

Canada Cultural Spaces Fund Webinar Transcription

June 1, 10 am

Valerie Hopper, Manager, Canada Cultural Spaces Fund Ontario Region

1:40 – The envelope that was announced for Canada Cultural Spaces Fund for this fiscal year is 168.2 million dollars – that’s nationwide, not for Ontario, but there is a notional portion of that we think we might be able to spend in Ontario. Right now, we’re looking at demand and trying to sort out how much of that can be spent in this province. We are doing more outreach [...] because normally our envelope is hovering around \$9-10 million dollars [and] we get enough projects in without additional outreach to spend those funds. We can spend up to three times that now so we can look at a larger number of projects as well as larger projects than we might have looked at in the past.

2:44 - There have been some changes to the program guidelines which were intended to assist in allocating these resources and open up a few new elements of eligibility which we will go over in some detail. The guidelines are on the website [\[http://canada.pch.gc.ca/eng/1455203896312/1455204007503\]](http://canada.pch.gc.ca/eng/1455203896312/1455204007503) I am speaking off of the guidelines that are on the website.

3:18 - In terms of applying, it’s still continuous intake [...] – we have a soft deadline coming up end of June to look at a large group of projects for this fiscal year – our fiscal year ends March 31, 2017. We do want to have a good idea by no later than October how this year’s money will be allocated, so it is a rushed period getting applications in and doing assessments.

4:01 - From the guidelines, the general objectives of the Canada Cultural Spaces program have not changed, it’s still the same components although we have reactivated the feasibility study component which was dormant for a few years, so that is opened up and remains as it was prior to it being dormant.

4:30 - The three components are *Construction and Renovation*, *Specialized Equipment* and *Feasibility Studies*.

4:38 - The eligible organizations, nothing has changed there – provincial governments are still eligible, Aboriginal people’s institutions, universities and incorporated not-for-profit arts and heritage organizations.

4:58 - I want to talk a bit about eligible expenses [...] we have talked about what we can do to provide additional support to heritage organizations. One thing we have added in terms of eligible expenses is the fabrication and design of permanent exhibits – by that I mean the point at which the content is already developed and researched and written [...] but actually refurbishing or constructing the cases or whatever is needed technology-wise to mount the exhibit is eligible – that is a new component to Cultural Spaces that we have not done previously.

5:59 - Another new element is the purchase and installation of public art, up to a maximum of \$150,000 contribution from Cultural Spaces. We have added definitions of public art in the glossary [for reference] (see: http://canada.pch.gc.ca/DAMAssetPub/DAM-PCH2-Arts-PerformingVisual/STAGING/texte-text/ccsf_application_guidelines_1455206993841_eng.pdf) It must be combined with a larger project, not as a standalone, but if you are doing a renovation or adding an addition and it extends to include a public art piece, you can include that portion of that expense in your budget now.

6:38 - We had in our last revision to the guidelines included the purchase and installation of integrated data-collecting and ticketing systems in combination with a larger project, similar to what we're doing now with the public art. Now in this new version, you can apply just for the ticketing system, it does not need to be part of a larger project – so that is a new change as well.

8:20 - Eligible items [...] if you happen to have a copy of the program guidelines in front of you, under *Specialized Equipment* you will see a list of Specialized Equipment that is eligible [...] this will give you a good idea of what we support. You will see there a new bullet that says exhibition cases, panels, and interactive displays. That was added with this new element I just spoke about related to exhibit development.

9:12 – A little bit lower you'll see *Ineligible Expenses* [...] I just want to [clarify] a couple things here. It says that the commissioning and purchasing of works of art is ineligible, but bearing in mind that a public art piece in front of your building is eligible [...] Don't be confused by that, the public art piece that I mentioned earlier is eligible.

9:48 – Just [clarifying] landscaping a little bit [...] if you are, for example an organization that has outdoor exhibits [...] and you want to put up interpretive panels and whatever else related to your visits – if you need a path to get to those panels, that would be eligible as supporting the exhibit. Pathways and parking lots just for walking are not, but if the work that you need to do outside relates to getting to an exhibit, you can include that expense.

10:37 – We say that historic building renovations or restorations not directly linked to professional arts and heritage are not eligible [...] If the historic building [and] the exterior of that building needs work, it is eligible as long as the building is being used for the purposes of this program. [...] If you have a historic building that is used as a visitor's centre or tourism centre its not eligible because there is no professional arts presentation occurring in that space.

11:26 – Another thing that we talked a little bit about is how much professional arts presentation needs to be in your space in order for it to be considered eligible. Previous to this fiscal year we had set a benchmark of at least 50% of activities in your organization need to be professional arts presentation, and by that we mean you are hosting a company or an artist from the outside, you are paying a guaranteed artist fee which is within professional standards, you are providing them with acceptable technical support [...] You might also in your organization run community-based arts activities where you do workshops for the general public or provide opportunities for local artists that are just emerging you may pay an honorarium to [...] that is [not considered professional presentation] but [is] very relevant to engaging your community. We are willing to look at projects that might have less than 50% professional presentation, so long as the professional presentation is a regular part of the annual programming in your space. By that I mean you run a series every year [...] it might only come to 25% of the activities that go on in your space but it's there – that is a little bit more open than we've had in the past [...]

13:34 – [...] The maximum contributions in the previous guidelines was 10 million dollars [...] I think the largest contribution we ever gave in Cultural Spaces was \$5.5 million dollars [...] in Ontario the largest one was \$4.7 million [...] The average contribution is about \$350,000, with quite a few projects hovering around \$2 million dollars, but with the increase in the budget they have decided to increase the maximum [contribution] to \$15 million. The project could be a \$30-40 million-dollar project; you could apply for \$15 [million]. [...]

14:31 - One thing to keep in mind for the very large projects coming forward [...] we would need to have a very high confidence level in the matching funding for these projects, because we would not want to tie up \$10 million of our budget for a project that does not have matching in place and may not make it in time to spend in the fiscal year the money is allocated in.

15:00 – With the larger projects it won't be possible for us to cash-manage the money forward to the next fiscal year. We would lose it to the Receiver General which goes back to the Government of Canada and wouldn't get spent in culture [...] Making sure you have as much matching in place as possible will increase the likelihood of your project going forward, especially for the very large projects.

15:39 – [...] Those are the major changes in the program [...] we [can] move to questions at this point.

Q&A

Q: Is there a deadline for funds to be spent?

Valerie: [...] The global deadline for the full allocation to be spent [the full 168.2 million] needs to be spent by March 31 2018. The money is split equally between two fiscal years [...] we need to spend approximately half of that amount by March 31, 2017 [...] For this first year [...] it will be tougher to spend it all [...] in the second year I believe there will be a fair amount of competition for the remaining funds as projects become more shovel-ready in the second half of the two-year period.

Q: [inaudible]

Valerie: I think in order to be eligible we would want to see that the actors are actually being paid that are performing in the work. I know there are a number of amateur theatre companies across the province [...] some do not contract a professional director, some do, so there is a continuum there. We would want to see that the actors performing are being paid.

Q: Can one organization apply for funding for more than one project?

Valerie: Absolutely. You can apply more than once in a year or you can put two projects in one application. Sometimes we see applications where there are three or four things being requested that are linked or not linked.

Q: Are purchases of touring vehicles considered special equipment? We are a theatre for a young audience company that tours to schools.

Valerie: If the vehicle is only used for transport that is not a mobile theatre space, the answer would be no.

**Andrew Shaver: We have funded portable touring equipment – portable sound and lighting for example.*

Q: Can matching funds come from another federal source such as the Canada 150 Infrastructure Fund?

Valerie: CCSF has 90-100% federal stacking – we can combine with other programs [...] but there are some infrastructure programs that have different stacking limits. Over at Industry Canada, for example, they tend to be 50% stacking, so that makes it a bit problematic... But I think for Canada 150 it's fine.

Q: Can a project be in phases?

Valerie: Yes – we see quite a few projects that come in in phases, sometimes it's a good approach when you are fundraising privately [inaudible] you can split the project into phases. As long as they seem like logical phases, it's great.

Q: Would the re-shingling on a roof of an 1878 schoolhouse be eligible or is this considered regular maintenance?

Valerie: [...] We do say in the guidelines that regular maintenance is not eligible. However, we have done roof re-shingling in the past. It would depend on whether we felt it was [neglected] or there was a capital reserve that wasn't used toward maintenance. Sometimes changing material on the roof is justified for a variety of reasons, whether they be interpretive or energy efficiency – things of that nature. I'm not going to say we have never redone a roof that could have been a maintenance item for an organization, but we don't always do them. It really is a case by case basis when it comes to that.

Q: What was the new percentage [...] needed to be professional programming?

A: 25%

**Andrew Shaver: 25%. But a stable track record is important.*

Q: We will be seeking funding for a feasibility study for an extension to our building: under Part E, does the \$25,000 quote include the contribution from the cultural spaces fund?

Valerie: No – a feasibility study can cost more than \$25,000 if that is the question.

Q: One of [my] projects includes renovations to the lobby and lounge of [the] space, and we would like to include a small intimate performance space. Would there be a portion of the expenses that are eligible for this project?

Valerie: I don't see anything that wouldn't be eligible. We do support the renovation of lobbies and great to be adding a performance space.

Q: I'm in the middle of a large renovation of a historic television studio into a performing arts space. I'm a professional artist and the owner. As I understand, non-profit status is needed for this fund. Would a partner non-profit leasee be eligible?

Valerie: Yes – if there was a tenure lease provided to someone who had authority over the programming in the space – then yes it would be eligible.

Q: Have the guidelines been physically updated?

Valerie: Yes – and they are live online.

Q: Can you tell us a bit about what indicators you tend to see that increase Cultural Spaces confidence in matching funding from the public and private sectors?

Valerie: Normally what we do when assessing a file [...] we don't normally put it forward for the Minister's consideration unless 70% of the funding is in place for the project [...] and by that I mean the recommendation Cultural Spaces would be awarding and what the applicant says they already have in the bank to match it – we like to see at least a 70% threshold met. Given this particular year, given that there may be some larger projects coming in, we are going to want to see more than 70% for the larger projects in place because the turnaround time for spending is very short. We would need to know that [the project] is ready to go for the latter part of the fiscal year.

Q: If an organization is applying for multi-year funding in 2016 and 2017, I am correct in my understanding that the funds need to be spent by March 31, 2018?

Valerie: Short answer to that is 'yes.' We want to spend this envelope we've been given - \$168.2 million by 2018. That doesn't mean your project can't continue into 2019, but we do not want to move money forward into 2019 from this envelope. If this project might take longer to do, we want to see our funds spent in the front end of this project costing. If there are residual costs going into the next fiscal year that are small, it's probably fine, but we don't know if we are going to have a big budget moving forward – we may revert back to our annual budget of \$28 million nationally after March 31 2018, so we can't commit to big spending after that because we do not have a confirmed envelope for that.

Q: If the total cost for a feasibility study is \$30,000 and we are requesting \$15,000 from the fund, are proposals with quotes still required?

Valerie: For something that small, no.

Q: Is the soft deadline in June still open for multi-phase proposals for 2016-17 and 2017-18?

Valerie: Yes

Q: Our museum, housed in a historic building suffered a major flood earlier this year. The foundation needs remediation. I am applying for 50% of the funding for repairs for this, but would also like to apply at the same time for an elevator for accessibility, as the area which needs remediation is also where the elevator would be situated. Is accessibility eligible for funding?

Valerie: Absolutely – you can combine into one application. Meeting provincial accessibility regulations is an area we do think is important and any renovation, whether it be washroom, elevator or entrance to your facility is a good application.

Q: We are seeking funding for Act 4 of a four-phase, five-year renewal of our 45 year-old building. This phase will cost 42% of the entire project. In looking at percentage of funding we could apply for, can we look at the entire multi-year project, or do we need to look only at Act 4. I ask because we have already raised nearly 1/3 of the money from individuals and private sources, however, this already raised money has mostly been used already in the first three phases of the project.

Valerie: If Act 4 does not have the matching [funds] yet [...] discuss in more detail with a program officer after the call.

**Andrew Shaver: It's important to note that costs are only eligible once you've submitted your formal application - anything paid out prior to your application would not count towards project total eligible costs.*

Q: What is the next soft deadline after June 2016?

Valerie: Haven't actually set one – might do one in the end of October.

Q: When will the successful projects be approved and when would we find out if we are successful if submitting in June?

Valerie: It depends – some of you may know that we did under our new Minister receive delegated authority for projects that we are contributing \$75,000 or less annually for approval in the director general levels within our bureaucracy – so those projects don't go to the Minister's office. If you have a project for \$120,000 and are asking us for half of that, \$60,000, that can have a fairly quick turn around compared to a project seeking \$4 million that has to go to the Minister's office for consideration. We do not have any control over timing of files once they leave our desks in the region [...] If the projects have spending in the fiscal year we would certainly be trying to ensure those are looked at on an urgent basis so that spending can occur prior to March 31. We can't give a date as to how long it will take [...] service standard is six months from date filing is deemed complete by us to the date the Minister makes a decision. If you apply by June 30, six months later puts it late for this fiscal year [...] we will try to rush the larger projects that have standing to get the funding out the door.

Q: I understand that more than one application for funding can be submitted by one organization. But does receiving one grant reduce our chances of receiving a second grant for another project?

Valerie: Depends on how much demand there is against the available resources and how well the project fits the program objectives. [It] has happened that an applicant has received two projects in one year. Depends on the environment of the total demand against the available resources.

Q: We are installing a [pipe] to connect to municipal water supply to improve the water pressure for fire suppression. Would this type of project be eligible for funding?

Valerie: That's a new one! [...] If it relates to fire safety and it is prohibitively costly to the organization they can apply for it.

Q: Can we submit projects from previous applications that have not been successful?

Valerie: Yes [...] Discuss it with a program officer. Depends why it was not successful, if there are things that have changed about it. Case by case on that.

**Andrew Shaver: It's always important to contact a program officer before you submit your application - we're here to help!*

Q: Any general observations about what common errors this group of 40 organizations can avoid? Or good things we can replicate?

Valerie: Big question! I would say, basically what Andrew mentioned earlier – don't fill out the application until you speak with a program officer and they can provide you advice for proceeding based on [your] project. Don't apply too early if you have no matching, if you don't have detailed costing

ready (for renovation or construction). We need the budgets to be realistic and as accurate as possible to determine funding levels. All kinds of things a program officer can provide you with [...] as you work on your application.

**Andrew Shaver: Try and have at least 25% of your revenues confirmed when you apply - the more the better. For larger projects, third party studies are a great support to you and to us. An engaged Board to support you makes a huge difference too!*