



# 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 its excellence. In pursuing this mission, the Council is guided by six core values:

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

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## Operating Assistance – Visual Arts Organizations

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**Operating Assistance contributes to the support of public program activities at professional, non-profit visual arts organizations that sustain an annual artistic and curatorial program encompassing creation, development, presentation, collections and dissemination activities.**

## 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 fulfill 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.

BC Arts Council programs are accessible to aboriginal artists or arts organizations and artists or arts organizations from diverse cultural and regional communities of British Columbia.

## 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/curatorial 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/curatorial 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/curatorial 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 Criteria

Eligibility is determined according to the following criteria:

An eligible applicant must:

- Be registered as a non-profit society in good standing in the Province of British Columbia and have operated as a visual arts organization for two fiscal years prior to application; or be a public visual arts organization operated by a local government for at least two fiscal years with a community-based board of management that sets policy for the organization's public programs and services.
- Have received at least two Professional Project Assistance awards from the British Columbia Arts Council.
- Provide year-round public programming and have done so during the immediately preceding two years.
- Compensate artists by paying fees at industry standards, and adhere to the international intellectual property rights standards.
  - Professional artists/curators must receive industry standard fees for work presented by visual arts organizations and public museums.
  - Community-based artists and curators whose work is programmed by visual arts organizations or public museums will receive payment through either exhibition fees or through other, mutually agreed upon alternatives.
- Employ professional artistic/curatorial and administrative leadership.
- Demonstrate financial need for assistance, as defined by Council policy.

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 and read these *Guidelines*.

Applications must include:

1. A signed, completed Operating Assistance application form, including CADAC ID number. (NOTE: If submitting electronically, clicking OK to the declaration statement is equivalent to signing a paper copy of the application form.)
2. A written statement (see page 2 of the application form) of no more than 12 pages, *including* a 2 page Organizational Profile (Part 1).
3. For municipally-run visual arts organisations, written terms of reference and policy setting responsibilities for the community-based boards of management.
4. A list of current board of directors or trustees or board of management, including their occupations and start date of their term of office.
5. A list of artistic/curatorial and administrative staff or significant contractors, giving name and title or responsibility (indicate if permanent/seasonal and full-time/part-time).
6. Current year publications created by your organization.
7. Copies of recently prepared planning and policy documents if not previously submitted and a detailed list of existing documents (if applicable).
8. Facilities Description/Floor Plan if not previously submitted or if changed from previous application to this program.
9. Two copies of your organization’s most recent financial statements.

Only applications containing a self-addressed stamped envelope with sufficient postage will have support materials returned.

### Financial Statements

Financial Statements must include a Balance Sheet, Income Statement and Notes. The type of Financial Statements required is based on the recipient’s last BCAC award or, in the case of new applicants, internally prepared financial documents are acceptable. Council Staff reserve the right to request audited Financial Statements if deemed appropriate, regardless of the amount of the applicant’s last award.

<b>BC Arts Council Grant for last fiscal year</b>	<b>Minimum Required Documentation</b>
Less than \$10,000	Internally prepared Financial Statements
\$10,001 - \$25,000	Notice to Reader Financial Statements (Externally prepared)
\$25,001 - \$100,000	“Review Engagement” Financial Statements
Greater than \$100,000	Audited Financial Statements

## **CADAC**

- The BC Arts Council is collecting financial and statistical information through a national online database called CADAC (Canadian Arts Data/Données sur les arts au Canada). This system enables 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](http://www.thecadac.ca) to access the form. For step-by-step instructions on this process, please see **Page 4** of the BC Arts Council Operating Assistance – Visual Arts Organizations 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 for this program and acknowledges receipt by email within 2 weeks.
- The Council's staff reviews applications for completeness.
- The Advisory Committee evaluates the applications using the assessment criteria outlined below.
- The Advisory Committee submits to the Council the 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 application.
- Within 30 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 requests, including requests from organizations not currently receiving operating assistance. Throughout the review, the Advisory Committee considers how well the organization fulfills its mandate, mission and values through pursuit of excellence in these three areas of assessment:

### **Artistic/Curatorial Achievement (50%)**

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

- The artistic/curatorial program activities of the organization's current year and over the past several years; the strength of the artistic/curatorial intention in the organization's 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/curatorial endeavour.
- Opportunities for the professional development of artists, curators and other visual arts professionals.
- Level of professional fees, other compensation and quality of working conditions for artists/curators and employees, including safety.
- The impact of the proposed program activities on the creative growth and development of artists/curators and other visual arts professionals.
- Achievability of proposed program of activities.
- The proposed program's effect on the artists/curators and other visual arts professionals and audiences experiencing it.
- Relationship to local and global artistic practice in the context of a culturally diverse and geographically vast province.

### **Community Engagement (25%)**

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

- Ongoing engagement with a range of visual arts professionals, artists, arts organizations and communities in the current year and over the past several years, especially with Aboriginal, culturally diverse and geographically isolated communities.
- Ongoing sustained engagement and 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/curatorial practice and outreach initiatives to the organization's identified communities.
- Achievability of proposed marketing and outreach activities.
- Strength of educational programming.

### **Organizational Capacity (25%)**

**The Advisory 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, volunteers and board of directors.
- Analysis of current financial position.
- Achievability of proposed plans to build organizational capacity.
- Presentation of realistic budget assumptions and projections, with a diversified revenue base that includes earned revenues, federal and local government support and private fundraising.
- Quality of board member, volunteer 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

Awards under this program are not available for archives-only organizations, single theme or specialty visual arts organizations, or those which qualify for operating assistance under other programs.

### **Demonstrated Need for Public Subsidy**

Public funds should be allocated in a manner that benefits the community. For that reason, the British Columbia Arts Council assesses whether each applicant has a real need for financial assistance to realize the project or program for which it requests assistance.

For Applicants in the Operating Assistance program, the Council evaluates need using these guidelines:

- For applicants with budgets under \$50,000: Holding an accumulated, undesignated surplus in excess of 50% of annual gross revenues will influence eligibility for assistance from the Arts Council.
- For applicants with budgets greater than \$50,000: Holding an accumulated, undesignated surplus in excess of 50% of annual gross revenues on the first \$50,000, plus an accumulated, undesignated surplus in excess of 25% of annual gross revenues over \$50,000 will influence eligibility for assistance.
- Surpluses generated for specific purposes (such as endowment funds and capital development) through private or public sector fundraising are exempt from this assessment of need.

## Changes to Awards

The British Columbia Arts Council reserves the right to redistribute, delay or suspend payments if the organization:

- Does not carry out its planned program of activities.
- Undergoes major changes in artistic or administrative direction.
- Does not meet its obligations as a grant recipient, including regular submission of reports to the Council.

## Recognition of Assistance

In recognition of funding, the support of the BC Arts Council and the Province of British Columbia should be acknowledged in all promotional materials. Approved acknowledgement, along with logo and graphics standards, are available online in a variety of ready-to-use digital formats at [www.bcartscouncil.ca](http://www.bcartscouncil.ca). The logo should be used on posters, brochures, print ads and programs and used where possible on media releases and signs related to the funded project.

As well, funded organizations with a website are encouraged to add a link to the BC Arts Council site.

For information regarding the provincial logo, please contact the Government Communications and Citizen Engagement office of the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development.

## Application Deadline (by online application system or postmarked)

- September 30, 2011



For an electronic application form go to <http://bcartscouncil.ca> and select Logon to Apply Online. You will be prompted for a 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](mailto:bcartscouncil@gov.bc.ca).

To download a printable version of the application form, [click here](#) and select Download printable form.