Live Music Business Development

Guidelines 2026/27

CREATIVE BC | BRITISH COLUMBIA

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Live Music: Business Development Guidelines 2026/27

The Amplify BC Live Music program supports B.C.-based live music presenters, growing the capacity of the live music sector through business development activities. Funding will also support live music performances for audiences and music artists, enhancing music tourism throughout B.C.

Program Overview

Program Budget: $1.8 million, delivered across two streams (Business Development and Presentation)

Who is Eligible: B.C.-based music festivals, venues, concert presenters, and promoters

Eligible Activities: Capacity-building projects taking place between **January 1, 2027 and December 31, 2027**

Grant Amounts: $2,000 - $50,000 per applicant company (across both funding streams), funding up to 50% of eligible expenses.

Applications Open: August 26, 2026

Deadline: Submit an online application by October 7, 2026, at 4:00 PM, PT

Aims + Objectives

- Grow capacity, sustainability, and innovation within B.C.'s live music sector
- Increase economic activity and jobs for B.C. musicians, live music companies, and industry professionals
- Support music tourism and performance opportunities for music artists and audiences; and
- Support a broad range of live music presenters, including presenters from systemically excluded groups who experience systemic barriers to participation.

Funding Streams

This program has two funding streams, with separate guidelines and application forms.

a) Live music presenters can apply for live music events through the **Presentation** stream.
b) Live music presenters can apply for capacity-building activities through the **Business Development** stream.

Live music presenters will apply for funding for a project, which is a set of eligible activities and related expenses that the applicant is requesting funding for.

Project Eligibility

Applicants must be B.C.-based festivals, venues, event producers, or presenters that meet the following criteria:

- Is a B.C.-owned and controlled corporation, registered business, or sole proprietorship with a valid GST number, that files B.C. tax returns. Applicants may also be not-for-profit organizations or charitable organizations with headquarters in B.C.
- New companies and individuals acting as sole proprietors can apply but will be required to register their business upon successfully receiving a grant. New businesses are eligible to apply for funding
- Core business activities for the applicant company, or business unit within a larger organizational structure, include presenting live music in B.C., or fills a gap in their regional community (outside of Metro Vancouver or Victoria's Capital Regional District). 'Core business activities' means that more than 50% of an organization's activities are related to the presentation of live music.
- Demonstrates an ongoing and sustained commitment to presenting live music and engagement within the local music community; and
- Assumes risk in programming, producing, and promoting of these live music performances in B.C.

Creative BC encourages applications from systemically excluded groups, including Indigenous Peoples (First Nations [Status/Non-Status], Métis, and Inuit), Black, People of Colour, People living with one or more Disability, 2SLGBTQIA+ communities, women, non-binary and gender diverse people, and other groups who experience systemic barriers to participation.

For previous recipients:

- **Final Reports:** If an applicant has received funding from Creative BC, all prior Live Music final reports must be submitted prior to **December 31, 2026**, to be eligible for funding through this intake. Grant recipients from 2025/26 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 applicant companies must be in good standing with Creative BC, which means the applicant is not in default with respect to prior grants, and there are no outstanding amounts owed to Creative BC.

Not eligible to apply:

- Artists promoting or presenting their own tours or concerts
- Municipalities, spaces, or events owned or operated by any level of government, except First Nations in regional communities.
- Other funding bodies or organizations
- Events, businesses or organizations in the **Metro Vancouver or Victoria's Capital Regional District** that present live music as a secondary activity (culinary festivals, sporting events, parades, local markets, or business improvement associations, breweries, or restaurants).

Financial Participation

Grant Amounts: $2,000 - $50,000 for up to 50% of budgeted cash expenditures.

Company Cap: Applicants will be approved for a maximum of $50,000 per company, across the two funding streams. Applicants requesting more than $20,000 across multiple Live Music program applications or streams must meet financial statement requirements.

This program funds activities and related expenses incurred between January 1, 2027, and December 31, 2027. Applicants are expected to contribute to the financing of the project and seek other revenue sources where appropriate.

Total public funding from combined sources cannot exceed 75% of the budget; however, public funding from combined sources can equal up to 100% of the eligible budget for companies owned by Indigenous peoples.

Eligible Costs

Applicants must provide a proposed budget for their project, and declare all expenses and sources of revenue, including confirmed and unconfirmed grants. Applicants should only apply for activities they can complete and pay for prior to **December 31, 2027.**

This stream provides eligible applicants with support for business development activities that directly support the viability, capacity, and sustainability of live music events, producers, and presenters. This funding stream is intended to support new or expanded activity, not ongoing operational expenses.

The types of projects eligible for this funding stream include, but are not limited to:

- Capital infrastructure improvements
- Audience development and market research
- Improvements to business processes, policies, and procedures
- Development of new products, services, or revenue streams
- Staff growth and development
- Development of knowledge and skills
- Investment into creating sustainable and environmentally-friendly events and venues.

Lists of previous recipients and recipient profiles can be found on the Creative BC website.

Eligible expenses include:

- Expenses for new or expanded company staff positions
- Training, courses, and consultants to grow knowledge and build skills for employees in a specific area
- Marketing campaigns not specific to an event, audience research, economic impact studies
- Training, planning, and policy development related to implementing communicable disease plans, crowd management, emergency preparedness, assault prevention, risk assessment, harm reduction, equity and inclusion, etc.
- Eco-friendly power sources (such as electric generators or grid power access), reusable plates, cups, and cutlery, composting toilets, cashless POS systems, water refilling stations, and other expenses related to creating a more sustainable event or venue
- Equipment purchases and upgrades for sound systems, lighting, soundproofing, staging, technology, accessibility improvements, etc.
- Construction, building materials, and any other costs related to renovations or infrastructure improvements
- Health and safety plans and protocols, safety equipment, etc.

- Reallocation of existing resources to support a portion of the project (no more than 30% of eligible expenses)

If applying for infrastructure upgrades, please provide information outlining the rental terms/ownership of the property, and letters of support from owners or building management demonstrating an ongoing commitment to maintain the space as a live music venue.

Ineligible expenses include:

- Capital purchases not specific to the project
- Operating costs not specific to the project, including utilities, regular maintenance, corporate overhead, or salaries
- Costs related to the presentation of live events, including artist fees and event marketing (these can be applied for through the Live Music: Presentation stream)
- Subscriptions, membership fees, or recurring expenses prior to this project
- Alcohol or other goods/merchandise intended for sale
- Liquor permits and gaming licenses
- Expenses paid in cash
- In-kind expenses or donated services
- Grant writing fees, legal fees, management fees, business registration fees, or fees for financial statements
- Work that has been paid up front but has not been completed by December 31, 2027
- Major expenses not included in the approved budget and incurred prior to Creative BC approval
- Activities that violate or infringe on any intellectual property rights
- Activities that contain elements of or promote any excessive violence, hate propaganda, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, cultural appropriation or elements which are obscene, indecent or child pornography within the meaning of the *Criminal Code of Canada* or are defamatory or are in any other way unlawful under Canadian laws.

Funding for conference fees and business travel, (which includes travel to festivals, conferences, and general business meetings) is not eligible through this program, but can be accessed through Music BC's Business Travel Grant. Travel directly related to the project is eligible, and travel to and from courses or training will be considered.

Application Procedures

The online application is available on the Creative BC website. Applicants may submit one or more applications for each funding stream (applicants can receive a maximum of $50,000 per company, across both streams) The Live Music program **opens August 26, 2026 and will close October 7, 2026, at 4:00 PM, PT.**

Upon submission of the online application, key personnel will receive an automated Self-ID form to complete. The information requested provides Creative BC with information on representation across all programs. This form must be completed by October 21, 2026, which is two weeks after the application deadline date.

Applicants with a disability or accessibility need may contact Creative BC for support in preparing an application. In this case, please allow an additional two weeks to prepare your application

Applicants with questions are encouraged to contact Creative BC staff prior to applying. Early submissions are welcomed.

Program Evaluation

Applications will be evaluated by Creative BC staff and a panel of industry professionals representing a variety of live music companies, industry backgrounds, regions, and demographics. Applications will be scored according to the priorities of the program, using the categories below. The Business Development Scoring Sheet is available on the Creative BC website.

- Idea, Strategy, and Approach
- Company Capacity
- Investment in B.C. Talent
- Economic Impact
- Justice, Equity, Decolonization, Diversity, and Inclusion
- 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 have yet to receive significant funding through its programs, which may result in smaller grants for previous recipients

The review period for complete applications is approximately **14 weeks** after the program deadline date. All applicants will be notified by email. Feedback will be available by request.

Project Completion

Recipients are required to complete a final report detailing the impact of the funding by **December 31, 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
- Cost report (template provided)
- 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 over two drawdowns (75% and 25% respectively), according to the conditions laid out in the Agreement.

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.

Use of Artificial Intelligence Technology

Applicants using Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology should refer to the 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.

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.

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.

Environmental Sustainability

Creative BC encourages the music industry to adopt and implement environmentally sustainable practices and reduce environmental impacts. Applicants are asked to use clean energy sources, minimize waste and pollution, travel responsibly, and choose vendors and collaborators with a track record of operating sustainably.

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** (template provided), including all other sources of financing and whether they are confirmed
- ☐ **Certificate of Incorporation, Business Statement of Registration, Society Certificate,** OR **GST number.** Applicants are not required to have a registered business at the time of application, but must register, in a timely manner, upon successfully receiving a grant.
- ☐ **Completed Creative BC Self-Identification Form** for each key personnel including the General Manager / Executive Director, and the Head Booker / Artistic Director. Applicants have up to **two** weeks after the application submission deadline to submit this form (sent via email to each listed individual, available at www.creativebc.com)
- ☐ **Music artist list from the previous years or this year's prospective programming (festival line up, concert series, one-off event, etc.)**. This should include the names of the Music artists, the dates of their performances, and any relevant details about their involvement in past or future (template available at creativebc.com) or any other format you'd like (social media graphics, poster, word doc etc.)

Required for applicants requesting more than **$20,000 requesting more than $20,000 (across both program streams, if applicable):**

- ☐ Externally-prepared **company/organization financial statements** in the form of a compilation engagement, review engagement, or audited statements for the previous fiscal year. Regardless of applicant's business structure, statements must be prepared by a licensed public accountant (CPA). Statements may be internally or bookkeeper-prepared if the company/organization is under a year old.

  Applicants may submit financial statements up to two weeks after the application deadline by email. If the statements are not submitted within the eligible timeframe, the requested amount will be reduced to $20,000.

  Applicants that submit multiple applications totalling more than $20,000 must submit externally prepared financial statements in alignment with the requirements above. This includes multiple applications within the same Live Music program stream or across both streams.

Required for applicants applying for funding for **new or expanded staff positions**:

- ☐ **Job descriptions or postings** which should outline the pay, responsibilities, and qualifications

Recommended materials:

- ☐ **Expressions of support** from partners and supporters that speak directly to the impact of the project. These can be provided as informal letters, emails, audio clips, videos, or in other formats.

- ☐ **Plans and Policies:** Communicable disease plans, sustainability plans, respectful workplace policy, safety riders, equity or accessibility policies, etc.
- ☐ **Other supporting documents** such as vendor quotes for large purchases/expenses, promotional materials, event calendars, confirmation of other funding**.**
- ☐ Internally prepared **financial statements** for those requesting $20,000 or less.
- ☐ **For infrastructure upgrades:** Letter from building owner or management outlining the rental terms/ownership of the property, and the ongoing commitment to maintain the space as a live music venue.
- ☐ **For research:** research proposals or scope of work from external consultants.

Questions?

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

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