

Status of the Artist

Canada will seriously examine the possibility of hosting an intergovernmental conference on the status of artists during 1996-1997, and proposes meetings with Secretariat members to discuss this possibility further.

Books and reading

Culture is an unusual phenomenon that combines aspects of our social and economic systems. Cultural products are rarely consumed in the traditional sense. Reading a book may cost money, certainly costs time, but in no sense uses up the book. It is there to be loaned or read again. What has happened is an emotional and intellectual exchange, which affects the user and may affect future exchanges. Cultural output is cumulative. Canada will therefore support any activity encouraging the distribution of books and reading.

Clearing house for international comparative research

In June 1994, the Department of Canadian Heritage organized an international symposium entitled "Crossing Frontiers: Issues of Culture, Heritage and Identity in a Comparative Context". This initiative was recognized and partially funded by UNESCO as a World Decade for Cultural Development project. The Symposium was attended by 200 policy-makers, researchers, academics and artists from over 15 countries including South America, Asia-Pacific, United States, Australia and Europe. One of the proposals emerging from the Symposium was the need to establish a clearing house for international comparative policy research in the heritage and culture areas. This idea was well received by the Symposium including representatives from cultural and heritage research institutes from around the world.

Canada is interested in seeing the realization of the project. It was suggested that Culturelink (an initiative of The Institute for Development and International Relations in Zagreb), an existing, yet not necessarily specialized cultural documentation and research network, become the hub of such a clearing house. Updates, bibliographic reviews, a who's who of researchers and abstracts on the state of international comparative research would form the basis of a specialized edition to be published annually by Culturelink and made electronically available through the Internet. Culturelink, a UNESCO/Council of Europe funded network could work on this activity in co-operation with institutes and researchers from around the world, including Canada, which could provide technical advice and act as regional facilitators for the project.