

**Ministry of Heritage,  
Sport, Tourism and  
Culture Industries**

Minister

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**Ministère des Industries du  
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Ministre

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November 12, 2020

Ms. Ann Louise Vehovec  
Chair  
Ontario Science Centre  
770 Don Mills Road  
Toronto, ON M3C 1T3

**2021-22 Mandate Letter**

Dear Ms. Vehovec:

Thank you for serving as Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Centennial Centre of Science and Technology, operating as the Ontario Science Centre. Your team's work contributes to a spectacular double bottom line in Ontario reflecting our rich cultural fabric and contributing to our economic success.

I often say Ontario offers the world in one province. The Ontario Science Centre is a world class cultural institution, making our jobs in the ministry – showcasing Ontario and attracting visitors – easier. The important work you are doing provides truly unique opportunities for residents and visitors to explore and discover.

I recognize the success of your Community Access Programs, which enable students and families to visit the centre at no cost. Please continue to work with local partners to meet the needs of communities and fulfil your mandate.

As you develop your business objectives, performance goals and other activities for the coming year, I ask that you consider a number of key government priorities.

The heritage, sport, tourism and culture sectors were one of the first hit by COVID-19 by a "triple threat" of health, economic and social crises. This has had an unprecedented and devastating impact on the ministry's agencies and operations and on our sectors. There's been no guide book on how to recover, but together, we've been supporting the work of the Ontario Jobs and Recovery Committee, shining a light on our sectors' challenges at the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs, and will help inform the next phase of *Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19*, to responsibly restart the economy. This coordinated effort will also culminate in a five-year strategic plan for the ministry, with a view to helping us rebuild and re-emerge as a premiere visitor destination. We need to be, and we will be, ready to welcome the world back to our province.

As part of the government of Ontario, agencies are expected to act in the best interests of Ontarians by being efficient, effective, and providing value for money to taxpayers. This includes:

**1. Competitiveness, Sustainability and Expenditure Management**

- Operating within your agency's approved budget.
- Identifying and pursuing opportunities for revenue generation, innovative practices, and/or improved program sustainability.
- Identifying and pursuing efficiencies and savings.
- Complying with applicable direction related to supply chain centralization, Realty Interim Measures and Agency Office Location Criteria.

**2. Transparency and Accountability**

- Abiding by applicable government directives and policies and ensuring transparency and accountability in reporting.
- Adhering to requirements of the Agencies and Appointments Directive, and responding to audit findings, where applicable.
- Identifying appropriate skills, knowledge and experience needed to effectively support the board's role in agency governance and accountability.

**3. Risk Management**

- Developing and implementing an effective process for the identification, assessment and mitigation of risks, including planning for and responding to emergency situations such as COVID-19.

**4. Workforce Management**

- Optimizing your agency's workforce to enable efficient and effective fulfilment of government priorities, while enhancing customer service standards.
- Streamlining back office functions to ensure that all available resources are redirected towards the critical front-line services that Ontarians depend upon.

**5. Data Collection**

- Improving how the agency uses data in decision-making, information sharing and reporting, including by leveraging available or new data solutions to inform outcome-based reporting and improve service delivery.
- Supporting transparency and data sharing with the ministry, as appropriate.

**6. Digital Delivery and Customer Service**

- Exploring and implementing digitization or digital modernization strategies for the provision of services online and continuing to meet and exceed customer service standards through transition.
- Using a variety of approaches or tools to ensure service delivery in all situations, including COVID-19.

I know that the Ontario Science Centre plays an important role in promoting STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) education and careers – a government priority. Please continue to deliver on your 21<sup>st</sup> century learning and youth innovation commitments, capturing the minds and enthusiasm of youth to cultivate the skills needed for future employment and lifelong learning. I also ask that you continue to seek opportunities to collaborate with Science North on the development and marketing of made-in-Ontario exhibits and other content for export. I encourage you to continue to leverage over 50 years of science programming to safely attract new visitors, increasing revenues, leveraging innovative digital content, and driving tourism. I encourage you to work in collaboration with your Regional Tourism Organization, where appropriate.

As the government continues to respond to COVID-19, there will be ongoing efforts to ensure that provincial agencies focus on improving the customer experience, adopting service innovation, offering more services virtually and online, and eliminating redundancies as part of the Enhanced Agency Evaluation being led by Treasury Board. This work will build on the advancements in digital service delivery made during the pandemic and the comprehensive review of provincial agencies that was completed in Fall 2019 to improve services, address inefficiencies and more effectively spend taxpayer dollars. The government is also continuing its Red Tape and Regulatory Burden Reduction initiative to reduce the cost of complying with regulations and reduce the number of regulatory compliance requirements, including red tape, on Ontario businesses. Staff from my Ministry may reach out to you to support these initiatives.

I value your role in operating a science centre; conducting an education program of science and technology and its relationship to society; stimulating public interest in science; and collecting, manufacturing, marketing and selling objects and displays. I ask that you ensure your agency continues to deliver this important work in a manner consistent with government priorities. As we move forward, it will be important to continue to work closely together, including taking a coordinated approach to communications, so that when it is safe to welcome the world back to our province, we are ready.

Together, our work has the potential to drive billions of dollars in economic activity and create thousands of jobs. Our work supports that incredible double bottom line – strong economic growth and a resilient cultural fabric that reflects the diversity and strength of Ontario's communities. As the Minister responsible for this important suite of industries, I recognize that there is a lot of work ahead of us to get our economy moving again and to make sure that Ontario remains an economic powerhouse.

I know that with the Ontario Science Centre's help, we will succeed.

Kindest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa".

Lisa MacLeod

Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries

c: Dr. Paul Kortenaar, Chief Executive Officer, Ontario Science Centre  
Nancy Matthews, Deputy Minister, Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries  
Sarah McQuarrie, Assistant Deputy Minister, Agency Relations and Accountability  
Division, Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries