

# AMPLIFY BC LIVE MUSIC – BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT TIP SHEET + FAQ's 2019-2020

## APPLICATION TIPS:

- Start early, and read the guidelines several times
- Call us if you have questions (earlier is better!)
- Check out the [list of past recipients](#)
- Have someone else read and review your application
- Refer to the goals of the program
- Answer questions directly - simple is better!

## AS YOU WORK THROUGH THE APPLICATION:

- You can start and save your application at any time. You will receive a link to your email when you save. When you return to your application, the original link you received will continue to update your saved material.
- Once you submit your application, you will receive a confirmation email with a .pdf of your completed application form along with the attachments you submitted with your application.

## HOW TO WRITE YOUR PROJECT PLAN:

Reference the Live Music Scoring Sheet as you respond to the project plan questions. Stay focused and address your business strategy and how it directly relates to the funding requests in your budget.

The project plan is designed specifically for each grant program and makes sure all applicants are responding to the same questions. If you have a business plan that would help provide context to your application, please attach it. Submit the completed project plan in a .doc or .pdf format. Copy the questions into your word document and write answers below. Maximum 6 pages!

### 1. Briefly describe the activities you are requesting funding for. Explain how the project is new or expanded.

- This program is intended to fund new or expanded activity. You must be able to clearly demonstrate how your project is new or show the incremental activity. For example, if you have a business unit that is expanding, we will fund 50% of expenditures related to the expansion.
- This program is intended to help your company grow - be imaginative and pitch us a great idea that is backed by research and data specific to your company.
- Tell us about your project. Be succinct and clear about your vision. Clarity on what you plan to do is very important. Those scoring your application need to understand what you want to achieve with this funding.
- Don't include too many items in your funding request. Explain how these items fit into your strategy and company/organizational goals. Large requests with no rationale may not be funded.

### 2. What are the goals of your project? How will you evaluate the success of your project?

#### Please use the following chart:

Use the chart below to help track your project goals. If successful, you'll be asked to re-visit this chart during final reporting, and update it with the actual outcomes of your project. Be as specific as possible when discussing your goals. Demonstrate that you understand the individual steps you need to complete to achieve these goals.

<u>Project Goals</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Measurable Outcomes</u>	<u>Evaluation</u>
Example: Improve accounting systems	- Buy new accounting software - Hire consultant to advise on new accounting practices - Sign up for accounting course	- New knowledge for staff - Ability to measure activities	- Knowledge has made the following impact... - New accounting software allows...

**3. Why have you decided to expand in this way? Back up your rationale using data, ticket sales, audience feedback, surveys, etc.**

- Tell us how this project is relevant to your company.
- Why is this project a good idea for you and for your customers/clients? Do you have any research that shows the need for this strategy or project?
- Is there a demand by your clients/customers for what you're proposing?
- How are you making money? How will this project help you create and attract more business?
- Tell us how you'll leverage this investment over time with long-term, sustainable growth.

**4. How will this project enhance and expand the existing scope and capacity of your business? How will your project help your company become more competitive? Please provide stats from previous years, if applicable, and revenue projections for the future.**

- Tell us your current operating capacity. Use concrete numbers to describe your scope and output. If your project is funded, how will your capacity grow over time?
- What are your company goals? How will this project move you towards these goals?
- What do you hope to accomplish in the next 2-5 years?
- Don't assume we know your company. Tell us what your business is about and who you serve. Be clear and concise and provide research and data where possible.
- If you are investing in training or new equipment, how will this benefit your company in the long term?

**5. What expertise, internal or external, do you have that will help you achieve your goals?**

- Not all projects will be successful, but what are you doing to give your event the best opportunity for success? How are you getting the word out to ticket-buyers, sponsors, etc.?
- Have you hired anyone to with specific expertise in an area you'd like to improve or grow?
- Have you tested this idea in the past? What specific skills on your team will make this project a success?

**6. Will this project continue, and if so, how do you intend to pay for this project and new/expanded jobs in future years?**

- If you are planning to add positions at your company, how do you plan to pay for these positions the following year without Amplify BC support?

**7. Describe any additional impacts this project will make in the following areas, if applicable:**

**Economic Impact: Does this project have a measurable economic impact for the company,**

**community or industry? Will this project increase music tourism, and create ongoing employment opportunities for BC artists and professionals?**

- Will this project make a significant impact on the local music economy?
- If you have conducted an economic impact study, or have surveys or letters of support from local businesses, please share here.
- Does this project create jobs for music industry professionals or for BC artists?

**Investment in BC Talent: Does this project invest in growing the skill and knowledge of BC music industry professionals? Does this project create opportunities for BC artists, or grow the company's capacity to serve more BC artists? If so, how many?**

- Does this project include training or mentorship opportunities?
- Will this project grow the experience or skillset of your employees?
- Will increased staff positions allow you to present more BC artists, or program more events for BC audiences?

**Diversity: Does this project support or expand the diversity of BC's music industry?**

Examples of this could include:

- Providing a service or programming an event that doesn't exist in a regional community
- Growing a company, service, or event that serves a niche
- Serving a new segment of BC's music industry
- Supporting companies owned by under-represented demographics
- Supporting companies that support niche genres and business activities

Throughout this program, Creative BC aims to support a wide range of people, businesses, and activities across BC.

**Future Capability: Does this project build company capacity and sustainability, and help the applicant adapt to the marketplace or test new ideas?**

- How is your project exploring new business models or ideas?
- Will funding allow you to experiment or take risks you may not have been able to take before?

**8. For new companies, events, or services: Describe the competitive landscape and how your idea will be successful. Who are your main competitors and what will your competitive advantage be?**

- If other companies are pursuing the same strategy, how will your approach be different/successful?
- A competitor analysis or a [SWOT analysis](#) can help identify and risks and challenges your company may face.

**9. For previous recipients: If you previously received funding from Creative BC, how does this project build on previous results? Please use actual data and results. Assume the people reading this application have not read the final report for your previous project.**

- Explain how the investment from previously funded projects helped you get to the next stage in the development of your company.
- Share how you were able to maximize your funding and how you are continuing to grow as a company. This funding is not intended to subsidize projects year after year, but to make strategic investments that will help you grow in the long term and become more sustainable.

## **BUDGET TIPS:**

- Applicants are required to use the budget template for Live Music – Business Development. You can download the template on the Live Music program page.
- Only list the items in the budget that you discuss in your project plan.
- Make sure you fill out the revenue section of the budget. Your revenue should equal the expenses, to show you have the funds to pay for the project. If not, please explain how you plan to make up the deficit. Include your Live Music funding request in the revenue section as unconfirmed, along with other sources of funding.
- If you have yet to confirm your matching funding, explaining a contingency plan in your Project Plan would be helpful in giving Creative BC the confidence that your project will move forward.
- Break down your expenses - if you're assigning existing resources to this project, tell us how many hours at what hourly rate, so we can see how you got to your final number.
- As the applicant company, remember that you are responsible for paying for 50% of proposed budget.
- There is a 75% cap on public funding for all projects, except for applications from companies owned by Indigenous peoples.
- Remove GST as this is ineligible.
- In-kind expenses are also ineligible, however, if you would like to include these in your budget to show us the full scope of your project, please use Column D.
- Hyperlink vendors where possible.
- Remove unused cells or add additional rows when needed.

## **BUDGET FAQ's:**

### **1. Do I need to fill out two separate budgets if I'm applying for both Business Development and Live Music Presentation?**

Yes. You will need to complete separate applications, budgets, and project plans for each project.

### **2. What is considered private investment?**

Private investment is any funds not derived from government sources. This could be company investment, private funders or personal investment. Earned revenue includes any revenue streams associated with the event, such as ticket sales food vendors, merchandise, or sponsorships.

### **3. What is considered public funding?**

Public funding is considered funds from municipal, provincial, or federal government programs. Examples of public funding include Creative BC, Music BC, BC Arts Council, Canadian Heritage, etc. Arts councils and other regional bodies may receive funding from government sources or private sources – please contact the funder to determine where the funding came from.

### **4. What if my budget changes over the course of the project?**

The application budget is a proposed budget and some changes are anticipated. In the final report you will address any changes to your application budget. If you are not sure if an expense that was not included in your application will be eligible, check the guidelines to be sure, and speak with Creative BC staff prior to incurring the expense for approval.

### **5. Do you need a vendor quote for every expense?**

Vendor quotes are not required but recommended, particularly for large budget items, and useful in supporting your request for key budget items. It also shows that you have done the research on your vendors and are further along in the planning process for your project.

#### **6. Do you require a lease agreement from venues?**

Lease agreements aren't required but are incredibly helpful in supporting an application for renovations, capital purchases, or significant investments into venues that are leased. A lease agreement or letter from the landlord or building owner can help show support and stability.

#### **7. Do I have to give you all my receipts at the end of my project?**

No. Creative BC will 'spot check' your final budget and cost report, and may request supporting invoices and receipts as proof of payment upon completion of the project. Please keep track of all receipts, invoices, and proof of payment (deposited cheques, e-transfer, credit card statement, wire transfer, paystub, etc.) so they can be readily available if needed. Cash payments are not eligible forms of payments in Creative BC programs.

### **REGISTERING AS A BUSINESS:**

#### **1. Do we need a business number to apply?**

Yes. All applicants must have a registered business. Proof of business registration can be shown in the following ways: a GST number, statement of business registration, or certificate of incorporation. If you have not registered your business, you can do so with [BC Business Registry](#).

#### **2. Do you have to be incorporated for your business or can you be a sole proprietorship?**

Eligible businesses include: sole proprietorships, general partnerships, corporations, or those working with registered GST numbers.

#### **3. The wait time to register my business with BC Registry Services is after the application deadline, can I still submit an application?**

Yes. Submit your confirmation of name request from BC Registry Services along with your application. Send us your statement of business registration as soon as you receive it, and we will add it to your file.

#### **4. Are not-for-profits eligible for funding?**

Yes. Canadian not-for-profits and BC Societies are eligible for funding in the Live Music program.

### **ELIGIBILITY:**

#### **1. Can I apply for business travel and conference fees?**

No, funding for conference fees and business travel, which includes travel to festivals, conferences, and general business meetings, is ineligible and can be accessed through Music BC's Business Travel Grant, however expenses for travel to and from courses or training will be considered.

#### **2. Do the vendors I'm hiring have to be a registered business?**

No. The only company that needs to be registered is the applicant company. You can hire a vendor that is not officially registered as a business.

#### **3. Does this program cover operating expenses like utilities, salaries, and rent?**

No. Operating costs not specific to the project are ineligible. However, if you are expanding your office to make space for new employees, the increase in these expenses can be claimed.

#### **4. Can I apply for event expenses like artist fees and hospitality?**

No. Expenses in Live Music – Business Development must be related to the overall growth in capacity of the business applying. Applicants who would like to receive funding for live music events must apply through Live Music – Presentation.

**5. If my company/organization has already received funding through this program, am I still eligible to apply?**

Previously funded companies are able to apply; there is currently no limit to funding over multiple intakes. Companies who have previously received funding from Creative BC need to address the impacts of previous funding in subsequent applications to make a case for reinvestment. Companies with competitive applications that have not received significant funding through Creative BC may be prioritized for funding.

**OTHER FAQ's:**

**1. What is the expense eligibility window?**

Eligible expenses must fall between October 2, 2019 and October 1, 2020.

**2. Can I submit multiple applications for separate projects?**

Yes, however the company cap in this intake is \$150,000 across both streams. We encourage applicants to focus their request on the project that is most developed and will make the best case for funding.

**3. When will I know if my application is successful?**

The review period for applications is approximately 12 weeks after the application deadline. Results are likely to be sent out via email around the week of February 3, 2020.

**4. How do I know if you got my application?**

Once you successfully submit your application, you will receive a confirmation email to the address you provided. This email will include a PDF copy of your submitted application, as well as a copy of the attachments you provided. If you don't receive a confirmation email, please get in touch with Creative BC to ensure your application was received.

**5. Where can we find a list of previous recipients?**

Previous Amplify BC recipients are posted [here](#). You can also find information on previous BC Music Fund recipients [here](#).

**EVALUATION AND OTHER TIPS:**

**Application assistance:** Creative BC staff are happy to provide you with assistance in preparing your application. Should you require assistance please contact the Program Analyst for this program by phone or email. Additionally, several information sessions, both in-person and online, will be hosted prior to the application deadline.

**Scoring:** Applications are reviewed by staff and a panel of industry professionals according to the scoring sheet available on the Creative BC website. Industry panelists are different every intake and are curated by staff to eliminate conflicts of interest. Panelists are chosen for their industry experience, and may have backgrounds in a variety of roles, company and organization types, event types and sizes, including festivals, venues, programmers, and presenters. Panels are also curated to include Indigenous representation, regional representation, women, people of colour, and other backgrounds.

**Conflict of interest:** Creative BC staff do their best to curate scoring panels without conflicts of interest. All advisory panelists must declare any conflict of interest before evaluating applications. Additionally, all advisory panelists are required to sign an agreement preventing them from disclosing any information they come across during evaluation.



**Success rate:** This program is highly competitive. Even unsuccessful applications may be well-prepared and meet the goals of the program. Applications are evaluated and scored comparatively within the limits of the program budget.

**First-time applicants:** Not all companies will receive a funding offer on their first application. Applicants who reapply often see an improvement in their overall score.

**Previous recipients:** For previous recipients, we are interested in knowing about the results of previously funded projects. If you aren't yet able to measure the impact of your previous project, your application may be less competitive than projects that are able to report on Creative BC's previous investment using audience growth, revenue generation, and other data. Use the space available in the last question of the Project Plan to be specific about how funding has helped you leverage other opportunities and to make a case for further investment. Companies with competitive applications that have not received significant funding through Creative BC may be prioritized for funding.

**Eligible expenses:** Applicants that include multiple ineligible expenses in their budget may be less competitive overall. A list of eligible and ineligible expenses is available in the program guidelines. If you are unsure about one of your expenses, you can contact Creative BC before the deadline to verify. In addition to the ineligible expenses listed in the guidelines, anything marked as TBD, miscellaneous, contingency, or budget items lacking detail or not addressed in the Project Plan may be deemed ineligible.

**Scope:** Targeted budgets and concise project deliverables are often most effective. Be purposeful with each expense listed in your budget. Items listed in the budget must be discussed in the Project Plan. Items not addressed may be removed from the budget and could affect the overall score of the application.

**BC jobs:** Applicant companies are not required to hire within BC, however, projects that emphasize BC jobs, particularly BC music jobs, are more competitive.

**Matching funding:** Funding requests that significantly exceed the company's revenues or that rely heavily on other unconfirmed funding may be less convincing. Applicants should be prepared to cover 50% of the proposed budget. In the case of companies with other confirmed public funding, the applicant company is expected to contribute at least 25% of the proposed budget. Budgets with over 75% public funding will see a reduction in their funding request, except for cases where the applicant company is owned by Indigenous peoples.

**Supporting documents:** Providing supporting documents such as letters of support, vendor quotes, and business plans are encouraged. They demonstrate you have researched the vendors and costs involved and are ready to move forward with your project. They can also demonstrate industry support and provide useful context about your business.

**Diversity:** Diversity is heavily weighted in the scoring criteria for this program. Applicant companies from underrepresented regions of BC, or applications that include Indigenous representation, people of colour, women, persons with disabilities, LGBTQ+ participation, and/or other underrepresented groups will receive higher scores in diversity. Creative BC also aims to fund a diverse spectrum of types of companies and activities within BC's music industry. Applications must also score well in the other categories to be competitive overall.

**Reductions:** Not all successful projects will receive 100% of the funding they request. Funding requests may be reduced for a variety of reasons including removal of ineligible expenses, funding

more projects, funding diverse projects, lack of required documents such as financial statements, or not addressing specific budget items in the project plan. Projects that receive reduced funding are given the opportunity to scale back their project and submit a revised budget.

**Feedback:** Feedback via email or phone call is offered to all applicants, both successful and unsuccessful. We try our best to provide direct and helpful feedback taken from evaluation notes, however due to volume, feedback length and detail may be limited. We encourage all applicants to use the feedback they receive to improve future applications.

**Final report statistics:** All successful applicants are required to submit a final report to conclude the project. Please make sure you're tracking the following statistics throughout the life of the project so that you may report on them at the end:

- # of labour hours (BC and non-BC)
- Total \$ spent on labour (BC and non-BC)
- # of new hires
- Employment demographics of new hires (self-identified)

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

Amplify BC funding programs offer support in the areas of artist development, music company development, live music, and industry development to stimulate the economy and serve BC's diverse music sector.

For more information about this program and upcoming opportunities, please contact:

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