



Cirque Bijou - Collaboret  
in the Big Top  
Photo © Andre Pattenden

## NATIONAL LOTTERY PROJECT GRANTS INFORMATION SHEET

# Research and Development (R&D)

Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants is our open-access funding programme for individual practitioners, arts organisations, libraries, and museum projects.

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# What's Inside

This information sheet relates to Arts Council England's National Lottery Project Grants. It can be used alongside the Project Grants 'How to Apply' guidance documents to support you to make your application.

See our [website](#) for more information about Project Grants.

In this information sheet, we will talk about the following:

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# Research and Development (R&D) projects

R&D projects are typically where a person or group develop a new idea or explore a new way of working. We are keen to support projects that allow creative and cultural practitioners and organisations to develop their work. 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 should 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 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 communities

To apply for a grant for an R&D project through Project Grants, you must show how the project will involve communities, 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 find out more about this programme [here](#).

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

## What you can apply for

These are some examples of the types of R&D projects we can support through Project Grants:

- Developing and testing new ideas and work
- Taking up creative residency opportunities, in England and internationally, that will 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 creative or cultural practitioners

# R&D projects outside England

Project Grants can fund R&D activities that happen outside England, but the project needs to demonstrate longer-term benefit to individuals and communities within England. You can show the benefits in different ways, depending on the nature of your project.

See the International activity and Project Grants information sheet [here](#) for more information about how to apply for activities abroad.

## What we look for in an application

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 maybe exploratory so everything you want to achieve may not be fully defined at the start
- consider how communities 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

# Contact us

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