

# Arts Impact Calculator

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ARTS RÉSEAU  
**NETWORK DES ARTS**  
OTTAWA D'OTTAWA



**OTTAWA  
COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION**

# Today's Agenda

**01**

Introduction

**02**

Methodology

**03**

Key Findings

**04**

Solutions

**05**

Recommendations

01

# Introduction

01

Introduction

**What if Ottawa arts organizations were better able to calculate the social and economic benefits they bring to their local communities?**

01

Introduction

**What if Ottawa arts organizations had access to purpose-built tools for measuring social and economic impact?**

01

Introduction

# Why is it important to measure impact?

- **Communicate value to stakeholders and partners.**
- **Attract investment and build support.**
- **Advocate for funding and policy changes.**

01

Introduction

## Why Now?

**Funders increasingly expect arts organizations to demonstrate the social and economic impact of their programming, making the notion of 'art for art's sake' no longer sufficient.**

01

Introduction

## Why Now?

**Now is the time to provide tools that help organizations showcase their impact and foster cross-sector connections, as the newly merged Arts Ottawa deepens its commitment to supporting the city's arts ecosystem.**

02

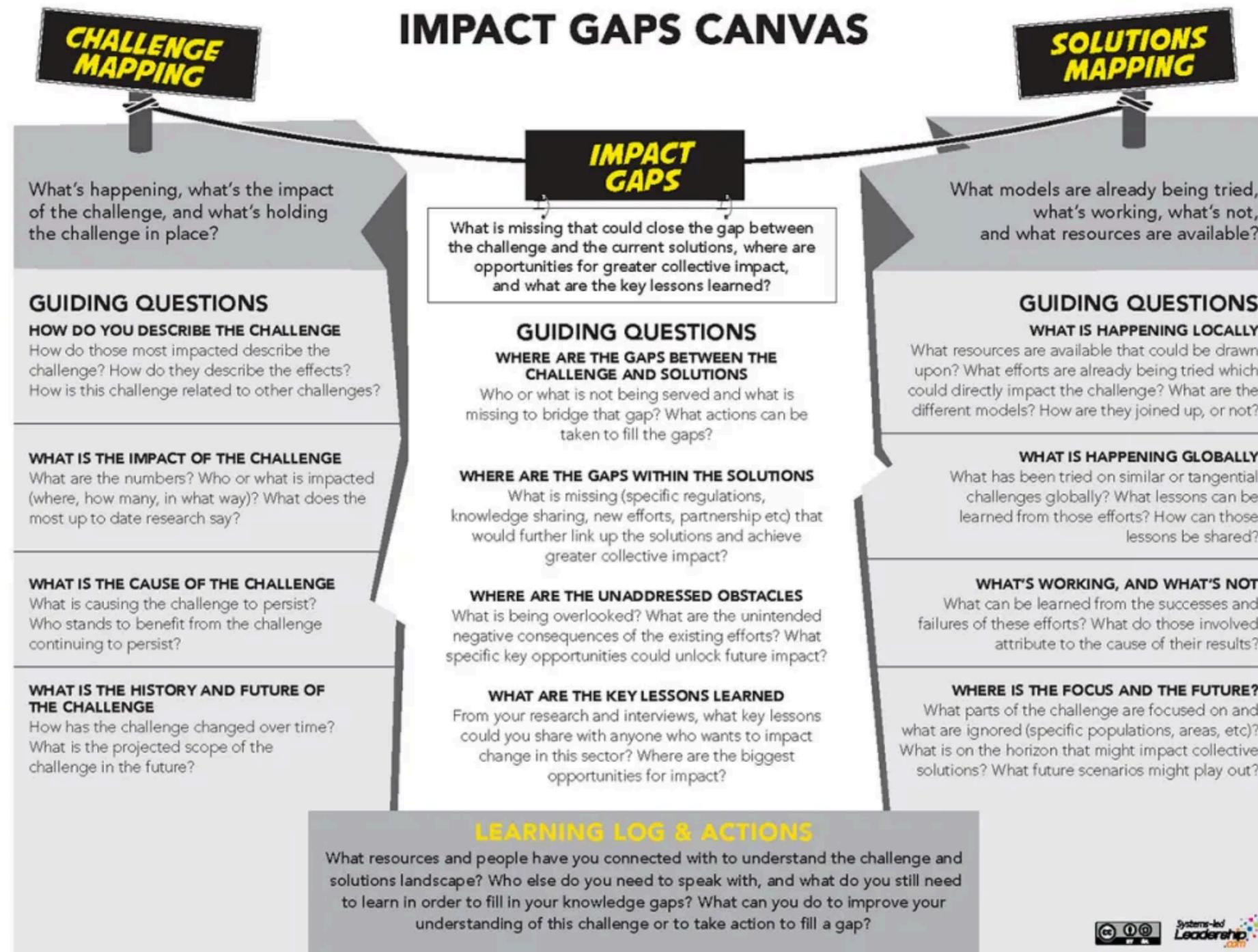
# Methodology

## 02

### Methodology

**Before diving into the development of a new tool, we needed understand the challenges Ottawa arts organizations face in measuring their impact.**

## 02 Methodology



We used the **Impact Gaps Canvas** framework to structure interviews, analyze existing tools, and develop actionable recommendations.

03

# Key Findings

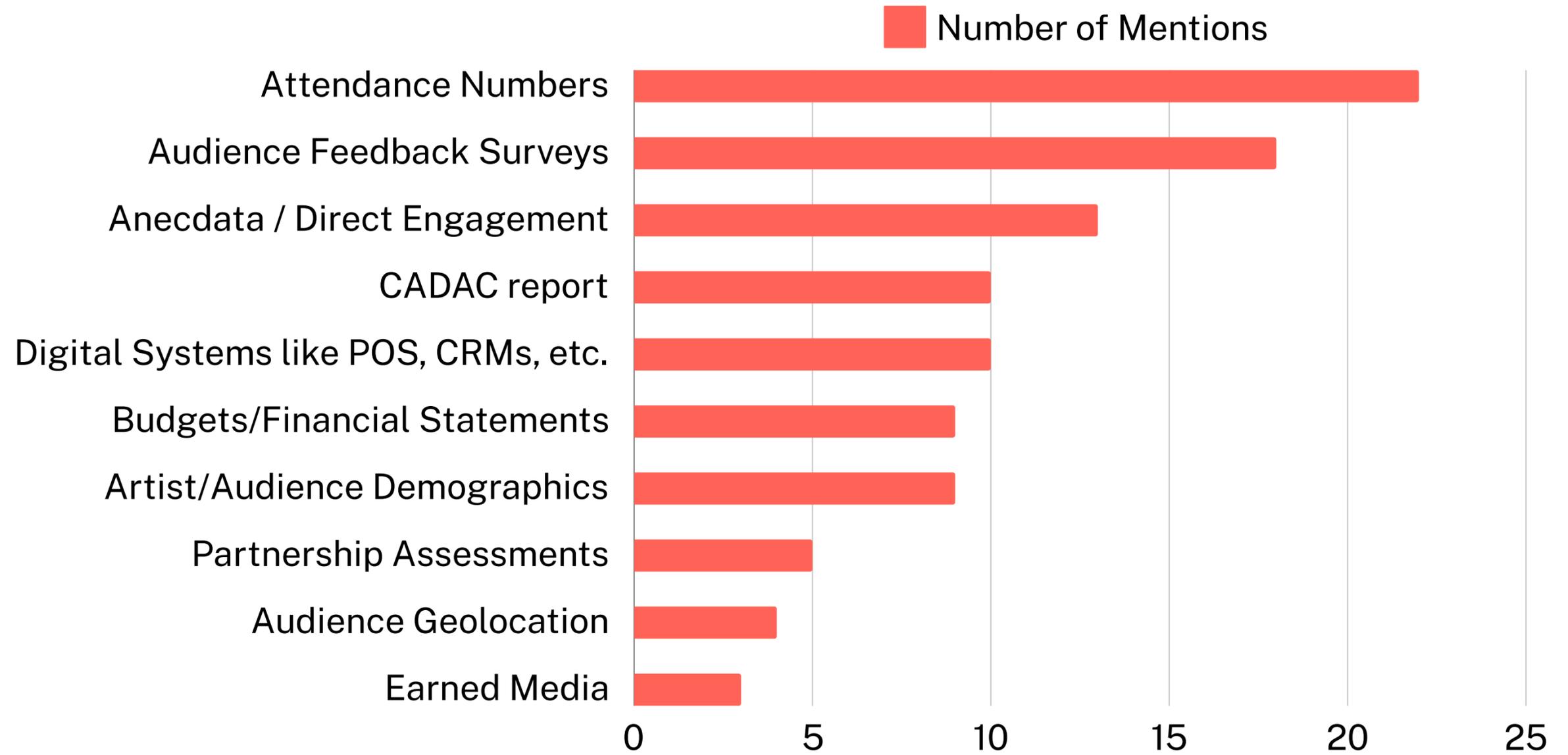
# 03

## Key Findings

**We interviewed Ottawa arts leaders to understand their approaches to measuring the social and economic benefits their organizations bring to local communities.**

# 03

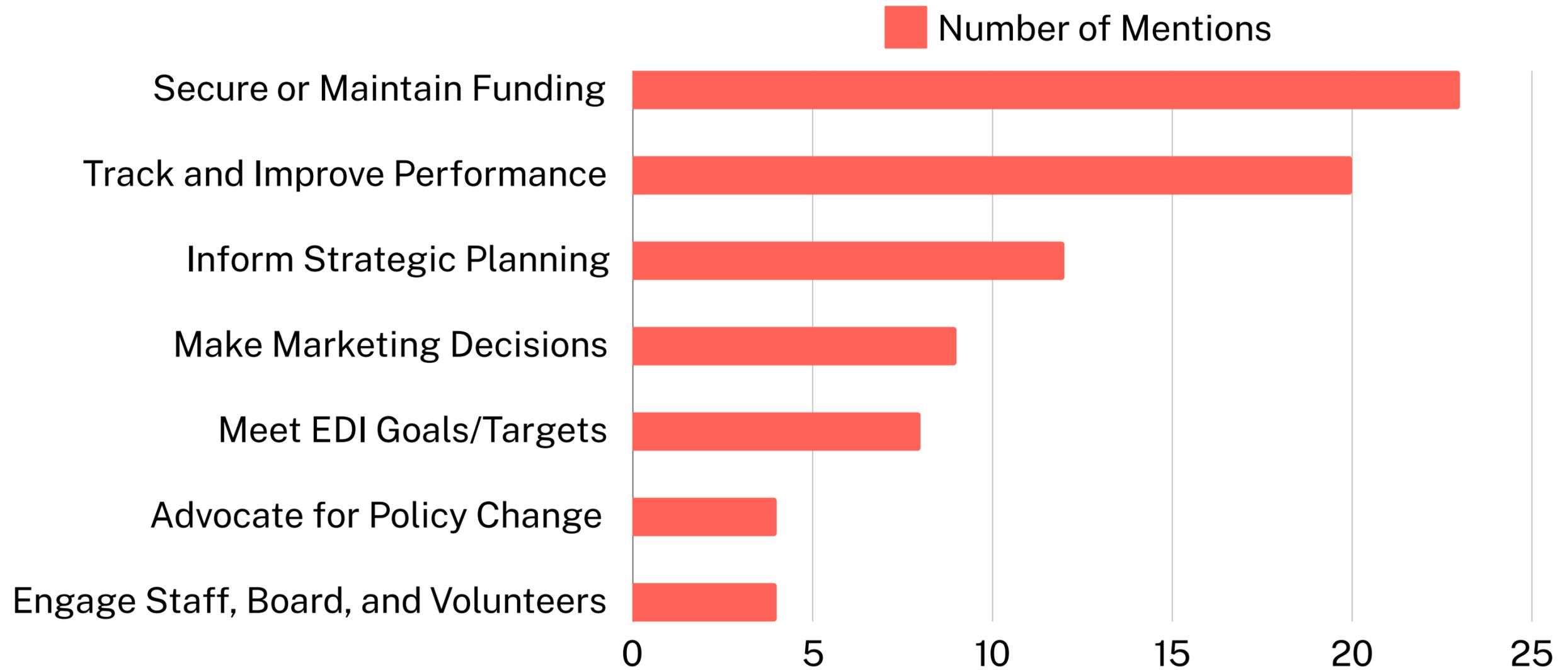
## Key Findings



**Ottawa arts leaders employ a range of tools and methods to measure the impact of their organizations.**

# 03

## Key Findings



**The two main reasons arts leaders adopt impact measurement are to secure funder support and improve organizational effectiveness.**

## 03 Key Findings



**We identified 12 common themes in how arts leaders defined their organizations' social and economic contributions to local communities.**

## 03

### Key Findings

**We also asked them to identify the challenges they face in measuring and communicating these social and economic benefits to their communities.**

# 03

## Key Findings

**Common themes and challenges** cited by arts leaders in measuring and communicating social and economic benefits include:

- **Resource and Capacity Challenges.**
- **Challenges Collecting and Accessing Data.**
- **Ethical Considerations in Gathering Equity and Diversity Data.**
- **Challenges Measuring Long-Term Effects and Systemic Impacts.**
- **Funder-Specific Challenges.**

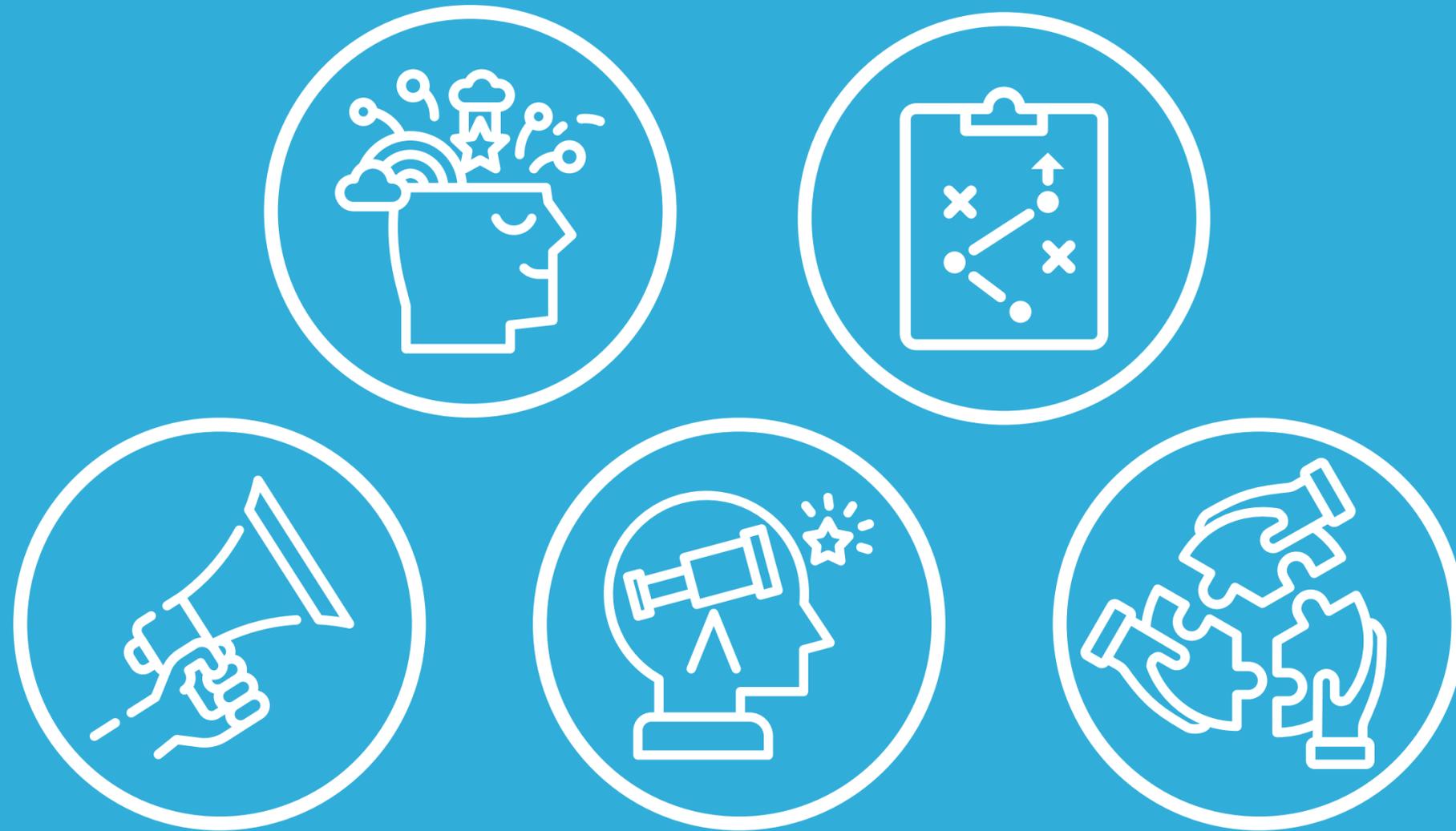
## 03

### Key Findings

**We distilled the challenges into personas to provide a clear and human-centered framework for understanding the diverse needs, goals, and pain points of Ottawa arts leaders engaging with impact measurement.**

# 03

## Key Findings



**Five personas illuminate the unique mindsets and pain points of Ottawa arts leaders as they navigate impact measurement, offering us a clear starting point for identifying actionable solutions**

# 03

## Key Findings

### Impact Persona: The Creator

Arts leaders prioritizing artistic vision and creative impact over tracking broader economic or social purpose outcomes.



**Mindset:** Views planning and metrics as secondary and potentially constraining to the creative process.

#### Pains:

- Often juggling multiple roles from strategy to implementation.
- Limited resources, particularly time and people, can lead them to deliberately deprioritize impact measurement.
- Difficulty understanding how to quantify and track impact, often relying on anecdotal evidence to tell their story.

#### Gains:

- Easy-to-use guidelines or “cheat sheets” on metrics valued by funders.
- Reminders to integrate impact tracking into existing curatorial processes.
- Peer learning opportunities to share impact measurement strategies.
- **Impact Aspiration:** Clear methods to track their long-term impact on artist careers.

# 03

## Key Findings

### Impact Persona: The Advocate

Leaders of identity-based arts organizations dedicated to serving the needs and aspirations of their community.



**Mindset:** Prioritizes the collective well-being of their community over organizational metrics or external validation.

#### Pains:

- Balancing expectations for data collection with the needs of their community.
- Struggles to find meaningful metrics that capture cultural and community value.
- Low survey response rates and difficulty ensuring survey participants accurately represent the community they mean to target.

#### Gains:

- Inclusive feedback tools that address the unique needs of their community.
- Tools to capture and communicate the impact of equity-focused programming.
- **Impact Aspiration:** Collaborative tools to define impact with their community.

# 03

## Key Findings

### Impact Persona: The Philosopher

Arts leaders focused on intellectual and cultural transformation as the ultimate indicators of success.



**Mindset:** Views their work as offering intangible value to society that cannot be fully captured through conventional impact measurements.

### Pain Points

- Finds it challenging to convey the significance of their work, as they see its true impact unfolding over a long historical arc, beyond the scope of simple metrics.
- Values deep engagement with a select few, but feels at odds with impact metrics that prioritize large numbers and widespread reach.
- Difficulty articulating this broad impact, often relying on anecdotal evidence to convey their impact.

### Gains

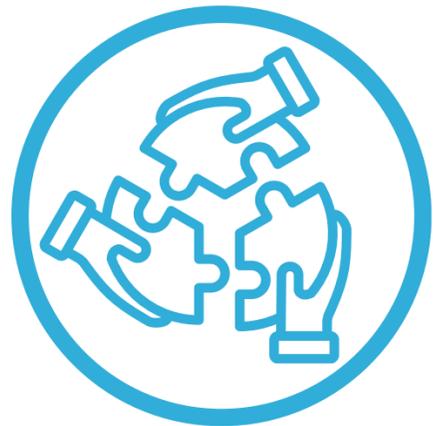
- Tools to blend qualitative insights with metrics for a balanced success narrative.
- **Impact Aspiration:** Tools to help identify the immediate indicators and inhibitors of the historical change their work seeks to inspire.

# 03

## Key Findings

### Impact Persona: The Collaborator

Arts leaders focused on achieving broader societal impacts through strategic partnerships with other organizations or sectors.



**Mindset:** Views partnership as essential for amplifying impact and believes shared metrics and collective measurement strengthen collaboration.

### Pain Points

- Difficulty accessing data from shared facilities and external partners.
- Difficulty measuring and communicating the collective impact of partnerships.
- Struggles to balance data analysis with the demands of partnership building.

### Gains

- Better data-sharing agreements within shared City facilities.
- Guidance on aligning goals and defining shared success metrics across sectoral partnerships.
- **Impact Aspiration:** Resources to build evidence-based storytelling and advocacy skills, to articulate collective impact and advocate effectively.

# 03

## Key Findings

### Impact Persona: The Optimizer

Results-driven arts leaders with a strong capacity for measurement and a focus on internal performance evaluation.



**Mindset:** Focused on leveraging data to boost efficiency and effectiveness, while continuously improving their methods.

#### Pains

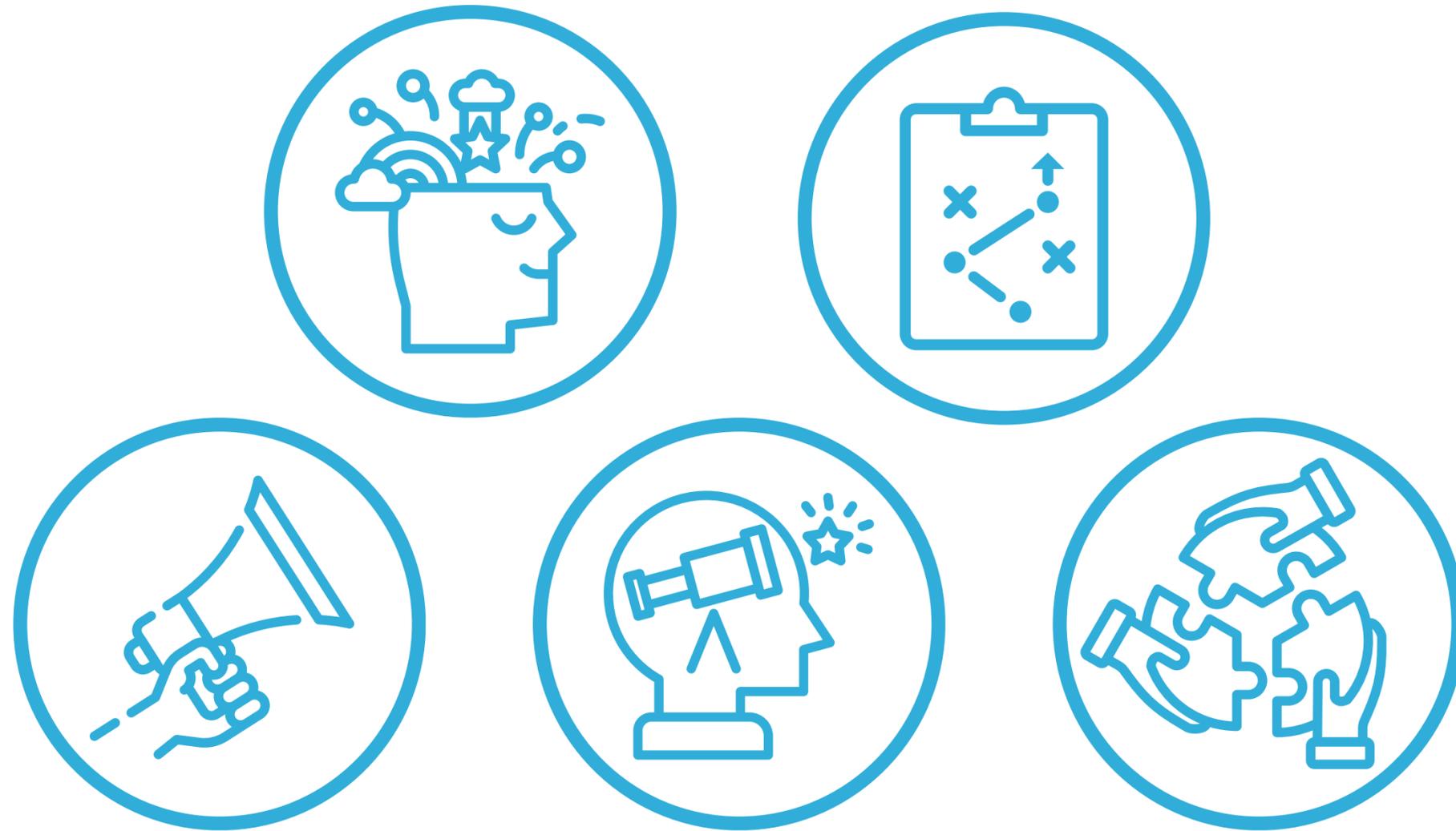
- Lacks time to analyze their data strategically or make full use of existing tools.
- Feels pressured to measure broader economic impacts but lacks the accurate tools and skills to do so.

#### Gains

- Advanced tools to integrate data and automate insights.
- Regional benchmarking tools to contextualize results and compare performance.
- **Impact Aspiration:** Advanced tools to produce insights on their broader economic impacts.

# 03

## Key Findings



**By understanding the mindsets and pain points of each persona, we can begin to align existing tools, resources, and strategies to their needs while identifying gaps where additional support is required**

04

**Solutions**

## 04 Solutions

### Impact Persona: The Creator

Arts leaders prioritizing artistic vision and creative impact over tracking broader economic or social purpose outcomes.



**Gain:** Simple guidelines or “cheat sheets” on metrics valued by funders.

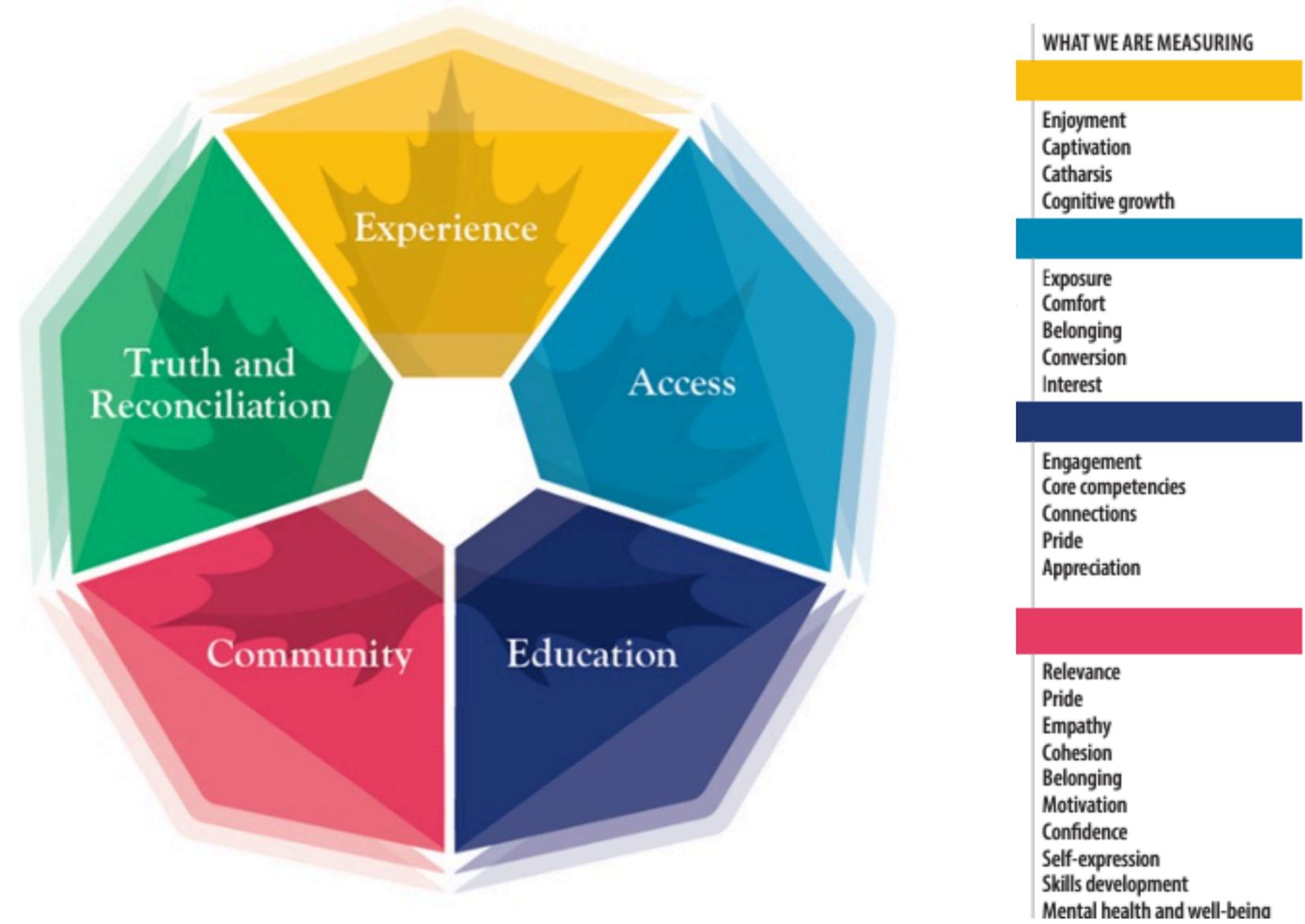
#### **Solution:**

Creators are often self-funded or relying on project funding and therefore unfamiliar with impact metrics. They would benefit from quick-reference guides on **CADAC statistics**, explaining their relevance and importance to funders in plain language. Supplement with peer learning to support the integration of tracking into existing curatorial processes.

**Impact Aspiration:** Clear methods to track their long-term impact on artist careers.

**Impact Calculation Gap:** Opportunity to co-create measures with organizations, funders, and artists to track the long-term impact on artist careers, possibly following a development process similar to the [Opera Civic Impact Framework](#).

# 04 Solutions



**The Opera Civic Impact Framework was developed using interviews to define key domains of influence, identify measurable outcomes, and shape a cohesive impact narrative for the opera industry.**

## 04 Solutions

### **Impact Persona:** **The Advocate**

Leaders of identity-based arts organizations dedicated to serving the needs and aspirations of their community.



**Gain:** Inclusive tools for collecting community feedback.

#### **Solution:**

Advocates aim to collect feedback from their community in ways that are both accessible and non-intrusive. By hosting workshops and peer learning sessions on using practical, low-cost marketing tools, they can gather insights while simultaneously increasing their visibility and reducing overall administrative burdens.

**Impact Aspiration:** Collaborative tools to define impact with their community.

**Impact Calculation Gap:** Opportunity to develop inclusive and actionable steps for co-creating measures of success with communities through mechanisms like [participatory budgeting](#).

## 04 Solutions

**Participatory budgeting is a process where community members collaboratively decide how to allocate a portion of an organization's budget.**



**By engaging the community in this way, organizations can identify shared priorities and co-create impact metrics that reflect the community's values and needs.**

# 04

## Existing Solutions

### Impact Persona: The Philosopher

Arts leaders focused on intellectual and cultural transformation as the ultimate indicators of success.



**Gain:** Tools to blend qualitative insights with metrics for a balanced success narrative.

**Solution:** Empower Philosophers to develop evaluative practices for measuring their long-term community impact. Provide access to free resources like Evaluative Thinking\_(Mass Culture) and Powered By Arts Impact.

**Impact Aspiration:** Tools to help identify the immediate indicators and inhibitors of the historical change their work seeks to inspire.

**Impact Calculation Gap:** Opportunity to align impact metrics with established global development indicators and align success narratives with the [UN's Sustainable Development Goals](#).

# 04 Solutions



**Empowering The Philosopher to align their work to global priorities enables them to measure progress toward tangible indicators of historical impact**

# 04

## Solutions



**The impact themes reflected in arts leaders' interviews align directly with at least 10 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).**

## 04 Solutions



A practical guide to the United Nations  
Sustainable Development Goals for cultural  
and heritage organizations in Canada

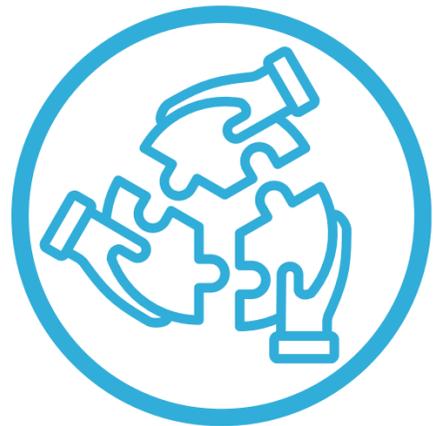
**How can we enhance existing resources to help cultural organizations identify their current contributions to the SDGs and measure progress with tangible indicators?**

## 04

### Existing Solutions

#### **Impact Persona:** **The Collaborator**

Arts leaders focused on achieving broader societal impacts through strategic partnerships with other organizations or sectors.



**Gain:** Tools to measure collective impact more effectively.

**Solution:** Collaborators face the challenge of transforming their success narrative to communicate collective impact with their partners. Empowering them to adopt **developmental evaluation** practices allows them to prioritize innovation and adapt with their partners, ensuring that evaluation evolves alongside their shared initiatives.

**Impact Aspiration:** Resources to build evidence-based storytelling skills, to articulate collective impact and advocate for change effectively.

**Impact Calculation Gap:** Opportunity to develop tailored resources to help arts leaders effectively manage impact measurement within cross-sector partnerships.

# 04

## Solutions

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### AGREE ON MEASURES OF SUCCESS

#### Questions to Guide Tool Use

- ✓ In discussing potential measures of success, how will we ensure that we consider both qualitative and quantitative indicators? Financial and non-financial indicators?
- ✓ How will we handle disagreements among partners as to what indicators we should use?
- ✓ How will we collect and manage the data we agree upon? Will one or more collaboration partners be responsible for these tasks? Will we enlist a third party?
- ✓ How often will we review this data? What will be its role in shaping our actions as a collaboration?

Source: <https://intersector.com/toolkit/>

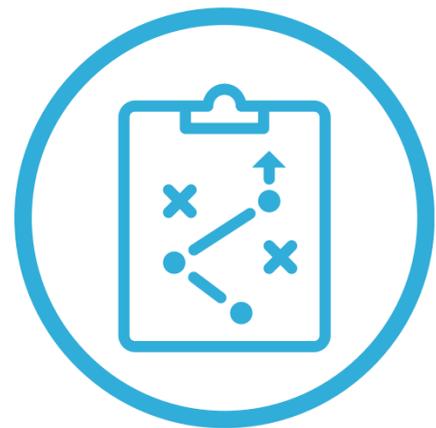
**Build on existing resources by addressing the unique needs and contexts of the Canadian arts sector, providing examples and templates demonstrating blended outcomes with sectors like health, education, urban development**

# 04

## Existing Solutions

### Impact Persona: The Optimizer

Results-driven arts leaders with a strong capacity for measurement and a focus on internal performance evaluation.



**Gain:** Advanced data integration and regional benchmarking tools to contextualize results and compare performance.

#### **Solution:**

- Empower Optimizers with curated webinar series on existing data integration platforms like Salesforce and other existing solutions that reduce redundancies and generate actionable insights.
- Help arts leaders explore tools like the DNA platform (Mass Culture), and Statistics Canada to understand sectoral dynamics.

**Impact Aspiration:** Advanced tools to produce insights on their macroeconomic impacts.

**Impact Calculation Gap:** Opportunity to create a ‘gamified’, user-friendly platform based on the Culture, Arts, Heritage and Sport Economic Impact Model to calculate macroeconomic impacts.

# 04 Solutions

## 2018 Culture, Arts, Heritage and Sport Economic Impact Model

*Please enter the expenditure data in thousands of dollars in the table below*

	Newfoundland and Labrador	Prince Edward Island	Nova Scotia	New Brunswick	Québec	Ontario	Manitoba	Saskatchewan	Alberta	British Columbia	Yukon	Northwest Territories	Nunavut
<b>Operating and Maintenance Expenditures</b>													
Personnel for government and other institutions													
Personnel for sporting and cultural events													
Transportation and communications													
Information													
Professional and special services													
Rentals													
Purchased repairs and maintenance													
Utilities													
Materials and supplies													
Payments in lieu of taxes													
Transfer payments and public debt charges													
<b>Investment and Infrastructure Expenditures</b>													
Acquisition of machinery and equipment													
Residential infrastructure (new and renovations)													
Non-residential infrastructure (new and renovations)													
Transportation infrastructure													
Other infrastructure investments													
<b>Visitor Expenditures</b>													
Transportation (automobiles)													
Transportation (car rentals)													
Transportation (other modes)													
Accommodations													
Food and beverages (at restaurants)													
Food and beverages (at stores)													
Recreation and entertainment													

**The Culture, Arts, Heritage and Sport Economic Impact Model (CAHSEIM) is a spreadsheet-based model designed to calculate the macroeconomic impacts of organizations in terms of GDP, employment, and labor income, tailored specifically for the arts, culture, heritage, and sport sectors.**

# 04 Solutions

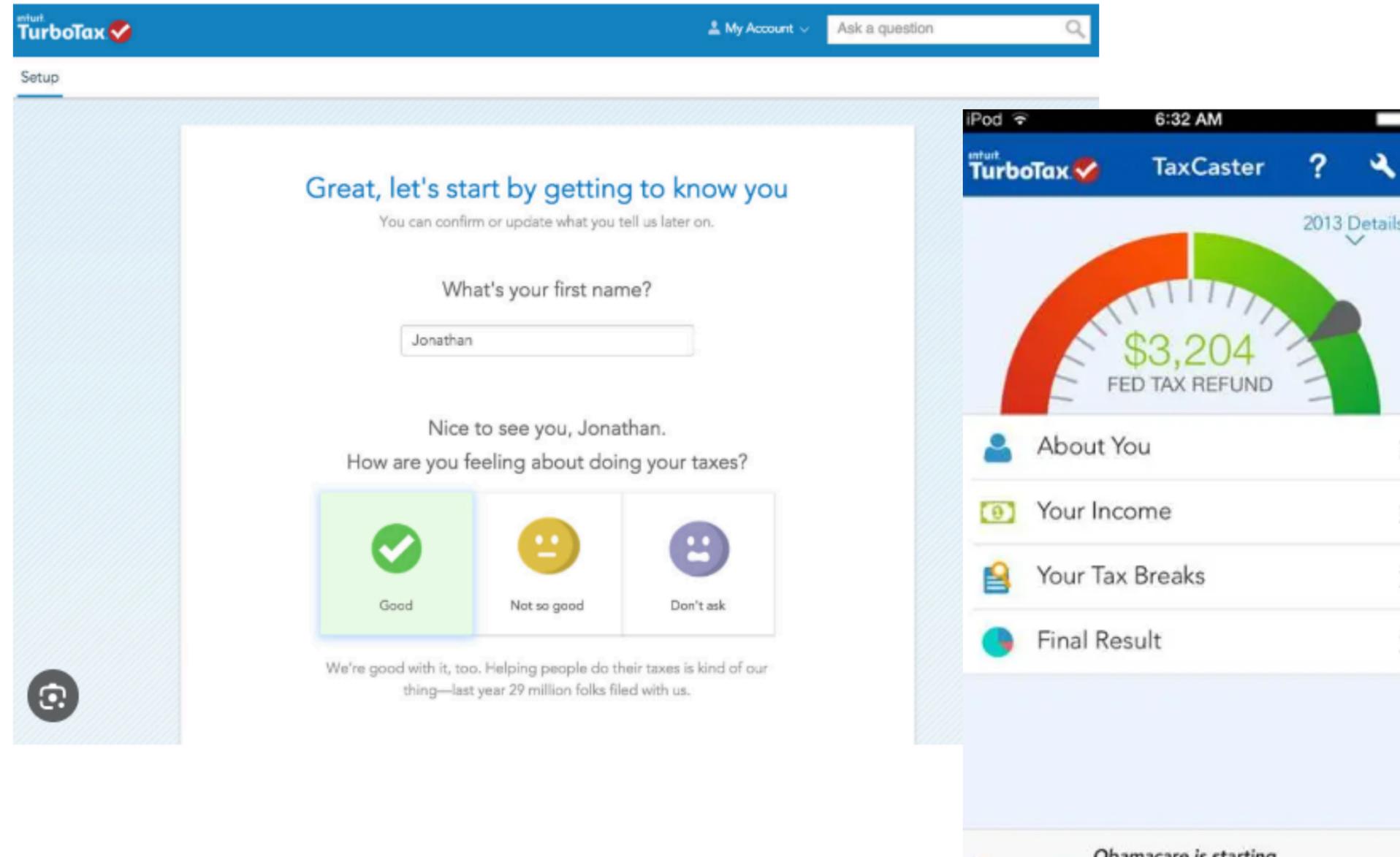
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**While the tool simplifies calculations, organizations with limited capacity or technical skills may still find it challenging to use effectively without guidance or training.**

# 04 Solutions



**Much like TurboTax simplifies complex tax processes with an intuitive interface, there is an opportunity to reimagine CAHSEIM's multi-sheet workbook as a user-friendly platform.**

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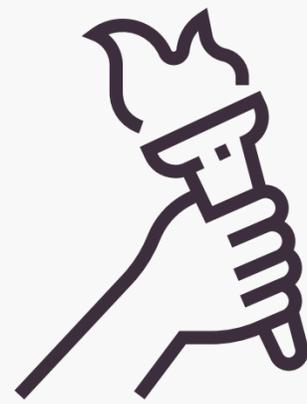
# Recommendations

# 05

## Recommendations



**Support**



**Champion**

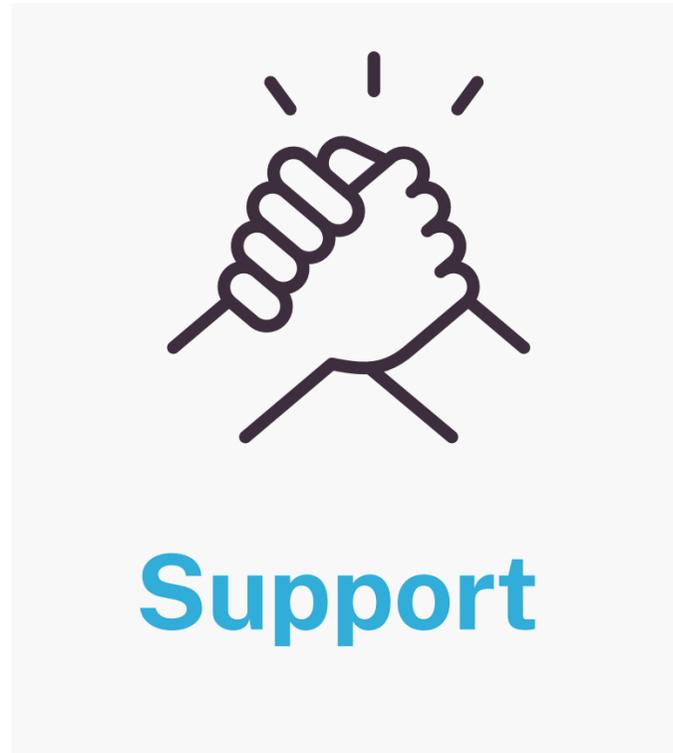


**Amplify**

**Three key themes emerged to guide Arts Ottawa in advancing impact measurement in the city's arts sector:  
Support, Champion, and Amplify.**

# 05

## Recommendations



**Recommendation 1: Empower arts leaders in Ottawa with tools and skills for meaningful impact measurement.**

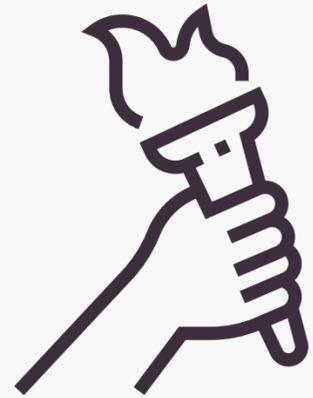
**Discover Your Persona:** Create a fun and interactive ‘personality test,’ helping arts leaders uncover their impact persona and pinpoint the support they need most, building validation and community.

**Co-Create Solutions:** Collaborate with the arts community to design tools and resources that truly resonate with their needs and challenges.

**Make It Matter:** Focus on building practical, user-friendly solutions that arts leaders will love — and actually use.

# 05

## Recommendations



### Champion

#### **Recommendation 2: Foster meaningful dialogue and collaboration between funders and organizations.**

**Bridge the Gap:** Address the growing disconnect by creating opportunities for transparent, two-way communication.

**Clarify Expectations:** Increase transparency around funder priorities and criteria to help organizations align their efforts effectively.

**Provide a Platform:** Offer arts leaders a space to share challenges and concerns, fostering understanding and mutual respect.

**Strengthen Relationships:** Cultivate partnerships that feel collaborative and equitable, rather than one-sided, advocate for funding to support impact measurement as a driver of sectoral development.

# 05

## Recommendations



**Amplify**

**Recommendation 3: Build an ecosystem where arts impact is effectively communicated and celebrated.**

**Elevate Arts Value:** Foster a culture where the value of the arts is widely understood and actively championed by the citizens of Ottawa.

**Strengthen the Media Landscape:** Track and encourage the quantity and quality of cultural coverage and reviews as part of understanding the city's cultural dynamics.

**Champion Storytelling:** Fund storytelling projects, collaborate with media, and use Arts Ottawa's platforms to showcase the arts' impact.

**Connect Narratives:** Link Arts Ottawa's storytelling efforts with the impact narratives of its constituency to create a unified, powerful message.

**What Questions  
Might you have?**

06

**Appendix**

## Impact Themes

### Economic Benefits



### Theme 1: Hiring and Paying Artists

*“Getting selected for our artistic programming means getting paid for the work that you present in our space. Artists, we know, are often underpaid and live below the poverty line.”*

06

Appendix

## Impact Themes

### Economic Benefits



### Theme 1: Hiring and Paying Artists

- Hiring and paying artists.
- Providing fair wages.
- Contributing to the local creative economy.

## Impact Themes

### Economic Benefits



## Theme 2: Workforce Development, Networking, and Training

*“..Emerging artists learn what it's like to be a professional artist. And then the next thing is being a professional artist. What you can expect, how to do a contract, etc.”*

*“We offer morning classes, master classes from visiting artists, master classes from National Art Center artists.. these are things that are imperative to practice.”*

## Impact Themes

### Economic Benefits



## Theme 2: Workforce Development, Networking, and Training

- **Equipping artists** with skills and opportunities to enhance career prospects and earning potential.
- **Networking** strengthens the creative economy by fueling collaborations, commissions, and employment.
- **Cultivating and retaining talent** to keep communities vibrant, attracting audiences, tourists, and investors.

## Impact Themes

### Economic Benefits



### Theme 3: Driving Broader Economic Impact

*“We're an amazing investment. Every dollar that the City of Ottawa gives to us, we'll turn that into something like four dollars. We're very efficient in using those initial investments.”*

*“We're working with a lot of hotels and tourism partners. So it's interesting to find out what kind of impact it [our programming] had on them.”*

## Impact Themes

### Economic Benefits



## Theme 3: Driving Broader Economic Impact

- **Cost Efficiency:** Arts organizations leverage public funding for maximum impact, delivering cultural, educational, and social benefits more cost-effectively than the state.
- **Multiplier Effects:** Arts programming stimulates local economies, attracts audiences, and boosts industries like tourism and hospitality.

## Impact Themes

### Economic Benefits



## Theme 4: Showcasing Artistic Excellence

*“artistic quality would be the primary focus for us. So it's very much [artistic quality in] mask, movement, dance, theatre, diverse global voices. And now it's shifting into more myth folklore.”*

*“We are recognized as a national leader in integrated dance or inclusive dance as well as Disability Arts.”*

## Impact Themes

### Economic Benefits



## Theme 4: Showcasing Artistic Excellence

- **Driving Innovation:** Arts organizations set benchmarks for professional-level quality work, pushing creative boundaries, inspiring the cultural sector and attracting investment.
- **Enhancing Competitiveness:** High-caliber productions draw larger audiences, media attention, and partnerships, boosting revenue and related industries like tourism and hospitality.

## Impact Themes

### Economic Benefits



## Theme 5: The Arts' Role in Driving Technological Innovation

*“What we do in these experimental domains has a kind of echo effect that makes its way through to the broader economy. There’s a dialogue, sometimes over decades, back and forth between different areas of culture. We see it in experimental music, we see it in experimental aesthetics, experimental computing.”*

## Impact Themes

### Economic Benefits



## Theme 5: The Arts' Role in Driving Technological Innovation

- **Fostering Experimentation:** The arts drive technological innovation through creative problem-solving and interdisciplinary collaboration.
- **Inspiring Breakthroughs:** Artists push boundaries, exploring tools and platforms that influence industries like design, gaming, and digital media.
- **Enhancing User Experiences:** By integrating artistic vision with technology, arts organizations advance creative practices and emerging innovations.

## Impact Themes

### Economic Benefits



## Theme 6: Offering Subsidized Access

*“people can't afford to pay for school trips and arts education. So whenever we can, we really try and do as much as we can for free within the community.”*

*“We try to remove administrative and financial barriers to artists by working with them and investing resources in their projects”*

### Impact Themes

#### Economic Benefits



### Theme 6: Offering Subsidized Access

- **Removing Barriers:** Subsidized programming, affordable rentals, and access to tools enable artists and communities to create and innovate without financial constraints.
- **Boosting the Creative Economy:** These supports stimulate local economic activity, attract diverse audiences, and foster a dynamic, accessible arts ecosystem.

## Impact Themes

### Social Benefits



### Theme 7:

### Enhancing Social Equity and Inclusion

*“a lot of our programming focus has been on supporting artists from equity deserving backgrounds and that has been a huge part of the work that we do here. And it's something that we try to reflect, and everything from funding applications to our hiring practices, to artistic programming and workshop instruction.”*

## Impact Themes Social Benefits



### Theme 7:

## Enhancing Social Equity and Inclusion

- **Advancing Inclusion:** Arts organizations amplify underrepresented voices, implement equitable hiring practices, and create spaces for diverse communities to connect and thrive.
- **Fostering Equity:** Inclusive programming and accessible resources address systemic inequalities.

**Impact Themes**  
**Social Benefits**



**Theme 8: Celebrating and Supporting Cultural Identity**

*“We focus on bringing French culture for the mostly French community.”*

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*“We are the only indigenous specific media arts organization in the city.”*

--

*“Sometimes we'll get people bringing their grandmother or something, it's a chance to see a film in their own language.”*

## Impact Themes

### Social Benefits



## Theme 8: Celebrating and Supporting Cultural Identity

- **Celebrating Identity:** Arts organizations provide spaces and resources for communities to express and share their cultural heritage and traditions.
- **Building Belonging:** Affirming cultural identities fosters pride, representation, and a sense of connection within and across communities.
- **Supporting Reconciliation:** Promoting cultural diversity and understanding contributes to reconciliation with Indigenous peoples by honoring their heritage and perspectives.

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Appendix

## Impact Themes Social Benefits



## Theme 9: Community Engagement and Partnership Impact

*“Our impact is really measured in how much we can spread our little tentacles into the community and impact many different levels”*

## Impact Themes

### Social Benefits



## Theme 9: Community Engagement and Partnership Impact

- **Building Connections:** Arts organization act as community anchors, forming partnerships that support local businesses, nonprofits, and other stakeholders, enhancing social and economic ties.
- **Fostering Cohesion:** Collaborative efforts create shared value, strengthen networks, and promote a sense of unity and mutual community support.

## Impact Themes Social Benefits



### Theme 10: Promoting Democratic Values & Active Citizenship

*“..Being in the nation's capital, where all the political decisions are made, I think that the media is so important. Film, television, its important that the stories are told from Indigenous perspectives. So I think it's really important for that to be showcased in the city of Ottawa specifically.”*

## Impact Themes Social Benefits



## Theme 10: Promoting Democratic Values & Active Citizenship

- **Inspiring Civic Engagement:** Arts organizations promote critical thinking, creativity, and active citizenship through storytelling and public engagement that highlight social and political issues.
- **Strengthening Democracy:** By fostering dialogue and participation, the arts advocate for social equity, enhance understanding, and cultivate informed, socially active citizens.

06

Appendix

## Impact Themes Social Benefits



## Theme 11: Leveraging Soft Power and Cultural Influence

*“Our mission centers on bringing people of diverse identities together. A lot of the artwork that we think is possible is artwork that speak truth to power and illuminates parts of society that aren't illuminated.”*

## Impact Themes Social Benefits



## Theme 11: Leveraging Soft Power and Cultural Influence

- **Shaping Values:** Arts organizations influence public opinion, cultural norms, and social relationships through creativity, storytelling, and representation.
- **Driving Social Change:** By fostering dialogue and promoting cultural understanding, they use "soft power" to create meaningful impact and strengthen their community influence.

06

Appendix

## Impact Themes

### Social Benefits



### Theme 12:

### Promoting Health and Well-Being

*“We've got a big commitment to wellness and wellbeing through our partnership program.”*

## Impact Themes

### Social Benefits



## Theme 12:

### Promoting Health and Well-Being

- **Enhancing Well-Being:** Arts organizations promote health outcomes by integrating creative wellness programs into broader health initiatives.
- **Collaborative Impact:** Partnerships with health professionals and community organizations provide accessible, therapeutic opportunities that support personal growth and community well-being.