

Cultural Infrastructure Grant

Program Guidelines



The Cultural Infrastructure Grant program supports Victoria-based arts and cultural spaces operated by not-for-profit societies, non-profit cooperatives, registered charities, Songhees and Esquimalt First Nation Councils or Urban Indigenous non-profit organizations. This program will support the development of new spaces, upgrades to existing facilities including accessibility and urgent life-safety infrastructure, specialized equipment and planning projects for arts and culture spaces located in the City of Victoria.

CONTEXT

Safe and accessible cultural spaces are an essential part of the community. They provide spaces to work, practise, host activities and engage communities. The arts and culture industries play a large role in society, providing quality-of-life benefits, generating economic development opportunities for local businesses, while also supporting the tourism sector.

Rising real-estate values and redevelopment pressures are causing displacement and precarity of tenure for arts and culture organizations. The [Create Victoria Arts and Culture Master Plan](#) (2017) and the [Victoria Music Strategy](#) (2021) provide strategic direction to support a vibrant, diverse and thriving cultural ecosystem which includes funding, capacity building and resources for arts and cultural spaces.

When writing your application, please refer to the Create Victoria Arts and Culture Master Plan and Victoria Music Strategy objectives to help align your project objectives and outcomes with City priorities.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- To improve and upgrade existing cultural facilities, providing safe, accessible and sustainable spaces for individuals and groups with diverse needs
- To build organizational capacity and support a diverse ecosystem of arts and culture organizations that own, manage or share production, exhibition and workspace
- To increase the supply of cultural spaces owned and/or operated by not-for-profit organizations with an arts and culture mandate

EQUITABLE APPROACH

The City of Victoria’s Cultural Policy guides decision making on how we do our work. The City is strengthening its commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion by embedding these considerations into City’s policies, programs and practices through the mandate of the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and the Equity Framework.

The City defines equity as treating everyone fairly by acknowledging their unique situation and addressing systemic barriers. In keeping with our Cultural Policy Statement, the City is working to ensure that everyone has fair access to equal benefits and outcomes by being able to participate fully in the creative life of the city, which is essential to an equitable, inclusive and human rights-oriented society.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants must meet all the eligibility criteria listed below to have their application reviewed for funding under this grant program:

- Be registered as a not-for-profit society, non-profit cooperative, charitable organization, Songhees Nation Council, Esquimalt Nation Council or a registered Urban Indigenous not-profit society, with an independent and active volunteer board of directors
- Have a primary arts and culture focus as part of the organization's vision and mandate
- Be in good standing under the *BC Society Act*
- Have operated as a registered organization (as per definition above) for one full year prior to application and provide financial statements signed by the Board for the most recent fiscal year
- Be in good standing as per the terms and conditions of all previous City of Victoria grant funding, including submission of final reports
- Facility must be located and operating within the City of Victoria
- Submit a completed application package including all required materials prior to the application deadline
- Applicants seeking funding for **expansion / (re) development, physical infrastructure, accessibility upgrades or specialized equipment** projects must have a cultural space secured with a minimum tenancy period of 24 months from the application deadline. Exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis, but the focus is on supporting long-term space for the arts and culture sector.
- For applicants with spaces used for multiple activities and/or purposes (recreation, community centre, etc.), applicants must demonstrate that 50 per cent or more of the space and/or activities are dedicated for arts and culture purposes.
- Organizations that are in arrears with any local authority, are bankrupt, seeking creditor protection, are insolvent or under court supervision of any kind are not eligible to apply.

PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIONS

Partnerships and collaboration between multiple organizations are encouraged. Not-for-profit arts and culture organizations applying in partnership or collaboration with other not-for-profit organizations should designate one organization as the lead applicant in the application. Collaboration between not-for-profit (designated as lead applicant) and private organizations working in the cultural sector are eligible.

The lead applicant will be responsible for completing the application and reporting on activities, if funded. Evidence must be provided demonstrating that the proposed project is vital to the activities, audiences and mandates of each of the organizations included in partnership applications. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Partnership Agreement (PA) between all partner organizations with clearly defined roles, responsibilities and relationships must be provided as part of the application package.

INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES & EXPENSES

Applicants cannot apply for funding under this grant program to cover the following:

- Equipment that is essential to and part of ongoing operations and administration; examples include office furniture and appliances, computer or telecommunication systems, software programs, etc.
- Routine maintenance and repair work that is part of day-to-day operations.
- Project work that is already underway or completed prior to the grant application deadline and/or budget items to cover existing project or organization deficits.
- Fundraising, organizational development or marketing activities related to capital campaigns.
- Recurring operating expenses including fixed costs (i.e., rent, utilities) and staff time that is not specific to the proposed project. For operating grant funding, please refer to the [CRD Arts Funding Service](#).
- Programming activities including artistic research, production and/or exhibition. For programming grant funding opportunities, please refer to the [CRD Arts Funding Service](#) or the City of Victoria's [Grant web page](#) for specific programs.

MAXIMUM GRANT FUNDING

- Organizations may receive Cultural Infrastructure Grant funding for three consecutive years after which the organization must wait one year before applying again
- Applicants may apply for only one project per year, under any one of the five categories listed below:
 - For property acquisition and re-development projects to create additional space, applicants can apply for funding up to a maximum of \$100,000 and must provide confirmation of matching funding from other funding sources
 - For infrastructure upgrade projects, applicants can apply for funding up to a maximum of \$50,000 or 50 per cent of project costs, whichever is lower
 - For accessibility upgrade projects, applicants can apply for funding up to a maximum of \$50,000 or 50 per cent of project costs, whichever is lower
 - For specialized equipment purchases, applicants can apply for funding up to a maximum of \$25,000 or 50 per cent of project costs, whichever is lower
 - For planning study projects, applicants can apply for funding up to a maximum of \$15,000 or 50 per cent of project costs, whichever is lower

APPLICATION DEADLINE & PROJECT

COMPLETION TIMELINE

The deadline for submissions is April 26, 2024, 11:59 p.m. PST.

Completed applications along with all required materials should be sent via email to acollins@victoria.ca.

- All application documents must be submitted in either PDF, Excel, and/or JPG formats.
- Projects must be completed within 12 months after receiving City Council approval for funding.
- In limited cases, subject to special conditions or extenuating circumstances, extensions may be provided. Extensions must be approved in writing by the grant administrator.
- Extensions must be approved in writing by the grant administrator.
- Projects must be completed within 12 months after receiving City Council approval for funding.

APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Review these Program Guidelines to confirm organization and project eligibility.
2. Download the application form and budget template from the City's website at victoria.ca/CIG.
3. Contact City staff to discuss your project and ask questions.
4. **Optional:** Applicants requiring assistance can submit draft application packages for staff review at least 14 days prior to the deadline.
5. Submit a completed application package along with all required supporting materials by the deadline.

REVIEW PROCESS: 8-12 weeks

1. **Staff Review:** Completed applications submitted by the deadline will be reviewed by staff to ensure eligibility.
2. **Evaluation:** All eligible applications will be evaluated as per the assessment criteria by City staff and subject matter experts.
3. **City Approval:** Grant funding recommendations made by the Selection Committee will be presented to the Director of Business & Community Relations for approval.
4. **Notification:** Following approval, each successful applicant will receive a digital copy of funding notification by email, along with terms and conditions of the grant funding.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

All eligible applications will be evaluated based the following assessment criteria. Applicants should discuss and demonstrate how the proposed project fulfils each of the four areas:

a) Vision and Need (25 per cent)

- Project meets a current or future need for arts and culture space and supports the organization's mandate and long-term sustainability goals.
- Applicant exhibits clear understanding of and responds to stakeholder needs, including artists, organizations and audiences.

b) Community Impact and Benefit (30 per cent)

- Clearly defined benefits in terms of upgrading infrastructure, accessibility, creating or expanding space and/or enhancing capacity for specific artistic discipline(s), practitioners and/or audiences.
- Demonstrates community participation with support from the arts and cultural community and other stakeholders.
- Demonstrates impact through enhanced and/or increased access for specific communities to participate in arts and culture activities.

c) Feasibility (30 per cent)

- Applicant demonstrates appropriate capacity with leadership, expertise and experience to ensure successful and timely completion of the project.
- Applicant demonstrates project viability with realistic and balanced project budget and clearly identified diverse sources of funding.
- Applicant exhibits financial accountability and long-term sustainability with balanced annual financial statement and operating funding to maintain the facility.

d) Equity, Diversity, Reconciliation & Accessibility (15 per cent)

- Applicant identifies and demonstrates impact on increasing or improving equity, reconciliation and accessibility, including physical, economic and/or cultural accessibility for underrepresented, marginalized and/or equity-seeking communities and/or Indigenous groups that experience barriers to participation and representation in arts and culture.
- Applicant demonstrates respectful and inclusive approaches and actions to support reconciliation with Songhees Nation, Esquimalt Nation and Urban Indigenous communities.

PAYMENT AND REPORTING

- Successful applicants will receive 80 per cent of their grant within 30 days of Council approval. The remaining 20 per cent of grant funding will be provided after receipt of the final report.
- All grant recipients must submit a final report within 30 days of project completion. Required documentation includes a project report, photo documentation, financial statement listing actual revenue and expenses signed by a Board representative and electronic copies of any studies or reports commissioned. A report template will be provided to successful applicants as part of the grant confirmation package.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Applicants awarded a grant will be required to agree to terms and conditions including:

- The information provided in the project proposal and related documents is accurate and complete. Any significant change or any change in scope or deliverables of the project as presented in the application, must be discussed and receive approval in writing from the Arts, Culture and Events Liaison in advance of implementation.
- Prior to undertaking any work related to property construction, renovation or alteration to existing premises, landlord approval and other permits have been obtained and provided to the City of Victoria. Confirmation is required prior to any initial grant payment.
- Applicants are responsible for securing all required permits and approvals to meet all federal, provincial and municipal legislation, guidelines and bylaws. The award of grant funding may in no way be construed as providing for other City approval.
- Grant recipients must return any unused portion of City funding at the end of the grant term (12 months from Council approval), unless an extension in writing has been obtained from the grant administrator.
- The City's support must be acknowledged in all promotional or public materials related to funded activities, including all print and online media. Contact engage@victoria.ca to request electronic copies of the City of Victoria's logo and usage standards.
- Submission of a final report upon project completion, which includes a project summary, photos, actual project budget signed by the Board and electronic copies of plans and studies commissioned as part of the project.
- Applicants who receive \$50,000 or more in funding will be required to provide an annual update on the status of their capital upgrades, for a period of five years following receipt of funding.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION

All documents submitted to the Cultural Infrastructure Grant program become the property of the City of Victoria. The City will make every effort to maintain the confidentiality of each application and the information contained within, except to the extent necessary to communicate information to staff and assessment committee members for the purposes of evaluation and analysis. The City will not release any of this information to the public except as required under the Province of British Columbia Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act or other legal disclosure process.

CONTACT INFORMATION

PLEASE NOTE: Applicants are encouraged to discuss their project with staff prior to submission to ensure eligibility.

Staff can provide assistance to applicants with limited grant writing expertise or resources to reduce barriers and increase participation.

Applicants requiring assistance can submit draft application packages for staff review at least 14 days prior to the deadline.

Contact:

Andrea Collins
Arts, Culture and Events Liaison
City of Victoria
Phone: 236.464.8672
Email: acollins@victoria.ca