

Art Gallery of Nova Scotia
Annual Accountability Report
for the Fiscal Year 2020-2021

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Accountability Statement

The Accountability Report of the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia for the year ended March 31, 2021 is prepared pursuant to the Finance Act and government policies and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting of outcomes against the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia's Business Plan for the fiscal year just ended. The reporting of the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia outcomes necessarily includes estimates, judgments and opinions by the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia management.

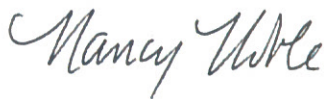
We acknowledge that this Accountability Report is the responsibility of Art Gallery of Nova Scotia management. The report is, to the extent possible, a complete and accurate representation of outcomes relative to the goals and priorities set out in the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia's 2020-2021 Business Plan.



Pat Dunn, Minister of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage



Erik Sande, Chair, Board of Governors



Nancy Noble, Chief Executive Officer

Message from the Chair/CEO

It has been quite the year. Despite the many challenges we all faced this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia had a momentous year. With the world's doors closed, including our own, we reimagined what the Gallery experience could be and how we could share it with the people of Nova Scotia and around the world. Through the hard work of our staff, we pivoted our program plan and reached over 200,000 people virtually and over 3,000,000 people through social media.

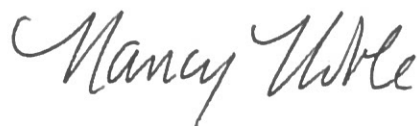
When we reopened our doors, we were excited to showcase exhibitions such as *Good Earth: The Pots & Passion of Walter Ostrom* which explored Ostrom's earliest work in stoneware and porcelain, and *Ned Pratt: One Wave* that charted a career overview of Pratt's photography. Throughout the year, the Gallery also opened exhibitions showcasing artists Jacques Hurtubise and Deanne Fitzpatrick, as well as several artists in *Making Space*, an exhibition which highlights the place where art and architecture intersect.

Big milestones were reached for the new Art Gallery – in November we concluded our international design competition for the new Art Gallery of Nova Scotia on the Halifax Waterfront, announcing the successful design proposal and the Gallery's largest-ever gift. Since then, we have been working with the architectural team and engaging the community to shape the final building design.

Thank you to all our volunteers, members, and supporters for your commitment to the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia over the past year. It has been a year of constant change, but we have risen to the challenges. The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia has a bright future ahead as we reopen to Canada and the rest of the world and begin to break ground on our new building.



Erik Sande
Chair of the Board



Nancy Noble
Director and CEO

Financial results 2020-2021

<i>As at March 31</i>	Budget	Actual	Variance
Revenue			
Operating	3,437,111	2,857,266	(579,845)
Programming	618,886	517,738	(101,148)
Gallery Shop	734,000	218,268	(515,732)
Capital Campaign		1,015,005	1,015,005
Other Revenue	124,000	418,441	294,441
Total Revenue	4,913,997	5,026,718	112,721
Expenses			
Salaries and benefits	2,490,652	2,262,995	(227,657)
Capital Campaign Building Project		94,167	94,167
Programming	802,422	400,306	(402,116)
Administration	327,324	447,180	119,856
Develop. & marketing	453,719	111,764	(341,955)
Acquisitions	29,709	297,650	267,941
Western branch	157,003	117,781	(39,222)
Gallery shop	581,231	196,529	(384,702)
Visitor experience	30,000	1,708	(28,292)
Building operations	16,500	29,435	12,935
Total Expenditures	4,888,560	4,974,520	85,960
Surplus/Deficit	25,437	52,198	26,761
Amortization of tangible capital assets	25,437	18,877	(6,560)
Annual Surplus	0	33,321	33,321

Notes to financial results:

The AGNS had an operating surplus of \$33,321. Operating revenue was \$2,857,266, a decrease of \$579,845 compared to budget. COVID-19 closures and reduced operating

hours contributed to a decrease in admissions of \$257,410. The closures also impacted sponsorship revenue which was \$320,388 lower than budget, donations which were \$172,219 lower than budget and memberships which were \$47,461 lower than budget.

Programming revenue was underbudget by \$101,148 due to the impacts of COVID on our in school programs, ArtsSmarts and ArtReach, and the cancellation of student based programming like March Break camps, summer schools, and PD days.

The Gallery Shop earned \$218,268 which is under budget by \$515,732, a direct result of the decline in the tourism season which reduced sales in the shop as well as the wholesale orders.

The Acquisition Fund revenues were \$295,637 which is \$293,637 over budget. This was due to increased donations which were designated for the support of acquisitions.

This was the first year for Capital Campaign revenues which were not included in the 2020-21 budget. Revenues of \$1,015,005 were collected and used to fund the capital campaign expenses and towards the Gallery's commitment to contribute \$30 million towards the new art gallery.

Overall expenditures were down by \$79,400 from budget. The capital campaign expenses of \$1,015,000 and building project costs of \$94,167 were not included in the original budget. These increased expenditures were offset from reduced savings in almost all departments as COVID significantly impacted all areas. Salaries and benefits were underbudget by \$227,657 as vacant positions were not filled due to spending pressures. Programming spending was modified as travelling exhibitions and in-gallery events were postponed or cancelled due to COVID regulations. Development and marketing spending was reduced due to the changes in the exhibition schedules and a redirection of resources to creating online programming and tours. The gift shop was underbudget by \$384,702 which was due to the decreased sales.

Measuring Performance

The AGNS's 2020-2021 Business Plan identified the following outcomes and goals.

Goal 1: Build capacity to deliver on the Gallery's new vision, mission, and priorities.

The Gallery is going through significant change, not only as we deliver on our new vision, mission, and belief pillars, but because of our work to build a new home on the Halifax waterfront. To ensure we can accomplish these tasks, we need to create the conditions that enable the AGNS team to achieve its goals. These include improving our systems, preparing and supporting staff, and stabilizing operational fundraising to deliver on its targets.

Outcomes:

- Key business processes ensure the ability to execute on workplans.
- Records management system is established.
- Staff and leaders are comfortable with change and change management.
- AGNS has a staff complement to meet its goals and objectives.
- A volunteer strategy ensures effective recruitment, training, and retention of volunteers.
- Fundraising targets are met.

Results:

Key business processes ensure the ability to execute on workplans.

With the closure of the Gallery in March 2020 due to COVID-19, staff work plans were required to shift to ensure the Gallery could continue to deliver on its mandate and maintain relevance during closure. Gallery management reallocated existing resources to ensure revised work plans had proper resourcing which included maximizing earned and contributed revenue.

Records management system is established.

Due to the impacts of COVID-19, the Gallery moved its focus away from the development of a proper records management system. The Gallery continued to use its existing records management systems in 2020/21.

Staff and leaders are comfortable with change and change management.

In 2020/21 change and adaptation was the reality for everyone. Gallery staff and leadership successfully managed the major interruptions that came with COVID-19 by quickly moving to online programming while closed. Gallery staff worked with partners, supporters, and others to ensure that changes to our operations were managed as efficiently as possible to ensure Nova Scotians maintained access to art and art programming.

AGNS has a staff and volunteers complement to meet its goals and objectives.

In 2020/21, the Gallery has further articulated the required roles, and the responsibilities of those roles, to deliver on our mandate now and in the future. Due to COVID-19, staffing plans were not executed in 2020/21.

Fundraising targets are met.

The Gallery was able to work with supporters to ensure their support was maintained during closure. The Gallery added value for sponsors and donors by reapplying their recognition to new digital offerings like *Studio from Home*, which was sponsored by Scotiabank, and Virtual Tours, which were presented by BMO. This swift realignment and stewardship allowed the Gallery to maintain many existing funders and meet fundraising targets for 2020/21.

Goal 2: Change the organization's governance to emphasize greater independence and efficiency.

Governance is critical to the success of the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia. From the legislation, bylaws, and policies that govern us, to our relationship with government and our members – we need to ensure that we have the structures in place to support our decisions and enable management and staff to realize our ambitious goals. We need strong leadership, appropriate governance structures, and a clearly defined relationship with the government to make ourselves nimble enough to respond to the environment around us while ensuring our efficiency as an organization.

Outcomes:

- A governance model is in place that allows AGNS to deliver on its mandate to the province while ensuring the gallery can be efficiently and operationally sustainable.
- Bylaws are updated and effectively govern the organization.

- A decision is made regarding the establishment of a charitable Foundation is created to support the AGNS.
- The board's makeup is inclusive and diverse.
- The Board is oriented and trained to effectively govern the organization.

Results:

A governance model is in place that allows AGNS to deliver on its mandate to the province while ensuring the gallery can be efficiently and operationally sustainable.

The HR and Governance Committee of the board began the process of bringing overall governance processes up-to-date with current good governance practices, including:

- Updating Terms of Reference
- Initial steps to develop annual work plans for all committees

Bylaws are updated and effectively govern the organization.

The Board approved a new set of by-laws for the AGNS to update and modernize the organization. These By-laws are awaiting approval by Governor in Council.

A decision is made regarding the establishment of a charitable Foundation o support the AGNS.

The Gallery undertook research on existing Foundation structures in other organizations to determine if a Foundation is desirable. The HR and Governance Committee also worked with a number of external people interested in setting up an independent foundation.

The Board's makeup is inclusive and diverse.

- The HR and Governance Committee reviewed and updated board evaluation criteria to better identify diversity, equity, and inclusion in the process.
- Targeted recruitment is ongoing.

The Board is oriented and trained to effectively govern the organization.

Given the limitations of COVID-19, training was not completed. However, a new board orientation manual was developed and distributed to new Board members.

Goal 3: Build a new Art Gallery of Nova Scotia .

The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia is re-imagining the Gallery in a new home on Halifax's waterfront. Through a collaborative, community facing approach, the Gallery's ambition is to create a dynamic public place that brings people together to experience art in new ways. A focused design process that incorporates a unique curatorial and programming approach will ensure our ability to make a vital contribution to the visual arts in Nova Scotia and beyond. We will build on that strategy and consider how we can serve Nova Scotians outside of the Gallery in Halifax. Our collection needs to grow to support our work and be cared for in an appropriate manner in a new storage facility. Lastly, we need to implement a capital campaign to support the project.

Outcomes:

- An architectural/design team is in place to deliver the project.
- A comprehensive community engagement strategy is designed and implemented.
- Marketing plan for building project is finalized and implemented.
- A curatorial and program plan guides the design of the new gallery and acquisitions strategy.
- Requirements for a storage site and facility are determined and costed.
- Capital campaign plan and timetable is developed.

Results:

An architectural/design team is in place to deliver the project.

In Fall 2020, the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia hosted a design competition exhibition, which featured the three final conceptual designs for the new Gallery on the Halifax Waterfront, supported by the provincial and federal governments. Impacts of the pandemic meant that the Gallery and project partners had to work virtually to complete this work.

The three teams participating in the exhibition were: Architecture49 with Diller Scofidio + Renfro and Hargreaves Jones; DIALOG + Acre Architects, Brackish Design Studio and Sharron Webb-Campbell; KPMB Architects with Omar Gandhi Architect, Jordan Bennett Studio, Elder Lorraine Whitman (Native Women's Association of Canada), Public Work and Transsolar. In the exhibition, visitors experienced 3D models of the conceptual designs, renderings, and detailed submissions by the three shortlisted design teams.

In November, the Gallery announced that KPMB Architects with Omar Gandhi Architect, Jordan Bennett Studio, Elder Lorraine Whitman (NWAC), Public Work and Transsolar were the winners of the design competition. The Gallery team has been working with the

architectural team and the community to further shape the final design for the new gallery.

A comprehensive community engagement strategy is designed and implemented.

The Gallery, along with the design team and partners, developed a comprehensive community engagement plan that reaches across Nova Scotia to deliver broad engagement, focused engagement, creative engagement, and site activation. The goal of the engagement process, which is ongoing, is to collect public feedback which can be used to inform the final design of the building, future Gallery offerings, and site activities. Implementation of the plan began in March of 2021, with focused engagement which targets underrepresented communities. Broader public engagement will move forward in 2021-22.

Marketing plan for building project is finalized and implemented.

A marketing and communication strategy for the building project was adopted in early 2020/21. Working with the approved plan, the Gallery and the buildings communication committee developed a visual identity for the project and the capital campaign. The first in market activity for the project launched in November 2020 to promote the design competition exhibition and public engagement. That campaign received over 1.7 million impressions and drove over 32,000 people to the project website and in-person exhibition to see the final three designs.

A curatorial and program plan guides the design of the new gallery and acquisitions strategy.

Considerable work was completed toward a curatorial and program plan for the new Gallery, although the delay in public engagement and the demands of the design process meant these were not completed. An acquisitions strategy is also being formulated but not complete. It did, however, recognize the need to ensure better representation of BIPOC artists in our collection and as a result we were able to focus our yearly collecting on beginning to bridge the gap.

Requirements for a storage site and facility are determined and costed.

During 2020/21 the Gallery articulated the storage requirements for the provincial collection and growth considerations. This plan will move forward for consideration in 2021/22.

Capital campaign plan and timetable is developed.

Following the design competition, the Gallery announced the first major project milestone by unveiling the winning design. Along with this The Donald R. Sobey Foundation with The Sobey Foundation committed a \$10 million transformational gift. In December 2020, the Gallery was also pleased to announce Rob Sobey and Donald R. Sobey (1934-2021) as Honorary Co-Chairs of the Capital Campaign Council and Dr. Jim Spatz as Council Chair. To create the foundation for the Capital Campaign the gallery has worked to form a Capital Campaign Committee of the board and has started to form the Campaign Council of volunteers. The Gallery has also contracted KCI, a fundraising consultancy, to assist in leading the campaign to success.

Goal 4: Deliver a program that focuses on contemporary art that addresses relevant issues.

The Gallery continues to be committed to excellence in our annual exhibition and program plans despite our focus on the future. We will continue to deliver a great slate of exhibitions and programs that engage and diversify our audiences. We also want to continue to push to realize our new vision and mission by exploring challenging issues and reflecting conversations in community.

Outcomes:

- The annual exhibition plan is delivered with a focus on contemporary art.
- New audiences are engaged.
- Complete Maud/Terroir tour in China.
- AGNS partners with the McMichael Gallery to travel Maud Lewis exhibition nationally.
- Improve the delivery of school programs through digital portal.
- Community programs continue to engage underserved and unique audiences.

Results:

The annual exhibition plan is delivered with a focus on contemporary art.

Although the Gallery was not able to realize the intended exhibition plan because of COVID-19 travel restrictions, staff were able to plan and deliver three new exhibitions in the Halifax location. These include:

- 1) ***Jacque Hurtubise – Prints from the Collection*** - Comprised of thirty prints, this exhibition provides a definitive overview of this key figure in abstract art's history and a fresh look at the definition of abstraction through print.
- 2) ***Deanne Fitzpatrick: The Very Mention of Home*** - The Very Mention of Home features a series of 22 hooked rugs from the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia's Permanent Collection, created by one of Nova Scotia's most celebrated rug hookers, Deanne Fitzpatrick. Each of these rugs was created in 2016 and are being exhibited together for the first time.
- 3) ***Making Space*** - The worlds of art and architecture intersect in *Making Space*. Featuring a multidisciplinary mix of practices, this permanent collection exhibition looks to the broader attributes of the built environment as a thematic point of departure.

New audiences are engaged.

As the world was dealing with a global pandemic, the Gallery was closed to the public. This closure allowed staff to switch focus and develop digital programming that would reach new audiences through digital and social media platforms. This shift allowed the Gallery to grow its online audiences and increase online engagement through various channels. This shift in our approach allowed us to reach 2,374,605 people on Facebook (182% increase over previous year), 348,240 people on Instagram, and 323,354 people on Twitter (46% increase over previous year).

Complete Maud/Terroir tour in China.

In 2020-21, the Gallery completed the tour of *Maud Lewis and the Nova Scotia Terroir* in China. This exhibition was visited by over 93,000 people during its 3-city tour.

Improve the delivery of school programs through digital portal.

When the Gallery learned all 2020/21 school programs would be delivered virtually, our team went straight to work, researching and testing how to bring educational programming to schools. We worked with teachers and artists to plan student projects, create digital lesson plans, and host live streams with artists for schools. Both the ArtReach and ArtsSmarts digital programs were a great success with 430 individual student projects completed!

Community programs continue to engage underserved and unique audiences.

With the closure of the Gallery, staff focused on the continuation of Autism Arts Programming, which is designed to create opportunities for people on the autism spectrum by presenting a variety of meaningful and positive art experiences. Along with this, the Gallery transformed its Artful Afternoon program to provide art making kits for youth living with mental health challenges. In lieu of in-studio interaction, the Afternoon Shift team created and distributed over 200 art kits which included meaningful packages of supplies, instructions, ways to connect, and access to additional facilitator support online and additional resources.

Goal 5: Engage with community to inform our offerings and create meaningful experiences.

To deliver on the mission and vision of the Gallery, now and in the future, there is a need to further engage existing and new audiences across the province. As we develop plans for a new Arts District on the Halifax Waterfront it is pivotal that we understand who our audience is and how they want to be served by a Provincial Gallery. This shift in thinking will move the gallery away from pushing content and programs to the public and will allow us to produce offerings that are informed by our audience. With this, the gallery will strengthen its brand and in-market capabilities through strong product development and strategic marketing initiatives.

Outcomes:

- A visitor centered engagement strategy and guidelines are completed.
- Increase social media engagement.
- Public programming better meets visitor and community needs.
- The Gallery has a strong brand presence in the market.
- The AGNS Shop aligns with the vision, missions, and values of the organization.

Results:**A visitor centered engagement strategy and guidelines are completed.**

To deliver on this, Gallery staff worked with the building project team to find efficiencies in the public engagement process to better understand what the public would like to experience in the Gallery, now and in the future. An approach to engagement was developed to understand how desired experiences could be implemented and how these desired visitor experiences could shape the new AGNS. This work will continue into the

future as we continuously shape our public offerings.

Increase social media engagement.

Social media reach and engagement has increased in 2020/21 due to the implementation of enhanced online programming and social media initiatives. As the Gallery reacted to the COVID-19 closures, we enhanced online offerings through our website and social media channels. This shift allowed the Gallery to reach over 3 million people through Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Of those 3 million people, over 105,000 engaged with our social media content.

Public programming better meets visitor and community needs.

An increase in online content during the pandemic allowed the Gallery to bring art making activities and art into people's homes through online delivery. This approach allowed us to meet the unique needs of Nova Scotians during periods of lockdown.

The Gallery has a strong brand presence in the market.

Due to the closure of the Gallery during the pandemic, marketing efforts were limited. However, the Gallery was able to maintain a strong online presence through the delivery of paid and earned promotion and online content. Along with this, the Gallery raised its profile through the delivery of a campaign to promote the design competition exhibition and public engagement for the new AGNS. That campaign received over 1.7 million impressions and drove over 32,000 people to the project website and in-person exhibition to see the final three designs.

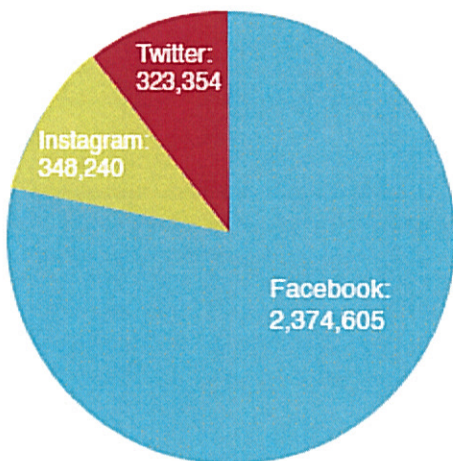
The AGNS Shop aligns with the vision, mission, and values of the organization.

In 2020/21 the Gallery shop sourced a wider range of local makers and crafts people to enhance local offerings and feature product made in Nova Scotia. Efforts were also made to secure saleable works by members of underrepresented communities. The Gallery also enhanced its online offering by making more products available online and introducing a curbside pickup program, making it easier for shoppers during COVID-19 closures.

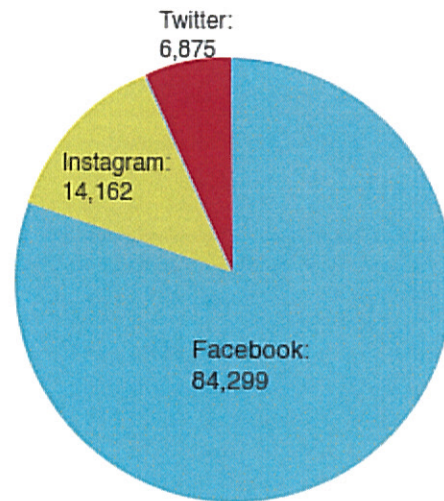
Performance Scorecard: 2020-2021 Highlights

Due to COVID-19, the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia experienced interruptions to its operations and operating hours. This, paired with impacts to regional tourism, resulted in the Gallery only receiving 6,490 in-person visits. However, during the closure Gallery staff shifted and quickly developed a slate of online programming to ensure Nova Scotians had continued access to art and the Provincial art collection. Online programming and content were delivered through Gallery social media channels and shared by partners and government departments. This swift reaction to COVID-19 resulted in the development of rich online content that engaged audiences across the province and around the world. The results of this shift include:

Increased Social Media Reach:



Increased Social Media Engagement:



The individual programs engaged a wide range of demographics and challenged perspectives through conversation and art making activities. The individual programs included:

Studio From Home:

In the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic we launched our *Studio from Home* program, which reached 102,544 people. This new virtual art-making program uses artworks from exhibitions and the Permanent Collection as inspiration for art activities for viewers of all ages, using common household materials and accessible techniques and methods.

Virtual Tours:

Gallery visitors were able to experience online tours in two different ways this year, self-led through 4D technology or through videos with the exhibition's artists. The virtual tours reached 84,576 people.

When travel restrictions prevented photographer Ned Pratt from visiting Halifax during the run of his exhibition, *Ned Pratt: One Wave*, we modified a typical artist talk experience into a series of short videos with narratives by Pratt, sharing stories and memories of significant locations in his photographs.

For *Good Earth: The Pots & Passion of Walter Ostrom*, co-curators Dr. Julie Hollenbach and Shannon Parker worked closely with Walter Ostrom to create an artist-led tour in the exhibition that could be widely circulated to audiences who were unable to visit the exhibition in-person.

The recorded tour highlights significant moments and experiences in Ostrom's influential career as one of Canada's foremost ceramic artists.

In Conversation Series:

Throughout the past number of years the Gallery has been reflecting on our role in supporting social change. We are trying to create space for urgent conversations that are taking place in our community and around the world. This new *In Conversation* series aims to provide a platform to help lift the voices of Black, Indigenous and artists of colour, to speak about their work and important social issues. Our intention is to use this platform to help change perspectives by creating space to have important conversations, with emerging and established artists, as well as community leaders. This program was developed during COVID closures to provide meaningful conversations through digital platforms and to respond to social injustices taking place around the globe. Four episodes were produced as part of this series and reached over 16,800 people around the world.

Artful Afternoon:

In May 2020, the weekly Afternoon Shift program for young adults and their support networks began the production of take-away Art Kits at the Wonder'neath art space. In lieu of in-studio interaction, the Afternoon Shift team created and distributed over 200 Art Kits which included meaningful packages of supplies, instructions, ways to connect and

access additional facilitator support online, and additional resources. This program continued to acknowledge the emotional and mental health challenges faced by many, and the important role the arts play in fostering connections, a sense of community, and supporting positive mental health outcomes. This program reached 1,645 people.