



ART IN THE COUNTY

# PEC ARTS EVENT PRESENTER GUIDE

TIPS AND RESOURCES FOR FUNDING AND  
PROMOTING ARTS & CULTURE EVENTS  
IN PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY



PRINCE  
EDWARD  
COUNTY  
ARTS  
COUNCIL

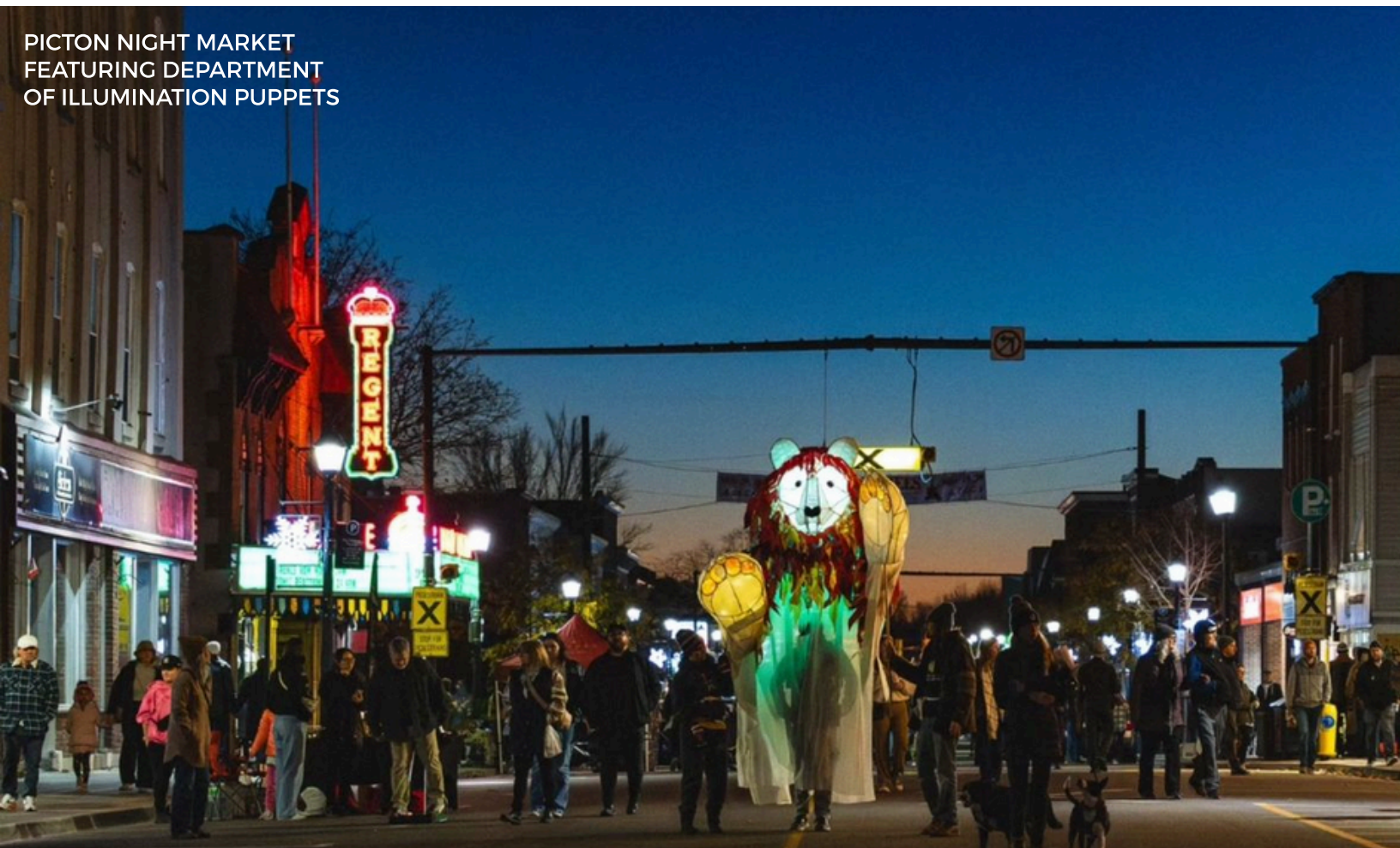


The County Arts (the Prince Edward County Arts Council) team was inspired to create this Guide after developing the **Art at the Heart of Picton Placemaking Strategy** (linked at [countyarts.ca/engage](https://countyarts.ca/engage)). The aim of this shorter document is to provide Prince Edward County arts event producers and presenters with helpful resources and strategies for funding and promoting successful events that engage both residents and visitors and catalyze positive economic, social, and cultural ripple effects for our broader community.

The Guide highlights relevant information for arts organizations from three of the four strategic directions outlined in the Placemaking Strategy:

- 1) Partnering to create engaging arts experiences
- 2) Partnering to promote engaging arts experiences
- 3) Measuring and sharing impact and audience data

PICTON NIGHT MARKET  
FEATURING DEPARTMENT  
OF ILLUMINATION PUPPETS



# PARTNERING TO CREATE ENGAGING ARTS EXPERIENCES

We know that arts & culture activities bring myriad benefits to our community, and that artists and arts organizations need support to create and promote them. In an ideal world, everyone - regardless of financial resources - would be able to access our offerings. But artists need and deserve to be compensated for their work, and the survival of arts venues and other infrastructure requires ongoing investment. As a result, most arts events require subsidies - either through ticket sales or other sources - to break even.

Arts event producers must concern themselves not only with **compensating artists** for their work but also with **artistic excellence, artistic intention and freedom, thoughtful curation,** and the **accessibility and relevance** of their experiences to the surrounding community. Before we delve into supports for arts events, some notes on the two latter considerations:

**Accessibility** - In his 2024 book *The Audacity of Relevance*, Alex Sarian writes: "If the arts don't belong to people, they don't feel a sense of belonging in them." Producers should continually strive to make arts experiences financially accessible and inclusive, to ensure that all community members feel welcomed and can reap their positive benefits. Ideally, an arts & culture-rich community can offer a mix of bookable/timed experiences and those that can be "happened upon", bringing surprise and delight to visitors and residents alike.

**Relevance** - Our motivations for attending arts experiences extend well beyond a need for entertainment or retail therapy. In a recent survey of arts & culture goers, respondents ranked **"learning new things"** as their top motivation for attending arts events. Sarian also writes of the importance of arts events as **"shared experiences"** and opportunities for emotional referencing: "a key process by which empathy is taught and experienced".

Arts organizations should remain curious about their current and potential audiences, continually evaluating their activities to ensure they remain responsive to community interests and needs. Not only will producing relevant events result in higher attendance and engagement levels. It will also help funders understand the impact of these experiences and their support, and continually reinvest in the artists and organizations that are producing them.

**"WHEN WE APPROACH THE FUTURE OF THE ARTS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF COMMUNAL AND COLLECTIVE PARTICIPATION INSTEAD OF TRANSACTIONAL CONSUMPTION, WE FIND OURSELVES ASKING VERY DIFFERENT QUESTIONS ABOUT HOW TO FOSTER ENGAGEMENT."**

ALEX SARIAN, THE AUDACITY OF RELEVANCE



# 1 - LOCAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES & OTHER SUPPORTS

- **The County Foundation** administers the PEC Arts Fund, Vital Impact Fund, Huff Family Fund, Neighbourhood Small Grants Program, and Donor Advised Fund Program.
- **Visit the County**, our local Destination Marketing & Management Organization offers a [Partnership Funding program](#).
- **Stay PEC** (local accommodation association) can offer financial support for advertising events to non-PEC audiences.
- **Picton Business Improvement Association** - The BIA's [Community Investment and Activation Program](#) provides financial and in-kind support to Picton-based events that are “accessible, open to everyone, and position Picton as the event destination” among other criteria. Eligible costs include artist fees, promotion fees, and coordination fees.
- **The Picton Recreation Committee** welcomes organizers of Picton events to present requests for in-kind (volunteer) and/or financial support at their meetings. **Recreation Committees and Community Associations in other wards** and villages may also have funding available.
- **Business Sponsors:** Many local businesses offer financial support to local arts events, and in our recent survey of Picton businesses, the majority were open to hosting artists/their work (e.g. pop-up/live performance, demonstration, workshop, art exhibitions).
- **Stark Family Fund**, administered by the Community Foundation for Kingston & Area
- **Davies Charitable Foundation**
- **John M & Bernice Parrott Foundation**
- **100 People Who Care PEC**
- **County Arts** offers free or subsidized access to meeting/rehearsal space at the [County Arts Lab](#) and may be able to assist with artist fee contributions for events taking place in and around the County Arts Lab / Picton Armoury.
- The Picton branch of the **PEC Library** offers rehearsal space and access to equipment, including a recording studio.

# 2 - NON-LOCAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- [RTO9 \(Regional Tourism Organization\) Partnership Funding program](#)
- [Experience Ontario](#) - for festivals and events with a tourism economic impact
- [Eastern Ontario Development Fund](#) for economic projects, open to businesses and nonprofits
- [Seniors Community Grant Program](#)
- [Canada Cultural Spaces Fund](#)
- [Ontario Arts Council](#) grants (including for Artists in the Community / community-engaged arts programming and Multi and Inter-Arts Projects (including festivals))
- [Canada Council for the Arts](#)
- [Ontario Trillium Foundation](#)
- [OMAFRA's Downtown Revitalization Program](#)
- [Ontario Creates](#) - including for music events
- [Access Copyright](#) events grants





# PARTNERING TO PROMOTE ENGAGING ARTS EXPERIENCES

Arts event presenters can use a variety of methods to promote their activities to visitors and PEC residents who are physically present in the County as well as those searching for opportunities online.

## 1 - BUSINESS COLLABORATIONS

In the Business Survey and interviews we conducted as part of the Art at the Heart of Picton Placemaking Strategy project:

- 96% of survey respondents were open to exploring cross-promotional activities with local arts organizations/events
- The majority of businesses were open to promoting events with posters and rack cards/brochures
- Several businesses were also open to:
  - developing bundle packages (for example: dinner and a show)
  - offering event attendees discounts or other kinds of promotions at their business

Beyond driving vibrancy and traffic for neighbouring businesses, arts event presenters can also offer promotional opportunities in return for businesses' support. The majority of business survey respondents indicated interest in arts organizations promoting their business, for example by including the business' logo/ad:

- in their print material (e.g. program, brochures, rack cards),
- on their websites
- on signs at arts events

### DID YOU KNOW?

In 2023, Prince Edward County welcomed 326,000 unique visitors. On average there were 7 repeat visits for each guest, and a total of 2.4 million visits over the year ([source](#)). In our business survey, 73% of respondents reported that over 50% of their customers are out-of-town visitors.

Visitors to PEC are more likely than the Ontario average to include arts-related activities in their itinerary (2022 Optiks Numeris data obtained by Visit the County).

## 2 - ONLINE PROMOTION OPPORTUNITIES

### 1) Online event listings

- **Countyarts.ca/whats-on** is County Arts' online listing for arts events in Prince Edward County. It is the top organic result for an "arts events in Prince Edward County" search on Google, meaning that it receives the most clicks and has the highest click-through rate. In June 2025 we are launching and distributing collateral for the Art at the Heart of Picton branding package - including window clings, posters, and 2500 brochures - featuring a QR code directing residents and visitors to the Countyarts.ca/picton landing page to learn about local arts & culture activities.
- **Visit the County** (PEC's Destination Management & Marketing Organization) has an online event listing
- **Experience Picton** lists Picton events
- **What's On Quinte** has a broader regional focus
- **99.3 County FM** lists and does PSAs for community events (free for nonprofits)

### 2) Newsletters & Social Media

A important benefit of submitting to online listings is that events may be prioritized for inclusion in the listing organizations' newsletters and social media feeds. For example, County Arts' arts-loving audience includes 1600+ subscribers to our monthly Artscene Newsletter and 5500+ social media followers. Events listed on our What's On page may be included in our Artscene newsletter and weekly summer "What's On" posts on our social channels. Make sure to submit events with lots of advance notice.

Event organizers can tag the social media accounts of relevant organizations (e.g. County Arts, Picton BIA, Visit the County, etc.) and business collaborators to help spread the word about events. The Picton BIA will also include Picton-based arts events in their weekly newsletter.





# 3 - PRINT & PHYSICAL PROMOTIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

**1) Printed materials** such as maps, brochures/rack cards, pamphlets, and calendars providing information about local events and attractions remain very popular with visitors. These should include QR codes / up-to-date links to websites with more information. They can be distributed in/through a variety of locations/methods:

- **10 Visitor information locations** ([list here](#)) run from June to October. This summer, the Regent Theatre in Picton is serving as a staffed tourist information centre.
- **Accommodations** - [Stay PEC](#), [Licensed STAs of PEC](#), and [Bed & Breakfasts of PEC](#) may be able to help promote events with their members.
- **Businesses** - As noted above, the majority of businesses that participated in our survey are open to displaying and distributing print materials.

## 2) Posters and Banners

Arts organizations can take advantage of the following physical promotional opportunities:

- In Picton, the BIA operates **2 poster boxes/kiosks** on Main Street at the corners of Elizabeth and Walton on a first come first served basis - send inquiries to [info@experiencepicton.com](mailto:info@experiencepicton.com)
- Local businesses regularly use their **storefront windows** to promote arts events.
- **Community info boards** inside libraries and businesses; the Radiator Collective and Picton Library are working to launch an outdoor info board.
- **Banners:** To inquire about hanging **over-street banners**, contact Bev Williams ([bwilliams@pecounty.on.ca](mailto:bwilliams@pecounty.on.ca)) at the Municipality. For major Picton-based events, organizers may also be able to use the **Main St. lamp post banners**; send inquiries to the Picton BIA at [info@experiencepicton.com](mailto:info@experiencepicton.com).

## 3) Local and regional publications where presenters can place advertising include:

[Picton Gazette](#), [Wellington Times](#), [County Live](#) (online only), [County Weekly News/Belleville Intelligencer](#), [Quinte News](#) (online only), [Inquinte.ca](#) (online only), [Watershed Magazine](#), [County Magazine](#), [Grapevine Magazine](#), [Profile Kingston](#), [Edible Ottawa](#), [Edible Toronto](#).

Presenters can also consider advertising with regional radio stations including [103.1 Classical FM](#).





# MEASURING AND SHARING IMPACT AND VISITOR DATA

Arts-based nonprofits operate with tight budgets in a competitive funding landscape. To facilitate the cross-sector partnerships at the heart of this strategy, event supporters and funders need to understand the return on their investment, whether related to a financial bottom line, community impact, or other objective. Visitor and impact data can also play a crucial role in helping arts organizations make decisions on where to invest their marketing budgets and how to improve their offerings.

## STEP 1 - COLLECT DATA

### 1) Make a Plan / Select Indicators

The first step is to determine who needs which kinds of data and why. The answers will depend on a variety of factors including the nature of the event; the needs of funders, supporters, and attendees; and the organization's mandate and capacity. Event Impacts, a UK organization, has developed a [comprehensive toolkit](#) for event evaluation focusing on 5 categories:

#### **Social**

- Community: How does the event change people's perceptions of a place?
- Health and Well-being
- Equity, Diversity & inclusion
- Volunteering & skills acquisition

#### **Economic**

- Direct economic impact: what additional spend can be attributed to the event?
- Total economic impact: adds in 'secondary'/indirect economic impacts
- Employment: spending and job creation within local organizations
- Long-term: economic impact beyond the event, e.g. spending on venues/infrastructure

**Attendance** - attendance numbers, audience profiles, and audience satisfaction

**Environmental** - including carbon footprint, waste impacts, and more.

**Media** - including volume & reach, tone & engagement, and reputational change

## STEP 2 - DECIDE ON METHODS & DEVELOP INSTRUMENTS

Once relevant categories and indicators have been selected (see Event Impacts Toolkit and this [Animating Democracy resource](#) for examples), organizers can then identify and develop appropriate data collection methods based on their needs and capacity. If the organization sells tickets online they might already have valuable audience information such as area and postal codes at their fingertips.



In some cases, organizations might need to develop new instruments. Creating and running a simple **participant survey** can be a relatively easy and effective place to start. The survey can be distributed in person at the event or sent out to participants after the event if their email addresses are available (an incentive, such as entry into a draw for a prize, can help increase participation). Mass Cultural Council's [Festivals Toolkit](#) provides helpful tips, examples, and pros & cons for various survey approaches.

### **Example: County Arts Participant Surveys**

- At our Art in the County and The Maker's Hand events, County Arts volunteers ask visitors to fill out a short survey on site to understand the proportion of attendees who are residents vs. visitors; for visitors, where are they coming from, whether they are staying overnight, for how many nights, and in what type of accommodation; whether they came to PEC specifically for the event, etc.
- We regularly survey our community programming participants to understand our impact on relevant objectives including skills development, well-being, social connectedness and more. We then use this data to improve and secure funding for these offerings.

Another helpful instrument for determining and communicating the economic impact of arts activities is the federal government's **CAHSEIM** (Culture, Arts, Heritage and Sport Economic Impact Model) calculator. It measures an event's or organization's direct economic impact and ripple effects using indicators such as GDP, labour income, and employment.

## **STEP 3 - SHARE IMPACT**

Once collected, this data can not only inform planning and marketing efforts. It is also instrumental in helping organizations form and nurture partnerships with funders and secure support for future activities. Granting programs will have specific reporting requirements, but the following steps focus on individual and business sponsors. Ideally, the life cycle of an event sponsorship will look something like this:

**1) Case for Support** - The event organizer prepares and presents a "Case for Support" (templates can easily be found online). This is a foundational, customizable document which describes the initiative and its actual or potential impact on the supporter's objectives, along with the benefits/perks (e.g. promotional, free tickets, etc.) the supporter will receive in exchange for their support.

**2) Ongoing stewardship and benefits** - Before, during, and after the event, the organizer should deliver the agreed-upon benefits at the appropriate moments.

**3) Reporting** - Shortly after the event, the organizer should prepare and present a follow-up report sharing as much quantitative and qualitative data as possible to demonstrate the success and impact of the event and promotional benefits.

[Business/Arts' Youtube page](#) contains many useful videos for arts organizations seeking to secure and maintain sponsors for their activities.