

LITERATURE PANEL

Arts Projects for Individuals and Groups

There was an impressive range of genres and forms in this round: fiction, creative non-fiction, graphic novel, poetry, podcasts and literature for children and young people.

Australia Council funding is not the ideal place to seek support when you are beginning your writing practice. We encourage early career writers to connect with their state writers' centre to develop their craft.

The most competitive applications

- gave well thought out responses to each question in the application form, giving a sense that the applicant knew what was required of them to present a full-bodied proposal
- provided relevant writing samples, often as a balance of recently published material and first drafts of intended new work
- gave the assessors a strong sense of the applicant's career, practice and progression
- presented clear, realistic project plans and persuasively demonstrated the ability and capacity of the applicant to carry them out
- provided enthusiastic, relevant letters of support from publishers, agents or key project partners
- were written in an engaging, confident and authoritative voice – this was particularly important for emerging writers
- demonstrated strong cultural protocols when working with First Nations and other communities, setting out the intended approach to cultural engagement or consultation and providing key letters of support
- were clear and specific in the short project summary section, supplying a brief outline of the project and what the applicant hoped to achieve
- where the elective third assessment criterion 'Creation' was chosen, were specific about how this project extended or pushed the applicant's writing practice
- supported claims with evidence
- were carefully edited
- used plain English, avoiding jargon or dense academic language
- provided evidence of the applicant's track record by supplying a body of written work, both published and unpublished
- contextualised the value of the proposed work, especially if working in a specific genre or new form
- provided evidence of the quality of the work by supplying strong industry letters of support explaining where the work fits into the relevant genre and/or creative sector.

Arts Projects for Organisations

The assessment panel noted the number of writers' festivals in the round. They praised applications that clearly defined opportunities for writers. The assessors were also encouraged to see projects that sought to make it easier for readers to access new voices, or which aimed to provide a sustainable income for mid-career writers.

The most competitive applications:

- set out their artistic programs, their intended audiences, and their audience engagement strategies
- engaged with culturally & linguistically diverse writers and regional writers
- provided well curated support material that included writing samples from previous or forthcoming publications, or writers named in the application
- provided a detailed, well thought out budget with large amounts broken down, especially for the higher funding requests
- demonstrated diverse sources of co-funding, in-kind support and revenue
- provided fair pay according to industry standards for writers and arts workers
- did not assume the assessors were familiar with the applicant organisation or its programming, but provided background and context
- included written support material to demonstrate artistic merit or quality of the service to the arts
- where the application involved a publication with ambitious targets, clearly articulated how those publishing goals would be achieved
- where the project involved schools or curriculum, provided details of the relationship between the applicant organisation and the Department of Education (or relevant education body)
- where funding was sought for repeat programs or festivals, provided evidence of the success and impact of the project in the form of qualitative testimonials, case studies, growth statistics or other evaluative measures.

Career Development for Individuals and Groups

The most competitive applications:

- clearly articulated how the activity would positively and significantly impact on the career of the applicant
- were well suited to this category: some applications would have been better suited to Arts Projects for Individuals and Groups, as they involved arts projects rather than career development activities
- demonstrated a strong self-awareness on the part of the applicant, articulating where they were in their career, providing background on their work and professional achievements, and setting out the next logical career steps
- communicated the timeliness of the opportunity

- provided high quality support material that demonstrated strong artistic merit and the potential
- ensured support material was relevant, well curated, and specifically tailored to underpin the activities outlined in the application
- provided a detailed and realistic budget
- if a mentorship was proposed, strongly articulated its relevance and strength
- did not assume the assessors were familiar with the event or festival the applicant was proposing to go to, but contextualised it, demonstrating how the attendance would impact on the applicant's career
- where the project was for an activity supporting existing or published material, provided excerpts as artistic support material
- where the activity involved travel, make the case for the necessity of that travel
- provided a high level of detail in the budget and activity timeline
- provided strong letters of support from experts in the field.