

# 2024-2025 Grants to Professional Arts Organizations Operating Assistance Program Guidelines

**DEADLINE** March 31, 2024, 5:00PM

**Staff Contact:**

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## Program Purpose

The Grants to Professional Arts Organizations Program supports the operating capacity of producing and presenting arts organizations in the Municipality and advances the profile of the local arts sector by fostering broad public access to, and appreciation of, the arts.

Support is provided towards ongoing core creation, production, presentation and administrative costs. Support is provided on an annual basis for incoming applicants and multiyear basis for returning applicants in good standing and is subject to annual budget availability.

Eligibility is restricted to registered non-profit and charitable arts organizations in good standing under the Nova Scotia Registry of Joint Stocks. Read more about eligibility in the Program **Eligibility Section**.

The Program is governed by [Administrative Order 2014-007-ADM](#).

**In the event that a conflict arises between the conditions stated herein and the Administrative Order referenced above, the Administrative Order shall be considered the document of record in all instances.**

## Overview

### Operating Assistance to Professional Arts Organizations

This stream supports the general and ongoing operational capacity of professional arts organizations in the Municipality as follows:

a) *Anchor Organizations:*

- Operate on budgets in excess of \$3 million per year.
- Registered non-profits that have operated continuously for a minimum of three (3) years with strong administrative management and a track record of success and artistic merit.
- Demonstrate strong public impact in terms of number of events, attendance and employment figures.
- Will be eligible to access a maximum of \$100,000 per year.\*\*

b) *Other Non-profit Organizations:*

- Registered non-profits that have operated continuously for a minimum of three (3) years with strong administrative management and a track record of success and artistic merit.
- Will be eligible to access a maximum of \$50,000 per year, or 15% of applicant's annual operating budget, whichever is less. \*\*

\*\*Under this program the Municipality may contribute no more than 60% of revenues required to cover annual administrative and core program costs. Combined municipal, provincial and federal funding normally will not exceed 90% of total revenues for annual administrative and core program costs.

## Program Administration

### DEADLINE March 31, 2024, 5:00PM

Applications will be administered by the Halifax Regional Municipality's Culture & Community division.

#### Program Officer

Lindsay Cory  
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### Two-Part Application Process

Your organization's contact information and general application information will be submitted through an **online application form** while the Written Responses and Financial Information of your application will be submitted by email. Please refer to the [Application Checklist](#) to ensure your application is complete.

### How to Apply

Note: If you are a new applicant, you must contact the program officer before applying to this program.

1. Access the **application form** from the [program website](#). Fill out the required information on the form and hit submit. If you have difficulty filling out this online form, please contact the program officer. Follow up the submission of your application form with your **written responses** by email.
2. Check the [Application Checklist](#) to ensure your application is complete.
3. Prepare your email to [artgrants@halifax.ca](mailto:artgrants@halifax.ca) which includes all the required application information.

**Applications will only be accepted to this email address. Please direct all questions to the program officer directly. If you are unable to submit by email, please contact the program officer directly. All applications sent to artgrants@halifax.ca will receive an auto-reply confirmation. If you do not receive confirmation within one week, please contact the program officer directly.**

4. Applicants will be notified upon initial review if their application is deemed ineligible.

5. Culture & Community staff will oversee the selection of a peer review panel who will be tasked with the scoring and assessment of applications.
6. Assessment will follow the evaluation criteria set out in this document.
7. Final recommendations of the peer assessors will be compiled by Culture & Community staff and directed to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) for review. In all instances, recommended organizations and corresponding funding levels are subject to the approval of the CAO.
8. All applicants will be notified of the results of this process once complete.

## Program Funding

- Support is provided on an annual basis for incoming applicants and multi-year basis for returning applicants in good standing and is subject to annual budget availability.
- Applicants for Operating Grants shall re-apply at the end of their funding term (terms will be laid out in funding agreements).
- Disbursement of the funds will take place upon the approval of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and will be administered by Culture & Community staff.

## Program Eligibility

### Definition of Eligible Professional Arts Organization

- **A Professional Arts Organization** means a registered, non-profit professional arts and culture organization that supports, presents or produces work by professional or established artists, and employs qualified paid staff to administer on-going arts and culture programs and services.

### Eligible organizations must

- be registered not-for-profit societies or not-for-profit cooperatives in good standing with the Provincial Registrar of Joint Stock Companies or federally registered under the Corporations Act as not-for-profit societies or cooperatives based and operating in Nova Scotia.
- Be located within the geographic boundary of the Municipality, with a mandate to provide programming and services to municipal residents.
- Have been operating for at least three (3) years prior to the date of application.
- Not be in receipt of operating assistance from any other municipal government department (excludes tax relief).
- Maintain an active membership or show a form of community support that includes residents of the Municipality and persons other than those who serve on the board of directors.
- Operate programs year-round, except for presenting organizations which may have seasonal programs.

- Have secured additional sources of revenue such as corporate contributions, donations, sales, and membership fees and must pursue other sources of public or private funding.

### Ineligible Organizations

- Schools or educational institutions (with the exception of university art galleries), or educational based organizations.
- Organizations not based within the physical boundaries of the Halifax Regional Municipality.
- Organizations in arrears to the Municipality, or otherwise deemed to be in poor standing on the basis of incomplete projects or outstanding final reports.
- Organizations whose primary purpose is not the ongoing (year-round) production or presentation of professional arts.

## General Terms

Should funding be approved, the Municipality will enter into an agreement with the applicant based on the following terms:

- Successful grant recipients must complete a final report describing the impact of the funding received through this program. Applicants can now opt for a final report interview which will be followed up by a written summary provided by Culture & Community staff. Final report requirements will be sent with the confirmation of the award and will be available from Culture & Community staff. The reporting criteria includes at a minimum:
  - Name of organization, amount of grant, Terms and Conditions (as described in the award notification letter).
  - Total annual budget outlining all revenues and expenditure categories.
  - A description of the applicants' programming, including information on the impact (attendance, participation) of the program and any expanded benefit.
  - Copies of printed materials funded through the grant (poster, brochure, booklet, CD, catalogue or photograph of project, newspaper article, magazine article), as well as documentation of events and/or projects directly or indirectly supported by the Municipality through this grant process.
- Should the operations of the applicant organization cease or be diminished, or should a project, in part or in whole, not be completed as described in the application, applicants must notify the program officer or their designate. In exceptional circumstances, where an organization's programming deviates significantly from that which was submitted in their application, a written request to amend the terms of the grant agreement must be submitted to staff and a written response (permission to amend) will be provided. This correspondence will be filed with the application.
- Municipal support must be recognized as outlined in the "Requirements for Acknowledging Funding" which will accompany the Terms and Conditions letter.
- All funding applications are subject to the [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#).

# Evaluation Form

<b>Basic Eligibility</b>	
The applicant must meet all of the following criteria to be considered eligible for funding:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant is a not-for-profit society incorporated under the Societies Act and registered with the N.S. Registry of Joint Stocks; or a not-for-profit co-operative incorporated under the Co-operative Associations Act and registered with the N.S. Registry of Joint Stocks. Organization has been active for 3+ years.</li> <li>• The applicant has provided a description of their organization’s role and mandate.</li> <li>• The applicant has included a list of active board members including executive roles.</li> <li>• The applicant has provided a list of current staff, indicating which are permanent and which are project-specific or part-time.</li> <li>• The applicant has provided a copy of financial statements for the most recently completed fiscal year, including a balance sheet (assets, liabilities, equity/debt) and income statement. Financial statements must be signed by an authorized representative of the organization.</li> </ul>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Proceed to Section 2 of Review</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Ineligible</b>

<b>Programs and Services (50pts)</b>
<p><b>• Program Delivery, Planning and Evaluation</b></p> <p>The application reflects:</p> <p>Stated goals and objectives of the organization; Program evaluation, design and development; Quantitative and qualitative assessment of programming from past years; Impact of the organization’s programming and service delivery <b>/30pts</b></p>
<p><b>• Community Relationships</b></p> <p>The application reflects:</p> <p>Consideration of audience development; Organizational and community partnerships; Communication and outreach; Impact and engagement; <b>/20pts</b></p>
<b>Organizational Standing (20pts)</b>
<p><b>• Governance, Administration and Strategic Direction</b></p> <p>The application reflects:</p> <p>Active and engaged Board of Directors; Clear organizational mandate and a well-articulated plan; Organizational status and responsiveness to opportunities and challenges <b>/20pts</b></p>
<b>Program and Service, Organizational Standing Total Score ___/70pts</b>

<b>Financial Stewardship (30pts)</b>	
Existing/previous financial statements are accurate and complete; Statements show revenues and expenses, assets and liabilities, cash savings and investments; Statements reflect that the organization is in good fiscal health <b>/15pts</b>	
Submitted operating budget is complete, detailed and accurate and has been developed to be efficient, without unnecessary costs; Budget shows diverse funding sources and revenue streams <b>/15pts</b>	
<b>Financial Stewardship Total Score ___/30pts</b>	

<b>Section 4 – Scoring Summary</b>	
<b>Program and Service, Organizational Standing</b>	<b>/70pts</b>
<b>Financial Stewardship</b>	<b>/30pts</b>
<b>Total Score</b> <b>*A minimum score of 70 is required to be eligible for award</b>	<b>/100pts</b>

# Application Checklist

## Applications for Operating Assistance must include:

- A completed online application form
- An email with all required information including **Written Responses** and **Financial Information**.

### Double check before sending your email for the following:

- Your name is included on all files using the naming structure provided in the [Application Checklist](#).
- Number your files in the order they should be opened (application forms have a list of required documents in order).
- Ensure your word counts, page limits and file sizes are in line within the program guidelines.
- Only send one application per email.
- Subject line should be: "Your Organization Name – Operating Funding Application".
- Keep attachments under 25MB and do not attach large audio or video files; include a streaming link in the body of the email (Upload large audio and video files to a streaming service such as YouTube, Vimeo or SoundCloud.
- Do not send cloud-based attachments (WeTransfer, Google Drive, Dropbox, etc.)
- Take note to not have long file names in your attachments.
- Ensure your email is addressed to [artgrants@halifax.ca](mailto:artgrants@halifax.ca).

## General Information on application

- Word counts are suggested to give applicants a sense of the level of detail and time that is expected for each part. They also consider that peer assessors will have many applications to read at once. If you can re-use some information from other grant applications, you may do so within reason, keeping in mind the above considerations.
- You may include all written responses in the same document.
- Except for the Application Form, which you will fill out online, all documents should be saved as PDFs and submitted to [artgrants@halifax.ca](mailto:artgrants@halifax.ca) by 5pm the day of the deadline.

## Accessing the Application Form

- Click here to open the [Application Form](#) in your browser.
- A preview of the Application Form is also available directly on the [program website](#).
- Application Form includes general information about you including contact and registration information for your application.



# Written Responses and Financial Information

## Organizational Profile (1,500 words max)

Please briefly describe the organization in relation to the following:

- Organizational history, role and mandate
- Geographic area of service
- Governance and administrative structure
- List of current staff (indicate FT and PT) and board members
- Any additional information important to the context or environment within which you work (ex: region, artistic community, cultural community).

## Programs and Services - Program Planning and Evaluation (1,500 words, 30pts)

Please briefly describe your organizations programming (past, present, future)\*:

- Past programming (most recently completed fiscal year)
  - List programs and activities undertaken over the organization's last fiscal year.
  - Provide brief description of the impact of this programming (audience attendance, community engagement, professional and organizational development, e.g.).
- Current programming (current fiscal year)
  - List programs and activities planned for the current fiscal year.
  - Provide brief description of the impact of this programming (audience attendance, community engagement, professional and organizational development, e.g.).
  - Provide brief description of how the organization plans to conduct evaluation of those programs.
- Planned programming (upcoming programming year)
  - List programs and activities planned for the upcoming year (year for which the organization is requesting funding).
  - Provide brief description of how the organization plans to conduct evaluation of those programs.

*\*If you are a provincial Operating Client of Arts NS or a federal Operating Client of Canada Council, you may submit the following information using the same [Programming Overview Template](#) for your provincial application.*

## Organizational development, community relationships and impact (1,000 words, 20pts)

Describe the organization's general approach to programming, program development and community engagement including considerations related to:

- Audience development
- Marketing and promotion
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives (as relates to programming)
- Collaboration and partnership in programming and administration (Organizational and Community Partnerships)

- Community impact (incl. sectoral impact)

### Organizational standing (1,000 words, 20pts)

Describe the organization's current operating model, governance structure, strategic direction and any opportunities and challenges in relation to the organization's current and future state including:

- Diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives (as relates to administration and governance)
- Roles and activities of the Board of Directors
- Links to strategic plan, where applicable

### Financial Information (30 pts)

Please submit a full picture of the financial position of the organization including:

- Financial Stewardship
  - Complete and accurate financial statements reflecting comprehensive financial information and a healthy financial position
    - o Detailed and signed financial statements from your most recent fiscal period\*
    - o New applicants and those not currently in receipt of operating assistance must provide detailed financial statements for the previous 3 years of operation
  - A detailed budget outlining projected revenue, operating and capital costs in a comparative table including the previous fiscal year actuals, current year budget projects and request year budget\*
    - o Details on any other Municipal funding received within the current and previous two (2) fiscal years (includes tax relief, cash grants, and rental subsidy).
  - For organizations on concerned status only:
    - o Two-page recovery plan

*\*Applicants are welcome and encouraged to submit the budgets and projections they use for Canada Council (CADAC) or Arts NS and do not need to complete a new template for HRM funding. If you need a template, you are welcome to use the [Financial Template](#) provided here.*

### Additional notes on required financial information

- Reports should itemize revenues and expenditures by applicable category (e.g. Artistic Expenses, Administrative Expenses, Marketing and Communications Expenses, etc.).
- Reports should list all, and differentiate between, sources of government funding (Municipal, Provincial, Federal).
- Reports may list in-kind expenses and must balance with listed in-kind contributions under revenues.
- Notation should be included to items listed on the financial table for the purposes of explaining:

- Any significant change in a particular category of revenue or expense.
- Any significant deficits or surpluses listed (expected) for the coming year's budget.
- Any particular items that the applicant wishes to highlight and address.
- Applicants whose projected budget shows significant debt (in excess of 5% of the total annual budget for that fiscal year) must include a debt-reduction plan and a brief explanation of what steps are being taken to eliminate the shortfall.

## Support Material Guidelines

Support material should be submitted with all applications to the Operating Assistance to Non-Profit Arts Organizations program. Test your material before you submit to ensure that it is formatted correctly.

**Video files (3 samples; max 15 minutes for all material)** submitted in the following acceptable formats:

- dvd format, .mp4, .mov, .mpg

**Audio files (3 samples; max 15 minutes for all material)** submitted in the following acceptable formats:

- .cda, .mp3, .m4a and .m4p

**Digital images (maximum 10 images)** submitted in the following acceptable formats:

- .jpg, .tiff, .tif file format;
- a maximum resolution of 1024 x 768 pixels; and
- RGB or greyscale.
- Max 2MB each

**Written or Printed Materials (maximum 15 pages)** unbound, single-sided, 8 ½ X 11" paper, portrait format, single-sided; can also be submitted digitally as a Word file or PDF document.