

# First Nations Commissioning Fund - Guidelines

The First Nations Commissioning Fund (the Fund) focuses on investing in opportunities that share Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' stories, histories and heritage, support economic outcomes for Queensland First Nations artists, organisations and communities, and present exceptional arts and cultural work to wider audiences and markets.

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## Fund objectives

- Support the development and presentation of new arts and cultural work and programs by individual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and arts workers, collectives and organisations
- Strengthen skills development and provide new employment or income-generating opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and arts workers and communities
- Grow a pipeline of high-quality First Nations arts and cultural products and experiences

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## What the funding can be used for

This fund is for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples only. The Fund supports applications from individuals and organisations for First Nations-led arts and cultural projects and programs at different stages of development, from consultation, planning, and creative development to production, presentation, and distribution.

Arts and cultural projects can include visual and performing arts; fashion, textiles and design; writing, arts-led projects that have community benefit; other arts-led projects that preserve and/or celebrate and share languages and culture.

In addition, applicants have the option to apply for fees for the commissioning of new live or recorded music as part of the project.

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## Funding available

- For single year projects – up to **\$70,000** for projects and programs up to 12 months.
- For two-year projects – up to **\$150,000** to support the development and delivery of single projects and programs across financial years. These are projects and programs that need a larger and/or longer scale of development of up to two years and include presentation and/or distribution.

**PLUS** up to **\$10,000** towards fees for commissioning new live or recorded music by Queensland-based Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander composers, musicians or librettists as part of your project.

## Eligibility

Please refer to the Arts Queensland [General Funding Guidelines](#) for general eligibility criteria and definitions.

In addition, the Fund requires that applicants must:

- be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who are artists or arts workers, or First Nations organisations or collectives based in Queensland. For The Fund, a First Nations organisation is at least 50% owned and led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, who have formal authority to make decisions in the operations and governance of the organisation
- **not** apply for 100% of the total project costs
- **not** receive Arts Queensland funding of more than \$1.5 million per annum

Applicants may only receive one First Nations Commissioning Fund grant per calendar year, based on the Round closing date. However, they can also receive a further grant for a different project through the Queensland Arts Showcase Program within the same calendar year.

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## Eligible and ineligible costs

In addition to the items listed in the [General Funding Guidelines](#):

- you **can** apply for:
  - costs towards artistic collaboration with a nationally or internationally significant artist or company for an outcome in Queensland
- you **cannot** apply for:
  - agents' fees or management fees for participating artists
  - equipment purchases or digital upgrades over \$3,000 (excluding GST)
  - rent and utilities
  - expenses associated with core staff involved in funded activities, including fees or wages, travel, accommodation and living-away-from-home allowances.

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## Assessment criteria

The Fund Assessment Panel, all of whom are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, will assess applications against the following criteria, which align with the [General Funding Guidelines](#) criteria:

### **High quality**

- Creative idea or concept is innovative and will deliver high-quality First Nations arts and cultural work or programs
- Professionals involved are highly skilled and well-regarded
- Includes collaborators and partners who will help create great cultural outcomes.

### **Strong impact**

- Creates new employment, income generating opportunities and/or skills development for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and arts workers in Queensland
- Builds new audiences, markets and reputation for Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and/or organisations
  - Responds to community needs and helps deliver government priorities, including the principles of the [Cultural Engagement Framework](#).

### **Sustainable value**

- Demonstrates value for money, sound governance, and ethical business practices, including paying amounts not less than industry award rates, recommended or agreed minimum rates, and adhering to cultural protocols
- Proposed activity has a strong delivery plan, including understanding potential risks and their management
- Will contribute to the sustainability and growth of Queensland's First Nations arts and cultural sector.

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## **Submitting your application**

You can submit your application, along with project timeframe, budget, and support materials, including letters of support, artist biographies/CVs, examples of prior work and appropriate cultural permissions, through SmartyGrants: <https://artsqueensland.smartygrants.com.au>.

You must submit your application by the Fund closing dates and times listed below.

	<b>Open</b>	<b>Close</b>	<b>Notification</b>	<b>Activity Start Date</b>
<b>Round 6</b>	3 February 2025	2pm 17 March 2025	Late May 2025	From 23 June 2025

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**For support** with technical issues related to the online application, please contact an Arts Queensland Grants Officer by telephone (07) 3034 4016 or toll-free 1800 175 531 or email [investment@arts.qld.gov.au](mailto:investment@arts.qld.gov.au).

Note: Arts Queensland reserves the right to modify the Fund Guidelines at any time. Applicants will be notified of changes.