
TAC is committed to equity and inclusion. We welcome and encourage applications from all Toronto artists, arts organizations and artist collectives. Specific equity measures or targeted programs are in place to ensure full access and participation by Black artists, 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?

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

This program has been created by TAC and The Creative School at Toronto Metropolitan University 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, an evolving program. The experience of each year's cohort is slightly different as The Creative School works with TAC to develop an 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 aim to challenge their concept of leadership and manifest change in Toronto's arts sector. The grant review panel is tasked with choosing a cohort that represents a diversity of practice and ideas, can work together, and that 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. 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.

Who can apply?

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 worker¹;
- Be willing to commit to a one week in retreat at a location in Ontario from April 29 to May 3, 2024, and to monthly sessions on Wednesday evenings in Toronto over a one-year period. Additional details are available on the TAC Leaders Lab page on the TAC website.
- 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.

Participant Requirements

TAC Leaders Lab participants will make a commitment to attend two orientation sessions in Toronto, a one-week intensive leadership retreat., and monthly activities and exchanges in Toronto in 2024-25. 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 retreat week 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 can expect to:

- Engage in an intensive leadership process at the retreat aimed at reframing personal perspectives and challenges;
- Examine the makeup 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 to collaborate with the 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.

¹ 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 manager in advance of submitting an application.

Costs

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

- Travel to and from the retreat
- All meals and accommodations at the retreat;
- A stipend of \$500 will be provided to cover business and personal costs during the program. Limited financial accommodation can also be made for childcare or eldercare upon request – please contact the Program Manager for more information.

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.

How do I apply?

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.

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?

- Applicants are asked to fill a series of questions detailing what leadership looks like and examples of leadership opportunities including challenges and successes.
- A reference letter is required from someone who is familiar or has been impacted by your work.

How is my application assessed?

- A multi-disciplinary review panel 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 cohort that reflects a diversity of experiences and perspectives.

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 do I find out the application results?

We will send you an email when the results are available and you will log in to TAC Grants Online to receive the results. Notification will be received within three months of the deadline date.

What do I do when I have completed the project?

Recipients are required to file a final report. 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 grant?

- Successful applicants will receive a Letter of Understanding. The Letter of Understanding will detail the terms and conditions of the grant.
- Grant recipients are required to acknowledge the support of Toronto Arts Council in all written materials relating to the activities supported.
- 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.

Further questions

If you have questions about the program, please contact:

Peter Kingstone, Grant Program Manager

peter@torontoartscouncil.org

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