

PROGRAM GUIDELINES 2020/21

ARTS INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM

About the BC Arts Council: New Foundations

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 BC 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 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

Program Impacts and Changes Due to COVID-19



The BC Arts Council recognizes unprecedented impact the COVID-19 pandemic is having on the B.C. arts and culture sector. While every effort is made to minimize revisions, program guidelines may need to be updated to align with the most current provincial and federal orders, and public health directives. Please note:

- Ensure you are working with the latest version of the program guidelines posted on the BC Arts Council website. The posting date is identified at the bottom of the program page. Any changes to the guidelines made after the original posting will be clearly highlighted.
- A blackout period has been placed on funding for activities that involve travel and/or in-person gatherings over 50. Details are posted on our [dedicated COVID-19 update page](#).
- Your application will be assessed recognizing that the responses to COVID-19 may shift. To the best of your ability, please clearly state in your application the impact that COVID-19 protocols could have on your project.
- If your application is successful, you may need to adjust your project to respond to unforeseen developments due to the COVID-19 pandemic. If this is the case, please contact your program officer, who will work with you to find creative approaches to uphold the original intention of your funded project, including remote and virtual solutions.
- The most up-to-date information is posted on our dedicated [COVID 19 update page](#). Updates will also be announced on our [Facebook](#), and [Twitter](#) accounts.

About Project Assistance: Arts Infrastructure

Project Assistance: Arts Infrastructure enables eligible organizations to develop and enhance spaces that support the work of B.C.'s arts and cultural practitioners. All projects must clearly demonstrate how they benefit arts and cultural practitioners. The program aims to support projects that:

- Catalyze the development of new or existing arts and cultural spaces through acquisition, renovation, or purchase of specialized equipment;
- Improve physical, social, and cultural accessibility to arts and cultural spaces
- Enhance access to arts and cultural spaces for underserved communities and underrepresented arts and cultural practices; and
- Strengthen the capacity of the sector to develop, operate and sustain arts and cultural spaces.

There are two project categories including:

A. Capital Improvements

Building-based projects involving the purchase, construction, renovation, or expansion of an arts and/or cultural facility may request assistance from this program up to \$75,000.

B. Specialized Equipment Acquisition

Projects focused solely on the purchase of specialized equipment for long-term use and associated installation expenses may request assistance from this program up to \$40,000.

Application Deadline and Submission

The deadline for submissions to Arts Infrastructure is October 19, 2020 no later than 11:59 p.m.

All applications will be submitted via the online grant application system. New applicants need to register on the [online system](#) before submitting an application. **Please note that approval of a new registration request may take up to four business days.** New registrants will be notified of approval and access to grant applications.

Applications by mail, email, or fax will not be accepted.

Eligibility Requirements

Assistance through this program is available to organizations.

An eligible applicant must:

- Be an organization with an arts and/or cultural mandate that is registered and in good standing as a non-profit society in the Province of British Columbia;
OR
- Be a professional public arts and culture organization operated by a local government and with a community-based board of management that sets policy for the organization's public programs and services;
OR
- Be a professional public arts and culture organization operated by a public post-secondary institution that offers public programming and/or provides regular ongoing access to the non-academic community;
OR
- For-profit book publisher;
OR
- Be an Indigenous Government, Friendship Centre, or Métis Chartered Community;

AND all of the below:

- Be based in British Columbia and offer programming in B.C.;
- Have operated as an organization for two fiscal years prior to application; and
- Engage competent and appropriate artistic/curatorial and management leadership as demonstrated by previous achievements, collaborations, partnerships, relationships, etc.

Eligible Costs

Awards are available to support:

- The purchase, construction, renovation, or expansion of an arts and/or cultural facility; or
- The purchase of specialized equipment and associated installation expenses for long-term use.

Exclusions

Awards are not available to support:

- Projects that are focused on non-cultural spaces (e.g. spaces used for arts and cultural activities less than 50% of the time);
- Project phases and activities that have begun prior to the application deadline;
- Operating expenditures;
- Feasibility studies, business plans, or other planning studies;
- Routine maintenance or repair;
- Restoration and refurbishment of artefacts/collections;
- Commissioning and purchasing of works of art;
- Gift shops;
- Commercial beverage and food facilities;
- Moving expenses;
- Long-term accrued interest on financing;
- Capital campaigns, fundraising or marketing activities and
- Projects or activities that are funded through other programs of the BC Arts Council.

Grant Amounts

Applicants should apply to the appropriate category as described above.

Category 1: Capital Improvements - Awards up to \$75,000

Category 2: Specialized Equipment Acquisition - Awards up to \$40,000

The request amount to this program:

- Must be 75% or less of the total project budget; or
- May be up to 90% of the total project budget for projects from organizations led by and/or rooted in:
 - Indigenous communities;
 - Underserved communities, including Deaf, Disability and Mad arts; Racialized or people of colour; 2SLGBTQ+;
 - Rural and remote (with a population under 25,000) areas.

For the 2020 intake, applicant contributions to the project budget can be composed of both cash and/or in-kind contributions. The project budget must balance in-kind revenues with in-kind expenses.

Application Requirements

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

All new applicants must create an Applicant Profile by registering with the [online system](#) before they can submit an application and should ensure all information and documentation in their online profile is up to date with each subsequent application.

Applicants must submit a complete online application, including all requested information and support material. All support materials must be submitted via the online system unless otherwise indicated.

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

The online application must include:

- A project description.
- Written confirmation from the Program Officer of applicant and project eligibility.
- List of any approvals and permits required to complete work on the project and the steps your organization plans to take to obtain them.
- A project budget with notes.
- Your organization's most recent Financial Statements, a list of staff members, and a list of board members (uploaded to the Organization Profile in the online system).
- A project timeline with a completion date before December 31, 2023.
- Two competitive quotes from prospective vendors or contractors for proposed capital improvement(s) or equipment purchase(s).
- Letters from any partnering organizations, if applicable, confirming the nature of their participation.
- For Capital Improvements: proof of facility ownership or relevant operational agreements and/or leases between the organization and the facility owners/landlords and other tenants.
- For Capital Improvements: planning documents or feasibility studies for the project (optional).

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 show two years of activity and 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.

BC Arts Council Grant for last fiscal year	Minimum Required Documentation All Financial Statements must be signed by the auditor/bookkeeper/accountant with Board approval (two Board member signatures)
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

Supporting Material:

Applicants must submit all materials in a digital format within the online application.

Applicants are advised to review and adhere to the [Upload Requirements for Supporting Material](#).

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure all supporting material is good quality and in a readable format. Poor quality materials may adversely affect an applicant's chances of success. Applicants are encouraged to test all materials before submitting their final application.

Do not submit supporting material other than what is outlined above, it will not be assessed. Do not send hard copy materials. Supporting material will not be returned.

Equity and Cultural Context

In its Strategic Plan [New Foundations: 2018-2022](#), the BC Arts Council makes a commitment to principles of equity, diversity, accessibility, and truth and reconciliation in all of its programs and processes. The Council also conducts its own operations and funding activities in accordance to legislation such as the [BC Human Rights Code](#), [Accessible Canada Act](#) and the [United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#), as well as [Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#).

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. The BC Arts Council also recognizes that all artistic practice exists within diverse and specific cultural contexts. All applicants are encouraged to contemplate a variety of factors around cultural appropriation, representation, and equitable and ethical collaboration processes, and to clearly position their work within its cultural context as required within their application.

Assessment Criteria

The three areas of assessment are set out below with their relative weight. Applicants should discuss in their application how the proposed project fulfils each area of assessment and should also discuss how the project may address the strategic priorities and values of the BC Arts Council including Equity and Cultural Context as above.

Availability and Quality of Spaces (40%)

The assessment panel will consider how the proposed project will develop and enhance spaces that support the work of B.C.'s arts and cultural practitioners. Assessors may discuss the following:

- Degree in which the project improves the conditions for artistic creation, production and/or presentation, or for the exhibition and preservation of cultural collections.
- Impact of the project on conditions, including technological, environmental, and safety features.
- Impact of the project on the number and/or capacity of available spaces at the local, regional and/or national level.
- Impact of the project on working spaces for artists, staff and other users.
- Benefits to other arts and cultural organizations at the local and/or regional level.

- Level of inclusion of and engagement with appropriate protocols and practices, particularly in regard to Indigenous artists and communities.

Access to Arts and Cultural Experiences (30%)

The assessment panel will consider how the proposed project will improve physical, social, and cultural accessibility to arts and cultural spaces, and enhance access to arts and cultural spaces for underserved communities and underrepresented arts and cultural practices. Assessors may discuss the following:

- Impact of your project on accessibility, including any impacts to physical, social and/or cultural accessibility for groups that may experience barriers to arts and cultural participation.
- Impact of your project on artists and cultural practitioners' capacity to engage with communities.
- Impact of your project on your capacity to reach underserved communities and groups and enhance access to underrepresented arts and cultural practices.

Feasibility (30%)

The assessment panel will consider the viability of the proposed project. Assessors may discuss the following:

- Appropriate levels of expertise and experience in place to ensure the successful completion of the project.
- Achievability of the proposed activities as determined by appropriate budgets, planning, and resource allocation.
- Level of environmental stewardship of the project's process, outcome, and consideration of long-term implications.
- Suitability of project in reference to history of artistic/curatorial activities and/or arts and cultural programming.
- The applicant's financial position, including appropriate management of surplus or deficit situations, reserve and/or restricted funds, and working capital ratio.
- Rigour of human resources practices in relation to providing fair remuneration, equitable employment, cultural competency and safety, and a safe, respectful work environment.

Assessment Process

Merit-based, independent peer assessment is the primary method of evaluation for all applications to this program. Assessment panels are comprised of individuals with a mix of broad professional knowledge, experience, geographical representation, and varied aesthetic, institutional and cultural viewpoints, including those from Indigenous perspectives.

The following process is used to evaluate applications to this program:

- The BC Arts Council receives online applications and reviews applications for eligibility;
- The assessment panel evaluates the applications using the assessment criteria outlined above and determines the level of funding and/or conditions on awards;
- The BC Arts Council informs each applicant of the assessment panel's decision in writing.

Applicants are encouraged to contact their program officer for feedback on their applications.

Notification of Awards

Decisions will be made within sixteen weeks of the application deadline. Notification will be sent via the online system to the contact linked to the application. Results cannot be requested in advance by telephone or email.

Payment of Awards

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

The BC Arts Council reserves the right to redistribute, delay, or suspend payments if the recipient:

- 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;
- Fails to comply with legal obligations; and/or
- Fails to respect the commitment to provide a safe and respectful work environment free from harassment, discrimination and sexual misconduct.

Final Reports

All recipients must submit a final report with the required documentation of the completed project to the BC Arts Council within 30 days of the completion date stated in the respective application. Final Report forms must be submitted through the online system.

Future applications to BC Arts Council programs will be ineligible if reporting requirements are not met.

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. The applicant's information will be shared in confidence with members of the adjudication jury. The names and locations of successful award recipients may be published, along with the amount of the award, in the Annual Report of the BC Arts Council as well as in various communications and promotional vehicles of the BC Arts Council and Government of British Columbia. Social Insurance Numbers are provided to Canada and Revenue Agency through the issuance of T4As.

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 print 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.

As well, funded applicants with a website are encouraged to add a link to the [BC Arts Council](#) website.

Contact Information

All applicants are encouraged to discuss the eligibility of their proposed request with the program officer prior to submission.

Sarah Todd – Program Officer
236 478-2528 | Sarah.Todd@gov.bc.ca

A full list of program officers is available on [our website](#).

For general information or further assistance, please contact:
250 356-1718 | bcartscouncil@gov.bc.ca

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