



Regional Arts NSW GRANT WRITING GUIDE

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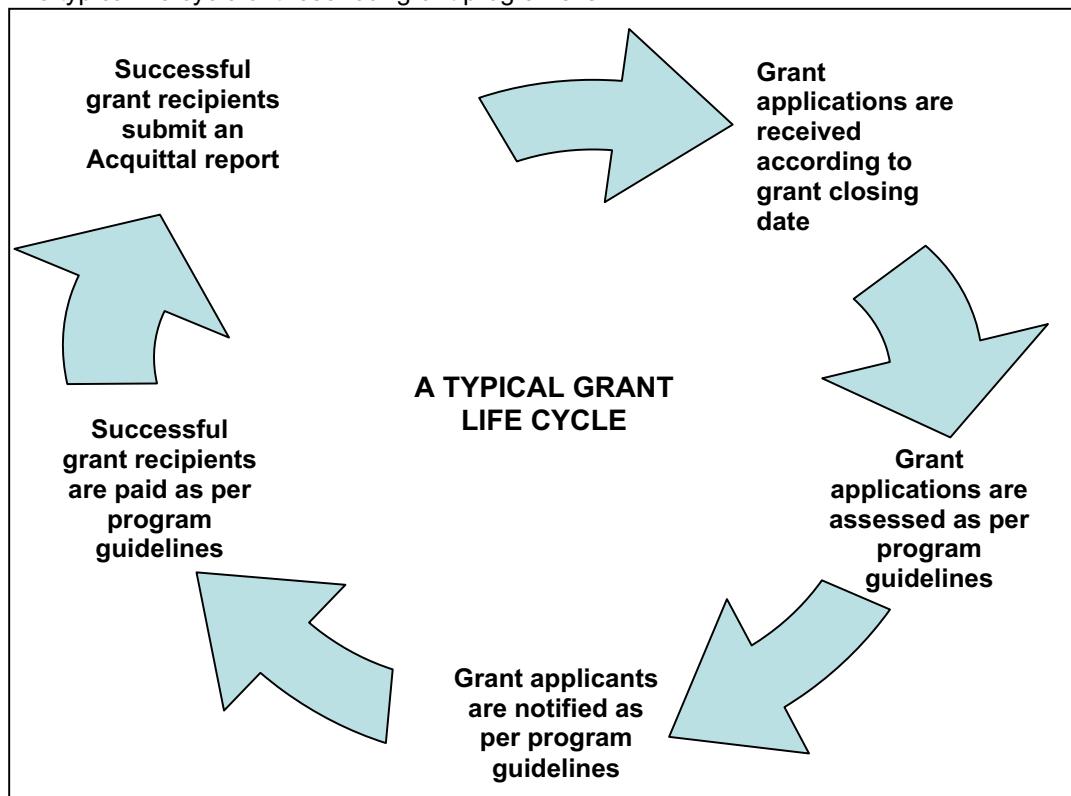
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1. INTRODUCTION

This guide has been compiled to assist with submissions to the **four grants programs** currently administered by Regional Arts NSW (RANSW):

- Country Arts Support Program (CASP)
- PROP UPS
- Regional Arts Fund (RAF)
- Quick Response Grant ('Quicks')

The typical life cycle of these four grant programs is:



When writing a grant application it is important to allow plenty of time for preparation and research. The process of gathering this information will also assist you in completing other funding applications so it is worth investing in this time. The information you are required to submit may vary from one program to another, however there are some basics that are common to most.

- **Always read the Guidelines thoroughly before commencing your application.** They give an overview of eligibility and criteria, categories and amounts of funding available, support material and closing dates.
- **Always seek clarification if you are unclear about any question or request for information before you go ahead.** The Funding Officers at RANSW and the Regional Arts Development Officers across NSW are available to discuss your ideas, queries and concerns. It is also useful to check other projects funded through the funding program – the most up-to-date list for CASP and RAF can be found on the RANSW website.

2. GENERAL PLANNING AND RESEARCH

A. YOUR ORGANISATION

Most applications will generally ask you to supply some sort of overview of your organisation i.e. its background/ history, aims and objectives, current or recent projects and its future directions. Preparing a grant application is a useful exercise in terms of planning and shaping your organisation. For some, the process can even help to clarify what you hope to accomplish as an organisation. This information will define '*who you are*' and '*what you do*' to the panel assessing your application.

You may be asked to elaborate on collaborations or partnerships with other organisations or groups within your community or region.

B. PROJECT PLANNING

Make sure you ask yourself the following questions and make notes against each point:

- **WHAT** is the project? Outline its aims & objectives.
- **WHY** do you want to do this project? What do you want to achieve; what are the proposed outcomes of the project? How is it significant or meaningful to your community? Identify the ongoing benefits after the life of the project.
- **WHERE** will the project take place – the location/venue?
- **WHO** are you targeting – both in terms of participants and audience?
- **HOW** will you manage the project? Talk about the logistics, management of funds, the resources needed; financial, human, materials etc.

C. Timeframe

Make a timeline or project plan. Determine start and completion dates and research funding deadlines for all relevant programs. The more complex a project the more detail required. Projects that have already commenced or have been completed are ineligible for funding from all four grant programs.

D. Research

This component is crucial to your application. You'll need to investigate the following areas:

- **Identify** who you want to work with or bring onto the project –artists, artworkers, consultants, facilitators or any other personnel involved – both paid and volunteer. You should check their availability and also their suitability in terms of what you want to achieve. It's important to ensure that they have the skills to realise the aims of the project. Find out about their previous work and what they can bring to your project.

You will usually need to submit a brief bio or an up-to-date CV for all artists involved in the project. This will depend on the requirements of the grant program and the guidelines and/or application form generally specify the amount of information required.

- **Consultation.** Where projects are based on community need or cultural development, it is strongly recommended that you discuss ideas and implications of these projects with the people in your community who are likely to be involved.
- **Working with Indigenous Communities.** In the case of projects that target or involve Indigenous communities, it is essential that consultation is undertaken and that you have their support. For any RANSW grants, it is necessary that evidence of the community's support be provided as part of your support material. Also check out the Indigenous protocol guides published by the Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Board at the Australia Council for the Arts http://www.ozco.gov.au/arts_resources/publications/cultures_indigenous_protocol_guides/
- **Support.** Investigate other sources of support within your community e.g. local government, community groups, local libraries, industry groups, P & Cs etc. Forming partnerships with other organisations or groups in your town or region has the potential to lead to sustainable cultural development in regional areas, rather than just one-off events. Request letters of support from those organisations involved or who will benefit from the project and include with your application.
- **Documentation.** It's important to plan how you will document the process and outcomes of the project. You'll need to consider this for inclusion in the budget as well as meeting reporting requirements.
- **Other Funding.** Always investigate funding options under other grant programs. You may be able to apply to different funds for different components of your project. Subscribe to the Regional Arts NSW fortnightly e-bulletin – go to <http://www.regionalartsnsw.com.au>. Each bulletin announces upcoming grants and funding opportunities.

It is important to be aware that almost all grants programs are extremely competitive and that funds are limited. Your application will be one of many so don't be discouraged if you are not successful. Feedback can generally be sought from program managers.

- **Time.** Allow time for preparation of your submission. Check early on what is required and don't leave it too late as additional material like CVs, financial statements, letters of support etc may be requested and these rely on other people's time commitments.

3. BUDGETS

Preparing Your Budget

When preparing a budget for a grant application always read the guidelines to establish what the particular grant program will allow.

Do NOT request more than the maximum amount available, as this may make your application ineligible and will indicate to the panel that you may not have read the Guidelines properly.

Do NOT expect a grant to pay for your entire project. Additional contributions from other sources are generally expected. This can be in-kind support, contributions from your organisation, generated income like sales or fees, other grants or sponsorship and donations.

DO use the Budget worksheets in the CASP and RAF application forms. These are intended to help you to complete your budget by itemising possible income and expenses items that should be included and providing clear instructions on how they should be presented in a budget format. For the Quick Response and PROP UPS grants, only a budget summary is required but it is a good idea to do a DRAFT budget before you transfer it to the actual application form.

A. DO the expense section of the budget first

Be realistic about what you ask for – don't underestimate the time and cost of the project. Likewise, don't inflate your costs as assessment committees look carefully at budgetary issues.

- Assess the personnel time involved
- Approach the artist/consultant to verify their costs and availability
- Assess if there is any travel, accommodation and living allowance involved
- Assess the cost of any materials, venue and equipment hire
- Don't forget to consider 'hidden' costs:
 - Insurance
 - Catering
 - Documentation
 - Incidentals

B. NOW do the Income section

- How much can you apply for from this particular grant?
- Is there any in-kind support you can source?
- Are there any cash donations or sponsorship opportunities?
- Is there any earned income?
- What can your organisation afford to contribute to the project?
- Is there any income from other grants for the project?

Budgets must always be balanced i.e. Income should equal Expenditure.

4. WRITING THE APPLICATION

- **Read the GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION FORM thoroughly.** These forms have information on what type of projects will be funded as well as specific instructions on how to complete the application.
- **Use the CORRECT FORM.** Each funding program has its own application form so make sure you use the correct form.
- **Be INFORMATIVE.** Your application will be read by an assessment panel that may not be aware of the project or your organisation. Your application is the basis on which they make their decision. Focus on the content, planning and outcomes.
- **Be CONCISE.** Assessment panels will often have to read and assess up to 50-60 or more applications.
- **Be PRECISE.** If an application form instructs you to use only the space provided, you should follow those instructions. Forms will indicate if you can attach additional pages.
- **The FRESH EYES test.** It's worthwhile giving a draft of your application to someone not involved in the project to read and give feedback. This can not only assist with proofing but also checking whether the application conveys your ideas clearly.
- **Is it LEGIBLE?** Always submit a legible application. You can download forms directly from the RANSW website on to your computer. If this is not possible, request a hard copy of the application form and use a typewriter. Hand written applications are acceptable and should be in black ink.

5. ASSESSMENT AND RATING PROCEDURES

Regional Arts NSW grants are assessed by selection panels. This varies depending on the program.

- **Country Arts Support Program (CASP):** Applications are assessed against the pre-determined selection criteria and guidelines by an independent panel selected by the Regional Arts Board (RAB) in your Region. They are then submitted to RANSW for data entry and processing. The State CASP Panel then ratifies these recommendations, provided they are eligible and meet the guidelines. Applications from regions without a RAB are assessed by the State CASP Panel, final decisions are made and applicants advised accordingly.
- **Regional Arts Fund (RAF):** RAF applications are assessed by an independent panel of at least eight members who represent various sectors of the arts across regional NSW. Applications are assessed and rated against the pre-determined RAF selection criteria and guidelines. The Panel makes final decisions and applicants are advised accordingly. For more information about the RAF panel go to <http://www.regionalartsnsw.com.au/grants/raf-panel.html>
- **Quick Response Grants ('Quicks'):** Applications are assessed in-house by at least two senior Regional Arts NSW staff, including the Funding Manager. They are rated against the pre-determined selection criteria and guidelines. Applications are processed within two working days of receiving the application and the applicant advised within five working days.
- **PROP UPS:** Applications are assessed against the pre-determined selection criteria and guidelines by an independent panel selected by the Regional Arts Board (RAB) in your Region. They are then submitted to RANSW for data entry and processing. As for CASP, applications from regions without a RAB sent directly to and processed by RANSW.

6. YOUR RESPONSIBILITY AS A GRANT RECIPIENT

- **Insurance cover**

Funding bodies sometimes ask for proof that your organisation has current and adequate insurance cover – public liability, personal accident where volunteers are involved, workers compensation when employing staff. Where an artist or professional person is engaged on a contract or fee basis, it is your duty of care to ensure that they have their own insurance that covers the specific activities of the project.

- **Artists Contracts**

If you are contracting artists for a project, you will need to get their ABN. If they do not have an ABN, you can either withhold 48.5% tax or request them to fill in a Statement of Supply (this document must be kept for a period of 7 years). Statements of Supply are available through the Australian Taxation Office or Australia Post and general information is available through the following link <http://www.ato.gov.au/businesses/content.asp?doc=/content/38509.htm>

When engaging artists, artworkers or project personnel for a fee, it is advisable to have a contract. The Arts Law Centre of Australia has some standard contracts available for a small fee that can be adapted to suit your needs. Contact details for Arts Law are The Gunnery, 43-51 Cowper Wharf Road, Woolloomooloo NSW 2011 Tel. 02 9356 2566, Freecall 1800 221 457 Fax 02 9358 6475 Email artslaw@artslaw.com.au Website <http://www.artslaw.com.au>

- **Auspicing arrangements**

If your group has no legal status (ie an unincorporated group), you can still apply for a grant but will need to nominate an incorporated body to manage the grant monies on your behalf, if you are successful. This could be the local council, local arts council or progress association and they will

need to show they are willing to undertake the role of auspicer by signing the application form plus the Conditions for Payment of Grant form, should a grant be awarded. The auspicings body accepts the grant monies on behalf of the grant recipient, pays the grant monies to the grant recipient and ensures, to the best of their ability, that the money is used for the purpose for which the grant is intended. It is up to the grant recipient and the auspicings body to work out an agreement on how the conditions of the grant are to be met.

▪ **Conditions of grant**

Grants generally come with a range of Conditions attached. These will vary so, if your application is successful, you should read them carefully. In accepting the grant, your organisation will be obligated to fulfilling these conditions.

- You will need to supply an invoice before your grant will be paid. If you are registered for **GST** you must supply a **Tax Invoice**, or you are **not registered for GST** you must supply an **Invoice**.
- RANSW requires that acknowledgements of the grant program be included in all publicity and promotional material and to include relevant logos of the program and/or funding body. Regional Arts NSW provides this information to all successful applicants. This requirement is outlined in all correspondence to the grant recipient as well as in the Conditions for Payment of Grant form. General information is also available through the following link <http://www.regionalartsnsw.com.au/about/logos.html>
- If your project changes in any way (eg it is postponed, cancelled or there is a change of artist etc) you are required to request a formal variation to your project in writing to RANSW for approval. This is important as a change in start date or end date can affect when you are paid and when your acquittal is due.

7. REPORTING AND ACQUITTAL REQUIREMENTS

Once you have completed your project, a requirement of the Conditions of Grant is that you acquit the grant. Acquittal reports must be submitted within the specified time period as outlined in your conditions of grant. Your organisation is accountable for this process and failure to comply can affect your eligibility for other grants.

- An Acquittal form will either be sent to grant recipients with the grant payment letter or are available on the RANSW website through the following link <http://www.regionalartsnsw.com.au/grants/grants.html>.
- Other information and documents will also help you acquit a grant. Keep copies of all publicity, media/ news clippings, programs, catalogues, invitations, photographs etc.
- Think about how you will measure and evaluate your project. If possible, gather statistics on audiences and participants.
- Keep good financial records to demonstrate how the funds were spent. You will need to supply a verified (i.e. Director or Treasurer's signature) Profit & Loss Statement or Audit Statement. The Grant should be separately identified (i.e. RANSW CASP Grant) in the income column.

8. CHECKLIST

These points may be obvious to some, but it is easy to overlook the often simple and last minute things.

- Do not staple, bind or pin the application as it will be photocopied several times. Paper clips are best.
- Make sure you make a copy of your application and support letters for your records.
- Make sure that the application is signed and dated by the correct person in your organisation.
- Ensure that all support material requested has been sourced and included in your application. Failure to do this may make your application ineligible.
- Check that you have the correct postal address for the funding body.
- If you are unsure of any requirement or detail relating to any aspect of the application, contact the Funding Officers at RANSW or your Regional Arts Board.

9. GUIDELINES, FORMS + CONTACTS

All the Regional Arts NSW grants programs, guidelines, instructions and forms are on the website at <http://www.regionalartsnsw.com.au/grants/grants.html> under 'Grants'.

A full list of all Regional Arts Boards is also on the website under 'RA Network' at <http://www.regionalartsnsw.com.au/network/network.html>

For information about other sources of funding for arts and community cultural development projects, subscribe to the Regional Arts NSW e-Bulletin from the website at <http://www.regionalartsnsw.com.au/subscribe.html>.

All enquiries about Regional Arts NSW grants should be directed to the Funding Manager or Funding Officer
Tel (02) 9270 2502 or (02) 9270 2501
Email funding@regionalartsnsw.com.au



Australian Government
Regional Arts Fund

The Regional Arts Fund is a Commonwealth
the NSW Ministry for the Arts and administered by
Regional Arts NSW



CASP is a State Government initiative funded by
Government initiative supporting the arts in
regional and remote Australia