

Creative Export Strategy

Self-Identification Questionnaire - Frequently Asked Questions



About the questionnaire

- The initial 2023 questionnaire is a first step - a starting point. A revised questionnaire could be added in the future.
- The questions, response options, and related definitions are primarily based on material and terminology that is being used elsewhere in the federal government, including the Canadian Heritage Portfolio.
- Should the terminology used elsewhere in the federal government change, or if future consultations indicate a need for revisions, Canadian Heritage may also change the terminology or wording in the questionnaire.
- The current questionnaire is voluntary but may be made mandatory for future iterations.

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Frequently asked questions

1. Why am I being asked to complete the self-identification questionnaire?

Collecting this data will allow Canadian Heritage to better understand who is benefiting from the Creative Export Strategy, identify and address barriers to accessing the Strategy’s programs and services, and track the impact of its programs and services for exporters, especially those who self-identify as being Indigenous or from equity-deserving communities.

In the case of a for-profit company, this questionnaire is meant to capture the self-identity of the business owner(s) and in the case of a not-for-profit organization, it is meant to capture the self-identity of each board member. To ensure a full picture of who is accessing Creative Export Strategy programs and services, it is important that ALL owners / board members complete the questionnaire.

2. Who should complete the questionnaire?

This questionnaire seeks to collect data on the self-identity of individuals applying for funding from the Creative Export Strategy’s grants and contributions program, Creative Export Canada. Note that Creative Export Canada projects or initiatives will be assessed on their merits through the project assessment process. Please see the program’s [Application Guidelines](#) for more information on these. The questionnaire will also collect self-identity data on those applying to participate in Canadian Heritage-led trade missions or trade and cultural events supported by the Creative Export Strategy.

3. When was the questionnaire launched?

The questionnaire was launched in June 2023 as part of the renewed Creative Export Strategy.

4. Is this a Canadian Heritage-wide initiative?

No. The questionnaire is limited to the Creative Export Strategy within Canadian Heritage.

5. Can I identify in more than one group?

Individuals can and should self-identify in relation to all dimensions covered by the questionnaire. Some questions allow individuals to select more than one response option whereas others, limit individuals to one response option for data integrity and reportability reasons.

6. I have already provided my self-identification data to another creative sector institution (e.g., Telefilm Canada, Canada Council for the Arts) or other federal organization. Why is there no centralized way to share this information?

In accordance with the [Privacy Act](#), government institutions must collect personal information such as self-identification information directly from the individual. The government institution must inform the individual of the specific purposes for collecting their personal information and how it can be used and disclosed and must obtain their consent for the collection. There may also be differences in the way questions are asked by different organizations, and responses provided by individuals can change over time.

7. How were the questions determined?

Canadian Heritage conducted research and consultations with federal and provincial partners including, the Canada Council for the Arts, the Canada Media Fund, Telefilm Canada, Global Affairs Canada, Creative BC, and Ontario Creates to develop an initial draft of the questionnaire.

Canadian Heritage then hosted five (5) virtual roundtable sessions in spring 2023 to obtain feedback on this draft of the questionnaire. Participants included community representatives of Indigenous and equity-deserving communities working in the creative sector and/or academia, as well as Canadian Heritage employees that are part of the Pride Committee and Advisory Committee on (Dis)Ability.

Feedback was sought on:

- the proposed CES approach to data collection and whether it ensures a variety of stakeholders will feel heard and can share their identities with Canadian Heritage in a safe and respectful manner;
- the terminology being used for self-identification, and concepts related to equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility;
- the questions and the answer options in the self-identification questionnaire; and
- respectful mitigation measures to minimize fraudulent self-identification, given that program funding is linked to self-identification.

As such, the wording of the questions is based on Canadian Heritage’s research and analysis of current approaches and best practices to self-identification, as well as the feedback received from stakeholders, partners and experts.

The questionnaire covers seven dimensions: age, gender identity, sexual orientation, Indigenous identity, racial, ethnic and cultural identity, deaf and (dis)ability, and language. While the questionnaire does not include every important diversity dimension, these dimensions cover aspects of identity that are generally recognized as being impacted by bias and discrimination in the creative sector.

Feedback is welcomed. See [Who can I contact for more information or to provide feedback?](#)

8. How was the terminology in the questionnaire chosen?

The questions are primarily based on terminology from the Government of Canada’s [Guide on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Terminology](#), and wording from federal legislation, including the [Accessible Canada Act](#).

Canadian Heritage recognizes that, for certain identities, terminology is not universally agreed upon and continues to evolve. The terminology and approach to the questions seek to balance inclusion, respect for privacy and reportability.

Feedback is welcomed. See [Who can I contact for more information or to provide feedback?](#)

9. Age — Can you clarify what is being asked?

The question regarding **age** asks for your year of birth. This information distinguishes users with the same or similar names. It also helps Canadian Heritage understand the age range of creative exporters accessing Creative Export Strategy program funding and services.

10. Language — Can you clarify what is being asked?

The question regarding **official language minority communities** asks you to indicate if you belong to an official language minority in Canada. In Canada, official language minority communities are French-speaking communities outside Quebec and English-speaking communities in Quebec.

A percentage of Creative Export Canada program's funding will be reserved for companies/organizations whereby at least 50% of the owners and/or board members self-identify as Indigenous peoples and/or members of equity-deserving communities, including official language minority communities. As such, the Creative Export Strategy encourages applicants from these communities to self-identify through the self-identification questionnaire to be eligible for this reserved funding. Only those who complete the self-identification questionnaire will be considered for this reserved funding. Applicants who choose not to self-identify, however, will still be eligible to access the other portion of the Creative Export Canada program's funding.

Finally, answering this question also helps understand the diversity of creative exporters accessing Creative Export Strategy program funding and services.

11. Gender identity — Can you clarify what is being asked?

The question regarding **gender identity** asks you to indicate the identity or term that best describes you at the present time. The question does not ask about your sex assigned at birth or sexual orientation.

“Gender identity” refers to a person's internal sense of being a woman, man, both, neither or somewhere along the gender spectrum. It influences how people perceive themselves and each other, how they act and interact and the distribution of power and resources in society. The question recognizes that gender identity can change over time.

The gender identity categories offered as potential responses represent the considerable diversity in how individuals and groups understand, experience and express gender identity. It is recognized that some of the response options may overlap. You are encouraged to choose the response that best represents you.

12. 2SLGBTQI+ — Can you clarify what is being asked?

The question regarding **2SLGBTQI+** asks you to select how you currently identify. The acronym 2SLGBTQI+ is used to refer to individuals who openly identify as Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex and other sexual orientations.

A percentage of the Creative Export Canada program's funding will be reserved for companies/organizations whereby at least 50% of the owners and/or board members self-identify as Indigenous peoples and/or members of equity-deserving communities, including 2SLGBTQI+ communities. As such, the Creative Export Strategy encourages

applicants from these communities to self-identify through the self-identification questionnaire to be eligible for this reserved funding. Only those who complete the self-identification questionnaire will be considered for this reserved funding. Applicants who choose not to self-identify, however, will still be eligible to access the other portion of the Creative Export Canada program's funding.

Finally, answering this question also helps understand the diversity of creative exporters accessing Creative Export Strategy program funding and services.

13. Indigenous identity — Can you clarify what is being asked?

The question regarding **Indigenous identity** asks if you identify as an Indigenous person. In Canada, an Indigenous person is someone who identifies as First Nation, Métis, or Inuk (Inuit). This question is about personal identity, not legal status or registration.

A percentage of Creative Export Canada program's funding will be reserved for companies/organizations whereby at least 50% of the owners and/or board members self-identify as Indigenous peoples and/or members of equity-deserving communities. As such, the Creative Export Strategy encourages Indigenous applicants to self-identify through the self-identification questionnaire to be eligible for this reserved funding. Only those who complete the self-identification questionnaire will be considered for this reserved funding. Applicants who choose not to self-identify, however, will still be eligible to access the other portion of the Creative Export Canada program's funding.

Finally, answering this question also helps understand the diversity of creative exporters accessing Creative Export Strategy program funding and services.

14. Racial groups — Can you clarify what is being asked?

The question regarding **race** asks you to indicate the racial groups to which you identify. Race is a term used to classify people into groups based principally on physical traits, such as skin colour. Racial categories are not based on science or biology but on differences society has created, with significant consequences for people's lives. Racial categories may vary over time and place and can overlap with ethnic, cultural or religious groupings.

A percentage of Creative Export Canada program's funding will be reserved for companies/organizations whereby at least 50% of the owners and/or board members self-identify as Indigenous peoples and/or members of equity-deserving communities, including racialized communities. As such, the Creative Export Strategy encourages applicants from these communities to self-identify through the self-identification questionnaire to be eligible for this reserved funding. Only those who complete the self-identification questionnaire will be considered for this reserved funding. Applicants who choose not to self-identify, however, will still be eligible to access the other portion of the Creative Export Canada program's funding.

Finally, answering this question also helps understand the diversity of creative exporters accessing Creative Export Strategy program funding and services.

15. Ethnocultural identity — Can you clarify what is being asked?

Ethnocultural identity relates to sense of origin and shared experience as part of a community. Population group should not be confused with citizenship or nationality. You may select all categories that apply.

16. Deaf and (Dis)ability — Can you clarify what is being asked?

The questions regarding **Deaf and (dis)abilities** asks you to indicate whether you identify as a person who is Deaf, partially Deaf, hard of hearing or having disability or disabilities, according to the definition provided by the [Accessible Canada Act](#). According to the Act, disability means any impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment—or a functional limitation—whether permanent, temporary or episodic in nature, or evident or not, that in interaction with a barrier, hinders a person’s full and equal participation in society. You may select all categories that apply.

The question does not ask whether you have ever qualified for a disability benefit under the Canada Pension Plan or other program. It also does not take into consideration whether you have received accommodations.

17. I am not comfortable responding to these questions. What should I do?

The questionnaire is voluntary. If you do not want to self-identify, you are not required to complete the questionnaire. You also have the option to choose “I prefer not to respond” for each question.

18. How will my information be used? How will it be stored?

Your self-identification information is collected, used, disclosed, retained and disposed of in accordance with the [Privacy Act](#). Consult the privacy statement that accompanies the questionnaire. Self-identification statistics will always be reported in aggregate form to ensure confidentiality. For further information on how self-identification information is /will be used and stored by the program, contact staff directly at: exports@pch.gc.ca.

19. Who will see my information? Will it be shared with those reviewing funding applications?

Access to these data is strictly limited to a small number of Canadian Heritage staff with the appropriate training and security clearance and on a need-to-know basis. This includes Creative Export Canada program officers reviewing your funding application as the information you provide will be used to determine if you are eligible for the Creative Export Canada's funding envelopes reserved for Indigenous peoples and equity-deserving communities.

20. If I self-identify, will it increase my chances of obtaining funding from the Creative Export Canada program?

Self-identifying does not increase your chances of obtaining funding from the program. Projects or initiatives will be assessed on their merits for funding through the funding application process. Please see the program's [Application Guidelines](#) for more information on these.

The information provided through the self-identification questionnaire be used to determine whether an applicant to the Creative Export Canada funding program would be eligible for reserved program funding for Indigenous peoples or equity-deserving communities. Only those who complete the self-identification questionnaire will be considered for this reserved funding. Applicants who choose not to self-identify, however, will still be eligible to access the other portion of the Creative Export Canada program's funding.

21. Is my company/organization eligible for the Creative Export Canada program's reserved funding?

A percentage of Creative Export Canada program's funding will be reserved for companies/organizations whereby at least 50% of the owners and/or board members self-identify as Indigenous peoples and/or members of equity-deserving communities. Only those who complete the self-identification questionnaire will be considered for this reserved funding. In the case of a for-profit company, the questionnaire must be completed by ALL business owners. In the case of a not-for-profit organization, the questionnaire must be completed by ALL board member.

22. Can I make changes to my questionnaire after it has been completed and submitted?

Yes. Self-identification information can be changed at any time. However, you will only be prompted to provide information at the time of submitting an application to the Creative Export Canada program or applying to be part of a creative industries trade

mission or to participate in a creative industry cultural or trade event supported by the Creative Export Strategy.

23. How often will this questionnaire be revised?

Canadian Heritage monitors the development of new standards and terminology for the collection of self-identification information and will update its practices with new standards as appropriate.

24. Who can I contact for more information or to provide feedback?

Canadian Heritage welcomes feedback on all aspects of this questionnaire. You may provide suggestions or comments by contacting exports@pch.gc.ca.