

International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies

Summary report for Members on the Secretariat's first 12 months

From Sarah Gardner, Executive Director, 19 March 2002

Background: The first global network of national arts funding bodies, IFACCA, was inaugurated at the World Summit for Arts and Culture, an event hosted in Ottawa by the Canada Council in December 2000. The secretariat started on 5 March 2001.

Summary: IFACCA's first year has seen the development of governance procedures and a budgetted strategic plan, the establishment of the secretariat, the first round of membership enrolments, and the initiation of a website and several projects.

Governance and Strategic Plan: The seven-person interim board is chaired by Dr Shirley Thomson, Director of the Canada Council. It met twice during 2001: in Johannesburg in April and in Dublin in September. It has developed a vision, mission and strategic objectives, agreed a budget and finance procedures, and approved a draft constitution, which was circulated to members in January 2002.

Secretariat: The secretariat, comprising the executive director, Sarah Gardner, and the administration and research officer, Christopher Madden, leases a small space in the Australia Council's Sydney offices. The secretariat registered as a not-for-profit company under Australian law in June 2001, opened a bank account and commissioned an Australian designer, Paul Clark, to produce the IFACCA logo.

Membership: To date, membership has been confirmed for 22 national arts agencies: Australia, Canada, Cayman Is, Colombia, Congo (Republic of), Dominica, England, Finland, Guyana, Ireland, Kenya, Micronesia (Federated States of), Northern Ireland, New Zealand, Palau, Philippines, Scotland, Singapore, South Africa, Swaziland, USA and Zimbabwe. Another 20 are considering joining. The founding fees were set according to the UN Scale of Assessments. The availability of affiliate memberships was announced in February 2002. Extensive international networks have been built with related organisations involved with arts support and research.

Communications: The website went online in May 2001 and now contains detailed information about more than 65 arts agencies. The popular fortnightly email bulletin, ACORNS, started in January and is distributed to a broad international constituency.

Projects: D'ART, an online information sharing program aimed at consolidating collective knowledge on key arts topics started in September. Soon-to-be-launched projects include the Future Leaders Exchange (FLEx), designed to build relationships and develop the skills of people working in national arts councils and culture agencies, and the staging of Mini-summits on major issues of concern. The host of the next World Summit and the first General Assembly is currently under discussion.

Finances: IFACCA is funded by membership fees, grants from foundations and sponsorship. Its 2001-2002 budget is \$US175,000. It has received approximately \$US17,500 worth of in-kind support for accounting and legal services, airfares, office costs, the website and translations. By paying for their own travel costs to attend meetings, members of the interim board have saved IFACCA a further \$US50,000.