



City of Nanaimo Culture Grant - 1-Year Operating (2026) Guidelines, Application Form & Terms and Conditions

This is an application package for the City of Nanaimo's Culture Operating Grant, available to Nanaimo non-profit cultural organizations.

Before completing this application form, refer to the eligibility criteria and guidelines.

Note: Three-year funding is available to established professional culture and heritage non-profit organizations that have been in operation for at least 4 years. Find the 3-Year Operating Grant Application [HERE](#).

2026 Grant Application Deadline: October 7, 2025 (4:00 pm)

Should you experience challenges or barriers in this application process or require additional support, we encourage you to reach out BEFORE application deadline to:
cultureandevents@nanaimo.ca (250-755-4483)

How to Submit your Application

- **Online (by 4:00 pm)**
Upload a PDF of the signed application and attachments for all sections using the online submission process
<https://www.nanaimo.ca/your-government/grants/culture-operating-grant>
- **Hardcopy application at the Bowen Complex Dropbox (by 4:00 pm)** located at 500 Bowen Road. The dropbox is accessible from outside, and is located on the lower level of the building near the tennis courts (Pine Street Entrance). Please make sure your package is clearly marked with the applicable grant name.

A confirmation email will be sent to all applicants using the email address indicated in your application form to confirm that we have received your submission.

Important Notes

- **Late applications will not be reviewed.**
- Applicant (or representative) must have attended a **MANDATORY Grant Preparation Zoom/ In-Person meeting** prior to submission.
- Organizations that have not had a representative attend a mandatory *Grant Preparation Zoom* meeting may be considered ineligible OR be subject to a minimum 10% reduction in available grant funding at the Grant Panel's discretion.

Grant Preparation Zoom/ In-Person Meeting Date Options			
Tues, Sept 23 rd	6:00 – 7:00pm	Project	Click for Link - Sept 23rd Project Meeting ID: 837 8726 9337
Wed, Sept 24 th	6:00 – 7:00pm	Operating	Click for Link - Sept 24th Operating Meeting ID: 894 9176 7349
Fri, Sept 26 th	6:00 – 7:00pm	DERF	Click for Link - Sept 26th DERF Meeting ID: 810 0184 5651
Sat, Sept 27 th	10 – 11:30am	All Grants	Click for Link – Sept 27th ALL Grants Meeting ID: 824 8058 2954
Mon, Sept 29 th	1 – 2:30pm	All Grants	In-person at the Bowen Complex, 500 Bowen Rd.
Wed, Oct 1 st	6 – 7:30pm	All Grants	Click for Link – Oct 1st All Grants Meeting ID: 886 0377 8937

- Applicants who have received funding in previous years **must submit a Final Report within 90 days of your most recent completed fiscal year.** If the fiscal year/AGM has not been completed at time of application, an **Interim Report** must be submitted prior to further grant application. Failure to provide a Final Report will render new applications ineligible.
- Culture [Operating Grant Final Report Form template](#) and [Budget Form](#) is available online (or by contacting us directly).

For more information, contact:
Culture & Events
250-755-4483
culturegrants@nanaimo.ca

Introduction

The City of Nanaimo recognizes the vital contribution of arts, culture and heritage activities to the City's economic and social progress; the value of artistic and cultural expression; and enjoyment of life by its citizens. The work of the Culture & Events team is guided by the City of Nanaimo's strategic planning document, [City Plan - Nanaimo ReImagined](#). The City Plan outlines a commitment to investing in arts and culture for the purpose of strengthening the City's economic base, improving the quality of life of residents, and enhancing community identity and pride. Further grounded within this integrated document are the City's strategic goals to build respectful, collaborative relationships with the communities we serve.

Culture opens our minds to new perspectives. As convenor, connector, facilitator, enabler and funder, the City of Nanaimo recognizes the crucial role of Nanaimo's independent arts, culture and heritage organizations to be united by a desire to create impact and value for diverse publics.

Purpose

To provide operational support for the activities of professional arts, culture and heritage organizations that play a significant role in contributing to the culture profile and economic vitality of Nanaimo.

Strategic Priorities

The City's strategic funding priorities for the program include:

- activities that encourage the expression and visibility of arts, culture and heritage;
- activities that promote and raise the cultural profile of Nanaimo;
- innovative collaborations and partnerships with other arts groups, community and cross-sector organizations; and
- neighbourhood-based activities.

Program Objectives

This grant is intended to support arts, culture and heritage non-profit organizations based in Nanaimo with demonstrated commitment to contributing to the cultural life of the City who:

- foster public enjoyment, engagement, community pride and a sense of shared identity through broad public access to a variety of quality arts, culture and heritage offerings
- support and compensate local and regional professional artists
- contribute a significant impact to the local creative economy
- advance local arts, culture and heritage practices by contributing to Nanaimo's cultural life locally, regionally, nationally and internationally

Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must:

- be incorporated as a non-profit based in Nanaimo and must be in good standing (provincially and / or federally) as a non-profit arts, culture or heritage organization with a mandate to serve the public;
- be in operation for at least three (3) years;
- offer year-round operation / seasonal public programming and / or services to artists; and
- show evidence of support from other sources (public and/or private)

Operating grants fund a maximum of 25% of an organization's total annual operating budget.

Ineligible Organizations

- Organizations that do not have arts, culture or heritage mandates
- City of Nanaimo departments
- Organizations with outstanding balances owed to the City of Nanaimo
- Publicly funded or private educational institutions (public schools, universities, colleges, training organizations)
- Organizations located and operating outside of the [boundaries of the City of Nanaimo](#)
- Previously funded organizations that have not submitted their final report
- Organizations that have not had a representative attend a mandatory *Grant Preparation Zoom* meeting may be considered ineligible OR be subject to a minimum 10% reduction in available grant funding at the Grant Panel's discretion

Organizations are not eligible for Culture Operating funding if they receive other operational funding from the City of Nanaimo. Organizations that receive Operating grant support who wish to undertake opportune collaborative projects or capacity building activities that can be clearly demonstrated to be outside their regular operations may apply for **one** supplemental Culture & Heritage Project grant per cycle. Projects that will be considered must be either a new (non-recurring) **Collaboration or Partnership** or a specific **Organizational Capacity Building** activity (ie. professional development, mentorship, strategic planning).

Only one supplemental Culture & Heritage Project grant can be submitted alongside Operating grants per year.

Eligible Activities

Operating grants fund a year-round cycle of operations at an organization, and are a contribution to the overall operations, programs and activities of the organization. An organization seeking operating funds must demonstrate their ongoing activity by providing a “Program of Work,” which describes all aspect of their operations: programming, administration, community involvement and promotion.

A “Program of Work” should include:

- The mandate of your arts, culture and/or heritage organization and the kinds of activities you undertake, including public engagement and community outreach initiatives
- How your organization is composed, including the governance structure, and ongoing administrative and creative staffing
- Details about any specific initiatives that foster collaborations and partnerships with other organizations (public and private, non-profit and for-profit)

Ineligible Activities

- Capital projects
- Recuperation of deficits
- The distribution of bursaries or scholarships

Assessment Criteria

Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

(40%) MERIT

- Quality of proposed programming activities, participating artists and / or contributors
- Alignment of proposed activities and goals with the organization’s mandate, vision and mission
- Degree to which proposed activities are innovative and / or degree to which proposed activities have community support

(40%) RELEVANCE / FEASIBILITY

- Activities that align with the Culture Grant program objectives and strategic priorities
- Organizational capacity, governance and demonstrated ability to deliver the proposed project
- Financial health of the organization, as demonstrated by financial statements and realistic proposed budgets with diverse sources of revenue

(20%) COMMUNITY IMPACT

- Ability to provide rich cultural experiences and learning opportunities for the public that build appreciation for arts, culture and heritage

- Offer professional services and opportunities to artists that can support and advance their work or career
- Economic impact in the community, contribution towards the health and vitality of the arts, culture and heritage sector

Adjudication Process

Applications must be received by the deadline. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered. Applications will be screened to determine eligibility and evaluated according to the assessment criteria. Recommendations will be made to Council for distribution of funds. Decisions are guided by the program's mandate, objectives and assessment criteria. Council decisions are final.

Appeal Process

If there was an error in the assessment process (for example, that support material was misplaced), applicants may file a formal complaint, in writing, within 10 calendar days of notification of results. All appeals will be reviewed by an appeals committee.

Terms & Conditions of Funding

General Terms and Conditions	<p>You must formally acknowledge that you accept your grant by the date specified in your results letter. The awarding of a grant is at the sole and absolute discretion of the City of Nanaimo. The City of Nanaimo retains the right to rescind or reduce any grant previously awarded. The circumstances for rescinding a grant include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • failure to meet the terms and conditions of the grant • failure to comply with legal obligations • failure to respect the commitment to provide a workplace free from harassment, discrimination and sexual misconduct • unapproved changes to funded activities • significant risk of insolvency or bankruptcy
Final Reports	<p>Grant recipients must use the Culture Grant Report Form to complete and submit their final report by the due date specified in the results letter. Final reports must detail any substantial changes to your original proposal and must include an accounting of spent and unspent funds. Failure to provide a final report will result in the rejection of all new funding applications.</p>
Grant Repayment	<p>If for any reason you cannot use the grant at the expected time, decide not to carry out the plans described in your grant application or refuse the grant conditions, you must notify us immediately. If you are unable to complete your project or event any unspent funds must be returned to the City of Nanaimo. Unused grant funds will not be carried over to the next calendar year. If you do not use the entire grant amount, any unused portion belongs to the City of Nanaimo.</p>
Payment	<p>The City of Nanaimo will deliver awarded funds by direct deposit. To receive funds via electronic funds transfer (EFT), recipient must fill out and return the EFT form, along with VOID cheque or verified account information printout from banking institution.</p>
Statement of Inclusivity	<p>Recipients of City of Nanaimo Culture Grant funding must demonstrate commitment to City of Nanaimo Policy C4.2 Equity and Inclusivity:</p> <p><i>“Equity recognizes that each person has different circumstances and allocates resources and opportunities to support more positive outcomes for all regardless of age, ability, gender, sexual orientation, faith practice, ancestry, or background. By identifying inequities and targeting investment in prevention and intervention, the wellbeing and inclusion of the diversity of people that make up our entire community can be enhanced, creating a city that puts people first and supports a sense of belonging.”</i></p> <p>Funding is provided with the expectation that recipients will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a welcoming, inclusive atmosphere where all people feel safe, comfortable and represented (Policy C4.2.1) • Encourage diversity awareness and build a culture of compassion for people of all cultures, genders, orientations, ages and abilities (Policy C4.2.8)

Accessibility & Support	Should you experience challenges or barriers in this application process or require additional support, we encourage you to reach out to cultureandevents@nanaimo.ca (250-755- 4483) BEFORE the Grants application deadline. To best support you, we ask that requests for additional support be made <i>at least</i> 1 week before the application deadline. The City is committed to improving accessibility for all by identifying, removing, and preventing barriers.
Changes to Activities	Changes to the scope of your original proposal must be approved by the City of Nanaimo. You must notify the City of Nanaimo immediately if you cannot use part or the entire grant during the period stated in your application. If there are major changes to your proposed activities (for example: changes to the purposes of your organization) you must submit an interim update for Staff approval.
Acknowledgement of the City of Nanaimo and Logo Use	Public acknowledgement of support is required for all grant recipients. Please ensure that all materials (including copies of reports, advertising, oral presentations and publicity relating to the project(s) or programming credit the support of the grant. Please ensure proper logo use when crediting the City of Nanaimo's support. You can request logo files by contacting culturegrants@nanaimo.ca .
Permits, Fees, Applications	The approval of this grant does not indicate approval of associated required permits for public events. Processing special event permits can take several weeks. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all necessary permits have been obtained prior to commencing project and or event and ensure compliance with all required permits.
Confidentiality	Documents submitted by applicants become property of the City of Nanaimo. The City will make every effort to maintain the confidentiality of each application and the information contained therein except to the extent necessary to communicate information to Staff and the committee for the purpose of evaluation and analysis. The City will not release this information to the public except required under the Province of BC's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act or other legal disclosure process.
Tax Implications	Organizations must be registered non-profit societies, in good standing, and will receive payment in the society name.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

My organization is located outside the City of Nanaimo boundaries. Are we eligible?

In order to be eligible for funds at the City of Nanaimo, your organization must be registered as a non-profit with an address inside the [boundaries of the City](#). Organizations that operate in multiple communities must be registered to an address inside the boundaries of the City of Nanaimo and must be able to demonstrate public activities taking place inside the City limits in order to receive funding through the Culture Grant Program.

What type of grant should I apply for? What is the difference between Project and Operating?

[Operating grants](#) differ from [Project grants](#) in that they fund a year-round cycle of operations at an organization, and are a contribution to the organization as a whole. Groups with Operating funds are expected to run year-round activities, hold an established administrative structure that reports to a volunteer Board of Directors, and has independently prepared or audited financial statements. Those applying for Operating grants must be able to demonstrate confirmed ongoing activity by providing a “Program of Work,” which describes programming, administration, community involvement and promotion. An organization in receipt of Operating funds has flexibility to adapt their program of work to respond to organizational change.

Project grants differ from Operating grants in that they are allocations toward the realization of a specific project or series of activities, and funds are focused on those activities rather than ongoing operations. An application for project funding would describe the nature of the project or series, who is involved, when and where it will take place. Administrative costs associated to the delivery of the project are eligible (for example: venue rental, staffing, or promotional costs), but the organization’s ongoing operating expenses (like office rent, or utilities) are not considered a project cost.

My organization is applying to host our annual cultural event fundraiser, with proceeds going to charity. Can we seek support from the City of Nanaimo?

Fundraising activities, where the outcome generates funds for a separate charitable cause are not eligible for funding through this program. Organizations that undertake fundraising activities, such as regular programs and events that charge a fee for entry, where the funds raised will be a portion of the annual revenues at the organization applying for funding, are eligible to apply, provided their fundraiser is not the sole activity of the organization.

Will there be an opportunity to ask questions before the application deadline?

It is our hope to help guide you / your organization toward success this grant season! As such, attendance to a Grant Preparation Zoom meeting will be required as part of your application process. Choose from several dates available (see page 2 of this application), and add a reminder to your calendar, or for further information please email culturegrants@nanaimo.ca.

Application Information Form

Organization Details

Legal Name of Organization _____

Address _____ Postal Code _____

City _____

Phone _____

Contact Person* _____ Position _____

** Must be available to be contacted in December 2025*

Phone _____ Email _____

Has your address or contact information changed since last application?

☐ Yes

☐ No

BC Society Registration No. _____

Is your society in good standing with the BC Registrar?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Grant Request Details

One-Year Operating Funding

Grant Year _____ Request Amount \$ _____ (max. 25% of total operating budget for year)

Total Operating Budget for Year \$ _____

A1. Applicant Profile (Up to 1 pg / single sided / no staples / font: Arial or Calibri / font size: 11 pt)

Input a summary of your organization

- What is your mandate / mission? How does your mandate align with section C.4 - *An Empowered Nanaimo* of the [Nanaimo City Plan](#)?
- Provide a brief history of your organization
- Does your organization have paid staff or is it volunteer-run?
- Who are your staff, and what are their roles?
- Who are your board members and what are their roles?

A2. Program of Work (up to 5 pgs / single sided / no staples / font: Arial or Calibri / font size: 11 pt)

Describe your 'program of work.' Refer to the assessment criteria as above for guidance.

A 'program of work' is a description of your full year cycle of planned activities. The description should address four key areas:

- cultural programming
- outreach/audience development
- administration and
- promotion

Respond to these questions:

A2.1 What is your programming for 2026? Identify the participating artists or contributors.

A2.2 How does this programming reflect your mission and goals?

A2.3 Who is the community you will reach through your programming?

A3. Activity Plan (up to 2 pgs / single sided / no staples / font: Arial or Calibri / font size: 11 pt)

A summary timeline that highlights the events you will undertake over the course of the program of work.

A4. Required Financial Information

- ☐ Using the [Budget Form](#) provided, please supply a budget that identifies the actual revenues and expenses of your previous year of activities, and a budget of revenues and expenses for the year of your request.
- ☐ Financial Statements *Please read threshold criteria carefully*

If funding request **equals or exceeds \$20,000.00**, please attach a PDF of the **audited or independently prepared financial statements** for the organization's most recently completed fiscal year (as submitted to the Province in your annual report).

\$0 to \$20,000:	Internally prepared financial statements
\$20,000 to \$50,000:	Independently prepared – Notice to Reader/ Compilation Engagement Report
\$50,000 to \$100k:	Independently prepared – Review Engagement
Exceeding \$100k:	Independently prepared – Audit

If funding request is **less than \$20,000.00**, please attach a PDF of a **year-end financial statement** which:

- reflects most recently completed fiscal year
- is signed by two signing officers of the organization
- includes breakdown of all public funding and operating net assets

A5. BC Society Act Annual Report

- ☐ Attach a copy of the organization's current [BC Society Act Annual Report](#)

A6. Support Material

Attach support materials such as: video documentation, images with corresponding descriptions, news articles or press coverage, brochures / programs of one event in previous or current year, resumes, and publications. Follow the guidelines below:

- ☐ up to 10 images (Jpeg files preferred)
- ☐ up to 5 sound clips, no more than 2 minutes in length (online links preferred)
- ☐ up to 5 minutes of video (online links preferred)
- ☐ up to 10 pages in writing samples, related publicity or marketing materials or participant biographies

Data limits apply to uploading materials. Files must be smaller than 100MB.

Other Information

Does your organization already receive (or have you applied) for other sources of City funding for these activities? If yes, please specify the source(s) (grant types) and dollar amount(s) (attach additional sheets if required):

☐ Yes

☐ No

Pending Application: Grant Type _____ Amount Requested \$ _____

Grant Type _____ Amount Granted \$ _____

Grant Type _____ Amount Granted \$ _____

Final Report on Previous Year Funding

- ☐ Applicants who have received funding in previous years must submit a Final Report on your most recent completed fiscal year, at least 30 days before a new funding request is submitted.

Failure to provide a Final Report will render new applications ineligible.

Grant Preparation Zoom/ In-Person Attendance

Please note attendance of mandatory Grant Preparation Zoom/ In-Person meeting

Date of meeting

Name(s) of attendee(s)

Signature & Declaration

I hereby acknowledge that the information included with my application is complete, true and correct to the best of my knowledge, and that I have been authorized by the Board of Directors (if representing an organization or society) to make this declaration and to submit this application on behalf of the above-named organization.

By signing this document I formally agree that my organization will accept the terms and conditions of this Grant as outlined in the guidelines. I acknowledge that the awarding of a grant is at the sole and absolute discretion of the City of Nanaimo. The City of Nanaimo retains the right to rescind or reduce any grant previously awarded if terms and conditions of funding are not met.

I hereby declare that if our organization is successful in obtaining a City of Nanaimo Culture Operating Grant, that we give the City of Nanaimo (or a third party appointed by the City) the right to review the project / program for which the grant was obtained to ascertain whether grant monies received were used for the stated purpose(s) set out in this application.

Signature

Position

Date

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act Statement: Information collected on this form, or provided with this form, is collected under the general authority of the *Community Charter and the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, and is protected in accordance with the *Act*. Personal information will only be used by authorized staff to fulfill the purpose for which it was originally collected, or for a use consistent with that purpose. For further information regarding the collection, use, or disclosure of personal information by the City of Nanaimo, please contact the Legislative Services Department at 250-755-4405.