

ARTS COUNCIL NATIONAL LOTTERY PROJECT GRANTS

Research and development (R&D)

Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants is our open-access programme for arts, museums and libraries projects.

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This information sheet relates to Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants.
See [our website](#) for more information about Project Grants.

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Research and development (R&D) projects

We are keen to support projects that allow artists, creatives and organisations to develop their work.

R&D projects are typically where a person or group develop a new idea or explore a new way of working. An R&D project can have a significant effect on a person's or organisation's work.

As R&D projects are usually exploratory, you might not be able to fully define what you want the outcome to be, but you would usually have a clear sense of what you want to explore and why.

How long an R&D project takes, how it is structured and what it focuses on will depend on the nature of your work. R&D projects can often involve other artists or practitioners, particularly when exploring new ideas or looking at shifting to a new model.

R&D projects might be self-contained, or might form part of a wider programme of work. For example, a project might start with a period of R&D that will guide the development of a script, which will then become a play.

Involving the public

To apply for a grant for an R&D project through Project Grants, you must show how the project will affect how audiences or participants will get involved with your work, either as part of the project or in the future.

Developing Your Creative Practice

If you are an **individual** and your project is:

- focused only on developing your own creative or professional practice; and
- **does not** include any public-facing elements (for example, performances, workshops, a tour, an exhibition or a publication);

you might find that it is more suited to our other funding programme, Developing your Creative Practice. The programme is designed to support R&D projects for individuals and can award grants of £1,000 to £10,000.

You can only apply to either Project Grants or Developing Your Creative Practice, so think carefully about which would best suit your needs.

What you can apply for

Some examples of the types of R&D projects we can support through Project Grants are as follows.

- Developing and testing new ideas and work
- Taking up creative residency opportunities, in England and internationally, that could have a longer-term effect on your future practice in England
- Getting access to mentoring and shadowing opportunities, including peer networks and critique groups, to trial new ideas and develop a market or commissioning opportunities
- Having access to production space or workspace to develop new ideas and work
- Taking up opportunities to 'go see' to guide your own practice, where that would have a longer-term effect on your work in the future
- Developing new partnerships and networks
- Training and continuing professional development opportunities for artists and practitioners

R&D projects outside England

Project Grants can fund R&D activities that happen outside England, but only if the project has a clear benefit to artists, cultural practitioners and organisations living in England. You can show the benefits in different ways, depending on the nature of your project.

See the 'International projects' [information sheet](#) for more information about how to apply for activities abroad. For full details of the eligibility requirements for Project Grants, read our [information sheet](#)

What we look for in an application

We understand that R&D projects have different types of outcomes to other kinds of projects, and encourage you to think about the different ways that R&D projects meet the criteria for Project Grants.

We want to know about the effect your proposed project on will have on your artistic or creative development and your future work. We also want to hear how audiences or participants will get involved with your work in the future. How a project will develop your creative practice, and how people will get involved, depends on the nature of your work.

In the application form, we ask specific questions about development, public involvement, partnerships and evaluation. In your answers to these questions, think about the range of outcomes your R&D project could have. Some of these will be short term and others long term.

There are some things you can think about to make sure your application for an R&D project is as strong as it can be.

- show clearly how the project will develop your work (directly or in general)
- explain what you want to explore and why? We understand that your project's outcomes might not be fully defined at the start due to the nature of R&D
- consider how the public might get involved with the outcome of your project, both during its lifetime and in the future even if there are no immediate opportunities to involve people as part of the project itself
- involve relevant partners to support the project
- show how learning from the project will be shared with others

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