

Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council

Business Plan 2026-29

Table of Contents

Chair’s Message.....2

Introduction.....3

Overview.....3

Mandate.....3

Vision.....4

Lines of Business.....4

Partnerships.....6

Primary Clients6

Budget.....6

Employees.....7

Board of Directors.....7

Strategic Issue.....8

Message from the Chair

As Chair of the Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council's (ArtsNL), I am pleased to present ArtsNL's Business Plan for the period of April 1, 2026, to March 31, 2029. This plan reflects the strategic directions of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and is submitted in accordance with our obligation as a Category 2 entity under the **Transparency and Accountability Act**. I accept accountability on behalf of ArtsNL for the preparation of the plan, the achievement of its objectives, and the results reported.

ArtsNL and its Council members are stewards of public resources, entrusted with transparency and accountability in decision-making. ArtsNL exists to enrich the lives of all, and we do so by investing public resources in a vibrant arts sector that strengthens communities, celebrates our diverse cultures, and contributes to the well-being of the entire province. Through policy and programming, ArtsNL supports the creation and presentation of artistic work that contributes to the cultural, social and economic bedrock of the province, strengthens ties between artists and audiences, nurtures partnerships and relationships, and seeks to make the arts accessible and valued by all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

Sincerely,

David Brown



Chairperson

Introduction

The Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council (ArtsNL) has been fostering and promoting artistic creation and developing the arts for the benefit of all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians for 46 years. Its programs are foundational to the core development of art and integral to the continued growth of the provincial arts ecosystem. This business plan outlines Council's objectives for the next three years.

Overview

ArtsNL is a non-profit Crown agency created in 1980 by the **Arts Council Act**. As a Crown agency, it operates at arm's-length from the Provincial Government. ArtsNL's purpose is to foster and promote the creation and production of works, the study and enjoyment of those works, and to encourage public awareness of the arts in the province. The primary function of ArtsNL is to develop and administer grant programs for emerging and established artists, professional arts organizations, community organizations, and schools. More information about ArtsNL is available [online](#).

Mandate

Section 5 of the **Arts Council Act** states the objects of the Council are to foster and promote the creation and production of works in the arts, the study and enjoyment of these works. In particular, the Council shall:

- Foster and promote, through grants and otherwise, the arts of the province and the arts of groups indigenous to the province.
- Help, through grants and otherwise, in the development of emerging and established artists and arts organizations in the province.
- Advise the Minister of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation with respect to the development of arts and arts policy in the province.

Vision

The vision of ArtsNL is of a province where Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are a creative, innovative and diverse people who fully participate in a healthy, vibrant and cultural community, which is globally recognized for artistic excellence.

Lines of Business

The primary function of ArtsNL is to develop and administer grant programs for emerging and established artists, professional arts organizations, community organizations, and schools. Currently, ArtsNL achieves this through eight funding programs:

- **The Professional Operating Program** is a multi-year funding program that provides eligible not-for-profit arts organizations with annual operating grants to offset the costs associated with the administration, creation, production and presentation of arts. The program supports the growth and development of the arts sector and fulfills ArtsNL's mandate to foster and promote the creation and production of arts, the study and enjoyment of those works, and to encourage public awareness of the arts. The funding cycle started in 2025 with the next funding intake opening in 2029.
- **Professional Project Grants Program** has two annual deadlines (fall/spring) and supports the creation and/or presentation of works of art in the disciplines of adaptation, dance, film, music, multidisciplinary arts, theatre, visual arts, or writing. Grants support project costs for creation, production, administration, travel, and professional development and are available to artists at every stage of their career.
- **Community Arts Program** is an annual program offered in the fall and is available to community-based not-for-profit arts organizations and community-based arts groups. This program supports the costs of community-based arts activities including arts workshops, presentations, productions, new creations, adjudicator fees, artist fees, and travel costs. This program is open to all artistic disciplines served by ArtsNL.

- **Professional Artists' Travel Fund** is open year-round and is available to artists, collaborations of artists, and professional arts groups. This program supports travel costs for artists or groups that have been invited to take part in unexpected activities that will enhance their careers.
- **School Touring Program** is an annual program available to individual artists, collaborations of individual artists, professional arts groups, and professional not-for-profit arts organizations to support the touring of productions to schools throughout the province. Offered in partnership with the Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education's **Cultural Connections Strategy**, the program provides students with direct access to high-quality artistic experiences. The program covers touring costs only (travel, accommodations, per diems, artistic and technician fees, tour administration, royalties, and limited rehearsal). This program is open to all artistic disciplines served by ArtsNL.
- **ArtsSmarts** is an annual program available to schools and school boards in the provincial K-12 education system. It is funded through the Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education's **Cultural Connections Strategy**, Equinor and an anonymous donor, and is administered by ArtsNL. Projects must incorporate artistic disciplines served by ArtsNL which enables schools to integrate arts activities into a variety of non-arts subject areas that align with specific outcomes in the provincial curriculum.
- **The Creation Grants Program** (Indigenous Arts) has three funding deadlines annually and provides funding to Indigenous artists, artistic groups, and culture carriers within Newfoundland and Labrador for the creation, development, exhibition, and transfer of knowledge related to an art form or artistic practice. Grants are available to Indigenous artists at any stage of their artistic career, working in all disciplines.

Partnerships

ArtsNL maintains partnerships with the business community and other funding agencies to:

- Administer the Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Awards, designed to honour the accomplishments of Newfoundland and Labrador artists.
- Manage the BMO Winterset Award, the Ross Leslie Award and the Gerry Porter Music Award.
- Facilitate the annual Equinor ArtsSmarts scholarship.
- Consult closely with its Indigenous Advisory Circle, which is instrumental in advising on the development of programs and building relationships with Indigenous artists.
- Contribute to the national table on issues of cultural significance and is a committed partner in cultural research and data sharing.

Primary Clients

ArtsNL works closely with:

- Artists at every stage of their career
- Professional Arts Organizations
- Community Arts Organizations
- Schools and School Boards
- Departments of Federal, Provincial and Municipal governments
- Business Community

Budget

The 2026-27 budget for ArtsNL is \$5,048,600 which supports the creation of art across six main disciplines including music, visual art, film and television, literary, dance, theatre, and multidisciplinary.

Employees

As of April 1, 2026, there are six full-time staff and one contractual staff employed at ArtsNL.

Board of Directors

ArtsNL is governed by a Council of no fewer than nine and no more than 11 members appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council. No fewer than seven of the appointed members must be artists or arts administrators. Council members are appointed for a term which must not exceed three years and are eligible for reappointment. Council members cannot remain for more than two consecutive terms.

As of April 1, 2026, the Council was comprised of the following members:

Chairperson:	David Brown, St. John's
Co-Vice Chairpersons:	Ann Connors, St. John's Ray Penton, Jr., St. John's
Board Members:	Michelle Keep, Bonavista Misty-Dawn Dyson, Happy Valley-Goose Bay Deanna Hutchings, Cow Head Rosalind Squires, St. John's Rhonda Tulk-Lane, St. John's Emily Pittman, St. John's
Non-Voting Member:	Colleen Soulliere, St. John's (Director of Arts and Heritage, Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation)

Strategic Issue: Responding to Arts Sector Needs

As the province's public arts funding agency, ArtsNL supports artists and arts organizations in the creation and presentation of their work for the benefit of all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. Our key priorities are aimed at strengthening the provincial arts ecosystem by supporting artists and arts organizations and deepening cultural impact.

Goal: By March 31, 2029, ArtsNL will modernize its programs by updating language, definitions, and guidelines to better respond to the evolving needs of artists in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Objective 2026-2027:

By March 31, 2027, ArtsNL will have identified priority programs and initiated a review process focused on modernizing program language, definitions, and guidelines.

Indicators:

- Developed an engagement plan, identify participants, and commence engagement sessions.
- Initiated a jurisdictional scan to complement the engagement sessions.
- Reviewed preliminary findings to identify program revisions.

Objective 2027-2028:

By March 31, 2028, ArtsNL will have utilized preliminary findings to commence program revisions.

Objective 2028-2029:

By March 31, 2029, ArtsNL will have completed program revisions, modernized program language, definitions and guidelines to allow programs to be more responsive and relevant to Newfoundland and Labrador artists.

