

arts UPPER HUNTER

COUNTRY ARTS SUPPORT PROGRAM (CASP)

2025

Funding Guidelines



The Arts Upper Hunter Country Arts Support Program 2025 is a Create NSW devolved funding program administered by Arts Upper Hunter on behalf of the NSW Government.

Photo: The Scone Neighbourhood Resource Centre engaged Dan Bianco to facilitate a street art workshop and work with participants to design a mural. The result is the Blue Tongue Lizard Mural. The project was supported by AUH CASP 2023. Photo taken by Lee Watts.

Applications for Arts Upper Hunter Country Arts Support Program

Open 9am on Monday 23 September 2024

Close 5pm on Monday 28 October 2024

For projects to be completed by 1 December 2025.

Overview

The Country Arts Support Program (CASP) is a long-running annual small grants program supporting community arts and cultural development across regional NSW.

Arts Upper Hunter's CASP program provides a brilliant opportunity to community groups and facilities in the Upper Hunter Region to develop a program, event, exhibition, performance, training opportunity or experience in their area.

CASP is not a recurrent fund. It really is for short-term projects with creative outcomes.

[Click to apply, via the SmartyGrants online form](#)

CASP objectives

The aim of the Country Arts Support Program is to support community arts and cultural development in regional NSW through small grants that:

- Assist locally determined community arts and cultural activities.
- Increase opportunities for regionally based groups to access a diverse range of arts programs.
- Enable communities to explore and express their cultural identities.
- Bring social and economic benefits to the community through training, employment and promotional opportunities.
- Lead to greater awareness and appreciation of cultural diversity.
- Increase the sustainability and resilience of regionally based community arts organisations.

Where the money comes from

Funded by the State Government through Create NSW, CASP is administered by Regional Arts Development Organisations (RADOs) themselves. **Arts Upper Hunter** is the RADO covering Dungog, Muswellbrook, Singleton and Upper Hunter council areas.

The program is guided by Create NSW's Arts & Cultural Funding Program's three main objectives:

- to grow creative leadership and programming excellence in NSW.
- to strengthen NSW arts and cultural activity that drives community and social benefits.
- to showcase NSW as a leader for strategic arts and cultural governance and strong financial management.

Eligibility: who can apply?

- A not-for-profit incorporated body
- A local government authority
- A collective or group with a nominated administering body (see FAQs below)
- Applicants are required to have a current certificate of currency for Public Liability Insurance - but see FAQs below
- Applicants are required to be based in the Arts Upper Hunter region covering Dungog, Muswellbrook, Singleton and Upper Hunter council areas. Your projects must also be substantially based in this region.

Who is NOT eligible to apply?

- Individuals - but see the FAQs below for some alternative options
- Groups not based in the Arts Upper Hunter region
- Project that are not substantially based in this region
- Professional touring groups
- Commercial enterprises
- Groups/ensembles and unincorporated associations with no administering body
- Regional Conservatoriums
- Organisations that have applied for or received funding from Arts Upper Hunter or Create NSW for the same activity
- State and federal government departments, including schools (except P&Cs or P&Fs)
- Organisations that have overdue reports or acquittals for funding programs administered by Arts Upper Hunter
- Applicants who have not discussed their project with Arts Upper Hunter.

How much you can apply for and what the money should be spent on ...

Grants of up to \$3,000 are available, primarily for professional artists' fees, travel and accommodation. Some of the funding can also be used for assistance, materials and promotions.

When should projects happen?

Generally projects should take place between 15 January and 1 December 2025. If a project *does* need to go over into 2026, for any good reason, this can be negotiated with Arts Upper Hunter. Payments will be made from January 2025 onwards. Projects *must* be invoiced by 30 April 2025 at the latest.

Eligible activities

Eligible projects may include but are not limited to:

- Workshops
- Arts activities as part of community festivals or events
- Artist-in-residence programs
- Public art and design projects
- Performances
- Arts and cultural directories
- Community seminars and forums
- Exhibitions
- Other local arts initiatives

CASP will not fund:

- Core administrative costs, office costs or the purchase of equipment
- Capital expenses
- Production costs of films, videos, books or other publications
- Competitions
- Fundraising events
- Prizes and adjudication fees
- Applicants who have already received Create NSW funding for the same activities
- General operating expenses or ongoing costs of long-term continuing projects
- Projects that have commenced or are completed
- Sporting activities
- Activities which could be considered part of the curriculum for schools or tertiary institutions.

Closing date

5pm Monday 28 October 2024.

Assessment criteria

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Artistic and cultural **merit** (Merit)
- Relevance, extent and depth of **community engagement** and participation (Impact)
- Evidence of **consultation** with and support from the community (Impact)
- Evidence of adequate planning, budgeting and **capacity to manage** the project (Viability)

Priority is given to projects which address these criteria. We also give consideration to the Upper Hunter region's arts and cultural needs and resources, to accessibility and inclusion, and to the geographic spread of the final recipients.

We are also careful not to fund repeat successful applications for similar projects from the same group year after year.

Process

Contact Arts Upper Hunter.

You *must* contact the Executive Director of Arts Upper Hunter to discuss your application before it is submitted. Ring John O'Brien directly on 0409 382 509 or email and book a phone call via rado@artsupperhunter.com.au.

Use the CASP SmartyGrants form.

To apply, you will need to complete and submit an application form through Create NSW's secure online grants system, SmartyGrants. You'll need to set up a SmartyGrants account before you can proceed with your application, if you don't already have one. You should save your application form on a regular basis and allow plenty of time to review it before submission.

[Click to apply, via the SmartyGrants online form](#)

Join us for a CASP-grant-writing session.

We are offering an **on-line session** to go through the whys and wherefores of the CASP process, including tips and tricks on filling in the SmartyGrants form. You will be able to ask questions at this time too.

CASP Grant-writing session: 5.00-6.30pm Monday 14 October 2024

Sessions are subject to change. Check the Arts Upper Hunter website for details and links.

Gather your supporting materials.

You will need to upload supporting materials through the SmartyGrants form. Support materials include Letters of Support, insurance certificate, current financial report, and visual, audio or written material that speaks to your project's goals and strengths. See the Checklist below.

Get your wording right.

Be clear about what the grant is for, what the project is aiming to do, why you're undertaking this project and how you will make it happen. Don't forget to tell us why you think this genuinely is an exciting project for your community. What is the need? And we recommend you have someone else in your group proofread and check over your application before pressing the "Submit" button.

Consider key groups and special needs.

Please do some solid thinking about who you *could* reach or engage with. How accessible are your events, promotions, information and membership to people with a disability? Is there a way of adding something extra that might appeal to young people? Is there a way of reaching people living remotely eg by Zoom; or is there a way of documenting what you're up to (on video say) so that others can share the experience later? Have you considered the needs of the visually impaired?

Arts Upper Hunter has its own Equity Action Plan, a 3-year plan for increasing accessibility and inclusion for all people. How your project addresses this area will be taken into account by the assessment panel.

Get your application in on time!

All applications must be submitted via the Arts Upper Hunter Country Arts Support Program (CASP) 2025 Application in SmartyGrants by 5pm Monday 28 October 2024. Applications will not be accepted after that time – don't try to submit at 4.55pm on the last day, it just might go wrong. Here is the link: [Country Arts Support Program \(CASP\) 2025 Arts Upper Hunter - Create NSW \(smartygrants.com.au\)](https://smartygrants.com.au)

How we assess your project.

Once your application is received and has been deemed eligible, it will be assessed, rated and prioritised by Arts Upper Hunter's Assessment Panel. The panel will make final recommendations based on the assessment criteria, artform, and taking into account the needs of the region, the range of projects funded, the broad demographics, distribution, priority groups, and scale.

Note that applicants do not need to be an arts-based organisation – in the past we have readily funded services, sporting, disabilities and other groups. It's the project that needs to have creative or cultural outcomes.

How we tell you.

A decision should be made by late November 2024. Once a decision has been made, successful candidates will be contacted and a public announcement made. Unsuccessful candidates will also be contacted. We are happy to provide feedback to both successful and unsuccessful applicants.

Checklist - things to get ready for your application.

- All supporting material must be *relevant* to your project and submitted with your application.
- If your project involves working with children and young people, participants must supply a current Working With Children Check Number – this is particularly for the artist being engaged or anyone who will be working closely with kids.
- Please consider access for People with Disability in your events *and* in your information - accessibility is a priority for Arts Upper Hunter.
- You must provide at least one Letter of Support from partner organisations, intending participants, and anyone else with a stake in the project going ahead (for example a youth service if there's a youth focus). The assessment panel *does read them* too! They help us to understand a project, its goals, its supporters, and its relevance to your community.
- Does your project involve creative content or intended outcomes relating to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander artists, communities or activities? If so, we suggest that you provide at least one Letter of Support from relevant Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander artists and/or communities. Even if no Letter of Support is provided, we will need evidence that consultation has begun. We encourage you to discuss this aspect with staff of Arts Upper Hunter. If you are an Aboriginal organisation, we still encourage you to consult with your members. Please follow this link to view Create NSW's Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Protocols: [Aboriginal Arts and Culture Protocols - Create NSW](#).
- Applications must have a current certificate of currency for Broadform Liability or 'Public Liability' Insurance (PLI).
- All applicants (with the exception of local government) are required to provide a current financial report for your organisation or administering body with your application. This would usually take the form of the most recent Profit & Loss report and Balance Sheet.
- It's crucial that visual, audio or written material you supply speaks to the project and helps us understand what you're seeking the funding for, in participation, brilliance or outcomes.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

**** Can I wait to find out if my application is successful before getting Broadform/Public Liability Insurance?**

No, we require you to already have PLI. (Most active incorporated associations, for example, have Public Liability Insurance.) Please discuss the issue with the Executive Director if you're concerned.

**** Would it help if I apply for less than the full amount?**

Not necessarily. We certainly review the budget - but it really is best to apply for the amount you think you need to run the project, in combination with other cash and in-kind support. This might be close to \$3000 or it might be much less. We do reserve the right to offer you less (or, in rare circumstances, more) if we think it appropriate.

**** We are a small museum/gallery in a Council-owned building - what sort of entity are we?**

Please discuss this with the Executive Director of Arts Upper Hunter before you go too far with your application. Where the museum is managed by volunteer staff in an incorporated association, that incorporated association will usually be the applicant, provided they have public liability insurance and can provide financial records. Where a museum or gallery is managed by paid Council staff, the applicant will usually be the Council, and the gallery or museum will be included in the Project Information of the form. (Councils don't have to upload financial statements into the grants form as their financials are on public record.)

**** We have received grant money for running workshops in the past and want to apply again, for different workshops. Is this allowed?**

Yes, but please note, Arts Upper Hunter are mindful of repeat successful applicants. While you clearly have good grant-writing skills, and are creating projects that meet our criteria, we do encourage successful groups to undertake more significant grant applications with other bodies, which will free up our funds for less experienced applicants. A pattern of successful applications for "sort of the same thing" will not prohibit eligibility but may reduce your chances of success this time round.

**** What is an administering body or Nominated Funds Administrator?**

If your collective or group is not incorporated, you can still apply for a grant if you have an administering body - in the application form they're called a Nominated Funds Administrator. An administering body is a legally constituted organisation that will take legal and financial responsibility for a grant if awarded. (This process is also known as "auspicing".)

A signed letter from the administering body will be required with the application. If a grant is awarded, the administering body must also sign the Conditions for Payment of Grant form

and is responsible for reporting on the grant within three months of the project's completion. All correspondence and monies will be directed to the administering body. It is recommended that grant applicants enter into a written agreement with their nominated administering body highlighting respective rights and responsibilities.

Being auspiced is usually not a big burden for either the auspisor or auspicee. We are happy to provide advice.

**** I'm an individual artist/creative type so I don't qualify for CASP. What grants & opportunities are available for individuals through Arts Upper Hunter?**

Here are a few possibilities:

- *AUH hopes to offer **Microgrants** to individuals and groups, including businesses, in 2025. These will be valued at \$500 or \$1000 and are less restricted than CASP (for example, the money can be used to buy equipment). They are however, quite competitive.*
- ***Join a local group** that might be a good fit - perhaps a CASP grant could be something you can propose once you have found your place in the group.*
- *Perhaps you can **offer your services** to a group that does qualify for CASP - consider approaching, for example, an arts and crafts group, a museum, a health or disability service, a school P&C, with a project that will contribute creative or other outcomes to that group (a theatre workshop for young people with a disability, digital animation skills, a music event tying in with an exhibition...)*
- *There are other grant opportunities around - AUH can advise on federal, state and other grants. Part of our job is **conversations** with creative people to see what their needs are and what is available to them.*
- ***Subscribe** to our e-newsletter ArtSparks on the [Arts Upper Hunter website](#) - there's always lots of news about upcoming grants and prizes and other opportunities.*



Photos from previous CASP funded workshops. Photo left taken by Mark Reedman, right by Anna Rankmore