

**Q.1: What are the designated priority groups?**

The designated priority groups have been identified as 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.2: What is the criteria for an organization or collective to be a designated priority group?**

Organizations and collectives that are members of a designated priority group must show that the majority of their activities, programming content, and financial and human resources are dedicated to one or more of the groups listed above. This must be demonstrated in one or more of the following areas: purposes statement, practices, practitioners, staffing, leadership, and engagement.

**Q.3: Where do we fill out the Designated Priority Groups information?**

The Designated Priority Groups Information section appears when you first register in the grant management system. The Designated Priority Groups section is where applicants tell us if they identify as part of a designated priority group or not. This is a different step from assessment of your grant application. This same section also appears in the Organization Profile once registered. You can update the information in your Organization Profile at any time.

**Q.4: Why are you collecting Designated Priority Groups information?**

This information allows us to provide equity-based supports and conduct research to improve services. For more information visit the [Designated Priority Groups policy page](#).

**Q.5: What is the Equity Data Tool? How is it different from the Designated Priority Groups information?**

The Equity Data Tool helps us understand who we are reaching with our programs and services and to collect information for statistical and research purposes. We collect information to add to our knowledge about organizations, including those that are members of underserved groups. It provides important data that we use to continue our work to reduce barriers and inequities in the arts sector. The information is also used to validate organizations that identify as a designated priority group. We encourage all organizations and collectives, to complete the Equity Data Tool whether you are a member of a designated priority group or not.

**Q.6: We are from a Designated Priority Group – why should we identify?**

Your organization or collective may be eligible for equity-based supports. Supports for designated priority groups may include funding prioritization and dedicated programs. We also use the information in the areas of outreach, statistics, and reporting on progress. The information helps us to make our programs better.

**Q.7: Our organization does not fit the criteria for a designated priority group. Should I fill in the information?**

We encourage all applicants to complete the Designated Priority Group section and Equity Data Tool. We use this information for statistical and research purposes to improve our services.

**Q.8: Do I need to fill in this section if I've explained my organization's or collective's purpose in the application?**

Yes, you need to fill out this section if you would like to be considered for supports made available to Designated Priority Groups. Supports are administered based on the information in the Designated Priority Groups section and validated through the answers provided in the Equity Data Tool. We do not use information provided in the application to identify designated priority groups.

**Q.9: Do I need to explain our background in the application if I've filled out the Designated Priority Groups section?**

You are not required to explain your organization's relationship to designated priority groups in the application unless it is relevant to the assessment criteria of the project or program you are applying for.

**Q.10: Do I have to fill in the Designated Priority Groups information when I register, or can I do it later?**

You can provide Designated Priority Groups information at the registration stage or at any time afterwards through the Organization Profile. Changes made to your Organization Profile after the program application deadline may not factor into the assessment for that intake.

**Q.11: Can we still be funded if we are not part of a Designated Priority Group?**

Yes, all applications are first assessed against the criteria outlined in the guidelines. Successful applicants come from a variety of communities, fields of practice and organizations, including those that are not from designated priority groups. Prioritization of designated priority group applicants is considered during the peer assessment process when allocating funding.

**Q.12: How often do I have to fill out the Designated Priority Group information and Equity Data Tool?**

Once you have completed each section, the information will remain in your Organization Profile. You will not need to provide the information again unless you want to make changes or provide updates. You can update the information at any time.

**Q.13: We already have an Organization Profile. Do I need to provide this information?**

Yes. We encourage you to revisit your Profile if you have not updated it since April 14, 2023. There is a new section to fill out.

**Q.14: Why are regional applicants considered a priority?**

Through extensive sector research and engagement, we identified regional arts as a priority along with other historically underserved groups. The BC Arts Council's [New Foundations strategic plan](#) recognized that a significant amount of the available funding and programming goes to artists and cultural organizations in the province's urban centres and that many regional and community-based artists and organizations have not historically seen themselves reflected in our current programs.

**Q.15: What if we do not know the answer to a question in the Equity Data Tool?**

We encourage you to fill out the Equity Data Tool 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.16: How will the information we provide in our Profile be reviewed and validated?**

BC Arts Council Staff and members of the Equity Advisory Network review the information provided in the Designated Priority Groups section, the Equity Data Tool, other registration information, and public facing materials such as websites to validate the status of an organization.

**Q.17: What is the Equity Advisory Network?**

The Equity Advisory Network is a network made up of experienced artists and arts and culture practitioners from a variety of fields of practice, with specific work and lived experience in the area of equity and diversity. Their role is to enhance the voices of Indigenous and equity-deserving communities in policy, programs and processes.

**Q.18: How are applications from designated priority groups prioritized for funding?**

All applications continue to be assessed against the assessment criteria in the program guidelines. Prioritization for designated priority group is considered when allocating funding. Learn more about [the peer assessment process](#) here.

**Q.19: Who has access to the information we provide?**

BC Arts Council staff have access to Designated Priority Groups and Equity Data Tool information. The information input by organizations may also be provided on a confidential basis to an Equity Advisory Committee working with the BC Arts Council. Assessors are informed when an applicant organization is considered a Designated Priority Group. However, they are not provided with other details from the Designated Priority Groups information or Equity Data Tool answers.

**Q.20: Can I change the information?**

Yes. You can change your information online through the grant management system at any time. We encourage you to review all of the information in your Organization Profile each time you start a new application. Changes made to your Organization Profile will not be applied to applications that have already been submitted.

**Q.21: Who can I speak to about data collection?**

You can ask questions about the collection, use or disclosure of information, by contacting:

Senior Director, BC Arts Council Secretariat and Strategic Engagement  
800 Johnson Street, Victoria, BC, V8W 9W3  
Phone: 250 356-1718  
[BCArtsCouncil@gov.bc.ca](mailto:BCArtsCouncil@gov.bc.ca)

**Q.21: I understood that the new Action Plan committed to streamlined applications and reduced barriers. Why are you creating more work for applicants – especially equity-deserving applicants - with these extra registration steps?**

In asking applicants to complete data collection questions and to identify whether they are a member of a designated priority group, we recognize that we are asking for 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 in alignment with our strategic priorities and to support our ability to provide funds to those who are historically underserved.

Reach out to us at [BCArtsCouncil@gov.bc.ca](mailto:BCArtsCouncil@gov.bc.ca) with your feedback.