

# DESIGNED TO THRIVE

MANITOBA ARTS COUNCIL  
**STRATEGIC PLAN**  
2017-2022



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION: A NEW DAY AT MAC</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>VISION, MISSION, VALUES</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>GOALS FOR 2017-2022</b> .....	<b>3</b>
ENCOURAGE ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION	
CONNECT CREATIVE COMMUNITIES	
CHAMPION THE VALUE OF THE ARTS	
<b>OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES FOR CHANGE</b> .....	<b>4</b>
RESPECT AND VALUE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AND CULTURE	
ENHANCE IT CAPACITY AND DATA-DRIVEN DESIGN	
CONNECT CREATIVE COMMUNITIES	
ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS	
REDESIGN WEBSITE AND COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY	
<b>ABOUT THE MANITOBA ARTS COUNCIL</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>FRAMEWORK AND PROCESS</b> .....	<b>9</b>



# INTRODUCTION: A NEW DAY AT MAC

It's a new day at Manitoba Arts Council (MAC). The past five years have seen an increase in the pace and impact of disruptive changes around the world, across Canada, and within Manitoba. Social values are shifting, technological innovations are remaking business models and the experience of everyday life, and globalization is accelerating in a warming climate.

As the pace of change in our province continues to accelerate, the value of the arts is amplified — they are our oldest and most reliable tools for imagining how we might respond to change, and for prototyping new models of cultural resilience. Governments fund the arts not just to encourage the creation of catalogues of work, but to provide communities with a platform for examining truths and values, and to create positive social and economic impact.

The cultural environment in which MAC exists today is fundamentally different from the one in which it was created. Over 100 languages are spoken in the province of Manitoba. Besides English, French, and German; the most common mother tongues include Tagalog, Punjabi, Cree, Ojibway, and Chinese. Manitoba's people are younger than the rest of Canada, and its Indigenous population is expected to double within a generation. By 2029, the majority of the Manitoba Labour Force will hail from Generations Y and Z. These demographic drivers set the stage for a cultural renaissance — where new voices, creative ideas, and emerging artistic practices that bear little resemblance to the status quo of the 20th century will thrive.

While the world is transforming, some things haven't changed. MAC has spent the last decade rising to the challenge of accomplishing more with the same budget, and now faces an urgent opportunity to optimize its planning and operations for a new world.

Manitoba Arts Council has the capability and responsibility to develop funding policy that is relevant and responsive to the development of artistic practice and public experience of the arts in a changing world. Continuing goals will include emphasis on artistic merit; but will accommodate and respond to the partnerships and collaborations, innovation and entrepreneurship, cultural inclusion, and technological dissemination that also characterize Manitoba's rich arts environment.

The Manitoba Arts Council's strategic plan provides a crucial reference in the present for designing plans and tactics to accomplish those goals. It is a document that captures not only what is possible; but what is important, and what is necessary.



# VISION

Artists, organizations, and communities working together to create a vibrant, innovative, and inclusive Manitoba.

---

# MISSION

We champion excellence in the arts through support for artists and arts organizations in Manitoba.

---

# VALUES

## EXCELLENCE

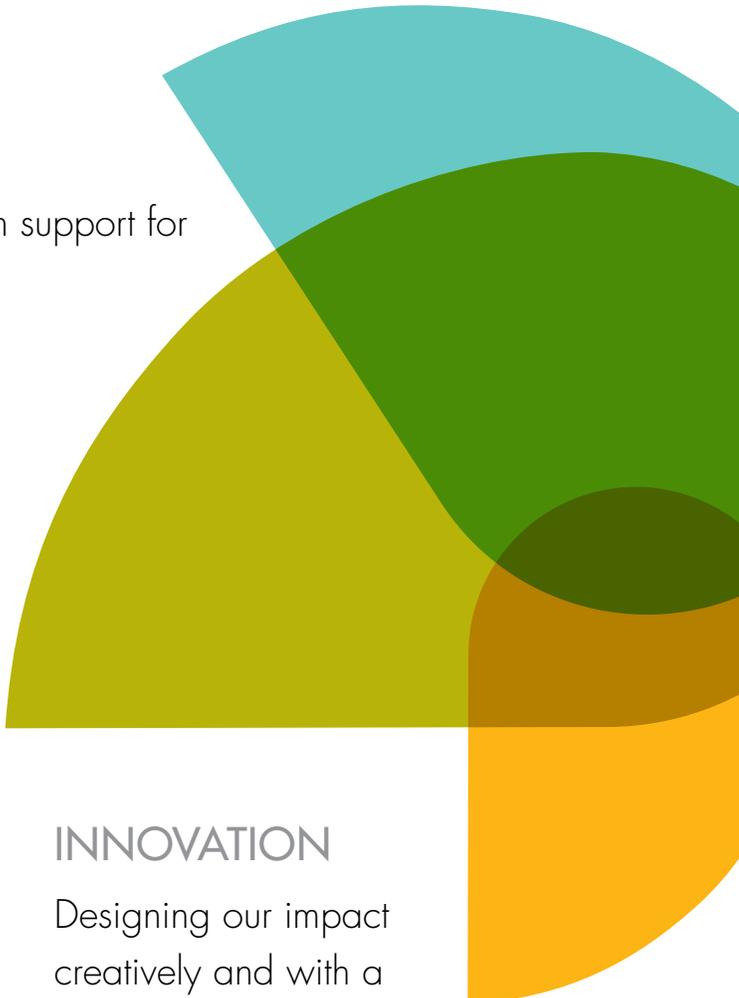
In the arts and the administration and delivery of our programs.

## DIVERSITY

Fostering greater inclusion in the arts.

## INNOVATION

Designing our impact creatively and with a long view.



# GOALS FOR 2017-2022

The Manitoba Arts Council is dedicated to achieving these high-level goals over the next five years. Each goal reflects and aligns with the vision and mission, builds on Council values, and connects to the 2017-2022 Focus Areas.

## ENCOURAGE ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION

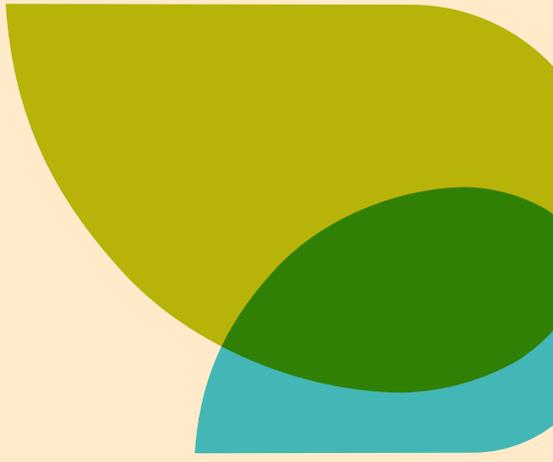
- Improve support for Indigenous artists, online and through outreach
- Increase application rates from diverse first-time applicants
- Comply with accessibility standards throughout communications and operations
- Diversify the composition of our board, staff, and juries
- Simplify programs and processes so that artists, collaborators and organizations spend more time on their work with efficient application processes
- Leverage CADAC, the Cultural Satellite account, and the Prairie Partnership on Arts Research to improve MAC's internal capacity for research, analysis, and knowledge sharing

## CONNECT CREATIVE COMMUNITIES

- Optimize the capacity of Manitoba's Art Sector for the benefit of all Manitobans
- Support new connections between art forms, communities of creators, and regions
- Strengthen networks of creators for emergent opportunities
- Encourage an increase in collaborative projects and applications
- Increase networking and collaboration between MAC staff and artistic communities
- Foster collaborations between MAC staff, artists, scientists, and business community

## CHAMPION THE VALUE OF THE ARTS

- Undertake annual assessments of the social and fiscal impact of MAC programs
- Take a leadership position on the value of artistic inquiry
- Highlight the importance of enabling sustainable artistic practice within Manitoba
- Design public awareness campaigns that use data and storytelling to convey the impact of the Manitoba Arts Sector, within the province and around the world



# OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES FOR CHANGE

These focus areas represent a high-level map of the path towards implementation of the focus areas. Following stakeholder consultation, we expect MAC's implementation plan will evolve and adapt. For the time being, it is helpful to identify a set of short term and long term outcomes that will help measure, evaluate, and report on the success of this strategic plan in our yearly Annual Report.

---

# RESPECT AND VALUE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AND CULTURE

Meaningfully engaging Manitoban communities of Indigenous artists and arts organizations is an important priority. MAC will work to apply the standards and principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). This important step towards reconciliation will be adopted with the guidance of Indigenous people and communities, and with a respect for Indigenous self-determination.

MAC will focus on aligning with UNDRIP actions, following a framework of affirming, recognizing, acknowledging, and respecting the rights of Indigenous peoples.

## SHORT TERM OUTCOMES

- Establish an Indigenous Advisory Group to guide the development of new programming, with a focus on self-determination
- Support the launch of the Canada Council's new Creating, Knowing, and Sharing program that encourages the creative capacity and professional development of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis artists and arts organizations

## LONG TERM OUTCOMES

- Work towards offering outreach and program support materials in Indigenous languages
- Work with the MAC Indigenous Advisory Group to remove systemic barriers to indigenous participation in the arts

---

# ENHANCE I.T. CAPACITY AND DATA-DRIVEN DESIGN

At the beginning of 2016, MAC operated 54 programs across numerous artistic disciplines. This represents an attempt to meet the needs of diverse communities after years of growth in a flat funding environment, and the administrative overhead of the catalogue has grown heavy. It is time to leverage under-utilized datasets and information technology solutions to decrease administrative overhead, and focus on delivering greater value to communities of artists and arts organizations.

## SHORT TERM OUTCOMES

- Improved transparency, accountability and research capacity to support decision-making in the arts sector
- Use CRM to map databases of clients affiliated with 54 existing programs to a new stream-based program structure: Create, Share, Support, Learn, and Indigenous arts
- Begin designing and building new programs that leverage big data from the start
- Integrate new voluntary information forms to track and improve service to Indigenous, culturally diverse, LGBTQ, and disability communities

## LONG TERM OUTCOMES

- Use improved data gathering techniques to assess and map the reach of MAC programs across Manitoba, and to develop new quantitative measures of success

---

# CONNECT CREATIVE COMMUNITIES

MAC needs to be more cohesive in its approach to the support a greater diversity of creative excellence. Creativity isn't the exclusive domain of artists and designers, it is a crucial and multidisciplinary mindset optimized for re-framing and solving problems.

## SHORT TERM OUTCOMES

- Revise language in communications and outreach materials to highlight the value that interdisciplinary collaboration creates in community-building and well-being
- Organize and sponsor events that connect members of the artistic community with thought leaders in other disciplines; from economics to healthcare to energy and environment
- Partner with successful public and private sector players in information technology and business innovation to guide the path forward for MAC

## LONG TERM OUTCOMES

- Programs dedicated to encouraging cross-sectoral collaborations with thought leaders and innovators in IT, design research, health, and environmental science that generate powerful fiscal and social impacts across Manitoba

---

# ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS

The usability of digital materials and experiences is a crucial step towards promoting equitable and inclusive access to the arts in the 21st century. MAC's clients are a diverse range of artists, collaborators, and arts organizations, and they deserve an excellent level of customer service that matches and exceeds regulatory standards.

## SHORT TERM OUTCOMES

- Form an advisory group to guide work towards a policy framework and Accessibility Plan in compliance with The Customer Service Standard on Accessibility
- Engage in community consultations on progress towards compliance, revise plans accordingly, train staff, and make the results of this process available online
- Establish an Indigenous Advisory Group to help shape the Indigenous arts program at MAC to ensure that self-determination is at its heart
- Engage with Culturally diverse and LGBTQ communities through outreach, consultation, and support activities
- Improve critical diversity on juries, on staff, and at the board level

## LONG TERM OUTCOMES

- Comply fully with The Accessibility for Manitobans Act Customer Service Standard Regulation and other future articles as they are codified
- Observe a marked rise in the application rates and in successful applications from diverse clients that ensures that the demography of Manitoba is reflecting back to Manitobans in our galleries and performance spaces

---

# REDESIGN WEBSITE AND COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

In the years ahead, MAC will create and iterate user-friendly mobile-first websites and online services to launch and accompany redesigned programs. Stories about the success and value of the arts across Manitoba will be promoted and shared across social media — with a multimedia focus on qualitative impacts and a data-driven focus on quantitative impacts.

## SHORT TERM OUTCOMES

- Redesign the MAC website with bilingual EN/FR content, culturally inclusive, a mobile-first focus, and compliance with the Accessibility Act to support deaf & disabled visitors
- Launch a blog and video tutorials to introduce new programs and applications
- Research Open Data standards and best practices to identify areas of opportunity
- In the North, where there is not broadband in some communities, ensure that face-to-face meetings, communications, etc. are facilitated and supported

## LONG TERM OUTCOMES

- Deploy an Open Data framework that collates and contextualizes datasets related to the arts in Manitoba, providing a scaffold for future public/private innovations
- Execute a social media strategy that leverages user-generated content and internal data-driven storytelling to communicate the true value of the arts in Manitoba
- Improve technology frameworks and face-to-face meeting frequency to enable rural and northern communities with improved engagement, access to learning opportunities, training, information and jury participation

# ABOUT THE MANITOBA ARTS COUNCIL

The Manitoba Arts Council is an arm's-length agency of the Province of Manitoba, established in 1965 "to promote the study, enjoyment, production and performance of works in the arts." The Council makes awards to professional arts organizations and individuals in all art forms including theatre, literature, dance, music, painting, sculpture, architecture or the graphic arts, and includes other similar creative or interpretative activity, including arts education. The Council uses a peer assessment process in making awards. Historically, the main criterion used to assess applications is artistic excellence.

The Council is funded through Manitoba Sport, Culture and Heritage. Council reports annually through the Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage to the Provincial Legislature in its Annual Report, and Council operations are audited annually through the Provincial Auditor.

The Manitoba Arts Council consists of 15 Board members appointed for a term by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council. Council develops policy for the benefit of the arts and of the public of Manitoba, using input from the community and key stakeholders. The Council also has the authority and responsibility to approve the expenditure of funds that supports the mandate and reflects the public trust.

Council is responsible for hiring a Chief Executive Officer to carry out policies and oversee operations. The Chief Executive Officer is in turn responsible for hiring arts program consultants and administrative staff who can best assist Council in its responsibilities.

## **Manitoba Arts Council**

525 – 93 Lombard Avenue

Winnipeg, Manitoba | R3B 3B1



# MANDATE

The Arts Council Act states: The aims and objects of the council are to promote the study, enjoyment, production, and performance of works in the arts; and for that purpose the council may make grants to, assist, co-operate with, and enlist the aid of, organizations whose objects are similar to the objects of the council, and co-operate with the Canada Council; provide through appropriate organizations or otherwise for grants, scholarships, or loans, to citizens of Manitoba for study or research in the arts; and make awards to citizens of Manitoba for outstanding accomplishments in the arts.

## FRAMEWORK AND PROCESS

Between 2007 and 2016, Council engaged in outreach activities with stakeholder groups across the province to identify unmet needs and to sketch an outline of how MAC could deliver value to new and existing clients in innovative ways.

Listening tours carried out across the province — from Winnipeg, to Flin Flon, to the North — helped MAC gain insight into gaps in programming, particularly for rural and Indigenous communities. Sponsored presentations on adapting to change rolled out alongside a new arts advisory panel and reviews of Council's policies on equity and community consultation.

In July 2016, Council hired a new CEO, Akoulina Connell, who promptly implemented a plan of strategic change and program reviews. The management team has been renewed, with a new Director of Finance, Debra Solmundson, returning to MAC. This will lead to additional growth opportunities for current staff. Following months of intensive research and data analysis, staff met in September 2016 for a Change Mapping Day that identified high-impact external change vectors, and streamlined all of MAC's more than 54 granting programs into four categories of activity: Create, Share, Support, and Learn, with an additional category for Indigenous arts. The new framework will be simple to navigate, responsive to change, and more accessible.

The results of Change Mapping Day suggest a new framework for organizing existing programs, and making decisions about new programs that better meet MAC's goals and highlight priorities related to MAC's relationship with Sport, Culture, and Heritage and the Funding Restructuring and Cultural Policy Review that is currently underway. The new structure will improve transparency,

accountability, and also be more aligned with the program changes at Canada Council for the Arts.

In late October 2016, MAC staff and council engaged in a two-day strategic planning session facilitated by an outside consultant that evolved team values, vision, mission, and goals for the next five years. This document represents the synthesis of the outputs of that session.

The vision, mission, and values of Council are at the core of all Council's policy development. This strategic plan introduces three primary goals for the five years ahead, to be engaged and accomplished through innovation across five focus areas.

Drawn from consultations and research, these goals and focus areas indicate how MAC will focus its efforts to achieve its vision in the most effective way possible. Council's strategic directions guide the range of activities MAC will identify to achieve its goals: renewing relationships with Indigenous and rural communities, investing in information technology to improve access to programs and materials, playing an active role in partnerships and collaborations, and revising program frameworks and development initiatives.

MAC is eager to collaborate with the Province to ensure a vibrant and relevant arts and culture sector reflecting who we are as a province today and in the future. Within a few short months of the new CEO's arrival, MAC's new leadership team has engaged its board and staff teams in the crucial conversations required to invigorate a new way of thinking so we can be prepared for the necessary changes that are coming in the months ahead.



MANITOBA ARTS COUNCIL  
CONSEIL DES ARTS DU MANITOBA

[WWW.ARTSCOUNCIL.MB.CA](http://WWW.ARTSCOUNCIL.MB.CA) | [WWW.CONSEILDESARTS.MB.CA](http://WWW.CONSEILDESARTS.MB.CA)