Music
Individual

This funding provides up to $18,000 to support the development of individual Alberta artists, arts administrators, or an ensemble of artists by providing funding for a specific music project.

Deadline information
March 1, 2027
September 1, 2027
Who can apply

Individual eligibility criteria

The AFA celebrates and supports diversity and is committed to creating equitable, inclusive, and accessible programs for all, free of barriers and discrimination. We recognize the unique contributions all artists make towards our community, and encourage applicants representing diverse communities, including Indigenous peoples, racialized communities, women, people with disabilities, and the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

To be eligible for individual project funding, you must be a resident of Alberta. This means you:

- are a Canadian citizen, permanent resident, or Protected Person with an open work or study permit from inside Canada
- have had your primary residence in Alberta for at least one full year before applying
- ordinarily live in Alberta for a least six months of each year with the exception of attending a formal program of study

You must be in good standing with the AFA with no open or outstanding projects or reporting to apply. Previous grant recipients must ensure all final reporting has been approved by the AFA before new applications are accepted.

Applicants, including ensembles or collectives, must not be incorporated under either provincial or federal legislation.

Collaborating artists, ensembles, and collectives

Collaborating artists, ensembles, and collectives are eligible to apply to this program if all project co-owners meet the individual eligibility criteria as defined above.

The AFA defines project co-owners as:

- those who share in the ownership or copyright of the created work
- those who have a significant financial stake in the project

For the purposes of this funding opportunity, in addition to the lead applicant, co-owners include, but may not be limited to, the following:

- ensemble and band members
- song writers

Unless identified as retaining ownership or copyright of the work, contributors who are not normally considered co-owners include, but may not be limited to, the following:

- session musicians
- producers
- arrangers
- Mentors, Elders, and Knowledge Keepers

Project co-owners must select a lead applicant to submit the application. The lead applicant must ensure all co-owners are listed in the application and is responsible for submitting the complete application before the program deadline.

If the project is approved for funding, the lead applicant is also responsible for receiving and managing any funds and completing any related reporting for the project.

If you are unsure whether an artist should be listed as a co-owner in your application, please contact your Arts Development Consultant as listed below.

What does this funding support?

Please note AFA funding is not assured for any project.

Types of projects

Through this opportunity, you may apply for project funding to support artistic activities in:

- art production
- marketing
- research
- training and career development

Art Production includes the development, creation and production of any music work. Projects should be confined to a distinct phase of a work, such as:

- composition projects (including commissioned work)
- demo recording projects not intended for sale, including full production and basic press kit expenses
- commercial recording projects intended for sale, including support for pre-production and song development (basic recording)

Alberta individual artists that have been contracted by commissioners to create a specific work (such as a composition) are eligible to apply for project support through this funding opportunity.

A commercial recording officially begins with pre-production of the album in a recording studio and is completed when the final manufactured recording is submitted to the AFA. If a recording is only intended for digital release, you must clearly state this in your application.

For any recording project, the AFA gives preference to projects recorded in an Alberta-based recording facility.

Marketing includes a program of activity for a specific period that promotes, advertises, or disseminates work created by Alberta music artists, and/or develops audiences for the artist's work.

Eligible projects include, but are not limited to:

- marketing and promotion of a commercial release
- costs associated with performances at special events by invitation
- promotional tours

Research includes a program of activity for a specific period of time that supports or results in the development of a music project.

Training and career development includes a course or program of study to develop an artist's training in music or arts administrator’s training in music administration.

Eligible projects include, but are not limited to:

- workshops
- master classes
- retreats
- mentorship programs
- professional courses of study in performance, recording arts, or composition

Eligible expenses

You can receive up to $18,000 to support your project. You may apply for up to 100% of eligible expenses that are directly related to carrying out your proposed project.

These expenses may include, but are not limited to the following:

For art production projects:

- session musician fees
- commission fees
- production
- royalties

For marketing projects:

- promotion and publicity

For training and career development projects:

- tuition or training fees

For all project categories:

- transportation and accommodation
- administration and contract fees
- basic living/subsistence expenses (housing, local transport, food, childcare, dependent care) up to $3,000/month
- other expenses and supplies considered by the AFA to be reasonable and necessary

Ineligible expenses

Additional expenses and activities that are ineligible for AFA project funding include:

- expenses for capital purchases, such as buildings or property, or for capital development, and studio construction or renovations
- recreational training projects
- artistic activities or projects undertaken in order to fulfill credit or thesis requirements
- artist, producer, and engineer fees for principal ensemble members
- recording studio rental fees for studios owned by principal ensemble members
- manufacturing expenses (CD pressing and artwork)
- contracts for ongoing activities or artists pursuing projects similar in scope to usual activities with commissioner
- expenses already incurred prior to the application submission, including grant writer fees

How to apply

We only accept applications through the Grant Administration Tracking and Evaluation (GATE) Front Office online application system. We must receive your online application through GATE Front Office no later than 11:59 p.m. Alberta Time on the deadline date, unless the deadline falls on a statutory holiday or a weekend when it will be extended until the next working day. Please give the system time to process your application so that we receive notification of your submission before the deadline falls.

- applicants may submit only one application to the AFA each deadline across all disciplines
- the AFA does not accept incomplete applications
- applications must be received prior to the commencement of the project

- projects involving more than one artist must be submitted by one individual on behalf of the ensemble or group

We do not accept separate applications for the same project.

GATE Front Office username registration

First-time applicants will require a GATE Front Office username and password. Email us at registrationafa@gov.ab.ca to get your login information at least five business days prior to the application deadline.

Please include:

1. your legal name
2. the funding opportunity to which you are applying
3. your email address

Your username and password will be sent to the email address provided.

What to include in your application

For detailed step-by-step instructions, please download the GATE Front Office user guide.

GATE Front Office online formlets:

- **Applicant Information**: Legal name and confirmation of your status (minor/Albertan)
  - if you are under the age of 18 years at the time of application, a parent or legal guardian must e-sign the Individual Applicant Agreement as the designate for the funding, and be responsible for:
    - the completeness and accuracy of the application in full
    - receipt and use of funding
    - reporting on the use of funds
    - serving as contact person for any inquiries relating to the funding
- **Contact Information** for primary applicant
  - ensembles must designate one contact person for all requirements of the grant as the primary applicant

    - this designated individual must e-sign the Individual Applicant Agreement
- **Address**: Street and mailing address for the primary applicant
- **General Information:** Confirmation of the application category (art production, marketing, research, or training/career development) and applicant status (individual/ensemble)
- **Project Description:** A brief project title (20 words) and project start and end dates
- **Project Co-owners:** A listing of the project co-owners involved in the project, their position or role, and confirmation of Alberta Residence
- **Individual Applicant Agreement:** A declaration of agreement with the statement of conditions e-signed by the primary applicant or designate
- **Project Expenses:** A listing of project expenditures in Canadian dollars
- **Project Revenue:** A listing of non-AFA revenues in Canadian dollars
    - the difference between expenditures and revenues will comprise the grant request to the AFA with the funding not exceeding $18,000

Attachments:

The GATE Front Office attachment section indicates that not all attachments are required for submission. This is because they are only required for certain types of projects (e.g. marketing plan for a marketing project). It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all attachments noted in the guidelines are submitted with their application according to project type.

Please submit the following mandatory attachments for all project types. Wherever possible, written support material should be uploaded in PDF format and limited to 4 MB in size:

- **Artist resume** of no more than four pages
    - applicants should submit music-related activities, which may include: past training, most recent performances and performance highlights, compositions, discography, and/or ensemble experience
    - list activities in reverse chronological order, with most recent activity listed first
    - resumes of all project co-owners involved in the project
- **Detailed project description**, including an outline of the objectives, planned activities, timelines, and expected results and impact on the applicant's artistic development

    - in keeping with oral traditions, Indigenous project descriptions are welcome as oral submissions no longer than 3 minutes in length
    - for more information on how to submit oral project descriptions, contact the Arts Development Consultant for this program, prior to the application deadline, at the contact information below.
- **Two musical selections** such as a scratch demo from the proposed project, high-quality demo, past commercial recording, recordings of previous compositions or scores, or two other representative past works
    - each audio file must be no longer than 5 minutes in length, , in mp3 or aac format, and no larger than 8 MB in size per file
    - please see Format section below for detailed submission instructions, including how to submit video files if appropriate to your project

Include the following attachments according to your application category, or when applicable to your proposed project:

- **Music scores** of previous compositions
- **Lyric sheets** from past works
- **Commission contract** and/or signed agreement with the commissioner, outlining a plan for the exhibition, presentation, display publication, screening or performance of the commissioned work(s) (mandatory for commission projects)
- **Proof of acceptance** for applicants who have been accepted into a specific course of study, with a detailed description, schedule, and budget for course of study (mandatory for training projects)
- **Alternate training choices** for applicants who have not already been accepted into a course a course of study, with a detailed description, schedule, and budget for the preferred choice and two alternate programs
- **Official invitations**, confirmations, or itineraries
- **Marketing plan** with detailed touring, marketing, and/or promotional details and strategies
- **Manufacturing budget** outlining the applicant's ability to fund manufacturing expenses (CD pressing and artwork) when applicable
- **Letter of reference** when applicable
- **Resumes** for other project co-owners when applicable
- **Additional support materials** that may assist in the assessment process

Format

- audio files and music selections must be limited to 5 minutes in length for each file
    - audio files must be in MP3 or AAC format
    - audio files must be no larger than 8 MB in size
        - Applicants are welcome to use any editing software of their choice to prepare their audio files; recording software such as Pro Tools, Reaper, Gargageband, or Audacity are often free and can be used to edit audio files into the required format and length as described above
- although video files cannot be included as attachments in Front Office, if relevant to your proposal, you may submit one video file of up to 5 minutes in length via email to musicAFA@gov.ab.ca
    - video files must be in avi, mov, mpeg, mp4, or WMV format
    - video files must be no larger than 400 MB in size
    - files must be submitted as an email attachment or as a link to an accessible file that can be directly downloaded
    - files must be submitted prior to the application deadline; support materials received after the deadline will not be reviewed or considered
    - download Video Support Material Technical Requirements for more information on preparing video support material.
- alternatively, you may mail a hard copy saved on a USB stick to 10708 – 105 Ave, Edmonton, AB, T5H 0A1
- please include your first initial, last name and project number on the USB
- support material must be submitted or postmarked no later than 11:59 p.m. Alberta Time on the deadline date

How will my application be assessed?

This funding is administered at the discretion of the AFA board on a project-by-project basis.

Staff convene an expert panel to consider all eligible grant applications submitted to each grant deadline. The expert panel assesses the merit of each application both on its own terms and in relation to all other applications received for a given deadline.

Assessment of a project is based on the following general criteria:

- the impact of the project on both the applicant and the artistic genre in Alberta
- the artistic, educational or promotional merit of the project
- the appropriateness of the project budget showing commitment from all partners as applicable
- the ability of the applicant to carry out the proposed project

Assessment also takes into account the applicant's:

- artistic and technical ability to carry out the proposed project
- level of training, experience, and expertise
- performance and achievements to date
- personal objectives

All expert panel recommendations are reviewed by the AFA board and all decisions are final. Funding is not assured for any project.

Learn more about expert panels and how the AFA adjudicates funding requests for all programs.

When will I hear?

Grant recommendations are made to the AFA board of directors. Successful recipients will be notified upon board approval, generally between four to six months from the application deadline.

We gather general comments about the applications and share them on the Adjudication page. The expert panel does not record specific comments about individual applications.

Conditions

Funding is intended for the purposes described in your application. By accepting funding, you agree to undertake the project as proposed in your original project description.

If you do not receive the full grant amount requested, you are still required to complete the project as proposed if you accept the grant:

- you must return the grant funds if the project cannot be completed as proposed

If you require a change to your project including outcomes, location or an extension to your final report due date:

- you must submit a request in writing for approval by the AFA
- the request must be submitted prior to the change being made and/or before your project completion date
- the AFA may consider a single extension per funding opportunity

Funding recipients are responsible for informing the AFA of how funds were spent and outcomes of the project:

- you must return funds if reporting requirements are not met
- you must return unused portions of funding to the AFA

Any funding recipient who does not provide a report prior to the date noted in the successful notification document, or does not fulfill any conditions associated with a grant or whose report is not approved will be made delinquent and ineligible for further funding from the AFA for a period of three years from the time the delinquency is resolved.

New applications will not be accepted until your previous project is completed and the final report is received and approved by the AFA.

Previous funding recipients must have met reporting requirements in order to be eligible to receive subsequent funding from the AFA.

The AFA, or our authorized representative, may examine a funding recipient's financial and other records to ensure that the funding is being, or was, used for its intended purpose.

We require a complete and satisfactory final report submitted to GATE Front Office that demonstrates that funding was spent on the activities described in the application.

Funding acknowledgement

Whenever possible, you must acknowledge the AFA for financial support in any publicity prepared in relation to the project, including electronic, print, or visual material.

Download versions of the AFA logo and guidelines for usage.

Reporting

In your final report, you must complete the following GATE Front Office formlets:

- **Individual Project Evaluation** with a completed project outcomes questionnaire
- **Project Expenses** with a complete and accurate financial accounting for final project expenses in comparison to the original budget submission

- **Project Revenues** with a complete and accurate financial accounting for all revenues received for the project

Include the following mandatory attachments as part of your final report:

- **Sample of work produced**, performed, or created
  - submit one audio file representative of your completed project
  - files must be no longer than 5 minutes in length, in MP3 or AAC format, and no larger than 8 MB in size
  - please see **Format** section (above in How to apply) for detailed submission instructions, including how to submit video files when appropriate to your project reporting
- if your project was for marketing, include proof of touring costs (i.e. receipts or itinerary) or sample of promotional material in lieu of audio sample
- if your project was for training or career development, include your tuition receipt in lieu of audio sample
- if your project was for composition, including commission, a copy of the completed score recognizing AFA support through the inclusion of the AFA logo in lieu of audio sample

When applicable, include:

- **Samples of promotional materials** related to the project, such as social media or website screenshots, posters, and/or programs showing funding credit to the Alberta Foundation for the Arts where appropriate
- **Samples of reviews**, interviews, publications, or other media in which the project was mentioned
- **Other support material**, if applicable, such a travel itinerary, confirmation of attendance at an event, invoices for studio time, other production costs, etc.

Helpful resources

Visit the Help and Resources section of our website to:

- download the new Front Office User Guide
- read application tips for individual artists that will help you write a stronger grant application

Working on your project budget? Download budget examples for Music individual project funding to help guide you.

You may wish to add video support materials to your application. Make sure your materials meet AFA technical requirements:

- download Video Support Material Technical Requirements for more information on preparing video support material

Project grant recommendations are made by Expert Panels. Their comments can be useful tips to help you improve your application.

- Review general comments from the Expert Panel from the previous application deadline.

The AFA recognizes many artists encounter barriers to application and reporting procedures.

- learn about the AFA's Accessibility Program

Apply Now

Arts Development Consultant - Music



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