



January 2021 – CHRC report on the CSRR project

Over the course of the last four months, the Cross-Sectoral Recovery Roundtables representatives – a unique gathering from all disciplines and industries of the cultural sector – have participated in five two-hour meetings with a number of smaller meetings and caucus meetings between. Out of that emerged a long list of priorities and issues to address the current emergency as well as what the sector needs to recover as a whole. From CHRC’s perspective, here is a summary of our discussions.

10 months into the pandemic, most of the cultural sector remains in full or partial shutdown. Even with a vaccine on the horizon, we cannot take recovery for granted and must be proactive as a community and with government to plan for the best future for the cultural sector.

Looking to the future to a positive recovery, two lines of thought are always present within the group:

- better economic stability for all stakeholders; and
- an accessible equal-opportunity sector that everyone can thrive in.

Out of our conversations, three key themes are emerging to help our sector bridge from our pandemic present to a better future:

1. Financial & Human Resources;
2. Internet, Technology & Legislation; and,
3. Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Accessibility (IDEA)

1. Financial & Human Resources:

While recognizing the significant government efforts to provide emergency financial support, we must also recognize that we are still in survival mode. This applies to covering basic needs as well as mental and physical health needs.

A pre-opening phase is tough to navigate because we can’t all simply pick up where we left off. There will be a continued need of financial support for businesses, organizations and workers - salaried and independent contractors. In many cases, it will take weeks or months for production to go live again or to be ready to welcome audiences, visitors and clients back into our spaces. It’s not just a question of “we’re open, come on in”.

An opening phase also has plenty of vulnerability, even if cultural workers get back to their occupations, when will audiences, visitors and clients return? Like other sectors, despite vaccine rollouts, we will still need physical protection. We will face the same challenges as banks, retailers and health professionals who are in close contact with their clients. In fact, we have to keep an eye out for what’s happening elsewhere in order to benefit from the lessons learned in

other sectors as we re-engage in our activities. In all cases, recovery does not immediately equate to being sustainable.

2. Internet, Technology & Legislation;

Without going too far into the subject of taxation, we have seen how the web giants have fared in these times. With the right legislation and implementation of the legislation we can help web giants become a greater part of our cultural fabric and the solutions we wish to articulate.

Migration to online delivery of cultural products and services is not optimal nor accessible for all. Technological and artistic skills-matching is a challenge to be addressed today and in the future.

Updating copyright and other legislation can improve discoverability and distribution of Canadian cultural production and its influence on intranational and international levels.

3. Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Accessibility (IDEA):

At the heart of all of these discussions is the desire to engage fully in Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility. IBPOC communities and persons with disabilities are still underrepresented in cultural occupations. Even if it takes a generation of commitment and difficult conversations, there is a shared motivation to reach a cultural sector rich in ideas, perspectives, skills and accessible to all who wish to engage in culture.

While moving towards a representative workforce, there is a need for effective widespread anti-harassment training, reporting and support services to eliminate discrimination, racism, harassment, bullying and violence to ensure worker safety for all.

A particular emphasis on the challenges of Indigenous Peoples: the Roundtable sessions to date have shown acknowledgement and understanding in highlighting that inclusion and representation are very important within these conversations going forward. In working with Indigenous Peoples, we must listen to Indigenous communities to understand the meaningful issues in the context of truth and reconciliation, taking into account the 94 Calls to Action¹.

Currently, too few representatives speak on behalf of Indigenous Peoples. To acknowledge and respect the diversity of Nations we wish to engage in a more effective collaboration with a call for an Indigenous-CHRC working group, gathering a diversity of Indigenous voices, including Inuit and Métis, representing urban and rural community contexts.

Because of the specifics, the working group could come together in a circle consultation process to address the present needs in a parallel way with the cross-sectoral roundtables. It would be most effective to support the self-determination of this Circle in establishing long lasting meaningful collaborations going forward.

¹ <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1524494530110/1557511412801>