



JURIED SOUND RECORDING: ALBUM Program Guidelines 2025-2026

Program Intent

The Sound Recording Program is intended to support the Canadian recording artist in advancing their commercial career through funding towards the recording and production of a full-length album.

Program Overview

1. The Juried Sound Recording: Album program provides funding toward the costs of production of an original full-length sound recording.
2. Financial support is set at 50% of eligible expenses to a maximum reimbursement of \$10,000.
3. Completions must be submitted by February 27th, 2026.
4. Applications are assessed by a jury and FACTOR, which may take up to 6 weeks from the application deadline and may be affected by volume of applications and juror availability.
5. Funding for this program is provided by Canada's Private Radio Broadcasters and the Department of Canadian Heritage via the Canada Music Fund's Individual Initiatives component.

Application Deadline

There is one deadline per FACTOR fiscal year for this program: **September 4th, 2025 at 5:00pm Eastern Time**

Prior to the deadline, there will be a window during which applications to this program can be created, edited, and submitted. Incomplete applications will not be retained in the system after the window closes.

If you experience technical difficulties which prevent you from submitting your application, you must contact FACTOR by email, with accompanying screenshot illustrating the issue, prior to 5:00pm ET on the deadline date. An application cannot be submitted if a report is filed after the deadline.

Who Can Apply

- **Artists rated General and 2**
 - **Record labels rated Approved, 2, or 3 with an artist rated General or 2**
 - **Record Labels in Mid-Tier Envelope**
6. Applicants under 18 years of age must submit a signed [Parent or Legal Guardian Consent Form](#) when applying.
 7. Artist managers, producers, or music publishers may fill out the application on behalf of an artist, however, only the party that controls the Canadian commercial release rights and exclusive Canadian exploitation rights to the sound recording at the time of application may be the Applicant. Typically, this will be:
 - A **Canadian artist**, if the artist is "unsigned" or has not licensed the sound recording to another party. If the artist is a band that is not incorporated as a company, then an individual member of the artist band must be the Applicant. You must have both an Updated Artist Profile and an approved Applicant Profile to apply.
 - A **Canadian record label** that has already signed the artist, or has licensed the sound recording, or has an option to license the sound recording. If the artist owns the underlying copyright in the masters but has licensed the sound recording to a record label, the label must be the Applicant. The record label must have an approved Applicant Profile and the Artist Profile must be updated before the label can apply.

8. An artist should be able to demonstrate recent market success and accelerating momentum in their career. The Artist Profile must be up to date at the time of application submission.
9. Artists may apply to only one juried program (Artist Development, Juried Sound Recording: Single/EP, or Juried Sound Recording: Album) being offered for the 2025-2026 fiscal year (April 1 – March 31).
10. FACTOR allows only one open Artist program project at a time (Artist Development, JSR: Single/EP, JSR: Album, or Artist Entrepreneur).
11. An Applicant may receive a maximum of three JSR projects (any combination of Single/EP and Album) in the lifetime of the program.
12. Record label Applicants should note the following policies:
 - Recipients of Top-Tier Envelope Funding are ineligible,
 - Record label Applicants are expected to retain exclusive control of the Canadian exploitation rights in the funded album for at least two years after first commercial release. See [Business Policies: Disposition of Masters](#).
 - A record label Applicant may not have more than two unreleased FACTOR-supported sound recordings in the JSR program at a time. If you have two projects funded under this program in progress, you may apply for funding for a third; however, funds for the third project will not be released until one of the approved projects is commercially released.
 - A record label Applicant may submit no more than two sound recording applications, per deadline, to the JSR program; the applications must be for different artists.
13. Francophone artists who are recording primarily in French and primarily developing their careers in a French-language market are expected to apply to [Musicaction](#). Francophone artists may apply to program if the activities and eligible expenses related to the project are incurred in the development of English-language materials for the English-language market. However, they must meet eligibility as it pertains to the Musicaction Global Company Envelope and tour producers for any live/touring expenses. The intent is that there should not be any dual funding in those categories.
14. If your Project has been submitted to Musicaction and rejected, it is not eligible for funding by FACTOR.

How to Apply

15. To fill out a JSR: Album application in the [FACTOR online system](#), you will first need a rated Artist Profile and Applicant Profile.
 - The **Artist Profile** provides details about the artist or group. Provide the mandatory information, then click the Request Review button.
 - The **Applicant Profile** provides the details of the person or party that enters a contract with FACTOR, will receive the funding, and will be incurring the costs. Once you've completed the profile, click the Request Review button.

Once you have submitted both profiles by clicking the Request Review buttons, they will automatically receive a provisional rating that allows you to apply for funding. You do not have to wait for the profiles to be reviewed by FACTOR before starting your JSR application, but the information will be verified prior to an offer of funding.
16. Go to the [How to Apply page on the FACTOR website](#) for step-by-step instructions on creating and sharing profiles, followed by how to submit an application.
17. FACTOR welcomes and encourages applications from people with disabilities. Please contact your Project Coordinator or [FACTOR Client Services](#) to discuss options for accommodations throughout the application process, as well as our [Application Accessibility Support Fund](#).

How Applications are Assessed

18. The following information is **mandatory** in the application. Failure to provide this mandatory material will result in an application being rejected as ineligible:
 - a) Name of album and number of songs
 - b) Genre
 - c) First song release date and last song release date
 - d) A detailed marketing plan for the proposed sound recording
 - e) Artist bio

- f) Demos for only two of the tracks you intend to record. These are called assessment tracks. Assessment tracks should:
 - i. Be new, recently recorded, original songs or compositions that have never been commercially released at the time of application. Jazz and classical artists may submit assessment tracks that are new arrangements of a work previously recorded and commercially released by another artist (e.g. standards, classical repertoire). Such assessment tracks may also have music and lyrics by non-Canadians; or they may be based on works in the public domain.
 - ii. Be uploaded in MP3 format;
 - iii. Meet MAPL requirements for Canadian content. See [Business Policies: MAPL Certification](#); and
 - iv. Not be in French/have primarily French lyrics.
- g) Lyrics (if any) to the assessment tracks;
- h) A sound recording budget
- i) Total request

Important note: It is not possible for FACTOR to attach materials to an application once it has been submitted. It is your responsibility to ensure all mandatory documents have been uploaded prior to submitting the application.

- 19. You are invited to provide additional material that you feel enhances your application, such as letters of support, tour dates, photos, and links to videos. Up to five documents can be uploaded under Additional Information in the Component Information tab of the application.
- 20. Assessment tracks are evaluated by an independent jury, accounting for 80% of the overall score (Songs/Vocals/Musicality). The remaining 20% is based on the artist's market activity and release plan.

How This Program Works

- 21. All JSR: Album applications must include the creation or licensing of a new, previously unreleased, qualifying album. JSR funding cannot be used to acquire or market a title that has already been commercially released.
- 22. This is a juried program, meaning that all eligible applications will be sent for evaluation to a FACTOR jury that will assess the commercial and artistic merit of the assessment tracks, the marketing plan and accompanying materials, and the project as a whole. Please see [Business Policies: Assessment Process – Juried Program](#).
- 23. If your application is successful, you must enter into a General Agreement which sets out the terms of the funding.
- 24. You must incur a minimum of \$1,000 in costs in the Sound Recording activity.
- 25. After approval, changes to your project plan should be discussed with your Project Coordinator to ensure your proposed changes to activities or costs remain eligible. Changes to the proposed activities having a budget impact of greater than 20% of eligible costs must have FACTOR pre-approval.
- 26. The sound recording produced with this funding must be commercially released in Canada according to the terms of the General Agreement. You are expected to use best efforts to market the album in Canada and make it available to Canadian audiences.
- 27. FACTOR restricts the transfer of ownership and control of full-length sound recordings which it funds under its sound recording programs. Recipients of full-length sound recording funding are obliged, for a period of two years after commercial release, to notify FACTOR of their intention to sell, assign, license, or otherwise transfer the control of the sound recording to another party. FACTOR may require 100% of the funding to be repaid when the sound recording is transferred to a non-Canadian label (including major labels) or a Canadian-owned entity which is recipient of Company Envelope funding. Please see [Business Policies: Disposition of Masters](#) for more details.
- 28. **Recipient Accessibility Support Fund:** FACTOR grant recipients are eligible for top-up support to their project funding for costs related to accessibility. FACTOR will allow applications in this fund for up to \$5,000 each fiscal year, not to exceed \$5,000 per project. Eligible costs claimed under this fund will be reimbursed at 100%. This fund is open to artists and staff of music companies associated with the project Artist or Applicant. Support for this fund is provided exclusively by Canada's Private Radio Broadcasters. See details on [FACTOR's Accessibility page](#).

Eligible Sound Recordings

29. Funding under the Sound Recording component must always be used to produce a qualifying album and, under some programs, to license an already produced but unreleased qualifying album. To be considered a qualifying album, the final sound recording must:
- Be performed by a Canadian artist and meet FACTOR's MAPL criteria for Canadian content (see [Business Policies: MAPL Certification](#));
 - Be a full-length album or [track equivalent album](#) of at least seven tracks, and/or at least 30 minutes of total running time;
 - Be comprised of all new sound recording masters that, as of the date of application, have not been previously [Commercially Released](#); and
 - Have no more than 51% French lyrics. The lyrics may otherwise be in English or any language other than French. French-language sound recordings may be supported by [Musicaction](#).

Eligible Costs - Sound Recordings

30. Expenses are eligible from date of application submission.
31. FACTOR will remove ineligible costs from the budget. The FACTOR contribution will be reduced accordingly.
32. Eligible expenses must contribute to the cost of recording and producing a high-quality, qualifying album. These can include:
- Studio time
 - Hiring an engineer, producer and musicians
 - Renting recording equipment
 - Mixing and mastering
 - Graphic design for album artwork
 - Distribution costs, including fees and set-up costs
33. Ineligible costs for sound recordings include, but are not limited to:
- Most expenses paid for in cash (see [Business Policies: Cash Payments](#));
 - Duplication and manufacturing expenses
 - Management and legal fees
 - Purchases of equipment, musical instruments and related supplies
 - Transportation, per diem, food, hotel, and hospitality expenses for local recording activities. These costs may be considered for out-of-town personnel (i.e. personnel based more than 300 km ground travel from artist's home city). When approved by FACTOR, per diems for out-of-town personnel are capped at \$50/day.
 - Any [in-kind or donated services](#)
 - Expenses for non-Canadian musicians and personnel (except as noted for members of the artist group)
 - Mechanical royalties and associated costs
 - Vocal lessons and instrument training.
34. Costs must be paid to Canadian companies located in Canada or paid to Canadian citizens/permanent residents for work performed within Canada. (See [Business Policies: Eligible Costs – General Terms](#)).
35. **Recording outside of Canada:** If you intend to record outside of Canada, you are encouraged to discuss it with your Project Coordinator in advance of making an application and provide a thorough explanation in your application. If approved, FACTOR may allow artist fees, travel costs and per diems for Canadian musicians (including non-Canadian artist members) and personnel traveling outside of Canada, on a case-by-case basis.
36. **Bringing a non-Canadian producer to Canada:** FACTOR may allow the costs of a non-Canadian producer coming to work in a Canadian recording studio located in Canada, provided that the majority of tracking and production occurs in Canada in a Canadian studio. Such costs may include travel, accommodation and producer fees. If you intend to request non-Canadian costs, you are encouraged to discuss it with your Project Coordinator in advance of making an application and provide a thorough explanation in your application.
37. FACTOR will not recognize any costs related to songwriting or composition of music and lyrics, or any other costs related to the underlying copyrights in the compositions. Arranger fees may be recognized when they are paid to a third party (not the Artist) who is hired on a fee-for-service basis to create an arrangement specifically for the funded sound recording and where that arranger does not have ownership in any of the resulting copyrights.
38. Pre-production costs, such as rehearsal space fees or rentals, must be paid to third parties and may not exceed 25% of eligible costs in the Sound Recording component. FACTOR does not recognize any in-house costs for pre-production. FACTOR will only recognize pre-production costs incurred after the date of application.

39. Session musicians' rates will be capped at a rate of \$400 per studio session equal to the number of tracks on the final project, to a maximum of one session per track. The day rate includes overtime pay for the session, if any.
40. In-house and/or related party transactions are capped at a maximum of 25% of the total eligible costs. Applicants must disclose all in-house and related party transactions in the Expense Details section of both the Application Budget and Completion Cost Report.
41. **Self-Production Allowance:** recognizes artist members who complete production work on the sound recording. To claim a Self-Production Allowance as an eligible cost in the budget:
 - a) The artist, not a record label, must be the Applicant for the project
 - b) Artist members must complete all tracking, including their own engineering.
42. The Self-Production Allowance is an in-house expense calculated as up to \$500 per track for a maximum of 10 tracks (\$5,000 maximum per project). The allowance covers studio rental, tracking, mixing, and mastering provided by the artist. Note that when the artist is the Applicant for the project, an artist's producer fee is ineligible.
43. The eligible Self-Production Allowance costs are reduced by:
 - a) Third-party studio rental fees
 - b) Third-party mixing fees
 - c) The in-house expense limit of 25% of total eligible costs for the sound recording component. Note that the final Self-Production Allowance is an in-house expense.
44. If the reductions bring the Self-Production Allowance to zero, then no Self-Production Allowance will be available, but all third-party costs will be allowed.
45. Artists may claim the Self-Production Allowance and third-party producer fees and mastering fees.
46. Production costs for tracks exceeding the Self-Production Allowance maximum can be claimed separately if completed by a third-party provider.
47. [The Sound Recording Cost Report](#) includes a Self-Production Allowance tab to guide you through claiming the allowance upon completion.

Completion

Please review the [Completion Guide](#) for detailed instructions.

48. If approved, your Completion Report may be submitted as soon as your project has concluded and no later than **February 27th, 2026**. No extensions will be granted.
49. Applicants must compile and organize all invoices, receipts, and proofs of payment; then enter the amounts being claimed into the FACTOR Cost Report, which can be downloaded from the Budget page of the Completion. Applicants must upload the Cost Report and all related expense documentation, then complete and submit all other sections of the Completion (including Budget, Results, Component Information and Public Funding).
50. Once submitted to FACTOR, the Completion will be deemed by FACTOR to be the recipient's true, accurate, and final accounting, and may not be unsubmitted, amended, or deleted.
51. You are obligated as a condition of funding to include the appropriate logos and acknowledgment in all materials created in a FACTOR-funded project. Please review the [Logo and Acknowledgment Guide](#) for specific instructions. Failure to provide appropriate logos and acknowledgment could result in a loss of some or all of your funding.
52. In addition to the program completion requirements, to complete the Sound Recording activity the Applicant must:
 - a) Provide final song information for each recorded song with songwriting and production credits.
 - b) Upload a copy of the album artwork. This should be the finished graphics for the commercial release, and must include the required acknowledgement and logo(s).
 - c) Submit a [Supplier's Declaration and Undertaking](#) signed by the producer of the sound recording.
 - d) Submit a Studio Work Log for each production studio involved in the project. You may use the [FACTOR Studio Work Log Template](#), or any form of studio log as long as it includes: Studio Name, Studio Address, Recording Date(s), Start and End Time(s), a description of the work done, Artist Signature, Studio/Producer/Engineer Signature.
 - e) Complete the product submission of the commercially released album. After completion and no later than 30 days after commercial release of the funded sound recording (the product submission deadline) you must deliver to FACTOR via email, a link to your commercially release sound recording (i.e. Spotify, Apple Music) and a digital copy of the final, as-released album artwork clearly showing the required logos and acknowledgments (i.e. FACTOR logo Canada wordmark, and all acknowledgement text.).