

Calgary Arts Development Group Agreements

This document has been updated as of March 1, 2023

What are group agreements?

The group agreements are intended to create an accountable space for Calgary Arts Development's community discussions and interactions. These discussions can range from assessment meetings, town halls, and interactions between applicants and staff. Through the group agreements, space is created for everyone to come to an understanding of the group dynamics and shared accountabilities, and to acknowledge that these agreements apply to everyone in the space; staff, assessors, applicants, presenters, interpreters, etc.

1. We commit to creating a safe space for everyone by:
 - Respecting each person regardless of how they identify, including their gender, sexuality, age, class, religion, beliefs, nation, physical, neurological, cognitive and Mad identities, etc.
 - Sharing language that respects everyone. In the spirit of collaboration, we will listen if someone has alternative language to share, and offer alternatives to ableist, ageist, audist, classist, homophobic, transphobic, racist, and sexist language.
 - Speaking from our own perspective and avoiding making generalized claims or assumptions about others' identities.
 - Not interrupting others.
 - Being mindful of how much time and space we each take up in discussions.
 - Making time and space for others to speak.
 - Using "I" statements ("I feel," "I think," "I wonder," etc.)
 - Replacing criticism with questions and encouragement.
 - Respecting those who wish to listen silently.
 - Recognizing that vulnerable interactions can occur, and creating space to acknowledge and discuss hurt or offense if it does.
2. We will respect all art forms, traditional, contemporary or other.
3. We will consider what the criteria mean for each applicant based on:
 - How they define their own practice.
 - What is appropriate within their artistic discipline.
 - Their stage of career, practice, experience, and expertise in their form.
 - A respect for the unique traditions and rights of different First Nations, Métis and Inuit nations and communities.

4. We will try to focus every conversation on what we appreciate about every project or activity.
5. We will remember that this is not a panel of experts:
 - We will honour the knowledge and experience others share.
 - We will not impose arbitrary standards or ideas on an applicant or their project or activity that are not appropriate to the specific context.
 - We will acknowledge the experiences and values that may make each of us biased.
 - We will allow others to help us check in with our biases in a respectful and productive way.
 - We acknowledge that we are all learning and may be at different places on our journeys. We will be patient with ourselves and others as we remain open to continued learning.
6. We will respect the confidentiality of applicants and assessment committees. What applicants and assessors choose to share about their identities, ideas and experiences will remain confidential, but we will take what we learn into our work and communities.