



Yukon Arts Policy

Introduction

Art is a reflection of society and the aspirations, beliefs and observations of its members. The expression and enjoyment of art is an essential element in the health of any free and democratic society. Art is not created or defined by government. Government's role is to recognize the socio-economic, cultural and spiritual contribution to the community made by individual artists, arts organizations and the arts consumers they serve, and to assist them in the achievement of their objectives.

The purpose of the Yukon Arts Policy is to structure and focus the way in which government supports the arts and to more efficiently utilize existing resources to address the distinct needs of Yukon First Nations artists and meet the evolving needs of communities, professional arts development activities and cultural industries.

Commitment

The Government of Yukon is committed to the support and development of a diverse and vibrant arts sector for the benefit of all Yukoners. The Yukon Government will work in cooperation and partnership with stakeholders and First Nations arts organizations to achieve this in a timely, effective and productive manner.

Principles

- The government believes that the individual artist is central to the successful development of the arts in the Yukon. Government will place a high priority in its program areas on the support of individual artists and the creative activity they represent.
- The government recognizes that programs of support must strive to achieve a representative usage by all Yukoners. The Government of Yukon is committed to working with Yukon First Nations artists and First Nations arts organizations to meet their distinct needs and encourage equitable access to all programs of support.
- The government believes that all Yukon communities should benefit from and enjoy access to the arts. The Government of Yukon will work to ensure that exposure to the work of artists and arts development activities will be available to all Yukoners.
- The government recognizes the importance of education and training in the arts. The Government of Yukon will work to further develop arts education opportunities for young people and professional artists in both the school system and the community.
- Government must strive to avoid overlap and eliminate duplication within its offices and agencies. The Government of Yukon will work to centralize arts funding and policy advisory functions to ensure the efficient coordination of planning and financial resources.
- The importance of involving artists and arts professionals in the assessment and adjudication of arts activities is vital to a healthy and productive arts community. Government will work to ensure that "peer review" and "arm's length" appraisal mechanisms continue to be used to advise government on funding and program decisions in the arts.

- Government, the private sector and the not-for-profit arts community must work together to achieve efficiencies and avoid overlap within the sector. The Government of Yukon will work with stakeholders to streamline arts administration functions and will encourage the elimination or rationalization of areas of overlap and duplication.
- Investment in infrastructure is important for all economic sectors and will help to build on our strengths and potential. Government will work to identify innovative and creative options to realize arts infrastructure requirements.
- Government recognizes the influence of the arts on a broad range of social and economic sectors and understands the shared role of government departments in implementing the Yukon Arts Policy.
- Government recognizes the specific role and diverse service requirements of each of the Yukon's three arts sectors:
 - **Community Arts** activities have a broad level of participation in Yukon and are a valuable source of personal and community development, education and recreational enjoyment. Government will actively support non-profit arts organizations delivering programs and services which meet community needs.
 - **Professional Arts** activities play an essential role in serving the needs of Yukon audiences and arts consumers and in providing the skills and quality arts products required for the successful development of cultural industries in Yukon. Government will recognize and support opportunities for Yukon artists and the organizations which employ them.
 - **Cultural Industries** have potential to create jobs for Yukoners and support the development of other economic sectors such as tourism, small business, manufacturing and education. Government recognizes that cultural industries are worthy of investment and will ensure that arts related commercial ventures have equitable access to business and economic development programs.

Background

The creation of a Yukon Arts Policy was a priority of the arts community and a goal of government for a number of years prior to its inception in 1997. The Arts Section was given the mandate to develop the policy following a broad consultation throughout the territory with artists, organizations and other interested individuals.

The contributions of this initiative were among the most exhaustive ever undertaken by what was then the Department of Tourism. In all 55 individual meetings were held, including 21 public meetings in communities throughout Yukon. Some 200 individuals participated in the process representing over 48 different organizations. In addition, there were 12 written submissions. Following the circulation and wide acceptance of a draft version, the policy was ratified by Cabinet on March 20, 1997.