

Application Summary: 2026 - 3279 - Sustaining Grant - Strategic Partners Grant

Application ID

2026 - 3279 - Sustaining Grant - Strategic Partners Grant

Applicant Information

Organization Information

Arts Council Wood Buffalo
9908 Manning Avenue
Fort McMurray, AB, T9H 2B9

Primary Contact

Liana Wheeldon
9908 Manning Avenue
Fort McMurray, AB, T9H 2B9

Phone: (587) 674-1625
Email: liana.wheeldon@artscouncilwb.ca



Application Summary: 2026 - 3279 - Sustaining Grant - Strategic Partners Grant

In the last year, have there been any significant changes to your organization or program?

No

What is your organization's Mission Statement?

Arts Council Wood Buffalo's Mission is to build a thriving community through the arts in support of our dynamic vision of a creatively empowered Wood Buffalo.

Application Summary: 2026 - 3279 - Sustaining Grant - Strategic Partners Grant

Please summarize the proposed service(s) that your organization is requesting funding for.

Learning:

- Business of the Arts / Creative Connections: Capacity building for artists in the region to connect with peers practicing at different levels in their careers, enabling local artists to take an entrepreneurial approach to expanding their practice.
- Consultative Services: Arts Council staff provide one-on-one support to members and non-members of ACWB on topics ranging from grant applications to portfolio development.

Profile Building:

- Wood Buffalo Excellence in Arts Awards: Showcase event recognizing local artists, administrators and educators for their contributions.
- Artist Directory and e-Marketplace: Geared to the region's artists who need support establishing an online presence and managing an e-commerce website.

Art Production:

- Artist in Residency Program / Suncor Indigenous Artist Program: Following a traditional residency model and including mentorship opportunities to benefit local artists, AiR helps bridge the gap in educational opportunities in the region.
- Rural Arts Support: ACWB Indigenous staff support the development of arts programming co-created with community members to meet the unique needs of the rural and Indigenous communities. This role supports individual artist growth and success, connects rural and urban, and the Truth & Reconciliation Calls to Action.

Collaborations:

- Seniors & the Arts: In partnership with St. Aidan's Society, ACWB hosts art-making workshops and events geared to older adults in our region.
- Alberta Culture Days: ACWB acts as the fiscal agent to support the arts initiatives facilitated by the artists and arts organizations in Wood Buffalo.

Social Enterprise

In partnership with the RMWB, ACWB is working to create an Arts Incubator space that will support and nurture a diverse range of arts and culture in the region. ACWB continues to create and deliver pilot programs, create facility use manuals, and collaborate on the creation of this space that will support arts, culture, business, and the general community.

Application Summary: 2026 - 3279 - Sustaining Grant - Strategic Partners Grant

Please note any restrictions on participating in your organization's programs, projects, services or events.

Although Arts Council Wood Buffalo is a member-driven organization, its work supports all artists, arts organizations, and community-at-large throughout the region. Anyone can become a member of Arts Council Wood Buffalo (ACWB) by submitting the appropriate fee. Although there are exclusive benefits for members (discounts on programming, profile on artist directory, ACWB Marketplace store, access to consultative services), membership is not required to access most of ACWB's programs and services.

In 2020, ACWB launched the Arts Champion Program which allows donors to contribute to the ACWB Membership Bank, further removing barriers to achieving membership. Residents of Wood Buffalo may register for these pre-paid Memberships confidentially, providing them with access to all exclusive and non-exclusive benefits without the burden of paying a fee.

Minimum number of board members according to the organization's bylaws:

5

Please list your current Board of Directors in the table:

Board of Directors

Name	Board Position	Years on Board
Will Collins	Chair	2.5
Theresa Wells	Vice Chair	3.5
Luie Raczyński	Treasurer	2.5
Mitchel Bowers	Secretary	5.5
Nabil Malik	Director	3.5
Jeffory Mason	Director	2.5
Clay Fadden	Director	1.5
Ashley Brockway	Director	1.5
Celia Macdonald	Director	1.5
Dawn Booth	Director	4.5
Anna Pottie	Director	.5

Application Summary: 2026 - 3279 - Sustaining Grant - Strategic Partners Grant

Do one or more board representatives or program staff have lived experience or expertise reflective of the demographics your organization serves?

Yes

If Yes; please briefly explain the lived experience or expertise.

Arts Council Wood Buffalo's voluntary governance Board of Directors makeup represents all areas of the arts, education, business, and industry sectors, and includes representation from Indigenous, Multicultural, and 2SLGBTQ+ communities. This diversity ensures that Arts Council is meeting the needs of our multifaceted sector. Board Members are considered leaders in their fields and help drive the momentum of the organization.

There are five female-identifying and six male-identifying Board Directors; 40% are from the 2SLGBTQIA+ community; 20% are from IBPOC communities; 30% differently-abled.

ACWB conducts annual skills and diversity matrix measuring to ensure the community is reflected in our Board makeup.

Application Summary: 2026 - 3279 - Sustaining Grant - Strategic Partners Grant

Provide a brief overview of the organization's strategic priorities.

ACWB's Strategic Priorities:

1. Organizational Transformation:

- Develop a creative campus that sparks economic revitalization.
- Provide resources and investment to cultivate the arts.
- Grow connection and collaboration between artists and community to increase social cohesion.
- Be recognized as a benchmark for the Alberta arts ecosystem.

2. Financial Sustainability:

- Demonstrate the value of the arts so that government and the community increase their awareness of, participation in, and commitment to the arts
- Be recognized as a great place to work.
- Be a leader of governance practices at all levels of the organization.
- Be financially sustainable.

3. Cross-sector Connection:

- Continuously commit to listening, unlearning biases, and being catalysts for social change.
- Innovate Alberta's arts sector through enhanced collaboration with other agencies.
- Trailblaze new cross-sector strategic partnerships to infuse innovation and creativity.

How many operational staff does the organization have? Please provide details in the table.

Operational Staff Information

	Per Organization Chart	Currently Filled
Full Time Positions	8	8
Part Time Positions	0	0

Program/Projects Details

Are you applying for more than one program or project?

If you are unsure, please contact CIP@rmwb.ca for clarification.

Yes

Step 1: Click on the button below to enter the name of your program(s) or project(s).

Step 2: Click on the Save Draft button at the bottom of the screen.

Step 3: Click on the "Program/Project Details" button below to complete the details of each Program/Project. Please be sure to submit the current program/project information form before moving onto the next project information form.

Program/Project: Alberta Culture Days & Alberta Day Status: Completed

Program/Project: Artist in Residence Program Status: Completed

Program/Project: Business of the Arts / Creative Connections / Membership Program Status: Completed

Program/Project: Rural Arts Support Program Status: Completed

Program/Project: Seniors & The Arts Program Status: Completed

Program/Project: Wood Buffalo Excellence in Arts Awards / The Buffys Status: Completed



Application Summary: 2026 - 3279 - Sustaining Grant - Strategic Partners Grant

Finances

Organization's most recent Fiscal Year End date

Please click Save Draft to update the following two questions with this date.

12/31/2024

Unrestricted Net Assets

Unrestricted Net Assets (accumulated net assets/surplus that the organization has not set aside for a particular purpose or earmarked by a donor for a specific program or project) from your Financial Statements ending: 12/31/2024

\$72,000.00

Total Operating Expenses

Total Expenses from your Financial Statements Ending: 12/31/2024

\$959,589.00

Application Summary: 2026 - 3279 - Sustaining Grant - Strategic Partners Grant

What efforts have been made in the past fiscal year to increase the financial support for your organization?

In 2025, ACWB has applied for:

Program Sponsorships - 28 applications, 18 achieved;

Operating/Program Grants - 16 applications, 8 achieved (2 pending)

Capital Grants & Donations - 11 applications, 6 achieved (3 pending)

Arts Council works closely with its financial advisors to invest grant funds to maximize returns from GIC interest which is reinvested into operations and programs.

ACWB utilized the Government of Alberta Crowdfunding platform to help fund the Buffys/Excellence in Arts Awards Program. This initiative provides matching funds up to \$5,000, and ACWB achieved a qualifying amount of \$9,000 in donations to be eligible for the \$4,500 in a matching fund amount.

The ACWB Partnerships Manager has received mentorship for obtaining and retaining sponsors from Business/Arts artsvest Canada and Global Philanthropic Canada. She has updated our Case for Support and is focused on creative business alliances to keep moving investment in ACWB forward.

Application Summary: 2026 - 3279 - Sustaining Grant - Strategic Partners Grant

Please explain any cost savings initiatives the organization has, or is planning, to implement:

To offset office rental costs, ACWB is subletting portions of its office space to St. Aidan's Society and Miralles Music. Additionally, ACWB has negotiated contracts with Shaw Rogers for reduced internet costs and Printer West for an in-kind copy machine.

Partnerships with organizations in Anzac and Fort Chipewyan enable ACWB to provide regular programming in those areas. Partnerships may include funding, transportation, and shared administrative tasks. ACWB also partners with the Fort McMurray Public School District and the Fort Chipewyan Community High School on initiatives, reducing venue rental and supply costs.

ACWB has outsourced some of its administrative work to a local vendor rather than hiring additional permanent staff. This represents a savings in payroll costs of approximately \$20,000.00 annually. ACWB negotiated better employee benefits, resulting in a 15% savings.

In kind promotional contracts have been negotiated with Rogers and Harvard Media to support promotion of ongoing programs and services.

The \$72,000 in surplus revenues from donations, fee-for-service, and ticket sales is internally restricted by a Board Motion as an operating reserve.

Application Summary: 2026 - 3279 - Sustaining Grant - Strategic Partners Grant

Please complete the following budget table:

Secured Revenue

Revenue Sources	Description	Revenue (Jan-Dec)
Donations	Industry donation	\$30,000.00
Other Grants	Industry partner program funding (AiR & SATA)	\$35,000.00
Government of Alberta Grant	Carryover from 2025 - grant ends March 31, 2026 (CITA)	\$15,000.00
Government of Canada Grant	Carryover from 2025 - grant ends March 31, 2026 (SATA)	\$10,000.00
Other	Office sublet	\$11,400.00
Other	Fee for Service Project	\$9,000.00
		\$110,400.00

Revenue in Progress

Revenue Sources	Description	Revenue (Jan-Dec)
Memberships	Annual fees for Membership Program	\$3,500.00
Fundraising	Miscellaneous donations	\$20,000.00
Sponsorships	WBEAA/Buflys	\$20,000.00
In Kind Revenue	WBEAA/Buflys	\$18,000.00
Government of Alberta Grant	AFA Operating Funds	\$70,000.00
Government of Alberta Grant	Alberta Day and Culture Days funds	\$15,000.00
Government of Canada Grant	NHSP Grant for Seniors & The Arts	\$20,000.00
Other Grants	Foundation programming fund	\$50,000.00
Other Grants	WBCF program grants	\$48,240.00
Other Grants	Business/Industry grant (RASP & C2)	\$10,000.00
Other	Endowment Fund returns	\$1,500.00
Other	Interest revenue	\$7,000.00
Program/Project Event Income (Admissions / Ticket Sales)	Buflys/BoA/C2/Partnership projects	\$28,700.00
Other	Fee for Service Projects	\$1,000.00
		\$312,940.00

Application Summary: 2026 - 3279 - Sustaining Grant - Strategic Partners Grant

Expenses

Type of Expense	Description	Total Expenses	Requested RMWB Grant
Program Materials and Supplies	Alberta Day & Culture Days	\$30,000.00	\$20,000.00
Program Materials and Supplies	Seniors & the Arts	\$29,000.00	\$0.00
Program Materials and Supplies	SCALE Partnership Project	\$6,640.00	\$0.00
Program Materials and Supplies	AiR / Suncor Indigenous Artist in Residency	\$18,500.00	\$0.00
Program Materials and Supplies	WBEAA / Buffys	\$92,950.00	\$0.00
Gifts for Elders / Honorariums	Bursaries/Elder honoraria/etc	\$6,250.00	\$0.00
Program Materials and Supplies	Business of the Arts/Creative Connections	\$86,600.00	\$0.00
Program Materials and Supplies	Rural Arts Support Program	\$20,000.00	\$0.00
Transportation and Delivery	Rural Arts Support Travel	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
Wages/Salaries/Benefits/MER CS	ACWB Staff expenses - WCB, EI, CPP, Benefits, etc.	\$680,000.00	\$620,000.00
Audit Fees	Annual Audit & bookkeeping	\$25,400.00	\$20,000.00
Insurance - Program, Project, Service or Event	Operating insurance, events, etc.	\$11,000.00	\$0.00
Advertising / Marketing Fees	General ACWB promo	\$500.00	\$0.00
Food Costs	RASP & Sata hospitality	\$3,000.00	\$0.00
Rent - Venue/Facility/Room/Equipment	Rent plus utilities	\$33,500.00	\$0.00
Training	Professional development	\$2,000.00	\$0.00
Volunteer Appreciation	BoD/AGM/Volunteer Appreciation	\$4,500.00	\$0.00
Administration Costs	Website/Bank chges/Phone/Office supply/etc.	\$33,500.00	\$0.00
		\$1,088,340.00	\$665,000.00

Shortfall



Application Summary: 2026 - 3279 - Sustaining Grant - Strategic Partners Grant

Total	
(Total Secured Revenue - Total Expenses)	-\$977,940.00

Total RMWB Grant Request

Amount	
Total	\$665,000.00

Application Summary: 2026 - 3279 - Sustaining Grant - Strategic Partners Grant

Total Cost of Program, Project, or Service

Total cost includes all costs of the entire program, project or service.

\$1,088,340.00

Total Grant Amount Request

For the Community Sustaining Grant, up to 75% of total program, project or service cost

\$665,000.00

Grant request as percentage of total cost of program, project or service

Click on the Save Draft button to calculate the percentage.

61%

Outline any expected non-financial resources being leveraged for this program, project, service or event to demonstrate community support.

ACWB is housed in a facility operated by St. Aidan's House Society. This offers revenue to sustain St. Aidan's while ACWB receives a subsidized rent cost. A local music teacher shares the space with ACWB to help alleviate costs for both organizations.

WB Technologies is providing ACWB a commercial print/copier at a substantially reduced usage rental rate.

Suncor Energy Centre for the Performing Arts and Keyano Theatre share resources and offer venue discounts for the execution of ACWB programs and services.

Staples offers ongoing discounts for office and print supply needs.

Several local organizations contribute in-kind to support different programs.

Application Summary: 2026 - 3279 - Sustaining Grant - Strategic Partners Grant

Preferred Cash-Flow

	Amount
January/February	\$498,750.00
April	\$0.00
August	\$166,250.00
October	\$0.00
Total	\$665,000.00



Application Summary: 2026 - 3279 - Sustaining Grant - Strategic Partners Grant

Attachments

Upload Strategic Plan

[Business__Funding_Plan_2026_-_FINAL.pdf](#)
605.2 KB - 10/09/2025 6:23 PM

[KPI_Master_Document.pdf](#)
79.5 KB - 10/09/2025 8:26 AM

[Strat_Plan_At_a_Glance.png](#)
655.8 KB - 10/09/2025 8:25 AM

Total Files: 3

Please attach a budget breakdown for each program, project, service or event if there are multiple requests included in this application.

[ACWB_Board_Approved_Projected_Operating_Budget_2026.xlsx](#)
16 KB - 10/09/2025 8:24 AM

Total Files: 1

Application Summary: 2026 - 3279 - Sustaining Grant - Strategic Partners Grant

Please attach a Partnership Letter(s) of Support for the proposed program, project, service or event to demonstrate authentic partnership and collaboration.

Applicants may use the >Partnership Letter of Support Template or submit a customized letter.

Each letter should include the following five key elements:

1. Commitment to the partnership and shared initiatives
2. Confirmation of the community need
3. History of prior collaboration or rationale for a new partnership
4. Defined roles, responsibilities, and resource commitments
5. Contact information for the partner organization

Each letter must be signed by an authorized representative of the partner organization.

Please note: The partnership letter is a mandatory requirement for Community Sustaining applicants and optional for Community Impact Grant application.

[ACFA_Lettre_d_appui_-_ACWB_ACFA.pdf](#)

185.2 KB - 10/09/2025 6:40 PM

[Partnership_Letter_ACWB_AFCSS.pdf](#)

242.3 KB - 10/14/2025 10:02 AM

[Partnership_Letter_ACWB_MCA.pdf](#)

204.9 KB - 10/09/2025 6:39 PM

[Partnership_Letter_ACWB_MCFN.pdf](#)

300.7 KB - 10/09/2025 6:39 PM

[Partnership_Letter_ACWB_St_Aidan_s_Signed.pdf](#)

155.3 KB - 10/14/2025 10:02 AM

[Partnership_Letter_ACWB_T;JB_docx.pdf](#)

187.1 KB - 10/09/2025 6:39 PM

[Partnership_Letter_ACWB_WB_Pride_\(1\).pdf](#)

292.1 KB - 10/09/2025 6:40 PM

Total Files: 7



Application Summary: 2026 - 3279 - Sustaining Grant - Strategic Partners Grant

Please attach signed Financial Statements for the most recent fiscal year end.

Note: Year end date must fall between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025.

[2a_2024_Final_Signed_ACWB_-_Dec_31__24_FS_-_772076.pdf](#)
280.8 KB - 10/08/2025 8:57 AM

Total Files: 1

Application Summary: 2026 - 3279 - Sustaining Grant - Strategic Partners Grant

Declaration

Declaration: – In making this application, I , the undersigned, confirm:

- that I have read the appropriate Grant Guidelines;
- that I understand that this application form and all required attachments must be completed in full and received before 2025-10-14 4:30 p.m. MT;
- that I understand that this application form and any attachments shall be part of the Community Investment Program Approval Committee (CIPAC, Council Appointed) meeting agenda and accessible through all methods that the public meeting agenda is available;
- that I understand the term of the Grant is January 1 to December 31, 2026 and that all expenditures must happen during this term; and
- that I am authorized by the applicant organization to complete the application and hereby represent to the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo's Community Investment Program and declare that to the best of our knowledge and belief, the information provided is truthful and accurate, and the application is made on behalf of the above-named organization and with the Board of Directors' full knowledge and consent.
- that I understand the personal information collected in this application is collected under the authority of Section 4(c) of the Protection of Privacy Act and is managed in accordance with the Act. It will be used to process your application and contact you if needed during the review of this application. If you have questions about the collection or use of your personal information, you may contact the Manager, Community Partnerships and Initiatives, at 9909 Franklin Avenue, Fort McMurray, AB T9H 2K4 or at 587-919-5522.

Acknowledgement

I do hereby certify that to the best of my knowledge, this application contains a full and correct account of all matters stated herein.

Applicant Name

Liana Wheeldon, Arts Council Wood Buffalo

Position/Title

Executive Director

Date: 10/14/2025

Project Summary

Alberta Culture Days & Alberta Day

Program, Project or Service Name

Alberta Culture Days & Alberta Day

Beginning Date

08/03/2026

Completion Date

Note: The term of the grant is January 1 - December 31, 2026. The program, project, service or event and all expenditures must occur during this term.

10/16/2026

Location program, project or service will be provided:

Note: If the grant is approved, the communities served will be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection from all communities will be required.
Do not select the rural community if the service is provided to the clients from rural communities through the urban service area.

Anzac, Fort Chipewyan, Fort McMurray

Please complete the following Program/Project or Event Delivery Details.

Program, Project, or Event Delivery Information

Program/Project/ or Event Location	In Person (Yes/No)	Virtually (Yes/No)	Travel Budget Required (Yes/No)
Anzac	Yes	No	No
Fort Chipewyan	Yes	No	No
Fort McKay	Yes	No	No
Anzac	Yes	No	No

How does your organization plan to address barriers related to delivering virtual services in rural areas. This may include limited internet access, lack of devices, and limited technical support. If applicable.

Events for Alberta Culture Days take place across the region.

How does your organization plan to address transportation barriers to provide the program, project, service or event? If applicable.

Free events for Alberta Culture Days take place across the region. Alberta Day is a one day event hosted in partnership with the Municipality in Fort McMurray. It is possible that busing could be arranged for some rural residents to attend or bus passes.

Council approved seven funding priorities. Please indicate which funding priority/priorities are applicable to this application.

Please select at least 3 funding priorities for the Community Sustaining and Subsidiary Grant applications. Please select at least 1 funding priority for the Community Impact Grant (Community Programs and Projects or Community Events) application.

- ☐ Community support services and wellness
- ☒ Accessibility, inclusion and belonging
- ☐ Hosting events/new business and visitors
- ☒ Partnership and collaboration
- ☒ Rural and Indigenous Communities and Relationships
- ☒ Social participation
- ☒ Value of culture, heritage and regional pride

Describe how the proposed program, project, service or event align with these priorities.

Alberta has declared September Month of the Artist. Alberta Culture Days and Alberta Day is a province-wide initiative celebrating the arts and offering events across the province to connect with arts and culture. Arts Council coordinates activities across the region, providing consultation, funds, and other supports for local artists to collaborate on offering a variety of experiences highlighting the value of culture, heritage, and promoting regional pride, while supporting diversity, inclusion, and accessibility. Social participation is supported by offering free participation in events, in rural communities and the urban service centre.

In the table below, please identify the total number of unique participants that you anticipate will access the funded program, project, service or event.

Target Population

Age	Target Population
Children (0-12 years)	60
Youth (13-18 years)	150
Adults	500
Seniors (65+)	200
Families	50
Community	400
Total	1360

Please identify the equity deserving population the program, project, service or event will serve.

Youth, Seniors, 2SLGBTQIA+, Immigrants, refugees and/or newcomers, First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit Peoples, Other racialized communities, Youth, Seniors, Women and/or girls, People experiencing poverty and/or homelessness, People living with disabilities, People living in rural communities, Other

How does your organization ensure that its programs, projects, services or events are accessible and inclusive for anyone who has an interest? Please share examples and success stories of accessibility and inclusivity.

All events are free to attend for both AbCD and AB Day. Both programs are celebrations of the vibrant arts and cultures of the residents of Wood Buffalo and showcase food, dance, music, and a variety of arts disciplines.

Each year, the variety of cultural groups that apply to receive funding or connections for this program grows. ACWB partners with the Multicultural Association of Wood Buffalo to ensure opportunities related to the programs are shared broadly.

Theatre; Just Because partnered on the Alberta Day initiative, connecting the Fort McMurray Fringe Festival activities to bolster attendance for both events. ACWB & T;JB will be partnering on Alberta Day and Fringe in 2026 as full program delivery partners.

If applicable, please explain how your program, project, service or event celebrates Indigenous culture, serves Indigenous communities and/or promotes Indigenous healing, language, cultural restoration, or reconciliation.

AbCD and Ab Day supports a variety of cultural experiences, including local Indigenous cultures. The free events and workshops offer opportunities for the public to learn about Indigenous languages and culture, all contributing to reconciliation.

Logic Model

Statement of Need: What social problem or gap do you hope to address by delivering the program, project, service or event? What evidence do you have that this problem or gap exists?

There is a need to increase engagement with arts and culture throughout the region, especially in rural and underserved areas. The program addresses the gap in accessible and community-driven arts and culture experiences and spaces. There are no standalone arts facilities or post-secondary education in the arts available in the region. AbCD and Ab Day offers paid work opportunities, mentorship, and community engagement to help mitigate these barriers.

Broad Strategy: How will the program, project, service or event address the social problem? (e.g., What approach are you taking that you hope will lead your program, project, service or event to support the social problem?)

Host free, public arts events on Alberta Day and throughout September that showcase local talent and promote collaboration between artists, organizations, and communities. Events will be held across urban and rural settings, emphasizing accessibility and inclusion. ACWB also applies to the Government of Alberta Culture Days fund to support both initiatives.

Rationale: What evidence or research do we have that this strategy will work? To demonstrate for example, "If [my organization] does 'x' program, project, service or event, then [this] change will happen for the target population."

If Arts Council hosts free arts and culture events during Alberta Day and Alberta Culture Days, then local communities will gain greater exposure to arts and culture, artists will have increased opportunities for engagement and recognition, and the community will become more culturally enriched.

Inputs: What resources will be invested to achieve your goal? (e.g., staff labour, venue space, volunteers, computers, etc.)

- Funding for artist fees and event expenses
- Venues (various locations across the region)
- Marketing tools (social media, flyers, etc.)
- Partnerships with local organizations and artists

Activities: What activities make up the program, project, service or event? (e.g., workshops, mentorship sessions, etc.)

- Organize workshops, performances, and exhibitions during Alberta Culture Days and Alberta Day.
- Provide spaces for local artists to showcase their work.
- Collaborate with community organizations to co-host events.
- Create opportunities for rural and Indigenous participation.

Outputs: What do you deliver? (e.g., # of total participants trained, # of organizations, # of sessions, # of events, etc.). Note, each activity should have outputs.

Note: If the program, project, service or event is approved, your outputs may be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection on the outputs is required.

- # of events or programs hosted for Alberta Culture Days & Alberta Day
- # of participants engaged
- # of artists hired
- \$ amount paid out to local artists
- # of community partnerships created

Outcomes: What change do you want to see for the participants by running your program, project, service or event? Organizations are required to identify at least one outcome, that will be measured through the grant period, should the application be approved.

Note: If the program, project, service or event is approved, your outcomes will be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection on the outcomes is required.

1. Increased community awareness of local arts and culture
 - a. Event attendance
 - i. # of participants at each event
2. Create opportunities for local artists to showcase their work
 - a. # of artists hired to execute events
 - i. # increase of artists hired
 - ii. # of events executed during AbCD

What tools will you use to measure the outcomes of the program, project, service or event?

Note: If your organization is approved for funding, copies of the measurement tools selected will be requested.

Surveys, Observation, Other:

Other:

Event registration; # of new groups or individuals applying for funding

Please provide details of how your program, project, service or event differs from other services being offered in the community.

Alberta Culture Days is managed locally by Arts Council Wood Buffalo and Alberta Day is a partnership with the Municipal Public Art staff. There are no other agencies celebrating Month of the Artist / AbCD through paid work opportunities for artists or free arts and culture events for residents and visitors to the region.

This grant is intended to promote an allied social profit sector within the Municipality. List the community groups or organizations that will be actively involved in the program, project, service or event delivery.

Community Organization or Group	Role
Anzac One Rec	Venue and workshop partners
Fort Chipewyan Community High School	Venue and workshop partners
Keyano Theatre	Venue partner
Suncor Energy Centre for the Performing Arts	Venue partner
Archie Simpson Recreation Centre	Venue partner
Athabasca Tribal Council	Workshops and program delivery partner
Anzac Family Community Support Society	Workshops and program delivery partner
Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo	Funding and program delivery partner
Theatre; Just Because	Event execution partners

Project Summary Artist in Residence Program

Program, Project or Service Name

Artist in Residence Program

Beginning Date

02/02/2026

Completion Date

Note: The term of the grant is January 1 - December 31, 2026. The program, project, service or event and all expenditures must occur during this term.

08/07/2026

Location program, project or service will be provided:

Note: If the grant is approved, the communities served will be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection from all communities will be required.
Do not select the rural community if the service is provided to the clients from rural communities through the urban service area.

Anzac, Fort Chipewyan, Fort McKay, Fort McMurray

Please complete the following Program/Project or Event Delivery Details.

Program, Project, or Event Delivery Information

Program/Project/ or Event Location	In Person (Yes/No)	Virtually (Yes/No)	Travel Budget Required (Yes/No)
Fort Chipewyan	Yes	No	Yes
Fort McKay	Yes	No	Yes
Fort McMurray	Yes	No	Yes
Anzac	Yes	No	Yes

How does your organization plan to address barriers related to delivering virtual services in rural areas. This may include limited internet access, lack of devices, and limited technical support. If applicable.

ACWB has a permanent staff member who resides in Fort Chipewyan, serving that community. The resident artists spend three to five days in Fort Chipewyan as part of the residency and travel to other rural areas to deliver workshops and other related events. ACWB does very limited virtual service delivery however, any virtual artist talks or workshops are recorded and uploaded to the YouTube channel for people to participate in their own way.

How does your organization plan to address transportation barriers to provide the program, project, service or event? If applicable.

AiR events and activities are offered in different areas of the region in order to reduce transportation barriers.

Council approved seven funding priorities. Please indicate which funding priority/priorities are applicable to this application.

Please select at least 3 funding priorities for the Community Sustaining and Subsidiary Grant applications. Please select at least 1 funding priority for the Community Impact Grant (Community Programs and Projects or Community Events) application.

- ☐ Community support services and wellness
- ☒ Accessibility, inclusion and belonging
- ☐ Hosting events/new business and visitors
- ☒ Partnership and collaboration
- ☒ Rural and Indigenous Communities and Relationships
- ☒ Social participation
- ☒ Value of culture, heritage and regional pride

Describe how the proposed program, project, service or event align with these priorities.

The Artist in Residence / Suncor Indigenous Artist Program provides opportunities for artists of all disciplines and demographics to participate as mentors and mentees. The specific stream for Indigenous artists, ensures more equitable representation and participation.

Activities associated with AiR offer engagement with arts and culture, providing opportunities for social participation. These may include showcase events, artist talks, or workshops.

Mentor artists brought to the region become ambassadors for Wood Buffalo and strengthen its artists' network in the larger arts ecosystem, building regional pride and highlighting the value of culture.

In the table below, please identify the total number of unique participants that you anticipate will access the funded program, project, service or event.

Target Population

Age	Target Population
Children (0-12 years)	0
Youth (13-18 years)	15
Adults	25
Seniors (65+)	0
Families	0
Community	100
Total	140

Please identify the equity deserving population the program, project, service or event will serve.

Youth, Seniors, 2SLGBTQIA+, Immigrants, refugees and/or newcomers, First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit Peoples, Other racialized communities, Youth, Seniors, Women and/or girls, People living with disabilities, People living in rural communities

How does your organization ensure that its programs, projects, services or events are accessible and inclusive for anyone who has an interest? Please share examples and success stories of accessibility and inclusivity.

This program provides free mentorship opportunities for residents across a variety of arts disciplines. While there are some private instruction options within the region, these are typically quite expensive and there is very limited development opportunity available for artists with a more advanced, professional skill set. This program brings professional artists to the region for four to six weeks at a time to be inspired by the region and work one-on-one or in group settings with local residents. The Artist in Residence and Suncor Indigenous Artist program also provides mentorship opportunities in rural communities in the region, which is not otherwise currently available.

One mentee participant was in the restorative justice program and was able to use the skills learned in the residency to gain work opportunities, contributing to their success in the restorative justice program.

If applicable, please explain how your program, project, service or event celebrates Indigenous culture, serves Indigenous communities and/or promotes Indigenous healing, language, cultural restoration, or reconciliation.

Artists are invited to apply to be mentors or mentees for the Artist in Residence Program. There are two streams for the program, one of which prioritizes Indigenous artists and rural resident participation (Suncor Indigenous Artist Program). Indigenous artists may apply to one or both streams, and oral applications are offered for both streams. Program activities promote cross-cultural exchange, serving reconciliation and restoration of culture.

Logic Model

Statement of Need: What social problem or gap do you hope to address by delivering the program, project, service or event? What evidence do you have that this problem or gap exists?

Local artists in Wood Buffalo often have limited access to professional mentorship and artistic development opportunities. There is a need to introduce new artistic perspectives and innovation into the region's arts community. Engaging non-local artists helps to diversify and enrich the local arts scene.

Although there are five elementary and high schools with an arts-focused curriculum, there is no postsecondary arts education or standalone arts facilities in the region. AiR offers mentorship and education opportunities not available in the region.

Research conducted by the municipality and by ACWB indicate a high need for opportunities to engage with the arts. In the Executive Summary of the Culture Master Plan it states:

Culture plays an important role in communities, providing many benefits including:

- Improving personal health and wellbeing, addressing social issues, allowing intergenerational contact, supporting balanced human development, and fostering innovation and creativity
- Making our community a better place to live, improving quality of life, helping to reduce vandalism
- Direct economic impacts (jobs, earned revenues) and indirect benefits (attracting visitors through cultural tourism, retaining residents)

Broad Strategy: How will the program, project, service or event address the social problem? (e.g., What approach are you taking that you hope will lead your program, project, service or event to support the social problem?)

Invite non-local professional artists to spend 4-6 weeks in residence in the region, providing mentorship to local artists and engaging with the broader community through workshops, talks, and public exhibitions. The Artist in Residence program also includes a specific stream for Indigenous artists, ensuring more equitable representation and participation.

Rationale: What evidence or research do we have that this strategy will work? To demonstrate for example, "If [my organization] does 'x' program, project, service or event, then [this] change will happen for the target population."

If Arts Council Wood Buffalo hosts an Artist in Residence program that includes mentorship opportunities and public engagement activities, then local artists will develop new skills and perspectives, and the broader community will gain greater exposure to diverse forms of artistic expression, leading to a more vibrant and innovative arts sector.



Project Summary Artist in Residence Program

Inputs: What resources will be invested to achieve your goal? (e.g., staff labour, venue space, volunteers, computers, etc.)

- Residency venue (studio space, accommodation)
- Funding for artists' fees, travel, and materials
- Community partnerships and mentors
- Administrative support for program coordination
- Marketing and outreach efforts

Activities: What activities make up the program, project, service or event? (e.g., workshops, mentorship sessions, etc.)

- Artist residency program for 4-6 weeks
- Public workshops and artist talks during residency
- Mentorship and skill development for local emerging artists
- Final public showcase or exhibit of the artist's work
- Indigenous Artist Program (Suncor Indigenous Artist Program)

Outputs: What do you deliver? (e.g., # of total participants trained, # of organizations, # of sessions, # of events, etc.). Note, each activity should have outputs.

Note: If the program, project, service or event is approved, your outputs may be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection on the outputs is required.

- Number of residencies offered
- Number of workshops and public engagements held
- Number of local artists mentored
- Number of participants in public showcases
- Number of Indigenous residents participating in program activities

Outcomes: What change do you want to see for the participants by running your program, project, service or event? Organizations are required to identify at least one outcome, that will be measured through the grant period, should the application be approved.

Note: If the program, project, service or event is approved, your outcomes will be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection on the outcomes is required.

1. Local artists gain exposure to new techniques and artistic perspectives.
 - a. Availability of more diverse art forms in the region
 - i. # of different art forms offered locally
 - ii. # of local artists seeking further arts education
 - iii. % increase/decrease of nominees for the Buffys
2. Increased community engagement with the arts through workshops and exhibitions.
 - a. increase of attendees to program activities
 - i. Registration logs
 - ii. Surveys collected

What tools will you use to measure the outcomes of the program, project, service or event?

Note: If your organization is approved for funding, copies of the measurement tools selected will be requested.

Surveys, Focus Groups, Interviews, Observation, Other:

Other:

of applications to be a mentor or mentee; event and workshop registration

Please provide details of how your program, project, service or event differs from other services being offered in the community.

There are no other artist residency programs. Additionally, all post-secondary arts education has been eliminated, creating barriers for Wood Buffalo artists to grow their networks, build their capacity, and be able to compete in the larger provincial or national arts ecosystems.

This program provides free mentorship opportunities for residents across a variety of arts disciplines. While there are some private instruction options within the region, these are typically quite expensive and there is very limited development opportunity available for artists with a more advanced, professional skill set. This program brings professional artists to the region for four to six weeks at a time to be inspired by the region and work one-on-one or in group settings with local residents. The Artist in Residence and Suncor Indigenous Artist program also provides mentorship opportunities in rural communities in the region, which is not currently available.

This grant is intended to promote an allied social profit sector within the Municipality. List the community groups or organizations that will be actively involved in the program, project, service or event delivery.

Community Organization or Group	Role
Keyano Theatre	Venue partner
Bouchier Group	Showcase and workshop venue partner
Anzac Community Centre	Venue partner
MacDonald Island Park - Suncor Leisure Centre	Showcase and workshop venue partner
One Rec Anzac	Venue partner
Archie Simpson Recreation Centre	Venue partner
Mikisew Cree First Nation	Program delivery partner

Project Summary

Business of the Arts / Creative Connections / Membership Program

Program, Project or Service Name

Business of the Arts / Creative Connections / Membership Program

Beginning Date

01/05/2026

Completion Date

Note: The term of the grant is January 1 - December 31, 2026. The program, project, service or event and all expenditures must occur during this term.

12/18/2026

Location program, project or service will be provided:

Note: If the grant is approved, the communities served will be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection from all communities will be required.
Do not select the rural community if the service is provided to the clients from rural communities through the urban service area.

Anzac, Fort Chipewyan, Fort McKay, Fort McMurray

Please complete the following Program/Project or Event Delivery Details.

Program, Project, or Event Delivery Information

Program/Project/ or Event Location	In Person (Yes/No)	Virtually (Yes/No)	Travel Budget Required (Yes/No)
Fort McMurray	Yes	No	No
Fort Chipewyan	Yes	Yes	No
Fort McKay	Yes	No	Yes
Anzac	Yes	no	Yes

Project Summary

Business of the Arts / Creative Connections / Membership Program

How does your organization plan to address barriers related to delivering virtual services in rural areas. This may include limited internet access, lack of devices, and limited technical support. If applicable.

ACWB has a permanent staff member who resides in Fort Chipewyan, serving that community. ACWB does very limited virtual service delivery however, any virtual artist talks or workshops are recorded and uploaded to the YouTube channel for people to participate in their own way.

How does your organization plan to address transportation barriers to provide the program, project, service or event? If applicable.

Program events and activities are offered in different areas of the region in order to reduce transportation barriers.

Council approved seven funding priorities. Please indicate which funding priority/priorities are applicable to this application.

Please select at least 3 funding priorities for the Community Sustaining and Subsidiary Grant applications. Please select at least 1 funding priority for the Community Impact Grant (Community Programs and Projects or Community Events) application.

- ☒ Community support services and wellness
- ☒ Accessibility, inclusion and belonging
- ☐ Hosting events/new business and visitors
- ☒ Partnership and collaboration
- ☒ Rural and Indigenous Communities and Relationships
- ☒ Social participation
- ☒ Value of culture, heritage and regional pride

Describe how the proposed program, project, service or event align with these priorities.

The BoA program serves to empower artists to formalize their artistic practice, by building their skills in the areas of entrepreneurship, creating a business plan, understanding cash flow, pitching their ideas with confidence, and more. Consultation or skill matching with other Members in order to build the capacity of artists is a key component of this program.

Creative Connections provides opportunities for artists to put their learning into practice through events and activities, working in concert to build the value of culture, social participation, and collaboration. Online and in person program activities make ACWB services accessible across the region.

Project Summary

Business of the Arts / Creative Connections / Membership Program

In the table below, please identify the total number of unique participants that you anticipate will access the funded program, project, service or event.

Target Population

Age	Target Population
Children (0-12 years)	0
Youth (13-18 years)	175
Adults	600
Seniors (65+)	45
Families	100
Community	1700
Total	2620

Please identify the equity deserving population the program, project, service or event will serve.

Youth, Seniors, 2SLGBTQIA+, Immigrants, refugees and/or newcomers, First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit Peoples, Other racialized communities, Youth, Seniors, Women and/or girls, People living with disabilities, People living in rural communities, Other

Project Summary

Business of the Arts / Creative Connections / Membership Program

How does your organization ensure that its programs, projects, services or events are accessible and inclusive for anyone who has an interest? Please share examples and success stories of accessibility and inclusivity.

Anyone can become a member of Arts Council Wood Buffalo (ACWB) by submitting the appropriate fee. Although there are exclusive benefits for members (discounts on programming, profile on artist directory, ACWB Marketplace store, access to consultative services), membership is not required to access most of ACWB's programs and services. ACWB maintains a 'Membership Bank', which enables residents to register for pre-paid Memberships confidentially, providing them with access to all exclusive and non-exclusive benefits without the burden of paying a fee.

Business of the Arts and Creative Connections workshops and events have low registration fees, sliding scales, or are offered free in some circumstances.

If applicable, please explain how your program, project, service or event celebrates Indigenous culture, serves Indigenous communities and/or promotes Indigenous healing, language, cultural restoration, or reconciliation.

Workshops and events are delivered across the region. Additionally, ACWB partners with ATC, McMurray Metis, and Mikisew Cree First Nation to join events produced by those organizations in order to connect with Indigenous Peoples.

Logic Model

Project Summary

Business of the Arts / Creative Connections / Membership Program

Statement of Need: What social problem or gap do you hope to address by delivering the program, project, service or event? What evidence do you have that this problem or gap exists?

The Social Sustainability Plan and Culture Master Plan indicate a need for broader opportunities for engagement with the arts. The lack of a standalone arts centre in the region makes connecting to arts and culture difficult and this program attempts to fill that gap with artisan markets, entrepreneur-led workshops and events, skill-building activities geared to artists, and other events and activities.

The program encourages artist retention in the region, at a time when many have been leaving to pursue a career in regions that offer more support and infrastructure for artists. ACWB's research study indicated that 81% of artists in our region are self employed in some way and that 52% of those artists earn below \$20,000 annually. 60% of professional artists are seeking assistance with marketing and other business expertise. Non-professional artists reported 53% were seeking opportunities for networking or other instruction and training.

Broad Strategy: How will the program, project, service or event address the social problem? (e.g., What approach are you taking that you hope will lead your program, project, service or event to support the social problem?)

Offer a series of workshops, networking events, and mentorship programs to equip artists with essential business skills. Facilitate opportunities for artists to collaborate with local businesses, fostering mutually beneficial partnerships that enhance both sectors.

Rationale: What evidence or research do we have that this strategy will work? To demonstrate for example, "If [my organization] does 'x' program, project, service or event, then [this] change will happen for the target population."

If Arts Council Wood Buffalo offers targeted business development programming for artists and creates platforms for collaboration with local businesses, then artists will be better equipped to sustain their careers financially and strategically, and local businesses will gain creative insights that can benefit their operations and branding.

Project Summary

Business of the Arts / Creative Connections / Membership Program

Inputs: What resources will be invested to achieve your goal? (e.g., staff labour, venue space, volunteers, computers, etc.)

- Staff (program coordinators, instructors)
- Venue (workshop and event spaces)
- Marketing and outreach tools
- Partnerships with local businesses and artists
- Funding for artists' fees

Activities: What activities make up the program, project, service or event? (e.g., workshops, mentorship sessions, etc.)

- Networking events for artists and businesses
- Business development workshops for artists (e.g., branding, financial management)
- Mentorship programs connecting artists with business professionals
- Collaborative projects between artists and businesses

Outputs: What do you deliver? (e.g., # of total participants trained, # of organizations, # of sessions, # of events, etc.). Note, each activity should have outputs.

Note: If the program, project, service or event is approved, your outputs may be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection on the outputs is required.

- Number of networking events held
- Number of artists/businesses participating
- Number of mentorship pairings made
- Number of workshops/events offered

Project Summary

Business of the Arts / Creative Connections / Membership Program

Outcomes: What change do you want to see for the participants by running your program, project, service or event? Organizations are required to identify at least one outcome, that will be measured through the grant period, should the application be approved.

Note: If the program, project, service or event is approved, your outcomes will be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection on the outcomes is required.

1. Increased knowledge of business practices among artists
 - a. Artists indicate a positive change in their understanding of business practices
 - i. # of small and medium enterprises supported
2. New connections between artists and businesses
 - a. Increased presence of the arts being integrated in events and activities.
 - i. Number of networking, workshop, and mentorship opportunities created
 - ii. Increased attendance at workshop and mentorship events

What tools will you use to measure the outcomes of the program, project, service or event?

Note: If your organization is approved for funding, copies of the measurement tools selected will be requested.

Surveys, Observation, Other:

Other:

Event registration logs; # of Membership enrolments

Project Summary

Business of the Arts / Creative Connections / Membership Program

Please provide details of how your program, project, service or event differs from other services being offered in the community.

Although there are business-oriented organizations offering different levels of entrepreneur skill-building, Business of the Arts workshop activities offers a space for community members that are not comfortable approaching large, government, or 'formal' institutions. In some instances, ACWB partners with those organizations to deliver activities and help break down the reluctance to engage.

ACWB is the overarching body representing the arts in Wood Buffalo making our Membership Program unique. Members have unlimited access to consultative services, discounts on events and workshops, and more.

Creative Connections provides a launchpad for creatives to start their business. ACWB connects artists with venues, mentorship, and other subsidized activities. The ACWB e-Marketplace encourages artists to explore e-commerce opportunities with the support of ACWB Staff. Under this program, Theatre; Just Because and ACWB will be partnering to execute Fort McMurray Fringe Festival in 2026 and ongoing. Building the capacity of T;JB will not only serve the theatre community, but create possibility for Wood Buffalo to become part of the greater Fringe Festival circuit, connecting us with municipalities across Western Canada.

This grant is intended to promote an allied social profit sector within the Municipality. List the community groups or organizations that will be actively involved in the program, project, service or event delivery.

Community Organization or Group	Role
Public Schools - various	Program delivery partners
The Redpoll Centre	Venue partner
The Multicultural Association of Wood Buffalo	Workshop and event partners
McMurray All Connected	Workshop and event promotional partner
Wood Buffalo Pride	Program delivery partners
Fort McMurray Chamber of Commerce	Program delivery partners
Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo	Venue and event partners
Theatre; Just Because	Program delivery partners

Program, Project or Service Name

Rural Arts Support Program

Beginning Date

01/05/2026

Completion Date

Note: The term of the grant is January 1 - December 31, 2026. The program, project, service or event and all expenditures must occur during this term.

12/18/2026

Location program, project or service will be provided:

Note: If the grant is approved, the communities served will be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection from all communities will be required.
Do not select the rural community if the service is provided to the clients from rural communities through the urban service area.

Anzac, Conklin, Fort Chipewyan, Fort McKay, Fort McMurray

Please complete the following Program/Project or Event Delivery Details.

Program, Project, or Event Delivery Information

Program/Project/ or Event Location	In Person (Yes/No)	Virtually (Yes/No)	Travel Budget Required (Yes/No)
Fort Chipewyan	Yes	No	No
Anzac	Yes	No	Yes
Fort McKay	Yes	No	Yes
Fort McMurray	Yes	No	No

How does your organization plan to address barriers related to delivering virtual services in rural areas. This may include limited internet access, lack of devices, and limited technical support. If applicable.

ACWB has a permanent staff member who resides in Fort Chipewyan, serving that community. ACWB travel to other rural areas to deliver workshops and other related events. ACWB does very limited virtual service delivery however, any virtual artist talks or workshops are recorded and uploaded to the YouTube channel for people to participate in their own way.

How does your organization plan to address transportation barriers to provide the program, project, service or event? If applicable.

ACWB has worked with Diversified previously to provide transportation and with Mikisew Cree First Nation to fly team members to Fort Chipewyan and to fly Fort Chipewyan community members into Fort McMurray. Program activities take place in a variety of rural communities across the region to help alleviate transportation barriers.

Council approved seven funding priorities. Please indicate which funding priority/priorities are applicable to this application.

Please select at least 3 funding priorities for the Community Sustaining and Subsidiary Grant applications. Please select at least 1 funding priority for the Community Impact Grant (Community Programs and Projects or Community Events) application.

- ☒ Community support services and wellness
- ☒ Accessibility, inclusion and belonging
- ☐ Hosting events/new business and visitors
- ☒ Partnership and collaboration
- ☒ Rural and Indigenous Communities and Relationships
- ☒ Social participation
- ☒ Value of culture, heritage and regional pride

Describe how the proposed program, project, service or event align with these priorities.

ACWB's Rural Arts Support Program (RASP) employs Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff members to facilitate co-envisioning and creating meaningful activities initiatives, programs, and services to meet the unique needs of the residents of rural communities within Wood Buffalo while enabling the community-at-large to engage with the arts, crafts, traditions, and values of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. Workshops and events throughout the year showcase a variety of traditional and non-traditional Indigenous art forms and other artistic expression, inviting residents to experience and learn about the different cultures in the region.

In the table below, please identify the total number of unique participants that you anticipate will access the funded program, project, service or event.

Target Population

Age	Target Population
Children (0-12 years)	45
Youth (13-18 years)	175
Adults	500
Seniors (65+)	200
Families	50
Community	400
Total	1370

Please identify the equity deserving population the program, project, service or event will serve.

Youth, Seniors, 2SLGBTQIA+, Immigrants, refugees and/or newcomers, First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit Peoples, Other racialized communities, Youth, Seniors, Women and/or girls, People experiencing poverty and/or homelessness, People living with disabilities, People living in rural communities, Other

How does your organization ensure that its programs, projects, services or events are accessible and inclusive for anyone who has an interest? Please share examples and success stories of accessibility and inclusivity.

The RASP Program activities are designed with community members to ensure accessibility and inclusivity. Programming in Fort Chipewyan is delivered free of charge to participants as are many of the other program activities across the region. Some workshops cost a nominal fee to help offset the cost of materials. While RASP workshops and events prioritize local Indigenous participation, they are open to all to attend.

The Bead & Heal drop in program in Fort Chipewyan had one participant report that they were able to maintain their sobriety journey more easily as a result of re-connecting with their culture in such a supportive environment.

If applicable, please explain how your program, project, service or event celebrates Indigenous culture, serves Indigenous communities and/or promotes Indigenous healing, language, cultural restoration, or reconciliation.

Research conducted by ACWB for our Post-Wildfire Recovery in the Arts project indicated that the need for rural and Indigenous residents to connect youth and Elders through sharing of stories, culture, and the arts is urgent. The lack of arts infrastructure and accessible gathering spaces creates a barrier to engaging with arts and culture.

The Truth & Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Call to Action #83 is to: "establish, as a funding priority, a strategy for Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists to undertake collaborative projects and produce works that contribute to the reconciliation process." The RASP program endeavours to support this call through hiring local Indigenous residents to facilitate cultural activities with and for the community-at-large.

Logic Model

Statement of Need: What social problem or gap do you hope to address by delivering the program, project, service or event? What evidence do you have that this problem or gap exists?

There is a lack of accessible arts programming in rural and Indigenous communities in the Wood Buffalo region. RASP aims to address this by providing culturally meaningful arts opportunities that connect communities and promote intergenerational learning.

The Rural Arts Support Coordinators work closely with community members, Indigenous Elders, and Traditional Knowledge Keepers to co-design programming that meets the unique needs of each of the rural areas. Research conducted for the Municipal Culture Plan, the Social Sustainability Plan, and the Arts Recovery Project indicates that sharing the resources ACWB has developed over the years, assisting in the set-up of gathering places to connect Indigenous Elders and youth, and providing one-on-one consultations for artists and community organizations in our rural areas is necessary and desired by the residents.

Broad Strategy: How will the program, project, service or event address the social problem? (e.g., What approach are you taking that you hope will lead your program, project, service or event to support the social problem?)

Deliver culturally relevant arts programming in rural communities through workshops and mentorship that promote Indigenous arts and foster connections between youth, Elders, and community members. Co-design programs, services, and events with the communities they are being delivered in.

Rationale: What evidence or research do we have that this strategy will work? To demonstrate for example, "If [my organization] does 'x' program, project, service or event, then [this] change will happen for the target population."

If ACWB delivers arts programming that is relevant and accessible to rural and Indigenous communities, then residents will have greater opportunities to engage with arts and culture, which will lead to stronger community connections, the preservation of cultural practices, and a more inclusive regional arts ecosystem.

Inputs: What resources will be invested to achieve your goal? (e.g., staff labour, venue space, volunteers, computers, etc.)

- Indigenous and rural arts facilitators
- Funding for artist fees and materials
- Venues in rural communities (e.g., community halls, schools)
- Partnerships with Indigenous and rural organizations
- Materials for workshops (e.g., beading supplies, traditional craft tools)

Activities: What activities make up the program, project, service or event? (e.g., workshops, mentorship sessions, etc.)

- Facilitate workshops focused on traditional and contemporary Indigenous arts.
- Provide mentorship opportunities between Elders and youth.
- Deliver public arts programming in rural areas (e.g., Anzac, Fort Chipewyan).
- Support artists from rural and Indigenous backgrounds through hiring and project funding.

Outputs: What do you deliver? (e.g., # of total participants trained, # of organizations, # of sessions, # of events, etc.). Note, each activity should have outputs.

Note: If the program, project, service or event is approved, your outputs may be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection on the outputs is required.

- # of participants engaged in 2025 programming (2023 programs served over 1200 residents)
- \$ paid to participating artists
- # of culturally relevant workshops (e.g., beading, jigging, ribbon skirt making)
- # of mentorship opportunities

Outcomes: What change do you want to see for the participants by running your program, project, service or event? Organizations are required to identify at least one outcome, that will be measured through the grant period, should the application be approved.

Note: If the program, project, service or event is approved, your outcomes will be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection on the outcomes is required.

1. Increased participation in arts programming among rural and Indigenous residents.
 - a. Workshop attendance
 - i. # of participants
2. Strengthened cultural identity and pride through engagement in traditional arts.
 - a. Cultural Knowledge retention
 - i. Survey feedback indicating % positive change

What tools will you use to measure the outcomes of the program, project, service or event?

Note: If your organization is approved for funding, copies of the measurement tools selected will be requested.

Observation, Other:

Other:

Testimonials

Please provide details of how your program, project, service or event differs from other services being offered in the community.

Arts Council's Indigenous programming is made by and for the Indigenous and rural residents. Activities are promoted and shared through social media channels created specifically for those rural communities. The staff leading the activities are Indigenous and they integrate Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers in the planning and delivery of the program.

This grant is intended to promote an allied social profit sector within the Municipality. List the community groups or organizations that will be actively involved in the program, project, service or event delivery.

Community Organization or Group	Role
Mikisew Cree First Nation	Venue and program delivery partner
Wood Buffalo Pride	Program delivery partners
Fort Chipewyan Community High School	Venue and program delivery partners
Anzac Family Community Support Society	Workshop and program delivery partners
Athabasca Tribal Council	Workshops delivery partners
Archie Simpson Recreation Centre	Venue partner
Keyano Theatre	Venue partner
Anzac One Rec	Venue partner
Conklin Multiplex	Venue and program promotion partner

Project Summary Seniors & The Arts Program

Program, Project or Service Name

Seniors & The Arts Program

Beginning Date

01/12/2026

Completion Date

Note: The term of the grant is January 1 - December 31, 2026. The program, project, service or event and all expenditures must occur during this term.

11/30/2026

Location program, project or service will be provided:

Note: If the grant is approved, the communities served will be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection from all communities will be required.
Do not select the rural community if the service is provided to the clients from rural communities through the urban service area.

Anzac, Fort Chipewyan, Fort McKay, Fort McMurray

Please complete the following Program/Project or Event Delivery Details.

Program, Project, or Event Delivery Information

Program/Project/ or Event Location	In Person (Yes/No)	Virtually (Yes/No)	Travel Budget Required (Yes/No)
Fort Chipewyan	Yes	No	No
Anzac	Yes	No	Yes
Fort McMurray	Yes	No	No
Fort McKay	Yes	No	Yes

How does your organization plan to address barriers related to delivering virtual services in rural areas. This may include limited internet access, lack of devices, and limited technical support. If applicable.

ACWB has a dedicated staff member in Fort Chipewyan to support that community.

ACWB does very limited virtual service delivery however, any virtual artist talks or workshops are recorded and uploaded to the YouTube channel for people to participate in their own way.

How does your organization plan to address transportation barriers to provide the program, project, service or event? If applicable.

St. Aidan's Society assists with transportation for older adults. Program activities take place across the region, reducing the transportation barrier.

Council approved seven funding priorities. Please indicate which funding priority/priorities are applicable to this application.

Please select at least 3 funding priorities for the Community Sustaining and Subsidiary Grant applications. Please select at least 1 funding priority for the Community Impact Grant (Community Programs and Projects or Community Events) application.

- ☒ Community support services and wellness
- ☒ Accessibility, inclusion and belonging
- ☐ Hosting events/new business and visitors
- ☒ Partnership and collaboration
- ☐ Rural and Indigenous Communities and Relationships
- ☒ Social participation
- ☒ Value of culture, heritage and regional pride

Describe how the proposed program, project, service or event align with these priorities.

ACWB and St. Aidan's Society partner to bring Seniors, Elders, youth, and general community members together to create relationships and share art and culture. Older adult participants are involved in the design of the program activities, facilitating workshops, and sharing art work.

In 2025, and continuing in 2026, French language programming is included, reducing the gap in offerings of this kind.

There is an annual celebration for the participants as part of the national Arts & Aging Day program. These activities work in concert to enhance regional pride, value of culture, and social participation.

In the table below, please identify the total number of unique participants that you anticipate will access the funded program, project, service or event.

Target Population

Age	Target Population
Children (0-12 years)	0
Youth (13-18 years)	10
Adults	50
Seniors (65+)	100
Families	0
Community	75
Total	235

Please identify the equity deserving population the program, project, service or event will serve.

Youth, Seniors, 2SLGBTQIA+, Immigrants, refugees and/or newcomers, First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit Peoples, Other racialized communities, Youth, Seniors, Women and/or girls, People experiencing poverty and/or homelessness, People living with disabilities, People living in rural communities, Other

How does your organization ensure that its programs, projects, services or events are accessible and inclusive for anyone who has an interest? Please share examples and success stories of accessibility and inclusivity.

The SATA program activities are entirely free of charge for older adults in the region. Workshops and events are held in accessible spaces and with the support of St. Aidan's Society. The addition of French language programming opens the accessibility to the Francophone community, providing programming not previously or readily available in the region.

Many older adult participants have provided testimonials about the connections they have made through the program and how they feel empowered as mentors and artists.

If applicable, please explain how your program, project, service or event celebrates Indigenous culture, serves Indigenous communities and/or promotes Indigenous healing, language, cultural restoration, or reconciliation.

The SATA Program is free for Seniors and Elders across the region to participate in. Different arts disciplines are explored, including traditional and contemporary Indigenous art forms. This program has some crossover with the ACWB Rural Arts Support Program, led by ACWB Indigenous staff and co-designed with rural and Indigenous community members.

Logic Model

Statement of Need: What social problem or gap do you hope to address by delivering the program, project, service or event? What evidence do you have that this problem or gap exists?

Seniors in the region face social isolation and often have limited access to engaging, creative activities that promote well-being. There is also a need for intergenerational connections between seniors and younger community members, as these relationships foster knowledge exchange and combat ageism.

Broad Strategy: How will the program, project, service or event address the social problem? (e.g., What approach are you taking that you hope will lead your program, project, service or event to support the social problem?)

Provide arts-based workshops and programming that are accessible to seniors and Elders, facilitating intergenerational mentorship opportunities. The program aims to engage seniors in creative expression while providing opportunities for youth to learn from and collaborate with Elders, thereby promoting mutual understanding and respect.

Rationale: What evidence or research do we have that this strategy will work? To demonstrate for example, "If [my organization] does 'x' program, project, service or event, then [this] change will happen for the target population."

If Arts Council Wood Buffalo provides arts-based workshops and intergenerational mentorship opportunities for seniors, then seniors will experience reduced social isolation, improved mental and emotional well-being, and a stronger connection to the community, while youth will benefit from the wisdom and experience of their elders.

Inputs: What resources will be invested to achieve your goal? (e.g., staff labour, venue space, volunteers, computers, etc.)

- Partnerships (e.g., St. Aidan's Society)
- Senior and Elder facilitators
- Venue space (community centers, online platforms)
- Materials for workshops (art supplies)
- Funding for artists and facilitators

Activities: What activities make up the program, project, service or event? (e.g., workshops, mentorship sessions, etc.)

- Hosting art workshops across various disciplines (painting, woodworking, theatre)
- Intergenerational mentoring opportunities
- Public exhibitions showcasing seniors' artwork

Outputs: What do you deliver? (e.g., # of total participants trained, # of organizations, # of sessions, # of events, etc.). Note, each activity should have outputs.

Note: If the program, project, service or event is approved, your outputs may be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection on the outputs is required.

- Number of workshops held
- Number of seniors and Elders participating
- Number of intergenerational mentorships created

Outcomes: What change do you want to see for the participants by running your program, project, service or event? Organizations are required to identify at least one outcome, that will be measured through the grant period, should the application be approved.

Note: If the program, project, service or event is approved, your outcomes will be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection on the outcomes is required.

1. Improved mental well-being and social engagement among seniors
 - a. Survey results on older adults' sense of social inclusion, mental well-being, and cultural engagement
 - i. % positive change indicated on survey
 - ii. # of unique and returning participants
2. Increased awareness of the value seniors bring to the community
 - a. Number of intergenerational collaborations or projects.
 - i. % positive change in perception of older adults value to community in youth participants
 - ii. Documentation of projects and collaborations

What tools will you use to measure the outcomes of the program, project, service or event?

Note: If your organization is approved for funding, copies of the measurement tools selected will be requested.

Surveys, Observation, Other:

Other:

Event registration

Project Summary

Seniors & The Arts Program

Please provide details of how your program, project, service or event differs from other services being offered in the community.

The partnership between a seniors serving agency and an arts serving agency is unique in our region. There are seniors' residence facilities that offer programming to their residents however, arts programming offerings are quite limited. Seniors & The Arts welcomes all disciplines and provides opportunities for youth to gain experience facilitating workshops with a mentor. This intergenerational connection builds stronger social cohesion and fosters understanding between participants of the issues and concerns of older adults and youth.

2025 saw a pilot of French language programming which will be expanded in 2026. The ACFA and ACWB are working together to source multilingual artists and translators for program delivery.

This grant is intended to promote an allied social profit sector within the Municipality. List the community groups or organizations that will be actively involved in the program, project, service or event delivery.

Community Organization or Group	Role
St. Aidan's Society	Program Delivery Partners
The Redpoll Centre	Venue partner
Keyano Theatre	Venue partner
One Rec Anzac	Venue partner
ACFA Regionale de Wood Buffalo	Program delivery partners; language support

Project Summary

Wood Buffalo Excellence in Arts Awards / The Buffys

Program, Project or Service Name

Wood Buffalo Excellence in Arts Awards / The Buffys

Beginning Date

03/02/2026

Completion Date

Note: The term of the grant is January 1 - December 31, 2026. The program, project, service or event and all expenditures must occur during this term.

11/30/2026

Location program, project or service will be provided:

Note: If the grant is approved, the communities served will be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection from all communities will be required.
Do not select the rural community if the service is provided to the clients from rural communities through the urban service area.

Fort McMurray

Please complete the following Program/Project or Event Delivery Details.

Program, Project, or Event Delivery Information

Project Summary

Wood Buffalo Excellence in Arts Awards / The Buffys

Council approved seven funding priorities. Please indicate which funding priority/priorities are applicable to this application.

Please select at least 3 funding priorities for the Community Sustaining and Subsidiary Grant applications.
Please select at least 1 funding priority for the Community Impact Grant (Community Programs and Projects or Community Events) application.

- ☐ Community support services and wellness
- ☒ Accessibility, inclusion and belonging
- ☐ Hosting events/new business and visitors
- ☒ Partnership and collaboration
- ☒ Rural and Indigenous Communities and Relationships
- ☒ Social participation
- ☒ Value of culture, heritage and regional pride

Describe how the proposed program, project, service or event align with these priorities.

The Buffys are for everyone. They provide a platform for local creatives to build their capacity and showcase their work. The Buffys offer broad opportunities for all residents to engage with arts and culture, enhancing its value and building regional pride as it is created by and for the residents of Wood Buffalo. Events leading up to the Buffys, and the showcase awards night itself, offer many opportunities for social participation and inclusion. ACWB partners with different community groups in Fort Chipewyan to bring performers and nominees to the event. All disciplines of art are recognized, celebrating our diverse residents.

Project Summary

Wood Buffalo Excellence in Arts Awards / The Buffys

In the table below, please identify the total number of unique participants that you anticipate will access the funded program, project, service or event.

Target Population

Age	Target Population
Children (0-12 years)	0
Youth (13-18 years)	50
Adults	400
Seniors (65+)	30
Families	0
Community	440
Total	920

Please identify the equity deserving population the program, project, service or event will serve.

Youth, Seniors, 2SLGBTQIA+, Immigrants, refugees and/or newcomers, First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit Peoples, Other racialized communities, Youth, Seniors, Women and/or girls, People living with disabilities, People living in rural communities, Other

Project Summary

Wood Buffalo Excellence in Arts Awards / The Buffys

How does your organization ensure that its programs, projects, services or events are accessible and inclusive for anyone who has an interest? Please share examples and success stories of accessibility and inclusivity.

ACWB invites creatives from across the region to submit applications to perform, create, and execute the activities associated with the Buffys. The selection committee works together to ensure representation from various equity-seeking communities and to include Indigenous cultures in the various activities associated with this program.

Various opportunities to access discounted access, volunteer opportunities, and mentorship activities are all included in the execution of the Buffys, creating opportunities for inclusion.

In previous years, ACWB has partnered with businesses and Nations in Fort Chipewyan to host events in their community and to support bringing performers and award recipients into Fort McMurray for the main event.

In 2024, a nominee that struggles with writing accessed the oral application option which is available to all nominees. Their nomination was successfully completed and submitted on time and that person was the recipient of the Buffys in their category.

Project Summary

Wood Buffalo Excellence in Arts Awards / The Buffys

If applicable, please explain how your program, project, service or event celebrates Indigenous culture, serves Indigenous communities and/or promotes Indigenous healing, language, cultural restoration, or reconciliation.

ACWB invites creatives from across the region to submit applications to perform, create, and execute the activities associated with the Buffys. The selection committee works together to ensure representation from various equity-seeking communities and to include Indigenous cultures in the various activities associated with this program.

Award categories across 12 recognized disciplines and an Arts Champion, Lifetime Achievement, and a Youth Leader in the Arts Award provides opportunities for nominators to recognize creatives from all communities across the region. A specific Indigenous Artist Award highlights the Elders, Traditional Knowledge Keepers, Artists, and Craft persons nominated in that category. Indigenous Artists are encouraged to be nominated in all applicable categories and are provided the opportunity to participate in the Indigenous Artist Award category when they submit their nomination materials even if they have not been specifically nominated in that category.

ACWB offers an oral application process for all its artist calls and honours the oral tradition for the Buffys nominations. The nominee is welcome to record the application (with assistance from ACWB staff if required) and the application is presented to the adjudicators in the voice of the applicant (not transcribed).

Logic Model

Project Summary

Wood Buffalo Excellence in Arts Awards / The Buffys

Statement of Need: What social problem or gap do you hope to address by delivering the program, project, service or event? What evidence do you have that this problem or gap exists?

The Wood Buffalo region has a thriving but under-supported arts community. Local artists, particularly those from rural areas, face limited opportunities to showcase their work, access professional development, and gain recognition. The Buffys aims to address this gap by providing a platform to celebrate and support the arts, enhancing the region's creative economy and promoting healing and connection.

There are no standalone arts centres in the region and the local college has eliminated all post-secondary opportunities for local creatives. Research conducted by and on behalf of ACWB indicates a lack of programs and infrastructure to meet the needs of artists and the community-at-large to have opportunities to engage with arts and culture.

Broad Strategy: How will the program, project, service or event address the social problem? (e.g., What approach are you taking that you hope will lead your program, project, service or event to support the social problem?)

The Buffys will offer recognition and financial support to local artists, boost networking opportunities, and elevate artists' visibility through a high-profile event. By showcasing artistic achievements through awards, performances, and exhibitions, the Buffys will contribute to the growth of the creative economy, community building, and professional development for artists.

Rationale: What evidence or research do we have that this strategy will work? To demonstrate for example, "If [my organization] does 'x' program, project, service or event, then [this] change will happen for the target population."

If ACWB delivers the Buffys program, it will provide local artists with the recognition and support they need to advance their careers. As artists gain visibility, they will have more opportunities to secure grants, sponsorships, and paid work, thereby strengthening the local creative economy. The program's past success, with over 22,000 attendees since its inception, demonstrates its impact on both artists and the broader community.

Project Summary

Wood Buffalo Excellence in Arts Awards / The Buffys

Inputs: What resources will be invested to achieve your goal? (e.g., staff labour, venue space, volunteers, computers, etc.)

People:

- ACWB Board of Directors and Staff
- Local creatives
- Volunteers
- Adjudication panel

Financial Resources:

- Funding from RMWB
- In-Kind sponsorship
- Donations
- Sponsorship
- Ticket Sales

Activity Specific Resources:

- Venue rental (incl. rehearsal space, workshop space)
- Nomination management platform
- Marketing and promotional materials

Activities: What activities make up the program, project, service or event? (e.g., workshops, mentorship sessions, etc.)

- Pre-program logistics
- Nominations process
- Adjudication
- Capacity building sessions for artists (workshops on building a CV; creating an artist statement; documenting body of work)
- Auditions
- Rehearsals
- Theme-related or skill building workshops
- Artwork creation (incl. set design; award creation; graphic design)
- Award and Showcase event execution

Project Summary

Wood Buffalo Excellence in Arts Awards / The Buffys

Outputs: What do you deliver? (e.g., # of total participants trained, # of organizations, # of sessions, # of events, etc.). Note, each activity should have outputs.

Note: If the program, project, service or event is approved, your outputs may be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection on the outputs is required.

of artists paid for performances and exhibitions
of nominees
of award recipients
of attendees
of sponsors, donors, grants
Lessons learned document

Outcomes: What change do you want to see for the participants by running your program, project, service or event? Organizations are required to identify at least one outcome, that will be measured through the grant period, should the application be approved.

Note: If the program, project, service or event is approved, your outcomes will be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection on the outcomes is required.

Increased visibility for local artists

A. Number of artists profiled as nominees (enhanced motivation and pride among local artists)

i. # of nominees (compare year-over-year)

ii. # of completed nomination packages

B. Number of attendees at showcase (increased public awareness and support for the arts community)

i. % increase in audience participants

ii. post-event survey participation from audience

What tools will you use to measure the outcomes of the program, project, service or event?

Note: If your organization is approved for funding, copies of the measurement tools selected will be requested.

Surveys, Observation, Other:

Project Summary

Wood Buffalo Excellence in Arts Awards / The Buffys

Other:

of unique, completed nominations; # of total nominations; Attendance; Financial contributions

Please provide details of how your program, project, service or event differs from other services being offered in the community.

The Buffys is the only celebration of the arts in the region. This unique program offers paid work opportunities for creatives in the region to showcase their work, opportunities for mentorship, capacity building, and peer-to-peer networking not otherwise available.

All completed nominations are adjudicated by subject matter experts in each of the award categories. This provides professional development opportunity for the nominee as well as raising the profile of the Wood Buffalo arts eco-system. Adjudicators are sourced through an international call and we have had participants from the UK, the United States, and across Canada.

The Buffys also provide an opportunity for the community to celebrate arts and culture at the showcase event in October and experience art forms that are not generally presented in the region. This event builds an appreciation of culture, regional pride, and offers social participation.

This grant is intended to promote an allied social profit sector within the Municipality. List the community groups or organizations that will be actively involved in the program, project, service or event delivery.

Community Organization or Group	Role
Keyano Theatre	Host venue; costumes; props
Theatre; Just Because	Performers; event setup & strike volunteers
Fuse Social/WB Volunteers	Volunteers for event execution



Supporting the Growth and Success of the Arts
in the Wood Buffalo region.

BY

SUPPORTING
Artists Needs



CONNECTING
Arts to the Community

ADVOCATING
for the Wood Buffalo Arts

ARTS COUNCIL WOOD BUFFALO SUSTAINING GRANT 2026 BUSINESS PLAN & FUNDING REQUEST

Executive Summary

Arts Council Wood Buffalo (ACWB) is a non-profit society and charitable organization dedicated to building a thriving community through the arts. To achieve this mission, Arts Council provides a variety of programs, services, and events – all working towards achieving our dynamic vision of a creatively empowered Wood Buffalo.

Incorporated in 2012, ACWB achieved its charitable status in June of 2019, opening new funding opportunities, which are leveraged to further strengthen its sustainability. Arts Council's Mission, Vision, and Values set the stage for ACWB's continued growth and its ability to respond to the increasing demands for its services from the community while working towards achieving its strategic goals.

Vision

A Creatively Empowered Wood Buffalo.

Mission

Arts Council Wood Buffalo is building a thriving community through the arts.

Value Statements

- Working purposefully towards Truth & Reconciliation informs and influences all we do.
- Creating brave spaces for authentic conversations and learning.
- Dismantling barriers to create an inclusive and connected community.
- Collaborating to enhance our community without duplication.
- Creating a remarkable quality of life through the creation and appreciation of the arts.

Strategic Priorities

- Organizations transformation
- Financial Sustainability
- Cross-sector connection

Audience

Although Arts Council Wood Buffalo is a member-driven organization, its work supports all artists and arts organizations throughout the region, and its programs and services are available to all residents. ACWB reaches a diverse audience from art galleries to school boards and from professional artists to community members. In order to create purposeful communication and meaningful connections, ACWB employs a variety of methods to reach its diverse audiences. These include a website, a monthly electronic member newsletter, professional and social media platforms, and advertisements.

Accomplishments and Milestones

Arts Council membership has seen steady growth and currently includes over 225 members representing individual artists, arts groups, social-profit organizations, and business. Additionally, ACWB has 1,136 community subscribers. ACWB is recognized as an influential voice for the arts and is often called upon by government and industry to represent the region's arts community.

Arts Council has continued to strengthen its ties with the social profit community and has created a number of impactful partnerships with organizations that are traditionally non-arts users. Through these

opportunities, ACWB has demonstrated that the arts are critical to the quality of life in our region. Arts Council launched Seniors & The Arts in 2020 in partnership with St. Aidan's Society, which brings artists, Seniors, and Elders together to create art, build relationships, and reduce feelings of isolation. The success of this program has been recognized provincially and nationally and has attracted Suncor to support funding the ongoing execution of the program, supplementing the New Horizons for Seniors annual grant.

In 2019, The Board and staff of the Multicultural Association of Wood Buffalo and Arts Council Wood Buffalo came together to sign a Memorandum of Understanding to further align the two organizations and work together to ensure consistent, unique support of the Arts and Culture sectors and eliminate any duplication of services. ACWB and Wood Buffalo Pride also have an MOU to support program delivery across the region.

Despite the economic downturn, lingering impacts of the 2016 Horse River Wildfire, the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the one-in-100-year flooding of downtown Fort McMurray, Arts Council Wood Buffalo maintained high-quality delivery of all its proprietary programs and services, seamlessly adapting to using virtual platforms and other means of connecting with the arts- and community-at-large. In 2022, ACWB was recognized with the Heart of Wood Buffalo Social Innovation Award for its ability to adapt its programs and services during the pandemic while supporting other organizations in adapting their programs to virtual format delivery.

Through the work of Arts Council Wood Buffalo, the region is witnessing a professionalization of its arts community – 48% of artists living in the region would now be defined as “professional” by the Canadian Artist Code.¹ This can be attributed to the Business of the Arts Workshop Series, Artist in Residency Program, and individual consultations that are providing artists with resources to hone their practice and to make a living from their work. These professional development opportunities help build our creative economy and encourage artists to stay in the community. Arts organizations are likewise supported in areas of fund development and governance, which promotes sustainability.

In 2022, ACWB received funding from the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo to purchase a property and begin the process of creating the Arts INCubator Campus in downtown Fort McMurray. Arts Council has leveraged this financial support to secure additional grant and private funding for the development of the project. 2026 will see ACWB and the RMWB further solidify its partnership with the municipality completing the project build and entering an operating agreement with Arts Council.

Leadership

One of the strengths of Arts Council is its voluntary governance Board which represents all areas of the arts, business, and industry sectors, including First Nations, Métis, Multicultural, and 2SLGBTQIA+ communities. This diversity ensures that Arts Council is meeting the needs of our multifaceted sector. Board Members are considered leaders in their fields and help drive the momentum of the organization.

ACWB is operated under the direction of Executive Director, Liana Wheeldon. Ms. Wheeldon has over 25 years of leadership experience working in the retail business sector with extensive experience in financial and human resource management, stakeholder relations, and community engagement. Ms. Wheeldon joined the non-profit sector in 2014.

¹ Arts Council Wood Buffalo, “Situation and Needs of Wood Buffalo Artists, Arts Workers, and Arts Business Owners,” December 2015.

In 2022, Ms. Wheeldon was honoured with a Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal in recognition of her commitment to the Wood Buffalo region, demonstrated through her volunteerism, and raising the profile of the region's arts locally and nationally through her tireless advocacy. In 2024, Ms. Wheeldon was shortlisted for the Fuse Social Heart of Wood Buffalo Non-Profit Leadership Award.

Her team is made up of individuals who have professional training and extensive experience in the cultural field. These skills and experiences are combined with a deep commitment to the vitality of the Wood Buffalo arts community.

In order to continue meeting the increased demand for our services, ACWB is actively seeking operational funding to maintain the Programs and Services it offers as well as its staff contingent of eight full-time positions.

The Rural Arts Support Coordinators work closely with community members, Indigenous Elders, and Traditional Knowledge Keepers to co-design programming that meets the unique needs of each of the rural areas. Research conducted for the Municipal Culture Plan, the Social Sustainability Plan, and the Arts Recovery Project indicates that sharing the resources ACWB has developed over the years, assisting in the set-up of gathering places to connect Indigenous Elders and youth, and providing one-on-one consultations for artists and community organizations in our rural areas is necessary and desired by the residents. Arts Council is working with Suncor to deliver the Suncor Indigenous Artist Program as an extension of the annual Artist in Residency Program. This stream is dedicated to connecting Indigenous residents with their culture while learning about cultural traditions and art forms from professional Indigenous artists from across Canada.

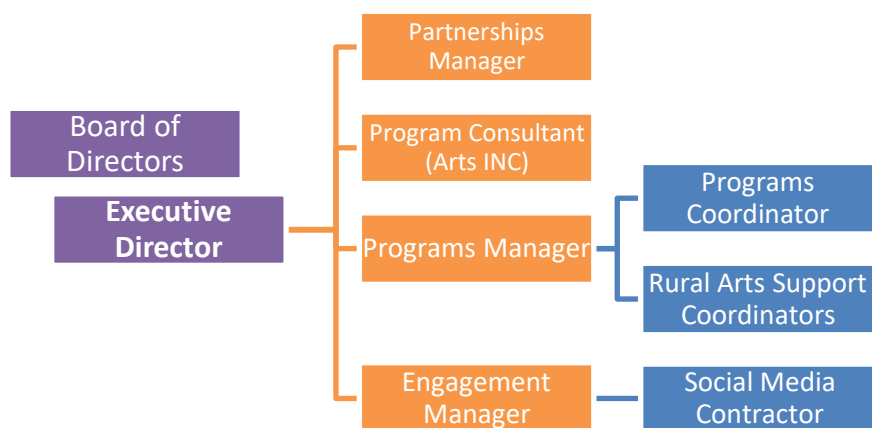
The Programs Manager and Programs Coordinators deliver the annual Buffys / Wood Buffalo Excellence in Arts Awards Program, recognizing the top artists in our region from all disciplines, arts administrators, and arts educators in a dynamic showcase event. Business of the Arts and Creative Connections Programs seek to enable entrepreneurship and build the skills and business acumen of artists and organizations to support their growth and success as they compete and thrive locally and internationally. Seniors & The Arts, and the Artist in Residency Programs work to connect artists and community through meaningful relationship building, networking, artmaking, and mentorship. The Programs Manager also oversees execution of Alberta Culture Days on behalf of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, applying for and stewarding grant funds while serving as a resource for the artists, arts groups, and community members that look forward to this event series each year. The Programs Manager is an active participant in the adjudication of the municipal Arts, Culture & Heritage micro-grant, created in partnership with ACWB.

The Engagement Manager works to deliver our purposeful communications, advocating for awareness and support of arts and culture in our region. Overseeing our Membership Program, website, CRM, online Artist Directory, ACWB Marketplace, social and professional media platforms, special events, and maintaining ACWB's Brand Identity all contribute to ensuring that Arts Council is recognized as an influential voice for the arts in our region and beyond the borders of Wood Buffalo.

The Partnerships Manager works to connect Arts Council Wood Buffalo with business, industry, and community-at-large with creative partnerships. Fundraising for ACWB and stewarding the donor relationship also falls within this portfolio. Arts Council continues its fundraising campaign to support the operations of the future Arts INCubator Campus, while the municipality completes the renovation, transforming a former movie theatre into a creative space offering broad opportunities for residents across the region to engage with the arts. Read more about this project here: <https://artsinc.ca>

In 2024, ACWB staff conducted an average of eighty-seven one-on-one consultations, advisory conversations, and referrals per month. The demand for this service has grown exponentially each year, with an incredible 48% increase over 2024. In 2025, ACWB staff is averaging over 110 consultations per month as of the end of Q3. The focus on the Arts INCubator Project, Downtown Revitalization, Culture Master Plan, and ACWB’s entrepreneurial programs has continued to grow the need for this service. With the support of the ACWB Board Directors, urban Arts Council staff supports Fort McMurray, Anzac, Draper, Conklin, Fort Chipewyan, and Fort McKay.

Arts Council has applied to the Government of Canada, private foundation, various business and industry organizations, and the Government of Alberta for financial assistance of our operations, programs, and services.



The State of the Sector

In 2016, ACWB’s Arts Impact Measurement (AIM) Committee completed an in-depth analysis of the impact, value, and needs of the Wood Buffalo arts sector – the first of its kind ever completed in our region. This research was conducted under the expertise of Hill Strategies Research Inc. – the leading Canadian cultural research firm. This connection ensured that findings from the research in Wood Buffalo would be statistically valid and could be compared to provincial and national data.

The two-pronged research project looked at the Situation and Needs of Wood Buffalo Artists, Arts Workers, and Arts Business Owners as well as whether the wider community values arts, culture, and heritage. The results provided unique insights into the state of the arts in our region.

Wood Buffalo residents rank the importance of arts and cultural events for “quality of life for you and your family” more highly than other Canadians: 81% of Wood Buffalo residents stated that these events were important or very important to their quality of life, compared to 66% of Canadians.² Wood Buffalo

² Arts Council Wood Buffalo telephone survey of 407 Wood Buffalo residents (March 2016) and Canadian Heritage Survey of 1,001 Canadian residents (2012).

residents understand that arts and culture are important in creating a balanced community and would like to see more arts events and programming in the region.

KEY FINDINGS OF THE PUBLIC SURVEY

1) Wood Buffalo residents value their cultural events and spaces (as well as local artists) but would like to see more opportunities for participation in the arts, culture, and heritage.

2) There are more Wood Buffalo families with at least one child involved in creative arts activities (90%) than families with a child who plays sports (85%).

3) Wood Buffalo residents, whether or not they have children, have a strong recognition of the importance of arts and culture activities for children and families.

Despite the demand for arts in the region, artists continue to earn lower than average incomes - 57% of Wood Buffalo artists earn less than \$20,000 from their art.³ It is not surprising then that during the 12-month period residents were surveyed, close to 50% of professional artists in the region had difficulty meeting a basic household need.⁴

Local artists have also clearly identified gaps in training and networking opportunities, which they require to further their careers and compete on a provincial and national scale. These training opportunities are often only available in urban centres outside of the region.

Further research conducted by the Arts Recovery Working Group and Arts Council's Arts Recovery Project Coordinator between 2018 and 2019 indicate that spaces to create and places to sell, perform, and promote artwork are still limited⁵. Survey responses were almost evenly sampled between Urban (59% of responses) and Rural (61% of responses) with the overwhelming message that the social value of being around other artists in a creative environment is extremely important in maintaining mental, emotional, and physical well-being.

Pre-Wildfire, only 6% of residents surveyed had access to an art making space, primarily in shared, multi-purpose spaces, and post-Wildfire, the number remains the same. 52% of surveyed artists indicated the need for individual studio maker spaces, with 46% of those looking for yearly rental. In rural communities, a further 29% of responders would like access to a shared 'cultural sharing and learning' space to pass on traditional skills, engage youth, and preserve their culture. 79% of artists surveyed indicated that they would utilize opportunities to professionally display and market their products, however, only 8% are represented in local outlets.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Arts Council Wood Buffalo, "Post-Wildfire Recovery in the Arts Strategic Plan", 2018

These are the gaps in our region's arts and cultural offerings that Arts Council Wood Buffalo is seeking to close. By building the capacity of our local artists to compete and thrive; creating collaborations between artists, arts organizations, social-profits, and industry; and, by providing opportunities for the community to express itself through the arts, Arts Council Wood Buffalo is working to create a remarkable quality of life for all those living in our region.

2026: Key Initiatives

Arts Council Wood Buffalo will build upon its previous successes by continuing its current offerings including consultative services in the community.

Continuing initiatives for 2026 also include:

- Buffys / Wood Buffalo Excellence in Arts Awards, an annual program recognizing and celebrating excellence in various areas of the arts throughout our region as well as building awareness of artist contributions in Wood Buffalo;
- Artist in Residence / Suncor Indigenous Artist Program, open to artists and creators in any discipline, follows a traditional residency model with the addition of community engagement and mentorship opportunities for our local artists and creatives;
- Seniors & the Arts, bringing together Seniors, Elders, and all ages in the community to reduce feelings of isolation through one-on-one conversations and group workshops resulting in the creation of artwork and lasting relationships;
- Creative Connections / Business of the Arts, is a learning program encouraging entrepreneurship and collaboration amongst artists, arts organizations, and community;
- Marketplace, offering new and emerging artists and artisans support to successfully establish an online presence, generate sales, and build their skills in the digital realm;
- Membership and purposeful communications;
- Rural Arts Support Program, co-designing programs and services with rural and Indigenous communities to provide meaningful support for the growth and success of the arts and artists in their areas; and,
- Preparation of the operating plan for Arts INC, including OH&S, lease agreements, program scheduling, and more.

New initiatives for 2026 include:

- Expansion of programs to include French and other language offerings.

The Arts Environment

On April 25, 2019, Statistics Canada released Culture Satellite Account (CSA) updated economic data for the Canadian arts, culture, and sport sectors from 2013-2017. The CSA is an accounting framework that measures the economic importance of culture and sport in the Canadian economy in terms of output, gross domestic product (GDP), and employment. In 2017, culture and sport goods and services contributed \$5.3 billion to Alberta's GDP, the fourth highest among the provinces. Alberta culture GDP increased overall by 16% from 2010-2017. Additionally, Alberta's culture sector provided a total of 53,739 jobs in 2017.⁶ Municipalities with vibrant culture sectors have increased market appeal and assist in motivating businesses and workers to relocate to an area.

⁶ Alberta Foundation for the Arts, "Explore the economics of Alberta Art", July 2019

Statistics Canada also provides an estimate of the direct economic impact of sports industries in 2017 (\$7.3 billion, or 0.3% of Canada's GDP). The direct economic impact of culture industries (\$59 billion) is eight times larger than the sports estimate. Similarly, the jobs estimate for culture industries (715,400) is almost six times larger than the estimate for the sports sector (125,500).⁷

Artists in Wood Buffalo are highly experienced (roughly 40% of local professional artists have more than 20 years' experience as an artist) and 47% have a university degree (whether arts-related or not).⁸ Regional artists are also strong contributors to the community: 85% have taught or mentored others through the arts and 72% of artists also volunteer their time in the community on arts-related activities.⁹ It is no surprise then that 77% of Wood Buffalo artists indicated they feel a strong sense of belonging to their community.¹⁰

Despite these benefits and impacts, the arts and culture sectors are systemically underserved. In addition to the low salaries for artists, "relative to other comparable municipalities in Alberta, Wood Buffalo is underserved in terms of arts and culture facilities."¹¹ This is surprising as there is an appetite for arts and culture in Wood Buffalo, not only by the Municipality, which recognizes that the arts can "strengthen regional pride and identity," but by citizens as well.¹²

In 2016, 86% of Wood Buffalo residents sampled responded that arts and cultural activities in a community make it a better place to live and 81% felt that arts and cultural activities contributed to their individual wellbeing.¹³ The following chart shows that Wood Buffalo residents value the benefits of arts and culture similarly to Canadians as a whole.

⁷ Hill Strategies, "Estimates of the Direct Economic Impact of Culture in Canada in 2017", June 2019

⁸ Arts Council Wood Buffalo, "Situation and Needs of Wood Buffalo Artists, Arts Workers, and Arts Business Owners," December 2015.

⁹ Ibid.

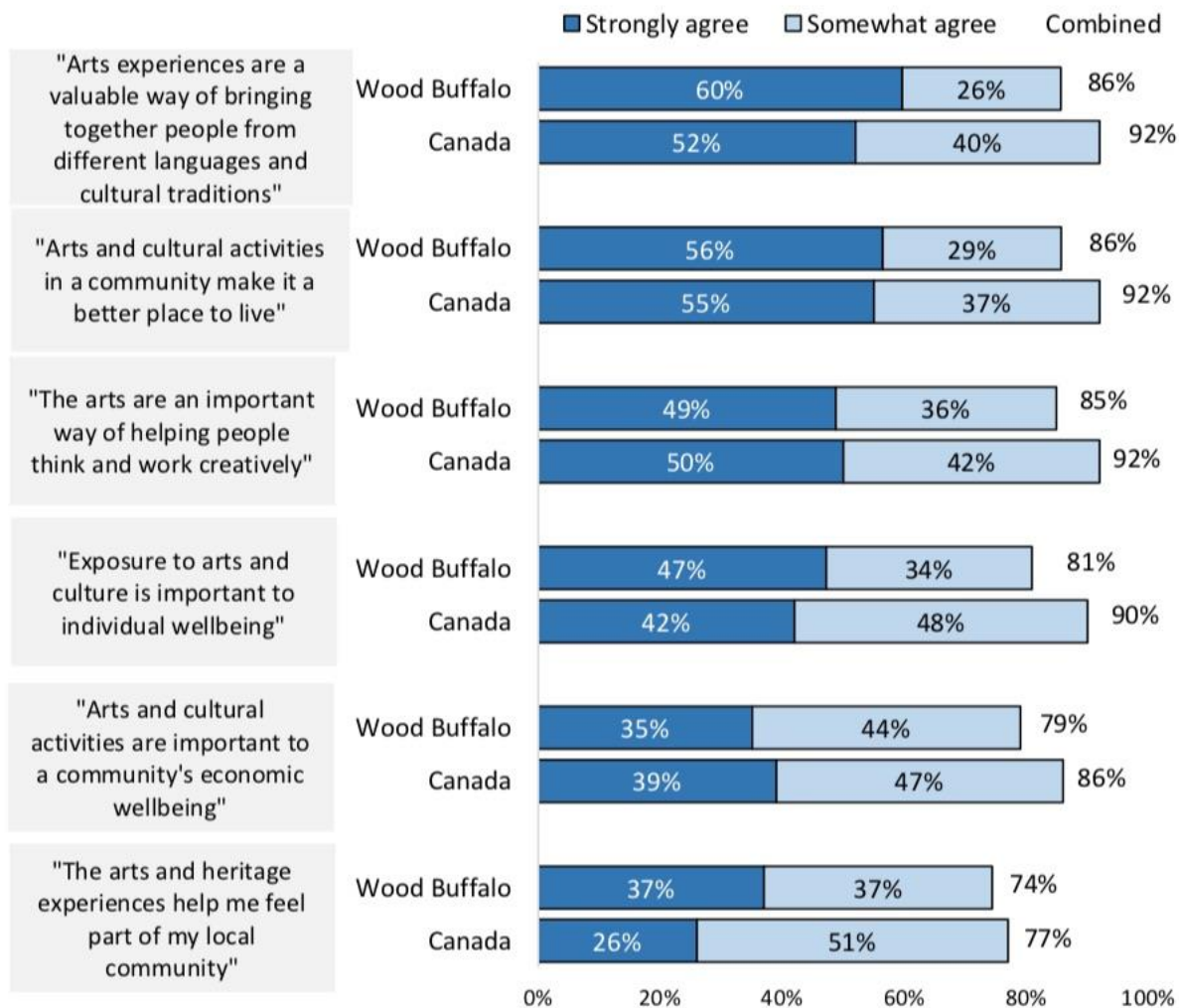
¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, "Municipal Development Plan", (Fort McMurray: October 2011), 131.

¹² Ibid.

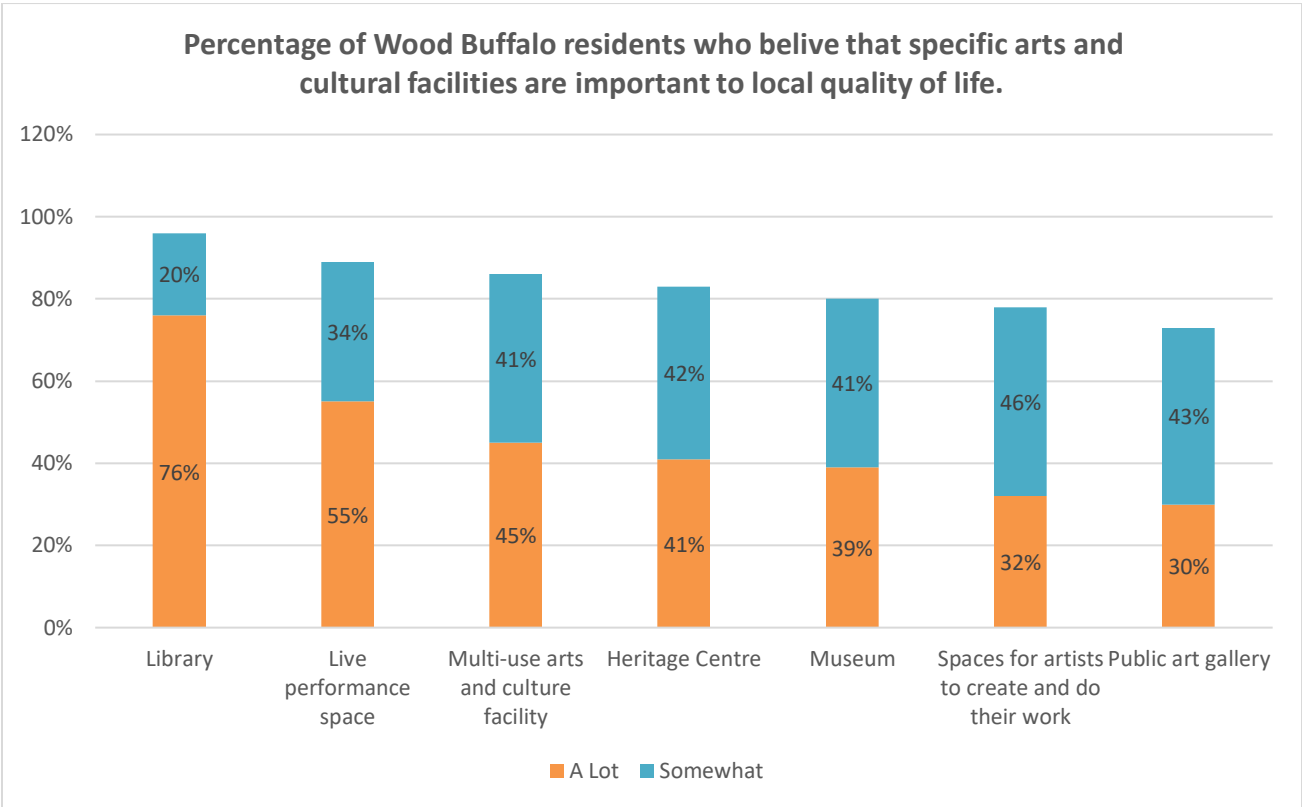
¹³ Arts Council Wood Buffalo telephone survey of 407 Wood Buffalo residents (March 2016) and Canadian Heritage Survey of 1,001 Canadian residents (2012).

Percentage of residents who agree with statements about the benefits of the arts and culture: Wood Buffalo residents compared with Canadian averages



Sources: Arts Council Wood Buffalo telephone survey of 407 Wood Buffalo residents (March 2016) and Canadian Heritage survey of 1,001 Canadian residents (2012)

As the following chart demonstrates, Wood Buffalo residents also see the importance of arts and cultural facilities in creating a remarkable quality of life in our region.



Working Towards a Shared Vision

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (RMWB) and Arts Council Wood Buffalo share a vision of using the arts to create an attractive and liveable community. Through financial support of ACWB, the Municipality is investing in this shared vision and an organization that is working towards the RMWB’s goals as outlined in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo 2022-2025 Strategic Plan, the Municipal Culture Master Plan, the Area Redevelopment Plan, Municipal Development Plan, and Downtown Revitalization.

Request for the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

In order to support the continued success of Arts Council Wood Buffalo and to better meet the needs of the region’s arts community, ACWB is requesting that the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo approve ACWB’s funding at \$665,000.00 for 2026, matching the approved allocation in 2025. An amount of \$20,000 of the total requested funds will again be stewarded by Arts Council in support of Alberta Culture Days programming on behalf of the municipality and the ABCD Community Planning Committee.

This funding request represents approximately 61% of ACWB’s proposed 2026 Operating Budget and is in line with municipal funding given to other arts councils across Canada.

The request for funding to the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo is to support Arts Council's existing initiatives, enable our organization to become more sustainable as we leverage this funding to achieve financial support from other government agencies and foundations, and to enable ACWB to be a strong partner in executing the Wood Buffalo Culture Master Plan in support of the supplemental motion passed May 14, 2019 at Council: THAT Administration proceed with taking the necessary actions in keeping with preparations for the 2020 municipal Budget to review support of operations, programming and other long-term financial considerations by community cultural organizations with a view to sustainably resource and deliver on the vision and goals of the Wood Buffalo Cultural Plan.

This operational support provided by the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo will have a significant impact on the growth and professionalization of our arts community and move forward several of the Regional Municipality's strategic objectives.

Best Practice: Municipally Supported Arts Councils

Arts councils foster creative cities by supporting artists and arts organizations. As these users are traditionally low-income earners and non-profits, the funding model for arts councils differs from that of other professional organizations and associations. Membership fees are minimal, and programs are heavily subsidized to provide wide access. The result is that most arts councils rely on funding from government, specifically municipalities, to fund their operations.

City	2023 Arts Council Operating Budget	2023 Municipal Funding	Population
Calgary	\$ 21,645,975	\$ 20,964,123.00	1,688,00
Edmonton	\$ 21,231,264	\$ 17,965,408	1,589,000
St. Albert	\$ 2,426,525	\$ 1,643,750	72,316
Spruce Grove	\$ 118,162	\$ 47,878	40,012



		Proposed Operating Budget 2025
PROJECTED REVENUE		
Projected Contributions		
	Membership Fees	3,500
	Fundraising & Donations	50,000
	Sponsorships - Buffys	38,000
	RMWB Sustaining Grant	665,000
	Organization Activation Grant - AFA (RASP) - carry forward	15,000
	Government Grant - AFA Operating	70,000
	Government Grant - Projects (AbCD and Alberta Day with RMWB)	15,000
	Government Grant - NHSP Seniors & The Arts /Partnership Project - carryover from 2025	10,000
	Government Grant - NHSP Seniors & The Arts /Partnership Project	20,000
	Catherine Donnelly Foundation - Indigenous & Multicultural Creative Connections	50,000
	WBCF - Creative Connections Program grant	41,600
	WBCF - Environmental Grant - partnership project with SCALE	6,640
	Business / Industry Grants - Suncor AoC & IAiR	35,000
	Business / Industry Grants - RASP & C2	10,000
	Buffys Gala Ticket Sales	18,700
	Registration Fees - BoA	10,000
	Endowment Fund returns	1,500
	Sublet main floor offices	11,400
	Fee for Service Projects	10,000
Total Contributions		1,081,340
Other Revenue		
	Interest Revenue	7,000
Total Other Revenue		7,000
TOTAL PROJECTED REVENUE		1,088,340
PROJECTED EXPENSES		
Cost of Goods Sold		
	Alberta Day & Culture Days - community groups funding	30,000
	Partnership Projects (Seniors and the Arts)	29,000
	Partnership Projects (SCALE environmental grant)	6,640
	Scholarships and Awards (WBEAA)	3,750
Total Cost of Goods Sold		69,390
Artist in Residency Indigenous and non-Indigenous Residency program		
		18,500
Total Cost of Artist in Residency Program		18,500
Arts Awards (WBEAA) Buffys - celebrating the best of the arts in WB		
		92,950
Total Arts Awards		92,950
Business of the Arts / Creative Connections Indigenous & Multicultural Creative Connections		
		45,000
	Creative Connections - ArtWorks!	41,600
Total Business of the Arts		86,600
Rural Arts Support Community-specific programming		
		20,000
	Travel	5,000
Total Rural Arts Support		25,000
Payroll Expenses		
	Contractors	55,000
	Wages & Salaries (+ MERCS)	625,000
Total Payroll Expense		680,000
General & Administrative Expenses		
	Accounting & Legal	25,400
	Advertising & Promotion (General)	500
	Board of Directors / AGM / Volunteer Appreciation	4,500
	Courier and Postage	300
	Gifts/Artist Fees/Venue - general	2,500
	Hospitality / Fundraising	3,000
	Insurance	11,000
	Interest and Bank charges	1,000
	Meeting & Conventions	3,600
	Mileage and Travel	3,000
	Office Supplies	1,700
	CRM & PayPal fees	2,000
	Photocopying and Printing	900
	Printed Material	2,500
	Professional Development	2,000
	Professional Membership	4,500
	Rent & Utilities	33,500
	Tech Subscriptions and Licenses	5,000
	Telephone	7,000
	Website	2,000
Total General & Admin. Expenses		115,900
TOTAL PROJECTED EXPENSES		1,088,340
NET INCOME		\$0.00

Fort McMurray, August 29, 2025

Letter of support for Arts Council Wood Buffalo's Seniors and the Arts Initiative

To Whom it May Concern,

As the Executive Director of l'ACFA régionale de Wood Buffalo, I am pleased to express our strong support for Arts Council Wood Buffalo's (ACWB) program, Seniors and the Arts. This project seeks to support healthy ageing, inclusion, and social cohesion with its activities.

ACWB and l'ACFA régionale de Wood Buffalo collaborated in 2025 to pilot offering French language programming for older adults in the community. Support from New Horizons for Seniors and Suncor Energy made it possible to offer free programming for low-income older adults while providing opportunities for local artists to connect with the Francophone community. This program created better understanding with the general community about the isolation felt not just by seniors but particularly those of the Official Language Minority Community.

Supporting this initiative for the 2026/27 funding year will offer broader reach around the region and a more inclusive approach to the Arts & Ageing Day celebration that previously was offered in English only.

Arts Council Wood Buffalo is committed to supporting initiatives that empower artists and enrich our community. We are confident that, with the support of the NHSP funding, the Seniors & the Arts Program will make a lasting impact on our region's cultural landscape.

Thank you for considering this important initiative.



Maryse Champagne
Executive Director
ACFA régionale de Wood Buffalo
100-312 Abasand Dr
Fort McMurray (AB) T9J 1B2
Office: (780) 791-7700
Email : administration.woodbuffalo@acfa.ab.ca
Web Site: <https://woodbuffalo.acfa.ab.ca/>



ARTS COUNCIL
WOOD BUFFALO

Thursday October 2, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

Subject: Letter of Support and Partnership

On behalf of Arts Council Wood Buffalo and Anzac Family Community Support Society, we are pleased to express our strong support and commitment to partnering with each other in the implementation of the Rural Arts Support Program, offering a variety of workshops and gatherings to residents of Anzac and the surrounding areas. These initiatives align with our shared mission to grow connection and collaboration between artists and community to increase social cohesion.

We are committed to working collaboratively with each other to ensure the success of this project. We recognize the pressing need for increased community connection and social wellbeing in our community.

Our organizations have a history of successful collaboration supporting rural programming in Anzac for several years, which demonstrates our ability to work effectively together.

For any further information or clarification, please contact:

Liana Wheeldon

Executive Director

Arts Council Wood Buffalo

Phone: 587.674.1625, x100

liana@artscouncilwb.ca

www.artscouncilwb.ca

Stephanie Burtenshaw

Anzac Family Community Support Society

587-644-0041

office@anzacfcss.com

We look forward to the opportunity to collaborate on this important initiative and are confident in the positive impact it will have on our community.

Sincerely,

Liana Wheeldon

Executive Director

Arts Council Wood Buffalo

K. Janver - Karen Janver
on behalf of

Stephanie Burtenshaw

Anzac Family Community Support Society



Thursday October 2, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

Subject: Letter of Support and Partnership for Community Programming

On behalf of Arts Council Wood Buffalo and the Multicultural Association of Wood Buffalo, we are pleased to express our strong support and commitment to partnering with each other in the delivery of Alberta Culture Days and other community programming initiatives in Fort McMurray. These initiatives align with our shared mission to create a remarkable quality of life through the creation and appreciation of arts and culture.

We are committed to working collaboratively with each other to ensure the continued success of these projects. We recognize the pressing need for increased community connection and social wellbeing in our community.

Our organizations have a history of successful collaboration, including entering a Memorandum of Understanding in 2019 to align our programs and services and ensure meaningful community engagement and eliminating any duplication of services, demonstrating our ability to work effectively together.

For any further information or clarification, please contact:

Liana Wheeldon
Executive Director
Arts Council Wood Buffalo
Phone: 587.674.1625
liana@artscouncilwb.ca
www.artscouncilwb.ca

Muna Ali
Executive Director
Multicultural Association of Wood Buffalo
Phone: 780.880.2929
executivedirector@mcawb.org
www.mcawb.org

We look forward to the opportunity to collaborate on this important initiative and are confident in the positive impact it will have on our community.

Sincerely,

Liana Wheeldon
Executive Director
Arts Council Wood Buffalo

Muna Ali
Executive Director
Multicultural Association of Wood Buffalo



ARTS COUNCIL
WOOD BUFFALO

Thursday October 2, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

Subject: Letter of Support and Partnership for Community Programming

On behalf of Arts Council Wood Buffalo and the Mikisew Cree First Nation, we are pleased to express our strong support and commitment to partnering with each other in the delivery of community programming in Fort Chipewyan.

We are committed to working collaboratively with each other to ensure the continued success of the Arts Council's Rural Arts Support Program and MCFN's Treaty Days and other initiatives. We recognize the pressing need for increased community connection and social wellbeing in our community.

Our organizations have a history of successful collaboration, including supporting rural programming, which demonstrates our ability to work effectively together.

For any further information or clarification, please contact:

Liana Wheeldon
Executive Director
Arts Council Wood Buffalo
Phone: 587.674.1625
liana@artscouncilwb.ca
www.artscouncilwb.ca

(Name) Lawrence Courteoreille
(Title) Chief Operating Officer
Mikisew Cree First Nation
(phone) 780.697.3747
(email) coo@mikisewcree.ca
(website) www.mikisewcree.ca

We look forward to the opportunity to collaborate on this important initiative and are confident in the positive impact it will have on our community.

Sincerely,

Liana Wheeldon
Executive Director
Arts Council Wood Buffalo

Lawrence Courteoreille
Chief Operating Officer
Mikisew Cree First Nation



Thursday October 2, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

Subject: Letter of Support and Partnership

On behalf of Arts Council Wood Buffalo and St. Aidan's Society, we are pleased to express our strong support and commitment to partnering with each other in the implementation of the Seniors & The Arts Program, offering a variety of workshops and gatherings to older adults across the region. This program aligns with our shared mission to support the health and wellbeing of people and communities through strategic partnerships.

We are committed to working collaboratively with each other to ensure the ongoing success of this program. We recognize the pressing need for increased community connection and social wellbeing in our community.

Our organizations have a history of successful collaboration supporting programming for older adults and launched the Seniors & The Arts Program in 2020, which demonstrates our ability to work effectively together.

For any further information or clarification, please contact:

Liana Wheeldon
Executive Director

Arts Council Wood Buffalo
Phone: 587.674.1625, x100

liana@artscouncilwb.ca
www.artscouncilwb.ca

Luana Bussieres
Executive Director

St. Aidan's Society
780.743.4370

luanab@staidanssociety.ca
www.staidanssociety.ca

We look forward to the opportunity to collaborate on this important initiative and are confident in the positive impact it will have on our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Liana Wheeldon".

Liana Wheeldon
Executive Director
Arts Council Wood Buffalo

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Luana Bussieres".

Luana Bussieres
Executive Director
St. Aidan's Society



ARTS COUNCIL
WOOD BUFFALO



Theatre;
Just Because

Thursday October 2, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

Subject: Letter of Support and Partnership

On behalf of Arts Council Wood Buffalo and Theatre; Just Because, we are pleased to express our strong support and commitment to partnering with each other in the implementation of the Fort McMurray Fringe Festival as part of ACWB's Creative Connections Program, offering a variety of performances, artisan market vendors, and workshops. This program aligns with our shared mission to grow connection and collaboration between artists and community to increase social cohesion.

We are committed to working collaboratively with each other to ensure the success of this program after the 'soft launch' in 2025. We recognize the pressing need for increased community connection and social wellbeing in our community and believe FMFF is an integral piece of building a thriving community.

Our organizations have a history of successful collaboration supporting programming for Alberta Days, Alberta Culture Days, and the ACWB Artisan Markets, which demonstrates our ability to work effectively together.

For any further information or clarification, please contact:

Liana Wheeldon
Executive Director
Arts Council Wood Buffalo
Phone: 587.674.1625, x100
liana@artscouncilwb.ca
www.artscouncilwb.ca

Bailey Yarkie
Artistic Director
Theatre; Just Because
(403) 501-1175
info@theatrejustbecause.com
www.theatrejustbecause.com

We look forward to the opportunity to collaborate on this important initiative and are confident in the positive impact it will have on our community.

Sincerely,

Liana Wheeldon
Executive Director
Arts Council Wood Buffalo

Bailey Yarkie
Artistic Director
Theatre; Just Because

Arts Council Wood Buffalo
Financial Statements
December 31, 2024

Independent Auditor's Report

To the Members of Arts Council Wood Buffalo:

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Arts Council Wood Buffalo (the "Organization"), which comprise the statement of financial position as at December 31, 2024, and the statements of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Organization as at December 31, 2024, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the Organization in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Other Information

Management is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the Annual Report.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. We obtained the Annual Report prior to the date of this auditor's report. If, based on the work we have performed on this other information, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Organization or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Organization's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Organization's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Organization to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Fort McMurray, Alberta

April 15, 2025

MNP LLP

Chartered Professional Accountants

Arts Council Wood Buffalo Statement of Financial Position

As at December 31, 2024

	2024	2023
Assets		
Current		
Cash (Note 3)	321,568	52,917
Accounts receivable (Note 6)	36,341	156,082
Prepaid expenses and deposits (Note 6)	82,384	730
Goods and services tax recoverable	28,902	15,026
	469,195	224,755
Restricted cash for capital purchases (Note 3)	650,317	1,466,270
Capital assets (Note 4)	5,080,036	3,957,446
	6,199,548	5,648,471
Liabilities		
Current		
Accounts payable and accruals (Note 4)	256,814	28,307
Deferred contributions (Note 5)	44,395	69,756
Unspent contributions related to capital assets (Note 6)	731,703	1,466,270
	1,032,912	1,564,333
Unamortized deferred contributions related to capital assets (Note 6)	3,849,287	2,724,208
	4,882,199	4,288,541
Commitments (Note 7)		
Net Assets		
Unrestricted	14,600	126,692
Invested in capital assets	1,230,749	1,233,238
Internally restricted	72,000	-
	1,317,349	1,359,930
	6,199,548	5,648,471

Approved on behalf of the Board of Directors

signed by "Will Collins"

Director

signed by "Mitchel Bowers"

Director

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements

Arts Council Wood Buffalo

Statement of Operations

For the year ended December 31, 2024

	2024	2023
Revenues (Note 5)		
Grants and sponsorships (Note 8)	793,350	852,256
Fundraising and donations	48,932	43,585
Fees for services, event sales and partnerships	48,015	31,421
Interest income	17,596	37,939
Amortization of deferred contributions (Note 6)	6,140	-
Membership fees	2,975	4,087
	917,008	969,288
Direct costs		
Artist fee	110,418	92,557
Scholarships and awards	3,250	3,250
Reception	1,129	4,601
Special projects	37	-
	114,834	100,408
Expenses		
Salaries and benefits	579,059	555,677
Subcontracts	61,952	42,221
Rent	32,985	24,739
Professional fees	30,555	29,328
Meetings and conventions	20,788	28,630
Employee benefits	20,460	27,119
Advertising	15,220	19,444
Office	12,187	14,033
Business taxes and licenses	11,061	8,393
Insurance	10,413	10,343
Travel	9,673	5,288
Professional development	9,300	39,222
Amortization	8,629	2,489
Telephone	6,859	6,792
Gifts (Note 10)	5,304	1,029
Utilities	4,455	-
Bank charges and interest	3,210	2,387
Membership fees	2,645	493
	844,755	817,627
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	(42,581)	51,253

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements

Arts Council Wood Buffalo
Statement of Changes in Net Assets
For the year ended December 31, 2024

	<i>Unrestricted</i>	<i>Invested in capital assets</i>	<i>Internally restricted</i>	2024	2023
Net assets beginning of year	126,692	1,233,238	-	1,359,930	1,308,677
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	(40,092)	(2,489)	-	(42,581)	51,253
Grant funds restricted for capital asset purchases <i>(Note 6)</i>	922,815	(922,815)	-	-	-
Investments in capital assets	(922,815)	922,815	-	-	-
Transfer to internally restricted	(72,000)	-	72,000	-	-
Net assets, end of year	14,600	1,230,749	72,000	1,317,349	1,359,930

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements

Arts Council Wood Buffalo

Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended December 31, 2024

	2024	2023
Cash provided by (used for) the following activities		
Operating		
Cash received from contributions	877,320	969,942
Cash paid for program service expenses	(412,992)	(393,612)
Cash paid for salaries and benefits	(599,519)	(582,796)
	(135,191)	(6,466)
Financing		
Cash contributions received for capital assets (Note 6)	510,704	271,396
Repayment of CEBA loan	-	(40,000)
	510,704	231,396
Investing		
Purchase of capital assets (Note 4)	(922,815)	(967,019)
Decrease in restricted cash for capital purchases	815,953	581,571
	(106,862)	(385,448)
Increase (decrease) in cash resources	268,651	(160,518)
Cash resources, beginning of year	52,917	213,435
Cash resources, end of year	321,568	52,917

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements

1. Incorporation and nature of the organization

Arts Council Wood Buffalo (the "Organization") is a not-for-profit organization incorporated provincially under the *Companies Act of Alberta*. As a registered charity the Organization is exempt from the payment of income tax under section 149(1) of the *Income Tax Act*.

The Organization operates to support the growth and success of the arts in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo. The Organization was established to raise the profile of the arts in the region and to provide support to all facets of the arts community.

2. Significant accounting policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit set out in Part III of the CPA Handbook - Accounting Standards for Not-For-Profit Organizations, as issued by the Accounting Standards Board in Canada using the following significant accounting policies:

Restricted net assets

The Organization follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions and in addition to its general operating surplus from program delivery and administrative activities, the following net asset reserves are maintained: invested in capital assets and internally restricted funds.

Net assets invested in capital assets reports the Organization's assets, liabilities, revenue and expenses related to Arts Council Wood Buffalo's capital assets.

Internally restricted net assets were established by the Organization's Board of Directors to restrict resources to cover operations in the event of unforeseen shortfalls.

Revenue recognition

The Organization follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions. Restricted contributions are recognized as revenue in the year in which the related expenses are incurred. Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue when received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured. Endowment contributions are recognized as direct increases in net assets.

Restricted investment income is recognized as revenue in the year in which the related expenses are incurred. Contributions restricted for the purchase of capital assets are deferred and recognized as the related asset is amortized. Contributions for capital assets which are not amortized are recognized as a direct increase in net assets.

Unrestricted investment income is recognized as revenue when earned.

Fees for services and event sales, membership fees, and other income are recognized when the related services are provided.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash includes balances with banks.

Externally restricted cash and cash equivalents are restricted for specific purposes and are not available for general operations.

Capital assets

Purchased capital assets are recorded at cost. Contributed capital assets are recorded at fair value at the date of contribution plus all costs directly attributable to the acquisition.

Amortization is provided using the straight-line method at rates intended to amortize the cost of assets over their estimated useful lives.

	Method	Years
Building	straight-line	25 years
Computer equipment	straight-line	5 years
Furniture and fixtures	straight-line	5 years
Website	straight-line	5 years

2. Significant accounting policies *(Continued from previous page)*

Long-lived assets

Long-lived assets consist of capital assets. Long-lived assets held for use are measured and amortized as described in the applicable accounting policies.

The Organization writes down long-lived assets held for use when conditions indicate that the asset no longer contributes to the Organization's ability to provide goods and services. The assets are also written-down when the value of future economic benefits or service potential associated with the asset is less than its net carrying amount. When the Organization determines that a long-lived asset is impaired, its carrying amount is written down to the asset's fair value.

Contributed materials

Contributions of materials and services are recognized both as contributions and expenses in the statement of operations and changes in net assets when a fair value can be reasonably estimated and when the materials and services are used in the normal course of the Organization's operations and would otherwise have been purchased. No such contributions have been recorded in these financial statements.

Leases

A lease that transfers substantially all of the benefits and risks of ownership is classified as a capital lease. At the inception of a capital lease, an asset and a payment obligation are recorded at an amount equal to the lesser of the present value of the minimum lease payments and the property's fair market value. Assets under capital leases are amortized over their estimated useful lives. All other leases are accounted for as operating leases and rental payments are expensed as incurred.

Measurement uncertainty (use of estimates)

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements, and the reported amounts of revenue and expenses during the reporting period.

Accounts receivable are stated after evaluation as to their collectability and an appropriate allowance for doubtful accounts is provided where considered necessary. Amortization is based on the estimated useful lives of capital assets.

These estimates and assumptions are reviewed periodically and, as adjustments become necessary they are reported in deficiency of revenues and expenses in the periods in which they become known.

Financial instruments

The Organization recognizes financial instruments when the Organization becomes party to the contractual provisions of the financial instrument.

Arm's length financial instruments

Financial instruments originated/acquired or issued/assumed in an arm's length transaction ("arm's length financial instruments") are initially recorded at their fair value.

At initial recognition, the Organization may irrevocably elect to subsequently measure any arm's length financial instrument at fair value. The Organization has not made such an election during the year.

The Organization subsequently measures investments in equity instruments quoted in an active market and all derivative instrument at fair value. All other financial assets and liabilities are subsequently measured at amortized cost.

Transaction costs and financing fees directly attributable to the origination, acquisition, issuance or assumption of financial instruments subsequently measured at fair value are immediately recognized in excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses. Conversely, transaction costs and financing fees are added to the carrying amount for those financial instruments subsequently measured at cost or amortized cost.

Arts Council Wood Buffalo
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended December 31, 2024

2. Significant accounting policies *(Continued from previous page)*

Financial asset impairment

The Organization assesses impairment of all its financial assets measured at cost or amortized cost. The Organization reduces the carrying amount of any impaired financial assets to the highest of: the present value of cash flows expected to be generated by holding the assets; the amount that could be realized by selling the assets at the statement of financial position date; and the amount expected to be realized by exercising any rights to collateral held against those assets.

Any impairment, which is not considered temporary, is included in current year excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses. The Organization reverses impairment losses on financial assets when there is a decrease in impairment and the decrease can be objectively related to an event occurring after the impairment loss was recognized. The amount of the reversal is recognized in excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses in the year the reversal occurs.

3. Cash and restricted cash for capital purposes

Included in cash and restricted cash for capital purposes are guaranteed investment certificates (GICs) of \$5,228 bearing interest at 2.25%, and \$900,000 bearing interest at 4.1% (2023 - \$5,113 bearing interest at 2.25%, \$500,000 bearing interest at 3.25%, \$900,000 bearing interest at 3.25%, and \$65,000 bearing interest at 4.1%).

4. Capital assets

	Cost	Accumulated amortization	2024 Net book value	2023 Net book value
Land	1,225,770	-	1,225,770	1,225,770
Building	3,824,724	-	3,824,724	2,724,209
Computer equipment	9,651	5,791	3,860	5,790
Furniture and fixtures	2,795	1,677	1,118	1,677
Website	30,704	6,140	24,564	-
	5,093,644	13,608	5,080,036	3,957,446

The building had no amortization recorded during the year as it is currently under redevelopment. Included in accounts payable is \$208,404 (2023 - \$nil) related to capital assets, which is therefore excluded from purchases of capital assets in the statement of cash flows.

Arts Council Wood Buffalo
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended December 31, 2024

5. Deferred contributions

	<i>Beginning of the year</i>	<i>Funding received (repayable) during the year</i>	<i>Recognized as revenue</i>	<i>End of the year</i>
Alberta Culture Days - Government of Alberta	-	4,000	(4,000)	-
Alberta Culture Days - RMWB	-	20,000	(20,000)	-
Alberta Foundation for the Arts	-	60,000	(60,000)	-
Artist in Residency	20,000	20,000	(20,000)	20,000
Arts Awards	-	19,000	(19,000)	-
Arts Award Grant - RMWB	-	20,000	(20,000)	-
Business of the Arts	-	1,500	(1,500)	-
Community Foundations of Canada	21,511	-	(21,511)	-
Prepaid memberships	4,555	2,975	(2,975)	4,555
Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo - operations	-	620,000	(620,000)	-
Rural arts support - CNOOC Petroleum	-	5,000	(5,000)	-
Rural arts support - RMWB	-	5,000	(5,000)	-
Seniors and the Arts Project	8,690	-	(8,690)	-
Suncor Energy Inc.	15,000	15,000	(10,160)	19,840
Other - fundraising, donations, interest and fees	-	93,032	(93,032)	-
	69,756	885,507	(910,868)	44,395

Amounts included in project summary above comprise all funding sources including grants, fundraising and donations, fees and interest income.

Deferred contributions related to funding received from Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo included above is as follows:

	<i>Beginning of the year</i>	<i>Funding received (repayable) during the year</i>	<i>Recognized as revenue</i>	<i>End of the year</i>
Administration and payroll costs	-	620,000	(620,000)	-
Alberta Culture Days	-	20,000	(20,000)	-
Art Awards	-	20,000	(20,000)	-
Rural Arts Support	-	5,000	(5,000)	-
	-	665,000	(665,000)	-

Arts Council Wood Buffalo
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended December 31, 2024

6. Deferred contributions related to capital assets

The Organization has received various grants to support the Arts Incubator Project. Deferred capital contributions consist of the unamortized amount of contributions received for the purchase of capital assets. Recognition of these amounts as revenue is deferred to periods when the related capital assets are amortized. Changes in deferred capital contributions are as follows:

	2024	2023
Balance, beginning of year	4,190,478	3,805,030
Amount received during the year	470,406	237,675
Interest earned on funds received	40,298	33,721
Amounts included in current year (prior year) accounts receivable	(114,052)	114,052
Amortization of deferred contributions	(6,140)	-
	4,580,990	4,190,478
Less: unspent capital contributions	731,703	1,466,270
Unamortized deferred capital contributions	3,849,287	2,724,208

Unspent capital contributions are comprised of restricted cash for capital purchases of \$650,317 (2023 - \$1,466,270) and deposits included in prepaid expenses and deposits of \$81,386 (2023 - \$nil).

7. Commitments

The Organization has entered into a lease agreement for office space with minimum monthly payments of \$2,400 per month until March 2025.

8. Grant and sponsorship revenue

	2024	2023
Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo	665,000	667,258
Alberta Foundation for the Arts	60,000	60,000
Business and Industry Grants	35,160	66,787
Community Foundations of Canada	21,511	20,270
Employment and Social Development Canada - Seniors and the Arts	8,690	24,941
Miscellaneous sponsorships	2,989	13,000
	793,350	852,256

9. Economic dependence

The Organization is economically dependant on grants received from the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo for its continued existence and ability to carry out its operations. The grant received from the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo accounts for 73% (2023 - 69%) of the revenue generated by the Organization.

10. Endowment funds

During the year, the Organization donated \$5,000 (2023 - \$nil) into an endowment fund with Wood Buffalo Community Foundation (the "Foundation") for which Arts Council Wood Buffalo is the sole beneficiary. During 2024, the fund earned net investment income of \$1,363 (2023 - \$572) resulting in a net fund balance of \$16,885 (2023 - \$10,523).

11. Financial instruments

The Organization, as part of its operations, carries a number of financial instruments. It is management's opinion that the Organization is not exposed to significant interest, currency, credit, liquidity or other price risks arising from these financial instruments except as otherwise disclosed.

Credit concentration

Accounts receivable from Prairies Economic Development Canada in connection with the development of the Arts Incubator project represents nil% (2023 - 73%) of total accounts receivable as at December 31, 2024. The Organization believes that there is minimal risk associated with the collection of these amounts. The balance of accounts receivable is widely distributed among the remainder of the Organization's large customer base. The Organization performs regular credit assessments of its customers and provides allowances for potentially uncollectible accounts receivable.

Interest rate risk

Interest rate risk is the risk that the value of a financial instrument might be adversely affected by a change in the interest rates. Changes in market interest rates may have an effect on the cash flows associated with some financial assets and liabilities, known as cash flow risk, and on the fair value of other financial assets or liabilities, known as price risk.

The Organization is exposed to interest rate price risk through its investment in Guaranteed Income Certificates (GIC's), which bear interest at fixed rates.



ARTS COUNCIL
WOOD BUFFALO



Thursday October 2, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

Subject: Letter of Support and Partnership for Qmmunity Connections, Rural Outreach and Creative Connections

On behalf of Arts Council Wood Buffalo and Wood Buffalo Pride, we are pleased to express our strong support and commitment to partnering with each other in the implementation of Qmmunity Connections, Rural Outreach and Creative Connections. These initiatives align with our shared mission to create safe and inclusive spaces for people to connect in creative ways.

We are committed to working collaboratively with each other to ensure the success of this project. We recognize the pressing need for increased community connection and social wellbeing in our community.

Our organizations have a history of successful collaboration, including an active MOU providing artist calls for the Pride Festival, co-delivering Qmmunity Connection activities, being an active Rainbow Space, and supporting rural programming, which demonstrates our ability to work effectively together.

For any further information or clarification, please contact:

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Wood Buffalo Pride
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We look forward to the opportunity to collaborate on this important initiative and are confident in the positive impact it will have on our community.

Sincerely,

Liana Wheeldon
Executive Director
Arts Council Wood Buffalo

Mitchel Bowers
Executive Director
Wood Buffalo Pride