

Evaluation of  
Arts Promotion  
Arts and Cultural Industries Program  
Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

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## Preamble

*Culture is .. the face of Canada abroad.<sup>1</sup>*

*Nations which do not make every effort to export their cultures are naive and self-destructive.<sup>2</sup>*

*The International Cultural Relations program is a key element of the third pillar of Canadian foreign policy. The program is designed to promote Canadian values and interests abroad by showcasing the richness and diversity of Canadian culture on the international stage. It contributes to the positive image that Canada enjoys around the world, helps to build lasting and productive relations, and supports the export of Canadian cultural products.<sup>3</sup>*

*Public diplomacy is partly about generating a character profile of Canada that makes us attractive to decision-makers abroad. There are also the domestic benefits to showcasing Canadian accomplishments abroad. But when we go looking for trading and investment partners, or others to share research projects too massive to do on our own, or for tourists with money to spend in Canada, or for quality immigrants, or for foreign students to study at our universities and colleges, well, we'd better brush up our image because there is lots of competition out there. Canada's image as an open, innovative, reliable, secure society and, I think most especially, as an interesting people, is marketable and can pay big dividends. But laying claim to such characteristics is not nearly as convincing as demonstrating them. It is the members of Canada's cultural community who venture abroad, who do that for us best – when we give them adequate space and financial support, that is.<sup>4</sup>*

Evaluation of  
Arts Promotion  
Arts and Cultural Industries Program  
Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

## Executive Summary

This evaluation has examined the Arts Promotion grant activity within the Arts and Cultural section (ACA) of the International Cultural Relation Bureau of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT). The evaluation conducted extensive person-to-person interviews with knowledgeable persons inside and outside of the department, a person-to-person survey of a random sample of artist-clients of the program, a self-administered survey of artist-clients, a web-search, a literature review and a data-base file review. An enhanced program logic model, focussed on the theory of the program, was developed. The results are presented under the main headings of relevance, results, and alternatives for program design and efficiency.

We found a program that, in its last complete fiscal year, awarded \$4,474,355 in awards for the following areas:

- ▶ \$2,645,056 (59%) to Performing Arts;
- ▶ \$ 431,480 (10%) to Visual Arts;
- ▶ \$ 187,281 (04%) to Film and Video;
- ▶ \$ 171,500 (04%) to Promotional Activities for the Performing Arts;
- ▶ \$ 164,669 (04%) to Literature;
- ▶ \$ 51,495 (01%) to Visiting Foreign Artists;
- ▶ \$ 26,000 (01%) to Canada/Mexico Exchange; and
- ▶ \$ 796,865 (18%) to Special Projects.

The average grant is small in terms of dollar value. Fifty per cent are for less than \$5,000.

The distribution of the grants by official language choice of artists was 32% French and 68% English.

The geographical locations of the artists are: Maritimes (5%); Quebec (33%); Ontario (35%); Prairies (14%); British Columbia (10%); Territories (1%). As well, 2% of the grants went directly through Missions.

## **Salient findings**

- ▶ The program sends very few artists to the same location abroad. Considering only the grants awarded by ACA, the large majority of locations receive only 1 ACA supported visit. Fewer than 10% of the locations are visited by ACA grant supported events five or more times. There is no discernable effort to create a “critical mass” of culture-promotion events.
- ▶ Within DFAIT, the perception is that the rhetoric for the Third Pillar is strong but the implementation is weak. Officers believe that there is a need for the Third Pillar to be given equal status and for it to be implemented with stronger policy direction and full integration with the other pillars. Moving the program elsewhere is seen as likely to be counterproductive to DFAIT foreign policy objectives.
- ▶ Staff at selected Missions were not fully cognisant of the way ACA operates. They were adept at leveraging funds and opportunities and appreciated all cultural events that came their way. Missions were conscious of the links between the three Pillars and sought to put culture to work in concert with trade and foreign policy objectives.
- ▶ Of the five Provincial Arts Councils (NS, ON, QC., MN, BC) interviewed, only Québec had a significant presence in promoting culture abroad.
- ▶ Key informants with significant experience in showcasing the performing arts domestically and abroad stated that the best way to strengthen the use of Canadian artists overseas is by ensuring that there is more money. All of the respondents were very articulate and adamant about this major requisite. They had two criteria for deciding what sorts of Canadian works should be showcased: (1) the quality of the product and (2) the objective of the tour or presentation.
- ▶ Three partner organisations with the federal government had the following advice: disclose the criteria for awarding grants, simplify the grant approval process, be pro-active rather than reactive in selecting grant recipients.
- ▶ The review of literature found highly successful international cultural offerings and a steady stream of artists and artistic companies successfully competing on their own in the international market place. This occurs in spite of a DFAIT environment that lacks vision, mission and advocacy for the Third Pillar. This cultural excellence abroad offers great potential for an integrated, directed Third Pillar vision.

## **Key messages**

- ▶ ACA has a weak position within DFAIT. It is necessary to raise its profile within DFAIT to augment its ability to carry out its mandate
- ▶ An enhanced status for ACA is also needed to give career-track credibility within DFAIT to those who work to promote Canada’s image abroad through the presentation of its culture and values.

- ▶ The Third Pillar requires significant policy support and the capacity to interact on an equal footing with the other two pillars of Canadian foreign policy.
- ▶ Regardless of popular views and/or preferences, the Arts Promotion program is less an artist support program and more a program that uses artists to support foreign policy objectives. Although a primary criterion for the selection of events to receive grants must be artistic merit, the use of the events to serve foreign policy objectives must remain the first consideration.
- ▶ Program effectiveness would be greatly enhanced if the grants were used to add to the impact of all Canadian culture representatives going abroad. This can be accomplished by having . . .
  - clearly articulated culture policy that fully integrates the Third Pillar (Canadian values and culture) with the other two pillars of Canada's foreign policy (prosperity and employment; protection of security).
  - strategic plans for culture promotion programs at selected Missions. These plans must be institutionalised, long-term, have clear objectives and be monitored against pre-defined performance standards.
  - sustained support from headquarters for the promotion of culture programs. This should come from two sources: the policy support for all three Pillars and from ACA. The latter should be in the forms of on-going advice on the strategic plan, selection of and support for Canadian artists going abroad and help with Mission concerns as they arise.

### **Recommendations**

There are five key recommendations. The first is the most important. Without visible action on the requirement to strengthen policy, the others are of little consequence.

- ▶ Build the necessary policy framework to support the Third Pillar.
- ▶ Increase program efficiency by reducing the time from grant request to grant approval to 60 days or less.
- ▶ Institute a performance measurement system that will measure elapsed time for key operations and that will measure satisfaction levels from priority Missions and from “client” artists as part of the on-going activity of the program.
- ▶ Introduce performance standards and use these as benchmarks for the performance measures.
- ▶ Modify the filing system for the maintenance of ACA records.

# Introduction

## Purpose of the Study

The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) commissioned an evaluation of the Arts Promotion program which comes under the Arts and Cultural Promotion Industries Division (ACA). The evaluation of this program was scheduled within the DFAIT cycle of evaluations of grants-issuing programs. This report presents the results of the evaluation. Associated with this report are two Working Papers. The Working Papers provide detailed findings from the study and are available under separate cover.<sup>5</sup>

## Evaluation Mandate

The mandate of this program evaluation study is

- ▶ to examine the relevance of the Arts Promotion grants of the Arts and Cultural Industries program
- ▶ to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the current program
- ▶ to consider alternatives that will enhance the cost-effectiveness of the achievement of the program's goals and
- ▶ to review the program's performance management regime.

The individual issues addressed within this mandate are all enumerated and addressed in the section of this report that presents the findings and conclusions for the specific evaluation issues.

## Methodology

The evaluation used five methodologies: program profile; literature review; self administered client satisfaction surveys; file review and person-to-person surveys. The data collection for each methodology was designed such that triangulation of the data produced by different methodologies would allow for validity checks of the answers provided for each question.

The methodological scope was extensive in that information was sought from comparator countries (United States, Great Britain, New Zealand, Australia), from the research and the popular literature relevant to the program, from the clients of the program, from the archived file records and from key informants with both direct program experience and direct Canadian-culture presentation experience.

Both the initial planning and the early reactions to the findings benefitted from (a) the experience of the evaluators responsible for actually conducting each element, (b) the views of two highly experienced cultural consultants who served as advisors and who did not have operational responsibilities for the evaluation, and (3) open communication with the full range of involved DFAIT officers.

A brief description of each of the methodology elements follows:

Program Profile. This approach served to capture the program theory in order that the objectives and the designed means of achieving those objectives could be understood. The model was based on information gathered in three group sessions

with ACA officers and on understandings gleaned in a number of interviews and from selected research literature.

Literature Review. A wide range of studies were collected and analyzed. The studies included previous evaluation studies, audit studies, departmentally commissioned reviews, policy papers and newspaper articles.

Self Administered Client Satisfaction Surveys. The original plan had been to use email to send the survey instrument to samples of successful and non successful grant applicants. This was changed in two main respects. First, almost all possible respondents on the ACA data base had been successful with at least one grant request in the last four years so a contrast between successful and unsuccessful grant applicants was not feasible. Second, the wide range of computer equipment, of computer application programs and of level of computer literacy made impossible the e-mail delivery of survey forms to all respondents. The survey form was sent in three different modes, depending upon the respondent: original specialised email format; word processing format and facsimile. The response rate (43%) was lower than planned. Cross checks with the responses from a directly comparable group however confirmed that the responses of this group could reliably be used. The validity check was available from the person-to-person administration of most of the same questions to a random sample drawn from the same artist-client data base. Comparison of the answers to the same questions found that the response pattern from the two samples were very similar.

File Review. The intention was to draw a random sample of case files from the set of grant applications and study in detail all of the steps along the way to a grant decision and then to post-project reporting. This was not possible due to the way in which completed files are desegregated for storage in the department. In place of the file review, advantage was taken of the very complete data base of eligible grant requests maintained by the program staff. This data base was most valuable for describing and understanding the sources, types, amounts and locations of grants.

Interview Surveys. Person-to-person interviews were conducted with several different groups in addition to the grant applicants who answered questions from the Client Satisfaction Survey instrument. These interviews were conducted either in person or over the telephone depending upon the physical location of the respondent. The following groups were interviewed: eighteen DFAIT officials; three Canadian government partners; three other country representatives, four Canadian Missions abroad, five provincial arts councils and eight key informants.



## Background and Context

Although the support of cultural activities by DFAIT has a long history, its recognition as a pillar of Canadian foreign policy only dates to 1994 when the Special Joint Committee of the House of Commons and the Senate concluded a review of Canadian foreign policy. In the context of that review, the Canadian Government issued its response with the title *Canada in the World*. That response set forth three pillars or objectives for Canada's foreign policy:

- the promotion of **prosperity and employment** by advancing Canada's international trade and economic interests abroad, by maintaining market access for Canadian goods and services, by attracting foreign investment, and by promoting tourism to Canada;
- the **protection of our security** within a stable global framework by using diplomacy to protect against military threats, international instability, environmental degradation, natural resource depletion, international crime, uncontrolled migration, and the spread of pandemic diseases; and
- the projection of **Canadian values and culture** in the world by promoting universal respect for human rights, the development of participatory government and stable institutions, the rule of law, sustainable development, the celebration of Canadian culture, and the promotion of Canadian cultural and educational industries abroad.

It is the Third Pillar, also known as the Culture Pillar, which is the supporting rationale for the program activities being evaluated. Within the business line and departmental objectives structure of DFAIT, the ACA program is expected to contribute to three of the business lines of DFAIT.

- **Public Diplomacy.** Creation of interest and confidence in Canada abroad and an international public environment favourable to Canada's political and economic interests and Canadian values
- **International Business Development.** Create jobs and prosperity by encouraging Canadian firms to take full advantage of international business opportunities and by facilitating investment and technology flows
- **International Security and Co-operation.** A peaceful, law-based international system reflecting Canadian values in which Canada is secure from threats from abroad.

We are cautioned by those sophisticated in cultural affairs that the contribution of culture is not measured in the same way as widgets or grant requests or numbers of shows that can be counted. The effect of culture is in terms of background creation and consciousness raising - *zeitgeist* creation. As such, its impact will be diffuse, may be pervasive and will operate over the long term. The compelling case for its importance has been made by many. This study will use the words of John Ralston Saul in his 1994 presentation to the Special Joint Committee of the House of Commons and the Senate:

*Culture is neither definable nor controllable. It comes out in thousand of forms. The resulting overall impression is the image of a country. The culture of a people defines itself through its expression.* page 7

*Canada's profile abroad is, for the most part, its culture. That is our image. That is what Canada becomes in people's imagination around the world. When the time comes for non-Canadians to buy, to negotiate, to travel, Canada's chance or the attitude toward Canada will already have been determined to a surprising extent by the projection of our culture abroad.* page 3

*Culture is the image of Canada abroad.* page 94

## **The Arts Promotion Program**

### **Purpose and Objectives**

The Arts and Cultural Industries section includes in its role the implementation of those elements of Canada's foreign policy for which culture representation is key. Four interdependent elements of the role are identified:

- ▶ Culture as diplomacy. The international expression of Canadian culture, values, identity and accomplishments include
  - ▶ the support of Canadian artists
  - ▶ finding new markets and audiences for cultural products
  - ▶ showcasing Canada through promotional activities at missions
  - ▶ promoting awareness of Canadian cultural diversity and creativity among specific international audiences
- ▶ Culture as business. The provision of assistance to Canada's cultural industries in establishing markets and partnerships abroad.
  - ▶ assisting artists and artist representatives to become "export ready"
  - ▶ financial assistance to artists to showcase their talents abroad
  - ▶ providing introductions and other assistance to foster the establishment of partners abroad
- ▶ Cultural outreach. The collaboration with, and the strengthening of, the many actors involved with the cultural industries of Canada.
  - ▶ developing an awareness of emerging artists
  - ▶ maintaining a network of artistic talent
  - ▶ strengthening the links between DFAIT and its federal, provincial and other partners engaged in the promotion of Canadian culture

The activities of ACA are shown in schematic fashion in the diagram on the following page.

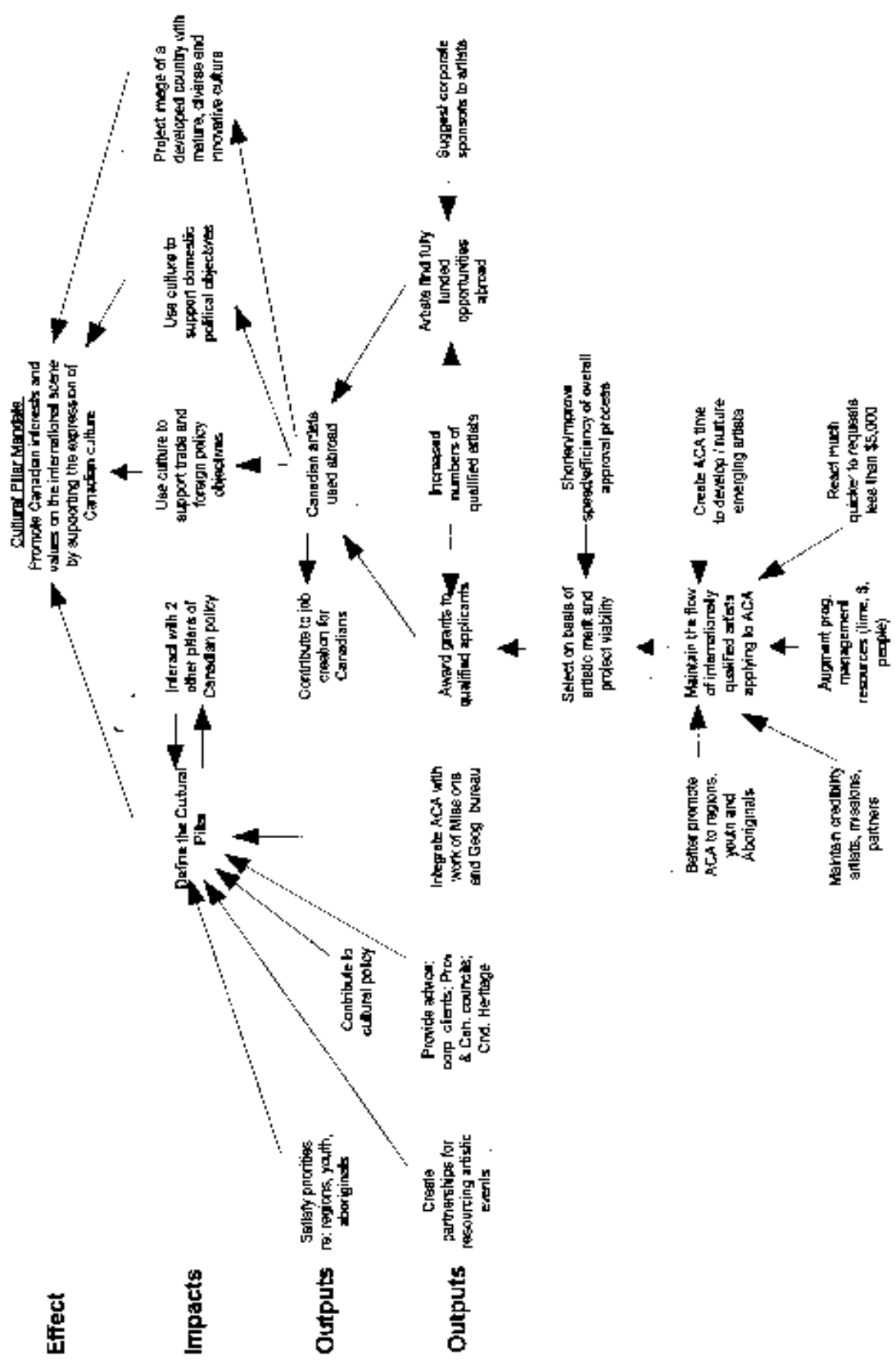
There are deficiencies with this program logic model which stem from the limited perspective of the model. It was developed for ACA. As such it does not have a sufficiently broad scope. It was not designed to take into account the fuller perspective of the International Cultural Relations Bureau which includes academic affairs. It does not take into account expressions of Canadian culture supported by other Bureaus of the Department. To be complete, it should be done from the

perspective of the Culture Pillar as a whole. This will require inclusion of other DFAIT efforts such as the Market Research Centre and its worldwide network of trade offices which produce market profiles and reports including 33 cultural industry reports (as of January 2000). It would require consideration of the role of the Canadian cultural centres at selected locations such as London, New York, Paris, Bonn/Berlin.

Additionally, there are the efforts of other government departments and agencies and of the private sector expected to be complementary to those of DFAIT. The Departments of Canadian Heritage, Industry Canada, the Canada Council for the Arts, Telefilm Canada and the National Film Board of Canada all have impacts in this field. Provinces have culture councils which work to support the efforts of their resident artists. The Quebec council, in particular, is very active on the international stage. Canadian museums provide goods and services across the world as well as in Canada. Canadian film and television present views of Canada to international audiences around the world as do book publishing and sound recording. Aboriginal arts and crafts provide views on elements of Canadian culture that find their way throughout the countries of the world. Overall, there is a wide range of mechanisms by which to showcase Canadian culture abroad.

Even in its current restricted form, the logic model carries several important messages.

- ▶ First, the grants to artists should be for the purpose of supporting foreign affairs objectives. The work of artists and of artistic companies is to be used to serve DFAIT policy objectives.
- ▶ Second, there is a requirement for close interaction and co-operation with the other two pillars.
- ▶ Third, the grants, as well as serving to express Canadian culture, have direct economic benefit for Canada.
- ▶ Fourth, the grants support growth experiences for Canadian artists and contribute to the development of artistic enterprises.



**Recommendation** The logic model presented in this report has been developed from the perspective of the Arts Promotion program. It should be reviewed, and possibly revised, from the perspective of those with a DFAIT level responsibility for Culture Pillar policy. This will enunciate the Pillar's mandate and objectives, make clear the underlying rationale of the Culture Pillar in the context of all three pillars of foreign policy and evaluate the potential of the means in place to achieve the intended objectives.

**Resources**

The ACA program budget currently provides about thirteen full-time-equivalent person-years, about \$325,000 for operational expenses (a drop of \$100,000 from 1996-1997) and close to \$5 millions for grants.

**ACA Structure**

The Director, ACA, together with the Director, ACE, for academic affairs, report to the Director General for the International Cultural Relations Bureau who, among other duties, has the responsibility for the development and “championing” of policy.

ACA, the Arts and Cultural Promotion division, is comprised of three sections: Arts promotion (grants program); Arts and Cultural Industries (trade development program); and Cultural Initiatives for War Affected Children.

The Arts Promotion program, with a 1998-1999 budget of \$4,694,000, has as its main operating tool the issuance of grants to Canadian professionals as well as cultural, artistic and educational non-profit establishments or organisations in order to promote Canadian culture abroad. The grants are awarded to professional artists and professionals in the cultural field who are Canadian citizens or resident in Canada and from not-for-profit arts, cultural, or educational organisations or institutions or their representatives registered in Canada. Individuals and institutions are expected to show a minimum of three years of professional activity in Canada. Special consideration may be given to applications from Aboriginal Canadians and young Canadians.

The grants always have the objective of promoting Canadian interests abroad and are awarded for work in the four fields described below. In general, priority for performing arts grants and for visual and media arts grants is given to projects that demonstrate high artistic standards, respond to a demonstrated credible interest abroad, are cost-effective, are part of a long-term marketing strategy and include a detailed promotional plan. Both the literature and publishing grants and the film, video and television grants are subject to the availability of funds. These grants generally cover the applicant's cost of international travel (literature and publishing) or the cost of air fare (film, video).



The four sections, and their 1998-1999 budgets, are:

Performing arts grants (\$2,240,000) support international tours by Canadian companies, groups and artists in the fields of music, theatre, dance or multi-disciplinary creation and performance.. Grants in this category do not generally exceed 30% of the total budget.

Visual and media arts grants support projects (\$450,000) that will demonstrate Canadian artistic and cultural creativity, innovation and excellence to foreign audiences. Eligible institutions are Canadian art museums and art centres including artist-run centres.

Literature and publishing grants (\$150,000) have the objective of supporting the promotion in foreign markets of recently published fiction and works of literary non-fiction. Support may be given for promotional projects and for participation in important international book fairs.

Film, video and television grants (\$150,000) are for the purpose of supporting participation in international events with a view to the sale of products abroad and the stimulation of international co-productions. Preference is given to projects that will help professionals launch international careers and develop international market potential. Applicants must demonstrate experience and success in their field and have a credible detailed marketing plan.

The balance of the 1998-1999 Arts Promotion budget was spent in the following ways: Annual operating budget: between \$300,000 and \$400,000; Program for visiting foreign artists: \$50,000; Canada-Mexico program for creative artists: \$30,000; Missions: \$499,000 distributed among 10 missions; Academia: \$125,000 for exchange programs; and Special projects from the Minister's office: \$1 million (of which \$200,000 is focussed on the issue of children and war). Additional funds become available at times for projects from entities responsible for national unity and federal-provincial relations.

## **Outputs**

In 1998-99, ACA initiated<sup>6</sup> 336 grants<sup>7</sup>. Our examination of program activity is taken from the 1998-1999 year.

Exhibit 1 shows the largest average awards to be for Performing Arts (\$25,191), Promotional Activities for the Performing Arts (\$10,088), Visual Arts (\$9,011), and Special Projects (\$9,249). Together, these four account for two-thirds (66%) of the awards.

Exhibit 2 shows one-half of the grant awards are for less than \$5,000. Three discipline categories in particular have small awards; Literature; Film and Video; and Visiting Foreign Artists. This is understandable in view of the types of awards made. The first two are for the cost of international travel for Canadians going abroad and the third is to bring foreign artists to Canada.

### Exhibit 1: Numbers of Awards and Average Amounts

Number	Per Cent	Discipline	Average Amount
105	31%	Performing Arts	\$ 25,191
49	15%	Visual Arts	\$ 9,011
47	14%	Literature	\$ 3,504
42	12%	Film and Video	\$ 4,459
23	7%	Visiting For. Artists	\$ 2,324
4	1%	Canada/Mexico Exchange	\$ 6,500
17	5%	Prom. Act. Perf. Arts	\$ 10,088
49	15%	Special Projects	\$ 9,249
336	100%	All	\$ 13,352

### Exhibit 2: Size of Grant by Discipline

Discipline	less than \$5,000	\$5,000 to \$50,000	more than \$50,000
Performing Arts	24%	59%	17%
Visual Arts	51%	45%	4%
Literature	96%	2%	2%
Film and Video	74%	27%	0%
Visiting For. Artists	100%	0%	0%
Can./Mex. Exchange	25%	75%	0%
Prom. Act. Perf. Arts	12%	87%	0%
Special Projects	24%	69%	2%
Total	50%	44%	7%

The distribution of the grants, in terms of the province of residence of the artists, was not dissimilar to the population distribution of Canada. The percentages of awards by province of residence are as follows: Atlantic, 5%; Quebec, 33%; Ontario, 35%; Prairies, 14%; British Columbia, 10%; and the Territories, 1%. Another 2% of the grants went to various Missions abroad in support of their cultural programs.

An examination of the locations to which the artists receiving grants was conducted. This revealed that very few cities were visited a sufficient number of times to provide a critical mass for the presentation of Canadian culture. Only three cities were visited more than ten times (Paris, London, New York City). Only five cities (Brussels, Edinburgh, Stockholm, Taiwan, West Palm Beach) were visited from five to nine times.

A count of the expressed official language preference of the grant recipients shows a distribution not significantly dissimilar to the Canadian population (68% English and 32% French).

More detail on these findings may be found in Working Paper 1.

# Evaluation Issues: Findings and Conclusions

## Program Relevance

Relevance refers to the extent to which the program continues to serve the interests of its clients and of Canada's foreign and trade policy. The evaluation addressed the following specific questions:

- a) Is the program consistent with Canada's trade policy and with Canada's foreign policy objectives?
- b) Do the interests of the Department and those of the clients complement each other?
- c) Does the program constitute value added for recipient clients

The mandate for Arts Promotion is to *promote Canadian interest and values on the international scene by supporting the expression of Canadian culture*. The support includes the giving of grants to individuals, institutions or organizations that create, interpret, promote or market Canadian cultural products for the international market.

The Arts promotion section of the Arts and Cultural Industries promotion division promotes Canadian culture internationally by providing financial support to professional artists and cultural organisations to showcase their work abroad. It provides policy guidance to the department, including missions abroad, to maximize the impact of Canadian cultural events in foreign countries and also helps Canadian artists to pursue their international initiatives.

The evidence collected in this evaluation leads to the conclusion that the program remains relevant:

- ▶ the Department continues to have a Third Pillar devoted to projecting Canadian values and culture to other countries. It requires the means of achieving this directly and of having this Pillar interact with the two other Pillars; viz., promotion of prosperity and employment and protection of our security within a stable global framework. The program mandate remains relevant and therefore requires activity most appropriate to its achievement.
- ▶ other countries share the same objective of conveying expressions of their interests, values and culture. This commonality among countries with cultural and economic objectives in common (in fact, in competition) reinforces the continued relevance of the Third Pillar objectives.
- ▶ the clients of the program are of the view that the program is essential for them because of the financial support that it provides. They are very satisfied with the quality of the program officers. There is some dissatisfaction with the time required to process grants but there does seem to be an acceptance the time taken to reach grant decisions. They go abroad for professional and career reasons and artistic merit is their prime consideration for judging event worthiness.
- ▶ the program partners within the federal government agree that the program is desirable and complementary to their own programs.
- ▶ the provincial government partners, with the exception of Québec which has its own extensive program, find the program highly desirable for its artists and for its own culture/tourist activities.



The broader question still remains: “Is the program as relevant as it might be?” Here the answer from previous studies and from current observers is “No”. Two examples of the “No” answers are cited here:

*After 25 years of existence, ten or more program reviews as well as observing other countries’ ICR activities around the world, there are still questions within EAITC [Evaluation and Strategic Planning] whether ICR is an essential component of Canada’s cultural relations. (page 31). 1990<sup>8</sup>*

*The recommendation to construct the Third Pillar has not been accepted. As a central feature of giving substance to the determination of government to make Canadian culture the third pillar of Canada’s foreign policy, the government and the cultural sector should co-operate in the appointment of a cultural ambassador. (Page 6) 1996<sup>9</sup>*

## **Program Effectiveness and Efficiency**

The evaluation issue here is the extent to which the program has achieved its objectives and how efficiently it has responded to the clients’ and regions’ expectations, in light of current human and financial resources.

There are a series of questions considered in this context and each is answered in the light of the information placed in Working Papers 1 and 2 of this report.

a) What were the effects and repercussions of this program?

Virtually everyone interviewed was of the opinion that the program contributes to the development of Canadian artists by assisting the artists to travel abroad, to gain experience on the world stage and to hone their skills against international competition. It is believed that perhaps 90% of the artists receiving grants would not have been able to go abroad without the assistance.

Although there was evidence that the program contributes to the promotion of Canadian culture on the world stage, there was little evidence that the program could claim credit for the impact made by Canadian artists. Most of the Canadian artistic activity at a location is not the result of ACA grants. Neither is it integrated, through planning, into an ACA designed framework. The program does not provide a critical mass of cultural events which can be claimed to have an impact as a result of the program.

The program was criticised for having insufficient funds to make a difference abroad and for not having sufficient influence on the activities of DFAIT at home.

b) What benefits were derived from the cultural activities to project Canada’s image abroad and to develop international trade?

The view is that the program does not really operate to project Canada’s image abroad. Rather, it reacts to requests from Canadian artists and provides funds to allows some of those who apply to go abroad. It is reactive rather than proactive. In that sense, the program does not act to project Canada’s image abroad and to develop international trade. Rather these are by-products of the grants awarded which enable Canadian artist to go abroad.

That being said, almost everyone was of the opinion that the presence of artists who do go abroad provides very important benefits to Canada. They do project Canadian culture. In large part, they are the image of Canada abroad and this is uniformly accepted as very beneficial to Canada's trade position and to its other interests.

c) Does the awarding of grants dovetail with departmental strategies and the strategies specific to each region?

No. The award of grants in large part is orthogonal to the department's objectives. It must be recognised that the selection of projects to receive grants is not done to achieve departmental strategies. There is general agreement that the program has little influence within the department. There is reason to believe that efforts are being made to change this state of affairs. There is also evidence that such efforts have been made, and have failed, in recent years. Perhaps the most promising of the most recent efforts are the attempts to designate priority to specific Missions and the attempt to bolster the policy development responsibilities of the Third Pillar.

There is a sense in which the award of grants is fully congruent with departmental requirements. This occurs when grants are not awarded for a project that would take Canadian artists to a country out-of-favour in the foreign policy of the day.

The most frequent comment made, regardless of the source of the comment, is that the program is underfunded.

d) Is the program being adequately promoted by the Canadian missions abroad and to the satisfaction of the arts community?

The evaluation produced little evidence on this point. In those cases where evidence is available, the view is that the Missions are very effective at leveraging the resources available to them. Some Missions are seen as very effective within the reality of their resources because of their ability to be opportunistic with the visits of Canadian artists whether travelling with or without program assistance. Artists do report finding the Mission staff to be very helpful with their many needs for information and guidance.

## **Interviews Findings**

### **Foreign Affairs Officials**

Within DFAIT, a total of 17 people were interviewed: 6 in ACA; 4 at geographical desks; 4 at Missions abroad; and 3 in the ranks of senior management. An amalgam of their views is presented in Working Paper 1. The following is a brief summary of the opinions expressed.

The rhetoric for the Third Pillar is strong but the implementation is weak. The projection abroad of Canadian culture and values is given lip service but not much more. There is a need for the Third Pillar to be given equal status and for it to be implemented with stronger policy direction and full integration with the other pillars. The implementation requires co-ordination within the department with special emphasis on the role of the Missions. The value of the Third Pillar is seen as supporting the world view of Canada as a country with highly developed, vibrant and multi-faceted cultural industries. The purpose of ACA is seen as supporting the promotion of Canada's image abroad and the sale of its cultural products.

The ACA program is seen as weak. It is viewed as a powerless program which is understaffed, lacks a strong policy capacity and is not able to make rapid decisions even within the financial authorities granted to the program within the Departmental responsibility structure.

The ACA strengths reside in a core of professional officers knowledgeable about the cultural communities of Canada and dedicated to the artistic communities and to the use of culture in support of foreign policy objectives.

The efficiency of ACA could be very much improved with grant requests processed within 60 days. The Canada Council is identified as a possible alternative mechanism for the awarding of grants; however, a number of severe disadvantages are seen for the Department associated with this alternative.

### **Missions**

All of the four Missions contacted had a cultural component, some more clearly defined than others. The budgets were relatively small in relation to the work that was being done. The people involved were very adept in leveraging funds and opportunities.

The relationship between the mission and headquarters is very much a function of interpersonal relationship and is highly dependent upon the mission. The relationship, and the duration of the relationship with ACA, is varied. All reported that it was good, and all seemed to sense that there were pressures facing the program – there was a lot of respect for the current Director and this seems to be based on the fact that he both understands culture and has had Mission experience.

Experiences and perceptions varied among the Missions. Yet there was, generally, a comfortable fit between culture and the other two pillars. The respondents seemed to be practical and flexible. They worked with what funds were available, identifying and taking opportunities to showcase the arts of Canada whenever and wherever possible. There was a general intention to show the diversity and creativity of Canada by the use of smaller groups and niche performances. The link between culture and trade was seen as strong.

Within the missions, there was not a clear delineation between ACA and all of the cultural products coming from Canada. Generally, anything coming over was within the radar of the mission. Respondents had scant knowledge of the way the ACA program works and how decisions are made. They generally had recommendations and suggestions for making their work more effective in relation to the mandate.

Missions learn of visits by Canadian artists in a variety of ways and not necessarily through DFAIT headquarters. What the Mission does for visiting artists depends on the Mission, the type of, and stature of, the artist/performance, her/his need and the purpose.

There often is a lack of lead time – people do not know if they will be getting the grants and this results in uncertainty in the Mission, which often has to go scrambling for local sources of support at the last minute

On the choice of artists to represent Canada, the Missions do not have a clear picture of who is chosen and how, although there is some conjecture and supposition that a jury system is used. Some embassies are in the information loop; others are not.

Although respondents had difficulty addressing the issue of objectives achievement in the context of these interviews, there was a feeling that the intended objectives were not well articulated or publicized. There was a view that there should be a stated objective for the groups/art forms sent out. If this was the case, the niche market and audience could be matched. For example, if you want to reach new audiences and perhaps speak of the diversity of Canada, a certain type of art would be useful. If you wanted to show that you were a big player, you would have to use some of the major Canadian artists with international reputations.

Among the Lessons Learned that these Mission representatives wanted to share are:

- ▶ Canadians must be proud of their culture. Cultural representatives, artists, promote the country.
- ▶ Use the technology to connect HQ and missions and all of the posts – keep current files of who is coming; what standards are; some common assessment files.
- ▶ Be transparent in how groups are chosen.
- ▶ Be clear and articulate about objectives.
- ▶ Facilitate the work of the missions. Provide career opportunities in culture, provide the Mission with tools, provide lead times and explain purposes.
- ▶ Be creative and seek new opportunities – niche markets; build on success of popular culture.

### **Provincial Councils**

Of the five provinces contacted, Quebec was the only one which had a distinct international stream. This component of the Quebec program has an annual budget of \$2 million. In the other provinces, when there was an international element, it was tied in with marketing and the cultural industries. Of the other four provinces, Nova Scotia was seemingly the most proactive although it depends heavily on federal - provincial funding for its initiatives. Nova Scotia also spends a lot of its funds on ensuring that the infrastructure for a cultural industry is in place. British Columbia supports its international artistic endeavours through market development for BC artists and for attendance at showcasing events. For the province's clients that do international 'gigs', the funding from ACA is important. Other than in Quebec, without this support the artists/groups probably would not get on the international circuit. The manner in which the clients are selected is a 'mystery' to the provincial councils. There were instances of feeling that all of the money goes to Quebec, or to central Canada. There was some feeling that there should be regional and geographic equity. At the same time, there were suggestions for a more transparent process with well defined and publicized criteria, and a system of selection based on a jury of peers.

The support of the Missions abroad was acknowledged and appreciated. Often, without their support, the activity could not have taken place. BC was especially indebted to the support in Asia, and NS for the support from the Eastern seaboard of the USA and Britain. Canadian Missions assist with networking, references and making suggestions for venues.

On the issue of collaboration with ACA, there was great difference among the provinces. The Quebec official felt that there was consistent and high quality collaboration. In BC there was informal collaboration and no notion of an equal partnership. NS felt that *“DFAIT never contacts you unless they are doing a survey.”*

Economic benefits did accrue back to the province and the country. These were most commented upon in NS and BC. NS made reference to an increase in tourism and to monies from record sales and royalties which come to the artists. Perhaps most important, the artists themselves were making their homes in the province, rather than necessarily moving to larger centres as in the past. BC was also noticing an increase in tourism.

All provinces were unanimously positive about to the desirable cultural dimensions of international showcasing and touring. The artists who had toured internationally were increasing their Canadian audience base when they returned.

Among the observations were the following:

- ▶ “Artists are our best ambassadors - they promote Canadian culture and give us visibility.”
- ▶ “We are presented as a distinct and unique cultural voice on the international scene - we gain a profile and an understanding of the issues.”
- ▶ “International acceptance has raised the local profile and has helped increase an awareness of the arts with spinoffs for other groups - there is an awakening of what is happening in the province.”

## **Partners**

Representatives from three partner organizations with international mandates and a relationship to the DFAIT mandate were interviewed. These are the Canada Council for the Arts, Telefilm Canada and Canadian Heritage. There is collaboration between DFAIT and these three partners with consultation on projects and on shared objectives. DFAIT was acknowledged to provide a valuable service both in Canada and abroad. However, it was criticized for having too many steps in its approval process and for not being fully transparent with the criteria for the awarding of grants.

The services provided by the Missions are seen as very important. They are highly useful for the clients of all three partners because of the within country connections available. The challenge within the Missions, however, is that often the people there may have no interest or responsibilities for the cultural portfolio. Headquarters DFAIT also offers knowledge but it cannot compensate for a lack of interested resources at the posts.

The partners suggested that DFAIT should bolster the capabilities of the Missions. They need more understanding of Canada’s cultural sector and they should be able to provide information to Canadian artists abroad as well as give them a sense of support. With all of the technology capacities, there is no excuse for artists not to have all of the information they need.

There were a number of suggestions for increasing the impact of the program with the key suggestion that DFAIT become pro-active, rather than reactive as is now the case.

The bottom line assessment of the partners is that DFAIT is not financed to carry out the mandate that they have been given. They should refocus – become aerated and dynamic, and look to leading European countries (Germany, France and the Netherlands) for models. Invest a lot, invest early and have a belief in the fundamental importance of what is to be achieved. There is a critical mass of culture companies with high quality work, an exportable product and an extensive network. The advice of the partners is to focus on excellence – develop an exportable product and commodity and supply it with the funds required.

### **Key Informants**

Eight key informants were interviewed. They are all highly experienced with Canadian cultural industries, both the artistic and the business sides, in Canada and abroad.

How can Canada strengthen the use of Canadian artists overseas to support the Cultural Pillar of Canada's foreign policy? Their answer is that the best way for Canada to strengthen the use of Canadian artists overseas for the support of the cultural pillar is by ensuring that there is more money. All of the respondents were very articulate and adamant about this major requisite.

These informed observers had two criteria for determining which Canadian works should be showcased: (1) the quality of the product and (2) the objective of the tour or presentation.

The first criterion for sending artists overseas is quality. Anything that is sent abroad represents Canada and must be a quality product. Send the finest art forms, regardless of regional or linguistic considerations. The ways in which quality is determined generally included some measure of peer assessment, the ability to survive over time, and some acceptance from the Canadian population. There was recognition that some of the newer and avant-garde art forms may not necessarily have public recognition and larger followings; in these cases it would be necessary to perform for niche audiences.

The second criterion relates to the objective to be achieved. This varies from city to city, and the officers on the spot are in good positions to make the decisions. New York and London can show almost anything – what is actually shown depends on the objective, whether or not there is collaboration and whether there is a trade element. Washington is conservative and the avant-garde should not be shown there; the audience one wants to influence are congressmen and politicians. We should look beyond traditional venues and send artists/works accordingly. It is desirable to go beyond the current boundaries and consider approaches such as presenting younger people with younger groups; sending symphonies to shopping centres and displaying at outdoor functions.

When asked, the respondents recommended a large number of changes to the program. Most of them were dependent upon having sufficient resources. Central among the suggestions were:

- ▶ Multi-year funding and an operating base for touring. There was a suggestion that a touring grid be designed for multi-years. To facilitate their planning, organizations would know a number of years in advance if and what amounts they would get.
- ▶ Provide funds to enable people to come to Canada to see what is happening here. This includes the entire range of people from the creators of the art form to art critics and everyone in-between. In this manner (1) there will be a greater

understanding of what goes on in the country artistically and (2) networks and relationships will be established or strengthened.

- ▶ Make the process more transparent – there is lack of information regarding how the process works – who makes the recommendations; what the criteria are; what is the appeal process, if any. There has to be better accountability for the process.
- ▶ Separate the artistic from the political elements - the Canada Council is there for the benefit of the artists. DFAIT should reflect Canada in the international political arena. There are parallels to draw from other sectors. For example, when Canada needs specialists in the posts for ‘nuclear reactors’ it engages them and provides them with the diplomatic stature as required. You wouldn’t use non-specialists to sell reactors, so why would you do this for culture.
- ▶ Engender status and recognition for the cultural affairs officers at home and abroad. Currently in the embassies and at HQ the cultural domain is seen as the poor cousin – the arts and culture stream is not seen as legitimate – it is for losers. It is not a stepping stone for becoming a diplomat. If it is to become part of the main stream, there must be recognition.
- ▶ Make accessing the applications easier. For example, the switch to the electronic application form created a lot of unnecessary confusion.

The current Director was cited as being particularly helpful and credible. The latter was a function of the fact that he had experience overseas as a cultural officer. There was a concern that, with the recent turnover of staff, the corporate memory could disappear.

Generally, there was a recognition that there has to be a better and a closer integration of the three pillars – there has to be a better understanding of what this implies, and articulation and recognition of how they can feed upon and work together.

The overall benefit to the country were stated to be:

- ▶ the Arts promote business
- ▶ there is recognition of the diversity of our regions, land and peoples
- ▶ there is recognition of our distinctiveness
- ▶ there is a realization that there are many languages and ethnic groups
- ▶ when Canada promotes its arts “there is a realization that we are not all in the woods, making maple syrup.”

Economic benefits were cited by every key respondent.

- ▶ all were able to cite examples of the economic benefits to the artists and to Canada.
- ▶ the cultural industries were cited as the fastest growing employment sector in the country, and this is not recognized or promoted to the extent that it should be.
- ▶ examples were given of how companies used leveraging. Starting with less than 20% of their touring money from government sources, they have been able to become financially viable and well known outside of Canada. The initial investments return to Canada and Canadians and impacts positively upon employment.

Image Benefits

- ▶ All of the key informants had stories about how Canada’s image was being defined through its arts and its artists. A typical type of comment implied that we

were no longer seen as a 'colony' of 'lumber jacks', but through our art were seen as being 'sophisticated' and 'worldly', often in conjunction with presenting our major art icons, the symphony orchestras and the ballets in world class centres, such as London and Paris. At the same time, some of our newer art forms and smaller groups and works made us 'edgy', 'unique', 'distinctive', 'vibrant'.

- ▶ It was also pointed out that often the only positive news stories about Canadians in overseas newspapers are those which speak of our arts and cultural successes. The negative ones deal with our transgresses – waste disposal and fishing.

### **Satisfaction Survey**

Surveys of the artist-clients were conducted. Two such surveys were used such that the results of one are a cross-check on the findings of the other. The full findings from the survey questions are in Working Paper 2.

The artist-clients have the following profile:

- ▶ About 30% have French as their official language of choice.
- ▶ In any given year, about one-quarter do not receive an Arts promotion grant and about half receive one award.
- ▶ About half consider themselves to be well established in their field and to have a major reputation.
- ▶ When they go abroad, the most frequent precipitating event is an invitation from a foreign producer.
- ▶ More than three-quarters claim that the grant provides essential financial support. They could not go abroad without the monetary assistance.
- ▶ The artist-clients learn about the grants award program by word-of-mouth from others in the arts and culture industries.

Among the many opinions expressed by the artists-clients are the following:

- ▶ Their most important reasons for going abroad are to make a positive impression on international audiences and to expand their presence in the international market. As well, they seek artistic growth, opportunities for new ventures/partnerships and the opportunity to represent Canada abroad.
- ▶ Almost all artist-clients considered the financial support to be essential or important. The most important immediate result cited by three-quarters of those receiving a grant is the financial support itself. One-tenth see credibility by association with DFAIT as a positive benefit.
- ▶ Close to half of the artist-clients see the opportunity to impress international audiences, critics and journalists leading to increased sales and future bookings as the most important longer term benefits from international activity.
- ▶ About half think that "helping people to understand Canada better by exposing them to Canadian culture and values" is an outcome of international activity.



Their views about the grant procedures are:

- ▶ Somewhat more than half found the application procedure to be reasonable. Of the remaining half, they are divided two to one between those who consider the procedure very easy and those who find it overly difficult. A few volunteered the complaints that the new computer based procedure is difficult, requires a high level of computer sophistication and equipment newer than they own.
- ▶ Two-thirds state that they can get information about the status of their application while it is being considered.
- ▶ More than half thought the time between application submission and announcement of outcome to be appropriate although one-third felt that it was longer than it should be.
- ▶ Although the views of the artist-clients on the criteria actually used to decide upon grant awards are quite similar to their beliefs about the criteria that are actually used, there are a few differences between the two. The two perspectives are similar in that the three most important criteria from both perspectives are artistic merit, professional status and international interest. They differ with respect to years of experience (artist-clients think this should not be important in getting awards but believe that it is) and availability of funds (artist-clients think it is used as a criterion and they believe it should not be).
- ▶ When asked if they thought the criteria were applied fairly to all applicants, almost three-quarters said that they had no opinion, that they did not know.
- ▶ There was a lot of redundancy in the notification of a award. On average, the notification was given 1.4 times to each client-artist. Telephone and letter were the two most frequently used communication media. Artist-clients are satisfied with the methods of communication used.
- ▶ Some six-in-ten received assistance from a Canadian Mission abroad but one-third of these considered the assistance to be limited or of poor quality.
- ▶ When asked what should be done to strengthen the grant program, the most frequent suggestions are to increase the total amount of funding in the program and to increase the amount available for each award.
- ▶ When asked what could be removed from the grant program without serious harm to the program, the three most frequently suggested removals are advice regarding the culture of the host country, promotion and publicity in Canada and professional advice to applicants.
- ▶ The large majority of the artist-clients consider the requirement for a post-project report to be very reasonable.
- ▶ Virtually every artist-client states that the awards are worth applying for.

The interaction between artist-clients and program officers was generally viewed very positively.

- ▶ About one-third received assistance from program officers of a non-monetary nature. The rest either did not want it (one-fifth) or did not know it was available (one-third).

- ▶ Nine-in-ten feel that they had a constructive, valuable relationship with a program officer.
- ▶ All program officers were judged competent in the official language of choice of the artist-client.
- ▶ The program officers are judged as efficient, knowledgeable, friendly and responsive.

**Recommendations** Three recommendations flow from the Satisfaction Survey.

The non-monetary help wanted by artist-clients is of such variety that it is almost idiosyncratic to the grant recipient. Some want services not offered, many do not know what is available; most do not want everything available. They should be offered a selected menu of services available and allowed to select that which best meets their needs.

Now that new computer based procedures are being instituted, there should be careful monitoring to ensure that the application procedures do not become a barrier to the artist-clients, especially the smaller independent artists.

Institute a feedback mechanism for artist-client satisfaction and monitor (a) whether the grant application procedures are “user-friendly”, (b) whether the program continues to meet the higher priority needs of artists-clients and (c) whether the efficiency of the program is seen to improve.

### **Literature Review**

The third pillar was instituted in 1994 as an announcement of intent and not as the result of a fully developed policy rationale. Recognised at the institution of the Third Pillar were the existing uses of culture within the department. What was lacking at the onset was a considered framework that interrelated the three pillars and integrated their efforts to achieve common goals.

Alongside the lack of vision, mission and advocacy for the Third Pillar have been a number of highly successful international cultural offerings and a steady stream of artists and artistic companies successfully competing on their own in the international market place.

The status of cultural industries is low within the department and is reflected by the unwillingness of many career officers to be tainted by a stint in an area seen as a backwater of the department. The rotational nature of DFAIT career paths is counter-productive to the kinds of skills and experiences needed for leadership and everyday work in cultural industries. The DFAIT approach to culture is fragmented among the Arts and Cultural Industries program, the individual Mission programs, the merchandising of culture products and the display of Canadian culture.

### **Program Alternatives**

Program alternative questions ask whether there are other more cost-effective methods for achieving the desired results and objectives, and how feasible these methods are. In addition to the examination of the program itself, there is also a search for lessons that

can be learned from the experiences of others. Specific questions that have been addressed are:

- a) Is the program being delivered as efficiently and effectively as possible?
- b) Are there more appropriate ways of making the program more efficient and delivering the services in a more cost-effective manner?
- c) Have other countries found more effective avenues for the delivery of comparable services?
- d) Are there valid suggestions available from the international research literature?
- e) Do the program managers/clients have practical suggestions for achieving greater efficiency and effectiveness?

## **Effectiveness Alternatives**

### **Remove the Arts Promotion grants program**

This alternative would emulate the American model for arts and culture promotion which is for government to do very little directly through grants to convey the country's image abroad. Simply allow the 'normal' flow of ideas and commerce to generate impressions of Canada to the extent that these reach various populations around the world.

**Considerations** The grants currently advertised and administered by Arts Promotion could be removed without also removing the monies for cultural programming at Missions and without discontinuing the funds available for objectives originating with the Office of the Minister.

**Advantages** This approach saves money in that it eliminates the need for grant money and for staff to knowledgeable select recipients dispense grants.

### **Disadvantages**

- ▶ Removes the currently identified mechanism for support of the Third Pillar of Canadian foreign policy. This removes the means for subsidising Canadians artists going abroad and it eliminates a core group of culture professionals as a source of advice within the Department.

**Assessment** This is rejected as an alternative for Canada. The model currently used by the United States is a change from their approach in the 1950's and 1960's when the USA did fund programs to send artists abroad. The reduction, and eventual elimination, of those programs coincided with the growth of the USA entertainment industry and the impact of the USA economy both of which are powerful conveyers of United States images to foreign audiences. The dominant opinion among those we consulted and the literature we consulted is that a middle-power like Canada must support cultural exports if its culture is to have a voice and face abroad.

### **Move to a British Council model**

The British Council spends some one billion dollars, Canadian. About one-third is provide by the British government. About 10% of the budget is classed as spending on arts and cultural events. The approach is not one of selecting and directly subsidizing artists. Rather, contributions are made to cultural events such as festivals where British artists will appear for the purpose of enhancing the reputation of the United Kingdom in the world. The British Council does not select British citizens to receive grants for specific purposes.

The British Council model is that of establishing a highly visible presence in a foreign country (actually about 128 countries) where it establishes interpersonal relationships, creates connections with organisations, interacts with the arts and culture communities, key organisers, impresarios, and sponsors portions of selected events. It creates a critical mass of British presence and stays the course.

The size of the Canadian arts and culture industries is not sufficient to convey its presence worldwide. As with other countries such as Australia and New Zealand, Canada has a requirement to actively portray itself on the world stage. Unlike the British Council with its vastly larger budget, Canada has a need to be focussed both with respect to locations of presentation and in selection of artists.

**Considerations.** This model is not available to DFAIT without the expenditure of considerably much more money than is envisaged for the foreseeable future. The creation of a new agency, and one which is inherently expensive, is not likely to be financially viable. Further, the British Council itself has advantages which would not be available to a Canadian counterpart including a long history of established operation worldwide and the sale of language instruction to help pay for other of its activities such as culture portrayal.

### **Buy Grants Services**

In this approach, another agency of government (most likely the Canada Council) would be engaged to issue grants following a fully developed set of guidelines. This option has been considered on several occasions and, some five years ago, merger legislation was introduced to combine the cultural programs of The Canada Council, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council and DFAIT. The proposal was rejected at the last minute by the Senate. If resurrected in principle, it could easily be expanded to include Telefilm in order to offer grants for film/video. The Canada Council is able to negotiate partnership agreements of this type and could enter into a Memorandum of Agreement if there was agreement on objectives, instrumentalities, and budget.

**Considerations** The Canada Council would have to be willing to work as an agent of DFAIT. The Arts and Cultural Initiatives program would write guidelines and monitor performance of the agency administering the guidelines. This alternative requires that monies would be set aside for Missions and for Office of the Minister projects.

### **Advantages**

- This approach would put the budget for artists in the hands of an agency which is unambiguously dedicated to cultural and artistic objectives, has many years of successful experience in awarding grants in the arts and culture, use peer assessment committees to evaluate applications and make grant decisions, and

program officers with strong cultural backgrounds and working experience in arts fields.

- ▶ Removes need for grant administration staff at DFAIT.
- ▶ Removes possibility of extraneous factors impacting upon grant administration.

### **Disadvantages**

- ▶ DFAIT officers will lose touch with the Canadian cultural community.
- ▶ The critical mass of DFAIT officers with a continuing interest in the Third Pillar as a support to foreign policy is likely to disappear.
- ▶ This alternative would break the relationship between the cultural grants program and the missions. Even if money is set aside for mission activity, it is unlikely that any agency outside of DFAIT would enjoy the trust of the missions. The following question has never been satisfactorily answered: "How, if the grants are administered outside DFAIT, can one possibly ensure the cooperation and support of the missions for cultural activities occurring in their regions?" Such cooperation is crucial since the Missions play integral roles in the use of culture in support of Canadian interests in diplomacy and trade.

### **Maintain the Current Program**

Continue as at present and with the same budgetary resources but with changes required for efficiency and morale gains. The key change would allow the Director General, ACA, to make grant decisions for awards up to \$125,000 without consultation elsewhere in the department. The selection of successful applicants from among the full set of requests would continue to follow established guidelines and would continue to include foreign affairs advice from regional desks and missions and cultural quality advice from other cultural agencies and provincial arts councils.

**Considerations.** Efficiency gains require that decision taking for grants to be made only at the minimal level of financial authorities without oversight by higher levels. It also requires much more rapid decision making; an efficiency boost facilitated by the new Promart 2000 system. Morale gains are expected along with increased responsibility for the grants officers.

**Advantages** The program as currently structured will be able to work more efficiency thereby releasing time for additional advice giving to artists early in their careers who will benefit from career development assistance.

**Disadvantages** The maintenance mode does not provide for an enhancement of the foreign policy advice given to the other 'desks' of DFAIT. This is an element not sufficiently served by the current program.

### **Raise the Culture Pillar Profile**

- ▶ Significantly increase the budget.
- ▶ The policy side of the Culture Pillar must be enhanced if it is to be seen as worthy of real support. "If we are to refocus our foreign policy on three fundamental missions, it must be realized that these are not three water-tight compartments. And culture penetrates all three. It is a value in itself. It is the image of a country. It is also a valuable trade good."<sup>10</sup>

- ▶ Give the Culture Pillar a central role in its own right. It is from such a base that it can, on the one hand, sell Canada to the world and, on the other hand, make a significant contribution to Canada's diplomatic and trade objectives. Three balanced pillars make for a very stable platform.

### **Efficiency Alternatives**

The financial authorities granted by Treasury Board gives authority to the Director General of International Cultural Affairs for expenditure up to \$125,000. In 1998-99, 98% of all the Arts Promotion grants were less than \$100,000. Yet permission to give these grants required approval from the Minister's office.<sup>11</sup>

The key steps in the grant process are:

- ▶ Applications arrive and are directed to the appropriate officer. Receipt is acknowledged and the application is registered into the ACA data base.
- ▶ Applications are reviewed by the appropriate officer and are sent electronically to Canada Council and to the appropriate Mission for review and comment. Their comments are reviewed.
- ▶ Following initial evaluation, projects and their ranking are reviewed by three people as a group (appropriate officer, ACA Director, ACA Deputy Director) and the final ranking is agreed upon.
- ▶ A memo is prepared for the Minister's Office. It is sent via the Director General and then the Assistant Deputy Minister.
- ▶ After approval has been received from the Minister's Office, ACA informs the applicants of the outcome of the selection process. Grant recipients are asked for their final itinerary. A grant agreement is prepared and sent for signature. The signed agreement is returned to ACA and countersigned by ACA.

On average, the grant application process takes a long time. ACA takes 148 days before there is a submission to the Minister's Office with recommendations for funding. The Minister's office takes 28 days for its approval process. ACA uses another 40 days before the grant agreement is signed. Total is 216 days or about 7 months.<sup>12</sup>

At least the large majority of all of the grants recommendations were approved as presented to the Minister's Office. Removing this step would add greatly to the efficiency of the process. The more rapid response would also bear fruit in an enhanced view of the department from the artistic community.

Here the recommendations are very straightforward. Reduce the amount of time that is spent on the administrative processing of grants. This prescription is independent of the time spent on making grant decisions. The key means to time reduction are : (1) use of Promart 2000 and (2) the partitioning of the total funds available to Missions and to disciplines. This should be done in advance of each fiscal year to inform program officers and should be re-considered at the end of the first quarter to allow adjustments for changes in needs and to recognize the flow, or lack thereof, of grants requests.

## Performance Management

Program management requires information about the use of resources. This information is best captured as part of the normal on-going activities of program operations and should not incur significant measurement or personnel cost.

As part of this evaluation, considerable attention was given to the extent to which on-going performance measurement could be harnessed to performance management. The guiding question was: "Can a performance measurement system be added to program operations such that monitoring information can be available at no or very little added cost?"

The evaluation sought information from records management files for two different aspects of the data collection effort. The information sought was for the year 1998-1999, the last complete fiscal year available for the program.

In one effort, a random sample of projects was selected and extensive efforts made to find the records for these projects. It was discovered that project files were not available. During the operational phase of a project, a project file is maintained by a program officer. Once the file is sent to records management, the file is segregated into components and these are filed under a number of different file categories. It was not feasible to reconstruct the original files without very significant effort. The evaluation chose to substitute the data base records of ACA for the project files. Although missing some of the information originally wanted (such as first decision on project eligibility and the sequence of negotiations to reach a grant amount), these records were complete and withstood our evaluation's tests for accuracy.

In the other effort, the memoranda to the Minister's Office recommending approval of grants were sought. The appropriate file folders were obtained from the records office and searched to locate all of the memoranda. For the memoranda located, a cross-check of each recommendation in the file folders was made against the record of events in the ACA data base. More than half of the events in the data base could not be located in the file folders. Therefore, the evaluation moved to use the records maintained by ACA. Copies of the memoranda to the Minister's Office recommending grant approvals are kept by ACA for the last complete fiscal year and for the current year.

It was also noted that an entire category of grant requests was missing from the ACA database. The informal estimate of the number of requests for grants received each year is 1000. The data base contained records for 489 project requests of which 336 had actually received grant awards. The difference, 153 projects, were eligible projects not recommended for funding, carry forwards from the previous year, or projects recommended to a Mission or elsewhere within the Bureau for direct funding. The other observation is that, if there had been a total of 1000 requests, then 511 requests had been judged not to be eligible. The review of these requests represents a significant amount of work but no record was kept in the database to show the volume of work.

The findings with respect to records management are as follows:

- ▶ The present system of filing does not allow rapid access to the base documents from a previous year.

- ▶ The present system of record keeping does not keep information organised in a fashion useful for the review of program decision taking. The exception is the maintenance of records for expenditure levels which are necessary and up-to-date but not adequate for management review of program operations.
- ▶ The present system does not provide information about work load associated with decisions about the eligibility of a grant request or about the time spent giving advice.

### **Recommendations**

**Record Keeping** We recommend that, for each and every grant request received, an on-going, cumulative, record be maintained of the following information:

- ▶ Initial receipt, date and form of request
- ▶ Judgement of eligibility, date and reasons
- ▶ If eligible, award recommendation, amount and justification
- ▶ Award, date of signing and transmittal and date of acceptance
- ▶ Evidence that event occurred
- ▶ Receipt of post-event award

**Filing System** We recommend that, whatever other files are maintained, the following file folders are created:

- ▶ A file folder be devoted for memoranda recommending action on project requests.
- ▶ A file folder be created to hold all of the cumulative record sheets for performance events. The record sheet will arrive at the file room as part of a folder containing all of the records of the project. As elements of that folder are moved to other files, a record should be maintained on the cumulative record sheet that will allow the original folder to be re-created should the need arise.

**Performance Standards** We recommend that service standards be developed for (a) the representation of Canadian culture, (b) timeliness in awards processing procedures and (c) advice giving. These standards would not be fixed targets. As with all standards, there should be a range of acceptable performance with the range defined as upper and lower bounds around a performance target. Performance that falls anywhere within this range would be considered fully satisfactory.

#### Representativeness

The Arts promotion grants have the mandate to promote Canadian interests and values on the international scene by supporting the expression of Canadian culture. The parameters of this expression have never been defined although it is generally accepted that (1) each event must meet very high standards of artistic merit and (2) all of the events together should provide a representation of



Canadian society. There appears to be an understanding that the latter is at least largely defined by, but may not be restricted to, the following parameters:

- ▶ official language groups;
- ▶ geographical regions;
- ▶ aboriginal heritage;
- ▶ youth constituency; and
- ▶ ethnic diversity.

#### Timeliness

Performance on timeliness can be measured in terms of numbers of elapsed working days for the following aspects of grants processing:

- ▶ 'Initial receipt' to 'Judgement of eligibility'
- ▶ 'Judgement of eligibility' to 'Award recommendation'
- ▶ 'Award recommendation' 'Award'
- ▶ 'Event date to 'Evidence that event occurred'
- ▶ 'Event date ' to 'Receipt of post-event award'

#### Advice Giving

Program officers are expected to give advice internally within the Department, both at Headquarters and to Missions and are expected to provide advice to individual artists. It is not recommended that program officers keep track of their time on such activity. Rather, it is suggested that careful note over time be taken of the percentage of the work is actually devoted to such activity and that a factor be built into the work standards associated with grants review and with meetings and conferences to compensate for this.

#### **Mission Satisfaction**

It is recommended that a means of measuring the quality of the interaction between ACA and the mission be designed.

#### **Artist-Client Satisfaction**

It is recommended that the two applicant satisfaction forms be designed. One is for use at the time that the decision on the application is announced and should be used to measure applicant satisfaction following acceptance or refusal of a project. It would include questions designed to measure the satisfaction of the grant recipient with the grant process. The other would be part of the end-of-project report. Both forms could be designed for return to a third party data collector who would also provide the analysis in which respondent identity is hidden.

# Overall Conclusions and Recommendations

## Overall Conclusions

The client of Arts Promotion is Parliament and the Canadian people. Its overriding raison d'être is to serve Canadian foreign policy. Although artist-clients benefit individually from grants awarded for presentations abroad, their support by DFAIT is for the purpose of using them to promote Canadian values and interests.

The Arts Promotion objectives would be better served if there was fuller support of the cultural programs at the Missions in priority locations. Providing long-term programmatic support to the priority Missions, sustained advice for a strategic program of cultural presentations, funds for opportunistic capture of Canadian artists and promoters visiting without DFAIT support and the use of DFAIT financial support to augment Mission program are all ways of supporting the expression of Canadian culture abroad. Additionally, informing artist-clients of the priority locations abroad will encourage them to submit proposals supportive of Canadian foreign policy interests.

Such program support requires the development and use of intellectual capital for culture and values. There is a need to better understand the interdependencies among the three pillars of Canadian foreign policy. Concurrently, there is a requirement to strengthen the policy platform for the Third Pillar. The understandings of the interdependencies among pillars has to be integrated within the overt action paradigms, within the very culture, of the department.

The Arts Promotion program lacks performance standards. The on-going evaluation by management of the program's performance against representativeness and timeliness goals is missing. There is no performance measurement system for the components of an officer's responsibilities. In particular, key components of an officers performance, such as determining the eligibility of an application and advice giving, are not recognised in any formal way.

## Recommendations

There are five key recommendations. The first is the most important. Without visible action on the requirement to strengthen policy, the others are of little consequence.

### **1. Build the necessary policy framework to support the Third Pillar.**

The logic model presented in this report has been developed from the perspective of the Arts Promotion program. It should be reviewed, and possibly revised, from the perspective of those with a DFAIT level responsibility for Culture Pillar policy. This will enunciate the Pillar's mandate and objectives, make clear the underlying rationale of the Culture Pillar in the context of all three pillars of foreign policy and evaluate the potential of the means in place to achieve the intended objectives.

### **Management response**

We agree. Only in this way will the potential of the program be effectively realized. The revision has now taken place and the objectives of the program are clearly articulated as being the promotion of an enhanced and positive image of Canada internationally

through the arts as a dynamic, innovative, technologically advanced, bilingual, culturally diverse, tolerant, creative and cosmopolitan country, in support and towards the advancement of our overall foreign policy interests. In order to further establish the position and relevance of the program as a central and core activity of the Department, we have, in the summer of 2002, implemented a Results-Based Management Accountability Framework (RMAF), a Risk-Based Audit Framework (RBAF), and updated Terms and Conditions for the Arts Promotion Program. The RMAF and RBAF specifically measure the impact and success levels of the Program in furthering these objectives at priority Missions and in priority geographic regions abroad. In addition, we are in the process of analysing grants applications and applying our eligibility criteria for international touring grants much more rigorously, in the interests of meeting these clearly enunciated program objectives.

**2. Increase program efficiency by reducing the time from request to approval to 60 days or less.**

Reduce the amount of time that is spent on the administrative processing of grants. This prescription is independent of the time spent on making grant decisions. The key means to time reduction are (1) use of Promart 2000 and (2) the partitioning of the total funds available to Missions and to disciplines. This should be done in advance of each fiscal year to inform program officers and should be re-considered at the end of the first quarter to allow adjustments for changes in needs and to recognize the flow, or lack thereof, of grants requests.

**Management response**

We agree and have already taken the steps necessary to respond more efficiently and quickly to grant requests. Authority for grant recommendations up to \$50,000 (the majority of all grants we issue), has been transferred back to this Bureau (ACD). In addition, our on-line grant application system has been updated, streamlined and promoted so that applicants and Posts are both familiar and comfortable with the software.

**3. Institute a performance measurement system**

As part of the on-going management of the program, measure key variables such as (1) elapsed time for key operations of grant application processing, (2) satisfaction levels from priority Missions and (3) from client-artists.

**Management response**

This challenge is more complicated, but we agree with the recommendation, and would refer again to the aforementioned RMAF, RBAF and amended terms and conditions for the Arts Promotion Program. This applies also to Recommendation # 4. The RMAF will specifically measure satisfaction levels, assessment of impact and success of the program in furthering overall objectives at priority Missions. Satisfaction of client-artists is already measured and assessed by virtue of the end-of-project reports from clients

that are obligatory as a condition of final payment. The new RMAF/RBAF do not, however, commit us to measure elapsed time for grant application processing. We are aware that this time period should be reduced, however, but do not foresee dramatic improvements in processing grant applications in the absence of increased human resources.

#### **4. Introduce performance standards**

We recommend that service standards be developed for (a) the representation of Canadian culture, (b) timeliness in awards processing procedures and (c) advice giving. As with all standards, there should be a range of acceptable performance with the range defined as the upper and lower bounds around a performance target. Performance that falls anywhere within this range would be considered fully satisfactory.

#### **Management response**

Please refer to Recommendation # 3. We submit that the new RMAF/RBAF answers point (a). As stated above however, we have not yet been able to introduce categorical service standards to meet point (b). On (c), we do provide advice to artist-applicants and to Missions on a case-by-case basis, but there is no formal program for this activity and as we are subject to severe time constraints in our ability to deliver this service, the development of service standards for (c) would not be useful.

#### **5. Modify the filing system for the maintenance of ACA records.**

We recommend that, whatever other files are maintained, the following file folders are created:

- ▶ A file folder be devoted for memoranda recommending action on project requests.
- ▶ A file folder be created to hold all of the cumulative record sheets for performance events. The record sheet will arrive at the file room as part of a folder containing all of the records of the project. As elements of that folder are moved to other files, a record should be maintained on the cumulative record sheet that will allow the original folder to be re-created should the need arise.

We recommend that, for each and every grant request received, an on-going, cumulative, record be maintained of the following information:

- ▶ Initial receipt, date and form of request
- ▶ Judgement of eligibility, date and reasons
- ▶ If eligible, award recommendation, amount and justification
- ▶ Award, date of signing and transmittal and date of acceptance
- ▶ Evidence that event occurred
- ▶ Receipt of post-event award

**Management response**

The on-line grant application system that was first introduced in the fall of 1999 and has since been updated addresses all these concerns. Elements of project files that cannot be filed electronically (such as hard copy supporting documentation, CDs, glossy reports, press clippings, etc.) are now filed under the same file number used by the on-line system. The results of consultations with Posts and other funding bodies are now automatically date-stamped and filed by the on-line system, which also includes a record of the funding decision.

## Endnotes

- 1.Saul, John Raulston. *Position paper on Culture and Foreign Policy*, Prepared for the Special Joint Committee of the House of Commons and the Senate reviewing Canadian Foreign Policy. August 30, 1994. Page 3
- 2.Saul, John Raulston. *Position paper on Culture and Foreign Policy*, Prepared for the Special Joint Committee of the House of Commons and the Senate reviewing Canadian Foreign Policy. August 30, 1994. Page 5
- 3.Text of a typical letter to an Arts promotion grant recipient. DFAIT File 0720-01/ACA Vol 6. Loc:C
4. Robert Higham, All Canadians Profit From Controversial Art in Paris, *The Ottawa Citizen*, February 16, 2000. Page A17
5. Working Papers are available from the Evaluation Division, Office of the Inspector General, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Ottawa. Working Paper 1 presents the *Detailed Record of Findings*. Working Paper 2 presents the *Survey Results*.
- 6.The text refers to grants initiated because the data base for budget expenditures in 1998-1999 includes grants initiated in 1997-1998 and completed in 1998-1999 with a final payment in the latter year
- 7.The list of *Projects Funded in 1998-1999* issued by International Cultural Relations actually numbers 335. The difference occurs because two of the grants listed in the data base, for \$4,000 and for \$21,000 to the same company, were reported as a single grant of \$25,000.
- 8.Paradigm Communications, *Program Evaluation Study - International Cultural Relations*, Evaluation and Strategic Planning, DFAIT. July 18, 1990
- 9.Report to Hon. Arthur Eggleston, Minister of International Trade. *Giving Shape to the Third Pillar of Canada's Foreign Policy*, Cultural Industries Sectoral Advisory Group on International trade (SAGIT), May 1, 1996
- 10.John Ralston Saul, *Culture and Foreign Policy*, 1996
- 11.Financial Divisional Administration Files, General - ACA, 0720-01/ACA. Multiple volumes.
- 12.Grants and Contributions Audit of the Arts and Cultural Industries Promotion Division, 2000