

Canadian Writer's Grants

A Firefly Guide.

Hello Friends!

If this is your first of our Firefly Guides, you'll see a theme here, that basically, in Canada, you need to have "established" yourself as a writer before the government will give you money to write. This makes sense on a fiscal level, but it can be a catch 22 for us writers — how do you get published if you don't have support?

The answer is of course that it's just a whole lot of hard work. There are a few grants out there for "emerging" writers. We have organized this list of grants into two categories, Part One is for writers with little or no publishing history. As you will see, it's a very short list. Maybe someday we'll have a Firefly grant for this.

In terms of what an "established" writer is, scroll down to "footnotes and fine print" at the end. It's complicated, and it changes from grant to grant, but we've done our best to break it down for you.

These grants may seem like holy grails of the writing world, but they aren't impossible to get, and the process becomes easier and easier once you get one grant approved. There are people in the Firefly community who have been able to support themselves for a while on these. They exist because people apply for them, so don't be shy, but also, don't stop here. Getting a piece published in a magazine or winning a writing contest will up your chances of getting a grant.

Let's all raise a glass to living in a country where it's possible to get paid to write!

Have fun out there,

~ Chris and the Firefly Team

Part One: Grants for 'Emerging' Writers

Toronto Arts Council Grants to Writers (Level One)

- Grant:* \$5,000
- Deadline:* June - check online for current dates
- Eligibility:* Applicants may have at least one *professionally published work (e.g. article, poem, short story, etc. – See footnotes)
Must be a current resident of the city of Toronto
- More info:* <http://www.torontoartscouncil.org/grant-programs/apply-for-a-grant/tac-grants/art-discipline-funding/literary/grants-to-writers>

Toronto Arts Council Grants to Playwrights (Level One)

- Grant:* \$2,000
- Deadline:* June - check online for current dates
- Eligibility:* For new or emerging playwrights with little or no prior history of production
Must be a current resident of the city of Toronto
- More info:* <http://www.torontoartscouncil.org/grant-programs/apply-for-a-grant/tac-grants/art-discipline-funding/theatre/grants-to-playwrights>

Canada Council for the Arts – Grants to Aboriginal Peoples: Creation Grants for Writers and Storytellers

- Grant:* \$5,000 – 10,000
- Deadline:* May - check online for current dates
- Eligibility:* Writers and Storytellers must be First Nation, Inuit or Metis.
Aspiring and Professional Writers and Storytellers are eligible.
(See footnotes for definitions)
- More info:* <http://canadacouncil.ca/writing-and-publishing/find-a-grant/grants/grants-to-aboriginal-peoples-creation-grants-for-writers-and-storytellers>

Did we miss anything? If you know of a grant that's not on this list, let us know!

Part Two: Grants for 'Established' Writers

Toronto Arts Council Grants to Writers (Level Two)

Grant: \$10,000

Deadline: June - check online for current dates

Eligibility: Applicants must have at least one of the following:

1 *professionally published book

60 pages of articles or non-fiction published in magazines, periodicals or anthologies

20 pages of published poems

Must be a current resident of the city of Toronto

More info: <http://www.torontoartscouncil.org/Grant-Programs/Apply-for-a-Grant/TAC-Grants/Art-Discipline-Funding/Literary/Grants-to-Writers>

Ontario Arts Council Writers' Reserve

Grant: \$1,500 --- \$5,000

Deadline: January - check online for current dates

Eligibility: Applicant is a *professional writer as defined by the OAC (see footnotes for definition)

Applicants submit directly to participating magazine and book publishers who act as third-party recommenders for the OAC.

More info: <http://www.arts.on.ca/page119.aspx>

Ontario Arts Council Writers' Works in Progress

Grant: \$12,000

Deadline: February, June, October - check online for current dates

Eligibility: Applicant must be an Ontario-based *professional artist as defined by the OAC

More info: <http://www.arts.on.ca/Page118.aspx>

Canadian Council for the Arts Grants for Professional Writers: Creative Writing

Grant: \$3,000 --- \$25,000

Deadline: October - check online for current dates

Eligibility: Emerging, Mid-Career and Established Writers

Applicants must meet the CCA definitions of a *professional artist *and* a **professional creative writer for all three experience levels.

(See footnotes)

More info: <http://canadacouncil.ca/council/grants/find-a-grant/grants/grants-for-professional-writers-creative-writing>

Canadian Council for the Arts Travel Grants for Professional Writers

Grant: \$500-\$2,500

Deadline: Anytime, at least 3 months before your trip

Eligibility: Applicants must meet the CCA definitions of *professional artist *and* *professional creative writer.

(See footnotes)

More info: <http://canadacouncil.ca/council/grants/find-a-grant/grants/travel-grants-for-professional-writers>

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Part Three: Footnotes and Fine Print

First things first: Canadian citizenship or permanent resident status is required to be eligible for these awards and grants.

Ontario Arts Council

According to the OAC, you are a professional artist if you are someone who:

- ~ Has developed skills through training or practice
- ~ Is recognized by artists working in the same artistic tradition
- ~ Has a history of public presentations or publication
- ~ Seeks payment for work and actively practices his or her art
- ~ Short breaks in artistic work history are allowed

According to the OAC, you are a professional writer if you have at least one of the following criteria:

- ~ One professionally published book for which you have a publishing contract and receive royalties
- ~ At least three separately published essays, short stories, poems or other work for which you have received payment

Toronto Arts Council

Applicants to this program must be published by a professional publisher.

Only publishers that have an independent editorial selection process are considered professional and the author must receive financial compensation for the work. Internet self-publishing, chapbooks and writing in community newspapers, trade journals, free publications, newsletters or student magazines, does not qualify as professional publishing.

Canadian Council of Art

According to the CCA, a professional artist is an artist who:

- ~ Has specialized training in the artistic field (not necessarily in academic institutions)
- ~ Is recognized as a professional by his or her peers (artists working in the same artistic tradition)
- ~ Is committed to devoting more time to artistic activity, if possible financially
- ~ Has a history of public presentation or publication

According to the CCA, a professional writer is a writer who has one of the following:

- ~ At least one book published by an eligible publishing house, **or**
- ~ For fiction, a minimum of four texts of creative writing (e.g., short stories, excerpts from a novel) published on two separate occasions in eligible literary magazines, periodicals or anthologies published by eligible publishing houses, **or**
- ~ For poetry, a minimum of 10 published poems, **or**
- ~ For literary non-fiction, a minimum of 40 pages or 10,000 words of articles published in eligible literary magazines, periodicals or anthologies that are published by eligible publishing houses.

For the CCA Grants to Aboriginal Peoples, definitions are as follows:

Aspiring writers

- ~ Have not yet had a book professionally published, but show a dedication to writing and have a substantial body of literary written work and some publications to their credit including articles, short stories, excerpts, poems, essays, commentaries, etc.
- ~ Aspiring writers must also show dedication to their craft by including a writing mentor or writing group/circle to assist in their proposed project.

Professional writers

~ have had one or more books published by an eligible publisher or the equivalent (for example, four texts of creative writing published in eligible literary magazines, periodicals or anthologies).

Storytellers

~ show a commitment to storytelling. They must also have the recognition as a storyteller in writing, of their peers or from members of their artistic community.

~ They must also be able to provide a list of storytelling events or performances for which they have been paid, received honorariums, or were fulfilling a traditional role within their community.