

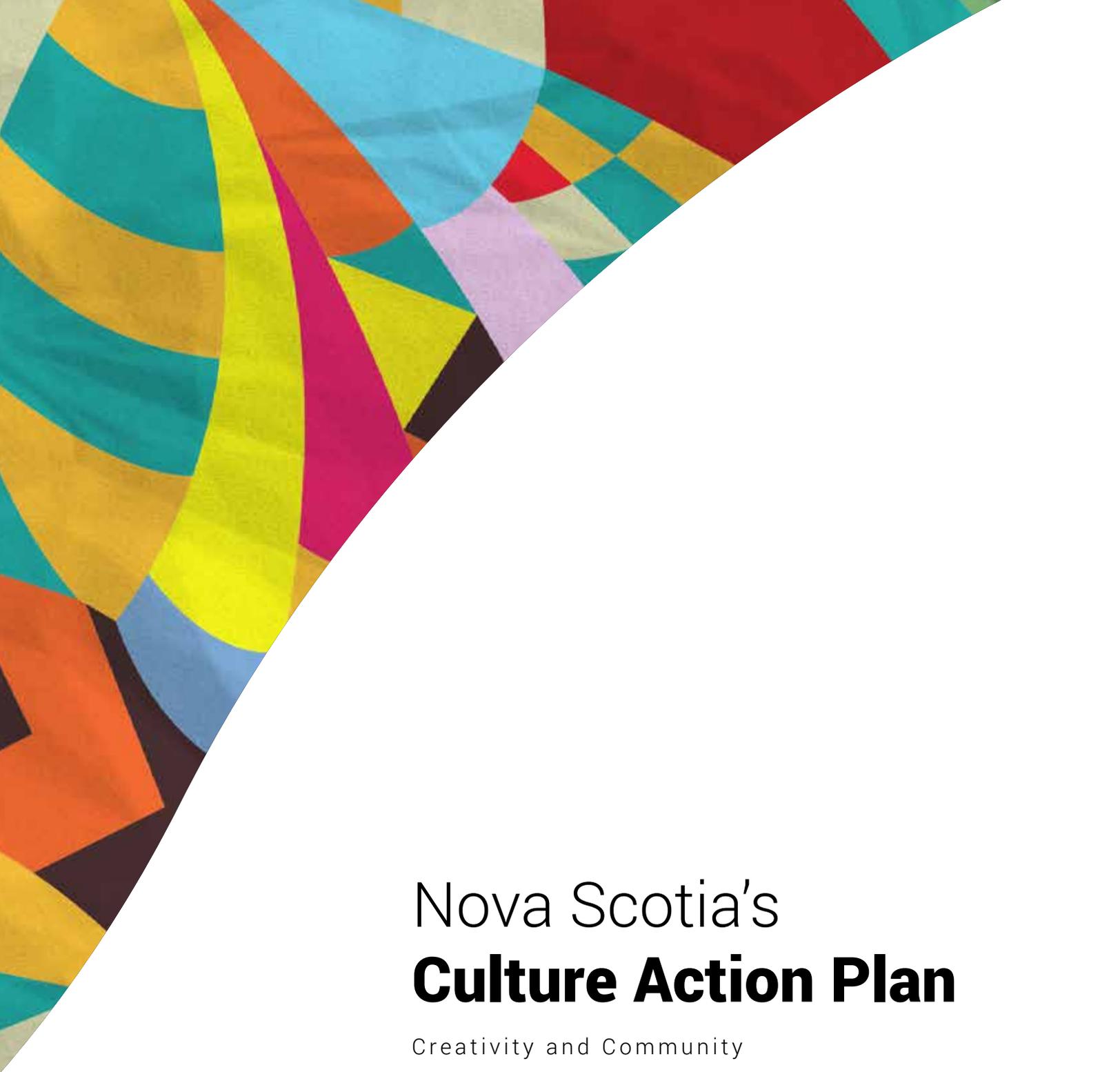
Nova Scotia's **Culture Action Plan**

Creativity and Community





novascotia.ca/culture



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Creativity and Community

Prepared by:

Nova Scotia Department of Communities, Culture & Heritage

Minister's Message

On behalf of the Government of Nova Scotia, I am thrilled to present our province's first truly comprehensive Culture Action Plan.

Government realizes that a vibrant culture has its own rewards in all of our lives and that culture can play an even greater role in economic growth and prosperity in every corner of the province. At the heart of this plan is the desire to do more for our cultural sector, more to celebrate and share our culture, and more for our diverse communities.

To borrow from George Elliott Clarke, Canada's Parliamentary Poet Laureate, "One needs poetry, passion, people and a plan." And that's what we are doing here.

I would like to thank the thousands of Nova Scotians who shared their perspectives on culture through our extensive consultation. And thanks must also go to the staff here at the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage, who took charge of this Culture Action Plan from day one and infused the entire effort with insight and perseverance.

In creating this plan, we have deliberately adopted a broad, inclusive perspective of what culture is—and what it can be, with more support, more engagement, and more people pulling on the line together.

Ultimately, defining culture can be a bit like the line often attributed to Louis Armstrong. When asked how to define jazz, Armstrong supposedly replied: "If you've gotta ask, you'll never know."

That rings true here. We may not be able to define every strand of our culture, but we know what it feels like, how it moves us, how it shapes our lives.

This plan brings life to our department's mandate of contributing to the well-being and prosperity of

Nova Scotia's diverse and creative communities through the promotion, development, preservation, and celebration of the province's culture, heritage, identity, and languages.

Importantly, this action plan will also guide the Government of Nova Scotia's decision-making process, providing actions, strategic priorities, and criteria.

Just as culture seeps into every aspect of our lives, it is also shared across government departments. In spite of our name, it does not neatly fit only into the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

So, although this department may lead the Culture Action Plan, we will rely on cooperation, commitment, and mutual support from our colleagues throughout government to translate these words into real actions.

Most importantly, we need you, the people of Nova Scotia, to help shine a brighter spotlight, to drive both innovation and preservation, to build and export and share our thriving culture. An inclusive, vibrant culture that can make enormously positive impacts on our way of life, our communities, our shared heritage, and our prosperity.

Sincerely,



Hon. Tony Ince
Minister of Communities, Culture & Heritage



“One needs poetry,
passion, people
and a plan.”

**George Elliott Clarke, Canada's Parliamentary
Poet Laureate and Nova Scotian**

About the design

The cover and graphic design of the Culture Action Plan is inspired by Nova Scotia's quilting heritage. Like our culture, quilt making is inspired by tradition and innovation, with both artistic and practical uses, passed down from generation to generation in communities and families all over the province.

Applied metaphorically, the Nova Scotian quilt is made up of many fabrics and designs, each square telling a different story, all stitched together and connected to create something stronger, more beautiful, more creative, more sustaining, and more comforting.

In the context of this design, quilts are symbolic of our culture, born from a rich, diverse heritage and symbolic of a forward-looking, optimistic new Nova Scotia.

Introduction

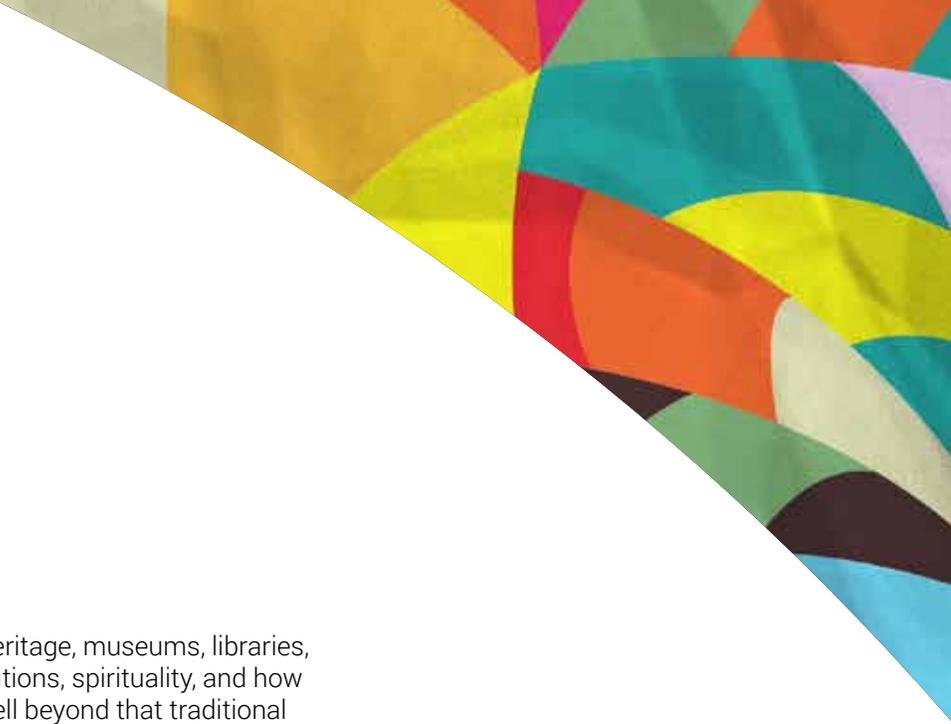
In the November 2013 Speech from the Throne, the provincial government set the wheels in motion for this plan, highlighting the importance of culture and the need for a comprehensive strategy that would boost the sector to achieve its greatest potential.

A few months later, the ONE Nova Scotia Report (Now or Never: An Urgent Call to Action for Nova Scotians) reinforced that while we have a strong, diverse cultural sector, we should be doing much more to capitalize on it and grow it as a real economic driver.

Truth is, culture already makes a big financial contribution to the provincial economy. And it is growing. Almost 14,000 Nova Scotians work in culture, and the sector contributed \$949 million to the provincial economy in 2014. That's up from \$823 million in 2010—a jump of more than 15 per cent in just five years.

Of course, beyond the dollars and cents, culture enriches us on its own terms in endless ways. Culture feeds our identity, our communities, our daily lives. Culture is our beating heart and soul, helping fulfill us emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually, while also providing endless opportunities for creativity, innovation, and economic prosperity.





What we mean when we talk about culture

We consider culture to include the arts, heritage, museums, libraries, archives, languages, cultural identity, traditions, spirituality, and how we interact with the natural world. And well beyond that traditional perspective, our Nova Scotia culture also includes our food and drink, heritage buildings, design and architecture, music and fashion, sports and recreation, and more.

The culture that first inhabited our province—the Mi'kmaq—and those that came after—African Nova Scotian, Acadian, English, Gaelic, and others—have helped to define and shape Nova Scotia's unique voice and character. We will use the strength of these cultures to help embrace, nurture, and support those new and emerging cultural voices that are helping to shape the Nova Scotia of today and tomorrow.

Think also about how we as Nova Scotians embrace our environment through protected spaces, wild places, our lakes, streams, and the ever-present ocean. Surfing and angling, paddling and kayaking, hockey and soccer, golf and camping. And if you think those don't contribute to our culture, stop for a moment and try to imagine our province without them. It just wouldn't be Nova Scotia.

There is an everythingness to culture. And our Culture Action Plan aims to champion the diverse membership, including performing and visual artists, writers, publishers, crafters, librarians, designers, historians, curators, painters and poets, chefs and brew masters.

Ultimately, we want a culture that includes tangible and intangible elements, but makes us feel proud and fulfilled to live where we do—an innovative, resourceful place that calls out to and welcomes newcomers and sustains Nova Scotians of all backgrounds, ages, and faiths. Regardless of how broadly or narrowly you define culture, how you perceive it and how it affects you, this point is certain: we need to do more for culture. And with this action plan, we are going to.

76%

say culture helps connect
people from different
communities and
backgrounds

2016 Culture Index Survey



The special place of artists and culture in provincial legislation

The inclusive notion of our culture is reflected in Nova Scotia's legislation, too. Some 80 acts of the provincial legislature have a connection to cultural matters: from the Heritage Property Act to the Status of the Artist Act, from the Multiculturalism Act to the Special Places Protection Act.

The Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage was proud to introduce the Status of the Artist Act in 2012. The act is designed to “acknowledge the artist’s role in building the Province’s identity and culture and the enhancement that art brings to the Province’s social and economic well-being.” As part of the act, the department and government recognize our “indispensable role in fostering and nurturing a healthy and vibrant artistic culture.” This commitment to our professional artists is a priority for the department and part of the foundation of this Culture Action Plan.

In 2016, Communities, Culture and Heritage invested more than \$56 million to support our culture and creative communities. This money went directly into the hands of culture organizations and artists.

Shaping the Plan through consultation and outreach

To create this plan, we sought the opinions and expertise of Nova Scotians, to take the pulse of our culture community and forage for great ideas. We wanted to combine those insights with the expertise and vision of our departments to create transformative actions.

We went all over the province, listening to varied voices on our shared culture. Between December 2015 and March 2016, we held workshops in 14 communities with 188 stakeholder groups representing thousands of Nova Scotians. We conducted an online survey with more than 1,000 responses. From May through September 2016, we also sought out public input through

80%

of Nova Scotians
feel culture creates
community identity

2016 Culture Index Survey



conventional and unconventional, creative responses. We asked for input through art, songs, and poetry. By the end of the process, more than 800 Nova Scotians had done just that, providing input through public events, phone surveys, and an online portal. In all, we've had the input of thousands of Nova Scotians—another reminder of how passionate people here are about their culture.

During the fall of 2016, we also conducted a formal consultation with the Mi'kmaq Rights Initiative Negotiation Office, representing the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs, gathering the perspectives of Nova Scotia's First Peoples.

We also wanted to see what else was out there, looking for those “best practices,” what other jurisdictions were doing in the culture field. If there are strategies that are working elsewhere, we want to know about them—and use them. In all, we reviewed 31 culture plans from Canadian municipalities, provinces, and another country, Australia.

It is fair to say some people told us the province needs to do a better job supporting the culture sector and bolstering its central role in a thriving Nova Scotia. People want better integration of arts in the education system, including post-secondary education, and better marketing and promotion of culture.

We believe this plan will help ensure our support for culture is understood, transparent, targeted, and broadly based. We want our culture creators and innovators to know government believes in their potential, their creativity and the important contributions they make to our province. We also want to make sure they are fully aware of the support we can offer—whether it's connecting to new markets and networks, providing financial support or smart advice. It is also important to acknowledge that government sometimes must also get out of the way; allowing the sector to do its best work, and to inspire the people and the private sector to embrace, support, and promote our culture and foster a climate where cultural expression thrives.

Themes and Actions

While hundreds of ideas were discussed and raised during our engagement with the culture community, the Mi'kmaq and the public, we have been able to reflect the consistently recurring ideas through the six main themes that follow. Each of those themes is supported with a number of specific actions.



Theme 1

Promote

Mi'kmaw Culture

“The story of Nova Scotia begins with Mi'kmaw culture,”

says Morley Googoo, the Regional Chief for Nova Scotia–Newfoundland and Labrador with the Assembly of First Nations. And that’s where this culture action plan begins, too.

Chief Googoo’s comment came in November 2016, during formal consultations with the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw Chiefs. The goal of the consultation sessions was to provide guidance and wisdom on how the province could best support, promote, and preserve this first, founding culture of Nova Scotia.

The consultations highlighted the welcoming nature of Mi'kmaw culture, its unique connections to the land, the sea, the entire environment. Chiefs, elders, and artists spoke of how their culture is continuously evolving through old and new traditions, including dance, music, and song, and language, arts, and crafts. A culture of generosity and humour, integrity, and values.

They also spoke of a culture that has endured despite attempts to destroy it after first contact with Europeans. And now, this culture should have both broad and targeted support to help it thrive in the 21st century and beyond.

An Environics poll from 2016 found that 55 per cent of Canadians agree aboriginal history and culture are very important as a defining characteristic of Canada. While that figure represents a majority of

Canadians, there is room to grow. We need to do more to acknowledge and embrace the significance of Mi'kmaw culture—a message we heard from the culture community and the Mi'kmaq. We must promote and preserve this culture while simultaneously taking steps to enrich and maximize it. That realization informs the actions that follow.

- Acknowledge and support Mi'kmaw interpretation and ownership of Mi'kmaw culture - enabling Mi'kmaq telling Mi'kmaw stories.
- Enhance opportunities for Mi'kmaq cultural expression through collaboration and support of crafts, powwows and mawiomi'l, arts, feasts, sporting events and other cultural activities.
- Work with Mi'kmaw leadership and other partners to address the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action.
- Work with Mi'kmaw educational and other organizations to foster revitalization and recognition of Mi'kmaq language.
- Revise and update the Special Places Protection Act and formally consult with the Mi'kmaq on revision of the Act, including incorporation of the principles of the Mi'kmaw Ancestral Remains protocols.
- Create opportunities for every Nova Scotian to learn about our shared history through enhancement of Treaty Education programs and services for the education system, the provincial civil service and the broader public.
- Work with the Mi'kmaq to recognize the unique position of the Mi'kmaq in this province and the contributions of Mi'kmaw culture through the support of a cultural centre in Nova Scotia.



- Collaborate with the federal and municipal governments, culture organizations and the private sector to enhance the visibility and appreciation of Mi'kmaq culture (e.g. implement a Mi'kmaq license plate).
- Continue to support justice-related Aboriginal initiatives in order to provide culturally relevant and people-centered programs, services, and human resource (HR) practices.
- Create a Mi'kmaq Cultural Liaison Position within government to facilitate our work with Mi'kmaq artists, culture workers and teachers, and to improve understanding and access to government culture programs and services.
- Work across government to implement use of a "place protocol" which includes in welcoming remarks of speeches of elected and senior officials, Mi'kma'ki as the traditional territory of the Mi'kmaq and the role of the Mi'kmaq as Nova Scotia's First People.

"When I found my culture, the feeling inside me. I blew up. I knew exactly what I needed to know and what I needed to obtain it. I also wanted to show my community how beautiful and how powerful it is."

Michael Doucette, Eskasoni First Nation (2016)



Theme 2

Promote Creativity and Innovation

At the heart of this plan is the recognition that culture helps drive successful economies and communities. Creativity and innovation spur a thriving, diverse array of cultural enterprises. From a bottom-line perspective, that means economic success, and from a societal perspective, it means more attractive communities. Places with thriving cultural sectors—in small towns and big cities alike—attract people and businesses because they are great places to live, raise families, and work.

Of course, creativity and innovation don't always happen on their own; government is here to help through funding, partnerships, and other supports to incubate and stimulate the culture community.

We know Nova Scotia's cultural sector is overflowing with creativity and innovation that deserves more recognition, more success, and more support. However, according to our public consultation survey, half of respondents don't feel Nova Scotia is open to new ideas and innovation. That's troubling. And it needs to change.

With these actions, we are committing to do more to nurture and fuel our most creative and innovative in the province, helping them flourish, experiment, and have the courage to take chances and push artistic boundaries.

- Create a Culture Innovation Fund that recognizes and supports innovative cultural initiatives that address social priorities and opportunities. The fund will contain some targeted monies to support the development of culture hubs in communities – places like libraries and museums. Nova Scotia needs more innovative community clusters as engines that enhance economic, social, and cultural activities, in our towns and our cities. Examples include the growing artistic enclave championed by Parrsboro Creative, and the newly created Newcomer Welcome Centres in the Pictou Antigonish Regional Library.
- Partner with businesses, post-secondary institutions, and creative entrepreneurs to explore creativity districts and “culture sandboxes” as incubators for innovative new ways to problem-solve and use culture for the benefit of Nova Scotians.
- Work with community organizations to support the not-for-profit and voluntary sectors, recognizing the essential role of volunteers in community and culture activities.
- Work within the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage and with culture organizations to review funding programs to ensure they are as effective and transparent as possible.
- Continue implementation of Nova Scotia's rural high-speed Internet initiative, recognizing that strong connectivity enhances access to culture and cultural expression for everyone.

“This plan helps us recognize and strengthen the interdependencies of culture, creativity, and innovation.”

Pamela Scott-Crace, Creative Nova Scotia Leadership Council





Theme 3

Strengthen Education, Partnerships, and Understanding

The more we can expose our children to culture and creative expression in our schools, the better off we will be as a province that values, inspires, and incubates original, even daring, talent. Working in collaboration with school boards, teachers, and others, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) has had real success in promoting and instilling innovative arts and culture education in our school system.

At the same time, we want to ensure our culture and creative workers are taught entrepreneurship and marketing, to help expand their successes. To further support both goals—in our schools and with our creative professionals—EECD and the Department of Labour and Advanced Education with support from CCH will lead initiatives in these areas.

According to our consultation survey, 82 per cent of Nova Scotians agree enhancing art education in our schools is a “very important” or “important” way for government to support culture. In consultations, some participants expressed frustration about stereotypes that exist when considering Nova Scotia culture. As a province, we need to do more to educate ourselves and the world beyond us about the diversity, scope, and excellence that truly characterizes our culture. We recognize that challenge and understand government has a role to play to change that, along with our culture producers.

These actions focus on education and partnerships to build both a keen appreciation for culture and an eye for economic opportunities in the cultural sector.

- Work with post-secondary institutions to enhance the entrepreneurial and export development skills of creative workers. For example, providing business education and mentorships for creative entrepreneurs and increasing opportunities to access export markets.
- Improve culturally inclusive practices in early childhood development programs through the teaching framework, pre-service training, and professional development for early childhood educators and developmental interventionists.
- The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development will work to strengthen and expand successful culture education in the public school system, from grades primary to 12. Examples include: WITS (Writers in the Schools); PAINTS (Professional Artists in the Schools); and PERFORM! (Bringing professional performers to schools to showcase drama, music, and dance).
- Expand and build on existing educational partnerships related to culture, such as working with the book publishing industry to promote Nova Scotia content in teaching resources.
- Support professional development in teaching with culture in the classroom.



- Promote cultural awareness and equity through classroom teaching and learning resources.
- Develop equity education programs that highlight Acadian, African Nova Scotian, and Mi'kmaw cultures.
- Support self-identification for all students.
- Include the language, history, and culture of Acadians, African Nova Scotians, Gaels and Mi'kmaq, including Treaty Education, in teaching grades primary to 12.
- Include the history of immigration in Nova Scotia in teaching grades primary to 12.
- Develop new Adult Education courses in African Canadian Studies and Mi'kmaw Studies to support the understanding of diversity in Nova Scotia – part of our continued efforts to improve adult literacy, numeracy, and employment prospects.
- Through the Treaty Education MOU work plan, move forward with the implementation of Mi'kmaw culture-based initiatives in partnership with key provincial departments and Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey. (For example, crafting a Treaty Education Framework).

Theme 4

Advance

Cultural Diversity

While we have been blessed by diversity, we need to also acknowledge there are things in our society that must change, must improve. A culture is not just built on successes, pride, and goodwill; a culture also holds on to our defeats, our grief, and our most shameful decisions.

Nova Scotia Senator Wanda Thomas Bernard puts it this way: "Once you recognize the connection between sexism and misogyny, racism, ableism, heterosexism and homophobia in our culture and the violence against women and girls, you recognize the power you have to change it."

We all need to recognize our power to change such things. Diverse beliefs, cultures, and experiences strengthen a modern society. Diversity builds understanding, empathy, and creativity. Those qualities also spur the economy, where different points of view and experiences create new opportunities.

And diversity attracts diversity. By embracing diversity, we become a beacon, safe and supportive to those who already call Nova Scotia home, and welcoming to all others, at a time when many people need optimism and tolerance, stability and opportunity.

All cultures can uplift and inspire and can also disappoint and betray. Nova Scotia is no different. To this day, long-standing prejudices have devastating social and economic echoes and impacts, particularly in our African Nova Scotian community. This theme takes inspiration and positive momentum from The Nova Scotia Home for Coloured Children Restorative Inquiry. And these actions will help build a more inclusive, welcoming,

and equitable province for new and prospective Nova Scotians, aboriginal, LGBTQI communities, women, and other diverse groups in our province.

- Work collaboratively with the community, government departments and agencies, and others, to continue to address systemic racism and discrimination and acknowledge head-on that these remain problems.
- Update the province's Multiculturalism Act of 1989 to better reflect and support the Nova Scotia of today and tomorrow.
- Improve access to early childhood development intervention programs for First Nation, Acadian and Francophone, African Nova Scotian, and immigrant families.
- Work to support the various cultural communities and identities in the province, including new and emerging cultural communities, in cooperation with frontline organizations and faith-based groups and build awareness and understanding among all cultures, and consider a gender lens.
- Strengthen the province's cultural offices: Gaelic Affairs, African Nova Scotian Affairs, and Acadian Affairs and Francophonie.
- Support initiatives of the United Nations' International Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024), by aligning our efforts with its three pillars: recognition, justice, and development.
- Strengthen approaches to building cultural competence and gender analysis in the public service and among stakeholders through application of inclusive social equity analysis and the completion of the 'Raising the Bar' diversity and inclusion strategy.



- Work with municipal governments to ensure all Nova Scotians, including African Nova Scotians, have clear title to land where their families have lived for generations.
- Continue to support justice-related African Nova Scotian initiatives in order to provide culturally relevant and people-centered programs, services, and human resource (HR) practices.
- Support the work of the N.S. Office of Immigration to increase the number of immigrants to Nova Scotia, as well as the joint efforts between the Office of Immigration and the Office of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie to attract more French-speaking immigrants.
- Work with EduNova, the co-operative industry association of education and training providers in Nova Scotia, to attract more international students and enhance cultural diversity in our schools and communities.
- Support government departments to contribute to achieving government's employment equity targets in the public service.
- Support the capacity of organizations to mentor communities and leverage strengths across the province. For example, Hope Blooms, the North End Halifax non-profit fueled by local young people, who have gained national recognition; or FECAN (La Fédération culturelle acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse), which helps grow opportunities for Acadian artists across NS.
- Through Tourism Nova Scotia, attract key tourism market segments to the province by continuing to promote Nova Scotia's cultural diversity and experiences.
- Develop education tools to enhance awareness of Labour Standards, focused on youth, international students, new immigrants and temporary foreign workers to support diverse communities and youth entering the work force successfully.

69%

agree culture helps to
increase citizen engagement
and participation

2016 Culture Index Survey



Theme 5

Excellence in Cultural Stewardship

Our consultations and research confirmed what we know intuitively: culture plays a major role in our social and individual lives, shaping community identity, building pride of place, connecting us to our natural surroundings, and bringing together people from different backgrounds.

Think of where you live or a favourite place to visit in Nova Scotia. Think about the architecture, the music, the heritage, the geography, the food, the feeling, the people. Think of the natural setting and the different kinds of recreation popular in those places. Lunenburg. Baddeck. Mabou. Guysborough. Wolfville. Dartmouth. Different communities with different cultures and identities.

The Nova Scotia Museum, Nova Scotia's provincial museum system, tells our communities' extraordinary stories—our natural history, our people's history, our seafaring traditions, our industrial heritage, and our artistic life. The buildings themselves house enormously important artifacts and archives that are a crucial part of our shared culture. But to experience the true diversity and points of view of all Nova Scotians, we also need to collect and understand the stories and significant objects of today for the benefit of future generations.

The Nova Scotia Museum faces many challenges as it strives to tell Nova Scotia's stories. Aging facilities, lack of access to technology, and limited support for updating interpretation and exhibits all hamper its efforts to tell those stories in a digital world. Traditionally, our museums have been telling stories predominantly through the lens of Anglo-Scottish culture. To reflect Nova Scotia's diversity and ensure our museums remain relevant, especially for younger Nova Scotians, we need to refocus the system. We need the Nova Scotia Museum to focus on diverse stories of provincial significance to fill the gaps in our provincial narrative. We need to work with our museum colleagues to continue to meet the challenge of telling stories in the 21st century, stories that engage Nova Scotians.

In addition to cultural and natural history, we recognize that we must be stewards of nature, too. Sport and recreation are key components of any strong community and culture. And across this province, Nova Scotians gain enormous physical, spiritual, and social benefits from being active in both the natural world and in our recreational facilities.

The actions below will support and enhance our commitment to be true stewards of the province's cultural and natural worlds.

- Position the Nova Scotia Museum system to tell the province's story while increasing relevance and attractiveness for visitors through strategic, targeted investments.
- Work with municipalities and communities to find ways to showcase provincially-significant sites.



- Enhance effectiveness and transparency of funding programs supporting cultural, sport and recreation organizations and facilities with a focus on rural Nova Scotia.
- Work with community partners to implement the Shared Recreation Strategy to foster active healthy living, and increase inclusion and access to recreation for all Nova Scotians.
- Work on the development of a Trails Strategy for Nova Scotia, aligning with growing use of trails.
- Seek community partnerships that help the Nova Scotia Archives share Nova Scotia's diverse documentary heritage.
- Continue to explore the feasibility of a re-imagined Art Gallery of Nova Scotia sharing space with NSCAD University.
- Work with the federal and municipal governments to explore creative ways to incent the adaptive re-use of heritage buildings.
- Work with stakeholders to promote and increase awareness of Nova Scotia's rich built heritage and its value to our province and identity.

76%
of Nova Scotians
say culture makes
them proud of
where they live

2016 Culture Index Survey



Theme 6

Drive awareness and economic growth of the culture sector

This theme, and the actions that propel it, is all about building profile, expanding opportunities, and baking a bigger pie. You and your cultural business may be rooted in Nova Scotia, but your marketplace and audience are global. We want to infuse our culture sector with more of the entrepreneurship, innovation, and creativity that drive our province's most successful businesses.

The culture sector accounts for 2.7 per cent of the provincial economy—significant, and still with plenty of room to grow. Part of the challenge is making sure people and markets, here in Nova Scotia and far beyond, know what is happening in our culture sector. Success stories abound, but sometimes aren't told; many aspects of the creative sector are thriving already, and should thrive even more with more time in the spotlight, more awareness and access, and more support.

These actions—investing, promoting, marketing, and collaborating—should benefit everyone looking to expand their enterprise in the creative culture sector.

- Create a more comprehensive “Buy Nova Scotia Culture” marketing program that promotes local food, wine, beer, and spirits, along with homegrown artists, and the products of our craftspeople and artisans. The program should build on the successes of the province's tourism sector and the Taste of Nova Scotia and Select Nova Scotia models.
- Use the existing Creative Industries Fund to help businesses and not-for-profits export globally, targeting the music, book publishing, craft, film, design, visual and performing arts sectors.
- Work with Screen Nova Scotia and industry organizations to strengthen the film and TV industry with a focus on developing Nova Scotian filmmakers, writers, and producers of local content and to encourage diversity and gender parity.
- Create a strategic, government-wide approach to the development, attraction and funding of events. These events showcase the province's sport, culture, heritage and competitive advantages to national and international audiences. Events have the ability to attract new visitors and make significant economic impact. A coordinated approach will ensure events are properly funded and deliver measurable results and return on investment.
- Continue support to sector councils and related organizations involved in culture focused on human resource development, attraction and retention, and training.
- Harness the expertise of the Creative Nova Scotia Leadership Council, a diverse assortment of culture sector leaders who provide input and counsel to the Minister and Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage.
- Strengthen workplace innovation, education, productivity, skills, and small business development for individuals and community groups.



Creative Profiles

Snapshots of excellence in Nova Scotia's world of culture and sport



Alan Syliboy

Alan Syliboy is an accomplished Mi'kmaq artist from the First Nations community of Millbrook.

His vibrant multi-media works captivate, inspire and share the beauty of his culture here in Nova Scotia and around the world.

An artist for more than 40 years, Alan studied first under the acclaimed artist and activist Shirley Bear and later at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design.

His list of artistic accomplishments is both diverse and lengthy. He created a limited-edition Butterfly gold coin for the Canadian Mint, received the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal, was a featured artist and Aboriginal consultant for the production DRUM!, and lead artist on a group sculpture for the 2010 Olympic Games in Vancouver.

Alan hopes his art will continue to bring pride to the Mi'kmaw people and teach and inspire generations to come.



Shauntay Grant

Shauntay Grant is a gifted writer and poet, performer and educator. Born in Halifax, Shauntay's work is infused with the storytelling traditions of her ancestors in Nova Scotia's historic black communities.

Educated and trained in creative writing, music, and theatre, her work embraces African Nova Scotian folk tradition, spoken word, and contemporary approaches to literature and performance.

She teaches creative writing at Dalhousie University, is a playwright-in-residence at 2b theatre company, and in 2016 was selected by the Writers' Trust of Canada for its celebrated Berton House Writers Retreat in Dawson City, Yukon. She has served as Halifax's Poet Laureate and organized the first national gathering of Canadian Poets Laureate.

photo by Shyronn Sardon



Denise Comeau

Denise Comeau is an artist who lives and works along the shores of Baie Sainte-Marie. Her work with watercolours, acrylics, and printmaking expresses a fusion of the environment, culture and community. For Denise, her art is an opportunity to examine and reflect on culture.

Though mostly self-taught, she has grown artistically through workshops in Nova Scotia and Québec, and a cultural exchange program in Poitiers, France.

Denise teaches art classes at the College de l'Acadie and in schools, as part of Visual Arts Nova Scotia's PAINTS (Professional Artists In The Schools) program. She is a board member of the Annapolis Region Community Arts Council, the Conseil des arts de Clare, the Conseil culturel acadien de la Nouvelle-Écosse, and a member of Visual Arts Nova Scotia.



Fiona Diamond

Fiona Diamond's fingerprints are all over landmark cultural events produced in Nova Scotia, from the 1970s to today.

Producer, concert promoter, project manager, marketing director and business owner, Fiona has probably made you laugh, sing, and applaud.

As Vice-president of Brookes Diamond Productions, she created and founded the nationally-televised Halifax Comedy Festival, co-produced the acclaimed musical event, DRUM!, and promotes a variety of East Coast tours for musicians, from the Barra MacNeils to Gordon Lightfoot.

Fiona Diamond is a driver of Nova Scotia's creative economy, and a shining example of the positive effects of culture and creativity in our province.



Parrsboro Creative

The people who live, work, and create in Parrsboro know they are part of a community that is inspiring, artistic, and beautiful. Now, with the Parrsboro Creative, they are using creativity and innovation to turn a best-kept-secret into a thriving, rejuvenated town, steadily filling with artists from near and far.

Led by a board of directors and a team of advisors from artists to entrepreneurs, Parrsboro Creative offers a Cultural Campus featuring courses in fine craft, fine art, drama and music; employing internationally known professional artists from the region to deliver the courses. The Cultural Campus and the newly announced Parrsboro International Plein Air Festival are creating an attractive destination for both the creator and the collector.

Working together, they are committed to turning a thriving cultural town into a destination again. Like the Bay of Fundy, so ingrained in Parrsboro's past, present and future, they know the rising tide lifts all boats.



Paul Tingley

Paul Tingley is an accomplished sailor and coach, and a testament to extraordinary dedication, athleticism, and perseverance. Paralyzed in a skiing accident at the young age of 24, his positive attitude and love for sailing has taken him around the world.

Paul is a five-time Paralympic Sailor with three Paralympic medals. He earned a gold medal in Beijing, and recorded a bronze medal finish in both Sydney and Rio.

Since 2009, he has led three international sailing camps for aspiring Paralympic athletes, in Miami, Toronto and Halifax.

Paul Tingley currently works with sport organizations in Nova Scotia to provide parasport opportunities.



Elizabeth Cromwell

Elizabeth Cromwell is a social leader, volunteer and founding member of the Black Loyalist Heritage Centre in Birchtown. She is committed to preserving and celebrating black history in our province, and in our country.

She has an honorary degree from Nova Scotia Community College, an honorary doctorate degree from Mount Saint Vincent University and is the recipient of many prestigious awards, including the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal.

A graduate of the Halifax Vocational School, Elizabeth was a devoted member of the Black Cultural Society Board and the Black United Front.

Elizabeth continues to serve the Black Loyalist Heritage Society Board of Directors to help develop educational outreach programs for our communities.



Laurie Swim

Laurie Swim is an award-winning textile artist and author, best known for her quilt-art. Born in Lockeport, Nova Scotia, Laurie's work reflects the landscape and people of the South Shore.

A graduate of NSCAD, she has contributed to art and culture for over 40 years. Laurie has written three books, been featured in private and public collections internationally, received the Portia White Prize, and is acknowledged as one of Canada's best living artists.

Along with her solo work, she also works with community volunteers to create collaborative, large-scale quilts.

Laurie is currently working on a monumental memorial project, Hope and Survival, to honour those killed in the Halifax Explosion a century ago.

Our Vision

Nova Scotia is an acknowledged leader in Canada as a place where cultural identity, expression, and economy prosper. A place where all people honour and embrace diversity and heritage, and thrive through unbridled creativity and community cohesion.

Final Thoughts

Like the quilts that inspired the graphic design of this plan, this document was built with purpose and care to craft something pragmatic, creative, and enduring. The key themes and actions are bound together to drive positive changes. And government is linked in carrying out those commitments with other government partners, our creative communities, the private sector, and all Nova Scotians.

We are confident that, working together, we can achieve the many worthy, smart, and innovative actions within this plan. We are committed to clarity and accountability in doing so, and to building a Nova Scotia whose thriving, creative culture and economy truly reflects our diversity, ingenuity, and enviable way of life.



Nova Scotia Culture Action Plan

Promote Mi'kmaw Culture

ACTIONS	Underway	2017	2018
Acknowledge and support Mi'kmaw interpretation and ownership of Mi'kmaw culture—enabling Mi'kmaq telling Mi'kmaw stories.			
Enhance opportunities for Mi'kmaq cultural expression through collaboration and support of crafts, powwows and mawiomi'l, arts, feasts, sporting events, and other cultural activities.			
Work with Mi'kmaw leadership and other partners to address the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action.			
Work with Mi'kmaw educational and other organizations to foster revitalization and recognition of Mi'kmaq language (currently underway).			
Revise and update the Special Places Protection Act and formally consult with the Mi'kmaq on revision of the Act, including incorporation of the principles of the Mi'kmaw Ancestral Remains protocols.			
Create opportunities for every Nova Scotian to learn about our shared history through enhancement of Treaty Education programs and services for the education system, the provincial civil service, and the broader public (currently underway).			
Work with the Mi'kmaq to recognize the unique position of the Mi'kmaq in this province and the contributions of Mi'kmaw culture through the support of a cultural centre in Nova Scotia.			
Collaborate with the federal and municipal governments, culture organizations, and the private sector to enhance the visibility and appreciation of Mi'kmaw culture (e.g., implement a Mi'kmaq license plate) (currently underway).			
Continue to support justice-related Aboriginal initiatives in order to provide culturally relevant and people-centered programs, services, and human resource (HR) practices (currently underway).			
Create a Mi'kmaw Cultural Liaison Position within government to facilitate our work with Mi'kmaw artists, culture workers, and teachers, and to improve understanding and access to government culture programs and services.			

Promote Mi'kmaw Culture *continued*

ACTIONS	Underway	2017	2018
Work across government to implement use of a “place protocol” which includes in welcoming remarks of speeches of elected and senior officials, Mi'kma'ki as the traditional territory of the Mi'kmaq and the role of the Mi'kmaq as Nova Scotia's First People.			

Promote Creativity and Innovation

ACTIONS	Underway	2017	2018
Create a Culture Innovation Fund that recognizes and supports innovative cultural initiatives that address social priorities and opportunities. The fund will contain some targeted monies to support the development of culture hubs in communities—places like libraries and museums. Nova Scotia needs more innovative community clusters as engines that enhance economic, social, and cultural activities, in our towns and our cities. Examples include the growing artistic enclave championed by Parrsboro Creative, and the newly created Newcomer Welcome Centres in the Pictou Antigonish Regional Library.			
Partner with businesses, post-secondary institutions, and creative entrepreneurs to explore creativity districts and “culture sandboxes” as incubators for innovative new ways to problem-solve and use culture for the benefit of Nova Scotians (currently underway).			
Work with community organizations to support the not-for-profit and voluntary sectors, recognizing the essential role of volunteers in community and culture activities (currently underway).			
Work within the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage and with culture organizations to review funding programs to ensure they are as effective and transparent as possible (currently underway).			
Continue implementation of Nova Scotia's Rural High-speed Internet initiative, recognizing that strong connectivity enhances access to culture and cultural expression for everyone (currently underway).			

Strengthen Education, Partnerships and Understanding

ACTIONS	Underway	2017	2018
Work with post-secondary institutions to enhance the entrepreneurial and export development skills of creative workers. For example, providing business education and mentorships for creative entrepreneurs and increasing opportunities to access export markets.			

Strengthen Education, Partnerships and Understanding *continued*

ACTIONS	Underway	2017	2018
<p>Improve culturally inclusive practices in early childhood development programs through the teaching framework, pre-service training, and professional development for early childhood educators and developmental interventionists (currently underway).</p>	→	→	→
<p>The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development will work to strengthen and expand successful culture education in the public school system, from grades primary to 12. Examples include: WITS (Writers in the Schools); PAINTS (Professional Artists in the Schools); and PERFORM! (Bringing professional performers to schools to showcase drama, music, and dance) (currently underway).</p>	→	→	→
<p>Expand and build on existing educational partnerships related to culture, such as working with the book publishing industry to promote Nova Scotia content in teaching resources.</p>	→	→	→
<p>Support professional development in teaching with culture in the classroom.</p>	→	→	→
<p>Promote cultural awareness and equity through classroom teaching and learning resources (currently underway).</p>	→	→	→
<p>Develop equity education programs that highlight Acadian, African Nova Scotian, and Mi'kmaw cultures.</p>	→	→	→
<p>Support self-identification for all students (currently underway).</p>	→	→	→
<p>Include the language, history, and culture of Acadians, African Nova Scotians, Gaels and Mi'kmaq, including Treaty Education, in teaching grades primary to 12 (currently underway).</p>	→	→	→
<p>Include the history of immigration in Nova Scotia in teaching grades primary to 12.</p>	→	→	→
<p>Develop new Adult Education courses in African Canadian Studies and Mi'kmaw Studies to support the understanding of diversity in Nova Scotia – part of our continued efforts to improve adult literacy, numeracy, and employment prospects.</p>	→	→	→
<p>Through the Treaty Education MOU work plan, move forward with the implementation of Mi'kmaw culture-based initiatives in partnership with key provincial departments and Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey. For example, crafting a Treaty Education Framework (currently underway).</p>	→	→	→

Advance Cultural Diversity

ACTIONS	Underway	2017	2018
Work collaboratively with the community, government departments and agencies, and others, to continue to address systemic racism and discrimination and acknowledge head-on that these remain problems.			
Update the province's Multiculturalism Act of 1989 to better reflect and support the Nova Scotia of today and tomorrow			
Improve access to early childhood development intervention programs for First Nation, Acadian and Francophone, African Nova Scotian, and immigrant families (currently underway).			
Work to support the various cultural communities and identities in the province, including new and emerging cultural communities, in cooperation with frontline organizations and faith-based groups and build awareness and understanding among all cultures, and consider a gender lens (currently underway).			
Strengthen the province's cultural offices: Gaelic Affairs, African Nova Scotian Affairs, and Acadian Affairs and Francophonie (currently underway).			
Support initiatives of the United Nations' International Decade for People of African Descent (2015–2024), by aligning our efforts with its three pillars: recognition, justice, and development (currently underway).			
Strengthen approaches to building cultural competence and gender analysis in the public service and among stakeholders through application of inclusive social equity analysis and the completion of the "Raising the Bar" diversity and inclusion strategy (currently underway).			
Work with municipal governments to ensure all Nova Scotians, including African Nova Scotians, have clear title to land where their families have lived for generations (currently underway).			
Continue to support justice-related African Nova Scotian initiatives in order to provide culturally relevant and people-centered programs, services, and human resource (HR) practices (currently underway).			
Support the work of the N.S. Office of Immigration to increase the number of immigrants to Nova Scotia, as well as the joint efforts between the Office of Immigration and the Office of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie to attract more French-speaking immigrants (currently underway).			
Work with EduNova, the co-operative industry association of education and training providers in Nova Scotia, to attract more international students and enhance cultural diversity in our schools and communities (currently underway).			
Support government departments to contribute to achieving government's employment equity targets in the public service (currently underway).			

Advance Cultural Diversity *continued*

ACTIONS	Underway	2017	2018
Support the capacity of organizations to mentor communities and leverage strengths across the province. For example, Hope Blooms, the North End Halifax non-profit fueled by local young people, who have gained national recognition; or FECAN (La Fédération culturelle acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse), which helps grow opportunities for Acadian artists across NS.			
Through Tourism Nova Scotia, attract key tourism market segments to the province by continuing to promote Nova Scotia's cultural diversity and experiences (currently underway).			
Develop education tools to enhance awareness of Labour Standards, focused on youth, international students, new immigrants and temporary foreign workers to support diverse communities and youth entering the work force successfully.			

Excellence in Stewardship

ACTIONS	Underway	2017	2018
Position the Nova Scotia Museum system to tell the province's story while increasing relevance and attractiveness for visitors through strategic, targeted investments.			
Work with municipalities and communities to find ways to showcase provincially significant sites.			
Enhance communications between the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage and community museums across the province (currently underway).			
Enhance effectiveness and transparency of funding programs supporting cultural, sport, and recreation organizations and facilities with a focus on rural Nova Scotia.			
Work with community partners to implement the Shared Recreation Strategy to foster active healthy living, and increase inclusion and access to recreation for all Nova Scotians.			
Work on the development of a Trails Strategy for Nova Scotia, aligning with growing use of trails (currently underway).			
Seek community partnerships that help the Nova Scotia Archives share Nova Scotia's diverse documentary heritage (currently underway).			
Continue to explore the feasibility of a re-imagined Art Gallery of Nova Scotia sharing space with NSCAD University.			
Work with the federal and municipal governments to explore creative ways to incent the adaptive re-use of heritage buildings (currently underway).			

Excellence in Stewardship *continued*

ACTIONS	Underway	2017	2018
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Work with stakeholders to promote and increase awareness of Nova Scotia's rich built heritage and its value to our province and identity (currently underway).

Drive Awareness and Economic Growth of the Culture Sector

ACTIONS	Underway	2017	2018
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Create a more comprehensive "Buy Nova Scotia Culture" marketing program that promotes local food, wine, beer, and spirits, along with homegrown artists, and the products of our craftspeople and artisans. The program should build on the successes of the province's tourism sector and the Taste of Nova Scotia and Select Nova Scotia models.

Use the existing Creative Industries Fund to help businesses and not-for-profits export globally, targeting the music, book publishing, craft, film, design, visual and performing arts sectors (currently underway).

Work with Screen Nova Scotia and industry organizations to strengthen the film and TV industry with a focus on developing Nova Scotian filmmakers, writers, and producers of local content and to encourage diversity and gender parity.

Create a strategic, government-wide approach to the development, attraction, and funding of events. These events showcase the province's sport, culture, heritage, and competitive advantages to national and international audiences. Events have the ability to attract new visitors and make significant economic impact. A coordinated approach will ensure events are properly funded and deliver measurable results and return on investment.

Continue support to sector councils and related organizations involved in culture focused on human resource development, attraction and retention, and training (currently underway).

Harness the expertise of the Creative Nova Scotia Leadership Council, a diverse assortment of culture sector leaders who provide input and counsel to the Minister and Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage (currently underway).

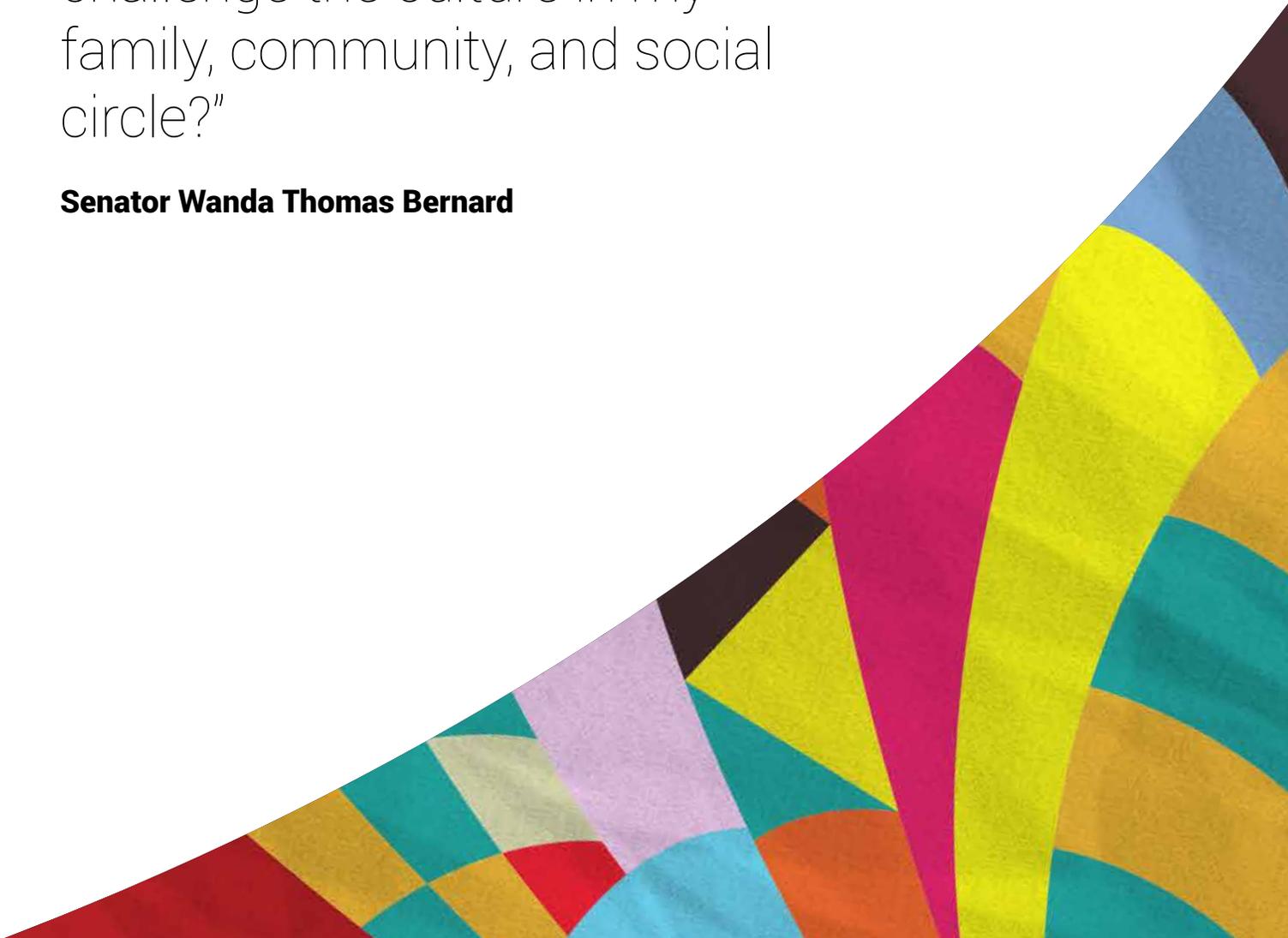
Strengthen workplace innovation, education, productivity, skills, and small business development for individuals and community groups (currently underway).





“Ask: what am I doing to challenge the culture in my family, community, and social circle?”

Senator Wanda Thomas Bernard







novascotia.ca/culture

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