



Arts and Culture Microgrant 2026 Guidelines

A thriving arts and culture scene makes Calgary a more livable city by strengthening the local economy, enriching cultural diversity, supporting well-being, and creating social connections for all individuals.

The Arts and Culture Microgrant supports **new arts and culture initiatives and programming** led by eligible community organizations that celebrate arts and culture and help activate communities in Calgary. The microgrant also supports recurring initiatives that introduce at least one new and significant programming element.

Examples of possible initiatives include, but are not limited to, a music festival, cultural cooking workshop, drumming workshop, artisan market, temporary interactive artwork or installation, shared makerspace, theatre production, light show, cultural film screening, or art exhibition showcasing local artists.

Initiatives should include the following **five core elements**:

New and Creative

- Initiatives must be **new projects** or, if an initiative is already established, it needs to introduce **at least one new and significant programming element** that aligns with the grant’s purpose. The focus of the grant is supporting work that brings something fresh to Calgary’s arts and culture community, whether through entirely new initiatives or meaningful additions to existing ones.

Cultural Learning & Art Appreciation

- Initiatives should create opportunities for people to **learn about culture or engage with art**. Projects may focus on cultural learning, artistic practice, or a combination of both. The aim is to foster deeper understanding, appreciation, and dialogue - whether through exploring diverse cultural traditions, experiencing creative expression, or bringing the two together.

Collaboration and Partnerships

- Initiatives should **include collaboration** between community-led organizations, local businesses, and creative professionals. Initiatives should build connections that strengthen Calgary’s cultural community, create shared opportunities, and amplify the impact of arts and culture initiatives through collective effort.

Accessibility and Participation

- Programs must be **open and welcoming to all Calgarians**, removing barriers to participation and ensuring broad community access.

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging

- Initiatives should actively **support equity-deserving groups and contribute to advancing diversity, inclusion, and belonging** across Calgary’s arts and culture sector, while encouraging approaches that deepen understanding and build meaningful connections with Indigenous communities, guided by the principles of Truth and Reconciliation.

The Arts and Culture Microgrant supports initiatives that promote respect and dignity of all people regardless of race, culture, national or ethnic origin, religion, education, age, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or socio-economic status. **It cannot be used to fund** political initiatives, rallies, protests, proselytizing, fundraising, annual general meetings, potlucks, banquets, or events that take place in private residences.

Funding tiers

The Arts and Culture Microgrant will offer a total of \$1 million in funding, divided between two funding tiers, over three intake periods. Applicants should apply for the tier that aligns with their initiative timeline and budget.

Tier 1 (up to \$5,000 per application)	Tier 2 (up to \$30,000 per application)
The grant will cover up to 100% of eligible expenses	The grant will cover up to 50% of project expenses (matching grant)
Intake opens January 2026 and ends when the funding is fully allocated	Intake 1 - Apply by March 4, 2026 Activities must begin between June 1 and November 30, 2026
Activities must be completed by December 31, 2026	Intake 2 - Apply by September 2, 2026 Activities must begin between December 1, 2026 and May 31, 2027
Apply a minimum of 30 days before your initiative start date	\$330,000 available for each intake in Tier 2 funding pool (total of \$660,000 for 2026)
\$340,000 available in Tier 1 funding pool for 2026	Limit of one grant per initiative. Organizations may submit applications for multiple initiatives
Limit of one grant per organization , per year	

Eligibility requirements

Applications **must meet all eligibility requirements**. This is mandatory to be considered for funding.

Eligible organizations **MUST:**

- Be one of the following:
 - Registered non-profit (can be registered provincially or federally)
 - Registered charity
 - Community Association ([click here for more information](#))
 - Business Improvement Area ([click here for more information](#))
- Be in good standing with The City of Calgary, with no outstanding reports or payments.
- Not receive funding via [Festival and Events Subsidy Program \(FESP\)](#), Festival and Events Subsidy Program Operations Assistance Fund (FESP-OAF), or [Downtown in Motion](#) for the same initiative.
- Play an active role in the initiative (cannot apply on behalf of another organization without playing an active role in the project).

Eligible initiatives **MUST:**

- Incorporate **all five core elements** outlined on page one of the guidelines.
- Start and end within the activity window specified for the tier and intake you're applying for.
- Occur within the geographic boundaries of the city of Calgary.
- Provide meaningful benefit to the Calgary community.

Eligible applications MUST:

- Include responses to every question in the application form.
- Be submitted before 11:59 p.m. MT on the application deadline day.
- Be signed by the grant writer.

Eligible expenses

Funding may be applied to costs that **directly support the delivery** of your initiative. Examples include:

- Honorariums and fees for artists, performers.
 - **Note:** We champion the use of industry standard minimum fees for artists, for example:
 - [CARFAC-RAAV Minimum Recommended Fee Schedule](#)
 - [Dance · Opera · Theatre Policy](#)
- Wages for contractors, technicians, and workers who are not employees or key volunteers for the organization (e.g. staff, board members, etc.), even if the contracts are distinct from their ongoing role.
- Initiative-specific venue costs, such as venue rental fees, utilities, and event cancellation insurance.
- Production and technical expenses.
- Marketing and communication expenses
- Initiative-specific equipment rentals, materials, and supplies (including transportation of these items).
- Tobacco products and accessories used for Elder offerings and Truth and Reconciliation activities.
- Training and support for volunteers.
- Development and implementation of health, safety, and accessibility plans.
- Permitting fees and other expenses for City services (i.e., parks permit, road closure permit).
- Other expenses and supplies that the Arts and Culture Division deems reasonable and necessary.

Ineligible expenses

This microgrant **does not extend to ongoing operational or capital costs**. The following expenses are not eligible:

- Office and administration fees, including office supplies, bookkeeping, postage, etc.
- Overhead costs such as utilities, rent, mortgage, etc.
- Travel, accommodation, and meal allowances
- Payments to the applicant organization, its directors, staff, their family members, or businesses they own.
- Compensation for grant writers and reporter writers
- Capital investments (i.e., building permanent infrastructure, construction, renovations, repairs, or the acquisition of significant equipment such as computers, video recorders, or power tools).
- Expenses incurred prior to approval of the application.
- Expenses that are not directly relevant to the initiative being applied for.
- Expenses that are already covered by other funding sources.
- Prize monies, trophies, or medals.
- Fundraising activities, donations, contingency funds, or repayment of deficits or debts.
- Commercial activities.
- Alcohol or cannabis.
- Expenses and supplies deemed unreasonable and unnecessary by the Arts & Culture Division.

Reviewing your application

Consideration for funding will be based on your application's alignment **with all five of the core elements**, and your demonstrated ability to carry out the initiative. We may contact you during the review stage if we have questions about your application.

Tier 1 applications are reviewed on an ongoing basis. You will be notified of a decision within four weeks from when we received your application. Applications received after the funding pool has been fully allocated will not be reviewed.

Tier 2 applications are independently reviewed and scored by a committee. Late applications will not be accepted, nor reviewed. Funding will be awarded to applications with the highest scores until all available funds are distributed. You will be notified of a decision within 60 calendar days from the application deadline. The decision is final.

Reporting back to us

Arts and Culture Microgrant recipients will be asked to share their success by providing a **final report within 60 days after the initiative is completed**. This is mandatory for all grant recipients. The reporting template will be provided upon grant approval. We may visit your initiative and provide feedback for future funding eligibility.

Acknowledgement of The City of Calgary as a funder

We ask that recipients acknowledge The City of Calgary as a funder by including our logo on/in any related digital or print advertising, promotional materials, and public communication. The City of Calgary will publish a list of Arts and Culture Microgrant recipients and the funding amount awarded.

How to apply

- Complete the Arts and Culture Microgrant application form.
- Email the completed application form to microgrants@calgary.ca with the subject line **"AC26 – [Insert Your Initiative Title]"** prior to the deadline.

If you need additional support to complete your application, email microgrants@calgary.ca.

Questions?

Email microgrants@calgary.ca or view our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) section on our website.