



## TAC LEADERS LAB

### PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Application Deadline: September 16, 2019

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TAC is committed to equity and inclusion. We welcome and encourage applications from all Toronto artists and arts workers, including but not limited to: Indigenous people, persons of colour, Deaf Persons, Persons with Disabilities and Persons Living with Mental Illness, people who self-identify as 2SLGBTQIAP, newcomers and refugees, young and emerging artists and arts workers, and those working outside the downtown core. Learn more about what we are doing to make TAC more accessible and inclusive in our recently adopted [Equity Framework](#).

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#### PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Toronto Arts Council (TAC) is seeking enterprising creative individuals to participate in the TAC Leaders Lab.

This program has been created by TAC and Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity to enhance leadership capacity in Toronto's arts and culture sectors. The program is designed for arts professionals who have demonstrated the potential to lead change in their organizations, communities or arts sectors. TAC Leaders Lab is, as its name suggests, is an evolving program. The experience of each year's cohort is slightly different as Banff works with TAC to develop the most effective experience for Toronto's arts leaders. The program stresses a balance between personal and professional development.

Participants will be selected in a competitive process managed by TAC. The ideal candidate will share a deep desire to challenge their concept of leadership and manifest change in Toronto's arts sector. The jury is tasked with choosing a cohort that represents a diversity of practice and ideas but can work together and they will embrace the open exchange of ideas in a cross-disciplinary environment. This means that many worthwhile candidates may not be selected and are encouraged to apply again the following year.

#### PROGRAM GOALS

The goal of the program is to build a network of open-minded, **creative problem-solvers** and **innovative thinkers** from across arts disciplines, who will explore concepts and practices of relational leadership. The program focuses on power/influence, resilience/self-care, systems/networks, and community/civic engagement. Our aim is to strengthen leadership capacity in the arts sector, by

creating bridges, networks, tools and the space for exchanging different perspectives and approaches. The TAC Leaders Lab aims to support individual leaders as they develop collaborative solutions to complex challenges. Finally, the program is designed to invigorate and inspire one of Toronto's most vital assets – our arts leaders – and to ensure their future capacity to drive the health and success of the sector and the city as a whole.

## **PARTICIPANT REQUIREMENTS**

TAC Leaders Lab participants will make a commitment to attend two orientation sessions in Toronto, a one-week intensive leadership retreat in Banff in Spring 2020, and ten monthly activities and exchanges in Toronto in 2020-21. Those applicants with full time employment are asked to submit a letter of support from their employer confirming that they will be granted paid time off to attend the week in Banff and the monthly Toronto sessions. Employed applicants who do not have the support of their employer are still eligible to participate in the program but must commit to making the necessary arrangements to take leave from work as required.

## **WHAT TO EXPECT**

Through a process led by facilitators from across disciplines and sectors, participants in the TAC Leaders Lab will enhance the skills, tools, networks and knowledge that will support personal leadership growth and new collaborative opportunities.

### **Participants of the program can expect to:**

- Engage in an intensive leadership process at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity aimed at reframing personal perspectives and challenges;
- Examine the multiple contexts of the Toronto arts ecology;
- Identify key challenges in leadership development, and the necessary steps to create positive action;
- Exchange information and ideas related to personal leadership, change strategies, creative place-making, equity, community engagement, collaboration and best practices in arts leadership;
- Build an active network of Toronto peers working in different disciplines;
- Share opportunities for participation in the activities of Leaders Lab participants;
- Participate in ongoing evaluation of the program including surveys and interviews;
- Engage with innovative leaders from the arts and other sectors about change-making initiatives;
- Make a year-long commitment to the program that will include events in Toronto focused on skills and connections, and online engagement with fellow participants;
- Challenge assumptions.

## **COSTS**

All program costs will be covered by TAC and include the following:

- Return flight and transfers from Toronto to Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity for one-week retreat;
- All meals and accommodations at Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity;
- A stipend of \$150 - \$750 to cover business and personal costs during the program. (The stipend will vary according to the employment status of the individual leader; those on salary from an organization will qualify for the lesser amount).

**Projects involving Deaf artists and artists with disabilities** may apply for a TAC Accessibility Grant by completing the Accessibility Expenses section of the application. A *TAC Accessibility grant* will provide up to a maximum of \$5,000 towards accessibility costs incurred during the program. Accessibility costs include but are not limited to: ASL interpretation, audio description, closed captioning, communications assistants, and attendant care.

## ELIGIBILITY

This program is open to professional arts workers living and working in Toronto. TAC recognizes the diversity of artistic, administrative, generational and cultural leadership styles and backgrounds that make up the Toronto arts sector and will factor that into its selection process.

### Each applicant must:

- Be a permanent resident of Toronto;
- Be a professional arts worker<sup>1</sup>;
- Be willing to commit to one week in Banff from April 25 to 30, returning to Toronto May 1 and a minimum of 10 monthly gatherings on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday from 1pm to 7pm in Toronto over a one-year period;
- Have demonstrated leadership qualities in the arts and culture sphere;
- Have demonstrated experience with community engagement;
- Not be an employee of the City of Toronto.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

Applicants are required to register and submit their application on *TAC Grants Online* (<https://tac.smartsimple.ca>). **Applications must be submitted no later than 11:59 pm on the deadline date.** TAC does not accept applications by any other means of delivery. You will receive a confirmation email when your application is submitted. Check your spam/junk mail folder if it doesn't arrive in your in-box.

## SELECTION PROCESS

- A multi-disciplinary jury of arts leaders will adjudicate all applications and recommend the final list of 18 candidates.
- Participants will be selected on individual merit and on the basis of building a group that reflects the diversity of experiences and perspectives that is Toronto.

Included in the **Equity Framework** is an **Equity Priority Policy**, which states that if there are multiple well-assessed applications of equal merit in an adjudication round but insufficient funds in the grants budget to support all deserving candidates, applications proposed by applicants that self-identify as belonging to one of Toronto Arts Council's equity priority groups or that primarily involve or serve artists from these groups will be prioritized.

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<sup>1</sup> TAC recognizes that due to systemic barriers within the broader arts community (e.g. limited mainstream presentation opportunities for artists from equity-seeking communities) that some flexibility may be required in interpreting eligibility criteria to take into account **equivalent** professional experience and contexts. Potential applicants from equity-seeking communities are encouraged to discuss their eligibility with the program officer in advance of submitting an application.

## **NOTIFICATION**

Applicants will be notified by email when the results are available, and will be able to log in to *TAC Grants Online* to receive their results. Notification will be received within four months of the deadline date.

## **CONTACT:**

If you have questions about the program, please contact:

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