GRANT WRITING ESSENTIALS

This info sheet takes you through the basics of grant writing and things to consider before you press submit.

WHAT DO YOU WANT FUNDING FOR?

Before you begin to look for a grant you should have an idea of what you would like funding for. Grants support specific projects and activities so think about what you've got coming up or would like to do next. For example, are you looking at recording, touring or professional development?

HOW MUCH MONEY DO YOU NEED?

Once you know what you want funding for, work out roughly how much you need so you can go looking for the right grant. Jot down costs for your upcoming project, which could include things like performance fees, studio hire, production costs, travel, venue hire, marketing and promotion.

WHERE DO YOU GET FUNDING FROM?

There are State (Create NSW) and Federal (Creative Australia) Government funding bodies for arts funding. Other government agencies, local councils, organisations and private businesses also offer funding. The MusicNSW funding calendar is a great place to start your research.

READ THE GUIDELINES

Once you've found the right grant for your project, you should read the grant guidelines to find out:

- If you are eligible

- What the grant supports financially (for example, grants usually don't cover the cost of equipment)

- How the grant will be assessed: check the assessment criteria or objectives

- The due date. Make sure you have enough time to gather the relevant documentation so you don't rush your application. We suggest a minimum of two weeks.

- Got any questions? Contact the funding body; they are usually able to provide you with more information.

THE PLAN! DO YOU HAVE ONE AND IS IT REALISTIC?

Strong grant applications are based on a detailed project plan. The five Ws; Who, What, When, Where and Why are a great way to break down your plan and its deliverables. For example, if it is a new album, who are your collaborators? What is everyone's role and what are the outcomes? When will you record? When will it be released? Where will this all take place? Why is this the right time in your career for this opportunity? Who will you get to write support letters?

WRITING THE GRANT APPLICATION

- Rather than filling out the online form as you go, it can be easier to work in a Word or Google document so you can fine tune and spell check your answers.

- If you are working in an offline document, cut and paste the questions from the application into the doc along with the assessment criteria so you can check the criteria when answering the questions.

- When writing the application, be aware of word or character limits for each question and make your responses clear and concise.

- Use support material to back up everything you claim. See below for more information.

BUDGET

What are the realistic costs of your project? The biggest rule when putting your budget together is to not generalise and to provide a reason for your proposed costs. Provide confirmed or projected costs and explain or provide evidence on how you got to those amounts.

- Figure out your budget in detail. Here's the budget template with examples. It's just a rough guide to help you work out your budget costs. You should use the format provided in the grant application.

- Once you have your budget, add it into the online application form or as requested and make sure you explain your budget and why you arrived at the figures you did.

- May sure you pay yourself and any artists working on the project. You can use the Musicians' Union calculator to help you understand what to pay yourself and others. It is based on the Live Performance Award 2010, which is the closest thing to regulated pay for the music industry, and it calculates minimum wage.

EXAMPLES OF SUPPORT MATERIALS

- Support letters. Here is a support letter template you can use as a guide as to what to send to potential supporters. For a tour, that might be a venue, festival or booking agent that's excited to have you play. For a recording, it might be a sound engineer, studio or producer you will be working with, or the record label that's excited to release the finished product.

- Project timelines for recording and release or a tour itinerary. Things can be confirmed/unconfirmed but should be noted either way. Giving a clear idea of what your plans are is important (here is our Regional Touring Network – you can use it to help you plot out a tour one day)

- Information about you and your team. You could provide a PDF with bios & headshots of the people involved in your project outlining their roles.

- An overview of Facebook, Spotify or Bandcamp analytics – follows, listens or sales that show that you have an audience keen to hear your work and see you perform.

- Reviews/quotes from previous releases or gigs

- Your EPK

DO I NEED HELP PUTTING THIS ALL TOGETHER?

You don't have to do it all on your own (unless you want to). Having someone go through the process or write up the grant can really help. You could ask a friend you trust or a bandmate that is good at writing. There are also grant writers available who offer their services for a fee.

READY TO GO?
DON'T SEND YET!!!

Have a trusted friend or someone on the project look over your final application. They might see something you missed like spelling mistakes or have some suggestions to make things clearer.

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT GRANT WRITING?

We offer a free general grant writing 1-on-1 session for First Nations. You can find out more and book in a session here.

MANAGE YOUR EXPECTATIONS

Most grants have about a 15% success rate so if you miss out this time don't stress. Request feedback and save your grant docs so you've got a headstart for next time.

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