Literary Individual Project Grant
September 1, 2017
Expert Panel General Comments

Comments made by the Expert Panel during its assessment of applications submitted to the September 1, 2017 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.

Project Description:
1. Some projects did not appear ready for the art production stage of development. Project objectives, work and realistic development plans need to be clearly articulated by the applicant.

2. The Panel had difficulty appreciating the artistic merit of projects that are similar to existing work. Applicants should demonstrate how the proposed work is a departure from previous work.

3. The Panel appreciated projects proposing work that marks a shift in the artist's process, provided the reasoning for the new direction, and demonstrated how the project contributes to the growth of the applicant as an artist.

4. Projects that had a culturally specific subject should demonstrate how the applicant has engaged the cultural group identified in the proposal.

5. Industry or social sector subject based applications could have been better formulated, including content that allowed the Panel to view the subject taking form as a literary work. The proposed work should resonate with an appreciable artistic component and not merely a technical, legal, historical or academic recounting and analysis that provides information on a given subject area.

6. Proposed timelines should be realistic, and the Panel encourages applicants to ensure they allot themselves adequate time and funds to complete the project as presented.

7. Successful applications for training and career development focused on how the proposed program would support the writer's development of his/her craft.

8. The Panel appreciated professionalism from the applicants. Writing samples and resumes should conform to the specifications listed in the program guidelines and applicants should format and proofread proposal.

Support Material:
9. The 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.

10. The Panel found it helpful when a writing sample best reflected the project proposed.

11. Writing samples should be of an appropriate length. The Panel found that a one page writing sample or overly long samples were not helpful in assessing an applicant's writing ability.

Budget:
12. Budgets should be detailed and appropriate to the project being proposed. Applicants are encouraged to make use of sample templates available on the Alberta Foundation for the Arts' website.

13. The Panel found it helpful when budgets provided a breakdown of subsistence expenses, e.g. housing, food, child care, utilities, transportation as opposed to listing a lump sum for monthly expenses.

14. Capital items such as computers, software, cameras and sound equipment are ineligible expenses.

15. 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, e.g. professional fees.