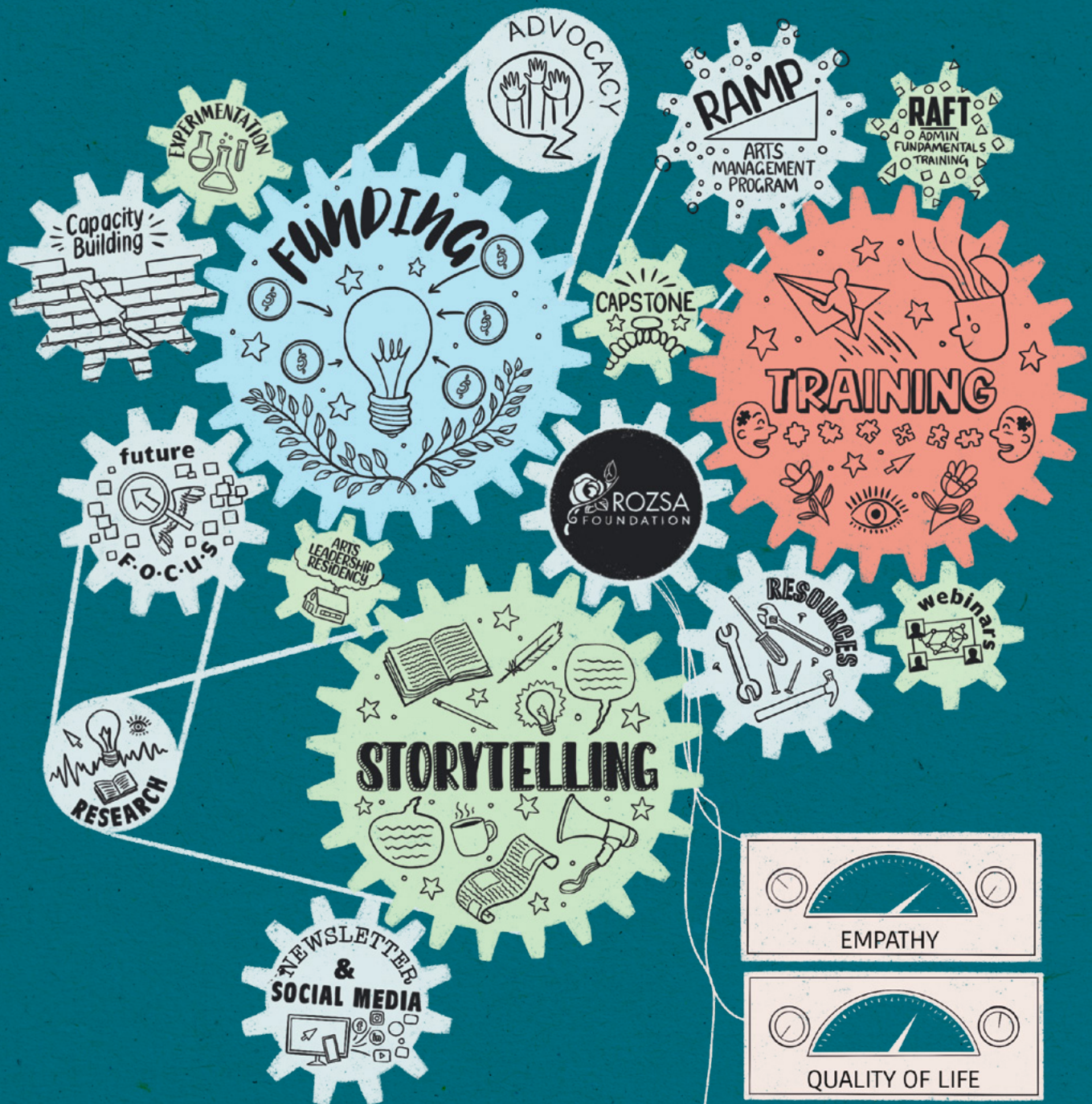


Rozsa Review

2023



INSIDE:

- 8 Arts Leadership Residency Goes Interprovincial
- 18 Capstone Project Funding for Accessible DJ Program
- 24 Bringing the Future Into Focus
- 28 Researching, Advocating, and Storytelling - Oh My!



The Rozsa Foundation was founded in 1990 by Drs. Ted and Lola Rozsa to strengthen the arts community they loved and supported. The Rozsas combined their love of the arts with a focus on good business practice, and sought to recognize and develop arts managers' impact in the sector.

This issue of the Rozsa Review is our annual report for the year 2023. This year was the first in a three-year strategic framework led by Executive Director Simon Mallett and developed by the staff and board with significant input from the arts community. The framework emphasized three integrated areas of focus, articulated in a new statement of purpose for the Rozsa Foundation:

The Rozsa Foundation is a philanthropic, learning-focused organization that advances equitable leadership and management practices in the arts in Alberta through an integrated use

of training, funding, and storytelling supports. We focus on learning and advocate for the arts as we believe that a knowledgeable, equitable, and thriving arts community can play a critical role in bringing about social change.

This statement gives us focus and helps us to be specific about the work that we do and how we communicate it to the arts community in Alberta and beyond. 2023 was about us leaning into this new understanding of our work and all it encompasses, and creating wide circles of impact from arts leaders to arts organizations to the greater arts sector.

Land Acknowledgement

The Rozsa Foundation operates where the Bow River meets the Elbow River, a place traditionally known as Moh'kins'tsis to the Blackfoot, now also known as Calgary. In the spirit of truth, respect, and reciprocity, we honour and acknowledge that this is the traditional territory of the Treaty 7 people; the Blackfoot Confederacy, comprising the Siksika, Piikani, and Kainai First Nations, the Iyârhe Nakoda, which includes the Chiniki, Bears paw, and Goodstoney First Nations, and the Tsuut'ina Nation. This territory is also home to many Métis and we are based in Alberta District 6 of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government. As an organization grateful to be working in this territory, we thank the generations of people who have taken care of this land for thousands of years and understand that we must uphold our own responsibilities toward honouring Treaty 7.

What's Inside

2 Message from the Executive Director

3 Message from the Board Chair

4 Empowering Arts Leaders

6 From Participant to Instructor

8 **Feature: Diane Din Ebongue's Arts Leadership Residency at the Nia Centre for the Arts**

13 Reinforcing Strong Organizations

14 Challenges Facing Arts Organizations in 2023

16 Funding Programs in 2023

18 **Feature: Mixtapes & Mashups at the National accessArts Centre**

22 **Feature: Amilia CRM Transforms Operations for the Allied Arts Council of Lethbridge**

24 Future Focus Funding in 2023

26 Mini Funding Features

27 Strengthening the Sector

28 **Feature: What is Storytelling and Why Does It Matter?**

32 Stepping Up Advocacy for the Arts Sector

33 Spotlight on Arts Audiences: Providing Data for Strategic Decision-Making

34 Social Media Importance and Growth in 2023

35 A Multifaceted Approach

36 Looking Forward



II

2023 saw the implementation of the Rozsa Foundation's new strategic framework, centered around an integrated approach to supporting the arts community and achieving our mission.

Simon Mallett, Executive Director

2023 saw the implementation of the Rozsa Foundation's new strategic framework, centered around an integrated approach to supporting the arts community and achieving our mission through three pillars of activity; Funding, Training, and Storytelling. The Funding and Training work builds off our long history of work in these areas, while continuing to refine our programs to ensure equitable access and to adapt to the arts sector's current context.

The emergence of Storytelling as the third pillar of activity was in direct response to the engagement process we undertook with interested parties throughout the latter part of 2022. This pillar continues the work we were doing of sharing diverse lessons, learnings, and narratives of success from and with the broader arts community, but also includes awards, research work, and a significant increase to our advocacy efforts aimed at bringing about stronger funding and support of the arts at all orders of government.

This new framework has re-shaped our understanding of how we can work at every level of the arts ecosystem in Alberta to bring about greater impact, which is mirrored within this annual report. While we continue to directly

support and connect with arts managers and leaders through training programs, funding opportunities, and by sharing their achievements, we also work specifically at the organizational level, with direct funding investments to create capacity within arts organizations to forge bold, new directions forward.

We're also aware, however, that the opportunity exists for the Rozsa Foundation to pursue key initiatives that benefit the sector more broadly, and that balancing the use of our resources between supports for specific individuals and organizations with those aimed at improving the overall conditions for the arts sector is the key to maximizing our impact in the years ahead.

Though it remains an immensely challenging time for the arts, we remain committed to building on the legacy of Drs. Ted and Lola Rozsa while being responsive to the emerging needs of the community we serve. With an engaged Board, an incredible staff, committed partners, and a supportive community, it's an exciting time to be doing this work towards an equitable and thriving arts community.



”

We will always prioritize personal relationships with those who lead our arts sector, championing the behind the scenes work of arts managers with a focus on the business of the arts, and advocating for support of the sector as a whole.

Mary Rozsa de Coquet, Board Chair

If you open the Rozsa Foundation book to 2023, you will read about new strategic directions and a Board willing to experiment with budget priorities and the responsibilities of the Directors.

While remaining true to the vision of the Founders and the long-established values of the organization, the Board deliberately moved away from adjudicating most of the funding requests to delving into sector research and supporting advocacy efforts. We started to assess our governance policies as Board members assumed new roles and bid farewell to Katrina Ingram who has introduced us to the world of ethical AI and served the Foundation in so many ways. We also ensured that our hard-working Executive Director had the opportunity to reflect on his leadership through a 360° review experience.

Of course, there had to be time to experience artistic endeavors and have some fun as the photos of our annual CPO gathering and Stampede pow wow visit reveal.

We look forward to welcoming new Board Directors in 2024 and to continue our exploration of new directions. However, our guiding principles will not change. We will always prioritize personal relationships with those who lead our arts sector, championing the behind the scenes work of arts managers with a focus on the business of the arts, and advocating for support of the sector as a whole to contribute to a healthier society where all are welcomed, and the arts are recognized as part of daily life. The Board is grateful for the support of the Members of the Foundation who entrust us with this responsibility.



Empowering Arts Leaders

Training by the Numbers

60 graduates

Rozsa Admin
Fundamentals
Training (RAFT)

20 graduates

Rozsa Arts
Management
Program (RAMP)

An arts community is only as strong as its leaders, regardless of their role. As part of our commitment to strengthening the arts sector in Alberta, the Rozsa Foundation provides training opportunities to build and develop capable and well-equipped arts professionals.

Rozsa Administrative Fundamentals Training (RAFT) gives participants an overview of the many facets of working in the arts, including non-profit and charitable designations, board governance, strategic planning, and more. The **Rozsa Arts Management Program (RAMP)** is offered in partnership with the University of Calgary's Haskayne School of Business and is an in-depth course that investigates most aspects of arts management, culminating in a Capstone Project that applies their new understanding to practical applications.

The Foundation also provides funding for mid-career arts professionals who are Indigenous, Black, and People of Colour who aspire to leadership roles in the arts to undertake an extended residency with a host arts organization. This funding program was created to address a need to create pathways for racialized leaders in all disciplines to advance their networks, experience, skills, and knowledge.



Day Pajarillo, 2023 RAMP graduate.



Participants at RAFT Fall Session at cSPACE Marda Loop. Photo by Motif Photography.

From Participant to Instructor

BY TOYIN OLADELE

Back in early 2019, Lanre Ajayi and Wunmi Idowu told me about this wonderful program they were taking for arts managers. It turned out they were taking the Rozsa Arts Management Program (RAMP) and I knew I wanted to do it too. I came into the Rozsa Foundation office and talked to program staff, who accepted me into the RAMP program, but also convinced me that I should do Rozsa Admin Fundamentals Training (RAFT) first to get a good basic understanding of the background and context of an arts organization. I ended up taking it the weekend before I started RAMP.



Toyin co-leads RAFT in person and online. Photo by Motif Photography.



Simon Mallett, Ariane Jacque, Dan Cardinal McCartney, and Kodie Rollan at the 2023 RAMP Celebration. Kodie facilitates RAMP and also co-facilitates RAFT with Toyin. Photo by Motif Photography.

I learned so much more than I had imagined I would from that weekend! I got the orientation I needed to understand the landscape of the arts sector in Calgary. It helped me figure out how to make this idea in my head about helping newcomer and immigrant arts professionals find their place become a real thing. I learned about the structure it could take and that I would need to recruit some board members and find some mentors. RAFT helped me start to see more clearly the shape of what I wanted to create and showed me that what I had been dreaming of could be a real thing. After RAFT, I could then take everything I learned in RAMP and apply it to building this organization, and I don't know if I would have had that same perspective without taking RAFT first.

Both RAFT and then RAMP were amazing in helping me build the network I would need to create what ultimately became the Immigrant Council for Arts Innovation (ICAI). Although everyone was coming from a different place and

for different reasons, we all wanted to build a career in the arts and help each other find opportunities to do that.

When the Rozsa Foundation asked me to co-facilitate RAFT in 2021, I was so excited. I had learned so much since I had done it and wanted to be able to bring that to the program. I didn't realize that I would also keep learning new things every time I taught it, and that every group of participants would change the focus of the program for me.

The past few years of teaching RAFT have had a great impact on how I look at arts management and what is possible. It has made me excited about all the new arts managers that are entering the sector and what they will do to energize our community and the city. I have been able to see what challenges and topics are emerging in all of these sessions and conversations and I am really looking forward to continue building this program with the Rozsa Foundation.



Diane Din Ebongue's Arts Leadership Residency at the Nia Centre for the Arts

Opposite page: NIA Centre team in front of marketing in Dundas Square, 2023. Photo courtesy of NIA Centre.

In September 2023, Nia Centre for the Arts welcomed Diane Din Ebongue to participate in a 6-month arts leadership residency in Toronto funded by the Rozsa Foundation's Arts Leadership Residency Funding Program. This residency marked a significant opportunity for Diane to immerse herself in the operations of a successful arts organization and further develop her skills in leadership, strategic planning, and fundraising.

The Nia Centre, established in 2008, is Canada's first multidisciplinary professional Black arts centre dedicated to supporting professional and emerging artists in developing their skills and showcasing their art. After a twelve-million-dollar capital campaign and

a three-year renovation project, the organization celebrated its re-opening in November 2023, setting the stage for Diane's involvement at a pivotal time in the organization's growth.

Diane, a Cameroonian-born and French-raised interdisciplinary artist and arts manager, sought mentorship from Nia Centre's executive director, Alica Hall, to enhance her understanding of the Canadian arts sector and refine her leadership skills. Diane holds a Master's of Technologies for Education and a Master's of Science, Arts and Techniques of Image and Sound. With her international experience in community engagement, operational management, executive leadership, and arts advocacy in Europe,



Diane Din Ebongue.
Photo courtesy of Diane.

Australia, and Cameroon, Diane aimed to adapt her expertise to the Canadian context and prepare for her long-term goal of establishing an arts organization focused on intercultural community building in Alberta.

“I reached out to Alica via LinkedIn in January 2023. As a Black woman and mid-career arts manager, I recognized the importance of learning from a racialized woman who had achieved success in the arts sector, particularly in a city like Toronto, known for its vibrant arts community. I wanted to put into perspective my experience in Calgary as a newcomer, understand what is specific to the local ecosystem and assess what is relevant to the arts sector as a whole. After months of discussions and planning, Alica and I crafted a program that encompassed all of my learning objectives. We successfully applied for the Arts Leadership Residency funding and received a \$20,000 grant from the Rozsa Foundation.”

”

As a Black woman and mid-career arts manager, I recognized the importance of learning from a racialized woman who had achieved success in the arts sector, particularly in a city like Toronto, known for its vibrant arts community.”

-Diane

During her time at the Nia Centre, Diane took on the role of development specialist. The residency format included hands-on participation in Nia Centre’s activities, as well as mentorship and guidance from the executive director.

“When I first arrived in Canada, I found myself losing confidence in my skills because they didn’t seem to apply in the same way here. It was disheartening to see that my previous knowledge and experience earned abroad didn’t always translate directly to the Canadian context. Indeed, fluency in a language does not guarantee an understanding of the Canadian workplace culture, which may differ from one province to another and can sometimes lead to miscommunication and challenges in the workplace. However, participating in this residency program played a pivotal role in helping me regain my confidence. Through participation in the daily work of the Nia Centre, I was able to observe effective leadership in action, learning firsthand about strategic



Drumming performance led by Quammie Williams at NIA Centre opening. Photo by Robert Okine, NIA Centre, 2023.

decision-making, team management, and how to foster a collaborative and inclusive environment. I managed to see the convergence between the Canadian workplace culture and my foreign experience, which was essential for me to adapt my skills, use my foreign experience as an asset instead of a handicap and identify opportunities for growth. Additionally, the residency exposed me to various fundraising strategies and techniques employed by the Nia Centre to sustain and grow their programs. I gained valuable insights into grant writing, donor cultivation, and community engagement to secure financial support for arts initiatives. These fundraising capabilities

will be crucial in my efforts to secure the necessary resources and funding for my future projects.”

The residency went beyond providing Diane with a comprehensive view of the daily workings of an established arts organization and a supportive environment to develop her skills. It also expanded her understanding of the unique experiences of Black artists and arts professionals in Canada. Indeed, Diane was able to experience firsthand the trajectory of the Nia Centre in serving the Black community from the moment a youth develops an interest in the arts to when an artist becomes more established.

“It was invaluable to see myself represented both in the organizational structure and in the community served. I was able to interact with people who share the same challenges in terms of equity and inclusion within the arts sector. No word can explain what it feels like to be a Black woman and artist and be part of a Black-led arts organization providing opportunities to Black artists, in a society that still struggles with representation, inclusivity, and acknowledgement of Black cultures and Black artists at a systemic level. Beyond my professional journey, I’ve learnt how to be unapologetic about who I am.”



*Diane Din Ebongue at NIA Centre Grand Opening.
Photo by Robert Okine,
NIA Centre, 2023.*

Diane defines the residency as a “life-changing” experience that is already opening many doors for her, both in Ontario and Alberta. While she keeps developing the strategy to achieve her long-term goals, she also secured a leadership position in an Alberta-based arts organization where she will contribute to creating connections and collaborations, by bringing together resources, expertise, and opportunities

for artistic growth and success. Furthermore, she is currently enrolled in the Rozsa Arts Management Program at the University of Calgary’s Haskayne School of Business. As she expands her artistic practice and collaborates with different arts organizations in various capacities, Diane looks forward to applying her new skills and contributing to strengthening our vital arts and culture community.

Reinforcing Strong Organizations

Funding to arts organizations has been at the centre of the work of the Rozsa Foundation since its inception in 1990. Over thirty years, investment in organizations has always been specifically focused, and in 2023 funding centred on **Experimentation, Capacity Development, RAMP Capstone,** and the recently established **Arts Leadership Residency** (2020) and **Future Focus Funding** (2022).

As a smaller funder, the motivation behind Rozsa Foundation support has been to identify gaps in the existing funding ecosystem for arts organizations and to develop funding programs that address them. In particular, the funding supports offered by the Foundation help to buttress financial and strategic stability, while also developing the arts leaders of tomorrow.

A collaborative community mural at Alcove Centre for the Arts.



Challenges Facing Arts Organizations in 2023

Through our extensive conversations with arts managers and leaders in 2023, several clear trends were present. These needs were often expressed as a part of organizations' requests for funding support, although sometimes they emerge as part of the natural flow of conversation, even if they are not connected to a planned funding request.

Audience and donor engagement remained a challenge for arts organizations of all sizes. Leadership was keen to develop and test new approaches to address the altered landscape of the sector but were highly risk adverse due to limited funds and time. We plan to develop an Audience Development Funding program in 2024 that can help to provide some risk capital to undertake some of these new approaches.

Across disciplines, many organizations saw **a turnover in leadership**. These leaders had been working hard to keep the doors open and lights on during the worst of COVID-19, and there was a high level of burn out among this group. This included many long-time founding leaders who were exploring or planning for their exit from their organizations. As a part of these transitions, several organizations undertook investigations into how they needed to 'right size' or find efficiencies in programming and operations to be sustainable into the future. Many took a good look at their mandates and strategized what work they needed to do to remain relevant to the community.

Venue accessibility was also a noticeable emerging issue as several organizations were looking to acquire their first space, or search for new space. Smaller organizations often needed to undertake strategic feasibility reviews to understand the full cost, requirements, and rationale of taking on their own space. Established organizations like Inside Out Theatre, the Calgary International Film Festival, and The GRAND needed to consider alternatives for programming and operations, as they faced loss of their existing spaces.

Throughout these challenges, arts organizations remained dedicated to their art and their community.

Trends in 2023

Challenges engaging audiences + donors

Turnover in leadership

Issues around venue accessibility



Left: Diane Din Ebongue. Photo by Robert Okine, Nia Centre, 2023. Right: Alberta Ballet Edmonton Newcomer Pilot.

Funding Programs in 2023

BY AYLA STEPHEN

In 2023, the Rozsa Foundation's funding programs supported organizations on projects that sought to build capacity and strengthen their business models. These organizations were also able to leverage funds, create new partnerships, and build organizational resiliency.

The Rozsa Foundation offered five funding programs in 2023: Capacity Development, Experimentation, Arts Leadership Residency, Future Focus, and the RAMP Capstone Projects Funding, developed to support projects created by participants in the Rozsa Arts Management Program (RAMP).

Calgary Arts Development (CADA) continued its support of the Capstone program, providing funding for RAMP projects undertaken by participants

who are not working with, or associated with, a registered charity. They are also a collaborative funder for the Future Focus Program, along with the Calgary Foundation.

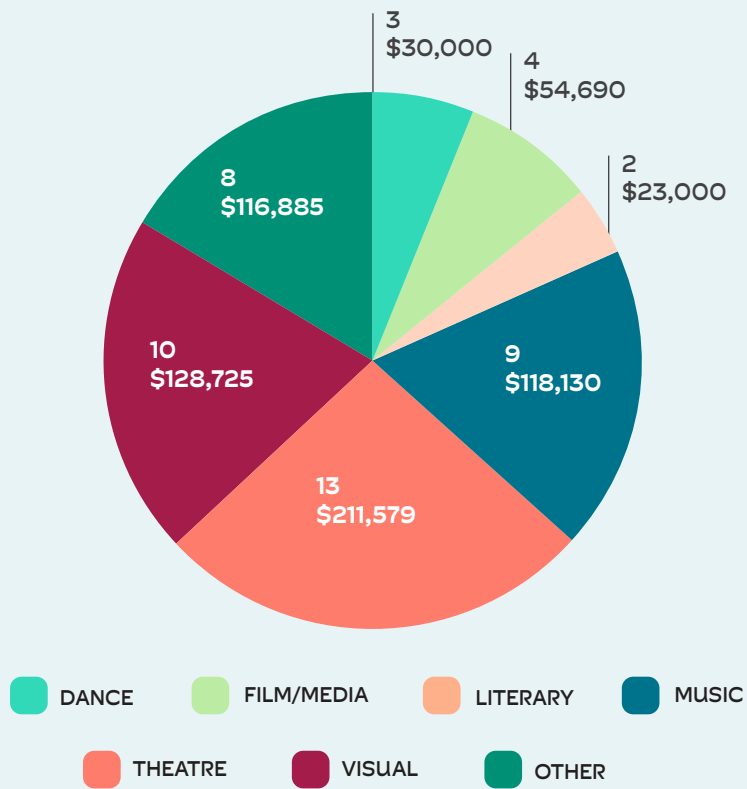
Funding programs became more autonomous from one another, with separate application deadlines and application questions for the various programs. Decoupling application deadlines from board meetings allowed the Foundation to experiment with community-based assessment committees in the fall.

In alignment with the new Strategic Framework, we also shifted terminology to use Funding in place of Granting, which took some adjustment, but has been well-received by the community members who have noticed.

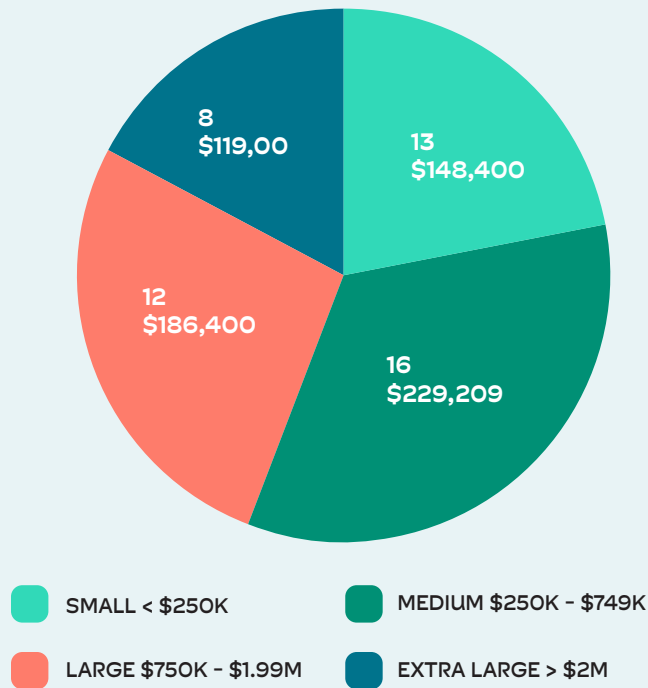
All the application metrics for our funding programs saw a significant increase in 2023. This includes the number of applications received, approved requests, the total amount requested, and the total funding amount approved. This increase is a direct result of our Future Focus Funding collaboration, which accounts for 28 of the 49 approved grants in 2023, and incorporates a significant portion of applications that would have come under our previous Aspirations funding program. Through Future Focus and RAMP Capstone Project funding we funded individuals (Capstone only), artist collectives, and non-profits in addition to registered arts charities.

Funding At-A-Glance

FUNDING BY DISCIPLINE



FUNDING BY ORGANIZATION SIZE



REINFORCING STRONG ORGANIZATIONS FEATURE



The Science Fiction People. Photo by Heather Saitz. Provided by National accessArts Centre.

Mixtapes & Mashups at the National accessArts Centre

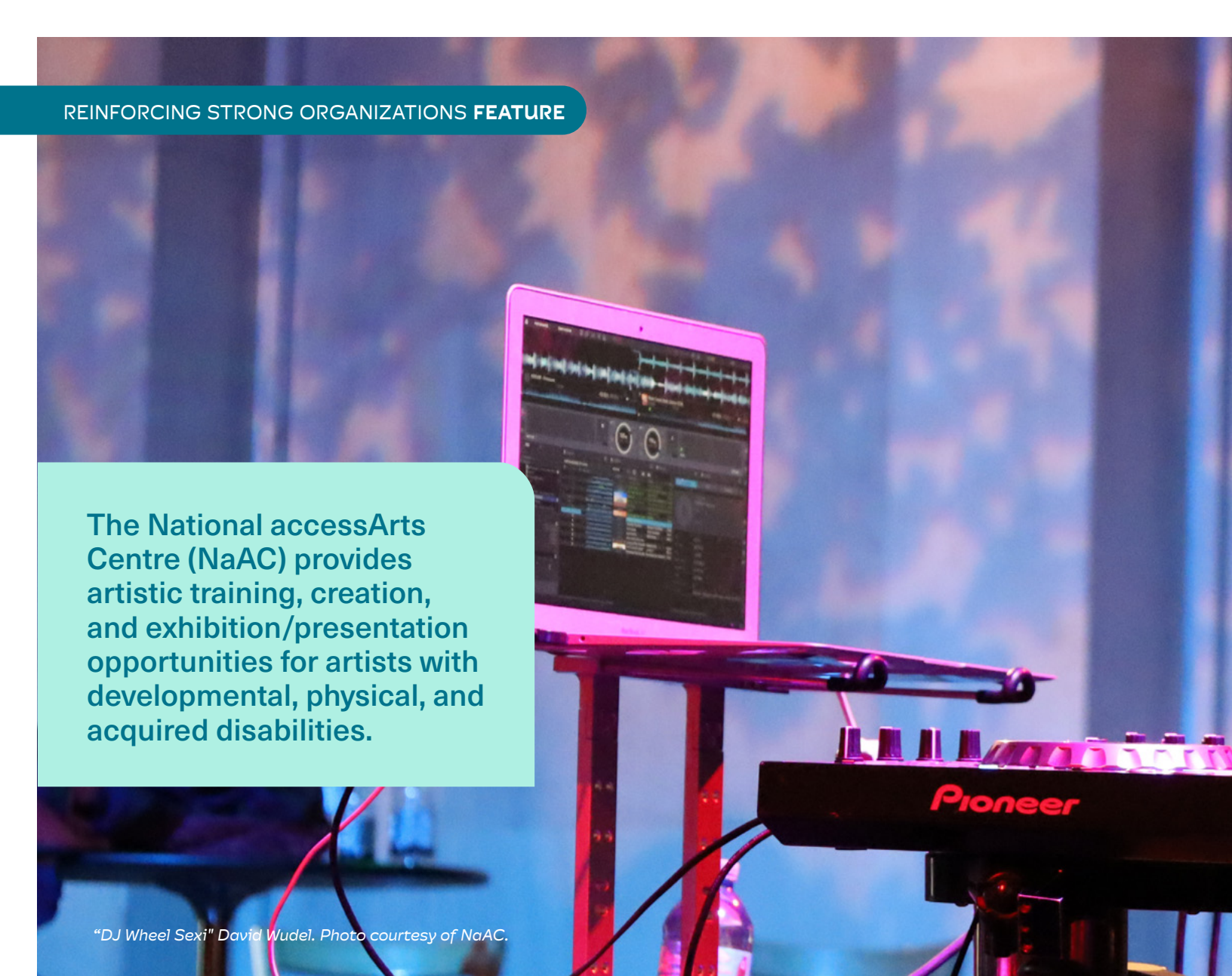
BY CLAYTON SMITH



Clayton Smith, Lead, Programs and Exhibitions, NaAC

My Rozsa Arts Management Program Capstone Project focused on developing a new stream of accessible audio and music programs for the National accessArts Centre's multidisciplinary Community Class programs. Recognizing that many current or prospective musicians with developmental disabilities have little prior exposure or experience with traditional music education, I prioritized providing Community Class participants with unconventional and innovative ways to create and explore music through accessible technology and user-specific approaches. With the experience gained through my Capstone Project, we continue modelling audio and music Community Classes that are informed by and respond to expressed interest from the NaAC artist community.

One accessible way we experimented with musical expression and creation was by introducing participants to DJing. After previous conversations with NaAC artists about storytelling through thematic playlists, compilation albums, and mixtapes, we felt that DJing would be a fresh and exciting way for participants to create music that brought immediate, creative, and fun results. After curating themed playlists, participants could experiment with mixing and mashing songs and samples to make something new. With user-friendly controllers, iPads, and software, participants explored by combining and overlapping different rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic elements of their songs, ultimately creating something



The National accessArts Centre (NaAC) provides artistic training, creation, and exhibition/presentation opportunities for artists with developmental, physical, and acquired disabilities.

"DJ Wheel Sexi" David Wudel. Photo courtesy of NaAC.

new and fresh. Rather than sitting through lectures on rhythm, tempo, or groove, the workshops provided hands-on experiential learning—a much more engaging way to learn about fundamental aspects of music.

After completing RAMP, The Rozsa Foundation Capstone funding was instrumental in ensuring the success of our very first audio and music community class, "Mixtapes & Mashups: Intro to DJing." Not only was the class designed through paid consultation with disabled musicians & NaAC artists, but we also hired disabled artists as guest workshop leads to share their personal experiences, creative practices, and technical prowess.

Acknowledging that innovative audio and music programming is rarely available to the developmental disability community, we made a point to invite community members from outside our registered artists and tried to increase awareness of the opportunity. With the help of the Rosza Foundation funds, we offered "Mixtapes & Mashups" to non-NaAC registered artists at no cost.

Since our initial workshop, the ripple effect of our Audio/Music programming has been profound. The community workshops, modelled after this Capstone-funded initiative, have become a cornerstone of our audio and music division. NaAC audio and music programs are consistently



some of the most sought-after community-based programs we offer each semester. The registration for each class since our first workshop has been either full or at 90% capacity, with repeat non-NaAC registered artists signing up each semester.

Overall, my Capstone Project built my confidence in developing and implementing programming at the NaAC. I solidified the importance of including our artists in program discussions, decision-making, and direction, making it a “best practice” for all multidisciplinary programs designed at the NaAC. By prioritizing time and space for critical reflection, hiring artists with disabilities as program developers and leads, and actively seeking

feedback from program participants, we improve the chance for our programming to be respectful and beneficial for our artists, the organization, program partners, co-workers, and NaAC extended supporters. My advocacy for the disability community can come in the form of thoughtful organization, efficient communication, and aligned goals, and that’s an excellent trajectory for my foreseeable future at the NaAC.



Amilia CRM Transforms Operations for the Allied Arts Council of Lethbridge

BY EMMA AUBIE AND AYL A STEPHEN

Photos courtesy of Allied Arts Council Lethbridge.

The efficiency and effectiveness of organizational processes can make a significant difference in serving communities and advancing strategic goals. This was particularly relevant for the Allied Arts Council of Lethbridge, who had been struggling with a patchwork of outdated systems that hindered their ability to operate smoothly. The Council successfully applied for Capacity Development Funding and with funding provided they acquired and integrated a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tool, called Amilia CRM.

Before the implementation of Amilia, the Arts Council faced administrative challenges in their day-to-day operations. Administrative processes were cumbersome and time-consuming, leading to inefficiencies and frustration among staff. Tasks such as class registration, facility rental management, and ticket sales were disjointed and there was a high risk of error. Accessing vital information across departments was difficult and resulted in siloed workflows, duplicated efforts, and miscommunication. All of this was compounded by the fact that the Arts Council operates out of two different locations, and their systems didn't allow for easy information sharing or updates.

Their existing systems also affected the council's ability to serve their patrons and community effectively. Registration for classes and events was a manual process, leading to long wait times and frustration for patrons. Additionally, the lack of centralized data made it challenging for the council to see trends or patterns in the community's needs and preferences, hindering any strategic decision-making.

Recognizing the need for a comprehensive solution, the Arts Council undertook the implementation of Amilia CRM. Since its launch in July, the new CRM has revolutionized their operations and eliminated many of their previous challenges. Administrative tasks that were once manual and time-consuming are now streamlined and automated, thanks to the platform's intuitive interface and robust features.

One of the most significant benefits of Amilia CRM is its ability to centralize information and break down barriers between departments and locations. Staff members now have easy access to vital data, enabling smoother collaboration and decision-making. Class registration, facility rental management, and ticket sales are all now



”

These types of projects are not the most "dazzling" but often have an enormous impact on an organization.



seamlessly integrated, which is reducing errors and improving efficiency.

The platform's analytical capabilities are empowering their team to gain deeper insights into community needs and preferences. With access to real-time data and analytics, the Arts Council will be able to tailor their programs and services to ensure they meet the diverse needs of their community.

Looking ahead, the Arts Council plans to continue refining their processes and providing additional training to staff to optimize the new capabilities of the Amilia CRM. They are also working towards integrating Amilia with their website, enhancing the user experience and accessibility.

These types of projects are not the most "dazzling" but often have an enormous impact on an organization. Although there is still work to do, the implementation of Amilia CRM has been transformative for the Arts Council, ushering in opportunity for more collaboration and innovation. By streamlining operations and improving communication, the Arts Council can continue fulfilling their mission of enriching lives through the arts.

Future Focus Funding in 2023

BY AYLA STEPHEN

28 funding requests were approved with an investment of \$405,109 at a 61% success rate.

Funding Areas

Strategic Directions + Capacity	6	\$79,690
Organizational Structures + Models	6	\$72,109
Venue + Space Investigations	4	\$59,325
Life Cycle (Mergers + Closures)	3	\$54,385
Succession Planning	4	\$53,100
New Revenue Models	3	\$46,500
Strategic Partnerships	2	\$40,000

Introduced in 2022, the Future Focus Funding program, a joint funding program between Rozsa Foundation, Calgary Arts Development Authority (CADA) and Calgary Foundation, continued through 2023. This collaboration supports arts organizations as they investigate, plan, and implement strategic adaptations in their operations to build capacity, strengthen business models, explore new directions, examine structural change, undertake succession planning, and address life cycle questions.

In 2023, 28 funding requests were approved with a total investment of \$405,109 at a 61% success rate.

Partnering with CADA allows the funding to reach organizations

operating outside of the Registered Charity model. Funding can be accessed by registered charities, registered non-profits, and ad-hoc and grassroots organizations with comparable structures. In 2023, three registered non-profits and one ad-hoc collective were supported.

Organizations who have received Future Focus funding are engaging in a variety of activities including community engagement research, landscape and needs analysis, investigation into new operating and performances venues, seeking of legal and human resources advice, and various non-profit operational and governance needs and learning.



Future Focus Feature: Loud Art Society

With support from the Future Focus program, **Loud Art Society (LAS)**, a Calgary non-profit arts group that provides individuals and families with mental health conditions with access to art therapy, completed a venue feasibility study. Their programming is typically hosted in space provided by partnering organizations or is delivered 'pop-up' style around Calgary. This approach is effective for community outreach but requires additional labour, as artists delivering the program must load in and out, set up and take down, and travel for each session. LAS's founding Artistic Director, Tara Vahab, felt that the next step for the organization

was to find and acquire their own space for program delivery. Through an in-depth venue needs analysis and feasibility study LAS identified realistic and attainable goals as they move towards their vision of an ideal space, and they have clearer insight into the immediate and long-term costs of operating their own venue. Instead of diving into the acquisition of their own venue, they are now investigating shared venue models that provide a more sustainable approach to organizational growth. This research had the additional benefit of starting more serious conversations with their partners, leading to strengthened relationships.

Pictured: Loud Art Society.



Shelley Youngblut, Mark Bellamy, Ian Ferguson, Sean Dunnigan, and Will Ferguson. Photo by Wordfest & David Kotsibie, Persuasion Photography.

WORDFEST

Business Model Evaluation – Capacity Development Funding

After a comprehensive business assessment of an online platform for digital content Wordfest decided to move away from their ambition to create their own Over-The-Top (OTT) platform, to a more singular focus on core strengths: content curation, production, and partnerships. The project helped them make the difficult but wise decision to refocus energies back to in-person experiences, saving them time, money, and effort on an initiative that, after analysis, would not have had the revenue impact they assumed at the start.

ALBERTA BALLET

Welcoming Newcomers Pilot Program – Experimentation Funding

"This pilot provided us with operational insights and most importantly, great feedback from our immigrant serving agency partners and the participants to continue our work with newcomer communities. The information gathered from the pilots helped to inform a new 6-week program onsite with Centre for Newcomers in Calgary from June-July. We plan to continue to support and build relationships with the families who participated in this pilot. Alberta Ballet is inviting each student to return and enroll in our year-long recreational programs from Sept 2023 – June 2024 at no cost. Those who wish to continue will be placed into our Alberta Ballet recreational classes based on their ages and abilities based on their teacher's observations."



Edmonton Newcomer Pilot Project. Photo courtesy of Alberta Ballet.

Strengthening the Sector

Beyond our funding and training programs, the Rozsa Foundation seeks to support the arts sector as a whole by undertaking activities such as **research, advocacy, newsletters**, and **developing resources**. We realize that arts managers and leaders can use the results of detailed research to make strategic decisions for their organizations. Likewise, arts managers can consult our resources page on our website to access specific information or ideas they need to be successful in their roles.

The articles in our newsletter keep the community informed about their fellow arts leaders' accomplishments, news and events they need to know of, and important ideas and conversations that are being had in the sector. Finally, our position as a private foundation allows us to undertake non-partisan advocacy projects to outline the impact of the arts in society, and lobby for increased government funding and art-friendly policies.



What is Storytelling and Why Does It Matter?

BY LISA MACKAY

*Opposite: Illustration
by Jessie Mead.*

Storytelling has become a great corporate buzzword, flung around with other jargon in the business community especially by folks in marketing and branding. There is a reason it has become so popular – storytelling is at once science and art and speaks to the very centre of our shared humanity. It is a powerful means of communicating, of strengthening bonds and connections, and of ensuring a message is understood and memorable.

The Rozsa Foundation has long understood the power of storytelling. As an entrepreneur and business owner, as well as donor to the arts, Ted Rozsa wanted to highlight the importance of arts managers in the ecology of a healthy and vibrant arts sector. Managers are responsible for things like revenue and expenses, staff, contractors, facilities, programming, strategic direction, and so much more - all of which directly impact and support the art we know and love. Ted and Lola also wanted to impress upon their business colleagues that their donations to the sector would be well-managed in more-than competent hands

of arts managers. For many years, the Rozsa Awards accomplished this goal by showcasing arts managers making a difference in their organizations. Learning about the roles and accomplishments of these individuals, their challenges and triumphs, drove home to Calgarians the message that these leaders were highly skilled, deeply passionate, and worthy of attention. Telling these stories with a large community celebration and lots of media attention made that message immediately understood and remembered.

It is in this spirit that we created a storytelling umbrella for our activities outside of, but connected with, training and funding programs. The arts community and its intersections with the Rozsa Foundation are overflowing with stories that can help the people in our profession learn new things, grow in their roles, and be inspired. These are stories we tell each other and that can be shared with the wider world. We believe in the importance of constantly learning from each other, our experiments, triumphs, mistakes, and epiphanies, and make it



Research is a gap in the sector that tight budgets don't always allow for, but knowing as much as possible about arts audiences, the public's spending habits, or the social impact of the pandemic are crucial for leaders in making decisions about their organizations.

our job to provide a hub for community learning to be shared and amplified.

The newsletter, resources, and our social media are the most direct applications of storytelling, as we share profiles of arts leaders to broaden the community and raise awareness of the talent available in our province. We also send stories about our training participants and our funding partnerships when they have done extraordinary work and developed new ways of thinking that can inspire their peers, and dive into timely topics and discussions facing the sector to enable the community to work on them together. We are also carrying on with the Awards with our Emerging Arts Manager Award, presented at the Mayor's Celebration for the Arts. The Rozsa Foundation Emerging Arts Manager Award aims to acknowledge the exceptional contributions of an arts manager who is in the early stages of their career yet has already made a significant impact within and beyond their organization. This year's recipient was Kadra Yusuf, the Artistic Director at EMMEDIA.

Research is a gap in the sector that tight budgets don't always allow for, but knowing as much as possible about arts

audiences, the public's spending habits, or the social impact of the pandemic are crucial for leaders in making decisions for their organizations. The Rozsa Foundation seeks to provide this research to the sector to equip arts managers with the data that can inform the stories they are telling their audiences. Research begins to tell its own story of the current and would-be patrons and supporters of the arts – their motivations, stumbling blocks, habits, and preferences – that we need to learn to be successful.

Finally, advocacy is all about sharing the stories of the art, artists, and audiences – and their impacts – with people who may not know enough about them. This could be politicians, bureaucrats, policy and programming creators, or the public. Successful advocacy is about telling the right story to the right people at the right time to move the needle on opinions, understanding, support, and funding for the arts sector. It also requires time and attention many arts organizations can not afford on their own, and the Rozsa Foundation is happy to step in to this area in support of the arts community.



”

Storytelling is a powerful means of communicating, of strengthening bonds and connections, and of ensuring a message is understood and memorable.

Mary Rozsa de Coquet, Mayor Jyoti Gondek, Kadra Yusuf, and Simon Mallett at the Mayor's Celebration of the Arts event.



Simon Mallett and Lisa Mackay with Minister of Arts, Culture, and the Status of Women Tanya Fir at the Premier's Stampede Breakfast.

Stepping Up Advocacy for the Arts Sector

BY LISA MACKAY

As a part of the strategic planning process in 2022, the Rozsa Foundation invited feedback from our community to help focus our priorities. Among the input we received was that, given our position as a private foundation, we could make an impact in taking on a greater role in advocacy to promote increased government support for the arts sector. We agreed that this aligned with our values and vision and determined to allocate greater resources to arts advocacy in 2023 and beyond.

We have since engaged in all orders of government advocacy, from Creative Calgary municipally,

to joining the Canadian Arts Coalition and working at a federal level. Provincially, after a very busy Stampede (also known as the 'barbeque circuit' for politicians), we joined the Nonprofit Vote led by the CCVO and Karen Ball and ran the VoteArtsAB campaign, a letter-writing campaign shared through the community with audiences and patrons of the arts to easily provide testimony for the value of the arts in Alberta. Supporters could scan a QR code or visit a website to easily send a letter to politicians. The campaign resulted in over 700 letters of support for the arts sent to the leaders of all of Alberta's political parties in just two weeks.

We also engaged New West Public Affairs in the fall to help us craft and execute a budget submission for increased provincial funding to the Alberta Foundation for the Arts and set up meetings with those who could advance our request. With their assistance we were able to present the details of our budget recommendation and case for increased funding to the Alberta Foundation for the Arts directly to Minister Tanya Fir, Deputy Minister Kim Capstick, and members of their ministry office. We look forward to seeing where our advocacy efforts take us in 2024.

Spotlight on Arts Audiences: Providing Data for Strategic Decision-Making

BY LISA MACKAY

In 2023, Alberta continued to deal with the aftermath of a pandemic that changed public life and reshaped our economy. This is especially true in the Arts & Culture sector which continues to experience a decline in engagement with events and activities. With this in mind, we contracted research firm Stone-Olafson to conduct in-depth research on the current engagement of arts audiences in the province. Throughout the pandemic, Stone-Olafson kept track of the “experience economy” and its preferences as health mandates came and went and concerns about being in public were top of mind. With that in mind, we asked them to continue this work but look specifically at arts and culture experiences, where their previous work included sports and all live event experiences.

To help fund this project, we approached other funders in

the province who support the arts community, and the Calgary Arts Development Authority (CADA), Calgary Foundation, Edmonton Community Foundation, Edmonton Arts Council, and the Alberta Foundation for the Arts all enthusiastically joined us. We are grateful to have their collaboration and to be able to widen the scope of the research to the full province with their assistance.

The two-year research project concentrates exclusively on learning how audiences engage with arts and culture experiences in their communities, looking at their motivations, preferences, and habits vis a vis their relationship with the arts. The research seeks to serve the arts sector’s needs and deliver insights that can be directly applied to make strategic decisions. Prior to creating the first survey, we sought feedback from the arts community

about their concerns and challenges and worked it into the research design.

The results of each wave of research will be delivered through in person presentations in both Calgary and Edmonton, where we hope conversations around solutions and ideas will emerge amongst attendees. There will be six waves of in-field work in all, delivered at specific intervals to help in the seasonal decisions being made by the leaders. We are optimistic that this research will be both wide in geographic scope while also deep in the level of understanding it provides the arts sector about their all-important audiences. The better informed the sector is, the stronger it will be overall.

”

The two-year research project concentrates exclusively on learning how audiences engage with arts and culture experiences in their communities, looking at their motivations, preferences, and habits vis a vis their relationship with the arts.

Social Media Importance and Growth in 2023

BY CIZA ZOYA



*Storytelling Associate
Ciza Zoya joined the team
in March 2023. Photo
courtesy of Ciza.*

I joined as the Storytelling Associate at the Rozsa Foundation in March 2023, and I'm thrilled to share our recent strides in enhancing our online presence and engagement across social media platforms. On joining, the first thing I undertook was to ensure a cohesive brand identity across all our platforms. I used Rozsa's existing brand colors and styles to create templates and visual elements for a unified look and feel throughout our content.

Central to my approach was to amplify community voices by spotlighting stories of art leaders and arts organizations within Alberta's arts community. Consistency is key, so I also prioritized consistency in posting through out our social media channels. Regular quarterly analysis has been crucial. It has helped us fine-tune our strategies and keep things moving in the right direction. By monitoring key metrics related to awareness, I have been able to adapt our strategies effectively.

We've tailored our content strategies to resonate with different audience and their interests across platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Mighty Networks, and all of them have shown growth in engagement.

We focus on our local arts community, but also try to develop conversation and discussion around topical issues that we are all confronting, from covid recovery to audience cultivation, political advocacy, and the role of arts in society. Social media is a wonderful way to connect arts managers and gain insight into the struggles and triumphs they are seeing within their practice.

By sharing stories and inviting engagement, social media is connecting a network of arts managers, where we can share stories about the reality of our work and advocate for the arts by amplifying the impact we see every day. I invite you to follow us and add your voice to these discussions!

 [Instagram.com/RozsaFoundation](https://www.instagram.com/RozsaFoundation)

 [Twitter.com/RozsaFoundation](https://twitter.com/RozsaFoundation)

 [Facebook.com/RozsaFoundation](https://www.facebook.com/RozsaFoundation)

 [LinkedIn.com/company/RozsaFoundation](https://www.linkedin.com/company/RozsaFoundation)

A Multifaceted Approach

BY SIMON MALLETT

While our research, advocacy, and storytelling work are the focus of our efforts to strengthen the sector, our approach is multifaceted, informed by identified trends, needs, and strategic opportunities. We continue to convene other private and public foundations that support the arts through the Arts Affinity group within Philanthropic Foundations Canada, which is aimed at fostering collaborative efforts to bolster the arts sector nationally. We placed an increased focus on resource development over the past year on the use of Artificial Intelligence, including hosting a webinar on the ethical use of AI, while developing our own policies and guidelines as a way to provide a roadmap for other organizations to do the same. And equally as important, we took time to celebrate the accomplishments of the sector, joining Mayor Jyoti Gondek and her office and Calgary Arts Development to return as the Champion Partner for the annual Celebration of the Arts – Calgary’s biggest celebration of the entire arts community – to toast all that was accomplished over the past year!



2023 RAMP graduates.

Looking Forward

BY LISA MACKAY

The Rozsa Foundation made a significant shift in the way we consider the work we do in the arts community in 2023. Although our programs did not change substantially, our language and approach to these programs felt new and much more thoughtful because of the Strategic Framework and the work that went into it. Top of mind was our role in the Alberta arts community and our effectiveness in supporting, empowering, and growing the arts sector.

Having a full year of the Strategic Framework under our belt, the Foundation is eager and excited to continue the work in the years ahead. Our understanding of the power of Storytelling as a new pillar of work has grown and solidified in ways that pave the road for deeper, more lasting outcomes. Our focus on advocacy work has been rewarding and invigorating, and we look forward to increasing our efforts in this area. The ongoing research project with Stone-Olafson is already yielding significant and important data on Alberta arts audiences, and the next five waves are full of opportunity to dig deeper into the responses and gather actionable insights. The newsletter and social media tools at our disposal, combined with a new Storytelling Associate role, have expanded and strengthened our voice on the many subjects and topics concerning arts managers.

Our work with fellow funders and collaborative grant-making has opened our

eyes to the potential impact of broadening our scope for funding and our role in supporting constructive change throughout the arts sector. The precarious realities of government funding, private donations, and corporate sponsorship have forced the arts to ask itself some difficult questions, and we intend to put resources into supporting the work of finding positive answers.

Our successful training programs, on-going community feedback and assessment, and an in-depth look at gaps and opportunities in arts management education and professional development have us looking at bold new ways of providing the learning experiences arts managers are looking for. Each of the Rozsa Foundation training programs will be evaluated and potentially reimaged in the next few years to address the evolving needs of the arts community and empower arts leaders to be confident and daring in the ways they are stewarding the arts sector into the future.

A focus on learning and assessment of impact have sharpened our vision of what is possible for the arts in Alberta and the role we can play to make it happen. We are excited to work with the arts community to create a world where the arts are recognized and supported as an integral and essential part of vibrant cities, communities, and economies, and can lead the way to a bright future for all.

Our Partners



Front cover illustration: Jessie Mead

Publication design: GOOD Company

Back cover photo: Mayor's Celebration of the Arts Reception, sponsored by Rozsa Foundation; Motif Photography.

Rozsa Foundation

Staff

Simon Mallett, Executive Director
Lisa Mackay, Director of Storytelling
Ayla Stephen, Funding Manager
Ainsley Soutière, Training & Events Coordinator
Ciza Zoya, Storytelling Associate
Toyin Oladele, RAFT Facilitator
Kodie Rollan, RAFT & RAMP Facilitator
Nikesh Harrinarain, Bookkeeper

Board

Mary Rozsa de Coquet, Chair
Bruce Halliday, Vice-Chair
Ian Minnifee, Treasurer
Paul Mouton, Secretary
Alec Milne, Director
Brittany Harker Martin, Director
Katrina Ingram, Director (outgoing)

Members

Mary Rozsa de Coquet
MC Rozsa de Coquet
Ruth Ann Rozsa Rayner
Brenda-Ann Marks
Alec Milne
Karen Rice
Scott Rozsa

cSPACE

Suite 490 1721 29 Ave SW
Calgary, Alberta T2T 6T7, Canada

(403) 245-6063

rozsafoundation.com

info@rozsafoundation.com

@RozsaFoundation

@RozsaFoundation

facebook.com/RozsaFoundation

linkedin.com/company/RozsaFoundation



