

FUTURE FOCUS FUNDING 2025 GUIDELINES

The Future Focus Funding program is a funding collaboration between Calgary Arts Development, the Rozsa Foundation, and the Calgary Foundation.

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ABOUT THE FUNDING PROGRAM

The Future Focus program provides funding to arts organizations who want to explore a key question or challenge facing their organization to enable a significant shift or transformation and to develop ‘future focused’ directions for operations that diverge from previous or current practice.

Organizations may be curious about how to anticipate, or encounter challenges they face, ask questions about their organizational purpose, their role in the arts sector and community, sustainability or continued viability, or how to adapt their business model or structure to operate into the future. The program supports organizations through the process of investigating, identifying, planning, and executing significant and purposeful adaptations in their operations.

HOW TO APPLY

Step One: Review the guidelines.

Please read through these program guidelines to get an initial understanding of the Future Focus program, the types of projects it supports, deadlines, and how applications are assessed.

Capture your questions and ideas about the work your organization is interested in to begin shaping your proposal. You might explore the resources in the Future Focus Resource Search Tool.

Step Two: Book a conversation.

If you are interested in applying, you must begin by booking a conversation with us. We will help to determine if your organization and project are eligible.

The final date for consultation and eligibility confirmation is two weeks before each intake deadline. Those dates are listed in the 2025 Deadlines section of this document.

We strongly recommend you **book a conversation AT LEAST FOUR WEEKS** prior to the deadline you plan to apply for.

Step Three: Complete your application.

If your project and organization are eligible for the funding program you will be sent access to the online application form, which must be completed by midnight of the application deadline.

Application Portal

All written applications will be accepted through Reviewr, the Rozsa Foundation’s online application portal.

Extension Requests

Requests for extension must be submitted at least two weeks before the deadline.

Who should I talk to?

There are two main contacts for this funding program:

Organizational Strategy Advisor

If you are **unsure which direction is best for you and your organization's needs**, or if you would like to brainstorm options and **discuss the key question, challenge, or opportunity your organization is facing**, you can book a meeting with Jennifer DeDominicis, Organizational Strategy Advisor. Jennifer is available as a confidential resource for organizations to consider their options and develop strategies to support their work.

Jennifer DeDominicis, Organizational Strategy Advisor: jennifer@distillconsulting.ca

Rozsa Foundation Funding Manager

If you are curious about your **organization and/or project's eligibility** for this program, or if you have **questions about the application, submission process or application portal**, please contact the Rozsa Foundation Funding Manager, Ayla Stephen.

Ayla Stephen, Funding Manager: ayla@rozsafoundation.com

If Ayla or Jennifer are unavailable all efforts will be made to provide alternative contacts for you to connect with about the funding program.

Future Focus Resource Search Tool

This ever-evolving tool was created to help you find resources that may inform and support your journey in making change at your organization. Resources include articles, books, videos, podcasts, reports, training and learning opportunities and contacts.

[CLICK HERE to access the online search tool.](#)

The resource is focused on leadership, change theory, forward thinking, and transparency.

This resource was curated by Brian Loevner and Jane Marland, with help from Sedina Fiati and Owais Lightwala. Additional support was provided by leaders and artists in Calgary and around Canada and the US. If you have any ideas, updates, or concerns about this tool, please email: brian@blveconsults.com.

2025 DEADLINES

As of April 6, 2025, there are three phases of the Future Focus Funding program: Investigation, Exploration, and Implementation. The Investigation Phase has separate deadlines from the Exploration and Implementation Phases.

Investigation Phase Deadlines

Applications to the Investigation Phase are due the final Friday of each month starting May 30, 2025.

Friday, May 30, 2025

Friday, June 27, 2025

Friday, July 25, 2025

Friday, August 29, 2025

Friday, September 26, 2025

Friday, October 31, 2025

Friday, November 28, 2025

Exploration and Implementation Phase Deadlines

Intake One

February 14, 2025: Final date for consultation and/or approval to make an application.

February 28, 2025: Application deadline

Late-April 2025: Notification of results

May 2025: Approved funding meetings and distribution of funds

Intake Two

May 9, 2025: Final date for consultation and/or approval to make an application.

May 30, 2025: Application deadline

Mid-July 2025: Notification of results

July - August 2025: Approved funding meetings and distribution of funds

Intake Three

August 29, 2025: Final date for consultation and/or approval to make an application.

September 12, 2025: Application deadline

November 2025: Notification of results

November - December 2025: Approved funding meetings and distribution of funds

Intake Four

October 24, 2025: Final date for consultation and/or approval to make an application.

November 7, 2025: Application deadline

Mid-December 2025: Notification of results

December 2025 – January 2026: Approved funding meetings and distribution of funds

Applications are due by 11:59pm on the date of the deadline.

POTENTIAL & INELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Organizations can access funds to engage external expertise and to develop and execute plans and strategies to navigate the questions, challenges, and opportunities they face. This work may include projects such as:

- Making changes to established business models and organizational or incorporation structures.
 - Note: the program does not provide seed funding for the establishment of new organizations, but to support existing entities make necessary changes to ensure their structures are serving the broader needs of the organization and community.
- Developing strategies for new directions and/or organizational sustainability, specifically around:
 - major shifts in organizational mission or the activity to support the mission.
 - venue and space-related investigations.
 - assessments of organizational capacity and ‘right sizing’ for sustainability.
 - plans for succession from founding organizational leaders.
- Investigating and implementing alternative revenue generating activities or diversifying revenue sources.
 - Note: the program does not support the creation or implementation of fundraising plans or events.
- Forming strategic partnerships with other organizations, including resource sharing.
- Addressing organizational life cycle questions, including potential mergers and closures.

While the projects completed with the support of Future Focus Funding will likely influence the development and delivery of your organization’s existing and future programs, **this funding program DOES NOT support:**

- the development and delivery of artistic programming
- emergency operating funds
- fundraising plans and events
- routine, cyclical strategic planning
- seed funding for the establishment of new organizations
- learning processes around nonprofit and charitable operating requirements.

INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Please note that Future Focus Funding cannot be used to pay for:

- ongoing administrative salaries
- ongoing administrative costs
- deficit financing & debt repayment
- capital campaigns
- ongoing programming activities
- retroactive costs - if you are incurring costs related to the project prior to the application deadline, those expenses may be ineligible for support.

While we do not support ongoing salaries, we understand that projects may require **additional** staff resources to complete work directly related to the project, which may be an eligible expense. This may be new, short-term staff specific to the proposed project, or additional time for existing part-time staff to undertake the work.

For organizations or groups without salaried administrative staff, project-related human resource costs may be included in the budget.

FUNDING AMOUNTS

As of April 6, 2025, there are three streams of the Future Focus Funding program and the amount of funding available is based on the phase of work to be undertaken.

Investigation Phase – up to \$5,000

Initial planning and consultations, information gathering, development of exploration process.

Exploration Phase – up to \$15,000

Identification of needs, initial development, project planning.

Implementation Phase - up to \$25,000

Builds upon exploration phase or previously related work, implementing change within the organization.

Organizations may apply for more than one Investigation or Exploration Phase prior to seeking Implementation Phase support.

WHO CAN APPLY?

Your organization or group may be eligible to apply if:

- Your organization is **arts-focused** or is an **organization engaging the arts to fulfill its mission**.
- Your organization is **operating in the Treaty 7 region (including Red Deer)**.
- Your organization is a registered charity, registered non-profit, ad-hoc group, grassroots organization, or operating with a comparable alternative organizational structure.
- Your organization does **NOT have an active Future Focus project** or outstanding Future Focus reporting.
- Your organization does **NOT** have an active funding agreement from the Rozsa Foundation, CADA, or Calgary Foundation **for the same project**.

Provincial arts service organizations operating outside out Treaty 7, whose work directly impacts arts organizations in Treaty 7 may also be eligible for the program.

Organizations can have only one active Future Focus project at any given time.

Organizations can submit one application per deadline.

Not sure about your eligibility? Contact Ayla Stephen at ayla@rozsafoundation.com.

NEW- Future Focus Investigation Phase

This initial stage of the program supports organizations to have some time, space, and resources to start to investigate how to approach a significant circumstance or challenge facing the organization in a new or different way.

The Investigation Phase is intended to support organizations to access experts who can provide initial insights, to increase the staff capacity required to begin to explore change-based work within the organization, and to ultimately articulate the key question or challenge facing the organization that would benefit from further exploration (potentially via the other phases of the Future Focus Program).

The Investigation Phase utilizes a simplified application process that is intended to help remove barriers to starting work within organizations that could ultimately lead to change and transformation.

Organizations can apply for up to \$5,000

Example Investigations

The following examples are to demonstrate the kind of work that is feasible within the investigation phase of the Future Focus program. They are not intended to be prescriptive, but to give a sense of scope and use of funds that are appropriate.

You are encouraged to discuss your specific ideas with Rozsa Foundation Funding Manager Ayla Stephen prior to application to ensure program fit.

Example One: A grassroots arts organization with a specific cultural mandate is at cross-roads. Should it continue as is? Should it broaden its mandate? Or is it ready to wrap up its initiatives because it has achieved its purpose? Funding might support the facilitation of a gathering of interested parties to assess if or how the organization is meeting the needs of its community and inform a path forward.

Example Two: A social enterprise has decided to transition to a non-profit but doesn't know what will happen to their shareholder's contributions and other assets. Funding might be used to engage legal advice around the ramifications of a change to established organizational or incorporation structures.

Example Three: A volunteer run registered charity has a new idea for a revenue generating initiative but has identified that it would require partnership with another organization to execute. Funding might support additional staff capacity to do initial investigations into partnership models between organizations to share resources.

Investigation Phase Application Questions

- 1) WHAT is the current circumstance or challenge that your organization is hoping to investigate?
- 2) HOW will you start to investigate this?
- 3) What COSTS will you incur to start this investigation? What will the funding pay for?
- 4) What are you hoping to LEARN from this work that will inform your next steps?

Exploration and Implementation Phases

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Questions you are asked to respond when applying to the Exploration or Implementation Phase are below.

TELL US WHO YOU ARE

- Organization name
- Organization contact information
- Organization mandate or statement of purpose
- Organization structure (e.g. non-profit, charity etc.)
- Charitable, not-profit, or Business Registration Number (if applicable)

Artistic Discipline

Requested for internal statistical reporting.

Annual operating budget

Requested for internal statistical reporting.

Applicant Contact Information

FOCUS OF THIS FUNDING REQUEST:

Select all that apply:

- Making changes to business models and organizational or incorporation structures.
- Developing strategies for new directions and/or organizational sustainability.
- Investigating and implementing new revenue generating strategies or diversifying revenue sources.
- Forming strategic partnerships with other organizations, including resource sharing.
- Addressing organizational life cycle questions, including potential mergers and closures.

Please select the phase of funding you are applying to:

- Exploration Phase – up to \$15,000
- Implementation – up to \$25,000

How much funding are you requesting?

In one sentence, what is the primary question or challenge your organization will address through this project? Max. 50 words.

Please provide an overview of activities that will be undertaken with this funding. For example, “a community and stakeholder engagement process”, “hiring a consultant for operational analysis”, or “conduct a venue feasibility study” etc. (Max. 60 words)

PRESENT SITUATION

Describe the factors or events that have led your organization to undertake this project. Highlight any past activities, decisions, or conditions that influenced this approach. Explain how this project differs from previous practices and why it is significant and impactful for your organization.

PROJECT PLAN

Project start date

Project end date

Please share your project plan for this work. We recommend including information about the activities to be undertaken, the people who will be leading, working on, or engaged during the project (both internal and external to your organization), the timeline, and the intended outcomes or desires of the activities.

PROJECT PARTNERS

Are you collaborating or planning to collaborate with any other organization or person, like a consultant or contractor? Yes or No

If you're bringing in external help, please provide a brief work plan and the cost estimate from the consultant or contractor in the Support Materials section. If you are collaborating or partnering with another organization, please include a letter of intent or support in the Support Materials section.

If you are undertaking this work internally, please share how the funding will enable the team to undertake the activities.

BUDGET

Please upload a full project budget in this section of this application.

A budget template is available on the Rozsa Foundation website.

LEARNING & OUTCOMES

Tell us what you hope to learn and the outcomes you hope to achieve. Explain how the proposed work contributes to a significant shift/transformation. Specify any documents, plans, or roadmaps that will be developed. Tell us what 'success' looks like at the end of this project.

Outline your approach for measuring, evaluating, and tracking your learning. How do you plan to assess the success of the project?

EDIA – Optional

Future Focus projects are not required to have an EDIA component. This section of the application will only be included for assessment if your proposed project is specifically intended to advance EDIA in your organization, practice, or community.

Do you intend to work with a specific community through this project, or is your project is intended to create impact or opportunity for a specific community or equity-deserving group? Yes or no

If you intend to work with a specific community, or if your project is intended to create impact or opportunity for a specific community or equity-deserving group, please describe how you will be engaging with and including that community or group in exploration and decision-making processes.

Mandatory Support Material

Project Budget

Financial Statements

Board List (mandatory for organizations who operate with a Board of Directors)

Potential Additional Support Material

Project specific support material will be determined during/after your conversation with the funder, but might include:

- Quotes and work plans from proposed consultants
- Cash flow forecast
- Draft financial statements
- Project budget support (e.g. quotes, invoices, calculations, projections)
- Confirmation of board support
- Strategic plan
- Information about contributors (e.g. biographies, consultant CVs, collaborator mandates)
- Other (e.g. feasibility studies, proof of concept, prior project reports)

APPLICATION ASSESSMENT

Funding decisions are based on the degree to which applications meet with the following statements:

1. **Organizational Understanding:** The organization understands the current state of its operations and programming and has clearly identified and explained the specific challenge the proposed project will address.
2. **Organizational Goals:** The organization has a clearly articulated guiding question that they are investigating, and the application explains how the proposed work will help the organization achieve a clear and impactful goal or learning objective.
3. **Project Plan:** The organization has laid out a clear and reasonable plan and timeline for the project to achieve the identified goals.
4. **Reasonable Budget:** The project budget is reasonable and appropriate for what the project aims to achieve.
5. **Learning and Evaluation Plan:** The organization has considered and outlined how they plan to learn from and assess the success of the project.

The following statement will be used in assessments for proposed projects that are designed to explore, promote, or bolster Reconciliation, equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility within the organization's operations or programs:

6. **Advancing EDIA:** The organization has a clear plan to engage and include the equity-deserving groups and communities that the project is designed to support.

If we receive several applications that are evenly assessed by the committee, priority may be given based on the following considerations, at the funders' discretion:

- Opportunities or organizations led by, with, and for equity priority groups. *
- Representation across all artistic disciplines, communities, and types of programming.
- Opportunities proposed by organizations who have not historically received funding from Calgary Arts Development, Rozsa Foundation, or the Calgary Foundation.

*The funding partners are using CADA's defined priority group areas as a guide. [Click here for information on those priority groups.](#)

Funding decisions are made by program staff at CADA, Rozsa Foundation, and Calgary Foundation after each application deadline. Any individuals with access to applications are held to strict conflict of interest and confidentiality agreements.

NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS

After the application deadline, a committee of assessors will review and discuss your project and request amongst the pool of applications received.

We will reach out to you if the committee has additional questions, or if they require additional information or clarification to make a funding decision.

All applicants will receive notification of their results by email. We notify all applicants of their results, whether successful or unsuccessful.

Investigation Phase: We aim to send notification of results within four weeks of the application deadline.

Exploration + Implementation Phases: We aim to send notification of results within eight weeks of the application deadline.

SUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS

What to expect if your funding request is approved.

1. You and Ayla will book an 'approved funding meeting' to discuss next steps, goals and aspired outcomes for final reporting, project timelines, and the payment schedule. If you are working with an organization, group, or collaborators, we encourage you to invite one of them to join you.
2. A funding agreement will be issued to either your organization or yourself, which must be signed and returned to the Rozsa Foundation.
3. Final reporting documents will be shared with you after the approved funding meeting, so that you can reference them throughout the project. Logos and recognition guidelines for the funders will also be shared with you.
4. The first payment will be issued after we receive the signed funding agreement.
5. Complete your project!
6. Share your reporting with the Rozsa Foundation.
7. Once we have reviewed and approved your reporting, we will issue the final payment.
8. Six to nine months after your project has been completed, we will reach out to ask for an update on the longer-term impacts the project has had on your organization.

If your project is funded you may also be asked to participate in surveys, interviews and/or focus groups to contribute to the ongoing evaluation of this program. There may also be opportunities to participate in peer-to-peer learning and knowledge sharing.

GET IN TOUCH

If you would like **support to identify your organization's key question, challenge or opportunity**, and to **ideate a project plan or strategy to answer or address it**, please contact:

Jennifer DeDominicis, Organizational Strategy Advisor: jennifer@distillconsulting.ca

If you have **questions about this funding program or about your application**, please contact:

Ayla Stephen, Funding Manager for the Rozsa Foundation: ayla@rozsafoundation.com.