CRAFTING OUR FUTURE
Craft Industry Strategy 2018-2021
PREPARED BY THE CRAFT INDUSTRY STRATEGY STEERING COMMITTEE
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INTRODUCTION

Craft in Newfoundland and Labrador originated as people needed to make their own goods for use in daily life. Craft skills were handed down from generation to generation and have survived to this day. Today, craftspeople continue to create both traditional and contemporary work no longer out of household necessity but as an expression of culture, creativity and important economic activity.

The craft industry creates businesses, entrepreneurs and employment throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. Craftspeople contribute to the province’s economy through the sale of goods, services and experiences and, with a renewed focus on strategic opportunities, the industry has the ability to increase their contribution to the provincial economic and cultural landscape.

Throughout 2017, the Craft Council of Newfoundland and Labrador led a strategic planning process with its partner organizations in industry, government and academic institutions to produce a new three-year strategy that will guide the industry’s growth to 2021. Organizations with mandates supporting the Newfoundland and Labrador craft industry formed a steering committee. The steering committee includes representatives from the Craft Council of Newfoundland and Labrador, the Anna Templeton Centre for Craft, Art and Design, the Quidi Vidi Village Plantation Craft Incubator, College of the North Atlantic, the Department of Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency.

While these partner organizations guided the development of the strategy, craftspeople are the central participants in the industry, represented by the Craft Council of Newfoundland and Labrador, the provincial craft industry association. Throughout the strategic planning process, the voice of craftspeople through surveys, focus groups and interviews steered this plan. The input of these craftspeople was fundamental in shaping the steering committee’s understanding of both the gaps that impede the industry’s growth and the opportunities that can sustain and grow craft businesses. The goals, strategic directions and actions in the following plan are directly reflective of their commitment and passion to grow the value of the craft industry in Newfoundland and Labrador.
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A significant amount of primary and secondary research was completed to inform the craft Industry Strategy 2018 - 2021. Online surveys of craft and apparel producers and craft and gift retailers in the province were conducted by the steering committee, providing quantitative and qualitative insights on the industry. The steering committee used this information to prepare an analysis of economic performance for the industry. Consultants were hired to supplement the surveys by conducting a literature review, stakeholder interviews, and focus groups.

The work of the steering committee and engagement with craftspeople during the strategic planning process demonstrated that there are tremendous opportunities to grow the value of the craft industry in Newfoundland and Labrador. Through focused and aligned efforts in providing product development opportunities, strengthening business skills and quality, developing existing and new markets, increasing collaboration and understanding the value of the industry, the craft industry will advance in both its economic and cultural contribution to the province.

CRAFT INDUSTRY – CURRENT ECONOMIC VALUE

There is little data available regarding the current economic impact that the craft industry has on the provincial economy. As having a baseline of economic performance data is critical in establishing realistic growth targets for the industry, the steering committee utilized existing data and information gathered from the surveys to develop an estimate of the total 2016 output/sales of the province’s craft industry.

Using the average sales per craftspeople in 2016, the committee estimates that total craft industry sales in 2016 were $36 million. It is also estimated that there are approximately 760 craftspeople/businesses.
The craft industry has the opportunity to grow and increase its economic impact in the province by focusing on supporting craftspeople to grow their businesses, enhance their business development skills, expand their markets and collaborate to increase their profitability.

Goal

Advance the Newfoundland and Labrador craft industry and grow industry sales to $40 million annually by 2021

Guiding Principles

This industry strategy is based on a number of guiding principles:

**Success of Craftspeople Leads to Industry Success**

The success of the Newfoundland and Labrador craft industry rests on the success of individual craftspeople. Partner organizations will focus on creating the conditions for success for established and emerging craftspeople.

**Collaboration**

Craftspeople and partner organizations each bring unique strengths and resources. The synergies created through collaboration among organizations and craftspeople will propel the industry forward and enable innovative partnerships.

**Focused Use of Resources**

Every partner has finite resources, including financial, human and technical. To achieve growth in the industry, all partners will be aligned in activities so that there is efficient and strategic use of resources to support the collective priorities of this strategy.
STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

There are three primary strategic directions that encompass the Craft Industry Strategy 2018-2021. These are:

- **Strategic Direction 1: Enhancing the Profitability of Craftspeople**
- **Strategic Direction 2: Maximizing and Expanding Markets**
- **Strategic Direction 3: Understanding Economic and Customer Value**

For each strategic direction, partner organizations have identified actions that they will lead and/or support to enable the business development efforts of craftspeople and build capacity in the industry as a whole.

Many initiatives are broad and encompass activities by multiple partners where mandates align and intersect. This enables collaborative action and efficiency and prevents duplication of efforts. Other actions are more specific and reflect a particular partner’s unique mandate.

The following abbreviations are used:

- **CCNL** – Craft Council of Newfoundland and Labrador
- **ATC** – Anna Templeton Centre for Craft, Art and Design
- **CNA** – College of the North Atlantic (Textiles: Craft & Apparel Design)
- **QVVP** – Quidi Vidi Village Plantation Craft Incubator
- **TCII** – Department of Tourism, Culture, Industry and Innovation
- **ACOA** – Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency

Woven Woolen Warmth by Morgaine Parnham
STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1: ENHANCING THE PROFITABILITY OF CRAFTSPEOPLE

Enhancing the profitability of craftspeople will ultimately help the industry as a whole grow. The priorities for Craft industry Strategy 2018-2021 will provide product and skills development opportunities, and strengthen business skills and product quality for established and emerging craftspeople.

OBJECTIVE 1.1: ADVANCE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN BUSINESS MANAGEMENT, DESIGN AND TECHNIQUE

Actions

1. Develop a training plan to enhance the skills of professional craftspeople, ensuring diversity of delivery methods and avoiding duplication of effort. Considerations to include facilities, existing programming, residency programs, innovation and technology use, craft specific and business and marketing skills training. (Lead: CCNL & TCII)

2. Promote business development, training, counselling resources and funding programs for craft producers that will enhance their technical skills, productivity or competitiveness, including guidance on preparing funding applications. (Lead: TCII & ACOA)

3. Deliver business counselling and training to retailers on craft product selection, merchandising and display and establishing business relationships with craftspeople. (Lead: TCII)

4. Explore a centralized online location for industry resources relating to training, funding and other industry needs, including links to other resource websites. (Lead: ATC/QVVP)

5. Plan and implement “Craft Conference 2020” to coincide with Craft Year 2020 celebrations. (Lead: CCNL)

6. Engage with Labrador producers through partnerships with Nunatsiavut government. (Lead: CCNL)

7. Explore potential partnerships for craft, business and relevant education/training with craft sector organizations and CNA’s customized and continuing education training division; continue to collaborate with external stakeholders/partners on current/new activities. (Lead: CNA)

8. Form focus groups to help guide curriculum for the Textiles: Craft & Apparel Design Program. (Lead: CNA)

9. Continue with existing initiatives to promote the Textiles: Craft & Apparel Design program and explore other new initiatives with the CNA’s marketing department. (Lead: CNA)
OBJECTIVE 1.2: INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY AND EFFICIENCY OF CRAFTSPEOPLE

Actions

1. Identify and promote resources and innovative solutions to improve productivity and increase production through opportunities, such as lean manufacturing and new technologies. (Lead: TCII)

2. Explore the provision of group services with partners that could support members’ needs (i.e. accounting, social media). (Lead: CCNL)

3. Promote business development and programs for productivity improvements to help craftspeople implement productivity/efficiency initiatives. (Lead: TCII & ACOA)

OBJECTIVE 1.3: IDENTIFY AND CAPITALIZE ON CRAFT-RELATED BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

Actions

1. Identify new business opportunities for craftspeople in the tourism industry utilizing the Provincial Tourism Product Development Plan, Regional Destination Development Plans and TCII Visitor Exit Surveys. (Lead: TCII)

2. Work with partners to develop and deliver workshops focused on Craft and Tourism product and experience development. (Lead: TCII)

3. Assist craftspeople to develop experiential tourism offerings for visitors in the province. (Lead: TCII)

4. Promote existing programs and initiatives aimed at increasing entrepreneurship among craftspeople and assist craft businesses to implement new activities that lead to growth and new income streams. (Lead: TCII)

5. Offer Wholesale 101 Workshops for craftspeople. (Lead: TCII & CCNL)

6. Preserve, document and stimulate production of contemporary, traditional and Indigenous craft. (Lead: CCNL)

7. Include information on funding sources in the resource section of the CCNL website. (Lead: CCNL)
OBJECTIVE 1.4: ATTRACT NEW, SUPPORT EMERGING AND RETAIN EXISTING CRAFT PROFESSIONALS IN THE INDUSTRY

Actions

1. Building on the success of the Quidi Vidi Village Plantation, explore opportunities to provide support to emerging craft businesses province-wide. (Lead: CCNL & ATC)

2. Encourage new and emerging craftspeople, including students, as well as existing craft professionals to become involved in industry activities (e.g. Craft Conference 2020, Craft East Buyers Expo) (Lead: CCNL)

3. Provide/facilitate business counseling to existing and emerging craftspeople and assist craft businesses to access programs and initiatives aimed at increasing entrepreneurship and start-ups. (Lead: TCII & ACOA)

4. Work with Indigenous producers to increase engagement in the industry. (Lead: CCNL)

5. Participate and ensure engagement of the craft industry in the renewed Cultural Action Plan and provincial cultural policy development. (Lead: TCII)

6. Explore new student recruitment activities, including outreach to high school students, communities and interested groups, through career fairs, contact with guidance counsellors, art teachers, fibre teachers, as well as collaborations with the Anna Templeton Centre. (Lead: CNA)

7. Continue to explore and implement partnerships of Textiles program with CNA’s Office of Industry and Community Engagement on initiatives, such as Industrial Research Assistance Program (e.g. Gear-Up Safety Solutions, Pro-active Physiotherapy and Business Portals). (Lead: CNA)

OBJECTIVE 1.5: APPLY CONSISTENT STANDARDS OF QUALITY FOR EXCELLENCE IN FINE CRAFT

Actions

1. Develop and implement one jury process for craft, bringing together elements of the TCII Product Review process with CCNL’s Standards review. (Lead: CCNL and TCII)

2. Continually promote and ensure excellence in craft (e.g. Textile Instructors’ presence on CCNL’s Standards committee). (Lead: CCNL)

3. Conduct jurrying for Labrador producers in Labrador, using CCNL standards for traditional and Indigenous craft, to ensure that the process incorporates local knowledge and expertise. (Lead: CCNL)

4. Explore opportunities for new technologies in craft and incorporate findings into standards process. (Lead: CCNL)

5. Continue to have Textiles students submit work to the Craft Council Jury as part of their Craft Fair project. (Lead: CNA)
STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2: MAXIMIZING AND EXPANDING MARKETS

For craftspeople to grow their businesses and ultimately drive industry growth, it is essential for them to take advantage of opportunities to increase their sales in existing markets and expand into new markets. Participation in non-sales activities will also increase the awareness of the Newfoundland and Labrador craft industry, which can open doors in new markets. It is also critical for craftspeople to understand their customers, their preferences and expectations to help guide business development investments.

OBJECTIVE 2.1: INCREASE NUMBER OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR CRAFTSPEOPLE EXPANDING THEIR MARKETS

Actions

1. Promote wholesale and retail opportunities to craftspeople as a way to reach local markets. (All partners)
   
a. Organize and expand the Craft & Gift Wholesale Show with partners’ support. Carry out evaluation and discuss implementation of findings in future action. (Lead: CCNL & TCII)
b. Encourage more Newfoundland and Labrador craftspeople to take part in Craft East Buyers’ Expo. (Lead: CCNL, TCII, CNA)

c. Continue to organize and promote the Christmas Craft Fair as a high quality event. (Lead: CCNL)

d. Continue to offer real-life experiences to students through participation in the Craft Council Christmas Craft Fair. (Lead: CNA)

e. Encourage sale of Newfoundland and Labrador craft in retail shops. (Lead: TCII & CCNL)

2. Identify new export opportunities and promote involvement of Newfoundland and Labrador craftspeople.

   a. Promote export market training and export opportunities offered through Craft Alliance Atlantic. (Lead: CCNL, TCII, CNA, ATC)

   b. Promote market development programs to assist craft businesses to access new export markets, as well as assist industry-led export projects for craftspeople. (Lead: TCII)

3. Promote opportunities to partner with other industries as a way to access/expand markets.

   a. Work to enhance Studio Guide as an authentic guide to craft. (Lead: CCNL)

   b. Use research, such as the TCII Visitor Exit Survey and retailer survey, to identify opportunities to align with market demand. (Lead: TCII)

   c. Assist craftspeople to enhance their profile in tourism marketing channels. (Lead: TCII)

   d. Familiarize provincial and regional Visitor Information Centre (VICs) staff with craftspeople. (Lead: TCII)

   e. Explore partnerships with CNA's Tourism & Hospitality Management program & Textiles: Craft & Apparel Design program to create an activity that will showcase the importance of partnership between the two sectors. (Lead: CNA)

OBJECTIVE 2.2: INCREASE AWARENESS OF THE NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR CRAFT INDUSTRY

Actions

1. Promote awareness of the Newfoundland and Labrador craft industry.

   a. Consider repeating participation in Seal Day and other external events. (Lead: CCNL)

   b. Implement Northern Lights Cultural Pavilion in Ottawa. (Lead: CCNL)

   c. Encourage craft businesses to participate in Tourism Opportunity Sessions around the province. (Lead: TCII)

   d. Promote craft industry participation in Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador events. (Lead: TCII & CCNL)
STRATEGIC DIRECTION 3: UNDERSTANDING ECONOMIC AND CUSTOMER VALUE

There is limited data available that allows the industry to measure the economic activity of craftspeople and their contribution to the overall economy. Clear definition of who is part of the craft industry and regular data collection from craftspeople will address gaps in information, provide benchmarks and allow the industry to measure its growth.

OBJECTIVE 3.1: DEFINE INDUSTRY AND ITS PARTICIPANTS IN ORDER TO ENABLE THE COLLECTION OF DATA

Actions

1. Work with craft industry partners to define the sector and align with standard industry classifications where possible to enable gathering and comparison of data from multiple sources. (Lead: TCII & CCNL)

OBJECTIVE 3.2: COLLECT DATA ON THE NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR CRAFT INDUSTRY TO MEASURE ECONOMIC AND CUSTOMER VALUE

Actions

1. Work with craft industry partners to gather primary research on a regular basis for example: Aim to collect industry economic data every two years (2019 next); training needs data every five years (2021); and Newfoundland and Labrador consumer data every five years. (All partners)

2. Explore funding options to assist with the cost of primary industry research. (Lead: CCNL)

3. Compare customer feedback results from TCII Visitor Exit Survey results. (Lead: TCII)

4. Develop survey series with partners and distribute to membership on regular basis to build trust for the survey data, promoting the importance of reporting data to demonstrate the value of the craft industry to the province. (Lead: CCNL)
Craft industry partners and craftspeople will work together to implement the actions identified in this strategy beginning in 2018.

The steering committee will meet annually in April to review progress on the actions. Together with craftspeople we will review the execution and effectiveness of these actions, measure progress towards the achievement of objectives and make adjustments as necessary. An annual update will be released to keep all stakeholders informed of progress.

New research on the economic value of the craft industry will be conducted through a new survey of craftspeople in the province in 2021. This will inform the final report on the results of the strategy, which will also be delivered in 2021.
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