



Arts Grants Board

guidelines



Northern Territory Government
Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts

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NORTHERN TERRITORY ARTS GRANTS BOARD

GUIDELINES

The Northern Territory Arts Grants Board provides for sector involvement in decision making relating to Government arts grants, to ensure a more transparent, accountable and 'arms-length' process for the allocation of Arts Grants project funding.

The Board is appointed by the Minister for Arts and Museums for a three-year term.

The role of the Arts Grants Board is to assess project applications to the Arts Grants Program across all art forms and categories including the Regional Arts Fund (RAF) which is an Australian Government initiative managed and delivered in the Northern Territory through the Arts Grants Program.



Northern Territory Government

Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts



An Australian Government Initiative



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Arts Grants Board Guidelines

INTRODUCTION

The main objective for the Board in its assessment of applications is to support those proposals which demonstrate the greatest potential to enhance and develop the artistic and cultural life of the Northern Territory in line with Northern Territory Government policy priorities. Proposals may concern activities carried out by an individual, a group, or an organisation. Applications are assessed primarily on artistic merit.

While an application's artistic merit can be assessed in isolation from all other factors, the Board needs to be confident that what is proposed is capable of being realised and that there are likely to be tangible benefits for the applicant, the arts sector and the broader community. The Board also needs to be mindful of providing a balance of support between regional and differing art form areas.

There are two project funding rounds each year, closing on 15 March and 15 October. The Board usually meet in May and December for up to three days, to assess applications to these rounds. Including application reading time, Board Members should be prepared to spend up to fifteen full days each year on project rounds.

The activities of the Board are guided by a framework, which includes arts and cultural policy directions, the Arts Grants Program Guidelines (including application assessment criteria) and these Guidelines.

The funding available for distribution derives from the Northern Territory Government through Arts NT and from the Australian Government through the Regional Arts Fund and must be distributed in the interest of all Territorians.

Regional Arts Fund

The Regional Arts Fund (RAF) is an Australian Government initiative supporting the arts in regional and remote areas, which is delivered in partnership with the Northern Territory Government through the Arts Grants Program.

The Northern Territory is a uniquely regional jurisdiction. By ABS remote classifications, the Territory's population is outer regional at its most urban, metropolitan extremes – and remote or very remote in all remaining circumstances. Therefore, all Northern Territorians are eligible for funding through RAF. The program has a number of broad objectives designed to benefit arts practitioners, workers and audiences (refer to the Arts Grants Program Guidelines).

It should be noted that funding under this program is a discrete source of funds and applicants are eligible to apply for support for the same activity from both the NT and RAF categories.



Arts Grants Board Guidelines

ARTS GRANTS BOARD MEMBERSHIP

The Board is appointed by the Minister for Arts and Museums, for a three-year term. Board Members may be invited to undertake consecutive terms with Ministerial approval. Given adequate reason a Board Member may be removed from office at any time by the Minister.

The Board will consist of a Chair and seven members inclusive of regional and Indigenous representation as well as art form, administrative and/or professional expertise.

Independent external advisers may assist the Board in circumstances where specialist expertise is desirable to ensure informed decisions. The Chair establishes the need for an independent adviser and liaises with Arts NT to ensure that an appropriate person attends the meeting. Specialist and external advisers will be drawn from the NT Register of Peers where possible. Specialist and external advisors do not have direct input into the Board's decisions.

ARTS NT SECRETARIAT

The Arts NT Grants Unit provides support to the Arts Grants Board and undertakes the role of Secretariat during assessment meetings. The Director, Arts NT and the Manager, Grants and Administration will be present at all assessment meetings.

The Grants Unit receives all applications following the respective closing dates to determine eligibility and conducts a process of quality control to ensure that all the necessary information and support material has been provided.

The Grants Unit collates all applications by category and distributes them to Board members at least four (4) weeks prior to the assessment meeting, including four (4) weekends.

The Manager, Grants and Administration determines the budget allocation for each round of funding in accordance with the published budget for the Arts Grants Program.

FUNDING CATEGORIES

The current Arts Grants Program Project funding categories are:

Northern Territory Government

- Presentation and Promotion
- Arts Development

Regional Arts Fund

- Networks and Partnerships
- Skills Development
- New Arts Communities
- Artist to Artist Support

For further information on the eligibility, categories and criteria see the current Arts Grants Program Guidelines Booklet.

Arts Grants Board Guidelines

ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

Assessment criteria for Arts Grants Project categories are set out in the Arts Grants Program Guidelines booklet which is produced each calendar year. Board Members should note that criteria vary according to funding category and that additional guidelines and protocols exist for applications involving Indigenous arts. The Regional Arts Fund (RAF) also has specific criteria and objectives.

Board Members will receive a complete set of applications and where possible, copies of support material, no less than four (4) weeks prior to the Assessment meeting, and are also required to visit Arts NT to view the artistic support material that is unable to be copied and forwarded for perusal.

- Application Assessment/Ratings

Board Members should be considering the priority they would give to the application. Each member, in their preliminary assessments, considers the applications relevance to the category objectives and rate each application against each assessment criterion with a 3, 2, 1, 0 rating. Ratings are recorded on the templates provided by the Arts NT Secretariat. If you have a conflict of interest with an application, you must indicate in the space provided on the ratings sheet.¹

The ratings should be awarded according to the following guide:

3	Meets criterion to a high degree.
2	Meets criterion.
1	Meets criterion only to a limited degree.
0	Does not meet criterion.
c	Conflict of Interest.

Once the rating sheet is completed, it should be returned to the Arts NT Secretariat prior to the commencement of the meeting.

All ratings will be compiled identifying each member's rating and the total score for each application.

Board members should also prepare themselves to discuss the artistic merit of each application which is crucial in forming a collective decision on what to support and why, and to what level.

The Board determines the final ratings and at what minimum rating level, applications will receive funding. The Board is also required to ensure that an appropriate level of funding is awarded in order for the activity to occur and in accordance with the budget available for the current round.

¹ An average rating will be calculated from the remaining members' ratings for the particular application and added to the final score for each conflict of interest identified.



Arts Grants Board Guidelines

- Support Material

In determining 'artistic merit', support material accompanying applications is a critical factor in the decision-making process. The provision of adequate and relevant artistic support material by applicants is therefore essential in most cases.

It is important that board members visit Arts NT prior to the assessment meeting to view artistic support material which cannot be copied and forwarded for perusal. The secretariat will arrange for material to be available for viewing in the four (4) weeks prior to the assessment meeting taking place. Secretariat will coordinate with regional members to ensure they have access to the support material at least one (1) full day prior to the assessment meeting.

ASSESSMENT MEETING PROCEDURES

Assessment meetings are held from 8.30am – 4.30pm on each day in accordance with a meeting agenda. It is not required that the board follow strict meeting procedures (where motions are formally proposed and seconded), however the board may choose to adopt such procedures if it so decides.

- Role of Chair

It is the Chair's duty to preside at assessment meetings. If the Chair is not able to attend, the Deputy Chair will preside. A meeting will not proceed unless a quorum of six (6) members including the chair is present.

The role of the Chair is to:

- preserve order and give all present a reasonable opportunity to express their views;
- clarify or interpret issues that may be uncertain;
- manage the group to reach the best conclusion or decision in the most efficient way possible that everyone understands and accepts (even though a minority of individuals may not necessarily agree with the decision).

It is intended that decisions will be reached on a consensus basis. It is the responsibility of the Chair to ensure that the collective will of the meeting is correctly ascertained.



Arts Grants Board Guidelines

- Role of Arts NT Secretariat

The Arts NT secretariat is present at all assessment meetings.

The role of the Secretariat is to:

- ensure all applications are treated fairly and with due consideration by the Board,
- ensure all information pertaining to each application (including the support material) is readily accessible in the appropriate format e.g. slides, cassette, video, DVD, CD Rom etc,
- answer questions and provide further information where required/requested,
- clarify any issues to do with Government funding guidelines, policies and priorities and, if appropriate, remind the Board should they appear to be being overlooked,
- record the decisions of the Board and report (in association with the Chair) on any issues arising from the decision-making process.

The Secretariat does not have a role in debating the particular merits of applications, nor can they vote on applications.

- Application Ratings/Discussion

It is important for members to voice their own opinions and to listen to the opinions of others. It is also important to defend or argue against an application if you feel the discussion is not adequately taking into account all of the issues/knowledge available, however, a formal consensus is required for a final decision to be made.

At the commencement of the meeting, applications will be ranked in accordance with the collective ratings. Applications which do not meet the minimum overall rating level required to receive funding, will not be discussed at length and feedback will be noted by the Secretariat. Discussion will only occur where a panel member has additional information or significant concern that an application will not receive funding.

Applications above the minimum overall rating level required to receive funding will be discussed according to their ratings and panel members will have the opportunity to amend their ratings if necessary. The Secretariat will continue to update the ratings as changes are required.

A formal consensus on the reasons for funding or not funding an application will be reached and recorded at the meeting. This decision will be consistent with the assessment criteria ratings to allow for detailed and specific feedback to be provided to the applicant. This feedback also forms the basis for individual advice to applicants to on strengthen future applications. Applicants are encouraged to obtain verbal feedback from the Grants and Administration Manager, Arts NT.

Any special conditions in relation to the grant required by the Board also need to be clearly identified and recorded. Once all applications have been considered, the assessment and feedback sheet recording ratings against the criteria, reasons for decisions and details of funding awarded will be signed by the Chair.



Arts Grants Board Guidelines

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Board Members will be required to abstain from discussion and voting and be absent from the meeting room when any discussion or voting is taking place where there is a conflict of interest.

A conflict of interest occurs when a Board Member's decision-making is influenced by a private interest. It is important to avoid, as far as possible, any potential conflict of interest. The Board should show no favouritism and Arts Grants decisions should be based solely on artistic merit.

Although it is impossible to list every circumstance giving rise to a possible conflict of interest, the following will serve as a guide to the occurrences that might cause conflicts of interest and that should be reported to the Board. Full disclosure of any situation in doubt should be made to permit an impartial and objective determination.

A Board Member could have a conflict of interest if:

- they or a member of their immediate family have applied for a Grant. (A Board Member cannot apply for a Grant without the approval of the Chair.);
- they or a member of their immediate family are employed by an organisation/individual applying for a Grant;
- they or a member of their immediate family belongs to the board of an organisation applying for a Grant; or
- they have previously discussed the details of an application or have been involved in the preparation of an application.

For the purposes of these guidelines, the definition of "immediate family" in relation to a Board Member means the spouse, parent, brother, sister or child, and includes the child or parent of the Board Member's spouse or de facto spouse.

Board Members are required to declare potential conflicts. Other Board Members also have responsibility for declaring a Board Member to be in a position of potential conflict.

The Chair shall determine how to proceed. The ruling of the Chair may be challenged by a member of the Board and will then have to be settled by majority vote of the Board Members. However, Board Members will usually be required to abstain from discussion on their own applications or applications relating to an organisation with which they are associated.

Board Members will be expected to take an active interest in arts activity throughout the Territory, but cannot receive direct approaches with regard to applications for Arts Grants. Such approaches would need to be declared as a conflict of interest. A Board Member may not receive monetary or other payments including gifts or favours.

Board Members may be involved in local arts activities to the extent that those activities do not conflict with the performance of the person's duties and responsibilities as a member of the Board.



Arts Grants Board Guidelines

A Board Member shall not purport to represent the Board in any outside activity unless agreed, in writing, by the Chair or Arts NT.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Members of the Board **MUST NOT** disclose the deliberations of the Board and all discussion during the course of a formal Board meeting is to be treated as confidential.

Board Members will be required to sign a declaration with regard to confidentiality and conflict of interest.

REMUNERATION FOR BOARD MEMBERS

Members of the Arts Grants Board are entitled to remuneration and expenses in accordance with the Northern Territory of Australia Remuneration (Statutory Bodies) Act.

Remuneration and expenses will be arranged by the Secretariat, for attendance at meetings as follows:

- Sitting Fees will be paid in accordance with the attached extracts of the Statutory Bodies Act.
- Reading time of up to three (3) days and Support Material Viewing time of one (1) day will also be paid in accordance with the attached extracts of the Statutory Bodies Act.
- Meals and Incidentals Allowance – for representatives attending meetings away from their usual place of residence will be paid in accordance with Determination 1, issued by the Commissioner of Public Employment each year.
- Travel and Accommodation for representatives attending meetings away from their usual place of residence will be booked and paid for by the Secretariat.

Sitting Fees are taxable. Tax will be withheld from gross payments. Board Members will be required to complete a Tax File Number declaration and bank account details form for payments.



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- Extract of conditions relating to Sitting Fees:
 - (a) The daily rate is payable in respect of each day on which the member –
 - (i) attends a meeting of the body;
 - (ii) is engaged, with the prior approval of the body, on the business of the body;
 - (iii) travels to or from the member's place of living before or after such a meeting or in connection with such business, or is absent from his place of living because of such travel,


where the total time so spent on that day exceeds 4 hours.

- (b) The hourly rate is payable in respect of each day on which the member –
 - (i) attends a meeting of the body;
 - (ii) is engaged, with the prior approval of the body, on the business of the body;
or
 - (iii) travels to or from the member's place of living, before or after such a meeting or in connection with such business, or is absent from his place of living as a result of such travel,

where the total time so spent on that day does not exceed 4 hours.

EXTRACT: SCHEDULE 2

Sitting fees are not paid to a member who is –

- a Judge;
 - a Magistrate;
 - the Solicitor-General;
 - a Chief Executive Officer within the meaning of the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act*;
 - an employee within the meaning of the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act*;
 - an employee of the Northern Territory Tourist Commission within the meaning of the *Northern Territory Tourist Commission Act*;
 - an officer or employee of the Public Service of the Commonwealth or a State of another Territory;
 - a member of the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission.
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Arts Grants Board Guidelines

EXTRACT: SCHEDULE 3

A member not engaged in, associated with, or practising in, the business, profession, trade or calling of the body shall be paid remuneration at the following rates:

- (a) where the member is the Chairman –
 - (i) a daily rate of \$190; or
 - (ii) an hourly rate of \$40; and
- (b) in any other case –
 - (i) a daily rate of \$135; or
 - (ii) an hourly rate of \$30

EXTRACT: SCHEDULE 4

ALLOWANCES

Travelling allowance shall be paid to a member, at the rate from time to time applicable under the Public Sector Employment and Management Act in respect of intra-Territory commercial accommodation for a person holding under that Act a designation of Executive Officer 1 for each night the member is required to stay overnight in a place other than his place of living by reason of –

- (a) the member's attendance at a meeting of a body;
- (b) the member's engagement, with the prior approval of a body, on the business of the body; or
- (c) travelling to or from the member's place of living after or before such a meeting or in connection with such business,

or an amount equal to the actual cost of meals and accommodation, where that cost exceeds the above rate in respect of each night where the member is so required to stay overnight.

