

First Nations Commissioning Fund - Guidelines

The First Nations Commissioning Fund (the Fund) is a key program of the Queensland Government's [Grow 2022-2026](#), the second action plan for [Creative Together 2020-2030](#), and is focused on investing in opportunities that share First Nations stories and cultural knowledge, and elevate awareness of Queensland's exceptional First Nations arts and cultural products and experiences.

Fund objectives

- Support the development and presentation of new work and cultural programs by First Nations artists, arts workers, and organisations
- Strengthen skills development and provide new employment opportunities for First Nations artists and arts workers
- Grow a pipeline of high-quality First Nations arts, cultural products, and experiences

What the funding can be used for

This fund is for First Nations applicants only. The Fund supports applications from individuals and organisations for First Nations-led arts and cultural projects and programs at different stages of development from consultation and planning, and creative development, through to production, presentation, and distribution.

In addition, applicants have the option to apply for additional funding towards a First Nations industry placement as part of the project, and/or the commissioning of new live or recorded music as part of the project.

Funding available

For single-year projects up to **\$70,000** for:

- projects and programs for up to 12 months

For two-year projects up to **\$150,000** (open to applications in January 2023) for:

- projects and programs that need a larger and/or longer scale of development of up to two years and include presentation and/or distribution.

PLUS up to **\$60,000** towards one First Nations full-time industry placement for 12-months (or a pro rata equivalent for part-time) with a focus on arts management and/or arts production. The placement must be:

- built into the planned activity, and you must provide evidence of your intention for continued employment of the person or role
- supported by a holistic skills development program and a supervisor with appropriate experience
- paid at least minimum award wage and covered under employer's Workcover and superannuation.

Multi-year funded applicants approved for this extra funding will have the option to apply for an additional \$30,000 (or a pro rata equivalent) in Year 2 to continue employment of the placement if they can demonstrate the successful delivery of Year 1 and provide evidence of how they will transition to the continued employment of the person or role beyond the second year the project.

PLUS up to \$10,000 towards commissioning new music by Queensland-based First Nations composers, musicians or librettists as part of your project.

Eligibility

Please refer to the Arts Queensland [General Funding Guidelines](#) for general eligibility criteria and definitions. In addition, the Fund requires that applicants must:

- be an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander artist/arts worker, organisation or collective based in Queensland. For the purposes of The Fund, a First Nations organisation is one that is at least 50% owned and led by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples, who have formal authority to make decisions in operations and governance of the organisation.
- **not** apply for 100% of the total project costs

If applying for funding for a placement:

- the applicant must have a proven track record in the provision of a safe workplace with skills development and on-the-job training capacity
- the placement must be a First Nations person permanently based in Queensland.

Applicants may only receive one First Nations Commissioning Fund grant per calendar year, however they are also able to receive a further grant for a different project through the Queensland Arts Showcase Program within the same calendar year.

Eligible and ineligible costs

In addition to the items listed in the [General Funding Guidelines](#):

- you **can** apply for:
 - costs towards artistic collaboration with a nationally or internationally significant artist or company for an outcome in Queensland
- you **cannot** apply for:
 - agents' fees, or management fees for participating artists
 - equipment purchases or digital upgrades over \$3,000 (excluding GST)
 - expenses associated with core staff involved in funded activities including fees or wages, travel, accommodation and living-away-from-home allowances.

Assessment criteria

The Fund Assessment Panel, comprised of 100% First Nations representation, will assess applications against the following criteria, which aligns with the [General Funding Guidelines](#) criteria:

High quality

- Creative idea or concept is innovative and will deliver high quality First Nations arts and cultural work
- Professionals involved are highly skilled and well regarded
- Includes collaborators and partners who will help create great cultural outcomes

Strong impact

- Creates new employment opportunities and skills development for First Nations artists and arts workers in Queensland
- Builds new audiences and markets and reputation for First Nations arts and cultures
- Responds to community needs and helps deliver government priorities including the principles of the [Cultural Engagement Framework](#)

Sustainable value

- Demonstrates value for money, sound governance, and ethical business practices, including paying amount not less than industry award rates, recommended or agreed minimum rates, and adhering to cultural protocols
- Proposed activity has a strong delivery plan including understanding potential risks and their management
- Will contribute to the sustainability and growth of the First Nations arts and cultural sector in Queensland

Note: To best support the growth of quality First Nations arts outcomes, the Fund Assessment Panel may recommend meritorious applications that can't be supported within the Fund budget, for consideration by First Nations members of the Queensland Arts Showcase Program (QASP) Assessment Panel.

Submitting your application

You can submit your application, along with project timeframe, budget, and support materials including letters of support, artist biographies/CVs, examples of prior work and appropriate cultural permissions, through SmartyGrants: <https://artsqueensland.smartygrants.com.au>

Applications must be submitted by the below listed Fund closing dates.

	Open	Close	Notification	Activity Start Date
Round 2 (single and two-year projects)	16 January 2023	12 noon 13 March 2023	week of 15 May 2023	from 5 June 2023
Round 3 (single and two-year projects)	17 April 2023	12 noon 5 June 2023	week of 14 August 2023	from 4 September 2023

For support with technical issues related to the online application, please contact an Arts Queensland Grants Officer on telephone (07) 3034 4016 or toll free 1800 175 531 or email investment@arts.qld.gov.au.

Note: Arts Queensland reserves the right to modify the Fund Guidelines at any time. Applicants will be notified of changes.