

Arts Development Fund for Persons with Disabilities

Guide to 8th Batch Application for a Grant from the Fund

Starting from the 2027-28 financial year, the Arts Development Fund for Persons with Disabilities (Arts Fund) will operate on a recurrent funding to ensure sustained support for arts participation among persons with disabilities (PWD). The subsequent funding scheme will inherit and continue to support the projects approved under the current application, with existing funding terms, regulations, reporting, and monitoring mechanism remaining applicable. The new name of the funding scheme will be announced in due course.

Ambit of Arts Fund

Arts Fund has been set up to subsidise eligible organisations for organising various time-limited arts programmes or activities for PWDs. The Arts Fund is administered by the Secretariat to the Arts Fund (Secretariat) of the Social Welfare Department (SWD) and overseen by a management committee (MC). The objectives of setting up the Arts Fund are to enhance arts knowledge of PWDs, foster their interests in arts and explore their potential through the provision of elementary and/or continuing arts programmes and help PWDs who have great artistic potential to strive for excellence and develop their career in performing, visual and creative arts.

Tiers of Projects under Arts Fund

2. There are two tiers of projects under the Arts Fund -

(a) **Tier One: Provision of Elementary and/or Continuing Arts Programmes**

The Arts Fund provides funding support for applicant organisations to organise elementary and/or continuing arts programmes or training classes or courses for PWDs, so as to give them opportunities to participate in arts and unleash their artistic potential. The Arts Fund also supports applicant organisations to hire professional arts tutors and to enhance logistic and technical support so as to provide continuing training for PWDs who have potential to nurture their arts talents. Grants for Tier One projects also cover public education programmes to promote the arts talents of PWDs and social inclusion.

(b) **Tier Two: Development of Talents and Careers in the Arts**

Tier Two projects aim at providing funding support to applicant organisations for

organising large-scale, impactful and sustainable projects which focus on developing the potential of talented PWDs for their career development. This tier of projects will require longer time of continuous training to develop the talents of PWDs with potential in arts. The Arts Fund provides funding support for applicant organisations to develop individual PWDs with great artistic potential to pursue their career in performing, visual or creative arts and to enable them to strive for excellence. Funding support covers professional guidance and training. In addition, Tier Two projects encompass the organisation of district-based and/or territory-wide programmes to showcase PWDs with great artistic potential through large-scale performances after a period of professional guidance or training funded by the Arts Fund.

Assessment Criteria

3. Applications for the Arts Fund are governed by rules and procedures. Grantees are expected to establish a mechanism for providing structured and ongoing training for PWDs to develop their arts talents through organising the funded activities or training programmes. The amount of grant is subject to assessment and deliberation of the MC. Part or whole of the net approved project cost after deducting the expected revenue from the project may be covered by this grant. The assessment criteria for the two tiers are:-

(a) Tier One: Provision of Elementary and/or Continuing Arts Programmes

4. Subject to assessment, grants will be provided for applicant organisations to implement Tier One projects for a maximum of 18 months with a maximum grant of \$0.75 million per project. The support-worthiness of the projects will be assessed based on the following criteria –

- i. whether the proposal is non-profit making in nature;
- ii. whether the proposal meets the purpose of cultivating the interests and potential of PWDs in arts development and developing their talents in arts;
- iii. whether the proposal is feasible and cost-effective including the reasonableness of the budget;
- iv. whether the proposal brings benefits to the promotion of inclusive arts development and social inclusion in the community; and
- v. whether the applicant organisation is capable of implementing the proposal including its management structure, financial viability, experience and track record.

(b) Tier Two: Development of Talents and Careers in the Arts

5. Tier Two projects are targeted at enabling PWDs to develop and consolidate their capabilities in career pursuits in arts. Each proposal shall last for a minimum of two years up to three years with a budget over \$0.75 million. In addition to the assessment criteria at paragraph 4 above, additional assessment criteria include:-

- i. whether the proposal is feasible in achieving the purposes of developing and sustaining the talents of PWDs in arts with potentials for career development;
- ii. whether the programme structures and contents are comparable with similar training courses/programmes in the market;
- iii. whether the provision of professional guidance is reasonable;
- iv. whether the component of providing training to professional arts instructors/tutors on understanding the special learning needs of PWDs is appropriately incorporated in the proposal; and
- v. whether the programmes are well planned and implemented for demonstrating the talents and achievements in arts through district-based and/or territory-wide programmes.

Submission of Application

6. The Arts Fund is generally open for applications once a year subject to review. The SWD now invites applications for the eighth batch from 3 August 2026 to 30 September 2026.

7. Applicant organisations shall be non-profit making non-governmental organisations (NGOs) granted tax exemption status under section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance (Cap. 112), with at least two years of experience in organising structured arts activities or training programmes for PWDs. They may or may not be receiving subvention from the SWD. Supporting documents, including tax exemption certificate, organisation structure, the latest audited financial statement as proof of financial management and control, and documentary proof of at least two years' experience in organising structured arts activities or training programmes for PWDs should be submitted with the application.

8. Eligible applicant organisations may apply for grants under the Arts Fund by individual eligible service units or joint applications by eligible service units within the same organisation for shared procurement and programme implementation. In making a joint application, the applicant organisation should state in the application form the specified distribution of the amount and percentage of the grant requested to

be assigned to each of the service units involved in the joint application. Virement of grants among service units or projects of a grantee is *not* allowed.

9. It is advisable for applicant organisations to seek sponsorship from other funding sources and not just rely on the Arts Fund for financing the project. Such funding request with relevant information should be disclosed in their applications. For example, organisations should consider making an application to the Arts Capacity Development Funding Scheme under the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau (CSTB) if their projects fall within its ambit.

10. Applicant organisations have to justify the requested amount by providing details on how the projects/activities to be organised or services to be provided will be deployed to achieve the objectives of the Arts Fund.

11. When conducting procurement, applicant organisations must strictly adhere to the principles of openness, transparency, fair competition and prudent use of public resources. The specific requirements are as follows: for every procurement with a value of more than \$5,000 up to \$10,000, at least two quotations must be obtained; for every procurement with a value of more than \$10,000 up to \$500,000, at least three written quotations must be obtained. Each quotation shall include detailed breakdowns, specifications, certificates and relevant professional requirements in support of the funding applied for. Under the premise that the procurement specifications and requirements are met, applicant organisations should select the supplier that has submitted the lowest bid in accordance with the principle of prudent use of public resources, otherwise, full justifications should be given. For procurement with a value of more than \$500,000, open tender shall be adopted. In addition, exceptional procurement cases recommended by the MC will be subject to approval by the Director of Social Welfare on a case-by-case basis.

12. Applicant organisations may apply for grants from the 8th batch of the Arts Fund either by submitting the electronic application form or by completing the latest application form, both of which can be accessed at <<https://www.swd.gov.hk>> under “Public Services > Rehabilitation Services > Funds for Specific Groups / Special Needs Trust / Financial Assistance > Arts Development Fund for Persons with Disabilities” section (https://www.swd.gov.hk/en/pubsvc/rehab/cat_fundtrustfinaid/adfpd/). Should applicant organisations choose to submit the physical application form, **one soft copy** (USB preferably in MS WORD 2010 or above for Windows format) and **one original copy of the completed application together with all relevant documents stipulated at paragraphs 7 and 11 above** should be submitted, in person or by registered mail, to the Secretariat to the Arts Fund of the SWD at Room 901, 9/F, Wu Chung House, 213 Queen’s Road East, Wan Chai, Hong Kong with “Application for allocation of grants from the Arts Development Fund for Persons with Disabilities”

clearly marked on the cover of the envelope. The closing date for submission of application is 30 September 2026 (Wednesday) at 5:00 p.m.¹ Late applications will not be processed.

Approval of Application

13. The exact lead time in processing the applications will vary depending on the number and complexity of applications received. In view of these variables, flexibility in the implementation schedule of the planned projects should be exercised. The Secretariat will acknowledge receipt of applications by email. **The Secretariat will endeavour to inform applicant organisations in writing of the result of their applications around six months after the closing date of application upon completion of all vetting procedures. Applicant organisations should not enter into any financial commitment in respect of their projects before their applications are approved. Any financial commitment made without or prior to the receipt of a formal approval shall be the sole responsibility of the applicant organisations.**

14. To ensure that the grant is used specifically for the purposes of the Arts Fund and within the scope approved by the MC, grantees will be required to sign an agreement (Notification of Result) which lays down the terms and conditions of the grant. The Secretariat reserves all the rights to disqualify an approved application, terminate the grant or ask for a refund.

15. The Art Fund will not fund any projects that the Government believes to likely constitute or cause the occurrence of offences endangering national security or otherwise be contrary to the interest of national security.

16. The Government reserves the right to disqualify any applicant on the grounds that the applicant has engaged, is engaging, or is reasonably believed to have engaged or be engaging in acts or activities that are likely to cause or constitute the occurrence of offences endangering national security, or otherwise the exclusion is necessary in the interest of national security or necessary to protect the public interest, public morals, public order or public safety of Hong Kong.

17. The annual allocation ceiling of the Art Fund is will be set at no more than the projected investment return from the capital. Nevertheless, in the circumstance that the investment income generated may not be able to fully meet the demand for

¹ If Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 8 or above or black rainstorm warning signal is in force for any duration between 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. on the closing date, the application deadline will be postponed to 5:00 p.m. on the next working day. Postal applications will only be accepted if the postmark is on or before the closing date.

allocation, the Director of Social Welfare may, taking into account the advice of the MC, authorise the use of part of the principal to meet the funding demand.

18. Appropriate acknowledgement of the grant given by the Arts Fund shall be made by the grantees in the implementation of the projects.

19. The Arts Fund does not normally support the recurrent expenditure of a project for more than **three years** unless otherwise approved by the Government. In assessing proposals submitted by applicant organisations, priority would be given by the MC to those that are more advanced/cost-effective than proposals previously approved.

20. No application for additional funding to cover unforeseen expenditure will be entertained.

21. Grantees should seek prior approval from the Secretariat for variation of estimates of individual budget items after the approval of grant with solid justifications and no adverse impact on the project deliverables. In any case, the total grant of the project after variation should not exceed the total grant originally approved.

Payment of Grant

22. Payment of the approved grant from the Arts Fund shall be made direct to grantees' bank accounts if grantees so authorise.

23. **The approved grant** will be disbursed **by instalments** during the funding period based on completion of milestones/deliverables, submission of all relevant documents as required and fulfilment of any other terms and conditions of the grant. **The first instalment, up to a maximum of 30% of the approved grant**, is a start-up fund and will be disbursed upon signing of the Notification of Result and satisfaction of other conditions prescribed by the Government. **The SWD reserves the right to withhold any payment if the applicant organisations fail to provide adequate information as required or fail to carry out the projects as approved and on schedule.**

24. The **payment schedule** will be stipulated in the Notification of Result. In most cases, **the grants will be paid every six months after the commencement of the project.** Grantees should submit a **progress report**, containing both qualitative and quantitative deliverables as well as documentary evidence, to the Secretariat **every six months.** If necessary, the Secretariat may request grantees to revise their evaluation methods and performance indicators.

25. The **final payment, at about 20% of the approved grant**, or the remaining balance for project lasting for one year or less, will be made on a reimbursement basis, subject to the submission of the final report and final Audited Financial Statement (AFS) within 6 months after completion of the projects.

Use of the Grant

26. Grantees must ensure that the grant is spent in a judicious manner and avoid wastage. Cash income generated from box office, admissions, enrolments, participation and sales of merchandise will not affect the eligibility of the application. Grantees must return to the Government any residual funds and operating surplus generated from the projects, up to the amount of the grant, at the time they submit the final AFS of the project. However, if a grantee proposes to claw back the operating surplus in a manner acceptable to the Arts Fund and subsequently approved by the Government, the grantee may retain **70%** of its operating surplus.

Accounts and Records

27. For project with a duration of more than 12 months, the grantee is required to submit an annual AFS within 6 months after the end of each reporting year and submit a final AFS **within 6 months after the project completion**. For projects with a duration of 12 months or less, the grantee is only required to submit a final AFS **within 6 months after the project completion** and submission of annual AFS is not required.

28. All separate books of accounts and records of the project, including the original copies of all the invoices and receipts, shall be kept for at least **seven years**. These books of account and records should include cash and bank books, ledger of accounts containing transaction records of all sums of money received and expended by the project and any other matters relating to receipts and payments.

Publicity and Acknowledgement

29. Grantees will be responsible for the publicity and marketing of the projects and relevant follow-up actions with a view to maximising benefits to the arts sectors for PWDs of Hong Kong and the community at large.

30. Grantees shall **acknowledge** the funding support under the Arts Fund as prescribed by the Government in all publicity, advertising and promotional materials and publications including but not limited to printed, electronic versions as well as at media events relating to the projects. The Government reserves the right to require a

grantees to immediately cease and desist from using any promotional materials in which reference is made to the Government. Grantees must also ensure that **a logo and a disclaimer** as prescribed by the Government will be included in any publicity materials, publication and media events related to the projects.

31. Grantees shall provide the Secretariat with details of achievements of the projects, if any, including creation of works in which intellectual property rights subsist, successful marketing and commercialisation of deliverables and awards. The Secretariat may from time to time disclose to the public details of such achievements, including announcing them on the internet or through publications or by showcasing them including but not limited to events and exhibitions for publicity and reference.

Completion of Project

32. A grantee should normally **commence the project within 3 months** from the date of approval of the grant and ensure that the project is implemented in accordance with the approved schedule and completed on time. **Within 6 months of completion of the project**, the grantee must submit to the Secretariat for endorsement a final evaluation report with a final AFS.

Enquiries

33. Enquiries should be addressed to the Secretariat at 2892 5133/ 2892 5522.

Secretariat to the Arts Development Fund for Persons with Disabilities
Social Welfare Department
July 2026