

Common issues with project funding applications

In the latest project funding round, announced in late October 2008, the Arts Board received 422 applications seeking more than \$9.87 million. After consideration, 151 projects were offered grants totalling nearly \$3.8 million. The Arts Board was able to fund approximately one in three projects, or 36% of projects in total.

The Pacific Arts Committee received 57 applications seeking \$985,552. It offered grants to 20 projects totalling \$261,619.

In each funding round, every application is read and assessed by members of the relevant peer assessment committee. The committees' recommendations are forwarded to the Arts Board for final funding decisions.

The Screen Innovation Production Fund received 72 applications seeking more than \$1.34 million. Overall 17 applications were offered funding to a total of \$263,155. This represents a ratio of one in four funded, or 24% of projects. Final decisions for this fund were signed off jointly by the Arts Board and the NZ Film Commission Chairs.

As is the case with every funding round, some worthwhile projects miss out on grants because there isn't enough funding available. In other cases applications were not offered funding as they did not have a strong enough match with Creative New Zealand's criteria. Based on feedback from committee members, programme advisers and Arts Board member, we've identified some of the common issues with applications and some ways you can improve your application.

When completing an application, we recommended that you follow the Application Workbook, which supplemented the Funding Guide: Ngā Pūtea. This resource lists all the information you needed to make a good application. You could also have contacted a programme administrator if you had any queries or needed help with understanding the information.

- 1) **Information about your project**
Some applications didn't provide enough relevant information about the project. This meant the committees and Arts Board members couldn't fully assess the artistic quality or the potential for the project to be realised.
- 2) **Budgets**
Some applications included budgets that didn't provide enough information or were inaccurate. Sometimes the requested amount for funding didn't appear to have any relationship to the budget.
- 3) **Support Material**
Some applications didn't provide sufficient or relevant support material. The type of support material varies depending on the artform and the Funding Guide outlines what's required. The following common issues were noted:
 - Dance: poor quality of video/DVD support material, or a failure to supply recordings of recent and relevant choreography

- Theatre: poor quality of video/DVD material
- Music: poor quality audio material; insufficient quantities; disc formats that couldn't be assessed; discs unlabelled
- Visual Arts; images (where required) not relevant to project, unlabelled, poor quality
- letters of support (where relevant): in some cases they were not appropriate, not from the right people, or not recent. Where key practitioners are named in an application a letter of confirmation from each of these is necessary to verify their interest and availability in the project.

4) **Applications to tour**

For touring applications common issues were:

- Insufficient itinerary information (i.e. where and when you're going, who you're seeing and why, what you expect the benefits to be.)
- Lack of confirmation of venues: NB a strong proposal includes letters or information to support the fact that the venue has been contacted and/or has confirmed your act.

To be successful your application must have:

- Clearly defined what you expected the project to achieve
- Demonstrated how you'll complete your project within the time frame
- Identified key people and their credibility to carry out the project
- Provided credible financial information
- Provided evidence of assured artistic quality
- Identified how your project meets Creative New Zealand's objectives (please refer to The Funding Guide: Ngā Pūtea and the Strategic Plan 2007-2010).