



## **GUIDELINES & ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

Applications open: **Thursday, April 16th, 2026**

Deadline for application: **Friday, May 15th, 2026**

### **ELIGIBILITY**

**Music Genre:** All music genres are welcome to participate in ARC, with a particular emphasis on popular genres. Eligibility and adjudication criteria are determined by the ARC Program Committee and may be updated periodically.

**Age limit:** Applicants must be a minimum of 19 years of age on or before May 15, 2026, to apply to participate in ARC. In the case of a band, all members must be of age to qualify for the program; no exceptions shall be made in this regard. Proof of age of majority is required.

**Original Artists:** Priority shall be given to Artists who write and perform their own original songs. No cover songs shall be accepted in assessing eligibility to the program.

**Travel:** Artists must be willing to travel to attend ARC program components including (but not limited to) The Clinic, The Retreat and The Show.

**Residency:** The Artist must have resided in British Columbia for at least 200 of the 365 days immediately preceding the date of application. In the case of a band or group, the majority or 50% of the permanent performing members must meet the above BC residency requirements. Proof of residency may be requested. Failure to provide proof by the deadline provided may result in disqualification. If an Artist or any permanent performing members move away from the Province of BC before the conclusion of the program, they will forfeit their place in the program and any monetary development awards, or travel honorariums associated with their participation. In instances where an Artist's residency is in question, the ARC Program Committee shall investigate to the best of its ability and decide in a timely manner. All decisions of residency will be at the discretion of the ARC Program Committee. All decisions will be final.

**Citizenship:** Artist must be a Canadian Citizen or Permanent Resident. Proof of Residency may be requested. In the case of a band or group, the majority of the permanent performing members must be Canadian Citizens or Permanent Residents.

### **Qualifying Artist:**

- a. ARC is a program designed to aid in the development of emerging artists (as opposed to artists with no track record, or established artists with a significant track record). ARC Artists should have some proven track record in BC but have yet to break out and achieve significant success in the music industry domestically or internationally. Typically, minimum considerations include:
  - i. Regular BC-based performances;
  - ii. More than 3 digital singles previously released on public streaming formats in the last 24 months; and
  - iii. An actively growing and engaged social media presence.



- b. Artists may apply as an individual, sole proprietorship, partnership, or limited company (as long as the partnership or limited company is at least 51% owned and controlled by the Artist and registered in British Columbia).
- c. An Artist's sound recording and musical work copyrights cannot be encumbered by any third-party company such that the Artist is unable to clear master use, mechanical, synchronization or other copyright-related clearances of copyrighted sound recordings, musical works, audio-visual productions, photographs, or other such materials used in ARC.
- d. Artists signed to a direct artist deal with any third-party company whether major or independent are not eligible for this program. Some discretion may be given to Artists signed to independent labels owned and operated in Canada. In these situations, Artists must still be able to clear any copyright encumbrances on any sound recordings, musical works, audio-visual productions, photographs, or other such material used in ARC. Eligibility in these cases will be decided on a case-by-case basis at the sole discretion of the ARC Program Committee.
- e. Artists signed to third party exclusive publishing or co-publishing agreements are not eligible for this program, however the Artist may have individual songs published, as such publishing does not preclude the Artist from participating in any way with this program. Non-exclusive song shopping or administration agreements are acceptable under this program, if the Artist retains signing authority for the musical works created or utilized during ARC.
- f. An Artist may be signed to a management or agency deal, if their manager or agent does not own or exclusively control the Artist's sound recording or musical work copyrights created or utilized during ARC.
- g. The ARC Program Committee reserves the right to disqualify artists based on a "successful past track record" as determined in the Committee's sole discretion.
- h. Artist should notify Music BC immediately if they intend to enter any of the third-party agreements as outlined above between the period of executing their signed program participation agreement and program conclusion. Music BC reserves the right to request and receive a copy of the third-party agreement in a timely fashion to be reviewed confidentially by the ARC Program Committee. Based on the terms and conditions of such agreement, the ARC Program Committee reserves the right to disqualify the Artist from receiving any Artist Development Awards offered during the Program Period.
- i. Artists may return in future editions of the program; however, they must participate in each program component from the beginning wherever attendance and participation is required. The maximum number of years that one Artist may participate in ARC is two (2) years. In the instance where participation is challenged the final decision will be at the discretion of the ARC Program Committee.

**Initial Artist Selection:** Applications will be filed online. Inclusion of pictures, biographies, career resume, recordings, video pitch and a live performance video will be required. Selection of the Artist participants will be by recommendation of independent juries administered by Music BC with final selection at the determination of the ARC Program Committee.

**Program Period:** July 2, 2026 to October 31, 2026



## **TIMELINE AND PROGRAM COMPONENTS**

April 16	Applications Open
May 15	Applications Close
May-June	Adjudication Period
June 12	Artist Participants Invited
July 2	Artist Participants Announced
July 31-August 2	Orientation & The Clinic
August 25-30	The Retreat
October 7-9	The Show

Attendance and participation in The Clinic, The Retreat and The Show is required for all ARC Artists. Dates above may be adjusted slightly.

For Artists consisting of 2 or more permanent members, attendance at The Clinic *may be limited* to a designated professional lead and one other permanent member due to capacity limitations in this component. All permanent members of all participating artists will be required to attend The Retreat and The Show.

### **ARC Development Award**

Each participant will be granted an award to be spent on creating, editing and advertising marketing content for their upcoming record release(s). An honorarium to cover travel costs to and from ARC program components - including The Clinic, The Retreat, and The Show will be included in addition to this Award.

### **Development Award Proposal**

Each artist will be asked to submit a one to two-page written proposal and a one-page budget (templates to be provided) outlining their intentions on how they will use the funding. A deposit of up to 75% of the funds will be dispersed at the beginning of the program period, with the remaining 25% balance dispersed at the end of the program period upon completion of a final report that includes sufficient proof of payments.

### **Orientation**

To kick off the first weekend of training during The Clinic, we will host a welcome session to review program expectations. Participants will be expected to arrange transportation to and from each component of the program with the exception of The Retreat.

### **The Clinic**

The Clinic is a 3-day business intensive within the Lower Mainland. Participants will attend workshops and focus groups with mentor assigned challenges provided upon completion of The Clinic. Participants will sit in on workshops focusing on financial management, legal, marketing, branding, release strategy and alike.

Following this crash course, drop-in mentor sessions will be arranged. This is an opportunity for each participant to ask follow-up questions following The Clinic and leading up to The Retreat. Participation in The Clinic will be a prerequisite to move on to The Retreat. Participation in The Clinic will be mandatory for a designated professional lead and one other permanent member.



Due to capacity limitations Artists consisting of 2 or more permanent members may need to designate which member(s) will attend on behalf of the group.

### **The Retreat**

The ARC Retreat will take place from August 25-30, 2026 in Princeton, BC. Music BC will provide transportation to and from the Retreat from Vancouver, BC.

The Retreat will take place over 5 full days and will be focused on creative workshops, one-on-ones and group training sessions with mentor-assigned challenges throughout. During The Retreat, participants will be immersed into workshops including but not limited to:

1. Writing/co-writing
2. Recording
3. Branding & Content
4. Vocal Training & Performance
5. Live Sound
6. Wellness

Attendance and participation in all aspects of The Retreat is required to move to the ARC performance component (The Show).

### **The Show**

Those who have successfully completed The Retreat will have an opportunity to apply their learnings and perform for local audiences, industry, and an international delegation during our annual partnership with the Vancouver International Film Festival.

## **APPLICATION FORM**

Applications must include:

1. Fully completed application form including general artist information, self-identification, and skills assessment
2. Artist biography (300 words max)
3. Upload of two (2) hi-res Artist photos (jpeg or png)
4. Link to two (2) digital, original master recordings (Artist's latest releases)
5. One (1) recent live performance video URL link (music videos, promo videos and lip-synched videos will not be accepted)
6. Artist Career Resume, including details on touring and showcase history, album/single release history, professional team history, audience following (streaming data, social media), and career accolades (nominations, awards)
7. Video pitch URL link (3-4 minutes). Artist should be prepared to answer the following in their pitch: ***How will participation in ARC be a career leveraging opportunity based on where you've been, where you want to go, and what obstacles are currently standing in your way?***
8. Agreement to Terms and Conditions



## **ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

Music BC will coordinate diverse jury pools with a minimum of 5 industry professionals for every 30 applications received. Industry professionals with a background in artist development and expertise in multiple music genres from BC and Canada will be prioritized and represented in each jury pool.

Applications will be juried online through a secure online platform administered by Music BC. The final round of qualifying artists whose scores make up the Top 15-25 will be presented to the ARC Program Committee to determine the 2026 Artist participants.

Jurors will be asked to assess applications based on five categories:

1. **Talent** (Originality, Musicianship, Vocals, Lyrics, Composition, Live Performance ~ 15 points)
2. **Pitch** (Video Pitch, Skills Self-Assessment, and Career Resume ~ 15 points)
3. **Career & Market Potential** (Genre marketability, Star Power ~ 10 points)
4. **Diversity** (does the applicant represent a marginalized community or group? Including Gender, Sexual Orientation, Ethnicity, Region, and Ability ~ 5 points)
5. **Professionalism of Package** submitted ~ 5 points.

All selected participants will be given a one-year individual or band membership to Music BC at no cost to the Artist. Current Members of Music BC will have their existing memberships extended by one year. Successful applicants will be required to sign a participation agreement and related license waivers.

### **Attendance & Participation**

We understand the components of ARC which require attendance and participation is a time investment, and humbly ask applicants to consider whether they are willing and ready to commit themselves fully to the program.

Attendance *as well as* participation will be monitored as Artists move through the program. To honor the integrity and spirit of the program, the ARC Program Committee reserves the right to remove participants should they miss a significant number of workshops, group sessions and so forth.

Participants are required to always conduct themselves in a professional manner and will ensure they maintain a respectful workplace free of bullying and harassment. Non-adherence to program guidelines and conduct may result in permanent expulsion from ARC.

Still have questions? Contact us at [info@musicbc.org](mailto:info@musicbc.org) or call us at 604-873-1914.