



**Ideas  
can...**

**Letting in the light:**

**The contributions of the humanities and social sciences to Canadian culture**

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**Submission of the Federation of the Humanities and Social Sciences to the Cultural Policy Review “Canadian Content in a Digital World”**

November 25, 2016



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## Executive Summary

*Ring the bells that still can ring  
Forget your perfect offering  
There is a crack in everything  
That's how the light gets in.*

From *Anthem*, by Leonard Cohen

Canadian culture—vibrant, inclusive, bilingual and pluralistic—is central to the vitality of our thriving democracy, society and economy. Canada’s higher education institutions and faculty play crucial roles in sustaining the quality and health of our cultural sectors. This is especially true for the humanities and social sciences (HSS) disciplines, including fine arts and design, which focus on human thought, interaction, expression and behavior across media, across history and across our globalized world.

The Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences represents a community of 91,000 researchers and graduate students at universities and colleges across the country. This community includes artists who are pushing the boundaries of Canadian culture, teachers who are equipping future generations with vital creative talents, and researchers who are exploring new cultural developments. They have important contributions to make to the development of cultural policy and share a strong desire to help build an inclusive, dynamic and competitive cultural sector in Canada.

This brief provides recommendations in the three key areas identified in the *Canadian Content in a Digital World* consultation paper: focusing on citizens and creators, reflecting Canadian identities and promoting sound democracy, and catalyzing social and economic innovation.

Cultural policy must support both the creators and the users of cultural products, and both rely on prior cultural education and experiences. Indeed, the creative process, from conception to reception, is dependent upon interactions among a myriad of actors and institutions, including educational bodies, libraries and performing arts centres.

HSS scholars—as researchers, educators and artists—make vital contributions to Canadian culture: through the production of cultural content; the training of creative talent; the development of knowledge, tools and methods needed by content creators; the education of audiences; and the preservation and effective archiving of cultural products. As such, investments in HSS research and the universities that enable HSS research and teaching are foundational investments in creators and creative industries.

## Recommendations

### **1. Engage the HSS community to inform culture policy**

The higher education sector plays a vital and far-reaching role in the production, preservation and circulation of valuable cultural works, and the research of HSS scholars generates insights to inform cultural policy. It is crucial that this sector be part of national discussions on cultural policy, infrastructure and public support for the arts. The federal government should establish mechanisms to facilitate the insights and evidence flowing from HSS research to inform federal policy-making relating to Canadian culture and heritage. The new Chief Science Officer could play a leading role in establishing such mechanisms.

### **2. Ensure communities across Canada have the opportunity to access and participate in culture by expanding broadband and supporting key cultural institutions**

The federal government should ensure that all Canadian communities can access cultural goods and participate in cultural exchanges. This will require enhanced investments in digital infrastructure to expand affordable broadband Internet access to underserved communities. Long-term investments in Canada's national and regional cultural institutions are also needed to enhance their capacity to serve communities across the country, support their cultural expression and preserve their cultural knowledge. This includes support for institutions such as the National Film Board, CBC/Radio-Canada, Library and Archives Canada, universities and colleges across the country, and Canada's many smaller, regional institutions, including libraries and galleries.

### **3. Support greater participation of First Nations, Inuit and Métis in cultural expression, engagement and education in Canada by enhancing access and success in post-secondary education and by supporting language revitalization programs**

The federal government should make significant investments to increase both the number of Indigenous post-secondary graduates and the number of Indigenous scholars in universities and colleges across Canada. This will require:

- Increased support for Indigenous research and researchers, including in cultural fields.
- Increased financial and programmatic support for Indigenous graduate students and post-doctoral researchers, including capacity-building supports to enhance long-term retention and success of Indigenous scholars.

- Significant federal investments and programmatic supports through the research granting councils and cultural institutions to address national obligations to ensure revitalization and long-term survival of Indigenous languages and cultures.

**4. Encourage creativity, knowledge-sharing and innovation in cultural sectors by supporting networks that connect cultural thinkers in academic and non-academic sectors. This should include support for work-integrated learning, artist-in-residence programs and dedicated cross-sector programs.**

To build the skills graduates need to thrive in the creative economy, the government of Canada should expand its support for work-integrated learning experiences to all of Canada's students. The Post-Secondary Industry Partnership and Cooperative Placement Initiative should be expanded to include students in all disciplines, including arts and design. The federal government should also explore, in collaboration with Mitacs and the Canada Council for the Arts, means to expand opportunities for paid internships for students in creative disciplines with partners in cultural sectors, industry or government. Funding for artist-in-residence programs should also be strengthened to support valuable opportunities for cultural players to work across sectors and across disciplines.

Additionally, the Federation recommends significant federal support to encourage the creation and expansion of diverse collaborative platforms that connect post-secondary researchers engaged in cultural scholarship in different disciplines with leaders in government, the private sector and civil society. Such collaborations will leverage Canada's strengths as a diverse, bilingual, multicultural, inclusive and prosperous democracy.

**5. Strengthen the ability of Canadian academic presses to support the discoverability of Canadian research through books and journals**

Considering the important contribution of Canadian scholarship to Canadian culture, the federal government should provide sustained funding for academic book and journal publishing, reflecting evolving real costs, including support for emerging open-access publishing models.

## Introduction

Humanities and social sciences faculty at universities across the country spark Canadians' imagination and creativity. They play a key role in developing creators, audiences, content and new forms of expression, helping to shape our identities, our democracy and catalyzing social innovation.

The Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences welcomes the opportunity of the government's cultural policy review to present recommendations for strengthening the multiple connections between research, the creative economy, and democracy in an increasingly digital world.

This brief focuses on ways forward in the three key areas identified in the government's consultation paper: focusing on citizens and creators, reflecting Canadian identities and promoting sound democracy, and catalyzing social and economic innovation. The submission has been greatly enriched by input from diverse experts within the Federation membership, including participants at a roundtable discussion convened by OCAD University in Toronto on October 24, 2016 (see Appendix).

### 1. Creators, citizens and the world that connects them

As noted in the *Canadian Content in a Digital World* consultation paper, cultural policy must support both the creators and the users of cultural products, and both rely on prior cultural education and experiences. For instance, an English class might spark an interest that shapes bookstore selections across a lifetime, and most artists have some formal education in the field (whether a high school art class or a university degree in theatre or music). The creative process, from conception to reception, is dependent upon interactions among a myriad of actors and institutions. These include contributions from researchers, educators, artists, community leaders, mentors, universities, publishers, and many other public institutions and private sector actors—all of whose work is the foundation of a strong creative economy.

## 1.1 Humanities and social sciences support Canadian culture

HSS researchers build the knowledge and historical perspectives that help us understand cultural products and inform their creation. This is particularly true in the humanities disciplines. Scholars of language and literature extend our knowledge of human expression across media, from poems to films. Music historians explore the development and structure of musical forms across nations and centuries. Philosophers explore those aspects of human experience that lie at the centre of so much art. The knowledge flowing from this scholarship provides a necessary and ongoing foundation for artistic creation.

HSS faculty also play a key role as educators in training new generations of creators. This includes enabling people to create content with a critical mindset and a broad knowledge base of the cultural past. Literature and music programs alike, for instance, teach content (traditions and examples that span across cultures and historical eras); methodologies for creation and analysis (genre theory and rhetoric); and practice (writing, composing and performing). HSS faculty also support the preservation of cultural products by training the experts who create and maintain Canada's museums, libraries and other archival institutions, including in Canada's centres of higher education. Increasingly, teaching in HSS is being enhanced by the use of new digital pedagogical tools. How we use such tools to learn and experience content is yet another area of HSS research with important implications for cultural innovation.

Some scholars are important producers of artistic work and methods in their own right, often exploring creative ideas and content in ways that are not possible in commercial contexts. By testing new techniques, exploring uses of new technologies and pushing accepted boundaries, scholars generate knowledge that supports artistic expression.

### Cartooning in a digital age:

Canadian cartoonist Kate Beaton—who majored in history and anthropology at Mount Allison University and worked at the Maritime Museum of British Columbia—is the creator and publisher of the acclaimed comic strip *Hark! A Vagrant*. Beaton publishes and promotes her work through digital platforms such as Tumblr, Twitter and iTunes, as well as through print. Her third collection, *Step Aside, Pops*, marks the largest first printing in the publisher Drawn & Quarterly's history. *Hark! A Vagrant's* signature blend of history and humour relies on Beaton's training and experience in the humanities. When investigating subjects for her comics, Beaton relies on what she learned as a history student, and her audience's ability to appreciate the humour in her work is likewise augmented by an education enriched by the humanities and social sciences.

In short, it is important to recognize that creative content does not arise simply from “naturally occurring” talent. Creators have honed their craft from broad experiences, often guided by educators and the results of research and innovation by scholars. HSS programs offer not only an environment for developing commercially successful creators but also for a culturally engaged population—one that reads, plays musical instruments, or pursues other artistic activities, including as informed and engaged audiences.

### **Universities as maker spaces and creative hubs**

The creative contributions of students, faculty and artists described above are dependent on the institutional support and facilities of Canadian universities, many of which have invested significantly in creative infrastructure, multidisciplinary programs, international linkages, learning zones and other supports for content creators.

In addition to serving as a “maker space” for their own academic communities, universities are important public venues for cultural expression. Their high-quality facilities (such as auditoriums, screening facilities and performance halls) enable them to host a broad range of cultural events, including exhibitions, readings, plays, concerts and festivals. In this way, universities help make art and culture more accessible to local and regional publics and increasingly beyond, through webcasts and other digital media.

Through their galleries and libraries, universities help preserve the cultural past and develop important innovations in how we store, use and share information. University libraries, for instance, have evolved into learning commons that employ advanced digital technologies—where the availability of computer systems, research librarians and data services are now every bit as important as the lending of print books.

Universities also nurture our cultural future, supporting research- and performance-creation activities as inherently productive of new knowledge. These institutions also support creators through artist-in-residence programs. These highly valuable partnerships benefit both artists and the university community facilitating the pursuit of experimental, boundary-pushing work that would not be possible in conventional commercial contexts. Such programs are also essential to supporting emerging talent.

### **A walk through history:**

Created by graduate-level students at Carleton University's Hyperlab, *Forgotten Worker Quest* is a smartphone app designed for eight- to 12-year-olds that guides them through a journey in the shoes of a 19th century Irish immigrant labourer working on constructing Ottawa's famous Rideau Canal. The app guides users through an interactive virtual adventure along the canal, prompting them to make choices to find the tools they need and avoid hazards such as explosions and malaria. Hyperlab's innovative interactive tools are made possible through advances in digital humanities research and presentation techniques that are expanding our understanding of how we can experience historical material.

## **1.2 Art and design in a digital world**

Many forms of art and culture are, at their heart, engagements with audiences in shared physical space. Consider, for instance, art in city streets, showings in galleries and museums, performances in comedy clubs and concert halls, and traditional Indigenous forms of cultural expressions such as beading, drum making, jingle dancing and throat singing. The power and enjoyment of these cultural forms is inextricably linked to human connection and engagement in lived social contexts.

While the importance of these in-person cultural forms will endure, digital cultural possibilities are creating new challenges and opportunities, particularly through the development of design talent and ensuring the existence of leading-edge digital cultural infrastructure to all parts of the country.

### **The importance of developing design talent**

Design describes a range of practices that often act as a commercialization link between the fine arts and the marketplace. Internationally, there is a growing trend toward connecting art and design with science and engineering to better enable scientific and technical advances to affect quality of life.<sup>1</sup> This process is vital to achieving a thriving digital economy, and it cannot be done without a flexible and steady pool of highly qualified creative talent, including new media artistry, digital mastery and innovative design.

The development of this talent will be crucial to Canada's success in a digitally oriented economy, especially considering the complex and rapidly changing nature of

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<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, "The Fusion Effect: The economic returns to combining arts and science skills" (2016) produced by NESTA, the UK's leading innovation think tank. <http://www.nesta.org.uk/publications/fusion-effect-economic-returns-combining-arts-and-science-skills#sthash.6c63eeXH.dpuf>

digital cultural spaces. Digital platforms, once considered merely new venues through which to deliver traditional cultural products, have become the studios, labs and workshops in which new forms of cultural expression are being created.

Because of the digital realm, traditional boundaries are fading. The borders separating the commercial and the non-commercial, the professional and the amateur, and works of heritage and works of industry are becoming less and less relevant. Importantly, even the distinction between digital and analog is not clear-cut. Many of the exciting cultural developments are occurring at the crossroads of digital and analog. For example, at the OCAD University roundtable, speakers discussed how faculty are supporting students who are developing virtual reality 3-D video games presenting archival historic work, or digital animations of hand-drawn sketches.

Similarly, many traditional forms of cultural expression, (from ballet to bead work), are evolving through critical exploration and application of digital technologies, supported by post-secondary research. Digitally generated special effects and sets are now part of many performances, for instance, from concerts to operas. In order to keep pace with the exciting digital and analog cultural innovations sparked by the rising importance of digital cultural spaces, Canada will need to support the development of exceptional design talent, with the tools and infrastructure required to make the most of new cultural opportunities.

### 1.3 Academic publishing of books and journals

It is important to underscore the importance of academic books and publishing in the Canadian cultural scene, crucially in both English and French. Canada's academic publishers play a critical role in helping disseminate knowledge from Canadian researchers—often on issues relating to Canada—through print and digital books and journals. Also important are scholarly editions of prior cultural works, which make historically and culturally significant materials from archives newly available to students and the general public through bookstores or online means.

Through its Aid to Scholarly Publications Program, which supports the publication and translation of Canadian scholarly research, and the Canada Prizes, which recognize excellence in these publications, the Federation has a key vantage point to appreciate the contributions of the academic book market as an important cultural sector. HSS scholarship in particular is more heavily reliant on the book as a vehicle for research transmission, compared to the natural sciences (where researchers are more likely to publish exclusively in academic journals).

While scholars create the original content, it is academic publishers who bring Canada's research into the world through books and journals (printed and digital). Canada's publishers, editors and designers help creators produce the highest quality, peer-reviewed record of Canadian scholarship and to reach a broad audience. The costs associated with this work—particularly in an era of rapidly developing technological possibilities and audience expectations—are substantial.

Scholarly presses are increasingly looking to provide online book and journal access and are supporting the development of open-access publishing models. Athabasca University Press and Wilfrid Laurier University Press, for example, have been offering open-access books for some time. These developments are resulting in a rethinking of traditional publishing business models that have implications far beyond university libraries and book publishing—including how producers and publishers can thrive in an environment where users increasingly expect free content.

While HSS research is extremely valuable for Canadian culture and knowledge, there are natural constraints on the scale of viable commercial markets for these books. Non-profit academic publishing therefore needs sufficient public support to ensure there are publishing opportunities for Canadian talent, publishing outlets for Canadian knowledge and high-quality products for readers both in Canada and around the world.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

#### **Strengthen the ability of Canadian academic presses to support the discoverability of Canadian research through books and journals**

Considering the important contribution of Canadian scholarship to Canadian culture, the federal government should provide sustained funding for academic book and journal publishing, reflecting evolving real costs, including support for emerging open-access publishing models.

### **1.4 Research to inform cultural policy**

The current global cultural landscape presents important challenges to policy makers and to researchers. Cultural exchanges are increasingly being mediated through new technologies, whose implications are not yet fully understood. The commercial landscape for culture is heavily influenced by international corporate entities, such as Google, Facebook or Netflix, which raises important questions about cultural diversity and inclusion.

This changing cultural and policy landscape dramatically affects academic researchers, requiring their engagement in policy discussions. At the same time, the work of Canada's HSS scholars is a crucial resource for helping all stakeholders understand the changing nature of cultural sectors and to inform public policy relating to culture. HSS scholars expand our understanding of major cultural developments, the implications of new technologies and the nature of cultural engagement of diverse population groups. A current example is the research providing evidence on the power of art-based programs to support healing for survivors of Canada's residential schools.<sup>2</sup>

The evidence generated through research should play a meaningful role in informing public-policy decisions. As the Federation has recommended in past submissions to government, the new Chief Science Officer should play a role in ensuring that such evidence from research—including on cultural matters—plays a meaningful role in the public-policy process.<sup>3</sup>

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Engage the HSS community to inform culture policy**

The higher education sector plays a vital and far-reaching role in the production, preservation and circulation of valuable cultural works, and the research of HSS scholars generates insights to inform cultural policy. It is crucial that this sector be part of national discussions on cultural policy, infrastructure and public support for the arts. The federal government should establish mechanisms to facilitate the insights and evidence flowing from HSS research to inform federal policy-making relating to Canadian culture and heritage. The new Chief Science Officer could play a leading role in establishing such mechanisms.

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<sup>2</sup> See, for instance: Archibald, Linda and Jonathan Dewar. "Creative Arts, Culture, and Healing: Building an Evidence Base," *Pimatisiwin: A Journal of Indigenous and Aboriginal Community Health* 8:3 (Jan. 2011). And Royal Winnipeg Ballet <https://nac-cna.ca/en/event/11175>

<sup>3</sup> "Grasping the complexity of things: Building a federal research system to serve all Canadians" (2016), Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences submission to the Fundamental Science Review. [http://www.ideas-idees.ca/sites/default/files/sites/default/uploads/policy/2016/federation\\_fundamental\\_science\\_review\\_submission\\_-\\_oct\\_3\\_2016\\_-\\_final\\_-\\_en\\_0.pdf](http://www.ideas-idees.ca/sites/default/files/sites/default/uploads/policy/2016/federation_fundamental_science_review_submission_-_oct_3_2016_-_final_-_en_0.pdf)  
"Creating a Chief Research and Knowledge Advisor for Canada," (2016) A brief submitted by the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences pursuant to the Government's commitment to create a Chief Science Officer. <http://www.ideas-idees.ca/sites/default/files/fhss-submission-chief-science-officer-march-1-final.pdf>

## 1.5 Supporting the HSS community's capacity to contribute to Canadian culture

As this section has described, the HSS community makes important contributions to the vibrancy, competitiveness and inclusiveness of Canada's cultural ecosystem by teaching creative talent, performing research on culture-relevant topics, by producing cultural products (including, but not limited to, scholarly literature) and by providing evidence from research to support the development of cultural policy. However, the balance of Canada's overall federal research portfolio leaves significant untapped capacity for HSS research and teaching to leverage greater contributions to Canadian cultural dynamism

Through Canada's Fundamental Science Review, the Federation is recommending that the federal government increase funding for HSS research from 15 percent of the total research portfolio to a minimum of 20 percent, to address the long-standing imbalance of funding in Canada's research system, as well as create a new fund to support forms of innovative multidisciplinary research that can fall between the mandates of the granting councils, and are critical for the new realities of the creative economy. The Federation has also called for longer-term, more predictable support for research infrastructure, including for the digital research infrastructure needed to enable high-potential emerging research possibilities.<sup>4</sup>

## 2. Reflecting Canadian identities and promoting sound democracy

The government has outlined in the consultation discussion paper that Canadian communities and individuals have diverse, multi-faceted and at times overlapping identities. This reality has important implications for Canada's cultural development and federal cultural policy.

In many ways, Canada faces these challenges from a position of strength. A 2015 study conducted by the Martin Prosperity Institute ranked Canada fourth in the Global Creativity Index. Our world-class standing was attributed to our No. 1 ranking in the

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<sup>4</sup> For details, see our submission for the Fundamental Review of Science (<http://www.ideas-idees.ca/issues/rd-funding>) and the Innovation Agenda (<http://www.ideas-idees.ca/issues/research>).

study's "Tolerance" category.<sup>5</sup> Maintaining—and indeed enhancing—such admirable national attributes will be an ongoing challenge in an increasingly digital age where, for instance, users of cultural products are increasingly able to isolate themselves from differing viewpoints.

This section considers how Canadian culture and Canadian cultural policy can most effectively promote rich democratic participation and expression of identity in a diverse country, as supported by the humanities, social sciences, fine arts and design.

## 2.1 Diversity and inclusion in Canadian culture

Canada's diversity is one of its key strengths. Cultural policy, and approaches to understanding "Canadian content" must therefore recognize the multiple allegiances of people living in Canada that arise out of their many historic, diasporic and other linkages in a hyper-connected digital world.

The importance of nurturing bilingualism in Canada's official languages, English and French, remains fundamental. Cultural policy must continue to reflect and support the specific realities and unique character of Québec culture, as well as reflect and support the vitality of francophone cultures across other provinces.

A new cultural policy framework must also include Indigenous and immigrant languages and cultures, alongside English and French. Support for diverse languages, cultural traditions and forms of expressions will be needed across Canada's regional and cultural landscape to strengthen the diversity and inclusiveness of Canadian society.

The government of Canada has a specific responsibility to help restore and support Indigenous languages and cultures as an urgent priority, due to its legal relationship with Indigenous peoples and its direct role in the historic diminishment of Indigenous cultures and languages. The higher education sector—and particularly the HSS community—has an important role to play in supporting these efforts, which is discussed further below.

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<sup>5</sup> For further commentary on Canada's ranking, see Daniel Tencer, "World's Most Creative Countries: Canada Ranks Near the Top, For An Unexpected Reason" (2015), [http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2015/10/24/most-creative-countries\\_n\\_8372484.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2015/10/24/most-creative-countries_n_8372484.html).

## 2.2 Ensuring access to cultural content

In order to ensure that all Canada's diverse communities have equitable opportunities to participate in democratic discourse, to define their own identities and to contribute to the creation of an inclusive, multicultural society, they need access to cultural content.

The government's consultation paper asserts that "Digital content is easily accessed and can be consumed everywhere." This is not, however, the experience for many Canadians or recent arrivals. Recent studies point to the high costs of Canadian cellular and Internet services, relative to those of other countries—resulting in particular hardship for low-income Canadians.<sup>6</sup>

Rural and northern communities face problems as well with online infrastructure. The bandwidth is so weak in some regions that inhabitants often struggle to send emails, relying instead on such intermediaries such as Facebook. This inhibits online and distance learning as well as the capacity to develop local cultural content. In addition to the needs for communication infrastructure, full participation in cultural life in Canada also requires human capital. Digital literacy is becoming an increasingly important requirement for cultural participation and content creation, and enhancing these skills in communities across the country remains an important priority. In order to make full use of Canadian digital content, users will also need the tools and skills to discover and share it.

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<sup>6</sup> "Internet, phone bills in Canada too high, says consumer study," CBC News online (March 23, 2015), <http://www.cbc.ca/news/business/internet-phone-bills-in-canada-too-high-says-consumer-study-1.3005282>

### Tradition in a digital world:

Jason Edward Lewis is a Professor of Design and Computation Arts as well as a digital media artist, poet and software designer. He founded the Obx Laboratory for Experimental Media, which works to assist Aboriginal communities preserve, interpret and communicate cultural histories; devise new means of creating and reading digital texts; and develop creative uses of mobile technology. He is the Director of the Initiative for Indigenous Futures, a seven-year SSHRC-funded partnership focused on how Indigenous communities imagine themselves seven generations hence. Lewis co-founded the Aboriginal Territories in Cyberspace research network that is investigating how Aboriginal people can participate in the shaping of our digital media future. He also co-directs workshops combining traditional stories and game design at the Kahnawake First Nations high school.

Canada's major institutions, as recognized in the government's consultation document, are a key source of culture and creativity for Canadians. They are also essential elements of a truly inclusive culture system. Organizations such as the CBC/Radio-Canada and the National Film Board play important roles in telling the stories of Canada's diverse peoples and making those stories available in Canada's many regions. However, success cannot be guaranteed through these major initiatives alone. Canadians rely on a vast network of cultural institutions—many regionally focused, and including universities' resources—such as libraries, museums, archives and galleries. The efforts of all these institutions, both in physical and digital spaces, is critical to ensuring region- and community-relevant cultural inclusion across the country.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**Ensure communities across Canada have the opportunity to access and participate in culture by expanding broadband and supporting key cultural institutions**

The federal government should ensure that all Canadian communities can access cultural goods and participate in cultural exchanges. This will require enhanced investments in digital infrastructure to expand affordable broadband Internet access to underserved communities. Long-term investments in Canada's national and regional cultural institutions are also needed to enhance their capacity to serve communities across the country, support their cultural expression and preserve their cultural knowledge. This includes support for institutions such as the National Film Board, CBC/Radio-Canada, Library and Archives Canada, universities and colleges across the country, and Canada's many smaller, regional institutions, including libraries and galleries.

### **2.3 The role of HSS research to support access and inclusion**

Canada's HSS community plays an important role in supporting the cultural expression of Canada's diverse communities and fostering democratic participation. Through their scholarship—which includes teaching students, producing new knowledge and creating cultural products—Canada's humanities and social sciences scholars provide Canadians with tools and supports to more fully articulate diverse regionally specific perspectives, voices and identities, and to invite citizens to engage in social change through art.

Knowledge and education allow cultural differences to flourish, and are integral to the creative process. Experience in the classroom is one of the primary opportunities Canadians have to interact with people from different backgrounds and diverse perspectives. Teaching and scholarly research play an important role in exploring,

introducing and amplifying the stories and perspectives of different population groups, enhancing our shared understanding of each other.

Importantly, universities and HSS researchers have special roles to play to amplify Indigenous voices, perspectives and participation in cultural production as part of action to achieve reconciliation. Universities are uniquely placed to contribute to the urgent task of restoring and preserving Indigenous languages—a task in which language scholars in the HSS community play an important role. Contributions from the HSS community more broadly will be required to meet other objectives associated with reconciliation, including welcoming and utilizing Indigenous knowledge, promoting public awareness of Canada’s Indigenous past and present, helping Indigenous students succeed at the post-secondary level and supporting the development of Indigenous thought leaders—including as creators of cultural content.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**Support greater participation of First Nations, Inuit and Métis in cultural expression, engagement and education in Canada by enhancing access and success in post-secondary education and by supporting language revitalization programs**

The federal government should make significant investments to increase both the number of Indigenous post-secondary graduates and the number of Indigenous scholars in universities and colleges across Canada. This will require:

- Increased support for Indigenous research and researchers, including in cultural fields.
- Increased financial and programmatic support for Indigenous graduate students and post-doctoral researchers, including capacity-building supports to enhance long-term retention and success of Indigenous scholars.
- Significant federal investments and programmatic supports through the research granting councils and cultural institutions to address national obligations to ensure revitalization and long-term survival of Indigenous languages and cultures.

## 3. Catalyzing economic social innovation

As the government's consultation paper identifies, cultural sectors are at the heart of today's knowledge-intensive creative economy. In Canada, cultural sectors make a significant contribution to Canadian prosperity. In 2010, the sector represented about three percent of Canadian GDP and accounted for more than 640,000 jobs.

More broadly, as Canada seeks to adapt and innovate in an evolving and increasingly service-dominated global economy, there is increasing evidence that skills and competencies in creativity, design, communication and problem-solving are needed alongside literacy, numeracy and other foundational skills, across the economy.<sup>7</sup> The World Economic Forum's 2016 *Future of Jobs* report lists creativity as the third most needed skill for workers to thrive in the economy of 2020.<sup>8</sup>

The following section discusses some key ways the HSS community can contribute to innovation and catalyzing the creative economy.

### 3.1 Building capacity for creativity across society

Canadian universities have key roles to play in equipping the next generation with a broad range of creative skill sets, positioning their graduates to contribute to innovation in sectors across the economy and society. The humanities and social sciences, where more than half of post-secondary students are enrolled, are vital for this effort. HSS training helps graduates bring creativity and imagination to bear on complex problems and pressing social issues, as well as honing their capacities for critical thinking (the ability to perform flexible, context-rich analysis), collaboration, historical perspective and understanding of diverse languages and cultures.

HSS faculty at universities across Canada are at the forefront of developing innovative teaching and learning methods, using new digital technologies to engage arts students in learning including exploration of new approaches to creation of cultural content.

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<sup>7</sup> The demand from employers for this breadth of skills is described in reports such as: the Business Council of Canada's "Developing Canada's Future Workforce," (2016), <http://thebusinesscouncil.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Developing-Canadas-Workforce-March.pdf> and the OECD's "Skills for Innovation and Research," (2011), <https://www.oecd.org/innovation/inno/47164461.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/01/the-10-skills-you-need-to-thrive-in-the-fourth-industrial-revolution/>

But we can do more to ensure that all Canadian post-secondary students gain the type of learning experiences needed to develop skills for a rapidly changing knowledge-intensive and creative economy by boosting access to experiential learning. High quality work-integrated learning experiences—including co-ops, paid internships, and practica with private, governmental and non-governmental employers—will help graduates in all disciplines to develop skills for innovation.

Mitacs internship programs such as Globalink have been helpful for digital artists, allowing them to construct teams of students and industry partners to exchange and develop multidisciplinary projects that link the arts with computer science and other disciplines. Continued support that enables wider placements with institutions across the cultural sector (including through collaboration with the Canada Council) could have great promise.

### 3.2 Supporting the cross-sectoral networks that enable innovation

New forms of networks are required to allow researchers from all disciplines, governments, the private sector and civil-society groups to achieve the kind of cross-boundary innovation and collaboration we need to ensure dynamism in our cultural sectors.

Fortunately, such platforms are already developing on campuses across the country and HSS researchers are deeply engaged with a wide range of partners. Take, for example, OCAD University's Imagination Catalyst, an entrepreneurship and commercialization hub that brings together students, faculty and alumni as well as creative entrepreneurs from across the Greater Toronto area to "create, build, design, tinker, modify, hack, invent or simply make innovative objects which address a market need or opportunity." Or District 3 at Montréal's

#### HSS skills at work in the gaming industry:

Canada's BioWare demonstrates the value of skills derived from the humanities and social sciences to innovation. Focusing on "rich stories, unforgettable characters and vast worlds," BioWare's computer games number among the most successful in the world. With titles like *Star Wars*, *Dragon Age* and *Mass Effect*, this game developer headquartered in Edmonton, Alberta, draws on a range of diverse talent including literature, history, computer science and fine arts graduates to develop the imaginative worlds and characters that spur sales of their games. The company's creative gaming concepts have drawn on academic knowledge from HSS about LGBTQ+ issues to create the first transgender characters and honest portrayals of gay and lesbian relationship choices in video games.

Concordia University, an innovation and entrepreneurship zone at the heart of Concordia, which calls itself a “blossoming ecosystem of individuals, ideas, ambitions and dreams.” Similarly, Ryerson University’s Digital Media Zone (DMZ) is a highly regarded platform and incubator centered on the University’s approach to zone learning. The DMZ now brings together entrepreneurs, students, artists and other innovators into areas such as fashion, urban energy, legal innovation and social ventures.

While such platforms are generating promising results, there remains significant unmet need for cross-sector and multidisciplinary collaboration. These platforms require increased support if they are to successfully scale up of local innovations and artistic achievements to address commercial and social needs.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**Encourage creativity, knowledge-sharing and innovation in cultural sectors by supporting networks that connect cultural thinkers in academic and non-academic sectors. This should include support for work-integrated learning, artist-in-residence programs and dedicated cross-sector programs.**

To build the skills graduates need to thrive in the creative economy, the government of Canada should: Expand its support for work-integrated learning experiences to all of Canada’s students by:

- Expanding the Post-Secondary Industry Partnership and Cooperative Placement Initiative to include students in all disciplines, including arts and design.
- Exploring, in collaboration with Mitacs and the Canada Council for the Arts, means to expand opportunities for paid internships for students in creative disciplines with partners in cultural sectors, industry or government.
- Strengthening funding for artist-in-residence programs to support valuable opportunities for cultural players to work across sectors and across disciplines.

Additionally, the Federation recommends significant federal support to encourage the creation and expansion of diverse collaborative platforms that connect post-secondary researchers engaged in cultural scholarship in different disciplines with leaders in government, the private sector and civil society. Such collaborations will leverage Canada’s strengths as a diverse, bilingual, multicultural, inclusive and prosperous democracy.

## Conclusion

The government of Canada's Cultural Policy Review has recognized the importance of "promoting creative environments and talent" given our changing economy and interconnected societies. Creative works are not only objects of consumption, but part of the exercise of our humanity. An economy that rewards creativity as a skill, one that allows creative talent to be a defining feature of people's occupations, must nurture the creative process, which depends upon a myriad of artists, researchers, universities and cultural institutions whose work is the foundation of a strong creative economy.

Generating influential content is a complex, social activity. HSS researchers both help us to better appreciate this activity and are leading participants in helping build it.

## Appendix 1

The Federation would like to thank the following individuals for contributing their time and expertise to shape the ideas in this submission, while noting the recommendations are those of the Federation.

- **Anne-Marie Fortier**, Professor of Literature, Université Laval
- **Catherine Middleton**, Professor of Information Technology, Ryerson University
- **Lisa Philipps**, Professor of Law, York University
- **Deanna Reder**, Associate Professor in Departments of First Nations Studies and English, Simon Fraser University
- **Ira Wagman**, Associate Professor of Communication Studies, Carleton University
- **Anne Whitelaw**, Associate Dean of Research (Fine Arts) and Associate Professor of Art History, Concordia University
- **Julia Wright**, Professor of English, Dalhousie University

The Federation also thanks OCAD University for convening a roundtable discussion on the cultural policy review on October 24, 2016, which has informed this submission. Participants included:

### Moderator:

- **Dr. Caroline Langill**, Dean, Liberal Arts and Sciences and the School of Interdisciplinary Studies (LASSIS)

### Speakers:

- **Dr. Camille Isaacs**, Faculty of LASSIS, Literature and Theory of the Diasporic, Black Atlantic and Postcolonial
- **Philippe Blanchard**, Associate Professor, Faculty of Art, Digital Painting and Expanded Animation
- **Dr. David McIntosh**, Faculty of LASSIS, Media Studies, Digital Theory and Production, Network Theory

### Participants:

- **Dr. Dot Tuer**, Faculty of LASSIS, Media Studies, Latin American Studies, Postcolonial Studies
- **Judith Doyle**, Associate Professor Faculty of Art, Film and Installation, Collaboration and Networks, Gesture and Motion Capture
- **Dr. Emma Westecott**, Faculty of LASSIS, Games, Games Design, Games Studies
- **Dr. Selmin Kara**, Faculty of LASSIS, Digital Cinema, Contemporary Documentary, Film and New Media Studies
- **Dr. Michelle Miller**, Faculty of LASSIS, Academic Writing - ELL, Comics and Graphic Texts, Creative Writing