



Crown Corporation

B U S I N E S S P L A N S

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2012–2013

Art Gallery of Nova Scotia

Business Plan 2012–2013

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Message from the Minister

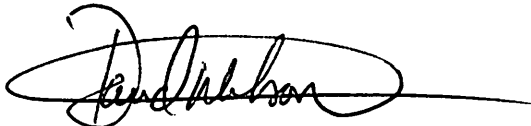
On behalf of the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage, I am pleased to present the business plan for the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia for the 2012–2013 fiscal year.

The Province of Nova Scotia continues to take great pride in the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia and supports its commitment to serving the public through collecting, preserving, and making accessible the visual arts. The province's collection is one of the most important assets we have, and the gallery's mission to tell the story of Canadian art with a Nova Scotian accent reinforces the provincial government's commitment to developing and strengthening our arts and culture sector.

Nova Scotia is rich in arts and culture, and the work of our artists enhances the quality of life of our citizens and ensures that Nova Scotia plays a role in the broader Canadian cultural experience.

The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia's mission and mandate reflect the government's commitment to enriching the arts in our province, and our department looks forward to supporting the gallery as it continues to pursue its mission in the year ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Wilson', with a large, sweeping flourish underneath.

The Honourable David A. Wilson
Minister of Communities, Culture and Heritage

Mission

To bring art and people together. This will be achieved by providing leadership in the development and preservation of quality collections, in the collection and display of quality exhibitions, and in the provision of engaging education and public programs.

Vision

The vision for the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia is to be the major art museum in Atlantic Canada, with a permanent collection and slate of programs of national significance that tell the story of Canadian art from a Nova Scotian perspective, while maintaining a signature facility that protects and preserves that collection at the highest standards.

Corporate Mandate

The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia is an agency of the Province of Nova Scotia constituted under The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia Act for the acquisition, preservation, and exhibition of works of art.

Planning Context

The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia is the principal art museum of the Province of Nova Scotia and is responsible for maintaining the Crown's art collection and for ensuring public access to this resource. The AGNS is the largest art museum in Atlantic Canada and serves as an anchor cultural organization for the entire region. As one of the few provincial art galleries in Canada that operates as a Crown agency, the AGNS exists in a rare environment. A creature of government, operating with civil service staff in a Crown-owned facility to preserve and maintain a Crown resource, the AGNS holds and executes a public trust. As one would expect, the funding for the AGNS comes largely from the provincial government. An ongoing priority is to find the right balance between fiscal responsibility, core operational costs, and the provision of relevant, quality programs given the ongoing economic challenges and increasing competition for public and private resources.

The gallery is overseen by a Board of Governors appointed by Executive Council and made up of volunteers who accept and hold a public trust to ensure that cultural activity remains in the public domain to the benefit of current and future generations. The AGNS board assumes responsibility, loyalty, and a duty to uphold the integrity of the organization. The involvement of the AGNS Board of Governors is paramount



in developing community awareness of the gallery's mission, in representing and interpreting the value of AGNS to community, government, corporate, and other funding agencies. The board acknowledges its role as advocate and fundraiser for the activities of the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia.

The AGNS has the responsibility to acquire, maintain, conserve, research, publish information about, and make accessible the Crown's art collection. The principal activities of the AGNS are the acquisition, preservation, and research of arts collections, the creation of knowledge through research, and the dissemination of these resources through exhibitions, publications, public lectures, presentations, and education and outreach programs.

Since 2006, the AGNS has provided these services through two venues: the AGNS in Halifax and the AGNS Western Branch in Yarmouth.

The AGNS has seen, in recent years, a significant increase in government operational funding at the provincial level. We have also increased revenues generated from the public, and have increased funds generated from other government sources for our exhibitions and education programs. Since 2009–2010 the AGNS has made significant strides in improving financial reporting, cost control, and corporate governance. A new management team was hired, and a program review and

organizational streamlining process was begun in that year. That process is ongoing, with the constant goal of financial and organizational stability for the AGNS.

While the collection held by the AGNS has grown rapidly in recent years, the gallery has begun to shift our focus towards fewer new acquisitions, ones targeted to fill specific gaps in our permanent collection. In 2012–2013 the gallery will continue to target specific acquisitions that immediately boost the permanent collection and enrich the experience of visitors to the AGNS. The bulk of our collections activity will be focused on continuing the process of rationalizing our storage facilities, creating better access to our collections for research and safer conditions for our employees and the collections.

Through its programs and leadership, the AGNS contributes to the positive environment that promotes the growth of the visual arts in Nova Scotia. It aspires to identify, acknowledge, encourage, and support the very finest achievements in the arts, to bring these to the public, encourage their growth, and promote awareness, from the local level to the international stage.

With funding from the Provincial Government, the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, and the AGNS, a feasibility study was commissioned to explore the options and opportunities to build a new gallery that features more space for the collection and for temporary

exhibitions, and that consistently meets the environmental standards needed to preserve the collection for the long-term. The study looks as well at the funding possibilities, operational savings, and jobs and growth potential for HRM and the province to be gained through such an investment. This study will be completed at the end of the 2011–2012 fiscal year and delivered to the Executive Council. Based on the recommendations for going forward according to the study’s findings, planning for the next steps will be a major priority for the AGNS in the 2012–2013 fiscal year.

Strategic Goals

The AGNS has several areas of longer-term direction:

1. **Financial Sustainability:** Continue to ensure that financial sustainability is a priority at all times.

With financial sustainability, the AGNS will secure its role as a key driver in increasing the economic potential of Nova Scotia’s cultural sector, acting as an economic engine for tourism, for the creative economy, and for HRM, the Province, and the region.

2. **Stewardship:** Preserve, promote, interpret, and develop Nova Scotia’s diverse visual arts culture and heritage.

Preservation, interpretation and conservation of the Crown’s art collection are ongoing priorities. As such, continuing to use the

Permanent Collection as the foundation of our temporary exhibition program and the continued strategic acquisition of key objects that enhance our ability to tell Canada’s stories with a Nova Scotia accent will be priorities in the coming fiscal year. So too will be the maintenance of a physical plant that can serve the needs of the Crown’s art collection for the present and plan for the needs that will develop in the future.

3. **Education:** Facilitate life-long learning by providing greater access to Nova Scotia’s visual arts culture and heritage and by providing programs that enhance the learning experience.

While this is an ongoing process and many effective and popular programs are currently being offered, the long-term goal is to ensure that program enhancements and growth continue in a manner responsible to the needs of the province’s communities and visitors, while remaining financially self-sustainable.

4. **Governance and Accountability:** Continue to function responsibly, with transparency and adherence to proper policies and procedures.

We will ensure that governance and accountability initiatives are being properly carried out, and that changes are made to reflect emerging realities where warranted.



Core Business Areas

The core business of the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia is the creation, accumulation, and dissemination of knowledge through the visual arts. This knowledge is delivered through five distinct but interrelated functions, three of which fall under the purview of our Curatorial department, while our ancillary functions are the responsibility of the Finance and Operations and Development and Auxiliary Services departments:

1. Curatorial

1 (a) Collections and Conservation

The AGNS acquires artworks for the permanent collection consistent with the mandate of the acquisition policy and of the AGNS mission statement. The gallery maintains related library, film, website, video and resource support materials, along with institutional archival records pertaining to collections, exhibitions, and institutional history. The AGNS ensures proper management of the collection through documentation, maintenance of records, and research. The AGNS strives to ensure that the Province of Nova Scotia's collection is preserved and maintained in an environment that meets museum standards, while conducting conservation and restoration methods using accepted museum practices.

1 (b) Exhibitions

In the area of exhibitions, the AGNS is committed to our mission of bringing art and people together. In addition to our annual Sobeys Art Award exhibitions, the AGNS presents a wide range of art in our exhibition programs in Halifax, Yarmouth, and across Nova Scotia through our travelling exhibition and outreach programs.

We are committed to building audiences for art and have a three-part strategy for doing so. The first is the continued growth of the Sobeys Art Award, Canada's premiere prize for contemporary art, administered by the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia since its inception in 2002. The annual award of \$50,000 and accompanying exhibition is funded by the Sobeys Art Foundation. The second strategy is to focus on the richness of our permanent collection, creating exhibitions that highlight the breadth and depth of the Crown's art collection and making it available on loan to institutions across the region, the country, and beyond our borders. The third part of our strategy is to build partnerships to broaden the reach of our art exhibitions—to tour exhibitions within the province, across the region, and in various places throughout the country. To that end we actively seek partnerships to ensure that our projects (most of which focus on the art of Nova Scotia and of Atlantic Canada) are seen by as many audiences as possible.

We are committed to raising the profile of this region's art across the country, to developing exhibitions that examine the

work of individual artists, and to creating a publication program that does justice to their work. Thematic exhibitions that we develop are drawn almost exclusively from our permanent collection and serve to complement the solo exhibition projects on view and in development. Our objective is to be a leader in the advancement of knowledge and understanding of visual art and in the fostering of the careers of Canadian artists, with a focus on artists based in this region.

1 (c) Education and Public Programming

AGNS has an ambitious education and public programming strategy that focuses on both on-site and outreach activities. On-site activities encompass the support and the interpretation of our temporary exhibitions programming and of our permanent collection exhibitions. Offerings include special exhibitions, the development of in-house didactic material in exhibitions, daily guided public tours, early-childhood education programs, infant and toddler/parent programs, studio/gallery workshops for students and teachers, family programs, a large docent program in support of school visits, and the fostering of life-long learning with a series of lectures, films, artist talks, and other educational activities including access to archives, publications, and study materials. We are committed to increasing our provision of education materials and services in French, including bilingual labels and publications, as well as programs offering guided tours, films, and lectures given in French.

Outreach activities involve many partnerships across the province that serve to further our mission of bringing art and people together. We work with educational institutions, libraries, social service agencies, hospitals, and other community organizations in a wide array of programs.

2. Finance and Operations

The AGNS maintains strict financial controls and accounting, ensuring transparency in our operations and fiscal responsibility across all our operations. The maintenance of these strict controls is a core function by which Finance and Operations oversees and manages all issues relating to human resources, physical plant operations, security of the gallery and the collection, visitor services, and point of sale.

3. Development and Auxiliary Services

The business function of Development and Auxiliary Services serves to financially support the operations of the AGNS and to encourage the public to visit the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia and engage with the visual arts.

The AGNS creates market awareness by various public relations tools. The AGNS promotes the sale of memberships to the public. Memberships generate revenues and create a sense of ownership, helping to recruit volunteers who assist the gallery in all aspects of its operations, including



fundraising, governance, and program delivery. The gallery publishes a member's magazine, the *AGNS Journal*, produces a monthly e-newsletter, and maintains an active web presence on our website, on Facebook, and through other social media.

The gallery provides auxiliary services that benefit visitors and members, while increasing gallery funding. Services include membership, volunteer programs, the Gallery Shop, facilities rentals, Art Sales and Rental (a related society housed in our premises), and a café.

Priorities for 2012–2013

The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia has identified three major priorities for the 2012–2013 business plan.

Priority 1: Feasibility Study

With funding from the Provincial Government, ACOA, and AGNS, a feasibility study was commissioned in 2011–2012 to explore the options and opportunities of a new AGNS building. Based on the recommendations of that study and on instructions from government, a priority for 2012–2013 will be to plan the next steps towards the implementation of the accepted recommendations of the feasibility study.

Priority 2: Strategic Plan

As part of the gallery's ongoing commitment to governance and accountability, the gallery is making ongoing strategic planning a priority for 2012–2013. The goal is to complete a five-year, rolling, strategic plan to assist the gallery in moving forward with clarity and transparency.

Priority 3: Enhancing the Visitor Experience

Our intention is to realign all AGNS priorities to meet and exceed the needs of regional and tourist audiences. By so doing, the gallery will strengthen its position in a competitive marketplace and build for the future. Concentrating on affordability and access, this new initiative should increase the relevance and visibility of the AGNS to Nova Scotians and our visitors. Each core business area will have specific strategic goals relating to the successful implementation of this priority.

Core Business Area 1: Curatorial

Collections and conservation; exhibitions; education and public programming

Strategic Action 1: Collections and conservation

The current physical plant continues to have severe limitations as a secure art storage and display environment. Our priorities for 2012–2013 will be to improve institutional access to the collection and to

facilitate use of the collection for exhibitions and research.

Strategic Action 2: Acquisitions

The gallery currently has to raise 100% of its acquisition funds for purchase, shipping, appraisal of donations, etc. Our acquisitions priority for 2012–2013 will be to integrate the AGNS acquisitions plan more fully into our collections and development plans so as to streamline the budgeting process and to create predictable and sustainable acquisitions budgets for the future.

Strategic Action 3: Exhibitions

Building on our rich permanent holdings, our exhibition slate celebrates Canadian art—contemporary, historic, and folk. We have developed solo exhibitions for key senior artists in the region and established partners in touring them nationally. In the gallery’s Western Branch we have established a distinct “folk” brand that opens the door to a sustainable model for our success. For 2012–2013, we will take this ongoing plan one step further. Our exhibitions priority for 2012–2013 will be to develop a “blockbuster” model with available resources around an exhibition that will appeal to a broad public and increase visitation to the gallery.

Strategic Action 4: Education

In 2012–2013 we will have two priorities for our education, focusing on language and school tours. These priorities will be to improve access to the Crown’s collection

by continuing to increase French language services; and to build future audiences by making guided tours of the AGNS free-of-charge to every student in the province.

**Core Business Area 2:
Finance and Operations****Strategic Action 1: Operations**

The AGNS is currently open 10 am to 5 pm seven days a week, with the hours extended on Thursday to 9 pm during the peak visitor season and closed Monday during the off season. In 2012–2013 we will be making it a priority to address the changing demographics of art museum visitors and to make the AGNS more consumer-friendly and more competitive for visitors’ leisure hours by changing its hours of operation. The gallery will be open during peak visitor season with extended hours six days a week and be closed during the off season on Monday and Tuesday. However, the gallery will open on Monday and Tuesday as necessary to accommodate school visits.

In addition, the gallery will be implementing of a fully integrated point-of-sale system that includes the Gallery Shop, memberships, admissions, events, and online services to all consumers. The current point-of-sale system is outdated and does not allow for online services, integration between the Information Desk and the Gallery Shop, or the accumulation of key visitor demographic information, which is vital for ongoing business planning.



Core Business Area 3: Development and Marketing

Strategic Action 1: Marketing

While AGNS has limited marketing funds, every effort will be made in the upcoming fiscal year to maximize the effect of what funds we are able to commit to marketing and promotion. Thus, a priority for 2012–2013 is to build audiences through streamlined branding tied to all core and ancillary services at AGNS, in order to improve revenues and increase visitation.

Strategic Action 2: Event-Based Fundraising

The priority for 2012–2013 will be to continue to grow the number of event-based fundraising initiatives, as well the net revenues of each, over the next fiscal year. The gallery will also work to establish the peak capacity for event-based fundraising so that it can determine the market saturation point for AGNS fundraising events. Continuing to develop unique experiences at a variety of entry price points will enable the AGNS to appeal to a wide array of market segments in its event-based fundraising strategy.

Human Resource Strategy

The AGNS will continue to focus on performance and professional growth for staff and our many volunteers, ensuring that personal goals are in line with

corporate objectives. Our human resource strategy encompasses the following:

- Continue the organizational review process that was begun in fiscal year 2011–2012. This review will be tied to the strategic plan and will address issues such as role clarity, succession, suitability of roles to current and future business needs, and enhancing the visitor experience.
- Continue to implement the performance management process for all staff, including setting annual objectives and performance appraisals.
- Implement the volunteer policy that addresses recruitment, retention, training, scheduling, and, most importantly, recognition.
- Provide professional growth for employees, with training and development.

Budget Context

The AGNS for the past two fiscal years has operated with authorization from Executive Council to run a \$450,000 deficit, reflecting the gap between fixed costs—such as salaries, building operations, collections maintenance, and insurance—and the provincial allotment. This is part of the long-term planning with government to arrive at a sustainable operating funding allotment for the AGNS that recognizes that, as a Crown agency, a large proportion of our costs are both fixed and directed towards the conservation and maintenance of Crown resources.

Budget Context

	Estimate 2011-12 (\$)	Forecast 2011-12 (\$)	Estimate 2012-13 (\$)
Revenues			
Gallery operations			
Province of Nova Scotia grant	2,046,000	2,046,000	2,046,000
Admissions and memberships	199,206	151,848	186,041
Donations and other	376,500	327,978	392,350
Programming recoveries	606,170	575,545	542,600
Gallery recoveries	36,000	22,500	36,000
Total gallery operations	3,263,876	3,123,871	3,202,991
Gallery Shop	315,000	221,878	236,134
Endowment fund	55,000	75,000	81,100
Acquisition fund	63,000	150,000	149,000
Total revenue	3,696,876	3,570,749	3,669,225
Expenses			
Gallery operations			
Salaries and benefits	1,936,707	1,820,425	1,972,923
Building operations	756,770	752,254	736,070
Programming	631,350	646,192	621,240
Development and public relations	257,378	239,421	261,000
Western Branch	140,128	136,141	142,016
Total gallery operations	3,722,333	3,594,433	3,733,249
Gallery Shop	307,727	221,541	208,160
Product development			
Endowment fund	22,000	22,000	22,000
Acquisition fund	95,000	160,000	156,000
Total expenses	4,147,060	3,997,974	4,119,409
Surplus (deficit)	(450,184)	(427,225)	(450,184)



Outcomes and Performance Measures

Overall Business Areas

Priority 1: Prepare implementation plan from feasibility study recommendations.

Outcome	Measure	Baseline Data	Targets	Trends	Strategies to Achieve Targets
The results of feasibility study will determine the direction gallery will take in future, which may include a new Art Gallery of Nova Scotia	Adoption of the recommendations of the feasibility study and incorporation of these recommendations into the AGNS strategic plan	Information collected to be used to make decisions regarding potential capital investments, fundraising strategies, as well as ongoing operational requirements	Completion of implementation plan by December, 2012	No current plan exists for gallery	Review recommendations of Lord Cultural Resources as outlined in the Feasibility Study to prepare an implementation plan that addresses the next steps for the Gallery

Priority 2: Complete a five-year strategic plan.

Outcome	Measure	Baseline Data	Targets	Trends	Strategies to Achieve Targets
Fully integrate strategic plan into future business planning processes	Completion of a strategic plan approved by the AGNS Board of Governors	Using stakeholder information, strategies to be identified as key priorities for next five years. Development of operational plans to support these strategies	Five-year strategic plan to form foundation for future business planning for gallery's success	No current strategic plan exists for gallery	By engaging various stakeholders from community, board, government, and management of the AGNS, prepare five-year rolling strategic plan to assist gallery in moving forward with clarity and transparency

Priority 3: Enhancing the visitor experience

Strategic Action 1: Collections and conservation; exhibitions; education and public programming

Outcome	Measure	Baseline Data	Targets	Trends	Strategies to Achieve Targets
Full implementation of storage plan established in 2010–11	Storage plan includes further utilization of offsite storage facilities to free up gallery space currently used as storage	Storage plan established in 2010–11	Fourth floor gallery space returned to full exhibition space by end of fiscal year	Project ongoing; significant space reallocated as exhibition space	Improve institutional access to collection and facilitate use of collection for exhibitions and research

Strategic Action 2: Acquisitions

Outcome	Measure	Baseline Data	Targets	Trends	Strategies to Achieve Targets
A predictable acquisitions budget year-to-year	Defer most acquisitions for current year to establish and implement a plan for forward-looking acquisitions funding	Prior fiscal year's donation receipts and restricted surplus balances that have been designated for acquisitions	New acquisitions to be based on prior year's receipts, providing knowledge of funds available in advance of each fiscal budget, allowing for better acquisition planning	For fiscal 2012–13 acquisitions may be deferred	Integrate AGNS acquisition plan more fully into collections and development plans to streamline budget process and create a predictable acquisitions budget for the future


Core Business Area 1 Curatorial
Priority 3: Enhancing the visitor experience
Strategic Action 3: Exhibitions

Outcome	Measure	Baseline Data	Targets	Trends	Strategies to Achieve Targets
Mounting of a "blockbuster" exhibition in 2012-13 that increases gallery visitation	Blockbuster will be on view between September and January. The measure of success will be the increased number of visitors during this same time frame year after year	Number of visitors during same time frame in 2011-12 of 4,166 serves as baseline measure	Number of visitors targeted in 2012-13 is 6,699, increase of 2,533, or 60%	Historically: significant increase in gallery attendance during previous "blockbuster" exhibitions	Develop a "blockbuster" model with available resources around an exhibition that will appeal to a broad public and increase visitations

Strategic Action 4: Education and public programming

Outcome	Measure	Baseline Data	Targets	Trends	Strategies to Achieve Targets
Continue bilingual didactics for temporary exhibitions and expand into permanent collection displays	Expansion of bilingual didactics into all permanent collection exhibitions over next two years	The percentage of permanent collection exhibitions that have bilingual didactics	50% of permanent collection to have bilingual didactics by end of fiscal year	Currently, only temporary exhibitions have bilingual didactics	Improve access to the Crown's collection by continuing to increase French language services
Secure corporate sponsorship funding for gallery's school tour programs	Successful negotiations of contract with a corporate organization to sponsor school tour program	Sponsorship revenue generated through development of relationship with a corporate sponsor	\$30,000 of sponsorship revenue, allowing schools in the province to attend gallery free of charge	Schools have visited gallery only if funds available or generated by schools	Build future audiences by making guided tours of AGNS free to students in the province

Strategic Action 1: Operations

Outcome	Measure	Baseline Data	Targets	Trends	Strategies to Achieve Targets
Extending hours during peak season to have direct impact on number of visitors to gallery	Increase in paid-admission visitors to gallery during peak season	Number of paid visitors from June to October 2011 of 8,507 serves as baseline measure	Number of visitors targeted in 2012-13 for the same peak season is 11,175, increase of 2,668, or 31%	Historically 56% of paid admissions are generated during peak season Tourist activity during peak in HRM provides the gallery with best opportunity for growth	Make AGNS more consumer-friendly and more competitive by changing its hours of operation
Improve point-of-sale information gathering and online sales ability integrated with membership data to better forecast revenue and visitation trends	Selection and implementation of fully integrated point-of-sale system by end of December 2012	Increase in online sales of memberships, admissions, event ticketing, along with shop sales Increase in information gathering related to visitors in order to build better forecasting tools in future	No increase in revenue in year one because of learning curve required for implementation Future years will see growth in all revenue areas Better forecasting in subsequent years will be based on reliable consumer information gathered during year one of implementation	Gallery has not had ability to offer online services to consumers in the past because of outdated technology Gathering of customer information has been manual and inconsistent in past	Implementation of a fully integrated point-of-sale system that includes Gallery Shop, membership, admissions, events and online services to all consumers Same system to provide data collection of visitor information


Core Business Area 3 *Development and Marketing*
Strategic Action 1: Marketing

Outcome	Measure	Baseline Data	Targets	Trends	Strategies to Achieve Targets
Improved AGNS branding to build audiences	Implementation of streamlined marketing campaign to cover all service offerings	Data tracking on points of impression through exit surveys, maximizing information gathered for future operational decisions	Have exit survey available to all visitors of gallery by May 21, 2012	Exit surveys: key indicators in monitoring success of service offerings Historically: no information to build upon	Build audiences through streamlined branding tied to all core and ancillary services at the AGNS to improve revenues and increase visitation

Strategic Action 2: Event-Based Fundraising

Outcome	Measure	Baseline Data	Targets	Trends	Strategies to Achieve Targets
Increased revenues from events as well as increased exposure for gallery to community at large	Increase in special-event revenues	Baseline measure: special-event revenue from 2011–12	Increase of revenue by \$40,000, or 45%	Rebranding primary event-based fundraising initiative and growing the number of events per annum has resulted in increased exposure and interest in gallery	Grow the number of and net revenues from event-based fundraising initiatives at AGNS