

ONTARIO CREATES – Ontario Music Office

Program Policies

Updated February 2026

The information in this document applies to the Ontario Creates Ontario Music Investment Fund program streams listed below. It is considered an integral part of the program guidelines and it is expected that applicants will review this document thoroughly along with the program-specific guidelines in advance of submitting an application:

- Music Company Development
- Music Industry Development
- Global Market Development – Music
- Live Music
- Music Futures

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1. Definitions and General Policies

Definitions

Ontario-based - have a principal place of business* in Ontario which serves as head office and base of operations. The applicant must meet the following:

- applicant must be eligible to pay corporate income taxes in Ontario
- Ontario address is listed as head office in T2 filing; and,
- Ontario address must be a stable and non-temporary establishment where the applicant can demonstrate that the location is under the corporation's control and the space can be objectively identified with the corporation. For example:
 - maintenance of an office for which the corporation pays rent or compensates employees
 - presence of office equipment
 - the place of business is listed as the corporation's residential address in the telephone directory
 - substantial quantities of the corporation's goods are kept on the property

- residents or employees of the corporation working at the property devote all their working hours to the corporation's interests
- have key management personnel who are Canadian citizens or permanent residents of Canada living in Ontario
- substantial usage of owned/rented machinery or equipment that is used to carry out the corporation's business

If the applicant is a successful funding recipient, the applicant must continue to have a principal place of business in Ontario for the duration of the funding.

Canadian-owned - as defined in the Investment Canada Act (Canada) and is Canadian-controlled as determined for the purposes of sections 26 to 28 of the Investment Canada Act. **

Ontario Expenditure - Ontario expenditures include goods or services provided by Ontario-based individuals or corporations in the course of carrying on their businesses at a permanent establishment in Ontario.

Ontario Resident – a person who has lived in the province 200 of the last 365 days and has filed their last tax return in Ontario.

Employee – a person who works for an employer:

- under the employer's direction and control;
- using the employer's supplies/workspace/equipment/etc.;
- subject to employer's workplace rules and discipline; and
- who issues regular compensation that includes deductions for taxes, CPP and EI

** The corporation's principal place of business will be determined at the discretion of Ontario Creates and additional documentation may be requested as required. For this purpose, a principal place of business is not a post-office box or fixed address of a friend or relative not directly employed by the company.*

***Excepting Multinational Record Labels*

Respectful Workplace - Ontario Creates is committed to fostering respectful workplaces in all sectors and companies we support. A respectful workplace is one that values diversity and inclusion, dignity, courteous conduct, fairness, positive communication and professional working relationships. A respectful workplace is free from harassment and discrimination, including sexual harassment.

The policy of Ontario Creates is to take every reasonable step to:

- Cultivate and sustain a respectful, positive, inclusive and supportive work culture
- Promote awareness of rights and responsibilities
- Prevent, identify, and eliminate workplace harassment and discrimination in a timely manner

- Improve and/or restore Ontario Creates' work environment and relationships affected by incidents or allegations of workplace harassment or discrimination, including those involving external stakeholders

Ontario Creates expects that all funding recipients maintain the principles of a respectful workplace, including taking every reasonable step to:

- Cultivate and sustain a respectful, positive, inclusive, and supportive work culture
- Provide a safe mechanism for staff to report incidents or allegations of inappropriate behaviour
- Take action to prevent, identify, and eliminate workplace harassment and discrimination in a timely manner

An eligibility requirement for Ontario Creates programs includes the applicant organization confirming that their interactions with Ontario Creates staff will adhere to Ontario Creates' respectful workplace policies and that they have in place both guiding principles and a process for maintaining a respectful workplace. Please download the **Applicant Affidavit** from the Ontario Creates website or from the application form in the OAP, sign, and include with your application as instructed.

Diversity - Ontario Creates values and supports diversity and gender parity at all levels and business roles within creative industries. We acknowledge that many communities continue to face systemic barriers, preventing them from participating meaningfully in these industries. 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, reflect, and strengthen diversity and gender parity in Ontario are expected to tangibly demonstrate a genuine and sustained commitment to these equity-deserving communities*. Ontario Creates encourages applications from companies that are led by BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, or People of Colour) or Francophone individuals and applicants that otherwise meaningfully meet the provincial definition of diversity**.

OMIF applicants seeking information around guiding principles and best practices are encouraged to review the **On-Screen Protocols & Pathways Media Production Guide** and the Black Screen Office **Being Seen Report** as a helpful resource.

* Equity-deserving communities are those that face significant collective challenges in participating in society. This marginalization may be caused by, but not limited to, attitudinal, historic, social and environmental barriers based on age, ethnicity, disability, economic status, gender, nationality, race, sexual orientation and transgender status. Equity-deserving communities identify barriers to equal access, opportunities and resources due to disadvantage and discrimination and actively seek social justice and reparation.

** The provincial definition of diversity includes, but is not limited to the following dimensions: ancestry, culture, ethnicity, gender identity, gender expression, language,

physical and intellectual ability, race, religion (creed), sex, sexual orientation and socio-economic status.

Accessibility - Ontario Creates welcomes applications from people with disabilities, people who are Deaf, and people who face barriers in accessing technology to complete an application. Applicants that have accessibility needs, face accessibility barriers, or require accommodations may request an alternative process or format for submitting an application, or funds (up to \$500 per application) towards service providers to assist with your application. Support for application assistance is also available to First Nations, Inuit, or Métis applicants facing language, geographic, and/or cultural barriers. Services may include, but are not limited to, assistance to create an account and navigate the Online Application Portal; transcribe/edit/organize/translate application materials; complete and submit application materials. Please contact the relevant Program Consultant listed in the program-specific guidelines a minimum of four weeks before the deadline.

Ontario Creates encourages applicants who host event-based activities to choose accessible venues and offer reasonable and meaningful accommodations for people with disabilities to participate in these activities. More information on the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act can be found at www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/05a11.

Sustainability - Ontario Creates encourages all Applicants to implement environmentally-sustainable practices and cleaner technologies – and reduce the use of unsustainable resources – in the development, production, and exploitation of their Activities.

Use of AI Technology

Applicants using AI technology should refer to the [Ontario Government's Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence Directive](#); Ontario Creates supports the following six principles for the ethical use of AI:

- **Transparent and Explainable** – transparent use and responsible disclosure around data enhancing technology like AI.
- **Good and Fair** – respects the rule of law, human rights, civil liberties, and democratic values. This includes dignity, autonomy, privacy, data protection, non-discrimination, equality and fairness.
- **Safe** – must function in a safe and secure way, and ensure tools are working as intended.
- **Accountable and Responsible** - Human accountability and decision making over AI systems within an organization needs to be clearly identified, appropriately distributed, and actively maintained throughout the system's life cycle. An organizational culture around shared ethical responsibilities over the system must also be promoted.

- Human-centric - AI systems should be designed with a clearly articulated public benefit that considers those who interact with the system and those who are affected by it. These groups should be meaningfully engaged throughout the system's life cycle, to inform development and enhance operations.
- Sensible and Appropriate - Data enhanced technologies should be designed with consideration of how they may apply to a particular sector along with awareness of the broader context. This context could include relevant social or discriminatory impacts. Program juries will be instructed to refer to this framework when reviewing projects including AI elements.

The use of AI technology must be disclosed and outlined in your application. This applies to (1) the use of AI to prepare content for the application form and supporting documents and (2) submitted projects that involve the use of AI technology in the creation of content or otherwise. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all applications and projects have access to all underlying rights, including content that is created with the assistance of AI technology. Ontario Creates reserves the right to require a legal opinion confirming compliance.

2. Application Submission

Online Application Portal - All applications must be submitted 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 Ontario Creates' website for the "OAP Quick Start Guide."

To start the application, click on "Start New Application" and follow the directions through the five-step wizard to access the application form.

For technical assistance, please contact the OAP Helpdesk at applyhelp@ontariocreates.ca.

Financial Statements - Ontario Creates requires applicants to provide financial statements to fulfill standard Ontario Government risk assessment parameters for the delivery of transfer payments. Financial statements are reviewed internally and reviews contribute to the evaluation of the feasibility of the proposed activity and the overall track record of the company. In some cases, financial statements are also used to verify company eligibility for stated program funding tiers.

Corporate Financial Statements for the two most recently completed fiscal years (financial statements must be current and dated within six months of the applicant's most recent fiscal year) must be submitted with your application:

- Internally prepared statements (profit & loss statement & balance sheet) will be accepted for requests of \$15,000 or less.
- Compilation Engagement Report, review engagement, or audited financial statements will be accepted for requests of more than \$15,000.
- A Compilation Engagement Report must be prepared and signed by an accountant who is a member in good standing of a provincial branch of the Chartered Professional Accountants (CPA).
- Review engagement or audited financial statements must be conducted by an independent public accountant who is a member in good standing of a provincial branch of the Chartered Professional Accountants (CPA).

** Exceptions may be considered for companies with less than two years of operations. Companies in this situation should contact Ontario Creates at least three weeks in advance of the deadline.*

Contrary to Public Policy - Products for which public financial support would in the opinion of Ontario Creates be contrary to public policy are not eligible. Products that are contrary to public policy may include products which are 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, and products whose dominant characteristic is the undue exploitation of sex or violence, or the combination of sex and one or more of the following subjects: crime, horror, cruelty, or violence.

FIPPA - Subject to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA), all information contained in the application will remain strictly confidential.

Communication - 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. All inquiries pertaining to Ontario Creates funds are to be directed to Ontario Creates staff only.

Final Decisions - All Ontario Creates decisions are final. 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.

Feedback - Applicants may receive feedback via a short call on request after decisions have been communicated. Feedback is provided verbally and is intended to assist with the preparation of future applications and/or ongoing activities. Evaluations are competitive and comparative for each program cycle. Incorporating feedback into a future application does not guarantee funding at a subsequent deadline.

3. Successful Applicants

Agreement - On acceptance into the program, the recipient company will be required to sign a standard Ontario Transfer Payment Agreement (TPA) covering the terms of their participation in the program, including providing Ontario Creates with permission

to use the project and delivery materials for promotional purposes. A copy of this agreement is attached for review in Section 5: Appendix 1 below. Recipients may not amend the agreement template.

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

Release of Project Information - Ontario Creates is required to provide a list of funding recipients to the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming, and to disclose funding information on the Ontario Creates website. Information provided may include but is not limited to company, project title/description, and amount of funding.

Insurance - Recipient companies will be required to carry Commercial General Liability Insurance on an occurrence basis for Third Party Bodily Injury, Personal Injury, and Property Damage, to an inclusive limit of not less than \$2,000,000 per occurrence, \$2,000,000 products and completed operations aggregate. Ontario Creates and His Majesty the King in right of Ontario need to be named as additional insureds on all policies. Please budget accordingly. Additional information on insurance requirements is available upon request.

Credit - Ontario Creates support is to be acknowledged with an Ontario Creates credit and logo on the project and all related publicity and promotional materials. Ontario Creates is to be advised in advance of any mention of Ontario Creates or Ontario Creates' involvement in the project in media releases, publicity materials, or social media. The Ontario Creates logo is available at www.ontariocreates.ca/media-room/ontario-creates-logo

Changes to the Activities - Ontario Creates must be notified of any significant changes to the activities as defined in the agreement and, if applicable, changes will require consent of Ontario Creates.

Interim Reports - Successful applicants (depending on funding amount awarded) are required to submit an interim report on the progress of their activities. Participants may also be requested to provide feedback on the process, business, and/or content development benefits and other outcomes in order for Ontario Creates to evaluate the program.

4. Delivery of Activity / Activities

Deliverables - The agreement with Ontario Creates will outline specific deliverables including, but not limited to: a cost report, copies of any materials that include Ontario Creates credit, and an assessment of the program. Since activity-related deliverables will vary, certain delivery requirements will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis at the execution of agreement stage. Participants may also be requested to provide

feedback on the process, business, and/or content development benefits and other outcomes in order for Ontario Creates to evaluate the program.

Cost Report - A Final Cost Report is required for all applications supported by Ontario Creates.

- Recipients awarded up to \$150,000 may be selected for a spot audit of the Final Cost Report. Upon request from Ontario Creates, copies of invoices & proofs of payments must be submitted.