



BRITISH  
COLUMBIA



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ARTS COUNCIL  
An agency of the Province of British Columbia

## IMPORTANT FACTS AND FIGURES

- Since 2001, the Government of British Columbia has allocated \$658 million in support of the province's arts and culture community.
- In 2017/18, the provincial government will invest more than \$60 million in arts and culture, including \$24 million through the BC Arts Council.
- The BC Arts Council has granted more than \$283 million to artists and cultural organizations in communities throughout the province since 2001.
- The budget for the BC Arts Council was increased in 2013/14 from \$16.8 million to \$24 million, and represents the highest level of funding in the Council's history.
- In 2016/17, the Council received 2,935 requests totaling \$46.3 million and approved 1,402 grants equaling \$24 million to applicants including:
  - artists and practitioners in 226 communities throughout British Columbia,
  - more than 200 core-funded professional arts and cultural organizations,
  - 65 co-op placements, internships and residencies,
  - 106 festivals,
  - 27 national or international appearances/tours,
  - 68 community arts councils,
  - 46 arts presenters; and,
  - 62 school districts

## BACKGROUND

- The BC Arts Council is an agency of the Province of British Columbia, created in 1995 through the *Arts Council Act*.
- The first meeting of the Council board was in 1996 at which time the funding programs offered under the former BC Arts Board were adopted.

## MANDATE, MISSION AND PRINCIPLES: ARM'S LENGTH AND PEER REVIEW

- According to the *Arts Council Act*, Council's mandate is to:
  - a) provide support for arts and culture in British Columbia,
  - b) provide persons and organizations with the opportunity to participate in arts and culture in British Columbia, and
  - c) provide an open, accountable and neutrally-administered process for managing funds for arts and culture in British Columbia.
- BC Arts Council's work is guided by two principles: an arm's-length status defines its relationship with government, and the peer assessment process defines its relationship with the arts community. Together these principles are the fundamental tenets governing Council's operations and decision-making processes.

- Council is at arm's length from government, which means that, within its legislated mandate, it has the authority to independently establish its priorities, policies and funding programs and to make grant decisions.
- Peer assessment refers to the use of independent artists and other professionals working in the field to assess grant applications, advise on priorities, and make recommendations to Council regarding the awarding of grants. Through peer assessment, Council involves the arts community directly in its operations.
- Council defines peers as individuals who, by virtue of their experience, knowledge and open-mindedness, are capable of making a fair and informed assessment of the comparative merits of grant applications.
- As a steward of public funds, Council relies on peer review to make informed decisions in the allocation of resources, to ensure freedom of thought and expression, and to engage in collective decision-making.
- The BC Arts Council oversees programs in the following four funding streams:
  - Professional Arts
  - Community Arts
  - Strategic Initiatives
  - Partnerships

## **MINISTRY, BOARD AND STAFF**

- The BC Arts Council includes government-appointed Council members and an administrative branch.
- BC Arts Council staff are part of the Arts and Cultural Development Branch within the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture. The Minister is the Hon. Lisa Beare and the Deputy Minister is Sandra Carroll.
- The Arts and Cultural Development Branch is comprised of the BC Arts Council as well as an area responsible for ministry policy. Gillian Wood is the Executive Director, responsible for both areas. The Director of the BC Arts Council is Sarah Durno.
- Fifteen Council members are appointed through Order in Council and represent the regions, cultural diversity and artistic communities of British Columbia. The Chair is Susan Jackson and Vice-Chair is Jane Brindley.
- For more information please see:
  - 2016/17 Annual Report
  - 2014-2018 Strategic Plan