

Organizations Arts Project Grant (OAP)

June 3, 2019

General Expert Panel Comments

Comments made by the Expert Panel during its assessment of applications submitted to the June 3, 2019 OAP 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. Priority was given to proposals that demonstrated the following:

General Comments

The Expert Panel recommends that applicants have an objective third party proof read application content to ensure that it is concise and accurate. Applicants are also encouraged to avail themselves of Arts Branch staff for both consulting services and advice on how to best prepare an application prior to submission.

Project Description

1. The Expert Panel appreciated statements articulating why this project is important to the organization's development and capacity building needs or artistic vision.
2. The Expert Panel had difficulty assessing a small number of artistic projects where the project activity was vague, the curatorial process unclear, thin or confusing and where project components such as audience numbers and demographic was not evident or where relationship with partnering stakeholders was not clearly defined.
3. Project activities should be described with clear and well-defined outcomes and a broad and long-lasting impact.
4. Applicants are encouraged to provide a history of achievements of projects that assures the panel members the organization has the experience and capacity to carry out the project.
5. Applicants should provide financial statements that are within the past year.

Budget

6. 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;
 - Demonstrate some level of contribution or rationale for the absence of contribution. Applicants that demonstrated commitment to the project by providing resources and / or fundraising for a portion of the costs were considered more of a priority over those projects that requested the full amount from the AFA without explanation.
 - The Expert Panel looked less favorably on projects where artists are required to pay in order to be exhibited.
 - The panel looked favourably on projects where contracted personnel and artists were properly remunerated, both in the context of industry standards, as well as the context of the project as a whole. While creation and production projects are encouraged to follow the minimum artist fees established by the professional community, e.g., CARFAC, CADA, Equity rates, applicants are also encouraged to exceed the minimum rates when possible. Applicants may consider paying senior artists an appropriate amount befitting their experience.
 - Contracted personnel or artist(s) remuneration should be explained in the application and budget breakdown with applicable budget notes. How were such fees calculated? In the instance when applicants may be providing differing levels of remuneration, a clear rationale articulated in the budget notes would provide a helpful explanation as to how an artist fee was calculated.
7. 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.

Support material

8. A number applications lacked support materials. Project proposals are greatly strengthened when accompanied by strong letters of confirmation or support and quotes for services that provide the expert panel with greater insight into the project’s impact and value to the applicant and / or the applicant’s community.
9. The Expert Panel recommends visual and other support material that allowed for a comprehensive assessment of an applicant’s technical and artistic ability. Artist resume, biographies should provide clear explanation of an artist’s experience.