



Professional
Association of
Canadian Theatres

strategic plan 2020 – 2024

www.pact.ca

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following plan provides a strategic framework to guide the direction and operations of PACT over the course of the next four years (2020-2024). It has been informed by collective insight from our Board of Directors and staff, as well as significant contributions and feedback from the membership and sector at large.

As with any strategic planning process, there have been challenges and debate, highs and lows. Two highs include an energized and dynamic day of dialogue with PACTcon2019 delegates, in Meacham, SK at Dancing Sky Theatre, under a never-ending blue prairie sky (May 2019) as well as several days of collective creation with PACT board and staff during a Calgary deep-freeze in the shared ATP/Theatre Calgary boardroom (January 2020). While one provided hundreds of sticky notes of potential and opportunity for the future, the other helped to dramaturg those ideas, and give them alignment, cohesion, strength and stability.

At the heart of the process and each individual session, there was an

overwhelmingly positive sense of potential and opportunity, in which to build on a solid foundation of existing services and programs. The feedback fueled the belief that PACT was a resource, a gathering place, a network, a connector and an advocate. Opportunities connected to opening doors, making space, broadening our reach and possibility of who we served and supported. Ideas coalesced on how PACT can and should connect our sector, be a leader, and be more visible.

And then March 2020 came, and the world as we knew it was hit by massive change. Tinkering on the plan was pushed to the side of the desk as PACT shifted into high action mode, rolling out a myriad of mechanisms and resources to help a devastated sector in an unprecedented time of global pandemic. And as if guided by our elongated strategic process, we began to embody our new framework – we connected, we took a lead on relief and recovery and became more visible and acknowledged as an essential force for live performance in Canada.

It is a pleasure and an honour to share this strategic plan with you now. This is our framework for how

PACT continues to grow and develop into our role and responsibility of **LEADERSHIP, CONNECTIVITY,** and **VISIBILITY**, not only for our membership but for all those dedicated to supporting theatre in Canada. We will continue to maintain and evolve the majority of our core services and programs, as well as developing and implementing many new essential initiatives designed to further open doors, make space, dismantle inequities and to make connections and opportunities. This is a living document and will continue to evolve and respond to current contexts of the world, and to the diversity of contexts in which you share your stories and make your best work.

We look forward to working with you on this continued pathway.

Boomer Stacey – PACT Executive Director, August 2020.

MISSION

PACT is a member driven organization that promotes and supports the practice of theatre in Canada.

WE BELIEVE

People that work in theatre deserve supportive and equitable working environments;

Theatre practice should encourage creativity, afford risk and accommodate change;

Theatre makes an essential contribution to the quality of life in Canada;

The experience of theatre should be accessible to all;

Theatre companies should be as diverse as the communities they serve.

WHO WE ARE

We strive to be cognizant of the needs of our members by offering programs and services that benefit them and Canadian theatre;

We are a proactive and responsive organization making prudent use of our resources;

We foster opportunities where theatre

practitioners can come together;

We are a leader in the national performing arts community and an advocate for live performance;

We aspire to be an organization that is representative of the breadth of Canadian theatre;

We are led by the principles of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility and strive to incorporate these principles in everything we do.

PACT will provide **LEADERSHIP** in advancing artistic and organizational practice of theatre in Canada.

PACT will foster **CONNECTIVITY** within our membership and will facilitate connections with the broader arts community.

PACT will increase **VISIBILITY** of our activities, our membership, and the practice of theatre in Canada.

PACT will provide **LEADERSHIP** in advancing artistic and organizational practice of theatre in Canada.

We will do this by:

- **Exploring models of artistic and organizational practice;**
- **Defining standards for, and promoting supportive and equitable workplaces;**
- **Prioritizing Environmental Stewardship;**
- **Fostering and supporting new leaders in the sector.**

LEADERSHIP

1. Exploring various models of practice through:

A. the research of models of leadership and artistic practice in Canada and around the world;

B. sharing the results of research in order to foster discussion and evaluation of current practices;

C. encouraging the decolonizing of

creation, dissemination and evaluation of the work.

Progress will look like:

- Initiate research of diverse practice, nationally and internationally (2020-2022), surveying PACT artists and companies as well as utilizing existing relationships and development of new connections in order to create and engage in dialogue and learning towards expanded understanding of leadership models;

- Dissemination of findings and implementation of learning & networking opportunities for discussion, discovery, learning and inspiration;
- Development of Decolonizing Theatre framework focusing on models of non-colonial theatre management, leadership, critical evaluation and artistic practice as well as identifying means of dismantling colonial systems (2021-2024).

LEADERSHIP

2. Defining standards for and promoting supportive and equitable workplaces in the sector through:

A. the incorporation and embodiment of the principles of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA), including Anti-Oppression/Anti-Racism (AO/AR) into the work we do and the promotion of programs that support those principles;

B. the dissemination of various work-life balance best practices within the sector;

C. human resources services and support to ensure that our workplaces are respectful, healthy and safe;

D. agitate against complicity, take action when oppression or racism is evident and hold our representatives, members and sector accountable.

Progress will look like:

- Establish defined IDEA – AO/AR standards as components of PACT membership, providing tools and resources for

companies to measure and benchmark current practice or growth; chart sector progress; and hold complicity accountable;

- Agitate towards the dismantling of systemic, oppressive barriers, and challenging the status quo when it does not benefit in an equitable and inclusive manner;
- Evolution of PACT's HR & ALL IN services including evaluation of current offerings, member priorities, pandemic related anticipated needs, AO/AR training and support services. HR Strategy initiated by Spring 2021 to include launch of HR and Health & Safety Board driven committees.

LEADERSHIP

3. Prioritizing Environmental Stewardship within the sector through:

A. research of best practices within Canada and abroad;

B. the exploration of new practices, the adaptation of existing practices, and the adoption of best practices within PACT's operations;

C. promotion of those best practices within the sector, tracking progress against benchmarks;

D. the recognition of productions and/or organizations that have responded to the climate crisis.

Progress will look like:

- Environmental Stewardship working group to help develop environmental plan for PACT and the theatre sector at large (2021-2022);
- working with partner organizations to benchmark existing practices and beginning stages of adaption of established tools and resources to a Canadian context;
- implementation of Learning & Networking program specific to environmental practice, working in collaboration with other partners for shared resources and content;
- highlighting the environmental narrative explored through an artistic lens;
- recognition and celebration of productions and sector leaders in environmental stewardship.

LEADERSHIP

4. Fostering and supporting new leaders in the sector through:

A. the provision of mentorship, professional development and succession tools;

B. advocacy for public supported, paid training and learning opportunities.

Progress will look like:

- Utilizing the framework of the Learning & Networking Strategy to prioritize opportunities, training and support for new leaders, removing or addressing barriers for participation;
- development of mentorship platform for new or aspiring managers and artistic leaders to be launched by 2021/2022;
- incorporate advocacy for training and learning opportunities as a priority for ongoing Federal advocacy efforts with government relation agency as well as through provincial and

regional funding and ASO partners.

PACT will foster **CONNECTIVITY** within our membership and will facilitate connections with the broader arts community.

We will do this by:

- **Creating opportunities for our membership to engage with each other;**
- **Facilitating engagement and exchange with the Canadian arts sector;**
- **Increasing PACT and Canadian theatres' engagement and exchange within the international theatre community.**

CONNECTIVITY

1. Creating opportunities for our members to engage with each other through:

- A. increased learning and mentorship opportunities;
- B. increased networking and exchange opportunities.

Progress will look like:

- Benchmark participation in current opportunities (from 2019/2020, pre-

COVID) to measure increased offerings and increased participation within existing opportunities (i.e. increase organizational buy-in so that more staff from more companies are regularly participating in Learning & Networking opportunities;

- identify and remove existing barriers or obstacles that would limit or exclude participation. Ensure IDEA principles are embodied within all L&N opportunities and develop strategy and timeline to increase IDEA in all offerings (i.e. training for all committee leaders and facilitators; closed captioning and ASL; removing financial

or other barriers to participation);

- implement safe, and accessible learning environment for all Learning & Networking opportunities;
- research and implement increased accessibility and/or decreased barriers to participation, and explore hybrid opportunities for future PACTcon and other learning events;
- Explore and incorporate additional means of communicating opportunities to the membership and sector at large via revitalized annual Communications Strategy (2021).

CONNECTIVITY

2. Facilitating engagement and exchange with the Canadian arts sector through:

- A. increased networking and exchange opportunities amongst all theatre practitioners;
- B. increased PACT participation within the national arts scene;
- C. encouragement of the inclusion of non-member artists and organizations in PACT events and activities.

Progress will look like:

- PACT lead in meeting with and seeking collaborative opportunities with theatre ASO's from across Canada, creating a roster of activities or offerings for all theatre professionals across the country;
- Continued PACT participation in the Canadian Arts Coalition, NASO gatherings and other relevant networking collectives;
- Continued exploration of "lowering the tent" and "hub not club" mentality while providing opportunities or intersection and connection with non-member artists and activities. Benchmark current opportunities and numbers of non-PACT participants in 2019/2020 (pre-Covid) in order to set future target and measure change;
- Incorporate non-member connection goals as part of Learning & Networking and Communications Strategies.
- Explore and incorporate additional means of communicating opportunities to the membership and sector at large via revitalized annual Communications Strategy (2021).

CONNECTIVITY

3. Increasing PACT and Canadian theatres' engagement and exchange within the international theatre community through:

- A. connection with international theatre artists, festivals, organizations and ASOs;
- B. advocacy for the inclusion of PACT and its

members in federal cultural diplomacy programs and activities;

- C. sharing international opportunities with our members.

Progress will look like:

- International Affairs working group to establish priorities and goals, connection points and opportunities for PACT membership to engage;
- Utilizing existing partnerships and development of new partnerships and connections to engage in international dialogue and exchange;
- Catalogue existing organizational and member-based relationships and exchange history;
- International theatre professionals to participate in PACT programming (i.e. PACTcon);
- Communications Strategy to incorporate mechanisms to share PACT's international presence, to share member's global presence and to share international opportunities. Strategy will also include creation of promotional piece to share Theatre in Canada news with an international audience.

PACT will increase **VISIBILITY** of our activities, our membership, and the practice of theatre in Canada.

We will do this by:

- **Increasing member awareness of PACT and our programs through an effective communications strategy;**
- **Increasing sector awareness of PACT;**
- **Raising the profile of theatre in Canada;**
- **Actively promoting public awareness.**

VISIBILITY

1. Increasing member awareness of PACT and our programs through an effective communications strategy which includes:

- A. consistent, clear and concise communication to encourage active participation amongst the membership;
- B. encouraging members to serve as ambassadors through shared

experiences of PACT's services and programs;

- C. encouraging participation of all staff of member organizations;
- D. developing stronger online engagement.

Progress will look like:

- o Development of a PACT Communications Strategy (2021) incorporating prioritizes specific to "internal" communications (messaging within membership);
- o Evaluation of current communications, mechanisms and services;

- o Increase institutional buy-in within PACT member companies (more staff within each PACT company utilizing more PACT programming).

VISIBILITY

2. Increasing sector awareness of PACT through:

- A. increased regional and provincial connections with unaffiliated organizations, training institutions, independent artists, and ASOs;
- B. expanded connections with national and international ASOs and other relevant organizations;
- C. the promotion and support of PACT members' involvement in other national and international organizations and events.

Progress will look like:

- Development and implementation of a PACT Communications Strategy (2021) incorporating major priority of "external" communications (messaging for those unaware of PACT, for non-members, in order to promote the services and programming that we offer to include specific niche information and promotion to individuals, companies, organizations, institutions, ASO's, etc);
- Research and develop regional, national and international target list to develop and expand

connections, partnerships and relationships;

- Learning & Networking Strategy, with goal to collaborate with national and international representatives of ASO's to share expertise and to create awareness of PACT programming;
- International working group to develop priorities and goals for opportunities for PACT membership to connect and engage with the global sector;
- Sharing and promoting PACT membership activities with the rest of our community.

VISIBILITY

3. Raising the profile of theatre in Canada through:

- A. effective national advocacy;
- B. participation in any activities that forward the interests of theatre;
- C. support of provincial, regional and local advocacy efforts.

Progress will look like:

- Update priorities and goals of consultation and

support of our government relationship agency in PACT's advocacy efforts;

- Research better understanding of non-federal advocacy efforts (local, regional & provincial) and how they connect with federal advocacy initiatives and based on results set specific action plan for how and where PACT can align or connect efforts;

- Use the opportunity of and current active pandemic-response, collective action networks to support the interests of the theatre sector both in response to pandemic recovery, as well as priorities

benefitting the theatre sector as a whole;

- PACT campaign to increase the visibility and prominence of theatre and voices from Canada around the world.

VISIBILITY

4. Actively promoting public awareness through:

- A. the dissemination of the vitality of theatre in Canada;
- B. support of national grass roots public awareness campaigns.

Progress will look like:

- Advocate for a federally funded campaign in support of theatre in Canada, relevant to pandemic recovery efforts of live performance sector (and/or pursue funding in support of);
- Development of national grass roots campaign to promote necessity, vibrancy, impact of theatre in Canada in cooperation with all theatre ASO's and theatre artist associations across the country (2021).

PACT Letters Patent

The Objects of the Corporation are to promote Theatre and performing arts in Canada on a nation-wide basis by:

- A. Promoting the general welfare of professional Theatre in Canada;**
- B. Promoting community interest in and support of Theatre in Canada;**
- C. Gaining increased recognition and support of professional Theatre from Federal, Provincial, and Municipal Governments and their agencies, and from the corporate and private sectors;**
- D. Encouraging and promoting communication and harmonious relations between and among theatres in Canada; theatres and the media; theatres and the public;**
- E. Advancing and promoting Canadian professional theatre internationally;**
- F. Affording professional theatres in Canada an opportunity to act for their common purpose and interest;**
- G. Acting in the interest and on behalf of its members in all lawful activities which may directly or indirectly contribute to the accomplishment of these objects.**