

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Implementation of the Pluralism Policy for the
Alberta Foundation for the Arts

Deadline to submit
July 2, 2021



Summary

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts (AFA) is seeking expressions of interest from qualified organizations or individuals for a consultancy contract, ending no later than March 31, 2022, to analyze, research, report and make recommendations on the implementation of its Pluralism arts policy. A copy of the AFA Pluralism Policy as approved by the board is included as Attachment 1.

Through this contract consultant(s) would be expected to:

- Assess current AFA programs and policies for alignment with the policy and identify gaps;
- Develop recommendations to bring current AFA policies and programs into alignment with the AFA Pluralism policy;
- Analyze the policy for alignment with current best practices in equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility (EDIA) initiatives in Alberta's arts sector and with the Government of Alberta's Diversity and Inclusion policy;
- Support and advise on AFA stakeholder engagement on implementing the policy;
- Make recommendations and support the development of interim activities/initiatives/projects that supports the policy that would be considered by the Board for immediate implementation over the course of the contract;
- Make recommendations on communicating the policy and any associated initiatives;
- Provide the AFA board with a final report of actionable recommendations for policies and programmes that the board can then review and determine an implementation plan.

The AFA will expect the consultant(s) to deliver, at minimum, one interim report detailing immediate implementation actions the AFA can pursue, and a final report with additional immediate actions, as well as short-term and long-term items for the AFA to consider and pursue.

- Proposals that include additional or alternate ways to make recommendations to the AFA to take tangible, meaningful actions to support implementation of the policy in the immediate or short-term during the term of the contract are encouraged.
- Proposals that include potential tools/systems/methodologies for measuring success and/or outcomes of policy implementation for reporting purposes are encouraged.
- Proposals that draw on resources from the Global Centre for Pluralism are encouraged.
- Proposals that align with the Government of Alberta's Red Tape Reduction initiative, which intends, in part, to make it easier for Albertans to access government programs are encouraged.

Project proposals must not exceed \$74,999.00. As an agency of the crown, the AFA is GST exempt.

- All proposals must be submitted as a fixed price, meaning that all project expenses (including travel) for the duration of the term of the contract must be included in the total proposed amount. Contractor(s) will be responsible to provide their own facilities (for example, all overhead, office space and equipment including supplies, administrative burden, mark-up, etc.)
- It is highly recommended that applicants have capacity to conduct virtual meetings via videoconferencing applications (for example, web cam, microphone, etc.), as it is likely meetings will be conducted via the AFA's Zoom account.

The deadline for all applications is July 2, 2021. The anticipated start date for the successful consultant(s) will be July 15, 2021 (see Procurement competition timeline below).

Project background

About the AFA

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts (AFA) is a public agency and a provincial corporation of the Government of Alberta with a mandate to support and contribute to the development of the arts in Alberta. We provide grant funding to artists and art organizations to encourage the growth and development of the arts sector. We also promote the arts and manage an extensive provincial art collection featuring work from artists all over the province.

The AFA reports to Alberta's Minister of Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women and is guided by the objectives found in the *Alberta Foundation for the Arts Act*, 1991:

- Support and contribute to the development of and to promote the arts in Alberta
- Provide persons and organizations with the opportunity to participate in the arts in Alberta
- Foster and promote the enjoyment of works of art created by Alberta artists
- Collect, preserve, and display works of art by Alberta artists
- Encourage artists resident in Alberta in their work

The AFA develops a three-year Strategic Plan to help guide its annual operations and planning, within the context of the current Ministry Business Plan and the foundation's legislative mandate.

Learn more about the AFA at www'affta.ab.ca.

About the AFA Pluralism policy

The AFA board approved has recently developed a Pluralism policy as a guiding principle for the Alberta Foundation for the Arts. In this policy, pluralism is considered an overarching philosophy that encompasses issues of EDIA, further articulating the key role of pluralism as a driver of dialogue, sense of belonging, trust, and innovation in Alberta.

The AFA believes in the full and equal participation of all citizens in the economy, polity, and society. The AFA manifests this belief through its policies and programs that promote inclusive citizenship in two distinct ways: in the arts and through the arts. This policy outlines the AFA's commitment to valuing difference among artists, by arts organisations, between artists and audiences, and through the ongoing impact of art on the fabric of society.

The AFA has developed its Pluralism policy based on the definition proposed by The Global Centre for Pluralism: recognizing, respecting, and valuing difference. The definition has been applied to the main areas of AFA business: the AFA Art Collection, AFA funding programs (grants), and AFA research and engagement activities.

Key stakeholders

The AFA is governed by a board of arts champions from across Alberta, appointed by the Government of Alberta. The AFA board meets regularly during the year, and has four working committees (each chaired by a member of the board) that align with the AFA's main areas of business, and who also meet regularly throughout the year:

- Finance and Governance Committee
- Grants Committee

- Art Collection Committee
- Research and Engagement Committee

The AFA's Pluralism policy initiative is being led by the Research and Engagement Committee.

The AFA board reports to the Minister of Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women. AFA staffing is provided by the Government of Alberta, through its Arts Branch. The Arts Branch is divided into three sections that primarily correspond to AFA areas of business: Arts Development (Grants), Art Collections, and Arts Services – Corporate Services.

The AFA Research and Engagement Committee is primarily supported by Arts Services staff.

AFA stakeholders include, especially as pertains to this project:

- AFA funding clients and grant recipients (organizations and individuals)
- Artists represented by the AFA Art Collection
- Indigenous communities that engage with AFA programs like the Alberta's Future Leaders program.
- Equity deserving artists and communities seeking reduced barriers and increased access to AFA programs and services.
- Albertans seeking information about Alberta's arts community, artistic heritage, and Alberta's artists.

Project structure

The successful contractor will liaise primarily with the Arts Services – Corporate Services section of the Arts Branch.

- The consultant will report to the Director, Arts Services.
- Key staff contacts will be the Arts Services – Communications and the Arts Services – Research consultants.
- The consultant may also be asked to attend meetings with members of the AFA Board as required.

Recommendations for implementation actions will be approved by the AFA board and/or the AFA Research and Engagement Committee. Recommendations will be included in advices prepared for board/committee meetings, which are prepared at least two weeks in advance of meetings.

Recommendations are approved by the board during meetings.

A schedule of upcoming AFA board and committee meetings is included as Attachment 3.

What to include in your proposal

The AFA acknowledges and appreciates the highly specialized nature of this type of work and the significant level of technical expertise required in this field. The AFA encourages vendors to ensure their proposals are as succinct as possible, and make use of clear language best practices (e.g., reduced usage of jargon, acronyms, etc.).

Please include the following:

1. Table of contents for the submission package.
2. Letter of introduction that demonstrates your suitability for the work including a description of your understanding of pluralism.
3. Project resources and relevant experience:
 - a. Please list any/all key consultant(s), a summary of expertise and relevant experience, and C.V./resumes
 - b. Please provide a summary of no more than three relevant or similar past projects undertaken, that notes service delivery approach and project outcomes.
4. Project summary and service delivery approach:
 - a. Please include a descriptive summary of activities to be taken during the term of the contract.
 - b. Please include a description of the approach and methodologies you will use to deliver the services.
5. Summary of deliverables:
 - a. Please include a description of what the AFA should anticipate in the interim and final reports.
 - b. Please include any additional proposed deliverables that will help ensure success for the AFA to implement its Pluralism policy (e.g. meetings/interviews, environmental scans, reports, workshops, training opportunities, additional resources, etc.)
6. Proposed project timeline
7. Itemized budget, including a proposed payment schedule
8. Additional support materials as appropriate (e.g. endorsements, mock-ups, videos, media articles, etc.). Please limit support materials to no more than five items.

How proposals will be assessed

The AFA will be scoring submissions based on the following criteria (refer to the scoring matrix for additional detail):

1. Vendor resources: knowledge, expertise, experience, capacity to fulfil the proposal – **40%**
 - a. Special attention will be given to demonstration of expertise in the area of pluralism.
 - b. Special attention will be given to demonstration of expertise in the arts sector.
 - c. Proposal should also demonstrate relevant knowledge and expertise in the areas of consultation/stakeholder relations, government structure/systems, policy development, research, and communication.
2. Project description: activities, approach, deliverables, and timeline – **30%**
 - d. Special attention will be given to the intended scope of the project, and whether it can be realistically completed within the given timeline.
3. Project budget/cost – **20%**
4. Additional support materials and value-add – **10%**

The highest scoring vendors (up to three) may be asked to give a short summary or presentation of their proposal and be interviewed by AFA board and/or staff members and will also be asked to provide three references.

Procurement competition timeline

Issue Date:	June 1, 2021
Closing Date and Time:	July 2, 2021 at 16:00 Alberta Time
Evaluation of Proposals:	July 5 to 9, 2021
Shortlist Presentations (if requested):	July 13 to 14, 2021
Selection of Successful Vendor:	July 15, 2021

The above dates are provided for information only and are subject to change at the sole discretion of the AFA.

Summary of attachments

1. AFA Pluralism policy
2. AFA 2019-22 Strategic Plan
3. 2021 AFA board and committee meetings schedule

How to submit and contact information

Please submit application packages by email to AFAContact@gov.ab.ca by the deadline date and time.

- PDFs are preferred, with all attachments consolidated into one document attached to the email. (Downloadable links to Google drive, Microsoft OneDrive, Dropbox, etc. are not preferred, but may be accommodated by special request.)
- Files that cannot be converted into PDFs, like videos, maybe provided by downloadable link (must be a file that can be downloaded and saved).
- Late submissions will not be accepted.

You may wish to mail or drop off a hard copy of your submission. Please send to/drop at:

Alberta Foundation for the Arts (AFA)
Capital Arts Building
10708 – 105 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5H 0A1

Paper copies are preferred (i.e. please do not drop off a USB key with files for download, with the exception of files that cannot be printed, like videos).

Questions?

Contact Aaron Talbot, Arts Services – Communications, at Aaron.Talbot@gov.ab.ca or by phone at 780-289-3781 (toll-free in Alberta by dialing 310-0000 first).

Pluralism Policy

Background: Guiding Principle for the Alberta Foundation for the Arts: Pluralism

The AFA believes in the full and equal participation of all citizens in the economy, polity, and society. The AFA manifests this belief through its policies and programs that promote inclusive citizenship in two distinct ways: in the arts and through the arts.

To achieve inclusive citizenship requires us to enshrine pluralism in our policies and practises.

Following the lead of The Global Centre for Pluralism, the AFA has adopted the definition of pluralism as recognizing, respecting, and valuing difference.

First – *recognize* all forms of difference.

- Difference is not restricted to what we can see or hear, but the full texture of what shapes our histories, experiences, and perspectives. We may be different in where we live (rural, urban, suburban); how we worship; who we love; where we come from; how we look; how we sound; our ability; our income and wealth; our occupation, our industry, or how we spend our time; the list of potential differences is endless. We wear multiple hats and we each wear different hats in different contexts. At times, one Albertan might come into conflict with another in how they differentially view or experience Alberta resulting in different fears, hopes, and expectations for Alberta's future. The first step to living peacefully together is to recognize those differences exist.

Second – *respect* difference.

- Recognizing difference does not delegitimize our own identity or position. The goal of pluralism is not 'sameness'. We do not need to agree with the other; but we must respect the other's right to exist. In their existence, we respect their unique histories, experiences, and perspectives that shape their being and outlook. Alberta is comprised of a diverse tapestry of uniqueness that can enrich us if we admire the differences among us. To reach that point of admiration, however, we must first nurture a common sense of belonging; doing so requires Albertans to dialogue among differences to better know one another, especially when we disagree.

Third – *value* difference.

- By recognizing and respecting what makes Albertans different, we set the stage to be able to value difference; innovation arises at the nexus of different ideas. Fostering trust and a sense of belonging not only create a

safe space for dialogue, but through dialogue catalyses innovation by bringing together Albertans from any walk of life to collaborate and create a prosperous future for all Albertans.

Diversity vs Pluralism: In contrast to diversity or multiculturalism, which are static observations of fact, pluralism is an active process that helps us value difference by getting to know ourselves and each other, and in doing so, constructively shape the economic, political, and social systems in which we live.

Policy: **AFA Promotion of Pluralism**

Pluralism is a guiding principle underlying all policies in the Alberta Foundation for the Arts.

The AFA promotes pluralism *in the arts* and *through the arts*.

In the arts refers to who participates as artists, arts organisations, and audiences, expressing how the sector accommodates and encourages diversity within the sector. This includes promoting:

- a) equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility of artists, arts administrators, and audiences;
- b) innovative artists practises that blend artistic practises and disciplines in novel ways; and
- c) innovative artistic practises that bring together artists from different backgrounds.

Through the arts refers to the impact of the arts on society, expressing how the arts sector promotes trust, dialogue, curiosity, and sense of belonging among Albertans. Through novel artistic conceptualization, creation, and curation, the arts fosters innovation that constructively shapes and textures the fabric of our society.

Promoting pluralism ‘through the arts’ uses art as a vehicle to help Albertans understand one another without sacrificing their individual identities. Once we understand each other, we can admire and learn from one another and create inclusive citizenship in our economy, polity, and society. This includes artistic practises that:

- a) promote dialogue among different audiences about their differences;
- b) promote trust, sense of belonging, and empathy among their audiences; and
- c) promotes innovation and creates new public value by bridging the arts with other sectors and industries.

Procedure: **AFA funding programs (grants, scholarships, acquisitions) are transformed to incentivize pluralism:**

Incentivize pluralism *in the arts*:

- a) equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility of artists, arts administrators, and audiences;

- b) innovative artists practises that blend artistic practises/disciplines in novel ways; and
- c) innovative artistic practises that bring together artists from different backgrounds.

Incentivize pluralism through the arts:

- a) dialogue among different audiences about their differences;
- b) trust, sense of belonging, and empathy among their audiences;
- c) innovation and create new public value by bridging the arts with other sectors and industries.

The AFA Art Collection is managed to promote pluralism:

Promote pluralism in the arts:

This is achieved by explicit goal-setting and curation of art from a diversity of backgrounds, artistic practises, and contexts (temporal, geographic, social, cultural). This is achieved through:

- a) equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility of artists, arts administrators, and audiences;
- b) innovative artists practises that blend artistic practises/disciplines in novel ways; and
- c) innovative artistic practises that bring together artists from different backgrounds.

Promote pluralism through the arts:

This is achieved by explicit goal-setting and reporting how art housed in the collection intrinsically promotes or has potential, through audience experience, to promote:

- a) dialogue among different audiences about their differences;
- b) trust, sense of belonging, and empathy among their audiences; and
- c) innovation and the creation of new public value by bridging the arts with other sectors and industries.

AFA research and engagement activities are conducted to prioritise pluralism:

Prioritize pluralism in the arts:

This is achieved by promoting, supporting, and enabling understanding and measurement of:

- a) equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility of artists, arts administrators, and audiences;
- b) innovative artists practises that blend artistic practises/disciplines in novel ways; and
- c) innovative artistic practises that bring together artists from different backgrounds.

Prioritize pluralism through the arts:

This is achieved by promoting, supporting, and enabling best practises to support and measure pluralistic artistic practises by Alberta artists and arts organisations. This is achieved by promoting:

- a) dialogue among different audiences about their differences;
- b) trust, sense of belonging, and empathy among their audiences; and
- c) innovation and creativity by bridging the arts with other sectors and industries.

Operation: The intent of this policy is to facilitate sustained social impact through the arts and ensure the integrity of the AFA itself as a role model. As such, it functions as an umbrella policy for all AFA work.

The Board, Staff and expert panels are representative of Alberta society. Enhanced understanding of the concepts of pluralism among the Board, Staff, expert panels and Albertans is developed through a variety of learning opportunities.

Approved: May 2021

Reviewed: n/a



Alberta Foundation for the Arts

2019-22 Strategic Plan

Alberta

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts acknowledges that the artistic activity we support primarily takes place on the territories of Treaty 6, Treaty 7 and Treaty 8, home of First Nations, Métis and Inuit throughout Alberta. We also acknowledge that our offices are located in Treaty 6 territory in Edmonton, known in the Nēhiyaw (Cree) language as amiskwaciwâskahikan (Beaver Hills House), and acknowledge the Métis people of Alberta who share a deep connection with this land.

We recognize and deeply respect that the land Alberta is situated on has been a meeting place for many Indigenous peoples with diverse histories, languages, and cultures, for thousands of years. We recognize the role of Elders and the knowledge-keepers in helping our communities better understand and foster our rich cultural heritage. We reaffirm our commitment to strengthening our relationships with Indigenous communities and growing our shared knowledge and understanding.

Table of Contents

Message from the Chair	4
Introduction.....	5
Strategic Direction	7
Goal 1: Connect communities through meaningful relationship building and foster appreciation of, and participation in, the arts	7
Goal 2: Encourage a healthy arts ecology by supporting artists and by stimulating the sector's creative development and sustainability.....	8
Goal 3: Affirm and revitalize relationships with Indigenous peoples	9
Goal 4: Encourage equity and inclusion, both in the arts and through the arts	10
Goal 5: Build a performance measurement culture at the AFA to improve service delivery.....	12
Relevant External Website Links	13

Message from the Chair

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts (AFA) is the primary provincial arts resource and grant funding agency in Alberta. For more than 25 years, the AFA has helped the arts be essential to quality of life in Alberta.

With the 2019-22 Strategic Plan, the board of directors has recalibrated the AFA's strategies to promote and help develop the arts in Alberta, and to adapt to the changing cultural landscape of the province. The plan describes how the AFA intends to serve our creative communities – individual artists, cultural workers, and arts organizations – as well as the public, over the next three years. It also articulates the underlying beliefs and values that guide the AFA in its work and provides context for the pursuit of its strategic goals.

Under this new plan, the AFA will seek to encourage a healthy arts sector, to build meaningful and reciprocal relationships with the arts community, and to harness the capacity of the arts to connect communities and be a catalyst for positive change. The plan affirms the AFA's commitment to promoting equitable access in the arts and to building relationships with Alberta's equity-seeking communities, particularly with Indigenous artists, culturally diverse artists, Deaf artists and artists with disabilities, and francophone artists. Since the arts community deserves transparency and accountability from its arts funding partners, the plan also proposes building a stronger culture of performance measurement and evidence-based decision making within our organization.

While this plan outlines a clear direction for the AFA, it is also the platform upon which the AFA intends to respond to emerging issues and needs.

On behalf of the AFA board of directors, I am pleased to present the AFA's 2019-22 Strategic Plan.

Original signed by Liam Oddie

Liam Oddie, Chair

Alberta Foundation for the Arts

Introduction

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts (AFA) was established in 1991 as a crown agency of the Government of Alberta. The purposes of the Foundation, as stipulated in the *Alberta Foundation for the Arts Act*, are to:

- Support and contribute to the development of, and to promote, the arts in Alberta;
- Provide persons and organizations with the opportunity to participate in the arts in Alberta;
- Foster and promote the enjoyment of works of art by Alberta artists;
- Collect, preserve and display works of art by Alberta artists; and
- Encourage artists resident in Alberta in their work.

The AFA reports to Alberta's Minister of Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women and supports outcomes and objectives outlined in the 2018-21 Ministry Business Plan, which was in place at the time the strategic plan was developed.

The AFA supports the outcome of having vibrant communities and diverse cultural opportunities that enhance Albertans' quality of life. Specifically, the AFA supports the ministry's key strategy to "provide support for artists and arts organizations to promote access, excellence and sustainability for the arts in Alberta."

The work of the AFA also contributes to these performance metrics: Performance measure 1.c: Percentage of adult Albertans who attended arts activities or events and Performance indicator 1.d: Percentage of adult Albertans who feel arts activities are important in contributing to the overall quality of life in their community.



AFA Vision

A vibrant arts community, embraced by all Albertans, that inspires inclusion, innovation, and creativity.

AFA Mission Statement

Encourage and support the arts as an essential contributor to the quality of life of Albertans.

Beliefs

We believe:

- The arts enable inclusive citizenship and are essential to the social and cultural fabric of Alberta.
- Access to the arts fosters creativity and is a catalyst for excellence, innovation, health, and well-being in our communities.
- The adaptability and responsiveness of the arts sector is crucial to the success of our local and global arts ecology.

Values

- Be transparent and accountable to the arts community, the government, and the public.
- Embrace diversity and strive to secure access to the arts for all Albertans.
- Act with integrity. Be fair and professional.

Strategic Direction

The following outlines five key goals of the strategic plan and the related strategic objectives.

Goal 1

Connect communities through meaningful relationship building and foster appreciation of, and participation in, the arts.

The AFA recognizes its ongoing role in encouraging engagement and dialogue within the arts community and beyond. The arts are essential to the social and cultural fabric of Alberta, and it is important that the AFA and the arts sector generate meaningful opportunities for artistic and cultural participation for everyone. This means ensuring that communities across the province feel connected to the arts and see their value.

It is important that the value of the government's investment of public funds in the arts be communicated to Albertans. The AFA will continue to promote a broader appreciation for the arts. We will create opportunities for in-person interactions, and use our digital communications to connect arts stakeholders to one another and to AFA programs. This includes enhancing Albertans' awareness and enjoyment of the AFA art collection, the largest provincial art collection in Canada.

Maximizing the investment into Alberta's arts community requires developing relevant engagement opportunities for diverse audiences. The AFA can support this development in part by focusing on building meaningful relationships between the AFA and its stakeholders. The AFA intends to also support and encourage opportunities for relationship building among artists, arts organizations, and audiences – both existing and potential.

Participation in arts activities and experiences with local institutions not only generates greater awareness, but also a sense of shared ownership. By connecting communities in this way, our desire is to strengthen Albertans' value of the arts in an intrinsic way, so that our unique cultural outputs are better recognized as core to our shared identity as Albertans.

Strategic Objectives:

- Create and support public engagement opportunities in the arts.
- Expand audiences in the arts by building relationships.
- Build greater awareness of the value of artists and the arts.
- Foster awareness and appreciation of Alberta's visual arts through the AFA art collection.



Did you know?

According to the 2018 Culture Track Report, Canadians value arts experiences that nurture belonging, empathy, and perspective. This report also concludes that attending arts activities is not just about enjoyment; the activities must be relevant to audiences.

Goal 2

Glossary

For the purposes of this plan, the AFA defines these terms as follows:

Arts Ecology

The relationship between the different components of artistic and cultural life in the province, including creators, audiences, institutions, and organizations.

Capacity Building

Capacity building refers to activities that build an individual's or an organization's ability to adapt, respond, and grow within Alberta's arts sector

Encourage a healthy arts ecology by supporting artists and by stimulating the sector's creative development and sustainability.

For more than 25 years, the AFA has played an important role in building and maintaining a healthy and vibrant arts ecology in Alberta. Direct and indirect funding support for artists has been a core part of our work since the Foundation's inception. During the last quarter century, the AFA has cultivated a community of funding clients and partners that have, in turn, nurtured and grown the thriving arts scene that we enjoy today.

Alberta's arts ecology has never been static, and continues to evolve in exciting and sometimes unpredictable ways, along with the rest of the world. Our diversity is growing and becoming more visible, new artists and arts organizations are emerging and challenging the status quo. Innovation – in artistic practice, as well as in administration to support these changing practices – is the only constant and must be embraced for the growth of Alberta's arts sector.

The AFA has a history of supporting the arts community's efforts to adapt and respond to shifts in society as well as complex challenges within the sector. We recognize that to fully support the community's capacity to adapt

to change, we need to not only enhance our funding mechanisms for artists in Alberta, but we need to also support, encourage, and reward innovative and inclusive practices in the arts.

We recognize that investments made towards stimulating responsiveness and adaptability in the arts sector not only benefit today's artists and cultural workers. They also forge pathways for a new generation of artists to grow and develop, and prepare the sector for the next cycle of artistic innovation.

Strategic Objectives:

- Support innovation and inclusive practices in the arts.
- Promote access to the arts for children and youth and support a new generation of artists.
- Strengthen skills, build capacity, and share knowledge within the arts community.
- Respond to the needs of the arts community through advocacy and continuous evaluation.



Did you know?

In 2014, the AFA partnered with Calgary Arts Development, the Edmonton Arts Council and the Edmonton Community Foundation to support approximately 40 arts organizations to participate in the *New Pathways Program*. Led by EmcArts out of New York, this program aims to develop a learning community to strengthen and advance organizational innovation and adaptive capacity.

Goal 3

Affirm and revitalize relationships with Indigenous peoples.

In 2016, there were more than a quarter million people residing within Alberta who identified as First Nations, Métis or Inuk (Inuit). It is one of the largest, youngest and fastest-growing Indigenous populations in Canada. Indigenous artists in the province are diverse and multi-faceted, practicing a variety of art forms, including customary and contemporary artistic practices.

The AFA recognizes the vital role of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples in shaping the artistic landscape of Alberta. More than twenty years ago, the AFA began to develop dedicated programs for Indigenous peoples. The AFA 2019-22 Strategic Plan rearticulates long-standing practice as a strategic priority, reaffirming the AFA's continued commitment to supporting Indigenous communities.

Efforts to support Indigenous peoples should be continually adapted and improved upon to ensure that Indigenous artists and organizations in Alberta are able to access adequate support for artistic and cultural activities. We seek to involve and support First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples across the province to build relationships, better understand their diverse perspectives, and adapt to their needs.

Artistic practices have often been integral to communicating the richness of Indigenous cultural heritage. Through AFA funding and programming, we wish to stimulate a healthy and thriving community for Indigenous artists, foster more opportunities for representation and engagement, and to promote greater awareness of the contributions of Indigenous artists in Alberta.

Strategic Objectives:

- Invest in artistic creation and development by Indigenous peoples.
- Promote community partnerships and collaboration to strengthen support to Indigenous artists.
- Enhance representation of Indigenous artists in the AFA art collection and promote sharing Indigenous works with Indigenous audiences and the broader public.
- Enhance responsiveness to the needs of Indigenous peoples through learning, relationship building, and evaluation.

Glossary

Indigenous

For the purposes of this plan, the term includes First Nations, Inuit, and Metis of Canada. The AFA recognizes the rights, diverse cultures and worldviews of Indigenous peoples, in accordance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007).

Goal 4

Glossary

Equity

Equity is a principle recognizing that all people have the right to be treated equally, but not all people experience equal access to opportunities.

Equity can also be described as the process of promoting fair conditions for all persons to fully participate in society.

Inclusion

Promoting an environment that values diversity, supports active engagement of individuals and communities, and sustains a sense of belonging.

Culturally Diverse

Culturally diverse artists are defined as those who correspond to “visible minorities” under the federal *Employment Equity Act*. These are individuals of African, Asian, Latin American, Middle Eastern or mixed heritage that includes at least one of these groups.

Deaf Artists and Artists with Disabilities

Artists with disabilities include those with visible or hidden physical, mental, or learning conditions with varying impacts.

Encourage equity and inclusion, both in the arts and through the arts.

Alberta's diversity is an essential part of our province and contributes to our rich cultural fabric. Our art, our artists, and our audiences should be reflective of this diversity. The AFA recognizes that all Albertans deserve equal opportunity to participate in the arts. We also acknowledge there are historical and ongoing inequities that have prevented access to the arts for everyone. Certain communities have historically faced systemic barriers to participating in the arts and accessing arts funding.

These inequities run counter to the values of our Foundation. As the provincial funding agency for the arts in Alberta, we are obligated to address this issue. This work begins at home. The AFA is committed to enhancing access to our funding and programs, to better understanding the systemic barriers that may be preventing access for some communities, and to promoting inclusion of diverse communities in our processes. We will lead by example.

We also want to provide our funding clients the same opportunity to address these issues within their own communities. We will develop opportunities to support artists and arts organizations to increase their capacity to promote equitable access and inclusion within their own unique systems of practice. We will also promote the value of fostering a more inclusive society through the arts.

Through our collective, ongoing efforts to build inclusive practices in the arts and addressing issues of equity, we are better positioned to promote an arts sector that truly reflects the diverse cultural fabric of our province.

Strategic Objectives:

- Provide equitable access to funding and other AFA programs, particularly for artists and arts organizations that have faced systemic barriers.
- Support capacity building for artists and arts organizations facing systemic barriers.
- Reduce barriers to participation for artists and arts organizations.
- Enhance capacity within the arts sector to understand and address equity and promote inclusive practices.

Priority groups of focus

Priority groups are identified in order to set evaluation criteria and to help guide operational decisions. The AFA is committed to ensuring equitable access for all Albertans, particularly:

- Indigenous artists;
- culturally diverse artists;
- deaf artists and artists with disabilities; and
- francophone artists.

Goal 5

Build a performance measurement culture at the AFA to improve service delivery.

The AFA board of directors is committed to evidence-based planning for our organization. The board will focus on expanding performance measurement and management practices so they are embedded in our decision making for effecting future performance.

The development and measurement of key performance indicators will be integrated into operational planning, and progress shared through AFA reporting. The capacity to measure success within years, between years, and between initiatives will allow the AFA to evaluate its work and ensure ongoing improvement.

The strategic objectives outlined in this goal correspond with the previous sections of this plan. A performance measurement framework, including benchmarks, will be developed for each objective as part of the AFA's operational planning.

Strategic Objectives:

- Evaluate and enhance the impact of the AFA's communication and engagement activities.
- Evaluate and enhance the impact of the AFA's support to individual artists and arts organizations.
- Evaluate and enhance the impact of relationship-building initiatives to better support Indigenous communities.
- Evaluate and enhance the impact of initiatives promoting equity and inclusion to better support equity-seeking groups.



Did you know?

The AFA Annual Report provides an overview of our yearly operations. Information includes accomplishments, summary of grants awarded, financial statements, and the AFA board's membership and responsibilities. All of our Annual Reports can be viewed on the AFA website.

The AFA website "Impact of Funding" page provides an interactive overview of how our funding is distributed across all of our funding programs.

The AFA also publishes funding data on the Government of Alberta's Open Data portal. This portal allows you to browse through grant recipient lists and learn more about the projects that have been funded by the AFA.

Relevant External Website Links

These website links are provided to give additional context and reference to concepts and terms listed throughout this plan. External links are current as of March 2019.

A PDF copy of the *Alberta Foundation for the Arts Act* is available online through the Queen's Printer at www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Acts/A19.pdf.

Goal 1

Culture Track: Canada is a study of the attitudes and behaviours of Canadian cultural consumers. The latest Culture Track report can be found on Business/Arts website at www.businessandarts.org/culture-track-canada.

Goal 3

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) was adopted by the General Assembly on September 13, 2007. An overview and PDF versions of UNDRIP can be found on the United Nations' website at www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples.html.

Goal 4

The purpose of the Canadian *Employment Equity Act* is to achieve equality in the workplace so that no person shall be denied employment opportunities or benefits for reasons unrelated to ability. The full text of the Act can be found on the Justice Laws Website at <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/e-5.401>

The Canadian Hearing Society (CHS) is a non-profit organization that provides services, products, and information that remove barriers to communication, advance hearing health, and promote equity for people who are deaf or hard of hearing. CHS's glossary of terms can be found on their website at www.chs.ca/glossary-terms.

Goal 5

The Government of Alberta open government portal is a collection of datasets and publications by government departments and agencies. The public can use and access this data freely to learn more about how government works, carry out research, or build apps. More information can be found on their website <https://open.alberta.ca>.

Board and Committee Meeting Schedule

Meeting dates can be changed at any time. Additional meetings are scheduled as required.

2020-21 COMMITTEE	
Meeting Dates	Location
Friday, June 11, 2021	Videoconference
Friday, Sept 10, 2021	Videoconference
Friday Dec 10, 2021	Videoconference

2020-21 BOARD	
Meeting Dates	Location
Friday, July 9, 2021	Videoconference
Friday, Nov 5, 2021	Videoconference