

Common issues with project funding applications

In the latest project funding round, announced in late May 2008, the Arts Board received 477 applications seeking more than \$9.5 million. After consideration, 156 projects were offered grants totalling close to \$3.3 million. The Arts Board was able to fund approximately one in three projects, or 33% of projects.

The Pacific Arts Committee received 50 applications seeking \$633,085. It offered grants to 27 projects totalling \$265,398.

In each funding round, every application is read and assessed by members of the relevant peer assessment committee or Pacific Arts Committee. The committees' recommendations are forwarded to the Arts Board to make the final decisions on funding.

In every funding round, some worthwhile projects miss out on grants because there isn't enough funding available. However, there are a number of common reasons why some applications aren't as strong as they could be.

Based on feedback from committee members, programme advisers and Arts Board members, we've compiled a list of some of the common issues with applications and ways you can improve your application.

When you're completing an application, it's important to work your way through the Application Workbook, which supplements The Funding Guide: Ngā Pūtea and lists all the information you need to make a good application. You should also talk to a programme administrator if you have any queries. Their details are at the end of this document.

1. Information about your project

Some applications don't provide enough relevant information about the project. This means the committees and Arts Board members can't fully assess the artistic quality or the potential for the project to be realised.

Your application should:

- clearly define what you expect the project to achieve
- demonstrate how you'll complete your project within the time frame
- identify the key people involved in the project.
- identify how your project meets Creative New Zealand's objectives (please refer to The Funding Guide: Ngā Pūtea and the Strategic Plan 2007–2010).

For travel-related applications you should provide:

- sufficient itinerary information (e.g. where and when you're going, who you're seeing and why, what you expect the benefits to be).

For festival applications you should provide:

- an overall vision for the festival and sufficient detail on the proposed artistic programme
- data from previous festivals (e.g. ticket sales, audience figures, surveys and analysis, any projected future audience growth based on these figures)
- evidence of other community stakeholder support for the festival (iwi, community trust, city council).

For multi-artform festivals, you should use the template on our website www.creativenz.govt.nz/funding/board/festivalfaq for your application.

2. Support material

Some applications don't provide sufficient or relevant support material. The amount and type of support material varies depending on the artform, and The Funding Guide outlines what's required. If in doubt, please call a programme administrator. Their contact details are at the end of this document.

Here are a few common problems with the quality of support material:

- venues: no confirmation of venue letters or information to support the fact that the venue has been contacted
- dance: poor quality of video/DVD support material; a failure to supply recordings of recent and relevant choreography
- theatre: poor quality of video/DVD support material
- music: poor quality support material; insufficient quantities of support material; disc formats that can't be accessed; discs unlabelled
- visual arts: images (where required) not relevant to project; unlabelled; poor quality
- letters of support (where required): in some cases, none are included or if they are, they are not appropriate.

3. Budgets

Some applications include budgets that don't provide enough information or are inaccurate. Sometimes, the requested amount for funding does not appear to have any relationship to the budget.

If you already have funding and/or are seeking funding from other sources, we also need to know:

- where the other funding has come from or where you're seeking it
- the amounts you've received or are seeking from each other source
- which parts of your project this other funding will pay for

- which parts of your project you would pay for with Creative New Zealand funding if you receive a grant.

Other points to consider when doing your budget:

- show clearly what the funding requested will be used for
- be realistic about the amount you ask for. A good way to get an idea of what might be reasonable is to look at previous grant lists – or talk to a programme administrator
- base your figures on actual quotes and provide evidence of these
- show clearly other sources of income that will help you complete your project, including income from box office or sales, if appropriate.

4. Asking for advice

Before you submit your application we recommend that you contact the Programme Administrator in your region. They can advise you about your application and discuss the amount and nature of the funding you're seeking.

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