

## **FUND GUIDELINES**

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# Catalyst and Transformation FUND

## **What is this program about?**

**The Catalyst and Transformation Fund (CAT)** is for Ontario-based arts organizations to investigate, plan, and implement **substantive change** in their operations.

This program provides funding to arts organizations to explore key questions, or challenges facing their organization in order to focus on rebuilding, restructuring, and reforming the way they work and operate. Arts organizations may be asking themselves questions about their continued viability, or how they need to adapt their structure or approach to operate into the future. They may be exploring or developing directions that diverge from previous or current operational practices. This program will support arts organizations through the process of exploring and identifying, and if applicable, implementing significant adaptations in their operations.

## **Who is eligible to apply?**

The program is open to **Ontario-based** incorporated non-profit arts and arts service organizations, including artist collectives\* operating on a non-profit basis that:

- ✓ Have been operating for more than 3 years
- ✓ Have total revenues of \$5 million or under
- ✓ Are based in Ontario

*\*An artist collective is defined as two or more artists working together under a group name, either on a single project or on an ongoing basis. For collectives of two artists, both must be Ontario residents. For collectives of more than two artists, the majority of members must Ontario residents.*

## **Can previous CAT Fund recipients apply?**

While previous CAT Fund recipients can apply, please note that priority will be given to organizations that have not previously received support from the CAT Fund. Previous applicants must also be applying for new and distinct phases of work or initiatives.

## **What kind of 'Substantive Change' initiatives qualify?**

- **Making shifts to new business models and organizational structures such as:**
  - Investigating and implementing new revenue generating models (e.g. social enterprise or diversifying methods of generating revenue)
    - *Example: Developing an art rental program for your gallery.*
  - Changing the way your organization is registered/incorporated.
    - *Example: applying for charitable status.*





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- **Forming strategic partnerships with other organizations** (both inside and outside of the sector) in order to transform the way you work together over the long-term (e.g. not as a one-off project-basis), for example:
  - To maximize resource sharing (materials, staff, etc.)
    - *Example: exploring contracting a shared Social Media Marketing staff to serve a group of three theatre organizations.*
  - Adopting a new shared space/venue model (e.g. for administration and/or performance/programming; note, the fund does not support capital upgrades, repairs, or equipment)
    - *Example: Developing a 'timeshare' model for an existing venue space for both administrative and programming purposes.*
- **Developing and/or implementing strategies and engaging expertise to transform capacity and/or explore new directions.** For example:
  - Exploring and/or addressing a significant transformation of activity(ies) to support the mission.
  - Exploring and/or addressing mission shift.
  - An assessment of organizational capacity and 'right-sizing' of the organization (e.g. through a process of restructuring to meet new or more realistic objectives and increase efficiency, like scaling activities or offerings).
    - *Example: A festival develops a new model to factor in flexible staffing and volunteer numbers from year to year/season to season depending on resources and capacity.*
- **Addressing organizational life cycle questions, including:**
  - Succession planning/implementation.
  - Exploring/implementing new leadership structures (e.g. co-leadership).
  - Exploring or starting to implement potential mergers.
  - Organizational wind-downs or corporate dissolution.

You can watch this playlist of previous CAT Fund recipients to learn more about their projects and the type of Explore and Implementation activities they worked on:

[The Catalytic Effect: Stories of Catalyst and Transformation](#)

## **When can a project happen?**

Projects must start between February 1, 2025 – April 30, 2025.

- **Exploration Projects** must be completed within 6 months of the project start date.
- **Implementation Projects** must be completed within 12 months of the project start date.





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You can apply for one project phase or both. If you are approved for both project phases, you will have up to 20 months to complete your combined Exploration and Implementation Project.

## *What kind of projects will be funded?*

**Exploration Projects:** Grants of up to \$15,000 for organizations to explore new directions and possibilities for their organizations. Funds can support experts (e.g. lawyers, accountants, HR experts) to help guide towards those changes.

**Implementation Projects:** Grants up to \$25,000 for organizations implementing change within the organization – Note: for previous CAT Fund recipients, this could be building on a previously funded Exploration project, or through other previously piloted project activities.

Applicants will be eligible to receive support for either or both of the above phases based on fund criteria. If applying for both project phases, there must be a direct correlation between the Exploration and Implementation projects being proposed, and an applicant must successfully complete and report on their Exploration Project before receiving Implementation Project funds. Specific reporting metrics and materials will be required for review and approval before funds can be authorized.

Applicants can apply directly to Exploration if they are just exploring an idea, or directly to Implementation if they are ready to implement a project idea.

## *The CAT Program will not fund:*

This fund does **not** support initiatives for:

- routine strategic planning (including building on existing/routine fundraising initiatives)
- Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility audits.
- the development and delivery of artistic programming or ongoing activities.
- capital building projects.

## *What costs are eligible?*

- Reasonable allocation for staff hours for the project.
- Professional fees for consultants, specialists, etc.
- Travel related to the project.
- Venue fees related to the project.
- Non-fixed equipment and software costs directly related to the project.
- Up to 15% for admin and overhead.





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## *What costs are ineligible?*

- Cost to hire new staff positions.
- Severance pay.
- Capital repairs, upgrades, or building costs.
- Contribution to endowment funds.
- Contributing to debt repayment or servicing.
- Costs incurred prior to the project start date and that extend past the project deadline for completion.

## *How do I apply?*

[CLICK HERE](#) to access and complete the application form.

Applications will be accepted from September 16, 2024, until November 8, 2024.

You can also download a copy of the application questions [from our webpage](#) in order to prepare your answers in advance.

## *How will my application be assessed?*

We understand the need for confidentiality, which is why the assessment and decision process is being done by Work in Culture's CAT Fund review committee. Organizations will have the option to request anonymity in their application process.

Work in Culture will have the final say on eligible expenses. Projects will be measured according to:

- **Organizational Goals:** The application explains how the proposed work will help the organization achieve a clear and impactful goal or learning objective.
- **Project Plan:** The organization has laid out a clear and reasonable plan for the project, including a timeline and budget, to achieve the project's identified goals.
- **Reasonable Budget:** The project budget is reasonable and appropriate for what the project aims to achieve.
- **Learning and Evaluation:** The organization has considered and outlined how they plan to learn from and assess the success of the project (if applicable).

Applicants should also be mindful of, and reflect on, how the advancement of inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility (IDEA) is an essential factor to the ongoing viability of their operations.





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## **When will I hear about submission results?**

Applicants will be notified about the results by the end of December 2024.

## **What is the reporting and acknowledgement process like?**

Final reporting will be managed by Work in Culture and deadlines will be set based on the project phase and project timeline. If your application is funded, you may be asked to participate in additional surveys, interviews, and/or focus groups to contribute to ongoing evaluation of this program.

Successful projects/organizations must acknowledge the Work in Culture Catalyst & Transformation Fund. Additionally, specific recipients may need to also acknowledge an individual funder from the funder group. Details will be provided in the funding agreement. If, due to the nature of your organization's project, you wish to remain anonymous to the funder group, please make a note in your application. (*e.g. organizations exploring closure may wish to have their organization name withheld from the funder group*).

## **How will funding be issued?**

Exploration Projects will receive their funding in two installments: after submission of a completed letter of agreement and pending successful completion of reporting requirements. Implementation recipients will receive their funding in three installments: after submission of a completed letter of agreement and pending successful completion of each reporting requirement. Applicants who apply for both Exploration and Implementation funding will only be eligible to receive their Implementation funding once their Exploration final report is received and approved.

## **Ready to apply? Consult this checklist:**

- Reviewed these program guidelines and assessment criteria.
- Attended an information session and/or watched the recording (**optional**)
- Scheduled a meeting with the fund administrator to confirm eligibility/project alignment (**if applicable/optional**)
- Gathered organization information and assessed eligibility, e.g.:
  - Incorporation or charitable registration number
  - Financial information: most recent signed financial statements
  - Governance approval (Board or governing body)
- Gathered project information and documentation, e.g.:
  - Project objectives
  - Learning and evaluation expectations
  - Project contributors (e.g. staff, professional services, partners)
  - Project plan(s) and timeline(s)





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- Project budget(s)
- For mergers and structured partnerships, proof of a collaborative agreement (e.g. letter of support)
- Other support materials if applicable (optional)

**You can find these Guidelines and other program information at:**

<https://workinculture.ca/programs/cat-fund/>

If you have any additional questions please be in touch with Stephanie Draker, Program Manager and CAT Fund Administrator, at [stephaniedraker@workinculture.ca](mailto:stephaniedraker@workinculture.ca).

