ATLANTIC PRESENTERS ASSOCIATION
STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-2024
Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we live, work, meet and travel on the traditional territories of Indigenous peoples that have cared for this land now called Canada since time immemorial.

The Atlantic Canadian provinces are on the ancestral, unceded and unsurrendered territories of several Indigenous peoples:

In Newfoundland we acknowledge that we live and work on the ancestral territories of the Mi’kmaq and Beothuk. We recognize the Inuit of Nunatsiavut and NunatuKavut and the Innu of Nitassinan, and their ancestors, as the original people of Labrador.

On Prince Edward Island, we acknowledge that we live and work on the traditional and unceded territory of the Abegweit Mi’kmaq First Nation.

New Brunswick and Nova Scotia is territory that is covered by the “Treaties of Peace and Friendship” which Mi’kmaq Welastəkwiyik (Maliseet), and Passamaquoddy Peoples first signed with the British Crown in 1726 and transferred to its successor nation, Canada. The treaties did not surrender any lands or resources but instead recognized Mi’kmaq and Welastəkwiyik (Maliseet) title and established the rules for what was to be an ongoing relationship between nations.
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Context and Situation

The review of the results of Atlantic Presenters Association’s (APA) last Strategic Plan 2013-2016 which was extended by two years to 2018, yielded very positive results.

APA is widely recognized among members and funding agencies as a strong arts service organization that is well-run, effective, relevant and growing. APA has built partnerships with regional presenting networks across Canada, continues to deliver a high calibre Contact East showcase and conference, as well as online training opportunities in partnership with Ontario Presents. APA is seen as learning how to effectively engage with and serve its new festival membership and the 2019 ShiftChange and Box Office summit was very well received.

APA compares well to their regional presenting network peers across Canada, both in terms of membership and budget. Stand out accomplishments include a highly successful Canada150 project that delivered 19 tours in Atlantic Canada in celebration of Canada’s 150th anniversary of its modern founding. Having been the driving force behind the technical development of I Want to Showcase, an online platform used by Canadian presenting networks and several US based networks to receive showcase applications, APA is poised to expand its national leadership in the digital world with two projects supported by the Digital Strategy Fund at Canada Council for the Arts:

1. Lead applicant for a Digital Literacy project with partners nationally, Making Tomorrow Better: Taking Digital Action in the Performing Arts
2. Partner for CAPACOA’s Linked Digital Future meta data strategy and transformation project

The last Strategic Plan centred on three specific areas of focus:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Member Engagement</td>
<td>Strengthening the relationship with the existing membership of the APA</td>
<td>Recent APA Road trips have been very useful. High level of responsiveness from staff.</td>
<td>strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expansion of membership to include festivals in Atlantic Canada</td>
<td>Very successful having increased from about 6 to 43.</td>
<td>strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recognition of the diversity of the APA membership (restructure membership) and streams of specific programming for festivals, theatre and small venues</td>
<td>Done. Effective programming for festivals has been emerging with ShiftChange and the member-requested box office) Cultural diversity deserves increased attention as the population diversifies.</td>
<td>strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Cooperation and Connectivity</td>
<td>Improved connectivity and cooperation between provincial governments and the APA</td>
<td>Good reputation among core funders; need better strategic story telling of APA impact and successes; members see room for improvement; poised to seize opportunities to develop industry positions (e.g. upcoming Events strategy in Nova Scotia)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Improved connectivity to presenting arts organizations in Newfoundland and Labrador (NL office)

**Evaluation:** No office was opened. NL funder says it would make no difference to funding; Arts and Cultural Centres are unique as provincial entity. It changes how APA can make a difference in NL as ACC’s role covers part of the networking and touring across NL aspects; Labrador organizations may benefit more from being connected to APA; travel distances, money and time are ongoing challenges.

Since 2014, APA has visited NL every year and continues to produce Contact East in St. John’s as part of the regular 4-year rotation between provinces.

### Complete a comprehensive audit of all programs and services

**Evaluation:** Current services are relevant; a few suggestions from members for new ways to support them more were brought forward, e.g. mentorship program, Presenting Handbook.

### Refine the Block Booking process

**Evaluation:** Canada150 program learnings will be reviewed to improve regular block booking.

### Build on the success of the Professional Development programming, make PD archive available, use digital learning methods

**Evaluation:** PD offers are strong, and Ontario Presents partnership has been useful re: webinar series; digital methods are not leveraged fully and archive is not available at APA.

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**Other areas that received strong feedback included:**

**Marketing and Communications:**

- APA needs to consider its marketing role in block booked tours, and whether to provide turn-key services for block booking partners
- APA needs to urgently build a contemporary, mobile optimized web presence

**Programming:**

- Consider a mentorship program for those entering the presenting field
- Create a Presenter’s Handbook (See OSAC example)
- Staff expertise is extensive and should be shared pro-actively not just in reaction
- Consider making email listserv more user friendly, i.e. allow members to post directly
- Formalize an Export Development Program, leveraging new Canadian Heritage funding

**Advocacy:**

- Build capacity to convene the sector and build advocacy positions relative to community consultation processes as well as proactively advocating with provincial governments on key issues of cultural policy and funding priorities.
Strategic Planning Framework

In every organization, no matter its size or industry, the following eight strategic levers combine in the formulation and implementation of contemporary strategic plans. To explore strategic options, it is important to understand which strategic lever is the dominant alpha strategy, which ones take a key influencer role and which ones are enabling strategies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business Definition</td>
<td>Focus on mandate, positioning the organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>Focus on operations, programming and services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Focus on people, allocation and management of authority and responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>Focus on sourcing, allocation and management of capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>Focus on identifying and reaching audiences; stakeholder communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
<td>Focus on creation and use of facilities, intellectual capital/ technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk</td>
<td>Focus on the unacceptable and mitigate it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
<td>Focus on type and rate of growth, e.g. organic vs mergers and acquisitions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In general an organization arranges the eight strategies to suite its aspirations in the long term: with a single alpha strategy that revolves around the business the organization is in, two to three influencer strategies and four to five enabling strategies. Each strategy is critically important to the overall success of the organization and its strategic plan.

Arts service organizations are first and foremost service-driven, so that is their alpha strategy: everything is geared toward creating and delivering services. How the remaining levers are organized can vary from one organization to another and depends on the strategic issues it is facing given its stage of maturity as an organization, its external environment, internal culture and capacity.

This is one way to articulate a strategic plan for an organizations. Within it key strategic actions are outlined and success measures defined to ensure multi-year implementation remains focussed on the strategic targets.
Strategic Plan 2019-2024

Strategic Orientation

This graphic represents APA’s strategic orientation that underlies this strategic plan. It uses the concepts advanced by Alan W. Kennedy and Thomas Kennedy in *The Alpha Strategies: Understanding Strategy, Risk and Values in Any Organization* (© 2013).

Alpha Strategy

- Programs and Services are APA’s alpha strategy, its raison d’être, as is the case for all arts service organizations. All other strategies are purposefully arranged, as key influencers (two) and enablers (five). All have to work in concert and are important to APA’s success and long-term viability.

Key Influencers

- Organizational management is one of two influencer strategies. APA’s staff complement has not changed in many years. With the tremendous success in growing its membership, the ongoing demand to develop relevant programming options for all members (from venue presenters to festivals), demand for new services and improving ways of delivering programs including taking a significant advocacy role vis-à-vis Atlantic provincial governments, APA must increase its human resources to maintain this greatly increased level of activity.
- Digital Infrastructure is the second influencer strategy, in two senses: how to use digital technologies to improve its own programs and service delivery; and spearheading leading projects in digital literacy and meta-date strategies that can transform how the sector operates.

**Enablers**

- Communication and marketing is one of five enabling strategies in delivering on APA’s mandate. APA’s primary audiences are its current and prospective members. Effective communications are important to ensure recruitment and retention of members and ongoing member engagement. Another important audience are funders and potential funders.
- Financial management, the sourcing and allocation of financial resources, follows the needs of the organization to resource its service delivery effectively and to spearhead major digital endeavours.
- Growth, while a key focus in the last plan, is giving way to primarily sustaining the organization for the next phase before considering a new growth phase.
- Risk management is always present and in this plan relates strongly to organizational management as understaffing and the health and well-being of staff are a concern. Naturally, risk management is also related to the new demands created by further growth and financial liabilities that are introduced as a result of new digital projects.
- Finally, business definition, i.e. mandate, mission, vision and values, serves as a touch point in ongoing decision-making about services, that is, it focusses the alpha strategy and gives specificity to its aspirations and execution.

The eight strategic areas will support these four key themes for this 5-year Strategic Plan:
Strategic Action Plan

Business Definition

MANDATE (Who we are)
The Atlantic Presenters Association (APA) is the regional arts service organization for arts presenters in the four Atlantic Provinces: Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. We are the marketplace for performing artists and presenters to meet and do business and we provide vital services and programs to support the work of our members in their local communities.

MISSION (What we are here to do, our purpose)
- To facilitate the presentation of professional, quality live performances by our members.
- To encourage the presentation of and engagement with diverse art forms among members.
- To increase access to professional work by equity-seeking groups (women, visible minorities, Indigenous peoples, people with physical disabilities or mental health challenges.)
- To provide spaces for a vital exchange of best practices and ideas.

VISION (What we aspire to)
Together, we are at the vanguard of enriching the lives of Atlantic Canadians and building vibrant, inclusive communities through shared live performance experiences.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES (What we believe)
- Working together in a supportive, collegial, generous way strengthens everyone.
- A safe, supportive, enriching, collaborative environment allows for rich personal and professional development.
- Every community in Atlantic Canada deserves a rich cultural life.
- Communities deserve to have access to their own local curatorial voice.
- Peer exchanges on our business practices validate and elevate our shared professionalism as presenters and APA validates our profession to the broader performing arts eco-system.

MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA
The following updated and simplified criteria for membership are proposed for adoption:
- They select the artistic programming for public presentation in their local communities guided by an artistic vision.
- They hire and pay appropriate fees to professional artists.
- They organize or provide the venue and supply the technical and promotional support.
- They know their audiences and are familiar with the professional arts community.
- Members may present their artistic programming in a season or a festival format.
- They are not-for-profit organizations.

Additionally, members may undertake activities outside of presenting, such as supporting artistic creation or production, outreach, rentals, managing or curating an on-site gallery, operating a bar or generating revenue from merchandise. Members do not need to be primarily presenters as long as they meet the above criteria and wish to become active members of the APA’s network.
Organizational Management: Building Capacity

Critically important is the recognition that current services and programs are somewhat understaffed. As such, not only new programs but existing ones require additional resources either on contract or on a permanent basis to run effectively and efficiently without compromising staff health and well-being.

To help accomplish this, the following division of responsibilities clarifies the role of board of directors and staff.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Board of Directors</th>
<th>Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ Maintain a healthy culture</td>
<td>▪ Implement strategic plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Stewards of organization</td>
<td>▪ Annual performance planning and evaluation, Executive Director supervises all staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Set clear expectations and measure results; support and provide guidance when needed</td>
<td>▪ Collect and report on key performance indicators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Performance planning and evaluation with the Executive Director</td>
<td>▪ Review and refine programming and services annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Governance structures and mechanism</td>
<td>▪ Day-to-day operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Lead on advocacy</td>
<td>▪ ED supports advocacy efforts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

APA’s Board of Directors recently completed its board manual and can now focus on other matters of effective governance:

▪ Establish a plan for diversifying the board demographically - look at membership make up, community make up and identify gaps.
▪ Consider the use of *ad hoc* board committees to streamline the work of the board and support the efforts of staff strategically. Committees to consider: policy review, membership, board nominations, digital technologies, and other *ad hoc* committees.
▪ Ensure APA’s suite of policies is current, complete and simple enough to implement
▪ Review and update bylaws, especially to ensure festival membership is equally considered.
▪ Develop an advocacy plan for board members to lead on with some staff support.

Staff Priorities

▪ Annual performance planning for all staff is essential to pro-actively manage workload issues
▪ Establish project plans to facilitate the ongoing management of programs and services that include work-back schedules for each program with key milestones, identify level of effort and specific staff responsible and contributing to different aspects.
  o Establish approval and accountability procedures for each project to facilitate decision-making
▪ Before launching a new program or service as a pilot, staff prepares a project management plan that identifies needed skills and expertise, staff resources and their specific roles and responsibilities, as well as success measures that allow for objective evaluation of the pilot.
▪ Conduct ongoing/annual evaluation of programs and services resulting in recommended actions / changes
▪ Learn to say “NO” and “Not now”
Membership and Mentorship
Ongoing membership development is an essential task for any member-based organization.

That means continuing to refine membership criteria with an eye to the evolution of the field that is seeing an increasing number of “non-traditional” entrants, including from culturally diverse backgrounds. It also means that programs and services have to be available to all presenting members regardless of format or venue. Valuable, relevant services are the calling card for any industry association.

Specific key performance indicators should be shared regularly with the Board and they can also feed in to the new APA annual report:
- Number of members
- Number and ratio of members retained from previous year
- Number of new members acquired
- Number of members that have attended specific events and activities, from Contact East, to block booking to webinar participation
- Satisfaction rating with APA overall and key services

Leverage Through Partnerships
APA has developed strong partnerships regionally and nationally. Partnerships have served to increase the capacity and capabilities of the participants, and avoid duplication of efforts.

Starting in the spring of 2019, APA will embark on two Digital projects in coordination with partners across Canada, which will serve to solidify its leadership position as well as achieve greater impact than it could on its own. Both projects will have their own project managers on a contract-basis in addition to APA’s current staff of three. That will relieve pressures on existing staff to deliver these new programs; additionally, they are a significant opportunity to deliver a series of professional development workshops centred on Digital Literacy in every Atlantic province as well as provide one-on-one coaching for Linked Data Future participants.

APA will continue to strengthen these key partnerships and evaluate their effectiveness on an annual basis. They may also feed into new kinds of professional development offers that may last beyond these initial two year projects.
**Effective Programs and Services**

APA will continue to deliver and refine its core services based on member / potential member feedback, and develop new programs to meet members’ need.

The following table outlines both existing and future programs that APA plans to institute as it builds up its capacity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Existing Program</th>
<th>Emerging or New Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contact East</strong></td>
<td>Refine continuously</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ShiftChange summits</strong></td>
<td>Refine continuously</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Block booking (traditional)</strong></td>
<td>Refine continuously</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A new joint booking mechanism for festival members</strong></td>
<td>Refine continuously</td>
<td>Create a suitable pilot program for a booking process for festivals;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Atlantic Moves program</strong></td>
<td>Continue the program with reduced public funding; refocus activities to provide best value possible</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>International cultural exchange/ Export &amp; Trade development</strong></td>
<td>Refine continuously</td>
<td>Expand on the ad hoc project and develop a consistent, fully government-funded program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional development (PD)</strong></td>
<td>Refine continuously both the online webinar series and in person workshops.</td>
<td>Experiment with mixed modes of live and digital workshops and presentations. Encourage attendance at PD or conferences where APA is a partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PD: Digital Literacy</strong></td>
<td>Spring 2019 to March 2021; Project manager and trainers contracted externally</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Linked Data Future initiative</strong></td>
<td>Spring 2019 to March 2021; CAPACOA as national lead provides financing to APA to hire a Linked Data Future coordinator in the Atlantic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mentorship program</strong></td>
<td>Develop a formal mentorship framework for those transitioning to a presenter role and create a mentoring network</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Digital Intelligence Library</strong></td>
<td>Develop a library with information and intelligence tailored to the Atlantic region</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>APA Annual Report</strong></td>
<td>Create an annual snap shot that reports on impact of APA’s activities, programs and services on its members and Atlantic Canadians. Disseminate to members, prospective members, funders, partners, media, politicians and the like</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact East</td>
<td>Refine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ShiftChange</td>
<td>Refine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block booking</td>
<td>Refine</td>
<td>Pilot the changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(traditional)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint booking</td>
<td>Design pilot</td>
<td>Run pilot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for festivals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlantic Moves</td>
<td>Refine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int’l Export &amp;</td>
<td>Design /solidify program</td>
<td>Annual trade missions, locations TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade Dev</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>Refine</td>
<td>See digital literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PD: Digital</td>
<td>Deliver workshops &amp; tools across Atlantic</td>
<td>NOTE: Both digital projects have their own project managers and financial resources in addition to APA’s regular operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linked Data Future</td>
<td>Digital coaching for project participants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentorship program</td>
<td></td>
<td>Design pilot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital</td>
<td>Integrate in new website</td>
<td>Update content - replace older content with new content, add new content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intelligence Library</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APA Annual</td>
<td>Write, design and publish</td>
<td>2020 report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>Identify opportunities; build plan</td>
<td>Implement; scan for issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Board-led)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Existing Program**

- Strengthen ad hoc advocacy efforts

**Emerging or New Program**

- Make pro-active advocacy to provincial and municipal governments a priority, including preparing budget submissions for provincial budgets and being the first-call for all matters related to live performing arts and policies that affect that sector.
To accomplish this workload APA will need to double its staff by 2021 and use some contractors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-2019</th>
<th>2019-20</th>
<th>2020-21</th>
<th>2021-22</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 exec dir</td>
<td>Add 1 full-time perm communications manager</td>
<td>Add 1 full-time perm program coordinator</td>
<td>Add 1 full-time perm program coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 director of programs</td>
<td>1 book keeper on contract</td>
<td>2 digital project managers on contract</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 program coordinator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 contract for digital application developer to redevelop and integrate I want to showcase, block booking and public posting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is also recommended that APA adopt a staff structure that gives staff members responsibility and accountability as the lead on specific programs and activities, rather than having all staff work on parts of all projects. The flagship Contact event will by its nature require engagement by all staff.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Key functions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Executive Director (exists) | Report to Board  
Supervise staff and manage performance plans; hire staff  
Funding proposals and reporting; key performance indicators  
Financial management  
Lead: Contact East; ShiftChange  
Oversight over all programs  
Back up to all staff |
| Director of Programs (exists) | Lead: Block booking; Festival joint booking  
Supports: Contact East, ShiftChange  
Back up to program coordinators |
| Program Coordinator 1 (exists) | Lead: Atlantic Moves, Professional development  
Supports: Contact East, ShiftChange  
Back up for Block booking; Festival joint booking |
| Communications Manager New: 2019-20 | Lead: Communications: website; digital intelligence library; Annual Report; Manage Digital Integration of Business Processes  
Supports: Professional development; Contact East; ShiftChange  
Back up for Block booking; Festival joint booking |
| Program Coordinator 2 New: 2020-21 | Lead: Export / Trade Development & Membership / outreach  
Supports: Professional development  
Back up for Block booking; Festival joint booking |
| Program Coordinator 3 New: 2021-22 | Lead: Mentorship program  
Supports: Export/Trade Development; Communications  
Back up for Professional Development; |
Leadership in the Digital World

There are three different levels at which Digital Infrastructure matters:

- Programs and services that empower members
- APA communications to members, stakeholders
- Re-development and integration of *I Want to Showcase* with downstream business applications

Digital Strategy Fund supported Projects

APA is the lead or partnering organization on two new programs that will run for two years from Spring 2019 to March 2021:

2. Digital Transformation Project - Linked Data Future, CAPACOA is the lead and APA a service agent for digital coaching

Making Tomorrow Better (lead)

This initiative brings practical digital know-how to participants so that they fully understand their digital footprint, and how various online platforms communicate with each other, and then use this knowledge to immediately improve their public-facing online footprint. Through a series of face-to-face workshops supported by video step-by-step tutorials, a new customized digital playbook and blog posts we enable them to take charge of their online footprint to advance their specific objectives. In so doing we help prepare them to become active partners in sectoral and national conversations about sustained digital innovation and new digital business models. Through this project, all four Atlantic provinces will have access to a series of 3 to 5 hands-on, practical workshops delivered as part of APA’s regular professional development as well as Contact East conference programming over two years.

Linked Data Futures Initiative

The first component is to research Linked Data Strategies, the second is to develop prototypes for new kinds of data applications. The third component of this project is a “coaching program that will provide direct, timely assistance to arts organizations as they seek to address business problems with digital solutions and as they develop new digital initiatives, with the intent of increasing collaboration and interoperability from the design phase. *This coaching program will be delivered in a decentralized fashion via regional partners.* Training sessions and materials will also be developed and delivered online and at performing arts conferences in order to help organizations address their own digital transformation and, and build readiness for new business models and collective strategies." (Source: CAPACOA website)

APA will seek synergies between these two initiatives including using its new digital intelligence repository to house information and tools, as well as leverage the digital literacy workshops to help prepare APA members to potentially consider participating in the coaching program.

APA Web Presence

Most urgently, APA requires an overhaul of its own website so that it becomes mobile enabled and features contemporary functionality. The new website should not use proprietary code, but rather be built using Open Source applications like WordPress or similar that have a rich developer network and up-to-date functionality and built in processes that support SEO as well as linked data strategies.
The new website will be built in 2019, and integrate all of APA’s web properties into a single interface that employs leading internet technologies to enhance discoverability and enable easier sharing of resources and tools for presenters.

### APA Web-based Business Applications

With emerging digital technologies and, in particular, the use of structured data as well as open linked data, the current stand-alone processes at the heart of APA’s market place function may be consolidated into a single seamless workflow. The current system is rife with duplication of basic data entry at each step and the legacy applications used do not communicate with one another.

APA will endeavour to undertake this work to integrate its backend digital business processes during the next two years while having the benefit of the two digital literacy and digital transformation coaching program.
Communications

APA needs to develop a cohesive approach to communications that proactively leverages its successes and is suited for member recruitment and retention as well as engaging funding organizations.

While APA requires a communications manager all of this work can be undertaken via contracts with qualified suppliers during the current fiscal year:

First half of 2019-20
- Update the APA branding graphics including the APA logo
- Develop a new, contemporary website built on an Open Source platform like WordPress
- Build up APA’s integrated web presence with social networks (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)
- First APA Annual Report showcasing its impact (numbers) and effectiveness (stories)

Second half of 2019-20
- Digital Intelligence Library on website
- Listerv functionality for member communications
- Manage ongoing communications
- Direct outreach to members to recruit for APA’s member activities

Financial Management

To increase capacity requires increased funding. APA will need to secure higher operational funding and continue to increase its project-based budgets.

An important source of project funding may come from The Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA). ACOA “works to create opportunities for economic growth in Atlantic Canada by helping businesses become more competitive, innovative and productive, by working with diverse communities to develop and diversify local economies, and by championing the strengths of Atlantic Canada.” ACOA has a wide range of support programs that may be pursued for funding for technological innovation, and business competitiveness as well as export market development.

Canada Council for the Arts, Canadian Heritage as well as provincial funders, should be kept informed of APA’s impact and be encouraged to enhance their operating and project funding.

While membership remains quite low, members do have to pay to participate in specific programs. The revenues raised off-set some of the costs of running these programs. Some discussion with members should be undertaken to determine what the feasibility is of increasing fees or charging for new services, without that becoming a barrier to participation.

Prudent financial management demands that budgeting is done in line with available public funding and reliable membership fees and revenue from programs. As such, staff hires can be phased in gradually if needed. That can mean working with time-limited contract staff or establishing part-time hours initially and moving to full time as the operational funding and program demands allow.
Growth and Risk

APA needs to ensure that it has the financial and human resources in place to serve its current membership effectively without burning staff out, which is the single greatest threat to the association at this time.

This plan, while it calls for the creation of new programs, over time, does so only in tandem with the necessary added human resources and the necessary financing whether it comes from a typical arts funding pool or from ACOA.

It is not anticipated that APA will pursue another major push to increase memberships until about 2021-2022, when it has its full staff complement in place.