

OTTAWA FRINGE

IMPACT REPORT

2025



OTTAWA
Fringe
FESTIVAL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LETTER FROM
ALAIN RICHER 1

OTTAWA FRINGE
OVERVIEW 2

2025 FESTIVAL 3

ARTIST IMPACT 4

COMMUNITY
IMPACT 5

COMMUNITY
IMPACT 6

AUDIENCE
ENGAGEMENT 7

ACCESSIBILITY
INITIATIVES 8

YOUR SUPPORT
MATTERS 9

CONTACT
INFORMATION 10

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



ALAIN RICHER

Executive and Artistic Director

In 2025, Ottawa Fringe shattered records, deepened community connections, and reaffirmed its role as one of the most accessible, inclusive, and impactful arts festivals in Canada.

With over 14,600 tickets sold (a 21% increase since 2023), 233 artists from Ottawa, across Canada, and around the world, and a vibrant lineup of bilingual shows across 9 venues, the festival thrived thanks to the dedication of artists, volunteers, partners, and audiences.

Ottawa Fringe is more than a festival. It's a launchpad for independent artists, a platform for underrepresented voices, and a gathering place where community thrives. Every ticket purchased, every hour volunteered, and every dollar donated directly fuels a stronger, more inclusive arts and culture landscape in Ottawa and beyond.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alain Richer".

Alain Richer

Executive & Artistic Director

21%

Increase in ticket sell since 2023

233

Artist performed in the 2025 Festival

100%

Ticket revenue given back to artists



OTTAWA FRINGE OVERVIEW

VISION

Ottawa Fringe exists to ensure that bold, independent theatre is accessible to everyone, empowering artists, engaging audiences, and strengthening the cultural heartbeat of our city. We envision a community where every artist has the freedom to take risks, every story has a stage, and every audience feels they belong. Through accessibility, diversity, and creativity, we are building a festival that truly belongs to all.

MISSION

Our mission is to provide performing artists from all career levels the opportunity to produce their work, regardless of content, form, or style, while exposing audiences to a rich variety of performance and storytelling. We encourage artists to take risks, pursue their visions, and develop their skills in an environment where they are supported to succeed. Ottawa Fringe plays a vital role in the growth and sustainability of professional theatre in our city by connecting artists with audiences, resources, opportunities, and each other.

2025 FESTIVAL AT A GLANCE

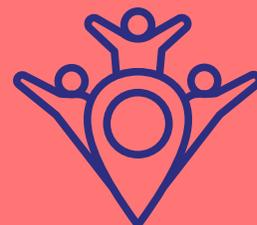
Ottawa Fringe 2025 was our most successful year to date, breaking records and building new connections across the city. Over the span of eleven days, audiences purchased 14,628 tickets, marking a 6.3% increase from 2024 and an impressive 21% growth since 2023. The festival featured 56 shows across nine venues, including 7 french shows, with 349 performances delivered. Audiences flocked to see work from 233 artists, representing Ottawa (50%), the rest of Canada (30%), and international stages (20%). In total, 34 shows sold out, demonstrating a growing demand for bold and original performance. Beyond ticket sales, more than 1,600 people took part in free community events, while 101 volunteers contributed 1,491 hours across 442 shifts to bring the festival to life. This year, with the support of a 37-person team and 17 seasonal positions, Ottawa Fringe thrived as a cornerstone of the city's cultural calendar.



349
Performances



14 626
Tickets Sold



50%
Local Artists



ARTIST IMPACT

At the heart of Ottawa Fringe is our commitment to artists. Unlike most cultural festivals, 100% of ticket revenue goes directly back to performers, ensuring their work is both seen and financially supported. Through initiatives like Open Doors, which provides waived fees, mentorship, rehearsal space, and funding for BIPOC, disabled, trans, and QTBIPOC artists, we continue to remove barriers and amplify marginalized voices. Ottawa Fringe is more than a festival; it's a launchpad for independent creators, building connections and shaping careers long after the curtain falls.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

* Ottawa Fringe keeps artists at the centre by removing financial barriers wherever possible. All artists benefit from subsidized venues, front-of-house and technical support.

\$4,780

Subsidized by Ottawa Fringe for each show



* Every ticket sold is an investment in independent theatre, ensuring artists can continue to take risks, share new stories, and grow their careers. In 2025 Ottawa Fringe returned \$141,018 to artists.

\$ 141,018

Given Back to Artist



"Producing/directing a show at Ottawa Fringe was like being given an open door. It allowed me to take new creative risks along with a group of youth, it opened the door for us to perform for the widest range of theatre audiences in the Ottawa area, and it allowed us to create quality theatre within a low budget. Ottawa Fringe was like living on a 10-day island of artistic exploration and relationship-building -- extremely organized, abundant in genuine energy, and career-fulfilling." - Kristina Watt Villegas, 100 Watt Productions (DNA, Fringe 2025)

COMMUNITY IMPACT



FREE COMMUNITY SERIES

Associate Artistic Director Emma Ferrante curated the Community Series: a lineup of free, accessible events that spotlight underrepresented voices, celebrate inclusion, and champion local collaborations. These gatherings, performances, and experiences highlight grassroots creativity and community-driven programming. In 2025, Ottawa Fringe invested directly in local artists, paying out \$12,000 to those performing in the Community Series. More than 1,600 people took part in these events, engaging with art, meeting artists, and connecting with one another, with many experiencing Fringe for the very first time.

1626

Patrons participated for FREE

\$12,000

Paid to local artists presenting during the Community Series.

VENDORS

At Ottawa Fringe vendors thrive. In 2025 we had 11 different local vendors and for many, their participation in the festival helped them reach their annual sales goal. The festival acts as an incubator for small businesses, giving them direct access to thousands of engaged patrons.

“Thanks to Ottawa Fringe, we were able to engage and meet a new set of customers and an amazing community.” – Delights by Mama, 2025 vendor

COMMUNITY IMPACT



JOBS

- * In 2025, the Ottawa Fringe Festival employed 37 staff across marketing, outreach, technical crews, front of house, access, administration, and artistic roles, a collaborative team working behind the scenes to bring the festival to life.
- * Each year, the Ottawa Fringe Festival generates meaningful seasonal job opportunities, giving community members hands-on experience in the arts and culture sector. In 2025, the festival created 17 seasonal positions, fostering new pathways for professional growth and creative careers.

Seasonal Jobs
Created

17

Employed Staff

37



VOLUNTEERS

- * 101 volunteers, with 40% returning from past years, formed the backbone of the festival by bringing experience, passion, and community spirit to every corner of Fringe.
- * Together they contributed 1,491 hours across 442 shifts, ensuring smooth operations in venues, front of house, and special events.

Number of
Volunteers

101

Total hours
volunteered

1491

AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT



674,000

Views on Instagram



141,000

Views on Facebook



200+

Media and Press
Features

In 2025, Ottawa Fringe reached more people than ever before, both online and in the press. On social media, the festival saw remarkable growth, with content generating more than 674,000 views on Instagram and 141,000 views on Facebook. Posts, stories, and reels amplified the energy of the festival well beyond downtown Ottawa, introducing new audiences to the excitement of Fringe and driving them to attend shows.

The buzz extended into traditional media as well, with over 80 media mentions across outlets including CBC Ottawa, CTV, Apt613, Radio Canada, Broadway World, Live 88.5, and more. From previews and reviews to artist interviews and feature stories, media coverage helped showcase the diversity of the festival lineup and spotlight artists to thousands of potential ticket buyers. Together, this mix of digital and media engagement positioned Ottawa Fringe not just as a festival, but as a major cultural event in the city, one that people are eager to talk about, share, and experience year after year.

ACCESSIBILITY INITIATIVE

* CAPTIONED PERFORMANCES

Captioned performances are a vital access initiative that ensure Deaf and hard-of-hearing audiences can experience theatre without barriers. At Ottawa Fringe, captions also make the festival more welcoming to our bilingual and multilingual community, allowing audiences to enjoy performances across languages. For artists, captioning opens their work to entirely new audiences, expanding their reach and impact. In 2025, we presented 27 captioned shows, affirming our commitment to a festival where everyone belongs.

Captioned performances **27**

Invested in Access Initiatives **\$14,000**

“The Ottawa Fringe Festival also supported Francophone plays by offering surtitles. This support allowed me to present my play to Francophones, to those learning French, and to Anglophones. Language is part of culture. Theatre fuels culture.” - Sophie Twardus - 2025 Artist

* COMPLIMENTARY SUPPORT TICKETS

To ensure no one faces barriers to live performance, Ottawa Fringe offers complimentary tickets to personal support workers, respite workers, and attendants accompanying patrons with disabilities.

* AUDIO DEESCRIBED PERFORMANCES

This year, Ottawa Fringe proudly offered two audio-described performances, complete with touch tours for blind and low vision audience members, expanding access and ensuring that more of our community could experience the festival's work in full.



WHY YOUR SUPPORT MATTERS

FUEL BOLD CREATIVITY

By partnering with Ottawa Fringe, you make it possible for artists to take risks, share their stories, and connect with audiences in transformative ways. With 100% of ticket sales going directly to artists, your support ensures that creative voices are heard and sustained, helping shape the future of Canada's performing arts.

STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Becoming an Ottawa Fringe Partner goes far beyond a logo on a poster, it embeds you in one of Ottawa's most inclusive and vibrant cultural events. Your contribution supports free community programming, accessibility initiatives like captioning and audio described performances, and opportunities for underrepresented voices. Together, we build a festival that reflects and celebrates the diversity of our city.



AMPLIFY YOUR IMPACT

Ottawa Fringe reaches tens of thousands each year. From the 14,600+ ticket buyers and 1,600+ community event participants, to the 674,000 Instagram viewers and 200+ media mentions amplifying the festival's profile. By joining forces with us, your brand becomes part of this momentum, demonstrating leadership in supporting culture, accessibility, and community growth.

CONTACT US



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