

STATEMENT OF INTENT

The MUSEUM ASSISTANCE PROGRAM will administer available resources fairly and equitably in accordance with a set of standards. It will support those museums that effectively provide access to their collections, information and facilities for the benefit of the community.

ADMINISTRATION

1. The Museum Assistance Policy is administered by the Nova Scotia Museum, Museum Services Division, who prepare recommendations for the approval of the Board of Governors.
2. The Nova Scotia Museum seeks the participation of the Federation of Nova Scotian Heritage in developing and applying a system of evaluation of community museums to determine operating grant levels, and in making future modifications to eligibility criteria and the grant formula.

ELIGIBILITY FOR FUNDING

1. To be eligible to apply for funding a museum must:

(a) be a non-profit permanent institution in the service of society and of its development, and open to the public, whose primary functions are to acquire, conserve, research, communicate and exhibit for the purpose of study, education and enjoyment, material evidence of the human or natural history of Nova Scotia

(b) have collections, information and public programs that either reflect the community where the museum is located or focus on a specialized theme.

(c) be a resource centre for research and study related to the collections and subject area of the museum.

(d) offer appropriate programs for schools and school class visits.

(e) have as its governing authority a society incorporated by Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Industry Canada) or under the Societies act of Nova Scotia, a Nova Scotia municipality or a First Nations governing body.

(f) have a written statement of purpose that clearly and accurately defines its goals for the public.

(g) have legal title to those collections that it houses on a permanent basis.

(h) own the building(s) it occupies or have assurance of long-term occupancy.

(i) adhere to publicly stated open hours and have a reliable open-by-request system for access during its off season.

(j) be registered as a charitable institution under the Income Tax Act of Canada.

(k) maintain accurate records of museum use.

(l) demonstrate strong community involvement and support.

(m) maintain separate financial records covering museum operation as distinct from any other activities of the parent organization.

(n) have been in operation and open to the public for at least two years.

2. Fulfilment of the eligibility criteria is determined by a combination of a written application form and an on site visit by an evaluation team.
3. New museums that are established after the effective date of this policy, April 1, 1995, without having obtained approval in principle from the Board of Governors of the Nova Scotia Museum, may forfeit their eligibility for funding under the museum assistance program regardless of subsequent fulfilment of the eligibility criteria.
4. Archives or fine arts activities that are integrated within an eligible community museum are eligible for funding. Stand-alone archives or art galleries are not.
5. Decisions regarding eligibility of a museum for funding, and the evaluation of the museum on which grant amounts are determined, are made by the Board of Governors on the recommendation of Nova Scotia Museum Staff. Museums may appeal such decisions to the Board of Governors

who may direct a review of the material and a reconsideration of the decision. If the result is still unsatisfactory the museum may appeal to the Minister of Education and Culture whose decision shall be final.

GRANT FORMULA

1. An operating grant shall not exceed 50% of the operating cost of the museum. The operating cost of the museum is deemed to be the total cost less any funding received from other provincial or federal government sources.
2. An operating grant shall not exceed the specified ceiling annually recommended by staff to the Board of Governors, in light of forecasted government support, except in cases where a museum is at a substantially higher level when the ceiling is designated. In such cases the following provisions apply.
 - (a) *the institution's grant level shall not increase unless the upper limit for all museums is adjusted to exceed the institutions grant level.*
 - (b) *the institutions grant level shall decrease in proportion to the amount by which a subsequent evaluation score declines below its previous evaluation score.*
 - (c) *in the event of an overall decrease in the total budget allocated for grants, the grant to such an institution shall decrease by an equivalent percentage.*
3. Eligible museums are assessed using a detailed evaluation system which assigns numerical ratings (points) to selected aspects of their operations including: Community Relevance, Collections/Information, Presentation/Visitor Experience, Physical facilities, Governance/ Administration/Management, Human Resources, and Marketing. Ratings are made

through a combination of a written application and a site visit by an evaluation team.

4. In order to ensure fairness in its administration, the evaluation system is open for inspection by applicant museums.
5. The program will be reviewed every five years and modified as required.
6. Funds available to the program are divided among eligible applicants according to their point scores under the evaluation system. After an initial evaluation at the start of the program, museums are then divided into three groups, for re-evaluation one group each year thereafter, until all are on a three-year rota, with each museum's score remaining in effect for three years.

ADVISORY SERVICES

1. The Nova Scotia Museum extends advisory and technical assistance, as resources permit, to community museums and to other groups engaged in museum activities on a non profit basis for the benefit of the public.
2. The Museum Services Division is the principal point of contact between community museums and the Nova Scotia Museum. The Division provides services itself where possible and refers requests to other divisions or outside sources as appropriate.
3. When Nova Scotia Museum staff provide consultation to community museum groups it is on the understanding that the information generated will be freely shared for the benefit of other such groups in Nova Scotia.
4. The Nova Scotia Museum encourages the exchange of information and other resources among community museums towards the continual development of museum standards and community support for museums.

5. The Nova Scotia Museum does not provide programmed training for community museums but when possible makes its staff available as resource persons for training organized by the Federation of Nova Scotian Heritage.

APPROVED:

JUNE 21, 1994
Board of Governors of the Nova Scotia Museum

EFFECTIVE DATE:

APRIL 1, 1995
Priorities and Planning Committee, Government of Nova Scotia

REVISED:

JANUARY 25, 1996
[1] incorporation of Section 2 Grant formula, approved by Board of Governors. December 9, 1994 [2] Advisory Services.

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