

John Mahon Arts Administrators' Sabbatical Fund

Administrators form an integral part of the arts infrastructure of Edmonton. The work behind the scenes, and the expertise required for all aspects of arts management, is often under-recognized. The individuals who specialize in this field are a critical piece of a sustainable arts ecosystem and many Edmonton region arts organizations do not have the capacity to support extended periods of renewal and professional development for their senior staff.

John Mahon was the Executive Director of the Edmonton Arts Council for 15 years until his retirement in 2013. This fund and program recognizes his contributions to the Edmonton arts community by providing the opportunity for local arts administrators to undertake sabbatical leave projects. Their continued contributions to the organizations they manage will enhance the stability and sustainability of Edmonton's arts community.

Purpose

The John Mahon sabbatical fund will offer two awards of up to \$25,000 each to two Edmonton region arts organizations per year. The awards must be used by the organization to hire qualified, short-term replacement staff to allow an identified staff person to take a paid sabbatical leave.

The sabbatical project must be:

- for an individual who has made their career as an arts administrator in the greater Edmonton region (which includes the City of Edmonton and the Counties of Sturgeon, Parkland, Leduc and Strathcona), including as examples: general managers, executive directors, communications or marketing directors, project, program or production managers;
- a paid, extended leave period, including usual pay and benefits;
- planned to commence within a reasonable time period at the discretion of the EAC.

The individual and organization must both commit to returning to their previous working relationship for at least 6 months following the end of the sabbatical project.

Eligibility

The applicant must be (all of the following must apply):

- registered in good standing as a not-for-profit society operating in the greater Edmonton area (as defined by the Edmonton Community Foundation) for at least the past three years;
- financially and administratively stable in the context of the arts community;
- the employer or primary contractor of the individual identified for the sabbatical, and;
- the organization must be able to prove that the individual taking the leave has been employed, full-time, by the organization in their current role for at least one full year.

The deadline for submission of this application is **11:59 pm on April 1st**. Applications must be submitted online on or before the deadline of April 1st annually. When April 1st falls on a holiday or weekend, the deadline is the next business day. Incomplete or late applications will not be accepted or considered.

Application

Applicants must complete the online application form and provide the following information as digital attachments. Applicants may submit projects with only preliminary planning in place.

1. Description of the Applicant organization.

- a) A two-page narrative that includes basic information about the history and current activities of the organization.
- b) The formal documents currently required by the Edmonton Arts Council to apply for an annual operating grant, unless those materials are already on file with the EAC

2. Individual's Statement

Please limit to three pages.

This is a letter from the individual administrator describing their involvement with the organization, their support for the nomination, and their preliminary plans for the use of the sabbatical time.

3. Description of the individual nominated for the sabbatical

Please limit to five pages and include as relevant:

- a curriculum vitae or resume that includes details of the individual's career and training to date;
- details of the nominee's role in the organization and its development, and;
- a description of the applicant's involvement in the Edmonton community.

4. Description of administrative planning

Please limit to 2 pages and include:

- the tentative timeline for the proposed project.
- the organization's preliminary human resource plan to cover the project.

5. Letters of support

Include at least two, and no more than four letters of support from board members, artists or knowledgeable community members that can speak to the merits of the nominee. Letters must be specifically addressed to the sabbatical program, and indicate more than just a general character reference.

Assessment

All applications will be reviewed and evaluated by a peer jury assembled by the Edmonton Arts Council. Recommendations will be forwarded to the Edmonton Arts Council board for approval.

The jury will be guided by all the text in this document, and in all cases will consider the following evaluation criteria:

- The administrator's demonstrated commitment to and achievement of excellence in their practice.
- The potential impact of this award on the administrator, the applicant organization and the Edmonton arts community (in that order).
- The potential for the applicant to complete the planning and execution of the project.
- The applicant organization and the administrator's demonstrated past connection to and potential future impact on the Edmonton region.

Reporting

Funded applicants and nominees must submit a joint financial and outcomes report no more than 90 days after the project is complete.