

FESTIVALS AND MAJOR EVENTS CANADA
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www.fame-feem.ca

Executive Summary

Canada's major festivals and events are uniquely positioned to mount world-class programming to mark Canada's sesquicentennial in 2017. Festivals and Major Events Canada (FAME) is eager to partner with the Government in order to celebrate this milestone event in a way that will deliver significant and lasting economic and cultural impact. **FAME recommends the Government invest \$20 million annually over the next three fiscal years in major cultural festivals. This investment is needed to create unprecedented programming, a diverse range of patriotic events that will turn Canada 150 into a one-in-a-lifetime memory for both Canadians and visitors from around the world.**

Investing in festivals and events is also an effective way to help communities across the country prosper by boosting employment and citizen engagement. From coast to coast to coast, festivals and events are community anchors.

Canada's 150 – Celebrating the Sesquicentennial through Festivals and Major Events

FAME is already hard at work preparing for Canada's Sesquicentennial in 2017. This landmark anniversary will provide a rare opportunity to drive cultural tourism, bringing in visitors while allowing Canadians to celebrate the history of our nation. FAME's members have the unique capacity to mount authentic celebrations around this important milestone. They have the infrastructure, human resources, partner networks, marketing savvy and operational expertise to turn Canada 150 into an unforgettable series of national events.

As the Government finalizes its plans and programs for Canada 150, it should consider partnering with FAME and its members in order to maximize the impact of the Government's investment in the sesquicentennial. Given the vast diversity of FAME member organizations, funds allocated directly to individual events is seen as the most efficient way to support Canada 150. Festivals would then align programming to Canada 150 themes, work collaboratively with one another to realize efficiencies (e.g. to secure major music acts) and align to a national brand strategy supporting marketing initiatives. **Therefore, FAME calls on the Government to embrace Canada 150 with \$20 million in annual funding for major festivals and events for the next three fiscal years (2015-2017).** This incremental funding will greatly strengthen the festival sector and the broader tourism and cultural industries that it supports.

Why Partner with FAME Members?

A partnership with FAME members for Canada 150 would deliver:

- An economic engine that generates millions for communities, local businesses and all three levels of government
- Employment, volunteer and training opportunities for youth, underemployed and skilled trades
- Employment opportunities and exposure for Canadian artists, musicians and cultural innovators
- A collective brand power that is key to showcasing authentic Canadian arts and culture on the world stage
- A proven way to reach diverse audiences across Canada, uniting communities while fostering national pride

What Could Canada 150 Look Like?

FAME members are already planning new and exciting programming to celebrate Canada in 2017. These are very special projects that will create a lasting cultural legacy for the country. Given the time and resources required to develop these projects, they will only be made possible with the support of incremental funding.

***The Stratford Festival** in Ontario is planning a number of projects designed to celebrate the achievements as well as the potential of Canadian artists. These include commissioning a new Canadian play based on Gordon Lightfoot's Railroad Trilogy. The iconic song tells the story of the creation of the railroad that links our country. Also planned is a series of Canadian adaptations of popular novels for young people. There is a lack of great plays for young people and the Stratford Festival hopes to fill this gap by commissioning Canadian playwrights to adapt novels such *The Fruit Cellar* by Canadian author Janet Lunn.*

***The New France Festival** in Quebec City celebrates the history of Canada through French Canadian culture as an integral part of its mandate. The Festival is planning a spectacular presentation for Canada's 150th anniversary, doubling the length of the festival and embarking on a number of exciting new strategic partnerships. These include a proposed partnership with the Tall Ships along the St. Lawrence, partnerships in francophone communities across North America, and a broadcast partnership with Radio-Canada. These initiatives will provide new revenue streams for the festival, increase tourism and add to the interpretation, dissemination and preservation of French Canadian history.*

***The Luminato Festival** in Toronto is exploring plans to theme its entire 2017 festival to Canada 150. The Festival will provide a stage for Canadian artists to investigate milestone events in our nation's past and critical issues that shape our present. For example, Canadian writers will be invited to reflect on vanishing spaces such as Newfoundland tilts and First Nations Longhouses, discussing unrecorded moments in our history. Presented as a series of public events, these new works will be preserved and shared beyond the Festival.*

***The Harvest Jazz & Blues Festival** in New Brunswick plans to develop, produce and present a full-length musical about Canadian Blues legend Dutch Mason in partnership with Theatre New Brunswick. Dubbed *Canada's Prime Minister of Blues* by BB King, Mason was a icon to music fans throughout North America. This musical will become an annual highlight of the Festival and an important tourism pull for the city of Fredericton.*

***The Winnipeg Folk Festival** is planning a unique Canada 150 workshop to celebrate what it means to be Canadian through the lens of traditional and contemporary folk music. Prominent Canadian musicians will be brought together to play each other's songs. Songs selected will honour common Canadian themes and values. The workshop will culminate in a performance of "Land of the Silver Birch" by First Nations poet, Pauline Johnson. This workshop would be then integrated into folk festivals across Canada including Edmonton, Calgary, Vancouver, Regina, Ottawa, Newfoundland and Dawson City, among others.*

Planning for Success: Timing of Funding is Crucial

A successful sesquicentennial celebration is contingent on extensive planning and preparation. Advance funding is required in order to meet the logistical, operational, booking, marketing, and budgetary timelines intrinsic to the festival sector. Based on project requirements, FAME recommends that the Federal Government create a fund providing \$20 million annually for Canada’s world-class cultural festivals commencing in 2015 and running until 2017 to support Canada 150. Providing consistent annual funding early will enable Canada’s major festival community to ramp up their capacity and build excitement and demand in advance of 2017.

Economic Impact: The Power of Festivals

Behind the stages, away from the spotlights, festivals and major events are complex businesses that create thousands of jobs in Canada each year; jobs for artists, musicians, trades people, and youth. They attract millions of tourists, both domestic and international. They generate billions in recreational spending—revenue that flows to hotels, restaurants, retail, transportation and a myriad of businesses. As a result, significant tax revenue is raised for all three levels of government.

Festivals are the draw—yet the events themselves see very little of these dollars. Festivals survive solely on revenue from ticket sales, private sponsorships and limited public sector support. A recent survey of FAME members showed that on average, only 4 percent of their operating budgets came from federal coffers.

FAME members are all charitable and not-for-profit organizations. As such, the revenue they generate is funnelled back into programming or allocated to free public events and other community initiatives. Significant resources are also devoted to preparedness planning as public safety is a top priority.

A 2009 study commissioned by FAME, of just 15 of Canada’s largest festivals and events, revealed some astonishing numbers. These events combined to:

- Attract more than 12.6 million visitors (including 3.3 million tourists)
- Contribute \$650 million in GDP to local economies
- Support the equivalent of 15,600 full-year jobs
- Deliver an economic impact of close to \$1.1 billion

Return on Investment: Driving Tourism Growth

A well-executed sesquicentennial will drive domestic and international tourism. Canada’s festivals are globally recognized products that have broad audience appeal. Tourism generated \$81.9 billion for Canada in 2012. It accounted for approximately 1.7 million jobs, many of these for Canadian youth. In 2012, tourism delivered approximately \$21.4 billion in government revenue—almost half of this at the federal level. Worth approximately \$17.3 billion, tourism is Canada’s largest service export.

Unfortunately, Canada’s tourism growth lags well behind global competitors. According to the World Tourism Organization, Canada achieved growth of 1.5% compared to the global average of 5% in 2013 and International tourism arrivals slipped from 7th place to 18th place over the past decade. This is at a time when international interest in Canada—and especially Canada’s cultural offerings—is at an all-time high (FutureBrand 2012).

A recent Deloitte analysis of Statistics Canada data suggested that a mere 1% increase in international arrivals would generate an \$817 million increase in Canadian exports. With the strengthening US economy, and a burgeoning middle class in emerging powerhouse economies like China and India, a tremendous opportunity exists to attract high-spending visitors to Canada in 2017.

Investment in authentic cultural products such as major festivals and events is key to achieving sustainable growth for the Canadian tourism industry. Festivals and celebrations around Canada 150 have the unmatched ability to shift international travel intentions by providing a time-sensitive reason to visit Canada in 2017. We need to invite the world to “Come Celebrate with Us.”

Canada 150 will also provide a compelling reason for Canadians to choose a domestic vacation in 2017. This will increase Canada’s \$65.8 billion domestic tourism receipts (2012). Targeting domestic travelers—especially young Canadians eager to explore the nation—will also help reverse Canada’s \$17.8 billion dollar tourism deficit (2012) by keeping Canadian travel dollars at home.

Conclusion

Canada 150 has the potential to be a once-in-a-lifetime celebration for all Canadians. But we must act now in order to capitalize on this enormous potential. FAME members provide the government with a turn-key solution for deploying the Canada 150 celebrations. Major events will attract foreign and domestic visitors lured by a festive atmosphere that promises to rival any destination in the world. Leveraging the expertise and experience of Canada’s major cultural festivals to celebrate the sesquicentennial has the power to breathe new life into Canada’s tourism industry, create jobs for youth, artists and trades people, and drive economic growth in regions across the country. This, however, can only be achieved through an investment partnership with the Government of Canada. As such, **FAME recommends that the Government invest \$20 million annually for the next three fiscal years in order to prepare for and execute this important milestone event in our nation’s history.**

About Festivals and Major Events

Festivals and Major Events Canada (FAME) / Festivals et Événements Majeurs Canada (FEEM) is a national, member-financed advocacy coalition.

FAME’s twenty members represent Canada’s leading arts, cultural, performance, entertainment and heritage-based festivals and events, including: The Calgary Stampede, Festival International de Jazz de Montréal, Festival Western de St-Tite, Gatineau Hot Air Balloon Festival, Harvest Jazz & Blues Festival, International Balloon Festival de Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Festival du Voyageur, Luminato Festival, Montréal en lumière, Montréal Just for Laughs Festival, Osheaga Music and Arts Festival, Québec Winter Carnival, RBC Royal Bank Bluesfest, Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo, SAQ New France Festival, Shaw Festival, Stratford Festival, Toronto International Film Festival, TD Vancouver International Jazz Festival, Winnipeg Folk Festival, and Associate Member, RÉMI (Regroupement des événements majeurs internationaux / Major International Events Network, Quebec).