

Tips for:

- **identifying community need and demand**
- **developing Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF) 2021-22 guidelines for local grant programs.**

Tips for identifying community need and demand

Understanding community need and demand, including through community consultation, is critical to planning arts and cultural programs and activities that are relevant, responsive and sustainable.

Five tips to identify need and demand

1. **LOCAL DATA.** Look at existing demographic and other local data to understand your community's composition. Are your activities reflective of the diversity that makes up your community? Does your planning take into account how your community is changing?
2. **RESEARCH AND EVALUATION.** Find out if any research needs analysis or program evaluations have been undertaken in your community that might provide helpful insights about local demand. Are there learnings that can be applied to your own planning?
3. **PAST PERFORMANCE.** Revisit what you and others have delivered in the past. What was well received by the community? Where was the greatest demand? What was tried that didn't work well? Use these insights to inform your ongoing planning.
4. **FUTURE TRENDS.** Consider what is on the horizon both locally and globally and the impact this might have on people's arts and cultural needs. Are interests changing? Do people want to participate in arts and culture in new or different ways? Plan for how you will respond to emerging demand.
5. **COMMUNITY CONSULTATION.** Ask your community about their needs and interests. What are their priorities for local arts and culture? How do they want to participate? What would they like you to deliver? Use the tips below to help inform your community consultation strategy.
6. **STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION.** Ask your key partners such as the Regional Arts Service Network (RASN) provider involved in your programs what the value, benefits, learnings and opportunities are to strengthen your regional investment.

Ten tips to identify need and demand

1. **PLANNING AND PURPOSE.** Spend sufficient time planning your consultation strategy. Reflect on past experiences of community consultation – what worked well and what

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would you do differently this time? Be clear about the purpose of community consultation. What are your objectives? What insights do you hope to gain? How will the consultation findings be used? If you are part of an organisation, make sure the leaders and decision makers are on board with your consultation strategy.

2. **BUDGET.** Know what budget you have to work with as this will influence the scope of your consultation, the methods you select and the type of promotion you use.
3. **PARTICIPANTS.** Identify who you need to include in the consultation. Is this a broad community consultation or something that is more narrowly defined? Are there groups you would like to reach that you do not usually hear from? What tools are best to promote your consultation to your identified participant group?
4. **LEVEL OF INFLUENCE.** Be clear with participants about what their level of influence will be in the decision-making process. This is important for managing community expectations. Who is responsible for the final decision and to what extent will community feedback influence that decision? Refer to the IAP2 Spectrum of Participation in the links below to assist with understanding the implications of different levels of participation.
5. **METHODS.** There are endless methods you can use as part of community consultation, including online surveys, face-to-face interviews, workshops, focus groups, community polls, social media, advisory panels, information kiosks and citizen juries to name a few. Think about how your stakeholders like to participate and if possible, aim for a variety of methods to suit different preferences and community groups for example, people whose first language may not be English. Also consider if there are existing processes you can build on, such as planned meetings and events into which you can add some consultation. Other considerations when selecting methods include budget, the skills and knowledge of facilitators to manage different processes, and what type of process is appropriate to the level of influence participants will have on decision making.
6. **FACILITATION ROLES.** Think about who is best placed to facilitate consultation – would someone from within your organisation or someone external to it be most appropriate? Also make sure you have clear processes in place to record and document community feedback.
7. **THE EXPERIENCE.** Whichever method you select, consider how you can make the consultation experience a positive one which feels safe, enjoyable and productive for participants. This ranges from having clear questions to guide people's responses, to selecting a neutral venue that feels welcoming, to providing opportunities for participants to connect with each other.
8. **IDEAS INTO ACTION.** Spend time carefully analyzing the data you have gathered from consultation. What were the common themes? Where were the differences of opinion? What were the needs of different stakeholder groups? What ideas were raised that align with your current practices? What might you need to do differently to take onboard the feedback you heard? Were there ideas that you can act on quickly? Which ideas need long term planning and development? Make sure you involve a range of people from within your group or organization in discussions about the findings to ensure the consultation outcomes inform ongoing planning in a real way.
9. **FEEDBACK AND EVALUATION.** Respect the time and effort people have contributed by following up with findings and themes from the consultation, information about decisions made and how community input has influenced outcomes. Also take the

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opportunity to ask participants for feedback on your consultation processes to inform future consultation planning.

10. **ONGOING CONVERSATION.** Ideally, community consultation should not be a one-off event. Now you have started building a database of people interested in having their say on arts and culture, find opportunities to keep the conversation going. Seek regular feedback on your programs and activities, use social media to pose questions or stimulate discussion, build opportunities into the events you deliver for people to share their ideas and opinions about local arts and culture or about particular issues happening in your community.

Links

Engaging Queenslanders: an introduction to community engagement.

<http://www.qld.gov.au/web/community-engagement/guides-factsheets/introduction>

IAP2 Public [Participation Spectrum](#) and [Code of Ethics](#).

Tips for developing RADF 2021-22 guidelines for local grant programs

Local Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF) guidelines enable communities and potential applicants to understand the purpose and processes of local RADF grants programs as well as providing information for those assessing applications.

Arts Queensland has developed the following tips in response to feedback from RADF Liaison Officers about ways in which Arts Queensland can support councils to develop programs that respond to local arts and cultural priorities and contexts.

The tips provide standardised text on common elements (such as objectives, criteria and reporting) which are consistent with RADF 2021-22 Guidelines. The tips also offer guidance for local councils to consider when developing their own RADF grants processes.

Arts Queensland requires local council RADF grant program guidelines:

- to reflect the updated RADF 2021-22 Guidelines
- to reflect the partnership between the Queensland Government and individual local councils (see purpose below) and includes the Queensland Government logo www.arts.qld.gov.au/aq-funding/acknowledgement
- are uploaded to councils' websites (Arts Queensland to link to from its website).
- Include the 'acknowledgement text' for use by successful applicants.

Please note: In preparing local grants guidelines please be aware of an issue regarding the option of offering interest-free loans as part of grants programs. Section 111 of the *Local Government Act* states that 'a local government must not, either directly or indirectly, make or guarantee a loan to an individual'. While it is the responsibility of each council to obtain their own legal advice about the grants they offer their communities, it is important to note this section of the Act. If artists are looking for interest-free loans, one option is to refer them to Enterprise Loans which provides microloans managed through Foresters Community Finance - <https://foresters.org.au/enterprise-loans/>.

Your Arts Queensland Partnerships Manager is available to provide feedback and advice on draft guidelines and associated forms. It is not a requirement to seek approval for local guidelines before uploading to council websites.

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Standard RADF text for inclusion in local guidelines

The below text may be incorporated into local council grants programs RADF 2021-22 Guidelines to provide consistency with RADF key messages across local and state governments.

Purpose

- The Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF) is delivered as a partnership between the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland and eligible local councils across the state.
- RADF promotes the role and value of arts, culture and heritage as key drivers of diverse and inclusive communities and strong regions. RADF invests in local arts and cultural priorities, as determined by local communities, across Queensland.
- RADF is a flexible fund, enabling local councils to tailor RADF programs to suit the needs of their communities.

Objectives

RADF objectives are to support arts and cultural activities that:

- provide public value for Queensland communities.
- build local cultural capacity, cultural innovation and community pride.
- deliver Queensland Government's objectives for the community.

Incorporating local priorities into guidelines

Local priorities (e.g. increasing liveability) are usually articulated in councils' strategic and cultural plans, and inform councils' own strategic arts and cultural initiatives and grants programs. When building local priorities into your guidelines you may consider the following:

- Are the priorities in your local guidelines consistent with local arts and cultural priorities outlined in the council RADF application to Arts Queensland and/or other planning documents such as your local arts and cultural plan?
- How were the priorities identified or developed and can this rationale be made explicit for the applicant? For example, 'Increasing liveability in our community is important because...'
- When will the priorities be reviewed? For transparency and openness, you may want to explain how the priorities were developed and the length of time they will remain priorities.

Eligibility for RADF local grants

Eligibility determines who can apply for RADF funding and how they can use the funding. When developing eligibility criteria you may consider the following:

- Are local artists, arts and cultural groups, and organisations eligible to apply?
- Are state-wide arts organisations eligible to apply?
- Are schools, businesses, or other types of non-arts groups eligible to apply?
- If you are funding individuals, do you require them to have an ABN? Can local community organisations auspice an individual's grant? Is there a council policy on this?
- Is an applicant who has not satisfactorily acquitted a previous grant excluded from RADF grants until the previous grant is acquitted?

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- Can an artist or organisation outside the Local Government Area apply for a RADF grant? If so, under what conditions? For example, the activity would have to demonstrate benefits for the local community.
- Are there any exclusions? This may be dependent on local priorities and/or funds available.
- Are there any particular activities or budget items that local RADF funding will not support?
- Should an explanation of eligibility be included in the local RADF grants programs guidelines?

Maximum limits for RADF local grants applications

The setting of maximum amounts that applicants can apply for will depend on the council's total RADF funding allocation to local grants programs and the prioritising of those grants programs.

For example, emphasis may be placed on individual professional development grants and bursaries, or on larger community projects. When considering placing caps on the amount that applicants can request from the funding program, local councils may want to consider:

- Is there a maximum funding request limit for a RADF grant application?
- Are there limits (percentage or dollar) for specific activities (e.g. professional development)?
- Will the program support 100% of actual costs of a project?

Application process

Most applicants invest considerable time and energy in preparing grant applications and consideration needs to be given to making the process as user-friendly as possible. In setting up the local grants application process local councils may need to consider:

- What is the process for people to apply to the program? For example, written application, online form, two-stage process including an initial Expression of Interest, verbal pitch of their project idea to community/committee, etc.
- What are the steps involved in the application process? For example, Step 1 - review local RADF guidelines on council website; Step 2 – discuss application plans with grants officer, etc.
- Where do applicants get information and copies of grants program documents or processes? For example, on the council website, at the local council office, etc.
- Who can applicants speak to about the submission process? For example, a RADF liaison, arts and cultural officer, grants officer or someone else.
- Are the RADF grants processes consistent with council finance and governance processes and policies?
- Do applicants need translating and interpreting services? For more information, the Translating and Interpreting Service can be contacted on 13 14 50 during business hours or <https://www.tisnational.gov.au/>

Assessment process

Assessment of public grants programs needs to be fair and transparent. Applicants want to know who is making decisions about funding, why those people have been selected to make decisions and how the decisions are being made. When developing and communicating your grant applications assessment process local councils may consider:

- How are funding decisions made?

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- Who makes them and through what kind of process? For example, a RADF committee, arts/community committee, community forum, online voting etc.
- Should there be a section in the local guidelines on the committee and process of appointment to the committee?
- How are members selected?
- Are members representative of the community and/or local priorities?
- How are members inducted?
- How does the committee deal with any conflicts of interest?
- Does the local RADF assessment committee or the group responsible for assessing applications need a 'Terms of Reference' or separate information and tools to assist them in assessment?
- How long will the assessment process take? Consider the time taken to assess and seek approval prior to informing successful recipients.
- If projects are related to particular community groups (e.g. young people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people), will the application need to include evidence of engagement with or support from this group and/or will the applications be assessed through a different process? For example, additional processes to engage with a local committee, group or community organisation.

Assessment criteria

In council applications to Arts Queensland, applications are required to articulate delivery against RADF objectives and assessment criteria including quality, reach, impact and viability. This is the standard criteria for assessment for all Arts Queensland investment programs.

When developing criteria for local RADF grants programs council's may consider how the information provided by applicants needs to:

- meet the criteria of quality, reach, impact and viability in the local context.
- comply with local RADF grant program guidelines including council objectives for local grants programs.
- align to the identified arts and cultural priorities of council (as per council's application to Arts Queensland).

The table (see over) provides a starting point for local discussions to develop assessment criteria for local grants programs. Local councils may consider using some or all of the criteria depending on the local priorities.

Criteria		Considerations:
Quality	Produces or contributes to high quality arts and cultural initiatives for local communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who will deliver particular projects or activities? Provide evidence of the quality of their work.• The types of outcomes expected from the projects and activities and how these are important in the local context.• How the projects or activities will provide high quality experiences for the local community and/or build the capacity of the local arts sector.

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Criteria		Considerations:
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any innovative aspects of proposed project or activities. How it is innovative for the particular council or community?
	Proven capacity to effectively support and deliver arts and cultural services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidenced track record of delivering high quality arts and cultural initiatives. How the proposed program of activities will build on past performance.
Reach	Provides access to and engagement in arts and culture for diverse communities, practitioners, participants and audiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who in the community will be engaged through the proposed program of activities? How does the proposed program of activities respond to diversity within the community?
	Evidence of local demand for proposed program/s.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does the proposed program of activities respond to local arts and cultural priorities and any other broader council or community priorities? How does the applicant know there is demand for the proposed program of activities? How does the applicant know the proposed program of activities responds to local needs and interests?
	Demonstrates community and stakeholder involvement in RADF priority setting, decision-making and evaluation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How did council arrive at the proposed program of activities (including how engagement with community stakeholders and results of evaluation and data collection inform the application)?
Impact	Demonstrates cultural, artistic, social or economic returns on investment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What cultural, artistic, social or economic value/outcomes does the applicant expect the proposed project or activity will contribute to the community? How will council communicate the public value of RADF activities in the community?

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Criteria		Considerations:
	Supports one or more of the Queensland Government Objectives for the Community including safeguarding our health, supporting jobs, backing small business, making it for Queensland, building Queensland, growing our regions, investing in skills, backing our frontline services, protecting the environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which Queensland Government objective(s) does the proposed program of activities make the strongest contribution to and how?
Viability	Evidence of good planning for strong governance and management of RADF at a local level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How RADF is managed locally. What processes are in place to ensure transparent and effective management including monitoring of outcomes? How council governance of RADF builds on previous successful models of management or has been reviewed in light of learnings or challenges.
	Evidence of partnership capacity with partners including business and government.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information about any local partnerships that will contribute to delivery of the proposed program of activities. How will the proposed activities leverage off other local projects, programs and events?

Timeframes for RADF local grants programs

Program opening and closing dates for applications, turnaround time for assessment and notification of outcomes are especially important milestones for applicants. When developing local grants program guidelines local councils may consider:

- Are there due dates/closing dates or can applications be submitted any time?
- How does council promote this to the community? For example, an annual RADF calendar, email, newsletter, local paper etc.
- How will RADF availability be communicated widely across a diversity of communities?
- How will council communicate the outcomes of grants rounds?
- How will council promote the outcomes and public value of RADF projects to the wider community?

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Notification of outcomes of assessment process

Guidelines will need to clarify when and how assessment decisions will be communicated to applicants. Councils may consider:

- How are assessment panel funding recommendations and approved funding decisions communicated to applicants? For example, by phone, letter or email.
- What happens if an applicant is successful? For example, a letter of offer or funding agreement is issued and copies of reporting templates are provided by council.
- Are applicants required to submit an invoice and complete an EFT form to receive payment?
- What happens if an applicant is not successful? Will council offer feedback and if so, in what form?

Acquittal and reporting requirements

Arts Queensland requires that Project Outcome Reports be submitted by all RADF grant recipients once funded activities are completed. Arts Queensland will provide Outcome Report templates for councils to distribute. Applicant outcome reports will inform RADF program reporting from council to Arts Queensland.

When developing reporting requirements for local grants guidelines local councils may consider:

- When and how will successful applicants receive a Project Outcome Report template and by what method? For example, hard copy or online.
- Are the guidelines clear on how and when Project Outcome Reports are submitted? For example, eight weeks after completion of activity.
- How will council report back to council stakeholders on the outcomes of RADF funded activity?
- How will council promote the public value of RADF funded projects within the community?

Acknowledging the partnership

All RADF funded activities must acknowledge the Queensland Government and the council in all promotional material and publications by including the RADF 2021-22 acknowledgment text and appropriate logos.

Acknowledgement Text for RADF 2021-22

The Regional Arts Development Fund is a partnership between the Queensland Government and [name of council] to support local arts and culture in regional Queensland.