

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

Comments made by the Expert Panel during its assessment of applications submitted to the September 1, 2016 Literary 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 and diversity 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.

1. The expert panel encourages unsuccessful applicants to review their applications with an eye to future program deadlines and to give thoughtful consideration to the most appropriate funding agency for the project under consideration.

Project Description:

2. Some projects did not seem to be ready for the arts production stage of development. Project objectives, work and realistic development plans, need to be clearly articulated by the applicant.
3. The Panel had difficulty appreciating the artistic merit of projects that had very similar plot points to existing work. Applicants should demonstrate how the proposed work is distinct.
4. Proposed timelines should be realistic and the expert panel encourages applicants to ensure they allot themselves adequate time and funds to complete the project as presented.
5. Successful applications for training and career development focused on how the proposed program would support the writer's development of his/her craft.
6. The panel appreciated projects proposing work that marks a shift in their artistic process and that provided the reasoning for the new direction.
7. The Expert Panel appreciated professionalism from the applicants. This includes accurate proofreading and pagination.

Support Material:

8. The expert panel weighted the appropriateness and clarity of the application as highly as the quality of the writing sample in determining which applicants would be recommended for funding.
9. Ideally, the writing sample should reflect the genre and tone of the proposed project as well as demonstrate the applicant's ability and artistic voice.
10. The Panel appreciated writing samples that did not require explanatory notes.
11. Writing samples should conform to the specifications listed in the program guidelines.
12. The Panel appreciated letters of support that spoke to the proposed project.
13. Letters of interest from publishers, theatre companies, etc. should confirm their role and level of participation in the proposed project.

Budget:

14. Budgets should be detailed and appropriate to the project being proposed. Applicants are encouraged to make use of the templates available on the Alberta Foundation for the Arts' website.
15. Applicant's should clearly articulate why they need the grant money? Show how the award will impact your ability to create a successful project.
16. The panel found it helpful when budgets provided a breakdown of subsistence expenses, e.g. rent, food, child care, living costs as opposed to listing a lump sum for monthly expenses.
17. If the project relies on unconfirmed revenue from other sources, applicants may wish to provide a plan "B" on how the project may be realized should such funding or other resources not be forthcoming.
18. Capital items such as computers are ineligible expenses as are debt repayment expenses.
19. The Panel paid special attention to promotional videos, book trailers and overly extended tour expenses to assess the expense rationale for these activities as effective marketing vehicles for new work.
20. Applicants are encouraged to make budget notes in the budget Comment box to explain expenses that may appear unusually high or that are not readily understandable to a third party.