

Designated Priority Groups and Equity Data Tool - FAQs for Organizations

Q: What are the new Designated Priority Groups Questionnaire and Equity Data Tool tabs that are showing up in my Organization Profile?

The BC Arts Council has introduced changes to the organizational profile section within the Grants Management System by adding tabs for a Designated Priority Groups Questionnaire and Equity Data Tool. These changes support [Extending Foundations: Action Plan 2022-2024](#) and our [Designated Priority Groups policy](#). The two new tabs will allow for the designation of organizations who identify as Designated Priority Groups and the collection of equity-based data to better support program and policy development.

At present, these changes have only been made for applicants with an Arts and Culture organization type profile but will be rolled out for all applicants over the coming weeks.

Q: How do I complete the Designated Priority Groups and equity-based questions in my Organization Profile in the Grant Management System?

There are two sections for organizations in our Grant Management System (GMS) where you can provide equity-based information:

1. Designated Priority Groups Questionnaire
2. Equity Data Tool

Steps on how to complete these sections are available below.

The **Designated Priority Groups Questionnaire** will give organizations the opportunity to be considered for strategic measures, including priority funding under the Designated Priority Groups Policy. This section is mandatory if your organization wants to be considered for priority funding.

The **Equity Data Tool** will collect data across organizations related to representation and equity within our programs and across the sector. We encourage all organizations, regardless of Designated Priority Group status to complete the Equity Data Tool.

More information about Designated Priority Groups can be found on the [Designated Priority Groups](#) policy page.

STEP 1 | Complete the Designated Priority Group Questionnaire:

1. Sign in to the [Grant Management System](#) and go to your Organization Profile
2. Click on the *Designated Priority Groups* tab

3. After reading the introduction, select *YES* if you agree to complete the Designated Priority Groups Questionnaire OR select *NO* if you do not want to complete the questionnaire. If you select *NO*, go to STEP 2
4. If you select *YES*, answer all the question below and move onto **STEP 2**

STEP 2 | Complete the Equity Data Tool:

1. Click on the *Equity Data Tool* tab
2. Please answer the questions that are most relevant to your organization. You are not required to answer every question, however we encourage you to fill out as much of the form as possible and prioritize starred (*) questions.

Q. Who can complete this information?

As of July 30, 2022, only organizations with an Arts and Culture Organization type profile will be able to complete the Designated Priority Group Questionnaire and Equity Data Tool. This is to support the intake for Operating Assistance which closes September 15, 2022. Tools to support the Designated Priority Group policy for individuals, collectives and all other organization types, will be rolled out over the coming weeks.

Q. If I already have a profile in the BC Arts Council's grant management system do I need to fill this out?

Yes. If your organization already has a profile registered in the system, you will need to update the information in order to complete grant applications.

Any organization registering for the first time will also need to fill out the same questions.

Once you have filled this information out, you will only need to update it if your information changes.

Q. What are the new sections in the profile?

There were two new registration sections added in August 2022:

1. Designated Priority Group Questionnaire
2. Equity data collection tool for organizations.

Many organizations will also still need to add their statement of purposes – which was part of the last registration/profile update.

Q. What is a designated priority group?

The BC Arts Council has identified designated priority groups. The designated priority groups consist of applicants and arts and cultural practitioners who are:

- Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit) Peoples;
- Deaf or experience disability;
- Black or people of colour (see details below);
- Located in regional areas (see details below).

Additional details:

People of colour include, but are not limited to: Chinese, South Asian, Black, Filipino, Latin American / Latinx, Southeast Asian, Arab, West Asian, Korean, Japanese, person of mixed ethno-cultural origin, or other communities of colour.

Regional areas, for the purposes of BC Arts Council grants and funding priorities, are considered as those outside greater Vancouver and the capital region.

These groups are based on equity commitments made through strategic directions outlined in the [New Foundations](#) strategic plan and funding gaps identified through recent evaluations. For more information, please review the [Designated Priority Groups policy](#) on our website

Q. My organization isn't part of or serving a designated priority group – why do I have to fill it in?

We ask all organizations to indicate whether they wish to complete the Designated Priority Group Questionnaire with a **YES** or **NO**. This will let us know that the opportunity has been considered and no further outreach is necessary.

Q. Why do all organizations have to also fill out the Equity Data Tool?

The Equity Data Tool is optional for most organizations, except those who wish to be considered as a Designated Priority Group. However, we encourage ALL organizations, regardless of Designated Priority Group status to complete the Equity Data Tool. This will provide the BC Arts Council with data related to representation and equity within our programs and across the sector.

Organizations that choose to complete the Designated Priority Groups Questionnaire must fill out the Equity Data Tool to validate an organization's alignment with designated priority groups criteria.

Q. My organization is a designated priority group – how will the information we provide be reviewed and validated?

The answers provided to the Designated Priority Groups Questionnaire will be reviewed by an Equity Advisory structure. This review will use the Equity Data Tool along with

registration information to validate an organization's alignment with designated priority groups criteria.

In addition to supporting the Designated Priority Groups Questionnaire, the data collected through the Equity Data Tool is collected for statistical and research purposes.

Q. Will Designated Priority Groups automatically be prioritized for funding?

All applications will continue to be assessed against the assessment criteria in the program guidelines. It is only after organizations are assessed that priority funding would be implemented.

Q. Who has access to the information we provide?

Designated BC Arts Council staff will have access to answers provided in the Designated Priority Groups Questionnaire as well as the Equity Data Tool information for all organizations. The information for those wishing to be considered as a Designated Priority Group will also be provided to an Equity Advisory group.

Peer assessors will know if an organization has been identified as being part of designated priority groups, however assessors will not be able to see the detailed answers.

You can request access to your information, have corrections made to your information and ask questions about the collection, use or disclosure of personal information, by contacting:

Senior Director, BC Arts Council Secretariat and Strategic Engagement
800 Johnson Street, Victoria, BC, V8W 9W3
Phone: 250 356-1718

Q. What is the criteria for being a designated priority group?

This means at least 51% of your activities, programming content and financial and human resources are dedicated to one of these groups. This may be demonstrated in one or more of the following areas: purposes statement, practices, practitioners, staffing, leadership and engagement.

Q. How are you calculating whether activities, programming content and resources add up to 51%?

We are reviewing three sources of information: the Designated Priority Groups Questionnaire, the Equity Data Tool and registration information.

The Equity Data Tool requires organizations to provide information on arts and culture practices, practitioners, staffing and leadership, and engagement activities. The Equity Advisory Structure will review these answers holistically to understand whether an organization meets the criteria.

In addition, some information will be verified through registration, for example, the address of a regional organization and the statement of purpose.

Q. What if we do not know the answer to a question?

We encourage you to fill out the application form to the best of your ability. Click 'Don't Know' if you do not know the answer to a question. Not all questions are mandatory.

Q. Can we update our organizational profile later?

Yes, you can update your organizational profile at any time. However, it is expected that status as a designated priority group will not change unless there are deeply-rooted changes within the organization itself.

If there are changes, it is particularly important to update all sections of your profile including new sections prior to each program application. Changes made to the profile after the program application deadline may not factor into assessment for that intake.

Q. What is the difference between equity-deserving groups and designated priority groups?

The BC Arts Council defines equity-deserving groups as those who work for equal rights, social justice, and reparation in response to collective experience of systemic and attitudinal discrimination based on age, ethnicity, disability, economic status, gender, nationality, race, sexual orientation, and transgender status, etc. The BC Arts Council integrates equity criteria across all funding programs, for example, through program assessment criteria.

In addition to recognizing equity considerations across all funding programs, the BC Arts Council has identified designated priority groups. These groups are based on commitments made through strategic directions outlined in [New Foundations](#) and funding gaps identified through recent evaluations. If an organization is part of or serves a designated priority group they may be eligible for additional supports.

The designated priority groups consist of applicants and arts and cultural practitioners who are:

- Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit) Peoples;
- Deaf or experience disability;

- Black or people of colour;
- Located in regional areas (outside greater Vancouver or the capital region).

Q. We understood that the new Action Plan committed to streamlined applications and reduce barriers. Why are you creating more work for applicants – especially equity-deserving applicants - with these extra registration steps?

In asking applicants identifying as designated priority groups to complete data collection questions, we recognize that we are asking practitioners to take on additional steps within the registration process. We have weighed the options carefully and have put these measures in place to ensure the stewardship of public funds to organizations that have been historically underserved. Reach out to us at BCArtsCouncil@gov.bc.ca with your feedback on the tool or our policies.