



T.R.A.I.N Program Evaluation Results

May 2023



What is T.R.A.I.N.?

T.R.A.I.N. - Training Respectful Adaptive Inclusive Networks in the Arts, was developed by Mass Culture to engage arts workers and artists across Canada in a community committed to building a more equitable and sustainable professional arts sector.



T.R.A.I.N. Learning Streams

- **Ethical Practices in the Arts** (Facilitators: Taiwo Afolabi & Jemma Llewellyn)
- **Why Bother: Arts Advocacy and Activism** (Facilitators: Kate Cornell & Tara Mazurk)
- **Artists as Civic Engagers** (Facilitator: Rebecca Hass)
- **Phase/Shift: Dissecting Existing, Adaptive and Emerging Models of Organizing in a Transitory Arts Sector** (Facilitator: Carla Stephenson)
- **Contracts are Only Words! - Empowering You to Navigate The Business of Art** (Facilitator: Jasmine Spei)
- **Equity in Evaluation for Artists** (Facilitator: Sharmalene Mendis-Millard)
- **Arts, Culture & Heritage - Past, Present and Future** (Facilitator: Soni Dasmohapatra)
- **EDI & Me: The Real Basics** (Facilitators: Tau S. Bui & Peter Farbridge)

EVALUATION QUESTIONS



1. **Experience:** What is the experience of artists and arts workers attending the workshops and how can the overall experience of engaging with T.R.A.I.N. be strengthened?
2. **Outcomes:** What outcomes (e.g. changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviours) is the T.R.A.I.N. program creating for participants overall?
3. **Future Possibilities:** What are the key themes emerging from the Learning Streams about the current state of affairs for participating artists and arts workers and the arts sector more broadly, opportunities and challenges to do this kind of work and imagined possibilities for a more respectful, adaptive and inclusive sector?

Evaluation activities

- Online post-program survey
- In-depth interviews
- Facilitator reflections
- Facilitator and collaborator identity-based data form



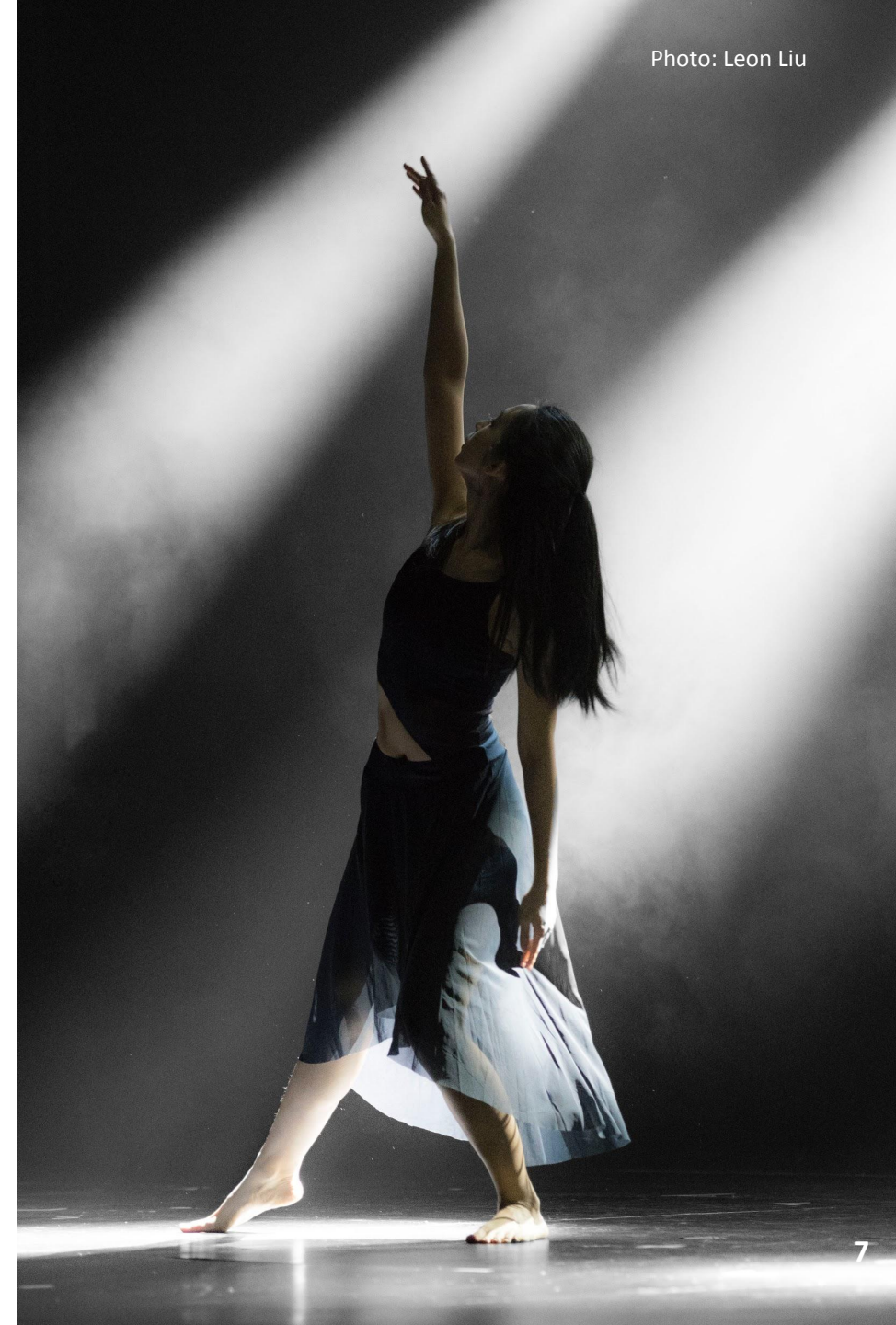
Photo: Unsplash, ux indonesia

Participant results

Evaluation participation

Participants:

- 48 survey respondents
- 5 in-depth interview participants



Program experience

- **Safe space:** 80.8% of survey respondents felt the T.R.A.I.N. program provided a safe space for discussion.
- **Valued:** 71.2% felt like their opinions and experiences were valued.

Shared suggestions

- Provide more opportunities to participate asynchronously and share recordings of the synchronous sessions with interested participants
- Share agenda and workshop materials in advance that can be printed and used as a guide for what to expect
- Provide more opportunities for open discussion involving participants
- Streamline the registration system
- Simplify the website
- Spread the sessions over a longer period of time
- Do more advanced promotion about learning opportunities so more people know and attend
- Provide more practical tools and resources



Photo: Marius Masalar

Program outcomes

- **Knowledge:** 93.2% of survey respondents had gained new knowledge during the T.R.A.I.N. program.
- **Motivation and empowerment:** 77.8% felt more motivated and/or empowered to engage in the topics covered in the series.
- **Skills and strategies:** 71.1% developed new skills and/or strategies that they felt they could apply in their work.
- **Confidence:** 60.0% felt more confident that they could be effective in the areas that they chose to focus on through the program.
- **Application of learning:** 64.4% had applied one or more things that they learned in the series by the time the survey was completed at the end of the three month program period.
- **Relationships:** 31.2% built new or stronger relationships with other artists or arts workers.

Program impact

1. Interactive discussions and hearing and learning from peers (15 mentions)
2. New knowledge, ideas and insights about timely topics (8 mentions)
3. Gathering with peers and recognizing shared values and struggles (7 mentions)
4. Supportive and space spaces for sharing (6 mentions)
5. Practical tools and resources (4 mentions)
6. Real life cases and examples (4 mentions)



Impact quotes

Connections and change:

“Being able to connect with artists and other organizations across Canada to learn how others are changing or making efforts for change in a positive manner.”

From ideas to action to outcomes:

“Thoughtful stories about how ideas/attitudes impact behaviour, subsequently impacting action, and action impacting outcome. Reflections from Indigenous arts workers were most impactful.”

Future topics

Participants want to dive deeper into the same topics with more collaborative training opportunities, including:

- EDI and anti-oppression
- More artist centric topics, with a focus on centring experiences of marginalized artists
- Truth and reconciliation and decolonization
- Advocacy
- Finances: sustainability, ethics, grant writing
- Emergent and adaptive practices

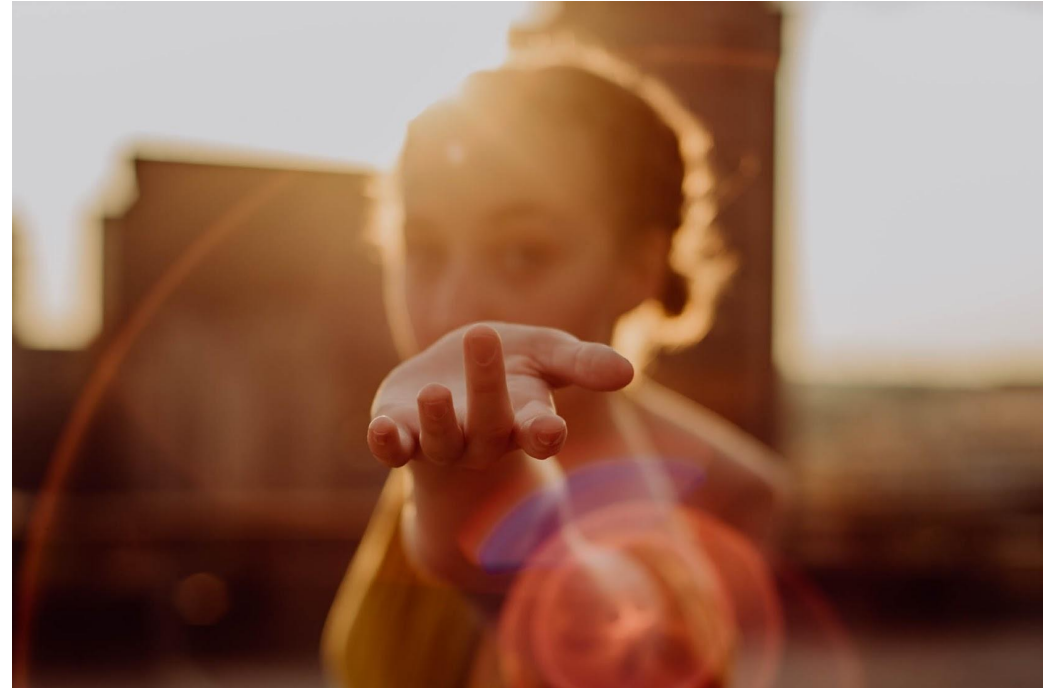


Photo: Olivia Bauso

Future possibilities

Interviewees shared a wish or big idea for the arts sector in Canada with regards to building a more equitable and sustainable professional sector:

- Offering T.R.A.I.N. as a micro credential or certificate
- Training for new Canadians and immigrants on the policymaking process in Canada to allow for more effective advocacy in arts, culture and heritage
- Greater respect for professionalism and professional staff and a rethink of the Board structure and ongoing funding that mirrors the level provided during COVID to support staff
- For arts administrators to have more uncomfortable conversations, think critically and take inspiration from artists in imaginative thinking
- Accessible, targeted and free mental health supports for artists



Photo: cottonbro, Pexels

Facilitator results

Who participated

Facilitators:

- 9 facilitator reflections (3 verbal, 6 written)
- 5 identity-based data forms completed



What worked well

- Freedom and autonomy to develop and deliver opportunities
- Safe spaces created for authenticity, vulnerability, challenging conversations and transformation
- Support from Mass Culture and in particular Jagroop
- Providing compensation to co-facilitators
- Balance between context-specific and national
- Diversity of participants and robust registration
- Experimentation with facilitation styles and resources
- ASL and French language interpretation
- Pulling it off in such a short time-frame given limited funding period

Challenges

- Not having more time for strategizing between facilitators, planning content creations, scheduling, sharing resources in advance due to limited funding period
- Not knowing who was going to be present
- Limited engagement from some participants (e.g. cameras off)
- Inconsistent participation across sessions within a Learning Stream so not being able to build upon previous sessions
- Some who chose to do 1-hour sessions found it too short
- Delving into challenging topics with limited relationships and limitations centring participants from equity-owed groups with limited understanding of people's identities
- Limited in-session feedback from participants to adapt and improve
- Not being able to share recordings with participants who missed a session

Value for facilitators

- Strengthening their own networks with other artists and arts workers and facilitators across Canada
- Experimenting with different types of facilitation and capacity building
- Building up own professional offerings
- Participating in other sessions
- Exposure and access to a larger network of participants
- Being able to show up authentically and bring one's full self to the program
- Feeling a part of something bigger



Impact quotes

Authenticity:

“It was the first time I was able to bring my Indigenous world view in so completely with a workshop. The creation of the asynchronous video and filming on the land gave me my first real opportunity to share information through natural order. It was very powerful for me, and has watered the seed of being my Métis self in all my spaces, including my work. And it was valuable to see and hear from others engaged in this work. A sense of community was building.”



Photo: Zen Chung

Exposure and content creation:

“To be able to participate in the first place! The breadth of the MC network means reaching people that may not have been aware of this type of training existing, and it was amazing people able to reach people from varying roles and disciplines. It was also nice having a couple of people reaching out wanting to bring the sessions to their own organizations. Also having the time and space (while being paid!) to work on and refine content, as well as the budget to fund collaborators, really enabled me to think bigger. And of course it was valuable knowing that trying to continue this work is clearly important!”

Thank you!

Meredith Davis
meredith@goodroots.ca

Good Roots Consulting
www.goodroots.ca

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