

PROFESSIONAL ARTS FESTIVALS

Project Assistance Program Guidelines 2022/23

Acknowledgement

The BC Arts Council acknowledges it carries out its work on the land of Indigenous nations throughout British Columbia. We are grateful for the continuing relationships with Indigenous people that develop through our work together. We acknowledge and raise our hands to the ɫəkʷəŋən (Lkwungen) people, known today as the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, on whose ancestral lands we operate our main offices.

About the BC Arts Council

For more information about the BC Arts Council's mandate, vision, values, and strategic directions visit the [About](#) and [Priorities](#) sections on the BC Arts Council website.

In the [Extending Foundations: Action Plan for 2022-2024](#), 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 conducts its own operations and funding activities in accordance with legislation such as the [BC Human Rights Code](#), [Accessible Canada Act](#), the [Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act](#), and the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#), as well as the [Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#).

In addition to the integration of equity criteria across all funding programs, consideration will be given to designated priority groups identified by the BC Arts Council. These groups have been identified in order to achieve our strategic direction commitments and correct funding gaps illuminated through recent evaluations and consultations. The designated priority groups consist of applicants who are:

- Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, or Inuit);
- Deaf or experience disability;
- Black or persons/people of colour;
- Located outside greater Vancouver or the capital region.

Organizations whose statement of purpose includes support for arts and cultural practitioners as listed above are also considered a designated priority group.

About Project Assistance: Professional Arts Festivals

Project Assistance: Professional Arts Festivals supports the development, enrichment, and creation of new or unique public programming through **a specific project, component, or programming initiative within an existing festival**. A festival is an event that includes related arts and cultural activities and programming presented over a continuous period of more than one day. Awards through this program are intended to encourage specific art forms or practices, increase the availability of professional arts in the community, and support the artistic programming of festivals. Awards are not available to support a festival in its entirety.

When and How to Apply

The deadlines for submission are May 31, 2022 and October 15, 2022 no later than 11:59 p.m.

The BC Arts Council office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday.

Applications must be submitted via the [online grant system](#). Applicants must ensure that all information (including address verification) and documentation in their online profile is up to date before submitting an application.

New applicants [must register and create a profile](#) in the online system. **Once submitted, it may take up to four days to process your registration.** New registrants will be notified once their registration is processed and they are able to access grant applications.

Ensure the email address bc.artscouncil.noreply@gov.bc.ca is on your safe senders list and check your spam folders.

Application Assistance

Individuals who self-identify as Deaf or having a disability, and organizations with a primary mandate to serve Deaf or disability arts practice are eligible for the BC Arts Council's Accessibility programs:

[Application Assistance](#) – pays for support services for creating and submitting grant applications.

[Access Support](#) – additional funding that supports access costs associated with creating or developing a project funded by a BC Arts Council grant.

These programs do not provide funding for audience accessibility or day-to-day access costs outside of the scope of a project. Accessibility requests are confidential and will not be part of assessment panels evaluating grant applications. Contact Accessibility Coordinator Clayton Baraniuk at 250-978-9839 or clayton.baraniuk@gov.bc.ca to request assistance.

Find out more about accessibility support at bcartscouncil.ca/accessibility

Question and Answer Sessions

Applicants are encouraged to attend a Question and Answer session.

Join BC Arts Council staff for an online information session including an overview of this program and an opportunity to ask questions. Session details are posted on the [BC Arts Council website](#), and [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages. If you have further questions, please contact program staff.

Who Can Apply

Submissions from applicants who do not meet eligibility criteria will not be forwarded for assessment. **To be eligible, an applicant must:**

- Provide arts and cultural programming or service to the arts and culture sector in B.C. and have done so for a minimum of one year.
- Engage professionals in artistic, curatorial, administrative or project leadership.

- Fairly compensate artists, arts and cultural practitioners, technicians, Elders, and Knowledge Keepers. Compensation must align with project and community contexts and industry standards within the field of practice, including adhering to international intellectual property rights standards and cultural ownership protocols.
- Adhere to the Criminal Records Review Act which requires that people who work with or may have unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults must undergo a criminal record check by the Criminal Records Review Program.
- Not currently receive Operating Assistance from the BC Arts Council.
- Have completed and submitted any overdue final reports on previous BC Arts Council grants by the submission deadline for this program.

Organizational applicants must also:

- Be registered and in good standing as a non-profit society or community service co-op in B.C. for at least one fiscal year prior to application with a dedicated arts and cultural purpose.

OR

- Be an Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit) community organization or Indigenous government in B.C., offering dedicated arts and culture activities.

OR

- Be operated by a local government or public post-secondary institution in B.C. for at least one fiscal year prior to application, with a community-based board of management that sets policy for the organization's programs and services, and that offers public programming by professional arts and cultural practitioners.

Arts or Curatorial Collective applicants must also:

- Be established and readily identified as a collective of independent B.C. artists, curators, museum or cultural practitioners, consisting of three or more individuals who are professionally active in their field of practice, **each of whom must:**
 - have a minimum of two years of professional practice in their field, following basic training.
 - have a demonstrated body of previous work as an individual practitioner.
 - be a Canadian citizen or Permanent Resident.
 - have been a resident of B.C. for at least 12 months immediately prior to the application deadline, and ordinarily reside in B.C. See [Determining B.C. Residency page](#).
- Have a demonstrated history of creating or presenting work as a collective and have a clear commitment to a current practice.
- Apply under the name of an individual member of the collective who acts as the key contact person and be listed as the submitting representative within the online grant system. If the application is successful, this person receives payment of the award on behalf of the group, be issued a T4A, and be responsible for submitting the final report.
- Note: Collectives are encouraged to confirm their eligibility with program staff prior to submitting an application.

Exclusions

Awards are not available to support:

- A series of events or recurring programming.
- Operating costs.
- Project phases or activities that have begun prior to the submission deadline.
- Project or budget deficits and contingency funds.
- [Capital expenditures](#) (construction, renovation, or purchase of property or equipment).
- Feasibility studies, start-up costs, or seed money.
- Fundraising activities, conferences, conventions, or projects where arts are secondary to other activities (e.g., competitions, or family, religious, or community celebrations or anniversaries).
- Subsistence to artists or cultural practitioners.
- Costs of producing commercial recordings or demo reels.
- Private or for-profit entities (except in the case of for-profit book publishing companies).
- Projects or activities funded through other BC Arts Council programs including BC Arts Council funds delivered through third-party delivery partners: First Peoples' Cultural Council, BC Touring Council, or Creative BC.

Ineligible applications will not be forwarded for assessment.

Grant Amounts

The request amount to this program:

- Must be 50% or less of the total eligible project budget; or
- May be up to 65% of the total eligible project budget for projects from organizations that align with the BC Arts Council's designated priority groups as stated above.

Applicant contributions to the project budget can be composed of both cash and in-kind contributions. The project budget must balance in-kind revenues with in-kind expenses.

There is no maximum request amount, but grants typically range from \$5,000 to \$30,000. Requests for larger grants will need to articulate a clear rationale for why the project requires a higher amount. Visit the [BC Arts Council Recipients](#) page to review a list of previously successful applicants and the range of awards for this program.

Applicants may submit only one application per discipline per intake. Applicants may apply to both Spring and Fall intakes, however an organization that receives an award in the Spring will not be eligible to apply in the Fall. An organization may receive only one award per discipline each fiscal year (April 1 to March 31).

Applicants are encouraged to submit realistic proposals for the funds required to feasibly carry out the project. Grants may be awarded for less than requested, however the BC Arts Council endeavours to support funding successful applications at 100% of the request when possible.

What is Needed for the Application

The applicant is responsible for submitting a complete application. The BC Arts Council will not contact applicants to address errors or missing requirements. Eligible applications are assessed as submitted.

A complete online application must include:

- Details outlining the proposed project including:
 - a summary of the proposed project, including rationale, objectives, and outcomes.
 - project timeline or work plan.
 - a biography for each member of the project's team (maximum 100 words each).
- A balanced project budget using the budget table provided in the online application. Include notes on the budget and indicate whether revenues are confirmed or pending.
- All required support material as per the list below.

Support Material

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

Do not submit material beyond what is requested; it will not be presented for assessment.

Required support material includes:

- Letters from partners or collaborators, if applicable, confirming the nature of their participation (maximum two letters, one page each). **Do not include general letters of support.**
- An operating budget for the applicant's fiscal year in which the proposed project takes place (organizations only).
- Examples of previous work relevant to the proposed project, **up to a maximum of*:**
 - **5 images or 5 minutes total of video or audio**, with identified excerpts to be viewed; OR
 - **3 pages of critical writing or documentation** (do not submit testimonials or reference letters).

***NOTE:** Items in excess of the listed maximums, including multiple links to materials within a single uploaded document, will not be reviewed. Other examples of previous work, such as publications, must be discussed with the program officer prior to submission to determine whether they are appropriate.

For applicants who have not previously received funding through this program:

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

Additional Information Needed from Organizations

To apply, the applicant's online Organizational Profile must be up to date and include:

- A current list of the organization's board of directors, editorial advisory board, trustees, or board of management, including their board position, occupation/expertise, and start date.
- A current list of administrative and artistic/editorial staff or significant contractors, including name, position, and employment status (e.g., permanent; part-time).

- A copy of the constitution if the applicant is a not-for-profit organization, OR a statement of the primary purpose of the organization for all other applicants.
- Signed financial statements for the two most recently completed fiscal years, as per the table below.

The type of Financial Statements required is based on the recipient's most recent BC Arts Council Operating Assistance or Project Assistance (discipline specific) award. For new applicants, internally prepared financial statements are acceptable. BC Arts 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 or Indigenous governments 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.

Previous BC Arts Council Grant (as per above)	Minimum Required Documentation
Up to \$10,000	Internally prepared financial statements
\$10,001 - \$25,000	Independently prepared financial statements: Notice to Reader
\$25,001 - \$100,000	Independently prepared financial statements: Review Engagement/Compilation Engagement Report
Greater than \$100,000	Independently prepared financial statements: Audit

Financial Statements must include:

- Balance Sheet, Income Statement, and Notes.
- An itemized list of grants identified by funder, either in the income statement or attached schedule.
- A breakdown of operating net assets, distinguishing between unrestricted net and capital assets.
- Signatures of the preparer and of two Board members affirming Board approval.

How Applications Will Be Assessed

The areas of assessment are described below along with their relative weight. Applicants should discuss how the project fulfils each relevant area of assessment. Consideration will be given to designated priority groups identified by the BC Arts Council as stated above.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS (10%)

The assessment panel will evaluate the:

- Project activity alignment with the BC Arts Council's priorities of Indigenous Arts and Culture; Equity, Diversity and Access; and Regional Arts.

ARTISTIC CONTRIBUTION AND SIGNIFICANCE (40%)

The assessment panel will evaluate the project's contribution and significance by considering the:

- Strength and clarity of artistic vision as demonstrated through programming, editorial, or curatorial choices.
- Quality of proposed activities, level of artistry, originality, production values, and overall contribution to arts and culture in B.C.
- Integrity of the creative processes, including ethical approaches to research and collaboration; use of source and physical materials; ownership and other cultural protocols, as applicable.

ENGAGEMENT AND IMPACT (30%)

The assessment panel will evaluate the project's engagement and impact by considering the:

- Degree of impact on the organization's identified communities as evidenced by effective community engagement strategies, programming, audience development, outreach, and marketing.
- Degree of impact on the development of B.C. artists, cultural practitioners, and arts communities.
- Level of engagement and sustainable benefits to diverse and/or historically underserved communities and their artistic practices.
- Level of accessibility and safety of engagement, including but not limited to physical spaces, cultural safety, affordability, and support for diverse participants.
- Consideration given to matters of cultural appropriation, representation, equitable and ethical collaboration processes, and appropriate protocols and practices, as applicable to the project.

FEASIBILITY (20%)

The assessment panel will evaluate the project's feasibility by considering the:

- Achievability of the proposed activities as determined by sound budgets, planning, resource allocation, and the applicant's overall financial health and capacity.
- Role of artistic leadership, including management and the board, as applicable, in fostering a healthy, sustainable work environment.
- Level of experience in realizing comparable projects at a professional standard.
- Rigour of human resources practices related to providing fair remuneration, equitable employment, cultural competency, cultural safety, and 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 broad professional knowledge, experience, geographical representation, and diverse aesthetic, institutional, and cultural viewpoints, including those from Indigenous perspectives.

The following process is used to evaluate applications:

- The BC Arts Council receives online applications and reviews each one for eligibility.
- The assessment panel evaluates the applications using the assessment criteria outlined above and determines the level of funding and/or conditions on payment of awards.
- The BC Arts Council informs each applicant of the assessment panel's decision in writing. Applicants are encouraged to contact program staff for feedback after results have been released.

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 online application, and to the organizational and governance leadership contacts provided in the organizational profile (as applicable). Results cannot be requested in advance.

Ensure the email address **bc.artscouncil.noreply@gov.bc.ca** is on your safe sender list and check your spam folders.

Payment of Awards

All award payments 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.
- Fails to respect the commitment to provide a safe and respectful workplace 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

Recipients must submit a final report with the required documentation of the completed project to the BC Arts Council within 30 days of the Project End Date in the application. Final Reports must be submitted through the online system.

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

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 assessment panel. 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 Revenue Agency through the issuance of T4As.

Recognition of Assistance

In recognition of funding, the support of the BC Arts Council and the Government 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.

Funded applicants with a website are encouraged to add a link to the [BC Arts Council](#) website.

Contact Information

A full list of program staff 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.