

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador Pre-Budget Consultations

March 13, 2015

Glynmill Inn, Corner Brook, NL

By: Gaylene Buckle, General Manager, TNL, P.O. Box 655, Corner Brook, NL A2H 6G1

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Good Morning:

Thank you Minister Crummell for the opportunity to present to these pre-budget consultations.

My name is Gaylene Buckle, and I am General Manager of Theatre Newfoundland Labrador. I serve on a number of committees with emphasis on arts, culture and tourism in the province of Newfoundland & Labrador, and for the past six years have been Vice-President of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres.

Beyond its significant and essential contribution to the wellbeing of Newfoundlanders & Labradorians, investment in the arts produces economic returns that boost the provincial government's bottom line through increased tax revenue and economic growth.

Increased investment in the arts will benefit all Newfoundlanders & Labradorians by stimulating job creation and local economic development, while providing more affordable access to artistic and cultural experiences in all regions of the province. Many professional arts organizations, like TNL, have charitable status in Canada because of the wide belief that the arts should be accessible to all. Government grants and corporate and individual sponsorships are essentially used to subsidize the cost of tickets to shows and programming such as Youth Theatre classes, so that it is indeed accessible to all. No child is ever turned away from our youth theatre classes because of an inability to a family to pay.

JOB CREATION:

Grants through the Newfoundland & Labrador Arts Council and other programs under Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development lead to the creation of numerous of jobs within the cultural sector. Within the theatre sector alone, jobs for actors, directors, musicians, choreographers, stage managers, lighting and sound technicians, carpenters, lighting, sound and costume designers, seamstresses, box office staff, bookkeepers, administrators, marketing personnel, theatre educators, result from investments through such programs. The spin off are the many jobs created indirectly as a result of vibrant arts communities.

CULTURAL TOURISM

Communities with flourishing arts activity, say these are key selling features for other business sectors as the vibrant cultural scenes offers a higher quality of life to residents and visitors alike. The economic spinoff generated by high quality, professional arts & culture activity is substantial. People come to Newfoundland & Labrador for its natural and authentic beauty. The arts are as much a part of this place as the mountains and sea.

Nationally (2011 stats)

- \$53.2 billion is contributed to the GDP by our cultural sector
- 700,000 Canadians work in jobs created by the cultural sector
- The average Ontario arts and culture tourist spends twice as much per trip as does a typical tourist – \$667 per trip versus \$374.

Provincially:

- Culture sector in NL is worth \$400 million annually
- In 2005, 3,815 people indicated that they worked in cultural occupations, for an estimated 2,766 FTEs in this occupation in 2005.

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- The Newfoundland & Labrador Arts Council's annual budget of \$2.1 million (0.03% of the provincial budget) of which \$1.7 million is awarded in grants, ranks number 6 out of the 10 when compared to the other provincial arts councils/boards. Newfoundland & Labrador's current per capita investment is \$4.02. Quebec ranks #1 at \$11 per capita. The National average is \$5.50.

Theatre Newfoundland Labrador (Fiscal year 2013-2014)

Please allow me to give you a financial/statistical snapshot of a TNL year, so you might get a better sense of the overall contribution of the entire arts & culture industry to the Province's economy.

- Total Revenue - \$983,435
 - 15% came from various grants through provincial government departments & agencies.
 - Your government's investment leveraged a further 24% in grant revenue from various federal government departments and agencies and 2% from municipal & regional governments & agencies.
 - Fundraising/Corporate & Individual sponsorships/donations accounted for a combined 6%
 - The remaining 53% was earned, mostly from box office sales and touring guarantees.

And how did we spend that money? \$553,348 was paid out in artistic, technical and operational salaries and fees. 29,014 hours of work or a FTE of 954 work weeks were created. Additionally 16 guest performers were paid for single-night engagements and \$17,278 went to playwrights as royalty and development fees. The remaining was spent on production, marketing and operational costs – more than 95% being spent in Newfoundland & Labrador.

And how many other jobs are created as a result of TNL's artistic endeavors? We know it to be significant in Cow Head, were a result of our Gros Morne Theatre Festival.

53% of the Gros Morne Theatre Festival's 11,000 patrons come from outside of Newfoundland & Labrador; of the 47% Newfoundlanders & Labradorians who attend our plays; 25% come from areas off the Northern Peninsula. Assuming each of those 7,920 tourists spend just \$300 during their visit – that's nearly \$2 ½ million.

The jobs created, goods purchases, taxes collected and spent, spending by patrons & artists and staff soon add up, resulting in a substantial return on the provincial government's total investment (through various grants) of \$140,000.

That's quite an impact by one tiny little theatre company in one tiny part of the province. Imagine the impact of all of the artists and arts organization. And then imagine the impact if funding to these artists were to increase.

Increased funding to artists would mean increased arts and culture activity which would mean increased pride of place which would mean increased desire to live and visit here. All of which would mean a healthier province financially, culturally and socially. Investment in the arts is an investment in our **truly sustainable** resource – our people.

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If we want to keep our professional artists here, we must treat them like professionals and ensure they receive industry standard fees and wages for their art. We brag about Newfoundland & Labrador's vibrant arts and culture scene, we brag about the talent amongst us. We celebrate our artists through words and pictures. But we will start to lose them to other provinces and countries if don't provide adequate funding to allow them to eek out a living here. Doubling the current level of funding to the arts would have an insignificant influence on the province's bottom line, but the impact would be immediate and noticeable. For every piece of art (visual, performing, literary) created in Newfoundland & Labrador, a 100 more that never make it past the *rejected* grant application phase.

I leave you with three recommendations, that if put in place I know beyond a doubt, will have an immediate and profound impact on our economy.

- 1. Increase funding to the Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council in order to increase the number of professional project grants and sustaining grants available to this province's artists and arts organizations.**
- 2. Reinstate the Market Access and Export component of the Cultural Economic Development Program to allow for continued touring the province's artists.** (TNL has quantifiable evidence that when we take a play about the Newfoundland & Labrador to some other part of the world, people from those communities – whether Tasmania, England or Vernon, BC are inspired to make the trek to Newfoundland & Labrador. Following its standing ovation presentation at the September, 2013 Contact East showcase it was said by one prominent Canadian presenter "*this is an award-winning live tourism advertisement for Newfoundland & Labrador. If you've never been here, you'd have to come after seeing this play!*")
- 3. Support the continued work on the 2006 Creative Newfoundland and Labrador Blueprint and The Status of the Artist Legislation ensuring continued growth in our cultural industries.**

Thank you.

