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Summary of the Peer Jury Feedback

Creation and Documentation Programs October 1st, 2025 Deadlines

Creation Program

General Information and Data

- 216 applications to the Creation program were evaluated by 7 peer juries, divided by artistic discipline.
 - Applications submitted in Multidisciplinary Arts were juried alongside the discipline closest aligned with each respective project, as determined by artsnb staff.
 - Applications submitted in Architecture were evaluated by the Visual Arts jury.
 - Applications in Literary Arts were juried separately by language.
 - An additional 3 applications were disqualified due to their ineligibility for this program. These applicants were directed to reapply for a different, more appropriate grant for their project.
 - 1 additional application was withdrawn by the applicant before peer jury evaluation.
- The 216 applications juried in this competition received the following results:
 - 63 applications received a status of "Recommended," and received funding.
 - 55 additional applications received a status of "Merit." This status indicates that the jury wished to recommend these applications for funding, but that the program budget was insufficient to fund all meriting applications.
 - 98 applications received a status of "Not Recommended." This status indicates that the jury did not recommend these applications for funding. It does not necessarily mean that the work lacks merit, rather, that the applications themselves were less competitive in the application pool received for this deadline.
- Grant assessment is a competitive process and budgets are limited. Remember that each deadline receives a different set of applications and is evaluated by different groups of peer jurors.
- Of 63 grants awarded, 22 were awarded to applicants receiving their first grant from artsnb.
- For more detailed information including success rates by category and by artistic discipline, please consult [the news release](#) featuring the results of this deadline.
- For useful tips and recommendations on preparing an artsnb application, please consult the [Application Toolkit](#).

General Feedback (all disciplines and juries)



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- The 7 peer juries were excited about the diversity of artistic styles present in the applications submitted for this deadline. They especially wished to commend the number of artists who are attuned to the impact their work has on their community.
- The juries encouraged all applicants to keep applying and improving their grant writing skills. Most of the time, when an application does not receive a grant, it is because the jury felt it did not include enough detail about the artist's vision, their proposed project, or their work plan to accomplish the project. The juries recognized the value of all the projects proposed and encouraged applicants to keep seeking support for their work.

Project description

- The juries appreciated project descriptions that clearly and concisely laid out the following elements:
 - A clear description of the proposed work or works (e.g.: type, number, and scale or length of pieces to be created or performed; whether the goal is a performance, a script, an installation, a sculpture, a novel, etc.)
 - A feasible work plan (e.g.: estimated timeline of steps toward creating the final work; the roles to be carried out by the applicant and their collaborators; etc.)
 - A brief statement on the applicant's approach to relevant themes (e.g.: why this project, and why now? How do the proposed choices of form or technique relate to the topic of the work? Who is the desired audience for the work? What is the message or desired impact?)
 - A brief explanation of how the proposed project will progress the applicant's artistic practice. (e.g.: how will this project challenge your skills? Will this project allow you to make connections with new publics or collaborators? What are your ambitions for the completed artwork?)
- The juries recommended that applicants avoid making abstract statements about the impact of the proposed project. If an application does not show how the proposed activities will concretely achieve the stated goal of the project, this can affect how the juries view the feasibility of the application.
- The juries noted that several applicants would benefit from having someone proofread their project descriptions to improve quality and clarity. Applicants who could use peer or professional support due to disabilities or language barriers may be eligible for funding from artsnb's [Application Assistance](#) program.
- For projects that require the artist to work with a mentor or that are focused on marketing existing works rather than creating new works, the juries recommended that applicants refer to, respectively, artsnb's Career Development—Professional Development and Career Development—Professionalization and Promotion grants.

Budget

- The juries recommended including detailed budget breakdowns whenever an application includes multiple types of expenses, e.g., multiple types of materials, many different services required, collaborator fees. The juries encouraged applicants to use the new description column in the budget form to include explanations for each expense requested.



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- The juries recommended that the priority of an application budget should be dedicated to paying artist fees for the applicant and any collaborating artists as they create new works.
- For applicants who have additional revenue sources beyond the requested grant, such as grants from another public arts funder, the juries recommended indicating whether these revenues are confirmed or pending decision.
- The juries reminded applicants to consult the [program guidelines](#) to ensure they are not requesting funding for ineligible expenses.

Artist CV

- The juries had the following recommendations for the artist CV:
 - The artist CV should focus on the applicant's professional experience in the arts and can leave out any non-artistic work experience.
 - The artist CV should include dates for each listed publication, performance, or exhibition. The juries recommended listing these items in descending order, listing the most recent experiences first.
 - The artist CV can include a section to list any previous grants, scholarships, and awards the applicant may have received.
 - For applicants whose practice spans multiple artistic disciplines, the juries recommended using a version of their CV that first lists their experience in the discipline most relevant to the proposed project, before listing their work in other disciplines.
- For more recommendations on how to prepare an artist CV, applicants may consult the [Application Toolkit](#) on artsnb's website.

Samples of work

- The juries wished to remind applicants that their samples of work are meant to support the application by demonstrating skills, techniques, or approaches that show the applicant's capability to undertake the proposed project. Samples of work should be relevant to the proposed project, and presented in an order that places the most relevant or more recent works first, as these are the first examples of the applicant's art that juries see. The juries recommended using the description box for each uploaded sample to explain why this specific piece was included in this application.
- For applicants who have already begun working on a draft or prototype of the proposed project, the juries recommended including samples from these preliminary works to give a better understanding of the applicant's approach to the project.
- The juries appreciated when applicants using longer works for their samples indicated the appropriate excerpts to be viewed using time stamps or page ranges.
- The juries wished to remind applicants that samples of work should not be hosted on websites that are paywalled or require subscription, as jurors must be able to easily access the samples to evaluate them. For more recommendations on submitting Samples of Work, applicants may consult Appendix 2 of the [Creation program guidelines](#).



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- For applications presenting photographs, video, or audio of the applicant's work, the juries wished to remind applicants to ensure their samples are of clear and consistent quality, as a low-quality video or image may detract from the quality of the work presented. While professional quality photos or recordings are not required, applicants who wish to hire a professional photographer to document their works for this purpose may apply for artsnb's Career Development—Professionalization and Promotion grant program.

Collaborative projects

- For applications that involve multiple co-creators, the juries recommended explaining what makes these chosen collaborators important for the project at hand (e.g. they have previous experience working with the primary applicant, or they bring a new skill to the collaboration, etc.). This information could be included in the project description or in the collaborator agreement letters.
- The juries also appreciated collaborative applications that allocated clear and fair payment for all artistic collaborators. For applicants who are newer to collaborative work, the juries suggested seeking industry standards for artist fees via artists' associations (e.g. [CARFAC](#), the [Canadian League of Composers](#), etc.).

Research, Consultation, and Cultural Relationships

- The juries advised keeping answers in the Cultural Relationships section specific to the ethical relationships directly related to the project. The purpose of this section is to make the approach to communities implicated in the project more transparent, which can include self-identification if relevant and/or explanations of the methods by which the applicant will obtain consent and recognize the involvement of those communities.

Letters of Recommendation

- While letters of recommendation are optional for the Creation program, many of the juries recommended that new and early-career applicants include letters to provide jurors with more context for their practice and accomplishments so far.
- When including letters of recommendation, please note that it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure the letters are sent to artsnb within one week of the application deadline. While there is no penalty for missing letters of recommendation, many of the juries had questions when an application listed the name of a recommender, but no letter was received.

Additional discipline-specific jury feedback

Craft

- The jury appreciated applications that demonstrated how the proposed project would relate to and expand the artist's existing practice. Beyond simply creating new pieces, how will a new body of work evolve the applicant's technical skills and/or concepts?



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- In the case of multiple artists applying separately for a single, collaborative project, the jury recommended that each applicant should explain how the project is relevant to their individual practice, rather than having all collaborators use the same project description.
- For samples of work, the jury recommended using the description box to clearly explain the techniques, scale, and context for the image in relation to the proposed project. The jury also recommended that applicants use high-quality photographs of their work (in focus, not blurry, well-lit). Applicants who seek funding to have their works photographed professionally are encouraged to apply artsnb's [Career Development—Professionalization and Promotion](#) grant program.

Literary Arts

- The jury was excited about the range of multidisciplinary projects proposed by literary artists, especially when elements such as video, visual, or audio were demonstrated to both complement and complete the written work proposed.
- The jury cautioned applicants to heed the maximum length for Samples of Work. They noted that literary artists in particular should not disregard the importance of editing their work to follow submission guidelines, as this is an important element of professionalism that demonstrates respect for the labour of peer jury members and potential editors or publishers.
- The jury recommended that applicants focus the budget for a Creation grant on the research and writing phase of creating a new work, instead of taking on too much activity for one grant. The jury recommended separating production-related expenses like editing, manuscript submission fees, book cover design, book printing, and launches into an application for another grant program. The jury referred artists who seek to fund these expenses to artsnb's [Career Development—Professionalization and Promotion](#) grant program.

Media Arts

- For applicants proposing a project outside their usual experience (e.g. moving from acting to directing) or on a larger scale than they have previously achieved, the jury recommended working with collaborators and/or mentors. The jury appreciated applications that presented agreements with each collaborator and that showed how each member of a team will support the applicant's ability to complete the project.
- In the budget section, the jury recommended including explanations of how each requested amount is estimated. For example, which industry standard or fee schedule was used to calculate fees for cast and crew? The jury encouraged applicants to use the description field in the budget form, as this provides the chance to explain the proposed expenses and the value of the applicant's and collaborators' labour.

Music

- The jury appreciated applications that included specific goals (i.e. number of songs being written, length of time for composition research, number of days in recording studio, etc.), as well as a detailed work plan to show how these goals will be achieved.



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- The jury encouraged applicants to propose a specific style, theme, or concept they would like to explore when writing songs for a new album, and to explain how the music will connect to the themes or ideas being proposed.
- For projects proposing to commission a composer for a new piece, the jury recommended including samples of work from the proposed composer.
- For applicants proposing a project outside their usual experience (e.g. starting a solo career after playing in bands), the jury recommended focusing the project description on this new direction rather than detailing past work.

Performing Arts (Dance and Theatre)

- The jury appreciated projects that demonstrated a clear relationship between the theme and the logistics of the project. For example: for applications that require travel, the applicant could explain why the proposed location is relevant to the concept of the project; or, an applicant can use the samples of work section to show their developing relationship to their proposed theme.
- For performance-based projects, the jury recommended including video or audio samples of the applicant's previous performances. While stills from performances can be useful, they do not alone provide sufficient information for the jury to evaluate a project from a performing artist. Applicants who seek funding to have their works recorded professionally are encouraged to apply artsnb's [Career Development—Professionalization and Promotion](#) grant program.
- Since Dance and Theatre are often collaborative disciplines, the juries wished to emphasize the importance of including letters of agreement for each collaborator.
- The jury wished to encourage artists in dance, theatre, and performance to pursue mentorships that will continue to foster their growth and technical skills. Applicants who seek to fund a mentorship opportunity are encouraged to apply to artsnb's [Career Development—Professional Development](#) grant program.

Visual Arts and Architecture

- The jury appreciated applications that demonstrated how the project would develop the applicant's artistic practice. For example, how does this project build upon the foundation of the applicant's previous work, or, what new direction might the applicant explore?
- The jury encourages applicants to use concise, direct, and accessible language in their project descriptions, rather than overusing academic terminology or abstract language.
- The jury emphasized that samples of work should present a piece clearly. This means: clear lighting, on a neutral background, without decorative elements or people posing with the work, and without obvious watermarks, which can obscure important details. Applicants who seek funding to have their works photographed professionally are encouraged to apply artsnb's [Career Development—Professionalization and Promotion](#) grant program.

Documentation Program



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General Information

- 17 applications to the Documentation program were evaluated by a multidisciplinary jury of peers.
 - An additional 2 applications were disqualified due to their ineligibility for this program, and were directed to reapply for a different, more appropriate grant for their project.
- The 17 applications juried for this deadline received the following results:
 - 6 applications received a status of "Recommended," and received funding.
 - 4 additional applications received a status of "Merit." This status indicates that the jury wished to recommend these applications for funding, but that the program budget was insufficient to fund all meriting applications.
 - 7 applications received a status of "Not Recommended." This status indicates that the jury did not recommend these applications for funding. It does not necessarily mean that the work lacks merit, rather, that the applications themselves were less competitive in the application pool received for this program deadline.
- Grant assessment is a competitive process and budgets are limited. Remember that each deadline receives a different set of applications and is evaluated by a different group of peer jurors.
- For more detailed information including success rates by artistic discipline, please consult the [news release](#) featuring the results of this deadline.
- For useful tips and recommendations on preparing an artsnb application, please consult the [Application Toolkit](#).

General Feedback

- The jury appreciated applications that featured strong, clear writing that communicates the applicant's passion while explaining the project, its timeline, and its possible impact.
- For projects in any discipline that proposed to feature interviews or conversations with other artists (documentaries, podcasts, videoclips, etc.), the jury recommended that applicants explain what original angle the applicant wishes to bring to that format.
- The jury recommended that applicants proposing to curate, interview, or include the work of numerous collaborators should name the artists they wish to feature, and include samples of their work as well as samples of the applicant's work.
- For projects that are regionally specific or involve working with specific communities the artist is not part of, the jury emphasized the importance of including a plan to ensure cultural sensitivity and feature the voices of those the project wishes to represent. The jury appreciated when applicants clearly explained how their own position shapes the project, how they will build the relationships required to create the proposed project, and how their collaborators will be acknowledged and compensated for their work.
- For applicants who are taking on an ambitious project outside their previous experience and applicants who are in their early career, the jury recommended seeking mentorships that will develop technical and critical skills. Applicants who seek funding to undertake



such a mentorship are encouraged to apply to artsnb's [Career Development—Professional Development](#) grant program.