

Learning Lab #1

Governance Models and Advocacy in the Arts Sector

February 19th, 9:00am - 12:00pm
Bayview Yards,
7 Bayview Station Rd, Ottawa ON K1Y 2C5

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The arts sector is at a turning point. With shifting political landscapes, rising operational costs, and ongoing systemic inequities, artists and cultural organizations must rethink governance and advocacy strategies to ensure long-term sustainability. How can we create governance models that reflect today's realities? How can we mobilize collective advocacy to drive real change?

MEET THE SPEAKERS

● **Reuben M. Nashali**

Reuben M. Nashali is the Executive Director of the Social Planning Council of Ottawa (SPCO), leading its work in shared governance, strategic planning, and community development. Committed to equity and grassroots leadership, he has redefined SPCO's governance model, expanding committees to amplify diverse voices in policy and programs. He has also modernized bylaws to enhance transparency and sustainability. Reuben's vision ensures equity, shared leadership, and community empowerment remain central to SPCO's mission.



● **Terri-Lynn Brennan:**

Dr. Terri-Lynn Brennan is an inter-cultural planner with a 30-year career spanning anthropology, public policy, and social equity. She is the Executive Director of the Indigenous charitable organization LodgePole Arts Alliance and leads her consultancy, Inclusive Voices Incorporated. Terri holds a national role as a sector trainer for the Cultural Human Resource Council in Maintaining Respectful Workplaces in the Arts, while advising municipalities on cultural planning and Indigenous relationship-building. Proudly Ohnkwéhon:we/Kanien'kehá:ka/Skaru:re? (Mohawk/Tuscarora) and British, she traces her roots to Six Nations of the Grand River, Ireland, and England. Terri lives on Wolfe Island, within the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Covenant Treaty, with her partner and their Portuguese water dogs.



● **Kelly Wilhelm:**

Kelly Wilhelm (she/her) is a consultant and strategist with over 25 years of experience in government, the arts, creative industries, and the non-profit sector. She leads the Cultural Policy Hub at OCAD University and is an Adjunct Professor in its School of Graduate Studies. Her consulting practice focuses on strategy, government relations, equity and inclusion, research, and public policy. Previously, she held senior roles at the Canada Media Fund, Canadian Heritage, Canada Council for the Arts, and as Chief of Staff to a federal minister. Kelly holds degrees from Queen's University and the University of Toronto and lives in Ottawa with her partner and two children.



● **Toby Fyfe:**

Toby Fyfe is a senior executive with experience in the public and non-profit sectors. He spent 19 years in the federal government, leading central agencies and departments in governance, program design, and communications. As President and CEO of the Institute on Governance, he rebuilt the team, achieved financial goals, and guided the organization through crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic. As a consultant, he has helped public sector organizations improve performance, including the RCMP. Previously, he was a CBC Radio producer for 17 years. He is a Senior Fellow and Adjunct Professor at Queen's University and Carleton University.



WHAT TO EXPECT:

- Insights into the current challenges impacting governance and advocacy in the arts sector.
- Presentations from thought leaders on innovative models that are being tested today.
- A collaborative workshop to develop actionable solutions for your organization.

SESSION DETAILS:

Duration: 3 hours

Format: Presentations, panel discussion, and interactive workshop

AGENDA:

8:30 - 9:00 | Registration and Networking

9:00 - 9:15 | Introductions

9:15 - 10:00 | Presentations from Panelists

10:00 - 10:30 | Q&A and Discussion with Panelists

10:30 - 12:00 | Workshop: Co-Designing Governance and Advocacy Strategies

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- Artists, arts administrators, and cultural workers
- Board members and decision-makers in the arts sector
- Policy advocates and funders invested in the sustainability of the arts

STIPENDS:

To remove barriers for participation, a \$30 stipend can be allocated for your attendance. Confirmation of request for stipends should be made at the point of registration.

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If you have any questions, please send us an email at info@artsottawa.ca. We look forward to learning with you!