



## REPORT

Report Date: October 20, 2022  
Contact: Natalie Lue  
Contact No.: 604.665.3020  
RTS No.: 14829  
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20  
Meeting Date: November 16, 2022  
[Submit comments to Council](#)

TO: Standing Committee on Policy and Strategic Priorities  
FROM: The General Manager of Arts, Culture, and Community Services  
SUBJECT: Vancouver Civic Theatres Activating Spaces Grant 2023

### **RECOMMENDATION**

- A. THAT Council authorize Vancouver Civic Theatres (VCT) staff to maintain an annual grant program to animate non-commercial VCT spaces and enhance their profile, subject to a maximum expenditure of \$200,000 for 2023 to be included in the annual VCT budget.
- B. THAT Council authorize staff to allocate a maximum of \$200,000 in 2023 to organizations meeting the criteria outlined in this report and specified in the VCT Grant Information Guide 2022 attached as Appendix A.
- C. THAT pursuant to Section 206 (1) (j) of the Vancouver Charter, Council deems any organization receiving a grant under this program from January 1 2023-December 31, 2023 that is not otherwise a charity registered with the Canada Revenue Agency, to be contributing to the culture of Vancouver.
- D. THAT the General Manager of Arts Culture and Community Services (GM of ACCS) (or their designate), is authorized to negotiate and execute agreements, to disburse the grants described in this report on the terms and conditions generally set out below, and on such other terms and conditions as are satisfactory to the GM of ACCS (or their designate), and the Director of Legal Services.
- E. THAT no legal rights or obligations are created by the approval of Recommendation A above unless and until the applicable theatre license agreement is complete and approved by the City in accordance with Recommendation C above and executed and delivered by both the grant recipient and GM of ACCS (or their designate).

*Recommendations A, B and C require two-thirds affirmative votes of all Council members per section 206 (1) of the Vancouver Charter.*

## **REPORT SUMMARY**

The Activating Spaces Grant program was approved by Council in 2019 (then known as “VCT Grant”) and ran from 2000-2022, allocating up to \$200,000 each year to support not-for-profit arts and cultural events at non-commercial Vancouver Civic Theatres (VCT) spaces. This report seeks Council approval to renew the program moving forward. If approved, staff will allocate up to \$200,000 in the 2023 VCT operating budget for this grant program and will disburse grants in alignment with the City’s long-range culture plan *Culture|Shift*.

## **COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS**

On July 9, 2019 (RTS 12991) Council approved new rental rates for VCT that included both commercial and not-for-profit rental rates for three consecutive seasons from September 1, 2020 to August 31, 2023.

On July 9, 2019 (RTS 11595), Council approved to authorize VCT staff staff to maintain an annual grant program to animate non-commercial VCT spaces and enhance their profile, subject to a maximum expenditure of \$200,000 for each of the next three years 2020, 2021, and 2022 to be included in the annual VCT budget.

On November 16, 2021 (RTS 14658), Council approved to authorize VCT staff to allocate \$200,000 to organizations meeting the criteria of the VCT Grant Program to animate non-commercial VCT spaces in partnership with community. Source of funding is the 2021 Cultural Grants operating budget.

## **CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS**

The City Manager recommends approval of the foregoing.

## **REPORT**

### About The VCT Activating Spaces Grant (formerly known as The VCT Grant)

This in-kind grant program provides rental subsidy and assistance for certain VCT costs (including a portion of technical and front of house labour costs), with an overall goal of maintaining a strong utilization of VCT non-commercial public spaces. An additional goal of this program is to build community engagement and strategic partnerships while assisting organizations with artistic development, to increase their profile, and expand their audiences.

VCT Activating Spaces Grants are one of the few non-cash grants that support eligible not-for-profit arts and cultural organizations to access the City’s professionally-equipped, downtown non-commercial VCT spaces. Grants to these organizations animate the City’s performing arts spaces and present a range of culturally diverse performances, workshops, rehearsals, recordings, arts festivals and conferences for public enjoyment and sector development. This program is one of many programs, awards, and services that the City offers to support a diverse and thriving cultural ecology.

The VCT Activating Spaces Grant Program is designed to support Vancouver-based, not-for-profit arts and cultural organizations that have a mission to develop, create, produce, present, and disseminate artistic work for the benefit of the public and the arts sector, in any artistic

discipline (e.g. Indigenous arts, community arts, dance, interdisciplinary, literary, media, multidisciplinary, music, theatre, visual arts, cultural advocacy).

This in-kind grant program provides rental subsidy and assistance for certain VCT costs (including a portion of event staff labour costs and in-house technical equipment) and serves a range of organizations, including large-scale year-round users, small-sized occasional users, and first time users. The program objectives are to assist organizations with artistic development, to increase their profile, and expand their audiences.

### 2022/2023 Performing Arts Season

The arts and culture sector, like many other sectors, continues to be deeply impacted by COVID-19. Last year, Council supported the sector through approving additional uses for grants, including the re-purposing of Theatre Rental Grant funding, the re-establishment of the VCT Grant, as well as specific COVID-19 recovery grants to allow artists and cultural groups to adapt and continue to deliver critical programs and services for the community.

### **Strategic Analysis**

One of the primary goals of this grant program is to provide low barrier access to small and emerging not-for-profit groups who may not have the means to be able to engage in short-term rentals with the VCT. The grant eligibility and guidelines of these short term rental agreements and grant award processes for 2022 are shown in Appendix A. This grant program is now well known within the creative not-for-profit sector. While the program, in 2022, has faced a few program challenges as organizations are still planning and assessing risk based on COVID-19 impacts, staff are confident, based on pre-pandemic requests and preliminary 2023 venue availability discussions with the sector, that there will be an increased need for access and funding, and as such, staff are requesting to maintain a \$200,000 grants budget in 2023. Table 1 below, outlines the request versus available budget over the last 6 years.

**Table 1 – Summary of grant requests per year, 2017-2022**

Year	Grant Requests	Grant Budget
2017	\$180,752	\$150,000
2018	\$241,932	\$200,000
2019	\$272,210	\$200,000
2020*	\$199,179	\$200,000
2021*	n/a	n/a
2022**	\$104,504	\$200,000

\* Program was suspended from Q2 2020 to Q4 2021 due to COVID-19 Operating Budget impacts.

\*\*Partial Statistics: figure is only reflective of 2022 requests as of October 20, 2022.

The 2022 VCT Activating Spaces Grant program features a wide range of performance and cultural events. The works reflect the diversity of Vancouver's cultural communities, which include Indigenous, LGBTQIA2S+, persons with disabilities, IBPOC, Senior, and French language communities with performers from the Métis Nation, Latin America, China, Bulgaria, Taiwan, Africa, and others. A summary of Vancouver-based, arts organizations, not-for-profit local community driven groups, as well as community based festivals/events that were and are soon to be awarded a grant in 2022 are listed in table 2\*\*:

**\*\*Table 2 – VCT Grant 2022 Awardees***\*\* Partial statistics as this program is still accepting applications for the 2022 calendar year*

<b>Organization</b>	<b>April 21, 2022 – Dec. 31, 2022</b>	<b>April 21, 2022 – Dec 31, 2022 (as of October 20, 2022)</b>
	<b>Grant Request</b>	<b>Actual and Forecasted In-kind Grant Disbursement</b>
Chor Leoni Men's Choir	\$ 740.00	\$ 740.00
Vancouver Tap Dance Society	\$ 5,180.00	\$ 5,180.00
Taiwanese Canadian Cultural Society	\$ 4,440.00	event cancelled
Powell Street Festival Society	\$ 1,480.00	event cancelled
*Latincouver Cultural & Business Society	\$ 3,020.00	\$ 3,020.00
*Time Will Tell Arts Society	\$ 1,510.00	\$ 1,510.00
Alliance Francaise Vancouver	\$ 1,510.00	\$ 1,510.00
Out Innerspace Dance Theatre and Film Society	\$ 5,920.00	\$ 5,500.00
Vancouver Symphony Society	\$ 5,500.00	\$ 4,466.00
*Pacific Brass Society (Vancouver Brass Orchestra)	\$ 1,510.00	\$ 1,510.00
VSO School of Music	\$ 5,180.00	\$ 5,180.00
PRPL Fork Film Fest Society	\$ 18,120.00	event cancelled
Yarilo Contemporary Music Society	\$ 2,265.00	\$ 2,265.00
Axis Theatre Company	\$ 5,820.00	\$ 5,376.00
Dancing on the Edge Festival Society	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 1,006.00
The Vancouver Men's Chorus	\$ 2,960.00	\$ 2,960.00
Vancouver Chamber Choir	\$ 755.00	\$ 755.00
*re: Naissance Opera	\$ 7,424.00	\$ 5,500.00
*Vancouver Cantonese Opera Society	\$ 2,265.00	\$ 2,265.00
*Compagni V'Ni Dansi Society	\$ 2,265.00	\$ 2,265.00
Turning Point Ensemble	\$ 1,510.00	\$ 1,510.00
*Music on Main Society	\$ 3,020.00	\$ 3,020.00

Asian-Canadian Special Events Association	\$ 1,510.00	\$ 1,510.00
*Sound of Dragon Society	\$ 2,265.00	\$ 2,265.00
Vancouver Chinese Canadian Seniors Society of Multicultural Song and Dance	\$ 3,775.00	\$ 1,510.00
Vancouver International Film Festival (Greater Vancouver International Film Festival Society)	\$ 7,550.00	\$ 5,285.00
*The Disability Foundation	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
BIPOC Creative Association	\$ 1,510.00	\$ 1,510.00
*Vancouver Opera Association	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 104,504.00</b>	<b>\$ 71,118.00</b>

\* event to take place after October 20, 2022

#### VCT Activating Spaces Grant Re-establishment in 2022

In 2022, the VCT Activating Spaces Grant was launched on April 21, which is approximately 6 months later than in pre-pandemic years. This was due to dedicated staff resources returning to VCT in the middle of Q1 2022 and additional time was needed to re-establish the program. The Q2 launch also impacted many organizations' ability to secure desired dates in eligible VCT spaces. Additional organizations had inquired about applying to this program but were ultimately unable to secure dates due to very limited venue availability at that late point in time. In addition, VCT had a number of event cancellations due to continued impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in lower disbursements than VCT originally expected.

In previous iterations of this program, VCT saw multiple individual grant requests of \$25,000 or higher (approximately 12% of the overall program budget). Due to the history of high requests, VCT set a limitation on the maximum award amount granted per organization each year. An award limit was set to \$5,500 per organization for 2022. Should Council approve this program for 2023, the intention is to increase the limit per organization to \$10,000 to accommodate larger requests while still being able to support a wide range of organizations.

As of October 20, 2022, organizations are still expressing interest in the program. Depending on venue availability and organization and programming eligibility, it is forecasted that an additional \$5000-\$10,000 of in-kind grant support will be awarded prior to the program end on December 31, 2022.

#### VCT Activating Spaces Grant Review Process

The applications are evaluated by a staff team from VCT using the published criteria and cross-checking applicants' bookings and theatre availability. The review considers the organization's capacity to produce the event as proposed, and the community impact of the presentation.

### VCT Non-Commercial Spaces

Based on the success of the 2022 grant program, VCT experienced greater utilization and diversity of users on the ʔxwʔexən Xwtl'a7shn, Annex and VCT lobby spaces. Staff are proposing, in 2023, to add the Vancouver Playhouse to the list of non-commercial spaces that would be eligible for funding under the VCT Activating Spaces Grant to provide an additional performing arts space option for grant recipients. This additional venue would provide more access to the City's unique public spaces.

### ***Financial***

VCT is proposing this \$200,000 annual subsidy grant program be managed within the approved VCT operating budget, with a maximum expenditure of \$200,000 in 2023.

### ***CONCLUSION***

Investment in these projects and organizations supports a diverse and thriving cultural ecology which supports the breadth of creativity – from disability awareness, contemporary dance, creative industry events, drag performance art, to Cantonese opera, musical education, and classical music ensembles.

\* \* \* \* \*



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## VCT Grant Information Guide 2022

This guide provides information about the objectives, eligibility, criteria and application process for the VCT Grant program.

### Application Dates

Access to applications opens on April 21, 2022 for events that occur within the 2022 calendar year (before December 31, 2022). Applications will be received on a rolling basis until all funds have been dispersed.

### Contact Information

Emily Carvell Helm  
Community Engagement Specialist  
604-665-2124  
[emily.carvellhelm@vancouver.ca](mailto:emily.carvellhelm@vancouver.ca)

Vancouver Civic Theatres and the City's Cultural Services department offer many other programs, awards, and services which you can learn about by visiting the City of Vancouver's [website](#).

### About the VCT Grant

The VCT Grant program addresses the need for space by arts and cultural groups in Vancouver, while building on our commitment to equity, diversity, accessibility, and inclusivity in our civic theatre spaces. The program supports short-term rental engagements with non-profit organizations with an artistic or cultural mandate and First Nation Band Councils.

This year Vancouver Civic Theatres will award grants towards the programming of select VCT spaces within its venue collection. The grant supports successful applicants by offsetting the facility rental costs of the following spaces:

#### [ANNEX](#)

[ᓂᓄᓄᓄ' exən Xwtl'a7shn \(formerly QET Plaza\)](#)

[Ancillary spaces at all four civic theatres](#) 1

2022 will serve as a pilot year for this program after a temporary suspension due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In an effort to support a wide range of events during the pilot year, organizations will be eligible to apply for one project/event per year with a maximum grant amount of \$5,500.

1 Ancillary spaces can only be confirmed 30 days prior to event



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The grant is not a cash award issued by cheque, or directly deposited into your organization's bank account. The grant amount will be considered an in-kind credit from which the facility rental costs that are invoiced to you by VCT will be deducted.

The grant amounts awarded may cover many of your rental costs, however there may be additional costs that could incur. Examples include: overtime labour, insurance premiums, food and beverage fees, taxes, security, and additional technical crew based on production needs. GST is assessed and collected on the total amount of all rentals and staff. Grant monies cannot be used to pay a tax amount.

### Eligibility

To apply to this program, the organization must:

- Be a non-profit society, a community service co-op legally registered and in good standing with BC Registries and Services, a First Nations Band Council on whose unceded traditional homelands Vancouver sits, or a registered charity with the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA)  
OR  
Groups that are not incorporated as registered non-profits, co-ops, or charities may contact staff to determine if an application in partnership with a registered non-profit society, co-op, charity or First Nations Band council is eligible
- Have an active presence in and deliver programs and services within Vancouver, or if led by either the xʷməθkʷəyʹəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliwətaɫ (Tsleil-Waututh) peoples held in their traditional homelands
- Have a clear artistic or cultural mandate
- Have skilled leadership, and be working with artists and creative collaborators with the relevant lived experience, permission, knowledge, skills, and expertise to lead and contribute to the work
- Provide respectful and safe working conditions for artists, staff, volunteers and contractors
- Comply with all applicable laws, governing acts, regulations, bylaws and guidelines, including obtaining any necessary licenses, permits or approvals required for the project

Priority for funding will be given to:

- Organizations that are ineligible to apply for a Theatre Rental Grant (TRG) or for events within the 2022 calendar year where the TRG deadline has passed
- Organizations and projects that reflect the priorities of the City's culture plan, [Culture/Shift](#)
- Public-facing events or performances that are free or ticketed at a low-cost
- First time applicants

Eligible projects include:

- Community-driven festival or special event with a focus on celebrating diversity
- Workshops/courses
- Performances
- Lectures





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Ineligible organizations/projects include:

- Organizations that do not meet program eligibility and objectives
- Political organizations
- Religious organizations
- Third-party fundraisers

### Assessment and Evaluation Process

A staff review process is used for this program. VCT staff and managers evaluate requests against the program criteria and funding priorities which consider each proposal's relative merits.

Grant results will be available approximately 4 weeks after the application is submitted.

Please note that VCT Grant requests often exceed available resources. As a result, not every grant can be funded or funded to the full request amount. Receipt of a grant does not guarantee funding in any future intakes.

### Conditions of Assistance

The awarded applicant will:

- Acknowledge Vancouver Civic Theatres in all promotional materials, speeches and welcoming/opening remarks in accordance with VCT's public acknowledgement guide
- Notify VCT of any significant programming/event changes in writing, which may result in the reduction or cancellation of the granted amount
- Complete and return a final report no later than 30 days post-event
- Acknowledge that cancellation fee(s) are applicable for the cancellation of any confirmed dates

### How to Apply

Applications for the VCT Grant are to be completed online using [VanApply](#), the City's new grants management system.

### Application Process

1. Contact the VCT Grant program administrator to confirm eligibility and indicate interest in applying for a grant
2. Secure event date(s) at Vancouver Civic Theatres
3. VCT staff will send you a booking request form to fill in along with an access code for VanApply
4. Return the booking request form to VCT to obtain your total grant request amount
5. Once the completed booking request form has been returned to you, your application can be submitted online using VanApply



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### Returning Applicants

- Login to <https://vanapply.vancouver.ca/>
- From the drop down beside your name, select your organization profile
- Click on “Manage Organization” under your name
- In your organization profile, scroll to question 6
- Enter the access code provided by VCT and save
- Click on “Programs”
- VCT Grant will show as available

### New Applicants

- New applicants are those who have never applied for a cultural grant in VanApply and will need to create an organization profile
- Go to <https://vanapply.vancouver.ca/> and click to register
- Select “Register as an organization”
- Create your profile and click to create account
- Complete organization info and enter the access code provided by VCT in question 6
- Complete the organization eligibility profile
- Click on “View Programs”
- VCT Grant will show as available

Please review for more info: <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/introduction-to-vanapply.pdf>

### Online How-To Guides and Videos

For step-by-step instructions and tutorial videos, visit:

<https://vancouver.ca/people-programs/vanapply-online-grant-application-system.aspx>

Applicants can contact [vanapply@vancouver.ca](mailto:vanapply@vancouver.ca) for technical support. Support is available Monday to Friday from 9 am to 5 pm.

### Freedom of Information

The Parties acknowledge that they are each subject to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (British Columbia)*, and that all records prepared by either Party may be under the custody and control of that Party for the purposes of the said act and that all records prepared by that Party in the performance of this Agreement are in the custody and control of that Party. Each Party is or will be subject to the access and privacy provisions of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (British Columbia)*, which creates a right of access to records under the custody and control of public bodies subject to specific limited exceptions.