



Annual Report 2025



MSBM

Board of Directors

Serge Balcaen

President

Brigitte Bouchard

Vice-chair

Carole Pelchat

Secretary

Nicholas Douklias

Treasurer

Shelly Glover

Denis-Michel Thibeault

Anthony Paventi

Sébastien Roldan

Matt Allard

City Councillor

Jérôme Marchildon

Councillor Representative



Land Acknowledgement

Le Musée de Saint Boniface Museum (MSBM) is situated in the heart of the Red River Métis Nation's homeland and tells the early history of Winnipeg from Francophone and Métis perspectives. We share a profound connection to the original ancestral territory of our relatives, the Anishinaabeg, Ininiwak, Anishininiwak, Denesutine, Dakota Oyate, and Inuit.

We acknowledge the Treaties made over the years and are grateful for their ongoing benefits and mindful of the responsibilities they embody. We particularly thank the Shoal Lake First Nation from whom we receive our water and the Northern Cree Nations for the electricity that comes from their lands.

MSBM commits to the sharing, conversations, research, and long-term relationships that will enable us to respectfully and collaboratively present 175 years of First Nations, Métis, French Canadian, Red River, and Winnipeg histories. We are committed to discovering, sharing and celebrating these stories as a Métis and Franco-Manitoban institution.

Completed in 1851, the squared-log building that houses MSBM has been a material witness to these 175 years of history. It was built after the first land-sharing treaty in Western Canada between five Inineu and Anishinaabe chiefs and Thomas Douglas, Lord Selkirk.



It was Lord Selkirk who then made it possible for the Grey Nuns who built this building to come to Red River and begin establishing schools and hospitals. Telling the stories of the development of Residential Schools in Red River, the abuses of which were revealed by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission remains a difficult but sincere area of reflection, research and responsibility in MSBM's ongoing interpretive planning.

As we undertake major rehabilitation work on MSBM's sturdy log structure, we recognize that the construction and renewal of historic buildings require careful choices about materials, energy, labour, and resources. We commit to approaching this project with care, accountability, and respect for the relationships with the natural world that sustain us all.



Table of Contents

Message from the President.....	1
Message from the Executive Director.....	3
About MSBM.....	4
2025 Highlights.....	5
Major Rehabilitation Project Roadmap.....	9
Governance, Leadership and Organizational Sustainability.....	11
MSBM Staff.....	12
Outreach at a Glance.....	13
Local Outreach.....	15
2025 Visitors.....	16
Revenue Snapshot	17
Economic & Social Impact at a Glance.....	18
Funders & Supporters.....	19
Recognition and Partnerships.....	21

Message from the President

As I reflect on 2025, I am proud of the resilience, dedication, and commitment demonstrated by everyone involved with Le Musée de Saint-Boniface Museum (MSBM).

This past year was one of both opportunity and challenge. MSBM continued its important work of preserving, interpreting, and sharing the rich Francophone and Métis history that has shaped our province and our nation. Through educational programming, community partnerships, and stewardship of our collections, we remained committed to ensuring these stories continue to inspire future generations.

At the same time, MSBM continued to face one of the most significant undertakings in its history: the preservation and renovation of its historic building. As custodians of Winnipeg's oldest building and one of Manitoba's most important heritage sites, we recognize our responsibility to protect this landmark for future generations.

Like many major heritage restoration projects across Canada, the scope and cost of the required work continued to evolve throughout the year. Rising construction costs, inflationary pressures, and the complexities that come with restoring a centuries-old structure have all contributed to increasing project costs. While these realities have created challenges, they have also reinforced the importance of the work ahead of us.

Throughout 2025, MSBM experienced both successes and setbacks in its fundraising efforts. We were fortunate to receive support from dedicated donors, community partners, government programs, and individuals who believe in the importance of preserving our shared heritage. Their generosity has allowed critical work to move forward and has demonstrated the strong community support that exists for MSBM.

At the same time, fundraising in today's economic environment remains challenging. Like many non-profit organizations, we have faced increasing competition for limited funding dollars while attempting to meet the growing financial demands of a major capital project. While we did not achieve every fundraising objective we set out to accomplish, we continued to build relationships, raise awareness, and lay the groundwork for future success.

These experiences serve as a reminder that preserving heritage is not a short-term effort. It requires patience, perseverance, collaboration, and a shared vision. While there is still significant work ahead, I remain confident that MSBM's dedicated staff, volunteers, board members, supporters, and community partners will continue working together to ensure this historic institution thrives for generations to come.

I would like to thank Executive Director Cindy Desrochers, MSBM staff, volunteers, members, donors, and my fellow Board members for their commitment throughout the year. Their passion and dedication continue to be the foundation of MSBM's success.

Serving as President has been an honour and a privilege. Le Musée de Saint-Boniface Museum occupies a unique place in Manitoba's cultural landscape, and I am grateful to have played a small role in helping guide the organization through another important year.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, thank you to everyone who has supported MSBM's mission. Together, we continue to preserve our past while building a stronger future.

Respectfully submitted,

Serge Balcaen

President

Le Musée de Saint-Boniface Museum



Image Credit: La Liberté

Message from the Executive Director

As I look back on 2025, I am struck by how much this year asked of Le Musée de Saint-Boniface Museum (MSBM) — and how much it revealed about our strength, our resilience, and our purpose.

While our historic building remained closed for rehabilitation, the work of MSBM continued. Staff brought programs into schools, community spaces, festivals, and partner events. They strengthened educational resources, expanded outreach, cared for collections, supported rehabilitation planning, and kept MSBM visible during a period of significant change.

This year reminded us that MSBM is more than its walls. Our building is our most significant artifact, and its renewal is essential to our future. At the same time, 2025 showed that MSBM's impact also lives in its people, partnerships, collections, and communities.

I am grateful to our staff, Board of Directors, volunteers, funders, donors, and community partners for their commitment. I am especially thankful to the organizations that welcomed MSBM into their spaces and helped us continue serving the community while our own building was under renewal.

As we look toward 2026, we know rehabilitation work will continue. We also know that the relationships, systems, and momentum built in 2025 will carry us forward.

Thank you for being part of this important chapter in MSBM's story.



Cindy Desrochers
Executive Director / Directrice générale
Le Musée de Saint-Boniface Museum

About MSBM

Le Musée de Saint-Boniface Museum (MSBM) preserves, shares, and celebrates the Francophone and Métis heritage of Manitoba through education, collections stewardship, community engagement, and heritage conservation.

Housed in the former Grey Nuns' Convent National Historic Site, Winnipeg's oldest building, MSBM is both a museum and the steward of one of Manitoba's most significant heritage landmarks. Its collections, programs, and historic site connect local community memory with broader provincial and national histories, including the Red River region, Francophone and Métis heritage, and the development of Western Canada.

In 2025, while the historic building remained closed for major rehabilitation, MSBM continued its work through outreach, education, collections care, partnerships, and building renewal.





2025 Highlights

Maintaining Connection and Visibility

In 2025, Le Musée de Saint-Boniface Museum (MSBM) continued to prioritize connection, awareness, and visibility while its historic site remained closed for rehabilitation. Recognizing that audiences could no longer visit its historic home, staff focused on bringing MSBM experiences directly into the community through outreach activities, public events, and partnerships.

Throughout the year, MSBM participated in festivals, cultural celebrations, schools, sporting events, community gatherings, and partner-led initiatives across Winnipeg and Manitoba. Through outreach booths, workshops, cultural demonstrations, and hands-on activities, audiences continued to engage with Francophone and Métis history and culture in meaningful ways.

MSBM also maintained a public presence through its temporary location at 219 Provencher Boulevard, where visitors participated in exhibitions, workshops, and special events.

Beyond participation numbers, this work helped strengthen relationships with community organizations and created new opportunities for collaboration. Many of these partnerships emerged from necessity but have become valuable additions to MSBM's approach to community engagement. As rehabilitation work continues, these relationships will remain an important part of how MSBM connects with audiences both within and beyond its walls.

Strengthening Learning Experiences

Education remains one of the most important ways Le Musée de Saint-Boniface Museum (MSBM) connects people with Francophone and Métis history, culture, and heritage. In 2025, MSBM continued to serve students and educators through outreach activities, workshops, curriculum-linked programming, and hands-on learning experiences delivered both at 219 Provencher Boulevard and throughout the community.

A key accomplishment this year was the strengthening of MSBM's educational resources and program infrastructure. Staff reviewed and updated lesson plans, organized educational materials, and created standardized program files to support consistency across all educational offerings.

Hands-on learning continued to be a hallmark of MSBM's educational approach. Through activities such as fingerweaving, beading, quill pen writing, Voyageur games, traditional demonstrations, and storytelling, participants were encouraged to explore history through direct experience and cultural engagement.



Staff also developed new tools and resources to support Museum Experience Ambassadors and future program facilitators. Training materials, cue cards, activity guides, and interactive resources were refined to ensure historical content remained accessible, engaging, and accurate.

While much of this work took place behind the scenes, it represents an important investment in the future of MSBM's educational programming.



Understanding and Caring for the Collection

While much of Le Musée de Saint-Boniface Museum's (MSBM) work in 2025 took place in the community, significant progress was also made behind the scenes in strengthening the stewardship of the collection entrusted to MSBM's care.

A major focus of the year was a comprehensive inventory project undertaken across MSBM's storage locations. Supported by three summer students, staff inventoried nearly **10,000** accessioned objects and identified more than **2,700** unprocessed or unnumbered items. This work improved accountability, enhanced location tracking, and provided a clearer understanding of the collections under MSBM's care.

The inventory project also revealed an important institutional challenge. Over more than 60 years, collection records have been shaped by evolving systems, documentation standards, staff practices, and database transitions. As a result, staff identified gaps, inconsistencies, and opportunities to improve records management and documentation. Recognizing and addressing these issues is an important step toward ensuring the long-term preservation and accessibility of the collection.



In addition to inventory work, staff continued to process acquisitions and deaccessions, respond to research and image requests, coordinate loans to partner institutions, and support community access to the collection. Collections also remained active through loans to external exhibitions, allowing important artifacts and stories to continue reaching audiences beyond MSBM.

Preventive conservation remained a priority throughout the year. When evidence of insect activity was discovered within portions of the textile collection, staff implemented mitigation measures and improved storage practices to help protect vulnerable artifacts.

Together, these efforts have strengthened MSBM's understanding of its collection and created a stronger foundation for future stewardship, access, and planning.

Looking Ahead

The progress achieved in 2025 provides a strong foundation for what comes next. While significant rehabilitation work remains underway, Le Musée de Saint-Boniface Museum (MSBM) enters 2026 with renewed momentum, stronger partnerships, and a clearer understanding of both its collections and its role within the community.

Work will continue on the rehabilitation of the former Grey Nuns' Convent, including building systems, accessibility, and long-term conservation priorities. These efforts are essential to preserving Winnipeg's oldest building and ensuring that this important heritage site remains protected for future generations.

September 7, 2026, will mark the 175th anniversary of the former Grey Nuns' Convent National Historic Site, the historic building that today serves as MSBM's home. MSBM will recognize this important milestone through a year of celebrations, reflection, and community engagement that honours the building's enduring legacy while looking toward its future.



The relationships and opportunities developed during the closure period will remain an important part of MSBM's work.

Outreach activities, educational programming, and community partnerships have expanded MSBM's reach and reinforced the value of meeting audiences where they are.

As the work of renewal continues, so too does MSBM's commitment to preserving and sharing Francophone and Métis heritage. The accomplishments of 2025 have strengthened the foundation for the years ahead and demonstrated that meaningful progress can continue during periods of transformation.



Major Rehabilitation Project Roadmap

- Accessible washroom (1st floor)
- Accessible washroom (2nd floor)
- Improved hallway circulation
- Accessible rear entrance and exit



Access



- Removed old mechanical system
- Reinforced structural elements
- Prepared for modern mechanical systems

Assess



- Repaired roof leaks
- Tested historic windows
- Identified lead paint and asbestos
- Completed engineering studies
- Confirmed structural impacts from 1990s mechanical systems



Strengthen

steam heating

third-floor

building for
mechanical

- Historic window restoration
- Building envelope conservation
- Main entrance accessibility improvements
- Final preparations for reopening



Reopen 



then 

Modernize 



- Electrical upgrades
- New HVAC system
- Third-floor fit-up
- Improved environmental conditions for collections and visitors

Governance, Leadership and Organizational Sustainability

In 2025, Le Musée de Saint-Boniface Museum (MSBM) continued to strengthen the organizational foundation needed to support its programs, collections, and major building rehabilitation project.

The Board of Directors and leadership team provided oversight during a complex year marked by construction, temporary operations, fundraising pressures, and evolving project requirements. Governance work focused on financial stewardship, risk management, capital project oversight, long-term planning, and the policy work needed to support a changing organization.

This included continued attention to governance practices, committee responsibilities, and operational policies that support accountability, consistency, staff wellbeing, and responsible decision-making.

Financially, MSBM maintained operations while advancing major rehabilitation work. The City of Winnipeg remained MSBM's largest operating funder, providing essential support for core activities. Additional government, foundation, donor, and community support helped move critical capital work forward.

More than \$1.7 million was invested in capital assets during the year, reflecting significant progress on the preservation and renewal of the former Grey Nuns' Convent.

These efforts demonstrate MSBM's commitment to responsible stewardship of public and donor funds, the historic building, its collections, and the communities it serves.



MSBM Staff

Full Time Team

Cindy Desrochers
Executive Director

Chloé Noël
Operations & Finance Manager

Shauna Matthews
Cataloguing Coordinator

Loïk Raymond
Outreach and Experiences Coordinator

Joëlle Paillé
Education & Public Programs Coordinator

Paul Kibour
Caretaker & General Maintenance



Museum Experience Ambassadors

Gérald Bayer
Dylan Collette
Julie-Anne Delaquis
Julie Desrochers
Roxane Desrochers
Indie Dufour
Ezra Ethier
Julien Ferrer
Kyla Fidler

Lily Gautron
Beaudry Labossiere
Drew Mittermayr
Raven Sanborn
Léo Sourisseau
Paul Sparling
Meg St. Hilaire
Celeste Vermette
Rowan Whiteman



Outreach at a Glance

Total # of Experiences: 7639

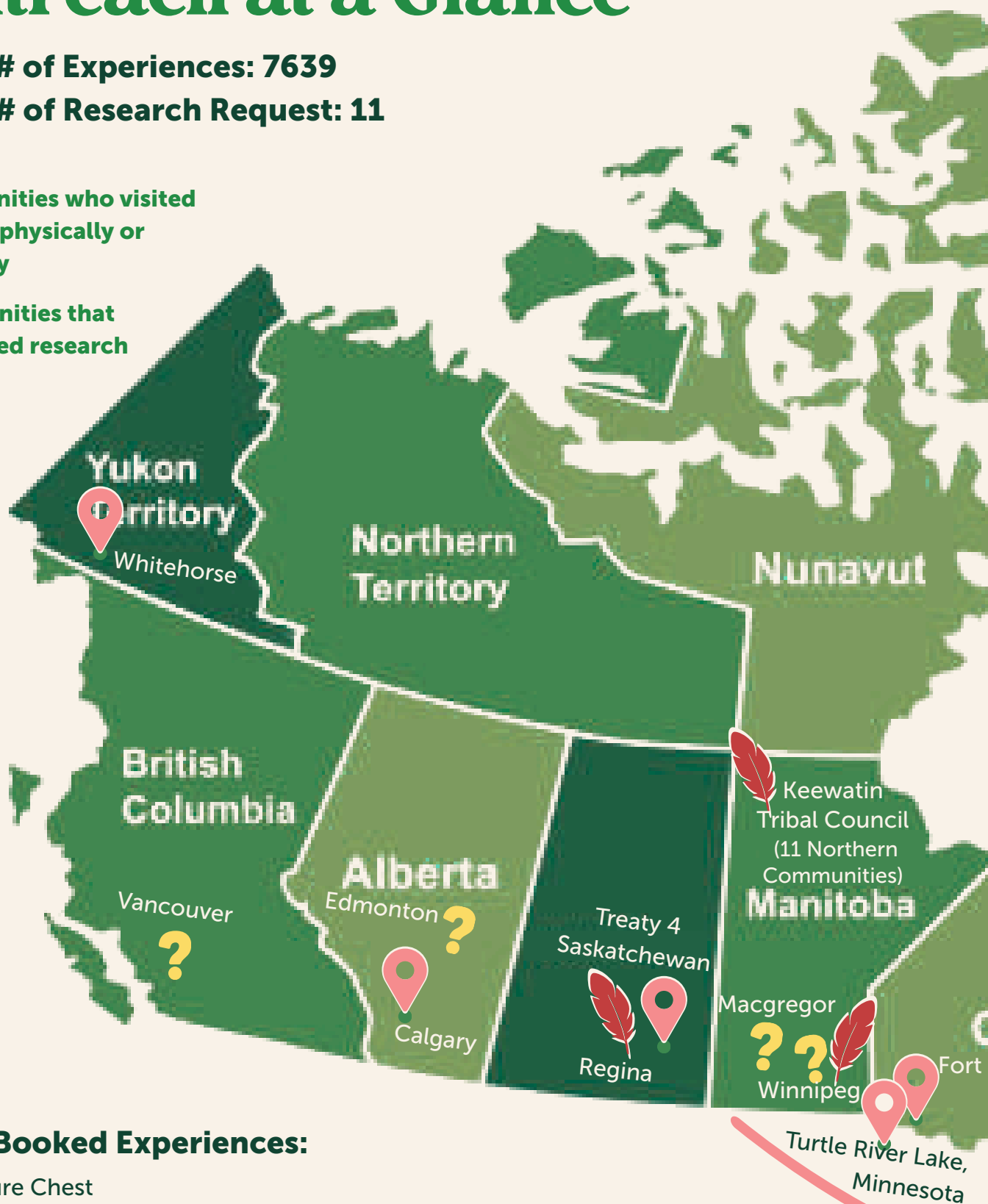
Total # of Research Request: 11



**Communities who visited
MSBM - physically or
remotely**



**Communities that
requested research**



Most Booked Experiences:

1. Treasure Chest
2. Fingerweaving
3. Beading



**Total # of Indigenous
Connections Created: 7**



**Indigenous community
connections created
through consultation**



**Turn the page for local
outreach statistics**

Local Outreach



Communities that visited MSBM (remotely or physically)

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| 1. Winnipeg | 4. Lorette |
| 2. Brandon | 5. Stonewall |
| 3. La Broquerie | |



Communities that MSBM visited

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| 6. Winnipeg | 13. Notre-Dame-de- |
| 7. Brandon | Lourdes |
| 8. Steinbach | 14. Saint-Claude |
| 9. Beausejour | 15. Austin |
| 10. Saint-Georges | 16. Laurier |
| 11. Gimli | 17. Saint-Lazare |
| 12. Morden | |



2025 Visitors

North America

- Alberta
- Alaska
- British Columbia
- California
- Indiana
- Kansas
- Kentucky
- Maryland
- Mexico
- Minnesota
- Mississippi
- New Brunswick
- New Hampshire
- New Orleans
- New York
- Newfoundland & Labrador
- North Carolina
- North Dakota
- Northwest Territories
- Nova Scotia
- Oklahoma
- Ontario
- Pennsylvania
- Philadelphia
- Portland
- Prince Edward Island
- Quebec
- Saskatchewan
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Washington

International

- Algeria
- Australia
- Belgium
- Brazil
- Chile
- Congo
- England
- France
- Germany
- Hong Kong
- Ireland
- Japan
- Mali
- Poland
- Seoul
- Sweden
- Ukraine
- Vietnam

Artifacts on Loan

MSBM items at the WAG-Qaumajuq

Total # of visits: **26,496**

MSBM items displayed at Buhler Gallery
- Tending the Wild exhibit

Total # of visits: **663**



Revenue Snapshot

Overview

Le Musée de Saint-Boniface Museum (MSBM) spent all of 2025 in its temporary location, as the restoration work continued at 494 Taché Avenue. Revenues from gift shop sales increased **25%** from 2024, while revenues from admissions were down in 2025. As there was only one exhibit to visit at the temporary location, there was no admission cost to visit. Additionally, funds were received from a provincial program to subsidize the cost of MSBM going out into schools for French-based programming.

Statistics

7790 pins sold (orange shirt, blue infinity, red infinity, silver infinity, rainbow infinity, inukshuk, metis flag, metis flag waving on pole, esplanade)

102 Keepin' it Riel shirts/onesies sold

2434 maple candies sold

32% increase in memberships sold in 2025 when compared to 2024



ECONOMIC & SOCIAL IMPACT AT A GLANCE

CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

\$5.3M INVESTMENT → \$4M GDP BOOST

Each \$1 Invested = \$0.75 GDP

Better returns than similar museums

- Aurora, ON = \$0.49
- Portland, US = \$0.40



JOBS CREATED

36

full-time jobs from
construction &
ripple effects

47

tourism-related
jobs/year
post-renovation

+17

new jobs from visitor

spending growth



TOURISM IMPACT

Visitor spending:

\$2.6M/year → \$4.2M/year

GDP from visitor spending:

\$3.2 M/year

post-renovation

post-renovation

- Percentage of local visitors: 36%
- Percentage of non-local visitors: 64%



TAX BENEFITS

\$1.15 M

total tax revenue from project

Annual operations & tourism
tax impact, by 2028:

\$281,800/year

- Federal,
provincial,
and municipal
governments



SOCIAL IMPACT Heart of Métis & FrancophoneVoices

- Living memorial to Louis Riel
- Decolonial storytelling
- Reconciliation and intercultural dialogue

Community Hub

- Education
- Identity-building
- Tourism



“This project is a catalyst for economic growth and a transformative force for community connection and visitor experience—fostering pride, dialogue, and a deeper understanding of our shared histories.”

FUNDERS & SUPPORTERS

Le Musée de Saint-Boniface Museum (MSBM) gratefully acknowledges the public, private, and community partners whose support made its work possible in 2025.

Operating Support

City of Winnipeg

Primary operating support for MSBM's core operations, programs, and services during the ongoing closure of the historic site.

Capital Renewal & Rehabilitation Support

MSBM recognizes the contributions of the government partners, foundations, donors, and community sponsors that made the major rehabilitation and renewal of the former Grey Nuns' Convent possible. Their investment is helping preserve one of Manitoba's most important heritage sites and preparing it to serve future generations.

Government of Canada

Capital rehabilitation and accessibility support through federal funding programs, including Community Spaces & Green Inclusive Community Buildings.

Province of Manitoba

Funding programs including From the Ground Up and Heritage Resources Conservation Grants.

City of Winnipeg

Capital support for building renewal and heritage rehabilitation.

Fondation MSBM Foundation Inc.

Winnipeg Foundation
Private Foundation
Francofonds
St Boniface Nurses Alumnae

Additional donors

Oblate Sisters
The many individual donors, of
whom there are too many to name

Programs, Projects & Summer Employment

MSBM also acknowledges the funders who supported specific programs, employment opportunities, collections initiatives, and educational activities in 2025.

Young Canada Works

Support for collections inventory students.

Urban Green Team

Support for summer Outreach activities.

Infinity Women's Secretariat

Support for summer employment.

Program for the Enrichment of French in Education

Support for French-language and bilingual educational programming.

Rendezvous francophonie

Support for francophone-heritage workshops in the Signature Museums of Manitoba



Foundation & Campaign Support

MSBM values the important role of Fondation MSBM Foundation Inc., formerly Les Amis du/Friends of Musée de Saint-Boniface Museum Inc., in advancing MSBM's long-term sustainability, fundraising efforts, and major renewal priorities.

Through the generosity of donors, campaign supporters, community members, and volunteers, the Foundation helps strengthen MSBM's capacity to preserve its historic building, care for its collections, deliver meaningful programming, and prepare for the future.

MSBM extends its sincere appreciation to all those who contributed to the Foundation's work in 2025. Their support reflects a shared commitment to MSBM's mission and to the preservation of Francophone and Métis heritage for future generations.



Recognition and Partnerships

We extend our sincere thanks to:

- Actionmarguerite
- Association des musées canadiens / Canadian Museums Association
- Association of Manitoba Museums
- Buhler Gallery
- Bloom & Brilliance
- Centre culturel franco-manitobain
- Chocolatier Constance Popp
- Connected North
- Culturocity
- CTV Morning Live
- Delores Gosselin
- Division scolaire franco-manitobaine
- Éducatrices et éducateurs francophones du Manitoba
- Etchiboy
- Envol 91,1FM
- Festival du Voyageur
- Forces of Lord Selkirk
- Heather Beerling
- Infinity Women's Secretariat
- Jason Lepine
- Jeudis Franco Thursdays
- Jeunesse Canada au Travail dans les établissements du patrimoine / Young Canada Works in Heritage Organizations
- La Liberté
- Le Conseil de développement économique du Manitoba
- Maison des Artistes
- Manitoba Fibre Festival
- Manitoba First Nations Education and Resource Centre
- Manitoba Métis Federation
- Manitoba Moose
- Manitoba Signature Museums
- Manitoba Social Science Teachers' Association
- Manitoba Tourism Education Council
- Nancy Goulique
- Paul Sparling
- Prairie Owl Beads
- Radio-Canada
- Red River Heritage Fair
- Résidences Despins
- Société historique de Saint-Boniface
- Tourisme Riel / Entreprises Riel
- Tracy Fehr / Honouring Our Mothers
- Université de Saint-Boniface
- Union nationale métisse Saint-Joseph du Manitoba
- Voyage Manitoba / Travel Manitoba
- Winnipeg Art Gallery-Qaumajuq
- Winnipeg Free Press