

The Rooms Corporation of Newfoundland and Labrador

Strategic Plan 2026–29



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A Message From the Chair of the Board of Directors

As Chair, I am very pleased to present The Rooms Strategic Plan 2026–29, which covers the period of April 1, 2026 to March 31, 2029. On June 29, 2025, The Rooms proudly marked its twentieth anniversary—an important milestone that offered the opportunity to reflect on how far we have come. Over the past two decades, The Rooms has demonstrated its value to residents and visitors to the Province alike, becoming a true place of possibilities. I am incredibly proud of the organization’s accomplishments and excited for what the next decade will bring.

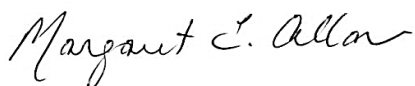
As The Rooms enters its third decade, it will continue its commitment to long-term sustainability while moving toward a more regenerative way of working. This approach positions The Rooms as an active, evolving part of the communities it serves—strengthening stewardship, supporting Truth and Reconciliation, encouraging shared development and deepening connections across the province. This shift reflects and reinforces our Vision, Mission and Values.

The priorities outlined in this plan reflect and support both national and provincial tourism strategies that emphasize cultural vitality and regenerative practice. By strengthening community access and engagement and by advancing a more resilient financial foundation, The Rooms and its Regional Museums will be better positioned to enrich the lives of residents while welcoming the visitors our communities attract.

This strategic plan builds on the successes of the past twenty years and sets clear direction for the next three. As a category one entity under the **Transparency and Accountability Act**, The Rooms is required to submit a strategic plan to government every three years through the Minister of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation. This plan meets that requirement while outlining a purposeful vision for our future.

The priorities and goals within this plan are achievable within existing financial and human resources. They align with our mandate, reflect the strategic directions of government and include measurable annual objectives that will guide our progress.

The Board and CEO are accountable for the preparation and execution of this plan. We remain fully committed to responsible stewardship of public funds and we are honoured to serve the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. Together, the Board, CEO, management and staff are dedicated to achieving the priorities and goals set forth—strengthening The Rooms role as a vital contributor to the cultural life, well-being and future of our province.



Margaret E. Allan
Chair, Board of Directors
The Rooms Corporation of Newfoundland and Labrador



Overview of the Corporation

The Rooms is a Crown Corporation of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador and steward of the province's archival, art, artifact and natural history collections. In addition to its St. John's location, The Rooms operates three Regional Museums which include: the Demasduit Regional Museum (DRM) located in Grand Falls-Windsor; the Provincial Seamen's Museum (PSM) located in Grand Bank; and the Labrador Interpretation Centre (LIC) located in North West River, Labrador.

The Rooms is a not-for-profit institution that connects visitors to people, place and culture. It challenges and inspires us to think differently.

As a provincial cultural institution focused on the public interest, our mandate furthers education, public outreach and the presentation of permanent and temporary exhibits based on the provincial archival, contemporary and historic art and museum collections entrusted to it by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

As one of Newfoundland and Labrador's landmark cultural attractions, The Rooms is central to a vibrant and growing tourism sector. As the Province's premier cultural space, it engages residents and visitors from across Canada and around the world. Together with its Regional Museums, The Rooms strengthens community-based tourism by offering welcoming cultural hubs that support the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation and advance the Provincial Government's priority to encourage residents to vacation at home.

The Rooms was established to collect, preserve, present and make available for research the historic artifacts, natural history specimens and archival records that represent and illustrate the significant history, culture and natural heritage of Newfoundland and Labrador. It collects, preserves and presents provincial, national and international contemporary and historic art and promotes the works of contemporary visual artists of the province and beyond. The Rooms strives to develop and conduct programs and events that represent and illustrate the significant history, culture and heritage of the province. The Rooms supports the development of cultural industries in the province and endeavours to strengthen the culture of the province, consistent with the strategic directions of the Provincial Government.

The Rooms employs 58 full-time permanent staff in St. John's, as well as five permanent seasonal staff to support operations at The Rooms Regional Museums. The Rooms also employs a number of hourly staff throughout the year to support visitor services, public and school programming, the archives reference room, and regional operations. Its annual operating budget for 2026-27 is \$10 million, of which an annual appropriation of \$6.7 million is provided by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

During its previous three-year strategic planning cycle April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2026, The Rooms welcomed more than 450,000 visitors and its Regional Museums collectively welcomed more than 25,000 visitors.

The Rooms maintains a strong online presence via its website www.therooms.ca and on Facebook @TheRoomsNL and Instagram @therooms_nl.



Mandate

The Rooms Mandate is outlined in the **Rooms Act, 2016**, under Section 4, Objects of the Corporation as follows:

- (a) collect, preserve, present and make available for research the historic artifacts, natural history specimens and archival records that represent and illustrate the significant history, culture and natural heritage of the province;
- (b) conduct research with respect to the history, natural history, culture and heritage of the province;
- (c) collect and present provincial, national and international contemporary and historic art;
- (d) advance and promote the works of contemporary visual artists of the province;
- (e) support the development of cultural industries in the province;
- (f) strengthen the culture of the province; and,
- (g) provide and enhance client services and partnerships to promote the cultural collections of the province and to show other national and international collections.

See Appendix 1 – Powers of the Corporation, **Rooms Act, 2016**



Mission, Vision and Values

Mission Statement

We create welcoming spaces for all people to gather, share stories, engage with the past and challenge narratives, in order to build an inspired community around art, history, culture and our natural environment.

Vision Statement

The Rooms is a values driven, sustainable cultural community hub that builds an inclusive, diverse, creative and confident community by connecting people with Newfoundland and Labrador's past and present so they can envision a bright future.

Values

Enabling Discovery

sharing the stories and surprises that are contained within our collections

Stimulating Curiosity

constantly exploring how we can be accessible to, connect with and mean more to people

Building Team Culture

forging relationships, working closely together and with external groups to achieve shared goals

Striving to be The Best

commitment to applying the highest standards in all that we do

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Anti-racism

commitment to a respectful, diverse, tolerant and welcoming environment where we are stronger together



Lines of Business

The Rooms mandate is delivered by the Archives and Collections Department and by the Art Gallery, Museums and Visitor Experience Department. These core departments are supported by the Finance and Operations Department, and by the Marketing, Communications and Fund Development Department, which provide essential services that enable effective and sustainable delivery.

Archives and Collections preserves, manages and provides access to the province's archival, art, natural history specimens and material culture collections, supporting research, learning and public engagement.

Art Gallery, Museums and Visitor Experience brings art, history, and culture to life through in-house exhibitions, collaborative projects, and dynamic visitor experiences. Beyond showcasing collections, the department presents touring exhibitions, explores diverse perspectives, and engages with complex and evolving narratives. Through school programs, public programming, and seasonal operations of The Rooms three Regional Museums, it fosters curiosity, critical thinking and meaningful connections for diverse audiences.

Together, these mission-focused activities are supported by the Finance and Operations Department and the Marketing, Communications and Fund Development Department.

Finance and Operations support organizational sustainability through responsible financial stewardship, facilities and security management, information technology and core administrative services that ensure efficient and effective operations. This department also manages volunteers and visitor services staff, as well as revenue-generating services including the gift shop, café and facility rentals.

Marketing, Communications and Fund Development strengthens The Rooms public presence and sustainability by building brand awareness, engaging audiences and supporting revenue generation. It leads communications, media relations and digital channels, and delivers integrated marketing campaigns and promotional materials that ensure consistent messaging and visibility for exhibitions, programs and services. In addition, the department contributes to the visitor experience and operations through coordination of ticketing and accessibility initiatives.



The following is a list of The Rooms lines of business:

- The Rooms acquires, preserves, presents and makes available for research the historic artifacts, natural history specimens and archival records that represent and illustrate the significant history, culture and natural heritage of the province.
- The Rooms collects and presents provincial, national and international contemporary and historic art; is the province’s steward of archival records and a co-facilitator of Information Management initiatives; and serves to inform, present and interpret the province’s history.
- The Rooms is an important education and outreach vehicle, aiming to provide access to its collections through education programs, travelling exhibits, Regional Museums, virtual access, workshops and artist residency programs.
- The Rooms is responsible for collections security, research, maintenance and preservation to safeguard the provincial memory, history and culture.
- The Rooms provides support to professional constituencies in the archival, visual arts and museum fields.



Issue 1: Outreach and Well-Being:

Expanding Provincial Reach Leveraging Regional Museums as Community Hubs

Newfoundland and Labrador's unique stories and cultures attract visitors from around the world. Residents also have a deep and abiding interest in the cultural heritage of this province. The provincial collections under the care of The Rooms represent Newfoundland and Labrador's unique cultural history and contain thousands of stories and topics of interest to both visitors and residents.

Collections cared for by The Rooms represent almost two centuries of gathering, preserving and safekeeping. Each artifact, archival document, photograph, artwork, archeological finds and natural history specimen reflects what people chose to keep and value in their time.

Collections cared for by The Rooms are an invaluable record of people's lives in this place for over 9,000 years. They give us a glimpse of creativity, innovations, exchanges, passions and conflicts evidenced by or expressed through art and material culture, a globally significant fossil record and specimens of unique plants and animals that have thrived here, where rock and forest meet ocean. There is a great deal of tragedy and hardship in that record. There are also many joys. Not the least of which is the joy of belonging—to place, to community, to culture.

The Rooms and its Regional Museums deliver a robust schedule of exhibitions and programs that connect audiences with these extensive collections. Over the next three years, The Rooms will expand access further by introducing new virtual and online programs and services. These initiatives will strengthen people's connection to the culture of this place, fostering belonging, social cohesion and an enhanced sense of well-being. This expanded reach will be guided by a needs assessment.

Long-term sustainability of our facilities, supported through responsible care of infrastructure, is foundational to ensuring access. **We will continue efforts—together with the responsible department—to ensure our facilities can support expanded provincial reach. Strengthening infrastructure directly advances this goal.** Building strong community hubs and improving infrastructure for local tourism experiences also supports the Provincial Government's priority to make Newfoundland and Labrador the tourism capital of Canada.

By increasing access to its collections, programs and services, The Rooms and its Regional Museums will further support Newfoundland and Labrador's culture and contribute to healthier, more connected communities throughout the province.



Goal:

By March 31, 2029, The Rooms will have increased access to its programs, services, and Regional Museum offerings across Newfoundland and Labrador by expanding digital and in-person engagement, strengthening regional partnerships, and enhancing and maintaining facility infrastructure to ensure safe, accessible, and sustainable spaces that support community well-being and the tourism industry.

First year objective:

By March 31, 2027, The Rooms and its Regional Museums will have developed a plan to expand province-wide access by launching enhanced virtual programming and online services that reach residents across Newfoundland and Labrador. The plan will support long-term access, program delivery and the positioning of Regional Museums as community hubs.

First Year Indicators:

- Research and conduct a needs assessment for expanding digital and in person engagement.
- Research a program celebrating one specific rural community, as a template for future programs.
- Continue to complete work on the existing Property Condition Assessment Report and continue to prioritize capital projects
- Develop a comprehensive plan that includes an assessment of infrastructure needs for the regional locations to support enhanced virtual programming and online services, expanding province-wide access for residents of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Second year objective:

By March 31, 2028, The Rooms and its Regional Museums will have piloted and evaluated new programs and services, both virtual and in-person, designed to support community well-being and cultural belonging.

Third year objective:

By March 31, 2029, following the completion of piloting and evaluating new programs and services, The Rooms will have implemented new virtual programming and online services to improve access for residents across Newfoundland and Labrador.



Issue 2: Regeneration and Sustainability:

Using a Regenerative Approach to Strategically Increase The Rooms Non-Government Revenue Base

Newfoundlanders and Labradorians have always had a profound sense of place—an understanding that where we live shapes who we are—recognizing the value of culture, not just as something to be preserved but as something that makes our society stronger, more vibrant and more connected.

At The Rooms, we see ourselves as storytellers. But every story begins with the collections that we care for. Our vision is to create and share diverse exhibitions and programs that resonate deeply with everyone. As stewards of the province’s history, we embrace the responsibility and complexity that comes with that role. We aim to be a place where stories are shared, challenged, revised, retold and remembered.

Over the past two decades, The Rooms has built a community inspired by art, history, culture and the natural world. Through creating places of belonging and strengthening social cohesion, The Rooms and its Regional Museums help cultivate safer spaces—places where people feel connected, welcomed and free to express who they are.

Issue two focuses on ensuring The Rooms and its Regional Museums maintain their financial stability through diversifying and growing funding while maintaining a solid base.

As The Rooms enters its third decade, there is an opportunity to invite donors, supporters and partners to work with us on initiatives that foster community well-being—connecting local businesses to projects that advance belonging—to place, to community, to culture. Supporting the idea of a place of possibilities.

This supports the provincial government’s strategic priority of building a thriving tourism industry while promoting Newfoundland and Labrador culture. This priority also promotes well-being for the residents of the province fostering social cohesion and safer communities.



Goal:

By March 31, 2029, The Rooms and its Regional Museums will diversify and grow their non-government revenue base by engaging donors, partners, visitors and communities in regenerative initiatives that strengthen community well-being and support the long-term sustainability of The Rooms.

First year objective:

By March 31, 2027, The Rooms and its Regional Museums will have developed a plan to diversify revenue from new sources.

First Year Indicators:

- Annual donor campaign designed and launched to increase donor participation and contribution year over year.
- Corporate sponsorship packages developed and marketed to increase the number and value of corporate sponsorship agreements.
- A promotional plan will be created for revenue generation opportunities.
- Establish a process for tracking and analyzing revenue-generating activities.
- Implement a donor pipeline framework to manage relationships from prospect identification through stewardship.

Second year objective:

By March 31, 2028, The Rooms and its Regional Museums will have implemented and evaluated a plan to grow revenues from existing sources.

Third year objective:

By March 31, 2029, The Rooms will have strengthened and expanded its philanthropic relationships by implementing a donor engagement strategy that connects individuals, businesses and partners to regenerative initiatives supporting community well-being.



Appendix 1: Powers of The Corporation – Rooms Act, 2016

- 6 (1) In carrying out its objects under this Act, the corporation may
- (a) acquire by purchase or lease real, personal, movable and immovable property, including securities and hold, manage or dispose of them as the corporation may determine;
 - (b) acquire by gift, bequest or devise real, personal, movable and immovable property, including securities and expend, administer or dispose of that property, subject to terms, if any, on which that property was given, bequeathed or devised to the corporation;
 - (c) enter into partnership, sponsorship and other contractual agreements that further the objects of the corporation;
 - (d) lease its property;
 - (e) operate restaurants, special events, parking facilities, shops and other facilities for the use of the public and lease or otherwise make available, on terms and conditions that the corporation considers appropriate, those facilities or space;
 - (f) expend money appropriated by the Legislature of the province for the purposes of the corporation;
 - (g) expend money received by the corporation from its operations including money received by it from leasing or otherwise making available facilities or space referred to in paragraph (e);
 - (h) establish classes of membership for the support of the corporation and its divisions and for that purpose may establish fee, donation and support amounts applicable to those classes;
 - (i) charge fees for the purposes of the operation of the divisions and facilities of the corporation; and
 - (j) generally, do and authorize those things that the corporation considers necessary for the attainment of its objects and the exercise of the powers of the corporation
- (2) Property acquired by the corporation under paragraphs (1) (a) and (b) shall be acquired or accepted subject to the advice and direction of the chief executive officer.
- (3) Unless otherwise demonstrated or agreed upon between the owner of the archival record, artifact or specimen and the chief executive officer, archival records, historic artifacts and natural history specimens in the care and control of the corporation are the property of the Crown.
- (4) Notwithstanding paragraphs (1)(a) and (b), the corporation shall not acquire or sell real property without the prior consent, in writing, of the minister.
- (5) The corporation may conduct activities jointly with the department and may enter into agreements with respect to the shared funding of activities.



- (6) The deputy minister of the department may request that the corporation provide professional expertise and technical services to the department and the corporation shall comply with that request.
- (7) The corporation may apply for an order under the Rules of the Supreme Court, 1986 for the recovery of records, historic artifacts, art or other property to which the corporation is entitled.

Rooms Act, 2016 cR-15.2 s6



Appendix 2: Primary Clients

The Rooms Corporation works closely with both external and internal clients. These include:

- Residents of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation
- Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
- Department of Labrador Affairs
- The Office of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation
- Indigenous Governments and Organizations
- Diverse Populations
- Equity-Deserving Groups
- Non-resident Visitors
- Pre-school Children
- Children in the K-12 System
- Youth, Post-Secondary Students and Lifelong Learners
- Families/Households
- Educators
- Artists, Academics, Archivists and Researchers
- Donors to Collections
- Individual Donors
- Corporate Sponsors



