



Yukon Sound Recording Fund What We Heard

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Engagement process

The purpose of this engagement was to gather feedback on proposed changes to Yukon's sound recording fund. The proposed changes, along with the feedback from the engagement are intended to modernize the fund to better serve the needs of Yukon's music industry. The fund has not been updated since its creation in 2005.

We asked music industry professionals and the public to consider these changes and respond to their content. The department is committed to serving the creative industry.

The engagement process was hosted on Engage Yukon and requests for feedback were distributed through various cultural industry organizations. The engagement was from December 9, 2020, until January 31, 2021. In total, the process brought in 14 responses.

Background

The Yukon Sound Recording Program supports Yukon's sound recording industry by providing financial assistance for demo and full-length sound recording projects. There are two intakes per year: May 1 and November 1.

There are two components to the Sound Recording Program:

- Professional Demo Recording of up to \$2,000 for producing a CD with a minimum of two tracks or five minutes.
- Professional Sound Recording of up to \$5,000 for producing a CD with a minimum of six tracks or twenty minutes.

The Yukon Sound Recording Program for professional demo sound recordings helps professional musicians and owners of recording studios and recording labels develop their careers and businesses. The fund provides 50 per cent of eligible expenses. The maximum Government of Yukon contribution from all sources is 75 per cent.

Economic Development made a commitment to undertake a review of Yukon Media Development's (YMD) funding programs. As part of this review, YMD engaged film and media industry stakeholders and the general public to obtain their ideas on improvements to the programs.

Related to the Sound Recording Fund, the purpose of the Enterprise Trade Fund for film and sound industries is to stimulate Yukon business activity through market expansion and business development. Traditionally, the Enterprise Trade Fund has helped sound artist entrepreneurs reach new markets through touring and showcasing. It has also helped filmmakers build networks and develop content to attend film festivals and media markets. Those activities are now funded under the Economic Development Fund.

What was proposed?

The contemplated changes to the Yukon Sound Recording Program are listed below. The proposals are in response to feedback the department has received on limitations within the existing program. The intent of the proposed changes is to broaden the spectrum of supports offered through the program to better meet the needs and capacity of Yukon musicians. The proposed changes include:

- 1) Rename the program “Yukon Professional Musician Development Fund” to better reflect the spectrum of supports housed under an updated fund.
- 2) Combine the funding currently expended through the Yukon Sound Recording Program (\$50,000) and a portion of the Enterprise Trade Fund (\$70,000) into a single fund with a total allocation of \$120,000.
- 3) Create two programs within the new fund:
 1. “Production Fund Program”: \$70,000 to be allocated through an adjudication process with two intakes per year. The Production Fund will support artist development, sound recordings, and the production of music videos and electronic press kits, with eligible out-of-Yukon expenses. Application deadlines are suggested to be February 1 and June 1.

There will be three eligible project streams within the Production Fund Program:

- A development stream that mirrors the FACTOR Artist Development program
- A full length recording stream; and
- A stream for the production of a music video or electronic press kit.

2. “Promotional Program”: \$50,000 to be allocated to applicants on a first-come, first-served basis for expenses related to marketing activities such as touring and showcasing to promote Yukon musicians outside the territory.

Proposed Program Funding Break Down

Yukon Professional Musician Development Fund	
Production Fund Program	\$70,000
Promotional Program	\$50,000
Total	\$120,000

What we heard

The public engagement process yielded positive discussion between industry peers and colleagues, highlighted areas for improvement in YMD’s sound focused programs and those areas that are working well.

The engagement process brought in 14 responses from recording studios, musicians, solo acts and bands, record labels, artists and music management. Overall the responses were very detailed. Feedback gave context to the industry’s concerns with the existing programs, what they liked about the proposed changes and what they would like to see changed further.

- The input received was organized into the following themes:
- Update to industry standards (definitions, mediums, metrics).
- Increase funding amounts and percentages.
- Application and jury remodelling.
- Emphasis on video and marketing activities.
- Diversification between developing and established artist entrepreneurs.

1. Update to industry standards (definitions, mediums, metrics)

“Demos and CD’s have not been relevant in the industry for a while now, in fact live video has been the industry standard for several years.”

- a) Language in current programs and proposed changes are outdated.
- b) Current and proposed funds are too rigid surrounding either demo or album.
- c) Definitions required for ‘professional,’ ‘eligible costs,’ ‘studio,’ and overall criteria which determine eligibility of the applicant, and costs.

“Singles and small numbers of 3 to 5 of pieces are generally the norm now for recording projects.”

2. Increase funding amounts and percentages

“If Economic Development wants to reach their goals and have real marketable products that compete globally or even nationally (ART that is worth spending more money on promoting) we need more money for less songs to be competitive.”

- a) \$5,000 not enough for contribution toward full album recording costs. Album recording costs now in the \$10 to \$20k range.
- b) Fund amounts have not increased in 15 years. Fund amounts have not accounted for inflation or the increased costs of recording, marketing, and other related costs.
- c) 50 per cent of eligible costs is not industry standard and is not a sufficient percentage of contribution to album costs.

3. Application and jury remodeling

“We would suggest giving larger sums to fewer successful candidates to give them a better chance at success.”

- a) Juries should be made up of Yukon industry professionals and media development officers. 50/50 for more transparency.
- b) Jury feedback is sporadic and not detailed enough.

- c) Jury should weigh equally, artistic merit, technical aspects and project proposal.
- d) Application should have clearer, more concise processes, fewer requirements, especially for entry-level artist entrepreneurs.
- e) Demo recording should not be required for development stages.
- f) Update to the industry standard to allow mp3 and online application submission.
- g) Rolling intake date is preferred.

“Peer review, adjudication process - either outside or within Yukon - is an important part of competition and raising the bar.”

4. Broaden scope of eligible activities (development, video, non-Yukon costs)

“There is no recognition that home recording is now a viable option for many artists, nor that writing, rehearsing, mixing, mastering, planning, etc. are valid expenses”

- a) Non-Yukon expenses should be considered eligible.
- b) Video content should be considered eligible, have some specific criteria, and a budget to ensure they have positive marketing effect.
- c) Home-recording should be considered an eligible format.
- d) Live streaming should be eligible for marketing/touring.
- e) Allow pre-recording costs.
- f) In-kind expenses should be eligible and defined.
- g) Marketing stream should mirror an album/video/single release cycle.
- h) Define where applicants can pay themselves more clearly.

“The purpose of the program is to support Yukon sound recording professionals to develop viable careers and businesses” ... yet artists applying cannot pay themselves for their own studio costs, mixing fees, sound engineer fees, producer fees, and mastering fees; all of which are eligible activities when hiring someone else.”

5. Diversification between developing and established artist entrepreneurs

“One additional result of this ‘industry-heavy’ approach is that many musicians / creators move to the ‘professional’ stage before they are ready or competent in their field.”

- a) Create definitions and criteria in order to identify whether or not applicants fall into a development/emerging or established artist entrepreneurs.
- b) Criteria and definitions in order to avoid funding ‘hobby’ recording.
- c) Avoid mirroring FACTOR programs as most Yukon artists cannot access those funds.
- d) Current programs are too industry-focused. Benefits are not finding their ways to musicians.

What’s next?

Based on this feedback, the department will work with industry stakeholders to further develop the new Sound Recording Program.