



Board Diversity Statement of Principles

(April 2014)

Role and Mandate

The Canada Council for the Arts is a federal Crown corporation with a mandate to “foster and promote the study and enjoyment of, and production of works in, the arts.” The Council offers a broad range of grants and services to professional Canadian artists and arts organizations and raises public awareness and appreciation of the arts through its communications, research and arts promotion activities. Its prizes and fellowships celebrate creativity by recognizing exceptional Canadians in the arts, humanities and sciences. The Canadian Commission for UNESCO operates under the general authority of the Council.

Vision

The Canada Council for the Arts contributes to, advances and supports a vital and diverse arts ecology that enriches the lives of all Canadians.

The Canada Council recognizes and embraces the importance and benefits of a Board that is representative of the diverse makeup of Canada (i.e., the community that it serves) to enhance the overall quality of its performance.

Principles

The Canada Council has a history of embedding values of equity within its operations. The practice of linguistic duality, gender equality, the investment in regional artistic institutions, the creation of the Aboriginal Arts and Equity Offices and its pioneering work in Deaf and disability arts, as well as equitable practices within policy development, grant programs and processes, have all contributed to a diverse and vital arts ecology.

These principles, policies and processes are detailed in the Canada Council’s Equity Framework (summary available at <http://canadacouncil.ca/en/equity-office/equity-framework>), an evolving document which outlines how the Canada Council implements diversity and equity values within its operational, governing and human resources policies, as well as public programs and services. This work reflects a commitment to institutional values and adherence to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Canadian Human Rights Act, the Employment Equity Act, the Canadian Multiculturalism Act, the Indian Act and the Official Languages Act.

The nature of the Canada Council and the challenges it faces determine and inform the overall mix of skills, expertise and knowledge required by the Board as a whole. In order to fulfill the Board’s roles and responsibilities, a variety of perspectives is needed to ensure knowledgeable discussions and informed

decision-making. As such, the Canada Council aspires to a balanced mix of representation, considering the following factors:

- *Gender* (representation of men and women)
- *Language* (representation of the two official languages, including official language minority communities)
- *Region* (representation from all parts of Canada)
- Diversity of *age* (representation of different “generations”)
- *Cultural diversity* (representation of Canadians of African, Asian, Latin American, Middle Eastern and of mixed racial heritage – including at least one of these groups)
- *Aboriginal people* (Aboriginal peoples from across Canada, including First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities)
- *Deaf people* (Canadians who are deaf or experience differing degrees or types of hearing loss. This includes those who identify as culturally Deaf and share distinct sign languages, traditions, values, histories, aesthetics and norms)
- *People with disabilities* (Canadians with actual or perceived impairments who experience disadvantage, and therefore a disability, as a direct result of that impairment)

In addition, the Canada Council looks for diverse experience and knowledge, including:

- ❖ *Artistic practice or experience* – artists and arts professionals within all artistic disciplines (dance, media arts, music, theatre, visual arts, writing and publishing, and integrated arts)
- ❖ *Expertise and specialization* in finance, accounting, governance, leadership in the arts and other sectors (e.g., public engagement, legal, marketing, etc.)

Process and Approach

As a federal Crown corporation, the Canada Council Board appointments process is governed by government policies and processes, as determined by the Privy Council Office. Appointments to the Council’s Board are made by the Governor in Council, through recommendations by the Minister of Canadian Heritage¹. The Council does not have decision-making power in making appointments, but ensures that the needs of the Board in terms of representation are clearly and consistently communicated to Canadian Heritage for each vacancy, in order to facilitate the recommendation process.

- ❖ Leading up to each Board vacancy, the Governance and Nominating Committee reviews the Board’s needs and requirements in terms of representation, using the factors indicated above to guide their assessment. This is done through an assessment of the current gaps and risks, and the specific needs going forward.
- ❖ An updated *Representation Requirements Statement* is provided to the Department of Canadian Heritage, indicating the specific needs and risks related to the upcoming vacancies on the Council Board. This is done by the Chair of the Board, through the Office of the Corporate Secretary.

¹ <http://www.appointments-nominations.gc.ca/prsnt.asp?page=Process&lang=eng>

- ❖ As part of the process, consultations with stakeholders about potential candidates who fulfill these requirements are held in order to promote transparency in the process and seek out individuals who would bring different perspectives to the Board. Stakeholders are encouraged to communicate directly with the Minister's Office regarding their interest in service on the Canada Council Board.

Other References

The following tools and resources are used to assess and update the Board's representation requirements:

- ❖ Board Representation Matrix (regularly updated)
- ❖ Board Profile and Selection Criteria (regularly updated)
- ❖ Canada Council Board Representation Requirements (regularly updated)
- ❖ Desirable Attributes for the Board (November 2009)
- ❖ Governance Policy (June 2011)
- ❖ Board Appointment Process document (March 2014)
- ❖ Canada Council Peer Assessment Policy (2009)
- ❖ Equity Framework (2012)