PROGRAM GUIDELINES 2023/24

MusiCounts Slaight Family Foundation Innovation Fund

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If you have any questions whatsoever about the application process, please send an email to **applications@musicounts.ca** or schedule a virtual appointment with a member of the MusiCounts team **here**.

Key Dates

✚ **September 14, 2023:** Applications Open

✚ **October 25, 2023:** Early Bird Deadline (submit your completed application by this date for a chance to receive one of two $500 gift cards to a music retailer of your choice!)

✚ **December 5, 2023:** Final Deadline

✚ **January–March 2024:** Adjudication Period

✚ **April 2024:** Applicants Notified of Adjudication Outcome

Program
Overview

The MusiCounts Slaight Family Foundation Innovation Fund provides schools in Canada with grants between $5,000 and $20,000 for instruments, equipment, resources, and clinician fees to support technology-forward, contemporary, or culturally-specific music programs in schools. Whether it be Indigenous drumming, hip hop, rock band or music production, this new MusiCounts funding stream aims to empower innovation in music education in Canada.

This grant program is open to all eligible schools in Canada. In particular, this program is geared towards schools that do not have the instruments, equipment, and resources needed to offer an inclusive and sustainable music program for students. **The MusiCounts Slaight Family Foundation Innovation Fund** aims to ensure that the most in-need youth in Canada have access to the benefits of music education.
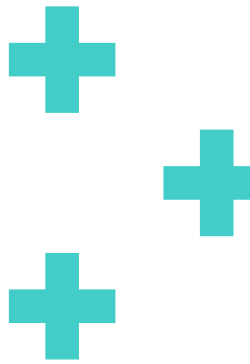
Who can apply?

+ All public, separate and First Nations schools in Canada are welcome to apply.

+ Teachers, administrators and/or school support staff may prepare an application on behalf of their school.

Why does this new funding stream exist, and what approaches to music education does it support?

In MusiCounts' 25+ year history of investing in music education, the majority of our resources have been allocated to music programs that reflect a Western colonial music education tradition; the same approaches to music education that are centered in provincial and territorial music curricula across Canada, and in postsecondary music education programs.

This new funding stream has been established to cultivate innovation in music education in Canada, and foster music education programs that speak to the diverse and evolving needs, interests and cultures of students across Canada.
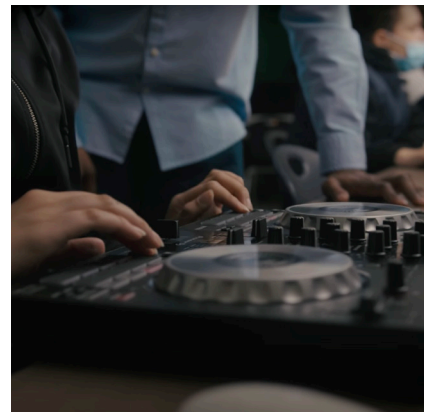
Program
Overview

This program will support approaches to music education that are contemporary, technology-forward, or culturally-specific. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Indigenous music
- Steel pan percussion
- Rock/pop/contemporary music ensemble
- Music production/recording
- Hip-hop/beat making
- Electronic music creation

What if my school has no music program?

✚ Schools that currently have no music education program at their school are encouraged to apply for support to start a new music program. In your application, it is essential that you provide details about how this new program will be implemented at your school, should your application be successful.

If you are seeking support for a more standard or traditional music education program, please see the **MusiCounts Band Aid Program**.

How to get started?

If you are interested in applying for financial support for music education at your school, you must start by submitting the **MusiCounts Intake Form**. This short form will help the MusiCounts Team determine whether your request is better suited for the **MusiCounts Band Aid Program**, or the **MusiCounts Slaight Family Foundation Innovation Fund**.

You can access the Intake Form **here**.

If you are unsure how to complete the Intake Form, please seek support from the MusiCounts team before submitting your Intake Form through either:

1. Sending an email to **applications@musicounts.ca**

2. Scheduling a **virtual appointment** with a member of the MusiCounts team.

Once you complete and submit your Intake Form, you will receive an email from the MusiCounts within two business days. This email will prompt you to create an account on the MusiCounts Grant Portal, and give you access to a tailored application form to complete.

Eligibility Criteria

What types of programs are eligible?

This program will support approaches to music education that are contemporary, technology-forward, or culturally-specific. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Indigenous music
- Steel pan percussion
- Rock/pop/contemporary music ensemble
- Music production/recording
- Mixing/mastering
- Hip-hop/beat making
- Electronic music creation

Who can apply?

All public, separate and First Nations schools in Canada are welcome to apply. The music program may be curricular or extracurricular, but the instruments and equipment received through this program must be owned by the recipient school and must be used by the school's students on a regular basis.

My school has no music program. Am I eligible to apply?

Yes. Schools with no music program are encouraged to apply for support to either the **MusiCounts Band Aid Program or the MusiCounts Slaight Family Foundation Innovation Fund**.

How often can my school receive this funding?

Schools may receive funding from the MusiCounts Slaight Family Foundation Innovation Fund once every five years.

However, special permissions may be granted for previous **MusiCounts Band Aid Program** recipients from the past five years who received support for traditional music education programs (band, Orff, etc), who are looking to diversify their school's music program offerings. If your school is interested in pursuing this, you must receive special permission to do so **prior to submitting the Intake Form**. Please schedule an appointment with a member of the MusiCounts Team **here**. In this appointment, prepare to discuss your ambitions for diversifying music education at your school and why this is needed.

My school has an existing music program, but I want to add an additional program offering. Is this eligible?

Yes. If your school already has one music program offered at your school, but you wish to implement an additional music program with MusiCounts' support, you are welcome to submit an application to MusiCounts.

Eligibility Criteria

Ineligible applicants:

✖ Schools that charge tuition.

✖ Community music programs (but don't worry, there is a funding program for community music education! Please see the **MusiCounts Community Music Program page**.)

✖ School-based music programs that are technology-forward, contemporary, or culturally-specific (but don't worry, there's a funding program for this as well! Please see the **MusiCounts Slaight Family Foundation Innovation Fund program page**.)

✖ Private music studios/ instructors.

✖ Schools that discriminate on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, or religion.

If you have questions about your eligibility for this program, please get in touch by emailing **applications@musicounts.ca**

Eligible Uses
of Grant Funds

Eligible Uses of Grant Funds

In your grant application, you will be asked to provide details on what you wish to purchase, should your grant application be successful.

✚ At least 75% of your grant must be used for the purchase of musical instruments and equipment.

✚ Up to 20% of your grant from MusiCounts Slaight Family Foundation Innovation Fund may be used to compensate an external clinician to work with you or your students to prepare you to appropriately facilitate this program. For example:

- If you intend to offer a music production program at your school, you may use a portion of your MusiCounts grant to compensate a local audio engineer or producer to facilitate workshops with your students.
- If you plan to offer an Indigenous-focused music program, you may use a portion of your MusiCounts grant to compensate a local cultural educator, Elder or knowledge keeper to work with you and/or your students in implementing this program.

✚ Up to 15% of your grant may be used for educational resources and accessories, including sheet music, educational apps, music stands, software, etc.

✚ Up to 20% of your grant may be used to repair instruments already in your school's inventory.

The following are not eligible uses of the MusiCounts Slaight Family Foundation Innovation Fund:

✖ Classroom renovations

✖ PA/sound system upgrades

✖ Field trips

✖ Full time teacher compensation (external/guest clinicians only)

Application Overview

Based on your response to the MusiCounts Intake Form, you will receive a tailored application form asking questions specific to your school's circumstances. All applications for the MusiCounts Slaight Family Foundation Innovation Fund, however, include the following sections:

Application Section	What's Required
School & Applicant Information	+ General information about your school and the primary applicant (individual preparing the grant application).
Program Details	+ Overview of music education at your school. + Details on the particular music education program is seeking support from MusiCounts. + Details on the current funding available for music education at your school.
Program Leadership	+ Details on who will lead the music program requesting support from MusiCounts. + Details on the engagement of external clinicians, if this is part of your request.
Community Need	+ Overview of the community of youth that will participate in the music program requesting support from MusiCounts, including a broad overview on the demographics of this student population and details on any barriers to success they may face.
Program Impact & Sustainability	+ Explanation of the impact receiving a MusiCounts grant would have on your school + Details on the sustainability of the music program seeking support from MusiCounts + **One letter of support from a colleague at your school.** We recommend including a letter from an **administrator** at your school, if the administrator is not the Primary Applicant. We advise that the letter speak to your administration's support for the long term impact and sustainability of music education

Application Overview

Application Section	What's Required
	at your school. The letter of support must be uploaded as a PDF, and may not exceed one page in length.
Inventory	✚ Respond to a few questions that pertain to the state of your school's existing inventory of musical instruments and equipment; **schools are no longer required to itemize their existing inventory of musical instruments and equipment.**
Request	✚ Completion of the MusiCounts **Request Form**, which you will gain access to once you submit your Intake Form and have been advanced to your application form. In the Request Form, you must itemize what you intend to purchase, should your application be successful.
	✚ Your **Requested Amount**, which is the total amount of funding you are requesting from MusiCounts. This must be between $5,000 and $20,000. Your Requested Amount must match the subtotal reflected in your Request Form.
	✚ A summary of why your school requires the instruments and equipment you are requesting in this application.

Tips for Submitting
a Strong Application

Submit your Intake Form ASAP.

Once your **Intake Form** is submitted, you will be invited to create an account with the MusiCounts Grant Portal and access your full application form within two business days. The Intake Form should take no longer than 5 minutes to submit. Doing this early ensures that you will have access to your application period for longer, allowing you more time to familiarize yourself with the questions and to submit a strong application.

Avoid talking about the broad benefits of music education.

No need to preach to the choir! We all know how important music education is for young people. In your application, direct your energy towards providing specific details about how music impacts the students at your school, rather than referencing research that reinforces the value of music education more broadly.

Address each question directly and concisely.

We advise that applicants get to the point in responding to questions in their application.

Ask for help.

If there is anything at all that you are unsure about, please do not hesitate to reach out to the MusiCounts team for support or clarification. We're here to help.

Click here to schedule a virtual appointment with a member of the MusiCounts team, or send an email to **applications@musicounts.ca**

How funding decisions are made?

Every application submitted to MusiCounts undergoes a thorough adjudication process. Our adjudicators evaluate applications on the following core criteria:

| Need Level | ✚ Is there an urgent need for the instruments and equipment requested? |
| | ✚ Does the student community served by the school's music program face barriers to accessing music education? |

Program Leadership & Sustainability	✚ Is there a strong plan in place to ensure the instruments and equipment requested will be regularly used by the school's students, in the short and long term?
	✚ Is there a teacher for the program in place, or solid plans for this?
	✚ Is there administrative support for the program?

| Impact Potential | ✚ Will receiving this grant have a significant impact on your school's music program, and your school's community of students? |

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Who can apply for the MusiCounts Slaight Family Foundation Innovation Fund on behalf of the school?

Anyone can apply for the MusiCounts Slaight Family Foundation Innovation Fund on behalf of the school music program, however, applications are typically submitted by the school music teacher, principal or member of the parent council. Please make sure the music teacher and/or the principal at the school are aware of the application.

Can I apply for instruments that will be shared by multiple schools?

Absolutely! For applicants looking to share instruments amongst multiple schools, please apply! In your application, please apply on behalf of the school where the instruments will be stored and explain in your application how they will be shared amongst each school.

Should I apply using my school email?

Unfortunately, many school boards block email correspondence from MusiCounts, as a result, we **HIGHLY** recommend that you use a personal email when applying to any of our programs.

How long does it take to fill out an application?

This varies from applicant to applicant. The most important thing you can do is to start early so you can familiarize yourself with the application expectations, and allow yourself the time needed to complete the application without feeling rushed. The deadline is final and no extensions are granted.

Will I need to save my username and password?

Yes! If your school is selected to receive a grant you will need your username and password to access your account. Please keep your username and password in a safe place so that you can access your account at any time.

What are the chances of my school being selected to receive a grant?

Though this varies from year to year based on the volume of applications received and funds available to allocate, we tend to support ~25% of applicants for this program.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

My school is located in a remote or isolated fly-in community, will MusiCounts assist with additional shipping costs?

If your school is located in a remote fly-in community, please let us know! We recognize that schools in remote communities may be subject to shipping costs that are prohibitively expensive. While funds from our grants cannot be used to pay for shipping costs directly, MusiCounts may be in a position to reduce or subsidize shipping costs in these exceptional circumstances, so please reach out to us.

There is no full-time music teacher at my school, am I still eligible to apply?

Absolutely! We encourage all schools to apply so long as there is a committed person in charge of leading the programming at the school. This can be any person in your school, or a community member, so long as they are endorsed and supported by the school administration.