TORONTO ARTS _ COUNCIL

2027 BLACK ARTS PROJECTS PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis.

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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The Black Arts Projects Program supports arts projects by Black artists, Black artist collectives, and Black-led, Black-focused, and Black-serving organizations[1]. For the purpose of this program, "Black" refers to African descendant people across the diaspora including but not limited to African Canadian, Afro-Caribbean, Afro-Latinx, East African, West African, Southern and Central African, Afro-Arab, Afro-Indigenous, etc. This funding program is intended to support the development, continuation, and flourishing of Black arts communities.

What does this program support?

The Black Arts Projects Program provides support to individual artists, artist collectives of 2 or more Black artists working on a non-profit basis and incorporated non-profit Toronto Black arts organizations. The City of Toronto supports this program through a funding allocation approved annually by Toronto City Council.

TAC recognizes the need to respond to barriers that Black arts communities face due to anti-Black racism. The program seeks to address these barriers by providing pathways to sustainable support to Toronto's Black-led arts organizations serving Black artists. The program is designed to increase access to, awareness of, and participation in Toronto Arts Council funding by Black artists, while amplifying the work of Black artists in the city and creating avenues for sustainable art practice.

This program is multidisciplinary and recognizes a diversity of art practices, including new and emerging art forms, culturally relevant art practices, and multi/interdisciplinary arts projects. Applicants can apply for projects that engage in one or multiple arts disciplines. Applicants may apply in one of two categories described below:

- **Creation & Development:** Supports full creation, partial creation, or completion of work-in-progress of an arts-based project at any stage and in any arts discipline. Project activities may include artistic creation in one or more stages of a project, including an arts education project (i.e., workshop(s)). This may also include OR solely focus on the beginning stage of research and development. The research and development stage may include testing an idea, developing processes, building scope, building collaborative relationships, gathering and organizing information, accessing, archiving, or documenting knowledge. Applicants must clearly state what stage their project is in and what part(s) of the project they are seeking funding for.
    - Open to individual artists and artist collectives
    - Maximum grant in this category is $10,000.

        - Maximum grant in this category including a mentorship component is $15,000.
        - Expenses can include:
            - Artistic, production and administrative fees and costs, including venue, publicity, marketing and outreach.
            - Fees paid to collaborators, mentors and creative resources.
            - Studio costs, materials, and production elements that are essential to creation.
            - Rental of space or software to conduct research interviews, accessing support materials, i.e., archives.
            - Visiting sites of significance
- **Presentation:** supports projects that primarily focus on presentation, including exhibition, presentation, and dissemination of work by Black artists in any arts discipline
- Open to individual artists, artist collectives and arts organizations
- Activities may include a series or one-off exhibition, festival, or presentation in one or more arts disciplines and/ dissemination of existing work
- This component does not fund workshops and conferences
- Maximum grant in this category is $15,000
- Maximum grant in this category including a mentorship component is $20,000
- Expenses can include:
- Artistic, presentation, exhibition and administrative fees and costs, including installation, rehearsal, venue, and production
- Dissemination costs including publicity, marketing and outreach
- Fees paid to collaborators and mentors

TAC may fund up to 100% of the requested amount. If the requested amount is below the total project budget, applicants must indicate other revenue sources, which may include in-kind goods and services.

Additional resources for project grant recipients include:

- **Mentorship** – mentorship for project grant recipients interested in connecting with artists that can support them in building or acquiring skill sets to develop their art practice. A mentorship option will be available in each project grant category, and applicants will be asked to indicate which mentor(s) they would like to work with and provide rationale for the mentorship. An additional budget of up to $5000 is available as compensation for mentors and applicants.

Grant recipients will also receive information about additional supports such as Black Arts Connect workshops and Black Futures Studios Co-Creation Lab as they become available:

- **Black Arts Connect**- drop-in workshop series focused on growing and establishing art practice. Project grant recipients may request and select sessions that are of benefit to them.
- **Black Futures Studios Co-Creation Lab** - access to a multidisciplinary co-creation lab for artists to collaborate, meet, and exchange ideas. This space will provide open multidisciplinary studio spaces to create and collaborate on work.

All additional resources are optional. Black Arts Connect workshops and Black Futures Studios co-creation lab may be accessed as needed. The mentorship component must be selected within the application. Please contact the Program Manager for more information about these supports.

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 4 months after the submission date
- All projects must be completed within two years of the date on the Notification Letter

Who can apply?

If you have any questions about your eligibility or the eligibility of your project, please contact the Program Manager.

- To apply to the Black Arts Projects Program, applicants must identify as a Black professional artist or artist collective, or be an incorporated not-for-profit arts organization. The payment of artists' fees is a requirement of all categories in this program.
- 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 applying.
- 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.
- You may not apply as an individual and an organization or collective for the same project at the same time. 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 year.
- 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 Black Arts Project and may not also have a pending application to the Black Arts Operating program. However, applicants may still apply for different projects to arts discipline programs as well as other strategic initiatives programs that TAC offers. In this case, the applicant may receive up to one project grant in each funding stream and three project grants [3] total per calendar year. Please note: if you apply for a Black Arts project grant, you cannot also apply to another TAC program for the same project. Please visit 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 requirements of residency. Note: Temporary absences of up to one year may be considered, subject to written explanation and special permission. Please contact the Program Manager.
- Professional artists who are pursuing a graduate degree may not apply for work related to their thesis. Note: A letter from the graduate program director confirming that the project is not related to the graduate student's thesis may be required. Please contact the Program Manager.

For Organizations and Collectives:

- Organizations and collectives must be incorporated non-profit organizations or unincorporated collectives which operate on a non-profit basis[2]. 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. For collectives of two artists, both must be City of Toronto residents and Black. For collectives of more than two artists, the majority of members must be City of Toronto residents and Black.
- Organizations must be Black-led, Black-focused, and Black-serving, including a majority of Black members on its leadership team, including Board of Directors, Board Executive, and management.
- Organizations and collectives must be located in the City of Toronto. A Post Office Box address cannot be used to meet this requirement.

This Program does not fund:

- Projects that have been completed prior to the announcement of results. Toronto Arts Council does not fund retroactively.
- Non-Black artists, organizations and collectives;
- Organizations and collectives that receive Operating funding from TAC;
- Undergraduate students.
- 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;
- This program is not intended to support ongoing operating costs, such as permanent staff salaries, general administration, and ongoing activities of an organization or collective.
- 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 competitive purposes, art therapy;
- Activities taking place outside of the City of Toronto.

How do I apply?

Applicants register and submit the application on TAC Grants Online (**https://tac.smartsimple.ca**). Applications can be submitted on an ongoing basis, any time before 11:59 pm on October 4, 2027. 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. **After 11:59 pm on October 4, 2027, your 2027 application can still be accessed in your Application History page in TAC Grants Online**. To work on a new application after October 4, 2027, you can start a new draft from the Apply page after the program re-opens by October 15th for the following granting year. Applications submitted between October 15th-December 31st, 2026 will be assessed in the first peer assessment in 2027, with results communicated in early Spring.

Application Accessibility Support

Applicants who are Deaf, have a disability, or 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 five main parts to the application are: Artistic Statement, Project Description, Mentorship (if applicable), Budget Information, and Support Material:

The Artistic Statement is a statement from the lead artist(s) of the project.

- Tell us about your Inspiration for creating; creative influences and process; achievements and career goals; collective vision or mission/values statement.
- Describe how Black artists and community members are involved in your project or decision-making

The Project Description covers: Project Goal, Project Phase (if applicable), Work Plan, Outreach & Access Plan (if applicable), and Project Contributors.

- The Project Goal describes what you want to do and why.
- The Project Phase describes what phase of your project you are applying for
- The Work Plan describes how you will accomplish the project.
- The Outreach 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 & Development projects).
- For presentation projects, access planning relates to measures taken to make the event accessible to audiences. For more information on how to create an access plan, please refer to our external resource list on accessibility in the arts
- The Project Contributors is a list of the artists and key community contributors involved in your project. Bios are required for all key project contributors.

The Mentorship component (if applicable), requires the following:

- Identifying mentor(s) for your project (must be determined prior to application)
- Mentor(s) artists' bio including name, artistic history and contribution

- Rationale for mentorship including how mentorship will support your development as an artist, collective or organization
- Identifying goals for the mentorship relationship
- A work plan for how you plan on working with your mentor(s) including a list of planned activities (optional)

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/Mentorship fees) for your project. You will also have an opportunity to provide more information about the budget and budgetary breakdown.

The Support Material is an important section where you will upload Audio-visual files/links to support the assessment of your application. Applicants in all categories are encouraged to contact the Program Manager to determine what, if any, support material is necessary. Audio-visual support material can either be uploaded to the application or made accessible through an external website where your work has already been uploaded, such as Vimeo, YouTube, personal website, etc. Do not submit material through Google Drive. If it's password protected, please include the password. Keep in mind that the Peer Assessors will have a maximum of 5 minutes to watch all of your support material. Written support material, like letters of support or press clippings must be uploaded in PDF format.

Answers to application questions may be submitted in written, audio or video format. If you are uploading your answer as an audio or video file, you will need to limit the length of your video to the maximum time allotted for each answer.

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 a panel of Peer assessors are Black artists who are selected on the basis of their familiarity with a broad spectrum of arts disciplines and practices, specialized expertise, fair-mindedness, gender diversity, as well as emerging, mid-career and established artists.
    - The grant review panel assesses projects in each category according to the following criteria:

- 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
- Contribution of the project to the development of the applicant, and (for presentation projects) the Black arts community
- Public impact, including the quality and effectiveness of the publicity, marketing, outreach and/or audience development strategies (for presentation projects)

- 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 or more of Toronto Arts Council's equity priority groups will be prioritized.
- Decisions of the grant review panel are final.
- Peer assessor evaluation of relative artistic merit will vary. Unsuccessful applicants may succeed with another grant review panel and are encouraged to reapply.

What do I do when I have completed the project or portion of the project being funded?

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. Reports on previous projects in this program must be submitted to TAC before you are eligible to reapply for another grant in the program. 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.

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 Program Manager

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