

Music Individual Project Grants September 1, 2021 General Expert Panel Comments

Comments made by the Expert Panel during its assessment of applications submitted to the September 1, 2021 deadline are outlined below. Please note that these comments provide a summary of the Expert Panel's assessment and do not necessarily relate to every individual application submitted to this deadline. **The Expert Panel does not provide individual comments.**

Project Description:

- The Expert Panel acknowledged that this was a highly competitive intake.
 - Panelists favoured projects which would have an impact on artist's career trajectory, had strong support within the community and would contribute to the Alberta music industry.
- Covid-19 response plans were helpful to assess project viability. It was helpful to have a clear plan on how projects would adapt to the current health crisis and how this would effect travel, touring, marketing and applicant training.
- The Expert Panel encourages applicants to reach out and access grant writing resources which are available within the community and through the AFA. Strong applications will increase your ability to effectively present your project and remain competitive.
- It may be helpful to keep in mind that Expert Panel members may not be familiar with your specific genre of music or your community.
 - Keep the overall tone of information and explanations clear and accessible to multiple audiences. When explaining your sound, influences or genre it is not necessary to over elaborate. Keep information relevant and focused on the specific project.
- The Expert Panel encourages unsuccessful applicants to look at all options available for Albertan musicians and to reach out to local resources.
 - There are many programs, residencies, mentorships, training and grant opportunities which may better suit the needs of the project and provide more opportunity and potential to reach current goals.

Marketing Plans:

- Applications which were appropriate within the project timeline included a clear breakdown of how funds would be used and had a cohesive overall vision of how to engage the target market were supported.
- Supporting documentation should outline the marketing plan with clear and relevant goals. Focus on how you will achieve those goals, why it is the right time for this project and how this will benefit the trajectory of your career.
- The Expert Panel encourages a collaborative effort within the Alberta music industry. It supports work that represents Albertan artists, contributors and support teams. It is

encouraged by team diversity and engagement outside of usual team and with new or up and coming artists.

- Consider if marketing funds are being used efficiently and if it is a worthwhile investment which will help achieve the project goals. Will this effectively reach your target market?
- If the marketing plan includes social media, the Expert Panel found it helpful when support material showed evidence of current online presence. How will marketing funds help increase viewership on these platforms in a highly saturated market and what will you do to stand out?
- Clearly specify other expected funds, grants, revenues and support you plan to receive and if these are guaranteed or pending.

Training:

- Provide strong support materials, clear goals and show a long term commitment to music as a career.
- The Expert Panel supported applicants who demonstrated a clear vision with realistic goals and expected outcomes for the future post education.
- Even if studies take you out of province or country, consider elaborating on how you will be contributing towards the Alberta music industry throughout your education.
- The Expert Panel encourages applicants to not only explain the program of study but to also explain how this program will impact their career trajectory and how they plan to use their skills and training post education.
- Support was shown for training and post secondary education which would benefit the current trajectory of the artist's career. Thought was given to the overall program content and if the investment would realistically lead to successful completion of specified goals.

Art Production:

- The Expert Panel favoured well presented, cohesive applications with quality supporting material, clearly defined budgets, and achievable goals.
- Projects that were relevant to the current provincial music market and would benefit the trajectory of the artist's career were supported.
- The Expert Panel expressed the desire to see evidence of engagement and a support network within the community. Elaborate on your production team, labels and collaborating artists as this will help support the viability of your project and gain confidence on your ability to follow through on execution.
- Consider elaborating on plans to complete the project if pending funds do not come through. The Expert Panel showed support for applicants it felt were motivated to seek alternative resources should pending funds not be awarded and projects that would have a successful outcome.
- The Expert Panel encourages applicants to consider and clearly explain their goals and how the project will influence their career. What is the impact of the project on both career and within the current Alberta music industry? Why is this the right time to be doing the project?

- Applications with clear timelines and logistics were favoured by the Expert Panel. Along with explaining the project, applicants are encouraged to include specifics such as who will be recording the project, the full production schedule, expected release dates, distribution methods and other key dates. Break this down and show how the project is being set up for success.
- If the project is planned to take place outside of Alberta, address how the opportunity will benefit not only the artist's career but how it will impact and contribute to the Alberta music community.

Budget:

The Expert Panel noted that it was important that project budgets:

- Are as accurate and realistic as possible; budget resources with specific, measurable and achievable goals.
- Detailed budget breakdowns are strongly encouraged. Explain how the funds being requested will be used. This includes any expected revenue, pending funding and personal contributions.
- Applicants requesting funding for subsistence should provide clear details on monthly expenses (accommodations or rent, daily food allowance, local transportation and childcare, when applicable).
 - Be specific. It is helpful to explain what parts of your plan will require subsistence and explanation on how funds will be allocated during this process.
 - It was suggested only applying for a portion of these costs which accurately cover the amount of time spent working on the project.