WHAT ARE GRANTS?

A grant is monetary assistance for a specific project. You will need to account for how all the money is spent. It is important to remember that you don't ever get something for nothing and all funding bodies require post-project acquittals and reporting. If you do not acquit successfully you will never be able to apply for another grant from that organisation again.

WHERE CAN THEY BE FOUND?

- Many government bodies and/or arts organisations offer grants.
- Check the **QMusic Grants & Funding Calendar** for details on what grants are available through the year.
- **Sign up** to our fortnightly newsletter Broadcast to receive updates and **news articles** about the latest funding opportunities.

HOW DO I APPLY FOR A GRANT?

- Get organised – know what you are applying for and why! You will need to be able to get this across clearly in your application.
- Always read the application and the guidelines carefully and if you don't understand something make a note of it so you can get the point clarified.
- Get in contact with the organisation that deals with the grants to make sure you are on the right track. Don't harass them with endless queries but approach once you have read all the material and worked out a general plan.
- Allow plenty of time for the amount of preparation and research involved.

BEING GRANT READY

Why should you plan to be ready to apply for a grant?

- Grant programs are highly competitive. On average just 20% of all grants are funded. The more forward planning you do the better.
- There are often long periods between submitting an application and being able to commence your project. For example, a grant program may close in August, with assessment occurring in September to October, notification occurring in October to November and the program specifying that funded projects cannot commence before January of the coming year.
- There may only be 1 or 2 rounds of a specific grant program each year. If you miss a round, you may have to wait 6 to 12 months before applying, which further delays your start date.

NOW ASK YOURSELF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS

- What is the project? Outline its aims & objectives.

- Why do you want to do this project? How is it significant or meaningful to you or your organisation? Identify the ongoing benefits after the life of the project.

- Where will the project take place? Location(s)/venue(s).

- Who are you targeting (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.

THEN...

- Are your budgets and schedules realistic? Always double check and make sure someone else runs their eye over your budget.

- Supply some sort of overview of your organisation i.e. its background or history, aims and objectives, current or recent projects and its future directions.

- Always make sure the application is supplied in the format outlined in the application and/or guidelines – this may include document formatting and spacing, number of copies, etc.

- Most importantly: Meet the deadline! Late applications won't be reviewed so all the work you would have done will be wasted.

- Almost all grant programs are extremely competitive and funds are limited. Your application will be one of many so don't be discouraged if you are not successful this time.

SUPPORT MATERIAL

Good support material is:

- Compliant with what is allowed or required, including format, under the grant guidelines.

- Professional quality.

- Relevant to the purpose of the application and the grant program.

- Up to date.

Support letters can take time to gather:

- Give the people and organisations that you need the letters from as much notice as possible.

- Give them a good briefing on what you need the support letter to cover.

- Give them a deadline.

BUDGET

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

Don't 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.

Don't expect grants to pay for your entire project. Additional contributions from other sources are generally expected. This can be in-kind support, contributions from you or other organisations, generated income like sales or fees, other grants or sponsorship and donations.

You must have an Australian Business Number.

Check the funding body's requirements with regard to GST as some bodies will require you to complete a budget exclusive of GST.

Funding bodies often expect to see total income, including the grant from them, equalling the total expenditure.

If you are applying to a number of funding bodies, indicate if funding has been confirmed by any of them and if not, when you are expecting to hear from them.

DO THE EXPENSES SIDE 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. Panellists are likely to be very experienced and knowledgeable in this area.

- List all items of expenditure – make sure you have time to get quotes on items you are not sure about.

- Assess the personnel time involved

- Assess if there is any travel, accommodation and living allowance involved

- Assess the cost of any materials, venue and equipment hire

- Insurance

- Catering

- Documentation

- Incidentals

NOW DO THE INCOME SIDE...

- How much can you apply for from this particular grant?

- Base estimates of project income on past experience and / or through speaking with others. Income might include sales of artwork, sales of catalogues, sponsorship, other grants and your own contribution.

- Is there any in-kind support you can source? In-kind income means non-cash contributions to your project, such as free venue or studio hire, free advertising or free freight. If you include in-kind income, make sure you show the equivalent cost in your expenditure.

- Are there any cash donations or sponsorship opportunities?

- What can your organisation afford to contribute to the project?

- Is there any other grant income for the project?

- Some grants expect matched funding, which means you MUST source the same amount of money/in-kind as your asking amount.

- Budgets must always be balanced i.e. income should equal expenditure.

KEY WORDS

It is important to understand some key terms that you will come across when researching which grants are appropriate for you to apply to. These include:

ACQUITTAL

The project report often required by a funding body once a funded project has been completed.

AUSPICING OR ADMINISTRATIVE BODY

Is an incorporated organisation that applies for a grant with or on behalf of an individual or a group. The auspicing or administrative body may be responsible for some of the administration of the project, but passes all or the bulk of the grant funds to the individual or group to actually do the project.

CONDITIONS OF GRANT FUNDING

These are conditions in the grant contract, such as project start and completion dates, required acknowledgement of support of the funding body and provision of an acquittal.

ELIGIBILITY

The rules governing who can apply for a grant and / or the kinds of projects supported. Examples of eligibility criteria include dates after which funded projects can commence, Australian, state or territory residency, professional status as an artist or status as an incorporated body, the number of applications that can be submitted by the same applicant and / or compliance with any existing or previous grants.

PEER PANEL OR PEER ASSESSMENT

Refers to a grant application assessment panel made up of independent people from the sector to which the grant program relates who are not employees of the funding body.

SUPPORT LETTERS

Letters written by the key creative personnel of venues, galleries or other people or organisations involved with the project and who support its goals and direction. Often these individuals and organisations are confirming their commitment to the project as they may be a venue hosting the project.

SELECTION CRITERIA

These are the factors against which your project will be assessed in making the decision about funding. These can include things such as contribution to regional arts development, benefit to the applicant's skills and experience internationally, degree to which the work is innovative or new, the development of new markets or audiences for the applicant's work.

SUPPORT MATERIAL

Applicants may submit material that supports the application such as examples of their work, copies of contracts, confirmations of venues, permissions relating to the project, copies of reviews or critiques of the applicant's work, samples of promotional material or support letters.

A STANDARD GRANT PROCESS

1. **Identify a good fit for your project with a specific grant program.
    If you need help with this:**

*   Do your own online research – there is plenty of information out there. Start with the QMusic Grant section of the website HERE and take it from there.

*   contact the funding bodies eg: Arts Queensland (07 3224 4896 / grants@arts.qld.gov.au) or Australia Council for the Arts (1800 226 912) to make sure you are on the right track. Always read the application form and guidelines carefully first and if you don't understand something make a note of it so you can get the point clarified.

*   but don't harass them with endless queries; contact them once you have read all the material and worked out a general plan.

*   talk to other people or organisations doing similar work to yourself who have been successful in a grant application.

*   be mindful of any application deadlines – these are not negotiable and must be strictly adhered to.

*   please note that QMusic staff are NOT trained to give you advice on identifying a suitable grant.

2. Prepare your application:

• allow plenty of time for the amount of preparation and research involved.

• write the application in accordance with the guidelines.

• organise your support material and only include relevant ones in your application.

• be focused in what you want to achieve and present your aims clearly and concisely.

• attend an information session if one is held by the funding body.

• consider paying for a QMusic Grant Assistance Service (GAS) whereby a skilled grant writer will meet with you and review your application. More info HERE. Please note that this service is only available to QMusic members.

3. Lodge your application with the funding body:

• get a third party to read it - does it make sense and is it exciting and engaging?

• check for typos and grammar.

• are all the required signatures in the right place?

• does the budget balance?

• are all the questions answered? Are all the criteria addressed?

• have you included proof of all necessary confirmations, permissions or contracts?

• make sure support material is properly labelled.

• make sure all material is in the format specified by the guidelines.

• make sure it is submitted ON TIME.

• keep a copy of the application for your records.

4. Application is assessed and you are notified of results.

If successful:

• you will receive a grants contract for signing. Make sure you can comply with the grant conditions and seek clarification with any items you are unsure about

• the grant is paid when the funding body has received the signed contract and a tax invoice

• ensure everyone involved in your project is aware of their responsibilities and deadlines under the funding contract.

• ensure that the necessary data for the acquittal is collected as the project develops.

• advise the funding body as soon as practicable of any changes you need to make to the project and why.

• ensure that the funding body is invited to any events.

• Ensure that the funding body is fully acknowledged according to it's guidelines.

If unsuccessful:

- seek feedback on how your application could have been stronger or more competitive

- an unsuccessful application may result from the quality of the application and support material, or from the nature of the project itself

- if you envisage making applications to that funding body in the future, ensure that it is invited to events – increasing its awareness of your work.

- don't give up on seeking funding - seek to learn from your experiences.

5. The project is completed and the acquittal is submitted to the funding body.

- make sure the information in the acquittal is correct.

- make sure the proper signatures are given.

- get the acquittal in ON TIME.

- label attachments and additional material.