<u>Explore and Create:</u> Assessment Criteria

The committee makes decisions based on the Assessment Criteria published in the program guidelines for <u>Research and Creation</u> or <u>Concept to Realization</u>. **Please review this information and be sure to clearly speak to it in your application.**

There is no one way to write a grant. Every part of your application matters. Each part must relate to or connect in some way to the next. For example, what you describe to do should be reflected in the revenues and expenses and have a coherence with the support materials, letters and confirmations/bios you provide.

Please note that only the content included in your application will be evaluated by the peer assessors. As such, every part of your application matters. <u>Clear, cohesive and compelling applications stand out</u>.

If your application isn't successful, it doesn't necessarily mean that your project lacks merit. Grant assessment is a competitive process and budgets are limited. The competition is fierce.

What follows are common factors which come up in discussion about applications as they relate to the assessment criteria. We invite you to consider the following tips drawn from some of the most common omissions and oversights.

Assessment Criteria #1

- **Artistic Merit (50% of the overall assessment with three sub-criteria):**

    - **The artistic quality of the work.**
    - **The artistic rationale for the project.**
    - **The potential artistic outcomes.**

The artistic rationale for the proposed project needs to be well articulated to be competitive. It is important to justify the project's artistic rationale, and demonstrate timelines, innovation, and artistic merit.

Explain to the assessors what you are exploring or researching.

Describe your methods of creation or production, or the process(es) you are undertaking and make sure these aspects are reflected in what you ask for in your budget.

Be sure to explain your present artistic practice, the creative direction you are moving in, the challenges you are undertaking, your influences, inspiration, and questions you are tackling.

The potential artistic outcomes as articulated in the application form and required documents must provide peers with a clear enough understanding or impression of the project.

Questions to consider about Artistic Merit:

- Beyond a personal desire to work on this project, what is the creative drive behind it?
- Why is this project, key collaborators and/or theme relevant/important to you and your artistic development/practice?
- What is the relationship between your current practice and the content?
- Are your trying to investigate something specific or reach a concrete result?
- What are you hoping to explore? Is it new to you? Why now? Why you?
- Whose story are you telling? Do you have the appropriate permissions to tell it? Are you demonstrating respectful efforts to engage with the key collaborators, communities and/or themes involved?
- What is your relationship with the themes or subject matter and practices involved in the project?
- Do the artistic expenses in your budget connect to the rationale for your project?

Assessment Criteria #2

- **Impact (30% of the overall assessment with three directives):**

  - **The potential of the project to contribute to the artistic development of the applicant and others involved.**
  - **The potential of the project to advance artistic practice.**
  - *This 3ʳᵈ criteria only applies to Concept to Realization applications:* **The potential of the project to build public interest in and knowledge of the artistic practice.**

Make sure you explain how the proposed project will contribute to your or your group's artistic development. The potential of the project to advance artistic practice must be clearly articulated.

Questions to consider about Impact:

- How are you pushing your boundaries or deepening **your** practice and development with this project?
- What are you doing differently? Why now? Are you exploring new materials, genres, forms, concepts, etc.?
- Is your disciplinary, geographical, cultural or community context clear?
- How will your project advance artistic practice more widely, beyond your own individual practice?
- Will it be contributing to an existing body of work? Filling a gap? Taking an exploration of material, genre, form, concept, tradition etc. into a new direction? Clarity of this impact is essential.
- What is the context for **your** work and **your** artistic practice or form? How will your work contribute to developing that form or community of artists? Be coherent and provide a clear understanding of the impact on the communities, artists or audiences you intend to involve.
- Why are you doing this project? Include both the micro (what you're doing now) and the macro (how could this affect your future as an applicant?)
- Are your goals and outcomes clear?

Concept to Realization Component **ONLY**

The project's potential to build public interest in and knowledge of your artistic practice must be clear and compelling to be competitive.

- What audience or communities will you reach?

Assessment Criteria #3

- **Feasibility (20% of the overall assessment with two directives):**

  - **The capacity and experience to undertake the project.**
  - **A reasonable budget,** (*including other revenue sources, if you applied to Concept to Realization*) **efficient use of resources and the ability to provide adequate working conditions.**

Applications that stand out are often the ones where the applicant convincingly demonstrates their capacity to undertake the project, including a realistic work plan providing key steps.

Provide required documents including agreements and/or copies of letters indicating how any collaborators, communities, co-producers, producing partners, presenters or exhibitors are involved and how they are supporting the project. If possible, group bios into one document for easy viewing.

Provide a detailed timeline and budget. Make sure to include the request amount in the budget. Make sure the budget is balanced: the total revenues (including grant amount requested) equal total expenses. Makes sure there are no surprises in the budget – any major element is mentioned in the project description.

Questions to consider about Feasibility:

- Are you demonstrating your ability to provide adequate working conditions for you and the project team members?
- Have you shown calculations and notes in your budget for yourself and collaborators?
- Do the short biographies and CV's of those involved demonstrate capacity and experience to undertake the project? For easy viewing attach group bios in one document.
- Did you use the Budget Notes column to explain/breakdown any expenses that are not self-evident? You can use the blank line items for expenses that don't fall into existing categories. You do not need to fill in amounts in the budget if they are not relevant to your project.

Concept to Realization Component **ONLY**

- If you are requesting over $60,000, it is important to provide a rationale for this higher amount. (Exceptionally, higher amounts may be considered for activities that have elevated costs due to the duration of the project, number of people involved, and/or technical or other requirements related to the artistic practice).

- Grants support the research, development, creation, and production of the work. Promotional costs can be included, however, should be clearly justified.

- If Touring activities are included in your grant request, it should be only a portion of your budget request. You might want to consider applying to a Circulation and Touring grant competition.

- It is recommended to diversify your revenue sources, if possible, and include them under "other revenue sources", whether pending or confirmed.

Support Material

- Support material is essential, it is difficult to assess applications without examples of past work, works-in-progress etc. Ideally there should be some reference here to what you describe in your project description.

- Material that speaks to your creative skill will be more compelling for a committee (avoid promotional videos that might only highlight your marketability).

- Make full use of the space to provide viewing notes/descriptions to explain the link to your proposed project.

- If providing support material that is not directly related to the project, provide a rationale to describe why it has been included. This can be described in the notes section of the support material.

- You may include material about key collaborators if relevant to the project. This will support the understanding of their specific involvement.   Brief bios rather than resumes are helpful.

- Assessment committee members are instructed to view as much material as they need to make an informed decision; generally, this is up to 10 minutes. It is recommended, however, to include complete works rather than excerpts. Be clear as to which parts of the material to review.

- Support material should be your current work/activities with a relationship or relevance to the grant application; it may also include the work/activities of other key artists or partners. You may choose to include earlier work/activities to provide a context for your application.

- Confirmation of support letters: Include letters that go beyond basic confirmation of participation in a project: effective collaborator letters are ones that include detailed and specific reasons as to why the collaborator supports this project and thinks it is worthy of their time and effort. Screengrabs of emails and texts are acceptable. Ideally, letters that confirm availability, commitment, and enthusiasm may be effective in convincing peers of the feasibility of a project.

- Confirmed sources of support: Include letters of confirmation from other funders or in-kind services with the application.

<u>Budget</u>

IMPORTANT: Canada Council Excel forms are not compatible with Apple's Numbers or open-source office productivity software such as Open Office. Please use Microsoft Excel for PC or Apple computers or create a free account with Microsoft Excel Online to use Excel in your browser.

- Make full use of the Budget Notes column! We love details, break down your expenses for us.

- A reasonable budget, including the ability to provide adequate working conditions by providing details, including notes, might be beneficial.

- A balanced budget where projects costs are equal to project revenues is a must! Fill out the revenues section with both pending and confirmed sources where applicable.

- **In the Revenues section, under Public Sector Revenues, write the grant amount you are requesting from the Canada Council (Grant for this application).**

- Artists' fees, copyright and royalties must be paid to all Canadian artists. The amounts must be agreed upon by the artists and the applicant, and fees must be based on current Canadian standards.

For additional assistance, questions, or clarifications about the program or project eligibility requirements, <u>contact an officer</u> in Explore in Create.