of pre-approved artsVest participants in Saskatchewan. artsVest Saskatchewan is a sponsorship training and matching incentive program created by Business for the Arts and delivered in Saskatchewan with funding from Canadian Heritage and the Government of Saskatchewan Ministry of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport, and with support from SaskCulture Inc. The program's goal is to assist Saskatchewan's small- to medium-sized arts and culture organizations in the development of new and mutually beneficial partnerships with local businesses.

Following a jury process and a review of 63 applications, 55 organizations have been pre-approved for the first round of funding. In Regina, 15 of 20 applicants received pre-approval for their plans, in Saskatoon 16 of 17, and in the Districts, 24 of 26. Due to the overwhelming interest in the program, not all organizations received approval for the full amounts requested. For a complete list of organizations, please visit our website at <http://www.businessforthearts.org/media-room/>.

Business for the Arts will bring sponsorship training and \$350,000 in matching funds to Sports, Culture and Recreation Districts each year for two years (2012 – 2013). The matching funds include \$100,000 each for Regina and Saskatoon, and \$150,000 to be shared among the surrounding districts. The funds flow entirely as matching incentive grants to local arts and culture organizations who successfully secure sponsorships with the business community.

"We congratulate our 2011-2012 Saskatchewan participants and look forward to bringing the artsVest program to communities around the province. By guiding arts organizations on how to secure sponsorships, artsVest arms them with the skills to generate new and diverse revenue streams, and create long-term partnerships with the local business community," said Nichole Anderson, President and CEO of Business for the Arts.





"Our dynamic arts, culture and heritage organizations are a source of pride for us here in Saskatchewan, as they make important contributions to our economy and our enviable quality of life," Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport Minister Bill Hutchinson said. "Businesses know that and I am confident they will respond enthusiastically to opportunities for partnerships that will raise their profiles in their communities, benefit their bottom line and make Saskatchewan stronger."

Arts and culture organizations were invited to apply for artsVest matching funds in November 2011 by submitting an application, including their sponsorship proposal and a list of businesses they intend to approach for sponsorship. If their application is approved, a pre-approved amount is reserved for them from the matching funds, which they must match in sponsorship from the business community. The pre-approval deadline for the first year of artsVest funding was January 13, 2012. The second year of artsVest Saskatchewan is currently planned to begin late spring 2012. artsVest currently operates in Ontario, Calgary, Saskatchewan and Winnipeg. For more information on the program, visit www.artsVest.com.

Since 1974, **Business for the Arts** aims to strengthen arts and culture in Canada by connecting arts organizations to business patrons and volunteers through our *artsScene* and *boardLink* programs; by providing arts organizations with matching incentive funds to stimulate business investment and professional development resources to improve their sustainability through *artsVest*; by communicating the value of investing in the arts through advocacy and research via our *Roundtables* and *Surveys*; and by providing a platform for arts organizations to celebrate their outstanding business partners in the arts through our *National Awards Gala* and media partnerships. For more information, visit www.businessforthearts.org.

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