

Business Foundations

Guidelines 2026/27



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Business Foundation Guidelines 2026/27

The **Business Foundations** program invests in growing businesses owned by people from systemically excluded groups in B.C.'s music ecosystem, to expand and develop networks, capacity, and infrastructure. This program is supported by Amplify BC.

Amplify BC is a \$7.5 million annual investment by the Province of BC to support the competitiveness and sustainability of B.C.'s music industry, administered through Creative BC.

Dedicated funds for systemically excluded groups will be distributed provincewide through two programs: [Demo Recording](#) and [Business Foundations](#).

Business Foundations Budget: \$400,000 supporting approximately 40 projects from British Columbia.

Program Overview

Who is eligible: Small businesses owned by people from systemically excluded groups in B.C.

Eligible activities: Business operations

Grant amounts: \$2,000 - \$10,000 funding up to 100% of expenses

Supports projects occurring between January 1, 2026, and March 1, 2027

Applications open: January 28, 2026

How to apply? Submit an [online application form](#) by March 25, 2026, at 4:00 PM, PT

Aims + Objectives

- Increase access to funding and reduce financial risk for those who experience barriers
- Invest in the development of growing music businesses
- Enhance the capacity of entrepreneurs to thrive in B.C.'s music industry
- Foster new and existing networks, capacity, and infrastructure for B.C.'s vibrant and diverse music communities.

Applicant Eligibility

This program supports entrepreneurs and small businesses owned by people from systemically excluded groups in B.C.'s music industry, who face barriers to participation and have been underrepresented and underserved by funding programs. This program supports the following groups:

- Indigenous Peoples: First Nations (Status/Non-status), Métis, or Inuit
- Black (or Afro-Canadian, including Black Caribbean, Black African and others from the African Diaspora)
- People of Colour (this may include Arab, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Latin American, South Asian, Southeast Asian, West Asian, and people of mixed ancestry)
- People living with one or more Disabilities (including those who live with chronic illness or are neurodivergent)

- People who are Deaf/deaf or hard of hearing
- 2SLGBTQIA+ people: Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, non-binary and gender diverse.

Majority ownership of the business (51% or more of the shares) must be held by an individual or a group of individuals who identify as one or more of the above groups.

All business owners must individually complete a self-identification form to demonstrate eligibility for the program. Self-identification information collected in the application process is confidential, used for eligibility, and to contribute to aggregate statistics generated for the understanding, promotion, and growth of the music industry.

Other Eligibility Information

This program supports entrepreneurs and small businesses active in BC's music industry, such as record labels, artist managers, live music presenters, recording studios, and other music-related companies. The intention of this program is to remove barriers to funding and encourage those new to funding to apply.

Individuals (sole proprietors), companies (registered businesses), and not-for-profit organizations are eligible to apply and must be:

- Doing business in the music industry
- Working with one or more artists or clients
- Headquartered or residing in B.C. and filing B.C. tax returns if required.

Not eligible to apply:

- Businesses that have received more than \$30,000 cumulatively through the Business Foundations, Live Music, Music Company, and/or Music Industry Initiatives.
- Businesses that are earning more than \$100,000 in annual gross revenues.
- Artists are not eligible. BC-based artists can apply for funding through the [Demo Recording](#) and [Career Development](#) programs.

For previous recipients:

- Final Reports: If an applicant has previously received funding through the Business Foundation program, all final reports must be submitted by **March 1, 2026**, to be eligible for this program. Grant recipients from 2024/25 who have completed their projects are encouraged to submit final reports as soon as possible, as final reports for returning applicants will be reviewed before 2026/27 grants are issued.
- Good Standing: The principals, directors, officers, shareholders and owners of all businesses applying must be in good standing with Creative BC. This means the applicant is not in default with respect to prior grants, and there are no outstanding amounts owed to Creative BC.

Project Eligibility

This program funds business operations and development activities to help your business sustain itself and grow.

Examples of eligible expenses include:

- Salaries, benefits, and fees for business owners, staff, and contractors
- Operational expenses, including rent, utilities, bookkeeping, subscriptions
- Core business activities, including live event production costs, content creation, master rights
- Marketing and advertising
- Training, mentorship fees, consultant fees
- Development of policies, procedures, business plans
- Travel directly related to the project is eligible, and travel to and from courses or training
- Equipment purchases, technology, health and safety costs, renovations and accessibility improvements
- Grant writing fees up to \$300 for applicants with self-declared disabilities or English language barriers

Ineligible expenses include:

- Expenses paid in cash, in-kind expenses or donated services
- Ceremonies, award shows, networking events, fundraisers, luncheons, galas, and parties, and alcohol.

Funding solely for conference fees and business travel is not eligible through this program (which includes travel to festivals, conferences, and general business meetings) but can be accessed through Music BC

Financial Participation

Grant Amounts: **\$2,000 - \$10,000**, funding up to 100% of expenses.

This program funds activities and related expenses incurred between **January 1, 2026**, and **March 1, 2027**. Applicants can submit one application per deadline.

Successful applicants will receive a 75% advance payment upon signing a funding agreement, and the remaining funds after completion and review of the final report.

Application Procedures

The Business Foundations program opens **January 28, 2026**, and has an application deadline of **March 25, 2026, at 4:00 PM PT**.

The [online application](#) is available on the Creative BC website. Applicants with questions are encouraged to contact Creative BC staff prior to applying. If you have limited access to the internet or connectivity issues, please contact Creative BC staff to arrange for a printable/hard-copy application form that can be submitted by regular post.

All business owners must individually complete a self-identification form. Upon submitting the application, the self-identification form will be emailed to each owner listed. This form must be completed by **April 8, 2026**, two weeks after the application deadline date.

Applicants requiring accommodation may contact Creative BC for support in preparing an application by phone or video call. Contact Creative BC staff a minimum of two weeks prior to the deadline to schedule an appointment.

Results will be available approximately 12 weeks after the deadline. All applicants will receive their application results by email.

Program Evaluation

Applications will be evaluated by a panel of industry professionals that represent the groups this program is intended to serve. Applications will be scored according to the priorities of the program, using the categories below. The [Business Foundations Scoring Sheet](#) is available on the Creative BC website.

- Business Strategy & Potential
- Community Impact
- Business Capacity
- Plan & Budget

Once applications are scored, Creative BC may make adjustments to fill gaps based on representation, region and type of applicant, to support the breadth of B.C. and its music industry. Creative BC may also prioritize applicants who are new to funding.

Project Completion

Recipients are required to complete a final report detailing the impact of the funding by **March 1, 2027**, and provide invoices and proof of payment for expenses upon request. The recipient is responsible for issuing all payments related to the project. Acceptable proof of payment includes a bank statement, credit card statement, processed cheque, wire transfer, or e-transfer confirmation.

To complete the final report and receive the balance of funding, applicants must submit the following:

- Online Final Report (available at www.creativebc.com)
- Cost Report (available at www.creativebc.com)
- Copies of all invoices and proof of payment, upon request; and
- Approved [Creative BC and Province of BC logo placement\(s\)](#).

Terms of Funding

Advance of Funds

The advance of funds (the “Advance”) is non recoupable (except as noted below under Forfeiture and Default and within the Agreement) and will be released through one drawdown if the Creative BC commitment is \$5,000 or less; and if the Creative BC commitment is over \$5,000, over two drawdowns (75% and 25% of the Advance, respectively), according to the conditions laid out in the Agreement.

Respectful Workplace + Client and Partner Code of Conduct

As a catalyst for, and investor in B.C.’s creative industries, Creative BC is committed to supporting a healthy ecosystem that thrives in a culture of mutual respect, dignity and inclusivity that is free from any form of harassment, discrimination, and violence. All companies that work with, or seek funding from, Creative BC are expected to adhere to [Creative BC’s Code of Conduct for Clients, Partners, and Stakeholders](#), implement policies and procedures for a harassment-free workplace, and comply with relevant laws. Creative BC is a signatory of the [Creative Industries Code](#) and expects all applicants, recipients, and partners to also adhere to this Code of Conduct. [Learn more](#).

Justice, Equity, Decolonization, Diversity + Inclusion

Creative BC is committed to ensuring program access for all, and incorporating justice, equity, decolonization, diversity and inclusion in program delivery. [Learn more.](#)

Misrepresentation

If an applicant approved for funding has provided false information with respect to their identity as one of the groups eligible for this program, Creative BC may:

- Consider the recipient in default, and terminate their funding agreement
- Require the repayment of all funds issued
- Deem the applicant ineligible for future funding.

Use of Artificial Intelligence Technology

Applicants using Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology should refer to [Province of British Columbia's Draft artificial intelligence responsible use principles](#). Particularly the principles of transparency, accountability and fairness in how they relate to this program.

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology must be disclosed and outlined in the application.

This applies to:

- The use of AI to prepare the application form and all supporting materials; and
- The use of AI in the creation of content or otherwise, for projects supported by Creative BC.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all applications and projects have access to all underlying rights including content that is created with the assistance of AI technology.

Creative BC views emerging technologies as potential tools to empower practitioners, not replace them, while remaining aware of their evolving legal, ethical, and cultural implications. Disclosure around the use of AI technology is required to understand how these technologies are being used and how they align with the Province of British Columbia's principles of use.

Creative BC does not use AI technology to evaluate applications and supporting materials.

Forfeiture and Default

A completion date is noted on the Agreement by which all deliverables will be submitted. Should all materials not be provided by the completion date, the eligible applicant forfeits any outstanding drawdown amounts and the commitment will be reduced by this amount.

Should an eligible applicant be placed in default- according to the terms of the Agreement, this limits the applicant, its principals and any parent or subsidiary companies from accessing further funding from Creative BC. In addition, Creative BC reserves the right to request immediate repayment of any funds advanced.

Application Checklist

Applicants must complete and submit the following items in Windows compatible formats:

Required for all applicants:

- **Online application form** (available at www.creativebc.com)
- **Budget** (.xlsx) (template available at www.creativebc.com)
- **Client List** (.docx) (template available at www.creativebc.com)
- **Community and Partnerships List** (.docx) (template available at www.creativebc.com)
- **Self-identification forms** completed and submitted individually by all business owners
- **Bios or resumes** for business owners

Profit and Loss Statement from the previously completed fiscal year. A profit and loss (P&L) template is available on the [Creative BC Website](#) Externally prepared statements are also accepted if you have them.

Required if applying as a business:

- **Business Statement of Registration, Certificate of Incorporation, Society Certificate, OR GST number**

Recommended materials:

- **Expressions of support** from partners and supporters that speak to the potential or track record of the applicant. These can be provided as informal letters, emails, audio clips, videos, or in other formats.
 - **Other supporting documents** such as business plans, business model canvas, SWOT analysis, vendor quotes, confirmed or prospective artist lineups, promotional materials, event calendars
- Questions?

Make sure to review the FAQ and Application Checklist on our website. If you still have any questions about eligibility, or require additional supports to submit your application, please contact:

Navreet Dhaliwal (She/Her)

Coordinator, Music Programs

ndhaliwal@creativebc.com

Direct Line: 236-455-0945

Program Inquiries: [Schedule an appointment](#)

Sign up for online **info sessions** on the [Creative BC website](#).