



Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support (IVAIS) program

Frequently Asked Questions

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1. About the program

1.1 Introduction

The Australian Government is committed to recognising, respecting, and investing in First Nations stories at the centre of Australia's arts and culture.

Under the First Nations First pillar of the government's [National Cultural Policy - Revive: a place for every story, a story for every place](#) the government has committed to continue investing in First Nations art centres and pivotal industry organisations through the IVAIS program.

The IVAIS program supports a professional, viable and ethical Indigenous visual arts industry with strong participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Some of Australia's most dynamic visual art is produced in Indigenous art centres, which enable artists to create new art, earn income, develop professional skills and connect to the art market.

Funding is delivered to 4 primary types of organisation including:

- art centres, mostly in remote and very remote locations
- industry service organisations
- art fairs
- arts hubs, mostly in regional or urban locations

The organisations funded through the program form the infrastructure that provides artists with studio space, materials, art development opportunities, marketing and exhibition support, as well as a range of professional support and services for artists, art centre staff and directors.

1.2 IVAIS Grant Opportunities

Grant funding under the IVAIS program is available through the following grant opportunities:

IVAIS Open competitive Grant Opportunity

An annual grant opportunity open to all eligible organisations seeking funding to deliver activities that meet IVAIS program outcomes.

IVAIS closed non-competitive grant opportunity

A closed non-competitive grant opportunity is available for organisations currently funded under the IVAIS program or invited to deliver program specific activities.

2. Making an application

Q1. When is the next IVAIS grant opportunity?

Specific dates of the next grant opportunity will be advertised on the [IVAIS website](#) and [Grant Connect](#).

Q2. Can IVAIS staff help me complete the application?

No. To be fair to everyone, IVAIS staff are unable to personally assist you to prepare your application. If you have general questions including eligibility, program outcomes and expenditure items, please email ivais@arts.gov.au to discuss.

Q3. Is there an opportunity to see what a successful application looks like?

No. There is no 'one best example' that will fit every situation, so best to consider the application form closely.

Q4. Can I apply for IVAIS funding as an individual, or if my organisation is based overseas?

No. You are not eligible to apply under the program if you are:

- an individual or sole trader;
- an unincorporated association;
- an overseas resident/organisation;
- an organisation that is at risk of insolvency;
- an organisation that has overdue acquittals or are in serious breach relating to Australian Government funding. A serious breach is one that has resulted in, or warrants, the termination of a grant agreement;
- an organisation not listed as eligible to apply for the grant under the *IVAIS Program Open Competitive Grant Guidelines Section 4.1*; or
- an organisation, or your project partner is an organisation, included on the National Redress Scheme's website on the list of Institutions that have not joined or signified their intent to join the Scheme. Further information is available at: www.nationalredress.gov.au.

See Section 4: Eligibility Criteria in the applicable *IVAIS Program Grant Guidelines*.

Further information is available at: <https://arts.smartygrants.com.au/>.

Q5. Can I submit multiple activities in one application, or should I submit separate applications for individual activities?

One activity per application is preferred. This allows the application assessors to clearly identify and assess the individual activities and associated budgets.

Q6. Do I need to be a member of the Indigenous Art Code?

The Indigenous Art Code (the Code) is a voluntary industry-led code of conduct that guides ethical trade in the industry. The Code is a set of rules and guidelines designed to support fair, transparent, and ethical trade with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander visual artists.

If you receive an IVAIS grant, you are expected to adhere to the Code's ethos and are strongly encouraged to become a signatory to or a member of the Code. Further information is available at: [Indigenous Art Code](#).

Where a number of applications are found suitable for funding for the same activity, and/or have equal ranking, preference will be given to organisations that are signatories to, or members of, the Indigenous Art Code, Indigenous organisations, followed by organisations with a demonstrated commitment to increasing Indigenous employment, supplier use and/or engagement.

Q7. Can I preview the application form?

Yes. You can preview the application form in the online [SmartyGrants](#) system.

Q8. Can I apply outside of an advertised round?

You cannot apply for funding outside of the advertised opening and closing dates for each round.

Q9. What should I include in the Accessibility Plan section?

The application form will ask you if your organisation caters for people with disabilities. You are encouraged to think about how your activity can include accessibility, and provide details of an accessibility plan or challenges your organisation faces in catering for people with disabilities. You can write about accessibility in the box provided, or you can attach a plan in the supporting documentation section.

Q10. How do I make my application competitive?

Consider the following tips when writing your application:

- Clearly explain how you will use the funding and what your activity or project will achieve. The claims you make should relate directly to the Program outcomes (see section 2 of the Program Guidelines) and the assessment criteria (see section 6 of the Guidelines).
- Use plain language and make sure your answers are concise. Word limits are the maximum allowed and included as a guide – if you can answer in fewer words, then feel free to do so.
- Do not assume assessors know about your organisation or your activity. Background information and supporting documentation is important, but make sure it is relevant to the application and your specific activity. This could include support for the activity from the community, the CEO and/or Board. If your activity is to be delivered in multiple communities, you should provide evidence that all participating communities support the activity.
- Provide clear information in your responses, and ensure that the proposed activities and expenditure match the items in the budget. A balanced and realistic budget should be provided showing requested grant amount and projected expenses.
- The scale and level of other funding and/or in-kind support proposed to support the activity will be considered.

2.1 Closed non-competitive round specific questions

Q11. How can I be considered for funding through the closed non-competitive grant process?

If you are successful in receiving operational support through two consecutive open competitive rounds, you may be considered for future grants through a closed non-competitive process. You will need to meet eligibility requirements, including being an existing multi-year funded organisation with at least two prior consecutive IVAIS funding agreements that include core operation funding, or an organisation invited to deliver program specific activities. You must have a proven record of delivery and no overdue acquittals or serious breaches relating to Australian Government funding. A serious breach is one that has resulted in, or warrants, the termination of a grant agreement.

2.2 Open competitive round specific questions

Q12. If my organisation already receives IVAIS funding, can I apply for additional funding for a one-off activity?

Yes, you can apply for funding for a new activity or additional purpose through the IVAIS open competitive grant process. Please ensure you clearly outline what the funding will be used for and how the proposed one-off activity will achieve IVAIS program outcomes.

If you are in receipt of closed non-competitive multi-year funding, it is expected that all ongoing operational and arts worker funding needs are met through the closed non-competitive opportunity.

Q13. Do I need to be an existing IVAIS-funded organisation to apply for a grant?

No. Any organisation that meets the IVAIS program's eligibility criteria can apply through the open competitive grant opportunity.

Q14. Can I apply for multi-year funding under the Open Competitive opportunity if my organisation is new to the IVAIS program?

Yes, you are able to apply for up to two years through the open competitive funding.

3. How will the application be assessed

3.1 Open competitive round specific questions

Q15. Who will assess open competitive round applications?

Your application will be first reviewed against the IVAIS program's eligibility criteria. Only eligible applications will move to the assessment stage.

Each eligible application is independently assessed on its merit by departmental officers.

A moderation panel is responsible for finalising recommendations to the Minister.

Q16. Who will approve grants?

The Minister for the Arts is the final decision maker in relation to which grants are approved.

3.2 Closed non-competitive round specific questions

Q17. Who will assess closed non-competitive grant opportunity?

Eligibility will be determined by departmental officers. Each eligible activity is independently assessed on its merit by a minimum of two departmental officers, including an executive level APS employee.

The Minister for the Arts decides which grants to approve taking into account the recommendations of the moderation panel and the availability of grant funds for the purposes of the grant program.

4. Funding

Q18. How much will the grants be for?

It is anticipated that most grants will be between \$45,000 - \$300,000 in total, depending on the scope of the grant activity and its complexity. If your organisation is new to the IVAIS program you will need to provide enough evidence and support to demonstrate to the assessors that you have the capability to manage the grant. We will consider your organisations ability to manage the activity, ensure a realistic budget and that there is a specific breakdown of budget line items. If you are seeking a higher amount of grant funding, the assessors will expect to see a higher level of evidence to support your application.

Q19. What should I choose in the application form under ‘what do you plan to deliver with this funding’?

Choose the most relevant outcomes to your activity. If your activity does not fit into the options listed, choose the most relevant and type in a more accurate description of your activity in the ‘Other’ field.

Q20. Does the IVAIS program fund community arts development, language and cultural maintenance activities?

IVAIS provides funding for professional visual arts activities that have strong connections to the art market. It does not fund activities focussed on community arts development, Indigenous languages or cultural maintenance. This means that funding is not available to support cultural centres and keeping places, art therapy programs and cultural development programs *unless* strong connections to the art market can be demonstrated.

For project-based arts activities with an Indigenous languages focus, you may wish to look at the Department’s Indigenous Languages and Arts (ILA) program at: <https://www.arts.gov.au/funding-and-support/indigenous-languages-and-arts-program>.

Q21. If applying for operational funding, is my art centre or arts hub expected to participate in industry events?

IVAIS funding is designed to support viable opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists to produce, extend, market and generate income from their professional visual art practice. Accordingly, IVAIS-funded art centres and arts hubs are expected to participate in industry events regionally, nationally, or internationally where possible. Where feasible, we encourage participation in at least one industry event per year which could include Indigenous art fair, art market or exhibitions.

Q22. Setting up a new art centre?

If you are setting up a new arts centre, we recommend that you contact IVAIS on 1800 006 992 to discuss eligibility. We also encourage you to consider seeking funding through your local and state government, and any industry peak bodies in your area.

Q23. What happens if only part of our funding request is approved?

Partial or full funding may be offered to successful applicants. The assessment of the application will be considered based on value with money, need for funding support and the viability and adequacy of the proposed budget. The overall competition for the funds available will also be considered. It is possible that the Minister may approve partial funding under certain circumstances. If this happens, we will work with your organisation to revise the project objectives, deliverables and budget before finalising your funding agreement.

Q24. How do I submit a grant application?

To apply you must:

- review IVAIS program information available on GrantConnect at www.grants.gov.au or <https://www.arts.gov.au/funding-and-support/indigenous-visual-arts-industry-support-program>;
- complete the online IVAIS application form on SmartyGrants at arts.smartygrants.com.au;
- provide all the information requested;
- meet all eligibility criteria and address the assessment criteria;
- include all necessary attachments or supporting material; and
- submit your application via SmartyGrants by the published closing date and time.

Q25. What happens if I need to submit a late application to the open competitive round?

Late applications may be considered if there are exceptional and unanticipated circumstances (examples are provided in section 7.2 of the Guidelines).

We will only accept a late application where an applicant has contacted the department to request late submission, and we have agreed to this in writing.

5. Eligible Expenditure

Q26. What are examples of eligible grant expenditure?

Some examples of eligible budget expenditure items under the IVAIS program are outlined below.

Additional budget items may be considered by emailing the IVAIS team (ivais@arts.gov.au), however prior written approval must be granted ahead of any expenditure.

Expenditure items should also be proportionate to the grant amount requested.

Operational Funding

- Employment costs, including
 - wages, superannuation and on-costs for Art Centre Manager, Assistant Manager, Studio Co-ordinator and arts workers not supported through IVAIS arts worker funding
 - workers compensation insurance
 - staff and artist training and professional development
- Art supplies and materials (including for on Country collection)
- Art fair and exhibition costs, including venue hire, freight and packing costs
- Administration costs (no more than 10% of total funding)
- Allowances, such as
 - travel to and from art centre locations for consultants
 - travel allowances to attend art fairs and exhibitions
 - meals at the art centre (some remote art centres provide food to their artists, due to the distance required for them to attend the art centre)
- Vehicle costs, including leasing, registration, and vehicle on-costs (such as maintenance)

- Other professional costs, such as
 - bookkeeping and accounting costs, and auditor's fees
 - advertising and promotion
 - subscriptions

Indigenous arts worker funding:

Arts worker funding aims to support the Grantee employ, train, and manage the administration costs of employing Indigenous arts workers. Eligible expenses include:

- Employment costs, including
 - Wages, superannuation and on-costs for Art Centre Manager, Assistant Manager, Studio Co-ordinator and arts workers not supported through IVAIS arts worker funding.
 - Workers compensation insurance
 - Staff and artist training and professional development
- Administration fee up to 10% per IVAIS-funded Indigenous art worker. The higher the number of arts workers, the lower the fee is expected to be.
- Training and professional development (expected to be 8-10% minimum of arts worker budget).

Project funding:

Project funding generally supports one-off activities. Expenses may include:

- Minor infrastructure upgrades, such as refurbishing art centre facilities, or making work, health and safety improvements.
- Art centre equipment and IT, such as security cameras, website development, computers, software, telephone and internet services, and new studio equipment or furniture.
- Supporting the creation and expansion of art fairs and art markets in new locations.
- Increasing access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists to national and international markets.
- Facilitating skills development programs in particular art forms.

Ineligible expenses

Section 5.4 of the Guidelines outlines what the grant money cannot be used for. Examples of ineligible expenses include:

- Costs associated with preparing grant application
- Artists fees for **making art** (artists fees for creative projects/workshops/events may be eligible – refer to the [NAVA Code of Practice](#))
- Artists living expenses (artists fees for residencies may be eligible in consultation with IVAIS)
- Purchase or commission of art works
- Payment of loans
- Re-granting to other organisations
- Purchase of a motor vehicle (co-contribution may be eligible in consultation with IVAIS)

Q27. Does the IVAIS program fund infrastructure activities?

Yes, the IVAIS program can provide support for upgrades to and/or refurbishment of art centre facilities. However, due to budget limitations, the IVAIS program is not able to fund large-scale capital infrastructure activities, such as the construction of an art centre building or staff housing. That being the case, the IVAIS

program can consider funding a contribution towards capital works in partnership with other government entities, the private sector, or philanthropists.

You may wish to talk with your local government, or state or territory government to see if other infrastructure funding opportunities exist. You may also wish to search for infrastructure grants on the Australian Government's grants and programs finder: <https://business.gov.au/grants-and-programs>.

Q28. Does the IVAIS program fund international exhibiting opportunities?

Yes, the IVAIS program can provide support for activities that will increase access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists to national and international markets. However, as outlined in the *IVAIS Program Open Competitive Grant Guidelines*, IVAIS cannot fund an overseas resident/organisation, as the support of international activities would need to be delivered through an Australian organisation.

5.1 Open competitive round specific questions

Q29. What are the different types of funding streams under the IVAIS program?

You will be asked what the funding will be used for in the application. This could include operational funding (including Indigenous Arts Workers), or project funding for a one-off activity.

You will be asked to provide further details and a proposed budget for all expenditure under operational, arts worker or project funding in the application.

Q30. Can I include operational budget items, including Indigenous arts worker funding, in my budget if I am applying for one-off funding?

Yes, you are able to include operational budget items, including for arts workers, in your budget proposal for one-off / new activity funding.

Q31. Can I include administration expenses in the budget?

Yes. However, it is expected that a maximum of 10% of your funding goes towards administration costs.

Administration fee/s towards IVAIS Indigenous art workers should be up to 10% per position, and with economies of scale the higher the number of arts workers, the lower the fee is expected to be.

Q32. What can Indigenous arts worker funding go towards?

IVAIS Indigenous art worker funding is designed to support the grantee to employ, train, and manage the administration costs of employing Indigenous arts workers and acceptable expenses are restricted to:

- Administration fee/s up to 10% per IVAIS Indigenous art worker, and with economies of scale the higher the number of arts workers, the lower the fee is expected to be
- Wages, superannuation and wages on-costs for Indigenous arts workers
- Training/professional development (must be 8-10% minimum of arts worker budget).

Q33. Will I be provided with a budget template?

Yes, you will be provided with a budget template to use in the SmartyGrants application forms, or you can use your own. You will be required to provide an itemised list of operational, arts worker and project-based expenditure in the application form in SmartyGrants. You should separately list all key expenditure items, and clearly show how IVAIS funding will be expended across each relevant financial year you are applying for.

6. Funding Outcomes

Q34. Can I request feedback on an application?

If you are unsuccessful, you may request feedback from the IVAIS team. Once an unsuccessful applicant has been advised of the outcome, there is a 2-week window to seek feedback by contacting ivais@arts.gov.au.

7. Contact Information

Contacting the Office for the Arts

For enquiries relating to the IVAIS program, please contact the Visual Arts and Design Team within the Office for the Arts

Ph: 1800 006 992

Email: ivais@arts.gov.au

8. Amendments

This document may be amended from time to time by the Office for the Arts. Revisions will be published on the [GrantConnect website](#) and [Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support program website](#).