STRATEGIC FUNDS AND INITIATIVES

Digital Now

COVID-19 has accelerated the need for digital adaptation and transformation. **Digital Now** is a new one-time digital innovation initiative to enable artistic groups, collectives and organizations to adapt existing works and/or create new ones to be shared virtually with the public. This funding is meant to stimulate job creation within the arts sector and ensure that artists and arts organizations can continue to create work and deliver their programming and activities virtually while the physical distancing, travel restrictions and other public health measures related to the COVID-19 pandemic are ongoing.

Canadian artistic groups, collectives and organizations can apply for costs related to the development, creation, adaptation, production, promotion, dissemination and the optimization of digital artistic content.

**Digital Now** aims to:

* stimulate hiring within the arts sector through projects that contract a diversity of artists and arts workers
* enable Canadian artistic groups, collectives and organizations to deliver their programming and activities digitally
* boost the digital knowledge and capacity of Canadian artistic groups, collectives and organizations, and enable them to adapt their operations
* enable Canadian artistic groups, collectives and organizations to reach Canadians through digital channels and platforms while physical distancing measures are in place
* enable Canadian artistic groups, collectives and organizations to engage local audiences, and to build new ones in Canada and internationally
* increase the discoverability of Canadian artistic content
* stimulate digital innovation and thinking in the arts

encourage diversity and inclusion, including gender balance and gender diversity, and representativity from Indigenous communities, culturally diverse communities, the Deaf and disability community, official language minority communities, youth, and various regions.

If you are the lead applicant of a group or collective, you may be eligible for [Application Assistance](http://canadacouncil.ca/commitments/equity/application-assistance) to pay someone to help you with the application process if you are experiencing difficulty and self-identify as:

* an artist who is Deaf, hard of hearing, has a disability or is living with a mental illness
* a First Nations, Inuit or Métis artist facing language, geographic and/or cultural barriers.

**Grant type** – [project](http://canadacouncil.ca/glossary/project)

**Deadline** – This special initiative closes on 28 April 2021.

There are 2 assessment groupings:

1. For applications submitted by 31 March 2021.
2. For applications submitted by 28 April 2021.

Applications received by each date will be assessed within that group.

**Grant amount** – fixed amounts of $25,000, $50,000 or $100,000

**Notification of results** – end of July 2021

**Application limits** – you can submit one (1) application

Applications for this grant do not count towards the maximum number of applications that can be submitted to the Canada Council each year (from 1 March – 28/29 February).

This grant does not count towards the number of project grants needed to be eligible for a Canada Council core or composite grant.

# I want to apply – What else do I need to know?

If you have not already done so, you must register in the [portal](https://apply.canadacouncil.ca/) before you apply. Please note that profile validation can take up to 15 business days.

# Applicants - Who can apply?

Types of potential applicants to this initiative include:

* artistic groups and collectives
* artistic organizations

Your eligibility to apply is determined by the validated profile created in the Canada Council portal.

Artistic organizations presently receiving core grants are eligible to apply to this initiative.

# Activities - What can I apply for?

You can apply for costs related to the development, creation, production and dissemination of digital artistic content. Examples include but are not limited to livestreamed works/events, downloadable works, virtual performances for young audiences, podcasts, sound art, digital exhibition and curatorial works, 3D object exploration, audiobooks, interactive artistic experiences, immersive storytelling and more. The project must result in a work that can be shared digitally.

* The project can propose a new work(s) or the adaptation of an existing work(s). This can include projects that have been previously funded for dissemination in a non-digital form.
* Content can be of any length, for any age group, be disseminated through any digital means and relate to any field of practice.
* Hybrid activities that combine digital and in-person dissemination are eligible providing there is a stand-alone digital component that is integral to the project and that in-person dissemination is feasible within your anticipated public health guidelines.
* The project must begin before December 31, 2021. The main phases of the project should be undertaken within 18 months of accepting the grant, but there is no specific end date.
* The project must contract artists and arts workers and pay professional fees and/or salaries.

It is your responsibility to ensure that the project respects government public health restrictions put in place to reduce the transmission of COVID-19, including recommendations for social distancing and limits on public gatherings.

**You can’t apply for** activities that occur before your project start date or those on the [general list of ineligible activities](http://canadacouncil.ca/funding/grants/guide/apply-to-programs/general-list-of-ineligible-activities).

**Ineligible activities**

* The project must propose content that is arts-based. Projects that only propose non-artistic content are not eligible (e.g. projects that focus on fundraising, communications/marketing, training, or operational tools and software, etc.)
* Projects that do not demonstrate how artists and arts workers will be contracted through professional fees and/or additional salaries are not eligible.

# Expenses - What is eligible?

* Fixed amounts of $25,000, $50,000 or $100,000 for direct costs related to the activity.

The Canada Council reserves the right to award a smaller amount based on your project budget and availability of funds.

**Eligible expenses**

All expenses **directly related to carrying out the proposed project** up to 100% of the project costs are eligible, including but not limited to:

* salaries, honoraria, artist’s fees, royalties and copyright paid to artists, arts workers, technicians, experts, project managers, developers and consultants directly involved in carrying out the project
* fees and costs related to content creation, artistic creation/adaptation and media production
* costs related to promotion, marketing and optimization of content
* training/skills acquisition if relevant to and required to deliver the project
* licensing fees
* equipment rental costs
* public accessibility costs, e.g. sign language interpretation, captioning, audio description, etc.
* costs related to COVID-19 safety measures

equipment and software purchase costs are eligible up to 15% of the total grant. For more information about [capital expenditures](https://canadacouncil.ca/glossary/capital-expenditures), consult our glossary.

Applicants are encouraged to meet accessibility standards when sharing their work online, including [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines](https://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/).

**Ineligible expenses**

Expenses that **are not directly related to carrying out the proposed project**are not eligible, including (but not limited to):

* ongoing operating expenses
* deficit reduction costs
* expenses incurred prior to the application submission date
* expenses related to renovating or constructing a building
* expenses for which funding has already been granted by the Canada Council.

The project must include payments to artists and arts workers. Awarded amounts will take into consideration fees and/or salaries paid to artists and arts workers contracted through the project. You cannot request support for salaries and fees that are part of your ongoing operating expenses.

**Digital Now** is part of the *Supporting Arts and Live Events Workers in Response to COVID-19 Initiative*, which supports the planning and presentation of COVID-19 safe events and the arts. You cannot receive this support for the same project from more than one Department of Canadian Heritage program and/or the Canada Council. Applicants that are normally eligible to receive funding from both Canada Council and Canadian Heritage programs may present a project application to each of these programs only if they are for distinct and separate projects.

# Assessment - How are decisions made?

If eligible, your application to **Digital Now** will be evaluated internally through a streamlined assessment process designed for quick turnaround. It is the applicants’ responsibility to provide sufficient information for the evaluation of all assessment criteria.

Applications will be assessed on the following weighted criteria:

**Impact (75%)**

* Potential of the project to contract diverse artists and/or arts workers and pay them professional fees or salaries during the 2021 calendar year
* A commitment to gender balance and gender diversity, and to reflecting the diversity of your geographic community or region, particularly with regards to the engagement and inclusion of Indigenous Peoples, culturally diverse groups, people who are Deaf or have disabilities, official language minority communities and youth.
* Potential of the project to further, develop and extend your artistic practice(s) or digital knowledge
* Potential of the content to be shared and discovered by the public, including your target audience

**Feasibility (25%)**

* Overall capacity and experience to undertake the project (prior digital experience is not required)
* A realistic workplan and timeline
* A reasonable budget
* Suitability of your project for digital dissemination

# Required information - What you need to apply

You will need to provide information about:

* your “discoverability” plan outlining strategies relating to promotion, digital marketing, and search engine optimization to ensure that your work can be found by your public
* your plan to pay artists and arts workers through the project
* your timeline
* your budget, including the fees and salaries you plan to pay to artists and arts workers.

You will also need to include:

* 1 recent sample of your previous work(s) or the work to be adapted if applicable
* biographies and letters of confirmation from key collaborators, if any.

# Grant payment and final reports

If your application is successful, the first step in receiving your grant payment is to complete the Grant Acceptance Form. Click [here](http://canadacouncil.ca/funding/grants/guide/if-you-receive-a-grant) for more information on the responsibilities of grant recipients.

A final report will be due 3 months after you complete the project.

# Contact information

We have designed this application form to be as straightforward as possible. Due to anticipated volume, we may not be able to respond to all enquiries within our standard service targets. However, if you require additional information or guidance, contact digitalnow@canadacouncil.ca before submitting your application.

PREVIEW: Application Form

This is not an official application form. You must use the portal to apply.

Use simple text formatting if you prepare your application outside of the portal. Formatted text uses additional characters, and some formatting may be lost when copied over.

 = required

## GRANT DESCRIPTION

1. **Give your application a name.** (approximately 10 words)

The name you provide is for your reference and will identify this grant application in your dashboard.

1. **Provide the name of the contact person responsible for this application.** (approximately 10 words) 
2. **Provide a one-sentence summary of your project.** If possible, use the format ACTIVITY, EVENT (if relevant) and DATES. (approximately 25 words) 

For example, “To create and livestream an original choreography using x platform from August, 2021 to November, 2021.”

This summary will be used in the Canada Council’s official reporting.

1. **Project start date**

This date must be after the date you submit your application. The project must begin before December 31, 2021.

1. **Project end date**

The main phases of the project should be undertaken within 18 months of accepting the grant, but there is no specific end date.

1. **Briefly describe your project and how it will allow you to further, develop and extend your group or organization’s artistic practice(s) and/or digital knowledge.** (approximately 500 words)
2. **Outline your workplan and timeline.** (approximately 250 words) 
3. **Briefly describe: How will you share your project in a digital environment? Who do you intend to reach with this project? What are your “discoverability” strategies relating to promotion, digital marketing, and search engine optimization to ensure that your work can be found by your public?** (answer all 3 questions; approximately 250 words) 
4. **Briefly describe (if applicable): What is your “monetization” strategy to generate direct or indirect revenue and value from your digital content (i.e. pay per view, subscription, pay what you choose, donations, product sales, advertising, sponsorships, etc.)? How will this project enable you to adapt your existing business model or explore a new one?**

Your answer to this question will be used for the purposes of gathering information but will not be assessed. (Answer both questions; approximately 250 words, 1700 characters)

1. **Briefly describe: How will this project stimulate hiring within the arts sector and contract artists and arts workers through professional fees and salaries? How will you determine the fees to be paid?** (Answer both questions; approximately 250 words) 

When hiring artists, you must pay professional artist fees. This may be governed by industry standards or union rates. You cannot request support for salaries and fees that are part of your ongoing operating expenses.

1. **Complete the table below for your proposed project. Exclude salaries and fees that are part of your ongoing operating budget.** 

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Fees and salaries** | **Amount** |
| Total professional fees paid to artists | $ |
| Total professional fees paid to arts workers | $ |
| Total salaries paid to artists | $ |
| Total salaries paid to arts workers | $ |
| How many artists will be paid professional fees or salaries? | # |
| How many arts workers will be paid professional fees or salaries? | # |

1. **How will this project reflect the diversity of your geographic community or region, particularly with the engagement and inclusion of Indigenous Peoples, culturally diverse groups, people who are Deaf or have disabilities, official language minority communities and youth, as well as a commitment to gender balance and diversity?** (approximately 250 words)
2. **How will you ensure safe working conditions for those involved in your activities?** (approximately 100 words) 
3. **If your proposed activity touches upon Indigenous traditional knowledge, linguistic or cultural intellectual property, please describe your relationship to this content and how appropriate protocols are/will be observed or addressed.** (approximately 100 words)
4. **If there is anything that has not been asked that is essential to understanding your application, provide it here.** (approximately 250 words)

Do not use this space to provide additional information related to earlier questions.

1. **If you have submitted another Canada Council grant for overlapping activities or expenses, please indicate the file number.** (approximately 10 words)

## TYPE AND NUMBER OF ACTIVITIES

1. **Type of activity** (you may choose more than 1)

[ ] Creation [ ] Adaptation

[ ] Production [ ] Dissemination/Distribution

[ ] Development [ ] Promotion

[ ] Other activities

1. **Other activities** (please describe, approximately 10 words)
2. **Complete the table below for your proposed project.** 

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Number of works** | **Amount** |
| Number of adapted existing works | # |
| Number of new works | # |
| Of total adapted and new works, how many of these are co-productions? | # |

## BUDGET

1. **Complete the Budget document.** 
2. **Grant amount requested** 

Rounding your requested amount up or down to the nearest fixed amount, please enter one of the following fixed amounts: $25 000, $50 000 or $100 000.

The Canada Council reserves the right to award a smaller amount based on your project budget and availability of funds.

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## REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

1. **For key artistic collaborators, provide their biographies and an agreement or a letter/email that indicates confirmation of their participation. If your project involves partners, provide a letter/email that indicates confirmation of their involvement. **

##  SUPPORT MATERIAL

1. **You must submit 1 item of support material. **

Support material should be your current work/activities with a relationship or relevance to the grant application. You may choose to include earlier work/ activities to provide a context for your application.

Due to anticipated volume, assessors will only review up to a maximum of 5 minutes of support material