

Surrey Arts Roundtable Summary

On Saturday, June 1st, 2019 the Arts Council of Surrey hosted a Roundtable discussion at the Newton Cultural Centre. Local artists and representatives of arts organizations were invited to talk about their needs, barriers to their success, and to share ideas on how to individually and collectively address these issues. Four central themes emerged from the group discussions:

Funding

Challenge	Participants see lack of funding as a primary barrier to their work Grants are an important source of revenue and a key source of anxiety. Organizations need ongoing, reliable core operating funding
Potential Actions for City and Community	Present workshops on accessing grant opportunities and tips for applying for provincial and federal grants
	Appoint a grant-writing resource person to coach local organizations on preparing applications
	Commit to paying artists, and to including industry-standard payment for artists in grant budgets. This promotes equity in the arts sector and allows organizations to apply for federal and provincial funding.

Space

Challenge	Space needs are a top priority Organizations need diverse spaces for both production and presentation
Potential Actions for City and Community	Establish new spaces, including studios, live-work facilities, office, meeting, storage, rehearsal, and production space. Performance and exhibition venues are also needed
	Activate existing underused spaces for arts users
	Encourage developers to invest in the arts or incorporate arts spaces in new developments
	Offer subsidized facility rental rates for local arts organizations

Organizational Capacity

Challenge	Organizational capacity gaps are common barriers to organizational growth Organizations need skilled artistic and administrative staff, but lack the resources to pay them
Potential Actions for City and Community	Offer training workshops for existing staff and volunteers in areas like technology (websites, social media, newsletters) and board management and development
	Plan events to connect organizations with skilled prospective board members
	Establish pathway to connect organizations with high school students who need volunteer experience

Connection

Challenge	Participants believe the Surrey arts sector can be strengthened by increased connection Resources are out there, but organizations need help connecting to them
Potential Actions for City and Community	Create a central online hub to connect artists, audiences, and opportunities
	Establish marketing resource-sharing and shortcuts for organizations to promote their events and connect with new audiences
	Plan regular events for artists and arts administrator to network and share skills and knowledge
	Educate the public on the benefits of the arts, and foster an environment where the arts are perceived as important