



TIPS ON ENGAGING WITH CREATIVE NEW ZEALAND



Get to know your funding advisors

- CNZ have artform specific funding advisors, called arts practice directors. Get in touch with the advisor most suitable to your project before you start the application process. [Visit their website for more.](#)
- Listen to the advice that they give in areas such as the level of funding similar projects may have received or how over-subscribed a particular funding round is likely to be. Incorporate their advice into your funding application to demonstrate you are open to receiving feedback.
- Needing a track record with CNZ is about more than successful funding applications. You need to show engagement with CNZ as an arts development agency rather than just a funder. Find ways to get noticed by CNZ that are not exclusively about their funding programmes.

Use the Creative NZ glossary

- Art is subjective and words and meaning can be open to interpretation. When seeking funding, it can help if you use the language that Creative NZ uses in its definitions to better align your work to their funding priorities and prevent 'over-writing' an application. [Visit their website for more.](#)



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Follow the format

- Make it as easy as possible for assessors by being succinct. Stick to the word limit if there is one and if the application asks for short biographies of people involved, make them short.
- Answer the question and don't try to 'freeform' the content to suit your project.
- Make it easy to find the relevant information. Don't write 'please refer to supporting information' – make sure all information sought is contained in the application.

Keep an eye on who gets funded

- CNZ publish the results of all their funding rounds [at their website](#). Look at what levels of funding are going to what projects to keep in tune with what is likely to be successful in future funding rounds.
- If a project is successful that is similar to yours, get in touch with them to see if they will share their information or tips that have helped them to be successful.



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Be clear about what you are asking for and the best fund for your project

- Don't make the mistake of applying for everything and using a 'cookie cutter' approach. Tailor your application to the fund whose priorities best match your own.
- If in doubt, get advice about what fund best fits your project.

Ask for detailed feedback

- Assessors submit commentary on every application and minutes are taken of panel meetings, so you have every right to request detailed feedback if your application is not successful.
- Don't settle for 'no further explanation' - make it clear to the arts practice director that you want to learn from your unsuccessful application and that you want feedback.



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Think like a funding assessor

- External peer assessors are chosen for their artform knowledge and experience and a panel of assessors will read your application. Assessors are not given any information about funding history or any other correspondence you may have had with CNZ - they can only assess based on what is included in the application.
- Once each application has been assessed, a combined list is created that ranks applications based on the assessors scores. A panel meeting is then convened for the assessors to discuss recommendations with CNZ staff and agree projects that are to be funded. Due to the volume of applications, it is often only applications that have scored from the mid-range upwards that are discussed in detail at the panel meeting.
- For Arts Grants, the key points are:
 - What is the idea?
 - Are the artistic aims clearly expressed?
 - Is the idea compelling?
 - Are the artistic outcomes and/or participant experience likely to be high quality?
 - Is the process to achieve the idea realistic and well-planned?
 - Is the budget thorough and accurate and does it consider fair remuneration for practitioners?
 - Do the people involved have sufficient experience to deliver the project?



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Proofread your work and seek feedback

- Get your work checked, ideally by someone who doesn't know the project. Can they understand the case you are making and what you are seeking funding for?
- Ensure the feedback is critical rather than just telling you your work is great.

Treat the budget section as seriously as the idea section

- Use the CNZ budget format- don't try and make your own.
- Don't leave any sections blank - the more detail you include the better.
- Be very clear about what the requested funds will go towards.
- Be realistic about what things will cost.
- Wherever possible, look to include other sources of revenue- even if this is your own 'in kind' contribution – to show you are not solely relying on CNZ.
- Be realistic about how many people will attend the work or purchase a ticket, demonstrating you have a good understanding of risk and that you know your market.