



for immediate release

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PROVINCE ANNOUNCES \$3.3M IN ARTS, CULTURAL AND CREATIVITY FUNDING FOR RURAL SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO

Municipal politicians, leaders from the business and not-for-profit community gathered on the steps of Blyth Memorial Community Hall today to hear an announcement from Deb Matthews, Deputy Premier of the Province of Ontario.

"The Province is pleased to invest \$3.3 million in the work of Blyth Arts & Cultural Initiative 14/19 Inc. to support the creation of a cultural hub.

"Our government, under the leadership of Premier Kathleen Wynne, is committed to supporting organizations that encourage innovation, collaboration, and cluster development. Blyth 14/19's goals to develop a cultural hub around the multi-disciplinary Canadian Centre for Rural Creativity (CCRC) align nicely with the Province of Ontario's priorities for economic development. Transformational private sector investment was also a major motivator of our desire to champion this project."

Blyth Arts & Culture Initiative's \$12.5 million project includes three key priorities:

- 1) Revitalization of the Blyth Memorial Community Hall – home of the Blyth Centre for the Arts and the celebrated national theatre company, the Blyth Festival;
- 2) Creating the Grant and Mildred Sparling Centre, home of the Canadian Centre for Rural Creativity, a multi-disciplinary arts and innovation hub; and

- 3) Establishing the Rural Trust to sustain creativity through a not-for-profit endowment for dedicated funds, awards, and scholarships.

“The **Canadian Centre for Rural Creativity (CCRC)** will establish itself as the leader in rural creative development by offering high quality, unique, experiences for artists, students, educators, and guests, participating in symposia,” said Project Director, Peter Smith. “By nurturing opportunities and cultivating creativity 14/19 will drive economic growth through culture and the arts.”

CEO David Peacock of the Province’s regional tourism office for Huron, Perth, Waterloo and Wellington, RTO4 Inc., said of the announcement, “the Province has allocated substantial resources to regional economic development and in particular tourism economic development over the past five years. The alignment of private, municipal and provincial resources and funds on this important project is exactly the kind of forward thinking that is key to unlocking growth in the province’s tourism economy. Blyth has always held an esteemed position in Canada’s cultural landscape and the vision of a Blyth based “rural centre” for Canadian creativity is a unique addition to the existing mosaic that includes prestigious arts centres like Banff and Fogo Island.

For more information visit www.ruralcreativity.org or www.blyth1419.ca