

Comments made by the Expert Panel during its assessment of applications submitted to the September 1, 2018 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 was impressed by the overall quality of grant submissions.

The Expert Panel gave priority to projects that had high personal merit as well as high impact on the Alberta dance community.

Project Description

1. The Expert Panel looked for personal statements, in the applicant's own voice, articulating why this project is important to the applicant's development and artistic vision. For training applicants, a clear personal statement accompanied by a well-articulated rationale for the choice of study program or workshop and its relevance to the applicant's personal long term artistic goals and career trajectory, were looked upon favourably. A "cut and paste" from the school website was not deemed appropriate or acceptable.
2. In addition to individual impact, the expert panel also assessed the impact on the dance genre and dance in Alberta. Those applicants that demonstrated on-going ties with Alberta were given a higher priority.
3. Established artists should not assume that they are known to every member of the Expert Panel. The panel members appreciated detail resumes and concise narratives that providing background and context for proposed projects.
4. The Expert Panel appreciated having identified collaborators with written understanding of the project and their preliminary fees. Resumes and backgrounds of the other artists allowed them to assess the probable success of a project as well as probably of commitment from the collaborators.
5. Applicants should ensure that the dates stated in the GATE online system are consistent with the dates stated in their attached project description. Many applicants had an end date in June, but the budget indicated they wished support for summer schools.
6. A number applications lacked video and other support materials that would allow the Panel to better appreciated applicant's creative ability and insight into proposed new work. A demonstration of past work and reviews of past productions were very helpful to the Panel. As per the guidelines, only downloadable links were assessed by the panel.
7. The Expert Panel found it helpful when applicants identified the choreographer and performer(s) in video support materials, particularly when footage included group pieces.

8. Some large scale art projects relied on a cross section of funding from multiple sources. The Expert Panel appreciated when applicants provided a plan “B” on how the project may be realized should such funding or other resources not be forthcoming.

Budget

9. The Expert Panel noted that it was important that project budgets:
 - Are as accurate and realistic as possible using quotes rather than arbitrary estimates;
 - Provide clear accounting break down of all expenses associated with the project;
 - Training – demonstrated some level of personal contribution or rationale for the absence of personal contribution;
 - Not include extraneous expenses such as excessive return travel, parent travel, outings, lost wages, or similar costs not directly associated with core project activity.
 - Details on dancer or artist remuneration should be explained in the application and budget breakdown or budget notes. How were artists fees calculated?
 - 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.
 - The cost of travel, accommodation, etc. should justify the value of the training or career development project, specifically the number of training hours and the quality of the proposed program.

Support material

10. Artist resume, biographies should be provide clear explanation of an artist’s experience.
11. Study project proposals were greatly strengthened when accompanied by strong, current reference letters from an array of industry professionals, both within the training institution and from the greater community, that provided the expert panel with greater insight into the applicant’s ability and the project’s impact and value to either the applicant and/or the applicant’s community.
12. The Expert Panel appreciated concise video and other support material that allowed for a comprehensive assessment of an applicant’s technical and artistic ability.
13. Video material should be as up-to-date as possible showing the applicant as close to their current age and ability. The material should also be curated and chosen carefully as the Panel members only have a short amount of time to watch the videos of each applicant.
14. For training students, a video of themselves doing barre work is not necessary. Dances chosen should demonstrate to the Expert Panel technical proficiency, performance style, stage presence, amplitude and intangibles that can only be seen in performance.
15. Applicants are encouraged to have an objective third party proof read application content to ensure that it is concise and accurate.