

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Critical Mass Art Announces Completion of Catalyst & Transformation Project with \$32,000 Investment from Work in Culture

Port Hope, ON — Critical Mass Art has successfully completed its Catalyst & Transformation (CAT) project, supported by a **\$32,000 investment from Work in Culture (WIC)**. The Explore phase began in February 2025 and led into a comprehensive implementation process focused on long-term sustainability and sector impact.

The Work in Culture Catalyst and Transformation (CAT) Fund provides funding to Ontario arts organizations to investigate, plan, and implement substantive change in their operations.

With the support of WIC funding, Critical Mass engaged **In Good Inc., a consulting firm specializing in destination marketing**, to lead research, interviews, and stakeholder engagement sessions with artists, partners, municipal staff, and community leaders.

The Explore phase of the project began in February 2025, launching a comprehensive consultation and strategic planning process designed to assess the organization's long-term sustainability and future role within the Port Hope arts ecosystem.

Over the course of both the Explore and Implementation phases, Critical Mass engaged artists, cultural partners, municipal staff, elected officials, and community stakeholders in more than 80 hours of interviews, facilitated sessions, and surveys.

This collaborative process resulted in the development of a strategic "Evolution Playbook" that outlines a bold and sustainable path forward for Critical Mass.

The process resulted in an "Evolution Playbook" outlining a strategic shift toward piloting an Arts Advocacy, Networking & Funding agency branch while continuing to deliver high-impact contemporary arts programming.

Key outcomes of the project include:

A clear strategic direction to evolve Critical Mass beyond a presenting model toward a broader role as an Arts Advocacy, Networking & Funding Council Agency serving Port Hope and the surrounding region.

A dual-stream approach that maintains high-impact public programming — including signature contemporary arts events — while developing new structures to support artists through advocacy, resource facilitation, and funding opportunities.

Exploration of a two-pronged organizational model to strengthen governance, clarify mandate, and position Critical Mass for long-term sustainability, including consideration of charitable status.

Development of an implementation roadmap that includes formation of an Advisory Group, finalization of renewed Vision and Mission statements, strengthened partnerships, and expanded artist support mechanisms.

This transformative work positions Critical Mass to better address regional gaps in artist advocacy and resource access, while continuing to deliver meaningful contemporary arts experiences to the community.

“This investment allowed us to pause, listen deeply, and think strategically about our future,” said Debbie Beattie, Director of Critical Mass. “With In Good Inc.’s guidance, we’ve developed a clear, community-informed roadmap to strengthen both support for artists, arts workers, and the cultural vitality of Port Hope.”

Critical Mass extends sincere thanks to **Work in Culture** for its leadership in strengthening Ontario’s cultural sector and for supporting organizations as they navigate growth and change.

For updates on Critical Mass’s evolving mandate and upcoming programming, visit **criticalmassart.com** or follow **@criticalmassart** on Instagram.

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About Work in Culture

Work in Culture (WIC) is a non-profit arts service organization that advances the careers of artists, creatives, and cultural workers from diverse lived experiences, and supports the organizations that engage them, through entrepreneurial and business skills development and innovative research. Learn more about Work in Culture and the Catalyst and Transformation (CAT) Fund at workinculture.ca/programs/cat-fund.