Making a Holistic Case for the Arts: Canadian Evidence regarding the Relationship between the Arts and the Quality of Life, Well-being, Health, Education, Society, and the Economy

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NOTE TO THE READER FROM THE CPAF SECRETARIAT

Please note that this report was commissioned by the Canadian Public Arts Funders (CPAF) as a discussion paper for a meeting of staff from the 14 members of CPAF (see Appendix). The meeting took place in Ottawa, Ontario, from June 2-3, 2014.

The views expressed by the author(s) are based on their interpretations from a variety of sources of information and do not necessarily represent all points of view or the current program structures and policies of the membership of CPAF.

The reader is invited to provide feedback to this report by contacting Melanie Yugo, Partnership and Networks Officer, Canada Council for the Arts, and CPAF Secretariat, at melanie.yugo@canadacouncil.ca or 1 800 263 5588 extension 5144.

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Hill Strategies Research is a Canadian company that specializes in applying social science research methods to the arts sector. Since its founding in 2002, Hill Strategies Research has prepared over 250 reports and presentations on the arts and culture in Canada, including 41 reports in the *Statistical Insights on the Arts* series and 117 issues of the *Arts Research Monitor*.

Hill Strategies’ founder and President, Kelly Hill, has 17 years of quantitative and qualitative arts research experience. Kelly is the author of numerous reports and articles examining the situation of artists in Canada, arts funding and finances, cultural participation and spending, cultural donors and volunteers, arts education, creative communities, and the benefits of culture.

Recognized across Canada as a leading authority on arts research and statistics, Kelly, a fluently bilingual Anglophone, is a sought-after speaker at conferences and workshops. Kelly has had the opportunity to do research projects, talk to artists or arts organizations, give presentations, and conduct discussion group sessions from coast to coast, including Victoria, Vancouver, Burnaby, Kamloops, Nelson, Edmonton, Calgary, Saskatoon, Regina, Winnipeg, Thunder Bay, Sudbury, Windsor, London, Kitchener, Hamilton, Brantford, Guelph, Oakville, Mississauga, Toronto, Owen Sound, Barrie, Orillia, Midland, Tottenham, Ottawa, Gatineau, Montreal, Quebec City, Moncton, Halifax, Charlottetown, and St. John’s.

Hill Strategies Research has three ongoing projects, which were created by Kelly Hill upon founding the company in 2002: the *Statistical Insights on the Arts* series (statistical reports), the *Arts Research Monitor* (a summary of research findings from various sources) and presentations based on our research findings. In addition, Hill Strategies Research also conducts other commissioned research projects, such as a recent study of municipal cultural investments.

Prior to founding Hill Strategies Research in 2002, Kelly gained a solid knowledge across the art forms as Research Manager at the Ontario Arts Council. Kelly’s academic background focused on socio-economic research and analysis: he obtained an MA in Political Science from the University of Western Ontario and a BA in Economics from Université Laval.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

Within the Canadian Public Arts Funders (CPAF) network, there is a common need to better articulate and demonstrate the value of public funding to the arts. In recent years, the narrative around public funding to the arts in Canada has arguably evolved. Once focused on government support for artists’ creation and production activities, it has shifted to a focus on government investment in the well-being of citizens, communities, and society. Public arts funders now need to develop a rationale which acknowledges the needs of citizens, and to justify public investment with concrete proof.

In preparation for a meeting of CPAF members, the network commissioned this literature review. The scope of the project was to provide an overview of key Canadian evidence and sources using a “holistic” framework that recognizes the complex and interrelated benefits of the arts in Canada. Evidence addressing five areas was explored: (1) quality of life; (2) well-being and health; (3) society and identity; (4) education; and (5) economy. Strengths, weaknesses, and knowledge gaps were identified, as were the implications for CPAF members.

KEY FINDINGS

The evidence base outlined below shows that there is a myriad of potential benefits of the arts, including intrinsic benefits, community and personal benefits, entertainment, quality of life, health and well-being, social capital, and more. In particular, Canadian surveys have pointed to strong public recognition of the benefits of the arts. Regarding individuals’ arts attendance, studies have pointed to entertainment, fun, and inspiration as primary benefits. As is the case in many areas of research, studies of causal links (rather than statistical associations) are very challenging to conduct.

One focus area that appears to have less research is society and identity. A number of reports have identified potential linkages between the arts and identity or social inclusion, but many are not backed by statistical information. Relatively speaking, the other focus areas (quality of life, well-being, education, and the economy) appear to be somewhat better served by existing research.

The focus of many studies of the arts and education or well-being has been on children or seniors. There appear to be fewer studies of adults of working age.

Research concerning the broad area of “public engagement” in the arts is an interesting avenue but is essentially in its infancy in Canada. There have not yet been major Canadian studies linking broader arts engagement and personal or public outcomes of that engagement.

It should be noted that the research reviewed for this report was not universally positive. Certain studies of arts education and employment linkages considered their findings to be inconclusive.

The evidence highlighted in this report regarding the benefits of the arts includes:
Quality of life

- The arts can have “intrinsic benefits” such as pleasure, stimulation, and meaning. These benefits of arts participation may be a result of neurochemical processes in the brain.
- Surveys have shown that a large majority of the Canadian public recognizes the contribution of the arts to quality of life, as well as the range of potential benefits of the arts, including creative thinking, high quality community life, and individual well-being.
- Attendee surveys have shown entertainment and fun to be the primary personal benefit of attendance, while the desire to be inspired or uplifted is a significant motivation for attendance. Community energy, vitality, and quality of life are seen to be important community benefits.
- Some recent research and policy efforts have focused on public engagement in the arts, providing a broader view of arts participation and connections between artists and the public.

Well-being / Health

- Recent research has shown a strong correlation (but not causation) between arts attendance and Canadians’ health and well-being.
- An insightful project on Vancouver seniors’ arts participation, health, and social inclusion demonstrated that participating seniors had an improved sense of well-being and social inclusion.
- Arts creation has been found to contribute to a sense of well-being in young female artists.
- The arts are important in Aboriginal health and well-being.

Society and Identity

- A number of different reports have shown that the arts help build various elements of social capital, including enhancing local creative capacity, pride, and relationships. Studies have been conducted in rural areas and in Aboriginal communities.
- A report on Aboriginal healing found that participating in creative arts activities can support healing among Aboriginal people and contribute to their sense of identity.

Education

- A number of research efforts have shown a link between arts education and student engagement in the education system.
- Structured theatre programs have been associated with children’s confidence, social skills, and conflict resolution skills. Other studies showed connections between music and reading comprehension, students’ self-esteem, discipline, creativity, and musical ability.
- An OECD report on arts education argued that the acquisition of artistic skills and ways of thinking should be prioritized over other, “non-intrinsic” benefits. The OECD report also concluded that research findings on the innovation-related impacts of arts education are largely inconclusive throughout OECD countries, including Canada.
Economy

- The Culture Satellite Account (CSA) estimated that the economic impact of the arts, culture, and heritage was $49.9 billion in 2009, or 3.4% of the country's overall GDP.
- Research has not consistently shown a connection between the arts and knowledge industries or overall employment growth, although a link has been posited.
- A number of more specific reports have examined consumer spending on culture, the economic impacts of cultural tourism, impacts of portions of the music industry, as well as provincial and local data.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, AND KNOWLEDGE GAPS

The evidence base outlined in this report highlights the many potential benefits of the arts. There is much compelling Canadian research. Research into the arts and health appears to be a burgeoning area, and many other projects have examined the arts and education, the economy, or the quality of community life. There is also significant crossover between outcome categories used in this report; many studies address various types of outcomes.

One focus area that appears to have less research is society and identity. A number of reports have identified potential linkages between the arts and identity or social inclusion, but many are not backed by statistical information. Other than public opinion surveys, it appears that no research has been conducted into the arts' contribution to Canadian identity and its standing abroad.

Other gaps in the literature include:

- A lack of Canadian information regarding the status and benefits of arts education in the full range of arts disciplines.
- Research into the arts and learning outcomes and overall well-being of adults of working age (rather than children or seniors).
- Canadian studies linking broader arts engagement and personal or public outcomes.
- Limited coverage of recent economic impact studies across the landscape of the arts and culture sector. While some provinces have pursued economic impact studies of certain elements of the cultural sector, many other provinces have not. The forthcoming Culture Satellite Account is expected to fill some (but not all) of the gaps in coverage.

In many research projects, as is the case in other research spheres, studies providing causal links rather than statistical associations are very challenging to conduct.
IMPLICATIONS FOR CPAF MEMBERS

Keeping up-to-date with the broad range of evidence regarding the holistic case for the arts is a key challenge for CPAF members. Our understanding of the range of benefits of the arts in Canada, while growing, remains partial. A “benefit mapping” process could be undertaken to systematically identify and connect areas of existing (and missing) research with types of outcomes (i.e., quality of life, health, well-being, society, identity, education, and economy) and benefit populations (i.e., individuals, certain groups, communities, provinces, territories, the country as a whole).

CPAF members could consider partnerships to examine the outcomes of the arts compared with other activities, such as sports participation. Even if there were perfect data on all arts disciplines and the full range of possible outcomes, some might ask whether other forms of participation (such as sports) have the same, different, or better outcomes than the arts. There might be an opportunity with the General Social Survey (GSS) to conduct a preliminary exploration of this topic. The GSS includes questions regarding participation in both the arts and sports.

A pilot project could be conducted with willing arts organizations to capture engagement-related data from their audience members, in addition to basic attendance statistics. As “public engagement” is an emerging area of significant interest, there may be more opportunities to fill gaps in outcomes research related to broader aspects of engagement (beyond arts attendance) in the future.

By allocating funding for evaluation and documentation-building within arts projects, CPAF members could attempt to ensure that more arts organizations with socially-minded programming integrate a strong evaluation and documentation framework into their programs.

Changes to data sources have implications for CPAF members. Some data sets related to the arts are disappearing (e.g., government spending on culture, heritage institutions, trade in culture goods and services), and others are reduced in scope (e.g., Survey of Household Spending). These changes mean that there will be less arts-relevant data available in the future. If CPAF members wish to obtain data on a number of subjects, including the holistic value of the arts, they will likely have to pay for the surveys and data analysis.

The change from a mandatory census to a voluntary National Household Survey (NHS) has limited impact on the holistic case for the arts per se, but it will mean that less data will be available on the situation of artists and cultural workers, especially in smaller provinces and the territories. In the longer term, the quality of other surveys (that have, until now, relied upon demographic information from the long-form census) might be compromised.

CPAF members could consider a coordinated approach to future research and data development. This could come through a CPAF sub-committee of senior research (and/or communications) staff at CPAF member organizations. A CPAF research sub-committee would be well positioned to communicate with Statistics Canada on an ongoing basis regarding survey needs and development. In this way, there might be an opportunity to include questions related to the value of the arts (or other subjects of particular interest to CPAF members) on future surveys.
FUTURE WORK AND KEY QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

Many outcomes of the arts are difficult to quantify, such as inner experiences and reactions. These deep, often personal experiences are very valuable to making a full holistic case for the arts. Capturing these elements would require in-depth qualitative research.

Future research might include studies of:

- **Arts creation and other aspects of arts engagement “beyond attendance”**. A recent Canada Council paper on public engagement in the arts identified a gap in the literature regarding the tools, mechanisms, and impacts of the interventions of policy and funding agencies, beyond arts education and community arts strategies.
- The arts and Aboriginal social inclusion. Care must be taken, of course, to ensure that studies recognize and accord with Aboriginal worldviews.
- **Education and well-being of adults of working age.** To date, the focus of many studies has been on children or seniors.
- Community arts projects that have socially-minded goals, possibly exploring the outcomes of community arts projects for youth, marginalized groups, and other Canadians.
- Contributions of Canadian artists to social well-being and the economy. While there have been some international studies, there appear to be relatively few Canadian iterations of this type of research. Specifically, the mechanisms by which the presence of artists might contribute to overall social or economic well-being are not well understood in the Canadian context.
- The status and benefits of arts education in the full range of arts disciplines. A Canadian study (Patteson et al., 2012) argued that there is “a great need for original Canadian research into [arts education] programs in the unique context of Canada”, its regions, and its diversity.
- **More empirical research in arts education, better methodologies, and better theories about “why and how arts education would have an impact on various outcomes of interest”** (Winner et al., 2013).
This paper was prepared to inform deliberations at a Strategic Development Meeting of the Canadian Public Arts Funders (CPAF) network in June 2014. The theme of the meeting was *Shifting Narratives: Making a Holistic Case for the Arts*.

The context of “shifting narratives” is the belief that the narratives around public funding to the arts have shifted from a focus on government support for artists’ creation and production activities to government investment in the well-being of citizens, communities, and society. This approach recognizes the contribution of the arts sector to broader outcomes such as prosperity in an uncertain world, healthy communities, as well as Canadian identity, pride, and sovereignty.

Furthermore, public arts funders now need to develop a rationale which acknowledges the complex needs of citizens, and to justify public investment with concrete proof.

This paper, which takes stock of existing research sources and identifies gaps, is an important step in helping CPAF members clearly articulate the unique role the arts play in the lives of citizens and, in turn, the value of public funding to the arts.

**Objectives**

In preparation for a meeting of CPAF members, the network commissioned this literature review. The scope of the project was to provide an overview of key Canadian evidence and sources using a “holistic” framework that recognizes the complex and interrelated benefits of the arts in Canada. Evidence addressing five areas was explored: (1) quality of life; (2) well-being and health; (3) society and identity; (4) education; and (5) economy. Strengths, weaknesses, knowledge gaps and future work for consideration were identified, as were the implications for CPAF members.

The objectives of the research are to:

- Provide participants with an overview of key Canadian evidence and sources for making a “holistic” case for the arts;
- Synthesize the strengths and weaknesses of these sources, as well as knowledge gaps;
- Identify the implications for CPAF members, including the impact of recent changes to Canadian data sources used by public arts funders in the past;
- Identify key questions and opportunities for future work.

The research will provide a common point of departure and help CPAF members explore the need for other initiatives following the meeting.

The following diagram provides a general model of the five focus areas. The diagram emphasizes the interconnectedness of the five areas.
Research Questions

The research questions developed by the CPAF Working Group guided this project:

1. What research exists in Canada that could be used in supporting a holistic case for the arts? What are the key sources?
2. What are the strengths of this current evidence base? What are the weaknesses and knowledge gaps?
3. What are the implications for Canadian Public Arts Funders (CPAF) network members? What has been and will be the impact of recent changes to Canadian data sources on CPAF members? What might be the potential uses of the data from sources such as CADAC and the Culture Satellite Account?
4. What are the key questions and opportunities for future work?
Limitations

The main limitation of this project has been time. The literature review, which ideally could have been conducted over a three to six-month timeframe, was condensed into a one-month period. As such, there is a greater risk that the researchers missed important pieces of information. In addition, the timeframe only allowed for limited time for reflection.

The researchers, while having significant experience in this area, have limited capacities in some areas, such as medical terminology that is relevant in some health-related research projects. This might lead to specific “blind spots” in certain geographic or impact areas.

Finally, the research was limited to Canadian reports (i.e., by Canadian researchers and/or involving Canadian residents). Findings from many international studies on these topics would also be relevant to the Canadian context.

Research Methodology

The literature review covers studies relevant to Canada published in English or French that examine elements of the holistic case for the arts, i.e., outcomes of the arts related to the quality of life, well-being, health, society, education, and the economy.

Recent work by Arts Council England such as *Towards Plan A: A new political economy for the arts and culture* with the Royal Society of Arts (RSA), as well as *The value of arts and culture to people and society – an evidence review* provided a point of departure for the research. Both pieces outline the “holistic” evidence that exists in terms of the impact of the arts on cultural, social, economic and educational outcomes.

Relevant research from Canada (typically by Canadian researchers and/or involving Canadian subjects) was examined, including research studies and evaluations based on scientific principles containing primary data gathered using sound methodologies, as well as robust analyses of secondary data. In general, publications from 2009 to 2014 were considered for inclusion in the literature review.

Kelly Hill, with Alix MacLean and Kirby Hill, performed a thorough literature search in order to identify and synthesize the findings of existing Canadian evidence and research sources related to making a holistic case for the arts.

A structured approach to the literature search was undertaken, including the following activities. From this multi-pronged starting point, the literature review expanded to include many other sources and references found in reports, via internet searching, and through communications with public arts funders and other researchers.

1) A close and critical reading of the Arts Council England reports that inspired this project (*Towards Plan A: A new political economy for the arts and culture* and *The value of arts and culture to people and society – an evidence review*).
2) Examining relevant reports already reviewed in Hill Strategies’ Arts Research Monitor, compendium websites such as the Canada Council’s page on the Impact of the Arts on Canadian Life, and reports referenced in articles found on these sites.

3) Examining reports available via Canadian organizations that are active in the field, as well as international organizations that have conducted research pertaining to Canada.

4) Receiving recommendations from the Canada Council and CPAF Working Group members about significant research reports and other sources of information.

5) Searching the Web of Knowledge, JStor, Google Scholar, and, as required, other peer reviewed literature sources.

6) Research reports were organized into the five areas and then analyzed. Strengths, weaknesses, knowledge gaps and future work for consideration were identified, as were the implications for CPAF members.

7) A draft paper was written for review by the CPAF Secretariat and selected CPAF members.

8) The final draft of the paper was presented for discussion at the CPAF Strategic Development Meeting on June 2, 2014.

9) The report was revised and finalized based on comments from the meeting.

**Organization of this Report**

The key findings of the research are organized into the following sections:

- Quality of life / Intrinsic benefits
- Well-being / Health
- Society and Identity
- Education
- Economy

Many of the reports and articles cited here treat various elements of the holistic case for the arts. Indeed, many of the topic areas are closely related. In this report, studies are mentioned only once, in an area of primary focus (as deemed by the research team). As such, the literature review’s division by topic is not “clean”.

Important themes, research gaps, and implications for Canadian public arts funders related to the holistic case for the arts are also provided. In addition to the bibliography in this report, an inventory of research articles that relate to the holistic case for the arts in Canada was created.
Quality of life / Intrinsic benefits

Regarding the relationship between the arts and the quality of life, the articles reviewed for this report show that the potential benefits of the arts include intrinsic benefits, community and personal benefits, and outcomes related to the quality of life. Canadian surveys have pointed to strong public recognition of the benefits of the arts. Regarding individuals’ arts attendance, studies have indicated that entertainment, fun, and inspiration are primary benefits. As is the case in many areas of research, studies of causal links (rather than statistical associations) are very challenging to conduct.

Research concerning the broad area of “public engagement” in the arts is an interesting avenue but is essentially in its infancy in Canada. There have not yet been major Canadian studies linking broader arts engagement and personal or public outcomes of that engagement.

Pleasure of the arts

Intrinsic benefits of the arts have been described as the “pleasure, stimulation, and meaning” that people derive from participating (McCarthy et al., 2004). Intrinsic benefits include private, personal impacts (e.g., captivation and pleasure), impacts that are of value both to the individual and to broader society (e.g., cognitive growth and expanded capacity for empathy), and impacts that are largely of benefit to the broader public (e.g., creation of social bonds and expression of communal meaning).

Some of the personal benefits of arts participation may be a result of neurochemical processes in the brain. Chanda and Levitin (2013) found “promising, yet preliminary” evidence for “the beneficial effects of music on reward, motivation, pleasure, stress, arousal, immunity, and social affiliation”.

Public recognition of the benefits of the arts

There appears to be strong public recognition of the myriad potential benefits of the arts. A survey of the Canadian public conducted by Phoenix Strategic Perspectives Inc. (2012) found that large majorities are either “strongly” or “somewhat” in agreement that:

- “The arts are an important way of helping people think and work creatively” (93%).
- ”Arts experiences are a valuable way of bringing together people from different languages and cultural traditions” (93%).
- “Arts and cultural activities in a community make it a better place to live” (91%).
- “Exposure to arts and culture is important to individual wellbeing” (90%).
- “The arts and culture help us express and define what it means to be Canadian” (87%).
- “Arts and cultural activities are important to a community’s economic wellbeing” (86%).
- “It’s important to support the arts by volunteering or donating funds or goods” (81%).
- “The arts and heritage experiences help me feel part of my local community” (77%).

Regarding public support of government funding, 90% of survey respondents agreed that governments should provide support for the arts and culture in Canada.
According to survey data, Canadians believe that the arts contribute to the quality of our lives. The national survey by Phoenix Strategic Perspectives indicated that large majorities of Canadians believe that specific arts, culture, and heritage facilities contribute to the quality of life of people living in their community. An Ontario survey (Environics Research Group, 2010) found solid agreement that “the arts help enrich the quality of our lives” (95% either “strongly” or “somewhat” agreed). A similar percentage of Ontario respondents (91%) indicated that arts facilities are important to the quality of life in their community, whether or not they personally use them regularly.

**Community vs. personal benefits**

A national survey conducted on behalf of Canada’s performing arts presenters (Strategic Moves, 2012) found that the Canadian public is split regarding who benefits most from performing arts presentation: 36% indicated that attendees and the community as a whole benefit equally; 29% believe that individual attendees benefit more; and the same percentage believe that the community as a whole benefits more. The remaining respondents indicated either “don’t know” (4%) or “neither” (2%).

In contrast, the Ontario survey (Environics) found that nearly two-thirds of respondents (64%) believe that the whole community benefits more from the presence of the arts, while only 32% indicated that arts attendees benefit more. This survey did not provide the same “middle ground” option as the national survey (i.e., both benefit equally).

**“Entertainment, fun” is key personal benefit**

The survey conducted for performing arts presenters probed the range of potential benefits of performing arts attendance. In terms of personal benefits, 84% of performing arts attendees indicated that “entertainment, fun” is a main benefit of attending the performing arts. “Emotional / spiritual / intellectual stimulation” was selected by 58% of respondents, while 57% chose “learn / experience something new”.

In an unprompted question (Environics), Ontarians most commonly mentioned entertainment or fun (36%) as a personal benefit of attending or participating in arts activities, followed by learning or experiencing something new (22%). Smaller numbers mentioned three other benefits: emotional, spiritual or intellectual stimulation (16%); exposure to different cultures (14%); and the opportunity to socialize with friends (11%). Nineteen percent of respondents did not know or indicated that the question did not apply to them.

**Community energy, vitality & quality of life**

The national survey respondents (Strategic Moves) were also asked to select up to three potential community benefits. The results were divided relatively equally between a number of different benefits:

- 42% of respondents selected “bringing energy and vitality to the community”.
- 38% chose “improved quality of life and well-being of residents”.
- 37% chose a “more creative community”.
- 32% selected “greater economic development in the community”.

The Ontario survey revealed that a majority of Ontarians strongly agree that artists’ successes give people a sense of pride in Canadian achievement.
**Attendance motivations vary by discipline; “Inspired, uplifted” is key**

People’s motivations for arts attendance represent the benefits that they hope to receive from attending. A Toronto report (Creative Trust, 2010), based on nearly 3,700 responses to a survey distributed by 20 small and medium-sized performing arts organizations, found that “being inspired or uplifted” was a popular motivation in each of the four performing arts disciplines covered by the study. However, the most popular motivations differed between the disciplines:

- **Dance**: 1) being inspired or uplifted; 2) discovering new choreographers and companies; 3) engaging intellectually with the art.
- **Music**: 1) being inspired or uplifted; 2) hearing great works by the masters; 3) discovering new composers and pieces.
- **Opera**: 1) discovering new operas that you’ve never heard or seen before; 2) being inspired or uplifted; 3) hearing and seeing great works by the masters. (The opera results were based on only one participating company.)
- **Theatre**: 1) engaging intellectually with the art; 2) being inspired or uplifted; 3) discovering new plays and playwrights.

**Arts engagement**

Some recent research and policy efforts have focused on public engagement in the arts, which the Canada Council defines as “actively engaging more people in the artistic life of society notably through attendance, observation, curation, active participation, co-creation, learning, cultural mediation and creative self-expression” (Canada Council for the Arts, 2012).

As noted by the Ontario Arts Council, their Arts Engagement Study (WolfBrown, 2011) looked “at the full spectrum of arts activities from traditional audience-based activities, personal practice activities, as well as arts participation via electronic, print and digital media. The report also explored “the importance of these arts activities to Ontarians, the settings in which arts activities take place, the relationships between personal arts practice and attendance, and the patterns of engagement across regions and demographic groups such as age and gender” (http://www.arts.on.ca/Page4400.aspx, accessed May 10, 2014).

As noted in Hill Strategies’ Arts Research Monitor, a New Brunswick survey related to public engagement in the arts (Pollara, 2008) found that “89% of respondents indicated that the arts are either ‘moderately important’ or ‘very important’ to the quality of their community. Similarly, 80% of New Brunswickers ‘agree that the arts are at least moderately important to their quality of life’. A similar percentage (85%) believes that government funding for the arts in their community is moderately or very important.” (http://www.hillstrategies.com/content/building-public-engagement-arts-new-brunswick, accessed May 10, 2014).

An important challenge in research efforts concerning public engagement in the arts is that a key national survey of cultural participation (Statistics Canada’s General Social Survey on Time Use, as analyzed in Hill, 2012) does not include engagement-related questions. Data from the national CADAC database may provide some insights into arts attendance but is not sufficiently detailed to provide information about more detailed aspects of public engagement in the arts. As this is an emerging area
of significant interest, there may be more opportunities to fill this gap in the future. For example, a pilot project could be conducted with willing arts organizations to capture engagement-related data from their audience members, in addition to basic attendance statistics.
Well-being / Health

Research into the arts and health, especially from a medical or scientific viewpoint, appears to be growing substantially. Other compelling (but correlative) Canadian evidence has connected arts attendance to health, volunteerism, and satisfaction with life. Seniors’ arts participation has been linked to health and many elements of social inclusion.

Aboriginal people and young female artists have also been studied, but these reports are quite limited in research scope.

**Arts attendance connected to Canadians’ health and well-being**

Hill (2013) undertook a two-pronged approach to examine connections between cultural participation and personal well-being among Canadians 15 or older. Preliminary statistical analysis showed that 18 cultural activities were strongly connected with eight indicators of health and well-being (self-reported health, self-reported mental health, volunteering, feeling trapped in a daily routine, stress level, knowledge of neighbours, doing a favour for a neighbor, and self-reported satisfaction with life). Cultural participants had significantly better results than non-participants for 101 out of 144 cross-tabulations (or 70%) between the 18 cultural activities and the eight social indicators.

Statistical regression analysis was conducted on six cultural activities and three social indicators:

- Art gallery visits were found to be associated with better health and higher volunteer rates (but not stronger satisfaction with life).
- Theatre attendance was positively correlated with all three social indicators (i.e., better health, higher volunteer rates, and strong satisfaction with life).
- Classical music attendance was associated with higher volunteer rates and strong satisfaction with life (but not better health).
- Pop music attendance was positively correlated with all three social indicators.
- Attendance at cultural festivals was associated with all three social indicators.
- Reading books was positively correlated with all three social indicators.

**Seniors’ arts participation, health, and social inclusion**

Phinney et al. (2012) examined the connections between the arts and health among 51 Vancouver seniors. Based on qualitative and quantitative evaluations, the researchers concluded that seniors’ involvement in the arts in local community centres was “associated with improved physical well-being and higher degrees of social inclusion”. In particular, correlations between arts participation and self-perceived health, chronic pain, and sense of community were statistically significant.

The arts creation aspect of the project was related to seniors’ sense of creative accomplishment, pride, hard work, and dedication, and also contributed to their learning, discipline, focus, self-esteem, confidence, and sense of identity.

A strength of the study was the integration of documentation and evaluation as a core process of a study. Evaluation of broader outcomes is a strong challenge for many arts organizations. CPAF
members could attempt to ensure, via funding and moral suasion, that more arts organizations with socially-minded programming integrate a strong evaluation framework into their programs, possibly in conjunction with academic researchers.

The authors note that “the psycho-physiological ways that the arts contribute to positive health and well-being are just beginning to be understood”. The area of the arts and health is burgeoning, and CPAF members should monitor progress in this area, possibly in conjunction with Arts Health Network Canada.

**Arts creation and mental health of young women**
Beneficial impacts of arts creation are not just found in seniors. Titus and Sinacore (2013) conducted a qualitative study of 10 young female visual artists and concluded that “both the process and product of art-making served to promote a sense of subjective well-being in the participants, through influencing emotions, self-image, and social relationships”. For the professionally-trained artists in the sample, “being an artist was an essential component of individuals’ identities”. The authors suggested that therapists could encourage some clients to create art in order to enhance their mental health.

**Arts and Aboriginal people’s health**
A literature review (Muirhead and de Leeuw, 2012) found that “using art as a communication tool in a therapy setting is ... an effective way of bridging the divide between primarily non-Indigenous health care systems and providers, and Indigenous world-views and understandings of health”. Further, the authors cited the 1996 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples’ finding that “the creative arts may have a valuable role to play in health and sociocultural revitalization for Aboriginal peoples”.

The authors argued that there is a “need for culturally appropriate health programs and treatment approaches that would ameliorate the road blocks facing Aboriginal people in the current health care system”.

*Making a Holistic Case for the Arts*, report prepared for CPAF by Hill Strategies Research, June 2014
Society and Identity

While studies exist related to arts participation and social capital, rural social change, and Aboriginal social inclusion, many of these reports are quite limited in scope. Other reports have identified potential linkages between the arts and identity or social inclusion, but are not backed by statistical information. Other than public opinion surveys, it appears that no research has been conducted into the arts’ contribution to Canadian identity and its standing abroad. Overall, it seems that the area of society and identity has less research evidence than other focus areas (quality of life, well-being, education, and the economy).

**Building social capital**

*Turner and Koke (2010)* outlined the benefits, impacts, and best practices established through the ArtsAccess project, which focused on “building community and local creative capacities,” collaboration, democratizing museum practices, and improving participation and access. The project involved four Ontario museum partners and a diverse range of community partners.

Case studies in the report highlighted the following impacts of ArtsAccess programs: “a sense of pride in mutual accomplishment” and “respect and friendship” between children and senior participants; creative art-making that emerged from Tyendinaga Mohawk culture and history; and cooperation and mutual appreciation between elementary school students, historians, and elders from two First Nations communities in Ontario.

Institutions, artists, and communities also benefited from the programs, via personal growth; improved institutional programming; the building of relationships, networks, and access; validation and celebration of participants, (including “the opportunity to bring art into everyday life, to speak and to be heard”); and the building of culture and cultural ties.

**Arts and social change in rural areas**

*Sutherland (2013)* studied youth-led social change in rural Northern Ontario using “photovoice” (a participatory research methodology combining photography and social change) as a community arts initiative. The author assisted the students in identifying and discussing the “dismembering challenges” they were facing in their communities, such as geographic isolation, decline of industries, lack of employment opportunities, negative community narratives pertaining to young people, and a lack of voice in community decisions. The report found that “the development of creative spaces may have the potential to help groups begin to take action to address various challenges that undermine their well-being, thus empowering them to create social change from the ground up”.

Sutherland identified “an urgent need for research to explore the potential outcomes of community arts projects for marginalized groups, specifically youth, in the Canadian context”.

*Making a Holistic Case for the Arts*, report prepared for CPAF by Hill Strategies Research, June 2014
**Potential impacts of the arts in rural areas**

A useful summary of the potential (rather than explicitly measured) impacts of arts and culture in rural areas can be found in Duxbury et al. (2009). The report argued that the arts (through individuals’ direct involvement, audience participation, or the simple presence of artists and arts organizations) can help to build interpersonal ties and promote volunteering, reduce delinquency in high-risk youth, relieve stress, improve residents’ sense of belonging and attachment, build community identity and pride, build social networks, increase tolerance of others, foster economic growth in creative industries, and increase the attractiveness of the area to tourists, businesses, new residents and investments.

**Creative arts and Aboriginal social inclusion**

Based on a survey, interviews, and an art therapy workshop, Archibald (2012) proposed three ways in which the creative arts (such as drawing, painting, carving, beading, mask-making, drumming, singing, dancing, songwriting, and storytelling) can support healing among Aboriginal people and contribute to their sense of identity: 1) through the healing power of creativity; 2) through the use of creative arts in therapy settings; and 3) within a holistic approach to healing – consistent with Aboriginal worldviews – that would encompass the creative arts, culture, and spirituality. The author found that, “among people who have been disconnected from their culture, learning a traditional craft or learning how to drum was an important step toward reconnecting with their Aboriginal identity and, thus, toward healing”.

**Arts in off-reserve Aboriginal communities**

Using surveys, interviews and focus groups, Stevenson (2006) examined the impacts of various ArtsSmarts projects on teachers, students, and communities in 15 off-reserve Aboriginal communities. Participants in the programs reported improved student behaviour and attendance, changes in teacher practice/pedagogy, increased sense of pride in Aboriginal culture and art forms, and improved tolerance among non-Aboriginal students. Other positive changes include: school climate; the way teachers and artists see their own work; and how students see teachers and artists. The participation of Aboriginal artists was cited as a critical factor in the positive outcomes and the success of the project.
Education

There is compelling Canadian research into the benefits of theatre related to children’s confidence, social skills, and conflict resolution skills in 10 to 15 year olds as well as music related to reading comprehension in 6 to 9 year olds. Obviously, these projects do not cover the full range of arts disciplines, nor do they cover all ages of children and youth (let alone adults).

Less rigorous studies have examined: connections between music and students’ self-esteem, discipline, creativity, and musical ability; initiatives in dance education; and the impact of the integration of culture in school settings on teachers and artists.

An international report considered research findings regarding arts education and innovation-related skills to be inconclusive.

**Arts education: A good fit for 21st century education?**

*ArtsSmarts (2010)* explored how learning styles and agendas have changed in the 21st century, identifying a range of important and evolving competencies, which include developing intellectual curiosity and critical thinking, encouraging an understanding of other people, and advancing creativity and innovation. The authors noted that student engagement is a key priority in 21st century learning, and explored the ArtsSmarts model as a method of engaging and motivating students.

*Upitis (2011)* summarized available research on the arts in education and found that:

- Dance, visual arts, music, and drama are equally important and equally “core” to the curriculum and to the development of the whole child.
- There is a time and a place for learning in the arts, about the arts, and through the arts.
- There are both distinct and overlapping roles for arts specialists and for generalist teachers, as well as for members of the community, to engage in the creation of effective programs for arts education.

**Enhancing children’s confidence, social skills, and conflict resolution skills**

*Wright and John (2004)* conducted a landmark Canadian study of the impact of structured, community-based theatre programs on 183 children in low-income neighbourhoods in Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg, Vancouver, and a rural town in Ontario. Based on attendance forms, skills forms completed by research assistants, questionnaires of the children and their parents, school records and interviews, the researchers found that the children showed statistically significant improvement in four outcomes related to psychosocial functioning: program participation and enjoyment; arts skills development; task completion; and prosocial skills. Findings from qualitative interviews with children and parents suggested that perceived improvements in the children included increased confidence, enhanced art skills, improved prosocial skills, and improved conflict resolution skills.

Of note, this study used data from the National Longitudinal Study of Children and Youth for its baseline data. This Statistics Canada survey is no longer being conducted.
Music and reading comprehension

Corrigal and Trainor (2011) studied the connection between music training and higher-level reading abilities in 46 “normal-achieving” children between six and nine years of age. The researchers found that “length of music training predicted reading comprehension performance even after controlling for age, socioeconomic status, auditory perception, full scale IQ, the number of hours that children spent reading per week, and word decoding skills”. Unlike previous research, the study did not find a correlation between music training and word decoding skills.

Music and students’ self-esteem, discipline, creativity, and musical ability

A 2010 survey of Canadian schools (Hill Strategies, 2010) found that principals and teachers perceived that music education had many “very important” benefits, including “self-esteem, self-discipline, creativity and musical ability”. The report also highlighted funding and other challenges related to music education in Canadian schools.

Music is only one important part of arts education in Canadian schools, and surveys concerning the status and benefits of other types of programs have not been conducted.

Dance education

De Rosa and Burgess (2012) provided an extensive overview of national and provincial initiatives in arts education, particularly dance education. The authors found that “dance is the most underserved artistic discipline in the arts education in K-12 schools” nationally and at the provincial level.

The report also discussed the role of dance in Aboriginal communities: “The dances of Aboriginal peoples in Canada are described as a form of celebration while also serving important spiritual or sacred purposes. Dancing takes place on reserves and in urban contexts, publicly and privately, for pleasure, entertainment, introspection and to reconnect with Mother Earth, Aboriginal culture and other Aboriginal people. Many contemporary dances can be traced to earlier social practices.”

Arts education for its intrinsic value, not for innovation-related skills

The OECD (Winner et al., 2013) published an extensive literature review on the impacts of arts education on skills critical to innovation, including technical skills, creativity, critical thinking, as well as behavioural and social skills. While there are some positive findings in some studies, the authors conclude that research findings on the innovation-related impacts of arts education are largely inconclusive throughout OECD countries, including Canada.

The researchers indicated that “the arts have been in existence since the earliest humans, are parts of all cultures, and are a major domain of human experience, just like science, technology, mathematics, and humanities”. As such, the researchers argue that, even though there is some evidence of the impact of arts education on other academic subjects and various skill sets, the primary justification for arts education should be “the intrinsic value of the arts and the related skills and important habits of mind that they develop”.

The authors set out an extensive agenda for future research, including a call for more empirical research, the development of better methodologies for conducting arts education research, and the
development of “sound and testable theories about why and how arts education would have an impact on various outcomes of interest”.

**Arts in Quebec schools: Impacts on teachers and artists**

Côté (2009) interviewed six teachers and six artists involved in a cultural partnership in Quebec schools through the *Culture in the School* program. She determined that the top three positive benefits cited by participating artists were “to be satisfied, to learn, [and] to be inspired”, while teachers cited “to learn, to be happy, and to be fascinated” as the most common impacts on their partnerships with artists in the classroom.

**Report on partnerships stresses need for future research**

Noting that there has been little research collecting and examining findings from separate organizations, Patteson et al. (2012) explored the “nature, benefits and challenges of two kinds of arts-in-learning partnership models as embodied by *ArtsSmarts* and *Learning Through the Arts* (LTTA)“. In addition to outlining the benefits of collaboration and guidelines for successful partnerships, the authors also provided many recommendations for future research: “Despite the expense and time involved in conducting research and the fact that few Canadian arts-in-learning organizations can afford to undertake major studies, there is still a great need for original Canadian research into our programs in the unique context of Canada and its regions. We identify here just a few key topics with which to begin to map out a Canadian research agenda: arts-in-learning in a multi-cultural society and school system, the arts-in-learning in First Nations schools and communities, and the increasing continuum of arts-in-learning activity in schools and communities.”
**Economy**

The Culture Satellite Account provides a solid estimate of the cultural sector’s economic impact ($49.9 billion in 2009). Previous estimates (based on different methodologies) differed significantly.

More specific economic reports have examined the perception of Canadian culture by international travelers, consumer spending on culture, cultural tourism, and elements of the music industry.

While some provinces have pursued economic impact studies of certain elements of the cultural sector, many other provinces have not.

The research reviewed for this report was not universally positive. A Canadian study did not find a statistically consistent relationship between the presence of artists and overall economic growth in Canadian urban areas.

**Overall arts and culture sector in Canada: Varying estimates of economic impact**

The most recent publicly released study of the economic impact of the entire arts and culture sector dates to 2008 (Conference Board of Canada). The project estimated an impact of $85 billion on Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2007, or 7.4% of Canada’s GDP. This estimate included the direct impact of the cultural sector ($46 billion), as well as indirect and induced impacts (the remaining $39 billion). The impact on employment was estimated to be 1.1 million jobs, or 7.1% of total employment in Canada.

McCaughey et al. (2014) note that the Culture Satellite Account (CSA) will provide economic impact statistics. An early release (Department of Canadian Heritage, 2013) indicated that the direct economic impact of the arts, culture, and heritage was estimated to be $49.9 billion in 2009, or 3.4% of the country’s overall GDP.

Obviously, the above two GDP estimates ($85 vs. $50 billion) differ significantly. The direct impact figures ($46 and $50 billion) are fairly similar but are still not directly comparable. Beyond the different years examined, the estimates were based on different methodologies. McCaughey et al. (2014) note that the CSA estimate is intended to be comparable to estimates of other sectors of the economy.

In addition to economic impact estimates, the CSA is intended to provide data on culture industry sales, employment, compensation, and hours worked (McCaughey et al., 2014).

**International perception of culture in Canada**

Two recent international survey-based studies of “national brands” have included Canada. These perception-based rankings could be related to people’s desire to visit the country, thereby influencing tourism levels:

- The Country Brand Index (2012-13) ranked Canada 10th regarding heritage and culture, whereas Canada ranked 2nd on the overall index. The heritage and culture index related to perceptions of a country’s history, art and culture, authenticity, and natural beauty.
• In the *Nations Brand Index* (GfK Roper, 2009), Canada ranked 12th on the culture index, based on questions concerning whether the country is believed to excel at sports, have a rich cultural heritage, and be “an interesting and exciting place for contemporary culture such as music, films, art and literature”.

**Arts and knowledge industries?**
According to a recent report based on interviews with 14 technology professionals as well as a literature review of evidence related to music and skills development (*Information and Communications Technology Council, 2013*), music assists in developing a number of important skills for high-tech workers. The report, supported by Music Canada, contended that rich music environments help attract high-technology jobs to local areas.

Not all researchers have found the arts and culture to have significant positive economic impacts on urban areas. Research by Polèse (2012) showed “no consistently significant relationship” between arts-related employment and overall employment growth in 135 Canadian urban areas between 1971 and 2006. Co-location of the arts with knowledge industries was found to be much stronger for larger cities than smaller ones.

**More specific reports**
According to Hill (2010), Canadian consumers spent over $27 billion on cultural goods and services in 2008, which represented $841 per capita. The report provided similar data for the 10 provinces and 12 Census Metropolitan Areas.

Statistics Canada’s Survey of Household Spending (on which the report was based) has since been redesigned. The new survey provides much less detailed information, and an analysis of spending on culture may no longer be possible. However, the Culture Satellite Account may cover this gap. According to McCaughey et al. (2014), one of the questions addressed by the CSA will be “How much is spent by each category of final demand purchased in Canada and abroad?”

Outspan Group Inc. (2009) examined the economic impact of travelers who attended cultural events in 2007. Taken from major surveys of Canadian and international tourists, the data showed that the net GDP impact of cultural tourists was $5.1 billion, generating over 110,000 full-time jobs and $419 million in government taxes (excluding income taxes).

In Ontario, based on four large-scale surveys of overnight visitors to the province, Research Resolutions & Consulting Ltd. (2012) found that the 9.5 million overnight cultural tourists had a $3.7 billion (net) economic impact on Ontario’s Gross Domestic Product in 2010. This economic impact generated 68,000 jobs and $1.7 billion in taxes for all levels of government.

Nordicity (2013) found the Canadian independent music industry to have a $303 million impact on Gross Domestic Product in 2011 and an employment impact of approximately 13,500 full-time equivalent jobs. The impact on federal and provincial tax revenues was $93 million.
An economic impact study of the sound recording industry in 2010 (PWC, 2012) calculated a GDP impact of $240 million, an employment impact of 3,300 jobs, and an impact on government revenues of $43.5 million.

**Provincial and local reports**

**Alberta**

Alberta Foundation for the Arts (2014) found that not-for-profit arts organizations in the province had a GDP contribution of $221 million and an employment impact of nearly 3,200 full-time jobs in 2010-11. The study noted that, in capturing a narrow range of activity (only not-for-profit arts organizations), the economic impact is very small compared to the overall provincial economy (less than 0.1%).

**Manitoba**

Manitoba Music (Nordicity, 2012) found that “the Manitoba music industry had a total GDP impact of $71.3 million in 2011”, with $25.0 million contributed to federal and provincial taxes. The employment impact was estimated at nearly 4,400 full-time equivalent jobs.

A Winnipeg Arts Council report (PRA Inc., 2009), while not estimating the net value added of the arts and creative industries to GDP, did estimate gross economic output to be almost $1 billion in Winnipeg and employment to be about 25,000 people.

**Ontario**

A report from the Martin Prosperity Institute (2009) charted the growth of “creativity-oriented occupations” in Ontario’s economy. Between 1971 and 2006, such occupations grew from 26% to 30% of the total labour force. The report emphasized the need to develop creative skills to ensure future growth in the provincial economy.

**Montreal**

The Board of Trade of Metropolitan Montreal (2009) found that the economic impact of the cultural sector in the Montreal Census Metropolitan Area was $12 billion in 2008. The employment impact was 158,000 jobs, and the impact on provincial and federal government revenues was $1.8 billion. An interesting facet of the study was the calculation that, for every 100 direct jobs, the cultural sector indirectly generated another 64 jobs. This “high spinoff” rate is higher than most other sectors of the greater Montreal economy (below only high-tech manufacturing areas).

**Nova Scotia**

Hamilton et al. (2009) outlined steps to develop the creative economy in Nova Scotia. They cited 2003 statistics on the cultural sector’s economic impact: $1.2 billion contributed to the province’s GDP and 28,000 jobs generated.
STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, AND KNOWLEDGE GAPS IN THE EVIDENCE

Myriad of benefits; some compelling Canadian evidence
The evidence base outlined below shows that there is a myriad of potential benefits of the arts, including intrinsic benefits, community and personal benefits, entertainment, quality of life, health and well-being, social capital, and more. There is significant crossover between outcome categories used in this report; many studies address various types of outcomes.

Canadian surveys have pointed to strong public recognition of the benefits of the arts. Regarding individuals’ arts attendance, studies have pointed to entertainment, fun, and inspiration as primary benefits. Canadian neurochemistry research appears to show that some of the personal benefits of arts participation, such as pleasure and stimulation, may be a result of neurochemical processes in the brain.

Canadian arts education researchers have connected theatre participation to children’s confidence, social skills, and conflict resolution skills (in 10 to 15 year olds) and connected music to reading comprehension (in 6 to 9 year olds). Other compelling (but correlative) Canadian evidence has connected arts attendance to health, volunteerism, and satisfaction with life. Canadian researchers have also linked seniors’ arts participation to health and social inclusion. The Culture Satellite Account provides a solid estimate of the cultural sector’s economic impact ($49.9 billion in 2009) and is expected to provide the standard for national and provincial economic impact estimates in the future.

It should be noted that the research reviewed for this report was not universally positive. In particular, studies of arts education and employment linkages considered their findings to be inconclusive.

As is the case in many areas of research, studies of causal links (rather than statistical associations) are very challenging to conduct.

Gaps in the area of society and identity
One focus area that appears to have less research is society and identity. A number of reports have identified potential linkages between the arts and identity or social inclusion, but many are not backed by statistical information. Other than public opinion surveys, it appears that no research has been conducted into the arts’ contribution to Canadian identity and its standing abroad. Relatively speaking, the other focus areas (quality of life, well-being, education, and the economy) appear to be somewhat better served by existing research.

Other gaps: adults of working age, public engagement outcomes, economic impact studies, and definitions
The arts education projects reviewed for this report do not cover the full range of arts disciplines, nor do they cover all ages of children and youth (let alone adults). The focus of many studies of the arts and education or well-being has been on children or seniors. There appear to be fewer studies of adults of working age.
Research concerning the broad area of “public engagement” in the arts is an interesting avenue but is essentially in its infancy in Canada. There have not yet been major Canadian studies linking broader arts engagement and personal or public outcomes of that engagement.

The coverage of recent economic impact studies is far from complete across the landscape of the arts and culture sector. There appears to be greater interest in economic impact studies in music than other disciplines. While some provinces have pursued economic impact studies of certain elements of the cultural sector, many other provinces have not. The forthcoming Culture Satellite Account is expected to fill some (but not all) of the gaps in coverage.

Definitions are a challenge. In some cases, definitions of “culture” vary between reports (e.g., “cultural sector”, “arts, culture, and heritage”, “creative industries”, “creative economy”, etc.).
IMPLICATIONS FOR CPAF MEMBERS

Need for up-to-date information
This project has identified many strengths and weaknesses in Canadian research regarding the outcomes of the arts. It is quite clear that the arts contribute to important personal and communal outcomes, including pleasure, meaning, entertainment, and health, as well as community vitality and quality of life.

Keeping up-to-date with the broad range of evidence regarding the holistic case for the arts is a key challenge for CPAF members. An important consideration is how to update the content of this report to ensure that CPAF members have the most current information possible regarding the holistic case for the arts.

Despite the best efforts of CPAF members and the researchers preparing this report, our understanding of the range of benefits of the arts in Canada, while growing, remains partial. A “benefit mapping” process could be undertaken to systematically identify and connect areas of existing (and missing) research with types of outcomes (i.e., quality of life, health, well-being, society, identity, education, and economy) and benefit populations (i.e., individuals, certain groups, communities, provinces, territories, the country as a whole).

Outcomes of the arts compared with other activities?
Even if there were perfect data on all arts disciplines and the full range of possible outcomes, that still might not meet the needs of all audiences regarding a convincing case for arts funding. For example, some might ask what “opportunity costs” are involved in funding the arts. That is, if the arts received less funding, what else could be funded? A corollary to this is the question regarding whether other forms of participation (such as sports) have the same, different, or better outcomes than the arts. Comparisons of opportunity costs are very challenging and time-consuming to conduct. That being said, there might be an opportunity with the General Social Survey (GSS) to conduct a preliminary exploration of this topic. The GSS includes questions regarding participation in both the arts and sports.

Further public engagement research
As noted in the body of this report, an important challenge in research efforts concerning public engagement in the arts is that Statistics Canada’s General Social Survey on Time Use, a key national survey of cultural participation, does not include engagement-related questions. Data from the national CADAC database may provide some insights into arts attendance but is not sufficiently detailed to provide information about more detailed aspects of public engagement in the arts. As this is an emerging area of significant interest, there may be more opportunities to fill this gap in the future. For example, a pilot project could be conducted with willing arts organizations to capture engagement-related data from their audience members, in addition to basic attendance statistics.

Stronger evaluation of societal outcomes of arts organizations’ programs
While a few projects summarized in this report integrated evaluation as a core process, evaluation of broader outcomes is a substantial challenge for many arts organizations. By allocating funding for
evaluation and documentation-building within arts projects, CPAF members could attempt to ensure that more arts organizations with socially-minded programming integrate a strong evaluation and documentation framework into their programs, possibly in conjunction with academic researchers.

Changes to data sources and other statistical considerations
Data sets related to the arts are disappearing in Canada, although the national survey of arts attendance (Statistics Canada’s General Social Survey on Time Use) should be conducted once again in 2015. A specific challenge in research efforts concerning public engagement in the arts is that Statistics Canada’s General Social Survey does not include engagement-related questions.

The loss of some surveys (e.g., government spending on culture, heritage institutions, trade in culture goods and services) and the reduced scope of some others (e.g., Survey of Household Spending) mean that there will be less arts-relevant data available in the future. Some compelling Canadian studies have relied on data that no longer exists (e.g., National Longitudinal Study of Children and Youth). As such, it is clear that, if CPAF members wish to obtain data on a number of subjects, including the holistic value of the arts, members will have to pay for the surveys and data analysis.

The change from a mandatory census to a voluntary National Household Survey (NHS) has limited impact on the holistic case for the arts per se, but it will mean that less data will be available on the situation of artists and cultural workers, especially in smaller provinces and the territories. Artists and cultural workers are obviously a critical component of the arts ecology. In the longer term, the quality of other surveys (that have, until now, relied upon demographic information from the long-form census) might be compromised.

The forthcoming Culture Satellite Account is expected to provide the standard for economic impact calculations. In addition to economic impact estimates, the CSA is intended to provide data on culture industry sales, employment, compensation, and hours worked.

Coordinated approach to future research and data development
CPAF members could consider a coordinated approach to future research and data development. This could come through a CPAF sub-committee of senior research (and/or communications) staff at CPAF member organizations.

A CPAF research sub-committee would be well positioned to communicate with Statistics Canada on an ongoing basis regarding survey needs and development. In this way, there might be an opportunity to include questions related to the value of the arts (or other subjects of particular interest to CPAF members) on future surveys.
Benefits mapping
This report provides a brief overview of the range of recent Canadian reports available regarding the holistic case for the arts. It is clear from the findings that not all arts disciplines and are fully covered by this research. However, it would take huge effort and investment to cover all of the “gaps” in the Canadian literature. As noted above, a “benefits mapping” process might be an important piece of future work.

Some benefits are difficult to quantify
Many outcomes are difficult to quantify, such as inner experiences and reactions to works of art. These deep, often personal experiences are very valuable to making a full holistic case for the arts. Capturing these elements would require in-depth qualitative research. Some community arts-based projects, such as Sutherland (2013), have attempted to do this. In the community arts sphere, Sutherland identified “an urgent need for research to explore the potential outcomes of community arts projects for marginalized groups, specifically youth, in the Canadian context”.

Areas of interest for future work
Based on the research in this report, it appears that interesting avenues for future research might include studies of:

- Arts creation and other aspects of arts engagement “beyond attendance”. A recent Canada Council paper on public engagement in the arts identified a gap in the literature regarding the tools, mechanisms, and impacts of the interventions of policy and funding agencies, beyond arts education and community arts strategies.
- The arts and Aboriginal social inclusion. Care must be taken, of course, to ensure that studies recognize and accord with Aboriginal worldviews.
- Education and well-being of adults of working age. To date, the focus of many studies has been on children or seniors.
- Contributions of Canadian artists to social well-being and the economy. While there have been some international studies, there appear to be relatively few Canadian iterations of this type of research. Specifically, the mechanisms by which the presence of artists might contribute to overall social or economic well-being are not well understood in the Canadian context.
- The status and benefits of arts education in the full range of arts disciplines. This is particularly important given the unique context of Canada, including its provincial education structures, diverse student populations, a significant Aboriginal school-aged population, as well as substantial arts learning opportunities outside of the school system.
- More empirical research in arts education, better methodologies, and better theories about “why and how arts education would have an impact on various outcomes of interest” (Winner et al., 2013).
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There is a CPAF member in every province and territory in Canada. The federal member of the network is the Canada Council for the Arts, which also provides the CPAF Secretariat. The 14 CPAF members are:

- Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council
- Prince Edward Island Council of the Arts
- Arts Nova Scotia
- New Brunswick Arts Board
- Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec
- Ontario Arts Council
- Manitoba Arts Council
- Saskatchewan Arts Board
- Alberta Foundation for the Arts
- British Columbia Arts Council
- Government of Yukon, Cultural Services Branch, Department of Tourism and Culture, Government of Yukon (Yukon Arts Advisory Council)
- Government of the Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture and Employment (Northwest Territories Arts Council)
- Government of Nunavut, Department of Culture and Heritage
- Canada Council for the Arts