

Career Development 2025/26

Tip Sheet and FAQ

Program Updates for 2025/26

- ❑ The Career Development application form now asks new questions about other pending and confirmed funding in your project budget. Please answer these questions carefully, and make sure that your attached project budget matches what you input into the form.
- ❑ The Career Development application form also asks new questions about the jobs that your proposed project will create. Please answer these questions to the best of your ability.

Frequently Asked Questions

How to develop your project plan:

Reference the Career Development scoring sheet while you respond to the Project Plan questions. Do your best to articulate your career goals and business strategy, and how these things directly support the funding requests in your budget. If you are submitting a Project Plan via video or audio, ensure that your submission addresses each of the questions below in sufficient detail. Please contact staff if you require support.

- 1. What do you want to do? Briefly describe the activities you are requesting funding for.**

In this section, describe the activities indicated in your budget in plain language. Activities need to be completed between April 1, 2025, and December 1, 2026. Focus on the short-term, quantifiable goals that you can achieve with this project. Demonstrate that you understand the individual steps you need to complete to achieve those goals. Use data (available sales metrics, audience numbers, past and projected revenue) to quantify your goals and show us how the goals you have identified make sense for your career. Why are they ideal goals for *you*, at this time?

- 2. What are the goals for your project? Make sure the goals are specific and relate to the activities in your budget. What are your tactics for achieving your goals, and how will you measure success?**

How is this project timely? Have you already started working on the project, booked time with your vendors, and confirmed your release and tour dates? Explain where you are at in your career, and why this project is important for that career at this moment in time.

- 3. How do these goals fit within your career trajectory? Where have you seen momentum in your career recently, and how is this project essential to moving it forward? Why this, why now?**

Discuss how the activities you are requesting funding for will help you build audiences and earn more from your music in the long term. Talk about how you are currently earning money from music, where you see the most success, if you have identified any challenges, and how this has influenced your decisions. Demonstrate that you have the business expertise, insights, and relationships to execute your goals.

- 4. How will this project increase your music revenues, and lead to new business opportunities? Please use concrete examples from the artist's own history, stats, and revenue projections.**

Interpret the audience analytics you have available to you through social and streaming platforms. Explain how the content supported by this program will reach a wider audience. How are you going to make sure your music is heard? If your project includes video, what is your plan to make sure people see it? How will you monetize these views?

- 5. How will you use the tools created through this project to reach and build your audiences?**

What is your release strategy for supported content or activities? If your project includes a digital or social strategy, what sets it apart from other artists? How is this release strategy suitable for you and your specific project goals? How will you measure its success?

- 6. How does this artist create B.C. jobs and strengthen the B.C. music sector? How are B.C. jobs prioritized in this project? How will the key people you are working with help you succeed? If you are hiring or spending outside of B.C., share why.**

Refer to your project budget to consider the kinds of jobs being created through your project. What role do the people you are hiring play in advancing the B.C. music industry? Have you worked with them before? Do they have expertise in the music industry, and with your specific genre? Are the rates appropriate to the level of artists? Will the invested dollar amount yield quantifiable results? If your proposed activities engage labour, companies, or other services outside of B.C., explain why, and how this adds value to your project.

- 7. Is there anything else you would like to share? (Optional)**

Open-ended. Use this space if there is anything you'd like to add.

How to plan your budget:

8. What is the difference between private and public investment?

Private investments are any funds not from government sources. This could be money earned from shows, other jobs, awards, donations, sponsorships, or crowdfunding. It could also simply be you investing your personal funds to enable your proposed budget to balance. Corporate-owned awards programs (i.e., RBC x Music, or Slaight Music prizes) are considered private funds. Public funds come from government sources, like the Canada Council for the Arts, or the BC Arts Council, as well as BC Gaming. For the purposes of this program, FACTOR is considered 100% public funding.

9. Are there maximum or minimum amounts for marketing/sound recording/video within the grant? Is it a better strategy to apply for just one activity, or all three?

You may apply for any combination of the three activities, up to the maximum grant for the artist category you are applying under. There is no benefit or drawback to applying for just one activity, or more than one: all applications are assessed objectively against the Scoring Sheet.

10. What if my budget changes during my project?

In the final report, you will have the opportunity to address any changes to your original application budget. If unanticipated changes to your project impact your budget (i.e., filming or production locations; specialized equipment; availability of talent, etc.), it's always best to communicate this proactively to Creative BC staff, rather than waiting to disclose these items in your final report. Music video projects not discussed in your original application require a treatment to be submitted to Creative BC for approval prior to adding video components to your project. Unapproved changes to your final project's scope, deliverables, budget, and timeline can impact the final amount of your grant.

11. Can I pay myself for work I do related to my project?

Artists can claim a self-payment allowance based on their artist category. \$1,500 is available for Emerging artists; \$3,000 is available for Established artists. Artists will need to report on the type of work they did, and the number of hours that went into their work.

12. Can I apply for sound recording expenses if I've already started recording the songs? What if the songs are already released?

Artists can apply for expenses that take place between April 1, 2025, and December 1, 2026. This includes expenses that were incurred retroactively prior to submitting your application. You can use the funds toward music that is in progress, or even released, as long as the expenses fall within that time period. You can also apply for marketing and video costs that support music of yours that's already public and not funded by Creative BC.

13. What if I have a question about the eligibility of a specific expense in my proposed project budget?

A detailed list of eligible and ineligible expenses is available in the program guidelines. If you are unsure about one of your expenses, you can contact Creative BC before the deadline to verify.

14. Do applicants always receive their full funding request?

Grants received by applicants can be less than what was originally requested to fund more projects or increase the overall representation of recipients. Reductions to requested amounts may vary based on the number of applications received, previous funding received from Creative BC, and overall score and ranking during the assessment process.

Artist categories:

15. I am not sure if I am an Emerging or Established artist. What should I do?

Think about your project first, and what you want to achieve. If you meet all the Emerging criteria and some of the Established criteria, and want to apply to the Established category, build a case in your application and Project Plan for why your project should receive significant funding. The Established category will be more competitive, since the funding amounts are higher, and there are fewer grants available. In some cases, applications may be moved to a different category based on how your application is assessed relative to others in that artist category.

16. I don't meet all the criteria for an Emerging/Established artist. What should I do?

This program supports a variety of genres and levels of artists. Each artist will respond to certain criteria differently. Artists who exhibit the career milestones outlined in the Career Development program guidelines will be more competitive; however, other factors, such as regional diversity, and access and representation from underrepresented groups, may be considered.

17. Are the prior year's suggested revenues of \$2,000 and \$30,000 for Emerging and Established artists meant to reflect gross or net annual earnings?

In both cases, these totals reflect gross (pre-tax) earnings. Emerging and established artists who can demonstrate a consistent pattern of this level of earning year-to-year (with exceptions granted for unforeseen situations like COVID-19) are generally the most competitive at the assessment stage. Only count revenues associated with the musical act that is applying for funding. Do not include revenues from other bands or unrelated music activities.

18. Am I ineligible if I don't have an artist website?

Artists are required to have an online presence. Facebook pages or other social media profiles meet this requirement; however, artists with a strong brand are generally more competitive.

19. For the career highlights section in the application form, can I include what an artist has done with a previous project?

For the purposes of your application, this question relates primarily to the artist that is requesting funding, and their current project. You can provide context from other projects, but it's best to focus on your proposed project. Be sure to differentiate the two.

20. Do I need to upload a demo or sound recording?

Applicants are required to already have music from previous releases or performances readily available online – a minimum of two songs. Do not submit .mp3 audio with your application.

21. I play in multiple groups. Can I apply for each group?

Yes, artists in multiple groups may submit a separate application for each group.

22. Can international labels submit applications for B.C. artists on their roster?

Yes. The applicant should be the business entity that holds the financial responsibility for the project. If that is an out-of-country label, then the label would apply. There is no advance payment for recipients outside of Canada. In this case, the grant is paid after the approval of the final report.

23. Are artists required to be Canadian citizens or permanent residents?

Canadian citizenship or permanent residency is not required. Eligible artists must have resided in B.C. for at least 200 out of the 365 days before the grant deadline of September 10, 2025. In the case of groups that are applying as a band, 50% or more of the permanent members must meet the B.C. residency requirements. Temporary residents must have a valid Canadian SIN number, file taxes in B.C. if legally required to do so, and be eligible to work and earn money in Canada. When signing the funding agreement, recipients are asked for proof, such as a rental agreement, banking or credit card statement, or utility bill.

24. Do live performance videos count towards the minimum release requirement of two songs?

Live performance videos would not meet this requirement. The artist needs to provide a link to their public songs in the application form. Songs can be shared on any public platform (Soundcloud, Bandcamp, Spotify, etc.) and do not have to be final official

releases. Demos that have been publicly released meet this requirement.

Types of applicants:

25. Do we need a business number to apply?

No. Both Emerging and Established artists can apply, either as individuals or as a business. If applying as an individual, you will be asked to provide social insurance information at the contract stage if successful. This information is used to issue T4As to recipients.

26. Can an established artist apply for a new solo project if they haven't announced it or released any music yet?

Artists beginning new projects are expected to meet the minimum criteria for Emerging artists for their new project independent of previous work. However, in exceptional cases only, the release requirement may be waived for established artists who can demonstrate the audience from their previous work will carry over to the new project. Established artists who wish to apply for a new project or solo project before releasing any music must contact Creative BC prior to applying to discuss eligibility.

27. If a band isn't registered as a business, can one of the band members apply as an individual to represent the group?

Yes. This person will take on the financial responsibility for the project, manage expenses and payments, and receive the T4A at the end for the grant amount. The same person must maintain responsibility for all financial management and reporting associated with the project. Changes without prior approval from Creative BC staff are not allowed.

28. If my band's revenue is close to \$30,000, should I apply under Emerging or Established?

\$30,000 is the recommended minimum annual revenue amount in the Established category. Many artists applying in the Established category will be generating more than this, but it may vary based on artist's genre or region. Applications are grouped by artist category when they are evaluated. It is up to the artist to decide which category best describes them and is most suitable for the scope of their project.

Video production:

29. What is a video treatment?

Video treatments are required for traditional music videos. They are optional for live performance videos and other visuals. The purpose of a video treatment is to demonstrate to reviewers that you have a clear creative plan and delivery plan for your project. A video treatment tells reviewers what your video will be about, how it will be

filmed, and/or the purpose of your video. It also demonstrates your creative and artistic vision for the video, illustrates how the material you're using for the video will be adapted or interpreted, and can go into more detail on your technical plans to create the video (i.e., filming locations, equipment, contingency plans, etc.). Some treatments also detail the creative team.

30. How detailed does the video treatment need to be?

Some video treatments we receive are very detailed and professional. Others are a half-page text summary. We recommend submitting a video treatment 2-4 pages in length, including visual references, outlining the narrative or concept of the video to outline your vision, and discussing other technical requirements.

31. My video idea has controversial subject matter. Will this video idea be funded?

Video treatments that contain gratuitous violence, guns, nudity, objectification of any gender or persons, or any other content deemed inappropriate for a government brand will be rejected.

32. Can filmmakers apply to make a music video for an artist?

No, filmmakers cannot apply directly for this grant. They can support the artist in preparing their treatment, but ultimately the applicant needs to be the artist.

Other frequently asked questions:

33. I've been funded in this program before. Does that mean that my chances of being funded this round are increased or decreased?

Each applicant has equal opportunity to receive funding. You have an opportunity to speak to the impact of prior funding as part of your current application, and this can provide helpful context for advisory panelists. During the evaluation process, staff may reduce grant amounts for applicants that have received prior support from Creative BC to create space for new applicants. However, having received previous grants will not lessen or impact your chances of receiving a grant.

34. What is an example of an expression of support?

A letter or expression of support can come from anyone who has experience working with you in music who can speak to the merit of your work. This could be provided in the form of a letter, email, or video testimonial. Sources of good supporting letters are often current or former artistic collaborators, colleagues, and members of the music industry who know you and your work. These letters should also demonstrate that the vendors and creative professionals you want to work with also want to work with you, specifically.

35. I have a disability that makes reading, comprehending, and working within forms and documents difficult for me. Is any special assistance available to me?

Applicants with a disability or accessibility need may contact Creative BC for support in preparing an application. A limited number of appointments will be available for applicants to prepare an application by phone or video call with staff. Contact Creative BC a minimum of two weeks prior to the application deadline to schedule an appointment.

36. I'd like to use a generative AI tool to help me write my Project Plan and/or other supporting application documents. Is this allowed?

When organizing your ideas and drafting your Project Plan, you may find it useful to utilize one of these tools. If you do so, it's important to keep the following in mind:

- These tools sometimes make mistakes. If you're using one to generate ideas, or to help you answer questions in your Project Plan, you should review the results for clarity, accuracy, and relevance before submitting.
- Tools like these don't know your artistic history, goals, and plans like you do. AI tools can generate a lot of vague text that won't help your application stand out. Make sure that the responses that you develop relate to you and your career and goals. If your application is funded, you will need to deliver on the goals in your Project Plan.
- The questions in the Project Plan are meant to be answered by artists, and most of the responses we receive in this program come from the artists themselves. Prioritize simple, conversational writing that's easy to understand. Advisory panelists for this program receive a large volume of material to read, and concise, well-organized applications often score more competitively.

37. How does the self-ID process work?

Creative BC asks applicants to its funding programs to complete an additional self-identification form that allows them to describe how they identify in relation to various demographics and categories. All information provided is confidential, and respondents can select 'Prefer not to respond' to any or all questions they do not wish to answer. This information is used by Creative BC to measure representation in each funding program, and to compile aggregate statistics on participation across Creative BC programs and services.

Once you complete and submit your grant application, you will receive an email directing you to complete this additional form. If you have listed more than one permanent member in your group/band/ensemble, with their specified email address, the form will be sent to each of them. Once everyone completes and submits the form, it will attach the information to your application. These emails sometimes go to spam, so you may need to search for them. Submission of this form is a required step in the application process: applications that lack this submission will be considered incomplete.

38. What if I move out of B.C. after I submit my application, but before I receive my funding results?

Applicants must continue to maintain their B.C. residency during the application evaluation period, and upon accepting a grant offer. Applicants who move during the evaluation period are not eligible for funding.

For More Information:

The Career Development program supports the economic growth and career development of emerging and established B.C. artists in the areas of sound recording, marketing, and music videos.

Contact

For more information about this program, as well as upcoming opportunities, please contact:

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