

Milly Ristvedt
RCA Advocacy Representative
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RCA continues to work with the Visual Arts Alliance <http://visualartsvisuels.ca> on issues concerning federal policy and funding for the visual arts. The New Funding Model of the Canada Council for the Arts, due to be rolled out in June, 2016, has been a primary subject of discussion at our teleconferences, as it affects grants to individual artists and arts organizations.

Organizations receiving core funding met with Sylvie Gilbert, Head of the Canada Council Visual Arts Section, to seek clarification of the new funding model on behalf of the Alliance. (Roughly half of the organizations within the Alliance, including the RCA, are not eligible to receive core funding for a variety of reasons.) The feeling after the meeting, while mostly positive, was that Council is strictly controlling communications on its process, and we will have to wait until the New Funding Model is formally rolled out to see how its substantial changes will affect the arts community.

Although the RCA does not receive core funding, project funding is still available to us, possibly even for a multi-year project, under the new model. As well as applying for project funding for events that engage the public at our annual general assembly, RCA Regional Committees might also consider applying for project grants.

In tandem with the new Funding Model the Canada Council is embarking on a new strategic plan, <http://canadacouncil.ca> intended to set priorities for the next five years. Artists and arts organizations are invited to provide feedback by completing their survey, <http://canadacouncil.ca/council/strategic-plan>, no later than **February 11, 2016**. In brief, the five major themes of the strategic plan are: Digital, Aboriginal, Artists' Contribution to Tomorrow's Economy, International, and Canada's 150th anniversary. The survey is long given the 15 minutes allowed for completion, so I suggest first downloading and studying it in PDF form.

Our new government has promised increased funding to the Canada Council for the Arts. Whether it will be possible to deliver on the promise given the affects of the most recent downturn in Canada's economic fortunes, remains to be seen. However, the temper of the times is much improved and the door is open to positive change. We count on the voices of our respected Academicians to speak to change that will benefit the visual arts, its organizations and the social and cultural world we share.