



2023-2024 MAGAZINE FUND GUIDELINES

Deadline: May 31, 2023 by 5:00pm ET

The Magazine Fund program documentation includes:

- Magazine Fund Guidelines (this document)
- [Ontario Creates Program Policies](#)

Applicants must review BOTH documents prior to submitting an application.

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1. Introduction

The Ontario Creates Magazine Fund is designed to increase the financial viability and overall business growth of the Ontario magazine media industry.

Funding will be provided to support projects that have clear, objective and measurable results and/or indicate direct and positive impact on the overall long-term business growth of the magazine publisher. Priority results include enhancement of publisher revenues and the creation/retention of jobs in the Ontario publishing industry. Ontario Creates will measure results of the program based on return on investment and jobs created and retained.

The Fund also accepts applications from publishers of digital-only magazines and will provide support for a limited number of digital magazines. Applicant Eligibility requirements are applicable to both print and digital publishers; please read the Eligible Magazine Titles section (pages 3-6) for specific requirements for digital magazines.

Magazine Fund: Diversity Enhancement Stream

The Ontario Creates Magazine Fund supports project applications from companies who do not meet the eligibility requirements for this program through a time-limited Diversity Enhancement. Companies with ownership that is racially diverse, Francophone, or otherwise meets dimensions of the provincial definition of diversity, may be eligible to apply for up to \$15,000 in project support. Please see the Appendix for details.

Ontario Creates is committed to:

- supporting diversity and gender parity;
- providing enhanced accessibility support to people with disabilities, people who are deaf and people who have barriers to accessing technology; and
- fostering respectful workplaces in all the sectors and companies we support.

Please see the [Program Policies](#) for more details.

2. Deadlines

The deadline for complete submissions is Wednesday, May 31, 2023 at 5:00 pm ET, through the OAP. Applications and documentation received after this deadline will not be considered.

Decisions will be communicated to applicants in August 2023.

3. Eligible Applicants

Independent, Canadian-owned and -controlled, Ontario-based magazine publishers may apply for this program.

In the case of affiliated companies and subsidiaries, only one may apply for funding. Entities for which the same person, or group of persons, holds or controls the majority of shares with full voting rights, or has been shown to have control, will be considered affiliated. Where companies are not affiliated according to the above definition, to be considered non-affiliated a corporation must maintain full control over editorial processes, have editorial autonomy from any other publisher applying for this program, and must produce separate financial statements.

To be eligible to apply, the corporation must:

- be a magazine publisher, publishing at the time of application;
- derive more than 50% of the Company's revenue from magazine revenues and related brand extension of the core magazine business (i.e., events, trade shows, website, television properties);
- be Ontario-based, with its central place of business located in Ontario and pay Ontario corporate taxes;
- be at least 75% Canadian-owned and -controlled;
- be incorporated in a Canadian jurisdiction at the time of application submission;
- be in good standing with Ontario Creates at time of application submission;
- have a minimum sales revenue of \$20,000; and
- be financially solvent at the time of application.

Please review the [Ontario Creates Program Policies](#) document for information on Financial Statements.

Magazine Fund: Diversity Enhancement Stream

- The Ontario Creates Magazine Fund supports project applications from companies who do not meet the eligibility requirements for this program through a time-limited Diversity Enhancement. Companies with ownership that is racially diverse, Francophone, or otherwise meets dimensions of the provincial definition of diversity, may be eligible to apply for up to \$15,000 in project support. Please see the Appendix for details.

4. Eligible Magazine Titles

PRINT magazines must:

- have completed a full 12 month publishing cycle and complete business year by the time of application submission;
- have published at least two editions;

- be published at the time of application, throughout the application process, and until completion of the proposed project;
- present a clearly displayed masthead or equivalent with a named editor;
- be primarily edited, designed, and published in Ontario;
- maintain an editorial function where the editor is named (editorial function is described as the commissioning of editorial material and artwork; directing writers, illustrators and photographers regarding the final form of this material; and laying out, copy editing and proofreading, and otherwise preparing the contents for publication);
- contain an average of at least 75% Canadian editorial content (editorial content is defined as text, photographs, graphics, and/or illustrations which are authored or translated by a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident of Canada. Editorial content adapted or condensed by a Canadian citizen or permanent resident will be considered Canadian editorial content for the eligibility purposes of the program);
- use an editorial calendar for the ideation, creation and publishing of content;
- present editorial content from more than one person;
- contain a majority of original content;
- be a minimum of 25 pages in length on average for regular published issues, regardless of physical size of the pages;
- appear in consecutively numbered or dated issues;
- be published under a common title, in accordance to an established publishing or update calendar;
- be published at regular intervals, no more than once every week (excluding special issues) and no less than twice a year;
- contain an average of at most 70% advertising in all the issues published during the previous 12 months;
- have a clear distinction between advertising and editorial content, with advertising or sponsored content and supplements clearly identified;
- have a publishing revenue stream, e.g., subscription revenues, advertising sales; and
- maintain one of the following types of circulation over the most recent six months:
 - have a circulation size of at least 2,500 copies per issue if applying for an individual project or 1,000 copies for a group project.

If your primary publication is in print and it meets all the above requirements, it is not necessary to also meet the requirements for a digital magazine outlined below.

If your primary publication is digital, it must meet all the requirements below.

DIGITAL magazines must:

- have completed a full 12 month publishing cycle and complete business year by the time of application submission;
- be published at the time of application, throughout the application process, and until completion of the proposed project;
- present a clearly displayed masthead or contact page that includes, at minimum, the names of the publisher and editor;
- be primarily edited, designed, and published in Ontario;

- maintain an editorial function where the editor is named (editorial function is described as the commissioning of editorial material and artwork; directing writers, illustrators and photographers regarding the final form of this material; and laying out, copy editing and proofreading, and otherwise preparing the contents for publication);
- maintain the availability of a substantive amount of content (which can include articles, videos, photo essays, infographics etc.);
- contain an average of at least 75% Canadian editorial content (editorial content is defined as text, photographs, graphics, and/or illustrations which are authored or translated by a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident of Canada. Editorial adapted or condensed by a Canadian citizen or permanent resident will be considered Canadian editorial content for the eligibility purposes of the program);
- use an editorial calendar for the ideation, creation and publishing of content;
- present editorial content from more than one person;
- contain a majority of original content;
- present content in specified, themed categories;
- be published under a common title, in accordance to an established publishing or update calendar;
- publish substantive new content at regular intervals, no less than twice a year;
- contain an average of at most 70% advertising during the previous 12 months;
- have a clear distinction between advertising and editorial content, with advertising or sponsored content and supplements clearly identified;
- have a publishing revenue stream, e.g., advertising sales;
- if a web-based magazine, have a valid, live URL address specific to the title;
- if an app-based magazine, have an application currently available for download; and
- maintain circulation at one of the following levels over the most recent 6 month period:
 - Open-access, web-based service: maintain a minimum of 15,000 unique monthly visitors
 - Application (app)-based circulation: maintain a minimum of 10,000 active subscribers
 - Closed-access (subscription, paywall) : maintain a minimum of 2,500 active subscribers

Note: Verification of digital circulation may be requested

Publications will not be eligible if:

- published for the purpose of promoting the interest of the principal business of the person, company or organization who publishes or at whose direction the magazine is published, where the principal business is other than magazine publishing;
- published directly or indirectly by one or more individuals, groups, organizations or corporations providing goods or services, where the principal goal of the publication is to enhance or promote the sales of such goods or services;
- the publication contains editorial content that is predominantly reproduced or repeated from current or previous issues of the same publication or of other publications or online sources;

- the publication is capable of inciting hatred against an identifiable group, including a section of the public distinguished by colour, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation or ethnic origin;
- the dominant characteristic of the publication is the undue exploitation of sex, or of sex and one or more of crime, horror, cruelty, or violence; and/or
- contrary to public policy in the opinion of Ontario Creates.

Ineligible publications include: blogs, newsletters, journals, professional association periodicals, in-house publications, guides, comic books, newspapers¹, alternative newsweeklies, directories, financial reports, catalogues, schedules, calendars, timetables, classifieds or listings.

If you have questions regarding eligibility please refer to the [FAQs](#) or contact Ontario Creates – see the final page for details.

5. Partnership and Group Projects

Partnership projects

Partners may be involved in your project. An eligible partner must be:

- one or more content creation companies from the book and magazine, film and television, interactive digital media, or music industries that was eligible to submit an application at the immediately preceding deadline for one of Ontario Creates’ Content, Marketing or Global Market Development Funds, or the Ontario Music Investment Fund;
- an Ontario-based organization; and
- a Canadian-owned and -controlled organization.

The profit-participation share of the partners should be in appropriate proportion to the ownership of the project and should conform to standard industry practices. Please note that preference may be given to projects that are substantially owned by Ontario-based

¹ For the purposes of defining a newspaper, the Ontario Creates Magazine Fund will use the criteria established by the Department of Canadian Heritage for their Canada Periodical Fund:

- | | |
|--|----------|
| • Broadsheet format, tabloid format or outsized (larger than 8 ½ X 11) | 2 points |
| • Unbound | 3 points |
| • Printed on newsprint of any quality | 1 point |
| • Identified as a newspaper | 1 point |
| • Cover subdivided (articles, boxed photos) | 1 point |
| • Advertising on front cover | 1 point |
| • Divided into detachable regular sections (news, analysis, entertainment, sports, etc.) | 1 point |
| • Follows traditional newspaper layout and design | 1 point |

Periodicals with seven (7) or more points will be considered to be newspapers and therefore are not eligible for the Ontario Creates Magazine Fund.

organizations. If you are considering working with a partner, please contact Ontario Creates in advance of your application.

Group Projects

Projects involving a number of magazine publishers are eligible. Each magazine publisher involved in the group project must meet all eligibility criteria. Each applicant must submit a complete application identifying their specific roles and responsibilities and referencing the other publishers attached to the project.

One lead applicant must be identified as the key contact for all communication regarding the application. Ontario Creates must be contacted at least four weeks in advance of submitting a group application to review the proposed project.

6. Eligible Projects and Activities

A publisher may submit an application for either one specific magazine title **or** for a group of magazines the applicant publishes.

Publishing companies who own **more than one title** may submit up to two applications. The total requested funding amount cannot exceed the Total Funding Available per Applicant company (see the Table on page 10).

Group publishers are responsible for ensuring that a maximum of two applications are submitted to the Magazine Fund. As above, the total requested funding amount of the two applications combined must not exceed the Total Funding Available.

The project must:

- be an activity not already underway at the time of submitting the application **or**, if an existing activity already in progress, demonstrate how funding would enhance the scope and impact of the activity (expenses incurred prior to the application being submitted are not eligible);
- be focused on driving sales and increasing publisher revenue in a tangible and measurable manner and/or improving operational efficiencies and productivity (expected return on investment is a key criterion for the jury in their review of the applications), or expected direct and positive impact on the Company's overall business strategy must be stated; and
- must be completed with a Final Report submitted by **February 17, 2025**.

Applicant companies that are receiving support for a specific activity through another Ontario Creates program are not eligible to receive additional support through the Ontario Creates Magazine Fund for the same activity.

Projects can include, but are not limited to:

- re-launch/re-brand projects;

- circulation projects – such as direct mail campaigns, request circulation development, insert cards, subscription renewal, promotional campaigns, newsstand projects;
- advertising sales projects – such as media kits or promotional material;
- a special issue or special section for an existing magazine that is a first-time issue or section for the magazine, which could also be produced in various formats, such as listings, directory, catalogue;
- a new magazine from an existing magazine publisher;
- redesign/upgrade of website;
- development/enhancement of online/mobile magazine formats;
- online marketing campaigns;
- podcasts, videos, webcasts;
- digitization of back issues;
- optimization of online content;
- exploration of alternate sales channels;
- international business development activities, including travel;
- enhancing internal workflow/backend processes, including CRM implementation; and
- development of a **digital transformation strategy/business plan** . As this is a competitive program, include as much detail as possible of how this plan would be researched, developed and implemented, and the expected outcomes.

Applicants are strongly recommended to contact your program consultant in the early planning stages to discuss your proposed project.

Special Note for publishers proposing circulation projects: While circulation projects by their nature often have a multi-year cycle, if Ontario Creates has previously funded a circulation project through the Ontario Creates Magazine Fund, a circulation project for this current round must be significantly enhanced and/or different to the previous one. You must ensure that you will be able to identify and report financial results unique to the specific circulation activity proposed in your application.

7. Budget, Financing and Timeline Requirements

A **budget template** has been created that **must be used** to provide the budget details for your project(s).

Eligible Project Budget Expenses

Eligible costs directly associated with the project must be included in the budget detail. Ontario Creates Magazine Fund can represent up to 75% of the total budget, with the remaining 25% of the total budget from the publisher and/or other funding sources including other government sources, and third party participation (such as retail partners).

Please note: budgets MUST be submitted on the excel budget template provided on the website and the OAP. No PDFs or alternate formats will be accepted. The template

consists of two separate tabs: Project Budget, and Financing. The Financing template must be completed.

Funding from the magazine publisher should have an accompanying **letter of intent** indicating commitment to the project. Funding from other sources should have an accompanying letter of intent.

Realistically valued “in-kind” services may be included as part or all of the 25% costs that must come from sources other than the Ontario Creates Magazine Fund.

If outside services are required for the project, please **include quotes** from providers and a rationale for their selection.

Ineligible Expenses

Expenses that are ongoing operational costs are not eligible. For a project which is an enhancement of activity already underway, expenses incurred to date are not eligible.

For digital projects and/or projects with digital components, capital expenses related directly to the project (i.e., hardware, software) may be included to a **maximum of 15%** of the total project budget.

Expenses incurred prior to the application being submitted are not eligible. The only **exception is costs related to the development of a digital transformation strategy/business plan**, or components thereof, that is the foundation of the application. If the application is not successful, Ontario Creates will not support these costs.

Ineligible expenses include costs associated with:

- salaries and wages of staff not directly related to the project;
- staff benefit costs;
- fixed overhead costs (such as machine costs: telephone, photocopier, computer); however, costs for long distance phone, paper costs, couriers and other expenses **directly** related to the project may be included;
- occupancy costs (rent or mortgage of facilities); and
- hospitality.

Ontario Creates Funding

Eligible applicants may apply for funding based on their level of **eligible sales revenue**.

Ontario Creates funding can represent a maximum of **75% of the project budget**. There are caps on the maximum funding levels based on the applicant company’s eligible sales revenue, which is defined for the purposes of this program as all magazine revenues including ad sales, subscriptions, and related brand extension of the core magazine business (i.e., events, website, television properties, content syndication).

Grants, funding and donations are not considered revenue for the purpose of this program and should not be included when calculating eligible sales revenue.

Publishers may apply for the following levels of funding, based on eligible sales revenue:

Eligible Sales Revenues	Total Funding Available per Applicant
Over \$2,000,000	(up to) \$75,000
\$500,001 to \$2,000,000	(up to) \$65,000
\$140,001 to \$500,000	(up to) \$40,000
\$20,000 to \$140,000*	(up to) \$35,000

* For publishers with eligible sales revenues of less than \$75,000, the funds requested should be proportional to sales, with the total request not exceeding 33% of eligible sales revenues and in keeping with 75% of total budget.

Section Three of the application form requires a breakdown of eligible sales revenue to assess the eligible maximum level of funding available to the applicant. Due to recent sales impacts as a result of COVID-19, the parameters for eligible sales criteria have been adjusted. Applicants have the option to base eligible sales on either the past 12 months or an average of eligible sales for the previous two fiscal years.

The number of applicants who will receive funding, and the amount of the funding received, is dependent on the total amount of funding for the program, and the quantity and quality of projects selected by the jury. This is a **competitive** application process. A jury of industry experts will review and recommend which eligible applications will receive funding from this program.

Applicants are expected to begin incurring expenses related to their project no more than 90 days following funding approval notification. Projects should be completed with all expenses incurred and all deliverables provided by the applicant’s final report date, and no later than February 16, 2024.

8. Application Process and Evaluation

- Read the [Program Policies](#).
 - Applicants must submit their application to Ontario Creates electronically through the Online Application Portal (OAP) at <https://apply.ontariocreates.ca/>;
 - For technical assistance, please contact the OAP Help Desk at applyhelp@ontariocreates.ca;
 - Applicants are strongly encouraged to begin the application process early to allow for ample time to provide the necessary information;
 - Applicants are advised to contact the program consultant at the beginning of the application process to discuss the project;

- Applications must be received at Ontario Creates offices electronically via the OAP no later than 5:00 pm on the date of the deadline;
- All print magazine material must be received at Ontario Creates no later than 5:00 pm on the date of the deadline;
- Applications that are received after the deadline will be considered ineligible;
- Applications must include all the required materials listed on the application form;
- Applications will be reviewed by Ontario Creates for completeness, eligibility and financial viability;
- Applications that pass this initial review will be assessed by an industry jury and Ontario Creates for final funding recommendations;
- Successful applicants will be notified within three months of the deadline; and
- Successful applicants will be required to enter into a signed funding agreement with Ontario Creates prior to receiving any funding.

Print Publications

Either:

- Upload a PDF copy of the most recent print issue: or
- Provide a link to digital version of the most recent print issue; and/or
- Submit three hardcopies of the most recent issue of your print magazine. For your application to be eligible, the copies must arrive at the Ontario Creates' office NO LATER than the program deadline.
The following may be submitted electronically or as hardcopy:
 - **Three recent editorial pieces** that represent the Canadian content of the magazine (three copies of each if submitted as hardcopy). In the hardcopy of the magazine that you submit, you may flag the editorial pieces that represent Canadian content

Printed materials must be received at Ontario Creates by 5:00 pm on the date of the deadline and directed to:

Program Coordinator, Industry Development
Ontario Creates
175 Bloor Street East, Suite 501, South Tower
Toronto, ON M4W 3R8

Digital Publications

The following **must** be submitted electronically:

- a) A current URL, or b) Instructions to access a digital edition; and
- **Three recent** editorial pieces that represent the Canadian content of the magazine (PDF and direct links are acceptable)

9. Decision Criteria

The jury will be looking for projects that demonstrate well thought-out activities that will drive sales, help strengthen the publisher's stability and promote business growth. The plan, timelines and proposed budget will be evaluated for feasibility, and the expected return on investment will be carefully considered by the jury.

Ontario Creates applies a lens of diversity, equity, and inclusion to the evaluation criteria for this program, and directs jury members to do the same. Applicants proposing projects/activities that support and reflect diversity are expected to tangibly demonstrate a genuine and sustained commitment to these equity-seeking communities. Ontario Creates may identify particular underrepresented communities within a particular sector. The provincial definition of diversity states: the dimensions of diversity include, but are not limited to: ancestry, culture, ethnicity, gender identity, gender expression, language, physical and intellectual ability, race, religion (creed), sex, sexual orientation and socio-economic status.

Funding allocations from the time-limited Diversity Enhancement may be available for projects that receive exceptionally high points on scoring criteria related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Applications will be assessed according to the following criteria:

Criteria	Weighting	Considerations may include:
Feasibility of the project	25%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well-defined project scope • Reasonable and detailed budget • Realistic schedule with milestones and appropriate resources • Thoughtful consultation, collaboration, and participation of equity-seeking communities, particularly underrepresented communities within the magazine industry
Relevance of the project	25%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fits with the company’s strategic plan • Supports job creation/retention • Clear explanation of how the project will enhance revenue, stability, and/or position the business for growth in the future • Aligns with current/evolving industry standards and innovations • Responds to challenges and opportunities faced by the

		<p>company and/or magazine industry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culturally appropriate initiatives to engage with equity-seeking communities
Expected Results	30%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly stated and supported by research • Tangible, measurable and realistic • Quantitative and qualitative • Identifies outcomes specific to activities focused on inclusivity and/or with equity-seeking communities
Demonstrated ability of the publisher to implement the plan	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly stated previous experience related to the proposed activities • Summary of activities and results from previous participation in Ontario Creates programs where applicable (final reports and results in previous years' programs will be taken into account) • Detailed explanation and/or research to support the project's expected success • Information on and rationale for the inclusion of external service providers where applicable • Information about the company, including diversity among senior leadership, staff, or contract employees • Explanation of company policies and/or activities that support diversity, equity and inclusion

10. Successful Applicants

Successful applicants will receive funding during the course of their activities, triggered by pre-determined deliverables as follows:

- 60% on execution of the Ontario Creates agreement;
- 25% on delivery of a satisfactory interim report; and
- 15% on delivery of a satisfactory final report and all deliverables outlined in the agreement

Successful applicants who are deaf or otherwise disabled may be eligible for supplementary funds for accessibility expenses required to complete their project deliverables.

The final program payment will be issued upon receipt and approval of a final report addressing project outcomes. This report must confirm that the project activities as outlined in the signed agreement with Ontario Creates have taken place. This final report will be due no later than **February 16, 2025**.

11. More Information

Matt Hilliard-Forde
Program Consultant, Industry Development
Phone: 416-627-6627
Email: mhilliard-forde@ontariocreates.ca

Appendix: Magazine Fund: Diversity Enhancement

Overview and Objectives

As an economic development agency, Ontario Creates' priority is to support the growth and development of business entities that are focused on driving commercial growth and creating job opportunities within the province of Ontario. The time-limited Ontario Creates Magazine Fund: Diversity Enhancement stream supports project applications from companies who do not meet the eligibility requirements for the Magazine Fund.

Companies with ownership that is racially diverse, Francophone, or otherwise meets dimensions of the provincial definition of diversity (see page 2), may be eligible to apply for up to \$15,000 in project support.

The key goals of this program are to:

- Enhance capacity for emerging businesses with company ownership that meets the provincial definition of diversity
- Strengthen and support critical stages of the growth Ontario's publishing ecosystem
- Enable the next generation of racially diverse industry professionals

Funding Available

Funding may be requested from a minimum of \$5000 to a maximum of \$15,000. The program is competitive, and funding amounts awarded may be smaller than the amount requested depending on the number of applications received.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to request a level of investment that aligns with their track record, capacity and stage of growth. Feasibility of the proposed budget will be part of the assessment process. Investment will be provided to successful applicants in the form of direct grants towards up to 75% of the total activity costs.

Eligibility

Proposed projects must meet the eligibility requirements and program goals described in the main Magazine Fund guidelines, and move the applicant company towards meeting the standard eligibility requirements for the program.

Eligible applicants must:

- Be businesses owned by self-identifying racially diverse, Francophone, or otherwise meet dimensions of the provincial definition of diversity;
- Generate more than 50% of their revenue from magazine publishing activities;
- Be Ontario-based, with its central place of business located in Ontario;

- Be incorporated in a Canadian jurisdiction or a registered business (with a Master Business Licence);
- Be in operation for a minimum of one year, and have completed a full 12 month publishing cycle;
- If a print magazine, have published at least two issues in the last 12 months;
- If a digital publication, have been publishing substantive content regularly over the past 12 months;
- Meet all other eligibility requirements in the Magazine Fund guidelines (pages 3-7) with the following exceptions:
 - Eligible sales revenue of \$5000 (subscriptions, ad sales, newsstand sales, events that take place under the magazine brand – please refer to the guidelines for more information)
 - Print publications: have a minimum circulation of 1500
 - Digital publications: have minimum website engagement of 5000 Unique Monthly Visitors (UMVs), or a minimum membership/subscriber base of 1500
- For applicant companies with more than one owner, at least 50% of the ownership must identify as racially diverse.

Eligible Activities & Costs

Projects can include, but are not limited to:

- Business Development (professional development courses, business planning consultants, development of a business plan);
- Marketing and Promotion (e.g. brand development, advertising, publicity);
- Strategic business travel and/or conference attendance;
- Circulation projects (direct mail campaigns, request circulation development, insert cards, subscription renewal, promotional campaigns, newsstand projects);
- Advertising sales projects (media kits or promotional material);
- A special issue or special section for an existing magazine that is a first-time issue or section for the magazine, which could also be produced in various formats such as listings, directory, catalogue;
- A new magazine from an existing magazine publisher;
- Redesign/upgrade of website;
- Development/enhancement of online/mobile magazine formats;
- Online marketing campaigns;
- Podcasts, videos, webcasts;
- Optimization of online content;
- Exploration of alternate sales channels;
- International business development activities, including travel;
- Enhancing internal workflow/backend processes, including CRM implementation.

When responding to the application questions and filling out the budget template, applicants must provide a business case and rationale for the types of costs for which

they seeking investment. Please keep in mind the economic development focus of the program (as outlined at the beginning of these guidelines) when preparing your budget.

All costs (except for marketing and business travel) must be incurred in Ontario. Costs must be incurred by **February 16, 2024**.

Submitting Your Application: Process and Evaluation

Applications are due by **5:00 pm EST on May 31, 2023**.

We strongly encourage applicants to attend information sessions and contact the relevant Program Consultant in advance of applying, and after thoroughly reviewing the program guidelines.

The Program Coordinator may be reached at programs2@ontariocreates.ca

All requested documentation must be submitted by the program deadline. Ontario Creates is not obligated to follow-up with applicants to request missing documentation.

Late applications will not be considered for funding. Prior discussion with Ontario Creates regarding the eligibility of an activity does not guarantee funding.

- Applicants must submit their applications electronically through the Ontario Creates Online Application Portal (OAP) at <https://apply.ontariocreates.ca>.
- Applicants that do not have a user account on OAP should go to <https://apply.ontariocreates.ca/> and click on “Register.” For assistance, please see the “[OAP Quick Start Guide](#)”.
- For technical assistance, please contact the OAP Helpdesk at applyhelp@ontariocreates.ca.
- The application can be worked on over time. Applicants should save their information as it is entered, and can continue to edit and/or add information up until the time when the application is actually submitted.
- Applications must be received electronically via the OAP system no later than 5:00 pm on the applicable deadline.

Please start the application process as early as possible (and ideally no later than at least two weeks ahead of the deadline) in order to allow ample time to complete the registration process, compile the required information and complete the application questions.

Summary of Application Materials

Applicants must supply the following information in their application:

- Applicant contact and self-identification information
- Requested funding amount (ranging from \$5000 to \$15,000)
- Responses to the following five application questions:

1. Explain what your business does in 100 words or less;
2. Provide a brief overview of the track record of the business owner(s). You may skip this question if providing resumes/CVs/letters of support in the Supporting Documents section;
3. Provide a more detailed overview of your business/company. This should include: a description of your business model; an outline of successes achieved to date; and profiles of mentors, board/committee members, business partners and/or team members. What makes your business unique and/or competitive in the marketplace?
4. What are your corporate goals for the next 12 months (e.g. activities you are intending to complete and why, clients that you are/anticipate working with, revenue targets you hope to hit, other accomplishments you hope to achieve)?
5. Describe the specific business development activity/activities ('the Project') for which you are seeking investment through this program. How would this investment help you achieve your corporate goals and build towards long-term growth and sustainability? Outline the types of costs that you anticipate incurring as you undertake the activity/activities.

The following Supporting Documents:

- Articles of Incorporation or Master Business Licence;
- If available, financial statements for the most recently completed fiscal year (Notice-to-Reader and Compilation Engagement statements are preferred, but internally-prepared profit & loss statements will be accepted.) Budget template (provided by Ontario Creates); and
- Detailed Timeline/Action Plan that includes the following information: Relevant project tasks or milestones; staff resources / leads; activity start date; activity end date

At least two of the following pieces of supporting documentation:

- Resumes/CVs of founders or key management personnel;
- Marketing materials/press clippings;
- Social media metrics (to demonstrate audience reach/growth potential);
- Letters of support;
- Corporate slide deck;
- Business/marketing/strategic plan.

Application Assessment

Applications will be reviewed and evaluated by Ontario Creates staff and an external jury selected through an open Call for Jurors process.

Applications will be assessed on the following criteria:

Criteria	Weighting	Considerations may include:
Track record of the business and/or its founders	10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to implement the project and achieve positive results • Viability of the business • Commitment to the magazine industry
Feasibility of the budget and proposed activities	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project is clearly described • Resources are identified and in place • Budget and timeline are accurate and realistic • Risks are identified and addressed
Innovation, quality and creativity presented in the proposal	15%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project is aligned with current/evolving industry standards and innovations • Project responds to challenges and opportunities faced by the company and/or magazine industry • Project fits with the company's business and strategic plan
Degree to which the proposed activities will contribute to the growth, capacity and sustainability of the business	30%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business goals are clearly articulated • Supports job creation and/or retention • Project and/or its results are intended to be sustainable • Project enhances the long-term growth, capacity and sustainability of the business • Project moves the company closer to becoming eligible for the main Magazine Fund • Likelihood of the project to succeed
Potential for critical and commercial success as a result of the investment	25%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly-stated results • Results are tangible, realistic and measurable • Results are supported by research • Reasonable return on investment (cost of project vs. expected outcome) or other significant and tangible outcomes

Responses to application questions and supporting documentation should demonstrate the applicant's ability to meet the above criteria in terms of tangible outcomes/metrics.

All Ontario Creates decisions are final. Ontario Creates reserves the right to alter program guidelines with general public notice to all potential applicants and to refuse any application for any reason. The number of awards and amount awarded is contingent on confirmation of Ontario Creates' annual budget. Ontario Creates is not required to make any minimum number of awards.

Subject to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, all information contained in the application will remain strictly confidential. All inquiries pertaining to Ontario Creates Funds are to be directed to Ontario Creates staff only.

Successful applicants will be notified by August 2023.

Obligations of Successful Applicants

Upon approval of a successful application, business entities will be required to sign an agreement with Ontario Creates that outlines the terms of their participation in the Strategic Support initiative, and provide an interim and final report.

Successful applicants will receive the following funding installments:

- 80% upon funding approval;
- 0% following the approval of the recipient's interim report as outlined in the funding agreement
- the remaining 20% following the approval of the recipient's final report and all deliverables outlined in the funding agreement

For more Information

Program inquiries should be directed to 416-642-6652 or programs2@ontariocreates.ca

Online Application Portal (OAP) inquiries should be directed to applyhelp@ontariocreates.ca

Ontario Creates is an agency of the Government of Ontario that facilitates economic development, investment and collaboration in Ontario's creative industries including the music, book, magazine, film, television and interactive digital media sectors.
ontariocreates.ca