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June 26, 2017

The Honourable Rochelle Squires
Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage
Room 118 Legislative Building
450 Broadway
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0V8

Dear Minister Squires,

Manitobans for the Arts is pleased to respond to the discussion paper *Imagine. Creative Manitoba!*, and the opportunity to help shape this province's first Cultural Policy in more than 25 years.

We are heartened to see reflected in the discussion paper the impact of the cultural sector as an essential part of Manitoba's economy, identity and brand. We believe that provincial investment is critical to the social and economic prosperity of our province. A robust cultural sector raises Manitoba's national and international profile and enhances the quality of life for Manitobans.

Manitobans for the Arts is dedicated to ensuring that elected officials appreciate the essential leadership role government plays in preserving and enhancing the cultural legacy that citizens of Manitoba have created over generations.

In 2015 Manitobans for the Arts led a process to develop a Provincial Platform, which proposed strategies to strengthen our province's cultural sector. We believe that these critical areas are the foundation for a profound and lasting change. These strategies have been updated for this response; we hope this document will be of assistance as you develop meaningful Cultural Policy to match the strength of the sector.

Thank you for undertaking this review and the commitment to engagement you have shown with the arts, culture, heritage and creativity sector.

Sincerely,

Board of Directors, Manitobans for the Arts

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Strategy 1: Strengthen financial capacity and sustainability of cultural organizations

Manitobans for the Arts recognizes and values the provincial government's long-standing investment in the cultural sector. While this investment hasn't declined, it also hasn't grown since the last cultural policy review over 25 years ago. **With inflation, the net effect in real terms is a decline in funding of close to 50%.** Manitoba has not kept pace with other provincial jurisdictions in Canada. Statistics Canada data from 2009/10 ranks Manitoba fifth in per-capita provincial spending on culture, and ninth when spending by all levels of government is analyzed.[1] Each year that provincial government investment continues to be flat-lined, Manitoba's cultural sector becomes less competitive and stable and the cultural workforce falls further behind.

Despite the flat-line in provincial funding, Manitoba's cultural organizations continue to be resourceful in building earned and private sector revenue. Since 2009, cultural organizations have increased their earned revenue from 41% to 47%; investment of public funds declined from 40% to 33% over that same period. It is not sustainable for this trend to continue. In order for cultural organizations in Manitoba to continue to generate higher earned revenues, and to increase the diversity, reach and impact on the communities they serve, increased provincial investment is imperative. It is the combination of provincial contributions, earned revenue and private sector support that allows Manitoba's arts and culture organizations to leverage federal funds, which in turn further enhances the capacity and strength of the sector.

The provincial government can foster organizational sustainability through a variety of means, including investing in programs that foster capacity building. Local examples include ArtSupport Manitoba helping organizations build their fundraising capacity through mentorship with seasoned professionals. In a community with few head offices, arts organizations are already deeply connected with the corporate community, but this engagement will grow if organizations have the resources to create on a broader canvas.

Other programs include the Government of Canada's Cultural Endowment Incentives Fund, encouraging private donors to contribute to endowment funds with a compelling match, and Business for the Arts' ArtsVest program, fostering partnerships with the private sector.

Recommended Actions:

1. Immediately increase investment, with new funding to the Department of Sport, Culture and Heritage. This investment will increase contributions to Manitoba's vibrant arts and cultural industries' organizations and to highly respected provincial agencies, including the Manitoba Arts Council, the Franco-Manitoban Cultural Centre and Manitoba Film & Music. All of these organizations leverage revenue from other sources, create jobs, stimulate the development of artists and creators; and facilitate the delivery of valued arts and culture programming to the citizens of Manitoba.
2. Commit to regular funding increases at a rate that matches future inflation.

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3. Continue the ArtSupport program and look to ways to build it and other organizational capacity-building programs.

The impact of increased investment will be a more resilient, diverse, inclusive and accessible cultural sector that continues to generate highly-skilled jobs; it will allow organizations to better leverage other public funds, to increase private sector revenue, to engage more artists and to reach and impact citizens throughout the Province.

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Strategy 2: Renovate and expand cultural infrastructure

Ideas may not require bricks and mortar, but transforming creative ideas into physical form often requires venues and facilities. While Manitoba has numerous creative spaces, the demand is greater than the supply. Provincial cultural assets across the province are cornerstones to communities and the organizations they serve, but require investment to ensure that they continue to provide adequate infrastructure at a professional level.

There is a critical and growing infrastructure deficit affecting existing spaces and facilities. Across Manitoba, culture is housed and created in provincial buildings, historical homes, museums, libraries and other community hubs. Past investments and our architectural history risk being lost without a commitment to maintain and enhance our cultural infrastructure. Facilities in all provincial communities need to be maintained, updated and renewed.

Recommended Actions:

1. Establish a new cultural capital fund to address the infrastructure deficit, and to ensure investment for creative production and presentation spaces. Such funds will ensure accessible venues for artists and audiences, and allow for innovation and use of new technology.
2. Create incentives for communities throughout Manitoba to promote the use of existing buildings and spaces for cultural purposes.

The impact of a new capital fund and space re-purposing incentive programs will be the modernization of communications infrastructure, the development and rehabilitation of venues to match the aspirations of Manitoba’s diverse and growing community of artists and creators.

These actions will ensure that Manitoba’s cultural sector continues to make its mark on a national and international scale, attracting artists and cultural entrepreneurs to live and work here, creating jobs and economic impact. The sector will also continue to deliver on the tourism brand, and ensure the vitality of communities across the province.

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Strategy 3: Build a sustainable cultural workforce

Digital technology is having a profound impact on arts and culture. On a worldwide basis, the bridging of new technologies and tech start-ups with the arts and cultural industries workforce is creating new hybrid industries and opportunity – jobs of the future are firmly rooted in the creative sector with arts and cultural industries at the core.

In order to capitalize on the opportunities, and meet the challenges, posed by the digital world there is a need for long-term industry and sector-specific training and professional development initiatives. These would address leadership, entrepreneurship and business skills, market export, project management, and marketing. There is a parallel need for training and professional development that fosters and encourages collaboration and projects across multiple disciplines.

Recommended Actions:

1. Build the cultural workforce through a commitment to enhance mentorship, professional development and training opportunities for emerging and mid-career cultural sector professionals and artists.
2. Invest in accurate and timely labour market intelligence/information collection and analysis.

The impact of long-term ongoing investment in effective mentorship and professional development programs, along with a coherent research plan, will be a healthier and more sustainable cultural workforce in Manitoba, one that is able to respond quickly and efficiently to the challenges of tomorrow's jobs. The arts and cultural industries workforce is already outpacing other sectors; with strategic investment, we will be poised to contribute even more to the provincial economy, creating meaningful and sustained employment.

Through investment that focuses on the specificities of arts and cultural industries' needs, the province can take a leadership role in ensuring cultural workers and the artists and creators they promote are competitive and ready to take on available jobs.

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Strategy 4: Preserve our heritage

Manitoba is endowed with a significant collection of heritage sites and buildings. We are fortunate to have a rich and dynamic heritage community, committed to preserving and presenting our collective experiences for the education and betterment of future generations.

Museums in communities across Manitoba are challenged in their efforts to preserve and protect Manitoba's history, including archaeological and paleontological collections that are held in trust for the citizens of Manitoba. Museums, galleries and heritage sites are faced with crumbling infrastructure, overflowing storage, conservation issues and a lack of collections management software. We are at risk of losing historically significant sites, buildings, artifacts and archives and the vitality of our libraries as community hubs.

Recommended Actions:

1. Establish a task force of heritage professionals to document best practices and to develop protocols and policies to ensure better protection of Manitoba's material culture held in the public trust throughout the province.
2. Review the Community Museum Granting Program and open eligibility to all museums in Manitoba.

The impact of province-wide best practices, protocols and policies for the protection of our heritage along with broad-based access to funding will ensure that the archival and historical agencies and organizations of Manitoba can ensure citizens' connections to our past in innovative ways.

In preparation for Manitoba's sesquicentennial celebration in 2020, with strengthened support, museums across the province are uniquely positioned to develop exhibits and programs that engage Manitobans in the discovery, understanding and celebration of our identity.

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Strategy 5: Enhance arts education for youth across the province

Arts education contributes to a vibrant community and to the educational, social and academic development of our youth. Manitobans are well positioned to be innovators and leaders in arts education, bringing dance, drama, music and visual arts to students from Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12) across the province. This will further develop wider skill sets that will prepare them for a rapidly changing workforce and world.

New arts curriculum frameworks have the potential to guide powerful change and growth in teaching and learning, improving both artistic and academic success across the province. They offer clear instructional guidelines for the teaching of dance, drama, music and visual arts in Manitoba schools; however, the education community needs sufficient resources and support to ensure the complete implementation of the new arts curricula from K-12.

Recommended Actions:

1. Enhance arts education by providing educators with training, resources and access to artists to help them effectively implement Manitoba's K-12 arts curriculum.
2. Ensure students have access to the very best arts and cultural industries experiences in the classroom and after school by investing in programs that provide cultural activities for young people, for example the Sistema program led by the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra.

The impact of enhanced arts education will demonstrate what research increasingly confirms: participation in high quality arts programs improves academic, personal and social outcomes for all students.[2]

Arts education helps students to think creatively, to innovate, and to become tenacious learners ready to solve complex problems — skills employers increasingly identify as desirable. It will also prepare them for a workforce where many future jobs are not yet defined but will require creativity and innovation. These skills can be nurtured through arts education.

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Strategy 6: Indigenous Art

Manitobans for the Arts recognizes that development of any strategy to support Indigenous art must be led by the Indigenous community.

Recommended Actions:

1. Facilitate an active consultation on the needs of the Indigenous arts and cultural industries community, led by Indigenous artists and creators, with the active involvement from all Manitoba First Nations, as well as Métis and Inuit Communities.
2. Include in the new Cultural Policy appropriate responses to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.
3. Review Creative Manitoba's Indigenous Artists' Needs Assessment Report, which identifies recommendations for Indigenous art programming; including, mentorship programs, access to cultural teachings, community building, business and entrepreneurial education, funding resources and access to employment opportunities.

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About Manitobans for the Arts

www.manitobansforthearts.ca

Manitobans for the Arts was created in 2012 to advance arts, culture, heritage and creativity in Manitoba. We are a non-partisan, volunteer and member-led group that places arts, culture, heritage and creativity at the centre of our province's prosperity and quality of life.

Our goals are to:

- Promote access to arts and culture for all Manitobans.
- Encourage participation and engagement in all aspects of the creative sector.
- Conduct research about the impact of arts, culture, heritage and creativity in the province.
- Share information among a diverse group of creative people working in the arts and cultural sector and with the community at large.
- Emphasize the role of arts and culture in Manitoba's well-being, growth and development.
- Identify gaps in service and promotion needs in the community.

MANITOBANS FOR THE ARTS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair

Roberta Christianson is also the Chair of the Manitoba Foundation for the Arts, Portage la Prairie Public Arts Committee and past President of the Portage and District Arts Centre.

Vice Chair

Thom Sparling is the Executive Director of Creative Manitoba, formerly the Arts and Cultural Industries Association of Manitoba, and has worked in the arts and cultural industries for 25 years.

Treasurer

Nicole Matiation is the Executive Director of On Screen Manitoba (the media production industry association). She has worked in arts management for 25 years and sits on several Boards including the CCFM, Culture Days MB/ Nuit Blanche Wpg, and Freeze Frame Media Arts Centre for Young people, which she co-founded in 1996 and ran for 12 years.

Directors

Kathleen Christensen has been active with Heritage and Museums for over 30 years. She has a Masters of Arts in Museum Studies from the University of Leicester. She is currently Acting Director of The Royal Canadian Artillery Museum and is serving as President of Association of Manitoba Museums.

Alan Freeman, a former cultural economist with the Mayor of London, has retired to Winnipeg and loves it.

Ray Hogg is the Artistic Director of Rainbow Stage, and an acclaimed director, choreographer and instructor.

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Camilla Holland is the Executive Director of the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre, and a steering committee member for the Canadian Arts Coalition and the Canadian Arts Summit.

Evan Klassen is a freelance stage manager and arts administrator based in Winnipeg, MB, and currently the Operations Manager for the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra.

Katarina Kupca is a fundraising consultant with 20 years experience in a variety of non-profit sectors.

Michelle Peters is the Executive Director of the Association of Manitoba Book Publishers.

Dr. Moti Shojan is Dean of Studies at St. Paul's College at the University of Manitoba where she also teaches in the Department of English, Film and Theatre. She served as Chair of the Winnipeg Arts Council and on the Boards of Winnipeg's Contemporary Dancers and the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra, the Education and Access Committee of the Winnipeg Art Gallery, and the Arts Advisory Committee of the Manitoba Arts Council.

Lynne Skromeda is the Executive Director of the Winnipeg Folk Festival. Prior to joining the Folk Fest, Lynne produced over 150 hours of original programming at Frantic Films.

Robert Vineberg retired from 35 years with the Federal Government in 2008. Since then he has been doing historical research and volunteering with immigration and arts organizations, including the Chair of the Board role at Manitoba Opera.

Jamie Wright is an accomplished visual artist, instructor and curator.

SOURCES

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- [1] Statistics Canada, *Government Expenditures on Culture: Data Tables, 2009/2010*
- [2] Bamford, A. (2006). *The wow factor: Global research compendium on the impact of arts education*. Berlin: Waxmann Verlag.
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