



Artscape Value Exchange Program

In April 2014, Artscape entered into formal discussion with its tenants, owners, and members about the conditions for artists and organizations to thrive. During four in-person, facilitated gatherings, we discussed facility attributes, programs, services and policies that best serve everyone's goals and identified opportunities to connect, collaborate, increase revenues and share resources. These conversations helped to identify a strong desire amongst tenants, owners and members for increased collaboration across and within the Artscape family of properties, more tenant-led events and added opportunities to share resources and develop new skills. We developed the Artscape Value Exchange Program in response to this discussion.

A pilot of the Artscape Value Exchange Program was implemented in 2015 for renters and purchasers at the Artscape Lofts at 210 Simcoe and the Artscape Lofts at PACE with great success. The results of this pilot strongly influenced the development of Artscape's five-year strategic plan, Artscape 5.0, of which a key component is the Thriving Artists Initiative. The Thriving Artists Initiative seeks to implement a wide range of value added services and strategies, intended to provide optimal support to our tenants and owners in their artistic endeavours. The Artscape Value Exchange Program is a key component of our efforts to contribute to our tenants' and owners' success.

Value exchange, sometimes also referred to as energy exchange, is generally defined as time spent contributing to the community in exchange for value, such as subsidized housing or membership to a co-operative. Various models of value exchange have been successful across North America. In each case, exchange of value is only part of the program's overall success; by relying on community service, these initiatives contribute to developing stronger communities and provide opportunities for participants to improve valuable skills and network with others.

The Artscape Value Exchange Program enables tenants and owners to work together to contribute to the quality of life at the buildings and communities in which they live and/or work. Artscape's key objective for the Artscape Value Exchange Program is to make tenant engagement a coordinated, consistent and measurable activity in which everyone plays a role and is working toward common goals. Specifically, the program is designed to:

- Create a positive, supportive and collaborative community
- Enhance engagement amongst tenants, owners and staff
- Animate and create connections between Artscape spaces and the wider community
- Encourage an effective mix of programs, services and tools to support the capacity building needs of a range of artists



How the Program Works

The Artscape Value Exchange Program requires individual tenants and owners to contribute five (5) hours a month to the community. A household (in which there is more than one adult living in the unit) is required to contribute seven (7) hours a month collectively. New applicants to the program are asked to identify how they plan to contribute to the community and outline their relevant past experience in their application.

Tenants and owners will sign a social contract with Artscape when they execute their lease, binding them to the terms of the Artscape Value Exchange Program. Their involvement with the program will begin at that time and will be a condition of tenancy.

The Artscape Value Exchange Program can include time spent in a number of ways, including but not limited to:

- Volunteering with a local community service organization
- Sharing resources or skills with other Artscape tenants/owners/members
- Facilitating a program that engages other artists and/or the broader community
- Coordinating tenant/owner exhibitions in Artscape common spaces
- Hosting or presenting artist talks
- Participating on an Artscape board or committee
- Creating content for the Artscape tenant portal, blog posts or website
- Improving an Artscape facility through labour such as painting or gardening

After signing their lease, tenants will receive a detailed orientation, which will familiarize them with Artscape's creative placemaking model, aspects of the building and the community, as well as the details of the Artscape Value Exchange Program.

Evaluation

Tenants and owners will be actively involved in the process of monitoring and evaluating the quality of their participation. Participating tenants and owners will submit a summary of their activity, including the nature of the service and time commitment, on a semi-annual basis.