DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY 1818 2018

Re-Think / Re-Vision of Dalhousie University's Ceremonial Mace

A Call for Submissions

Dalhousie University is internationally known as one of North America's most welcoming universities. Founded in 1818, Dalhousie is one of Canada's oldest universities, attracting more than 18,500 students annually from around the world. Located in Halifax, Nova Scotia, on Canada's East Coast, the university blends world-class academic programs with leading-edge research. Our focus on academic innovation means that we are committed to the continuous development of our programs and courses. As Atlantic Canada's leading research university, Dal attracts $135 million in research grants and awards each year. Dalhousie's campus reflects a diverse mix of students who come from Nova Scotia, across Canada, and around the world, bringing multiple cultures and perspectives to the Dalhousie community.

As Dalhousie University approaches its 200th Anniversary in 2018, a committee has been struck to respond to recommendation seven in our Belong report calling on the University to acknowledge and reflect on our rich history and examine the role of the mace in Dalhousie's induction and convocation ceremonies. The mace is a ceremonial staff of office and is currently carried to lead a procession of students and faculty into and out of induction and convocation ceremonies. It has come to represent the significance of these ceremonies for students, faculty, and the University community as a whole.

Dalhousie's ceremonial mace was designed by Dr. R.L. de C.H. Saunders, Director of Medical Museums and Professor of Pathological Anatomy, to represent the "proud maritime tradition of the Atlantic provinces and the historical heritage of Dalhousie's service to them". It was carved in oak by A. H. MacMillan, enriched with silver and enamel, and measures 1.4 metres. It was first carried in an academic procession in May 1950.

Why are we re-visioning the role of the Mace at Dalhousie?

Dalhousie's current mace represents a colonial narrative embedded in the University's history. It does not represent the Indigenous people who first inhabited the land on which Dalhousie lies, the struggles of those who suffered under colonialism, segregation, and slavery, or the evolving values of inclusiveness and diversity at the University today. It is important that the University reflect on the following:

- Dalhousie University and society as a whole has changed greatly since 1950 when the mace was first carried, and in our nearly 200-year history. It is important for us to acknowledge all aspects of our history, identify where we can do better, and continue working towards fostering a more diverse and inclusive Dalhousie. The re-visioning of the mace and its role at Dalhousie is an important component for Dalhousie in working towards these goals.

- Does Dalhousie University value the ceremonial mace as an emblem of authority and, if yes, whose authority does it represent?

- If not, what kind of ceremonial object might better embody the values of the University and its community, to represent that authority?

While aware of the historical role of the existing mace, the committee members seek, through partnerships with artists, designers and/or artisans, to commission the production of a new ceremonial object that better reflects the University's values and diverse community. To that end, we affirm the following:

- We acknowledge that the convocation ceremony – with its issuance of diplomas – is an act of honour and a formal recognition of a student's mastery of knowledge that has been acquired through their studies, of a student's transformational experience at the University, and, reciprocally, of a student's contributions to a collective body of knowledge. The convocation ceremony also reaffirms the students' life-long membership in Dalhousie's academic community.

- We desire to honor the dedication of Dalhousie's current and future Faculties in their role of knowledge transfer to the graduands.

- We respectfully acknowledge and honour the 14,000-year presence in this territory of Indigenous peoples and their knowledge.

- We desire to recognize the subsequent arrivals of peoples from Europe, Africa, and Asia and the successive contemporary waves of people coming to Canada from all nations in an ever-more globalized world.

- We pursue the crafting of a new ceremonial object that better reflects the university's values and diverse community.

- We aspirationally desire that Dalhousie's new ceremonial object express the exchange of ideas and the perpetual generation of knowledge. It should evoke pride and humility in the graduates who will represent the University's values in the wider world, should embody a sense of welcome to people from all walks of life, and should foster a sense of community.

What forms might the ceremonial object take?

The current mace is a product of a colonial heritage with a militaristic pedigree. Instead, we seek a new ceremonial object (or objects) to exemplify Dalhousie University's commitment towards fostering a community of diversity and inclusiveness, to embrace the multiplicity of populations that have shaped Dalhousie and Nova Scotia, and to embody Dalhousie's core values. We choose to leave the form of the ceremonial object(s) open. Beyond traditional forms, this call for submissions seeks and encourages proposals that consider novel forms. Non-exhaustive examples of novel forms include:

- basket(s) that bear meaningful – and faculty or culture-specific – 'gifts';
- vessels that represent the sharing of libations, the 'pouring of knowledge' between containers;
- drums or other rhythmic instruments;
- ceremonial sticks/staffs;
- sculptural objects crafted with symbolic materials and elements (e.g. birch bark, eagle feathers, copper, carved wood, ceramics, amethyst and other precious metals, beaded components, and textiles).

How might a new ceremonial object representing authority integrate with existing ceremonies?

The current University mace is used to lead the procession of students and faculty into and out of the convocation and induction ceremonies. First and foremost, the ceremonies are celebrations of the students. Webcasts of past convocation ceremonies are available at https://www.dal.ca/academics/convocation/webcast/archives.html

A new ceremonial object should play roles of welcoming and closure to the ceremonies. However, we are open to proposals that include alternative modes of integration with the University's ceremonies or adaptations of the ceremonies that maintain or enhance the celebration of the graduates' accomplishments. Please include in your submission, when relevant, any performative components affiliated with your proposed ceremonial object. Examples include:

- drum(s), as performative objects, to herald the ceremony;
- performers to create relevance for the graduates and Faculty members during processions;
- new roles for additional vestments, flags, or banners;
- new and meaningful objects or uses of objects to be part of opening and closing ceremonies that introduce other potential symbolic functions (such as pouring of liquids between vessels).

Who are eligible candidates for this commission?

This call for submissions is open to all artists, artisans, and designers with a demonstrated record of successful project completion. Due to the multi-layered agenda of this project, however, Dalhousie University encourages collaborative partnerships with artists/designers and community members. Team-based and collaborative submissions require that one of the partner/members have a demonstrated record of successful project completion.

What is the budget, timeline, and jury process?

This is a two-stage competition process with an open first call for general design proposals followed by a juried selection of up to 5 finalists who are each paid $1,000 for their intellectual property and time/materials invested in their final proposal. The expectation is that the winning proposal will be created and delivered by the commissioned artist(s) and/or design team.

Budget: up to $60,000 CAD for delivery of commissioned object(s). This includes:

- professional fees for the artist/designers/collaborators for their intellectual property;
- copyright fees;
- all material, labour, and production expenses of finished ceremonial object;
- a detailed care and maintenance manual;
- a robust storage and transport container;
- all packaging and delivery expenses.

Timeline:

- 3 March 2017, release of Call for Submission and competition brief;
- 10 April 2017, deadline for acceptance of general design proposals;
- 1 June 2017, announce shortlist selection of up to 5 Finalists;
- 1 September 2017, submission of design proposals from project Finalists;
- 15 September 2017, Jury determines winning design
- 2 October 2017, awarding of production contract and general press release;
- 15 January 2018, delivery of new ceremonial object;
- 6 February 2018, debut of new ceremonial object at the Bicentennial Address;

The Jury will consist of seven members from the Dalhousie community and from communities beyond the campus. For example (but not limited to), the jury will have representation from:

- student population and alumni;
- faculty and staff;
- Dalhousie University Board of Governors;
- indigenous community;
- African Nova Scotian community;
- Acadian community;
- international community;
- visual arts/fine craft cultural community;
- Mace Re-Think / Re-Vision committee.

Whenever possible, a single jury member could represent more than one of the above communities. The selection of the finalists is at the sole discretion of the jury.

The Jury will have support from an ad hoc advisory committee constituted to answer questions as they arise about, for example: Indigenous, cultural, and ethnographic issues; respectful ceremonial process; and material construction of ceremonial object.

What are the submission considerations and process?

Beyond the potential form(s) of the new ceremonial object as outlined above, the physical object(s) should be:

- constructed of robust and durable materials;
- free of sharp edges and pinching crevices;
- low maintenance and easy to store;
- portable and user friendly for proposed ceremonial purposes;
- safely transferable from person to person.

In accordance with health and safety guidelines, the ceremonial object will:

- not exceed 23 kg if used as a stationary object located on the stage at convocation;
- not exceed 5 kg if used in ambulatory procession or ceremony.

All submissions should include:

• drawings/images (maximum 3 pages) illustrating physical features and/or components of the proposed ceremonial object including notes about fabrication;

• a written statement (250 words or 1 page maximum) outlining the ceremonial scope of proposed device and a vision statement about its ceremonial function;

• a written budget (1 page maximum) outlining the design fees and production expenses of the proposed ceremonial object;

• artist's biography (250 words or 1 page maximum for solo artists/designers, 750 words or 3 page maximum for team productions); web-link to full CVs is also desirable;

• a written statement (250 words or 1 page maximum) outlining why the artist/designer or design team is qualified to address the subject matter presented in their proposal;

• up to 10 support images (under 300 KB each) of previous, relevant projects identifying: title, year, dimensions, materials.

Proposal packages are submitted online to:

• https://dal.bidsandtenders.ca/Module/Tenders/en

Only the finalist applicants (up to five) will be notified.