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# Framing Infrastructure in a Cultural Context:

A National and International  
Policy Scan

Katie Warfield, Erin Schultz,  
and Kelsey Johnson

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## **Framing Infrastructure in a Cultural Context: A National and International Policy Scan**

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*Abstract:* Through a scan of online policy and program information, this paper explores uses of the term *cultural infrastructure* in Canadian federal policy and in policies and programs internationally. Geographically, the international scan covers the United States, Australia, the European Commission, England, Ireland, and Norway. Both national and state- or regional-level sources are included in most of the countries. The review indicates wide-spread considerations of the importance of investing in cultural infrastructure, and an emerging tendency, particularly in North America, to recognize the importance not only of tangible built forms of cultural infrastructure but also of less tangible and more technologically oriented types of cultural infrastructure. More detailed considerations of cultural infrastructure tended to be found in regional-level policies and programs.

*Résumé :* Par une revue minutieuse de renseignements en ligne en matière de programmes et de politiques, ce document explore l'utilisation du terme infrastructure culturelle dans les politiques fédérales canadiennes et les politiques et programmes internationaux. Géographiquement, l'examen international couvre les États-Unis, l'Australie, la Commission européenne, l'Angleterre, l'Irlande et la Norvège. Les sources aux niveaux national, régional ou par état sont comprises dans la majorité des pays. La revue fait état d'une conscience générale de l'importance d'investir dans l'infrastructure culturelle ainsi qu'une tendance émergente, particulièrement en Amérique du Nord, de reconnaître l'importance non seulement des formes tangibles d'infrastructure culturelle, mais également des types moins tangibles et plus technologiquement orientés d'infrastructure culturelle. Des considérations plus spécifiques en matière d'infrastructure culturelle ont, en général, été repérées dans les politiques et les programmes au niveau régional.

### **Introduction**

Arts and culture are increasingly recognized as integral and necessary components of a city's social fabric, contributing to the economy and quality of life in cities and communities. Parallel with this, we observe a growing number of efforts to integrate funding, planning, and management of the arts and culture within the systems of a city's urban governance, planning processes, and basic infrastructure. This trend is reflected and represented in a series of terms and phrases that now permeate Canadian cultural policy documents: cultural infrastructure, cultural sustainability, socially inclusive cities, culture as the fourth pillar of sustainability, creative cities, cultural clusters, creative hubs, and the creative class.

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Katie Warfield has an M.A. in Communication and a Certificate in Urban Design, both from Simon Fraser University. Erin Schultz is a master's student in the Urban Studies program at Simon Fraser University. Kelsey Johnson recently graduated with a BA in Communication from Simon Fraser University.

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This paper elaborates on the many and varied uses of one of these terms: *cultural infrastructure*. The paper is an exploration of the term *cultural infrastructure* as it has appeared in Canadian policy literature, and how it has been used in policies and programs in the United States, Australia, Britain, and other European countries.

## Methodology

In 2005 and 2006, preliminary scans of the use of the term *cultural infrastructure* was conducted primarily through reviewing websites and online documents of government departments and agencies in Canada and Internationally. In early 2007, this preliminary compilation was revisited, sources reviewed, and findings analyzed. To assist in comparing how various countries and jurisdictions refer to cultural infrastructure, findings were organized and coded within a comprehensive table documenting geographic and organizational uses of the term and the general categories of meanings included within these uses. The table was also used as a starting point for identifying trends and themes emerging from the various uses of the term cultural infrastructure. This table is presented in Appendix A.

## I. Framing *cultural infrastructure*: The Canadian context

### Infrastructure

Infrastructure is a fluid and changing concept. Infrastructure Canada provides, perhaps, the most broad and comprehensive definition of “infrastructure” as it is used by various governmental agencies:

- a) For policy and program purposes, infrastructure is “core physical assets instrumental to supporting the delivery of public services.”
- b) For research purposes, infrastructure is more generally defined as “the basic or underlying structure on which an organization or system is built and which makes it able to work” (Infrastructure Canada, 2004a, p. 9).

In October of 2003, a research roundtable on the State of Infrastructure held by the Research and Analysis Division of Infrastructure Canada provided a deep and thorough analysis of the term as different federal ministries use it (see Table 1). The results (which correspond to the strategic objectives of 25-plus attendees, including federal government departments, agencies, and a Crown corporation) revealed that, in addition to this broad definition, the term *infrastructure* may be subdivided into three groups:

1. **Tangible infrastructure:** “hard” or “physical” elements essential to the economy and to society. These include:
  - Traditional infrastructure like highways, telecommunications, water supply and distribution, and energy utilities
  - Public housing and health infrastructure such as hospitals and clinics
  - Amenities including parks, museums, and recreational and cultural facilities
  - Knowledge-based infrastructure such as educational facilities, libraries, and research facilities
2. **Intangible infrastructure:** “soft” infrastructure that facilitates the functioning and management of tangible infrastructure. These include:
  - Communication infrastructure including email, cellular, and satellite service
  - Knowledge-based resources such as a national weather service, publicly available electronic databases, and information and research networks

- Data, protocols, and scientific research that contributes to public infrastructure (i.e. that benefit the public)
- 3. Transformative infrastructure:** a system of with both a scope and depth of effect sufficient to alter virtually every aspect of the economy, society, and the environment, such as:
- Knowledge-based infrastructure including the internet

The three types of infrastructure are, in practice, interdependent. In fact, the trend to divide and categorize infrastructure has recently faded in Canada. As the final report of the roundtable argued, infrastructure is an all-encompassing term and to divide its use into separate subcategories would be contradictory and counterproductive (Infrastructure Canada, 2004b).

(However, given the exploratory nature of this discussion paper, we considered these sub-categorizations to be a possibly useful classification framework in organizing a broad spectrum of definitions, and have considered them in organizing the various uses of the term *cultural infrastructure*.)

**Table 1: Use of the term infrastructure by various federal departments and agencies (2003)**

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Usage of the term <i>Infrastructure</i></b>
Atlantic Canada Opportunity Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High speed internet services including means for e-learning</li> <li>• Infrastructure that will enhance the growth of earned income and employment opportunities in the region</li> </ul>
Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infrastructure that promotes economic development</li> <li>• Municipal facilities and buildings</li> </ul>
Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All the elements that make up our cities and municipalities including physical, social and economic infrastructure</li> <li>• Social infrastructure includes community centers, parks, schools, hospitals, and museums</li> <li>• Housing for households with specific needs/ Improved housing choice and affordability</li> </ul>
Health Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technological infrastructure (virtual networks)</li> </ul>
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community buildings, housing</li> <li>• Infrastructure to link First Nations, Inuit, and Northern communities to the Canadian economy</li> </ul>
Industry Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technological infrastructure: telecommunications, research programs in enabling RandD networks, broadband access, etc</li> </ul>
Infrastructure Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The basic underlying structure on which as organization or system is built and which makes it able to work</li> <li>• Types of infrastructure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) policy and program (specifically cultural, recreational, and urban facilities; tourism; broadband telecommunication; and affordable housing)</li> <li>b) research (transformative infrastructure and knowledge-based infrastructure—information and research networks, business and university links)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Natural Resources Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge infrastructure (data, protocols, maps, science and technology, and monitoring and reporting systems)</li> </ul>
Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information technology facilities, networks, services, and assets</li> <li>• Communication and information technologies</li> <li>• Frameworks for cooperation, information exchange, accountability, and action</li> </ul>
Public Works and Government Services Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Real property assets (facilities and installations to fulfill departmental and public requirements)</li> <li>• Urban renewal and “good neighbor policies” (such as multi-use facilities and rejuvenating downtown cores)</li> </ul>
Western Economic Diversification Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amenities such as cultural infrastructure and knowledge-based infrastructure (for example, educational research facilities)</li> <li>• Cultural/recreational facilities</li> </ul>

Source: Infrastructure Canada—Infrastructure Canada, 2004, Adapted from 1-Page Summaries.

## **Cultural infrastructure**

### **Cultural Spaces Canada Program**

In May 2001, more than two years before the research roundtable, the federal government invested \$500 million to ensure the growth and development of Canadian culture through the *Tomorrow Starts Today* initiative. This investment focused on five key priorities: the production of Canadian books, the production of Canadian sound recordings, the development of Internet content and new media, *the preservation and restoration of cultural infrastructure*, and the promotion and exchange of Canadian cultural goods abroad (Canadian Heritage, 2001a, emphasis added).

In June 2001, then-Canadian Heritage Minister Sheila Copps announced an \$80 million investment in a new Cultural Spaces Canada Program, designed to improve cultural infrastructure with a focus on repairing and upgrading arts and heritage facilities (Canadian Heritage, 2001b). Eligible cultural infrastructure included theatres, art galleries, museums, and facilities built in the 1960s through the 1980s that were in need of repair, as well as older non-cultural infrastructure that could be refurbished for cultural use, such as surplus school or industrial space.

It was through the development of the Cultural Spaces Canada Program that interests in *culture* and *infrastructure* merged. Specifically delineated in its mandate, the Cultural Spaces Canada Program was to develop strategic links between the two:

The Infrastructure Canada Program places an emphasis on local or regional projects, based on priorities set by the municipal and provincial governments who share in the funding of the projects. The Cultural Spaces Canada Program will complement the Infrastructure Canada Program by contributing to the funding of projects that fit into a strategic national approach to improving physical conditions for artistic creativity or enhancing access to arts or heritage experiences. (Canadian Heritage, 2001b)

Overall, the program aimed to improve access for Canadians “to performing and visual arts, museum collections and heritage displays” (Canadian Heritage, 2001b).

### **An evolving definition**

During the 2003 Infrastructure Canada Roundtable discussions, Canadian Heritage participants articulated their concept of cultural infrastructure as “gathering places for artists and the community,” such as theatres, museums, cultural centres, art galleries, etc., where Canadian voices could be heard and their stories told. This included meeting spaces that connect Canadians through active citizenship and participation in cultural activities (Infrastructure Canada, 2004a).

Canadian Heritage also noted their strategic objectives vis-à-vis public (cultural) infrastructure:

- Increase cultural participation and engagement by providing facilities for cultural expression
- Connect Canadians and build a more cohesive Canada
- Promote active citizenship and participation
- Provide support for sharing of cultures and creativity from different communities
- Improve access to performing arts, visual arts, media arts and to museum collections and heritage displays
- Contribute to improved physical conditions for artistic creativity and innovation (Infrastructure Canada, 2004a, 1-Page Summaries, p. 4)

**Towards an expanded definition**

Synthesizing the tri-part definition of infrastructure emerging from the Roundtable Workshop with the definitions of cultural infrastructure articulated by Canadian Heritage, a more comprehensive understanding of *cultural infrastructure* emerges. These concepts are distinct from, but related to, that of *cultural capital*. A preliminary attempt to synthesize these concepts is presented in Table 2.

This expanded scope for considering cultural infrastructure, based on contemporary policy discussions about infrastructure, helps to widen the discussion and counters the tendency to narrowly focus only on a community’s cultural facilities.

**Table 2: Towards an expanded scope for conceptualizing cultural infrastructure**

Sub-categories of Cultural Infrastructure	Examples
Tangible Cultural Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural facilities (theatres, galleries, museums, gathering places)</li> <li>• Rejuvenated urban infrastructure (urban renewal)</li> <li>• Housing/residences for artists</li> <li>• Tourism spaces and infrastructure</li> <li>• Educational and research facilities for culture and the arts</li> </ul>
Intangible Cultural Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural and artistic education and training</li> <li>• Infrastructure to promote economic sustainability to arts and culture</li> <li>• Infrastructure to promote access to arts and culture (funding programs)</li> <li>• Infrastructure for cooperation and collaboration</li> <li>• Cultural and ethnic networks and associations to promote citizenship and diversity</li> </ul>
Transformative Cultural Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge-based networks</li> <li>• Research networks</li> <li>• University-public-private networks</li> <li>• Internet and broadband access</li> <li>• Communication and media (including mass media) access, and access to production capacity</li> </ul>

**II. Framing *cultural infrastructure*: The international context**

With the growing emphasis internationally on preparing citizens to engage in the creative economy, many countries are actively involved in planning for and investing in cultural infrastructure within cities and communities. While only some countries use the precise terminology of *cultural infrastructure*, many territories, provinces, regions, and cities have prioritized cultural infrastructure within their planning and policy documents and initiatives.

This section provides a scan of how various countries are embedding notions of cultural infrastructure within their public policy, programs, and strategies.

**Europe**

**European Commission**

The European Commission uses a broad and comprehensive definition of cultural infrastructure. An EC working paper considers that:

*cultural development, the quality of the natural and the man-made environment, the qualitative and cultural dimension of life, and the development of tourism contribute to making regions economically and socially more attractive in so far as they encourage the creation of sustainable employment. ...[Infrastructure should] support... the development*

of tourism and cultural investment, including the protection of cultural and natural heritage, provided that they are providing sustainable jobs. (Commission of the European Communities, p. 3, italics in original)

Another European Commission-affiliated source provides definitions of cultural infrastructure that touch on themes of employment, access, and international partnership building. Cultural infrastructure includes monuments, archaeological sites, museums, and places of cultural activity. It enhances access to cultural activities (for example, through subtitled performances), and encourages linking and networking between European cultural organizations Council of the European Union, 2003).

### **England**

In England, arts and culture are managed at the regional scale through two sets of offices: the regional offices of the National Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the Regional Cultural Consortia. Consortia are located in each of the English regions outside London, and are led by local chairpersons and DCMS staff.

Although no direct reference to cultural infrastructure was found within the centralized documents of the DCMS, there are several government documents and discussion papers on “the built environment” and its direct connection to social inclusion, arts support, and cultural enhancement (Council for British Archaeology, 2002). It is the regional consortiums that delve more deeply and thoroughly into cultural infrastructure.

Table 3 presents those sub-regions of England that make direct reference to, and illustrate an involvement in, cultural infrastructure.

### **Ireland**

Cultural infrastructure is embedded within the federal framework of the government of Ireland. Within the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism, arts and culture are managed under the Arts, Film and Music Unit; the Cultural Institutions Unit; and the Cultural Institutions Special Projects/IT Services Unit. Rather than addressing only historical and heritage infrastructure for cultural and artistic development, the Cultural Institutions Unit oversees both historical and contemporary cultural infrastructure.

This infrastructure includes the National Archives, the National Concert Hall, the National Library of Ireland, the National Museum of Ireland, Chester Beatty Library, the Irish Museum of Modern Art, and the National Gallery of Ireland.

Ireland’s key goal is to provide a capital infrastructure for the national cultural institutions in co-operation with the Office of Public Works; to acknowledge the fine art and cultural history of the country; and to influence the development of the private sector cultural industry by financially supporting non-state institutions and projects supporting the cultural infrastructure of the country.

### **Norway**

Cultural infrastructure is organized under the Norway Ministry of Culture and Church Affairs, the Ministry of Trade and Industry, the Department of Environmental Affairs, and Arts Council Norway.

In Norway, cultural infrastructure is that which improves:

- Accessibility—emphasizing not only ease of physical and geographic access but also the capacity of an art form to inspire interest, understanding, enjoyment and, where possible, participation
- Financial support—as in support schemes for libraries, cinema, the national press, and literature
- Urban space—as in city regeneration projects
- Current cultural projects—as in that which is managed under the National Museum of Art, Architecture, and Design

**Table 3: Cultural infrastructure in the sub-regions of England**

Sub-region	Scope and definitions of cultural infrastructure
<b>South West</b>	<p>The South West Cultural Consortium believes that cultural infrastructure is about more than buildings—it also encompasses events such as festivals. “The definition of cultural infrastructure is changing because of technology and its influence on how people use facilities” (Cultural Sector Research Group, 2005). “New facilities need to be flexible to accommodate changes in behaviour and the uses of technology” (Elson &amp; Downing, 2005, 25).</p> <p>In <i>Culture and the Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West</i>, cultural infrastructure refers to what is valued in terms of sense of place and environment. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cultural, sport, health, and education facilities</li> <li>• libraries</li> <li>• multi-sports hubs, healthy living centres, and other shared cultural facilities</li> <li>• public art in new development and infrastructure projects</li> </ul> <p>Cultural infrastructure is also seen as having a material dimension and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the performing and visual arts, craft and fashion...</li> <li>• media, film, television, video and language</li> <li>• museums, artefacts, archives and design</li> <li>• libraries, literature, writing and publishing</li> <li>• the built heritage, architecture, landscape and archaeology</li> <li>• sports participation, events, facilities and development</li> <li>• parks, open spaces, wildlife habitats, water environment and countryside recreation</li> <li>• children’s play, playgrounds and play activities</li> <li>• tourism, festivals and attractions; and</li> <li>• informal leisure pursuits. (Elson &amp; Downing, 2005, p. 6)</li> </ul>
<b>Yorkshire</b>	<p>The Yorkshire Arts Board established a Sustaining the Infrastructure program, part of their goal of long term planning for cultural excellence, which includes cultural infrastructure as a top priority for 2006-2007. It refers to cultural infrastructure in the following contexts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• research into artists, arts organizations, and other arts producers</li> <li>• data on employment, the arts economy, issues around taxation and copyright, and methods of production</li> <li>• major evaluation of grants for the arts to assess the extent to which the Arts Council is creating opportunities for individuals and organizations to realize their artistic ambitions</li> </ul>
<b>Living East</b>	<p>Living East can be seen to categorize cultural infrastructure into two temporal categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Past cultural infrastructure: “The past lives on in the landscapes, towns, villages and historic sites that give the region its unique character. Recognizing our historical connection to them helps to create pride of ownership and a sense of belonging.”</li> <li>• Future cultural infrastructure: “Imagining the future means ensuring that newly developed areas include meeting spaces, arts and entertainment venues, sports facilities, children’s play areas and facilities for community groups and creative entrepreneurs. By creating places where people want to live and work, and where firms want to do business, culture contributes to the region’s prosperity.” (Living East, 2006, p. 9)</li> </ul>
<b>Culture North East</b>	<p>Culture North East uses the term <i>cultural assets</i> rather than cultural infrastructure. It prioritized cultural assets in its 2005 <i>Regional Cultural Strategy</i>. Cultural assets are defined as those which contribute to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tourism, heritage, and to social and cultural enhancement</li> <li>• the natural and environmental landscape</li> </ul>
<b>Culture South East</b>	<p>Culture South East has worked most strongly—perhaps the most of all the consortia—to ensure that culture is embedded within its regional plan. Cultural infrastructure includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cultural hubs, multi-sports clubs, and healthy living centres (Elson &amp; Downing, 2004)</li> <li>• sports, tourism, and the natural and built environment</li> <li>• creative industries such as advertising, architecture and design, publishing, television, radio, film and video, software, and computer industries</li> <li>• antiques (Culture South East)</li> </ul> <p>Cultural infrastructure also includes buildings and spaces which can be readily adapted to changing requirements, and which can respond to community wishes.</p>

## Australia

In Australia, arts and culture are centrally organized under two federal ministries: the Department of Communication, Information, Technology and the Arts; and Culture and Recreation Australia. Arts and culture are further managed at the territorial level. Australian *cultural infrastructure* initiatives are generally decentralized and managed under territorial ministries. Table 4 provides an overview of Australian territorial governments that make direct reference to, and illustrate an involvement in, cultural infrastructure.

**Table 4: References to cultural infrastructure in Australia**

Territories	Scope and definitions of cultural infrastructure
<b>Queensland</b>	<p><i>Creative Queensland</i>, the Queensland Government Cultural Policy (2002) discusses the need for “well-planned infrastructure” to support the delivery of services. Initiatives include better use of existing physical spaces (e.g., schools), development of new facilities, establishment of an Indigenous Centre at the Queensland Museum, establishment of Indigenous Knowledge Centres through the state library system, an information forum, improved networking support among collecting and exhibiting institutions, and improved library services. It also considers the enhancement of public places through the engagement of artists in the development of public infrastructure, public art commissions, and the improved management of art collections.</p> <p>State infrastructure and cultural policy also come together under the <i>State Infrastructure Plan 2004-2005</i>. This document is divided into ten sections, one of which specifically plans for cultural infrastructure. In this document, cultural infrastructure includes artistic, cultural, and creative endeavors across the state, including some national and international engagement. This infrastructure is described as a catalyst that drives significant growth in artistic and cultural pursuits, and hence supports a creative economy. Through strategic investment and partnership in Queensland’s cultural infrastructure by the private, commercial, or government sector, this economy can support a broad range of endeavors.</p> <p>Initiatives mentioned in the <i>Plan</i> include: upgrading and expanding arts and cultural facilities, developing new arts facilities, developing a research and storage facility for the Queensland Museum, improving heritage trails and support programs, capital works projects to integrate art and design, and youth engagement programs.</p>
<b>Australian Capital Territory</b>	<p>The <i>Canberra Spatial Plan</i> (ACT Planning and Land Authority, 2004) makes provisions for cultural infrastructure but does not define it outright. The Plan’s objectives include the need to “[f]acilitate the provision of physical, social and cultural infrastructure in a coordinated and cost effective manner” (p. 30). Currently, there are no explicit cultural infrastructure initiatives.</p>
<b>New South Wales</b>	<p>Although not directly termed cultural infrastructure, arts and culture are integrated directly into the regional strategic plan. Cultural initiatives integrated into the regional plan include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government arts projects, collections of fine art and artifacts, and its buildings</li> <li>• Means of monitoring and providing policy advice on the state’s cultural institutions</li> <li>• Means of managing a cultural grants program that supports a range of arts and cultural activities</li> <li>• Means of managing capital projects, which provide venues and accommodation for arts organizations, and globally oversees the capital works programs in cultural institutions</li> <li>• Initiatives that allow people everywhere in New South Wales to “share in the rewards of a vigorous cultural life, in which the arts flourish freely, information is readily available to all who need it, and the cultural heritage of the State ... [is] preserved and interpreted for the benefit of present and future generations” (Government of New South Wales, 2002, p. 132).</li> </ul>
<b>Northern Territories</b>	<p>The State Infrastructure Program 2005-2006 includes direct capital funding and public works money for Community Development, Sport, and Cultural Affairs infrastructure. Given the examples of funded initiatives, the state includes the following types of projects within its scope of cultural infrastructure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural facilities and venues</li> <li>• Recreational facilities</li> <li>• Roadwork improvement prior to the construction of new facilities</li> <li>• Public art</li> <li>• Indigenous community infrastructure</li> <li>• Arts, museum, and library services</li> </ul>
<b>South Australia</b>	<p>Cultural infrastructure includes heritage buildings, heritage items, galleries and museums, entertainment venues, and collections at the Art Gallery of South Australia, South Australian Museum, State Library of South Australia, History Trust of South Australia museums, and in Tandanya.</p> <p>South Australia recognizes these assets could not exist without other infrastructure, including organizations such as the Adelaide Festival Centre, Adelaide Entertainment Centre, and South Australian Film Corporation,</p>

Territories	Scope and definitions of cultural infrastructure
	<p>and events such as the Adelaide Festival, Adelaide Film Festival, Fringe Festival, and Womad.</p> <p>Current infrastructure programs include the master plan for the Adelaide Botanic Gardens and Mount Lofty Botanic Gardens. Also included are upgrades and heritage refurbishment, such as the State Library of South Australia and redevelopment of the public realm of North Terrace (a partnership with Adelaide City Council).</p> <p>The strategic plan's future goals expand on South Australia's definition of cultural infrastructure. Future infrastructure plans are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage, preserve, and add value to its heritage buildings, items, and places</li> <li>• Improve the condition of the state's art, cultural collections, and public spaces as a legacy for future generations</li> <li>• Find innovative ways to display and make art and cultural collections accessible to the South Australian community and international audiences</li> <li>• Upgrade heritage buildings to an acceptable standard for disability access, including the Old Adelaide Gaol, the Thebarton Police Barracks, the Migration Museum, and parts of the South Australian Museum</li> <li>• Display art and cultural collections more effectively for improved tourism, educational, and research outcomes</li> <li>• Ensure ongoing public access to the performing arts</li> <li>• Refurbish Adelaide Festival Centre and environs, upgrade the Adelaide Entertainment Centre and the state's regional theatres in Whyalla, Mount Gambier, Port Pirie, and Renmark</li> <li>• Find new base for the South Australian Film Corporation (Government of South Australia)</li> </ul>
<b>Victoria</b>	<p>Major infrastructure plans and projects that are too large for Capital Works are dealt with by Major Projects Victoria (MPV)—an arm's-length organization from South Australia's Department of Infrastructure. Launched in June 2005 by MPV, the Building One Victoria Project aims to develop infrastructure-focused projects to strengthen the state. The strategic framework for the project supports Victoria's commitment, over the next ten years, to improving old, and building new, cultural infrastructure. Cultural infrastructure in Victoria includes both arts and culture, and sports facilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cultural facility infrastructure includes:</b> State Library of Victoria redevelopment; Ngargee Contemporary Arts Centre; West Gate Bridge Memorial Park; Melbourne Recital Centre and Melbourne Theatre Company; and Bonegilla Migrant Experience Heritage Park</li> <li>• <b>Sporting facilities include:</b> Melbourne Cricket Grounds redevelopment; Commonwealth Games Athletes Village; Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre Upgrade; Docklands Film and Television Studios (on old industrial lands); and Yarra Precinct pedestrian link (Major Projects Victoria)</li> </ul>
<b>Western Australia</b>	<p>Western Australia's Department of Culture and the Arts is responsible for the strategic planning and management of the state's culture and arts capital works allocation, by planning, developing, and maintaining the state's arts and cultural venues and infrastructure. The department receives funding for these capital works projects, which include the following cultural infrastructure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• theatres, galleries, and exhibition spaces, indigenous art and cultural centres, and community museums</li> <li>• venues for, or integral to, arts and cultural activity</li> </ul> <p>Cultural infrastructure also specifically includes public art as detailed in the Western Australian Percent for Art Scheme. This program allocates up to one percent of the estimated total construction cost of the state's capital works projects, totaling \$2 million AUD and over, to commission Western Australian artworks. The Department of Culture and the Arts works in partnership with the Department of Housing and Works to develop, implement, deliver, and advocate for the inclusion of a Percent for Art component in civic projects (Department of Culture and the Arts, Government of Western Australia).</p>

## United States

### National level

There are three major federal institutions that directly support arts and culture in the United States: the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services. All three make reference to either arts or cultural infrastructure or facilities. Overall, however, the use of the term cultural infrastructure appears to be more for rhetorical value than as a tangible goal or strategy (Schuster, 2002).

The **National Endowment for the Arts** (NEA) has a Folk and Traditional Arts Partnership Program that provides between \$10,000 U.S. to \$50,000 U.S. to advance “the Arts Endowment's goal to preserve [the

United States'] diverse cultural heritage by strengthening the state and regional infrastructure of support for the folk and traditional arts" (NEA). The Folk and Traditional Arts Partnership is one of the only references made to infrastructure in any of the organization's policy literature.

According to the NEA, within the context of their Folk and Traditional Arts Partnership Program, "the term infrastructure refers to stable, professionally directed programs that are responsive to a diverse folk and traditional arts heritage" (NEA).

Projects might include but are not limited to:

- Professional folk arts positions in support of the folk and traditional arts
- The creation of long-term organizational and community partnerships that are based in the folk and traditional arts
- Discovery research to identify and document underserved folk and traditional artists and arts
- Apprenticeship programs
- Technical assistance to traditional artists and folk arts organizations
- Festivals, exhibitions, new technology, and other presentations of folk and traditional artists and their work (NEA).

The **National Endowment for the Humanities** (NEH) interprets cultural infrastructure in three ways: tangible, intangible, and technological or 'cyber-infrastructure'. The NEH provides a series of Challenge Grants that interpret cultural infrastructure in ways that relate to tangible, intangible, and technological conceptions of arts and culture. Following notions of tangible infrastructure, the NEH provides support for museum capital improvements, such as recent grants for the Heritage Harbor Museum in Providence, Rhode Island and the Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village in Dearborn, Michigan.

Intangible cultural infrastructure is also supported, as the grants "help to preserve collections, expand educational resources and facilities, and enact programs that foster research in the humanities" (NEH). The American Academy of Arts and Sciences' Support for Humanities Endowment and Infrastructure Program is funded through a Challenge Grant "for a program of visiting scholars in the humanities and for lectures, conferences and special projects; and renovation of office facilities for visiting scholars" (NEH). The educational, networking, and operational foci of their mandate are efforts to develop intangible structures that support the larger systems of humanities investigations.

Technological cultural infrastructure or 'cyber-infrastructure' is also a central focus of the NEH. Several Challenge Grants provide technological infrastructure to communities and organizations to enhance culture and the arts through communications and connectivity. One of the organization's Challenge Grants aids the New England Historic Genealogical Society to develop "the technological infrastructure for a website that will serve as an electronic portal into the society's manuscript collections and research library" (NEH).

The foremost use of the term infrastructure by the **Institute of Museum and Library Services** (IMLS) is found enshrined in the various State Library Services and Technology Acts. Similar to the NEH, the IMLS refers to technological infrastructure as that which provides access to networked information for their users, as well as community education.

According to the IMLS, infrastructure also relates to the networked connections between libraries. The purpose of this connective variant of infrastructure is to build "understanding, shared goals, and healthy working relationships among all types of libraries as well as an expanded, more visible role for those libraries in the communities they serve" (IMLS).

The IMLS also funds tangible infrastructure with its Museums for America grants. Designed to be flexible, these grants fund ongoing museum activities including the improvement of institutional infrastructure (IMLS).

### **State level**

Although cultural or arts infrastructure is more prevalent at the state than the federal level, within the governmental/policy realm it does not seem to be as prominently pursued in the U.S. as it is in Australia, the U.K., or Canada. (This may be, in part, due to the greater involvement of private interests and philanthropists in developing cultural facilities in the United States.) This section presents brief overviews of three states that are investing time, finances, and consideration into cultural or arts infrastructure: California, New York, and Oregon.

**California.** In 2001, California proposed a new state budget bill (8260) which attempted to establish a Cultural Infrastructure Development Fund to provide grants to museums, as well as to “rehearsal and gallery space, community centers and extra-curricular arts education facilities, renovations for handicapped accessibility and earthquake retrofitting, adapting new technology, and building management capacity” (Analysis of the 2001-02 Budget Bill). The proposal not only requested the development of such a fund but also the expansion of the responsibilities of the California Arts Council (CAC) to administer it and thereby facilitate in the upkeep, development, and management of California’s state cultural infrastructure. However, due to extreme state budget pressures in 2003, this proposed program was not implemented.

Cultural infrastructure in California currently focuses on initiatives that either contribute both to larger public infrastructure and arts issues, or to initiatives that provide technological infrastructure that facilitate connection and collaboration with public and private stakeholders and the larger artistic community.

Rather than including infrastructure needs as a responsibility of the California Arts Council, the organization’s 2005-2006 Strategic Plan illustrates the importance of cultural infrastructure. According to this document, the major focus on infrastructure, as far as arts and culture goes, is a singular transportation project called Public Art for Transportation (California Arts Council). The project uses arts and culture funding and initiatives to upgrade the aging transportation infrastructure of the state. Unlike other conceptions of cultural infrastructure, this one sees arts and culture used to aid in the upkeep of traditional public infrastructure rather than seeing funds being directed for the upkeep of production and consumption space of arts and culture (for example, theatres and galleries).

The Arts Council has also established an Infrastructure Grant Program where infrastructure is conceived of as communicative networks and linkages among stakeholders and agencies in arts and culture. An excerpt from the Council’s Biennial Report describes the program:

The Infrastructure Support Program was established to build upon or establish statewide networks of multicultural arts organizations, and discipline-specific or function-specific arts service providers. The goals of this program are the building of a solid communication infrastructure designed to increase information sharing, networking, collaborations, marketing and advocacy, and the development of strategies for better serving the public. The Council provided funding for 16 statewide networks totaling \$224,000. (California Arts Council, n.d., p. 16)

No mention was made of an intangible conception of cultural infrastructure, but California does conceive of both tangible and technological infrastructure.

**New York.** The New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) offers one of the more interesting conceptions of cultural infrastructure at the state level. To the NYSCA, cultural infrastructure includes not only tangible built forms or intangible operating structures, but also community infrastructure (tangible and intangible) as well as conceptual technological infrastructure, meaning the development of graphic representations of space and their development into built form.

Direct grant support for cultural infrastructure is fed through two Council Grant Areas: Architecture, Planning and Design, and Capital Projects. The objectives of the grants are to support the following types of cultural infrastructure:

- Institutional operations of organizations supporting public programs in design and planning
- Design literacy programs
- Communities, public spaces, and cultural facilities
- Individuals who work in design arts
- Contemporary and historical/classical architecture
- Streetscapes, public spaces, transportation, growth management, open space that socially and economically revitalizes New York villages, towns, and cities
- Research that translates advances in the imaginative products of design technology into built form, for the purposes of bridging “the growing gap between some contemporary theory and practice” (NYSCA).

The New York State Council on the Arts presents a scope of cultural infrastructure incorporating built form (including public space, heritage, transit space, etc.), institutional or operational funding, networking, technological connectivity, education, and research initiatives that support the development of arts and culture as a field.

**Oregon.** In April 2006, the Oregon Arts Commission published *Plan for a Creative Oregon Initiative*, which “outlines the opportunities that exist for the arts and creative sector” (Oregon Arts Commission, 2006, 2), in which cultural infrastructure takes two different forms: tangible and technological.

In support of the economic potential and benefits of creativity, arts, and culture, the Oregon Arts Commission pressed for the importance of intangible infrastructure for the long-term and economic sustainability of state arts and cultural organizations. The *Plan for a Creative Oregon Initiative* argues for “critical infrastructure funding (operating support) to provide essential services and access to the arts” (6). Within the publication, arts and culture are considered for their economic potential and so infrastructure funding serves the goals of enhancing the economic sustainability and survival of arts and culture.

### III. Analysis

A comprehensive table representing the geographically specific uses of the term *cultural infrastructure* is presented in Appendix A. This table was used as a tool to compare how various countries and jurisdictions use the term cultural infrastructure in their policy documents. It also provides a helpful means of identifying distinctive trends and themes in terms of what constitutes cultural infrastructure (What types of cultural infrastructure are most commonly alluded to?) and geographic trends (What types of cultural infrastructure are most commonly alluded to in each geographic region?).

## What constitutes cultural infrastructure?

The national and international policy scan revealed a myriad of specific cultural infrastructure types falling under the tri-part categories of tangible, intangible, and transformative. As shown in Table 6, these specific cultural infrastructure types can be further categorized by theme.

As one might expect, tangible cultural infrastructure receives the most attention both nationally and internationally in policy literature. Museums, arts and entertainment venues, cultural facilities, libraries, and art museums and galleries are the most common references made to cultural infrastructure. Thematically, arts and cultural amenities, followed by historical attractions, and the built environment, are the most prevalent categories of tangible cultural infrastructure. The natural environment and creative industries are, albeit much less frequently, also mentioned in reference to tangible cultural infrastructure.

Intangible cultural infrastructure is mentioned less within policy literature. Grant programs receive the most attention, followed closely by networking. In general, cultural policy and knowledge generation are the two most dominant categories of intangible cultural infrastructure. Knowledge exchange and human resources, while noteworthy, are mentioned by fewer government departments and agencies.

**Table 6: Types of cultural infrastructure and emerging themes**

Tangible	Intangible	Transformative
<p><b>Historical:</b> built heritage, monuments, archaeological and historic sites, and museums</p> <p><b>Educational:</b> archives, libraries, educational facilities, and research facilities</p> <p><b>Industrial:</b> creative industries</p> <p><b>Arts and Cultural Amenities:</b> art museums and galleries, cinemas, arts and entertainment venues, arts facilities, cultural facilities, cultural hubs, rehearsal spaces, arts and culture organizations, community centers, and meeting spaces</p> <p><b>Special Events and Attractions:</b> presentations and exhibits, festivals, tourism spaces</p> <p><b>Outdoor and Recreational:</b> playgrounds, sport and recreational facilities, health facilities, and parks</p> <p><b>Natural Environment:</b> water environment, countryside, open spaces, wildlife habitats, and natural landscapes</p> <p><b>Built Environment:</b> gardens, public art, built landscapes, public spaces, building restorations, accessibility infrastructure, and indigenous community infrastructure</p>	<p><b>Knowledge Generation:</b> research and research data</p> <p><b>Policy:</b> evaluation of cultural policy, youth policy and program initiatives, and grant programs</p> <p><b>Knowledge Exchange:</b> educational initiatives</p> <p><b>Networking:</b> partnerships and networks</p> <p><b>Human Resources:</b> employment, professional development, apprenticeships, and fellowships</p>	<p><b>Technological:</b> new technology, connectivity, and digital and online resources and collections</p>

Perhaps because it is a relatively new concept, transformative cultural infrastructure receives the least attention in the cultural policy and program literature reviewed. When mentioned, transformative cultural infrastructure is most commonly discussed in reference to digital and online resources and collections, which are becoming increasingly relevant and popular in the digital age.

In short, government departments and agencies, both nationally and internationally, place considerably more emphasis on tangible cultural infrastructure than on intangible and transformative cultural infrastructure. Geographically, however, different trends emerge.

## **Geographic trends**

### **Canada**

The federal Canadian sources presented a fairly expansive range of cultural infrastructure types. Although this may be a reflection of the established framework and its basis on the Canadian tri-part definition of infrastructure—tangible, intangible, and transformative—Canadian policy does provide one of the more broad definitions of cultural infrastructure.

In terms of tangible cultural infrastructure, Canadian policy often refers to what might be considered typical conceptualizations of cultural infrastructure: museums, libraries, research facilities, art museums and galleries, arts and entertainment venues, and arts and cultural facilities.

The natural or built environment, sport and recreational facilities, or the outdoors are not explicit in descriptions of tangible cultural infrastructure. It is important to note, however, that some infrastructure-related programs do include references to recreation facilities, which, in turn, often includes culture-oriented recreational facilities. Similarly, the “built environment” can be seen to be addressed in part through heritage and historic places initiatives. These additional sources were not reviewed in this scan, which concentrated on the definitions set out by Infrastructure Canada and Canadian Heritage, the two main policy agents in this area. These observations do not invalidate the current research, but point to limitations in the scope of documents reviewed, and thus the patterns found in the analysis should be interpreted as high-level observations.

Canadian Heritage refers to grant programs in discussions of intangible cultural infrastructure, while Infrastructure policy places strong emphasis on the importance of knowledge generation and exchange, and their roles in supporting the physical (tangible) entities.

Canada is one of only two geographic regions (the other being the United States) that make any reference to transformative cultural infrastructure.

### **European Union**

The European Commission focuses on historical tangible cultural infrastructure including monuments, archaeological and historic sites, and museums. This emphasis is likely a reflection of Europe's long, rich history and cultural heritage. The Commission also mentions cultural facilities, which is likely used as an all-encompassing term for a variety of tangible cultural infrastructure types.

In terms of intangible cultural infrastructure, the E.U. refers to networking, specifically between European cultural organizations. Human resources and employment are also seen as intangible cultural infrastructure. The European Commission does not allow for transformative cultural infrastructure in its description of cultural infrastructure.

## **England**

England's conceptualization of tangible cultural infrastructure is unique largely because of its focus on the natural environment. Along with the more common types of tangible cultural infrastructure such as cultural facilities, arts and entertainment venues, public art, built heritage, and museums, several of England's consortia also mention playgrounds, sport and recreational facilities, health facilities and various elements of the natural landscape as tangible cultural infrastructure. This is likely in part because there is no departmental divide between culture and sport, and the two, as a result, become somewhat synonymous.

There is, however, tremendous variation from consortium to consortium, with only one of the five consortia making any reference to intangible cultural infrastructure. The Yorkshire Arts Board references knowledge generation (research and data), cultural policy, and grant programs in discussions relating to intangible cultural infrastructure.

None of England's consortia make reference to transformative cultural infrastructure.

## **Ireland**

Ireland's conceptualization of tangible cultural infrastructure is somewhat unique because of its focus on large-scale national cultural institutions and its simultaneous support for the private sector cultural industry. Ireland's definition of what constitutes cultural infrastructure is fairly limited with only tangible cultural infrastructure such as museums, archives, libraries, art museums and galleries, and arts and entertainment venues mentioned.

Ireland makes no reference to intangible or transformative cultural infrastructure.

## **Norway**

Norway's conceptualization of cultural infrastructure is limited to common types of tangible cultural infrastructure such as libraries, art museums and galleries, cinemas, and public art. It is interesting, however, that the country defines cultural infrastructure by what it does rather than by what it is. Cultural infrastructure, for example, is described as that which improves accessibility, financial support, urban space, and cultural projects.

Similar to Ireland, Norway makes no reference to intangible or transformative cultural infrastructure.

## **Australia**

Like England, Australia's conceptualization of tangible cultural infrastructure includes not only common types of cultural infrastructure, such as museums, libraries, galleries, rehearsal spaces, and arts and cultural facilities, but also sport and recreational facilities and parks. Australia's only reference relating to the natural environment is heritage trails (Queensland). Several territories do, however, note various elements of the built environment in their definitions of cultural infrastructure, including gardens, public art, building re-use, and indigenous community infrastructure. Australia is the only geographic region that explicitly acknowledges infrastructure for indigenous communities in their discussions of cultural infrastructure.

Australian cultural policy makes few references to intangible cultural infrastructure and no explicit reference to transformative cultural infrastructure. The initiatives mentioned in *Creative Queensland* reference some intangible infrastructure to support statewide services, such as an information forum, improved networking support among collecting and exhibiting institutions, and various public art programs.

## **United States**

Cultural infrastructure in the United States is discussed at both the federal and state levels. At both levels, tangible, intangible, and transformative cultural infrastructure are equally pursued. Various arts and cultural amenities including museums, libraries, cultural facilities, and more were mentioned in reference to tangible cultural infrastructure. There is, however, no mention of sport and recreational facilities, health facilities, or the natural environment, perhaps a reflection of the government departments and agencies in question.

The United States focuses more on intangible and transformative cultural infrastructure than any other geographic region including Canada. In terms of the intangible, grant programs, research, educational initiatives, networking, and human resources receive the most attention. The United States emphasizes the importance of transformative (or technological) cultural infrastructure that increases connectivity, with emphasis on 'cyber-infrastructure' including digital and online resources/collections.

## **Concluding remarks**

This expanded scope for considering cultural infrastructure, based on contemporary policy discussions about infrastructure, helps to widen the discussion and counters the tendency to narrowly focus only on a community's cultural facilities. There seems to be an emerging tendency, internationally and particularly in North America, to recognize the importance not only of tangible built forms of cultural infrastructure but also of less tangible and more technologically oriented types of cultural infrastructure.

Policy documents from Australia and England show that by defining what constitutes cultural infrastructure regionally rather than nationally, a more diverse range of significant cultural infrastructure types can emerge. By considering cultural infrastructure from a regional perspective, government departments and agencies can more adequately provide for specific community needs.

The tendency to define cultural infrastructure by its function rather than by its form, as demonstrated by Norway and the European Union, allows for a more broad and inclusive understanding of cultural infrastructure. Framing cultural infrastructure from a functional perspective also highlights the diverse roles of cultural infrastructure and its valuable contribution to a community's social fabric, economy, and overall quality of life.

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## Creative City Network of Canada

*Transforming communities through culture*

The Creative City Network of Canada is a national non-profit organization that operates as a knowledge-sharing, research, public education, and professional development resource in the field of local cultural policy, planning and practice.

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