



## Doors Open Simcoe County 2018

Dear Heritage, Community and Culture Partners,

Re: Doors Open Simcoe County 2018

This year we are proposing a county-wide Doors Open event to be held on Saturday September 29 and/or Sunday September 30, 2018 showcasing regional history and architecture as well as celebrating Canada's cultural diversity. The 2018 theme is Equality and a Fair Society. It is our hope that a Simcoe County Doors Open will connect a wide variety of new sites and venues as well as support returning participants from previous years.

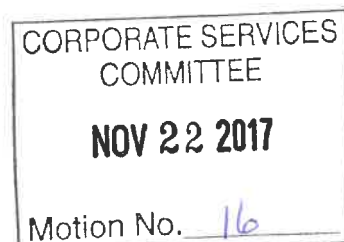
Doors Open Simcoe County is coordinating in partnership with the Ontario Heritage Trust. Doors Open Ontario phenomenon operates under the banner of Doors Open Ontario, a province wide heritage tourism initiative led by the Ontario Heritage Trust. Each year participating communities across Ontario host a one or two day weekend event where local sites of interest are open at no charge to the public. The program was launched in 2002 to create access, awareness and excitement about the province's ~~heritage~~ heritage. It provides unique opportunities to explore and enjoy some of the most interesting places in Ontario cities, towns and villages – many of which are not typically open to the public. In the program's 16 year history there have been nearly six million visits to participating Doors Open sites. Over a number of years, municipalities within our county have participated in Doors Open. It is our hope that this year you will be interested in participating in a county wide program.

For those of you unfamiliar with Doors Open, I am including a Frequently Asked Questions document. The weekend chosen for the event coincides with Culture Days; a National event that celebrates all things arts and culture. Along with FAQ's, I have also included a 1.5 pager explaining Culture Days.

If you are interested in participating in a Doors Open Simcoe County, please contact me at 705-726-9300 ext. 1620, email: [donna.goodwin@simcoe.ca](mailto:donna.goodwin@simcoe.ca). Interested communities will be invited to a meeting to form our working group and start organizing a great event.

Regards,

Donna Goodwin, Cultural Development Coordinator  
Tourism Simcoe County



## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1) Why would a property or site be showcased? What are the benefits of participating in Doors Open?**

People who open their properties during Doors Open play an active role in the celebration of their community's history and culture. There are important and fascinating stories connected to properties all across Ontario, but without Doors Open events, these stories are sometimes left untold. Interestingly, it's not always the people who open their properties that are the ones telling the stories; visitors during Doors Open events have been known to share intriguing tales about their own personal connections to a site. In this way, the people who showcase their properties often learn as much as those who are visiting.

Doors Open participants may also benefit from the vast amount of marketing and promotion that is conducted as part of the program. Participating sites are not just promoted across the local community; they are also marketed province wide through the Ontario Heritage Trust's website and printed materials. As such, a relatively unknown Doors Open site may receive more public exposure in one weekend than it typically does in an entire year. Participating in Doors Open is also a great way to meet new people and to develop strategic partnerships with other local sites and organizations.

### **2) Why are properties selected as potential sites?**

In simplest terms, properties are selected because they are interesting. Some Doors Open Ontario sites are selected for their historical, architectural, natural or cultural significance, but all selected sites share an ability to attract visitors. We believe that there is a general interest in people wanting to explore firsthand. The community representative initially determines the selection and approval of participating sites.

### **3) Who does the selection of the properties?**

Representatives from the local Doors Open organizing committee work on a list of potential properties for inclusion in the event. An effort is made to include a variety of properties (e.g., places of worship, public buildings, natural heritage sites, etc.) from various areas within Simcoe County. Your community representative and/or Doors Open Simcoe County Committee determine the selection and approval of participating sites.

### **4) Do properties have to be open entirely to the public?**

No. It is the responsibility of the site representative to determine which parts of a property to open during the Doors Open event. We do ask, however, that at least a portion of the site that isn't normally open to the public, since this is the premise behind the Doors Open concept. We also ask that visitors be granted permission to visit any part of the property that is directly connected to its significance. For example, if a residence is considered significant for its early-19th-century living room fireplace, it would be expected that visitors be granted access to the living room to view the fireplace.

### **5) What are the responsibilities as a Doors Open site representative?**

The duties of the site representative will be clearly laid out in a formal site agreement that must be signed by both the property owner and event representatives. Generally responsibilities include:

- *Providing photographs and historical information to event representatives.*
- *Attending special Doors Open meetings.*
- *Preparing sites prior to the event. Showcasing the site on the day of the event.*
- *Reporting on the site's involvement.* Following the event, sites are asked to provide detailed statistics on the number of visitors as well as general feedback.

### **6) Who does the advertising and marketing of the program?**

There are two separate levels of marketing and advertising. The Ontario Heritage Trust conducts marketing and promotional activities at the provincial and regional level. The production of Doors Open Ontario program brochures, maintenance of the Doors Open Ontario website, production of Doors Open Ontario site signs and other high-level marketing initiatives are all handled by the Ontario Heritage Trust. The local Doors Open organizing committee will be responsible for local level promotion such as event brochures, posters and the placement of advertisements in local media.

### **7) How will we know if the event is successful?**

Each participating property is provided with a tracking sheet for logging the number of visitors to their site. Event success will not only be gauged by the number of visitors to each site, but also by the quality of the experience. Surveys are available at each site for visitors to complete and electronically.

### **8) Is there any cost to participate?**

There is no fee to participate and participation is strictly voluntary. Most costs associated with the event – such as registration fees and advertising costs – will be covered by the local Doors Open organizing committee (Simcoe County). Site representatives are able to use their own funds if they wish to undertake additional advertising or offer complimentary refreshments or souvenirs on the day of the event.

### **9) Can sites charge admission?**

Doors Open Ontario is based on the premise that admission to sites be free of charge. As such, visitors cannot be charged an admission fee. Some sites, however, provide guests or visitors with the option of purchasing snacks, drinks, souvenirs, etc. for a nominal cost.

### **10) What about liability and insurance?**

The site owner/manager is responsible for ensuring that the building/site is adequately insured against possible damage or theft. Doors Open Simcoe County Organizing Committee or, the County of Simcoe assumes no liability for damage or theft that may result from the site's participation in the Doors Open Simcoe County program.

## CULTURE DAYS FACT SHEET

- Launched in September 2010, Culture Days ([www.culturedays.ca](http://www.culturedays.ca)) is an annual event that features individual artists, diverse cultural groups, organizations, municipalities, and festivals who come together to catalyze and inspire greater participation and engagement in arts and culture.
- Culture Days showcases free, hands-on, interactive activities that invite the public to the behind-the-scenes world of artists, creators, historians, architects, curators and designers in their home community.
- Culture Days represents the largest-ever voluntary collective public participation campaign undertaken by the arts and cultural sector in Canada.
- Over 12 million Canadians have participated in 45,000 Culture Days activities hosted by tens of thousands Canadian artists, cultural organizations and groups in some 900 different Canadian cities and towns since 2010.
- Culture Days aims to foster appreciation and support of the artistic and cultural life that is lived, created and expressed across the country in urban centers and rural communities alike.
- Promotes direct interaction between creators and the public as a key to increasing understanding and appreciation for art and culture.
- Affirms that every citizen, regardless of age, geography, background, or income is the guardian of the cultural life of his or her community.
- As a leading national voice for the active daily and engaged cultural life of all Canadians, Culture Days provides support, tools and resources to artists and cultural organizations to help them unite the country through engagement in culture.
- As a result of participating in Culture Days activities, Canadians stated\* they: attended more arts and cultural events (61%), visited more art galleries or craft studios (41%), became a fan of an artist or cultural organization (37%), took on more volunteer work, (25%), took classes related to an arts or cultural activity (24%), took up an art form of some kind (21%), and donated more to arts or cultural organizations (17%).
- Québec's annual Journées de la culture event inspired the initiation of Culture Days, and Alberta Arts Days, established in 2008 (and now known as Alberta Culture Days), helped to spur on a national movement. Both provincial events take place concurrently with Culture Days.

How it works:

- There is an open call for all individual artists, groups, municipalities and arts and cultural organizations of all types and disciplines to offer free participatory and interactive arts and cultural activities during Culture Days. Everyone is encouraged to participate: whether you are a professional or amateur cultural creator (i.e. artist, artisan, educator, animator, historian, curator, architect, designer, etc.), group, venue or organization, including culturally diverse, Aboriginal, urban and rural communities, there is a role to play!
- Anything is possible during Culture Days – any activity or offering that brings creators and the public closer together. Examples of activities include a museum opening its restoration workshop to the public, a local theatre group inviting visitors to a dress rehearsal, an architect and a historian organizing a guided tour of a neighbourhood, or choreographers offering a dance class.
- Once registered with Culture Days, participating individuals, groups, and organizations receive support and materials in areas such as marketing and promotion, PR, media relations, collaboration, and digital and social media best practices to assist with encouraging and increasing local public participation
- Culture Days offers best practice and knowledge-sharing support to Canadian artists and cultural organizations throughout the year with comprehensive programs including a National Congress on Culture hosted in a different Canadian cultural hub each year, livestream seminars, webinar tutorials and a host of other on-line tools and resources