TAC is committed to equity and inclusion and welcomes applications from diverse cultural and geographic communities within the City of Toronto. Specific equity measures or targeted programs are in place to ensure full access and participation by Indigenous artists, artists of colour, artists who are Deaf, have disabilities or are living with mental illness, artists who self-identify as 2SLGBTQIAP, newcomer and refugee artists, young and emerging artists and artists working outside the downtown core. Learn more about what we are doing to make TAC more accessible and inclusive in our Equity Framework.

What does this program support?

The Open Door program supports ideas with the potential to create transformative change for arts organizations and collectives and/or the arts sector in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Open Door projects demonstrate innovation and support experimentation and risk-taking. The program supports projects that invest in community partnerships, collaborative leadership, and the sharing of knowledge.

For 2021, Open Door will support Toronto arts organizations and collectives in their broad ranging plans to transition, transform and thrive in response to an on-going global pandemic.

In 2021 Open Door program will provide funding for:

- Large-scale, collaborative initiatives that create transformative change for organizations and collectives, create meaningful engagement for artists and audiences, with the potential to significantly benefit underserved communities.

- Projects that address pandemic-related impacts for organizations, collectives, and/or the arts sector with emphasis on community access and participant health and safety.

- Organizations considering succession, merger, restructuring or wind-down of their operations.

There is no set grant amount or maximum request for this program. This grant may cover up to 100% of project costs. Grants awarded may be less than the full amount requested.

Eligible expenses may include extraordinary costs - including equipment purchases required to improve access and participant safety - that allow arts organizations to function and present arts activities in the context of public health restrictions. Projects involving equipment purchase may request up to 25% of the total budget towards these costs. You will be required to submit an Access Plan and Budget that describes how the equipment is intrinsic to the project and how you will accommodate audience and participant access needs.

Toronto Arts Council recognizes that the pandemic has exacerbated existing inequities within the arts sector. The program will prioritize support for projects that are led or created by and/or primarily involve a majority of artists or arts workers from one or more of TAC equity priority groups. More information about TAC equity priority groups is available on our website through the following link: Equity Framework. Consideration will also go to organizations and collectives that support artists, arts workers, and communities most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

TAC Accessibility grant

Projects involving Deaf artists and artists with disabilities may apply for an additional TAC grant by completing the Accessibility Expenses section of the application and including the requisite information in their budget. A TAC Accessibility grant will provide up to a maximum of $5,000 towards accessibility costs.
for artists incurred during the project. Accessibility costs include but are not limited to: ASL interpretation, audio description, closed captioning, communications assistants, attendant care (including helpers for Elders), support workers and equipment rentals or other supports required to meet artists’ accessibility needs).

**When can the project happen?**

All projects must be completed within two years of the date on the notification letter. Project activities may not start until after November 1.

**Who can apply?**

Applicants are encouraged to speak to Liza Mattimore, Strategic Programs Manager, before submitting an application. Please contact Liza to schedule an appointment to discuss your proposal: liza@torontoartscouncil.org.

- Applicants must be located in the City of Toronto. A post office box cannot be used to meet the residency requirement.
- To apply to Open Door applicants must be either an incorporated non-profit arts organization or an artist collective operating on a not-for-profit basis.
- Applicants must have a viable administrative and financial plan for the proposed activities;
- Organizations that have received an Open Door grant in the past two years must contact the program manager to discuss their eligibility.
- 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 grant program manager in advance of submitting an application.
- Applicants with active Arts Discipline or Strategic Funding grants may also be eligible to apply to this program for the 2021 grant cycle. Please speak to the Program Manager about your eligibility.

**This program does not fund:**

- Individuals
- Activities included in TAC operating grants
- Activities included in TAC project grants
- Projects previously funded through Open Door
- Print or online publishing.
- Schools, tuition-funded training programs, curriculum-based programs, or research projects.
- Organizations receiving operating funding directly from the City of Toronto’s Economic Development and Culture Division or from another City of Toronto Division

**How do I apply?**

Applicants are required to register and submit the 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.
Application Accessibility Support for Deaf persons or persons with disabilities

Applicants who are Deaf or have a disability and need support to complete their grant applications can apply for funds to cover the costs of assistance from Application Support Service Providers. Up to $500 is available per eligible applicant in each calendar year. Please contact your Grant Program Manager at least six weeks before the grant program deadline to determine eligibility, request application support funding, and to review the process for payment to be made to your Service Provider. Requests for application support require approval from the Grant Program Manager.

What do I need to prepare?

The three main sections of the Open Door grant application are: Project Description, Budget, and Support Material.

- The Project Description section asks about: the inspiration for the project; its relationship to the Equity Framework and communities impacted by COVID-19; how it may be transformative for Toronto artists, the sector, or for the applicant; and how it will create meaningful engagement for artists and audiences with the potential to significantly benefit underserved communities. You will be asked about your Access Plan and if you are requesting funding for equipment purchases, you will be required to describe how the equipment is intrinsic to the project and how you will accommodate audience and participant access needs.

- The Budget section asks you to fill out the budget form and upload supplementary budget notes which break down the budget totals in the form. You are also asked about your organization’s experience managing project budgets. For requests over $30,000, you may also upload a PDF copy of your most recent financial statements (either audited, or internally prepared with a balance sheet and statement of revenues and expenses). If you are requesting funding for equipment purchases, you will need to include a supplementary budget breaking down those costs and detailing how they inform your access plan.

- An optional Support Material section allows you to include material or information beyond what is included in the text of the grant application. Video/Audio: provide a URL link and password (if required) to your file. Video and audio files should be no longer than 3 minutes in length. Do not submit material through Google drive. Images: you can provide a link or upload JPEGs. Writing samples, press clippings and letters of support: upload a PDF file.

How is my application assessed?

Applications are assessed through a peer review process: a review panel of practicing artists and arts workers decides which applications will be recommended for funding. The grant review panel’s recommendations are approved by TAC Directors.

Peer assessors are selected because of their direct experience and knowledge of the Toronto arts sector as well as to ensure fair representation from TAC’s identified equity priority groups.

The grant review panel assesses projects according to the following criteria:

- The potential for the proposed project to create transformative change for arts organizations and collectives and/or the arts sector in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- The extent to which the project invests in community partnerships, collaborative leadership, and the sharing of knowledge.

- Demonstration of an applicable and clear Access Plan for organizations and collectives, and an applicable budget (for projects involving equipment purchase).

- The financial and administrative viability of the proposed project.
• The extent to which your project serves artists and communities from TAC equity priority groups including those most impacted by COVID-19

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.

**How and when will I find out the application results?**

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 by the beginning of November. Results are not released over the telephone.

**What if my project changes?**

Grants may be used only for the purposes outlined in the application. Changes to the scale, activities and timeframe of the project must be reported promptly to TAC. In such cases, TAC may require full or partial repayment of the grant. Changes to project dates must be reported to the Grant Program Manager.

**What do I do when I have completed the project?**

Recipients are required to file a final report on their project. The final report is filled out and submitted online, just like the application. Future applications will not be accepted unless reports on previous funding have been received and approved by TAC.

**What are the rules or requirements for this funding?**

• Successful applicants will receive a Letter of Understanding. The Letter of Understanding will detail the terms and conditions of the funding. The Letter of Understanding must be signed and uploaded to TAC Grants Online before funding can be released. The Letter of Understanding also describes situations that would require grant repayment.

• Recipients of TAC Strategic Funding must acknowledge TAC’s support with both logo recognition and the following statement on promotional materials related to the funded activity: This project was supported through Toronto Arts Council Strategic Funding.

• Toronto Arts Council has moved to electronic payments. If your application is approved, you will be required to enter the bank account information of the grant recipient that corresponds to the Applicant Name on your Notification Letter. Bank information is submitted along with your Letter of Understanding and other Notification Letter Requirements.

• The City of Toronto requires that all organizations and individuals adopt a policy of non-discrimination as a condition of receiving a grant from the City. All successful applicants will be required to submit a signed Declaration of Compliance with Anti-Harassment/Discrimination Legislation and City Policy. A copy of the following City documents can be downloaded from TAC’s website: Anti-Racism, Access and Equity Policy Guidelines, Hate Activity Policy and Procedures and Human Rights and Harassment Policy and Procedures.

• TAC staff attends client performances and events. Grant recipients are required to send TAC information on any public performances or events presented in the context of their grant-supported projects. This information should be emailed to the Grant Program Manager.

• In addition to the aforementioned general conditions of funding, TAC reserves the right to place other conditions on the release of the grant (such as confirmation of venue, programming, other sources of funding, etc.). Any specific conditions will be contained in the Letter of Understanding.
Further questions

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