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NEWS RELEASE

Evergreen Festival offers a safe way to celebrate the season

Evergreen Festival goes Virtual



December 7, 2020 · Halifax, Nova Scotia · Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA)

The holiday season is critical to the vitality of local businesses and artisans, making up a significant portion of yearly sales in major cities around the country. These small and medium-sized businesses create jobs, generate community revenues and create authentic, local products for everyone to enjoy.

Celebrating culture, connections and community

Last week, [Discover Halifax](#), [Jazz East Rising Association](#) and [Develop Nova Scotia](#) kicked-off the first [Evergreen Festival](#) to showcase Nova Scotia culture, food, spirits, crafts and art. The new annual signature holiday event supports local businesses across the province by offering a safe and accessible on-line shopping experience for anyone looking for a special gift made in Nova Scotia.

Federal investment in the downtown economy

Andy Fillmore, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities and Member of Parliament for Halifax, on behalf of the Honourable Mélanie Joly, Minister of Economic Development and Official Languages, today announced a \$100,000 non-repayable contribution to support the Evergreen Festival.

Downtown businesses in many of Canada's major cities have been particularly hard hit by the restrictions and challenges of COVID-19. Today's announcement demonstrates the Government of Canada's commitment to Canadian businesses – helping them not just survive, but thrive.

Canada 



Quotes

"As we continue to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, we are committed to doing whatever it takes to support small businesses and their communities. As we've said from the very beginning of this pandemic, we will continue to be there for our small businesses and the millions of hard-working Canadians they employ, through the holiday season and beyond."

- *The Honourable Mélanie Joly, Minister of Economic Development and Official Languages and Minister responsible for ACOA*

"Holiday shopping makes up a significant portion of a small business's annual sales, so more than ever, it's absolutely crucial for all of us to buy local. Nova Scotia has an incredible assortment of local businesses that can cater to almost every need, and many of them have created online ordering and shipping options meaning buying local is easier than ever."

- *Andy Fillmore, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities and Member of Parliament for Halifax*

"Safety has always been a priority in our plan, and we have adapted the Evergreen Festival while still celebrating the diversity of our culture and supporting local businesses. We have had strong support from local businesses, partners and associations and we are grateful. This will help us create a strong foundation for a sustainable holiday event next year."

- *Gordon Stevens, Chief Operating Officer and VP Finance for Develop Nova Scotia*

Quick facts

- Canadians are strongly encouraged to consider shopping online to support local businesses of all kinds.
 - The shift to online shopping is increasing, with 42% of Canadians indicating that they will shop online this year for the holidays.
- Originally planned as an in-person event with live entertainment, the organizers quickly pivoted to a virtual experience to follow new public health orders and ensure public safety.
- The Festival features videos of more than 50 culturally diverse performances, including music, and dance, among others.
- Local residents can still enjoy the light displays along the Halifax waterfront and downtown while maintaining social distancing and following public health guidelines.
- Funding for this festival is provided through ACOA's [Business Development Program](#).
- In addition to its regular suite of programs, ACOA delivers COVID-19 support for Atlantic Canadian businesses and business support organizations through the Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF) and Canadian Seafood Stabilization Fund (CSSF).
- Visit Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan to learn more about the many COVID-19 emergency support programs available for Canadians and businesses.



Associated links

- [Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan](#)
- [Regional Relief and Recovery Fund \(RRRF\)](#)
- [Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\)](#)

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