



2019 Pre-Budget Submission

To the House Standing Committee on Finance
August 2, 2018

The Glenn Gould Foundation is a Canadian registered charity established in 1983. Our mission is to honour Gould's spirit and legacy by celebrating brilliance, promoting creativity and transforming lives through the power of music and the arts. Our reach is global because of Glenn Gould's worldwide fame and prestige.

Our central initiative is the coveted Glenn Gould Prize, Canada's most internationally significant honour for creative achievement, awarded every second year to a person of any nationality who has enriched the human condition through the arts, with emphasis on innovation and humanitarianism. Some have called it the "Nobel Prize of the Arts."

The real work of The Glenn Gould Foundation, however, is to elevate Canada's position on the world stage – promoting our nation's leadership in innovation, creativity and ideas that change the world – precisely the areas most closely associated with Glenn Gould across the planet.

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Executive Summary

We maintain that a policy of cultural diplomacy is an important means for advancing Canadian interests and competitiveness, to raise our national profile as a leader in innovation, creativity, excellence and diversity. Cultural diplomacy has been neglected to our detriment. We recommend that Canada:

- Establish a global “Creative Canada Strategy” with a clear “Brand Canada” mandate, rooted in cultural diplomacy;
- Identify key strategic initiatives as the anchors for this campaign, based on continuity, effectiveness, global reach and ability to promote the Creative Canada message;
- Choose the expansion of The Glenn Gould Prize as one of several cornerstone initiatives for the Creative Canada Campaign. We seek federal funding of \$15 million (one-time grant) – to be matched by the private sector - to raise the Glenn Gould Prize to a stature of a Canadian-inspired Nobel Prize of the Arts.

Introduction

Canada is living through a period of global upheaval. Widely accepted standards of behaviour, trade and conduct are being challenged. Equally, we are in the midst of a period of technology-driven economic transformation. These revolutionary developments represent both opportunity and threat to Canada’s competitiveness.

Rightly, the Government of Canada has committed itself to re-engagement with the world. This re-engagement has taken many forms from the fight to preserve open trading relationships to maintaining our proud tradition of foreign and development aid.

There is one area in which Canada lags behind. Our nation should address itself in a focussed and sustained way to building a modern, progressive, and more prominent presence in the community of nations. We speak of “Brand Canada,” but do little to generate and promote an image to counter stereotypes of this country. Images of the lumberjack and Mountie have picturesque appeal, but do not advance our global presence in information technology, medical research, financial services, diplomacy and other creative disciplines - the backbone of the vital information economy. The prevailing image of Canada and Canadians globally remains rooted in postcard images that do little to carry us forward in the turbulent times ahead. Canada’s global image remains, at best, a “middle of the pack” perception, and not one of leadership.

Cultural diplomacy used in a targeted, strategic and focussed way, is a crucial instrument in the toolbox for elevating Canada’s position on the world. In an increasingly competitive global economy, to neglect developing a “Creative Canada Strategy” is to discard a vital opportunity.

Yet, while other nations grasp this fact¹, and invest in using culture to project a positive representation of themselves, Canada long ago cut even its most basic investments in this area (e.g., elimination of dedicated embassy and consular cultural officers with discretionary budgets

¹ Cf: Report of the Advisory Committee on Cultural Diplomacy, U.S. Department of State, September 2005 (“Cultural Diplomacy: The Lynchpin of Public Diplomacy”): “Cultural diplomacy is the lynchpin of public diplomacy; for it is in its cultural activities that a nation’s idea of itself is best represented.”

to allow them to take advantage of local opportunities to “market Canada”). We have only recently begun to re-invest, but at such a low level and a non-strategic way as to be marginally effective.² We have no equivalent to the Alliance Française, Goethe Institute, Japan Foundation, Confucius Institute or British Council. We have not learned from the UK with its successful “Cool Britannia” GREAT BRITAIN campaigns.³

While forward-looking nations the world over invest in projecting positive images of themselves, Canada seems stuck with an outmoded notion that once a treaty is in place, maximized prosperity follows automatically. We neglect the reality understood by every business, that selling is based on building relationships, that marketing is a key business investment, and that perception is reality. Proactive investment in using Canada’s internationally recognized cultural riches, to foster an image of this nation for the 21st and 22nd Centuries, is a necessity, not a frill.⁴

Now more than ever, we need to “up the game” in promoting a Brand Canada rooted creative leadership to secure our global competitiveness.

Look at the photograph in Appendix 1, taken recently in a restaurant in Paris. Ask if that’s the image of Canada and Canadians held by our trading partners and rivals, and then ask, “would I buy a supercomputer from that man?”⁵

Then ask yourself if investing robustly in a new Brand Canada is a frill.

² Compare the investments cited below with the \$1.75 million allocated to Global Affairs for the Mission Cultural Fund established in 2016, a sum to be divided between Canada’s 174 missions abroad – amounting to \$10,057 per mission.

³ GREAT BRITAIN was established in 2012 “to inspire the world to think and feel differently about the UK now and in the future, demonstrating that it is the best nation to visit, invest in, trade with and study in.” The program is active in 144 countries and 252 diplomatic posts and Britain’s government auditor has projected it to yield direct and indirect annual economic benefits of at least **£1.6 billion** on an initial three-year investment of £113 million – and that funding was over and above all existing programs.

⁴ An investment in cultural diplomacy for Canada is completely distinct in purpose and strategic design from Canada’s other cultural investments (e.g., through the Canada Council). We are arguing for a marketing campaign to establish the image of CREATIVE CANADA in the mind of the world, and nothing less. To be successful, it must have a different set of objectives, different strategic design and tactics from existing arts granting programmes and infrastructure.

⁵ Cf “How is Canada Perceived in the World?” (Montreal Gazette, 26 Sept. 2015)

Recommendations

“Great nations write their autobiographies in three manuscripts – the book of their deeds, the book of their words and the book of their art.”

- John Ruskin

Recommendation 1: Identify Clear Objectives

We recommend that the Government of Canada, commit itself to a vigorous cultural diplomacy strategy with the following key objectives:

- 1) Communicate a powerful, sophisticated message about Canada, its talents, its values and its identity to the world, both through presenting and hosting.
- 2) Strengthen ties with allies and trading partners, and reduce tensions with others, by fostering connections based on shared humanity – to “undermine otherness”.
- 3) Expand trade and economic prosperity – going well beyond the creative industries– based on the promotion of a Brand Canada, rooted in concepts of excellence, internationalism and innovation, inclusivity, to elevate Canada’s global profile.

Recommendation 2: Framework for Creative Canada Campaign

We recommend that the Creative Canada Strategy have mandate that dictates strategic coherence and a results-based approach based on the following framework:

- 1) **Continuity**
Penetrating global consciousness takes time, consistency and concerted effort: entrenched perceptions cling stubbornly in peoples’ consciousness. Long-term thinking, regular messaging, reinforcement and initiatives with predictable, repeated cycles are most powerful.
- 2) **Clearly Defined Message**
Effective messages are clear and simple. The message about how culture informs the Canadian brand needs punch. Creative Canada’s message should target global, not domestic, audiences. Narratives for the home market may not be the ones that resonate abroad.
- 3) **Play to Our Strengths – Seen Through the Eyes of the World**
“If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart.” (Nelson Mandela) Canada’s policy should focus on what other nations value in cultural expression so we can show our strengths meaningfully to them (e.g., in China, 60 million students study classical piano, a symbol of success and upward mobility, while other music genres that enjoy popularity in the West are frowned upon).

Review and analyze what cultural products, messages and symbols can produce lasting impact abroad in the following key groups: a) general public; b) business leaders; c) thought leaders; d) government leaders.

- 4) **Creative Canada Needs Originality, Imagination and Leadership in the Best Canadian Tradition**
Doing what others are already doing – especially if they are doing it with a bigger budget – will not achieve success or leadership.

To promote Canada’s creativity and innovation, our strategy must be infused with precisely those qualities. We can learn from our success stories – (e.g., investment in Own the Podium, or funding to the Canada Gairdner Prizes in medical science).

“Best Practices” is the study of others’ experiences with a view to emulating *their* successes, which means that the parade has already passed by the time we decide to join it. Being first and best is a winning strategy.

- 5) **Effective Use of the Power of Symbols and Signature Projects**

Investment in the expansion of Canada’s cultural diplomacy is overdue. Over time, it will pay significant prosperity and trade dividends, and build bridges that we need now more than ever. Vigorous cultural diplomacy is a proactive equity-builder for the nation.

It would be prohibitive to create a traditional marketing campaign to blanket the globe. But the selection of a number of highly visible “signature” projects using recognized symbols is an effective alternative. The Swedes have the Nobel Prize and American visibility is enhanced with the Oscars and Grammys. These symbols are global emissaries for their countries’ best, most creative image of themselves.⁶

Senior officials in the Ministry of International Trade have expressed agreement with these views. Investing in Canadian strategic initiatives in cultural diplomacy for Brand Canada serves a wide range of national interests: stimulating tourism and cultural exports, attracting business investment, scientific and technological talent, enhancing trading relationships in numerous sectors - even advancing diplomatic objectives such as winning a seat at the Security Council.

Cultural diplomacy should be in our national tool-kit, elevating Canada abroad, promoting a spirit of national pride and optimism at home.

⁶ The most celebrated example of the transformative power of a single cultural initiative is Frank Gehry’s design for the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, which brought worldwide recognition to the Spanish city, giving rise to the term, “the Bilbao Effect” and providing a massive and sustained boost to the Spanish economy.

6) Aim High – Because Nothing Else Will Work

Embrace a bold vision for what we can accomplish through cultural diplomacy, refusing to settle for anything less than the summit of achievement, recognition and global positioning. When Glenn Gould pierced the Iron Curtain in 1957 becoming the first Western artist to visit the Soviet Union at the height of the Cold War, he became our first cultural diplomat. He became Canada's *interstellar* ambassador with his music on the Golden Record aboard the Voyager space probe in 1977. He was not held back by diffidence, and his impact is felt to this day. With Voyager now 13 billion miles from earth, Gould showed us how to aim high.

Our artists electrify audiences around the world, but we do little to reflect that glory back onto the amazing country that produced them. Be bold, Canada, seek the summit, and:

“Dream no small dreams, for they have not the power to move the hearts of men – or women!”

Recommendation 3: Canada's “Nobel Prize of the Arts”

The Glenn Gould Foundation has proposed that the Government of Canada invest in a signature initiative that meets these criteria: expansion of The Glenn Gould Prize to three prizes that stand as counterparts to the Nobel Prize as global symbols of creative achievement, excellence and innovation.

Gould is perhaps the most internationally recognized and celebrated Canadian of all time. Globally, he is viewed not only as a musical genius, but also an innovator and visionary who predicted and embraced the information age.

To create a symbol of Canadian excellence, creativity and innovation as global as Gould would require a marketing investment of billions of dollars, but Gould already exists and The Glenn Gould Foundation and Glenn Gould Prize have a thirty-five year history of successful international engagement. These are national assets waiting to serve Canada's global interests.

The Glenn Gould Foundation proposes to expand the existing Glenn Gould Prize to three \$100,000 international Prizes presented biennially:

- **The Glenn Gould Prize in Creative Innovation⁷**
- **The Glenn Gould Prize in Cultural Humanitarianism**
- **The Glenn Gould Prize in Artistic Excellence**

with corresponding Protégé Prizes for outstanding young artists.

The Foundation proposes that this be used as a core signature project in Canada's revitalized cultural diplomacy.

⁷ Cf McKinsey and Company: “And the Winner is . . .” *Capturing the Promise of Philanthropic Prizes*, 2009: “governments have long used prizes to drive innovation and engagement to produce societal benefit, . . .” (pp. 7-)

The Foundation asks that Canada make a one-time endowment investment of \$15 million for this expansion (Cf. the 2008 grant to the Gairdner medical science prizes). The Foundation will use Canada's investment to leverage matching funds from the private sector, establishing a \$30 million endowment to turn a unique existing asset into a key cultural lynchpin in our nation's Brand Canada strategy.

With this base, the Foundation will move to a heightened global profile, enabling Canada to permanently "Own the Creative Podium."

Appendix I

The Global View of Canada – An Image in Need of a Re-Boot



Photograph – from a typical Paris café, 2017