



BRITISH COLUMBIA ARTS COUNCIL

An agency of the Province of British Columbia

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MANDATE

The British Columbia Arts Council supports the arts and cultural community by providing financial assistance, policy research, advocacy, and public education.

MISSION AND CORE VALUES

The mission of the Council is to engage all British Columbians in a healthy arts and cultural community that is recognized for excellence. In pursuing this mission, the Council is guided by six core values:

2. Artistic excellence in all art forms.
3. Vibrant arts and cultural communities central to the creation of a healthy society.
4. Breadth of artistic activity - from emerging to established, from classical to experimental and from traditional to contemporary.
5. Inclusiveness, while respecting B.C.'s Aboriginal arts and culture.
6. Clear goals, developed in consultation with the arts and cultural communities, to guide short and long-term operations.
7. Fair and transparent administrative and adjudicative processes that adhere to the principles of accountability, independence recognition of merit, and equality of opportunity.

Operating Assistance – Professional Performing Arts Organizations

***Operating Assistance* contributes to the support of organizations that sustain an annual artistic program encompassing creation, development, production, and public presentation.**

ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE

All artists and practitioners strive for excellence in their work. The assessment of artistic excellence is central to the evaluation of requests for funding. The fact that everyone experiences artistic work in his/her own way makes the assessment of artistic quality difficult to discuss.

The Council's approach is to consider three dimensions of artistic work:

1. Idea – the intention or artistic impetus behind the work.
2. Practice – the effectiveness of how the work is put into practice and the impact it has on those experiencing it.
3. Development – the contribution the work makes to the development of the artist, the art form and the arts more widely.

All applicants to the British Columbia Arts Council are encouraged to submit concise, realistic requests, responding fully to the assessment criteria.

An essential element of any application is insightful, critical self-reflection. The Council believes that artists and arts organizations are well placed to assess the quality of the work they produce, and how actions and decisions fulfil their stated mandate. Members of advisory committees and juries want to hear the applicant's own assessment of the problems faced and the creative solutions under consideration.

GUIDELINES: READ FIRST

General Information

Applications are evaluated according to the applicant's mandate, vision and core values, as well as specified criteria. The criteria are grouped into three areas: artistic achievement, community engagement and organizational capacity. An organization that excels in all areas of the assessment criteria will demonstrate the following characteristics:

- Excellence in artistic activity, with clear ideas, skilled practice and strong contribution to the art form that is at the heart of the organization.
- Stimulating and varied forms of engagement with artists and the general public, through audience development, artistic development, participation, discourse and education, or other opportunities offered by the organization.
- Excellence in leadership and management, resulting in greater sustainability and growing recognition of the organization.
- Realistic planning supported by informed and active trustees.

Eligibility

Eligibility is determined according to the following criteria:

An eligible applicant must:

- Be registered as a not-for-profit society in good standing with the Province of British Columbia and have operated for at least two fiscal years prior to application.
- Have received at least two Project Assistance awards from the British Columbia Arts Council.
- Provide public programming and have done so in the immediately preceding two years.
- Compensate artists by paying fees at industry standards and adhere to the international intellectual property rights standards.
- Employ professional artistic and administrative leadership.
- Demonstrate financial need for assistance as defined by Council policy. (*See Essential Information for Applicants*)

Ineligible applications will not be reviewed by advisory committees.

For organizations that have not previously received Operating Assistance:

- Applicants must establish eligibility with Council staff at least six weeks before the application deadline.

For organizations that have previously received Operating Assistance:

- Eligibility is reviewed annually.

Application Requirements

All eligible applicants are urged to discuss their request with Council staff prior to submission, read these *Guidelines* and read *Essential Information for Applicants*.

Applications must include:

1. A completed application form, including CADAC* ID number.
2. A written statement of not longer than 12 pages total (see application form, pg. 2).
3. A completed *Summary of Major Activities* for the current season and the proposed season (see application form pg. 5-6).
4. A list of current board of directors or trustees, including their occupations.
5. A list of artistic and administrative staff or significant contractors including job titles.
6. Six copies of the most recent season brochure.
7. Two copies of the most recent financial statements (see *Essential Information*):

*NEW THIS YEAR: CADAC

- The BC Arts Council is collecting financial and statistical information through a new national online database called CADAC (Canadian Arts Data/Données sur les arts au Canada). This system will enable arts organizations applying for operating funding from public funders who are members of CADAC to submit their financial and statistical information in the same format.
- The following are member partners: the Alberta Foundation for the Arts; the British Columbia Arts Council; the Canada Council for the Arts; the City of Vancouver; the New Brunswick Department of Wellness, Culture and Sport; the Manitoba Arts Council; the Ontario Arts Council; the Saskatchewan Arts Board; and the Toronto Arts Council.
- Previously, applicants to these funders were required to provide the same information in multiple formats on multiple occasions. Discussions are ongoing with other provincial, territorial and municipal arts funders to encourage them to join the CADAC partnership.
- You must use the CADAC Financial Form for Arts Organizations and the Statistical Form for Arts Organizations to submit your financial and statistical information. You are encouraged to register your organization with CADAC as early as possible to ensure that you have enough time to assemble the required financial information.
- Please go to the CADAC website at www.thecadac.ca to download the form. For step-by-step instructions on this process, please see **Page 4** of the application form.

Adjudication Process

Merit-based, independent adjudication is the primary method of evaluation.

Advisory Committees are comprised of individuals with expertise in a particular artistic discipline or genre. When selecting jury and committee members, the Council considers broad professional knowledge, expertise, geographical representation and diverse aesthetic, institutional, and cultural viewpoints.

The following process is used to evaluate every application:

- The British Columbia Arts Council receives applications and acknowledges receipt by email within 2 weeks.

- The Council's staff review applications for completeness.
- The Advisory Committee evaluates the applications using the assessment criteria outlined below.
- The Advisory Committee submits to Council its recommendations for funding and conditions on the payment of awards.
- The Council reviews the recommendations of the Advisory Committee.
- The Council informs each applicant of its decision in writing.
- Applicants are urged to contact Council staff for feedback on their applications.
- Within 60 days of notification of the results, applicants may appeal the decision based on the Council's written appeals policy.

Assessment Criteria

Applications are judged against a number of equally eligible applications, including requests from organizations not currently receiving operating assistance. Throughout the review, the Advisory Committee considers how well the organization fulfils its mandate, mission and values through the pursuit of excellence in these three areas of assessment:

Artistic Achievement

The Committee will assess excellence in the achievement of professional artistic activity, acknowledging the range of different practices that may exist in any one discipline. Council's advisors will discuss the following:

- The artistic activities of the organization's past season and over the past several seasons; the strength of the artistic intention in the work; the overall practice; and the development of the art form, artists and artistic practice.
- A range of internal and external factors affecting the current levels of achievement.
- Vigour, originality and risks taken in the overall artistic endeavour.
- Opportunities for professional development of artists.
- Level of professional fees, other compensation and quality of working conditions for artists, including safety.
- The impact of the proposed work on the creative growth and development of artists.
- Relationship to local and global artistic practice in the context of a culturally diverse and geographically vast province.
- Achievability of proposed program.
- The program's effect on the artists and audiences experiencing it.

Community Engagement

The Committee will assess excellence in engagement with one or more identified artistic communities, the broader arts and cultural community and the general public. Council's advisors will discuss the following:

- Engagement with a range of artists, arts organizations and communities in the past season and over the past several seasons, especially with Aboriginal, culturally diverse and geographically isolated communities.
- Partnerships with other organizations.

- Presentation of work by and employment of British Columbians and Canadians.
- Calculated risk-taking with regard to public engagement.
- Importance of the artistic practice and outreach initiatives to the organization's identified communities.
- Achievability of proposed marketing and outreach activities.

Organizational Capacity

The Committee will assess excellence in management, leading to sustainability and growing recognition of the organization, as well as realistic planning supported by informed and active trustees. Council's advisors will discuss the following:

- The applicant's reflection on the internal and external factors contributing to the organization's current capacity across all areas of planning, communication, audience development, marketing, fund development, financial management and governance.
- Opportunities for professional development for staff and board of directors.
- Achievability of proposed plans to build organizational capacity.
- Presentation of realistic budget assumptions and projections, with a diversified revenue base including earned revenues, federal and local government support and private fundraising.
- Quality of board and employee recruitment, tenure and succession planning.
- Focus, commitment and effectiveness of the board, including board self-assessment initiatives.
- Governance practices and policies.

In each area, the Advisory Committee considers the organization's reflection on both past achievement and proposed plans.

Exclusions

Operating assistance is not available for:

- start-up costs
- seed money
- capital expenditures (construction, renovation, or purchase of property or equipment)
- feasibility studies
- budget deficits
- for-profit entities

Application Deadline (by online application system, or postmarked)

- March 15, 2010



For an electronic application form go to <http://bcartscouncil.ca/> and select Logon to Apply Online. You will be prompted for your user ID and password. If you do not have a user ID and password, please contact the BC Arts Council at (250) 356-1718 or bcartscouncil@gov.bc.ca.

To download a printable version of the application form select Download printable form at <http://www.bcartscouncil.ca/guidelines/organizations/performingarts>.