



Australian Government

**Department of Infrastructure, Transport,
Regional Development and Communications**
Office for the Arts

Restart Investment to Sustain and Expand (RISE) Fund Frequently Asked Questions

August 2020

Please note, the amended RISE guidelines were published on 21 May 2021. These FAQ's are currently being updated to align with the amendments in the guidelines.

Updated FAQ's will be published soon.

Making an application

1.1. Can individuals apply?

Individuals or Sole Traders without employees may apply for funding as long as they are part of a joint (consortia) application.

Joint applications must have a 'lead organisation' that meets the eligibility criteria. Only the lead organisation can submit the application form and enter into a grant agreement with the Commonwealth.

Sole Traders with employees are eligible to apply in their own right, irrespective of how their employees are engaged.

1.2. Can state and territory-owned entities apply?

No. State and territory owned entities may be parties to a joint or partnership application, provided they are not the lead applicant.

State and territory owned entities can also benefit from grant activities delivered by a third party. For example, a third party may include venue hire costs for presentation of an activity at a state owned facility.

1.3. Can local government-owned entities apply?

Yes. Local government-owned entities are eligible to apply so long as their primary purpose is the arts and entertainment. A local government owned entity is a separate legal entity from the council with its own ABN.

Councils may apply as part of a joint application where there is a lead organisation that meets the eligibility requirements. The requirements for joint applications is at section 7.2 of the Guidelines.

1.4. Can "for profit" organisations apply?

Yes, as long as your organisation meets the eligibility criteria in 4.1 of the Guidelines.

1.5. Which entities can be auspiced?

Unincorporated groups (three or more individuals who do not form a legally constituted organisation) with an arts or entertainment purpose are eligible for funding but must be auspiced by an organisation that meets the eligibility criteria.

Sole Traders without employees cannot be auspiced.

1.6. How do joint applications work?

Organisations wanting to join together as a group to deliver a grant activity or project must appoint a 'lead organisation'. The lead organisation must meet the Fund's eligibility criteria and only the lead organisation can submit the application form and enter into a grant agreement with the Commonwealth.

Applicants (including the lead organisation in a joint application) may submit more than one application, however the same applicant cannot receive funding for more than one application in the same assessment period.

Joint applications can include overseas partners so long as the lead organisation meets the eligibility criteria and the activity is undertaken in Australia.

1.7. Are we able to apply for both the RISE and Sustainability Fund?

While an organisation may be eligible to apply to both the RISE and Sustainability Fund (noting Sustainability is open to Australian Government funded organisations only), an organisation's financial position will likely make them better suited to one or the other in the first instance.

The Sustainability Fund will provide 'last resort' funding assistance to organisations at imminent risk of insolvency. The RISE guidelines outline that organisations that are at risk of insolvency are not eligible to apply to RISE.

If your organisation is facing imminent risk of insolvency we recommend firstly submitting an application to the Sustainability Fund.

1.8. Can administration costs be funded?

Only the administration costs associated with undertaking projects funded by the RISE Fund.

The RISE Fund does not provide operational funding for organisations. It is important to demonstrate how funding your administration costs will contribute to successfully delivering your project. Projects that include a high percentage of administration costs are likely to represent less value for money.

1.9. Can infrastructure costs be funded?

No, with the exception of costs associated with establishing COVID-safe infrastructure such as physical partitions or shields.

1.10. Can my project be delivered solely online?

Yes. Innovative ways to deliver content and productions in response to COVID-19 restrictions are encouraged.

1.11. What are 'new' projects or activities?

A new project or activity is one that was not presented prior to COVID-19 or one that has been re-imagined in response to COVID-19 restrictions.

1.12. What does 'scale' of a project mean?

Scale refers to the size and extent of a project, including how many participants and locations are involved. Assessors will consider the scale of the project in the context of your organisation's experience and capacity.

1.13. What type of activities can be funded?

The purpose of the Fund is to support the arts sector to re-activate. The Fund does not support sporting, automotive, motocross, esports or hospitality-related activities.

The types of activities that are eligible for funding include:

- cultural and creative events or activities, including innovative ways to deliver performances, exhibitions, tours and online delivery
- cultural and creative programming and promotion
- festivals
- purchasing or leasing essential equipment for events, such as sound or lighting equipment
- development of COVID-safe infrastructure and protocols
- community outreach activities such as workshops

- capacity-building activities that link to the objectives and outcomes of the program, supporting support an organisation to build long-term financial sustainability.

1.14. What do you mean by 'arts and entertainment'?

The purpose of the Fund is to support the arts sector to re-activate.

To be eligible, an organisation's primary purpose must be arts and entertainment.

Arts and entertainment entities are organisations whose major source of revenue or hours worked are in activities that involve at least one of the following:

- the employment of cultural or creative workers*
- the operation of venues or facilities often used to exhibit or showcase creative and cultural talent
- the organisation of arts and entertainment activities.

*Creatives and support workers are those who are engaged in either creative roles (such as artists, creative production roles) or in roles that support the arts and entertainment activity (such as technical or administrative roles).

Organisations whose primary purpose is sporting, automotive, motocross and hospitality events are not eligible.

1.15. Can I apply more than once?

Yes. You can submit more than one application, noting that funding decisions will consider a balance across art forms and types of activity, geographic and community diversity, and generation of jobs. Please note that where you submit multiple applications in an assessment period, those applications will compete against each other. You cannot receive funding for more than one application per assessment period.

1.16. Can I reapply for funding?

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

If you are unsuccessful, you may ask for feedback and re-submit. It is recommended that you include new or more detailed information when submitting your new application and ensure the activity you are applying for is aligned with the RISE Fund's objectives, outcomes and assessment criteria.

1.17. Can I submit an application on behalf of a group?

Yes. Joint or consortia applications are eligible for funding under the RISE Fund, as outlined in section 7.2 of the RISE Fund Guidelines.

1.18. What if I need to update my application after submitting it?

If you find an error in your application after submitting it, you should contact us immediately at RISE@arts.gov.au. We do not have to accept any additional information, nor requests from you to correct your application after you have submitted.

1.19. How can I make my project COVID-safe?

Organisations should prepare and develop a COVID-safe plan, including risk assessments, hygiene controls and physical distancing, to operate in a COVID-safe way to protect staff and project participants.

The National COVID-19 Commission Advisory Body has released a planning tool to assist businesses develop COVID-safe plans, which is available at www.pmc.gov.au/nccc/resources/planning-tool-help-businesses-reopen-and-be-covidsafe. Safe Work Australia also has a range of guidance and protocols for office environments, workplaces, and training, available at www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au.

1.20. How do I demonstrate that my project would be substantially less likely to proceed without investment support?

You should provide evidence of funding need in your application, which may include financial statements or a statutory declaration about your financial status.

1.21. How do I demonstrate my project will generate increased economic activity?

Depending on the nature of your project, your application should show expected economic outcomes such as revenue from ticket sales, benefits for other industries such as hospitality and accommodation, and likely future benefits as a consequence of your project. You may base this on similar previous activities you have delivered.

1.22. How do I make my application competitive?

Before submitting your application, you should check that it:

- clearly addresses the program objectives, outcomes and assessment criteria (sections 2 and 6 of the RISE Fund Guidelines)
- uses plain language and answers questions concisely
- does not assume assessors know anything about your organisation or project
- provides relevant background information and supporting documentation

1.23. Where can I get more assistance with my application or SmartyGrants?

You can seek further assistance by contacting the RISE team at RISE@arts.gov.au.

If you are experiencing technical issues with SmartyGrants, please contact service@smartygrants.com.au. You can also call +61 3 9320 6888 between 9.00am and 5.00pm Australian Eastern Standard Time, Monday to Friday.

Further information is also available in the SmartyGrants help guide at <https://applicanthelp.smartygrants.com.au/help-guide-for-applicants>.

2. Assessment process

2.1. How long will it take to assess my application?

Applicants will usually be advised of an assessment outcome within 10 weeks from the time the application is assessed. Applicants will be advised of the outcome in writing.

2.2. When are the assessment periods?

While there are no rounds, funding assessment recommendations will be provided to the Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts every two to three months.

The first batch of applications is expected to be assessed in October for applications received by 30 September 2020. Additional assessment recommendations may be made outside of these timeframes. Any updates to this indicative timing will be published at www.arts.gov.au.

There is no allocated funding amount for each assessment period.

2.3. Can my application be fast-tracked?

No, unfortunately fast-tracking of assessments is not possible.

2.4. What is the role of the Creative Economy Taskforce?

The Creative Economy Taskforce provides advice and support regarding implementation of the Government's JobMaker plan for the creative economy to the Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts. Further information is available at www.arts.gov.au/covid-19-update.

2.5. If my application is ineligible or unsuccessful, can I ask for feedback?

Yes. Should your application be found ineligible you have 10 business days from the date you are notified to request feedback. Should your application be found unsuccessful, you may request feedback within one month of being advised of the outcome. Feedback requests can be submitted to RISE@arts.gov.au.

2.6. Will my funding history with the Office for the Arts or other Australian Government agencies be taken into account?

Yes. Your organisation's history as a funding recipient may be considered, particularly your compliance with reporting and acquittal requirements. For instance, if you have outstanding reports, you may be ineligible to apply for further funding. If you have a reasonable reason for a delay in reporting you may explain this in your application.

3. Funding and acquittal

3.1. Can my budget include expenditure on COVID-safe infrastructure and protocols?

Yes. COVID-safe infrastructure and protocols are measures to minimise the risk of exposure to COVID-19, consistent with industry best practice and guidance provided by the National Cabinet, Safe Work Australia, National COVID-19 Commission Advisory Body, and Australian Health Protection Principal Committee. Such measures should be reflected in an organisation's COVID-safe business plan.

3.2. Can my budget include a contingency for unexpected expenses?

Yes. This should not exceed 10 per cent of the total funding requested through the RISE Fund.

3.3. How much funding do I have to contribute to the project?

You are required to make a financial contribution towards your project or have other sources of funding, although the impact of COVID-19 will be taken into consideration. There is no minimum or maximum amount of co-contribution, but the level of contribution is expected to be relative to the nature and scale of the project, and higher co-contributions, including from states and territories, will be advantageous to your application.

3.4. Can I apply for RISE funding if I currently receive funding for the same project from the Office for the Arts, the Australia Council and/or Creative Partnerships Australia?

Yes. As long as the funding you are receiving is not for the same component of the project as the one for which you are seeking funding through the RISE Fund.

You must clearly identify all funding sources in your budget, and separate expenditure items that will be covered by the RISE Fund from the expenditure items that will be covered by funding from other sources.

3.5. Can I apply if I've also applied for a Show Starter Loan?

Yes. However, a combination of a RISE Fund grant and Show Starter Loan cannot make up more than 50 per cent of the total budget of a project or \$5 million, whichever is the lesser. Your budget must also include details for what part of the project will be funded by a Show Starter Loan.

3.6. Do I need to have confirmed funding from other sources?

No. Other sources of funding do not have to be confirmed at the time of application. The application form will ask you to identify which funding has been confirmed.

3.7. Can other funding sources be entirely in-kind, or does some of it need to be monetary?

Yes. Support can be financial, cash and/or in-kind support from sources other than the Australian Government.

3.8. What happens if my other funding sources fall through during the project?

You will need to advise the Office for the Arts immediately and we will consider whether we need to vary our agreement with you.

3.9. If an item in the proposed budget is deemed ineligible for funding, does this mean my entire project is considered ineligible?

No. Partial funding may be considered through the assessment process.

3.10. If I'm successful, will I receive the full amount of funding I've requested?

Partial or full funding may be offered to successful applicants. The assessment of applications will consider value for money, which may include the need for funding support, the quality and viability of the work plan and timeline, and the viability of the proposed budget. The overall competition for funding, in the context of available funds, will also be taken into account when grants are offered. There may also be circumstances where partial funding is offered if a project is clearly scalable.

3.11. Can I apply for multi-year funding?

No. Funding will only be available in the 2020-21 financial year, however the maximum grant period for your activity is two years, starting from the date a grant agreement is executed ('executed' means both you and the Commonwealth have signed the agreement).

Your grant agreement will specify any conditions regarding the completion date of your activity and the acquittal of grant monies.

3.12. Can I receive funding for a project that has already commenced?

No. You cannot receive funding for any part of a project for which costs have already been incurred.

3.13. If I'm successful, how will I get paid?

If successful, you will be required to enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the Commonwealth. You will be paid following execution of the agreement by yourself and the Office for the Arts. Payments will be made as set out in the grant agreement.

The RISE Fund uses a Commonwealth Simple Grant Agreement. Sample grant agreements are available on the Department of Finance's website at www.finance.gov.au/government/commonwealth-grants/tools-templates.

3.14. What happens if my project is affected by COVID-19 restrictions?

Your risk assessment and management plan should include COVID-19 restrictions and mitigation measures. If your project is affected by COVID-19 restrictions, you must advise the Office for the Arts immediately and we will consider whether we need to vary our grant agreement with you.