



CRAFT COUNCIL
OF NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

Craft Council of Newfoundland & Labrador

Strategic Plan | 2018 - 2023

January 2018

During the fall of 2015, the Craft Council of Newfoundland and Labrador embarked on a major strategic planning project. The Craft Council's goal was to consult widely with members and stakeholders, and develop a Strategic Plan that would guide the work of the organization for the next five year period. This Plan would ensure that the work of Craft Council would meet the needs and expectations of members, funders and other stakeholders, and enable the organization to support a thriving craft industry.

This document is divided into six key parts:

1. **The Executive Summary**, provides an overview of findings from the consultation process, and challenges and opportunities to be faced by the Craft Council.
2. **The Process**, describes the Craft Council's goals and recommended methods for achieving those goals that were identified through the Strategic Planning process.
3. **The Strategic Way Forward**, summarizes the recommendations under ten key priorities, followed by the components of the Strategic Plan relevant to each.
4. **The Strategic Plan**, outlines the goals, objectives, time lines, and where possible who will be responsible to complete or initiate the work.
5. **The Concluding Remarks**, offer the thoughts of the Planning Committee as the Craft Council looks toward the implementation of this Strategic Plan.
6. Finally, the Appendices:

Appendix A, Findings, provides a detailed synopsis of the findings from the membership survey, the focus group sessions, and the outcomes of the planning retreat - all of which form the basis for the Strategic Plan.

Appendix B, Members' Data, provides details of data from the Members' Survey.

Appendix C, Profile, is a brief organizational profile, highlighting major achievements.

Appendix D, identifies Acronyms used

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Craft Council of Newfoundland and Labrador is pleased to present a comprehensive Strategic Plan to carry the organization through the next five year period. The Plan is based on wide consultation with members and partners, and is designed to ensure that the work of the Craft Council will meet needs and expectations as they arise. It identifies new opportunities for the Craft Council, so that the organization and the industry can remain current.

The strong response from Craft Council members to the survey and their enthusiastic participation in focus groups and the retreat is evidence of a professional group, highly engaged with their organization. The Craft Council is pleased to have found a high level of accord, with key themes, priorities and principles finding commonality of support.

Following is a summary of findings upon which this Strategic Plan is based.

The Craft Council Itself - Governance and Sustainability

One very succinct written comment from a member captures a widely held sentiment: "It takes structure and processes to produce outcomes. The viability and sustainability of the Craft Council **must** be a top priority if goals set in the strategic plan are to be fully realized."

A review of organizational mandates, mission and vision statement is essential, no doubt leading to revisions to the Craft Council's Board and Committee structure and Constitution. Revisions to Board make-up would be a positive step, incorporating new skills and perspectives, and defining clear roles for Board members.

A goal of greater sustainability and self-sufficiency requires more diversified sources of revenue, increases in sales revenues, a targeted fund development strategy and an overall review of programs and services. Better data management about members, service users and customers would advance efficiencies and financial returns.

The Craft Council must urgently address formal succession planning to ensure continuity, documenting corporate memory while identifying long standing processes that may not be formally recorded. A review of the compensation package offered to staff is in order as is the development of a policy and procedures manual. Ongoing professional development opportunities for staff are recommended.

The Devon House Craft Centre is the Craft Council headquarters and an impressive physical representation of the craft industry. There are significant reasons why Devon House is no longer providing the best response to the needs of the Craft Council, and immediate decision-making attention must be paid to its future.

The Craft Council and its Members

The Craft Council is highly valued by its members for its commitment to juried craft and professionalism, for its functions as a network and the voice of the community, and for its ongoing work in the development of the provincial craft industry.

The Craft Council is both the provincial industry association for craft, and a membership organization. The work that the Craft Council does to develop the provincial craft industry benefits the members of the organization. Similarly, the work that the Craft Council does to further the interests of its members is of benefit to the industry as a whole. It is important that working craftspeople show trust in the current legitimacy and future health of the industry through their membership in the Craft Council of Newfoundland and Labrador.

A strategy to increase membership numbers should include consideration of membership structures: a multi-tiered, sliding scale fee structure was proposed and should be explored. A review of the jurying system could reveal alternate delivery methods to ensure constructive experiences for existing and potential members. Supports for emerging craft makers and businesses are critical.

To best serve its members into the future, several issues are critical, including succession planning among members, professional development in the areas of design and business management skills, as well as guidance in the use of new technologies. Regular reviews of programs and services are recommended.

The Craft Council is highly valued as a community of craftspeople and a network of professional colleagues. There is a strong personal satisfaction among members in being connected to the Council accompanied by a sense of accomplishment, professionalism and acceptance by peers. Enhancement of communications content, frequency and methodology is needed to maintain this network.

Craftspeople recognize the Craft Council as their voice to the public and to the government. It is important that this voice is clear and strong. A more vocal, province-wide celebration of craft and the work of the Craft Council itself would do much to heighten the legitimacy of the industry, encourage new members and establish the viability of craft as a professional career.

The Craft Council and its Partners - Collaboration for Province-wide Industry Growth

Government, education and the industry itself form three pillars which focus the strength and resilience of the craft sector. The collaborative relationship that exists among the Craft Council, the provincial college and the federal and provincial governments results in effective effort and efficient use of resources. This partnership must be nurtured in order that it continues to provide impetus to the industry. It must be recognized that each partner must continue to dedicate effort and investment to strengthening their respective roles in order for the industry to continue to thrive.

Numerous other partners, including but certainly not limited to the Anna Templeton Centre, Craft Labrador, the City of St. John's, Parks Canada, the Canadian Crafts Federation and First Nations groups have much to offer the craft sector and much to gain from our experience, skills, markets, products and people.

The Craft Council of Newfoundland and Labrador is a provincial organization and the industry association for craft in the province. As such, it is essential that the Craft Council have representation from all parts of the province, and develop and deliver services to craftspeople throughout. This is so important to the essence of the Craft Council that each strategic area should be considered through the lens of involvement by craftspeople who live in rural and remote areas. For example, a communications plan should consider that not all regions have equal internet access.

Significant work in Labrador by the Craft Labrador Management Committee and its partners, including the Craft Council, has advanced the development of the craft sector in that part of the province. Much has been learned, and there are lessons that can be shared to the benefit of other rural parts of the province.

Every strategic plan includes topics of current focus. In this plan, two areas came to the fore, offering opportunities for industry growth and market expansion. Innovation and tourism have been highlighted for strategic effort.

A focus on innovation is required if the sector is to remain current, bringing major advantages to the production of craft and the methods used to promote, market and develop the sector. The use of technology and individual creative expression and technique are not mutually exclusive, but there will be an impact on current criteria as written in the **Standards of Quality**. Discussions to find a balance between technology and the hand of the maker are necessary.

Work to strengthen ties between craft and tourism present opportunities to enhance revenue streams for members and the Craft Council itself. New opportunities in experiential tourism are prevalent. A conversation about the role of the Craft Council in this regard should include the website, the Guide to Professional Craft Studios in Newfoundland and Labrador and other potential tools. Pursuit of more craft content in provincial tourism advertising would enhance the role of craft in tourism. The retail arm of the Craft Council, as evidenced presently in the Craft Council Shop, must play a more active role in strengthening the craft offering province-wide.

The Craft Council's role in industry development and growth was seen as a priority for members. Current collection of industry data, including economic impact, will offer a picture of current industry status. It is critical that the strategy under construction by industry partners use this data as well as wider industry knowledge to project growth targets, with timelines and routes to achievement. As the craft industry organization for the province, the Craft Council must take a leadership role in this initiative.

II. PROCESS

This Strategic Plan was developed using an appreciative inquiry approach, focusing on the strengths and achievements of the Craft Council. This project consisted of consultation with members and stakeholders, a planning retreat and writing the final Strategic Plan.

Consultation

Membership consultation was essential and comprehensive. A survey asked why craftspeople are members of the organization, and the benefits that they perceive to have gained. It was the goal of the plan to determine how to enhance those benefits, strengthen them, and offer them to a wider group. Of course, guidance was also sought on what is missing from Craft Council work, and what areas of opportunity would ensure the Craft Council maintains a leadership role in an energetic craft industry.

Focus groups with stakeholders were also essential ingredients. The Craft Council wished to determine the value that professional colleagues and partners found in the work of the Craft Council, and how that could be enhanced.

In order to ensure objective and unbiased consultation so that resulting data would be reliable, the Craft Council contracted a professional and experienced consultant to carry out the work.

The Planning Committee appointed by the Board in the fall of 2015 met to develop an approach, research funding opportunities and draft a call for proposals for consultants. Financial support from Metro Business Opportunities allowed the Craft Council to contract Butland Communications (Marilyn Butland and Pat Curran) to conduct the consultation with members and partners and to present a summary of their findings to the Committee.

The members' survey was comprised of some straightforward multiple choice questions, and other more open ended questions requiring thoughtful responses. This meant that the survey took longer to complete and to analyse, but the group thought that the value of the responses would be worth the extra effort.

The survey was sent to 242 members, and had a response rate of 48.7%, or 118 individuals. The consultants were impressed by the high number of responses, saying that this indicated a high level of support for the Council and its work among its members.

In addition, the consultants held focus groups with the current Board of Directors, a group of past Board members, representatives of funding agencies and the staff of the Craft Council. Efforts were made to schedule a focus group with customers, but this was not successful.

The consultants reported findings of the survey and focus groups to the Board, using a PowerPoint presentation and the Craft Council's webinar technology to ensure full Board accessibility.

The written report from Butland Communications was received and studied carefully by the Committee, as it was the intention that the content of the planning retreat would centre on the findings from the consultations. The Committee found the report to be comprehensive, and containing good information on which to move forward.

The Perceived Value of the Craft Council of Newfoundland & Labrador

The Report from Butland Communications detailed the responses to the membership questionnaire and the discussions held at focus groups. There was a significantly high concurrence of opinion regarding the areas of greatest value where the Craft Council plays a role in the lives and businesses of working craftspeople.

Members identified the value of the Craft Council as being founded on three key areas of importance:

1. A focus on standards, professionalization and quality
2. The Craft Council as a community
3. Industry support and growth

In addition, the analysis of responses indicated ten areas which were identified as priorities for attention. These ten priority areas were presented at the planning retreat, and those attending chose a final list for immediate attention. The ten areas were:

1. Value of Craft Council
2. Operational Support and Resources
3. Tourism and Crafts
4. Industry Development
5. Member Development
6. Partnership and Collaboration
7. Innovation and Technology
8. Supporting Professional Development
9. Rural Engagement and Labrador
10. Considerations on a New Strategic Plan

Planning Retreat

A planning retreat held in Bonavista in June, 2017 explored priorities as identified in the consultation process and began to develop concrete goals and objectives. Participating were members of the Board, staff, Craft Council and wider craft industry.

Originally scheduled for the 2016 calendar year, the Board had decided to delay the planning retreat to allow the new Executive Director time to become more familiar with the organization and to have an ownership of the plan she would be responsible to implement.

All members of the Board of Directors and the staff were encouraged to attend. An invitation was extended to all Craft Council members, inviting those interested in participating in the planning retreat to respond with a request for necessary travel assistance. In the end, 32 people were accommodated and all travel costs covered.

Marilyn Butland agreed to facilitate and developed a Participant Guide for advance circulation to enable preparation and prior thought. This guide noted the topics for potential inclusion in a final plan; these were taken from those issues identified as important in the consultation process.

The process was a compact one. It consisted of Friday evening and all day on Saturday, June 2 & 3, 2017.

The Friday evening session started with a motivating presentation by John Norman, local entrepreneur and animator of Bonavista Living and Bonavista Creative. Marilyn Butland provided an overview of the consultation process and findings, and the ten issues identified in the consultation as being of primary importance were presented. Participants were asked to individually select three priority areas for inclusion in the final plan, and overnight these votes were calculated; the six areas receiving the most votes were presented on Saturday for full group discussions.

The Agenda for Saturday was designed so that participants had ample opportunity to express their thoughts, ideas and opinions on each of the six topics in informal, small group sessions. Each of six tables was labeled with one of the chosen topics, and each equipped with a designated note-taker directed to record all comments made. Participants visited each table for one of six 20 minute sessions.

In the afternoon, participants chose one of the six topics for focused discussion using comments and ideas from the morning session. A preliminary draft of goals, objectives and action items resulted for each. Participants were also asked for resources, timelines and responsibility for action items, although these latter items were not generally supplied.

In the end, all ten topics were addressed to some extent, and included in one of the six headings in the final Strategic Plan. For example, 'Industry Development' is covered under Partnerships and Collaboration. Items noted under the 'Value of the Craft Council' section ultimately found a place in Member Development.

Writing the Final Strategic Plan

Following the planning retreat, all notes taken were assembled by Marilyn Butland and a report summarizing the event was submitted. The Committee then sent each note taker a copy of their notes as presented in the report to ensure that they accurately reflected the thoughts and opinions expressed. Once confirmations were received, the Committee met to convert the final notes into the Strategic Plan for presentation to the Craft Council Board.

The Committee envisaged a goal-oriented document that would accurately reflect the priorities identified during the consultations and the ideas and opinions of those who participated in the planning retreat. It would provide clear deliverables and deadlines to staff, committee members and Board.

There would be five or six distinct strategic topics following those priority areas identified at the planning retreat. For each, the Plan would express clear objectives and goals as well as a series of action items to enable the Craft Council to achieve the desired outcomes.

Clearly, not all ideas expressed at the planning retreat fit appropriately into a working plan. Some ideas are enthusiastically unrealistic and some go beyond the capacity and mandate of the Craft Council itself. The Committee worked to translate the priorities expressed in the notes into a workable Strategic Plan that captures the intention of each objective and to assign responsibility and deadlines.

Finances

The Craft Council was successful in its application for financial support to the Metro Business Opportunities **Consultant Advisory Services Program**. Approval of our request for a \$5,000 contribution towards a budget of \$7,500 was granted and the Committee was able to issue our call for consultants, and contract Butland Communications to implement the consultation portion of the project.

The budget for the planning retreat was capped at \$18,000, with approximately 45% being requested from ACOA, and the balance coming from the Craft Council itself, taken from annual operating funds from the Department of Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation. These funds had been allocated in two fiscal

years, approximately half in 2016/2017 and half in the current year of 2017/2018. This budget enabled the Craft Council to cover facilitator and travel costs.

The Craft Council Strategic Plan, 2018 - 2023

The Strategic Plan for 2018 - 2023 combines a consolidation of operations, a strengthening of the Craft Council role in rural parts of the province, and exciting new plans for areas of strategic investment in our members and in our industry.

This plan is based on the expressed opinions of members and stakeholders, and is true to the value that those individuals place on the work of the organization. That the development of this plan was achieved with such extensive input from members and stakeholders and with such efficiency and economy indicates impressive levels of support and trust for the organization and for all those involved in the compilation of the Strategic Plan.

III. THE STRATEGIC WAY FORWARD: OPERATIONAL SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

One very succinct written comment from a member captures a widely held sentiment - that **"it takes structure and processes to produce outcomes. The viability and sustainability of the Craft Council must be a top priority if goals set in the strategic plan are to be fully realized."**

A review of organizational mandates, mission and vision statement is essential, no doubt leading to revisions to the Craft Council's Board and Committee structure and Constitution. Consideration of revisions to the make-up of the Board of Directors will be a positive step, with the Craft Council seeking new skills and perspectives to help guide and manage future development.

This review should also include discussions regarding the Craft Council's status as a membership organization and an industry organization. Are these alternatives actually the same thing, and if not, can the Craft Council be both? Are there tensions between the two which need to be aired through open discussion?

As the Craft Council reflects upon its financial future, diversification of revenue sources must be a priority. The development of a targeted fund development strategy should be considered, with a goal of greater sustainability. The Craft Council should also consider whether sales revenues can be increased and how this could be achieved within the parameters of current organizational policy. More frequent reviews of all programs and services need to be conducted in order to ensure that all are focused on the organization's vision and that all are operating in the most fiscally responsible manner possible.

The Craft Council must urgently address formal succession planning to ensure continuity, documenting corporate memory while identifying long standing processes that may not be formally recorded.

A review of the compensation package offered to staff is in order as is the development of a policy and procedures manual.

Data management, while not specifically raised frequently, seems to be a need that would address several shortfalls. Better data about members, service users and customers will enable more efficient and effective delivery of services, and will also enhance the Craft Council's ability to see a return on its efforts.

The current facility housing the Craft Council and its services to the membership and to the public is a permanent physical representation of the craft industry in the eyes of the public. There are significant reasons why Devon House is no longer providing the best response to the needs of the Craft Council, and immediate decision-making attention must be paid to its future.

1. OPERATIONAL SUPPORT & RESOURCES - GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

GOAL ONE The Craft Council is Financially Stable and Sustainable

- Objective 1 Diversify Revenue Sources**
- Action 1.1** Explore new sources of government investment - Canadian Heritage, Canada Council
 - Action 1.2** Seek new partnerships with businesses and organizations
 - Action 1.3** Seek new opportunities for consultancy on a fee for service basis
 - Action 1.4** Develop comprehensive fund development strategy

Objective 2 Maximize Financial Return and Member Services from Facility

- Action 1.5** Feasibility study / business plan to consider:
- * maintain Devon House or seek new facility
 - * increased membership services
 - * potential for increasing sales and usage
 - * fiscal viability for long term sustainability
 - * sources of revenue, including capital campaign
 - * potential for Clay Studio relocation, either within or outside a Craft Council facility

GOAL TWO Documentation Reflects Current Reality of the Craft Council and the Sector, and the Organization’s Role Within the Sector

Objective 1 Redefine Mission/Vision Statements

- Action 1.6** Board committee to review/rewrite, consulting with staff, and bring recommendations back to Board and then to membership

Objective 2 Review and Rewrite Constitution

- Action 1.7** Board appoint Constitutional Review Committee
- * Draw upon Board, external experience and possible Business and Arts NL lawyer
 - * Consider implications for charitable status
 - * Consider implications for recognition as a sector organization
 - * Consider revisions to Board membership
 - * Review committee structure

- Action 1.8** Clarify Job Descriptions for Board members

GOAL THREE	Organization Goals are Being Met Efficiently and Effectively.
Objective 1	Staff and Board Have Necessary Skills to Carry Out Required Tasks
Action 1.9	Identify skills that are required
Action 1.10	Identify skills that are existing within the organization
Action 1.11	Make a professional development / training plan for Board and Staff
Action 1.12	Review Staff compensation package
Objective 2	Operation is Efficient and Streamlined
Action 1.13	Develop succession plan for Staff and Board
Action 1.14	Identify areas where skills can be transferred among staff
Action 1.15	Review internal budgeting and financial management structure
Action 1.16	Develop Policy and Procedures Manual
Action 1.17	Enhance Craft Council data management capacity
Objective 3	Craft Council Initiatives Achieve Maximum Revenue for Organization and Maximum Benefit for Members
Action 1.18	Complete comprehensive business plans for Craft Council Shop, Craft Fair, Clay Studio

2. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT - GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

GOAL ONE	Membership Includes a Broader Range of Craftspeople, Organizations and Supporters
Objective 1	Increase Membership Numbers
Action 2.1	Develop new membership categories to encourage entry level membership
Action 2.2	Develop and implement tangible membership material - membership card, services brochure
Action 2.3	Acquire and implement comprehensive database for membership management
GOAL TWO	Programs and Services Meet Needs of Membership
Objective 1	Evaluate Existing Programs and Services to Determine value
Action 2.4	Conduct internal review on a program by program basis in light of new plan/priorities
Action 2.5	End programs with minimal value

GOAL THREE	New Services to Meet Membership Needs are Identified and Implemented
Objective 1	Meet Training Needs Identified in Industry Strategy
Action 2.6	Obtain training needs information from industry strategy questionnaire
Action 2.7	Develop training plan for in person, webinar and distance delivery
Action 2.8	Identify partners to avoid duplication, or to ensure craft specific training
Objective 2	Identify and Add New Benefits as Needed
Action 2.9	Offer insurance, and similar programming to members at all levels
Action 2.10	Explore group services that could support members' needs (i.e. accounting, social media)
Objective 3	Identify and Capitalize on New Opportunities for Expanded Member Programming
Action 2.11	Undertake delivery of provincial wholesale show and marketing seminars
Action 2.12	Implement Northern Lights Cultural Pavilion in Ottawa
Action 2.13	Consider repeating participation in Seal Day and other external activities
Action 2.14	Implement Craft Council booth at Folk Festival
Action 2.15	Create Online Shop
Objective 4	Ensure Programming Meets Needs of Emerging Craft Businesses
Action 2.16	Define anew initiative to support emerging craft makers, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Professional Development, in person and by webinar * Quidi Vidi Village Plantation * Mentorship * Online resource centre

THE STRATEGIC WAY FORWARD: MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

The Craft Council is highly valued by its members for its commitment to juried craft and professionalism, for its functions as a network and the voice of the community, and for its ongoing work in the development of the provincial craft industry.

The Craft Council is both the provincial industry association and a membership organization. For the most part, the work that the Craft Council does to develop the provincial craft industry benefits the members of the organization; similarly, the work that the Craft Council does to further the interests of its members is generally of benefit to the industry as a whole. It is important that working craftspeople show their trust in the current legitimacy and future health of the industry through membership in the Craft Council of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Just as the Craft Council must plan for leadership change, some members are winding down their operations and activities. There is a need for succession planning among members, ensuring that vital skills and techniques are not lost, bringing new members in and investing in their professional development while assisting older members to make a transition from production to retirement.

The Craft Council wishes to increase membership numbers and provide services to as many craftspeople in the province as possible. Membership fees and structures provide a barrier to increased membership numbers; a multi-tiered, sliding scale fee structure was proposed for further exploration.

As a membership organization, it is crucial that the Craft Council keep members informed and engaged. A search for new services and ongoing evaluation of existing programs and services will ensure that all are meeting the needs of organization members. It is important that the Craft Council invest in the recruitment of new members, the support of emerging craftspeople and in the growth of established makers and businesses.

Many claimed that the industry is too humble. A more vocal, province-wide celebration of craft and the work of the Craft Council itself will do much to heighten the legitimacy of the industry, encourage new members and establish the viability of craft as a professional career.

Craftspeople recognize the Craft Council as their voice to the public and to the government. It is important that this voice is clear and strong and speaks on behalf of craftspeople throughout the province. It is also important that the presence of the Craft Council in rural areas be strengthened, and that craftspeople in all parts of the province have a voice on the Craft Council Board of Directors.

THE STRATEGIC WAY FORWARD: PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

As a strong and flexible representative of a diverse industry with multiple facets and ways of connecting with other sectors, the Craft Council is in a prime position to partner with others.

The Craft Council must be strategic and not engage in collaboration for its own sake. The Craft Council should fully understand the concept of partnership, identify the skills, knowledge and assets that the organization can bring to a collaborative effort, and have clear and concise goals for what it hopes to achieve. These goals must align with the overall objectives of the new Strategic Plan.

Government, education and the craft industry form three pillars which focus the strength and resilience of the craft sector. The collaborative relationship that exists among the Craft Council, the provincial college and the federal and provincial governments results in effective effort and efficient use of resources. This partnership must be nurtured in order that it continues to provide impetus to the industry. Each partner must continue to dedicate effort and investment to strengthening their respective roles in order for the industry to continue to thrive.

Numerous other partners, including but not limited to the Anna Templeton Centre, Craft Labrador, the City of St. John’s, Parks Canada, the Canadian Crafts Federation and First Nations groups have much to offer the craft sector and much to gain from our experience, skills, markets, products and people.

Building on the success of past partnerships, the Craft Council will seek new partners to enable its pursuit of strategic goals. Many were suggested, ranging from other industry organizations to members of the Craft Council itself.

It is important that the Craft Council does not duplicate the work of others but work with them to deliver certain services.

Collaborative undertakings must always be sensitive to existing resources, and recognize the existence of strengths in rural communities. Being attuned to distinctions between partnering and directing will affect the Craft Council’s ability to achieve successful partnerships.

3. PARTNERSHIP & COLLABORATION - GOALS, OBJECTIVES & ACTIONS	
GOAL ONE	Ensure Programming Beyond Craft Council’s Current Capacity
Objective	Create More Inclusive and Effective Partnerships
Action 3.1	Develop a clear understanding of a partnership function
Action 3.2	Define current partnerships
Action 3.3	Identify appropriate new partners
Action 3.4	Seek cross province partnerships
Action 3.5	Develop a plan for partnership development

THE STRATEGIC WAY FORWARD: RURAL ENGAGEMENT AND LABRADOR

The Craft Council of Newfoundland and Labrador is a provincial organization and the industry association for craft in the province. As such, it is essential that the Craft Council have representation from all parts of the province, and develop and deliver services to craftspeople in all parts of the province. This is so important to the essence of the Craft Council that each strategic area should be considered through the lens of involvement by craftspeople who live in rural and remote areas.

Recent successes exist in rural based activity that can be built upon, and there are avenues that the Craft Council can pursue in partnerships with Destination Management Organizations (DMO) and others. However, there is much grass roots work to be done to ensure that each craftspeople who can benefit from Craft Council membership knows about the organization and is enabled to take advantage of the contacts and programs that the Craft Council network can bring to them.

Internally, the Craft Council can more clearly define the role of the Board members who represent members in the regions, enabling and empowering them to interact with craftspeople, especially in rural areas. Communications needs attention to ensure that members and potential members are aware of and able to take part in Craft Council programming, especially considering that not all rural members will have easy access to internet services.

Significant work in Labrador by the Craft Labrador Management Committee and its partners, including the Craft Council, has advanced the development of the craft sector in that part of the province. Much has been learned, and there are lessons that can be shared to the benefit of other rural parts of the province.

4. RURAL AND LABRADOR ENGAGEMENT - GOALS, OBJECTIVES & ACTIONS	
GOAL ONE	Build Rural-Based Strengths in Craft Industry
Objective 1	Develop Process for Working Relationship Between Craft Council and Rural Based Groups
Action 4.1	Establish process for Craft Labrador and Craft Council to work together, clarifying roles and planning future activities
Action 4.2	Documentation of process leading to the development of the Craft Labrador Initiative and the Craft Labrador Management Committee; identification of lessons learned during formation and program roll out
Action 4.3	Consider implementation in other regions as appropriate
Action 4.4	Provide Craft Council support to emerging projects as able
Action 4.5	Seek local expertise to advise Craft Council on local strengths and needs to guide working relationships
Objective 2	Role of Regional Representatives is Enhanced
Action 4.6	Bring regional representatives together to discuss role of this position
Action 4.7	Strengthen contact between regional representatives and members in their regions
Action 4.8	Initiate networking sessions in regions, particularly around submitting to the Standards Committee

Objective 3	Traditional Craft Techniques are Celebrated and Preserved
Action 4.9	Develop a plan for the documentation and preservation of traditional craft skills, especially in Labrador
Action 4.10	Develop list of traditional craft skills
Action 4.11	Develop data base of makers
Action 4.12	Assess level of danger of loss

THE STRATEGIC WAY FORWARD: CRAFT AND TOURISM

The work of the Craft Council in strengthening the ties between craft and tourism for the benefit of working craftspeople must be in alignment with organizational values of product excellence, cultural authenticity and fair return to makers. There are opportunities for enhanced revenue streams for members and for the Craft Council itself.

The Craft Council's history in the development and delivery of professional opportunities in the design of cultural craft products dates back to a workshop held in St. John's during the provincial trade show of 2010. Products reflecting cultural and historical artefacts present economic opportunity to craftspeople. This has most recently blossomed on the Bonavista Peninsula and can be repeated in other parts of the province.

Although opportunities in experiential tourism are widespread, the surface has barely been scratched, and members and other craftspeople are in need of guidance. Partners to help develop and deliver support in this area are available through Destination Management Organizations (DMOs) and the Department of Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation.

The retail arm of the Craft Council, as evidenced presently in the Craft Council Shop, can play a more active role in strengthening the craft offering province-wide. The Shop itself needs to clarify and strengthen its own role as the leader of craft retailing in the province, and can best pursue this in the development of a comprehensive business plan.

Marketing of craft, craft shops and craft studios to the travelling public is in need of strengthening. A conversation about the role of the Craft Council in this regard should include the website, the Guide to Professional Craft Studios in Newfoundland and Labrador and other potential tools. Pursuit of more craft content in provincial tourism advertising would enhance the role of craft in tourism.

The Craft Council continues to gain insight in the enhancement of ties between craft and tourism, and there are others in the province with experience to share and guidance to offer. It was suggested that the Craft Council compile its growing knowledge and offer a best practices guide to developing craft for the tourist market, combined with a local best practices mission for sharing skills and ideas. Such a guide would address matters related to product design, experiential tourism and marketing to the travelling public.

5. CRAFT AND TOURISM - GOALS, OBJECTIVES & ACTIONS

GOAL ONE	Build on Cultural Authenticity for Industry Growth
Objective 1	Ensure Craft and Tourism Activities are Representative of Authentic Craft Practice
Action 5.1	Ensure Craft Council promotes the juried shops and studios
Action 5.2	Implement public engagement activity about the value of the handmade, and the cultural sources of NL craft
Action 5.3	Participate in out of province best practices missions as available
Action 5.4	Facilitate in-province transfer of experiences learned
Objective 2	Work with DMOs to Promote Craft in Tourism as Identified in Destination Development Plans
Action 5.5	Follow-up with Legendary Coast on 16/17 program and evaluate
Action 5.6	Work with Labrador DMO and Labrador Craft working group to develop programming
Action 5.7	Initiate work with Central DMO - Adventure Central / Qalipu Nation
Action 5.8	Initiate work with Aboriginal Tourism groups
Objective 3	Build Experiential Tourism in Craft
Action 5.9	Seminars and networking sessions to define and develop authentic craft experiences for tourists
Action 5.10	Craft Council staff take GMIST program
Action 5.11	Craft Council build and offer craft experiences to tourists; consider facilitating packages that include several craft studios
Objective 4	Maximize Craft Industry Sales to Tourists
Action 5.12	Continue and expand Studio Guide
Action 5.13	Explore opportunities for new iterations of Bonavista training
Action 5.14	Enhance marketing and promotion opportunities to the tourist industry
Action 5.15	Research tourist expectation and requirement for craft
Action 5.16	Build local best practices guide and mission to share experience with external visitors or cross province visitors
Action 5.17	Maintain awareness of TCII exit survey results; increase satisfaction rating

THE STRATEGIC WAY FORWARD: INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT

The Craft Council is currently working with industry partners to define a comprehensive strategy for further development of the craft industry in the province. This project also entails an assessment of the economic impact of the industry, as well as collection of detailed information about industry participants. It is important that this information is closely read and understood by industry partners, as this will directly inform the strategic direction. Craft Council staff have observed a recent industry shift away from

production groups and larger businesses to more individual enterprises. Another shift that has been noted is a recent return to interest in wholesale marketing, an industry element which had diminished some years ago, but now seems to be regaining strength. It is essential that industry partners are aware of such changes, and take steps to ensure that appropriate supports are in place.

The working relationship among industry partners is strong and contributes to the strength and health of the craft industry, and must be maintained. As part of the strategy process, the partners should define a growth target for the industry and work together to achieve it.

This partnership recognizes that each has strengths and assets that they bring to joint industry development. Members have identified what they see as the most critical roles for the Craft Council in industry development as industry promotion, support for young and emerging craftspeople and working with industry partners.

Members indicated the importance of their representative group, the Craft Council, having a strong voice in how the industry is presented and promoted to the public. They see industry promotion as key to industry growth.

INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT - OBJECTIVES, GOALS & ACTIONS	
GOAL THREE	Maximize Industry Growth
(Action items related to Industry Development are included as Goal Three of Partnerships and Collaboration)	
Objective 1	Work with Partners to Set and Achieve Industry Growth Targets
Action 3.1	Complete Craft Industry Development Strategy
Action 3.2	Ensure that existing programs are providing maximum levels of service
Action 3.3	Explore innovation and craft, and research how innovative processes and technologies can enhance industry value

THE STRATEGIC WAY FORWARD: INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

A focus on innovation is required if the sector is to remain current. This need extends to the Craft Council and its members, and pertains to both the production of craft and the methods used to promote, market and develop the sector. Potential partnerships and collaborations, along with a focus on innovation by both levels of government, provide an opportunity and some context within which innovative practices might be identified.

Within the Craft Council there is an appetite to try new approaches - to back up, reconsider, and do some things differently. Best practices exist in other jurisdictions and might inform activities here. For example, the British Crafts Council has done work on innovation and craft. By identifying other approaches and modeling them to suit local circumstances, the Craft Council will have a chance to consider and develop new processes and services.

The emergence of technology in craft development was considered in light of production methodologies, business revenue, and the competitive success of craftspeople. The introduction of more sophisticated technology in craft production has the potential to have a transformative impact on craft development.

Members and others emphasize the high value of the “hand of the maker”, and this ingredient is critical to the value of the final product in a juried craft environment. With the introduction of technology, the need for strong design skills becomes even more critical. The use of technology and individual creative expression and technique are not mutually exclusive. Indeed, technology can foster exciting and innovative products and new ways of producing current products. This will require a review of **Standards of Quality** criteria to find a balance between technology and the hand of the maker.

Members also noted their struggles with technology insofar as limitations exist to broadband capacity; improvements in this area can transform product research and design activities, as well as marketing and business promotion.

Partners also focused on innovation, claiming that ignoring the opportunities that it offers will be to the detriment of the industry. They noted that the Provincial Innovation Strategy and the Craft Industry Strategy currently under development provide opportunities for support and direction. Partners indicated that the Craft Council’s mission should reflect the emergence of technology and the need to move towards more innovation. A review of the **Standards of Quality** is required to ensure clarity on technology adoption.

INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY - OBJECTIVES, GOALS AND ACTIONS

(Action items related to Innovation and Technology are included under Objective Two of Member Development)

Objective 2	Find Balance Between Craft and Technology
Action 2.8	Host membership discussion regarding a balance between adoption of technology and the hand of the maker
Action 2.9	Review Standards of Quality and revise as required
Action 2.10	Provide professional development opportunities for innovation and technology in craft

THE STRATEGIC WAY FORWARD: JURYPING AND PROFESSIONALISM

Jurying the work of craftspeople is a sensitive task and must be undertaken with care and consistency. The Craft Council would be advised to strengthen communications with members and potential members regarding product quality and jury results in order to ensure positive experiences. Early understanding of the process and the reasons why jurying is done will do much to alleviate potential tensions and ensure that the process is a constructive one.

The Craft Council has been jurying work for more than 40 years, using the same system and it may be time to review that system to determine if alternate methods would be more useful. As the province is now reconsidering its role in the promotion of the Crafts of Character logo, it is also a time to determine if there is potential for a closer relationship or a merger between the two, how that would be managed and what the impact might be.

Discussions regarding innovation and technology will have an impact on the current **Standards of Quality** supported by the Craft Council. Open discussions among members need to happen urgently as this technology presents opportunities which may run counter to the current criteria.

JURYING AND PROFESSIONALISM - GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

(Action items related to Jurying are included as Goal Two of Member Development)

GOAL TWO	Ensure There is a Broad Understanding of the Value of Excellence in Craft
Objective 1	Increase Number of People Submitting Samples to Standards and Ensure That They Have a Constructive Experience
Action 2.4	Develop a targeted education campaign about the Craft Council's jurying process and the benefits it provides to individual craft makers
Action 2.5	Use a variety of back up support materials including webinars, website publications, checklists, feedback forms, conversations with groups and individuals, new language, one on one follow-up and handholding
Action 2.6	Consider consistency and integrity of jurying process, committee structure and appointment, alternates to monthly and St. John's based meetings (i.e. twice a year)
Action 2.7	Consider the potential for melding with the provincial government product preview process / Crafts of Character

THE STRATEGIC WAY FORWARD: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Members indicated a need for business skills training, and especially noted marketing and the use of social media as important topics. The Craft Council should work with partners to develop and deliver this training, ensuring that topics are focused specifically on craft businesses, as this will lead to greater uptake and effectiveness.

Advantage must be taken of technology which offers opportunities for distance delivery through webinar or online courses, to enable wide access, and continuing availability. Alternate methods of sharing skills, such as mentorship, are in demand. There is a need for professional development to support the preservation of traditional skills.

Professional development is important. Depending on the skill set or training required a critical mass of participants may not always exist to rationalize the investment or effort. Care must be taken to ensure that the craftsperson/member for which the training is intended is the focus, rather than a need to meet attendance requirements. Focus groups also implied a need for more personalized approaches to training delivery, potentially through support for individual endeavours. In some instances, technology such as online training may enable specific professional development needs to be met. For more generic skills, for instance business management and marketing, collaborative approaches with other partners might be utilized.

Professional development opportunities for Craft Council staff should also be explored.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT - GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

(Action items related to Professional Development are included as Goal Four of Membership Development)

GOAL FOUR	Identify and Implement New Services to Meet Membership
Objective 1	Meet Training Needs Identified in Industry Strategy
Action 2.13	Obtain training needs information from industry strategy questionnaire
Action 2.14	Develop training plan for in person, webinar and distance delivery
Action 2.15	Identify partners to avoid duplication, or to ensure craft specific training

THE STRATEGIC WAY FORWARD: COMMUNICATIONS AND THE CRAFT COUNCIL AS A COMMUNITY

The membership consultation indicated a high value for their perception of the Craft Council as a community of craftspeople and a network of professional colleagues. There is a strong personal satisfaction in being connected to the Craft Council that brings a sense of accomplishment, professionalism and acceptance by peers.

The Craft Council needs to examine how it communicates with members, considering the frequency and content of communications, and how these can be improved. Face to face meetings and gatherings are of prime importance in relationship building and every opportunity should be taken to gather Craft Council members together.

Many claimed that the industry lacks credibility, and that the sector is too humble. A more vocal, province-wide celebration of craft and the work of the Craft Council itself would do much to heighten the legitimacy of the industry, encourage new members and establish the viability of craft as a professional career.

COMMUNICATIONS AND THE CRAFT COUNCIL AS A COMMUNITY

(Action items related to Communications are included as Goal Two of Partnerships and Collaboration)

GOAL TWO	Enhanced Communication with Stakeholders
Objective 1	Create a Communications Plan
Action 3.6	Review existing draft Communications Plan, edit where necessary
Action 3.7	Ensure Communication Plan addresses members' access to information
Action 3.8	Ensure Communication Plan addresses industry credibility and audience development
Objective 2	Establish direct communication with members and potential members
Action 3.9	Build a comprehensive database of members and potential members
Action 3.10	Continue monthly newsletter to members
Action 3.11	Assign responsibility for regional member contact to regional Board reps, including direct contact, networking sessions
Objective 3	Enhance online presence
Action 3.12	Complete design and launch new Craft Council website
Action 3.13	Expand Instagram usage

IV. THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The following pages contain the Strategic Plan in its entirety, and include tasks and assignment of responsibility for the next five years. For the most part, tasks are detailed for the first years and less so for later ones. In some cases, specific targets are identified, but this is not always so. Annual reviews will provide specifics as work evolves.

This Plan is a new one for the Craft Council, and is about setting the organization on the road to achieving goals to benefit craft and craftspeople in the province. The Board, Committees and staff of the Craft Council are reminded that part of their first year's work should be to evaluate progress and identify specific targets and actions for the coming year. If the goal is to increase membership numbers, for example, the first year's work should include a collection of relevant data, the development of a plan, and the setting of a justifiable target for the coming year.

Any good strategic plan is a living document, one that will change as the organization encounters successes and new challenges. This Plan will be the same: regular evaluation of steps completed, coupled with a clear idea of lessons learned will enable the Craft Council to move forward.

This Plan is a document to keep the Craft Council strategically focused. It is developed based completely on the information gleaned from the membership survey and the focus groups. It is designed to highlight the priorities faced by the Craft Council and lay out a path to achieving priority-related objectives and goals. It will give the Craft Council the tools to be proactive, seeking innovative ways to strengthen membership, the industry and the role of craft in the culture of the province.

CRAFT COUNCIL OF NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

STRATEGIC PLAN 2018 - 2023

1. OPERATIONAL SUPPORT & RESOURCES

		Present to 18/19	19/20 - 20/21	21/22 - 22/23
GOAL ONE	The Craft Council Is Financially Stable And Sustainable			
Objective 1	Diversify Revenue Sources			
Action 1.1	Explore new sources of government funding - Canadian Heritage, Canada Council	Register Canada Council portal, apply for funding, core & Gallery, apply Cdn Heritage, feasibility study. DFO, seal day. ED	Reapply Canada Council, gallery travelling exhibition, SSHRC with Concordia. ED/ Gallery	Explore new sources
Action 1.2	Seek new partnerships with businesses and organizations	Shop with downtown shops-Shannon. Inuit Art Fdn, Labrador North CofC, Nunatsiavut, PAL, Comfort Inn, seek partners for new conference, ED	Innu Business Devt., Qalipu Nation, NunatuKavut; plan conference	Conference 2020. Build on previous.
Action 1.3	Seek new opportunities for consultancy on a fee for service basis	Shop in Labrador-Shannon, Photography & graphic design services for members -Rachel	Labrador DMO	Build on previous, explore other DMOs
Action 1.4	Develop comprehensive fund development strategy	Develop first draft, including capital campaign. ED with Treasurer	Finalize Fund Devt. Strategy	Continue implementation
Objective 2	Maximize Financial Return and Member Services From Facility			
Action 1.5	Feasibility study / business plan to consider: * maintain Devon House or seek new facility * increased membership services * potential for increasing sales and usage * fiscal viability for long term sustainability * sources of revenue, including capital campaign	Complete feasibility Study. ED with building committee. Start business plan, ED with Board		

	* potential for Clay Studio relocation, either within or outside a Craft Council facility	Complete feasibility and business plan. Wendy and Clay Committee		
GOAL TWO	Documentation Reflects Current Reality of the Craft Council and the Sector, and the Organization's Role Within the Sector			
Objective 1	Redefine Mission/Vision Statements			
Action 1.6	Board committee to review/rewrite, consulting with staff, and bring recommendations back to Board and then to membership	Complete this year. ED with Board.		
Objective 2	Review and Rewrite Constitution			
Action 1.7	Board appoint Constitutional Review Committee * Draw upon Board, external experience and possible Business and Arts NL lawyer * Consider implications for charitable status * Consider implications for recognition as a sector organization * Consider revisions to Board membership * Review committee structure	Terms of Reference. Appoint Committee. Board. Committee starts review. Seek outside organization assistance. Board Constitution Committee Constitution Committee Constitution Committee	Present new constitution at AGM 2018	
Action 1.8	Clarify Job Descriptions for Board members	Rowena		

GOAL THREE		Organization Goals are Being Met Efficiently and Effectively		
Objective 1		Staff and Board Have Necessary Skills to Carry Out Required Tasks		
Action 1.9	Identify skills that are required		Committees as appropriate, with HR Committee	
Action 1.10	Identify skills that are existing within the organization		ditto	
Action 1.11	Make a professional development / training plan for Board and Staff		ditto	continue implementation
Action 1.12	Review Staff compensation package	HR Committee, before Budget 18/19		
Objective 2		Operation is Efficient and Streamlined		
Action 1.13	Develop succession plan for Staff and Board	Draft for Board. HR Committee.	Plan Approved, implementation	
Action 1.14	Identify areas where skills can be transferred among staff	All Staff	All Staff	All Staff
Action 1.15	Review internal budgeting and financial management structure	Advisory support from Business and Arts NL	Full review following new constitution.	
Action 1.16	Develop Policy and Procedures Manual		Terms of Reference, Source contract	
Action 1.17	Enhance Craft Council data management capacity	Build database. Rowena, Lisa, Earl		
Objective 3		Craft Council Initiatives Achieve Maximum Revenue for Organization and Maximum Benefit for Members		
Action 1.18	Complete comprehensive business plans for Craft Council Shop, Craft Fair, Clay Studio	Plans for Shop, Clay Studio. ED with Shannon, Wendy.	Plan for Craft Fair	

2. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

		17/18	18/19	19/20
GOAL ONE	Membership Includes a Broader Range of Craftspeople, Organizations and Supporters			
Objective 1	Increase Membership Numbers			
Action 2.1	Develop new membership categories to encourage entry level membership	Part of Constitutional Review		
Action 2.2	Develop and implement tangible membership material - membership card, services brochure	Materials developed and printed. Rowena, Rachel, Lisa.		
Action 2.3	Acquire and implement comprehensive database for membership management	Rowena, Earl, Lisa.		
GOAL TWO	Ensure There is a Broad Understanding of the Value of Excellence in Craft			
Objective 1	Increase Number of People Submitting Samples to Standards and Ensure That They Have a Constructive Experience			
Action 2.4	Develop a targeted education campaign about the Craft Council's jurying process and the benefits it provides to individual craft makers	Develop Plan, ED plus Standards Committee		
Action 2.5	Use a variety of back up support materials including webinars, website publications, checklists, feedback forms, conversations with groups and individuals, new language, one on one follow-up and handholding	Apply to Canada Council for funds. Rowena, Rachel with Janet Skinner, Labrador Data, Katie Parnham, J Barry, with Standards Committee	Implement	

Action 2.6	Consider consistency and integrity of jurying process, committee structure and appointment, alternates to monthly and St. John's based meetings (i.e. twice a year)		Standards Committee, with Board	
Action 2.7	Consider the potential for melding with the provincial government product preview process / Crafts of Character	Begin discussions. Standards Committee, ED, partners at TCII	Consultation with members, users	
Objective 2	Find Balance Between Craft and Technology			
Action 2.8	Host membership discussion regarding a balance between adoption of technology and the hand of the maker	Membership discussion. Gallery		
Action 2.9	Review Standards of Quality and revise as required		ED, Standards Committee	
Action 2.10	Provide professional development opportunities for innovation and technology in craft	ED, Gallery, Partners (NATI, CME, MUN, CNA)	ED, Gallery, Partners	ED, Gallery, Partners
GOAL THREE	Programs and Services Meet Needs of Membership			
Objective 1	Evaluate Existing Programs and Services to Determine Value			
Action 2.11	Conduct internal review on a program by program basis in light of new plan / priorities	Develop procedure, ED with Board	Identify three priority areas and conduct review, Board with Committee	Identify three priority areas and conduct review, Board with Committee
Action 2.12	End programs with minimal value	Board	Board	Board

GOAL FOUR		Identify and Implement New Services to Meet Membership Needs		
Objective 1		Meet Training Needs Identified in Industry Strategy		
Action 2.13	Obtain training needs information from industry strategy questionnaire	ED with industry partners		
Action 2.14	Develop training plan for in person, webinar and distance delivery		ED and partners	ED and partners
Action 2.15	Identify partners to avoid duplication, or to ensure craft specific training		ED	ED
Objective 2		Identify and Add New Benefits as Needed		
Action 2.16	Offer insurance, and similar programming to members at all levels	Insurance, ED & Lisa, Partners		
Action 2.17	Explore group services that could support members' needs (i.e. accounting, social media)	ED with Partners, Business&Arts NL, NLOWE		
Objective 3		Identify and Capitalize on New Opportunities for Expanded Member Programming		
Action 2.18	Undertake delivery of provincial wholesale show and marketing seminars	Implement, evaluate, discuss future. ED, Shannon, Rachel		
Action 2.19	Implement Northern Lights Cultural Pavilion in Ottawa	Implement, evaluate, discuss future. ED, Shop, Rachel		
Action 2.20	Consider repeating participation in Seal Day and other external activities	Apply funds, ED & Committee	Implement, Evaluate	
Action 2.21	Implement Craft Council booth at Folk Festival	Implement, evaluate, Shannon		
Action 2.22	Create Online Shop	Implement, Rachel, Shannon, Gallery		

Objective 4	Ensure Programming Meets Needs of Emerging Craft Businesses			
Action 2.23	Define anew initiative to support emerging craft makers, to include -Professional Development, in person and by webinar -Quidi Vidi Village Plantation -Mentorship -Online resource centre	Seek Funding, implement. ED with partners	Evaluate, end year one	

3. PARTNERSHIP & COLLABORATION - GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

		17/18	18/19	19/20
GOAL ONE	Ensure Programming Beyond Craft Council's Current Capacity			
Objective 1	Create More Inclusive and Effective Partnerships			
Action 3.1	Develop a clear understanding of a partnership function	Seek resource person. ED and Board		
Action 3.2	Define current partnerships	All Staff		
Action 3.3	Identify appropriate new partners	All Staff		
Action 3.4	Seek cross province partnerships	All Staff		
Action 3.5	Develop a plan for partnership development		ED with Board	
GOAL TWO	Enhanced Communication with Stakeholders			
Objective 1	Create a Communications Plan			
Action 3.6	Review existing draft Communications Plan, edit where necessary	Rachel, with ED. Submit for board approval		
Action 3.7	Ensure Communication Plan addresses members' access to information	ditto		

Action 3.8	Ensure Communication Plan addresses industry credibility and audience development	ditto		
Objective 2	Establish Direct Communication with Members and Potential Members			
Action 3.9	Build a comprehensive database of members and potential members	Build database. Rowena, Lisa, Earl		
Action 3.10	Continue monthly newsletter to members	Rachel		
Action 3.11	Assign responsibility for regional member contact to regional Board reps, including direct contact, networking sessions	Const. Review, Board		
Objective 3	Enhance Online Presence			
Action 3.12	Complete design and launch new Craft Council website	Rachel		
Action 3.13	Expand Instagram usage	Rachel		
GOAL THREE	Maximize Industry Growth			
Objective 1:	Work with Partners to Set and Achieve Industry Growth Targets			
Action 3.1	Complete Craft Industry Development Strategy	ED with industry partners		
Action 3.2	Ensure that existing programs are providing maximum levels of service	ED with industry partners		
Action 3.3	Explore innovation and craft, and research how innovative processes and technologies can enhance industry value.	ED with industry partners		

4. RURAL AND LABRADOR ENGAGEMENT - GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

		17/18	18/19	19/20
GOAL ONE	Build Rural-Based Strengths in Craft Industry			
Objective 1	Develop Process for Working Relationship Between Craft Council and Rural Based Groups			
Action 4.1	Establish process for Craft Labrador and Craft Council to work together, clarifying roles and planning future activities	October, ED, Craft Labrador group		
Action 4.2	Documentation of process leading to the development of the Craft Labrador Initiative and the Craft Labrador Management Committee; identification of lessons learned during formation and program roll out	CLMC, Janet Skinner, Sherry Penney		
Action 4.3	Consider implementation in other regions as appropriate	Board, ongoing		
Action 4.4	Provide Craft Council support to emerging projects as able	Regional reps, Board, ongoing		
Action 4.5	Seek local expertise to advise Craft Council on local strengths and needs to guide working relationships	Regional reps, Board, ongoing		
Objective 2	Role of Regional Representatives is Enhanced			
Action 4.6	Bring regional representatives together to discuss role of this position	Board, ED, twice a year	Board, ED, twice a year	Board, ED, twice a year
Action 4.7	Strengthen contact between regional representatives and members in their regions	Provide support, ED, Lisa		

Action 4.8	Initiate networking sessions in regions, particularly around submitting to the Standards Committee	Regional Reps discuss	One session in each region, Regional Reps	Two sessions in each region, Regional Reps
Objective 3	Traditional Craft Techniques are Celebrated and Preserved			
Action 4.9	Develop a plan for the documentation and preservation of traditional craft skills, especially in Labrador	ED, Labrador Committee to discuss, October	Seek funding, implementation	Implementation
Action 4.10	Develop list of traditional craft skills	Regional Reps, Labrador Committee	Seek funding, implementation	Implementation
Action 4.11	Develop data base of makers	Regional Reps, Labrador Committee	Seek funding, implementation	Implementation
Action 4.12	Assess level of danger of loss	Regional Reps, Labrador Committee	Seek funding, implementation	Implementation

5. CRAFT AND TOURISM - GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

		17/18	18/19	19/20
GOAL ONE	Build on Cultural Authenticity for Industry Growth			
Objective 1	Ensure Craft and Tourism Activities are Representative of Authentic Craft Practice			
Action 5.1	Ensure Craft Council promotes the juried shops and studios	ED, partners, part of all Craft Council involvement with DMOs	ED, partners, part of all Craft Council involvement with DMOs	ED, partners, part of all Craft Council involvement with DMOs
Action 5.2	Implement public engagement activity about the value of the handmade, and the cultural sources of NL craft	ED, partners, part of all Craft Council involvement with DMOs	ED, partners, part of all Craft Council involvement with DMOs	ED, partners, part of all Craft Council involvement with DMOs
Action 5.3	Participate in out of province best practices missions as available	ED. Others as appropriate		
Action 5.4	Facilitate in-province transfer of experiences learned	ED, partners, part of all Craft Council involvement with DMOs		

Objective 2	Work with DMOs to Promote Craft in Tourism as Identified in Destination Development Plans			
Action 5.5	Follow-up with Legendary Coast on 16/17 program and evaluate	ED, partners, part of all Craft Council involvement with DMOs		
Action 5.6	Work with Labrador DMO and Labrador Craft working group to develop programming	ED, partners, apply to Arctic Inspiration Prize		
Action 5.7	Initiate work with Central DMO - Adventure Central / Qalipu Nation	ED, partners, part of all Craft Council involvement with DMOs	ED, partners, part of all Craft Council involvement with DMOs	
Action 5.8	Initiate work with Aboriginal Tourism groups	ED, partners, part of all Craft Council involvement with DMOs		
Objective 3	Build Experiential Tourism in Craft			
Action 5.9	Seminars and networking sessions to define and develop authentic craft experiences for tourists	ED, partners, session one		
Action 5.10	Craft Council staff take GMIST program		ED, other staff	
Action 5.11	Craft Council build and offer craft experiences to tourists; consider facilitating packages that include several craft studios	Develop model and market. All staff	Implement. All Staff	
Objective 4	Maximize Craft Industry Sales to Tourists			
Action 5.12	Continue and expand Studio Guide	Evaluate Guide, research options for expansion. Rachel		
Action 5.13	Explore opportunities for new iterations of Bonavista training	Retailer survey for industry strategy, HNL. All staff		

Action 5.14	Enhance marketing and promotion opportunities to the tourist industry	as above		
Action 5.15	Research tourist expectation and requirement for craft	Rachel		
Action 5.16	Build local best practices guide and mission to share experience with external visitors or cross province visitors		ED with Rachel, Shop	
Action 5.17	Maintain awareness of TCII exit survey results; increase satisfaction rating	ED	ED, seek location specific input	ED

V. CONCLUDING REMARKS

As with any strategic plan, this document must be viewed as an evolving picture of Craft Council goals which must necessarily adjust to a changing environment. It should be monitored closely, reviewed annually, and adapted to meet the growing needs of the organization and the industry. Each part of the Craft Council should examine its own contribution to the achievement of the goals set out in the Plan. Each new proposal should be examined closely to determine whether it fits with the Plan and should be pursued. An annual review should determine how the Plan needs to be changed for the coming year.

This Plan should be used as the basis for a bold new vision for the Craft Council, one that will take it charging into the coming years with energy and conviction that its work will make a profound difference in the lives of working craftspeople and the economic and cultural life of the province. It is a tool that can be used to make what is good even better, to launch new ideas from the successes of the past, and capture and channel the energy and commitment of all the players in craft sector.

The Craft Council would like to thank the people and programs who have made the development of this Strategic Plan possible. Thanks are extended to consultants Marilyn Butland and Pat Curran of Butland Communications, to funding sources at Metro Business Opportunities, the provincial Department of Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation, and the federal Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, to the Planning Committee of Frances Ennis, Katie Parnham, Anne Manuel and Rowena House, and to all the members, partners and supporters who contributed to a vision for the future of the Craft Council of Newfoundland and Labrador.

APPENDIX A. FINDINGS

The following pages summarize the findings of the consultation process. These findings are presented as an amalgam of the contributions of those who are committed to the future strength of the Craft Council serving its membership and the craft sector of Newfoundland and Labrador. This section discusses in detail the common themes, the ideas that were explored in depth and the evident priorities that were apparent throughout the consultation process.

There are Points Which are Particularly Noteworthy:

- ◆ The strong response from Craft Council members to the membership survey are evidence of a professional group, highly engaged with their organization.
- ◆ There is a high level of accord among the respondents, with key themes, priorities and principles finding commonality of support among all respondents.
- ◆ Clear evidence of respect among respondents for all players in the provincial craft industry permeated the entire process.

Key Themes Emerged:

- ◆ A commitment to high quality has resulted in industry growth and a fair return to makers for their work.
- ◆ Province-wide representation and presence for the Craft Council is essential and forms the essence of what the Craft Council is.
- ◆ Partnerships and collaboration with others are critical, expanding the capacity and reach of the Craft Council, enabling broader strength for industry development and allowing the Craft Council to focus on priorities.
- ◆ A focus on new and emerging craftspeople is essential for rejuvenation of the industry
- ◆ Recent Craft Council achievements were identified with potential for building upon for further success.
- ◆ A way must be found to balance craft and technology: innovation must be incorporated smoothly into the Craft Council operation and into craft in the province.
- ◆ The viability and sustainability of the Craft Council is essential for the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

Members indicated value for three areas of importance upon which the Craft Council is founded:

- *A focus on standards, professionalization and quality*

The jury process, the Craft Council's exacting standards and an ethic of professionalism is strong. The emphasis on quality is high, and at the heart of what the Council does. Members cite a transition from hobby to small business with the support of the Craft Council.

- *The perception of the Craft Council membership as a community*

There is a personal satisfaction in being connected to the Craft Council and how it brings members together. This in turn promotes a sense of accomplishment, professionalism and acceptance by peers. The focus is on supporting craftspeople to develop both creatively and in business. Members value having a collective voice and being respected for their work.

- *Industry support and growth*

The third area gathers the various supports and services available to members. The Craft Council supports grass roots businesses while building the confidence of craftspeople. A dedicated Board of Directors, working closely with a small group of capable and committed employees, builds the role of the organization as industry leader. The Craft Council is recognized as a strong advocate and voice for the industry and its members, strengthening individual craftspeople while enhancing the value of the sector overall. They have built strong working relationships with partners and engaged in emerging strategic projects that offer great potential for the future.

It is worth noting that a strategic plan contains objectives that will always require attention, and ones that present a passing opportunity requiring focused, strategic work. In this Strategic Plan, the reader will find:

Areas that will always be critical: operational sustainability and member development will always be important to the stability of the organization and its ability to do the work that it has undertaken to do.

Areas that are part of the essence of the Craft Council: rural engagement and collaborative work with partners need to be the focus of attention at the moment. These will always be important facets of the Craft Council's work plan, but may not always need the strategic attention that is entailed in the current Strategic Plan.

Goals pertaining to areas that are seen to be of current strategic importance: craft and tourism, for example, and innovation and technology. These areas of opportunity may change as the Craft Council adapts its strategic direction to a changing environment.

FINDINGS: OPERATIONAL SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

The Craft Council of Newfoundland and Labrador is a mature organization, with a stable membership of approximately 250 craftspeople and industry stakeholders. The Craft Council is recognized by the provincial government as the industry organization for craft. The Craft Council is also a federally registered charity, with responsibilities in the areas of public education and presentation of craft. The organization places high value on the cultural and creative attributes of craft, as well as the potential for economic benefit to the province.

Managed and led by a Board of Directors composed primarily of professional craftspeople, the Craft Council employs six full time and three part time staff members. These employees are supplemented from time to time by summer students and contract workers dedicated to a particular project. Employees work from the Craft Council facility in downtown St. John's. This facility houses a large retail craft shop, two craft galleries with changing exhibitions, a teaching clay studio, and the offices of administration, communications and management staff.

The major sources of funding to the Craft Council are the provincial Department of Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation, and the federal Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, who contribute approximately equal amounts to ongoing operations and special projects. These funds comprise approximately 20% of the Craft Council's annual cash flow. The balance of funds is self-generated through sales, tuition, craft fair fees, and a range of special projects. Other sources of funds have been sought and received for a range of programs and projects, and have come from applications to the Canada Council, the City of St. John's, Creative Gros Morne, Arts NL, Parks Canada and others.

Strengths and Successes

The Craft Council has built a reputation of strength and reliability among its stakeholders.

Members are engaged and have respect for and trust in the organization and its staff, as well as a vested interest in its strength and growth. Members recognize that the Craft Council has been instrumental in the growth of their businesses and studio practices. They want to see the same level of support for new and emerging craft makers.

Funders and partners spoke highly of the value of the Craft Council, recognizing strong working relationships and the contribution of the organization to move the industry forward, increasing the economic value of the sector. The Craft Council's reach into rural parts of the province was recognized, with the Fibre Arts Conference, the Gros Morne Craft Residency, and the work on the Bonavista Peninsula with the Cultural Craft Initiative cited as recent examples. Partners particularly noted that the Craft Council has professionalized the industry, taking it from hobby-based operations to small businesses.

Partners also noted the access of the Craft Council to grass root businesses, and observed how the organization provides marketing and training opportunities, building the confidence and reach of small and emerging craft businesses. Partners recognized the tireless efforts of the dedicated staff. Finally, they noted that the Craft Council is a strong advocate and voice for the industry and its members.

The consistent and reliable delivery of programs and services by the Craft Council to its members and to the industry is recognized as a strength. The Christmas Craft Fair will celebrate its 44th anniversary in 2017. The Shop and Gallery have been delivering high levels of service since opening in 1991. The Clay Studio has offered classes and workshops since 1993, and the Revolving Loan Fund has issued more than 300 loans. Adherence to policy regarding excellence in fine craft throughout the organization has been steadfast and is credited with prime responsibility for the growth in fiscal strength of individual craft businesses.

The Craft Council is financially stable, careful in budgeting and in monitoring revenues and expenditures. The Council is meticulous in maintaining financial and legal obligations and ensures a full annual audit.

Challenges and Opportunities

Despite the foregoing acclaim, there are gaps in the Craft Council operation. Much of the material in this section comes from focus groups with Board and staff, which is understandable as these are the people who deal with operational matters, are aware of the demands and challenges, and have direct knowledge of where attention is needed.

Need for a Focused, Strategic Plan

The Craft Council has been without a focused, strategic plan for some time, and this is a gap that this document will fill. In order that efforts are focused on what the members and the industry need, and that all initiatives drive towards a common vision, a plan that lays out the strategic direction is essential.

Along with the development of this plan, and indicated as a high priority for the organization, is a review of organizational mandates, mission and vision statement. This will no doubt lead to revisions to the Craft Council's Board and Committee structures and the Constitution. Considering the financial challenges which the Craft Council currently faces, care should be taken to maintain the charitable status which the Craft Council now maintains.

It is time that both the mission statement and the vision statement are reviewed and adjusted to meet current priorities and goals. The current mission statement was revised at the time of the 2014 Annual General Meeting. The current vision statement was written at a planning session held in 2008. As they now stand, these statements read as follows:

Mission Statement: As industry leaders, we preserve and advance excellence in craft for the economic, cultural, and social benefit of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Vision Statement: Craft is a vibrant, valued part of Newfoundland and Labrador's contemporary life, recognized worldwide for excellence, tradition and innovation. The Craft Council of Newfoundland and Labrador supports and celebrates the integrity of the handcrafted object, the creativity of the maker, and the viability and visibility of our industry.

The Craft Council Board of Directors

A review of the founding documents of the Craft Council should also include a review of the make-up of the Board of Directors. Historically, the Board is composed of working craftspeople, most of whom have similar skills and perspectives. An occasional Board member from outside the craft community (an example is a current Board member who is not a craftsperson but has extensive HR experience) has brought different skills and experiences and is highly valuable to the management of the organization.

Ongoing professional development for Board members will increase the value of the Board to the organization and to the community at large. This is especially true as the Craft Council is a not for profit organization managing several business operations which are expected to generate revenue. Training in organizational management topics will be of benefit.

More specific directives about the role of individual members of the Board would be helpful.

Fiscal Issues

There was wide recognition that for the Craft Council to maintain its focus on programs and services, it must seek to sustain and expand its resources where necessary. The constant struggle for sustainability diverts the Craft Council from its primary focus, consuming the energy of key staff. It is acknowledged that the Craft Council accomplishes much more than might be expected given the resources available.

Revenues from membership fees (\$22K) represent a small percentage of the Craft Council's overall budget (\$1.0 million). For some, the time has come to consider whether the Craft Council should continue with a paid membership. For others, the number of paid members is a useful measure of value, and should be increased significantly.

There is some recognition of how the Council can act in a consultancy role, on a fee-for-service basis.

At an internal level, the Craft Council currently manages a budget based on departmental lines; each working program or service (i.e. Shop, Gallery, Craft Fair, etc.) manages its own budget. A review of the organizational mandate should also include a review of this structure, to determine if these boundaries work to the detriment of overall efficiency or if an alternate structure would serve the organization better.

Structural Issues

The description of the Craft Council as a multifaceted organization leads to some confusion at the operational level, where expectations are high and sometimes conflicting. The organization runs the risk of internal tensions resulting from serving a sometimes divergent range of stakeholders. Is the Craft Council a membership organization or an industry association? Can it be both? Is one the same as the other? Do members have different expectations than funders who provide support to the Craft Council in recognition of its status as an industry organization? Will work on behalf of one benefit the other? Does the Craft Council wish to continue to serve the membership, the wider craft community and the general public, necessary to maintain charitable status? These questions are ones that could be addressed by a more in depth conversation than this current consultation allowed. Current members are not exclusionary - quite the opposite. Most wish the membership to expand, and that steps are taken to make membership criteria and fees more accessible to craftspeople all over the province.

Human Resources Issues

Several points under this heading were raised during focus groups with staff members, and with the Board. Resources have not allowed sufficient investment in staff compensation, although as an employer the Craft Council manages and cost shares a health plan and has recently implemented a matching contribution to employees' retirement savings. Attention to this point will strengthen the Craft Council's ability to attract and retain staff in the long term.

Succession planning was identified as a critical need. Historically, staff turnover is very low, and therefore the corporate memory of the organization lies vested in very few people. As the Craft Council nears its 50th anniversary, a written history of the organization, accompanied by organization and management of the Craft Council archive, would be a timely initiative.

There was some concern expressed by staff regarding staff and management relations, indicating that there is room for a stronger connection between Board and staff. This seems to be a consequence of a heavy workload rather than any active disengagement.

Regular professional development opportunities for staff were also indicated as necessary to staff growth and to enable their ability to grapple with growing demands and a changing environment.

Facility Issues

The facility currently housing the Craft Council is a valuable asset. Not only is it a significant fiscal asset, being wholly owned by the organization, but it is recognized in the community as the home of the Craft Council and is a permanent, physical representation of the strength of the industry. It houses a large retail shop, two galleries with changing exhibitions, a teaching clay studio, and the offices of administration, communications and management staff, enabling ease of internal communications and mutual programming support.

While these attributes do provide value to the Craft Council, there are significant issues which must be addressed; some of these issues have become urgent, and were identified as priorities during consultation.

The building was constructed in the late nineteenth century as a private dwelling. Its internal architecture does not lend itself easily to re-use as a retail shop, a clay studio and even as a gallery.

The location, while fairly visible in the community, is somewhat away from the standard shopping routes, and therefore not best suited to a retail venture.

The Clay Studio, operating at Devon House since its inception in 1993, is unable to grow and expand programming because of a lack of space.

The building is a provincially recognized heritage structure and this reinforces ties between craft and the culture and history of the province. However, there is a tension between this feature, and the efforts of the Craft Council, especially the Gallery, to showcase cutting edge contemporary craft.

The building itself is in need of immediate repair, with pressing issues on several fronts. The cost of maintaining a heritage building is one that absorbs significant Board and staff attention.

There was a clear need expressed for immediate attention and decision regarding the issue of Devon House, and whether this particular building and location has served the prime purposes for which it was purchased and its services established. A number of suggestions were made, ranging from selling the building and buying another to dividing operations so that some are in prime location and others in less expensive areas. In any case, the home of the Craft Council must be such that any visit, by a tourist, a shopper, a supporter, a member or a staff person be an experience of excellence, representing the values of the organization overall.

Data Management

A number of issues raised under this heading by members, staff and partners seem to indicate that better management of data industry-wide would facilitate management of a number of challenges. The Craft Council itself needs to address management of data regarding members, program users and customers, in order to better serve these individuals. Such data is extremely valuable, and full use could result in more efficient service to members, increased shop sales and more effective programming overall.

Workload Issues

Several references were made to gaps in performance caused by heavy workloads on the part of staff, and high expectations from members and partners. A review of program offerings to ensure that all are contributing to the goals and mission of the Craft Council would be sensible. As well, the Craft Council should consider lessons learned from what was initially the Anna Templeton Centre project of the Craft Council. As the project grew, it became strong enough to exist on its own, and was separated. The Anna Templeton Centre is now a supportive partner for many Craft Council projects. Are there other areas where the same pattern could be followed?

FINDINGS: PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

As a strong and flexible representative of a diverse industry with multiple facets and ways of connecting with other sectors, the Craft Council is in a prime position to seek partnerships. The Craft Council's work in marketing, exhibition, jurying, retail, awards, professional development and many other avenues means that opportunities for partnership are numerous and diverse. The organization's geographic reach opens doors to regional and local partners, and local partners can respond with grass roots knowledge and objectives.

There is a broad recognition of the value of partnership and the success that has come from a collective approach to industry development. At times, a single result may cut across multiple sectors, bringing a diversity of successes, and there is room to enhance approaches with other industry associations and potential partners in other sectors. Craft is a strategic sector and its reach, capacity and achievement can be enhanced through collaborative work with new partners.

Strengths and Successes

The success of the Craft Council has been helped by many strong partnerships.

These include support from both federal and provincial governments (the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and the provincial Department of Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation) for many Craft Council initiatives, as well as financial support from other sources including, most recently, the City of St. John's, the Canada Council for the Arts, Arts NL, Creative Gros Morne and Parks Canada.

The Craft Council has built and continues to pursue a strong working relationship with sector development staff at the provincial Department who work closely with Craft Council staff on many industry development projects.

A long standing partnership with Textiles: Craft and Apparel Design at the College of the North Atlantic, and previous incarnations of this key professional training program at the provincial community college has resulted in fruitful programs and services and a steady growth in industry strength.

The Anna Templeton Centre for Craft Art and Design, formerly a project of the Craft Council, and now its own independent organization, has grown to be a valuable partner, especially in projects related to professional development and training in the craft sector.

A recent example of a regional partnership has been with the Labrador Craft Management Committee

which has accomplished significant activity in craft development in that part of the province. The local knowledge and support amassed by the Labrador Committee means that the work that can be accomplished is well beyond what the Craft Council could do without that local partnership.

Many partners have been related to specific projects. For example, the City of St. John's is a strong partner in the development and implementation of the Quidi Vidi Village Plantation, a craft incubator in St. John's. Parks Canada played a strong partnership role in the 2015 Fibre Arts NL conference as well as the ongoing Gros Morne Craft Residency. The Craft Council has worked with retail partners on the Bonavista Peninsula as they develop the Cultural Craft initiative, and continues to play a partnership role. New partnerships with destination management organizations pose the potential for further influence and accomplishment.

The Craft Council is currently engaged with other craft industry partners to develop a comprehensive strategy for further development of the craft industry. This will be the third iteration of this initiative, with each of the three combining industry research and analysis, and assessment of economic impact, with a strategic action plan for further industry growth.

Challenges and Opportunities

Comments made about partnerships and their value were all encouraging of the Craft Council to use the opportunities that partnerships can provide to expand the reach and the capacity of the organization and enhance services to members, especially with the aim of increasing the ability of working craftspeople to earn a living wage. That said, there are challenges associated with ensuring that partnerships work to the best possible conclusion for all involved, and much advice was offered on where and how to seek appropriate partners.

Understanding Partnerships

To engage in the best possible partnerships and to achieve the most benefit, the Craft Council must first be sure to understand what a partnership entails, and how to choose partners that will bring the best benefit. The Craft Council must consider the benefits that a potential partner might draw from a collaborative effort, and take these into account when planning an approach. As with any new initiative, the Craft Council should be clear about its own motivation and goals for a partnership, as well as considering the key skills and knowledge that the Craft Council can offer to a potential partner. The Craft Council should develop a clear set of criteria for a potential partnership, including such items as workload, finances, product quality, communications and management to ensure insofar as possible, a successful outcome.

The Craft Council should take care not to duplicate services, but to work with other agencies and together offer an expanded range of services that will meet individual goals of all partners. In devising plans to reach the goals laid out in this Strategic Plan, the Craft Council will no doubt continue to work with existing partners, but will find benefit in seeking new partners that can enable greater effectiveness for both.

Partnerships Within the Sector

The Craft Council will continue to work with existing partners, ensuring that collaborations are tracked and evaluated to ensure accountability and inform future planning. As has been clearly stated, it is the strength of the relationship among those pillars of the industry - government, educational institution and

Craft Council - that has enabled the strength of the industry. These partnerships must be carefully tended to ensure that their strength continues to move the industry forward.

Partnerships with Other Sectors

There is potential to find partners to enable the Craft Council to expand its capacity and reach into new areas of endeavour. Memorial University and the College of the North Atlantic both have centres for technology and innovation which can help to advance the Craft Council's goals in these areas. The Newfoundland and Labrador branch of the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters and the Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Technical Industries are also potential partners.

Tourism industry operators and destination management organizations can be sought out to build collaborative efforts in the tourism sector. From an industry association perspective, Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador (HNL) is an obvious partner. At the regional level, some Destination Management Organizations (DMOs) have identified strategic priorities that include craft, and work has already begun with the Legendary Coasts DMO.

Other industry organizations within the province have goals which would benefit from collaboration with the craft sector, and the Craft Council could reach out to explore these opportunities.

Opportunities may also exist to create new partnerships with education and health agencies, with craft becoming part of an overall approach to wellness. The new Memorial University facility at The Battery was mentioned as a potential community partner, as have organizations like Choices for Youth, the Y Enterprise Centre and Open Windows.

Partnerships within the Craft Council Itself

The Craft Council as a whole was encouraged to recognize and act on the potential for partnerships among its own existing programs. There is room within the existing structure for development of stronger programming ties between departments and programs. The lessons of partnership building could be applied internally as well.

Partnerships with Members

Membership consultation showed an eagerness among members to partner with the Craft Council. Established craft businesses have local ties and assets that make them able to assist the Craft Council in building a stronger rural and regional presence.

In other cases, especially in Labrador, members noted that traditional craft skills are being lost, and that local partners can play a strong partnership role in keeping traditions alive.

Partnerships Among Craftspeople

There is a long history of collaboration between individual craft makers, as happens frequently now at the Quidi Vidi Village Plantation. Craft studios and galleries in a single community share joint events and

promotional costs, as they have done in Tors Cove. Craft businesses and organizations have partnered for the Cultural Craft initiative on the Bonavista Peninsula. Partnerships and networks throughout the province were suggested as ways in which craftspeople could share information about such things as supply sources, which could move into joint purchases. This was particularly mentioned in the Labrador context, where joint initiatives bring much potential for regional benefit. While this topic is being discussed one could also consider whether there is a role for the Craft Council to facilitate such collaborations, or join a partnership for wider benefit.

Craft Council members also noted that the relationship between the funder and the craft business applicant can also be seen as a partnership, with a need for a stronger relationship and greater transparency overall.

FINDINGS: RURAL ENGAGEMENT AND LABRADOR

The Craft Council of Newfoundland and Labrador is a provincial organization and the industry association for craft in the province. As such, it is essential that the Craft Council have representation from all parts of the province, and develop and deliver services to craftspeople in all parts of the province. This is so important to the essence of the Craft Council that each strategic direction should be considered through the lens of involvement by craftspeople who live in rural areas.

It is acknowledged that most Craft Council members are Avalon and Eastern Newfoundland-based and that there is a significant need and opportunity for greater presence and visibility in other areas of the province. Resources are always an impediment to this growth; however partnerships and technology may enable more rural engagement beyond the Avalon and eastern regions. A focused effort is required to find a way to strengthen the Craft Council's rural presence.

Recent Achievements

Several recent rural-based project activities by the Craft Council, including its involvement in the Cultural Craft Project on the Bonavista Peninsula and Fibre Arts Newfoundland and Labrador held in 2015 in Gros Morne, have been cited as successes. There is an opportunity to extend this success by replicating these processes and approaches in subsequent years, in other areas and in other media.

For instance, the work with Cultural Craft partners on the Bonavista Peninsula may serve as a template for further rural engagement by the Craft Council in other regions. The success of the 2015 Fibre Conference bodes well for a second conference, in another region and perhaps tackling a different medium.

Recent work with the Legendary Coasts Destination Management Organization is the beginning of a series of projects with other DMOs across the province, providing the Craft Council with opportunities to deliver services to working craftspeople residing in rural areas.

Recent work with the Craft Labrador Management Committee has supported the delivery of much needed programming in Labrador. Workshops in traditional skills, the development of a comprehensive website and the beginning of bulk purchasing to increase the accessibility of raw materials have all happened because of grassroots work by volunteers and craftspeople in Labrador.

Challenges and Opportunities

Enhancement of Awareness of the Craft Council in Rural Areas

Awareness of the Craft Council and its programming is low outside the Avalon Peninsula. While social media and an online presence are essential tools, these cannot stand alone. As much as possible, a personal presence is required. The Craft Council was encouraged to bring information about the benefits of membership to small communities throughout the province.

The Craft Council should consider carefully the benefits of membership through a rural lens. Consider a part time craftsperson in a rural community, making work to sell in the local craft shop during the summer season. It may be that this craftsperson does not understand the benefits that membership can bring, or if those benefits are truly of value. The Craft Council must ensure that the value to the craftsperson is real and is conveyed.

Online avenues will be useful to advance awareness of the Craft Council and its work. A revitalized website, plus consideration of the best way to use social media to reach an audience of rural craftspeople will be valuable tools.

The Craft Council now has access to webinar technology and this can be used to hold meetings and deliver professional development workshops, enabling access by rural craftspeople.

It must be recognized, though, that not all rural areas have easy access to the Internet. As well, personal visits by a Craft Council Board member or staff person will have positive results.

Despite the prevalent use of digital media, there are still many craftspeople who would respond positively to a membership card, to a brochure clearly listing membership benefits, to written testimonials from current members, to a folder containing printed material about Craft Council programming.

The Craft Council could consider how to involve existing members in reaching out to potential members in their regions. One on one contact from members who have experienced the benefits of being a part of the Craft Council would carry significant weight. One member suggested a facilitated studio swap would be an interesting way to put rural and urban craftspeople in contact to the benefit of both.

A Craft Registry

An inventory of craftspeople and their products will be an extremely useful tool in a campaign to reach craftspeople in rural areas. It may be easier to contact them through rural based groups like development associations or Women's Institutes.

As there are traditional skills that are being lost, especially in Labrador, a first step in preservation and documentation is knowing who is making what.

Strengthen the Role of Regional Representatives

The role of the Regional Representative (regional rep) on the Craft Council Board of Directors has been underutilized, and could be strengthened to the advantage of the craftspeople in each region. While

there is a job description for this position, it should be reinvigorated, and a budget allocation made each year to enable regional reps to travel within their region and to represent the Craft Council when possible and appropriate.

Contact with staff needs to be stronger. Information about the members in the region, including contact information should be provided automatically, along with information about the Craft Council and its programs and services.

Insufficient advantage has been taken in recent times of the regional reps on the Board. While it is recognized that a list of tasks to be assigned to this position could be overwhelming, responsibilities could include any of the following: stronger two-way communication between members and staff, profiles of regional members for website promotion, occasional networking sessions, or representation of the Craft Council at local events. Regional reps need to be empowered to be a liaison between regional members and the Board and staff of the organization.

It was suggested that regional reps have periodic teleconferences to talk about ways to share experiences about the Craft Council presence in rural parts of the province.

Use Partners for Local Knowledge and Collaboration

There are strong opportunities for use of partners in reaching out to rural craftspeople. The Craft Council could participate in local events that draw people together, including tradeshow and festivals.

Recent experience shows that there is an eagerness among potential local partners to work with the Craft Council. Members at the planning retreat had many suggestions, especially from Labrador, as there was a strong contingent present. No doubt there would be willing partners in other regions should the Craft Council look for them.

Labrador

As there are only a very small number of Craft Council members in Labrador, the views of Labrador craftspeople were not specifically included in the membership survey. However, a strong representation from Labrador was present at the planning retreat, and they spoke strongly and clearly about the work that has been happening in Labrador, the work that needs to be done, and their perceptions of the role of the Craft Council.

Significant work has been accomplished in the last four years in Labrador in the areas of needs assessment, transfer of traditional skills, communication among craftspeople via email and the internet, bulk purchases of raw materials and other key areas essential for support of Labrador craft. Their approach has been to document the need, map out a step-by-step action plan to meet that need, and follow that plan in a deliberate and focused manner. The personal and frequent contact with individual craftspeople has been a key part of each initiative. Perhaps most significantly, the Craft Labrador Management Committee has a strong sense of their long term goals and outcomes. Documentation by the Craft Labrador Management Committee of their process and lessons learned over the past four years will be extremely helpful to the Craft Council as it contemplates needs in other rural areas.

FINDINGS: MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

The Craft Council was formed in 1972 as a membership organization. For the bulk of its life, membership numbers have been between 250 and 300; in recent times, most are professional makers who look to the Craft Council to help them earn a full time or significant part time living. Membership numbers also include teachers and other resource people to the industry, and those with an interest in learning about and sustaining craft in the culture and economy.

Membership numbers are shifting. Indications are that membership numbers are shrinking slightly - as the usual annual membership number appears to be closer to 250 than to 300. The average age is increasing, and members are retiring or moving away and they are no longer being quickly replaced by new members. There may be barriers that prevent potential members from joining. There are many craft makers who sell their work at local markets and retail shops who are not members of the Craft Council and who could benefit from the services and networks that the Craft Council provides.

The Craft Council currently has three levels of membership - a general membership, open to any craftsperson or supporter, a marketing membership, open to any juried member participating in market venues, and a low-cost student membership rate. Fees are \$80, \$95 and \$30 per year.

It is the responsibility of the membership to set membership fees at a membership meeting, and the last increase was voted in with enthusiasm in 2011. Nevertheless, the annual fee might be a barrier to those considering becoming a member, and it is important that there is clear value in paying the fee and becoming a member of the Craft Council.

The Craft Council offers a range of support programming to its members in the areas of professional development, marketing, exhibition, and communications services. The Craft Council is the provincial voice for the craft industry and works with industry partners to strengthen the economic value and return to working craftspeople.

Strengths and Successes

The survey of members showed strong support for the organization, and a high rate of return indicates engagement and a strong sense that the actions of the Craft Council have importance and impact on the work and lives of its members.

There were three areas, clearly expressed, wherein membership in the Craft Council was shown as valuable.

The Craft Council focus on standards, professionalism and quality of work was of primary importance. Members indicated that the emphasis on high quality is at the heart of the work that the Craft Council does, and is a basis of the professionalism of the industry.

The Craft Council is recognized as a community of craft makers. There is a personal satisfaction in being connected to the Craft Council and recognition for how it can bring members together. This in turn promotes a sense of personal accomplishment as a member of a professional group that values peer support. Members value the collective voice and the respect for their work that membership brings.

The Craft Council plays a crucial role in industry development. Members value the various supports

and services that are available to them, enhancing their creative and economic prowess, and bringing credibility and visibility to the sector. The Craft Council is recognized as a strong advocate and voice for the industry and its members, strengthening the individual craft makers and businesses while enhancing the value of the sector overall.

Challenges and Opportunities

The comprehensive survey of the Craft Council membership provided much material for this section regarding the needs and expectations of members. Many showed a desire for increased supply of current offerings - more exhibitions, more marketing opportunities, more rural programming, more professional development. Others suggested alternate approaches to membership structure and development of the public profile of the industry.

Public Recognition for the Industry and for the Craft Council Itself

Overall, there is a feeling that the craft industry is not regarded by the general public as a legitimate industry with a credible business community and an economic weight in the province. At the same time, the sector was described as 'humble', and not celebrating or marketing craft as much or as well as it should. The work of the Craft Council is not well known, even among its members and potential members. Benefits are not clearly laid out, and misconceptions exist.

Provincial Focus

As a provincial organization, the Craft Council of Newfoundland and Labrador is expected to have a province-wide presence, with members and programming happening in all regions. Membership is concentrated in the St. John's metropolitan area, and to a lesser extent, in the eastern part of the province.

Much of the provincial population overall is to be found in the same geographical regions, bringing both opportunities and challenges. A concentrated population enhances the public audience for markets, exhibitions and the Craft Council shop. It also focuses a high percentage of the membership for delivery of professional development programming.

On the other hand, members and audiences who do not reside within this higher density population area do not have the same access to the public and membership services of the Craft Council. Like all provincial organizations, the Craft Council faces the challenges of reaching and serving those members and potential members.

Travel is a challenge, requiring both time and budget. Technology is sometimes part of the solution, but it requires equipment and expertise for both the deliverer and the user. For some regions, especially in Labrador, a real person with paper documents is needed for prime communication. In other regions, the membership numbers are high, and requiring more effort for wide contact.

The Craft Council Board has seven regional representative seats. Board members need clearer direction of the role of a regional rep, and support in achieving a stronger regional presence for the organization.

Membership Structure and Fees

There were conflicting opinions expressed regarding membership fees. Some felt that the annual return in fees was too small a percentage of the annual Craft Council revenue to warrant collecting it. Others felt that the payment of a fee indicated a measure of support and attachment for the organization that should not be ignored. Some felt that the current marketing membership fee to be too high, and presented a barrier to joining. Others declared that it did not matter what the fee was - that there should be a clear value for the money invested.

There was an intense discussion about the membership structure at the planning retreat. Current divisions of student, general and marketing were felt to be too restrictive, and it was suggested that the Craft Council restructure its membership levels and fees on a sliding scale, where members who use low levels of service pay a lower fee than those who use high levels of service. Participants in this discussion felt very strongly that there should be a fee to belong to a professional organization.

Increasing Membership Numbers

As the membership ages, moves away or retires, the Craft Council must take active steps to attract new members. Younger makers will bring a younger audience to market events and exhibitions. Both are required to maintain industry strength.

There are several challenges for the Craft Council in this regard, including the necessity of ensuring that potential craft makers are aware of the viability of a career in craft, that graduates of professional training programs are welcomed into the industry and that new and emerging makers, of whatever age, and in whatever location in the province, are supported and guided through the early years of business growth.

Potential for New Business and Professional Services

As the sector has grown in professionalism, the potential for the development of new business-related membership benefits has appeared. Health plans for members, joint insurance plans and sharing transportation costs were suggested.

Data Collection

The collection of accurate data about members was seen as valuable, in particular about their use of Craft Council services. A review of membership structure will require a better understanding of the use that each individual member makes of various services offered. More effective use of database software is needed.

The collection of accurate data about the industry was also seen as essential. Information about industry challenges and achievements will enable enhanced development and delivery of services, and a timely record of economic impact is necessary to track industry growth and to evaluate the results of industry supports.

Representation

The membership survey indicated that craftspeople want a voice. They see the Craft Council as their voice to government and want that voice to be strong. They want to see individual members having a voice in the management of the Craft Council. The role of the regional representative is seen to include being that voice.

FINDINGS: CRAFT AND TOURISM

The relationship of craft to tourism product development was identified as a consistent theme in focus groups and the membership survey. For most, craft is recognized as an important element in the Newfoundland and Labrador culture. Both traditional and contemporary craft can play a role in interpreting that culture for the traveller and in serving as a purchased reminder of a stay in the province. The opportunities presented by a visiting marketplace have much potential in augmenting the annual income of a working craftsperson, and this is an avenue that is ripe for pursuit. For some, though, the focus on tourism and tourists is disappointing and even threatening as it presents the possibility that professionalism and quality may be at risk as craftspeople strive to fill perceptions of a price-conscious and icon-driven marketplace.

Making craft for the tourist market presents both an opportunity and a challenge for craftspeople and for the craft industry. Exit surveys show that more than half of the tourists who travel to the province visit a craft shop to purchase Newfoundland and Labrador crafts. Ensuring that there are products that meet the tourist's requirements - of high quality, designed to speak of this place, in sufficient supply to meet the demand and at price points that meet the varying expectations of a diverse audience - will enable growth of the contribution that tourist purchases make to the overall industry value. New opportunities in experiential tourism are available for interested craft businesses to pursue, and research in the tourism sector shows that such experiences are in high demand.

Opportunities

The 2011 Exit Survey conducted by the provincial tourism department reported that 54% of respondents visited a craft or gift shop during their stay. That's a huge potential audience that currently contributes approximately \$8 million to the annual craft industry value. Tourist sales can be especially important where resident population levels are low and average age higher - that is, much of rural Newfoundland and Labrador.

The Exit Survey also showed that the level of satisfaction with the products and venues that tourists found measured just 76%, leading one to believe that the potential for a greater contribution is there. Many craft shops and studios are not TAP approved, meaning that they do not meet the level of service that HNL studies show are in demand by the visitor. Compliancy is required for listing in the Newfoundland and Labrador Visitor Guide, resulting in a major promotional loss.

It should be noted that detailed expenditure figures for 2016, the latest detailed exit survey, have not been released, and should be consulted when they become available.

Experiential Tourism

Many members and other stakeholders mentioned the widespread demand for more hands on activities and experiences. Experiential tourism has become a new catchphrase, and the craft sector is one that is well equipped to offer this to tourists. Craftspeople will need guidance in developing marketable experiences, in planning the logistics and finances so that such offerings are profitable. Members suggested that the Craft Council should take a lead role in this area through offering experiences to tourists at the organization's facility in St. John's, partnering with members and others to offer experiences elsewhere, and offering support and advice to members as they develop their own offerings.

Cultural Products

Since 2010, the Craft Council has worked with the provincial government to encourage the development of handcrafted products that reflect museum artefacts and archaeological finds. The gift shop at the Colony of Avalon has worked hard to seek out craftspeople to create reproductions of objects found in the site at Ferryland. The Historic Sites Association of Newfoundland and Labrador manages gift shops at national historic sites like Castle Hill and Red Bay in Labrador; these shops have a mandate to carry works that reflect the exhibits at the historic sites. Most recently, efforts have been made on the Bonavista Peninsula to nurture the design and production of craft works that draw upon the history, environment and culture of that region, and efforts in product development and marketing made by a partnership of shops and venues on the peninsula are having exciting results.

Working with Partners in the Tourism Sector

In recent years, the Craft Council has shared several projects with tourism sector organizations. A seminar on business start-up and use of social media to promote your business travelled the province in 2015, with an HNL staffer leading the sessions on promotion. More recently, the Craft Council worked with the Legendary Coasts organization on a craft initiative in the region, aimed at targets identified in the DMO's Destination Development Plan (DDP). This latter example is the first step: further work is needed, following an evaluation of the year one initiative.

Other Destination Management Organizations within the province have identified craft as an area of priority within their DDPs. Usually, the Craft Council is specifically mentioned as a potential working partner to ensure that goals are met. Experiences gained in the first stages of work with Legendary Coasts can inform work to be done in other regions, bearing in mind that each region is unique and has particular attributes that will feed a unique response from craft makers in that region. Work in each region should always include identification and inclusion of as many craftspeople as possible, accompanied by programming to enhance learning and networking opportunities. Specific topics could include product development for the tourist market, development of experiences for the traveller, and promotion to the travelling marketplace.

It should be recognized that these partnerships have the potential to deliver positive results, including the enhancement of tourism opportunities, expanded markets for working craftspeople, and a new revenue stream for the Craft Council itself.

The Craft Council continues to gain insight in this area, and there are others in the province with experience to share and guidance to offer. It was suggested that the Craft Council compile its growing knowledge and offer a guide to developing craft for the tourist market, combined with a local best practices mission for sharing of skills and ideas.

Challenges

There was a certain measure of wariness to the Craft Council working to strengthen links between craft and tourism. There is a tension that requires a greater understanding of the range of interests of visitors, some of whom want inexpensive mass produced items from offshore factories, and others who are seeking unique, handmade objects that reflect the environment, culture and individual identity of the maker. Much the same as the local market, in fact. The Craft Council's role in working with DMO's to further the joint goals of the craft and tourism sectors must be to encourage the development and sale of authentic traditional and contemporary craft in the tourist market that meets the same standard of quality that the Craft Council promotes for all its venues.

Craftspeople may need to better understand the needs of tourists as they relate to product, service, and price point. There may be a perception that the tourist is looking only for cheap products that depict the icons of puffins, icebergs and row houses. While craft products that respond to such icons may indeed be unique and well made, the danger seems to be on many minds that such products, showing little evidence of individual interpretation, will saturate the marketplace.

The tourism industry has many examples in the provision of accommodation and meals where higher price points have not prevented full bookings. The same can be true in craft.

Promotion and Marketing

Promotion of craft to the travelling public was seen as a significant challenge by members. For the most part craft businesses must act independently to promote their offerings to the travelling public. Provincial regulations mean that highway signage to draw travellers off the Trans Canada Highway is expensive, and serve solely as a marker, without any individualized promotional value. Shops and studios can design, print and distribute rack cards.

Some bemoaned the low level of support for the Studio Guide, and encouraged the Craft Council to expand the Guide's content to encourage greater participation. An expanded guide with a province-wide network of scheduled demonstrations or a special section devoted to experience offerings was suggested. Partnering with tourism marketing groups to create craft maps was suggested.

Experience in Cape Breton indicates that an app based studio map may not be worth the investment, but social media promotion of studios, shops and events is essential. The craft sector could make greater use of the social media feeds managed by the province, by sending them tourist relevant content. While Facebook remains a primary avenue, Instagram use is growing rapidly.

The recent round of new ads from Tourism NL has included one focused on craft. This is a great start, but considering the strong role that craft plays in the authentic culture of the province, more inclusion of fine craft in tourism marketing should be urged. Improving tourist experiences and purchase opportunities for craft province wide will help to ensure that tourism marketing for craft increases.

The Craft Council Shop

The Craft Council Shop is a year round operation; nevertheless, it depends significantly on tourist sales for a major portion of its annual sales revenue. With annual sales of close to \$500,000, the Shop is a major service to craftspeople, returning \$300,000 to Craft Council members each year. The Shop as a member service is of special value to those who are new and emerging and have yet to establish their own retail presence. The Shop also plays a valuable role for members living in rural areas who depend upon the Shop to enable them to reach the larger urban marketplace.

During the focus groups it became clear that staff at the Craft Council Shop are feeling the frustrations caused by the success of the work of the Craft Council in growing independent craft businesses, including shops and retailing studios. The Shop finds itself pressured to make sales and generate revenue for the organization, while at the same time expected to share their customers and their suppliers with newly established retail outlets. This point, which had been raised in pre-retreat documentation, was discussed at the planning retreat, with a general feeling that the Craft Council and the Craft Council Shop is expected to take a leadership role in the retailing of craft in the province. Perhaps it is now time that the Shop augment its member service offering.

The Craft Council Shop has much to offer the industry. Not every member will want to retail directly from his or her own studio or shop, and having at least one store in the province that sells only juried work promotes and strengthens the concept of striving for excellence. The staff in the Craft Council Shop have acquired an enormous knowledge about the craft makers of the province, about their products, their inspirations and their stories. In addition, they have extensive retailing knowledge and experience in the display and sale of handcrafted works. While some measure of direct support to other parts of the industry has happened, much greater use could be made of the accumulated knowledge and experience that the Craft Council Shop has to offer.

When the Craft Council Shop started in 1991, it was the only shop in the province that carried only juried work. It took many years of building and development before the Shop generated revenue for the Craft Council. Today, to the credit of the Craft Council, there are many shops and retailing studios selling juried work in the province, and it is time for the Craft Council Shop to move beyond, into the next stage of their own business development as the direct retail arm of the organization. The Craft Council must recognize that its Shop should play a leadership role within the retail sector of the craft industry, and be prepared to invest in the next steps of its Shop development. The development of a comprehensive business plan is necessary to ensure that every traveller who visits the Craft Council should have an outstanding experience. The plan should address the following:

- ◆ A discussion of the role of the Craft Council in direct retailing of fine craft and the part that the Craft Council Shop plays in this.
- ◆ A clear identification of the strengths of the Craft Council Shop and steps to be taken to build on those strengths to ensure that the Shop is the best fine craft shop in the province.
- ◆ Consideration of the role of the Craft Council Gallery as a sales venue for high end work, and whether those sales should become part of the mandate of the Shop, enabling the Gallery to focus solely on its role as a showcase.
- ◆ Consideration of location.

- ◆ Development of a consultation service to enable the sharing of the Shop’s knowledge and experience with a provincial network of craft retailers, using this as a method to generate Craft Council revenues. Services could be offered in person, online, through written best practice guide and best practice missions.
- ◆ Development and testing of online craft sales based on the stories of the makers and their inspirations, environments and cultural influences, rather than simply on the attributes of the product itself, as online craft sales have traditionally been.

FINDINGS: INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT

The Craft Council’s role in industry development and growth was seen as a priority for members. The three pillars of craft development – government, education institution and working craftspeople, as represented by the Craft Council – have worked together in this province to develop the thriving craft industry that now exists.

The Craft Council is currently working with industry partners to define a comprehensive strategy for further development of the craft industry in the province. This project also entails an assessment of the economic impact of the industry, as well as collection of detailed information about industry participants. It is important that this information is closely read and understood by industry partners, as this will directly inform the strategic direction. Craft Council staff have observed a recent industry shift away from production groups and larger businesses to more individual enterprises. Another shift that has been noted is a recent return to interest in wholesale marketing, an industry element which had diminished some years ago, but now seems to be regaining strength. It is essential that industry partners are aware of such changes, and take steps to ensure that appropriate supports are in place.

The working relationship among industry partners is strong and contributes to the strength and health of the craft industry, and must be maintained. As part of the strategy process, the partners should define a growth target for the industry and work together to achieve it.

This partnership recognizes that each has strengths and assets that they bring to joint industry development. Members have identified what they see as the most critical roles for the Craft Council in industry development as industry promotion, support for young and emerging craftspeople and working with industry partners.

Members indicated the importance of their representative group, the Craft Council, having a strong voice in how the industry is presented and promoted to the public. They see industry promotion as key to industry growth.

FINDINGS: INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

A focus on innovation is required if the sector is to remain current. This need extends to both the Craft Council and its members, and pertains to both the production of craft and the methods used to promote, market and develop the sector. Potential partnerships and collaborations, along with a focus on innovation by both levels of government, provide an opportunity and some context within which innovative practices might be identified.

Innovation within the Craft Council was considered. There is an appetite to try new approaches - to back up, reconsider, and do something different. Best practices exist in other jurisdictions and might inform activities here. For example, the British Crafts Council has done work on innovation and craft. By identifying other approaches and modeling them to suit local circumstances, the Craft Council will have a chance to consider and develop new processes and services.

The emergence of technology in craft development was considered. There was an acknowledgment that the introduction of more sophisticated technology in craft production is inevitable to remain competitive and may have a transformative impact on craft development. Adoption of some measure of technology may be increasingly necessary for craftspeople to remain current and competitive.

Members and others emphasize the high value of the “hand of the maker”, and this ingredient is critical to the value of the final product. With the introduction of technology, the need for strong design skills becomes even more critical. The use of technology and individual creative expression and technique are not mutually exclusive, but will have an impact on current criteria as written in the **Standards of Quality**. Discussions to find a balance between technology and the hand of the maker are necessary.

Members also noted their struggles with technology insofar as limitations exist to broadband capacity; improvements in this area can transform product research and design activities, as well as marketing and business promotion.

Partners also focussed on innovation, claiming that ignoring the opportunities that innovation offers will be to the detriment of the industry. There is opportunity for the craft sector within the Provincial Innovation Strategy, as well as opportunity for including attention to innovation within the Craft Industry Strategy currently in development. Partners indicated that the Craft Council’s mission should reflect the emergence of technology and the need to move towards more innovation. The Craft Council may need to review its standards to ensure clarity on technology adoption.

FINDINGS: PROFESSIONALISM AND THE JURYING PROCESS

The advancement of excellence in craft has been the key phrase in the mission statement of the Craft Council for many years. Since the mid-1970’s, the Craft Council has managed a jurying process, ensuring the works sold in Craft Council venues meet a high standard in design, technical execution and quality of materials. This determination has led to a professional craft industry where works of fine craft are recognized for their quality by a loyal audience and craftspeople are compensated appropriately for their work.

Consistently throughout the consultation process, the jurying process was supported strongly and consistently, and recognized for its role in industry development. Craftspeople expressed pride in being able to say that their work had been juried by the Craft Council of Newfoundland and Labrador and noted its contribution to their own success.

Challenges

Jurying the work of craftspeople is a sensitive task and must be undertaken with care and consistency. The Craft Council would be advised to strengthen communications with members and potential members regarding product quality and jury results in order to ensure positive experiences. Early understanding

of the process and the reasons why jurying is done will do much to alleviate potential tensions and ensure that the process is a constructive one.

The Craft Council has been jurying work for more than 40 years, using the same system and it may be time to review that system to determine if alternate methods would be more useful. As the province is now reconsidering its role in the promotion of the Crafts of Character logo, it is also a time to determine if there is potential for a closer relationship or a merger between the two, how that would be managed and what the impact might be.

Discussions regarding innovation and technology will have an impact on the current **Standards of Quality** supported by the Craft Council. Open discussions among members need to happen urgently as this technology presents opportunities which may run counter to the current criteria.

FINDINGS: SUPPORTING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional development continues to be an important element of sector growth that must continue to receive attention from the Craft Council. Although the number of young makers with diploma and degree level education is growing, still the majority of working craftspeople are self-taught or community trained. This generally means that technical skills are strong, but design and business skills need attention.

This was borne out by the consultation process, where the need for strengthening of design skills was indicated as important, especially when considering export markets and the incorporation of technology into the production process. The Craft Council's focus on design skills must continue, as this is vital to the organization's emphasis on the requirement for original design.

Members indicated a need for business skills training, and especially noted marketing and the use of social media as important topics. The Craft Council should work with partners to develop and deliver this training, ensuring that topics are focused specifically on craft businesses, as this will lead to greater uptake and effectiveness.

Advantage must be taken of technology which offers opportunities for distance delivery through webinar or online courses, to enable wide access, and continuing availability. Alternate methods of sharing skills, such as mentorship, are in demand. There is a need for professional development to support the preservation of traditional skills.

Professional development is important. Depending on the skill set or training required a critical mass of participants may not always exist to rationalize the investment or effort. Care must be taken to ensure that the craftsperson/member for which the training is intended is the focus, rather than a need to meet attendance requirements. Focus groups also implied a need for more personalized approaches to training delivery, potentially through support for individual endeavours. In some instances, technology such as online training may enable specific professional development needs to be met. For more generic skills, for instance business management and marketing, collaborative approaches with other partners might be utilized.

Professional development opportunities for Craft Council staff should also be explored.

FINDINGS: COMMUNICATIONS AND THE CRAFT COUNCIL AS A COMMUNITY

The membership consultation indicated a high value for their perception of the Craft Council as a community of craftspeople and a network of professional colleagues. There is a strong personal satisfaction in being connected to Council, a sense of accomplishment, professionalism and acceptance by peers.

There were a number of points made during the consultation and at the planning retreat concerning ways in which this network could be strengthened, to the benefit of individual members and to the Craft Council as a whole.

It is important that the Board of Directors of the Craft Council have full regional representation from around the province, and that members have a vote in the selection of that person.

Face to face meetings and gatherings are of prime importance in relationship building and every opportunity should be taken to gather Craft Council members together. Conversely, whenever members do gather, the opportunity should be taken to hold a workshop, or other event for the benefit of members.

Some people bemoaned the loss of the print newsletter, and found the online bulletin to be an unsatisfactory substitute. The Craft Council needs to consider how it communicates with members, considering both quantity and content of communications, and how this can be improved. A new website, currently in development, will be welcomed, and will bring the work of the Craft Council and the stories of its members to a new audience.

Members can be ambassadors for the Craft Council; this role would be more effective if members were well informed regarding the benefits of membership. Members also pointed out that as part of a membership organization, they should be thinking about what they could do for the Craft Council, rather than solely about what the Craft Council can do for them. It was said that many members do not acknowledge the help that the organization has provided to the development of their businesses.

The consultation also made reference to the work of the Craft Council in promoting itself and the industry. The craft industry was defined as 'a humble sector', and not prone to celebrating itself and its achievements. The work of the Craft Council in promoting itself to its members and to the general public needs to be strengthened. This will help to heighten the profile of the craft industry, bringing the respect and credibility that some members find to be lacking.

APPENDIX B: MEMBERS' SURVEY DATA

A full report of all responses to the membership survey, excluding respondent names and contact information was developed as part of the process. The high volume of responses to open ended questions was informative, at times passionate and demonstrated care for their craft and for the Council. They reveal unique perspectives and in totality provide a comprehensive foundation for future consideration and direction.

Below is a summary that reflects group responses according to themes and demeanours.

High Level of Engagement and Response

Of the 242 invitations sent on January 26, 2016, 209 (86.4%) were opened, while 22 (9.1%) were unopened and 6 (2.5%) bounced. 164 people (67.8%) clicked through the survey online while 5 opted out. There were a total of 118 responses by the time the survey was closed on February 19, after an aggressive promotion by the Craft Council and a number of reminders to people who hadn't responded. That indicates a **response rate of 48.7** for the total of 242 – a remarkably high response for an online survey, with its many open-ended questions requiring in-depth and thoughtful responses. Of the 118 who responded, 94 completed the full survey (79.7%), some over a period of time, while 24 surveys were partially completed (20.3%). Identifiers – business, name and contact information as well as unique IP addresses – are not reported.

Textile Focused Craftspeople Dominated

Among the 89 people who identified their craft medium:

- ◆ 45% selected textile. After that the next highest groups were:
- ◆ metal (17%),
- ◆ clay (13%) and
- ◆ wood (12%).

Diverse Range of Time Involved as a Member of the Craft Council

There appears to be a solid level of engagement among new and growing craftspeople. Of those who indicated the number of years they were a member of the council:

- ◆ about 60% are members for 10 years or less – 14% for 2 years or less, 30% from 3 to 5 years, and another
- ◆ 17% are members for between 6 and 10 years. Among those who responded and have a longer connection as members,
- ◆ 11% are between 11 and 15 years,
- ◆ 13% between 16 to 20 years, while the remaining
- ◆ 1.5% are members longer than 20 years.

Most are Small Operators

When asked to indicate how many employees and piece workers they work with,

- ◆ 68% said they have employees, but the number of employees rarely exceeded themselves or one other person. A few indicated 2 or 3, with only 6 people saying they had from 5 to 8 employees.
- ◆ 34% used piece workers- again while the majority had less than 5, there were 2 who said 75 and 125.
- ◆ About a quarter of the respondents (27%) said they had neither employees nor piece workers.

Few Export Outside the Province

About a quarter (24%) of the 116 people who responded said they export outside of the province.

From Passion to Self-Employment - Reasons Craftspeople are Satisfied with their Craft

The 99 people who responded are satisfied with being a member of the Craft Council in different ways, with the comments falling loosely into different descriptors and some mentioning more than one.

- ◆ The majority (36%) of the comments fell into various ways of describing creativity, passion and liking how customers respond.
- ◆ Another 28% explained their satisfaction as being tied to entrepreneurial drive, and mentioned business factors from sales to customers.
- ◆ About a quarter described various interests in fellowship and collegiality, collaboration or communications.
- ◆ 15% specifically mentioned self-employment or being independent.

For Most, Success Means Business, for Some it's the Passion

When asked what success looks like, or where they want to be in five years, of the 100 who responded, few overlapped in their reasons.

- ◆ 56% described some level of wealth or income or achievement of a business and income they could depend on.
- ◆ More specifically tied to their business, 11% want to export outside the province.
- ◆ Being happy and following their passion was foremost for 17%.
- ◆ A few wanted respect and recognition as an artist (3%)
- ◆ Another 9% wanted to retire.

Craft Council can Help Craftspeople with Expanding Their Craft and Growing Their Business

The 97 respondents mentioned a range of areas where they could use some help from the Council. Most need help with the business side of their operation.

- ◆ 26% want help with various types of selling and marketing
- ◆ 18% want help in managing the business - employees, finance, and operations
- ◆ 8% want help with technology, internet, and related skills
- ◆ some referenced time management, productivity and improving logistics (7%) and guidance and mentorship (4%)

There were many who focused more on their craft - learning and collaborating.

- ◆ 18% want training, orientation and exposure to more craft techniques either in their own craft area or new or related crafts
- ◆ 9% want to gather with others, to work and share ideas together

Craft Council has Been Good to Craftspeople

There are no distinctive measurements or categories, but the 97 people who responded described the Craft Council has having helped them, somewhat equally, in three main areas:

- ◆ Growth: from emerging to maturity, respondents described how they grew from the Council's training, product feedback, standard setting, and advice. And many appreciated the endorsements and encouragement - of their art and their business
- ◆ Sales: direct sales through the Gallery, Shop, the Christmas raft fair and other referrals and connections
- ◆ Exposure: marketing and promotion through the council's activities, gallery, exhibitions and displays

Craft Council Members Want Sales and Exposure of Their Artistry

When asked to set priorities for how the council can help craftspeople in the future, the top 3 priorities for the 106 respondents were in order were:

- ◆ Craft Council Shop (71%)
- ◆ Christmas Craft Fair (63%)
- ◆ Craft Council gallery (54%)

On the other hand, those given the least priority, or lowest, were:

- ◆ Craft Council Clay Studio (64%)
- ◆ Loan fund (55%)
- ◆ Studio guide (50%) and scholarships (48%)

To Have an Impact on Industry Growth, Members Primarily Want Promotion of the Industry

When asked to set priorities for how the council can impact industry growth, the top 3 priorities for the 100 respondents in order were:

- ◆ Industry promotion (61%)
- ◆ Partnerships with other groups (48%)
- ◆ Support for young and emerging craftspeople (47%)

On the other hand, those given less priority, with medium ranking, were:

- ◆ Advocacy (59%)
- ◆ Craft development (52%)
- ◆ Audience development (51%)

Members do Care About the Craft Council

Of the 95 people who responded, many gave multiple answers that fell loosely into several areas of the council's activities and purpose:

- ◆ A quarter (25) appreciated the professional support
- ◆ 23 appreciated the credibility of high standards and how they were set
- ◆ A sense of community and collaboration with other craftspeople was important to 17 people
- ◆ Some appreciated how the council advocates for them and the industry (14)
- ◆ Some appreciated the selling support and the sales the council made for them (13)
- ◆ Others liked how the council helped create appreciation for the culture and art of the province (10)
- ◆ Others liked the council's overall professional manner and operation (8) and how it generated awareness of the sector (4)

Good Crafts Council Opportunities for Member Engagement and Connection, but Room for Improvement

Of the 84 who responded, many make the most of Craft Council events and gatherings:

- ◆ Craft fairs and sales events are important (19%)
- ◆ Exhibitions and workshops (14%)
- ◆ The council's newsletters (12%)
- ◆ The council itself (9%)

Many craftspeople are self-driven and make connections through:

- ◆ Their own networking and friendships (14%)
- ◆ Social media and online (12%)
- ◆ Other craft guilds, organizations and associations (8%)

However, there are many who do not feel connected (23%) and want more opportunities online, outside of St. John's and with other mediums.

Multitude of Ideas for Craft Council to Engage People of Newfoundland and Labrador

There were no dominant ideas, but the range of suggestions to the Craft Council from the 87 respondents was diverse.

- ◆ Increase its presence throughout the province from more craft fairs, attending other fairs and events, pop ups, sell in more craft shops, rural events, organize more gatherings for craftspeople and so on.
- ◆ Expand to and rely on usual media - publicity, media relations, advertising, government tourism-style ad, magazines, social media
- ◆ Increase visibility with open houses, technology, workshops and by cross-promoting with other organizations and events
- ◆ Strengthen publicity about the council itself

Wishes are Diverse

The 80 respondents to the prompt "I wish that ..." gave diverse advice, with no areas dominating, but which included:

- ◆ Greater public appreciation for crafts
- ◆ Greater visibility and awareness, in the province and beyond
- ◆ More gathering spaces and studio spaces
- ◆ More self-sufficiency for operators
- ◆ A stronger creative and cultural connections
- ◆ Better communications and collaboration
- ◆ Less rigid council operations around consignments
- ◆ Inclusion of craft awareness in school curriculum
- ◆ Stronger regional presence and distribution through the province

APPENDIX C. CRAFT COUNCIL PROFILE

The Craft Council of Newfoundland and Labrador is a member-based organization that works to maximize the artistic and economic potential of the craft community of the province.

Formed in 1972 as the Newfoundland & Labrador Craft Development Association, the Craft Council still, and always, takes its role as a development association as the crucial focus of its operations. The Council supports and promotes a high standard of excellence in craft production and service to members and the general public. Programs and services are varied, and include work in the area of marketing, exhibition, product development, training and communications.

In addition to these activities, the Council answers members' requests for assistance, advice, and information in a variety of craft-related areas, and works with other cultural industry organizations, with private and public agencies and with all levels of government to respond to and keep pace with the evolving craft industry.

Province-wide, the Council's members number close to 300, including craft makers, educators, agents and resource people. Through its regular e-bulletins, the Craft Council regularly reaches a spectrum of craftspeople that ranges from producers of functional craft to makers of craft-based art.

In 1991, the Craft Council acquired a home and a landmark -- an historic stone and brick building overlooking the harbour in downtown St. John's. It serves as both the Council's headquarters and as the focal point of the craft industry of Newfoundland and Labrador. Today, the "Devon House Craft Centre" contains the only craft gallery in the province, an ever-expanding gift shop, a teaching clay studio, incubation studio spaces, a library and resource centre, and offices for administration and special project management.

In 2012, the Craft Council of Newfoundland and Labrador celebrated its 40th anniversary, recognizing four decades of support to the professional craft community. In 2016, the Craft Council celebrated another anniversary - 25 years at the Devon House Craft Centre.

The Craft Council of Newfoundland and Labrador is a voluntary, charitable organization and a member of the Canadian Crafts Federation. A professional staff supports the Board of Directors and numerous standing committees in the management of the Council's operations.

The Craft Council provides stable and innovative programming that builds upon a wealth of experience and anticipates new opportunities and changing directions. The strength of the Craft Council of Newfoundland and Labrador lies in the dedication of its volunteers and members, its wise use of resources and the energy and clarity of vision that the Council brings to all endeavours.

APPENDIX D. ACRONYMS

ACOA

Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, federal agency and funding partner for many craft sector projects

TCII

Department of Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation, provincial government department with responsibility for business and sector development, including the craft sector

DMO

Destination Management Organization, regional organization serving the tourism sector; the Legendary Coasts is the DMO for the Avalon region

SSHRC

The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada is a Canadian federal research-funding agency that promotes and supports post-secondary research and training in the humanities and social sciences. Funding applications may only come from educational institutions; others may partner.

ED

Executive Director

HR

Human Resources

NLOWE

Newfoundland and Labrador Organization of Women Entrepreneurs

GMIST

Gros Morne Institute for Sustainable Tourism

HNL

Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador, the provincial industry association for the tourism sector

ArtsNL

Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council