



Canadian Conference of the Arts Advocacy Priorities 2007-08

As an extension of its mission to foster an informed public debate on cultural policy issues in Canada, the Canadian Conference of the Arts actively advocates on a number of them. From time-to-time, the Board of the CCA reviews the advocacy priorities of the organization and the related active policy files. At its February 17, 2007 meeting, the Board recast as follows the policy and advocacy priorities recommended by member delegates at the March 2006 National Policy Conference held in Ottawa.

1. Increasing the Levels of Federal Government Investment in the Arts and Culture Sector

The CCA will continue to advocate for commitments to increased and stable investment by the federal government in Canadian arts and culture through a variety of channels.

The various files pursued under this objective include:

- Funding increases for the agencies within the Canadian Heritage Portfolio, with a special emphasis on the Canada Council for the Arts and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), as well as a new national museums policy.
- Ensuring that the suite of funding programs under the “Tomorrow Starts Today” (TST) envelope is secured beyond March 31 2010.
- Creating an investment and regulatory framework for content delivery systems from broadcasters to internet service providers to ensure a consistent and significant source of investment in Canadian content creators, artists and other arts and culture professionals,
- Promoting incentives for greater philanthropy by the introduction of more generous tax measures to reward giving to charities and arts organizations.

2. Advancing the Socio-Economic Status of Artists, Creators and other Arts Professionals

The CCA has been active for decades in efforts to advance the socio-economic status of artists, creators and other arts professionals. The CCA has championed federal status of the artist legislation and advocated for equitable tax treatment for independent contractors, and the enhancement of moral and economic rights for creators and copyright owners.

The various files pursued under this objective include:

- Securing access by independent contractors to social benefits and the “soft” benefits associated with the Canada Pension Plan (CPP).

- Enacting continued revisions to the *Copyright Act* to ensure that creators and copyright owners benefit from the public use of their work.
- Achieving more equitable tax treatment for independent contractors, including income averaging, treatment of grants and the exemption of copyright and residual income from federal taxation.
- Implementing a comprehensive professional development regime with plans to recruit, retain, and develop skilled arts professionals within the context of a sectoral succession plan.

3. Enhancing the Support for the Production and Distribution of Canadian Cultural Products at Home and Around the World

Increased and stable levels of investment in Canadian artists, creators, cultural institutions and enterprises are not the only requirement to secure a vibrant and successful and creative Canadian cultural sector.

The ability of Canadians to own, control and distribute creative works in all media is fundamental to success at home and around the world. Canadian public policy must defend and enhance this capacity through a variety of measures, including;

- Implementation of policies that assert the importance of Canadian ownership and control of cultural enterprises.
- Retaining and reinforcing legislative and regulatory measures to ensure Canadian ownership and control of cultural enterprises of any kind that distribute, promote and commission new works by Canadian artists, creators and producers and make them available across Canada.
- Implanting a new policy framework that ensures that all forms of Canadian content distribution and production technologies share the same cultural obligations and objectives.
- Developing a Canadian foreign policy that promotes public diplomacy, international market, and audience development and the celebration of Canadian cultural achievements on the world stage.

4. Affirming the Role of the Federal Government in Arts and Culture Policy

The CCA has long advocated for the development of a coherent statement of federal policy in the arts and culture sector. While many individual pieces of legislation and regulations exist, there remains the need for the federal government to adopt a comprehensive framework that articulates its ongoing commitment to the development of the arts and culture in Canada to create a distinctly Canadian cultural postmark on the international scene.

The CCA will address this issue in a variety of ways, namely;

- Developing the concept of a Charter of Cultural Citizenship spelling out the obligations and rights of Canadian in matters of arts and culture.
- Participation in the review of cultural agencies and programs in a constructive and rigorous manner.

- Recasting arts and culture advocacy language and strategies in addressing the evolving relationship between the government and civil society.
- Analyzing and communicating the cultural platforms of all political parties during federal election campaigns.

5. Developing Cultural Diversity at Home and Abroad

The Government of Canada is committed to support the UNESCO Convention on cultural diversity. The CCA believes that cultural diversity starts at home, by ensuring that there is a different Canadian cultural voice in the world.

Coincidentally, Canada is a stable and prosperous country with a rich tapestry of diverse cultures. From this asset, how can Canada define a strategy to forge this diversity into something uniquely Canadian?

Looking at the CCA itself, the engagement of these diverse communities, particularly through youth, is a priority for the long-term health of the CCA and its ability to reflect the changing face of Canadian society to policy-makers.

The CCA must develop a strategy to extend its membership base among the diverse communities in Canada. It will work with partners to facilitate the engagement of these communities in the public policy discourse for the arts and culture sector.

Specific actions will include;

- On the international level, sustained involvement in the Coalition for Cultural Diversity (CCD), including advocating for the integrity of Canadian cultural policies and funding programs in international trade negotiations.
- Insisting that the application of measures within the *Broadcasting and Telecommunications* Acts enhance the diversity of Canadian voices and perspectives in all media and platforms.
- Definition of a strategy to reflect domestic cultural diversity in all elements of the CCA work plan.
- Engagement of youth in the development of the arts and culture sector and recognition of their contributions to our collective cultural identities.