



Seeding Creative Pathways to Inclusive and Accessible Impact Investing in Canadian Arts and Culture

Preface

Hatch Open 2.0 is a national effort to support more inclusive and accessible impact investing with equity and justice-deserving groups in the artistic, creative, and cultural industries across Canada from May 2026 to Jul 2028.

Digital tools have changed quickly since this project was first imagined, including the growth of Artificial Intelligence (AI). While it is not the primary focus, in response to these shifts we are including considerations about how AI may both help and harm the ways people create and share impact stories.

This work builds on the development of **Hatch Open 1.0**, an open-source platform (pre-beta) developed from 2019 to 2025. It includes tools for user profiles, financial management, knowledge and ecosystem mapping. It also supports the future development of **Artse United**, a proposed platform cooperative for creatives and small enterprises. An upcoming report, *Open Up!*, will share key insights from these earlier activities.

This plan invites artists, cultural workers, impact investors, technologists, and community partners to take part in shaping **Hatch Open 2.0**. Your ideas, lived experience, and feedback are important to the direction of this work. As a living document, this plan will continue to evolve based on community involvement. You can [express interest to be involved here](#).

Précis

Hatch Open 2.0 is a multifaceted project to help make impact investing more accessible, inclusive, and community guided in arts and culture. From May 2026 to Jul 2028, we will work with communities across Canada to prototype three open-source

elements: 1) *impact practice framework*, 2) *impact investing ecosystem*, and 3) *impact investing software platform*.

Each element aims to help creatives and investors understand and use impact stories to support social and financial decision-making. All three will focus on the perspectives of creative gig workers and small enterprises who self-identify as 2SLGBTQIA+, Deaf, Disabled, Indigenous, Outside the Core, Racialized, Youth, and other equity and justice-deserving groups. We will also explore how Artificial Intelligence (AI) might help improve accessibility while keeping all decisions human led and community safe.

Community involvement is central to this project. There will be opportunities for paid positions, volunteer contributions, and other in-kind support. You can help by sharing stories or lived experience, reviewing drafts, testing prototypes, offering feedback on AI use, supporting translation or accessibility, or helping host conversations.

The sections that follow explain each activity and describe how you can take part.

Purpose

What is impact investing?

Impact investing is the practice of directing financial or other resources toward communities, organizations, groups, individuals, or activities that generate positive social outcomes and financial returns. It prioritizes sustainability, equity, and long-term benefits for the public good alongside financial profitability.

What are impact practices?

Impact practices are the methods used to plan, measure, communicate, and respond to the socioeconomic, environmental, cultural, or other impacts and outcomes of a community, organization, group, individual, or activity.

ArtsPond and partners will prototype **Hatch Open 2.0**, an equitable framework, accessible ecosystem, and open-source software platform supporting story-based impact investing in arts and culture from May 2026 to Jul 2028. As Artificial Intelligence (AI) becomes more common in creative and financial environments, this project will examine whether AI can help improve access, reduce reporting burdens, support translation, and strengthen cross-cultural communication while also preventing harms related to bias, misrepresentation, and data exploitation.

Our goal is to help make creative impact practices and impact investing easier with 2SLGBTQIA+, Deaf, Disabled, Indigenous, Outside the Core, Racialized, Youth, and other equity and justice-deserving artists, producers, and other creatives from across Canada. Activities will take place in Fluent and Plain English with supports for Sign, French, and selected Indigenous languages as resources allow. AI-supported

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translation and captioning tools may be explored to increase accessibility, with careful oversight to ensure accuracy, cultural safety, and human review.

This project builds upon **Hatch Open 1.0** (2019 to 2025). This pre-beta open-source software platform includes features for user profile and financial management, plus knowledge and ecosystem mapping. *Artse United* is a proposed platform cooperative to be powered by Hatch Open. Both prioritize support for gig workers and small enterprises in the artistic, creative, and cultural industries. As we evolve this work, we will explore how AI might support tasks such as pattern recognition, impact mapping, or accessibility while ensuring that creative agency stays in human hands.

Hatch Open has been funded by the Digital Strategy Fund (Phase 1) and Strategic Innovation Fund (Phase 2) at Canada Council for the Arts, plus operating funding from Ontario Arts Council with Government of Ontario.

Paths

Hatch Open 2.0 includes three interconnected paths:

1. [Impact practice framework](#) (May 2026 to Oct 2027)
2. [Impact investing ecosystem](#) (Jan 2027 to May 2028)
3. [Impact investing platform](#) (Aug 2027 to Jul 2028)

Below you will find a brief description for each, including a summary of activities, key questions, and opportunities for paid and volunteer or in-kind support.

1. Impact practice framework

Strengthening connections between creative and social impact frameworks

From May 2026 to Oct 2027, we will co-create a qualitative impact practice framework connecting artistic, creative, and cultural impact stories with social impact frameworks like Canadian Index of Wellbeing (CIW), United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), Environmental, Social, Governance (ESG), and others. Potential qualitative impact frameworks for consideration are summarized in this [literature review](#) from 2020.

The framework will explore how both human insight, and careful, responsible use of AI and other emerging digital tools may help the creation, interpretation, and sharing of impact stories. This includes potentially using AI to help organize information, support translation, and reduce reporting burdens while making sure all stories remain human led, culturally safe, and grounded in lived experience.

The equity and justice-centered framework we develop will serve as a foundation for the impact investing software. It will do so by deepening understanding and connections between creatives and investors, including 2SLGBTQIA+, Deaf, Disabled, Indigenous, Outside the Core, Racialized, Youth, and other equity and justice-deserving communities from across Canada and internationally. AI will be treated as an optional tool that may support access needs and ease of use, but it will never replace personal storytelling or decision-making.

Stages

This element includes four stages:

- **Seeking** (May to Dec 2026)
Update prior-stage research on qualitative impact practice frameworks and draft a disability and accessibility justice-focused framework as a first step. Explore where AI and other emerging digital tools may support research, translation, or organization of information while keeping human ownership and judgment at the center.
- **Sensemaking** (Aug 2026 to May 2027)
Extend and refine the draft framework through a fellowship program. Study how AI might help people reflect on stories, compare patterns, or surface connections, while ensuring that creatives and communities decide what insights matter most.
- **Shaping** (May to July 2027)
Integrate community feedback into the framework with a focus on spatial, environmental, and digital justice. Identify the limits of AI use and create clear

guidance for safe, accessible, and culturally respectful use of AI in impact practices.

- **Sharing** (Aug to Oct 2027)

Release the framework for public input. Provide options for people to explore the framework with or without AI supported tools, and gather stories about what is helpful, harmful, or missing.

Questions

Key questions for this element include:

Creatives

- What stories do creatives want to share about their lives and work?
- What goals do creatives have for their impact practices?
- What stories best show their creative, social, and financial impact?
- What stories do creatives want to hear from investors?
- What types of support are creatives seeking from investors?
- How may AI or other digital tools help creatives collect, shape, or share their stories without reducing their meaning or authenticity, or threatening their artistic, creative, cultural, and intellectual property?

Investors

- What stories do impact investors want to share about their values and work?
- What goals do investors have for their impact practices?
- What stories best show their social and financial impact?
- What stories do investors want to hear from creatives?
- What support do investors want to offer to creatives?
- How can AI or other digital tools help investors understand creative impact stories while preventing bias or misinterpretation?

Creatives and Investors

- How can creatives and investors align their values, goals, and understanding of impact?
- What tools or frameworks help illustrate both stories and data?
- What connections need to be made across different impact frameworks?
- How can people balance short-term financial goals with long-term social and cultural impact?
- How can both groups maintain clear and honest communication?
- How can AI or other emerging digital tools support shared understanding without replacing relationships or community wisdom?

Opportunities

Paid and volunteer or in-kind opportunities to support this element include:

- **Paid**

- Expert guides (~\$3,000 x 6 positions, including 1 Deaf creative, 1 Disabled creative, 1 Indigenous creative, 2 Canadian impact investors, 1 International impact investor)
- Fellows (~\$1,750 x 20 positions, including 15 creatives and 5 impact investors, prioritizing Deaf, Disabled, 2SLGBTQIA+, Indigenous, Racialized, Outside the Core, and Youth from across Canada only)
- Interpreters (French and Sign, variable rates per hour) and translators (French and Indigenous, variable rates per word)
- Care team members including Access Doula and Associate Producer (variable rates, minimum is age plus \$5 per hour)

- **Volunteer or in-kind**

- Recruit or engage experts, fellows, or partners
- Review draft versions of the framework
- Suggest frameworks or connections to explore
- Translate content into languages other than English
- Co-design or co host engagement sessions
- Share personal needs and stories that inform the evolution of the framework
- Provide feedback on the helpful or harmful roles AI and other emerging digital tools could play in impact practices

2. Impact investing ecosystem

Cultivating relationships, networks, and shared knowledge for long-term sustainability

From Jan 2027 to May 2028, we will explore ways to build an international ecosystem of creatives, community members, impact investors, knowledge experts, and technologists who care about accessible and inclusive impact investing in arts and culture. This ecosystem will help people learn from one another, form new partnerships, and support the long-term growth of the impact practice framework and impact investing platform.

As digital tools continue to evolve, we will also explore whether AI can support this ecosystem. This potentially includes using AI and other emerging digital tools for sensemaking, shaping and sharing information, knowledge, and wisdom, meeting accessibility, and language translation connecting people across regions, cultures, and languages. All AI use will remain optional, human led, and guided by disability justice, Indigenous data sovereignty, and cultural safety.

The ecosystem's purpose is to create welcoming spaces where people can exchange knowledge, share impact stories, and support each other in meaningful and sustainable ways

Stages

This element includes four stages:

- **Seeking** (Jan to Apr 2027)
Research existing networks, membership models, and partnership opportunities at a local, regional to provincial, national, and international level. Begin to outline outreach plans. Explore how AI and other emerging digital tools may support translation, accessibility, or connection without replacing human relationships.
- **Sensemaking** (May to Jun 2027)
Refine the plan through community feedback. Discuss how AI may or may not be helpful for community building and knowledge sharing.
- **Shaping** (Jul to Oct 2027)
Finalize strategies for how the ecosystem will grow, support members, and share knowledge. Provide clear guidance for safe and culturally respectful use of AI within the ecosystem.
- **Sharing** (Nov 2027 to May 2028)
Begin hosting networking events, drop ins, and knowledge sharing sessions. Offer both AI-assisted and non-AI options for translation, access, and communication.

Questions

Key questions for this element include:

Frameworks

Exploring how the ecosystem strengthens the impact practice framework:

- How can the ecosystem support continued refinement, translation, and growth of the impact practice framework?
- What supports do people need to use the framework across languages, regions, and lived experiences?
- How can community knowledge and lived experience shape stewardship of the framework long-term?
- What shared tools or learning practices help people use the framework in real world settings?
- How can AI or other digital tools help organize information about the framework while keeping human stories and expertise at the center?

Ecosystems

Exploring how to cultivate a healthy and sustainable ecosystem:

- What impact investing networks already exist, and how can we connect them to avoid duplication and increase impact?
- What motivates people to join an arts-focused impact investing ecosystem?
- What governance, membership, or participation models help create safe and accessible spaces?
- What supports do people need to participate across differences in culture, language, geography, or income?
- How can the ecosystem stay resilient, self sustaining, and adaptive over time, with or without AI tools?

Platforms

Exploring connections between the ecosystem and software platform:

- What kinds of training, support, or peer mentorship will help people use the impact investing platform with confidence?
- How can the ecosystem help create accessible onboarding and learning materials?
- How can developers, designers, and IT partners support long term platform care through the ecosystem?
- How can ecosystem insights guide new platform features, including optional AI tools for organization or translation?

- What supports are needed to ensure platform governance remains community driven and equitable?

Opportunities

Paid and volunteer or in-kind opportunities to support this element include:

- **Paid**
 - Expert guides (\$3,000 x 2 positions)
 - Interpreters (French and Sign, variable rates per hour) and translators (French and Indigenous, variable rates per word)
 - Care team members including Access Doula and Associate Producer (variable rates, minimum is age plus \$5 per hour).
- **Volunteer and in-kind**
 - Recruit experts and participants
 - Review and edit ecosystem plans
 - Support translation into languages other than English
 - Co-host engagement or community sessions
 - Share lived experience, needs, and suggestions
 - Offer feedback on possible uses or limits of AI or other emerging digital tools in community settings

3. Impact investing platform

Building digital tools for story-based social and financial impact in arts and culture

From Aug 2027 to Jul 2028, we will design and prototype an open-source and accessible software platform that connects the impact practice framework with practical tools for impact investing in arts and culture. The platform will help creatives and investors share impact stories, understand each other's goals, and explore possible partnerships in a safe and accessible digital environment.

As part of this work, we will also explore whether emerging digital tools like AI can help with tasks such as translation, accessibility, organizing information, or matching similar stories. All AI use will stay optional and human led. Story sharing will remain guided by lived experience, cultural safety, disability justice, and community control of data.

The goal is to build a platform that supports meaningful relationships and care centered decision making. The platform will include features such as user profiles, story-based matching, simple financial tools for budgeting and payment processing, and visual ways to explore impact data. Accessibility will be built in from the start, with a focus on the needs of 2SLGBTQIA+, Deaf, Disabled, Indigenous, Outside the Core, Racialized, Youth, and other equity and justice-deserving communities.

Stages

This element includes three stages:

- **Seeking** (Aug to Dec 2027)
Research technical approaches, accessibility needs, story based data structures, and ethical data governance. Explore how AI tools may support translation, information organization, or access features while keeping control with users. Begin early design and planning.
- **Sensemaking** (Jan to Mar 2028)
Test early prototypes and wireframes with creatives, investors, accessibility partners, and technical advisors. Gather feedback on usability, safety, and the optional role of AI. Update designs based on real stories and lived experience.
- **Shaping and sharing** (Apr to Jul 2028)
Build a working prototype with core features. Prepare public demonstrations, simple onboarding tools, documentation, and open source release materials. Share stories and insights with the public and invite feedback on next steps.

Questions

Key questions for the platform:

- What platform features best support story based impact practices for creatives and investors?
- What accessibility needs must be included for Deaf, Disabled, Indigenous, multilingual, and low bandwidth users?
- How should data, stories, and financial information be governed to protect user rights and community ownership?
- What learning tools or supports help people use the platform with ease?
- How can optional AI tools be used safely to support matching, translation, or organization without creating bias or reducing the meaning of stories?
- What partnerships or technical supports are needed to keep the platform sustainable and community guided over time?

Opportunities

- **Paid**
 - Expert guides (\$3,000 x 1 position)
 - Software testers (\$250 x 12 positions)
 - Interpreters (French and Sign Language, variable rates per hour) and translators (French and Indigenous, variable rates per word)
 - Access and care team members including Access Doula and Associate Producer (variable rates, minimum is age plus \$5 per hour).
- **Volunteer and in-kind**
 - Help recruit testers, advisors, and contributors
 - Review or edit technical documentation and reports
 - Test prototypes and share feedback on usability and access
 - Translate content into languages other than English
 - Advise on ethical data governance
 - Provide insight about safe and helpful uses of AI and other emerging digital tools
 - Support outreach and help host community sessions

Minimal budget

Cultivate Program

Strategic Innovation Fund @ Canada Council for the Arts

65,000	Creative leads
75,000	Technology leads
35,000	Fellows
30,000	Guides and coaches
22,500	Care team
22,500	Access and language support
\$250,000	Total

\$1M+ in additional funding will be requested in 2026 and 2027.