



*Dedicated to a better Brisbane*

# Lord Mayor's Creative Fellowships Guidelines

These guidelines are for the Lord Mayor's Creative Fellowships, which support Brisbane artists, arts workers, cultural workers or creative producers to grow their creative careers with professional development opportunities.

## Introduction

The Lord Mayor's Creative Fellowships Guidelines (the **Guidelines**) establish the rules which govern the administration of the Program (the **Program**) including the application, eligibility and selection process to be followed and the assessment criteria that will be used to select grantees.

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with Council's *Creative Brisbane Creative Economy strategy* and *A City for Everyone: Inclusive Brisbane Plan 2019-2029*.

## About the program

Brisbane City Council (**Council**) is committed to fostering a vibrant and creative city, by supporting the professional development of local artists, arts workers, cultural workers or creative producers wishing to develop and expand their careers in the arts and cultural sector.

The grant supports artists working across all art forms and disciplines. This includes but is not limited to animation, craft, dance, design, ceramics, experimental and interdisciplinary art, jewellery, land art, metalwork, moving image, multimedia, music, printmaking, sculpture, tapestry and theatre.

## Objectives

The program aims to support individual talented emerging and early-career Brisbane-based creatives grow their skills and practice to build their creative careers with a structured career and professional development opportunity that may include:

- skills development
- masterclasses/workshops
- residencies
- conferences
- short course training
- defined mentorships
- structured learning experiences.

Opportunities to participate in rigorous educational/learning opportunities may come from recognised peak body organisations or arts and cultural

experts with recognised professional standing. Self-led professional development projects will not be considered.



Support of professional development may also include up to 50% of the total project budget to fund travel, accommodation and living expenses as outlined in the eligibility and grant requirement section.

*Dedicated to a better Brisbane*

A contingency plan for any unexpected events or risks that may impact the project should also be considered.

### **Intended outcome**

The purpose of the program is to attract, develop and retain our creative workforce to build creative sector sustainability, increase global cultural exchange and promote Brisbane's creative profile.

Professional development opportunities allow emerging artists to gain experience, develop networks and learn skills from the world's best. These experiences are invaluable for individual artists and the ongoing development of Brisbane's vibrant arts sector.

The program uses funds to invest in creative outcomes that align with the [Creative Brisbane Creative Economy strategy](#) to cultivate Brisbane's identity as a global city for creativity.

Council leverages its [Sister Cities](#) relationships to foster civic, economic and cultural ties.

Council strongly encourages Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, artists who identify as having a disability, identify as being culturally and linguistically diverse, who are LGBTIQ+, and/or who are under 25 to apply.

### **Grant amount and key dates**

Grants of up to \$10,000 per application are available under the program to support individual Brisbane-based artists, arts workers, cultural workers or creative producers to undertake professional development opportunities.

Applications for this program will open on Monday, 29 September 2025 and close on Monday, 17 November 2025 at 3pm. Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application late March 2026. Project activities must commence after 20 March 2026.

### **Eligibility and grant requirements**

#### **Number of applications**

Council will only accept one application per individual.

An applicant must not apply for a grant under this program if the applicant has also applied for a grant under the Creative Sparks Grant Program (regardless of whether the applicant is successful).



*Dedicated to a better Brisbane*

Preference will be given to applicants who did not receive either a Creative Sparks Grant or Lord Mayor's Creative Fellowship in the previous financial year. This does not apply where the organisation is acting as an auspice.

### Who is eligible to apply?

Applicants must:

- be an individual professional artist, arts worker, cultural worker or creative producer
- be 17 years of age or over at the time of submitting an application
- if under the age of 18 years of age, have their application co-signed by their legal guardian, confirming they will take responsibility for managing any funding that may be offered to the applicant
- be a resident of the Brisbane Local Government Area (**Brisbane LGA**)
- be a permanent resident or Australian citizen
- have an active Australian Business Number (**ABN**) that is registered under the applicant's name and location or be auspiced by an Auspice Organisation that is based in the Brisbane LGA
- demonstrate exceptional talent, initiative and passion for their work
- classify as an emerging or early-career artist\* (refer to definition in the Glossary).

An incorporated Auspice Organisation can only support a maximum of 2 applications per grant round. The incorporated Auspice Organisation must have an office in, and provides goods or services to the residents of, the Brisbane LGA.

### What activities or projects are eligible to apply?

Council will accept applications for proposed activities or projects that:

- are for professional development opportunities between 21 March 2026 and 20 March 2027
- can demonstrate the artistic, cultural, social and/or economic impacts that align with the objectives and intended outcomes of the program
- do not exceed the Limitations on Funding of up to 50% of travel, accommodation and living expenses of the total project budget requested from Council (e.g., if an applicant is requesting \$10,000 for the total project, 50% or \$5000 can be used for travel, accommodation and living expenses).

Travel can include local, intrastate, interstate and international activities.

### General eligibility requirements

All applicants must:

- not have any outstanding reporting or acquittals with Council
- hold appropriate insurance(s) to cover the applicant for the duration of the funded activity in the applicant's name
- demonstrate financial and in-kind support from their own or other sources for the proposed activity.

The program will not support 100% of the proposed activity costs. The applicant must show income from sources other than from the



*Dedicated to a better Brisbane*

Lord Mayor's Creative Fellowship in the application budget. Sources may include cash or in-kind support, other government funding, or income from fundraising, sponsors or philanthropic entities.

### **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural content and communities**

Any proposed activity or project reflecting or working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures must be endorsed by the relevant authority from that community. Applicants must show how they will acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural knowledge and intellectual property.

Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander applicants must provide appropriate letters of support from the community who will benefit from the proposed activities or project if the proposed activity or project will be delivered outside the applicant's community.

For proposed activities or projects that contain cultural material or activity where the applicant is not an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, the applicant must demonstrate that they are working in partnership with the benefited community and provide appropriate letters of support with the application.

Applications which fail to provide appropriate letters of support will be deemed ineligible.

Further details on the protocols and appropriate acknowledgements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures are available from the Creative Australia's [Protocols for using First Nations Cultural and Intellectual Property in the Arts](#).

### **Ineligible applications**

The program will not fund proposed activities or projects that are:

- an unstructured/self-directed study program
- an opportunity with a limited professional development outcome
- prizes, awards or competitions
- fundraising events, including charitable events
- school arts activities, summer/winter schools, including eisteddfods
- conducted by a political organisation or have a political purpose
- for purchase of capital items including computers, buildings, vehicles, art making equipment and musical instruments, however, hire of equipment and purchase of art-making consumables directly related to delivery of the project may be eligible
- for the development, making or installation of public artwork or art murals
- for the purposes of repayment of debt or loans
- activities that are part of a certificate, degree or other study/training at university, government or private institutions
- for projects for which the sole purpose is an exhibition, performance or making a work (such as a recording or publication). This includes performances at festivals
- for projects that are seeking the majority of funding for travel, touring, accommodation or living expenses (per diems)
- costs for activities that have or are proposed to commence before 21 March 2026.



*Dedicated to a better Brisbane*

Further, the program will not fund and grant funds must not be used for:

- contingency costs
- earning the recipient an artist fee
- projects that do not pay recommended industry award rates for those artists, arts workers and creative producers providing the professional development experience (in-kind rates must be calculated at industry standard)
- general public liability or insurance costs for the individual applicant or proposed activity or project.

Applications will be deemed ineligible if:

- the submission is incomplete
- it does not comply with eligibility criteria
- it is requesting 100% of project costs
- activities have already taken place or are in progress before funding is approved
- it does not have a clearly defined arts component
- compulsory support material is not provided including quotes for all the requested grant spend
- the proposed activity or project cannot be completed within 12 months from the Notification Date
- submitted after the closing date and time
- the applicant is:
  - a Queensland or Australian Government department (including education institutions) or agencies, foundations or grant making bodies or projects which fall under the responsibility of another tier of government
  - seeking funding for international students wishing to travel to their city of origin
  - an employee of Council
  - an organisation of any kind
  - currently in receipt of creative funding from Council to the value of \$10,000 or more in the same financial year that the grant round is open.

## **Application process**

### **Making an application**

All applications must be submitted via the online application system SmartyGrants. Please note that once the grant round has closed, changes to submitted applications cannot be made.

### **Preparing an application**

The online application system will allow applicants to save, develop and print out applications before they are submitted. Supporting material can be attached to the applicant's online application.



*Dedicated to a better Brisbane*

A budget table is required to support the application. This is a critical aspect of the submission and all applications for funding must include realistic budgets and represent value for money. The budget must have a net zero balance.

Before applying, read our budget tips, including an example of a [budget table](#).

Grants can be used to cover costs such as:

- artist fees providing the professional development experience (at industry rates)
- accommodation\*
- conference/workshop/masterclass fees
- travel, living allowance\*
- mentoring fees
- materials (directly related to the development opportunity)
- hire of studio, venue, equipment
- short course fees.

\*Note, the majority of funding cannot be used for travel, accommodation or living expenses.

Applicants are required to submit compulsory support material including biographies and CVs for key artists, personnel or other collaborators involved in the activity, peer/industry support letter, confirmation of cash or in-kind support, confirmation of the professional development activity, quotes of expenditure, if auspiced, an auspice letter of support and consent, and permission from appropriate community representatives if the proposal involves First Nations arts, cultures and communities.

Once an applicant has submitted an application:

- the applicant will receive an email confirming receipt of the application
- submitted applications will be kept confidential and the contents will not be disclosed to any person outside the application and assessment process
- the applicant will receive notification advising whether the application was successful or unsuccessful
- the list of successful applicants will be published on Council's website.

## Assessment process

### What is the assessment process?

Council will review all applications against the eligibility criteria.

Council may determine whether an application meets the eligibility requirements in these guidelines at any stage during the assessment of the application.

If an application is ineligible, the application will not be progressed through the assessment process.

## The assessment process



*Dedicated to a better Brisbane*

Provided the eligibility criteria for making a grant application under these guidelines are satisfied, the project will be assessed against the following assessment criteria. The bullet points under each criteria indicate what assessors may consider when assessing your application. Applications do not need to respond to every bullet point listed.

Criterion number	Criterion	Percentage weighting
1	<b>Quality (Applicant's talent and demonstrated commitment to their practice)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Track record, creative achievement and skill of the artist or artists involved.</li><li>Quality of the professional development activity.</li><li>Artistic rationale, why you have chosen this activity.</li></ul>	40%
2	<b>Benefit (Relevance and benefits of the experience to the applicant's career development)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Impact it will have (e.g., to your career, artistic and cultural practice, the sector or the community).</li><li>Outcomes you hope to achieve.</li><li>Your need for the activity.</li></ul>	40%
3	<b>Viability (Viability of the proposed project)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Achievable objectives and timeline.</li><li>Realistic budget with quotes demonstrating value for money.</li><li>Evidence of additional resources and support, including other sources of income and in-kind contributions.</li><li>Relevant high-quality support material including required compulsory support material.</li><li>Evidence of appropriate cultural permissions for the use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stories or content that is not your own.</li></ul>	20%

Following the initial assessment by Council officers, recommendations will be provided to the Comparative Assessment Committee for review before presentation to Council's delegate. Council's delegate makes the final decision regarding funding allocation. All decisions are final and there will be no review or appeal process.

Eligible applications are considered on merit against the assessment criteria so not all eligible applications will be awarded funding.

## Successful applicants



### The Funding Agreement

*Dedicated to a better Brisbane*

Successful applicants must enter into a legally binding grant agreement with Council (the Funding Agreement). Council will not release any funds from the grant to a successful applicant unless and until the Funding Agreement executed.

The applicant must:

- ensure they continue to comply with these guidelines
- deliver the approved project in accordance with the contents of the submitted applications approved by Council for the provision of a grant
- comply with the Funding Agreement (including any applicable special conditions and appropriate acknowledgement of Council's contribution to the Approved Purpose)
- submit a variation to Council if there are changes to the project for approval prior to proceeding with the project amendment
- fully acquit the grant to Council in accordance with the Funding Agreement.

Any decision by Council to grant funding under this program does not amount to Council's consent or approval for the carrying out of the approved activities or project.

Successful applicants are responsible for ensuring all other consent and approvals required to conduct the approved activities or project are obtained.

### Acquittal

All funds must be acquitted within 12 months of the Notification Date by completing and submitting a project acquittal form online through SmartyGrants.

This document must detail the outcomes of the project and how the funds were spent. It must demonstrate that funding has been used for the purpose for which it was provided, include a report of financial transactions and provide evidence that the project achieved its intended objectives.

Successful applicants will receive a link to the Acquittal Form that will be attached to their application in SmartyGrants.

If a successful applicant fails to properly acquit the funds in accordance with the Funding Agreement, the applicant will be ineligible to apply for another grant from Council for a period of 2 years.

### Unsuccessful applicants

Failure to receive funding is not necessarily due to a poor application but may be the result of a high volume of applications. Unsuccessful applicants may seek feedback on their application by contacting a Council Grants Officer and may be encouraged to resubmit their application for consideration in a future grant round.

## Enquiries



Further information is available by [contacting Council](#), and request to speak with a Creative Sector Development Coordinator.

*Dedicated to a better Brisbane*

Applicants with a hearing impairment or speech impairment can contact Council through the National Relay Service (NRS):

- Teletypewriter (TTY) users can phone 13 36 77 and ask for 07 3403 8888
- Speak and Listen users can phone 1300 555 727 and ask for 07 3403 8888
- Internet relay users can connect to the [NRS](#) and ask for 07 3403 8888.

This information is available in other languages by contacting the Translating and Interpreter Services on 13 14 50 and asking to be connected to Council on 07 3403 8888. All enquiry services are free.

Refer to the [SmartyGrants help guide](#) for technical assistance when submitting an application. The SmartyGrants support desk is open 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday on 03 9320 6888 or by [email](#).

## Glossary

This Glossary contains terms and phrases applicants may need to be familiar with when planning an application.

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural knowledge and Intellectual Property means** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' interests in their culture, heritage and knowledge and includes the intangible and tangible aspects of cultural practices, cultural expressions, resources and knowledge systems that have been, and continue to be, developed, nurtured and refined by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as part of expressing their cultural identity. It excludes Intellectual Property Rights and Moral rights.

An **Aboriginal person** is someone who is of Aboriginal descent, identifies as an Aboriginal person and is accepted as such in the community where he or she lives or comes from.

The **Acquittal Form** is due within 12 months from the Notification Date and explains the outcomes of the project and how the funds were spent. It must demonstrate that the funding has been used for the purpose for which it was provided, including a certified report of financial transactions and provide evidence that the project achieved its intended objectives. Successful applicants will receive a link to the Acquittal Form that will be attached to their application in SmartyGrants.

**Art form** refers to the different creative industry sectors as outlined in the ANZSCO occupations and ANZSIC industry classes.

An **artist** or **cultural worker** is a creative person who has specialist training in their field (not necessarily in academic institutions), committed to devoting significant time to their creative activity or practice and who creates art or cultural value as identified with their profession.

An **arts worker** is a person who manages or facilitates the development of arts and cultural activity.



*Dedicated to a better Brisbane*

**Assessment criteria** are the specified principles or standards, against which applications will be judged. These criteria are also used to assess the merits of proposals and to determine application rankings.

**Assessment process** is where applications are assessed against the assessment criteria under these guidelines and a determination is made for recommendation to Council's delegate.

An **Auspice Organisation** is an incorporated not-for-profit organisation with an ABN that accepts and manages the legal and financial responsibility of the funding on behalf of the recipient. The organisation must be based within the Brisbane LGA.

An Auspice Organisation is responsible for providing a financial report on the completion of a project. It is not responsible for the artistic direction or quality of the project. If an applicant states in their application that they are being auspiced by an Auspice Organisation, a letter from that Auspice Organisation must be provided, signed by the chair, president or chief executive officer (or equivalent) of the organisation, agreeing to auspice the proposal.

**Australian Business Number (ABN)** is a unique 11-digit number that identifies your business to the government and community. The name of the applicant must match the name of the ABN and the name of the bank account we pay the grant into. There are no exceptions to this rule. If you cannot provide an ABN and bank account that are in the same name as the applicant, you will need to nominate an administrator for your grant.

Paying **Award Rates/Industry Standard** means the applicant must be able to demonstrate that award rates or industry standard are paid to arts and cultural workers involved in the proposed activities or project. For further information please refer to the [Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance](#), [Arts Law](#), [Australian Production Design Guild](#), [Musicians Australia](#), [National Association for the Visual Arts](#), [Theatre Network Australia](#), [Ausdance Queensland](#), [Australian Writers' Guild](#), [Australian Society of Authors](#), [Access Arts](#), [BlakDance](#), [Museums and Galleries Queensland](#), [Musicians Union of Australia](#).

The **Comparative Assessment Committee** is an internal Council group whose role is to undertake a review of the assessment process and funding recommendations.

**Creative producer** is the term applied to someone who enables the making of a creative product including management of finances, marketing, associated legal and royalty issues. A creative producer may or may not have a technical role in the development of creative product (e.g., a music producer may not necessarily produce the music).

**Culturally and linguistically diverse** people are people who were born, or whose parents were born in a non-English speaking country and from communities with diverse language, ethnic background, nationality, dress, traditions, food, societal structures, art and religious characteristics.



**Development opportunities** are cultural activities that have a development intention, for emerging or established artists of any age and skill level.

*Dedicated to a better Brisbane*

**Eligible** means that the applicant or project satisfies the conditions for funding.

**Emerging or early career artists** is to be an artist practicing within 10 years of graduating from an undergraduate degree (or equivalent). However, this does not mean that applicants need to have attained formal qualifications in their area of practice to be considered for a grant. Where an applicant does not have formal training, the beginning of their practice is commonly marked by a significant recognition of the artist's work and the artist's vocational commitment to ongoing practice.

An artist who has exercised a number of roles within an art form is deemed to have continuous practice within that art form. That is, an applicant whose art form is visual arts and whose career began in art making and subsequently shifted to art curation will be regarded as having continuous practice in the visual arts. In calculating their years of practice, the nominee should combine these two periods.

An artist whose career commenced as an actor and who subsequently shifted their focus exclusively to stage direction would be regarded as having a continuous theatre practice. A dancer who has moved into choreography will be regarded as having continuous dance practice.

**Fellowship** is funding awarded to applicants for purpose of professional development in their chosen art form.

The **funding agreement** is the binding agreement between Council and a successful applicant under this grant program and which contains obligations relating to the grant of funding including any special conditions that may be applicable.

**GST** stands for Goods and Services Tax. If an applicant or Auspice Organisation is GST registered, Council will pay the grant amount plus relevant GST supported by a taxable invoice. If an applicant or Auspice organisation is not GST registered, the relevant GST will be added to the grant, but not itemised as GST. For advice on GST, please contact a tax advisor or the Australian Taxation Office on 13 24 78 or visit their [website](#).

**In-kind support** are goods and services you receive but do not pay for including volunteer labour, administrative support, furniture, equipment, materials, venue and office space, professional services (e.g., legal, financial) and technical services. These contributions should be given a dollar value and must be included in the proposed budget.

**Intellectual Property Rights** includes all present and future rights in relation to copyright, trademarks, designs, patents, trade, business or company names, trade secret, confidential or other proprietary rights, or any rights to registration of such rights whether created before or after the date of this Funding Agreement, and whether existing in Australia or otherwise, but excludes Moral Rights.



*Dedicated to a better Brisbane*

**Letters of support** can be provided from individuals, groups or organisations. A support letter should explain how the project or activity will benefit you, other artists or arts professionals, participants, or the broader community. It can also detail the support or involvement of key project partners, or evidence of consultation.

You can include up to 3 letters of support, with each letter not exceeding one A4 page.

**Moral rights** means the right of integrity of authorship, the right of attribution of authorship and the right not to have authorship falsely attributed, more particularly as conferred by the *Copyright Act 1968* (Cth), and rights of a similar nature anywhere in the world, whether existing before or after the date of the Terms and Conditions.

**Notification Date** is the date that Council notifies the applicant, in writing, of the application outcome.

**Partnership** is an agreement between the applicant and another entity providing access to resources and opportunities that would otherwise be unavailable to the proposed activity.

**Public liability insurance** is third-party insurance designed to protect not only members of the public but visitors, trespassers, sub-contractors or anyone else who may be physically injured and/or whose property may be damaged whilst you undertake your project. It does not usually cover employees or volunteers. For further information about insurance, visit the [Arts Law Centre of Australia](#).

**Professional development** opportunities grow your skills and practice and build your career. For example, skills development, attending masterclasses, workshops, art residencies, attendance at conferences, short course training, defined mentorships and structured learning experiences.

Opportunities to participate in professional development activity may come from recognised peak body organisations or arts and cultural experts with recognised professional standing.

Professional development activity does not refer to self-led professional development project. Self-devised projects will not be considered including, for example and among other things, a non-structured mentorship program, meetings, networking opportunities, public appearances, interviews, attending performances, exhibitions, festivals or events.

A **quote** is the estimated price of a job or service. Obtaining quotes are required in the application to substantiate budget expenses.

**Sister Cities** are relationships established for their strategic relevance to the City of Brisbane and its residents. Sister Cities share commonalities and synergies with Brisbane across various fields. For example, the existence of any trade ties, economic characteristics and key industry sectors to maximise the best possible business outcomes for Brisbane.



**SmartyGrants** is the online application portal used to receive applications. Applicants register creating a username and password to access the relevant application forms and documents.

*Dedicated to a better Brisbane*

**Support material** helps to build your case for funding and provides evidence that your application meets the funding criteria. The amount of detail and supporting evidence you provide in your application should be relative to the size, complexity and grant amount requested.

If you don't supply all the support material relevant to your fund it is unlikely that your application will be recommended for funding.

Compulsory support material you **must** include:

- artistic CV summaries for key artists, arts professionals, collaborators, or partners involved
- confirmation of cash or in-kind support
- budget showing appropriate payments to creatives providing the professional development opportunity
- peer/industry support letter
- confirmation of the professional development activity, if successful
- quotes to substantiate budget expenses
- evidence of proper consultation, consent, and permission from appropriate community representatives if your proposal involves First Nations arts, cultures and communities. Please read the Cultural Engagement Framework for guidance on working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and cultures
- if auspiced, an auspice letter of support.

A **Torres Strait Islander person** is someone who is of Torres Strait Islander descent, identifies as a Torres Strait Islander person and is accepted as such in the community where he or she lives or comes from.

**Travel, accommodation and living expenses** refers to the mode of travel (air, road, rail) and their associated costs (e.g., petrol), the type of accommodation required (e.g., hotel, house rental) and the day-to-day living expenses (e.g., food, bills).

**Variation approval** from Council is required if you have any changes to your project, prior to proceeding with the project amendment. You can request a grant agreement variation to:

- adjust activity milestones
- extend the timeframe for a reasonable period of time to allow completion of the activity
- make minor changes to grant activities (only for unforeseeable events)
- make changes to activity personnel
- change allocations across approved budget line items (if over 10% of the total grant – budget reallocations to approved budget lines under 10% of the total grant do not require formal approval).

If you wish to propose changes to the grant agreement, you must complete a Request for Variation form via SmartyGrants.



You should not assume that a variation request will be successful. Your request will be considered based on factors such as:

*Dedicated to a better Brisbane*

- how it affects the activity outcome
- whether it is consistent with the grant objectives
- whether it's within the grant's permitted timeframe.