



Annual Arts Grants Guidelines 2025

Key dates

Applications open	15 May 2024
Applications close	11:59pm 23 June 2024
Notification to applicants	September 2024

The City of Melbourne respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land we govern, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong / Boon Wurrung peoples of the Kulin and pays respect to their Elders past and present. We acknowledge and honour the unbroken spiritual, cultural and political connection they have maintained to this unique place for more than 2000 generations.

We accept the invitation in the Uluru Statement from the Heart and are committed to walking together to build a better future.

1. Introduction

Council's vision is to consolidate Melbourne's strengths as a creative city: a place that inspires experimentation, innovation and creativity. The City of Melbourne [Council Plan 2021-25](https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/about-council/vision-goals/Pages/council-plan.aspx)¹ establishes a framework for this vision, guided by the values of integrity, courage, accountability, respect and excellence.

We embrace the transformative role that the arts and creativity plays in building all aspects of the city. Our [Creative Strategy 2018-28](https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/arts-and-culture/strategies-support/pages/draft-creative-strategy-2018-28.aspx)² places creativity and artists at the heart of our work and drives our [Creative Funding Framework 2024-30](https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/arts-and-culture/strategies-support/Pages/creative-funding-framework.aspx)³.

2. Funding categories

Funding category	Funding available	Who can apply and key information
Arts projects	Up to \$20,000	Artists and small to medium arts organisations for the creation and presentation of projects to the public
Arts residency: Boyd Studio-1	\$5,000 plus studio space in-kind	Artists and small to medium arts organisations Two residencies of six months duration: 13 January to 30 June and 4 July to 15 December 2025
Writing residencies: Boyd Garret Libraries	\$5,000 plus studio space in-kind	Writers in any genre Boyd Garret: one residency of 12 months duration: 13 January to 15 December 2025 Libraries: two residencies of three months duration (dates and library location to be negotiated)
Arts residency: Art and Heritage Collection	\$5,000 plus access to and time spent in residence with the Collection.	Individual artists One residency of up to 12 months duration including up to 10 days in residence with the Collection at Melbourne Town Hall (dates to be negotiated)

Aboriginal artists please also note that applications for [Aboriginal Arts Project grants](https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/arts-and-culture/strategies-support/funding/Pages/aboriginal-arts-projects.aspx)⁴ open on 1 August 2024 for activities taking place in 2025.

3. General eligibility

Applicants must:

- be an artist or small to medium arts organisation
- submit only one application
- complete the proposed project or residency between 1 January and 31 December 2025
- comply with the City of Melbourne municipal [boundary](https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/about-melbourne/melbourne-profile/Pages/City-maps.aspx)⁵ requirements
- comply with additional grant category eligibility and terms and conditions
- have no overdue acquittals for City of Melbourne grants
- have no debts to the City of Melbourne

¹ <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/about-council/vision-goals/Pages/council-plan.aspx>

² <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/arts-and-culture/strategies-support/pages/draft-creative-strategy-2018-28.aspx>

³ <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/arts-and-culture/strategies-support/Pages/creative-funding-framework.aspx>

⁴ <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/arts-and-culture/strategies-support/funding/Pages/aboriginal-arts-projects.aspx>

⁵ <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/about-melbourne/melbourne-profile/Pages/City-maps.aspx>

4. Ineligibility

The program does not support:

- Projects currently supported by another City of Melbourne funding program.
- Multiple applicants submitting for the same project.
- Organisations funded through our Multi-year grant program.
- Projects that are curated and presented by other Council programs including Arts House, ArtPlay and Signal.
- Professional development including attendance or speaking at conferences.
- Permanent works and murals in outdoor spaces including on private and public buildings.
- Podcast content that is not arts specific.
- Commercially focused projects where the priority is making work to sell at retail.
- Ongoing classes and workshops.
- Courses, education programs or activities that are required for an accredited course of study.
- Activities that have a primary focus on fundraising.
- Competitions, prizes or awards.
- Applications made by political organisations or activities that have a party political purpose.
- Government departments or agencies, foundations or grant making bodies, education institutions.
- Activities owned by the City of Melbourne and applications from Council employees including contractors.
- Applicants or activities that denigrate, exclude or offend parts of the community or that breach Commonwealth and State anti-vilification laws.

5. Support material

Artistic support material is an important part of an application and assists the assessment panel in understanding your project and creative practice. Applicants are encouraged to submit quality support material that strengthens the project proposal.

Support material you must include:

- artistic CV summaries for key artists
- examples of current, past or proposed works
- tentative booking quote or communication with a venue manager or relevant staff (excludes online projects and residencies)

Optional support material include:

- project timeline
- peer/industry support letter

6. How to apply

- Watch the grants briefing presentation and the applicant top tips video on our [website](#)⁶.
- Go to the [FAQs](#)⁶ for answers to frequently asked questions
- Apply via our website and submit one application by **11:59pm Sunday 23 June 2024**. Late applications are not accepted.

⁶ <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/arts-and-culture/strategies-support/funding/arts-grants/Pages/arts-grants.aspx>

7. Need help with your application?

- Phone 03 9658 9658 (Monday- Friday 9am to 5pm)
- Email artsgrants@melbourne.vic.gov.au

If you need an accessible application format such as audio or video, please get in touch with us.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait artists and organisations

Contact Laura Johnston for application support on 0411 776 324 (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9am–5pm) or email at laura.johnston@melbourne.vic.gov.au

d/Deaf, disabled, neurodiverse and chronically ill artists

Contact Will Box for application support on 0481 099 439 (Monday to Friday 9am–5pm) via the National Relay Service 133 677 or by email at will.box@melbourne.vic.gov.au

For auspicing services contact [Arts Access Victoria](https://www.artsaccess.com.au)⁷ on 03 9699 8299 or email grants@artsaccess.com.au

Artists from multicultural communities

Contact Laura Johnston for application support on 0411 776 324 (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9am–5pm) or email at laura.johnston@melbourne.vic.gov.au

For auspicing services contact [Multicultural Arts Victoria](https://www.mav.org.au)⁸. Email miriam@mav.org.au

Our multilingual information telephone services offers assistance to people from a non-English speaking background. Visit [interpreting services](https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/community/health-support-services/multicultural-services/Pages/translation-services.aspx)⁹ for information in different languages.

Technical assistance

Refer to the SmartyGrants [Help Guide](https://www.smartygrants.com.au/help-guide-for-applicants/)¹⁰ or contact the support desk 9am - 5pm Monday to Friday on 03 9320 6888 or email service@smartygrants.com.au

8. Assessment process

- Applications are assessed as submitted by an [external arts panel](https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/about-council/governance-transparency/Pages/grants-and-sponsorships.aspx)¹¹.
- Applications are treated as confidential and contents are not disclosed outside the assessment process. A summary of your proposal may be used in reports to Council.
- The City of Melbourne reserves the right to reject any application that is ineligible or does not meet the criteria and has the right to request further information.
- Canvassing or lobbying in relation to an application is prohibited. No consideration will be given to an applicant who attempts to influence the Lord Mayor, Councillors, employees or assessors.
- Assessment panels may recommend part funding.
- Assessment recommendations are considered and determined by Council. All decisions are final and there will be no review or appeal process.
- Unsuccessful applicants may apply to other funding programs.

⁷ <https://www.artsaccess.com.au/>

⁸ <https://mav.org.au/>

⁹ <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/community/health-support-services/multicultural-services/Pages/translation-services.aspx>

¹⁰ <https://applicanthelp.smartygrants.com.au/help-guide-for-applicants/>

¹¹ <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/about-council/governance-transparency/Pages/grants-and-sponsorships.aspx>

9. Terms and conditions

- Grants may be considered taxable income by the Australian Taxation office and artists must determine their own taxation responsibilities.
- The City of Melbourne reserves the right to invite artists to apply.
- The list of successful applicants will be published on the City of Melbourne's website.
- Successful applicants must sign a funding agreement with City of Melbourne and comply with the grant obligations and acquittal requirements.
- Grant payments are subject to receipt of a tax invoice and any other information requested by City of Melbourne (for example a revised budget, project details and venue confirmation).
- The City of Melbourne will not be responsible for shortfalls in project budgets if the grant recipient is unable to meet project costs.

10. Other opportunities

The City of Melbourne offers a wide range of [opportunities](#)¹² to support artists and the broader Melbourne community to deliver a range of quality programs and activities. There are also specific opportunities through [Arts House](#)¹³, [Signal](#)¹⁴, [ArtPlay](#)¹⁵ and [Yirramboi Festival](#)¹⁶.

Stay up to date on the latest City of Melbourne opportunities by:

- Visiting our [website](#)¹²
- Following us on [social media](#)¹⁷
- Subscribing to our [e-newsletters](#)¹⁸

¹² <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/about-council/governance-transparency/Pages/grants-and-sponsorships.aspx>

¹³ <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/arts-and-culture/arts-house/Pages/arts-house.aspx>

¹⁴ <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/arts-and-culture/signal/Pages/signal.aspx>

¹⁵ <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/arts-and-culture/artplay/Pages/ArtPlay.aspx>

¹⁶ <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/arts-and-culture/aboriginal-torres-strait-islander-arts/Pages/yirramboi-first-nations-arts-festival.aspx>

¹⁷ <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/pages/social-media.aspx>

¹⁸ <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/news-and-media/pages/news-and-media.aspx>

11. Arts Projects category

The Arts Projects category supports artists and small to medium arts organisations. Applications are open to artists from all backgrounds and career stages working in any art form or practice.

Funding is available for the creation and public presentation of one-off projects or a specific part of an annual program in 2025 (either online or at a venue/location within the City of Melbourne boundaries). Examples of a public presentation could be, but not limited to, a performance, exhibition, installation and publication launch.

The focus of funding is on the presentation of project outcomes that contribute to increased audience access and the creative invigoration of Melbourne.

Funding available

Grants of up to \$20,000

Access Costs

Up to \$2,000 is available for access costs to help reduce barriers for d/Deaf, disabled, neurodiverse and chronically ill artists involved in the project. Access costs must specifically support artists to create and present the work (for example artist transport, support worker, carer, Auslan).

Eligibility for projects presented at a venue or outdoor space

- contact the arts grants team if your project will be presented in an outdoor space managed by the City of Melbourne (such as a park or laneway)
- projects in outdoor spaces must be temporary for up to a maximum of three months.

Eligibility for online projects

To be eligible for an online presentation, you must demonstrate a relationship to the City of Melbourne in one of the following ways:

- A permanent place of residence in the City of Melbourne boundaries.
- An ongoing creative practice based in the City of Melbourne boundaries (for example a studio).
- The project idea is about a specific part of the City of Melbourne. For example, an online publication of essays and poetry exploring cultural and family histories in the community of Kensington or an online exhibition of photographs depicting the physical and cultural environment of the Queen Victoria Markets.

Assessment criteria

Applicants must address all three criteria. The bullet points under each criteria indicate what assessors may consider when assessing your application. You do not need to respond to every bullet point listed.

Criteria 1: Creative excellence

- artistic and creative strength of the idea
- boldness and experimentation
- creative collaborations and partnerships

Criteria 2: Access, inclusion and equity

- embrace diversity of career stages, abilities, backgrounds, cultures, ages, genders and sexualities
- appeal to new or underrepresented audiences
- low cost or free to the public
- occur in new or unexpected places or at different times of the day or night
- different ways in which people can participate in and experience the arts

Criteria 3: Viability

- achievable timeline
- realistic budget, including artist fees
- key artists are identified
- relevant high quality support material
- evidence of appropriate cultural permissions for the use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stories or content that is not your own

Budget

Applicants are required to provide a realistic budget using the template provided in the application form.

Income

Include all sources of income you will need to make the project happen (confirmed and unconfirmed).

Examples of income include the City of Melbourne grant request, other grants or sponsorship, earned income such as ticket sales and in-kind support.

Project costs

The grant can be used to cover project costs such as artist fees, materials, production, venue and equipment hire, promotion and marketing, public liability insurance and access costs such as Auslan.

Grants cannot be used for:

- International travel and accommodation or touring.
- Capital works, facility maintenance and improvements.

Where can the project outcome take place?

Venues and outdoor spaces for project presentations must be located within the City of Melbourne Council boundaries. This does not include the broader Melbourne metropolitan area.

Our local government boundary encompasses Docklands, East Melbourne, Fishermans Bend, Jolimont, Kensington, North Melbourne, Melbourne's central business district, Parkville, South Wharf, West Melbourne and *parts of* Carlton, Carlton North, Flemington, Port Melbourne, South Yarra and Southbank.

If in doubt about the suburb boundaries, check our interactive [maps](#)¹⁹.

To find a suitable venue for your project presentation within the City of Melbourne boundaries visit [Creative Spaces](#)²⁰.

¹⁹ <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/about-melbourne/melbourne-profile/Pages/City-maps.aspx>

²⁰ <http://www.creativespaces.net.au>

For visual artists, affordable gallery spaces are available for hire at [City Library Gallery](#)²¹ and [Library at the Dock Gallery](#)²². Contact the gallery team at librarygallery@melbourne.vic.gov.au for more information.

Library at the Dock also has an affordable [performance space](#)²³.

Applicants are required to include venue costs in their budget and a tentative email booking quote or communication from the venue manager.

Outdoor spaces

Applicants proposing projects in outdoor spaces managed by the City of Melbourne may require a permit and must discuss their idea with the arts grants team prior to submitting an application.

Permits are not required as part of the application process, however applicants must demonstrate awareness of any requirements that may have approval or cost implications for the project budget. Go to [Event Planning Guide](#)²⁴ and [permits](#)²⁵ for more information. Successful applicants must obtain relevant approvals and permits before the grant is paid.

The City of Melbourne does not manage Federation Square, State Library forecourt, Arts Centre forecourt and the Royal Botanic Gardens. Applicants proposing the use of these spaces should contact them directly.

²¹ <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/community/libraries/bookable-spaces/Pages/city-library-gallery.aspx>

²² <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/community/libraries/bookable-spaces/Pages/library-at-the-dock-gallery.aspx>

²³ <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/community/hubs-bookable-spaces/the-dock/library-at-the-dock/Pages/performance-space.aspx>

²⁴ <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/community/organising-events/Pages/event-planning-guide.aspx>

²⁵ <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/pages/permits.aspx>

12. Art Residencies category

Art residencies provide studio spaces and facilities for artists and small to medium arts organisations to develop their creative practice. Applications that propose collaborations and partnerships are welcome.

Residencies available

- Boyd Studio-1
- Boyd Garret and Libraries (for writers)
- Art and Heritage Collection

Access Costs

Up to \$2,000 is available for access costs to help reduce barriers for d/Deaf, disabled, neurodiverse and chronically ill artists involved in the residency. Access costs must specifically support artists in the development of the work (for example artist transport, support worker, carer, Auslan).

Eligibility

In addition to the general eligibility, 2024 residency recipients are ineligible to apply.

Assessment criteria

Applicants must address all three criteria. The bullet points under each criteria indicate what assessors may consider when assessing your application. You do not need to respond to every bullet point listed.

Criteria 1: Creative excellence

- artistic and creative strength of the idea
- boldness and experimentation
- creative collaborations and partnerships

Criteria 2: Access, inclusion and equity

- embrace diversity of career stage, abilities, backgrounds, cultures, ages, genders and sexualities
- appeal to new or underrepresented audiences

Criteria 3: Viability

- achievable timeline
- key artists are identified
- relevant high quality support material
- evidence of appropriate cultural permissions for the use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stories or content that is not your own

Terms and conditions

Successful applicants must meet the Annual arts grants terms and conditions in addition to the following:

- provide their own \$20 million public liability insurance cover (not applicable for library residencies)
- include the City of Melbourne logo in any marketing associated with work developed during the residency

Intellectual property

Copyright of any works created during the course of the residency remains with the creator.

Boyd Studio-1

Boyd Community Hub is a City of Melbourne integrated community service space housing the Southbank Library, a cafe, family services, meeting rooms and artist studios including Boyd Studio-1.

Residency details

- Number of residencies available: Two
- Duration: six months per residency. Artists are required to be in residence for a minimum of three days per week during normal business hours.
- Artist fee payment: \$5,000
- Studio rent: There is no cost to successful applicants. Rent is valued at \$4,976
- Dates: 13 January to 30 June and 4 July to 15 December 2025

Site details

- Location: Studio-1, Boyd, 207 City Road, Southbank
- Art forms and studio limitations: the studio is not suited to art forms and practices that generate loud noise, use heavy machinery, extractor fans and open flames. There is no grease trap sink. Due to the heritage nature of the building, the studio is not suitable for suspension of equipment or artworks.
- Studio specifications: 57m2 with large windows, good natural light, wooden floors, high ceilings, sink and wireless internet connection.
- Access: Artists will have 24/7 swipe card access to Studio-1 and the Boyd building facilities

To view the Studio-1 space visit [Creative Spaces](#)²⁶.

Boyd Garret

Boyd Community Hub is a City of Melbourne integrated community service space housing the Southbank Library, a cafe, family services, meeting rooms and artist studios including Boyd Garret.

Residency details

Boyd Garret residency supports writers working in any field of creative writing including, but not limited to literature, poetry and scriptwriting.

- Number of residencies available: One
- Duration: 12 months. Artists are required to be in residence for a minimum of three days per week.
- Artist fee payment: \$5,000
- Studio rent: There is no cost to successful applicants. Rent is valued at \$4,326
- Dates: 13 January to 15 December 2025

Site details

- Location: Boyd Garret, 207 City Road, Southbank
- Studio specifications: 20m2 with large windows, good natural light, carpet, high ceilings
- Access: Artists will have 24/7 swipe card access to the garret and the Boyd building facilities. The garret is only accessible by a staircase.

To view the Garret studio space visit [Creative Spaces](#)²⁷.

Libraries

²⁶ <https://www.creativespaces.net.au/space/creative-spaces-arts-residency-boyd-studio-1>

²⁷ <https://www.creativespaces.net.au/space/boyd-garret>

City of Melbourne libraries are creative learning and community spaces. They are home to meeting and writing rooms, learning and training rooms with computer labs, recording studios, makerspaces, multi-purpose community rooms and performance spaces. View the spaces-via [bookable spaces](#)²⁸.

Residency details

The Libraries residency supports writers working in any field of creative writing. Writers will have an opportunity to use spaces and resources specific to their needs during the residency such as librarian research support. Visit [City of Melbourne library network](#)²⁹ for more information.

Applicants are required to describe how they intend to use library resources to support their writing practice.

- Number of residencies available: Two
- Duration: three months per residency (up to 3 days per week to be negotiated)
- Artist fee payment: \$5,000
- Room hire/rent: there is no cost to successful applicants
- Residency dates, library location/s and access: to be negotiated with the successful applicants
- Residency outcome: recipients will need to participate in one of the Libraries writing workshop groups to share their insights as a practicing writer.

Art and Heritage Collection

The [Art and Heritage Collection](#)³⁰ is the City of Melbourne's repository of artworks including both indoor and outdoor items. These range from historical mayoral portraits to contemporary art including works by Aboriginal and Torres Strait artists and permanent public artworks such as Vault. The City Gallery at Melbourne Town Hall is also part of the Collection program.

Residency overview

The Art and Heritage Collection residency provides a unique opportunity for artists in any art form to access and engage with the most extensive local government collection in Australia. This residency is for experienced artists who have worked independently for a number of years and can demonstrate how their practice would benefit and develop through re-interpreting the Collection.

The residency should be research focused from a creative perspective. Artists are discouraged from indicating pre-determined and specific outcomes in their application. Applicants will not have physical access to the Collection prior to submitting an application but are encouraged to view it online.

Residency details

- Number of residencies: One
- Duration: up to 12 months including a total of 10 days in residence with the Collection at Melbourne Town Hall (dates to be negotiated)
- Artist fee payment: \$5,000
- Location and Access: Artists will have access to the Art and Heritage Collection at Melbourne Town Hall and various outdoor sites within the municipality.

²⁸ <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/community/libraries/bookable-spaces/Pages/bookable-spaces.aspx>

²⁹ <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/community/libraries/locations/Pages/locations.aspx>

³⁰ <http://citycollection.melbourne.vic.gov.au/>