



- The BC Arts Council is an independent agency of the Province of British Columbia. It was created in 1995 through the Arts Council Act.
- The Council's mandate is to support the arts and cultural community by providing financial assistance, research, advocacy, and public education. Its mission is to engage all British Columbians in a healthy arts and cultural community that is recognized for excellence.
- The Council's work is guided by two principles. The arm's length principle defines its relationship with government, and the peer assessment principle defines its relationship with the arts community. Together these principles are the fundamental tenets governing the Council's operations and decision-making processes.
- The Council is at "arm's length" from the government, which means that, within its legislated mandate, it has full authority to establish its priorities, policies, and funding programs and make grant decisions.
- Peer assessment means the use of independent artists and other professionals working in the field to assess grant applications, advise on priorities, and make recommendations to the Council on the awarding of grants. Through peer assessment, the Council involves the arts community directly in its operations.
- Peers, as defined by the Council's, are people who by virtue of their experience, knowledge and open-mindedness, are capable of making a fair and informed assessment of the comparative merits of grant applications.
- As a steward of public funds, the Council adheres to peer review to: make informed decisions in the allocation of resources; to ensure freedom of thought and expression; and to engage in collective decision-making.
- First meeting of Council was in 1996 – adopted funding programs from BC Arts Board.
- Fifteen Council members are appointed by the Lieutenant Governor by Order in Council. Chairs have included Mavor Moore, Ann Mortifee, Nini Baird and Don Shumka. Former Vice-Chair, Jane Danzo was appointed Chair in July 2009.
- CSB provided secretariat until 2007 when Council branch was created – A line branch of MTCA
- Branch comprised of Executive Director, Associate Director, Communications Manager, 7 Program Officers and an Administrative team of 5.

- The Council oversees 31 programs that support artists and arts organizations in communities across B.C. All funding decisions result from independent peer review.
- Annual budget provided by Legislative appropriation.
 - 1996/97 = \$14.8M
 - 1997/98 -1999/00 = \$11.8M
 - 2000/01 = \$14.5M
 - 2001/02 – 2004/05 = \$11.0M
 - 2005/06 – 2007/08 = \$13.8M
- 2008/09 budget totalled \$23.8M. This included:
 - \$13.3M in legislative appropriation.
 - \$3.5 M in earnings from BC150.
 - \$7.0 from supplemental estimates, of which \$6.7M was paid to operating clients based on 60 – 70% of 2008/09 funding levels paid out in March 2009.
- February 09 budget:
 - \$7.93M in legislative appropriation.
 - \$3M in earnings from BC150.
 - Due to recession, Government reviewed all discretionary spending through summer.
- August 09 update
 - Government made decision to allocate \$10.9M from the Community Gaming Grants to Council.
 - Legislation has no provision to transfer \$10.9M to Council.
 - Grants directly paid to Council clients following normal peer review process.
 - Urgency in delivery of funding due to delays over summer.
- September 09 budget:
 - \$3.75M for entire Arts and Culture Division costs.
 - No legislative appropriation for grants. Government assigns grant funding from Ministry of Housing and Social Development's gaming grants.
 - HSD is paying \$10.9M in Council grants directly to clients.
 - Independent artists and students receive Council funding with cheques issued by 2010 LegaciesNow.
- Fiscal 2010/11 AND 2011/12
 - \$2.75M/\$2M for division.
 - No final decisions at this point; budget process for 2010/11 starts in autumn, with details to be released March 2010.