

# Art Gallery of Nova Scotia

2025-26 Business Plan



AGNS 2025-26 Business Plan

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#### Message from the CEO

In early 2025, the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia (AGNS) released our five-year strategic plan, *Framing the Future*. Together, we are strengthening Nova Scotia's position as a beacon for visual arts on the North Atlantic. At the core of this transformation are the vibrant communities of Nova Scotia, our dedicated supporters, and the visionaries—artists and cultural leaders—who inspire us.

2025-26 marks the first full year of implementing *Framing the Future*, representing a pivotal moment for the AGNS as we work towards realizing the three strategic goals that will establish a stronger gallery, and a stronger Nova Scotia, by 2030.

At the heart of this journey is a commitment to reimagining what it means to be a cultural institution. Over the next five years, your Gallery will spark conversations, ignite imaginations, and make art more accessible than ever before. This transformation would not be possible without the invaluable input and steadfast support of our community, partners, and team. This annual business plan for 2025-26 outlines the steps we will take this year to bring *Framing the Future* to life. It is a bold testament to our shared ambition to create a cultural landmark that enriches lives, celebrates Nova Scotia's unique perspective, and inspires generations to come.

Thank you for joining us on this exciting journey. Together, we will amplify the impact of the visual arts and strengthen the arts sector across Nova Scotia and the North Atlantic. Let's embrace this momentum and reimagine the possibilities of art and culture—at home and beyond.

Sarah Moore Fillmore | CEO

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#### **Executive Summary**

Through this plan, the AGNS will become a leading center for contemporary art and cultural exchange where all Nova Scotians feel welcome and at ease. Through carefully curated exhibitions, innovative programs, strategic partnerships, and expanding its Permanent Collection, the AGNS will encourage deep conversations and engagement across the North Atlantic while inviting participation and heightening impact here at home.

To realize this vision, AGNS will concentrate on three strategic goals and associated objectives, grounded in enhanced curatorial practices, strengthened funding, and improved community and partner relations. These goals are:

- 1 Elevate Nova Scotia Through the Visual Arts
- (2) Create a Compelling Impact
- (3) Set a Standard for Sustainable Operations

To ensure success and proper five-year implementation of the strategic plan, the AGNS has developed a comprehensive list of action items and annual deliverables over the next five years that will allow the team to work towards achieving each objective outlined in the plan. This annual business plan for 2025-26 outlines the work being done this year at the AGNS to achieve the overarching goals and objectives.

#### Art Gallery of Nova Scotia

#### Mandate

The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia is a Crown Agency of the government of Nova Scotia, which is mandated, through the *Art Gallery of Nova Scotia Act*, to acquire, preserve, exhibit and interpret the Province's art collection. The Gallery shall be an agency of the Province acting as custodian for the people of Nova Scotia with respect to their collection of visual art. The role shall include access to, collecting, preserving, exhibiting and interpreting works of visual art in a regional, national, and international context relevant to the communities of and in Nova Scotia.

#### Mission

The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia seeks to present the most vital and engaging contemporary art from around the world. We will embrace tradition and the past by applying a contemporary viewpoint that addresses relevant issues and challenges perspectives.

#### Vision

The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia is an inclusive public gathering place that connects people with art to inspire.



#### Business Plan Goal 1 and Objectives

## (1) Elevate Nova Scotia Through the Visual Arts

With a focus on contemporary art and conversations, the AGNS will become a key hub for artistic discourse across the North Atlantic. The AGNS will focus on developing its collection and exhibition program to showcase global themes from Nova Scotia's uniquely local perspective. This approach will highlight the region's contributions to global art conversations. Through transatlantic partnerships, the Gallery will enhance cultural exchange and broaden its regional and global impact, while also delivering leading art experiences to Nova Scotians, boosting the Gallery's visibility and elevating the Province's cultural profile.

This approach, along with the creation of renewed facilities, will establish the AGNS as a major player in the North Atlantic and will significantly raise Nova Scotia's cultural profile worldwide. To make this goal possible the AGNS will focus on the following objectives over the next five years:

- **OBJECTIVE 1:** Evolve the Permanent Collection to support an engaging exhibition program that connects global themes with Nova Scotia's story.
- **OBJECTIVE 2:** Build partnerships across the North Atlantic to expand cultural exchange and increase the visibility of Nova Scotia's art and culture.
- **OBJECTIVE 3:** Bring leading national and international artwork, artists, and exhibitions to Nova Scotia.
- **OBJECTIVE 4:** Develop an enhanced physical space for the AGNS that stands as a premier centre of excellence in the visual arts.

In this annual business plan, the AGNS has outlined a series of actions and 2025-26 deliverables that will allow the institution to achieve the objectives above.

The following charts outline the multi-year actions and annual deliverables for 2025-26.



# 1 Elevate Nova Scotia Through the Visual Arts

1:1 Evolve the Permanent Collection to support an engaging exhibition program that connects global themes with Nova Scotia's story.			
MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIC ACTION	2025-26 DELIVERABLES	COMPLETE BY	
Create a collection plan that considers deaccessioning and acquisition of works	<ol> <li>Develop policy/procedure for disposition of lower value deaccessions/ fundraising gifts.</li> <li>Create formal policy defining Art Fundraising Collection.</li> </ol>	Q3	
Develop one to three original exhibitions annually from the Permanent Collection	1. Open the following Permanent Collection exhibitions in 2025-26:  — From One to Many Natures on third floor North (Q1)  — H. Rosenberg in the Oyler Gallery (Q1)  — Blacklight in the South mezzanine (Q1)  — Conversation Threads in Gallery One (Q4)  — Refresh to the Manning Gallery (Q4)	Q1-4	
	<ul><li>2. Finalize Permanent Collection exhibition cycle for the next three years.</li><li>3. Develop and launch marketing and comms plan for 2025-26 Permanent Collection exhibitions with a focus on owned communication channels.</li></ul>		
Create a \$5,000,000 general acquisition fund to support collection growth	<ol> <li>Develop framework and management plan for acquisition fund that aligns with existing acquisition, disposition, and financial policies; and includes detailed fundraising plan for additional philanthropic support.</li> <li>Develop a case for support that considers the collection growth strategy, areas of focus, and impact.</li> <li>Secure \$100,000 in initial seed funding.</li> </ol>	Q4	





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#### Elevate Nova Scotia Through the Visual Arts

#### 1:2 Build partnerships across the North Atlantic to expand cultural exchange and increase the visibility of Nova Scotia's art and culture. **MULTI-YEAR** 2025-26 DELIVERABLES **COMPLETE** STRATEGIC ACTION Develop and tour 1. Develop touring package and plan for the exhibition Joan Jonas: Q1 Moving Off the Land II. one to two exhibitions annually to Q2 2. Develop an exhibition touring strategy that supports multi-year Canadian and planning for travelling exhibitions. international venues 3. Celebrate the opening of Moving off the Land II through the Q2 development of a marketing and communications plan and opening events in Cape Breton. Create an exhibition 1. Present an exhibition by emerging artist Séamus Gallagher. Q1 and publication 2. Formalize the parameters of a biennial emerging artist program for Q4 platform that generates implementation in 2026-27. opportunities for emerging artists

1:3 Bring leading national and international artwork, artists, and exhibitions to Nova Scotia.			
MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIC ACTION	2025-26 DELIVERABLES	COMPLETE BY	
Engage leading international artists in the development and implementation of a multi-year exhibition plan	<ol> <li>Open the following exhibitions by leading national and international artists in 2025-26:         <ul> <li>Sonia Boyce: Feeling Her Way (Q1)</li> <li>Oluseye: Black Ark (Q2)</li> <li>Teresa Hubbard / Alexander Birchler: No More Boring Art (Q3)</li> </ul> </li> <li>Develop and launch marketing and communication plans for 2025-26 exhibitions that celebrate leading international artists through earned, paid, and owned media.</li> </ol>	Q 1-3	

# 1 Elevate Nova Scotia Through the Visual Arts

#### 1:4 Develop an enhanced physical space for the AGNS that stands as a premier centre of excellence in the visual arts. 2025-26 DELIVERABLES **MULTI-YEAR COMPLETE** STRATEGIC ACTION BY Safeguard the collection 1. Update and finalize design brief for a collections storage facility that Q1 outlines facility requirements. by moving to a purposebuilt collections 2. Develop project team and next steps. management facility Q3 that aligns with museum standards Complete and update 1. Update existing feasibility studies related to a new purpose-built Q1 studies related to a new gallery to better reflect the current environment. home for the AGNS 2. Complete an updated economic impact study for the AGNS and a Q2 new gallery. Continue to explore Q2 1. Reconvene government partner team. opportunities for a 2. Update feasibility studies to ensure the scope of a new building Q3 new gallery facility for aligns with the existing and future needs of AGNS. the AGNS Audit existing facility Plan and implement audit of existing facility in conjunction with the Q2 updated feasibility studies for a new gallery. and develop an action plan to address required upgrades and failing infrastructure







#### Business Plan Goal 2 and Objectives

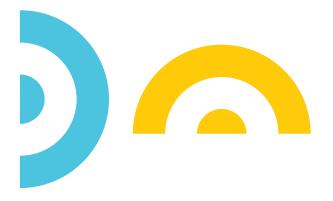
## (2) Create a Compelling Impact

To create a compelling impact, the AGNS will enhance the visitor experience with innovative public programs and engaging gallery activities, making art more inviting and accessible. The Gallery will work with others to build a more inclusive art scene with mission-oriented programs that welcome diverse perspectives. By tackling and removing access to obstacles and expanding art education, the Gallery will become more welcoming, attract a wider audience, and increase community involvement. This will enrich the cultural scene across Nova Scotia. To make this goal possible the AGNS will focus on the following objectives over the next five years:

- **OBJECTIVE 1:** Invigorate the visitor experience through new and innovative public programs and activities.
- **OBJECTIVE 2:** Build partnerships that allow diverse communities and artists to create meaningful programs.
- **OBJECTIVE 3:** Improve the overall brand experience by removing barriers to access.
- **OBJECTIVE 4:** Expand the Gallery's impact across the province though art education programs.

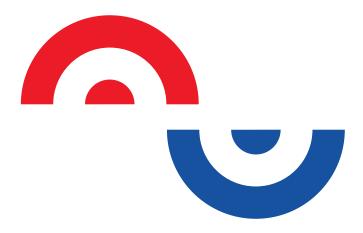
In this annual business plan, the AGNS has outlined a series of actions and 2025-26 deliverables that will allow the institution to achieve the objectives above.

The following charts outline the multi-year actions and annual deliverables for 2025-26.



MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIC ACTION	2025-26 DELIVERABLES	COMPLETE BY
Evaluate program offering to ensure alignment with the AGNS goals, vision, and values	Complete a detailed program review of all AGNS programs with consideration of impact, cost benefit, resource requirements, programming gaps, and activation of AGNS goals and objectives.	Q2
Make studio experiences available to visitors during open hours	Develop a framework for studio-based activities with consideration of audiences, available resources, and overarching institutional goals and objectives.	Q4
	<ul> <li>2. Deliver existing paid programming, which includes:</li> <li>— Art camps for kids (Q2 &amp;Q4)</li> <li>— Painting &amp; Pints (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4)</li> </ul>	Q1-4
Ensure programming is developed to support the exhibitions on view	1. Deliver Creative Minds series and event-based public programs to support the following exhibitions:  — Séamus Gallagher: OH BABY (Q1)  — Sonia Boyce: Feeling Her Way (Q2)  — Joan Jonas: Moving off the Land II (Q2)  — Oluseye Ogunlesi: Black Ark (Q2)  — Mi'kamki Artist Spotlight (Q3)  — From One to Many Natures (Q3)	Q1-3
	2. Better align in-school activities with exhibitions, collections, and new acquisitions.	Q3
	3. Deliver a public program focused on music and connected to community to support themes in the exhibition <i>Sonia Boyce:</i> Feeling Her Way.	Q2
Create multi-sensory experiences throughout the Gallery	Introduce facilitators into gallery spaces to create entry into the works on view through discussions, demonstrations, and activities.	Q2

2:1 Invigorate the visitor experience through new and innovative public programs and activities.				
MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIC ACTION	2025-26 DELIVERABLES	COMPLETE BY		
Integrate event style offerings to create unique access points	1. Develop an institutional event strategy for implementation in 2026-27 that provides new access points to the Gallery, revenue generation, community engagement, and exciting brand building experiences.	Q4		
for visitors and supporters	2. Introduce one new event with a philanthropic component to build new pipeline of donors.	Q3		
	3. Develop a concept and implementation plan for a large, biennial fundraising gala event (first event in 2026-27).	Q4		
	4. Outline the requirements for five annual stewardship and cultivation events for existing and future supporters starting in 2026-27.	Q4		
Focus health and	Complete Year three of the Artful Afternoon Program commitment.	Q4		
wellness programming to heighten impact	2. Complete commitments related to Autism Arts.	Q1		
	3. Following the findings of the program review, develop a framework for focused wellness programming for implementation in 2026-27.	Q4		
Formalize the offerings and process related to group visitation	Formalize the intake process Gallery-wide for organized group bookings, including initial inquiry, booking, and group orientation.	Q3		
	2. Based on the findings of the program review, develop core group offerings for groups of eight or more.	Q4		



## 2

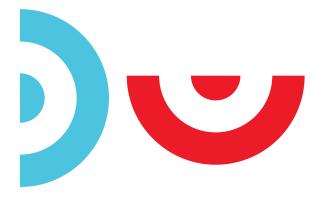
2:2 Build partnerships that allow diverse communities and artists to create meaningful programs.				
MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIC ACTION	2025-26 DELIVERABLES	COMPLETE BY		
Offer annual public programming in partnership with artists	<ol> <li>Program the (Tea)chings gallery space with the Mi'kma'ki Artists' Spotlight (two shows).</li> <li>Work with cultural centers to host a Mi'kmaw language tour.</li> </ol>	Q2-4 Q2		
and collaborators working in Indigenous communities	3. Contribute to a hands-on art making activity at an urban Indigenous gathering.	Q4		
Collaborate with regional institutions to amplify the work of diverse artists working in Atlantic Canada and beyond	<ol> <li>Present the work of Edward Mitchell Bannister, in partnership with Owens Art Gallery/Mt. Alison University and Black Artists Network of Nova Scotia, opens in Q3.</li> <li>Continue partnering with the National Gallery of Canada to celebrate the Sobey Art Award Atlantic Canada Finalist.</li> </ol>	Q3 Q3		
Work in partnership with community leaders to develop arts	Identify key partnership opportunities with local arts and cultural festivals such as Nocturne, Prismatic, Pride, and others and outline opportunities for multi-year offering.	Q1		
programming that amplifies existing community activities that celebrate culture	2. Host a significant art project during Nocturne 2025.	Q3		
	Continue partnership with Alliance Française to offer French language tours.	Q4		





2:3 Improve the overall brand experience by removing barriers to access.				
MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIC ACTION	2025-26 DELIVERABLES	COMPLETE BY		
Improve the use of technology and immersive platforms to increase access throughout the Gallery	<ol> <li>Create a taskforce to identify visitor-focused digital activation opportunities that contribute to a broader interpretation plan.</li> <li>Identify resources, including infrastructure, needed to roll out the plan.</li> <li>Implement a public WIFI option.</li> </ol>	Q3 Q4 Q4		
Extend operational hours	Develop business case to outline benefits, costs, and potential impacts with a clear rationale for expanding evening hours including an outline of a pilot program structure and operational plan for implementation in 2026-27.	Q3		
Expand free access options for Nova Scotia residents	Create the detailed framework and project plan for the implementation of enhanced free access for Nova Scotia residents.	Q1		
Enhance e-commerce capabilities and systems integration	<ol> <li>Conduct a needs assessment of systems (POS, Accounting System and CRM) and identify new systems or enhancements to existing systems that will improve integration, create efficiencies, streamline operations, and centre the visitor experience.</li> <li>Develop a detailed implementation plan for a new system or</li> </ol>	Q3 Q4		
	enhancements to existing systems.			

2:4 Expand the Gallery's impact across the province though art education programming.				
MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIC ACTION	2025-26 DELIVERABLES	COMPLETE BY		
Contribute to the leadership of P-12 art education within Nova Scotia	Outline the current landscape of art education in Nova Scotia and identify gaps that can be filled through AGNS activities in alignment with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.	Q1		
Create broader access to artists in-school programs for teachers	Based on findings from the program evaluation, develop an updated identity for the art education offering to enhance access and understanding for P-12 educators.	Q3		
through enhanced positioning and awareness	2. Launch initiatives to increase awareness of AGNS art education programs 2026-27.	Q4		
Further the reach of the gallery experience through virtual exhibitions and tours	the gallery experience exhibits and tours.			
Refresh the in-gallery school program to bring more P-12 student groups into the Gallery	Based on findings from the program evaluation and additional market research, develop program plan.	Q3		







#### Business Plan Goal 3 and Objectives

#### ig(3ig) Set a Standard for Sustainable Operations

To set a standard for sustainable operations at the AGNS, the institution will work on expanding its funding sources to ensure long-term financial stability and reduce dependence on any one source of revenue. A critical component to ensuring success is building a diverse and engaged team while collaboratively creating a lively and innovative environment. Inclusive operations will be guided by principles of equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility that will make the Gallery more welcoming and reflective of the community it serves. This approach will help the Gallery stay financially and operationally stable while enhancing its reputation as a leading cultural institution that excels in sustainability and inclusivity.

To make this goal possible the AGNS will focus on the following objectives over the next five years:

**OBJECTIVE 1:** Increase and diversify annual funding while reducing dependency on single source funding.

**OBJECTIVE 2:** Cultivate a highly engaged and diverse team.

**OBJECTIVE 3:** Advance Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA) initiatives that foster a stronger sense of belonging for Nova Scotians.

In this annual business plan, the AGNS has outlined a series of actions and 2025-26 deliverables that will allow the institution to achieve the objectives above.

The following charts outline the multi-year actions and annual deliverables for 2025-26.



## 3 Set a Standard for Sustainable Operations

3:1 Increase and diversify annual funding while reducing dependency on single source funding.			
MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIC ACTION	2025-26 DELIVERABLES	COMPLETE BY	
Increase earned revenue from public facing activities	SHOP		
	<ul> <li>Increase shop sales by 12%.</li> <li>Create a framework to better review shop sales data.</li> <li>Evaluate and update the inventory strategy and pricing structures.</li> <li>Enhance marketing efforts that feature the Gallery Shop during peak shopping seasons.</li> </ul>	Q4 Q2 Q1 Q4	
	ADMISSIONS		
	<ul> <li>Review pricing structures to coincide with free access options.</li> <li>Deliver a brand marketing campaign and collaborate with tourism partners to raise awareness of the AGNS among the tourism market.</li> </ul>	Q4 Q4	
	PROGRAMMING		
	<ul> <li>As part of the program review, examine paid programming and align pricing structures with market standards.</li> </ul>	Q1	
	Work with tourism and event partners to use AGNS experiences to help in attracting events, conventions, and tourists to Nova Scotia.	Q2	
Raise \$5M annually from philanthropic sources	Increase giving through annual fundraising activities including Annual Fall Appeal, regular donor meetings, and individual solicitations for:  — Annual Fund Donors (<\$1K) by 10%  — Leadership Donors (\$1K+) by 20%	Q4	
Sources	- Leadership Donors (\$1K+) by 20%  - Major Donors (\$25K) by 9%	Q2	
	2. Secure lead gift for free access options.	Q2	
	3. Convert 18% of existing members to annual donors.	Q3	
Establish an MOU for	Articulation of a funding methodology that aligns with the AGNS	Q2	
sustainable funding from the Province based on the AGNS mandate	mandate.  2. Identify operation funding required to deliver on AGNS's mandate.	Q3	



#### 3

#### Set a Standard for Sustainable Operations

3:2 Cultivate a highly engaged and diverse team.			
MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIC ACTION	2025-26 DELIVERABLES	COMPLETE BY	
Strengthen the AGNS workforce by	Implement Workforce Planning Process to determine skill sets, headcount, and structure needed to achieve goals.	Q1	
attracting and retaining top talent	2. Build talent pipeline for critical roles within AGNS and develop key partnerships to help fill challenging vacancies.	Q2	
	Develop Management Compensation Framework for government approval	Q4	
Develop a formal learning and	Review the performance appraisal process and provide recommendations for enhancement.		
development strategy that embraces	2. Conduct a corporate needs analysis on learning and development and establish formal leadership competencies and coaching framework.		
inclusion, life-long learning, and professional growth	Conduct succession planning and develop targeted development plans for successors of critical roles.		
Empower and celebrate employees through an engaged, safe, and inclusive workplace	Launch second annual employee engagement survey and assess effectiveness of program based on changes in the score.		
Build the framework	Review organizational design and functional areas.	Q1	
that fosters development and	2. Prepare for upcoming collective bargaining.		
professional growth in a creative	3. Develop AGNS specific systems and processes to support HR practices and policies.		
environment	4. Introduce project management software to increase efficiency.		

## 3 Set a Standard for Sustainable Operations

3:3 Advance Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA) initiatives that foster a stronger sense of belonging for Nova Scotians.				
MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIC ACTION	2025-26 DELIVERABLES	COMPLETE BY		
Identify immediate and long-term needs related to equity and inclusion  Work with EDI consultant to assess EDI landscape to enhance the opportunities at AGNS.		Q4		
Finalize and implement accessibility plan	Expand Accessibility Advisory Committee.	Q1		
	Conduct accessibility audit as outlined in plan. Develop report with findings and recommendations.	Q3		
	3. By March 31, update 3-year Accessibly Plan, including steps to implement audit recommendations.	Q4		





## Proposed Financial Plan 2025-26

	2024-25 BUDGET	2024-25 FORECAST	2025-26 BUDGET	INCREASE (I TO \$	DECREASE) FORECAST %
REVENUE					
Operating	3,580,500	2,873,458	3,395,000	521,542	18.2%
Development	424,000	1,235,000	2,282,000	1,047,000	84.8%
Education	202,000	176,581	125,000	(51,581)	-29.2%
Public Programming	70,000	62,885	61,000	(1,885)	-3.0%
Programming	433,000	_	_	_	_
Subtotal	4,709,500	4,347,924	5,996,000	1,515,076	32.2%
Gallery Shop/Wholesale	600,000	576,000	756,000	180,000	31.3%
Acquisitions	3,000	22,000	5,000	(17,000)	-77.3%
Endowment	160,000	438,533	225,000	(213,533)	-48.7%
Total Revenue	5,472,500	5,384,457	6,982,000	1,464,543	26.8%
EXPENDITURES					
Human Resources	3,086,000	3,172,086	3,706,168	534,082	16.8%
Administration	356,500	546,480	571,600	25,120	4.6%
Building Operations	41,000	21,000	192,000	171,000	814.3%
Development	105,000	101,500	140,200	38,700	38.1%
Communications & Marketing	286,000	259,897	360,365	100,468	38.7%
Visitor Experience	61,000	55,000	61,500	6,500	11.8%
Public Programs	121,000	95,050	164,400	69,350	73.0%
Programming	30,000	40,000	45,300	5,300	13.3%
Exhibitions	370,000	340,552	537,157	196,605	57.7%
Collections Management	260,000	315,916	330,100	14,184	4.5%
Education Programs	209,000	175,840	110,700	(65,140)	-37.0%
Subtotal	4,925,500	5,123,321	6,352,490	1,096,169	22.3%
Western Branch	96,000	22,500	_	(22,500)	-100.0%
Gallery Shop/Wholesale	352,000	335,979	429,510	93,531	27.8%
Acquisitions	25,000	40,220	125,000	84,780	210.8%
Endowment	45,000	50,000	60,000	10,000	20.0%
Total Expenditures	5,443,500	5,572,020	6,967,000	1,261,980	23.2%
Amortization of Tangible Capital Assets	29,000	25,437	15,000	(10 A27)	-36.0%
	29,000		13,000	(10,437)	-50.070
Annual Surplus (Deficit)	_	(213,000)	_	213,000	





1723 Hollis Street, Halifax Nova Scotia B3J 3C8 **agns.ca**