



FEDERATION  
*of* CANADIAN  
ARTISTS

# Strategic Plan

2021 – 2026

Gallery  
FEDERATION  
of CANADIAN  
ARTISTS

FEDERATION ART GALLERY www.artists.ca FEDERATION ART GALLERY www.artists.ca

# Table of Contents



<b>1</b>	<b>Steeped in History</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Substantial Presence</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Our Vision of the Future</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Our Commitments &amp; Strategies</b> .....	<b>14</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Service</li><li>▪ Growth</li><li>▪ People</li><li>▪ Sustainability</li><li>▪ Operational Excellence</li></ul>	
<b>5</b>	<b>Making it Count</b> .....	<b>20</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Acknowledgement</b> .....	<b>21</b>

# Preface



## About Us

The Federation of Canadian Artists (FCA) is a registered charity founded in 1941 by professional Canadian working artists including Group of Seven luminaries Lawren Harris, Arthur Lismer, and A.Y. Jackson. The first National Executive Council was led by André Biéler and Lawren Harris was the BC region's first Chairman. Other notable founding members included Emily Carr and the Honorable Mark Kearley.

**The FCA continues to operate as a non-profit with members throughout Canada and Chapters in BC, Alberta and Ontario.**

The FCA is dedicated to raising artistic standards by stimulating participants to greater heights of knowledge and achievement by offering a unique gallery that is primarily sponsored by artists.



**This Strategic Plan has been developed to communicate the FCA vision, intended direction and emphasis during the next five years.** As an organization, the FCA will use this document to guide decisions around policy, operations, and budget. Our goal is to establish a roadmap that ensures efficiencies and provide excellent service to our growing membership across Canada.

# Steeped in History



Painter and Fine Art professor André Biéler recognized a great need for Canada's artists to meet, commune and understand each other after teaching at the Banff Summer School and meeting Western artists for the first time.

In 1941 with assistance from the National Gallery of Canada Biéler organized the first Conference of Canadian Artists at Queens University in Kingston, Ontario. Delegates at this conference were challenged with examining the role of the artist in Canadian society and whether the creation of an organization would be a federation of Canadian art societies or a body of artists, independent but cooperative with any existing societies.

*They chose a federation which is a culmination of chapters across Canada*



Leaders of the Federation of Canadian Artists meeting in Toronto (May 1942)

"This is not just another art society, nor is it intended to replace any existing art society. It is an organization formed to unite all the artists in Canada, whether member of existing societies or not, in a federation which it is hoped will become a power in the country."

- Vancouver Art Gallery 1945 (Vancouver Province Newspaper)

"With a large unified membership, the Federation hoped to become the voice of the artist – strong enough to be heard from Nanaimo to Nova Scotia."

- André Biéler

# Substantial Presence



## *Joint message from our President and Executive Director*

With the pace of change ever increasing, developing a strategic plan that is both visionary and practical is essential. While recognizing how much we have achieved, we know there is much more to be done moving forward.

### **Over the past ten years, we have been proud to accomplish:**

- Increased membership 10% year over year
- Doubled the number of exhibitions
- Created a new sales portal, augmented sales staff and marketing efforts, tripling artwork sales
- Evolved our services by adding virtual learning sessions, online feedback and critiques
- Significantly increased partnerships and collaborations to extend the appreciation and communication of the visual arts and culture
- Established chapters in Alberta and Ontario
- Founded the Federation Studio and workshop/virtual recording space for physical and online events

There are further challenges ahead of us. With the number of artists in Canada growing at an unprecedented rate, the marketplace for art has expanded globally through digital platforms, in part through the challenges faced through the pandemic and the massive influx of digital content. Fresh approaches to art continue to inspire and challenge us to think differently, and act differently. We need to ensure we continue to meet the needs of our members and the community while staying true to our mission. It is our privilege to lead the charge and we are excited to take the Federation into the future in new and innovative ways. We pride ourselves on our ability to be nimble and responsive to our ever-changing environment.

**We believe in this strategic plan which puts us on the path to achieve great things.**

We welcome your comments at [strategy@artists.ca](mailto:strategy@artists.ca).



**Dene Croft** SFCA  
President



**Patrick E. Meyer**  
Executive Director

# Our Mission



Our mission is to advance the knowledge and appreciation of art and culture to all Canadians, offering education, exhibition and communication in the visual arts, and to support and promote emerging to professional member artists.

Our mission has withstood the test of time, and while new approaches, new methods and mediums and of course new artists have come along, the core of who we are and what we do at the Federation continues to be our north star. Our mission statement isn't just what we do, it defines our purpose and why we do what we do.

## *What we stand for and who we are:*



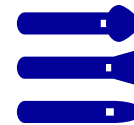
**We are a national association** of arts professionals in support of the Arts. Artists are at the center of everything we do.



**We are proud of the history of our organization**, current, past artists, and in particular, the connection to the Group of Seven artists as our visionaries.



**We uphold uncompromising standards.** Our high standards of artistic excellence are a cornerstone of the FCA, that set us apart from other arts organizations.



**We ensure courtesy**, professionalism and pathways to success in everything we do.



**We recognize that art is deeply personal** and appreciate the emotional implications of our decisions.



**We are responsive and flexible** in adapting to the needs of our members, and

**We educate and support artists** to do and be better.

# Our Vision of the Future



“The Federation hopes to bridge the isolation of artists in different parts of the country, discover talent and organize regional as well as country-wide activities and to publish an art magazine to serve the interests of art and artists in the country as a whole”

- Vancouver Art Gallery 1945 (Vancouver Province Newspaper)

The Federation continues to expand and grow its presence across Canada, bringing art and artists to communities through our local and regional chapters, a physical presence with our galleries, and an online presence through our website. We also recognize that the Federation’s vision has expanded and evolved along with the ever-changing environment in which we operate.

Our Vision sets the roadmap and the direction for the future as follows

To be **recognized** as the **Canadian hub for the visual arts** through continuous **support**, rigorous **promotion**, meaningful **connection** and a **devotion to excellence**.



# Our Vision of the Future

“The Federation hopes to bridge the isolation of artists in different parts of the country, discover talent and organize regional as well as country-wide activities and to publish an art magazine to serve the interests of art and artists in the country as a whole”  
 - Vancouver Art Gallery 1945 (Vancouver Province Newspaper)

The Federation continues to expand and grow its presence across Canada, bringing art and artists to communities through our local and regional chapters, a physical presence with our galleries, and an online presence through our website. We also recognize that the Federation’s vision has expanded and evolved along with the ever-changing environment in which we operate.

Our Vision sets the roadmap and the direction for the future as follows

To be **recognized** as the Canadian hub for the visual arts through continuous support, rigorous promotion, meaningful connection and a devotion to excellence.

- By government
- By patrons
- By galleries
- By media
- By artists





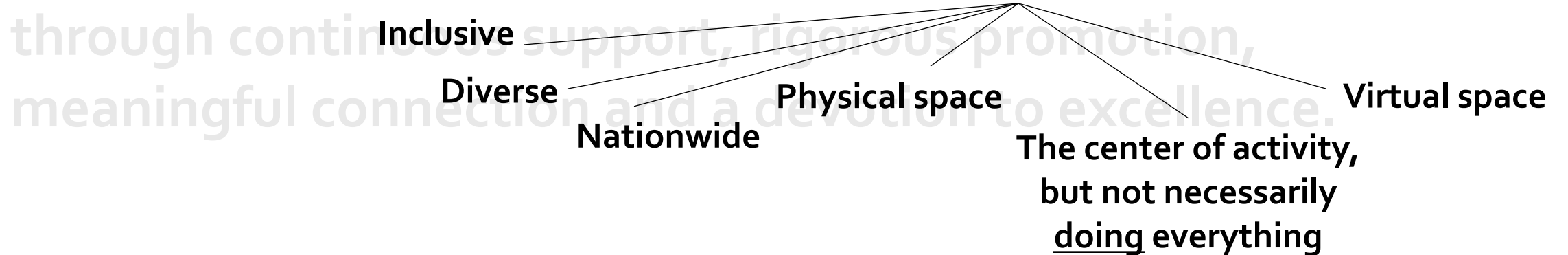
# Our Vision of the Future

“The Federation hopes to bridge the isolation of artists in different parts of the country, discover talent and organize regional as well as country-wide activities and to publish an art magazine to serve the interests of art and artists in the country as a whole”  
*- Vancouver Art Gallery 1945 (Vancouver Province Newspaper)*

The Federation continues to expand and grow its presence across Canada, bringing art and artists to communities through our local and regional chapters, a physical presence with our galleries, and an online presence through our website. We also recognize that the Federation’s vision has expanded and evolved along with the ever-changing environment in which we operate.

Our Vision sets the roadmap and the direction for the future as follows

To be recognized as the **Canadian hub for the visual arts**



# Our Vision of the Future



“The Federation hopes to bridge the isolation of artists in different parts of the country, discover talent and organize regional as well as country-wide activities and to publish an art magazine to serve the interests of art and artists in the country as a whole”  
*- Vancouver Art Gallery 1945 (Vancouver Province Newspaper)*

The Federation continues to expand and grow its presence across Canada, bringing art and artists to communities through our local and regional chapters, a physical presence with our galleries, and an online presence through our website. We also recognize that the Federation’s vision has expanded and evolved along with the ever-changing environment in which we operate.

Our Vision sets the roadmap and the direction for the future as follows

To be recognized as the Canadian hub for the visual arts through continuous **support**, rigorous promotion, meaningful connection and a devotion to excellence.

```

graph TD
    Support[support] --- Education[Education]
    Support --- Space[Space]
    Support --- Finance[Finance]
    Support --- Advocacy[Advocacy]
  
```

# Our Vision of the Future

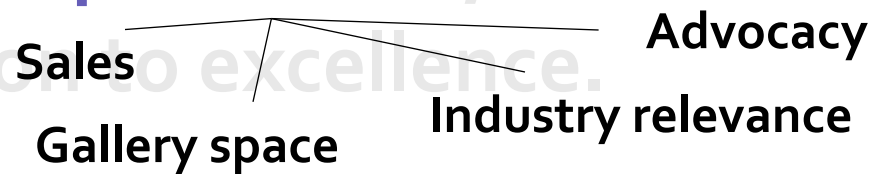


“The Federation hopes to bridge the isolation of artists in different parts of the country, discover talent and organize regional as well as country-wide activities and to publish an art magazine to serve the interests of art and artists in the country as a whole”  
*- Vancouver Art Gallery 1945 (Vancouver Province Newspaper)*

The Federation continues to expand and grow its presence across Canada, bringing art and artists to communities through our local and regional chapters, a physical presence with our galleries, and an online presence through our website. We also recognize that the Federation’s vision has expanded and evolved along with the ever-changing environment in which we operate.

Our Vision sets the roadmap and the direction for the future as follows

To be recognized as the Canadian hub for the visual arts through continuous support, rigorous **promotion**, meaningful connection and a devotion to excellence.



# Our Vision of the Future

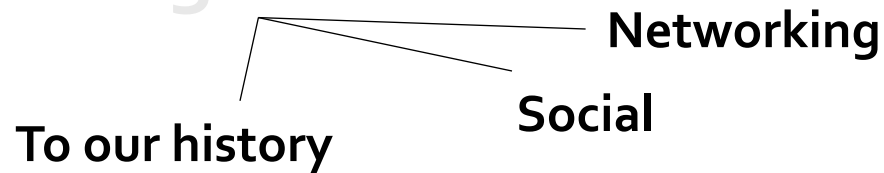


“The Federation hopes to bridge the isolation of artists in different parts of the country, discover talent and organize regional as well as country-wide activities and to publish an art magazine to serve the interests of art and artists in the country as a whole”  
*- Vancouver Art Gallery 1945 (Vancouver Province Newspaper)*

The Federation continues to expand and grow its presence across Canada, bringing art and artists to communities through our local and regional chapters, a physical presence with our galleries, and an online presence through our website. We also recognize that the Federation’s vision has expanded and evolved along with the ever-changing environment in which we operate.

Our Vision sets the roadmap and the direction for the future as follows

To be recognized as the Canadian hub for the visual arts through continuous support, rigorous promotion, meaningful **connection** and a devotion to excellence.



# Our Vision of the Future

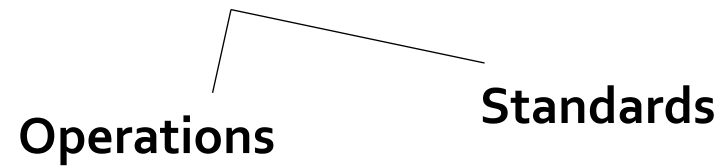


“The Federation hopes to bridge the isolation of artists in different parts of the country, discover talent and organize regional as well as country-wide activities and to publish an art magazine to serve the interests of art and artists in the country as a whole”  
*- Vancouver Art Gallery 1945 (Vancouver Province Newspaper)*

The Federation continues to expand and grow its presence across Canada, bringing art and artists to communities through our local and regional chapters, a physical presence with our galleries, and an online presence through our website. We also recognize that the Federation’s vision has expanded and evolved along with the ever-changing environment in which we operate.

Our Vision sets the roadmap and the direction for the future as follows

To be recognized as the Canadian hub for the visual arts through continuous support, rigorous promotion, meaningful connection and a **devotion to excellence.**





# Our Commitments & Strategies

The Federation is committed to five areas of focus. We take our commitments seriously and will strive to maintain focus on each and every one of these. They will guide and inspire our actions and help us to keep focused on what is important in achieving our vision. In addition, will provide clarity and direction on our priorities and efforts over the next five years.

**Our five areas of focus include:**



### Service

the evolution of services we provide to our members and community



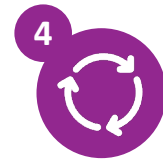
### Growth

our commitment to a national presence



### People

the support/development of the individuals who provide leadership, deliver our services and create meaningful relationships



### Sustainability

to ensure that the Federation continues to thrive and grow



### Operational Excellence

to continually learn and improve the way we do things

Within each of these areas of focus, we have set out specific strategies which guide our actions. Our strategies were established to fulfill and honour the unique vision that created the Federation of Canadian Artists whose original objective was that the term “artist’ referred to artists from every genre across Canada... painters, sculptors, architects, graphic artists, designers and craftspeople. In addition, within this context were to be included art lovers, critics and curators.

**Our objective with these strategies is to build on and strengthen those original concepts.**



# Service Commitments & Strategies



*The Federation is committed to deliver relevant services while increasing the quality & variety of services provided to members*

Our members are the core of our community and the key focus of most of our services such as promotion, education and in setting standards that ensure members adhere to the highest level of quality and set goals for all our artists to aspire to when showing their work in Federation exhibitions.

As a service organization, our values and beliefs drive our behaviours. If not for our steadfastness in putting our artists and members at the center of everything we do, our services alone would not meet our commitment to our vision and mandate. We take pride in the relationships we have built with our members, with the public who enjoy and purchase the art created by our artists, and the community. We strive to promote a positive, helpful, and friendly environment. Our staff and professionals are well versed and educated in arts and carry a credibility that helps to promote our services to artists and other potential patrons and collectors.

## Strategies

1. Creation of virtual and actual art spaces
2. Investigate and innovate to provide additional services to meet the needs of stakeholders (members, donors, benefactors, patrons, etc.)
3. Expand current services into new areas of the visual arts
4. Ensure the accreditations awarded should keep pace with international artistic standards
5. Ensure hiring and training supports our service promise



# Growth Commitments & Strategies



## *The Federation will continually strengthen its services and provide them in communities across Canada*

The Federation has been extremely successful in our support of fine artists in Western Canada and continues to expand across Canada. Yet we still have a long way to go if we are to achieve our vision. There are many organizations who support artists, but we believe we are uniquely placed as the national arts organization supporting artists across Canada in large and small communities.

Not only will expansion contribute to our vision, but it will also help the Federation generate more revenue to support additional services and programs. We will benefit from economies of scale by leveraging existing practices and marketing approaches that have served us well over the years. The knowledge and expertise we have built in Western Canada can readily be employed through other chapters. Our reach allows us to evaluate services and approaches in different markets before expanding nationally. Having a greater presence across the country allows us to keep current with the different types of artists, patrons, collectors, and what other arts organizations are doing. This market insight will be easier to gain through growth and will help us in turn to expand our services. A newer area of focus for us will be to look to partnerships to help advance the Federation's mandate and growth. These could be partners who help with our marketing efforts or help to fund our growth strategies.

### Strategies

1. Develop an education centre outside of the existing gallery space
2. Grow the overall membership across Canada – doubling membership in 5 years
3. Establish new Chapters in major Canadian cities (e.g. Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, etc.)
4. Establish a second physical hub in one city in Canada
5. Expand the membership to be more reflective of the fabric of all Canadians
6. Advance the awareness and reputation of the FCA amongst external stakeholders (partners, media and government)





# People Commitments & Strategies



*The Federation will provide a meaningful, professional work experience and a workplace that values & supports its people*

A significant measure of success for the Federation is related to the people who are at the heart of its operations. This includes staff, volunteers, and members of the Board. The history of the FCA is rich in artists and communities who believe in the value and importance of art and culture in society. To that end, the Federation needs to employ leading practices to attract and retain volunteers and staff and equally important, ensure we provide the opportunity to develop and grow their skills and expertise through professional development opportunities. The Federation relies on a strong volunteer base of members who assist with capacity building for Federation events and activities. Our members also serve on the Board of Directors who help to set the priorities and direction in conjunction with the Executive Director. Identifying passionate members, with skills in business, education, governance and standards is critical to the success of the Federation.

Concentrated investment in the development of staff and volunteer resources will continue to build on our goal of operational excellence, as well as enhance and build on a diverse and inclusive arts community.

## Strategies

1. Create a professional development plan for staff
2. Develop a program that recognizes staff for exemplary service and contributions to the advancement of the visual arts
3. Attract staff and volunteers who are inspired and motivated to work in the arts and create an environment that promotes personal growth
4. Determine how to successfully leverage and expand capacity through volunteers and committees
5. Assess, develop and maintain the quality of the Board by bringing individuals who offer new perspectives, required skills and come with passion and dedication to the Federation's mission and vision
6. Ensure we have individuals involved in the accreditation process who are leaders in their field, committed to upholding of a high degree of quality and rigorous standards for art



# Sustainability Commitments & Strategies



*The Federation will ensure short and long-term sustainability through effective funding assurance and purposeful governance at the Board and leadership levels*

Financial sustainability for the Federation means we are focused on our long-term financial health and accessing diverse sources of funds to help us achieve our vision. Maintaining a strong balance sheet with sufficient reserves allows us to respond to the challenges of a changing environment. At the same time, growing our revenue sources while employing good operating practices and managing costs will help to fund our growth while preserving reserves. Sound governance practices in budgeting and reviews, along with our management systems, give us the information we need to make the right investments for our future. An essential part of our growth strategy is assessing and establishing funding from a diverse range of sources including governments, organizations and individuals as well as our members. The FCA is the largest art association of its kind and we offer our financial supporters a way to significantly advance the arts in Canada.

Our success is also dependent on strong, passionate and visionary leadership who will maintain focus on our strategies and achieving our vision. Good leaders are difficult to find and retain, requiring inspiration to drive motivation and passion to drive commitment. The Federation also needs to guarantee the engagement of skilled professionals to market, sell, educate and inspire our members, patrons and collectors. We will put in place a process for succession planning that factors in the timing needed to find these valuable individuals.

## Strategies

1. Establish sustainable funding that supports ongoing growth
2. Assess and establish a diversity of funding sources (governments, organizations and individuals)
3. Develop a process for recruiting, maintaining and ensuring succession planning for all Board, leadership and professional staff positions
4. Establish a risk management plan which includes business continuity planning



# Operational Excellence Commitments & Strategies



*The Federation will embrace problem-solving and leadership in an environment of continuous improvement to achieve ongoing operational excellence*

Operational excellence is both a mindset as well as an approach to continually seeking new and better ways of doing things in an organization. As a society, the Federation has always prided itself on the ability to find creative ways to do more with less. Building on this strong foundation, the Federation will pursue operational excellence, employing leading practices, capabilities and innovations to best deliver on our services and support our growth strategies. Particularly important in a changing world is to have the speed and ability to change to market conditions. Rising patron and collector expectations, expanding markets and digitalization are key drivers for change and there is an increasing need for operational excellence.

Ultimately, operational excellence is not just about reducing costs or increasing productivity, its about creating a culture whereby the Federation can produce valuable services for members, patrons and collectors and achieve long-term sustainable growth. It is a journey that involves the right tools and processes. When this is done successfully, the Federation's culture will be one where employees are provided for in a way that enables them to stay empowered and motivated to do their best.

## Strategies

1. Advance the digital capabilities in support of the chapters and hubs.
2. Establish a consistent brand and operating model for all Chapters and a method for ensuring ongoing consistency and alignment
3. Create a documented process which standardizes and accelerates the establishment and support of all new Chapters
4. Establish a program that recognizes volunteers, artists and chapters
5. Improve data collection to further gain insights about the Federation and leverage this data to make informed decisions

# Making it Count



Each year on the anniversary of the Strategic Plan, the Federation will provide a year in review report to help inform the way forward for the coming year. The year in review report will be informed by feedback from the Federation:

Members, patrons and collectors to determine level of satisfaction on current services

Chapters on their successes and challenges to help inform the growth plan moving forward

Staff to determine employee engagement and satisfaction

Board Committee on successes and challenges

The methods, targets and measures will be determined each year. Where applicable, updates on the progress of the strategies will be provided during the Annual General Meeting.

Based on insights gleaned from the year in review report, the Executive Director will develop an annual operating plan and budget. This operating plan will establish the priorities within the commitments and strategies to be advanced within the current year. This operating plan will be presented to the Board for feedback and ultimately for approval.

## In Closing

It is our privilege to honour and respect the legacy of the Group of Seven and their vision for a Federation of Canadian Artists, while securing its future by continuing to evolve and grow in new and creative ways.

**We welcome all to come along on this exciting journey with us, whether as an artist, a patron or collector of the arts, or as part of the diverse and inclusive community in which the Federation serves.**

# 6 Acknowledgements



When the Federation of Canadian Artists was created in 1941, its principal objective was

**"to unite all Canadian artists, related art workers and interested laymen for mutual support in promoting common aims; the chief of these is to make the arts a creative factor in the national life of Canada and the artist an integral part of society."**

The goal of this strategic plan is to acknowledge, embrace and build upon that objective.

---

Thank you to the Board members and staff who were instrumental in creating this vision forward and to the many artists and member who continue to inspire and motivate us to promote and support the arts in Canada.

"Let the artist's hand be unbound! Let the emotions of his heart find expression! And let the work of art be shown to all, that our pride may find satisfaction!"

*- André Biéler*

FEDERATION  
*des* ARTISTES  
CANADIENS



FEDERATION  
*of* CANADIAN  
ARTISTS