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Contemporary popular music and Grants for the Arts

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# 1 Grants for the Arts

Grants for the Arts (GFTA) is our Lottery-funded grant programme for individuals, arts organisations and other people who use the arts in their work. Grants are available for activities carried out over a set period and which engage people in England in arts activities and help artists and arts organisations in England carry out their work.

Activities we support must be clearly related to the arts and must be project-based, up to a maximum of three years in length. Grants normally range from £1,000 to £100,000 and we can fund up to 90 per cent of the cost of an activity.

All applicants must also read the ‘[How to apply guidance](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding/grants-arts/2016/how-to-apply)’. Download it from our website or contact us for a copy.

# 2 Contemporary Popular Music and Grants for the Arts

Grants for the Arts welcomes applications from individuals, groups and organisations working in the contemporary popular music sector. This includes, but is not limited to:

* solo artists
* bands
* groups
* labels
* promoters
* managers

We are keen to support activities from a range of sub genres including, but not limited to:

* rock
* indie
* alternative
* electronica
* urban
* metal
* punk

## 2.1 What you can apply for

Through Grants for the Arts we want to support projects that contribute to the development of artistic activity, raise the quality of work produced and provide opportunities for the public to engage with your work.

Type of arts related activity that Grants for the Arts can support includes:

* development of new material
* recordings (read our information sheet ‘[Music recording and labels, and Grants for the Arts](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding/grants-arts/2016/information-sheets)’)
* collaborations
* rehearsing for live events
* touring
* showcasing
* purchasing musical instruments (read our information sheet ‘[Asset purchase and Grants for the Arts](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding/grants-arts/2016/information-sheets)’)
* making creative digital content such as music videos or live broadcast (where the applicant can demonstrate how the activity is appropriate to their stage of development, and that they have appropriate distribution plans to engage an audience)

## 2.2 What you cannot apply for

* purchase of musical instruments without a rationale for how the assets will contribute to the development of artistic activity, broadening engagement and raising the quality of work produced
* profit making activity. We can fund activity that generates an income, but any income made has to be spent within the project otherwise your budget will be unbalanced. For example; if you are expecting to make income from selling gig tickets we would expect to see this income in your budget table
* creation of recording with no appropriate plans to distribute the work
* activities that will primarily benefit a single artist’s career without also benefitting audiences and participants in the wider arts sector. We call this kind of activity *self-promotional.* We do encourage artists to promote themselves and their work, but to be eligible for Grants for the Arts applicants would need to evidence that there is a wider public benefit to the activity
* ongoing running or programming costs e.g. for promoters or venues

# 3 Public Engagement

While it is important for us to support artist development through Grants for the Arts, it is also important for an application to explain how the public will benefit from the activity.

Applicants applying for support towards a self-initiated activity should:

* demonstrate partnership support
* evidence clear demand from the public

Applications from the contemporary popular sector can often struggle to meet our criteria for public engagement, and a high proportion of applications are made ineligible because the activity applied for is self-promotional with no clear benefit the public, either in the short or long term.

A good application should talk about how an activity will reach and develop a fan base and/or wider audiences.

It may be helpful to read our [information sheets](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding/grants-arts/2016/information-sheets), ‘Public engagement and Grants for the Arts’ and ‘Audience development and marketing, and Grants for the Arts’, to understand what we mean when we talk about public engagement and why it’s important.

# 4 Developing new music, songs and recordings

The creation of new material is an essential part of artistic development and career progression. We are aware its value as well as that of going on to record work, however to make a strong case for support you would need to evidence:

* that the activity is appropriate to your stage of development and profile
* how producing a recording will create future artistic opportunities
* you have an effective means to distribute and market your work to engage an audience. Stating that you will make a recording and put it online or at a merchandise stand will be unlikely to result in a strong application. If your project is focused on developing new material but not recording, do you have an effective means to present it to the public? If there is no immediate opportunity to engage people, you will need to show how the public will be engaged in the future
* if a recording is being produced as merchandise to support the costs of a wider project (e.g. a tour) expected income from the sales should be shown in the budget section of the application form, under ‘earned income’. The [How to apply](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding/grants-arts/2016/how-to-apply) guidance explains how you can address this criteria in more detail. You may also find our information sheet ‘[Music recordings and labels, and Grants for the Arts](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding/grants-arts/2016/information-sheets)’ useful.

# 5 Touring and live performance

Touring and performing live work supports artistic development and allows artists to reach new audiences. Promoters and venues play a vital part in developing music and audiences as well as being part of the infrastructure that supports talent development.

In order to make a strong case for support you would need to evidence:

* for artists - that the activity is appropriate to your stage of development and profile
* for venues and promoters – that the activity would support programme development, tours and artist and audience development
* that you have an effective means to reach an appropriate audience

# 6 Equipment

Please note that applications for equipment purchases are unlikely to be successful unless they clearly demonstrate development of artistic activity and substantial benefit to the wider public. Read our information sheet ‘Asset purchase and Grants for the Arts’ before you apply. If you are between the ages of 18 and 25 then you may wish to consider the [Take it Away](http://www.takeitaway.org.uk/) scheme.

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# 7 Paying artists

Arts Council England is committed to ensuring proper and fair payment to artists and those who work in the creative industries is in recognition of their professional status, skills and experience. Please read our information sheet ‘[How to pay artists, and Grants for the Arts’](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding/grants-arts/2016/information-sheets).

# 8 International work

Please read our information sheet ‘[International activity and Grants for the Arts’](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding/grants-arts/2016/information-sheets) for guidance on what we can fund through Grants for the Arts. There are also links to the Artists’ International Development Fund, the International Showcase Fund delivered by the PRSF and the Music Export Growth Scheme (delivered by the BPI) in the ‘[Further Information](#_11_Further_information)’ section.

# 9 Momentum

The Momentum fund is an Arts Council England initiative delivered by the PRSF to support those who can demonstrate the potential to significantly further their career within the industry. Momentum and Artists or representatives thereof must demonstrate they are at the appropriate place in their career in order to be eligible for Momentum support. Grants for the Arts is recommended for those emerging artists and bands that are not able to demonstrate their careers are at a level appropriate for Momentum. Momentum funds cannot be used as match funding for Grants for the Arts and visa versa.

More information on Momentum can be found [here](http://www.prsformusicfoundation.com/Funding/Momentum-Music-Fund/)

# 10 Case Studies

Below are some examples of successful projects and some of the reasons Arts Council were interested in supporting them.

**Lewis Robinson - London Calling, £10,000**

An opportunity for 14 acts representing a range of musical genres to record new material alongside the production of a compilation album to promote each act. The project also included an extensive marketing campaign and a series of confirmed high-profile performance opportunities for those involved.

The application was successful in articulating how the production of the recording would have a long- term benefit to artistic practice and career progression of the artists involved, supporting them in further audience development and securing live bookings for their work.

**Blue Lotus Group – Bass Culture UK tour, £31,052**

Two tours, each tour taking place in four cities (Liverpool, London, Birmingham and Sheffield) showcasing the impact Reggae music has had on popular British music such as Drum & Bass / Jungle, Dub Step, Grime and UK Reggae.

This application was successful in articulating how the activity contributed to Arts Council England goals through highlighting excellent talent and developing national audiences for diverse music genres.

**Outfit- "Slowness" tour with new live AV commission, £6,250**

A five-date tour accompanied by the commissioning of a bespoke AV set and accompanying lighting design, reflecting the cover art direction of recently-released album, “Slowness”.

The application was successful in articulating how the activity was appropriate for the artists’ stage of development and profile, demonstrating recent performances of a relevant size and scale as well as a range of positive reviews for the release. The activity contributed to Arts Council England goals by effectively developing audiences for strong, emerging talent.

**Nao - Supporting Little Dragon on UK tour, £10,490**

Emerging artist, Nao was offered the main support slot for established artist, Little Dragon on their UK/Ire tour. The project included support for rehearsals prior to the tour.

The application was successful in articulating a unique opportunity for an acclaimed emerging artist to dramatically develop career opportunities and reach new audiences, as well as promote a new release and video.

**Squareglass - Record label development, £8000**

Seven releases, accompanied by live shows, interviews and collaborations, exploring the relationship between music and technology and how it can be utilized to promote certain agendas and ideas.

This application was successful in articulating how the activity contributed to Arts Council England goals through developing audiences for diverse music genres with due consideration given to effective marketing and PR.

**Kassia Zermon – Bunty, ‘Multimos,’ £14,780**

Solo vocal loop artist Bunty delivered a live, interactive and multi- disciplinary performance to accompany the release of her multimedia album ‘Multimos’. The project included the delivery of workshops, rehearsals, a website, a system for live smart-phone audience participation and two industry-showcasing gigs.

The application was successful in demonstrating how the project would provide relevant career progression in terms of reach to new promoters and partner venues in order to develop audiences nationally. A collaborative approach to innovative programming was evidenced alongside a clear and effective evaluation strategy.

**Phil Wyard - Dingus Khan tour & promotion of debut album, £9,910**

An extensive, 26-date tour to support the debut album by Dingus Khan, as well as road-test new material.

The application gave due consideration to public engagement, demonstrating an effective strategy for the development of new audiences and was strengthened by confirmation of all 26 tour dates.

**Constant Flux - PKN and Zombie Crash UK tour, £9,866**

Constant Flux invited Pertti Kurikan Nimipäivät (PKN), a punk band from Finland and strong example of learning-disability music, to tour with a unique line-up of hand picked bands from the British punk-scene, including integrated UK band Zombie Crash. ‘Integrated’ is defined here as mixing learning disabled artists with non-learning disabled artists on a bill.

The application was successful in articulating the formation of a model for integrated gigs in the UK to develop audiences beyond learning-disabled events for learning-disabled audiences. The project also developed relevant networks for supporting integrated shows in accessible venues.

**Kraak Gallery - SAM series, £12,100**

A series of performances centred on the bold and experimental, coupled with the delivery of a strategy aimed at increasing audiences within the venue.

The application was successful in demonstrating bold programme development featuring a diverse range of artists, alongside an appropriate marketing plan to develop audiences for a venue key to showcasing emerging talent within the city.

# 11 Further information

**Musicians Union**

[www.musiciansunion.org.uk](http://www.musiciansunion.org.uk)

**Other Grants**

[Artists' International Development Fund](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding/apply-funding/apply-for-funding/artists-international-development-fund/)

[International Showcase Fund](http://www.prsformusicfoundation.com/funding/international-showcase-fund/)

[Momentum Music Fund](http://www.prsformusicfoundation.com/funding/momentum-music-fund/)

[PRS for Music Foundation Open Fund](http://www.prsformusicfoundation.com/funding/open-funding/)

[BPI: Music Export Growth Scheme](https://www.bpi.co.uk/megs.aspx)

[Help Musicians](https://www.helpmusicians.org.uk/)

**Loan schemes**

[Take it away](http://www.takeitaway.org.uk/)

[Creative Industry Finance](https://www.creativeindustryfinance.org.uk/)

[AIM start-ups](http://www.aimstartups.com/)

**Music Development Organisations**

[Generator](http://www.generator.org.uk/)

[British Underground](http://britishunderground.net/)

[Urban Development](http://www.urbandevelopment.co.uk/)

[Roundhouse](http://www.roundhouse.org.uk/young-creatives/)

[Music Education Hubs](http://artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/xls/Music_education_hubs_contact_details_Feb13.xls)

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# 12 Contact us

**Phone:** 0845 300 6200, 0161 934 4317

**Textphone:** 0161 934 4428

**Email:** [enquiries@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@artscouncil.org.uk)

**Website:** [www.artscouncil.org.uk](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk)

**Post:**  Arts Council England - Grants for the Arts,

The Hive, 49 Lever Street, Manchester, M1 1FN

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