



# Cultural Destinations – putting culture at the heart of the visitor economy

## Guidance for applicants

Below is an outline summary of key information. Please see [Section three](#) for full eligibility criteria.

Summary of key information	
<p><b>What is the focus of the Cultural Destinations fund?</b></p>	<p>Culture and visitor economy have an interdependent relationship. Cultural attractions, including theatres, art galleries, festivals and museums, attract visitors to a destination and their spending helps to sustain these cultural venues and organisations. The relationship between culture and visitor economy is well evidenced and reflected in the ambitions of the recent Culture White Paper which sees culture as an important draw for international tourists.</p> <p>Cultural Destinations aims to enable arts and culture organisations working in partnership with Destinations Organisations<sup>1</sup>, to increase their reach, engagement and resilience through working with the tourism sector. Closer working between the two sectors will contribute to the economic growth of the cultural and tourism visitor economies. We are therefore opening this scheme exclusively to applications</p>

<sup>1</sup> Please see the list of [Destination Organisations](#) in England.

	<p>from consortia, with a nominated lead applicant.</p> <p>Funding from this programme may be used as match funding for Visit England's Discover England funding programme.</p>
<p><b>Who can apply?</b></p>	<p>Each application must be from a consortium which must include one cultural organisation (arts organisation or museum) and one Destinations Organisation. The lead applicant, as the accountable body, must be properly constituted. Please see <a href="#">Section three</a> for full eligibility criteria.</p> <p>The lead applicant must be a cultural organisation except where an application is for funding to match a Discover England Fund project. In this case a Destination Organisation can be the lead applicant, but a cultural organisation must be a consortium partner.</p>
<p><b>When is the deadline for applications?</b></p>	<p>12pm (midday) on 26 August 2016.</p>
<p><b>How much can be applied for per application?</b></p>	<p>Between £100,000 – £500,000 over three years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• existing Cultural Destinations projects can apply for up to £150,000</li> <li>• applicants seeking match funding for a round 2, years 2/3 Discover England project can apply for up to £500,000</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all other eligible applicants can apply for up to £300,000</li> <li>• the minimum application level for all categories is £100,000</li> </ul> <p>Please see <a href="#">Section three</a> for full eligibility criteria.</p>
<b>When must the activity take place?</b>	<p>Activities must start no earlier than 1 April 2017.</p> <p>Activities must end no later than 30 March 2020.</p>
<b>Minimum match funding from other sources</b>	<p>10 per cent of the total project budget; this does not include in kind.</p> <p>Organisations applying to extend their current Cultural Destinations project must have 20 per cent of the total project budget; this does not include in kind.</p>
<b>When will we make our decision?</b>	<p>We will aim to notify applicants of our decision no later than the end of February 2017.</p>

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## **Section one – introduction**

### **Welcome**

Thank you for your interest in applying for a Cultural Destinations grant to help England's world-class cultural sector take its place as a key part of our visitor economy. Working with VisitEngland, we want to see culture at the heart of the tourist offer in places all over the country.

Cultural Destinations is a partnership initiative between Arts Council England and Visit England, the national tourist board, to help develop potential of arts and culture to drive growth in the visitor economy. This programme aims to increase participation in the arts, expand the markets open to culture to make the sector more resilient and sustainable, and contribute to economic growth. It will also enable culture to play a key role in delivering the ambitions for Visit England's new Discover England programme as set out in the recent Culture White Paper. This guidance gives you information on how to apply. Please read the guidance carefully.

### **About Arts Council England**

Arts Council England champions, develops and invests in artistic and cultural experiences that enrich people's lives. We support a range of activities across the arts, museums and libraries – from theatre to digital art, reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to collections.

Great art and culture inspires us, brings us together and teaches us about ourselves and the world around us. In short, it makes life better. Between 2015 and 2018, we plan to invest £1.1 billion of public money from government and an estimated £700 million from the National Lottery to help create these experiences for as many people as possible across the country.

On behalf of the Department for Education, we are investing over £75 million between 2015 and 2016 in a network of 123 Music Education Hubs across England.

For more information about the Arts Council visit [www.artscouncil.org.uk](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk)

### **About Arts Council England's strategic funds 2015-18**

Our strategic funds help us to target particular challenges, opportunities or gaps, creating the environment for further development to take place in the arts and culture sector. Ultimately, they help us meet the goals set out in our strategy, [Great Art and Culture for Everyone](#). Our goals, for reference, are as follows:

**Goal 1:** Excellence is thriving and celebrated in the arts, museums and libraries

**Goal 2:** Everyone has the opportunity to experience and be inspired by the arts, museums and libraries

**Goal 3:** The arts, museums and libraries are resilient and environmentally sustainable

**Goal 4:** The leadership and workforce in the arts, museums and libraries are diverse and appropriately skilled

**Goal 5:** Every child and young person has the opportunity to experience the richness of the arts, museums and libraries

### **About any other partners**

VisitEngland is part of VisitBritain which is the national tourism agency. A non-departmental public body funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), VisitBritain/VisitEngland plays a unique role in building England's tourism product, raising Britain's profile worldwide, increasing the volume and value of tourism exports and developing England and Britain's visitor economy. See more at: [www.visitbritain.org/overview](http://www.visitbritain.org/overview)

### **Discover England Fund**

The three-year £40 million Discover England fund, announced by Government last year, will ensure that England stays competitive in the rapidly growing global tourism industry, by offering world-class English tourism products to the right customers at the right time.

Visit England are now calling for bids from destinations and businesses of all sizes who want to be the first to set out how they can use this money to deliver bookable

product that appeals to international visitors. They would also expect this investment to benefit the domestic market.

The fund will support the growth of one of England's most successful export industries, inbound tourism. Tourism is an industry that delivers jobs and economic growth across the English regions – generating £106 billion a year and employing over 2 million people, with a strong domestic market.

The fund is open for applications this year. There are two opportunities: 1) destinations and businesses can apply to test new approaches and develop products in line with customer needs by March 2017; and 2) large scale partnerships who want to join up the regional product offer and create a step-change in how customers access this through technological solutions and transport integration over a two year period. See more at <http://www.discoverenglandfund.org/>

## **Section two – purpose of the activity**

### **Aims and outcomes**

Culture and visitor economy have an interdependent relationship. Cultural attractions, including theatres, art galleries, festivals and museums, attract visitors to a destination and their spending helps to sustain these cultural venues and organisations. The relationship between culture and visitor economy is well evidenced and reflected in the ambitions of the recent Culture White Paper which sees culture as an important draw for international tourists.

The aim of Cultural Destinations is to enable arts and culture organisations working in partnership with Destination Organisations and other tourism partners to increase their reach, engagement and resilience. Closer working between the two sectors will contribute to the economic growth of the cultural and tourism visitor economies and support the development of world-class cultural and tourism products that not only benefit domestic visitors, but meet the needs of international visitors. We are therefore opening this scheme exclusively to applications from consortia. Each consortium will need to nominate a lead applicant.

This programme will support the positioning of culture as a prominent part of the visitor offer, helping to drive growth of the visitor economy. It will also enable culture to play a key thematic or geographic role in a Discover England Fund project by match funding those applications that have a strong cultural element that delivers on the outcomes below. Successful applicants will be able to demonstrate how their proposal will effect a step change for both culture and tourism.

Cultural destinations aims to build partnership capacity in the cultural and visitor economy sectors to achieve the following outcomes:

- more and different types of people experiencing the arts and culture in local destinations in a way that contributes to the growth of local visitor economy
- increased income leading to greater sustainability and resilience for cultural organisations and tourism businesses in local destinations
- repositioning of culture as a prominent part of the visitor offer and local economic growth plans
- a commitment from public and private sector partners to continue working in partnership to support the growth of the local visitor economy through cultural tourism beyond the life of this project

We want to share the learning from the programme widely, so successful applicants will be asked to:

- evaluate the impact of activity on audience engagement and visitor economy growth
- identify and share high quality practice and learning which can be disseminated nationwide
- review projects and actively disseminate learning locally

### **Existing Cultural Destinations projects**

Existing Cultural Destinations projects are eligible to apply for up to £150,000 to continue the work funded through round 1 where:

- there is tangible evidence that an extension will significantly enhance the outcome of the round 1 investment beyond that which was originally envisaged
- new opportunities have arisen since the initial proposal that will lead to significantly enhanced outcomes
- the previous project is not significantly behind and no due conditions remain unmet

Where an existing Cultural Destinations consortium is applying for match funding for the Discover England programme, it cannot also apply separately for an extension of its existing Cultural Destinations project.

### **How much funding is available?**

A total of £3 million (TBC) is available for the second round of the Cultural Destinations fund.

Applicants can apply for projects that last for up to three years but we strongly encourage applicants to consider whether they require funding for one, two or three years.

If you are applying for funding for activity taking place in one year your project must end no later than 31 March 2018.

If you are applying for funding for activity taking place over two years your project must end no later than 31 March 2019.

If you are applying for funding for activity taking place over three years your project must end no later than 31 March 2020.

We will consider funding activities that take place over three years depending on the available budget and whether a clear rationale has been provided. Your application will need to make clear how much funding you are applying for in each year.

It is likely that there will be a high level of demand for funding, particularly over three years, and that there will be good applications that we are unable to fund. You should think about what you would do if we cannot award you funding.

**Geographical focus of the fund**

The geographical focus is designed to support the Arts Council's intent to ensure that a minimum of 75 per cent of our Lottery funding is spent outside London. For this particular fund our expectation is that 85 per cent of the fund will be committed outside London.

This means that we expect to fund a maximum of only one project from London.

**Section three – eligibility**

Please read the eligibility requirements for the fund carefully. If you do not meet any of these requirements we will be unable to consider your application for funding.

<b>Who can apply to the Arts Council’s Cultural Destinations fund?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the lead applicant (accountable body) must be a properly constituted body</li><li>• the lead applicant should clearly identify partners, at least one of which should have significant experience and expertise in delivering arts and/ or cultural programmes</li><li>• the lead applicant must have a mandatory conversation with a designated Senior Relationship Manager (see <a href="#">Section five</a>)</li></ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the lead applicant must be based in England</li> <li>• the lead applicant must be able to demonstrate financial stability, appropriate governance and an ability to accept, administer and account for the grant</li> <li>• the lead applicant must show how each arts and/or museums partner in the consortium demonstrates a contribution to Goal 1 of <i>Culture, Knowledge and Understanding: Great Museums and Libraries for Everyone</i></li> <li>• consortia can be formed of any number of organisations but there must be at least two members, one of whom must be a recognised Destination Organisation<sup>2</sup> with a Destination Management Plan in place or have one in development</li> </ul> <p>Our understanding and definition of an arts and/or cultural organisation is an organisation that can clearly demonstrate that their primary aims are around arts and culture, with activities benefitting the arts and cultural sector within England. This includes but is not limited to arts organisations, museums, libraries, Music Education Hubs and local authority service departments.</p> <p>The kind of arts and/or cultural organisations that are eligible as partners/collaborators include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• limited companies registered at Companies House (or equivalent, if outside the UK)</li> <li>• Community Interest Companies registered with the CIC Regulator</li> <li>• charities or trusts registered with the Charity Commission</li> <li>• Limited Liability Partnerships registered at Companies House</li> </ul>
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<sup>2</sup> Please see the list of [Destination Organisations](#) in England.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• partnerships established under a Deed of Partnership</li> <li>• Industrial and Provident Societies or Community Benefit Societies subject to regulation by the Financial Services Authority</li> <li>• organisations established by Royal Charter or other legislation</li> <li>• statutory bodies including local authorities</li> </ul>
<b>Who cannot apply?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• organisations that have not met any overdue payment conditions on any previous grant from us</li> <li>• individuals</li> <li>• organisations that have not completed a mandatory conversation with a Senior Relationship Manager</li> <li>• organisations based outside of England</li> <li>• organisations that do not demonstrate that they will be in partnership with an arts and/or cultural organisation</li> <li>• organisations that have submitted another application to this scheme</li> <li>• organisations already in receipt of funding from the Arts Council for the activity specified in the application, for example, through strategic funds or through National Portfolio Organisation, Major Partner Museum or Music Education Hub funding</li> </ul>
<b>What activity can be supported?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• market and audience/visitor research that is designed to inform the repositioning of the cultural offer</li> <li>• strategy and policy development where it is reflected and embedded in local Destination Management Plans</li> <li>• cultural and tourism asset mapping</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cultural product development where it is demonstrably linked to long-term visitor economy growth</li> <li>• marketing and promotional activity (where it is additional to existing activity and is equivalent to no more than 75 per cent of the total project cost)</li> <li>• itinerary and package development</li> <li>• sector events, meetings and workshops</li> <li>• familiarisation visits</li> <li>• training</li> <li>• attendance at tourism trade shows or other business-to-business development opportunities</li> <li>• improved interpretation and visitor information, including digital assets</li> <li>• evaluating the impact of funded activity or visitor growth and cultural engagement</li> </ul>
<p><b>What activity cannot be funded?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• activities that are not related to the arts</li> <li>• activities that do not benefit or engage people in England (in the short or long term) or that do not help artists and arts organisations in England to carry out their work</li> <li>• activities (including buying goods or services) that have started, been bought, ordered or contracted before we make a decision about your application. This is because we cannot fund activity retrospectively</li> <li>• costs that are already paid for by other income including your own funds or any other funding</li> <li>• activity that does not fit within relevant Destination Management Plans and other local strategic plans for the area covered by the project</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• core funding of a local cultural/visitor economy partnership body (existing or new) or other partner organisation</li> <li>• marketing and promotional activity that duplicates existing activity, or is greater than 75 per cent of the total project cost</li> <li>• project management costs other than those directly associated with the funded project</li> <li>• activity funded through other Arts Council funding schemes</li> </ul>
<p><b>How much can be applied for per application?</b></p>	<p>Existing Cultural Destinations projects can apply for a maximum of £150,000.</p> <p>Applicants seeking match funding for a Discover England project can apply for up to £500,000.</p> <p>All other eligible applicants can apply for up to £300,000.</p> <p>The minimum application level for all categories is £100,000.</p>
<p><b>How much match funding from sources other than the Arts Council is required?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a minimum of 10 per cent of the total cost of the activity to come from sources other than the Arts Council. This does not include in kind</li> <li>• organisations applying for an extension on their previous Cultural Destinations project must have a minimum of 20 per cent of the total cost of the activity from sources other than the Arts Council. This does not include in kind</li> </ul> <p>The level of match funding will be taken into account when considering financial viability.</p>
<p><b>Delivery timetable</b></p>	<p>Activities must start no earlier than 1 April 2017.</p>

	Activities must end no later than 31 March 2020.
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## **Consortia and partnership agreements**

We will only accept applications for funding from organisations working as a consortium. One organisation must act as the lead organisation and submit the application.

All partners within the consortium must show a firm commitment to joint working. Your application must show the benefits and rationale of working as a consortium.

If we decide to fund your project we will enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the lead organisation. This organisation must accept our terms and conditions of grant and will be solely accountable to us for all monitoring information, how all the money is spent and for the full and successful delivery of the project.

One of our standard terms and conditions of grant is that the organisation we enter into a grant agreement with cannot subcontract any of the project to other organisations without our prior agreement in writing. So if we award a grant, before the project can start, we must approve a partnership agreement between the lead organisation and the other partners involved in the project.

Consortia do not need to be formally constituted. If awarded a grant they will be required to put in place a written partnership agreement or memorandum of understanding. This agreement will have to address several points:

- that the lead applicant is solely responsible to Arts Council England under the terms of the funding agreement
- the lead applicant should consider how it ensures that all partners deliver on their obligations under the partnership and how it would deal with any non-performance
- how organisations can leave or join the consortium over the lifetime of the grant and how this will be managed

There is further guidance about [Partnership agreements](#) on our website.

Before making an application or discussing a potential application with Arts Council England we strongly advise each consortium to read the Cultural Destinations, round 1 interim evaluation report which is available now. We would also expect you to consider and discuss the following questions:

- Is there a clear commitment from each consortium member to work together, including from boards (or equivalent governance structure)?
- Can partners clearly identify unmet growth potential in the local visitors economy that could be realised by repositioning and growing cultural tourism?
- Can the consortium secure the commitment of key cultural organisations and local partners required to deliver the programme outcomes? For example (but not exclusively):
  - the local authority (where it is not the partner Destination Organisation)
  - Local Enterprise Partnership
  - the private sector (eg via a local chamber of commerce, Business Improvement District, local tourism businesses, hotels association or other key local businesses)
- Is the balance of cultural and tourism partners on the consortium appropriate to deliver the proposed outcomes and maintain a strong cross-sector partnership?
- Has the consortium carefully considered the additional capacity required to deliver the proposed project?
- Are consortium members able to commit the time and resources required over the duration of the award to realise their ambitions?
- Is each consortium member's expected level of engagement in the project realistic and clearly set out?
- How will the group work to identify and address shared development issues or skill groups?
- Does each consortium member have the commitment to deliver a long-term step change in the role that culture plays in the local visitor economy?
- Who is the appropriate lead applicant to submit an application to manage and report on the grant?
- Can the consortium adequately measure the impact on the visitor economy and arts audiences in their destination?
- Do the proposed outcomes of any Discover England Fund proposal, for which this fund is being asked for match funding, adequately deliver against the objectives of Cultural Destinations?

The consortium (or a wider partnership convened by the consortium) could include other organisations who are part of the local visitor economy, eg heritage, sport or outdoor adventure, but they cannot receive any of the grant unless they are delivering arts or museums activity for the project. They may, however, benefit indirectly through shared audiences or markets with a view to developing joint promotional activity, packages or itineraries.

#### **Section four – what you will be expected to deliver**

We welcome applications that will make a contribution to achieving the aims and outcomes outlined in [Section two](#) above.

Applications must be submitted by a lead applicant on behalf of their consortium. This can be either an arts organisation or museum, or in the case of an application for match funding for a Discover England Fund project, a Destination Organisation or equivalent tourism body, so consortia should consider carefully which organisation is most appropriate.

Consortia must comprise of at least one cultural organisation (arts organisation or museum) and one Destination Organisation or equivalent. In most instances we would expect this to be a recognised local Destination Organisation; however, it could be any entity (public, private or both) that undertakes tourism development or marketing activities on behalf of a destination.

All Destination Organisations included in consortia must have in place a Destination Management Plan or have one in development. The lead applicant should work together with the consortium to submit an application that identifies unmet growth potential in the local visitor economy and a joint plan for capacity building activity which will realise potential.

Applicants must also demonstrate how the project will contribute to:

- Arts Council England's goals as set out in *Achieving Great Art and Culture for Everyone*, particularly goals 2 and 3:
  - increase in the numbers of people taking part in the arts or experiencing museums in participating areas
  - increased resilience for cultural organisations in participating areas

- the growth of local visitor economy and alignment with the *Strategic Framework for Tourism in England 2010-20*.

Applicants must also demonstrate how each organisation or museum in the consortium demonstrates contribution to Goal 1 of *Achieving Great Art and Culture for Everyone*.

## Section five – how to apply

### Making an application

#### When to apply

The online application form will open on **Thursday 14 July 2016**. Applications must be submitted by **12pm (midday) on Friday 26 August 2016**. Applications submitted after this time will not be considered.

#### Application process

**1. Read this guidance carefully and contact us**

This guidance gives you information on how to apply and answers some common questions. If you have any further questions you can contact our Customer Services team at [enquiries@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@artscouncil.org.uk)

**2. Prepare and submit your proposal**

You must apply through our [online application portal](#) using the **standard application** form:

- i. Once you have logged in (or created a new user account if you have not used the online portal before) you will see the Welcome screen. On this screen, select “Standard application” from the dropdown list:



Select the programme you wish to apply to:  ▼

**Start Application**

- ii. When you press “Start Application”, you will be taken to the “Eligibility Check” section where you should select the name of this fund from the dropdown list:

## Eligibility Check

### Eligibility questions - Section 1

The following questions are to check your application against some basic criteria.

\* Which strategic programme are you applying for?

- iii. When you have completed the eligibility check you will be taken to the full application form which includes questions about you (or your organisation) and the activity you are applying for, and a section called “Response to the brief” which gives you space to provide a full proposal for your activity. There is also a section where you can upload the mandatory attachments that we need, and any other supporting information.

#### iv. Proposal

The proposal can be a maximum of 7, 000 words, divided into three sections: “Meeting the brief” (3,000 words), “Governance and management of activity” (2,000 words) and “Financial viability” (2,000 words). You do not need to use the full word count if you do not feel it is necessary. Use the criteria/prompts in [Section six](#) of this guidance to help you structure your proposal.

- Introduction
- Organisation details
- Main contact details
- Basic details
- Meeting our goals
- Response to the brief
- Attachments
- Activity beneficiaries
- Monitoring information
- Declaration
- Submit the form

## **v. Attachments**

*You must upload the following mandatory attachments on the “Attachments” screen:*

- a detailed budget for the activity showing proposed income and expenditure (as an Excel sheet or similar)
- a work plan for the proposed project, including milestones and key review dates
- the email we sent confirming that you had a mandatory conversation with an Arts Council Senior Relationship Manager
- financial statements for your previous financial year, prepared to the relevant legal standard for an organisation of your size and status (non-National Portfolio Organisations only)
- your latest management accounts (non-National Portfolio Organisations only)
- your governance documents (non-National Portfolio Organisations only)

***You may also upload the following optional attachments:***

- up to three other relevant attachments; these must each be a maximum of five pages in length

Examples of optional documents we would expect to see for the Cultural Destinations Fund, include but are not limited to:

- an outline of proposed activities, including artistic/cultural/tourism content and audiences/participants/markets to be reached
- brief biographies of key individuals or organisations to be involved
- draft partnership agreement
- evidence of match funding expected or confirmed

The combined limit on file size for all the attachments taken together is **10 megabytes**.

We will use the information you give us in your application form and any attachments to decide whether we will offer you a grant. If your application does not contain the information we need in the format we ask for it to be in, we might not be able to consider your application. After you have read this guidance, if you have any further questions please contact us.

### **Assistance with your application**

We are committed to being open and accessible, and want to make the Cultural Destinations application process accessible to everyone.

If you experience any barriers within the application process or require help to make an application, our enquiries team can be contacted by:

- telephone: 0845 300 6200
- text phone: +44(0) 161 934 4428
- email: [enquiries@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@artscouncil.org.uk)

### **Talking to us about your application – the mandatory conversation**

Once you have read the guidance and started to think about your application, you must speak with a designated member of staff in one of our area offices in more detail about your proposal. We use the term “mandatory conversation” to describe this scheduled, structured conversation, which often takes place by telephone. You must have this mandatory conversation before submitting your application to the Cultural Destinations fund. Please contact our Customer Services team to find out more about this.

We will arrange a time to speak with you. As a general guide, we would aim to cover the following points:

- how will the project deliver against the aims of this programme?
- how will the consortium ensure that there is sufficient capacity to deliver the project?
- is there good quality baseline data available or a clear approach to gathering baseline data against which progress can be measured?
- how will relationships be sustained and developed through and, if appropriate, beyond the life of the project?
- how will the project be evaluated, and how will learning from the project be shared across all partners, as well as more widely across the arts and cultural sector?
- finance and management of the project
- any diversity and equality issues that may be relevant to the project
- whether other funding programmes might be more appropriate for the project

We will not be able to read, or provide written comment on, draft applications.

Once you have had this conversation with the designated member of staff, we will send you an email to confirm that the mandatory conversation has been completed. You can then submit your application at any time, uploading a copy of the email we have sent you as supporting information (see the Attachments section of the application form for instructions on where to do this).

It is your responsibility to develop and write the application, including what you feel to be all the relevant information. We will talk with all potential applicants but cannot guarantee success for any applicant.

### **After you submit your application**

You will receive an acknowledgement email confirming that we have received your application. This will be sent to the email address which you used to log into the portal. The email will include a PDF copy of your application for your reference.

We will conduct an eligibility check within 10 working days of the deadline for applications. If your application is not eligible, this means that we cannot process it any further and it will not be considered for funding. If your application is not eligible we will write to you to let you know, and will explain our decision.

## **Section six – how we will make our decision**

We will aim to notify applicants of our decision no later than 28 February 2017.

We will check your application to ensure that you have provided all the information we have requested.

We will make our decision based on the information you provide in your application, any further information that we request and, where relevant, data and information from the Charity Commission and Companies House websites relating to your constitution and audited accounts from the past two years.

Each criterion (“Meeting the brief”, “Governance and management of the activity”, and “Financial viability”) will be assessed using a five-point word scoring:

- **Not met**  
*The application does not meet the criteria*
- **Potential**  
*The application does not meet the criteria but shows potential to do so*
- **Met**  
*The application meets the criteria*
- **Met (strong)**  
*The application meets the criteria and shows strong qualities*
- **Met (outstanding)**  
*The application meets the criteria and shows outstanding qualities*

On the basis of these ratings we will recommend whether an application is suitable for funding. Applications that do not achieve at least “met” under all three criteria will not be recommended for funding.

We will assess each application against the following criteria, using the assessment prompts below:

<p><b>Criteria</b></p> <p><b>Meeting the brief</b></p> <p>Word count: up to 3,000 words</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear and convincing plans to deliver on the fund’s <a href="#">aims and outcomes</a> and all the elements of <a href="#">what you will be expected to deliver</a>, as described in this brief.</li> <li>• Does the application demonstrate a clear vision underpinned by in-depth understanding of the place of culture in the local visitor economy?</li> <li>• Does the applicant demonstrate the potential for a clear step-change in the role of cultural tourism and do the proposed plans deliver this?</li> <li>• Does the applicant demonstrate how the project will contribute to Arts Council England’s goals as set out in <i>Achieving Great Art and Culture for Everyone</i>, goals 2 and 3?</li> <li>• Does the activity significantly improve the outcome of a round 1 Cultural Destinations project where relevant?</li> <li>• Does the application demonstrate how it delivers against the goals of the Discover England Fund where relevant?</li> <li>• Does the consortium include appropriate partners with clear roles and responsibilities?</li> <li>• Does the Destination Organisation have a Destination Management Plan in place or in development?</li> <li>• Do all arts and museums consortium members make a contribution to Goal 1 <i>Achieving Great Art and Culture for Everyone</i>?</li> <li>• Is there evidence of a commitment to long-term cultural tourism development leading to visitor economy growth from all consortium members?</li> <li>• Are there clear plans in place to evaluate and adequately measure the impact of the activity on visitor economy growth, cultural engagement and resilience and is there or will there be good quality baseline data available?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Management of the activity</b></p> <p>Word count: up to 2,000 words</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the application clearly demonstrate how the consortium will manage the activity and budget?</li> <li>• Are appropriate governance arrangements in place and/or planned, including how partners are engaged?</li> <li>• Does the application demonstrate effective and efficient use of the grant?</li> </ul>

- Does the application demonstrate that the lead applicant and consortium have the appropriate skills and knowledge to deliver the programme?
- Has the applicant set out how the project will be resourced and clearly identified where additional capacity to deliver the project will be found?

### **Financial viability**

Word count: up to 2,000 words

- Does the lead applicant have appropriate financial systems and resources in place to manage the grant?
- Is the lead applicant financially stable?
- Appropriateness of proposed budget.
- Evidence of organisational buy-in by applicant and project partners, as cash investment and/or in-kind support.
- Are there robust and realistic plans for resourcing the activity effectively?
- Is the minimum amount of match funding confirmed, or is there evidence that it will be confirmed during the lifetime of the project?
- Value for money – an appropriate return on investment.

### **Decision making**

Once we have scored your application and a recommendation has been made whether to fund it, we will make our decision. To do this we will consider how strongly your activity scored against our criteria and any balancing criteria we have outlined below, and we will also consider your activity alongside other applications to the fund.

Balancing criteria:

- the relative strength of each application against criteria compared to other applications received in an area
- geography across England – where the activity is proposed to take place and where the benefit will be realised
- type and scale of the project

These balancing criteria will be used in addition to the main criteria to ensure a good spread of funded projects according to each balancing criterion, and to differentiate between a number of proposals that are considered strong.

We anticipate that this will be a highly competitive programme and we will pay due account to the balancing criteria when making our decisions.

Any decision to offer funding will be subject to discussing and finalising a detailed funding agreement. This process could result in agreed changes to your planned activities and budgets and consequently to your level of funding.

### **Complaints procedure**

If you are not happy with the way we have dealt with your application, please contact us and we will discuss this with you. If you are still unhappy, you can ask us for a copy of our complaints procedure.

Details can be found in [Making a complaint](#), which is available on our website, [www.artscouncil.org.uk](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk), or by contacting our enquiries team by email to [enquiries@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@artscouncil.org.uk) or by phoning 0845 300 6200.

Please note that you can only complain if you believe we have not followed our published procedures when assessing your application. You cannot appeal against the decision.

## **Section seven – Freedom of Information Act**

The Arts Council is committed to being as open as possible. We believe that the public has a right to know how we spend public funds and how we make our funding decisions.

We are also listed as a public authority under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. By law, we may have to provide your application documents and information about our assessment to any member of the public who asks for them under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

We may not release those parts of the documents which are covered by one or more of the exemptions under the Act. Please see the Freedom of Information website at [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk) for information about freedom of information generally and the exemptions.

We will not release any information about applications during the assessment period, as this may interfere with the decision-making process.

### **Contact us**

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