



Multi-year Arts Grants Guidelines 2025-2027

Key dates

Applications open	29 April 2024
Online briefing session Bookings¹ open from 29 April	4pm 9 May 2024
Applications close	11:59pm 2 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 Nation 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 <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/o/city-of-melbourne-10687547785>

1. Introduction

Council's vision is to consolidate Melbourne's strengths as a creative city: a place that inspires experimentation, innovation and creativity. We embrace the transformative role that the arts and creativity plays in building all aspects of the city. This is reinforced in our [Creative Strategy 2018-28²](#), which places creativity and artists at the heart of our work and drives our [Creative Funding Framework 2024-30³](#).

Council is committed to investing in multi-year funding to innovative arts organisations who can transform our city with bold confidence. Our principles for creative funding have been developed in response to wide sector consultation. These principles will guide decision making and the strategic choices we make about what is funded.

- We support artists and small to medium arts organisations.
- We build and strengthen relationships with Aboriginal artists and arts organisations.
- We prioritise challenging, creative ideas and ambition.
- We support creatives and projects that reflect the diversity of Melbourne.
- We encourage participation and activation of the arts within the municipality.
- We prioritise projects that contribute to the creative transformation of Melbourne.

2. Funding streams

Funding stream	Funding available	Key information
Multi-year Arts Grants 2025 - 2027	\$40,000 to \$330,000 annually	Call for proposals every 3 years Open to small, medium and large arts organisations presenting work to the public annually
Awards Grants 2025 - 2027	Up to \$25,000 annually	Call for proposals every 3 years Open to Victorian based arts organisations delivering an awards program in the municipality that recognises local artists

3. Assessment criteria

Applicants must address all three criteria and as many of the bullet points that are relevant to the proposal.

Criteria 1: Creative excellence

- challenging, creative ideas and ambition
- participation and activation within the municipality
- genuine engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- build partnerships and new connections between organisations, artists and art forms
- contribute to the creative transformation of Melbourne
- quality and ambition of artistic vision.

Criteria 2: Access, inclusion and equity

- embrace diversity of 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.

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>

Criteria 3: Governance and viability

- experience and capability of the people leading and governing your organisation
- business or strategic plan that covers some or all of the funding period
- how your business or strategic plan achieves your vision
- observance of cultural protocols (such as Traditional Owner engagement)
- financial viability of your organisation.

4. Application process

- Complete and submit your application via [SmartyGrants](#)⁴ by 11.59pm on 2 June 2024.
- Applications are assessed by a panel of external experts.
- Recommendations are presented to Council for approval.
- Applicants will be notified of the outcome in September 2024 subject to Council approval.

5. Eligibility

Applicants must:

- submit only one application
- propose activities that have public outcomes annually and are located within the City of Melbourne [municipality](#)⁵ during the term of the funding
- be a not-for-profit independent / non-government arts organisation
- have a registered Australian Business Number (ABN)
- have documented evidence of an appropriate legal structure and an Australian registered company, business cooperative or partnership
- have current public liability and professional indemnity insurance policies.

6. Ineligibility

The program does not support:

- applications from individual artists
- activities that do not involve or benefit practicing artists, arts workers or audiences
- activities taking place outside the municipality
- creative / artistic development
- activities that are currently funded by another City of Melbourne grant, sponsorship or expression of interest program
- core organizational / operational funding
- international travel and accommodation or touring
- auspiced organisations for grant requests of \$40,000 and over
- activities that have a primary focus on fundraising
- multiple organisations applying for the same activity
- State-owned agencies, organisations and institutions including educational institutions, foundations and grant making bodies
- arts and cultural organisations that are not legally constituted
- organisations that have an outstanding debt to the City of Melbourne or that have failed to comply with the terms and conditions of any previous funding agreement with City of Melbourne
- applications made by political organisations or activities that have a party political purpose
- activities that are owned by the City of Melbourne and applications from Council employees including contractors.

⁴ <https://melbourne.smartygrants.com.au/>

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

7. Additional information

- Canvassing or lobbying in relation to an application is prohibited. No consideration will be given to an applicant who intends to influence Councillors, the Lord Mayor, employees or assessors.
- Details of the [assessment panel members](#)⁶ will be published online post Council approval.
- Applications are treated as confidential and contents will not be disclosed outside the application and assessment process. A brief summary of your proposal may be used in reports to Council.
- The City of Melbourne will not correct errors in applications but reserves the right to request further information.
- Organisational performance will be considered as a part of the assessment process.
- The City of Melbourne has the right to reject any application that is ineligible.
- All decisions are final and there will be no review or appeal process.
- Successful applicants will enter into a funding agreement detailing the grant obligations including annual acquittals and establish annual performance measures.
- Unsuccessful applicants may be eligible to apply to other City of Melbourne [grants and sponsorship programs](#)⁷.

Contact us

- Email: artsgrants@melbourne.vic.gov.au
- Phone: Bronwyn Roper 0422 872 729 Monday to Friday or Candy Mitchell 0421 056 709 Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9am to 5pm, public holidays excluded
- Refer to the [FAQs](#)⁸ for answers to frequently asked questions

Interpreter and translation services

Our multilingual information telephone service provides access to [translators](#)⁹ and information in different languages.

Accessibility for d/Deaf, disabled applicants

d/Deaf, disabled applicants are encouraged to contact Council staff to discuss any specific needs or additional support that may be required to complete and submit an application. Phone Bronwyn Roper with inquiries on 0422 872 729.

If you are deaf, hearing-impaired or speech-impaired contact us via the National Relay Service on 133 677 (ask for 03 9658 9658).

Technical support

Refer to [SmartyGrants help guide](#)¹⁰ for technical assistance with submitting an application form.

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

⁷ <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/about-council/governance-transparency/Pages/grants-and-sponsorships.aspx>

⁸ <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/arts-and-culture/strategies-support/funding/pages/arts-creative-investment-partnerships.aspx>

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/>

The [SmartyGrants support desk](#)¹¹ is open 9am–5pm Monday to Friday on 03 9320 6888 or by email service@smartygrants.com.au.

¹¹ <https://www.smartygrants.com.au/sg/who/?menuId=7072>