Youth Participation in Arts, Heritage, Culture and Community
A National Conversation

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Contents

Executive Summary

In March 2009, the Department of Canadian Heritage held discussions on youth engagement with 100 organizations and 40 youth participants from the Encounters with Canada program. Discussions focused on understanding what models of engagement are in use, what barriers or challenges exist related to youth engagement, how current federal programs support engagement activities, and the role of Canadian Heritage and/or the Government of Canada in supporting and encouraging youth engagement. Youth and adults from across the country emphasized that youth engagement is essential. It is no longer a question of "why" engage youth, but rather "how."

Models of Engagement
Although different models were shared, three common threads were repeated:
1. Participants reflected that it is important to pay attention to process as well as outcome, making sure that youth engagement is valued as an experience, not just as a means to an end.
2. Participants stressed the value of providing a continuum of opportunities, allowing diverse levels of involvement and various opportunities (or "points of entry") for becoming involved.
3. The importance of participating in authentic exchange was emphasized by both youth and adults; effective youth engagement is seen to be a two-way street with youth, adults, and organizations sharing and growing together.

Incentives to Participation
Youth are attracted to involvement that makes a difference, has a cause, or features activities that tap into their passions. Meeting with peers is very important, both spending time with existing friends and making new ones. Gaining educational experience is an incentive to engagement activities, especially for youth-at-risk. Gaining career-building experience is a benefit to youth as well as the sector they are engaged in.

Effective Mechanisms to Engage Youth
Youth engagement practices were diverse but common practices did emerge. The importance of having youth involved from beginning to end (having youth participate in the design, delivery, and evaluation of projects), ensuring youth voice and youth involvement in governance (creating opportunities for youth to contribute to organizational decision-making through things like youth councils), and providing for safe and welcoming physical spaces (less formal, where youth feel ownership and a sense of belonging), were all common themes. Also, providing recognition for youth contributions via honorariums, appreciation activities, or even ensuring that youth received a simple thank-you for their efforts were all highlighted as essential components of effectively engaging youth.

Challenges to Youth Participation
Organizations and youth face challenges to engagement; these relate primarily to resource scarcity, reaching the right young people the right way, and specific barriers faced by organizations.

Experiences with Existing Federal Support

Participants spoke of the strengths of existing relationships with the federal government, such as great programs and the funding which makes things possible. They also spoke of challenges in existing relationships, such as administrative costs, inefficiencies, inconsistent relationships, restrictive funding requirements, and the burden of evaluation.

Roles for Canadian Heritage

Discussions concerning experiences with existing federal support led participants to suggest three roles:

Operating Differently as a Funder
- Fund programs instead of projects
- Support youth-led organizations
- Fund youth engagement (not just organizations that engage youth)
- Create a simpler, clearer, and broader funding process
- Recognize excellence through more than just funding (e.g., awards, references)

Developing a Role as Connector and Network-Builder
- Connect organizations with each other
- Connect government departments and different tiers of government
- Connect youth organizations with arts, heritage, and culture organizations
- Connect to already-existing conversations
- Inspire communities and organizations to engage youth
- Mobilize individuals and organizations through advice, guidance, funding, resources, and knowledge related to youth engagement
- Participate in programs through more site visits
- Volunteer (within the federal public service) to share expertise with their local communities
- Communicate about youth engagement information, funding, and research

Building Capacity
- Educate organizations about evaluation, design programs, and meet funding expectations, as well as provide education around leadership

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Canadian Heritage's Citizen Participation Branch helps Canadians to better understand both the diversity and the shared aspects of the Canadian experience, and seeks to connect Canadians to one another and their communities. The Branch is home to a number of programs that serve to fulfill these objectives: Building Communities Through Arts and Heritage, Exchanges Canada, Katimavik, Canadian Studies, and the Young Canada Works Secretariat.

In the spring of 2009, the Citizen Participation Branch hosted a series of facilitated discussions with individuals, organizations, and institutions from across Canada. The topic of conversation was youth engagement, with special focus on the arts, heritage, and culture sectors, and what Canadian Heritage can do to support and increase youth participation and engagement in communities and in these sectors. Themes explored included youth engagement theories and practices, reasons for engaging youth and challenges that arise, as well as current experiences with federal support and roles that the Department could play in supporting youth engagement.

A total of 14 roundtable discussions were held with 92 organizations serving communities and youth (including youth-led organizations). Included in this national conversation were representatives from youth organizations, arts, heritage, and culture organizations. These roundtable discussions were held in Montréal, Ottawa, Winnipeg, Vancouver, Moncton, and Toronto. Canadian Heritage officials also supplemented the above-mentioned roundtables by soliciting feedback (either in person, by telephone, or by e-mail) with eight additional organizations[1] based on the questions asked in the roundtable discussion.

Listening to Youth Voice

As part of the dialogues conducted at Encounters With Canada (EWC), participants wrote letters to the Department sharing their insights and suggestions about youth engagement. Excerpts from their letters are included throughout the report in text boxes like this.

In addition to organizational stakeholders, two additional roundtable discussions were held with youth through facilitated group discussions held in Ottawa (March 5, 2009, and March 12, 2009) with a total of 40 *Encounters With Canada* participants, representing youth (aged 14 to 17) from diverse regions and cultures across Canada.

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[1] In most cases these were organizations that were not able to attend a roundtable discussion in person but still welcomed the opportunity to provide input.

1.2 Methodology

Defining Youth

For the purpose of these conversations, youth was defined according to the definitions used by each organization. This resulted in the word being used to describe children and young adults from the ages of 8 to 35, depending on the context. Despite not putting parameters around the definition of youth, some trends in how organizations defined youth were observed. In the context of education and engagement in institutions like museums, art galleries, and dance, the word "youth" encompassed the younger end of the spectrum (aged 8 to 18) whereas when dealing with employment projects and professional development, youth was more often used to describe young adults (aged 18 to 35).

Defining Engagement

Defining youth engagement for the purpose of the roundtable discussions was done using examples of the types of activities that the Department considered good examples of civic youth engagement activities as well as arts, heritage, culture, and history engagement. These examples were designed to serve as a starting point for conversation, and outlined varying degrees of youth ownership and active participation in activities.

Civic youth engagement examples included youth participating, leading, and developing initiatives that would benefit the community, mentoring other youth, or contributing to leadership and decision making.

Arts, heritage, culture, and history youth engagement examples included participation as an audience, student, creator, or teacher of activities that are related to arts, heritage or culture.

Examples were designed to demonstrate a spectrum of engagement opportunities, from passive to active, with varying levels of time commitment and involvement in decision making and leadership.

Research Questions

There were two main research questions. The first explored youth engagement, both from a theoretical and practical perspective. The second focused on the federal government, and specifically Canadian Heritage, and how it supports and encourages youth engagement.

In order to answer the above research questions, Canadian Heritage chose to undertake a national conversation with a range of youth-led, youth-serving, and community organizations. Some of the consulted organizations are supported by various Canadian Heritage programs, while others are supported by other federal departments, and still others receive no federal funding. An independent consulting firm was engaged to facilitate the process and compile the findings.

In order to address these research questions, Canadian Heritage employees designed a three-pronged approach that consisted of roundtable discussions, interviews, and facilitated discussion with youth. Each of these approaches used a discussion guide developed by an independent consultant in

conjunction with Canadian Heritage employees. Three different forms of the discussion guide were developed to be appropriate for each of the three methods of discussion (see Appendix A).

Participants

Participants invited to the roundtable discussions were chosen and invited to attend by Canadian Heritage. They were informed of the purpose of the research prior to their participation, and were sent an agenda in advance. These regional discussions, held across Canada, were facilitated by an independent consulting firm and observed by employees of the Department (see Appendix B for a complete listing of organizations that participated in the roundtable discussions).

Roundtables

Two types of organizational stakeholders were invited to participate in a series of 14 roundtable discussions (see Appendix C for the complete schedule of roundtable discussions). Stream 1 consisted of arts, heritage/commemoration, and culture organizations. A total of 56 organizations participated in this stream of roundtable discussions, including museums, art galleries, festivals, the literary sector, community arts organizations, and trainers and presenters in the arts.

Stream 2 consisted of community and youth organizations, including those both youth-led (by youth, for youth) and youth-serving (by adults, for youth). A total of 36 organizations participated in this stream of roundtable discussions, including service clubs, community centres, and youth leadership organizations. In some cases, organizational stakeholders were not discretely from one stream or the other, but represented a blend of both.

Roundtable conversations were held in both official languages where necessary (through the use of simultaneous translation and a bilingual facilitator) and participants were invited and encouraged to speak in the language of their choice. Roundtable discussions were audio and visually recorded. Facilitated youth discussions were audio recorded, and interviews were annotated by the interviewer. Participants were made aware of the method of recording prior to the commencement of the discussions.

Additional conversations

 Canadian Heritage officials supplemented the above-mentioned roundtables by soliciting feedback (either in person, by telephone, or by e-mail) with eight additional organizations[2] based on the questions asked in the roundtable discussion.

In addition to organizational stakeholders, two additional discussion groups were held with 40 youth, through facilitated group discussions held in Ottawa (March 5, 2009, and March 12, 2009) with *Encounters With Canada* participants, who represent youth from diverse regions and cultures across Canada.

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[2] In most cases, these were organizations that were not able to attend a roundtable discussion in person but still welcomed the opportunity to provide input.

1.3 Analysis

Findings from this process are presented in sections representing the six categories that arose in the national conversation about youth participation:

1) Models of Engagement
2) Effective Mechanisms to Engage Youth
3) Incentives to Participation
4) Challenges to Youth Participation
5) Experiences with Existing Federal Support
6) Roles for Canadian Heritage

1.4 Limitations

While Canadian Heritage made significant efforts to ensure that the range of participating organizations represented a broad cross-section of the geographic, linguistic, and cultural diversity of Canada, discussion participation was limited to those individuals who were available to attend the scheduled roundtable discussions or correspond via telephone, e-mail, or through separate meetings during the discussion period. For this reason, the findings in this report represent a sort of national conversation convened by the Department, rather than a representative research study of all youth and youth-serving organizations.

In addition, although roundtables were regionally distributed from coast to coast, individuals and organizations attended based on their availability. In some cases, participants in a roundtable were not from the geographic region in which the discussion took place, or represented an organization that was national in scope. For this reason, regional comparisons cannot be drawn from the roundtable discussions.

Limitations surrounding youth discussions are related to the sample, as young people were accessed through existing organizations which generally attract youth who are already engaged. The perspectives of youth who are not engaged are therefore not directly represented in this report, although participants in organizational roundtable discussions were able to speculate on reasons for not participating and comment on the observed experiences of youth who are not engaged through questions on barriers and challenges related to youth engagement.

2. Models of Engagement

Summary:

- Participants reflected that it is important to pay attention to process as well as outcome, ensuring that youth engagement is valued as an experience, not just a means to an end.
- Participants stressed the value of providing a continuum of opportunities, allowing diverse levels of involvement and various opportunities (or "points of entry") for becoming involved.
- The importance of participating in authentic exchange was emphasized by both youth and adults; effective youth engagement is seen to be a two-way street with youth, adults, and organizations sharing and growing together.

As part of the introduction to roundtable discussions, the concept of youth engagement was discussed and examples of the current conception of youth participation as seen by Canadian Heritage were provided by the facilitator. Participants articulated a number of theories (such as Hart's *Ladder of Participation,*[3] and Driskell's *Continuum of Participation*[4]) and models (such as the Centre of Excellence's *Framework of Youth Engagement*) that are reflected in the common themes of creating opportunity for authentic exchange, developing a continuum of engagement opportunities, and paying close attention to process.

Figure 1: Common themes in models of youth engagement

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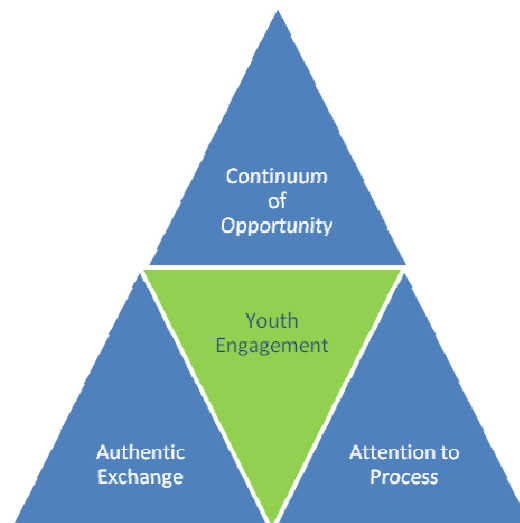
[3] Hart, R. (1997). *Children's Participation: The Theory and Practice of Involving Young Citizens in Community Development and Environmental Care*. London: Earthscan.

[4] Driskell, D. (2002). *Creating Better Cities with Children and Youth: A manual for participation.* London: Earthscan.

Additionally, examples of national strategies to foster youth engagement were mentioned, as well as international examples. Finally, reasons for engaging youth were articulated by organizations, and youth articulated their reasons for becoming involved.

2.1 Theme 1: Authentic Exchange

> *"One thing I like about some activities I'm in, you get to speak your ideas and adults listen and you get to organize and run them."* - EWC Participant

One of the most commonly used words in roundtable discussions about effective youth engagement was the word "relationship." Participants reflected on not only the value of relationships for individuals (e.g., improving social support networks, helping youth feel valued in the community), but also on the positive impact a truly two-way relationship can have for programs (e.g., authentic youth participation in decision making and contributing to program development). Two types of youth engagement models suggested the theme of relationship building that led to an authentic exchange:

Mentorship
The practice of mentorship–connecting adult mentors with youth (either naturally through connections that youth develop over time with employees and adults involved in an organization, or more intentionally through programs that pair adults and youth together as part of the process)–was recommended by many participants. It was noted that mentorship can have positive impacts on young people from a personal-development as well as a professional-development perspective, with established professionals mentoring emerging professionals in their field.

Scaffolding
Engaging older youth to support and mentor younger youth in their communities, as well as providing support for older youth to deliver programs or workshops to younger youth are both common models of engaging youth.

2.2 Theme 2: Continuum of Engagement Opportunities
Repeated in all models of youth engagement that were mentioned during this process was the idea that youth engagement occurs on a spectrum or continuum, and that it is important to maintain a variety of entry points for young people, and a variety of layers at which they can engage in an activity. The following three spectrums were emphasized:

1. *Full Circle Involvement*–a best practice is to engage youth at the beginning, the middle, and the end of a project–all the way through a project from involvement in the conception, to development, then delivery and evaluation.

2. *Ladder of Participation*–youth engagement can happen to varying degrees, and it is important to recognize what kind of youth engagement is being undertaken. Several examples of theoretical continuums were presented (see Hart and Driskell for two examples)

3. *Incremental Involvement*–programs should make space for different levels of engagement, and allow young people to increase their level of involvement at their own pace. Having layers to programming and different avenues of entry into a program facilitates this type of incremental engagement.

> *"I also think that to get youth involved you must stress that programs available are not for the 'straight A' student only or the 'student council prez'" - EWC Participant*

2.3 Theme 3: Attention to Process

It is important to realize that when working with youth, participants in these discussions felt that the process was as important (sometimes more important) than the outcome of a youth engagement activity; it is in the process that young people learn and grow and become able to contribute. Several important features of good process were listed by participants:

> *"Activities made me feel welcome, belonging and a part of something." - EWC Participant*

Engaging the Whole Person
Three elements of "head, heart, and feet", are defined by the Centre of Excellence in Youth Engagement in their youth engagement theory as thinking, feeling, and doing. These elements were echoed in the observations of many participants. This approach is useful in framing the different types of motivation for youth involvement in engagement activities. Young people who shared their reasons for getting involved listed things like having opportunities for learning and experiencing new things, feeling like they belong to a community, and doing things that will influence change in the world. They wanted to use their "heads, hearts, and feet."

Recognizing Diversity
Participating organizations recognized that there is diversity among youth and within communities; therefore, no one model of programming is the same across communities, programs, or even individual youth participating in the same community and program from year to year.

2.4 Examples of National and International Strategies

The activities of Canada's current Governor General were cited during several different roundtable discussions as great examples of how youth engagement can be done really well on a federal level. Many of her programs were mentioned repeatedly as a "best practice."

Opportunities for Youth (OFY), a Canadian funding model from the 1970s, was cited as the catalyst that launched the careers of many participants in the arts, heritage, and culture streams in one roundtable discussion. Although only mentioned once, all participants in that session were very passionate about the quality and impact of that program.

Also mentioned only in one group, but with emphasis, was the fact that some roundtable participants found the Canada Youth Arts Network (CYAN) to be an exciting idea when it was started, but some organizations felt that it has fallen short of reaching its potential for a variety of reasons (primarily the large scope of its work and resource restrictions). These participants did see value in engaging and

connecting on a national level around youth in the arts. Although CYAN did not come up in any other roundtables, the idea of national exchange and connection was a universally expressed theme.

Internationally, Ecuador, Norway, France, the UK, and the EU were all mentioned as good examples of funding and engagement models. Unfortunately, the scope of these roundtable discussions did not allow for participants to fully explain them. These countries may be a good starting point for further research on international models of youth engagement.

3. Effective Mechanisms to Engage Youth

Summary:

‒ Engagement activities should involve young people from the beginning to end, through recruitment to program design, delivery, and consider what happens after the project ends
‒ Providing recognition and awards to appreciate young people's contributions increases engagement and improves the experience for them.
‒ It is important to create safe and welcoming youth-friendly space for engagement activities.

Roundtable discussions with youth revealed a variety of mechanisms that are effective in engaging youth. In particular, participants described program design elements, delivery approaches, and non-program factors that facilitate youth engagement. Observations about youth engagement practices have been organized into practices that work at the beginning, middle, and end of an engagement project, as well as all around good practice for all stages of a project. In addition to separating observations into these four categories, where observations specific to the arts, heritage, and culture sectors were made, these are noted.

3.1 Get Young People Involved from the Beginning to the End

Recruitment

Participants emphasized that programs need to start by meeting young people where they literally are: in schools, community centres, recreational facilities. Engage them in their own environment (while playing sports, or at the youth centre).

Several organizations advised that it is important to communicate early; specific communications strategies discussed included promoting activities at least three months in advance through radio, posters, or the Internet, and reaching out to youth through in-person contact in places they already are (e.g., go to schools and host booths at the lunch hour).

Young people expressed loud and clear a sense that they do not know how to become engaged. They are either not aware of opportunities or do not feel comfortable approaching projects or organizations when they want to become involved.

> *"A huge problem for getting involved is HOW! I know a handful of students and peers who are highly interested in getting involved; they just don't know how. Yes, we have announcements at school, but we can never hear them so we don't know what's happening"* - EWC Participant

> *"The awareness surrounding these programs is minimal. I never knew a lot of them existed, and I am a very active community person. I believe that if youth actually knew about the programs, they would get involved. By using TV, Internet, and other social networks, I think you would see the number of interested youth increase."* – EWC Participant

Program Design

A major theme among organizations that effectively engage youth was the involvement of young people (either youth or young adults) in designing programs. The consensus was that, in order to be culturally relevant to youth, programs need to have youth input in design. Youth-led organizations must demonstrate that youth are capable of designing and delivering highly successful and relevant programs. Organizations suggested there is a need to find effective ways to allow youth involvement in all levels of project design, and ensure that thoughts and ideas are heard, put in place, and implemented in the project design. A youth council seems to be a commonly used method of achieving youth input into programs. Youth and young adult boards exist across the country, providing significant leadership opportunities for young people.

Participants acknowledged that programs should have limits to their scope. They suggest it is important to consider the audience for programs, and the reasons why engagement is necessary, and behave accordingly. It is important to identify the target group that is being served and not try to be everything to everyone. They also suggested articulating what specific interest is to be met. It was observed that organizations and program quality suffer when they try to be "everything to everyone."

Extra time and resources for organizations were also deemed necessary to allow for trial and error, especially with youth-driven projects. Some participants said that it is important to make mistakes and learn, allowing for a learning curve with financial and human resource support. Some individuals felt that the common perception among funders is that youth work takes fewer resources, but they feel that, in reality, it takes more.

A few participants noted that incorporating youth engagement into organizational policy and procedures at decision-making and leadership levels leads to validating the importance of involving young people, and has a trickle-down effect throughout the organization. Some participating adult-led organizations suggested incorporating youth voice beyond the project level, into the core of the organization, as a means to truly engage youth. For youth-led organizations, this practice is already a part of their work by the very nature of being youth-led.

Program Delivery

Participants suggested that partnering with other organizations is a good way to effectively build sense of community and provide youth with the information and supports they need. No one organization can meet all the needs of a young person, so partnerships help ensure that the community better responds to their needs.

Organizations suggested that programs need to adapt to young people, and not expect young people to change immediately. Many challenges around youth engagement were thought to be not about youth disengagement but rather adult disengagement from youth. For this reason, it was suggested that accessible language be used, and that organizations operate in welcoming and more informal ways. One participant noted that people delivering programs to young people have to be ready to be changed

> *"Youth are a huge part of our society and so often we're dismissed... it takes a very determined and intelligent youth to get involved or be heard." - EWC Participant*

14

by their work with youth as much as they are ready to change youth. It was also suggested by other participants that successful engagement is an exchange and a partnership, not a one-way street.

Producing a tangible end product is something generally considered important for young people, according to some participants. Producing something meaningful and gaining a sense of contribution was seen to have positive effects for youth self esteem and feelings of belonging.

After the Project Ends
Young people, along with some organizations, noted the importance of maintaining connections with young people and sharing developments that have arisen from their participation. They suggested preparing for the project ending, and working with young people to determine what next steps or supports need to be in place for continuity. Action planning was seen by several organizations as a large part of youth conferences or short-term projects.

3.2 Provide for Recognition and Awards

> *"I also find it very hard to do as much as I do and rarely get a thank-you." – EWC Participant*

Compensation
Many organizations and young people alike emphasized the importance of respecting what youth have sacrificed in order to participate (free time, employment opportunities, etc.), and providing for transportation and food as well as possibly an honorarium to compensate them for their time or recognize their contribution.

Several benefits of offering an honorarium were shared:
- A monetary exchange provides validity to the activity. Honorariums are about valuing and appreciating the young person for making the choice to engage.

- Young people are often choosing between competing ways to spend their time, and often money plays a role in their deciding what they do.

- Celebrating successes and accomplishments is an essential piece of good youth engagement practice. Symbols of recognition are important.

Arts and culture organizations suggested valuing youth talent and contributions to the arts by rewarding young artists for their efforts–pay for their work, commission their work to an exhibition, host public performances, or share their accomplishments with the media.

Employment
Employment opportunities and internships can be very effective (yet relatively under-funded) mechanisms to engage young people. Arts and culture institutions observed that university co-op programs exist in science and engineering, but are not common in arts and culture. Heritage organizations expressed appreciation for the Young Canada Works program, but felt it could be expanded.

Awards

Participants also recognized the value in providing young people with awards and public recognition, such as media coverage, for successful accomplishments. Many communities currently do offer youth awards, and participants often listed this action as a form of engagement activity that was currently used in their organizations.

3.3 Create a Safe and Welcoming Youth-Friendly Space

"Meet Them Where They're At"

In terms of being welcoming and youth-friendly, the most frequently cited suggestion was to "meet young people where they're at" figuratively by operating in a way that is developmentally and culturally appropriate. Dress codes and ways of working can be more informal, and participants suggested using fun, creative, and active approaches whenever possible. It was suggested by some participants that facilitators be youth or adults who are youth-friendly and familiar with the language and culture that is accessible to youth. Although this was seen to be crucial, some participants cautioned that this should not be taken too far or done carelessly, as youth live up (or down) to the expectations set for them and see through fake interactions. Taken too far or done without care, participants felt this approach could leave youth feeling belittled or treated without respect.

Facebook is No Replacement for Face-to-Face

Technology can be a great communication tool, but stakeholders (especially youth themselves) repeated very clearly that tools like Facebook do not replace face-to-face interactions. Community organizations need support to update their websites and develop a Web-presence that is accessible to young people. But the Web is a communication tool not an engagement tool. Some youth organizations excel at Web-based communications (particularly youth-led organizations), and perhaps mentorship opportunities could be fostered to help all organizations develop their capacity in this milieu.

> *"More activities would give people more chances to communicate and discuss in person rather than on Facebook or MSN. In our society, we need to keep our personal connection with one another and become one whole community." – EWC Participant*

Create Safe Space That is Comfortable, Accessible, and Actually Safe and Secure, Where Young People Feel Welcome

Examples provided of making safe spaces for youth included actually removing desks and office equipment from spaces and replacing them with couches to create an open and informal environment. Storefront and studio spaces were considered to be very youth-friendly.

Relationship Building

Participants reflected that relationships are a core component of effective youth engagement and creating a youth-friendly and welcoming environment, and this has implications across several domains of practice:

- Trained, qualified, accessible employees who can act as role models, and are well paid and valued by the organization (both to show youth they are valued, and to reduce turnover that disrupts programs).
- Mentorship that works both ways–young people can act as mentors to adults, especially when those adults need to understand youth culture. Work with young people, not just for them.
- Program longevity so that employees can build relationships and participants can become engaged on a long term basis.
- Incorporate ways for young people to evaluate their experience and provide feedback.

3.4 Youth Engagement Practices That are Arts/Heritage/Culture-Specific

It was suggested as a best practice by several arts, heritage, and culture organizations to have young people participate actively in the production as well as in the appreciation of arts, heritage, and culture, through activities like jurying work and participating in its analysis, designing and delivering historical animation, or producing a performance piece.

Some participants suggested the practice of bringing events (such as travelling shows or exhibits), and bringing artists and makers of culture, as well as persons who can speak to a particular heritage event (e.g., veterans) directly to young people. Role modelling and demonstrating the potential for a career were considered to be important aspects of connecting young people with arts, heritage, and culture professionals.

> *"I would like there to be a big forum on immigration and how immigrants are to be respected as a vital part of Canadian culture. In my opinion, the culture of Canada, as a mosaic, is the culture of the world." – EWC Participant*

Participants considered engaging activities to be ones that are relevant to the lives of young people within the scope of arts, heritage, and culture. As one participant from an arts background suggested, Shakespeare may not always be relevant to the lives of youth; sometimes spoken word may be more successful. However many participants considered it equally important to be sensitive to specific interests and needs of communities and audiences, as there can be different needs and opportunities (e.g., one stakeholder organization offered free ballet lessons to boys, and over 70 enrolled).

Helping youth identify with their own cultures is seen to be essential, especially in minority groups. Specific groups mentioned included Francophones, Aboriginal peoples, and new Canadians. This means engaging these cultures in the design and delivery of programs, which can be a challenge for many organizations.

The importance of expertise was given in the example of teaching art; artists need to be taught about teaching, and teachers need to be taught about arts, or they can work together. Teachers and artists have different expertise, so to ensure programs are delivered expertly, participants stressed that professional development, as well as partnerships, can be effective ways to add expertise to a youth program.

In addition, it was suggested that collaboration between sectors can be an effective way to serve youth in arts, heritage, and culture programming. Several stakeholder organizations have been modeling programs after recreation (which has been engaging youth successfully for a very long time) and working with youth organizations to make programs more youth-friendly.

4. Incentives to Participation

Summary:

- Youth are more engaged when there is a cause, or activities that tap into their passions.
- Meeting with peers is very important–both spending time with existing friends and making new ones.
- Gaining educational experience is an incentive to engagement activities, especially for youth-at-risk.
- Gaining career-building experience is a benefit to youth as well as the sectors they are engaged in.

4.1 Being Engaged with a Cause

Youth engagement, particularly in youth-led organizations, is often related to issues of importance that youth care about (e.g., the environment, social justice, and media awareness). Youth engagement itself can be a form of social action, by contesting stereotypes and reframing youth in the media as social change agents by presenting positive images of youth accomplishing things and making valuable contributions.

> *"Allowing us to be expressive is an asset as our true colours come out. Most important is the initiation of passion and educating us on the factors that contribute to our modern society. This helps us to be more diverse and accepting of change, but also creating change that is positive."*
> EWC Participant

Youth organizations may also use the arts as a form of community engagement (e.g., community art projects like murals in transit stations). In addition, some organizations may engage by using arts to respond to tragedy (e.g., shooting, loss of life) as a healing exercise.

4.2 Meeting with Peers

Youth engagement can provide social support for all youth, but is an especially powerful tool for empowering marginalized groups (e.g., arts organizations for Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgendered and Queer youth). This was a universal theme among young people, and young people from rural and remote regions expressed the importance of engagement activities as opportunities to meet new people. All young people who shared this were in attendance at the *Encounters With Canada* forum, which had national representation, and highlighted how significant it was to be meeting people from different cultures and regions. Youth engagement also provides intergenerational dialogue opportunities, which is of particular cultural significance in Aboriginal communities. One roundtable participant suggested that youth engagement is essential because traditional institutions (e.g., the Church in Quebec) are no longer builders of community for a majority of youth.

> *"It's great that the government is giving youth this amazing shot at further education [Encounters]! I appreciate it very much for I am a student looking for more than a classroom education. Hands-on learning is something that should be further supported." – EWC Participant*

4.3 Gaining Educational Experience

Schools have been identified as gateways to reaching youth, and were often cited as the simplest way to reach the majority of youth. Teachers were mentioned as a main link between arts, heritage, and culture organizations or institutions and young people. Participants also noted that arts, heritage, and culture perspectives can be excellent lenses through which to explore the curriculum, and that community, arts, heritage, and culture organizations have a role to play in supporting schools to engage youth in new and creative ways. According to some participants, the most successful school programs also take the curriculum very seriously, and work to support the outcomes outlined in it, supporting, rather than competing with, the school's agenda. Museums often do this very well, communicating with schools years in advance to ensure that their exhibits fit within the curriculum for the coming years.

Youth organizations feel passionately that engagement activities help young people who are alienated or disconnected from the mainstream education system find ways to connect. Engagement activities that provide alternative credits (i.e., towards high school or university) give value to the experience of participating in arts, culture, and heritage activities. Organizations suggested this as a great way to connect to those "back row" youth who may not be engaged in mainstream education. One participant even suggested that many "at-risk" young people display entrepreneurial tendencies in the at-risk behaviour they exhibit (e.g., graffiti art). Engagement practices are seen to harness that energy in productive ways and help turn things around for the better.

At the same time, participants recognized that schools are struggling in youth engagement; there are very high rates of student disengagement. Recruitment solely by teachers and school counsellors was warned against by young people themselves as this method can result in selection bias towards kids who are already engaged; "from the front row, not the back."

> "...do not allow everything to go through teachers and grade counsellors as they often do not do anything with the opportunities or don't allow more unsuccessful students to attend." – EWC Participant

4.4 Gaining Career-Building Experience

Engagement activities provide youth with professional development not only for working in the areas they engage in, but by helping them acquire the transferrable skills of communication, teamwork, critical thinking, entrepreneurial spirit, etc. There was a perceived need by arts and culture participants to show the outside world (educational institutions, potential employers, and even parents) that arts and culture activities are valuable for developing skills.

Participants also noted that youth often first engage in their communities to develop skills and build their résumés. At the same time, arts, heritage, and culture organizations hope to groom the next generation of employees for their sector.

5. Challenges to Youth Participation

Summary:

– A resource scarcity exists for youth organizations in the form of time, money, transportation, human resources, and facilities.
– Reaching the right young people the right way can pose a challenge. In particular, organizations find it challenging to reach less privileged youth of all cultures. There is also a challenge to get the proper balance of engagement (not too much, not too little), address regional challenges, combat negative stereotypes, and address gaps in continuity for older youth.
– Barriers for organizations include communications, evaluation, changing paradigms about the role of youth, and program inflexibility.

The first step to overcoming the challenges and barriers which exist in Canadian organizations and communities is to identify and try to understand them. Challenges were presented by stakeholders in terms of barriers for youth, barriers for organizations, barriers specific to the arts, heritage, and culture organizations, and barriers that apply to all levels.

5.1 Resource Scarcity

No organizations or young people who participated in this conversation complained of being over-resourced. The funding climate is very competitive, and organizations are getting by "on a shoestring" in most cases. It is their perception that youth programs and activities are often under-valued by society and therefore by funders.

Some of the specific resource issues identified include the following:

- *Time* is a barrier, as many youth do not have the time to be involved in activities in their communities. Many youth work, have additional school activities, or are already involved in sports and recreation.

- *Money* is also a barrier, as not all youth can afford program fees. Even free programs are impacted by this because so many young people have part-time jobs.

- *Transportation* is a barrier, especially for rural communities. Programs need to go to youth, or provide transportation to connect them to their programming.

- *Human Resources* were a resource that organizations mentioned struggling with. Organizations reported finding it difficult to maintain adequate human resources for a few reasons: low pay, difficult hours, lack of job stability (due to project-based funding), and a sense that youth work is the bottom rung of a career ladder. Also, many organizations rely on volunteers because of resource scarcity. As one participant phrased it, "The only way you stay around for a long time in this sector–as an individual–is not to look at it like a job, but as a mission." According to some stakeholders from arts, heritage, and culture organizations, human resources are particularly challenging; no one really trains for community youth engagement leadership in these sectors.

There are reportedly limited professional development opportunities and credentials. For this reason, participants observe a broad range of skills and successes in the field.

- *Finding good facilities* can be a challenge, as there is also a reported shortage of good physical programming space in some communities (e.g., youth organizations get leftover unwanted space or no space at all). It is frequently the case that young people want to be engaged, but organizations don't have the resources or capacity to engage them.

5.2 Reaching the Right Young People the Right Way

Over-Representation of Privileged Youth
Several organizations that host school visits to arts, heritage, or cultural institutions suggested that if a map is created of school attendance, the same schools will often be found to visit the same institutions over and over, and these are observed to be mostly the well-resourced schools. So although it may appear that there are many school visits per year, participants pointed out that the number of students reached is much lower than the number of student visits over the course of the year. Also, youth with abundant parental and community support are more likely to engage in these sectors outside of school (e.g., dance classes, family trips to the museum).

Engaging All Cultures
Making engagement accessible, appropriate, and safe for all cultures is a significant challenge. Many organizations commented on the difficulties they encountered engaging Aboriginal youth, some new Canadian communities (although not all), and French-language groups outside of Quebec. This is a complex issue beyond the scope of this report, but issues of inclusion, colonial heritage, and racism contribute to this barrier. Many organizations who noted this as a barrier also expressed a desire to do what they can to overcome it.

Proper Balance of Engagement
Many youth and organizations alike identified challenges associated with breaking through to all youth, not just "keeners" or those who stand out and are already highly engaged. On the other hand, several youth-led organizations identified challenges around over-engagement, and as a result, youth burnout among some of their most engaged clients, members, or employees. Too much engagement can be just as much a challenge as too little.

Regional Challenges
Rural and urban communities face unique challenges regarding youth engagement, and their efforts to engage youth need to look significantly different, both in terms of distribution of resources as well as program design, based on these challenges.

Negative Stereotypes
Some communities react negatively to their youth based on poor communication, poor understanding of youth culture, or perceived fear of youth. An example given by participants was the practice of

playing classical music in public spaces to "drive youth away." This negative stereotyping of youth can disengage them. Even if an organization is interested in engaging young people, participants felt that organizations need to combat assumptions that young people may have about how approachable the organization is. Youth who already face multiple barriers are particularly vulnerable to the effects of negative stereotyping.

There are also negative stereotypes in youth culture about over-engagement and many organizations fear that youth feel being involved or engaged is somehow "uncool." This is not universal, however, as many youth-led organizations can also attest to the value of being engaged in youth culture.

Gaps in the Continuity of Engagement for Older Youth
Retention is challenging, especially in regards to maintaining a life-long continuum of engagement as youth grow up or change. This is especially highlighted by Aboriginal groups, as they are such a young population, and have a focus on intergenerational partnerships rather than youth-focused ones separate from adults.

The arts and culture sectors reported challenges around continuity. Programs exist for youth, and grants exist for established artists and performers, but participants reported little in the way of support for emerging professionals. This was pointed out primarily by the performing and visual arts organizational representatives.

5.3 Barriers for Organizations

Communications
Making contact with young people can be difficult (especially with disengaged youth, who may have left school or be out of the mainstream). Staying in touch with youth once contact is made can be challenging, especially for organizations that are already under-resourced, but in many cases it is deemed to be important to maintain contact in order to provide continuity of engagement in the organization and the community. Retention of youth participants in programs or projects is often a big challenge because young people move and/or grow up. To maintain those relationships takes a significant investment of time and employees.

Evaluation
Evaluation can be a challenge because so many of the outcomes of youth engagement are qualitative (do not easily fit within reporting frameworks) or long-term (and therefore are not within the reporting timeline). This is only the case when expectations of the recipient of the evaluations are quantitative and short-term. There are other evaluation models that can be more compatible with youth-engagement activities.

Changing Paradigms
Arts, heritage, and culture organizations theorized that traditionally there has been a role for young people as "audience" but this is only one level of engagement. They felt that the shifting of roles for

youth from audience to participant needs to be intentional. Adults who were speaking on behalf of these organizations felt they needed to help "break the ceiling" for youth becoming involved in organizations, so they could be seen as producers rather than solely receivers of arts, heritage, and culture. In some institutions and fields, this is seen to be a significant paradigm shift.

Inflexibility

Some participants commented that engaging youth with the end goal already figured out takes away their power and makes their contributions token at best, and disengaging at worst. It was also noted by many participants that the constraints of current funding and proposal parameters are very focused on the identification of measureable results, often before the project begins, which does not allow for flexibility of experimentation and learning which is where many youth engagement breakthroughs occur. For whatever reason (funding expectations, policies, and procedures), inflexibility is a significant barrier to engagement at all levels.

6. Experiences with Existing Federal Support

Summary:

- Participants noted the strengths of existing relationships with federal departments, such as great programs and funding that allows programs to happen.
- Challenges with existing relationships were highlighted, including the costs of administration, inefficiencies, inconsistent relationships, funding requirements, and evaluation.

Experiences with existing federal support programs were discussed and participants shared both the strengths of existing relationships with federal departments and agencies, including Canadian Heritage, as well as the challenges faced in working with the federal level.

6.1 Strengths of Existing Relationships
Great Programs
Canadian Heritage was recognized by several organizations as a leader in creating and delivering national programs for young people. Some organizations noted that positive funding relationships have been developed through frequent and simple communications, not a lot of red tape, and not too many meetings. Funding relationships can be really positive if each party is engaged as a true partner as opposed to simply the "money" or the means necessary to do the work. Many program officers at Canadian Heritage were described as being competent and helpful. There were a few organizations or youth who did not agree with this point, suggesting that programs should be delivered regionally, and the federal role should be limited to funding.

Young Canada Works allows young people to be exposed to heritage institutions, but it was mentioned that both participating youth and institutions would benefit from a longer tenure, possibly part-time throughout the school year as well as 16 weeks in the summer.

Funding Makes Things Possible
Without funding there would be no way to deliver programs, and organizations felt this was important to recognize. Even partial funding allows for leverage when seeking private sector sponsorship, and this kind of support was commended by some participants, especially when it allowed them to leverage further funding.

6.2 Challenges in Existing Relationships
It is important to note that, when discussing challenges, the conversation became focused very broadly on funders in general rather than specifically on Canadian Heritage. It could be reasoned that this occurred because representatives of the Department were present, and therefore stakeholders did not feel it was appropriate to single out this funder. It could also be reasoned that stakeholders have common experiences with funders and challenges.

Administrative Costs

Participants repeatedly noted that high administrative costs take a share of the funds away from direct programming. The cost of formal auditing was called "prohibitive" by several organizations. The reporting burden is seen to be very high, and sometimes organizations reported needing an employee just to fill out the paperwork. Organizations are becoming "quite weary of it." Youth-led organizations expressed this challenge in a slightly different way; they cited challenges around "middle-men" (trustees) taking a portion of their funds in exchange for the credibility of having adults vouch for their organizations.

Inefficiencies

Application challenges were expressed in terms of the complicated nature of proposals needed to receive funding as well as the slow turn-around to hear the results. Some participants noted that in certain cases the timeframe on hearing back was so long that the request was no longer relevant. Problems with getting answers in a timely fashion can be a very serious problem for organizations, especially when other funding partners have contributed and events must be paid for. A few participants also noted that it was important that young people be given fair warning if their program was going to happen or not.

Participants noted that contribution agreements can take a long time to deliver funds, while organizations are still expected to deliver programs and produce results. This was often mentioned as a significant barrier to effective program delivery.

Inconsistent Relationships

Employee turnover affects administration ability at both ends of the spectrum (both in the funding organization and the funded organization). When program officers and youth organization employees build relationships, the funder-funded process runs smoothly. When either or both of these positions experience high employee turnover, the relationship becomes a challenge.

There was interest in seeing the hiring process for program officers who will be dealing with youth organizations include a requirement for experience and expertise in youth work. Relationships with Canadian Heritage employees who have some expertise have been much better than with those who are not familiar with how organizations work with youth.

Funding Requirements

Target groups are a problem on a number of levels. It can often be difficult to meet targets for some populations for a variety of reasons that do not indicate poor program performance (such as changing demographics, etc.). Some participants said that often groups are selected as target groups because of the lack of current engagement within the group and, consequently, any improvement could be a significant improvement. Also, youth who may not be considered the target group for a particular project according to funding criteria, but are participating because the project meets their needs, are being included in ratios and putting the project's chances of receiving continued funding at risk. The example given was of a community centre designated to serve a certain proportion of Aboriginal youth in a neighbourhood, which might serve the majority of Aboriginal youth, but if too many youth of other

cultures are recorded in their attendance records, the ratio set by funding requirements would not be met. Finally, the measurement required to track target population uptake inevitably leads to the perception of being labelled, which is not received well by many participants.

Changes in priority populations, like the recent shift from youth-at-risk to newcomers, can also cause program interruptions to groups who still need the support. Participants raised the rhetorical question of what happens to the youth-at-risk once newcomers become the "flavour of the month." Do they simply get left behind from the last funding cycle with no continued programs? Sometimes there is a gap between what the government has established as a priority and what the community truly needs, and every community has unique needs.

Many participants remarked that short-term funding is a problem. It can lead to a revolving door phenomenon among youth participants and employees alike, and the result is a devaluing of young people who were involved in pilot projects over the long term. Because of the emphasis on pilot projects, organizational resources are redirected to writing proposals and chasing operating dollars. Multi-year funding makes it much easier to deliver projects and programs.

Some participants also noted that timing of funding processes are poorly designed. Although the early spring is fiscal year-end for government, it is a prime time for youth programming and leaves a 'dead zone' for organizations who are between grants.

Lack of flexibility in funding is also a challenge because "new and innovative" often means fitting outside of standard funding models and formulas, yet there is a great deal of emphasis on producing new and innovative programming.

Organizations frequently referred to the "pilot project phenomenon" where organizations feel they are not able to access funding to maintain projects that are already established, but rather are being constantly expected to produce new and innovative strategies. One participant put it bluntly, saying proposal-writers who have already established successful projects ask themselves, "What can we do to change it enough so it looks like it's new, but still keep the integrity of it?" The desire for a shift in funding from project-based to program-based funding was repeated many times.

Some participants noted that the current funding process actually discourages partnership and collaboration by insisting on innovation and doing something unique. A policy framework that encourages competition rather than collaboration was not seen to benefit the community or organizations.

Evaluation
Government expects concrete and tangible results, but this is difficult because so much of this work is social change, which takes a long time to manifest and is usually qualitative. Evaluations should include more than demographics and participant counts. Support and valuing of case study and other qualitative approaches should be included to better capture what is actually going on in programs.

Evaluation is a challenge to the capacity of many organizations, and they expressed a need to have help (either in the form of funding or design help) to ensure that it is done well. Some participants even suggested that funding for evaluation should be separate from project funding, so that it does not reduce program resources.

Participants reflected on the amount of evaluation that gets produced in the course of their work, and wondered about where that information goes and how it gets used. There were concerns that evaluations are not used beyond a cursory check for funding accountability, and that valuable data about youth and community projects is being lost. Participants suggested that an analysis and communication strategy for sharing the lessons learned from evaluations generated by funded projects would be a good first step in making evaluation useful.

7. Roles for Federal Support

Summary:

- Suggestions were made for ways that Canadian Heritage could operate differently as a funder, through funding youth engagement, funding programs instead of projects, supporting youth-led organizations, simplifying the process, and providing recognition through more than just the awarding of funds.
- Participants suggested that Canadian Heritage develop a role as a connector and network builder

To conclude these conversations, stakeholders shared their vision of how the federal government could operate to support and encourage youth engagement. These suggestions took three forms:

1. changing the way Canadian Heritage operates and is perceived as a funder;

2. developing a role as a network builder; and

3. developing a role as a capacity builder.

7.1 Operating Differently as a Funder

Fund Youth Engagement, Not Just Organizations That Engage Youth
Funding youth engagement would be a way to support existing arts, culture, and heritage organizations without demanding that they reshape their programs to fit funding rubrics. It could be funding that focuses both on the process of youth engagement and the content of the arts, culture, or heritage programs; the involvement of professionals in these fields would be essential to ensure all funded projects offer high-quality learning opportunities for youth.

Fund Programs Instead of Projects
A very frequently stated request was to fund programs instead of projects. Participants noted that it seemed like they were constantly creating the same project under a different title and sending proposals to get project funding; many participants remarked on how inefficient this system is. Program employees know their work is successful, but they have to reinvent it in the form of new projects in order to get new funding. Many participants said that multi-year funding would help everyone. This point was raised in every discussion held with organizations.

Supporting Youth-Led Organizations
"Youth-led" organizations and funding bodies can be a great model, according to the experience of many participants. There was an expressed need for a mediator between youth-led organizations and the funding powers that be, which would help build the capacity to deal with the expectations (infrastructure, accountability, etc.) without removing the leadership capacity of young people. Putting youth in leadership positions is seen by organizations as a natural way to encourage social change and youth empowerment, while increasing the relevance and youth-friendliness of programs. Also, having a youth special advisor or advisory council was suggested as a great step in providing more voice for youth at the federal level.

Simplify, Clarify, and Broaden the Funding Process

Most organizations would like to have a simplified application process for funding, along with up-to-date and easy-to-find websites, with funding details and applications clearly available.

Also, there is a desire for more open communication mechanisms (e.g., a community liaison for funding), so that applicants can call someone and ask questions to ensure a proposal is suitable. Some participants feel they have that relationship with the Department, but this was not universal. Program officers can become a "bridge" between a community group and the Department; they can take a more active role in developing proposals, sit down with organizations, and help them flesh out project ideas.

Flexibility around grant criteria is key, as criteria that is too rigid limits creativity. Less stringent guidelines for funding would be appreciated, along with more clarity around what is allowed and what is not.

The useful information contained in program evaluations was suggested as an untapped potential. It was suggested that federal funders could feed data back to the community in aggregate form on what works and what does not, or partner with academics who could do the analysis for them.

Recognize Excellence Through More Than Just Funding

The possibility of providing recognition such as awards, certificates, and certification, outside of monetary support to programs and projects of excellence, was suggested by some participants. Recognition lends credibility and allows programs and projects to leverage outside support. Some participants also suggested that it would be nice if program officers could act as references for programs seeking corporate or foundation funds. More matching grants would also facilitate leveraging of support from the private sector.

7.2 Developing a Role as Connector and Network-Builder

"We need to see our funders as a resource for developing relationships, networking, and connecting and learning, not just as a wallet."(Participant)

Connect Organizations with Each Other

Many participants noted that someone who works with many organizations, such as a federal program officer, could share information and provide resources and let organizations know about what other similar organizations are doing, to share organizations' success stories. Bringing together governments and organizations was seen as an excellent role. The funding officials in government should see themselves as a "network weaver"—they have the capacity to look at the landscape and see what is going on and compare it to what is needed. Synergies between organizations exist, and government is in a unique position to identify and connect potential partners.

Connect Government Departments and Different Tiers of Government

Communication between departments and different levels of government could mobilize funding partnerships and powerful collaboration. Many government departments fund youth and

arts/heritage/culture organizations, but it is not apparent that they talk to one another or collaborate. There needs to be more "horizontal cross-pollination" of ideas and initiatives.

Connect Youth Organizations with Arts, Heritage, and Culture Organizations

Youth organizations have started to compete for arts/heritage/culture-based funding sources by adding arts, heritage, and culture to their programs and vice versa. Collaboration, rather than competition, needs to be fostered so that expertise is put to good use (both youth-engagement expertise and arts/culture/heritage expertise). The Department could host forums or sponsor other ways to connect organizations face-to-face. Mentorship was suggested as a way successful established organizations could support emerging and newly funded, or not-yet-funded, organizations.

Connect to Already-Existing Conversations

During one roundtable discussion, a few organizations involved in the National Youth Serving Agencies network (which meets twice a year) expressed an interest in discussing opportunities to engage with the Department to facilitate connecting organizations and developing a new role for government, and suggested a further conversation at their table.

Inspire

The federal government can be seen as a "placeholder for hope" and could take a leadership role in empowering communities to effect positive change.

Mobilize

Participants suggested that Canadian Heritage could become a community organizing force for youth work (e.g., funding a facilitator who could help mobilize the community), and work closely with leaders in communities. Participants felt that there was an opportunity for the Department to provide advice, guidance, funding, resources, and knowledge around youth engagement.

Participate

Participants felt there was untapped opportunity for Canadian Heritage employees to go into communities to see how programs are working. If the role of Departmental employees was expanded to include more site visits, employees would be in a position to see first-hand what is actually being funded and speak directly to organizations about what they could do to enhance the project. This has been done before, but groups reinforced how important it is, and the need to be constantly in partnership and contact. Funding community facilitators or community educators in the arts, heritage, and culture sectors would be especially valuable. The field of community arts/heritage/culture practice has immense potential, and most discussions in the arts, heritage, and culture streams mentioned the value of having community facilitators. The field is still in its infancy. It needs institutionalized education and professional development as well as credentials and certifications.

Volunteer

Institutionalizing a culture of volunteerism within the federal public service would be invaluable to communities everywhere, according to participants. Many corporate cultures promote and even reward employees for volunteering, and the federal public service could do the same. There is a wealth of

knowledge and expertise in the federal public service that could be shared with the community. Although there may be perceived conflicts of interest, these can be overcome with creative policies.

Communicate

Better communications need to be developed, both through the in-person methods mentioned above, and in written communications such as website and application forms. The government does not have a particularly youth-friendly website, but this could be improved. Consistent messages about youth across all departments would be a start, and a clearinghouse of research and funding opportunities related to youth would be very useful. This would increase the perception that youth are valued.

7.3 Building Capacity

Educate

Participants feel that Canadian Heritage could provide education around evaluating for results, and designing programs with good capacity for corporate/institutional memory, using federal accountability models. Helping organizations navigate the intricacies of the charitable sector would be really valuable to most participating organizations. For example, providing a better definition of "advocacy" would be helpful for non-profits who wish to make social change but are afraid of putting their charitable status in peril. Additionally, some organizations (especially in the arts, heritage, and culture sectors) suggested that support for leadership training would be appreciated.

Appendix A: Discussion Guides

Youth Facilitated Discussion Guide

The Department of Canadian Heritage wants to do what it can to make sure Canadian youth participate actively in Canadian society, contribute substantially to what that society looks like, and share a common appreciation of their Canadian identity. In other words, they want to encourage youth engagement on a national level.

The purpose of meeting with you here today is to explore how you think your government can best support these goals of participation, contribution, and appreciation. Specifically, the Department of Canadian Heritage is interested in how to encourage youth engagement with Canada's arts, heritage and culture, and how to engage youth in their communities.

9:00 am	Opening Comments (10 minutes) Introduction by facilitator (setting out discussion objectives) Introduction of participants (Group Juggle)
9:10 am	Activities that promote engagement (20 minutes) What types of activities are of greatest interest to youth, in terms of community engagement, or participation in arts, heritage and culture? (brainstorming activity)
9:30 am	Group Juggle (5 minutes)
9:35 am	Programs that encourage engagement (40 minutes) Awareness of existing programs that encourage and support youth engagement in communities, or in the arts, heritage and culture fields (think-pair-share activity) Attractiveness of existing programs (Apples and Onions activity)
10:15 am	Break (15 minutes)
10:30 am	Group Juggle (5 minutes)
10:35 am	Federal government role in enhancing youth participation (40 minutes) What should be the federal government role in enhancing youth participation? ("When you are the Government dotmography")
11:15 am	Closing Exercise (10 minutes) A wrap-up exercise in which each participant can share their ideas with the Department of Canadian Heritage directly (Dear Department)
11:25 am	Thank-you and final group Juggle (5 minutes)

<u>Facilitation Guide (internal use only; not for participants)</u>

Legend:

Designed to Address is the question from the original list, to show what information is being gleaned from this activity.

Set-up is the preparation required for each activity, and a description of what has to be done by the facilitator, as well as what materials are required.

Instructions are written as a script for the facilitator, and will be followed fairly closely.

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1. Brainstorming for Activities

Designed to Address: What types of activities are of greatest interest to you: engagement in communities (e.g., encouraging volunteering, funding for projects, support for youth community organizations etc.), arts, heritage and culture (e.g., internship programs, education and outreach, funding for projects etc.)?

Set-up: Flip-chart posters on the wall or on the table with eight words (participate, contribute, appreciate, engagement in community, Canadian identity, arts, heritage and culture) plus an "all of the above" poster spaced with room for sticky notes. Enough sticky notes and markers for 24 participants.

Instructions: Look at the words that are up around the room (or on the table). Think about the activities young people in Canada can do or would like to do that relate to these eight words. I'm going to hand out sticky notes and markers, so that you can list your own ideas about what types of activities are of greatest interest to you, and put them next to the words they fit best with. If they fit in more than one place, you can write the same activity on more than one sticky note. If they fit absolutely everywhere, just put them next to "All of the Above"

[If time permits, a facilitated discussion around why certain activities clustered around particular words could be held.]

2. Think-Pair-Share for Programs

Designed to Address: Are you aware of any existing programs that encourage and support youth engagement in communities? in the arts, culture, or heritage?

Set-up: Participants will be asked to pair off in groups (two or three participants per group). They will be provided with pens and journal paper with "Head (thinking), Heart (feeling), Feet (doing)" as a prompt for contextualizing their experience. Envelopes will be provided in case they would like their journal notes mailed to them after the consultation.

Instructions: This next activity is designed to explore any existing programs that encourage and support youth engagement in communities, and in arts, culture or heritage. First, I'd like you to think quietly for a few minutes about your own experience or knowledge of programs that try to engage youth in

communities, arts, heritage, or culture. Here's a piece of paper with our question, and the words "Head, Heart, Feet" on it. This is because I'd like you to think about what these programs want you to think, to feel, and experience. After enough time has passed, we'll pair off to share our experience, and further brainstorm about other programs you may remember once you hear others talking. Pairs may share reports to the large group if time allows, and I'd like to collect your journals and notes. If you want to keep your notes, write your mailing address on one of these envelopes, and stick the notes in there, and I can mail it back to you.

3. "Apples and Onions" for What Works and What Doesn't

Designed to Address: What, if anything, appeals to you about those programs?

Set-up: Facilitator will bring one apple and one onion for each participant. One-page descriptions of Canadian Heritage youth programs will be distributed for participants to use as a reference. Is it possible to also have other federal programs listed, so that youth can also include these in their thinking? Such as Cadets, for example, or the International Youth Internship Program at CIDA? There may be others too.

Instructions: [hand out apples and onions, and the Canadian Heritage program sheet]

Apples are things that leave a good taste in your mouth, and onions are things that leave a bad taste. Thinking about youth programs you've experienced, what are the "apples" and "onions". Looking at the list of programs I've handed out, what are the possible "apples" and "onions" you see?

4. When you are the Government Dotmography

Designed to Address: Based on your experience, if you were to incite more youth participation, what would be your focus? (i.e. internships, project funding, funding for organizations, training and education, promotional campaigns etc.)

Set-up: Have list of ways government can support youth participation (internships, project funding, funding for organizations, training and education, promotional campaigns) including room for additions. Have a set of stickers for each participant.

Instructions: The Department of Canadian Heritage has come up with some examples of ways they think the government could support youth engagement in communities, arts, culture, and heritage. Here's a list: encouraging volunteering, support for youth community organizations, internship programs, training and outreach activities with professional artists, historians or curators, etc.

When your generation becomes the government, do you think you'll have any other ways of supporting youth participation?

[Have a discussion/brainstorming session; provide an example of using new media like Facebook to get youth input on issues related to youth, then resume facilitation]

In addition to developing strategies, one of the important aspects of Canadian government is democracy (or voting). So we're going to have a vote. [Pass out stickers]. Use these stickers to vote on the types of support that most interest you, and you think would be most meaningful for youth. You can place stickers however you choose (all on one, if it's the most and only important way, or evenly spaced, if you think they're all good, or any mix in between).

[Participants to participate in dotmography exercise, then resume facilitation]

Why do some things have more dots, and others fewer?

5. Dear Department Comments

Designed to Address: A wrap-up and conclusion exercise, and an opportunity for open-ended general feedback.

Set-up: Participants will be provided with pen/pencil and paper to write comments to the Department of Canadian Heritage.

Instructions: Given all our discussions today, and recognizing that all this happened because the Department of Canadian Heritage wants your expert opinion on how the Government can support youth participation in community, arts, heritage, and culture, spend a few minutes thinking about what you think the most important ideas from today were. Also think about what we might have missed or forgotten that is important for youth participation. Then take the last few minutes to write some comments (no more than a page) in your neatest handwriting (I'm going to have to type these up, you see) to explain all this important stuff to the Department of Canadian Heritage. Again, if you want me to return your comments to you after we've added the information to our report, put it in the envelope and I'll send it back to you when we're done.

Community Organizations / Arts, Heritage, and Culture Organizations Roundtable Discussion Guide

Canadian Heritage Roundtable Discussions Agenda

The Department of Canadian Heritage seeks to ensure that Canadian youth participate actively in Canadian society, contribute substantially to its evolution, and share a common appreciation of Canadian identity. The purpose of this discussion is to explore how best to support these goals.

This stream of roundtable discussions focuses on [youth engagement and inclusion/youth arts, culture and heritage], and seeks to involve youth and national youth-serving organizations and service clubs engaged in and contributing to issues that encourage youth participation in communities in Canada.

Thank you for attending and sharing your expertise with the Department of Canadian Heritage. This roundtable is being facilitated by an independent consultant from Atlantic Evaluation Group. A representative of the Department will be in attendance at each roundtable. The discussions will be recorded and summarized into a report that will inform future decisions around youth participation and inclusion. Your remarks will be presented in summary form, and will not be attributed directly to you in the final report; however, a list of all roundtable participants will be included.

Opening comments (15 minutes)
- Introduction by facilitator (Atlantic Evaluation Group)
- Introduction of participants
- Setting out roundtable discussion objectives

Roundtable discussion on program elements/best practices (60 minutes)
- What mechanisms to engage youth in [engagement and inclusion/arts, culture, or heritage] activities are most effective?
    - What kinds of program *design* mechanisms are effective?
    - What kinds of program *delivery* mechanisms are effective?
    - What kind of non-program mechanisms are effective?
- What are the main challenges faced by your organization in engaging youth?

Tea/coffee break (15 minutes)

Roundtable discussion on federal support (75 minutes)
- What has your experience been with federal programs that encourage and support youth participation in [engagement and inclusion/arts, culture, or heritage or history/commemoration] sectors?
    - What are the *positive* experiences/features of existing federal programs?
    - What are the *negative* experiences/features of existing federal programs?
- What role does the federal government have in helping organizations to engage Canadian youth?
- What type of support would be most welcomed by your organizations?

Wrap-up, and concluding comments (15 minutes)

Bilateral Interview Guide

The Government of Canada's *Department of Canadian Heritage* helps Canadian youth:

- participate actively in their communities and society,
- contribute positively to Canada's development, and
- share a common understanding of what it means to be Canadian.

The purpose of this discussion is to hear your thoughts on how these goals can be pursued in the most effective way. We are especially interested in hearing your views on engaging youth in your community.

Our discussion is one of several that are taking place across Canada with youth, youth-serving organizations, and service clubs who are working to encourage youth participation in communities.

All of these discussions will be combined to create a report that will inform our future decisions around how the Department of Canadian Heritage can support youth. Once finalized later in 2009, findings will be shared with all organizations who participated in the roundtable discussions. Your remarks will be presented in summary form, and will not be attributed directly to you in the final report; however, a list of all participants will be included.

Thank you very much for sharing your expertise with the Department of Canadian Heritage.

Questions:

- What type of work are you currently doing to engage youth?

- What works best in engaging youth in community activities?
    - When you're *designing* a project to engage youth, what are some of the effective approaches you use?
    - When you're *delivering* a project to engage youth, what are some of the best practices that you use?

- What are some of the main challenges you face in engaging youth?

- What are some of the best experiences you've had working with funders? What are some of the most challenging experiences?

- Have you ever tried to receive government funding for your work? If not, why? If so, were you successful?

- What could government do to help you work more effectively? Are there different things that you think the different levels of government should do?

Appendix B: Complete List of Organizations who Participated*

1. ArtReach Grant Review Team
2. Arts Network for Children and Youth
3. Arts Smarts
4. ArtStarts in Schools
5. b current Performing Arts Corporation
6. Blunt Magazine Inc.
7. Caprice Duncan
8. Celtic Colours
9. Centre A
10. Culture pour tous
11. Hackmatack Children's Choice Book Award
12. J. D. Griffin Adolescent Centre
13. Jeunesses Musicales
14. Kapisanan Philippine Centre for Arts and Culture
15. La Tohu
16. Le 100 Nons
17. Manitoba Conservatory of Music and Arts
18. National Circus School
19. Northrop Frye Festival
20. Reel 2 Real International Film Festival for Youth
21. Reel Canada
22. Réseau indépendant des diffuseurs d'événement artistiques unis (RIDEAU)
23. Revolutionaries Honouring Your Mind's Eye (RHYME)
24. Royal Conservatory of Music
25. Royal Winnipeg Ballet School
26. School of Contemporary Dancers
27. Sketch
28. Soulcraft Collective
29. Théâtre Le Clou
30. Theatre Revolve
31. UrbanArts Community Arts Council
32. Vancouver Art Gallery
33. Vancouver East Cultural Centre
34. West End Cultural Centre
35. Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra
36. Womynation Memento
37. Arts for Children and Youth
38. Emerging Arts Professionals Network
39. Expect Theatre
40. Jumblies Theatre
41. JUMP Math
42. Regent Park Focus
43. Workers Arts and heritage Centre
44. Art City
45. Dominion Institute
46. Historica Foundation of Canada
47. Canada's National Historical Society
48. Centre d'Études Acadiennes
49. Council of Heritage Organizations
50. Fédération culturelle canadienne française Ottawa
51. McCord Museum of Canadian History
52. Canadian Children's Book Centre
53. Canadian Museum Association
54. Centre des sciences de Montréal
55. HeartWood Centre for Community Youth Development
56. SEVEC
57. Canadian 4-H Council
58. Institut du nouveau monde
59. Jeunesse au Soleil (3 people)
60. Junior League (Toronto)
61. Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation
62. YMCA of Greater Toronto
63. D-CODE
64. TakingITGlobal
65. Junior Achievement Canada
66. Youth Employment Services
67. Youth in Motion
68. Apathy is Boring
69. Canadian Youth Assembly
70. Check your Head: The Youth Global Education Network (2 people)
71. Chinese Association of Newfoundland and Labrador
72. Fédération des jeunes francophones du NB
73. KAYA
74. New Brunswick Advisory Council on Youth
75. Association des Scouts du Canada
76. Forces Avenir
77. Girl Guides of Canada
78. Second Chance Program
79. The Adventure Group (2 people)
80. YOUCAN
81. Youth Empowerment Canada
82. DreamNow
83. Free the Children
84. Jeunesse Canada Monde / Canada World Youth
85. Optimist International
86. St. John's Native Friendship Centre
87. Waterlution
88. Beatz to da Streetz
89. Big Soul Productions
90. Klondike Institute of Arts & Culture
91. Federation culturelle canadienne francaise
92. City of Iqaluit
93. Framework Foundation
94. Tuktoyaktuk Youth Centre
95. Working Women Community Centre
96. 21 Inc
97. Schools without Borders
98. Bringing Youth Towards Equality
99. Partners For Youth
100. I Vote Toronto

*Additionally, 40 participants from *Encounters With Canada* participated in group discussions

Appendix C: Complete Schedule of Roundtable and Facilitated Discussions

Date	Location	Stream
February 13	Toronto	Roundtable with focus on Youth Engagement and Inclusion Organizations
March 3	Montréal	Roundtable with focus on Arts/Heritage/Culture Organizations Roundtable with focus on Youth Engagement and Inclusion Organizations
March 5	Ottawa	Youth Facilitated Discussion at *Encounters With Canada*
March 6	Ottawa	Roundtable with focus on Arts/Heritage/Culture Organizations Roundtable with focus on Youth Engagement and Inclusion Organizations
March 9	Winnipeg	Roundtable with focus on Arts/Heritage/Culture Organizations
March 10	Vancouver	Roundtable with focus on Arts/Heritage/Culture Organizations Roundtable with focus on Youth Engagement and Inclusion Organizations
March 11	Toronto	Roundtable with Arts/Heritage/Culture Organizations
March 12	Ottawa	Youth Facilitated Discussion at *Encounters With Canada*
March 13	Moncton	Roundtable with focus on Youth Engagement and Inclusion Organizations
March 16	Toronto	Roundtable with Arts/Heritage/Culture Organizations Roundtable with focus on Youth Engagement and Inclusion Organizations
March 17	Toronto	Roundtable with focus on Arts/Heritage/Culture Organizations Roundtable with focus on Youth Engagement and Inclusion Organizations