



Canada Council  
for the Arts

Conseil des arts  
du Canada

# Canada Council for the Arts Granting Policy

**June 2018**

# Granting Policy

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## 1. Preamble

### *I. Effective Date*

The *Granting Policy* is effective as of April 1, 2017.

### *II. Purpose*

The Canada Council's *Granting Policy* governs and supports the Canada Council's granting activities.

### *III. Objective*

The objectives of this policy are to outline and communicate the values, instruments, administrative roles and processes underpinning granting activity at the Canada Council; and to support management accountability, oversight and transparency of granting activities.

### *IV. Authority and Administrative Responsibility*

Authority for the *Granting Policy* resides with the Canada Council's Director and CEO. The Director General, Strategy and Public Affairs, is responsible for the development and oversight of the *Granting Policy*. The Director General, Arts Granting Programs, is responsible for the administration of the *Granting Policy*.

### *V. Approval and Revision to the Granting Policy*

Recommendations regarding the *Granting Policy* may be brought forward to the Director and CEO by the Executive Management Committee or the Arts Granting Programs Committee, through the Director General, Strategy and Public Affairs. The Canada Council's Board approves the Policy and any revisions or amendments to this Policy.

### *VI. Relationship to other Canada Council activities*

The Canada Council's granting activities are a key component of the Council's activities, which also include:

- ❖ Prizes
- ❖ Partnerships
- ❖ Council-led initiatives
- ❖ Research
- ❖ Communications and public engagement activities
- ❖ Canadian Commission for UNESCO initiatives
- ❖ Canada Council Art Bank

While these activities may share many of the same objectives, values and administrative processes as the Canada Council's granting activities, they are not governed by this policy.

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## 2. Funding Principles

The Canada Council is a Crown corporation created by an Act of Parliament in 1957 ([Canada Council for the Arts Act](#)) "to foster and promote the study and enjoyment of, and the production of works in, the arts." All of the Canada Council's activities are guided by its mandate and are rooted in its responsibilities and duties as a Crown corporation.

The Canada Council must also meet the highest ethical standards. Its staff and management are required to adhere to the internal Code of Ethics, as well as the Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector. This ensures the Canada Council's objectivity and safeguards the public's trust.

Its granting activities are further guided by the following Funding Principles, which provide the philosophical and ethical framework for the Canada Council's internal operational policies and procedures.

### *I. Arm's Length Relationship*

The Canada Council operates at arm's length from government by virtue of its founding legislation, the [Canada Council for the Arts Act](#), and in accordance with the [Financial Administration Act](#) (s. 85 (1.1)). This permits the Canada Council to develop policies and programs and make decisions independent from political interference or influence.

### *II. Stewardship of Public Funds*

As a Crown corporation that dispenses public funds, the Canada Council has a high degree of responsibility to maintain the public trust and account fully and openly for its operations and decisions. The Canada Council is committed to the sound stewardship of public funds, and the prudent use of public resources through sound financial systems, effective risk management, efficient and accountable granting processes, and timely and transparent reporting.

### *III. Peer Assessment*

Peer assessment is the basis for the majority of the Canada Council's funding decisions. The Canada Council's commitment to peer assessment is based on the conviction that:

- ❖ Peer assessment provides the best possible means of identifying outstanding ability and artistic merit;
- ❖ Freedom of thought and expression benefits from a decision-making process that encompasses a diverse range of professional expertise and knowledge;
- ❖ The use of a wide and diverse range of peer assessors provides the best guarantee of accountability, fairness and transparency in the Canada Council's funding decisions; and
- ❖ In addition to expertise in various disciplines and artistic practices, peer assessment should reflect the diversity of Canada's population through representation from Indigenous, culturally diverse, Deaf and disability and official language minority

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communities, as well as regional representation and a balance of gender, age and official languages.

The Canada Council's peer assessment process is explained on the Canada Council [website](#).

#### *IV. Respectful workplaces*

The Canada Council's policies promote respectful workplaces not only for its own employees, but also for the recipients of its grants. Organizations that accept a grant must declare their commitment to providing a workplace free from discrimination, harassment and sexual misconduct. When applicable, funded organizations must show that they have policies in place that protect and promote healthy workplaces.

The Canada Council's [Application Assessment Process and the Awarding of Grants](#) describes the mechanisms to deal fairly with concerns relating to a grant recipient's capacity to provide safe working conditions and to foster a workplace free from discrimination, harassment and sexual misconduct.

#### *V. Cultural Self-determination of Indigenous Peoples*

The Canada Council respects the histories, traditions, languages and contemporary practices of Indigenous Peoples and seeks to foster the development of Indigenous artists and organizations.

The Canada Council is committed to reaffirming its relationship with the Indigenous Peoples of Canada: First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples. It believes that an Indigenous-centered approach that respects Indigenous artistic expression, cultural protocols, and Indigenous rights and a focus on cultural self-determination will stimulate Indigenous artists, artistic practices and communities. It acknowledges the cultural sovereignty of Indigenous peoples and respects the concepts of Indigenous self-determination.

This means that the Canada Council's granting programs and strategic funds targeted to support Indigenous arts will be guided by Indigenous artists' values and worldviews, administered by staff of Indigenous heritage, assessed by Indigenous arts professionals, and their impact will be measured and reported on in an Indigenous cultural and artistic context.

Through its programs and other activities, the Canada Council affirms the following:

- ❖ Respect for Indigenous worldviews, and the rights of Indigenous Peoples as articulated in the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) (2007).
- ❖ Support for and commitment to the principles of reconciliation articulated through the report of the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#) (2015);
- ❖ The importance of artistic activities that respect and encourage First Nations, Inuit and Métis cultural self-determination and the vitality of Indigenous artistic practices and communities.

- ❖ Recognition of the distinct and unique place of First Nations, Inuit and Métis artists in Canada as creators, interpreters, translators and transmitters of an inherent Indigenous cultural continuity, as well as their unique contribution to Canadian cultural identity.
- ❖ Recognition and support of customary and contemporary artistic practices by First Nations, Inuit and Métis artists.
- ❖ Support and encouragement of a Canadian arts landscape that is deeply ingrained with perspectives, voices, stories, struggles and aesthetics of the First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada.
- ❖ Recognition of the distinctiveness of the many unique and self-defining First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities in Canada.

## VI. *Equity and Diversity*

In accordance with the [Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#) and the [Canadian Human Rights Act](#), the Canada Council recognizes the individual worth and dignity of all people. All individuals have the right to be treated, in all matters, solely on the basis of their personal merits, and to be accorded equal opportunity with all other individuals.

The Canada Council opposes any discrimination, stereotypes or generalizations based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, socio-economic status, disability and conviction for which a pardon has been granted. The Canada Council seeks to ensure that its granting activities are not compromised by these forms of discrimination.

The Canada Council recognizes:

- ❖ Historical disadvantages experienced by individuals within certain groups based on characteristics related to Indigeneity, cultural, ethnic, linguistic, racial, regional, generational, gender, sexuality-based as well as disability-based differences;
- ❖ Barriers (systemic or otherwise) of access to its grants and services faced by some individuals or organizations;
- ❖ The value of adjusting and changing its policies and programs to improve the conditions of underserved artistic communities; and
- ❖ The importance of evaluating and revising equity policies and practices to ensure fairness and relevancy.

In accordance with its [Equity Policy](#), the Canada Council serves the breadth and diversity of Canada's artistic communities and has the following equity objectives:

- ❖ To ensure that the Canada Council is a national and international leader in equity and the arts;
- ❖ To ensure the Canada Council's funding remains relevant and reflective of the cultural identities of all Canadians; and
- ❖ To support artistic leaders from equity groups in expanding their influence and impact.

The Equity Policy articulates the relationship between equity and diversity as interconnected and interdependent concepts. Equity promotes diversity, and the promotion of diversity impacts the implementation of equity. However, the two notions are distinct: equity is a principle and a process whereas diversity reflects a reality or desirable state.

Further, in accordance with the [Expanding the Arts: Deaf and Disability Arts, Access and Equality Strategy](#), and in keeping with the Canada Council's commitment to equity, diversity and inclusive policies, the Canada Council recognizes that Deaf and disability arts are important evolving sectors and practices in the Canadian arts ecology, to be supported, promoted and advanced.

The Canada Council considers that advancing gender parity is an important aspect of its work to support equity in the artistic community and reviews and adapts its programs accordingly.

The Canada Council also reports annually to the federal government about the ways in which its programs and policies support the implementation of the [Canadian Multiculturalism Act](#). This provides an opportunity for the Canada Council to monitor, develop and highlight the ways in which its activities support Canada's multiculturalism policies as expressed in the Act.

## VII. *Official Languages*

The Canada Council believes in the distinct contribution that Canada's two official languages make to the diversity of the arts in Canada, as well as in the important role the arts can play in promoting linguistic duality and the vitality of Official Language Minority Communities (OLMCs).

As a federal institution, the Canada Council is subject to the [Official Languages Act](#) (OLA). The Canada Council's granting activities follow the requirements of the OLA by ensuring that services are available to the public in both official languages. Further, the Canada Council has an obligation under the OLA to take positive measures to enhance the vitality of OLMCs, to support and assist in their development, and to foster the full recognition and use of both official languages in Canadian society.

The Canada Council's approach to official languages is described in its *Official Languages Policy*. In its granting activities, the Canada Council provides equal treatment to applications in both official languages, including through its use of peer assessment procedures that enable participation by peers in the official language of their choice.

The Canada Council's compliance with the OLA and support for linguistic duality and OLMC vitality is monitored internally on a regular basis and reported on in the annual [Review on Official Languages](#) that it submits to the Minister of Canadian Heritage.

## VIII. *Comparative Assessment*

The Canada Council awards funding to those applications that demonstrate the highest artistic excellence and meet all the assessment criteria, within a comparative context. In order to

arrive at this determination, it is important to compare similar applications. As such, applications are grouped for the assessment process, and assessors are asked to rank applications in order of merit according to the program assessment criteria.

## *IX. Outcome-based Approach*

Through its granting activities, the Canada Council works to fulfill its mandate to foster and promote the study and enjoyment of, and the production of works in, the arts. In so doing, the Canada Council works to achieve results for the arts, for Canadians and for society.

Each of the Canada Council's granting instruments has clearly articulated objectives and expected outcomes. These are measured and monitored over time to help the Canada Council meet its objectives and communicate the impact of its activities, and those of the arts sector, to Canadians. In aggregate, these contribute to the Canada Council's overall strategic objective: "excellent, vibrant and diverse art that engages Canadians, enriches their communities, and reaches markets around the world."

## **3. Granting Instruments**

### *I. Granting Programs*

The Canada Council's principal granting instrument is its suite of national, non-disciplinary arts granting programs:

- ❖ Explore and Create
- ❖ Engage and Sustain
- ❖ Creating, Knowing and Sharing: The Arts and Cultures of First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples
- ❖ Supporting Artistic Practice
- ❖ Arts Across Canada
- ❖ Arts Abroad

These programs encompass a comprehensive range of artistic activities, including the creation and presentation of new works, development of capacity among artists and arts organizations, and fostering public engagement in the arts. Through the programs and their components, the granting programs are intended to have inherent flexibility to accommodate a range of artistic disciplines and activities.

### *II. Strategic Funds*

In addition to the granting programs, the Canada Council also makes use of strategic funds. These are special funding mechanisms created in response to a strategic priority identified by the Canada Council, or to support a partnership or other type of collaboration or initiative.

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Strategic funds differ from the regular granting programs in that they have different intended outcomes (i.e., apart from intended outcomes of the six granting programs) or broad outcomes that cut across more than one of the granting programs.

Strategic funds are also used in situations that require processes that are different from those used in the regular granting programs. Details about each strategic fund are available on the Canada Council's website.

### *III. Evolution of Granting Instruments*

Granting instruments – namely the Canada Council's granting programs and strategic funds – may need to evolve over time. Modifications to such instruments may be triggered by:

- ❖ trends and developments in artistic practice
- ❖ operational concerns
- ❖ opportunities to adopt best practices and find efficiencies
- ❖ opportunities to enhance Council's impact
- ❖ audit results and program evaluation results and recommendations

Of these, program evaluation will be the major driver of change. Granting instruments will be evaluated on a regular basis in alignment with the Program Evaluation Policy and Plan and under the direction of the Research, Evaluation and Performance Measurement Section. The program evaluation results and recommendations may lead to changes in program design.

Program evaluations may occur earlier than planned if directed by Executive Management Committee.

## **4. Administration**

### *I. Administration of Granting Instruments*

The administration of granting instruments is guided by the principles identified in this policy, and administered by the Canada Council's operational policies and procedures.

### *II. Delegation of Authority*

The Canada Council's *Delegation of Authority Policy* is updated on a regular basis, upon approval by the Board. It sets out authorities and accountabilities related to grants, payments, spending and contracts.

### III. *Conflict of Interest*

In all its assessment processes, the Canada Council relies on clear procedures to manage conflicts of interest in an ethical manner. A conflict of interest can be real, apparent or potential:

- a) “Real” means that the conflict of interest exists at the present time;
- b) “Apparent” means that the conflict of interest is perceived by a reasonable observer to exist, whether or not it is the case;
- c) “Potential” means that the conflict of interest can be reasonably foreseen to exist in the future.

The Canada Council recognizes that the potential for conflict of interest will always exist in its granting activities, given that current knowledge of the artistic milieu is required in the assessment of competing proposals. The Canada Council’s approach is to avoid conflict of interest whenever possible and to be ready to manage it when it does occur. Accordingly, peer assessors, employees and Board members are all subject to the Canada Council’s procedures on managing conflicts of interest, and are expected to disclose any and all conflicts of interest to ensure the integrity of the assessment and decision-making process.

### IV. *Transparency and Confidentiality*

The Canada Council is committed to the principles of transparency and accountability. While proactive disclosure is not mandatory for Crown corporations, the Canada Council does adhere to the Government’s guidelines on proactive disclosure. The Canada Council’s policy is to publish information on all grants recipients on its website. The Canada Council also proactively publishes the names of peer assessors who serve on a committee, on a quarterly basis. The Canada Council does not make public the names of unsuccessful individual applicants, and guidelines on confidentiality are enforced throughout and following the peer assessment process.

Through its Open Data initiative, the Canada Council offers the public detailed statistical data regarding grant recipients, in line with the Government of Canada’s initiative to work with the national and international open government community.

All information collected by the Canada Council is subject to the [Access to Information Act](#) and the [Privacy Act](#). The Canada Council adheres to all requirements under these laws, and may only use personal information for the purposes for which it was originally collected or for uses consistent with that purpose.

### V. *Compliance, Audit and Evaluation*

Regular internal audits are conducted to ensure that Canada Council’s granting activities are in compliance with this policy and the Canada Council’s operational policies and procedures. The Granting Policy and operational policies may be subject to internal audits, at the

determination of the Board, within the responsibility of the Canada Council's internal audit function.

The *Granting Policy* will be reviewed in alignment with the Canada Council's Program Evaluation Policy and Plan.

Changes to related policies, legislation, goals or operations, and the need to foster continuous operational improvement, are circumstances that may also trigger a review of the Policy.

#### *VI. Transitional Considerations*

Grants administered under the programs effective until the end of 2016-17 will continue to be governed by the existing policies until such files are closed.

The *Granting Policy* is effective as of April 1, 2017, and governs all granting activity from that point on.

*Approved by the Board on October 5, 2016; amended June 14, 2018.*