

OPERATING ASSISTANCE: LITERARY ARTS

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 reaffirms its commitment to principles of reconciliation, equity, diversity, inclusion and access 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 BC Act](#), [Accessible Canada Act](#), the [Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act](#) and Action Plan, 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 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 people of colour; or
- Located in regional areas (outside [greater Vancouver or the capital region](#)).

Organizations whose statement of purpose includes support for and who are led by arts and cultural practitioners rooted in communities as listed above are considered a designated priority group.

About Operating Assistance: Literary Arts

Operating Assistance: Literary Arts provides funding to support activities of professional, non-profit organizations in B.C. that provide an annual artistic and/or editorial program encompassing any form of artistic expression or social, cultural, or intellectual commentary or inquiry through:

- regular publication in print or digital form;

- presentation, programming, and/or development of writing-based arts and artists.

The Operating Assistance program supports an organization's operations over a funding cycle of two years. Applicants must meet the specific eligibility requirements within these guidelines.

When and How to Apply

*****UPDATED*** Applications can be submitted through our online system at any point before September 15, 2022, no later than 11:59 p.m. We are unable to accept any applications after this date. If you have any questions, contact a Program Advisor.** The BC Arts Council office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday.

Submit your application through the Grant Management System. Ensure that all information (including address) and documentation in your organization's online profile is up to date before submitting an application.

New applicants [must register and create a profile](#) in the online system. **Once the registration request is submitted, it may take up to four business days to process your request.** BC Arts Council will email you once your registration is processed and you 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.

Applicants can submit a portion of their application by way of an audio or video recording. See instructions within the application on this option.

Application Assistance

Organizations with a primary purpose to serve Deaf or disability arts practices may be eligible for the BC Arts Council's Application Assistance, which pays for support services for creating and submitting grant applications.

Application Assistance 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

Who Can Apply

If your organization does not meet the eligibility criteria, your application will not be forwarded for assessment. **To be eligible, an organization must:**

- Be an arts and culture organization, 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 culture purpose.

OR

- Be a professional arts periodical publisher operated by an accredited B.C. post-secondary institution with an advisory editorial board that sets policy for programs and services. Both

print and digital periodical publishers may apply and must meet the specific eligibility criteria for the relevant form.

AND

- Provide ongoing literary arts programming, service, and/or professional development opportunities to the arts and culture sector in B.C. and have done so for a minimum of one year with a commitment to continued operations. Some examples include a reading series, a writer in residence program, or an ongoing writing workshop.

OR

- Publish an eligible periodical in B.C. and have done so for a minimum of one year with a commitment to continued operations.

AND

- Engage professionals in artistic, curatorial, editorial, administrative, or project leadership;
- Fairly compensate artists, arts and cultural practitioners, technicians, Elders, and Knowledge Keepers. Compensation must align with community contexts or sector 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;
- Have received **at least one Project Assistance grant** from the BC Arts Council within the past seven years. Grant programs that fulfill this eligibility criteria include Professional Project Assistance; Arts-Based Community Development; and Arts Impact Grants. Grant programs that do not fulfill this eligibility criteria include, but are not limited to: Pivot Program; Arts Infrastructure; Resilience Supplements; Community Arts Festivals; Project Assistance: Community Arts Organizations; Touring; Early Career Development; Youth Engagement; or Co-op Placement.

In addition to the above eligibility criteria, organizations should have stability in current operations, both administratively and financially. Stability would be demonstrated through:

- having at least one staff person (part-time or full-time) that maintains consistency in operations and programming;
- ongoing and diverse sources of revenues outside of BC Arts Council programs;
- ability to plan programming and activities up to two years into the future; and
- the capacity to compile annual financial and statistical information.

An eligible arts periodical publisher must also:

- have published at least two issues in the year preceding the application deadline (print periodicals) or have maintained a publishing program and had two issues available for at least 12 months before the application deadline (digital periodicals);
- operate year-round and publish on a regular, clearly communicated schedule, and publish at least two editions or issues per calendar year;
- produce periodicals that:
 - feature the first publication of original content;
 - prioritize work by writers and artists based in British Columbia or Canada;

- include content created by more than one person;
- provide clear submission guidelines and editorial selection processes;
- have and honour a clearly articulated policy on the use of contributors' work and intellectual property;
- clearly identify, on the masthead or equivalent, who is responsible for editorial processes and decisions;
- have identified the target audience and developed an appropriate distribution plan.

Print periodicals must:

- be printed on paper;
- have a minimum average of 24 pages per issue over a one-year period;
- have paid circulation of a minimum of 20% of the copies printed.

Digital periodicals must:

- have paid subscription access to content, maintaining an average of 100 subscribers over a period of 6 months.

OR

- have scheduled email delivery of content, maintaining a minimum average of 300 registered email recipients over a period of 6 months.

Arts periodicals published in any written language or combination of written languages are eligible for assistance if all other eligibility criteria are met.

Confirmation of eligibility and intention to apply should be established with a Program Advisor prior to submitting an application. Ineligible applications will not be forwarded for assessment.

Exclusions

Operating assistance is not available to support:

- budget deficits;
- [capital expenditures](#) (construction, renovation, or purchase of property or equipment);
- start-up costs or seed money;
- Organizations that solely operate venues or facilities without the primary purpose of artistic production; or
- private or for-profit entities.

Assistance is also not available to support periodicals or activities that:

- do not pay industry-level fees to writers, artists, and other professional contributors;
- primarily offer news reporting, current events coverage, or lifestyle content;
- advocate for political organizations or causes;
- are academic or scholarly journals;
- promote a commercial enterprise;
- are in-house newsletters or magazines that publish material of interest to a membership; or
- are principally devoted to the work of students or other non-professional writers.

Grant Amounts

The minimum grant amount is \$20,000. There is no maximum grant amount.

As part of the [Extending Foundations: Action Plan for 2022-2024](#), the BC Arts Council is working towards more equitable distribution of funding within its stable budget.

Priority for requests for increases to past grant amounts will be given to organizations aligned with designated priority groups as stated above. A clear rationale for why additional funds are needed must be provided.

Organizations that are placed on Concerned Status under Council's Fair Notice Policy may be subject to reductions of up to 20%.

What is Needed for the Application

You are responsible for submitting a complete application. The BC Arts Council will not contact applicants to address errors or missing requirements, other than as required to determine eligibility. Eligible applications are assessed as submitted.

A complete online application must include:

- Your organization information, including history, mission, values, main activity(ies), COVID-19 impacts, organizational capacity, governance, and facilities;
- A programming overview addressing questions based on this program's assessment criteria; and
- All required support material as per the list below.

An application from a periodical publisher must also include:

- A statement of editorial policy and current role in Canadian literary publishing;
- A summary of the overall publishing program for the proposed year;
- A completed Summary of Publications for Current and Projected fiscal years; and
- A completed Circulation and Financial Data form.

Support Material

Review and adhere to the [Upload Requirements for Support Material](#).

Required support material includes*:

- Up to 5 current planning and policy documents, such as strategic plans, human resource policies, anti-racism policies, or cultural safety policies;
 - This should include documents detailing the current approach to equity across your organization, if available; if stand-alone policy documents are not available, you will be provided with an opportunity to describe.
- A list of writers and/or artists presented or published in the previous year;
- A blank sample author, artist, and/or contributor contract.

A periodical publisher must also provide:

- A fee schedule for contributors;

- Six print copies of at least two selected issues published over the past year OR specific URLs for digital periodical content over the past year.

Excess support material, including multiple links to materials within a single uploaded document, will not be reviewed.

Additional Information

To apply, your organization'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.
- voluntary self-identification as a designated priority group, in order to be considered a designated priority group.
- signed financial statements for the two most recently completed fiscal years, as per below.

UPDATED SECTION **Financial Statements**

For all applicants, Financial Statements must include:

- Balance sheet, income statement and notes, following standard accounting formatting.
- 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.

For applicants currently receiving Operating Assistance, Financial Statements required are based on the previous Operating Assistance grant received, as per the table below.

For applicants not currently receiving Operating Assistance, Financial Statements requested are based on the single largest grant received in the organization's previous two fiscal years, excluding Resilience Supplements, Pivot and Arts Infrastructure Program grants. If you did not receive any applicable grants in your previous two fiscal years, internally prepared financial statements are acceptable. Applicants not currently receiving Operating Assistance will not be required to restate already completed previous year Financial Statements into higher level reporting types.

For organizations operating under the umbrella of a local government, an Indigenous government, or a 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, and notes indicating if the applicant entity may accrue assets, surpluses or deficits from one year to the next.

BC Arts Council staff reserves the right to request audited financial statements if deemed appropriate, regardless of the amount of the applicant's previous funding.

Previous BC Arts Council Grant Received (as per above)	Minimum Documentation
Up to \$15,000	Internally prepared Financial Statements
\$15,001 - \$40,000	Independently prepared Financial Statements: Notice to Reader/ Compilation Engagement Report
\$40,001 - \$100,000	Independently prepared Financial Statements: Review Engagement
Greater than \$100,000	Independently prepared Financial Statements: Audit

How Applications Will Be Assessed

In [Extending Foundations: Action Plan for 2022-2024](#) the BC Arts Council commits to placing reconciliation, equity, diversity, inclusion and access at the centre of its activities, with the intention to rebalance historic funding distribution and modernize peer assessment. Assessment criteria are designed to speak to the diversity of ways organizations across the province can be achieving and contributing. The areas of assessment are described below along with their relative weight. While your submission should address how your activities fulfil each area of assessment, you should expect to be stronger in some areas than in others.

RECONCILIATION, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND ACCESS (30%)

The assessment panel will evaluate the organization's alignment with the priorities of Extending Foundations by considering:

- The relevance of the organization within equity-deserving communities;
- The organization's contribution to and established presence in communities located outside major urban centres, as applicable;
- The level at which the organization shows commitment to advancing opportunities for and service to equity-deserving and under-represented communities;
- The organizations engagement with reconciliation, as applicable;
- The significance of steps the organization has taken to pursue equity, diversity, inclusion, and access depending on its region, community served, size, and mandate; and
- The strength of the organization's policies in upholding equity in its human resources, governance, and operational practices.

ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL CONTRIBUTION, ENGAGEMENT AND IMPACT (40%)

The assessment panel will evaluate the organization's overall artistic and cultural contribution, engagement, and impact by considering:

- The relevance of the organization to the communities it serves, as demonstrated through programming, audience development, outreach, editorial, or curatorial choices;
- How well the organization can identify the communities it serves;
- The contribution to the development of the art form(s) and cultural practices in B.C.;
- The level of artistry, risk, originality and production values achieved in programming, in accordance with the organization's purpose;
- The impact on and contribution to the development of B.C. artists, cultural practitioners, and artistic communities;

- The integrity of the creative and artistic processes; including research, collaborative processes, the ethical treatment of contributors, and source/physical materials;
- The level of accessibility and engagement, including but not limited to physical spaces, cultural safety, affordability, and support for diverse participants or those who experience barriers or disability; and
- The effectiveness of practices that eliminate cultural appropriation and support meaningful representation, using appropriate protocols and practices.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY AND GOVERNANCE (30%)

The assessment panel will evaluate the sustainability and resilience of the organization by considering:

- The relevance of the organization's governance, leadership and organizational structures to the organization's purpose, community, lifecycle and size;
- The achievability of the proposed programs as determined by sound budgets, planning, resource allocation, and the organization's overall financial health;
- The role of leadership, management, and the board in good governance and fostering inclusion and a healthy, sustainable workplace;
- The rigour of human resources practices, in relation to providing fair remuneration, professional development, equitable employment, cultural competency, cultural safety, and a safe and respectful workplace; and
- Organizational ability to negotiate change, adapt to new circumstances, and tolerate risk.

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:

- Staff receives online applications and reviews each one for eligibility;
- A review is then completed through an equity advisory structure;
- The assessment panel then evaluates the applications using the assessment criteria outlined above and recommends the level of funding and conditions on payment of awards;
- Funding allocations are approved; and
- Staff informs each applicant of the final decision in writing.

Applicants are encouraged to contact 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.

Funding Status

Organizations funded through the Operating Assistance Program 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 are placed on Concerned Status under Council's Fair Notice Policy will:

- Be required to submit a complete application on an annual basis; and
- Be subject to annual adjustments to grant amounts, including reductions.

Payment of Awards

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.

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 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, BC Arts Council and the Government of British Columbia's support 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.

The BC Arts Council encourages funded applicants to add a link to the [BC Arts Council](#) website.

Contact Information

A full list of program staff is available on [the BC Arts Council's website](#).

For general information or further assistance, please contact:

Telephone: (250) 356-1718

Email: bcartscouncil@gov.bc.ca

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