

THE ARTS AND CULTURE UPDATE
April 10, 2002

Welcome to the first edition of The Arts and Culture Update, your connection to news and developments in Nova Scotia's Tourism and Culture Department.

New Arts and Culture Council

April marks the beginning of the new Arts and Culture Council, replacing the Nova Scotia Arts Council. The new council, administered through the department of Tourism and Culture, will continue to provide funding, services and support to Nova Scotian artists and cultural organizations. It will also oversee other provincial investment programs and services delivered through the department.

The new council will focus on more input from cultural and geographic communities, and have a greater emphasis on accountability for resources and spending. The new council will also create savings in administrative costs, leaving more funds for artists' projects.

For artists, this transition will be seamless:

- Applications will be processed in the same way.
- Artists who have received approval for funding will receive their funds as usual.
- Deadlines will remain the same, and artists are still encouraged to apply for the various funding programs.
- The principles of peer review and jury processes will be maintained and artistic merit will remain the criteria for the awarding of funding support.

Artists who have questions about their applications can call (902) 424-6471, or e-mail cultaffs@gov.ns.ca.

The creation of the new council is part of an ongoing attempt to work in the best interests of the arts and culture sector, geographic communities and the public at large. Our aim is to create an inclusive and supportive environment for all artists and cultural organizations in Nova Scotia.

We recognize that arts and culture are two separate entities, with different but equally valuable roles to Nova Scotians. Our goal is to provide funding to initiatives that will help strengthen this combined sector, and ensure its longevity.

The new council, which includes 10 representatives from the arts and culture sector, and two from government, does not imply political influence by government. In fact, the influence and advice of the arts and culture community will be extended into other provincial investment programs that support arts and culture in Nova Scotia.

Artistic expression will not be at risk because of this new council; individuals will still be able to compete equally for the available funding, and will still be judged by an impartial body of peer reviewers, not by the council itself. The department's investments into cultural organizations will also continue.

Along with our mandate to increase representation by all Nova Scotian communities, we are also determined to ensure that the monies allocated to arts and culture are spent as efficiently as possible. The administration costs of the Nova Scotia Arts Council were over \$370,000. By bringing the administrative activities and services of the council within the Tourism and Culture department, we can reduce those costs and the savings will be reinvested into arts and culture programming.

While staff have been impacted by these changes, it is our intention to treat all employees fairly, and we are actively pursuing options for these individuals. Some of these staff have already agreed to join us in this transition, and we are delighted to have them with us.

We are excited about the progress of the arts and culture in Nova Scotia. We're determined to uphold the principle of peer assessment in providing support to artists. We're determined to create new and better ways to provide support to artists and cultural organizations. And we're convinced our new model will work for Nova Scotians - across the sector and across the province.

Part of this evolution is a strong commitment to keeping you informed. These Arts and Culture Updates, as well as planned additions to the Tourism and Culture web site (www.gov.ns.ca/dtc) will help us in that endeavor.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to e-mail us at cultaffs@gov.ns.ca.

Stay tuned for more.

The Nova Scotia Department of Tourism and Culture

To comment on an item in The Arts and Culture Update, please e-mail us at cultaffs@gov.ns.ca

If you know an artist or cultural organization who could benefit from these updates on events, funding opportunities and other arts and culture information, please forward this e-mail along.

If you received this email from a friend, and you would like to be added to the Arts and Culture Update mailing list, please send an e-mail to cultaffs@gov.ns.ca and include Subscribe in the subject line.

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