

Theatre Individual Project Grants September 1, 2022 Submissions General Panel Comments

Comments made by the panel during its assessment of applications submitted to the September 1, 2022 deadline are outlined below. Please note that these comments provide a summary of the panel's assessment and do not necessarily relate to every individual application submitted to this deadline. **The panel does not provide individual comments.**

Project Description:

- The panel appreciated the variety of solid applications but were excited by, and gave priority to, proposals that they felt would have a strong impact on either the audience, the artist, or the theatre ecology in Alberta.
- The panel was excited to see so many applications from a wide range of communities and gave priority to applications that featured communities, voices and points of view that had not been often seen/heard.
- When artists create in partnership, some project proposals only presented information from one artist. The panel was interested in hearing from all main collaborators.
- The panel appreciated proposals from artists that had a strong sense as to why this project needs to happen. What is the artistic urgency? What is the artists' connection to the material?
- The panel was pleased to see so many artists demonstrate a commitment to diversity, inclusion in leadership, and behind the scenes -- through either the list of principal artists, or the outlining of their artistic process that made it clear that these artists were thoughtfully, respectfully and appropriately engaged. The panel appreciated when artists provided evidence of support and guidance from the community in question.
- The panel highly ranked projects that were artistically relevant and provided growth opportunity for the artists involved. The panel were excited by artists stretching personal artistic boundaries and where they could see a clear growth trajectory.
- The panel were excited to see collaborations between emerging artists and established artists.
- The panel gave priority to those artists that were able to indicate how Alberta would benefit from the project. This was especially important with respect to students who travel out of province and out of country to study. How would those acquired skills help the theatre ecology in Alberta?
- The panel read through many proposals and appreciated proposals where the applicants took the time to lay out the proposal in sections and in a concise and precise manner. It especially appreciated when the artist would state right at the beginning their main objective and exactly what they were asking the AFA to support.
- The panel appreciated having the project put in a wider context; however, the artists must be clear as to what portion is to be supported.

- Conversely, there were many exciting ideas that the panel was unable to support as key details were missing:
 - There needed to be a clear concise project description, along with realistic timelines, accurate and detailed budgets, specific venues and indications of community support.
 - Including the CV/resumes of the other members of the creative team were also helpful in determining what resources the artists had to work with.
- Applicants needed to ensure that they supplied information about their style of artistic practice, their experience and their background. The panel members did not know every theatre and performance artist applying and could only go by what was included (or not) in the written proposal. Applicants should ensure that the project is situated within the context of the artists' journey.
- The panel gave priority to professional development applicants where there was a clear indication of ties to Alberta and that the knowledge would be brought back to be shared.

Budget:

- The panel was concerned about viability when the project's revenue sources were mostly pending and no plan B was indicated should funding from other sources not be realized.
- The panel was supportive of projects that compensated artists with industry standard or a living wage.
- The panel appreciated when applicants showed diverse revenue sources.
- \$15,000 is not a large amount in the greater scheme of things. Budgets should be accurate and contingencies larger than 5% (of the global budget) made the panel question the accuracy of the budget.
- There were many wonderful ideas/concepts that the panel members were excited by, but the budgets were not clear, or were lacking in detail

Support Materials:

- Support materials should enhance the application by demonstrating artistic style, method of devising, and support the artists' vision.
- Letters of support were important especially for emerging artists as it gave the panel confidence in either the artists' abilities or that significant mentoring or support would be available from either organizations or experienced individuals.
- Letters of support from organizations or festivals should clearly outline any types of support offered (in addition to monetary support or donation of space). An enthusiastic endorsement of the artist in question is also appreciated.
- Writing samples, especially for emerging artists, were important as they allow the panel to assess ability
- Those who create using non-traditional methods, such as devised theatre, would benefit from providing a work sample or an outline of their process.