

SaskCulture Inc. Funding Review

Implementation Strategy

May 2008

Background

The Board of Directors of SaskCulture initiated a Funding Review in April 2004. Reduced resources were the impetus for the Review but, early into the process, the Board recognized that a complete Review was necessary to bring the work of SaskCulture in line with its Ends. In deciding to conduct the Review, SaskCulture recognized that the lottery system has been a tremendous support for cultural activity in the province for the past thirty years and that the organizations supported by the Trust have been integral to a culturally vibrant Saskatchewan.

As Trustee for the Culture Section of the Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund for Sport, Culture and Recreation, SaskCulture is charged with the task of ensuring that the funds are used to meet the goals of the Trust Fund. These goals are defined in the lottery agreement which is based on SaskCulture's Ends. The performance criteria within SaskCulture's Cultural Policy are also based on these goals and SaskCulture's Ends. Effective delivery to meet these goals is essential if the cultural community wants to maintain the Trust Fund resources for cultural activity. Effective use means that SaskCulture must be actively engaged in the ongoing process of ensuring that the funds are relevant and accessible. By initiating its own Review, SaskCulture was being proactive in addressing emerging needs versus the status quo.

The results of the Review provide evidence for SaskCulture to make a better case to government that the money going to culture through the lottery system is a good public investment. It also points out where improvements to the system are necessary. Completing the Review and implementing the necessary changes proactively informs government that we are fulfilling our Trusteeship role.

The Funding Review took longer than originally anticipated but, given the circumstances of the past few years, it could not move any faster. It was important that the process not be rushed because the decisions resulting from the Review will shape the future and therefore require careful and visionary consideration. It is also important to note that at least eighteen months of the last four years were taken up with the more immediate task of working with our lottery partners, government and the cultural community to obtain a reduced lottery fee. Given the successful outcome from that work, it was time well spent.

All members of the Funding Review team also needed to be well informed as the process moved forward. With the significant changeover to the SaskCulture board each of the last couple of years, there was also a need to educate new members on the progress made.

In February 2006, SaskCulture hosted a Funding Review *Summit* for the membership. With 150 people in attendance SaskCulture received a wealth of information to guide it in moving forward. Five themes emerged from the Summit discussions:

Leadership

There is a strong desire for action on the part of decision-makers. Participants consistently raised the need for decision-makers to take the initiative to make decisions/changes that would make the system relevant and effective. If identified,

disillusionment with the summit process was consistently framed in terms of the desire to get on with action.

Communication

Ongoing dialogue and communication with member groups of the cultural community is valuable and should be maintained.

Funding

Funding is an important and complex issue. Long-term, sustainable funding is vital and efforts should be made to find more funds. Many participants voiced a need for re-evaluating the distribution to ensure a fair and 'democratic' process.

Diversity

It is important to recognize a broad definition of culture and a broad range of cultural activities. There is a strong desire to engage a wider range of people, particularly those who have been under-funded and undervalued. There is a need to focus on youth, both in educational strategies and engaging them in dialogue. These efforts will be key to ensuring their participation in the arts and sustaining cultural organizations.

Public Awareness/Advocacy

Culture is essential to quality of life and needs to be promoted and celebrated in all areas. It's important to invest in our culture to build the province and promote diversity.

In October 2006 the SaskCulture Board adopted a set of *Guiding Principles* for the remainder of the Review. The principles were designed to inform SaskCulture's stakeholders on the underlying values for the Funding Review. They were developed as a result of the discussion and dialogue over the previous two years by the Board and the Funding Review team, as well as from meetings with members and other stakeholders. The principles were designed to guide the balance of the work on the Funding Review.

The membership of SaskCulture had an opportunity to discuss the principles with the Board at a member consultation in October 2006, as well as an opportunity to provide written feedback. That feedback informed the final principles set by the Board in February 2007.

Principles

(ordering does not indicate priorities)

- 1. The focus for funding priorities in the future will be the support of relevant cultural activities. Organizations will be supported as a means to deliver relevant cultural activity. Relevant cultural activity will be based upon cultural impact, accessibility and service.**

The Culture Section of Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund currently supports a broad base of excellent cultural activity. SaskCulture believes in the principle of ongoing operational support that enables organizations to have the necessary infrastructure to provide quality cultural activities. SaskCulture also thinks greater emphasis on ensuring that the Culture Section of the Trust funds support cultural activities that are relevant now and in the future is essential. Within the lottery supported system there appears to be an expectation that once an organization receives eligibility status it is guaranteed continuous funding. However,

SaskCulture recognizes that change is inevitable. Some programs and services that were relevant twenty years ago may not be as pertinent at present; likewise, some programs and services will be even more relevant today than they were previously. There may also be some very important new activities that address funding priorities to which SaskCulture would want to devote some Trust Fund resources.

2. Trust funding for cultural activities will be allocated to support the stated priorities of the Culture Section of the Trust. These priorities will be based on direction found in SaskCulture's Ends and the lottery agreement.

When the Culture Section of the Trust was formed there were minimal criteria for organizations receiving support. Over the years, the number of outcomes expected of beneficiary groups has increased significantly. Government sees these funds as public monies; therefore, recipients are expected to support some aspect of the public good as defined through public policy, namely the lottery agreement.

SaskCulture works with the Ministry of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport and its lottery partners to create the lottery licence agreement. In doing so, SaskCulture focuses on ensuring that the Ends of SaskCulture form the basis of the cultural priorities in the agreement. It is the job of the SaskCulture Board to continually link with its members, as well as other stakeholders, to assess and refine its Ends. A key component of that process was the Funding Summit in February 2006 from which five priority themes surfaced – leadership, communication, funding, diversity and public awareness/advocacy. These priority areas support SaskCulture's current Ends.

3. Cultural impact, plus access and participation, will be the key elements for determining support by the Culture Section of the Trust. Once an activity/organization receives a positive evaluation in these areas, it will then be considered in terms of its organizational effectiveness.

For the most part, organizations that provide activities that achieve significant cultural impact, are accessible, and generate participation, will make an important contribution to SaskCulture's Ends (public interest priorities within lottery agreement). Consequently, emphasis on cultural programming and activities for the people of Saskatchewan is what will be evaluated. The effectiveness and efficiency of an organization will be considered in relation to its work in advancing SaskCulture's Ends.

4. SaskCulture, as Trustee for the Culture Section of the Trust, will work with appropriate stakeholders to ensure that everything currently supported by the Culture Section of the Trust, including SaskCulture itself, is evaluated to ensure that it is the best means available to contribute to a culturally vibrant future. As well, evaluation of organizational strengths, weaknesses and gaps will be considered.

SaskCulture's stakeholders include its membership (lottery recipients as well as the others), its communities of interest, other agencies that SaskCulture partners with as well as community. SaskCulture must ensure that it finds ways to link with all of these in some way to get feedback on what is, as well as what is not, supported by the Culture Section of the Trust.

5. In looking to the future, the Culture Section of the Trust will also need to be open to new possibilities for service delivery.

It is essential that consideration be given to different levels of support and different mechanisms for program delivery. The Culture Section of the Trust must also give consideration to having different levels of qualification for Trust support. Anticipated shifts in the province's demographic patterns and rural to urban migration suggest changes may be necessary.

6. SaskCulture, as Trustee for the Culture Section of the Trust, must consider what will be supported in the future. In doing so, discussions need to take place with those funding agencies that it partners with to ensure that work is mutually supportive and that the areas of support by each agency are clearly defined.

A partnership approach to funding is necessary to avoid duplication and to achieve maximum coverage of cultural activity throughout the province.

7. SaskCulture will not force groups currently funded by the Culture Section of the Trust to change, but if funded groups are not meeting a satisfactory level of the funding priorities of the Culture Section of the Trust, their funding will be decreased or discontinued.

If an organization/program is deemed to no longer warrant Culture Section of the Trust funding, or to receive a significant reduction in Trust funding, there will be decreasing support through a defined transition time.

Strategy for Change

Once the principles were finalized in 2007, SaskCulture conducted interviews with the organizations that deliver programs and services supported by the Culture Section of the Trust. The information from those interviews, the various funding applications and follow-ups for the past five (5) years, funding trend information, the 2006 Members' Summit, Board and Committee discussions throughout the Review, as well a review of the applicable restructuring reports of a few years back, have all been considered by SaskCulture in the development of an Implementation Strategy.

Throughout its work on the Review in 2007, there was solid agreement that the "status quo" is not an option as SaskCulture moves forward. The Review results will inform changes to current programs in terms of *relevancy, accessibility, and cultural impact as well as effectiveness and efficiency*. As noted at the beginning of the report, reduced resources were the impetus for the Review, but it quickly grew to much more. When reducing resources was no longer an issue, the framework of the Review grew to be more long term and focused on expected outcomes for the Culture Section of the Trust, rather than how to achieve the bottom line.

Once all of the meetings were conducted, numerous reports read and the many hours of discussion had taken place, the SaskCulture board agreed that the changes required had to address the following areas of concern.

Areas to be Addressed

1. Level of municipal support for cultural activities needs to be increased in both larger and smaller communities;
2. Increased levels of participation by persons of First Nations and Métis ancestry, as well as support for First Nations and Métis cultural programming and leadership opportunities;
3. Increased engagement in cultural activities by people from rural parts of the province, as well as *geographically isolated* communities in both northern and southern Saskatchewan;
4. Completion of an Eligibility Review to address: organizational performance (cultural impact, accessibility and/or organizational effectiveness), overlapping mandates and/or duplication in services/program delivery, and gaps in services/programming;
5. Increased support for calculated risk-taking;
6. Increased focus on ensuring that the lottery-funded system is accessible to the people of Saskatchewan. This means that the focus of organizations should be broader than their membership;
7. Increased support for capacity building to the organizations supported by the Culture Section of the Trust;
8. Increased participation in cultural programming by youth, as well as more opportunities for leadership by youth in cultural organizations/activities; and
9. Improved advocacy and communication across the whole of the cultural community.

Implementation

In October 2007, SaskCulture's Funding Review had proposed the following outcomes and implementation strategy to its members. The outcomes will enable SaskCulture, as Trustee for the Culture Section of the Trust, to address the areas of concern identified in the previous section of the report. It is important to note that there is not one specific outcome for each area of concern. The outcomes, as a whole, represent the direction that SaskCulture will take to ensure that the Culture Section of the Trust is investing in cultural activity that addresses the areas of concern identified by the Funding Review.

The proposed outcomes encompass change for the cultural community that is supported by the Culture Section of the Trust, including SaskCulture itself. Structurally, SaskCulture will have to change as these outcomes unfold. Such changes may involve constitutional changes and operational changes.

SaskCulture's focus will evolve into that of a cultural congress, in which it acts as the catalyst for bringing the various cultural sectors together on common issues, such as advocacy for culture as a whole, training for cultural workers and volunteers, cross-cultural funding initiatives, capacity building and risk-taking, as well as the Trusteeship role for the Culture Section of the Trust.

The outcomes that are part of the Implementation Strategy are designed to provide greater role clarity, less duplication throughout the cultural community, more cultural impact and increased access and participation.

Outcomes for Implementation

- 1. SaskCulture will work to strengthen its ability to be responsive to emerging needs by ensuring that resources from the Culture Section of the Trust are available for capacity building to enable those organizations/programs with cultural impact to have the necessary resources to be effective and efficient in moving forward.**

Current Situation

There are many facets to capacity building and at present there are limited programs to enable the cultural community to try new initiatives. The current funding system is based on continuous funding to eligible organizations/programs; therefore emerging needs are only supported in a limited capacity when new funds become available. Organizations that have been around for a while are expected to get by on the same level of resources from year to year despite increasing costs

Actions

- Coordinate and conduct the eligibility reviews of identified provincial cultural organizations.
- Review and implement any changes to adjudication models used by the Culture Section to address changing needs.
- Establish, implement and evaluate the Capacity Building Fund.
- Establish a system for transfer and delivery of funding programs, as a result of Funding Review recommendations.
- Review and determine future support for Saskatchewan festivals.
- Complete a detailed HR Study to review standards and salary options
- Develop and implement SaskCulture HR training plan
- Develop strategy to support cultural worker training in Saskatchewan and identify role at the national level
- Build awareness, recognition and value of cultural workers paid and unpaid
- Support cultural groups and leaders in their understanding of cultural diversity and increase culturally diverse participation in cultural activities.
- Increase access and support for training and development for cultural workers
- Work with partners to develop and implement a Creative Kids program to provide funding to kids who cannot afford cultural activities.
- Review and update current communication systems and tools to ensure effective and efficient communication throughout the cultural network
- Review membership categories and constitutional changes as they related to District development
- Advocate for a new lottery licence fee.

- 2. Increased opportunities for First Nations and Métis engagement and participation.**

Current Situation

During the same time period that SaskCulture was undertaking the Funding Review it also hired a First Nations and Métis Coordinator for a one year pilot program. That person's task was to meet with various community individuals to determine the best advisory mechanism for the community and advise SaskCulture on its next steps toward its own Aboriginal Action Plan. In the fall of 2005, the initial SaskCulture First Nations and Métis Advisory Circle was established and in 2006 a full-time Coordinator was hired. With the Circle and a full-time

person in place, SaskCulture went to work on incorporating a number of actions into its operational plan. The work that has been done is just a start, but it shows that SaskCulture and the Culture Section of the Trust are moving forward in increasing First Nations and Métis engagement.

Actions

- Establish, implement, evaluate and refine the Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Leadership Program (AACLP).
- Coordinate meaningful contribution and ongoing development of the First Nations and Métis Advisory Circle.
- Develop SaskCulture's First Nations and Métis network and establish in database.
- Set up an Aboriginal awareness opportunities for SaskCulture membership, to assist members and others in the cultural community in gaining a better understanding in working across cultural boundaries
- Support the development and implementation of the 2008 Gathering around a theme of cross cultural awareness

3. Strengthen SaskCulture's role in encouraging increased municipal support for cultural engagement at the local level.

Current Situation

SaskCulture's current operational plan has incorporated a Municipal Cultural Engagement Pilot Project. The strategy to have a number of pilot projects which will inform communities as to the value of culture within community is meant to inform a larger contingent as well as potential municipal legislation. Having a session on this topic at the SUMA convention is a major opportunity to create increased awareness.

Actions

- Work with partners to develop and implement a "Creative Kids" program to provide funding to kids who cannot afford cultural activities.
- Provide Sport, Culture and Recreation Districts with information and opportunities to increase their understanding of culture, its benefits and the cultural network.
- Support the ongoing development of the District delivery system.
- Increase awareness and understanding of the District's role and their impact in the cultural community
- Increase awareness of municipal cultural engagement: continue research and support for cultural planning and mapping, including future training.
- Work with four pilot communities to create a strategy and tools for increasing cultural engagement at the community level; promote for use in other communities
- Work to advocate for increased investment in culture with local municipal governments, changes to municipal structure to include cultural facilities.
- Increase use of Saskevents.com through marketing and promotion.

4. SaskCulture will work with Saskatchewan Arts Board to establish a mutually-beneficial system to equitably support all arts-related activities in Saskatchewan.

Current situation

SaskCulture and the SAB recognize the value of having a funding partnership supported by the Culture Section of Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund for Sport, Culture and Recreation

for arts programming. These programs, which are strategic to the accomplishment of the shared ends of both organizations, are supported annually and approved through the SaskCulture Spending Plan process. Although there have been some challenges operationally, and in meeting funding expectations, the agreement has served the community well.

Actions

- Outline working relationship with SAB and determine partnership agreement requirements. This will include a funding framework for all programs currently supported and adjudicated by the SAB, as well as active roles in the delivery of some festivals and media arts funding, shared criteria and guidelines, eligibility, and support for lottery promotion.
- Clarification of SaskCulture's new relationship with arts PCOs and cultural industries PCOs –active members with partnering potential.
- Determine and implement branding strategy for SAB and SaskCulture partnership programs.
- Assess the potential of other cooperative ventures between SAB and SaskCulture.

- 5. SaskCulture will take the lead in establishing a provincial heritage organization with a broad based mandate to work on shared issues and to advocate on behalf of the heritage community as a whole. Eligibility reviews may result in some PCO programs being brought into that organization.**

Current situation

There is a need to bring the heritage community together for common advocacy and programming. Presently, heritage is not well served because there is no organization that can actively and loudly speak on behalf of heritage as whole, other than SaskCulture. The type of advocacy that is required for heritage in this province at present, and into the near future, is beyond the mandate of SaskCulture.

When the heritage COI was established in 2001, the idea of an umbrella organization was presented to the heritage community as an option for the heritage COI mechanism. The community chose the option of creating an internal SaskCulture committee, but indicated there may be a need to revisit the option of an independent organization in the future. Given what we know about the state of heritage, the Funding Review provides an excellent opportunity to move the establishment of such a body forward.

Actions

- Hire, on contract, a skilled consultant with experience in heritage to guide the process.
- Establish a framework for new organization to take on role of Heritage Community of Interest.
- Conduct eligibility reviews of those heritage organizations identified as possible candidates for having their programs brought into new organization
- Meet with other heritage organizations and leaders to outline changes proposed for heritage.
- Work with Heritage COI to hold heritage community consultations regarding the framework for the new organization (include Foundation, Ministry Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport, & Tourism Saskatchewan).
- Interim advocacy strategy updated and supported until organization is in place.

Outstanding Issues

This organization will be set up as not for profit and function for advocacy and programming. If the new organization can engage in advocacy that obtains a more satisfactory level of support for heritage for the Saskatchewan Heritage Foundation through the General Revenue Fund -- a model similar to that being implemented for the arts (SAB) could be considered in the distant future.

Some means of ensuring a linkage with the entire heritage PCOs will need to be incorporated into the model. At the same time the new organization needs to be inclusive of the heritage community beyond the PCOs.

- 6. SaskCulture will support an increased understanding of multiculturalism, inter-culturalism and ethno-culturalism in Saskatchewan by incorporating changes into its funding programs and services to better support such groups.**

Current Situation

During the course of the interviews and research as part of the Funding Review, plus the challenges in the workings of the Multicultural Community of Interest Committee, SaskCulture has come to realize that all of the groups that are defined as multicultural are not specifically multicultural. There are a number of organizations that deliver very worthwhile cultural programs that are more heritage- and arts-based than multicultural. These groups should be recognized for their contributions to the cultural community on the basis of their own mandates rather than forcing them into a category. SaskCulture certainly recognizes that a portion of the work of these organizations is multicultural, or cross-cultural, in nature and wants to ensure that this type of work continues, but it is time that the value of these ethno-cultural-based activities is recognized.

Actions

- Work with multicultural and ethno-cultural organizations to determine future vision for multiculturalism in Saskatchewan, as well as the separate needs of ethno-cultural groups.
- Work with the community to determine how to best move multiculturalism and interculturalism forward in Saskatchewan, as well as increase cross-cultural endorsement;
- Assess funding options for ethno-cultural activity to eliminate some of the stipulations in multicultural funding classifications, such as cross-cultural or anti-racism programming, and widen their ability to be part of heritage and arts networks.

- 7. Conduct an eligibility review of those organizations that did not perform well as part of the Funding Review assessments.**

Current situation

Although the Funding Review conducted an excellent assessment of each organization on the eligibility list, it will be important to conduct the Eligibility Review based on their performance of the past 5 years, as well as the observations and issues raised in the Funding Review. These reviews will articulate possibilities in terms of federating some current groups, as well as where new structures may be necessary.

Actions

- Appoint Eligibility Committee responsible for reviewing organizations.
- Identify groups to be reviewed and inform them of the process and timeline.

- Complete review by November 2008

8. Increase the effectiveness of adjudication mechanisms for the Culture Section of the Trust.

Current situation

The adjudication system that has been in place for the funding programs supported by the Culture Section of the Trust needs to be aligned with the funding demands of today and the future. Some of the mechanisms we use have been in place since the Trust was established and are based on a sport model – in particular the Cultural Advisory Committee for PCO funding with the exception of the PCOs adjudicated by the SAB. An elected committee does not ensure that the range of experience and diversity that is necessary.

With the third party funding arrangements currently in place to support a number of the funding programs through the Culture Section of the Trust the accountability mechanisms of SaskCulture for these programs need to be reviewed.

There are a number of duplications within the funding programs that we contract out, in particular the larger festivals and the media arts grants. If these programs were moved to the SAB the applicants would have one application and one assessment. The PCOs that administer these programs could focus on program and service delivery rather than funding roles.

SaskCulture is also planning to bring the rest of the third party funds in-house. The organizations that we currently contract with would still promote the program and recommend the jury members, but the applications, review process and follow-ups would be the direct responsibility of SaskCulture.

Actions

- Assess the funding adjudication mechanisms currently in place July-October/08
- Recommend new adjudication models November 2008
- Implement new models April 2009

Implementation Time Frame

Member Feedback	January 10, 2008
Board Finalization of Implementation Strategy	February 15, 2008
Revamping of SaskCulture's work based on final Strategy	March 2008
Implementation Unfolds and is incorporated into SaskCulture's plan (2 to 3 year process)	April 2008-10