

# STRATEGIC PLAN

## ALBERTA CRAFT COUNCIL

2013 - 2016

### Alberta Craft Council Mission

To promote, develop and advocate for fine craft in Alberta.

### Alberta Craft Council Vision

To be the organization of first choice for professional craft artists, serious amateur craftspeople and craft aficionados.

### Alberta Craft Council Organizational Aims

- To support contemporary and heritage crafts as significant art forms that contribute to Alberta's culture.
- To develop an Alberta craft sector of creative, skilled, viable, and sustainable craftspeople, studios, businesses and networks.
- To facilitate career development in craft disciplines.
- To organize and foster exhibitions, publications, marketing ventures, awareness projects and information services benefiting ACC members and the general public.
- To be fiscally responsible and practice good governance.

### Alberta Craft Council Core Values

**Quality:** We support and promote the creation and development of quality fine craft that is original, innovative, distinctive and authentic.

**Education:** We support and promote the development of fine craft knowledge, skills and related entrepreneurship that develops careers, financial and critical success, and professionalism in the craft sector.

**Inclusiveness:** We support and promote a broad-based membership of those interested in Alberta fine craft, involving individuals, organizations and businesses.

**Partnership:** We seek, support and promote relationships with regional, national and international fine craft and cultural interests.

**Innovation:** We support organizational innovation that demonstrates integrity, vitality and responsible growth.

# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD

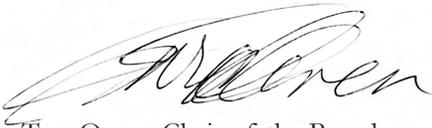
The Alberta Craft Council is 33 years old in 2013, and has grown more or less steadily over that time - from one part-time staff to eight staff currently, and from about \$9,000 in provincial funding to over \$190,000. Retail sales of members' work started in 1991 and are now approximately \$350,000 a year. Overall revenue in 1980-81 was \$6,370 and in 2012-13 was over \$755,000.

At this time, the Alberta Craft Council is the largest Alberta Provincial Arts Service Organizations. It is the largest western provincial craft council, and operates the second largest public gallery in Edmonton.

This Strategic Plan takes into account past successes (and some problems) and pertinent trends, and identifies, consolidates, extrapolates and predicts the next three to five years of ACC activity, as accurately and realistically as possible.

The Alberta Craft Council board members and staff work on a wide range of practices and projects to ensure both stability and reasonable growth. The board is complete, active and effective. Staff members are well-trained, enthusiastic, dedicated and stable. And a range of other indicators, such as member feed-back, media coverage, visitor book comments, and funders' satisfaction are positive.

The board members and staff are dedicated to continuing this steady success. Furthermore, the board has introduced some new accountability practices, such as the sixth organizational aim (below) to "be fiscally responsible and practice good governance".



Tara Owen, Chair of the Board.

February 11, 2013

# COMMUNICATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

This Strategic Plan is intended to be up-dated annually. It is meant to be a working document for board members, staff, volunteers and others, including relevant funders. Upon completion, or following up-dating, it will be posted on the Alberta Craft Council website. A summarized version will be communicated to members via the Alberta Craft Magazine. Key points in the Plan will also be used in future member surveys.

# OVERVIEW

The Alberta Craft Council is managed by a board of 12 volunteer Directors and co-coordinated by a staff of eight. It is a non-profit volunteer society incorporated January 8, 1980 under the Societies Act of Alberta and was registered as a charity with Revenue Canada April 1, 1982. ACC was established as the umbrella council for all craft organizations in Alberta. In 1983, membership in the council was opened to individuals and corporations. The Council operates a gallery/store facility in Edmonton and is involved throughout Alberta in exhibitions and services such as craft marketing, communications, and education. The ACC has a province-wide membership that reflects Alberta's urban/rural demography and has approximately 15% of members from other areas in Canada. The ACC is designated, and partially funded, by the Alberta Foundation for the Arts as a Provincial Arts Service Organization.

# CURRENT TRENDS & ISSUES

- traditional definitions and frameworks of craft, art, design, and culture continue to change.
- craft related media attention, publications, websites, on-line journals, etc. have all grown, indicating a positive repositioning of craft.
- digital communications technologies, the internet, and social networking are providing new opportunities for exposure, media coverage, and sales.
- serious craftspeople and/or craft artists with unique work are reporting increased appreciation and sales.
- various hobby-turned-small-business, crafter, DIY and designer/maker phenomena continue, and markets come and go. This adds confusion to the idea of “craft” but also provides a source of new members and creative energy, especially amongst those who discover the merits of originality in their work and career development.
- more professional craftspeople are developing international reputations and/or travel opportunities including teaching, study, participation in workshops, exhibitions, publications and sales. And more emerging craftspeople are expecting international aspects to the careers.
- customers and visitors seem to be increasingly interested in the “value added” aspects of craft. younger craftspeople are often more career-oriented and have higher expectations for their careers and for craft organizations.
- fundraising competition amongst organizations is increasingly stiff, and individual grants to artists are increasingly scarce and competitive.

## STRATEGIC PLAN

### Goal #1:

#### The Alberta Craft Council Promotes its Members, the Organization and the Fine Craft Sector.

##### What this goal means for the Alberta Craft Council:

The ACC is dedicated to providing comprehensive awareness and promotion of individual members, the Council, and Alberta fine craft.

### Outcome 1.1:

Strong promotion about and to ACC members

#### Strategies for Outcome 1.1:

- Increase the effectiveness of the Alberta Craft Council shop and galleries to promote members’ fine craft products to the public for both sale and appreciation.
- Increase the promotion of members’ studio sales, tours and events through projects such as the ACC magazine, website, e-news and social media.
- Expand the use of the ACC’s print publications, website, e-news and social media to promote membership activities and interests.

- Continue to sell members’ work, to test market craft opportunities, to network with members and customers, to host openings/receptions, and to provide media exposure which benefits members’ interests.
- Continue referrals and other forms of promotion and sale of members’ work.
- Continue role of exhibitions (solo, group, travelling, etc.) as a form of promotion.
- Continue to highlight special events and occasions of interest to the membership and public such as fine craft awards.

#### Performance Measures/Targets for Outcome 1.1:

- Staff will set these goals annually or regularly, and report to the AGM and/or for publication in the magazine.
- Increase in sales annually.
  - Increase in visitors to ACC and ACC member events.
  - Increase in member events (such as studio sales) listed in the magazine, website, etc.
  - Increase in magazine readership, e-news and *What’s in...* subscribers, twitter and facebook followers.
  - Increase in new consignors.
  - Increase in media coverage.

## Outcome 1.2:

### Strong promotion of the Alberta Craft Council

#### Strategies for Outcome 1.2:

- Increase the ACC members' knowledge of the Council's services and activities.
- Improve the frequency of coverage about ACC events through the media and public promotions: tourism publications, media releases, social media and advertising.
- Increase ACC shop and gallery customer/visitor traffic.
- Continue to promote publicly the value of associating with and networking through the ACC about fine craft: openings, receptions, publications, social media and media coverage, etc.
- Continue and expand ACC role as the leading organization for fine craft in Alberta through special projects and events such as work with ACAD, Series, Craft Year 2015 and other national and international events.
- Pursue outreach opportunities for expanding ACC interests and operations.

#### Performance Measures/Targets for Outcome 1.2:

- Improve members' participation in ACC activities and services.
- Increase publicity/recognition.
- Increase sales and customers.
- Increase member organizations.
- Increase activity in southern Alberta.
- Investigate space in Calgary for ACC operations.

## Outcome 1.3:

### Strong promotion of the fine craft sector

#### Strategies for Outcome 1.3:

- Increase involvement with special and traveling craft exhibitions: ACC galleries, other provincial, national or international spaces.
- Increase "incubator/market test" and mentoring opportunities in the ACC shop/galleries.
- Increase the use of ACC publications, facilities and services to promote fine craft sector ideas and issues.
- Use the ACC's provincial perspective to facilitate dialogue between various craft sectors, fostering interest and appreciation for their diverse ideas and issues.
- Pursue opportunities to promote fine craft sector ideas and issues to the general public, and within culture, tourism, and other sectors.

#### Performance Measures/Targets for Outcome 1.3:

- Increase in activity in Edmonton.
- Increase in activity in Calgary.

- Increase in activity province wide.
- Increase in new consignors or new work from existing consignors.
- Increase in studio visits and education opportunities for staff.
- Increase in partnerships with galleries and other presenting organizations for travelling exhibitions.
- Progress on activity related to Calgary facility and services.

## Goal #2:

### The Alberta Craft Council Facilitates Career Development in the Fine Craft Sector

#### What this goal means for the Alberta Craft Council:

The ACC is dedicated to either providing or arranging for career development in, and/or educational information about, the craft sector.

## Outcome 2.1:

### Direct support for career development and education\* in the craft sector.

#### Strategies for Outcome 2.1:

- Expand and refine member and sector awareness of "professionalism" in fine craft practice.
- Expand ACC member consultations for career development, mentoring and education\* in the craft sector.
- Increase promotion of craft sector career development opportunities through ACC publications, organizational connections and member services.
- Host craft business training sessions and other events which promote career development and education in the craft sector.
- Continue calls for entry, juries and other fine craft selection processes for the work of ACC members.

*\*Note: education refers to career and business education - craft media education is traditionally the role of ACAD, Series, other educational settings, guilds, etc.*

#### Performance Measures/Targets for Outcome 2.1:

- Increase member use of ACC career services such as the Advisory Committee, website, social media, etc.
- Increase career events such as lectures or partnerships with educational institutions that offer such courses.
- Increase member understanding of ACC and other standard professional practices.

## Outcome 2.2:

Indirect support for career development and education in the craft sector.

### Strategies for Outcome 2.2:

- Expand the promotion of courses and workshops sponsored by members and schools in the fine craft sector.
- Continue ACC involvement with fine craft education events (e.g. Series, Summerscapes, guild/association courses, etc.).
- Continue offering ACC members referral services with craft producers, instructors, and relevant institutions.
- Continue ACC involvement with fine craft awards and scholarship programs on behalf of the Council's membership.

### Performance Measures/Targets for Outcome 2.2:

- Number of ACC members who teach, promote courses, etc.
- Number and descriptions of members involved with ACAD, universities, colleges, summer schools, etc.
- Number of nominations and recipients for awards.

## Goal #3:

The Alberta Craft Council Advocates for Fine Craft Provincially, Nationally and Internationally.

### What this goal means for the Alberta Craft Council:

The ACC is dedicated to being proactive in the Alberta and Canadian cultural sector and to being recognized at home and abroad as a principal representative of quality fine craft.

## Outcome 3.1:

ACC is a strong advocate for fine craft.

### Strategies for Outcome 3.1:

- By policy and practice, set examples for “quality” in fine craft. This may include retail activity, jury and curatorial practices, editorial content, appearance of spaces, and professional practices.
- Actively improve the craft environment in Alberta through public awareness and debate, organizational representation, and membership advocacy.
- Increase media coverage and quality of coverage of ACC events, craft sector issues, and membership needs and interests.
- Maintain and develop national and international contacts to further nurture interest in, and markets for, ACC members' work.

## Performance Measures/Targets for Outcome 3.1:

- Improve all aspects of “quality” in ACC activities, member representation, public perceptions.
- Increase in feature articles in print publications.
- Increase in exhibitions – provincially, nationally and internationally.
- Increase aspects of “critical” recognition for both ACC and members.

## Outcome 3.2:

The ACC defines craft in Alberta.

### Strategies for Outcome 3.2:

- ACC defines craft. Through exhibitions, publications, marketing projects, awards, advisory services, media coverage, and other activities, the ACC demonstrates, advocates, and arbitrates on questions such as “what is craft”, “what is or isn't good quality, original, authentic, craft” and “what constitutes the fine craft culture or sector”.

### Performance Measures/Targets for Outcome 3.2:

- ACC expands its recognition, by members, media, arts sector and others, as the pre-eminent fine craft organization, gallery, and promoter in Alberta.

## Goal #4:

The Alberta Craft Council Engages its Committed Broad-based Membership.

### What this goal means for the Alberta Craft Council:

The ACC is dedicated to working with and for committed professional craft artists, as well as serious amateur craftspeople and craft aficionados who are members of an expanding Council.

## Outcome 4.1:

ACC members are engaged and committed.

### Strategies for Outcome 4.1:

- Expand opportunities for members to be involved in the ACC.
- Expand member awareness of services provided by ACC.
- Continue to expand access to and variety of information about the ACC, its member services, its volunteer opportunities, its sponsored events, and the craft sector in general through Council publications.
- Expand province-wide ACC venues, events and exhibitions to involve members closer to their home

region, such as the TREX touring exhibitions, socials, and local events.

- Regularly survey the membership for additional ways and means of serving and involving them in the ACC's Mission, Vision, Aims, Values and activities.

#### **Performance Measures/Targets for Outcome 4.1:**

- Increase membership awareness of and involvement in ACC services.
- Expand ACC website to be more interactive.
- Enhance numbers and results of studio socials, guild talks, community tours, etc.

### **Outcome 4.2:**

The ACC membership is regionally distributed, diverse and growing.

#### **Strategies for Outcome 4.2:**

- Recruit new members in traditionally under-represented regions and groups.
- Broaden board representation by geography, craft mediums, ethnicity, age, gender, etc.
- Expand membership options for guilds, associations, retailers and schools.
- Continue to use ACC events, receptions, and partnership opportunities with others to recruit new members.

#### **Performance Measures/Targets for Outcome 4.2:**

- Increase in individual & organization/guild memberships.
- Increase in staff or member visits to events.
- Increase diversity of members - young members, senior craftspeople, people in a mid-life career change, etc.
- Increase role of aboriginal, new immigrant, and other "minority" members.

## **Goal #5:**

**The Alberta Craft Council Partners and Fosters Partnerships to Stimulate Fine Craft Activity.**

#### **What this goal means for the Alberta Craft Council:**

The ACC is dedicated to participating in and initiating partnerships that further the aims and goals of the Council on behalf of its members.

#### **Outcome 5.1:**

Local, Provincial, National, and International Fine Craft Partnerships.

#### **Strategies for Outcome 5.1:**

- Continue or increase memberships with a variety of craft, cultural and other organizations which are consistent with the ACC mandate.
- Participate in co-sponsored activities with a variety of craft and other organizations that are consistent with the ACC mandate.
- Investigate additional partnerships with craft, cultural and other organizations that are consistent with the ACC mandate.

#### **Performance Measures/Targets for Outcome 5.1:**

- Maintain and increase role in organizations such as The Works, Professional Arts Coalition of Edmonton, Canadian Crafts Federation, Craft Organization Development Association.
- Continue involvement in related special events such as Craft Year 2015.
- Expand exhibitions & lectures, special projects, partnerships, etc.

## **Goal #6:**

**The Alberta Craft Council Fulfills its Mandate.**

#### **What this goal means for the Alberta Craft Council:**

The ACC is dedicated to achieving its organizational Mission, Vision, Aims and Values in all that it does.

#### **Outcome 6.1:**

Consistent and increased funding; meeting operational commitments and future initiatives.

#### **Strategies for Outcome 6.1:**

- Explore new sources of revenue: marketing projects, service fees, fundraising campaigns, grant opportunities, estate endowments, and corporate support.
- Continue to advocate for revenue sources for new ACC initiatives.
- Continue ACC staff professional development relating to fine craft sector ideas/issues and shop/gallery craft displays/web technology and social media so that they can knowledgeably converse with members, visitors and customers.
- Continue responsible accounting practices and budget projections to track ACC funding, revenues and expenditures for present and future operations.

#### **Performance Measures/Targets for Outcome 6.1:**

- Increase core and project funding.

- Increase revenue from sales and other sources.
- Balanced books.
- Satisfied funders.
- Continue positive perceptions, from members, media coverage, social media, etc.

## Outcome 6.2:

Responsible and responsive governance and administration.

### Strategies for Outcome 6.2:

- Continue to attract, develop, value, recognize, and reward ACC staff and volunteers to a high standard: remuneration, resources, professional education and development.
- Govern the Council in accordance with the ACC mandate.
- Continue to respond to membership satisfaction with ACC operations as measured through various sources: shop/gallery customer comments, members' observations/comments, membership satisfaction survey results.
- Continue appropriate governance practices: effective board, regular meetings, AGM and reporting, etc.

### Performance Measures/Targets for Outcome 6.2:

- Maintain a stable and professional staff.
- Recruit and maintain a stable, effective board.
- Track and measure pertinent operational statistics.
- Meet accounting, reporting and governance obligations.
- Report to membership annually on performance measures.

This Strategic Plan has been approved by the current ACC board members and staff:

#### 2012 - 2013 Board of Directors:

Tara Owen - Chair (Calgary)  
Dawn Detarando - Vice Chair (Red Deer)  
Patricia Hartnagel - Treasurer (Edmonton)

Heather Forbes (Grande Prairie)  
Xanthe Isbister (Medicine Hat)  
James Lavoie (Edmonton)  
Mary-Beth Laviolette (Canmore)  
Jennifer Salahub (Calgary)  
Kai Georg Scholefield (Calgary)  
Vic Steel (Fort McMurray)  
Meghan Wagg (Edmonton)  
Kari Woo (Canmore)

#### Staff:

Tom McFall - Executive Director  
Nancy St. Hilaire - Administrative Manager/Editor  
Joanne Hamel - Member Services/Exhibitions  
Laura O'Connor - Communications/Exhibitions  
Annette Aslund - Events/Exhibitions  
Linda Frena - Gallery Shop Coordinator  
Elaine Emerson - Gallery Shop Staff  
Pat Aslund - Gallery Shop Staff

## RESOURCE PLANNING

### supporting operational goals, 3 - 5 year projections

A long-term goal is to establish a Calgary facility and related activity. This will require extensive planning and significant investment. The expansion is motivated by general need and opportunity, and the assumption that a significant majority of senior professional members live and work in Calgary, partly because of their association with ACAD.

Another long-term goal is to establish a permanent (preferably owned and custom-built) location for the ACC in Edmonton.

The ACC's budget growth over the past ten years has averaged about 3.2% per year.

#### Past Budget Fluctuations

| 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| -5%  | 8%   | 10%  | 5%   | 5%   | 20%  | -15% | 2%   | -2%  | 4%   |

(average 3.2%)

# Alberta Craft Council

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