

# Crown Corporation Business Plans 2016–2017

Art Gallery of Nova Scotia





# Contents

- Message from the Chair ..... 5
- Mission ..... 7
- Vision ..... 7
- Mandate ..... 7
- Purpose ..... 7
- Driving Principles ..... 7
- Context ..... 9
- Core Business Functions ..... 9
- Strategic Goals and Priorities ..... 11
- Outcomes and Performance Measures ..... 14
- Budget Context ..... 16
- Conclusion ..... 17



# Message from the Chair

On behalf of the board of governors of the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, I am pleased to present the gallery's business plan for 2016–2017. As the largest art museum in Atlantic Canada, the gallery aspires to be at the heart of artistic and cultural energy in the region and understands its contribution to the socio-economic well-being of the province.

The gallery is looking to the future. Over the last year, the gallery engaged its board of governors, employees, and a cross-section of members, volunteers, partners, and donors to redefine its mission and vision statement. The outcome of this process is a clear path forward and a focused plan with continued emphasis on engaging and welcoming new visitors, as well as longstanding supporters, to Nova Scotia's fine art museum.

The 2016–2017 annual business plan was prepared by the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, taking into consideration government's priorities and policies and the realities facing the gallery. The annual plan and supporting budget were reviewed and approved by the gallery's board of governors.

Sincerely,

Erik Sande  
Vice Chair



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## Mission

*To stimulate a meaningful connection with art, through stewardship of its professional collection, partnerships, exhibitions, education, and programming.*

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## Vision

The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia is at the heart of artistic and cultural energy in Atlantic Canada. We invite, inspire, and engage diverse audiences to join us in exploring the world through art.

## Mandate

The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia (AGNS) falls under the portfolio of the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage (CCH). The department is responsible for the preservation, celebration, and growth of all things cultural – from the arts, dance, and music to archives, museums, and libraries, as well as Nova Scotia’s natural heritage, linguistic expression, and more.

The AGNS serves a very specific function within the department’s arts investment portfolio. The gallery has the mandate to acquire, preserve, interpret, and exhibit the Government of Nova Scotia’s art collection. The gallery aligns with departmental objectives such as community engagement and development of local artists through its programming and exhibitions, and relationships with regional, national, and international galleries and art museums.

## Purpose

With more than 17,300 works, Nova Scotia’s permanent collection of art is an incredible resource and a wonderful reflection of the people, the culture, and the heritage of Nova Scotia. The purpose of the AGNS is to build, protect, and present the people’s collection of art so Nova Scotians and visitors alike can explore and discover the province’s place in the world through art.

## Driving Principles

### Build on the Strength of the Permanent Collection

The people’s collection should be a source of pride and a reflection of what is distinctive and important to the province. To support this principle, the gallery has developed an exhibition strategy and slate of programs designed to showcase the richness of the permanent collection as well as the tremendous creative capacity and diversity of Nova Scotia’s artists.

*Terroir* is the centrepiece of the AGNS 2016–2017 exhibition schedule. The intent is to create a multi-sensory experience, anchored by an enhanced suite of programs and events featuring artists from all parts of the province. As the term *terroir* suggests, the art is representative of the land and environment that inspires and influences its unique perspective.

The latter half of the 2016–2017 exhibition schedule will feature iconic photography from the permanent collection as well as internationally acclaimed Atlantic Canadian artists. This strategy enables the gallery to engage more visitors by building on its

resident strengths and the dynamic mix of works from celebrated artists and the permanent collection.

## Contribute to the Socio-economic Well-being of the Province

The gallery has vast experience in developing educational programming that benefits and supports Nova Scotians across the province. Programs such as Autism Arts, delivered in Halifax and the gallery's Western Branch in Yarmouth, are innovative in the Canadian context. Artful Afternoon, delivered in partnership with the Alzheimer's Association of Nova Scotia and private sector partner, The Berkley, provides people with dementia and their partners in care with appropriate and engaging experiences with art.

The gallery's volunteer docents provide exceptional learning opportunities for thousands of students, of all ages, to explore a range of topics through art. In 2015–2016, educational programs such as ArtReach and ArtsSmarts connected students from 17 communities across the province to art and concepts not typically available in their area.

The gallery's programs are strengthened by engaging artists to share their expertise and talent. By building on its core expertise, the gallery believes its programs align with government's goals and priorities of supporting enhanced health and wellness outcomes, improving the resiliency and social well-being of communities, and introducing our youngest citizens to varied and rich early childhood experiences.

The gallery attracts visitors and contributes to cultural tourism in the province. Volunteer guides engage visitors every day with tours of the gallery and its collection. Their insight and expertise help orient visitors to the culture and heritage of the province through art.

In 1996, the AGNS secured both the funding and the necessary space to create a permanent gallery for Maud Lewis's Painted House and a collection of the artist's works. Twenty years later, a new movie on the life and art of the beloved Nova Scotian artist will be released as the gallery marks this milestone. The gallery views this as a wonderful opportunity to attract visitors and reacquaint audiences with Maud Lewis and the iconic images that have become synonymous with Nova Scotia.

The gallery also has a role in contributing to the province's national and international reputation. The AGNS actively works with partners to promote the cultural vibrancy of the province, understanding how this influences an individual's decision on where to live, work, attend university, or start a family. The gallery also understands the importance of cultural institutions to leading companies in determining where to locate or expand a business. As part of this principle, the gallery will build on the expertise developed over the last 13 years as the lead institution for the Sobey Art Award to enhance its reputation as a force in Canadian contemporary art through innovative programming, scholarship, and exhibition.

## Stewardship

Stewardship – managing the gallery's finances responsibly, strategically collecting and caring for art work, and exhibiting Nova Scotia's excellent artists as well as those from around the world – remains a central principle for the gallery.

## Context

The AGNS is at a critical juncture. After more than 100 years in operation, the gallery is charting an ambitious course forward, with the intention of creating a new and iconic home for the gallery and the province's permanent collection of art.

Funding for the practice of art and the support of organizations that allow artists to connect with each other and their audiences is an important component of the Canadian cultural landscape. Yet the current financial climate is proving difficult for many institutions. Apart from an operational grant from the provincial government, the gallery must secure approximately \$1.8 million annually to support programs and services. This lack of predictable funding has challenged the gallery in many ways.

One of the gallery's goals in fiscal 2016–2017 is to hire a Chief Advancement Officer to support more-robust fundraising, contributing to greater operational stability and laying the financial footing for a new gallery.

The gallery's physical plant has also been a constant distraction and source of frustration. Flooding, leaking windows, and systems failures have caused temporary closures and limited the gallery's ability to attract visitors and some travelling exhibits. The gallery is now facing more than two years of work to upgrade its HVAC system. Although the work should have limited impact on visitors, staff will be required to constantly monitor conditions, move art, and adjust schedules to accommodate the HVAC work. The age of the building and thickness of the walls in the North Gallery means that wiring for Wi-Fi is very costly. Finding a technology partner to help wire and animate the gallery is another priority for 2016–2017.

Enhanced internal controls and a focus on stewardship are critical to positioning the gallery for the future. CCH is supporting the gallery in advancing legislative change to provide management and the board of governors with responsibility and accountability to chart a course forward. In preparation, the team at the gallery is examining internal processes and focusing on planning to better respond to both challenges and opportunity.

To thrive, cultural organizations must build sustainable, mutually beneficial partnerships with like-minded organizations. Institutions like the gallery must also create bridges – through education, programming, and interpretation – that enable people to experience and connect with art. After a year of research and examination, the gallery has a much better understanding of its strengths and its ability to forge a new path for the future.

## Core Business Functions

The core business of the AGNS is the creation, accumulation, and dissemination of knowledge through the visual arts. The following four distinct core business areas are delivered through various functional areas in the gallery, both in Halifax and in our Western Branch.

### Acquisitions

The AGNS acquires artworks for the permanent collection according to the mandate of the acquisition committee and the gallery's mission statement. The gallery

maintains related library, film, website, video, and resource support materials, along with institutional archival records pertaining to collections, exhibitions, and institutional history.

## Preservation

The AGNS ensures proper management of the collection through documentation, maintenance of records, and research. The gallery strives to ensure that the Province of Nova Scotia's collection is preserved and maintained in an environment that meets museum standards, while conducting conservation and restoration treatments using accepted museum practices.

## Exhibitions

The AGNS is committed to our mission of stimulating a meaningful connection with art. The AGNS presents a wide range of art in our exhibition programs in Halifax, the Western Branch, and across Nova Scotia through our travelling exhibition and outreach programs. The gallery is committed to building audiences for art. To do this, the gallery focuses on the richness of the permanent collection, creating exhibitions that highlight the breadth and depth of the people's art collection and making it available on loan to institutions across the region and the country, and beyond our borders. The gallery also builds partnerships to broaden the reach of our art exhibitions, to tour exhibitions within the province, across the region, and throughout the country. The AGNS actively seeks partnerships to ensure that projects, most of which focus on the art of Nova Scotia and Atlantic Canada, are seen by as many audiences as possible. The gallery is committed to raising the profile of this region's art activity across the country,

to developing exhibitions that examine the work of individual artists, and to a publication program that does justice to their work. Thematic exhibitions, drawn almost exclusively from the permanent collection, complement solo exhibition projects on view and in development. The objective is to be a leader in the advancement of knowledge and understanding of visual art, and in the fostering of the careers of Canadian artists, with a focus on artists based in this region.

## Education and Public Programming

The AGNS has an ambitious education and public programming strategy that focuses on both on-site and outreach activities. On-site activities include the interpretation of our temporary exhibitions programming and of our permanent collection exhibitions. Offerings include special exhibitions, the development of in-house didactic material in exhibitions, daily guided public tours, early childhood education programs, infant and toddler / parent programs, studio/gallery workshops for students and teachers, and family programs. The gallery has a large docent program to support school visits and the fostering of lifelong learning with a series of lectures, films, artist talks, and other educational activities such as access to archives, publications, and study materials. Outreach activities involve many partnerships across the province that advance the gallery's mission of stimulating a meaningful connection with art. The gallery also works with educational institutions, libraries, social service agencies, hospitals, and other community organizations in a wide array of programs.

## Strategic Goals and Priorities

The Government of Nova Scotia's plan is to focus on three priorities – *People, Innovation, and Education* – within the context of fiscal sustainability and the delivery of core services efficiently and effectively.

The AGNS's 2016–2017 annual business plan outlines outcomes, goals, and performance measures that align with government's three priorities while delivering on the gallery's mission and core services. Each of the goals in this plan is followed by the letter P, I, or E, indicating the government priority it supports.

This plan has been informed by the ONE Nova Scotia Coalition and the Coalition Action Plan.

An analysis of the gallery's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, as well as current trends and the realities facing Canadian museums and cultural institutions, provides clear direction for the future.

Based on this direction, the gallery is focused on three strategic priorities: **Education & Programming, Engagement & Experience,** and **Stewardship.**

Partnerships enable the gallery to deliver on all three strategic priorities. Through partnerships, the gallery is able to extend its reach, connect with new and diverse audiences, share resources, and build on the knowledge and expertise of others. Partnerships are critical in delivering programming and educational initiatives as well as engaging visitors and creating a memorable experience for visitors.

### Education and Programming

Statistics repeatedly show the benefits of programming in supporting creative learning and exposure to the arts for preschoolers and primary to grade 12 students as well as older adults and people coping with numerous health-related challenges. Preschoolers exposed to a broad range of learning experiences have better long-term developmental, health, and societal outcomes.

#### Outcome to be achieved

Nova Scotians enjoy vibrant, culturally rich lives (enriched through visitation or involvement in education and programming at the AGNS).

#### Goals

Education initiatives and programming through the AGNS will

- enhance education, health, and wellness outcomes and support the development of young children (P)(E)
- engage more students and early adopters (preschoolers & primary to grade 3 students) across the province (P)(E)
- welcome and assist in the resettlement of new Nova Scotians and contribute to more-resilient, socially and economically viable communities (P)(E)
- engage the expertise and talent of more Nova Scotian artists (P)

Longer-term educational initiatives and programming at the AGNS will be recognized nationally for its leadership and innovation, with program curriculum and development generating strong results and potential revenue.

## Engagement and Experience

Younger people value and look for culturally vibrant communities when determining where to live, work, attend university, or start a family. Leading companies look for cultural institutions and communities that value and support the arts when determining where to locate or expand a business. Having strong, vibrant cultural institutions like the AGNS is important. The gallery understands how broader engagement contributes to this goal and to the institution's long-term sustainability. Broader engagement also brings a host of other benefits for the gallery, as well as for the province.

People are looking for experiences. From Mommy and Me Yoga to date nights and hands-on art activities, leading museums and galleries are opening their doors for diverse groups to have experiences with art. By enhancing basic wayfinding and hosting special events, galleries are using experiences to elevate each and every visit. The gallery recognizes that a positive experience will encourage visitors to return and to tell others to do the same. In 2016–2017, the gallery will take every opportunity to partner with the private sector and community-based organizations to create memorable experiences.

## Outcome to be achieved

Nova Scotia benefits from engagement with art and culture

## Goals

Engagement and experience with the AGNS will

- warmly welcome Nova Scotians and attract more and diverse visitors to the gallery (P)
- ensure that more Nova Scotians understand the relevance, and appreciate the value, of their art gallery and the province's permanent collection (P)(E)
- stimulate a meaningful experience while visiting the AGNS (P)(I)
- create an easy, holistic, technology/social-media-based experience (P)(I)
- drive partnership and broader involvement/investment in the gallery (P)(I)

## Stewardship

The gallery is entrusted with the protection, preservation, and presentation of Nova Scotia's permanent art collection. The gallery also receives an operational grant from the province as well as sponsorship and donations from individuals and the private sector. It is important that the gallery be a responsible steward of the permanent collection and of the funds provided to operate and deliver programs and experiences to Nova Scotians and visitors.

### Outcome to be achieved

The AGNS is a responsible steward of the province's permanent collection and uses sound fiscal principles to provide sustainable funding for programming and exhibitions.

### Goals

Stewardship by the AGNS will

- provide exceptional care, exhibition, and cultivation of the province's permanent collection of art (P)(I)
- provide sound fiscal management of the funds provided to deliver on the gallery's mandate (I)
- deliver confidence to members, sponsors, and donors that their investments and gifts are well managed and used for their intended purpose (P)(I)
- build a case for support for a new gallery

# Outcomes and Performance Measures

**Core Business Area** *Nova Scotians enjoy vibrant, culturally rich lives (enriched through visitation or participation in education and programming at the AGNS)*

Measure	Target	Trends				Strategies to Achieve Target	
		2010–11	2011–12	2012–13	2013–14		2014–15
Number of people participating in school, health, and wellness programs	10% increase per year	6,008	4,613	5,351	5,959	6,395	Develop and deliver relevant programs designed to introduce art, the gallery, and associated benefits to new and diverse audiences, based on the 2016–17 exhibition schedule.
Program survey rating (by teachers and partners):		Survey to be developed to measure satisfaction and gather baseline data					Continue and increase initiatives with government and community-based organizations to introduce children, underserved (health/wellness) populations, and immigrants to the gallery.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• overall positive experience</li> <li>• relevance to classroom curriculum</li> <li>• relevance to program objectives</li> </ul>							Conduct program review for impact, partnership, and sustainability.

## Core Business Area *Nova Scotia benefits from engagement with art and culture*

Measure	Target	Trends				Strategies to Achieve Target	
		2010–11	2011–12	2012–13	2013–14		2014–15
Attendance Level	10% increase per year	38,892	37,198	49,274	41,592	41,519	Enhance visitor experiences through interpretation and hands-on activities.
Number of visitors to the website	10% increase per year	83,347	81,886	92,567	96,825	105,257	Enhance visitor experience training for employees and volunteers. Develop comprehensive marketing and communications plans to engage more visitors.
Repeat engagement in programs		Survey to be developed to measure satisfaction and gather baseline data					Develop robust survey tools and establish baseline.
Visitor satisfaction							

**Core Business Area** *The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia is a responsible steward of the province's permanent collection, using sound fiscal principles to provide sustainable funding for programming and exhibitions*

Measure	Target	Trends					Strategies to Achieve Target
		2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	
Level of funding from donations and sponsorships	10% increase per year	\$160,781	\$208,021	\$232,017	\$183,613	\$330,649	Build development capacity at the gallery.
# works acquired consistent with the AGNS Acquisition Policy	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	Upgrade security to protect the permanent collection and loaned art in the gallery's care. Establish measures (benchmarks) and gather data to support evidence-based decision making.
# works publicly available through display, online, and on tour							Update AGNS collections database to improve access, exhibitions, and study of the permanent collection.

## Budget Context

	<b>Budget 2015–16 (\$)</b>	<b>Forecast 2015–16 (\$)</b>	<b>Budget 2016–17 (\$)</b>
<b>Revenues</b>			
Operating	2,351,500	2,381,500	2,160,300
Development and Fundraising	877,000	508,953	991,146
Programming recoveries	411,250	371,981	178,000
Educational recoveries	198,200	173,817	286,686
Western Branch	33,600	18,787	17,500
Gallery Shop	31,000	152,100	160,000
Acquisition Fund	—	266,402	—
Endowment Fund	51,750	785,650	45,000
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>3,954,300</b>	<b>4,659,190</b>	<b>3,838,632</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Salaries and benefits	2,184,194	2,067,163	2,227,907
Administration	329,700	384,700	280,500
Building operations	14,500	12,900	19,800
Programming	693,059	640,978	394,004
Education Programs	160,115	106,132	164,989
Communications and Marketing	233,900	176,013	290,900
Western Branch	229,943	239,341	185,517
Gallery shop	13,000	141,700	141,115
Acquisitions	20,000	292,458	15,235
Endowment fund	29,050	47,560	35,200
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>3,907,461</b>	<b>4,108,945</b>	<b>3,755,167</b>
Revenue less expenses	46,839	550,245	83,465
Amortization of tangible capital assets	46,415	29,357	82,825
<b>Annual surplus</b>	<b>424</b>	<b>520,888</b>	<b>640</b>

## Conclusion

The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia is an asset to the province, as evidenced by its partnerships with organizations focused on education, health, and wellness. The gallery is relevant and engaged in addressing many of the issues facing Nova Scotia. The gallery is also an important part of creating a rich and vibrant province – an attractive place for highly skilled young people and lifelong residents.

In 2016–2017, the AGNS will focus on **Education/Programming, Engagement/Experience**, and **Stewardship** in order to create a sustainable foundation to advance the gallery and its long-term goals.

