

A
Cultural
Industries
Development
Strategy
For
Saskatchewan

Presented to the Minister
Saskatchewan Municipal Government
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Cultural Industries Development Strategy Committee

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Executive Summary

Mandate and Objectives

The mandate given by the Government of Saskatchewan to the Cultural Industries Development Strategy Committee was to develop a single vision for the cultural industries in Saskatchewan. This was to be achieved by developing a business plan for these industries that would include "domestic and international marketing objectives, including reference to current Jilin, China, and Ukraine initiatives, as well as provide direction for a new Canada-Saskatchewan partnership agreement and new technology/information highway initiatives."

The objectives of the Cultural Industries Development Strategy as defined by the Committee were

- to document and assess existing businesses to identify a critical mass of cultural industry activity
- to consolidate existing information on each sector into one document and present a cogent plan for future development
- to generate solutions to the problems and issues facing the cultural industries through a process of discussion and collaboration, and
- to develop proposals for initiatives that, whenever possible, address the needs of all, or more than one, of the individual cultural industries, without losing sight of industry-specific needs and perspectives.

Defining the Cultural Industries

In defining the cultural industries for Saskatchewan, the provincial government considered an industrial orientation towards job creation and primary employment, an interest in developing commercial cultural products for specific markets, and a critical mass of activity that would enable the sector to compete in Canada and abroad. Using these criteria, the province defined the cultural industries in Saskatchewan as book publishing, craft and visual arts, film and video, and music and sound recording. These are the four sectors addressed in this Strategy.

The Role of the Cultural industries

"Whereas it is preferable to be primarily a producer and exporter, rather than net importer, in other sectors of the economy, it is absolutely indispensable in the cultural industries. To be simply a consumer of someone else's culture, rather than a producer of one's own, is unacceptable." *Canada's International Business Strategy*

People record the past, celebrate the present, and envisage the future through stories, songs, and artifacts. Strong cultural industries give form and voice to the values that define us as a people, and they proclaim these values to those within the community and to those outside it. A community that knows where it has been and has a strong vision of its present identity knows where it is going. An imported culture cannot instill this sense of purpose; only indigenous voices can claim the future with such confidence.

Cultural industries contribute to more than just the culture of the province. In addition to their important role in enhancing the quality of life in Saskatchewan, they are at the heart of the technological revolution and comprise a steadily growing sector of the provincial economy. The presence of a strong cultural sector in Saskatchewan diversifies the province's traditional resource-based economy and contributes to the province's employment profile high-skill, high-value jobs that will enable Saskatchewan to compete in the international marketplace well into the 21st century.

The keys to maximizing the cultural and economic contributions the cultural industries can make in Saskatchewan are

- identifying common challenges and opportunities where sectors can combine forces
- recognizing and supporting diversity, and
- developing strong partnerships with government to lay the foundation for growth.

The Strategy

The Cultural Industries Development Strategy Committee developed eight Key Result Areas (KRAs), each with specific recommendations as to how the cultural industries and the Government of Saskatchewan can work together to achieve sustainable growth and development in the book publishing, craft and visual arts, film and video, and music and sound recording industries in the province. For each KRA, the Committee makes a number of common recommendations, and, where appropriate, each sector puts forward industry-specific recommendations.

The eight KRAs are

- Product Supply
- Infrastructure
- Investment
- Domestic Market Development
- International Market Development
- Professional Development and Training
- Regulation and Policy, and
- New Technology and Multimedia.

Product Supply

The cultural industries in Saskatchewan produce high-quality products. The challenge is to generate more product to service identified markets. The keys to more product, as identified by the Committee, are a vibrant artistic community, capital to finance product development and production facilities, and skilled personnel.

General recommendations include continued provincial support to the artistic community through the Saskatchewan Arts Board and a Small Business Loans Program to provide the cultural industries with access to capital. Craft and visual arts recommends increased training opportunities for craftspeople and

artists in the province; film and video recommends a Saskatchewan Employment Tax Credit to develop and maintain the pool of highly skilled production personnel now found in Saskatchewan.

Further training issues are dealt with under Professional Development and Training.

Infrastructure

The cultural industries are well served by strong industry associations, which are members of the Saskatchewan Council of Cultural Organizations (SCCO – now SaskCulture) and supported by the Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust system. Film and video also benefits from the presence of SaskFILM, and all the cultural industries benefit from the presence of the Saskatchewan Arts Board (SAB).

Provincially, the cultural industries work mainly with the Department of Municipal Government (now Department of Culture, Youth and Recreation); federally, with the Department of Canadian Heritage.

The Strategy recommends enhanced support for SCCO (SaskCulture) and the SAB, the designation of the Department of Municipal Government (Department of Culture, Youth and Recreation) as the lead department responsible for provincial government policy development regarding the cultural industries, an increased role for the industry associations in light of the Strategy, the formation of a Cultural Industries Development Council (SCIDC) to coordinate any initiatives arising out of the Strategy, and a renewed Canada-Saskatchewan Partnership Agreement on Culture.

Book publishing recommends continued and enhanced support to literary publishing and a provincial support base that encompasses more than just the literary publishers. Craft and visual arts recommends a provincial professional association for commercial galleries and a common forum for the craft and visual arts sector accessible to members of CARFAC, the Saskatchewan Craft Council, and the proposed professional galleries' association. Film and video stresses the importance of continued provincial support to the Saskatchewan Communications Network and the Sound Stage project.

Investment

Investment in the cultural industries can be from private or public sources, although traditionally private investment in the cultural industries is difficult to garner. The Strategy recommends the implementation of a Product Investment/Loan Program for book publishing, craft and visual arts, and music and sound recording, along the lines of SaskFILM; and a Private Investor's Tax Credit Program to encourage individuals to make equity investments in Saskatchewan cultural businesses. Film and video underscores the importance of renewed funding to SaskFILM and the establishment of the Saskatchewan Employment Tax Credit.

Domestic Market Development

Expanding market share in Canada is of crucial importance to all the cultural industries. The Strategy recommends a Marketing Initiatives Loan Fund and strategic linkages with government departments to help the cultural industries research and establish new markets. Film and video stresses the importance of theatrical screen time for Canadian productions.

International Market Development

Each sector has distinct strategies for different market sectors. The Strategy recommends that the Marketing Initiatives Loan Fund include a component for international marketing; and that the cultural industries work with the Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership, government trade missions, and Canadian embassies to increase awareness of Saskatchewan cultural products abroad.

Professional Development and Training

Key to the development of the cultural industries in Saskatchewan is the existence of a highly trained workforce and creative artists to produce raw materials. The Strategy recommends the establishment of a Professional Development and Training Fund, and encourages partnerships with Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training and FutureSkills.

Regulation and Policy

Governments at the federal, provincial, and municipal levels each put into place regulations and policies that encourage or hinder industrial development.

At the federal level, the Strategy encourages the provincial government to support copyright reform and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. At the provincial level, the Strategy encourages a continued commitment to the Saskatchewan Communications Network; a Buy Saskatchewan preference for government purchases, licences, or commissions; and recognition of creators' rights in any interprovincial agreements.

Book publishing recommends a closer working relationship with the Provincial Library and Saskatchewan Education, the use of Saskatchewan-published materials in government literacy campaigns, tendering to Saskatchewan publishers of book-length government publications, and continued provincial support for the zero-rating of the Goods and Services Tax on books and keeping the provincial sales tax off books. Craft and visual arts recommends provincial industry standards, and a percentage of capital costs from government projects dedicated to craft and visual arts acquisitions.

New Technology and Multimedia

The cultural industries recognize the importance of strategic partnerships in this rapidly evolving area. The Strategy recommends a New Technologies Product Investment Program to develop business opportunities for the cultural industries. The Strategy also recommends that the cultural industries work with the Government of Saskatchewan to develop strategic partnerships with the software development and telecommunications industries.

Investment Summary

There are four global programs recommended in the Strategy:

- A Small Business Loan Program for operations and capital acquisitions
- A Marketing Initiatives Loan Fund for domestic and international market development
- A Professional Development Fund for training self-employed individuals, and in-house and freelance staff, and
- A New Technologies Product Investment Fund to develop business opportunities in new media.

There are also new core investment mechanisms proposed for book publishing, craft and visual arts, and music and sound recording. These are:

- A Product Investment/Loan Program for project funding, and
- A Private Investor's Tax Credit Program to encourage investment from individuals.

The film and video sector has an existing parallel to the Product Investment/Loan Program and has proposed a tax credit program of its own. These two film-specific programs supported by the Strategy are:

- SaskFILM and
- The Proposed Saskatchewan Employment Tax Credit Program (SETC).

SaskFILM, established in 1993, was a key factor in the development of the film and video industry in Saskatchewan. As an investment mechanism designed to generate growth in a mature industry, the Saskatchewan Motion Picture Association has proposed the SETC. SaskFILM and the SETC are viewed as external to the Cultural Industries Development Strategy as they pre-date the Strategy and were developed independently. These film programs are presently being assessed by the provincial government and expectations are the implementation of the SETC and renewal of SaskFILM. With this improved product investment environment, the film sector is expected to grow significantly. The global programs recommended in this Strategy will be important to support corporate stability, and human resource and market development in the accompanying growth spurt that is anticipated by the film and video sector.

The performance objectives for the book publishing, craft and visual arts, and music and sound recording industries are based on the expectation that all six of the programs and the four global programs – will be undertaken. Similarly, the performance objectives for the film and video industry are based on the expectation that the renewal of SaskFILM and the proposed SETC will receive government approval and that the four global programs outlined in this Strategy will be implemented.