

## **FAQ SUMMARY**

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## What is WIC's Festivals Learning Exchange: Collaboration Program? (FLeX)

This project was developed in response to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the arts and heritage sector, in particular, the arts and heritage festival organizations that were disproportionately affected. As arts and heritage festivals move beyond crisis management, cancellations, and closures, effective collaboration strategies will be crucial in their ability to adapt, recover, and prosper post-pandemic.

WorkInCulture, working closely with a topic specialist and regional delivery partners in Toronto, Kingston, Sudbury, and Ottawa, will develop and pilot a virtual training program focused on providing the skills and knowledge required to form and implement effective collaboration strategies.

### Who is the program for?

This Festival Learning Exchange program is open to non-profit arts & heritage festivals located in Toronto, Kingston, Sudbury or Ottawa.

The project objective is to provide 30 non-profit arts and heritage festivals broadly with the tools, expertise and processes to create and implement a collaboration strategy that has both measurable short-term performance indicators and long-term goals.

### Who is eligible to apply?

Staff representing non-profit arts (all disciplines) or heritage festival organizations of any size may apply. **Eligible organizations must:**

- Be based in one of the pilot communities of Kingston, Ottawa, Toronto, or Sudbury.
- Be a federally or provincially incorporated professional, non-profit organization with an arts or heritage mandate - e.g. museums, galleries, theatres, arts/heritage services organizations, an organization managing a heritage site, or equivalent Indigenous peoples' institution, or organization, etc. (Indigenous peoples include First Nations, Inuit, and Métis);
- Be administered by an active board of directors or equivalent Indigenous governing body.

The applicant must have a collaboration strategy and/or ideas for their organization that they are looking to address and refine through the training.

### What is the program about?

The focus of this programme is Festivals and Collaboration:

- Why festivals?: to reinforce the Ontario festivals sector by developing long-term relationships based on shared references beyond disciplinary and geographical boundaries

- Why collaboration?: to practise core competencies in a supportive environment conducive to reflection, exchange, critical thinking and emotional flourishing
- How do you define collaboration?: Collaboration enables individuals to work together to achieve a defined and common purpose and/or outcome.

## **Will you cover public health protocols and other COVID-related operational matters?**

In brief, no—there is no one-size-fits-all answer to these questions. However, there will be plenty of networking opportunities with peers and local municipal representatives to find relevant answers to your specific operational needs and grow collaborative projects.

## **Will you cover how to collaborate with sponsors and funders?**

No, these types of relationships are primarily transactional in nature. However, a stronger collaboration strategy can help open new doors and make outreach to sponsors and applications to funders more effective.

## **So, what will you cover then?**

The Festival Learning Exchange program is an invitation to take time away from the minutiae of constant decision-making to meet peers in a supportive environment, learn from each other, and develop personal and organisational strategies to:

- communicate your purpose (and boundaries) to others
- co-produce long-term / large-scale projects with artists, communities, other arts organisations & local institutions
- develop feedback processes and evaluation principles

Participants will have the opportunity to get peer feedback on the collaborative project or idea they wish to develop.

## **Why do I need to provide an outline of a collaboration strategy idea in the application?**

The goal of this extended training program is to help participants learn new skills and knowledge that they can apply in real-time as the program progresses. As part of the participant assessment and selection process, we want to make sure that you will get something out of the program that has immediate benefit to your collaboration development and/or implementation plans.

If you're not sure how to articulate your idea, considering using the STAR method:  
*Situation: Set the scene and give the necessary details of your example.*

*Task: Describe what your responsibilities are/will be for this situation.*

*Action: Explain what steps you are taking/or will take to address it.*

*Result: Share what outcomes you hope your actions will achieve.*

EXAMPLE: Festival A has not been very successful in engaging with emerging artists despite a strong desire to do so. The Artistic Director from Festival A would like to collaborate with more emerging artists, but there are disagreements with the other staff about how to best approach and engage with this group. The AD would like to explore a collaboration strategy that first addresses how the festival team can work together to come up with an outreach strategy they can all get behind and implement in time for the next call for submissions. The AD hopes that this will help optimize their outreach processes and also help them reach the target community more effectively.

### What is the difference between each type of session?

- The **INTRO** session (1h) is our official kick-off, where we'll go over the technologies used (Zoom, Slack...) and the program outline.
- In the **CORE** sessions (full cohort - 3 x 2.5 hours), we'll use theories and plenty of examples (including from the cohort) to stimulate group discussions on dialogue, decision-making models, evaluation principles and other linchpins of thriving, joyful, mutually beneficial collaborations
- **DROP-IN** sessions (small groups - 1.5 hour) will be available to book throughout the program duration to interact in smaller peer groups and develop cross-disciplinary & province-wide relationships
- In the **PLACE** sessions (small groups - 2 x 1.5 hours), festivals located in the same municipality or region will discuss local policy and network development with peers and municipal representatives
- The **SPOTLIGHT** sessions (priority booking for cohort, open to public registrations - 3 x 2 hours) will feature special guests deep-diving into examples from other places and sectors

In parallel to the program, the Learning Exchange cohort will have exclusive access to a dedicated Slack workspace where participants will connect with each other to share materials, engage in discussions, etc. A module on WorkInCulture's eLearning site will house core program info and other relevant program content, materials, and resources.

### How will the training be delivered?

The sessions will be offered virtually over Zoom. Core, Drop-In, and Place sessions will not be recorded.

Where this is an opportunity, and it is safe to do so, participants may opt to meet in-person to discuss ideas and build their own collaborations at their discretion.

### Do I need to attend all sessions to be part of the program?

INTRO + CORE + PLACE sessions: attending all of these sessions is the minimum commitment expected from the main, designated participant (10 hours total).

SPOTLIGHT + DROP-IN sessions: these sessions can be attended by the main participant, and/or by one or more members of staff / board from the same organisation depending on the relevance of the topic (up to 10 hours total).

For more information, please review the training schedule on the [program page](#).

### What else can I expect as a participant in the program?

As part of the application and selection process, participants will identify key learning objectives and a collaboration strategy development plan they will create/expand on during the program.

Through the session, participants will gain core competencies and confidence in establishing their collaboration strategies.

Periodic evaluation will happen throughout the program to measure the impact and effectiveness of the training provided.

Post-training, WorkInCulture staff will continue to check-in on participants over a 5-6 month monitoring period.

### What are the benefits of participating?

The primary benefit is the opportunity to learn about relevant skills, models, and practices to inform and improve your collaboration strategies. Participants will also connect with regional peers and learn about local resources available to support their goals.

Learning outcomes will be unique to each individual, but are intended to include:

- Fundamental collaboration strategy development skills
- Management and leadership skills
- Effective communication skills
- Decision-making skills
- How to build networks and stronger relationships
- New models, approaches, and ways of thinking
- Increased confidence in one's ability to implement their collaboration strategy....

Participants who complete the minimum number of hours of participation outlined in above will receive a completion certificate. Additionally, participants may be invited to participate in promotional campaigns to capture their experience in the program and promote themselves and their organization. These campaigns will be shared with WorkInCulture's 11,000+ social media followers as well as across partner channels.

### What does it cost to participate?

There is no fee to apply or participate in the program.

However, participants will be required to cover costs associated with taking the time to attend the workshops and access the training including utilizing one's own computer or laptop and having access to reliable wi-fi connection, etc.

### What kind of learning accommodation can you offer?

Closed captioning will be provided during all virtual sessions delivered over Zoom. Online resources available through WorkInCulture's eLearning website will remain available to participants for a period of 6 months past the delivery time period.

Please let us know of any learning accommodations we can provide by contacting Stephanie Draker, Program Manager at [stephanie@workinculture.ca](mailto:stephanie@workinculture.ca) and we will do our best to meet your needs.

### How do I apply?

The application process for FLeX: Collaboration will open on October 18, 2021  
Tune into our info session on October 26, 2021 (details on program page)

The deadline to submit your application is November 26, 2021.

[CLICK HERE](#) to access the form.

### When will successful applicants be notified?

Successful applicants will be notified in December 2021.

### What happens if I am selected?

WorkInCulture staff will contact you by email to confirm your participation. You will receive a package comprised of meeting dates and Zoom links and any other preparatory materials to review in advance. Additionally, you will receive an invite through WorkInCulture's eLearning website to register your user account to access any online eLearning content.

### What happens if I am not selected?

We would encourage you to apply for future programs. We will also endeavour to connect you to other learning opportunities or resources that might be applicable – just reach out to Stephanie.

**You can find these FAQs, training schedules, and other project information at:**

<https://www.workinculture.ca/FLEX>

If you have any additional questions please be in touch with Stephanie Draker, Program Manager at [stephaniedraker@workinculture.ca](mailto:stephaniedraker@workinculture.ca)