



**Meeting with Simon Brault and Canada Council for the Arts Staff
Wednesday, February 10, 2016 10 AM-1 PM
460 Ste. Catherine West, Suite #610**

Present:

Canada Council:

Simon Brault (Director and CEO)

Carole Boucher (Executive Coordinator - Arts Granting Programs)

Sarah Dingle (Manager, Policy and Planning - Policy, Planning and Strategic Foresight)

ELAN Board of Directors:

Bettina Forget, President (Visual Arts)

Valerie Buddle, Vice-President (Dance)

Kristelle Holliday, Treasurer (Regions)

Fortner Anderson (Film/Television)

Chuck Childs (Past Past President)

Farah Fancy (Corporate)

Rob Lutes (Music)

Deanna Radford (Writing/Publishing – Quebec Writers' Federation)

Kalina Skulska (Regions)

Dan Webster (Presenter)

ELAN Staff:

Guy Rodgers (Executive Director)

Amy Macdonald (Program Coordinator)

This summary has been edited and condensed.

Q+A with Simon Brault on the New Funding Model (NFM)

Simon Brault offers some context for the creation of the New Funding Model (NFM).

- The aim is for the NFM to be **ready to function by April 1, 2017**.
- The NFM aims to change the conversation about the importance of the arts **from needs to impact**. It was also developed with the possibility of an increased amount of money in mind, although this increase is not certain. Its development was also informed by the need to be open and transparent, and to keep the arts on the government's radar for the 2015 federal election.
- Two important questions that the Canada Council faces are **Aboriginal art** and the role of the arts in reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous Canadians, and Canadian artists' participation on the **international stage**.
- The NFM is not an end state, but a way to continue growing the Canada Council's capacities and impact. Because it is **an evolving model and the possibility of new federal funding has not been confirmed**, Brault notes that his comments will contain important nuance and "if" statements.

1.

Q: *After the IPOLC/PICLO (Interdepartmental Partnership with Official Language Communities) collaboration between Council and the Department of Canadian Heritage (PCH) expired, Canada Council continued to maintain a dedicated envelope to support OLMC artists. **What policy does Council intend to adopt regarding OLMC artists under the NFM?***

A (Simon Brault): **The Canada Council will maintain that fund.** The NFM will have 6 programs, but will maintain strategic funds such as this, which apply to all programs to achieve specific goals.

2.

Q: *Will a **new tier of jury adjudication** supplement the current system of a jury of peers in order to evaluate Canada Council priorities? If so, could you describe the functioning and the composition of the two-tier jury system?*

A (Simon Brault): The jury system will be refined, perfected, and enhanced. Over the last 20 years, juries have been tasked with an increasing amount of work. The NFM returns to the essence of the peer system: assessing applications against the criteria outlined by the Canada Council. **There will be no major shifts in how juries operate under the NFM, other than a renewed focus on assessing artistic excellence**, with the expertise of Council staff to complement and document decisions.

The Canada Council also wants to be clearer about how money is allocated. A jury's recommendation goes through a delegation of authority, up to the Canada Council board. **Although the peer committee recommendation is important, the allocation of public money is made by the Canada Council itself, not the jury.**

Clarification 2a: *Would the Canada Council **deny an application that a jury recommended?***

A (Simon Brault): The Canada Council doesn't have the resources to fund every application a jury recommends. If many recommended projects are at the same level artistically, then considerations like equity, distribution, etc. will be brought to the table. **The Council's input is more about recalibration informed by Council's values and priorities.** The process will depend on the program.

Clarification 2b: *We can access juries' feedback on our applications; it would be helpful to access **feedback from Canada Council staff and board** as well.*

A (Simon Brault): The Council aims to be more transparent. Every client will be able to know where their application is in the system, view comments, etc.

Clarification 2c: *Regarding the composition of **superjuries** for grant evaluation: will artists be present?*

A (Simon Brault): There will be no superjury. Applications go to peer juries and then the Canada Council board. The delegation of authority will be made very clear. The board must approve decisions over \$500,000; the CEO, between \$100,000-500,000; and the Director of the program up to \$100,000. Council is observing best practices all over the world to help improve the jury system.

Clarification 2d: *Where will **Program Officers' input** come in?*

A (Simon Brault): Program officers will have **more or less the same input as before.** Their role will shift a bit towards helping juries make decisions, providing them with more info about finance, governance, etc. to **allow juries to focus on evaluating artistic work.** Officers will be in the room and will be allowed to provide commentary, probably more than before. Canada Council will use its expertise to be accountable for the final decisions, rather than "deresponsibilizing" to the jury. All decisions will be well documented.

Clarification 2e: *Under the NFM, where "**previous work**" is taken into account, does this mean previous work submitted as part of applications, or in your career?*

A (Simon Brault): It depends. Some programs take into account not just previous work, but also work that's been created. Canada Council will rely on jury evaluations, which will depend on programs and components.

3.

Q: *Will the number of **arts organizations receiving core funding** remain the same over the next five years?*

A (Simon Brault): It depends on artistic creation and evolution. The Canada Council will not maintain a system that encourages the creation of nonprofits to have predictable revenue. Under the NFM, composite and multi-year project grants will help artists avoid needing to create a structure for the sole purpose of having an idea of what's coming next year or the year after, and the fragmentation that results. With broader corridors of access to funding, organizations can group forces and money will follow.

Clarification 3a: *How will that affect cultural workers? The NFM features at least one grant for cultural workers, but how will artists be able to access their support?*

A (Simon Brault): A multi-year project grant should include cultural workers. This does not indicate a move away from core grants; we just need to make sure we are not forcing the next generation of artists to create structures.

Clarification 3b: *What about mid-career organizations that haven't received core funding yet? Is there an opening to explore other ways in which mid-sized companies could work?*

A (Simon Brault): Yes. **Organizations need to consider why they want core funding: are there other ways to advance their mandates?** Organizations should be empowered to achieve what they want to achieve. Core funding will still be available, but the system will not drive organizations towards it as the only option.

Clarification 3c: *Will the criteria to apply for core funding change under the NFM?*

A (Simon Brault): The criteria won't change radically, but we want to make sure core funding is really the best way to achieve an organization's goals. **The criteria are still under development.**

4.

Q: *How is Council going to manage the transition from the current funding programs to the new format? What happens with existing clients? Are there any programs that are now discontinued? Or have new deadlines? What will be the impact on multi-year funding?*

A (Simon Brault): Council is working to ensure a fair, smooth, transparent transition. **Nobody will be lost:** that's a commitment. **The goal is to open the new online portal in December 2016.** If clients feel they are lost, they should get in touch. Additionally, nobody will be favoured or penalized if they come in at a different stage of a multi-year funding commitment.

Clarification 4a: *When will you announce new application deadlines?*

A (Simon Brault): It should be around **spring 2016**, once the budget is known. Council knows things are uncertain, and it is being prudent with planning in order to be sure it can deliver.

A (Carole Boucher): If any deadlines are cancelled, you will know in advance.

Questions from ELAN members

5.

Q: *Re: the New Funding Model, specifically Engage and Sustain, which applies to Artistic Institutions (revenue > \$2-million) and Artistic Catalysts – wherein access to a potentially larger operating grant is based on "Engagement: commitment to reflecting the diversity of your organization's geographic community or region, notably through your artistic programming, organizational make-up and audiences, with regards to the inclusion and engagement of Aboriginal Peoples, culturally diverse groups, people who are Deaf or have disabilities and official language minority communities."*

Who qualifies as an Artistic Catalyst? (Anyone who traditionally received operating funding?)

A (Simon Brault): Artistic Catalysts are basically organizations that offer continuous programming or activities in the community. Council avoided size-based terminology, but scale is a consideration. The definition doesn't have to do with whether an organization receives core funding.

Q: How is diversity being defined? I notice that age, gender and sexuality are not identified.

A (Simon Brault): The Canada Council is one of very few arts councils in the world incorporating diversity as a fundamental part of its assessment criteria. **It will be up to juries and the community to refine in comparative context what needs to be included, so the definition will be in ongoing evolution.** Diversity will be assessed in terms of programming, workforce, board, and performance.

Clarification 5a: Will Equity officers remain in that position?

A (Simon Brault): Yes. **Equity won't be a funding office, but a centre of expertise and policy.** It will be proactive in terms of how Council makes granting decisions and composes juries, and how equity evolves in the future.

Q: If eligible institutions do NOT demonstrate this nature of "Engagement", will their funding be reduced/cut? Or will they continue to ride on existing operating funding (status quo)?

A (Simon Brault): **The demonstration of "Engagement" will be evaluated by juries in comparison to your peer group.** Underperformance on this criterion will affect your global evaluation. What's clear is that diversity is a central consideration.

A (Carole Boucher): It's one criterion among others. Criteria are always comparative, so it will evolve.

Q: When is this new approach scheduled to take effect? If this is all contingent on the Council administering a larger funding envelope (transfer payments doubling, as per the Liberal government promise), what happens if the funding envelope does not increase? Or if it takes 10 years (I haven't seen mention of a timeline) – will we have to wait for such monies to become available to see any demonstrable change?

A (Simon Brault): **The first wave will come in 2017.** If new funds come in, the process may be accelerated.

6.

Q: Two+ years ago CALQ redistributed portfolios among its staff so it is no longer necessary to have expertise in an artistic discipline. Before this change, music programs were handled by people with expertise in music, etc.; clients were able to talk to people who understood their business and art. Now it is not necessary for a CALQ employee to know anything about the arts or the business of the arts: any bureaucrat can work on any portfolio. Will the changes at CCA include the same downgrading of knowledge and expertise in the arts?

A (Simon Brault): **Council is committed to maintaining disciplinary knowledge.** Each director of the six new programs wears two hats: Director of one of those programs, and Director of a discipline. This approach is used by arts councils in other countries. Each program will have a full suite of experts and decisions will still be informed by disciplinary expertise.

7.

Q: *If I have a **touring exhibition abroad**, will the Canada Council **support me as an individual artist or support the artist through the organization/museum abroad**? Will the artist also eligible to apply for a travel grant?*

A (Carole Boucher): For a touring exhibit, **support would be given to the entity organizing it in Canada**. Support can include travel grants for artists, depending on the project. If this is the case, artists will not be able to apply for a second travel grant.

A (Simon Brault): The international will be a very important focus under the NFM. Council will focus on the arts, not industry; namely the advancement and representation of excellent work coherent with an artist's or organization's trajectory.

8.

Q: *A **band could progress a bit more if not for the lack of French on their website**. Is there any sort of grant for this? SODEC would not fund to translate for an Anglo artist to tour Quebec.*

A (Simon Brault): There are no specific plans to intervene here, but we'll take the question into consideration.

A (Carole Boucher): Translation can be accounted for within a project (e.g. for promotional material) but must be directly related to that project.

9.

Q: *In reviewing the information of the revisions my question is regarding the music programs. As a concert producer in Montreal for the last many years we have noticed an uptick in touring international artists, specifically, from a few select countries. We have much increased traffic from artists from the Nordic countries Sweden, Norway, Iceland, and Denmark. We also have a strong increase in touring from Australian and Irish artists. In doing a bit of research about this I found that the increases are due to the quality of support programs for Music artists in all of those countries.*

A few key examples are:

- *The 5 Nordic countries, with only 25 million people, account for the most music exports, right behind dominant markets like the US and UK.*
- *One in three Swedish students attends publicly funded after-school music programs, and the Swedish government also subsidizes music outside of the classroom, with some musicians even being given money just to rehearse.*
- *The trade based approach of Norway involves supporting the sector as a creative industry and facilitating of increased exports out of Norway, through financial schemes, programs to raise competence and networking amongst the industry as well as international marketing.*
- *Trade based approach in Australia has resulted in strong north-south seasonal exchange programs.*

How has the success of these other approaches informed the approach to designing programs by the Canada Council?

A (Simon Brault): Many of these countries have merged their arts and industry branches under a comprehensive strategy. As a federation, the Canadian model is more complex, with walls between arts and industry, and non- and for-profit, at different levels of government. Where we are now, the lead would have to come from Canadian Heritage as the branch responsible for industry. **The Council's focus is to invest in the uniqueness and quality of artistic creation.**

Clarification 9a: *Canada has very good programs, but **we should take opportunities to look at trade potential.** Nordic artists are unique; that's why people are paying attention to them.*

A (Simon Brault): Canada is currently very competitive in terms of the quality of its artists' work, in particular with music; Canadian artists perform widely. **We need to rethink the traditional industrial model, and make sure excellent art is presented.**

Further questions

10.

Q: *You mentioned that OLMC funding (the Roadmap) is a horizontal strategic envelope. **Are there others as part of the NFM?***

A (Simon Brault): **Specific information about these will be revealed on December 1, 2016.** Another example is a fund for the acquisition of equipment for media arts.

Clarification 10a: *Could you elaborate on what this means?*

A (Carole Boucher): **The objective is to increase the success rate of OLMC artists in regular programs.** If an OLMC application is highly recommended, but unable to be funded through the regular program's budget, the OLMC strategic envelope can be used to support that project. **This will remain the same under the NFM.**

A (Simon Brault): Sometimes Council creates these horizontal envelopes, and sometimes government does. The intent is to ensure that all programs are impacted by the issue under consideration rather than creating a new program specifically to address the issue.

11.

Q: *Will there be anything like the Flying Squad under the NFM?*

A (Simon Brault): Yes, under the new program Supporting Artistic Practice.

12.

Q: *Our **program officers will know the new program criteria, so they'll be informed as to their evolution?***

SB: **Yes. Council is training staff** ahead of the NFM implementation.

13.

Q: *What will happen after 2017? Will there be new goals to pursue with new funds provided by the government?*

A (Simon Brault): The Canada Council and its community must renew their capacity to be strategic. **We want the arts sector to address the concerns, needs, possibilities, and challenges of our society at a relevant level. We want to encourage a dynamic, constantly renewed arts sector seen as essential component of Canada's public life.** We want the arts community invited to the table for fundamental decisions, and now we have an opportunity to work towards this goal.

Follow up on discussion with Simon Brault (NFM, strategic plan 2016-2021, federal budget) and other news from Council (Carole Boucher and Sarah Dingle)

Guy Rodgers opens with some context. At one point, there was talk of an annual meeting between ELAN's board and Canada Council staff, but this proved difficult. This meeting could serve much the same function.

14.

Q: *What can we expect in terms of the implementation process?*

A (Carole Boucher): It's difficult to give details; it's under development and complex. Council will make sure that funds follow organizations and that negative impact is minimized. It may be difficult to maintain the last deadlines of the fiscal year. Everything is on the table. **Final decisions on deadlines, process, and integration of new funds will be coming in the next few weeks.**

15.

Q: *As core funding is restricted, OLMC and regional communities may suffer greatly from the loss of institutions that have been essential for the vitality of those artistic communities. What will the Canada Council do to ensure continuity of these organizations?*

A (Carole Boucher): The intention is **not to reduce core funding, but to eliminate the need to create organizations to access sufficient funding.** There is no intent to reduce core support for organizations receiving it now. The current support they have will be the starting point. As evaluation occurs, some organizations may find their funding cut, but only as a result of comparative evaluation in their peer group.

Clarification 15a: *These organizations serve a much different function for their communities than arts organizations in major cities, and new organizations may not spring up so readily to take their place if they disappear.*

A (Carole Boucher): **We are taking into consideration how organizations are engaged in their communities.** Under the NFM, Artistic Catalysts will be evaluated based partly on the role they play within their community, and there will be supports for other types of organizations like NASOs (National Arts Service Organizations).

Clarification 15b: *Core funding does offer a certain stability for artist-driven organizations. Project grants can provide subsistence funds, but not funds for time spent creating your work. On the other hand, under the current system, organizations must obtain their mandate with their core funding, if they receive it, but it often feels like there isn't enough. Are there plans to allow such organizations to apply for project funding as well?*

A (Carole Boucher): Core funding should cover everything you want to do, including paying artists. The goal is to create the possibility for an organization to apply once every 2 or 4 years and include all its activities. Eligible expenses will be less restrictive. Council has been working with the same budget for years, and created funding restrictions in this environment. If there is more money, this may change.

16.

Q: *Applications to the Canada Council are mostly from non-profits, but increasingly artists (especially in music) are starting for-profit companies. Will the NFM be accessible to for-profit artists?*

A (Carole Boucher): In some cases, for-profit artists will be eligible. Creation/production grants will be less restrictive. Core funding is limited to non-profit organizations, except in writing/publishing. Project grants are more flexible. Composite grants will allow one application for many projects.

A (Sarah Dingle): Remunerating artists and organizations is an important focus of the NFM. There was a specific question in the Canada Council's Strategic Plan survey about making eligibility more flexible. **There will be ways of implementing strategies to take that into account.** Open submissions to the strategic planning process will be accepted by email until February 18.

Clarification 16a: *Is there room for a hybrid model between for- and non-profit? Some exhibitions in my gallery are installations, and some are by artists who want to sell prints.*

A (Carole Boucher): The need to open funding to new types of organizations is well understood. The NFM will need to be adjusted over time. Council needed to find a place for all its current clients, which limited its capacity to reinvent things.

17.

Q: *If a certain group is poorly remunerated, what tools will exist under the NFM to funnel specific monies to resolve the problem?*

A (Carole Boucher): The NFM is non-disciplinary; no special access will be provided for any specific discipline.

A (Sarah Dingle): The new Explore and Create program is designed to better reflect the way each artist practices their particular art. A flexible structure should make it easier for an artist to receive a grant that fits their process. The priority is to deliver money to the artist.

Clarification 17a: *What future do you see for NASOs in this non-disciplinary model?*

A (Carole Boucher): The **Supporting Artistic Practice** program funds support organizations and NASOs, and includes core grants. It provides the best access ever offered to those organizations. ELAN, for example, will be able to access core funding.

Clarification 17b: *ELAN is in a special place as an OLMC organization. Who will people talk to in order to voice the need for increased funding?*

A (Carole Boucher): With the new horizontal structure, section heads will still be responsible for gathering and discussing issues in their respective disciplines. The head of a given program would be another possibility.

18.

Q: *Under FACTOR, commercial success is a criterion, whereas the Canada Council focuses on artistic work rather than commercially viable work. Is this still the same under the NFM?*

A (Carole Boucher): Yes. The Canada Council is defining its boundaries with respect to Canadian Heritage and its funding of industry as well. Their actions must be complementary.

Clarification 18a: *ELAN and Greenland Productions have applied to host an event in 2017 that includes both commercial music and period music. Would the Canada Council be open to working with other organizations to fund composite events?*

A (Carole Boucher): Arts festivals have access to different types of projects. Cannot say for sure where exactly this fits.

A (Sarah Dingle): For 2016-2017, you'd be applying under existing programs. This is an ongoing discussion.

19.

Q: *Could you explain the arts administrator catalyst grant for individuals?*

A (Carole Boucher): **Two categories exist for this kind of support under the NFM;** not all information is available right now. The category of arts professional can include administrators, and will sometimes have access to professional development and travel grants. The category of individual cultural connectors will be maintained. There will be a lot more access for groups.

20.

Q: *How will you resolve unforeseen problems with the NFM?*

A (Carole Boucher): **Feedback will play an important role,** but we have not yet developed specific structures to collect it. We are building criteria, and there will be interviews to assess results of grants. **There will be better reporting on what we're doing. There is also a commitment to be transparent and open about the money Council gives away.** Council is managed by a board; there is a structure in place to make sure it's not going in the wrong direction.

A (Sarah Dingle): No one discipline should come out ahead in the assessment process, because applicants in each discipline are assessed against their peers in that discipline. NASOs will be assessed against other NASOs.

21.

Q: *There is a worry in the Eastern Townships that the NFM abolishes discipline-specific juries; it's not clear that there is more than one jury per program.*

A (Carole Boucher): **Disciplinary assessment is maintained.** We may group applications from different disciplines in certain cases, but only for efficiency. Some components will be assessed in a multidisciplinary context. Revisions to granting policies are not finished.

A (Sarah Dingle): The way the juries will work, precisely, is still being finalized.

Final comments

Carole Boucher: **There are still changes coming down the line.** Changes are occurring internally, as well as to the online application portal and final reports.

Clarification: *Will you be taking these in-person consultations into the regions?*

A (Carole Boucher): **Maybe, but it's a lot to cover.** So far they have been held in urban centres, plus webinars to reach artists in other areas.

Clarification: *Windows 7, 8, or 10 was necessary to participate in the webinar.*

Carole Boucher: Under the NFM, the new **Aboriginal arts program** will be managed and developed by Aboriginal people.

Sarah Dingle: Regarding the question about specific equity measures, the **Strategic Plan survey** provided an area for feedback.