
2026 COMMUNITIES AND ARTISTS SHIFTING CULTURE (CASC)

About the Peer Assessment Process

Arts & Culture uses a blended assessment model where three to six peer members of the arts, cultural, and creative community are invited to participate in the assessment process with Cultural Planners. The assessment committee reviews applications, participates in discussions, and makes funding recommendations for City Council's approval. Peer members are local artists, cultural workers and administrators in the field who bring professional experience, knowledge and expertise gained from their involvement in Vancouver's arts and cultural communities.

Because this grant program receives applications from a vast range of organizations both with and without a core arts and culture mandate, every effort will be made to assess applications within the context of their core work and activities. Peers contribute current knowledge and understanding of artistic and organizational practices through their active work in the sector. Staff provide historical knowledge of the applicants' programming, financial, and operational history (where applicable), and an overview of the local cultural sector.

Commitment to Diverse Representation on Assessment Committees

Arts & Culture has adopted policy to exceed 50% representation of people from equity-deserving communities in all its assessment bodies for grants and awards. We recognize it is not possible to include every dimension of equity on assessment committees but strive to achieve a meaningful representation of voices that represent the makeup of our cultural sector. We also look for representation of a range of artistic practices; type, tenure, and size of organization; various positions and roles; and perspectives from new and senior leaders, artists, and cultural workers. Staff will take measures to ensure that members will be invited into culturally safe and welcoming spaces.

Orientation, Group Agreements, and Unconscious Bias Training

Assessment Committee members participate in an orientation session in advance of the assessment meetings. The goal of this is to allow members to get to know each other and to meet staff, to learn more about the goals of the program, to understand the process, and to clarify roles. The orientation will include an overview of Culture|Shift goals and directions which include Reconciliation, and Cultural Equity and Accessibility. It is also a place for staff to learn what else may be needed to support the members throughout the process.

Each time a new committee is convened, members will establish an agreement for how they will work together throughout the assessment meetings. This agreement will set shared

expectations, establish pathways for conflict and resolution, ensure a solid understanding and affirmation of the City's Cultural goals, program guiding principles and objectives, and establish what is needed to ensure a safe space based on trust, consent and mutual accountability.

To understand how bias shows up in the room and in decision-making processes, time is reserved to discuss unconscious bias, and learning resources are provided prior to the assessment meetings.

How to Participate in Assessment Committees

We encourage self-nominations from community members year-round. Information on how to submit your nomination can be found here: <https://vancouver.ca/people-programs/grant-application-and-assessment-process.aspx>

Funding Recommendation Process

City Council Approval

Funding recommendations from the assessment committee are brought forward in a report to City Council for consideration and approval. Applicants receive an email approximately a week in advance of the report going forward for the Council meeting date. *Please check your spam folder if you do not see an email notification.*

The report is also made public on the City's website at the same time. Names of the peer assessment committee members are made public in this report.

To find reports online go to:

1. vancouver.ca
2. Under "Your Government", click on "Vancouver City Council," then click on "Council meetings and decisions"
3. Scroll to and click on "Get agenda and minutes," then click on "Upcoming Meetings"
4. Find the appropriate Regular Council or City Finance and Services meeting date and click on Agenda and Minutes
5. Scroll to locate the appropriate Administrative Report, often called *20XX Cultural Grant Allocations*

Assessment Feedback and Reconsideration

Every effort is made to use a clear and informed assessment process to ensure recommendations achieve the goals of the City's culture plan and contribute to a vibrant and culturally diverse community. Given the rich cultural activity in the city, demand exceeds available resources, and not all applications can be funded or funded to their full request amount. Applicants may request additional information on the assessment process including comments and clarification of the peer assessment committee's recommendation. Where there

are specific conditions on a grant or specific comments to be shared, they will be provided to the organization.

For demonstrated instances where either the financial situation (at the grant submission deadline) or eligibility status was misunderstood by the peer assessment committee, applicants may formally request reconsideration of the recommendation. For eligible formal requests, the recommendation will be withdrawn from the recommendation report to Council and will be reviewed by the Managing Director of Arts & Culture who will make a final recommendation and submission to City Council for their consideration at a later date.

For specific details on the Request for Reconsideration policy and process, visit
<https://vancouver.ca/people-programs/request-for-reconsideration.aspx>

Contact Information

Vanessa Richards, Cultural Planner

vanessa.richards@vancouver.ca

Organizations with names
starting with A to M

Joyce Rosario, Cultural Planner

joyce.rosario@vancouver.ca

Organizations with names
starting with N to Z