

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 23, 2024

Alliance Française Vancouver Unveils New Landmark \$24-Million Cultural Facility Amid 120th Anniversary Celebrations

Sustainably-designed, multi-purpose building will serve as essential community hub, in promotion and preservation of francophone cultures

Vancouver, BC – After nearly a decade of planning and preparation, Alliance Française Vancouver (AFV) will unveil its new, state-of-the-art cultural facility, at 6161 Cambie Street, on July 22, 2024 and host its official opening ceremony on August 14, 2024. The \$24-million, 30,000-square-foot community hub will serve as a bastion of francophone cultures in Vancouver, becoming the largest, independent cultural facility in B.C.

“Drawing upon the rich cultural heritage of Alliance Française Vancouver, which this year celebrates its 120th anniversary, we are thrilled to unveil our new landmark cultural facility, devoted to preserving and celebrating the French language and thriving francophone cultures present in Vancouver today,” says Damien Hubert, Executive Director of AFV. “Through our purpose-built, sustainable design, our new expanded facility will now include a sizable boutique art gallery, a 165-seat professional theatre, the Champs Élysées Café & Bistro, media library, multiple classrooms, roughly 2,700 square feet of artist studio space, and much more. Our mission is for AFV to be a vital gathering space for creativity and community.”

AFV’s building project began in 2015, when it was determined that a new facility was necessary to meet the needs of a growing francophone community in Metro Vancouver. The organization’s original 8,500-square-foot historic home, originally built in 1968, was no longer able to meet the burgeoning demand for AFV’s education, cultural, and community services. The Vancouver-based firm McFarland Marceau – recognized for its sustainable approach to architecture – was selected to design the facility. Since the building’s demolition in 2021, AFV has operated from its temporary space at 8555 Cambie Street.

Boasting an airy, light-filled design, the four-floor facility’s architecture reflects its West Coast roots, with a mass timber structure, skylight window, gorgeous wood detailing, and uninterrupted views of Metro Vancouver’s mountainous landscape. The eco-responsible project was recognized in 2022 with a Jury Prize from UNESCO’s Man and the Biosphere (MAB) programme, which honours outstanding contributions in the management or preservation of the environment.

As one of the most ambitious projects in the Alliance Française international network, AFV's new facility is now the third largest Alliance location in North America, after New York and Toronto. The world-class, fully accessible cultural facility features a plethora of amenities for all ages. A 165-seat professional theatre will offer Vancouver's cultural scene a much-needed mid-range performance facility; a 1,120-square-foot art gallery visible from the street will showcase the work of both local and international artists; a French-inspired café and bistro, Champs Élysées, will offer a breakfast and lunch menu throughout the day and transform into an intimate wine bar at night; an 2,700-square-foot flexible artist space, with movable panels, will offer affordable rental studios for artist residencies; a fully-stocked media library will boast the largest francophone collection in B.C., with access to thousands of books and multimedia for all ages; a set of 16 classrooms will serve as an incubator of knowledge and exploration of the French language and culture, for ages 3 and up; a fully-equipped demonstration kitchen will allow for gastronomic exploration and cooking classes; and a large, sun-drenched, west facing exterior terrace will offer a serene ambiance for Alliance patrons and event rentals.

SAVE THE DATE: In celebration of the facility's opening, AFV will host an exclusive media tour on August 14 at 3pm, followed by a ribbon cutting ceremony with local government dignitaries coupled with a VIP reception at 5:30pm. More details will be shared with the media in advance of the opening event.

AVF's new facility is funded with support from all levels of government, as well as foundations, private companies, and individual donors. AVF's capital campaign launched in 2019 and has raised \$5M to date with a goal of \$6M by the end of 2025. In 2022, AFV launched a dedicated fundraising campaign for its new theatre. Individuals are encouraged to name a theatre seat with the donation of \$750. To date, 68 seats have been named with a goal of 150 seat donations by the end of 2025. More details available at alliancefrancaise.ca

For more on Alliance Française Vancouver, visit alliancefrancaise.ca

To download the French version of this press release, please click [HERE](#).

Alliance Française Vancouver gratefully acknowledges the support of the following funding partners:

Canadian Heritage
BC Mass Timber Program
BC Community Gaming Capital Program
BC Art Council
BC Francophone Affairs
City of Vancouver
Molson Foundation

About Alliance Française Vancouver (alliancefrancaise.ca)

Alliance Française Vancouver has a long history of serving the community by providing French language programs and promoting local and international francophone cultures through the events it organizes. Each year, Alliance Française Vancouver collaborates with over 50 cultural partners and 100 artists. Alliance Française Vancouver is an active member of the BC Federation of Francophones, and also part of a global network of Alliances Françaises regrouping 834 centres in 132 countries.

Alliance Française Vancouver is a Canadian not-for-profit organization, incorporated under the Societies Act of the Province of British Columbia. It is a registered Canadian charitable organization. It operates autonomously and independently, without any political or religious affiliation with oversight by an elected board of directors who are volunteers and locally-based.

-30-

For further media information, contact:

Laura Murray 604.418.2998 | lmurray@mpmgarts.com

Angela Poon 604.569.5343 | apoon@mpmgarts.com

MURRAY PATERSON
MARKETING GROUP