TORONTO ARTS _ COUNCIL

2027 Program Guidelines

CREATIVE COMMUNITIES: MULTI-YEAR OPERATING FUNDING

Application deadline: April 1, 2027

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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Toronto Arts Council provides funding support to outstanding artists and arts organizations that contribute to the cultural life of the City of Toronto. TAC is committed to artistic excellence, innovation, and accessibility, and supports a wide spectrum of artistic endeavour and a range of activity that makes the City of Toronto one of the leading cultural centres in Canada. Through its support, TAC cultivates a richer engagement between artists and audiences and reflects the City of Toronto through the diversity of artists, arts communities and audiences that it serves.

What does this program support?

The Creative Communities Program provides Multi-Year Operating support to non-profit Toronto arts organizations (both incorporated and unincorporated) engaged on an ongoing basis in work that enables public participation in arts and culture. Funding through this program supports both operations and programming. The City of Toronto supports this program through a funding allocation approved annually by Toronto City Council.

Art practiced at a community level creates a powerful sense of inclusion, understanding, and the possibility of self-expression among participants. It can involve one or more art practices, such as music, dance, theatre, visual arts, and storytelling. The collaborative involvement of professional artists with community members is a necessary component.

TAC contributes to the development of community arts in Toronto by supporting community-engaged arts activity that demonstrates vision and excellence. In addition to funding professional[1] arts organizations and community groups engaged in community arts activities, TAC recognizes the vital contribution emerging arts organizations make to the cultural life of Toronto and provides funding opportunities to assist these groups to access professional artistic leadership.

Who can apply?

To be eligible for Multi-Year Operating funding, an applicant must:

- be non-profit;
- have professional[1] artistic leadership and pay appropriate professional fees to artists;
- be located in the City of Toronto and have a significant portion of its activities occurring within the City;
- have a history of sustained community arts activity over the two years prior to this application;

- have received Annual Operating funding through TAC's Creative Communities program for at least the past two years;
- have a viable administrative structure;
- be governed by a Board of Directors or other body responsible for the organization ;
- have sound financial management;
- have stable artistic, organizational and board leadership with plans in place for any transition;
- submit verification of financial results of the last completed fiscal year:
- for requests over $50,000, **audited financial statements** are required;
- for requests of $50,000 or less, **a review engagement** is required, (or, if available, audited financial statements);
- for requests of $25,000 or less, if annual operating revenues are under $100,000, **unaudited financial statements** that include a balance sheet and a statement of income and expenses is required, (or, if available, audited financial statements or a review engagement);
- receive significant support on an annual basis from other levels of government and/or the public and/or the private sector.

First-time Applicants

First-time applicants to the Multi-Year Operating program (i.e. organizations that did not receive multi-year funding last year) must speak to Senior Manager, Arts Discipline Programs Kevin Reigh prior to completing an application form to confirm that they are eligible to apply.

Can I Apply to Other TAC Grants?

Organizations may receive only one grant per calendar year through the Creative Communities program and may not apply to other TAC discipline programs. However, TAC offers other types of granting opportunities through its *Strategic Initiatives* envelope, and operating grant recipients may be eligible to apply to one of these programs. Please consult TAC's website for other granting opportunities. Operating grant recipients may receive a maximum of one additional grant per calendar year and must submit a final report on that project before applying to another program in the *Strategic Initiatives* envelope.

What activities does this program fund?

Community Engaged Arts: This program funds professional arts organizations that bring artists and communities together to do creative and participatory work. The engagement can be through programs such as:

- storefront and Neighbourhood-based arts centers
- artist residencies
- collaborative creation and presentation/exhibition of artwork
- workshops and mentoring
- exploration of community issues through art
- sustaining of traditional, culturally-based art forms

The organizations must include Toronto-based professional artists in its programs. Please note that, although teaching and learning (from group workshops to one-on-one mentoring) can be an important part of the community arts process, this program does not fund faculty salaries.

Arts Service Organizations: This program funds professional arts organization that supports the work of professional artists working at a community level. This can include:

- organizations that provide booking/promotional services to professional artists working in schools, parks, libraries and community centres
- multidisciplinary arts organizations that serve and support artist-members
- organizations whose primary purpose is to support the professional practice of community arts

Value of Grant

TAC does not fund 100% of an applicant's budget. Applicants may receive less than the full amount requested. TAC does not provide funding for capital projects (e.g. equipment, renovations, purchase of buildings), fundraising events/projects or deficit reduction.

How do I apply?

Applicants are required to register at TAC Grants Online (https://tac.smartsimple.ca) and submit the application using this online grants management system.

Applications must be submitted on TAC Grants Online 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.

You will enter your Financial and Statistical data online at CADAC (Canadian Arts Database/Données sur les arts au Canada) www.cadac.ca. Financial statements must also be submitted to CADAC and a copy uploaded in PDF form with your application.

Do I need to prepare support material?

In addition to the information requested in the application form, applicants may upload promotional materials produced by their organization in relation to its last year's activities (e.g. programs, brochures, catalogues, etc.) and/or press clippings (maximum 6 pages). Accepted file format – PDF

First-time applicants to this program may provide a link to audio/visual support material. If required, provide the password or any special directions required to access the file. Applicants currently receiving TAC Annual Operating support should not submit audio/visual support material. The assessment committee will review audio/visual support material from first-time Annual Operating applicants only.

How will my application be assessed?

Applications are reviewed first for eligibility by TAC staff. TAC's Creative Communities Committee then assesses all eligible applications. Grant recommendations are approved by the TAC board of directors.

TAC's Creative Communities Committee is a volunteer committee of practicing artists, other arts professionals and individuals involved in community-based arts activities in communities and neighbourhoods across the city. Members are selected on the basis of their familiarity with and specialized expertise in a broad spectrum of arts styles/practices and their direct experience in the Toronto arts community. TAC strives to ensure fair representation of gender and diverse cultural communities on its adjudication committees and grant review panels. Creative Communities organizations are invited to nominate peers interested in serving on TAC's Creative Communities

Committee. These nominations should be submitted in writing. Committee members serve maximum three-year terms.

Multi-Year Operating funding is recommended only at the discretion of the Creative Communities Committee. First-time applicants should be aware that approval is not automatic solely on the basis of meeting the general eligibility requirements. The Creative Communities Committee reserves the right to transfer applicants that do not meet the standard required to receive Multi-Year support to TAC's Annual Operating program.

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.

Assessment Criteria

The Creative Communities Committee evaluates all organizations applying for Annual Operating funding using the following assessment criteria in the context of each applicant's stated mandate and direction, available resources and stage of development, and the geographic, cultural and artistic environments in which it works. TAC has further adopted specific equity-focused assessment criteria to evaluate the extent to which an applicant organization reflects the diversity of its local community and the City of Toronto in its artistic programming and in its operations, particularly with regards to the inclusion and engagement of Black people, Indigenous people, persons of color, persons who are Deaf, have disabilities or are living with mental illness, and persons who self-identify as 2SLGBTQIAP.

TAC's equity focused criteria represent 20% of an applicant's overall assessment in the evaluation process for operating grants.

Artistic Assessment Criteria:

I. Artistic Quality

In assessing Artistic Quality, consideration is given to:

- The vitality of the organization's mandate and vision.
- The relationship of the mandate and vision to the organization's achievements, initiatives and goals.
- The levels of artistry achieved through the organization's artistic activities, which may include creation, production, presentation, performance, design, writing, exhibition, programming, etc.

II. Development of the Art Form

In assessing the contribution, the organization makes to the development of the art form, consideration is given to:

- The level of commitment to the development of Canadian work through creation, production, presentation, exhibition and/or programming.
- The role of the organization in the development of the artistic field.

III. Role and Relevance in the Artistic Community

In assessing the organization's role and relevance in the artistic community, consideration is given to:

- The organization's relationships with artists and/or other arts organizations, which may include resource-sharing, creative collaborations, providing opportunities for networking and professional development, etc.
- The support the organization gives to artists in Toronto by providing opportunities for performance, exhibition, screenings, networking, professional development, and/or other types of support.

IV. Equity Implementation

In assessing Artistic Equity Implementation, consideration is given to:

- The alignment of equity and inclusion goals with mandate and programming, and the ways goals are evaluated.
- The demonstration of accountability regarding equity and inclusion goals, and recognition that equity and inclusion work is an ongoing process.
- The level of commitment to engaging artists from TAC equity priority groups in programming, and the development of production or distribution networks with people from priority groups.
- The extent to which programming is inclusive and accessible to a broad community.
- An awareness of potential issues of cultural appropriation.
- An intersectional approach to inclusion.

2. Organizational Assessment Criteria:

I. Public Impact

In assessing the organization's public impact, consideration is given to:

- The organization's ability to describe its current audience and its level of commitment to develop an audience that reflects the community it serves.
- The organization's ability to recognize and cultivate potential new audiences and develop marketing plans to support this.
- The ways in which the organization engages its audience through outreach and audience development activities such as artists' talks, Q&As, pre- and post-performance talks, lecture-demonstrations, etc.
- The organization's ability to gain support from the wider community in the form of sponsorships, partnerships, volunteers, etc.

II. Financial and Administrative Viability

In assessing the organization's financial and administrative health and operations, consideration is given to:

- An appropriate allocation of human and financial resources to fulfill the organization's plans.
- The stability of the organization, demonstrated by its retention of staff and strategies for ensuring succession planning.
- A budget that is realistic and shows a range of earned, private and government revenue.
- A demonstration through past performance of the organization's ability to secure the resources necessary to carry out its work.
- A demonstration through past performance that the organization can respond to changes in its financial circumstances.

- If the organization has a deficit, the effectiveness of the plans that are in place to reduce the deficit and to improve and strengthen financial planning.
- A governing body of the organization that reflects the community served by the organization and is committed to the well-being of the organization.

III. Equity Implementation

In assessing Organizational Equity Implementation, consideration is given to:

- Equity related organizational goals that recognize equity and inclusion as an ongoing process.
- A commitment to the intersectional representation of TAC equity priority groups in the senior leadership, staff and board, and articulation of how the goals were developed.
- An awareness of systemic barriers – physical, economic, cultural, social or artistic - that may prevent participation in the activities or the organization, and the articulation of goals to address barriers.
- Partnerships with other organizations belonging to TAC equity priority groups.
- The level of commitment to engaging audiences from TAC equity priority groups.
- Efforts to create an inclusive environment, and particularly for people requiring accessibility accommodations
- The integration of anti-oppression frameworks and non-colonial or non-Eurocentric lenses applied to organizational activities.

Are there requirements and guidelines for paying artists and arts workers?

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

Toronto Arts Council recognizes that increasing levels of compensation for artists and arts workers may require organizations to review programming levels – TAC will not penalize organizations making necessary adjustments, including reducing programming.

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.

Payment of Grants and Reporting Requirements

Grant recipients will be required to sign a Letter of Understanding that details the terms and conditions of their grant. The Letter of Understanding will be made available when you receive your grant results. Grant payment will not be released until the signed Letter of Understanding has been uploaded to TAC Grants Online.

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.

Multi-year grants will be paid in three annual installments. Release of the first installment is contingent upon receipt of the signed Letter of Understanding and fulfillment of any conditions specified in the Letter of Understanding. Release of the second and third-year payments will be contingent on the organization fulfilling the interim reporting requirements that will be outlined in the grant notification letter.

Amounts approved for an organization may change over the multi-year period if:

- the organization does not carry out its planned program of activities.
- the organization undergoes major changes in artistic and/or administrative direction or personnel or a major disruption of activities is predicted.
- the organization fails to meet its obligations as a grant recipient, including the requirement to submit reports to TAC and comply with the acknowledgement policy.
- TAC is unable to fulfill its funding commitments due to a reduction in its grants budget.
- TAC receives an increase to its grants budget and new monies become available to the Creative Communities program during the multi-year cycle.

Acknowledgement of Toronto Arts Council Support

Grant recipients must include visual acknowledgement of TAC support in all promotional materials, advertising and programs of performances or works related to the grant. The TAC logo may be downloaded from TAC's website; specifications for the size and placement of the logo should be commensurate with that of other donors or sponsors that have provided comparable financial support.

Repayment of Grant

The grant must, on the request of TAC, be repaid (in whole or in part) to TAC, if the grant recipient:

- breaches any of the terms and conditions of the grant.
- knowingly provides false information in the grant application.
- uses the grant for purposes not approved by TAC.
- ceases operating.
- ceases to operate as a non-profit organization.
- winds up or dissolves.
- commences or has commenced against it any proceedings in bankruptcy, or is adjudged a bankrupt.
- breaches any of the provisions of the Ontario Human Rights Code in its operations.

City of Toronto Anti-Racism, Access and Equity Policy

The City of Toronto requires that all grant recipients adopt a policy of non-discrimination as a condition of receiving a grant or other support from the City.

All grant recipients will be required to submit a signed Declaration of Compliance with Anti-Harassment/Discrimination Legislation and City Policy.

A copy of the following City of Toronto documents can be downloaded from the TAC website at www.torontoartscouncil.org: *Anti-Racism, Access and Equity Policy Guidelines, Hate Activity Policy and Procedures*, and *Human Rights and Anti- Harassment Policy*.

Contact your Program Manager

For further information on this program please contact Senior Manager, Arts Discipline Programs:

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