

## CITT/ICTS President's report at the 2020 Annual General Meeting



*Last August, CITT/ICTS held its very first online edition of the Annual General Meeting, as part of “Rendez-vous becomes virtual” (see <http://estalink.us/156s2>). It is our great pleasure to share the vibrant message that our out-going president Angela Drainville delivered to the members at the opening of this meeting.*

*~ Monique Corbeil, National Coordinator*

TO SAY THAT THIS IS ONE of the most unusual years that CITT/ICTS has ever faced, would be a fantastic understatement. Our organization took what we thought was a seismic leap toward a new format at last year's conference in Whitehorse —with a shift toward reconciliation and a focus on increasing the diversity of the membership (<http://estalink.us/0qx9j>). I am so grateful that all those who joined us in Whitehorse were able to be there, it remains one of the highlights for me in my time as a member with CITT/ICTS. I was honored to be able to share my community and our culture with you then, and it is a particularly poignant now, as the most recent time we were all together.

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During last year's AGM, we were challenged by members on our inclusion of Women+ in the organization. Taking the notion even further, the Board responded by creating a new committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Working with that committee, we revised our Governance Document to require the presence of at least two genders for all decisions made by the Board. These were first steps, in what we hope will be a more welcoming and inclusive CITT/ICTS.

We followed up the AGM and conference last year with a comprehensive survey of the membership. One-hundred and nine members responded to the online survey, and 20 members agreed to be interviewed by phone. The results of this scan were presented to the Board of Directors at the in-person meeting in Montréal in mid-February. CITT/ICTS worked with a third-party consultant to facilitate a two-day strategic planning session which will shape the course of the organization over the next five years. Although the plan is approaching completion, COVID-19 delayed its progress. We are hopeful that over the next six months, that work will be completed, and the resulting strategy will be shared with the membership.

However, some of the highlights that you can look forward to are: a revised digital strategy, positioning the organization as a hub for professional development, enhancing accessibility, and a reinvention of the mentorship program as well as Callboard.

Shortly after that meeting was when the bomb dropped on our industry. It was as devastating for us, as it was for all of our members. We were forced to cancel EXPO-SCÈNE and to figure out our own path forward in the midst of the chaos that consumed us all.

I cannot overstate the horrific impact that COVID-19 has had on our industry, from individual technicians, to our presenting organizations, to our supply sector. There is no one that has escaped the economic, social, and mental health fallout of these last few months.

Soon after, we realized that an in-person Rendez-vous would not be possible, and Matt Frankish and his team on the Conference Committee worked extremely hard in order to deliver this conference in digital format for you. We have been aided in producing the conference by our resilient friends at JST Productions and Frampton Productions. I'm grateful for your support.

We are so pleased with the outcome of this event, and have

an incredible amount of gratitude for all of our sponsors, our panelists and speakers, and to our members for coming together to demonstrate our own resilience in overcoming the challenges facing our industry.

I have been buoyed by seeing new faces, and hearing voices from diverse backgrounds, and from diverse regions across Canada (and even beyond). It is almost overwhelming to see how many people have joined us that have never joined us before. I can only assume that this speaks to the accessibility of the format, and of the pay-what-you-can format. The Board of Directors has taken note of this, and will continue to work toward ensuring that our offerings are as accessible as possible.

Throughout these past few months, the Board has been meeting regularly (and perhaps more frequently) to review financials, make decisions about spending, and to ensure the stability of the organization in general. We also took the initiative to begin several digital “drop ins” to facilitate dialogue between members. We intend to have these “check-ins” continue throughout the year, and are hopeful that our conference roundtables will also move to more regular virtual meetings throughout the year.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank our incredible office staff—Monique and Marie-Laure for their efforts through a very difficult time. They have kept us on track, and continue to facilitate our work. Thank you for your dedication, it has been incredible.

I would also like to thank my committed Board of Directors. Many of you have had to deal with your own loss and grief through these last few months. Several of you defining your own “revised work practice,” several dealing with the uncertainty of CERB, and companies near bankruptcy. The fact that you have still managed to find time to prioritize your commitment to this organization is incredible.

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In addition, I need to thank all of those impacted by the cancellation of EXPO-SCÈNE, for your patience, your grace, your understanding, and your support on the financial side of the cancellation.

Today, we are still trying to define—what is definitely not something I’m willing to call a new normal—but, might call “the next steps” in order to regain our industry. Throughout, we will be with you, and we hope that we will be able to chart a course to provide you with more support as we venture on.

Your incoming Board of Directors is the first gender-balanced Board in the history of CITT/ICTS. We acknowledge that we still have some work to do on achieving true equity and diversity in the organization, and in the industry, but we need to celebrate our baby steps as we achieve them.

I am also confident in the leadership that incoming President Matt Frankish will bring to our organization. He is a strong, ethical leader, who is committed to the survival and even the progress of our industry in these incredible times.

Finally, I want to thank you for allowing me to serve as your President. I am passionate about the work of CITT/ICTS, and to have the ability to lead for this short time has been a gift to me.

I look forward to watching the organization continue towards its strategic goals—and to sharing the journey with each of you.

Angela Drainville  
CITT/ICTS President ■



**Angela Drainville** is an independent producer and presenter who makes her home in Whitehorse, YK. She is the current President of Music Yukon and Yukon Theatre for Young People, and the Past President of CITT/ICTS.