

# PROGRAM GUIDELINES 2020/21

## PROJECT ASSISTANCE FOR CREATIVE WRITERS

### 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 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

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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: Creative Writers

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**Project Assistance: Creative Writers** assists professional writers with the creation of specific projects. Eligible genres include drama, fiction, graphic novels, juvenile, non-fiction, poetry, and spoken word.

Awards are available to support the creation of new work or the re-writing of unpublished and unproduced manuscripts. Applications may be made by individuals or on behalf of a collaboration of two or more writers sharing creative control or authorship of a project.

Funding is provided at Level 1 or Level 2 according to the previous publishing accomplishments of the applicant.

## Application Deadline and Submission

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The deadline for submissions to Creative Writers is September 30, 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

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Assistance through this program is available to professional writers. For collaborative applications, each individual applicant must meet the eligibility criteria. Ineligible applications will not be reviewed.

Self-published writers who are accepted as Members of the Writers' Union of Canada or as full Members of the League of Canadian Poets may apply to the relevant level, as below.

An eligible applicant must:

- Be a Canadian citizen or Permanent Resident and have been a resident of British Columbia for at least 12 months immediately prior to the application deadline, and ordinarily reside in B.C. For more information, review our [Determining B.C. Residency](#) page.
- Be a professional creative writer who has completed all basic training (not necessarily in academic institutions) and is not enrolled in full-time studies.
- Have completed two or more years of artistic practice after basic training.
- Be applying for either the first or second time with a project; if an applicant has twice applied unsuccessfully for the same project, the proposal must be substantively changed to be considered.
- Compensate artists and arts professionals fairly in keeping with community contexts and industry standards within the field of practice, including adhering to international intellectual property rights standards and cultural ownership protocols, if applicable.
- Have submitted any outstanding final reports on previous BC Arts Council grants by the submission deadline date for this program.

### Eligibility Criteria - Level 1

For awards at Level 1, the applicant must have at least one book professionally published, or an equivalent defined as:

- Writers of fiction: 120 pages of fiction in literary magazines, recognized periodicals, or anthologies published by recognized professional publishing houses.
- Writers of nonfiction: 120 pages of articles in literary magazines, recognized periodicals, or anthologies published by recognized professional publishing houses.
- Writers of poetry: 40 pages of poetry in literary magazines, recognized periodicals, or anthologies published by recognized professional publishing houses.
- Playwrights: a minimum of two short works or one full-length work professionally produced, published or publicly workshopped.
- Spoken word artists: have received payment for public literary professional performances on at least three separate occasions.

### Eligibility Criteria - Level 2

For awards at Level 2, the applicant must be recognized as senior artists in their discipline and professional communities, and must have:

- Fiction, nonfiction and poetry writers: at least three books professionally published.
- Playwrights: a minimum of two full-length work professionally produced or published.
- Spoken word artists: an appropriate body of professionally recognized work.

## Eligible Costs

### Awards are available to support:

- Subsistence for the applicant. Recipients of awards are expected to devote the majority of their time to their practice for the duration of the project;
- Costs of materials of the project;
- Rental of equipment and/or space (as applicable);
- Funds paid to other professionals to help realize the project (e.g. editor);
- Travel expenses relevant to realizing the project.

## Exclusions

### Awards are not available to support:

- Projects previously assisted through this program;
- Sponsored or commissioned works;
- Research and writing of works with minimal original, critical, or analytical content such as indices, bibliographies, and instructional or technical books including textbooks, cookbooks, self-help books, and guidebooks;
- Scholarly or academic works;
- Scripts for film or television;
- Publication or promotion of books and periodicals;
- Projects substantially funded through other provincial government agencies;
- Expenses incurred prior to the application submission date;
- Capital expenditures (e.g. construction, renovation, or purchase of property or equipment).

## Grant Amounts

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Applicants should apply to the appropriate category based on the eligibility criteria as outlined above. There are two categories of awards:

**Level 1:** Awards up to \$7,500

**Level 2:** Awards up to \$15,000

Assistance through this program is possible only once per BC Arts Council fiscal year (April 1- March 31).

## Application Requirements

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All applicants are encouraged 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 detailed written statement (up to 750 words) that includes:
  - a precise description of the proposed project; and
  - a description of how an award will assist with the project. In this description consider responding to these questions: Why This Project? Why You? Why Now?
- A Curriculum Vitae (CV) of the applicant(s) that includes professional training and related artistic activities (maximum three pages per artist);
- A detailed publication history including titles, publishers, and dates of publication. A separate document is not required if included as part of the CV (maximum one page per artist);
- A balanced project budget using the budget table provided in the online application. Provide notes to the budget and indicate whether revenues are confirmed or pending;
- Letters from any partners or collaborators, if applicable, confirming the nature of their participation.

**Supporting Material:**

Applicants must submit all materials in a digital format and fill out the Portfolio Inventory Form within the online application. Please provide:

- For fiction and nonfiction writers, poets, and playwrights: a maximum of 20 pages (or equivalent word count) of recent writing samples in manuscript format. This sample should consist of:
  - writing from the proposed project (work in progress); and
  - a previously published (produced) sample that demonstrates the applicant's writing ability in the proposed genre.
- For spoken word artists:
  - a written sample of no more than 20 pages; and
  - up to 5 minutes of recorded performance documentation in audio or video format.

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

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that 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.

Please do not submit materials beyond what is requested in the guidelines; they will not be presented for assessment. Do not send hard copy materials. Supporting material will not be returned.

## Equity and Cultural Context

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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

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The two 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.

### **Artistic Contribution, Significance, and Impact (75%)**

The assessment panel will review the applicant's artistic achievement, contribution, creative processes, and impact by considering:

- Clarity, vitality, and strength of the proposed project demonstrated through the level of artistry and risk, originality and challenge, quality of the practice, and the development of the art form;
- Integrity of the creative processes including approaches to research, collaborative processes, contributors, source materials, and cultural contexts and protocols, as applicable;
- Potential benefits to the development of the applicant's practice, the applicant's own identified communities, and the professional arts community in B.C.;
- Applicant's artistic practice in the context of B.C.'s geographic, Indigenous, and cultural diversity, including acknowledgement of and engagement with the cultural context in which the work exists, cultural protocols, accessibility of space and content, and reconciliation, as applicable.

### **Feasibility (25%)**

The assessment panel will consider the viability of the proposed project by considering:

- Ability to realize the project artistically, based on previous successes and support material;
- Achievability of the project as determined by sound budgets, planning, and resource allocation.

## Assessment Process

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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

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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

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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.

Grants are taxable income and must be reported as such. Individuals receiving grants on their own behalf or on behalf of a collective are issued T4As for the year in which the grant payment is processed.

## Final Reports

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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

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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. 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

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

Michelle Benjamin – Program Officer  
236 478-2582 | [michelle.benjamin@gov.bc.ca](mailto:michelle.benjamin@gov.bc.ca)

Walter Quan – Program Officer  
778 698-3527 | [walter.quan@gov.bc.ca](mailto:walter.quan@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](mailto:bcartscouncil@gov.bc.ca)

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