

Soumission par: / Submission by:

**RES Consulting**

RES Consulting  


RES Consulting  
P.O. Box 1020  
St. John's, NF  
A1X 4V5

February 02, 2002

Case Competition Organizing Committee:

Our consultation team has reviewed the evaluation framework provided by your committee. This framework provided a solid starting point for our own evaluation plan. We have adopted many of Ms. Vadeboncoeur's evaluation activities, but have expanded the evaluation plan to include a more rigorous research design. In particular, we have focused on program effectiveness.

Today, all levels of governments are increasingly concerned with accountability issues. Since MAP is a federally-funded program, this necessitates its evaluation. Our evaluation plan encompasses not only program efficiency (e.g. client satisfaction), but also program effectiveness, both of which are included under accountability. Further, the time-series design we have suggested will allow an identification of trends both prior to, and succeeding, the reorientation of MAP in 1999.

Please forward our proposal to Ms. Vadeboncoeur. Please do not hesitate to contact RES Consulting should you require any additional information. We appreciate the opportunity to respond to this Request for Proposal and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

RES Consulting

# **An evaluation of the Museums Assistance Program (MAP)**

**Report prepared by: *RES Consulting***

February 02, 2002

Acknowledgements: We would like to thank Annie Vadeboncoeur for her involvement in the evaluation of the Museum Assistance Program (MAP).

## **Overview**

The Museums Assistance Program (MAP) is managed by the Department of Canadian Heritage (PCH) and provides financial assistance to Canadian museums and similar institutions. Financial assistance is provided through annual grants and contributions aimed at activities that foster Canadians' access to their artistic, scientific, and natural heritage. A second objective of the MAP is to enhance awareness, understanding, and enjoyment of this heritage.

Financial assistance is available under three components: (1) Access and National Outreach, (2) Aboriginal Museum Development, and (3) Organizational Development.

The objective of the Access and National Outreach component is to connect distinct geographic regions of the country by helping museums reach Canada's culturally diverse audiences. The Aboriginal Museum Development component assists Aboriginal organizations preserve, and facilitate public understanding of, their diverse cultural heritage. Finally, the objective of Organizational Development component is to assist museums and their employees in attaining professional standards and in strengthening the institutions' economic stability.

In 1999, MAP's priorities were refocused on interprovincial traveling exhibitions, professional exchanges, multimedia projects, and increased emphasis on Aboriginal museum development. In light of this reorientation, the PCH is seeking an evaluation of the MAP. An evaluation framework has been developed by the MAP program manager, Annie Vadeboncoeur, and an evaluation consultant.

RES Consulting has been asked to provide an evaluation proposal for the MAP. Specifically, our tasks include:

- (1) Comment on the existing evaluation framework including strengths, weaknesses, and missing elements (if any).
- (2) Develop a concrete evaluation plan.
- (3) Describe data collection tools in detail.

- (4) Discuss challenges and opportunities of our evaluation plan.

This report addresses each of these tasks in turn and includes recommendations for the evaluation of the MAP. It is hoped this proposal will be beneficial to Ms. Vadeboncoeur and her staff in finalizing an evaluation plan.

**The existing framework**

The current evaluation matrix provides a solid starting point for the MAP's evaluation. It is hoped the suggestions on the following pages will strengthen and augment that framework. The following table will address the framework's strengths, weaknesses, and missing elements.

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Missing elements</b>
Addressed relevance, success, and design/delivery issues	No analysis of funding issues or museum activities pre-MAP (i.e. pre-1970's)	Under "Relevance," opinion of key government officials on federal government's role in addressing heritage needs of Canadians
Multiple indicators and data sources	Sometimes ambiguous indicators/data sources (e.g. who are "stakeholders" or what is "MAP census survey")	Direct survey of (or interviews with) Aboriginal people (to address retention, preservation, or conservation of cultural heritage)
Trend analysis (e.g. MAP applications, funding, etc.)	No logic model	Under "Success" survey or interviews with museum staff addressing professional development
Addressed evaluation of all three components of MAP	Lack of rigorous research design	Measure of long-term financial stability of museums
	Framework does not address reorientation of MAP's priorities in 1999	Complete description of MAP priorities pre-1999
	No timeline proposed for any evaluation activities	Measure of the overall objectives of MAP
		Assessment of public understanding of Aboriginal culture/heritage

## **Our evaluation plan**

In general, the existing evaluation framework adequately addresses relevance, success, and design and delivery of the MAP. We support the implementation of all data collection outlined in the matrix. However, we feel the framework could be strengthened by adopting a more rigorous research design, including an implementation timeline. The following sections detail the chronological order for our evaluation:

### *Literature review*

We recommend a thorough review of relevant literature. For example, other federal programs which support projects similar to MAP. In addition, it would be beneficial to examine the application and funding process of similar programs (provincial, municipal, or international). It would also be useful to examine how similar programs have been evaluated and if the programs have been successful. Finally, a review of the heritage literature might help establish Canadians' attitude toward, and knowledge of, their cultural heritage.

### *Needs assessment*

It is unclear whether a needs assessment was conducted prior to implementation of the MAP. We think a full needs assessment should be conducted in order to address the issue of relevance and identify barriers to use. The questions, indicators, and data sources in the current framework provide a starting point for this assessment.

### *Program design and delivery*

We believe the MAP's design and delivery will have a critical impact on its success. Given this, an assessment of the delivery and design of the MAP should be the next step in the evaluation. We suggest implementation of the activities outlined in the current framework; however, we reiterate the importance of a comparative review. For example, what has been the success of other programs using similar design and delivery processes? In addition, it would be beneficial to examine the non-applicants and unsuccessful applicants to the MAP. Is it possible the design and delivery of MAP as it currently exists is contributing to unsuccessful applications? Do all museums across Canada have equal knowledge about MAP?

In order to identify both non-applicants and unsuccessful applicants, we suggest a document review of MAP’s criteria and guidelines. Once identified, random samples of these participants can be contacted for a survey about the MAP.

*Program success*

We believe a more rigorous research design is needed to evaluate program success than that provided in the current framework. In order to evaluate the outcomes of the re-oriented MAP, data must be collected pre- and post-MAP. Even if access to, and knowledge of, heritage is increased, there is currently no way to attribute that to the MAP. The longitudinal nature of our evaluation proposal will likely increase the human and financial resources required for the evaluation.

The overall objectives of the MAP are to foster access of generations of Canadians to their heritage and enhance their awareness, understanding, and enjoyment of this heritage.

However, the MAP also has specific objectives for each of its three components. In order to evaluate program success, all objectives must be considered.

<b>Components</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Data collection tools</b>
Overall objective of MAP	Quasi-experiment; interrupted time series (pre and post-1999 MAP trend analysis)	Canadian’s access to their human, natural, scientific, and artistic heritage  Canadian’s awareness, understanding, and enjoyment of heritage	Archival data analysis (pre 1999)  National surveys
Access & National Outreach	Quasi-experiment; interrupted time series (pre and post-1999 MAP trend analysis)	All indicators listed in current framework (4A); including 10 years post-1999	Archival data analysis (pre 1999)  Annual workshops with stakeholders  Annual exit surveys  All data sources in current framework

Aboriginal & Museum Development	Quasi-experiment; interrupted time series (pre and post-1999 MAP trend analysis)	All indicators listed in current framework (4B); including 10 years post-1999	<p>Survey of Aboriginal people to assess preservation of cultural heritage</p> <p>National survey to assess public understanding of Aboriginal heritage</p> <p>All data sources in current framework</p>
Organizational Development	Quasi-experiment; interrupted time series (pre and post-1999 MAP trend analysis)	<p>All indicators listed in current framework (4C); including 10 years post-1999</p> <p>Number of marketing and development strategies</p> <p>Number of strategic plan initiatives</p> <p>Each MAP client's annual financial report</p>	<p>All data sources in current framework</p> <p>Review of annual financial plan of all MAP clients</p> <p>Surveys with MAP museum staff</p>

**Data Collection Tools**

*Literature review*

We suggest reviewing all federal, provincial, and municipal government web sites for lists of relevant publications. These publications will be used to review best practices, evaluations, and outcomes in similar programs. The literature review should also include relevant journals which focus on heritage issues.

*Archival data*

We suggest using archival data collected by MAP clients pre-1999. Archival data will include:

- Access to heritage
- Awareness/understanding/enjoyment of heritage
- Profile of Access and National Outreach component funded projects
- Profile of Aboriginal Development component funded projects
- Profile of Organizational Development component funded projects
- Aboriginal assessment of preservation of heritage

- Public awareness of Aboriginal heritage
- Financial plans of all MAP applicants (successful and non-successful)
- Any surveys conducted with MAP client staff

Archival data would be used as a comparison tool to assess any changes in MAP clients after the reorientation of priorities in 1999. Each archival measure listed above address the components and activities outlined in the table above.

### *Surveys*

We have suggested several surveys for the current evaluation. They will be used partly for comparison purposes with the archival data outlined above; they will serve as the observations in the time series design. For example, annual surveys will establish the number of travelling exhibits for each museum.

We have also suggested surveys to collect data that the current framework does not address. For example, a national survey to assess public understanding of aboriginal heritage. Other surveys suggested correspond to the components and activities in the table above.

### *Annual workshops*

It is our opinion that a single regional workshop is insufficient for the evaluation. Annual workshops with key stakeholders (e.g. museum staff, MAP staff) would provide more detailed data on the opinions of stakeholders.

### *Annual financial plan*

We recommended a review of each MAP client's annual financial report. This will assist in assessing the objective of the Organizational Development component of MAP – strengthening the economic stability of the organization. For example, indicators outlined above (number of marketing and development strategies, strategic initiatives) should be included in the financial plan.

Note: In addition to these data collection tools, we have recommended implementation of all data collection sources in the existing framework. We have not addressed them in more detail here

since reasons for their use is self-explanatory. They will supplement all the data collection tools we have outlined above.

**Strengths and weaknesses of our plan**

<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
Time series design allows a longer trend analysis. This may assist in ruling out alternative explanations for outcomes.	Time series design without a control group still is vulnerable to history threats. That is, something other than the MAP is contributing to observed outcomes.
Our suggestion to examine non-applicants and unsuccessful applicants may assist in identifying problems with design and delivery.	Extensive use of archival data. We currently do not know if data is available, and pre and post measures may not be comparable
Focus on program effectiveness	Time series design will increase the human and financial resources required for the evaluation

**Conclusions and recommendations**

- (1) First, we recommend that this evaluation be completed in light of the importance of accountability issues to all levels of government.
- (2) It is unclear whether a needs assessment was completed prior to implementation of MAP. We recommend a needs assessment be conducted to determine potential barriers to MAP, identify targets, etc.
- (3) Create a profile of successful and unsuccessful MAP applicants, and non-applicants
- (4) Implement time series design to identify trends (pre- and post-MAP). The longitudinal nature of time series data can help officials track intended and unintended impacts of MAP. In addition, this is a more rigorous design.
- (5) We recommend a thorough literature review to identify best practices in heritage.
- (6) We recommend a clearer definition of the program to be evaluated – for example, the framework provided did not really address the reorientation
- (7) Include a measure of long-term financial stability
- (8) Direct surveys of Aboriginal people
- (9) National surveys to assess knowledge of Aboriginal heritage
- (10) Interviews with key government officials to determine federal government’s role in addressing the Heritage needs of Canadians