



2026 COMMUNITY ARTS INVESTMENT PROGRAM

Development Acceleration Stream - Program Guidelines and Eligibility Criteria

Through the City of London's Community Arts Investment Program (**CAIP**) – Development Acceleration Stream, the London Arts Council (**LAC**) supports the artistic and administrative costs of London-based incorporated nonprofit arts organizations and/or registered charitable arts organizations' ongoing yearly/seasonal activities taking place within the city of London.

To better support the growth and development of the local arts sector and the ability of arts organizations to realize their vision and long-term goals, as well as reflect the focus of the City's multi-year budget, **LAC** encouraged eligible arts organizations to apply for four years of operational plans to be considered for the 2024-2027 **DAS CAIP cycle**.

Every four years (next cycle 2028), **DAS** opens to all **eligible** arts organizations to apply. If an arts organization's application is successful, the organization will be required to submit an annual application from years 2 to 4 with updated operational information and an annual report as investments depend on City Council's approval through the Annual Budget Update process.

Note: Through an annual process for years 2 to 4, if an organization is deemed to not meet the program criteria, guidelines, conditions, goals, and objectives and/or show significant changes in the scope of operations and finance, it will be re-evaluated and may not receive the annual amount that was determined during the year 1 cycle.

Submission of a request is **not a guarantee** of an investment. Organizations must meet the assessment criteria standards for Artistic Impact and Service Quality, Contribution to London's Arts Sector and Quality of Life for Londoners, Contribution to the Careers of Artists and Arts Workers, support for **LAC's** Priority Groups, and Professional Standard and Administrative/Financial Viability. These guidelines provide essential information on **DAS**, including Eligibility Criteria, Assessment Process, and Investment Policies. **Please review the guidelines prior to each submission period as information and policies are updated regularly and subject to change.**





OBJECTIVES

DAS provides financial investment to incorporated nonprofit and/or registered charitable arts organizations that **continue to demonstrate significant contributions to:**

- Community impact and revitalization.
- Job creation and talent/youth retention.
- Attraction of audiences from outside of London (Tourism).
- The development of new audiences in London.
- The engagement of London artists with professional opportunities and industry-standard compensation.
- The nurturing of creativity and arts engagement, including volunteer opportunities for all London residents.
- Addressing current needs in the London community.
- Strengthening and expanding access to the arts.
- Creating inclusive activities and equitable practices that reflect the diversity of artists, arts communities, and audiences in London.
- Fostering collaboration between emerging and established artists and arts organizations across disciplines.
- Building capacity in the arts and culture sector through professional development, mentorship, and investment in sustainable, relevant, high-quality artistic work; and
- Cultivating community partnerships across private and public sectors

PROGRAM GUIDELINES AND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible to submit an Investment Request to **DAS**, an organization must:

- Be an Ontario incorporated nonprofit and/or registered charitable **arts organization** located in London with an **annual operating budget of greater than \$250,000.00**.
- Have a clearly articulated mission and vision **directly focused on the creation, presentation, and production of a specific artistic discipline (or disciplines)**





- under artistic direction** to develop and promote works of artists/creators through regular or consistent artistic programming.
- Be led by paid, professional artistic and administrative personnel managing the organization's artistic programming and administrative operations.
 - **Include artist fees** (guest artists, contracted artists) as part of their expenses
 - Provide proof of sound financial management and an annual operating budget of **less than \$1,500,000.00** by submitting audited financial statements for the most recent completed fiscal year/season.
 - Have a range of revenue sources including earned, private, government and foundation grants.
 - Be governed by a board of directors or an advisory body with fiduciary responsibility for the organization.
 - Have community support and involvement demonstrated through one or more of the following: membership, fundraising, and/or volunteer involvement.
 - Provide all required information requested in the online submission form. **Late submissions are not accepted; incomplete submissions are disqualified and will not be reviewed by the assessment panel.**

Note: A professional arts leader (Executive Director, CEO, etc.), a Board Chair, or an individual with signing authority of a not-for-profit organization applying for CAIP DAS funding cannot also apply for CAIP project funding.

CAIP and its Policy are not applicable to the following nonprofit Arts Organizations:

- Festivals that are not arts festivals.
- Heritage or cultural museums.
- Cultural heritage organizations eligible for funding from the City of London Community Heritage Investment Program (**CHIP**).
- Those that receive operating funding from the City of London (Note: **any funding that is not capital** from the City of London) either through the annual grant program or the multi-year community grant program.





- **Those in default of the terms, conditions, and requirements of any City of London granting program including Innovation grants, Capital grants, the annual grant program or the multi-year community grant program.**
- London Regional Art and Historical Museum (Museum London) and the Grand Theatre.
- Those that have an annual operating budget **over \$1,500,000**.
- Those **not located** within the city of London

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES:

- Artist and production expenses
- Administration and facility operating expenses
- Programming and event expenses
- Marketing expenses
- **Please refer to the budget template for more information.**

INELIGIBLE EXPENSES:

- Costs related to capital purposes including, but not limited to, the purchase of land, fixtures, physical facilities, or specialized equipment.
- Tuition fees
- Art therapy and/or second party fundraising events/projects.
- Legal fees outside of the general operating scope of the organization's activities.
- Investment activities (for clarification contact **LAC**).
- Deficit reductions: The financial situation of an organization will be discussed during the consultation process. Organizations reporting financial deficits greater than **10%** of their overall budget **must** provide a **Board approved** deficit reduction plan.

As per the City of London's current audit requirements for **LAC**'s reporting on the management and administration of **CAIP, interim reports for DAS recipients are required**. The Interim Report details will be outlined in the Contractual Agreement between successful **DAS** recipients and **LAC**.





PROGRAM SUBMISSION PROCESS

Prior to starting a submission, organizations **are required** to consult with the **LAC's Executive Director and Officer, Arts Investments**. Consultation means a conversation, in person or via Zoom, in which an organization's representative(s) provides detailed information on the organization's activities and budget. **Consultation does not guarantee an organization will receive an investment.**

Consultation also determines an organization's **eligibility to remain** in **DAS**. **LAC** reserves the right **to transfer an organization to the Arts Organization Stream**. **LAC** will take into consideration any developments or changes to an organization's mandate and programming in determining if a transfer is appropriate. If deemed appropriate, the organization will be notified prior to the submission deadline.

Program Submission Deadline: Friday February 20, 2026, at 4:30 p.m.

Submissions are through the online platform; no other means of submission will be accepted. If you require assistance, please contact **LAC**. Please see Appendix "A", Conditions and Requirements of Investment below.

Notification: Organizations will be notified by email **approximately 10-12 weeks** after the closing date.

ASSESSMENT

Submissions are reviewed via a Peer Assessment process that engages Assessors who are representatives of the arts, arts professionals, and arts practitioners in the City of London. Assessors are selected by **LAC** through a year-round open "Expression of Interest" on **LAC's** website. Assessors are carefully chosen for their knowledge of the arts, high standing within the arts community, awareness of the City of London context and broader arts environment and, where possible, are reflective of the diversity of London itself.





Assessment Panels evaluate submissions based on **LAC's CAIP** objectives, assessment criteria, and available investment resources. In determining and allocating investments, Assessment Panels must balance **1) supporting a maximum number of organizations providing high-quality services and programming beneficial to the London community, 2) investment amounts that make a substantial contribution to the operations of the organizations, and 3) ensuring the operations of recipients are sustainable, viable, and accountable.**

DAS submissions are assessed based on criteria including Artistic Quality/Service Impact, Contribution to London's Arts Sector and Quality of Life for Londoners, Contribution to the Careers of Artists and Arts Workers, Support for **LAC's Priority Groups**, and Professional Standard and Administrative/Financial Viability of the organization. Assessors assign each with a score on a scale of 1 to 5: **1(poor), 2(fair), 3(good), 4(very good), and 5(excellent).**

Assessment panels may allocate DAS Investments of no less than \$25,000.00 and no more than \$80,000.00. Organizations receiving an **investment of \$50,000.00** and more will be subject to a percentage holdback. Holdback details are outlined in the Contractual Agreement between successful **2026 DAS** Investment recipients and **LAC**. **Please note that assessment panel decisions are final.** Any questions regarding your submission should be directed to **LAC** staff.

Submissions are assessed and evaluated in the following criteria:

ARTISTIC IMPACT AND SERVICE QUALITY: 25%

- The organization's mandate and vision.
- The organization's achievements, initiatives, current activities, and plans embody its mandate and vision.
- The organization's activities (creation, presentation, and distribution of artistic work and/or the delivery of art services) are of quality to their artistic field.
- The commitment of the organization to hiring London artists and fairly compensating all artists and employees.
- The organization supports the development and/or presentation of local work.





- Organizations must include artist fees as part of their expenses.

CONTRIBUTION TO LONDON'S ARTISTIC COMMUNITY AND QUALITY OF LIFE FOR LONDONERS: 20%

- The organization has a demonstrated impact on artists, communities, audiences and/or participants.
- The organization prioritizes the interests of artists in determining fees for artists, including paying cancellation fees when necessary and feasible.
- The organization's activities provide opportunities for broad and meaningful access and engagement for audiences and/or participants.
- The organization demonstrates an understanding of current community needs and addresses these needs through its activities and programming.
- The creation of activities and programming that engage the community and address access, diversity, and inclusion as defined by **LAC's CAIP** guidelines.
- The effectiveness of the organization's plan to sustain and develop its audience and participants.
- The ability of the organization to cultivate partnerships across the broader London community in the private and public sector.

CONTRIBUTION TO THE CAREERS OF ARTISTS AND ARTS WORKERS: 20%

- The organization provides meaningful support for artists through significant opportunities for artistic creation, production, presentation, publication, or engagement.
- Organizations with the capacity to do so, provide professional services and resources to artists (ex. affordable rehearsal and presentation spaces, administrative or artistic professional development or other services).
- Any professional development activities or other services the organization offers for artists are easily accessible and affordable.
- The organization prioritizes the interests of artists in determining artist fees (including paying cancellation fees when feasible).





- The organization nurtures and builds professional relationships with artists,
- The organization prioritizes providing professional opportunities for artists/arts workers and stable employment for administrative and technical staff.
- The organization demonstrates a strong and regular commitment to the creation, commissioning, presentation, purchasing and/or exhibiting of new artistic works (this could be many small-scale works or fewer large-scale works that require more time and resources).

PROFESSIONAL STANDARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE/ FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 20%

- Board governance, oversight, support, and involvement is appropriate for the size and scope of the organization.
- The organization's Board represents the community it serves.
- The organization employs professional staff (artistic staff, arts managers, and administrators, whether full-time, part-time, or contract) to manage the organization's operations.
- The viability and clarity of the organization's plans and the capacity of the organization's administration to successfully execute its plans.
- The organization's internal equity practices address the needs of diverse staff, volunteers, artists, and community partners.
- The organization's internal structures, policies, and processes contribute to the safety and well-being of staff, contractors, board members, and volunteers. Please refer to **LAC's Respectful Workplace Policy** (www.londonarts.ca/policies).
- The organization demonstrates good planning based on the current context and responds in innovative ways to changes in circumstances, including staff and Board transitions.
- The organization has sound financial strategies and management practices to execute organizational plans and manage financial obligations, cash flow and risks, and fulfill annual and long-term financial plans.
- The organization thoroughly adheres to CAIP's contractual agreements, conducts its business in an ethical and professional manner for its constituency, partners, clients, volunteers, funders, donors, and sponsors, and maintains its standards as





a professional arts organization within its operations through its programs and services.

**SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS AND EQUITY-DESERVING ARTISTS/ARTS PROFESSIONALS:
15%**

- Inclusion and support of Indigenous and equity-deserving professional artists is organic within **LAC**'s operations and programs. This includes creation, production, and presentation support through **CAIP**, as well as contract work through **LAC**'s Education, Health, Public Art, and Social Enterprise Programs.
- **LAC**'s Cultivating Allyship Equity and Accessibility Framework outlines and communicates the principles and processes that support **LAC**'s development of equity in the arts sector. The Framework represents **LAC**'s commitment, as well as the commitment we ask of our partners, collaborators, and investment recipients, to:
 - Build meaningful, respectful relationships with Indigenous people and equity-deserving groups.
 - Reflect equity in hiring and decision-making processes and bodies.
 - Create spaces for staff/partners for accountable learning and engagement.
 - Provide products, devices, services, and/or environments that accommodate the needs and preferences of those experiencing disabilities.

Indigenous people and equity-deserving groups identified as **LAC**'s focus groups may change from time to time based on the changing population and the shifting needs of equity-deserving communities. **LAC**'s current focus groups are listed in alphabetical order – community members who are: **Black, Indigenous, LGBTQIA2S+, Newcomers, People with Disabilities, People of Colour, People with English as a second language, Older Adults 55+, Young Adults (18-24)**. **LAC expects** arts organizations are also committed to:

- Individuals in leadership positions (staff, board, and/or other volunteer roles) from **LAC**'s focus groups.





- Initiatives, activities, and plans that reflect these priorities.
- Programming that demonstrates reciprocal and sustained relationships with artists, communities, audiences, and/or participants from these equity-deserving groups.

Definitions have been provided for the terms “access,” “diversity,” and “inclusion:”

- *Access* encompasses the physical, financial, intellectual, and socio-economic accessibility of programming, events, and venues.
- *Diversity* addresses the non-material culture of the organization, specifically the way in which it welcomes people of varying ability, income, language, incarceration history, cultural background, race, ethnicity, faith, gender, orientation, and education level.
- *Inclusion* refers to the removal of material or non-material barriers to participation, through policies in human resources, strategic planning, physical environment, programming, audience, community development, and budget management.

Note: The LAC treats all applications as confidential and will not release or disclose their full content except for purposes of reporting, assessment, audits, investigations, and any other legitimate circumstances under the law.

The LAC will engage in discussions regarding an application with the individual formally identified in the application form as the applicant.



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APPENDIX "A"

Conditions and Requirements of Investment Development Acceleration Stream

Please read the following conditions and requirements that govern receipt of London Arts Council's (**LAC**'s) investments before completing the submission through **LAC**'s online system.

If the organization is successful in receiving an investment, the following terms and conditions apply for the receipt of LAC Funds:

1. Purpose and use of the investment

On behalf of the organization, I UNDERSTAND THAT:

- **CAIP** investments will be used only for the purpose(s) outlined in this application and in the **LAC** investment notification letter.
- Investments are to be spent within the fiscal year indicated and shall only be used for the purpose(s) outlined in the organization's submission.
- Organizations are **required to communicate promptly** to the **LAC** regarding any significant changes to the scale and/or scope of activities, including substantial changes in budget and programming. If the changes are not accepted by **LAC**, **repayment may be required**, and no further submissions will be accepted from, nor any investment payments issued to, the organization until the investment is repaid. **LAC** will work closely with the organization to resolve a situation should one arise.
- Should all reasonable attempts at resolution fail, **LAC**, as the steward of **CAIP** on behalf of the City of London, may proceed with legal action.
- Investments cannot be spent on major capital expenditures, including buying, leasing, or renovating buildings, purchase of major equipment, investment activities (for clarification contact **LAC**), or legal fees outside of the general operating scope.





2. Legislative requirements for employers

On behalf of the organization, I CONFIRM THAT:

My organization abides by all applicable employment legislation, including but not limited to, the Occupational Health & Safety Act, Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, Employment Standards Act, and the Ontario Human Rights Code. The organization has policies and procedures in place to ensure a work environment where all workers are treated with respect and dignity, and where workplace sexual violence and harassment are not tolerated.

On behalf of the organization, I UNDERSTAND THAT:

All successful **CAIP** recipients must sign a **CAIP** Contract that includes a commitment to providing safe working conditions and fostering a workplace free from discrimination, harassment, disrespectful behaviour, and/or reprisal.

If a complaint is received by **LAC**, the organization will proceed with care to protect the reputation and dignity of the parties involved, while requiring that organizations receiving **CAIP** investments act to ensure working conditions without harassment or intimidation.

Failure to respect the commitment to provide a workplace free from discrimination, harassment, disrespectful behaviours, and/or reprisal could result in **LAC** initiating a process to review and potentially reverse an investment decision.

3. Safe programming requirements

On behalf of the organization, I CONFIRM THAT:

- If my organization's employees or volunteers are in direct, on-going, close contact with vulnerable persons, a safe programming policy is in place to guide a





holistic screening process for those implicated. This screening process includes a vulnerable sector check.

4. Audit requirements

On behalf of the organization, I UNDERSTAND THAT:

- The organization is required to maintain accounting records of funds received from **LAC** detailing their receipt and disbursement. Organizations are required to keep and maintain all records, invoices, and other documents relating to the investment received in a manner consistent with generally accepted accounting principles for a period of 7 years. **LAC** may review and audit the books, payroll, accounts, and records of an organization that has received a **CAIP – DAS** investment.
- **LAC** investments must be broken out on the financial statement, either in the body or as a note to the statement.

5. Reporting requirements

On behalf of the organization, I UNDERSTAND THAT:

- Organizations that receive a **DAS** investment must attend an information session with an **LAC** team member regarding CAIP funding requirements before payment is released.
- Organizations that receive **DAS** investments **must provide an interim report (for investment of \$50,000 and more) and a final report with the following year's application.**
- Final reports must include an audited financial statement for the last completed fiscal year.
- Financial statements must be signed by two representatives of the Board/governing body.
- Organizations that **choose not to reapply** for a **DAS** investment **must submit a report within six months** of their fiscal year end. If a report is not received when due, **LAC may require repayment of the investment and will not accept any**





further submissions from, or issue any investment payments to, the organization until the investment is repaid or an acceptable report submitted.

6. Acknowledgment

On behalf of the organization, I UNDERSTAND THAT:

- Organizations are **required** to acknowledge the support of **LAC** and **City of London** using **LAC** and **City of London** logos in **ALL** physical and virtual marketing and promotional materials including but not limited to, flyers, postcards, posters, programs, social media, media, and presentations for the organization's activities and programming. Live performances **must include verbal recognition of LAC** and the City of London. Logos are provided on www.londonarts.ca/investments.
- Organizations are **required** to provide/directly invite at the least, two members of **LAC** to **ALL** media events, virtual or public performances, and exhibitions. These events, performances, and exhibitions **must include verbal recognition of LAC** and the City of London as major investors in the organization and its operations.
- **Special fundraisers are not applicable.** If **LAC** representatives are invited, **LAC** will purchase tickets.
- Organizations must add their events to **LAC's** event listings through www.londonarts.ca/events by contacting info@londonarts.ca, and **tag LAC in all social media postings**. This assists **LAC** in staying current on the activities of **AOS** investment recipients. Organizations must maintain an active link from their website to www.londonarts.ca.

7. Partnership

- Organizations that are successful in receiving a **DAS** investment are required to attend Arts Manager Meetings if called upon by **LAC** and respond to collaborative initiatives requested by **LAC** and/or the City of London Culture Services in planning for sector-specific or city-wide celebrations, commemorations, initiatives, or campaigns that spotlight and support London's artistic community.





- Organizations that receive a DAS investment in 2026 are required to participate in London's Bicentennial celebrations through relevant artistic programming. Participation is intended to foster civic pride, encourage collaboration, and collectively mark this significant milestone in the city's history. Successful applicants must submit their proposed bicentennial activities to the City of London's "Get Involved" webpage (<https://getinvolved.london.ca/london200>).

8. Indemnity

- "Indemnified parties" means the **LAC**, the **LAC** Board of Directors and employees, the City of London, Council, and City of London employees. The recipient will indemnify and hold harmless the indemnified parties from and against all liability. Organizations are required to maintain \$2M in liability insurance.

Contact Information: London Arts Council, (519) 439-0013, www.londonarts.ca

Notification: Organizations will be notified by email **approximately 10-12 weeks** after the closing date. For inquiries regarding the Community Arts Investments Program **DAS: investment@londonarts.ca**



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