

# The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation

**Inclusion. Sustainability.  
Resilience. Innovation.**

By Ann McQueen



Tamil Seniors from Scarborough Centre for Healthy Communities perform in Jumblies Theatre's 'Like An Old Tale' showcase at Cedar Ridge Creative Centre, May 2010. Photo: Katherine

This Funder Portrait is part of a series of brief papers and podcast interviews featuring funders who are supporting arts and culture as a creative strategy to achieve community building and development, civic engagement, or social justice goals. Visit the [Animating Democracy](#) website for other Funder Portraits and [Resources](#).

Listen to a [podcast interview](#) by **Ann McQueen** with J.W. McConnell Family Foundation President and CEO **Stephen Huddart**.

Related profile: [Jumblies Theatre](#)

*The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, based in Montreal and funding throughout Canada, supports what it calls socially engaged arts—arts organizations and activities that build bridges between culture and community—as a way to realize its vision of “a Canada where all people feel a sense of belonging and contribute as active citizens to improving the well-being of all.” The foundation’s most recent initiative focused on arts-based social inclusion owes much to what it learned from ArtsSmarts, an arts-infused learning program launched at the end of the 1990s. In fact, ArtsSmarts has had a lasting impact on the way the foundation approaches its work in building networks and scaling innovations, no matter the sector.*

*The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation often makes early stage investments to experiment and learn. Then, as it did with ArtsSmarts, it leverages its grants to support demonstration projects into national initiatives. Devoted to generating and acting on knowledge, the foundation also disseminates its own reports and white papers, and convenes roundtables with other learning organizations. With an endowment of about \$550 million and up to \$20 million in grants each year, all of its activities are directed towards its mission of “engag[ing] Canadians in building a more innovative, inclusive, sustainable, and resilient society.”*

Artists can surface and sustain the capacity of people by working in creative collaboration with vulnerable and marginalized communities, fomenting strategies of self-realization, adaptation, and emancipation through context-based, participatory art. This art does not displace the vulnerable. It includes them, inspires them, and makes room for them as co-creators.

[The Art of Resilience, The Resilience of Art](#)

Few family foundations aspire to national impact; fewer still achieve that goal. The [J.W. McConnell Family Foundation](#), based in Montreal and funding throughout Canada, convenes roundtables, invests in strengthening leaders, organizations and networks, and leverages early support for demonstration projects into multi-year national initiatives. With an endowment of about \$550 million<sup>1</sup> and \$20 million in grants each year, its work is focused on a vision of “a Canada where all people feel a sense of belonging and contribute as active citizens to improving the well-being of all.” One route to realizing this vision is through the arts.

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## THE LEGACY

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John Wilson McConnell was born in 1877 into the hardscrabble life of a large Irish immigrant family; by 1920, he was one of the richest men in Canada. Described as a generous and modest man, a tithing Methodist whose early giving was largely anonymous, he established his country’s second family foundation in 1937. As the well-being of the most vulnerable of his fellow citizens was threatened by the depression, John Wilson took a particular interest in youth, elders, healthcare and education, which he expressed through capital gifts and grants. McGill University and its hospitals, the YMCA, Boys’ and Girls’ Clubs, homes for the elderly and a number of churches were early recipients. The J.W. McConnell Foundation also provided major funding for the construction of Place-des-Arts, Montreal’s performing arts center, which opened the year of its benefactor’s death in 1963.

John Wilson’s family continued to support his philanthropic interests under a new moniker, The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, which is still governed solely by his direct descendants. In 1980, foundation trustees adopted a national focus. By the 1990s, they embraced a proactive mission focused on helping Canadians “understand, adapt, and respond creatively and effectively” to the profound economic, social and political changes affecting Canada and the world. The foundation turned from favoring capital infrastructure to projects that made organizations more productive, efficient, and responsive. Soon, it adopted a practice that still resonates today—testing hypotheses by making modest investments in a variety of settings; then amplifying the impact of successful local innovations by bringing them to scale across the country.

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## NOT AN ARTS FUNDER

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The J. W. McConnell Family Foundation is not, staff hastens to declare, an arts funder. Yet one of its leading initiatives, ArtsSmarts (GénieArts in French), which was developed by the foundation and launched in 1998, became an exemplar of how the arts can create change in individuals, organizations, and systems. Lessons from the initiative, which was one of the foundation's first efforts at moving a local initiative to national scale, still resonate today.

Just as in the United States, the economic crunch of the mid-1990s meant that many Canadian schools reduced or dropped art programs. How were young Canadians to “understand, adapt, and respond creatively and effectively” to the 21<sup>st</sup> century knowledge economy without the arts? The foundation convened a roundtable in 1996 to tackle this challenge. Participants proposed a new arts-in-education model to increase student engagement and develop teacher practice by linking schools and communities, artists, and educators. ArtsSmarts began to roll out across Canada in 1998.

The foundation's first commitment, \$2,700,000, supported the work of seven partners<sup>2</sup> as well as the [Canadian Conference of the Arts](#)<sup>3</sup> in Ottawa, which centralized project administration. Within its first three years, ArtsSmarts had involved 58,000 students and a second phase of funding, \$3,420,000, was committed through 2003. This was intended to mark the end of the foundation's involvement in the time-limited initiative—until Tim Brodhead, then the foundation president, took a new staff member with him to the ArtsSmarts annual meeting in Quebec City.

Stephen Huddart—now President and CEO—was two weeks into his new job as a senior program officer when he convinced Brodhead to assign him to the ArtsSmarts initiative. The value of the program was evident. “What that program did for me and for the foundation” Huddart says, “was to show us how powerful the arts can be as a means of bringing new hope and engagement and opportunity to young learners. We discovered over and over again that the program was reaching children for whom school in the traditional sense was a terminally boring or difficult experience. We were so struck by how many times a teacher would say ‘I had no idea this student of mine had such talent’ or ‘could become so passionate about education.’ It transformed kids.”<sup>4</sup>

And here, according to Huddart, is the central reason that the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation—“not an arts funder”—dove so deeply into supporting art: “ArtsSmarts is about using the arts as a means of teaching other topic areas. It's not about teaching art *per se* or about how to make art. It was instructive for the foundation, in terms of the arts' unexpected power to bring life to classrooms and in particular, it was its take-up by some of the most difficult inner city or



President and CEO of the  
J.W. McConnell Foundation,  
Stephen Huddart

remote aboriginal communities—it was in those settings that ArtsSmarts seemed to have the most dramatic effect on student involvement, student retention, and overall participation in education.”

### ArtsSmarts: Key Lessons <sup>5</sup>

- ArtsSmarts has a catalytic effect on student engagement, academic performance, and school completion.
- Students of varying abilities learn together at the same time, which is crucial to teaching in today’s diverse classrooms.
- ArtsSmarts’ projects are co-created among teachers, artists, and students and often include unique local content. Putting ‘pre-packaged’ programs aside in favor of a responsive, flexible approach creates passionate advocates among local partners.
- Outcomes can be puzzling. In its early stages at a Métis<sup>6</sup> school in Northern Alberta, academic results declined, even as anecdotal evidence indicated that ArtsSmarts benefited student self esteem, as well as school and community culture. Change can sometimes create ‘noise’ that obscures deeper shifts in a system. Eventually, local practice was refined and improved, and the school became the most improved in the District and a model for Indigenous schools across Canada.
- ArtsSmarts holds lessons about how a concept becomes a set of demonstration projects and later a national program operating at local and regional levels. It has attracted over 450 funders and sponsors at the local and regional levels, but finding national partners has been more difficult.
- ArtsSmarts showed the foundation and its partners how to work with intermediaries to manage programs and build networks.

With \$3,600,000 from The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, the goal of the third phase (2003 to 2008) was to expand beyond ArtsSmarts’ demonstration sites to make it an integral part of the curriculum of all provinces. The program expanded its partner base and assigned the role of administering and incubating ArtsSmarts across the country to the [Canadian Education Association](#) (CEA).



The need to establish a national organization to manage a growing network of practitioners and invest in professional development, research, conferences, and digital resources soon became apparent. In 2008, the foundation made a \$1,000,000 grant to ArtsSmarts to support its transition to independent self-governing status. Then in 2010, a \$300,000 grant helped the organization adapt to changing circumstances by developing a new business model.

By early 2013, ArtsSmarts began to reflect on its next phase. If self-sustaining provincial and

Through ArtsSmarts, Social Science students collaborated with artist Odile Tétu to create a mural representing the Acadian and Aboriginal stories of their region." Photo courtesy of GénieArts Nouvelle Écosse

regional partners are carrying out the core ArtsSmarts work, is a national organization still relevant? Should ArtsSmarts continue, merge, or close up shop? The board reached a decision that fall. While the impact of the foundation's funding and network building will continue to be felt in classrooms across Canada, the national ArtsSmarts made the decision to close by the end of 2013.<sup>7</sup>

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## ART FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

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The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation has invested more than \$10 million in ArtsSmarts since its inception. The initiative's impact on the foundation's more recent work—regardless of sector—remains palpable. As Huddart notes, “We learned a lot about how scaling works or doesn't [from] ArtsSmarts. When we looked to the systems we were trying to change, we had to look at strategies at different levels from local to regional to national, to think about how systems transform. We spent a lot of time thinking about this.”

In 2006, as the foundation was immersed in initiatives in family caregiving, environmental stewardship, and poverty reduction, the Trustees adopted a new mission statement to reflect the proactive work in grant making, convening and network building that was already underway:

*The J. W. McConnell Family Foundation engages Canadians in building a more innovative, inclusive, sustainable, and resilient society.*

It was in this context, and fully in keeping with its self-described role of “not an arts funder,” that McConnell expanded its emphasis on what it calls socially engaged arts by supporting program models such as *El Sistema*-style youth orchestras, community arts studios focused on marginalized individuals, and collaborative nation-wide community art festivals. “It's not,” Huddart says, “about excellence in the arts. It's about art as a factor in social change.”

***It's about making art accessible to all.*** [Culture pour tous](#) grew out of the volunteer effort of artists and leading members of the Quebec cultural community to democratize and build awareness of local cultural assets by creating a three-day festival of hands-on art making. The first [Journées de la culture](#) was held in Montreal at the end of September 1997; this cultural happening now occurs throughout Quebec. In 2005, the foundation made a three-year \$382,000 grant to expand Journées de la culture's activities to include programs to strengthen artists' ability to work with communities, to support the creation of public works of art in schools and communities, and to include new linguistic and cultural communities. This focus on the training and support of practitioners continued through 2012 with the foundation's four-year, \$500,000 grant to Culture pour tous to expand its work building bridges between the social and cultural realms, a practice known as cultural mediation, by providing training, support, research and networking opportunities to communities across Quebec.

Journées de la culture inspired the [Canadian Arts Summit](#) to launch a national effort with the first three-day [Culture Days](#) event in 2009; in 2013, an estimated 1.7 million Canadians participated in a weekend of community arts activities and free admission to cultural institutions. The foundation's next four-year, \$750,000 grant, made in 2012, was centered on sharing this program model. Funding is helping Culture Days strengthen its network of 1,500 organizations in Canada by establishing a Learning Program to conduct research, document programs, and share lessons on cultural engagement programming through increased networking opportunities.

***It's about expressing shared concerns through art.*** The [National Theatre School of Canada](#) (NTS) in Montreal provides professional training in acting, playwriting, directing, and design, in both French and English. In 2005, with a five-year \$455,000 grant, NTS established the Cultural and Artistic Leadership Program (CALP) to facilitate mentoring, make small grants supporting student attendance at artistic events, and finance post-graduate productions that combined artistic excellence with social impact. A recent foundation report<sup>8</sup> exploring this project documented productions on issues such as brutalized children ("Use My Babies Well"), immigration and integration ("Borealis" and "Mondial des cultures"), industrial pollution ("Theatre Ecolo!"), and the environment ("The Beekeepers"). Importantly, each production also gave the artist the opportunity to talk with the audience about the art and the issues, reinforcing the social impact of theater.

Following this grant, in 2011 the foundation committed \$1 million to NTS' 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary campaign to enable CALP to expand across Canada. This funding, along with gifts from other donors and matching commitments from the Federal and Quebec Governments, will establish endowments at seven community foundations. By the time this four-year grant runs its course, about \$3,700,000 in endowments will be in place, generating an estimated \$131,950 annually to support innovative, socially focused productions by recent NTS graduates and ensuring that this nation-wide expansion will be supported in perpetuity.



La Ruche d'Art Community Studio and Science Shop is a storefront classroom and art hive located in the community of St Henri in Montreal, QC. This space serves as a welcoming public homeplace for locals as well as for students from neighboring universities. Photo: Leo Bottos.



A favorite crooner created by Daniel Ducheck and locals watches over the Studio d'Art Saint-Sulpice Collective Garden at this LaRuche d'Art studio located in a family social housing neighborhood in Northern Montreal. Photo: Meng Siow

*It's about the power of art to include and engage.* [La Ruche d'Art](#)—The Art Hive—is a Montreal-based free

community studio that makes art more accessible, especially to socially isolated people on the margins of society, through dialogue, art making, and gardening. The studio opened its doors in 2011 as a community outreach program of Concordia University's Faculty of Fine Arts. In 2012, the foundation made a three-year, \$300,000 grant to help La Ruche d'Art expand to a second Montreal site and disseminate lessons to influence municipalities, local Arts Councils, and other universities to recognize the social value of community arts programs. The foundation has already noted the program's impact on students—future practitioners—who become more engaged in their communities while learning new skills that will benefit their artistic practice and employment opportunities. Now, it is documenting its impact on the engagement and inclusion of street involved youth, low-income families, senior citizens and others.

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## KNOWLEDGE AS CURRENCY

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The foundation's approach to grant making demands a high degree of evaluation and ongoing learning. So it's startling to hear its Knowledge and Evaluation Officer declare, "we don't evaluate our grantees." But that's exactly Kevin Chin's position. Instead, when a grantee asks about what type of evaluation the foundation wants, he suggests they match the evaluation to their organization's needs. Summative, formative, or developmental evaluation—there's nothing standard about evaluation. It's up to the grantee to decide whether or not their

project would benefit from a formal evaluation and, if so, what kind would fit best. “We’re agnostic about different ways of evaluating. It’s context dependent,” he says.

The family foundation focuses everything—from grantee selection to initiative design to its knowledge and evaluation agenda—through the lens of its mission and Canada’s four core challenges: inclusion, sustainability, resilience, and innovation. This moves Chin’s attention from the grantees—though they certainly get their share of that—and focuses him on the big picture, learning from multiple program evaluations, evaluating the foundation’s own work, and sharing its lessons with other stakeholders. “The knowledge piece,” Chin says, “is trying to figure out what stories are worth telling. My role is to capture knowledge for public dissemination—what parts of our work can benefit the community sector—and for our internal audience, for our Trustees and staff, to help us become better grant makers. Knowledge is so ethereal, but we know it’s important. Our main currency is information, knowledge.”<sup>9</sup>

Knowledge and evaluation come together in Chin’s thinking about various approaches to evaluation. For instance, Chin is a fan of Developmental Evaluation or DE, which is particularly helpful in complex or evolving situations where the program model or even its goals are not yet fixed. In such fluid projects, the evaluator is embedded in the work, able to provide feedback and reality testing in real time. Chin notes that DE has been enormously important to the success of the foundation’s philanthropic focus on Indigenous youth where, for example, an evaluator can point to emerging issues of power and identity, allowing for adjustments to be made before the problem overshadows the intent of the program. While DE is powerful, Chin says, “this approach has to be done thoughtfully and with eyes wide open.”

On the other hand, Chin is particularly intrigued by the possibilities of visual arts-based evaluation, which he sees as “a more engaging evaluation approach that’s not transactional, that promotes engagement from different stakeholders, including nonreaders and others.” A relative newcomer to the idea, he confesses to being surprised to learn that one grantee had been using a visual arts-based evaluation model for years.

[Jumblies Theatre](#) was founded in 2001 to create socially engaged arts projects and performances “with, for, and about the people and stories found there” in the immigrant and low-income communities of Toronto. Within a few years, Jumblies was also working across Ontario and British Columbia to deliver art programs, promote social inclusion of marginalized individuals, and conduct professional development workshops to train local practitioners. A three-year \$320,000 grant made in 2012 is helping Jumblies work with local artists and organizations to support community arts centers in 15 rural and urban areas across Canada. This grant is also assisting with its work mentoring new leadership, delivering unique capacity-building programs, and building national and regional collaborations.



**McConnell’s Knowledge and Evaluation Officer Dr. Kevin Chin**

Jumblies' founder, Ruth Howard, has experimented with visual arts-based planning and evaluation for nearly a decade. Today, artists and staff integrate it into all stages of their work for immediate, direct feedback, and teach it as a core skill in their professional development and mentoring activities. Three examples:

Participants reflect back on a residency or collective performance by creating large multi-colored graphs reflecting on the ups and downs of the program. As the graphs are compared and discussed, the valuable feedback and insight Jumblies staff receives helps shape future agendas.

Following a residency, Jumblies artists and staff write their desires and unfinished business on pebbles laid out as a path forward. The pebbles are then divided into two piles: pebbles with ideas they want to realize are saved to become part of the plan for the coming year; those desires/pebbles which they were willing to let go are thrown into the nearby river.

“Evaluation quilts” are made up of comments written or drawn on bits of color-coded fabric representing various categories (highlights, challenges, suggestions), then sewn onto a fabric base, creating a durable display. Transcriptions of the comments feed into future planning.

“Ruth Howard is very clear that with any kind of arts-based evaluation, you need a professional artist there.” Chin ponders before taking the idea a step further. “Our foundation could bring in an artist to interpret for us, help us evaluate an event or experience, but how do you share that with a larger audience? Maybe that’s our role as a foundation, to interpret these creative ideas, to interpret a danced evaluation, a mural, a photograph, to act as a bridge, to put a frame around something like that to make it easier to understand. A lot of funders are reluctant to go down this route of arts-based evaluation, but as a private family foundation, we are afforded a lot of privileges in terms of experimentation. We have an extremely supportive board interested in innovation, so for us to embark on an arts-based evaluation, it’s a possibility.”

Entertaining such ideas is Kevin Chin’s way of thinking long-term, big picture. “The idea of social capital—community, inclusion, self-esteem, trust—how do you measure that in an engaging way? Certainly you could use surveys, interviews. How can we incorporate the concepts of



**Jumblies staff taking part in an evaluation exercise for the Arts for All Essential workshop. Photo: Katherine Fleitas**

storytelling and social capital in a way that allows us to evaluate our initiatives at a macro level? I've been exploring different ways of doing it, but I'm still looking."

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## ART AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

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While it couldn't have been imagined at the outset, ArtsSmarts, with its focus on networks as a means of scaling programs and impact, along with more recently funded socially engaged arts programs, has paved the way for the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation's most recent initiative focused on art and social inclusion.

The [New Brunswick Youth Orchestra](#) (NBYO) founded over 40 years ago, introduced [Sistema NB](#) in 2009. In 2010, the foundation, noting that one out of six New Brunswick children live in poverty, made a three-year, \$200,000 grant to expand Sistema programming to three additional sites throughout the province. The wealth of experience and knowledge generated by the NBYO has been widely disseminated under this grant, helping other Sistema centers build their local capacity to better serve youth in their music education.

Why is this music-based program model important to the foundation? Huddart is clear. "What's actually happening here is that participation in an orchestra is providing these kids with the opportunity to overcome the effects that the stress of poverty imposes on the developing brain. So kids participating in this program are ... developing a kind of confidence



Singing, rhythm and paper instruments – how all Sistema New Brunswick children begin their experience in the orchestra. Photo courtesy of Sistema New Brunswick.

and recognition of their own abilities and potential in ways that overcome the social isolation and the neurological deficit that kids in poverty often experience."

In 2012, the foundation made a two-year, \$95,000 grant to the [National Arts Centre's](#) (NAC) philanthropic arm, the [NAC Foundation](#) (NACF), to learn from the work of the nine current Sistema sites as part of a needs assessment and to develop a business plan outlining the structure and activities of a national-level partnership. While NAC<sup>10</sup> doesn't have an El Sistema-inspired orchestra of its own, the musicians and

apprentices of its Institute for Orchestral Studies have worked closely with New Brunswick youth. NAC also has extensive experience creating resource materials for educators, programs

for young audiences of all socio-economic backgrounds, and advanced training for emerging artists. This experience, combined with its capacity and national reach made it another logical partner to advance the foundation’s interest in developing a Sistema movement in Canada.

In 2013, with this systemic approach to scaling in hand, the foundation distributed matching grants of up to \$10,000 to 11 El Sistema programs that are either in the pre-launch phase, have been in operation for less than three years, or are established youth orchestras conducting research that could benefit similar programs throughout Canada.

In addition to this support of El Sistema-inspired orchestras, support for the training and convening of socially engaged arts practitioners will fall under the umbrella of the emerging [art and social inclusion initiative](#). Organizations such as La Ruche d’Art, Culture pour tous, and Jumblies Theatre received early investments. Now, to grow the field of socially engaged arts in Canada, new funding will test other promising practices, build partnerships and networks, and disseminate the knowledge generated through this work. Ultimately, of course, the goal is to fulfill the foundation’s mission to build a more inclusive society by addressing the needs of marginalized and excluded people.

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## PARTNERING FOR IMPACT

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In the summer of 2013, J.W. McConnell Family Foundation staff, along with the [Breuninger Foundation](#), a German funder with interests in art, placemaking, and civil society, and [Musagetes](#), an Ontario-based public foundation focused on the arts and community, convened

a discussion about “the contribution of art and culture to urban resilience and livability.” The deeply reflective thoughts of 36 people—artists, architects, foundation representatives, environmentalists, academics, and investors—are captured in “[The Art of Resilience, The Resilience of Art.](#)”



Miniature world created as part of Jumblies “4 Lands of Nipissing” residency, in partnership with the White Water Gallery (North Bay) and Aanmitaagzi (Nipissing First Nation). Photo: Elizabeth Lott

Subtitled “A paper on the contribution of art and culture to urban resilience and livability,” the report<sup>11</sup> has clear links to the ArtsSmarts network-building experience and John Wilson McConnell’s concern for the well-being of his fellow Canadians.

How will this well-being, this resilient society, be achieved? As the report notes, “A resilient culture is one where everyone contributes.” The work—like everything the foundation does—will be collaborative, networked, multi-sectorial, and inclusive.

And what of the role of the arts? Parts of *The Art of Resilience* read like a manifesto for the family foundation’s art and social inclusion initiative: “Artists can surface and sustain the capacity of people by working in creative collaboration with vulnerable and marginalized communities, fomenting strategies of self-realization, adaptation, and emancipation through context-based, participatory art. This art does not displace the vulnerable. It includes them, inspires them, and makes room for them as co-creators.”

The work of the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation is profoundly aspirational. Yet, there is a clear view on how best to partner with others—grantees, fellow funders, academics, and even the most vulnerable—to achieve national impact. “This brings us to where we are today,” Huddart says, “less command-and-control mode and migrating more to an approach whereby we support autonomous partners, partners who are bigger than us, to move, shift, and create a field. In a sense, it’s a more humble approach. It’s also one, I think, that’s more appropriate given the scale of the challenges and the complexity of what we’re trying to contend with.”



**Ann McQueen**, principal at [McQueen Philanthropic](#), an advisory service for foundations and individuals, has nearly 20 years experience in philanthropy. Formerly, McQueen served on the board of Grantmakers in the Arts and led the Boston Foundation’s arts grantmaking, developed a fellowship program to celebrate individual artists, and led a series of seminal research projects into the fiscal health of the cultural sector. She is a member of the boards of Boston Natural Areas Network, which preserves and advocates for urban open space, and Associated Grant Makers, a forum for New England foundations and their nonprofit partners.

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## End Notes

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<sup>1</sup> All currency is stated in Canadian dollars citing various J.W. McConnell Family Foundation sources.

<sup>2</sup> Art Starts in Schools, British Columbia; Calgary Arts Partners in Education Society, Alberta; Community Foundation of Ottawa-Carleton, Ontario; Newfoundland & Labrador Arts Council; Nova Scotia Arts Council; Portage and District Community Foundation, Manitoba; and Saskatoon Foundation, Saskatchewan.

<sup>3</sup> The Canadian Conference on the Arts, a nonprofit founded in 1945 by a coalition of artists and cultural institutions as the Canadian Arts Council, ceased operations in 2012 after the federal government ended 47 years of support. A caretaker Board of Governors is committed to preserving the legal entity and charitable status until March 2014.

<sup>4</sup> Stephen Huddart spoke with the author on August 28 and September 23, 2013. All quotes and observations are drawn from those conversations.

<sup>5</sup> Key lessons are drawn from the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation website (<http://www.mcconnellfoundation.ca/en/programs/artssmarts>), which is based on two research reports, also available as PDFs on the McConnell website: [Deconstructing Engagement: A First Generation Report on the ArtsSmarts Student Engagement Questionnaire, 2007](#) and [Engaged in Learning: The ArtsSmarts Model](#).

<sup>6</sup> “Métis” is a French Canadian term, now commonly used in English, for indigenous Canadians of mixed First Nations (indigenous, non-Inuit people) and European heritage. The people and their culture are recognized as a distinct aboriginal group.

<sup>7</sup> [An Important Announcement from ArtsSmarts](#), October 16, 2013.

<sup>8</sup> [Supporting The National Theatre School’s “Theatre Engaging Communities” Program](#), Kevin Chin, February 2012, available as a PDF on the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation website.

<sup>9</sup> Kevin Chin spoke with the author on August 20 and September 18, 2013. All quotes and observations are drawn from those conversations.

<sup>10</sup> The National Arts Centre opened in 1969 in Ottawa, Ontario, as one of Canada’s largest performing arts venues; it remains the only North American performance facility that is both bilingual and multi-disciplinary. Its four stages are home to a classical orchestra, English and French theater productions, dance events, and community programming.

<sup>11</sup> The Art of Resilience, along with [charts and drawings](#) generated at the 2013 meeting, is also available through [Cities for People](#), an initiative exploring “How can we enhance social, ecological, and economic wellbeing and help civic cultures thrive?”