



2015

# PHILANTHROPIC IMPACT REPORT



## ROM LEARNING

**YOUR MUSEUM. YOUR IMPACT.**

We are pleased to share with you the impact of your investment in the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM), which helps us connect people to their world and to each other.

# OPENING A WORLD OF POSSIBILITY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Where hands-on learning leads to dino-sized impact for more than 100,000 students who visit the ROM each year.



When students visit the ROM, something incredible happens: learning becomes a multi-sensory, hands-on experience. Guided by their innate curiosities, and without the rules and pressures often affixed to classroom learning, students are able to pursue interests that can become lifelong passions. And of course, at the ROM, learning becomes fun!

“I liked seeing all the dinosaur bones and digging for fossils in the sand. I felt like a real archaeologist,” says ROM learner, Olivia, an eight-year-old student whose class was able to visit the Museum thanks to donors.

For the 101,972 students who, like Olivia, visited the ROM last year, they uncovered more than just fossils. As one of the largest co-curricular educators in Canada, the Museum brings learning to life in a way not possible in the classroom. Enabled by your support, ROM educators provide experiential programming and object-based activities that are closely aligned with the Ontario curriculum—informal learning environments that open a world of possibility for students.

## BY THE NUMBERS

**101,972 STUDENTS**

Experienced wonder and discovery at the ROM

**1,427 SCHOOL VISITS**

Supported through the School Visits Bursary Program

**73,081 STUDENTS**

Reached through Travelling EduKits

**126,079 LEARNERS**

Across Canada reached through travelling exhibitions

## LEARNING AT THE ROM

At the ROM, we encourage learners of all ages to dream. By providing them with direct access to collections that span more than 5,000 years of world culture and the expanse of natural history, we help redefine the boundaries of what they believe to be possible. At the same time, our world, too, becomes open to boundless possibility.

For students who would otherwise have limited opportunities to visit the ROM, your generosity helps expand accessibility to even more schools. With many classrooms visiting the ROM from underserved communities, your support also ensures that learning at the ROM can reach those who could benefit most; for when kids are given the chance to soar, they take with them entire communities.

A growing body of evidence affirms that self-directed, informal learning experiences can profoundly impact the education and development of school-aged children and youth, enriching their lives and the world around them.



### DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Our ability to excel in an increasingly complex and interconnected world will depend foremost on our capacity to engage and interact with diverse groups of people—and these attitudes begin in the classroom.

Through interactive, multicultural fieldtrip experiences, the ROM cultivates a framework of inclusion and acceptance.<sup>1</sup> Your generosity helps to expose students to world cultures, connecting them to diverse cultural heritage and perspectives, and cultivating understanding and acceptance among children and youth.



### ECOLOGICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

ROM educators not only align learning experiences at the Museum with lessons taught in the classroom, they also make them relevant to our planet's most pressing ecological challenges.

With younger generations less connected to nature than in previous decades, these experiences—placing students in direct contact with specimens from our natural history collections—are essential to cultivating an early ecological awareness from which future environmental concern may develop.<sup>2</sup>



### FUTURE CAREERS AND ASPIRATIONS

Students leave the ROM excited about the impact they can create across various fields. They often find greater relevance in their studies—particularly in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (collectively known as STEM) streams—and become that much more likely to pursue knowledge-based careers.<sup>3</sup>

And while not every child will grow up to be one of tomorrow's leading scientists, the critical thinking skills they develop through this engagement helps them become more informed members of society.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rosenberg, Tracy Jean. "Museums and Social Cohesion." *Peabody Journal of Education*; 86(2), 115-128. 2011.

<sup>2</sup> Wells et al. "Nature and the Life Course." *Children, Youth and Environments*; Volume 16, Issue 1: 1-24. 2006.

<sup>3</sup> Chi et al. "Evidence & Impact: Museum-Managed STEM Programs in Out-of-School Settings." *NRC Workshop on Out-of-School STEM Learning: A National Summit*. 2014.

<sup>4</sup> Bartels, Dennis. "Critical Thinking is Best Taught Outside the Classroom." *Scientific American*; Volume 308, Issue 3.

# IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS



## SCHOOL VISITS BURSARY PROGRAM

Established in 2004 to help make the Museum more accessible to learners, the School Visits Bursary Program provides much-needed financial assistance to facilitate class fieldtrips to the ROM. The costs associated with bringing an entire class to visit the ROM can be prohibitive for many schools; however, thanks to the generosity of supporting partners, **19,059 students** had the opportunity to ignite their imaginations at the ROM last year.

Working closely with ROM staff, participating school boards help to identify schools that would benefit from one of the ROM's educational programs at no cost. The assistance provided through the Program covers admission, guided tours of galleries and interactive activities aligned with the Ontario curriculum.



## TRAVELLING EDUKITS AND PLANETARIUM

For students unable to experience the Museum in person due to financial or geographic circumstances, your generosity brought the ROM directly to their classrooms. Last year, our Travelling EduKits—portable cases that include real ROM artifacts and resource materials—reached **73,081 students**. In addition, our Travelling Planetariums reached a total of **4,655 students**.

The support of the Slaight Family Foundation enabled ROM educators to develop an exciting new “Dinosaur Detectives” EduKit, which will allow students to explore the fossilized remains of the largest animals to walk the Earth—dinosaurs! Already booked for circulation this school year, these EduKits will help students further develop science skills through hands-on, dino-sized fun activities.



## INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

Through school visits, hands-on galleries and travelling programs, the generosity of the Slaight Family Foundation also helped the ROM integrate Indigenous knowledge, perspectives and contributions into the Museum experience of students. This effort aims to address an alarming gap in Indigenous education: only 29 per cent of elementary schools and 47 per cent of secondary schools in Ontario provide educators with training on Indigenous issues,<sup>5</sup> leading to a lack of teacher confidence in approaching the subject matter.

Given the central role of teachers in educating younger generations about the issues that shape our world, this has helped put Indigenous issues at the forefront, setting the trajectory for future attitudes that will make Canada a more inclusive place to live.

**Thank you for believing in the transformative power of the ROM.**

For students and inquisitive minds of all ages, your support helps connect them to their world and to each other.

<sup>5</sup> “Ontario’s Schools: The Gap Between Policy and Reality.” *People for Education*, 2015