

# ACT Arts Fund

## 2016 Program Funding Guidelines

### 1. About the Category

Program funding supports leading ACT arts organisations that provide significant programs of activity that support and develop the arts in the ACT, and that strongly engage with the ACT community.

Program organisations are expected to contribute to sector development, career pathways for artists, artistic leadership and provide access opportunities for the ACT community.

Program organisations should also demonstrate sound and strategic governance, management and artistic leadership through dynamic and vibrant artistic programs and support a diversity of activity.

Organisations applying for Program funding must be ACT-based, incorporated arts organisations with a well established role in the ACT arts sector.

Program funding is not intended to support organisations that only offer a series of projects. Nor is it intended to provide core funding for the organisation. Funding is intended to contribute to the costs of delivering a specific program that is identified as a priority for the government. Funding can include a contribution towards reasonable core administrative costs associated with delivering the activity, however, funding should largely focus on the direct costs of delivering the program.

Program organisations are not required to have a full time office or administrative staff, however, must be readily accessible to the community.

Program funding is for two years, although in some circumstances only one year of funding may be provided. Should one year funding be offered, any conditions or expectations for that year may be articulated in the Deed of Grant.

### 2. Assessment Process

Organisations wishing to apply for Program funding must meet with artsACT prior to lodging an application in order to discuss government priorities and which part of their program might be suitable for funding. Please call artsACT on (02) 6207 2384 to arrange online access to the application form and a suitable time to meet, at least three weeks prior to the closing date for applications.

Applications are assessed on merit against the assessment criteria and within the available budget, and in the context of the ACT arts landscape and the ACT arts policy.

Applications for Program funding will be considered by an independent panel. The panel will consider the organisation's application including its goals/strategies the artistic program and budget, the purpose of the funding and relevance in the ACT arts landscape. The panel provides its advice to artsACT, which will also consider the priorities of the ACT arts policy, currently funded Key Arts and Program Organisations and s, the strengths and weaknesses of the ACT arts sector, and if there are any program/service gaps or overlaps, and the available budget.

Funding recommendations are provided to the Minister for the Arts, who will make the final funding decision.

### **3. The Assessment Criteria**

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

1. An organisation with a clearly defined role in the ACT arts sector which meets a community need.
  - Your organisation's priorities for the next two years.
  - Your organisation's position within the ACT arts landscape.
  - How your organisation is addressing a community need.
2. A high-quality program of activity that fosters artistic innovation and creative thinking and facilitates community participation in and access to the arts.
  - Your program of key activities for the next two years.
  - How the program demonstrates innovation and vibrancy.
  - How the program engages with and encourages diverse participation by the ACT community.
3. Strong governance and administrative practices to deliver the proposed program.
  - The skills and experience of key staff members
  - Your organisation's board or committee and how they will provide strategic direction for your organisation.
4. A justification of the budget, outlining a sound and sustainable financial position that represents value for money and includes a diversity of income.

Applicants to the Program Funding category must submit online through the artsACT Smarty Grants portal:

- a completed application form;
- a business plan or organisational mission statement commensurate with the organisation's activities;
- a copy of the organisation's most recent audited financial statements; and

- relevant support material limited to any two items. Preferred file formats are: for text files (Word, PDF); for image files (JPEG, PNG); for audio files (MP3); and for video files (MP4).

The business plan for a Program organisation should be commensurate with the scale of its artistic programs and level of funding being sought. Program organisations may wish to use the [Business Plan Framework](#) for Key Arts Organisations, which is available on the artsACT website under the Key Arts Organisation category information link.

The assessment process normally takes three to four months to complete. The Minister for the Arts will publicly announce successful applicants after organisations have been informed by artsACT.

## 4. Funding Request

Applicants should note the ACT Arts Fund is highly competitive. Therefore, the amount of funding requested should be commensurate with the artistic and cultural benefit to the ACT community and the organisation's artistic and administrative experience.

Organisations are encouraged to seek income from a variety of sources, both government and non-government.

Applications must represent value for money in both the level of funding and quality of the outcomes to be achieved. Where an applicant has previously received funding or is receiving funding, any increased funding request must be described and substantiated in detail, including a description of the benefits from the requested additional funding.

Organisations in receipt of Program funding are not generally eligible to apply for further funding through the ACT Arts Fund, except where specifically identified by artsACT e.g. ACT Residencies Program.

## 5. Financial Position

Program funded organisations should have sound financial positions through responsible financial management. The ACT Government expects Program organisations to build and maintain reasonable cash reserves through end-of-year surpluses. Cash reserves can assist organisations in their long-term sustainability, support any unforeseen circumstances or to establish any new initiatives. The level of cash reserves should be relative to the nature of the organisation's activities. A benchmark for cash reserves is the maintenance of a minimum of 10% of the annual gross income of the organisation.

Program organisations are strongly advised to seek independent expert advice from a qualified accountant (either through the board or from co-opted advice) to ensure long term viability.

## **6. Operations**

The ACT Government provides funding to Program organisations on the basis of clear benefits to the ACT community, particularly to maximise community access to and engagement with the arts. Funding is on the basis of organisations continuing to deliver high quality arts activities and outcomes accessible to members of the ACT community.

## **7. Governance**

The ACT Government considers that strong governance of an organisation receiving public funds is essential to its sustainability and viability. The type of governance structure should be commensurate with the size and operations of the organisation. Appropriate governance requires a clear understanding of the role and responsibilities of the governing body.

Collectively, individuals on the board should have a range of skills necessary to achieve the objectives of the organisation; these may include strategic governance, management, financial, legal, and artistic skills. Organisations should also consider the need for succession planning for their Boards.

Program organisations are responsible for meeting national best-practice standards for board governance and board-member conduct. Organisations should put measures in place to ensure that office bearers or other members do not and are not seen to unfairly influence or benefit from opportunities that may arise through their participation in decision making for the organisation.

## **8. Accessibility and Diversity**

The Government provides funding to Program organisations to maximise community access to and engagement with the arts. Funding is on the basis of organisations continuing to deliver high quality arts activities and outcomes accessible to all members of the ACT community.

## **9. Reporting Requirements**

Program funded organisations are expected to provide detailed and timely reporting through the annual acquittal and annual revised program and budget process, as outlined in the Deed of Grant. Late or inadequate reporting may result in delays to funding payment.

All formal correspondence regarding Program funding is addressed to the organisational chair or president. artsACT can only accept a response from the chair or president and not from organisational staff.

## **10. Acknowledgment of Funding**

As a requirement of the Deed of Grant, Program funded organisations must appropriately acknowledge ACT Government funding and support. ACT Government support must be acknowledged on all material (either hard copy or electronic), including websites, newsletters, media releases, advertisements, programs, broadcast emails, invitations and any other promotional material. Acknowledgement must include the use of the ACT Government logo in conjunction with the words 'Supported by the ACT Government'. Acknowledgment must be proportionate to the ACT Government's level of funding compared to other funding received.

Acknowledgement also needs to be made in formal speeches, such as at launches and openings.

Further information about acknowledging ACT Government support can be accessed through the artsACT website at <http://www.arts.act.gov.au/resources/logos-and-branding>

## **11. Revocation of Funding**

Funding may be revoked during the term of a Deed of Grant where:

- the organisation breaches its Deed of Grant;
- an organisation does not substantially meet the outcomes and performance measures as agreed;
- there has been a significant change in the activities/circumstances of the organisation;
- the organisation operates illegally, ceases to operate, or enters into liquidation or receivership; or
- the ACT Government reduces or does not provide funding for the ACT Arts Fund.