
PROGRAM GUIDELINES 2019/20

OPERATING ASSISTANCE: Community Arts Organizations

All applications to this program must be submitted through the BC Arts Council's [new online application system](#). All applicants must create an *Organizational Profile* by registering with the new online system *before* they can submit an application to this program. Allow up to four business days for registration approvals.

About the BC Arts Council

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 BC Arts Council’s values guide all decisions and activities, from program design to the peer review process. We strive for constant improvement under these values in how we serve artists and cultural organizations throughout B.C.

- 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

About Operating Assistance: Community Arts Organizations

The BC Arts Council's Operating Assistance Program aims to provide consistent and responsive funding to assist the general operations of established 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.

Operating Assistance: Community Arts Organizations awards are made once a year for the applicant's upcoming activities. Funding is available to registered non-profit organizations with an arts and culture mandate, including cultural centres and associations and Indigenous friendship centres and in British Columbia that:

- provide public access to a range of artistic and cultural activities (including traditional arts and culture);
- develop and encourage leadership for arts and culture at the community level; and
- encourage support for arts and culture from local and regional governments, including First Nations Band Councils and Trusts, where applicable.

There are three components to Operating Assistance: Community Arts Organizations. For FY 2019/20, all applicants will apply for one (1) year of support. There is no extended cycle this year.



PLEASE NOTE CHANGES TO THE PROGRAM COMPONENTS FOR 2019/20

1. BASIC ASSISTANCE

Award levels for BASIC ASSISTANCE are allocated by a peer-assessed ranking within a band determined by:

- a) The size of an organization's total operating budget as demonstrated by the submission of financial statements of the last two (2) completed fiscal years; and
- b) If the organization holds facilities, the costs associated with operating those facilities may be considered including how they are managed (i.e. rent, own, lease, fee-for-service).

Award level is a minimum of \$5,000 and a maximum of \$20,000 annually.

2. LOCAL MATCHING FUNDS

Community Arts Organizations that receive financial assistance from local and regional sources, including First Nations Band Councils and Trusts, may be eligible for 100% matching funding to a maximum of \$5,000. Support levels are determined by:

- a) Amount of funds received from local sources in the most recently completed fiscal year;
- b) Requested LOCAL MATCHING FUNDS must correspond with the previous year's financial statements that are required with this application; and
- c) The organization meets all qualifications for BASIC ASSISTANCE, as above.
- d) Donated services and in-kind contributions from local sources are not included in LOCAL MATCHING FUNDS request as they are not eligible under this funding stream.

Award level is a maximum amount is \$5,000 annually.

3. CAPACITY AND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Awards are competitively assessed by considering the organization's plans for developing programming, engagement, community access, and organizational and/or artistic capacity. Applicants are required to describe specific initiatives they will be undertaking over the next funding cycle. Small capital improvements, including equipment purchases, are eligible requests.

Please note that not all organizations who apply to this component will receive an award. Neither the funding level nor future awards are guaranteed from one program intake to the next.

Award level is a maximum of \$10,000 annually.

Application Deadline and Submission



The deadline for the Operating Assistance: Community Arts Organizations is **October 15, 2019** no later than 11:59 p.m. All applications will be submitted via [online application](#).

Applicants need to register in the new online system *before* submitting an application. Please note that approval of new registration requests may take up to four (4) business days. New registrants will be notified of approval and access to grant applications.

Applications by mail, email or fax are no longer accepted.

Eligibility Requirements

Eligibility is reviewed annually for all applicants. Current recipients and eligible new applicants to the Operating Assistance: Community Arts Organizations must:

- Be registered as a not-for-profit society, including Indigenous friendship centres, cultural centres and associations, in good standing with the Province of British Columbia;
- Have an arts and culture mandate and have operated as a community arts organization for at least two fiscal years prior to application;
- Provide year-round services to its community and have done so in the immediately preceding two years;
- Receive cash support from local sources (i.e. cash for operations or programs, not in-kind);
- Compensate professional artists at industry standards and community artists at agreed upon rates and adhere to international intellectual property rights standards;
- Have skilled and appropriate artistic and administrative leadership (volunteer or paid);
- Demonstrate a range of membership and engagement that is representative of its constituency or community including diverse cultural and Indigenous populations.

New applicants and those not currently receiving Operating Assistance must also have:

- Received a minimum of two (2) BC Arts Council project grants within the last five (5) years. Eligible grants have file numbers starting with: 2015/2016/2017/2018/2019.
- Established eligibility with BC Arts Council staff at least four (4) weeks before the application deadline.

Application Requirements

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure applications are complete. The BC Arts Council will not contact applicants to address errors or to request missing application requirements including support material. Eligible applications will be assessed as they have been submitted.

Applicants must submit a complete [online application](#) including all requested information and support material (i.e. electronic files; hard copies scanned and attached as PDF) as follows:

- A maximum of three (3) recently prepared planning, policy or promotional documents that have not previously been submitted.
- A maximum of five (5) pieces of documentation of the organization's recent activities (i.e. newspaper clippings, program materials, etc.)

The following documentation must be provided through the applicant's *Organizational Profile* and must be updated at minimum once per year:

- A list of the organization's current board of directors, trustees, or board of management, including their occupations and start dates.
- A list of current administrative and artistic/curatorial staff or significant contractors, giving name and title or responsibility (indicate if permanent/seasonal and full-time/part time).
- Most recent Financial Statements, in accordance with requirements outlined below.

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;
- a breakdown of operating net assets, distinguishing between unrestricted net assets and capital assets;
- have two (2) years of activity;
- be signed by the auditor/bookkeeper/accountant; and
- have board approval and be signed by two (2) board members of the organization.

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. Council staff reserve the right to request audited Financial Statements if deemed appropriate regardless of the amount of the applicant's last award.

Previous BC Arts Council Grant	Minimum Required Documentation
Up to \$10,000	Internally prepared Financial Statements
\$10,001 - \$25,000	Independently prepared Financial Statements
\$25,001 - \$100,000	Review Engagement Financial Statements
Greater than \$100,000	Audited Financial Statements

Considering Cultural Context

In [New Foundations: 2018-2022](#), the BC Arts Council has made a commitment to principles of equity, diversity, accessibility and truth and reconciliation in all of its programs and processes. In its own operations and with support it provides for arts and culture in the province, the BC Arts Council administers its activities in accordance with the [BC Human Rights Code](#) and strives to foster cultural safety and safe and respectful workplaces for all artists, arts workers and cultural practitioners.

The BC Arts Council is committed to the standards and principles of the [United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(the Declaration\)](#) and the [Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#). We support the Province of British Columbia in its commitment to fully adopt and implement both of these important documents.

The BC Arts Council acknowledges the cultural, geographic and regional diversity of the province, and recognizes the distinct and varied contexts of Indigenous, cultural and regional communities.

In consideration of these commitments, all applicants and assessors should contemplate a variety of factors around cultural context when submitting a proposal. Not all considerations will apply to all applications.

- Consider issues around cultural appropriation and ownership if using the cultural expressions, aesthetics or iconography of various 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), 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.”
- Consider the reciprocity of relationships with the various communities and cultural practices represented in your application, and whose voices and perspectives are being included. Consider how you have addressed cultural protocols and/or received permissions where required, including appropriate community consent, support, advice and/or collaboration.

Assessment Criteria

All applications should critically assess the applicant organization’s current activities, challenges faced, and proposed solutions, as well as how it fulfils its mandate, mission, vision and core values through the lens of the four areas of assessment, weighted as follows:

- Artistic Contribution and Significance - 40%
- Engagement and Impact - 25%
- Organizational Capacity and Governance - 25%
- Cultural Competency and Agility - 10%

The Advisory Committee will consider a number of criteria under each area of assessment. Not all will apply to every applicant; rather, they are aspects that might be considered and should be addressed in the application if relevant to the organization and its work. Additionally, some criteria may have implications in more than one area of assessment.

ARTISTIC CONTRIBUTION AND SIGNIFICANCE (40%)

Assessment of the organization's overall contribution to artistic and cultural practice in the province, including the significance of its contribution to the development of its art form(s) and communities. Advisory Committees may consider the following:

- Vision and artistic leadership.
- Overall contribution to the development of the art form, artists, other practitioners and broader artistic practice, in the context of a culturally and regionally diverse province.
- Vigour, originality and risk in artistic activities.
- The achievability of the proposed program.
- Commitment to the development of B.C. artists and cultural practitioners, including the level of professional fees and other compensation to artists and cultural workers.
- The quality of working conditions for artists and cultural workers, including cultural safety.
- Consideration of cultural context in all artistic activity and projects.

ENGAGEMENT AND IMPACT (25%)

Assessment of the organization's engagement with and impact on the province's broad arts and cultural community and the organization's own identified communities, including current and potential audiences, various partners and cultural groups, and the public. Advisory Committees may consider the following:

- The strength and reciprocity of relationships with identified communities.
- Engagement with the artistic community in B.C.
- Inclusion of and engagement with appropriate protocols and practices.
- The diversity and appropriateness of the artists, partners and communities the organization is engaged with.
- The strength and effectiveness of marketing, outreach and audience development strategies and educational programming.
- Public engagement successes and challenges.
- Consideration of cultural context in engagement activity.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY AND GOVERNANCE (25%)

Assessment of the management, leadership, human resources and governance within the organization, including policies and planning, as they contribute to sustainability, resilience, and capacity. Advisory Committees may consider the following:

- Strategic planning and development, including the efficient use of resources to support organizational, community and artistic development.
- The internal and external factors contributing to the organization's current and potential artistic, engagement and organizational capacity across all areas.
- Staff, employee and volunteer recruitment, development, tenure and succession planning.

- The role of management and the board in fostering a healthy, sustainable workplace and supporting the organization's development.
- Human resources policies and procedures, in relation to salaries, benefits, professional development, workplace safety and respectful workplace.
- Structure, level of activity and function of the board as it serves the organization's vision, including board tenure, recruitment and succession planning.
- The organization's overall financial health.
- Consideration of cultural context in management and governance activity, including the commitment to cultural safety for staff, volunteers, artists and board members.

CULTURAL COMPETENCY AND AGILITY (10%)

Assessment of the organization's ability to work respectfully, knowledgeably and effectively with artists, practitioners and communities from a diversity of cultural backgrounds as this has particular implications in considering reconciliation and the cultural safety and self-determination of Indigenous peoples. Advisory Committees may consider the following:

- Commitment and ability to foster cultural safety.
- Capacity to acknowledge, negotiate and respect differing cultural perspectives, worldviews and values.
- Reciprocity in artistic, cultural and community relationships.
- Ability to question organizational assumptions in a cultural context and willingness to learn in unfamiliar cultural situations.
- Ability to address cultural protocols and permissions where required, including appropriate community consent, support, advice and/or collaboration.
- Ethical use of material, including issues of cultural appropriation and ownership.
- Recognition of the impact of proposed artistic activity, including who will benefit from it.

Adjudication Process

Merit-based, independent adjudication is the primary method of evaluation. Applications are evaluated against the above assessment criteria alongside a number of equally eligible applications, including those from organizations not currently receiving Operating Assistance.

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 artistic, institutional, and cultural viewpoints, including those from Indigenous perspectives.

The following process is used to evaluate every application:

- BC Arts Council receives applications via online application.
- Council staff reviews applications for eligibility.
- Advisory Committee evaluates the applications using the assessment criteria.
- Advisory Committee submits recommendations for awards and any applicable conditions on the payment of awards to the Council.
- Council reviews the recommendations and informs applicants of decisions 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 Appeals Policy.

Notification of Awards

Decisions will be made within sixteen (16) weeks of the application deadline. Notification of results will be sent via email to the organizational and governance contacts provided in the online application system. Results will not be released by telephone.

Funding Status

For FY 2019/20, all applicants will apply for one (1) year of Operating Assistance. There will be no Extended Cycle or Annual Status designations for this intake.

CONCERNED STATUS

Organizations funded through Operating Assistance 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 the 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 BC 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.

APPEALS POLICY

The BC Arts Council Appeals Policy allows for appeals of funding decisions in Operating Assistance programs. Appeals are considered when the applicant can demonstrate that there was significant information available to the Advisory 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.

Confidentiality and Recognition of Awards

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 Advisory Committee. 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.

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 (e.g. posters, brochures) and online (e.g. organization's website). The [BC Arts Council logo and graphics standards](#) are available in a variety of ready-to-use digital formats.

Contact Information

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