

INDIVIDUAL ARTS GRANTS: VISUAL ARTISTS

Program Guidelines 2025/26

Grant Program Summary

Applications: **Open:** October 24 | **Close:** December 9 | **Results Expected:** Late March 2026

Who Can Apply: B.C.-based individual established visual artists, craft artists, or independent visual arts critics and curators. Applicants must meet the eligibility criteria detailed in the [Who Can Apply](#) section below.

Program Purpose: To support eligible projects that advance:

- The research or creation of new visual art works
- An independent visual art criticism practice
- A curatorial practice independent from art organizations or institutions

Maximum grant amount: \$15,000.

Next Intake: This grant program is expected to open again in fall 2026. A [Grant Programs Calendar](#) showing our annual grant program cycle is available on our website.

New applicants: We encourage you to discuss eligibility with a Program Advisor before applying. Applications for projects that do not meet the eligibility criteria in these guidelines will not be forwarded for assessment.

Contact us. We are here to help.

Review these program guidelines and the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) on the BC Arts Council website before applying. Contact a Program Advisor if you have any questions.

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For general information, contact:

250-356-1718 | BCArtsCouncil@gov.bc.ca

BC Arts Council office hours are 8:30 am to 4:30 pm (Pacific Time), Monday to Friday.

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Guidelines are reviewed and updated before every grant intake.

Be sure you are working with the most current version.

Any updates to guidelines made after the grant program opens will be highlighted.

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 ləkʷəŋən (Lekwungen) people, known today as the Songhees and Xwsepsum (Kosapsum) Esquimalt Nations, on whose lands we operate our main offices.

About Individual Arts Grants: Visual Artists

Individual Arts Grants: Visual Artists supports professional visual artists, contemporary and traditional craft artists, and independent visual and media arts critics and curators with the creation of specific projects.

Grants are available to support the research and creation of new artworks.

Independent visual or media arts curators and critics may apply to further their practice independently from art organizations or institutions. Applications from critics or curators may investigate visual arts, media arts and/or museum practice.

If an applicant currently holds a full-time position with an organization that will directly benefit from the proposed project, the project may be deemed ineligible.

Applications may be made by individuals. Projects that involve two or more artists sharing creative control may also submit a single “collaborative” application under the name of one of the artists. The artist submitting the application must be eligible for the program as listed below. Collaborating artists are not required to meet all eligibility criteria but must include a resume, CV and/or biography.

Projects that are solely Media Arts (moving images, sound, audio, new media, and digital arts) are not the priority of this program. The [Individual Arts Grants: Media Artists](#) supports media arts projects for eligible media artists.

Examples of Eligible Projects

We encourage you to contact the Program Advisor to discuss the eligibility of your project before applying.

Examples of eligible projects include, but are not limited to:

- Creating or completing new work or body of work for exhibition
- Attending an Artist Residency to research and/or create new artwork(s)
- Curating an exhibition and/or other public programming of visual or media arts
- Critical writing exploring visual or media arts, and/or museum practice

Eligible Expenses

Grants are available to support:

- [Subsistence costs](#) of up to \$750 per week, prorated for part-time weeks. Subsistence expenses are in lieu of artist fees for the applicant(s), to support living costs incurred while undertaking a project or activity, such as housing/rent, food, and local transportation. Grant recipients are expected to devote most of their time to their project when receiving full time Subsistence. Preparatory time can be included in Subsistence.
- Costs of materials or supplies directly related to the project.
- Rental of equipment or space when directly related to the project.
- Fees paid to other professionals to help complete the project, for example, other artists, practitioners, contractors, technicians, an editor, or sensitivity reader.
- Travel expenses directly related to completing the project.
- Accessibility costs related to the project that are not eligible for the Access Support program.

Exclusions - What Will Not Be Funded

Grants are not available to support:

- Project phases or activities that begin before the application closing date.
- Projects that focus solely on single channel moving images (film, video, animation) from established media artists who are eligible for the BC Arts Council's [Individual Arts Grants: Media Artists](#).
- Projects or activities already funded through other BC Arts Council grant programs.
- Instructional, sponsored, or commissioned works.
- Projects or activities previously funded with BC Arts Council funds received through third-party delivery partners: ArtStarts, First Peoples' Cultural Council, BC Live Performance Network, or Creative BC.
- Curriculum-based activities or projects related to continuing education or post-secondary programs at educational institutions or where artists are providing professional development or arts education outside of the creative process.
- Projects or activities that are not based on artistic or curatorial decision making, or where arts and culture are not the primary focus.
- Projects or activities that do not involve or benefit artists or arts and culture practitioners.
- Projects where arts therapy, health or therapeutic work is the primary focus or outcome.
- Fundraising activities; conferences and conventions; family, religious, anniversary or community celebrations.
- Projects or activities that are primarily intended for or focussed within creative industries or the commercial sector, including architecture, interior or exterior design, commercial fashion design, commercial film and television, commercial music activities, culinary arts, video games, sports, recreation, mass media, journalism, podcasts, commercial illustration, graphic design.
- Podcasts and radio programming that are not embedded within established artistic practice or not specifically dedicated to the dissemination of artistic works.
- Projects that are focused on professional development or arts education.
- Amateur, pre-professional or student projects
- Projects focused on the commercial sale of artistic work, including art fairs, commissions and craft shows.
- Contests and competitions, except if competition is integral to the art form or cultural practice.

Grants are also not available to support the following expenses:

- [Capital expenses](#) (for example, construction, renovation, or purchase of property)
- Equipment purchases over \$2,500, or that are not directly related to the project activities
- Promotion, and marketing expenses not directly related to the project activities.
- Touring or circulation expenses.
- Feasibility studies, start-up costs, or seed money.
- Project or budget deficits, surpluses or contingency funds.

Grant Amounts

The maximum grant amount is \$15,000.

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

We encourage you to submit a realistic budget outlining the funds you need to complete the project.

Applications requesting the maximum amount should demonstrate a large scope, potential for impact and articulate a clear rationale for why the project requires the maximum amount.

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

BC Arts Council grant programs are very competitive. We are not able to support all eligible projects. We are generally able to fund between 20% to 40% of eligible applications in a program intake. To see a list of grant recipients and the range of grants awarded, visit the [BC Arts Council Grant Recipients](#) page.

Required Artist Fees and Compensation

Eligible projects must include appropriate payment to the artists, arts and culture practitioners, and other members of the project team engaged in the proposed activities. At a minimum, payments to artists should be consistent with the recommended rates set by an arts service organization, professional association, or by established practitioners within the field of practice. Payment structures that are not guaranteed, or that risk low or non-payment to artists do not meet this compensation requirement (for example, commission-based sales of artworks, percentage of door sales).

RESOURCE: The [CARFAC-RAAV Minimum Recommended Fee Schedule](#) (Canadian Artists' Representation / Le Front des artistes canadiens) provides guidelines on what visual and media artists should be paid for their copyright and other professional services.

Compensation to Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Cultural Advisors

Elders, Knowledge Keepers and other cultural advisors should be fairly compensated according to community context and appropriate protocols. You will be asked in your application to describe the approach used to determine the fair rate of pay.

RESOURCE: The First Peoples' Culture Council [Working with Elders](#) document was developed as a free resource to support anyone interested in engaging with Elders and Knowledge Keepers.

When and How to Apply

Applications - Open: October 24 | **Close:** December 9 | **Results Expected:** Late March 2026

Submit your application through the [online grant system](#). **Applications will only be accepted until 11:59 p.m. (Pacific Time) on Tuesday, December 9, 2025.**

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

You may only apply for a single project in an application. A single project may encompass the creation, criticism, or curation of a body of work.

New applicants:

- Register and create a profile in the online system to access the online application. Instructions are on our website: [How to Apply Online](#).
- We recommend you register at least 2 weeks before the application closing date.
- New registration requests go through a review. We may contact you by email or phone to request additional information.
- The review and approval process may take up to 5 business days after we have received all required documents. **Register early to avoid delays.**
- You will receive an automated email when your registration request is approved.
- Add the automated email address **NoReply@BCArtsCouncil.ca** to your safe senders list and check your spam folders.
- Once approved, you will be able to complete your profile and access the online application.

All applicants:

- Closely review these guidelines to make sure you and your proposed activities are eligible before you apply.
- Then, log into the online system to update your online profile and to access the online application.

Registration questions? Contact BCArtsCouncil@gov.bc.ca or 250-356-1718 for registration assistance. The BC Arts Council office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday.

Accessibility Support

If you self-identify as D/deaf or having a disability, you are eligible for the BC Arts Council's accessibility support 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 BCACaccess@gov.bc.ca

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

Who can apply

Before you begin your application, make sure you are eligible, and your proposed project is eligible. Ineligible applications will not be forwarded for assessment.

Projects that are solely Media Arts (moving images, sound, audio, new media, and digital arts) are not the priority of this program. The [Individual Arts Grants: Media Artists](#) supports media arts projects for eligible media artists.

Applicant Eligibility

To be eligible, you must:

- Demonstrate you are an established visual or craft artist or independent critic or curator in a CV or Resume, by having:
 - **Completed appropriate and relevant training in the discipline.** Training may include education through post-secondary institutions, traditional knowledge transfer, or apprenticeship with a qualified practitioner or knowledge keeper.
 - Have completed **two or more years of artistic practice** after basic training.
 - Worked at a level that is recognized as professional by other practitioners in a similar discipline or by organizations in the discipline, demonstrated by:
 - **For visual or craft artists:** having completed two or more professionally curated exhibitions for which you have received exhibition fees (CARFAC rates or an equivalent fee).
 - **For independent curators or critics:** having curated two or more exhibitions or professionally published two or more works of critical writing for which you have received professional fees (CARFAC rates or an equivalent fee).
 - **Alternately, for Indigenous applicants who do not meet the above criteria:** Have previously received at least one grant to assist with the creation of work through the First Peoples' Cultural Council arts program.

Culturally specific practices with curated public display or engagement outside of typical exhibition formats, and/or where compensation is not traditional, may be eligible as exhibition credits. Contact a Program Advisor to discuss prior to applying.

To be eligible, all applicants must also:

- Be a Canadian citizen or Permanent Resident of Canada.
- Be a B.C. resident who ordinarily resides in B.C. and has lived in B.C. for at least 12 continuous months immediately prior to the application closing date. For more information, review our [Determining B.C. Residency](#) page. You must be prepared to provide documentation to support your residency status (if requested).
- Have final creative control over the proposed project.
- Fairly compensate artists, arts and culture 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](#).

- Not have any overdue final reports on previous BC Arts Council grants.
- 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.

Required Support Material

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

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

Only submit support material that is related to your proposed activities. 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.

You are encouraged to test all materials before submitting your application.

If you have any questions about support material, contact the Program Advisor.

Required support material for this application includes:

- A Curriculum Vitae (CV) for the applicant (or if submitting a collaborative application where multiple artists share creative control of the proposed project, resumes or CVs for ALL collaborators). All CVs should:
 - Be a maximum of three (3) pages with a minimum font size of 11 point.
 - List previous training, education, apprenticeship, or mentorship activities relevant to the artistic craft, discipline, or practice.
 - List related artistic activities, exhibitions, publications, residencies or other awards or achievements
 - All listed training, grants, or artistic activities should:
 - Indicate the dates and locations of the activities
 - Include the names of artists/curators/funders/organizations/publishers/mentors
 - Indicate which exhibitions, publications, or presentations you received fees for (for example: "Paid Fee" or "CARFAC fee received").
- Confirmations from partners or collaborators (as applicable) confirming the nature of their participation (maximum one page each). **Do not include general letters of support.** Confirmations can be as simple as an email or a formal letter.
- Examples of work related to the proposed project:
 - **For Visual and Craft Artists:**
 - Up to 12 images**OR**
 - Up to 6 minutes of video documentation
 - **For Independent Critics and Curators:**
 - Up to two published texts, articles, or catalogues (maximum 6 pages total)**OR**
 - Up to 12 images or up to 6 minutes of video documenting the work of the artist(s) who will be the focus of the research or project.

OR

- Up to 12 images or up to 6 minutes of video documenting a previous exhibition.
- A completed Inventory of Submitted Materials form. Describe your support materials and how they relate to the proposed project.

Note: You may submit a combination of the above types of examples to best serve your application. Total examples must not exceed the maximum amount allowed in a single format. Maximums are calculated as follows: 30 seconds audio/video = ½ page of text = 1 image.

Note for Collaborative Applications: Collaborative applicants must divide the support material uploads between collaborators as they see fit, within the same limitations noted above.

How to name your support material files:

Name your files beginning with your Last Name, First Name - Support Material Type, followed by any additional info such as Image Title, Viewing Order, or Project Partner name. For example:

- Smithers_Nelson_CV.doc
- Smithers_Nelson_image_title_1.doc
- Smithers_Nelson_reference_letter_partner_2.doc

Peer Assessment – How Decisions Are Made

Assessment Process

The following process is used to evaluate applications to this grant program:

- The BC Arts Council reviews each application for eligibility.
- Eligible applications are forwarded to independent assessment panels. Assessment panels include individuals (assessors) with broad artistic knowledge, experience, geographical representation, and diverse aesthetic, institutional, and cultural viewpoints, including those from Indigenous perspectives.
- Assessors read and score the applications using the assessment criteria below.
- The assessment panel then ranks (or orders) the applications. Grants are awarded based on this ranking.
- Funding priority may be given to applicants considered part of a designated priority group.
- The BC Arts Council sends an email to each applicant with the peer assessment panel's decision approximately 16 weeks after the application closing date.
- Applicants may check the status of their application at any time through the online system.
- All results are final.

Assessment Criteria

The assessment panel will read and score your application based on the following criteria.

Each criteria category has a percentage of your application's total score. For example, a category weighted at 20% means you can score between 1 and 20 in that area. Compelling, detailed, and specific reasons, with strong evidence and clear responses to the criteria will score higher. Vague,

wordy or confusing answers, not addressing questions, or not responding to the criteria will score lower.

Keep these criteria in mind as you complete your application. Some of the specific points listed below may not apply to your project. However, your application should clearly explain how the proposed project generally meets each area of assessment.

ARTISTIC CONTRIBUTION AND SIGNIFICANCE (40%)

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

- Quality, scope, and significance of the proposed project.
- Level of artistry, originality, rationale or vision and overall contribution to, or advancement of, the artistic practice
- Contribution to the art form or practice, including reclamation, preservation, or innovation.
- 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.
 - Appropriate protocols and practices.
- Meaningful contribution to under-represented artistic practices.

IMPACT ON THE APPLICANT AND COMMUNITY (40%)

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

- Potential impact or benefits to the applicant's individual artistic or professional practice, including the timeliness, urgency, and relevance of the activities for the applicant's exposure and professional growth.
- Significance of the project relative to the BC Arts Council's priorities of reconciliation, equity, diversity, inclusion, and access.
- Potential benefits to, or engagement of, the applicant's identified communities, the arts community in B.C., rural and remote communities, and/or equity-deserving or underrepresented communities.
- Level of accessibility within project plans, which may include, but is not limited to: cultural, cognitive, financial, intellectual, linguistic, physical, psychological, sensorial accessibility; and support for those who experience barriers or disability.

FEASIBILITY (20%)

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

- Achievability of the project as demonstrated by a realistic budget and resource allocation.
- The applicant's experience in realizing previous and/or comparable projects at a professional standard.
- Measures in place to ensure the safety of all participants, including physical, emotional, psychological, or cultural safety.
- Clarity of the work plan or timeline.

Designated Priority Groups

The BC Arts Council is committed to targeted investment in underserved and equity-deserving groups. These [designated priority groups](#) are the focus of strategic measures, dedicated programs, funding prioritization processes, and other equity support initiatives.

Designated priority groups include applicants and arts and culture 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](#)

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

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

Notification of Results

The BC Arts Council intends to inform applicants of the peer assessment results 16 weeks after the application closing date.

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.

Feedback

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

Payment of Grants and Reporting Requirements

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. Final reports must be submitted through the online system within 30 days of the Project End Date stated in the application.

You will not be able to submit future applications to the BC Arts Council if you have an overdue final report.

Recognition of Grants

In recognition of grant funding, BC Arts Council and the Province of British Columbia's support should be acknowledged in all promotional materials, both print and online. The approved BC Arts Council logo and Province of British Columbia logo is available as a joint file in a single download in a variety of ready-to-use digital formats. Find logo downloads and accompanying graphics standards and usage guidelines [online](#).

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

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 BC Arts Council's Annual Report 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.

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 culture activity in communities across British Columbia. The BC Arts Council is actively committed to reconciliation, equity, diversity, inclusion, and access through our 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. There is also a [What is the BC Arts Council?](#) video on our website that includes ASL interpretation with voice over and captions.

What is Needed for the Application: **Application Checklist**

Be sure you have included or completed the following before you submit your application. You will not be contacted to address errors or missing requirements. Applications are assessed as submitted.

Before you start:

- ☐ Review the application preview and program guidelines for specific requirements.
- ☐ Call the Program Advisor if you need to confirm eligibility or if you have questions.
- ☐ New applicants: Register in the BC Arts Council online system.
- ☐ Add NoReply@BCArtsCouncil.ca to your safe senders list.
- ☐ Complete and submit any overdue final reports on previous BC Arts Council grants.

In your Personal Profile on the BC Arts council online grant system:

- ☐ Update your mailing address and other contact information.
- ☐ Complete the Designated Priority Group section (required for funding prioritization).
- ☐ Complete the Voluntary Self-Identification section (optional).

Dates, Number and Drop-down Menus:

- ☐ Enter your project start and end date and the funding amount you are requesting.
- ☐ Select your primary artistic practice, and the primary practice used in the project.

Text boxes in application:

- ☐ Answer all mandatory text-based questions, including:
 - ☐ A project description that includes artistic vision, rationale and research methods.
 - ☐ Names and descriptions of roles for collaborators you share creative control with.
 - ☐ Descriptions of accessible, ethical and equitable approaches to your work, practice, activities or engagements (as required).
- ☐ Answer all non-mandatory text-based questions that are relevant to your project.

Pop-out forms:

- ☐ Complete the Eligible Professional Credits Table with the required amount of credits.
- ☐ Complete the Budget Form, including notes to explain your expenses and revenues.
- ☐ Complete the Inventory of Submitted Files Form, providing context for your support material submissions.

Uploaded documents:

- ☐ A detailed project timeline or workplan starting after the application closing date.
- ☐ Up to 12 images or up to 6 pages of published texts, or 6 minutes of audio or video.
- ☐ Your Curriculum Vitae (CV) and, the CVs or bios of collaborators (if applicable).
- ☐ Confirmations from partners or collaborators (as applicable).

And finally:

- ☐ Complete the Access Support tab (as applicable).
- ☐ Share your feedback in the Feedback tab (optional).
- ☐ Review the Assessment Criteria to be sure your answers address the program priorities.
- ☐ 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!**