



Region of Waterloo Arts Fund

Guidelines

What types of projects do the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund (RWAF) grants support?

The Region of Waterloo Arts Fund (RWAF) offers grants that support innovative art projects with the potential to spur artistic growth for participating artists and to enhance cultural development throughout the region.

RWAF welcomes applications from individuals, collectives, and not-for-profit organizations with projects that support our vision of “Where Arts Starts” in Waterloo Region. We welcome all arts disciplines, including performing arts (theatre, music, dance), visual arts, film/video/media, literature, and interdisciplinary and community arts. With a funding focus on innovation, we support emerging artists, as well as established artists who are experimenting, exploring new creations processes, crossing disciplines, or building on new work.

New for Spring 2023:

RWAF began working with a consultant in 2021 to identify improvements we can make to our Board of Directors and to our funding process to reduce barriers and expand opportunities for racialized applicants to become successful. These updated guidelines are rooted in those recommendations. Please visit our [Imagining Equitable Futures](#) page to view the full reports that led to our implementing the changes made to the Spring 2023 round of granting.

Evaluation Criteria:

In keeping with best practices in the arts granting sector, Peer Reviewers will now assess all applications, and receive compensation for sharing their time and expertise. The Board, as part of its governance role, will oversee this process to ensure transparency, integrity, impartiality, and accountability. For more information about this process, please visit our website [here](#).

The Peer Reviewers will focus their assessment on the following three areas: artistic vision, impact and engagement, and viability. Successful applicants are those whose project proposals meet **as many of these criteria as possible**:

1. Artistic Vision

- The applicant clearly articulates the vision for the project

- The applicant clearly describes how this project fits into their existing body of work

2. Impact and Engagement

- The project contributes to the professional growth and development of the applicant, OR
- creates potential opportunities for community engagement (if applicable), OR
- provides intrinsic benefits to other artists in the region or the community at large

3. Viability

- Project work plan and budget reflect the vision of the project in ways that are reasonable, realistic, and well thought-out
- Artists contributing to the project are appropriately paid according to discipline's standards
- A realistic plan to obtain other funds, if needed, is clearly articulated
- Capacity for completing the project is evident

NEW FUNDING STREAMS

Applicants will be asked to identify in two ways: as an organization, artist, or collective, and as Emerging or Established. The criteria for determining these categories are:

ARTISTS

- Emerging Artist
 - New or growing art practice, under 5 years of experience
 - Maximum funding they can apply for is \$10,000
- Established Artist
 - Seasoned art practice, 5 or more years of experience
 - Maximum funding they can apply for is \$7,500

COLLECTIVE

- Emerging Collectives
 - The collective has existed for under 5 years
 - Maximum funding they can apply for is \$10,000
- Established Collectives
 - The collective has existed for 5 or more years

- Maximum funding they can apply for is \$7,500

ORGANIZATIONS

- Emerging Organizations
 - The organization has existed for under 5 years
 - Maximum funding they can apply for is \$10,000
- Established Organizations
 - The organization has existed for 5 or more years
 - Maximum funding they can apply for is \$7,500

Who is eligible to apply for a grant?

Individuals, collectives, and not-for-profit organizations practicing in any arts discipline, and living and/or working primarily in Waterloo Region, are eligible to apply for a RWAF grant.

Applicants must be in good standing with RWAF, with no current or active projects/grants.

Applicants whose Final Report from a previous project is still outstanding, or who have other grant-related issues, may not be eligible to apply for a new grant.

Past grant recipients must have met the Grant Agreement and reporting requirements related to their previous grant(s) in order to be eligible to apply for new funding – this includes the submission of a Final Report that has been received, reviewed, and approved by RWAF's Board of Directors.

Only one (1) application per granting round is permitted, and applicants may apply for only one (1) project at a time.

If you are a past or current RWAF grantee and need clarification about your eligibility status, please contact us directly at info@artsfund.ca.

RWAF accepts applications from:

Individual artists:

- 18 years of age or older
- Legally entitled to be or remain in Canada
- A resident of (or someone who works primarily in) the region
- In good standing with RWAF, with no active or outstanding projects or reports

Unincorporated not-for-profit organizations or collectives:

- The majority of members of the ensemble, collective, or collaboration must meet the individual artists eligibility criteria (above)

Incorporated not-for-profit organizations:

- Registered as a not-for-profit corporation federally or provincially, and are in good standing with RWF for at least one year prior to the deadline
- Governed by a volunteer board
- The majority of its members live or work in the Region of Waterloo
- Operating at arm's length from municipalities, commercial enterprises, or educational institutions
- A demonstrated commitment to fiscal responsibility

Ineligible applicants include:

- Municipalities
- Commercial enterprises
- Educational Institutions

Eligible Expenses:

The Region of Waterloo Art Fund offers funding for innovative projects that meet or exceed the assessment criteria described above. Applicants may apply for up to 100% of **eligible expenses** directly related to carrying out such projects. See the list below for details.

As a local grantor, we are often the first place emerging artists go to seek support. That said, we encourage all applicants to seek **multiple sources of funding**. Leveraging a RWF grant can help applicants maximize the feasibility and the impact of their project. Plus, realistically, expenses can surge between the time an application is submitted, and the actual project gets off the ground. Having multiple sources of funding makes for a more secure work plan and a more feasible budget.

Project-related eligible expenses may include, but are not limited to:

- Artist and technician fees associated with creation, production, and distribution
- Equipment or space rental
- Project promotion and publicity
- Transportation and accommodation
- Royalties
- Administration and contract fees
- Minor capital expenses such as software, electronics, and similar materials up to a cost of \$500

Ineligible Expenses:

- Ongoing and operating costs of the organization (e.g., core staffing, office expenses, rent, insurance)
- Costs associated with core program offerings, the applicant's usual activities, or regular presentation seasons

- Projects or events with recurrent, unvarying, definitive components (e.g., a theatre company or gallery promoting its upcoming season)
- Expenses for activities incurred prior to the application submission, including grant-writing fees

RWAF does not fund:

- Projects / project activities retroactively
- Core programming
- Capital projects such as buildings, property, capital development and facility construction or renovations, or expenses for capital purchases in excess of \$500
- Goods or services for personal use
- Organizational marketing or promotion
- Organizational planning and development
- Fundraising
- Educational programs and instruction, recreational training projects
- Artistic activities or projects undertaken to fulfill an academic credit or thesis requirement
- Projects in which art-making is incidental or secondary to other aspects of the project, where the primary goal of the project is, for example, commercial, therapeutic, or social in nature
- Artistic production originating outside Waterloo Region

When is the best time to apply?

RWAF does not fund projects retroactively. Grant money cannot be used to fund activity that began ahead of the application deadline and before the granting decision date. Spring round applicants are notified about the status of their application by the end of that June, while Fall round applicants receive notification by the end of December.

Projects must occur within 12 months of receiving a grant. For detailed timelines and application deadlines, visit our website: www.artsfund.ca.

How do I apply for a grant?

A link to our online application portal is posted on our website. If you need the application in another format, please email your request to info@artsfund.ca to discuss.

The link to the online application portal is only live during an application timeline window. The portal is not accessible after an application deadline has passed.

When you submit an application, your personal information will be shared, in confidence, with the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund volunteers and employees of the Regional Municipality of Waterloo.

After each granting round, the names of successful applicants, descriptions of their projects, and the amount RWAF has awarded all grantees are detailed in a Media Release that is then posted on our website (see “Press Releases”) and sent to local media. Questions regarding the collection and use of personal information by RWAF should be directed to info@artsfund.ca.