

Creative City Network of Canada

CCNC Membership Plan 2013-2015

For presentation at the Annual General Meeting, Ottawa, ON

Prepared by: CCNC Board of Directors



May 31, 2013

Executive Summary

The 2013-2015 CCNC Membership Plan is a response to a successful facilitated session at the Victoria Summit 2012 about the role of CCNC in communities across Canada, the development of a 2012-2014 Strategic Plan and Operational Plan, and on-going conversations between the board, members and peer-to-peers across the country. The outcome is a strong desire to diversify the network membership while staying true to the history of the organization, the practice of local cultural development, and local governments.

The plan also addresses the reality that since 2010 the network has moved to a 100 per cent earned revenue operating model. Membership fees – one of the stabilizing elements of the annual budget – covers two-thirds of the core operating budget. This is not sustainable. In order to offer excellent services in areas such as the website, professional development, research and advocacy, CCNC will need to grow revenue sources over the next several years.

Following the Victoria Summit 2012, the Board of Directors undertook the development of a new membership plan that would review the current membership and services, develop a strategy to diversify membership, and outline strategies to retain and increase membership. The results are the following recommendations.

Between 2013 and 2015, the Creative City Network of Canada should:

- 1. Maintain Voting-Membership with local governing authorities in Canada. This includes municipal and regional governments and band councils;**
- 2. Update the CCNC By-laws to introduce a new Non-Voting Membership for all other entities. This includes provincial, territorial and federal governments in Canada, governing authorities in other countries, entities such as not-for-profits, businesses and educational institutions, and individuals; and**
- 3. Make being a member of CCNC more valuable by gradually introducing new services for members.**

This membership plan offers a strategy that will allow the Creative City Network of Canada to reach out to other levels of government, non-profits, individuals and other entities, while continuing CCNC governance through local governments. The proposed strategy offers CCNC the flexibility to embrace the growing interest in local cultural development from a wide-range of groups, will raise the profile and legitimacy of local cultural planning across Canada, and help the network become sustainable in the long-term.

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"The most important stakeholder for the Creative City Network of Canada is the membership. The members are the lifeblood of the organization and the reason why the network continues to exist today."

- Ian Forsyth, President, CCNC

Introduction

The need for a CCNC Membership Plan is rooted in several different issues that the Board of Directors believed were important to address through a coherent strategy. The first is the long-standing question of how to serve the growing practice of local cultural development, while maintaining governance of CCNC by those local government professionals directly involved with the practice. The second is how to ensure the long-term sustainability of the organization.

Through the work of the Creative City Network, local cultural development has become an expanding field that more people and communities want to be involved with. The recent consultation, 'CCNC in Your Community' facilitated by Inga Petri from *Strategic Moves*, engaged over 170 people for an hour at the 2012 Creative City Summit in Greater Victoria. Feedback from the successful session revealed a strong desire from the people who participated to diversify the membership. This is especially true for people working in small and rural communities where cultural development happens through arts organizations and community leaders, not necessarily through the local government. CCNC also heard that provincial governments would like to have access to the Creative City tools, resources and networks, so that they can help support their communities in local cultural development.

The second issue is more recent. In the past, the Creative City Network of Canada was eligible for funding from the Department of Canadian Heritage. As well, the network received funding from the BC Government and through provincial programs such as 2010 Legacies Now. These vital programs helped the network develop important research tools such as the Cultural Planning and Mapping Toolkits in 2006, the large format Special Edition Newsletters, make improvements to the website, and provide some services in French.

Today, the network survives entirely on earned revenue through membership fees, net revenues from the annual Summit, and individual donations. While the organization has cut back office expenses to the bone, it faces a very tight financial scenario each year. In order to support the network office, website, annual summits, research and membership services, the Creative City Network of Canada must find a way to grow all revenue sources, including membership, so that it can cover the organization's core operating costs.

Objectives of the Membership Plan

There are three objectives of this plan:

1. Review current membership and services;
2. Develop a strategy to diversify membership; and
3. Retain and increase membership.

Fundamental to the success of the membership plan is a communication strategy to support the objectives, clear and realistic timelines, and adequate financial and human resources.

The outcomes of this plan will align with the priorities articulated in the CCNC's 2012 – 2014 Strategic Plan approved by the Board of Directors on February 4, 2013.

CCNC Strategic Plan 2012-2014

(Approved by the Board of Directors on Feb. 4, 2013)

Vision

Every community strategically integrates their local cultural resources in the social, economic, cultural and environmental sustainability of their community.

Mission

The Creative City Network of Canada is a national non-profit organization that operates as a knowledge sharing, research, public education and professional development resource in the field of local cultural policy, planning and practice.

Through its work, the Creative City Network of Canada helps build the capacity of local cultural planning professionals – and by extension local governments – to nurture and support cultural development in their communities. By doing so, the Creative City Network of Canada aims to improve the operating climate and conditions of artists, arts, heritage, and cultural organizations across the country, and the quality of life in Canadian communities of all sizes.

Values

The Values of the Creative City Network of Canada are:

- **Direct sharing between communities**
- **Professional excellence**
- **Encourage a diversity of ideas**
- **Respect local community decision-making**

CCNC Service Priorities, 2012-2014

1. **Network Hub** – Coordinate, build and grow a national network of cultural workers and provide access to cultural expertise and experiences.
2. **Professional Development** – Offer timely professional development to government and cultural workers.
3. **Research** – Encourage the development and or facilitate, create, support original research required by the membership and provide access to relevant cultural research.
4. **Advocacy** – Promote the case for strengthening the cultural sector at the local level and influencing the life of Canada and Canadians.

Review Current Membership and Services

Current Membership

The current membership of the Creative City Network of Canada is open to Canadian local governing authorities. This is based on our 11-year history as an incorporated organization, and on the preceding years from 1997-2001 when the network operated informally through then innovative Listserv technology called Culture-L. There are a few membership exceptions in the case of Edmonton and Winnipeg, where the local government has delegated the responsibility of cultural development and planning to an arm's length organization. For example, the Edmonton Arts Council is the municipal member for the Edmonton community.

At this time, according to the By-laws, all members are voting members. Each member has one vote, and each member can have one person serve on the organization's Board of Directors through nomination at the Annual General Meeting. The members pay an annual membership fee, and all employees of the member organization are able to access the membership services.

The annual cost of membership is based on community population size. It ranges from \$270.00 + tax for a community of under 20,000 people, to \$3,749.00 + tax for a community greater than 500,000 people.

Table 1: 2012 CCNC Membership Rates

Voting Members (based on population size)	2012 Fee (Canadian dollars)
Greater than 500,000	\$3749 + tax
300,000 - 500,000	\$2142 + tax
100,000 - 300,000	\$938 + tax
20,000 - 100,000	\$403 + tax
Less than 20,000	\$270 + tax

In 2012, the network attracted 114 members who contributed a total of \$79,564.00. Because the membership year-end is December 31 and the organization's fiscal year-end is March 31, the organization divides the membership revenue for each fiscal year so that 25 per cent comes from the previous year and 75 per cent from the current year. Therefore, the projected actual membership revenue for 2012/2013 is \$77,000.

According to the 2012/2013 projected revenues (as of February 4, 2013), the membership revenue was \$77,000 or approximately 67 per cent of the total core operating budget.

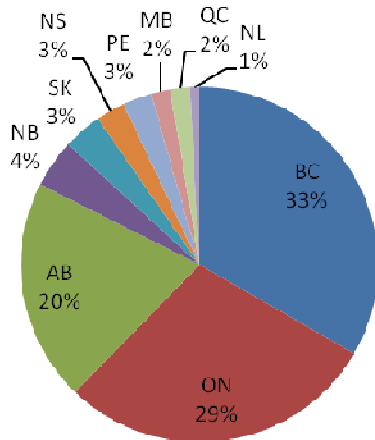
Membership Analysis by City Size and Geography:

The network attracts cities of every size. Of particular note, 72 per cent of the network members are from communities of 100,000 people or less.

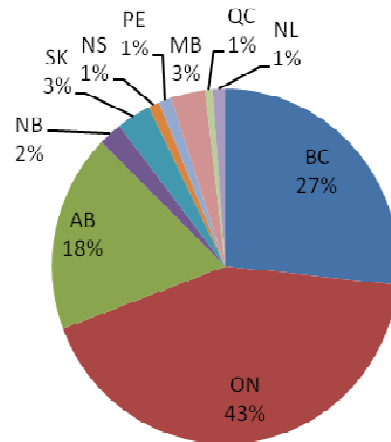
At the same, the large cities contribute a greater share of the total membership revenues. Six members in the largest category (5 per cent of the membership) contributed 28 per cent of the total membership revenue. The six members are Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver, Mississauga, Ottawa, and Toronto. In comparison, 82 members in the smallest two categories (72 per cent of the membership) contributed 33 per cent of the total membership revenue.

The network membership is largely concentrated in three geographic regions: British Columbia, Ontario, and Alberta. A deeper analysis of the membership shows that the network has been able to attract smaller sized cities in British Columbia and Alberta, while Ontario is, for the most part, represented by bigger cities in comparison. Because Ontario has a larger share of big city members, Ontario members represent 29 per cent of the membership and they contribute 43 per cent of the annual membership revenues.

Share of CCNC Members by Province in 2012



Share of Membership Dues by Province in 2012



Current Services

The Creative City Network of Canada offers members the following services:

Website: The website acts as home base for the CCNC members. It provides information on upcoming events, a job board, course board, and calls for public art. It also offers a research hub with examples of culture plans and policy documents. The website was recently updated and re-launched in September 2012 and now includes inspiring photographs from member communities, and a brand new look and feel through the updated CCNC logo and colours.

Enews: CCNC connects with its members through a monthly e-newsletter called Creative City Enews. It provides a digest of arts and cultural news articles mostly from Canada, and includes some international articles. CCNC also produces a Member Notes E-Newsletter that provides information specifically to members about relevant events and topics.

Social Media: CCNC has a Facebook page, Twitter, and LinkedIn accounts updated daily with arts and cultural news articles, interesting topics, recent research, or summaries of CCNC events.

National Summits: CCNC hosts an annual national summit that takes place in a different city each year. The summit brings together the members of the network around professional development topics related to local cultural development.

All of these services provide an excellent network hub that helps connect members across Canada engaged in local cultural development. However, a careful review of these services shows that many current member benefits are actually available to the public free of cost. These include the website, Creative City Enews, and social media such as Facebook and Twitter.

Table 2: 2012 CCNC Membership Services

Current Services	Free Access	Member Access
1. Website	✓	✓
2. Creative City Enews	✓	✓
3. Facebook	✓	✓
4. Twitter	✓	✓
5. Attend Summits		✓
6. Sponsor a Summit		✓
7. Discount on Summits		✓
8. Member Notes E-Newsletter		✓
9. Host a CCNC Summit		✓
10. Vote at the AGM		✓
11. Serve on the Board		✓

One of the tasks of the membership plan is to make being a member of CCNC more valuable. This means increasing services for members.

Proposed New Services

Given the importance of the member services, the membership plan proposes the following actions in the coming years: bring back the Listserv(s), develop a members' portal for the website, establish a research consortium to fund research on local cultural development, and develop a CCNC awards program.

While some of these services may have previously existed, the membership plan proposes that the network revitalize each of these services so that they provide members with the best experience possible.

Listserv: A listserv is an automatic mailing system for a specific group of people. Going forward, the network would like to provide several listserv(s) based on the members needs and topic preferences. For example, the three basic listserv could include: (1) All Member Listserv; (2) Voting Member Listserv; and (3) Specific Topic Listserv(s) – such as public art, rural cultural development etc.

Online Members' Portal: The members' portal would provide information exclusively developed for members. The members' portal would be accessible by all members, and would allow members to create an account and a profile page. The goal of the members' portal is to further the service priorities of the network such as strengthening peer-to-peer connections, professional development, and access to relevant research.

Research Consortium: In 2010 and 2012, several large cities pooled their funds and hired a consultant to develop a report that addressed their research needs. Building on this successful model, the Research Consortium would be comprised of network members who are willing to invest funds to undertake specific research projects. The members and network will determine the mechanics of how this will work. This initiative will address the growing need for research on local cultural development and planning.

CCNC Awards Program: In order to advance the field of cultural development, examples of success stories through awards programs can be a powerful way to promote professional development and strengthen local cultural development. The awards program could include areas such as public art, cultural planning and community events.

Diversify Membership

In response to the outcomes of the 'CCNC In Your Community' session conducted at the 2012 Creative City Summit in Greater Victoria, the membership plan recommends that the organization maintain the current voting member category of local governments and expand its membership to include a new category of non-voting member.

Voting Member

The **Voting Member** will only be available to local governing authorities in Canada. This includes:

- (1) Municipal governments;
- (2) Regional governments;
- (3) Officially designated local cultural planning and cultural policy bodies such as the Edmonton Arts Council and Winnipeg Arts Council; and
- (4) Band councils.

As voting members, local governments will continue to oversee the strategic direction of the organization through voting at the AGM and serving on the Board.

As well, the voting members would have the special benefit opportunities to host a CCNC Summit and participate in the CCNC Awards Program (forthcoming).

Non-Voting Member

The **Non-Voting Member** will be available to all other entities. This includes:

- (1) Provincial, territorial, and federal governments in Canada;
- (2) Governing authorities in other countries;
- (3) Not-for-profits; businesses; educational institutions; and
- (4) Individuals.

Non-voting members will receive discounts on Summits, Member Notes E-Newsletter, Access to a Members' Portal (forthcoming), Access to Listserv(s) (forthcoming), and participation in the Research Consortium (forthcoming).

As well, non-voting members will be a part of a national network that supports local cultural development, and will help raise the profile and legitimacy of cultural planning and policy in communities across the country.

The following table summarizes the proposed membership categories and services.

Table 3: Proposed New Membership Categories and Services

Current and Forthcoming Services	Voting Member	Non-Voting Members
1. Website	✓	✓
2. Enews	✓	✓
3. Facebook	✓	✓
4. Twitter	✓	✓
5. Attend Summits	✓	✓
6. Sponsor a Summit	✓	✓
7. Discount on Summits	✓	✓
8. Member Notes E-Newsletter	✓	✓
9. Access Members' Portal(s) <i>Forthcoming</i>	✓	✓
10. Access Listserv(s) <i>Forthcoming</i>	✓	✓
11. Research Consortium <i>Forthcoming</i>	✓	✓
12. Host a CCNC Summit	✓	
13. Awards Program <i>Forthcoming</i>	✓	
14. Vote at the AGM	✓	
15. Serve on the Board	✓	

Retain and Increase Membership

Along with developing new membership services and membership categories, it is important to address how the network can retain existing members and recruit new members.

Existing Members

In order to keep existing members, the network should make being a member of CCNC more valuable by introducing new services that are specifically for members. For example, this includes bringing back the listserv(s), restoring the members' portal, developing a research consortium, and launching the CCNC Awards Program.

In addition, the membership plan recommends making investments in online technology such as an online payment system for membership renewal and summit registration, and developing online surveys. This would be a strategic investment to make CCNC membership-services as efficient and user-friendly as possible.

Increasing New Members

Areas of potential growth include membership categories such as other levels of government, local governments in other countries, aboriginal communities, organizations and businesses in the arts and cultural sector, educational institutions, and individuals engaged in local cultural development.

The membership plan also shows that even though 72 per cent of the members come from communities of 100,000 people or less, there is room for expanding membership in small and mid-sized communities across the country.

In order to realize the goal of increasing membership, the network must dedicate resources to actively recruit new members through communications materials, the network's activities, and clearly outline the benefits of membership.

Membership Plan Recommendations

Between 2013 and 2015, the Creative City Network of Canada should:

- 1. Maintain Voting-Membership with local governing authorities in Canada. This includes municipal and regional governments and band councils;**
- 2. Update the CCNC By-laws to introduce a new Non-Voting Membership for all other entities. This includes provincial, territorial and federal governments in Canada, governing authorities in other countries, entities such as not-for-profits, businesses and educational institutions, and individuals; and**
- 3. Make being a member of CCNC more valuable by gradually introducing new services for members.**

Conclusion

The Membership Plan 2013-2015 for the Creative City Network of Canada builds on the organization's current strengths, while addressing long-standing issues of how to reach out to the expanding practice of local cultural development and the fiscal realities of operating only on earned revenue.

By introducing a new non-voting membership category, the network can balance the need to diversify and expand the membership while maintaining the overall governance and strategic direction of the organization with local governments.

Finally, as the membership plan builds on the network's vision, mission and values, all current and future members would support knowledge sharing, research, public education, and professional development in the field of local cultural policy, planning and practice.

Appendix 1: 2012 Members

Armstrong	BC	Whistler	BC	Calgary	AB
Burnaby	BC	White Rock	BC	Camrose	AB
Capital Regional District		Barrie	ON	Canmore	AB
Castlegar	BC	Bracebridge	ON	Cochrane	AB
Coquitlam	BC	Brampton	ON	Edmonton	AB
Courtenay	BC	Brantford	ON	Fort Saskatchewan	AB
Cowichan Valley Regional District	BC	Collingwood	ON	Grande Prairie	AB
Esquimalt	BC	Haldimand County	ON	Hinton	AB
Fort St John	BC	Cayuga	ON	Jasper	AB
Kamloops	BC	Hamilton	ON	Leduc	AB
Kelowna	BC	Huntsville	ON	Medicine Hat	AB
Lake Country	BC	Kingston	ON	Morinville	AB
Langley	BC	London	ON	Okotoks	AB
Maple Ridge	BC	Markham	ON	Red Deer	AB
Nanaimo	BC	Minto	ON	Spruce Grove	AB
Nelson	BC	Mississauga	ON	St Albert	AB
New Westminster	BC	Mississippi Mills	ON	Stony Plain	AB
North Vancouver	BC	North Bay	ON	Strathcona County	AB
Northern Rockies Regional Municipality		Oakville	ON	Wood Buffalo	AB
Oak Bay	BC	Ottawa	ON	Yellowhead County	AB
Pemberton	BC	Peterborough	ON	Fredericton	NB
Port Coquitlam	BC	Pickering	ON	Moncton	NB
Port Moody	BC	Port Hope	ON	Oromocto	NB
Powell River	BC	Richmond Hill	ON	Riverview	NB
Prince George	BC	Sioux Lookout	ON	Saint John	NB
Quesnel	BC	Smiths Falls	ON	Prince Albert	SK
Regional District of North Okanagan	BC	St Catharines	ON	Regina	SK
Richmond	BC	Thunder Bay	ON	Saskatoon	SK
Saanich	BC	Toronto	ON	Yorkton	SK
Sechelt	BC	Vaughan	ON	Amherst	NS
Sidney	BC	Waterloo	ON	New Glasgow	NS
Sooke	BC	Regional Municipality of Waterloo		Port Hawkesbury	NS
Surrey	BC	Welland	ON	Charlottetown	PE
Tofino	BC	Whitchurch-Stouffville	ON	Stratford	PE
Vancouver	BC	Windsor	ON	Summerside	PE
Victoria	BC	Airdrie	AB	Brandon	MB
		Banff	AB	Winnipeg	MB
		Beaumont	AB	Repentigny	QC
				Trois-Rivieres	QC
				St John's	NL

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