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TOWARDS A NEW MUSEUM POLICY

**REPORT ON THE
ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS
JUNE 28 – 29, 2005**

DEPARTMENT OF CANADIAN HERITAGE

N.L. HUSHION AND ASSOCIATES

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Canada 

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The opinions expressed in this report are those of the participants in the Round Table and do not necessarily reflect federal government policy or opinion.

N.L. Hushion and Associates wishes to express our thanks to the staff of the Heritage Group, Department of Canadian Heritage for their assistance with the organization of the Roundtable.

TOWARDS A NEW MUSEUM POLICY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TOWARDS A NEW MUSEUM POLICY REPORT ON THE JUNE 28 – 29, 2005 ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS

1.0 Introduction

As an important component of the consultations leading to the development of a new museums policy, the Department of Canadian Heritage held a facilitated Round Table discussion with twenty-eight directors and senior staff of museums from across Canada on June 28/29, 2005. A detailed Discussion Guide examining the major issues and options was circulated prior to the meeting and served as the main framework for the agenda.

2.0 Critical Issues Facing Canadian Museums, Today and for the Future

From the more than eight issues outlined in the Discussion Guide, the participants first focused on the difficulties of maintaining not-for-profit values in a for-profit world. Preserving core museological functions is becoming ever more costly yet these same essential responsibilities are very separate from any ability to generate revenue. Rather than describe a separation between the front-of-house activities (programs) and back-of-house (collections), they identified a seamless continuum that requires constant balancing.

The current perception that museums receive some 60% of their funding from government is not the experience of several of the participants, where the level is more likely in the range of 32% - 40%. Despite these constraints, museums continue to be successful on a range of fronts however they do need to focus more on demonstrating how well they are connected to their communities. Measuring success will be another challenge for, while there is agreement that it must be done, there is also concern that the skills required may not be present. Separate from this but equally important is the question of the continued growth in the number of museums, which leads to the perception of competition for already too-limited funding. Minister Frulla asked the participants to consider and comment on the advisability of focus and/or restraint in this area by the Department.

3.0 Policy Priorities: Discussion of Proposed Theme, Priorities and Objectives

The Discussion Guide set out a theme, with three broad priorities and accompanying objectives. In principle, the concepts underlying the overall theme were agreed to however there was considerable debate about some of the terms. Some preferred 'energize' to 'revitalization' and many wanted references to intellectual revitalization and mention of the creation of knowledge.

Another point, which brought forward considerable debate, was the meaning of 'significant collections'. While there is the model of the Movable Cultural Property Program, others believed strongly in 'significance' in the context of the local institution.

The term ‘the changing Canadian society’ was considered somewhat limiting by some, as it might be seen to exclude the existing or traditional audiences. And what about youth?

A need to incorporate the importance of international presence for Canadian museums was emphasized, as were the benefits that such a presence could bring to Canada. Alternately, collaboration on a smaller scale, as opposed to several provinces, is a more current need.

One of the most effective ways to stimulate the public’s active involvement in museums is to ensure that people translate this involvement into ‘ownership’. Connecting to new communities is increasingly essential. There were also suggestions for a survey of why people don’t come to museums, not on an institutional basis, but as an across-the-country assessment and analysis.

Several persons understood the term ‘visitor’ to mean not of the community, however all stress that attracting residents is far more important than visitor/tourists, especially in areas where such traffic is very light.

4.0 Policy and Program Principles

Six policy/program principles were articulated in the Discussion Guide, elaborated by a framework with three federal roles.

The question of relevance to a community identified in the first principle was explored in depth, with the emphasis being placed on the need to use collections to develop programs for newer audiences. The importance of collections-based research was again stressed. Identifying the value of a museum to its community must start with the local; museums must not lose sight of the importance of the community showing and expressing that it understands the value of the museum to the community as a whole.

Participants found that there was little reference to the importance and potential of technology in the document and hoped to see an expanded reference.

Specific proposals included acknowledging museums as ‘intellectual, educational and scientific’ assets for their communities; a need to define ‘excellence’, perhaps by the existing provincial definitions; and to incorporate ‘innovation’ in several of the statements. More clarity in the use of the term ‘national collections’ was also requested.

The need for a prefacing vision statement for the policy was identified, and tying the development of the new museum policy to the Museums Act was a further suggestion.

5.0 Expanding the Policy Priorities

The second day of the Round Table discussions focused on working in five groups to address in more depth the three policy priorities that had been established, first in the Discussion Guide and then through the previous day’s work.

5.1 Participation

There is a pressing need for comprehensive, core information on community, audience and visitors (residents and tourists), with data that enables a better understanding of audience, and of particular needs/interests. Visitation is not the same as the more desirable engagement/participation. Proactively stressing the value and relevance of museums within their communities - being welcoming and informative for everyone is very important.

Museums are seen as places of trust and this must be both respected and expanded on. The concept of a museum as a centre for dialogue, in particular as contemporary issues are not necessarily collections-based, could be explored more completely.

Activities to be supported under a participation agenda included market research on constituencies (network, common interests, geographic); development → delivery → evaluation of projects/programs; multi-year programs that demonstrate relevance and increased participation, development of new innovative approaches and/or programs; incentives for joint projects and partnerships (where appropriate); internships designed to build capacity in specialized areas, for example First Nations object research; and packages developed by regional/provincial associations on How to Market, How to Partner.

Suggestions for tools to support increased professional excellence included a virtual resource centre to share market research; a network to share information, best practices; study tours for staff at various levels; information on the link between cultural heritage and economic growth/innovation/health of the community and of the individual; sharing of best practices by making Canadian Heritage final reports of projects funded available; flying squad(s) to work with museums to develop skills in outreach activities and promoting two way participation; Museum Chairs for curators; a community relevance checklist and assessment tools; and information on new volunteer experiences and new types of volunteerism.

Some key goals are more active engagement by all, good governance and a feeling of ownership of the museum from both existing and new communities. The main themes in the results/measurement area included: level of awareness of both programs and of the institution; community support (financial, moral and in-kind); an increase in the number of partnerships and in outreach, thereby developing a larger audience; and the quality of the 'museum experience'.

5.2 Preservation

The term 'preservation' was much debated; for some it was 'a stitch in time' while others termed preservation too narrow and much preferred 'ensuring our legacy'. Just a few of the key preservation issues are lack of funds, lack of staff knowledge and time;

inadequate buildings and infrastructure; national/global record-keeping system and information sharing on collections for zoos; and the ability to access new techniques.

Alternatives to “outstanding significance and national importance” as a possible criterion to define the Government’s sphere of action included having “communities of interest” define artifacts/collections that are of national significance, while others would measure community relevance, or organizational/mandate relevance. There was considerable debate on what a ‘national collection’ is – by intent as well as legal definition. It was strongly felt by some that not all collections of national importance are found in national museums.

An extensive list of activities that should be eligible for funding in a preservation program was developed as well as a variety of ways to develop skills and professional practices in the area of preservation and conservation.

Internships were considered to be effective, as was coordination of group projects via associations. The Canadian Heritage and Canadian Museums Association (CMA) Bursary Program needs more publicity and flexibility.

5.3 Sustainability

Sustainability requires a multi-faceted approach – finances are but one component. The major threats and/or barriers identified began with inadequate management and governance. Aging infrastructure is another issue as is competition for funding across sectors, and within the sector. Museums need to celebrate their successes, and change from passive to active in their approaches. The inequity of access for heritage to support services and programs (such as the Canada Council’s Flying Squad) was cited several times. It also needs to be recognized that endowments are not the ‘magic bullet’, in particular for smaller endowments where the interest will not be adequate.

Additional roles the federal government could play in promoting sustainability include a program/resource guide to promote programs/resources that already exist; promote and represent the museum community to other federal departments in order to access additional programs/funds; provide incentives for communities/committees of interest to work together to address common issues; and assist the CMA in developing a mentorship program. Multi-year support for special initiatives and /or for planning and research was supported by all.

All groups agreed that the incentives would help to stimulate additional donations, particularly if they were matching. Museums have retained their position as keepers of knowledge and authority and this position needs to be captured and used to build support. The leadership in the community must come from the museums directors.

Practical suggestions for changes the Department should make to Cultural Spaces or the capacity-building program (CAHSP) were brought forward.

The concept of a Statistics Canada Sustainability Index, with specific criteria, was supported by all.

6.0 Closing Remarks and Summary

The two day Round Table discussion closed with a full summary and closing remarks from Lyn Elliott Sherwood, Executive Director, Heritage and congratulations from many participants for a stimulating and valuable discussion.

TOWARDS A NEW MUSEUM POLICY

REPORT ON THE JUNE 28 – 29, 2005 ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS

1.0 Introduction

The Department of Canadian Heritage is developing a new policy in order to assist museums to position themselves to meet the challenges they face and to mobilize the support they need from all stakeholders. Through this process, the Department has undertaken several different forms of consultation, including a two day, facilitated Round Table Discussion in late June, 2005.

In preparation for the Round Table discussions, a comprehensive Discussion Guide¹ was prepared and circulated in advance to the twenty-eight invited participants (please see Appendix for a list of participants and a copy of the agenda). In addition to the topic areas to be fully explored in the discussions, the Guide contains a summary of the Policy process in the federal government and an over-view of museum trends.

Opening comments from Eileen Sarkar, Assistant Deputy Minister, Citizenship and heritage and from Lyn Elliot Sherwood, Executive Director, Heritage outlined the context and focus for the Round Table and emphasized the importance of the deliberations in the development of a new museum policy. To underline the longer-term vision needed for such an exercise, participants were asked to give a single word which describes the museum community as they see it in 20 years. Key words that resonated through the later discussions included valued, inclusive, adaptable, culturally relevant, welcoming, accessible, dynamic, credible, connected, empowered, and centre for dialogue.

The agenda for the two-day meeting was firmly grounded in the Discussion Guide that allowed for flexibility to ensure that the full spectrum of issues and opinions were discussed by the participants.

2.0 Critical Issues Facing Canadian Museums, Today and For the Future

A brief summary of the points laid out in the Discussion Guide included:

- ▶ *budgetary pressures and an increased emphasis on self-generated revenues have had an impact on collections care, with “behind-the-scenes” functions taking second place to “front-of-the-house” functions. There is a gap in available statistics on the state of collections and the infrastructure necessary to support them.*
- ▶ *limits to the financial growth that can be sought from “earned revenue*
- ▶ *a decline in the paid workforce represents a loss of knowledge and expertise, and increased demands on those who remain*

¹ *Towards a New Museum Policy: Discussion Guide - Canadian Heritage/Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2005*

- ▶ *volunteers are one measure of the engagement of the community with institutions. For smaller institutions, they are critical to continued organizational capacity to serve visitors and care for collections. Museums need to develop strategies not only to deal with changing volunteer behaviors and interests but also to recruit and retain volunteers from increasingly diverse communities*
- ▶ *museums need to demonstrate relevance to a changing population, to find ways to attract traditional visitors and to understand and build relationships with new audiences*
- ▶ *are museums positioned to compete for “audience share” in an increasingly demanding market. Museums cannot afford to undertake regular visitor surveys yet they need to increase their understanding of the implications of the demographic changes within their communities. They have indicated that they cannot renew their public programming with sufficient regularity to attract local audiences, or research their existing collections to exploit their richness and diversity.*
- ▶ *institutions need more research to support statements about their value to the communities they serve.*

The initial emphasis in the discussion addressed the difficulty in sustaining not-for-profit values in an increasingly for-profit world. Museums are a public “good”, they are not businesses. Describing this challenge becomes even more complex when trying to explain to funders and potential sponsors that carrying out the core functions of a museum (collections, research) is ever more costly yet such functions are quite removed from any ability to generate revenue. Increasing the number and range of public programs may generate more revenue, but this also creates new pressures rather than addressing existing ones.

The participants did not see a conflict, an either/or situation, between the front-of-house (or public) functions and the back-of-house (i.e. conservation, research). They emphasized rather a seamless continuum within their operations that requires constant balancing in order to sustain all parts.

Several people spoke to levels of funding, in particular the figure of 60% in the Discussion Guide. In one instance, the reality is only 40% but as 8% of this total is projects only, the final total is some 32%. Coupled with this is the experience of others, who state that they may have reached the maximum level of non-public funding in an already very competitive arena. More consultation and sharing of priorities between the provincial and municipal levels of government could be very useful.

Museums are now attracting over 58 million visitors annually, which is concrete evidence of their contribution and many successes however many felt that museums have not yet reached their full potential in public positioning. Better statements and more attention are needed to demonstrate how museums are connected to their communities. As one participant stated: museums are 19th century institutions – we must rethink and use these ambiguities!

There is also agreement on the importance of tangible measurements of performance based on agreed upon criteria however there is also the recognition that such

measurement must be undertaken seriously and there is some concern that the skills needed might not yet be present within the institutions themselves.

This is linked to staff capacity in a broader framework as there are concerns about the loss of expertise in such areas as planning and financial control as younger professionals leave for other fields and the work force ages. Connected to this, especially for smaller institutions, are the changes in volunteers. Traditional volunteers may be declining but a different type is now becoming involved, often younger, and who sees the opportunities museums can provide in areas such as ESL.

An under-lying question that ran through these conversations and was brought forward during the visit of Minister Frulla was: do we need more museums? Given the challenges faced by existing institutions, is it beneficial to add even more, with expectations of federal support. There is already a level of stress in the system – there are not enough resources for the existing institutions yet more keep being added. Is there a need for rationalization, perhaps even limitations? The Minister, in replying that additional museums such as the National Portrait Gallery and the Canadian Museum for Human Rights have been a priority, returned the query to the participants, and asked them to consider the advisability of focus and restraint, and provide comments to the Department.

3.0 Policy Priorities: Discussion of Proposed Theme, Priorities and Objectives

From the Discussion Guide, *the Department is proposing that:*

- ▶ *the overall theme for the new policy be revitalizing Canada's museums so that they can better serve the changing Canadian society.*

The Department has identified three broad priorities and accompanying objectives:

- ▶ **participation:** *increasing and diversifying active engagement in Canada's museums by visitors, volunteers, members and other participants;*
- ▶ **preservation:** *stabilizing and renewing significant collections;*
- ▶ **sustainability:** *strengthening the capacity of institutions to mobilize support from a variety of stakeholders and renewing the infrastructure necessary to support museum missions.*

The broad outcomes that are being proposed for the policy at this stage are:

- ▶ *Canada's museums will be dynamic venues that are relevant to, and attract, our diverse population;*
- ▶ *They will be actively supported by an increased number of stakeholders;*
- ▶ *They will be positioned to ensure the protection of the physical and intellectual legacy represented by their collections.*

The discussion began with an exploration of some of the terms used. “Revitalization” presented some challenges; some felt that ‘energize’ might better capture the desired action. Where do we place intellectual revitalization – and in particular, where is the creation of knowledge found? Should this not in fact be the fourth pillar? There was some agreement that ‘creation of knowledge’ is encompassed in ‘preservation’ however for most, the latter term is about stabilization, understanding and renewing – not creation.

There is a need to recognize the importance of research, and to emphasize that research findings do not simply sit on a shelf but bring collections alive.

What is the meaning of ‘significant collections’? Who determines significance? While there is the model of the Movable Cultural Property Program, others argued strongly in favour of ‘significant’ as determined by the local institution. It needs to be a bottom-up definition that demonstrates the significance of the collection to the institution itself.

One participant favoured introducing the process with the definition of ‘museum’ – and suggested that the one found at the beginning of the Discussion Guide is appropriate:

Museums play an important role in Canadian society as the keepers of our heritage – of our artifacts, our history and our collective memories – and as places where we celebrate and explore thousands of years of human creativity and ingenuity.²

The term ‘the changing Canadian society’ was also challenged as being limiting, and could in fact be seen to exclude much of the traditional or existing audience. What about youth, for example?

Several participants noted the absence of any reference to ‘international’ and spoke to the considerable benefits of including this potential, from two perspectives. Museums are sites of interchange – both global and local. Museums are excellent tools to project Canada abroad, in particular our integrated approach. On the other hand, sometimes the partnerships could benefit from being more local/regional, for example with the cultural centres up the BC coast, as opposed to with three provinces, as is currently the case. Department staff expressed openness to ideas on ‘international’ while cautioning that at the same time, priorities would need to be identified.

The need for the sustainability of and further advancement in museology as an objective was also proposed.

With evaluation in mind, the need to keep the definition of ‘stakeholders’ quite broad was stressed. Participants would also like to see more reference to the importance of partnerships, both between museums and with others. This was one of the examples that was given as to how the new policy must be accessible to all museums, small, medium and large.

One of the most effective ways to stimulate the public’s active involvement in museums is to ensure that people translate this involvement into ‘ownership’. Moving from a visitor to an ‘owner’ is a significant challenge, as can be seen in the results on International Museums Day in Montreal. With over 125,000 persons participating, it has been possible to track demographic changes in the attendance over several years. It is clear that people want to connect to the collections, however this level of new interest

² *ibid*; page 6

only seems to happen when admission is ‘free’. Connecting to new communities is increasingly essential. There were also suggestions for a survey of why people don’t come to museums – not on an institutional basis but as an across-the-country assessment and analysis.

Several persons understood the term ‘visitor’ to mean not of the community, however all stress that attracting residents is far more important than visitor/tourists, especially in areas where this traffic is very light. One person’s best measure of success was to chart whether residents bring their guests to the museum!

On a practical level, the three priorities were considered to be at different levels – two are institutional and the third functional.

4.0 Policy and Program Principles

The background for this section is outlined in the Discussion Guide as follows:

A number of principles have been articulated that could underlie a new museum policy:

- 1. As public institutions, museums are in service to their communities and must remain relevant to their communities;*
- 2. All museums, large and small, represent important cultural, social and economic assets for their communities. The differing needs and capacities of institutions should be acknowledged in policy and program development;*
- 3. Individual institutions and the sector as a whole should strive continually for excellence;*
- 4. Museum success depends on the ongoing relationship between “behind-the-scenes” and “front-of-the-house” activities and is grounded in ongoing research;*
- 5. The Government of Canada has a fiduciary responsibility for the national collections it holds in trust for all Canadians. It also chooses to provide targeted support to other institutions to achieve specific policy objectives;*
- 6. Programs should be structured to enable museums and the Department to demonstrate and measure results that are meaningful in the context of the objectives of the museum policy.*

Further, the Auditor General recommended that the Department develop a framework for heritage policy that would define federal roles and responsibilities in relation to other stakeholders.

The framework proposed by the Department in response to the Auditor General’s recommendations divides federal roles into three categories:

- ▶ As the Government of Canada, it is legally responsible for national collections and international conventions and agreements;*
- ▶ As nation-builder, it intervenes to bridge and connect different regions (e.g., traveling exhibitions; the Virtual Museum of Canada) and recognizes nationally-significant heritage in a pan-Canadian context (e.g., the designation of National Historic Sites and certification of cultural property under the Movable Cultural Property Program);*

- ▶ *As a capacity-builder, it chooses to encourage sector transformations to respond to changing circumstances and support the continual pursuit of excellence (e.g., through the Canadian Conservation Institute and the Canadian Arts and Heritage Sustainability Program). This responsibility is shared with other stakeholders.*

Program Approaches

A more flexible approach would better serve both the community and the government.

- ▶ *define program results at an appropriately high level;*
- ▶ *recognize that achieving transformative results requires a variety of complementary activities;*
- ▶ *recognize that transformation may be a lengthy process; and*
- ▶ *be amenable to the measurement of meaningful results.*

The discussions on these topics focused both on questions of principle as well as practical suggestions for improvement and clarity, perhaps even including a Glossary of Terms.

The issue of relevance to a community in the first principle was reviewed in some depth, particularly as in some cases it might encompass the use of existing collections that may not, at first glance, appear to be relevant to a changing community. Emphasis was placed on the need to use these same collections to develop programs, as opposed to only for permanent exhibitions presented for an extended period of time, as there are more stories (with increased relevance) than a single exhibition can illustrate. The importance of research in this connection was stressed several times.

In looking at the value a community places on its museum, many agreed that most museums are local. If the museum is not valued by its community, it won't survive. For example, in 2004 when the City of Ottawa wanted to cut all museum funding, the community expressed its belief in the value of these institutions and the cuts did not happen. Museums must not lose sight of the importance of the community showing and expressing that it understands the value of the museum to the community as a whole.

There are some substantive differences for certain sectors that need to be recognized. For example, methods of research may vary widely for aboriginal communities. Not all members of the museum community have collections, or in some cases, these may be of intangible heritage.

Despite the recognition of the impact of technology, there is little reference to its potential and to any possible complications. Allowances need to be made to ensure that it is integrated into various options available.

In reviewing the statements of principle, it was observed that several tend to be about what 'should' be, rather than what is, and it is hoped that this can be changed.

Relating to specific statements of principle:

- ▶ in the first statement, it was stressed that communities must be ‘respective’ communities, which in some cases might even be global.
- ▶ for the second principle, it was felt that not only should the differing needs and capacities of institutions be acknowledged, but also be addressed. The sentence should be amended to read *represent important cultural, intellectual, educational, scientific, social and economic assets for their communities*. It was also felt that there may be inadequate scope for First Nations heritage in the second statement.
- ▶ there were queries relating to the definition of excellence in point 3, and a note that there are already some provincial standards for excellence. It was also suggested that ethical standards be incorporated in this point.

A possible rewording is: Individual institutions and the sector as a whole strive continually for excellence and innovation

- ▶ for the fourth principle, it is essential to stress the concept of the integration and continuum between front- and back-of-house functions, indeed between all functions of a museum. The sentence also needs to incorporate the importance of ‘innovation’ – is grounded in on-going research and innovation.

A suggested rewording is: Museums’ success is founded in their capacity to fully carry out all museological functions, to ensure the continuum and quality of the relationship between front- and back-of-house activities, and to continue their commitment to innovation.

- ▶ the fifth principle brought forward a number of questions as to the meaning of ‘national collections’. Several people stressed that collections of national significance are not all in national museums, and that these same collections need support. The legislation establishing the national museums is specific as to how the attribution must be stated, but a rewording to ‘collections held by national institutions or federally-held collections’ might clarify the point.

On this same point, there is also interest in seeing an integration of the roles of national museums with other museums, and a hope that such principles will be articulated in the policy.

A final point on these issues was a wish for a strategic approach to Canada-wide collections development.

In the general discussion summing up the topic, the importance of making sure that there is a clear understanding of the rationale for the policy development could be followed up by staff. Some participants noted that the Museums Act could provide useful language. Some also looked for a statement of the philosophy of federal government in its funding for museums.

A suggestion that an advisory committee be created to assist in setting objectives and measuring results was tabled.

Supplementary Comments

Following several of the discussions, various proposals were brought forward for further consideration, at a later date. Several participants spoke to the need to have a vision statement for the policy, and initial thoughts were contributed. They include:

A. Canadians and visitors will take pride in learning about the human and natural history of this country through collections and programs that reflect community and civic pride and provide physical and intellectual evidence of our history preserved for current and future generations.

B. Vision

To better serve Canadians and the changing Canadian society by providing them with a multiplicity of ways to discover and to learn about their heritage, and to enrich their sense of identity.

Principle

The Government of Canada has a responsibility to make cultural expression accessible as an enriching element OR as an essential aspect of the quality of life of Canadians.

5.0 Expanding the Policy Priorities

The second day of the Round Table discussions focused on working in five small groups to address in more depth the three policy priorities that had been established, first in the Discussion Guide and then through the previous day's work. The following is a summary of the discussions in all five groups however interested readers are encouraged to review the Flip Chart Notes from the sessions found in the Appendix for a fuller understanding.

5.1 Participation

5.1.1 What are the issues facing museums in increasing participation rates and demonstrating relevance

The suggestions addressed first and foremost the need for comprehensive, core information on community, audience and visitors (residents and tourists). However, such data must lead to acquiring a better understanding of audience, and of particular needs/interests. Visitation is not the same as engagement/participation, which is more desirable.

Perhaps even more important is the need to proactively stress the value and relevance of museums within their communities. Museums do not need to reflect every culture within their community but rather be welcoming and informative for everyone. Nonetheless, the 'face' of the museum – Board, staff and volunteers needs to reflect the community. Quality of programming through innovation needs to be a guiding principle, but with the caution that 'chasing money may lead to mandate creep and lack of focus'.

Museums are seen as places of trust and this must be both respected and expanded on. The concept of a museum as a centre for dialogue, in particular as contemporary issues are not necessarily collections-based, could be explored more completely. Community development is not an area that many museums have expertise in – they tend to be more inward looking. More information on visitors in general – their intent to visit etc. – as well as the need to expand partnerships are important and immediate challenges.

5.1.2. What kinds of activities should be supported under a participation agenda

Some of the suggestion included market research on constituencies (network, common interests, geographic); development → delivery → evaluation of projects/programs; multi-year programs that demonstrate relevance and increased participation, development of new innovative approaches and/or programs; incentives for joint projects and partnerships (where appropriate).

Internships designed to build capacity in specialized areas, for example First Nations object research, were seen as important. Funding could also be available for regional/provincial associations to develop packages such as: How to Market, How to Partner, which could then be made available regionally.

5.1.3. What resources or tools would be useful to support increased professional excellence in this area?

Among the suggestions that came forward were: a virtual resource centre to share market research; a network to share information, best practices; study tours (including staff at various levels); information on the link between cultural heritage and economic growth/innovation/health of the community and of individual; Canadian Heritage could assist in the sharing of best practices by making final reports of projects funded available and actively promoted and disseminated through the associations; flying squad(s) to work with museums to develop skills in outreach activities and promoting two way participation; Museum Chairs for curators to create a network of shared resources; a community relevance checklist and assessment tools; and information on new volunteer experiences and new types of volunteerism that are both meaningful and flexible.

5.1.4. What results should we be seeking and how should they be measured

Some key goals are more active engagement by all, good governance and a feeling of ownership of the museum from both existing and new communities.

The main themes in the results/measurement area included : level of awareness of both programs and of the institution; community support (financial, moral and in-kind); an increase in the number of partnerships and in outreach, thereby developing a larger audience; and the quality of the ‘museum experience’.

Information on how Canadians value their museums is needed, perhaps gathered through a nation-wide survey. The same type of measurement is needed for diversity/audience; it needs to be a combined or collective measure, as opposed to at the individual institutional level.

Indications that public programs are frequented by a public more reflective of the actual community in all its variations are also desirable.

5.2 Preservation

The term ‘preservation’ was itself much debated in several of the groups. One stated that it is best understood as ‘a stitch in time’ while others termed preservation too narrow and much preferred ‘ensuring our legacy’. Another group provided a complete definition of what preservation encompasses : stabilization and conservation of artifact/specimen; collections management (data); physical management of the museum environment; research/understanding/interpretation of collections and ensuring that they are displayed and traveled appropriately.

5.2.1. *What are the key preservation issues that museums are facing?*

The lists developed by all the groups had many similarities: lack of funds, lack of staff – knowledge and time; inadequate buildings and infrastructure; national/global record-keeping system and information sharing on collections for zoos; ability to access new techniques – DNA, digital; the increase in the size of collections – coping with their management/space/duplication/gaps; diversity of specific expertise to manage/preserve collections; agreed-upon acceptable standards for infrastructure/treatment; practical risk assessment and management tools; and in some situations, policies are needed.

5.2.2. *Is there an alternative to “outstanding significance and national importance” as a possible criterion to define the Government’s sphere of action in any potential direct investment in preservation?*

One group proposed having “communities of interest” define artifacts/collections that are of national significance (peer-based, perhaps a Commission, using the model of the Alliance of Natural History Museums). Other alternatives would measure determining community relevance, or organizational/mandate relevance. There was considerable debate on what a ‘national collection’ is – by intent as well as legal definition. It was strongly felt by some that not all collections of national importance are found in national museums.

5.2.3. *What activities should be eligible for funding in a preservation program? What is the rationale for including these activities?*

If the title of the program were changed to Collections, it must also incorporate physical and intellectual research, perhaps even a centre for research. Another consideration was to first rationalize on a macro level present needs with those of new museums.

The groups developed a collective and quite comprehensive list: risk assessment and risk management; grading of collections; renewing/building environmental systems and storage spaces; natural disasters; conservation treatment/stabilization; assessment of the health of collections; facility upgrades and assessments; ensuring that buildings meet standards appropriate for all aspects of preservation; data/network information management training and software; collections based intellectual research; issues or materials treatment research; networks for sharing information/accessing and sharing expertise; research to identify material of national significance and then protect/preserve it; and documentation of cultural landscapes, trails, maps.

5.2.4. *How should the ongoing development of skills and professional practices in the area of preservation and conservation be supported?*

The suggestions covered a broad range from training, mentorships, interns, and sharing expertise from larger institutions with smaller ones (2 way) to using the provincial museums associations as a clearing house for expertise (linking Parks, universities,

provincial museums, private sector, museum community) and in person and on-line mentoring.

5.2.4.1 Would internships offered by larger institutions be effective?

There was agreement that such internships would be effective but caution was suggested so that these would not be a hindrance to the host museum. Spending part of the internship in small institutions was also suggested, as in the Getty program model. Some preferred a shorter term of 1 – 2 months, rather than a full year.

5.2.4.2 For smaller museums, should greater emphasis be placed on group projects led by associations or other similar organizations (e.g., collections documentation projects for multiple institutions)?

The response was a positive one, but with an emphasis on agreed standards, excellence and tool kits as opposed to “doing it”.

5.2.4.3 The bursary program offered by the Department through the Canadian Museums Association is currently under-utilized. How could it be improved to be more useful?

The program needs more publicity and more flexibility. Other suggestions included increase the size of the grants, improving the structure, widening the criteria for those who are eligible, and focusing principally on mid-career.

5.2.4.4 What other kinds of support for professional development are needed?

First we must know what the needs are, as there will be different needs for different museums - for example, the impact of changing technology. Partnerships with other organizations and more structured professional development activities by national organizations would also be effective. The knowledge base on which training is based needs to be further strengthened through research. Study tours and a flying squad for heritage were also mentioned. The provincial museums associations stated that they would be interested in delivery of CCI content (under license), on-site consultations and assessments, and funding to hire local conservators to train smaller museums.

5.2.5 Given that preservation is a never-ending task, how will we know if we are succeeding? How should we measure results?

The majority of suggestions were practical and sequential: to quantify the magnitude of risk (via grading and a national strategic review) and the value of the collections, make decisions based on best use of funds, improve the level of care, use increased public access as an indicator.

Even more practically, if accessioning/de-accessioning policies are created and used; conservation priorities are articulated in organizational plans; storage areas have been improved; only approved conservation materials and practices are used; the provincial museum associations and museum CEOs report on conservation achievements as a governance practice and an accountability measure; institutional outcomes are evaluated; and there is regional delivery of professional development in conservation, i.e. numbers, areas, institutions, frequency.

5.3 Sustainability

5.3.1. *What are the key threats and barriers to sustainability faced by museums?*

Sustainability requires a multi-faceted approach – finances are but one component. The major threats and/or barriers identified began with inadequate management and governance. Participants spoke to a lack of Board leadership and direction-setting, in part due to an absence of core competencies and effective governance structures. At the management level, there is a need to update skills and to improve financial management expertise; there also appears to be a resistance to cultural managers within the sector.

Aging infrastructure is another issue as is competition for funding across sectors, and within the sector. In many ways, museums are too insular and need to learn from, and partner, with others.

One group identified a conflict between the principles for this topic (infrastructure, communities) and the questions that tended to be all about finances. Another queried whether the lack of marketing re the relevance and importance of museums to communities and to Canadians was a factor in the stagnation of visitor numbers. We need to celebrate our successes, and change from passive to active in our approaches! Several positive suggestions came forward such as a national marketing campaign for museums – Participation for museums.

On a practical level, the inequity of access for heritage to support services and programs (such as the Canada Council’s Flying Squad) was cited several times. It also needs to be recognized that endowments are not the ‘magic bullet’, in particular for smaller endowments where the interest will not be adequate. Could these be pooled to maximize interest?

Some practical statistics were also offered by a participant³:

- ▶ In Canada, the percentage of total donations directed to the following sectors:

Religious organizations	50%
Health care	8%
Education	19%

³ Source: Imagine Foundation

Social services	21%
Other (including heritage)	2%

▶ These donations come from:

Individuals	70%
Corporations	18%
Foundations	12%

5.3.2. *What additional roles could the federal government play in promoting sustainability without taking on responsibility for ongoing operating costs?*

The majority of suggestions involved either working with and through other government departments to increase access for and awareness of museums, or extending support to a longer term.

Examples include producing a program/resource guide to promote programs/resources that already exist; promote and represent the museum community to other federal departments in order to access additional programs/funds; provide incentives for communities/committees of interest to work together to address common issues; and assist the CMA in developing a mentorship program.

The tangible benefits of endowing research/curatorial chairs was cited by several participants, as well as support for Centres of Excellence.

Multi-year support for special initiatives and/or for planning and research was a suggestion from all groups. In addition, the provincial museum associations were interested in funding for the creation of professional development kits (with a focus on financial/business planning) to assist institutions.

5.3.3 *Would endowment incentives help to stimulate additional donations?*

All groups agreed that the incentives would help to stimulate additional donations, particularly if they were matching. They may also leverage additional provincial support. Specific projects, such as the creation of research chairs, that can be funded is useful in selling such ideas.

Museums have retained their position as keepers of knowledge and authority and this position needs to be captured and used to build support. The leadership in the community must come from the museums directors.

5.3.4 *Are there changes the Department should make to Cultural Spaces or the capacity-building program (CAHSP) to make them more effective?*

A series of comments and practical suggestions came forward: the forms are too complicated for some institutions; faster turn-around time from application to decision;

clarification of priorities; new guidelines; fund implementation as well as studies; inadequate funds; reverse the “new” takes precedence over “existing” (“upgrading”) approach; include “energy efficiency” programs.

5.3.5 *How should we measure sustainability?*

The participants looked for evidence that there is/are:

- ▶ long term plans in place (3-5, 5-10 years)
- ▶ diversified and predictable funding sources
- ▶ effective governance practices (reporting, transparency, accountability)
- ▶ strategic partnerships
- ▶ more than meeting the bottom line
- ▶ succession plans in place
- ▶ ability to embrace and manage risk
- ▶ retain/replace staff, volunteers and/or professional expertise
- ▶ community support (memberships, sponsors, volunteers, interaction)
- ▶ embrace leadership role
- ▶ acquisition of core competencies (all aspects of museum operation)
- ▶ innovation: creative problem-solving

Others included:

- ▶ a comparison of the percentage of expenditures on overhead versus creative/innovative/relevant programs/growth/knowledge
- ▶ there is the required continuity through needs assessment; development of plans; and implementation

The concept of a Statistics Canada Sustainability Index was also brought forward, including:

- ▶ no deficit - budget has kept pace with inflation
- ▶ state of infrastructure
- ▶ ratio of endowment/earned revenue/public funds
- ▶ contributions to research/programs
- ▶ demographics
- ▶ diversity
- ▶ mandate delivery
- ▶ collections risk – standards
- ▶ attendance
- ▶ visitor satisfaction survey
- ▶ public awareness

At the close of the group reports, two additional topics came forward. The first was whether there was any consideration for accreditation of institutions, either via government regulation or self-administered.

Accreditation of some aspects of museum activities is already carried out under existing federal programs. The Indemnification program has standards that must be met, due to risks assumed by the government, and the designation of institutions under the Movable Cultural Property program constitutes a form of accreditation.

A separate query addressing multi-media in museums and the complex situation this may create. The 'threat' comes from the problem of sustainability for operating costs. It is generally quite possible to obtain support for the purchase of the equipment but there is little or no support for its on-going operating. This leads to museums having to make choices between traditional approaches to interpretation and innovative uses for multi-media due to high on-going costs that cannot be supported.

6.0 Closing Remarks and Summary

Lyn Elliot Sherwood, Executive Director, Heritage began her closing remarks by thanking all present for the rich and constructive discussions. She stressed the importance of Minister Frulla's visit, which reaffirmed her engagement, and recognized the challenge that the Department must now deliver a proposal that the Minister can take forward. Ms Sherwood also paid tribute to staff members Susan Murdock, Kim Gauvin and Richard Gauthier for their contribution to the success of the Round Table.

A positive tension in the museum community was noted throughout the discussions. The community itself has met many challenges and adapted to a changing environment, and deserves to be congratulated for this. However in the course of developing policy, it is equally important to identify present problems that such a policy is designed to solve. Limits must be acknowledged and barriers to further success identified.

Ms Sherwood remarked that the discussions had revealed an inherent paradox in messages emerging from the community. On one hand, participants stressed that museums are effectively fulfilling their roles within society. On the other hand, the discussions demonstrated that museums are, in fact, experiencing an increasing number of challenges that threaten their continued success. Resolving this tension might assist the sector in better communicating its needs to decision-makers.

A second paradox was also noted by Ms Sherwood. On one hand, some participants argued for the need to rationalize collections, in effect to look at museums through the lens of a collective preservation effort across the country. On the other hand, participants also stressed the importance of museums within communities and the role that collections play as a springboard for communicating local history. In that context, duplication of collections may not be an issue.

Museums are and must be rooted in their communities, many of which are themselves in evolution. Each institution defines its role in relation to its community, and in those communities where tourism may be a significant factor, museums do recognize that tourists' interests may be different from those of residents. In response to the discussion about the increase in the number of museums, Ms Sherwood invited participants to reflect on why there is a perception that existing institutions cannot meet new needs within communities and why museums are not active participants in community decision-making about new museums.

She noted the emphasis that participants had placed on the role that museums can play internationally and the importance of research in all aspects of museum activities. She applauded the observation that museums must become more effective in communicating their value, both through various tools and through action.

The discussions clarified and emphasized the continuum, as opposed to the competition, between the public face of the museum and the research and support activities that are often unseen but so essential. Coupling the importance of the continuum with the

recognition that museums are continually working within a set of not-for-profit values in a world that has an expanding for-profit mentality is an on-going challenge.

Ms. Sherwood noted that the phrase 'Ensuring the legacy' could be a more comprehensive – and hence more accurate – way of describing the objectives of a preservation agenda. One discussion table had used the phrase “a stitch in time” to emphasize the importance of preventive conservation measures. Ms Sherwood noted that a cost-benefit analysis of preventive conservation could assist institutions to make appropriate investment decisions and invited participants to provide examples of existing analyses of this nature. She was fully in agreement with the statement that sustainability is about far more than dollars and buildings, and was particularly interested in the concept of the Sustainability Index. She noted the need to consider both the sustainability of the sector and the sustainability of individual institutions.

In the area of continuing skills development, innovation is key. The challenge of the transfer of knowledge within each institution, as well as within the sector, between big and small and all disciplines, is important and will further reinforce the network.

The strong message about the importance of flexibility was heard. One of the most important components of any new policy will be to establish the objectives at the right level. Outcomes must be clear – what they are and how can they be measured. If measuring is part of the cost of a project, then it will be recognized. The measurement of value, while difficult, will be very important. We also need to determine where and how qualitative measures fit in. Will it be possible to arrive at a common approach to the assessment of risk to collections?

Attention will be paid to developing self-assessment tools which could contribute to capacity-building and a culture of continual striving for excellence. Participants clearly identified the need for coherence within the federal government, and the Department is also working more collaboratively with colleagues in the provinces and territories.

Ms Sherwood stressed that there will be further discussions over the summer that may include additional contacts. She stressed that this policy will form part of a larger agenda, and in closing the session, thanked everyone for their contribution and for the intellectual rigour of the discussions.

APPENDICES

**VERS UNE NOUVELLE POLITIQUE MUSÉALE / TOWARDS A NEW MUSEUM
POLICY**

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28 et 29 juin 2005 / June 28 and 29, 2005**

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**ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION ON
NEW DIRECTIONS FOR CANADIAN MUSEUM POLICY**

**TUESDAY, JUNE 28 &
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 29, 2005**

**CROWNE PLAZA OTTAWA HOTEL – PINNACLE ROOM
101 Lyon Street, Ottawa**

Please note: The HONOURABLE LIZA FRULLA, MINISTER OF CANADIAN HERITAGE & MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR STATUS OF WOMEN has indicated her strong interest in speaking during the Roundtable, however her schedule makes it difficult to be precise about the exact timing of her arrival. We will receive some advance notice and will suspend the session to welcome the Minister at a time most convenient for her.

TUESDAY, JUNE 28, 2005

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 8:30 - 9:00 | CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST |
| 9:00 - 9:30 | OPENING COMMENTS AND INTRODUCTION
Context and Focus for the Round Table
Eileen Sarkar, Assistant Deputy Minister, Citizenship and Heritage
Lyn Elliot Sherwood, Executive Director, Heritage |
| 9:30 – 10:30 | Discussion: Critical Issues Facing Canadian Museums, Today and for the Future |
| 10:30-10:45 | BREAK |
| 10:45-11:15 | Further discussion of the Critical Issues |
| 11:15-12:15 | Discussion: Policy Priorities - Discussion of proposed Theme, Priorities and Objectives |
| 12:15-1:30 | LUNCH |
| 1:30 – 2:30 | Further discussion on Policy Priorities – Theme, Priorities and Objectives |
| 2:30 – 2:45 | BREAK |
| 2:45 – 4:00 | Discussion: Policy and Program Principles |
| 4:00 – 4:15 | Summary of the day’s work and outline for next day’s sessions |

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 29, 2005

8:30 - 9:00	CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST
9:00 - 10:00	Discussion: Participation - Issues, Approaches and Outcomes
10:00 – 10:30	Reports on group discussions on Participation
10:30 - 10:45	BREAK
10:45 – 11:45	Discussion: Preservation - Issues, Approaches and Outcomes
11: 45 - 12:15	Reports on group discussions on Preservation
12:15- 1:15	WORKING LUNCH IN SMALL GROUPS
1:15- 2:15	Discussion: Sustainability - Issues, Approaches and Outcomes
2:15 – 2:45	Reports on group discussions on Sustainability
2:45 – 3:00	BREAK
3:00 – 4:00	Closing Remarks and Wrap-Up of the Roundtable

TOWARDS A NEW MUSEUM POLICY

ROUNDTABLE: JUNE 28 AND 29, 2005
OTTAWA

FLIP CHART NOTES

ONE WORD TO DESCRIBE THE MUSEUM COMMUNITY IN 20 YEARS

valued
inclusive
adaptable
authentic
Canadian
culturally relevant
welcoming
sustainable
focused
integral
sunshine
cooperative
authentic
participation
rigorous
knowledge society
confident
wonderment
discovery/social cohesion
accessible
dynamic
intercultural
credible
connected
educational entertainment
empowered
engaging
leading edge
transformed
vibrant relevancy
agora
centre for dialogue

CRITICAL ISSUES

- 1. Do you agree that these are the most important issues?*
- 2. Are there additional issues that have not been identified?*
- 3. How have these issues affected your organization?*

- ▶ different emphasis. Awareness of effort being made (collections). Balance between the two elements – not secondary. Feels isolated in effort to resolve – no one takes ownership of the institution – big need operating funding – says generally 60% from government – but actual is only 40%, of which 8% is project, therefore only 32% is operating.
- ▶ risk is for how long - keep balancing act. 30% assured funds
- ▶ should be direct consultation – who is providing support. Municipal/provincial = acknowledge municipal level by others
- ▶ agree on base level required
- ▶ endorsed – need voice of non-government (Glenbow is 25% government). Can not-for-profit values continue in a profit world. Creation of cash creates tensions
- ▶ museums may not be good at public positioning
- ▶ measuring our performance – labour intensive, essential in social
- ▶ attempting to find balance – but very much focused on tourism - front-of-house – move to catch up must be made
- ▶ an issue or a principle
 - ▶ ↙ ↘
role of government
 - ▶ current parameters – the state decides to intervene. A responsibility - changing the perspective
- ▶ emphasize how popular museums are – 58 million visitors. May have failed but motivate them, inform politicians
- ▶ museum attendance = giving = art (but these are liabilities)
- ▶ better efforts on philanthropy
- ▶ evaluate financial assessment – project support. Support public activities – not core. Government retains key functions. Report public programs/research
- ▶ challenge of innovation. Capacity issues for museums to explore new ways – room for innovation – public expectations
- ▶ necessary to have partnerships among museums – must explore further
- ▶ front-of-house/back-of-house – a continuum (otherwise perpetuate that front-of-house is all there is)
- ▶ UK study on salaries – low. Profession undervalues
- ▶ in traditional museums, back-of-house is a burden – but competing with others (children museum as a play land)
- ▶ don't compartmentalize too much . Linking donations →research →exhibition →more donation
- ▶ broaden scope → new Canadian

- ▶ operating funding pressures – have had a strong impact - front-of-house serves fund raising and development
- ▶ need broader statement of the complexity - get message out to the public – show how you can be connected
- ▶ run a public good – not a business, with performance measures, how to indicate these for a public good?
- ▶ staff recruitment difficult – universities broadening training
- ▶ not an either/or. Too much money on front-of-house – take it to behind the scenes. Not a competition
- ▶ split in how it is perceived. Museums are paradoxical – how to balance conservation with use –transpose functions
- ▶ 19th century institutions – must rethink and use the ambiguities – not a contradiction
- ▶ problem is staff capacity (comes long before succession)
- ▶ need butter for the whole slice – if not, make choices
- ▶ budget pressures – hard to explain to potential funders. Costs increase if we are simply doing our jobs – these are removed at great distance from the ability to generate revenue. Very labour – intensive, low margin returns – requires other skills
- ▶ increase public programs + more revenues but doesn't address pressures
- ▶ ability to raise money and contain forces that are creating pressures
- ▶ on the job learning was central but doesn't work as well now with reduced staff
- ▶ in museums, the product produces revenue, but in the private sector, money produces product
- ▶ don't separate museums from what is happening in the rest of the community
- ▶ donors maxed out – focus now on health and education – need to “rebadge” museums to catch the whole community
- ▶ volunteers isolated
- ▶ lose years of experience – but now there is an absence of expertise in planning and budgeting. All aging no young ones left. Market to young potential employees.
- ▶ Do we need more museums – rationalization, limitations – never can be enough money (Minister Frulla Have added some new museums - CM, PG, CHR – other demands. ?Should we focus, restrain?)
- ▶ not seeing a decline in volunteers – different type – students for ELS – youth. Traditional volunteer may be declining

POLICY PRIORITIES

Do you agree with the proposed overall theme?

1.1 Is it forward-looking and results-oriented?

1.2 Does it communicate any unintended messages?

1.3 Is it likely to generate support from decision-makers?

2. Do you agree with the three broad priorities?

2.1 Are there other priorities that should be included?

3. Are these the right objectives and desired outcomes?

- ▶ Revitalize – existing stock , conflict with creating the new
- ▶ government funds “new hip thing”
- ▶ stress in system – not enough for existing but keep adding more
- ▶ centralization → funds to larger → trickle-down
- ▶ small, medium, large are all relevant
- ▶ terminology – significant collections, sustainability
- ▶ revitalisation
- ▶ Secure acquired knowledge (in danger). Protect the short and medium term → development of museums
- ▶ revitalisation okay but the rest is too narrow – society and changing society (do both)
- ▶ intellectual revitalization – in different cultures – also different genres of exhibition.
- ▶ Dialogues with curators → bring universities and others into the dialogue
- ▶ where are partnerships – developing them essential
- ▶ clear, articulated
- ▶ society and its changing society
- ▶ up-front discussion of purpose of museums. Reaffirm the importance of museums in Canadian society
- ▶ want more on the successes in the struggle – wants more than a document that will just ask for money
- ▶ wants broader struggle/celebration/ successes
- ▶ no international? Diverse, potential cultural bridges. [open to ideas (international) but needs priorities]
- ▶ revitalization – already exists. Energize. Policy needs to reflect various regions of the country
- ▶ definition of museums – see page 1 of Discussion Guide
- ▶ communication with broader society – need to understand about how to talk about successes with people
- ▶ is creation of knowledge (under preservation?)
- ▶ Preservation is stabilization, understanding and renewing
- ▶ Research – address on Wednesday
- ▶ creation of new knowledge

- ▶ Is research the 4th pillar? – not just sitting on the shelf – bringing alive
- ▶ infrastructure – inclusive – a system
- ▶ Renew – consolidate, improve
- ▶ ‘significant’ as determined by the local institution. Bottom-up definition. Relevant (to the institution)
- ▶ Sustain and advance museological practice
- ▶ [three topics] are at different levels – 2 are institutional, 1 is functional
- ▶ RESULTS
- ▶ Maintain or improve their capacity – it seems that everything is stalled.
- ▶ More tools
- ▶ More measurement
- ▶ Stakeholders as broad as possible
- ▶ Measure diverse, but don’t measure this way
- ▶ Increase ties with the public – traditional public, youth
- ▶ limits to financial growth – assumed that we know what the appropriate % of government funding is?
- ▶ 25% of government funding is the stretch point (can’t get more from the private sector)
- ▶ also some communities don’t have head offices
- ▶ do not have the skills to do the fundraising etc. improve expertise
- ▶ Doubt that the growth of sponsorships can continue
- ▶ Attract new voices
- ▶ Do not work in silos
- ▶ Retention of public – new fee structure – clarification
- ▶ museums are not about Rodin maquettes
- ▶ libraries – why free admission
- ▶ staff competition with NWT government – higher salaries. Multi-year projects provide a continuum
- ▶ assumption that services should be “free” – government is already paying. Must educate the public in the value of museums – also Board members – staff cannot work for free
- ▶ seems to focus on “visitors” as not community members – focus on new perspectives in traditional audiences/conversation on audience share/traditional visitors include members
- ▶ Hard to work year after year – cannot continue to work on the same basis
- ▶ demographic changes. In Montreal Museums Day 125,000 people – noted demographic changes. People want to connect with the collections – are of interest – why only when “free”? Must connect with communities – explain role – part of social cohesion
- ▶ do non-visitor survey Why don’t they come? What attracts – is there a problem
- ▶ not just surveys – need real integrated partnerships

- ▶ Role of Canadian museums internationally – projecting Canada abroad – integration institution on the international stage – integrate with cultural centres in BC
- ▶ MISSING - KNOWLEDGE CREATION – RESEARCH – Museums are trusted sources of information
- ▶ sites of interchange = global/local
- ▶ museums as a socially responsible exposing historical problems of injustice. Interact with the community we serve

POLICY AND PROGRAM PRINCIPLES

1. *Is there a case to be made for additional federal roles?*
2. *What would be the benefits of a possible “multidimensional project” approach as outlined above?*
3. *What would be the disadvantages?*
4. *Is the capacity for the type of planning and measurement required for this approach widespread in the community?*
- 4.1 *How could such a capacity be developed or reinforced?*

- ▶ Relevance – complex inter-relationships using collections → develop into programs (now only a permanent exhibition presented for an extended period of time). But there are more stories (and more relevant) to all levels. Use functions of research preservation for outreach
- ▶ zoos also need new markets, initiatives. In NS, provided live exhibits to museums. Involve children – bring showmanship – train staff
- ▶ remember integrating technology. CHIN has been very helpful – access to collections on-line
- ▶ strategic approach to Canada-wide collections development
- ▶ community value – most museums are local – if not valued by community, won’t survive. Libraries are still central in Ottawa. In 2004 Ottawa wanted to cut all museum funding but community expressed value and it didn’t happen. Must not lose sight of showing value, express it
- ▶ global issue. What is the philosophy of federal government funding to museums. Contradiction between how museums are supported across Canada. Federal funding is structured in contradiction with how museums are structured
- ▶ revolution in governance – due to corporate changes
- ▶ Research → local, aboriginal communities – not correct for all, difference is important.
- ▶ Should not forget those who do not hold collections – in Québec there are quite a few. Problematic
- ▶ need to know Gaps in communications, information) need to know.... What programs, opportunities, even what others are doing out there
- ▶ watch linkages and cost re measurement

- ▶ #4 integration / continuum
- ▶ #1 in the broadest sense – global. NEED A GLOSSARY = respective communities
- ▶ Principle statements – are what is/are rather than what should be. Add education and scientific intellectual to list
- ▶ #2 address short-comings
- ▶ Problem between the use of community in 1 and 2 – in one they are users, in the second, it is hosts
- ▶ Excellence – note that there are provincial standards for
- ▶ Add adherence to ethical standards
- ▶ #4 include all of those functions; add innovation, quality of the relationship
- ▶ depends on research, innovation, and continuum
- ▶ national collections dans les musées nationaux
- ▶ need for advisory capacity – setting objectives and measuring results
- ▶ looks for integration of roles of national museums with other museums. Need to articulate the principles
- ▶ is partnership/network another principle of working together
- ▶ #5 add in National Museums responsibilities and make a separate point for the second part
- ▶ why are we doing this – reference to the Museums Act For staff to follow up on
- ▶ collections of national significance not all in national museums – need support for these
- ▶ First Nations heritage under #2 – but terms is a problem
- ▶ What about collections held by national institutions or federally held collections

Some suggestions

Vision

Canadians and visitors will take pride in learning about the human and natural history of this country through collections and programs that reflect community and civic pride and provide physical and intellectual evidence of our history preserved for current and future generations.

Outcome

Value to the visitor should be measured. What was the value of the exhibit?
What was the value of the program to us as museum operators? Will the funds justify the ramping up of capacity to provide the “correct” outcome measures.

- ▶ #1 – for the whole population. Measurement – individual institution as well as broader
- ▶ Collections – intangible, oral history
- ▶ clear results, more positive, dynamic, mesurant tres fort
- ▶ #1 enriching and attractive for Canadians and (cultural diversity)
- ▶ work with different scales of museums (as opposed to 3 provinces)
- ▶ do the 4th pillar tomorrow
- ▶ #2 concrete and increased support from a larger number....
- ▶ #3 to better carry out their mission and to maintain activities

Vision

To better serve Canadians and the changing Canadian society by providing them with a multiplicity of ways to discover and to learn about their heritage, and to enrich their sense of identity.

Principle

The Government of Canada has a responsibility to make cultural expression accessible as

an enriching element

or

an essential aspect of the quality of life of Canadians

Policy and Program Principles (pg. 14/16)

Individual institutions and the sector as a whole strive continually for excellence and innovation

The success of museums depends: on their ability to undertake all museological functions, on the quality of the ongoing relationship between “back-of-house” and “front-of-house” activities, and on the importance of innovation.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 29

SMALL GROUP WORK

PARTICIPATION

GROUP 1

1. *What are the issues facing museums in increasing participation rates and demonstrating relevance.*

- ▶ Understanding audience (research)
- ▶ Communicating relevance
- ▶ Access (open house)
- ▶ * quality of programming (innovation)
- ▶ Change (not the same old)
- ▶ Lack of focus – mandate and resources aligned to mandate
- ▶ Relevance – not just participation – but also increased understanding and knowledge
- ▶ *chasing money leads to mandate creep and lack of focus

2. *What kinds of activities should be supported under a participation agenda*

- ▶ Market research of constituencies (network, common interests, geographic)
- ▶ Development → delivery → evaluation
- ▶ Multi-year – more relevant, more participation
- ▶ Support to develop new innovative approach/program
- ▶ incentives for joint projects (where appropriate)

3. *What resources or tools would be useful to support increased professional excellence in this area?*

- ▶ virtual resource centre to share market research
- ▶ network to share information, best practices
- ▶ study tours (including staff at various levels)
- ▶ information on link between cultural heritage and economic growth/innovation/health of community/individual

4. *What results should we be seeking and how should they be measured*

- ▶ new vehicles for engaging constituents (media, partnerships)
- ▶ % not just numbers
- ▶ awareness (program, institution)
- ▶ community support (\$, moral, in-kind, web site)

PARTICIPATION

GROUP 2

1. ***What are the issues facing museums in increasing participation rates and demonstrating relevance***
 - ▶ define audiences: local and tourist
 - ▶ Define community
 - ▶ Partnerships: long term building of relationships
 - ▶ Concept of value more important than relevance
 - ▶ “participation rates” are not the only measure of value
 - ▶ Qualitative measures are more important than quantitative
 - ▶ You do not have to visit a museums to value it – i.e. Parliament National Collection
 - ▶ Museums do not have to reflect every culture in their community – they have to be welcoming of all people and informative
 - ▶ Each museum is a part of Canada and tells a piece of our collective story
2. ***What kinds of activities should be supported under a participation agenda***
 - ▶ Partnerships
 - ▶ Use of temporary space by partnership organizations
 - ▶ “back of house” to ensure knowledge and skills under activities to enhance participation
 - ▶ Build capacity – document collection
 - ▶ Fund phases of building capacity i.e. 4 years X funding for cataloguing = complete catalogue then move to next stages – programming/outreach
 - ▶ Internships – aboriginal internship training program
 - ▶ Government fund regional/provincial associations to develop packages: How to Market, How to Partner. These are made available regionally
3. ***What resources or tools would be useful to support increased professional excellence in this area***
 - ▶ Sharing best practices Canadian Heritage should make final reports of projects funded available and actively promote and disseminate (CMA/PMA)
 - ▶ Tiered application and funding process (less onerous for smaller amounts of money)
 - ▶ Whose standards are we measured by? Difference between scale and size but issues/tools are the same
 - ▶ surveys: what are results? How do we get consistency? How do we get resources for small/medium – regional packages, regional coordination
4. ***What results should we be seeking and how should they be measured***

- ▶ Canadians continue to value their museums
 - ▶ increase in volunteers = increase in value of volunteers
 - ▶ does the audience reflect the mandate? i.e. train museums attract trainiacs
 - ▶ ++ number of partnerships
 - ▶ ++ outreach = ++ audience
 - ▶ national measure of diversity/audience – combined or collective measure of audience – not just at an institutional level
 - ▶ measure how Canadians value their museum? Time for a large survey
-

PARTICIPATION

GROUP 3

1. ***What are the issues facing museums in increasing participation rates and demonstrating relevance.***
 - ▶ Reach beyond traditional audiences
 - ▶ museum should participate in and even provoke public debate
2. ***What kinds of activities should be supported under a participation agenda***
 - ▶ Dissemination of programming both within and without the walls of the institution
3. ***What resources or tools would be useful to support increased professional excellence in this area?***
 - ▶ Long term support for planning of programs – market research, testing, rayonnement/outreach, production
 - ▶ flying squad to work with us to develop skills in outreach activities and promoting two way participation
4. ***What results should we be seeking and how should they be measured***
 - ▶ museum will become site for citizen interaction
 - ▶ Production of a tangible tool for dissemination to others - Canadian studies, 12 step programs
 - ▶ public programs frequented by a public more reflective of the actual community in all its variations
 - ▶ reaffirm links with museum community by knowledge, success and failures
 - ▶ Number of social activities and diversity composition
 - ▶ Publications, consultations
 - ▶ # of surveys

- ▶ Improve ability of umbrellas to communicate and disseminate
-

PARTICIPATION

GROUP 4

1. ***What are the issues facing museums in increasing participation rates and demonstrating relevance.***
 - ▶ Audience is King/Queen. Measure intent to visit before “green light” an exhibition
 - ▶ diversity – population Asian in Calgary: Asian Board members, Asian Advisory Comm., exhibition this year – Asian
 - ▶ on-line presence
 - ▶ review Study that shows gradual increase in visitation due to corporate site look
 - ▶ relevance of ideas Centre for Dialogue
 - ▶ Contemporary issues – not necessarily collections-based
 - ▶ Museums as a place of trust
 - ▶ question of “counting” visitors
e.g. audience at lectures not stats
 - ▶ web hits
 - ▶ loans/visitors to traveling exhibits
 - ▶ Question: capturing “good”
 - ▶ measuring success – “public good” - non-paying
 - ▶ Research
 - ▶ Publications
 - ▶ Question of capacity
 - ▶ At capacity for children/school attendance
 - ▶ relevance (programming) vs. Expense
 - ▶ Risk analysis
 - ▶ Balance
 - ▶ Higher risk funded by sure bets
 - ▶ Visitor survey
 - ▶ Intent to visit survey
 - ▶ Focus testing in multiple communities
 - ▶ Staff and volunteers – diversity
 - ▶ “the face of the museum”
 - ▶ Staff – aging
 - ▶ Multi-tasking, at capacity
 - ▶ Need bigger building and more staff - relevant organizational structure to sustain relationships (visitors, groups, stakeholders)

- ▶ Governance Board part of structure to forge and maintain relationships
- ▶ Advisory Committees
- ▶ diversity across Canada is not homogeneous

2. ***What kinds of activities should be supported under a participation agenda?***

- ▶ Dialogue
- ▶ exhibitions
- ▶ centres of exchange and understanding special events (dinner and issues) "safe areas"
- ▶ common ground for meeting interpretive programs
- ▶ publications
- ▶ Program apprenticeships
- ▶ training internships – building capacity – advisors
- ▶ virtual access – introduction to the museum to be visited enriches experience
- ▶ First Nations object research
- ▶ Youth
- ▶ Service to the public
- ▶ volunteers
- ▶ IT costs \$\$

3. ***What resources or tools would be useful to support increased professional excellence in this area?***

- ▶ programs for specialized training, internships, fellowships (CLORE)
- ▶ curatorial/education
- ▶ Engaging and enriching visitors experience
- ▶ strengthen and enhance volunteers capacity to relate to public - also curators
- ▶ Risk – would this reduce in-depth research capacity? – “sizzle” vs. solid differences in museums – some with more resources, less front-of-house capacity. Others in the opposite situation
- ▶ Museum Chairs – curator – network of shared resources
- ▶ special meetings to share information
- ▶ Centres of excellence
- ▶ Focus/share collections, research expertise
- ▶ Cross-posting (university)
- ▶ Guest curatorships
- ▶ Endowments of curators

4. ***What results should we be seeking and how should they be measured?***

- ▶ Qualitative

- ▶ Publications, peer review articles, op-eds, evaluations and assessment, (interns, Board members)
- ▶ Quantitative
 - ▶ Surveys
 - ▶ Attendance (paid and unpaid)
 - ▶ Diversity
 - ▶ # of programs (public)
 - ▶ #of exhibitions
 - ▶ Non-visitor surveys
 - ▶ New partnerships and collaborations
- ▶ Seeking results: what do you want?
 - ▶ Engagement
 - ▶ Good governance
 - ▶ [new] communities feel ownership of our museum

PARTICIPATION

GROUP 5

1. ***What are the issues facing museums in increasing participation rates and demonstrating relevance***
 - ▶ All museums want to increase visitation
 - ▶ quality vs. quantity – useful proxy?
 - ▶ engagement/participation is not the same as visitation
 - ▶ participation a means, not an end
 - ▶ community development?
 - ▶ no track record
 - ▶ mindset – inward, literacy, ESL
 - ▶ some experience
 - ▶ Quality of exhibits, programs, experience
 - ▶ Imagination – what can museums be and do?
 - ▶ Change in volunteerism
 - ▶ Local focus and tourists – push/pull
 - ▶ Diverse community
 - ▶ Membership cycle churning
 - ▶ Rich collections but focus on one message
 - ▶ Who is going to do the work – attract, retain. Train
 - ▶ Need for more research to allow more messages

- ▶ Museums → community centres
- ▶ Library model – safe, social action
- ▶ Museums could play a role in issues of contemporary significance

2. ***What kinds of activities should be supported under a participation agenda?***

- ▶ Community development
 - ▶ Play role
 - ▶ Have identity
 - ▶ Facilitator
 - ▶ Plan and implementation
- ▶ Sustainability does not equal self-sufficiency
- ▶ Mobilize members – they are more than an annual fee

3. ***What resources or tools would be useful to support increased professional excellence in this area***

- ▶ Market research – coming, not coming, why?
- ▶ Expertise in corporate sponsorship
- ▶ Community relevance checklist and assessment tools
- ▶ Network the experiences
- ▶ Association has role to play in PD and networks
- ▶ Validate volunteer movement
- ▶ New volunteer experiences – new types of volunteerism, meaningful, flexible

4. ***What results should we be seeking and how should they be measured?***

- ▶ True role as community centre and developer
- ▶ More active engagement by all – members, volunteers and staff, community, visitors
- ▶ Initiate, facilitate, participate, partner, support community development and change
- ▶ Measures of quality of experience
- ▶ Museums must reflect needs and assets of community

PRESERVATION

GROUP 1

Preservation: definition

- ▶ stabilization and conservation of artifact/specimen
- ▶ collections management – data
- ▶ physical management – environment
- ▶ research/understanding of collections/interpretation of collections
- ▶ ensure that it is displayed and traveled appropriately

1. *What are the key preservation issues that museums are facing?*

- ▶ lack of \$
- ▶ staff – knowledge, time
- ▶ Buildings – appropriate, size, infrastructure
- ▶ record-keepers (zoos – collections info re species globally) . Need national/global record-keeping system information sharing of collections
- ▶ new techniques – DNA, digital
- ▶ increase in collections – management/space/duplication?/gaps?
- ▶ diversity of specific expertise to manage/preserve collections
- ▶ do we have agreed acceptable standards for infrastructure/treatment
- ▶ risk assessment and management tools – practical
- ▶ need policies in some situations

2. *Is there an alternative to “outstanding significance and national importance” as a possible criterion to define the Government’s sphere of action in any potential direct investment in preservation?*

- ▶ have “communities of interest” define artifacts/collections of national significance (peer-based, Commission, length of term – e.g. Alliance of Natural History Museums)

3. *What activities should be eligible for funding in a preservation program? What is the rationale for including these activities?*

- ▶ conservation treatment/stabilization
- ▶ assessment of health of collections
- ▶ Facility upgrades and assessments
- ▶ buildings that meet standards appropriate for all aspects of preservation
- ▶ data/network info management and training and software

- ▶ access funds for research through DCH and other sources (NRC, SSHRC and others)
 - ▶ collections/intellectual research or issues or materials treatment research
 - ▶ network for sharing information/accessing and sharing expertise
 - ▶ identify stuff of national significance through research and then protect/preserve it
- 4. *How should the ongoing development of skills and professional practices in the area of preservation and conservation be supported?***
- ▶ skills development is needed but it is one of a group of requirements – infrastructure, jobs
 - ▶ need to work with other areas/partners to access/develop these requirements – for example: fed/provincial infrastructure agreement - DCH to facilitate
- 4.1 *Would internships offered by larger institutions be effective?***
- ▶ yes – paid – early or mid-career
- 4.2 *For smaller museums, should greater emphasis be placed on group projects led by associations or other similar organizations (e.g., collections documentation projects for multiple institutions)?***
- ▶ yes, with eventual aim towards agreed standards, excellence
 - ▶ ??? accreditation of museums/staff???
- 4.3 *The bursary program offered by the Department through the Canadian Museums Association is currently under-utilized. How could it be improved to be more useful?***
- ▶ Increase size of grants/improve structure/look at mid-career focus/target more and make it worthwhile
- 4.4 *What other kinds of support for professional development are needed?***
- ▶ what are the needs – access needs – different needs for different groups – impact of changing technology
 - ▶ partner with other organizations
 - ▶ more structured professional development activities by national organizations
 - ▶ strengthen knowledge base on which training is based (research)

5. ***Given that preservation is a never-ending task, how will we know if we are succeeding? How should we measure results?***

- ▶ Improve quality of preservation of objects/collections of national significance
 - ▶ Partnerships
 - ▶ Awareness
 - ▶ Information
 - ▶ Level of research
-

PRESERVATION

GROUP 2

STITCH IN TIME

Term PRESERVATION narrow – LEGACY better

1. ***What are the key preservation issues that museums are facing?***

- ▶ lack of resources
- ▶ Museum-standard storage space
- ▶ Conservators – preservation
 - ▶ Preventative conservation
 - ▶ Education
 - ▶ Preservation of corporate knowledge/institutional memory
“paper rules”
 - ▶ On-going collections research and collections and documentation

2. ***Is there an alternative to “outstanding significance and national importance” as a possible criterion to define the Government’s sphere of action in any potential direct investment in preservation?***

- ▶ Many museums have segments of collections which are of national/international significance. Current definition seems okay pending Conference/Round table engaging researchers, conservators, philosophers

3. ***What activities should be eligible for funding in a preservation program? What is the rationale for including these activities?***

- ▶ Education – preventative conservation
- ▶ Basic restoration
- ▶ Guidelines – paint/not paint
operate/not operate

- ▶ Display environments
 - ▶ STORAGE
 - ▶ Collections management
 - ▶ CCI – expand role \$
 - ▶ CHIN expand role \$
4. ***How should the ongoing development of skills and professional practices in the area of preservation and conservation be supported?***
- 4.1 ***Would internships offered by larger institutions be effective?***
- ▶ Yes, but the money must be there which does not hinder the hosts. Also part of internship must be spent in small institutions. Getty program model
- 4.2 ***For smaller museums, should greater emphasis be placed on group projects led by associations or other similar organizations (e.g., collections documentation projects for multiple institutions)?***
- ▶ Yes but emphasis on standards and tool kits as opposed to “doing it”. The institutions must take the responsibility
- 4.3 ***The bursary program offered by the Department through the Canadian Museums Association is currently under-utilized. How could it be improved to be more useful?***
- ▶ Nice concept but not all budgets/fund raising efforts can afford the % requirements
- 4.4 ***What other kinds of support for professional development are needed?***
- ▶ If the jobs are worth having then professional development will follow and be more lasting. Addressed under sustainability.
- 5 ***Given that preservation is a never-ending task, how will we know if we are succeeding? How should we measure results?***
- ▶ capable of completing more stages in the process
 - ▶ More institutions actually doing preservation

PRESERVATION

Group 3

1. ***What are the key preservation issues that museums are facing?***
 - ▶ expertise – capacity, internships, shadowing
 - ▶ Space facilities
 - ▶ Risk management
 - ▶ Lack of \$ - materials, attracting professionals
 - ▶ Environmental control
 - ▶ Backlogs

2. ***Is there an alternative to “outstanding significance and national importance” as a possible criterion to define the Government’s sphere of action in any potential direct investment in preservation?***
 - ▶ collaboration with institutions – define what is of value
 - ▶ Are we talking about certification? What is the cost of that? How much? Locally defined and regional matrixes
 - ▶ Argument made by institutions
 - ▶ Unique, particular values to Canadian history – i.e. not a collection of European antiquities
 - ▶ Subjects of collection may be significant or Canadian collection of Italian art

3. ***What activities should be eligible for funding in a preservation program? What is the rationale for including these activities?***
 - ▶ Equipment purchase, IT (Yukon model)
 - ▶ Training
 - ▶ Funding regional centres for conservation expertise – stand alone or existing facilities, within national museums. This should be part of their mandate (offering training and advice)
 - ▶ Change title of Preservation to Collection, incorporate physical and intellectual – research – centre of research
 - ▶ Documentation – cultural landscapes, trails, maps
 - ▶ Public education – CCI, also local
 - ▶ Local media, cable, schools to show presentation – what do you do in the winter

4. ***How should the ongoing development of skills and professional practices in the area of preservation and conservation be supported?***

- 4.1 ***Would internships offered by larger institutions be effective?***
- ▶ yes – regional – comparative facility – relevant collections
 - ▶ Professional exchange – program
 - ▶ Shorter term focus – 1-2 months – instead of full year
- 4.2 ***For smaller museums, should greater emphasis be placed on group projects led by associations or other similar organizations (e.g., collections documentation projects for multiple institutions)?***
- ▶ yes
- 4.3 ***The bursary program offered by the Department through the Canadian Museums Association is currently under-utilized. How could it be improved to be more useful?***
- ▶ more publicity. More flexibility
- 4.4 ***What other kinds of support for professional development are needed?***
- ▶ mentorship – calls, face to face, on site
 - ▶ Different levels
 - ▶ Study tours
 - ▶ Flying squad – Canada Council
 - ▶ CMA role at conference
 - ▶ Visual audio support – multi-media
5. ***Given that preservation is a never-ending task, how will we know if we are succeeding? How should we measure results?***
- ▶ could be a group template – capacity building
 - ▶ Needs Assessment
 - ▶ Development of long term plan
 - ▶ Annual measure of progress i.e. # of items/collections/inventory
 - ▶ Leads to enhanced use of publicly held collections
 - ▶ Greater participation

PRESERVATION

GROUP 4

1. *What are the key preservation issues that museums are facing?*

- ▶ Lack of access to expertise + supplies+ capacity
- ▶ Size and collections
- ▶ Knowledge of condition
- ▶ Facilities – state of
- ▶ Clutter in collections mandate – ad hoc collecting
- ▶ Need procedures, implementation, framework for preservation
- ▶ Contract employment – short term, project
- ▶ Lack of importance paid to collections care and preservation
- ▶ Motherhood priority vs. operational priority
- ▶ Conservation not sexy
- ▶ Slow, quiet neglect
- ▶ No \$\$ for conservation supplies
- ▶ Cut back to provincial advisory services
- ▶ Conservation is vulnerable to cuts
- ▶ CCI reduction in community outreach/service,

2. *Is there an alternative to “outstanding significance and national importance” as a possible criterion to define the Government’s sphere of action in any potential direct investment in preservation?*

- ▶ alternative – community relevance
- ▶ Organizational/mandate relevance

3. *What activities should be eligible for funding in a preservation program? What is the rationale for including these activities?*

- ▶ activities funding
- ▶ PMA conservation as outreach for professional development, advising
- ▶ Reinforcing/rewarding preservation standards
- ▶ training/coaching volunteers
- ▶ preventative conservation skills
- ▶ preservation of intangibles + audio + digitized collections
- ▶ bulk purchasing of supplies
- ▶ on site consultations/assessment → plan and supplies

4. *How should the ongoing development of skills and professional practices in the area of preservation and conservation be supported?*

- ▶ PMAs
 - ▶ Hire grads
 - ▶ Internships for students
 - ▶ Mentoring – in person, on-line
 - ▶ Clearing house for expertise (linking Parks, universities, provincial museums, private sector, museum community)
 - ▶ HRSDC partnering for employment and internships
- 4.2 ***For smaller museums, should greater emphasis be placed on group projects led by associations or other similar organizations (e.g., collections documentation projects for multiple institutions)?***
- ▶ yes
- 4.3 ***The bursary program offered by the Department through the Canadian Museums Association is currently under-utilized. How could it be improved to be more useful?***
- ▶ guidelines too narrow
 - ▶ Eligible – independent contractors, not full-time employees
 - ▶ Need to reflect museum community members – PT, contract, seasonal
 - ▶ Increase minimum \$
- 4.4 ***What other kinds of support for professional development are needed?***
- ▶ PMA offering regional:
 - ▶ Delivery of CCI content (license)
 - ▶ Independents (museum workers) need access too
 - ▶ On-site consultations, assessments
 - ▶ \$ to hire local conservators to train
 - ▶ Development plans
5. ***Given that preservation is a never-ending task, how will we know if we are succeeding? How should we measure results?***
- ▶ accessioning/de-accessioning policies created/used
 - ▶ Conservation priorities in organization plans
 - ▶ Improve storage areas
 - ▶ Use of approved conservation materials and practices
 - ▶ PMA + CEO of museums reporting on conservation achievements as a governance practice = accountability measure

- ▶ regional delivery of professional development in conservation - #, areas, institutions, frequency + related issues
 - ▶ institutional outcomes are evaluated
-

PRESERVATION

GROUP 5

1. *What are the key preservation issues that museums are facing?*

- ▶ Environmental controls
- ▶ Appropriate storage (size)
- ▶ Data entry and retrieval (records multi-media)
 - ▶ Digital assets
- ▶ What are the preservation tools?
- ▶ Centres of excellence
- ▶ Sharing expertise
- ▶ Collecting policies
- ▶ Governance oversight
- ▶ Grading, growing, pruning

2. *Is there an alternative to “outstanding significance and national importance” as a possible criterion to define the Government’s sphere of action in any potential direct investment in preservation?*

- ▶ CPERB ← → CCI
- ▶ + investment in presentation
- ▶ How do you recognize objects of “osni”? Outside national museums
- ▶ Funding to preserve and maintain/ rationalize

3. *What activities should be eligible for funding in a preservation program? What is the rationale for including these activities?*

- ▶ risk assessment and risk management
- ▶ Grading collections
- ▶ Renewing/building environmental systems, spaces (storage)
- ▶ RATIONALIZE (macro) present needs with new museums
- ▶ Natural disasters

4. *How should the ongoing development of skills and professional practices in the area of preservation and conservation be supported?*

- ▶ training, mentorships, interns
 - ▶ Sharing expertise from larger institutions to smaller ones (2 way)
 - ▶ [viewpoints depend on various sized museums]
 - ▶ Relevance to sectors depending on s/m/l
- 4.3 ***The bursary program offered by the Department through the Canadian Museums Association is currently under-utilized. How could it be improved to be more useful?***
- ▶ ?communications what?
 - ▶ ?eligibility?
- 4.4 ***What other kinds of support for professional development are needed?***
- ▶ sense of professionalism in museums – build awareness
 - ▶ Management training
 - ▶ Specialized skills: IT, conservation
5. ***Given that preservation is a never-ending task, how will we know if we are succeeding? How should we measure results?***
- ▶ quantify the magnitude of risk (grading, national strategic review) and the value of the collections
 - ▶ Minimize risk (reality?)
 - ▶ Make decisions based on best use of \$
 - ▶ = level of care
 - ▶ + public access indicator
 - ▶ + assess care vs. mandate
 - ▶ Communicate/respond to our stakeholders
 - ▶ Legacy
 - ▶ Evidence around collections/risk/rationalization

SUSTAINABILITY

GROUP 1

1. *What are the key threats and barriers to sustainability faced by museums?*

- ▶ lack of sustainable funding
- ▶ management and governance – need to update skills
- ▶ competition for people's time
- ▶ aging infrastructure
- ▶ keeping up with changing demographics
- ▶ too insular as institutions – should learn from others and partner with others
- ▶ impact of new legislation
- ▶ need to empower ourselves – ACTIVE VS. PASSIVE
- ▶ amateur → professional in managing our affairs

2. *What additional roles could the federal government play in promoting sustainability without taking on responsibility for ongoing operating costs?*

- ▶ management schools (all disciplines)
- ▶ project money to become more self-sufficient
- ▶ study tours
- ▶ promote programs/resources that already exist
- ▶ produce program/resource guide
- ▶ promote and represent museum community with other federal departments in order to access other programs/funds
- ▶ assist CMA in developing a mentorship program
- ▶ incentives for communities/committees of interest to work together to address common issues

2.1 *Would endowment incentives help to stimulate additional donations?*

- ▶ yes

3. *Are there changes the Department should make to Cultural Spaces or the capacity-building program (CAHSP) to make them more effective?*

- ▶ forms too complicated for some institutions
- ▶ more efficient (SHORTER) timelines for decisions needed
- ▶ clarification of priorities
- ▶ fund studies - but also need to fund implementation
- ▶ not enough funds available
- ▶ “new” takes precedence over “existing” (“upgrading”)

- ▶ should include “energy efficiency” programs
4. ***How should we measure sustainability?***
- ▶ % of expenditures on overhead vs. creative/innovative/relevant programs/growth/knowledge
 - ▶ revenue = or < expenditures
 - ▶ deliver sentence #3
 - ▶ Statistics Canada Sustainability Index
-

SUSTAINABILITY

GROUP 2

1. What are the key threats and barriers to sustainability faced by museums?

- ▶ principles (infrastructure, communities) don’t match suggestions (questions are all about finances)
- ▶ overall, endowments are not the magic bullet
 - ▶ financial is one component of sustainability
 - ▶ if the foundation is small (\$50,000 – 100,000) then interest is not significant
 - ▶ idea of pooling funds to maximize the interest
- ▶ sustainability multi-faceted approach
- ▶ competition for funding – across the sectors i.e. health care – and within the sector - # of institutions
- ▶ different laws – Alberta can raise funds through Lottery and VLTs
- ▶ no one with the skills to do long term planning/business plans
- ▶ resistance (fear) to “cultural managers” within the sector
- ▶ lack of Board leadership and direction setting
 - core competency
 - governance structure
- ▶ Canadian Heritage already makes funds available to do this work (strategic planning, governance)
- ▶ national marketing campaign on museums – Participation for museums – program not tied to specific day such as Museums Day. Discover your Roots – focus on children – CMA??
- ▶ membership fees tax deductible – Quebec model

2. What additional roles could the federal government play in promoting sustainability without taking on responsibility for ongoing operating costs?

2.1 *Would endowment incentives help to stimulate additional donations?*

- ▶ idea of chairs – AGO example – research or conservation chair. Multi-dimensional approach needed
- ▶ if you can use endowment to hire fund raiser behind the scenes – yes
- ▶ fund raiser → 3 years - sliding scale – to build fund raising capacity
- ▶ need champions – like universities use graduates – community relations
- ▶ honorary chair for organizations – museums@large
- ▶ attach to Participaction for museums
- ▶ Don Cherry – the Hockey Hall of Fame is a museum
- ▶ Joanie Mitchell – example – Saskatoon – Mendel
- ▶ museums are seen as authorities – have not lost credibility as other sectors have. Must leverage this authority to build support
- ▶ leadership in the community from museum directors

3. *Are there changes the Department should make to Cultural Spaces or the capacity-building program (CAHSP) to make them more effective?*

- ▶ improved
- ▶ needs tiered entry
- ▶ linkages to implementation programs

4. *How should we measure sustainability?*

- ▶ we are still open
- ▶ multi-year
- ▶ staff/Board have capacity to undertake the roles
- ▶ requires continuity through:
 - Needs assessment
 - Development of plan
 - Implementation

Checks and measures at each step

SUSTAINABILITY

GROUP 3

1. What are the key threats and barriers to sustainability faced by museums?

- ▶ lack of integration into broader social and economic initiatives

- ▶ not on municipal agenda political health/education
 - ▶ Ability to lobby or market
 - ▶ we don 't celebrate our successes
 - ▶ growth of collections combined with decrease in funding (cost of living)
 - ▶ less of staff and their knowledge
 - ▶ digital/multi-media
 - ▶ increased competition
 - ▶ failure of relevance, innovation and renewing infrastructure
2. ***What additional roles could the federal government play in promoting sustainability without taking on responsibility for ongoing operating costs?***
- ▶ Endowments/Matching – build skills in financial management
 - ▶ endow research /curator chairs
 - ▶ Centres of Excellence
 - ▶ communication of value of museums
 - ▶ multi-year – minimum three years
3. ***Are there changes the Department should make to Cultural Spaces or the capacity-building program (CAHSP) to make them more effective?***
- ▶ institutionally defined
 - ▶ bridging (overlap) staff retirements
4. ***How should we measure sustainability?***
- ▶ must be in long term context
 - ▶ develop sustainability index
 - no deficit/budget keep pace with inflation
 - state of infrastructure
 - ration endowment/earned revenue/public funds
 - contribute to research/programs
 - demographic
 - diversity
 - mandate delivery
 - collections risk – standards
 - attendance
 - visitor satisfaction survey
 - public awareness

SUSTAINABILITY

GROUP 4

1. What are the key threats and barriers to sustainability faced by museums?

- ▶ inequity of access to support services and programs (Flying Squad) between heritage and arts
- ▶ lack of long term plans
- ▶ weak/ineffective governance
- ▶ lack of expertise in financial matters
- ▶ too much project-driven money – destabilizes institution, PMAs)
- ▶ multi-tasking staff → volunteers
- ▶ rampant ‘VAS’ (volunteer avoidance syndrome)
- ▶ lack of imagination - “old ways” vs. new problems and risks
- ▶ absence of predictable funding levels → planning
- ▶ inability to sustain/retain new professional staff/salaries
- ▶ programs limited by funding criteria and timelines → depth, quality, and solid outcomes (i.e. meaningful)

2. What additional roles could the federal government play in promoting sustainability without taking on responsibility for ongoing operating costs?

- ▶ multi-year support for special initiatives
- ▶ funds for implementation and evaluation of project plans
- ▶ PMAs – fund initiatives to create professional development and tool kits to assist institutions (financial plans/business planning)
- ▶ facilitate funding partnerships (HRSDC → youth/student, internships, summer replacements)
- ▶ support Forum for information exchange between PMAs regarding priorities and shared projects of relevance across borders

2.1 Would endowment incentives help to stimulate additional donations?

- ▶ Yes – leverages additional provincial. Private sector, foundation & philanthropic/individual sources)
- ▶ equal access between heritage museums and art museums (not currently)

3. Are there changes the Department should make to Cultural Spaces or the capacity-building program (CAHSP) to make them more effective?

- ▶ new guidelines
- ▶ faster turn around times from application to approved funds available
- ▶ thanks for making PMAs eligible (CAHSP)

4. *How should we measure sustainability?*

- ▶ long term plans in place (3-5, 5-10 years)
 - ▶ diversified and predictable funding sources
 - ▶ effective governance practices (reporting, transparency, accountability)
 - ▶ establishment of strategic partnerships
 - ▶ more than meeting the bottom line
 - ▶ Succession plan
 - ▶ Ability to embrace and manage risk
 - ▶ retain/replace staff, volunteers &/or professional expertise
 - ▶ community support (memberships, sponsors, volunteers, interaction)
 - ▶ embrace leadership role
 - ▶ acquisition of core competencies (all aspects of museum operation)
 - ▶ Innovation: creative problem-solving
-

SUSTAINABILITY

GROUP 5

1. What are the key threats and barriers to sustainability faced by museums?

- ▶ lack of recognition as a profession and as a valued institution requiring professional staff – impacts on sustainability, staffing, succession
- ▶ \$\$\$
- ▶ staff reduction
- ▶ succession
- ▶ arts managers are too damn good for us
- ▶ Supermen and Women are required
- ▶ building maintenance, new and old
- ▶ inadequate protection of collections
- ▶ lack of marketing re relevance and importance of museums factor in stagnation of visitors numbers
- ▶ Competition within the sector
- ▶ valued but not visited and supported
- ▶ Donations in Canada go to:

Religious organization	50%
Health care	8%
Education	19%
Social services	21%
Other (including heritage)	2%
- ▶ Donations come from:

Individuals	70%
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Corporations	18%
Foundations	12%

Source: Imagine

2. ***What additional roles could the federal government play in promoting sustainability without taking on responsibility for ongoing operating costs?***
 - ▶ multi-year support for planning – research
 - ▶ general awareness program re Heritage, Museums and Galleries across the departments
- 2.1 ***Would endowment incentives help to stimulate additional donations?***
 - ▶ YES, IF MATCHING FUNDS PROVIDED
3. ***Are there changes the Department should make to Cultural Spaces or the capacity-building program (CAHSP) to make them more effective?***
 - ▶ yes, CSC - emphasis on preservation as well as access
 - ▶ Capacity Building – yes
4. ***How should we measure sustainability?***
 - ▶ ability to meet the stated goals and objectives

FROM REPORTS

PARTICIPATION

- ▶ *break apart participation and relevance – they are separate, one is not the measure of the other*
- ▶ programming in line with what people are interested in exploring
- ▶ market research done by a constituency – several museums/communities together
- ▶ link to cultural/economic drivers (Richard Florida)
- ▶ don't undertake large measures of what cannot be controlled
- ▶ have a major agency undertake a country-wide study on demographics
- ▶ Flying Squad – equal access for heritage
- ▶ demonstrate that museums are wise expenditure centres for tax dollars
- ▶ museums = trust = centres for community interaction
- ▶ communication budgets must be increased
- ▶ “osni” = sum of collections across the country = national

Use Legacy – Ensuring the Legacy – instead of Preservation

Professional development is part of Sustainability

Question of Accreditation

(Government regulation or Self-regulated)

Government only regulates where (example) there is the risk of loss of life

Indemnification program has standards that must be met, due to risks. CPRB also has standards for its designation.

Multi-media as a threat? The threat comes from the problem of sustainability for operating. Can acquire the equipment but no support for operating. Choices have had to be made elsewhere between traditional approaches and multi-media due to high on-going costs that cannot be supported.