

# TORONTO ARTS\_COUNCIL

## 2026 DANCE PROJECTS PROGRAM GUIDELINES

***Application deadlines: March 16 and August 4, 2026***

TAC is committed to equity and inclusion. We welcome and encourage applications from all Toronto artists, including but not limited to: Indigenous artists, Black 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

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### **What does this program support?**

The Dance Projects program provides funding to professional dance artists, organizations and collectives for the creation, production and presentation of dance works, and other projects that support the development of professional dance in Toronto. The program recognizes a diversity of dance practices. The City of Toronto supports this program through a funding allocation approved annually by Toronto City Council.

You may apply in one of four categories described below. Grants awarded may be less than the full amount requested. In all categories except Creation, TAC will not fund 100% of a project: applicants must indicate a range of revenue sources, which may include donated goods and services.

**1. Creation:** supports choreographic creation, including research and development, and commissions. Some form of presentation (e.g., in-studio, with invited peers or public) must be included as part of the process. If you create your work in stages, you may apply for funding for different stages of creation but note that you can only receive one grant in a calendar year from this program.

The maximum grant in this category is \$10,000. TAC may fund 100% of a project in the Creation category.

Expenses can include:

- Fees paid to choreographers, dancers, and creative resources such as a musical composer, outside eye, mentor, elder, dramaturge, etc.
- Studio costs and production elements that are essential to the choreography.

**2. Production and Presentation:** supports the rehearsal, production and presentation of live dance.

The maximum grant in this category is \$20,000.

Expenses can include:

- Artistic, production and administrative fees and costs, including rehearsal, venue, publicity, marketing, and outreach.

**3. Dance Series and Festivals:** supports dance series and festivals that present Toronto choreographers, dance artists and dance companies.

The maximum grant in this category is \$10,000.

Expenses can include:

- Artists' engagement fees, production and administrative fees and costs, including publicity, marketing, and outreach.

**4. Dance Field Development:** supports projects that develop and advance the practice of professional dance in Toronto. Development projects must benefit a group of dance professionals; individual professional development projects are not eligible. Individuals are not eligible applicants in this category; the applicant must be an organization or collective.

Projects can include:

- Short-term dance technique or choreographic workshops, laboratories, etc.
- Events designed to further develop or expand a specific dance technique, practice, or movement style.

The maximum grant in this category is \$8,000.

Expenses can include:

- Artistic, production and administrative fees and costs, including venue, publicity, marketing and outreach.

For all categories, project expenses could include: artists fees, production and technical fees, marketing and outreach costs, administrative costs, childcare costs, etc. The payment of artist fees is a requirement in this program.

Works conceived for digital platforms are eligible in all categories.

### **TAC Accessibility Grant**

**Projects involving Deaf artists and artists with disabilities** may apply for an additional **TAC Accessibility grant** that 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.

Starting in 2026, the TAC Accessibility Grant will allow grant recipients to apply for an Accessibility Grant at any time during their project. The Accessibility Grant will be available to grant recipients as a separate application in 2026.

### **When can the project happen?**

The Project Start Date must be a minimum of 3 months after the submission deadline date. Applications submitted to the February deadline should be for projects taking place after June 1 and applications submitted to the August deadline should be for projects taking place after November 1; All projects must be completed within two years of the date on the Notification Letter.

### **Who can apply?**

If you are a first-time applicant, or if you have any questions about your eligibility or the eligibility of your project, please contact the Dance Program Manager.

- To apply to Dance Projects, applicants can be individual professional dance artists, or professional not-for-profit dance organizations or collectives. The payment of artists' fees is a requirement in this program.
- Artists must be professional. A professional artist is someone who has developed their skills through training and/or practice; is recognized as such by artists working in the same artistic

tradition; actively practices her/his/their art; seeks payment for her/his/their work; and has a history of public presentation with involvement (as a dancer, choreographer or producer) in at least 2 paid dance performances or productions.

- 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.
- You may not apply as an individual and an organization or collective for the same project in the same competition. If you are one of the members of an applicant collective, you may also apply as an individual for an unrelated project in the same competition.
- The project for which the funding is requested must take place in the City of Toronto.
- Applicants may receive only one grant per calendar year through the Dance program and may not apply to other TAC discipline programs. However, TAC offers other types of granting opportunities through its Strategic Initiatives envelope, and you may be eligible to apply to one of these programs. Please note: if you apply for a Dance project grant you cannot also apply to another TAC program for the same project. Please consult TAC's website for other granting opportunities.

***For Individuals:***

- Individuals must be Canadian Citizens or Permanent Residents or have an application pending for Permanent Resident status or be a Protected Person (approved refugee claimant) and, if requested, be able to provide documentation to verify this.
- Individuals must have been a resident of the City of Toronto for at least one year prior to the deadline, and live and work in Toronto for at least 8 months a year. A Post Office Box address cannot be used to meet the residency requirement. Note: Temporary absences of up to one year may be considered, subject to written explanation and special permission. Please contact TAC's Dance Program Manager.
- The project's choreographer must have completed at least one year of independent dance practice and a minimum of three publicly presented pieces, excluding student presentations.
- Professional artists pursuing undergraduate or graduate studies may not apply for work related to their academic program of study.

***For Organizations and Collectives:***

- Organizations and collectives must be incorporated non-profit organizations or unincorporated collectives which operate on a non-profit basis. A collective is defined as two or more artists working together under a group name, either on a single project (ad hoc) or on an ongoing basis.
- The majority of the members of an organization or collective must have completed at least one year of independent dance practice.
- Organizations and collectives must be located in the City of Toronto. A Post Office Box address cannot be used to meet this requirement.
- For collectives of two artists, both must be City of Toronto residents. For collectives of more than two artists, the majority of members must be City of Toronto residents.

### **This Program does not fund:**

- Projects that have been started or completed prior to the announcement of results. Toronto Arts Council does not fund retroactively.
- Choreographers who direct dance organizations that receive Operating funding from TAC;
- Organizations or collectives that receive Operating funding from TAC;
- Dance studios and schools;
- Schools that are part of Ontario's public or private education system;
- Educational and religious institutions, unless there is a clear separation in both programming and budget between their regular activities and their arts activities;
- Ongoing operating costs, such as permanent staff salaries and general administration of an organization. This program is not intended to support an organization or collective's ongoing activities. For information about Annual Operating funding, please contact TAC's Dance Program Manager.
- Costs related to equipment purchase, capital projects (such as building purchase or renovation), fundraising activities, deficit reduction, publishing and archiving projects, awards and award ceremonies, projects conceived for the creation of a film or for competitive purposes, art therapy;
- Activities taking place outside of the City of Toronto (such as touring, travel, accommodations).

### **How do I apply?**

Applicants 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 dates. 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 four main parts to the application are: Artistic Statement, Project Description, Budget Information, and Support Material:

- The Artistic Statement is a statement from the choreographic lead(s) of the project...It may refer to Dance genre and/or aesthetic; Inspiration for creating; Creative influences; General creative process; and Career goals. (up to 500 words)
- The Project Description has four sections: Project Goal, Work Plan, Public Impact and Project Contributors.
- The Project Goal describes what you want to do and why. (up to 1000 words)
- The Work Plan describes how you will accomplish the project. (up to 250 words)

- The Public Impact section gives details about the intended audience/participants and how you plan to reach them. This section is for projects that include public presentation or community participation (an answer is not required for Creation projects). (up to 250 words)
- The Project Contributors is a list of the artists and key community contributors involved in your project. Provide resumes for choreographers and artistic directors and brief bios for other contributors. Accepted file format – PDF.
- In *Budget Information* you will fill out a table that shows the proposed Revenues (Earned Revenue, Private Sector Revenue, Government Revenue) and Expenses (Artistic/Production Expenses, Administration/Marketing Expenses) for your project. You will also need to upload a PDF file with supplementary budget information with a breakdown of donated goods and services and projected Artistic Fees.
- *Support Material* is an important part of the application. Audio-visual support material is required in applications in the Creation and Production/Presentation categories. Applicants in the Series/Festivals and Dance Field Development categories should contact the Dance Program Manager to determine what, if any, support material is necessary. Audio-visual support material must be submitted by providing links to an external website where your work has already been uploaded, such as Vimeo, YouTube, your personal website, etc. Do not submit material through Google drive. You may password protect your video link and provide TAC with the password within the application. Applicants can provide a maximum of three examples of their work (separately or within one clip) not exceeding a total of 10 minutes. Written support material must be uploaded in PDF format.

### **Are there requirements and guidelines for paying artists?**

Grant recipients are required to pay artists' fees for professional artists, and encouraged to bring these fees into line with sector standards or, at a minimum, living wage benchmarks:

- arts sector guidelines: [Carfac \(visual arts\)](#), [Canadian Alliance of Dance Artists](#), [Canadian Actors Equity – Independent Theatre Agreement](#), [Canadian Federation of Musicians](#)
- the Ontario Living Wage as a minimum standard for artists/arts workers' salaries and fees: [Ontario Living Wage by Region](#)

### **How is my application assessed?**

Grants are awarded on a competitive basis by an independent review panel of peers from the dance community. Peer assessors are professional dance practitioners, including choreographers, dancers, artistic directors, and presenters selected for their familiarity with a broad spectrum of dance practices, specialized expertise, and fair-mindedness. Grant review panels are composed to ensure fair representation of gender and cultural diversity, as well as emerging, mid-career and established artists. The grant review panel's recommendations are approved by TAC Directors.

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

#### ***All categories***

- Artistic merit
- Contribution of the project to the development of the applicant
- Financial viability of the project and the ability of the applicant and participants to carry out the project

#### ***Production/Presentation, Series/Festivals and Dance Field Development categories only***

- Contribution of the project to the development of dance in Toronto

- Public impact, including the quality and effectiveness of the publicity, marketing, outreach and/or audience development strategies
- Financial viability, indicating a range of revenue sources

Project funding is recommended only at the discretion of the grant review panel. This is a competitive program. Applicants should be aware that meeting the general eligibility requirements does not guarantee that a grant will be recommended.

Included in TAC's [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 will be prioritized.

Decisions of the grant review panel are final.

As the peer assessors and the applications change with each year, peer assessor evaluation of relative artistic merit will also vary. Unsuccessful applicants may succeed with another grant review panel and are encouraged to reapply.

### **How and when do I find out the application results?**

TAC will send you an email when the results are available, and you will log in to TAC Grants Online to receive the results. Results are not released over the telephone.

Notification will be received within four months of the deadline date. For the February deadline, you will find out in late May; for the August deadline, you will find out in late October.

### **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 your 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 through TAC's granting portal. The due date for the final report will be included in the grant notification letter. Future applications to the Creative Communities, Dance, Literary Arts, Music, Theatre, and Visual/Media Arts programs 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.
- Grant recipients are required to acknowledge the support of Toronto Arts Council in all written materials relating to the activities for which funds are granted. The TAC logo is available on our website; specifications for the size and placement of the logo should be commensurate with that of other donors or sponsors that have provided similar financial support. In lieu of the logo, the recipient may use the phrase "produced with the support of the City of Toronto through Toronto Arts Council."
- 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.
- Grant recipients are required to maintain adequate accounting records as to the receipt of funds from Toronto Arts Council. A T4A form will be issued by TAC to Individual Applicants and should be retained for income tax purposes.
- 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**

Contact Dance Program Manager

Tafiya Bayah (he/him/they/them)

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