

SASKOMUSIC

STRATEGIC PLAN 2016

Amended December 2015

Background

SaskMusic (the Saskatchewan Recording Industry Association) is a non-profit association established in 1987. We represent, promote, and develop the commercial music industry of Saskatchewan. Our programming includes artist listings, career consults, professional development and training, marketing and export assistance and activities, and communication and networking opportunities. Our member artists and music professionals come from across the province, and work in every genre of the music industry. SaskMusic serves as a source of information and resources for both the public, and the music industry. We strive to be the voice of Saskatchewan music.

Context for Planning

SaskMusic is governed by Bylaws, and the SaskMusic Policy Guide. SaskMusic is a member-based, non-profit corporation representing the four components of the music and sound recording industries (Creative, Interpretive, Technical and Administrative, and Product Delivery) as defined under "Association Identity."

SaskMusic is a province-wide, inclusive, and democratic organization. As such, its board and staff are guided by policies requiring effective governance and management, ethical conduct, and careful consideration of the current needs of SaskMusic members. With respect to its ability to contribute to the provincial and national health of the industry, SaskMusic is highly regarded for its organizational stewardship, governance and management practices, diverse programming, and responsible fiscal management. The goals that drive SaskMusic represent essential services required by the music industry of Saskatchewan for it to operate effectively and thrive. SaskMusic board, staff, and membership carry out the mission of the corporation in a manner that reflects mutual respect and a sincere desire to serve not only SaskMusic members, but the people of Saskatchewan.

Framework for Plan

The legal and jurisdictional framework for the cultural industries in Saskatchewan is mandated by The Culture and Recreation Act, Chapter C-51.01 June 15, 1993 and the Government of Saskatchewan cultural policy "Pride of Saskatchewan: A Policy where Culture, Community and Commerce Meet (March, 2010).

The mandate, vision and mission of SaskMusic are set out in its Bylaws and Policy Guide.

MANDATE

The Bylaws of SaskMusic express the mandate of SaskMusic as follows:

- To assist in the development and promotion of Saskatchewan musical artists and the industry on a provincial, national and international level.
- To increase recognition of the Industry as a vital element of the economy and cultural identity of the Province of Saskatchewan.

Based on this mandate, the Board of SaskMusic has determined that the vision, mission, core beliefs and key strategic actions of the organization are:

VISION

- We envision a future where Saskatchewan's music industry is vigorously healthy; progressive; and musically and culturally diverse;
- Where its value and quality are acknowledged with pride at home, and with acclaim beyond our borders; and
- Where all benefit from Saskatchewan music.

MISSION

SaskMusic stimulates growth and development in the Saskatchewan music industry through leadership, promotion, training, advocacy and partnership.

CORE BELIEFS

- Saskatchewan's music industry has enormous creative talent;
- Music industry professionals are entitled to fair and equitable compensation;
- Music is an integral part of Saskatchewan's cultural identity;
- Saskatchewan's music industry has the capability to succeed on a global scale;
- The music industry is a major contributor to Saskatchewan's economic development.

KEY STRATEGIC ACTIONS

- **Communications, Public Relations and Marketing:** to ensure that the promotion of the Saskatchewan music industry is effective in raising awareness of the talent and capacity of the industry locally, nationally and internationally.
- **Partnership Development and Management:** to ensure that current partnerships and key relationships remain strong, and that SaskMusic actively strives to forge new and meaningful partnerships within the cultural sector, the private sector, and tourism sector.
- **Education, Professional Development and Training:** to ensure that Saskatchewan artists and music industry professionals have access to the tools and knowledge needed to assist them in succeeding in their career or business development.
- **Organizational Development and Management:** to ensure that the infrastructure and mechanisms for strong and focused organizational growth are in place.
- **Funding Development and Management:** to ensure that SaskMusic actively seeks to establish and secure the funding needed to realize the goals of the organization in sector development.
- **Artist and Industry Professional Focus:** to ensure that the policies, programs and resources of SaskMusic are focused on supporting and assisting artists and industry professionals in achieving their goals and aspirations.

OPERATIONAL PLANS

The Board of Directors determined that all activities of SaskMusic undertaken must, within resource and budget capacities, raise the awareness of the economic and cultural benefits of the music industry for the province and people of Saskatchewan. Further, the Board directs that all of the strategic actions should be given the same priority by the staff and management of the organization, accepting that there will be some differences due to resource and budget restraints.

The following programs and services are proposed as specific strategic actions at this time.

COMMUNICATIONS, PUBLIC RELATIONS, AND MARKETING

To ensure that the promotion of the Saskatchewan music industry is effective in raising awareness of the talent and capacity of the industry locally, nationally and internationally.

SaskMusic will operate, as much as is reasonably possible, within its current Communication Plan. Current highlights are as follows:

- a) **The Session** newsletter. Distributes information on SaskMusic and the Saskatchewan music scene to local and national industry representatives. It is a well-established and well-read publication. After a trial period of digital-only distribution, the publication returned to hard copy distribution in 2012.
Outcome: High visibility of Saskatchewan music to those who receive the publication. Content is also disseminated on the website and often picked up by other media.
- b) **E-Release:** Distributes timely news and deadlines to Saskatchewan industry professionals (and some fans). Recipient surveys indicate appreciation of all content areas that are covered. The subscriber list continues to grow.
Outcome: Perception of SaskMusic as an active, helpful organization. Members know of association initiatives and receive reminders to help them access deadlines/opportunities.
- c) **Export Missions:** SaskMusic is represented at conferences internationally to network on behalf of the Saskatchewan industry and, at strategic events, present Saskatchewan showcases for selected export-ready artists. At some events, sponsorship and/or promotion of Saskatchewan music is done through ads/booths.
Outcome: Increasing recognition of the Saskatchewan industry among the international music market. More artists are being invited to showcase at lucrative international events.
- d) **In Tune** compilation albums: A tangible marketing tool that is used to promote as many Saskatchewan artists as possible to the national and international music industry. Pieces are distributed internationally and are a versatile item for a wide range of events.
Outcome: Increased recognition of Saskatchewan artists to the national and international community.
- e) **Website:** The main home online of SaskMusic; a repository of education, Saskatchewan artist and album release information, and more. The redesigned site (2014) was intended to draw more general public interest to local artists by presenting more fan-friendly, non-industry “fun” information.
Outcome: A one-stop shop for information about the Saskatchewan music industry and the specific artists/professionals who work in Saskatchewan, with increased recognition of artists.
- f) **Social Media** (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc): Social media is used extensively as staff resources permit. The majority of our member artists are actively using at least one of these resources.
Outcome: SaskMusic have a respectable online presence/reach, but growth is limited by staff time.

- g) **General Media advocacy:** Staff is frequently accessed by media seeking resource people/comments on the industry, and in turn endeavours to keep provincial media informed of our activities.
Outcome: SaskMusic is a go-to resource for media and influence is continuing to expand.
- h) **Advocacy:** SaskMusic advocates on behalf of our members, and the music industry as a whole, to build awareness and understanding of the industry. We work to provide a collective voice regarding rights, artist fees and status of the artist, often with partners on a national level (ie Focus on Creators and the Council of Canadian Music Industry Associations).
Outcome: Increased recognition of the issues facing artists, and improved revenue potential.

PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

To ensure that current partnerships and key relationships remain strong, and that SaskMusic actively strives to forge new and meaningful partnerships within the cultural sector, the private sector, and tourism sector.

The staff and Board will continue to build on the existing relationships and partnerships but will proactively seek out new opportunities. Partnership development also includes government and funder relationship building. SaskMusic continues to engage in discussions with Creative Saskatchewan and our Ministry on how best to move the music sector forward, how best to position for support from government and the private sector, and how best to utilize current funding through program harmonization.

Partnership development will also include the investigation of potential partnerships with broadcasters and potential funding resources. These new relationships will be developed through various networking methods, including face-to-face meetings, industry sector summits and round table discussions with focus groups.

SaskMusic will operate on these points, where applicable, in harmony with its current Export Strategy. Current highlights are as follows:

- a) **Export Missions:** SaskMusic's international export marketing capacity has been consistent for the past several years, with numerous projects completed on our own, with music industry association partners, with the assistance of the Canadian Independent Music Association, and/or our export consultant Sound Diplomacy.
Outcome: SaskMusic has been able to expand its reach to international markets, and has a membership benefit which results in tangible results for export-ready artists (i.e. more international tours, more revenue). We receive increased name recognition and members receive additional performance opportunities.
- b) **Broadcasters:** SaskMusic will continue to engage with potential broadcast partners for mutually beneficial events, and to explore potential Canadian Talent Development Fund allocations (current and past relationships include Bell Media, Harvard Broadcasting and Golden West Broadcasting).
Outcome: SaskMusic benefits from general revenue and increased name recognition through promotion of events associated with this funding.
- c) **Creative Saskatchewan / Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport:** SaskMusic continues to build a positive relationship with its government funders and engage in proactive discussions.
Outcome: Stable funding for both operations and programming.
- d) **Hosting:** SaskMusic supports major music events hosted in Saskatchewan, such as providing knowledge on host committees for The JUNO Awards, BreakOut West, the Canadian Country Music Awards, etc.
Outcome: SaskMusic receives increased name recognition and helps contribute to economic/tourism activity in the province.

- e) **Workshops and Seminars:** SaskMusic occasionally partners with others to deliver programming. Past partnership examples include the SaskTel Jazz Festival, Regina Folk Festival, American Federation of Musicians locals, and Saskatchewan Country Music Awards, among others.
Outcome: Strengthened relationships with partner organizations and access to new potential participants and marketing opportunities beyond our own.

EDUCATION, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

To ensure that Saskatchewan artists and music industry professionals have access to the tools and knowledge needed to assist them in succeeding in their career and business development.

Professional development has been identified as a key area in which SaskMusic can provide current, relevant and accurate assistance to the Saskatchewan music industry.

- a) **Workshops and Skills Labs:** Our workshop offerings provide important, timely information to assist artists and industry professionals in self-managing their careers and increasing their capacity for success. SaskMusic co-presents certain events to increase their reach and cost-effectiveness. We are working towards making these sessions available in streaming/online versions to enable members to participate regardless of their location.
Outcome: Artists are more likely to achieve success, and are better able to handle various elements of their careers. Presenting the events physically in both Regina and Saskatoon (at minimum) is crucial and increases attendance. This is a practical and immediate return-on-investment for our members.
- b) **Career Tracks:** SaskMusic staff and contracted non-staff mentors alike meet one on one with members to address their various questions. This is a key program component of an industry association, and success is dependent on having knowledgeable staff and mentors.
Outcome: Artists have a place to turn for objective advice and resources, and the program is extremely well utilized. Artists are better prepared to manage their careers, plan for growth, and access funding opportunities (grants).
- c) **Careers in Music:** SaskMusic provides staff resources to high schools where students are informed about jobs in the music industry. It is important to educate future industry professionals about their options and give them a realistic expectation of what it would be like to work in music.
Outcome: Satisfied teachers/resource people and better-informed students. This program assists students who were already interested in a career in music, and provides information on the next steps to take/consider, including options for post-secondary education in a music-related area.
- d) **SaskMusic Legal Program:** We provide free legal services to members for music-related issues (dependent on funding and pro-bono availability).
Outcome: This is a well-utilized service providing important information and advice without a financial burden for the member, at the same time avoiding potential career setbacks.

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT & MANAGEMENT

To ensure that the infrastructure and mechanisms for strong and focused organizational growth are in place.

Highlights:

- a) **Updating and following policies and bylaws:** The Governance and Nominating Committee meets as needed to ensure our policies are relevant to the association's current needs.
Outcome: responsible and orderly governance and management of SaskMusic
- b) **Recruitment of new board members:** Increased interest from prospective board members, and availability of online voting procedures have significantly increased the number of nominations received annually for board positions. Succession planning is considered throughout the year and a board orientation procedure is in place.
Outcome: A more diverse range of skill sets is represented on the board, with a desirable amount of nominees and director turnover from year to year.
- c) **Human Resource Management:** A committee of the board completes an annual performance review of the Executive Director, who conducts regular performance reviews of all staff. An appropriate succession plan is in place for staff. Respectful treatment of board and staff through the development of appropriate policies is observed.
Outcome: A healthy and well-functioning staff environment.

FUNDING DEVELOPMENT & MANAGEMENT

To ensure that SaskMusic actively seeks to establish and secure the funding needed to realize the goals of the organization in sector development.

SaskMusic works within the current structure of Creative Saskatchewan to obtain core operational and program funding. SaskMusic investigates and pursues additional funding opportunities that may become available.

Highlights:

- a) **To maintain or increase the funding received directly from Creative Saskatchewan:** and maintain proactive discussions with government funding representatives.
Outcome: Adequate funding to accomplish SaskMusic's goals for our association and our industry.
- b) **To decrease reliance on government sponsorship by diversifying non-governmental sponsorship revenue.**
Outcome: SaskMusic has been able to maintain modest non-provincial funding levels through relationships with commercial radio and others.
- c) **Maintenance of a healthy, appropriate reserve fund:** SaskMusic strives to maintain an industry-standard healthy reserve fund in the range of 3-6 months operating revenue.
Outcome: SaskMusic has been able to build our reserve fund to 3 months reserves and seeks to grow it to 6 months.

ARTIST & INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL FOCUS

To ensure that the policies, programs and resources of SaskMusic are focused on supporting and assisting artists and industry professionals in achieving their goals and aspirations.

SaskMusic seeks to represent a comprehensive range of skill levels, from emerging to export-ready, and conduct outreach to under-represented genres/demographics.

- a) **Member Surveys:** Members will have the opportunity to express their needs through a variety of contact methods, including member feedback surveys.
Outcome: Positive responses, with direction taken into account in program development.
- b) **New Program Development:** Initiatives are developed and revised continually based on the needs of members and our industry, with a balance of initiatives catering to a specific segment (ie songwriter development) and general (ie best albums of the year).
Outcome: An engaged membership, with different members accessing different programs based on their individual needs.

CONCLUSION:

The Board of Directors of SaskMusic believe that the strategic directions outlined in this document represent a realistic, achievable path of development for the professional music industry within Saskatchewan. A focus on education and professional development will assist Saskatchewan artists and industry professionals in competing in the ever-changing international music industry. Ensuring that our staff and mentors are up to date on current communication methods and industry issues will allow SaskMusic to pass on relevant and crucial information to our members. We seek to bring the excellence of Saskatchewan artists to the people of the province and beyond, and ensure the ever increasing contribution of the industry to the provincial economy.