

**Dance Individual Project Grant
September 1, 2016
General Expert Panel Comments**

Comments made by the Expert Panel during its assessment of applications submitted to the September 1, 2016 Dance Individual Project Grant program are outlined below. Please note that these comments provide an overview of common issues noted by the Expert Panel and do not necessarily relate to every unsuccessful application submitted to this deadline. **The Expert Panel does not provide individual comments for each application.**

Expert Panel Comments:

The Expert Panel was impressed by the overall quality of grant submissions. A number of applications may be unsuccessful as a result of a finite program budget relative to the high number of deserving submissions and not necessarily because of reasons listed in comments below.

Project Description

1. The Expert Panel appreciated personal statements articulating why this project is important to the applicant's development and artistic vision. In particular, a clear personal statement from training applicants accompanied by a well-articulated rationale for the choice of study program or workshop and its link to the applicant's development was looked upon favourably. This includes an explanation of how a specific training program, relative to similar available training programs, would further develop the applicant towards their stated training needs and career objectives, including specific courses or techniques or specializations of the program.
2. Cut and paste program information from training program website is not an appropriate substitute for a fully formulated project description written by the applicant.
3. Applicant background and project description should be written in a clear concise manner. The Expert Panel encourages applicants to make use of writing tip sheet material available on the AFA web site.
4. The Expert Panel had difficulty assessing a small number of applications where the project description was vague, thin or confusing and/or the application lacked support materials that demonstrate past work and reviews of past productions.
5. Projects that demonstrate steps that will be taken to ensure that the project's goals are attainable were looked on favourably. The panel had difficulty assessing projects where productions plans appear beyond the experience of the applicant.
6. Teacher training programs applications could be further strengthened if applicants demonstrate the impact of their project on their community, particularly when student teachers plan to return to their community to share their training.

7. The panel had difficulty assessing training projects that included competition activity. The panel believes that limited resources are better directed towards projects that focus on training activity.

Budget

8. The Expert Panel noted that it was important that project budgets:
 - Are as accurate and realistic as possible;
 - Provide clear accounting break down of all expenses associated with the project;
 - A budget and budget notes should clearly articulate relationship between “hosting” company and choreographer;
 - Details on dancer or artist remuneration should be explained in the application and/or budget notes.
 - Training – demonstrate some level of personal contribution or rationale for the absence of personal contribution;
 - Not include extraneous expenses such as additional multiple return travel, parent travel, outings, lost wages, mortgages, or similar costs not directly associated with core project activity.
 - The panel looked favourably on projects where artists were properly remunerated, both in the context of industry standards, as well as the context of the project as a whole. Creation and production projects are encouraged to follow artist fees established by the professional community, ie. CADA.

Support material

9. Artist Resume, Biographies should be provide clear explanation of an artist’s experience.
10. The Expert Panel greatly appreciated DVD support material that allowed for a comprehensive assessment of an applicant’s technical and artistic ability.
11. Training applicants should ensure two audition pieces are included as part of the application. Ensure video support material directly pertains to project activity.
12. Barre exercises and centre work is only appropriate for very young applicants. Experienced older training applicants should provide appropriate solo audition pieces.
13. The absence or lack of visual support material made it difficult to assess some applications.
14. In a small number of cases the DVD / USB material did not play properly.

Letters of support

15. Applicants are strongly encouraged to include current letters of reference from teachers or colleagues. Letters of support should speak to the applicant and the project itself.
16. Some large scale art projects rely on a cross section of community resources such as unconfirmed funding from multiple sources. As part of their proposal, applicants may wish to provide a plan "B" on how the project may be realized should such funding or other resources not be forthcoming.
17. Applicants are encouraged to have an objective third party proof read application content to ensure that it is concise and accurate.