

October 28, 2021

The Hon. Pablo Rodriguez, P.C., MP
Minister of Canadian Heritage
25 Eddy Street, 12th Floor
Gatineau, Quebec
K1A 0M5

Dear Minister,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Museums Association (CMA) and Canada's museum and heritage community, I want to offer our congratulations on your appointment as Minister of Canadian Heritage as well as sincere wishes of much success.

It is a testament to the dynamic times we live in that so much has changed in Canada's cultural landscape in the two years since you last held this portfolio.

The pandemic for one, laid bare the economic vulnerability of many Canadian museum and heritage institutions. But museums also answered the call. Supported by federal pandemic assistance programs, they remained focused on the health and safety of their staff and communities while providing much-needed educational and recreational opportunities for families.

While the pandemic served to highlight the importance of a responsive federal partner in times of crisis, it also highlighted the need to build the resiliency and adaptability of the sector.

The world museums help explain is changing ever more rapidly. To remain relevant and accessible, they need predictable, long-term sources of funding. Application and project-based funding — the backbone of Canada's current museums policy — while important, only serves to promote short-term solutions.

This is why the CMA along with its partner provincial and territorial museum associations are calling for an update to Canada's 30-year-old national museum policy.

A refreshed national museum policy would help preserve and enhance our ability to tell Canada's story. It would allow for further digitization of collections and empower greater collaboration and sharing of Canada's cultural heritage.

An effective national museum policy that is firmly anchored in the present will focus on protecting, celebrating, and advancing Canada's cultural heritage, ensure the financial sustainability of the sector, encourage long-term planning, and help promote key Canadian values like environmental sustainability, truth and reconciliation, and unity in diversity.

We were encouraged to hear before the election was called, your predecessor minister Guilbeault, commit to early consultations on modernizing Canada's museum policy. We urge you to follow through on that commitment.

You can rest assured that the CMA, its members, and its partners stand ready to work with you and your officials on this important undertaking.

I look forward to meeting you and discussing how we can best support your efforts in this area.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Wallace". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michael" and last name "Wallace" clearly distinguishable.

Michael Wallace
President
Canadian Museums Association