

Small Experiments Program

Application Deadline: October 31, 2016 at 4:30pm MST

Contents

- Program Goal
- Program Description
- Eligibility
- What You Can Apply For
- How to Design Your Experiment
- How to Apply
- Assessment Process
- Application Checklist
- Notification of Results
- Final Report Outline
- Contact Information

Program Goal

The goal of this program is to provide support for those looking to develop new approaches to challenges and opportunities relevant to the work they do in the arts.

Program Description

This program invests in low-risk, high-learning experiments demonstrating a clearly identified issue that needs to be addressed, a hypothesis being tested, and a method for collecting information and learning from results.

Eligibility

You may apply to this program as one of the following:

- A professional artist or collective.
- An arts-based community group.
- A non-profit arts organization registered as a society in the province of Alberta.

Applicants must either be Calgary-based, or able to demonstrate that they consistently make significant contributions to the arts that are accessible to Calgary citizens.

Calgary Arts Development staff review all applications for eligibility. For applicants that also have non-arts-related programming or operate in areas outside of Calgary, Calgary Arts Development will determine eligibility through the applicant's commitment to the arts and the scope of its activities within Calgary's arts community.

The following groups are ineligible for funding through the Small Experiments Program:

- Political, trade union or fraternal lodge organizations.
- Degree- and diploma-granting educational institutes such as colleges and universities.
- Organizations that receive operational funding directly from The City of Calgary.

What You Can Apply For

This program offers a **maximum of \$5,000** to cover expenses related to a single experiment. Only one applicant per experiment may apply. The total amount of funding available through this program is **\$105,000**.

These funds may go towards *any* expenses so long as you can show that they are necessary to effectively run your experiment and learn from it, including but not limited to:

- Professional fees or wages for labour related to the experiment
- Materials
- Equipment
- Travel
- Documentation

If you have questions about any other possible expenses, please contact staff.

How to Design Your Experiment

A good experiment starts with an important question you would like to answer. For this program, this question will be about a problem, a need, or an opportunity related to your work in the arts, including but not limited to:

- How you create or share your work.
- The conditions that allow you to create work.
- How your work is understood or valued.

Your question can tackle big ideas or it may focus on something very specific, or perhaps technical; on the surface it may not even seem to have anything to do with art! What matters is that you can show that answering it will have a meaningful effect on your work.

A single experiment may involve one activity or several, and take place on a single day or over a longer period of time. Whatever the case, **your experiment should focus on just one question you are trying to answer.**

When thinking about whether a question is important enough to tackle, **think about whether or not it challenges a fundamental assumption you have about the way you work.**

Hypothesize, Test & Analyze

Once you know what you want to question, the next step is to form a *hypothesis*, or an educated guess about what you think the answer might be. This guess does not have to be backed by absolute certainty or perfect, it just has to be good enough to give you something important to look for when you test.

Your experiment is about trying something, observing what happens and then learning from it. Whatever your experiment is and what it looks like, you want it to:

- Include methods of collecting important information relevant to your question.
- Be as simple as is necessary for you to address your original question.

Finally, the last thing you'll want to consider is how you will be able to interpret the results of your experiment, based on your original question and your hypothesis. It is important to remember that this process is not about doing something once, perfectly. Answering your question will probably require trying things many times, failing and then trying again. This program is just meant to give you a start.

For that reason, we are looking to encourage experiments that can be completed on a small scale in the near future.

The deadline for your final report will be June 30, 2017, meaning your experiment should take place some time between now and next spring so you have time to analyze your results. For more information see the Final Report Outline at the end of this document.

How to Apply

All applications must be submitted using the online granting interface found at calgaryartsdevelopment.com.

New users must set up an account to access the interface. For instructions on how to use the online grant interface, please refer to the Granting Interface Questions in our Investment Program FAQ on calgaryartsdevelopment.com.

If you are applying on behalf of an organization that already has an account and you would like access to it, please contact us at grants@calgaryartsdevelopment.com or 403.476.2031.

The application process will be available **October 3, 2016** through our online grant interface.

All applications must be submitted through the online granting interface by **October 31, 2016 at 4:30pm MST**.

If a deadline extension is required, Calgary Arts Development must receive a written request before this deadline. The full **Deadline Extension Policy** is available at calgaryartsdevelopment.com.

Assessment Process

Applications will be assessed by an independent, arm's-length assessment committee made up of artistic peers and community members.

Community members are Calgarians with an appreciation for the arts (any discipline) who actively attend arts performances and presentations. Artistic peers are artists and arts professionals who possess professional experience and knowledge directly relevant to the arts sector.

All applications will be considered according to three criteria:

- The **importance to your work (40%)** of the question you are trying to answer. How you define your practice/mandate and its goals will form the context for considering this.
- The **design (30%)** of your experiment and how effectively it might answer your question.
- The **feasibility (30%)** of the project plan and budget.

For more information on assessment criteria, please see the Assessment Committee Terms of Reference at calgaryartsdevelopment.com.

Application Checklist

- Primary Contact Information** (address, phone number, email, alternate contact).
- Description of **artistic practice and goals**. Individuals/collectives should include relevant CVs and artist statements. Collectives providing multiple CVs and statements may combine each into a single PDF as necessary. Community groups and organizations must include artistic mandates and the most recent available financial statements.
- What is the question you are trying to address?** (200 words max.)
- Why is answering this question important to you and how do you know?** Consider what you or others have tried before, what assumptions you might have about the question that might need to be reconsidered, etc. (500 words max.)
- Describe how you will test your question.** What is your hypothesis, or your most educated guess of the answer to your question? What exactly are you testing? How does the experiment work? How will you collect information? (500 words max.)
- Project timeline** for the experiment. Provide a timeline showing how you will execute your experiment. You may write this into the online application (200 words max.) or upload a PDF (2MB max.)
- Project budget.** List revenues and expenses for the overall experiment project plan. Upload the mandatory standard budget form available at calgaryartsdevelopment.com.
- Support materials.** This can include anything you feel will help you make your case, including text, digital images, audio or video. Limit your support material to a maximum review time of 10 minutes. You may include up to five attachments with a maximum of 2MB each. Provide short descriptions of each attachment in the fields provided. Acceptable file formats are PDF, JPG, DOC, DOCX, XLS and XLSX. For audio and video materials, please enter a YouTube or Vimeo link with specific instructions on which sections to view.

Notification of Results

Applicants will be notified of the results of their applications in writing by **December 7, 2016**. Successful applicants must return executed investment agreements no later than **December 16, 2016**. Please ensure that you contact staff if your contact information needs to be updated after the application deadline as **we cannot accept any agreements past that date**.

Final Report Outline

The deadline for your final report will be **June 30, 2017**, meaning your experiment should take place some time between now and next spring so you have time to analyze your results.

Report Requirements

- Brief description of your question, hypothesis, experiment, and measurements.** Give a brief overview of your small experiment. (300 words)
- What was the outcome of the experiment?** What was the outcome of your experiment? Was your hypothesis correct? (500 words max.)
- What did you learn?** What did you observe through your experiment? How do the results change your hypothesis, assumptions, or questions? What might your next steps be? (500 words max.)
- Updated budget.** Provide an updated project budget with actuals. (upload max. 2MB)
- Updated timeline.** Provide your actual timeline. (upload max. 2MB)
- Support material.** Upload any material which demonstrates the experiment, outcomes, measurements, and/or learnings. You may include up to three attachments with a maximum of 2MB each. Provide short descriptions of each attachment in the fields provided. Acceptable file formats are PDF, JPG, DOC, DOCX, XLS and XLSX. For audio and video materials, please enter a YouTube or Vimeo link with specific instructions on which sections to view.

Contact Information

Contact the Community Investment Team at grants@calgaryartsdevelopment.com or 403.476.2031 if you have any questions about the program.