Excerpts from the “Financial and Structural Analysis of the Canada Dance Festival and the Festival international de nouvelle danse”

May 31, 2005

This study was prepared for the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Canada Council for the Arts and the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec.
Preamble

This document contains excerpts from the “Financial and Structural Analysis of the Canada Dance Festival and the Festival international de nouvelle danse”, a study commissioned and funded by the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Canada Council for the Arts and the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec. In order to respect the confidentiality of the information supplied to the funding partners by their clients, certain information directly pertaining to the festivals have been removed in accordance with the Access to Information Act. Withdrawn sections are indicated.

The views or opinions expressed in the study are strictly those of its authors and do not necessarily represent those of the fund providers or of the Government of Canada.

*Ce document est aussi disponible en français.*
Presentation of the firm Gagné Leclerc Groupe Conseil


Members of the team assembled to fulfill the mandate described below have over 80 years of relevant experience and offer a unique combination of expertise and skills. Their professional background is an indication of their ongoing commitment to support the development of culture and cultural organizations in Quebec, Canada, and abroad.

They have helped various departments, agencies and municipalities, at home and abroad, to develop and assess policies, strategies and programs designed to promote the development of arts and culture.

They have planned and helped establish a number of cultural organizations, helped revive organizations in difficulty, worked with community-based arts organizations to make their actions more effective, and implemented a variety of major projects.

Whether as managers, administrators or consultants, their renowned expertise and rigorous methods are valued by their many clients.

- Over the past 10 years their teams have conducted arts and culture research and analysis for many clients, including various levels of government.
- They have advised and coached various public and private organizations by offering strategic planning and reorganization exercises.
- They have also managed major projects in Quebec and abroad.

Gagné Leclerc Groupe conseil has always promoted cooperation and teamwork. Effectively fulfilling the mandate and ensuring client satisfaction are their top concerns.
Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Canada Council for the Arts, and the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec for commissioning us to prepare this report ‘Financial and Structural Analysis of the Canada Dance Festival and Festival international de nouvelle danse’.

In particular, we wish to acknowledge the invaluable support of Roger Gaudet of the Department of Canadian Heritage, Anne Valois of the Canada Council for the Arts, and Nicole Doucet of the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec.

It is only fitting that we also recognize the significant contribution of members of the study’s steering committee, and of the many people in contemporary dance and presenting who were gracious enough to take part in interviews and discussion groups.

Please direct any questions you may have concerning this study to André Leclerc, the partner in charge of the project.

Danielle St-Georges
Project Director

The following people helped prepare the study:
André Leclerc, partner in charge
Sylvain Gagné, partner
Alexandrine Tétreault-Simard, head researcher/writer
Marie-Claude Giroux, researcher/writer
Vicky Boutin, researcher/writer
Brigitte Lavallée, interview and discussion group coordinator
Ghyslain Boileau, analyst
Laurence Poirier-Bourdon, copy editor
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1. Background, mandate and report structure

1.1. Background

In November 2003, FIND, the Festival international de nouvelle danse ceased operations. In January 2004, the Canada Dance Festival (CDF) announced to its funders that it was expecting to incur a large deficit for its 2004 edition. Both FIND and CDF were funded by Canadian Heritage (PCH), the Canada Council for the Arts (CCA), and various other provincial, regional and local public and private sector sources.

FIND was an international dance festival that focused on contemporary dance, though not exclusively, whereas the Canada Dance Festival is a celebration of all kinds of contemporary dance in Canada. FIND was based in Montreal, and the CDF is based in Ottawa.

The two bodies have faced similar challenges:

- The CDF and FIND both operated on a biennial basis, had difficulty maintaining a presence in their communities during their off-years, and had to rebuild their audiences during each festival year.
- The dance community considered both festivals to be important springboards in terms of visibility and tour development. The two events were showcases for the dance community, whose members used them to get together, exchange information, see new works and form new partnerships.
- Both festivals had a great deal of difficulty obtaining private-sector funding and developing audiences.
- Both festivals have battled steadily increasing costs and decreases in funding.

The response of the contemporary dance community to the shutdown of FIND, and the subsequent efforts of several organizations to replace it, have highlighted the need to close the gap created by the demise of FIND. Significant programming cutbacks in the 2004 Canada Dance Festival (CDF) have also had a major impact on the community. These responses underscore the importance of the festivals to the community as a whole.

Over the years, as festivals have risen to prominence as artistic institutions, the environment in which they operate has changed. The needs of the dance community have changed, a number of regional festivals have emerged, and national and international tours have evolved – as have attendance patterns and audience demographics. All this has been accompanied by significant changes in the way funding operates.
A prominent institution has closed its doors while another is experiencing financial difficulty. It is time to conduct a thorough analysis of FIND and the CDF, and reassess the milieu in which dance festivals should operate, before attempting to launch new initiatives or make adjustments to those that already exist.¹

1.2. Mandate

Gagné Leclerc’s mandate for preparing this study was divided into two workplans [translation]:

**Workplan 1** – “It is essential that the dance community, national/international festivals (whether new or established), and their funding partners have a solid understanding of the challenges the CDF and the FIND had to face.”

**Workplan 2** – “It is essential that the dance community, national/international festivals (whether new or established), and their funding partners have access to an accurate, up to date assessment of the contemporary dance presenting environment in terms of the artistic community and its organizations, the audience and the funding partners.”²

This document reports the results of our research and analysis as specified in Workplan 1. The results of our research and analysis as specified in Workplan 2 are addressed in a separate report.

1.3. Report structure

The report is divided into eight sections, including this one.

2. Methodology

In this section we explain our approach, analytical methods, documentary sources, consultations and study constraints.

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² Idem.
3. **Some Key Concepts for Understanding Specialized Disciplinary Festivals**

The purpose of this section is to provide a number of key concepts for understanding the environment of specialized festivals and a conceptual framework for understanding the analysis that follows. In this section we address a number of issues: the environment of dance presentation; festival definitions, typologies, functions, partners and major planning stages; and a brief discussion of the economic model for festivals.

4. **Financial and structural analysis of the CDF and FIND**

This section has been removed in order to maintain the confidentiality of information provided by the organizations concerned.

5. **Difficulties and challenges shared by the CDF and FIND**

This section seeks to understand the various issues, challenges and barriers faced by the CDF and FIND. We highlight the internal management challenges they have faced, examine issues involving their environment and partners, and focus on important changes that have occurred in Canada’s dance environment since the 1980s.

6. **A look at other festivals**

This section offers comments and observations on festivals other than FIND and the CDF. Among other things, we will examine the experience of the Carrefour international de théâtre de Québec (CITQ) using excerpts from its consolidation and development plan. We establish a list of other Canadian dance festivals, and focus on the international dance festivals considered by the community to be the most successful.

Part of this section has been removed in order to maintain the confidentiality of information provided by the organizations concerned.

Part of this section has been removed in order to maintain the confidentiality of information provided by the organizations concerned.
7. **Needs and expectations of the dance community and their partners concerning dance festivals**

In this section, the report presents the results of interviews conducted by the firm on both the community’s perceptions of the ingredients for a successful festival and the expectations expressed by the various stakeholders (creative community, presenters, funders).

8. **Some observations on redefining existing and emerging contemporary dance festivals**

In this section, the report offers some observations on redefining existing and emerging contemporary dance festivals. These observations are intended to draw attention to and create an analytical framework for various success factors, as well as pitfalls to be avoided, including mandate and mission, organization, audiences and other considerations.
2. Methodology
2. Methodology

This section provides an overview of the methodology used to collect the data and opinions that form the basis of our structural and financial analysis of FIND and the CDF.

2.1. Documentation review

We undertook a review of documentation connected with the difficulties and challenges of FIND and the CDF in each area of interest to the study, i.e. finances, structure, human resources, leadership, artistic programming, community support, audience development, communications, and the local and regional context. The relevant documentation includes both publicly available and confidential documents provided to us by the Canada Council for the Arts, Canadian Heritage, and the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec (CALQ): i.e. grant applications, development plans, recovery plans, activity reports, financial statements3, budgets, etc. The public version of this report has been edited to protect the confidentiality of the information supplied to us. We conducted further research at National Archives to gain access to FIND’s public documents. We also conducted research on the general topic of cultural festivals to obtain a more comprehensive picture of this phenomenon.

2.2. Consultations

We extended our research to include a series of interviews on the same set of topics. The meetings, held in one-on-one interviews or discussion groups, were designed to gather the perceptions, opinions and expectations of members of boards of directors, management, staff, “client” organizations and other professional members of the community among whom FIND, the CDF and the other festivals we examined carried out their operations. The responses gathered in these meetings is treated as confidential in this report, and the results of the consultations are presented in such a way as to ensure confidentiality is maintained. The list of participants was drawn up in collaboration with the Canada Council and endorsed by the project steering committee. The meetings were conducted within the terms of both Workplan 1 and Workplan 2. A description of the scope of the workplans is provided in “Mandate,” Section 1.2 of this report.

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3. The financial statements and budget forecasts were analyzed on a biennial basis, reflecting the operating cycle of the two festivals. The CDF’s fiscal year-end is August 31 and FIND’s is December 31.
Table 1 indicates the breakdown of participants by type of meeting (i.e. interview or group).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Interviews and discussion groups – number of people met by type of meeting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of people met in individual interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of people met in 11 discussion groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total number of people met</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We held discussion groups in the four main centres for contemporary dance in Canada, i.e. Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver and Ottawa.

### 2.2.1. Regional distribution

Given that the study covers all of Canada, we took care to ensure all regions were properly represented among those consulted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2: Interviews and discussion groups – regional distribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Columbia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saskatchewan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quebec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maritimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

4. As 13 were met in both discussion groups and individual interviews, 128 individuals were met during these consultations.
2.2.2. Category of persons interviewed

We also took care to ensure we met with a cross-section of those working in contemporary dance in Canada. The breakdown by professional role/affiliation is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of meetings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Companies involved in creation/production</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presenters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-disciplinary</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Festivals</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service firm</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent artists</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agents</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representatives of funding bodies</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (training, journalist, consultant, presenter networks)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.3. Study constraints

Though we had access to the Canada Council and Canadian Heritage archives, as well as certain documents of the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec, we were unable to consult all the festivals’ internal archives. We were obliged to proceed knowing that certain information would not be available to us.

The funders provided us with a number of documents from various sources. We therefore had to deal with a number of accounting formats when comparing budgets and action plans with the financial statements. The already considerable task of making year-over-year comparisons was exacerbated by the fact that, from one festival to the next, the CDF changed the accountants it used to prepare its financial statements, while in 2003 FIND modified its bookkeeping methods. Under the circumstances, we were unable to conduct certain analyses and budgetary comparisons with the degree of precision we would have liked. In addition, several key pieces of data differed from one source to another, and in some cases were missing altogether.

In addition to these methodological problems, we could not be sure of, or vouch for, the reliability of data provided to us by the organizations in question, especially regarding festival attendance and occupancy rates.

Finally, we regret that it was impossible to interview all the people involved in the festivals.

5. Only parts of the FIND archives were made public by the Library and Archives Nationales du Québec. The CDF provided all relevant information on request, whenever such information was available. A portion of the CDF archives has been lost.
3. Some key concepts for understanding specialized disciplinary festivals
3. Some key concepts for understanding specialized disciplinary festivals

This part of the report offers some keys to understanding the ecology of specialized festivals and briefly discusses the ecology of contemporary dance presentation, festival definitions and typologies, their functions, partners, the major planning stages typical of festivals, and the economic model they apply.

It covers the following topics:

- the ecology of contemporary dance presentation;
- definitions and typologies;
- complementary and contradictory functions;
- vital partnerships;
- the major planning stages of biennial festivals;
- an economic model.

3.1. Ecology of contemporary dance presentation

As part of the presentation process, contemporary dance festivals are, above all, intermediaries between those who offer productions and the audiences who want to see them. They are integral to and work within a particular continuum, i.e. training — creation — presentation. They form an important link in this chain, whether at the local, regional, national or international level. Figure 1 illustrates how dance festivals fit into this ecology.

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6. As we will see later, festivals do not operate strictly as presenters. They also play an important role as promoters, thereby helping to promote the discipline as well as national and international exchanges.

Excerpts from “Financial and Structural Analysis of the Canada Dance Festival and the Festival international de nouvelle danse”
Figure A: General ecology of contemporary dance presentation
In addition to their primary function as presenters, local, regional and national dance festivals act as bridges or intermediaries between the parties involved, namely:

- local performing companies and the local audience that attends performances during the event;
- local performing companies and other local presenters (specialized or multi-disciplinary) who may elect to buy the productions they’ve seen and present them to other audiences;
- local dance companies and foreign presenters (including foreign festivals) if they have attended performances;
- and, in some cases, local dance companies and foreign audiences if they have travelled to a local event.

International festivals held in Quebec or elsewhere in Canada may well establish the same relationships as those noted above. Plus, they act as connections between:

- foreign performing companies and the local audiences who attend the performances;
- foreign performing companies and local presenters who, by buying and presenting the productions of the companies they’ve seen perform, may reach other local audiences.

International festivals held abroad have an impact on Quebec and Canadian contemporary dance by acting as intermediaries between:

- local performing companies scheduled to perform at such events and foreign audiences;
- local performing companies scheduled to perform at such events and foreign presenters (including those from other festivals);
- foreign performing companies scheduled to perform at such events and local presenters who may decide to bring them to Quebec or elsewhere in Canada.

Festivals of contemporary dance play an important role in presentation, not only because they offer audiences direct access to the art form, but also because they tend to provide points of contact and exchange between performing companies and other presenters. They may therefore have a multiplier effect on dance presentation at the local and/or international levels. In other words, aside from their main role in presenting to audiences, contemporary dance festivals can also act as catalysts for other presenters.
3.2. Definitions and typologies

3.2.1. Definitions

The generic term “festival” denotes an extremely wide range of events, in every respect (i.e., goals, artistic agenda, scope, size, resources, etc.). The definitions provided in various French- and English-language dictionaries vary greatly, a reflection of how difficult it is to pin down this relatively recent phenomenon in a precise way.

According to the *Petit Robert*, a festival is a “large-scale musical performance” or “a series of performances in which the works of a particular discipline or artist are presented” [translation]. The *Multidictionnaire de la langue française* suggests that a festival is more like a “set of artistic performances which take place periodically in a particular location” [translation]. It should be noted that French-language dictionaries construe festivals in “cultural” terms only.

As far as the *Collins* is concerned, festivals may take one of two quite different forms. They are either “an organized series of events such as musical concerts or drama productions,” or “a day or time of the year when people have a holiday from work and celebrate some special event, often a religious event.”

Because there are in fact many festivals that are non-cultural in nature, some have suggested to further define festivals that are indeed “cultural.” The *Institut de la statistique du Québec* states that a “cultural festival” is a “public performance limited in its duration, in the course of which shows and other types of cultural activities are presented” [translation]. These events may centre around a particular artistic discipline (“specialized disciplinary festivals”) or a number of themes (“multi-disciplinary festivals”). “Such performances are deemed to be ‘cultural’ because their primary purpose is the presentation of artistic or cultural content” [translation].

Members of the research group on “the phenomenon of festivals in the European cultural space”7 assert that, in addition to presenting shows and activities, festivals must meet other criteria to qualify as “cultural festivals.” In particular, they must:

- have a primary objective and values that are clearly artistic;
- have professionally managed operations;
- run approximately a week or more;

7. See the work description drafted by the research group led by Dragan Klaic (Netherlands) on The Festival Phenomena in the European Cultural Space, May 2004
Excerpts from the “Financial and Structural Analysis of the Canada Dance Festival and the Festival international de nouvelle danse”

- use one or more venues for the event;
- have proper legal status;
- recur on a regular basis.

To continue our analysis and without committing to one particular definition, we have set out a general typology of festivals to help us better identify the various facets of this phenomenon.

3.2.2. Typologies

In this section we present a typology of festivals to help identify their various attributes and improve our understanding of this complex world.

The individual components of this typology do not describe the overall nature of a festival in and of themselves, although in various combinations they generally account for the various forms a festival can take.

Moreover, while certain attributes and distinctions are clear-cut, others are less so and should be treated with caution.

**Cultural versus non-cultural festivals**

The primary goal and mandate of a festival may be to present cultural and/or artistic content (i.e. the Festival de théâtre des Amériques, the TD Canada Trust Vancouver International Jazz Festival, etc.), or it may base its programming on other criteria, sectors or themes (i.e. the Vancouver International Wine Festival, the Internationale de montgolfières de St-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Pumpkin People Festival, etc.).

In the pages that follow, we will look mainly at issues related to cultural festivals.

**Specialized versus multi-disciplinary festivals**

A festival may be organized around a particular artistic discipline or sub-discipline, in which case it is referred to as a “specialized disciplinary festival” (i.e. the Festival de Lanaudière); around a particular audience (i.e. Les Coups de Théâtre Festival international des arts jeune public); or it may comprise a number of cultural disciplines (i.e. Montréal en lumières, Festival des arts de Saint-Sauveur, etc.).
**NPOs versus NPOs funded or managed by a for-profit body**

A festival is typically a non-profit organization that may have its own independent management structure (i.e., Carrefour international de théâtre, or may be managed by a team of professional event coordinators (i.e. Festival international de Jazz de Montréal and Équipe Spectra, etc.).

**Annual versus biennial festivals**

To be considered a festival rather than a one-time occurrence, an event must be held on a regular basis. Festivals are generally held on an annual or biennial basis.

**Local/national/international festivals**

When we speak of local, national and international festivals, the criterion applied in defining its scope is usually the nature of the programming. In other words, a festival qualifies as international if it is mandated to include foreign works in its program, even if it is also presenting local and/or national companies.

Furthermore, a festival can attempt to attract its audiences at the local level only, or nationally and internationally as well. Such efforts may reflect a desire to benefit from tourist spending, increased visibility and/or the presence of professional attendees (especially other presenters).

**Professional orientation versus audience orientation**

A festival’s mandate may include promoting professional development in a particular artistic discipline by highlighting, for example, the latest trends and developments likely to benefit the discipline and members of the community associated with it. It may, however, focus on audience development and on satisfying the public’s taste for works referred to as “accessible.”

**Single artistic vision versus panorama**

A festival may wish to have its programming reflect the informed choices of an artistic director, based on his or her unique artistic vision. On the other hand, the festival’s goal may be to program a panorama of activities representative of the state of the discipline, whether in terms of styles and trends or territories and regions.

**Small/medium/large**

The size of festivals can vary considerably, whether in terms of ticket sales, attendance, number of performances or companies performing, length, etc.
3.3. Complementary versus contradictory functions

A festival can adopt a range of functions. Among those typical of a specialized disciplinary festival, functions may differ depending on whether we take into consideration the audience, the community or funders whose main business is not cultural.

- Functions of the festival for the audience (general audiences and specialized audiences)
  - Contribute to audience development
  - Promote the discipline
  - Present a critical mass of performances (event-driven)
  - Provide a unique opportunity to see a collection of performances that would otherwise be unavailable
  - Celebrate the discipline

- Functions of the festival for the discipline (creators, presenters and “cultural” funders)
  - Present new trends emerging in the discipline
  - Present the best of what’s available and encourage others to emulate the example
  - Contribute to the advancement and development of the discipline
  - Present emerging artists
  - Present certain currents or schools of thought
  - Present an all-inclusive look at what’s being done
  - Encourage networking and connections, and promote the exchange of ideas
  - Stimulate professional development and training
  - Present performances (sometimes compensating for the lack of presenters)
- Extend the run of performances and contribute to the market development of performing companies, both nationally and internationally
- Establish, consolidate and launch careers
- Co-produce dance pieces with others
- Establish residency programs

Functions of the festivals for the non-cultural funders
- Have an economic impact
- Have an impact on tourism
- Raise the “prestige” of a city, province or country
- Act as ambassador to international events
- Add to the excitement of urban life

A specialized festival can have many functions. Faced with a range of possible and sometimes contradictory functions and roles, a festival is obliged to establish its priorities and make choices. Difficulties may arise if the resources at their disposal do not match the scope of the functions they envisage, or if external partners have expectations that do not match the organization’s mandate or resources.

3.4. Festivals, a complex environment

Traditionally in Canada, the creation and development of festivals has depended on the initiative and commitment of an individual or a collective. Organizers are responsible for setting up the event and obtaining the support of various partners.

Festivals are complex undertakings that require considerable resources and the commitment of a number of partners. Cooperation is the key to successfully organizing a festival. However, when a number of partners are involved, expectations are raised and goals are set which may at some point become mutually competitive or even incompatible.
Festivals therefore face a number of internal challenges, pressures and sources of tension which they must resolve at various levels within their organization (i.e. governance, artistic programming, management and human resources, marketing, etc.), as well as a number of external challenges, pressures and sources of tension with their various partners.

As indicated in Figure 2, the main partners with whom a festival must develop a relationship are as follows:

- audiences
- funders
- private corporations
- creators, performing companies
- local, national and/or international presenters and venues
- media

Some of these partners (i.e. funding agencies, audiences and private corporations) can have a direct, short-term impact on the organization’s revenues. The others (i.e. creators, press and presenters) can have a major impact in the medium to long term, notably through the influence they can wield over funders, audiences and private corporations.
3.5. Planning and implementation cycle for a biennial Canadian festival

Figure 3 illustrates, in summary form, a typical planning and implementation cycle for a biennial Canadian festival.

Figure 3: Planning and implementation cycle for a biennial Canadian festival
Immediately after a festival, organizers generally prepare an assessment and a preliminary scenario for the next festival. Over the following months, the organization is in “exploration” mode. It develops a financing strategy, makes its first overtures to its public and private partners, submits a number of grant applications to its public partners, and requests donations and sponsorships from its private partners. It also reassesses its communications and marketing strategies.

About six to eight months before the next event, the organization moves out of planning mode and into implementation mode. It needs to confirm programming arrangements and hire staff – in a word, spend most of its budget. As our interest is in biennial festivals, it is worth noting that at this juncture nearly 75 percent of fixed administration costs have already been spent. Whereas the expenditures are almost all committed (the consequences of cancelling an event at this point can be serious, both legally and in terms of credibility), much of the revenue is not yet confirmed. Box office revenues are entirely at risk and, in many cases, the organization is waiting for word on its grant and sponsorship applications. The organization must therefore assess the level of risk involved and make its decisions accordingly.

### 3.6. Economic model

Within the framework of this study, it seems useful to describe the two main attributes of the festival economic model i.e. the impact of the biennial structure, and the implications of being event-oriented.

#### 3.6.1. Biennial cycle

A specialized biennial festival involves a complex organization requiring versatile and able staff. This leads to steady pressure on the organization to “professionalize,” or make a transition from the status of “event organizing committee” to a permanent, fully established organization, which means having ongoing resources for management, administrative support, communications and marketing.

For most organizations of this kind, the responsibilities may be ongoing. However, the workload for a biennial event does not always justify having a permanent full-time staff. Hence the cycle of hiring and layoffs, which can even affect core personnel.
This dilemma explains why most biennial festivals try to consolidate their resources by presenting either an annual event or special events during off-years.

The collaboration between the Carrefour international de théâtre de Québec and the Festival de théâtre des Amériques is an example of this phenomenon.

Biennial festivals have two other motives for maintaining a permanent presence: to remain visible, and to develop ongoing relations with the private sector.

3.6.2. Event orientation

By definition, a festival presents a fairly wide range of shows, each of which is presented for only a limited number of performances.

National or international festivals that wish to present the best material can expect to incur high fees and technical costs without generating sufficient revenues to cover expenses, even if the event is a success.

The economic model underpinning festivals such as the FIND and the CDF is crucially affected by two key factors: the impact of the biennial structure and the implications of being event-oriented. The biennial nature of a festival generally creates continuing pressures on the organization’s personnel. These pressures come into play alongside the search for greater visibility and the desire to maintain ongoing relationships with the private sector. These factors explain why the majority of biennial festivals strive at all costs to get their organizations onto a permanent annual cycle. The event-driven nature of such festivals, i.e., the presentation of a series of shows over a very short period, means that it is almost impossible for a festival to cover the expenses involved in presenting their events (high fees, technical costs, etc).
4. Financial and structural analysis of the Canada Dance Festival (CDF) and Festival international de nouvelle danse (FIND)
This section has been removed in order to maintain the confidential nature of the information provided by the organizations concerned, in accordance with the Access to Information Act.
5. Difficulties and challenges shared by the CDF and the FIND
5. **Difficulties and challenges shared by the CDF and the FIND**

In this section we look at a number of shared difficulties and issues faced by the CDF and FIND with regard to internal management and relations with other stakeholders.

5.1. **Summary table of information on the CDF and FIND (withdrawn)**

This section has been removed in order to maintain the confidential nature of the information provided by the organizations concerned, in accordance with the *Access to Information Act*.

5.2. **Challenges related to internal management**

Analysis of the CDF and FIND allowed us to identify some of the challenges shared by the two festivals. The two festivals have shared challenges associated with the following factors:

- The biennial timing of each event
- The diversification of funding sources and the need to link reliable, stable sources with the carrying out of basic mandate-related activities
- Difficulty finding directors to sit on their boards

5.2.1. **Challenge: managing the impact of the biennial festival cycle**

The fact that both festivals have had to operate on a two-year cycle has had a significant impact on their human resources, cash flow management and visibility.

For these two organizations, holding a festival once every two years has inevitably led to an alternation between staff hiring and layoff phases, with the impact this has in terms of time spent hiring and training staff, staff turnover (losing the best people after training them), staff loyalty, etc. Given the nature and volume of festival activities, this inevitably affects a number of functions that are directly related to operations and the mounting of performances (i.e. production, technical, communications activities, etc.)
Furthermore, in terms of planning and coordination, the two-year cycle poses a problem since these responsibilities are permanent. We must keep in mind that the complex environment and specific context in which festivals operate require a high threshold of ability and versatility on the part of the organization’s core staff (senior management, artistic director, administrative support, communications director, etc.), all of which results in pressure to consolidate. Changes in the environment and, often, the profile and development of festivals, militate in favour of the organization moving from the status of “event organizing committee” (with massive layoffs after the event is over) to “permanent professional organization.”

This “forced transition” exerts a great deal of pressure on budgets. When the base financing does not leave room for this “transition,” some organizations are prompted to create projects during the off-years to obtain the financing they need and maintain a permanent staff (i.e. the Théâtres d’ailleurs du Carrefour international de Théâtre and the Théâtres du Monde du FTA). Alternatively, they may wish to mount their event on an annual basis. FIND attempted several times to mount its event every year. This was an important element of the development plan that was made public in May 2003. From 1994 to 1997, it organized a dance season (Danse en Saison) and presented events such as Danse à l’Usine in 2000. The CDF, for its part, launched several initiatives including a program to support emerging choreographers, a youth program, a program for secondary school students, etc.

The biennial cycle can also have a major impact on cash flow. Fluctuations in revenues and expenses can sometimes cause liquidity problems (even when there is an operating surplus). In certain situations, this can lead to errors in assessing the financial health of the organization.

Presenting a festival every two years also has major impact on the visibility of the event and its place in the city. Audiences and press alike forget quickly. It is difficult to create and develop a sense of pride and loyalty when an organization is only “present” for two weeks every other year. It is also hard to create and maintain fruitful relations with the business and political communities, and this has an impact on the ability to raise funds.
5.2.2. Challenge: handling the risk associated with government funding

The CDF and FIND received large government subsidies for their last editions. The relative size, sources and various characteristics of government funding may help or hinder an organization’s development, and at the same time enhance or diminish the financial risk it incurs. This all leads to the issue of diversification of funding sources and the ability to match reliable and predictable sources with the plans related to an organization’s basic mandate.

In general, diversifying the sources of government funding tends to lead to more of this kind of funding and to less financial risk for an organization. However, this statement must be qualified by taking into account the consistency between the mandates of organizations and their funders. Thus, a cultural organization whose basic mandate is supported by funding from a well-diversified group of funders with a cultural mandate will generally have a lower financial risk than an organization that is backed by a small group of funders or by funders whose mandate is something other than the promotion of culture.
The CDF

Table 24 details the government funding provided to the CDF for the 1996, 2002 and 2004 cycles. From 1996 to 2004, the CDF experienced a slight increase in government funding, from $463,000 to close to $664,000. If we exclude the $112,000 in targeted grants for the 2004 edition, the actual increase will have been around $110,000, which would represent an increase of around 25 percent. In 2004, 89 percent of government funding, or $588,000 out of $663,000, came from funders with cultural mandates, i.e. the Canada Council for the Arts, the Department of Canadian Heritage, and the Ontario Arts Council (OAC). In 2002, this proportion came to 81 percent.

Table 24: CDF government funding – 1996, 2002 and 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Government funding</th>
<th>Audited Results</th>
<th>Audited Results</th>
<th>Audited Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Government of Canada</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada Council for the Arts</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>$246,715</td>
<td>$218,186</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCA Touring Office</td>
<td>$70,543</td>
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<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Human Resources Council</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$17,200</td>
<td>$4,430</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department of Canadian Heritage</td>
<td>$205,000</td>
<td>$175,000</td>
<td>$294,480</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department of Foreign Affairs</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>Total, Government of Canada</strong></td>
<td>$350,543</td>
<td>$468,915</td>
<td>$532,096</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Government of Ontario</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Recreation</td>
<td>$27,500</td>
<td>$3,200</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ontario Arts Council</td>
<td>$45,000</td>
<td>$46,200</td>
<td>$66,885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intergovernmental Affairs Secretariat</td>
<td>$7,500</td>
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<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total, Government of Ontario</strong></td>
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<td>$49,400</td>
<td>$71,885</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Municipal Governments</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Ottawa</td>
<td>$32,725</td>
<td>$42,000</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton*</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$14,000</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total, municipal governments</strong></td>
<td>$32,725</td>
<td>$56,000</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total, Government subsidies</strong></td>
<td>$463,268</td>
<td>$574,315</td>
<td>$663,981</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*After amalgamation, the Regional Municipality’s contribution was integrated with that of the City of Ottawa.
It should be noted that the CDF’s main source of public funding is the Government of Canada, which has provided more than 80 percent of its funding. The remaining 20 percent has come from provincial and regional governments.

While most of the CDF’s government funding comes from cultural organizations (which mitigates the financial risk), the virtual absence of provincial funding (compared to FIND in Quebec) deprives the organization of revenues that might be essential to its development. While the Government of Ontario’s contribution to the CDF went from $80,000 in 1996 to $71,885 in 2004, the Government of Quebec’s contribution to FIND rose from $430,000 in 1995 to close to $1 million in 2003. The Government of Canada provided a significant proportion of the CDF’s total revenues in 2004 and 1996. These proportions were lower in the case of FIND. The sizeable contribution made by the Government of Quebec is mainly responsible for the large difference.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Government funding</th>
<th>Audited Results</th>
<th>Audited Results</th>
<th>Non Audited Results, Nov. 2003</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government of Canada</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada Council for the Arts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance section</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
<td>$190,000</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>$35,012</td>
<td>$1,490</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio-visual production</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millennium Fund</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-total, Canada Council for the Arts</strong></td>
<td><strong>$41,012</strong></td>
<td><strong>$341,490</strong></td>
<td><strong>$200,000</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Canadian Heritage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissemination (APC, CIP, Component III)*</td>
<td>$265,000</td>
<td>$185,000</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidation (2002-2003)</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$112,218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAHSP (stabilization fund)</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsorship Program</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Economic Development Canada</td>
<td>$43,339</td>
<td>$186,000</td>
<td>$155,412</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employ. and Immig. Canada</td>
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<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department of Human Resources Dev.</td>
<td>$55,250</td>
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<td>$35,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Foreign Affairs</td>
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<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embassies et consulats</td>
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<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>Sub-total, federal departments</strong></td>
<td><strong>$413,589</strong></td>
<td><strong>$406,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>$502,630</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Total, Government of Canada</strong></td>
<td><strong>$454,601</strong></td>
<td><strong>$747,490</strong></td>
<td><strong>$702,630</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Of the $265,000 indicated for the 1995 cycle, $65,000 is the last payment of a grant received for the previous cycle.

8. Between the 1996 and 1998 editions, the Ontario Arts Council’s budget was cut back by 39.4 percent.
relatively stable funding to the cultural sector: the Canada Council for the Arts (Dance Dissemination Program: Multi-Year, Annual and Project Funding), Canadian Heritage (APC, CIP Component III), the Conseil des Arts et des Lettres du Québec, and the Montreal Arts Council (formerly CACUM). Thus, 60 percent of the increase in government funding came from various sources, generally non-recurrent, which promote different objectives, legitimate as such, including labour market development, tourism development, economic development and urban animation. For the 1995 cycle, 75 percent of government funding could be considered “stable cultural” funding, while this number dropped to 61 percent for the 2003 cycle.

The FIND’s total revenues from non-recurrent government sources, provided in support of various objectives, increased between 1995 and 2001, and decreased slightly in 2003. During this period, although government funding increased substantially, paradoxically, the FIND’s financial structure became more fragile.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government of Quebec</td>
<td>Audited Results</td>
<td>Audited Results</td>
<td>Audited Results, Nov. 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conseil des Arts et des Lettres du Québec</td>
<td>$400,000</td>
<td>$578,200</td>
<td>$596,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operation</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$38,680</td>
<td>$0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Projects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Subtotal, CALQ</td>
<td>$400,000</td>
<td>$616,850</td>
<td>$596,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministère de la Culture et des Communications</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special assistance</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relocation assistance</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$2,650</td>
<td>$47,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stabilization and consolidation fund</td>
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<td>$65,000</td>
<td>$28,000</td>
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<td>Seasons office</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>$0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employment program</td>
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<td>$87,445</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emploi-Qc poverty fund</td>
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<td>$0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ministère des Relations internationales</td>
<td>$19,777</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministère des Affaires municipales et de la Métropole</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal, Quebec departments</td>
<td>$29,777</td>
<td>$415,472</td>
<td>$382,489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total, Government of Quebec</td>
<td>$429,777</td>
<td>$1,032,362</td>
<td>$978,889</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Finally, Figure 14 illustrates the combined impact of diversification of government funding sources and consistency between an organization’s mandate and that of its funders on the organization’s level of financial risk. The CDF and the FIND are very different in this regard, since the CDF is supported by a small number of funders with cultural mandates, and the FIND was supported by a large number of funders who provided considerable financial support to other sectors or objectives.

**Table 27: FIND government funding – City of Montreal 1995, 2001 and 2003**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Funding</th>
<th>Audited Results 1995</th>
<th>Audited Results 2001</th>
<th>Audited Results Nov. 2003</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>City of Montreal</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Festivals Bureau</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (projects and special assistance)</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$4,287</td>
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<tr>
<td>Montreal Arts Council</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operation</td>
<td>$160,000</td>
<td>$160,000</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (projects and special assistance)</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td>$5,500</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total, City of Montreal</strong></td>
<td><strong>$220,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>$198,500</strong></td>
<td><strong>$214,287</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total, government funding</td>
<td><strong>$1,104,378</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,978,352</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,895,806</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.2.3. Challenge: recruiting members of boards of directors

The CDF and the FIND frequently ran into difficulty recruiting members for their boards of directors. These members assume many responsibilities and volunteer their time and energy. The activity sector of these two festivals, a discipline that is not well known by the public and has a great deal of difficulty securing private funding, may have been a disincentive for many candidates to join either of the two boards.

5.3. Challenges related to the external environment

As previously indicated, specialized festivals evolve and work in a complex environment within which they must form a number of partnerships and meet multiple and sometimes conflicting expectations.

This section outlines a variety of challenges, obstacles and issues regarding the different relationships between these specialized festivals and their partners, in particular:

- audiences;
- funders;
- private-sector;
- artistic community;
- presenters and venues operators; and
- media.

These partners are also subject to upheavals and changes in their own worlds, and must constantly adapt to shifting pressures.

Thus, since the early 1980s, they have had to grapple with the tremendous changes that have washed through the arts and culture sector. There has been a proliferation of creation companies in several disciplines, and presentation networks have expanded tremendously. Radical changes have occurred and new dynamics have evolved around and within the contemporary dance milieu and its specialized festivals.

We are not proposing a comprehensive profile of the changes that have recently taken place in the contemporary dance specialized festival environment.9 However, we will briefly examine a few phenomena.

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9. This is the purpose of our firm’s second study.
5.3.1. Audiences

**Challenge: working with a relatively small contemporary dance audience**

Audiences have a twofold impact on festival budgets, because they generate ticket sale revenues and have a major influence on the granting of sponsorships.

The potential pool of audiences for contemporary dance festivals is necessarily limited if we consider that contemporary dance followers form a relatively small group. While attendance at contemporary dance performances has increased over the last two decades, contemporary dance festivals still cannot count on large audiences. A festival dedicated to this discipline must also be able to cultivate audiences other than dance experts and followers. An example among others, audiences could be cultivated in followers of other art forms.

**Challenge: satisfying a heterogeneous public**

It is important to think of specialized festival audiences in the plural. The audience is not homogeneous but composed of different groups with wide-ranging expectations.

Firstly, these festivals attract professionals and followers (creators, presenters, etc.), who want to pursue their interest in new trends, professional training and development, networking and exclusive events through sophisticated and original programs and activities. The professional reputation of a specialized festival within the disciplinary community, whether at the national or international level, depends on their ability to satisfy the disciplinary clientele. In other words, to be considered a major player, a specialized festival must depend on the quality of its programming to win adherents among the artists and art aficionados. In addition, the latter may already have access to interesting programs (such as the specialized dance presenters programs in Montreal, and the NAC dance series).

The “general public” however may wish to attend shows that are “accessible” or that involve famous artists and enjoy an enriching experience where they feel acknowledged, moved and comfortable; or simply take part in the celebrations. Since attendance has a direct impact on self-generated funding (ticket sales, sponsorships, etc.) and government funding (funders’ expectations with regard to audience development, economic and tourist potential, etc.), festivals must make every effort, especially through programming, marketing, choice of venue and audience development activities, to ensure the greatest number of people, not only regular followers, attend the events. In addition, contemporary dance festivals should be seen as key audience development tools for the discipline, well beyond the events themselves. By presenting a rich and concentrated program of quality events, the festival can provide an invaluable opportunity for people who do not normally follow the discipline to discover an area in which they can expand their understanding of the discipline and as a result, be interested in attending regular season performances.
These different needs and parameters have a significant impact on how an event is organized, especially on how programming is formulated. A good example of this is the fact that the effort to present the latest developments in an artistic discipline, or the relentless quest for new foreign visitors (professionals and tourists) may conflict with the desire and need to attract local audiences. This does not mean the quest for excellence and originality and the desire to please a large audience are mutually exclusive. However, one must remember that the various audience expectations may require the execution of a number of different and complementary strategies.

5.3.2. Funding partners

*Challenge: dealing with bureaucracy and regional disparities*

Most specialized festivals rely on government funding as their major source of income.

There are no single-window approaches or coordinated strategies for festivals that have to submit applications to different levels of government (federal, provincial and municipal), since each level has its own application form.

Cultural festivals are often overwhelmed by the time and resources required to seek out and manage funds. Filling out the necessary grant applications and reports takes a significant amount of festival organizers’ time. It is useful to point out that, according to the *Rapport d'enquête sur 32 festivals et événements culturels du Québec, 2000-2001*[^10], the organizations promoting the 32 festivals studied (including FIND) spent an average of 240 person-days (1,682 hours) per year searching for and managing government and private funds. This enormous investment of time is roughly equal to the work done by one full-time employee in a year. The search for funds is generally handled by the presenters’ employees (1,465 hours on average per event) or sub-contracted (217 hours, but mostly to search for private-sector funding).

Cultural festivals also have access to assistance programs, depending on their geographic location. The amounts available vary considerably from province to province, and even from city to city. We need only compare the amounts granted to cultural events by the Government of Quebec and City of Montreal with those granted by other Canadian provinces and cities to see that not all festivals have equal access to subsidies.

*Challenge: juggling different funders with varying mandates and interests*

We should also note that cultural festivals have to knock on the doors of funders who back the entire arts community (Canadian Heritage, arts councils, etc.), as well as funders with altogether different vocations who are interested in the impact of the events they back, whether on tourism or on the overall economy. Many potential funders therefore support multi-disciplinary or non-cultural festivals. Many festivals

which claim to be “artistic” have a hard time catching the interest of regional or local bodies. However, some government organizations are starting to recognize the unique benefits of backing avant-garde "niche" initiatives as a means of supporting a community's image, reputation and development.

All levels of government are therefore requiring, among other things, that festivals:

- increase their audiences, their independent and private funding, and their impact on the economy and tourism
- provide a springboard for new artists and a stage for the local arts scene
- perform works for the general public
- represent a variety of artistic movements and cultural realities

These series of and often conflicting demands manifest themselves not only when programs are compared among themselves, but within certain subsidy programs.

While the funding organizations offer the festivals subsidies for their operations, they are not always multiyear subsidies, and the proportion of funding for one-time projects tends to increase. By providing such non-recurrent grants, funders keep specialized festivals on edge and off balance. In many cases, more than 50 percent of grant revenue is gained on specific, non-recurrent projects. This situation is all the more difficult to manage for biennial festivals, since in their off-years they have fewer financial and human resources and may face serious cash flow problems. Festivals have a natural tendency to grow, and generally face increasing financial requirements. These festivals sometimes develop projects just because there are funding programs, and not because they contribute to their mandate. Thus, the requirements of certain funders tend to push biennial festivals to develop secondary activities outside the festivals and to keep up a constant pace of activities. Some funders have begun to address this problem by providing multi-year financial support that takes the biennial nature of certain organizations into consideration, but some of the major funders have yet to develop these mechanisms.

Given all these funding constraints, specialized festivals may be considered high-risk activities. Financial balance and stability, which are so difficult to attain, are a day-to-day challenge faced by these festivals.

For specialized festivals this can have a number of consequences on programming, audience development efforts, marketing and management (notably the time and resources spent seeking and consolidating funding).
On the programming side, artistic ambitions may prove irreconcilable with the expectations of government funders, for whom economic and tourism returns, increased attendance, ticket sales and/or private donations, and the presence of foreign presenters and companies that represent various communities or trends (i.e. emerging performers or cultural diverse dance traditions) take precedence over the discipline's qualitative development. Moreover, festivals must deal with a host of requirements with sometimes incompatible goals, which can greatly influence a program. Such broad demands can weaken a festival’s artistic programming, on which the event’s reputation and success depends. In brief, the flexibility — and perhaps quality — of artistic programming can be curtailed by the growth of financial partnerships and their many and divergent aspirations and expectations.

The difficulties encountered by festivals in securing funding for their activities have a direct and significant impact on how they are structured. To ensure a balanced budget, the festival must generally reduce its permanent or semi-permanent staff to a bare minimum and rely on volunteers, term employees and subsidized jobs, which entails a whole other array of management and training problems.

In conclusion, a cultural festival would pay a heavy price for ignoring economic realities and the expectations of its funders. This situation implies a range of adjustments and commitments, whether in terms of artistic programming or investment in marketing, professional management and operations. While it may feel torn between these sometimes conflicting requirements, a festival cannot economize when it comes to maintaining a consistent and high level of cooperation and transparency with the various funders that control public dollars.

5.3.3. Private sector

**Challenge: meeting the needs of funders with regard to private-sector funding**

While it is sometimes hard to develop in some of the leading edge artistic practices, it is nonetheless important to maintain relations with the private sector. On one hand, it helps to increase the financial resources. On the other, government funders often make it a requirement when providing their grants.

“[translation] corporate sponsorship has adopted the form of an association of companies, where producer and sponsor both benefit from the monies spent. Sponsors expect recognition, visibility in the community and clients, as well as contact with a certain market and an opportunity to invite prospective clients to performances. Artistic producers draw immediate monetary benefits and community recognition”\(^{11}\).

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\(^{11}\) The Canadian Encyclopedia, Historica Foundation.
The report, entitled *Donors to Arts and Culture Organizations in Canada*,\(^\text{12}\) indicates that the $47.9M collected by cultural and artistic organizations in 2000 represented only one percent of donations to all non-profit organizations in Canada. When it comes to private sector donations and partnerships, the arts and culture sector is the poor cousin.

In terms of sponsorships, private-sector companies receive constant requests for support from a myriad of organizations with a panoply of missions and activities. Specialized festivals, especially when held every two years, are at a disadvantage because the private sector is generally looking for high-visibility events that appeal to the broadest possible audience. Private-sector companies want to increase their sales and be associated with the top events. It is generally recognized that the private sector prefers a sure bet, with high media visibility, and does not necessarily endorse avant-garde work.

*Rapport d’enquête sur 32 festivals et événements culturels du Québec, 2000-2001,* suggests there are a number of reasons for the difficulties encountered in the search for private-sector funding.

- Sponsors say they are frequently solicited.
- Organizations lack the resources needed to promote the event to potential sponsors.
- The pool of businesses and companies that sponsor the cultural sector is limited (if not saturated), which makes it difficult to find new partners.
- It is hard to maintain long-term contacts with representatives of businesses and corporations because they are always changing. Contacts keep having to be re-established.
- Organizations lack expertise in the search for private-sector funding.
- Sponsorship is not a priority for businesses and corporations.
- The visibility provided by an event does not meet sponsors’ expectations.
- The target audiences do not appeal to the sponsors.
- Potential sponsors face budget cutbacks and restrictions.
- The event is new and not widely known.
- The type of event does not appeal to the target sponsors.
- Targeted businesses and corporations change their funding policies.
- Private funding means a certain commercial shift that is not always compatible with the nature of the event.

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Some of the comments made suggest that the boards of directors of cultural festivals can be part of the problem when they do not include enough members from the private sector to ensure optimal private funding.

Finally, 10 of the 32 festival organizations in this study relied on consultants to find private-sector funding. The Quebec Institute of Statistics estimates that the annual average cost of these consultants is roughly $14,000. One of the favourite forms of payment to consultants is a commission based on the amount of funding they collect. However, the resources (financial and human) invested in the search for private-sector funding do not always yield the desired results. The investment of time and money for private-sector fundraising campaigns sometimes exceeds the amount collected.

While specialized festivals may encounter difficulties in their search for private-sector sponsors and donors because of their nature, scope and frequency, they have no choice but to keep looking for ways to interest the private sector if they are to ensure their survival. The challenges involved in developing private-sector funding may prompt festivals to re-assess their strategies and approaches and step up their efforts, but everyone, organizers and funders alike must set realistic and attainable objectives. Lastly, once a business has committed its support, a festival must make every effort to ensure its partner is happy with the collaboration and does not withdraw. The loss of a sponsor can be catastrophic for an organization.

5.3.4. Creators

Challenge: managing companies’ many expectations

Specialized festivals must deal with their immediate artistic community, including artists and performing companies. However, the latter have voiced a number of expectations regarding specialized festivals, and these expectations may conflict with one another or with other event functions. In the contemporary dance milieu, creation companies, which have rapidly multiplied since the 1990s and suffer in their estimation from insufficient presentation, want specialized festivals to:

- serve the local artistic community by including their works in the programming;
- give them an opportunity to enhance their visibility and reputation;
- attract local and international presenters so they can get work, go on tour and increase the life span of their works;
- allow them to position themselves on the local, national and international scenes;
- provide a showcase for professional development by letting them take the pulse of the discipline and take part in training (master classes, workshops, etc.);
Excerpts from the “Financial and Structural Analysis of the Canada Dance Festival and the Festival international de nouvelle danse”

- provide a showcase for up-and-coming artists to show their work and the latest trends in the discipline;
- pay reasonable and fair fees and provide optimal conditions to show their creations;
- not impose overly severe exclusivity clauses in their contracts, that might prove prohibitive for future dissemination shows or prevent them from trying out their performances on audiences before showing them to specialists and presenters;
- propose co-production contracts;
- contribute to audience development for contemporary dance;
- stage a festive event that will help them create networks and celebrate their discipline, etc.

**Challenge: dealing with the proliferation of companies**

The contemporary dance milieu, which some believe is facing a major development crisis, has great hopes, expectations and needs vis-à-vis specialized festivals. A large number of creation companies want festivals to show their work, thereby placing tremendous pressure on them.
The contemporary dance creation community in Quebec and the rest of Canada has mushroomed. In 20 years, the number of performing/production companies has virtually ballooned. The change in the number of Canadian companies funded by the main government partners (federal, provincial and municipal) over the last six years is a clear indicator of the breadth of the phenomenon.

While there may be more visibility afforded to the growth of contemporary dance companies in Quebec, the rest of Canada has also seen its share of growth, especially Ontario and British Columbia. The major poles of contemporary dance today are Montreal, of course, but also Toronto and Vancouver.

This proliferation of dance companies in Quebec and the rest of Canada has gone hand in hand with increased recognition of several companies on the national, but especially the international, stages. The quality of contemporary dance in Canada, and in Quebec in particular, is now well established and garnering praise from around the world. There is a dynamic energy sweeping through the world of contemporary dance creation in Quebec and the rest of Canada.

Yet, this exceptional growth in the dance community has not been without its own issues and challenges.

Although a number of companies have developed, organized and become veritable institutions over the last 20 years thanks to the world of festivals, today dozens of new companies are emerging on the scene and competing with them,
Table 28: Change in number of subsidized contemporary dance companies, 1998 to 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>YK</th>
<th>NWT</th>
<th>NU</th>
<th>BC</th>
<th>AB</th>
<th>SK</th>
<th>MB</th>
<th>ON</th>
<th>QC</th>
<th>NB</th>
<th>NS</th>
<th>PEI</th>
<th>NL-L</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While according to stakeholders, contemporary dance, as discipline, may need festivals, creation companies (and performers) also need them. More and more of them are knocking on festival doors, which raises a number of questions. Under these conditions, can festivals avoid incurring the wrath of companies they do not include in their programs? Can they claim to represent the whole world of contemporary dance? Can they play the same active and guiding role for new performers that they have played for companies that are now established?
Challenge: preserving programming freedom

Contemporary dance festivals find it difficult to satisfy all the expectations imposed on them by the artistic community. How can they reconcile the desire to develop and show all facets of the local cultural milieu while attracting the general public by featuring the discipline’s top stars and presenting the most interesting new trends whether local or foreign?

A festival dedicated to contemporary dance cannot claim to satisfy the expectations of all the creation companies. However, it must make every effort to garner the support of the artistic community, which is dynamic but fragmented and grappling with serious dissemination problems. This situation is all the more daunting for contemporary dance companies (as opposed to other artistic disciplines) because there are relatively few dance venues and presentation organizations. It is worth noting that part of the funding for contemporary dance festivals is linked to a peer assessment that makes recommendations to funders, notably the Canada Council for the Arts.

5.3.5. Media

Challenge: spending an increasing portion of the budget on marketing while trying to maintain a balanced budget

Festivals are investing ever-larger portions of their budgets on communication and marketing. Does this increase audiences, make them loyal, or move and inform them? Nothing could be less certain. This phenomenon is evident in every country and with all festival types. We seem to be witnessing a race wherein events that rely on the media to relay their message, are obliged to constantly do more to make themselves heard and be more persuasive than their competitors.

Challenges: generating media interest and standing out despite media saturation and the absence of star power

Not only do festivals dedicated to avant-garde disciplines such as dance have to compete in an environment marked by a proliferation of “general audience” festivals. They have to deal with a media that has almost no interest in the discipline. It would be impossible to ignore the difficulties caused by the negligible place occupied by contemporary dance in the media world, especially TV, which gives the public at large and youth a very narrow exposure to dance. To attract and rally audiences and the private sector, a contemporary dance festival must attract the interest of a media that is often more concerned with star power than quality artistic programming.

13. It would be useful to share the results of the peer assessment with festivals. This might give them a better idea of the support they have in their milieu and allow them to plan accordingly.

There is no denying that the media would rather cover spectacular events involving stars and proven successes. The media want to communicate simple information without having to educate the audience. Yet in many regards, the contemporary dance discipline is not conducive to this. Contemporary dance is “secondary” for the few media that cover it during the regular season. One can therefore not expect a dance festival to get media coverage that helps it reach far beyond committed followers and lovers of the art. While they must reach the general public to attract larger audiences, contemporary dance festivals face a general lack of media interest in their discipline.

5.3.6. Presenters and venue operators

*Challenge: maintaining good relations with presenters*

Perhaps even more than other disciplines, contemporary dance festivals must maintain sound and productive relations with local and international presenters, as their activities can:

- serve as a go-between for creators and presenters to promote subsequent tours for companies on local, national and international stages;
- compete with the regular seasons of permanent local venues which include dance seasons in their annual programming; and
- provide the only window to contemporary dance for local and national presenters.
More national and international contemporary dance presentation

The world of contemporary dance creation suffers from a significant shortage of performance venues. However, since the 1980s the world of dance presentation has grown, even if its growth has not kept pace with the increasing number of creation companies and is uneven from region to region. While companies that present contemporary dance performances have started occupying more and more space on the Montreal and international stages, the trend has been much more modest in the rest of Canada. While this growth falls short of the community’s requirements, it has nonetheless made a significant impact on the dance creation community and specialized festivals in Quebec and the rest of Canada.

It is also important to consider that special performance venues, such as l‘Agora and Tangente, came into being in Montreal. These organizations/venues have helped promote shows by Quebec artists in Montreal. Danse-Danse was created on the heels of the successful experience of Danse en Saison and, since 1998, has been offering a Montreal season of high-calibre performances of Quebec, Canadian and foreign productions. In so doing, it has served as a platform for reciprocal arrangements for national and international tours by Quebec companies. The last few years have seen the appearance of new Canadian contemporary dance festivals and contemporary dance performances on the programs of multi-disciplinary festivals (i.e. Festival Montréal en Lumières, Festival des Arts de Saint-Sauveur, etc.).

Table 29: Tour performances by Canadian dance companies in Canada and abroad, 2002-2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Performances</th>
<th>Home Performances</th>
<th>Tour Performances In Canada</th>
<th>Tour Performances Abroad</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002-2003</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>1,131</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>70.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>1,280</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>50.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>685</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>40.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3,096</td>
<td>1,728</td>
<td>55.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that the statistics include all types of dance companies (ballet, contemporary, folk, etc.)

15. Our firm will be looking at this in greater detail in its next report, entitled Analyse de l’environnement de la diffusion de la danse professionnelle contemporaine au Canada.
16. Also note the establishment of La Rotonde in Quebec City.
At the same time, presentation within Quebec has become more organized. The concern with showing more dance within the province, which was part of the provincial government’s policy on the presentation of performing arts, manifested itself in the development and implementation of the *La danse sur les routes du Québec* project. In 2002-2003, the program’s partners, which cover a variety of disciplines, programmed 27 productions, which gave 92 performances and reached 17,146 spectators17.

An important point for contemporary dance is that several Quebec choreographers of all generations have received extensive exposure on the international scene. These days, international presentation networks are a preferred territory venue for Quebec and Canadian companies. Participation in international festivals and performance on foreign stages are no longer the exception but the rule for many performing companies, for which they are becoming an increasingly important source of revenue.

Several companies have managed to establish partnerships with different international presenters, which has allowed them to get involved in international coproductions and more extensive tours. In Quebec especially, several companies are using agents to develop their foreign markets and coordinate their tours.

While artists from Quebec and other parts of Canada now face more competition (from East European countries for example) on the international stage, their networks are already well established and international presentations are often a priority for dance companies (especially those from Quebec), in part because they get higher fees than those paid in Quebec and the rest of Canada.

The contemporary dance creation community is evolving in an entirely different performance environment than the one that prevailed in the early 1980s. While there are still not enough of them, and they still cannot meet all the needs (some provinces are facing bigger problems than others), presenters have developed, diversified and become organized at the regional, national and international levels. Contemporary dance presentation is no longer the exclusive reserve of a few players. It is now the domain of a variety of partners, all seeking in their own way and within their own means to present dance performances and develop audiences.

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More dance performances offered on Canadian stages

The spectacular increase in the number of companies in Quebec and the rest of Canada, as well as a better presentation network, have resulted in a remarkable increase in the number of performances offered. There has been a tremendous increase in the availability of dance performances from Quebec, the rest of Canada and abroad. In terms of shows and seats, the relative importance of contemporary dance on the Canadian performing arts landscape has increased enormously.

This remarkable availability should be taken into consideration because festivals that specialize in this discipline, such as FIND and the CDF, are no longer the unique players they were at the time of their creation. For instance, while FIND showed 40 percent of all Montreal dance performances in the late 1980s, it showed only 6.8 percent in 1999 and 13.8 percent in 2001, the year FIND had its heaviest program.
Growing number and importance of festivals

In the past 20 years, festivals have become omnipresent. They are no longer just a significant component of the cultural lives of communities, but an important part of economic activity and tourism. The number of festivals has grown to such an extent that the annual calendars of some cities (such as Montreal) are almost completely full. This abundance generates a tremendous amount of energy and attracts tourists. It has also positioned Quebec and the rest of Canada on the international market and given us the kind of visibility that can only have a positive impact on the various events. Nonetheless, this multiplication of festivals can generate problems and have a negative impact on smaller organizations and artistic festivals such as the FIND and the CDF.

Cultural festivals must not only compete with the regular seasons of permanent artistic institutions. They are also in a tight race with one another for attendance, programming, government funding, sponsors, time slots, etc. The competition is all the fiercer when specialized festivals have to co-exist with a myriad of major non-artistic or “popular” events that have a major economic and tourism impact and draw large numbers of spectators, sponsors and government funds. In this environment of proliferating festivals and events, the stream of requests for assistance from the private sector, government funding partners, the public and the media is endless. The offer is such that there is good reason to wonder whether the market is on the brink of saturation (at least in the summer), especially since cultural festivals and events are evolving in a world of scarcer resources. Although changes to laws governing marketing and sponsorship for the tobacco industry and the end of the federal sponsorship program have dealt a heavy blow to the organization of cultural events in Canada, the major players have managed to reposition themselves and highlight the impact of their event on tourism and the economy. They have managed to convince public authorities they should get more support for their development (government departments and agencies focused on economic development, Société des événements majeurs internationaux (SÉMIQ) in Quebec, etc.).

18. There is also the policy of free admission to sites and performances at major festivals.
Presenters attend specialized festivals not only to see new works and make choices for their future programming, but to “test” audience reaction to various performances. Presenters decide to travel to certain festivals on the basis of the quality of their programming and originality (as represented by works they cannot see elsewhere), and to events that have already proven themselves and acquired a favourable reputation with audiences, dance professionals and the media. Presenters want to see as many works as possible, do as much networking as possible (with artists, other presenters, etc.) within a short time, and see complete works (as opposed to what they see at market events and “showcases”).

Presenters want festival organizers to collaborate with them in mutually beneficial ways. Some presenters would like to see cooperative arrangements where the festival’s programming would not harm the presenter’s regular dance seasons and the festival does not require overly restrictive exclusivity clauses in their contracts. Collaboration between festivals and presenters can lead to presentation partnerships and the use of festivals as bridgeheads for a presentation circuit that helps distribute works and rationalize costs. However, local specialized presenters are not necessarily in favour of allowing festivals to organize other activities or seasons outside the festivals themselves, since they might interfere with their own programs.

As important links in the presentation chain, specialized festivals must work with other presenters who program contemporary dance so that they transcend the usual forms of unproductive competition and work toward more fruitful forms of collaboration for presenters, festivals and the contemporary dance community in general.


Excerpts from the “Financial and Structural Analysis of the Canada Dance Festival and the Festival international de nouvelle danse”
**Challenge: Dealing with competition between festivals**

We should not play down the fact that competition between international festivals, combined with the presenters’ limited financial resources, forces specialized festivals to attract presenters by offering them highly favourable conditions. Dance festivals are obliged to invest considerable resources in transportation, accommodation, complimentary tickets and so on.

The overall finding concerning these shared external challenges is that specialized festivals are all obliged to keep redefining and repositioning themselves in order to adapt to new realities and to the factors that affect their stature, their role and their ability to survive.

Every festival must therefore make its way through a maze of often-contradictory expectations, which are in turn influenced by an ever-changing environment. The health of these specialized festivals is dependent on winning the cooperation of the other players and reconciling many different goals and needs.

The report suggests an analytical framework for understanding the various alliances specialized festivals must nurture and the challenges these create for festivals, including:

- In terms of audiences, the need to cope with the limited audiences for contemporary dance, the need to satisfy a more heterogeneous audience;
- In terms of funders, the problems inherent in dealing with large bureaucracies while juggling a mix of funders who each have different mandates and interests;
- In terms of the private sector, the problems inherent in seeking funding from the corporate sector and being able to respond to their needs and requirements;
- In terms of the creators, the problems involved in dealing with the growth in the number of companies and their varying expectations while giving the artistic direction the freedom to do programming;
- In terms of the media, the need to invest in promotion while maintaining financial stability, to generate media interest and stand out from others, despite the media “clutter” and lack of any star system;
- In terms of dance presenters and venue operators, the need to maintain good relations with them and avoid jeopardizing their programming, while trying to appeal to them given the significant competition among festivals.
6. A look at other festivals
6. A look at other festivals

This section offers comments and ideas about festivals other than FIND and the CDF, with a view to drawing useful lessons. For instance, we will draw up a list of Canadian dance festivals, and focus on the international dance festivals reputed to be the most successful. However, any comparisons clearly have limits because each festival operates within its own unique context.

6.1. The experience of the Carrefour international de théâtre de Québec (CITQ)

This section has been removed in order to maintain the confidential nature of the information provided by the organization concerned, in accordance with the Access to Information Act.

6.2. Specialized contemporary dance festivals in Canada

Table 32: List of specialized contemporary dance festivals in Canada

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Festival</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Duration of the dance programming</th>
<th>Local</th>
<th>Canadian</th>
<th>International</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dancing on the Edge Festival</td>
<td>Vancouver</td>
<td>BC</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>7-16 July 2005</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vancouver International Dance Festival*</td>
<td>Vancouver</td>
<td>BC</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>8-26 March 2005</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada Dance Festival/Festival Danse Canada*</td>
<td>Ottawa</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>Biennial</td>
<td>3-12 June 2004</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dusk Dances</td>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Festival of Interactive Physics</td>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>23-27 June 2005</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fringe Festival of Independent Dance Artists</td>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>9-21 August 2005</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guelph Contemporary Dance Festival*</td>
<td>Guelph</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>31 March – 3 April 2005</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moving Pictures Festival of Dance on Film and Video</td>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>4-7 November 2004</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Squar Zero</td>
<td>Ottawa</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>Biennial</td>
<td>10-12 June 2004</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlantic New Dance Festival</td>
<td>Halifax</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td>Biennial</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Festival International Danse Encore</td>
<td>Trois-Rivières</td>
<td>QC</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>9-12 June 2005</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moving Pictures Festival of Dance on Film and Video</td>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>8-26 March 2005</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian Dance Festival*</td>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>Biennial</td>
<td>19-27 February 2005</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* member of CanDance

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20. This list does not include other festivals that feature dance, such as the Festival des arts de Saint-Sauveur or the Montreal High Lights Festival.
Please note:
- many of these festivals take place in Ontario;
- the emergence of regional festivals is a recent phenomenon;
- many respondents from British Columbia emphasized the disproportionately small amount of financial support given to festivals in Western Canada, as opposed to those in the “centre”;
- there seems to be little connection or dialogue between the various festivals.

6.3. Main international dance festivals

The interviewees identified the following events as successful contemporary dance festivals:

- Dance Umbrella, Dance Festivals in Edinburgh and Glasgow (United Kingdom)
- Festival Impulstanz, Vienna (Austria)
- Munich Dance Festival and Tanz im August in Berlin (Germany)
- Madrid en Danza (Spain)
- Venice Biennale (Italy)
- Festival international de Montpellier-Danse, Rencontres chorégraphiques Seine Saint-Denis, Festivals d’Aix-en-Provence, d’Avignon, de Rouen, de Lyon (France)
- The Holland Dance Festival, Springdance in the Netherlands, Springdance Utrecht, Juli-Dans (Netherlands)
- Dansa Na Cidade, Lisbon (Portugal)
- Four Days in Motion, Prague (Czech Republic)
- Festival internacional de Londrina (Brazil)
- Festival Cervantino (Mexico)
- Tokyo Performing Arts Market (Japan)
- Adelaide Festival of the Arts (Australia), plus other festivals in Poland, Moscow, Slovenia and Zagreb
It is noteworthy that European festivals predominate in this list of successful models.

**Some characteristics of successful international festivals**

During interviews and discussion groups, the following reasons were cited for the success of these festivals:

- They have been able to establish major reputations and maintain them over the years.
- Their managers are able to adapt to change – a critical skill in a discipline marked by rapid change.
- They have clearly positioned themselves.
- They offer quality programming from around the world, presenting good companies in good performance venues. They present an interesting mix of small, medium-sized and large companies. They take risks.
- They operate in a local context while taking into account more universal concerns.
- Some offer residencies or co-produce works, thereby assisting the professional development of choreographers.
- They include a highly developed educational component and a number of resources for interaction and exchange.
- They are well established in their respective communities.
- They attract audiences and play to full houses.
- They seem to do well financially.

Many stakeholders pointed out that most foreign festivals face the same challenges as the FIND and the CDF.

Stakeholders also noted that few Canadian presenters attend international festivals, apparently because they are not considered relevant since presenters cannot assume the financial risk of hosting international companies. Only a handful of presenters in Canada travel to festivals abroad.

Needless to say, this situation highlights the important role the FIND played in helping Canadian presenters see works from abroad, stay abreast of international advancements in the discipline, maintain reciprocity with foreign counterparts, and ensure Canadian artists are featured by international presenters.
7. Needs and expectations of the dance community and partners from dance festivals
7. Needs and expectations of the dance community and partners from dance festivals

The aim of this section is to describe the community’s perceptions regarding the ingredients for a successful festival. The section will also outline the expectations of various stakeholders (dance creators, presenters and funders).

7.1. Perceptions regarding the ingredients for a successful contemporary dance festival

As we have already noted, festivals are complex organizations that operate in equally complex environments. According to the stakeholders consulted, a winning formula is composed of a number of ingredients. We have grouped these ingredients into various categories:

**Leadership**

Festivals embody the vision of their directors. The person at the head of an organization is thus a fundamental ingredient in the organization’s success or failure. Festival directors must be visionaries and deal respectfully with the community, their employees and their partners. Festival directors must work for the long term and adapt to change.

**Programming**

In a context where the artistic discipline concerned is, by definition, the raison d’être for a festival featuring that discipline, the festival’s artistic programming is a key factor in its success. Most stakeholders clearly feel the programming must be of a high standard. Some creators go even further, noting that programming must be bold and varied and take risks. Some creators point out that programming should provide room for companies of different sizes, including emerging companies. Another consideration is that festival programming should differ from what is presented during the regular season and include powerful artistic experiences.

**Activities associated with the festival**

Successful festivals not only organize quality programming but also a number of activities around their official programming, such as workshops, conferences or parallel (“off”) programming. They also offer places and opportunities for attendees to network.
The public
Successful festivals attract audiences (and, as the funders point out, benefit from box-office revenues). A number of choreographers emphasize the need not to anticipate public’s tastes but rather to create an experience. Several people pointed out that a successful festival offers impeccable customer service.

The milieu
It has been repeatedly stressed that festivals need to be involved in, and work with, their local milieux. A festival is a collective tool that must be integrated into its milieu and respect its ecology. Ideally, festivals can mobilize the dynamic human forces in its community. Festivals need to respect their local and international partners. Festivals also need to be able to count on adequate political and financial support.

Management
Everyone agreed that a festival must have a clear mandate and be managed in a financially responsible manner.

7.2. Expectations regarding festivals
We asked the people interviewed about their expectations regarding festivals. Answers varied according to the type of stakeholder. This section outlines the expectations of creators, presenters and funders.

Creators
Essentially, creators want:

- a platform to help them be noticed by presenters in Canada and abroad, and thereby obtain work and enhance their credibility and prestige;
- attractive fees and performing conditions that respect the artistic integrity of their works;
- to be able to compare themselves with other artists, position themselves on the Quebec, Canadian or international scenes, and “tap into” what is being done in the discipline;
- funding to create works (co-production);
- to develop professionally by attending activities such as workshops or master classes, and interact with artists from Canada and abroad (a stay of more than two days is necessary for this);
a festival based on strong artistic vision and risk-taking artistic direction;

a celebration of dance and a festive event;

festivals that include all forms of dance (Ontario respondents in particular).

**Presenters**
Essentially, presenters want:

- to see the best of what is currently being done in the discipline, either to obtain programming ideas or see shows they would not otherwise be able to see;
- to network and interact with colleagues;
- to meet artists;
- to see a number of works and meet many people within a short timeframe;
- to see complete works rather than excerpts, to know exactly what they are buying;
- to be dealt with respectfully by the festival’s management team;
- to work with people in a mutually beneficial way.

**Funding agencies and similar organizations**
Funding agencies and similar organizations want festivals to:

- produce results and, more specifically, results that are consistent with funding agency objectives;
- provide quality programming;
- be accessible to the general public;
- be well-managed and financially stable;
- host foreign guest artists appropriately;
- have a competent and accessible management team.
8. Reflections on redefining existing and emerging contemporary dance festivals
8. Reflections on redefining existing and emerging contemporary dance festivals

In this section, we offer a few ideas about redefining existing or emerging contemporary dance festivals in Canada. The thrust of these ideas is to draw attention to, and shed light on, certain success factors and pitfalls.

We have grouped these elements under the following headings:

- mandate and mission;
- organization;
- audiences;
- other considerations;
- funding.

8.1. Mandate and mission

8.1.1. A clear and realistic mandate and mission

Every contemporary dance festival needs a clear and realistic mandate. To avoid infringements, misunderstandings or false expectations, the mandate should be well-defined and explicit.

Given the wide range of functions that festivals can perform, an unclear mandate can not only become a powerful generator of conflicts, causing the festival concerned to be constantly torn between different priorities, but also, and more importantly, an unclear mandate can give rise to expectations that the festival might not be able to meet.

8.1.2. Mandate and mission clearly communicated and understood

It is important that the festivals clearly communicate their mandate and mission and thereby help to manage people’s expectations of them. Although festivals are an integral part of the dance presentation ecology, they do not play the role of “responsible parent” for the community as a whole.
8.1.3. High-quality artistic programming

A festival’s artistic programming cannot be separated from its mandate and mission. What determines a festival’s success, attendance and longevity is the ability of its artistic directors to provide high-quality, original programming. The artistic discipline is the festival’s raison d’être and must remain its central concern. Festival programming is an art, not a science. The task of developing a successful program\[\text{[translation]}\] is the job of a specialist who absolutely must have artistic freedom.\[\text{[21]}\] At the same time, the principle of artistic freedom must be offset by the need to program within the limits of available resources. In the final analysis, it is a question of balance.

8.2. Organization

8.2.1. Strong leadership and competent, transparent governance

It is important to ensure the Board of Directors of the organization responsible for a festival’s success actively supports the organization as it carries out its mission. In playing this role, boards rely on the availability and varied composition of their membership, their relations with business community, and their sensitivity to artistic concerns. Mechanisms must be set up to ensure transparency between the board and management, as well as a process of ongoing dialogue.

A festival requires strong senior management. Its managers should be permanent and demonstrate solid ability in cultural administration and management.

With respect to leadership, we cannot overemphasize how important it is that festivals establish, maintain and strengthen relations with their partners. To succeed and remain viable a festival must, among other things:

- receive considerable support from the artistic community, which should identify with the festival and support its functions and objectives;
- establish strong, constructive relations with other presenters and performance venues, and work in partnership with them;
- maintain ongoing, transparent dialogue with all funders;
- cultivate an image that is attractive to the private sector.


Excerpts from the “Financial and Structural Analysis of the Canada Dance Festival and the Festival international de nouvelle danse”
8.2.2. Permanent human resources

Even when they take place biennially, major national or international festivals need a permanent core professional team to run their minimum ongoing operations (among others to maintain their relationships with various partners) and provide continuity over time for successive editions of the festival. Key positions should be filled by professionals of the highest calibre. However, this presumes the adoption of competitive working conditions and correspondingly appropriate remuneration levels. The organization should strike a balance between the staff required to carry out its mission and the need to generate sufficient revenue to maintain a balanced budget. The human resource structure should be appropriate for the festival’s size.

8.3. Audiences

8.3.1. Audiences: a paramount concern

Contemporary dance festivals are a special place where creators and audiences can meet. However, audiences cannot and must not be overlooked in the equation – either by funding agencies, festival organizers or performers. While taking their respective mandates into account, specialized festivals need to attract as many spectators as possible for four main reasons:

- to give as many people as possible an opportunity to experience and appreciate contemporary dance;
- to give artists an audience before which they can express their talent and creativity;
- to generate revenue for the organization;
- to give taxpayers an opportunity to watch performances they have helped to fund.

The question remains: what attendance levels can these festivals achieve? The ambitions of festival organizers and funders to attract as many spectators as possible are legitimate. However, everyone should have realistic expectations when it comes to specialized festivals featuring disciplines such as contemporary dance.
It is therefore appropriate to question certain practices, namely:

- When assessing specialized festivals, should certain funders focus mainly on attendance levels?
- How much of the resources and effort should be devoted to audience development activities and projects?
- What proportion of expenditures should be devoted to marketing and promotion costs?

There are also challenges on the programming front. Does “cutting edge” programming that reflects the latest trends necessarily have a detrimental effect on programming intended for the “general public”? Is it not possible to strike a balance between “specialized” and “accessible” works? Should we not take advantage of the curiosity that leads the general public to attend a contemporary dance festival to offer people a greater selection of experiences? Should a festival’s artistic direction not ensure the general public is not put off or sidelined by programming that is exclusively “cutting edge?” In other words, it is necessary to question how we think about audiences in order to avoid programming that lowers standards.

However, for a festival to be recognized and successful it must be guided by a strong, original artistic vision. Any initiative to attract more spectators must bear this in mind. Otherwise, festival organizers will risk losing the loyal audience base they have already acquired.

In brief, the audience must be the prime concern of any festival. The means used to attract spectators should be measured and assessed in light of the festival’s mandates, resources and attendance potential. However, once this has been done, it would be shortsighted to measure a festival’s success solely on the basis of the number of spectators.

8.3.2. The place of young audiences

Given the importance of audience development, not just to festival attendance but to the development of the contemporary dance discipline in general, specialized contemporary dance festivals would do well to ask themselves how much of their training activities and programming should be devoted to young audiences.
8.4. Other considerations

8.4.1. Location

Where should contemporary dance festivals be organized? What is the most suitable location for them?

There is no single response to this question. A priori, the ideal location for a festival is in a dynamic disciplinary milieu in which it enrols itself. In this way, a festival can benefit from existing infrastructure and proximity to the community’s main stakeholders. The existence of a major partner is also an important factor in festival success. There are other examples of successful festivals in isolated locations. The least one can say is that the key factor is the commitment of the management team and the support of local partners.

Many people we interviewed, especially from the West or the Maritimes, said they would like the CDF to take on an itinerant character.

While some respondents feel an “itinerant” CDF could make contemporary dance accessible to audiences throughout the country, it would have no structuring impact since audience development takes place over time. If the CDF became itinerant, as some recommend, it would have major impact on its organization in terms of:

- the significant loss of the National Arts Centre as the main financial, material and administrative partner;
- the need to seek private funding in new markets and thus continually develop new relationships;
- greater logistical difficulties, partly due to periodic change in suppliers (media partners, equipment rental, hotels, etc.).

8.4.2. Inclusion in the calendar

Generally speaking, contemporary dance festivals need to find a niche in an already heavy event calendar, position themselves in an often-saturated media universe, and avoid causing problems for festivals in other disciplines by competing with them.

To fit into the ecology and serve as an effective development tool, festivals need to take into account the dance seasons of presenters and the production cycles of performing companies.

22. For instance, festivals like the Sundance Film Festival and the Festival du cinéma international in Abitibi-Témiscamingue.
8.4.3. Coexisting with other disciplines

Is it conceivable to combine several specialized festivals to create a single festival? This approach may help achieve a greater critical mass, streamline resources, and have a greater impact on audiences, the private sector and the media. However, while the approach has succeeded in some parts of the world, we would do well to approach it with caution here, at least for now. On one hand, many in the contemporary dance community are opposed to the idea and fear that dance would not be recognized as a major art form and would be relegated to a secondary position. On the other hand, it would be necessary to verify the cultural events calendar and the availability of performance venues to see if such a major event could find a place in the calendar.

At any rate, if such a formula were adopted it would be necessary to ensure that:

- contemporary dance was assigned a major part of the programming, promotion and available resources;
- the artistic direction was independent.

8.5. Funding

Having a clear and realistic mandate is one thing; ensuring it has the solid support of funders is another.

Given the relative importance of public funding in the revenue structure of specialized dance festivals, it is vital that the mission, mandate and action plan of festivals take into account predictable public funding and that, inversely, funders’ requirements be consistent with the resources they put at the festivals’ disposal. To avoid unrealistic expectations, the contemporary dance community and its partners must have a good understanding of the mandates and action plans in question.

From the standpoint of sound management of public funds, it goes without saying that festivals are responsible for producing the desired results and funders are responsible for assessing these results.

The issue of festival underfunding does not stand alone. The issue is not whether a festival is underfunded but whether, given its mandate and action plan, it has sufficient support.
Festivals also rely on stable funding to support their operations and reduce the amount of risk, time and energy involved in looking for revenue sources. One avenue worth exploring is whether multi-year funding could be provided on a project basis, if not for operational support.

Recurring long-term funding for festival operations should be established within a reasonable time frame to ensure the viability of contemporary dance festivals in Canada, and this should take their biennial character into account. Funders should also consider supporting biennial festivals during their “off” years.

To accomplish this there is a need for ongoing collaboration between festivals and funders, and between funders themselves.

**Conclusion**

These few observations do not claim to cover all actual or potential challenges involved in redefining existing or emerging contemporary dance festivals. They are simply a brief attempt to highlight a few avenues of exploration that might mark out and guide future thinking.

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Beyond the challenges and obstacles that face contemporary dance festival organizations, it is important to appreciate how important these festivals are for the dance community and the artform. We cannot overemphasize the need for these instruments and for having them function in a way that benefits contemporary dance in Canada, helping to ensure that it continues to evolve and remains one of our leading lights in the international cultural scene.
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Excerpts from the “Financial and Structural Analysis of the Canada Dance Festival and the Festival international de nouvelle danse”


Appendix 1: List of acronyms

CAHSP: Canadian Arts and Heritage Sustainability Program
CALQ: Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec
CCA: Canada Council for the Arts
CDF: Canada Dance Festival
CITQ: Carrefour international de théâtre de Québec
DFAIT: Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade
FIND: Festival international de nouvelle danse
FTA: Festival de théâtre des Amériques
MCCQ: Ministère de la Culture et des Communications du Québec
NAC: National Arts Centre
OAC: Ontario Arts Council
OCTGM: Office des congrès et du tourisme du grand Montréal
PCH: Department of Canadian Heritage
RQD: Regroupement québécois de la danse
SEMIQ: Société des événements majeurs internationaux du Québec
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