

Community Outreach & Tenant Selection Process

(City of Toronto - June 2026)

1. OUTREACH & COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Information regarding available Affordable Housing and Referral units will be communicated transparently and equitably to the professional arts community. Under the City of Toronto's Rental Housing Supply Program (RHSP) guidelines, Trade Routes will disseminate the opportunity using the following channels:

- **Public Open Call:** Utilizing an information flyer, Trade Routes will announce unit availability and pricing through our social media channels and digital mailing lists.
- **Local Industry Network:** We will distribute the opportunity through our established Local network of leading cultural institutions and grass roots not for profit arts organizations, ensuring the opportunity reaches a diverse, sector-wide audience.
- **Advance Notice & Preparation Period:** To mitigate the urgency of a chronological waitlist and ensure equitable access, Trade Routes will publicly announce the opening of Artist Tenant Call a minimum of 14 to 30 days prior to accepting applications. This pre-launch education period ensures all prospective applicants across the sector have equal time to gather documentation, understand the income requirements, and prepare their submissions before the time-stamped queue begins.

2. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Trade Routes does not utilize subjective juries or grading rubrics to determine who receives a referral. To be considered for a referral, candidates must pass an objective two-part eligibility criteria:

- **A. Professional Status & Active Practice Verification:** Candidates must be actively working professionals who have devoted a relevant portion of their recent working life to the music and cultural industries. While we recognize that the modern musician and music professional requires many artists to hold supplemental non-industry employment, applicants must demonstrate a **sustained history of professional creative work** over the past 24 months.

Applicants must provide an Electronic Press Kit (EPK), CV/Resume, or portfolio demonstrating at least two of the following indicators of professional industry validation:

- **Industry Income:** Proof of consistent paid engagements, such as tour routing, performance contracts, venue invoices, music related employment, or session work history.
- **Industry Funding & Support:** Receipt of grant funding or financial backing from any order of government, any arts agency, record label, distributor or management agency.
- **Critical Recognition:** Demonstrated media coverage, critical reviews, chart history, or official selection for recognized music festivals and industry showcases.
- **Institutional Validation:** Active membership in a recognized professional guild, union, or association, or recognition via industry awards and nominations.
- **Non-Traditional Evidence:** We recognize that marginalized or independent musicians and cultural workers may lack access to formal institutional documentation. If an applicant cannot provide traditional paperwork, they may satisfy the above indicators by providing community-validated or non-traditional evidence. This includes independent digital distribution records, community performance history, or self-driven promotional campaigns that clearly demonstrate a sustained professional practice.
- **Note:** *The 24-month active practice requirement will be reasonably extended for applicants returning from documented medical, caregiving, or parental leaves.*
- **B. Income Compliance:** Candidates must have a household income that does not exceed the City of Toronto's RHSP maximums for the specific unit size.
- **C. Housing History Accommodation:** Trade Routes recognizes that the housing crisis disproportionately forces musicians, and cultural workers into precarious or informal living arrangements (such as couch-surfing or undocumented sublets). Applicants who cannot provide a traditional previous landlord reference due to recent informal housing arrangements will not be penalized. They may bypass the standard landlord reference requirement by providing an alternative professional or community character reference.

3. FAIR & EQUITABLE SELECTION PROCESS

To ensure all candidates are evaluated fairly, eliminate cronyism, and to adhere to a 10-day vacancy turnaround, Trade Routes utilizes the following chronological referral process:

- **Stage 1:** The Chronological Queue: Once candidates pass the objective eligibility check, they are placed on the centralized Trade Routes waitlist strictly in order of the date and time their application was received.
- **Stage 2:** The 10-Day Referral Window: When a Landlord notifies Trade Routes of a unit vacancy, Trade Routes skips any applicant whose income exceeds that specific unit's maximum cap and contacts the top-ranked, time-stamped candidate. That specific candidate is then provided the Landlord's proprietary Expression of Interest (EOI) and Eligibility Form to complete and is formally referred to the landlord within the 10-day window for the Landlord's final review and decision.
- **Stage 3:** The "Two-Offer" Rule: To ensure the waitlist remains active and is not bottlenecked by individuals unprepared to move immediately, an applicant is eligible to receive a maximum of two offers for a suitable unit. A unit is strictly defined as "suitable" only if it aligns with the applicant's maximum income cap, required bedroom count, and any documented accommodations protected under the Ontario Human Right Code (such as mandatory accessibility features or critical geographic proximity for caregiving and late-night transit). If an applicant refuses two units that meet their defined suitability criteria, they are removed from the waitlist to make way for other eligible applicants ready to sign a lease. They are welcome to re-apply, receiving a new time-stamped entry at the bottom of the list.
- **Stage 4:** OHRC Accommodation Override: In compliance with the Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC), our 10-day turnaround is subject to a formal Accommodation Override. If a top-ranked applicant requires a timeline extension due to a protected ground (e.g., a disability requiring accessible moving logistics or family status requiring childcare coordination), Trade Routes will accommodate the adjustment to the point of undue hardship to ensure vulnerable musicians are not constructively penalized.

4. CONFLICT OF INTEREST CONFIRMATION STATEMENT To ensure integrity and public trust in the tenant selection process, the organization enforces an anti-nepotism policy. Because the selection process is purely chronological and objective, subjective bias is structurally eliminated. Executive leadership holds zero discretionary input regarding who is selected from the queue.

Furthermore, to ensure strict compliance with City of Toronto requirements and to completely eliminate any real or perceived conflict of interest, it is the policy of Trade Routes Canada that its Board of Directors, their family members, employees, and corporate suppliers are explicitly excluded and ineligible from accessing any affordable housing units financially supported by the City of Toronto or managed within the Trade Routes portfolio.