

# **Crown Corporation**

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

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2014–2015

### **Art Gallery of Nova Scotia**

*Business Plan 2014–2015*

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# Message from the Chair of the Board of Governors

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 the 2014–2015 fiscal year.

Incorporated in 1975, and with a history dating back to 1908, the AGNS has long ensured that the Crown's art collection was documented, shared, and communicated with citizens and preserved for future generations.

Atlantic Canada's largest art museum, the gallery is an anchor of cultural tourism in the province and the region. It welcomes Nova Scotians and visitors from around the world from January to December. Culture, including fine art, is essential to the well-being of individuals and societies, giving people throughout civilization opportunities to consider, reflect, and recharge.

In 2013–2014, the gallery faced a year of challenges and triumphs, including closures resulting from unexpected building repairs and the Mintz family gift of Annie Leibovitz photographs. The board of governors and staff look forward to the coming year, in which we continue to engage people with spectacular art through new acquisitions, expanded programs, and service improvements all Nova Scotians can enjoy.

This 2014–2015 business plan summarizes the gallery's priorities for the coming year, outlines measures to be taken, and summarizes our anticipated expenditures. It reflects the government's and the board's shared commitment to protect this important cultural asset and to develop and strengthen the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia for everyone to enjoy. It also continues the implementation of the board of governors' strategic plan for 2012–2017.

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 much to be proud of, much to share with each other, and much to show off to the rest of the world.

The board of governors is proud of the accomplishments of the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia and anticipates a successful year ahead.

Sincerely,

Robbie Shaw  
Chair, Art Gallery of Nova Scotia Board of Governors



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## 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.

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## Vision

The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia is a pre-eminent 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 17,000 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.

This past year was a very challenging one for the gallery, with the failure of both the sprinkler system and elevator and with the work on the Ondaatje Courtyard. The gallery's closure during the summer

reduced its ability to serve Nova Scotians and, beyond that, to attract visitors and members, an important source of revenue for the institution. It reflected a building that is no longer adequate to ensure that the province's art collection is preserved and protected for future generations. The requirement for continuing maintenance of our buildings reinforces the need for a new facility.

## Strategic Goals

In 2012, the gallery's board of governors prepared a strategic plan. The five strategic goals identified now form the basis of the gallery's ongoing 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. The following five 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 policy and the 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 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.

### 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, in Western Branch, 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 the award's inception in 2002. 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.

## **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 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.

## **Auxiliary Services**

This core business area serves to encourage the public to visit the gallery and engage in the visual arts. The gallery provides auxiliary services that benefit visitors and members. Services include membership, volunteer programs, the Gallery Shop, facilities rentals, Art Sales and Rental (a related society housed in our premises), and a café.

The AGNS creates market awareness through various public relations tools and promotes membership to the public. Membership creates a sense of ownership, helping to recruit volunteers who assist the gallery in all aspects of its operations. 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.

# Priorities for 2014–2015

## 1. Build a New Home for the AGNS

In a time of financial restraint, with many conflicting demands on the resources of taxpayers, we understand that the AGNS has to present a coherent plan for 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 collection 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 responsibly respond to the physical shortcomings of the current building and to the risks inherent in not moving to address them.

In 2014–2015, the AGNS will continue to work with the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal to mitigate the existing unfavourable 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 2014–2015, 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 finalize a fully documented case for support that will become the investment prospectus for potential donors. This resource document will reveal the vision and specific funding challenges that must be met to realize its objectives.

The case for support must convey a clear vision addressing the specific needs of the AGNS and Nova Scotians. It 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 an updated Report to the Community to raise awareness of the significance of the Art Gallery to Nova Scotian culture

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:

- developing campaign materials from the outset, such as a Report to the Community, to raise awareness of the significance of the Art Gallery to Nova Scotian culture
- communicating the national reputation of the AGNS and the calibre of its collection

- outlining and explaining the vision 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 a 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. Having cultivated and secured a chair of the Strategic Prospect Engagement team, the gallery will continue to recruit community leaders to this team. With the assistance of key stakeholders, members, and influential friends, the chair will help identify, cultivate, and recruit a volunteer organization at the highest level.

### **Begin the 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.

## **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, research, and outreach will be enhanced in 2014–2015 by two new initiatives that directly engage with Nova Scotia art and that provide multiple platforms for Nova Scotians to experience, engage with, and be educated about the range of cultural activity in this province.

For 2014–2015, the gallery will focus its attention on two priorities to accomplish our goal. We will promote accessibility to the permanent collection and develop a survey of Nova Scotian art.

**Promote accessibility to the gallery’s permanent collection**

Building on the strength of the provincial art collection, the gallery will look to enhance its exhibition and public program offerings by highlighting key collections therein. With spotlight exhibitions and publications, the gallery seeks to build an audience for the works in the collection.

Central to this priority’s success are the following:

- A handbook that illustrates the treasures of the provincial collection will be published.
- A new database and Collections Care plan is to be identified and developed to establish a long-term collections strategy including storage on and off-site.
- A significant push will be made in preparing for the exhibition of the Annie Leibovitz book collection. Included in this is the physical preparation of the works as well as lining up speakers, partners and ancillary programming to help contextualize this important photography collection.

**Develop a “Survey of Nova Scotia Art” to be implemented in 2015–2016**

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 a single exhibition that provides a snapshot of the current tenor of the arts in this province. The AGNS will create a survey of the Nova Scotia art to do just that. Through an open call, the gallery will solicit entries from artists working in Nova Scotia. Having established a jury of two curators from the AGNS and one

from outside the country, the gallery will determine a working process, including a call for submission and review process. The survey 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 Experiences**

A prime 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 gallery will undertake activities designed to create an institutional culture that puts the visitor, and visitor services, at the forefront of our activities and planning in order to more fully deliver on our mission of “engaging people with art.”

For fiscal 2014–2015, the gallery will focus its attention on the following four priorities in order to accomplish our goal.

**Continue to use new technologies to better connect with our members and to reach out to potential new ones.**

We will examine our existing membership policies and procedures to ensure that they reflect best practices in our approach. We will increase online transaction sales to an enhanced AGNS website, making it easier for Nova Scotians to become, and remain, members of the AGNS. We will also continue to target growth in social media through tools such as Facebook and Twitter.

**Build on our successful school programs to reach even more Nova Scotia students**

In 2013–2014, we piloted a professional development (PD) day program for children. This program will be expanded to all areas of HRM and the Western branch, exposing even more children to fine art.

**Enhance marketing efforts to increase visitation**

We believe that by better communicating our activities to Nova Scotians they will be more likely to visit the gallery to experience these activities for themselves. The gallery plans to measure the visitor experience with exit surveys and data extracted from website traffic.

**Focus on the visitor and on our members through a renewed emphasis on volunteer recruitment and training, ensuring that the visitor experience is the best it can be**

We will establish a dedicated Volunteer Committee of the board of governors to ensure growth in volunteer numbers, recruitment of qualified volunteers, training that will contribute to the overall guest experience, and consistency in volunteer recognition. We will also establish a Membership Task Force to revise membership categories to be reflective of today's gallery experience. The goal of this task force will be increasing memberships to the gallery and adding value to gallery membership.

## Budget Context

	Budget 2013-14 (\$)	Forecast 2013-14 (\$)	Budget 2014-15 (\$)
<b>Revenues</b>			
Operating	2,180,000	2,480,409	2,423,500
Development & fundraising	857,000	682,544	1,116,500
Programming recoveries	210,000	168,500	165,900
Educational recoveries	151,500	212,018	206,980
Western Branch	—	12,726	11,700
Gallery Shop	248,630	193,711	245,000
Acquisition fund	65,000	120,993	—
Endowment fund	105,000	314,650	140,750
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>3,817,130</b>	<b>4,185,551</b>	<b>4,310,330</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Salaries and benefits	2,008,160	2,001,615	2,037,042
Administration	339,000	320,533	346,000
Building operations	27,500	96,274	10,050
Programming	507,400	525,236	840,710
Education programs	111,625	161,230	140,660
Communications & marketing	343,600	205,268	439,100
Western Branch	140,000	173,278	218,976
Gallery Shop	216,330	177,733	213,760
Acquisitions	80,000	143,695	10,000
Endowment fund	22,000	29,364	28,050
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>3,795,615</b>	<b>3,834,226</b>	<b>4,284,348</b>
Revenue less expenses	21,515	351,325	25,982
Amortization of tangible capital assets	18,000	17,408	22,500
<b>Annual surplus</b>	<b>3,515</b>	<b>333,917</b>	<b>3,482</b>

# Outcomes and Performance Measures

## Core Business Area

Outcome	Measure	Target 2014–2015	Strategies to Achieve Targets
Build a new AGNS	Updated Report to the Community is prepared Case for support document reflects the needs and ambitions of the AGNS Strategic Prospect Engagement Team is recruited	Release report to the public by the end of April 2014 Final version of the case for support published and ratified at June 2014 AGM Strategic Prospect Engagement Team in place by fall 2014	Develop and implement communication strategy Establish ad hoc committee of the board to steer the process Finalize case for support Pending approval of Executive Council, recruit high-profile community leaders to form part of this team. Recruit Strategic Prospect Engagement Team
Enhance exhibitions and public programming	A handbook that illustrates the treasures of the provincial collection will be published Online access for Nova Scotians to the collection Survey of Nova Scotia Art in 2015–16	Key works that illustrate the collection and source of funding for this initiative have been identified New database and collections care plan fully implemented Long list of artists identified	Senior staff to identify key works Staff to identify champion for the project Collections care plan developed and implemented Call for applications Review works Develop long list of artists with curatorial review panel
Create positive visitor experiences	Number of memberships, especially family memberships Retention rate of memberships Attendance at school programs Number of visitors	1,215 memberships, a 4.5% increase over 2012–13 210 family memberships, an increase of 10.5% over 2012–13 Retain 60% of 2012–13 members 3,850 students, a 10% increase over 2012–13 21,600 paid visitors, a 10% increase over 2012–13	Use new technologies to establish online sale of memberships Examine existing membership policies and procedures Establish a Membership Task Force Establish a teachers' advisory council to ensure that this program meets teachers' and students' needs Work with curriculum experts to clarify how the collection and exhibitions fulfill expected outcomes Create a Volunteer Committee to improve training of volunteers in visitor service

