



Cultural Policy Mandate of the Canadian Conference of the Arts

Background

Since 1945, the Canadian Conference of the Arts (CCA) has been engaged in the development, analysis, and promotion of public policies to advance the state of the arts and culture in Canadian society.

When it was first created, not only was the CCA the only national umbrella organization bringing all of the arts together, it was also charged with representing specific disciplinary and regional interests of artists, creators, and arts professionals.

Much has changed since those early days. Now, in addition to many national arts service organizations representing producers, artists, and art forms, there are well-established cultural labour organizations, copyright collectives, as well as provincial, territorial, municipal, and community-based arts umbrella organizations. Together these organizations ensure that the issues of importance to their constituencies are dealt with in a serious and professional manner.

The CCA's Renewed Mandate

As the oldest and most broadly based arts umbrella organization in Canada, the CCA must maintain a strong role in the articulation, analysis and development of policies that support the continued growth and maturity of the arts and culture sector in Canada. Recently, the Board of the CCA has reviewed the Mission Statement of the organisation, which now reads as follows:

“The Canadian Conference of the Arts (CCA) is the national forum for the arts and cultural community in Canada. It provides research, analysis and consultation on public policies affecting the arts and the Canadian cultural institutions and industries. The CCA fosters informed public debate on policy issues and seeks to advance the cultural rights of Canadians.”

The CCA mandate is first and foremost at the federal government level. Indeed, while the CCA enjoys a broad and diverse membership base and many of the policy issues it is concerned with cross jurisdictional borders, it does not currently have the resources required to ensure credible and rigorous engagement in every cultural or public policy at the federal, provincial/territorial, and municipal level across Canada.

Policy and Advocacy Guidelines

In order to ensure the most effective use of the resources, the following **guidelines** should inform the ever changing policy agenda for the CCA.

1. As a rule the CCA must maintain a standing watch on all public and cultural policy developments that take place at the federal government level. Most developments occur in relation the Department of Canadian Heritage, though the scope of CCA's analysis must also take into consideration new initiatives through the Ministries of Finance, Industry, Foreign Affairs and others, not to mention the Government's agencies and crown corporations that have any kind of impact in the cultural domain.
2. In consultation with appropriate members on specific files, the CCA will address federal policy issues in a holistic manner, assessing the effect on the arts and culture sector in

order determine any areas for particular concern and appropriate strategies and tools for proactive response.

3. The CCA should maintain a watching brief on public and cultural policy developments at the provincial/territorial and municipal levels of government. The foremost role of the CCA in this brief is to function as the hub of a communications network, which makes the sector aware of any developments in public or cultural policy that could potentially have a broader impact on the interests of the arts and cultural industries, and the cultural rights of Canadians.
4. In general, the CCA will not directly intervene in public or cultural policy issues at the provincial / territorial or municipal levels of government. The CCA can, if a formal request is made on behalf of a recognized member organization, provide guidance and advice to those who wish to intervene in such matters in order to advance their own specific interests.
5. If an issue emerges at the provincial / territorial or municipal level where no organization exists to represent the interest of the arts and culture sector, the CCA would intervene if a request is made from the arts and culture communities in that particular province, territory, or municipality.
6. As the preferred modus operandi, the CCA can endorse the representations of provincial/territorial and municipal arts organizations only if the issue in question has a broader implication for the sector outside of the jurisdiction in question.
7. The CCA should only consider adherence to other arts coalitions, campaigns, or similar initiatives if the objectives of the exercise are consistent with the CCA's policy and advocacy priorities, the organization's mission and governance structure, and do not in any manner duplicate or subsume the role of the CCA as the policy voice of the arts and culture sector.
8. As a matter of course, the Board of Governors of the CCA will periodically assess these guidelines to ensure that they support the primary mission of the organization and add value to the public and cultural policy process in an effective and sustainable manner.