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PROGRAM GUIDELINES – 2018/19  
OPERATING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM - Visual Arts Organizations  
Application deadline: September 30

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The Operating Assistance Program aims to provide consistent and responsive funding to assist the general operations of established professional non-profit arts and cultural organizations across disciplines; in so doing, the program supports the sustainable delivery of high quality and impactful arts programs and services to communities across the province.

The Operating Assistance Program supports organizations' operations over a funding cycle of up to four years, determined by discipline, type of organization and/or status within the program. Lengths of funding cycles, application requirements and eligibility criteria vary across disciplinary and other sectoral considerations. All applicants must meet the specific eligibility requirements included in the Program Guidelines. Applications from organizations not currently receiving Operating Assistance are only accepted in Year One of a funding cycle.

**The Operating Assistance Program – Visual Arts Organizations is in  
Year Three of a three-year funding cycle.**

The Operating Assistance Program offers funding through Extended Cycle and Annual grants:

- 1) **Extended Cycle:** provides established, stable organizations with a fixed funding level over an extended funding cycle. Eligible, approved organizations will receive an operating grant amount over a period of two to four fiscal years based on an initial request amount and subject to annual reporting and budgetary approvals. Organizations on Extended Cycle Status must submit a report by the program deadline annually in order to receive a grant in each of the subsequent years within their funding cycle.
- 2) **Annual Status:** provides funding for annual operations to organizations that are newly entering the operating program; experiencing significant transition; or requiring closer monitoring as identified by the Advisory Committee, Council or staff in consideration of Program Guidelines and Council policy. Those organizations placed on Annual Status must submit a full Operating Assistance – Annual Status application by the program deadline each year.

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*BC Arts Council program guidelines and application forms are revised annually.*

# About the BC Arts Council: New Foundations

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The BC Arts Council is an agency of the provincial government established by the *Arts Council Act*, for the purposes of:

- Providing support for the arts and culture in British Columbia;
- Providing persons and organizations with the opportunity to participate in the arts and culture in British Columbia; and
- Providing an open, accountable and neutrally administered process for managing funds for British Columbia arts and culture.

In July 2018, the BC Arts Council released [New Foundations: Strategic Plan for the British Columbia Arts Council 2018-2022](#), which articulates the following vision:

*“Artists and cultural organizations in British Columbia are well-supported, thriving, and able to reach their full potential under principles of equity, diversity, accessibility, and reconciliation. Arts and culture are seen as fundamental to developing vibrant and resilient communities, where the people of British Columbia are highly engaged in the province’s unique arts and culture sector recognized for its innovation and leadership in Canada and abroad.”*

## **Strategic Directions**

The new strategic plan lays out four new strategic directions for the BC Arts Council, intended to facilitate more equitable access to arts funding and informed by the current context facing the arts and culture sector in B.C.:

- Sustainability and Creative Development
- Equity, Diversity and Access
- Indigenous Arts and Culture
- Regional Arts and Community Arts

## **Values**

The current year is one of transition, as Council’s funding priorities and programs begin to navigate from the previous strategic plan to the full implementation of its new strategic directions. Throughout this transition, Council is highlighting and strengthening some of its previous commitments, as expressed through values such as access, recognition, engagement and consultation, while signalling the new values that will guide all of Council’s decisions and activities, from program design to the peer review process, into the future:

- Artistic Development and Achievement
- Indigenous Engagement and Cultural Vitality
- Equity, Access and Diversity
- Collaboration and Partnerships
- Engagement and Participation
- Recognition and Promotion
- Fair and Transparent Governance

Throughout all of its work, the BC Arts Council is committed to upholding the principles outlined in the [Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#) and the [United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) (the Declaration), as adopted by the Province of British Columbia.

## About the Operating Assistance Program – Visual Arts Organizations

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The Operating Assistance Program – Visual Arts Organizations 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.

### **The Operating Assistance Program – Visual Arts Organizations is entering Year Three of a three-year funding cycle.**

- **Extended Cycle Status:** Visual Arts Organizations on Extended Cycle Status applied in Year One and were approved for a grant amount that will remain fixed for each year of the funding cycle. Organizations on Extended Cycle Status must submit a report annually by the program deadline in order to receive funding for Years Two and Three. Full information about the requirements for the Extended Cycle Report, including the Report Form, is available [on our website](#).
- **Annual Status:** Approved Visual Arts Organizations on Annual Status applied in Year One and were approved for a grant amount for Year One of the funding cycle. They must submit a full application in Years Two and Three of the funding cycle. The application form and requirements are available [on our website](#).

The BC Arts Council will not accept new applications for Operating Assistance or Enhanced Capacity during Year Two or Three of the funding cycle.

In September 2019, all eligible applicants will apply for support for the next extended funding cycle.

## Eligibility for the Operating Assistance Program – Visual Arts Organizations

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Only organizations that received Operating Assistance in Years One and Two are eligible for Year Three. Eligible applicants 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 and with a community-based board of management that sets policy for the organization's public programs and services, OR;
- Be a professional visual arts organization operated by a public post-secondary institution in B.C. that offers public programming by professional visual artists in a dedicated gallery facility with regular ongoing access to the non-academic community

AND,

- Provide public programming and have done so in the immediately preceding two years.
- Compensate artists by paying fees at industry standards and adhere to 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 must receive payment through either exhibition fees or through other, mutually agreed-upon alternatives.
- Have professional artistic/curatorial and administrative leadership.

- For organizations that are not currently receiving Operating Assistance:
  - Applicants must have received at least two Professional Project Assistance awards from the British Columbia Arts Council within the past five years and within the same program discipline.
  - Applicants must establish eligibility with Council staff before making an application at least four weeks before the application deadline.
- For organizations that have previously received Operating Assistance:
  - Eligibility is reviewed annually.

Ineligible applications will not be reviewed by Advisory Committees.

## **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 or those which qualify for Operating Assistance under other programs.

## **Submission Requirements – Visual Arts Organizations**

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All applicants are urged to discuss their request with the appropriate program officer prior to submission.

**It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure applications are complete and all application requirements are included. The BC Arts Council will not contact applicants to address errors in applications or missing application requirements, including support material, other than that required to determine eligibility. Eligible applications and any supporting material will be assessed as they have been submitted.**

### **Extended Cycle Status - Report Requirements**

All Extended Cycle applicants must complete and submit the Extended Cycle Report, including a signed and completed Report Form, documentation of significant changes from the Year One submission, two copies of the organization's most recent Financial Statements (see below), and updates to their financial and statistical information.

The report must be printed on single-sided, standard letter-sized white paper and submitted unbound and without staples.

### **Annual Status - Application Requirements**

The application must be printed on single-sided, standard letter-sized white paper and submitted unbound and without staples.

Annual Status applications must include:

- A signed, completed Operating Assistance Program – Visual Arts Organizations Annual application form.
- A written statement (see page 2 of the application form for requirements) of no more than 15 pages, including an Organizational Profile (Part 1) of up to 2 pages.
- A list of the organization's current board of directors, trustees or board of management, including their occupations and start dates.
- A list of administrative and artistic/curatorial staff or significant contractors, giving name and title or responsibility (indicate if permanent/seasonal and full-time/part-time).
- One copy of any recently prepared planning and policy documents, if not previously submitted. These will be made available to the Advisory Committee at the time of adjudication.
- Two copies of your organization's most recent Financial Statements, in accordance with requirements outlined below.

**Specific Annual Application Requirements – Visual Arts Organizations**

- One copy of each publication created by your organization in the current year only.
- A Completed Summary of Major Activities for the current and three projected years (limit 2 pages per year).
- Facility description/floor plan, if not previously submitted or if changed from previous application to this program.
- A **maximum of five printed hard copy** images representing the following: a sample image of the exterior of your facility; a sample image of permanent exhibitions (if applicable); a sample image of a temporary exhibition; and a sample image of a public programming activity.

All required financial and statistical information must be entered and uploaded to CADAC for reconciliation and adjudication by the application deadline date.

Support material will not be returned.

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

Financial Statements must include:

- a Balance Sheet, Income Statement and Notes;
- an itemized list of grants identified by funder, either in the income statement or in an attached schedule; and,
- a breakdown of operating net assets, distinguishing between unrestricted net assets and capital assets.

The type of Financial Statements required is based on the recipient's last BC Arts Council award (excluding special projects); in the case of new applicants, internally prepared financial statements are acceptable. Internally prepared financial statements must be signed by two board members of the organization. Council staff reserve the right to request audited Financial Statements if deemed appropriate, regardless of the amount of the applicant's last award.

**For applicants operating under the umbrella of a local government or post-secondary institution, financial statements must include a statement of income and expenses for the applicant's activities alone, signed by the umbrella organization's financial officer, in addition to notes indicating if the applicant entity may accrue assets, surpluses or deficits from one year to the next.**

|   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| <b>BC Arts Council Grant for last fiscal year</b> | <b>Minimum Required Documentation</b> |
|---|---------------------------------------|

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Up to \$10,000         | Internally prepared Financial Statements signed by two board members |
| \$10,001 - \$25,000    | Independently prepared Financial Statements                          |
| \$25,001 - \$100,000   | “Review Engagement” Financial Statements                             |
| Greater than \$100,000 | Audited Financial Statements   |

## CADAC

The BC Arts Council collects 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.

You must use the CADAC Financial Form for Arts Organizations and the Statistical Form for Arts Organizations to submit your financial and statistical information.

In addition to the hard copies submitted with your application, your organization’s Financial Statements must be submitted to CADAC to be reconciled against the Last Year Actuals you have entered in the database. The Last Year Actuals entered in CADAC must be reconciled and locked by CADAC staff prior to adjudication.

**Accurate assessment of your organization’s request to the BC Arts Council depends upon you providing this financial and statistical information to CADAC in sufficient time for reconciliation and validation.**

Contact CADAC or your program officer for details. New applicants should discuss CADAC requirements with their program officer.

## Assessment Criteria

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The three areas of assessment are set out below, along with their relative weighting.

Throughout the application and assessment, applicants and the Advisory Committee should:

- Consider and discuss how the organization fulfills its mandate, mission and values through the pursuit of excellence in each of the three areas of assessment.
- Respond to the core values and goals of Council presented above in considering and discussing each of the three areas of assessment as they relate to the applicant’s mandate, mission, values and activity.

In evaluating each application, the Advisory Committee is asked to consider a number of possible criteria under each area of assessment. It is important to note that not all of the criteria will apply to each application; rather, they are examples of aspects that might be considered and should be addressed in the application if relevant to the organization and its work.

Applications are judged against these criteria alongside a number of equally eligible applications, including those from organizations not currently receiving operating assistance.

An essential element of any application is insightful, critical self-reflection. Members of advisory committees and juries want to hear the applicant’s own assessment of the problems faced and the creative solutions under consideration.

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

## **ARTISTIC/CURATORIAL ACHIEVEMENT (50%)**

**The Advisory Committee will assess the professional artistic/curatorial achievement of the organization, acknowledging the range of practices that may exist. Advisory Committees may discuss the following:**

- The artistic/curatorial vision of the organization and artistic leadership.
- The strength of the artistic/curatorial intention as realized in the organization's activities, including how well programming activities relate to the written mandate, mission and core values.
- The organization's activation of its permanent collections, as appropriate.
- The organization's overall activities and contribution to the development of visual arts practice, artists, and other professional practitioners.
- A range of internal and external factors affecting the current levels of achievement.
- Vigour, originality and risks taken in the overall artistic/curatorial endeavour.
- Level of professional fees, other compensation and quality of working conditions for artists, curators, other professionals, volunteers and employees, including safety considerations and culturally appropriate support.
- The organization's relationship to local and global visual arts practice in the context of a culturally diverse and geographically vast province.
- The achievability of the proposed program.
- The impact of the organization's artistic/curatorial activities on the audiences and publics experiencing it.
- The impact of the proposed programs on the creative growth and development of artists, curators and other visual arts professionals.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (25%)**

**The Advisory Committee will assess in the organization's engagement with and impact on the visual arts community; the broader arts and cultural community; and, its identified audiences and/or publics.**

**Advisory Committees may discuss the following:**

- How community engagement practices serve the artistic/curatorial vision.
- The inclusion of and engagement with appropriate protocols and practices, particularly in regard to Indigenous artists and communities.
- Partnerships with other organizations.
- Ongoing engagement with a range of visual arts organizations and professionals, artists, arts organizations and communities, especially with Indigenous, culturally diverse and geographically isolated communities.
- Presentation of work by and employment of British Columbians.
- Calculated risk-taking with regard to public engagement.
- The importance of the artistic/curatorial practice, programming and outreach initiatives to the organization's identified communities, including the arts community and the community at large.
- The appropriateness of proposed marketing, outreach and audience development activities.
- The strength of educational and/or outreach programming.



## ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY (25%)

**The Advisory Committee will assess the organization’s management, leadership and human resources, including policies, planning and governance, as they contribute to the sustainability, resilience, and capacity of the organization.**

### **Advisory Committees may discuss the following:**

- The achievability of proposed plans to build organizational capacity.
- The internal and external factors contributing to the organization’s current and potential capacity across all areas, including artistic/curatorial, planning, communication, audience development, marketing, fund development, financial management, human resources, governance, etc.
- Analysis of current financial position, including appropriate working capital ratio and management of surplus or deficit situations, reserves and/or restricted funds.
- Presentation of realistic budget assumptions and projections, with a diversified revenue base including earned revenues, federal and local government support and private fundraising.
- Opportunities for professional development for staff and the governing body.
- Quality of staff and employee recruitment, tenure and succession planning.
- Level of volunteer activity, including number of volunteers and their function, as it serves the artistic/curatorial vision and community engagement activities.
- Structure, level of activity and function of the governing body as it serves the artistic/curatorial vision, including board tenure, self-assessment initiatives and quality of recruitment and succession planning.
- Governance practices and policies.

## Considering Cultural Context

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All applicants should consider the issues around cultural appropriation if using the cultural forms, aesthetics or iconography of cultural communities removed from their social, political and cultural roots. Cultural appropriation can also occur when there is insufficient credit given to the sources of artistic and cultural work. Cultural appropriation diminishes access and reduces the opportunity for artists from Indigenous and diverse cultural communities to tell their own stories.

If working with Indigenous peoples, communities, culture or intellectual property (including but not limited to stories, songs, dance, designs, art, traditional knowledge or other cultural expressions), applicants should consider the principles outlined in the [United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) (the Declaration). The Declaration affirms that Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination and the right to practice and revive their culture and traditions. As stated in Article 11 of the Declaration,

*“This includes the right to maintain, protect and develop the past, present and future manifestations of their cultures, such as archaeological and historical sites, artefacts, designs, ceremonies, technologies and visual and performing arts and literature.”*

Article 31 of the Declaration affirms the rights of Indigenous peoples to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and cultural expressions and their manifestations and intellectual property. If you are working with traditional knowledge, you will need to explain how you have addressed cultural protocols and/or received permissions where required.

## Application Deadline and Submission

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The deadline for the Operating Assistance Program – Visual Arts Organizations is **September 30**.

Applications are accepted by mail and must be postmarked **by Canada Post or a courier company no later than September 30**. Applications may be hand delivered or delivered by courier to 800 Johnson Street, Victoria, BC, up to 4:00 p.m. on the deadline day.

Applications by email or fax will not be accepted.

Note: if the deadline falls on a weekend or statutory holiday, the deadline becomes the next business day.

## Adjudication Process

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

Applications for Operating Assistance are assessed by peer Advisory Committees. Advisory Committees are comprised of individuals with expertise in a particular artistic discipline, genre or practice. When selecting jury and committee members, Council considers broad professional knowledge, expertise, geographical representation and diverse aesthetic, organizational, and cultural viewpoints, including those from Indigenous perspectives.

The following process is used to evaluate every application:

- The British Columbia Arts Council receives applications and acknowledges receipt by email within 2 weeks of the deadline.
- Council staff reviews applications for eligibility.
- The Advisory Committee evaluates the applications using the assessment criteria outlined above.
- The Advisory Committee submits to Council its recommendations for funding and conditions on the payment of awards.
- Council reviews the recommendations of the Advisory Committee.
- Council informs each applicant of its decision in writing.
- Applicants are urged to contact their program officer for feedback on their application.
- Within 30 days of notification of the results, applicants may appeal the decision based on Council's written appeals policy.

Applicants on Annual Status continue to be assessed by peer Advisory Committees in subsequent years of an extended funding cycle. Extended Cycle applications are assessed by staff only, who may refer applications to Advisory Committees for review on a case-by-case basis (see Funding Status below).

## Notification of Awards

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Decisions will be made within sixteen weeks of the application deadline. All applicants will be notified by letter. Results will not be released by telephone or email.

## Funding Status

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Within the Operating Assistance Program, successful applicants are placed on either Extended Cycle or Annual Status.

### **EXTENDED CYCLE STATUS**

Under normal circumstances, the grant amount awarded in Year One will remain stable for the subsequent years of the funding cycle. Visual Arts Organizations on Extended Cycle Status will not submit a full application for support for Year Two (2017/18) or Year Three (2018/19), but must submit an Extended Cycle Report, including additional documentation as required, to request and release their subsequent Operating Assistance grant payment. Full information about the requirements for the Extended Cycle Interim Report, including the Interim Report Form, is available [on our website](#). The next full application for Visual Arts Organizations on Extended Cycle Status will be made in September 2019.

### **ANNUAL STATUS**

Organizations receiving Operating Assistance for the first time may, at the recommendation of the Advisory Committee and approval by Council, be placed on Annual Status. Annual Status may also be applied to organizations in transition or for which the Advisory Committee, Council or staff expressed a need to monitor more closely in light of Program Guidelines and Council policies.

Organizations placed on Annual Status will:

- Be required to submit a complete application on an annual basis;
- Be subject to annual adjustments to grant amounts within the stated funding cycle; and,
- Receive an award on an annual basis.

### **CONCERNED STATUS**

Organizations funded through the Operating Assistance Program are subject to the BC Arts Council's Fair Notice Policy. The Fair Notice Policy warns poorly performing organizations of the possibility of a phased loss of all operating funding, unless significant improvements are achieved, through the designation and application of Concerned Status criteria.

Organizations that remain or are placed on Concerned Status under Council's Fair Notice Policy will:

- Be required to submit a complete application on an annual basis;
- Be subject to annual adjustments to grant amounts, including reductions of up to 20%, within the stated funding cycle; and,
- Receive an award on an annual basis.

### **PAYMENT OF AWARDS**

All payments of grant monies to the grant recipient are subject to an authorizing appropriation under the Financial Administration Act.

Grant recipients must promptly inform the BC Arts Council of substantive changes to the organization, including:

- Significant shifts in structure, staffing or activities
- Major changes to proposed activities;
- Changes in legal status, ownership, corporate structure, name, or mandate;
- Danger of insolvency, bankruptcy, or credit protection;
- Legal proceedings that pose a financial or reputational risk.

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 submission of final reports to the Council.
- Fails to comply with legal obligations.
- Demonstrates significant risk of insolvency or bankruptcy.
- Fails to respect the commitment to provide a safe and respectful workplace free from harassment, discrimination and sexual misconduct.



Advisory Committees and/or Council staff may also require organizations to provide additional information on an annual basis based on specific criteria or eligibility or policy concerns. In those cases, grants may be conditional or subject to adjustment based on these Payment of Awards guidelines, based on the information submitted, the recommendation of the peer review committee, and approval by Council.

## **APPEALS POLICY**

The BC Arts Council appeals policy allows for appeals of funding decisions in programs utilizing the Advisory Committee process<sup>1</sup>. Appeals will be considered when the applicant can demonstrate that there was significant information available to the Committee at the time of adjudication that was not presented at the meeting or that was substantively misunderstood by the Committee. The BC Arts Council will not consider any notices of intention to appeal that question only the assessment of artistic merit.

## **Grant Amounts**

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The minimum grant amount within the Operating Assistance Program – Visual Arts Organizations is \$20,000. There is no maximum grant amount. All applicants to the British Columbia Arts Council are encouraged to submit concise, realistic requests, responding to the assessment criteria.

Under normal circumstances, for organizations on Extended Cycle Status there will be no adjustments to the grant amount within a funding cycle and the amount awarded for 2016/17 will carry over for each year of the designated funding cycle.

Organizations placed on Annual Status or Concerned Status are subject to annual application requirements and the possible adjustment of funding levels, at the recommendation of Advisory Committees and approval of Council.

## **Confidentiality and Recognition of Awards**

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### **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 organization's 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.

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<sup>1</sup> Advisory Committees make recommendations to the Board for operating funding; juries make decisions for project assistance programs.

## 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, both hard copy and online. The approved BC Arts Council and provincial logo and graphics standards are available online in a variety of ready-to-use digital formats at <http://www.bcartscouncil.ca/mediaroom/logoanduse.htm>. The joint 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 website.

## Contact Information

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Sue Donaldson – Program Officer, Visual Arts, Museums and Literary Arts Programs  
778-698-3528 | [sue.donaldson@gov.bc.ca](mailto:sue.donaldson@gov.bc.ca)

A full list of program officers is available at <http://www.bcartscouncil.ca/about/coordinators.htm>.

For general information or further assistance, please contact:

Telephone: 250 356-1718  
Email: [bcartscouncil@gov.bc.ca](mailto:bcartscouncil@gov.bc.ca)

Program guidelines are reviewed annually.  
Please ensure you are working with the most current  
program guidelines for each intake.