



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 suite of granting programs.

Those things are in the future.

In the present, the Edmonton Arts Council recognizes that Arts and Festival Organizations may have artistic experiments, organizational development, strategic planning and audience engagement planned or underway. To support these activities, the EAC is investing previously unspent 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 connected to the Ambitions, Aims, and Actions outlined in *Connections & Exchanges*.

This is currently a one-time funding opportunity. Future support of organizations will develop as a result of the EAC's ongoing granting review, and the implementation of *Connections & Exchanges*.

Eligible Applicants

Arts and Festival Organizations that are current EAC Operating Grant recipients (Arts Operating, Festival Operating, Festival Seed, Cornerstone, or Celebrations grants in 2018 or 2019) 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 established Indigenous organizations that may not have had a granting relationship with the EAC in the past.

Eligible Projects

This funding is intended to support a wide variety of organizational projects and activity on a timeline defined by the applicant.

Proposed work must relate to an initiative or project that is relevant to the applicant's own goals, aspirations and strategic plans.

This includes, as examples: Artistic Experimentation, 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 the identified initiative or work.

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.

Two-Stage Process

Stage one – Deadline August 1

Applicants will submit brief outline information through the online application portal: eacawards.fluidreview.com. Text in response to the online questions will provide an overview of the goals and activity the applicant is planning to pursue. A preliminary budget is required at this stage.

Stage two – Deadline October 1

If requested, applicants will provide a more detailed proposal that responds to the full assessment criteria, and questions that the EAC might identify. This will include complete descriptions, budget, timeline, and may include updated organizational information if requested.

This process is meant to assist applicants. It allows the EAC the chance to raise questions at the initial stage that might strengthen the final proposal.

If the EAC does not request a second-stage submission, it allows the applicant organization to focus on other work rather than developing a full proposal.

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.

Applications will be assessed at both the initial outline stage and at the full proposal stage. 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.

The assessment will be guided by the four principles that underpin *Connections and 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 and Exchanges – Book 1, Page 42)

The assessment will in all cases be structured by the following specific criteria:

The Merits of the proposed initiative, including:

At both stages

- 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 Aim or Action in *Connections & Exchanges*.

At stage two

- 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.

The Merit of the Applicant, including:

At both stages

- 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.

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.