

Glossary

Key terms and concepts in arts and culture-led social change and social innovation.

Ableism

Ableism refers to the systemic discrimination, prejudice, and social exclusion experienced by individuals with disabilities, where their abilities are devalued or disregarded due to societal norms and structures that prioritize able-bodiedness.

See also: *Audism*.

Access

Access encompasses the removal of barriers that limit individuals' ability to fully participate and benefit from all aspects of society.

It involves ensuring that services, resources, opportunities, information, and environments are available and accessible to everyone, regardless of factors such as geography, income, culture, or ability.

See also: *Ableism; Audism; Deaf, Deaf Culture, deaf, and Hard of Hearing*.

Arts and culture

Arts and culture is an umbrella term referring to a wide array of traditions, practices, and forms in the artistic, creative, and cultural industries.

Among others, it includes the fine arts, applied design, cultural heritage, and more.

See also: *Industry (Artistic, Creative, Cultural)*.

ASO / ASO+

ASO is an acronym that is used interchangeably to denote *Arts Service* or *Arts Support Organization*.

In Canada, ASOs are typically structured as not-for-profits that provide affordable fee-for-services and/or accessible in-kind community supports to creatives from one or more disciplines locally, regionally, or nationally.

Variations on ASO include LASO (Local ASO), PASO (Provincial ASO), and NASO (National ASO). NASO (National Arts Service Organization) is also an official designation with charitable status at Canada Revenue Agency.

While not currently registered as a charity, ArtsPond is an example of one of only a few NASOs with a mandate to support all disciplines in arts and culture across Canada.

However, we do not relate solely to service or support as adequate descriptors for what we do. As a changemaker and a caregiver, the accountabilities of service and support alone do not feel quite weighty enough. As such, we think of ourselves as a different kind of ASO, or ASO+.

ASO+, as identified by ArtsPond, refers to entities that embrace multiple strategies for guiding arts and culture-led systems change and mutual care.

Five strategies that encompass and extend beyond traditional offerings by ASOs include:

1. **Service**

Offering affordable fee-for-services and resources to strengthen capacity and impact of individual artists and other creatives in diverse communities. Often focused on enhanced survival in response to disasters, dangers, and daily basic needs.

2. **Support**

Providing accessible and/or in-kind community assistance and advocacy that strengthens resilience and sustainability of individuals, communities, and ecosystems. Often focused on shifts from survival to thriving despite systemic resource deserts, daily gaps, and unmet dreams.

3. **Social purpose**

Incubating pathways to help elevate the value and benefit of giving care with underserved or precarious communities. Often focused on the immediate present and shifting to active co-creation of therapies and remedies with individual caregivers and impacted groups.

4. **Social change**

Catalyzing ripples of positive change within systems by mobilizing collective actions and structural reforms that address systemic

inequities and injustices. Often focused on the near future with measurable and attainable goals in 1 to 5 years.

5. **Social innovation+**

Leveraging creative approaches and collaborative partnerships to drive transformative change and dismantle harmful systems of precarity and injustice in favour of caring alternatives. Often focused on longer timelines of 5 to 10 years or more.

Audism

Audism is discrimination against d/Deaf or hard of hearing individuals, valuing hearing and speech over deafness and sign language. It includes attitudes, behaviors, and social structures that marginalize this community, affecting their access to communication, education, and opportunities.

Belonging

Belonging refers to the human feeling of being accepted, included, and valued within a particular group or community. It involves creating environments where individuals feel a sense of security, connection, and ownership that fosters a supportive and inclusive culture.

BIDEA

BIDEA is an acronym that stands for Belonging, Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access. It is an extension of DEI frameworks (Diversity, Equity, and

Inclusion) and broadly outlines the ways that humans from various communities are represented, valued, and provided with opportunities to thrive.

The aim of BIDEA is to create more inclusive and equitable environments where diverse voices, perspectives, identities, experiences, backgrounds, and abilities are celebrated and empowered.

Colonialism

Colonialism is the practice of one nation or group exerting control over another, often for economic benefit, by establishing settlements, exploiting resources, and imposing cultural, political, and social dominance over Indigenous people.

Deaf, Deaf Culture, deaf, and Hard of Hearing

Deaf

With a capital “D”, Deaf refers to people who identify as culturally Deaf, typically as a member of the Deaf community, which may use sign language as their primary means of communication. Being Deaf is often seen as a cultural identity rather than solely a medical condition.

Deaf Culture

Deaf Culture refers to the shared beliefs, values, customs, traditions, and experiences of Deaf individuals and their communities. It encompasses

unique linguistic, social, and cultural norms, including the use of sign language, visual communication, and a strong sense of identity and pride in being Deaf.

deaf

With a lowercase “d”, deaf refers to the audiological condition of having a significant hearing loss, regardless of whether the individual identifies with the Deaf community or uses sign language.

Hard of Hearing

Hard of Hearing (HOH) refers to individuals who have some degree of hearing loss but may still have residual hearing and may use a variety of communication methods, including spoken language, sign language, or assistive devices like hearing aids or cochlear implants.

Digitalization

Digitalization describes the swift and extensive integration of digital technologies in society, profoundly altering how people and organizations function while also bringing risks like data breaches and social inequality amplification.

Disconnection

Disconnection refers to limited communication and collaboration that hinders innovation and diversity in creative expression.

Two types of disconnection include:

1. **Regional disconnection**, particularly in suburban, rural, and remote areas, refers to the limited access to cultural resources, events, and opportunities compared to urban centers. It involves a lack of infrastructure, funding, and community support, leading to isolation, reduced artistic participation, and challenges in preserving and promoting local cultural heritage.
2. **Disciplinary disconnection** refers to the absence of communication and collaboration between different artistic fields or disciplines. It involves a lack of integration or exchange of ideas among practitioners from diverse artistic backgrounds, hindering innovation, interdisciplinary exploration, and the development of holistic artistic expressions.

Disruption

Disruption in arts and culture refers to significant shifts or challenging interruptions that fundamentally alter that way creative practices, industries, and cultural experiences operate.

These disruptions can arise from a variety of factors, such as *technological, socioeconomic, political and regulatory, pandemic, environmental, demographic, cultural (globalization), crisis and conflict*, and more.

For example, these eight disruptions include:

1. **Technological and digital disruption**
This type of disruption occurs when new technologies, platforms, or digital tools transform the production, distribution, and consumption of artistic and cultural content. Examples include the rise of streaming services, virtual reality experiences, generative artificial intelligence, and digital art platforms, which have reshaped how audiences consume and engage with creative works.
2. **Socioeconomic disruption**
Social and economic disruptions result from shifts in societal norms, values, and behaviors, as well as changes in economic conditions and funding models within the arts and culture sector. These disruptions can impact funding sources, audience demographics, and artistic practices, leading to changes in cultural trends, tastes, and priorities.
3. **Political and regulatory disruption**
Political and regulatory disruptions stem from changes in government policies, regulations, or political climates that impact arts funding, censorship, or cultural diplomacy initiatives. Shifts in political ideologies or geopolitical dynamics can influence artistic expression, cultural exchange, and international collaboration.

4. **Pandemic disruption**

Pandemic disruptions create significant upheaval and setbacks in arts and culture due to venue closures, event cancellations, financial strain on workers and institutions, reduced public engagement, pivots in programming, and more.

5. **Environmental disruption**

Environmental disruptions refer to the impact of environmental factors such as climate change, natural disasters, lack and loss of clean water, or ecological crises on arts and culture. These disruptions can affect cultural heritage sites, artistic practices, and the sustainability of cultural institutions, prompting adaptation and resilience efforts within the sector.

6. **Demographic disruption**

Demographic shifts, such as changes in population demographics, migration patterns, or generational preferences, can disrupt arts and culture by altering audience demographics, cultural consumption habits, and the demand for certain types of artistic content or experiences.

7. **Cultural disruption (globalization)**

Globalization and increased interconnectedness can disrupt arts and culture by facilitating cross-cultural exchange, hybridization of artistic styles and traditions,

and the emergence of global cultural trends. This can both enrich cultural diversity and challenge traditional notions of authenticity and cultural identity.

8. **Crisis and conflict disruption**

Crises such as wars, conflicts, or humanitarian emergencies can disrupt arts and culture by damaging cultural infrastructure, displacing artists and cultural communities, and hindering artistic freedom and expression. These disruptions often require humanitarian and cultural heritage preservation efforts to mitigate their impact and safeguard cultural heritage.

We find it useful to note that the types of disruptions described above are primarily unidirectional, where systems are largely impacting people, communities, and ecosystems in a challenging or negative way.

However, systems can also be disrupted in the opposite direction by people, communities, and ecosystems.

For the purposes of clear definition, we refer to this type of disruption as *Hacking*. Hacking is one element of ArtsPond's *Heart Circle* described below.

See also: [Heart](#).

Diversity

Diversity encompasses the presence of a wide range of human identities, perspectives, and experiences within a community, ecosystem, group, or organization. It includes differences in race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, ability, religion, and more.

Exploitation

Exploitation encompasses various unjust practices disadvantaging artists and marginalized communities.

It includes *financial exploitation* via inadequate compensation, *intellectual property exploitation* such as plagiarism, and *cultural appropriation* without proper understanding. Additionally, *tokenism*, *power imbalances*, *labor exploitation*, and *gatekeeping* restrict opportunities, perpetuating biases and inequalities.

For example:

1. **Tokenism and exploitative representation**

The superficial inclusion or representation of marginalized groups in arts and cultural productions for the purpose of diversity quotas, marketing strategies, or token gestures, without genuine empowerment, agency, or meaningful participation in decision-making processes.

2. **Power imbalance and exploitative relationships**

Exploitative relationships may occur within artistic collaborations, professional networks, or institutional structures, where individuals or organizations with greater power, influence, or resources exploit those with less power, agency, or bargaining power, leading to coercion, manipulation, or abuse.

3. **Labour exploitation**

Labour exploitation in the gig economy involves unfair treatment like low pay, job insecurity, and no benefits for freelancers. Workers face precarious conditions, with little control over schedules and no access to benefits like healthcare. It may also involve sweatshop labor, child labor, or unsafe working conditions in manufacturing facilities, studios, or cultural institutions.

4. **Intellectual property exploitation**

The unauthorized or unfair use of artists' intellectual property rights, including copyright, trademarks, or royalties. It may involve plagiarism, piracy, or unauthorized reproduction and distribution of artistic works without proper attribution or compensation.

5. **Gatekeeping and exclusionary practices**

The selective control or restriction of access to opportunities, resources, or platforms within

the arts and culture sector, perpetuating hierarchies, biases, and inequalities that exclude marginalized individuals or communities from participation or recognition.

6. **Financial or economic exploitation**

Unjust compensation or underpayment of artists, performers, or cultural workers for their creative labor, skills, and contributions. It may include practices such as unpaid internships, wage theft, or unfair contracts that exploit artists' economic vulnerability.

7. **Cultural appropriation**

When individuals or institutions from dominant or privileged groups exploit elements of marginalized cultures for their own benefit, often without proper understanding, respect, or acknowledgment of the cultural significance or context. This can lead to the commodification, distortion, or misrepresentation of cultural practices, symbols, or identities.

Equity

Equity involves recognizing and addressing systemic barriers that prevent equal access to resources, opportunities, and outcomes. It entails providing fair treatment, access, and support to ensure that everyone can thrive, regardless of background or circumstances.

While equality assumes that all people should be treated the same, equity takes into consideration a person's unique circumstances, adjusting treatment accordingly so that the end result is equal.

Equity-deserving

Equity-deserving refers to individuals and communities that have been historically marginalized and disadvantaged and deserve equitable treatment and opportunities to address inequalities.

While not limited to, these include (alphabetically):

- **2SLGBTQIA+** individuals (two-spirited, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and non-binary, queer and questioning, intersex, asexual, and other)
- **d/Deaf** individuals (including Deaf, deaf, and hard of hearing)
- **Disabled** people (with access needs including seeing, hearing, mobility, flexibility, dexterity, pain-related, learning, developmental, mental-health related, memory, and other)
- **English as a Second Language (ESL)** communities
- **Indigenous** people (First Nations, Inuit, Métis)