

Visual Arts and New Media Project Grant

September 1, 2020

General Expert Panel Comments

Comments made by the Expert Panel during its assessment of applications submitted to the September 1, 2020 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 unsuccessful application submitted to this deadline.

The Expert Panel does not provide individual comments.

General Comments

- Please be concise and edit applications, as panelists read a large quantity of applications.
- Do not rely on your prior experience and resume to promote your project. Please provide specifics in the detailed project description as requested in the AFA guidelines.
- For projects transitioning to online platforms and/or website development, providing a marketing or dissemination plan, and/or relevant analytics (where appropriate), will strengthen the application.
- If you include territory acknowledgements, or other elements pertaining to Reconciliation in your application, please demonstrate a clear link and understanding of acknowledgements relative to the proposed project.
- When working with marginalized communities, please provide details about your collaborative and/or working practices. This assists the expert panel in evaluating your understanding of equitable and appropriate approaches to this type of work.
- If working with Indigenous communities or topics, please provide support materials and/or clarify how you will consult and follow protocols appropriately.
- Applicants need to include timelines and demonstrate clear anticipated outcomes. Projects that were unfocused were difficult to assess.
- Please share prior research and preparations made when taking on a new medium, practice or direction, to demonstrate you are ready for the proposed transition.

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- When applying for study or residencies, stronger applications were those that articulated the relevance of the opportunity to the artist's practice and goals.
- If applicants are applying for project costs related to a confirmed exhibition or residency, a confirmation letter enhanced the project proposal
- The Expert Panel was impressed with the diversity of projects and the quality of visual arts activities in the province.
- If you are reaching out to new audiences or communities, including plans or strategies for making new connections strengthens the application.
- An unsuccessful grant request did not necessarily mean your project was without artistic merit. Not all strong projects could be supported. The Expert Panel encourages applicants to reapply in the future, and to reach out to AFA consultants for feedback prior to next submission.

Budgets

- Budgets should reflect realistic revenue and expenses. Please provide quotes where possible.
- Budgets should be sufficiently detailed to give the Panel the information they need to evaluate the potential of a project, and to show that you have done your homework.
- In expenses, do not include public gallery services, or artist fees paid to you. These are not in-kind, as you do not pay for the gallery staff, or venue related costs. These will be removed from your expenses, resulting in a lower eligible grant amount. Please reach out to AFA consultants before the next deadline, if you need help in identifying eligible in-kind expenses.
- Under 'Expense Category Types' in your budget, artist's fees are only used when hiring or contracting out project components to others. Funding requests for living costs are covered under the 'Subsistence' category.
- If you have other confirmed grants or revenue please clarify what AFA funds will be spent on, so the Expert Panel knows what is not covered by other revenues.

Support Material

- Please provide downloadable support files (not links), as per the guidelines on the website. The Expert Panel does not view links, or do external research.
- Do not include excessive text or other design elements that makes your images shrink in size or hard to see.
- Panelists stressed the importance of good support material, including types appropriate to the proposed project, e.g. video and installation benefit from media or video samples as opposed to stills, etc.
- If projects depart from an artist's normal practices, support material that reflects the use and understanding of new materials and processes strengthens an application.