

CREATIVE ART CENTRAL – CRITERIA OUTLINE



About Creative Art Central

Creative Art Central is an art in community commissioning program for established and emerging creative practitioners. This year we will be considering yearly funding of up to \$40,000 in commissioned funds per project, along with one allocated commission for a First Nations creative practitioner*. The number of projects supported, and funds distributed will be determined by the merit of applications assessed.

Eligible creatives are invited to apply for the program to develop new** and contemporary works in any discipline, which follow an art in community framework***. To find out more about the process of community art projects click [HERE](#).

*** If you apply as a First Nations creative practitioner, this does not disqualify you from being assessed within the overall Creative Art Central program. Creative Art Central is a merit-based art in community program, awarding commissions to creative practitioners who demonstrate a high level of competency against the outlined criteria.**

**** A new work is a concept or idea which has not undertaken or pursued any stage or form of development, including public production or engagement. This means, projects which are currently in early or mid-stage of production in a private, community or public context will NOT be eligible for Creative Art Central.**

***** An art in community framework requires the collaborative delivery of a socially, culturally and/or community engaged art project, resulting in an outcome where community is engaged through a participatory context. Rather than community being a passive and/or audience-based contributor, community must be a dominant feature in the production and/or delivery of the project. This can be related to a co-designed and co-led initiative which benefits the community from a social, cultural, environmental and/or demographic context.**

An eligibility process will need to be addressed, as outlined below, with a project completion date being administered on a case-by-case basis, in reference to a multi-year or singular year production. To be part of this opportunity, you must register. The registration form will be active on **Monday 13 October 2025**.

The top 10 registrations who score the highest points under the eligibility criteria will be awarded seed funding of \$1,000 to refine their concept, with up to three-months to complete this refinement process. The top 10 awarded will be selected under a merit-based criteria based on the questions addressed within the **Registration Form**. This section will be scored by two council representatives.

About the Pitch Process

The **pitch** is an opportunity for you to share your refined concept, level of experience and capacity to deliver. The pitch will be presented within a 20-minute timeframe and can be presented in any medium and context you like. More information regarding the **pitch** will be emailed to those selected. A selected industry panel and a council representative will assess your eligibility score against the criteria to award those will the commissioned funds. The industry panel will be announced prior to the pitch date in **9-13 March 2026**. All those who participate in the pitch process will be informed of the outcome by the Creative Art Central representative either via email or phone.

Eligibility and Non-Eligibility

To be eligible you must be:

- a Central Coast resident
- an emerging creative practitioner, defined as one who has less than five years dedicated to their practice
- an established creative practitioner is defined as one who has committed a major aspect of their working life to their practice (even if this work has not been the main source of income) and a degree of training, experience, or manner of working that allows their work to be assessed against the highest practiced standards.
- a creative practitioner from any discipline who identifies as either emerging or established as outlined above
- a central coast-based arts organisation, group or collective, with members or individuals who identify as either emerging or established
- able to produce a new work of high quality which contributes to our local creative identity
- able to produce a new work which adheres to the art in community framework

Non eligible:

- if you are a creative that does not live on the Central Coast
- if you are an art collective, group or organisation that does not reside on the Central Coast
- if you were an individual part of or an art collective, group or organisation that was a successful recipient in the past three years (2022-2025) of Creative Arts Central
- if you have been a successful individual recipient of Creative Arts Central in the past three years (2022-2025)
- any casual or permanent Central Coast Council employee
- if a project and/or concept is in early or mid-production within any context, including public and/or community.
- any form of training and/or education expenses, including professional development workshops and/or courses

First Nations Eligibility and Non-Eligibility

Identification Criteria

As outlined by AIAATSIS, your heritage is something which is personal to you. You are not required to provide a letter of confirmation to identify as a First Nations person. As part of the criteria of this program to determine your heritage and as outlined by AIAATSIS you must:

- identify as First Nations
- be of First Nations descent
- be accepted as such by the community, in which you live or formerly lived.

To be eligible as a First Nations creative practitioner, you must be:

- a Central Coast resident
- an emerging creative practitioner, defined as one who has less than five years dedicated to their practice
- an established creative practitioner is defined as one who has committed a major aspect of their working life to their practice (even if this work has not been the main source of income) and a degree of training, experience, or manner of working that allows their work to be assessed against the highest practiced standards.
- a creative practitioner from any discipline who identifies as either emerging or established as outlined above
- a central coast-based arts organisation, group or collective, with members or individuals who identify as either emerging or established
- able to produce a new work of high quality which contributes to our local creative identity
- able to produce a new work which adheres to the art in community framework
- identifies as First Nations as outlined by the identification criteria

Non eligibility:

- if you are a creative that does not live on the Central Coast
- if you are an art collective, group or organisation that does not reside on the Central Coast
- if were an individual part of or an art collective, group or organisation that was a successful recipient in the past three years (2022-2025) of Creative Arts Central
- if you have been a successful individual recipient of Creative Arts Central in the past three years (2022-2025)
- any casual or permanent Central Coast Council employee
- if a project and/or concept is in early or mid-production within a public and/or community context.
- your First Nations identification does not fit within the identification criteria
- any form of training and/or education expenses, including professional development workshops and/or courses

About the Budget

The CAC budget must be allocated for the delivery of the proposed project only. This includes; artist fees, required materials, installation equipment, curation, documentation, venue hire, marketing and catering. The CAC funds cannot cover educational and/or training expenses, insurances, accommodation fees and travel expenses.

As reference of how to itemise and breakdown your budget, an example has been provided below:

| Category | Description | Amount (AUD) | Notes |
|-----------------------|---|--------------|--|
| Artist Fees | Payment for your time and creative work, including other collaborators fees | | Include hourly/daily rate/where the award was acquired |
| Materials & Supplies | Paints, canvas, props, costumes, installation equipment etc. | | Be specific |
| Venue Hire | Studio, gallery, rehearsal space | | Include duration and hourly rate |
| Marketing & Promotion | Posters, social media ads, printing | | Include design costs if needed (graphic designer fees) |
| Documentation | Photography, videography, editing | | For portfolio or reporting |
| Access Costs | Auslan interpreters, captioning, ramps, cultural advisors/support | | Ensure inclusivity |
| Other | Catering (launch related), DA's | | Any additional relevant expenses |
| TOTAL | | | |

Providing Support Material

It is important that good quality support material is provided. This includes your CV being clear, concise and relevant to your practice, and any digital images, writings or videos/reels to be reflective of your practice. Also use active URL's for digital content and adhere to specified numbers and lengths of support material required.

Important Information Revised

- Stage one: **register** your capacity, skills and initial concept as outlined in the Smartygrants form. All mandatory questions will have an Asterix (*) allocated

- Stage two: **pitch** your idea (invitation only)
- You must have a new idea which has NOT been previously undertaken in any form of production or development.
- You must propose to develop a new and contemporary work which reflects an art in community framework.
- You must live on the Central Coast, NSW
- You must identify as either an emerging or established creative practitioner.
- You must identify as a First Nations creative practitioner as outlined by AIATSIS (First Nations category only).
- You must be a Central Coast art collective, group or arts organisation with members or individuals which identify as emerging or established.
- Your concept must either engage and/or collaborate with the local community within a co-designed and/or co-created context.

Key Dates

- Registration Dates: **13-27 October 2025**
- Seed Fund Recipients Notified by: **5 December 2025**
- Invitation to Pitch Dates: **9-13 March 2026**
- Commissions Announced by: **15 May 2026**
- Commissions to commence after: **1 July 2026**
- Commissions to be completed by: **30 June 2027**

For more information regarding Creative Art Central, please visit [Creative Art Central | Central Coast Council \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://centralcoast.nsw.gov.au/creative-art-central) and click on either the easy English or General Fact Sheet. You can also email culturaldevelopment@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au

To access the Registration Form – click [HERE](#)

PLEASE NOTE: THIS WILL NOT BE ACTIVE UNTIL MONDAY 13 OCTOBER 2025

Central Coast Council is committed to creating welcoming, inclusive and flexible opportunities for creatives who represent the diverse backgrounds within our community. We welcome and encourage registrations from creatives of all ages, abilities, genders, ethnicity, cultural backgrounds or sexual orientation. Please email Madalyn.Trypas@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au to discuss what adjustments you may require enabling you to fully participate in Creative Art Central.