

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW EMERGENCY FUNDING INITIATIVE: COMMUNITY CARES ANNOUNCED TO SUPPORT THE INDIGENOUS ARTS COMMUNITY

Ottawa, Ontario – January 30, 2020 - The Canada Council for the Arts, the Aboriginal Curatorial Collective, Indigenous Performing Arts Alliance, the Indigenous Screen Office, and the Inuit Art Foundation announced today the creation of Community Cares: Emergency Response Fund for First Nations, Inuit and Métis Individuals Working in the Arts, a new time-limited emergency response fund to support First Nations, Inuit and Métis individuals working in the arts and culture sector during the COVID-19 pandemic. Indigenous communities have been disproportionately affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. This is a special fund devised to provide immediate support to Indigenous artists and cultural workers adversely affected by the pandemic.

First Nations, Inuit or Métis artists and cultural workers who have lost income due to COVID -19 may apply to the fund. Loss of income may be due to self-isolation, postponement or cancellation of travel, events or market access, reduced sales of work, or due to caring for family members or children, as well as other disruptions caused by the pandemic. This fund will be open to any individuals who are First Nations, Inuit or Métis, working in the arts and culture sector, whose practice has been negatively impacted by COVID-19.

Support in the amount of \$1,000 will be distributed to successful applicants. Applicants will be able to apply online through the websites of the Aboriginal Curatorial Collective, Indigenous Performing Arts Alliance, the Indigenous Screen Office, and the Inuit Art Foundation. Funds will be distributed by the Aboriginal Curatorial Collective. The Canada Council for the Arts has committed \$250,000 to support this initiative.

“The Council seeks to help support First Nations, Inuit and Métis artists and arts and cultural organizations through this challenging time. We are grateful to our partners for delivering this fund that will further Indigenous creation, which is essential to the renewal of relationships between Indigenous artists and Indigenous and non-Indigenous audiences.”

– **Simon Brault, CEO and Director, Canada Council for the Arts**

“This fund represents a truly community led initiative to support Indigenous artists in this tumultuous time. The Canada Council for the Arts is proud to partner with the Aboriginal Curatorial Collective, Indigenous Performing Arts Alliance, the Indigenous Screen Office, and the Inuit Art Foundation to respond to our community’s needs and the challenges our artists and cultural workers face.”

– **Steven Loft, Director, Creating, Knowing and Sharing: The Arts and Cultures of First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples, Canada Council for the Arts**

“For many of us at the ACC-CCA, our artists, curators, and cultural workers are where we find our community, our family, our worldviews, our sense of self and how we belong in the world. This community is in pain right now. To truly survive this crisis, we need to care for cultural health as well as our bodily health; we must come together in spirit if not in physicality to ensure our whole community is supported since we cannot thrive in isolation. We hope that this fund can offer some care and support to our community, because we need you.”

– **John Hampton, Director of Programs, Mackenzie Art Gallery, and Co-Chair, Aboriginal Curatorial Collective**

“The Indigenous Performing Arts Alliance is honoured to be part of this unique program to support Indigenous performing artists in this unprecedented time. The Canada Council shows great leadership in providing funding on this scale through Indigenous community partners, in getting funds into the Indigenous performers who truly need it.”

– **Cynthia Lickers-Sage, Executive Director of the Indigenous Performing Arts Alliance**

“With productions shut down across the country since March, we know that our community of Indigenous screen-based creators will benefit from this initiative. We would like to thank the Canada Council for taking this unique, community-based approach that will allow us to reach Indigenous artists and creators across all areas of practice.”

– **Kerry Swanson, Managing Director, Indigenous Screen Office**

“As the President of the Board of the Inuit Art Foundation, I wish to express our gratitude for this support. Inuit artists of all genres are struggling right now because of cancelled exhibitions, shows, speaking engagements and sales. We welcome the opportunity to ensure that this assistance reaches Inuit and Inuvialuit across the North and South who need this support. I'd like to thank the Canada Council for the Arts, Aboriginal Curatorial Collective, Indigenous Screen Office and Indigenous Performing Arts Alliance for coming together and supporting the Indigenous art community when it's needed most. Nakummek!”

– **Dr. Heather Igloliorte, Board President, Inuit Art Foundation**

To reduce barriers to access and distribute funding quickly, applicants will be able to apply online, by video submission, or by telephone if they do not have internet access. The Canada Council for the Arts, the Aboriginal Curatorial Collective, Indigenous Performing Arts Alliance, the Indigenous Screen Office, and the Inuit Art Foundation will release further information next week, once the initiative is open for applications (acc-cca.com/programs/community-cares-emergency-response-fund).

Quick Facts:

- Community Cares is in addition to funding available through Canada Council’s existing funding program: Creating, Knowing and Sharing: The Arts and Cultures of First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples which supports Indigenous individuals, groups, Indigenous-led arts organizations and arts/cultural sector development organizations that foster a vital and resilient Indigenous arts ecosystem.
- As part of the 2016-21 Strategic Plan, the Council committed to tripling its support to Indigenous creation, as well as furthering truth and reconciliation, and decolonization and, fostering a shared future. The Council’s overall funding to Indigenous artists, groups and arts organizations totaled \$17.8M in 2018-19; Council is on track to increase its investment from \$6.3M in 2015-16 to \$18.9M in 2020-21.
- Community Cares is one of four special emergency funding initiatives offered by the Canada Council in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Indigenous artists, groups and organizations were also able to benefit from funds offered to eligible arts organizations experiencing a significant financial impact, and the micro innovation grants that support digital creation and dissemination.

###

The *Inuit Art Quarterly* is the only publication that focuses solely on the vibrant and dynamic world of Inuit art. Published by the Inuit Art Foundation since 1986, this quarterly art magazine connects readers around the world with the Arctic by way of feature articles on well-known and emerging artists, timely and topical commentary and exclusive interviews.

Established in 1987, the **Inuit Art Foundation** provides support to Canada’s Inuit arts communities and is the sole national body mandated to promote Inuit artists and art within Canada and internationally. The Foundation is deeply invested in the rich history and tradition of Canada’s Inuit artistic expressions while actively contributing to the growth and development of these unique and diverse contemporary art practices. The Foundation undertakes advocacy on behalf of Inuit artists and realizes a number of strategies aimed at enhancing the appreciation and interpretation of Inuit art. The Inuit Art Foundation is supported by the private sector along with contributions from Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada and other public agencies. A volunteer, Inuit artist majority Board of Directors oversees the Foundation.

For more information please contact Alysa Procida at **(647) 498-7717** or aprocida@inuitartfoundation.org.

www.inuitartfoundation.org