



Arts Business Support Fund Application Guide

2026

Government of
Northwest Territories

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Overview

The Government of the Northwest Territories' (GNWT) Arts Business Support Fund provides funding of up to \$10,000 for the start-up and/or growth of arts related business activities in the Northwest Territories (NWT).

Arts Business Support Fund is designed to support the growth and sustainability of the NWT arts economy; support the start-up and/or growth of businesses that provide arts related services; and build the diversity of arts inventory from NWT professional artists. This funding is for professional artists, individual entrepreneurs or small businesses that provide (or want to provide) arts-related services or products to the NWT arts sector.

What activities this funding supports

Activities that are **eligible** to receive funding include:

- Arts business start-up costs
- Scaling up services for established artists
- Art equipment and tool purchases
- First run for an artist to turn their original artwork into new product inventory intended for commercial sale
- Marketing and promotion to foster growth of the arts business

Who can apply

Types of potential applicants include:

- Individuals who have been a resident, or have been operating in the NWT for at least 6 months prior to applying, and are living in the NWT at the time of application.
- Sole proprietors and small businesses participating in or supporting the arts sector and are based in the NWT.

What expenses this funding supports

Expenses that are eligible to receive funding include, but are not limited to:

- Arts business start-up costs, including but not limited to:
 - Business license fees
 - Registration fees
- Equipment and tool purchases, including but not limited to:
 - Fur or industrial sewing machines
 - Carving tools
 - Equipment for production, post-production and/or duplication for all arts disciplines.
 - Computers and software needed for digital arts related activities
- Equipment for merchandising/display of artwork for the purpose of sale
- First run for an artist to turn their original artwork into new product inventory intended for commercial sale, including but not limited to:
 - Publishing a book
 - Print of calendars, art cards, postcards, wall prints, merchandise, etc.
 - Recording of music for a digital file or CD duplication
 - Maximum of 250 units per product
- Marketing and promotion to foster growth of the arts business, including but not limited to:
 - E-commerce website development
 - Design of marketing materials
 - Print of marketing materials
 - Video development for the purpose of marketing
 - Agency costs related to marketing and promotion activities

What expenses this funding does not support

Expenses that are **not eligible** to receive funding include:

- Subsequent commercial print runs of inventory
- The purchase of raw materials.
- The purchase of artwork from artists or non-original inventory for the purpose of resale.
- Living or business operating expenses, such as rent or mortgage, wages, food, and utilities.
- Office expenses (e.g., paper, typing, photocopying, etc.)
- GST, HST or PST on eligible expenses.
- Excluded Costs Contributions will not be provided to assist with the acquisition or purchase of:
 - Assets previously acquired by the applicant, shareholder or partner in the project, or by an associated business;
 - The applicant's internal costs not directly related to the project and non-arm's length transactions, including payments made to shareholders or members of their immediate family or businesses related by common effective control; or
 - Assets previously purchased by third parties with the assistance of the Government of the NWT or the Government of Canada, in which case the amount of the previous contribution will be deducted from the fair market value of the asset to arrive at the eligible cost of the asset.

How funding will be allocated

- Funding is allocated to five Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI) regional offices in the NWT (North Slave, South Slave, Dehcho, Beaufort Delta, and Sahtu).
- This funding is assessed and administered through the ITI regional offices.
- Applications will be accepted on an on-going basis throughout the fiscal year, from April 1 to March 31 annually.
- Applications are assessed on a first come, first serve basis until the annual budget is exhausted.

Application process

- It is strongly recommended that you contact your [regional ITI Office](#) to discuss your idea and plan your project prior to submitting your application.
- Once you have your project planned, fill out the [Arts Business Support application form](#).
- The supporting documents that must be included with your application include:
 - Professional and/or artistic resume
 - Samples of work (if applying for inventory reproduction)
 - Copies of quote(s) (NWT quotes are encouraged)
 - Proof of NWT residency (e.g., utility bill, letter from band, etc.)
- Submit the completed application form and supporting documents to your [regional ITI Office](#).
- Applications can be submitted anytime for available funding, from April 1 to March 31st annually.

Application processing time

Applicants will be informed in writing within 15 business days of the review of a complete application whether approval of the application has been granted and which eligible costs have been approved.

Funding payment

Applicants approved for funding will receive a contribution agreement that outlines the terms of funding, payment schedule and reporting requirements.

- Applicants must sign the agreement and return it to their regional ITI office.
- Applications must be approved before beginning the activity. Expenditures made prior to the date of application approval will not be considered.
- To receive the payment, an account with GNWT is required and be in good standing
- Payment will be processed and sent to funding recipients within **14 to 30 days** of the GNWT receiving the signed contribution agreement.

Funding conditions

Funding recipients must meet the following conditions:

- Funding must be used for the stated purposes in the approved application. If a situation arises where you cannot use the funds as proposed, contact your ITI regional office.
- Any changes in part or in full of the contribution agreement must be approved in writing by the regional office prior to changes being made.
- Applicants must be in good standing with the GNWT and currently be a resident of the NWT.
- Applicants may only apply to this fund for one project at a time. A funded project must be completed and reported prior to re-applying for this fund.
- All overdue reporting must be submitted and approved prior to applying for new arts funding.
- Minimum equity contributions are required and based on community classification:
 - Group 1 communities (Yellowknife, Hay River, Fort Smith, and Inuvik) – minimum **30%** of total project costs
 - Group 2 communities (all other communities within NWT) – minimum **20%** of total project costs
 - This program does not accept sweat equity.

Funding acknowledgement

Funding recipients must credit the GNWT for financial support in any publicity prepared in relation to your activities, including electronic, print, or visual material.

Where the logo is unable to be used, the following message can be included in publicity related to the funded recipient's activities:

This project was made possible, in part, with funding from the Government of the Northwest Territories.

Funding reporting

Funding recipients must provide financial reporting within **terms of their contribution agreement** after the completion of the project outlining how the funds have been used.

To complete required reporting:

- Fill in the 'Actual Costs' and 'Actual Revenues' fields in the budget section of your application.
- Provide receipts for all the expenses you are claiming as 'Actual Costs'
- Complete the Arts Business Support Fund reporting survey either using the online or downloadable form from the GNWT website (link will be provided).