

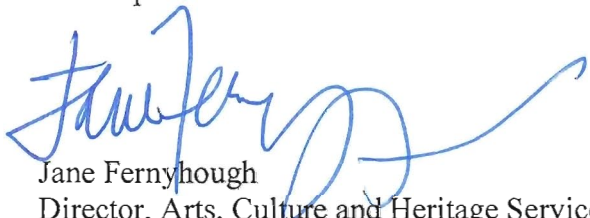


**To:** Planning Committee  
**From:** Jane Fernyhough  
Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services  
**Re:** **Richmond Media Lab**

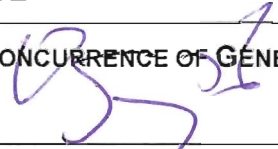

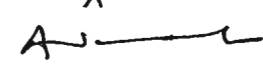
**Date:** July 29, 2014  
**File:** 11-7144-01/Vol 01

**Staff Recommendation**

1. That the report titled "*Richmond Media Lab*" dated July 29, 2014, from the Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services, be received for information; and
2. That future funding to operate the Richmond Media Lab be included in the 2015 budget process for Council consideration.



Jane Fernyhough  
Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services  
(604-276-4288)

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
<b>ROUTED TO:</b>  Finance Division	<b>CONCURRENCE</b>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER</b>  
<b>REVIEWED BY STAFF REPORT / AGENDA REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE</b>	<b>INITIALS:</b>  	<b>APPROVED BY CAO</b> <i>Acting</i> 

## Staff Report

### Origin

On May 21, 2014 the following referral was made at Planning Committee:

*That the Richmond Community Services Advisory Committee Communications Tool From Richmond Addiction Services Society and Richmond Youth Media Program, dated April 7, 2014, be referred to staff to examine:*

1. *Future funding and partnership opportunities for the Richmond Addiction Services Society and Richmond Youth Media Program;*
2. *Other programs that are operating out of the Richmond Media Lab;*
3. *How these programs support City strategies; and*
4. *The long-term strategy to staff these programs.*

The purpose of this report is to:

- Provide an examination of the Richmond Youth Media Program's future funding and partnership opportunities;
- Provide an analysis of other programs operating out of the Richmond Media Lab and how these programs support City strategies; and
- Outline options for long-term funding staffing strategies.

This initiative is in line with Council's Term Goal No.9 Arts and Culture:

*Continue to support the development of a thriving, resilient and diverse cultural sector and related initiatives in creating a vibrant healthy and sustainable City.*

### Analysis

#### Background

The Richmond Media Lab is City-operated and has located its own 400ft<sup>2</sup> space in the Richmond Cultural Centre, opened in March 2011 with the intent to expand the delivery of arts opportunities to include the growing field of media arts and to provide the community with increased access to media technology, including tools for video and audio editing, digital art, web design and podcasting, and to develop skills which could be applied towards artistic activities and practical marketable skills.

Concurrently, the Richmond Media Lab partnered with the Richmond Collaborative Committee for Children and Youth (RCCCY) to provide the Richmond Youth Media Program (RYMP), which is supported by the Vancouver Coastal Health Sharon Martin Community Health (SMART) Fund. The program targets low asset/hard to reach youth and engages them through program development with creative media technology and by connecting individuals with positive role models. Programming includes drop-in sessions where supervised youth can work independently or in a variety of structured classes.

In 2013, RYMP received 27 referrals, bringing the total number of active members to 68. Referrals came from a variety of sources including Family Services of Greater Vancouver, Richmond's Roving Youth Leaders, Kaleidoscope, Vancouver Coastal Health, Richmond Art Gallery, Richmond Youth Service Agency, Richmond Addiction Services, family members and youth themselves.

In addition to being home to RYMP, the Media Lab acts as a "hub" for creative, multimedia project creation and assists the Richmond Arts Centre, Richmond Art Gallery, Richmond Museum and the Richmond Public Library to complement their educational opportunities available to youth. The Media Lab also provides ongoing media production support (e.g. video coverage, audio recording, video production and editing) to other City divisions such as Corporate Communications, Economic Development, Community Social Development and Youth Services.

The original intent of the Media Lab was to be a programming offshoot of the Richmond Arts Centre; however, staff underestimated the interest it would generate in the community, particularly from youth at-risk and service agencies and organizations. This demand for programs and services in the media arts as well as the provision of sponsorship and grant revenues largely attribute for the Media Lab's success.

#### Future Funding and Partnership Opportunities

Currently, Richmond Addiction Services Society (RASS) plays the leadership role (originally filled by RCCCY to partner with RYMP) and administers funding provided by Vancouver Coastal Health's SMART Fund. The Fund has helped support the program, including equipment and staff hours since its inception. The \$25,200 which was allocated for 2014/15 is expected to run out in March 2015. Richmond Steel and Recycling Ltd. has also been a sponsor of the Media Lab since its opening and 2014 funding, in the amount of \$12,000, has been confirmed until March 2015.

RASS has also been seeking out alternate funding sources for RYMP and has recently applied for one-year funding in the amount of \$20,000 through Telus' Community Grant. Staff have also been working with the Manager, Corporate Partnerships to extend the relationship with current sponsors and to explore new sponsorship opportunities to help support the Media Lab.

While sponsorship and grants have largely offset costs over the past three years, reliance on this type of funding strategy risks the long-term sustainability of the Media Lab and challenges future planning.

#### Other Media Lab Programs

In addition to RYMP, the Media Lab offers a wide range of programs in media arts such as Animation, Claymation, Acting on Camera, 3D Game Design, Digital Photography, Intro to Social Media, Music Production, Filmmaking and Learn to DJ. Classes are designed for students six years and up, including intergenerational classes.

Cinevolution Media Arts Society, the City's co-presenter of *Your Kontinent: Richmond International Film and Media Arts Festival*, is a Resident Art Group of the Media Lab which also offers animation and digital storytelling classes, media cafe screenings and community dialogue events, and unique media arts workshops.

The Media Lab continues to partner with a variety of outside organizations to increase access to media technology and to provide community outreach programming. Examples of the Media Lab's reach over the past three years include Newworld Theatre (DIY Podplay Project); RASS/Touchstone (Richmond Hospital, Challenging Automatic Prescription); ACTIMAGE Centre for Digital Arts (3D Modelling Workshop); Langara (Adobe Illustrator Workshop); Richmond SD38 Enex Project (Recording Artists Mentorship); Northwest Culinary Academy of Vancouver (Localvore Cooking Contest Video); and the Rick Hansen Anniversary Relay (RYMP DJ Performance).

Program growth in the Media Lab continues to be a trend with increases in both the variety of programs offered and the number of registered participants. For example, eight of the eleven programs offered this past summer filled with five of the programs carrying waitlists. Program adjustments and the addition of two new classes (Build a Website and Animation Level 1) helped to accommodate some of the waitlisted participants.

### Supporting City Strategies

The Richmond Media Lab was originally created to further the objectives laid out in the Council adopted Richmond Arts Strategy and to provide an opportunity for the community, particularly youth, to explore and benefit from the growing field of media arts. By using technology in ways that are current and relevant for young people and their learning experiences, the Media Lab has provided residents the opportunity to learn about media arts and develop technical related skills which help them become more engaged in their communities.

In addition to supporting the Richmond Arts Strategy, the Media Lab helps to advance the goals and actions in the City's Social Development Strategy and Youth Services Plan by providing a safe and youth-friendly space in the City Centre; expanding services for youth such as the RYMP program; initiating a collaborative approach to service delivery; encouraging community accessibility through free and affordable programming; and increasing the use of technology and enhancing existing communication channels.

Within the organization, the Media Lab has become an increasingly important corporate resource and is used regularly for support with video production and editing. It is anticipated that as the City continues to increase its use of video as a communication tool that the Media Lab's in-house video production, editing and training will continue to expand.

### Long-term Staffing Strategy

The Media Arts Specialist is responsible for advancing media arts practice and education by developing and facilitating programs and events that meet the needs of Richmond's culturally diverse community and address the trends in the media arts. A particular focus of the position involves utilizing media arts practice as a tool for creating positive opportunities for 'low asset' youth through the RYMP program.

Since the inception of the Media Lab in 2011, the Media Arts Specialist position has been mainly funded through sponsorship and grant money with some Department gap funding to maintain the number of staff hours. Project-related work and Media Lab programs are cost-recovery.

Further extension of the RYMP will require grant funding to support its goals and cover operating costs. Sponsorship will also continue to be important for the Media Lab to remain nimble in its response to new and growing trends in media arts. Long-term staffing however

does require a more sustainable approach to facilitate the success of future media arts programming, production and support. Three options are provided for consideration:

OPTIONS	STAFFING	ANNUAL COST
1	Regular PT 25 hrs/wk	≈\$57,062
2	Regular PT 30 hrs/wk	≈\$65,500
3	Regular FT	≈\$81,700

It is recommended that a request for funding in the amount of ≈\$81,700 for a full-time equivalent Media Arts Specialist (Option 3) be submitted to the City’s 2015 budget cycle for consideration. This would allow for extended operating hours of the Media Lab, further growth and diversity of media arts programming, and extended in-house video production, editing and support.

Future Budget Implications

Currently the Media Lab is identified in the City’s operating budget at a net cost to the City of \$14,200. Should funding for a full-time equivalent position be approved the net cost to the City would increase to \$46,500. Sponsorship and grants would continue to be sought to offset operational costs such as supplies and equipment. A decision to not approve funding for the position will require greater sponsorship and grant revenue to be secured to offset operational costs (e.g. staffing, supplies, equipment) or the Media Lab’s service level will be reduced.

Information Technology has also identified the total cost of equipment replacement, which staff have broken down into a three-year annual replacement cost and included in the 2015 operating budget. Program and project-related contractors as well as supplies and materials continue to be budgeted as cost-recovery.

BUDGET	2014	2015
<b>Revenue</b>		
Sponsorship/Grants	\$37,200	\$37,200*
Program	\$28,600	\$28,600
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$65,800</b>	<b>\$65,800</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Staffing	\$49,400	≈\$81,700**
Events	\$500	\$500
Supplies & Materials	\$16,700	\$9,700
Contracts	\$13,400	\$13,400
IT Equipment	0	\$7,000
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$80,000</b>	<b>\$112,300</b>
<b>Net Difference</b>	<b>-\$14,200</b>	<b>-\$46,500</b>

\*Sponsorship revenue is dependent on continuing to secure sponsors.

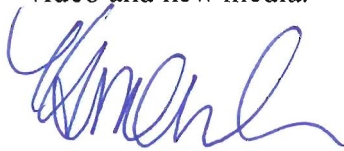
\*\*Recommended Staffing level - FTE

### **Financial Impact**

There is no financial impact to this report. Any funding requests will require a business case and be subject to future capital and operating budget approval.

### **Conclusion**

The activities and programs provided by the Media Lab expand the creative opportunities in the community and increase access to the growing field of media arts, particularly for youth. By creating a more sustainable operating model for the Media Lab, it is anticipated that it will continue to advance the key directives of the Richmond Arts Strategy, advance corporate initiatives and provide greater exposure to and opportunities in the growing areas of audio, film, video and new media.



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