

Support - Operate

Grant Application Guidelines

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Grant details

The **Support - Operate** program invests in the ongoing activities of arts and cultural organizations. Funding through this program supports operating costs and the delivery of impactful arts and cultural programming and services.

Important dates

Application deadline: January 25, 2026

Notification of results: May 2026

Grant amount

This is an application to receive funding for three fiscal years (2026-2027, 2027-2028, and 2028-2029). You can determine the maximum grant you can request for your organization by looking at the table below and your most recently completed financial statements.

Notes:

- Grant amounts from previous years are not guaranteed.
- MAC will not award a grant lower than \$20,000 per fiscal year.

Annual revenue (from all sources)	Maximum grant you can request
Equal or greater than \$50,000 and less than \$125,000	up to 40% of your annual revenue or \$37,500 (whichever is less)
Equal or greater than \$125,000 and less than \$500,000	up to 30% of your annual revenue or \$125,000 (whichever is less)
Equal or greater than \$500,000 and less than \$5 million	up to 25% of your annual revenue or \$750,000 (whichever is less)
Equal or greater than \$5 million	Up to 15% of your annual revenues

Eligibility criteria

The Support-Operate grant is available to the following organization types:

- Professional not-for-profit arts organizations
- Professional arts service organizations
- Community not-for-profit organizations
- Book and periodical publishers

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Eligibility criteria (continued)

Your organization must meet all the following criteria:

- Has arts or culture as the primary focus of its mandate
- Has reported annual revenues of at least \$50,000, not including in-kind revenues, for one of the past three years
- Has paid staff in a leadership role (or is planning to have within the next three years)
- Has the ability to report financial and statistical information in the Canadian Arts Database/Données sur les arts au Canada (CADAC)
- Pays professional fees to Manitoba artists and arts/cultural professionals
- Has the ability to plan programming/activities three years in advance

In addition to the criteria above, **Book & Periodical Publishers** must:

- Primarily publish literary genres (including novels, poetry, short fiction, creative non-fiction, graphic novels, art criticism)
- Primarily publish titles written by people other than shareholders or staff

In addition to the criteria above, **First-time applicants** to the Support – Operate grant must:

- Have received a minimum of two MAC project grants since 2020 (excluding the Arts and Cultural Sustainability Fund, Support – Looking Forward, Support – Strengthen and Recognize – Prizes nominations)

First time applicants

This year, MAC is welcoming applications from organizations that are not currently receiving a Support – Operate grant. New applicants must meet the eligibility criteria listed above.

Ineligible organizations

The following organizations are ineligible to apply for the Manitoba Arts Council's Support – Operate grant:

- Museums and Heritage groups
- Libraries
- Organizations, affiliated with large institutions, that are not financially, curatorially, and artistically independent
- Municipalities and sub-committees of municipalities
- Charitable Foundations
- Organizations that directly or indirectly receive ongoing funding from the Department of Sport, Culture, Heritage and Tourism

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Applicant category

MAC recognizes four distinct categories of organizations in its Support-Operate program: **Community Building, Education and Training, Presenting and Publishing, and Sector Building.**

Each organization category has a tailored application form with assessment questions reflecting the category's characteristics.

You will have the opportunity to address all of the work of your organization, no matter which applicant type you choose. MAC does not prioritize any category above any other.

You can change your category at any time before you submit the application.

Caution! Going back and forth between categories may result in lost information.

MAC recommends that you determine your applicant category before you start writing your application.

Categories:

Community building	Your organization is embedded in community , whether defined by a geographical area or by a collective experience. You play an essential role in the health and well-being of your community by giving people the opportunity to take an active part in shared artistic and cultural expressions.
Education and training	Your organization focuses on students in arts and culture, developing skills for lifelong learners, and aspiring professional artists. You offer rigorous training in one or more disciplines, based on a curriculum taught by qualified instructors.
Presenting and publishing	Your organization inspires and provokes Manitoban audiences . You take risks by presenting or publishing innovative, relevant, and high-calibre artistic work that pushes boundaries. You invest in professional Manitoban artists and the creation of new artistic work that moves the art form forward.
Sector building	Your organization focuses on its members by building and strengthening arts and culture at the sector level. You represent and support a specific discipline or stakeholder group within the arts and culture sector and provide resources and advocacy for your members.

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Financial and statistical reporting

For Support – Operate grants, MAC uses a national online database to collect financial and statistical information. This database is called Canadian Arts Database/Données sur les arts au Canada or CADAC for short. As part of the application, you must submit your organizations' financial and statistical data through CADAC.

For first-time applicants

You cannot create your account in CADAC without first contacting MAC's Help Desk. MAC will provide you with instructions on how to access your new account. Keep in mind that it may take a few days to gain access.

More about CADAC

CADAC is a joint effort of arts funders across the country and is dedicated to the collection, dissemination, and analysis of financial and statistical information about Canadian arts organizations. CADAC provides data that helps demonstrate the value and reach of public funding of the arts. Your participation in CADAC allows MAC to report on the health of Manitoba organizations and the impact of the arts in our communities. You will also have access to your own historical data and reports on your own organization and comparative reports to all similar organizations in the database.

Visit cadac.ca to learn more.

Assessment criteria

Applications to the Support – Operate grant will be assessed by an external peer assessment committee based on the following criteria:

- Impact – the impact of your organization's programming
- Inclusion – your organization's work towards removing barriers to accessing arts and culture
- Operations – your organization's health in areas of management, governance, and finance

The assessment is weighted equally between the three areas.

Concerned Status Policy

MAC reserves the right to flag organizations for which Support – Operate funding may no longer be appropriate. These organizations are placed under a "Concerned" status. The Concerned Status Policy outlines how MAC identifies these organizations and the procedure used to resolve the issues or remove the organization from the program.

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Accessing other MAC grants

Organizations that receive Support – Operate grants have limited access to MAC's other grants. Support – Operate recipients can also apply to the following programs (additional eligibility criteria may apply):

- Share – Tour
- Recognize – Competitions
- Support – Strengthen
- Support – Looking Forward

Refer to each grant's eligibility criteria to learn more.

Looking for help?

Accessibility

If you are D/deaf or living with a disability, you can request extra funding to cover the costs of accessibility-related supports and services. Visit our [Accessibility webpage](#) for an application form or contact MAC's Help Desk to learn more.

Program Consultants

If you have any questions about the grant application, a Program Consultant can speak with you about your application and review your draft. Consultations are in high demand closer to the application deadline, so we suggest you [contact us](#) as soon as possible.

Help Desk

To get in touch with the appropriate Program Consultant, to get technical assistance with Manipogo (MAC's online application system), or to request [an offline application or accessibility assistance form](#), contact our Help Desk during our regular business hours (8:30-4:30, Monday to Friday).

Help Desk

Phone: 204-945-2237

Toll-Free: 1-866-994-2787

Email: helpdesk@artscouncil.mb.ca

Website: www.artscouncil.mb.ca

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Application contents

You must complete the following and submit your application by January 25, 2026.

1. Impact

Question	Question type
Fill out the Programming table with details of your programming/activities for all the years for this funding cycle.	Table
What do you hope to achieve with your programming?	Open text field (500 words max.)
Describe how your organization actively supports the work of Manitoba artists. <i>For example:</i> ○ <i>Paying artist fees and honorariums to Manitoba artists</i> ○ <i>Encouraging the creation of new work by Manitoba artists</i> ○ <i>Presenting work by Manitoba artists</i> ○ <i>Creating jobs for Manitoba artists</i>	Open text field (300 words max.)

1.1 Application questions for the **Community Building** category only

Question	Question type
Describe the community you serve.	Open text field (300 words max.)
In what ways is your organization connected to the community? <i>For example:</i> • <i>Do others seek you out as a partner?</i> • <i>How do you connect to other groups within or beyond your community?</i>	Open text field (250 words max.)

1.2 Application questions for the **Presenting and Publishing** category only

Question	Question type
Describe your audience.	Open text field (300 words max.)
What is your unique role in the arts and cultural ecosystem in Manitoba?	Open text field (250 words max.)

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1.3 Application questions for the **Education and Training** category only

Question	Question type
Describe your student body. <i>For example:</i> • <i>How many students do you teach?</i> • <i>What is the age range of your student body?</i> • <i>What proportion of students are new versus returning students?</i> • <i>What level are they training at? Pre-professional and/or professional, recreational, etc.</i>	Open text field (300 words max.)
What processes do you use to evaluate the students?	Open text field (200 words max.)
Describe your instructors. What credentials do you require of them?	Open text field (200 words max.)

1.4 Application questions for the **Sector Building** category only

Question	Question type
Describe your members.	Open text field (300 words max.)
In what ways are you connected to your peers in the sector on a local, provincial, and national level? <i>How does your programming respond to the changes of your arts/cultural sector?</i>	Open text field (250 words max.)

2. Inclusion

The Manitoba Arts Council believes in the importance of arts and culture for the benefit of all Manitobans. We strive for funding, programs, and policies that are equitable for all.

Organizations that receive Support – Operate funding are expected to lead by example in the areas of:

- truth and reconciliation
- accessibility
- equity

Describe how your organization is making progress in at least some of these areas. Bear in mind the size and scope of your organization.

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Question	Question type
Is your organization implementing tangible actions in the area of truth and reconciliation within this funding cycle?	Check box
<i>If yes: What work is your organization undertaking?</i>	Open text field (300 words max.)
Is your organization implementing tangible actions in the area of accessibility within this funding cycle?	Check box
<i>If yes: What work is your organization undertaking?</i>	Open text field (300 words max.)
Is your organization implementing tangible actions in the area of equity within this funding cycle?	Check box
<i>If yes: What work is your organization undertaking?</i>	Open text field (300 words max.)

3. Operations

3.1 Leadership

Question	Question type
Do you have paid staff?	Check box
<i>If yes: Describe your leadership. Include any changes you anticipate in your leadership within this funding cycle.</i>	Open text field (250 words max.)
<i>If yes: Fill out the Leadership table. If you have more than one person in leadership, describe them all.</i>	Table
<i>If no: Describe your three-year plan to bring on paid leadership.</i>	Open text field (250 words max.)
Fill out the Board of directors table with details on each person on your board. Keep responses brief.	Table

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3.2 Strategic Plan

Question	Question type
Does your organization have a current strategic plan?	Check box
<i>If yes:</i> Upload a copy of your current strategic plan.	Upload field
<i>If no:</i> Describe your organization's goals for the next three to five years. How do you plan to achieve those goals?	Open text field (300 words max.)

3.3 Health and safety

Question	Question type
How does your organization ensure a supportive, safe and respectful environment for board members, staff, contractors, artists, volunteers, audiences, and students.	Open text field (200 words max.)
Does your organization work with children, youth or <u>adults living with an intellectual disability</u> ?	Check box
<i>If yes:</i> How does your organization ensure a supportive, safe and respectful environment for them?	Open text field (200 words max.)

3.4 Facilities

Question	Question type
Tell us about the building/facilities where your organization carries out its work. <i>What benefits or challenges does your building/facilities bring to your organization?</i>	Open text field (150 words max.)
Do you own your facility/building?	Check box

3.5 Environment

Question	Question type
Is your organization implementing tangible actions in the area of environmental sustainability within this funding cycle?	Check box
<i>If yes:</i> What work are you doing in this area?	Open text field (200 words max.)

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3.6 Finances

3.6.1 Financial and statistical reporting in CADAC

For this application, you'll need to complete the following in CADAC:

- **Financial form** for 2023-2024 *plus* upload your **financial statements*** for that year
- **Financial form** for 2024-2025 *plus* upload your **financial statements*** for that year (if available)
- **Projected budget** for 2025-2026 (current year)
- **Projected budget** for 2026-2027 (grant request year 1)
- **Projected budget** for 2027-2028 (grant request year 2)
- **Projected budget** for 2028-2029 (grant request year 3)

You will also need to complete the following in CADAC:

- Enter your organization's **actual statistical information** for 2023-2024 and 2024-2025

*Financial statements

The financial statements we require are based on the size of each organization's current Support – Operate grant.

Grant amount	Document to provide:
\$35,000 or less:	Internally prepared statements, a review engagement, or audited statements
Between \$35,001 and \$100,000:	A review engagement or audited statements
\$100,001 or more:	Audited statements

For first-time applicants:

First time applicants may provide any available financial statements. However, you'll be required to comply with the requirement above for year 2 and 3 of this funding cycle.

3.6.2 Requested grant amount

Question	Question type
Enter the grant amount you are requesting for a single year. Example: If you wish to receive \$50,000 annually for the next three years for a total of \$150,000 over the multi-year funding cycle, enter \$50,000.	Number field

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3.6.2 Financial situation

Question	Question type
Is there anything you would like to say about your financial situation that provides further context to the information in your CADAC forms?	Open text field (200 words max.)

3.6.3 Surplus or deficit

Question	Question type
Does your organization have an accumulated surplus of 25% or more of its annual revenue?	Check box
<i>If yes:</i> Why do you have a surplus and how do you plan to use it?	Open text field (200 words max.)
Does your organization have a deficit of 15% or more of its annual revenue?	Check box
<i>If yes:</i> Why do you have a deficit and what is your plan to reduce it?	Open text field (200 words max.)

4. Support Material

Support material is visual and/or audio examples of artistic work.

This is your opportunity to provide high quality samples of the work you've described in this application.

Here are a few examples of what you can include:

- images of productions or exhibitions
- audio or video recordings
- written material
- photos of workshops, classes, or gatherings
- photos of your facilities being used

Submit a minimum of one, and up to a maximum of three items of support material.

The following count as one item:



up to 5 digital images **OR**



up to 15 pages of text **OR**

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up to 4 minutes of audio or video

For instance, your three items can be a total of 15 images, or 45 pages of text, or 12 minutes of audio/video. But you can also submit a combination of images, text, and recordings, as long as it falls within the limits.

For audio/video files, you may also enter a link toward vimeo, youtube, soundcloud or bandcamp.

For further details, see [support material requirements](#).

Book and periodical publishers

If you are a book or periodical publisher, you may opt to send physical copies of your publications.

Question	Question type
Support material files	Upload filed
Support material details	Table
Describe how the support material relates to this application.	Open text field (500 words max.)

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Assessment Rubric

When reviewing your application, the assessors will rank each statement on a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being the highest. The assessors will not rank you on the questions that do not apply to your organization.

Programming Impact (for all categories)

- The programming reflects the artistic/cultural vision and mandate of the organization.
- The organization actively supports the work of Manitoba artists.
- The organization has achievable goals for its programming, and it is relevant to its audience.
- The support material aligns with the organization's written description of its programming.

Assessment statements that apply to the **Presenting & Publishing** category only

- The organization can clearly articulate who their audience is.
- The organization's role in the arts and cultural ecosystem in Manitoba is unique.

Assessment statements that apply to the **Community Building** category only

- The organization can clearly articulate who their community is.
- The organization is connected to their community.

Assessment statements that apply to the **Sector Building** category only

- The organization can clearly articulate who their members are.
- The organization is connected to their peers in the sector at the local, provincial, and/or national level.

Assessment statements that apply to the **Education & Training** category only

- The organization can clearly articulate who their student body is.
- The organization uses an effective process to evaluate the students.
- The instructors have the necessary credentials to deliver the curriculum.

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Inclusion

- The organization is undertaking work in the following area(s) and is committed to their goals:
 - truth and reconciliation
 - accessibility
 - equity
- Overall, the organization demonstrates a strong commitment to inclusion.

Operations

- The leadership has appropriate skills and experience for the size and scope of the organization.
- The organization has a realistic plan to bring on paid leadership in the next three years.
- The board has appropriate skills and experience for the size and scope of the organization.
- The organization has clear goals and realistic plans to achieve them.

Health and safety

- The organization provides a supportive, safe, and respectful environment for board members, staff, contractors, artists, volunteers, audiences, and students.
- The organization provides a supportive, safe, and respectful environment for children, youth, and adults living with an intellectual disability.

Building/Facilities

- The organization has a clear understanding of the benefits and challenges of their building/facilities.

Environmental sustainability

- The organization is undertaking work in the area of environmental sustainability and is committed to their goals.

Financial information

- The organization's financial information does not cause concern.
- The organization has a realistic plan to spend their surplus.
- The organization has a realistic plan to reduce their deficit.
- The organization's budget aligns with their vision and mandate.