Australian Government
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts

# Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support (IVAIS) Program – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

## 1 General questions about the IVAIS Program

**Q1. Where can I find information about the IVAIS Program and the Open Competitive (OC) and Closed Non-Competitive (CNC) grant opportunities?**

- The IVAIS program Grant Opportunity Guidelines (OC and CNC) provide information about the grant funding purpose, objectives, eligibility, assessment criteria, and application process
- Both guidelines and other key material is available on the IVAIS webpage: https://www.arts.gov.au/funding-and-support/indigenous-visual-arts-industry-support-program

**Q2. Which grant opportunity applies to my organisation?**

- The OC grant opportunity is available to all eligible organisations seeking funding for a new or time-limited activity
- The CNC grant opportunity is only available to organisations invited to submit a proposal.

**Q3. What has changed in the 2027 IVAIS Grant Opportunity Guidelines?**

- Annual reporting requirements for grantees have been reduced to two reports
- Eligible expenditure list has been updated
- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are now included
- The start date for **all** activities is 1 July 2027.

## 2 Open Competitive grant round questions

**Q4. What is the key timing for the IVAIS OC grant opportunity?**

The 2027 IVAIS OC grant opportunity runs from 29 October to 26 November 2026.

**Q5. Can I apply outside of an advertised round?**

No. You cannot apply for funding outside of the advertised opening and closing dates for each round.

### Q6. How do I submit a grant application?

To apply see information available on GrantConnect at www.grants.gov.au **or** on the IVAIS webpage: https://www.arts.gov.au/funding-and-support/indigenous-visual-arts-industry-support-program

Complete the online IVAIS application form on SmartyGrants at arts.smartygrants.com.au

### Q7. Can I apply for IVAIS funding as an individual?

No. You are not eligible to apply under the program if you are an individual. Eligibility requirements are at **Section 4: Eligibility Criteria**, in the applicable *IVAIS Program Grant Guidelines.*

### Q8. How much funding can my organisation apply for?

It is anticipated that most grants will generally be between $45,000 to $300,000, with the total amount commensurate with the scale and complexity of the proposed project or activity**.**

If your organisation is new to receiving funding from IVAIS you will need to provide appropriate evidence and to demonstrate to the assessors that you have the capacity to manage the grant.

We will consider your organisation's ability to manage the activity, ensure a realistic budget and that there is a specific breakdown of budget line items. If you are seeking a higher amount of grant funding, the assessors will expect to see a higher level of detail and evidence to support your application.

### Q9. How do I make my application competitive?

Consider the following tips when writing your application (this list is not exhaustive):

- Clearly explain how you will use the funding and what your activity or project will achieve. The claims you make should relate directly to the Program outcomes (see Section 2 of the Program Guidelines) and the assessment criteria (see Section 6 of the Guidelines).
- Use plain language and make sure your answers are concise. Word limits are the maximum allowed and included as a guide – if you can answer in fewer words, then feel free to do so.
- Do not assume assessors know about your organisation or your activity. Background information and supporting documentation is important. Make sure it is relevant to the application and your specific activity. This could include letters of support for the activity from artists, the community, the CEO and/or Board. If your activity is to be delivered in multiple communities, you should provide evidence that all participating communities support the activity.
- Ensure the proposed activities and expenditure match the items in the budget. A balanced and realistic budget should be provided showing requested grant amount and projected expenses.
- The scale and level of other funding and/or in-kind support proposed to support the activity will be considered during the assessment process.

### Q10. Can IVAIS staff help me complete the application?

No. IVAIS staff are unable to assist you to prepare your application.

If you have questions after reviewing all the grant material provided please email ivais@arts.gov.au

### Q11. What happens if I need to submit a late application to the OC round?

Applicants remain responsible for submitting a complete application by the published closing time. Developing a submission does take some time.

Late applications will not be considered. If an extraordinary circumstance presents, such as an emergency or extreme weather event contact IVAIS@arts.gov.au immediately. The department must agree in writing to accepting a late submission before you will be able to submit it.

### Q12. Can I submit multiple activities in one application, or should I submit separate applications for individual activities?

No, only one activity per application. This allows the assessors to clearly identify and assess the individual activities and associated budgets.

### Q13. Is there an opportunity to see what a successful application looks like?

No. There is no 'one best example' that will fit every situation, so it is best to consider the application form closely and answer the questions as best you can for your organisation and activity.

### Q14. Do I need to be a member of the Indigenous Art Code?

The Indigenous Art Code (the Code) is a voluntary industry-led code of conduct that guides ethical trade in the industry. The Code is a set of rules and guidelines designed to support fair, transparent, and ethical trade with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander visual artists.

You do not need to be a member of the Indigenous Art Code to receive IVAIS funding. However, if you receive an IVAIS grant, you are expected to adhere to the Code's ethos and are strongly encouraged to become a signatory to, or a member of, the Code. Further information is available at: www.indigenousartcode.org

Where a number of applications are found suitable for funding for a similar activity, and/or have equal ranking, preference will be given to:

- organisations that are signatories to, or members of, the Indigenous Art Code;
- Indigenous organisations; and,
- organisations with a demonstrated commitment to increasing Indigenous employment, supplier use and/or engagement.

### Q15. Do I need to be an existing IVAIS-funded organisation to apply for a grant?

No. Any organisation which meets the IVAIS program's eligibility criteria can apply through the OC grant opportunity.

### Q16. If my organisation already receives IVAIS funding, can I apply for additional funding for a one-off activity?

Yes. You may apply for funding for a new activity or additional purpose through the IVAIS OC grant process. Please ensure you clearly outline what the funding will be used for and how the proposed one-off activity will achieve IVAIS program outcomes.

If you receive CNC multi-year funding, we expect that ongoing operational and arts worker funding needs are met through this funding.

### Q17. Can I apply for multi-year funding under the OC opportunity if my organisation is new to the IVAIS program?

Yes. You can apply for up to two years through the OC funding round**.**

Under **Section 3.2** of the open competitive Grant Guidelines, the maximum grant period is two financial years. Therefore, a 2-year grant agreement for activities beginning from 1 July 2027, would cover the 2027–28 and 2028–29 financial years. If your organisation works to a calendar year and you need assistance with your application, please contact the IVAIS team by emailing ivais@arts.gov.au

### Q18. What can funding be used for?

You will be asked what the funding will be used for in the application. This could include operational funding, employment of Indigenous Arts Workers, or project funding for a one-off activity. Eligible expenditure is at **Appendix A** of the Grant Guidelines.

You will be asked to provide further details and a proposed budget for all expenditure under operational, arts worker or project funding in the application.

### Q19. What should I choose in the application form under 'what do you plan to deliver with this funding'?

Choose the most relevant outcomes to your activity. If your activity does not fit into the options listed, choose the most relevant and type in a more accurate description of your activity in the 'Other' field.

### Q20. How should I answer the Accessibility Plan section?

Please write about how your organisation caters for people living with disability and note any challenges your organisation faces in providing accessibility in the box provided. Alternatively, you can attach an Accessibility Plan in the supporting documentation section.

### Q21. Does the IVAIS program fund community arts development, language and cultural maintenance activities?

IVAIS provides funding for professional visual arts activities that have strong connections to the art market.

It does **not** fund activities focussed on community arts development, Indigenous languages or cultural maintenance.

However, an activity involving these areas may be eligible where it is clearly part of professional visual arts activity and has a strong connection to visual arts production and the art market and can be demonstrated.

### Q22. Does the IVAIS program fund international exhibiting opportunities?

Yes, the IVAIS program can provide support for activities that will increase access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists to national and international markets.

However, IVAIS cannot fund an overseas resident/organisation, as the support of international activities needs to be delivered through an Australian organisation.

### Q23. Does the IVAIS program fund infrastructure activities?

Yes, for eligible minor infrastructure improvements such as studio refurbishment, work health and safety improvements, accessibility improvements, security upgrades and storage improvements.

However, the IVAIS program does not fund large-scale capital infrastructure activities, such as the construction of an art centre building or staff housing. That being the case, the IVAIS program can consider funding a contribution towards capital works in partnership with other government entities, the private sector, or philanthropists.

You may wish to talk with your local government, or state or territory government to see if other infrastructure funding opportunities exist. You may also wish to search for infrastructure grants on the Australian Government's grants and programs finder: https://business.gov.au/grants-and-programs

### Q24. If I am applying for operational funding, is my art centre or arts hub expected to participate in industry events?

IVAIS funding is designed to support viable opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists to produce, extend, market and generate income from their professional visual art practice. Accordingly, IVAIS-funded art centres and arts hubs are expected to participate in industry events regionally, nationally, or internationally where possible.

Where feasible, we encourage participation in at least one industry event per year, which could include Indigenous art fair, art market or exhibition.

### Q25. Can IVAIS support the establishment of a new art centre?

If you are setting up a new art centre, we recommend that you contact IVAIS by emailing ivais@arts.gov.au to discuss eligibility. We also encourage you to consider seeking funding through your local government and state or territory government and discuss options and support with industry service organisations within your area.

### Q26. I have an existing IVAIS grant but my financial audit report is not ready. Can I still be considered for funding in the current round?

We ask that organisations contact the IVAIS team and advise at a minimum what they can provide (e.g. a draft financial audit). Requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis, noting that it is a priority that you submit all overdue reporting.

### Q27. What happens if only part of our funding request is approved?

The assessment of your application will be based on value with money, need for funding support and the viability and adequacy of the proposed budget. The overall competition for the funds available will also be considered.

It is possible that the Minister may approve partial funding or a reduced length of duration of the grant funding under certain circumstances.

If this happens, we will work with your organisation to revise the project objectives, deliverables and budget before finalising your funding agreement.

### Q28. Can I include operational budget items, including Indigenous arts worker funding, in my budget if I am applying for one-off funding?

Yes. Operational and Indigenous arts worker costs may be included where they are temporary, directly support the proposed open competitive activity and do not duplicate existing funding.

### Q29. Can I include administration expenses in the budget?

Yes. However, it is expected that a maximum of 10% of your total grant funding goes towards administration costs.

### Q30. Will I be provided with a budget template?

Yes, you will fill in your proposed budget to the template provided in the SmartyGrants application form. You will be required to provide an itemised list of operational, arts worker and project-based expenditure.

You should separately list all key expenditure items and clearly show how IVAIS funding will be expended across each relevant financial year you are applying for.

### Q31. What is a 'business case'?

A business case sets out the opportunity for funding, may consider options, analyse costs and risk, and ultimately support the proposed investment. The nature of a business case will vary to what you may be applying for.

It should outline the nature of the opportunity that the funding is seeking to address, and link to the goals and objectives of the program. The amount of detail provided in the business case is proportionate to the scale, nature and complexity of the proposed opportunity.

### Q32. What is a 'strategic plan'?

A strategic plan is a long-term roadmap (typically 3 to 5+ years) that defines an organisation's vision, mission, and high-level goals.

### Q33. What is a 'risk management plan'?

A risk management plan should reflect planning for what might go wrong is something happens and planning how you might react if it does, and to reduce their negative impacts. Depending on what you may be applying for, you may have a variety of unique potential risks. The purpose of a risk management plan is to help you identify, evaluate and plan for possible risks that may arise within the project management process.

Further information about risk management plans can be found at: https://business.gov.au/risk-management/risk-assessment-and-planning/make-risk-management-plan

### Q34. Who will assess OC round applications?

Your application will be first reviewed against the IVAIS program's eligibility criteria (Program Guidelines Section 4). Only eligible applications will move to the assessment stage.

Each eligible application is independently assessed on its merit by departmental officers.

A moderation panel is responsible for finalising recommendations to the Minister for the Arts.

### Q35. Who will approve grants?

The Minister for the Arts is the final decision maker.

### Q36. Can I request feedback on an unsuccessful application?

Yes. If you are unsuccessful, you may request feedback from the IVAIS team. Once you have been advised of the outcome, there is a 2-week window period to request feedback by contacting ivais@arts.gov.au.

# 3 CNC grant round questions

### Q37. How can I be considered for funding through the CNC grant process?

You may be invited to apply for the CNC funding if you meet all eligibility requirements, including being an existing multi-year funded organisation with at least two prior consecutive IVAIS funding agreements that include core operational funding, or an organisation invited to deliver program specific activities.

You must have a proven record of delivery and no overdue acquittals or serious breaches relating to Australian Government funding. A serious breach is one that has resulted in, or warrants, the termination of a grant agreement.

If you were in scope to apply you will have already had contact from the department and been invited to re-apply/apply.

### Q38. How has the 2027 IVAIS CNC application and assessment process changed?

- Invited organisations will be asked to confirm their details and complete an Application Renewal Proposal through SmartyGrants.
- The Application Renewal Proposal **must** include organisational information, a business case, activity work plan, indicative budget, strategic plan, risk management plan and details of other funding.
- You may also include optional information such as letters of support to strengthen your claim for funding.
- Assessment criteria have changed and been reduced from four to three:
    1) past performance and demonstrated outcomes (40%),
    2) future need, proposed outcomes and strategic alignment (40%), and
    3) delivery confidence and grant management (20%).
- Previous IVAIS reports, acquittals and grant management records may be considered during the assessment.

### Q39. What is an Application Renewal Proposal and what information is required?

An Application Renewal Proposal gives assessors the information needed to assess your organisation's eligibility, past performance, future need, proposed outcomes, delivery arrangements and value with relevant money. An invitation to submit does not guarantee funding and funding is very limited and highly competitive.

### Q40. Who will assess the Closed Non-Competitive grant opportunity?

Your Application Renewal Proposal will be independently assessed on its merit by departmental officers against the grant opportunity guidelines.

A moderation panel is responsible for finalising recommendations to the Minister.

### Q41. Who will approve grants?

The Minister for the Arts is the final decision maker.

**Q42. What changes require approval before or after a grant agreement is signed?**

Contact IVAIS before changing the activity, milestones, timing, approved budget or allocations between operational, Indigenous arts worker and project funding. Written approval is required before moving funds between funding components. Some changes require a formal Deed of Variation, and approval is not automatic.

# 4 Contact information for IVAIS

**Email**: ivais@arts.gov.au

# 5 Amendments

This document may be amended from time to time by the Office for the Arts. Revisions will be published on the GrantConnect website and Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support program website.

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