

PROJECT GRANT PROGRAM

for Winnipeg arts organizations & collectives



2026 Application Guidelines

This program is intended for new and developing arts organizations, established arts organizations that work on a project basis, and arts organizations undertaking a special, one-time initiative. Collectives or unincorporated groups may be eligible provided that they meet the special criteria outlined below. The program is designed to provide partial support to a broad range of activities and art forms, reflecting different cultural traditions and art practices. A Project Grant must be applied to a specific project - with potential for artistic merit and civic impact - planned to take place within the 18 months following the notification date.

2026 Deadline: Tuesday February 3rd

The maximum grant available under the Project Grant Program is \$10,000

First-time applicants are advised to review these guidelines carefully and then consult with the Grants Consultant before completing an application. Applicants intending to apply as a collective *must* contact the Grants Consultant to determine eligibility prior to applying. This program is not open to organizations receiving Operating or Program Support Grants from the Winnipeg Arts Council, or to any organization or collective which receives other grants or funds from the City of Winnipeg or any of its agencies.

Applications to this program are submitted online at winnipegarts.gosmart.org.

Online applications will be accepted beginning in November 2026.

After reviewing these guidelines please direct questions regarding the program to:

Sam McLean

Grants Consultant

204-943-7668

sam@winnipegarts.ca

The Winnipeg Arts Council funds and supports artists and arts organizations. We initiate and promote development of the arts for the people of Winnipeg.



GENERAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants for Project Grants must meet all of the following criteria:

- be an organization that has as its primary mandate and core activity the creation, production or presentation of the performing, visual, literary, film, video or media arts.
- be based and active in Winnipeg, and provide programming or services that are open to the public and publicized city-wide.
- be registered as a not-for-profit corporation in Manitoba, governed by a volunteer board of directors, and have operated as such for a minimum of six months, OR be an artist collective that meets the special criteria below, in addition to the criteria for not-for-profit corporations.
- have qualified artistic and administrative leadership (which may be combined), and pay principal artistic contributors for their services in accordance with generally accepted professional standards.
- *receive revenue from sources other than the WAC.* These may include box-office revenues, memberships, sponsorships/donations from individuals or businesses, in-kind contributions or support from foundations and other levels of government.
- Arts service organizations whose primary objective is to support the development of one or more art forms through a range of services to professional artists and/or not-for-profit arts organizations, or through the bringing together of professional artists and the arts community at large, may be eligible. *Arts service organizations must contact the Program Manager in advance of applying to determine eligibility.*

Dedicated professional art programs that fit these criteria and function as part of a larger incorporated not-for-profit organization may be considered eligible for funding provided that the organization has dedicated artistic staff and resources related to the creation, production or presentation of the performing, visual, literary, film, video or media arts. Prospective applicants must contact the Grants Consultant prior to applying to ensure eligibility.

Multiple organizations collaborating on a project must designate an eligible arts organization to act as the primary applicant, record keeper, and responsible fiscal agent for the project.

SPECIAL CRITERIA FOR COLLECTIVES OR UNINCORPORATED GROUPS

Collectives or unincorporated groups must consult with the Winnipeg Arts Council's Grants Consultant prior to applying to ensure eligibility.
--

- A collective is considered a group comprised of two or more professional artists working together under a group name, either on an ongoing or ad hoc basis.
- If the collective is two members, both must be residents of the City of Winnipeg. If the collective is more than two members, at least 50% of the group must be residents of the City of Winnipeg (proof of residency may be required).
- All members of the group must have at least one year of professional practice and a history of public presentation. A group is not normally considered if its principal artistic collaborators have been enrolled in an undergraduate program within the last year.

- The group must have qualified artistic leadership. In the absence of an Artistic Director, applicants must include an outline of the artistic oversight for the project and short bios of the principal artistic collaborators.
- Collectives should already have identified the work(s) to be exhibited or presented, or, at minimum, have developed clear critical or curatorial objectives and provide a list of artists/artworks under consideration.
- Principal artistic collaborators on the project must be paid in accordance with generally accepted artistic standards.
- The group must have a designated administrative agent for the project, who is responsible for ensuring the terms of the contribution agreement are met.
- All members of the collective must be in good standing with the Winnipeg Arts Council.
- Collective applications are not intended to augment or replace applications from arts organizations. If an incorporated arts organization is involved with the project, the request should normally come from the organization rather than from a collective.
- More than one request for a project will not be accepted, i.e., one request from an organization and one request from a collective, or an application for a Project Grant and another for an Individual Artist grant, for similar or overlapping projects. If you are unsure whether this applies to you, contact the WAC office in advance of making your application.

NOTE: Payments to collectives will not be issued to individuals. If you intend to apply as a collective you must be able to deposit a cheque payable to the name of the collective.

No exceptions will be made.

INELIGIBILITY

Project Grants are not available to:

- organizations or collectives that do not have as their primary mandate and core activity the creation, production or presentation of the performing, visual, literary, film, video or media arts;
- organizations or collectives that are not based in and active in Winnipeg;
- individual artists;
- for-profit organizations;
- civic, provincial or federal departments or branches;
- health, social service, religious or sports organizations;
- educational institutions;
- private club or community centre programs;
- trade unions, trade guilds, and professional associations;
- organizations that receive multi-year Operating or Program Support grants from the Winnipeg Arts Council;
- organizations or collectives that receive other grants or funds from the City of Winnipeg or any of its agencies;
- organizations or collectives that have previously received support from any Winnipeg Arts Council program and have not submitted an acceptable Final Report. Contact the Grants Consultant if you cannot report on a previous grant before the new deadline because of your publishing or production season.

Project Grants are not available for:

- ongoing organizational costs including general overhead, salaries, and administration (reasonable administrative costs directly related to the project may be included);
- competition prizes, awards, or scholarships;
- annual conferences;
- travel, tours and/or activity outside Winnipeg;
- activity undertaken or costs incurred prior to the award notification date;
- deficit reduction or fundraising projects;
- projects that forecast a deficit;
- capital projects/purchase of equipment (where specialized equipment associated with the project's production is required, please contact the Grants Consultant to discuss eligibility);
- projects that are included in the ongoing activities of any organization which receives Operating or Program Support grants from the Winnipeg Arts Council;
- projects that are included in the ongoing activities of organizations which receive other grants or funds from the City of Winnipeg or any of its agencies;
- activities for which any member of the group or collective has a pending request or confirmed funding from another Winnipeg Arts Council program;
- projects that have been previously declined by Winnipeg Arts Council juries twice; if you are requesting support for a project you have already submitted to this program, we encourage you to contact us before applying to ensure that your request is eligible.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

The Project Grant Program has a single annual deadline:

February 3rd, 2026 *for projects taking place between May 1, 2026 and November 30, 2027.*

Applications must be submitted online at winnipegarts.gosmart.org until 11:59 pm local time, however no technical support is available outside of office hours. Applications will be accepted at the beginning of November, 2025.

APPLICATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED USING THE GOSMART WEBSITE. APPLICANTS WHO DO NOT HAVE REASONABLE ACCESS TO THE INTERNET SHOULD CONTACT THE WINNIPEG ARTS COUNCIL AT LEAST FOUR WEEKS PRIOR TO THE DEADLINE TO ENQUIRE ABOUT ALTERNATIVE APPLICATION METHODS

INCOMPLETE OR LATE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED FOR FUNDING

NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS

Applicants will be informed of the results of their application, in writing, within approximately three months of the application deadline. Results are never released over the telephone, and assessor comments are not provided. Feedback will be provided, only when necessary, on technical aspects of your application. All funding is conditional and dependent upon an annual allocation from the City of Winnipeg.

PROCESS

Applicants must complete and submit all materials listed in these guidelines. **Only one proposal per organization or collective may be submitted to this program for consideration at any time.**

The program is not intended to facilitate artists submitting multiple proposals as members of different collectives at the same deadline.

Winnipeg Arts Council staff do not vote on applications. Staff review all requests received to determine eligibility, and then convene an independent jury of artistic professionals to assess each application and the support materials provided. The jury considers all applications based on the assessment criteria listed below and the context of the competition, and makes funding recommendations. Grants are awarded by the Winnipeg Arts Council based on these recommendations. There is no procedure for appealing the recommendation, however, the Winnipeg Arts Council welcomes comments or suggestions about any of its programs.

ASSESSMENT and EVALUATION CRITERIA

The program is competitive. Jurors are selected on the basis of their familiarity with and expertise in a broad spectrum of artistic practices and broadly reflect the community and the range of applicants. The jury will consider all of the following factors in evaluating grant requests; your application should address these criteria:

ARTISTIC MERIT

The jury will look at the artistic vision and the impact of the project on Winnipeg's arts ecosystem. Does it have a demonstrated artistic quality or make a contribution to the art form? Is the project distinct compared to other arts offerings in Winnipeg? Does it provide opportunities for Winnipeg artists? Are they being compensated properly?

AND

CIVIC IMPACT

Applicants should demonstrate how the project will engage with Winnipeg artists and audiences. Who are the target audiences? Will the project connect with new audiences? How will it reach different groups of people including historically underserved communities in Winnipeg? Will the project engage with different arts organizations, artists and community groups?

AND

PROJECT VIABILITY/ORGANIZATIONAL COMPETENCE

The jury will look at the applicant's potential to carry out the project. Does the applicant have the capacity? What is their track record - have they done something of this scale before, or are they ready to take this next step? Are the objectives realistic? Do they have a stable base of support and additional revenues (in-kind, sponsorships, other grants, etc.)?

CONDITIONS OF ASSISTANCE

- Grant payments are made by cheque and are not made to individuals. If you apply as a collective and are awarded a grant you must be able to deposit a cheque made payable to the name of the collective.

- Grant funds must be applied to anticipated expenses associated with the approved project, and not to subsidize any other project of the applicant, or to reduce or eliminate accumulated deficits.
- Grants are not retroactive, and cannot be applied to costs incurred prior to the notification date.
- Projects supported through this program must be completed within the time specified in the application, to a maximum of 18 months after the notification date.
- Previously funded projects must be completed with a satisfactory final report received and approved by the Winnipeg Arts Council before a new application can be submitted. Contact the Grants Consultant if you cannot report on a previous grant before the new deadline because of your publishing or production season.
- Recipients agree to carry out the activities as proposed in their application. Changes to the proposed grant activities must be brought to the attention of the Winnipeg Arts Council for consideration and approval before they are carried out. If a project is significantly changed without approval, the Winnipeg Arts Council reserves the right to rescind the award.
- If a collective does not report on a grant, no members of that collective will be eligible to apply to Winnipeg Arts Council programs until the file is closed.
- Projects which are recommended for funding at a lower amount than requested may be required to submit an acceptable revised budget before final approval of the grant.
- The Winnipeg Arts Council requires acknowledgement of its financial assistance on all film, video, electronic and printed materials related to the activities supported by this grant program, including brochures, ads, programs, posters, signage, websites and media releases. The required wording and WAC logo are available on the WAC website at www.winnipegarts.ca.
- Receipt of a grant does not guarantee funding in the following or any subsequent year.
- The Winnipeg Arts Council may share information related to applications and awards with officials in other funding agencies to assist with program planning and evaluation.
- The maximum grant available under the Project Grant Program is \$10,000.
- Ten percent of a grant awarded will be held back pending approval of an acceptable final report on the project.

FINAL REPORT

Grant recipients are required to submit a final report within 90 days of completion of a supported project, that includes:

- a summary of audience or attendance numbers / participation;
- a narrative description of the project undertaken, noting any variances from what was approved in the original proposal, and reflecting on the impact of the grant in terms of:
 - the art form;
 - the short- and long-term impact on the recipient organization and participating artists;
 - public impact and dissemination (Who is your audience? How did you engage with your audience? How was public value created?);
- a financial statement with actual revenues and expenses noting any variances from the approved budget using the "Final Report Actuals" column on the approved budget form;
- print materials (programs, flyers) and press articles/reviews related to the project;
- a selection of jpeg images related to the project for Winnipeg Arts Council public relations use. Please include accompanying image credits: name, description of work/image, photographer, etc.

WINNIPEG ARTS COUNCIL PROJECT GRANT PROGRAM – APPLICATION MATERIALS

Online applications are submitted at winnipegarts.gosmart.org. You must use an organizational account, not an individual account, to apply for a Project Grant.

- Log In to your organizational account or create a new one with a username and password. You must have an account in the name of the organization or collective under which you are applying. If you have previously applied for individual grants only, you will need to create a new organizational account to apply for a Project Grant.
- **Fill in** your application in the sections listed below. *You must save your work before leaving each page.* You may lose your work if you try to move to the next page without saving it first.

Please note that the GoSmart system uses character counts which include spaces.

1. Grant Overview

Provide information about the grant amount requested, total project budget, dates and artistic discipline. You will also need to provide a brief synopsis used to identify your application.

2. Project Description & Participation

In 5,000 characters (approximately 750 words), outline the planning, implementation, coordination, marketing and delivery of the project. Provide the names of the confirmed artistic team, information about your intended audience and how you plan to engage this audience. Your application will be assessed for potential artistic merit, civic impact and project viability as outlined under “Assessment and Evaluation Criteria” in the guidelines. You will also need to provide projected participation numbers for your project.

If your project deals with cultural content, your application should describe how you will deal authentically with that content. Examples include projects that include Indigenous knowledge or stories, or representations of cultures other than your own. There is no strict format for this, and it may not be applicable to all projects. Examples of rationale might include descriptions of lived experience or self-identification information, as well as through the participation of Knowledge Keepers, Elders, or cultural advisors from the communities represented in the proposed work. Letters of confirmation/support may be attached.

If your work engages with AI, for example materials created with, enhanced with, or otherwise employing the use of artificial intelligence or machine learning tools or technology, this must be disclosed in your application. Likewise, the use of stock images, sounds, etc., or any other type of materials or processes which are not your original creations must also be disclosed. This applies to your proposed project and your support materials as well as any other previous work referenced in your application.

3. Bios of Key Artists Involved in Your Project

In 5,000 characters (approximately 750 words), provide information on the key artists involved. Collectives should include names and information for all collective members. Collectives must attach a declaration affirming each member’s agreement to be held to the reporting expectations of the of the project grant. This declaration must be signed by each member of the collective at the time of submission.

4. Detailed Project Budget

You must use the Excel document provided. Complete and upload the Excel form outlining all sources of revenue and all expected expenses including only revenues and expenses that pertain to the project and fall within the granting period. Total revenues must equal total expenses and you must also indicate whether revenues are confirmed or anticipated. In the event that you are awarded a grant you will be required to submit an *Actuals* budget with your Final Report.

5. Organizational / Collective Information

In 5,000 characters (approximately 750 words), outline your organization's incorporated mandate, artistic mission, and annual activities. Collectives should describe the artistic direction/oversight of the group as well as any previous work among the principal artistic collaborators. You will also need to provide estimated participation numbers for your previous year's activities (if applicable) and arts organizations must include a board list and their most recent financial statements. If your organization has a significant surplus or deficit you must include a plan to address it.

6. Support Material

Online support material is done in 2 stages. You must upload it to your profile, called a Media Library, and then indicate which items in your Media Library are to be attached to the application itself. Please see below for allowable support material.

SUPPORT MATERIAL GUIDELINES

Applicants must include examples of previous work and/or work in progress for the jury to review. Work related to the proposed project is usually most effective. It is essential to include the highest quality samples in order to best represent your proposal and to indicate their relation to the proposed project. The examples submitted should demonstrate the quality of your work and your ability to undertake and complete the proposed project. For collaborative works, please specify your role in the creation or execution of the work.

Support material must be uploaded to your Media Library. The system will provide directions to do this.

It is not necessary to complete all of the fields which are offered when you upload your materials, but you should be sure to include the name of the work, date created, and if applicable, name(s) of collaborator(s). You can include any other applicable information in the description field. Visual artists should include the dimensions of the work samples.

You can store a maximum of 250 MB of data in your Media Library. This is the total combined for all of your samples.

- **PRINTED MATERIALS** such as written works in progress, scripts, outlines, treatments, research plans, musical charts, etc. should be uploaded in PDF format.
- **DIGITAL IMAGES** must be uploaded in JPG format.
- **AUDIO TRACKS** may be uploaded as MP3, WAV, AIF, WMA files.
- **VIDEOS** may be uploaded as MP4, MOV, MPG, MPEG, MXF, WMV files.

Applicants may submit up to 3 items, where “one item” is defined as any of the following:

- up to 4 minutes of audio or video, *or*
- up to 5 digital images, *or*
- up to 10 printed pages in PDF format.

The only acceptable item beyond these limits is a one-page letter confirming technical aspects of your application, i.e., a letter confirming the participation of a collaborator, or stating that the rights to perform or adapt an existing work have been acquired. Any additional materials must fit within the three-item limit described above.

There is no limit to the length of the samples you can upload, but assessors will review a maximum of 4 minutes per sample. Applicants wishing to have more than 4 minutes of one sample considered must adhere to the “3 item” rule, i.e., a track running between 4:01 and 8:00 in duration is two items, and a track longer than 8:00 will use all your allowable support material quota.