



## **ADVOCACY POLICY**

**Approved by Council October 4, 2005**

### **PREAMBLE**

Advocacy is the pursuit of influencing outcomes – including public and resource allocation decisions within political, economic and social systems and institutions – that directly affect people’s lives. Advocacy consists of organized efforts and actions that seek to highlight critical issues that have been ignored and submerged, to influence public attitudes, and to enact and implement laws and public policies so that a vision of “what should be” in a just, decent society becomes a reality. The arts are an integral part of this vision for Manitoba society.

Arts advocacy has purposeful outcomes: it can enable supporters of the arts to gain access to and voice in the decision-making of relevant institutions, it can change the power relationships between these institutions and the people affected by their decisions (thereby changing the institutions themselves), and it can bring a clear improvement to people’s lives.

### **POLICY**

The Manitoba Arts Council advocates for an arts sector that is valued by the public and by government as an integral part of Manitoba society. The Council works to ensure that the arts are generously funded by significant public and private resources, that they attract a wide and committed audience and support base, that they occupy a prominent place in public awareness and education, that they are recognized as an essential element to community and cultural identity, and that they play an important and meaningful role in the lives of all Manitobans.

### **PROCEDURE**

The Council advocates for the arts by following its internal plan for arts advocacy, by developing and maintaining partnerships with a number of Manitoba arts and non-arts organizations in the province to collaborate on major arts advocacy efforts, and by working to create a provincial cultural policy in partnership with various provincial government departments.

#### **1. Internal Arts Advocacy Plan**

The Manitoba Arts Council maintains an internal arts advocacy plan that outlines the protocols for advocacy actions initiated by the Council. This plan includes:

- protocols for identifying and articulating specific advocacy issues within the broader context of advocating for increased support for the arts over the long term
- protocols for working in partnership with other organizations with similar advocacy interests
- protocols for advocacy-based contact between the Council and elected officials
- protocols for advocacy-based contact between the Council and the media
- protocols for advocacy-based relations with organizations and foundations
- protocols for advocacy efforts aimed at the public
- strategies for promoting the successes of artists and arts organizations supported by the Council
- strategies for equipping individual artists, arts administrators, arts supporters, and Council board members with information and training around their own advocacy efforts



## 2. Advocacy Partnerships

The Manitoba Arts Council, realizing the value of a united voice and a strong resource base when making a case for the arts, establishes and maintains partnerships with a variety of arts organizations, arts service organizations, associations, foundations, and private-sector funders. The Council nurtures these partnerships with the ultimate goal of establishing a coalition of organizations committed to long-term advocacy for the arts in the province of Manitoba.

## 3. Creating a Provincial Cultural Policy

The development of a provincial cultural policy is key to ensuring that the arts in Manitoba are valued, supported, and celebrated over the long-term. The Council, with the support of the Department of Culture, Heritage and Tourism, works to establish links with other provincial departments in order to develop a policy that demonstrates the importance of the arts in various sectors of Manitoba life, and that clearly articulates the benefits of, and aims and outcomes for, the arts in Manitoba. Participating provincial departments may include:

- Education, Citizenship and Youth
- Advanced Education and Training
- Family Services and Housing
- Finance
- Health
- Industry, Economic Development and Mines
- Justice
- Labour and Immigration
- Aboriginal and Northern Affairs

