



Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des arts
du Canada



seed grant

BOOKLET

Strategic Innovation Fund

Table of Contents

What is the Canada Council for the Arts? 01

What is this booklet for? 02

Want to apply? 02

What is the Strategic Innovation Fund? 03

What do we mean by Innovation? 03

What do we mean by 04

What are the strategic priority areas? 05

What are the Strategic Innovation Fund’s main and support components? 06

What is the Seed Grant? 08

Who, when, how, what and how much can you apply for? 09

What you can apply for or not apply for? 10

What are the eligible or ineligible expenses? 11

What are the assessment criteria? 12

Designated priority group definitions 13

Food for thought 15

Some questions to ask yourself 16

Additional resources 17

Contact us! 17

What is the Canada Council for the Arts

The Canada Council for the Arts is Canada's public arts funder, with a mandate to "foster and promote the study and enjoyment of, and the production of works in, the arts."

The Council's grants, services, initiatives, prizes, and payments contribute to the vibrancy of a creative and diverse arts and literary scene and support its presence across Canada and abroad. The Council's investments foster greater engagement in the arts among Canadians and international audiences.

What is this booklet?

This booklet is a tool to support Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists, arts professionals, cultural carriers, cultural connectors, groups and organizations.

It was designed as a complementary tool to assist you in your understanding of the Council's new Strategic Innovation Fund and its Seed component.

Want to apply? You need an applicant profile!

Do you have a validated profile on the Canada Council for the Arts (CCA) online portal?

Yes?

Good! Login to your portal account to confirm that this component is available to you.

No?

Visit our online funding portal (apply.canadacouncil.ca) to check your eligibility, create an account and submit an applicant profile. Your applicant profile will be reviewed by Council staff to make sure you are eligible. This may take up to 15 business days.



What is the Strategic Innovation Fund

Canada Council's innovation strategy reflects our commitment to supporting positive and fundamental change through grants and programs, special funding initiatives, partnerships and collaborations aimed at rebuilding a more resilient, sustainable, equitable, accessible, greener, healthier and connected arts sector.

The Strategic Innovation Fund was designed to support your efforts to build capacity, take risks, try new ideas, share knowledge, find new networks, create prototypes and scale up exciting solutions.

The Strategic Innovation Fund will support a range of projects from the early stages of research and development to the implementation and scaling of large projects with national, sector-wide impact. Collaborations, including those with other sectors, are encouraged.

What do we mean by Innovation?

Creating change requires bold action. Trying new things, taking risks and accepting failure. We call this innovation.

- Innovation should not be confused with artistic creativity.
- Innovation tackles key systemic issues in the arts sector, including social inequities.
- Innovation addresses clearly identified challenges and produces fundamental change. It is both a process and a goal.
- Innovation is the key to solving the pressing and enduring issues we face as a global society, including exclusion, environmental sustainability and failing economic models.

What do we mean by

Resilient

The capacity of the arts sector to develop and work within a changing environment and context and to thrive from that change.

Sustainable

The ability of the arts sector to develop and thrive while considering limited resources and the impact of its activities on the environment and society.

Equitable

An equitable approach promotes fair conditions for all persons to fully participate in society and recognizes that, while all people have the right to be treated equally, not all have experienced or experience equal access to resources, opportunities or benefits.

Accessible

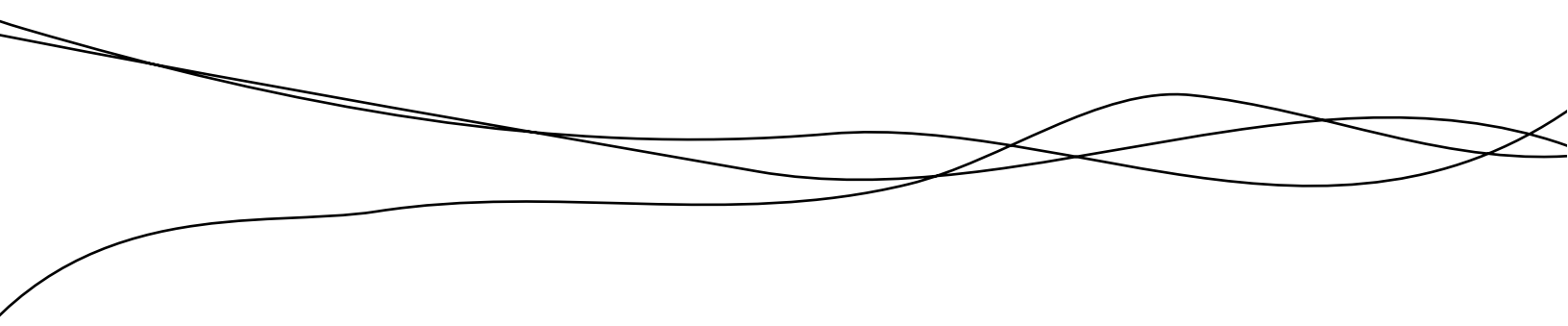
An accessible approach removes barriers for everyone to fully participate in the arts sector and increases access for people who are Deaf or have disabilities.

Green

A green approach develops ways to reduce the impact of our activities on the environment to build a more ecologically sensitive and eco-friendly society.

What are the Fund's key strategic areas?

Projects must respond to one or more of the following key strategic areas:

- Strengthening the resilience and sustainability of the arts sector, including new business and revenue models
 - Advancing social justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion in the arts
 - Increasing the accessibility of arts and culture for people who are Deaf or have disabilities
 - Decolonizing the arts sector
 - Creating a greener arts sector
 - Stimulating the digital transformation of the arts sector (except Seed grant component)
 - Improving the health, wellbeing, and financial security of artists and arts professionals
 - Building networks and partnerships to strengthen the arts ecosystem and the role of arts in society
 - Amplifying the benefit of the arts for thriving communities
- 

Strategic Innovation Fund:

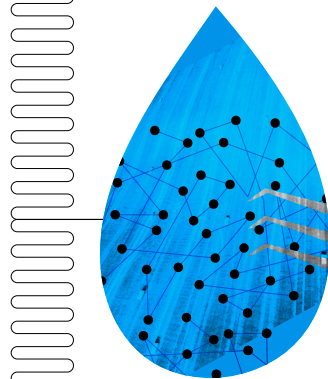
Main Components



Seed Grant

SMALL-SCALE GRANT

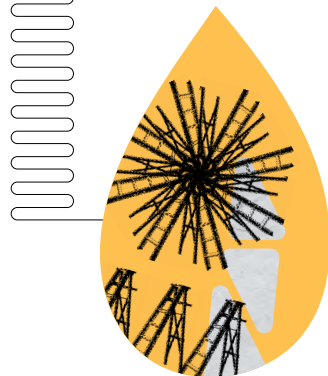
To prepare, experiment, plan, explore, develop.



Cultivate Grant

MEDIUM-SCALE GRANT

To implement, pilot and prototype.

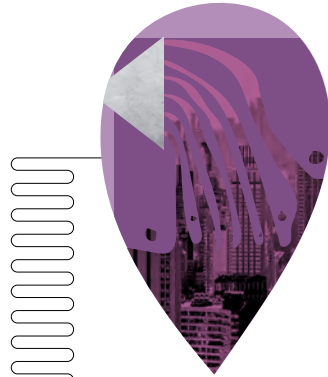


Grow Grant

LARGE-SCALE GRANT

To scale up initiatives that have demonstrated a strong potential for wide impact.

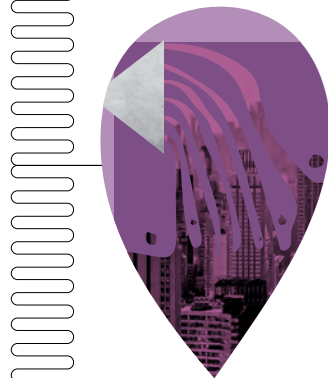
Support Components



Digital Generator

STREAM 1

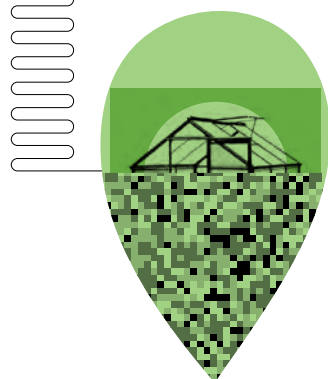
To build digital capacity and transform business models and operations.



Digital Generator

STREAM 2

To implement recommendations from an external assessment to build digital capacity and transform business models and operations.



Digital Greenhouse

To leverage digital technology to address sectoral and digital challenges.



The Seed Grant

A grant to help you think, explore, experiment and prepare for innovation.

What is the Seed Grant for?

- It supports small-scale activities to explore and develop innovation projects and partnerships that address systemic issues in the arts sector.
- It gives you the space and time to think about change and what innovation can mean and do for you, your organization or your arts community.
- It helps you conduct research and scans, develop a project idea, plan your project and reach out to potential partners.
- It helps groups and organizations rethink their business models, create a plan for the future and transform the way they work.
- It helps you gather, connect, consult, discuss and share knowledge with the community.
- It enables you to imagine and create new approaches to solve different challenges that concern you, your own community and arts sector.

Who can apply?

Types of eligible applicants to this component include:

- Artists and arts professionals
- Cultural connectors
- Artistic groups and collectives
- Artistic organizations

First Nations, Inuit and Métis:

- Arts/cultural professionals
- Cultural carriers
- Groups,
- Collectives,
- Organizations

You will need a validated applicant profile to apply.
Core grant recipients are eligible for this component.

When can I apply?

You can apply any time before your project begins.

How do I apply?

- Apply online via our application portal. For more information about the process please visit [this page on our website](#).
- Use your Canada Council for the Arts profile to apply.

We invite first time applicants to contact us in advance of applying.

How much can I apply for?

Up to \$25,000 in funding.

What can I apply for?

- Sector research and exploration activities.
- Planning and project development activities.
- Evaluation, gathering and knowledge-sharing activities.
- Partnership and network-building activities.
- Organizational transformation activities that demonstrate the potential to significantly increase the resilience, responsiveness, inclusion, social relevance and sustainability of groups and organizations.

Expenses: What is eligible?

Up to 100% of eligible costs* directly related to the project activities, including:

- Honoraria and fees paid to artists, experts, trainers, facilitators, project managers, consultants, elders and community leaders directly involved in carrying out your project.
- Travel, accommodation and per diem costs.
- Software licensing fees.
- Equipment rental costs.
- Research expenses, including purchase of data sets and impact measurement.
- Public accessibility costs, such as sign language interpretation, captioning, audio description, etc.
- Costs of sharing results and transferring acquired knowledge to the community.

*Other costs directly related to carrying out your project must be justified.

Ineligible expenses

Expenses that are not directly related to carrying out the proposed project are not eligible, including:

- Ongoing operating expenses.
- Salaries of permanent staff.
- Deficit reduction costs.
- Purchase of furniture or general office equipment.
- Capital construction or renovation costs.
- Expenses incurred prior to your application submission date.
- Expenses for which funding has already been granted by the Canada Council.

Assessment criteria

Relevance and Impact: 70%

- The project has clearly articulated sectoral challenges or opportunities
- The objectives of the project are aligned with the key strategic areas of the fund
- The proposed activities are relevant, suitable, and consistent with the project's objectives
- There is an appropriate and relevant plan to share knowledge and results with the community

Feasibility 30%

- The team leading the project has the expertise and capacity to successfully carry out the project
- The budget is reasonable, the workplan is realistic and aligned with the project's objectives

Accessibility, equity, diversity, social justice, and decolonization

(if applicable to the project)

If your proposed project addresses challenges and gaps related to accessibility, equity, diversity, social justice or decolonization, you must demonstrate that:

- Appropriate cultural protocols for the community or communities involved are being observed.
- You have the active participation, collaboration, involvement, and empowerment of the specific community or communities impacted by the project.

If your response to this criterion is not satisfactory, your application may be deemed unsuccessful.

Designated priority groups

Targeted funding will be in place to ensure equitable support for applicants who have self-identified as belonging to one of the Council's designated priority groups using the checkboxes in the Council's online portal:

Indigenous First Nations, Inuit, Metis

The first inhabitants (First Peoples) of a land (including First Nations, Inuit and Métis of Canada), and the philosophies, cultures, cosmologies and rights of those "First Peoples", in accordance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007).

Culturally Diverse

The Canada Council for the Arts uses "culturally diverse" to respectfully identify racialized groups that correspond to "visible minorities" under the Employment Equity Act. These are Canadians of African, Asian, Latin American, Middle Eastern and mixed racial heritages (mixed racial heritage includes one of the above groups), who have been historically disadvantaged as a group and may experience discrimination based on colour, culture and race.

Deaf and Disability

Deaf – People with hearing loss, hard-of-hearing, oral-deaf, deaf-blind and late-deafened, many of whom identify as Culturally Deaf – sharing distinct sign languages, traditions, histories, and values. Deaf with a capital "D" represents a range of experiences from being culturally Deaf to having hearing loss and using multiple forms of oral and visual communication.

Disability – Disability is an experience of exclusion or disadvantage. People with disabilities are those with actual or perceived impairments who experience discrimination and disadvantage as a direct result of that impairment, or due to social, policy or environmental barriers. Impairments are physical, mental or learning conditions that have long-term, temporary or fluctuating effects.

Official Language Minority Community

Official Language Minority Communities (OLMCs) are groups of people whose maternal or chosen official language is not the majority language in their province or territory—in other words, anglophones in Quebec and francophones outside of Quebec. For the purposes of its granting programs, the Canada Council defines OLMC individuals, groups and arts organizations as those who self-identify as belonging to one of these groups.

In addition to the Council's designated priority groups,

We also encourage applications from youth (18 to 35) and other historically underserved and marginalized communities, including 2SLGBTQ and gender-diverse communities, women and artists at intersections of multiple identities.

Food for thought

Innovation: Where Do I Start?

Let's start from here: There is no single approach to innovation.

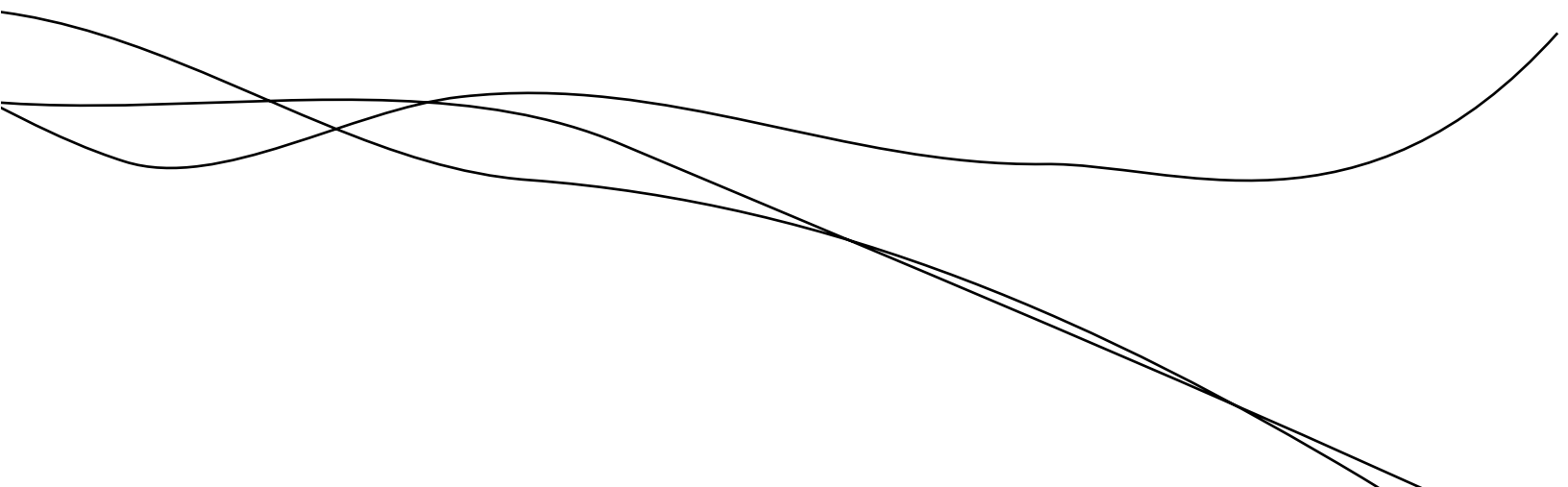
Innovation can mean different things to different people, communities and sectors. It could be experimenting with something new to you or the arts sector, acquiring new skills or adapting an existing idea. Innovation starts with identifying your own need to change, to make things better and to adapt to your reality.

The Seed grant can help you recover from the pandemic by helping you rethink the way you operate. Maybe you want to develop a new revenue stream or retool your business model? Maybe you want to green your operations or implement distributed leadership to foster a more inclusive workplace?

The Seed grant offers support to think, prepare, research and/or explore your innovation readiness and/or to nurture your capacity to innovate. What can you do to imagine and create new approaches to solve different challenges that concern you and your community? The answer is up to you.

When Preparing Your Project

Keep in mind that the outcomes of your project should align with at least one of the Strategic Innovation Fund's key strategic areas.



Some questions to Ask Yourself

- Why do you want to undertake this project? What is the problem you're trying to solve?
- Why do you believe that this problem is important to tackle? What evidence or research do you need to gather to support your idea?
- What are the outcomes you would like to see as a result of your project?
- How might your project impact the arts sector, or your community? How is this tied to the Fund's key strategic priorities?
- Who is your project for? Who will benefit?
- Who would you wish to collaborate with to make it happen? Is there anyone else in or outside the arts sector who is already working on this idea? Could you collaborate?

Additional Resources

Canada Council Resources

Application Assistance

canadacouncil.ca/commitments/equity/application-assistance

Access Support

canadacouncil.ca/funding/strategic-funds/access-support

Equity

canadacouncil.ca/commitments/equity

Market Access Strategy for Official Language Minority Communities Fund

canadacouncil.ca/commitments/official-languages

Canada Council for the Arts glossary of terms

canadacouncil.ca/glossary

Canada Council for the Arts new Strategic Plan

[2021-26 Strategic Plan | Canada Council for the Arts](https://canadacouncil.ca/2021-26-strategic-plan)

Land Acknowledgement

[Land Acknowledgement | Canada Council for the Arts](https://canadacouncil.ca/land-acknowledgement)

Contact Us!

General questions

info@canadacouncil.ca

1-800-263-5588, ext. 5060

Portal technical support

assistance@canadacouncil.ca

Strategic Innovation Fund questions

innovationfund@canadacouncil.ca



Canada Council Conseil des arts
for the Arts du Canada

This booklet has been created as a complementary tool for applicants to the CCA Strategic Innovation Fund and the Seed Grant and is not intended for redistribution.

Canada Council for the Arts, 2022