

# Needs Assessment: Arts Administration Skills and Resources in Nunavut's Arts and Culture Sector

Executive Summary

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## Executive Summary

### Introduction

Thousands of Nunavummiut are working in the visual arts and crafts, performing arts (music, theatre, circus and dance), film and media arts, and writing and publishing industries. Forming a diverse arts and culture sector, these artists and arts organizations are important contributors to the territorial economy and serve vital societal roles as well, from youth engagement to cultural and linguistic revitalization.

In recognition of its wide impact, several funding agencies at the municipal, regional, territorial and national levels are invested in ensuring the future health and prosperity of Nunavut's arts and culture sector. Since 2008, the Canada Council for the Arts (the Canada Council) has worked closely with funding agencies at various levels in order to strengthen its ability to serve artists in Nunavut and to ensure actions are coordinated and relevant. In discussions with the arts community, a lack of business skills, training<sup>1</sup>, services<sup>2</sup> and resources were all identified as major barriers to the sector's stability and growth.

While arts administration<sup>3</sup> activities are challenging for artists across Canada, running a business of any kind in Nunavut entails a unique and complex set of challenges. These challenges include: geographic isolation; high cost of utilities, access to supplies, transportation and communication; lack of business facilities; language barriers; challenges with respect to access to information and services; lower literacy and numeracy skills; and high competition for skilled staff and support workers. Furthermore, the language of arts administration resources is typically English, but the proportion of persons in Nunavut whose mother tongue was Inuktitut or Inuinnaqtun was 68% in 2011.<sup>4</sup> In addition, Inuit men and women may conduct business activities according to Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) principles, which form the core of Inuit culture and guide decisions, policies, and establish values. As these IQ principles are implemented throughout government and public agencies, it is also important that arts administration training and services consider the IQ framework, which implies mentorship, intergenerational learning (from elder to youth) and experiential learning through participation.

Investment in training and skills development, as well as in support services and resources, are all critical elements to sustaining and growing the arts and culture sector in Nunavut. In recognition of this, the Canada Council, in association with the Government of Nunavut, Department of Economic Development and Transportation (ED&T) and Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada

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1 In this context, arts administration and business skills training could be anything from a one-day or weekly course offered by a university, college or industry association to a webinar, conference workshop or mentorship.

2 In this context, service providers are those who help artists accomplish administration, marketing and financial tasks. They might be Nunavut-based companies or individuals, from outside Nunavut or online resources.

3 Arts administration and business skills refers to any work activities that is not related to the production of art. In other words all of the general administrative, financial and marketing-related activities artist take on.

4 Statistics Canada, 2011 Census of Population, "Mother Tongue and Language Spoken Most Often at Home" Accessed from:

[http://www.gov.nu.ca/sites/default/files/files/StatsUpdate\\_Mother%20Tongue%20and%20Language%20Spoken%20Most%20Often%20at%20Home,%202011%20Census.pdf](http://www.gov.nu.ca/sites/default/files/files/StatsUpdate_Mother%20Tongue%20and%20Language%20Spoken%20Most%20Often%20at%20Home,%202011%20Census.pdf)

(AANDC), has engaged Nordicity to conduct a *Needs Assessment of Administration Skills and Resources in Nunavut's Arts and Culture Sector (Needs Assessment)*.

### **Project Mandate**

The research objectives of the *Needs Assessment* are:

- 1) To understand which supports and training artists and organizations are currently accessing in Nunavut;
- 2) To identify what additional skills training and services are needed; and
- 3) To explore opportunities for developing enhanced training and services that meet identified needs.

Given the variability of needs across sub-sectors, communities and individuals, addressing arts administration skills and resource gaps will involve many solutions and many stakeholders. Not all of the options for improving arts administration capacity provided within this report are feasible for the Canada Council, ED&T and AANDC, nor are they necessarily within the scope of individual funders as their respective responsibilities and mandates vary. Nevertheless, the various funders<sup>5</sup> involved hope that the outcome of this research will be improvements to how training is conceptualized, funded and delivered, as well as stronger and more relevant professional services to ensure arts sector vitality.

As such, this study has been conducted in an exploratory way, aiming to capture and bring together as many perspectives and potential solutions as possible. While formal recommendations were outside its scope, the report is intended to be used by the sector as a whole – from the individual artist at the grassroots community level; to educators, funders and the local, territorial and national arts organizations as they develop strategies for future growth.

### **Research Methodology**

To capture artist and art organizations business skills and resource needs, Nordicity developed a phased approach in consultation with the Canada Council. This research methodology included a literature review, phone interviews, online surveys, artist roundtables and the development of an inventory of training providers. Concurrent to this study, Nordicity undertook the review of *Sanaugait: A Strategy for Growth in Nunavut's Arts and Culture Sector* for ED&T (the *Sanaugait Review*) and facilitated the Nunavut Film Development Corporation's (NFDC)'s Strategic Planning Workshop during the 2014 Industry Summit. Both of these engagements also involved questions and discussions pertaining to business skills and resources for visual arts and crafts and film and media respectively. From November 2013 to March 2014, approximately 85 artists and sector stakeholders were directly

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<sup>5</sup> The Nunavut arts funders tri-level were involved in the oversight of the Needs Assessment. Members of the tri-level include representatives from ED&T, AANDC, CanNor, Department of Canadian Heritage, Kakivak Regional Association, Inuit Heritage Trust, Nunavut Film Development Corporation, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, the City of Iqaluit and the Nunavut Economic Development Forum.

consulted in-person or over the phone on arts administration needs and capacity-building solutions.<sup>66</sup> In addition, online surveys were distributed in English, Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun, with the *Needs Assessment* survey receiving 70 useable responses and the *Sanaugait Review* survey receiving 130. Preliminary results from these consultations were presented to the Tri-level Steering Committee and the results were then validated and prioritized by a roundtable comprising mid-career and established artists in Iqaluit.

### **Common Arts Administration Skills Needs**

While arts administration skill levels vary across the sector, many activities are nonetheless conducted within the same fundamental context. As such, this report begins by identifying the common resource and training business needs across sub-sectors, which is then followed by a snapshot of the unique gaps within each sub-sector.

- **An overall need for basic financial literacy skills:** Underpinning most, if not all, of the arts administration skills gaps is a need for confident literacy and financial literacy skills. Financial literacy refers to the ability to understand how money works and is earned, managed and invested, and to make informed and effective decisions with respect to financial resources. In the arts sector, a lack of literacy and financial literacy in particular limits Nunavut artists' ability to read and understand legal documents and write proposals, which are critical to a flourishing career.
- **Few artists are spending time on longer-term business planning activities:** The survey asked artists to describe what business activities they were currently engaging with and found that most artists are undertaking day-to-day business activities, but less than half are involved in longer-term business planning activities. According to respondents, artists most commonly "organize their time" (78%), "price their work" (74%), "promote work online" (69%) and "sell or distribute work online" (56%). These skills are commonly taught during arts sector workshops during festivals and are a basic requirement for doing business. However, fewer individual artists are involved in what are typically considered longer-term planning activities, such as "setting business goals" (45%), "creating project budgets" (45%) and "investing money" (31%).
- **Artists felt the least comfortable with activities involving a legal type of transaction:** For each activity individuals reported performing, survey respondents were asked to describe their comfort level with that activity. Individuals were least comfortable with activities that have a transactional and sometimes legal element, such as "negotiating contracts," "pricing their work" and "preventing work being used without permission." During the roundtable, it was noted that most artists do not have the confidence to undertake such activities and that, in legal matters, artists are not aware of (and thus often do not assert) their legal rights. Reported engagement with sales and marketing activities also drops to one third of artists or less, for example for "working with buyers outside of Nunavut" (28%), "selling or distributing work through an agent" (23%) and "writing marketing documents" (18%). This reveals that not only do many artists feel

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<sup>66</sup> This includes 15 phone interviews using the *Needs Assessment interview guide*, 30 phone interviews as part of the *Sanaugait review*, which included questions on business issues, the *Sanaugait Review* roundtables with 22 artists and the *NFDC Strategic Planning Workshop* with roughly 20 filmmakers.

uncomfortable with many transactional and sales activities, but they have limited access to professionals who can help them.

- **Financial management skills, such as bookkeeping and accounting, are viewed by artists to be the highest-priority gap:** From basic bookkeeping to sector-specific accounting, financial management is a shared challenge for artists and arts organizations. Even mid-career and experienced artists and organizations describe these activities as their highest-priority needs. While the consensus is that individual artists want a stronger understanding of the basic skills involved in bookkeeping and financial management, they would prefer to consult expert resources for more sophisticated financial management activities. However, accountants with expertise in the arts are not readily available in the North. Nunavut-based artists were asked, of the money-related activities they were *not* doing, which they were planning to try in the future. Relating to financial management activities, the greatest share of survey respondents indicated that they were planning to start “writing grant applications” (44%) and “creating project budgets” (42%). After financial management skills needs, artists and arts organizations reported that sales and marketing skills needs were most urgent, followed by business and administration skills.
- **The ability for Nunavut artists to market themselves and their work is limited:** While 56% of individual artists report selling or distributing work directly online, there was a broad range of comfort levels and capabilities amongst artists in terms of locating and working with online tools and resources. The majority of direct sales online is likely to occur through local Facebook sell/swap groups. However, related to sales and marketing, most artists planned to begin “promoting work online” (42%) within the next two years.
- **Grant-writing skills and a resources gaps are hindering sector growth:** In Nunavut’s complex funding system and language and literacy environment, challenges in grant writing appear to be more pronounced than elsewhere in Canada. At the organizational level, several interviewees expressed that they often lack the resources and personnel to take advantage of opportunities and apply for funding, leaving some arts organization grants at the territorial level under-resourced. Another complicating factor for accessing grants is the perception that the majority of the programs are written with “a southern economy in mind” and do not reflect the realities facing artists and organizations in Nunavut (i.e., elevated travel costs). The consensus from artists and arts organizations was that grant applications were seen as too complex and lacking in flexibility.

### Common Organizational Needs

The following are distinct needs for arts organizations, which include businesses, industry associations, and not-for-profit community arts organizations.

- **Human capital and resource gaps are limiting growth:** Nunavummiut with administration skills are frequently drawn to higher-paying, typically more stable territorial government employment leading to competition for skilled employees. As a result of these gaps in staffing, arts administrators are frequently focused on day-to-day business needs, and cannot always travel to pursue business growth opportunities, take the time to build skills, or pursue new and alternative sources of financing and sponsorship. In fact, the activity the fewest number of organizations (approx. 53%) reported engaging in was “working with donors and sponsors”;

- **Space shortages:** Community arts and cultural organizations face difficulties in building and maintaining spaces, as well as finding and keeping qualified arts managers and staff to run them.
- **Skills gaps in project management can compromise and stall strategic projects:** In some instances, a lack of organizational capacity can also delay or have a negative impact on major strategic projects. For instance, organizations trying to build infrastructure require knowledge of issues such as building codes, planning capital fundraising campaigns and sophisticated project management skills.
- **Senior arts administrators need access to professional development that builds strategic planning and board management skills:** Nunavut's arts organizations also face challenges relating to board governance, training board members and/or leveraging board members' skills, connections, time and assets. Related to this issue is training for arts managers with regard to long-term strategic planning and basic not-for-profit management. Senior arts administrators also described wanting greater interaction with funders in order to better understand their goals, and with other arts and culture executives in the territory in order to better understand the strategic planning process and key success factors in building effective cross-cultural teams.

## Sector-Specific Needs

The following provides a snapshot of the business landscape facing each arts and culture sub-sector.

### ***Visual Arts and Crafts: A changing external market and declining sales.***

Sales outside of Nunavut for fine art, especially carvings, are declining, as the market for Inuit art was dramatically affected by the 2008 downturn in the global economy and by changing customer preferences. As a result of this decline, sales and marketing activities have become the primary business issue across the visual arts and crafts sub-sector. However, the domestic market in Nunavut is growing, and demand is primarily being met by online direct selling through informal channels like Facebook or through the five arts and crafts organizations subsidized by the Nunavut Development Corporation (NDC). NDC provides ongoing basic business support to them, mentorship in basic management skills (including pricing and managing cash and payables) and working with capital funds. Despite this growing business activity domestically, stakeholders note that Inuit participation at managerial levels in formal sales channels needs improvement.

The visual arts and crafts sub-sector is currently the only one with some formal post-secondary training available in Nunavut. Nunavut Arctic College provides the *Jewellery and Metalwork* diploma program and the *Fur Design and Production* and *Goldsmithing* certificate programs, which include some instruction in small business management. Those working in other fine arts such as carving, drawing and painting, however, have limited opportunities for business training, though some recently accessed the Business of Art workshop provided by NACA at the 2013 Nunavut Arts Festival.

Grant-writing support is more established in visual arts than in other sectors, primarily through the assistance of economic development officers (EDOs), the Nunavut Arts and Crafts Association (NACA) and private galleries. These groups also provide varying degrees of assistance in marketing. The consensus among participants was that increased collaboration among stakeholders, both private and public, is key to the future of the industry.

- **Visual arts organizations are most in need of marketing and sales support and financial planning skills.** This need is especially pertinent in terms of having better market information on what contemporary customers want to buy, where new and potential markets exist, and how art evaluation has changed. Some arts organizations also face challenges with bookkeeping, meeting payroll and managing unpredictable cash flows, especially in the tourist off-season.
- **For individual visual artists, the most critical skills needs relate to financial literacy and understanding the larger Inuit marketing and sales system.** There is a high preference for cash sales over commission, which narrows opportunities. Some artists would benefit from a greater understanding of the types of career paths available, along with greater access to various types of buyers, agents, galleries and distribution and exhibition channels. In addition, artists need to be equipped with negotiation and pricing skills in order to ensure they earn fair value for their time and materials.

***Film and Media Arts: The lack of formal, institutional training is a top sector challenge.***

On-the job and entry-level training is common at established organizations such as IBC, Isuma TV, and Arnait, but stakeholders struggle to develop more advanced business affairs-related training. A training delivery gap also currently exists as past providers, such as the Ajjit Media Association, are no longer active in this area due to lack of core funding and dedicated staff. While not part of the Nunavut Film Development Corporation (NFDC) Mandate, the organization has provided a business affairs workshop during the 2014 Nunavut Film Industry Summit.

- **As businesses are often operating grant-to-grant, there is a need to support them in strategic planning and in building stable financial models.** Compared to visual arts, there is more overlap between organizational and individual business needs as some film businesses are typically operating from project to project.
- **Specialized production accounting is the number one business service need.** While many larger organizations rely on southern professional service suppliers and are generally well organized, smaller companies and individual filmmakers are in need of on-the-ground production accounting, which is hard to find.

***Performing Arts: Emerging, but under-supported.***

While there is rich history of performing arts traditions in Nunavut, the business support and skills training side of the sub-sector is underdeveloped. There is no music association, and no record labels, publicists, or professional managers. Even the rights societies such as SOCAN have little presence in the territory. Artists are typically self-managed and desire greater mentorship and apprenticeship opportunities with established performers.

Qaggiavuut! Society for a Nunavut Performing Arts Centre advocates for the industry and an arts centre, and also promotes artists on its website. The Alianait Arts Festival is growing and seen as an industry supporter, but training is technically outside its mandate.

Shared organizations and individual artist skills needs in performing arts include: grant writing, bookkeeping and project management. These challenges exist in part because most revenue is

generated from live performances, and logistics issues (e.g., venues, travel, promotion) face added complexity in the North.

***Writing and Publishing: A small industry with potential for growth.***

The smallest sub-sector currently needs support from an industry association in order to elevate professionalism and business understanding across the whole industry (including authors, service providers, etc.). Some ad-hoc exchange occurs with experts across North America on specific issues (e.g., entertainment law), but very little funding is available for soliciting expert advice or for developing cross-platform projects with other sectors. Authors and publishers generally require more support in terms of grant writing, business affairs (legal and accounting), and sales and marketing. Growth areas include convergence with digital media, children's literature, and in instructional materials for Inuit language and culture.

**Support Services**

Artists and arts organizations everywhere rely on external expertise and support for many arts administration activities. It is not necessarily realistic to expect that an artist or organization could accomplish all arts administration activities alone. One basic challenge in Nunavut is the limited access to specialized expertise geared towards the cultural sector. In this context, arts administration and business support providers are a key element in ensuring growth and stability for the sector. The following describes the current landscape for support.

- **The general business support services in Nunavut are established, but specific arts administration support only exists in pockets:** The current support service landscape includes many general business resources, such as: the Regional Inuit Association's economic development corporations, chambers of commerce, business development centres and community futures groups, and Canada-Business Nunavut Service centres. Each of these have offices or representatives in the three regions of Nunavut, but their services are not always applicable to the unique needs of arts administration. Every community also has a community economic development officer (EDO), who is there primarily to assist with grant writing. However, the attention of EDOs to the arts sector varies by community; certain EDOs provide support primarily for visual arts and few have knowledge of eligible funding opportunities for artists beyond the territory.
- **Few national arts industry associations have much presence or dedicated resources for the territory, with some notable exceptions:** For instance, CARFAC launched an Inuktitut version of its website in 2014 and currently has a Nunavummiut board member. The Inuit Art Foundation is also currently undergoing a revival and plans to expand its marketing and advocacy support roles beyond visual artists to include artists in other sectors. Beyond these examples, few national arts industry associations have taken steps to provide for the unique needs of Nunavut artists.
- **Nunavut-based industry associations (e.g., NACA, Ajjit) and societies (Qaggiavuut) support and/or represent artists and arts organizations at the territorial level, but it is difficult to deliver support and training at the community level:** Survey and roundtable respondents emphasize the need for someone in the territory to address general and specific arts support.

- **Community-based arts organizations are key to delivering support and training:** Communities with their own arts and/or heritage centres benefit from the access to dedicated space and support staff working in the sector. Arts centre managers at Uqqurmiut in Pangnirtung and Kinngait Studios in Cape Dorset, for instance, support artists by maintaining studio space, ordering supplies, selling work, and developing opportunities for artists to interact with customers and by providing instruction. Community-based multi-purpose heritage organizations include: the Natilik Heritage Society in Gjoa Haven, which runs a non-profit Inuit arts retail/wholesale operation and hosts performances; the Ilisaqsivik Society in Clyde River, which provides film and media workshops; and the volunteer-run Kitikmeot Heritage Society of Cambridge Bay, which creates a number of workshops and programs around traditional hide preparation and sewing.
- **Despite a variety of service support resources, survey respondents rely overwhelmingly on friend and family members for support:** Survey respondents who reported that they did not engage in a given business activity, were asked who helped them. Survey respondents rely overwhelmingly on friends and family members for support (45%). Next, they consulted EDOs for Business and Administration activities (20%), local businesses for financial management (19%) and online resources for sales and marketing (15%). Roundtable participants also indicated that when they need support, they turn to their friends and peers working in the industry, as well as by online research. In contrast to this informal network of volunteers, sustainability would require more permanent resources.
- **Service provision gaps exists in terms of awareness of programs and general arts administration support services:** Access to information and support on funding opportunities and resources was cited as a key area for improvement by participants. Nunavut is currently the only province or territory without an arts council, and this organizational gap may be underpinning some of the grant coordination and awareness issues discussed in the report.
- **Gaps in EDO knowledge of available funding and arts processes and in ED&T Arts Advisors art sector expertise:** These two roles are key conduits to accessing grant support in Nunavut. Participants found that EDO knowledge of funding opportunities, especially national ones, varies by community. Interviewees and roundtable participants also expressed that, in some cases, those roles administering arts funds would benefit from a greater understanding of the culture sector's unique context in terms of how artists operate.
- **Gaps in legal and accounting support in Nunavut are the primary business support challenge for filmmakers, but specialized accounting services for the arts are also important for all sector participants:** There are only a handful of bookkeepers and accountants in the territory and no lawyers who currently provide any services in entertainment law. Typically, the more established organizations have business affairs support in Montreal or Toronto; however, publishers and the smaller independent filmmakers, who deal with complex tax credit rules, do not have access to these services, nor to the resources to hire a full-time position.

### Training

The general landscape for arts administration training in Nunavut generally includes: 1) one-off, industry-specific workshops at festivals, conferences, trade shows and summits; 2) courses and classes embedded in broader arts-focused curricula at the two Nunavut Arctic College programs and 3)

business skills training that is not specifically geared towards arts and culture. Of survey respondents, 33% of artists and 46% of representatives of organizations reported having accessed Arts Administration training in the past 5 years.

- **Few professional development opportunities exist for advanced arts administrator activities and manager-level activities:** There are few opportunities for ongoing skill-building at the intermediate and advanced arts administrator levels other than some on-the job training.
- **Few on-going learning opportunities exist for individuals, and there is a need to build on workshops offered during festivals:** There is an ad-hoc approach to developing business skills in the sector and a lack of follow-up on training and/or ability to measure impact. One-off workshops are seen by roundtable participants as important for “planting seeds,” but artists need a series of workshops on a variety of issues, at varying levels and with access to continuous support throughout the territory.
- **Respondents find it hard to find (and find out about) relevant and local training:** Survey respondents identified the following top barriers to accessing arts administration training: 1) Finding relevant programs locally; 2) Paying for travel to get to training; 3) Finding time to do the training; and 4) Finding out about training programs.
- **The culture of informal mentorship is strong, and efforts to formalize mentorship programs are increasing.** Mentorship and community-based initiatives are also consistent with the way Inuit men and women conduct business activities according to Inuit Qaujimagatunqangit (IQ) principles. In particular, the principle of Pilimmaksarniq/Pijariuqsarniq implies the development of skills through observation, mentoring, practice and effort<sup>7</sup>.
- **Successful training in the north needs to be culturally relevant:** Successful training approaches often incorporate experiential and hands-on learning, role playing and group work, but this is not typically available in the shorter workshop format. Providing advance notice and initial face-to-face instruction with literacy-friendly resource materials are also critical success factors when delivering training.

### Options for Strengthening Capacity

The following serves to shed light on opportunities for developing and delivering enhanced training to build the arts administration skills needed for the sector’s future growth and success.

#### **1. Augment existing resources**

The following elaborates on existing training and service providers and resources that could be further enhanced to support identified needs.

##### **1.1. *Adapt and expand existing Nunavut training resources for arts administration***

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<sup>7</sup> For a list of all IQ principles, see The Government of Nunavut website page, “Inuit Societal Values,” Accessed from: <http://www.gov.nu.ca/information/inuit-societal-values> Date accessed: March 2014.

The most common training provider listed by respondents, Nunavut Arctic College, is already considering options to add one-year courses in marketing, web design and general management. These programs would either be added to existing fur and jewellery design programs or as optional management courses. The college hopes to further develop graduates' entrepreneurial skills by introducing a co-op program and extending delivery options to the hamlets. The college is also currently undergoing a program review of the Inuit Language and Culture program and is considering developing a "Centre of Excellence for Language and Culture," which would enhance the place of arts programs at the college level. While there is a demand for film, television and journalism programs, the college does not presently have the ability to run them without external funding support. Respondents also spoke of the need for refresher courses, which could potentially also be delivered by other groups or organizations.

High schools have also been identified as a key place to build basic business and entrepreneurial skills for the arts sector. Formalized mentorship networks such as the Inuit Women in Business Network could be more publicized within the arts community and arts administration resource materials could be incorporated into the existing toolkit that focuses on building financial literacy.

### ***1.2. Adapt arts and culture resources and learning tools for Nunavut***

The availability of a toolkit and aftercare package tailored for Nunavut artists was cited as a potential solution to address some unmet business needs. During the roundtable, artists suggested utilizing contract templates from ACTRA, SOCAN, CAPACOA, CARFAC and provincial arts councils. Participants felt that a collection of useful templates, such as release forms, performing arts contracts, financial tracking tools, fee schedules, etc., could be reviewed, modified and made available for Nunavut artists. To accompany such templates, a series of documents explaining key terms and practices could be prepared and made available.

### ***1.3. Enhance support provider capacity and/or roles***

In addition to having access to templates and background information on artistic and business matters, participants emphasized the need to have regular access to a professional, which they defined as an artist with business experience that can provide support and guidance on an as-needed basis.

Some artists and other stakeholders have expressed that there is a need to clarify the roles of key support workers, such as EDOs, ED&T Arts Advisors, NACA, Ajjit, NFDC and NDC. With respect to Arts Advisors who administer the Arts Development Program (ADP) through ED&T Community Operations, roundtable participants were concerned that some decisions to fund or reject proposals are being made by a small group of government employees with limited understanding of the arts industry. Artists find the application and granting process complicated and occasionally lacking in transparency. In response, participants proposed juried selections, comprised of practicing artists in the territory. The new ADP policy includes a committee structure that comprises an artist (or someone with art expertise) and the Senior Arts Advisor from ED&T, Tourism and Cultural Industries division; however, this committee structure will be implemented once the Senior Arts Advisor position is filled.

Other participants in the consultation process wondered whether the Arts Advisor role is one that could be expanded beyond grant administration to include guidance on arts administration concerns as well. Currently, arts advisors will at times seek the advice from the Manager at Cultural Industries, who is a sector specialist. However, with high turnover and unfilled positions within ED&T, it is difficult to

take on responsibilities beyond grant administration. As mentioned in this report, challenges pertaining to staffing and filling positions is not uncommon throughout the territory.

The Nunavut Literacy Council and NACA newsletters, which have resource pages and useful information, are seen as beneficial by roundtable participants, who recommended that these activities continue, but that additional information and outreach activities be undertaken by various groups serving the artist population in the territory.

EDOs are also resources for regional and territorial organizations looking to communicate with artists and spread awareness of opportunities to artists at the community level. As EDOs' knowledge of and skills and involvement in the arts vary by community, greater educational efforts are required for these first-line arts support workers. One participant suggested creating a shared calendar of events across the territory that might attract EDOs and other community-based support workers to coordinate and plan training. Such training sessions could be conducted by funders or territorial arts organizations at festival events, conferences or tradeshows. The sessions could incorporate follow-up webinars such as one-on-one or seminar-style sessions with the trainer on a particular arts administration challenge or issue.

#### ***1.4. Expand and enhance reach of festival workshops***

While participants saw the value of individual workshops, such as financial management and bookkeeping, they preferred workshop series or ongoing learning with practical application exercises that are led by established professionals that are currently working in, or have experience doing business in, Nunavut. Considering there are varying levels of experience and understanding on issues such as business planning, one-off workshops often fail to realize their full potential in helping Nunavut artists address their needs.

It was suggested that once an arts organization provides a workshop, details of that workshop could also be shared with EDOs or local arts groups. If the workshop is relevant and in-demand, those EDOs or arts groups could then apply to have the same trainer come to their communities and teach the same workshop. These workshops could also be integrated into a larger programming curriculum. While face-to-face programming is generally always preferred, workshops at festivals could also be recorded and aired on local community television stations, expanding their reach.

## **2. Develop new capacity building Initiatives**

### ***2.1. Introduce a new cross-sectoral support and advocacy organization***

Roundtable participants spoke at length about the need for, and potential for great benefit from, the establishment of an arts council in Nunavut. There are different models of arts councils that the Government of Nunavut could consider, and given the political system and the various funders involved, a unique structure may need to be further developed.

Both the Northwest Territories and the Yukon do not have arms-length arts councils; instead, they function primarily as advisory boards to government on funding, arts policy and strategy. Roundtable participants felt the Nunavut arts council could be separate from, but affiliated with, the Government of Nunavut and would be comprised of individual artists as well as representatives from existing arts-related associations such as NACA, Nunavut Film, Qaggiavuut and Alianait.

For roundtable participants, an arts council in Nunavut is seen as a body where artists could provide each other with peer support and act as a clearinghouse of valuable relevant information, tools and resources, while helping to educate the Government of Nunavut and other bodies on the realities associated with doing business as an artist.

#### ***2.2. Introduce new community-based multi-purpose arts centres***

Subsequent to the arts council discussion, the roundtable group agreed that the creation of a Nunavut arts centre, which includes consideration for performance artists, visual artists, filmmakers and other arts disciplines would help support Nunavut artists on a variety of levels, including increased opportunities for, and access to, capacity-building activities.

While infrastructure is not a business issue in the context of this study, several respondents pointed to the lack of infrastructure and buildings dedicated to the arts in certain communities as key areas that need to be addressed. While a standalone arts centre is not viable in every community, some kind of multi-purpose space that incorporates arts activities has been found to be a basic element in improving arts administration capacity.

#### ***2.3. Introduce a new training organization***

With respect to training and skills development, participants discussed the need for a full-fledged Fine Arts Program at a university level, which is potentially partnered with the Arctic College or located in a separate fine art school. Several survey and interview respondents also spoke of building training through a model similar to that of the Yukon School of Visual Arts in Dawson. It provides a foundation program and allows students to complete a first year of study in a Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) or Bachelor of Design (BDes) degree, and then transfer to a partner institution.

Respondents also spoke of opportunities to build sector-specific training organizations or institutes. For instance, Inuit Heritage Trusts developed a model of building 10-day institutes into a phased, multi-year process to develop the skills of heritage workers. While the content of the program is specific to heritage work and museum conservation, these institutes present a model for how longer-term skill-building can be achieved in a specific sector in the unique Nunavut context. In other jurisdictions, training organizations are developed through sub-sector specific groups such as in Manitoba, where there is a separate not-for-profit organization called Film Training Manitoba that developed out of the industry association.

#### ***2.4. Develop an accounting and legal support resource network in Nunavut***

In addition to workshops, arts and art organizations need improved access to professional service firms, namely for accounting and legal services. Participants suggested finding a means to share a business affairs professional among smaller companies and individuals. An initiative such as this might require that industry associations or agencies broker connections with entertainment lawyers and accountants inside and/or outside of Nunavut on a non-exclusive basis. Artists felt that this accounting and legal aid could be shared across sectors, and that legal support was ranked as a lower priority than accounting.

### **3. Foster partnership opportunities**

Several options put forth by participants entail building and fostering partnerships and collaborations of various kinds.

### ***3.1. Develop geographic links***

Another identified opportunity to build capacity is through increasing circumpolar networking opportunities and the sharing of information on issues such as training, grants, revenue generation, mentorship and support. In particular, partnerships with other Arctic regions may be a means to build professional businesses that require a greater critical mass such as music labels or online distribution networks for Inuit music and film.

### ***3.2. Encourage cross-sector organization collaboration***

While each sub-sector evidently has unique needs and is at a different life-cycle stage, many artists work across mediums and express a desire for greater cross-sector interaction. Participants suggested fostering stronger relationships between the heritage and arts sectors, as territorial-level organizations and government agencies are frequently working with similar community-based artists and organizations, but undertaking activities separately. Stakeholders also suggested that there could be opportunities to leverage the strong relationships between film and music, as the two sectors often collaborate on projects. Recognizing the synergies between film and music, the Government of Yukon, under the direction of industry stakeholders, added “sound” to the mandate of the Film Commission, such that it became the Yukon Film and Sound Commission.

According to another participant, a key challenge facing the arts and cultural sector is the need to foster more willingness to cooperate, to “break down the silos” between different organizations advocating for the arts, and to “agree on an agenda and common vision,” especially when it comes to building new multi-purpose arts and culture facilities.

### ***3.3. Encourage grassroots, artist-led Initiatives***

In the survey and in interviews, artists and small businesses spoke of the need to have more opportunities to connect with other artists.

The *Needs Assessment* roundtable was perceived as a great opportunity for collaboration, and participants discussed the need to hold such roundtables on a more regular basis. Similar activities requiring non-complex efforts were cited as ways to support the building of capacity among Nunavut artists. According to the roundtable, one of these simple beneficial activities could be regular, informal, semi-structured gatherings in which artists could discuss common concerns, provide one another with support and clarify artist needs. One roundtable participant is planning to build on the momentum of the roundtable and organize a monthly gathering for artists in Iqaluit.

To help start the process of working towards a Nunavut Arts Council and to begin building a set of resources for Nunavut artists, individuals present at the roundtable also set up a Facebook group ([www.facebook.com/nunavutartists](http://www.facebook.com/nunavutartists)) to connect Nunavut artists and share important information. Roughly a week after its launch following the roundtable, it had 137 “likes.” The page intends to provide Nunavut artists of all sub-sectors with a platform to ask questions and get answers.

This Facebook group was an unintended, but very welcome, outcome of the *Needs Assessment*. Further encouragement and support of such grassroots, artist-run initiatives is an important step in building the sector, which is a shared responsibility among all participants.

### **Conclusion**

The *Needs Assessment* confirmed anecdotal reports that gaps in business and arts administration skills and support services are causing challenges at the individual, organization and sub-sector levels, and these challenges are, in turn, compromising the stability and growth of the Nunavut arts and culture sector.

Although the specific needs of every sector and of every individual artist and arts organization varies, there are some key common and critical needs. Developing greater financial management and financial literacy skills is a top priority, followed by marketing and sales. These skills are acquired most effectively through face-to-face workshops and/or more intensive yet culturally-appropriate institutes that have built-in longer-term support and effective follow-up in the form of a community support worker or mentor. Artists and other stakeholders want to move beyond one-off workshops and see more consistent, ongoing support and training from Northerners and/or people involved in the arts with business experience. To complement this type of training, there is a need to adapt existing tools, templates and resources from other jurisdictions to the Nunavut context. In terms of support and support infrastructure, a Nunavut Arts Council and Nunavut Arts Centre were seen by roundtable participants as potential springboards to support artist needs, including in arts administration.

In concluding remarks, participants spoke to the positive and growing arts community in Nunavut, emphasizing that the contribution of the arts extends beyond economics. They stressed the need to continue educating various levels of government about the realities facing artists in the territory. Building the sector's capacity is evidently a shared responsibility among Nunavut organizations, support workers and the artists themselves, in conjunction with funders at the municipal, regional, territorial and national levels.

While recommendations were outside the scope of this report, one of the insights stemming from this report is the vital need for the various organizations and agencies to better understand their role as part of the support chain and improve communications and coordination among stakeholders. Planning who will lead, implement and support capacity-building initiatives is an important next step in this process, particularly in Nunavut's complex training and learning environment. The shared goal and desired outcome of this mapping exercise will be a greater ability to effectively conceptualize and plan arts administration training and resources that better suit the needs of the Nunavut context, and ensure a sustainable and growing arts and culture sector in Nunavut.

