



Crown Corporation

B U S I N E S S P L A N S

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2013–2014

Art Gallery of Nova Scotia *Business Plan 2013–2014*

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Message from the Minister

On behalf of the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage, I am pleased to present the business plan for the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia (AGNS) for the 2013–14 fiscal year.

Incorporated in 1975, and with a history dating back to 1908, the AGNS is Atlantic Canada's largest art museum and home to Nova Scotia's provincial collection.

The gallery is an anchor of Nova Scotia's cultural tourism and is open to Nova Scotians and visitors from around the world all year long. From historical paintings to folk and contemporary art, Nova Scotia's glorious art treasures belong to us all. Sharing these treasures is part of the glue that holds our society together, refreshes our spirits, and helps us reflect and thrive in a fast-changing and often busy world.

The Province of Nova Scotia takes great pride in the AGNS and supports the gallery as it works "to engage people with art." As stewards of one of the largest collections in Atlantic Canada, our government supports the gallery as its directors and staff build and preserve the provincial collection for future generations, facilitates learning, ensures accessibility, and provides an exceptional experience at the gallery.

In order to achieve these goals most effectively, the gallery has created a strategic framework presented in this business plan.

This document summarizes the gallery's strategic priorities for the year ahead, outlines measures to be taken, and provides a budget summary for the 2013–14 fiscal year. It also reflects our government's commitment to protect this important cultural asset in our care and our continued assurance to develop and strengthen our arts and culture sector for everyone to enjoy.

Our cultural heritage is a big part of what makes Nova Scotia unique. Though the heritage we share is immense and diverse, it is also distinctive, personal, and local. We have so much to be proud of, so much to share with each other, and so much to show off to the rest of the world.

Our department looks forward to working with the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia as it continues to build on its successes in the year ahead.

Sincerely,

The Honourable Leonard Preya
Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage

Mission

To engage people in an enhanced experience with art, through its professional collection, preservation, exhibition, and interpretation.

Our mission statement reflects our commitment to our audiences, to our collections, and to the standards of our profession. Engagement is at the core of this mission, and at the core of our values as an institution.

Vision

The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia is a preeminent art museum with exceptional collections, exhibitions, education, and public programming. We are a hub of artistic and cultural energy and an inspiring resource for Nova Scotia and the world. With innovative approaches to engaging people, the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia is a gathering place to provide direct encounters with extraordinary works of art.

Mandate

The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia (AGNS) is an agency of the Province of Nova Scotia constituted under The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia Act for the acquisition, preservation, and exhibition of works of art.

Planning Context

The gallery is overseen by a board of governors appointed by Executive Council and made up of volunteers. The AGNS board assumes responsibility, loyalty, and a duty to uphold the integrity of the organization. The involvement of the AGNS board of governors is paramount in developing community awareness of the gallery's mission, in representing and interpreting the value of the AGNS to community, government, corporate, and other funding agencies. The board acknowledges the competency role as advocates and fundraisers for the activities of the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia.

The AGNS is the primary institution for the preservation and collection of visual art in Nova Scotia, and it is the largest art museum in Atlantic Canada, with a collection of over 15,000 artworks. We focus our collecting and exhibition activity on the art history of Nova Scotia, of our region, of the country and internationally, in order to tell the story of how the art history of Nova Scotia fits into larger national and international contexts. The growing success of the annual Sobey Art Award, organized by the AGNS since the award's inception in 2002, puts us at the forefront of contemporary Canadian art. The AGNS serves a central role in presenting Nova Scotia's art to the country, Canadian contemporary art to wider audiences in Canada, and Canadian art to the world.



In December 2012, a feasibility study for a new AGNS was completed. The recommendations outlined in this study will be implemented as part of our need to continue to meet the gallery's mandate. Also, in 2012 the gallery's board of directors prepared a strategic plan. Five strategic goals were identified and will form the basis of the gallery's ongoing future planning:

1. Build a new home for the AGNS.
2. Enhance exhibitions and public programming.
3. Increase visitation and memberships.
4. Create an AGNS Foundation.
5. Continue to stabilize the AGNS operational and program funding.

Core Business Areas

The core business of the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia is the creation, accumulation, and dissemination of knowledge through the visual arts. These are delivered through five distinct but interrelated functional areas, three of which fall under the purview of our Curatorial department, while our ancillary functions are the responsibility of the Finance and Operations and Development areas.

1. Curatorial

1 (a) Collections and Conservation

The AGNS acquires artworks for the permanent collection consistent with the mandate of the acquisition policy and of the AGNS 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. The AGNS ensures proper management of the collection through documentation, maintenance of records, and research. The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia 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.

1 (b) Exhibitions

The AGNS is committed to our mission of bringing art and people together. In addition to our annual Sobey Art Award exhibitions, the AGNS presents a wide range of art in our exhibition programs in Halifax, Yarmouth, and across Nova Scotia through our travelling exhibition and outreach programs.

We are committed to building audiences for art and have a three-part strategy for doing so. The first is the continued growth of the Sobey Art Award, Canada's premiere prize for contemporary art, administered by the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia since its

inception in 2002. The annual award of \$50,000 and accompanying exhibition is funded by the Sobey Art Foundation. The second is focusing on the richness of our permanent collection, creating exhibitions that highlight the breadth and depth of the Crown's art collection and making it available on loan to institutions across the region, the country, and beyond our borders. The third part of our strategy is to build partnerships to broaden the reach of our art exhibitions, to tour exhibitions within the province, across the region, and throughout the country. To that end we actively seek partnerships to ensure that our projects (most of which focus on the art of Nova Scotia and of Atlantic Canada) are seen by as many audiences as possible.

We are 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 that we develop are drawn almost exclusively from our permanent collection and serve to complement the solo exhibition projects on view and in development. Our 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.

1 (c) 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 surround the support and 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, family programs, a large docent program in support of school visits, and the fostering of lifelong learning with a series of lectures, films, artist talks, and other educational activities, including access to archives, publications, and study materials. We are committed to increasing our provision of education materials and services in French, including bilingual labels and publications as well as programs such as guided tours, films, and lectures given in French.

Outreach activities involve many partnerships across the province that serve to further our mission of bringing art and people together. We work with educational institutions, libraries, social service agencies, hospitals, and other community organizations in a wide array of programs.

2. Finance and Operations

The gallery maintains strict financial controls and accounting, ensuring transparency in our operations and fiscal responsibility across all our operations.



This core function oversees and manages all issues relating to human resources, physical plant operations, security of the gallery and the collection, visitor services, and point of sale.

3. Development and Auxiliary Services

This business function serves to financially support the operations of the AGNS and to encourage the public to visit the gallery and engage in the visual arts.

The AGNS creates market awareness by various public relations tools and promotes membership to the public. Membership generates revenues and creates a sense of ownership, helping to recruit volunteers who assist the gallery in all aspects of its operations, including fundraising, governance, and program delivery. We publish the *AGNS Journal* (a members' magazine), produce a monthly e-newsletter, and maintain an active online presence on our website, Facebook, and other social media.

The gallery provides auxiliary services that benefit visitors and members while increasing gallery funding. Services include membership, volunteer programs, a Gallery Shop, facilities rentals, Art Sales and Rental (a related society housed in our premises), and a café.

Strategic Goals

1. Build a New Home for the AGNS

(Implement the recommendations of the feasibility study prepared by Lord Cultural Resources.)

In a time of financial restraint, with many conflicting demands on the resources of taxpayers, the AGNS understands that we have to present a coherent plan for the short-term mitigation of the risk factors to the collection as well as a long-term strategy that will move us forward with a building that lives up to the mandate granted to the AGNS. Nova Scotians have a right to expect that the art collections they own will be stored, preserved, researched, and exhibited in a manner that will ensure the long-term health of the collections and that will continue to provide opportunities for Nova Scotians and their visitors to enjoy the rich visual heritage found in this province and region. They also have a right to expect a clearly articulated, fiscally sound plan that describes how to respond responsibly to the physical shortcomings of the current building and to the risks inherent in not moving to address them. In fiscal year 2013–2014 the AGNS will continue to work with the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal to mitigate the existing factors of the building, while performing necessary groundwork toward our long-term goal of building a new home for Nova Scotia's remarkable art collections.

For fiscal 2013–2014, the gallery will focus its attention on the following four priorities in order to accomplish our goal.

Refine the case for support

Private support of this initiative is imperative if a new building is to become a reality. The AGNS will prepare a fully documented case for support that will become the investment prospectus for potential donors. It will be the resource document revealing the vision and specific funding challenges that must be met to realize its objectives.

The case for support must convey a clear sense that the specific needs of the AGNS have been carefully prioritized and are not a wish list. They must persuade prospective supporters that the new facility to house the collections of the AGNS is a goal worthy of their support. Success in this area will mean that the new building is funded in part other than from tax revenues, thus providing needed financial relief to Nova Scotians.

Develop and begin implementation of communication strategy

Communicating to Nova Scotians why this process is necessary is vital to any hope of its success. There is a need for a highly personalized and targeted communications strategy to educate and cultivate the community's influencers and opinion leaders on a number of fronts, including the following:

- communicating the national reputation of the AGNS and the calibre of its collection

- outlining and explaining the plans for a new art gallery, the cost, and the proposed timeline
- communicating the shortcomings of the current facility for families and businesses in Nova Scotia
- communicating the dynamic role the AGNS plays in attracting and retaining qualified professionals across the business, education, and health sectors
- communicating the role the AGNS plays in the community's ability to attract new business with new employees who will settle in this area.

Success in this area will mean that Nova Scotians are made more aware of the excellence of their art gallery and of its central role in the perception of Nova Scotia by the rest of the country, as well as its role in the vibrant culture of our communities.

Recruit Strategic Prospect Engagement team

Successfully engaging the private sector in raising funds for a new building is a vital component of the potential success of this initiative. If senior, influential, and committed philanthropists decide that this project is worthy of their support, it will become a reality. The AGNS will begin the activity of cultivating and securing a chair of the Strategic Prospect Engagement team and, in turn, the team itself. With the assistance of key stakeholders, members, and influential friends, the chair should help identify, cultivate, and recruit a volunteer organization at the highest level.



Begin process of Strategic Prospect Engagement

This process will include providing coaching and orientation to volunteer leadership. The gallery will undertake prospect research and qualification. Top prospects will be identified, and a plan will be developed that includes cultivation strategies for each prospect. The Strategic Prospect Engagement will continue for the next 12 months.

2. Enhance Exhibitions and Public Programming

A key part of the mandate of the AGNS is to exhibit works of art; that is, to make them available to public view. Our mission of engaging people with art takes this to another level. It is our goal to engage Nova Scotians in a discussion about their collections and the vibrancy of the cultures in their communities, and to provide a model of excellence to inspire Nova Scotians to ever-greater achievements in the arts. Our regular program of exhibition and public programs, of research and outreach, will be enhanced in fiscal year 2013–2014 by two new initiatives that directly engage with Nova Scotia art and that will provide multiple platforms for Nova Scotians to experience, engage with, and be educated about the range of cultural activity in this province.

For fiscal 2013–2014 the gallery will focus its attention on the following two priorities in order to accomplish our goal.

Begin implementation of the “Maud Lewis Project”

This project builds on the scholarship conducted on the Maud Lewis house, a centerpiece of the provincial collection. It will include research for a book written by the gallery’s Senior Conservator and Curator of Education and Public Programs, geared toward middle and high school students as well as the general public. The book will comprise chapters that explore various aspects of Maud’s work, such as her use of cultural references, as well as her personal history with juvenile arthritis. Additions to the Maud Lewis Gallery in 2013 will include bilingual educational materials, and research will begin on the inclusion of new technologies, such as tablets in the gallery spaces to help illustrate elements of Maud’s composition and approach to her subject matter. Increased use of the resources of our website will ensure that Nova Scotians have access to the rich resources surrounding the Maud Lewis house and our collection of her paintings, and a slate of events and programs in the gallery will attract people to see first-hand the wonderful creations of Nova Scotia’s, and Canada’s, greatest folk artist.

Develop a “Triennial of Nova Scotia Art” to be implemented in 2014–2015

Nova Scotia has a rich visual culture, one that finds expression in communities across the province. Nova Scotians rarely get to see the best of these expressions drawn together

in one exhibition that provides a snapshot of the current tenor of the arts in this province. In 2013–2014 the AGNS will create the Nova Scotia Triennial to do just that. Through an open call, the gallery will solicit entries from artists working in Nova Scotia. The jury composition will be determined drawing on the skillset of panelists, including one from outside the province (international curator of contemporary art). The jury will examine the submissions and arrange for an exhibition and book highlighting those artists selected for inclusion. The Triennial will give Nova Scotians the opportunity to view works from every corner of the province and to take part in a series of conversations about contemporary art that will be supported by education programs, public events, and related activities.

3. Create Positive Visitor Experience

An important indicator of the importance placed by Nova Scotians on the activities of the AGNS is their direct engagement in those activities through visiting the gallery and purchasing memberships. In the coming fiscal year the AGNS will undertake activities designed to continue the increase in visitation we have been enjoying and to increase the number of memberships in order to more fully deliver on our mission of “engaging people with art.”

For fiscal 2013–2014 the gallery will focus its attention on the following three priorities in order to accomplish our goal.

Use new technologies to increase new memberships and retain more existing ones

We will implement online transaction sales capacity to an enhanced AGNS website, making it easier for Nova Scotians to become, and remain, members of the AGNS and to enjoy the enhanced benefits that come with membership. By targeting membership sales and online donations with an accompanying tiered direct marketing strategy, we will increase our target sales pool to a broader audience.

Enhance marketing efforts to increase visitation

Through the use of segmented market research, we will focus our marketing efforts in core and ancillary services to more tightly segmented audiences. We believe that by better communicating our activities to Nova Scotians they will be more likely to visit the gallery to experience those activities for themselves.

Gather visitor information

The gallery plans to measure the visitor experience with the new technology and the implementation of “Exit Surveys.” Feedback on exhibitions, overall visitor experience, and public programming available will be critical to plan for future events. Feedback surveys from parents on educational programs such as March Break and Summer School will be invaluable. The gallery will be provided with information on what we can do better to increase participation in classes and encourage students to return.



Budget Context

	Estimate 2012-13 (\$)	Forecast 2012-13 (\$)	Estimate 2013-14 (\$)
Revenues			
Gallery operations			
Province of Nova Scotia grant	2,046,000	2,046,000	2,148,000
Admissions and memberships	186,041	145,547	157,000
Donations and other	392,350	826,075	705,000
Programming recoveries	542,600	542,855	361,500
Gallery recoveries	36,000	36,000	27,000
Total gallery operations	3,202,991	3,596,477	3,398,500
Gallery shop	236,134	216,722	248,630
Endowment fund	81,100	201,629	105,000
Acquisition fund	149,000	274,448	65,000
Total revenue	3,669,225	4,289,276	3,817,130
Expenses			
Gallery operations			
Salaries and benefits	1,972,923	1,931,506	2,008,160
Building operations	736,070	261,953	384,500
Programming	621,240	919,812	619,025
Development and public relations	261,000	340,613	343,600
Western Branch	142,016	134,899	140,000
Total gallery operations	3,733,249	3,588,783	3,495,285
Gallery shop	208,160	196,600	216,330
Endowment fund	22,000	22,120	22,000
Acquisition fund	156,000	300,836	80,000
Total expenses	4,119,409	4,108,339	3,813,615
Surplus (deficit)	(450,184)	180,937	3,515

Outcomes and Performance Measures

Overall Business Areas

Outcome	Measure	Target 2013–14	Strategies to Achieve Targets
1. Build a new AGNS	Case for support document reflects the needs and ambitions of the AGNS as determined through the feasibility study findings Public awareness is created about the benefits of a new building for the AGNS Candidates are identified, recruited, and interviewed Active solicitation by Strategic Prospect Engagement team has begun	Final version of the case for support published and ratified at June 2013 AGM Tiered communications plan for all levels of stakeholders and audiences ratified at June 2013 AGM Strategic Prospect Engagement team in place by fall 2013 Strategic Prospect Engagement team has all solicitation materials and has received campaign training by fall 2013	Finalize case for support Develop and implement communication strategy Recruit Strategic Prospect Engagement team Begin process of Strategic Prospect Engagement
2. Enhance exhibitions and public programming	Retention rate of memberships Parental feedback of summer school and March break programs	Increase membership retention to 80% (from 70% in 2012–13) 70% of students returning from 2012–13 summer school and March break	By measuring the renewals of memberships we can see that we are offering exhibitions and programs that are satisfying to our members By receiving parental feedback on our programming we can offer programs that engage students
3. Create positive visitor experience	The number of visitors who purchased memberships after their visit Use information from exit surveys to effect changes	Convert 0.5% of visitors to members – approximately 100 visitors Establish database to capture exit survey information and report on a timely basis to senior management team	Train front-desk staff on effective upselling methods Implement exit survey for visitors to complete

