



2024 PROGRAM GUIDELINES

RBCxMUSIC | FIRST UP

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Table of Contents

- 2 - Program Details
- 4 - Program Eligibility
- 5 - The Application
- 6 - Adjudication Criteria

Program Timeline

April 22: Applications Open

May 14: Applications Close

Mid-June: Participants Confirmed

Mid-June: Introductory sessions for program participants

August - November: Workshop Series & 1-1 Mentorship

Early December: Final project presentations

The RBCxMusic First Up Program, Powered by MusiCounts, will offer a transformational professional development experience to 30 emerging artists and music professionals who represent the next generation of Canada's music industry.

This unique experience will equip participants with the skills, connections, and industry insights needed to fuel fulfilling and sustainable careers in music. Through a months-long intensive workshop series, 1-1 mentorship sessions with industry leaders, paid performance opportunities, and financial honoraria, this immersive opportunity is among the most comprehensive non-academic development programs for young music professionals in Canada.

If you have any questions about the application process or are unsure if this program is right for you, please email firstup@musiccounts.ca.



Program Details

Participant Expectations & Time Commitment

From mid-August to early December, participants must be available every Monday evening (5:00-7:00pm ET), as well as some Thursdays, to participate in virtual workshops. Between participating in virtual workshops, 1-1 mentorship sessions and preparations/assignments associated with these, all participants should expect to spend approximately 6 hours per week on this program. You should only apply to be a part of this program if you are comfortable with the investment of time required.

Selected applicants must be comfortable collaborating with fellow participants with different levels of experience across all subjects. Participants must be committed to creating a shared experience; the value of this program will not solely reside in the program contents, but in the exchanges and support between peers. Collaboration and community building will be cornerstones of this program.

Upon admittance into the program, each member of the cohort will be asked to sign a Participant Agreement. This agreement will detail the time commitment of participating in the program as well as a participant code of conduct. Participants who do not complete the program as detailed in the Participant Agreement or fail to attend workshops may be asked to leave the program. A \$2,500 honorarium will only be made available to participants once they have completed the program in full, as outlined in the Participant Agreement.

Workshop Series

From mid-August to early December, participants will engage in weekly virtual sessions led by stakeholders in different areas of the music industry. Sessions will range from informational to interactive and will require participants to apply workshop content to their own creative projects and career planning. Workshops will be led by active stakeholders in the music industry, on topics including but not limited to:

- Artist management
- Music supervision
- Marketing
- Entertainment law
- PR and communication
- Grants
- Financial literacy
- Music publishing
- Sync & licensing
- Creative direction
- Brand partnerships
- Career development

1-1 Mentorship

All participants will be able to book several 30 minute 1-1 meetings from a list of curated music industry mentors. These mentorship meetings are intended to give participants the opportunity to network, get advice on their career, or request feedback on their current projects. The mentor pool will include active stakeholders working in different areas of the music industry.

Live Performance Opportunities

Program participants who are able to perform live will be able to participate in paid performance opportunities via RBCxMusic.

Final Project

If selected to participate in this program, you will be required to apply the content from the program to a project or career objective that you are currently working towards. For the duration of the program, you will be required to apply the program contents directly to your current project. At the end of the program, all participants will be required to deliver a final presentation summarizing this.

Program Eligibility

This program is intended for emerging music creators and professionals in Canada who demonstrate high potential, an early track record of success, an evidenced commitment to building a career in music, an eagerness to hone their craft, and an openness to leverage the new information and relationships offered through this program to advance their careers.

To apply for the program, you must align with the following criteria:

1. Be between the age of 19-35 as of June 1, 2024.
2. Be an emerging music creator (artist, instrumentalist, composer, producer, etc.) or an emerging music professional/entrepreneur (manager, publisher, publicist, agent, promoter, etc.)

Individuals with a wide range of experience are eligible to apply for this program. MusiCounts and RBCxMusic recognize that being an “emerging artist” in Canada is not a singular experience, but rather a journey with distinct stages. This program will have two streams aimed at engaging emerging artists and music professionals at two junctures in their career trajectory:

1. **Early Emerging:** Artists and music professionals who are in the early stages of their careers, and show strong indicators of success and future potential. This includes artists and music professionals transitioning from music education programs and/or independent music projects to more active music careers.
2. **Early Career:** Artists and music professionals who are active and established. They might have been already recognized by peers, the industry, and the general public but still have not been able to achieve their full potential or break on a national stage.

In your application to the program, you will be asked to indicate if you identify as an early career or early emerging artist/music professional.

Approximately 15 participants per stream will be selected to participate in the program. Some of the program components will be tailored for participants in each stream, and some program components will bring together participants from both streams.

The Application

How to Apply

You will complete your application to this program via the MusiCounts Application Portal. To get started please follow these steps:

1. Create an account [here](#).
2. Start an application using [this link](#).
3. Once you've created an application, revisit the Application Portal to edit your application [here](#) (we suggest you bookmark for easy access).

Important: The application process for this program takes place in two stages. Stage 1 involves creating your Applicant Profile. Here, we ask for very general information about the applicant; this should not take longer than 5 minutes to complete.

Following your submission of Stage 1, you will receive email instructions inviting you to begin Stage 2 within two business days. Stage 2 is the full application. You must submit Stage 2 by May 14 to be considered for this program.

Application Overview

Stage 2 of the application process is organized as follows:

1. **Applicant Details:** information about the applicants' biography, and their professional/artistic practice.
2. **Work Examples:** all applicants must provide 3 examples of their work that characterize their abilities. All performing artists who perform live must include a live performance video or audio recording.
3. **Career Goals:** all applicants will be required to discuss 2-3 tangible career goals that they hope to realize in the next 3-5 years.
4. **Program Impact:** applicants will be asked to describe what barriers to success they are currently facing, what areas of the industry they find difficult to understand, and how their participation in the program may help support this. Applicants will also be asked to detail their top learning objectives should they be selected to participate in the program.

Current Project: If selected to participate in this program, participants will be required to apply the content from the program to a project or career objective that they are currently working towards. In the application, applicants must describe a project that they are currently working on, and how their participation in this program will help them with said project.



Adjudication Criteria

All applications submitted to this program will be reviewed by a committee of music industry professionals. Adjudicators will be asked to identify applicants that align with the following criteria:

1. Skill & Originality:

- a. Does the applicant's work demonstrate technical ability and expertise?
- b. Does the applicant's work demonstrate a unique and original perspective on their main practice?

2. Impact Potential:

- a. Are the applicant's needs and expectations aligned with what the program offers?
- b. Does the applicant make a thoughtful case for how participation in the program will advance their career and creative practice?

3. Current Project:

- a. Is the applicant currently working on a project that would allow them to maximize the opportunities provided during this program?
- b. To what extent does the timing of their project make them a priority to participate in the upcoming cohort?

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