

South Temiskaming Region

Regional Cultural Sustainability Plan

Final Report



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Introduction

The City of Temiskaming Shores has shown great leadership in northern cultural development. The City was one of the first Ontario communities to complete both a cultural mapping project and a municipal cultural plan. This leadership stemmed from the City's clear understanding of the central role cultural resources play in the community's future.

Specifically, the Municipal Cultural Plan cites the important role played by cultural resources and cultural groups or organizations in contributing to the quality of life of its community. It also recognizes that this same quality of life is a magnet critical to attracting and retaining young talent and new businesses and investment.

Proceeding with initiatives and actions within its Municipal Cultural Plan, the City has recognized that in order to increase its cultural profile within its fiscal realities there would be a need to find creative solutions to challenges that cultural organizations were experiencing.

With a broad mandate to plan with a sustainable mindset and the recognition that cultural activity extends beyond its municipal borders, the City with the assistance of the Federal Government and the Government of Ontario has undertaken a cultural sustainability exercise for the South Temiskaming region. The 'Regional Cultural Sustainability Plan for the South Temiskaming Region' is a document intended to develop a framework based approach to decision-making and sustainable cultural planning, both internally across organizations and externally with partners.

A first for Ontario, the Regional Cultural Sustainability Plan examines how both municipal partners and key partner agencies might better consider and integrate cultural priorities, goals and opportunities across a wide range of sustainable initiatives.

In developing the Regional Cultural Sustainability Plan, the City has engaged MDB Insight to engage a broad cross section of the cultural sector and the partners at the table to help identify the region's capacity to support sustainable initiatives that will empower cultural organizations to be champions of local growth and development (Figure 1).



FIGURE 1: THE REGIONAL CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY PLAN PROJECT PROCESS





What is Cultural Sustainability

Defining Cultural Sustainability

Cultural sustainability at its simplest is the assurance of the longevity, maintenance and encouragement of cultural assets by a community or set of communities. It includes both tangible and intangible assets. These are described as:

- **Tangible Assets** – assets such as cultural enterprises, organizations, spaces and facilities, festivals and events, among others, that contribute to arts, culture and heritage in a specified geography.
- **Intangible Assets** – the unique stories and traditions of a community or set of communities that contribute to their uniqueness.

Cultural sustainability ensures both tangible and intangible assets are preserved, enhanced and nurtured, but the approach is different for every community based on a variety of reasons such as local context, attitudes and values and limits to capacity or capabilities.

Addressing and planning for cultural sustainability helps articulate a unified vision for cultural development, spurs economic benefits associated with commerce, entertainment and tourism, and contributes the overall improvement of quality of life and quality of place. In addition, cultural sustainability can become a rallying point for tourism development and coordination, so that local treasures can be shared.

A Vision for Cultural Sustainability in the South Temiskaming Region

The South Temiskaming Region has its own collective histories, values and concerns. Consultation with community stakeholders has highlighted some key aspects of a local vision for cultural sustainability. These include:

- **Collaboration:** A highly integrated and connected community of individuals, groups and organizations that seek partnership opportunities as a means for attaining shared goals.



- **Diversity:** Celebrating the cultural diversity of communities (First Nation, Francophone, Anglophone and different ethnic heritages) as unique components that add to the collective value of the region.
- **Economic Prosperity:** The ability of cultural assets, organizations and individuals to contribute to the economic vitality of their communities and the region through their activities, including tourism.
- **History:** A respect for heritage, cultural origins and the historical development of communities and the region.
- **Support:** The encouragement and celebration of arts, culture and heritage via local and regional expressions of support through attendance at activities and events, funding to encourage projects, activities or grant opportunities, promotion of activities and events, and advocacy efforts that contributes to the health and wellbeing of the cultural sector.

Challenges with Cultural Sustainability

There are barriers and challenges that exist toward cultural sustainability in every community. Identifying challenges is an important step to advancing cultural sustainability because strategies and actions can be developed to help address them. Local and regional contexts have an impact on what kinds of challenges or barriers are likely to exist; however, there are shared challenges that many communities or regions face to varying degrees. These include:

- **Lack of Knowledge:** Lack of knowledge about a subject, its value or importance to cultural sustainability.
- **Capacity:** Lack of ability to act, govern or administer aspects of collective or singular operations to the extent necessary to reach identified goals.
- **Finite Resources:** Lack of capital or human resources to be allocated toward a specified need and the prioritization of other allocations over aspects of cultural sustainability.
- **Ideological conflicts:** Divergence in perspectives rooted in conflicting standards, values and beliefs, resulting in disagreement on perceived problems and solutions related to cultural sustainability.

Challenges with Cultural Sustainability in the South Temiskaming Region

Stakeholder engagement has indicated that all of the above challenges exist within the region or its communities to some degree, but there are also additional challenges or barriers that have emerged that are specific to the region. These include:

- **Youth Engagement:** A concern that youth are not subjected to sufficient opportunities to grow an appreciation for local heritage, become involved in arts,



culture or heritage interests, or understand the contribution the sector provides the local economy and overall quality of life.

- **Volunteer Needs:** A local concern that volunteers become worn-out through their commitments to organizations or activities and that there are insufficient numbers of volunteers to meet the needs of local organizations and groups. Many cultural organizations depend either entirely or at least in part on volunteer contributions and it is often the same individuals that are dispersed across different organizations.
- **Economic Connections:** Many people do not understand the economic benefit to a region attached to arts, culture and heritage. Patrons of programming and events spend money. Tourists are attracted to unique towns with diverse and interesting things to do. Practitioners purchase supplies, materials and use local services.
- **More Than Economics:** Cultural development provides many benefits to a community that are not attached to the economy, such as quality of life, community wellbeing and social or spiritual aid. Many people are not aware of these contributions or of the negative impact that erosion or elimination of these assets would have on the perceived value of a community.
- **Coordination:** There is currently no mechanism, organization or long-term role devoted to coordinating cultural development across the region or mobilizing different stakeholders to arrive at common understandings, priorities and goals.



Perspectives on Cultural Sustainability

Community input and engagement is a critical component of any strategic planning process. Accordingly, a variety of community engagement tools were used to examine the region’s capacity to not only support initiatives that will empower cultural organizations but also understand the perceptions that business stakeholders, civic and regional partners and the general public had towards cultural sustainability.

The following engagement process was used to capture and build on community feedback.

FIGURE 2: ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
In-Community Consultation			Telephone Survey
Individual Cultural Organization Workshops	Public Forum	Stakeholder Interviews	General Public Survey
Strategic planning and capacity building roundtables with 13 local organizations, groups or clubs	Consultation exercise with 32 individuals from cultural sector or municipalities	Discussions with 30 community leaders, elected officials or municipal management	Statistically valid (+/- 5%) random sample telephone survey administered among 201 members of the general public



Thematic Results of Consultations

The results of a thematic analysis, which consists of the rolling-up of data from all engagement activities into an aggregated summary of key themes, are summarized in this section. A more detailed discussion of each theme can be located in **Appendix A**.

Communications and Interaction

Cultural organizations and groups are experiencing communication challenges both internally and externally. Internal challenges are associated with capacity to use technology and knowledge of modern communications tools, such as social media. Workshops were identified as means to addressing internal communications issues. External issues related to interacting with other organizations and the perceived need for a resource that would facilitate the sharing of information via an online hub and/or a regional coordinator to facilitate the flow of information.

Working Toward a Collaborative Environment

This theme emerged from a desire among participants to see a more collaborative environment. Some participants already see this as a local strength to be enhanced. The collaborative environment includes inter-organizational partnerships or cooperation as well as a need for inter-municipal collaboration, which was noted by many stakeholders as being deficient. The theme also applies to institutions such as schools and possible partnerships in cultural development. The notion of an arts council emerges within this theme, with organizations noting that an arts council would only function if there were a paid coordinator administering the organization. It was noted that currently municipalities across the region have limited capacity to share the cost of a coordinator directly as a municipal employee.

Shared Spaces and Resources

This theme relates to notions that local groups are in need of spaces from which they can conduct activities, host meetings, and make use of onsite services or equipment. These could be resources spread across the region and listed in a central registry or online portal. There is recognition that memberships or user fees would require development.

Volunteer Retention

Volunteer retention is a concern to many organizations and groups in the region. Without access to funds to pay sufficient staff, volunteers are depended upon. Volunteers are difficult to find and are a challenge to retain over long-term periods. The notion of an online registry where organizations can share volunteer needs and individuals can seek volunteer positions in areas of interest was noted as a possible solution. Capacity building workshops targeting at volunteer attraction strategies were also suggested.



Online Portal

An online portal suitable to enhancing the sharing of information, tracking and posting of volunteer needs/opportunities, space and facility use and facilitate promotion or outreach regarding events was a frequently identified theme. The portal provides solutions to other identified challenges already discussed, but would require maintenance or curating to ensure it is kept up to date and provides the services needed. The idea has roots in the Temiskaming Shores Municipal Cultural Plan, but has garnered a regional interest. Several stakeholders saw this as the most feasible of several cultural sustainability tools.

Cultural Development Support from Government Entities

Cultural development support from government entities was articulated by organizations and groups in regard to both financial and non-financial support. These are most easily explained as either financial or in-kind support. Notably there is some divergence between organizations or groups that perceive there is insufficient support for arts, culture and heritage compared with several municipalities indicating they are providing the best of their capability to support.

Educating the General Public on the Importance of Cultural Sustainability

There is concern among various stakeholders including organizations and some municipal representatives that the general public are not sufficiently aware of the value of cultural sustainability in the region. A key sticking issue was that of a lack of a vision for the region, which could be shared with stakeholders including organizations, minority groups, municipal governments, private sector partners and education institutions. The purpose of growing public understanding of cultural sustainability is to ultimately encourage a stronger sense of pride in past, present and future cultural assets, be it physical spaces or groups and organizations. Finally, youth were also discussed as an audience requiring more information about the value of arts, culture and heritage and opportunities to engage in them.

Culture and the Economy

The economic value of culture and cultural sustainability is a complicated subject raised by many stakeholders. Participants most easily made connections between local arts and the contribution they provide to the tourism sector. There is a clear need to identify the various ways in which the cultural sector contributes to the broader economy. There is also a need to demonstrate that not all positive impacts of culture can be reduced to economic benefits alone.

Cultural Development and Diversity

The final theme discussed is the role of diversity in cultural development. There is tremendous pride in the diversity offered to the region by Anglophone, First Nations and Francophone heritage. In looking at the various organizations and groups engaged, it is clear that many make concerted efforts to work with diverse groups, include them in activities and identify opportunities for future collaboration.



Importantly, the diversity of communities themselves was also highly valued. Notions that would continue to support celebration of diversity relate to ensuring early participation of different stakeholder groups and municipalities across the region on matters related to regional cultural development, the exploration of opportunities to continue to educate the general public about the value of cultural diversity, and the identification of activities and events that can continue to valuing diversity.

Perceptions of Cultural Sustainability from the General Public

Building on the in-community consultation results, a statistically valid survey was designed to gauge the general public's opinions on South Temiskaming region's arts, cultural and heritage organizations and activities. The results of the survey provide information surrounding the general public's perceptions of cultural sustainability and its importance to future planning. The survey had a total response rate of 201 individuals represented equally across each of the South Temiskaming region municipalities. Survey responses were also captured across a broad range of income levels. A detailed breakdown of the survey can be seen in Appendix B.

When the general public was asked to provide an opinion on how important arts, culture and heritage was to them personally over 80% of the total survey respondents said it was either very important or somewhat important. Only 3% mentioned that arts, culture and heritage was not important at all. When asked what type of attributes best described current arts, culture and heritage activities, over 60% of the total respondents mentioned family friendly and nature oriented as the top attributes. The lowest attributes were 'leading edge' and contemporary attributes. 23% of the survey respondents believed 'exciting' to be one of the top attributes.

When asked about the community's role in supporting the arts, culture and heritage communities, over 85% of the participants said that the main role of the community was in supporting and celebrating art, culture and heritage. Additionally, over 80% of respondents agreed that the community does a good job at providing sufficient opportunities for residents to participate in arts, culture and heritage. However, 25% of the participants agreed that the community did not provide sufficient facilities and spaces for arts, culture and heritage activities.

When asked if they or anyone in their household was interested in any arts or cultural activities over 70% of the total respondents mentioned they were interested in history, performing arts, visual arts, and literature and literacy. The least interested was new media and digital arts with 40% of the total participants interested in that discipline. Building on that question, respondents were asked if they participated in culture as much as they would have liked to. 41% of the total respondents replied yes they have participated as much as they would have liked to, while 59% responded no they have not participated as much as they would have liked to. When asked the reason for not participating, respondents noted that there was a lack of programs / variety of



programs available as the main motive. Other reasons included current available programs as not being of interest and a lack of information available on what activities were occurring.

When asked which arts, culture and heritage performances/events they were most interested in, 82% of respondents were interested in music based performances or events. Food events were rated second highest followed by artisan fairs. Art galleries and public art tours had the lowest of interest rates but still well above 50% of the total response rate.

Best Practices for Cultural Sustainability Initiatives

Given discussions of an arts council, online portals and resource spaces, a best practice case study was undertaken. These best practice case studies provide a series of potential tools that could support cultural sustainability. More elaborate discussions of best practices and each case study are provided in Appendix C.

Best Practice #1 - Art, Heritage and Cultural Councils

Tactically, best practice research highlights several tools that art, heritage and cultural councils can use to improve the sustainability of cultural organizations across a region. These tools include:

- Council should serve as a lynchpin connecting members with each other and representing the collective externally; the central point of convergence for arts, culture and heritage in the community.
- Adopt a regional level funding scheme which can be leveraged for additional grants.
- Developing a communications and marketing strategy to maximize outreach and promotion of the organization¹.
- Host one or two marquee events per year to bring value to the Council by increasing its relevance and legitimacy across the broader community while fulfilling a specific set of identified community or stakeholder needs.
- Develop and rotate newsletter composition responsibilities.
- Develop an inventory of existing grant programs that is updated semi-regularly, so that the council is aware of all possible opportunities (and associated deadlines) for grants.
- Provide mission or vision statements for specific projects.

¹ Hartnett, Bridget and Ron Matan (2011), "Marketing Your Nonprofit Organization," Sobel & Co, LLC, Spring, accessed July 17, 2015: <http://sobel-cpa.com/sites/default/files/whitepaper%20Marketing.pdf>.



- Make use of lent space.
- Create a sliding scale for memberships.

Best Practice #2 - Resource Centres

Best practice research for physical resource centres highlighted the following attributes:

- Leading Physical Resource Centres ensures that their space(s) is well publicized and marketed toward the targeted users.
- Leading Resource Centres host various community events at their space.
- Leading Resource Centres are present across multiple locations.
- Leading Resource Centres differentiate membership and user fees.
- Leading Resource Centres explore other revenue models.
- Leading Resource Centres have membership criteria that provide commitment requirements from users to be full-fledge members.

Best Practice #3 - Online Portal

Best practice research for online portals highlighted the following attributes:

- Keep content up to date in member sections of websites.
- Ensure only approved members have access to the members' areas.
- Editing and admitting privileges should be controlled by only two people ever at the same time.
- Do not over-crowd member areas with resources that are not demanded by stakeholders.
- If a member fee structure exists, ensure online payment options exist to capture online sales opportunities.
- Volunteer administrators can be effective site administrators.
- Form close cross-promotional relationships with related organizations.



Regional Cultural Sustainability Plan

Vision

The growth and prosperity of cultural organizations has transformed South Temiskaming Region's provincial profile and its ability to attract creative talent from across Canada. The cultural sector inspires community and artistic pride throughout the region in the form of unique festivals, strong community outreach programming and volunteer participation. The continuing integration of technology has transformed the cultural community driving the demand for the creation of new products and modes of product delivery.

South Temiskaming Region's cultural scene is supported and sustained by a strong and collaborative cultural organization sector. The fragmentation that had once characterized the sector – between arts and heritage, between not-for-profit and for-profit groups – has been transcended. Ongoing communication and community outreach by cultural organizations (through the Arts, Culture and Heritage Council) has resulted in South Temiskaming Region's cultural life continuously evolving and responding to changing community needs and circumstances.

Finally, there is widespread awareness and understanding of the central role cultural organizations and cultural development play in sustaining economic prosperity for all municipalities within the South Temiskaming Region

Defining Roles

The Regional Cultural Sustainability Plan is a strategic document that will guide sustainable cultural development across the South Temiskaming region for the next five to ten years. The core vision of the Plan is to develop, enhance and promote cultural resources and sustainability in the South Temiskaming region to the benefit of residents, the cultural community, the business sector and visitors.



It is important to recognize that the City of Temiskaming Shores is a key, but by no means the only player contributing to the cultural vitality of the South Temiskaming Region. The Plan recognizes that the City's distinct role in developing local cultural capacity is by acting as a promoter, funder, facilitator and champion, but impactful culture development requires a collaborative sector involving many partners each with their own unique role to play and contribution to make.

To achieve sustainability within the Region, it is critical that the responsibility for cultural development is understood fundamentally as a shared responsibility by all area municipalities and local cultural organizations. Over the next five to ten years, those partners must also expand beyond to include other partners such as educational institutions, the business community, the tourism industry, knowledge-based businesses and other levels of government. Creative individuals, arts, heritage and cultural administrators, volunteers, audiences, associations and businesses will all need to embrace their roles - not just in driving cultural vitality but in connecting to and supporting the larger needs and aspirations of the region.

Understanding these roles is fundamental towards building a shared identity that is grounded in the rich histories, traditions and languages of the region and to embracing a cultural sustainability framework that aims to strengthen collaboration and promote South Temiskaming as a cultural hub within Northern Ontario.

Building a Sustainable Framework – Action Plan

Interpreting the Action Plan

Each strategic objective is supported by several actions, identified partners, and performance measures. For each action a level of priority has been identified. The level of priority has been based on several criteria including:

- The level of immediacy based on the region's objectives
- The potential to contribute to the overall cultural sustainability and vibrancy of South Temiskaming
- The resources required
- The logical sequence of actions, with each building from the last; in some cases, these are identified as separate steps to support the same overall objective

The priority level assigned to each action item also corresponds to a specific timeframe. The time frame for each priority level may be operationalized as:

- Short term – within 1-2 years
- Medium term – within 3-6 years
- Long term – within 7-10 years



Action Plan

#	Action / Tasks	Priority			Partners	Resources
		S	M	L		
Strategic Objective #1 – Sustain Cultural Resources by Communicating its Economic Impact						
1.	Illustrate the Value Proposition of Cultural Resources					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convene a Regional Annual Cultural Summit to report on progress made over the past year in implementing the Regional Cultural Sustainability Plan and to undertake “opportunity citing” regarding new cultural issues or opportunities. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch a public awareness campaign in South Temiskaming regarding the economic, social, and health benefits of a strong cultural sector (build on Municipal Cultural Plan item 3.A.iii). 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote community heritage as an element of cultural sustainability. The message should promote natural and cultural heritage that is both tangible and intangible. In addition to Indigenous and early settlement history, heritage also embraces and values recent decades and the arrival of residents from many parts of the world. (build on Municipal Cultural Plan item 2.D). 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with community organizations and cultural organizations to increase private sector/business sponsorship by illustrating the benefits of being a part of a social good. artsVest is a signature matching incentive and sponsorship training program offered throughout Ontario. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the economic contribution that the cultural organizations bring to the region via a sector gap analysis. There is funding available from government agencies to undertake such a study. 					
2.	Strengthen Communication and Collaboration Among Cultural Organizations Across The South Temiskaming Region					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convene a regular meeting (2/year) drawing individuals working in culture across the South Temiskaming area to strengthen relationships and explore potential partnership opportunities. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the Annual Cultural Summit to support communication and collaboration. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the development of future tourism packages and broader strategies, ensure cultural resources play an important role. 					



#	Action / Tasks	Priority			Partners	Resources
		S	M	L		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convene regular meetings of cultural organization representatives across the region to improve awareness and understanding of the range of cultural programs and activities, and their relationship to evolving community needs. Issues addressed should also deal with questions of gaps and overlaps in programming. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to provide workshop opportunities in effective marketing and communications to build capacity of cultural organizations. Form partnerships with local Chamber of Commerce to assist in bringing in guest speakers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote online resources such (e.g. Paro Centre) for free webinars. 					
Strategic Objective #2 – Sustain Cultural Resources through Regional Leadership						
3.	Establish a Regional Arts, Culture and Heritage Council					
A.	Pre-establishment					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a municipality (ies), community organization, or individual to lead the establishment of the regional Arts, Culture and Heritage Council. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a staff or community member from each municipality to be responsible for cultural development and to represent their municipality on the regional Arts, Culture and Heritage Council. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a board that reflects values of diversity (cultural and community diversity). 					
B.	Post-establishment					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The RACHC should work with community organizations to build linkages. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a voluntary membership. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify ways to begin to integrate relevant best practices and ensure an ongoing list of best practices is monitored by the organization (this could be a valuable resource to enhancing institutional memory). 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Facebook page and Twitter account. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a Mentor-Council that the new Council can designate a liaison to learn from; the mentor should be an Ontario organization that has existed for at least five years and that is familiar with the growing pains of starting out; it should also be regionally distant from South Temiskaming to reduce concerns over competition. 					



#	Action / Tasks	Priority			Partners	Resources
		S	M	L		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a Five Year Growth Strategy that articulates aspirations and goals and establishes actions over that period. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquire Ontario Arts Council funding in 2018. 					
Strategic Objective #3 – Sustain Cultural Resources by Maximizing the Region’s Resources						
4.	Develop an Online Cultural Portal					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a map of regional cultural organizations. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a more robust and inclusive community calendar of events 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create an online resource hub that provides documents on grant writing tips, event planning, volunteer attraction and business and marketing skills. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create an online forum for ongoing discussion between cultural organizations. 					
5.	Establish a Shared Resource Centre					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore opportunities for affordable meeting space for cultural organizations. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine the feasibility of establishing a shared resource space or facility for small community based cultural organizations providing meeting rooms, filing cabinets, storage, administrative support, access to photocopier, etc. The facility also serves to build connections and partnerships among organizations. 					
6.	Establish a Shared Resource Network					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore opportunities for the development of a shared resource network where professional experience (e.g. curatorial support) is funded and shared among a variety of cultural organizations. 					
7.	Create a Permanent Cultural Coordinator Position for the South Temiskaming Region					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a permanent bilingual cultural coordinator position to coordinate cultural events and programming and liaise with regional cultural organizations. 					
Strategic Objective #4 – Sustain Cultural Resources Through Government Support						
8.	Identify Current Financial Support From the South Temiskaming Region					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a regional cultural fund supported by each Municipality. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a regional cultural fund supported by regional community agencies 					



#	Action / Tasks	Priority			Partners	Resources
		S	M	L		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage joint-bids for cultural grants available through the Province and Northern Ontario programs. 					
9.	Identify Current In-Kind Support From the South Temiskaming Region					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a partnership agreement with each Municipality to providing a percentage of available event space at a reduced or no cost for cultural activities. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a partnership agreement with each Municipality to providing a percentage available space monthly for cultural activities within the community. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a partnership agreement with regional community agencies to provide event space at a reduced or no cost for cultural activities. 					
Strategic Objective #5 – Sustain Cultural Resources by Embracing Cultural and Linguistic Diversity						
10.	Increase Francophone and Indigenous Cultural Competency					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and Promote the Northeastern Ontario Francophone Best Start Network’s Francophone Cultural Linguistic Competency Framework and the Timiskaming Best Start’s Indigenous Cultural-Linguistic Framework. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage Keynote Speakers to present each Framework to municipal staff and council in each municipality. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan an annual ‘Cultural Conversations Café’ to be held at various locations throughout the region during Culture Days, focusing on Francophone and Indigenous cultures. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support current efforts to increase visibility and understanding of Indigenous culture through events and festivals. Encourage cultural organizations to work collaboratively to grow these events over time. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use appropriate communications channels in any marketing and communications strategy aimed at reaching out to diverse communities (e.g., social media, TV ads on the multicultural channels, community newspapers, etc.). 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build diversity outcomes into any Service Agreements with cultural organizations. 					
Strategic Objective #6 – Sustain Cultural Resources by Increasing Awareness of Volunteer Opportunities						
11.	Increase Awareness of Volunteer Opportunities					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build skills and knowledge in volunteer management among cultural organization representatives by providing workshops that teach volunteer attraction and retention techniques. 					



#	Action / Tasks	Priority			Partners	Resources
		S	M	L		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt a collective approach to recruiting volunteers, potentially through a dedicated website or webpage posting various volunteer opportunities across culture organizations. 					
12.	Recruit Youth Volunteers					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a social media marketing campaign specifically for high school students to attain their required volunteer hours with arts, culture and heritage organisations. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage the recruitment and engagement of youth on the boards of cultural organizations. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to support and work with educators committed to introducing a wide range of cultural disciplines in the school system. Ensure that in addition to teaching the practice of cultural expression, students are exposed to potential future employment opportunities in arts and cultural industries. 					



Appendix Report





Appendix A

Engagement Themes

Engagement Process

This section outlines the various engagement activities associated with the project. The following engagement process was used to capture and build on community feedback.

FIGURE 3: ENGAGEMENT PROCESS



Individual Cultural Organization Workshops

Working from a list of interested groups and organizations, a series of on-site visioning and planning sessions with board members and leaders of each group was conducted. The format of each session was structured as a roundtable discussion that identified current challenges, strengths and aspirations for each organization. The sessions also identified opportunities in how the region can foster cultural sustainability.

In total, MDB Insight met with 13 cultural organizations from across the region. As a follow up to the Regional Cultural Sustainability Plan, these thirteen cultural organizations will also be receiving Individual Sustainability Plans to ensure their anchor status as contributors to the quality of life in their local community.

Public Forum

A public forum was held to broaden awareness of the Regional Cultural Sustainability Plan. The Forum was also used to seek community input into shaping possible sustainable initiatives that were initially put forward by the Municipal Cultural Plan. It was important to understand how such initiatives could be transformed from abstract ideas into a series of functions or roles to be performed.

In total, over 30 individuals attended the forum and provided insights into how the region could plan for cultural development in a sustainable manner.

Stakeholder Interviews

In collaboration with the City, a list of thirty stakeholders was identified for one-on-one consultation. The list consisted of elected officials and municipal staff from various



communities across the South Temiskaming Region, key business and community leaders and cultural sector representatives.

Building on the strengths, gaps, and opportunities that were raised from the previous two steps, the stakeholder interviews examined the feasibility and the priority of sustainable initiatives across the region. Additionally, the stakeholder interviews examined what it means to be culturally sustainable at a regional level.

Key Themes

Theme: Communications and Interaction

One of the largest themes to emerge from different engagement activities to date is the issue of difficulties associated with communication. Cultural organizations and groups are experiencing communications challenges both internally and externally.

For internal communication improvements participants indicated the need for capacity building tools. In some instances, members of organizations lack basic computer skills to effectively use online opportunities. Examples of this would include completing online applications for grants or the ability to share information with members and the general community. Participants noted capacity building tools such as workshops can assist in building internal communication expertise.

External communication issues raised by participants were related to how organizations (and governments) share information, interact and engage with the outside world. For external communication, several tools were identified as potential solutions. These included:

- A cultural coordinator that would help bridge information gaps, connect individuals and organizations with each other, and provide important information relevant to arts, culture and heritage to interested stakeholders.
- An Arts, Culture and Heritage Council that would use its membership network to facilitate the flow of information and share the needs of its members or stakeholder groups.
- An online cultural portal that would serve as a hub for community interaction.

These external tools were originally noted as important priorities within the Cultural Plan developed by the City of Temiskaming Shores, but participants have highlighted their relevance at the regional level as well.

Theme: Working Towards a Collaborative Environment

Another theme that emerged from engagement activities relates to a desire among participants to see a more collaborative environment. Many organizations are already very engaged with other organizations and partners across the community, but there is still a desire to see stronger and more effective relationships across the wider region.



Cross-organizational collaborations appear to be the most common form of collaborative relationships, but many organizations have also expressed that they would like to see more engagement with or from Municipalities and Schools.

There has also been a clear gap identified in regard to inter-community collaboration in the arts, heritage and culture sphere. Many municipal stakeholders were clear in their disinterest in larger regional collaborations with other municipalities.

Theme: Shared Spaces and Resources

The idea of a physical space for arts and culture resources was first raised as a possibility for the City of Temiskaming Shores in its 2014 Municipal Cultural Plan; however, given the size of the South Temiskaming Region, many stakeholders indicated that a single location does not make practical sense. Instead two alternatives were often discussed as more realistic options:

- **Multiple locations** – This is the idea that several resource centres need to be established across the region, for the good of a larger area. Each individual space would not need to be as large as if it was a single location for a larger area, and in addition more people would make use of the facilities. The key challenge was that each space would likely require capital for upgrades and equipment.
- **Resource Availability Listing** – It was identified that there were already many locations, organizations and even private companies that are willing to share resources with community groups. It was suggested that a resource list be developed, with all necessary details to help groups or individuals find and book space as needed. Such a resource would also provide a map of where different facilities were located.

Some other suggestions were to integrate arts and culture resources into a plan for a larger community and recreation centre, so as to benefit more people and organizations at the same time. The one drawback of such a creation is that it would likely be the result of a single municipality's contribution rather than collaboration among numerous municipalities. Deciding where such a facility would be located was also acknowledged as a difficult and possibly politically polarizing decision.

Additionally, participants also added that shared resources did not have to be bound to physical spaces. Many participants noted that shared resources could include the use of a shared services or roles. Examples included:

- A shared curator that could provide curatorial services across the region – potentially improving collaboration between regional exhibits
- Shared grant writers
- Shared communication professionals
- Shared financial assistance (accountants, bookkeepers)



Theme: Volunteer Retention

Many groups and organizations depend largely on volunteers for their general operations, projects or events. Even organizations that have some paid staff still rely heavily on volunteers for some aspects of operation.

Volunteer dependence is a direct result of not having enough money to afford to pay more staff. Because organizations cannot afford to pay staff they often rely on a finite pool of volunteers. As many engagement participants have indicated, most volunteers are people over the age of 50. As such, a common challenge shared by many organizations and groups is a lack of young adult or youth engagement in volunteer activity

For many smaller organizations, most volunteer support is conducted by a very small group. These individuals play roles as members of boards of directors or committees as well as play roles in delivering programs and activity. It is often the same individuals that volunteer across multiple organizations or initiatives. The result is volunteers being spread very thinly across numerous responsibilities and organizations. This increases the likelihood of volunteer burn-out or fatigue.

Consultation efforts uncovered the following as elements needed by organizations to work better with volunteers:

- Setting realistic expectations and time commitments
- Identifying project-specific tasks
- Identifying the value of volunteer commitment
- Rewarding volunteer dedication
- Promoting volunteer opportunities
- Engaging youth and young adults in volunteer capacities
- Having a resource such as an online portal with a component dedicated to volunteer needs and recruitment

Theme: Online Portal

There is a clear regional demand for an online resource that resonates across the South Temiskaming Region. Participants suggested that an online portal would be the most feasible objective to be pursued at a regional level,. These resources typically are most capital intensive at the front end, with minor costs over the longer-term.

Understanding that an online portal requires an appropriate time commitment for maintenance and moderating conversations and information exchange, participants were asked to articulate what the primary functions should be for any regional online portal. Participants articulated the following:

Key components suggested by stakeholders should:

- Include a cultural map of regional assets associated with arts, culture and heritage.



- Provide online resources – serving as a “Non-profit 101.” Examples would include a tab that lists best practice information about grant writing, governance models and guidelines, and other possible solutions to operating an organization.
- Include an event planning tool, to help book, promote and organize specific events related to arts and cultural development.
- Include a volunteer attraction tool, where volunteer needs can be articulated and where volunteers can apply to become involved with different organizations based on their areas of interest.
- Provide an online blog that represents the region’s cultural resources, offers tips, discusses innovations in arts, culture and heritage, and provides a critical evaluation of available programs and services, grants and partnerships.

Theme: Cultural Development Support from Government Entities

Advocacy for cultural sustainability by local governments emerged as a common theme in two key ways; financial support and in-kind support.

Financial Support

Engagement activities have illustrated an area of divergence between community organizations and Municipal stakeholders. On the one hand, local groups are concerned that municipalities are not doing enough to promote a vision of sustainable cultural development, while on the other hand, municipalities insist they are already doing all they can with the limited budgetary resources they have available.

Another challenge identified during consultations regarding municipal perspectives is that investment and support is associated with demonstrating a return on investment. In funding cultural programming it is often difficult to demonstrate such a return. There are other values and community benefit such as civic pride and sense of belonging that can be derived through investment in culture that are not recognized because they are not economically rooted.

In-kind support

Another form of support identified by stakeholders was in-kind support via the allocation of space, municipal staff or facilities for groups, events or projects. Many organizations acknowledged that municipal partners are generally more supportive in this form of support. Some municipalities also boasted that they provide much support of this kind.

In-kind support was viewed as particularly strong among established organizations and also from the private sector, where many area businesses or business organizations demonstrate a willingness to offer resources such as meeting space and promotional support.



Community Support for Arts

The general public and many stakeholders associated with municipal governments are under the impression that the community is generally supportive of arts and culture. Over 80% of respondents to a random telephone survey expressed support for arts and culture as either somewhat important or very important, and nearly 90% of respondents agree or strongly agree that their community supports arts, culture and heritage. In regard to individuals expressing support for arts and culture, feedback from cultural organizations suggests there is some parallel recognition of their support; however, at the community level, particularly governments, many organizations diverge from the belief that there is sufficient support.

Theme: Educating the General Public on the Importance of Cultural Sustainability

A key theme that also emerged during various engagement activities relates to an identified need for better education of the general public about the value and importance of cultural assets and sustainability. The solution warrants a consolidated effort of promoting a shared vision of cultural sustainability to the larger public via advocacy activities by a variety of partners including:

- Individual organizations, groups and stakeholders
- Minority cultural groups
- Municipal governments
- Private sector partners
- Education institutions

Currently, only one municipality in the entire region has a cultural plan, and it is not used as an inter-departmental tool as was intended. The result is a perception among local organizations that the City of Temiskaming Shores treats cultural planning as a single silo as opposed to something that flows across multiple departments and is brought into consideration on all relevant policy discussions.

It was identified by some participants that other communities, not having specific cultural plans, cannot be expected to adopt the Plan developed by Temiskaming Shores. Nonetheless, there were many stakeholders including government participants that acknowledged much content, particularly regarding key objectives, does have relevance across the broader region. Where complications arise is in regard to municipal investment in culture, which is often either very limited or community specific.

The purpose of growing public understanding of cultural sustainability is to ultimately encourage a stronger sense of pride in past, present and future cultural assets, be they physical spaces or groups and organizations. Opportunities to bring different areas of interest in closer contact were identified as mechanisms to facilitating public education. For example, a deeper collaboration between sports teams and arts groups was seen as a means of helping grow local appreciation for both and encourage mutual respect,



as was better synergies between organizations and local schools, to ensure youth can learn about and appreciate local arts, heritage and culture.

A final component of the education theme relates to youth. Many local cultural organizations and groups have desires to include local youth in their programs and projects. Educating youth about the value of the cultural assets across the region was therefore seen as a means of exposing children and young adults to opportunities for expression, involvement and appreciation for arts, heritage and culture across the region. If parents, teachers and peers are not engaged in cultural activities, the belief is that children and youth will emerge as not being engaged in them either.

Theme: Culture and the Economy

The economic value of culture and cultural sustainability is a complicated subject raised by many participants. In some ways, economic value has clear strengths, such as through tourism. Participants most easily made connections between local arts and the contribution they provide to the tourism sector. In addition, assets such as museums were also seen as related to the tourism economy.

Less obvious was the economic value attributed to other cultural organizations, because the good they provide is less visible. For example, a cultural organization such as an arts and culture council is viewed as something less directly connected to local economies, even though such organizations build local capacity, increase visibility, and allow for collaborative relationships to flourish between different member organizations or individuals.

There is a clear need to identify the various ways in which the cultural sector contributes to the broader economy. There is also a need to demonstrate that not all positive impacts of culture can be reduced to economic benefits alone. Some public goods relate to community wellbeing, a healthy citizenry, civic engagement and the growth of social capital. Even though these do not necessarily relate to economic benefits, they nonetheless represent aspects that contribute to quality of life across the region and in each community.

Theme: Cultural Development and Diversity

The final theme discussed is in regard to the role of diversity in cultural development. There is tremendous pride in the diversity offered to the region by Anglophone, First Nations and Francophone heritage. In looking at the various organizations and groups engaged, it is clear that many make concerted efforts to work with diverse groups, include them in activities and identify opportunities for future collaboration.

It was suggested that ideas associated with inclusiveness should be embedded in early planning processes, rather than as after-thoughts; as is sometimes the case. Some engagement participants expressed concern that they are merely reached out to as a form of tokenism. Though this is not always the case, it serves as a reminder that



engagement of diverse groups needs to be done sincerely and with clear, mutual and culturally-sensitive understandings of expectations and goals.

There is also a diversity of communities across the region, each with unique histories and heritages that are held in high esteem. There is a desire for the preservation and continued education of their value to community members and the region as a whole. Some participants would like to see stronger advocacy in celebrating diversity at a regional level in order to draw attention to the region for visitors and local residents alike.

Stakeholder engagement has shown that while these diverse communities and groups have pride, they also require tools to help them better coordinate, connect and collaborate. Returning to the notion of a shared vision for cultural sustainability, it was made apparent by some participants that cross-promotion and mutual respect needs to be nurtured across the region to establish a strong foundation from which a shared vision and other goals and objectives can grow most organically.



Appendix B

Public Telephone Survey

Building on the in-community consultation results, a statistically valid survey was designed to gauge the general public's opinions on South Temiskaming region's arts, cultural and heritage organizations and activities. The results of the survey provide information surrounding the general public's perceptions of cultural sustainability and its importance to future planning. The survey had a total response rate of 201 individuals represented equally across each of the South Temiskaming region municipalities. Survey responses were also captured across a broad range of income levels. A detailed breakdown of the survey can be seen below.

Respondent Profile

FIGURE 4: WHICH COMMUNITY DO YOU LIVE IN?

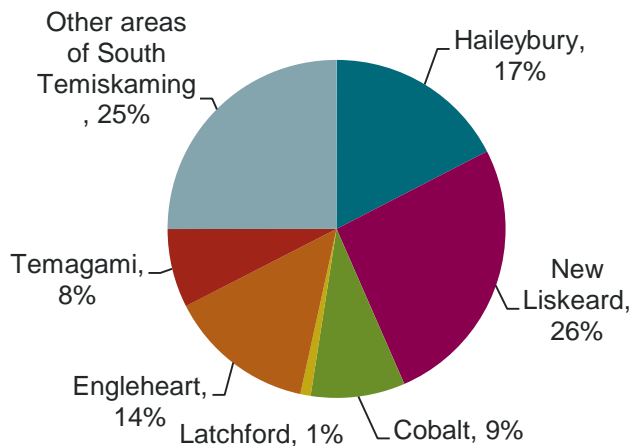
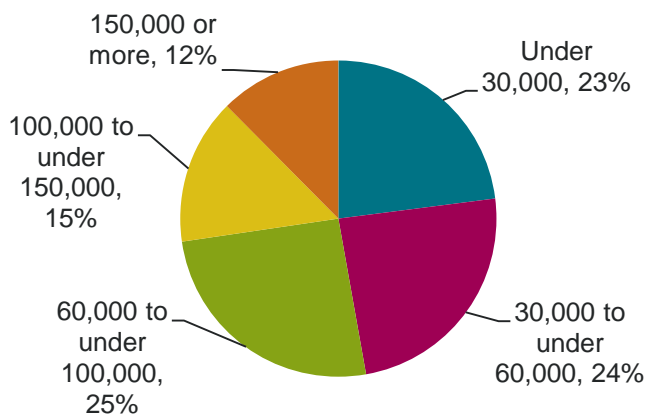


FIGURE 5: WHICH HOUSEHOLD INCOME BEFORE TAXES FITS YOUR DESCRIPTION?





Part 1 – Value of Culture

FIGURE 6: HOW IMPORTANT IS ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE TO YOU PERSONALLY. WOULD YOU SAY IT IS...

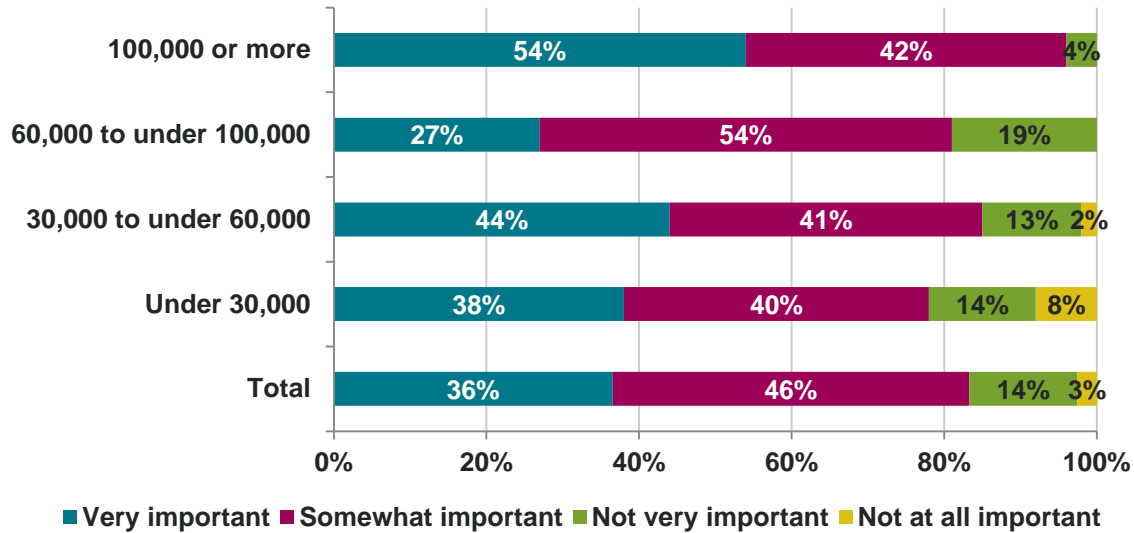


FIGURE 7: USING A SCALE OF 1 TO 10 WHERE 1 MEANS THE WORD OR PHRASE IS NOT AT ALL ASSOCIATED WITH YOUR COMMUNITY AND 10 MEANS IT IS STRONGLY ASSOCIATED WITH YOUR COMMUNITY. ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE RESOURCES AND ORGANIZATIONS IN YOUR COMMUNITY ARE...

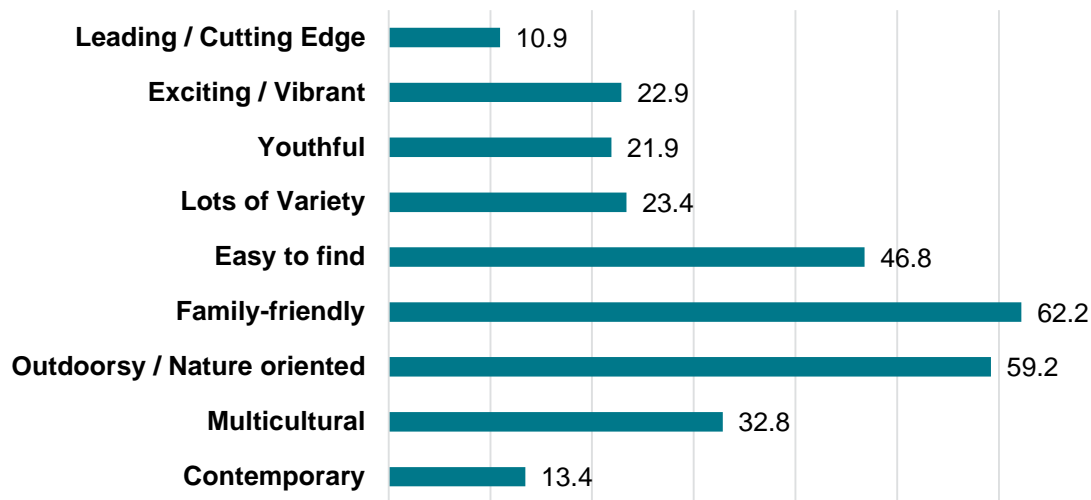
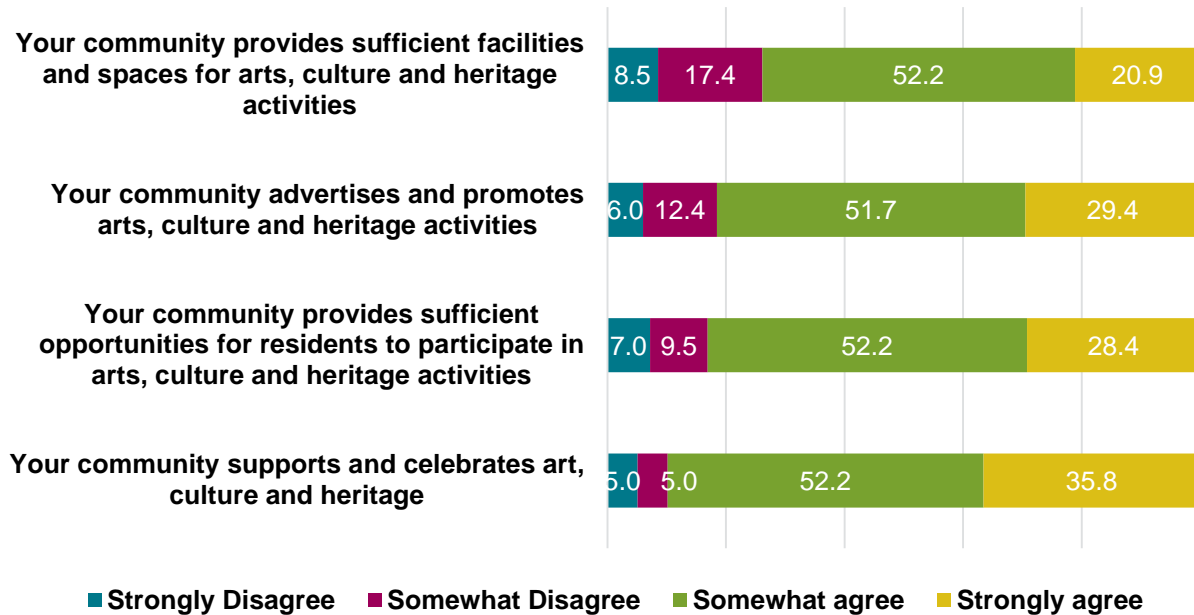




FIGURE 8: BASED ON THE FOLLOWING LIST OF STATEMENTS REGARDING YOUR COMMUNITY'S ROLE IN SUPPORTING THE ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE COMMUNITY. PLEASE TELL ME THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU AGREE WITH EACH STATEMENT.



Part 2 – Participation in Culture

FIGURE 9: ARE YOU OR OTHER MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD INTERESTED IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING ARTS OR CULTURE ACTIVITIES EVEN IF YOU MAY NOT BE PARTICIPATING IN THEM. TOP 3 CHOICES PER RESPONDENT.

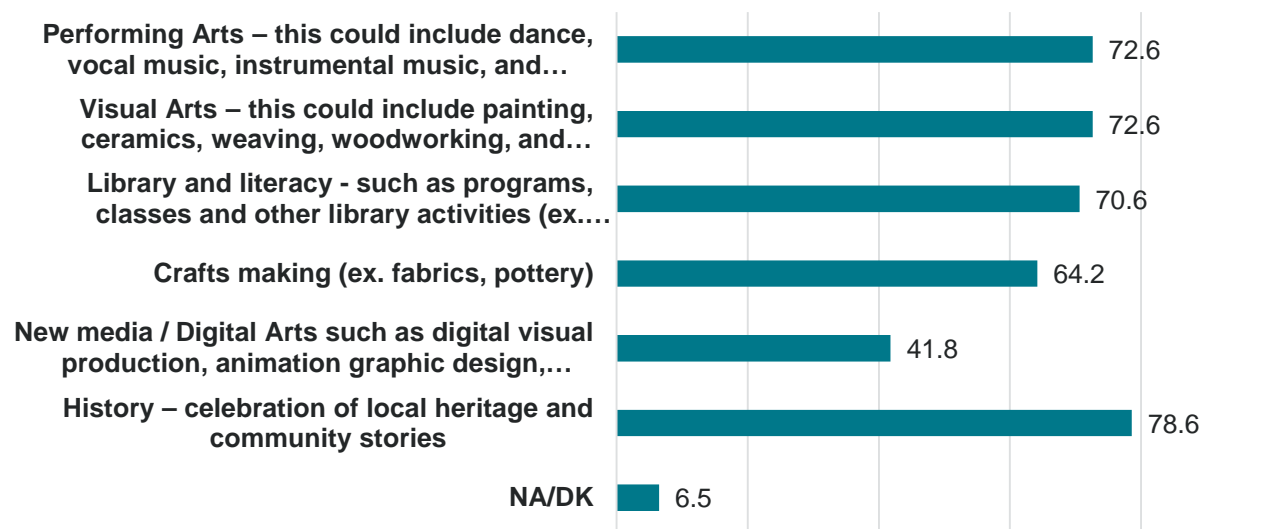




FIGURE 10: BASED ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION, HAVE YOU OR OTHER MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD TAKEN ACTIVITIES IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS.

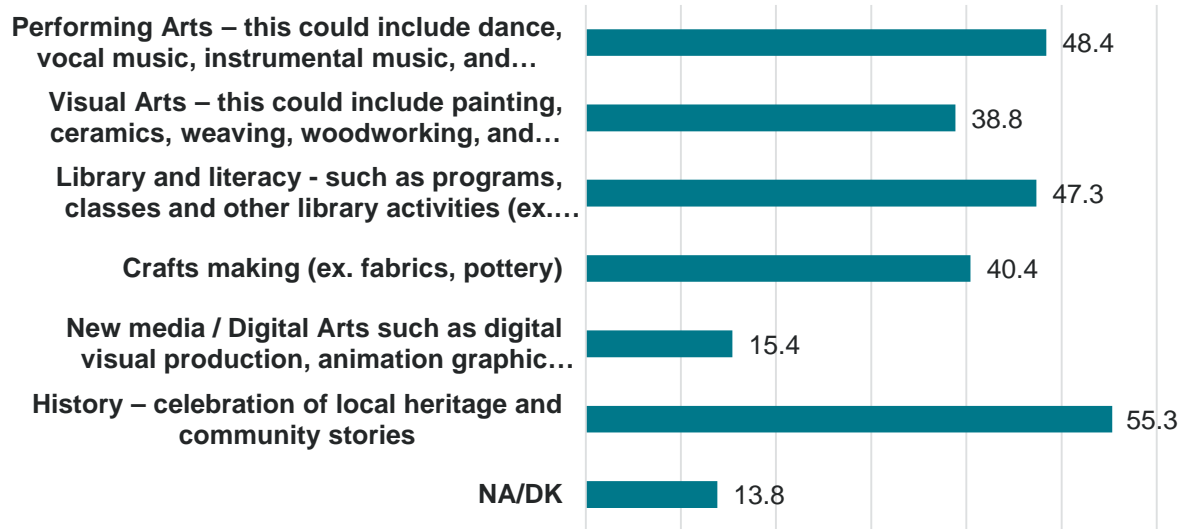


FIGURE 11: IN YOUR OPINION, DO YOU OR MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD PARTICIPATE IN ARTS OR CULTURE ACTIVITIES AS MUCH AS YOU OR THEY WOULD LIKE TO?



FIGURE 12: WHAT ARE THE REASONS THAT YOU OR MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD DO NOT PARTICIPATE IN THESE ACTIVITIES AS OFTEN AS YOU WOULD LIKE?

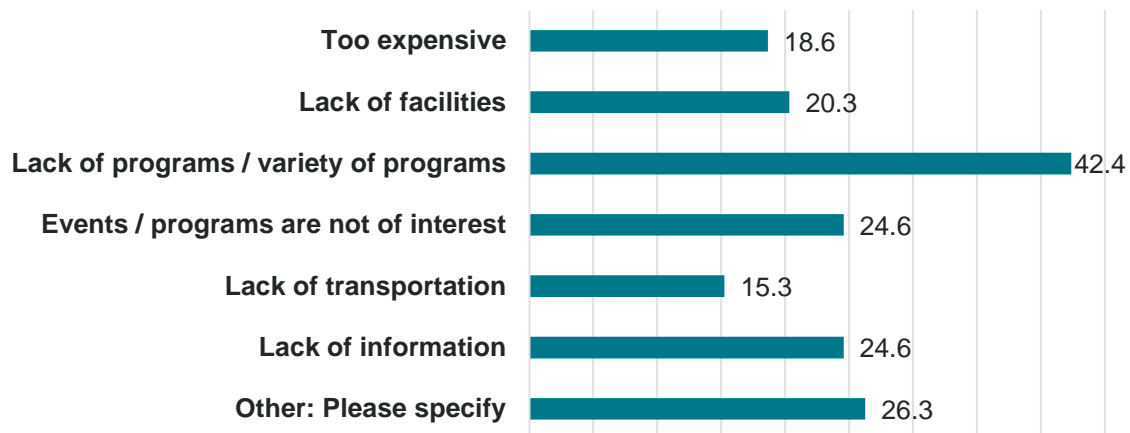




FIGURE 13: ARE YOU OR OTHER MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD INTERESTED IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING ARTS OR CULTURE EVENTS OR FESTIVALS EVEN IF YOU MAY NOT BE PARTICIPATING IN THEM. TOP 3 CHOICES PER RESPONDENT.

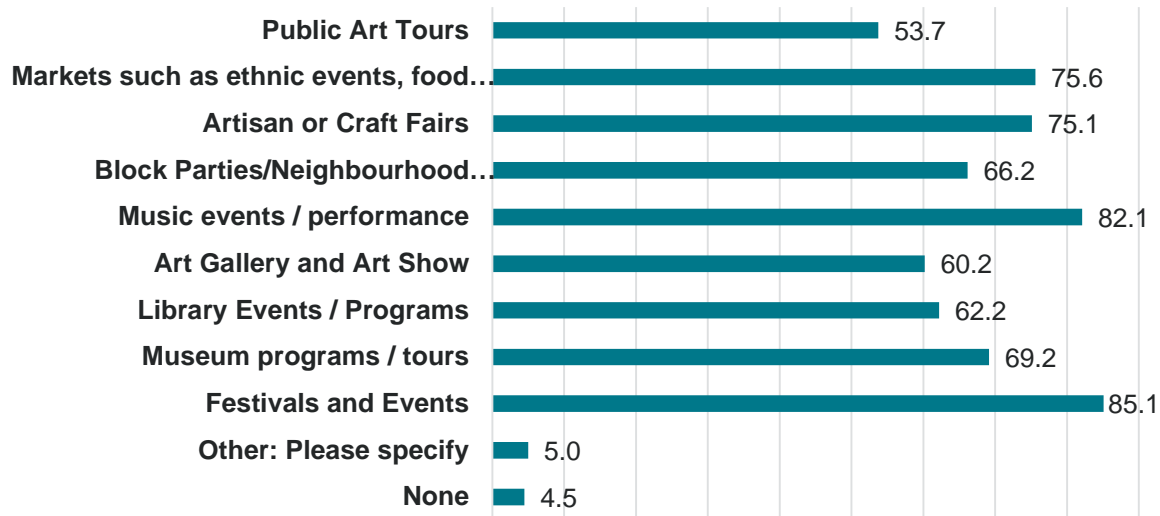


FIGURE 14: BASED ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION, HAVE YOU OR OTHER MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD PARTICIPATED IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING EVENTS OR FESTIVALS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS?

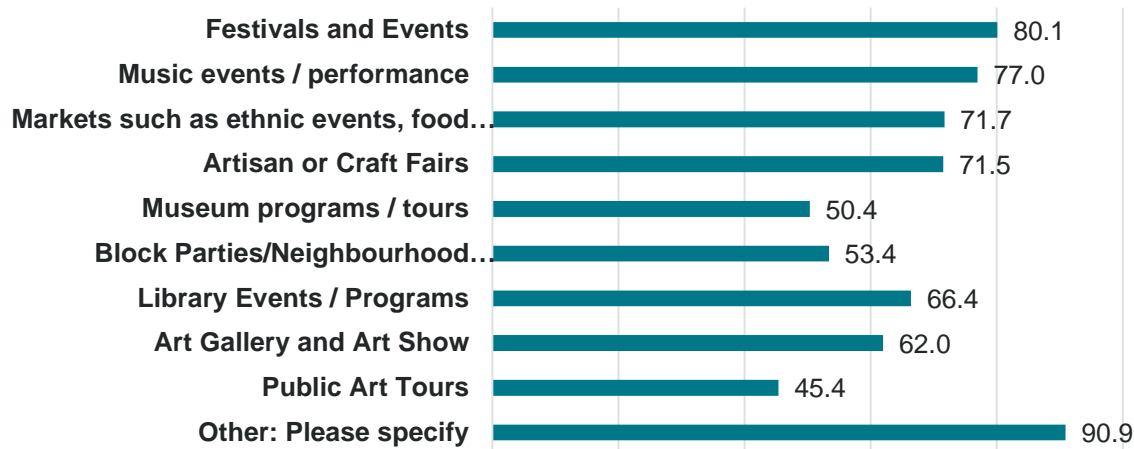
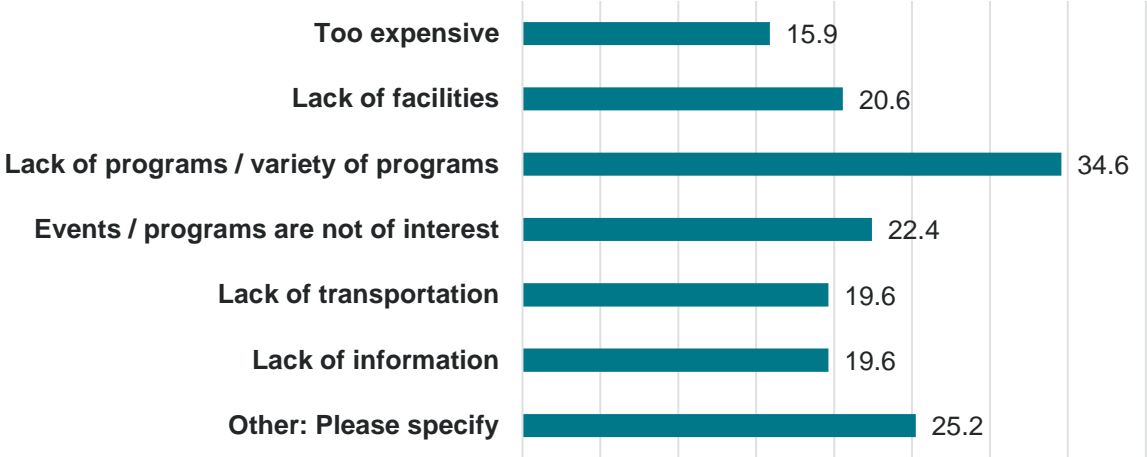


FIGURE 15: IN YOUR OPINION, DO YOU OR MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD PARTICIPATE IN ARTS OR CULTURE EVENTS OR FESTIVALS AS MUCH AS YOU OR THEY WOULD LIKE TO?





FIGURE 16: WHAT ARE THE REASONS THAT YOU OR MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD DO NOT PARTICIPATE IN THESE ACTIVITIES AS OFTEN AS YOU WOULD LIKE?





Appendix C

Case Studies and Best Practices

Art, Heritage and Cultural Councils

Best practice research has highlighted that arts, heritage and cultural councils are the lynchpins that harness regional cultural sustainability. Lessons pulled forward from the best practice research indicated that most councils are funded and supported by multi-level systems. The research suggests that at a regional level, funding should be derived from multiple partners across the region so that it can be leveraged toward other project revenues derived through grants from larger government structures or in-kind donations, such as space or staff resources.

Best practice research also suggests that art, heritage and cultural councils should serve as the singular point of convergence for arts, culture and heritage in the community. It is important that no other organization fulfils the role performed by the Council as a hub for cultural connectivity (neither in a physical sense nor in the online world). While other organizations or groups may be actively involved in the process, the Council should be the lead and primary actor acting as the central figure of coordination.

Tactically, best practice research highlights several tools that art, heritage and cultural councils can use to improve the sustainability of cultural organizations across a region. These tools include:

- **Developing a communications and marketing strategy to maximize outreach and promotion of the organization.**²
 - Key instructions and approaches to distributing messages are required to ensure that anyone in the organization can contribute communications content that is amenable to the brand and purpose of the organization and ensure there is continuity in how information is shared and stored (i.e. archived).
- **Host one or two marquee events per year to bring value to the Council by increasing its relevance and legitimacy across the broader community while fulfilling a specific set of identified community or stakeholder needs.**
 - Events add a focal point to which the broader community and member-stakeholders can associate a brand, but that recognition only comes with a perceived value associated with the event and benefit it brings to a set of stakeholders or the broader community.

² Hartnett, Bridget and Ron Matan (2011), "Marketing Your Nonprofit Organization," Sobel & Co, LLC, Spring, accessed July 17, 2015: <http://sobel-cpa.com/sites/default/files/whitepaper%20Marketing.pdf>.



- **Develop and rotate newsletter composition responsibilities.**
 - While newsletters are an important means of keeping stakeholders of an organization informed, the reality of organizations that are largely reliant on volunteers is that it becomes difficult to ensure newsletter content is released on time and in a predictable form. Modern technology makes assembling newsletters increasingly user-friendly. Developing a rotation of newsletter contribution responsibilities ensures the burden is shared more equally.
- **Develop an inventory of existing grant programs that is updated semi-regularly, so that the council is aware of all possible opportunities (and associated deadlines) for grants.**
 - The specific costs associated with projects or running the organization should be understood so as to make matches with available grant programs easier. If you know what costs money it will be easier to find know what programs may help cover some of those costs.
- **Provide mission or vision statements for specific projects.**
 - Some organizations develop specific mission or vision statements for proprietary projects.
- **Make use of lent space**
 - Not all councils have the luxury of having their own offices or meeting rooms, and instead rely on a network of partners that lend space to them for meetings or smaller gatherings as in-kind donations. Ensure space sharing arrangements are clear as to what resources are included and planned well in advance out of courtesy to the lender.
- **Create a sliding scale for memberships**
 - Membership fees are usually structured differently depending on the type of member. For example, organizations can usually enroll in a membership, but the annual fee is typically higher than for individuals. Seniors and students usually receive a reduced fee, and some organizations have special designations for private sector funders.



Case Studies

QuinteArtsCouncil

The Quinte Arts Council (QAC) has existed since 1967, where it first received funding as part of Canada's centennial anniversary. The council is headquartered in Belleville, Ontario, but has a geographic coverage across three counties. As such it exemplifies multi-jurisdictional collaboration.

Its mission is to:

- Advocate for artists and arts organizations
- Provide effective, accessible communication tools
- Engage artists in our programs and events
- Provide arts education opportunities for artists and students
- Provide professional development activities for artists
- Foster and engage in dialogue about the arts in our community

Funding model

The Council receives funding from Prince-Edward County, Hastings County, the Counties of Lennox and Addington and from the City of Belleville. Municipal funds are used to leverage Federal and Provincial grants. In addition, the organization also raises money through its membership base, which includes student, basic-member, group and private donor rates, as well as through its Gift Shop at the QAC-operated gallery space.

The QAC also hosts various annual fundraising events or arranges for fundraising activities in conjunction with other community projects.

Location

The QAC's office and gallery are donated to the organization from the City of Belleville, but utilities and operating costs are paid for by the organization. The location is a former municipal building consisting of two floors.

Programs and Services

Key offerings of this Council include:

- Umbrella – A local arts and culture newspaper printed quarterly by the Council
- Weekly column in the Belleville Intelligencer newspaper
- Weekly arts updates
- Event listings
- Awards and Bursaries programs



- Artistic professional development workshops and notifications about calls for entry, auditions etc.
- Artistic directory
- Member meeting space (physical space at headquarters location)
- Online member space
- Community events: Bi-annual juried art show, recognition awards, Art in the Community Visual Art Show (at gallery space) and Sales
- Advocacy and champion of arts in the community and arts policy

Unique Traits

Most local media in the region do not provide content on arts and culture, but through its own quarterly newspaper artists and patrons of the arts can grow an appreciation for local news on the subject. In addition, QAC's weekly column in a local newspaper provides a regular source of insight into community goings-on across the region.

The QAC also provides special funding to hire teachers to give special courses and workshops in art education at local schools as a means of connecting with young people interested in the arts. In addition, QAC also oversees an art-lending project to have works by local artists installed around area businesses. The works are on loan to each company but are also for sale, in the event that people that have viewed the art want to purchase it or in the event that the businesses wish to do so.

Because QAC is an umbrella organization representing several geographic areas, it can gain funding from different sources without over-burdening any individual municipality.



Demonstrating how an arts and cultural council's name can also be part of its branding, Antigonish Culture Alive's name is catchy and innovative but easy to understand.

Representing a convergence of various cultural backgrounds including Gaelic, First Nation, French and English, Antigonish Culture Alive (ACA) celebrates diversity in the arts and culture sector and provides a venue for interaction, information sharing and collaboration. While its website provides general information of various kinds, it also has a large member section, where coordination is facilitated.

Funding Model

The ACA is primarily self-funded via local events that bring it revenue and grants. It also received a very small annual endowment from the municipality. It also charges a membership fee, but the fee allows members special perks including the ability to qualify for some ACA-specific exhibit events such as GoArt (an annual festival). Unlike some other Councils, membership is not restricted to local individuals. As such, artists or groups from other areas can also apply to become members. Member fees fit along a sliding scale, but the organization does not have any categories for patrons of the arts, unlike some other Councils.

Council Location and Governance

The Council does not have a physical location, but rotates board meetings at different members' homes or uses the meeting rooms of other organizations or businesses. It also uses Skype during times of inclement weather.

The organization employs one part-time coordinator, with a very active board of directors. The Board is proactive in maintaining contact with former members for reasons of institutional memory and deference.

Different board members have specific responsibilities, such as grants, communications and youth art, in addition to typical governance roles such as chair, vice-chair and treasurer.

Programs and Services

The ACA has a number of interesting programs and services, including:



- GoArts – An annual arts competition and exhibit series run in conjunction with the People's Place Library, where there is a gallery space
- Antigonight – A yearly festival where numerous businesses and galleries show off local art during the evenings
- National Youth Arts Week – Every May ACA coordinates a local contribution to this national event, which includes a youth art exhibit and various activities
- Workshops and information sessions – ACA organizes a number of workshops annually designed to help local artists or organizations, such as grant writing workshops and social media marketing. Members receive special reduced rates.
- Grants and Bursaries – ACA provides small grants to area artists and organizations, as well as bursaries to local high schools
- Online event listing and calendar – Anyone can provide notices about upcoming events for submission on the event listing and online calendar
- Searchable member directory – A useful listing of members, including profiles and filtering criteria is available to anyone.
- Special member section on website – The website contains a special section for members, which has numerous resources, message boards and coordination tools

Unique Traits

The ACA is the only organization that collectively represents arts and culture in Antigonish. It has numerous unique traits that bear discussion.

The Antigonight festival, which is administered by ACA, is Nova Scotia's only participatory arts festival, designed to get community members engaged in art through hands on interaction and through engagement with local artists.

The website members' area is sophisticated and designed to facilitate capacity building for its users. The members' section platform is through a separate web company that specializes on back-end website add-ons called Wild Apricot.



Resource Centres (Physical Space)

Best practice research for physical resource centres highlighted the following attributes:

- **Leading Physical Resource Centres ensures that their space(s) is well publicized and marketed toward the targeted users**
 - An unused or underused space may result in a perception that it is not useful. All appropriate users should be contacted directly in providing information about the resource.
- **Leading Resource Centres host various community events at their space**
 - Use the space for various community events so that members as well as the general public can become acclimatized to the space. Examples include components of festivals held on the premises, exhibits, theme parties and fundraising events.
- **Leading Resource Centres are present across multiple locations**
 - If possible consider the option of multiple locations to meet the needs of a larger geographic area. Different locations may have some components that others do not.
- **Leading Resource Centres differentiate membership and user fees**
 - Users often have diverse needs for a space. Some require only a place for monthly meetings, while others require more frequent use. Some require a larger working space, while others require just a small station.
- **Leading Resource Centres explore other revenue models**
 - Some resource centres use a portion of their space for additional revenue, such as café uses.
- **Leading Resource Centres hold membership to minimum volunteer or community engagement hours**
 - As a means of maintaining exposure to the broader community, some resource centres require their membership to contribute to the community in some way.



Case Studies



The Tett Centre for Creativity and Learning is an arts and cultural resource centre and learning space operated in Kingston. The location is home to eight arts organizations, artists' studios, and a variety of rental spaces including rehearsal and multi-purpose studios and a community gallery.

Its mission is as follows:

The Tett Centre for Creativity and Learning's mission is to foster creativity and learning in the arts by providing a unique opportunity for professional artists, students, area visitors, and the broader Kingston community to come together in a vibrant setting offering an exceptional range of creative activities designed to appeal to people of all ages and artistic abilities.

With the support of the City of Kingston Cultural Services, community sustainability, arts and culture, and in partnership with Queen's University and community members, we aim to engage the Kingston community in their artistic pursuits with emphasis on education, organization, heritage and culture.

The Tett provides a resource centre for community members to use, including access to work space, shared resources, WIFI and a kitchenette.

Funding Model

The Tett receives an endowment from the City of Kingston, which pays for a full-time coordinator and facility manager. Additional revenues are derived through space rental to users and for events. Revenue is also derived via grants, which constitute a large portion of its funding.

Location

The space is provided to the Tett on agreement from the City of Kingston, but the Tett rents some of its space as artists' studios and numerous clubs. In addition workshops and programming are offered in a number of artistic fields including music, theatre, fine arts, geology, pottery and dance.



The Tett is housed in a converted mill that was built in the 19th Century, and which was modernized and upgraded via a partnership between the City of Kingston and Queen's University.

Programs and Services

The key to the Tett is not so much that it directly organizes or creates programs or services. It provides space for people to do the artistic or cultural things they want to do, whether through an individually-designated work space or through a larger space that is occupied by a club or not-for-profit. Some of the Tett's features include:

- **The Malting Tower** – This space was formerly a malting tower, and has since been converted into a large event space available for rent for community or private functions. The Tett hosts numerous events in the space, some of which are fundraisers, such as its annual Halloween dance (children also have a separate dance in another location in the building on the same night!)
- **Summer camps** – Numerous summer camps occur on the premises devoted to different art forms
- **Café** – Beginning in summer of 2016, the Tett will open a café on its premise that opens onto a patio on the river-front.
- **Joe Chithalen Memorial Musical Instrument Lending Library** – Housed in the Tett is this resource of musical instruments of all sorts and from all over the world. From guitars to sitars to drums and percussion, after the one-time member-fee (10\$) patrons can rent any instrument on a monthly basis for free.
- **Kingston Handloom Weavers & Spinners** – Ever want to weave your own textiles or make your own thread? This club located at the Tett accepts members year-round who enjoy access to a large work space, looms and spinning wheels, and other resources. Courses are also offered.

Unique Traits

When the Tett was first established it served as a focal area to create visibility to the arts community in Kingston. A previous art collective had occupied another location but it was overly introverted. When the landlord decided to oust the collective its isolation resulted in a lack of empathy from the general public. Each organization or artist that licences space in the Tett is compelled to provide a minimum of five hours community engagement or volunteering per month.



The Centre for Social Innovation (CSI) is located in Toronto and provides a physical space for members to make use of common resources, spaces and facilities for their project needs. The CSI defines itself as a “coworking space, community and Launchpad for people who are changing the world.”

Funding

The CSI derives its funding from member fees, value-add fees, private funders, consulting revenue and grants. Specific funders have included Urbanspace Property Group, Harbinger Foundation, Ontario Trillium Foundation, Toronto Community Foundation, Heritage Canada and the Canadian Alternative Investment Cooperative.

Location

The CSI has three locations spread across Toronto in order to meet the needs of different organizations across the large geographic area. All locations have space available for long-term use, such as cubical space, as well as common areas or meeting rooms that can be reserved for special events.

In addition to meeting rooms, each location also has capacity for larger events, such as workshops, performances or lectures.

Unique Traits

The CSI offers a unique combination of available space and resources to be used by members, which are largely social enterprises. Not only do members benefit from specific physical resources and facilities on location, but they also benefit from the cross-pollination and potential for collaborative efforts offered by an environment where many organizations are members. Much like business incubators serve as a location for concentrated economic development and support in specific sectors, the CSI serves as an incubator for social innovation.

In addition, CSI's expert consulting is designed to be able to help organizations in any level of development plan for their future.



Online Portals

Best practice research for online portals highlighted the following attributes:

- **Keep content up to date in member sections of websites**
 - As with outward-facing site content and functions, when member areas have dated content, they run the risk of people equating the site with being uninvolved, irrelevant or in disrepair. Even if a website is only maintained by a volunteer or team of volunteers, some minimum standards or benchmarks need to exist for content refreshment and maintenance to ensure the site is current.
- **Ensure only approved members have access to the members' areas**
 - The possible security and privacy complications of a website requires a means for controlling member access to different aspects of the website. When a new member is accepted to the site he or she must be easily admitted, and if a member resigns his or her membership (either as an individual or group), access to member areas must be revoked immediately.
- **Editing and admitting privileges should be controlled by only two people ever at the same time**
 - With too many people having access to controlling backend components of the portal, there is a risk that conflicting information is posted or responsibilities not be taken seriously by individuals. Only two people should ever have access to admitting privileges at once for the portal; typically the primary media supervisor or communications coordinator and the most senior executive or board member. Having two people with access provides a buffer in the event that one person is not available to update content or admit new members to the site or if one person leaves the organization.
- **Do not over-crowd member areas with resources that are not demanded by stakeholders**
 - An overly cluttered site may bring unnecessary confusion to users, in addition to running the risk of falling behind in terms of upkeep. All components and resources should be derived based on consultation with stakeholders and feedback channels, wherein users can make suggestions for future components or adjustments.
- **If a member fee structure exists, ensure online payment options exist to capture online sales opportunities**
 - If there is a cost associated with membership to an organization or access to specific online resources, users must have access to at least one method of online payment.



- **Volunteer administrators can be effective site administrators**
 - It is not entirely necessary that a pay position administers such a portal. Many organizations rely on one or two key volunteers to check and maintain the site on a weekly basis. If it is maintained weekly, most administrative duties can be performed within just a couple hours.
- **Form close cross-promotional relationships with related organizations**
 - Some stand-alone portals, such as Perth Arts Connect, form cross-promotional relationships with local governments and tourism offices so that people visiting either site can be referred to the other. Note: if the member section is on a Council website, the Council website would be the vehicle to connect to other external partner sites.



Case Studies



Perth Arts Connect (PAC) self-identifies as a nexus for arts marketing across a region representing Perth County and the towns of St. Mary's and Stratford. While the town of Stratford is renowned for its theatre festival, other artistic, heritage and cultural assets are given exposure through PAC. The organization is most active online through its website (<http://www.perthartsconnect.ca/>) and social media channels. The PAC's stated mandate is, "Perth Arts Connect is a not-for-profit, member driven organization whose mission is to encourage, promote and support arts, culture and heritage, to enrich and enliven Perth County communities and to ensure that creativity and imagination remain a vital part of our social and economic life." PAC is an interesting case study because of its online portal, which serves as a hub for arts, culture and heritage growth, facilitation and engagement across the region.

Value Proposition

The PAC serves as a point of convergence for arts, culture and heritage information that is useful to members (in terms of network development and access to workshops or events organized by PAC) and the community at large. The network offered by PAC brings value to membership by providing connections and partnership opportunities. Workshops are designed and hosted by PAC in partnership with regional experts, also bringing value to the organization. An initiative titled "Atrepreneurship" sought to provide local artists with business planning and management skills. There are no other arts and culture organizations operating at the scale that PAC does which increases the organization's perceived value.

Growing Legitimacy

The PAC has done several things to help grow its legitimacy. First, access to a branding grant through the local Community Futures Development Corporation helped the organization establish a recognizable brand and online media strategy. That brand has increased legitimacy of the organization through greater visibility and an active and dynamic online presence.

Second, the networking opportunities offered by the online platform and membership directory increase its legitimacy because PAC is recognized as a broker and facilitator of relationship development. Because PAC members are able to find complimentary



artists, groups or possible collaborators, awareness of different offerings, expertise and opportunities across the region has grown.

Third, a strong presence and active role in coordinating activities/events during Culture Days has also aided in growing the organization's legitimacy. Culture Days is a national program in which many communities across Canada initiate public events centred on arts, culture and heritage every September. The PAC took a leadership role in organizing and promoting Culture Days activities across the region. The leadership role in Culture Days has grown its public visibility and also helped promote local events, thereby increasing its legitimacy within the broader community and its membership organizations that have events occurring during the festival.

Finally, members recognize that a regional approach to promoting and coordination holds specific benefits that may not as easily be attainable at a smaller scale. Because no other group offers such promotional and support services at as large a scale and across as many areas of arts, culture and heritage, PAC's legitimacy is enhanced due to the value it brings its members.

Engaging Stakeholders and Partnerships

The PAC offers promotional support for artists, groups, organizations and community partners under the following categories:

- Visual arts
- Performing arts
- Music
- Literary arts
- Artisans
- Arts educators
- Heritage
- Heritage sites
- Heritage tours
- Events
- Culture days

The organization's website and Facebook page remain the primary means of promoting upcoming events and engaging with the general public regarding out-going messaging.

The PAC established strong collaborative relationships with local tourism organizations across the region to help promote arts, culture and heritage as tourism-related assets. Perth County Tourism directs online traffic to PAC, and PAC directs online traffic to Perth County Tourism. In some communities, arts councils and tourism organizations rival each other, whereas in Perth County, the two have struck upon a mutually supportive relationship, which has benefited both organizations and the community in general.



Organizational Sustainability

The PAC is self-funded via membership and otherwise reliant on grants. It is currently administered entirely by volunteers. The organization indicated that ideally organizations such as PAC or arts councils should be funded and staffed by a municipality, either directly or through arms-length relationships. Most organizational administration is managed by a small core of regular volunteers, except for specific events, wherein a larger volunteer base is required, and upon which the organization relies on connections with local civil society organizations, groups or students for needed help at PAC events. The investment of time toward voluntary support has been recognized as an ongoing challenge by PAC that would be alleviated through access to funding that would support a part-time coordinator.

Membership fee structures:

- Active Members: Artist (\$25); Non-profit (\$50); For Profit (\$75)
- Non-active members: Individual (\$25); non-resident individual (\$40); Friends (\$100); Group supporter (\$250)