

METHODOLOGY

DEAF AND DISABILITY ARTS PRACTICES IN CANADA

This document describes the methodology used in *Deaf and Disability Arts Practices in Canada*, a research project that was commissioned and funded by the Canada Council for the Arts, and lead by a team composed of Deaf, disabled, and allied researchers and artists.

The aim here is to explain the data collection methods and data analysis approaches used in the project as well as its overall research strategy. This methodology was developed by the research team in collaboration with the Canada Council for the Arts.

Title for citation purposes

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1.1 Secondary data research methodology

The first part of this research project from May to July 2018 involved secondary data research combining statistical analysis with a literature review. The statistical analysis consisted of a descriptive examination of quantitative data relating to Deaf and disability arts practices in Canada. **This information was obtained from various databases and cultural organizations for the period from 2008 to 2018, namely:** (1) census data on Deaf and disabled people; (2) labour force data on Deaf and disabled people in the arts sector; (3) data on organizational support practices for Deaf and disabled artists; and (4) funding data on Deaf and disability arts practices. The data collection involved three steps: (1) researching nine statistical databases;¹ (2) submitting requests to various federal, provincial and municipal arts councils and several other federal bodies;² (3) consulting publicly available data on the websites of departments, agencies, foundations or cultural initiatives (e.g. Canadian Heritage and Telefilm Canada). Of the **22 organizations** that were canvassed,³ **18 responded** to our information requests and **11 provided** us with at least one piece of information on the targeted themes. The other agencies did not have any information on the research themes.

The literature review consisted of a thematic analysis of research reports, articles and other grey literature (published in Canada or abroad between 2004 and 2018) on the practices of Deaf and disabled artists in Canada. The study addressed the following themes: (1) current and emerging practices of Deaf and disabled artists in Canada and the role of self-defining and self-determining discourses and approaches; (2) key issues and advances in cultural accessibility and democratization in Canada; (3) connections, similarities and differences among the practices and environments of Deaf and disabled artists; and (4) best practices in cultural accessibility both in Canada and abroad.

¹ Statistics Canada, B.C. Data Catalogue, Alberta Government Open Data, Ontario Data Catalogue, Institut de la statistique du Québec, Office des personnes handicapées du Québec, Open Data New Brunswick, Nova Scotia Open Data Portal and Open Data Newfoundland and Labrador.

² The persons contacted were employees or managers who agreed to share certain information whenever available.

³ The following organizations were consulted: **Federal (4)**: Canadian Heritage, Canada Council for the Arts, National Film Board (NFB) and Telefilm Canada; **Provinces and Territories (12)**: BC Arts Council, Alberta Foundation for the Arts, Saskatchewan Arts Board, Manitoba Arts Council, Ontario Arts Council, Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec, Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council, Arts Nova Scotia, New Brunswick Arts Board, Government of Prince Edward Island (Arts Grants Program), Northwest Territories Arts Council and Government of Yukon (Arts Section); **Municipalities (6)**: Arts and Culture Council of Vancouver, Calgary Arts Development, Edmonton Arts Council, Winnipeg Arts Council, Toronto Arts Council and Conseil des arts de Montréal.

This work consisted of four steps : (1) searches in three scientific databases (ProQuest, Cairn and Érudit) ; (2) keyword searches of the websites of various cultural and artistic organizations, foundations, institutions and initiatives ; (3) keyword searches in social media (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) ; and (4) searches of references in the bibliographies of the selected documents. A total of **1,368 references** were identified and **1,158 records** and abstracts of articles were reviewed. A total of **1,069 abstracts** were excluded as irrelevant, **89 abstracts** were retained on account of their relevance to the themes under study, **65 abstracts** directly relating to the study were classified by research theme, and **27 articles** were analyzed.

1.2 Primary data research methodology

The second part of the research consisted of a study of primary data. The collection and analysis of these data was based on **34 individual interviews** and **8 focus group sessions** (involving **51 participants**), which took place between May and September 2018. A total of **85 people participated** in the research. **Data were collected in eight Canadian cities, in a total of six provinces :** Vancouver (British Columbia), Edmonton (Alberta), Winnipeg (Manitoba), Toronto and Ottawa (Ontario), Montréal and Québec City (Québec) and Halifax (Nova Scotia). **The research examined four dimensions of the practices of Deaf and disabled artists :**⁴ (1) artists and their practices ; (2) collaborations and artistic practice settings ; (3) relationships with the broader arts community ; and (4) funding.

Individual interviews were conducted with Deaf and disabled artists, and focus group sessions consisting of 4 to 10 participants each were held with artists, cultural workers and members of presenter, service and training organizations (e.g., representatives and members of presenters, festivals, galleries, cultural centres and artist-run centres). Semi-structured interviews and focus group sessions were conducted in English, French, Quebec Sign Language (LSQ) and American Sign Language (ASL).

⁴ According to the Canada Council for the Arts, the practices of Deaf and disabled artists include but are not limited to the practices of artists with disabilities, the practices of artists who are Deaf, the practices of artists living with mental illness, the practices of artists with mixed abilities, the practices of artists with intellectual disabilities, and integrated arts.

The participants were Deaf and disabled adults, plus a number of allies working in arts and culture. Participant recruitment⁵ was designed to assemble a diverse, non-probability sample in terms of gender, language, ethnocultural background, socio-demographic category and occupational profile. Interviews were conducted in accessible locations⁶ with LSQ and / or ASL interpreters on hand; travel expenses were covered, and participants could specify their equity-related needs.

Analysis of the data from the primary data collection was based on both deductive and inductive methods. Deductive analysis was performed by coding the data using NVivo software. A chart listing four general themes, **30 sub-themes** and **93 markers** was used for coding. The coding was followed by a thematic analysis of the main findings. An inductive analysis of key themes and main issues was carried out by the research team. This analysis was complemented by a collective interpretation of the results through an iterative process involving researchers, research assistants and collaborators. The relevance of the research issues and their prioritization were confirmed by a comparison of analytical methods and an exchange of views that drew on the expertise of all research team members.

5 Participants were recruited through a call for participation issued in English, French, LSQ and ASL, which was posted on the Canada Council's website, and communicated via social media, as well as through the snowball sampling method. A total of 121 people expressed interest in participating in the research.

6 We would like to warmly thank the following individuals for arranging the availability of accessible premises during data collection: Maria F. Arentsen (Département d'études françaises, de langues et de littératures, Université Saint-Boniface, Winnipeg), Linda Campbell (Department of Environmental Science, Saint-Mary's University, Halifax), Kathryn Church and Paris Master-McRae (School of Disability Studies, Ryerson University, Toronto), Célia Forget (CELAT, Centre de recherche Cultures-Arts-Sociétés, Université Laval, Québec City), Henrieta Lau (BC Artscape, Vancouver), Danielle Peers (Faculty of Kinesiology, Sport and Recreation, University of Alberta, Edmonton), and Drea Flyne and Peter Kuling (Department of Theatre, Faculty of Arts, University of Ottawa).