



# Arts Commons Rebranding Initiative Request for Proposals

Brand Strategy and Design Consultancy

RFP release date

July 8, 2024

Deadline for proponent questions or inquiries

July 26, 2024

**Submission deadline**

**August 2, 2024**



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Arts Commons is located in Treaty 7 Territory, on the sacred land that is the original home of the Niitsitapi from the Blackfoot Confederacy (Siksika, Piikani, and Kanai First Nations); the Îyârhe Nakoda (Chiniki, Goodstoney/Kichipwot, and Bearspaw First Nations); and the Dene of the Tsuut'ina First Nation. This territory is also home to the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 5 & 6 within the historical Northwest Métis homeland. The diversity of these nations is reflected in their oral histories, arts and culture practices, and deep connections with the land and waters. We recognize the cultural, economic, and social contributions of these nations and thank them for sharing this land with us. We commit to being good stewards of this land, while we are here, and welcome all who work, live, play, honour, and celebrate this historic territory.

## Arts Commons

205 - 8 Avenue SE Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2G 0K9

Registered Charitable Number

11882 3269 RR0001

[artscommons.ca](https://artscommons.ca)

# RFP Overview

Western Canada's largest arts centre, Arts Commons, located in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, is seeking qualified proponents to spearhead a comprehensive rebranding initiative. Arts Commons is embarking on a historic expansion and modernization process, with the Arts Commons Transformation (ACT) and Olympic Plaza Transformation (OPT) Projects. The rebrand is an outgrowth of a recent transformational gift of \$75 million from Dave Werklund and his family which will see the renaming of Arts Commons to **Werklund Centre**, in perpetuity, starting in the 2025-26 season.

Arts Commons invites the submission of proposals from an agency or a collective of qualified individuals for the provision of marketing and rebranding services, including market research, strategy, branding, and brand identity design.

**Phase 1:** Proponent(s) will evaluate Arts Commons' existing brand to help establish the organization's objectives for a new or revised brand position. They will also conduct market research to gain a thorough understanding of the target audiences and assist in defining the centre's new brand personality and direction for creating the new brand identity.

**Phase 2:** Proponent(s) will provide services for developing a complete visual identity system/brand toolkit and offer recommendations for realigning existing platforms (website, social media) to the new design and brand systems.

**Phase 3:** Proponent(s) will not only lead the development of a rebrand launch and public awareness initiatives but also devise comprehensive strategies to continuously engage the audience with the new brand. These strategies aim to increase public awareness and retention of the new brand's visuals and values, providing a road map for brand activation and implementation.

We believe that the right partner(s) will not only help us achieve our mission but also help us shape our compelling and unique story. Please indicate if you are interested in one phase or all phases.

# Arts Commons

Comprised of six world-class resident companies (Alberta Theatre Projects, Arts Commons Presents, Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, Downstage, One Yellow Rabbit, and Theatre Calgary), **Arts Commons is the steward of Western Canada's largest arts centre**, and the artistic and civic cornerstone of Calgary's downtown core. The organization's strategic priorities include supporting artists and creative organizations, including the more than 200 community groups that call Arts Commons home, to realize their missions, and to foster opportunities for collaboration across our cultural campus. The Arts Commons campus currently spans over 560,000 sq.ft., with five performance venues, ranging in size from a capacity of 180 to 1800, including the beautiful Jack Singer Concert Hall, as well as a variety of other spaces for workshops and exhibitions.

Arts Commons is located in the heart of Downtown Calgary with quick and easy access to the Calgary Light Rail Transit system. We are adjacent to Olympic Plaza and the historic Stephen Avenue Walk, home to a range of hotels, restaurants, and local attractions, with the Calgary Telus Convention Centre (CTCC) and the Glenbow Museum across the street. Within a short walk you can also find the National Music Centre, the new Central Public Library, and The Confluence.

Arts Commons has been a key contributor to the social, economic, cultural, and intellectual life and well-being of Calgarians and visitors since its founding in 1985. It typically serves more than 400,000 patrons at ticketed events and more than 150,000 people annually at free events and gatherings.

## **Our Belief**

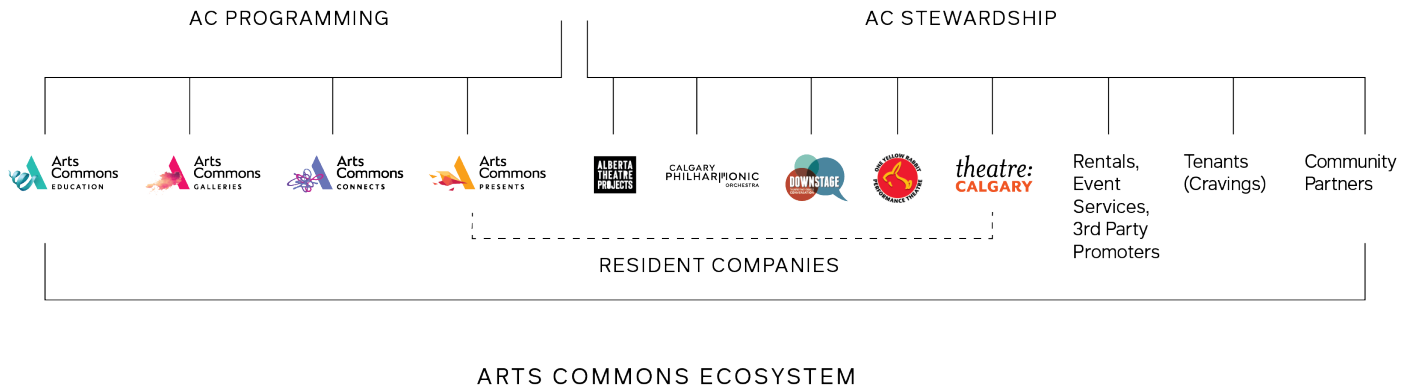
That equitable access to the arts is a human right.

## **Our Responsibility**

To redefine a bold and adventurous Calgary by championing and investing in creativity.

## **Our Mission**

Our Mission is to be an inspirational force where artists, community, and organizations celebrate cultural identities, experience the full breadth of human emotions, and ignite positive change.



## Arts Commons programming sub-brand pillars:

### Arts Commons **Education**

Our education programs offer unique learning experiences for students of all ages and abilities, using hands-on learning to teach creative discovery linked to the curriculum. The ConocoPhillips Hub for Inspired Learning, part of Campus Calgary, guides classes in exploring their 'Big Question' with teaching artists. We also offer Student Presentations, such as National Geographic Live student shows, where students and teachers can come to Arts Commons to see a live performance.

### Arts Commons **Galleries**

Arts Commons is home to six galleries (Ledge, Lightbox Studio, Windows, +15 Galleries, Broadcast Lab, and +15 Soundscape) which are free to enjoy. These galleries feature local artists and community collaborations in rotating exhibitions.

### Arts Commons **Connects**

Connects local artists to exhibition and performance opportunities, professional development, networking, and career growth and creates opportunities for community partnerships. Includes the TD Incubator program and the RBC Emerging Visual Artist Program.

### Arts Commons **Presents**

Arts Commons Presents invites you to discover the transformative power of the arts. As the programming arm of Arts Commons, Arts Commons Presents encompasses the programming and presenting of our in-house series: BD&P World Stage, Classic Albums Live, National Geographic Live, and TD Amplify Cabarets.

# Arts Commons Transformation and Olympic Plaza Transformation

The Arts Commons Transformation (ACT) and Olympic Plaza Transformation (OPT) projects in Calgary represent a significant investment in the city's downtown and arts sector. With a total investment of \$660 million, these projects aim to revitalize the downtown area creating a complete 'campus' experience to enliven an entire downtown block—one of the largest contiguous arts spaces in Canada. The Arts Commons Transformation (ACT) project involves the development of a new building and the renovation of the existing facility, while the Olympic Plaza Transformation (OPT) will reimagine the urban gathering space as an innovative, arts-focused area in the core. These projects are aligned with The City of Calgary's Downtown Strategy and represents a strategic investment to enhance downtown vibrancy, rejuvenating Calgary's core by establishing safe, inclusive public spaces enriched with arts and cultural programming.

Following extensive ongoing collaborations, a shared vision for an expanded facility and campus was created with input from all Arts Commons resident companies, advocates, and other stakeholders. The Arts Commons Transformation (ACT) project is a collaboration with the City of Calgary and the Calgary Municipal Land Corporation (CMLC) that will create a civic arts centre that is more accessible, vibrant, and inclusive and will act as an integral community resource. Executed in two phases, ACT will both expand capacity in an adjoining new building and renew the existing facility, bringing it up to today's standards.

The Olympic Plaza Transformation (OPT) will reimagine the 35-year-old urban gathering place as an innovative, flexible, arts-focused gathering space in the core, building on the momentum of the investment and work already underway in downtown Calgary.

Olympic Plaza will be closed from late 2024 through 2028 to enable construction on both the Arts Commons and Olympic Plaza transformation projects. Arts Commons will lead curated programming, operations, and maintenance for the revitalized plaza after construction is complete.

# Dave Werklund and Family

Marking another major milestone for Arts Commons Transformation (ACT) and Olympic Plaza Transformation (OPT), Arts Commons is humbled to announce a transformational gift of \$75 million from Calgarians Dave Werklund and family to support ACT and OPT, bringing project funding to \$498.5 million of its \$660 million goal.

With immense gratitude for this historic donation, Arts Commons will invest the \$75 million gift towards construction costs, create the Dave Werklund Education Wing, as well as establish four funds to support the sustainability of the following institutional priorities: education, accessibility, operations, and an ongoing endowment to rename Arts Commons as Werklund Centre in perpetuity, starting in the 2025-26 season.

Celebrated as one of Alberta's most successful entrepreneurs, Dave Werklund's journey growing up in rural Alberta and his dedication to industry-leading work was documented in the recently released autobiography "Unconventional: The Story of an Entrepreneurial Environmentalist Inside Alberta's Oil and Gas Industry." Born and raised on a farm near Valleyview, Alberta, Dave Werklund's modest upbringing taught him the value of teamwork, innovation and caring for both his community and the land. That remained strong as his career in Alberta oil and gas grew. Recognizing an urgent need to resolve the industry's environmental and waste management issues, Dave's businesses have operated under the mantra "Protecting the air we breathe, the water we drink and the ground we walk on." As Founder and CEO of Canadian Crude Separators, he earned the Ernst & Young Canadian Entrepreneur Of The Year award in 2005. The following year, he established the Werklund Foundation to provide youth leadership opportunities, and his work as an environmental steward in the oil and gas services industry lives on in his new company, Pure Environmental. Dave Werklund is also a Calgary Business Hall of Fame inductee, a Member of the Alberta Order of Excellence, a Member of the Order of Canada, and recipient of Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee Medal. Through the Werklund Family Office, Dave owns and manages a vast portfolio of companies and investments which allow him to engage in his favourite passion, philanthropy.

Despite never surpassing Grade 9 in school, Dave's life has been filled with a passion for knowledge and education, devouring books to enhance his natural skills in leadership and business, feeding his entrepreneurial spirit as a student of the world, and engaging in continuous personal development training. His passion for higher learning compelled him to support others' pursuits of formal education. In 2013, his \$25 million gift to the University of Calgary's Faculty of Education created the Werklund School of Education, and in 2017, he made the largest-ever personal donation to an Alberta college or technical institution of \$16 million, creating the Werklund Agriculture Institute at Olds College. The transformational gift of \$75 million marks a new era of such philanthropy for the Werklund family, but one that follows in this history of increasing creative learning opportunities in Alberta and recognizes the connection between equitable access to the arts, education, and our collective health and wellbeing.

# Rebrand Goals and Objectives

The renaming of Arts Commons as Werklund Centre in perpetuity, starting in the 2025-26 season, is an exciting opportunity to reshape the Arts Commons story. One that requires a bold, future-focused, and undeniably compelling brand that can act as an umbrella for the initiatives within the campus. In addition to the new brand identity, it is vital to develop a compelling narrative that conveys the story of the entire alliance, its dynamic and high-impact initiatives, and the interconnected relationships.

This request for proposal (RFP) provides an exciting opportunity for one or more qualified proponents to develop a coordinated strategy to build a credible and distinctive brand for Werklund Centre.

As a result of this renaming, the following positive outcomes will occur:

- The new Werklund Centre identity will be a bold, dynamic reflection of the future of our organization and our commitment to the community—it will inspire audiences, increase awareness, drive revenue, and improve brand recognition.
- Werklund Centre's programs, venues and communications will be brought together visually as one organization with one unifying message and direction.
- The project will help cultivate a strong organizational identity and value proposition that the average Calgarian can articulate.
- It will elevate perception of Werklund Centre as a civic centre that drives vitality in downtown Calgary, spurs economic growth, and demonstrates its dedication to the cultural and civic agendas.
- The new Werklund Centre identity will bring to light a truly transformational shift in the role of a modern arts centre in Canada—one that blends arts, education, social enterprise, and greater civic dialogue.



# Scope of Work

The purpose of this project is to develop and support the launch of the newly named Werklund Centre by creating a new brand identity and story that reflects the campus's mission, vision, and values. Proponents can submit proposals for individual components or for the full scope of the initiative, which includes three distinct phases.

## **Phase One - Market Research and Brand Strategy**

### Market Research

- The selected agency will audit existing research, reports, and the current branding materials and standards, and will review published communications and internal documents, including press, annual reports, social media, and strategic plan, to build an understanding of Arts Commons' current brand, position and voice.
- Plan to conduct interviews with key stakeholders within the organization, including board members, staff, resident companies, and long-term supporters. These interviews should aim to understand their perspectives on the current brand, its strengths, weaknesses, and their vision for the future.
- Conduct market research, as required, to gather insights into the community's perceptions and expectations of the current brand and what Calgarian's desire from Werklund Centre.

### Brand Strategy

- Develop a brand platform - positioning, personality, promise, differentiation, and values - that reflects the new Werklund Centre campus model.
- Develop a comprehensive brand architecture that addresses relationships between Arts Commons and it's programming arm, it's resident companies, and ACT/OPT future user groups.
- Develop and implement a strategy to gain consensus among various stakeholders, including resident companies, community groups, artists, and third-party users, for the new Werklund Centre brand. Provide guidance for implementing the new brand.
- Create a communications plan inclusive of brand roll out strategy for stakeholders and target audiences. This includes a marketing strategy inclusive of public relations and outreach, internal implementation, and external awareness.
- Provide a recommended strategy for the overarching Werklund Centre brand and its sub-brands, and ensure that all brand logos and identities are aligned.
- Develop standards for monitoring and measuring brand performance.

## Phase Two - Concept and Design Development

### Visual Identity Development

- Create a visual identity for the new Werklund Centre brand platform and sub-brand logo package (if required), including but not limited to:
  - Primary logo (full color and one color)
  - Secondary sub-brand logo(s)
  - Colour palette
  - Typography
  - Associated visual and dynamic elements
- Develop a brand toolkit detailing logo usage, typography, colour palette, imagery use, mock-ups for digital and print collateral (electronic template for e-blasts/e-newsletter, stationary, e-signature, etc.), and others guidelines as identified.

### Website Redevelopment Strategy

- Concept development for a new/modified website to match/reflect the new Werklund Centre brand identity, ensuring a consistent and distinct brand experience across all websites (Arts Commons, Arts Commons Presents, ACT/OPT).
- Make recommendations by:
  - Developing an updated sitemap and associated website wire frames
  - Create mock-ups with branding, typography, colour palettes, and imagery

**Note:** Implementing a website redevelopment will be part of a separate website project supported by internal staff.

### Social Media

- Provide recommendations on updating social media profiles to reflect the new brand identity.

## Phase Three - Implementation and Launch

Proponent(s) will lead the development of a rebrand launch and public awareness initiatives. The purpose of this will be to introduce our new identity and officially start the name transition from Arts Commons to Werklund Centre, and to increase public awareness and retention of the new brand visuals and values.

- Develop an implementation strategy to introduce Werklund Centre's vision, mission, values, graphic identity, and messages—ensuring a smooth brand transition process.
- Provide recommendations on roll out and launch strategy timeline, tactics and suggested collateral to successfully help launch the new Werklund Centre brand and build awareness across core audiences.

# Proposal Requirements

It is important to Arts Commons that the selected design firm have experience with similar projects of size and scope. All submissions must, at a minimum, include the following elements:

- Background and expertise in providing rebrand services for arts and cultural, and/or civic organizations.
- Summary of your commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Description of services you provide and why you are uniquely qualified.
- Strategic approach, methodologies, and tactics for achieving objectives within the scope of work outlined above.
- Summary of how you typically work with clients (degree of collaboration, etc.).
- Please provide samples of relevant projects you've developed and give us a little background about each (links may be included).
- A list of any clients that may pose a conflict of interest, if applicable.
- Bios and qualifications of key team members who will be responsible for executing the project. Include relevant experience. Additionally, what resources would you dedicate to this project to be successful?
- Identify your main point of contact.
- Please indicate which phase(s) you are interested in and have all fees separated.
- Proposed detailed work plan outlining milestones, deliverables, and timelines for each phase of the project.
- Describe how you manage your timeline for implementation and identify milestones in the project.
- Share proposed fees, terms & conditions. Tell us your budget range for this proposed project - Itemized budget detailing costs associated with agency services, and other relevant expenses.
- Any non-profit discount or pro bono work (we welcome your proposal to include how your company would support the project through cash/contra sponsorship, or other considerations).
- Outline assumptions that go into the costs and describe any services not included in the cost estimate but are regularly incurred on similar projects.
- Provide references from at least three (3) clients/projects you have worked with in the past 12 months.

# Evaluation Criteria

The selection committee will identify a group or agency with the experience and knowledge necessary to lead the rebrand initiative project. Proposals will be evaluated on creativity, a demonstrated understanding of the project's scope and goals, including understanding Arts Commons' mission, ability to work within the approved budgeted guidelines, and results based on work produced for other clients. Arts Commons will evaluate and score proposals in their sole discretion based on the following criteria (not listed in order of importance):

- Strategic thinking and methodology submitted in your proposal.
- Quality of match between qualifications/capabilities and experience, project scope and requirements.
- Have been operating continuously as a marketing agency for a minimum of 24 months and possess full-service, in-house capabilities for marketing, creative services, production, media planning and placement, direct response and research. Agencies that intend to partner with outside consultants to fulfill complete work remit should signal their intent.
- Prioritize collaboration (ability to work with the Arts Commons leadership and staff, board of directors, stakeholder groups, and consultants/partners as needed).
- Previous experience/past performance history.
- Samples and/or case studies from previous relevant projects.
- Award-winning reputation and client references.
- Projected costs & optional costs and services - clarity, feasibility, and realism of proposed work plan and budget (projected costs are based on the work of your agency. We understand that not all costs will be provided as these are highly dependent on the agreed-upon strategy).
- Demonstrated expertise and experience successfully launching a rebrand for similar sized organizations.
- Demonstrated alignment with a culture prioritizing inclusion, truth and reconciliation.
- Breadth of connections and knowledge of the Calgary market, as well as the local, national, and international arts and culture industry.



# Timelines and Key Milestones

The following is the approximate timeline and process for proponent solicitation, evaluation and selection, Werklund Centre brand strategy and collateral development, and public engagement/launch.

RFP release date	July 8, 2024
Deadline for proponent questions or inquires	July 26, 2024
<b>Closing date &amp; time - submission deadline</b>	<b>August 2, 2024 14:00 MST</b>
Interview invitations issued to short-listed proponents	August 6, 2024
Interviews and review process	August 19 - 23, 2024
Winning proponent(s) notified	August 27, 2024
Phase one (research, assessment, strategy)	September 2 - 30, 2024
Phase two (identity and asset development)	Oct 1 - Nov 29, 2024
Finalization of deliverables	December 2 , 2024
Phase three (brand roll out and launch approach)	Dec 9, 2024 - Jan 31, 2025
Anticipated project completion	February 28, 2025

All proponents must ensure that they are available to attend an interview with Arts Commons Selection Committee in a forum as determined by Arts Commons week commencing August 19, 2024. Alternate week dates are almost certainly not available, and Arts Commons has no obligation to make them available.

# Submission Contact

All proposals should be submitted in PDF format via email to [kdirkson@artscommons.ca](mailto:kdirkson@artscommons.ca) by 5:00 p.m. MST on or before **Friday, August 2, 2024**.

Any questions related to the RFP must be sent to [kdirkson@artscommons.ca](mailto:kdirkson@artscommons.ca) and received no later than 5:00 p.m. MST on Friday, July 26, 2024. Questions submitted will be answered within two business days after receipt in the order received.

Agencies that are selected for presentations will have the opportunity to submit questions prior to presenting and during Q&A portion of the presentation.

## **Please submit final proposals to:**

**Kaija Dirkson**  
Vice President, Brand and Audience Development  
Arts Commons  
[kdirkson@artscommons.ca](mailto:kdirkson@artscommons.ca)

## **Terms and Conditions**

Submitting proponents signify understanding and agreement with these terms by responding to the RFP and will adhere to the following terms:

- Do not contact any Arts Commons Board Member, staff member, or members of the committee. All inquiries must be sent to [kdirkson@artscommons.ca](mailto:kdirkson@artscommons.ca).
- All ideas and concepts shared with Arts Commons in this RFP process are submitted in a non-proprietary manner.
- Arts Commons reserves the right to change any part of this RFP, the process and/or altogether cancel at any point and for any reason without any liability to submitting parties.
- Issuance of this RFP does not commit Arts Commons to award a contract or to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of proposals responding to the RFP. Arts Commons reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, re-advertise, and/or select a candidate outside of the RFP process.
- Proponents understand that any information provided in a proposal that is found to be untruthful or otherwise a misrepresentation will automatically disqualify the candidate. In addition, should untruths or misrepresentation be found with the selected proponent after contracting, such would be grounds for immediate termination of the contract without any liability from Arts Commons.
- All information (written or spoken) shared by Arts Commons is deemed confidential and shall not be shared with outside parties.

# Additional Information

For additional information, please visit our website and/or refer to the following pages:

Arts Commons (AC)  
<https://artscommons.ca>

Arts Commons Presents  
<https://acpresents.ca>

Audited Financial Statements & Report to the Community  
<https://artscommons.ca/reporttocommunity>

Arts Commons Transformation (ACT) Project  
<https://artscommons.ca/act>

Olympic Plaza Transformation (OPT) Project  
<https://www.calgarymlc.ca/projects/olympic-plaza-transformation>

AC Brand Guide  
<https://artscommons.ca/brand>

ACT Brand Guide  
<https://my.corebook.io/ACT-project-ID>

OPT Brand Guide  
<https://my.corebook.io/opt-project-ID>

**Instagram** (@yycarts, @artistsofyyc, @yycartsed)

**X /Twitter** (@yycarts, @yycartsed)

**Facebook** (yycarts, JackSingerConcertHall)

**TikTok** (yycarts)

**YouTube** (yycarts)

**Linkedin** (Arts Commons)

**Pinterest** (Arts Commons)