



opera.ca

the voice of opera in Canada / la voix de l'opéra au Canada

2019/20

**Guide to Professional Opera
Company Membership with
Opera.ca**

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Membership Overview

Policy

Opera.ca has one main category of membership: Professional Company Members. Eligibility is based on the following five criteria:

1. Is a non-share corporation duly organized and existing under the laws of Canada or any province or territory of Canada whose repertory includes opera and/or music theatre and whose primary mission is the education of the community through the production and performance of opera and/or music theatre.
2. Has produced and performed at least one staged or semi-staged work each season, before a paying audience, during the current season and each of the immediately preceding two seasons. For the purposes of this section, semi-staged work means a production that includes some stage direction through the presence of a stage director and a combination of costumes, props and/or scenic elements.
3. Employs paid management of at least one full time equivalent.
4. Utilizes live paid professional soloists, musicians and other artists for at least some part of its productions.
5. As a condition of membership in “good standing” each applicant for company membership shall provide to the Corporation, along with its application, a copy of its most recent audited financial statements, two letters of reference from the head of another professional opera company, a completed Professional Opera Survey and such other documents or information as the Corporation may require from time to time.

Bylaws

The bylaws of Opera.ca can be found on our website here:

http://www.opera.ca/sites/default/files/pdf/page/operaca_bylaws_cnca.pdf

Dues Assessment

Dues for Professional Company Membership vary according to operating budget, and range from \$350 - \$15,000 based on 2018/19 expenses as follows:

2018/2019 EXPENSE	ANNUAL DUES	MAX. /MIN. PAYMENT
\$7,500,000 and above	.0015 x 2018/19 Expense	\$15,000 maximum
\$5,000,000 - \$7,499,999	.0020 x 2018/19 Expense	\$10,000 maximum
\$3,000,000 - \$4,999,999	.0025 x 2018/19 Expense	\$8,500 maximum
\$2,000,000 - \$2,999,999	.0030 x 2018/19 Expense	\$6,500 maximum
\$1,000,000 - \$1,999,999	.0035 x 2018/19 Expense	\$5,500 maximum
\$500,000 - \$999,999	.0040 x 2018/19 Expense	\$3,500 maximum
Under \$500,000	.0035 x 2018/19Expense	\$350 minimum

Renewal Process & Timeline

Your professional membership is active for 12 months from July 1 through to June 30.

Provided you are in good standing your benefits will be extended through the fall of the next year during the renewal period. If you are unrenewed, have not requested a payment plan, or abeyance status, your benefits will end as of the renewal deadline for that year. The renewal deadline this year is **November 1, 2019**.

For 2019/20 the timeline is as follows:

July 1 2018 - June 30 2019	Services provided to members in good standing.
June 30 2019	Expiration of 18/19 membership, Payment plans complete.
Nov 29 2019	Renewal Deadline (or payment plans proposals)
July 1 2019- Dec 31 2020	Renewal period 18/19, benefits extend through this period.
Jan 1 2020	Benefits end for unrenewed PCMs

For more information, refer to our bylaws in section “Membership Obligations 9-16” (pages 3-5).

In ‘Good standing’

Only PCMs in good standing are eligible to vote at the Opera.ca AGM, are eligible for Opera.ca grants and subsidies, and are eligible for some OPERA America grants and subsidies available to Canadians (such as their Innovation Grants).

You are in good standing if:

- You have submitted your Membership Renewal and Dues Assessment Form by December 31.
- You have completed the most recent Professional Opera Survey (for the previous fiscal year).
- You have provided audited financial statements for the year in which your dues are based.
- You are up-to-date on all grant reports.

Abeyance Policy

We strive to be effective and responsive to the needs of our members, and to be helpful in times of turmoil, and so with this in mind, we offer a membership policy called Abeyance. Abeyance recognizes the significant financial challenges some members companies may face from time to time. Abeyance is designed to assist struggling companies unable to pay dues, and to keep them closely connected to Opera.ca at a time when they need us the most. When in Abeyance, a member company does not pay dues, and receivables do not accrue. They retain access to services, however are not eligible for any financial grants or travel support.

Companies must apply to be in Abeyance and provide a signed letter from their board chair detailing their financial difficulties. (See Appendix for full Abeyance Policy.)

Foundation

Mission

Opera.ca is the national association for opera in Canada offering memberships and associations to opera companies, businesses, teaching institutions, and individuals. With a strategic focus on professional opera companies, it seeks to create and sustain the conditions that will make the art form an integral part of Canadian life.

Core Service Commitment

Opera.ca is committed to:

- Continuously improving its services as a communications hub from Opera.ca to members, the public and stakeholders, and between members
- Acting as a convening body for the sector to come together
- Advocating at the federal level for and on behalf of the opera sector
- Delivering an evolving program of member services to the sector that responds to the changes in the field
- Working collaboratively with other arts service organizations to maximize impact

Strategic Plan – Charting Our Civic Impact

We will be commencing a strategic consultation this fall in advance of a new strategic plan.

http://www.opera.ca/sites/default/files/pdf/page/charting_our_civic_impact_o.pdf

Member Benefits

Relationship to OPERA America

Our innovative and forward-looking relationship with OPERA America automatically makes all Opera.ca members also members of OPERA America, connecting members with their North American colleagues, sharing information such as production directories, coproduction opportunities, and HR information. Through OPERA America, our members can access opportunities to further connect and explore the many forums OPERA America offers: New Works, Tech/Production, Marketing, and Governance, to name just a few. A fee-for-service agreement governs our relationship.

OPERA America produces its own detailed Guide to Professional Company Membership that details the full array of benefits available to members, as well as the following Canadian Addendum detailing Canadian eligibility as required by some US funding sources.

OPERA America - Canadian Eligibility Addendum

Canadians are eligible to apply for Innovation Grants and Forum stipends with the exception of the New Works Forum stipends.

Canadians cannot be the lead applicant, but can be part of a consortium for:

- New Works Featured Presentation Grants
- Opera Fund: Repertoire Development and Audience Development (although the majority of consortia members must be U.S. companies)
- Opera Grants for Female Composers: Commissioning Grants (although the composer must be a citizen or legal permanent resident of the U.S.)

Canadians are not eligible for New Works Exploration Grants.

Programs & Services

Annual General Meeting

Opera.ca holds an Annual General Meeting each year in October/November.

The meeting is held either in person or by teleconference and often rotates from year to year.

The 2019 AGM will be held by teleconference November 26, 2019.

Vancouver/ UBC Opera Summit

The Vancouver/UBC Opera Summit is the first, full-sector opera event of its kind, combining the think-tank of the bi-annual Opera Colloquium with last year's highly successful Education and Artist Training Summit. This full-sector event for all levels of membership will continue a holistic conversation began last fall around the future of opera and the discovery of opportunities that will result in a better connected, more inclusive and equitable future opera sector.

Through the theme of *Building New Bridges*, the first day Colloquium will explore local and global opportunities for professional opera companies in civic impact, international market development, cultural exchange and diplomacy. The following two-day Opera Summit will build on the theme introduced at last year's Summit around the "the gap" experienced by many emerging artists between their training

and the establishment of their careers. *Building New Bridges* positions this challenge not as an emerging artist problem, but a sectoral one, and invites delegates to co-create solutions that will lead to a stronger, more connected and equitable future opera sector.

<https://operasummit.meetinghand.com/>

Funding Programs

Opera.ca has one new funding program; the **Coproduction Loan Program**.

From time to time, travel support is offered, but members are advised to consult the Canada Council's Arts Abroad and Arts across Canada funding program for more extensive travel support.

Through OPERA America, Canadian PCMs are eligible to apply to the following OPERA America programs:

- Forum Travel Subsidies
- Innovation Grants

Note: To be eligible for all Opera.ca and OPERA America funding, a PCM must be a member for a minimum of one year in the year before applying for funding.

National Opera Directors Recognition Program

The annual National Opera Directors Recognition Award program honours one opera company board member for exemplary leadership and support on behalf of their respective opera company within their community.

The selected honouree is celebrated in their own community in addition to a special dinner in New York City in February, where they are joined by the US recipients of the National Opera Trustee Recognition. The deadline to nominate a board member for this award is October 18, 2019.

OPERA America Leadership Intensive

Each year, an independent jury selects two mid-career opera professionals to attend the OPERA America Leadership Intensive program, designed to identify and develop the most promising potential opera leaders of the future.

The 2019 intensive will take place from January 31 – February 7, 2020 in New York City. The deadline to apply is September 7, 2018. Please contact Christina Loewen for more details.

Mid-Season Sector Teleconferences

In late winter, Opera.ca hosts a mid-season teleconference for all PCMs as a means of sharing revenue and sales results, successes, and challenges to date. A scheduling poll is sent out to all members in January of each year to select a date and time.

Communications

Opera.ca produces a monthly e-newsletter called *High Notes* prioritizing news from the sector, Canadian opera creation, civic impact, and job listings. *High Notes* is sent out only to those who have subscribed to receive the e-newsletter. To enroll your staff or board to receive *High Notes*, direct them here: <http://www.opera.ca/sign-our-newsletter>. Email c_loewen@opera.ca with news you would like to share in *High Notes*.

As well, targeted and timely bulletins called *Enews* are sent out directly to Professional Company Members only, on topics related to PCMS only. *Enews* bulletins cover topics such as advocacy, membership, registration, and professional development opportunities. *Enews* is sent to the Artistic and General Directors of each opera company only.

A newsfeed on our website pulls headlines from news sources on opera in Canada.

Advocacy

Opera.ca advocates for the opera sector nationally and in partnership with other arts service organizations.

Our Advocacy efforts are enhanced by your company's relationship with your Member of Parliament. Ensure that your MP is invited to your events and is aware of the good work you do in your community.

In 2019, Opera.ca submitted two recommendations to the Standing Committee on Finance as part of their pre-budget consultations. The brief can be found on our website here: http://www.opera.ca/sites/default/files/pdf/page/opera.ca_brief_to_standing_committee_on_finance_1819.pdf

Additional Services

Executive Director Christina Loewen is available to attend board or staff sessions where you require a sector-wide perspective on the field of opera in Canada. She can attend in-person when funding allows or via Skype.

Governance

Opera.ca Board of Directors

Cheryl Hickman – Chair
Artistic Director
Opera on the Avalon

Michael Mori – Vice-Chair
Artistic Director
Tapestry Opera

Tim Yakimec – Secretary Treasurer
General Director
Edmonton Opera

Dean Burry
Assistant Professor
Queens University

Prof. Patrick J. Hansen
Associate Professor
Opera McGill

Kim Gaynor
General Director
Vancouver Opera

Ian Rye
CEO
Pacific Opera Victoria

Chantal Lambert
Soprano/ Director
Atelier lyrique de l'Opéra de Montréal

Marion Newman
Soprano

Marc Scorca
Ex-officio
President and CEO, OPERA America

Nominations

Board members are nominated each year by the Nominations Committee, who recommend a slate of officers and directors to Opera.ca members to be voted on at each AGM.

Committees

We succeed only through your help and active participation in the national conversation. There are several committees you or a member of your staff may wish to serve on, such as the Finance/Audit Committee, Governance Committee, the Strategy Committee and ad-hoc committees assembled for specific programming (AGMs, Colloquia, etc). Please call or email Christina Loewen if you would like to participate in a committee.

Acknowledging Opera.ca

There are currently 15 professional producing opera companies in Canada from coast to coast.

We highly recommend adding an affiliation notice on your website: “A proud member of Opera.ca, the voice of opera in Canada”. Our Logo is available for download here: <http://www.opera.ca/programs/creation-fund>

Other ways of acknowledging Opera.ca include a slide on surtitles, or a house program ‘filler’ ad. Contact Opera.ca with your ad guidelines and we can send you the artwork.

Funders:

Opera.ca acknowledges the support of its funders: The Canada Council for the Arts and the Ontario Arts Council.



Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des arts
du Canada



ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL
CONSEIL DES ARTS DE L'ONTARIO
an Ontario government agency
un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario



Ministry of Tourism and Culture
Museums and Technology Fund



Global Affairs
Canada

Affaires mondiales
Canada



Season at a Glance 2019/20 (and other important dates)

The Leadership Intensive
Application Deadline: The deadline has passed

Vancouver/ UBC Opera Summit
Vancouver, British Columbia
19-21 September 2019

National Opera Directors Recognition Program
Nomination Deadline: 18 October 2019

Opera Canada Awards: The Rubies
Toronto, Ontario
4 November 2019

Opera.ca Annual Meeting
By Teleconference
26 November 2019

Professional Company Dues Deadline
29 November 2019

OPERA America Innovation Grants
Intent to apply deadline: October 30, 2019
Application deadline: January 23, 2020

OPERA America Conference 2020
Seattle, Washington
13-17 May 2020

**Opera.ca Celebrates its 20th Anniversary in 2020! Stay tuned
for exciting news and programming.**

Appendix - Opera.ca Membership Policies: “Abeyance Status”

Date of Issue: September 2014

Policy Statement:

Opera.ca understands that when a professional opera company finds itself in difficult financial and organizational circumstances - and are unable to pay member dues for that year - that this is often the time when they need the services of association the most, those offered by membership in Opera.ca. For this reason, Opera.ca offers a special confidential status called Abeyance.

Abeyance status is a policy statement not a membership category.

Scope:

This policy applies to the Board of Directors.

Provisions:

To be approved for Abeyance status, Professional Company Members must meet the following criteria:

- Submit a request letter for Abeyance signed by the General Director and Chair of the Board.
- Provide Audited Financial Statements for the previous year demonstrating an accumulate deficit of 20% or greater of revenues.
- In Abeyance mode, opera companies will have access to uninterrupted communications, *High Notes*, *Enews*, invitations to attend sector teleconferences, network meetings, and advocacy meetings.
- Opera companies must demonstrate a willingness to participate in Opera.ca activities and support programs to be co-designated for companies in abeyance.
- The Board of Directors will consider applications for Abeyance at the next board meeting following the request, and notify the company shortly thereafter.
- Based on company’s participation in Opera.ca activities, at the end of each year, the Board will make recommendations for their continued status in Abeyance mode.

Restrictions

Companies in abeyance mode will not have access to:

- Funding, travel grants, discounts or awards provided by Opera.ca or OPERA America
- Additional benefits offered through OPERA America
- Voting privileges