

## KEY INFORMATION FOR POTENTIAL ASSESSORS

### **SASKCULTURE INC.**

SaskCulture is a community-driven, non-profit organization that works to build a culturally-vibrant province where all citizens celebrate, value and participate in a rich cultural life.

### **Culture Defined**

Culture is a dynamic system of acquired elements, with values, assumptions, conventions, beliefs and rules through which members of a group relate to each other and the world. As a dynamic system, culture is evolutionary, supporting existing cultural values while challenging them. It defines who we are as a people; keeping alive our past, reflecting our values, articulating our dreams, and fostering pride in who we are. It proclaims our existence and identity to the world.

Culture is reflected in activities of creation, preservation, research, presentation, appreciation, participation, education professional development and training.

### **Mission Statement**

SaskCulture represents the cultural community as a whole and assists the cultural community in its endeavours to develop and promote the cultural life of the province.

### **Principles and Values**

SaskCulture supports engagement in cultural experience.

#### *SaskCulture values:*

- the diversity of the cultural community and its ability to provide a wide range of cultural experiences to the people in Saskatchewan; and
- Indigenous peoples' cultural revitalization and sustained cultural exchange.

SaskCulture will be responsive to people within Saskatchewan.

#### *SaskCulture values:*

- accessibility, inclusivity, equity, and democratic processes;
- the diversity of the people in Saskatchewan;
- multiculturalism as a means to promote the understanding and creativity that arises from the interaction among, and the evolving expressions of, various cultures;
- supporting Indigenous peoples' cultural revitalization and integrating Indigenous knowledge systems, oral histories, laws, protocols, and relationships to the land as an essential part of the reconciliation process; and
- taking constructive action on addressing the ongoing legacies of colonialism that have had destructive impacts on Indigenous peoples' cultures and languages as part of reconciliation.

SaskCulture recognizes strength in common purpose.

#### *SaskCulture values:*

- an inclusive and cohesive cultural community, from which communities will draw strength;
- a collective effort to advocate for culture and a healthy resource base for cultural activity;
- co-operation and partnerships between cultural organizations, as well as other sectors;
- the involvement and contributions of volunteers and cultural workers; and
- sharing responsibility for establishing and maintaining mutually respectful relationships as Treaty people.

SaskCulture provides equitable and fair access to resources.

#### *SaskCulture values:*

- SaskCulture's position as a partner in the Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund for Sport, Culture and Recreation, which provides a unique and significant source of revenue for cultural activity;
- transparent and accountable funding mechanisms;
- effectiveness and efficiency in programs and services both within organizations and across the cultural community;
- the delivery of relevant cultural activity that is based upon cultural impact, accessibility and service; and
- cultural organizations with a unique mandate.

### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

SaskCulture ensures that arms-length adjudication processes are used to support all funding decisions assigned to it as Trustee for the Culture Section of the Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund for Sport, Culture and Recreation (CST).

The Trust Fund Agreement emphasizes support for accessible sport, culture and recreation opportunities through initiatives that provide for:

- enhanced quality of life of Saskatchewan people through the provision of quality sport, culture and recreation programs;
- services that improve the economic and social viability of communities and the province;
- equitable program opportunities for all Saskatchewan residents, regardless of age, gender, geographic location, or economic or social circumstances;
- engaging Saskatchewan people through sport, culture and recreation so that they are proud of and informed about the province;
- improving physical activity and health outcomes for Saskatchewan people; and
- ensuring openness and accountability for the use of public funds.

SaskCulture's own Cultural Policy is the tool that it uses to set the policy framework for funding decisions. The Cultural Policy places emphasis on:

- cultural impact;
- participation and access;
- organizational effectiveness; and
- high standards of accountability.

The SaskCulture Cultural Policy supports cultural activity that is in line with SaskCulture's Ends. The Ends speak to greater accessibility and inclusiveness, both of which support the Guiding Principles of Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund and the public interest priorities of the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport.

SaskCulture's 14-person volunteer Board of Directors has overall responsibility for the development of the spending plan for the CST and funding program guiding policies. The Board also determines the amount of funding to be allocated to each funding block annually. This work is done by the Board between January and March of each year in accordance with the fiscal year of the Trust.

### **PRINCIPLES OF PEER ASSESSMENT**

Peer assessment is the foundation of adjudication processes at SaskCulture as it is in many cultural jurisdictions around the world. Peer processes draw trusted community leaders into deliberations, providing important discipline and field expertise, offering cultural and contextual wisdom, and inviting openness of thought and dialogue that ensures knowledgeable, thorough consideration of all applications submitted to each program. The peer assessment process instills a level of confidence in the proceedings and builds accountability and transparency in the decision-making process.

The fundamental goal of the peer review process in this instance is to provide an unbiased, independent expert review of cultural impact for consideration by SaskCulture. SaskCulture's peer review process brings together adjudicators with different perspectives in the pursuit of a common goal: to identify excellent cultural activity that promises to make significant strides in the pursuit of SaskCulture's vision. It is therefore essential that a spirit of teamwork and cooperation prevail during adjudication deliberations.

In addition, all adjudicators must adhere to upholding the highest standards of conduct to ensure that the credibility of this process and its participants is not compromised.

### **CRITERIA FOR PEER ASSESSORS**

- Expertise and knowledge of one or more of the genres/disciplines being addressed by the various programs, or relevant generalist experience and knowledge of the not-for-profit cultural sector.

### **EXPECTATIONS OF PEER ASSESSORS**

- Flexibility and capacity for open-mindedness in conjunction with the ability to bring objective, informed analysis to the table to make informed judgments;
- Demonstrate an ability to participate thoughtfully in informed discussions while also being efficient and staying on point, and yielding time to others to make their contributions;
- Vision and aptitude for holistic thinking;
- Readiness to undertake preparations for meetings, including becoming familiar with the specifics of the program, the purposes and intentions of SaskCulture, and the content of the applications under consideration; as well as completing assessment forms or other commentaries or initial work as required;
- Capacity to work collaboratively; and
- Capacity to respect others and hold all discussions in confidence.
- Creative Kids adjudicators will be chosen based on adjudication criteria, as well as geographical location as all meetings are held in Regina.

### **INELIGIBILITY**

- Employees of a government agency / Ministry that works in policy or programming oversight related to Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund for Sport, Culture & Recreation.
- Employees of agencies that receive funds directly from the Ministry cited in the previous point or that have a contractual arrangement with SaskCulture to partner in the delivery of any funding program from the Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund for Sport, Culture and Recreation.
- Individuals who hold a position as an elected official within the provincial political structure or an affiliated agency (i.e. MLA, MNS, FSIN).
- Some applicants, depending upon employment and/or volunteer role, (i.e. staff and board members of SaskCulture members) may have more potential for conflicts of interest in certain funding programs. In this case, SaskCulture reserves the right to determine eligibility for volunteer positions.

### **ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PEER ASSESSORS**

Members of a SaskCulture adjudication are required to:

- acquaint themselves fully with the purposes and objectives of SaskCulture;

- ✓ acquaint themselves fully with the description of the program and the assessment criteria, as well as with all applications and related documentation received prior to and during An adjudication meeting;
- ✓ comply with SaskCulture policies (conflict of interest, confidentiality, etc.) at all times;
- ✓ assess all of the applications based on the assessment criteria and description of the program, and in accordance with SaskCulture policies and directions;
- ✓ acquaint themselves fully with the scoring mechanism specific to the program in question;
- ✓ be prepared provide feedback on merits or limitations of applications with a view to improving future performance;
- ✓ determine and approve the final funding recommendation list(s) and sign an *Adjudicator Agreement* Form.

#### **TIME COMMITMENT REQUIREMENTS OF PEER ASSESSORS**

- ✓ Adjudication meetings – approximately 6 hours per meeting – not including travel time.
- ✓ Preparation in advance of adjudication meetings – an average of 8 hours per funding program.
- ✓ Other meetings may be called as required to consult with SaskCulture staff on policy and procedures.
- ✓ Potential attendance at SaskCulture functions such as the Annual Gathering.
- ✓ Creative Kids provincial adjudication is an exception as meetings are held in Regina and are more frequent (approximately 6 times per year) but require less advance preparation and meeting time.

#### **LENGTH OF TERM**

To strengthen the overall expertise of assessors in the pool, SaskCulture promotes a standing terms position. Assessors are accepted into the pool for a minimum of three years. SaskCulture staff review the pool of qualified assessors annually and kindly thanks those who are no longer eligible. Those who remain eligible remain in the pool until the assessor requests removal from the pool. Assessors are selected from the pool for adjudication meetings based on availability and are not expected to attend every meeting requested.