

PERFORMING ARTS PROGRAM

Internships

2026 Application Guidelines

METCALF FOUNDATION

The Metcalf Foundation's mission is to enhance the effectiveness of people and organizations working together to help Canadians imagine and build a just, healthy, and creative society.

We focus our efforts on three areas:

- advancing economic dignity and prosperity for low-income people and communities in Toronto;
- working with leaders across Canada to safeguard lands and waters for generations to come; and
- supporting individuals, organizations, and field building in the performing arts to meet the cultural needs of Canadians.

Our work is grounded in the belief that change happens when we share hopeful visions of the future, work and learn collectively, think broadly in pursuit of comprehensive solutions, and take a meaningful role in the decisions that affect our lives.

We believe that nonprofit and charitable organizations play a critical role as catalysts who animate and facilitate lasting change. They create space for people to connect, communicate, and participate. We are interested in organizations that are deliberately engaging communities in their work and developing new strategies and collaborations.

We encourage success by:

- supporting dynamic leadership — celebrating, developing, and strengthening leaders who are contributing to positive change;
- nurturing new ideas and practices — exploring and developing innovative approaches to tackling tough problems and seizing opportunities; and
- fostering integrated thinking — creating opportunities for ongoing dialogue, collaborative learning, and reflection to build new knowledge and inform action.

In our work, we aim to be clear, open, reflective, and responsive. We actively seek to learn from our experiences with funded projects and from our ongoing exploration of issues and ideas. We expect our grantmaking practices to evolve as we strive to realize the full potential of our commitment and resources.

PERFORMING ARTS PROGRAM

Art is a transformative way of learning about ourselves and the world we live in. Artists challenge our assumptions and bear witness to our common humanity. The environment that enables the arts sector to achieve these impacts, however, is changing in unpredictable ways and faster than ever before.

Shifts in audience tastes and demographics, increased competition for audiences, limited new resource development opportunities, and the need for new leadership are just some of the challenges the sector faces today.

INTERNSHIPS

Metcalf Performing Arts Internships invest in the sector by increasing the number of cultural leaders and arts workers who will be better positioned to advance the field.

The performing arts are collaborative and labour intensive. It takes a myriad of highly trained people — artists, producers, administrators, craftspeople, technicians, and facility staff — to make a professional performance possible. The people in the performing arts, whether onstage or off, are its most crucial resource. They are creative, committed individuals striving to create and produce in a complex, challenging environment.

Cultural leaders and arts workers realize their career ambitions in several ways, from formal training on a dedicated path to transitions within the arts sector itself. Regardless of the trajectory, what remains clear is the need for high-level, mentor-driven learning to achieve success.

The Metcalf Foundation wants to strengthen the performing arts by supporting paid internships in artistic, administrative, and production roles including producers, administrators, choreographers, composers, conductors, curators, designers, directors, and playwrights. Other roles that are integral to the sector will also be considered (performers are excluded).

The internships are designed to encourage the sharing of the rich experience and specialized knowledge that exists throughout the sector. Individuals who complete internships should have more knowledge, better skills, broader work experience, and more robust networks — all of which will help them gain meaningful and sustainable employment while making a strong professional contribution to the performing arts.

The initiative also encourages arts companies to reaffirm their commitment to the future by providing formal opportunities for mentoring and training. We hope organizations will realize opportunities to foster leadership and respond to skill shortages in critical areas.

Funding Limits

Grants will be made for an intern's salary and statutory benefits, **to a maximum of \$40,000 for a full-time, 10-month (43 week)** internship. Organizations may contribute more to the salary if they wish.

Eligibility

Applicants to this program **must**:

- be professional theatre, dance, music, or opera companies or those working between and among these disciplines (including creation/production companies, festivals, professional training institutions, and service organizations);
- be based in and active within Ontario;
- have a minimum of three years of organizational/production history; and
- have a current, valid charitable registration from the Canada Revenue Agency.

Please note:

- Organizations may apply individually or in partnership with other organizations.
- Internships must be a minimum of eight weeks in duration.
- Internships must take place in the province of Ontario.
- Internships funded in Round 1 must be completed by December 31, 2027, and in Round 2, by March 31, 2028.
- Co-op work terms, or any other component of an intern's educational degree, are not eligible for funding.
- Internships must begin after the grant notification date (typically July 1 for Round 1 and January 1 for Round 2).

Application Deadlines

Deadlines for 2026 are:

	Round 1	Round 2
application	March 31, 2:00pm ET	October 6, 2:00pm ET
grant notification	June 18	December 17

Metcalfe is unable to consider late or incomplete applications for funding. **All materials must be received by the time and date listed above.**

Application Requirements

Applicants are invited to reach out to Metcalfe Performing Arts Program Director Michael Trent, at mtrent@metcalfeoundation.com, to set up a time to meet online in advance of making a submission. First time applicants are strongly encouraged to do so. These meetings are not pre-assessments but rather an opportunity to ask clarifying questions. Prospective interns and mentors are expected to read/view all the resources available on our website prior to their meeting with Michael.

There are **six** components to a complete application:

1. Metcalf application cover sheet;
2. statements;
3. application text;
4. budgets;
5. video submission; and
6. attachments.

Please use no smaller than 11-point type.

1. Metcalf Application Cover Sheet

A fillable PDF application cover sheet can be found at the end of this document or download a Word version at <https://metcalffoundation.com/downloads/>

2. Statements – maximum ½ page each (total one page)

- A.** Intern statement – describe your current and future relationship to the field and your ultimate career goals; tell us why you are drawn to this specific mentor and/or host organization.
- B.** Mentor statement – why are you drawn to the intern and what potential do you see in their contribution to the sector? Tell us about your and your organization’s experience with mentorship and learning opportunities.

Note: Metcalf places significant importance on hearing the individual voice, perspective, and motivation of the intern and mentor; we want to understand their passion for this opportunity.

3. Application Text – maximum 5 pages total (with a suggested length for each section)

- A. Brief** introduction to the company’s work **½ page**
- B.** Describe the following: **3–4 pages**
1. Intern’s analysis of their existing and desired skill sets (or learning goals) related to their chosen practice in their own voice
 2. Work plan showing the skills development and activities the intern will undertake in order to close the gap between their existing and desired skill sets
 3. Opportunities for external professional development relevant to the intern’s goals
- C.** Brief bio of the intern **less than ½ page**
- D.** Brief bio(s) of the mentor(s), trainer(s), and/or supervisor(s) **less than ½ page**
- E.** Describe how and when the mentor and intern will discuss if the intern’s learning goals are being met and any changes required to the work plan **less than ½ page**

4. Budgets

- A.** Expenses and revenues for the proposed internship. Revenues (Metcalf grant + the organization's contribution, if applicable) must equal Expenses (Intern salary + employer/employee CPP/EI (if not included in the salary) + professional development costs, if applicable).
- **Do not include** in-kind revenues and expenses, only actuals. Clearly indicate how you are addressing CPP/EI employer and employee costs. Our grant or your organization can cover both, or our grant can cover the employee's portion only (while the host organization covers the employer's portion).
 - Indicate if the internship is full-time. For internships that are part-time and/or of shorter duration, the maximum grant amount of \$40,000 must be pro-rated based on the following maxima: \$4,000/month, \$930/week, or \$24.80/hour. Please note that we consider full-time to be 37.5 to 40 hours per week. Clearly show how you arrived at your request based on these pro-rated maxima.
 - Funds granted from this program may only be used for an intern's salary and statutory benefits (CPP and EI costs). No other costs, such as mentoring costs or fees, or administrative overhead, are eligible for this grant.
 - Organizations are expected to cover all costs related to external professional development activities and, if applicable, must clearly show this in their budget.
 - Organizations are encouraged to ask for the eligible maximum. They are not at a competitive advantage by asking for less. If the total ask is less than \$40,000 (based on a shorter duration and/or being part-time), organizations cannot apply the difference to cover employer and/or employee CPP or EI costs.
- B.** Organization's current operating budget (condensed version, two-page maximum). Please do not submit CADAC forms.

5. Video Submission

Create a short video, up to 90 seconds in length, in which the intern and mentor engage in conversation around the following prompt: **For the intern, what is one significant area or idea that you wish to explore deeply through your internship?**

- Introduce yourselves to begin (first names only needed). The intern should name the area or idea of interest and then engage the mentor in a **robust conversation** about the area or idea. No need to address the camera directly nor to repeat what is already written in your application. Make sure the sound is clear and avoid visual clutter.
- **Note:** Applicants can record their conversation in person or through a video conferencing application. If possible, avoid recording two separate videos as this will not show the interaction between the mentor and intern.

6. Additional Information

- A. Intern's résumé
- B. Organization's most recent audited financial statements

Application Resources

This document contains active links to each of these online resources:

- List of past Performing Arts Internships grants
- Pointers for your video submission
- Internships Information Session recorded on March 1, 2022
- Review the FAQs in the How to Apply section

Assessment of Applications

Applications will be reviewed by Metcalf's board and staff, assisted by an advisory panel from the performing arts community. Funding decisions will be made by the Metcalf board and decisions are final.

Reviewers will want to understand how this investment will make a tangible difference for the intern and the professional development needs of the sector. The strongest applications will:

- have a strong match between the intern and mentor/organization;
- demonstrate meaningful career development for the intern;
- provide evidence of increased responsibility through the course of the internship;
- propose exciting professional development opportunities to fill a gap within, and/or complement, the work plan; and
- demonstrate that proposed internships of less than 43 full-time weeks and/or are part-time nonetheless provide meaningful opportunities for the intern to meet their learning goals.

Applications should be submitted in **electronic form only**.

Please email **one pdf file** with all written materials, and include a **link or attachment** to a **downloadable** video, to **grants@metcalffoundation.com** by the date and time listed.

Performing Arts Internships

APPLICATION COVER SHEET – PERFORMING ARTS PROGRAM

Organization Information

Name of Organization

Contact Name

Position

Mailing Address

City

Province

Postal Code

Telephone

E-Mail

Website

Charitable Registration Number

Organizational Revenue (from last audited statements)

Intern Information

Intern Name and Preferred Pronouns

Intern's Mailing Address

City

Province

Postal Code

Telephone

E-Mail

Application Information

Amount Requested

Area of Practice (eg. management, artistic direction, producing, technical direction, design, etc.)

Duration of Internship (specify months or weeks and part-time or full-time)

Internship Anticipated Start Date and End Date (month, year)

Application Checklist – Please ensure all of the following are included in your application to us.

- 1. Metcalf application cover sheet
- 2. Statements from intern and from mentor
- 3. Application text (in this order):
 - a. brief introduction to the company
 - b1. analysis of intern's existing & desired skill set
 - b2. work plan
 - b3. opportunities for external professional development
 - c. brief bio of the intern
 - d. brief bios of the mentor(s)/trainer(s)/supervisor(s)
 - e. process to discuss if learning goals are being met
- 4. Two budgets – a. internship budget & b. organization's current operating budget
- 5. Video – link or attachment to downloadable file
- 6. Additional information – a. intern's resume & b. organization's audited financial statements

Please attach this form to your Performing Arts Internships application.