

The Arts Council of New Westminster

Strategic Plan

2018-2021

DRAFT

*Building Community Through the Arts*

The Arts Council of New Westminster is passionate about promoting the arts and artists as a vital component of the city's culture.

The arts are integral to the quality of life and unique character of our city, thereby making New Westminster a vibrant place to live and work.

We take great pleasure in sharing this  
Strategic Plan July 2018 – June 2021  
with our community,  
the artists and arts organizations we serve.  
We hope you will join us to ensure its realization.

**The Board of Directors  
The Arts Council of New Westminster  
Spring 2018**

## **Executive Summary**

The Arts Council of New Westminster (the Arts Council) aims to collaborate with the City, artists and the community to ensure the arts have a vibrant and beneficial presence in our community. With this Strategic Plan, our mandate is to bring community together through the arts and to establish the arts as essential to our community. This document is a description of what the Arts Council plans to do over the next three years to work towards this goal.

The Arts Council has a long history of creating a presence for the Arts in our city. The Arts Council was founded 1967 and incorporated in 1969. Over the years, many people have worked tirelessly and passionately to promote the arts within our community. This Board intends to build on the accomplishments of past Boards, Executive Directors, artists, city councils and community members.

The past three years have seen enormous growth of our organization, with increased presence in our city, support for artists, programming, funding and staff. As a Board, we wish to capitalize on this momentum to ensure continued growth, vibrancy and reach into the community.

The Arts Council continues to be committed to listening to and being responsive to our members and the community at large. We are proud to have been able to hold five Community Roundtables strategically placed around the city so as to capture ideas from as many demographics as possible. We also hosted a month long online survey to gather ideas from our members and community. We have taken care to weave these ideas into this Strategic Plan and our Committee Work Plans.

We are proud of the plan that we are bringing forward. It is our deepest desire that the Arts Council continues to be the hub for the arts, artists and community members in our city and that we act as a catalyst in making the arts essential in our city.

### **Programming and Partnerships**

A summary of our Programming and partnerships will be inserted here.

**DRAFT**

This page has been intentionally left blank

## **Vision**

**Ensuring the arts have a vibrant and beneficial presence in the city; being the catalyst that brings people together through the arts thereby enhancing the lives of community members; working to make the arts an essential part of the fabric of our community.**

The Arts Council began the strategic planning process by reflecting on the path we have taken over the past three years. Our goals were to bring community together through the arts, to make the Arts Council relevant in our city and to create a vibrant presence for the arts in our city. We have accomplished all of this and more.

As the Arts Council was considering creating a vision for the next three years, we envisioned what it would be like to live in a community where the arts were *essential* to how we go about living our lives - that is, where the arts were so embedded in the culture of our city that they are everywhere and enjoyed by many, and that they are a defining factor of what New Westminster means both to its residents and to those from outside our community.

We envision the Arts Council having a key role in facilitating the creation of a community where the arts are essential. We wish to be the catalyst that brings people together who are interested in defining what it means to have the arts an essential part of the culture of our city and in creating a plan of action together. Some of the first steps we are taking: continuing our Cultural Roundtables; ongoing networking sessions; bringing community members onto our committees and continuing to survey our members and community for their ideas that we can implement.

The Arts Council understands that it needs to put foundational documents and structures in place to facilitate community taking an active part in the realization of this Strategic Plan. This documentation will provide structure and focus to the work we will be doing over the next three years.

Finally, in order to expand our reach and our ability to see our strategic plan to fruition, we understand that we need to increase revenue, especially to support expanded human resources. A primary focus over the next three years is to develop a thriving donor program and explore other revenue.

We are invigorated by the vision we have created for the Arts Council moving forward and we hope it is invigorating to all who read this document so as to build energy and passion towards our vision. We invite all to join with us in making this vision a reality.

## **Mission**

### **Be the hub for the arts and artists in New Westminster**

The Arts Council has developed this Strategic Plan so that we can meet our mission of being this hub through fostering, supporting and promoting arts for all age groups, cultures and Indigenous community members. We will do this by:

- Acting as an information and resource center for artistic and cultural projects
- Advocating for and supporting the arts and artists in our city
- Facilitating arts and cultural events in New Westminster
- Providing advocacy and representation of the arts at all governmental levels
- Providing opportunities for community to come together through the enjoyment and experience of the arts and arts events
- Being an arts and culture community partner across a variety of sectors in New Westminster

DRAFT

## **Core Values**

### **Inspiration and Artistic Excellence:**

Providing meaningful experiences in a welcoming environment for visitors, participants and volunteers by offering a variety of high-quality artistic experiences for all ages; and creating opportunities to nurture and support our artists, so they may continue to grow and strive for artistic excellence.

### **Diversity and Recognition:**

Creating a broad range of programs and gallery exhibitions to reflect the diversity of our community; and being inclusive and respectful of all cultures which have influenced both the history of and present day New Westminster.

### **Partnerships:**

Involving and reaching out to others in formal, informal, new and established projects and working with the City and other like-minded community groups to ensure an arts presence in all celebrations and events.

### **Partnering with the Indigenous Communities:**

Holding and creating space for Indigenous communities so as to provide opportunities to engage in artistic experiences and performances; and creating an awareness and appreciation of Indigenous cultures within the larger community of New Westminster.

### **Governance:**

Ensuring the use of fair and transparent processes that adhere to principles of accountability, independence, merit, and equity.

### **Communications and Engagement:**

Ensuring active communication and community engagement through our approach to planning, strategic directions and goals and program development so as to serve and maintain relevancy to members and to the community.

We will continue to provide opportunities for feedback from our members and community to ensure transparency, relevancy and collaboration.

The Arts Council will continue to build and strengthen these relationships to seek input from the community, city, artists and arts organizations in order to remain responsive and relevant.

This plan will be presented to community members through a Community Engagement meeting for feedback for the final document in June 2018. It will be presented to City Council July 2018 and to the Arts Council AGM attendees on November 2018 at Centennial Lodge.

## **Strategic Directions and Goals**

The Arts Council has established several overarching strategic directions to guide the activities of the Council over the next three years and to support our Mission:

*To build on the mission of the Arts Council as the hub for the arts in the city through our programming, events and activities both at The Gallery at Queens Park and within our community. To move more deeply into the fabric of our community to become an organization that is seen as indispensable by its members, city council and our community and one that acts as a catalyst to promote the arts as essential to our community.*

*To continue to develop a Governance Committee structure and foundational documents so as to manage its affairs to ensure that the Arts Council is on a firm footing administratively and financially, thereby assuring sustainability and continuity over the long term.*

*To develop a strong and robust donor program in order to increase our reach and what we are able to do for artists, our members and our community at large with a focus on raising funds to increase human resources.*

*To bring an increased amount of community members onto our Committees in order to involve community in the fruition of this Strategic Plan and to continue to build the idea that we are ALL the Arts Council and everyone involved is important and has a valued contribution to make.*

*To build strong relationships with First Nations, all stakeholders\* and interested groups so that together we further the aims of the arts community and ensure the Arts Council's unifying and leading role in bringing community together through the arts.*

\*stakeholders: members of the Arts Council, artists, arts groups, supportive partners, the City of New Westminster, the media, academia, etc.; any person or group that has a stake in the success of the Arts Council of New Westminster.

### **Goals that have emerged from our Strategic Directions:**

**Goal 1: Be a hub for the arts and artistic community in New Westminster**

**Goal 2: Expand and refine the Governance structure**

**Goal 3: Increase funding from a variety of sources**

**Goal 4: Develop and nurture relationships**



## **Goal 1: Be a hub for the arts and artistic community in New Westminster**

The Arts Council holds a unique position within our city: its mandate dictates that we reach out to and engage with community in many ways. We seek to reinforce the feeling of community members that the arts are essential to a thriving community and contribute significantly to the quality of life in New Westminster.

The Arts Council is interested in continuing to explore ways the arts can be used in our city to draw community together in celebration, joy and passion. Developing a solid infrastructure of performance spaces, studios, and galleries and creating programs and a public presence can help the quality of city life and the connections between residents and the arts.

As these connections are made, we hope our community will come to see the Arts Council not as an entity separate from themselves, but one of which they are part of in a very real way and as an indispensable organization within our city. We see each of us as creative citizens and we hope the advantages of a sustainable arts community will be understood and supported by all in our community, both financially and through involvement with the Arts Council and the arts.

### **Strategic Objective: To increase the Arts Council's presence, effectiveness and impact in the community**

2018-2019

- Develop a repeatable and renewable community (Cultural) roundtable structure to bring people together to take part in developing the arts in the city
- Establish a calendar of roundtable events and host four Cultural Roundtables
- Create a plan with community input of how to activate ideas from Roundtable discussions
- Restructure existing Arts Council programming to have a presence in Queensborough and with seniors
- Review programming; prioritize and modify programming based on highest impact on the community
- Increase membership participation on programming committees by putting out a call for members to be on committees
- Research artists in residence opportunities
- Review programming needs to volunteers/revise outreach structure
- Host annual appreciation event connected to AGM in November

2019-2020

- Continue to host Cultural Roundtables and implement plans to active ideas from Roundtable discussion that were created last year
- Review programming with community input to determine how we did in Queensborough and with seniors
- Review programming; prioritize and modify programming based on highest impact on the community
- Review committee structures and refine as necessary
- Continue to put out a call for committee members
- Implement plans for one artist in residence
- Research Mentorship Program possibilities within ACNW membership and the community

*Building Community Through the Arts*

- Formalize the volunteer recruitment process
- Continue to host annual appreciation event at AGM in November

2020-2021

- Review Cultural Roundtables with community to determine relevance; refine as necessary
- Review programming in Queensborough and with Seniors to determine relevance
- Determine if there are any other demographics that need a focus for programming in the city
- Review programming; prioritize and modify programming based on highest impact on the community
- Review committee structures and refine as necessary
- Continue to put out a call for committee members
- Implement plans for a second artist in residence
- Implement plans for mentorship program within ACNW membership and the community

**Strategic Objective: To communicate to the community that the Arts Council and the arts are a vital part of their lives and provides social benefits and economic impact**

2018-2019

- Board members assigned as liaison to attend current group member meetings
- Explore social enterprise programs that increase presence within the community
- Redevelop the New West Cultural Map in partnership with the city as a directory of performance spaces, studio, galleries and arts organizations
- Engage community stakeholder groups with communication survey around website and pre-existing communication structure
- Redevelop ACNW Website utilizing community feedback
- Promote the recipient of the NWSS/Douglas College bursary
- Develop and implement public relations and communications plan
- Review current practises of advertising and social media
- Continue the role of the Digital Coordinator contract position subject to funding
- To develop and initiate a media campaign to inform community of the value of the arts through social media, on our website, in our newsletter, at networking sessions, newspaper article etc.

2019-2020

- Continue Board members assigned as liaison to attend current group member meetings
- Implement social enterprise programs that are feasible from research last year
- Promote and use the New West Cultural map in partnership with the city as a directory of performance spaces
- Evaluate and refine the ACNW Website with member and community input
- Continue to work with Douglas College to provide scholarship; promote recipient
- Create and distribute a brochure highlighting the ACNW and its programs
- Evaluate and update public and communications plan
- Hire a Marketing Coordinator subject to funding
- Review Human Resources to determine need
- Expand and implement the media campaign informing community of the value of the arts and create recommendations to move forward

*Building Community Through the Arts*

2020-2021

- Continue Board members assigned as liaison to attend current group member meetings
- Review effectiveness of New West Cultural Map with city and community input; implement changes as needed
- Evaluate and refine the ACNW Website
- Research other scholarship opportunities beyond Douglas College
- Evaluate and update public and communications plan
- Expand the role of the Marketing Coordinator subject to funding
- Review Human Resources to determine need
- To evaluate effectiveness of media campaign informing community of the value of the arts and create recommendations to move forward

**Strategic Objective: To attract and retain members to enable us to expand our reach and better support our community.**

2018-2019

- Assess member satisfaction
- Put in place an automated system for membership management
- Assess membership growth
- Review current membership benefits
- Review and revise structured levels of membership recognition
- Initiate a membership survey to determine desired membership benefits

2019-2020

- Hire Membership Coordinator subject to funding
- Develop membership marketing plan
- Run membership drive
- Board members assigned as liaison to connect with external organizations
- Implement annual member satisfaction survey connected to automated system for membership management
- Raise membership fees to reflect increased benefits
- Create a member discount program at arts events
- Evaluate the automated system for membership management

2020-2021

- Implement annual member satisfaction survey connected to automated system for membership management
- Continue to fund Membership Coordinator position subject to funding
- Launch membership marketing plan
- Evaluate member discount program at arts events

## **Goal 2: Expand and Refine the Governance Structure**

*The Arts Council will continue to develop a strong operating base, including staffing, committees, funding and programming to contribute effectively to the arts community.*

*The Arts Council will continue to build on the work completed by the previous Strategic Plan. The Arts Council will create foundational documents to draw in more community members as volunteers to sit on various committees.*

*Over the past three years, the Arts Council has continued to expand and refine the committee structure. The current Arts Council committees are:*

*Governance Committees:*

- *Finance*
- *Fundraising*
- *Media and Marketing*
- *Membership and Outreach*

*Program Committees:*

- *Literary Arts*
- *Performing Arts*
- *Visual Arts*

### **Strategic Objective: Create foundational documents**

2018 – 2019

- Create a Board Handbook, Board recruitment package, Committee Recruitment package, Board ED/ Succession plan documentation, Operations manual for ED
- Establish a Governance Committee to review and update Bylaws
- Establish a Governance Committee to review and update Policy and Procedure Manual

2019 – 2020

- Review foundational documents and update as needed
- Determine if any additional foundational documents are required; create as needed
- 

2020 – 2021

- Review foundational documents and update as needed
- Determine if any additional foundational documents are required; create as needed

### **Strategic Objective: Create a Board succession plan to recruit new Board members**

2018-2019

- Establish a year-long nomination committee to actively recruit new board members
- Create a package to send to potential interested people
- Identify board skills and gaps to advertise for new board members

2019 – 2021

- Concerted effort to increase board and committee diversity and inclusion

*Building Community Through the Arts*

2020-2021

- Assess Board succession plan and refine as necessary

**Strategic Objective: Develop strong Governance and Programming committees.**

2018 – 2019

- Put out a call for Committee members; provide orientation for committee members
- Put out a call for new Board members; provide orientation for new Board members
- Research Professional Development opportunities for Board members
- Create annual Committee Work Plans based on the Strategic Plan; hold one Pro D session this year
- Develop Volunteer Coordinator job description and secure funding to hire in 2019
- Research best practices for a Government Advocacy Committee

2019 – 2020

- Assess effectiveness of committees
- Continue to put out a call for Committee members
- Complete Board self-evaluation and recommendations to improve
- Review effectiveness of Nomination committee
- Provide Professional development for Board members, consider bringing in an outside presenter
- Review and update annual Committee Work Plans
- Review and update Policy and Procedure manual; board handbook; Board and Committee foundational documents
- Hire a Volunteer Coordinator subject to funding
- Establish a Government Advocacy for the Arts Committee; create a plan for advocacy

2020 – 2021

- Assess effectiveness of committees
- Continue to put out a call for Committee members
- Review effectiveness of Nomination committee; refine as needed
- Complete Board self-evaluation and recommendations to improve
- Provide Professional development for Board members subject to funding
- Review and update annual Committee Work Plans
- Review and update Policy and Procedure manual; board handbook; Board and Committee foundational documents
- Review Volunteer Coordinator position
- Establish a Government Advocacy for the Arts Committee; implement plan for advocacy

### **GOAL 3: Increase funding from a variety of sources**

The Arts Council understands there needs to be robust funding from a variety of sources in order to meet our Strategic Planning goals. Like many volunteer organizations, it currently depends on project grants and volunteers to fund and carry out activities.

The Arts Council intends to seek additional funding to support its work and increase its capacity. The Board is developing a dynamic donor program and exploring social enterprise opportunities to create an ongoing monthly revenue stream.

The Arts Council is committed to fair and transparent administrative processes and adhering to the principles of accountability. This is central to the goal of financial sustainability.

#### **Strategic Objective: To seek long-term, sustainable and diverse revenue streams for Arts Council programming**

##### 2018 – 2019

- Research short and long-term fundraising initiatives
- Activate the Board in fundraising responsibilities and activities
- Create an annual Fundraising Work Plan for the Board
- Develop an individual donor program
- Consider a grant writer/fundraiser pilot project
- Research social enterprise opportunities; implement one social enterprise initiative
- Research outside help to contact potential grants/foundations for programming
- Secure funding for one artist in the Artist in Residence program in 2019-2020
- Secure funding for Digital Coordinator 2018-2019
- Secure funding to hire Marketing Coordinator 2019-2020
- Secure funding to hire Membership Coordinator 2019-2020
- Secure funding for Board Professional Development workshop 2019-2020
- Secure funding for Volunteer Coordinator position 2019-2020
- Secure funding to hire professional fundraiser 2019-2020
- Secure funding for Outreach Coordinator 2019-2020

##### 2019 – 2020

- Evaluate fundraising initiatives from 2018-2019
- Implement short and long-term fundraising activities
- Evaluate and make recommendations on Board involvement in Fundraising activities
- Create further social enterprise projects as identified as viable
- Develop a corporate sponsorship program
- Develop a legacy giving program
- Research Fundraising software 2019-2020
- Increase rental rates for Gallery/Lodge rentals
- Secure funding for a second artist in residence 2020-2021
- Secure funding for a mentorship program for 2020-2021
- Secure funding to expand role of Marketing Coordinator
- Secure funding to continue funding Membership Coordinator 2020-2021
- Secure funding for Volunteer Coordinator position 2020-2021
- Secure funding for Fundraising Software for 2020-2021

2020 – 2021

- Implement a corporate sponsorship program
- Implement a legacy giving program
- Purchase Fundraising Software
- Review increase in rental rates for Gallery/Lodge rentals
- Evaluate and make recommendations on effectiveness of fundraising initiatives
- Evaluate and make recommendations on Board involvement in Fundraising activities
- Evaluate and make recommendations on the annual Fundraising Work Plan
- Implement recommendations

**Strategic Objective: To obtain funds to support additional staffing for the daily operations of the Arts Council**

2018 – 2019

- Research outside organizations who can research potential grants/foundations for human resources
- Complete a search for community members with skills in professional fundraising to bring onto the Fundraising Committee or Board of Directors
- Research costs of hiring a professional fundraiser
- Research short and long-term fundraising initiatives for human resources
- Determine staffing needs and costs of hiring new staff
- Review annual budgeting process to include additional staffing

2019-2020

- Review operating funds and set yearly fundraising targets
- Engage outside organizations to search out grants/ foundations for human resources if recommended by Board in 2018-02019
- Hire a professional fundraiser if recommended by Board in 2018-2019
- Bring on professional fundraiser(s) to Fundraising Committee/Board or Directors
- Implement short and long-term fundraising initiatives for human resource
- Search out further short and long-term fundraising initiatives for human resources

2020-2021

- Review operating funds and set yearly fundraising targets
- Evaluate effectiveness of outside organizations/professional fundraiser
- Continue to search for people with skills in fundraising for Board and Committees
- Continue to search out short and long-term fundraising initiatives for human resources
- Evaluate effectiveness of ongoing fundraising activities; refine as necessary
- Assess future staffing needs

**Strategic Objective: To secure funding for new or improving existing assets**

2018 – 2019

- ED to provide current list of assets
- Finance committee to determine asset requirements
- Develop a timeline to replace current assets
- Fundraising committee to research new opportunities for donations and sponsorships

2019 – 2020

- Finance committee to review asset requirements and prepare timeline for purchase
- Fundraising committee to implement fundraising plan for donations and sponsorships

2020 – 2021

- Finance Committee to review asset requirement
- Finance committee to determine future asset requirements
- Finance Committee to prepare the timeline to replace current assets/purchase asset requirements

**GOAL 4: Develop and nurture relationships**

Key to the sustainability and vibrancy of the Arts Council is the support and involvement of the community and the arts community, including artists and arts groups and organizations in music, theatre, media arts, dance, film, literature and visual arts (including crafts).

The Arts Council will meet regularly with the arts community to establish relationships, provide support and advocacy and develop program and events that are relevant and responsive to the community's needs and desires. Members and community have indicated that they wish to see ongoing networking events in the city so as to draw together people from all areas of the arts for sharing ideas and celebrating the arts so these have been written into this Strategic Plan. In addition, members of the arts community have indicated they wish the Arts Council to be a strong advocate for artists and the arts in our city.

In addition to nurturing relationships with artists and the community at large, the Arts Council intends to develop and nurture relationships with city employees, local businesses, community organizations and other non-profits. The Executive Director has successfully taken a lead in developing these relationships and we are anticipating this growing even stronger as we move forward.

The Arts Council will make it a priority to hold and create space for Indigenous communities to provide opportunities to engage in artistic experiences and performances. This will create an awareness and appreciation of Indigenous cultures within the larger community of New Westminster.



**Strategic Objective: To implement outreach activities to artists and community**

2018 – 2019

- Increase membership of a committee tasked to develop plans for outreach activities
- Host ongoing quarterly Cultural Roundtables; create a yearly timetable
- Host ongoing artistic discipline networking events; create a yearly timetable
- Determine the viability of hiring an Outreach Coordinator
- Continue to survey, meet with and provide events for collaboration with artists and the community at large
- Ensure responsiveness to ideas and requests from artists, our members and the community, implementing ideas whenever feasible
- Connect with artists, members and community to join Arts Council committees
- Work with the city to develop/implement Art Strategy Plan

2019 – 2020

- Identify underrepresented groups and invite them to participate in ACNW events
- Survey and meet with artists to ensure we are supporting them adequately
- Evaluate effectiveness of Cultural Roundtable and Networking events, provide recommendations for moving forward
- Continue to work with City to support Art Strategy Plan
- Hire an Outreach Coordinator

2020 – 2021

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the Cultural Roundtables
- Evaluate the effectiveness of ongoing networking events

**Strategic Objective: Connecting with diverse communities**

2018 – 2019

- Identify diverse communities within New Westminster
- Connect with these communities through surveys, one-on-one meetings, networking sessions in their community to identify their wishes and desire around the arts in New Westminster
- Undergo a diversity audit for committees and programming

2019 – 2020

- Create a plan to connect/involve these communities more deeply in the Arts and in the Arts Council
- Identify two communities with which to strengthen our relationship
- Invite people from these communities onto Arts Council Committees and the Board
- Obtain feedback from these communities regarding the effectiveness of Arts Council initiatives within their community

2020 – 2021

- Identify additional communities with which to strengthen our relationship
- Invite people from these communities onto Arts Council Committees and the Board
- Invite diverse communities to present at Arts Council programming

*Building Community Through the Arts*

- Obtain feedback from these communities regarding the effectiveness of Arts Council initiatives within their community

**Strategic Objective: Connecting with Indigenous communities**

2018 – 2019

- Consult with Indigenous artists and organizations about possible opportunities and spaces for Indigenous performers at events in New Westminster
- Dedicate 1 month per year for Indigenous artists at The Gallery at Queen's Park
- Consult with other Arts Councils to determine best practices and network with a wider Indigenous community

2019 – 2020

- Seek out opportunities for performances by Indigenous artists at ACNW events
- Increase the number of Indigenous artists to support
- Ensure performance opportunities for Indigenous artists at ACNW events
- Assess AC initiatives; refine and redevelop based on feedback
- Implement plan to build relationships and work with the Indigenous community
- Participate in community Reconciliation activities

2020-2021

- Continue to seek out opportunities/highlight Indigenous artists at ACNW events
- Evaluate our success at connecting with Indigenous communities and make recommendations to move forward

**Strategic Objective: Connecting with businesses and organizations from a variety of sectors**

2018 – 2019

- Identify businesses and organizations with similar interests as the Arts Council that we can connect with
- Remain active on Tourism, Chamber of Commerce committees
- Continue to support Board Mixer; consider hosting one this year
- Research how other Arts Councils are nurturing this kind of relationship in their communities

2019 – 2020

- Create mutually beneficial partnerships with identified businesses and organizations
- Develop two opportunities for cross-sector collaboration
- Continue to identify businesses and organizations with similar interests as the Arts Council and initiate a partnership with them
- Assess effectiveness of initiatives in 2018-2019

2020 – 2021

- Develop three opportunities for cross-sector collaboration
- Continue to identify businesses and organizations with similar interests as the Arts Council and initiate a partnership with them
- Assess effectiveness of initiatives in 2019-2020