

Creative City Network of Canada
AGM President's Report
June 13, 2014

Each year, our annual gathering reminds me of how truly exceptional our network is. We are a robust group of over 110 municipal members, and a growing network of individuals and organizations. We represent half of Canada's population, and yet 70% of our members come from mid-sized cities or smaller. We are engaged in many different types of cultural work, and we share common challenges around cultural planning, public art, and protecting our cultural assets, to name a few. There are three reasons why we have achieved so much success in growing our network. They are: focusing on local cultural development; embracing a broad network of stakeholders; and growing a network of networks.

At its foundation the Creative City Network of Canada is committed to the local level of government. We support people who work with arts, culture and heritage initiatives in the communities, towns, and regions we live in. Local, is what connects us all and is the lens we view every thing we do.

At the same time, we are now embracing the full range of people who do this work in our communities. As of last year, anyone can be a member of the Creative City Network. It is an important step to ensuring that the network reflects our expanding practice.

The third is that we connect people with similar interests. We've always done this, but as our practice becomes more professionalized, there is a greater desire to dig deep into specialized areas. That is why we are moving to a model that supports a *network of networks*. Right now our primary focus is on developing a public art network, a research network, a cultural planning network and a special events network. We are doing this through a variety of avenues so if you are interested in this please let us know and get involved.

Like building a creative city, building a creative city network takes a considerable team. I want to take this opportunity to thank our staff, board members and volunteers for their hard work and dedication to the network year-round. In particular, thank you to our staff Jennifer Lord and Anna Whelan. You have made a significant contribution to our network in such a short time. I also want to extend a heart-felt thanks to our board vice-president Nichola Reddington for her work this year. Nichola chaired the board for three-months while I was on maternity leave, and led the development of this year's Summit and the selection of our host-cities for the next five years. Thank you Nichola.

As you can see, our network is the combined efforts of everyone in this room individually and collectively. It is a product of our diversity and our shared interests. We have achieved a lot, and I know we are going to continue to build on that success. I look forward to seeing you all in Kelowna next year.

Elena Bird
Board President, Creative City Network of Canada