



Recommendations from the Culture Sector Team on a New Arts and Culture Partnership Council for Nova Scotia

Final Report

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Minister of Tourism and Culture
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Executive Summary

On behalf of the Minister of Tourism and Culture, a Culture Sector Team comprising leaders from Nova Scotia's arts and culture community explored terms of reference with respect to the creation of a new Nova Scotia Arts and Culture Council (NSACC). Those terms of reference along with recommendations for the Minister's consideration are as follows:

1. Developing and recommending the mandate and major responsibilities of the new Arts and Culture Council

Summary of Recommendations

- the name for the council be changed to reflect a new emphasis on partnership, specifically to the Nova Scotia Arts and Culture Partnership Council (NSACPC)
- the new council be guided by principles of artistic autonomy and independent assessment with respect to artistic merit
- the Nova Scotia Department of Tourism and Culture work collaboratively with the NSACPC to assist in its responsibility of overseeing provincial investment in arts and culture initiatives
- the mandate for the NSACPC be to make recommendations to the Minister on the planning, design, and delivery of arts and culture programs in Nova Scotia
- the NSACPC be responsible for program review, investment priority review, and strategic planning advice
- the new council include 13 culture sector leaders, who will serve as volunteers and represent the sector at large, and two representatives from government
- an Executive Committee be formed, consisting of the council chair, the executive director of the Culture Division, a vice-chair, and the past chair
- administrative support for the council be provided through staff and other resources currently within the Culture Division
- the council develop precise operating guidelines, including methods by which it will gather ongoing stakeholder input on plans and priorities
- the council outline its recommendations in an annual culture sector development plan, presented to the Minister and tabled in the legislature
- the council develop specific performance targets on program activities and precise evaluation methods for programs and activities to ensure a means of measuring and reporting on results
- the council's activities complement and support the efforts of existing organizations that work in support of culture



2. **Recommending the process through which appointments are made and guidelines for the selection of representatives for the new Nova Scotia Arts and Culture Partnership Council**

Summary of Recommendations

- culture sector representatives be appointed by the Minister of Tourism and Culture at the recommendation of a sector-led selection committee
- terms of appointments for the initial council be staggered between one-, two-, and three-year terms
- culture sector council members be eligible to serve a maximum of two consecutive three-year terms
- council members elect their own chair and vice chair
- a sector-led selection committee recommend the initial members of the council to the Minister, based on an application process
- the scope of activity to be determined by the council include, but not be limited to, program development, review, and evaluation; research into new areas of cultural development and the government's role in this development; and research and development into new ways of stabilizing and increasing arts funding
- the council consist of a number of sub-committees, including but not limited to executive, program, cultural development, industry, long-term strategic planning, and selection
- the requirement for selecting one council member from each of the Culture Division's four defined regions of the province be considered mandatory

3. **Recommending the Nova Scotia Arts and Culture Partnership Council's priorities for the coming year**

Summary of Recommendations

- the main priority of the new Nova Scotia Arts and Culture Partnership Council be focused on setting up and operating under the new partnership model, including confirming vision, mission, and mandate and establishing operating guidelines



4. Recommending a process by which the new council consults with and supports regions

Summary of Recommendations

- regional representation on the new council be ensured
- internal and external communications be ensured
- a regional presence be established to assist applicants in their application process and to draw out and encourage development of new artistic talent
- a mentoring program be instituted where individuals who were successful in the past could assist applicants new to the process and who may require guidance
- a sample application be provided that shows the key points that must be addressed to ensure eligibility

5. Recommending the spending priorities of the Endowment Fund established to support arts and culture activities and making recommendations on the best options for non-government contributions to the fund

Summary of Recommendations

- the Nova Scotia Department of Finance review: the agreement with fund managers, fund performance, the current investment policy, and regulations and recommend any appropriate changes
- all new donations and other general funds received become part of the principal of the fund
- monies received by the fund for named purposes and any resultant income or earnings be segregated and held in trust for that purpose
- appropriateness of the current \$1 million floor be examined against the estimated annual gap between eligible grant recipients and available funds
- the council pursue mechanisms for growing the Endowment Fund
- income from the investments be used to pay fund management fees and expenses, and any excess of income over these expenses be provided as a special contribution to the program budget to fund eligible projects in the program year following the year in which the excess occurred



6. Examining the review recommendations for the Nova Scotia Art Bank, and determining how that program should be improved

Summary of Recommendations

- the Art Bank's client base be broadened, allowing corporations and other institutions to receive works on loan from the collection
- the purchase program be reinstated; new acquisitions should continue to be selected by an independent assessment jury
- partnerships be developed with community groups, schools, and other arts organizations to widen access to the collection and broaden programming to communities around the province
- the provincial government continue to provide core operational funding to the Nova Scotia Art Bank
- an expression of interest be generated to ascertain if there are qualified agencies within the province that may be interested and able to administer the program; prior to issuing an expression of interest, Visual Arts Nova Scotia should be approached about the possibility of undertaking the contract for the first three years

The following pages of this report are devoted to each of the terms of reference.



Terms of Reference

#1: Developing and recommending the mandate and major responsibilities of the new Arts and Culture Council

Developing a New Arts and Culture Partnership

The Culture Sector Team is recommending that the name for the council be changed to reflect a new emphasis on partnership, specifically that it be changed to the Nova Scotia Arts and Culture Partnership Council (NSACPC).

For members of the team, the concept of "partnership" evolved following an extensive examination of the purpose and responsibilities of the new council in the wake of the disbanding of the former Nova Scotia Arts Council. Our ideal is to foster a partnered approach to addressing the challenges and opportunities that face the arts and culture in Nova Scotia today.

By bringing together on the council a cross-section of individuals who represent the full scope of arts sub-sectors and cultural industries in the province, we hope that greater progress will be made in championing the need for artistic diversity in the province and for integrating the mandate of culture into the social and economic health of our communities.

The proposed approach for the NSACPC is a 'made in Nova Scotia' answer to the question of how to build a collaborative and results-oriented partnership. It will require ongoing commitment to the notion of a global approach to growth and development, acceptance of shared contributions, and recognition of mutual needs and benefits.

In developing this approach, the team reviewed arts council models in several jurisdictions across Canada, including those that share administrative support, such as British Columbia, Alberta, and the Yukon. The team also reviewed a partnership model here in Nova Scotia, specifically, the Nova Scotia Tourism Partnership Council model.

While the traditional arts council model has a significant history in the cultural policy of our country, the proposed model can be equally successful in fostering artistic activity. The proposed model can address the specific character of the province's cultural community and serve a broad range of cultural development initiatives.

With these goals in mind, a preliminary vision statement has been proposed for the council, which strives toward "a healthy environment for Nova Scotia artists, the arts and culture." The mission statement that follows from this vision has been identified as "to foster a healthy environment for Nova Scotia artists, the arts, and culture through processes that are inclusive, equitable, and accountable."



It is also recommended that the new council be guided by principles of artistic autonomy and independent assessment with respect to artistic merit. These principles are best expressed in a report submitted to the federal government in 1982 by Louis Applebaum and Jacques Hébert entitled: Report from the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee. The report states that "policy should facilitate self expression, rather than control or organize it," and goes on to recognize that "government's role does not extend to the exercise of artistic judgement—except where government relies on public trustees and professional adjudicators who stand outside of the political process."

The Council's Relationship with Government

It is recommended that the Nova Scotia Department of Tourism and Culture work collaboratively with the Nova Scotia Arts and Culture Partnership Council (NSACPC) to assist in its responsibility of overseeing provincial investment in arts and culture initiatives. A collaborative relationship between government and the arts and culture sector can:

- engage the shared expertise of the sector and government to develop strategic long-term plans and strengthen both government and sector investment in the arts and culture
- encourage cultural sector leadership in marketing, development, sales, and cross-sectoral partnerships
- encourage culture sector involvement and leadership in building sustainable communities
- unify and coordinate sector input on policy issues that impact the long-term sustainability of the culture sector
- ensure that the government goal of growing the culture sector economy through export development is maximized through a coordinated approach to investment.

Mandate

It is recommended that the mandate for the NSACPC be to make recommendations to the Minister on the planning, design, and delivery of arts and culture programs in Nova Scotia.

Responsibilities

It is recommended that the NSACPC be responsible for the following:

- **Program Review.** The council will undertake a review of all existing programs and their reach and impact in all regions of Nova Scotia. Programs will be reviewed every two years.
- **Investment Priority Review:** The council will review spending on all related programs as well as investigate and provide advice on ways to lever additional funding to help address investment priorities.



- Strategic Planning Advice: The council will provide advice and make recommendations on new directions and priorities, including, but not limited to:
 - revising programs including frequency of access (deadline dates)
 - overseeing investment decision process (staff, peer juries, or panels), recognizing that peer review is the accepted mechanism in place for determining artistic merit
 - ceasing ineffective programs or decision processes
 - designing and developing new programs
 - creating investment strategies for both short-term (programs and projects) and long-term (facilities, training, and industry) investment.

Structure

It is recommended that the new council include 13 culture sector leaders, who will serve as volunteers and represent the sector at large, and two representatives from government. This will not be a strictly geographically representative council. Members will be selected with sensitivity to all four cultural regions in the province, which include Cape Breton, Metro, North, and South. A public call will be made for new appointments, and all members will be recommended by a sector-led selection committee and appointed by the Minister of Tourism and Culture. While the council members will volunteer their time, it is recommended that per diem rates be established to ensure broad participation from the sector.

It is recommended that an Executive Committee be formed consisting of the council chair, the executive director of the Culture Division, a vice-chair, and the past chair. It will organize reporting information, discuss input, and bring recommendations forward. The Executive Committee will also be responsible for all communications on behalf of the council, including annual and ongoing communications plans.

It is recommended that administrative support for the council be provided through staff and other resources currently within the Culture Division. It is further recommended that the council be invited to have representation on the hiring committee for any future competitions for the position of executive director of the Culture Division, given the significant role of the executive director as a partner at the council table.

Accountability, Operating Guidelines, and Reporting

The new council will be accountable to the Minister, who in turn is accountable to the legislature. There will also be accountability expectations placed on the council from the sector. To address accountability issues:

- It is recommended that the council develop precise operating guidelines, including methods by which it will gather ongoing stakeholder input on plans and priorities.
- It is recommended that council outline its recommendations in an annual culture sector development plan, presented to the Minister and tabled in the legislature.
- It is also recommended that council develop specific performance targets on program activities and precise evaluation methods for programs and activities to ensure a means of measuring and reporting on results.



Consultation

It is recommended that the council's activities complement and support the efforts of existing organizations that work in support of culture, including Nova Scotia cultural federations, community arts councils, and other sector-specific organizations. It is further recommended that the council consult with the sector on a regular basis through workshops, surveys, one-on-one meetings, and other direct communications channels.

#2: Recommending the process through which appointments are made and the guidelines for the selection of representatives for the new Nova Scotia Arts and Culture Partnership Council

It is recommended that the Province of Nova Scotia invite applications from qualified Nova Scotians interested in serving on the Nova Scotia Arts and Culture Partnership Council (NSACPC). Applicants should have a demonstrated interest in the arts and/or cultural industries through activity as a practitioner, arts administrator, benefactor, arts board member, or arts manager or as a professional serving the arts community in a financial, consultative, or legal environment.

Council Composition and Selection Process

As previously stated, it is recommended that the NSACPC consist of 15 persons. Thirteen culture sector representatives will be appointed by the Minister of Tourism and Culture at the recommendation of a sector-led selection committee. This 15-person council will also include two representatives from government, one of whom will be the executive director of the Culture Division.

For the initial council, it is recommended that terms of appointment for culture sector representatives be staggered between one-, two-, and three-year terms.

- Each culture sector council member shall be eligible to serve a maximum of two consecutive three-year terms.
- The council members shall elect their own chair and vice chair.
- Culture sector council positions that become vacant during the course of the year shall be filled by the normal process, and the new appointed council member will serve the remainder of the term of the retired council member. If such vacancy occurs within 90 days of a scheduled end of term, the vacancy will not be filled.

It is recommended that a sector-led selection committee recommend the initial members of the council to the Minister, based on an application process. The initial selection committee will be made up of two members of the Culture Sector Team, including the chair; two cultural representatives; and the Culture Division's executive director. The selection committee shall be cognizant of the necessity to:

- strike a balance between the arts and cultural industries
- strike a balance between artists and arts organizations



- address regional and cultural diversity
- address the necessity to have a wide range of experience among council members
- represent a diversity of culture sub-sectors.

A minimum two-thirds majority vote by members of the selection committee shall be required to validate the recommendation of a council member to the Minister.

Scope of Activities

It is recommended that the scope of activity to be determined by the council shall include, but not be limited to:

- program development, review, and evaluation
- research into new areas of cultural development and the government's role in this development
- research and development into new ways of stabilizing and increasing arts funding.

It is recommended that the council consist of a number of sub-committees, including but not limited to: executive, program, cultural development, industry, long-term strategic planning, and selection.

Composition of the Council

Of the various criteria used to determine council eligibility, it is recommended that only the requirement for selecting one candidate from each of the Culture Division's four defined regions be considered mandatory.

#3: Recommending the Nova Scotia Arts and Culture Partnership Council's priorities for the coming year

It is recommended that the main priority of the new Nova Scotia Arts and Culture Partnership Council be focused on setting up and operating under the new partnership model, including confirming vision, mission, and mandate and establishing operating guidelines.

#4: Recommending a process by which the council consults with and supports regions

Keeping in mind regional investment trends by the department and the former Nova Scotia Arts Council and the perceived conflict between regional equity and peer review, it is recommended that the new council:

- ensure regional representation on the new council
- ensure internal and external communications
- establish a regional presence to assist applicants in their application process and to draw out and encourage development of new artistic talent
- institute a mentoring system program where individuals who were successful in the past could assist applicants new to the process and who may require guidance
- provide a sample application that shows the key points that must be addressed to ensure eligibility.



#5: Recommending the spending priorities of the Endowment Fund established to support arts and culture activities and making recommendations on the best options for non-government contributions to the fund

Background

The Endowment Fund was assigned to the Minister of Tourism and Culture pursuant to the Financial Measures Act 2002. Under that act, the Endowment Fund was established as a special fund to be used to pursue the aims outlined by the former Nova Scotia Arts Council, namely:

- to make arts and culture integral to the lives of all Nova Scotians
- to foster artistic and cultural excellence throughout the province
- to encourage creative expression by funding activity in the arts and culture
- to fund activities based on artistic merit utilizing peer assessment
- to educate the public regarding the cultural, social, and economic importance of the arts
- to strive for regional, cultural, and developmental equity in the distribution of funding
- to carry out research on matters relating to the arts and culture
- to obtain advice on matters of arts policy
- to award grants and render financial or other assistance as may be required in the furtherance of these purposes
- such other matters in support of the arts and culture as prescribed by the Governor in Council.

The Endowment Fund was created with an initial contribution of \$575,168 from the province in 1996–97. Additional contributions of \$150,980 were made to the fund, bringing total contributions to \$726,148. (The \$150,980 includes a \$103,000 investment by MTT, a \$43,000 from the Nova Scotia Arts and Culture Coalition, and individual contributions of \$4980.) The market value to the end of June was estimated at \$933,000. Growth in the fund resulted primarily from investment earnings and donations from private donors.

Other than as specifically noted below, the current regulations appear adequate for the continuance of the fund.

General Recommendations

It is recommended that staff at the Nova Scotia Department of Finance review the agreement with fund managers, fund performance, the current investment policy, and regulations and recommend any appropriate changes. The cost of fund management services seems disproportionate to the activity and the investment results, i.e., 35.6 per cent of the investment income in 2000. The fees are based on the value of the fund not on the fund performance, and the fee percentage declines once the fund reaches \$1 million.

It is also recommended that all new donations and other general funds received become part of the principal of the fund.

Further, it is recommended that monies received by the fund for named purposes and any income or earnings be segregated and held in trust for that purpose.



Recommendations for Spending Priority for the Endowment Fund

It is recommended that the appropriateness of the current \$1 million floor be examined against the estimated annual gap between eligible grant recipients and available funds. The current regulations state that no expenditure from the fund shall be made until the capital reaches a minimum of \$1,000,000.

It is also recommended that the council pursue mechanisms for growing the Endowment Fund.

Further it is recommended that income from the investments should be spent as follows:

- Payment of fund management fees and expenses.
- Provide any excess of income over these expenses as a special contribution to the program budget to fund eligible projects in the program year following the year in which the excess occurred. Any excess of these funds at the end of the program year shall be carried over to the following program year. (In the event that carry-over is not possible, funds should remain in the Endowment Fund and transferred only once the actual program need has been confirmed.) This ensures that endowment funds are spent on the priorities of the NSACPC.

#6: Examining the review recommendations for the Nova Scotia Art Bank and determining how the program should be improved

The team reviewed a report prepared by the Art Bank Review Committee in December 2001. The potential for generating revenue and promoting the works throughout the province was recognized. The team unanimously supported the continuation of provincial funding for the Nova Scotia Art Bank program. The following positioning statement and recommendations are provided:

Positioning Statement—Nova Scotia Art Bank

After examining the recommendations made in the Nova Scotia Art Bank Review, released in December 2001, members of the Culture Sector Team have endorsed a number of key recommendations included in the report. These recommendations include:

- broadening the Art Bank's client base, allowing corporations and other institutions to receive works on loan from the collection
- reinstatement of the Art Bank purchase program; further to this recommendation, we recommend that new acquisitions continue to be selected by an independent assessment jury
- the development of partnerships with community groups, schools and other arts organizations to widen access to the collection and broaden programming to communities around the province



While the Culture Sector Team respects the review panel's concern regarding professional accreditation associated with government running the program, the team believes a more dynamic structure is needed. It therefore recommends the following:

- The provincial government should continue to provide core operational funding to the Art Bank program.
- Rather than continuing to administer the program through the Culture Division, the team recommends that an expression of interest be generated to ascertain if there are qualified agencies within the province that may be interested and able to administer the program. Prior to issuing an expression of interest, Visual Arts Nova Scotia should be approached about the possibility of undertaking the contract for the first three years. The department should also develop a clear statement of principles regarding the Art Bank, including the program's mandate, goals, objectives, outcomes, and roles and responsibilities of both government and the outside agency. This document should also clearly reference that the government's commitment will remain unchanged throughout the process.

Providing base-level funding for the program to a non-profit organization with a vested interest in visual arts would create the following advantages:

- The organization would have the ability to raise its own profile—and the profile of Nova Scotia visual artists—by administering the program.
- A non-profit organization would have the opportunity to offer potential corporate supporters certain charitable advantages.
- If rental rates for the program are reviewed and new clients for the program are developed, the program has the opportunity to become more financially viable. This could also create an additional source of revenue for new Art Bank acquisitions.

The Culture Sector Team is aware that the Art Bank program plays a pivotal role in developing the careers of visual artists in the province. It is for this reason that we support a working relationship between an appropriate agency within the visual arts community and the provincial government.

These recommendations are put forth with a clear understanding that the Art Bank program would continue to be a provincial program, since the status as a provincial program is important to the community.

The team acknowledges that Visual Arts Nova Scotia (VANS) is a likely candidate to run the Art Bank on behalf of the province and could be approached first to determine interest. An initial service delivery arrangement could be negotiated with an option to renew.



Summary of Partnership Benefits

The team has identified a number of key benefits associated with a new Nova Scotia Arts and Culture Partnership Council, including:

- new energy and innovation due to arts and culture sector involvement
- a collaborative approach in identifying and acting on issues and priorities of the arts and culture sector
- stability in provincial development planning given ongoing sector involvement
- sector involvement/monitoring to ensure independent decision making concerning artistic merit
- a progressive movement from narrow issues, towards strategic and long-term planning
- shared responsibility in reporting results and sharing new plans with the sector
- expanded network of people who are well versed in joint sector-government plans for the culture sector, whose shared priorities are reflected in a wide range of activity
- additional resources and expertise dedicated to Nova Scotia's arts and culture sector
- clear accountability for expenditure of public funds
- increased ability to access research expertise and to develop and track measurement factors.



Background

Tourism and Culture Minister Rodney MacDonald formed a team in April 2002 to help shape a new Arts and Culture Council for Nova Scotia to replace the former Nova Scotia Arts Council. The role of this team was to establish a framework that would result in a broadened Arts and Culture Council.

In making the announcement, the Minister said the new council would oversee provincial investment in programs and services delivered through the Department of Tourism and Culture.

"We are working to evolve the traditional model of arts councils to a more inclusive mechanism because culture permeates so many facets of Nova Scotian society," he said. This includes serving the interests of artists, creators, community cultural organizations, cultural industries, and cultural tourism. There will also be a greater emphasis on accountability for resources and spending.

The Minister also said that a new Arts and Culture Council will expand upon the principles on which arts councils operate to support artists and cultural organizations. "We look forward to working with this group on our new direction—a direction that will be an innovative model for other jurisdictions," he said.

The team comprises leaders from a variety of arts and culture genres and includes the following:

- Chair: Actor and Theatre Director Eva Moore from Halifax. Ms. Moore is the Artistic Producer of the 2003 World Theatre Congress and Festival, Artistic Director of the Liverpool International Theatre Festival and former Executive Director of Theatre Nova Scotia (Nova Scotia Drama League).
- Businessman Michael Ardenne from Seabright, Halifax Regional Municipality. Mr. Ardenne is President and CEO of Ardenne International Inc., Artist and Event Management, and is a former chair of the Music Industry Association of Nova Scotia.
- Nova Scotia performer and East Coast Music Award winner Linda Carvery from Halifax. Dr. Carvery performs nationally and is a past President of the Nova Scotia Mass Choir. She sat on the Nova Scotia Arts Council board and is a past board member of Symphony Nova Scotia.
- Performing arts centre manager Don Ferguson from Glace Bay. Mr. Ferguson is General Manager of the Savoy Theatre and is also a community capacity officer for the Town of Glace Bay, with a focus on building community partnerships and capacity.
- Arts and community volunteer Dale MacLennan from Halifax. Ms. MacLennan is the Director of Finance with Halifax Regional Municipality and has served on the boards of numerous community organizations including Mermaid Theatre of Nova Scotia.
- Amy Melmock of Paradise, Annapolis County, is the Director of Community and Economic Development for the Town of Middleton and has worked as an arts administrator with Festival Antigonish and the Stan Rogers and Springhill Music festivals.



To arrive at the recommendations outlined in this report, the team held discussions with the Minister and Deputy Minister of Tourism and Culture and reviewed former Nova Scotia Arts Council legislation, client feedback, departmental objectives and business plans, former arts council programming and departmental programming, government reporting requirements, including the Minister's legislated responsibility, and provincial appointment processes. The team also reviewed research on arts council models in other jurisdictions as well as partnership models within Nova Scotia. The team also took into account policy and program challenges and gaps, operational priorities and fiscal challenges.

To help focus efforts, the team defined a preliminary vision and mission for the new Arts and Culture Partnership Council, which are as follows:

- Vision: "A healthy environment for Nova Scotia artists, the arts and culture." "A healthy environment" was described as one that is sustainable, responsive, productive, diverse, vibrant, appreciative, and nurturing.
- Mission: "To foster a healthy environment for Nova Scotia artists, the arts and culture through processes that are inclusive, equitable and accountable."

The team also identified principles regarding overall program offerings, which include independent assessment, the need to maximize dollars to artists versus administration, and program relevance. Current programs were also reviewed briefly and include Grants to Individuals: Creation, Professional, Presentation; Grants to Organizations and Small Groups: Production/Presentation, Professional Development, Commissioning, Sustaining, Touring, Youth, Cultural Activities, Facilities, Anchor Organizations, and Industry Growth.

In addition, the team developed an overall purpose for programs in relation to the vision and mission statement, identified potential clients, and established guidelines for providing support.

In relation to the vision and mission statement, the purpose of programs is to enable artists, arts organizations, and those engaged in arts and cultural activities in Nova Scotia to create, produce, present, promote, and support arts and culture products at home and abroad. Potential clients include individuals, organizations and groups (not-for-profit), and arts and cultural businesses.

More specifically

- The purpose of funding for individuals is to create, produce, and present new work; to develop new ideas and approaches, such as technical or administrative concepts as they apply to arts and cultural activities; and to improve the ability to do their work (create, produce, and present) through professional development activities.
- The purpose of funding for organizations and groups is to create, produce, and present arts and culture products; to encourage the creation of new works through initiatives such as commissioning; and to provide administrative, educational, and research services for arts and culture activities.
- The purpose of funding for arts and cultural businesses (for profit) is to create economic growth and to create sustainable infrastructure through support to organizations.