

Work in Culture: HR Spotlight

A 3-year project of Cultural Careers Council Ontario, supported by the Ontario Trillium Foundation

HR IN THE CULTURAL COMMUNITY

Cultural workers make important, far-reaching contributions to the health of communities across Ontario. Skilled, innovative, resilient people are essential for the success of Ontario's cultural sector. Individuals and organizations working in culture face challenges that include financial marginalization, unpredictable career paths, uniquely specialized skills, small staffs, and extensive self-employment – leading to high turnover and widespread burn-out that jeopardize the cultural sector's success.

There is ample evidence that sound human resources practices reduce stress, increase workplace fairness, and improve morale. In the cultural community, however, there is a lack of understanding of human resources, limited availability of relevant information and tools, and even a perception that human resources practices don't apply to work in culture.

It's widely recognized that inadequate human resources practices make the cultural sector vulnerable. Increased awareness and understanding of the value of human resources practices, skills development and training programs, and relevant human resources information would benefit Ontario's entire cultural community – creators, administrators and facilitators alike.

WORK IN CULTURE: HR SPOTLIGHT

Cultural Careers Council Ontario (CCCO) is the central, multi-disciplinary body for human resources (HR) issues for Ontario's cultural community, developing and facilitating culture-relevant HR programs and tools.

Work in Culture: HR Spotlight, initiated and developed by CCCO, and supported by the Ontario Trillium Foundation, is a multi-faceted, three-year (2006 to 2008) cultural HR project, focusing on the needs of small to medium-sized organizations and self-employed cultural workers.

Work in Culture: HR Spotlight will shift attitudes and increase awareness of HR best practices in the cultural sector, by:

- Building HR knowledge specific to culture in Ontario
- Developing and distributing practical and culture-relevant HR programs, materials, and tools
- Promoting the value and importance of HR in Ontario's cultural sector

Specific *Work in Culture: HR Spotlight* programs and activities will include:

- Training selected administrators and creators as partners ('train the trainers'), to conduct workshops, and promote HR practices in cultural communities across Ontario
- Developing culture-relevant HR information, templates, checklists, tip sheets, and education programs such as 'Introduction to HR' workshops

- Extending CCCO's popular HR Tools series that includes titles on recruiting, mentoring, and conflict resolution; proposed new topics will cover leadership, interviewing, auditioning, and team building
- Expanding CCCO website content and interactivity through downloadable content, online training, Q&A, and links to HR tools on other websites
- Developing materials and presentations to promote HR perspectives and resources, to influencers such as boards, arts service organizations, cultural associations, education institutions, and relevant media

Anticipated benefits of *Work in Culture: HR Spotlight* include:

- Increased awareness and knowledge of HR practices and resources
- Wider integration of HR practices in cultural workplaces, increasing job satisfaction and facilitating staff retention
- Increased opportunities for career development, training, and mentoring
- Shared HR information and tools within the cultural community, through working with local partners across Ontario
- Increased awareness and use of CCCO resources

Working with professional evaluators and measurement standards, CCCO will evaluate results of *Work in Culture: HR Spotlight* through:

- Qualitative objectives for skills development opportunities, HR priorities and practices, program evaluations, and communications
- Quantitative targets for workshops, materials, geographic sites, contacts, constituent resources, website activity, and trained trainers

Work in Culture: HR Spotlight is directed by a steering committee of CCCO board members and other cultural community representatives, encompassing a wide range of experience in employed and self-employed aspects of culture.

ABOUT CCCO

Cultural Careers Council Ontario (CCCO) is a not-for-profit sectoral council, founded in 1996, to represent career development and human resources issues for Ontario's cultural sector. CCCO assesses human resource needs in the cultural sector, develops and supports programs to meet those needs, and creates and advocates policies and practices for training, retraining and other human resource issues. CCCO's website www.workinculture.ca includes its popular job posting board.

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