

PROJECT TITLE: Grant-writing assistance for Alberta Media Artists

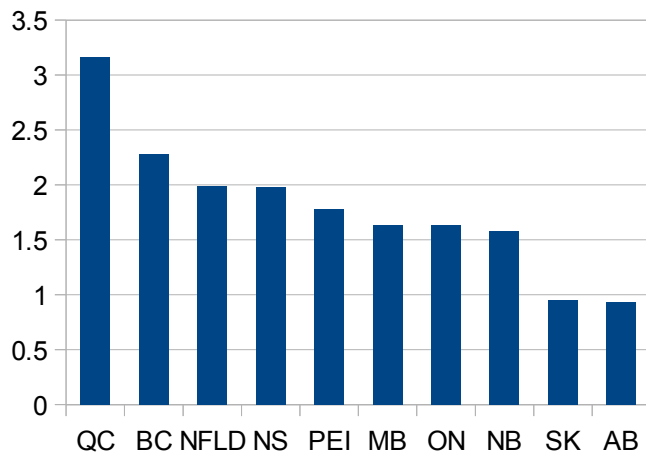
CONTEXT:

There is a long-standing belief among Alberta artists and arts organizations that our province is underfunded by the Canada Council for the Arts relative to other provinces. The basis for this belief is clear in the funding data presented by the Council.

To use the 2019 fiscal year as a representative example:

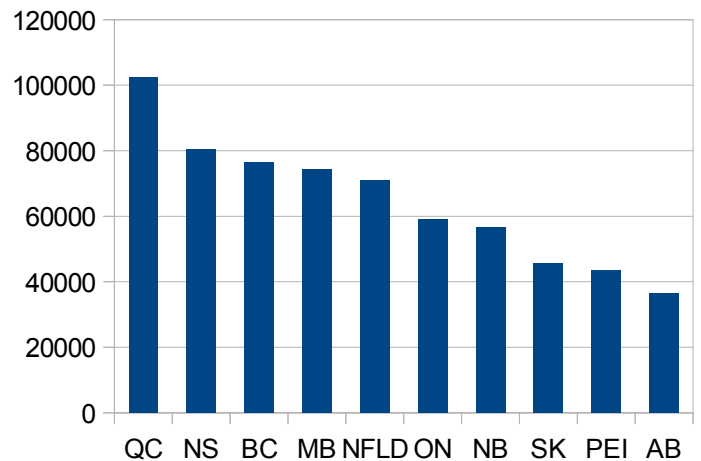
Despite being home to over 11% of Canada's population and 8.4% of its artists, Alberta artists were responsible for only 5.4% of successful grant applications that year, and only 6% of the total grant dollars awarded.

Successful Grant Applications per 10,000 Population



(Data from Canada Council for the Arts Funding Overview 2019-20)

Grant Dollars Awarded per 10,000 Population

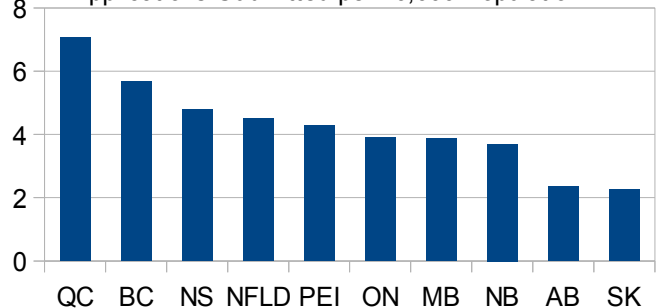


(Data from Canada Council for the Arts Funding Overview 2019-20)

That trend holds true for media artists, too. Looking at the *Explore and Create* stream, the major funding source for the creation of individual artistic projects, Alberta artists in 2019 accounted for only 2% of the total grants awarded in the media arts stream, and 2% of dollars allocated. Alberta media arts organizations fared a bit better as a group, sharing 6% of the total media arts core funding between them in 2019, but still far below what you might expect based on Alberta's population. Looking at this data, it isn't hard to understand why Alberta artists feel shorted.

In response to these trends, Council has tended to respond with another truth: Alberta artists aren't getting funding because they aren't applying. This, too, is supported by the data. Looking again to 2019, Alberta artists accounted for only 5.8% of applications that year. In that light, the province's 6% portion of the Canada Council's grant funding total looks much more plausible.

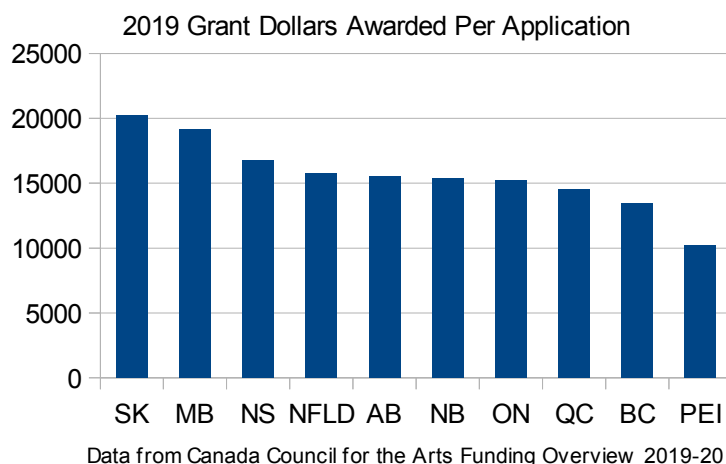
Applications Submitted per 10,000 Population



(Data from Canada Council for the Arts Funding Overview 2019-20)

In fact, when looking at dollars awarded per application, rather than by population, Alberta is right in the middle of the pack: 5th overall in 2019, and 5th on average over the past five years. Nothing to brag about, but also hardly a sign of an anti-Alberta bias.

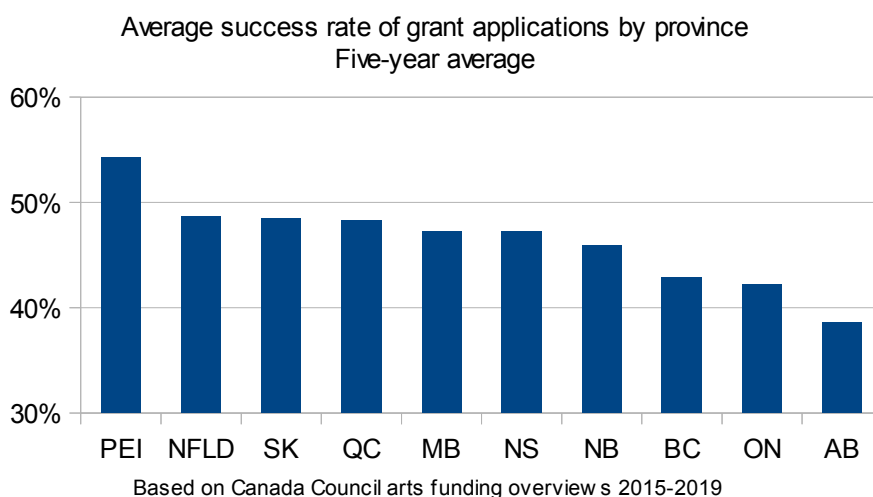
As with before, that trend also holds for the media arts. Alberta media arts organizations submitted only 2.83% of the national total of media arts grant applications, making their 6.8% share of media arts grants awarded look a lot more impressive. Individual grants didn't have quite so rosy of an outcome, with Alberta artists submitting 3.73% of applications and receiving 3.01% of the grants, but that still paints a somewhat rosier picture than the one provided by just looking at results and comparing them to overall populations. It is clear that Alberta's funding outcomes are at least somewhat proportional to its applications.



That raises an important question: **Why aren't Alberta artists (and Alberta media artists specifically) applying for more grants?**

There are a number of possibilities. The most straightforward would be that there just aren't as many media artists in Alberta as there are in other provinces. This possibility is difficult to determine from Council stats, as only media artists who have taken the time to register for an account through Canada Council would show up in their numbers. Alternative approaches to determining this could involve comparing the number of individual applicants to provincial funders; or looking at memberships in PASOs or NASOs. If it turns out that Alberta simply has fewer media artists proportionally compared to other provinces, then the funding disparity would be largely explained.

Another possibility, one that has been suggested at past public meetings between Alberta artists and the Council, is that Alberta artists don't apply because they have been discouraged from doing so by high rejection rates. A rough calculation of application success rates by province seems to show some truth in this: in each of the years from 2015-2019, Alberta had the lowest success rate of any province (excluding territories). In fact, in every year from 2015 through 2018, Alberta's average was at least 6% lower than the national average; in 2016 and 2018, it was more than 10% lower. Things improved in 2019 when the gap was reduced to 2.84%, but that's a small

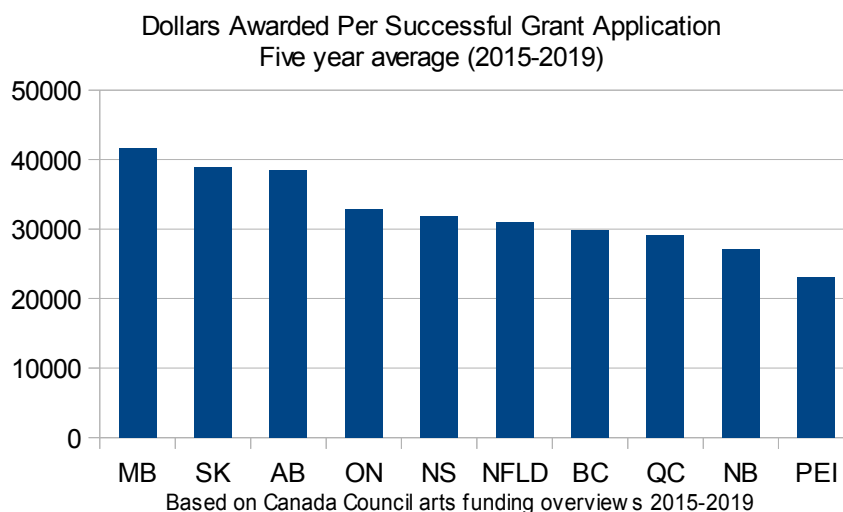


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reassurance when Alberta still had the lowest success rate of any province or territory that year.

It's worth pointing out an oddity here: There's a discrepancy between Alberta's lowest-in-the-nation success rate, and its dead-centre number for dollars awarded per application submitted. That's because one thing Albertan artists and arts organizations do well is making the most of a successful application. From 2015 through 2017, Alberta had the highest rate of dollars awarded per successful grant application, and the province ranked third highest on that statistic over the past five years.



Calculating success rates for media artists specifically isn't currently possible based on the data that Council has released, but one indicator of the same difficulty is that in every year from 2015 to 2019, Alberta media artists accounted for a lower percentage of grants awarded than of grants requested. The numbers are particularly stark for individual artists, who submitted an average of 4.03% of all media arts grant requests during that time period, but received only 3.16% of the approved grants. For whatever reason, Alberta individual artists are struggling to convince Council's juries that their projects are worth funding.

One last note regarding success rates: It has been suggested that the issue is from an under-representation of Alberta artists on Council juries. As mentioned above, Alberta has 11% of Canada's population and is home to 8.4% of its artists. However, Alberta artists made up only 6% of the peer assessors on Council juries in 2019-20, 6.5% in 2018-19, and 5.5% in 2017-18. While this puts the jury numbers well below Alberta's share of the general and artist populations, it tracks fairly closely to Alberta's share of the overall grant applications in each of those years.

PROPOSAL:

In recent years, AMAAS has worked to increase the number of Alberta media artists applying for Council funding. This makes sense given Council's statements that the chief reason for Alberta's underfunding relative to its population is that its artists just aren't applying enough.

Although the sample size is too small for strong generalizations, it does seem that AMAAS' efforts to encourage more individual applications have been successful. In 2017-18, 29 individual Alberta artists submitted a total of 32 grant applications to Council. In 2019-20, 44 individuals submitted 56 applications. Unfortunately, that increase has done little to bring more grants to Alberta media artists. In 2017-18, Alberta artists received 14 grants. In 2019-20, despite nearly double the applications, Alberta artists received a total of 15 grants.

Given what has been said about the discouraging effect of low success rates, there is a real danger that these sorts of results could lead to another generation of Alberta media artists choosing not to apply for Council funding, further alienating the province from the national arts ecosystem and

perpetuating the gaps described above. Increasing the number of applications from Alberta artists may actually be counterproductive if those efforts aren't paired with a plan to increase the success rates of those applications.

To address this, AMAAS should work with the Canada Council for the Arts and the Independent Media Arts Alliance Society to create a program aimed at strengthening the grant applications of Alberta's individual media artists.

The activities of this program would fall into two main areas:

Area 1: Understanding Alberta's Success Rate

This would involve seeking feedback from the Canada Council (within the confines of FOIP and other practices intended to protect the privacy of artists and juries) or from artists themselves to determine if there are any recurring shortfalls in proposals from Alberta artists. If possible, anonymized jury feedback should be analyzed and trends identified to discover common areas of criticism or concern. Jury feedback is preferred as it would reflect the *actual* conversations that led to funding decisions. If this is not possible, then a combination of interviews with Alberta media artists who've had applications denied, and an examination of rejected applications voluntarily submitted by AMAAS members could be used to try to determine any issues.

For example, it would be useful to know whether the issues are more substantive, with artists' proposed projects not meeting national standards or missing the goals of the funding program; structural, such as issues around ineligible activities and expenses; or stylistic, such as unclear writing and other poor communication. This knowledge could be used to prepare documents that can be given to individual artists and media arts organizations in Alberta to provide strategies for preparing stronger applications.

Area 2: Supporting Future Applications

A panel of media artists, arts administrators, and other experts with experience writing and evaluating grants would be assembled in order to provide constructive feedback on Alberta media artists' grant applications before they are submitted to Council. This group would ideally consist of artists from across Canada to reflect the types of peer assessors who would be found on a real Canada Council jury, and would have the dual benefit of helping strengthen Alberta artists' applications, and building connections between Alberta media artists and other artists and institutions around the country.

Ideally, this project would take place over a span of multiple years to see what impact it has on application and success rates. If it is successful, it could either continue in the same form, or be adapted into a set of documents and tools that could be provided to media arts institutions across the province to help them support their members' applications. It is also possible that this work may prove relevant to institutions outside of the media arts—after all, it's Alberta's overall underfunding that prompted this research, not just that of the media arts. Given Council's move towards discipline-agnostic funding programs, the toolkit developed by AMAAS could become a valuable resource for all Alberta artists.

It is recommended that this project focus on individual artists due to the significantly higher success rates of media arts organizations.

EVALUATION:

In order to understand whether this project is successful, AMAAS would want to track the following statistics, at a minimum:

- The annual number of media artists applying for Canada Council funding, by province
- The annual number of Canada Council grant applications by individual artists, by province
- The overall number of successful artists and applications each year, as a number and as a percentage of overall applications, by province
- The success rate of grant applications that benefited from feedback as part of this project

In addition, it would be useful to collect the following:

- An initial survey of AMAAS individual members to understand their reasoning for applying or not applying for Council funding, and their experience of the process if they have applied
- Feedback from future Council juries on Alberta media arts grant applications (provided voluntarily by AMAAS members, or anonymized by the Canada Council)

The program would be considered successful if the success rate of applicants who benefited from feedback increases relative to the overall success rate of all applicants. This relative measure is important because the rate varies greatly from year to year depending on the number of applications and available funding; looking only at Alberta's success rate could lead to false impressions of improvement or decline based on broader national trends.

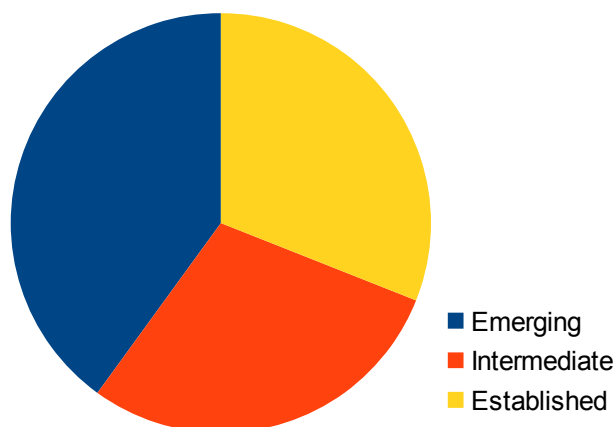
A NOTE ABOUT TIMING:

Developing an understanding of the issues raised in Understanding Alberta's Success Rate will require sustained research that will hopefully provide important insight in to the challenges facing Alberta artists. However, with the Canada Council's recent announcement of \$116 million in new project funding with deadlines as early as late March and early April, it is recommended that an ad-hoc version of Supporting Future Applications should be adopted as soon as possible. This could be as straightforward as providing an honorarium to a small number of grant assessors with based on a fixed number of applications, assigned on a first-come-first-served basis. Considering the scale of the Council's announcement, though, it is important to give Alberta media artists a fighting chance at accessing those funds.

PROJECT TITLE: Alberta media artists' experience with the Canada Council for the Arts

In order to address the consistently low application and success rates of Alberta media artists' submissions to the Canada Council for the Arts, the Alberta Media Arts Alliance Society commissioned an informal survey to better understand their members' experience of the funding process.

Career stage of survey participants



Given the limited population size and lack of random selection, this survey should not be seen as representative of a broader population. However, it does provide a snapshot of the views of 39 AMAAS members, 35 of whom identify as practising artists (including one visual artist). Approximately 40% of these artists identify as emerging, 31% as established, and 29% as intermediate. No definitions were provided for these categories; artists were asked to self-identify.

By and large, the responses support the conclusions of AMAAS' original grant support document: that success rates for Alberta media artists applying to the Canada Council are very low, that a sizable majority of Alberta media artists believe their home province impacts how Canada Council juries view their applications, and that these factors may have a discouraging effect on Alberta media artists.

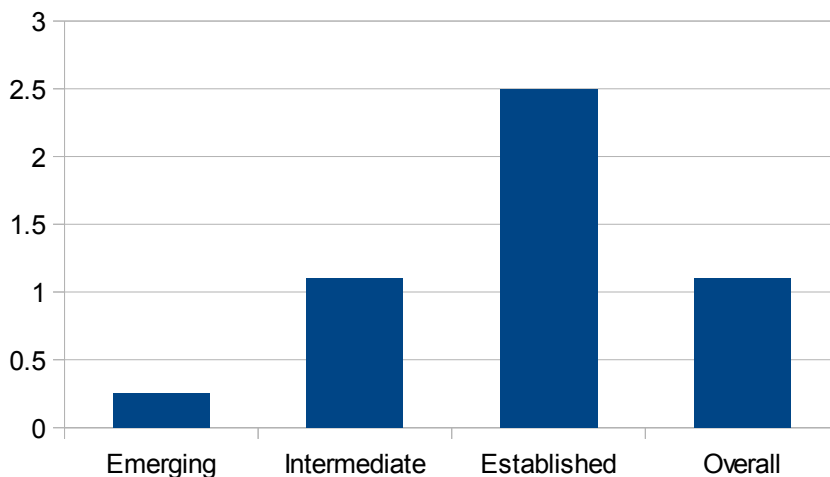
The following summary will address these three points in more detail.

SUCCESS RATES FOR ALBERTA MEDIA ARTISTS

The Canada Council's own internal documentation makes it difficult to break down the application success rates of individual provinces by discipline. While it could be inferred from related statistics that Alberta media artists were having a difficult time convincing Council juries of their projects' merits, direct confirmation was harder to come by.

This survey provides some more clarity. Respondents submitted at least 42 applications to the Canada Council over the past three years.¹

Number of applications per Alberta media artist over the last three years

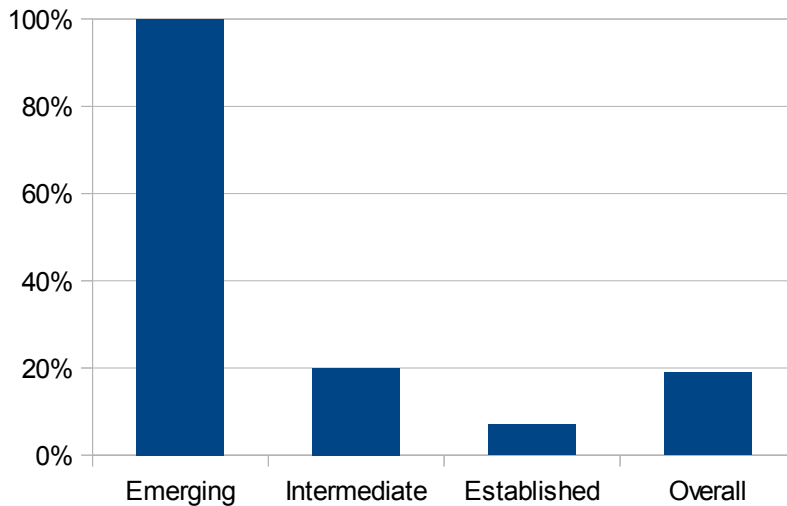


¹ Based on data provided by the Canada Council, this represents about 1/3 of the actual Alberta media arts individual grant applications submitted over the past three years.

Of these, eight were successful, for an overall success rate of 19%.² This is significantly lower than both the national average success rate of roughly 49% and Alberta average of 42% for Canada Council applications across all disciplines during the same period.

Success Rates of Alberta Media Artists

Based on self-reported applications over past three years



Surprisingly, the success rates actually decrease with the experience level of the artists. Established artists submitted 28 applications (or approximately 2.5 per artist), with only two successful applications, for a success rate of 7%. Intermediate artists submitted 10 (or 1.1 per artist), with a success rate of 20%. Emerging artists submitted only four applications (or .25 per artist), and 100% of those applications were fully funded.

It is difficult to say what accounts for this discrepancy. Given that established artists are submitting roughly eight times as many applications per artist, it may be the case that newer artists are self-selecting so only the highest

quality projects even get to the application stage, while intermediate and established artists become willing to take a shot on more projects as they gain confidence. Whatever the reason, if these numbers hold true for the broader Alberta media arts population, at the very least, they challenge the Canada Council's claim that Albertans simply aren't applying enough. That may be the case for emerging artists, but if established Alberta media artists are averaging 2.5 applications every three years, but are only succeeding 7% of the time, the issue isn't a lack of trying. The fact that the only two successful applications were from artists who have submitted four or more applications in the past three years shows how difficult a time Alberta media artists are having with this process.

One last note on success rates: The survey also asked artists whether they have applied for and received funding from various levels of government at any point in their career, not just the last three years. While the results can't be used to calculate a per-application success rate, as subjects weren't asked about the number of applications, they are still interesting. Understandably given the lengths of their careers, most established artists have received funding from all three levels of government. Nearly 90% of the established artists who've applied for municipal funding have received it at some point; 82% of those who've applied for federal funding have received it, and 100% have received provincial funding at some point.

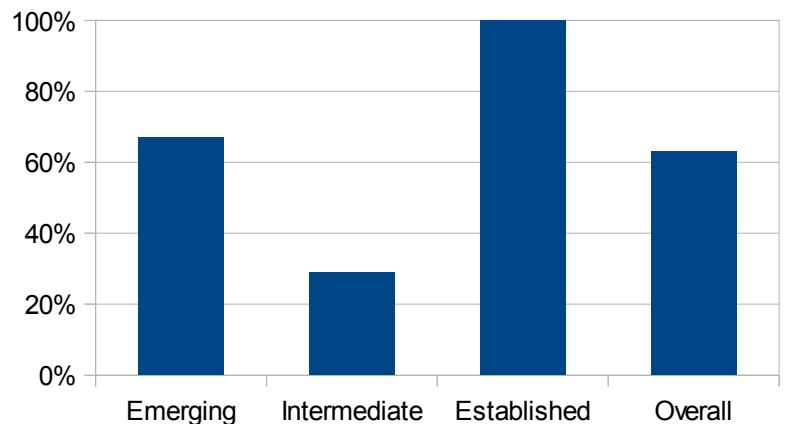
² Three participants reported submitting "4+" applications; for statistical purposes, these are counted as four applications each.

Emerging artists are the next strongest on average. 71% of emerging artists who've applied for municipal funding have received it; and the same with 67% of those who've applied federally and 62% provincially. Despite their longer careers, intermediate media artists had a harder go municipally and federally, at 43% and 29% respectively, with 78% of intermediate artists who've applied for provincial funding receiving it at some point.

Taken all together, the statistics around successes show a pool of established artists who have had some success with federal funding at some point in their careers, but who are currently frustrated with the system; emerging artists who mostly have not applied for federal funding but who experience above-average rates of success when they do; and intermediate artists who have had very little luck with the federal granting system to date.

Percentage of respondents who have received Federal funding at some point in their career

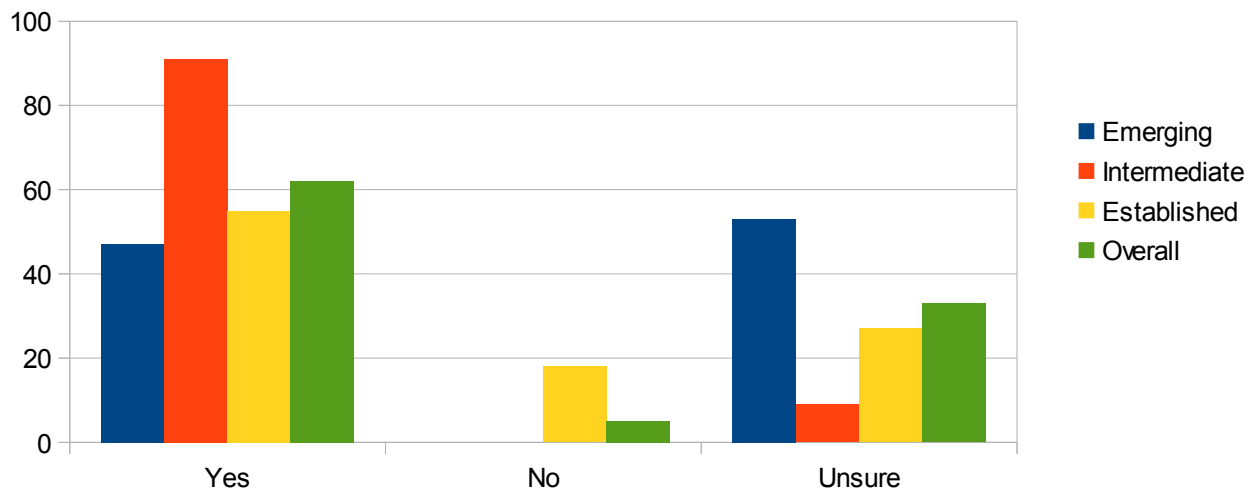
Based on self-reported data



BELIEF IN ANTI-ALBERTA BIAS

Although all measures looked at between our initial report and this survey show that Alberta artists generally, and Alberta media artists in particular, experience much lower than average success rates with their applications, understanding why is much more challenging. Short of sitting in on jury conversations, it's impossible to know what leads to the selection of one applicant over another for the limited pool of Council funding.

Do you believe an artist's home province has an impact on how their applications are viewed by granting juries?



For the purposes of AMAAS' research, however, the actual existence of bias is less important than the perception of bias and its effects on applicants. And as with most research on biases and motivations, the results are somewhat mixed.

One thing that is not in doubt, is that many Alberta media artists believe that your home province has an impact on how your applications are seen by Canada Council juries. Overall, 62% of respondents believe their location impacts how their grants are seen, which rises from 47% of emerging and 55% of established artists to 91% of intermediate artists—the group who has had the least success with Canada Council overall. Most emerging artists are unsure whether there is an impact, while only two artists total—both of them established artists—said they do not believe location has an impact on jury assessments.

When asked why they believe this bias exists, many of the respondents focused on Alberta's politics, with answers like “the political climate of the province has created an image of a culturally regressive or embarrassing region for acceptable candidates,” “Alberta can look fairly backwards on the world stage,” or even that they “have heard that the CCA only approves Alberta projects if they are actively based on overtly critiquing the provincial government.” Others cite systemic issues in Alberta's media art ecosystem, including less diversity of artists, fewer training opportunities, and a lack of provincial support for the arts as factors holding the province back.

Several respondents pushed back against the notion of anti-Alberta bias, specifically referencing time they spent on Canada Council juries and noting efforts to ensure there was equity for projects from all across Canada. On the other hand, one artist who has been on a jury said they feel that there is a strong anti-Alberta sentiment on the jury, and strongly encouraged more Alberta artists on Council juries as a way to increase Alberta's share of funding.

It's also worth noting that the belief in an anti-Alberta attitude at Council is mirrored by a negative view of Council among Alberta media artists. Asked to rate their overall experience in applying for funding from the Canada Council, 47% of those who've applied in the past three years rated their experience as somewhat or very negative, compared to only 12% rating it somewhat positive (the remaining 41% were neutral). Of the various areas the survey asked about, “Receiving grant feedback” earned by far the most negative rating.

GETTING DISCOURAGED

The more contentious question is whether that belief in an anti-Alberta bias is leading to fewer applications. Based on these survey responses, that doesn't seem to be the case—at least not broadly. Only four out of 39 respondents stated they were somewhat or very unlikely to apply for future funding from the Council; their other responses make it clear that their issues with the Council extend beyond perceived bias. Six respondents were neutral about future applications, and the remaining 29 were somewhat or very likely to apply in the future.

That, coupled with the high submission rates for established artists and moderate rates for intermediate artists, make it appear that Alberta media artists will continue applying for funding despite perceived bias against their applications. While that doesn't bode well for healthy relationships between the Council and Alberta artists, it at least shows that the relationship isn't so

broken that Albertans won't at least give it a shot.

Still, even if intermediate and established artists are applying, that only reinforces the importance of raising success rates. A 7% success rate for established artists over the past three years is shockingly low, and 20% for intermediate artists is still less than half the national average. As discouraging as the results of this survey are, at least they show a clear need for AMAAS and the Canada Council to support efforts at raising those success rates.

A PATH FORWARD

The bulk of the analysis of the survey so far has been aimed at understanding whether AMAAS' proposed grant-writing support project is an appropriate response to the problem of Alberta's low success rate, and the data seem to support that by indicating Alberta artists are struggling with their Council applications. Emerging artists lack familiarity with Council programs and are not applying for opportunities; intermediate and especially established artists are applying but are not succeeding in securing funding. AMAAS can and should look into addressing both of these issues.

AMAAS' project has two main focuses: understanding Alberta's success rate, and supporting future applications. To the former, if this survey is an indication, it seems likely that artists will be willing to provide AMAAS with the grant feedback they received from the Canada Council, either anonymously or otherwise. Given respondents' low opinion of Council's feedback, this may not be particularly useful, but hopefully it would at least show some trends that can be learned from.

Several survey respondents mentioned the Alberta Creative Development Initiative program run by the Canada Council (in collaboration with Calgary and Edmonton's municipal arts funders, as well as the Alberta Foundation for the Arts), which ran from 2007 through 2012. While Canada Council did report on overall outcomes for that program in their 2012-13 annual report³, that data is limited to the overall number of applications received (1,868), grants awarded (602), and funds disbursed (approx. \$8 million). It could be useful to speak to Council about any qualitative lessons learned from this program, including challenges they faced and reported benefits to individual artists' career development.

Survey respondents also mentioned difficulty finding resources like examples of successful grants to learn from, or suggested obtaining unsuccessful grants to find trends in those. Both these tasks would require a great deal of trust from AMAAS' membership in how those resources would be used, but if members were willing, those applications would be valuable for shaping future training opportunities.

Of the potential supports mentioned in the survey, three stand out as being seen as useful to a majority of respondents. One-on-one grant feedback, information sessions with Canada Council staff, and training sessions on general grant-writing strategies were all selected by over 50% of respondents as supports that would make them more likely to apply for future funding from the Council. Workshops on specific areas of grant-writing was another popular option at 41%, and 43% said that grant-writing "jam sessions," with multiple artists working on their applications at the same time in a supportive environment, would also be useful.

³ The information on ACDI can be found on page 10 of the 2012-13 annual report, located at https://statsandstories.canadacouncil.ca/_pdf/2012/EN/National-Overview-2012.pdf

In all, this survey supports the initial research behind AMAAS' grant-writing support project, reinforcing the need for more constructive feedback on Alberta media arts grants, more opportunities to connect with the Canada Council, and more active guidance in grant-writing all around. This isn't a cure-all for Alberta's low success rates, and respondents note that jury representation, provincial funding models, and many other factors play a roll in these outcomes. But the need for action is clear, and this program appears to be a promising one.

APPENDIX A: Short Answer Responses

Q. 30: Alberta has a much lower application rate to the Canada Council than would be expected for a province of our size. Based on your own experiences, do you have any ideas why that's the case?

For myself as an emerging artist, I am more comfortable applying for municipal and provincial funding as there is a higher success rate. I can imagine that others might feel discouraged from too many rejections or too intimidated by the Canada Council application to apply?

the grant writing process is difficult to understand

The difficulty with being recognized as a professional artist.

Bias against Alberta in favour of Quebec Ontario

Success rate is probably low discouraging people to spend the time to apply to subsequent applications. Projects in some other provinces can more elaborate due to funding available in their regions making it hard to compete with those mega projects. Also, there are more training opportunities, equipment availability and high level presentation opportunities in other regions stepping up the bar to a level hard to achieve for an artist situated in Alberta, unless they are travelling extensively and seeking those opportunities away.

Much more involved process. Low success rate in the community

Jury selection. We need jurors from each jurisdiction, not just one juror from western provinces and territories. Each region is different needs, practices etc. Disproportionate to Quebec and Ontario.

I remember one comment was why does so many Alberta artists focus on our landscape - the outdoors - as opposed to urban issues. Well in any city in Alberta you drive 15 minutes and more and there tends to be nothing. Very different from southern Ontario and Quebec.

I know very few peers in the media arts who have been successful at receiving grants. This means that there are not many people to ask for peer feedback, especially in regards to how much money to request. I personally think I asked for too little from my successful CC grant because I wanted to ensure I received it.

High rejection rates. Population/ artist density in Ontario. Alberta doesn't take it's local artists seriously, so our creativity is dwarfed by areas like Ontario, where artistic practices are more celebrated and rewarded.

There are less media artists in Alberta and less artists in general. The most active artists leave the Province.

There is not enough provincial support to nurture emerging and mid-career artists to get to the level required to compete on a national level. The current attacks on post-secondary in Alberta will also negatively impact arts development in the province as most universities and colleges will probably target their arts programs for reductions and cuts. I also believe there is a regional bias against artists in the prairie provinces, including selection for jury members. and I think there are biases against certain art forms, particularly in the media arts. I have been an award winning media artist for over 30 years, spent my whole career in Alberta and have only received 2 Canada Council grants - one in 1998, and one in 2007 when they had a specific program targeting Alberta artists. I have never received a travel grant even for travel to competition festivals. In the years prior to the period specified in this survey I never bothered to apply as I felt it would be a waste of time and only recently decided to try again.

Repeated rejections

I simply believe that there is a prejudice against projects from Alberta

Albertans don't fit their mould and get turned consistently down. It is not worth the time to put in the effort for a low possibility of success. If they know we have a lower application rate, I am curious to know what Albertan's' success rate is of those that do apply, and how we compare to EACH of the

other provinces. The ACDI program was the first time I succeeded in obtaining Canada Council individual project grant funding. I have succeeded recently for individual Explore and Create, but only by applying for under \$10,000 for a project created by 9 people.

We do not live in Ottawa

the 1% millionaires gamble the 99% of the country's money and to avoid taxes they fund some small projects. and Canadians are very lazy to do anything to improve the status quo of their livelihood let alone giving grants to students.

Their categories and eligibility criteria is confusing and makes me unsure how to proceed. Also the low success rate in Alberta makes me think it isn't worth the effort of applying.

No, I have no idea.

There has been a perception that the money goes to Ontario, Quebec and BC

Canada Council staff and qualifying jurors seem to be unfamiliar with the Albertan artist landscape. They don't know the structure or the artists unless those people have been actively showing in Toronto or Montreal.

Seems difficult to fit as an emergent artist

I did not study Arts, but I am in the field since 2015 in community theatre and digital storytelling .

When I was trying to fill up the profile in the application, I struggle with some of the questions, so I quit.

Lack of awareness

In my experience, people feel a lack of confidence in their skills. Also, a lot of other artists I know don't have much knowledge about grant writing and where to find information about it. Finally, among the folks I know, it is very difficult to write grants at the same time as working full time. it's not promoted enough.

Alberta isn't very supportive towards creative careers. A lot of artists also suffer from feelings of inadequacy.

It's difficult to find people who have received Canada Council funds who are willing to share the do's and don'ts to help you be successful with this granting agency.

Perhaps Alberta artists are more likely to apply to the other funding streams which are more approachable and closer to home.

Lack of representation on the council from the western provinces?

Personally feel it's more a readiness of the artist to take that leap of faith. I believe that it's ok to fail. But then if you are invested in that creative process and truthful to the work of art, the work will speak for itself.

Grant writing experience and time to commit to it

It is not well advertised and I would definitely like more information around it and to be supported as part of the grant application streams.

The economic policies of our provincial government affect artists' ability to survive never mind create.

Application processes can be convoluted -- clarity on expectations from the funding provider is so helpful.

Arts organizations are not supported in applying at the start up level, the task seems scary and daunting and they often are rejected the first time. It is more of an established arts game.

Q. 33: Why do you believe that to be true? [regarding juries' views of Alberta grant applications]

I don't know how Alberta's grant applications are viewed relative to other provinces.

This is based on my conversations with artists in BC and Ontario and Quebec. They are surprised that Alberta produces any art to speak of. So when Albertan artists attempt something ambitious, they are looked at negatively, as if they could never realize the ambition.

I am not very familiar with the Canada Council and Alberta rates of applications

I would hope that our province doesn't matter but more that there is no one here to give us the inside track.

I feel the political climate of the province has created an image of a culturally regressive or embarrassing region for acceptable candidates.

The number of artists receiving grants. I have also noticed many Alberta artists that do receive are not born and living Alberta artists but rather from Ontario who have moved to Alberta.

i don't know, i am not the jury. ask the jury

I'm not sure what the perception of Alberta is

Alberta is perceived as conservative and capitalist and therefore not deserving of artistic support.

Which is a narrow and untrue assumption but I don't blame anyone for thinking it given our current provincial government and oil obsession.

unsure

Alberta can look fairly backwards on the world stage.

I'm assuming that the jury is large and diverse enough that they would not have a negative Alberta bias.

The critical mass of Canadian artists is in Ontario and Quebec. Those provinces have much better provincial structures for their artists - the OAC, for example, has tiered funding opportunities based on your artistic level (I.e. a mid-career artist can ask for more money than an emerging artist). AFA caps out at only \$15,000, which is very little compared to other provinces. Considering the inflation and the increase in living wages in the past ten years, it's disappointing that the AFA has never increased their grant amount. If you get a grant from Ontario or Quebec, automatically your work is respected because the competition in those provinces is ostensibly higher.

not sure how other provinces are....

neutral as I have no idea how they review applications

Since our community is quite small we know who is real and who is not

Having sat on a jury recently, I found no regional bias with my colleagues. The projects spoke for themselves.

I don't believe there to be favouritism in regards to region.

Alberta isn't exactly thought of as a creative place and maybe there tends to be too much content related to cowboys.

There is a view that if you truly wanted to be successful in the arts you had to be located in Montreal, Toronto, and to a lesser degree Vancouver. Part of this is that our provincial gov has never really been supportive enough of the arts and culture in order to grow its influence nationally. The reliance on who you know is also a factor, you need to have friends and acquaintances in positions of influence to give an extra boost to your applications. As an example, in my experience I was always successful with travel grants to attend conferences and festivals when I worked at an ARC, as soon as I applied as an individual artist I was never successful, even when I was in competition. I also think that our province is tainted by the idiots in power, it is an embarrassment and I've never felt so dispirited as I have in the last few years.

I have been on a jury

I think it is based on how much provincial supports already exists and how much can be leveraged on applications at the Canada Council Grants applications.

I believe the perceived conservative politics of our province biases the progressive views of juries based in other provinces. I have heard that the CCA only approves Alberta projects if they are actively based on overtly critiquing the provincial government.

They think Alberta is rich and conservative?

Maybe Alberta has been perceived as an Oil and Gas hub, and a place where the Arts have not had the importance of other industries. There are many artists in the province that have to make a living working as arts administrators or in a different industry, since it seems to be difficult to make a living as an artist in here.

We can write a tall grant or have the best idea to present in all grandeur. I wish to reinvent my own thought process of creating work that leaves the audience thinking. May be we could have something in common ! A creative Brain.

My opinion is coloured by my own feelings about Alberta's conservative nationwide reputation.

I was in an ACDI jury. All the jurors but one was an Albertan. The non Albertan expressed surprise at the ambitiousness of the projects and explained that in Ontario people apply for stages of projects for a \$20,000 to \$15,000 grant. Whereas the Albertans were applying for the entire project from start to finish for that amount. I have not sat on a “real” council jury.

Regionalism and jury selection. Not all artists are made equal across the country.

Lack of diversity, fewer French projects, fewer film training opportunities (e.g., film school)

Don't know how Alberta is viewed

I feel that arts communities in other provinces are as impacted by the conservative history of our province has had on the arts

Because they are not used to seeing Albertan applications and they don't have Albertan representation on the jury, they are not understanding artists CVs in the context of the province. If they work is all great they will be biased to that which is familiar to them.

There is not enough funding -- or perhaps not enough clear information on where to find funding if there is an abundance/ writing a grant that is well-received is a challenging language to learn// scarcity= competition is high (my successful AFA grant application was my FIFTH application over the years)

I think that there might be less diversity and volume of artists in Alberta compared to BC or Ontario. Most artists in Alberta end up moving to either province as they are not finding enough support/work in this province. Having sat on a jury for Canada Council, I know there was discussion on making sure there was equity across all provinces and that the importance of each project might differ depending on where they are located. I don't think they are viewed any more negatively, I just don't think there's many Alberta applications for them to choose from. In the jury I sat on, there was definitely more applications from Eastern Canada.

much less successful applicants

Success rate, comments from word of mouth “Alberta artists don't submit quality applications’

Q. 35: Is there anything AMAAS should look into to understand Alberta's lower rate of Canada Council Funding applications?

ask for feed back from ARCs and organizations in other arts disciplines to try to coordinate strategies and responses

Why the CCA actively encourages Alberta artists to apply, but juries reject their applications. I feel the CCA just encourages artists to apply because it looks good on their annual reporting.

I need definitely more guidance in terms of the Canada Council Funding process and allocation / refer to past artists that have been successful.

Truly unsure

Perhaps look at board structure - how and when board members are instated...push for more 'western' applicants to get involved.

If at all possible look into promoting Canada Council Funding applications in art schools. I am a graduate of AuArts, and in my design stream grant funding was barely discussed.

As someone who has sat on a CC jury I believe there needs to be a officer who can review the submission with the applicant before the grant is handed in. The writing quality of the average grant is so low it hurts the reader.

There are no classes in grant writing and its next to impossible to find good templates, so the process becomes quite daunting for many artists.

Plus, the grant grading process is quite obtuse and the feedback from CC is quite minimal.

There seems to be a fundamental misunderstanding of film art at the Canada Council. They adhere to auteur principals, which are in my opinion exclusionary and minimize the artistic contributions of ghettoized creators in l fields. Each phase of making a film is creative, and we should empower all the crew in those phases to consider themselves artists, like an editor, or a sound designer. Often a director can't find their voice without these people.

There was some research done when Canada Council had a stream of funding specifically to boost the applications from Alberta. I can't remember what it was called. This was discontinued though and not sure how long this program lasted. I had applied to it almost 10 years ago and was unsuccessful. I think they discontinued it shortly afterwards.

What is the ratio of success rate vs application rate for Albertans vs other provinces? What is the % of applications vs capital from Alberta vs other provinces? Are we lower at succeeding because we just aren't writing very good applications?

We should have a rep on juries all the time.. look at the history of Albertans on jury and cross reference with successful Alberta grants you will see.... If you are not at the table you don't eat...Get to work and demand equality!

Encouraging people to apply, provide some mentoring and grant workshopping opportunities.

Not sure

I think it's a larger question of how many artists and creators are in Alberta and what opportunities do they see to survive in this Provence.

Canada Council's approach to filmmaking in general seems out of date. The council seems to prioritize traditional art forms (music, theatre, dance). It's very confusing where film belongs in CC's categories.

It would be helpful to understand the CC grant streams in VERY PLAIN STRAIGHTFORWARD LANGUAGE. Their categories obscure their purpose.

I didn't even make it beyond the qualifier to enter an application in two of the candidate categories so take what you will from that.

don't know

make the millionaires help out with their money they are hoarding 99% of the country's money and then you scarp at the bottom of the barrel to find some money to give to students.

How to encourage emerging artists as well as intermediate artists to apply.

If someone has served on a jury at the provincial level, they should be automatically recommended to serve on a Canada Council jury.

I don't know.

Ask for examples of successful Albertan applications, as well as completed projects.

A review of unsuccessful AB grant applications to determine if there is a trend more art programs for kids would foster interest in the next generation

Not sure

The only success CCA grants I've received in the last 10 Years was through the ACDI program that was specific for Albertans. I had better success from CCA in the 1990s & 2000's

Maybe you can become a bridge/point of connection between Canada Council and AMAAS members, so we could be informed about the info sessions or workshops through you.

Other idea is, knowing from them the weakness they have identified in the Alberta submissions, maybe they can invest in strengthening artists in Alberta to level their training, experience or exposure.

Let's see the results of the ACDI experiment. I understood that to be a program to address this same issue. To give non-grant holders access, experience, and give them a chance to create work so they can compete on a national stage. Did it work? How many Albertan artists applied, were accepted, and rejected before the ACDI programs? How many applied, were accepted, and rejected after it? A second barrier is getting "accepted" to be eligible to apply. Getting accepted to the portal is absurd. The guidelines the staff are using to determine eligibility are not published. Because they are not published, it seems random and due to individual officer discretion. It is a giant barrier to anyone other than a senior grant writer or an academic.

Jury selection.

Clarity on your website regarding current opportunities and the application process.