

2021-2022 MAGAZINE FUND GUIDELINES

Deadline: May 28, 2021 by 5:00pm ET

The Magazine Fund program documentation includes:

- Magazine Fund Guidelines (this document)
- [Ontario Creates Program Policies](#)

Applicants must review BOTH documents prior to submitting an application.

PROGRAM ADJUSTMENTS FOR 2021 – 2022:

Ontario Creates understands that COVID-19 has created many challenges across the creative industries.

- Projects may address necessary COVID-19 responses, in keeping with the program objectives. Companies will be permitted to budget funds for operations-related costs, including salaries. Project outcomes should account for these types of necessary expenses.
- The cost of participating in virtual activities/events that facilitate international business and audience development will be eligible including costs associated with the preparation of marketing materials.
- As the COVID-19 situation evolves, successful applicants will be permitted to make activity changes as necessary.
- Please contact your program consultant in advance to discuss the specifics of your circumstances and projected deliverables.

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1. Introduction

The Ontario Creates Magazine Fund is designed to increase the financial viability and overall business growth of the Ontario magazine media industry.

Funding will be provided to support projects that have clear, objective and measurable results and/or indicate direct and positive impact on the overall long-term business growth of the magazine publisher. Priority results include enhancement of publisher revenues and the creation/retention of jobs in the Ontario publishing industry. Ontario Creates will measure results of the program based on return on investment and jobs created and retained.

The Fund also accepts applications from publishers of digital-only magazines and will provide support for a limited number of digital magazines. Applicant Eligibility requirements are applicable to both print and digital publishers; please read the Eligible Magazine Titles section (pages 4-6) for specific requirements for digital magazines.

Ontario Creates values and supports diversity and gender parity at all levels and business roles within creative industries. We acknowledge that many communities continue to face systemic barriers, preventing them from participating meaningfully in these industries.

Ontario Creates applies a lens of diversity, equity, and inclusion to the evaluation criteria for this program, and directs jury members to do the same. Applicants proposing projects/activities that support, reflect, and strengthen diversity and gender parity in Ontario are expected to tangibly demonstrate a genuine and sustained commitment to these equity-seeking communities¹. Ontario Creates encourages applications from companies that are led by BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, or People of Colour) or Francophone individuals and applicants that otherwise meet the provincial definition of diversity².

¹ Equity seeking communities are those that face significant collective challenges in participating in society. This marginalization may be caused by, but not limited to, attitudinal, historic, social and environmental barriers based on age, ethnicity, disability, economic status, gender, nationality, race, sexual orientation and transgender status. Equity-seeking communities identify barriers to equal access, opportunities and resources due to disadvantage and discrimination and actively seek social justice and reparation.

² The provincial definition of diversity states: the dimensions of diversity include, but are not limited to: ancestry, culture, ethnicity, gender identity, gender expression, language, physical and intellectual ability, race, religion (creed), sex, sexual orientation and socioeconomic status.

Ontario Creates is committed to fostering respectful workplaces in all sectors and companies we support. Please see [Program Policies](#) for more details, including the required respectful workplace Applicant Affidavit.

Ontario Creates welcomes applications from people with disabilities, people who are deaf, and people who have barriers to accessing technology. If you would like to request an alternative process or format for submitting an application please contact the relevant Program Consultant a minimum of four weeks before the deadline.

2. Deadlines

The deadline for complete submissions is Friday, May 28, 2021 at 5:00 pm ET, through the OAP. Applications and documentation received after this deadline will not be considered.

Decisions will be communicated to applicants in August 2021.

3. Eligible Applicants

Independent, Canadian-owned and -controlled, Ontario-based magazine publishers may apply for this program.

In the case of affiliated companies and subsidiaries, only one may apply for funding. Entities for which the same person, or group of persons, holds or controls the majority of shares with full voting rights, or has been shown to have control, will be considered affiliated. Where companies are not affiliated according to the above definition, to be considered non-affiliated a corporation must maintain full control over editorial processes, have editorial autonomy from any other publisher applying for this program, and must produce separate financial statements.

To be eligible to apply, the corporation must:

- be a magazine publisher, publishing at the time of application;
- derive more than 50% of the Company's revenue from magazine revenues and related brand extension of the core magazine business (i.e., events, trade shows, website, television properties);
- be Ontario-based, with its central place of business located in Ontario and pay Ontario corporate taxes;
- be at least 75% Canadian-owned and -controlled;
- be incorporated in a Canadian jurisdiction at the time of application submission;
- be in good standing with Ontario Creates at time of application submission;
- have a minimum sales revenue of \$20,000; and
- be financially solvent at the time of application.

Please review the [Ontario Creates Program Policies](#) document for information on Financial Statements.

4. Eligible Magazine Titles

PRINT magazines must:

- have completed a full 12 month publishing cycle and complete business year by the time of application submission;
- have published at least two editions;
- be published at the time of application, throughout the application process, and until completion of the proposed project;
- present a clearly displayed masthead or equivalent with a named editor;
- be primarily edited, designed, and published in Ontario;
- maintain an editorial function where the editor is named (editorial function is described as the commissioning of editorial material and artwork; directing writers, illustrators and photographers regarding the final form of this material; and laying out, copy editing and proofreading, and otherwise preparing the contents for publication);
- contain an average of at least 75% Canadian editorial content (editorial content is defined as text, photographs, graphics, and/or illustrations which are authored or translated by a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident of Canada. Editorial content adapted or condensed by a Canadian citizen or permanent resident will be considered Canadian editorial content for the eligibility purposes of the program);
- use an editorial calendar for the ideation, creation and publishing of content;
- present editorial content from more than one person;
- contain a majority of original content;
- be a minimum of 25 pages in length on average for regular published issues, regardless of physical size of the pages;
- appear in consecutively numbered or dated issues;
- be published under a common title, in accordance to an established publishing or update calendar;
- be published at regular intervals, no more than once every week (excluding special issues) and no less than twice a year;
- contain an average of at most 70% advertising in all the issues published during the previous 12 months;
- have a clear distinction between advertising and editorial content, with advertising or sponsored content and supplements clearly identified;
- have a publishing revenue stream, e.g., subscription revenues, advertising sales; and
- maintain one of the following types of circulation over the most recent six months:
 - have a circulation size of at least 2,500 copies per issue if applying for an individual project or 1,000 copies for a group project.

If your primary publication is in print and it meets all the above requirements, it is not necessary to also meet the requirements for a digital magazine outlined below.

If your primary publication is digital, it must meet all the requirements below.

DIGITAL magazines must:

- have completed a full 12 month publishing cycle and complete business year by the time of application submission;
- Have conducted a minimum of two significant content refreshes;
- be published at the time of application, throughout the application process, and until completion of the proposed project;
- present a clearly displayed masthead or contact page that includes, at minimum, the names of the publisher and editor;
- be primarily edited, designed, and published in Ontario;
- maintain an editorial function where the editor is named (editorial function is described as the commissioning of editorial material and artwork; directing writers, illustrators and photographers regarding the final form of this material; and laying out, copy editing and proofreading, and otherwise preparing the contents for publication);
- maintain the availability of a substantive amount of content (which can include articles, videos, photo essays, infographics etc);
- contain an average of at least 75% Canadian editorial content (editorial content is defined as text, photographs, graphics, and/or illustrations which are authored or translated by a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident of Canada. Editorial adapted or condensed by a Canadian citizen or permanent resident will be considered Canadian editorial content for the eligibility purposes of the program);use an editorial calendar for the ideation, creation and publishing of content;
- present editorial content from more than one person;
- contain a majority of original content;
- present content in specified, themed categories;
- be published under a common title, in accordance to an established publishing or update calendar;
- publish substantive new content at regular intervals, no less than twice a year;
- contain an average of at most 70% advertising during the previous 12 months;
- have a clear distinction between advertising and editorial content, with advertising or sponsored content and supplements clearly identified;
- have a publishing revenue stream, e.g., advertising sales;
- if a web-based magazine, have a valid, live URL address specific to the title;
- if an app-based magazine, have an application currently available for download; and
- maintain circulation at one of the following levels over the most recent 6 month period:
 - Open-access, web-based service: maintain a minimum of 15,000 unique monthly visitors
 - Application (app)-based circulation: maintain a minimum of 10,000 active subscribers
 - Closed-access (subscription, paywall) : maintain a minimum of 2,500 active subscribers

Note: Verification of digital circulation may be requested

Publications **will not be eligible** if:

- published for the purpose of promoting the interest of the principal business of the person, company or organization who publishes or at whose direction the magazine is published, where the principal business is other than magazine publishing;
- published directly or indirectly by one or more individuals, groups, organizations or corporations providing goods or services, where the principal goal of the publication is to enhance or promote the sales of such goods or services;
- the publication contains editorial content that is predominantly reproduced or repeated from current or previous issues of the same publication or of other publications or online sources;
- the publication is capable of inciting hatred against an identifiable group, including a section of the public distinguished by colour, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation or ethnic origin;
- the dominant characteristic of the publication is the undue exploitation of sex, or of sex and one or more of crime, horror, cruelty, or violence; and/or
- contrary to public policy in the opinion of Ontario Creates.

Ineligible publications include: blogs, newsletters, journals, professional association periodicals, in-house publications, guides, comic books, newspapers³, alternative newsweeklies, directories, financial reports, catalogues, schedules, calendars, timetables, classifieds or listings.

If you have questions regarding eligibility please refer to the [FAQs](#) or contact Ontario Creates – see the final page for details.

5. Partnership and Group Projects

Partnership projects

Partners may be involved in your project. An eligible partner must be:

- one or more content creation companies from the book and magazine, film and television, interactive digital media, or music industries that was eligible to submit

³ For the purposes of defining a newspaper, the Ontario Creates Magazine Fund will use the criteria established by the Department of Canadian Heritage for their Canada Periodical Fund:

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|--|----------|
| • Broadsheet format, tabloid format or outsized (larger than 8 ½ X 11) | 2 points |
| • Unbound | 3 points |
| • Printed on newsprint of any quality | 1 point |
| • Identified as a newspaper | 1 point |
| • Cover subdivided (articles, boxed photos) | 1 point |
| • Advertising on front cover | 1 point |
| • Divided into detachable regular sections (news, analysis, entertainment, sports, etc.) | 1 point |

Periodicals with six (6) or more points will be considered to be newspapers and therefore are not eligible for the Ontario Creates Magazine Fund.

an application at the immediately preceding deadline for one of Ontario Creates' Content, Marketing or Export Funds, or the Ontario Music Fund;

- an Ontario-based organization; and
- a Canadian-owned and -controlled organization.

The profit-participation share of the partners should be in appropriate proportion to the ownership of the project and should conform to standard industry practices. Please note that preference may be given to projects that are substantially owned by Ontario-based organizations. If you are considering working with a partner, please contact Ontario Creates in advance of your application.

Group Projects

Projects involving a number of magazine publishers are eligible. Each magazine publisher involved in the group project must meet all eligibility criteria. Each applicant must submit a complete application identifying their specific roles and responsibilities and referencing the other publishers attached to the project.

One lead applicant must be identified as the key contact for all communication regarding the application. Ontario Creates must be contacted at least four weeks in advance of submitting a group application to review the proposed project.

6. Eligible Projects and Activities

A publisher may submit an application for either one specific magazine title **or** for a group of magazines the applicant publishes.

Publishing companies who own **more than one title** may submit up to two applications. The total requested funding amount cannot exceed the Total Funding Available per Applicant (see the Table on page 10).

Group publishers are responsible for ensuring that a maximum of two applications are submitted to the Magazine Fund. As above, the total requested funding amount of the two applications combined must not exceed the Total Funding Available.

1. The project must

- be an activity not already underway at the time of submitting the application **or**, if an existing activity already in progress, demonstrate how funding would enhance the scope and impact of the activity (expenses incurred prior to the application being submitted are not eligible);
- be focused on driving sales and increasing publisher revenue in a tangible and measurable manner and/or improving operational efficiencies and productivity (expected return on investment is a key criterion for the jury in their review of the applications), or expected direct and positive impact on the Company's overall business strategy must be stated; and
- must be completed with Final Reports submitted by **February 17, 2023**.

Applicant companies that are receiving support for a specific activity through another Ontario Creates program are not eligible to receive additional support through the Ontario Creates Magazine Fund for the same activity.

Projects can include, but are not limited to:

- re-launch/re-brand projects;
- circulation projects – such as direct mail campaigns, request circulation development, insert cards, subscription renewal, promotional campaigns, newsstand projects;
- advertising sales projects – such as media kits or promotional material;
- a special issue or special section for an existing magazine (minimum of 8 pages) that is a first-time issue or section for the magazine, which could also be produced in various formats, such as listings, directory, catalogue;
- a new magazine from an existing magazine publisher;
- redesign/upgrade of website;
- development/enhancement of online/mobile magazine formats;
- online marketing campaigns;
- podcasts, videos, webcasts;
- digitization of back issues;
- optimization of online content;
- exploration of alternate sales channels;
- international business development activities, including travel;
- enhancing internal workflow/backend processes; and
- development of a **digital transformation strategy/business plan**. As this is a competitive program, include as much detail as possible of how this plan would be researched, developed and implemented, and the expected outcomes.

Applicants are strongly recommended to contact your program consultant in the early planning stages to discuss your proposed project.

Special Note for publishers proposing circulation projects: While circulation projects by their nature often have a multi-year cycle, if Ontario Creates has previously funded a circulation project through the Ontario Creates Magazine Fund, a circulation project for this current round must be significantly enhanced and/or different to the previous one. You must ensure that you will be able to identify and report financial results unique to the specific circulation activity proposed in your application.

7. Budget, Financing and Timeline Requirements

A **budget template** has been created that **must be used** to provide the budget details for your project(s). Only Excel documents will be accepted (no PDFs).

Eligible Project Budget Expenses

Eligible costs directly associated with the project must be included in the budget detail. Ontario Creates Magazine Fund can represent up to 75% of the total budget, with the

remaining 25% of the total budget from the publisher and/or other funding sources including other government sources, and third party participation (such as retail partners).

Please note: budgets MUST be submitted on the excel budget template provided on the website and the OAP. No PDFs or alternate formats will be accepted. The template consists of two separate tabs: Project Budget and Financing. The Financing template must be completed.

Funding from other sources, including from the magazine publisher, should have an accompanying **letter of intent** indicating commitment to the project and ability to finance the portion of the budget indicated in the application.

Realistically valued “in-kind” services may be included as part or all of the 25% costs that must come from sources other than the Ontario Creates Magazine Fund.

If outside services are required for the project, please **include quotes** from providers and a rationale for their selection.

Ineligible Expenses

Expenses that are ongoing operational costs are not eligible. For a project which is an enhancement of activity already underway, expenses incurred to date are not eligible.

For digital projects and/or projects with digital components, capital expenses related directly to the project (i.e., hardware, software) may be included to a **maximum of 15%** of the total project budget.

Expenses incurred prior to the application being submitted are not eligible. The only **exception is costs related to the development of a digital transformation strategy/business plan**, or components thereof, that is the foundation of the application. If the application is not successful, Ontario Creates will not support these costs.

Ineligible expenses include costs associated with:

- salaries and wages of staff not directly related to the project;
- staff benefit costs;
- fixed overhead costs (such as machine costs: telephone, photocopier, computer); however, costs for long distance phone, paper costs, couriers and other expenses **directly** related to the project may be included;
- occupancy costs (rent or mortgage of facilities); and
- hospitality.

Ontario Creates Funding

Eligible applicants may apply for funding based on their level of **eligible sales revenue**.

Ontario Creates funding can represent a maximum of **75% of the project budget**. There are caps on the maximum funding levels based on the applicant company’s eligible sales revenue, which is defined for the purposes of this program as all magazine revenues including ad sales, subscriptions, and related brand extension of the core magazine business (i.e., events, website, television properties, content syndication).

Grants, funding and donations are not considered revenue for the purpose of this program and should not be included when calculating eligible sales revenue.

Publishers may apply for the following levels of funding, based on eligible sales revenue:

Eligible Sales Revenues	Total Funding Available per Applicant
Over \$2,000,000	(up to) \$75,000
\$500,001 to \$2,000,000	(up to) \$65,000
\$140,001 to \$500,000	(up to) \$40,000
\$20,000 to \$140,000*	(up to) \$35,000

* For publishers with eligible sales revenues of less than \$140,000, the total request for funding from this program should be in reasonable proportion to overall eligible sales revenue – i.e., approximately 25% of your eligible revenue.

Section Three of the application form requires a breakdown of eligible sales revenue to assess the eligible maximum level of funding available to the applicant. Due to recent sales impacts as a result of COVID-19, the parameters for eligible sales criteria have been adjusted. Applicants have the option to base eligible sales on either the past 12 months or an average of eligible sales for the previous two fiscal years.

The number of applicants who will receive funding, and the amount of the funding received, is dependent on the total amount of funding for the program, and the quantity and quality of projects selected by the jury. This is a **competitive** application process. A jury of industry experts will review and recommend which eligible applications will receive funding from this program.

8. Application Process and Evaluation

- Applicants must submit their application to Ontario Creates electronically through the Online Application Portal (OAP) at <https://apply.ontariocreates.ca/>;
- For technical assistance, please contact the OAP Help Desk at applyhelp@ontariocreates.ca;
- Applicants are strongly encouraged to begin the application process early to allow for ample time to provide the necessary information;
- Applicants are advised to contact the program consultant at the beginning of the application process to discuss the project;
- Applications must be received at Ontario Creates offices electronically via the OAP no later than 5:00 pm on the date of the deadline;

- All print magazine material must be received at Ontario Creates no later than 5:00 pm on the date of the deadline;
- All print magazine material must be delivered by Canada Post, we are not able to receive deliveries by courier or in-person;
- Applications that are received after the deadline will be considered ineligible;
- Applications must include all the required materials listed on the application form;
- Applications will be reviewed by Ontario Creates for completeness, eligibility and financial viability;
- Applications that pass this initial review will be assessed by an industry jury and Ontario Creates for final funding recommendations;
- Successful applicants will be notified within three months of the deadline; and
- Successful applicants will be required to enter into a signed funding agreement with Ontario Creates prior to receiving any funding.

Print Publications

The following **must be** submitted as hardcopy. For your application to be eligible, the copies must arrive at the Ontario Creates' office NO LATER than the program deadline.

Please send by Canada Post (DO NOT COURIER or HAND DELIVER):

- **Three copies of the same issue.** If applying for a project involving a new magazine, include three copies of an existing magazine

The following may be submitted electronically **or** as hardcopy:

- **Three recent editorial pieces** that represent the Canadian content of the magazine (three copies of each if submitted as hardcopy). In the hardcopy of the magazine that you submit, you may flag the editorial pieces that represent Canadian content

Material submitted by Canada Post must be received at Ontario Creates by 5:00 pm on the date of the deadline and directed to:

Program Coordinator, Industry Initiatives
 Ontario Creates
 175 Bloor Street East, Suite 501, South Tower
 Toronto, ON M4W 3R8

Digital Publications

The following **must** be submitted electronically:

- a) A current URL, or b) Instructions to access a digital edition; and
- **Three recent** editorial pieces that represent the Canadian content of the magazine (PDF copies and direct links are acceptable)

9. Decision Criteria

The jury will be looking for projects that demonstrate well thought-out activities that will drive sales, help strengthen the publisher's stability and promote business growth. The plan, timelines and proposed budget will be evaluated for feasibility, and the expected return on investment will be carefully considered by the jury.

Ontario Creates applies a lens of diversity, equity, and inclusion to the evaluation criteria for this program, and directs jury members to do the same. Applicants proposing projects/activities that support and reflect diversity are expected to tangibly demonstrate a genuine and sustained commitment to these equity-seeking communities. Ontario Creates may identify particular underrepresented communities within a particular sector. The provincial definition of diversity states: the dimensions of diversity include, but are not limited to: ancestry, culture, ethnicity, gender identity, gender expression, language, physical and intellectual ability, race, religion (creed), sex, sexual orientation and socio-economic status.

Applications will be assessed according to the following criteria:

<p>Feasibility of the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well-defined project scope • Reasonable and detailed budget • Realistic schedule with milestones and appropriate resources • Thoughtful consultation, collaboration, and participation of equity-seeking communities, particularly underrepresented communities within the magazine industry 	<p>25%</p>
<p>Relevance of the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fits with the company’s strategic plan • Supports job creation/retention • Clear explanation of how the project will enhance revenue, stability, and/or position the business for growth in the future • Aligns with current/evolving industry standards and innovations • Responds to challenges and opportunities faced by the company and/or magazine industry • Culturally appropriate initiatives to engage with equity-seeking communities 	<p>25%</p>
<p>Expected Results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly stated and supported by research • Tangible, measurable and realistic • Quantative and qualitative • Identifies outcomes specific to activities focused on inclusivity and/or with equity-seeking communities 	<p>30%</p>

<p>Demonstrated ability of the publisher to implement the plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly stated previous experience related to the proposed activities • Summary of activities and results from previous participation in Ontario Creates programs where applicable (final reports and results in previous years' programs will be taken into account) • Detailed explanation and/or research to support the project's expected success • Information on and rationale for the inclusion of external service providers where applicable • Information about the company, including diversity among senior leadership, staff, or contract employees • Explanation of company policies and/or activities that support diversity, equity and inclusion 	<p>20%</p>
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10. Successful Applicants

Successful applicants will receive Magazine Fund support during the course of the program. Upon entering into an agreement with Ontario Creates, funding recipients will normally receive 60% of the total funds awarded. However, Ontario Creates may choose to alter this initial payment amount.

Subsequent payments will be related to interim and final reporting milestones, and will be based on the recipient's project timeline. The signed agreement between the recipient and Ontario Creates will specifically indicate the date for the interim and final reports.

The final program payment will be issued upon receipt and approval of a final report addressing project outcomes. This report must confirm that the project activities as outlined in the signed agreement with Ontario Creates have taken place. This final report will be due no later than February 17, 2023.

11. More Information

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Ontario Creates

Ontario Creates is an agency of the Government of Ontario that facilitates economic development, investment and collaboration in Ontario's creative industries including the music, book, magazine, film, television and interactive digital media sectors.

ontariocreates.ca