



**National Gallery
of Canada**

**Musée des beaux-arts
du Canada**

EDUCATION AND PUBLIC PROGRAMS POLICY

This policy was approved by the Board of Trustees on December 4, 2018.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. OBJECTIVE	1
2. APPLICATION	1
3. CONTEXT	1
4. PRINCIPLES	1
5. POLICY REQUIREMENTS	3
6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.....	3
7. INQUIRIES.....	4
8. REFERENCES	4

1. OBJECTIVE

The objective of this Policy is to outline the principles that guide the development and implementation of the Gallery's education and public programs, activities and products, hereto referred globally as "education programs".

2. APPLICATION

This Policy applies to Gallery employees, interns and volunteers who, within their responsibilities, deliver a wide range of education programs.

Contractors and service providers working closely with the Education and Public Programs division, are encouraged to adhere to the spirit of this Policy.

This policy covers the full range of education programs and interpretive tools offered by the Gallery at its main facility in Ottawa, and, when and where feasible, at partnering institutions, travelling exhibitions venues, and online.

3. CONTEXT

Through its education and public programs, the National Gallery of Canada (NGC or the Gallery) promotes engagement through learning about art, and enjoyment of art consistent with its mandate, as defined in the *Museums Act*, which states as follows:

To develop, maintain and make known, throughout Canada and internationally, a collection of works of art, both historic and contemporary, with special but not exclusive reference to Canada; and to further knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of art in general among all Canadians.

The informal, leisure learning that occurs in and through museums is distinct from formal school-based learning. Museum visits are educational and social in nature. They emphasize reflection, discovery, participation and creativity. Visitors direct their own learning, by: bringing their unique perspectives to the encounters with objects; making choices and personal connections; acquiring information; developing ideas and skills; and taking away enriched meaning and understanding. Learning happens before, during and after a museum visit, as well as online.

4. PRINCIPLES

The Gallery's education and public programs will aim to:

A. Facilitate Access

The Gallery supports access for all Canadians to the national collection and its programming. Its education programs will aim to attract and appeal to a broad range of people, who will experience art through various means. Accordingly, the education programs will be designed to incorporate the following:

Intellectual access

The suite of programs will correspond with various levels of knowledge and interest in art.

Physical access

Programs will be accessible to a range of visitors, on-site in Ottawa, and, where feasible, at partnering institutions and travelling exhibitions venues. As part of Gallery's commitment to a strong presence locally and nationally, the Gallery will prioritize program approaches that allow on-site content to be shared widely.

Electronic access

Online programs will aim to extend the Gallery's reach to audiences, locally, nationally and internationally, enhancing the public's understanding and appreciation of the national collection and exhibitions. Education programs will strive to leverage the educational potential of digital and social media and the web, where applicable.

Economic access

The Gallery will strive to offer on-site education programs free of charge, when possible, or include their user fees within the Gallery admission fees. Some programs, however, will be subject to fee structures, in line with the Gallery's need to recover costs.

Cultural /Linguistic access

All programs will be delivered in a manner consistent with the Gallery's obligations under the *Official Languages Act*. To the extent possible, print and digital products will include additional languages to address the Gallery's diverse publics. The selection of additional languages will be based primarily on data from the Gallery's audience studies and/or surveys, augmented by data from Statistics Canada on the ethnic origins of Canadians.

B. Use the Gallery's Full Collection

Programs will aim to draw on the full breadth of the Gallery's collection and exhibitions in a stimulating manner, and will be informed by research, and collaboration with curators, artists and other experts. Emphasis will be placed on the development of interpretive content and programming that build on the strengths of the collection and exhibitions and that present a range of perspectives on and ways of engaging with them.

C. Conduct Innovative Research and Evaluation of the Visitor Experience

Programs will contribute to the Gallery's overall research and innovation agenda through:

- A solid research foundation in learning theory and critical issues in museum interpretation;
- An ongoing and active commitment to visitor research and evaluation;
- Experimentation with new interpretive strategies, techniques and tools; and
- A lively exchange and collaboration with a network of experts within and outside the museum community.

Program evaluation will be conducted on a cyclical basis and will encompass front-end, formative and summative studies. Evaluation data will be gathered systematically and deliberately, and can help the Gallery to improve continually by better understanding its visitors/users, programs, and the visitor experience.

D. Foster Conversations around Art

As an expression of human creativity, art embodies ideas, emotions and stories: through its programs, the Gallery will help people to connect with these, and to share their own. Programs will strive to provide multiple opportunities and formats for connection, with increasing emphasis on digital and social media.

E. Develop New and Diverse Audiences

In recognition of the Gallery's philosophy and understanding of Canada as a vibrant pluralistic society, programs will aim to reflect the interests of diverse audiences while striving to develop new audiences for its programming. As part of its commitment to diversity, the Gallery will actively study its visitors and potential-visitors, seek opportunities for engagement, and aim to establish education program priorities for diverse audiences in response to the Gallery's overall programming.

5. POLICY REQUIREMENTS

In developing and implementing education programs and interpretive tools, the Gallery will:

- A.** Establish education priorities, primarily in response to curatorial- and exhibition-related needs, and in consideration of the fiscal constraints of the institution;
- B.** Ensure that the themes, content and formats of education programs are consistent with the Gallery's mandate and respond to the Gallery's overall programming agenda;
- C.** Ensure education programs enhance the reputation of the Gallery, and reflect the Gallery's commitment to excellence, creativity and innovation in informal learning and its belief in the value of the visual arts;
- D.** Demonstrate a commitment to relevance, accuracy, objectivity and ethical behaviour;
- E.** Promote learning and enjoyment of art as an integral part of the visitor experience;
- F.** Aim to meet the needs and interests of the communities it serves;
- G.** Ensure audience-centered programs meet applicable legislative and policy requirements that have an impact on education programs and their audience (e.g. *Official Languages Act*, *Copyright Act*, and *Privacy Act*); and
- H.** Ensure that responsibility for education programming is delegated to staff with appropriate expertise and training, whether employees, volunteers or consultants

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A.** The NGC Education and Public Programs division is responsible for informal learning, and for the development and implementation of education programs and interpretive

tools at the Gallery. Educators set the interpretive agenda through their expertise in presenting content in a variety of learning modalities to engage diverse audiences and increase attendance.

- B.** Partnerships and Community Engagement division works in collaboration with the Education and Public Programs division on the educational dimension of partnered programs organized with external parties. Partnerships, both internal and external, are an effective means to attain shared objectives. They are used to facilitate the design and delivery of the Gallery's education programs. Prospective partnerships will be visitor-centered, cost effective, and aligned with Gallery priorities. They will aim at providing access to new audiences. Partnerships involving education and public programs will be approved by the Deputy Director, Advancement and Public Engagement or the Director and CEO.
- C.** The Deputy Director, Advancement and Public Engagement is responsible for the development of the education and public programs strategy, approach and content, implementation and evaluation.
- D.** The Director and CEO, has final approval for the interpretive strategy and approach, content, implementation and evaluation of the Gallery's education programs.

7. INQUIRIES

Questions concerning the interpretation of this policy should be addressed to the Chief of Education and Public Programs.

8. REFERENCES

Access to Information Act (1985)
Copyright Act (1985)
Museums Act, (1990)
Official Languages Act (1985)
Privacy Act (1985)
NGC Values, Ethics and Code of Conduct