

# Explanation for grant applications to commission a composition or libretto

## Grants to commission a composition or libretto

### *general*

The Performing Arts Fund offers grants for composition or libretto commissions (hereafter: grant to commission a work) to an organisation that wishes to commission a music writer (generally a composer and/or librettist) to create a new work.

The goal is ultimately to encourage performing organisations to commission the creation of new repertoire and in that way to contribute to developing the quality and quantity of the performing arts in the Netherlands.

### *who can apply*

To apply, the applicant must have a legal personality. For example, foundations and associations with full legal competence.

An organisation can submit three applications a year, at most. If an application concerns a composition in conjunction with a libretto, then this project is treated as a single work, provided the grants are applied for simultaneously (so as part of a single application). A repeated application – an application submitted previously but was rejected can be resubmitted – is not counted as one of these three.

### *what can be applied for*

A grant to commission a work is provided for a specifically described work that will be created by a music writer specified in the application (so not for a music writer still to be chosen). The commissioning party and the commissioned party need to have reached agreement on the principal aspects of the commission, before the application is made.

A grant can only be awarded if the composer or librettist who the organisation wishes to commission is actively part of the professional performing arts sector in the Netherlands. In this way the Fund seeks to ensure that (the commissioning of) the work and the result will contribute to the performing arts climate in the Netherlands.

The applicant will need to make plausible that the work will be performed several times. He/she can do so, for example by describing the possible locations and/or venues where the production can be performed or by supplying confirmations by venues that wish to programme the production for which the work is written. A work can also be commissioned jointly, with each of the commissioning parties assuming responsibility for one or more performances. It is only in exceptional cases that an application involving just one performance will be considered for a grant.

A commission grant cannot be applied for if it is for the organisation's own artistic leader, or in other situations where there is no clear distinction between the commissioning party and the commissioned party.

### *how is the application assessed*

Subsidy grants are assessed in one or more grant application rounds a year. The corresponding submission deadlines are announced via the website of the Performing Arts Fund NL.

All applications that fulfill the requirements are tested against the following criteria:

- a) motivation of the choice of music writer for this work;
- b) public reach;
- c) significance of the result of the activities for the performing arts in the Netherlands.

Additionally, the assessment may examine how the proposed work will contribute to the diversity of the performing arts in the Netherlands.

To test criterion A, the motivation provided by the applicant for the choice of music writer will be examined. What matters here is how the applicant relates the composer or librettist on the one hand to the specific work on the other. Exactly why does the applicant wish to commission precisely this music writer for the work? The choice of composer can be motivated with reference to the nature and content of the commission (e.g. the theme), but the applicant can also base his/her choice on the specific characteristics of the music writer's work or on the development that the applicant sees in his/her work.

For criterion B, what matters is the size of the public that will be reached with the result of the commission. This pertains first of all to the anticipated number of performances and the public reach achieved in that way. This includes public reached by means of radio, television or internet. The question is secondly whether the work can live on by becoming part of the repertoire of third parties. The instrumentation of the work and whether the work is available to third parties, for example by being published, are relevant aspects here.

Criterion C examines how the activities will contribute to the performing arts climate. Will the results offer an interesting enrichment of the performing arts in the Netherlands? Will the activities serve as an example for other commissioning parties, or will the work contribute significantly to enhancing public reach?

In principle, the criteria described in the first paragraph serve as basis to determine which applications will be considered for a grant. Only where these criteria offer insufficient ground to differentiate between specific applications, the contribution to the diversity of performing arts will be considered as well.

#### *amount of the grant*

The amount of the grant is determined by the Board of the Performing Arts Fund NL. This is principally based on the agreed honorarium in the agreement.

## **Submission and processing**

### *submission*

Applications must be submitted by way of the appropriate application form for the grant in question. These application forms can be found on the Performing Arts Fund NL website. In the case of foreign organisations wishing to apply one should first contact the Fund in order to obtain the application form. The activities should be described using the series of questions as formulated by the Performing Art Fund NL. The application and accompanying information are the main benchmarks to determine if the applicant is eligible. It is therefore important that the application gives a clear and concise overview of the proposal.

The application will only be assessed if it has been submitted on time, if the application form is filled in correctly and the required additional information has been supplied. The Performing Arts Fund NL will not ask for additional information if the application is not clear enough. Information and appendices that are submitted after the deadline will not be taken into consideration in the assessment of the application.

#### *application rounds*

Grant applications are assessed in separate rounds. The number of rounds per year is dependent on the available budget and the kind of subsidy. These rounds are determined each year and the application deadlines are made public via the Performing Arts Fund's website. Applications must be received by the Performing Arts Fund NL on or prior to the deadline. The timely submission of the application is the responsibility of the applying organisation.

#### *eligibility*

Applications can only be submitted twice for a particular proposal/activity. This means that if an application is unsuccessful, the proposal can only be resubmitted once more. The reasons for the refusal do not matter. Even if the feedback was positive but the application was not successful because of insufficient funds, the proposal can only be resubmitted once more. The nature of the proposed activity is key: even if the proposal has been modified, for example because elements have been added or omitted, or if the title, planning or people involved have changed. This also applies if an application has been submitted to the Performing Arts Fund NL for a different kind of subsidy. An application can also be rejected if it is too vague or unclear with respect to the proposed activities, and thus cannot properly be assessed.

An organisation that has received a grant from the Performing Arts Fund NL, but has not complied with the conditions and obligations associated with said grant, cannot apply again for a period of two years. The reason for this approach is that the Performing Arts Fund NL operates on the basis of trust that the grant awarded will be used correctly. If that trust is broken, no applications will be accepted in principle for a period of two years: in principle, because in such cases the specific nature of the transgression will be taken into account.

### **Budget and allocation**

Because the number of applications in general far exceeds the available budget, the Performing Arts Fund NL works with a system of financial tiers. Tiers are determined per kind of subsidy and where necessary per discipline. If there is more than one application round per year, it is possible that financial tiers are determined for each particular round. All financial tiers are published on the website of the Performing Arts Fund NL.

Applications will, after having been assessed on the basis of the criteria listed above, be divided in three categories:

- A. Granted;
- B. To be granted if there is enough money; and
- C. Rejected.

The number of applications assigned to Category A can never exceed what the budget can accommodate. After all, all applications in Category A will receive subsidy. This does not apply to applications assigned to

Category B. These will first be arranged in order of priority, and the budget is then allocated according to this order. The extent to which an application meets the criteria determines whether it is assigned to Category A or B.

### **Obligations and reporting**

Changes that are essential to the awarded grant must be reported.

This is the case when activities are for instance cancelled or take on a different form than proposed. The awarding of the grant can be accompanied by specific obligations with regards to the reporting of certain matters.

If it appears that substantial changes have taken place and were not reported, the Performing Arts Fund NL can lower the grant awarded or repeal it in its entirety.

The responsibility in this situation sits entirely with the applying organisation. In case of doubt, the organisation should contact the Performing Arts Fund NL to determine whether the change is substantial.

Grants of less than €25.000 do in general not need to be reported upon. The Performing Arts Fund NL uses random checks to assess if activities conform to their submitted proposals. The applicant therefore needs to be able to confirm that this is the case. This can mean having to send in the result of the grant to the Fund, such as the score of a composition. If no further information is requested following random checks, then the Performing Arts Fund NL will officially confirm the height of the grant. The applicant will receive written confirmation.

For grants of €25.000 or more a full report is required.

### **Conclusion**

This explanation must be read in combination with the applicable regulation:

*Deelregeling projectsubsidies Fonds Podiumkunsten*. If you have questions or require more information, please contact us.