

CDAA | ACCO

Canadian Dance Assembly

L'Assemblée canadienne de la danse

Finding Our Centre

Strategic
Direction
2014-2017



Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des Arts
du Canada



ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL
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Canada



Canadian
Heritage

Patrimoine
canadien

LOVE
dance
j'aime
DANSE

Photo: Kaitlin Standeven, by Jeremy Mimmagh

CANADIAN DANCE ASSEMBLY

STRATEGIC DIRECTION – FINDING OUR CENTRE: 2014-2017

PROFILE: OUR MISSION, MANDATE AND VALUES

Mission

The Canadian Dance Assembly exists to facilitate the dynamic exchange of information relevant to Canadian professional dance of all forms and aesthetics. It strives to cultivate a strong national voice for Canadian professional dance and to support the development of resources for this field of artistic expression. It is the members of the Canadian Dance Assembly, through their activities, experience and participation who provide the dynamism and synergy that make the organization vital in the Canadian arts milieu.

Having an organization that unites us in our work builds community and alleviates the feeling of working in isolation. It is important to have an organization that has a pulse on the national scene to help make connections across the country and bring us together. Through conferences, workshops and networking events, CDA fills a niche by creating national programming, connectivity and cross-disciplinary collaboration.

We strive to be respected by our membership and be recognized as a leader they can rely on and to whom the membership comes to for tools, resources, questions, or advice. CDA advocates on sector-wide issues that our members do not have the capacity to work on independently. CDA desires to have impact within the community and fosters positive change in the landscape of Canadian dance. We strive to increase the presence of dance within the public and political eye and also within the media. The organization serves to support the dance community so that it is a healthy and viable sector.

Mandate

The Canadian Dance Assembly (CDA) is the voice of the professional dance sector in Canada and advocates for a healthy, sustainable environment in which professional dance practice can grow and thrive.

CDA is a reputable source of information on the current state of dance in Canada and provides representation to policy makers and the public.

CDA enables its national membership of dance professionals and organizations to connect with their peers through regular communications, conferences, forums and workshops, and facilitates opportunities for networking, dialogue and exchange relevant to the Canadian dance sector.

Value Statement

The Canadian Dance Assembly is a member driven organization that, through the design and delivery of its activities, programs and services, upholds the core principles of being a collaborative, inclusive, consultative, non-partisan, proactive, diplomatic and transparent organization that represents the diverse professional dance milieu in all regions of Canada.

The organization ultimately exists to serve the needs of its members and functions as a bottom up organization responding to their needs. We strive to have an increased presence in Ottawa in order to make connections and influence policy makers and leading political figures. It is important that dance has a national voice at the same table as other arts service organizations. By collaborating and advocating with a united voice we can be increasingly effective. Together we are stronger.

CURRENT REALITY

As part of the strategic planning process, the professional leadership of the Canadian Dance Assembly undertook a knowledge based self-assessment and a thorough review of its program and resource centres of activity. This examination revealed:

- 1. Leadership:** Professional leadership and Board leadership working well together.
- 2. Programming:** Programming has been streamlined to better serve our professional membership, focusing our services to better suit the members' needs and available resources. In the past years, CDA has focused on I love dance / J'aime la danse, National Dance Week and the I love dance Awards. Based on recent feedback, CDA has put the I love dance campaign on hold so it can have an increased focus on political advocacy. We also work towards creating programming in partnership with other service organizations, and have a goal to increase engagement with digital technology.
- 3. Organization is in the process of regaining financial balance, but is still unstable:** The organization is building capacity and exploring different organizational models. Taking steps to right size the organization.
- 4. Infrastructure:** CDA infrastructure needs attention and needs to be reinvigorated. Hardware, software and office space all need attention.
- 5. Human resources:** Strong core professional and volunteer team, but because of financial strain had to reduce staff. There is a human resources deficit.

THE VIEW AHEAD

The CDA strives to:

- Increase and strengthen our relationship with our members.
- Work towards a position of respect and prominence within the arts sector in Canada.
- Build relationships on a local, provincial, national and international level with other arts service organizations.
- Strengthen our relationships with elected representatives.
- Explore partnerships outside of the arts.

- Build our capacity to do research.
- Build digital strategies and platforms as an additional form of revenue.
- Have diversity and pluralism integrated within every aspect of our work
- Capitalize on elections for the capacity to build followers and supporters.
- Realize the financial recovery plan and put it into action.
- Have adequate infrastructure and HR resources to carry out daily activities.

STRATEGIC RATIONALE

- We have listened and must continue to listen to our members and stakeholders.
- We must be fiscally responsible and live within our means.
- We need an adaptive mindset (listening to the social and political landscape).
- We believe that contraction is needed and useful to build a strong core that will subsequently generate growth for the organization.
- We work collaboratively in order to share/ maximize limited resources and to build bridges beyond dance.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Strategic Priorities encompass 6 major goals:

GOAL 1

INCREASE ADVOCACY SERVICES – ENGAGE OUR MEMBERS TO BE POLITICALLY AWARE AND ACTIVE

- The CDA (ED and Board) will meet with a minimum of 5 politicians each year.
- CDA will have an advocacy communications strategy in place by March 2015.
- The CDA will take a leadership role in the Canadian Arts Coalition (CAC) and will continue to work closely with members of the Performing Arts Alliance (PAA) on national advocacy or joint initiatives.
- Monitor provincial and municipal elections and implications to the arts sector, circulate information to the membership.
- Use the Dance Mapping research of the Canada Council to increase politician awareness of dance, circulate relevant stats or tools for members to help them make their case.
- Create an Advocacy strategy specific to the 2015 election.
- Create an advocacy tool kit to be used by our members as well as letter templates or other resource tools.
- Work with the Advocacy Committee to respond to members' needs.

GOAL 2

INCREASE MEMBERSHIP AND ENGAGEMENT – THROUGH PROGRAMS, SERVICES AND RESOURCES

- Transition to a single membership renewal date and implementation of automatic renewal options for organizational members (if they choose).

- Work with the membership committee to retain members and recruit new membership from across the country. Increase renewal retention rate by building trust within the membership.
- Through the engagement of International Dance Day / National Dance Week, recruit new supporting members.
- Offer increased services such as an affordable Health Insurance program option.
- Diversify membership by ensuring representation from all corners of Canada and within all disciplines.
- Increase partnership with regional service organizations and regional opt-in program.
- Develop our partnership with the CADA organizations and work together to keep those members informed and engaged in CDA activity.
- Revitalize the website and member login area and increase engagement online through social media activity.
- Increase number of regular e-bulletins circulated throughout the year.
- Host next major conference in 2015 and I love dance Awards ceremony with the goal of increasing engagement in programming and attendance, a smaller regionally focused meeting will follow in 2016 and another larger scale conference then in 2017.
- Improve communications by developing a comprehensive Communications plan.

GOAL 3

REACH THE GOALS OF THE FINANCIAL RECOVERY PLAN - INCREASE STABLE REVENUES AND REDUCE EXPENSES STRATEGICALLY

- Close the income gap by 2015 and eliminate the accumulated deficit by 2020.
- Monitor cash flow and forecasting documents through regular monthly calls with the Finance Committee.
- Develop strategies for dealing with cash flow issues that tend to arise at the end of the fiscal year.
- Revenues and Expenditures are appropriately time-phased and on budget (individual donation campaign will be moved to September from December)
- Establish a Fundraising Committee to help source out new areas of funding.
- Develop new sponsor relations through opportunities such as the 2015 conference.
- Analyze expenses and seek opportunity for improving cost reduction (eg. Rent fee decrease).

GOAL 4

REPRESENT THE DIVERSITY AND BREDTH OF THE ENTIRE DANCE COMMUNITY - TO BE EMBEDDED IN ALL COMMITTEES AND COUNCILS

- Increase engagement and ensure representation of every aspect of Canadian Dance within our membership.
- Establishment of a fully documented board recruitment strategy, board recruitment kit, and board manual which reflects the diversity of the dance community.
- Work with the Pluralism Committee to circulate communications/education and awareness items as part of our e-news circulation.
- Update office policies and develop policies on anti-racism, access and equity.

- Undertake regional meetings with an awareness of a pluralistic agenda and programming.
- Ensure each Standing Council has a Pluralism Committee representative.
- Increase our membership with a pluralistic approach.
- CDA is recognized as a leader in pluralistic engagement.

GOAL 5

STRENGTHEN NETWORK – CULTIVATE REGIONAL, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

- Increase CDA presence at regional events.
- Strengthen the function of the Standing Councils, establish clear goals, objectives and Terms of Reference.
- Increase collaboration with the Performing Arts Alliance on joint initiatives and activities.
- Strengthen our network by increasing member attendance at CDA conferences and events.
- Continue to work closely with our Regional Arts Service Organizational partners on events such as International Dance Day.
- Increase attendance at national and international events (such as Dance USA, TanzCongress)
- Work with the regional service organizations to host International Dance Day / National Dance Week each year

GOAL 6

STRENGTHEN THE ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE – HARDWARE, SOFTWARE AND OFFICE SPACE

- Update technical equipment and programs.
- Update office manual and policy documents.
- Database training.
- Investigate website enhancements and updates alongside communications plan in order to improve our online tools.
- Establish a volunteer recognition program.
- Enhance office space and working environment
- Investigate new office space.