



2019 Connections & Exchanges Initiative Grants Preparing Arts and Festival Organizations for the next ten years.

Deadlines: August 1 – Stage 1 submissions
October 1 – Stage 2 full proposals (if requested following Stage 1)

In October 2018, Edmonton City Council unanimously approved *Connections & Exchanges: A Ten-Year Plan To Transform Arts and Heritage In Edmonton*. The implementation framework for *Connections & Exchanges* includes planned new investments over the coming years, and a renovation of the Edmonton Arts Council's (EAC) suite of granting programs.

Those things are in the future.

In the present, the EAC recognizes that Arts and Festival Organizations may have a wide range of initiatives that are already underway, or in the planning stages. To support these activities, the EAC is investing reserve funds towards the timely realization of a wide range of work. In this way the community can prepare for and actively pursue the Ambitions, Aims, and Actions outlined in *Connections & Exchanges*.

Purpose

The *Connections & Exchanges* grant will invest in work by existing Edmonton Arts and Festival organizations towards initiatives that they identify, and that are linked to the Ambitions, Aims, and Actions outlined in *Connections & Exchanges*.

This is a one-time funding opportunity. Future support of organizations will develop as a result of the EAC's ongoing granting review, including community consultations and the design of an implementation plan for delivering on the vision and strategy of *Connections & Exchanges*.

Eligible Applicants

Arts and Festival Organizations that are in receipt of EAC Operating Grants from the Arts Operating, Festival Operating, Festival Seed, Cornerstone, or Celebrations grants and are in good standing, are eligible to apply.

In the spirit of reconciliation, and as outlined in *Connections & Exchanges*, Indigenous Peoples of this territory freely determine how to participate in Edmonton's arts and heritage sectors. Therefore, we will work in conjunction with Indigenous advisors to facilitate eligible applications from Indigenous organizations that have a focus on cultural practices, arts, and festival programming. Indigenous organizations that do not have a prior granting relationship with the EAC are invited to apply.

Eligible Projects

This funding is intended to support a wide variety of artistic and organizational initiatives on timelines set by the applicants. Proposed work must relate to an initiative that is relevant to the applicant's own goals, aspirations, and strategic plans.

This includes, as examples:

- Artistic Experiments
- Organizational Development
- Audience Development and Engagement
- Partnerships and/or sector-based Initiatives that might have shared impact

Initiatives and work must also be relevant to any of the Ambitions, Aims, and Actions outlined in *Connections & Exchanges*.

Activity does not need to be new to be considered. This investment can respond to enhancement, extension, or amplification of existing initiatives.

Applicants may request support towards work and costs that occur any time after the second-stage deadline.

Funds are not intended to support

- Applicants that are not primarily arts or festival organizations
- The regular, ongoing activities of the applicant, outside of their proposed initiative.

Level of Support

Organizations may request grants of up to \$30,000. There is the potential for more than 25 grants.

Grant funds are intended to support costs directly associated with the work identified by the applicant. Applicants may also define and request a portion of ongoing overhead costs for the duration of grant period, relating to their proposed initiative.

Two-Stage Process

Stage One – Deadline August 1

Applicants will submit a brief outline of their proposed initiative through the online application portal: eacawards.fluidreview.com. Completed responses to the online questions will provide an overview of the goals and activity the applicant is planning to pursue. A preliminary budget will be required at this stage.

Stage Two – Deadline October 1

Applicants that are assessed positively at Stage One will be invited to submit a detailed proposal that responds to the full assessment criteria, and questions that the EAC might identify. This will include comprehensive descriptions of the initiative, budget, timeline, and may include additional organizational information, if requested.

This process allows the EAC to raise questions and provide input after the initial stage that might strengthen a final proposal.

If the EAC does not request a Stage Two submission, organizations can focus on other work rather than investing in a full application that would not be supported.

An invitation to submit a full proposal does not guarantee a grant, and the EAC reserves the option to approve or decline funding at any stage in the assessment process.

Assessment

Applications will be assessed by a combination of peer assessment and a committee of the EAC Board, with the active input of the EAC staff.

The assessment will be guided by the four principles that underpin *Connections & Exchanges*:

- Inclusivity that reflects the diverse values of the communities in Edmonton;
- Leadership, excellence, and innovation in the arts and heritage communities;
- A collective civic responsibility for arts and heritage;
- Strengthened economic security for arts and heritage.

(*Connections & Exchanges* — Book 1, Page 42)

The assessment will be structured by the following criteria:

The merits of the proposed initiative:

- The potential of the work being pursued in furthering the organization's goals, mandates and strategic directions, and/or contribute to an artistic practice, discipline, or community.
- The potential of the initiative to advance an identified Ambition, Aim, or Action from *Connections & Exchanges*.

The merits of the applicant:

- The ability of the organization to undertake the work proposed, informed by the effectiveness, rigor and depth of the work the organization has pursued and achieved in the past.

The following criteria will also be used if the applicant is invited to submit a Stage 2 proposal:

- How effective, researched, thoughtful, and feasible the plan and timeline for the proposed work is.
- How clearly the applicant meaningfully, intentionally and thoughtfully proposes to bring the outcomes to fruition.
- The quality of the processes the organization will use to gauge the success or failure of the proposed project.

Grant Recommendations

Grant recommendations will be made based on the assessment process and will be subject to the review of the EAC Board and/or a designated sub-committee.

The Edmonton Arts Council's strategic goals, such as reflecting the full demographic diversity of the City of Edmonton, will be considered before granting decisions are made.