

Canadian Evaluation Society
Evaluation Case Competition 2002

Case for the Preliminary Round
February 2002
“Museums Assistance Program”

The Student Evaluation Case Competition is organized by the National Capital Chapter of the Canadian Evaluation Society. The members of the 2002 organizing committee are:

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The Organizing Committee gratefully acknowledges the Department of Canadian Heritage for providing the information that underlies this case and for the translation of the case to French.

This material, a combination of actual and hypothetical documents, has been assembled for educational purposes only.

Rules for the Preliminary Round of Competition

There must be at least three and no more than five members to a team.

All team members must be registered in a university or college program (undergraduate or graduate, full or part time). Team members may be from any academic discipline.

For the Competition, each team must organize: a place to work, an Internet connection to enable downloading of the case and a printer to produce copies of the case for each team member.

Teams will be given **1 hour to download the case** and make photocopies for each team member.

Teams may be coached prior to the competition but **coaches must not communicate with their teams once the teams have received the case.**

In preparing their submissions, teams are at liberty to explore any public information source such as would be accessible by a management consulting group. For example, they may consult books or articles, search libraries, use the Internet, and so forth. Team members are free to leave the work-site and take refreshment as they wish but they may communicate only within the team.

Teams have **five hours** to prepare their submission.

Submissions must be sent **by e-mail to casecomp@evaluationcanada.ca** with a copy to isabelle@storm.ca in Word or WordPerfect format **no later than 6 hours after the call from the Organizers revealing the password of the case on the web.**

Submissions should be concise. Judges will look for quality, rather than quantity.

Judges must not know the real identity of the teams. Thus, throughout their submission, teams should identify themselves only by an imaginative, non-revealing code name, such as Noble Consultants.

In the e-mail message to which their submission is attached, teams must provide the following information. (This information will be removed when submissions are sent to the judges.)

- Code name for the team
- University or College of the team
- School, Department or Program
- Team Coach (if applicable)
- Names of team members

Judges may take up to three weeks to select the best three submissions and draft feedback for all teams.

The three finalist teams will be invited to compete again and present their analysis in front of a live audience at the annual conference of the Canadian Evaluation Society in May 2002, in Halifax.

Remember: Have fun! Share responsibility and control within the group. It's not important whether you win or lose, but how you play the game!

Criteria

The following table provides teams and judges with the general basis of assessment. However, the uniqueness of each case necessitates flexibility in the evaluation process.

AREAS	CRITERIA	WEIGHT (%)
CONTENT	Relevance of material selected for presentation: relevance to issues	5
	Relevance of material selected for presentation: relevance to findings	5
	Relevance of material selected for presentation: relevance to conclusions	10
	Evidence presented: support for points made	5
	Evidence presented: awareness of the limits of evidence	5
ACCESSIBILITY	Ease of absorption of information: clarity of points made	10
	Ease of absorption of information: logical linkages between points (idea flow)	5
	Ease of absorption of information: organization of points	10
IMPACT	Strength of argument: cohesiveness	5
	Strength of argument: persuasiveness	5
	Strength of argument: impact on memory	5
	Impetus for decision-making: rationality of recommendations	15
OVERALL	Overall impression	15

February 2nd, 2002

Dear CES Team 2002,

Congratulations on the establishment of your new consulting practice. A program manager from the Department of Canadian Heritage has recently asked us to distribute the attached Request For Proposals (RFP) on the *Museums Assistance Program (MAP)*. More specifically, Annie Vadeboncoeur, the MAP program manager, is looking for information on how her team might evaluate the program. We thought that your team would be interested in this opportunity.

The attached documents contain the RFP, which will provide you with background information on the MAP program as well as an evaluation framework for the program, developed by Ms. Vadeboncoeur and a professional evaluator. The evaluation framework lists the evaluation questions, the indicators, as well as some data sources that could be used for measurement.

The proposal that you will submit must present a coherent plan for the evaluation of MAP. The program manager and her staff are interested in knowing how you would evaluate this initiative if you were hired to do this. The following elements should be addressed in your team's proposal:

1. Comment on the existing evaluation framework. List the strengths and weaknesses of the framework, and describe what elements are missing, if any.
2. Develop a concrete evaluation plan. Describe each of the evaluation activities that you would undertake, in chronological order.
3. Describe each of your chosen data collection tools in more detail. Explain what they are, how you would use them in this evaluation, and why you would use them.
4. Briefly discuss the challenges and opportunities that your plan presents, to highlight its strengths and weaknesses.
5. Your proposal is going to people with no or very little knowledge about evaluation. You should send out a short cover letter with your proposal that discusses the benefits of evaluation for this particular program, and that promotes your approach. Note: The cover letter should be part of your submitted document, not the message body of your email.

Finally, there is real concern in the department that the evidence that will be gathered throughout this evaluation may not meet a minimum of rigour to have credible results in the stakeholders' eyes. Keep this concern in mind as you set out your evaluation plan, and address this concern wherever appropriate.

We look forward to receiving your submission by email later today.

Good luck!

Lisa Fairweather, Natasha Bergeron, François Dumaine, and Isabelle Bourgeois
2002 Case Competition Organizing Committee

Evaluation - Museums Assistance Program

BACKGROUND OR ORIGIN OF PROJECT

The Museums Assistance Program (MAP), a program managed by the Department of Canadian Heritage (PCH), provides financial assistance to Canadian museums and other related institutions. The assistance is administered through annual grants and contributions which are aimed at ensuring access to collections across the country and in achieving standards of excellence in research, exhibitions, education, conservation and information technology. MAP provides Canadians with access to collections through three program components:

- financial support for travelling exhibitions which promote culture, heritage and diversity;
- financial support to Aboriginal museums for the development and management of collections;
- promotion of professional exchanges between museums and the professional development of museum professionals.

In 1999, MAP's priorities were refocused on interprovincial travelling exhibitions, professional exchanges, new multimedia projects and an increased emphasis on Aboriginal museum development. The Department is now seeking to evaluate the outcomes of the reoriented MAP and has provided the following guidelines.

PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT AND OBJECTIVE

An evaluation of the MAP program should address the following issues:

- **Relevance:**
Relevance issues should question whether the program realistically addresses an actual need.
- **Success:**
Success issues should explore whether the program is effective in meeting its intended outcomes, without unwanted negative outcomes. Success issues also cover the progress that is made toward the achievement of the final outcomes.
- **Design and Delivery:**
Design and delivery issues focus on whether the most appropriate and efficient means are being used to achieve outcomes, or whether other approaches are warranted. The program's cost-effectiveness is assessed through design and delivery evaluation questions.

Findings from this evaluation will be used to adjust the Program design to address efficiencies and impacts.

DESCRIPTION OF THE MUSEUMS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

OBJECTIVES

The Museums Assistance Program provides financial assistance to Canadian museums and related institutions, for activities that:

- foster access by present and future generations of Canadians to their human, natural, artistic and scientific heritage;
- enhance awareness, understanding and enjoyment of this heritage.

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

The program provides funding for projects undertaken through traditional means as well as through the application of new technologies. Priorities for MAP funding include:

- projects which tell the Canadian story and promote inter-provincial perspectives such as traveling exhibitions, outreach, collaborative initiatives and partnerships.
- projects which foster and support Aboriginal museum development.
- projects which support and encourage exchanges and dialogue between Canadian museum organizations and professionals.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

MAP provides financial assistance to Canadian museums and related institutions, for museum activities that support the objectives of Canada's museum policy. The program is managed by both the Heritage Policy Branch at the Department of Canadian Heritage and its Regional offices; MAP program delivery is assured primarily through the regional offices of the department.

Applicants to MAP must be:

- incorporated, non-profit Canadian museums which :
 - provide services to the public year-round;
 - employ at least one full-time professional staff; and,
 - have policies regarding collections management and conservation, and medium-term organizational plans (3 to 5 years).
- incorporated, non-profit organizations wishing to plan and create a museum.
- incorporated non-profit museum service organizations and related institutions.

TERMS OF PARTICIPATION

MAP provides funding assistance on a project basis. The funding formula provides up to 70% of direct costs, dependant upon which component the project was submitted under, and the availability of funds. A project to be carried out over fiscal years is eligible for evaluation and funding.

Financial assistance is available under the following components:

Access and National Outreach
Aboriginal Museum Development
Organizational Development

Access and National Outreach

The objective of the Access and National Outreach component is to connect different geographic regions of the country, by assisting museums to reach wide and diverse Canadian audiences that reflect the nation's cultural diversity through:

- the development and circulation of traveling exhibitions, programs, and products that reach beyond local and provincial audiences;
- the exchange of, and dialogue between, museum personnel.

MAP encourages museums to undertake projects reaching as wide and diverse an audience as possible. Funding for Access and National Outreach projects is open to competition once annually. Two funding options are available to applicants under this Component:

National Outreach Initiative	This option is in support of the development of outreach projects such as traveling exhibitions, new media initiatives, the presentation of special educational or interpretive activities, and professional exchanges delivered or circulated in at least three provinces or territories. These projects are to commence after the start of the fiscal year (April 1) following the grant run deadline (November 1) and are eligible for up to 70% of direct project costs, depending on available funding.
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Exhibition Circulation Fund	This fund is made available to assist with costs related to the borrowing of an exhibition originating from a museum in another province. Institutions with an annual budget up to and including \$1,000,000 may apply at any time in the calendar-year, and are eligible to receive one grant annually under these terms. Funds provided will assist in covering any applicable borrower's fees or similar costs such as the transportation of the exhibition. This option will provide 50% funding of the borrower's exhibition fee, rental, transportation or similar costs, to a maximum of \$5,000 per grant.
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Aboriginal Museum Development

The objective of the Aboriginal Museum Development component is to assist Aboriginal organizations in the preservation of their cultural heritage, and to increase and facilitate public understanding of the rich and diverse cultures of Aboriginal peoples through:

- encouragement of the development of museums and related cultural facilities within Aboriginal communities, through the funding of feasibility and other similar studies.
- support for museum projects carried out in partnership between First Nations communities or groups and established museums.
- support for initiatives which are not necessarily related to other MAP components.

The Aboriginal Museum Development component will be open to competition once annually, and projects are eligible for up to 70% of project costs, depending on available funding.

Organizational Development

The objective of the Organizational Development component is to assist museums and their employees in attaining professional standards in areas such as collections care and personnel development, as well as strengthening the economic stability of the institutions through the support of:

- initiatives which maximize the human resource potential of trustees, staff and volunteers;
- initiatives which ensure the long term conservation, preservation or management of collection resources in museums;
- planning and feasibility studies, marketing and development strategies, and strategic planning initiatives which contribute to the long-term financial stability of museums.

The Organizational Development component will be open to competition once annually. Successful projects are eligible for up to 50% of project funding, depending on available funding.

Program Service Delivery

Overall, the MAP grant run cycle is structured to facilitate the Minister's approval of projects as early in the fiscal year as possible, or roughly six months from the application deadline. While the program authority for MAP rests within the Arts and Heritage Sector, MAP is co-managed between the regions and headquarters, and is principally a regionally delivered program.

Operational costs for program administration at headquarters total approximately 2.25 FTEs and \$36,000 in operational costs. The FTEs and operational costs of regional staff are proportional to the time these museum and heritage consultants dedicate to the Museums Assistance Program, as many also contribute to program delivery for the Cultural Initiatives Program among others.

Applicants to MAP are encouraged to discuss their proposals in advance of the deadline submission date with regional staff. The PCH regional museum consultant determines eligibility of both clients and projects, and assists an applicant in the development and preparation of their submission by explaining program criteria, objectives and providing feedback on their submission. This assistance helps to ensure that successful project applications will fully address the program criteria and contribute to the objectives of the Museums Assistance Program.

Once these applications meet the necessary client and program eligibility criteria and include the full range of required information, projects submitted under the national components (Access and National Outreach, Aboriginal Development) are presented to a peer review committee, which is composed of museum professionals with a range of disciplines and expertise. They are nominated each year by regional staff and selected by headquarters personnel. These professionals will evaluate each project according to the quality and feasibility set out by the program's criteria, the end result being a ranking of the submissions based upon said criteria and the projects' museological merits. Program staff use this ranking as the principal basis for formulating recommendations to the Minister. In the case of the Organizational Development component, the submissions are assessed directly within the regions usually through consultative processes which may include a regionally constituted peer panel.

In all components, the actual engagement of funds and expenditure takes place through the transfer of resources to the Regional Fund Centers. The only funds committed and expended through headquarters are for those projects submitted by National Service Organizations.

The recommendations are signed off at the Executive level within the regions or headquarters as appropriate and are sent to the Minister of Canadian Heritage for approval before the applicant receives notice of its successful/non successful application.

The applications must be received within the Department by November 1st each year. The peer review committee convenes during the month of January, and departmental staff complete the recommendation process by the end of the fiscal year. This process is structured to support the approval process for the Minister as early in the new fiscal year as possible.

The following table outlines the focus for an evaluation. It delineates and lists the evaluation questions.

MAP EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND DATA REQUIREMENTS		
Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Data Sources
A. Relevance		
<p>1. Do the MAP objectives remain relevant within the current policy context?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> do museums across Canada continue to require financial assistance to design, transfer and display their exhibits/products outside of their own facility, across provinces? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> analysis of needs number of MAP Access & National Outreach component applications & recipients; also ratios; across time (trend) opinion of stakeholders (applicants, museum professionals, associations and PCH regional and headquarters senior managers and staff) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> program documentation (files) review 1999 MAP census survey (including unsuccessful applicants) case studies key informant interviews visitor exit survey regional workshop
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> do Aboriginal heritage organizations continue to require financial support in the preservation and presentation of the cultural heritage of Aboriginal peoples? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> analysis of needs number of MAP Aboriginal Development component applications and recipients as well as applications made to the National Component; also ratios; across time (trend) opinion of applicants, Aboriginal heritage groups and PCH regional and headquarters senior managers and staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> program documentation review 1999 MAP census survey (including unsuccessful applicants) visitor exit survey case studies key informant interviews regional workshop
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> do museums across the country continue to require financial assistance to develop and enhance professional standards and expertise in all museum management areas? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> analysis of needs number of MAP Organizational Development component applications & recipients, and ratios across time (trend) opinion of applicants, Aboriginal heritage groups and PCH regional and headquarters senior managers and staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> program documentation review 1999 MAP census survey (including unsuccessful applicants) case studies key informant interviews regional workshop
<p>2. If MAP had not been implemented in the early '70s, to what extent would the MAP funded museum activities have been negatively impacted?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> analysis of funding trends since '70's analysis of trends regarding number of MAP applications and number of MAP approved projects since '70's; also ratios opinion of MAP stakeholders (museum professionals and PCH staff) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> program documentation review statistical analysis 1999 MAP census survey key informant interviews regional workshop

Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Data Sources
<p>3A. What are, at the beginning of the 21st century, the current needs of Canadians in regard to their awareness and understanding of their diverse heritage?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • opinion of MAP stakeholders • opinion of Canadians 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • literature review • 1999 MAP census survey • <i>Canadian Heritage questions in a national survey</i> • visitor exit survey • key informant interviews • regional workshop
<p>3B. What is the appropriate role of the federal government in regard to addressing these needs? For example, should the federal government identify the various “collections of national significance” across the country and provide support for their effective management?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • opinion of MAP stakeholders • opinion of Canadians 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • literature review • 1999 MAP census survey • <i>Canadian Heritage questions in a national survey</i> • visitor exit survey • key informant interviews • regional workshop
B. Success		
<p>4A. To what extent has MAP led to Canadians knowing and understanding more about each other because of better access to their diverse heritage, identity, history and symbols? Specifically through 1- the National Outreach Initiative 2- the Exhibition Circulation Fund?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • statistical profile of MAP Access and National Outreach component funded projects since '70's, specifically in regard to: • number of traveling exhibits • number of borrowing exhibitions • number of new media initiatives • number educational and interpretive activities • professional exchanges • opinion of stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • program documentation review • 1999 MAP census survey • visitor exit survey • case studies • regional workshop
<p>4B. To what extent has MAP led to the more effective retention, preservation, conservation and presentation of the cultural heritage of Aboriginal peoples in Canada? Specifically through 1-funding of feasibility and other studies 2-funding of First Nations communities/groups partnerships with established museums and other projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • statistical/descriptive profile of Aboriginal Development component in terms of number and type of projects, funded organizations, “visitors” and facilities reached • opinion of stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • program documentation review • 1999 MAP census survey • visitor exit survey • case studies • regional workshop

Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Data Sources
<p>4C. To what extent has MAP led to the more effective management and greater capacity to meet new challenges as well as long term financial stability of museum organizations across Canada regarding</p> <p>1-the professional development of trustees, staff and volunteers 2-effective long term management of collections 3-planning and feasibility studies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • statistical/descriptive profile of Organizational Development component projects in terms of: • number of professional development initiatives undertaken (number of persons trained) • number of collection management initiatives undertaken • number of studies undertaken and number followed-up opinion of stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • program documentation review • visitor exit survey • 1999 MAP census survey • case studies • regional workshop
<p>5. What performance monitoring mechanisms have been put in place to measure MAP performance? What annual reporting and/or periodic reviews should be implemented?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analysis of MAP program/project forms and reports for data availability on performance • opinion of MAP stakeholders and experts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • documentation review • literature review • 1999 MAP census survey • key informant interviews • regional workshop
C. Program Design and Delivery		
<p>6. Is the level of funding appropriate in each of the three MAP components?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • opinion of MAP stakeholders and experts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • documentation review (past funding) • 1999 MAP census survey • key informant interviews • regional workshop
<p>7. More generally, to what extent are the design and delivery of the three MAP components consistent with MAP objectives?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analysis of MAP guidelines and criteria in regard to their fit regarding MAP objectives • opinion of MAP stakeholders and experts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • documentation review • 1999 MAP census survey • key informant interviews • case studies • regional workshop
<p>8. More specifically, is MAP (three components) designed appropriately to reach targeted institutions and individuals?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • profile of institutions reached by MAP vs intended • opinion of MAP stakeholders and experts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • documentation review • 1999 MAP census survey • key informant interviews • regional workshop

Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Data Sources
<p>9. Are there design/delivery elements that work against the success of MAP regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focus of three components; • approval criteria; • peer review and regional review; • PCH-MAP funding/budgeting processes (program/ project; Regional/ Headquarters); • Reporting structure; • Other? What are they? What change should occur? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • opinion of MAP stakeholders and experts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • literature review 1999 MAP census survey key informant interviews • case studies • regional workshop
D. Cost-Effectiveness and Alternatives		
<p>10. Is the current MAP delivery approach cost-effective? How does it compare to other similar (provincial/municipal/ international) programs?</p> <p>11. What alternatives are possible in terms of design and delivery?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analysis of other (provincial/municipal/ international) programs regarding delivery process and funding/budgeting decisions; • review of federal programs that may support similar projects; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • literature review • key informant interviews • 1999 MAP census survey • regional workshop