Australian Government

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts

Live Music Australia
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

October 2022

Contents

1. About the program

1.1   Introduction

The Live Music Australia program is an open competitive grant opportunity that contributes to the Australian Government's Arts and Cultural Development Program. That is to support participation in, and access to, Australia's arts and culture through developing and supporting cultural expression.

The Live Music Australia program will provide grant funding of $20 million over four years, to 2023-24. The program supports small to medium venues to build capacity to host quality original Australian live music, which is professionally staged.

It is recognised that the Australian music industry continues to face significant pressures in light of the severe impacts of COVID-19, and that venues may require assistance as they rebuild following the lifting of capacity restrictions. Funding through the program may support venues to redevelop their capacity for hosting live music following the impacts of COVID-19.

The objectives and intended outcomes of the program are outlined in the **Live Music Australia Guidelines**. Please make sure you read the Guidelines in conjunction with these FAQs.

1.2   Office for the Arts

The Office for the Arts is part of the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts. The Office for the Arts develops policies and delivers programs to encourage excellence in the arts, protect our cultural heritage and support public access to, and participation in, arts and culture in Australia. This is achieved through the delivery of strategic advice, policy development, effective program and grants management, regulatory management and collaborative stakeholder engagement.

For more about the Office for the Arts, see www.arts.gov.au

1.3   Contacting the Office for the Arts

For enquiries relating to the Live Music Australia program, please contact the Contemporary Music Team within the Office for the Arts.

Phone: 02 6271 1711
Email: music@arts.gov.au

2. Making an application

2.1   Who can apply?

The eligibility criteria for applicants is outlined in section 4 of the program Guidelines.

2.2   Where do I apply?

The grant opportunity is advertised on the Australian Government's GrantConnect website. You will need to register as a user and create a password to access this site.

Applications must be submitted via SmartyGrants, an online grants administration system, which you can access through GrantConnect or from the Live Music Australia program page on the Office for the Arts website. You will need to register as a user and create a password to access SmartyGrants.

If you have accessibility issues with using the online SmartyGrants system, please contact music@arts.gov.au for assistance.

2.3   When can I apply?

Application rounds for Live Music Australia will be open twice per financial year over four years, from 2020-21 to 2023-24 (eight rounds in total).

You must submit your application between the opening and closing dates that will be advertised on GrantConnect and the Live Music Australia program page on the Office for the Arts website.

2.4   What can I apply for?

Eligible grant activities, including examples, are outlined in section 5 of the program Guidelines.

2.5   Do you fund festivals?

Round Five of the Live Music Australia program will target investment in live music festivals, recognising their important role in the Australian music ecology. It is recognised that festivals are key live music venues and contribute to the place-based music ecology in any location. The definition of live music venue in the program guidelines, including under the outcomes and objectives of the program, includes festivals stages.

To receive funding under Round Five of the Live Music Australia program you will need to demonstrate your commitment to hosting a primarily music focused festival and committed to presenting original Australian live music acts. Multi-disciplinary arts or food festivals, in which music is a secondary function, are not eligible to apply. Festivals that use multiple venues in a geographical area are eligible to apply, as are festivals that run over a longer period of time than one weekend a year.

2.6   What is original live music?

Original live music is defined as live music performed by a band that identifies as an 'originals band' that plays predominantly 'original' music - that which is composed and written by the band (or written for the band by a songwriter as the first or exclusive artists). The band may include some 'covers' songs, written or previously performed or recorded by other artists, in their live performance.

Live Music Australia prioritises funding to live music programming of original live music.

2.7   Do you fund live streaming activities?

We recognise that live streamed gigs have gained popularity as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and that many venues have been exploring the viability of digital streaming as part of their normal live music programming. It is the intention of the Live Music Australia program to support performance of original live Australian musicians and bands playing to live audiences, and a sustainable venue based live music industry. While some digital or online elements may be included in an application, they should be a complement to the proposed activity rather than the main component of the proposal. In addition, the application should substantiate how these components meet the objectives of the program.

2.8   Can I apply more than once?

Yes. There is no limit to the number of times you can apply over the four-year period of the Live Music Australia program, but you can only apply **once per application round**.

You may reapply to future rounds of the program regardless of whether you have been successful or unsuccessful for a previous application. Furthermore, you may reapply for the same or a similar activity, provided you are not seeking to fund activities already paid for under a previous successful grant.

If your application was previously unsuccessful, it is recommended that you seek feedback, consider the advice provided, and include new or more detailed information when submitting your next application. You should also ensure the activity you are applying for has outcomes aligned with the Live Music Australia program's objectives.

2.9   Can I apply outside of an advertised round?

You cannot apply for funding outside of the advertised opening and closing dates for each round.

Late applications may be considered if there are exceptional and unanticipated circumstances (examples are provided in section 7 of the Guidelines). If you believe you have a case to submit a late application, you must provide a request in writing to the Office for the Arts at music@arts.gov.au. Requests must be received **prior to the closing date**, unless the circumstances (such as an internet outage or an extreme weather event) prevent you from doing so. You may only submit a late application if the Office for the Arts provides formal agreement for you to do so.

2.10   Can I submit an application on behalf of a group?

Yes. Joint or consortia applications are eligible for funding under the Live Music Australia program. Please see section 7.2 of the program Guidelines.

2.11   My project involves other venues and or partners. Do these need to be confirmed before I can apply?

If you are applying with a partner organisation they do need to be confirmed, in principle, before you finalise your application. You should also attach letters of support/confirmation as part of your application.

2.12 I would like my project to improve accessibility for people with disability. What should I consider?

Both online and on-site accessibility of live music festivals can provide significant barriers to participation for people with disability. We encourage all applicants to consider how accessible their festival venue/s are at present, and to apply for funding for projects aimed at increasing accessibility. You may also consider the online accessibility of your website and digital systems.

Some improvements you can make to your venue are relatively low or no cost, while some require significant capital works. The two checklists below, developed by MusicNSW, will help you identify both quick wins and longer-term strategies to improve your venue's accessibility:
Online Accessibility Checklist
On-site Accessibility Checklist

Another toolkit to use when planning accessible and inclusive events, and when considering improvements to your venue to increase accessibility, is the NSW Government's Toolkit for Accessible and Inclusive Events. Also visit Arts Access Australia's website https://artsaccessaustralia.org for further resources.

3. Completing the application form

3.1   Can I preview the application form?

Yes. You can preview the application form in the online SmartyGrants system.

3.2   How do I make my application competitive?

Consider the following tips when writing your application:

- Make sure your application clearly addresses the program objectives (see section 2 of the program Guidelines) and the assessment criteria (see section 6 of the program 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 less words, then feel free to do so!
- Don't assume assessors know anything about your organisation or your activity. Background information and supporting documentation is important, but make sure it is relevant to the application and your specific activity.
- Provide clear information in the work plan that shows the sequence of activities over the period of the project including planning activities with reasonable timeframes. Ensure that the activities in the work plan match the items in the budget.
- Your application will be more competitive if you show that you will pay all individual artists / musicians a guaranteed minimum $250 performance fee for a gig of three hours or less in duration.
- If you are applying for live music programming, show that the artists and bands you intend to program predominantly play original music, rather than covers.
- Make sure any claims made within your application are supported by relevant evidence. This documentation will help to demonstrate a festivals commitment to hosting original live music, and its ability to undertake the activity successfully. Evidence should include:
  - letters of support from community, participants and industry (including artists, promoters, community groups, local councils, MP's and related businesses);

- o detailed programming information (past and planned), artist biographies and background information on type of music being presented;
- o marketing or promotional materials;
- o recent equipment quotes, if applicable, and
- o festival information such as accessibility plans.
- Include a detailed, balanced budget that is supported by calculations/explanatory notes and quotations for goods and services (for more tips on preparing a budget, see FAQ 3.3 below).

Support Material:

- Support material provides additional evidence for the application and includes performance schedules, artist line-ups, marketing plans, equipment quotes and relevant festival information.
- Make sure any supporting images, videos or documents are high quality and professionally presented.
- Where possible, collate your support material into groups of documents rather than uploading a large number of individual files. For instance, combine all of your quotes and budget material into one PDF and all of your support letters in another.
- Provide URLs that direct the assessors to the specific information or material you wish them to review. Avoid providing URLs to general pages such as home pages or Facebook accounts.
- **Assessors cannot access shared drives, such as Dropbox or Google Drive, and any documents provided this way will not be reviewed during assessment.**

Live Music Australia grant rounds are extremely competitive and demand for funding is high. Not all applications that meet the assessment criteria can be funded. Even if you are successful, the grant you are awarded may not be for the full amount you requested.

Generally speaking, your application will be more competitive if you:

- focus on ensuring that each element of your proposal is <u>one</u> of the eligible activities outlined in section 5.1 of the program Guidelines (e.g. equipment OR programming OR professional development);
- have a clearly articulated and achievable outcome;
- demonstrate a genuine need for funding;
- demonstrate co-contributions relevant to the activity and commensurate with the amount of funds being requested (see FAQ 5.2), and
- demonstrate previous, as well as ongoing, commitment to supporting the performance of original Australian live music beyond the immediate grant opportunity (evidence of programming).

3.3   I've never completed a grant or project budget before. How do I get it right?

If you are running a business you will be used to budgets that are focused on profit and loss. However, for the purposes of applying for a Live Music Australia grant, you need to prepare a project budget that balances to zero. If successful, your grant must be fully expended according to your project budget and Government funds cannot be held as a profit.

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The application form includes two sets of tables. In the first table, you must list all the expenditure directly related to the activity you are applying for, and how each line of expenditure will be funded This can be either from the grant or contribution for other income sources, or both (e.g. partially supported by the grant).

In the second table, under the 'Other income' heading, you must account for any of the non-grant support you identified in the first table. Other income is classified as 'cash' or 'in-kind' and may come from a range of sources such as business revenue, investment from others organisations, other grants, sponsorships, voluntary labour or pro-bono services (see also FAQ 5.2). You also need to indicate whether the income source is confirmed or pending.

If you have completed the tables correctly, the automatically calculated fields titled 'Grant request and expenditure balance' and 'Overall activity balance' will both come to zero.

Keep in mind that the budget should relate only to the proposed activity – you are not expected to itemise your entire business income and ongoing costs or liabilities.

It is also critical that you provide a level of detail to justify the proposed grant expenditure. You must include quotations for any goods and services included in your budget. You should also provide clear breakdowns or explanations for how budget line items, for example wages and artist fees, have been calculated.

We expect that artists and professionals employed or engaged to deliver activities funded under the Live Music Australia program will be remunerated for their work. We recommend you refer to pay scales and conditions prescribed by legally binding industrial awards and agreements, and or benchmarks established by arts and entertainment industry organisations, such as the Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance (MEAA). (also see FAQ 5.4 about appropriate minimum performance fees.)

3.4   Do I need to have an OneMusic licence to apply?

While it is not mandatory to have a OneMusic licence, it is a requirement that appropriate copyright permissions and licensing is in place for the use and presentation of music. In the majority of situations this requirement is satisfied by holding a OneMusic licence. More information can be found here. This question is asked for data collection purposes and context.

4. Getting help with my application

4.1   Who can I talk to about my application?

Program staff are available to assist you in understanding the purpose of the grant, application requirements, and the process for submitting your application.

If you wish to discuss your application prior to submitting, or have any questions that are not covered in this document, please contact the Contemporary Music team at music@arts.gov.au or on 02 6271 1711. Please note that we cannot review draft applications or provide advice on the content and details of your individual application or budget.

4.2   Who can help if I have problems submitting my application?

If you experience technical issues using SmartyGrants, please refer to the Help Guide for Applicants and the Applicant Frequently Asked Questions on the first page of the online application form. You can also contact the SmartyGrants support desk at service@smartygrants.com.au or on 03 9320 6888. The support desk hours are Monday to Friday 9:00 am to 5:00 pm (AEDT).

4.3   Can I amend my application after submitting it?

If you become aware that you've made an administrative error, such as providing an incorrect name or contact details, or if there's been a change in contact details, please advise the Contemporary Music team in writing as soon as possible at music@arts.gov.au.

Other changes, including amendments to the content of your proposal or additional support material, cannot be made after submission. For this reason, you should ensure your application is thoroughly reviewed and all attachments checked prior to submission.

5.   Funding and acquittal

5.1   How much money can I apply for?

The maximum amount you can apply for in a single application is $100,000 and the application form will not allow you to submit a request above that amount. You can view what is eligible to be claimed under Section 5.1 in the Live Music Australia Guidelines.

5.2   The Guidelines say I have to contribute towards the grant. What does this mean?

All applicants are required to contribute towards the cost of their activity. Contributions may include your own money, financial contributions from other parties (co-investment, partnerships, other grants), and/or in-kind support from yourself or others (goods or services provided without a fee).

As outlined in section 3.1 of the Guidelines, there is no minimum or maximum amount of contribution, however it should be relative to the nature and scale of the activity. For example, the larger the grant request, the higher the level of funding from other sources should be.

Contributions should be shown in the 'Other income' section of the application form and this information will help determine your need for the grant and your activity's value with money (see FAQ 5.3 below).

Think of your own contribution as more than an application check box – it is a way to demonstrate your own investment in the project as well as your ongoing commitment to the original Australian live music sector.

5.3   The Guidelines refer to "value with money". What does this mean?

"Value with money" is defined in the Glossary at section 15 of the program Guidelines. It is a principle applied during the assessment of applications (see program Guidelines, section 8.1) that considers the need for funding support, the quality and viability of the activity plan and timeline, and the viability

and adequacy of the proposed budget. For an application to represent value with money, it must meet all of these factors.

For example, an application may be well written and propose an activity that is strongly aligned with the program objectives, but if it is not supported by a realistic and economical budget and lacks appropriate support material (such as quotations for goods and services) and provides little detail or explanation (such as a budget breakdown and or calculations) then it will not be considered to represent value with money.

5.4   How much should I pay artists / musicians?

Your application will be more competitive if you can show that you plan to pay a minimum guarantee of $250 performance fee per musician for a gig of three hours or less. While this might not be what you usually pay musicians, you are able to request funding to support performance fees as a part of your grant funding. Please note, if you are engaging experienced high-calibre musicians, it may be appropriate to pay significantly more than a $250 minimum performance fee.

5.5   I'm currently receiving, or am applying for, funding from another government source. Can I still apply to this program?

Yes. As long as the funding you are currently receiving, or will receive, is for a different component of the activity that is not covered by the funding you are applying for under the Live Music Australia program.

You are expected to clearly identify all funding sources in your budget. You are also expected to separate the expenditure items that will be covered by the Live Music Australia grant from the expenditure items that will be covered by other funding sources.

5.6   If I'm successful, will I receive the full amount I requested?

Partial or full funding may be offered to successful applicants. The assessment of applications will consider value with money, which includes the need for funding support, the quality and viability of the activity plan and timeline, and the viability and adequacy of the proposed budget. The overall competition for the funds available for a round will also be considered when grants are offered.

5.7   If I'm successful, when and how will I get paid?

It is anticipated that applicants will be notified within three months of the closing date of a round.

If successful, you will be required to enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the Commonwealth and you will not be paid until the agreement is fully executed (signed by yourself and the Commonwealth). It is anticipated that the execution of agreements will take up to 3 weeks.

There are three different types of agreements that may be used under the Live Music Australia program. Sample grant agreements are available on the Department of Finance website. The type of agreement will be determined based on the scope and complexity of the grant, as outlined in section 10 of the program Guidelines.

Payment or payments will be made as set out in the grant agreement. Generally, there will be one payment made via a single electronic bank transfer.

5.8   If I'm successful, when can I start my activity?

You cannot commence your activity until the grant agreement has been executed (signed by both yourself, as the applicant and the Commonwealth). Live Music Australia will not fund any costs that pre-date the agreement execution date.

5.9   If I'm successful, how long do I have to spend the grant?

Successful activities will be funded for a maximum duration of 12 months from the date of execution of the grant agreement. Your grant agreement will specify any conditions regarding the completion date of your activity and the acquittal of grant monies, including reporting requirements.

5.10   What if my activity is delayed due to COVID-19?

As a result of COVID-19, we recognise that many venues are impacted by lockdowns and capacity restrictions. We acknowledge that this may result in unforeseen delays affecting the completion date of activities. Should you experience such delays, please contact the Contemporary Music team as soon as possible to discuss the required variations to your grant agreement.

5.11   If I'm successful, do I have to acquit the grant when the activity is completed?

Yes. You will have to complete at least one report in order to acquit the grant funds. There may be other reports required, and the complexity and number of reports you will be required to complete depends upon the nature and scope of your activity. Reporting requirements will be outlined in your grant agreement and a sample report template will be provided with your agreement or on request.

Failure to acquit your grant may prevent you from applying for any future Australian Government funding.

6. Assessment Process

6.1   Who will assess my application?

Applications will be assessed by the Office for the Arts, with input from qualified music industry representatives. We may also seek input from other government officials, such as state and territory arts funding bodies and the Australia Council. For more information please see section 8.2 of the Guidelines.

All assessors are required to perform their duties in accordance with the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines*, including abidance to the provisions on conflicts of interest and privacy. Please see section 13 of the Guidelines.

6.2   How long will it take to assess my application?

It is anticipated that applicants will be notified of funding outcomes within 3 months of the closing date of a round.

6.3   If my application is unsuccessful, can I ask for feedback?

Yes. You may request written feedback within three months of being advised of the outcome. Please request feedback by emailing music@arts.gov.au, providing your Live Music Australia application reference number e.g. LMA00xxx. Feedback will generally be provided within 28 days of your request.

7. Amendment

This document may be amended from time to time by the Office for the Arts. Revisions will be published on the GrantConnect website.