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Chair

Ms. Julie Dabrusin

Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage

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•(0845)

[*Translation*]

The Chair (Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Toronto—Danforth, Lib.)): Welcome everyone to the 95th meeting of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage.

[*English*]

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), we are beginning our study of cultural hubs and cultural districts in Canada.

I'm happy to welcome our witnesses today from the Department of Canadian Heritage. We have Ramzi Saad, Director General, Arts Policy Branch; and Lise Laneville, Director, Strategic Arts Support, Arts Policy Branch.

You will have 10 minutes.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Ramzi Saad (Director General, Arts Policy Branch, Department of Canadian Heritage): Hello.

My presentation has two sections: the first deals with cultural districts and the second with creative hubs. In each section, I will give an overview, explain the federal contribution, in particular the Heritage Canada programs I am responsible for, and provide examples of investments.

[*English*]

Turning to slide 2, we have an overview of the arts and culture sector. The arts and culture sector is a significant contributor to Canadian quality of life and personal satisfaction, as well as a major contributor to the Canadian economy. In particular, following a recent 2017 arts and heritage accessibility survey, Canadians overwhelmingly believed that arts experiences were a valuable way for bringing people together from different languages and cultural traditions.

As you can see from the figures on the slide, Canadians feel that arts and culture make a positive social contribution to their communities, as well as making positive economic impacts.

I'll begin the formal presentation in two sections: cultural districts and creative hubs. We'll start with cultural districts.

What is a cultural district? Although there is no set definition, a cultural district is traditionally conceived as a well-recognized, branded, mixed use area where a high concentration of cultural facilities serve as an anchor of attraction. Facilities include amenities

like performance spaces, museums, galleries, artist studios, arts-related shops, music or media production studios, dance studios, colleges for the arts, libraries, arboretums, and gardens. Because they are mixed use developments, cultural districts incorporate other facilities, such as office complexes, retail spaces, and occasionally residential areas.

The development of cultural districts can happen organically, or they can be engineered by urban planners and municipal governments. In both cases, it is the municipality that has a key role to play in either supporting the construction of the districts, trading permissive zoning regulations for growth, implementing tax or other incentives for cultural organizations in the area, or by officially designating them as cultural districts.

While municipalities play a key role in the establishment or designation of these districts, all levels of government can play a role in the local economic growth and improving the quality of life at the local municipal or regional levels.

We will turn to slide 4.

•(0850)

[*Translation*]

I will now go over the federal contribution to cultural districts.

A number of federal departments and organizations contribute to the vitality of cultural districts. The three main contributors are Infrastructure Canada, the Department of Canadian Heritage, and the Canada Council for the Arts.

In terms of the broader development of a cultural district, the Department of Canadian Heritage offers programs that invest in the organizations and public spaces that present the main cultural offerings in the cultural districts to the public. I am responsible for two key programs: the Canada Arts Presentation Fund and the Canada cultural spaces fund.

I will now give you an overview of each program.

[*English*]

We will turn to slide 5. I'll begin by giving an overview of the Canada arts presentation fund.

The Canada arts presentation fund supports professional arts festivals and performing arts series to offer activities that connect artists with Canadians in their communities. The program has a permanent \$32 million grant and contribution budget, and budget 2016 provided an additional \$0.5 million in grants and contributions for an export supplement in fiscal year 2017-18.

The beneficiaries include festivals and organizations of varying size across the country, like the Edmonton Folk Music Festival in Alberta, the PuSh International Performing Arts Festival in Vancouver, Festival transAmériques in Montreal, and the Confederation Centre for the Arts in Charlottetown, and smaller festivals with big local impact like Dance Matters in Toronto and Théâtre de la Ville in Longueuil.

Since the inception of the program in 2001, opportunities for Canadians to attend arts festivals, or performing arts series supported by the program, have tripled to over 600 annually in more than 250 communities across the country. The fund has a direct impact on Canadians; more than 20 million people attend the program-supported festival series each year.

The second program I'd like to give an overview of, on slide 6, is the Canada cultural spaces fund. This program is the only federal program dedicated to cultural infrastructure. It supports the improvement of physical conditions for artistic creativity and innovation. The fund provides support in three areas: the improvement, renovation, and construction of art and heritage facilities; the acquisition of specialized equipment; and feasibility studies related to cultural spaces.

Some examples of organizations that have benefited from the program include the Winnipeg Art Gallery and the Stratford Festival. From 2001 and 2002 until the end of 2017, over 1,700 projects in 436 unique communities across Canada were supported by this fund. Eighty per cent of these communities are in rural, remote, and small urban centres.

In addition to the ongoing investment in cultural infrastructure through this fund, which is \$30 million annually, budget 2017 announced an additional \$300 million over 10 years, starting in fiscal year 2018-19. This additional investment is part of the investing in Canada plan, which recognizes the role that cultural infrastructure has to play in cities of the 21st century.

Those are the two programs.

In order to illustrate how the federal government supports a cultural district, we'll give you a federal example. We're now on slide 7.

[Translation]

In Canada, we have seen the growth and establishment of cultural districts such as Queen West in Toronto, Granville Island in Vancouver, Sir Winston Churchill Square in Edmonton, and Quartier des spectacles in Montreal. I will use the Quartier des spectacles in Montreal as an example of a cultural district.

The Quartier des spectacles has received support from various governments and organizations to help create a vibrant destination in downtown Montreal. The Quartier des spectacles is a municipally-driven project to recognize, develop, and designate a sector in

downtown Montreal as a cultural district. Although overseen by the municipality, the project received support from Infrastructure Canada and the major projects component of the building Canada fund.

To complement this larger investment, the Wilder Building, a dance centre, received \$4.7 million in funding from the Canada cultural spaces fund. This support provided artistic organizations with a space for its activities.

Tangente, a long-standing contemporary dance company, is one of those organizations. Tangente received support from the Canada arts presentation fund and the Canada Council for the Arts.

The work of organizations such as Tangente draws the public, local residents, and cultural tourists to the region. The organizations have the ability to present and develop their content because they have financial support for their activities.

Government support is co-ordinated here to ensure that the entire district has the resources and infrastructure required to support the organizations and the public. For their part, the organizations on site have the resources needed to create productions that bring the district to life.

●(0855)

[English]

That ends section 1 with an overview on cultural districts.

I'd like to now move over to the second section and topic, which is creative hubs.

Like cultural districts, there is no set definition of a creative hub, but they are conceived and designed to encourage collaboration, innovation, and productivity. They are multi-tenant user facilities involving participants from a range of sectors and disciplines. They include some or all of the following characteristics: shared space, technology, and other resources; opportunities to develop collaboration and to exchange ideas; and public access and programming.

As you can see from the diagram on slide 8, each individual creative hub will strike a different balance of all those elements, which are sensitive to local context and respond to the needs of the creative sector and the broader community. However, it is also the mix of the participants, the availability and diversity of the collaborative spaces, the intent to share skills and talent, and the provision of improved access to specialized and digital equipment that enable creative hubs to foster innovation and growth in the creative sector.

Creative hubs are not a new business line for the Canada cultural spaces fund. Projects with some or all of these characteristics have been eligible for support from that fund. To do so, I would like to illustrate two recent examples we have supported, as shown on slides 9 and 10.

An example of a creative hub supported by the Canada cultural spaces fund is cSPACE in Calgary. It's a renovation project that created a 50,000 square foot incubation facility. It is being used by a wide variety of artistic disciplines, including cultural industries, film production, sculptors, visual artists, theatre, as well as a teaching studio for the Alberta College of Art and Design continuing education program.

cSPACE also emphasizes pure learning strategies and collaboration while also providing space and resources for public presentations. Affordability is a constant barrier for artists, and the building's below market rental rates for studio and office spaces make it accessible to arts and festival groups and other creatively focused entrepreneurs.

There are co-working desks, teaching studios, classrooms for collaboration, workshops and professional development, theatre space, hallway galleries, and a meeting room for public programming. cSPACE encompasses all of the characteristics that we described earlier of a home for tenants from a range of sectors; shared spaces and resources, which is key for the creative community; and a focus on collaboration and public access to showcase their work.

The second example is a recent project that has been approved. It's a New Dawn centre in Sydney, Nova Scotia. The New Dawn Centre for Social Innovation on Cape Breton Island is a renovation project that has taken a convent, and created a creative hub. It has a range of participating disciplines, shared resources, gathering spaces, programs for exchange and collaboration, and public programming in spaces.

The centre, though, takes a different approach to creative hubs, and relates to the specific needs of the community in an effort to support education, innovation, and technology in Cape Breton. New Dawn will create a mixed-use facility with sustainable working and gathering spaces for Cape Breton's creative, innovative, and forward-looking creators. As a centre for social innovation, it will support individuals, businesses, and not-for-profit and charitable organizations working in innovative ways to affect social change. An interesting fact about New Dawn is that nearly 25% of the building is dedicated to collaborative spaces and offices for those outside of the arts and cultural sector. The project is expected to be completed by spring of 2019.

That gives you a good illustration of the proliferation and the projects coming forward in Canada around creative hubs.

Lastly, in support of creative hubs, the Government of Canada laid out its vision for the creative industries in Canada through the creative Canada policy framework. The vision for Canada's creative industries in a digital age framework outlines how the government will support skills, development, innovation, and collaboration by investing in the next generation of cultural spaces, creative hubs.

As stated in the policy framework, creative hubs will help nurture and incubate the next generation of creative entrepreneurs and small business startups. Canadian creative talent will have access to spaces where they can build their entrepreneurial skills, create, collaborate, and innovate, and help generate new markets for Canadian creativity in all its forms.

The additional investments under budget 2017 in the Canada cultural spaces fund will now enable the program to prioritize targeted support for creative hubs in order to advance the creative Canada vision by bringing together professionals from a range of arts or heritage sectors and creative disciplines while always continuing to invest in traditional arts and heritage infrastructure projects that remain part of its core business, such as museums, theatres, and performing arts centres.

● (0900)

To date, the department has secured all of the necessary authorities for the Canada cultural spaces fund to provide an additional \$30 million per year for 10 years, and right now my team and I are finalizing the details for operationalizing this investment, beginning in April 2018.

I'll close there.

Thank you.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you very much for the presentation.

We will now begin the question and answer period.

In the first round, members have seven minutes for questions and answers.

We will start with Liberal MP Gordie Hogg.

[English]

Mr. Gordie Hogg (South Surrey—White Rock, Lib.): Thank you. My apologies for being late. I still am not adjusting very well to the weather here. I thought I brought the sunshine with me from British Columbia this time, and apparently I failed to do so.

Can you talk to me a little bit about Richard Florida's work on creative cultures and how it might combine with this?

Mr. Ramzi Saad: Richard Florida is a man who is all about how to bring the creative sectors together, and how to force collaboration in order to incent innovation and look at new ways in which creative talent is incubated.

For us, the programs provide an opportunity, within the Canada cultural spaces fund, to prioritize investment, to find ways in which the creative disciplines can come together with the arts and heritage sectors, and to create the content and showcase the creative works sought by Canadians both in Canada and abroad.

Mr. Gordie Hogg: Regarding his reference referred to the educational component and the living structure of it, would they differ dramatically? When you were talking, it sounded a lot like Richard Florida's talk of creative cultures and the sense of how they might be in a hub. I was trying to articulate how that might fall into a hub context.

• (0905)

Mr. Ramzi Saad: From what we've seen across the country in the development of hubs, it's about responding to the needs of a community. As a result, creative hubs will be distinct across the country. We have examples of hubs that strictly have the creative sector in them alone. There will also be hubs like the New Dawn Centre for Social Innovation that will have educational components or programming.

To allow for collaboration in the cultural sector, you really have to respond to the needs of your artists and your communities. That is what I think is going to be the changing conversation with hub proponents around the intent to ensure innovation and collaboration amongst many disciplines in the creative sector.

Mr. Gordie Hogg: You made reference to Gibsons Public Market and Granville Island, and I'm familiar with both of those. If I were to spend a little bit more time than I have at Gibsons, how would I know if it were flourishing or not? What would the context be?

Mr. Ramzi Saad: The response would be several-fold. One is that you'd be looking at the improved working conditions for the creative sector and its ability to create, preserve, collect, and exhibit its works. The other measure would be around how Canadians access that content and ensure that they have the best facilities to experience it in. We allow for the support of the best technical and digital equipment, the best experience provided through these hubs, and the opportunity to showcase that work. All of those conditions can be fostered through a creative hub.

Mr. Gordie Hogg: Is there such a thing as a virtual hub?

Mr. Ramzi Saad: That is an excellent question, and now that we're all talking about creative hubs, everyone's talking to me about the virtual hub. The mandate I have with the Canada cultural spaces fund is to support physical spaces. I think this is something we're going to have to explore. To answer your question on a virtual hub, we have not yet embarked on that, because we're trying now to understand what physical spaces and conditions creators need. I think the idea of how the hubs across Canada will be networked may be part and parcel of how we get to what a virtual hub really is. The idea is that while we're looking for collaboration within a hub, it's important for the hubs to also develop that network. Maybe that is part of how we would get to a virtual hub, but that's something we haven't explored yet. Now that we're talking about creative hubs, I can tell you that this is coming up, but I don't have a specific proposal with regard to it.

Mr. Gordie Hogg: We have community arts councils in our communities. A number of them are very active and have spaces. I think they see themselves as cultural hubs, and I wonder what it is about them that would not make them hubs, other than that they have a physical space and they bring different types of arts. The essence of what you're describing, they seem to have.

How would I tell them they're not a cultural hub?

Mr. Ramzi Saad: From a technical perspective, in the applicant guidelines we'll be launching in April, we'll be putting together a clear definition of a creative hub, based exactly on the characteristics I've outlined in the presentation.

We're will have to have a conversation to determine whether those centres or multi-use centres are hubs or not. But ultimately, we're

going to be making sure that we have a variety of disciplines, people, and sectors, a variety of business models, in a hub, and we want to make sure that the public has access to that hub in programming, experiences, and the opportunity for artists to be able to showcase their work through those hubs.

It will also be critical to have the shared resources and spaces to offset the affordability question, so we can get artists into centres so they can innovate and collaborate.

As to your point, we are able to support them. Depending on the centre, we'd have to assess whether it's a hub or not, but depending on the needs of the community, if they're coming together and they're getting the benefits of that collaboration, then I think that's great. But our idea is to incent and to make sure that the proponent or developer of the hub is coming in, making sure that the mix of tenancy and the intent for collaboration is there. It's not just about having a multi-tenant facility where you're just renting your office space and you leave at the end of the day. The idea is to make sure that there are workshops, development sessions, and a real opportunity for the tenants to engage with each other. I think that's what's going to distinguish what we support today in multi-tenant facilities vis-à-vis the creative hub of the future.

• (0910)

Mr. Gordie Hogg: Would my interpretation of this be incorrect if I were to suggest that since you've already got the core, the next iteration is to decide how we can connect these core-like nodules across the country? Is that the expectation or intent?

Mr. Ramzi Saad: The answer is yes, and we plan to do that through partnerships with portfolio agencies, and municipal, provincial, and territorial governments. As part of the creative policy framework, we intend to strike those partnerships to make sure that those creative hubs are networked.

Mr. Gordie Hogg: Thank you.

The Chair: We're going to Mr. Van Loan.

Hon. Peter Van Loan (York—Simcoe, CPC): In your presentation, you have a bit on cultural districts, and I suspect that if you said the word "creative hub" to an ordinary person off the street, what would come to their mind would be something akin to a cultural district. But when you're looking at creative hubs in the context of this vision for Canada's creative industries in the digital age—which I gather is where you're going to go for funding—it seems to be focused on something much smaller, like a single-building-type situation.

Can you expand on that a bit more for me and clarify that they are not the same thing, but very different things?

Mr. Ramzi Saad: Correct. As described, a cultural district is a composition of many types of amenities and facilities. A creative hub could be a physical space in a cultural district, thus an amenity or part of what makes a cultural district. But a creative hub could be a stand-alone building in any community across the country that's allowing for the creative sector to collaborate, innovate, and enhance productivity. As I described earlier, a cultural district is looking at all the elements that could have commercial spaces with individual dance centres, gardens, and creative hubs. The creative hub is very much a physical space, but it's the occupants inside and the way they are working that make this unique.

Hon. Peter Van Loan: I think for many smaller communities that are interested in accessing cultural spaces funding, there might be some real challenges here. There might be real bias in the program in favour of places where these things are already together. If a smaller community were suddenly required to take their local theatre group, their local art gallery, and some of their other similar cultural organizations to get cultural spaces funding as a hub, they might suddenly say it's costing them too much to get all of those into one place. They're all in different buildings right now in this particular community.

My concern is that if this is a big part of the programming, is there an inherent bias in favour of larger urban areas versus smaller communities?

Mr. Ramzi Saad: If we can go back to the cultural spaces fund slide, my response would be to note that 80% of the communities that the cultural spaces fund supports are in rural, remote, or small urban centres.

Hon. Peter Van Loan: That's right now.

Mr. Ramzi Saad: That's correct. The cultural spaces fund will always continue at its core to support museums, theatres, and performing arts centres. That is the core. We have received additional money through budget 2017, from which we can prioritize investment towards creative hubs. As we ramp up, a portion of that investment, depending on the needs of the community, will be used through the additional funding available. But rest assured that all communities today will continue to be able to apply for and access support from the cultural spaces fund. I think what will be interesting is that, as we engage and do our outreach with stakeholders and as the regional offices of Canadian Heritage across the country are working with partners, we will be able to introduce the concept of creative hubs. We can put forward the ideas around ways that the stakeholder community can collaborate, and maybe, depending on the community and its affordability issues or the ecosystem there, they may decide to come forward and say, "We'd like to aggregate our work and be part of a centre that can share resources." In some centres right now, we hear big theatre companies saying, "Let's pool our resources and come together because we can't afford to be operating on our own."

In response to your question, communities across the country will still access the fund, and I think we'll be able to have a conversation with them around the best ways they can share resources. If creative hubs are the way it would work for a community, then they will also be able to apply to the program. It's not limiting the current support we provide across the country.

● (0915)

Hon. Peter Van Loan: You indicated that you would be coming out with criteria for applications sometime in the near future. Is that correct?

Mr. Ramzi Saad: That's correct. As part of the intake for 2018-19, we'll update the applicant guidelines and specify the definition of a creative hub. We will launch them, and they will be made publicly available.

Hon. Peter Van Loan: Can you give us a hint of what kind of criteria you're looking at? We might even have some feedback for you.

Mr. Ramzi Saad: We can go back to the slide on creative hubs, the one with the diagram.

For us, in essence, a creative hub will ensure that all of the elements identified as characteristics of hubs are part and parcel of what we will call a creative hub in the future. We will ensure that there is a multi-tenant facility that brings a range of arts or heritage sectors together with the creative disciplines; that we will be able to foster support for diverse business models and different people; and that multiple users will be able to have a space where they can share resources. There should be a collaborative intent within that space for the tenancy, and there will also be an opportunity for the public to access that space.

Hon. Peter Van Loan: To what extent will you tolerate—let's call it—non-arts funding? I think of my local hub, which intended to have an art gallery, but may or may not, yet also has a training facility related to the hospitality sector, a chamber of commerce office, and a food bank. There are a whole bunch of these kinds of community-oriented things. To what extent will you tolerate the presence of other uses before something ceases to be what you consider a creative hub?

Mr. Ramzi Saad: We have not specified criteria, but at this point we do not want to have a program that is limited. We want to have a conversation around ensuring flexibility, the idea being that technology companies may want to be part of this creative hub where they can benefit as well and our creative sector can benefit from having technology enterprises. We will not limit the non-arts, heritage or creative disciplines from being part of this hub if those are what best suit the community.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Thank you, Madam Chair.

A big thank you to both of you for this presentation. This is obviously your pet project and you are passionate about it. One cannot oppose a good thing. It is indeed fantastic.

From what I have understood, cultural centres are meeting places for professionals and enthusiasts. For the artists, they are places of cultural mediation where they showcase their disciplines. They could also be places where people are introduced to and participate in these disciplines. This is definitely a great project.

Is there a different business case for each cultural centre with the federal government as the lead? Are there other partners, such as the municipalities or the provinces? It appears that the private sector is also invited to participate in these projects. What does the funding arrangement look like?

Mr. Ramzi Saad: We believe it is important to have the opportunity to establish partnerships with the municipalities and the provinces. This is of interest to them as well because it really responds to the needs of the creative sector. The creators said that it was important to have spaces where there could be collaboration. All levels of government are currently studying this issue. For us, it is an opportunity not only to work with the provinces and the municipalities, but also to see how our department can support cultural centres. It also depends on the disciplines and the variety of creators at each cultural centre. Therefore, municipalities also have an interest in cultural centres.

● (0920)

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Do you create or support cultural centres? Are communities responsible for presenting a proposal for a cultural centre in order to obtain funding? How does that work?

Mr. Ramzi Saad: For the time being, there are two categories of entities that can propose a creative hub: non-profit organizations in the arts and heritage sector, and provincial and territorial governments and municipalities.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Then, that is the process. If you were a given community and you wanted to attract all these participants to a creative hub, you would put together a project based on the guidelines already established by the government, submit a proposal, and then hope that it is accepted. Is that right?

Mr. Ramzi Saad: Exactly. We will soon announce the guidelines and explain all the eligibility criteria. We believe it is important to encourage the development of creative hubs and ensure that we have a national conversation about the needs of creators.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: With regard to a national conversation, have there been discussions with the Quebec ministry of culture and communications about this? Given that your projects are very community-based, you find yourselves directly involved in areas of provincial jurisdiction. Culture is an especially sensitive and delicate issue in Quebec. To what extent are you working with Ms. Montpetit's ministry in Quebec City?

Mr. Ramzi Saad: I have personally had conversations with some representatives of the arts councils. When we release the guidelines, the regional office will have conversations with all stakeholders to discuss the strategy, vision, and eligibility criteria.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: You mentioned conversations with the arts councils. I will talk about what I know about my region, Longueuil—Saint-Hubert. The Longueuil arts council, for example, which is located in the greater Longueuil area, is going to be very excited about this idea. Many creative disciplines have knocked on its door and said how they would like to have more support or some spaces.

You stated that you are having conversations with arts councils. Is that at the federal, provincial, or municipal level?

Mr. Ramzi Saad: For the time being, I have initiated conversations only with provincial councils. Naturally, we will be

working with officers in the regional offices of Canadian Heritage so that they contact all stakeholders, as necessary.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Thank you for your answer.

I would like to ask you whether different first nations communities have reached out to you about this. For example, I believe that the Northwest Territories has a centre called the Prince of Wales centre, if I am not mistaken. The one thing we do know is that these communities need to keep their culture alive and maintain the connection to place. Do you have special envelopes for that?

Correct me if I am wrong, but, obviously, if communities are supposed to meet the program criteria first, do they have to present a business case that establishes that they are responsible for most of the costs? I am referring to first nations, but it applies to everyone.

Mr. Ramzi Saad: Yes, that applies to everyone.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: What are the extent of the costs? What percentage of the final project cost is funded?

Mr. Ramzi Saad: That is an interesting question. It depends on the region. It will be higher in the north. It also depends on the proposal. Is it a construction project or a renovation project? Is the sole purpose of the project to upgrade the specialized equipment? It depends on the needs and the project idea.

As of right now, the indigenous community can receive 75% of the funding. Thus, it has access to more funding than that provided for regular projects, and these criteria will be maintained.

The funding depends on the nature of the proposal. The program has three components. For example, a proposal for building a space is very different than a proposal for buying equipment.

● (0925)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Nantel. Your time has expired.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Thank you, Madam Chair.

The Chair: We will now go to Mr. Hébert from the Liberals.

Mr. Richard Hébert (Lac-Saint-Jean, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I want to thank the witnesses for their presentation.

From what I understand, cultural hubs and cultural districts should provide spaces where artists of all disciplines and local residents can work, create, exhibit, and gather. These spaces could be created within cultural institutions, such as museums, libraries, or performing arts centres. However, according to researcher Beatriz Garcia from the University of Glasgow's Centre for Cultural Policy Research, cultural districts and cultural hubs should also promote the representation of what makes a city unique. I am thinking of cities like Dolbeau-Mistassini, which is located in my riding of Lac-Saint-Jean. It is a small rural community.

How can we promote the expression of regional identity in cultural hubs? Furthermore, how can we ensure that the support provided by the department is balanced between urban centres and outlying communities?

I am referring to the relationship between the creative hubs we find in large urban centres, such as Montreal's Quartier des spectacles, which you mentioned earlier, and what we find in Dolbeau-Mistassini, a municipality with a population of 15,000.

Ms. Lise Laneville (Director, Strategic Arts Support, Arts Policy Branch, Department of Canadian Heritage): Thank you for the question.

The program is administered on a regional basis. The Canada cultural spaces fund is managed through Canadian Heritage's regional offices. The regional officers work closely with municipalities and organizations in small urban centres or remote centres to ensure that they are well represented in the Canada cultural spaces fund. The officers work in close collaboration with organizations applying to the fund.

As you heard during our presentation, 80% of the communities that have received support are rural, remote, and small urban centres. That means these communities are well represented in the program.

We are also very conscientious about ensuring that the projects submitted to the program are representative of the community. We feel it is important that projects come from the community and truly represent it.

Mr. Richard Hébert: All right, thank you.

Dr. Garcia, the expert on cultural policy, also says that implementing cultural policies with regard to cultural hubs and cultural districts comes with its share of dilemmas, especially on the economic front. It makes it harder to choose between supporting cultural events, which are more temporary, and supporting permanent infrastructure, some of which may become obsolete.

Do you think there is an aspect of this economic dilemma that benefits one community more than another?

If not, how do you reconcile the two and balance support for events with support for the infrastructure needed for a cultural hub or cultural district?

Mr. Ramzi Saad: All I can talk about are the objectives of our federal tools for supporting cultural districts. It is really the municipality that is responsible for the spaces and conditions. Our job is to find ways to animate cultural districts. Right now, Canadian Heritage has two key instruments, one for supporting physical spaces and one for supporting arts presentation and dissemination. That is really what we do.

The municipality is responsible for the economic impact and for meeting the communities' diverse needs. It depends on factors like the neighbourhood, the location, meaning whether it is downtown or in a more remote location. It can vary. That is why I do not have a specific answer for you at this time.

• (0930)

Mr. Richard Hébert: Considering large cities separately from smaller municipalities, we need to think about another problem that

can arise, namely gentrification. We know that gentrification often forces lower-income residents out of certain neighbourhoods.

How can we promote the creation of cultural hubs or cultural districts in a way that will not harm local residents and will reduce the negative views some people may have of culture and the presence of government?

Ms. Lise Laneville: That is a great question. I'm sure municipalities have been hard at work on that lately.

Our sphere of influence is limited to the Canada cultural spaces fund. We support projects that come from the community and that represent the community.

Mr. Ramzi Saad: We do not support a space just because it is located in a cultural district. We are going to take all that into consideration, but we also need to determine how well the space responds to needs.

If there are any key benefits, that is an important factor to consider, and we are going to find a way to recommend a project in a cultural district. However, there is no criterion or parameter that makes it mandatory for a space to be part of a cultural district. We respond to needs, and we have some flexibility in our recommendations.

The Chair: Thank you.

[English]

Now we are going to Mr. Eglinski, for the Conservatives.

Mr. Jim Eglinski (Yellowhead, CPC): Thank you.

I'd like to thank both presenters today.

I have a question. I'm going to slide off the topic for a moment, then I'm going to get back to what we were talking about, cultural centres and creative hubs. I want to get a definition of art by your department.

I love art on the walls, but I also like art on the ground, rolling vehicles, for example. I attend many car shows throughout Alberta and British Columbia. To me, it's art. Some of these vehicles are so well done—a classic Duesenberg or something like that—yet I never see any funding or support for that type of art, which represents a fairly large group of people. The largest gathering in our community, in any one of my communities in the Yellowhead riding, would be the local car show that's held maybe two or three times in the summer.

Therefore, I ask, what's the definition of art?

Mr. Ramzi Saad: I will take an opportunity to respond to that, but also tie in to where creative hubs can come in and what the vision is.

For us, as you implied, the arts are defined in terms of the professional excellence around the creation, production, and presentation of artistic work. We categorize them in three areas—performing arts, visual arts, and media arts, in principle without getting into every single subsector of the arts. That said, in the performing arts, we're looking at theatre, dance, opera, and live music. In visual arts, it's crafts, photography, sculpture, paintings. Media arts are digital arts and new media arts. Those are the well-established and understood definitions of the arts.

Did I miss any disciplines?

Is there anything else you want to add to that?

Ms. Lise Laneville: I would add that those are the disciplines that comprise the cultural satellite account, and how we measure the economic impacts.

Mr. Ramzi Saad: Is that clear? Does it answer the first part of your question?

Mr. Jim Eglinski: Yes.

Mr. Ramzi Saad: The question now gets into how we are dealing with the creative sector, how we are dealing with all of those who are using their creative ability and talent, yet they're in an economic sector that is defined very strictly. For example, I may work in the automotive sector, but I'm an industrial designer.

I think today the idea of a creative sector, the way in which we want to look at creative disciplines, especially with what the government has put forward in its creative Canada policy framework, is really to open up support to ensure the inclusion of architecture, fashion, and design. Design design is where you're going to get into the industrial piece and question of whether that is automotive design or any other form.

The point of creative hubs is that we want to bring that creative talent, regardless of discipline, together with the arts and cultural and heritage sectors to incubate and develop the content that is required.

By opening up our support, by bringing the creatives together, there is now an opportunity to have that conversation. That's clearly articulated in the framework. So you have arts, and then you have the opportunity we have before us.

• (0935)

Mr. Jim Eglinski: Thank you.

Now I'll go back to the subject, cultural districts and creative hubs. We have a building, and I have a couple of these centres in different small towns in my area. We have an area in Edson called the Red Brick, which was a school built in the 1930s and then closed down and then reopened as, I believe, both a creative hub and a cultural district. We hold everything from community meetings there, senior gatherings, to any one of the arts you want to bring in. We have a theatre in there.

They're always struggling for funding, whether it's from the municipality or from the province. Can a very diversified group like that ask for cultural district funding and for creative hub funding, and would it be acceptable? They fit both.

Mr. Ramzi Saad: For cultural district funding, there's no one centre where you go to apply to be a cultural district. Depending on

your business, what you would do is to seek support from many levels of government and many funding programs in government to be able to animate the work you want.

If you're an arts presenter, you'd go to the Canada arts presentation fund. If you want to build a building, you'd go to Infrastructure Canada to get the core support. If you are looking to enhance your artistic work, you would apply to the Canada Council for the Arts.

The answer is that there is a lot of opportunity and a lot of federal programs, as well as the support that each of the arts councils within the provinces can provide, depending on what the project is.

The Chair: Great. Thank you very much.

We'll now go to Ms. Dzerowicz for five minutes.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.): Thank you so much. Thanks for the excellent presentation this morning.

I'm very blessed. I have a very rich artistic community in my riding. It's crazy. I actually didn't recognize it until I came into office. Literally every artistic person I meet on the street will say, "I live in your riding."

I was very interested in your presentation. Thanks for taking us through the two main mechanisms that you've been funding: cultural hubs and creative spaces, and creative districts in Canada through your Canada arts presentation fund and Canada cultural spaces fund.

One of our key questions is how can the federal government foster and support their additional development? We have the two funds now. If you were to make additional recommendations to us, what more could we be doing? That's my first question.

Secondly, I hold strategic arts round tables with my community, and I often ask what I can do to be helpful to them at the federal level. They often say, "Julie, if there's any way that you can better collaborate with the other levels of government, that would be really helpful." It's one of the things they say to me, particularly around additional spaces, funding, or bringing things together.

I just want to get your thoughts. We have two amazing funds now. They're doing some really good work. If you had to make some additional recommendations in terms of additionally fostering and supporting their development, what would they be?

Is there a way that we can work better with the other levels of government?

Mr. Ramzi Saad: Given what I'm trying to achieve, I'm not in a position to make recommendations at this point, but I can tell you that our two programs do not support programming or what's going to happen inside a creative hub, but that's something we are hearing is a need.

That said, I think that is potentially one of the things that we would potentially want to do, namely to look at support through the municipal and provincial governments, to look at the role of our portfolio organizations, as well as the fact that the Department of Innovation, Science and Economic Development has also come forward with a \$1.26 billion program in the strategic innovation fund that allows partners to come together to look at developing innovative tool kits for that support.

We look to the Canada cultural spaces fund for the proponents to bring together the private resource support to look at the programming within the space, but the fund does not support the operations, maintenance, and programming within the space. We're very much focused on the physical conditions that are in place. Right now, to my knowledge, there is no support for programming from the Department of Canadian Heritage.

• (0940)

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Thank you.

In my riding, MOCA, the new museum of Canadian contemporary art, is opening up. Because of a huge concern in the community that now that we have this great big museum, it's going to eat up all the smaller visual art galleries, they've formed an alliance with the local community, which they call the Akin Collective. They're going to be working together, which is amazing.

We've tried with some small theatre and dance groups to get them together, but they're so small that they don't have the leadership resources or capacity to be able to form the type of collective that allows them to apply for these kinds of funds or to get private funders. There's a sophistication there, and I wonder whether there's some sort of funding or support that we could provide to build the capacity of some of these small organizations that are very professional, but that spend all of their money and time just doing their services. I wonder if you might be able to address that.

Ms. Lise Laneville: There is a program at the Department of Canadian Heritage called the Canada cultural investment fund that is also under the direction of our policy branch. Its focus is to help organizations build their capacity and build better business practices. One of the program's strategic initiatives is to encourage collaboration, organizations working together, so they are able to develop their capacities.

For example, one of the projects that has been supported through this program is called "artsVest" through Business for the Arts. It is delivered nationally in communities and offers capacity building for arts and heritage organizations to build their fundraising capacity so that they are able to get sponsors and additional support from their local communities.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We are now going to Mr. Shields for five minutes.

Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you for your presentation today.

Just for clarification, is the National Gallery something funded by your department, or is it totally separate?

Mr. Ramzi Saad: National galleries?

Ms. Lise Laneville: The National Gallery of Canada?

Mr. Ramzi Saad: That's a crown corporation, yes.

Mr. Martin Shields: I just wanted to make that clear.

You identified 600 different groups receiving money during the year. Is that 600 an ongoing average in a year?

Mr. Ramzi Saad: The answer is yes. Arts presenters are those who put on festivals and performing arts series and, as you know, they occur annually in each community. The arts presentation fund has recurring clients come into the program, and that's why we can estimate the average. We have about 600 because we see the proliferation of the diversity of festivals in communities across the country.

Mr. Martin Shields: Would you submit the list of those to us?

Mr. Ramzi Saad: Absolutely. We have proactive disclosure of the full list of recipients every year. I'm happy, depending on which periods you're looking for, to provide that information.

Mr. Martin Shields: If you could provide the current list, that would be great.

Mr. Ramzi Saad: Absolutely. We'll get that list to you, yes.

Mr. Martin Shields: It helps identify that.

You talked about the variety of pots of money out there: you have \$36 million, you have \$30 million, you have \$168 million over two years, you have \$300 million over 10 years. I'm not an accountant, so I'm trying to figure out what's available in any one given year, and is it matching by provinces and municipalities, or are they separate? You've got a lot of moving pieces in here. It's a little hard to figure out who gets what in a specific year to deal with.

• (0945)

Mr. Ramzi Saad: Yes. That's why we have the jobs we have.

How can I start this? To begin with, the programs are oversubscribed across the board in the arts sectors. We are not able to respond to the demand that we receive across the country. That being said, for each of the two programs I've identified, we look at the profile across the region in terms of attributing an allocation for each of the regions. Depending on the program, we have different parameters in place to identify that allocation.

Mr. Martin Shields: I understand that, but can you tell me how much money you're going to spend in 2018?

Mr. Ramzi Saad: Oh, yes. We will use up the entire budget, so the budget for—

Mr. Martin Shields: I've got \$36 million, \$30 million, \$168 million, and \$30 million. It's \$300 million over 10 years, so is that \$30 million a year?

Mr. Ramzi Saad: Yes. For the Canada cultural spaces fund, we'll be adding \$30 million per year, for 10 years, to the base budget. In terms of grants and contributions, that will come out to \$55 million a year that we intend to spend over the next 10 years. That will be the envelope for cultural spaces. It includes creative hubs. For the Canada arts presentation fund, the budget is \$32 million per year.

Mr. Martin Shields: Correct. What about the \$168 million over two years?

Mr. Ramzi Saad: The \$168 million over two years was an investment as part of the immediate boost to infrastructure capital through the Government of Canada for 2016-17 and 2017-18. That additional \$168 million ends on March 31 of this year, so the additional \$300 million begins as of April 2018, moving forward.

Mr. Martin Shields: Matching?

Mr. Ramzi Saad: No.

Mr. Martin Shields: It's all direct grant, with no matching of municipal and provincial funding—it's not a third, third, third?

Mr. Ramzi Saad: Because the program is oversubscribed, we cannot provide matching. We receive a proposal for application, we assess it against the merits, and we look at the partners that are coming forward. We must ensure—for a physical infrastructure piece—that two-thirds of the funding is provided, and then we make decisions based on the merit and viability of the project.

Mr. Martin Shields: So it is a matching. If they have to have two-thirds in—

Mr. Ramzi Saad: No. There's no guarantee that just because the provincial investment is \$5 million, you will get \$5 million. The regional envelopes in some cases are not more than \$5 million.

Mr. Martin Shields: You said they had to have two-thirds. Something has to be in place before you can apply to get anything.

Mr. Ramzi Saad: Correct. Usually the applicants will come in having done their own fundraising through private sector donations. They will also most likely come in with municipal or provincial partners, who have all confirmed their sources of funding before we can make an assessment or a recommendation to the minister.

The Chair: You have 15 seconds.

Mr. Ramzi Saad: Sorry if I rushed the responses.

Mr. Martin Shields: No, that's good. Thank you.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: We will now move on to Mr. Breton from the Liberal Party.

Mr. Pierre Breton (Shefford, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms. Laneville and Mr. Saad, thank you for your very illuminating presentations today.

I am very pleased with the clarity and especially the precision of your statements about the different funds. It is not every day that we get the chance to speak with specialists like you.

I want to add to what Mr. Van Loan said earlier about the regions and their cultural hubs or festivals. It may be a feeling I have, but we often feel overlooked compared with Quebec's large urban centres like Montreal or Quebec City.

Take, for example, the Canada arts presentation fund. It is described as funding for organizations that hold arts festivals. That encompasses a wide range of events. I want to be sure I understand what kinds of festivals are eligible and what the selection criteria are. There are lots of festivals all over Quebec. I will focus on Quebec because that is where I am from. Organizations and municipalities are working hard to make their communities dynamic. They often hold festivals to attract visitors during the summer or at other times of year.

You gave many examples when you were talking about the Canada cultural spaces fund, but you did not give any examples of festivals like these. Do you fund smaller festivals in the regions, or does the money mainly go to the big festivals in Montreal and Quebec City? We often hear about the grants awarded in those large cities.

Tell me about the criteria. What do organizations have to do to access this funding? I am thinking of events like the international song festival in Granby, in my riding, which is the largest French-language song festival in America. Our region does not receive this funding, yet the festival draws Americans, Europeans, and francophones from across Canada.

Tell me about that, please.

• (0950)

Mr. Ramzi Saad: Certainly.

It depends on the nature of the festival. The department also has a program for local festivals. The name of the program is building communities through arts and heritage.

By contrast, the Canada arts presentation fund is for professional arts festivals. That means we have two programs, one for supporting professionals and one for supporting local communities. They each have their own criteria. I can explain the differences, but I do not have the French criteria in front of me.

[*English*]

I will just respond in English. For the professional arts presenters, the mandate is really around professional activities. The activities have to showcase artists from at least two provinces or territories, they have to last a minimum of three days, and the artists must be remunerated. That's what we look at for the professional festivals.

Then, complementing that, if you're a local festival that is really centred around cultural events, celebrations, or historic activities, you can go to the building communities through arts and heritage program, which allows you to have artists showcase from a specific region or territory or province. The requirement is that a festival is only available for a minimum of one day.

[*Translation*]

The criteria are not stringent, unlike those for the Canada arts presentation fund, which supports professional presentation. We allocate funding based on the nature of the festival.

That being said, as I mentioned, our statistics show that most of our arts presentation funding goes to festivals in rural regions or small urban centres. In fact, 67% of our arts policy funding goes to rural regions.

The Chair: Your speaking time is up, Mr. Breton. Thank you very much.

Now we will move on to Mr. Nantel from the NDP for two minutes.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Thank you very much.

I am not going to beat around the bush. I want to ask you one of the questions provided by our Library of Parliament analysts: in your opinion, which international or Canadian examples should the committee examine during its study? That is a straightforward question. Are there any interesting international examples you can think of?

I will tell you the reasoning behind my question. I think this committee is faced with significant industry interests in culture. Consequently, we should spend a lot of time studying how amending the Copyright Act would impact cultural communities and cultural industries.

Why do you want the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage to study your program? Isn't Canadian Heritage capable of doing that itself?

Mr. Ramzi Saad: I would like you to go back to the first question, please.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: I see plenty of merit and plenty of promise in this fledgling program. That being said, why would it be worthwhile for the committee to do a study of your program, since I'm guessing you have already done several?

● (0955)

Mr. Ramzi Saad: There is some confusion here. We are not the ones who asked you to do this study. However, this does give us an opportunity to explain to you how the government is investing in cultural spaces and cultural districts.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: I want to emphasize how much I appreciate it. Thank you for explaining this to me. I have often asked for these concepts to be defined for my benefit, and you did it beautifully.

Do you think it would be very worthwhile for us to spend a lot of time on this?

Mr. Ramzi Saad: I don't think it would be appropriate for me to answer that.

Mr. Pierre Nantel: All right.

Thank you, that is all.

[*English*]

The Chair: That brings us to the end of this part. Thank you very much for your presentations. They were very helpful for kicking off this study and prompting all of the questions.

We're going to have to suspend for a few minutes as we go in camera for committee business.

[*Proceedings continue in camera*]

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