



Canada Council  
for the Arts

Conseil des arts  
du Canada

# what we heard

**SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS:  
2013 CANADA COUNCIL'S  
INTER-ARTS OFFICE CONSULTATION**

Typhaine Girault, Nouveauté, 2013



Bringing the arts to life  
De l'art plein la vie



OCTOBER 2013

## about the canada council's inter-arts office

The Inter-Art Office (IAO), created in 1999, currently supports professional artists and arts organizations working in:

- integrated arts
- contemporary circus arts
- artist and collaborative practices related to these two art forms

In other words, the IAO supports activities that combine emerging and existing art forms into new forms. Its programs work in complement to the other funding programs of the Canada Council for the Arts. This being said, given the fluid nature of contemporary artistic practice, applications to the IAO are increasingly crossing over into other disciplines and sectors of activity of the Council.

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# executive summary

From May 1 to July 31, 2013, the Canada Council for the Arts' Inter-Arts Office (IAO) launched a consultation with the inter-arts sector for input on how to improve the IAO suite of programs and to identify some of the key issues and opportunities facing the sector today.

We received a powerful and moving set of ideas that underline the tremendous generosity, diversity and critical capacity of the inter-arts sector.

This report was edited by arts consultant Zancor media and Canada Council staff and is comprised of quotes from those who took part in the consultations. We would like to thank everyone who generously contributed their time and insights on how to improve the IAO's programs and how to share services and tools to develop the sector.







# what we heard

The five themes below present a summary of 'What We Heard' during the consultations and will inform us as we revise our programs. Each theme is expanded upon in a section of this document, including specific quotes and comments from the consultations.

## Five themes we heard:

### 1. Access

#### *application process, definitions/art forms, equity, public engagement in the arts*

Participants identified a number of barriers to accessing resources and suggested ways to improve the application process, to clarify program definitions and position the different genres of artistic practice within the Inter-Arts Office (IAO). Participants also noted that the inter-arts sector has remarkable momentum and potential for growth. Some of the equity seeking groups (e.g. culturally diverse, Aboriginal, Deaf and disability, younger artists) expressed frustration at feeling “left out” of the established inter-arts community and are searching for “ways in” such as increased access to opportunities such as mentorships and residencies. We also heard both concerns and support for public engagement in the arts with a strong interest to deepen this dialogue.

### 2. Assessment

#### *peers, artists and community collaboration program (ACCP), measuring impact*

Artists and arts professionals feel strongly about peer assessment and representation. Some said that IAO programs should be evaluated by specialized peer assessors for each art practice (i.e. integrated arts, contemporary circus arts or artists and community collaboration). Others think that inter-arts practices are better evaluated by a broader range of peers. Participants in the consultation feel that impact measurement is important but that the role that art plays in society can sometimes be difficult to quantify, especially in inter-arts. Overall, we heard a desire for more information and input about how applications are assessed and how the impact of funded activity is measured.



**six** CITIES  
REGIONS  
*300+ participants: in-person meetings*

..... CONSULTATION *by* NUMBERS .....

**51 IDEAS**  
+ 12 comments:  
*crowd engagement platform*

**40+**  
**EMAIL SUBMISSIONS**  
FROM ARTISTS AND  
ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

twenty-nine  
**APPLICANTS**

TO THE GRANTS  
TO ORGANIZATION  
**PROGRAM**  
WRITTEN SURVEY

**2** PRESENTATIONS  
*at* INTERNATIONAL  
CONFERENCES



### 3. Boundaries

#### *interactions with artistic disciplines and other sectors, positioning the inter-arts sector*

A recurring theme we heard in every region was that the boundaries are shifting for art forms and organizational structures. Artists are increasingly engaging in cross-disciplinary activities that sometimes challenge current structures, such as multidisciplinary organizations or art practices that are constantly in flux. We also heard that artists are increasingly interested in cross-sectoral practices and new ways of engaging areas outside the arts (e.g. arts and science, and the private sector). Overall, we heard that the inter-arts community is keenly aware of the rapidly changing environment and is looking to position itself in a larger context.

### 4. Operating

#### *financial considerations, program design*

We received a range of feedback on long-term grants in reference to the Canada Council's Review of Operating Grant background document, notably on the challenges of managing financial information and reporting, alternative program designs and issues with eligibility. Tensions were apparent between the notion of access to funding from those not yet in the funding system and the stability of funding from those who currently have ongoing funding. The role of presenters and service organizations were noted as critical to the development of the sector. Overall, we heard that a mix of short- and long-term funding options make sense in order to provide both flexibility and continuity of support.

### 5. Sharing

#### *distribution of resources, historical funding patterns, isolation and networking, research*

Questions and suggestions were presented about how to better share resources, understand historical funding patterns, address the challenges of isolation, tap into the potential of new technologies and increase research and knowledge mobilization. Some in the inter-arts sector feel isolated from the rest of the arts community and would like to see increased dialogue. Participants in the consultation also suggested that the IAO could play a larger role to ensure that quality and relevant data on artistic trends is available to increase awareness and understanding of the sector. Overall, we heard that more collaboration within the sector and with artistic disciplines could help identify commonalities and develop a stronger culture of sharing.

### Next steps

We invite further feedback about the findings of this report to [consult-ia@canadacouncil.ca](mailto:consult-ia@canadacouncil.ca) until December 15, 2013. The IAO will announce changes to its suite of programs during the spring of 2014 including a rationale for the changes in relation to the consultation findings and the Council's Review of Operating Grants Background Document.



# background

In October 2012, in the context of the Canada Council's organization-wide Review of Operating Grants, the Inter-Arts Office (IAO) merged its former annual programming grants and operating grant programs into a two-year interim program. It also announced plans to consult with the inter-arts communities to improve its programs and share knowledge about current and emerging artistic practices in the sector:

"This program is an interim measure that will be in place during a period of consultation, program re-design and evaluation. It will fund activities between 1 April 2013 and 31 March 2015. At the end of the two-year funding cycle, this program will be revised or replaced entirely. Organizations will be able to apply again for funding at this time; however this funding will not be assumed to be a continuation of previous commitments and is not guaranteed. If funding is awarded, the amount may or may not be consistent with the amount previously received."

(Source: Application guidelines, Grants to Organizations program)



Grants to Organizations Meeting in Montréal (2013 05 23)



On May 1, 2013 the IAO launched a consultation web site, which included a background document that proposed two questions and a set of sub-questions to frame the consultation:

1

**What are some of the issues and opportunities for the IAO to consider as it explores how to make its suite of programs more flexible, responsive, meaningful, impactful and measurable, especially its Grants to Organizations program in the context of the Council's Review of Operating Grants Exercise?**

How can the IAO improve its suite of programs while making sure that they are both equitable and effective?

How does the proposed 'suite of funding components' outlined in the Review of Operating Grant Programs document apply to the Inter-Arts Sector and where do current and prospective applicants to the IAO fit in this continuum?

How can the experience with past programs such as Explorations inform future program design?

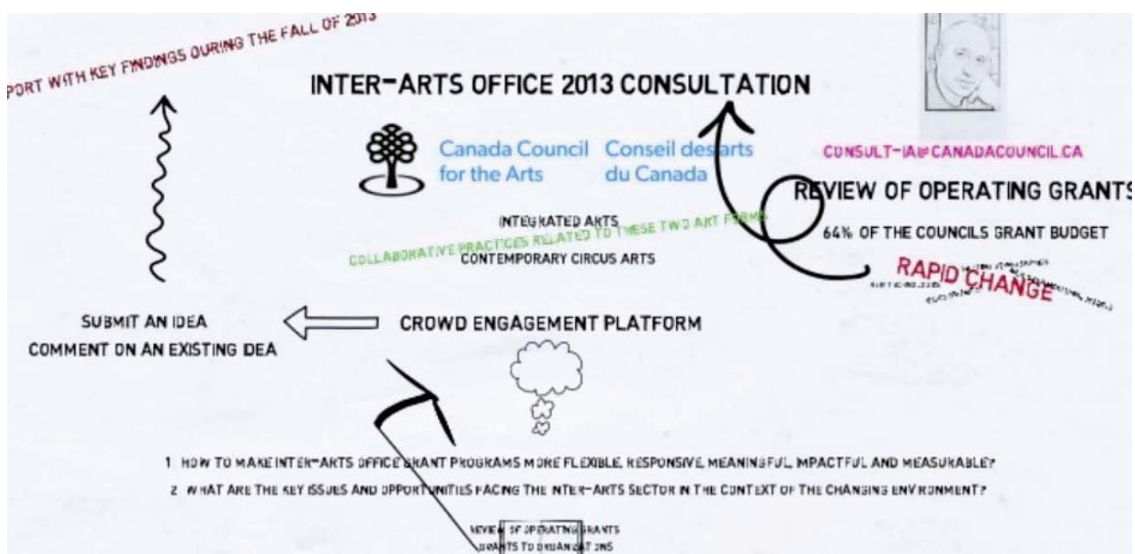
How does the notion of public engagement in the arts relate to inter-arts practices?

How should we address activities that overlap disciplinary work and increase further collaboration across disciplines?

How should we better understand the 'degree of integration' versus the 'quality of integration' in an assessment process?

How can we increase the impact of the inter-arts sector?

How can we streamline programs while increasing their measurability without compromising their specificities?



Excerpt from introduction video by IAO Coordinator Claude Schryer



## 2

**What are some of the key issues and opportunities facing you today in the context of the changing environment in which you work, such as new technologies, shifting definitions of art practice, demographic shifts, new organizational models, economic crisis, etc.?**

Who is succeeding and why?

Who is facing challenges and why?

What can we learn from each other as the arts communities, including the Council, weather the seas of change?

Participants were asked to identify 'issues' and 'opportunities' in relation to this set of questions. Input was received from various sources, including:

- Crowd engagement platform (May 1 – July 31, 2013)
- Email submissions from artists and arts organizations
- In-person meetings across the country with artists, arts professionals and partners (see Appendix 1: List of Meetings)
- International conferences (including *Open Engagement 2013* in Portland and the *Mini-Summit on International Policy Frameworks for Experimental Arts Practices* in Sydney)
- Publicly available reports and policy documents
- Written survey of applicants to the Grants to Organizations Program (November 15, 2012)

Summary reports from the crowd engagement platform and the meetings have been posted on the [IAO Consultation website](#) (see News and Events). Two Council blog posts were written about the consultation and are available on the website (see [Why Consult?](#), May 1 and [Inter-Arts Consultations: 10 Ideas We've Heard So Far](#), June 17).

This report is a high-level summary of all sources noted above and is structured according to five themes that emerged during the consultation. Regional specific issues and opportunities have been summarized in Appendix 2: Regional Perspectives.

This document was edited to eliminate duplication and to synthesize the input by theme. Some similar ideas with nuances were retained. Many quotations apply to more than one theme.



# 01

**ACCESS** application process, definitions/art forms, equity, public engagement in the arts



Grants to Organizations Meeting, Vancouver (2013 05 16)

Participants identified a number of barriers to accessing resources and suggested ways to improve the application process, clarify program definitions and position the different genres of artistic practice within the IAO. Participants also noted that the inter-arts sector has remarkable momentum and potential for growth. Some of the equity seeking groups (e.g. culturally diverse, Aboriginal, Deaf and disability, younger artists) expressed frustration at feeling “left out” of the established inter-arts community and are searching for “ways in” such as increased access to opportunities such as mentorships and residencies. We also heard both concerns and support for public engagement in the arts with a strong interest to deepen this dialogue.



## acronyms

GTOM – Grants to Organizations meeting

CEP – Crowd-engagement platform

RM – Regional meeting

## 1.1 Access: Application process

### We heard from artists and arts professionals that:

A good, clear set of priorities would be extremely valuable to assess where and how an organization fits into the IAO's programs. (GTOM)

Council should consider face-to-face interviews with grant applicants. (CEP)

Final report to be done [by Council staff] by looking at the website of the organization. (GTOM)

Find a solution to the overly-long wait time between application submission and response in Grants to Organizations program, since this can compromise the applicants' activities and programming. (GTOM)

Grant writing as a process has a strong emphasis on writing and is at odds with oral traditions. (GTOM)

Improve the French translation of the application documents. (GTOM)

It is sometimes difficult to describe process-based collaborative artistic work and to anticipate what artistic outcomes might look like in an application. (Prairies RM)

It would be good to develop videos about art practices in each region and post them on the Canada Council's website, for example, to showcase work and create more awareness of the different approaches to inter-arts work across the country. How can the arts community submit work for this purpose? (Prairies RM)

It would be useful to have more than one organizations project grant deadline per year. (Prairies RM)

Maintaining momentum on new creations is difficult when there is a long wait (i.e. 2 years) between completing a research/creation grant and applying for a production grant. (CEP)

More emphasis could be placed on support materials. Perhaps these could be sent out to peer assessors in advance or available online. (GTOM)

Objectives: Add support for diversity and put the artistic objectives in first place. (GTOM)

Potential new eligible activities: translation costs, website development, legacy documents, documentation. (GTOM)



## 1.1 Access: Application process continued

Some artists and groups have challenges in writing grants because they use a different language, such as artists in hip-hop. The written application form and the specialized language can be a challenge. Less printed material and more audiovisual material on YouTube would be useful to save time for applicants. (Ontario RM)

The language in the applications makes assumptions about knowledge of inter-arts and arts practices and is academic. (GTOM)

The payoff between the time and effort required to submit an application and the subsequent grant received is not always profitable for the applicants in the Grants to Organizations program. (GTOM)

There should be a place in the Grants to Organizations program to capture the whole context of the organization including history and what is happening currently; the increased conciseness of the application is helpful, but the space for this has been lost. (GTOM)

We gladly take the opportunity that is offered to us to raise a few challenges and we salute this vast consultation operation that will allow an update of the programs taking new realities into account. (email)

**When changes are made to the guidelines or applications a summary of changes could be circulated.**

(GTOM)





## 1.2 Access: Definitions/Art Forms

A glossary of the terms in the Grants to Organizations program application. (GTOM)

Despite its successes and stimulating perspectives, the circus arts sector experiences a profound and persistent misunderstanding: false perceptions are maintained regarding our circus arts sector, which overshadow its reality. (email)

Given the practice's expansion, encourage new organizations that meet the definition of inter-arts to apply to the program. (GTOM)

Inter-arts covers a wide variety of practices; each of these practices needs to be defined. (GTOM)

Interdisciplinary arts are an artistic practice in their own right, one that is distinguishable among all the others, and it is erroneous to confuse it with mediation and social transaction practices, which primarily seek to support the well-being of the community through cultural experiences. (CEP)

It is difficult to precisely define what the interdisciplinary arts are since the essence of this artistic practice combines the notions of change and of creation of a new artistic practice from the combination or contact of many existing forms and practices. In spite of these challenges, the interdisciplinary arts are a recognized discipline and it is important that the Canada Council support the development of this practice anchored in the contemporary. (email)

Circus art is a separate entity with a strong identity that seems to put pressure on integrated arts, which is defined by the diversity of its disciplines and their shared philosophy. (GTOM)

Ours is a close-knit environment, and we want to support its diversity because it helps us to inspire one another. (GTOM)

One of the things I appreciate most about the inter-arts category is that I feel it really fits what I am doing as an artist – and allows me to be working outside the box but also to have a category that fits... however one of my projects fits all three categories – but I understand that you need to make those categories work in order to have the grant request seen through the correct lens with the correct criteria. (email)

Perhaps simplify definitions and terminology around inter-multi-disciplinarity. (GTOM)

Please put the definitions of eligible activities back in the guidelines. (GTOM)

Shifting definitions of art practice – in some ways this is beneficial as it allows for more experimentation. However, the fact that the Council is open to new definitions doesn't necessarily mean that other funding bodies are. (GTOM)

Stop telling us that circus and culturally-specific work is inherently interdisciplinary. These forms are vital and deserve support, but calling them interdisciplinary is profoundly confusing and a poor solution. (CEP)

The IAO should refocus on exploratory practices and watch that it does not become too large; the program should be clearly defined and based on interdisciplinary approaches. The IAO seems to pursue the inclusivity of practices: circus, citizen concerns, arts and science – all of which is laudable – but what happened to interdisciplinary practices? (Quebec RM)



### 1.3 Access: Equity

It is difficult to find operational funding for small multidisciplinary organizations that provide support for new Canadians. It's difficult for professional artists coming from other countries to adapt to Canada and to access grants; these organizations would need to apply to each section, which does not make sense on a small scale; it would be nice for the IAO to support unique organizations that are struggling to adapt to the changing landscape of Canada. (Ontario RM)

It's intimidating for the next generation to be part of the inter-arts community; is there room for the next generation? The Council should explore entrepreneurial and partnering models such as "art-business" initiatives. (Quebec RM)

I feel that the greatest challenge remains in the fact that the practices, projects and organizations in this sector are diverse. Each has their own reality and their own needs, and it is therefore difficult to compare them to one another. (GTOM)

Culturally-diverse artists (immigrants) bring a fresh, dynamic and new forms of expression to the table. This is something that should always be kept in mind when developing programs. Moreover, these artists do not always express themselves using new technology and their idea of an inter- or multi-disciplinary project is not the same as that which is officially admitted; it often differs based on their culture and generation. A great deal of open-mindedness and awareness of this reality is therefore crucial for peer evaluation, to ensure that these artists are not discriminated against. (GTOM)

More emphasis in Inter-Arts programs should be paid to smaller and rural settings. While interdisciplinary practice is associated with contemporary and cutting-edge artistic practice, small communities have always operated in a cross disciplinary context. (CEP)

Opportunity for the Canada Council and all funding bodies to review their application process and assess methods of submitting an application. Not all people come from a written tradition. Many people, no matter what cultural background, find it difficult to express themselves on paper. For example, Aboriginal people come from an oral tradition. Furthermore, the 'grant writing language' is very specific, complex and can be intimidating for some. It is not always financially possible to have someone guide and assist in the process. (GTOM)

Seriously good work in being responsive to emerging practice trends – i.e. around the very formation of Inter-Arts and all its history since. But can you please stop making so many changes so often in such condensed periods of time? (GTOM)

The 'integrated arts concept' is recent however the concept of combined art forms (e.g. music, storytelling and dance) is old; how do culturally diverse artists relate to the IAO? How is this being brokered? What patterns of funding and access have emerged from equity groups since integrated arts category was created? (Ontario RM)

The issue of more flexible and accessible organizational funding is of interest in particular to the younger generation of artists. For example, some projects don't need a long lead-time and would benefit from more rapid turnaround (such as projects related to rapidly unfolding events) whereas larger projects would benefit from a multiyear commitment. (Ontario RM)

The profound lack of understanding of, and therefore qualified appreciation/ assessment of, disability arts, both within the disability arts & culture milieu and in the broader arts ecology – not to mention the disability service world, the academy, the health sector. (GTOM)



## 1.4 Access: Public engagement in the arts

Art needs an audience that is able to appreciate and be critical of the offering. For artists to be successful in the professional sphere the marketplace must be developed. Despite the importance of getting “bums in seats” marketing budgets are small and vulnerable to cuts. Reaching and developing audiences is often overlooked. A national forum that shared innovative ideas on audience development would be beneficial to the community. (CEP)

Audience diversity leads to different types of organizations: those with large audiences and others that pursue cutting edge research and development for highly specialized audiences. (GTOM)

Community engagement is growing in partnership with communities such as thematic projects around food. Is ‘community engagement’ a discipline? We should not minimize programs that are growing and that respond to funding priorities. The public want to be more involved in the arts, which is good, however there is a balance point to be found between community and conventional practice. (Ontario RM)

The Council's preoccupation with the principle of public engagement in the arts is worrisome. Artistic research and experimental practices are important in a cultural ecology. To “strengthen the links between the arts and the public” is not always a goal for professional artists and the Council has a duty to recognize the importance and purpose of atypical forms, and to value them. (CEP)

More emphasis on public engagement and de-emphasize organizational structure. (GTOM)

The Council's policy on public engagement in the arts is not well understood: everyone wants to have a larger audience but it is necessary that the work be for the general public? (Quebec RM)

The inter-arts milieu is well positioned to seize the remarkable momentum these days in order to present and promote what we want. (GTOM)

What about trans-disciplinary and cross-sectoral practices? Do they not engage the public in new and interesting ways? (Atlantic RM)

Why does the Council have specific criteria to integrate ‘art that engages with the public’? Would it not be better to open rather than narrow these criteria? (Atlantic RM)



Northern Regional Meeting, Inuvik (2013 07 14)



# 02

**ASSESSMENT** peers, artists and community collaboration program (ACCP), measuring impact



Prairies Regional Meeting, Calgary (2013 06 10)

Artists and arts professionals feel strongly about peer assessment and representation. Some said that IAO programs should be evaluated by specialized peer assessors for each art practice such as integrated arts, contemporary circus arts or artists and community collaboration. Others think that inter-arts practices are better evaluated by a broader range of peers. Participants in the consultation feel that impact measurement is important but that the role that art plays in society can sometimes be difficult to quantify, especially in inter-arts. Overall, we heard a desire for more information and input about how applications are assessed and how the impact of funded activity is measured.



## acronyms

GTOM – Grants to Organizations meeting

CEP – Crowd-engagement platform

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## 2.1 Assessment: Peers

### We heard from artists and arts professionals that:

Canadian artists should be assessed by a jury of peers who are able to evaluate projects with knowledge and competence. (CEP)

Continue to invite first time assessors in order to provide artists with this rich experience: of value in particular for artists from remote regions (peer assessor).

Using only one panel to evaluate new practices, circus art, multi-disciplinary presenters, integrated arts and artists, and the community seems a rather difficult task to me, particularly if they must be evaluated based on the same criteria. (GTOM)

Given that the composition of IAO juries attempts to represent many socio-geographical needs (region, experience, cultural diversity, artistic practice), there is little chance of having someone on the jury who knows or has seen the work of a given organization in the competition. How can socio-geographical representation be considered more important than knowledge of the artistic environment, the discipline and its actors and the history and evolution of the discipline? (CEP)

It is unfair to adjudicate us against standards of large organizations. (GTOM)

The issue of the degree and quality of integration in the new IAO programs may be resolved based on the nature of the proposed activities. Our organization's approach is based on the diversity of cultural and cross-disciplinary practices, and the idea of "openness" or "integration" take on the same meaning inasmuch as artists from various disciplines participate in the entire creative process. (GTOM)

Some inter-arts work is more challenging to assess. It is a particular lens of assessment and important for funders to maintain a jury pool of assessors who understand this work. Funders need to remain flexible about which programs best support artists who cross boundaries. (Prairies RM)

That service and associative organizations, given their particular vocation, be assessed upon criteria that differ from the ones put forward for creation and presentation organizations. (email)

The Council could run a 'coffee house' type session with recent jury members about what they are looking for and what they value in applications. Experiences on an Alberta Creative Development Initiative (ACDI) jury were amazing and enlightening. (Prairies RM)

There is an inconsistency in what is valued by juries, both within Canada Council from deadline to deadline and between Canada Council and other public funding bodies. Perhaps best practice guidelines for what a successful organization consists of, would be helpful. For instance, does having a fund reserve show that an organization is responsible and careful, or does it show that the organization really does not need funding support? (GTOM)

While the principle of peer review appears of paramount to the Council, it seems to lose importance in practice for Inter-Arts juries. Some jury members appear to have misconceptions about the multidisciplinary arts environment or do not come from that environment. Council should ensure that the make-up of juries is representative of the artistic practices in question. (CEP)

Would like to see program officers and jury members attending the work of the companies who are funded. We would like to see this as a mandatory requirement. Experiencing first hand is the best way for all concerned to understand the work that is being done and to assess and 'report' on successes and challenges. (GTOM)



## 2.2. Assessment: Artist and Community Collaboration Program (ACCP)

Activist art is not a discipline. Everyone practices art that is politically, socially and aesthetically activist. This issue concerns the discipline as a whole and not a particular theme or approach. (GTOM)

All disciplines support community collaborations – why is it so emphasized in Inter-Arts? (CEP)

Artist and Community Collaboration projects would be best evaluated by a single jury across departments, as it is the community aspect that is important, not the discipline. (CEP)

Can the ACCP eligibility be changed to include not only artistic vision and skill but also human service qualification and proven experience with marginalized communities? (GTOM)

Disciplinary separation of artist and community collaboration is difficult. Best to see it as an art practice with a free flow of artistic expression. The IAO has perhaps become too rigid in its categories. (Ontario RM)

High ethical standards are required in artist and community collaboration work in order to ensure best practices. There are real issues in the community around the exploitation of marginalized individuals and communities. We must see best practices adhered to when grant applications are adjudicated and the work is assessed, and after the project, evaluated, in order to maintain the ethical standards required by marginalized communities and the work in collaboration with community. (BC RM)

If Artist and Community Collaboration Project grants could be counted as eligible project grants, this would make the operating grant program more accessible. (CEP)

The artists and community program has become dogmatic about the methods artists should use to create their work. (GTOM)

Like others, I see that the IAO is serving many different agendas. We know that there are many forms of community-engaged practices and that many of them cross disciplines. But these forms also require artist/facilitators and their organizations to acquire specific skill sets that make unique demands of them. If the ACCP program were to be integrated into a new section at the Council, along with the community-engaged projects/operation support that is already in place in Inter-Arts, would this better serve the people doing these forms of work? (email)

Maintaining assessment based on artistic merit not (perceived) social need. (GTOM)

When considering changes, acknowledge advantages of having ACCP across all disciplines (versus having a separate “Community Arts” office) - a good approach in that it isn’t so segregating of the practice. (GTOM)

Would there be an advantage to creating a structure with one application point for all artist and community collaboration type work? Also, please keep this valuable program as it creates critical access points for equity groups. (BC RM)



## 2.3 Assessment: Measuring impact

Focus on “success stories” from organizations rather than statistics as a measuring tool (GTOM)

Natural environment and land-based artist residencies are increasingly part of the group’s practice, and these residencies, responding to changing seasons and cycles, can unfold over a period of many years. Does the IAO envision a program that has the flexibility to use a significantly longer analytical timeline as the framework for reporting and assessment? (CEP)

We increasingly seem to be using managerial logic and thinking in terms of maximizing performance, but art cannot be treated like a shared photocopier. (GTOM)

The community recognizes that the impact of programs must be measured with tools such as the CADAC system, but the role that art plays in the creation of identity is sometimes hard to quantify or measure. (Quebec RM)

The measurability of outcome and impact is critical. One challenge is in final reporting on the outcomes on the longer term and grow and how to monitor continued relationship. A project could be take place over six months but the impact could take place years later. Extended reporting opportunities would provide more rounded perspectives on the impact of funding and provide useful feedback for the artists’ work. (Prairies RM)

There is a lot of change in the air: one challenge is how to make informed decisions, what the impact of these changes might be and how they relate to program objectives. The IAO needs to ensure that there is sufficient data analysis that is shared with the community. For example, with the regular adjustment policy, will the movement of funds penalize emerging equity groups because they don’t have the capacity to compete with more established organizations? How will this be mediated? (Ontario RM)

We need to find ways to better measure the impact of the work on the longer term such as social outcomes however it is important to be sensitive about the burden on arts organizations.

(Prairies RM)









# 03

**BOUNDARIES** interactions with artistic disciplines and other sectors, positioning the inter-arts sector



Grants to Organizations meeting in Montreal (2013 05 23)

A recurring theme we heard in every region was the 'shifting boundaries' of art forms and organizational structures. Artists are increasingly engaging in cross-disciplinary activities that sometimes challenge current structures, such as multidisciplinary organizations or art practices that are constantly in flux. We also heard that artists are increasingly interested in cross-sectoral practices and new ways of engaging areas outside the arts (e.g. arts and science, and the private sector). Overall, we heard that the inter-arts community is keenly aware of the rapidly changing environment and is looking to position itself in a larger context.



### 3.1 Boundaries: Interactions with artistic disciplines and other sectors

#### We heard from artists and arts professionals that:

Disciplinary organizations should be given the ‘permission’ to support multidisciplinary activities (e.g. dance or interdisciplinary artist working in a theatre venue) if the activity fits in their overall mandate. (Ontario RM)

Inter-arts artists are working increasingly in an intersectorial context (e.g., arts and science). The IAO should establish a program to support these practices. The Off the Radar program was a wonderful initiative for promoting “critical thinking” in the sector. It should be continued. (Quebec RM)

Inter-arts is everywhere in Montreal: the disciplinary landscape has changed. (peer assessor)

Interdisciplinarity is a growing trend and is visible in artistic practice and other sectors. Council should recognize and support interdisciplinary artistic practices in each discipline. All the disciplines support by Council should contribute to a comparative cross-disciplinary analysis of funding levels.

It is clearly stated that the Inter-Arts does not support multidisciplinary presenters, yet many multidisciplinary presenters receive funding. (CEP)

It remains unclear where an organization moving from disciplinary to integrated arts fits in the transition. When and how does an organization transfer to inter-arts? (Ontario RM)

It’s ironic that we have to deal with silos when the arts are moving in the other direction: you need to figure out a new approach. (meeting with an arts organization in Ontario)

Operating funding does make sense in order to provide continuity to support the success of the artists, however the workload to manage CADAC is substantial, which makes two-year project grants look viable in some cases. Some organizations could combine grants between sections. There should be more porousness between disciplines and better resource distribution strategies between sections. Funders should follow growth and reflect the evolution of art practices. (Ontario RM)

Perhaps a ‘hub’ approach would be more inviting than disciplinary silos (arts organization in Alberta)

Provide a single application that could be processed by several arts sections. (GTOM)



## acronyms

GTOM – Grants to Organizations meeting

CEP – Crowd-engagement platform

RM – Regional meeting

In the future, projects that do not incorporate several disciplines will be few and far between—I feel that this is the direction in which our society is currently headed. Therefore, we should revisit the idea of operating by discipline and eventually consider the idea of artistic merit by “project,” which will vary from case to case, may or may not incorporate one or more disciplines, and may take on different hybrid forms from one instance to another. (GTOM)

Single purpose organizations tend not to work well in the north: multi-purpose and cross-sectoral approaches are more common. (Northern RM)

The ability to move between sections at the Canada Council or to apply in more than one section is a great addition. More could be done to educate applicants about this. (GTOM)

The Council needs a place where outsiders can come in but should the IAO be a catch-all? (Ontario RM)

There is little communication between artistic disciplines; the IAO should encourage more dialogue between the disciplines. (Quebec RM)

**“ We sometime feel like artistic disciplines are putting artists into a box.  
How does one step out of one’s home discipline?  
How can we recontextualise this relationship? ”**

(Prairies RM)



Ontario regional meeting in Toronto (2013 05 27)



### 3.2 Boundaries: Positioning the inter-arts sector


2% of the Council's budget is attributed to the IAO, which is relatively little given the level of activity and vitality of this ever-expanding sector. Why doesn't the Council do an exercise to seek out more resources? (Quebec RM)

Because there are many artistic realities in Canada and each one faces different challenges and possibilities, we must define the context for national arts practice. (GTOM)

It is important to support emerging artists and groups of artists by putting them in contact with other artists or artistic organizations, which could have a positive impact on the entire artistic community at the national level. Collaboration is key! (GTOM)

In order to have access to operating grants, organizations should be required to account for grants received from both IAO and other disciplines offices. (CEP)

In response to Council's document outlining the review of operating grants programs at Council and the statement that operating grants, while groundbreaking in the 1960s and 1970s, are unsustainable today. Without any real argumentation or firsthand data to support this thesis – other than the Council's budgetary stagnation – the Council's authorities have decided to set a consultation process into motion, the conclusions of which are both foregone and disappointing. Foregone in the sense that according to the Council's opinion, the operating grant model constitutes the main problem to be solved; disappointing in the sense that the Canada Council seems unable to rally the entire Canadian community around the recognition of its contribution and the improvement of its funding. (CEP)



We are witnessing a 'power drain' of artists out of regions towards urban centres where there is more work and opportunities, such as circus arts in Quebec and culturally diverse artists who migrate to large urban centres.

(Prairies RM)



Inter-Arts inherently embrace experimentation and risk. (GTOM)

It is customary for institutional consultations to focus on goals that will lead to the improvement of the services and support provided for the arts community. It appears that the Council's approach seeks to solve its strategic powerlessness by weakening the ecology of many artistic fields on the basis of hypotheses that are making times difficult for us: broad budget cuts, shrinking of operating grants, reduction of project grants, program deterioration, service reduction, watering down of artistic merit. (CEP)

The IAO is well-positioned to initiate discussion and reflection on the Council's operations as a whole because it deals directly with the challenges and expectations of today's artists. (GTOM)

Residencies for international artists and commissioning seem like a relatively little explored area for Inter-Arts and are an opportunity because of the ability to share practice across disciplines and art practices: it's about the quality of relationship and connections made. The IAO could play more of a leadership role here. (BC RM)

The Inter-Arts sector has lots of innovation but needs to have light shed on it in order to better understand its contributions. (Prairies RM)

The interdisciplinary arts milieu expects the Canada Council to fully recognize its contribution: artists and organizations expect measures that will finally put an end to economic hardship and precariousness. Artists and organizations expect that the operating and project support programs will be maintained and bolstered in a sustainable manner, by ensuring the carrying through of linkages between research-creation/production-dissemination-propagation. (CEP)

The issues of infrastructure and shared equipment merits further reflection. There is a link between integrated arts and integrated infrastructure. A better synchronization of efforts between funders and partners would be useful in order to reduce barriers in sharing space and equipment and would have a positive impact across the arts and in other sectors. (Prairies RM)

A strong professional association to organize and consolidate the sector, to rally its various stakeholders around common goals. (GTOM)

Very good international recognition of Inter-Arts. (GTOM)



# 04

**OPERATING** financial  
considerations, program design



Quebec Regional Meeting, Montréal (2013 05 22)

We received a range of feedback on long-term grants in reference to the Council's Review of Operating Grant background document, notably on the challenges of managing financial information and reporting, alternative program designs and issues with eligibility. Tensions were apparent between the notion of access to funding from those not yet in the funding system and the stability of funding from those who currently have on-going funding. The role of presenters and service organizations were noted as critical to the development of the sector. Overall, we heard that a mix of short and long term funding options make sense in order to provide both flexibility and continuity of support.





## acronyms

GTOM – Grants to Organizations meeting

CEP – Crowd-engagement platform

RM – Regional meeting

## 4.1 Operating: Financial considerations

### We heard from artists and arts professionals that:

A place to explain details on reserve funds and surpluses in the Grants to Organizations program CADAC form. (GTOM)

Applicants need to better understand the financial aspects of applications: more literacy required and more compassion for those who do not have the skill set. (conversation with a peer assessor)

CADAC: should be divided by organization type; too many fields that address other types of organizations; problems with the fiscal years; has statistics somewhat heavy (GTOM)  
How do you transition from project funds to operating funds in Inter-Arts? Can you use project funding for staff? (Northern RM)

The CADAC may provide good internal benchmarks from one year to the next between certain similar presenters; however, it becomes biased when used to compare creation/production organizations and it is here that we lose our originality. Is originality not what we are seeking in art? The expression of one's own voice and perspective? (GTOM)

The Council has a responsibility towards artists who are not easily funded by the private sector. If it does not fulfill this responsibility, commercial logic will rule and there will be no room for debate. (GTOM)

New technologies – increased social media campaigning/marketing means more staff time allotted to this arena. (GTOM)

Offer workshops on CADAC. (GTOM)

**Grants to Organizations program methodology is very interesting – effectively highlights details on applicant organizations' finances and financial resources (e.g. self-generated revenues, private funding and deficit).**

(GTOM)

The financial side of CADAC works; the accounting staff/contractors have no problem completing it and like the format. (GTOM)

The statistics side of CADAC is complex and unclear in the Grants to Organizations program; a guide to the form specific to Inter-Arts could help clarify the process. It is also unclear what the statistics are being used for. (GTOM)

What is the right balance point between administration and artistic costs? (BC RM)



## 4.2 Operating: Program design

A majority of contemporary circus art activities are in Quebec. The rest of Canada is far behind and tend to get 'ping ponged' around with other funders. How can a circus company get an operating grant in these conditions? (Ontario RM)

An artist-led inter-arts company noted that it is currently eligible to apply for operating (three grants in five years) however it received advice that it might be better off applying for project funding because little would be gained in operating and that it might actually distort the creative process of the company. An alternative funding model adapted to small organizations would better for their needs. (Atlantic RM)

As part of the program review underway at the CCA, it was suggested that a multi-year project funding program be developed. This would foster the funding of emerging groups in particular. Artists and cultural organizations sometimes have to put a great deal of energy into preparing several applications for each phase of a given project. Multi-year project applications would give artists and cultural organizations the opportunity to better articulate their artistic vision to obtain optimal funding for the duration of the project. (email)

Dissemination of multidisciplinary practices are often limited to and constrained within specific events such as festivals. Opportunities for longer-term programming are particularly rare. The Council should support specialized dissemination initiatives for multidisciplinary arts. (CEP)

Eligibility for organizations – does there have to be core funding in place for an organization to access Canada Council funds? It can be a challenge to collaboration because so many of the organizations in the North don't have the basic resources to operate full-time... (Northern RM)

I believe that there is an inherent degree of fluidity and/or flexibility in every arts organization, and so 'categorizing' groups could be problematic. (GTOM)

I feel it would be a good idea to adapt the programs to the various roles the organizations play (based on the type of organization, its size and its scope) beyond their artistic or disciplinary fields. (GTOM)

Longer term project grants make sense for many organizations in this region with lighter administrative structures (collectives or artist-led companies). It is useful to know how much funds applicants have for a project well in advance. This helps artists realize their vision... (Atlantic RM)

Micro grants, like those offered by the Edmonton Arts Council. (GTOM)

**“ Multi-year funding helps build capacity and reduces the reporting and administrative time. ”**  
(GTOM)

We must have a strong foundation and organizations with stable operations that develop practices over the long term. At the same time, new organizations must also have the opportunity to stabilize. Some will die with their creators, while others would like to endure and leave behind a legacy of some kind – a direction, an event, a history – is this possible? It would be to the benefit of our collective artistic heritage. (GTOM)



One of the requirements for access to operating grants is the receipt of a number of project grants from the same discipline sections at the Council. Given the specificities of inter-arts sector, it is normal for companies to receive grants from Inter-Arts as well as other sections, such as Dance or Theatre. However, these grants do not count toward access to operating grants. (CEP)

Operating funding provides support for essential staffing infrastructure and resources enabling arts organizations to plan and manage a variety of short- and long-term artistic activities while in contrast, program funding (and for an arc of activity) provides support for specific artistic programs and activities, operating and project funding provide for complimentary rather than identical needs. (GTOM)

Operating funding's unique role is to work with project funding to support the entire ecology of arts practice, the organizational equivalent of the progress from new growth to old growth "art" forest: organizations that represent the flowering of an art practice and bring energy into their home community and field of practice; preserve diversity; store resources and knowledge to recycle into the system; and provide shelter and support for new and emerging generations of art (and community-engaged art) practice. (GTOM)

Operating grants can be onerous in terms of the application and reporting processes. (GTOM)

Resetting budgets to zero is perceived as a factor that will undermine organizations and make them feel more insecure. It is difficult to associate selling a good idea with the concept of research and exploration. The organizations are trying to find ways of transferring skills to the younger generations. (GTOM)

Stop being overly flexible. Exclusion can be a good and equitable thing too. ... There has been so much "flexibility" since the shift in language that many art forms have lost their original meaning and intent. (GTOM)

The economics of being an independent artist means artists often take on as many projects as feasible. It is not always possible for them to participate in all projects of their collective. A broader definition of "collective" would enable collectives to maintain their mandate and values but maintain a looser overall structure. (CEP)

There seems to be a significant disconnect between the list of organizations receiving operating funding at the Council, and recognized leaders in the field of interdisciplinary arts. (CEP)

Since the conventional dissemination structures are not always suitable for multidisciplinary and emerging practices, the IAO should support the self-dissemination, as well as creation and dissemination activities in situ. (CEP)

Stable funding allows an organization to plan over a period of time; that predictability would allow planning projects that take a few years to develop and would also allow organizations to leverage that stable money for further funding. (GTOM)

Service organizations play an important role in the development of the arts community. There is a need for increased support for capacity building and professional services to artists. What about service and advocacy organizations that support more than one discipline. Where do they fit? (Atlantic RM)



# 05

**SHARING** distribution of resources, historical funding patterns, isolation and networking, research



Atlantic Regional Meeting, Halifax (2013 06 04)

Questions and suggestions were presented about how to increase the sharing of resources, better understanding historical funding patterns, addressing the challenges of isolation, tapping into the potential of new technologies and increasing research and knowledge mobilization. Some in the inter-arts sector feel isolated from the rest of the arts community and would like to see increased dialogue. Participants in the consultation also suggested that the IAO could play a larger role to ensure that quality and relevant data on artistic trends is available to increase awareness and understanding of the sector. Overall, we heard that more collaboration within the sector and with artistic disciplines could help identify commonalities and develop a stronger culture of sharing.



## acronyms

GTOM – Grants to Organizations meeting

CEP – Crowd-engagement platform

RM – Regional meeting

## 5.1 Sharing: Distribution of resources

### We heard from artists and arts professionals that:

Artist-run centres are facing increasing issues with the cost of space, which affects programming and is encouraging some organizations to think differently about partnerships and collaboration with other art forms and sectors outside of the arts. This is a critical moment for increased dialogue about increase resource sharing in order to break isolation and encourage less competition and more collaboration across disciplines. What mechanisms can be put in place to help with this? (Atlantic RM)

Canada Council restructuring = opportunity to rethink support for the mega-institutions (GTOM)

Canada is filled with independent artists, collectives, small and big circus companies that have their own signature. Since a few years already, the country's circus arts have undergone a fast and exceptional growth: presence of an important circus community that is engaged and structured, growing infatuation of the audiences for this artistic discipline, recognition of the creativity, excellence and expertise of our circus on the international scene. (email)

The IAO supports innovative artistic practices that first and foremost focus on artistic quality and that subsequently incite public interest and involvement. However, a balance between these two requirements can only be achieved through long-term planning under stable financial conditions. We find that the IAO programs must give further consideration to the relationship between the artistic quality of the work and the conditions in which the work is produced. (GTOM)

Need to explore more private funding starting with a relationship, which might then lead to requesting financial or in-kind support. (Northern RM)

Rather than asking the inter-arts community to comment on the distribution of funds between operating and project funding, why not create a think-tank and hire people to research this issue and report back to Council? (CEP)

Suggestion for the development of a database of corporate funders that can be accessed by artists, and an advisory group that can help artist realize costly public art projects. (CEP)

That the Canada Council be concerned about supporting excellence, develop and put in place strategies and measures allowing recognition and fair and consistent financial support for already established and performing organizations, as well as for emerging organizations or organizations with a particular vocation (citizen project, regional specificities, new practices, diversity, etc.). (email)

That the Canada Council develop and put in place strategies and measures allowing a fair distribution of the resources between sectors that would also ensure a common vision of the challenges and rules of attribution of the granted supports. (email)

The IAO could encourage large organizations to share resources more and trickle down their successes. Examples: space, human resources, mentoring, other resources. (GTOM)

What if an organization wants to share some of its equipment but does not have the staff to manage the rental agreements? Is there a way for the IAO to facilitate shared equipment projects in order for artists to gain access to facilities and technology? (Prairies RM)



## 5.2 Sharing: Historical perspectives

Gathering the integrated arts, circus arts and community collaborative arts under the umbrella of a single program should in itself be the object of serious reflection. (CEP)

I still miss the Explorations Program of the Canada Council because it allowed you to connect Indigenous arts practice in remote communities not normally funded under the Canada Council with artists in a professional discipline that was different but complementary, thus creating an entirely new art form. (email)

Is it not strange that the expression “interdisciplinary art” is missing from the Grants to Organizations program? It is after all the interdisciplinary arts that are at the origin of the IAO, and do they not continue to play a prominent role in the Canadian cultural landscape by working at the same time to create new contents and forge links with the public, artists and organizations so as to redefine, vitalize and develop new forms of contemporary art? (CEP)

The Explorations program fostered the emergence and support of new artists. It also better met the needs of artists and Franco-Canadian cultural organizations because it had very solid regional roots and flexible guidelines. This made managers and panel members aware of the specific issues and challenges related to artistic practices in minority communities. (email)

Integrated arts has suffered from having been removed from performance art on panels, among other places. (GTOM)

The former Explorations program played a role in encouraging cross disciplinary collaboration in the 1970s. Performance art also played a role in the development of critical and innovative approaches in art making at this time. These rich histories are important to keep in mind moving forward for the Council. (Atlantic RM)

The Inter-Arts mission in 2002 was much clearer and more consistent than it is today: “The Inter-Arts Program supports creation, production, dissemination and professional development by Canadian Inter-Arts professional artists and arts organizations in one of three Inter-Arts practices: performance art, interdisciplinary work and new artistic practices” (CEP)

The loss of performance art means a loss of the program’s historical, philosophical and cultural roots. (GTOM)

When the Council created the “multi-inter” programs in the 1980s, the goal was to reduce segmentation and silos. It is ironic to see that in 2013, interdisciplinarity is trying to become a discipline, while there is a great shift toward interdisciplinary approaches within all the disciplines. This is quite a paradox. The Council should perform an exercise to assess its ability to work horizontally. (Quebec RM)

While it was good to be consulted now, why was the arts community not consulted when Inter-Arts removed performance art and included contemporary circus arts from its purview, or changed to Integrated Arts, and lowered the ceiling on project grants? (CEP)



## 5.3 Sharing: Isolation and networking

Create more partnerships and collaborations between arts organizations and between the private sector and arts organizations. (GTOM)

Develop venues, synergies, opportunities and networking. (GTOM)

Develop and consolidate presentation networks in Quebec, across Canada and abroad. (GTOM)

Journalists do not know how to cover interdisciplinary arts. (meeting with service organization)

Networking and capacity-building activities for culturally diverse artists through the Equity Office have been important such as the Stand Firm initiative. Networking grants would be of great value. Equity groups in particular need to build on the current momentum. (Atlantic RM)

Networking in the Deaf and Disability arts sector is important but can be very expensive. The Council's Equity Office has been very helpful in this regard. One of the greatest challenges is the cost of interpretation such as American Sign Language (ASL). (Prairies RM)

Pairing up of artists is a key concern for the younger generation of artists such as connecting artists from different regions through new media or match emerging artists with senior artists and creating opportunities based on each other's strengths for mentorship and cross generational collaboration such as laboratories and workshops. (CEP)

Pan-Northern collaborations are growing due to increased trust and the identification of areas of common interest. (Northern RM)

Recognize the importance of mentorship/collaboration/co-operation between artists and organizations. (GTOM)

The IAO should invite stakeholders to participate in a "think tank" for a more in-depth consideration of these questions. (Quebec RM)



BC Regional Meeting, Vancouver (2013 05 15)



## 5.4 Sharing: Research

A larger national discussion about socially-engaged practices would be valuable. (Ontario RM)

Finding the people and the right time to share knowledge and the legacy of what has been built is hard. There are not positions opening for these people to be mentored either in the organizations funding by Inter-Arts or in the arts in general. (GTOM)

Inter-Arts could lead the best practices discussion for community engaged arts. What is considered success and good engagement differs from organization to organization. The practices of some organizations or projects when executed poorly have negative effects on other organizations/projects. (GTOM)

New technologies are a relatively untapped area for development in inter-arts. There are few collaborations with the private for-profit sector and institutions; the communities are mostly disconnected: one has technologies and the other ideas on how to use them: how to better connect them. There is a need for more digital media strategies... (BC RM)

Take advantage of print and digital media to develop creative ways to translate resources and artistic knowledge into sharable and saleable programs, services and productions (other than live performance) that will inspire other artists and communities across Canada and beyond and generate revenue and royalties. (GTOM)

The issue of organizations applying to arts and non-arts funders complicates the reporting process for organizations that work cross-sectorally such as organizations working in arts and social justice. The expected outcomes can vary. Perhaps a centralized database and better reporting tools could make this easier? (Prairies RM)

There is a difference between reporting (about achieving corporate policy objectives) and evaluation (about value and impact). (Prairies RM)


There is a need to create more focused set of cultural statistics at the federal, territorial and provincial level. The CADAC system can help with this but a more concerted effort is required on this front. Would a national index entered by the arts community be useful? (Prairies RM)



There is value in more data however some research is out of date or does not cover inter-arts practices. We need both quantitative and qualitative information. For example, it would be interesting to look at leveraging the power of other networks of collaborators in inter-arts: who comes to the table and which of these is unique to inter-arts. This snapshot would have an interesting range of partners and could paint a portrait of who is involved in the sector in particular about how connections are being made through art with sectors outside of the arts. (Prairies RM)

We attempt to utilize and embrace new technologies and interdisciplinary art practices in every aspect of our mandate. New technologies and diverse artistic practices are being introduced to Aboriginal youth and communities in order to develop a contemporary voice for Indigenous values, cosmologies and world-views. It is our intention to create a bridge, cultivate a dialogue and nurture understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal individuals and communities. (GTOM)

We would like to know more about 'integrated arts' trends across the country and what distinguishes this from 'multidisciplinary' activities. (Prairies RM)



We would like  
to know more about how art  
practices are changing?  
Funding programs need to follow  
what artists are doing. Inter-arts is  
at the edge of where other work  
is shifting. It is a critical lens into  
where the community is going...

(Prairies RM)



# appendix 1

## LIST OF MEETINGS (IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER)

2013-03-11	Meetings with Regroupement des arts interdisciplinaires du Québec (RAIQ) and Email for arts organization : Regroupement national des arts du cirque, Montréal
2013-05-15	BC Regional Meeting Vancouver, c. 30 participants (in person and by phone)
2013-05-16	Grants to Organizations applicants, English session, Vancouver, c. 20 participants
2013-05-17	Open Engagement Conference, Portland, Oregon
2013-05-22	Quebec Regional Meeting Montreal, c. 40 participants (in person and by phone)
2013-05-23	Grants to Organizations applicants, French session, Montreal, c. 35 participants
2013-05-27	Ontario Regional Meeting Toronto, c. 30 participants (in person and by phone)
2013-05-27	Meeting with Harbourfront Centre, Toronto
2013-06-04	Atlantic Regional Meeting Halifax, c. 30 participants (in person and by phone)
2013-06-10	Meeting with Banff Centre for the Arts, Banff
2013-06-10	Prairies Regional Meeting, Calgary, c. 40 participants (in person and by phone)
2013-06-13	Meetings with Emerging and Experimental Arts Section, Australia Council for the Arts
2013-06-14	International Federation of Arts Council's and Cultural Agencies (IFACCA) Mini-Summit on International Policy Frameworks for Experimental Arts Practices, Sydney, Australia, c. 20 participants
2013-06-19	Meeting with arts organization: Regroupement national des arts du cirque board of directors
2013-06-29/30	Meetings on Positioning the Arts within Resilient Cities, Wasan Island, Muskoka
2013-07-13/14	Northern Regional Meeting, Inuvik, c. 40 participants (in person) as part of the 2013 NWT Arts, Culture and Heritage Gathering
2013-07-26	Meeting with IAO peer assessment committee



## acronyms

GTOM – Grants to Organizations meeting

CEP – Crowd-engagement platform

RM – Regional meeting

# appendix 2

## REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES

We heard from artists and arts professionals that:

### **Atlantic (Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland & Labrador)**

What are some of the root causes of the lack of applications and activity from Atlantic Canada in inter-arts? The field of inter-arts is relatively new here. More flexible models should be considered such as the proposed multiyear programming grants. (Atlantic RM)

The cost of rehearsal space in St. John's is very high and can restrict collaborative work. (Atlantic RM)

Congratulations to the IAO for the changes to its programs. It is taking leadership role by exploring new funding models such as extended project. These are also exciting times in Nova Scotia with the new arts council and the equity partnership initiative [Nova Scotia Program to Support Diverse Artists. (Atlantic RM)

I would like to see more emphasis in this program on smaller and rural settings. Often we associate inter-disciplinary practice with contemporary and cutting edge artistic practice. My experience has been that many small communities have always operated in a cross disciplinary context. (email)



Northern Regional Meeting, Inuvik (2013 07 14)



### British Columbia

Not enough resources – human or financial. Lack of financial resources makes it impossible to pay competitive wages / salaries to attract and keep staff. Too often people leave the arts sector to work in jobs that are more financially viable. This makes it difficult to do long-term strategic planning. (GTOM)

Lack of in-depth understanding from funders, review committees and non-Aboriginal community about our art practices processes and protocols. Our model of working is very different from the Western European method and therefore cannot meet the same measurables. Also, since many of our cultural traditions, so integral to our art practices, were lost, we need to develop them. We need to develop our artists and train our administrators. This takes time. (GTOM)

Given the fluid and emerging qualities of inter-arts is there some role to facilitate more networking in the inter-arts sector in order to help to connect artists and level the playing field between, for example, urban- and rural-based organization? Inter-arts is more challenging than a discipline, which has more infrastructure for networking. There is a desire to break isolation... (BC RM)

In Vancouver, along with lack of funding, we have the highest rental rates of anywhere in the country. This makes living, storage and work space extremely expensive. There is also a terrible lack of space and we have paid thousands of dollars for sub-standard rehearsal space in which the floors are dangerous to dance, act and perform including nails coming through the floor boards, uneven floors, etc... This must be taken into consideration when adjudicating proposals from Vancouver. (GTOM)

Someone from the Council has to spend more time in Vancouver with the smaller organizations to understand our issues. It feels like there is an incredible disconnect between the Council and Vancouver arts organizations funded at lower levels. (GTOM)

There is a crisis for artists and arts organizations. Vancouver experiences issues of funding, office, storage and rehearsal space. (CEP)



### **North (Northwest Territories, Yukon, Nunavut)**

Our circumstances are unique in that a great deal of effort is expended to preserve traditional Inuit culture, but few resources are available to contemporary or “modern” organizations or artists. (GTOM)

It is difficult to continue to make artistic practices a priority for members because the social system in the north is inadequate and leads to all sorts of inconsistencies and economic and social disadvantages. There is a serious lack of public spaces available to artists to practise and present their work. This is a major issue for artists in Nunavut. There is a lack of initiatives in the private sector in Nunavut, where the social and economic systems are almost entirely managed by the territorial or federal government. There is little substantial, positive action taken in the Arctic. Therefore, our organization is often held up as a model and we have few obstacles to finding basic funding. (GTOM)

Young people often don't fit government program criteria and funders should move forward from where people are at, keeping in mind the high cost of living in the arctic that often means that more remotely located artists cannot compete with artists in the south. (Northern RM)

What is Inter-Arts and who gets funding in the North from Inter-Arts? (Northern RM)

Support is not just about money but also about maintaining a consistent and a meaningful presence. (Northern RM)

The 1000-word description of the project is sometimes seen as a deterrent for some artists. In the assessment process, is it the quality of the application or the quality of the work being proposed that determines whether a grant is awarded? How can you make the application process more accessible? (Northern RM)

Single purpose organizations tend not to work well in the North: multi-purpose and cross-sectoral approaches are more common. (Northern RM)

Interdisciplinary artists such as the Borderless Arts Movement in Yellowknife are integrating storytelling with other art forms and would like how to get into regional communities and to know more about how to make connections outside the territory. (Northern RM)

Literacy can be a barrier for artists who wish to apply. How can the Council help artists in applying and what assistance is available? (Northern RM)



### Ontario

The Ontario Arts Council 'recommender grants' could be a model. There is a need to deliver grants more quickly (4-6 weeks). Perhaps organizations that receive operating grants can all have 'risk pockets' in order to help local artists develop new ideas. For example, a conference planned on short notice could get support from this kind of fund. 'Innovation pockets' (mini grants to encourage innovation) is also a possibility. (Ontario RM)

### Prairies (Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta)

Saskatchewan has good network for exchange and connections that can serve as a model. (Prairies' RM)

The marginalization of our art forms within the professional arts ecology, the marginalization of Calgary-based artists – who are not from Vancouver or Toronto, the two (English) cities that get the most notice/credibility within the country's arts ecology... (GTOM)

We utilize a unique organizational model that relies on mentorship to develop our administrative infrastructure. We emphasize programming excellence and a streamlined administrative bureaucracy. The success of this model has been emulated by others and has been the inspiration for two new collectives. Our ideas of progress and growth seem quite different from our peers. We sense that our commitment to regional development over careerism and hegemony can lead to peer confusion and an underestimation of our strengths. (GTOM)

We have evolved into a multi-faceted organization that has the ability to generate income; however in doing so we have greatly added to our administrative workload. Therefore we are constantly having to weigh whether we use our income to fund productions or expand our infrastructure. We do not have the resources to do both. (GTOM)

There are ZERO affordable incubation, rehearsal or performance venues in Alberta that are TRULY accessible, so we have to waste our limited production funds on building our own adaptations, like wheelchair ramps, bathroom handrails, etc... (GTOM)

Some municipal governments have created forums to share ideas in order to create synergies such as quarterly meetings to assist with sharing of resources at the **City of St-Albert Cultural Services**. This is an ongoing challenge but this forum help sort things out in this municipality. (Prairies RM)

Canada is now experiencing a dramatic increase of young Aboriginal people. Prince Albert will soon be one of the first urban centres in Canada with a majority aboriginal population. IPAC is positioned to serve this changing demographic and serve as a model organization in terms of its unique and inclusive approach. (GTOM)

The other key issue is a lack of all things circus in our region. We do not have technicians, riggers, coaches, or fabricators with expertise in this field, making it challenging to find the proper people to collaborate with. (GTOM)



## Quebec

There seems to be a concentration of artists working in inter-arts particularly in Montréal and Vancouver. Could this concentration penalize certain artists because there would be a limited allocation of funds on a national level? (Quebec RM)

Our inter-arts presentation activities are not recognized by the CCA. This important part of our work is therefore not taken into account, even though it is partly—but not exclusively—tied to our production and creation activities. When the CCA decided to no longer take inter-arts presenters that were not operational into account, it left a significant gap that has not been filled by any other stakeholders. (email)

Access to appropriate workspaces in the Québec City and Chaudière-Appalaches regions is a barrier for many working in the field of multi-arts. Inter-Arts should create a program to support the access and/or the creation of new workspaces. (CEP)





Typhaine Girault, *O-porte-nité*, 2013

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