Playwrights Guild of Canada created the following *Caregiver Compassion Fund Pilot Program Overview* in 2023 as part of their Balancing Act Level UP! Pilot Project.

Please credit Playwrights Guild of Canada and Balancing Act if you use, cite, or share information from this resource.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss these materials, please contact Balancing Act at balancingact@theatredirect.ca.

PGC
PLAYWRIGHTS GUILD OF CANADA

BALANCING ACT

Playwrights Guild of Canada
Caregiver Compassion Fund Pilot Program Overview

PGC Caregiver Compassion Fund is a pilot program to offer financial assistance to member playwrights who are caregivers in order to assist them in their writing work. PGC is participating in the second cohort of Balancing Act's Level UP! initiative, which focuses on fostering inclusive and compassionate policies and practices for working arrangements in the arts sector. A national initiative of Theatre Direct, Balancing Act aims to advocate for and create opportunities for artist caregivers in Canada. PGC is proud to learn from the participants of cohort 1, work alongside colleagues, and contribute input from our pilot program, hoping it may assist the overall initiative.

Who: Open to PGC members

What: Assistance for artists who have caregiver responsibilities that impact their ability to work on a script, production, or related project

Amount: A maximum of $500 per individual

Period: Work or projects that take place between January 1, 2023, and December 31, 2023. Applicants may apply for expenses already incurred if they fall within the stated period.

Applications open: April 3, 2023

Applications close: April 30, 2023

The application will ask the artist to...

- Indicate their own priorities. In other words, to determine what problem needs assistance and how this fund could help mitigate the problem (in full or in part).
- Ask for what they need and not to exceed the cap.
- indicate their own level of need (based on a rating scale).
- Indicate their own identity/identities (optional). We prioritize historically marginalized communities for this Compassion Fund: Indigenous, Black, Persons of Colour, LGBTQ2S+, women, people with disabilities (artist can indicate all that applies).

PGC definitions:

Caregiver: a person with responsibility for the care, supervision, daily needs, and safety of another person. The other person could be (but is not limited to) a child, minor dependent, dependent with a disability, partner, sibling, parent, stepparent, grandparent, or close friend. Care may also be necessary for yourself.

Historically marginalized communities for this Compassion Fund include: Indigenous, Black, People of Colour, LGBTQ2S+, women, people with disabilities (artist indicates all that apply).

Examples of expenses supported include childcare, after-school programming, home care support, external caregiver, adult program, transportation, equipment, or other as defined by the artist's need.

Examples only:

A playwright is the main caregiver for their partner who requires full time assistance. Their writing time is limited to times when their partner is asleep, which is exhausting and not their ideal writing time. The playwright would like to engage a caregiver through a professional service so they can focus on writing during their ideal time window. The playwright is applying for financial assistance for the costs of that outside help.

A playwright has an opportunity for a workshop process that utilizes evening and weekend hours. They have two children who are not yet in school. They already have regular daycare spots. Their regular daycare does allow for care between 4:30pm and 6:00pm for extra fees but does not provide care beyond 6pm. They need to make alternate arrangements at extra cost to be able to hold the workshop. The playwright is applying for financial assistance for the costs of that extra childcare.

A playwright has an opportunity to attend three days of auditions for their play. Two of the audition days fall on days when the playwright is responsible for caring for their adult sibling who has a disability. Booking and paying for specialized transportation (vs. public transit) would be significantly better for both the sibling and the playwright. Booking and paying for an adult day program would be the best environment for the sibling. The playwright is applying for financial assistance for the costs of both.

Notes:

PGC will ask for receipts for expenses incurred. There are no CRA tax implications for an artist accepting this kind of financial support. PGC cannot speak to the implications of receiving these funds for artists who may receive subsidized support through other programs (e.g., municipally supported daycare assistance).

Process:

PGC will award the requested amount (up to a maximum of $500 per recipient) as the fund allows. If requests exceed PGC's fund (maximum $2000), recipients will be selected through a matrix that prioritizes self-identified historically underserved groups and level of need. No preference will be given to the region or types of support requested.

Recipients will be asked to provide detailed information to facilitate direct deposit payment. Applications will be reviewed in confidence by PGC staff.

This is a pilot project and applicants will be invited to offer feedback to PGC and Balancing Act. Balancing Act works with Good Roots Consulting, who will be sending an anonymous survey through PGC to artists after the project.

PGC will protect the privacy of the artist and all information included in their request. PGC will not share names of artists assisted but will release the number of artists assisted. Further, PGC will share lessons learned to assist with improvements in any future programming and with professional colleagues to promote and improve compassionate caring within the Canadian theatre industry.

Timeframe:

- PGC will prepare information during February 2023.
- PGC will open the Fund April 3, 2023.
- The deadline for applications will be April 30, 2023.
- Recipients will be notified by May 31, 2023.
- Applicants (not receiving funds) will be notified June 1, 2023.
- If funds remain after intake #1, PGC will offer a second intake.
- The deadline for applications for the second intake will be September 1, 2023.
- Recipients will be notified October 1, 2023.
- Applicants (not receiving funds) will be notified October 2, 2023.