Provincial Arts Service Organizations Operating Funding

All disciplines
Organization

This grant provides funding in three-year cycles to eligible member-based arts organizations that provide educational, resource-based, promotional and advocacy services as the umbrella organization for an artistic discipline or sector in the province.

Deadline information
February 1, 2027
Who can apply

To be eligible for Provincial Arts Service Organizations operating funding, you must:

- have the promotion of an artistic discipline or sector as your organization’s principal mandate as stated in its incorporation documents
- engage in on-going development of, support for, and advocacy on behalf of that discipline or sector as its core primary activity
- serve a province-wide membership of both individuals and organizations
- derive revenue from sources other than the AFA
- maintain a provincial office with staff that is accessible to the membership
- engage in regular communication to the membership
- offer regular programs and development opportunities for the artistic discipline or sector
- advocate at the provincial level on behalf of the artistic discipline or sector

Your organization must:

- be a not-for-profit organization
- be registered and in good standing under the appropriate legislation and have been in operation in Alberta for at least two years
- have at least 50% of the organization’s board members living in Alberta
- employ an Executive Director or equivalent

- demonstrate the ability to operate using good governance principles, effective administration practices, and a commitment to fiscal responsibility while maintaining its mandate
- operate as a stand-alone arts organization at arms-length from municipalities, commercial enterprises, or organizations and institutions receiving annual operating funds from the Government of Alberta or its affiliates
- comply with all Canadian Arts Database (CADAC) financial and statistical requirements
- have a board-approved cash reserve policy

Ineligible applicants

Organizations that are engaged primarily in competition-based activity are not eligible for AFA funding.

First-time applicants

If this is your organization’s first application for AFA Provincial Arts Service Organizations operating funding, you must contact the AFA at least three months before the deadline for a preliminary eligibility assessment.

Eligible first-time applicants will be accepted only at the beginning of each three-year cycle.

As a first-time applicant, your organization must provide approved financial statements that demonstrate the organization has positive net assets for the three annual fiscal periods immediately prior to application.

What does this funding support?

This funding is designed to support your organization’s operations, which are specific to your organization’s mandate, strategic and/or business plan and activities as described in your application and/or reporting.

AFA operating funding typically supports expenses such as:

- administration
- programming
- salaries and fees
- maintenance of equipment and fixed assets

- promotion
- other expenses as required to fulfill your organization’s mandate

How to apply

We only accept applications through the Grant Administration Tracking and Evaluation (GATE) Front Office online application system.

We must receive your online application through GATE Front Office no later than 11:59 p.m. Alberta Time on the deadline date, unless the deadline falls on a statutory holiday or a weekend when it will be extended until the next working day. Please give the system time to process your application so that the AFA receives notification of your submission before the deadline falls.

GATE Front Office username registration

First-time applicants will require a GATE Front Office username and password. Requests must be received at least five business days prior to the application deadline.

Please complete the GATE Front Office Registration form and email it as an attachment to registrationAFA@gov.ab.ca.

GATE Front Office usernames and passwords will be sent to the email addresses provide on the registration form.

What to include in your application

For detailed step-by-step instructions, please download the GATE Front Office user guide.

GATE Front Office online forms

- an Application Contact List which designates one contact as your organization’s primary contact and signing authority for this application
- your organization’s street address and mailing address
- your organization’s registration details, including legal name, Alberta Registration number and incorporation date

- CADAC number for your organization’s last three years of financial and statistical data
- an Organization Applicant Agreement, which must be agreed to by your organization’s Signing Authority
- a current board list which includes names and titles, mailing addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses and start dates for all current members
- a completed Statement of Eligible Expenses form, using the data from the corresponding lines from CADAC, and includes both eligible and ineligible expenses as well as your organization’s membership information
- a completed Diligence Questionnaire

Attachments

Attachments must be developed prior to application, using either original documents specific to your organization or preformatted AFA templates, and uploaded to your online GATE Front Office submission.

You’ll be required to complete and upload the following attachments:

- a current, board-approved business or strategic plan
- a listing of planned activities for the upcoming three-year cycle
- your most recent annual financial statements including Balance Sheet, Statement of Revenues and Expenditures, and Statement of Cash Flows
- a confirmation of your organization's most recent annual return from Alberta Corporate Registry
- a current list of your organization's core staff and their positions
- a copy of your organization’s Cash Reserve Policy

Cash Reserve Policy

Your organization’s submitted Cash Reserve Policy must:

- be approved by your organization’s board of Directors
- establish a base Cash Reserve amount as a percentage of your organization’s annual operating expenditure and provide a rationale for that base amount
- outline that the Cash Reserve be clearly identified on your organization’s annual financial statement

- define the Cash Reserve as an unencumbered, restricted cash account that can only be accessed upon a resolution of your organization's board of Directors, approved by a majority vote
- outline that the Cash Reserve funds may only be used to temporarily finance unforeseen operating deficits
- outline that funds removed from the Cash Reserve must be replenished within three fiscal years from the end of the fiscal year in which the Cash Reserve funds were utilized
- outline that the base Cash Reserve amount, once approved by the AFA, may not be reduced without prior approval by the AFA

We strongly encourage all organizations to strive for a cash reserve of no less than 10% of your organization’s average annual operating expenditures.

However, we recognize that individual organizations have unique operating requirements. In considering the savings target for the Cash Reserve, your organization’s board of Directors is expected to consider its own operating requirements and determine an appropriate target which may be more or less than 10% of average annual operating expenditures.

Eligible organizations in this funding opportunity are encouraged to consult department staff as they develop the Cash Reserve Policy and associated plan for implementation.

How will my application be assessed?

Funding awarded through this opportunity is calculated for each organization through two components:

- a base amount of up to $50,000 for operating expenses
- an additional amount of up to 50 per cent of eligible expenses

Note: Recommended additional amounts are determined within the context of total available funds within the allocated Provincial Arts Service Organizations program budget.

Funding for Provincial Arts Service Organizations is established by the AFA Board of Directors based upon the annual AFA Budget allocated by the Government of Alberta. Department staff evaluate applications according to eligibility criteria and

prepare recommendations to the board.

An Expert Panel makes funding recommendations over and above the base amount to your organization. The Expert Panel is convened by department staff and is comprised of representatives from the arts and/or not-for-profit community. Expert Panel assessment is based on your organization's governance practices, fiscal responsibility and arts mandate. They will consider your organization's demonstrated successes in providing ongoing development of, support for, and advocacy on behalf of your identified arts discipline or sector and your strategies for the future.

The AFA Board of Directors reviews all funding recommendations, and all decisions are final.

When will I hear?

Grant recommendations are made to the AFA board of directors. Successful recipients will be notified upon board approval, generally between four to six months from the application deadline.

Conditions

Your organization is only eligible to receive support from one AFA operating funding opportunity in any given year. Funding is intended for the activities planned for your organization's next fiscal year based on information provided in your funding application.

Ineligible expenses for AFA operating funding include, but are not limited to:

- alcohol
- amortization
- GST expenses
- fundraising expenses
- bad debt and other paper losses
- capital expenses

The AFA or our authorized representative may examine your financial and other records to ensure funding was used for its intended purpose:

- funding recipients must return unused portions of their grant to the AFA

- we may require your organization to return funds if reporting requirements are not met
- if you do not meet reporting requirements, your organization may be ineligible for further funding from the AFA for a period of three years from the time the delinquency is resolved

The AFA Fair Notice Policy applies to this funding opportunity. We may cancel, suspend, reduce or demand repayment of your grant in circumstances where we are concerned with the viability of your organization.

Funding acknowledgement

Your organization must credit the AFA for financial support in any publicity prepared in relation to your organization's activities, including electronic, print or visual material.

- if your organization fails to satisfy AFA recognition requirements, it may be subject to a 10% funding reduction in subsequent payments.
- subsequent infractions may result in ineligibility to apply for AFA funding opportunities

Download versions of the AFA logo and guidelines for usage.

Reporting

You are required to complete and submit satisfactory interim and final reports in GATE Front Office that demonstrate awarded funding from the previous fiscal year was spent on the activities described in your application.

As per the conditions of your grant agreement, reporting is mandatory. If your organization fails to meet reporting requirements, it may be ineligible for further funding from the AFA for a period of three years from the time any delinquency is resolved.

If your organization does not intend to continue to seek AFA operating funding in the future, you are still required to submit a final report.

Reports are due yearly on February 1 throughout the three-year grant cycle and as outlined in your successful notification letter. Your reports must be submitted through GATE Front Office no later than 11:59 p.m. Mountain Time on the respective

due dates. If the report deadline falls on a statutory holiday or a weekend, it will be extended until 11:59 p.m. on the next business day.

Please give the system time to process your submission so we receive notification of receipt of your report before the deadline falls.

Interim Report

Interim reports are required at the end of years one and two of your grant agreement and require the completion of GATE Front Office formlets and the upload of several attachments. It is recommended you prepare your attachments as PDF documents prior to starting your report. Applicable templates are available for download under the Helpful Resources section of the guidelines.

GATE Front Office formlets:

- **Statistical Report:** Aligned with your organization's most recently completed fiscal year end and its board-approved financial statements
- **Statement of Eligible Expenses:** Aligned with your organization's CADAC filing for its most recently completed fiscal year
- **Current Board List:** Including executive details of all current board members

Attachments:

- Copies of related promotional and publicity materials form the most recently completed fiscal year, showing compliance with AFA recognition requirements (scanned into one PDF file of no more than 4 MB)
- Detailed budget for the current or upcoming fiscal year
- Listing of completed arts activities from your most recently completed fiscal year, using the provided template
- Listing of planned arts activities for your current or upcoming fiscal year, using the provided template
- Material Change Report, using the provided template
- Most recent approved financial statements including Balance Sheet, Statement of Revenues and Expenditures, and Statement of Cash Flows. Accepted financial statements are determined by your most recent grant payment and must correspond to the following:

    - Grants up to $25,000 require a financial statement approved and signed by three board members (including the Treasurer)
    - Grants of $25,001 to $50,000 require a Notice to Reader financial statement provided by an independent, professionally-designated accountant
    - Grants of $50,001 to $100,000 require a Review Engagement financial statement provide by an independent, professionally-designated accountant
    - Grants of more than $100,000 require an Audited financial statement provided by an independent, professionally-designated accountant
- Confirmation of filing of your most recent return from Alberta Corporate Registry

Final Report

Final reports are required at the end of year three of your grant agreement and require the completion of GATE Front Office forms and the upload of two attachments. It is recommended you prepare your attachments as PDF documents prior to starting your report.

GATE Front Office online forms:

- **Statistical Report:** Aligned with your organization's most recently completed fiscal year end and its board-approved financial statements

Attachments (applicable templates are available under the Helpful Resources section)

- Most recent approved financial statements including Balance Sheet, Statement of Revenues and Expenditures, and Statement of Cash Flows. Accepted financial statements are determined by your most recent grant payment and must correspond to the following:
    - Grants up to $25,000 require a financial statement approved and signed by three board members (including the Treasurer)
    - Grants of $25,001 to $50,000 require a Notice to Reader financial statement provided by an independent, professionally-designated accountant
    - Grants of $50,001 to $100,000 require a Review Engagement financial statement provide by an independent, professionally-designated

accountant
    - Grants of more than $100,000 require an Audited financial statement provided by an independent, professionally-designated accountant
- Copies of related promotional and publicity materials form the most recently completed fiscal year, showing compliance with AFA recognition requirements (scanned into one PDF file of no more than 4 MB)

Helpful resources

Visit the Help and Resources section of our website to:

- download the new Front Office User Guide
- find additional resources for organizations

Download additional resources

- Financial Statement Board Approval Form
- Planned Activity Listing
- Completed Activity Report
- Material Change Report
- Direct deposit form

Apply Now

Arts Development Consultant

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