

Individual Arts Grants: CREATIVE WRITERS

Program Guidelines 2023/24

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

The BC Arts Council is an agency of the Province of British Columbia under the Arts Council Act, nurturing and supporting arts and cultural activity in communities across British Columbia. 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 and other guiding documents 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](#).

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.

Designated Priority Groups

The BC Arts Council has committed to targeted investment in underserved and equity-deserving organizations and the development of equity support initiatives, including a policy to support [designated priority groups](#). Support for designated priority groups includes funding prioritization, dedicated programs, outreach, and reporting.

The BC Arts Council's designated priority groups include applicants and arts and cultural practitioners who are:

- Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, or Inuit) Peoples;
- Deaf or experience disability;
- Black or people of colour; or
- Located in areas outside [greater Vancouver or the capital region](#).

Applicants who would like to identify as part of a designated priority group must complete the Designated Priority Groups section in their online Individual Profile.

All applicants are also encouraged to complete the Voluntary Self-Identification section but it is not mandatory.

About Individual Arts Grants: Creative Writers

Individual Arts Grants: Creative Writers supports professional writers in B.C. in the creation of new book-length literary projects or the re-writing of unpublished or unproduced manuscripts. Eligible genres include non-fiction, drama, fiction, graphic novels, comic arts, fiction and non-fiction for children, poetry, and spoken word.

Applications may be submitted by individuals or on behalf of a collaboration of two or more eligible artists sharing creative control of a project.

When and How to Apply

Submit your application through the [online grant system](#).

This grant program has one intake per year.

You may submit only one application per intake.

You may only apply for a single project in an application.

Intake – Open: August 25 | **Close:** October 6 | **Results:** February 2024

Applications will be accepted until 11:59 p.m. on October 6, 2023.

This grant program will be open again in Fall 2024. A [Grant Program Calendar](#) showing our annual grant program cycle is available on our website.

New applicants: [Register and create a profile](#) in the online system. **It may take up to five business days to process your registration request.** You will receive an email when your registration request is approved and you are able to access the online application. Add the email address **NoReply@BCArtsCouncil.ca** to your safe senders list and check your spam folders.

All applicants: Update your online Personal Profile (including mailing address and Designated Priority Group and Voluntary Self-Identification sections) before submitting your application.

Questions? Contact the Program Advisor for this grant program. We are here to help. The BC Arts Council office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday.

Accessibility

If you self-identify as Deaf or having a disability, you are eligible for the BC Arts Council's accessibility programs.

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

[Access Support](#) provides funding to support access costs associated with 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 the assessment panel's evaluation of a grant application.

For more information or to request assistance, contact:

Nicola Dunne, Accessibility Coordinator at 778-405-4007 or Nicola.Dunne@gov.bc.ca

Find out more about accessibility supports online at BCArtsCouncil.ca/accessibility.

Who Can Apply

You are encouraged to confirm eligibility with the Program Advisor prior to applying. Applications that do not meet the eligibility criteria as outlined in these guidelines will not be forwarded for assessment.

For collaborative applications, each participant in the collaboration must meet the eligibility criteria.

To be eligible, you 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, review our [Determining B.C. Residency](#) page;
- Be a professional creative writer as determined by:
 - Having completed appropriate and relevant training in the discipline. Training may include education through post-secondary institutions, traditional knowledge transfer, and/or apprenticeship with a qualified practitioner;
 - Working at a level that is recognized as professional by other practitioners in a similar discipline and/or by organizations in the discipline, including professional book publishers, literary magazines, recognized literary associations, and specialized presenters such as literary festivals and fairs; and
 - Having a demonstrated body of work that meets the specific eligibility requirements for either Level One or Level Two, as outlined below.
- Have final creative control over the proposed work;
- Compensate and acknowledge other artists and professionals fairly in keeping with community contexts and industry standards within the field of practice;
- Follow international intellectual property rights standards and cultural ownership protocols;
- Have completed and submitted any overdue final reports on previous BC Arts Council grants by the submission deadline for this grant program; and
- Be applying for either the first or second time with a project; if you have applied twice unsuccessfully for the same project, the proposal must be substantively changed.

Level One Eligibility

To be eligible for a Level One grant, you must have at least one book (minimum 48 pages) published by a professional literary or trade publisher engaging an editorial selection process, and for which you have a publishing contract and receive royalties, OR an equivalent defined as:

- **Fiction and non-fiction:** a minimum of 120 pages (estimated 250 words per page) published

in professional print or online literary magazines or periodicals, or anthologies published by recognized professional publishing houses, and for which you have received payment.

- **Poetry:** 40 pages of poetry published in professional print or online literary magazines or periodicals, or anthologies published by recognized professional publishing houses, and for which you have received payment.
- **Drama:** a minimum of two short works or one full-length work professionally produced, published, or publicly workshopped, and for which you have received payment.
- **Spoken word:** professional history of recent public performances in dub, sound, or performance poetry, storytelling, ASL poetry, or other performance literature forms for which you have received payment on at least three separate occasions.
- **Graphic novels and comic arts:** a minimum of 120 pages published in professional literary magazines or periodicals, or anthologies published by recognized professional publishing houses, and for which you have received payment. Eligible projects include works that are visual in nature; unified in narrative, style, theme, or concept; and intended for professional publication as a book, series of comics, or web comic. Most projects will include text and visual elements. Wordless projects intended primarily for publication, with a strong sequential structure or narrative direction are eligible. Works for all ages are eligible. Both or either the writer and artist may apply as long as they meet the eligibility criteria for this program.

Level Two Eligibility

To be eligible for a Level Two grant, you must be recognized as a senior artist in your discipline and professional communities, and must have:

- **Fiction, nonfiction, poetry, graphic novel, comic arts:** at least three books (minimum 48 pages) published by a professional literary or trade publisher, and for which you have publishing contracts and receive royalties.
- **Drama:** a minimum of two full-length works professionally produced or published, and for which you have received payment.
- **Spoken word:** a significant body of professionally recognized work in dub, sound, or performance poetry, storytelling, ASL poetry, or other performance-based literary forms for which you have received payment.

Self-published Authors – Level One

To be eligible at **Level One**, a self-published author must meet all of the criteria as above for a professional creative writer except that your demonstrated body of work must include:

- Sales of more than 400 copies of a self-published work of prose or a graphic novel, or 200 copies of a self-published work of poetry within 24 months of the application date. BC Arts Council may request official sales records. Sales of e-books, online books, and print books are recognized equally. Print books shorter than 48 pages and e-books shorter than 16,000 words are not considered.

OR

- Voting membership in a recognized professional writers' association including but not limited

to the Canadian Authors' Association (professional members only), League of Canadian Poets (full members only), and The Writers' Union of Canada. Full voting membership in other professional writers' associations may be recognized at the BC Arts Council's discretion. Recognized professional writers' associations must be incorporated as non-profit organizations and have published membership criteria that are compatible with the BC Arts Council's definition of a professional artist.

Self-published Authors – Level Two

To be eligible at **Level Two**, a self-published author must meet all of the criteria as above for a professional creative writer except that your demonstrated body of work must include:

- Sales of more than 400 copies for at least three self-published works of prose or a graphic novel, or 200 copies of a self-published work of poetry, with the most recent work having been published within 24 months of the application date. BC Arts Council may request official sales records. Sales of e-books, online books, and print books are recognized equally. Print books shorter than 48 pages and e-books shorter than 16,000 words are not considered.

General Eligibility Notes

Student or academic publications, including scholarly monographs and articles published in peer-reviewed academic journals or work produced to satisfy academic requirements, may not be used to establish eligibility.

The work of a co-author is considered in proportion to the shared authorship. For example, a book co-authored with two other authors is considered to be one-third of a book.

If your previous work is not in the same genre as your proposed project, your support material should confirm your ability to work in the new form.

Eligible Expenses

Grants are available to support:

- Subsistence of up to \$750 per week. Subsistence expenses are living costs incurred while undertaking a project or activity, and can include housing costs, food, and local transportation. Grant recipients are expected to devote most of their time to their practice for the duration of the project.
- Costs of materials directly related to the research, development, and creation of the project.
- Rental of equipment or space when directly relevant to the project.
- Fees paid to literary professionals to help complete the project, for example, an editor, dramaturge, or sensitivity reader.
- Travel expenses directly relevant to completing the project.

Required compensation within project activities:

Eligible projects must include appropriate payment to artists, arts and cultural practitioners, and other professionals engaged in the proposed activities. At a minimum, payments to artists should be at the recommended rates set by the arts service organization, professional association, or established practitioners within the field of practice. Payment structures that are not guaranteed

(for example, commission-based sales of artworks, percentage of door sales) that risk low or non-payment to artists do not meet this compensation requirement.

Applicants can determine compensation to Elders and Knowledge Keepers according to community context and appropriate protocols. Applicants should describe the approach used to determine the fair rate in their application.

What Will Not Be Funded

Grants are not available to support:

- Projects or activities previously funded through this or other BC Arts Council programs.
- Projects or activities funded with BC Arts Council funds received through third-party delivery partners: ArtStarts, First Peoples' Cultural Council, BC Touring Council, or Creative BC.
- Project phases or activities that began prior to the application submission deadline.
- Works with minimal original, creative, critical, or analytical content such as indices, bibliographies, and instructional or technical books including textbooks, cookbooks, self-help books, and guidebooks.
- Scholarly, educational, or academic works including curriculum-based projects related to education or post-secondary programs.
- Projects related to arts therapy or other health-related or therapeutic work.
- Instructional, sponsored, or commissioned works.
- Works intended for the commercial sector or creative industries (for example, scripts for film, radio, television, interactive digital media, or other commercial media arts).
- Works created primarily for distribution through social media channels or streaming platforms.
- Testimonials, personal growth, or self-help books or manuals, including those of a religious, devotional, or spiritual nature.
- Expenses related to publication including rights, royalties, design, production, and print.
- Actor and other fees or expenses related to workshopping plays or readings.
- Promotion and marketing, including touring expenses.
- [Capital expenses](#) (construction, renovation, or purchase of property or equipment).
- Project or budget deficits or contingency funds.

Grant Amounts

You may request up to 100% of the eligible project expenses.

You should apply to the appropriate level based on the eligibility requirements above.

Level 1: Grants up to \$7,500 | **Level 2:** Grants up to \$15,000

We encourage you to submit a realistic budget for funds required to feasibly carry out the project.

BC Arts Council intends to support successful applications at 100% of the request; however, grants may be awarded for less than requested.

BC Arts Council grant programs are highly competitive, and support is not available for all eligible projects. Success rates in BC Arts Council grant programs are generally between 20% to 40%. Visit the [BC Arts Council Grant Recipients](#) page to review a list of previously successful applicants and the range of previous grants for this program.

What is Needed for the Application

You are responsible for submitting a complete application. You will not be contacted to address errors or missing requirements. Eligible applications are assessed as submitted.

An application checklist is included at the end of these guidelines.

A complete application must include:

- A written statement (up to 700 words) that includes:
 - A precise description and summary of the proposed project. In this description consider responding to these questions: *Why This Project? Why You? Why Now?*
 - A project timeline or work plan.
Note: Notification of results is generally 16 weeks after the application submission deadline so plan accordingly if your project is dependent on this grant funding.
- A description of equitable and ethical approaches in the project and/or practice.
- A detailed expense form. Be sure to:
 - Use the expense table provided in the application.
 - Include notes for each included expense.
- All required support material as per the list below.

As part of our commitment to accessibility, the BC Arts Council is now accepting parts of applications in audio and video formats. See instructions within the application.

Required Support Material

Applicants should review and follow the [Upload Requirements for Support Material](#).

Do not submit any additional support materials outside of what is required below. Excess support material, including multiple links to materials within a single uploaded document, will not be reviewed and may negatively impact the assessment of your application. If you have any questions about support material, contact the Program Advisor.

Required support material for this application includes:

- A maximum 20 pages (or equivalent word count) of recent work in readable manuscript format. For example, use a minimum 10-point serif font, reasonable margins, not single spaced. Include your name and the title of the work/s on the sample pages.

This sample must include both:

1. **writing from the proposed project.** If completed or final work is not available, provide a detailed outline or overview, table of contents, or other material that clearly demonstrates the content, style, and quality of the proposed project; and
 2. **previously published, curated, or produced work** that demonstrates your writing ability in the proposed genre.
- A description of your sample material that explains how the material relates to the project description in the application and provides context for the sample material you have provided;
 - Spoken word artists may include up to 5 minutes of recorded performance documentation in audio or video format.
 - Curriculum vitae (CV) with professional training and related artistic activities and achievements (maximum 3 pages per artist).

- A complete publication history including titles, publishers, and publication dates (maximum 2 pages per artist). This is not required if the information is included in the CV.
- Letters from partners or collaborators, if applicable, confirming the nature of their participation.

How Applications Will Be Assessed

The [Extending Foundations: Action Plan for 2022-2024](#) includes the BC Arts Council's commitment to placing reconciliation, equity, diversity, inclusion, and access at the centre of its activities with the intention to address historic funding inequities. Equity considerations are embedded throughout the assessment criteria and the assessment process. Funding prioritization may be applied to applicants who identify as part of a designated priority group as outlined on page one.

Assessment criteria are designed to encourage applicants to speak to the various ways their activities align with the priorities of the BC Arts Council.

The assessment criteria are also the primary lens through which the assessment panel will review and score your application. The areas of assessment for this grant program are outlined below along with their relative scoring percentage. Keep these criteria in mind as you complete your application.

ARTISTIC CONTRIBUTION AND SIGNIFICANCE (40%)

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

- Quality of the proposed project, including level of artistry, originality, and overall contribution to the artistic practice;
- Integrity of the creative processes including ethical approaches and consideration given to:
 - Research methods;
 - Use of source and physical materials;
 - Equitable collaboration processes;
 - Matters of cultural appropriation and representation; and
 - Appropriate protocols and practices.
- Meaningful contribution to under-represented artistic practices.

IMPACT ON THE APPLICANT AND COMMUNITY (40%)

When considering the impact of the project, the assessment panel will assess the:

- Potential benefits to the development of the applicant's practice, the applicant's own identified communities, and the professional arts community in B.C.;
- Significance of the project relative to the BC Arts Council's priorities of reconciliation, equity, diversity, inclusion, and access;
- Level at which the project will advance awareness of equity-deserving and under-represented communities; and
- 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.

FEASIBILITY (20%)

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

- Achievability of the project as demonstrated by a sound budget and resource allocation;
- Level of experience in realizing comparable projects at a professional standard; and
- Clarity of the work plan or timeline.

Assessment Process

The following process is used to evaluate every application to this grant program:

- The BC Arts Council receives applications and reviews each one for eligibility.
- Eligible applications are forwarded to independent assessment panels. Assessment panels include individuals with broad professional knowledge, experience, geographical representation, and diverse aesthetic, institutional, and cultural viewpoints, including those from Indigenous perspectives.
- Assessment panels evaluate eligible applications using the assessment criteria above and determine the level of funding or conditions on payment of grants.
- The BC Arts Council informs each applicant of the assessment panel's decision in writing.
- Applicants may check the status of their application at any time through the online system.
- All results are final.

Notification of Grants and Feedback

The BC Arts Council's commitment is to inform each applicant of the results of the assessment process no later than 16 weeks after the submission deadline.

Notification is sent by email to the primary contact linked to the application.

Emails are sent through the online system. Be sure the email address **NoReply@BCArtsCouncil.ca** is on your safe sender list.

Results will not be shared before the official notification letters are sent.

Contact the Program Advisor for feedback on the assessment of your application after you have received notification of the results.

Payment of Grants

All 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.
- Makes 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 will be paid by cheque sent to the mailing address listed in the individual or organization profile in the online system unless the applicant is registered for direct deposit.

Grants are taxable income and must be reported. Individuals receiving grants on their own behalf or on behalf of a collective are issued T4As for the year the grant payment is processed.

Final Reports

Grant recipients must submit a final report on 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 from the applicant to BC Arts Council grant programs will not be accepted 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 grant recipients may be published, along with the amount of the grant, in the Annual Report of the BC Arts Council as well as in various communications and promotional vehicles of the BC Arts Council and Province of British Columbia. Social Insurance Numbers are provided to Canada Revenue Agency through the issuance of T4As.

Recognition of Grants

In recognition of grant funding, the support of the BC Arts Council and the Province of British Columbia should be acknowledged in applicant's 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.

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

Contact Information

If you have questions after you have reviewed these program guidelines and the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) on the BC Arts Council website, contact the program advisor.

Michelle Benjamin – Program Advisor

236-478-2582 | Michelle.Benjamin@gov.bc.ca

For general information, contact:

250-356-1718 | Email to: BCArtsCouncil@gov.bc.ca

**Program guidelines are reviewed and updated annually.
Be sure you are working with the most current guidelines for each intake.
Updates to the guidelines made after the original posting will be highlighted.**

Individual Arts Grants: Creative Writers – Application Checklist

Be sure you have provided or completed the following before you submit your application. Review the program guidelines and the application for specific requirements.

Before you start:

- Review the program guidelines and application preview.
- Contact the Program Advisor to address concerns or review questions about eligibility.

In your profile on the BC Arts Council online grant system:

- update your address and other contact information.
- complete the Designated Priority Group Questionnaire (required for strategic funding).
- complete the Voluntary Self-Identification section (optional).

Text boxes in application:

- all mandatory text-based questions have been answered.
- all non-mandatory text-based questions that are relevant to your project have been answered.

Pop-out forms:

- summary of eligible expenses with notes for each expense (the budget) has been completed.

Uploaded documents:

- up to 20 pages of sample writing has been uploaded, and a clear statement that provides context for the sample work has been provided.
- up to 5 minutes of audio or video sample has been uploaded (spoken word artists only)
- your curriculum vitae (CV) has been uploaded.
- your publishing history (if not included in the CV) has been uploaded.
- letters from partners or collaborators, if applicable, have been uploaded.

And then:

- complete the Access Support tab (as applicable).
- share your feedback in the Feedback tab (optional).

And finally:

- review the Assessment Criteria to be sure your answers address the priorities for this program.
- ask a friend or trusted advisor to review your application for clarity, omissions, errors, etc.
- read the Declaration tab and complete the acknowledgement.
- submit your application!**