

ARTS INFRASTRUCTURE 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 pay our respects to the Elders and Knowledge Keepers, past and present, descendants and custodians of these lands and waters. 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 (Lekwungen) 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 BC Arts Council conducts its 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](#). These identified groups will be the focus of BC Arts Council strategic measures, through dedicated programs, funding prioritization processes, partnerships, and outreach.

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;
- Located in areas outside [greater Vancouver or the capital region](#).

Identifying as a designated priority group means the majority of your activities, programming, and financial and human resources are dedicated to one of the groups listed above. This may be demonstrated in one or more of the following areas: purpose statement, practices, practitioners, staffing, leadership, and engagement.

If your organization or collective would like to be considered for strategic measures including priority funding under the Designated Priority Groups policy, you must complete the Designated Priority Groups and Equity Data Tool sections in your online Organization Profile.

About the Arts Infrastructure Program

The Arts Infrastructure Program enables eligible organizations to develop and enhance spaces that support the work of B.C.'s arts and cultural practitioners. The program aims to support projects that:

- Catalyze the development of new or existing arts and cultural spaces through acquisition, renovation, or purchase of specialized equipment;
- Improve physical, social, and cultural accessibility to arts and cultural spaces;
- Enhance access to arts and cultural spaces for underserved communities and underrepresented arts and cultural practices; or
- Strengthen the capacity of the sector to develop, operate, and sustain arts and cultural spaces.

All projects must be completed **before December 31, 2026**. Project categories include:

Category 1. Planning & Consultation

Planning processes, and research to support the acquisition, development or enhancement of arts and cultural facilities. Maximum request: \$25,000

Category 2. Capital Improvements

Building-based projects involving the construction, renovation, acquisition, or expansion of an arts and cultural facility. Maximum request: \$250,000

Category 3. Specialized Equipment Acquisition

Projects focused solely on the purchase of specialized equipment for long-term use and associated installation expenses. Maximum request: \$40,000

See **Examples of Eligible Projects** below for more information and examples of projects this grant program intends to support.

When and How to Apply

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

Applications will be accepted until 11:59 p.m. on November 15, 2023.

Applicants should discuss their application with the Program Advisor before applying.

Organizations may submit only one application to this grant program per intake.

This grant program is expected to 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. Once approved, you will be 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 Organization Profile (including mailing address and Designated Priority Groups and Equity Data Tool sections) before submitting your application.

Questions? Contact a 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

Organizations with a primary purpose to serve D/deaf or disability arts practices may be 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 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:

Clayton Baraniuk, Accessibility Coordinator at 250-978-9839 or Clayton.Baraniuk@gov.bc.ca

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

Who Can Apply

All applicants are encouraged to confirm eligibility with a Program Advisor before applying. Applications from organizations that do not meet eligibility criteria outlined in these guidelines 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 two fiscal years prior to application with:
 - The majority of key staff (paid or volunteer) and board members based in B.C.
 - Creative control and decision making for programming and engagement primarily maintained within the organization and by leadership based in B.C.
 - A purpose or mandate dedicated to arts and culture programming and activities.or
 - A purpose or mandate to provide services to the arts and culture sector in B.C.
 - Operations and activities that reflect this dedicated purpose or mandate.

OR

- An **Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit) community organization** registered and in good standing as a non-profit society or community service co-op in B.C. for at least two fiscal years prior to application with:
 - The majority of key staff (paid or volunteer) and board members based in B.C.
 - A commitment to offering regular arts and culture activities.

OR

- An **Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit) government** in B.C. that offers regular arts and culture activities.

OR

- An **arts and culture organization** operated by a local government in B.C. for at least two fiscal years prior to application, that:
 - Maintains an ongoing arm's length, community-based board of management or advisory structure that sets policy for the organization's programs and services.
 - Holds a dedicated programming space and has at least one dedicated staff person in an artistic, curatorial, or administrative leadership position who is responsible for programming and engagement.
 - Offers ongoing public programming by professional arts and cultural practitioners.
 - Primarily operates with autonomy, holding creative control and decision making for programming and engagement within the organization, with separate financial records for operations. See Financial Statement Requirements section below for more detail.

OR

- An **arts and culture organization** operated by a public post-secondary institution in B.C. for at least two fiscal years prior to application, that:
 - Holds a dedicated programming space and has at least one dedicated staff person in an artistic, curatorial, or administrative leadership position who is responsible for programming and engagement.
 - Offers ongoing public programming by professional arts and cultural practitioners, the majority of which is not programming of faculty or student works.
 - Primarily operates with autonomy, outside of curriculum, holding creative control and decision making for programming and engagement within the organization, with separate financial records for operations. See Financial Statement (singular) Requirements section below for more detail.

OR

- A **book publisher** that meets the eligibility requirements for either the Project Assistance or Operating Assistance for Book Publishers program.

An eligible organization must also:

- Provide public arts and cultural programming (or service to the arts and culture sector) in B.C. as a primary activity and have done so for a minimum of two years prior to the intake closing date.
- Provide programs that benefit the community at-large and not solely the interests of its nonprofit society members.

- Engage skilled artistic, curatorial, and administrative leadership (volunteer or paid) for project or service delivery.
- 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.
- Follow international intellectual property rights standards and cultural ownership protocols.
- Follow 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 completed and submitted any overdue final reports on previous BC Arts Council grants by the for this grant program.

Examples of Eligible Projects

Applicants are encouraged to confirm the eligibility of their project with a Program Advisor before applying. Applications for projects that do not meet eligibility criteria in these guidelines will not be forwarded for assessment.

The Arts Infrastructure Program provides support to eligible organizations to develop and enhance spaces that support the work of B.C.'s arts and cultural practitioners. Grants through this program are not meant to cover operating or ongoing expenses or routine maintenance costs.

Examples of eligible activities include but are not limited to:

- Planning, consultation, and research processes to support the development or acquisition of arts and cultural facilities including architectural plans, energy studies, feasibility studies, and community consultation.
- Purchase of specialized equipment such as audio, video, lighting, exhibition, or other equipment that is primarily utilized for artistic programming
- Acquisition, construction, renovation, or expansion of an arts and cultural facility and spaces used for arts and cultural purposes more than 50% of the time.
- Projects to improve accessibility.

Required artist compensation within project activities

Eligible projects must include appropriate payment to the 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, or that risk low or non-payment to artists and other professionals do not meet this compensation requirement (for example, commission-based sales of artworks, percentage of door sales).

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 focused on spaces not used for arts and cultural activities.
- Industrial, archaeological or heritage sites, historic places, or organizations dedicated to archives.
- Project phases or activities that have begun prior to the intake closing date.
- Project phases or activities already funded through this or other BC Arts Council grant programs.
- Operating expenses or long-term accrued interest on financing.
- Routine maintenance or repairs.
- Moving expenses.
- Restoration and refurbishment of artefacts or collections.
- Commissioning and purchasing of works of art.
- Gift shops or commercial beverage and food facilities.
- Purchase of office equipment, furniture and supplies dedicated to administrative tasks.
- Landscaping projects.
- Parking lots.
- Capital campaigns, fundraising or marketing activities.
- 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.
- Projects or activities that are primarily intended for support of or focussed within creative industries or commercial sector (with the exception of book publishers), including architecture, fashion, commercial film and television, culinary arts, games, sports, recreation, mass media, journalism, podcasts, graphic design.
- Member-funded societies.
- Costs of producing commercial music recordings or demo reels.
- Private or for-profit entities (except in the case of for-profit book publishing companies).
- Project or budget deficits or contingency funds.
- Start-up costs or seed money.
- Projects or activities that are not based on artistic or curatorial decision making, or where arts and culture is not the primary focus.
- Curriculum-based activities or projects, including those related to continuing education or post-secondary programs (except professional arts training organizations).
- Social service organizations.
- Project where art therapy, health or therapeutic work is the primary project focus or outcome.
- Museums with only temporary exhibitions.

Grant Amounts

Applicants should apply to **only one** of the categories. See category descriptions above.

Category 1: Planning & Consultation - Grants up to \$25,000

Category 2: Capital Improvements - Grants up to \$250,000

Category 3: Specialized Equipment Acquisition - Grants up to \$40,000

The request amount in any category::

- May be up to 75% of the total eligible project budget; or
- May be up to 90% of the total eligible project budget from applicants that are considered part of the BC Arts Council's designated priority groups as defined on page one.

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

Applicants are encouraged to submit realistic budgets outlining the 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 online application must include:

- Details outlining the proposed project including:
 - Summary and detailed description of the proposed project.
 - Rationale and objectives underlying the project.
 - Detailed project timeline or work plan of the current project stage.
 - Timeline should begin after the intake closing date and have a Project End Date before **December 31, 2026**. Applicants should present a realistic work plan within this timeframe that accounts for the complex nature of infrastructure projects.
 - Note: Notification of results is generally 16 weeks after the intake closing date so plan accordingly if your project is dependent on this grant funding.
- Description of alignment with [CleanBC Better Buildings](#) programs as applicable; for example, strategies for achieving greenhouse gas emissions reductions and energy efficiency improvements.

- List of any approvals and permits required to complete work on the project and a description of the phase of approvals the project is at or the steps the applicant plans to take to obtain approvals and permits.
- Balanced project budget. Be sure to:
 - Use the Project Budget Table provided in the application.
 - Include detailed notes on the budget.
 - Indicate whether revenues are confirmed or pending.
 - Balance in-kind revenues with in-kind expenses.
 - Make sure your Amount Requested in the application matches the request amount in the Project Budget Table.
- All required support material as listed 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

Review and follow the [Upload Requirements for Support Material](#) before uploading support material to your online application.

Do not submit any additional support material 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 questions about support material, contact the Program Advisor.

Required Support Material includes:

- Letters from any partnering organizations, if applicable, confirming the nature of their participation.
- **For Category 1: Planning & Consultation**
 - List of external contractors or vendors with biographies or profiles as applicable.
 - One quote from a prospective vendor or contractor for proposed planning or consultation services.
- **For Category 2: Capital Improvements**
 - Proof of facility ownership or relevant operational/legal agreements, appropriate zoning (if applicable) and/or leases between the organization and the facility owners/landlords and other tenants.
 - Two competitive quotes from prospective vendors or contractors for proposed capital improvement(s).
 - **For projects over \$75,000**, all relevant planning documents (such as architectural drawings, feasibility studies, community consultation, accessibility assessments) are required.
- **For Category 3: Specialized Equipment Acquisition**
 - One quote from a prospective vendor or contractor for proposed equipment purchase(s).

Additional documentation may be required upon request from the Program Advisor.

Additional Information Required from Organizations

Before you apply, you must update your online Organization Profile with the following:

- Current list of the organization's board of directors, editorial advisory board, trustees, or board of management, including their board position, occupation/expertise, start date, and place of residence.
- Current list of administrative, artistic, or editorial staff and significant contractors, including name, position, place of residence and employment status (for example, permanent or part-time).
- Copy of the organization's certified constitution if the applicant is a not-for-profit organization OR a statement of the primary purpose of the organization for all other applicants. **Do not include by-laws.**
- Completed Designated Priority Groups information section.
- Answers in the Equity Data Tool that are relevant to your organization. You are not required to answer every question.
- Signed financial statements for your two most recently completed fiscal years. See details below.

Financial Statement Requirements

All organizations must upload to their online profile signed financial statements for their two most recent completed fiscal years.

Following standard accounting formatting, financial statements should include comparative information for the prior fiscal year. If a comparative year is not included within a single set of statements, then ensure a set of financial statements for each year has been uploaded to your profile.

Not-for-profit organization financial statements, including those internally prepared, must include:

- A balance sheet, income statement, and notes following standard accounting formatting.
- An itemized list of grants identified by funder, included either in the income statement or in an attached schedule.
- A breakdown of operating net assets, distinguishing between unrestricted net and capital assets.
- Signatures of the preparer and two board members affirming board approval.

For applicants 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.
- A signature of the umbrella organization's financial officer.
- Notes indicating if the applicant entity may accrue assets, surpluses, or deficits from one year to the next.
- An itemized list of grants received that are related to the applicant, not the entire umbrella organization, and identified by funder, either in the income statement or attached schedule.

The type of financial statements that are required are outlined in the chart below.

NOTE: The type of financial statements that are required are based on the single largest BC Arts Council grant received in the organization's previous two fiscal years, not including Resilience Supplements, Pivot Program grants, Arts Impact grants, or Arts Infrastructure Program grants.

If you did not receive an applicable grant in the previous two fiscal years, internally prepared financial statements are acceptable.

BC Arts Council 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)	Type of Financial Statements Required
\$0 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

Assessment Criteria

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 organizations considered designated priority groups as outlined on page one.

Assessment criteria are designed to encourage applicants to speak to their diverse and relevant achievements and contributions, and 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.

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

The assessment panel will evaluate the project's alignment with the priorities of the BC Arts Council as outlined in the [Extending Foundations Action Plan](#) by considering:

- The level at which the project will advance opportunities for and service to equity deserving and under-represented communities.
- The contribution to communities located outside major urban centres (as applicable).
- The project's potential for advancing reconciliation (as applicable).

- The significance of the project in pursuing equity, diversity, inclusion, and access as relative to the applicant's context, including its region, capacity, community served, available resources, purpose, and mandate.

AVAILABILITY AND QUALITY OF SPACES (40%)

The assessment panel will evaluate how the project will develop and enhance spaces that support the work of B.C.'s arts and cultural practitioners by considering the:

- Degree in which the project improves the conditions for artistic creation, production and/or presentation, or for the exhibition and preservation of cultural collections.
- Impact of the project on the quality of the space, including technological features, environmental conditions, and safety features.
- Impact of the project on the number or capacity of available spaces at the local, regional and/or national level.
- Impact of the project on working spaces for artists, staff, and other users.
- Benefits to other arts and culture organizations at the local and/or regional level.
- Level of inclusion and engagement with appropriate protocols, practices, research, and consultation methods particularly in regard to Indigenous artists and communities.
- Potential energy efficiency improvements in new and existing buildings including, but not limited to, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in alignment with [CleanBC](#).
- The level of accessibility, including but not limited to physical spaces, affordability, and support for those who experience barriers or disability.

FEASIBILITY (30%)

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

- Suitable levels of expertise and experience of project leaders to ensure the successful completion of the project, including personnel from the applicant's organization and/or external consultants, contractors, community participants, Knowledge Keepers, and subject matter experts (such as artistic, curatorial and management leadership).
- Appropriate levels of compensation for everyone involved in the project.
- Achievability of the proposed activities as determined by sound budgets, planning, resource allocation, and the applicant's overall financial health and capacity.
- Level of environmental stewardship and climate impact of the project's process, outcome, and consideration of long-term implications.
- The applicant's financial position, including appropriate management of surplus or deficit situations, reserves, restricted funds, and working capital ratio.
- Rigour of human resources practices related to providing fair remuneration, equitable employment, cultural competency, cultural safety, and safe and respectful work environment.

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

Payment of Awards

Grant 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 and 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 of the completed project to the BC Arts Council within 30 days of the Project End Date stated in the application.

Final Reports must be submitted through the online system.

For larger scale projects, an interim progress report may be required.

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 the 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.

Call us! We are here to help.

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

Nadine Carew – Program Advisor, Arts Infrastructure
778-698-3288 | Nadine.Carew@gov.bc.ca

For general information, contact:
250-356-1718 | BCArtsCouncil@gov.bc.ca

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