



## Sharing the Results of the 2013 NWT Arts Council Artist Survey

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The [NWT Arts Council](#)'s strategic planning process was launched in August 2013 with a survey that was sent out to over 500 NWT artists and arts organizations. For six weeks the survey was open and over this period three notices were sent out to encourage artists and organizers to complete the form.

The feedback submitted by 145 respondents (29%) was extremely supportive, insightful and engaged. The NWT Arts Council acknowledges the importance of the survey in its recent strategic planning deliberations and recognizes the importance now of feeding the survey results back to the NWT artistic community.

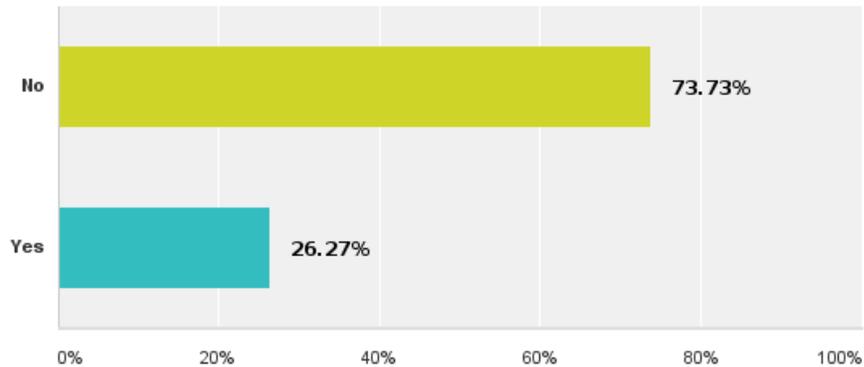
It's clear from the number of individuals who took the time to complete the online survey that the artistic constituency cares deeply about the arts in the Northwest Territories. The NWT Arts Council members would like to thank all of the respondents for their time and interest in helping the NWT Arts Council chart a renewed course for the future.

The survey consisted of three questions with an open space provided for suggestions.

Please find the results of the survey below.

## Q1 Mandate Presently the Mandate of the NWT Arts Council is: to promote the arts in the Northwest Territories. Do you think the mandate should change?

Answered: 118 Skipped: 4



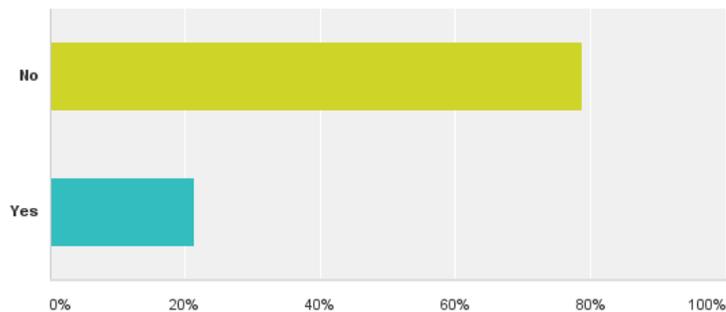
### Comments: Mandate

1. I think this should read - support and promote the arts in the NWT!
2. I think that the council needs to take a more active role in promoting the arts in the NWT - perhaps recreating the mandate could incorporate this.
3. I think it is important that some kind of vision for building an infrastructure for the arts in the NWT becomes an aspect of the work. For example, the current funding (which I wouldn't want to see change) funds projects but the North also needs agents, cultural organizations, programs and support that help artists market their work online (not a two day workshop). Right now, it seems that the individual or group needs to imagine possibilities for themselves in order to represent artists' interests outside of the NWT. There really isn't much to tap into.
4. This is fairly open ended; how does the arts council intend to promote the arts
5. I would like to see "promote and support" not just promote
6. Perhaps a more inclusive definition should be added as some people don't realize that arts include performing arts, not just two dimension art.
7. I think it should add to promote and encourage arts in the NWT
8. Mandate: To promote the arts, both professional and amateur, in the Northwest Territories.
9. Perhaps it could include the development of arts and culture in the NT so this includes nurturing and supporting artists and arts initiatives not just promoting what already exists.
10. Going beyond the "promotion" of NWT art, I would like to see more support for local experimentation and the pushing of "northern" art boundaries/limits, regardless of the art's marketability. More community development through arts programming.

11. I would like to see the NWT Arts Council take on more than just promoting the arts. I would suggest something more towards 'developing' the arts.
12. Possible clarification of "arts in the Northwest Territories" - does it mean NWT artists and is the promotion only within the NWT or will promotion be done in the south as well. Also, what about artists from the NWT that may temporarily be in the south?
13. To promote the arts and crafts in the Northwest Territories, nationally and internationally.
14. Change to: Promote arts from the NWT for local, national and international audiences
15. It could be to support the Arts in the NWT and promote within Canada.
16. "To Promote the arts in the NWT": It's limited to "in the NWT" - why not promote northern artists to the rest of Canada, the world!
17. One of the more difficult tasks for artists in the NWT is to find venues outside the Territory for their work. Given the remote location it is difficult to ascertain the caliber of a venue online and prohibitively expensive to visit a location. I believe it would be of great advantage were the Arts Council to establish relationships with galleries etc., with established reputations, that would be receptive to Northern work. While this may start as a Canadian enterprise, international markets such as Japan and Germany, that have a fascination with Canada and the North in particular should be investigated. The scope of work to be presented should include all facets of artistic work and not overly reliant on 'traditional' renderings.
18. I would add the word "support" in there as well - as promotion of the arts is something that the AC does at conferences, but supporting us through your programs and services is what really makes the difference for us. We often end up doing the promotion ourselves as artists.
19. And to promote the artists of the NWT and nurture that talent
20. Perhaps the word 'encourage' could be added to the mandate
21. Well, that's not it completely... By making recommendations to government on funding, issues, policies.
22. Should be expanded to include "promotion of artistic development"
23. I'd like to add an addendum. I prefer to look at it as promoting NWT arts in the Territory and beyond. If I remember correctly, people have received funding for activities outside the NWT but that support our arts here. If that is correct - awesome. If not, then that's what I would like to see changed.
24. Broadened the mandate to include other forms of culture, such as heritage.
25. To promote the arts OF the NWT
26. I agree with mandate, however find the above phrase would be more purposeful and comprehensible if elaborated upon, for example sub categories such as economic, tradition, new explorations...
27. "... promote the arts and artists in the Northwest Territories..."
28. To support and promote the arts in the Northwest Territories
29. Should actively support. Promote is a passive word.

**Q2 NWT Arts Council Structure Presently, six members are appointed to the NWT Arts Council by the Executive Council of the Government of the Northwest Territories for terms of two years each. Members may then renew their terms again for two years only. Members are selected for their expertise and abilities in the arts from the South Slave, Tłı̄chǫ, Beaufort-Delta, Deh Cho, Sahtu, and North Slave regions. The administrative duties of the Council are carried out by the Heritage and Culture Division of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment of the NWT. Do you think this structure should change?**

Answered: 112 Skipped: 10



## Comments: Board Representation

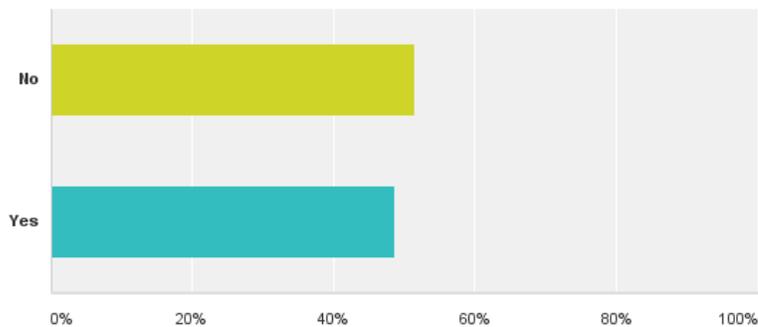
1. Yes - the Council should stay the same - however I think the peer review system can be incorporated. ie have a number of the council members sit with then 1 or two outside artists coming in as peers for their input as well. I think Council is sometimes asked to review arts they are not familiar with -so this would strengthen the review process. Also administratively - if given the larger view of the Council taking over all arts funding - then administrative support must be increased to reflect this. Right now, the administration of Council activities is handled on a shoestring of support and this must change.
2. Very little communication is made public for interested potential members. The administrative duties appear to be handled as the work load of ECE permits.
3. There needs to be more ownership and administration by the council or perhaps a contracted third party to do things like public outreach and update the website - which is extremely out of date.
4. I am not sure what constitutes "expertise and abilities in the arts" I am also unsure how board members are selected but I feel they should be elected or nominated by the region or community and then elected by either the previous board members OR by the artists living in each region. I think it is an EPIC failure that there is no requirement of a formal arts education or understanding of contemporary arts in Canada. Artists in the NWT will rarely be able to compete at a national level if there is a complete lack of understanding of the contemporary arts scene.

5. I said no but I really don't know because the answer depends on number one. It depends on a shift in the work. I think keeping all the regions represented and working together is important but it could be that who you want on the group could become more specific. For example, if you decide that a focus is making connections to southern markets then for two years and possibly another two , you want to be sure that you have people who have had experience doing that. With a different focus, say on revitalizing traditional arts, you would need to have people who have expertise in that area- not just knowledge of the art but also how it could be revitalized.
6. This division is too silent; I would like the group to be more proactive
7. Appointment by the Executive Council smacks of political influence creeping in. I would like to see a Committee of Council made up of representatives of all the Arts organizations. That Committee could make recommendations to the Executive Council for the suggested list of appointees.
8. Volunteers should be included from each area
9. The communities should be represented. Currently I have no clue as to who presents my community. Should this not be changed? No knowledge of who sits on this board.
10. The members should certainly represent the Northern communities, but there should be membership from cultural "transplants" as well. Members who have an arts background and now live in the Northwest Territories.
11. Break the meeting into 2 parts. Meet once to discuss the arts and another time to discuss the crafts separately therefore giving an increased emphasis on the craft sector instead of having same people for years, they should give others a try and gain input and learning about how the art structure works so they can all be on same level and know what they are representing.
12. There should also be consideration to include a representative from each genre of art form recognized in the strategy. There is currently no commitment to do that - only ensure all regions are represented. It would also be good to consider involving ITI in this structure so there is cross over between the 2 departments so they can work together to promote the arts. There is too much confusion of which department does what - one arts organization is the solution.
13. The board should not be appointed by regions. It should be appointed by artistic discipline. In its current form, certain disciplines have no representative on board and Council members are not all practicing artists. It's hard to believe the Council claim that it awards grants based on "artistic merit" when no one on board is qualified to assess such merit.
14. I believe there should be a Youth on board (either make sure one of these six are under 25 or have another seat for a youth) to keep us up to date on the trends and technology.
15. More representation
16. There are now so many programs and services offered by the AC, it seems without any change to the improving the speed of administration. Wondering if council members should take on more responsibilities, meet more often and a working board appointed to each program area.
17. It should be promoting our amazing talented artists by nurturing that talent - promoting local musicians and providing opportunity for films filmmakers and travel to southern events to promote artists not just art in general

18. The Council might want to be more arms-length and hire and terminate its own administrative staff, providing of course you have the funding to do that. Your legislative ACT may or may not need amending if you want to go that route.
19. Not sure. Are members expert and able in their own subset of the Arts world, and/or in their own region? Are they able to look at a broader picture as well? If so, then it's OK.
20. The executive council shouldn't be the only ones making the decision; the regional community should be included
21. I wish there was an "I Don't Know" option!! I'm not clear on how the Exec. Council chooses the appointees. Do they just choose names by reputation? Are the names forwarded to them? Do they just choose names unilaterally with no input? I think it's important that the Exec. Council receives support, assistance in choosing the appointees.
22. Something closer to proportional representation based on mandate (see previous comment: established artists, emerging artists, traditional artists, new explorations, for examples) may serve purposes better than strictly or primarily regional representation.
23. Regional representation is good, however additional representation by discipline/art form would be good to ensure proper level of expertise in all areas eg visual arts, writing, theatre etc
24. " Each member is then able to renew their term by another two years"? Self renewal? Not acceptable! Rather "A member may have their term renewed by another year."
25. It is not clear from the statement above whether the member renews their own term, or whether the Executive can decide to renew their term. There should be some kind of check and balance system in place so that a member is re-evaluated after their two year term.

**Q3 Services The NWT Arts Council provides recommendations to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment on financial awards for creative artistic projects in the visual, literary, media, and performing arts, as well as on issues and policies associated with artists and the arts. The Council presently meets once per year to review applications for the NWT Arts Council funding program. Do you think the services of the NWT Arts Council should change?**

Answered: 109 Skipped: 13



## Comments: Services

1. Council should be looking at taking over all of the arts funding - this includes the programs currently held by MACA, ITI and ECE. This way it is one stop shopping from beginning to end for the artist and the arts organizations. Right now there is confusion on a number of fronts - both within and outside of the Departments. Council can then increase its meeting schedule from once per year to three or four times per year and this can also be helped with video conferencing. The office for the Arts Council should also be separate from the government departments they are with now - so that they have a stand alone storefront like Sportsnorth. This means rethinking all of the activities of Council and recognizing the importance of the work that they do on a daily basis.
2. More promotion of the arts and outreach to artists and art groups.
3. It would be good to have grants available on a first-come, first-served basis, that could be potentially reviewed by the group once/month. This would allow people to submit applications as projects come up, and potentially reduce the time between application submission and finding out if money is available.
4. The Arts Council could meet several times a year to discuss arts issues and provide current information or advice to ECE Culture and Heritage Division
5. I believe the NWT Arts council should be working cooperatively with ITI to support artists and organizations through cooperative funding programs. I believe that application deadlines for Organizations and Individual Artists should be separate and decisions and funding results should

be as timely as the expectation of application. Results 6 months after the application deadline is ludicrous when projects are to be completed before the end of your fiscal year. Also WHY on earth do you need the Minister's approval when he has already "appointed" six people to make these decisions???? COME ON! It is a joke that only workshops or community based projects get funding and rarely do individual artist projects get completed because of a huge fundamental bias to education. If you want education and professional development to support the arts then set up a program for professional development and arts workshops through ECE. NWT will never move forward in contemporary arts until the idea that our artists are "not as good" is wiped from the process and projects of real artistic merit and artists with proven potential/drive are given the support they need to become great on a regional, national and international stage.

6. I think meeting once a year is fine but I do wonder how people who are not as comfortable writing proposals and applications could be supported through the process. I think the council does a good job of funding fairly within regions but I wonder how we could increase equity of access so that those who either do not have, or do not have a relative who has, a significant degree of literacy in English could access the funding program.
7. Meeting once a year tells me that the board is responding to artist or artist group initiated submissions. can the board be more proactive in bringing in arts related programs, coordinating art education initiatives, collaborating with other provincial arts councils towards national entity.
8. It could be beneficial to have 2 times a year when applications are reviewed.
9. Meeting should be twice a year
10. Maybe meet twice a year.
11. Yes, appointments for one meeting a year for up to four years seems like a waste of potential. Promotion and propagation of arts etc should be a factor not just picking who should receive monies based on ability to write a proposal. What about art for arts sake.
12. There are different dates and events. Sometimes the funding is not available at the right time for some events
13. Dolling out funds once a year may make it easier for the council, but artistic concepts and initiatives have a time factor as well. I recommend two submission deadlines, at least, per year.
14. These are difficult questions as they are so black and white. It's not really that I think they should change, but that we are so fortunate to have an incredible Arts community and I'm very thankful for all the support. I just think we need more of it. I'm worried, for example, of the change from moose hide to the brown stroud - it's very hard to find moose hide or caribou hide. We are quickly losing the ladies that know how. We fund LOTS of hand games competitions in the NWT but what drums will be used if the skill to get the hides to make the drums are gone. I think we need to fund summer programs that pay young people to work with Elders to make hides...rather than mowing lawns and picking up garbage for a make work program. So, I think the leadership for some areas of much needed support could come from the NWT Arts Council.
15. I was surprised by the inconsistent roll out of the grants this year. Some artists heard they had received money, others heard nothing. With this kind of thing, I think you have to ensure on the administrative side that people are hearing at the same time.

16. Perhaps meeting twice per year would bring more immediacy to the work? Spread the work out? More ongoing grant programs available? I'm not sure of the complications in this!
17. Council should meet twice a year. Every year the applications increase in numbers. As a Council member I find that to do applicants justice I need more time to read thoroughly their applications BUT, I find with the limited time allotted I'm just skimming over applications looking only at certain parts of the application or reading only my region's applications thoroughly. Also some applications are open to when they receive finances, whereas other applications are very firm as to when finances should be required. One other item, although Tsiighehtchic is situated by the highway we are not accessible in fall and spring plus no airport for transportation. Council should look at changing the time when we reviewed applications so council members are able to travel for a face to face meeting, especially when we finances are being distributed.
18. Applications need to happen more than once a year. The Government fiscal year and funding proposal deadlines often do not mesh well with the timelines of organizations applying for funding.
19. More promotion of Traditional Crafts and more of a presence in the communities (Trade Shows, career talks, etc.) promote the NWTAC and the services provided.
20. The Arts Council should steer its focus away from "artist development" and put more emphasis on supporting the actual production of artwork. Right now, it's easier to get a grant to attend a workshop than to create art. It's absurd. Also, every year, the Council funds several projects that are not artistic in nature. Meanwhile, creators asking for living allowance to produce meaningful artwork are routinely turned down. Helping artists create art should be the Council's first priority.
21. I believe there should be two meetings per year for review.
22. I would recommend that they meet more often in order to help out the artists more by being able to submit applications throughout the year. Even twice a year would improve this.
23. I would like to see the council meet twice per year, at a minimum. Because they only meet once per year some art promotion opportunities are lost, due to the waiting period required for approval of funding.
24. The council should meet more often than once a year in order to more effectively process applications. There is a blind time from April to September when projects can essentially not take place due to the long processing time. The council should also have the capacity to make decisions on policy and smaller projects (under 20k) without needing the Minister's approval.
25. It's so limiting to only be able to apply once a year. What if I come up with a great idea in July and there's a limited time to make the thing happen. I have to wait through the winter to be able to apply for funding? Ridiculous.
26. 6 months at a time. Once a year is too restricting. Some people need a different time of year to apply
27. Have a twice a year intake.
28. I believe that the council should meet more often, especially to administer issues and associated policies regarding artists in order to take advantage of seasonal variances and to expedite financial awards to the artist(s).

29. As it stands, any project seeking funding may need to wait in excess of a year. Projects such as workshops, competitions, exhibitions can come and go in that time. It would be beneficial to have contingency funding for such events.
30. Meet and award more frequently?
31. Perhaps there is an opportunity for a second meeting. If people know they are not going to be able to use their funding this would be a chance to reallocate.
32. A twice-a-year deadline might alleviate the crunch for administration, decision making, and financial roll-out of approved Projects.
33. Any way you could meet more often so artists don't have to wait for the next yearly review? Seems a shame to have to delay a project because the council does not meet more often.
34. Provide more opportunity for the poor disabled and elderly to access workshops and events to nurture talent provide opportunity for access to mentoring for artists
35. Adjusting the system to accept applications more than once a year should be considered perhaps a distinction between 'major' and 'minor' projects could be made, so that less advance preparation is needed to prepare a proposal for a minor Project.
36. Are the applications reviewed by a jury, a panel of peers? Does the government, the Ministry, have final approval? Your Board of Directors could approve the recommendations of juries. This too, provides arms-length position of independence for the Arts Council.
37. Continue to oversee the distribution of funds. Perhaps meet one other time, NOT to review applications, which must be exhausting. Review the options for more focused funding in the current grants program and modify the program if required: - Only support professional artistic activity by individuals or organizations? - Continue to support recreational artistic groups as well? - Provide financial support to artistic events? Expand funding opportunities outside the current grants program (still directed by the Council): - Perhaps provide scholarships or loans for study or research in the arts? - Provide prizes or awards, as well as grants? - Support initiatives to bring the arts into schools? Consider additional methods of generating funds to support the arts: - Provide a means for people to donate toward scholarship funds, to be awarded by the council?
38. I don't think the services should change, but meeting more than once a year would be beneficial.
39. Twice a year would be nice so that people trying to finalise a summer project can move forward. Sometimes the funds come too late in the summer to implement.
40. Should meet at least twice a year to review applications.
41. Twice
42. Perhaps the Council doesn't need to meet, in case they are influencing each others decisions based on politics or whatever. Also, if they are flying to yk that seems like a waste of money that could be better spent on art projects directly. The screening process could be that Boris, or whomever the lead administrator is, gives recommendations or withholds recommendations. Council members then each individually accept or decline the recommendation. Intake deadlines could be 3 or 4 times annually, maybe separating organizational applications from individual artist apps.
43. Twice a year.

44. Grants, as described above, are great. the granting process itself could be improved, and the Council could have a wider scope. As to grants, please consider bi-annual awards, or second-session awards of funds if funds not expended by say November. Please also consider clear sub-categories such as emerging (not-yet-established) artists funding (with simple application process) and established/ professional artists funding (more demanding application - a ramp-up to National and other funding). A wider scope could include liaison assistance for increasingly established artists with, in turn, more established artists to guide/ assist in attaining other sources of funds. A recent news release on the senior-artist-as-mentor program in Ontario intrigued.
45. Allow multi-year funding for projects
46. It is inappropriate that the Arts Council meets only once a year and that there is only a single deadline for applications each year. It is time that the Council meets and that there are at least two deadlines each year. The council should also be responsible for the budget, mandate of and appoint (or recommend) the Film Commissioner of the NWT.
47. Two deadlines per year would be preferable. If an artistic project comes up after the February or January deadline, an artist has to wait an entire year to apply for funding (plus the eight months processing time). Two application deadlines a year, with the funding split as needed between those two deadlines, meaning that it shouldn't be split exactly 50/50, but rather provide the Arts Council with the flexibility to award up to 60% of the funding during either of the two deadlines per year, based on the strength of the projects that they see. Additionally, the Arts Council (and supporting staff) don't have to spend days and weeks walking applicants through the application process who haven't taken the time to properly follow the application process (i.e. incomplete applications, failure to follow application instructions) , but can instead advise to resubmit in six months following the proper application guidelines. This forces artists to actually take the time to put together quality applications with thought behind them, which may appear harsh in the short term, but ideally will increase the overall quality of applications in the longer term. As well, if the Arts Council makes this position known well in advance and continues to offer advice and support (for example, agreeing to review applications in advance of deadline to provide advice), then the Arts Council can work within their deadlines without letting artists new or less comfortable to the Arts Council application process slip through the cracks and miss funding opportunities.
48. I would suggest that applications be accepted twice a year.
49. Once per year is not enough to review applications. It's very difficult to operate within the timelines of the funding - e.g. you cannot plan any summer activities because funding isn't allocated until the end of the summer and you have to use the funding before the end of the fiscal year. For organisations this is especially difficult because there are venue schedules to consider. I think there should be two review periods.
50. Multiple review dates would be very helpful to artists... even just twice a year would make a huge difference.
51. Need to meet more than once a year to discuss policies and issues