

# CULTURAL MAPPING PROJECT

## REPORT ON FINDINGS

### Introduction

The Cultural Mapping Project of Community Arts Ontario represents an opportunity at a key point in the development of community arts to build relationships with diverse arts groups in the province. The results of this relationship building have the potential to:

1. Contribute to the creativity and development of community arts practice.
2. Enhance the effectiveness of the role of community arts in community development.
3. Facilitate cooperation and collaboration among diverse groups in communities.
4. Further audience development.

In October 2003 the Cultural Mapping Project commenced with the hiring of Zainab Amadahy as Project researcher for Phase I of the project.

The Department of Multiculturalism and Heritage approved and funded the following activities as Phase I of three project phases:

- Research equity practices and access ethno-racial groups in community arts.
- Assemble a literature review of best practices and resource materials for effecting change.
- Present a geographic analysis of groups and individuals involved in community arts practices from a diverse perspective.
- Map and document ethno-racial groups and communities throughout the province.
- Undergo a needs assessment of ethno-racial diverse communities in accessing community arts.
- Identify systemic barriers faced by ethno-racial diverse communities in accessing community arts.

Deliverables by February 15, 2004 include:

1. A final report on the research findings to include recommendations for follow-up.
2. A Strategic Action Plan to comprise Phase II of the project.
3. A literature review of resources on organizational change toward diversity and equity for Community Arts Ontario and its member organizations.
4. A database of diverse groups practicing community arts across the province.

### Cultural Mapping: Definitions

**Cultural Mapping:** Though there are many definitions and concepts of cultural mapping in the literature, the objective of this project is to diversify the membership and

programming of Community Arts Ontario. Thus, “mapping” involved researching the goals, outcomes and processes of relationship building among CAO and its member organization with diverse groups as well as identifying non member groups from diverse backgrounds and experiences and researching their service needs and priorities.

**Diversity:** While the word diverse simply means “different”, the concept of diversity in organizations means incorporating the “differences” among community members into the organization’s mandate, membership, staffing, volunteers, programming and services.

**Equity:** For the purpose of this project, the term equity applies to power dynamics, authorities and decision-making roles and responsibilities. The idea is that as the organization changes to accommodate “differences” it ensures that representatives from diverse communities have meaningful access to all levels of organizational decision-making, planning and implementation.

## **Areas of Research**

Research for the Cultural Mapping Project focused on four general areas:

1. **Organizational Change toward diversity and equity:**
  - i. A literature review of resources is in development and will be appended to the final report. This document will include resources on theoretical approaches to this work as well as case studies and other relevant organizational development information that will be useful to community arts groups embarking on such work.
  - ii. Consultation with activists both in and outside of the arts sector who have been involved in organizational change toward equity and diversity.
2. **Community Arts Ontario:** current policies and practices regarding diversity and equity.
3. **CAO Member Organizations:** current policies, practices, priorities and history as they relate to diversity and equity. In addition, the research looked at the supports and services required by organizations undertaking such work.
4. **Non-Member Organizations:** services and programming needs, experiences and priorities to determine if and how CAO and its member organizations can begin developing relationships with diverse communities and groups.

## **Methodology**

**Participatory Action Research:** This model was employed by the researcher in gathering information.

Key features of this model include:

- Acknowledging the researcher's biases and that s/he is not outside the process.
- The objective of doing this research is to inform action aimed at effecting organizational change.
- Research tools and strategies are flexible and culturally appropriate to the groups, individuals and communities involved.
- Reflection on and modification of assumptions, premises, tools, methods, etc. is ongoing.
- The researcher does not define problems or offer solutions but researches how communities do this for themselves and then analyzes the implications.

**Advisory Committee:** First steps in the project involved the establishment of an Advisory Committee comprised of:

- Board Chair
- Regional Reps to CAO's Board of Directors.
- 2 Community Representatives from non-member organizations with expertise in community arts as well as organizational change related to ethno-cultural diversification and equity.
- CAO's Coordinator
- Mapping Project Researcher

The role of this committee is as follows:

1. Maintain an overall view of the project's progress, direction and impact.
2. Be a resource to the Researcher in terms of helping to identify key issues, resource people and organizations to be contacted.
3. Provide guidelines to the Researcher regarding priorities, timelines, data collection tools and assessment tools.
4. Provide evaluation and feedback to the Researcher and Board.

The committee met three times during the life of the project and individual members offered advice and guidance based on their areas of expertise, knowledge and experience.

### **Documentation Review**

It was the intent of the Researcher to review policies, procedures and job descriptions of CAO to identify key issues, priorities and areas of follow-up. Though several policies are currently in development there is a lack of documentation, the implications of which are discussed below. The website was reviewed and analysis is below.

### **Member Survey**

A survey was developed and e-mailed to all CAO member organizations, with the exception of municipalities in December 2002. A response deadline of January 31, 2003

was set. In addition, it was posted on the website. Phone and e-mail follow-ups were done the week of January 20, 2003.

The purpose of the member survey was to:

1. Determine the extent to which current policy and practice among member organizations addresses diversity and equity issues.
2. Determine how much diversity issues are a priority for the membership.
3. Encourage organizations to make diversity a priority.
4. Provide ideas on what organizations can do to begin the diversification process.
5. Generate interest in and understanding of the Cultural Mapping Project.
6. Collect information that would inform interviews with resource people and discussion group questions.

The survey questionnaire is appended to this report.

### **Interviews and Discussion Sessions**

Interviews and Discussion Groups were conducted in the areas of research outlined above. All resource people, interviewees and groups were promised confidentiality.

**Organizational Change**: Resource people for information on the processes of organizational change were identified by the following sources:

- Advisory Committee referrals.
- Referrals from staff at the Ontario Arts Council, Multiculturalism and Heritage Canada, Canada Council for the Arts and the Toronto Arts Council.
- Researcher's personal networks.
- Participants who recommended others.

The purposes of the interviews were to determine:

- The variety of processes and structures employed in organizational change.
- Methods of avoiding and managing conflict.
- What works, what doesn't and why.
- How the work is sustained.
- Common themes and issues that arise.
- Key issues affecting outreach to specific communities.
- Further resources.

There was no set questionnaire or format for interviews on organizational change. Often the researcher simply asked people to speak of their experiences in this area and to tell their stories.

**Member Discussion Groups** : The following questions were developed with input from the Advisory Committee. Discussion sessions were held in Toronto, Ottawa, Kingston, Hamilton, Windsor and Waterloo. Member groups past and present were invited to these sessions. In addition, the Researcher consulted with member organizations in all regions of the province. These included: Manitoulin Island, Sudbury, Timmins, North Bay, Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Chapleau and Sioux Lookout.

The purpose of the member group discussions was to:

- 1) Identify regional issues.
- 2) Gather information on the diversity and equity work already underway in the regions.
- 3) Identify ways in which CAO could support the work.
- 4) Enable networking and sharing within the regions among member groups.

Questions discussed at these sessions included but were not limited to:

- 1) What are the diversity issues in your organization?
- 2) What diversity and equity work has your organization been involved with?
- 3) What yet needs to be done?
- 4) What types of resources and training are required for your organization to do this work? Who can provide them?
- 5) Are there any barriers that might impede your organization from doing this work? How can they be eliminated or minimized?
- 6) How can Community Arts Ontario (CAO) help with your organization's efforts?

**Non-Member Group Interviews**: Non member groups and resource people were identified in a variety of ways:

- Referrals from CAO staff, directors and member groups.
- Advisory Committee referrals.
- Referrals from staff at the Ontario Arts Council, Multiculturalism and Heritage Canada, Canada Council for the Arts and the Toronto Arts Council.
- Researcher's personal networks.
- Online searches.
- Community service directories
- Phone books.
- Participants who recommended others.

A database of non-member groups contacted for this study was developed.

The questions asked of non member groups were aimed at collecting information that would enable CAO members to identify potential first steps in establishing relationships with diverse communities and artists as well as to identify:

- 1) Systemic barriers to accessing CAO services and programs.
- 2) The focus, orientation and topics of training / awareness-raising in CAO.
- 3) Structural and process differences among communities and community groups.
- 4) Potential training and service needs in various community groups.
- 5) Possible areas of collaboration and support that CAO and its member organizations can provide.
- 6) What is underestimated or ignored in terms the contribution of diverse groups to Canadian society.

The following questions were asked of non-member group representatives:

1. What are some of the problems or negative experiences you've had in working with organizations outside of your community?
2. What are some of the positive experiences? What has to be in place for these experiences to be positive?
3. What are some of the barriers or negative experiences you've had in accessing funding?
4. Are there funding programs not being offered that would be useful to you, your organization and/or your community?
5. What can and should established arts organizations be doing to support artists artists-of-colour / newcomers / Aboriginal artists / differently-abled artists and their organizations?
6. How do you feel your work and your organizations can better contribute to economic development within your communities or in Canada generally?

Volunteer interpreters were used in the Cultural Mapping Project as required.

Non-member groups in the following areas were consulted for this project: Toronto, Ottawa, Kingston, Hamilton, Windsor, London and Waterloo, Manitoulin Island, Sudbury, Timmins, Haileybury, Bear Island, North Bay, Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Chapleau, Barrie, Georgian Bay, Six Nations of the Grand River, Wahta Mohawk Territory, Parry Sound (Wausauksing FN) and Sioux Lookout. In addition, resource people out of province in BC and Quebec were also consulted.

### **Participation in Programs :**

The Researcher participated in the May 2003 Conference "Kicking it up a Notch", the 2003 AGM as well as the Governance Workshop in order to experience CAO

programming and processes and to assess issues such as outreach, inclusion, diversity of content, etc.

## **Findings:**

The following is a review analysis of the information collected through the above methods.

### **Organizational Change Toward Diversity and Equity - Issues Identified**

Resource people to this piece of the research were primarily affiliated with non-member groups, although many had had some sort of contact or experience with CAO. However, five of the resource people consulted on this topic were affiliated with CAO member organizations.

All those consulted on this topic possess a sincere belief that organizational development in the areas of diversity and equity are crucial to the survival of community arts groups. The many ways in which groups and individuals define community arts all imply that diversification and equity are essential to remaining relevant, creative and effective in the context of changing demographics and power dynamics in the world, much less the province.

In general, it is agreed that organizational change takes time (years) because it involves connecting with diverse groups and building relationships of trust, understanding and mutual support. It also often requires changes to organizational structures, policies, decision-making processes, methods of communicating, planning processes, human resource management practices and, most importantly, a values shift.

It is also agreed that diversity and equity work is an ongoing responsibility that will end only when social inequality ends. Thus, it is important to plan for ways in which the work will be sustained and integrated into the organization's ongoing work, even long after project funding has run out.

Sincerity, honesty and respect are raised time and again as being important values that underlie this type of work. If these fundamental attitudes are present, mistakes (and they will happen) can be easily rectified, forgiven and forgotten. Assumptions that connecting with diverse groups will involve mutual exchange are fundamental to the success of long-term relationships. That is, the sharing and learning will go both ways –several ways, in fact.

It is important not to anticipate specific outcomes of these processes, as well. Needs, levels of community development and a myriad of factors will organically shape the various ways that organizational change, diversification and equity play out. Envisioning very specific outcomes may limit creative ways of sharing, create expectations that cannot be met and generally frustrate the process. In fact, all sources consulted for this project to date have implemented different models in doing this work. In some examples,

one or more individuals drove the process. In another example, an increasingly diverse membership raised the issue and led the process. Another example saw a group begin with implementing gender equity only to understand the importance of expanding their mandate to other forms of diversity and equity work. Yet in another example, the funder required organizational change of the group. In a final example, an event targeting diverse communities motivated organizational change. The process is never the same.

One factor, however, remains constant: Tension is inherent to organizational change and conflicts inevitably arise. It is challenging to share limited resources, redistribute decision-making power and question long held values and beliefs. The key to managing tensions is to expect and prepare for them. Training, education and awareness-raising activities are essential at all levels of the organization. An organizational culture that understands that conflict can be healthy and functional when well managed is helpful. A shared framework of natural, healthy cycles of organizational change and development can also minimize tension and fear.

Many participants, members and non members alike, emphasize the importance of understanding historical experiences of colonialism and racism in order to understand current power dynamics in Canadian society. Indeed, it is essential to understand that power dynamics is at the base of equity and diversity implementation strategies. Having established this, it is recognized that the task of specifically studying the many histories and experiences of various ethno-cultural groups that may make up one's "community" is daunting, if not impossible. However, no one expects this. The main issue is to at least have a framework of analysis that enables an understanding of and sensitivity to experiences of colonialism and racism.

Most participants tend to agree that one exception to this is that of Aboriginal histories and cultures. This is because an understanding of the experience of the First Peoples in the political economy and history of the country in which we live and work, a clear analysis of the Canadian context and power structure, is fundamental, particularly in community arts work. This is not to say that the experiences of other disempowered groups are less significant. It is simply recognition that the accumulation of wealth, privilege and power in Canada is predicated upon the implementation of genocide, assimilation and systemic violence committed against Aboriginal peoples.

Many participants also stressed that diversity and equity work cannot be exclusive to ethno-cultural communities. Identities transcend ethnicity and intersect with sexual orientation, class, different abilities, age, etc. Social inequality affects many other groups and, while racism is further complicated by homophobia, ageism and ableism, for example, these "isms", in and of themselves, serve to marginalize individuals and groups. Thus, this work by definition must be inclusive to all marginalized groups.

In getting specific, there were a number of options presented as possible starting points for purposefully embarking on organizational change. None of these are exclusive; in fact they overlap, and can certainly be implemented simultaneously.

1. **Representation**: For some groups the first step in the process is to diversify the organizational leadership. Everyone cautions that it is important to stay away from the following:
  - a. Tokenism. This is recruiting individuals on the basis of their ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc. without considering skills, experiences and potential contributions and/or not recognizing contributions. The expectation is that the organization will continue doing exactly as it has always done, only with a few brown, black or red faces sprinkled into the mix. Tokenism is often motivated by attempts to improve public image, thus it selects for individuals who are visibly or publicly representative of a group and does not require any sincere commitment to equity, diversity and organizational change.
  - b. A tendency to assume that one representative from a marginalized community can represent the entire community. As many participants note, no community is homogeneous. Thus, the key concept here is to be representative not simply through individuals but through a familiarity with and a framework of analysis of power relationships.

It is stressed that leadership must reflect the community and even if a community is relatively ethno-culturally homogeneous one must move beyond the question of ethnicity and define what diversity means in that particular context. Many studies (some in the corporate world) have suggested that establishing and maintaining culturally diverse groups impacts positively on creativity in planning, problem solving and decision-making. This research could doubtlessly be applied beyond ethno-cultural diversity. Thus, it is important to recognize the advantages of diversifying decision-makers to organizations wishing to remain vibrant and relevant.

2. **Equity and Diversity Policies**: The need for binding policy has been identified as essential to the sustainability, accountability and consistency of equity work. The process of developing policy has several advantages:
  - a. Policy development requires discussion and exploration of the issues. Final decisions are commitments that groups make to a principle, which contrasts favorably with the alternative of having one or two active individuals driving a process that may fall from the organizational agenda when the individuals' involvement wanes.
  - b. The consultation and outreach often required in drafting effective policies can be a learning experience and can establish networks that become integral to ongoing work.
  - c. Clarity and consensus of overall directions and principles facilitates evaluation and the identification of problems and their solutions.
  - d. The knowledge that policies exist contributes to a level of comfort, confidence and trust among participants from marginalized communities for whom safety is always an issue.

It is important to remember, however, that all the policies in the world will not change attitudes any more than laws eradicate racism. Policy development can never take place in isolation and can never be assumed to be the only relevant process.

3. **Education and Awareness Raising**: To further ensure a safe environment for participants and facilitate the work, it is important to raise awareness within your organization and community of the benefits of equity and diversity work, the issues diverse groups deal with historically and currently as well as of basic organizational development issues (conflict management, managing change, etc.)

In addition, it is important to provide concrete skills training in an interactive format for the organization's participants in areas such as human resources management, outreach, facilitation, animation and governance, while integrating equity and diversity issues into the training.

Another important educational component in establishing a representative leadership is to differentiate between positive and negative discrimination.

In doing this training, educational and awareness raising work, the organization must remain open at all times to practices and processes that have developed in different communities. Thus, strategies and methods will be subject to review and revision as the organization is informed by increasingly diverse participation in the process.

4. **Showing Support to marginalized and disempowered communities**: This involves recognizing that community arts groups in ethno-cultural and marginalized communities are perfectly capable of identifying and articulating their needs. If your organization can respectfully support the way in which they wish to address their needs, your help and solidarity is welcome. Concrete actions may take such varied forms as writing support letters, making space available, fulfilling a specific role in a joint collaboration, etc. As trustful relationships are established an organic process of collaboration and connection will occur over time, although outcomes may not take predictable or expected forms.
5. **Embarking on in consultation with community groups**. Some participants recount significant success with implementing projects that specifically involve marginalized groups in order to involve members of those communities in the organization as well as provide educational opportunities for organizational players. As community leaders and artists work with the organization on a specific project, they become resources and will often assume leadership roles in the group long after the life of the project has ended. However, it is important to ensure that the project is one that has either been initiated in the community or developed in partnership with that community in order to ensure cultural appropriateness, relevance and success.

**Member Survey Results & Analysis:**

**Response:**

<b>Region</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>Cent</b>	<b>S. W.</b>	<b>GTA</b>	<b>P/N<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>NN<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Total</b>
Total Surveys Sent	12	21	10	21	34	15	0	113
Number of Respondents	3	6	2	3	10	8	2	34
<b>% Respondents</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>53</b>		<b>30</b>

It is difficult to guess why 70% of member organizations did not respond to the survey. Only two groups offered explanations: one was in the process of merging with another organization; another was undergoing a change of leadership and was unable to address the survey until well after the response deadline.

Nevertheless, as surveys go, a 30% response rate is considered normal to above normal. Hopefully this is indicative of the high level of interest, support and awareness the Cultural Mapping Project has generated.

**1. Does your organization have formal policies, approved by the membership, on any of the following?**

<b>Question 1</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>Cent</b>	<b>S. W.</b>	<b>GTA</b>	<b>P/N</b>	<b>NN</b>	<b>Total</b>
Anti-Racism	0	2	0	2	8	4	0	16
Anti-Discrimination	0	2	0	2	8	4	0	16
Accessibility	1	2	1	1	5	3	2	15
Equity	1	2	0	2	6	5	0	16
NA	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>64</b>

**2. Do you have formal equity policies, approved by the membership, concerning:**

<b>Question 2</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>Cent</b>	<b>S. W.</b>	<b>GTA</b>	<b>P/N</b>	<b>NN</b>	<b>Total</b>
Hiring	0	2	1	2	5	4	0	14
Contracting	0	1	0	2	1	3	0	7
Volunteer Recruitment	1	2	0	2	3	3	0	11
Member Recruitment	1	2	1	2	6	3	0	15
Committee Composition	1	2	1	2	6	4	0	16
Recruiting	0	2	1	2	4	5	0	14

<sup>1</sup> P/N refers to organizations that have a provincial or national mandate and/or membership.

<sup>2</sup> NN is an abbreviation for No Name. Two surveys were returned with no indication as to who had filled them out.

HR Management	0	2	1	2	5	4	0	14
NA	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>92</b>

**3. Do you have informal equity policies, practices or procedures (not approved by membership but implemented on an ad hoc basis) concerning:**

<b>Question 3</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>Cent</b>	<b>S. W.</b>	<b>GTA</b>	<b>P/N</b>	<b>NN</b>	<b>Total</b>
Hiring	2	3	0	1	5	1	0	12
Contracting	2	2	0	1	6	2	0	13
Volunteer Recruitment	2	3	0	1	5	2	2	15
Member Recruitment	2	2	0	1	4	2	2	13
Committee Composition	2	4	1	1	3	2	2	15
Recruiting	3	3	1	1	5	1	1	15
HR Management	2	1	0	1	5	0	0	9
<b>Totals</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>92</b>

**Researcher comments:**

The reason it is illustrative to differentiate between formal and informal policy is to ascertain:

- a. Whether the organization as a whole has discussed and is committed to equity and diversity.
- b. The degree to which commitment to equity and diversity will be consistent and long term.
- c. The degree to which organizations can be held accountable to their performance on these issues.

Organizations without formal policy can change their priorities, levels of commitment, definitions of terms, etc. at the whim of individuals who happen to be active in an organization at any given time. It is also difficult to evaluate an organization's performance when clear policy directives do not exist.

The process of developing equity policy often requires outreach, consultation and discussion with diverse groups. The process itself becomes a learning experience as well as an exercise in outreach, networking and marketing. Furthermore, organizations that engage in formal policy development are better able to identify needs such as resources and training that might be required for their members, leadership or staff.

The existence of clear strong policies contributes to a feeling of “safety”, accountability and comfort for individuals of diverse life experiences, ethno-cultural backgrounds, sexual orientations, different abilities, etc. Instituting policy is one way of encouraging diverse participation at all organizational levels.

While many respondents have policy in the area of diversity and equity, it is clear that many others rely on “informal” or “ad hoc” decisions. Thirteen (13) respondents have no formal equity or diversity policies what-so-ever. Only four out of 14 organizations lacking formal policies identified policy development as a priority for their organizations.

Among organizations lacking policy, seven (7) did not see their community as being ethno-culturally diverse, which is something the Researcher lacks sufficient information on which to comment. However, it is interesting to note that two (2) of these organizations indicated, through their use of the word, that they do not understand the definition of “ethno-cultural”. As one respondent put it, “there are no ethno-cultural groups in ...” Clearly, many people see the word “ethno-cultural” as applying only to “people of colour” and Aboriginal people, or perhaps only to people of non-Anglo-Saxon background.

On the bright side, 17 respondents (half) have an array of formal policies. These organizations could serve as a resource to organizations wishing to develop policies of their own.

**4. Does your organizational membership reflect the cultural diversity of artists in your community?**

<b>Question 4</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>Cent</b>	<b>S. W.</b>	<b>GTA</b>	<b>P/N</b>	<b>NN</b>	<b>Total</b>
Yes	2	2	2	1	5	4	1	17
No	1	2	0	0	1	1	0	5
Don't Know	0	1	0	2	2	1	0	6
Not Culturally Diverse	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
Somewhat	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>32</b>

**5. Does the leadership in your organization reflect the cultural diversity of your membership?**

<b>Question 5</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>Cent</b>	<b>S. W.</b>	<b>GTA</b>	<b>P/N</b>	<b>NN</b>	<b>Total</b>
Yes	2	3	2	0	5	4	1	17

No	1	1	0	2	1	1	0	6
Don't Know	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	3
Not Culturally Diverse	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Somewhat	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>30</b>

**6. Do employees, contractors and consultants reflect the cultural diversity of your community?**

<b>Question 6</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>Cent</b>	<b>S. W.</b>	<b>GTA</b>	<b>P/N</b>	<b>NN</b>	<b>Total</b>
Yes	3	3	1	1	7	3	0	18
No	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	3
Don't Know	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	3
Not Culturally Diverse	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Somewhat	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NA	0	1	1	0	1	0	2	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>30</b>

**7. Have any of the following issues been identified as priorities for your organization?**

<b>Question 7</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>Cent</b>	<b>S. W.</b>	<b>GTA</b>	<b>P/N</b>	<b>NN</b>	<b>Total</b>
Diversifying Membership	2	1	1	0	5	4	1	14
Leadership	3	0	0	1	4	3	1	12
Committee Comp	3	0	1	1	4	2	1	12
Volunteers	3	1	0	1	3	1	0	9
Policies	0	1	0	0	4	2	0	7
Staffing	2	0	1	0	3	2	0	8
Member Ed.	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	3
Staff ed	0	0	0	0	3	2	0	5
Improving Outreach	2	3	0	1	9	4	0	19
Other	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>93</b>

**Researcher Comments :**

The goal of representing the diversity of the community in which a group operates is recognized as an important component of organizational change aimed at equity and cultural diversity. It is encouraging that half of the respondents feel their leadership, membership and/or staff represent the cultural diversity of their community. For a handful of organizations these questions were unanswerable

because they did not employ staff, did not have membership structures and/or did not have a board. Thus, it appears that only 3-6 respondents, a very small number, feel they are not representative. It must be kept in mind, however, that seven organizations do not feel that their communities are culturally diverse.

Once again, it is very encouraging to note that over half of the respondents indicated that they had prioritized some form of organizational development toward equity and diversity. The highest response in this category, however, has to do with prioritizing the improvement of outreach strategies. Some analysis needs to be done on whether “outreach” refers to programming, marketing and audience development or whether it refers to outreach for membership, volunteers, leadership, staff and decision-makers in general.

**8. What methods of communication have you used to outreach to diverse cultural groups and artists?**

<b>Question 8</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>Cent</b>	<b>S. W.</b>	<b>GTA</b>	<b>P/N</b>	<b>NN</b>	<b>Total</b>
Newsletter	1	1	2	3	5	5	1	18
E-mail	3	1	2	3	8	5	1	23
Regular Mail	1	2	1	3	3	2	1	13
Networking	1	2	2	2	8	5	1	21
Phoning	2	2	1	3	3	3	1	15
Media advertising	3	2	1	2	7	1	1	17
Mainstream media	1	0	1	2	5	1	0	10
Community Media	1	1	1	1	7	1	1	13
Ethno-specific Media	0	1	1	0	3	1	0	6
Announcements	1	0	0	0	6	2	1	10
Other	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>147</b>

**Researcher comment:**

The main point of this question is to pass on some ideas that organizations have used to do outreach. A key issue is to recognize that communities are not just ethno-culturally diverse but also diverse in terms of language, class, educational levels, income, sexual orientation, etc. and varied methods of outreach are required for organizations interested in equity and diversity. Outreach strategies employed by respondents seem to indicate an understanding of this.

On the other hand, the phrasing and focus of the question, which simply surveys the outreach method, does not allow any analysis of the accessibility, assumptions, exclusivity, inclusiveness, etc. of practices. Placing an ad in a community newspaper does not guarantee that appropriate language and /or images were used, for example. It also does not guarantee results. Advertising a

job posting in various places does not mean one has engaged in equity hiring practices.

Organizations need to be mindful of “token” efforts at inclusion through their outreach strategies. The goals of equity and diversity work include involving diverse groups at all levels of decision-making and participation.

The following comments concerning outreach made by respondents are worth special mention:

- One organization provided an example of outreach as consulting with a local band council on the “costumes, sets, etc.” for a youth group’s production of *Pocohantas*. Where to begin? That 1) many Aboriginal groups have expressed their concerns with the racist, ethno-centric and inaccurate portrayals of the story of *Pocohantas* and 2) the nation from which *Pocohantas* hails is not the same nation that was consulted in the example provided, are points that hopefully make themselves. The concept of outreach as using the expertise of a group to further one’s own goals and activities is not quite consistent with the notion of outreach for the purposes of ensuring equity at all levels of organizational structure, decision-making and programming. It is indeed possible that details of the example would provide further clarification and invalidate the researcher’s observations. However, based on the information provided, questions concerning awareness levels, skills and the very sincerity of the organization involved should not surprise anyone.
- Some comments by respondents indicated that representatives of marginalized communities and diverse groups were welcome to participate based on their skills, experience, interest, availability, etc. Is this attitude exemplary of a systemic barrier? Consider the option of seeking out difference in order to learn from it. Consider the option of being prepared to train and mentor participants who come from disadvantaged experiences. Consider the option of being prepared to restructure and rethink organizational practices to accommodate differences.

Further worth mentioning is that four organizations indicated they were “open” to anyone in the community; that anyone was “welcome”. This certainly does no harm to equity and diversity efforts, but it may indicate a lack of understanding that purposeful, skilled and sustained outreach is essential to the success of such work. As many have noted, it is a responsibility of organizations receiving public monies to outreach, particularly to marginalized communities. Furthermore, the very definition of “community arts” – any definition – would suggest it is essential.

**9. Does your organization co-sponsor events and activities with various cultural groups in your community?**

<b>Question 9</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>Cent</b>	<b>S. W.</b>	<b>GTA</b>	<b>P/N</b>	<b>NN</b>	<b>Total</b>
More than 1/yr	2	2	1	2	5	2	2	16
Annually	1	1	0	0	2	1	0	5
Less than 1/yr	0	1	1	0	3	1	0	6
No one remembers	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
Never	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
NA	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>31</b>

**10. Do members of your organization formerly attend and participate (as representatives) in events and activities sponsored by various cultural groups in your community?**

<b>Question 10</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>Cent</b>	<b>S. W.</b>	<b>GTA</b>	<b>P/N</b>	<b>NN</b>	<b>Total</b>
More than 1/yr	3	3	2	3	7	5	1	24
Annually	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Less than 1/yr	0	0	0	0	3	1	1	5
no one remembers	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Never	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
NA	0	0	0	0	1		0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>33</b>

**11. Does your organization have the interpretation and translation resources necessary to outreach to, communicate with and network with various cultural groups and artists in your community?**

<b>Question 11</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>Cent</b>	<b>S. W.</b>	<b>GTA</b>	<b>P/N</b>	<b>NN</b>	<b>Total</b>
Adequate	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	3
Inadequate	1	1	1	2	9	4	0	18
Not an issue	1	3	1	0	1	2	2	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>31</b>

**12. Does your organization organize events and activities whose primary purpose is to promote and enable networking among diverse cultural groups and artists?**

<b>Question 12</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>Cent</b>	<b>S. W.</b>	<b>GTA</b>	<b>P/N</b>	<b>NN</b>	<b>Total</b>
More than 1/yr	1	1	1	2	2	3	0	10
Annually	0	1	0	1	1	2	0	5
Less than 1/yr	1	1	1	0	3	0	0	6
no one remembers	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	3
Never	0	3	0	0	2	1	1	7
NA	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>32</b>

**13. Does your organization send official representatives to events and activities whose primary purpose is to promote and enable networking among various cultural groups and artists?**

<b>Question 13</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>Cent</b>	<b>S. W.</b>	<b>GTA</b>	<b>P/N</b>	<b>NN</b>	<b>Total</b>
More than 1/yr	2	1	1	2	2	3	0	11
Annually	0	1	0	1	1	2	0	5
Less than 1/yr	1	1	1	0	3	0	0	6
No one remembers	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
Never	0	3	0	0	2	1	1	7
NA	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>32</b>

**14. Does your organization offer formal support (e.g., letters, resolutions, etc.) to cultural groups that face incidents of discrimination and harassment?**

<b>Question 14</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>Cent</b>	<b>S. W.</b>	<b>GTA</b>	<b>P/N</b>	<b>NN</b>	<b>Total</b>
Routinely	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
When leadership feels	1	2	0	1	1	0	1	6
When asked by community	1	2	0	0	4	2	0	9
When members require	2	0	1	0	1	3	1	8
Never	0	3	0	2	5	0	0	10
NA	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>35</b>

**15. Does your organization take public positions (e.g., media releases, media conferences, public announcements, speaking at rallies, letters to politicians, etc.) concerning anti-racism, anti-discrimination, equity and financial access?**

<b>Question 15</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>Cent</b>	<b>S. W.</b>	<b>GTA</b>	<b>P/N</b>	<b>NN</b>	<b>Total</b>
Routinely	1	0	1	0	2	1	0	5
When leadership feels	2	2	0	1	3	1	0	9
When asked by community	1	2	0	1	3	0	0	7
When members require	1	2	0	0	1	3	1	8
Never	1	2	0	1	3	0	1	8
NA	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>38</b>

**16. Does your organization organize events and activities aimed at removing barriers and facilitating the participation of diverse groups and artists in your organization?**

<b>Question 16</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>Cent</b>	<b>S. W.</b>	<b>GTA</b>	<b>P/N</b>	<b>NN</b>	<b>Total</b>
More than 1/yr	2	2	1	2	5	4	0	16
Annually	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	3
Less than 1/yr	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
No one remembers	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	4
Never	0	2	0	0	1	0	1	4
NA	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>31</b>

**Researcher Comments:**

Questions 10 through 16 are meant to get at the level of the social, political and historical awareness necessary to effectively implement organizational development in the areas of equity and diversity. As many people involved in this type of work have noted, one cannot simply make a commitment to equity and diversity at the office but not incorporate it into every aspect of one's life. The commitment is values-based; it recognizes the importance of support and solidarity. Artists experiencing some form of disempowerment, discrimination or racism cannot separate their work from their day-to-day lives. For example, an artist who is being discriminated against because she wears *hijab* is affected at every level of her being. Furthermore, so are her family and community. Thus, the struggle to eradicate social injustice in community arts is connected to eradicating it in society – indeed in the world. Equity and diversity work needs to recognize this. Consequently, organizations need to recognize that work they do

in their groups and communities is connected to and integrated with what is going on in society and in the world. It cannot take place in isolation.

Having declared this bias, the responses to many questions are very encouraging and bode well for ongoing work in this direction. More than half of the respondents engage in activities aimed at supporting, promoting and furthering equity and diversity work. In several cases the nature of the organization (e.g., municipal arts councils) suggest that the work they can do in this area is limited. Nevertheless, such organizations are doing what is possible within their limitations. Even more exciting is that a number of respondents indicated they could be doing more work in a number of areas. This suggests an understanding that diversity and equity work is ongoing. As long as inequality exists in the larger society, the struggle to eradicate it will continue in organizations.

### **Community Arts Ontario -Policies & Programs :**

**Policies, documents and resources:** As mentioned above, there is a lack of organizational policies. A Human Resources policy is currently in development. Volunteer recruitment policy, Board nominations & appointment policies and policies for volunteers are also needed. Member organizations have requested that CAO develop templates that can be adapted for local use.

**Inclusion and representation:** Hiring and employment practices are currently under review. Most recently staff and volunteers at CAO have been representative of the province's diversity, however there is no policy commitment to maintain this. In addition, formal hiring and evaluation processes do not currently exist.

The CAO Board of Directors represents diversity in many ways including gender, sexual orientation, Francophone participation and geographic region. However the participation of youth, differently-abled people, "people of colour", newcomers and Aboriginals are clearly lacking and the leadership is aware and critical of this fact. Leadership selection processes are also currently under review. Recent discussions regarding the representation of Francophone communities suggests that the bilingual requirement is beyond CAO's current financial capacity, however it can be considered in the future. Thus, the organizational language for the time being is English. This is consistent with the expectations of Francophone organizations consulted in the research phase of this project.

While there is an awareness that organizational culture may have to undergo some change in order to attract and maintain diverse participation, no concrete discussions have occurred and to date no specific goals have been set.

**Outreach, Relationship Building & Public Relations**: CAO makes every effort to advertise in and distribute information on its services and programming to diverse communities, particularly in Southern Ontario and the Ottawa region. All advertising and outreach materials to date are in English and there has been no major discussion or planning to ensure that outreach materials are culturally appropriate. Member organizations vary greatly in their capacities to outreach to diverse groups in their regions, however all groups recognize the importance of doing so.

Resource people to this project have raised concerns regarding the organization's general image and the quality of communications with both members and non members. It is perceived by both members and non members as essentially a "white", "middle class", southern Ontario centered and Anglophone organization. Participant reactions varied greatly to this perception. Some participants simply accepted this without anticipation that either the reality or the perception would change and that CAO would still have a role to play in any case. Others clearly desire organizational change and it cannot happen fast enough. Of course there are several positions in between these polar opposites.

The CAO website is currently under review and revisions are forthcoming. Currently, the website lacks visual representation of the diversity of groups practicing community arts or information on diverse programming in the province, although it accurately represents the membership and current participants in most programs.

**Annual Conference**: According to participants consulted in this study CAO has made strides in diversifying the annual conference in terms of the planning group, participation and programming. However, all agree this work needs to continue in order that the annual conference more accurately reflects the diversity of community arts groups and practices in the province. The 2003 conference included workshops on diverse forms of cultural expression, such as popular community based practices in Latin America. There was also a workshop on diversity and organizational change.

Conference activities, exhibitions and presentations were held in physically accessible locations. However, based on the researcher's experience as well as informal feedback from participants, information to this effect was not publicized and the volunteers working at the conference were unequally informed about the accessibility of the various locations. In addition, reliance on public and personal transport to the different locations created an inequality of access situation for physically challenged participants.

Resource people in Northern and Francophone communities also expressed concerns about the accessibility and relevance of the annual conference. For groups located in geographically remote regions, travel to conference locations usually requires significant time and resources which small organizations do not

have. Thus, even with travel subsidies, attendance is either not a priority or becoming less so.

For Francophone groups it was clear that the dominant use of English at conferences was a barrier to their participation. Interestingly enough, Francophone groups among the membership consulted in this research did not indicate they had any expectation of receiving services from CAO in English. They perceived CAO as an Anglophone organization and had joined for their own reasons under this assumption. They also felt that Francophone arts service organizations served their needs more directly. At the same time Francophone organizations offered some suggestions as to how the conference might be more responsive to their needs. These included: 1) interpretation for all events, 2) recording events and either dubbing or subtitling them in French, 3) including Francophone participation and activities in French. As mentioned above, the implementation of any or all of these suggestions is dependant on funding.

**Governance Workshop:** The traveling governance workshop was delivered in partnership with the Institute on Governance and included local resource people in all regions. The workshop the Researcher attended in Kitchener-Waterloo adequately addressed the concerns and needs of participants. However, content or presentation methods that would have satisfied the needs of arts groups from “people of colour”, newcomer or Aboriginal communities was lacking.

While most organizations feel they can benefit from leadership development workshops, for example, many are cautious as to how relevant such workshops will be to their context. As a case in point, one resource person from an African Canadian arts organization told the Researcher that current leadership issues in his group included how to recruit and incorporate the input of an Elders Council. He felt his organization would have more to learn from Aboriginal organizations than from CAO’s governance workshop. Other organizations were interested in workshops that would discuss the recruitment and retention of Directors from diverse backgrounds and inclusive decision-making and planning processes.

In addition, the location of the workshop attended by the Researcher was not physically accessible.

Finally the facilitators, resource people and participants were not representative of the diversity of ethno-cultural groups, ages and people with different abilities practicing community arts in the region.

Some groups in northern communities felt that the amount of time and travel involved in attending the workshop, even in their region, precluded their participation, even though travel subsidies were provided. Distances among northern communities are significant and even when activities are based in regions there are always communities that are too far away to make participation practical. As one participant explained, the location of the all-day workshop in

his region was a four hour drive from his town in good weather. He would have to arrive the night before the workshop and leave the evening after or possibly, if the weather was inclement, the following morning: a commitment of 1.5 days minimum. Participants in small organizations often cannot take that kind of time away. Suggestions for resolving this problem included: 1) video conferencing and 2) recording workshops and distributing them to members. These suggestions of course have their drawbacks in that interaction between resource people and participants would be limited. In addition, train the trainer options would not exist in these formats. Nevertheless, such activities would be an improvement to the current model of workshop delivery, were the funding in place.

**Advocacy:** The extent to which CAO has credibility as an advocate for diversity and equity in the arts community has been questioned by many people consulted in the research. This is due to its above-described image among funders as well as the arts community. In addition there are some very uncomplimentary stories of encounters with CAO floating around that may or may not accurately reflect the current organizational culture and practice but have influenced perceptions and impacted CAO's reputation nonetheless.

CAO has most recently played a role at the Minister's Conference on Diversity and Multiculturalism sponsored by Sheila Copps. The fact that CAO has undertaken a Cultural Mapping Project is perceived of positively by the vast majority of participants for this research. The opportunity for CAO to play a role in supporting the advocacy efforts of diverse communities exists. The extent to which CAO is able and willing to do so is a matter for discussion, both internally and with community groups around the province.

Northern organizations would welcome stronger support of CAO on their advocacy issues. These issues include "impractical" funding criteria that is being applied to northern communities; arts council insistence on professional arts activities; assumptions about poor artistic quality; assumptions that diversity and equity work is lagging behind that done in the south; bureaucratic funding application processes; inadequate resources to support organizational capacity building and the lack of educational, professional development and networking opportunities.

Francophone groups would also appreciate the support of CAO on their advocacy issues which include expanding provincial funding options for Francophone artists and groups, equalizing per capita funding with other provinces and Anglophone communities and; assumptions that diversity and equity work in Francophone communities lags behind that of Anglophone communities.

"People of colour", newcomers and Aboriginal groups feel that CAO must educate its own membership in order to understand the issues affecting artists of diverse backgrounds and experiences, and thus become better enabled to help with advocacy issues. Issues affecting these groups include, but are not limited

to: a backlash concerning the peer assessment processes used at the arts councils, diversity and equity criteria that is neither monitored nor enforced by funding agencies, bureaucratic funding application and reporting processes, inadequate resources to support organizational capacity building, racism in the sector, the continued rise of Islamophobia and anti-Arab sentiment, lack of awareness of different cultural forms of artistic expression, lack of understanding of different cultural manifestations of organizational development and decision-making, etc.

The only organizations that raised issues regarding sexual orientation were those working with youth and children. In these organizations it is felt that greater public education on sexual orientation was required in order to eliminate barriers for practitioners working with children and youth.

One organization consulted raised issues concerning the lack of facilities, physical accessibility and credibility for cultural arts practitioners as well as consumers with disabilities. It was suggested that increased awareness of the needs of this group was an advocacy issue.

### **Newsletter:**

Due to specific efforts of the Executive Director and other staff, newsletters produced over the life of this project have been diverse in the following ways:

- Contributors are representative of the diversity of community arts practitioners.
- Article topics address the issue of diversity, equity and organizational change.
- Articles explore diverse forms of community arts expression.

Currently there is no policy or formal commitment to maintaining such diversity. However, organizational leadership is supportive of this trend. In addition, though the spirit of embracing diversity has been appreciated, critics note that some articles tend to “exoticize” or view some forms of cultural expression and their practitioners through the lens of looking at “the other”. Greater exploration of these topics will resolve this concern as the CAO community becomes more aware and educated on diverse forms of community arts practice.

### **Best Practices – CAO Member Organizations:**

The CAO membership is quite diverse in terms of their mandates and programs. The membership is composed of arts councils, municipalities, ASOs and community arts practitioners. The extent to which member organizations serve, collaborate with or otherwise include diverse communities and groups in their activities varies significantly. No generalizations can be made in terms of regions, locations, structures or organizational terms of reference. However, in every region there exist member organizations that recognize the importance of inclusion and relationship building, and are implementing projects to that effect, with various levels of success.

**Criteria:** Best practices criteria include:

1. **Policy Development and Organizational Change:** organizational policies reflect a commitment to diversity and equity; organizational structures and processes adjusted to be more inclusive.
2. **Representation:** diverse communities are represented at all organizational levels including Board, staff, volunteers and program participants.
3. **Inclusion:** Projects and programming are carried out in consultation with participants from diverse groups and the content is reflective of the concerns and issues of diverse groups.
4. **Partnerships and collaborations** with organizations from diverse communities.
5. **Advocacy and Support:** lends its resources and actively supports organizations from diverse communities in lobbies and campaigns.
6. **Needs Identification:** undertakes projects aimed at identifying the needs of marginalized and diverse groups in order to better serve, work with or include them.

No member organization has outstanding practices in all areas; many excel in one or more area and have identified priorities for continued work in other areas. It is also clear that best practices often overlap and that intentional work in one area will spontaneously and holistically expand to others. These organizations may provide resources to other member organizations around their areas of expertise and resource each other. It is also important to note that many member organizations did not participate in any or some of the processes to collect information and thus could not be assessed for best practices.

### **Definition of Community Arts**

It is interesting to note how the definition of community arts affects best practices. Organizations that define part of their role as facilitating community development; consider themselves accountable to their communities (and not just their members); assume they have no legitimacy unless communities are involved in every level of decision-making, etc. easily meet the best practices criteria. In addition, such organizations see their roles as not only consistent with community arts development but as essential to it. Thus, it would seem that developing a definition of community arts that includes these features should encourage and facilitate the development of best practices.

### **Examples of Best Practices (in no particular order)**

#### **Members**

1. A CAO member in a northern Ontario city has been successful in incorporating diverse groups at every level of the organization's activities. These groups include youth-at-risk, low income/working class, labour and women in subsidized housing. Projects that specifically work with these groups begin with discussion and needs assessment within those communities. Members of those communities become involved in the project planning process at the outset. The history has been one in which members of marginalized communities become involved in the organization at the Board level as a result of collaborating on projects. Just this past spring at the AGM community members acknowledged the organization needed stronger involvement with the local Aboriginal communities. Thus, relationship building with this community has been formally adopted as a priority for the coming year. A project (or projects) involving the local Aboriginal community has commenced with consultations with the local friendship centre as well as local Aboriginal artists and artisans.
  
2. A CAO member in Toronto has achieved great success at ensuring that its staff, governing bodies and program participants are representative of the ethno-cultural diversity of its catchment area. The geographical boundaries of this organization's "community" are clearly defined. The organization has done numerous door-to-door surveys to determine the ethno-cultural make-up of its "community" and also keeps abreast of relevant socio-economic and census data concerning the city of Toronto. In this way it has determined which newcomer as well as more established immigrant communities comprise the population of its catchment area and furthermore has some idea of the issues and challenges facing these groups. The member group has an unofficial policy to recruit staff and volunteers from these communities and has processes to consult these communities around the types of projects and programming that would benefit them. Staff and volunteers from the communities involved ensure that the processes and programming offered by the member organization are culturally appropriate and relevant. The organization has identified that it has difficulty maintaining a culturally diverse Board and is currently working to understand why this might be true. One barrier identified concerns the nature of the lives of newcomers who are also low income. Another barrier to maintaining diverse staffing relates to the temporary nature of funding.
  
3. A CAO member in a northern Ontario community comprised of Francophones, Anglophones and Aboriginal people is mandated to serve the local Francophone community. However, in its many activities and projects this Francophone organization makes an effort to build relationships with other communities in the area. For example, the organization has brought in Aboriginal artists from other communities and programs their performances/exhibitions in the local Francophone and Anglophone schools as well as on the two local reserves. The CAO member works with local band councils and has Anglophones involved in its planning committee for an annual bilingual multi-disciplinary festival showcasing local as well as non-local artists. This year, for the first time in its history, the annual festival included, at the initiative of the local band councils, a

pow wow in the town rather than on either of the reserves. In this manner many locals and tourists who attend the annual festival were exposed to a pow wow for the first time in their lives.

4. A CAO member in Toronto has a formal mandate to work with labour and showcase working people's art. Though the organization does not call what it does "community arts" as such, the organizational mandate and program objectives specify that it provides opportunities for marginalized artists/practitioners to exhibit and present multidisciplinary works that explore issues their communities are dealing with; challenge, critique and present alternatives to the current social order. This organization has become more and more diverse over the years in its programming. Strong, clear policies are in place. Despite the fact that staff turnover is very high due to the nature of funding, the organization's recent record in maintaining a diverse staffing component is exemplary. In the spring of 2003, this organization had identified the need to work at diversifying its Board. While there have been board members from diverse/marginalized communities directors who stay with the organization over the years tend to be of European descent. The organization believes after some internal discussions that this is due to organizational barriers, one of which is the lack of awareness of long-standing directors concerning the process and organizational cultural requirements of maintaining diverse Board. Thus, the lead staff people have been charged with programming awareness-raising activities for the Board.
5. A CAO member organization in southwestern Ontario has a formal mandate to work with labour and marginalized community groups. The member's definition of community arts resembles the definition described above. Its board is comprised of ethno-culturally diverse representatives from labour groups. In addition, board recruitment policies and procedures require an ethno-cultural diversity that reflects the city's and this has been consistently achieved to the organization's benefit. Thus, as well as performing their usual roles, directors act as liaison to and resource people for various communities. At this stage in its development the CAO member is often called upon by various communities to play a role in projects and programs initiated within the communities themselves. As well, the organization initiates projects in partnership with diverse communities, plays a role in referring and connecting community organizations to each other and supports the development of newcomer groups. In fact, the organization currently shares an office with an emerging group serving newcomer artists.
6. A member organization serving Toronto youth has been successful at recruiting staff and volunteers that are representative of the ethno-cultural communities it works with. The organization depends heavily on its diverse staffing and volunteer component to develop culturally appropriate outreach and programming. The organization has made an informal commitment to ensure that its staffing remains ethno-culturally diverse to ensure continued culturally

appropriate and relevant programming. The group is currently in discussion concerning how to ensure a culturally diverse board as well.

7. A CAO member in a First Nations community has a mandate to serve the youth of that community and have the content of its work express the issues, concerns and challenges of that community. In addition to serving the interests of its own community through its work this group provides an awareness-raising role to non-Aboriginal peoples through its performances as well as through its participation in collaborations and ASOs. The group has significant internal discussions aimed at ensuring its own programming and processes are accessible to First Nations youth in their own as well as other communities; accessible to people of all sexual orientations; respects and incorporates the participation and concerns of Elders, etc. Furthermore the organization is playing a significant role in raising awareness of diversity issues within cultural sectors by such activities as training interns representative of non-Aboriginal cultural groups. At the time of writing the group was in the planning stages of hosting a conference on cultural diversity from the orientation of the Aboriginal worldview. A representative from this member group has served on the CAO board and played a role in initiating the Cultural Mapping Project while providing significant support to it.
8. A CAO member in a northern Ontario town operates a museum which currently houses a seasonal exhibit pertaining to the settler community. This town is a service centre for fly-in communities in northern Ontario and has a significant Aboriginal population, part of which is permanent and part of which is transitory. The CAO member does not currently have the funding to renovate its facilities to expand its exhibit to include Aboriginal content. However, it collaborates with the local Indian friendship centre and a local anti-racism group. Currently the CAO member is playing a role in a campaign to recover artifacts and medicine items taken from the local Aboriginal community. It also supports and collaborates on specific projects aimed at relationship building between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations as well as generating more awareness of Aboriginal culture and history locally.
9. In northeastern Ontario an ASO which is also a CAO member works at building relationships with both the Francophone and Aboriginal communities in their area. At the time of the interview this organization was housed in a building owned by a Francophone arts organization and thus had a good relationship with and a good idea of the cultural issues of the local Francophone community. Though the organization's members mostly comprise Anglophones of European descent (many of whom speak French as a second language), the newsletter runs articles and ads in French written by Francophones with content relevant and appropriate to a Francophone audience. In addition, the organization has a board member representing the local Aboriginal cultural centre and also runs articles and ads in its newsletter pertaining to issues and activities in the Aboriginal community. The newsletter and publications of this member group publicize and promote the cultural activities of the Francophone and Aboriginal communities as

well as those of their own members. The organization's evaluation of this practice concludes that mutual promotion and cooperation is beneficial to all groups as well as to the town's local economy and cultural sector. Although the CAO member has identified a desire to work more closely with the Aboriginal community, their current financial situation requires they prioritize fundraising to maintain an office and staff.

10. In an Eastern Ontario city a CAO member, also an ASO, launched a project at the time of interview which aimed to outreach to diverse ethno-cultural communities to involve them in a project that would partner member artists with artists in those communities on specific multi-disciplinary projects. Although this organization did not currently have an ethno-culturally diverse board, its lead staff person was a member of an immigrant community and was playing a role in raising awareness at the board level of the need to become more diverse in its governance as well as programming. The lead staff had developed a relationship with the local Ministry of Citizenship office as well as the local business association which were also interested in promoting cultural diversity for their own purposes. At the time of the researcher's visit the Board chair and lead staff person for this organization attended a cultural awareness event presented by the Native Student's Association at the local university in order to learn more about the issues of the local Aboriginal community as well as to network with local artists/practitioners.

### **Best Practices – Non-Members**

1. In a northwestern Ontario city a group serves youth from newcomer, "people of colour" and Aboriginal communities. Because of the different funding structures for Aboriginal and newcomer/immigrant communities and significant cuts to programs serving the latter, the group is in serious financial crisis. However, it is currently partnering with the local friendship centre and band councils to continue delivering programming to youth. Much of this is cultural programming. The group utilizes Elders and cultural teachers from the local Aboriginal communities in its programming. Much of the programming content is aimed at identifying and responding to common needs and issues experienced by young people as identified by the youth themselves. Because the organization offers social services and programming, such as a drop-in centre, the processes for consulting with youth around developing appropriate cultural programming tend to be informal yet effective. However, the organization needs significant infrastructural development, including stronger governance, and would benefit significantly from collaborating with organizations that have such processes in place. Such collaboration would enable the group to contribute to a greater awareness of the programming and service needs of their participants within their own geographic area.
2. A group in Toronto serving the Latin American community has had significant internal discussions on diversity issues within its own community. These

concern the lack of representation of Afro-Latinos and indigenous people of Latin American origins within the organization's programming and leadership. In addition, the organization has been concerned about inequality and stereotypes among community members from national groups (e.g, Chile, Mexico, Colombia, Venezuela, Brazil, etc.). The organization has hosted public discussions on these issues. The discussions have led to more diverse programming and participation in planning from Afro-Latin and indigenous groups. In addition, a much more diverse national representation characterizes the staffing, volunteer and programming components of the organization. The group is still working at diversifying its staffing (although funding is an issue) and Board.

3. An anti-racism committee in a northwestern Ontario town is comprised of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community members. The group works mainly with youth. Although cultural programming is only a part of its mandate its processes for developing and implementing such programming involve youth from both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities at the early consulting and planning as well as implementation and evaluation phases. The cultural programs and projects are relevant to issues confronting young people from both backgrounds and serve to raise awareness in the larger community. The organization provides many opportunities for the youth of both communities to develop leadership skills by incorporating mentoring and training into their programming. In addition, the group collaborates with many community initiatives working routinely with the local museum, friendship center, band councils and local artists of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal background. The group has identified its need to work harder at maintaining a diverse board.

## **Conclusion**

Community Arts Ontario is at a key moment in its development. Clearly organizational leadership has taken the commendable initiative to implement organizational changes that have to potential to impact many communities across the province and beyond. As a community of artists CAO has the capacity to develop creative, exciting and dynamic models of organizational change in partnership with diverse communities. This initiative has the further potential to impact other sectors and catalyze changes that will enhance the participation of all members of society.

# CULTURAL MAPPING PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS

**Issues Identification:** The recommendations that follow are intended to address issues that have been identified in the four areas of research conducted in the Cultural Mapping Project:

1. Organizational Change/Development Toward Diversity and Equity
2. CAO Organizational Needs and Preparedness Related to Diversity and Equity
3. CAO Member Organizations' Needs and Preparedness Related to Diversity and Equity
4. Experiences, Needs, Priorities and Issues among Diverse Community Artists and Their Organizations.

Recommendations of the researcher are as follows:

## 1. **Vision, Mandate, Objectives**

That CAO as an organization:

- a. Clearly incorporate principles of diversity and equity into the organization's Vision Statement, Mandate and Objectives.
- b. Ensure that all programs, services and activities incorporate the principles of diversity and equity in their planning and delivery.
- c. Determine the extent to which CAO can and will serve Francophone communities and reflect this in the above documentation<sup>3</sup>.
- d. Set specific, measurable goals related to diversity and equity.

## 2. **Policy and Procedure Development**

That CAO develop the following policies and procedures:

- a. **Anti-Discrimination Policy** to establish organizational standards and ensure that processes for resolution exist when these standards are violated.
- b. **Personnel Policy** for both permanent as well as contract staff. These policies should clearly establish consistent standards of fairness throughout the organization. They should include typical items such as benefits, remuneration rates, professional development standards, discipline procedures, grounds for dismissal, etc. In addition, they should include clarification on roles and responsibilities, accountability, dispute resolutions for labour/management as well as employer / employee, etc.
- c. **Code of Conduct** establishing standards of professional, respectful and courteous behavior to which all staff, volunteers and Directors must adhere.

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<sup>3</sup> Since the production of this recommendation the Board has decided that current and anticipated levels of funding do not permit the consistent delivery of culturally appropriate bilingual services and programming to francophone arts groups. However, whenever possible the Board will endeavor to provide such services.

- d. **Annual Performance Reviews** for all staff that assess performance in relation to job descriptions and codes of conduct. Reviews can also serve as opportunities for mutually agreed on goals for professional development. Confidential records of these reviews should be maintained by the organization.
- e. **Exit Interviews** for outgoing staff who leave the organization to provide opportunities to collect anecdotal and statistical information on organizational performance with regard to diversity, equity and other organizational practices.
- f. **Template Policies for Member Organizations.** The above policies can be made available in a generic form to member organizations wishing to develop their own policies in this regard.
- g. **Formal program evaluations and needs assessments.** There are a variety of processes for undertaking this work which needs to be integrated into all organizational activities. Strategic planning sessions should begin with an assessment of the needs of organizational members and the community arts sector as well as a critical review of the previous year's programs. These assessments should inform planning processes.
- h. **Policy review.** Organizational policies should be reviewed and revised as necessary. Current policies need review and as policies are developed they will need to be evaluated over time.

### **3. Structure & Leadership Selection**

That CAO take immediate steps to diversify the organizational leadership through the following methods:

- a. **Equity Hiring** practices. This would include the development of equity criteria into job descriptions, tendering procedures, advertising methods, hiring committee selection and applicant interviews.
- b. Setting **Representational Goals for the Board and Committees.** Equity and diversity principles should be included in the mandate of the Nominations Committee and such criteria should be made a high priority in candidate selection.
- c. Create a two **(2) year part time staff position** the responsibilities of which are:
  - i. Be a resource to CAO and its members on diversity and equity work.
  - ii. Coordinate programs and services aimed at achieving diversity and equity goals
  - iii. Coordinate the sharing of equity and diversity resources and information among CAO members
  - iv. Promote and support relationship-building among member and non-member organizations.

### **4. Training and Resources**

That CAO encourage, promote and maintain resources to enable organizational change for itself and its members through the following methods:

- a. Maintain, distribute and make available resources on equity, anti-racism, anti-discrimination, conflict management, organizational change, etc. (see attached bibliography<sup>4</sup>.)
- b. Incorporate equity and diversity issues and resources into existing training and development programs: e.g., governance workshop, annual conference, newsletter, etc.
  - i. **Governance Workshop:** (The Researcher understands that this is a time-limited program, however below are examples of what a future program should consider.)
    1. Ensure facilitators and resource people that are more representative of diverse communities.
    2. Ensure that facilitators and resource people that have experience in and extensive knowledge of diverse communities.
    3. Ensure content that acknowledges diversity (e.g. uses examples from diverse communities and organizations).
    4. Ensure content that addresses the governance needs, concerns and development of diverse organizations (e.g. how to recruit and retain a diverse Board, how to respond to incidences of racism & discrimination, legal responsibilities regarding human rights, how to recruit and incorporate the input of an Elders Council, forms of consensus decision-making, conflict management and organizational change issues, etc.).
    5. Ensure that content address the need, benefits and process of organizational policy development, particularly as it relates to diversity and equity.
  - ii. **Annual Conference**
    1. Ensure that the conference planning group is diverse.
    2. Provide more opportunities for diverse, non-member groups and artists to facilitate workshops and offer cultural presentations.
    3. Provide workshops devoted specifically to discussing topics related to diversity and equity such as (only suggestions):
      - a. Recruitment and retention of a diverse Board
      - b. The Role of an Elders Council
      - c. Hybridized cultural identity and consequent community arts expressions.
      - d. Immigrant artist experiences
      - e. Art and Spirituality: Case Studies from World Cultures (e.g., Aboriginal, African, South Asian, etc.)
      - f. Hands on sessions for developing diverse forms of “art” (e.g., calligraphy, mural-making, popular theatre, etc.)

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<sup>4</sup> In development.

- g. Community ownership and copyright issues (such as with stories and characters from the oral histories of Aboriginal cultures)
- h. Consensus decision-making models.
- i. Issues affecting artists from Muslim and Middle Eastern communities.
- j. Other?

**iii. Newsletter**

- 1. Information on diverse forms of cultural expression (e.g., wampum, calligraphy, mural-making, popular theatre, etc.)
  - 2. Historical and everyday experiences of artists facing discrimination with positive resolutions.
  - 3. Other?
- c. Ensure the **website is visually representatives** of the diversity of community arts practice in the province through graphics and photos.
  - d. Ensure the website clearly reflects the organizational commitment to diversity by including **regularly updated information on projects and programs** in this regard.

**5. Outreach & Relationship Building**

That CAO develop a strategy for building relationships with diverse and marginalized community arts groups.

- a. Create a **Community Development Worker** position the responsibilities of which will be to:
  - i. Be a resource to the Board around policy development, implementation and evaluation.
  - ii. Coordinate relationship-building tasks outlined in the Strategic Plan.
  - iii. Coordinate leadership development activities and projects.
  - iv. Assist the board and CAO members in developing appropriate outreach and relationship-building strategies & processes.
  - v. Coordinate the development and distribution of resources on diversity, equity and leadership development to community arts organizations as per the Board's policies and procedures.
- b. Create 18-month positions for six (6) part time **Regional Equity and Diversity Coordinators** to be a resource to member groups. These coordinators would promote and facilitate needs identification of member and non-member groups, information sharing as well as outreach/relationship-building, planning and action. Regions will consist of: Toronto area, Southwest Ontario, Eastern Ontario, Central Ontario, Northeastern Ontario, Northwestern Ontario (as they are currently identified). Depending on CAO's commitment and ability to serve

Francophone communities, some of these positions might require bilingualism or some other way of addressing the language differences.

- c. Hold **regional consultations** on advocacy concerns for both member and non member groups hosted by CAO. Such gatherings also serve as opportunities for networking, needs assessments, etc.
- d. Support the advocacy efforts of marginalized groups by **incorporating the advocacy concerns of marginalized groups** into CAO's advocacy activities and **collaborating with** the advocacy activities of these groups.
- e. **Utilize the database** developed by this project to begin outreach and relationship-building on a regional level.
- f. All CAO activities, programs and services should be **physically accessible**. In addition, these activities must be advertised as such.
- g. Volunteers and staff serving members and the public at events and activities must be well-informed and oriented on the physically accessible facilities and accommodations for those who require it.

## 6. Special Projects

That CAO initiate projects to further its equity and diversity goals.

- a) Initiate collaboration with one or more groups representing diverse communities to organize an event or program specifically devoted to exploring issues of diversity, equity and relationship-building.
- b) Encourage and support the organizing of local and regional events of this nature.

## 7. Administration

That administrative procedures and practices support equity and diversity work.

- a. Regularly updated website info, particularly the database.
- b. Regularly update member contact information.
- c. Prompt, polite and professional public relations.



**COMMUNITY ARTS ONTARIO  
CULTURAL MAPPING PROJECT  
TWO YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN**

Approved by Board of Directors  
Date: March 26, 2004

**Phase II & III Vision Statement:**

Community Arts Ontario (CAO) strives to create a society that recognizes and values the contributions of cultural workers from diverse communities toward improving the quality of life for all. CAO further recognizes that sharing and exchanges among diverse and marginalized cultural workers contributes to the overall development of community arts and further enhances the role the arts plays in community development.

**Phase II & III Mandate Statement:**

Community Arts Ontario (CAO) recognizes that cultural workers and institutions have the potential to play a significant role in positive social change through understanding, articulating and addressing the needs and aspirations of individuals and communities. Thus, CAO's role is to encourage, support and enable expressions of the diversity of artists in the province, including those that have been historically marginalized and disempowered.

**Introduction**

The following Strategic Plan Outline is written from the perspective that organizational change must be bottom-up as well as top-down in order to ensure consistency and longevity. While the plan assumes that organizational leadership must be committed and aware it also understands that as a member organization CAO policy and direction are determined through processes that involve input from various organizations across the province. Thus, to ensure the ongoing work of maintaining diverse and equitable collaboration with communities that have constantly shifting demographics it is essential to ensure that there is commitment to ongoing development at all levels of the organization as well as its membership. This requires a commitment to training, awareness raising and strengthening governance among the leadership of CAO as well as its member organizations.

Outcomes	Objectives	How	Who	Timeline
<p>1. A CAO Diversity &amp; Equity Training Manual &amp; Workshop Guide</p> <p>Relates to Report Recommendations 4a &amp; 4b.</p>	<p>Develop a training resource for CAO staff and volunteers to address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building relationships with diverse communities and groups</li> <li>• Recruitment and retention of diverse Boards/volunteers</li> <li>• Recruitment and retention of diverse staff</li> <li>• Policy development</li> <li>• Leadership &amp; governance</li> <li>• Program development</li> </ul>	<p>Use information, bibliography &amp; case studies gathered through the research phase with input from regional reps and other key participants from various regions.</p>	<p>Contracted popular education writer accountable to a subcommittee of the Board.</p>	<p>Months 1-5</p>
<p>2. Organizational Leadership that understands and is committed to diversity and equity.</p> <p>Relates to Report Recommendation 4b.</p>	<p>1) A Community Development<sup>5</sup> Coordinator to act as resource to the Board and member agencies on diversity and equity issues as well as coordinate specific equity and diversity projects.</p> <p>2) 12 workshops (6 in Southwest, Eastern Ontario and Toronto, 6 in Central, Northeastern and Northwestern Ontario) to member organizations on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building relationships with diverse communities and groups</li> <li>• Board/Volunteer recruitment and retention</li> <li>• Recruitment and retention of diverse staff</li> <li>• Policy development</li> <li>• Leadership &amp; governance</li> <li>• Program development</li> </ul> <p>Workshops recorded on video or CD ROM are available to CAO member and non member organizations as resources.</p>	<p>1) Develop a job description and hire a “person of colour”, Aboriginal person, labour representatives, a person whose first language is not English or person with a visible disability to coordinate this work.</p> <p>2a) Using the workshop guide and other resources.</p> <p>2b) Traveling leadership workshops to be recorded and made available to organizations within and outside of the CAO membership at cost.</p> <p>2c) Record conference workshops and activities and make available to CAO members.</p>	<p>Board of Directors</p> <p>Community Development Coordinator</p> <p>Workshop facilitators and resource people to be 100% “persons of colour”, Aboriginal persons, labour representatives, persons whose first language is not English and persons with a visible disability.</p>	<p>Months 1-2</p> <p>Deadline: Conference 2006</p>

<sup>5</sup> Researcher will prepare a draft job description for Board approval.

Outcomes	Objectives	How	Who	Timeline
<p>3. Policies &amp; Procedures Manual</p> <p>Relates to Report Recommendations: 1a, b, c, d; 2a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h; 7c.</p>	<p>Organizational policies pertaining to human resources, programming as well as Board and volunteer recruitment procedures revised and/or drafted. This will include but not be limited to: Annual performance review procedures, grievance processes, equity hiring policy, volunteer recruitment policy, Board nominations &amp; appointment policies and policies for volunteers.</p> <p>Template policies developed for CAO member organizations.</p> <p>Annual policy reviews.</p>	<p>One policy per month to be developed and included in the manual.</p> <p>Board to institute policy review at its annual strategic planning session.</p>	<p>Community Development Coordinator to facilitate Board discussion and develop drafts.</p> <p>Board to have final approval.</p>	<p>(Currently underway) Months 1-12</p>
<p>4. Diverse Board Representation</p> <p>Relates to Report Recommendations 3a, b, c.</p>	<p>A minimum of 50% of Board positions occupied by “persons of colour”, Aboriginal persons, labour representatives, persons whose first language is not English, member of a labour organization and persons with a visible disability.</p>	<p>Diversity criteria becomes a priority among Board recruitment criteria.</p>	<p>Nominations Committee, Community Development Coordinator</p>	<p>Deadline: The end of Project year 3</p>
<p>5. Diverse Staff Component</p> <p>Relates to Report Recommendations 3a, c.</p>	<p>A minimum of 50% of contract &amp; consulting positions occupied by “persons of colour”, Aboriginal persons, labour representatives, persons whose first language is not English and persons with a visible disability.</p> <p>ED is a “person of colour”, Aboriginal person, a person whose first language is not English or person with a visible disability.</p>	<p>Diversity criteria becomes a priority in hiring process.</p>	<p>Hiring Committees</p>	<p>Deadline: ASAP</p>

Outcomes	Objectives	How	Who	Timeline
<p>6. Diversity and Equity represented in <i>Arts On</i> (CAO Newsletter) and on the web site.</p> <p>Relates to Report Recommendations 4a, b; 7a, b, d.</p>	<p>A minimum of 50% of articles and columns written by “persons of colour”, Aboriginal persons, labour representatives, persons whose first language is not English and persons with a visible disability.</p> <p>Each newsletter issue to contain a minimum of one article specifically addressing diversity &amp; equity issues.</p> <p>Each issue to profile a form of community arts expression that relates specifically to communities “of colour”, Aboriginal communities, labour, communities whose first language is not English and communities of people with a visible disability. (E.g. wampum belts, calligraphy.)</p> <p>A minimum of 50% of the images and art displayed on the website will be representative of artists “of colour”, Aboriginal artists, artists whose first language is not English and artists with a visible disability.</p> <p>A minimum of 25% of the website’s content will be devoted to issues related to diversity and equity in community arts and CAO.</p>	<p>Develop newsletter policy that incorporates the objectives.</p> <p>Active solicitation of participation in the newsletter from diverse artists and their organizations.</p> <p>Request referrals from current contributors to the newsletter to identify other potential contributors.</p>	<p>Newsletter Coordinator, ED</p>	<p>Deadline: Month 10</p>
<p>7. Diverse Conference Programming and Participation</p> <p>Relates to Report Recommendations 4b, 5c, 5f, and 5g.</p>	<p>A minimum of 50% of CAO’s annual conference workshops, panels, presentations, performances, exhibitions and activities must involve participants from the communities identified above.</p> <p>A minimum of two conference activities must be devoted specifically to addressing CAO diversity and equity issues.</p> <p>All conference venues are physically accessible.</p>	<p>Call for Proposals will state this as a criteria and proposal reviews will consider this criteria.</p> <p>All promotional materials will clearly indicate the venues are physically accessible. Volunteers and staff will be enabled to provide information on accessibility.</p>	<p>Conference Organizing Committee, Diversity Consultant, ED</p>	<p>Deadline: Conference 2005</p>

<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>How</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
8. Diverse Complement of CAO Volunteers  Relates to Report Recommendations 3b, c	A minimum of 50% of organizational volunteer positions are occupied by “persons of colour”, Aboriginal persons, labour representatives, persons whose first language is not English and persons with a visible disability.	Active outreach to artists and organizations from diverse communities.	Community Development Coordinator, ED	Deadline: Conference 2005
9. CAO willing and able to represent advocacy issues of diverse groups.  Relates to Report Recommendations 5b, c, d, e.	CAO has an understanding of issues and priorities affecting artists “of colour”, Aboriginal artists, artists whose first language is not English and artists with a visible disability and will advocate on behalf of these artists with government policy-makers and funding agencies.  A report on advocacy issues identified by above artists and groups.	Regional consultations with organizations and groups representing and/or working with artists “of colour”, Aboriginal artists, artists whose first language is not English, artists with a visible disability and artists from remote geographical regions.	Community Development Coordinator to coordinate, facilitate and compile report.	Conference 2005
10. Increased diversity of CAO membership  Relates to Report Recommendations 5d, 5d, 5e.	A minimum of 25% of CAO member organizations will be representative of or working with artists “of colour”, Aboriginal artists, artists whose first language is not English and artists with a visible disability by the end of project year 3.	Encourage and support member organizations developing relationships with diverse groups and artists in their regions.  Encourage and support member organizations in developing partnerships and joint projects with diverse groups in their regions.  Use the database and information collected in the research phase of the project to identify regional groups with which joint projects and partnerships will be useful.	Regional Diversity & Equity Project Coordinators (6 part time) <sup>6</sup> along with key leadership in CAO member organizations.	Commences: beginning of Project year 3

<sup>6</sup> Job descriptions to be drafted by the Researcher for Board approval.

Outcomes	Objectives	How	Who	Timeline
<p>11. CAO member organizations committed to diversity and equity; working with diverse groups and artists in every region.</p> <p>Related to recommendations 5b, 5d.</p>	<p>80% of CAO member organizations exhibit one or more of the following best practices:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. <b>Policy Development and Organizational Change:</b> organizational policies reflect a commitment to diversity and equity; organizational structures and processes adjusted to be more inclusive.</li> <li>8. <b>Representation:</b> diverse communities are represented at all organizational levels including Board, staff, volunteers and program participants.</li> <li>9. <b>Inclusion:</b> Projects and programming are carried out in consultation with participants from diverse groups and the content is reflective of the concerns and issues of diverse groups.</li> <li>10. <b>Partnerships and collaborations</b> with organizations from diverse communities.</li> <li>11. <b>Advocacy and Support:</b> lends its resources and actively supports organizations from diverse communities in lobbies and campaigns.</li> <li>12. <b>Needs Identification:</b> undertakes projects aimed at identifying the needs of marginalized and diverse groups in order to better serve, work with or include them.</li> </ol>	<p>Formally indicate on all documents and publicity materials that commitment to diversity and equity is an expectation of membership in CAO.</p> <p>Continue with best practices recognition awards.</p> <p>Develop template diversity and equity policies which can be used by member organizations.</p> <p>Maintain multi-media resources on diversity and equity with materials available for distribution to CAO members.</p> <p>Implement all above strategies.</p>	<p>Regional Diversity &amp; Equity Project Coordinators (6 part time)<sup>7</sup></p>	<p>Deadline: end of project year 3</p>

**Evaluation:**

Success criteria will be measurable in all cases as per the numbers stated in the objectives for all outcomes. Goals for outcome #11 will be measured against information collected through the Best Practices Awards process. These goals will be evaluated at the Board’s annual strategic planning session. The ED and the

<sup>7</sup> Job descriptions to be drafted by the Researcher for Board approval.

Community Development Coordinator (CDC) will be responsible for ensuring that input from member organizations, staff, volunteers and directors will be formally solicited as appropriate. In addition, both the ED and CDC will maintain a record of informal and anecdotal information relevant to the objectives and will regularly report on informational gathered in this manner. Feedback from these sources will be fed into the strategic planning process.

## APPENDIX I

### **Barriers to Diversity and Equity A Discussion Paper Prepared for the Cultural Mapping Project**

By Zainab Amadahy, Researcher

The following is an attempt to allow the reader to reflect on and review some of the issues that have arisen in the Cultural Mapping Project. It is important to understand that the anecdotes and issues raised in this section relate to barriers and that best practices are discussed in the main body of the report. While it is difficult to quantify the balance of barriers vs. best practices (because such concepts are not always quantifiable and also not all CAO members participated in the project) it is the Researcher's impression that there is a fair balance of barriers and best practices throughout the membership (and sometimes even within organizations). The reason for raising the issue of barriers as well as best practices is to better inform the planning process for the project's next stage and not to ridicule, judge or ostracize any organization or its practices.

#### **Common Issues Among Non Member Groups**

The first thing to realize about non-member groups is that there is vast diversity within the diversity. For example and urban Aboriginal community will have both similarities with and difference from a First Nations community far from an urban centre. The "Arab community" contains a variety of languages, religious traditions and nationalities. The Latin American community includes people of European, indigenous and African descent as well as mixed raced people who identify as such. Latin Americans speak Spanish, Portuguese, English and many indigenous languages. All ethno-cultural communities have members with disabilities (visible and not), different sexual orientations and the gamut of age groups. Thus, it becomes important to be mindful that each group -- each community -- will have a history, character and needs that are quite diverse.

#### **Exclusion:**

The first point that many groups wish to make is the extent to which they feel excluded from the mainstream arts communities. This can manifest itself in many ways. Sometimes forms of artistic expression are not recognized or valued as "artistic" (e.g., popular theatre, calligraphy and Aboriginal dance forms). It is often assumed that these are "folk arts" or social programs. This is particularly true of artists with disabilities or artists who work with disabled people. The assumption is that artistic quality is lacking; that the emphasis is on preserving culture or providing a social service and on community development rather than on producing and developing "art". Because there is a lack of understanding of how these art forms have developed over time, how they have fused with and been influenced by other cultures and how they have been integrated with community development it is assumed that these forms of expression do not constitute "art".

Pow wow dancing, for example, is often seen as “traditional” dance that was performed over centuries, unchanged and static. This is not the case at all. This is true of ceremonial dances that outsiders to the community generally never see. While a few pow wow dance forms have been preserved over time, the vast majority are actually contemporary dance forms that are evolving as we speak. In addition, many traditional dance styles inform and infuse contemporary forms. It is also important to note that these dances were “traditionally” not performed by women, which is certainly not the case these days. Furthermore, pow wow dancing is fully integrated with regalia-making. Thus there is a visual arts component that is as evolving and “artistic” as any other visual art. Activities at pow wows as well as pow wows themselves have social, cultural and economic functions; they contribute to, demonstrate and promote economic as well as cultural/artistic development.

If such activities fit the definition of community arts then there is not a friendship centre on Turtle Island that does not practice community arts through its cultural programs (beading, regalia-making, storytelling, drumming, dancing, singing, etc.)

The point of how artistic expressions from many cultures are misinterpreted can be similarly illustrated by the following anecdote. A Lebanese theatre company that applied for funding for a pre-Islamic period piece was advised by an arts council grants officer that the wearing of *hijab* (traditional head covering) by the female characters would suggest to audiences that the play was advocating the oppression of women. Besides the inaccurate assumption that all women who wear *hijab* are “oppressed”, this anecdote serves to illustrate how Middle Eastern cultures and history are interpreted through the filter of a Eurocentric value system and then evaluated.

Different definitions or concepts of what constitutes “community arts” contribute to this concern about feeling marginalized. In the dominant Eurocentric tradition “art” is seen as something that can be bought, sold and collected. It is produced and performed by “professionals” for an “audience” which often pays a fee for the privilege. This is not the case in most other world cultures where art is integrated into day-to-day activities, has a spiritual or intangible value and is practiced by everyone.

One informant, a world renowned visual artist originally from Afghanistan, related that “back home” as well as in other parts of the world where he had lived, bringing the family to see high quality theatrical presentations was completely affordable, which is not the case for a working class family in Canada. In addition, on a post-war trip he had made back to Afghanistan he told me that amidst the rubble people were making art, “bringing out” their poetry, weaving, sculptures, etc. and sharing it despite the fact that there was no “market” and it was not a viable “career option”. Making art in this context is not about entertainment, recreation or business. It does not depend on wealthy patrons or formal institutions. It is a part of who they are – a statement of who they are -- as a people and a culture. “Art” is integral to their physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being.

While community artists seem to have long-recognized such activities as “community arts” it is consequently unclear why such activities among some groups remain marginalized even in the

“community arts” sector. Thus it appears there is more going on than just a lack of familiarity with some forms of cultural expression.

Another way in which groups are excluded is simply the result of “isms” (e.g., racism, homophobia, ableism, Islamophobia, etc.). The story of how “The Lands Within Me” exhibit at the Canadian Museum of Civilization (CMC) is an example. This was a multi-disciplinary exhibit that Canadian artists of Arab descent had worked on for over a year prior to its scheduled opening. Then 9-11 happened and the exhibit was abruptly cancelled. Official reasoning held that the exhibition would offend or upset the public. As a result of public pressure that culminated in a statement by then Prime Minister Jean Chretien suggesting the exhibit should go on, the museum bureaucracy complied. Formal written comments from people who viewed the exhibition were overwhelmingly favourable (in the 90% range). Eighteen months later the CMC terminated the contract of the exhibit’s curator, who had been there for 10 years and was the only curator-of-colour at the institution. Again, public pressure resulted in her reinstatement.

The point to this much-abridged anecdote is to illustrate how artists outside the mainstream community are excluded not on the basis of any artistic criteria but on the basis of what people believe they might produce. Work that deals with sexual and cultural identity or other “controversial” topics are not ones with which most institutions want to deal.

Another example is contained in a short anecdote told by the Artistic Director of a Lebanese theatre company. When the AD tried to book a venue for a performance, the person taking the info jokingly suggested that since this was an Arab dance group he would be prepared for a terrorist bombing. “What can you do?” the AD asked me. “He thought he was funny.”

While most institutional representatives might not be so blatant in exhibiting their racism, one has to ask how much racism -- as well as other “isms” -- are unspoken and unacknowledged and what are the outcomes?

A musician originally from Burma and now living in Canada as a permanent resident spoke of his return from Asia when he was detained for 24 hours at the Toronto airport and had part of his percussion instrument seized for fear it “could be used as a weapon”. This is an example of how the current political climate impacts on artists from Asian, South Asian, Middle Eastern and Islamic communities. Another musician told me of how her group (members of South Asian background) was detained for several hours at the border while entering the US, making them late for a gig. While this is a discriminatory practice of the US government members of communities targeted by the US in this fashion make the point that the Canadian government does not oppose or even protest racial profiling committed by the US against Canadian citizens crossing the border. Examples of discriminatory practices against Canadian citizens include arrest, long term detention, deportation to a third country and deportation to Canada. Such activities have become more frequent since 9-11.

Though arts institutions are not involved in discriminating against or harassing artists in the above two cases, it is clear that artists are not excluded from the discriminatory practices of other institutions and demonstrates that artist groups from diverse communities have advocacy issues that are significantly different from the majority of arts groups currently in CAO’s membership.

Another “ism” the arts sector must deal with is “ableism”. In the course of this study the Researcher was surprised at how many member organization offices, events and activities were physically inaccessible. For example, one resource person told me that his board had discussed with their ED the need to find office space that was physically accessible. Yet when the organization relocated the new office was on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of a building without an elevator. This example of course raises issues related to governance and human resources practices as well as diversity and accessibility. Thus, it is easy to see how these issues interconnect.

Another amusing example of the lack of attention to physical access was the governance workshop in Waterloo that the researcher attended. Not only did the workshop not deal with issues of ethno-cultural diversity until a specific question was asked, it was also located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of a building with no elevator.

As the researcher for this project I was invited to participate in a City of Toronto sponsored training workshop on accessibility. At the time I had a serious knee injury, walked with the aid of a cane and could not climb stairs. I was shocked when I arrived at the venue to find that the only way to access a workshop on accessibility was to climb two flights of stairs. While I presume the workshop’s content was primarily devoted to issues of ethno-cultural access, it was still remarkable to me that they had not considered interrelated access issues.

The “Out of Africa” exhibit at the ROM back in the 80s is illustrative of the long term damage that is done to relationship building when “isms” are not appropriately challenged. Though the curators were undoubtedly well-intentioned, this exhibit created significant controversy because it was curated without any input from the diasporic African community and consequently was experienced by this community as racist. The scars of this episode have never completely healed and the community still speaks of it, which serves to illustrate how difficult it is to regain trust once lost.

The ROM exhibit contained personal and spiritual objects that had been pillaged or “collected” by non-Africans and put on display with inappropriate, inaccurate and paternalistic descriptions of their origins and uses. Community members continue to make the point that there are available, in diasporic African communities, items which are fit to be displayed in a certain context and would serve to enlighten, educate and build bridges of cultural understanding. Furthermore, African artists and institutions would be the ones being compensated in tangible and not so tangible ways, redistributing resources to a community that has been stolen from for centuries.

The ROM and other institutions have since grappled with issues of relationship building and community consultation in order to avoid such controversy, all to varying degrees of success. However, the point here is that fear, ignorance and petty politics on the part of institutions is another factor that serves to exclude artists of diverse experiences and backgrounds. Social inequality exists and “isms” impact on the everyday lives of artists as they do on individuals in other sectors. This is important to accept and acknowledge when building trustful relationships with diverse communities.

It is also important to understand that “isms” are systemic and are not just about willful and knowledgeable exclusion or abuse. As one informant explained, “People think when you say racism you mean hate. Most people don’t hate, so they don’t see themselves as racist. I think we need another word to describe what goes on. Maybe it’s more Judeo-Christian-centrism. Or Eurocentrism.” The point is that many of us, whether of European heritage or not, do not see how much of our values and standards are considered the “norm” -- universal to all cultures. We don’t even necessarily assume our practices are superior because we cannot conceptualize other ways of doing or thinking. This is how, even with the best of intentions, one can destroy the potential for relationship building. This is something we must all question in order to further our work.

### **Networking, Joint Projects & Collaborations :**

Almost every organization consulted for this study is interested in networking, joint projects and collaborations, but only under specific conditions. Emphasized is the concept of respect, balance and sincerity. That is to say, all resource people in a variety of ways stressed their expectation that they be regarded as people who have something to offer; that they have skills, experiences and unique perspectives to contribute.

Many resource people related stories of being approached by art organizations to collaborate in some way. One participant consulted for this study spoke of being contracted to perform at a CAO conference. A week before she was scheduled to do so a CAO organizer called her and suggested that she might want her performance to consist of something more “Aboriginal” than her demo materials indicated because CAO was interested in “showing off its diversity”. Some of the issues that have prevented positive collaborations are not quantifiable and measurable but have to do with attitudes, beliefs and behaviours.

First is the motivation for collaborations. Groups resent when they are asked to participate in a project simply in the interest of helping an organization become more diverse. Likewise, groups are not impressed with being asked to participate so that an organization or project can broaden its audience or market appeal. No one wants to feel that their contributions are irrelevant and that what is important is their ethnicity, sexual orientation or visible disability, for example. When the experiences, histories and cultures of all participants is not recognized, appreciated and valued joint projects are inherently sabotaged from the start. The time needed to invest in building relationships as opposed to simply making contact, outreaching and inviting others is often underestimated.

Many groups do not have an interest in being invited to participate in another group’s already formulated vision, plans, etc. It is beneficial to true relationship building that time be invested in learning about diverse communities, participating in their activities and lending support prior to expecting that they will simply show up and participate in activities that are not of their design and may not even be consistent with their value system. Participants in any endeavor must share the same visions and goals. This is obvious, though it is often ignored.

Communities, and groups within them, need to be communicated with in a respectful way, which acknowledges that, as in any relationship, there will be mutual benefit. That is to say, the lessons

do not flow one way. Furthermore, groups are always on guard against the loss of their autonomy and independence. As well, they are concerned with having an equal say in decision making at the highest level of policy development.

These are not unrealistic concerns in my experience with member group discussions. Many groups within the CAO membership consulted for this study feel they can play a role in “teaching” or “helping” other groups without acknowledging or understanding that they may have a few things to learn. For example, in one focus group members discussed how they could not expect participants from diverse communities to observe group norms such as attending meetings consistently, arriving on time or following up with task assignments. In other words, lateness, inconsistency and irresponsibility were viewed as cultural characteristics and had to be tolerated in order to achieve the goals of diverse representation. Organizations would simply have to put up with that type of behavior until the participants learned better.

These beliefs were stereotypes based on racism, pure and simple. After all, it’s not as if groups composed of European descended participants do not display such behaviors. However, it seems that those who believe this also believe that accommodating irresponsible behavior is part and parcel of developing a diverse organization. Thus, those who embarked on this work are portrayed as saintly, tolerant, patient types who “understand” diverse cultural practices. It is not seen as racist to first believe these stereotypes and, secondly, to hold participants of certain ethnicities unequally accountable to realistic expectations. This anecdote is not being shared to incite anger or defensiveness, but to alert us all to where some members of the organization are and so we can realistically look at action strategies.

In one very multi-cultural small city, a rep from a CAO member organization shared her “outreach project proposal”. The purpose of this project was to outreach to diverse communities to let them know what services and programs the group offered. The Researcher asked this person if she knew what was going on in the various communities in her city, what projects, events and programs were already underway and what services these groups had already identified as a need. She did not know. Furthermore, she claimed she didn’t have the time or resources to do this type of research. In talking with the lead staff and president of the board in separate interviews, themes of overwork and not-enough-resources permeated the discussions. Yet, inherent in the outreach project proposal is the assumption that the organization has something to offer diverse communities and can deliver it in a culturally appropriate manner.

A musician who lives around the corner from the building where this organization is located was also interviewed. The Researcher arranged to meet her on premises. This musician had never previously set foot inside the building and did not know what the organization did or who it served. In the several hours we spent at the organization that day, she and I were the only “people of colour” who passed through the door. The visual art displayed on the premises did not depict anything that would suggest the organization served a diverse community. The staff and Board are all of European descent. Obviously, questions arise as to how effective this outreach project will be. This is not to suggest that the organizational actors are insincere or mean-spirited. Simply that they are making assumptions that will sabotage their work. Hopefully, other groups and individuals will not get burned in the process.

In contrast to the above anecdote, consider the following example of another CAO organization in a different multicultural urban centre. Inherent in this group's mandate is that "art" is both a tool and a product of community development. Thus, as an organization, it must be a part of, representative of and accountable to the community in which it operates. It has no relevance without community. If projects and activities are not initiated by a community, they involve various community artists and activists at the very earliest stage, evolve with their input and often take on a life of their own within those communities. In one case a committee that had served to advise on one project eventually arranged for that exhibit to go on tour.

Projects and activities do not just serve the purposes of the CAO group but the community groups they are partnered with. The organization is very active and because community groups are involved from the outset, they take ownership and promote and support activities as well as the organization. Furthermore, because this organization has worked with so many community groups over the years they now facilitate networking between and among diverse groups in their area. For example, a labour group wanting to collaborate with Aboriginal artists or a Chinese Canadian group wishing to contact video artists will be connected through this organization. Finally, the group is constantly in the process of evaluating ways in which it works with communities and what still needs to be done.

This last point is crucial in understanding that as communities are in constant flux (newcomers arrive, communities become settled and established, etc.) there is always a need for the organization to evaluate and adjust its ways of working.

To sum up, it is very clear that member organizations are at different levels of understanding the concepts of diversity and equity, have different abilities to build relationships with diverse communities and have different priorities in embarking on such work. Furthermore, most non-member groups are already involved in community arts in their own culturally specific ways and it is important to the success of CAO's subsequent work that this is recognized and respected.

## **Process**

In commenting on decision-making processes, non-member groups shared the following. Although they may have trouble with making it a reality, most organizations understand that decision-making processes and organizational leadership must be equally accessible to all. This is as much about structures as it is about interpersonal behaviour. Most groups understand that they must constantly review and adjust their decision-making structures to facilitate participation. Processes like consensus-decision-making, team-building exercises and circles utilizing a talking stick are becoming more and more common. However, what many people do not realize is that, just as most communication between individuals is non verbal, significant discussions in organizations often happen outside of formal processes.

Consequently, access to information and information sharing are crucial to ensuring all group members are included and prepared to participate in decision-making and planning. Seeking out and validating diverse points of view in an informal manner, where people are not put on the spot, are essential to building the trust necessary for full and real participation.

Contrast the following anecdotes.

Anecdote 1: Some years ago a women's organization became polarized when Native women questioned the practice of serving alcohol at all its functions. The factions argued about that and many other issues that polarized the membership along ethnic, cultural and linguistic lines. The organization is now defunct and, although there are many other contributing factors, the above issue was never resolved to anyone's satisfaction.

Anecdote 2: A housing co-op noticed that Muslim members would never attend the general meetings. Muslim women were invited to meet informally with delegates from the Board to discuss barriers to their participation at the meetings. As it turned out, the fact that wine was served was a serious impediment to their participation. They did not wish to prohibit anyone from drinking but did not themselves wish to be around it. More importantly, they did not want their children exposed to social drinking and the childcare room was just across the hall. The co-op and the Muslim women came to the compromise that wine would be served only at some social functions and never at business meetings. Now Muslim women in the building attend meetings and have even joined committees.

Key factors that resulted in a positive resolution for the latter case include:

- Leadership noticed and cared about the fact that a whole community of people was not participating.
- The Board initiated the discussion and did not wait for Muslim women to take the risk of broaching the topic.
- The discussions were conducted in a non-threatening, non-punitive manner, e.g., asking how to remove barriers.
- The values and culture of the women was never questioned but always respected. Differences were acknowledged but not differently valued.
- The women were involved in coming up with appropriate solutions.
- Everyone knew they would have to make adjustments to accommodate each other.

This is an example of how it is important to be up front about cultural differences as part of respecting them. It also shows how informal processes must be extended outside of existing networks and cliques if healthy relationships are to be established.

It is also important that everyone take responsibility for the group's functioning and not just newcomers or "minorities". Many reps from diverse communities told me how much they resent always having the responsibility to raise issues and continue raising them until they are addressed; how they are always seen as taking on the role of educating others about their cultures, histories and experiences. If one understands an organization as serving the interests of the entire community then minority concerns become organizational concerns.

Another anecdote illustrates how day-to-day and interpersonal behaviors can sabotage an organization's work. A human rights organization that was involved in a campaign in a West African country hired a summer student to work as administrative support in the office. The student spent two months with the organization and upon leaving revealed in his exit interview that he was born and raised in the country in which the group had been campaigning. In fact, the

man was a refugee and had experienced many of the abuses the organization had been campaigning against. Though he felt they had been very courteous, no one had even bothered in two months to spend enough time conversing with this student to find out where he had come from. The group realized too late that this man had significant skills, experiences and information that would have enhanced their campaign.

The emphasis here is on informal processes. The student in the above example was treated fairly; no laws were broken and he did his job to everyone's satisfaction. However, it is clear that all the structures and processes in the world do not necessarily mean that the spirit of the organization's mandate is being served.

Another anecdote relates how a Board struggled with recruiting culturally diverse members. The two people they recruited eventually resigned. One of them spoke about her discomfort as director. Her English was heavily accented and she assumed people found it difficult to converse with her. They listened to her at meetings, but on social occasions they ignored her. She told of attending a party where two Board members on either side of her talked to each other throughout the event, without either of them so much as making eye contact with her, saddled in between them.

Needless to say, this did not make the woman feel welcomed or a part of the group. However, her experiences in her country of origin were extraordinary and this group was deprived of whatever she had to offer them when she resigned.

Similarly I remember sitting on a Board that requested the participation of a member who coordinated the organization's newsletter. The man used a wheelchair and had health issues that impeded his speech. When asked to join the Board, he declined saying, "I don't think you're ready for me yet." I recall thinking at the time that he was unfortunately right in that our meetings were always so focused on getting decisions made quickly so we could leave. We were not a terribly social bunch. So of course we would never have had the patience to deal with someone who took considerable time to speak and make his points.

Yet I remember how creative his writing for the newsletter was and how much he cared about our community and its members. I think we missed a significant opportunity back then by refusing to review our organizational culture and make it more accessible to members of different abilities.

To conclude, ensuring inclusion and providing opportunities for meaningful participation is about more than formal processes and structures.

### **Hiring Practices and Policy Development**

Resource people consulted for this study emphasized the importance of staff of community arts organizations being representative. They point out the many advantages accrue to an organization that has a diverse staffing complement, particularly if they are building relationships with diverse communities. Having a variety of languages, cultural practices,

abilities and life experiences on which to draw when planning, problem-solving and relating to the public is an asset to any organization.

Integrated with recruiting and maintaining a diverse staffing complement is to have policies and procedures in place that ensure that staff enjoy reasonable benefits, opportunities for professional development and protection from abuses of power. Any organization should have such policies, but in a context where diversity exists, it is important that the organization create and maintain a work environment that is socially just and equitable. Because unequal privilege and “isms” as discussed above exist in our society, it would be naïve to believe our organizations are free of them. Consequently, policies providing protection and recourse for employees at all levels of the organization must be in place.

The issue of policy development outside of human resources, on the other hand, was greeted with mixed reactions. Many resource people from non-member groups recount that the process of developing anti-discrimination, equity and other policies can be fraught with conflict. Once passed policies are never revisited, or in some cases remembered, for fear of dredging up past wounds. “What is the point of spending all this time on developing a policy if it’s just going to sit on a shelf and gather dust somewhere?” one informant asked me. “I’d rather see people committed to equity than to go around writing up bureaucratic policies that are never looked at.”

Others felt that policy development became even more important as the organization became more and more diverse. “We don’t all come to the organization from a level playing field. The organization has to ensure fairness for everyone.”

Although many experiences with developing organizational policy are fraught with conflict, it is likely that negative experiences of policy development are actually symptomatic of larger problems in the organization. Nevertheless, the point that policy in and of itself does not guarantee that equity and justice prevail is a valid one.

### **CAO’s Current Image in Diverse Communities**

It is evident that most of the non member organizations consulted to do not know of Community Arts Ontario. If they have heard of the organization they are not clear on what it does.

When informed of what CAO does, such groups assess the services that CAO offers with mixed reviews. While most organizations feel they can benefit from leadership development workshops, for example, they are cautious as to how relevant such workshops will be to their context. “We might get something out of it,” one key informant from an African Canadian arts organization told me with a shrug. Current leadership issues in his group include, for example, how to recruit and incorporate the input of an Elders Council. He felt his organization would have more to learn from Aboriginal organizations than from CAO’s governance workshop.

How relevant the annual conference would be to the variety of diverse organizations in the province would depend on the content of workshops and networking opportunities offered in any given year. As yet, the opportunities for networking would not be significant enough for many organizations to spend limited resources on. If an African Canadian group was interested in

networking opportunities with Aboriginal groups, as in the above example, there would be little point in going to the CAO conference at this stage. However, it is certainly possible that if it chooses CAO could play a significant role in this regard.

For example, despite the controversy it generated<sup>8</sup>, the *Writing Through Race Conference* sponsored by The Writer's Union of Canada back in the 1980s served as a huge catalyst for the organization's diversity and growth in terms of members, funds and activities. It garnered international attention, for better or worse. Unfortunately this work was not sustained into the new millennium but the precedent is there for CAO to build on.

At the same time there are generic services that interest many organizations. The advocacy role that CAO plays is of interest to all groups, although the priority issues on which to advocate might vary (but they would in any case). The degree to which CAO wishes to provide some services and to what extent it is their role to provide them is a matter for discussion. For example, every non-member organization consulted in this study felt they would benefit from proposal-writing workshops. The question is, to what extent is that CAO's responsibility or that of the funders?

Other services non member groups felt they could benefit from included on networking opportunities with diverse arts organizations and training. Areas of training included marketing, audience development, computer skills and professional development for managers. Some organizations have expertise in one area and not another and if the resources and infrastructure were in place they would be able to share with and train each other.

## **Barriers Summarized**

The paragraphs above discuss barriers to diversity within the sector as well as in CAO. Below is a list of barriers that relate specifically to CAO:

**Membership:** the following barriers apply to CAO member organizations.

1. Lack of understanding of what diversity and equity mean and how they can benefit an organization and the community arts sector.
2. Lack of formal commitment on the part of member organizations to represent the diversity of their communities.
3. Offices and venues that are not accessible to people with physical disabilities.
4. The notion that ASOs and member driven organizations are accountable only to their members and not to the larger community.
5. Insufficient awareness of how diverse groups experience marginalization and disadvantages.
6. Insufficient skills and experience related to relationship-building and managing organizational change.

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<sup>8</sup> The controversy centered on the fact that participation in the conference was limited to writers of colour and Aboriginal writers. Since that time, similar gatherings with similar participation limitations have not generated the same level of controversy.

7. Insufficient funding to enable organizations to maintain the stability required to embark on relationship-building.
8. Inexperienced governance.
9. Fear that current programming and projects will no longer be seen as important or fundable.
10. Fear that diversity and equity criteria will replace “artistic” criteria for grant programs.
11. Fear that organizational change will create unemployment, conflict and general disruption to the organization’s work.

**CAO**: the following barriers apply to CAO as an organization:

1. Lack of representation from diverse communities among staff and decision-making bodies.
2. Lack of formal policy and procedures.
3. A public image that suggests diversity and equity is not a concern for CAO (although this project has raised many expectations in that regard).
4. Inappropriate public relations practices.
5. Inadequate resources to pursue particular initiatives such as operating bilingually, recording and distributing resources, etc.
6. Membership criteria that does not address diversity and equity issues.
7. A definition of community arts that does not specifically address diversity and equity issues.
8. A lack of concrete goals to ensure equity and diversity throughout the organization.

As mentioned previously, though barriers must be acknowledged and addressed, there are many positive practices within CAO and among its membership. It is important to work with the membership to address barriers and enhance best practices in order to build a foundation and a long term commitment within CAO for ongoing work towards promoting diversity and equity.

## **APPENDIX II**

The following is a collection of unedited articles that written by the Researcher to the Cultural Mapping Project for “Arts On” the CAO’s Newsletter. These articles were written as part of the process to generate interest in the project as well as to create greater awareness of issues that arose during the research process.

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### **A PERSPECTIVE ON DIVERSITY**

In many places of the world massive rainforests are devastated by business interests and then replanted with straight, green, aesthetically pleasing seedlings all lined up in rows, ripe with the promise of a mature forest to replace the old. The assumption of course is that one selects trees with the characteristics humans consider most desirable and “healthy”.

The thing is that in a natural forest, where old growth is interspersed with new, where gnarled and disfigured trees may have survived a disease that provides immunity to others around it, there exists a symbiotic relationship that even the most dedicated of scientists have yet to grasp.

The First Peoples who walked Turtle Island, though they are not recognized for their “scientific” knowledge, had a different perspective. In this worldview Mother Earth and all her children teach us that diversity is necessary to our health and well-being. You do not see the trees insisting that they all bear the same fruit. You do not see the fish declaring war against those who do not swim. You do not see corn blocking the growth of squash and beans. What one plant puts into the soil, another takes. What one tree puts into the air another creature breathes. What one being leaves as waste another considers food. Even death and decay serve to nurture new life. Every one of Mother Earth’s children co-operates so that the family survives. When one person helps another, all benefit. In contrast, when someone suffers, we are all diminished.

Likewise, it is the diversity among two-leggeds that allows us to survive. How would it be if everyone thought the same way; had the same skills, talents and interests; looked the same? How would we survive as a human species without our diversity?

### **MANAGING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE**

Corporate models of organizational change have given us S-curves where healthy businesses are born, struggle and peak in their operations. NGOs responded with the 8-curve illustrating the cyclical nature of organizational development in which organizations and parts of organizations experience birth, struggle, peaks, declines and rebirths in a never-ending cycle over their lifetimes. The key in the 8-curve model is to expect change and then “manage” it in order to control its pace and direction.

Aboriginal peoples have for millennia used a Medicine Wheel Paradigm, which frames an understanding of the world and our place in it. This paradigm can be applied to the notion of

organizational change as well as other “life” cycles, whether they are found in the natural world or not.

Medicine Wheel teachings are far too complex to explore in a short article, or in any written format, for that matter. However, as it applies to organizational development, the medicine wheel can serve as a model for enhancing our understanding of change in organizations, the communities they serve and the individuals involved. In this model “managing” change in the sense of planning, monitoring and evaluating is still important. However, “managing” is balanced with letting go and allowing changes to take a “natural” course.

This is a hard concept to grasp for Type A personalities that often manage community organizations and rightly concern themselves with controlling budgets, coordinating the implementation of strategic plans and reporting to funders. However, it is important to allow space for the sometimes messy process of communities with all of their ethno-cultural, sexual, abilities and other diversities to impact organizational change. In this way one ensures the changes are relevant, the community is committed and the organization is accountable for its work. Thus, the organization remains vibrant, creative and truly representative of a community’s aspirations.

## **ACTIVE LISTENING**

One of the best skills involved in communicating is listening. Listening is essential to any form of relationship building. How many of us would have friendships and intimate relationships with people who did not listen to us?

Listening is more than just waiting for your turn to talk. It is an active process that indicates how much value and respect is given to what another person has to say. Since most communication among people is non verbal anyway, one can still convey significant information and feelings through listening.

We all know how frustrating it is to be cut off when we are talking. In some cultures, interruptions are considered the height of rudeness. Yet we all interrupt from time to time. Often we underestimate the message we are sending when we interrupt or cut people off.

Research shows that men are more likely to interrupt women when they are talking than the other way around. Likewise, people with foreign accents or speech impediments are more likely to be interrupted. In hierarchical situations, where one person’s status is perceived to be higher than another, it is much more permissible for the person with more power and authority to do the interrupting. For example, the boss can interrupt the employee but not the other way around; the professor can interrupt the student but not vice versa.

The message being sent is “what I have to say is more important”; “you aren’t worth listening to”; or even “I have more of a right to be heard than you”. Consequently, many people experience interruptions, particularly if they are frequent, as indications of racism, sexism, ableism, classism or some other form of “ism”.

Active listening on the other hand says, “I am interested in what you have to say” and “I take you, your opinions and your concerns seriously”.

It is also important to be aware of how much of the speaking time one takes. Again, we have all been in the situation of listening to someone drone on while they do not notice our eyes glazing over or our eagerness to leave. Depending on the context, talking too much and being insensitive to the reactions of others sends the same message as interruptions.

Good communication skills will never replace the spirit behind the words. Good manners will not cover up disrespect. However, poor communication skills will certainly sabotage the best of intentions. Consequently, active listening is important to the process of building relationships with diverse communities.

## **BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS**

In my work I have spoken about the importance of “building relationships”. In my travels many people recounted tales of inviting diverse communities, groups and their representatives to meetings and events only to be frustrated by the lack of response. This is a common experience among groups that have genuinely tried to reach out and include diverse communities in their work.

Reducing this approach to the personal level may illustrate a few key points. What if you received an invitation to a party at the home of someone you had never met or barely knew? You would probably not know anyone at the party. In addition, the event that the party was celebrating was no relevance to you. What are the odds that you would find time in your social, work and volunteer calendar to attend this function?

What makes you attend a party? Caring about the host with whom you are friends? Knowing that you will see people you enjoy? Wanting to celebrate an event with others who share an understanding and interest? Knowing that going to the party will help further your social or professional goals?

When this example is applied to relationship building among communities key issues emerge. Organizations wanting diverse participation in their activities must look at what comes before the invitation to a meeting or an event. Showing an interest in the issues confronting a community and demonstrating support is a first step in “making friends” and “building relationships”, whether with individuals or groups.

### APPENDIX III

#### Researcher's Travel Schedule

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Locations</b>
February 27– March 6, 2003	Ottawa
March 14-15, 2003	Kingston
April 9-10, 2003	Windsor
May 5, 2003	Scarborough
May 6, 2003	Six Nations of the Grand River
May 19-21, 2003	Hamilton
May 22, 2003	Kitchener/Waterloo
May 28, 2003	Windsor
May 30, 2003	Kitchener/Waterloo
June 3, 2003	Barrie
July 13-19, 2003	Timmins, Haileybury, Temiskaming, Bear Island, North Bay
July 28, 2003	Midland
August 11-18	Sudbury, Manitoulin
September 9-17, 2003	Thunder Bay, Sioux Lookout, Sault Ste. Marie, Chapleau
November 12 & 13	Toronto discussion group sessions.

## APPENDIX IV

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24. Thais Donald, Kingston Arts Council
25. Dream Catchers Craft Shop, North Bay
26. Marianne Dunn
27. Sophie Edwards
28. Tor Lukasik Foss, Art Gallery of Hamilton
29. Frank Francis, Caliban Theatre
30. Richard Fung
31. Marilyn George, A Native Influence
32. Myra Rosenberg, Art Starts
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45. Richard Hunter, Centre for Aboriginal Media
46. Lemme Ibrahim, Mosaic
47. Star Jacobs, Art Starts Neighbourhood Cultural Centre

48. Vicki Jarvis, Sudbury Arts Council
49. Rene Johnson, Ontario Workers Art & Heritage Centre
50. Aida Kaouk, Museum of Civilization
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75. Native Students Association, Queens U
76. Nishnabe Gamik Friendship Centre
77. North Bay Indian Friendship Centre
78. N'swakamok Native Friendship Centre, Sudbury
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119. Tony Yazbek, Carnival of Cultures / Al Arz Lebanese Art Group
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#### **Advisory Committee Members**

Linda Albright, former Director  
 Ron Berti, former Director  
 Laila Binbrek, community representative  
 Martin De Groot, Director  
 Richard Doherty, Director  
 Gillian McIntyre, Director/Committee Chair  
 Rani Glick, ED  
 Theresa McGrory, Director  
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 Agnes Chan Wong, Director