



# 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. The value of a vibrant arts and cultural community in the creation of a healthy society.
2. The value of artistic excellence in all art forms.
3. The value of inclusiveness and the fullest possible reflection of the province's Aboriginal and cultural diversity.
4. The value of encouraging artistic practice from traditional to experimental and established to emerging.
5. The value of administrative and adjudication processes which are transparent and that adhere to the principles of accountability, independence, recognition of merit, and equality of opportunity.
6. The value of defining clear goals, developed in consultation with the arts and culture community, to guide long and short-term operations.

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## SPECIAL PROJECT ASSISTANCE – UNIQUE OPPORTUNITIES

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***Special Project Assistance – Unique Opportunities* supports extraordinary production costs incurred by professional BC arts organizations for projects scheduled as part of significant national or international cultural events. Over the next five years, a number of events will provide opportunities to demonstrate to national and global audiences the outstanding calibre of the arts in BC. The program will assist arts organizations that plan to take full advantage of involvement in these opportunities.**

## 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; and
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. 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**

### **General Eligibility**

Under normal circumstances, an eligible applicant must:

- be a professional arts organization assisted by the BC Arts Council in recent years (2007 - 2009)
- provide audited or independently-prepared financial statements for the most recently completed fiscal year (see page 5 for further information);
- employ competent artistic and management leadership as demonstrated in previous achievements, collaborations, partnerships, relationships, etc.;
- compensate artists by paying fees at industry standards and by adhering to international copyright law;
- be in receipt of a formal invitation to participate in a unique event;
- provide a project budget that demonstrates a diversified revenue base, with significant funding from sources other than the BC Arts Council, such as guarantees, federal and local government support, and private funding;
- have completed and submitted final reports for any outstanding project assistance provided by the BC Arts Council; and
- demonstrate the need for financial assistance, as defined by Council policy.

### **Exclusions**

The Special Project Assistance – Unique Opportunities program does not provide subsistence to artists or cover commissioning or creation costs. It does not assist travel or touring expenses or the creation or preparation of performances for competitions. Additionally, the program will not support projects where the performance is secondary to other purposes (e.g. fundraising events; or for conventions, family, religious or community celebrations).

## **ADJUDICATION PROCESS**

The BC Arts Council is committed to active partnerships in the development and dissemination of arts and cultural activity in British Columbia. Merit-based, independent assessment is the primary method of evaluation.

While the Council makes every effort to respond swiftly to each application, in the interests of fairness, the following process is used to evaluate every application:

- the Council receives applications at any time, but adjudicates them periodically throughout the year;
- the Council acknowledges receipt of applications in writing;
- the Council's staff review applications for completeness and accuracy, and prepare an analysis of the applicant's administration, financial management, and sustainability;
- the multi-disciplinary projects jury then evaluates the applications on the basis of the assessment criteria and determines the level of funding and conditions on the payment of awards; and
- the Council informs each applicant of the decision. Applicants are urged to seek feedback on their applications from the program coordinator.

## **ASSESSMENT CRITERIA**

**The Jury will consider each application according to the applicant's mandate and history as well as against four areas: unique opportunity, artistic achievement, community engagement, and feasibility.**

### **Unique Opportunity**

This criterion gives applicants an opportunity to articulate the significance of the unique event and explain the importance of the opportunities presented to the applicant. Organizations proposing projects that were programmed as part of regular activities and scheduled prior to receipt of an invitation should provide details of the extraordinary opportunity and highlight the additional production costs that will be incurred as a result of participating in the unique event.

Jurors will consider the following points:

- The prestigious and unique nature of the event in a national and international context, and
- The potential benefits to the development of the applicant and its artists provided by participating in the event.

### **Artistic Achievement**

This criterion encourages applicants to define and demonstrate excellence in their artistic activity, showing how the proposed project will advance the art form or practice that is central to the work of the organization. Jurors will consider the following points:

- Clarity and focus
- Originality and vitality
- Artistic risk or challenges inherent in, or tackled by, the proposed project
- Ability to realize the project artistically, based on previous successes and support material
- Previous achievements of the creative team
- Potential benefit to the professional arts community and the opportunities provided for professional BC artists, including aboriginal and culturally diverse artists, and
- Clear statements about compensation to every professional artist participating in the project.

### **Community Engagement and the Development of Artists**

This criterion encourages the applicant to show how the project will offer stimulating and varied forms of public engagement, primarily through performance or exhibition but also through audience and artistic development, participation, discourse and education, or other opportunities offered. Jurors will consider the following points:

- Knowledge of the project's audience plus insight and strategies that will lead to further audience development
- Commitment to work created by BC and Canadian artists, and new collaborations, including emerging or under-recognized artists, artistic practices, and forms
- Accessibility of the project to artists and audiences, including artists and audiences of Aboriginal, culturally diverse and/or regional communities
- Risk taking with regard to public engagement, and
- Capacity of the project to maximize the exposure provided by the unique opportunity.

### **Feasibility**

This criterion considers the achievability of the project. The following points will be considered by the jurors:

- Abilities in project management, including planning, audience development, marketing, communications and financial management
- Demonstrated capacity to promote and finance this project, and
- Skills available to take advantage of the possibilities offered by the unique opportunity.

## Application Requirements

**All applicants MUST contact the Unique Opportunities program coordinator *prior* to submitting an application.**

Applicants must provide a signed, completed application form and all requested information.

Applications must include (see Application Checklist on application form):

- a signed, completed Special Project Assistance -Unique Opportunities application form that addresses all application questions and includes details of the proposed project, including the budget as well as the names and short biographies of the artists and creative team;
- a brief history of the applicant's creation, development, production, and/or dissemination in British Columbia;
- a letter of invitation from the presenter with an outline of the applicant's plans to maximize the impact of participating in the event;
- production plans;
- a list of the organization's current board of directors or trustees, including their occupations;
- a list of principal administrative and artistic staff or significant contractors, giving name and title or responsibility; and
- two copies of either:
  - the most recent, independently prepared financial statements for organizations whose total operating budget is less than \$400,000 or whose last award from the British Columbia Arts Council was \$40,000 or less; *or*
  - audited financial statements, for organizations whose total budget exceeds \$400,000 or whose last award exceeded \$40,000, whichever is applicable.

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

## 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; or
- does not meet its obligations as a grant recipient, including submission of any outstanding 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. Examples of camera-ready formats along with usage guidelines for the Council logo are available to successful applicants, and are also accessible in a variety of formats on the Council's Web site at [www.bcartscouncil.ca](http://www.bcartscouncil.ca). For information regarding the provincial logo, please contact the Public Affairs Bureau of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts.

The logos should be used on posters, brochures, print ads and programs and used where possible on media releases and signs related to the funded project.

## **Maximum Assistance Levels, Special Project Assistance – Unique Opportunities Program**

Project assistance will not exceed 50% of the total project budget.

Under normal circumstances, if a project is dependent on funding from other sources, approved awards will not be paid out until funding from other sources is confirmed.

An organization may receive funding through this program only once between April 1 and March 31 of the government fiscal year.

### **Confidentiality of Information**

The collection, use, and disclosure of personal information are subject to the privacy provisions of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. Your personal information will be shared in confidence with members of the adjudication jury. The names and locations of successful award recipients will be published along with the amount of the award in the Annual Report of the BC Arts Council.

### **Application Deadline**

The deadline for Special Project – Unique Opportunities Assistance applications is:

- May 15, 2009 (post marked)



To download a printable version of the application form, go to: <http://bcartscouncil.ca/> and select Online Applications. Please note that e-application is not available for this program. 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).