

PROGRAM GUIDELINES 2020/21

PROJECT ASSISTANCE: Visual Arts Organizations

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 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



Program Impacts and Changes Due to COVID-19

The BC Arts Council recognizes the 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 as posted on the BC Arts Council website. Any changes to the guidelines made after the original posting will be clearly highlighted.
- Restrictions are in place on funding for activities that involve travel and/or in-person gatherings over 50. Details are posted on our [dedicated COVID-19 update page](#).
- The protocols in response to COVID-19 may change, and your application will be assessed with this in mind. To the best of your ability, please clearly state how you are planning for your project to respond to any changes that may occur.
- If your application is successful and you need to adjust your project to respond to unforeseen developments due to the COVID-19 pandemic, please contact your program officer. They 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 [COVID 19 update page](#). Updates will also be announced on our [Facebook](#), and [Twitter](#) accounts.

About Project Assistance: Visual Arts Organizations

Projects Assistance: Visual Arts Organizations supports the development, enrichment, and creation of new or unique public programming and documentation, including exhibitions, dissemination projects, artists' residencies, exploration of new forms, and audience development.

Application Deadline and Submission

The deadline for submissions to Project Assistance: Visual Arts Organizations is October 15, 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 Arts and Cultural Organizations and Arts or Curatorial Collectives. Ineligible applications will not be reviewed.

To be eligible, you must:

- Be based in British Columbia and offered programming activity in B.C. for a minimum of one year.
- Compensate arts and cultural practitioners 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.
- Not currently receiving Operating Assistance from the BC Arts Council.
- Have submitted all required final reports on previous BC Arts Council grants as of the deadline date for this program.

An Arts and Cultural Organization must also:

- Be an arts or cultural organization registered and in good standing as a non-profit society or community service co-op in the Province of British Columbia for at least one year;

OR

- Be a visual arts organization operated by a local government or First Nation in B.C. with a community-based board of management that sets policy for the organization's public programs and services;

OR

- Be a visual arts organization operated by a public post-secondary institution in B.C. that offers public programming by visual arts professionals in a dedicated gallery facility with regular ongoing access to the non-academic community;

An Arts or Curatorial Collective must also:

- Be readily identified as a professional independent collective of B.C. visual arts professionals.
- Consist of three or more artists or cultural practitioners who are professionally active in visual arts.

- Each member of the independent collective must have a minimum of two years of professional practice in their field, following basic training, and must have a demonstrated body of previous work as an individual practitioner, and may not be a fulltime student.
- Each member of the independent collective 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, please review our [Determining B.C. Residency page](#).
- Have a member of the collective act as a key contact person for the application. The key contact person will be held responsible for the application and, if it is successful, for receiving the award on behalf of the collective and submitting the final report.

Exclusions

Project Assistance is not available for:

- Operating costs
- Project phases or activity that have begun prior to the submission date
- Project/budget deficits
- Capital expenditures (construction, renovation, or purchase of property or equipment)
- Fundraising activities
- Start-up costs or seed money
- Feasibility studies
- For-profit entities
- International travel costs of foreign artists visiting British Columbia
- Travel to international symposia
- Conferences or competitions
- Creation or preparation of work for competitions
- Projects that are secondary to other purposes (e.g. fundraising events, conventions, or family, religious or community celebrations or anniversaries)
- Subsistence to arts and cultural practitioners
- The cost of producing recordings
- Projects or activities funded through other programs of the BC Arts Council or its third-party delivery partners, including First People's Cultural Council, BC Touring Council, or Creative BC

Grant Amounts

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

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

Application Requirements

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:

- Details outlining the proposed project including:
 - a summary description of the proposed project;
 - rationale and objectives underlying the project; and
 - project timeline and/or work plan.
- A summary of the applicant's history of development, creation, production, and/or dissemination of their discipline in British Columbia, including any appropriate press or critical documentation (do not submit testimonials or reference letters), to a maximum of three (3) items;
- Biography for each member of the project's creative team; maximum 250 words each;
- 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;
- An operating budget for the fiscal year in which your proposed project takes place; and
- Letters from partners or collaborators, if applicable, confirming the nature of their participation

For applicants that have not previously received funding through this program only:

- Two letters of reference from established arts and cultural practitioners familiar with the applicant's work.

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.

Additional Requirements for Organizations

The following documentation must be provided through your Organizational Profile and must be updated at minimum once per year:

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

Financial Statements must include:

- 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 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 reserves 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.

BC Arts Council Grant for last fiscal year	Minimum Required Documentation <i>All Financial Statements must be approved by the Board of Directors and signed by the person preparing them (i.e. bookkeeper/accountant/ financial officer) and two Board members.</i>
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

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, along with their relative weight. Applicants should discuss in their application how the proposed project fulfils each area of assessment and how the project may address the strategic priorities and values of the BC Arts Council including those outlined in the Equity and Cultural Context as above.

ARTISTIC CONTRIBUTION AND SIGNIFICANCE (40%)

The assessment panel will evaluate the project's overall artistic achievement, contribution and creative processes by considering:

- The strength of artistic vision of the project as demonstrated through programming, editorial or curatorial choices,
- The quality of proposed activities demonstrated through the level of artistry and risk, originality, production values, and overall contribution to arts and culture in B.C.; and
- The integrity of the creative processes, including approaches to research; interpretation; collaborations; contributors; source and physical materials; and cultural contexts and protocols.

ENGAGEMENT AND IMPACT (30%)

The assessment panel will evaluate the project's engagement with, and impact on, the province's arts and cultural community and the applicant's own identified communities, by considering:

- The impact of the work on the identified communities as supported by effective audience development, visitor outreach, marketing plans, community engagement strategies, and educational programming;
- The level of commitment to the development of B.C. artists, cultural practitioners and arts community; and
- The ability to engage and sustainably benefit historically underserved communities and their artistic practices, including meaningful engagement with diverse demographics, accessibility of space and content, and reconciliation.

FEASIBILITY (30%)

The assessment panel will evaluate the viability of the project by considering:

- The achievability of the proposed activities as determined by sound budgets, planning, resource allocation, and the applicant's overall financial health;
- The role of artistic leadership, including management and the board, as applicable, in fostering a healthy, sustainable work environment;
- The level of experience in realizing comparable projects at a professional standard.
- The rigour of human resources practices, in relation to providing fair remuneration, equitable employment, cultural competency, cultural safety, and a safe and 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 as well as the organizational and governance leadership contacts provided in the organizational profile (as applicable). 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.

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

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 must discuss the eligibility of their proposed request with the appropriate program officer prior to submission.

Sarah Todd – Program Officer, Visual Arts Organizations
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:

Telephone: 250 356-1718

Email: bcartscouncil@gov.bc.ca

Program guidelines are reviewed annually.

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