



Making a difference...together

REPORT TO ARTS COMMITTEE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10, 2009

SUBJECT

Arts Sustainability Victoria Foundation

PURPOSE/ISSUE

This report is in response to an Arts Committee request for information on the Arts Sustainability Victoria project

HISTORY/BACKGROUND

Arts stabilization is an international movement. In Canada, the U. S. A., England and other countries, groups have acted to create new forms of funding and other support for the arts and heritage in the face of general erosion of funding from government sources. Typically, only larger organizations participate in stabilization or sustainability programs due to the need for depth in both staff and board in order to sustain the internalization of training and ongoing changes that define participation.

The goal of arts stabilization is to aid in strengthening, not merely sustaining, cultural organizations. The objectives of arts stabilization programs are achieved by providing both technical and financial support to the processes of change which must be undertaken if the organizations are to revitalize and renew themselves and enhance their long-term capacity to advance their artistic, cultural and community service missions.

The idea to establish an arts sustainability program in Victoria arose following the completion of a similar program in Vancouver. In March 2001 the BC Arts Council gave \$500,000 to the Victoria Foundation for the establishment of such a program. Following a feasibility study and the development of a business plan \$750,000 from the Department of Canadian Heritage was received by ASV in March 2005.

The program consists of two components, the Technical Support Program (TSP) and the Capacity Investment Plan (CIP). The TSP phase began with an application intake. It required organizations with accumulated deficits to reduce them to no more than 15% of their annual operating budget. This initial phase provided support for the organizations to identify and rectify gaps in their existing infrastructure and to build a multiyear strategic plan that would guide the organization towards specific goal(s) to be achieved at the completion of the project.

The Capacity Investment Plan phase required the organizations to raise matching funds in order to be eligible for final payout. Payouts related to this phase are scheduled to be made in two installments.

Of the five organizations taking part in the program, the CIP goals are as follows:

- Art Gallery of Greater Victoria - investments in programming, marketing and communications capacity (audience development)
- Belfry Theatre - mortgage retirement
- Pacific Opera – a working capital fund to expand programming to include a fourth opera
- Victoria Conservatory of Music - deficit reduction
- Victoria Symphony - deficit reduction

ALTERNATIVES

1. To receive this report for information.
2. To not receive this report for information.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Arts Service is not a contributor to ASV therefore there have been no direct costs to the CRD.

Funds resulting from the ASV program are not directly related to ongoing operational needs as reflected in CRD operating grant applications. It can be expected that the outcomes of each organization's Capacity Investment Plans will vary. The relative success or failures of the various CIPs will certainly be reflected in future applications from these organizations.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSIONS

The ASV is the final project of its type to be funded by the Department of Canadian Heritage's Capacity Investment Program.

The Victoria project is unique in that each organization, in collaboration with the ASV foundation board, has developed a program that is specific to that organization's circumstances and needs. Sustainability projects in other cities were based on standardized programs that were similarly applied to each organization.

At this time the Chair of the ASV is preparing a status report for his Board. He has agreed to provide a copy of his report to the Arts Service when complete. At that time Arts Service staff will provide an addendum to this report.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that this report be received for information.



Manager
CRD Arts Development