



CRAFT

NOVA SCOTIA

Organizational and Program Review Finding and Recommendations

Prepared by

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Presented to

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Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we live, work, meet and travel on the traditional territories of Indigenous peoples that have cared for this land now called Canada since time immemorial.

Craft Nova Scotia acknowledges that we work, meet and travel in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People. We acknowledge and honour the Mi'kmaq people who have cared for and continue to care for this land. This territory is covered by the "Treaties of Peace and Friendship" which Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) Peoples first signed with the British Crown in 1726. The treaties did not deal with surrender of lands and resources but, in fact, recognized Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) title and established the rules for what was to be an ongoing relationship between nations. As Treaty People, Indigenous and non-Indigenous we share the mutual responsibilities for stewardship and sustainability of our cultures and community within this beautiful land. Craft Nova Scotia is committed to deepening our learning and strive to honour and uphold these Treaties through the preservation and celebration of cultural traditions and contemporary craft practices.

Strategic Moves is located in and operates from Whitehorse, Yukon on the traditional territories of the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council and Kwanlin Dün First Nation, self-governing nations that negotiated modern land claims treaties, Final Agreements, and Self-Government Agreements (2002 and 2005 respectively) under the [Umbrella Final Agreement](#) (UFA, 1993) between the 14 Yukon First Nations and the Governments of Canada and Yukon. The UFA is the result of a twenty-year process that began in 1973, when a delegation of Yukon Chiefs went to Ottawa to meet with the Prime Minister of Canada. Armed only with their determination, courage and the historic document, [Together Today For Our Children Tomorrow](#), they were able to convince the federal government to begin a negotiation process for a modern-day treaty, the first in Canada.

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“[This is the] opportunity to take an organization that was doing reasonably well and take a huge leap forward, be very progressive and become proactive, re-envision what we do and how we do things.”

- Planning Group Participant

HOW TO READ THIS DOCUMENT

The first section lays out the context for this organizational review, the project's design and shares appreciation of the people who have been involved in this work.

The Diagnosis (Analysis) and Prescription (Recommendations) sections present the key findings and directly related recommendations.

Findings or insights are presented in a text box and specifically identified.

The table of contents shows the diagnostics and recommendations clearly. Users of this digital file can click on the table of contents to navigate this document.

Additionally, a draft Bylaws revision and a draft Policy Framework have been developed for review and approval by the appropriate bodies within Craft Nova Scotia. Those are supplied in separate documents due to length.

For additional background and detail, the reader can request the previously published detailed Report of Findings: Part 1 – Online Survey and Environmental Review; Summary of Qualitative Input from Stakeholders (March 25, 2022); and Part 2 - Governance Review: Bylaws and Policies (April 11, 2022)

***“Hopeful for structural change, effective policy change.
Excited to see new folks participate and make change.”***

– Planning Group Participant

CONTEXT

In September 2021, Craft Nova Scotia (CNS) issued a *Request for Proposal* for a Project Consultant to undertake an *Organizational and Program Review, and EDI Consulting*. On the basis of its winning proposal, Strategic Moves was engaged to develop a review of CNS' organizational structures, governance, and program review, through the lens of equity, diversity and inclusion, including:

- Review Bylaws, Organizational Policies, Strategic Plan, and other relevant internal documents and make recommendations.
- Evaluate the governance structures in terms of effectiveness, in general, and through the lens of EDI, in particular.
- Program review to evaluate effectiveness and sustainability and develop a plan for future programming as warranted by the findings.
- Review best and leading practices among the arts and culture sector, not-for-profit sector and beyond to inform our thinking related to equity, diversity, inclusion as well as anti-racism practices and sustainability practices.

METHODOLOGY

Strategic Moves' community engagement practice values mutual respect, connectedness, reciprocity, generosity, and common purpose. We offered multiple avenues for input and feedback suited to different people and organizations to make participation as easy and user-friendly as possible.

Strategic Moves brought an attitude of sharing and holding space for the entire group to enable them to work effectively together. Any review process requires a common basis of fact and understanding from which to validate the key issues and develop sound solutions. Sharing basic information, coming to agreement on the issues, as well as creating spaces for critical discussion were all essential. To accomplish this, we purposefully designed these processes together with the CNS project leader and Board committee to enable sharing, learning, focusing attention, and creating the reflection and thinking spaces that allowed participants to make new information their own and provide their advice and guidance.

This process has been undertaken during the ongoing COVID pandemic using digital tools:

- Online survey
- Zoom-based focus groups and community input and review meetings
- Web-based research and tools like Statistics Canada's Census database
- Email and phone calls to maintain ongoing communications

The following graphic outlines the specific activities undertaken between December 2021 and May 2022.

Gathering Input

- Board and Staff interviews – Board members in two group discussions; 4 current and 1 former staff, via a mix of individual and group interviews
- Community Conversations (Feb 15 & 17) – 70 RSVPs with 44 attending plus 3 Board members and staff as observers
- Focus groups with participants from equity-seeking groups (March 7 & 8) – 7 participants
- Online Community Survey (January 26 - March 1) – 141 completed responses
- Emails / phone calls – consultant received additional comments from interested parties
- TOTAL number of participants offering direct input and perspectives: 198

External Information

- Funders perspective (focus group with 4 staff from NS provincial funder)
- Review of bylaws and policies
- Environmental Scan re: trends, best practices

Report of Findings

- Consolidated findings in two parts: Part 1 - Survey and Environmental Review with a Summary of Qualitative Input from Stakeholders; Part 2 - Governance and Policy Review
- Issues identification from EDI and Good Governance perspective

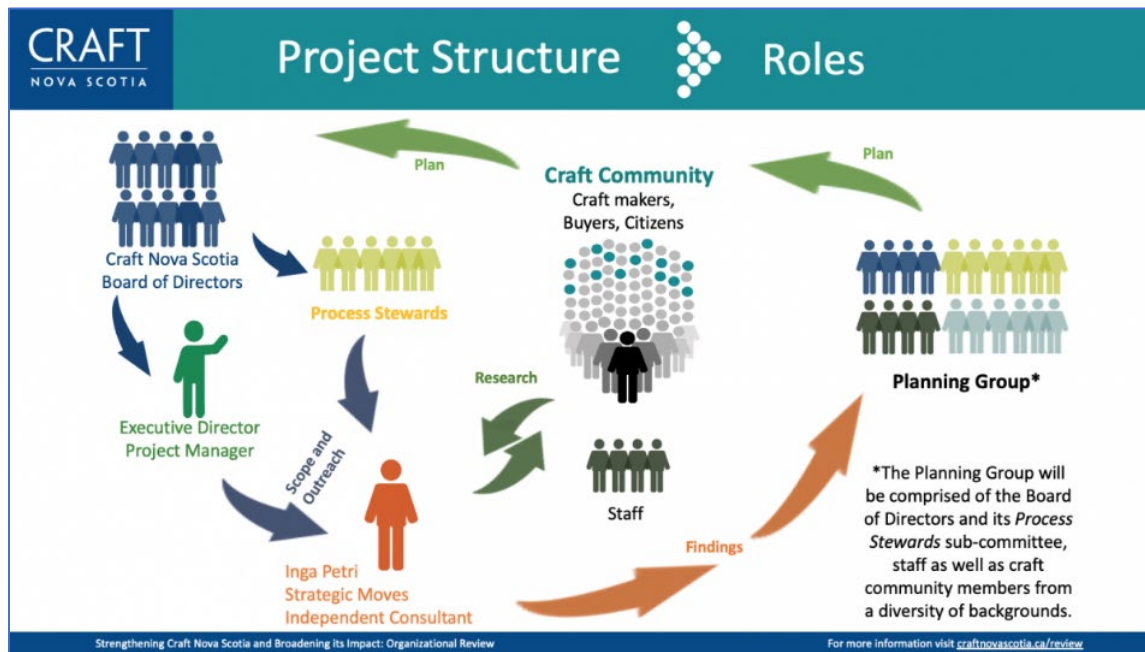
Planning Group

- Comprised of Board, staff and ten community members
- Undertook 4 Planning Group working sessions on March 31, April 14, April 21 and May 5.
- The April 14 working meeting was held as an open community and Planning Group working session to review and validate research and help identify the issues to address to move forward. 12 community members attended in addition the Planning Group members.
- Develop a set of recommendations for changes to move the organization forward, from organizational structure and governance, programs and services, membership, training and development, financial management

Findings and Recommendations

- The present Report of Findings and Recommendations
- Draft Bylaws ready for Board and membership review
- Draft Policies ready for Staff and Board review

The consultant, in collaboration with the Board of Director's *Process Stewards Committee* and Executive Director, developed this project structure. It was designed to create ample spaces for a diversity of voices to be heard throughout the research and planning process, and to build toward a consensus on key recommendations. The formation of the Planning Group brought interested stakeholders to the same table of reflection and guidance: the Board of Directors, core staff as well as ten community members without regard for their current membership status in CNS.



The Planning Group was designed to “actively participate in the reflection and planning process. The decision process is designed to achieve consensus; the process and conversations should lead to a common set of goals and implementation paths.” Criteria for participation were simple:

- must be able to commit to the time to fully engage in the planning work
- have an interest in strengthening Craft Nova Scotia for the benefit of the whole craft community in Nova Scotia
- have an interest in advancing truth and reconciliation with Indigenous communities
- have an interest in advancing equity, diversity and inclusion within Craft Nova Scotia

Individuals could indicate their interest by communicating directly with the consultant or by indicating their interest in the online survey which was received by the consultant. From an initial group of 31 individuals who either expressed definitive interest or sought additional information, 19 people were invited to participate. Those 19 represented those who expressed definitive interest, various craft disciplines, age groups, and were both members and non-members of CNS. After consideration by this initial group, ten confirmed their participation. Having reached the target, we invited any other interested individuals to the community meeting on April 14 where they could fully participate in the reflections on findings and guide further detailed discussions.

This final report and recommendations reflect the work done by the Planning Group members and expand on proposed draft solutions. The CNS Board of Directors will receive this report and finalize the action plans resulting from it, including further membership engagement.

APPRECIATION

This organizational and program review was commissioned and supported by CNS' Board of Directors in both time and expertise.

- Deborah Wheeler President
- Tori Poynton 1st Vice President
- Frances Dorsey 2nd Vice President
- Kaas Ghanie 3rd Vice President
- Wilma Butts Secretary
- Bernard Burton Past President
- Candice Prior Director-at-large
- Marla Benton Director-at-large

Special appreciation to the current and former staff members who shared their perspectives and experiences and substantively contributed to this work. Special thanks to Kelly Jerrott for managing this work for CNS and offering advice and guidance throughout.

- Kelly Jerrott Executive Director
- Emily Wareham Director, Centre for Craft Nova Scotia
- Anna Joan Taylor Administrative Coordinator, Centre for Craft Nova Scotia
- Pamela Juarez Studio Operations & Programming Coordinator (hired March 2022)
- Rebecca Groves Membership Engagement & Administrative Coordinator (hired March 2022)
- Alexis Vessey former staff member
- Julian Covey former staff member
- Julie Rosvall former staff member
- Susan Charles former staff member

In addition to the Board and current staff, the following craft community members joined the Planning Group and participated in discussions that informed the analysis and these recommendations. Their contributions have been invaluable to guide the final recommendations delivered with this report.

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| ▪ Athanasia Vayianou, former jewelry technician | ▪ Linnet Finley |
| ▪ Erin Wells, current ceramics instructor | ▪ Lori Nason |
| ▪ Fern Pellerin | ▪ Nancy Oakley |
| ▪ Helen Ruddy | ▪ Robert Champagne |
| ▪ Jane Mason-Browne | ▪ Virginia Stephen |

We engaged with many individuals active and interested in CNS as well as the craft sector in general through various research and feedback modes, including the online survey. We thank them for their time and dedication to advancing craft in Nova Scotia.

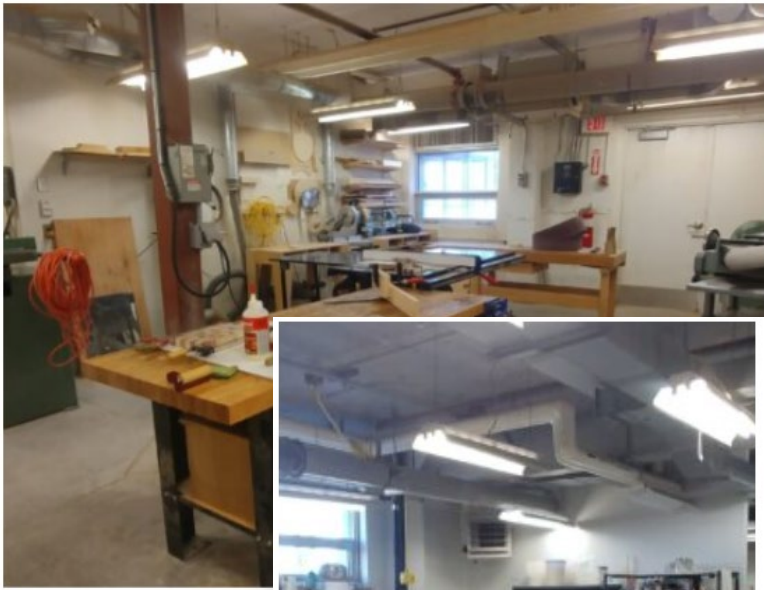
Special appreciation to the following individuals who participated in community meetings and focus groups, alongside the members of the Planning group.

▪ Adam	McNamara	▪ K. Claire	MacDonald
▪ Alexandra	Glenn-Collins	▪ Karen	LeBlanc
▪ Alison	Murphy	▪ Kas	Stone
▪ Alissa	Kloet	▪ Kate	Grey
▪ Allyson	Simmie	▪ Kellie	Anderson
▪ Andrea	Tsang Jackson	▪ Kit	Holden-Ada
▪ Brandt	Eisner	▪ Lauren	Williams
▪ Carley	Mullally	▪ Lux	Habrich
▪ Carol	Morrison	▪ Lynette	Richards
▪ Chris	Shore	▪ Megan	Archer
▪ Colette	Samson	▪ Neil	Forrest
▪ Darrell	Eisner	▪ Perry	Park
▪ Denise	Lynch	▪ Philip	Doucette
▪ Dorothee	Rosen	▪ Rebecca	Hannon
▪ Ellen	Timbre	▪ Renee	Brazeau
▪ Emma	Piirtoniemi	▪ Robin	Metcalfe
▪ Funmilayo	Odeniyi	▪ Sarah	Cheetham
▪ Hans	Durstling	▪ Susan	Jeffries
▪ James	Brown	▪ Undine	Foulds
▪ Jamie	MacLellan	▪ V.	Smith
▪ Jennifer	Marlow	▪ Veronica	Post
▪ Jessie	Fraser	▪ Wendy	Shirran
▪ Joanna	Close	▪ Z. Ven	Cain
▪ Julie	Hollenbach		

INCENTIVES AND HONORARIA

To recognize participation in the community input sessions, a \$25 honorarium was offered for the first 10 people who registered and participated in each of the two sessions. Focus group participants received a \$75 honorarium for their participation. The online survey used a \$100 gift voucher for CNS services as an incentive. In recognition of the extensive time commitment by Planning Group members, the ten community members joining were offered a \$300 honorarium for their time and participation.

Board members volunteered throughout without remuneration. Core staff members participated within the scope of their employment at CNS.



*The Wood, Ceramics,
Jewellery and Weaving
Studios at the Centre
for Craft.*



DIAGNOSIS – KEY ISSUES

This next section outlines 11 major areas of concern that emerged during this review process.

1. NEED FOR IMPROVED CLARITY AND UNDERSTANDING OF GOVERNANCE

The Review revealed both misgivings and misperceptions about the governance structures of CNS, the authority of Board and staff, and a misperception by some that the organization operates without accountability to the membership. There are several factors that conspired to create these impressions:

- Inaccessible bylaws resulting in a lack of knowledge about the existing governance structures.
- At times ambiguous bylaw provisions that are open to interpretation.
- No term limits that have resulted in very long tenures (10 years and more) among Board members.
- The presentation of a slate of Board members for acclamation at the Annual General Meeting.
- No apparent transparency in Board nominations process.

These misgivings and misperceptions surrounding structural concerns have become coupled with a sense that CNS has been stuck in old ways of operating. In part that latter view is based on old bylaws that have not been reviewed or substantively amended in two decades (the [Registrar's record](#) shows a bylaw amendment in 1999, while the set of bylaws provided as part of this process were dated 2006 with a minor amendment to a single clause in 2020); and that it has not kept up with the times in terms of social change and in terms of best practices in not-for-profit governance.

Finding It is important to note that these misperceptions are not supported by the facts in terms of how CNS' governance works, in particular in terms of accountability to membership. Nonetheless, the Board of Directors took these concerns seriously; it commissioned this Organizational Review to develop an informed, clear and empowered way forward for CNS as an organization and its membership.

Basis of Fact

In this section of the report (page 11 to 16), the facts of CNS' governance structures are outlined. In addition, an overview of best practices in governance is interwoven to provide context for the changes recommended.

CNS is a membership-based association. It is a Nova Scotia-registered not-for-profit arts service organization that has obtained charitable status federally. This dual status provides a minimum legal framework for the authorities, responsibilities and accountabilities through the [Societies Act, Nova Scotia](#) (1993), the [Canada Not-for-Profit Corporations Act](#) (2009), and the [General Requirements for Charitable Registration](#) (2012).

These laws together **do specify** the powers and accountabilities of members and their elected Board of directors, as well as the fiduciary duty of the Board of directors. These laws **do not** include any mention of the delegation of powers or accountability mechanisms to an Executive Director or other staff. When an organization's Board becomes an employer, provincial labour laws apply to the organization and its employees. It is the Board's responsibility to ensure the lawful operation of the organization in compliance with all laws, including Occupational Health and Safety and Human Rights legislation.

As required by law, CNS holds an Annual General Meeting at which financial statements and activities are reviewed; members can engage in discussion of the reports and the results achieved. CNS also makes

mandatory annual filings and organizational updates that are published by the [Registrar of Joint Stock Companies](#). Mandatory annual charitable financial returns are filed with and published by [Canada Revenue Agency](#). All of this information is in the public domain and accessible to anyone.

Finding The detailed bylaws review revealed that the current bylaws are outdated, unclear and ambiguous in a number of areas. The policy review identified an incomplete policy framework requiring several new policies to be added and others updated.

Evolution in Governance Structures

In early-stage not-for-profit organization, called societies in Nova Scotia, the Board is often a working Board that develops and provides programs and services directly to its membership, often with deep involvement of that membership. As organizations grow and mature, their scope increases, and they tend to require increased capacity to advance their mandate. They hire their first staff person and begin to delegate some of their responsibilities to staff. As the staff complement grows, the Board tends to move to being a management Board and, eventually, it should move toward being a governance Board (ideally one that operates on a “hands-off, nose-in” basis to satisfy its accountability to members as well as laws.)

Finding Before the COVID-induced, earlier than planned, departure of its long-time Executive Director, the CNS Board acted as a governance Board that met quarterly and was largely concerned with the financial viability of the organization and its programs. In effect, all day-to-day management authorities were delegated to the Executive Director.

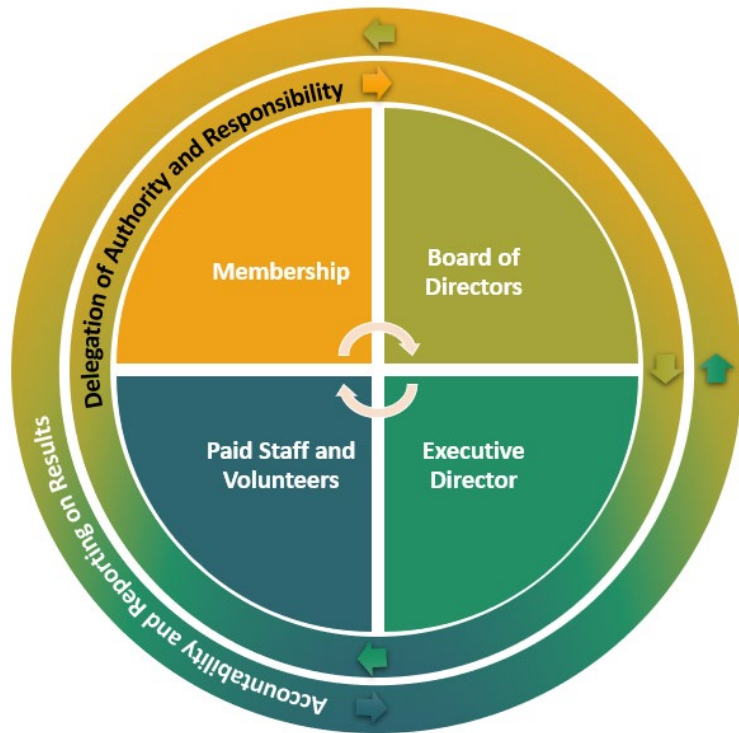
At each developmental stage of an organization, its governing documents should be reviewed and updated to ensure they meet the needs of an evolving organization. Policies and procedures must be developed and updated to satisfy a wide range of legal obligations emanating from the Labour Standards Code, Human Rights legislation, Occupational Health and Safety and any other relevant provincial and federal laws, from social obligations to serve a diverse membership and the community at large as well as from practical considerations to provide standardized, reliable programs and services.

Finding Up-to-date, transparent delineation of lines of authority, responsibility and accountability are crucial to avoid unhelpful behaviours from an earlier stage of organizational development, and to avoid misunderstandings and misinterpretations of authorities that become detrimental to the health and vitality of a society.

Authority, Responsibility and Accountability in Not-for-profit Organizations

This graphic shows the basic organizational dynamic in terms of the delegation of powers (authority and responsibility) emanating clockwise from the membership toward front-line staff while accountabilities and reporting are moving in the opposite direction from staff back to the membership of the society.

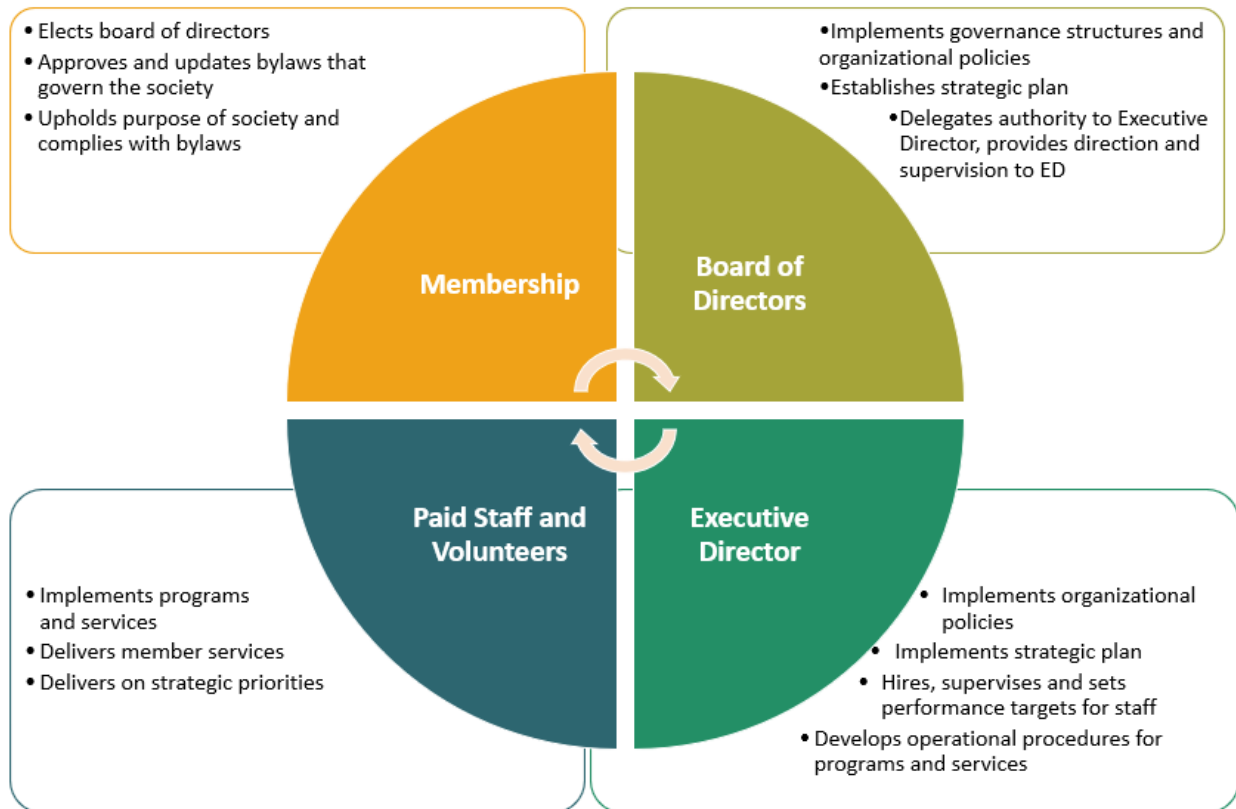
Staff delivers programs and services directly to members. Their relationship with membership can and should be one of trust and respect. Notwithstanding that closeness, accountability from staff never goes directly to the membership or the Board; staff members' authorities and responsibilities are delegated through the executive director. Therefore, staff is accountable and reports to the executive director who in turn is accountable and reports to the Board who in turn is accountable and reports to the membership.



Finding In the absence of an executive director the Board as the employer is, in fact, responsible and accountable for running the organization, providing direction to staff as well as hiring and firing them. Bylaws are not intended to govern staffing, other than to allow the hiring of an executive director and other staff without requiring specific membership approval. Therefore, a more comprehensive HR policy should be adopted that outlines delegation and accountability mechanisms, usually done through performance planning and review. That HR policy should also outline the actions the Board will take when the executive director position is vacant, such as appointing an acting or interim Executive Director, so the Board does not in effect need to manage staff or day-to-day operations.

Basic Roles and Functions in a Mature Society

Each of the groups of people within a society has specific roles and tasks to ensure its functioning:



1. Membership elects the Board of Directors, approves bylaws and upholds them; receives services.
2. The society is governed by a Board of Directors. The Board can delegate any of its authorities and responsibilities to an executive director who it directs and supervises. Importantly, the Board cannot delegate or abdicate its accountability to the membership. As such Boards normally retain their oversight over governance and strategy. Well-functioning Boards adopt a “trust and verify” approach to hold the executive director accountable for their actions, decisions and results achieved.
3. The executive director is the sole direct report to the Board. They are directed and supervised by the Board through the founding documents, the strategic plan, annual business plans, performance planning and review as well as monitoring results.
4. All other staff report to the Executive Director or their designated managers.

Governance Tools

Every society has the same basic governance tools at its disposal. It can use them to achieve sufficient cohesion and accountability in the organization to achieve its purpose.

In Nova Scotia, the legally required documents are:

1. Memorandum of Association = The purpose statement; this document is created and updated by the membership with guidance and recommendations from the Board, and anyone engaged to do so.
2. Bylaws = Specify the governance of the society, rights and obligations of members and Board; the bylaws are created and updated by the membership with guidance and recommendations from the Board, and anyone engaged to provide advice.

Any organization uses these tools to establish standards of behaviour and how to get things done:

3. Organizational Policies = Establish the broad standards of behaviours; Establish code of conduct for staff and volunteers; policies are usually created by the Board in collaboration with the executive director and/or the senior management team, and anyone the Board or executive director engages to provide advice.
4. Operational Procedures = Specific sequences of activities to implement specific tasks; usually developed by staff as it relates to implementation of plans and priorities.

Not-for-profit organizations have adopted standardized management practices using key planning tools and documents to keep track of their goals and objectives and translating them to workplans:

5. Strategic Plan = A 3- to 5-year strategic plan sets out the specific goals and objectives as well as success measures to advance the purpose of the society. A strategic plan is a key management tool for a governance Board; its creation ideally is undertaken jointly by the Board and staff, with input and feedback from the membership. Often an external strategic planner is engaged to facilitate the research and planning processes.
6. Annual Budget = The Board has fiduciary authority and is responsible and accountable to the membership as well as the public. The Board cannot abdicate its fiduciary responsibility; it can delegate specific financial management tasks. The Annual Budget is normally prepared by the Executive Director in consultation with staff and in close collaboration with the Treasurer or a finance committee who present the budget for discussion and approval to the Board. Once approved the budget offers the parameters within which staff does their work. New spending within a budget cycle and spending above the approved budget usually requires approval by the Board as outlined in its financial policy.
7. Annual business plan = This plan turns the high-level multi-year strategic plan and the annual budget into detailed annual activity plans for staff and volunteers; this is usually the responsibility of the executive director or the management team of a society in collaboration with staff. In larger organizations there may be specific functional plans as well, e.g. programming, marketing, facility maintenance and upgrading.
8. Annual performance plans = the annual business plan is translated for each employee into their specific performance plan and targets specific to their role; this is usually the responsibility of the manager the employee reports to in collaboration with the employee and executive director. Performance reviews methods should be supportive of staff and clear in terms of the legal obligations of the employer, and the accountability for results achieved or missed.

Governing Documents – Summary Table

Document	Type	Authority of	Responsibility of	Consultation with
Memorandum of Association*	Foundational - Purpose	Membership	Board	
Bylaws*	Foundational - Powers	Membership	Board	Exec Director
Policies – Board governance, committees	Behaviours	Board	Board	Board
Policies – Operations, HR		Board	Exec Director	Staff Members
Procedures	Consistent and reliable execution	Exec Director	Staff	Volunteers Members
Strategic Plan	Strategic Direction 3 to 5 years	Board	Board Exec Director	Staff Members
Annual Budget	Revenue sources & Resource allocation	Board	Board Exec Director	Staff
Annual Business Plan	Implementation & Accountability	Exec Director	Managers	Staff Board Volunteers
Annual Performance Plan		Exec Director	Managers Staff	

** Updates to both of these documents only come into force once they are filed and approved by both Nova Scotia's Registrar for Joint Stock Companies and then Canada Revenue Agency. Changing a charitable organization's purpose is a serious endeavour; the new purpose statement [must meet the requirements for charitable purposes](#) outlined by Canada Revenue Agency. There is no guarantee of the length of time provincial and federal approval requires. Normally, provincial approval can be obtained within weeks, unless documents are not properly filed. Federal approval can take several months or longer if there is a concern about whether the new purpose is exclusively charitable.*

***“[I feel] optimistic that we can implement these suggestions.
[I] appreciate that these sessions have given
an opportunity for all to share their perspectives.”***

– Planning Group Participant

2. COMMUNICATIONS

Effective communication is crucial in any organization. Effective communication means that the information is presented clearly and sent to the intended recipients in a manner that reaches them; and that it is received as intended. In short, every communication requires a sender and a receiver. The Board and staff who are operating the organization and the membership must be engaged in the process of communication and sharing information with each other.

There has been recurring feedback about a perceived lack of communication or access to information about organizational matters to the broader membership. Yet, there has also been a long history of poorly attended Annual General Meetings which are designed to provide accountability from the Board to the membership. (This is not an uncommon occurrence in the not-for-profit sector.)

In the communications field, the shaping of messages and communications receives much attention. No less important, but often discounted, is it to understand the *unintended messages* that might be communicated to all or some of the community, membership or stakeholders. Unintended communications appear to be at issue in some of the misconceptions about how CNS is governed and how it operates. These include:

- Inaccessible bylaws and / or differing interpretations of bylaws.
 - **Fact:** they have been available by request to all members without prejudice; but they are ambiguous in parts, and, at times, overly complicated (e.g. board nominations and elections) or too detailed (e.g. in articulating organizational policies).
- Whether a non-juried craft maker or other individual can be a full member and thus can become a Board member.
 - **Fact:** they can be.
- How to become a Board member or stand for election.
 - **Fact:** the bylaws establish a clear but complicated nomination and election process; this requires significant updates to make the process clearer, easier and more accessible.
- That the Board acts autonomously without accountability.
 - **Fact:** the Board is, in fact, in charge of the organization, which is an authority bestowed by the membership through the election – or acclamation – of the Board; in return the Board is accountable to the membership and it must lawfully fulfill its role.
- How to volunteer in the organization and serve on its committees.
 - **Fact:** the website does not appear to feature that information, or any indication of the need for volunteers.
- Membership benefits are not clear except for juried members.
 - **Fact:** the current website has a membership section that outlines benefits; whether they are valued is another issue.
- The Centre for Craft is an independent organization
 - **Fact:** it is not – [see section 3.](#)

The net effect of this dynamic has been that CNS appears as a closed, exclusive club to some participants in the Review process.

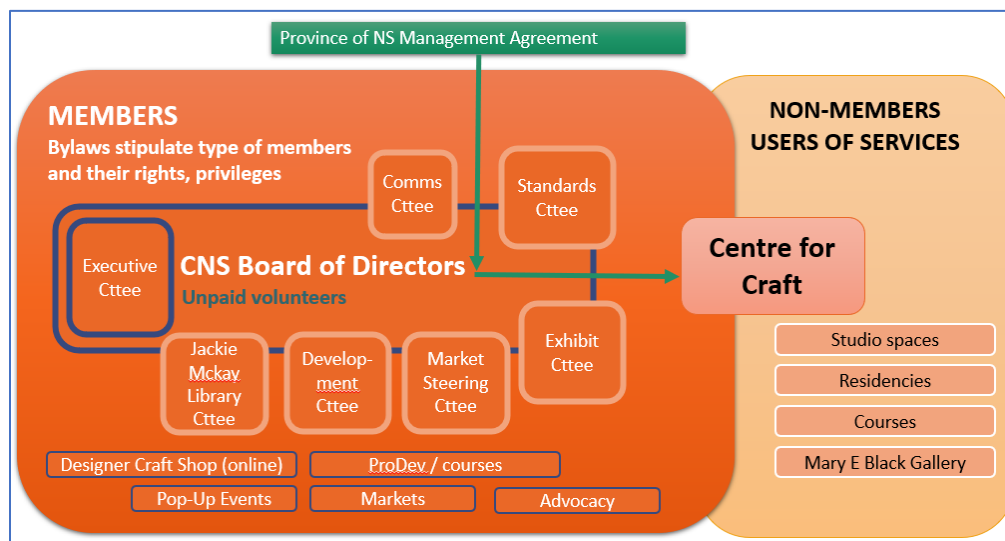
Of note, communicating with the membership is largely a function that is delegated to staff. In terms of bylaws and related concerns about membership services, for instance, members can contact the office and request information or discuss their needs and desires.

Finding Throughout the review process there have been complaints about bylaws not being accessible. In reality, every member has the right to know the bylaws and financial matters of the society. In effect, as a charity, CNS is subject to public disclosure of its financial information through Canada Revenue Agency; and its bylaws and amendments to them must be filed with and approved by the Nova Scotia Registrar for Societies which in turn makes them available publicly. To correct the perception of being exclusive, CNS should consider making its bylaws, annual financial statements and its strategic plan, publicly available on its website.

3. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CRAFT NOVA SCOTIA AND THE CENTRE FOR CRAFT

Basis of Fact

This graphic portrays the fuller organizational structure of CNS including standing committees, services and programs both for its members and the wider craft community. CNS is responsible and accountable under a management agreement with the Province of Nova Scotia for the operations of and results achieved by the Centre for Craft. The Agreement was first struck in 2004 to ensure the Centre's continued existence for the benefit of the craft movement as a whole.



In short, the Centre for Craft is an integral part of CNS and governed under the same governance structure as any other program or service provided by the society. The majority of provincial funds received by CNS are a result of this management agreement; those funds must be used to deliver the contractually mandated programs and services.

Confusion due to Separate Brand, Separate Building, Separate Reporting

The Centre of Craft occupies a province-run building at a separate location from the CNS offices. In addition, CNS has maintained a separate brand for the Centre for Craft. There is also a requirement for financial reporting to the Province separate from the other programs and services provided by CNS. The relationship between the Board and the Centre has not been particularly close in the past, except at the level of programs Board members might participate in. The users of Centre programs tend to be younger, earlier in their career and from more diverse backgrounds than members of CNS. This combination of factors appears to have generated a false sense that the Centre operates in some ways autonomously or on its own terms, separate from CNS.

Finding The Centre for Craft is managed by CNS. The CNS Board is responsible and accountable for all activities undertaken at the Centre for Craft both to the Province of Nova Scotia and to the society's membership. Staff of the Centre, like all other staff hired by CNS, take direction from and report to the Executive Director.

4. EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION – VOICE AND INFLUENCE

What We Have Learned

While 75% – a large majority – of survey respondents expressed favourable views of CNS, and highlighted the value they see in the society, 25% – a large minority – expressed a range of unfavourable views. These unfavourable views were often related to perceptions of a lack of diversity, exclusion of craft practices or methods not based in European traditions and perceiving an exclusionary club mentality in the organization. Nonetheless, this segment sees the potential of CNS to help them develop their networks and careers and wishes for full entry into the society.



There has been extensive feedback through all phases of this organizational review that CNS has not adequately kept up with the social changes that have taken place over the last few decades. Since this organizational review commissioned by the Board of Directors has explicitly been tasked to apply a lens of equity, diversity and inclusion, this feedback did not come as a surprise. The review process has been designed to help the society transition toward providing equitable, diverse and inclusive spaces where voices, experiences and craft practices that have been systemically marginalized or excluded in society in general would be centred, respected and supported.

Throughout the diagnostic and planning phases we have heard some worry that concepts of *excellence*, *quality* and *the standards* have been used to maintain a *status quo* that is seen to favour long-time members looking for market opportunities, rather than invite emerging artisans and craft makers from diverse backgrounds and artistic practices into the fold. Importantly, there is a shared sense between Board, staff and craft makers that any cultural blind spots should and can be alleviated through a number of mechanisms: from reviewing the standards themselves to ensuring jurying is not influenced unduly by who is jurying and who is being juried.

CNS' slow response to the changing demographics of Nova Scotia is seen as a serious liability by many. The reverse is seen as true as well: greater diversity and inclusion would strengthen the society, increase its relevance and make it more resilient now and in the future. Similarly, spending more resources and attention on rural Nova Scotia outside Halifax is seen as an important area of renewed focus.

The desire and need for training related to equity, diversity and inclusion for Board and staff members was amplified and affirmed by the online survey as well as the planning group process. There also have been requests to provide that training to committee members and the wider membership and community to bring everyone along on the path of inclusion.

Finding Board, staff and membership of CNS have acknowledged significant shortcomings in terms of fully representing the craft community, not only in terms of forms of craft, but in terms of the cultural backgrounds and identity-based groups that have been systemically marginalized in Canadian society. There is strong agreement to make the changes needed to evolve CNS as a true leader in advancing equity, diversity and inclusion through effective actions. CNS Board signed the federal government's [50-30 Challenge](#) in 2019 and seeks to implement specific actions to meet the challenge within the bounds of the demographics of Nova Scotia. Removing structural barriers to broaden inclusion should become paramount.

5. STANDARDS AND JURYING PROCESSES

What We Have Learned

The Standards Committee is an active standing committee of the Board. It has developed an extensive library of standards it applies in its jurying of different craft disciplines. Those materials are available and published on CNS' website.



The Standard Committee's work is integral to building and maintaining CNS' reputation: high quality and high standards are the most commonly cited strengths of the organization. However, this strength has also become a weakness, as the process to become a juried member has resulted in a feeling of exclusion, at times, rather than a feeling of recognizing diverse craft practices. As previously reported: "Frequently crafts people say they are applying but not making it past the standards committee. Many of them show at crafts

shows across the province and their work is high caliber. Diversifying the perspective of the selections committee seems important.” The *norm*, *standards* and *excellence* all carry cultural connotations that are not universal and may not be easily transferable from one cultural context to another.

Importantly, we have not heard any requests to lower standards or to compromise on quality measures being applied; however, there has been demand to revisit the Standards through the lens of diversity and inclusion and to acknowledge and accept practices based in other cultural contexts including but not limited to Indigenous practices. There also has been demand to provide more assistance to applicants to ensure they are well equipped to succeed in the jurying process. Such assistance has been available but may not be widely known.

Craft NS is participating in ongoing regional conversations with other craft organizations to review and update standards. Recently, the Standards Committee experimented with a blind jurying process for Standards to see how it affects the outcomes, if at all. Related to Standards, there is also an Exhibition Committee. That committee has recently adopted a Diversity and Inclusion statement to guide its curatorial work which has also been approved by the Board.

Finding Standards are important; however, it is crucial to ensure they do not bias toward certain European craft practices or exclude other cultural practices and techniques.

6. LABOUR RELATIONS AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

It is beyond the scope of this organizational review to investigate, validate or adjudicate any potential, or specific grievances, complaints or human resource related concerns. It is however clear that a complaint and conflict resolution process that allows staff to escalate and resolve grievances is required to help ensure concerns are addressed in a timely and proactive manner.

A lack of trust had developed between Board/management and some staff as well as the society and some members and non-members who are craft makers. Much of this appears centred on issues related to equity, diversity and inclusion, or some lack thereof, in the organization. Aspects also relate to divergent beliefs about the power of staff versus the power of the executive director and the Board ([See the governance diagnostic](#), and [the relationship to the Centre of Craft diagnostic](#)).

There are also *conflict of interest* policies needed to govern situations where staff might be perceived to benefit their own craft practice (as members of CNS) because of their employment. Similarly, a *conflict of interest* policy for Board members needs to be developed, to avoid perceptions of favour or preferential treatment in terms of market or exhibit opportunities.

The existing HR policy framework is too rudimentary to cover the needs of a mature arts organization with many services and programs for both members and non-members.

Finding A comprehensive and current policy framework, including HR policies, complaint, conflict of interest and conflict resolution policies, have to be developed to suit the needs of the organization.

There is also a shared concern about the ability of the arts sector in general to be able to attract the talent needed in future, given its well-founded reputation for paying low wages compared to competitors for the same skill sets. Especially as many arts and cultural workers have left the arts due to COVID restrictions, there is renewed urgency to evolve a system whereby cultural workers achieve a living wage. Various mechanisms



for this are being discussed in the sector, from increased public support to a guaranteed basic income. Advocacy efforts have gained momentum due to the improved understanding of precarious employment in much of the arts sector. Some staff at CNS have outlined their inability to make ends meet without other support, whether from family or government, with the wages they are paid, and the lack of at minimum cost of living increases. CNS recognizes the need to take steps toward improving wage levels within the industry and has approved a new 2022 budget that includes wage increases.

7. OPERATIONAL AND HR STRUCTURE

The discussions above about [clear communications](#), [governance](#) and [the relationship between CNS and the Centre for Craft](#), have shown that there is a need to clarify staff roles and related hierarchies.

Historically, it appears that job titles were used to recognize individuals' contributions in the absence of having the budget needed to offer wage increases or bonuses in recognition of achievement. This has created a situation where there are several "directors" at CNS, which arguably has contributed to a certain level of confusion about authorities, responsibilities, and accountabilities.

There also needs to be a detailed review to see to what degree existing job descriptions reflect what staff do and ensure alignment. This is particularly important as COVID has shifted work done by employees.

Finding The [operational structure](#) of CNS is clear but job titles and functions don't fully align to this structure. Development of a broader Human Resources Plan, with the assistance as needed of a Human Resource specialist well-versed in the arts and culture sector, will correct these concerns.

8. SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES TO SUPPORT OPERATIONAL CAPACITY

CNS has been slow to realize the potential of the shift toward digital tools that has accelerated since the mid-1990s due to the advent of the Internet. It has remained a paper-based organization; the need to find paper files that contain important organizational information is a hindrance to efficient operations. Due to the accelerated departure of the previous executive director, there was no opportunity to familiarize the incoming executive director with filing cabinets and where to find the final or current paper documents. This has resulted in extensive searches for paper documents including policies, and considerable effort to ascertain whether a document was the definitive or latest approved version. There also appears to be a lack of available documentation which has made operational and HR decisions opaquer as staff have changed.

In 2022, it is difficult to operate any office efficiently without contemporary digital systems and digitizing repetitive processes whether it is for finance transactions and reporting, service delivery or event organization and marketing. CNS uses different tools for membership fees, retail and market sales, online sales, and workshop fees. These tools operate independently and require substantial efforts at reconciliation with the accounting system. The membership database is another standalone tool that does not feature adequate functionality to manage the list, members communication or integrate with the financial or accounting system.

Finding CNS should invest in integrated digital technology back-office infrastructure, that satisfies its wide range of operational needs from financial administration for online and physical sales to workshop registrations and event attendance to payroll; to maintaining membership and contact lists with integrated communications tools; to project and event management.

9. FINANCIAL MODEL, COVID AND LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY

Basis in Fact

CNS' public funding has been provided exclusively by the Province of Nova Scotia. Most of that funding comes from an Agreement between the Province and CNS for the management and operation of the Centre for Craft; that means those funds are not core funding for CNS but dedicated funds that can only be spent on programs and services the Centre provides. CNS' public funding as a percentage of overall revenue was around 40% prior to COVID. That was much lower than similar organizations in Nova Scotia

with similar budgets that received about 70% from public sources across all three levels of government (municipal, provincial, and federal). This relatively low ratio of public funding means CNS has to generate significant revenue from membership, various user fees and registrations. It should be noted that having diversified funding for arts service organizations is desirable as it makes an organization more resilient



and agile. In the case of CNS, it appears that there may be several untapped public funding options and there also may be opportunities to increase private sources of funding along with earned revenue. With the new executive director, greater efforts have gone to identify and secure public funding for projects from sources other than the Province.

By 2018, CNS had accumulated a debt of about \$100,000. This debt resulted from lower income from core activities like the craft markets – and an annual deficit for holding the Summer Craft Market – and operating the Designer Craft Shop at an annual deficit since inception. Board and staff worked hard to reduce expenses, including through reducing staff hours, to pay down this debt. By 2020, this debt was reduced by half and then COVID upended all plans. In the end, for all the uncertainty COVID has been creating, it turned into a silver lining: with staff layoffs/early retirements combined with receipt of the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy, CNS posted a surplus in 2021 that erased its debt completely and set aside part of the surplus in a reserve fund.

COVID relief funds have given CNS an improved financial footing that allows it to evolve toward a sustainable, debt-free charitable organization capable of advancing its mandate. Further, in 2022, CNS secured funding from Canada Council for the Arts to deliver digital training and services offerings, which respond to an important need in Nova Scotia's craft community.

Finding CNS' financial model needs to be strengthened and diversified. Within the scope of Provincial COVID recovery plans, there is an opportunity to secure higher levels of public funding to provide more adequate wages to permanent and casual staff as well as instructors. Further diversification of public funding to include municipal and federal sources combined with an increase in private donations, sponsorships, grants from foundations and various streams of earned revenue should be a priority.

10. ANALYSIS OF RETAIL SALES

CNS has managed retail sales opportunities for its members for decades. These services have ranged from the annual Winter market to a summer fair, from operating a retail sales location to managing pop-up stores to a foray into online store front. While these market development opportunities are generally highly regarded and valued by members, many of these retail services have operated below break-even. While the Winter craft show has been a net positive contributor to not only the craft makers' sales but to CNS as well, the physical retail outlets have created significant debt for CNS over the years, despite having free or greatly reduced rent. As COVID took hold in the spring of 2020, CNS closed its money-losing retail store. And in a positive COVID twist, the annual deficit and accumulated debt these operations incurred have been paid off.

There has been a great deal of change in the retail landscape since the 1980s and 1990s. While annual craft fairs continue to have a viable customer base, retail sales compete in a complex environment that now includes various online sales channels as well as big box and discounters. There remains a strong

market for crafts in general, however the way people buy craft and their motivations may be quite different than they used to be.

On the one hand, historically, access to these various retail opportunities is a main reason to become a member of CNS, as well as going through the process to become a juried member. On the other hand, CNS has not found a formula to run a physical year-round retail store at minimum at a break-even level. The financial risk CNS has taken on over the years has created significant stress on the organization. It forced the Board to focus on managing debt rather than other issues of importance.

Within this review, we have not conducted a detailed financial analysis of potential future retail scenarios. However, the dozens of craft fairs in Halifax and across Nova Scotia every year make it clear: Nova Scotians and visitors to Nova Scotia want to be able to purchase Nova Scotia-made fine arts products and crafts.

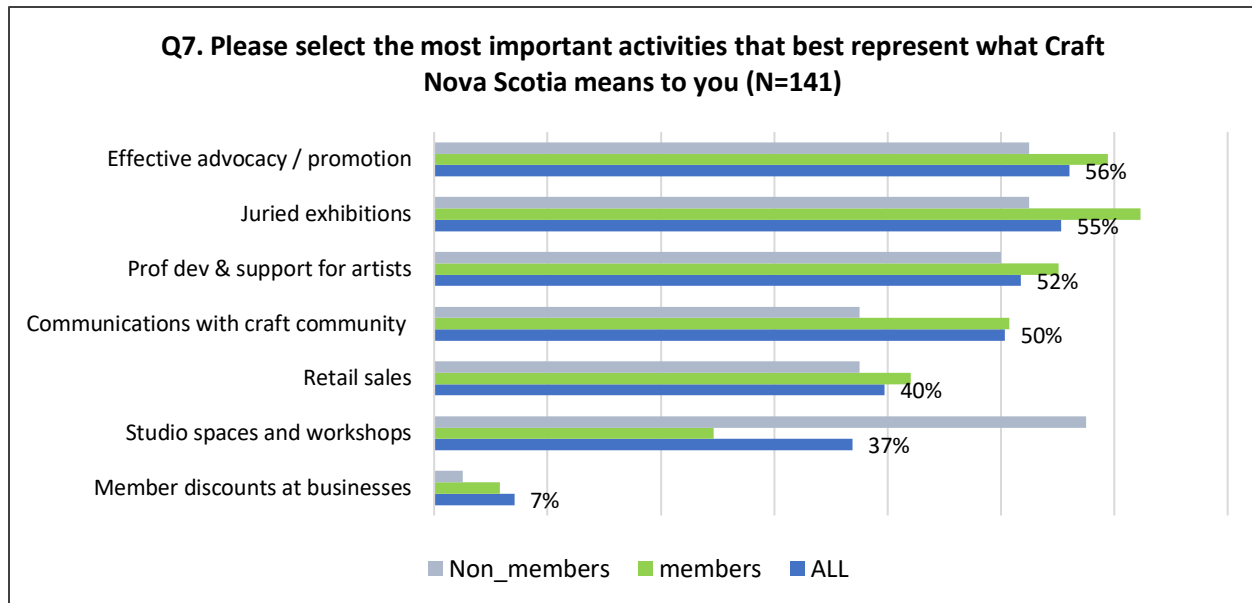
Finding Retail sales opportunities are valued by many members. Retail has changed with the emergence of big box stores, discount chains and Amazon, the online retail behemoth that literally has revolutionized retail. As such CNS needs to conduct a thorough retail analysis to determine which of the myriad of formats it can adopt without introducing creating annual, non-recoverable deficits. Of particular focus should be a full operational assessment of fully managed online sales (along with the common brand presence the CNS banner provides), as well as annual fairs and pop-up sales opportunities. This assessment should be led by an expert retail analyst who is well versed in the arts, craft and culture sectors.

11. PROGRAM REVIEW

The online survey examined the overall program offer in several ways. Importantly, the participation in the survey allowed for the creation of a members and non-members subgroup.

- 47% reported being members while 29% reported not being members.
 - These two cohorts were large enough for meaningful sub-group analysis; those who used to be members (15%) and are considering membership (9%) were not.
- By age, the under 45 age group were more likely to consider membership and to be former members, compared to older age groups.
 - They also represented the smallest part of current membership at 28% of respondents, compared to 61% of 45 to 64 age group, and 56% of 65plus group.

- Note: In Dec 2021, Craft Nova Scotia had 215 paid members – that means the current survey represents 1/3rd of the current total membership.

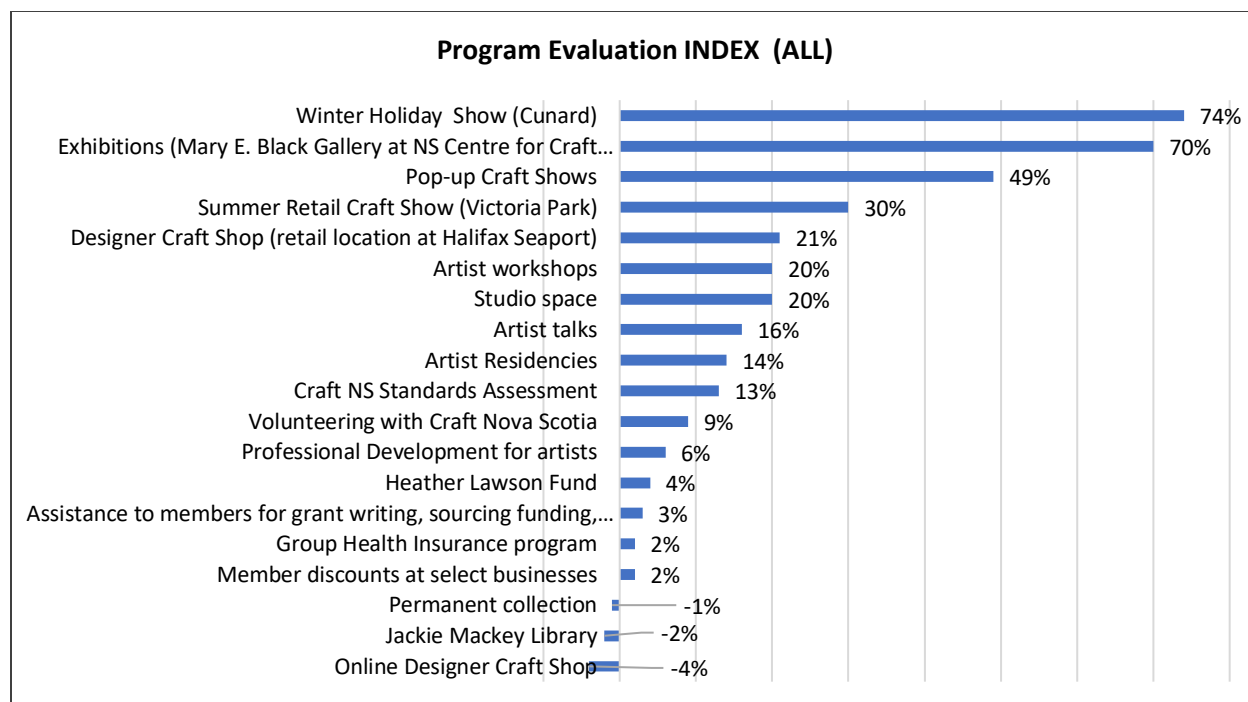


Advocacy and promotion were the top-rated association for most respondents, followed by juried exhibitions and professional development and support for artists. Except for studio spaces and workshops, which were top rated by non-members, all other elements were similarly valued by members and non-members.

To assess specific current programs overall, we asked three survey questions, which were then used to construct an Index. The questions were:

- Please select all activities, programs, or services by Craft Nova Scotia in which you have *participated* in any capacity since January 1, 2019. (The next two questions will be about the activities you selected.)
- *How important* are these activities, services, or programs to you personally? (5-point scale)
- In your opinion *how effective* is Craft Nova Scotia in delivering value with each of these activities, services, or programs? (5-point scale)

Those who reported use of a service or program, then received the next two questions only for those programs they had used. For the 5-point scaled questions about importance and effectiveness, a net score was calculated by adding ratings of 4 and 5 (*mostly* and *completely* important or effective), minus 1 and 2 (*not at all* and *somewhat* important or effective), middle (3) ratings are dropped out. The following chart shows the single Index number, which was created by simply adding the net score for importance to the net score for effectiveness and multiply the sum by reported usage. The higher the index figure, the greater the overall perceived value.



Important to consider in a fuller evaluation is that most activities are used by a segment of respondents, but they are of high importance or effectiveness for these groups. This is the case, e.g., for studio space and artists residencies. For specific decision-making the full survey report and tables should be consulted.

The evaluation is very strong for top rated programs and services. Non-members did not participate in all activities as they are not all eligible. Members tended to regard top-rated retail and exhibition activities more favourable. Non-members rated Standards lower than members, which is perhaps not surprising. Access to markets, along with most programs and services is more highly valued by those outside Halifax with generally less access.

The survey data showed several significant differences in the overall value different services and activities deliver by age group:

- The 65+ group most strongly values the Winter Holiday Show, and Exhibitions at the top score of 100, followed by other market activities.
- The 45 to 64 group favoured markets most strongly, with little enthusiasm for other services.
- The under 45 group favoured exhibitions, studio spaces, artists residencies, and artist workshops most strongly.

The data makes clear that stage of career has a large influence on the programs and services used as well as their relevance to craft makers.

Internal discussions about programs have been ongoing since last fall. As that process is incomplete and should include a full array of metrics.

An output and outcome-based evaluation tool was created for CNS specifically. However, we did not receive the information to complete this type of objectives-based overall impact analysis; as other Organizational Review matters required more time and attention, the consultant did not pursue this line of inquiry further.

Finding Program evaluation that uses objectives-based outcomes, alongside financial metrics, would allow CNS to optimize its resource. Availability and tracking of data are at the core of any capacity to evaluate. Within this review, at least, this approach could not be executed.

***“Excited about the gaps identified, and what CNS can do
to better serve craftspeople.***

***Digital education grant, outreach programs to extend
influence beyond Halifax.”***

- Planning Group Participant

Organizational Review

PRESCRIPTION

This next section outlines the specific series of recommendations resulting from this review. Each recommendation references the diagnostics it seeks to address. As CNS has continued operating throughout this process, several recommendations have already been acted upon. In those cases, a status statement accompanies the recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION 1 – REVISE BYLAWS TO IMPROVE GOVERNANCE AND TRANSPARENCY

Basis of Recommendation: Diagnostic 1, 2 and 4

Develop a new set of bylaws that respond to the findings of the organizational review and the Planning Group discussions about issues, challenges and opportunities of good governance for CNS and that are designed to meet the legal requirements of the [Societies Act, Nova Scotia](#) (1993), charitable organizations subject to the [Canada Not-for-Profit Corporations Act](#) (2009), Guidance on [General Requirements for Charitable Registration](#) (2012).

Of particular importance to this bylaw revision will be to:

- Achieve unambiguous clarity on authorities, responsibilities and accountabilities in terms of roles and functions of membership, the Board of directors and its committees
- Built-in process to assure the rejuvenation of the Board of Directors by simplifying the process for Board nominations, elections and setting term limits
- Revise and simplify membership categories and their rights and responsibilities: maintain voting and non-voting membership category.
 - It is important to ensure that those who are at the heart of the organization, craft people, have a strong voice in the work and direction of the society.
 - Any voting membership that includes people who are not actively working in craft must always subscribe to the Purpose and Bylaws of the organization
 - A non-voting membership category is commonly used to allow supporters to support the organization, and students to become acquainted with the organization and its services.
- Create avenues for participation in the organizational aspects using digital means, instead of always relying on physical presence.
- Focus on revising the bylaws to satisfy the legal requirements and contemporary methods of good governance and reducing barriers to participating, without including specific policy direction
- Move policies out of the bylaws and develop a workable, clear policy framework for the operations of CNS which are largely delegated to paid staff

Status: A draft Bylaw revision was discussed by the Planning Group in May 2022. With feedback a revised version was presented to the Board in June for further refinement and to bring to the membership for review and approval. Of note: updates to Bylaws only come into force once they are filed and approved by both Nova Scotia's Registrar for Joint Stock Companies and, if there is a change to the Purpose of the organization, by the Canada Revenue Agency.

***“[I’m] hopeful for structural change, effective policy change.
Excited to see new folks participate and make change.”***

– Planning Group Participant

RECOMMENDATION 2 – ESTABLISH A DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE

Basis of Recommendation: Diagnostic 4, 5, 6

To ensure adequate ongoing focus on equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) within CNS structures as well as in its hiring practices, policies, membership development and board development, establishing a working committee is recommended.

It is important to recognize that change comes when those who have held relatively more privilege make space for those who have held relatively less privilege. Often organizations put people from equity-seeking groups on committees without having the levers of power to affect the changes needed, or without being the ones who need to create the spaces to be fully inclusive of people from all background and walk of life.

As such, it is recommended that this new Diversity and Inclusion Committee includes members from equity-seeking groups: black and people of colour, Indigenous, people with disabilities (visible and invisible), LGBTQ2S+ community members, women, as well as white, cis-gender, able-bodied people.

The composition of the committee should include:

- one board executive member
- one director-at-large
- two members of the membership
- up to two non-members
- executive director
- up to one additional staff member

The terms of reference for this committee should encompass examining opportunities to make CNS more inclusive in line with recommendation 3, including making recommendations to the Board for changes to increase diversity and inclusions as a daily practice, and identifying training needs for staff, board and regular members.

Given the labour required to do this work, in particular, for participants from equity-seeking groups, it is recommended to pay an honorarium to committee members for participating in meetings and undertaking work in between meetings, in line with the new policy for remuneration of board members, as soon as CNS financial situation allows. Any committee member who does not require that honorarium, they can donate it back to CNS. Any paid staff member who sits on a committee does so as part of their employment and will not receive any additional remuneration.

RECOMMENDATION 3 – REDUCE BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION TO ADVANCE INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY

3.1 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Basis of Recommendation: Diagnostic 4

- Fully implement the 50-30 Challenge and achieve its goals within 5 years. According to the federal government: [“The 50 – 30 Challenge will](#) act as a framework to accelerate diversity actions already taking place in many Canadian organizations and to encourage other Canadian organizations in adopting practices to improve equity. (...) The 50 – 30 Challenge asks that organizations aspire to two goals:
 - Gender parity ("50%" women and/or non-binary people) on Canadian Board(s) and/or senior management; and
 - Significant representation ("30%") on Canadian Board(s) and senior management of other equity-deserving groups: Racialized, Black and/or People of Colour, People with disabilities (including invisible and episodic disabilities), 2SLGBTQ+ and/or gender and sexually diverse individuals, and Indigenous Peoples. The program and participants recognize Indigenous Peoples, including those that identify as First Nation Peoples, Métis Nation, and Inuit, as founding Peoples of Canada and underrepresented in positions of economic influence and leadership.
- It is recommended to adopt the 50-30 Challenge across the organization not only the senior leadership, based on self-identification for membership, volunteers as well as Board and paid staff.
- To ensure that the membership of the society as well as its Board and staff reflect the broader craft community in Nova Scotia, the Board should set organizational policies to actively seek people from diverse backgrounds including Indigenous, Black and People of Colour, LGBTQ2S+, immigrants, people with disabilities (visible or invisible), people at various stages of their career who are active in various craft disciplines and a wide range of life and professional experiences.

Status: A draft policy has been presented to the Board of Directors for review in June 2022.

3.2 Adopt the Exhibition Committee’s Newly Drafted Exhibitions Standards EDI Statement as Programmatic Policy

Basis of Recommendation: Diagnostic 4 and 5

The following statement was crafted by the Exhibition Committee as part of its 2022 Call for Exhibits. It has meanwhile been approved by the Board.

“Craft Nova Scotia is committed to following the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act in all aspects and activity of its operation. In accordance, all Craft Nova Scotia exhibitions, including those at the Mary E. Black Gallery or other venues, will be directed by principles of respect, equity, transparency, and accountability. This includes consideration and care for the stories being told through craft displayed in the

gallery—ensuring that exhibited craftwork honours the genuine representation of an artist’s *own* stories, culture, community, heritage, and related practices.

Craft Nova Scotia will assess the broad community impact of all programming and craftworks displayed in the Mary E. Black Gallery and other affiliated spaces to ensure alignment with this commitment. Craft Nova Scotia will take into consideration craftworks and programs within a broader historical, social, and cultural context, and how craftworks/programming may impact communities engaged by or reflected in the artwork or programming.

This commitment means that Craft Nova Scotia and the Mary E. Black Gallery have the right to exclude or omit any works that do not follow the principles outlined above.”

Status: Approved and adopted by CNS Board of Directors on May 19, 2022.
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3.3 Training Program for Board, staff and members on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), as well as Reconciliation, Decolonization and Indigenization (RDI)

Basis of Recommendation: Diagnostic 4, 5 and 6

- Deliver the *Respectful Workplaces* workshop by Cultural HR Council to Board, staff and members <https://respectfulartsworkplaces.ca/>
- Develop a mandatory tailored EDI and RDI training program as part of the on Boarding process for Board, Board committees and staff. The Cultural Human Resources Council and its partners across Canada have developed a series of workshops including:
 - [Harassment and Bullying](#) in the workplace
 - [Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission sanctioned workshops](#) cover a wide range of topics that are important at CNS:
 - Employee Engagement & Cultural Intelligence
 - Recognizing Biases in Hiring
 - Accommodating Illness and Disabilities in the Workplace
 - Creating an Inclusive Culture
 - Unconscious Bias
 - Unpacking Privileges
 - The Blanket Exercise (Indigenous)
 - Indigenous cultural training
 - Anti-racism education
- Offer some of these or similar professional development training for the CNS membership and craft community at large

Status: As of May 2022, an initial series of three community workshops were scheduled:

- June 13 (Foundations of Creative Liberation)
- July 13 (Reimagining an Equitable Artistic Sector)
- August 10 (Sustainable Creative Change-Making)

3.4 Establish a Nominating and Governance Committee for the Board

Basis of Recommendation: Diagnostic 1 and 4

- Strike a Nominating and Governance committee comprised of Board and regular members to identify Board positions that will be vacant at the next AGM, review Board job descriptions, solicit nominations, vet candidates for the Board, and make a recommendation to the membership
- This committee will conduct regular bylaw review (at least every three years), policy reviews, lend leadership to CNS' strategic planning processes, provide guidance to the Board and executive director on all governance related practices to ensure CNS is at the forefront of best and leading practices in the not-for-profit sector.
- This committee will collaborate with the Diversity and Inclusion Committee ([see recommendation 2](#)) and apply a lens of equity, diversity and inclusion and endeavour to reduce barriers to full and equitable participation in the organization.

Status: On May 19, 2022, the Craft Nova Scotia Board of Directors approved striking this committee comprised of two board members and two other members of the organization.

3.5 Remuneration for Board of Directors and Committee Members

Basis of Recommendation: Diagnostic 1 and 4

Within the Bylaws allow remuneration for directors as directors to alleviate systemic exclusion of those unable to afford to volunteer. Any remuneration would not replace an income but acknowledge the work time needed to fully participate on the Board of Directors and committees. The rate will be set by the outgoing Board of Directors for the next term and reported on to the membership within the annual financial report. To ensure the intended effect is achieved with this policy, all Board members will receive the remuneration. Those who do not require it, can donate it back to the society as they see fit.

By way of example, many Board of Directors in the Yukon are appointed by government. [Its policy from 1999 remains in effect](#). The category within that policy that applies to CNS would receive an honorarium of \$125/day. Instead of recommending a fixed rate within this document, it is recommended to set a rate that works in the context of CNS.

Importantly, this recommendation requires integration into the annual budgeting process to ensure funds are available to do so. All efforts should be made to secure the needed funds within 3 years.

3.6 Reduce financial barriers to participation

Basis of Recommendation: Diagnostic 2, 4 and 9

Not all craft makers are able to afford regular rates for membership, jurying fees, submission fees or other dues charged by CNS. While this has always been true, COVID has brought greater urgency to this issue. Therefore, CNS will work to build sufficient financial flexibility to extend financial relief to members who require it.

Importantly, this recommendation requires integration into the annual budgeting process to ensure funds are available to do so without jeopardizing the viability of CNS as it relies heavily on earned revenue to operate. All efforts should be made to secure the needed funds within 5 years. (See [recommendation 8](#))

3.7 Develop reciprocal memberships with similar organizations

Basis of Recommendation: Diagnostic 4, 9, 10 and 11

- Many craft makers are members of several organizations. Some craft makers from equity-seeking groups have not found a home in CNS. The capacity to build reciprocal memberships that are mutually beneficial to members could be an important avenue to build relationships and partnerships across differences.
- Priority targets are Indigenous organizations, Black Nova Scotians and Recent Immigrant groups.

3.8 Identify and Expand Programs and Services to Rural Nova Scotia

Basis of Recommendation: Diagnostic 4, 7, 10 and 11

CNS' members live and work across Nova Scotia. Most programs and services are offered only in Halifax. In future, CNS will find ways to deliver programs and services to members in rural Nova Scotia. This may require new funding, as well as investment in digital services.

RECOMMENDATION 4 – DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE POLICY FRAMEWORK

Basis of Recommendation: Diagnostic 1 through 11

Through a phased approach review and update existing policies and create new policies to guide the behaviours of the organization.

Most urgent (within 6 months)

Policies to develop:

1. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy (50-30 Challenge)
2. Cultural Appropriation policy (see new Exhibit Standards statement)
3. Conflict of Interest Policy

4. Jury Confidentiality and Conflict Policy
5. Respectful Workplaces Policy – Anti-discrimination and Anti-harassment
6. Complaints policy
7. Staff - Interpersonal conflicts and grievances
8. RACI (Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, Informed) Matrix
9. Remuneration for Board Members and Committees

Policies to review and update:

1. Jurying Policies (Standards Committee)
2. Curation/Exhibition Policy
3. HR Policy, including Remote work / Work from Home policy

Urgent (within 1 year)

Policies to develop:

1. Policy on hiring or contracting members and Board members
2. Cyber security and IT equipment, email, cellphone and social media use policy
3. Financial Policy – spending authorities and limits
4. Training & professional development for Staff

Policies to review and update:

1. Board and Committee Manual
2. Terms of Reference for all active committees
3. Membership Policy
4. Performance Management and progressive disciplinary process
5. Membership categories, benefits and privileges as well as fees

Less Urgent (within 2 years)

Policies to develop:

1. Hiring of relatives' policy
2. Policy on Disciplining Members and Board Members

Policies to review and update:

1. Privacy Policy

Review bylaws every three years and prepare any amendments for approval by the membership at the next AGM. Review policies on a continuous 3-year cycle, so that each policy is reviewed and validated or updated every three years.

Status: A suite of draft policies identified as most urgent has been prepared and shared with the Board of Directors for review in June 2022.

RECOMMENDATION 5 – REVIEW STANDARDS AND JURY PROCEDURES

Basis of Recommendation: Diagnostic 5

Standards play an important role in accessing retail and exhibit opportunities.

In recognition of this important role, CNS will:

- Review its standards to remove systemic biases and ensure inclusion of diverse arts and craft practices such as those outside of Euro-centric traditions and styles. Work with experts in craft disciplines to define any quality standards to meet.
- Review who sits on juries and their background to ensure they are qualified jurors for diverse arts, craft and design. In some cases, CNS may reach out to experts to invite them to participate on juries.
- Widely promote information sessions and hands-on assistance to applicants wishing to meet the Standards set out for their craft and design disciplines.
- Work with regional craft organizations on the establishment of common criteria of quality and excellence suited to the full diversity of craft and design practices.
- Provide information and training to jury members on diversity and inclusion as well as the evolving theory and practice of cultural appropriation in the craft context.

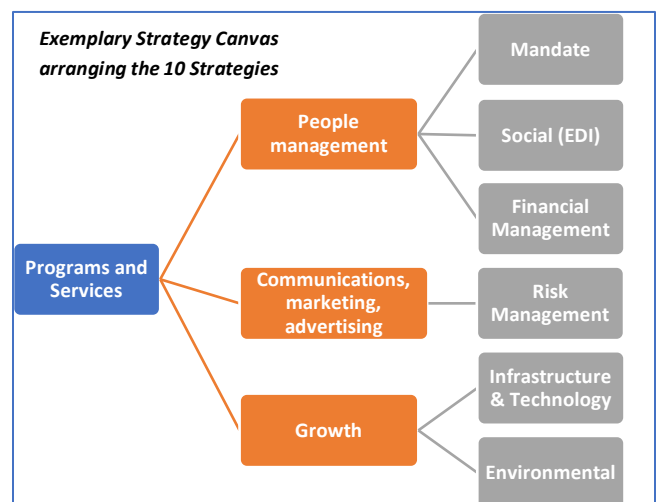
RECOMMENDATION 6 – STRATEGIC PLANNING

Basis of Recommendation: Diagnostic 1, 2, 4, 9 and 10

Update Vision, Mission, Values

- Ensure the organizational review recommendations are reflected in the Strategic Plan rather than treated as an adjunct.
- Identify new funds and ensure allocation of funds to implement these recommendations over the life of the strategic plan and report on progress
- Its current vision, mission and values statements have not been updated in more than 20 years. As such as part of CNS' strategic planning process those aspirations should be reviewed and amended.
- Adopt a contemporary strategic planning method that addresses these 10 strategies effectively.

Of note, the Purpose of the organization is set within the Memorandum of Association and cannot be changed without a special resolution by the membership (75%) which then needs to be approved by the Registrar for Joint Stock Companies in Nova Scotia and Canada Revenue Agency to maintain charitable status before it is in force.



RECOMMENDATION 7 – BRAND MANAGEMENT AND IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS

Basis of Recommendation: Diagnostic 1, 2 and 3

CNS needs to actively manage its brand, its reputation and ensure cohesive and coherent communications and marketing approaches.

Brand Management and Marketing

- CNS has recently adopted a Master brand approach where the CNS brand and Centre for Craft appear side by side and are derivative of each other. This is an important step toward developing cohesive brand, marketing and communications assets that unambiguously communicate who CNS is and what its programs and services are.
- Move from informational marketing (the what, when, where, how much) to motivational breakthrough marketing (the why) for events, workshops, exhibits and markets.

Web and Social Media Strategy

In keeping with a cohesive brand strategy:

- Develop an integrated digital communications strategy and plan to ensure effective and efficient marketing and communications with members and the wider public.
- CNS should consolidate its social media channels so it maintains one presence on each relevant platform encompassing all of its programs and services including the Centre for Craft.
- CNS should consolidate its web presence into a single website for all its programs of services including those provided at the Centre for Craft.
- CNS maintains a single mailing list / emailing list for members and the wider public with segmentation strategy to ensure relevant communications.
- Assess integrated tools that encompass financial transactions, list maintenance and communications and tracking.

Reputation Management and Communications

- Publish the foundational and governance related documents on the CNS website
- Publish information about nominations and participation on the Board of directors and on Board committees on the website and via enews.
- Ensure communications are received as intended by the membership and the public
- Develop a relationship building program with equity-seeking groups and individuals to build credibility and membership over time
- Provide training, as needed, to staff to ensure effective and culturally sensitive communications

RECOMMENDATION 8 – DIVERSIFY REVENUE STREAMS

Basis of Recommendation: Diagnostic 6 and 9

- Identify and apply to federal, provincial and municipal grants and contributions that can aid in achieving the purpose of CNS
- Continue to work with the Province of Nova Scotia to augment the core funding and the management agreement to at least account for inflation to maintain service levels
- Identify and apply to foundations for funding
- Develop a targeted private donation and sponsorship program
- Develop new earned revenue streams that are sustainable
- Increase financial resiliency and build a 6-month operating reserve fund

RECOMMENDATION 9 – ASSESS THE FUTURE OF CRAFT RETAIL

Basis of Recommendation: Diagnostic 10

Retail sales opportunities are highly valued by many members. Retail has changed with the emergence of big box stores, discount chains and Amazon.

CNS needs to conduct a thorough financial and risk analysis of the myriad of retail formats it could adopt or facilitate for members to determine whether or under what circumstances they are viable for CNS itself to operate.

This assessment also should look at retail opportunities for members from the members point of view. That means examining retail opportunities members can take advantage of in the market and how CNS can facilitate relationships with craft stores, tourism operators and others.

A particular focus should be a full operational assessment of a fully managed online sales store including staffing, shipping and logistics, as well as various annual fairs and pop-up sales opportunities.

This assessment should be led by a retail analyst who is well versed in the arts, craft and culture sectors as well as regionally focused digital retail

RECOMMENDATION 10 – HUMAN RESOURCE PLAN

Basis of Recommendation: Diagnostic 6, 7 and 9

At its most basic, a Human Resource Plan is the ongoing and systematic planning ahead to achieve the best use of your organizations most valuable asset: quality employees. An HR planning process typically includes:

- an analysis of current supply and availability of employees and their skills and expertise
- forecasting future needs in terms of skills and expertise in the workforce
- matching projected demand with supply
- supporting organizational goals

A Human resource plan should be designed for continuity of services or put in place alternative plans to enable sick days and vacations as well as unexpected vacancies.

In small organizations, Human Resource planning has particular challenges that require creative solutions:

- In the arts wages are often lower than for comparable skills in other sectors, therefore, non-monetary rewards and recognition are particularly important to retention.
- Succession planning in arts organization poses particular challenges due to the relatively small staff complement, which makes being a good employer all the more important to fill positions as they become available.

It is recommended to

- Realign staff titles, roles and functions with the operational structure of the organization. Given the size of the staff there should be a single director in the form of the executive directors. Other senior roles should use descriptive titles to describe their role. The title *manager* should be used when a senior staff member has other staff that report to them. *Director* or *Manager* should not be used to denote someone who manages processes but not people.
- Develop a skills inventory among current staff and ensure their talents are used to best effect for the organization. Reclassify pay scales as needed to reflect actual skill sets and the value they contribute.
- Review and update job descriptions.
- Create an annual personalized training plan where staff receive both paid time off for professional development that benefits the organization and an annual training allowance.

RECOMMENDATION 11 – MOVE TOWARD COMPETITIVE STAFF WAGES

Basis of Recommendation: Diagnostic 6, 7 and 9

To attract and retain the specialized staff CNS requires to run effectively, work toward securing the public or earned revenue necessary to pay living wages to staff and offer annual cost-of-living (inflation) increases. Ensure that wages paid are competitive within the not-for-profit arts, sports and recreation sector, using labour market information from Statistics Canada.

Ultimately, arts organizations will have to find ways to offer competitive wages that can compete in the labour market with non-arts organizations in the not-for-profit sector.

Importantly, this recommendation requires integration into the annual budgeting process to ensure funds are available to do so without jeopardizing the viability of CNS. All efforts should be made to secure the needed funds to achieve living wages for all employees within 3 to 5 years. (See [recommendation 8](#))

Status: On May 19, 2022, the Board of Directors approved a new budget that includes raises in wages for staff.

RECOMMENDATION 12 – DEVELOP DIGITAL BUSINESS MODEL STRATEGY

Basis of Recommendation: Diagnostic 7, 10, 11

CNS has secured Canada Council for the Arts funding to deliver digital training for the craft community in Nova Scotia. There are a number of Strategic Innovation Funds available to assist arts organization faced with significant needs for a digital transformation of their operations as well as their audience-facing approaches through digital engagement, digital sales and marketing or digital arts presentation.

CNS has been participating in a Canadian Craft Federation digital initiative. However, CNS has a significant need to fully assess its own digital maturity and needs both in terms of its own operations as well as member and audience facing digital tools and processes.

It is recommended that CNS apply to Canada Council for the Arts to advance its digital capacity in service of its members including in rural Nova Scotia:

- Through its [Digital Generator](#) fund CNS can access up to \$40,000 in a Stream 1 application for digital assessments, planning and strategy development by an external consultant, and up to \$50,000 for implementation of the resulting plans in Stream 2.
- This funding can include the work needed to fully develop and revitalize the CNS Online Craft Store, develop a digital craft sales strategy and plan, including identifying the staff skills and experience to manage and promote it.
- Use the recent funding from Canada Council to develop and deliver workshops to members across the entire province, and develop a library of digital teaching assets for future use.
- Develop the digital marketing and outreach strategies needed to deliver on EDI objectives as well as audience-facing marketing and communications methods that leverage the contemporary semantic web to fullest effect.

RECOMMENDATION 13 – ADOPT DIGITAL OFFICE INFRASTRUCTURE

Basis of Recommendation: Diagnostic 8

To gain significant efficiency and effectiveness, CNS should invest in integrated digital technology back-office infrastructure, that satisfies its wide range of operational needs from financial administration for online and physical sales to workshop registrations and event attendance to payroll; to maintaining membership and contact lists with integrated communications tools; to project and event management.

To achieve this, CNS should:

- conduct an assessment of the tools (digital or analog) it currently uses,
- identify any processes that require the same information to be entered multiple times in different databases
- identify the best, interoperable software solutions for its needs, including marketing automation
- Develop a plan to purchase and implement the best available digital solutions

While it is unlikely that a single software can satisfy all operational needs, the number of tools in use should be significantly reduced and, thus, generate benefits in shorter learning curves when new staff are hired and reduce costs related to a proliferation of single purpose, standalone software tools as well as repetitive manual data entry.

This work may be accomplished using insights from the Canadian Crafts Federation digital initiatives as well as funds available for the digital work to be done as per [recommendation 12](#).

RECOMMENDATION 14 – SECTOR ADVOCACY

Basis of Recommendation: Diagnostic 2, 4, 6 and 9

The demand for a living wage has echoed across the COVID years loud and clear including at CNS. There is increasing discussion around universal basic income, a guaranteed basic income and the standard of a living wage for all workers.

CNS already has been actively participating in ongoing advocacy discussions within the cultural sector including leading advocacy efforts and championing funders adjusting their criteria to enable competitive wages for arts workers, or at least a living wage, along with annual increases in line with inflation to avoid staff falling behind and over time falling into the category of the working poor.

The society has been a key influencer in providing messaging and participating in meetings with the Minister, Deputy Minister and Assistant Deputy Minister and key Department staff. This has included meetings in advance of the provincial budget, as well as in response to the budget.

Expanding these efforts through public education and building public support may be required to realize the ambitions for the economic health and well-being of arts and cultural workers in Nova Scotia and Canada.

***“Optimistic for diversity, inclusion,
professional development.”***

– Planning Group Participant

RECOMMENDATION 15 – PROGRAM DESIGN AND EVALUATION

Basis of Recommendation: Diagnostic 11

While day-to-day operations are the responsibility of staff, they are accountable for the results achieved to the Board and membership through the Executive Director. Program evaluation is an objective method to aid in this process.

It is recommended to adopt a standardized practice of program design and evaluation to measure the output and outcomes achieved of programs and services.

This practice ensures that CNS allocates resources where they are most useful in its annual budgeting process; and programs can be adjusted pro-actively, and where needed, in consultation with the provincial funder.

Provide training as needed to fully implement an ongoing program evaluation system.

Craft Nova Scotia

Program Evaluation Form

Created by Inga Petri, Strategic Moves, December 21, 2021

The following table should be completed for each major program or service offered by Craft Nova Scotia. Please complete this information to the best of your ability. If necessary financial information will be calculated using information from the organization's financial reports. Please indicate which year the figures cited relate to.

Program Name		
Program inception date Or start and end dates		
Program Manager	Manager Name, Title:	Number of other staff, contractors or volunteers needed to deliver the program
Program Description - what is it, briefly outline different activities included in the program		
Goals - what is it looking to achieve	Short-term:	Long-term:
Specific measures to evaluate goals	Success measures:	Success measures:
How are outcomes measured?	Criteria:	Results
Level of satisfaction of attendees/ participants	Target: 80% Satisfaction top box (4+5) on a 5-point scale	
Target audiences	Primary:	Secondary:
Attendance / participation #	Annually:	By specific activity: •
Revenue generated (direct from participants) (Indirect from funders, donations)	Annually:	By specific activity: •
Cost per activity (excluding staff time) (including promotion, sales)	Annually:	By specific activity: •
Average paid staff hours to run the program	Annually	By specific activity: •
Do you consider this program a success? How?		
Ideas about how to improve the program		
Other Comments		

*“Hopeful for positive change.
Grateful for time and effort
and input through this process.”*

– Planning Group Participant