

2025 CULTURAL INDIGENOUS FUNDING (CIF) INFORMATION GUIDE

Deadline: Wednesday, October 1, 2025, at 11:59 pm

The Cultural Indigenous Funding (CIF) program provides core support for Indigenous mandated and led organizations in Vancouver. Recipients are cultural organizations that develop, create, produce, present, and disseminate artistic work, or provide services or space in any artistic discipline.

This guide provides information about the objectives, eligibility, criteria, application process, and relational approach for this grant program. Please review this information guide before starting your application.

The City's Arts and Culture department offers other programs, awards and services. Details are on the City's web page at: <http://vancouver.ca/people-programs/arts-and-culture-grants.aspx>

Key Dates (subject to change)

For new applicants:

Expression of Interest opens	Wednesday, June 25, 2025
Expression of Interest closes	Wednesday, July 30, 2025, 11:59 pm
Staff review and invitation to apply	August 2025

For previous recipients and groups invited to submit full applications:

Applications open	Wednesday, August 27, 2025
Applications close	Wednesday, October 1, 2025, 11:59 pm
Review and assessment of applications	October/November 2025
Council approval of grant recommendations	December 2025
Grant payment	January 2026

Application Support

Applicants who are Deaf/deaf, Hard of Hearing, or live with a disability and need support to complete their grant applications can be reimbursed for up to \$500 towards the costs of assistance from service providers. Please contact program staff if you have any questions, or need support with the application process.

Contact Information

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Website: <http://vancouver.ca/people-programs/arts-and-culture-grants.aspx>

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New for 2025

Changes to the Application Process and Form

Expression of Interest (EOI) for New Groups

From 2020-2024, Staff invited organizations to apply to the pilot version of the Cultural Equity and Accessibility Funding (CEAF) program based on direct community input and knowledge of local leaders who were advancing equity and accessibility in practice, through policy, programs and the people in decision-making roles.

In line with the priorities of Culture|Shift, the City's cultural plan, to centre the voices of Indigenous and Equity-deserving artists and communities, the budget for Cultural Equity & Accessibility Funding and Cultural Indigenous Funding has increased for 2025. With more funds available, new groups can be supported. As a result, these programs are shifting from an invitation-only process to an open call through an **Expression of Interest (EOI)** process.

The EOI process is for organizations seeking core cultural funding through the following programs:

- Cultural Equity and Accessibility Funding (CEAF)
- Cultural Indigenous Funding (CIF)
- Cultural Operating Funding (COF)

Key Dates:

- EOI Opens: June 25, 2025
- EOI Deadline: July 30, 2025

What Happens Next?

- EOIs will be reviewed by staff based on program eligibility and previous grant history
- A limited number of organizations will be invited to submit a full grant application, based on available funding.
 - **CEAF and CIF:** 8–12 new groups may be invited.
 - **COF:** Funding may allow for 2 or more new groups.

Important Notes:

- Submitting an EOI does not guarantee an invitation to apply or a grant award.
- We strongly encourage all interested groups to also apply to the upcoming CASC intake as an additional opportunity.

NOTE: Current funding recipients through the pilot program, Cultural Indigenous Grants, will be transitioned to the new program and the EOI is not required.

Neighbourhood Activation Task

There is a new neighbourhood activation task for you to indicate where programs and services took place in your last year or season. This is for data collection purposes only and will not be assessed.

About Cultural Indigenous Funding (CIF)

Program Description and Goals

CIF supports and sustains the core operations of organizations that are led by and for Indigenous communities, to uphold, recognize, and support xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) and Urban Indigenous artists and cultural practitioners, grounded in inherent and constitutionally protected Indigenous Rights. This program supports organizations to build capacity, to deliver artistic and cultural programming, and for other needs the organization identifies.

Goals include:

- Building mutual trust and connection that honours and respects the deep knowledge held within the organization and its people, and endeavours to maintain a joyful process of information exchange and support
- Provide sustainable support for more Indigenous organizations to lead and support artists and communities in Vancouver.
- Elevate underrepresented, marginalized, and racialized artists, cultural practitioners, and organizations to research, develop, create and present their work.
- Provide meaningful opportunities where artists and cultural workers have the freedom, agency, and safe spaces to share their stories.
- Enable creative work that work that strives to dismantle racism, and celebrate creative, complex, and joyful art and culture in Vancouver.
- Expand public access to culturally relevant and diverse work, programs and services to broaden understanding of Vancouver's cultural history and creative stories.
- Amplify cultural life throughout Vancouver neighbourhoods, communities, and public spaces.
- Create a more equitable, collaborative, vibrant, and sustainable arts and culture sector.

Culture|Shift: Culture Plan 2019-2029

CIF and other cultural grant programs are informed by Culture|Shift, the City of Vancouver's 10-year cultural plan (2020–2029) that provides a strategic framework to support arts and culture. Culture|Shift calls for us to be deeply mindful of how arts and culture is conducted upon the unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

We acknowledge that grant and award funding programs have historically been informed by a limited world view of arts and culture. This has enabled many organizations to establish and thrive, while simultaneously creating patterns of historic exclusion for many artists and organizations. Culture|Shift calls for us to address historical inequities, create new frameworks, and set directions for more equitable distribution of support so that all can participate in the cultures and creative stories of Vancouver. The CIF program supports Culture|Shift Direction 2: Reconciliation & Decolonization.

Culture|Shift is one of many actions to repair the harms of systemic exclusion and discrimination, including systemic ableism, dispossession of land, forced relocations, internment, race-based taxes, race-based refusal of asylum and immigration, racial segregation, and displacing or demolishing of racialized communities' neighbourhoods.

Culture|Shift connects with other City policies and strategies, such as the UNDRIP Strategy, and both Equity and Accessibility Frameworks. The City uses an Indigenous Rights, a Racial

Justice, an Intersectionality, and a Systems Orientation lens in its approach to Equity. This means to acknowledge:

- the distinctiveness of Indigenous sovereignty and to uphold Indigenous rights;
- that one out of every two residents in Vancouver is racialized, and commit to dismantling racism and elevating racialized voices;
- how multiple forms of discrimination including ableism intersect and take an intersectional approach to how gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, socio-economic class, race, religion and immigration status have compounding negative impacts; and,
- embedded discrimination within systems, and the redesign of the rules and incentives of systems, in order to lead to more equitable outcomes.

Read more about Culture|Shift's goals, directions, and priorities at:

<https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/vancouver-culture-shift.pdf>

Prioritizing Indigenous and Equity-deserving Artists and Organizations

In order to balance funding investments to support organizations and artists that reflect the diversity of Vancouver and the unceded ancestral lands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) peoples, we aim to increase investment to Indigenous and equity-deserving artists and organizations who have been discriminated against and most impacted by structural racism.

The City uses an Indigenous Rights, a Racial Justice, an Intersectionality, and a Systems Orientation lens in its approach to Equity. This means to acknowledge:

- The distinctiveness of Indigenous sovereignty and to uphold Indigenous rights;
- That one out of every two residents in Vancouver is racialized, and commit to dismantling racism and elevating racialized voices;
- How multiple forms of discrimination intersect and take an intersectional approach to how gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, socio-economic class, race, religion and immigration status have compounding negative impacts; and,
- Embedded discrimination within systems, and the redesign of the rules and incentives of systems, in order to lead to more equitable outcomes.

Eligible Applicants

CIF supports the core operations of organizations that are led by and for xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh), and Urban Indigenous peoples, to develop, create, produce, present, and disseminate artistic or cultural work, or provide services or space in any artistic discipline.

Common characteristics of groups supported by this program include:

- Supporting Indigenous artists and communities in ways that are embedded in their mission, leadership, operations, finances, programs and services
- Being recognized by their peers as having high impact and trust within their cultural community
- Challenging dominant operational models to build organizations in ways that reflect the community they serve
- Operating with an annual budget generally between \$50,000-\$250,000

To be eligible for this program, organizations need to meet the following:

Organization Status

- Be a registered non-profit society, co-op, charity or First Nations Band council.
- Be physically located and have an active presence in and deliver most of its programs and services within Vancouver, or if led by either the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) peoples, held in their traditional homelands.

Mission & Mandate

- Have a clear mission with explicit commitments to support Indigenous artists and communities in ways that are embedded in their mission, leadership, operations, programs and services

Funding History

- For new applicants: Have received two grants through Communities and Artists Shifting Culture (CASC)

Financials

- Have sustained a minimum annual expense budget of \$50,000 for the past three years
- If approved for funding, recipients will need to provide board-signed, independently prepared financial statements (e.g. compilation engagement or notice to reader).

Additional considerations to be a priority to receive funding:

Programs

- Have a history of consistent annual delivery of impactful arts and cultural programs or services
- Compensate (or is building towards compensating) artists and staff at minimum standard industry rates.

Organizational Capacity

- Have a governance model that is supportive of the mission, a healthy and inclusive workplace, and the staff and people served.
- Have professional and experienced leadership in artistic and/or administrative roles.
- Have workplace policies or practices which support a healthy and respectful workplace for staff and volunteers.

Financials

- Have growing and diverse financial revenues generally between \$50,000-\$250,000 with sound accounting practices.

Ineligible Organizations and Activity

- Public or private educational institutions (public schools, universities, colleges, training organizations).
- Organizations already receiving core support from another department at the City of Vancouver (e.g. Cultural Operating or Core Support from Social Policy).
- Core artistic training and in-class activity.
- Capital projects.
- Deficit reduction, third party fundraising activity, scholarships, contests, or competitions.

- Activity taking place outside Vancouver city limits, unless led by either the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) peoples, held in their traditional homelands.

Grant Amounts

CIF grants will not exceed 50% of an applicant's last actual expense budget. New recipients generally start with a base level grant of \$15,000 and may be recommended for a higher amount based on available funding. CIF grants currently range from \$15,000 to \$40,000.

Information on previous grant awards and recipients is located at:

<https://council.vancouver.ca/20241113/documents/cfsc1.pdf>

Application Questions and Assessment Criteria

The pilot version of the CIF program explored relational grant making practice, with a small number of organizations. The approach to funding emphasized trust, mutual accountability, and long-term relationships between funders and recipients, rather than transactional decision-making. This process involved the opportunity for ongoing dialogue and feedback, as well as the recognition of lived experience and local knowledge as valuable expertise.

The current CIF application builds on those roots, and poses similar questions, but the process will start with a written application.

The questions for each section of the application are prompts to consider your priorities, challenges, and opportunities and tell us about your current and upcoming artistic and organizational plans. The criteria following each set of questions inform how answers will be assessed, with each section given a different weight (indicated by percentage of overall application).

Artistic Purpose (15%)

Questions

- What are the mission, vision, and values of your organization?
- Summarize the history of the organization. Why was the organization started, by who, and what are some significant milestones to date?

Criteria

- Purpose clearly expresses why the organization exists and responds to a clear need in Vancouver's arts and culture sector.
- Mandate explicitly names and prioritizes advancing artistic, cultural, or community-engaged work of Indigenous artists and people.
- Equity and/or accessibility is embedded in the mission, leadership, operations, programs and services.

Artistic Contributors and Programs (30%)

Questions

- Who are the artists and creative collaborators you work with? What are their roles and why do they choose to work with you?
- What are your programming plans for next year?

- What you are most excited about when looking ahead?
- What were the highlights and learnings from the last year?
- Attachments:
 - ☐ Previous and Current Year Programs* – summary of activity from your previous year
 - ☐ Upcoming Year Programs* – summary of activity proposed for your next year.

**Option to use an existing document created for another grant program and/or provide a link to a video or website*

Criteria

- The majority of resources and activities are dedicated to those led by Indigenous artists and cultural workers who have skills and expertise to lead and contribute to the organization and programs and services.
- Programming is shaped by ethical collaboration practices, informed consent and due credit practices, along with practices to prevent cultural appropriation.
- Programs and services advance the organization's mission, and a particular discipline or practice.
- There are public land acknowledgements of the Local Nations (Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh) and if working with Indigenous artists or content, respectful and informed cultural practices are integrated into co-creation processes in relevant, safe and well-resourced ways.

Participation, Access, and Impact (30%)

Data about your previous year of activity

- Number of public activities
- Attendance at programs
- Number of paid artists
- Number of staff and contractors employed
- Number of volunteers

Questions

- Who are the community(ies) that you serve? What are the joys and challenges of being in relationship with those communities?
- How you serve your community(ies) through your programs and/or services?
- How do you make your programs safe and accessible for participants, and what values guide your work to be inclusive and fair?
- Attachments (if available):
 - ☐ Accessibility Policy and/or Plan.

Criteria

- Programs develop or engage audiences and participants from equity and/or accessibility denied communities.
- The organization considers accessibility practices as ongoing learning to improve participation along multiple dimensions of access: (i.e. physical, cognitive, financial, linguistic, cultural, social, and geographic).
- There is returning, consistent or growing participation in programs and services.

Leadership and Administration (15%)

Questions

- Who are the people that drive the organization? What is working well?

- What practices and/or policies are in development or in place to support a healthy/respectful workplace environment?
- What are the questions/barriers/structures you are grappling with, as an organization and as artists?
- What are the organization's aspirations for the next two or three years?
- Attachments (first two are required):
 - ☐ Staff List with names and position titles
 - ☐ Board of Directors list (names, positions, affiliation/experience, and terms)
 - ☐ Healthy/Respectful Workplace Policy and/or practices

Criteria

- Leadership has the relevant professional and lived experience to manage the organization and advance equity and accessibility practices in cultural sector.
- There are policies or practices in development or in place to ensure a healthy/respectful workplace and actionable processes to address conflict.
- Organization is committed to developing capacity and future leadership opportunities for cultural workers from equity and/or accessibility denied communities.
- Board members contribute a range of skills and experiences to lead the society, and may also be actively decolonizing governance practices.

Financial Management (10%)

Questions

- How are you building artistic and administrative capacity?
- Did you encounter any financial challenges in the last year? What were they?
- Where is your organization at financially? Where would you like to be in three or five years? What supports you need to get there?
- Attachments (required)
 - ☐ Proposed operating budget for the upcoming fiscal year
 - ☐ Board-signed Financial Statements for the most recently completed fiscal year (usually a compilation engagement or notice to reader).

Criteria

- Working towards a mix of revenue sources (earned, public sector, private), and achievable budgets for programs, services, operations
- There are realistic budget projections, an appropriate balance of programming and administrative expenses, with expenses aligned with revenues.
- Most financial resources are for programs and people from equity or accessibility denied communities who receive equitable compensation for their services.

Grant Recipients: Rights and Responsibilities

Respectful Workplace and Communications

The City is committed to a safe, respectful and inclusive workplace. City policies define expectations for respectful, appropriate workplace behaviour and processes for reporting and resolving incidents of bullying and harassment, including discrimination. Policies comply with the B.C. Human Rights Code, WorkSafeBC regulations, and the Criminal Code of Canada.

The City of Vancouver policies include:

- Respect in the Workplace Policy: [ADMIN050.pdf \(vancouver.ca\)](#)
- Preventing Violence in the Workplace Policy: [SUBJECT: \(vancouver.ca\)](#)
- Code of Conduct: <https://policy.vancouver.ca/AE02801.pdf>

Eligibility for this program, and conditions of the Grant Agreement, requires recipients to provide a healthy/respectful workplace environment demonstrated through policies and practices. If a complaint of unsafe working conditions is received by Arts & Culture, staff will ask that the complaint be directed to the organization's leadership and be put through their processes according to their policies and procedures.

Eligibility for CIF, and conditions of the Grant Agreement, also requires recipients to not make statements or engage in conduct which could be characterized as threatening, intimidating, harassing, or discriminatory, in all interactions or communications with and about elected City officials or staff.

This policy does not restrict a recipient or their staff from exercising their freedom of expression as protected under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. This includes promoting political or social participation and engagement, advocacy of policy change, criticism of City policies and decisions, or anything else which is properly considered "political speech".

Grant Agreement

If the applicant organization receives a grant, it must adhere to legal terms and conditions that will form a binding agreement between the Recipient and the City of Vancouver for the use of funds. The full agreement is set out in the online submission and should be closely reviewed and signed by a representative of the organization who has the full right, power, and authority to enter into the agreement and complete the work.

Grant recipients will acknowledge the City's assistance and the Grant in all public communications or materials. Grant recipients can contact Anthony Hoang at anthony.hoang@vancouver.ca to receive the recognition marks electronically.

Freedom of Information

The Parties acknowledge that they are each subject to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (British Columbia)*, and that all records prepared by either Party may be under the custody and control of that Party for the purposes of the said act and that all records prepared by that Party in the performance of this Agreement are in the custody and control of that Party. Each Party is or will be subject to the access and privacy provisions of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (British Columbia)*, which creates a right of access to records under the custody and control of public bodies subject to specific limited exceptions.

Application Attachment Checklist

Required:

- ☐ Previous and Current Year Programs* – summary of activity from your previous year
- ☐ Upcoming Year Programs* – summary of activity proposed for your next year
**Option to use an existing document created for another grant program and/or provide a link to a video or website*
- ☐ Data to compile about your previous year of activity
 - Number of public activities
 - Attendance at programs
 - Number of paid artists
 - Number of staff and contractors employed
 - Number of volunteers
- ☐ Staff list with names and position titles, indicate whether full-time, part-time or contract
- ☐ Board of directors list (names, positions, affiliation/experience, and terms)
- ☐ Proposed operating budget for the upcoming fiscal year
- ☐ Board-signed financial statements for the most recently completed fiscal year (usually a compilation engagement or notice to reader)

If available:

- ☐ Accessibility Policy and/or Plan
- ☐ Healthy/Respectful Workplace Policy and/or practices