



Unsuccessful Grants for the Arts applications for over £15,000

How we make decisions on applications over £15,000

After completing the risk check, we will consider the applications against our stated criteria:

Artistic quality – the quality of the activity and the quality of effect the activity will have on the people experiencing it, or its ongoing effect on artistic practice (or all of these)

Public engagement – how the public will engage with the activity, immediately or in the long term

Management – how the activity will be managed and its ongoing effect

Finance – how realistic the activity is financially and its future effect



To determine how well an application meets these criteria, we ask ourselves a series of questions or prompts for each of the four appraisal criteria. It is very important to note that not all the prompts will apply to every application, but they are the type of things we may look at. We will use our judgement to decide which prompts are relevant in each case, depending on the type of activity and how much money you are applying for.

Artistic quality prompts

- are the activity's artistic aims clearly expressed?
- how strong is the artistic idea?
- is the plan to carry out the activity likely to achieve the artistic ambition?
- how strongly does the activity develop the work/skills of artists/organisations involved?
- does the artists/organisations experience (and any supporting documents) demonstrate a good track record?
- are the artists/organisations involved of high quality?
- is the wider artform/sector impact of the activity likely to be strong?

Public Engagement prompts

- does the application make a strong case for public engagement with the activity?
 - are the target audiences for the activity clearly identified?
 - does the activity specifically increase opportunities for people who don't currently engage in the arts or are engaged a little in arts activity?
 - does the activity increase opportunities for people already engaged in arts activity?
- are plans to market the activity to audiences/participants well defined, and are they likely to achieve audience projections?
- if there is no immediate opportunity to engage people (e.g. R&D) does the application show that the applicant has considered how the public will be engaged in the future?
- have access and diversity been considered effectively?



Management prompts

- is the activity realistic and well planned (including having a realistic tour schedule, where appropriate)?
- does the application show the applicant's ability to manage the activity successfully?
- does the applicant have a track record of managing a similar activity?
- is the activity supported by appropriate partnerships? Is their commitment confirmed?
- are plans to evaluate the activity appropriate?
- has risk been appropriately considered, with reasonable mitigating actions identified?

Finance prompts

- is the budget appropriate for the activity that is planned? [Is the amount of money the applicant is asking for suitable for the scale and type of activity? How appropriate are the areas of income and spending?]
- are all items in the budget relevant and reasonable? [Are fees or wages appropriate to the context? Have quotes for assets been appropriately researched for any asset purchases (minimum of three quotes)?]
- does the application demonstrate that the activity is attracting income from other sources? Is any other income confirmed? If not, do potential income sources seem realistic?
- has the cash flow been adequately taken into account?
- how appropriate are the financial controls that are in place?
- do current audited accounts confirm the financial assumptions the activity is based on?

We will use the evidence in your application and our expertise and judgement to come to a 'word score' for each appraisal criteria:

met – outstanding: the application meets the criteria and shows outstanding qualities. Score = 4

met – strong: the application meets the criteria and shows strong qualities. Score = 3



met: the application meets the criteria. Score = 2

potential: the application does not meet the criteria but shows potential to do so. Score = 1

not met: the application does not meet the criteria. Score = 0

The appraisal reports/scores are the first tool to help prioritise applications, however, we will consider your activity alongside other applications and will look at the range of projects we support. We want the projects we fund to cover a broad range of activity types, artforms and geographical areas. We also review a range of reports on our spending so far and future demand on the Grants for the Arts budget. This means that we may choose to not fund some high scoring applications.

Unsuccessful applications

There are three main reasons that applications for over £15,000 are not recommended for funding:

Did not meet criteria

The application did not fully meet the criteria in one or more of the areas we consider when appraising; artistic quality, public engagement, management and finance

We will not fund applications that score potential or not met against any of the four appraisal criteria. Your appraisal report will provide more detail on where we identified weaknesses.

Comparatively weaker

Although the application met the criteria we consider when appraising (artistic quality, public engagement, management and finance), we decided that the outcomes for one or more of these areas of the activity were less strong than other applications we received



Even if an application scores met or above for all four criterion, we may choose not to fund the activity. We use this reason when an application was potentially fundable, but we decided the application had some weaknesses. Your appraisal report will provide more detail on where we identified weaknesses.

Competition for funds

Although the application met the criteria, we consider when appraising (artistic quality, public engagement, management and finance), we decided not to fund your activity. Our decision making takes many factors into account, and we consider your activity alongside other applications and look at the range of projects we support. We had to make difficult choices about which applications to support as our funds are limited

Even if an application scores met or above for all four criterion, we may choose not to fund the activity. We use this reason when an application was potentially fundable, but with limited funds available, we had to make difficult decisions.

Making a new application

You can apply to Grants for the Arts again, but please think carefully about why we chose not to fund your application.

We may have identified weaknesses in your application that could be improved, or the activity itself might be making less of a contribution to the spread of projects we fund. Whilst there are no priorities for Grants for the Arts, we need to support a wide range of activity that benefits people from all over the country.

If you do decide to reapply, please ensure that you have read the [How to apply guidance](#) and any other relevant guidance material carefully. You must address the reasons that the original application was not successful, but it is always worth thinking about ways you could strengthen all sections of your application form.



And remember, addressing feedback provided will not guarantee that a future application will be successful. Grants for the Arts is competitive and we always receive more good applications than we can fund.

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