

## How to apply: Over £30,000

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

**Published: November 2021**

**Last updated: April 2023**

**[artscouncil.org.uk](https://artscouncil.org.uk)**



# **Access Support**

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We are committed to being open and accessible to everyone. We realise some people may find that there are barriers to applying for a grant or accessing our services. Our Access support information sheet explains the ways we can help.

## **Do you need this information in another format?**

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You can also find Easy Read and audio versions of this guidance on our website: **[artscouncil.org.uk/projectgrants](https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/projectgrants)**

If you experience or expect any barrier with making your application and would like more information or a copy of our guidance, please **contact us**.

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You can also **Livechat** with us by visiting our website:  
**[artscouncil.org.uk/projectgrants](https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/projectgrants)**

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# Welcome to National Lottery Project Grants

Before you think about applying to National Lottery Project Grants, you should read our strategy **Let's Create**. The full strategy is **here** (<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/lets-create/strategy-2020-2030>), and the Easy Read version is **here** (<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/lets-create/strategy-2020-2030/accessing-lets-create>).

National Lottery Project Grants is our open-access funding programme for arts, museums and libraries projects. It is always open, and has a quick turnaround, so we can respond to people's good ideas. We also aim to broadly reflect the diversity of contemporary England through the grants we make.

National Lottery Project Grants supports a broad range of creative and cultural projects that benefit people living in England. It can support individuals and organisations with grants from £1,000 upwards. Projects can range from directly creating and delivering creative and cultural activity to projects which have a longer term positive impact, such as organisational development, research and development, and sector support and development.

- We can make grants between £1,000 and £100,000+. **This guidance is only for applicants asking for over £30,000, including touring applications, Place Partnerships and Projects of National Significance**
- We can support projects that last up to a maximum of three years
- All applications must be made using our online system, **Grantium** – see our separate guidance (<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/advice-and-guidance-library/grantium-support#section-1>) for details

- Applications must meet the programme's criteria. The application form will ask you to describe your project using these three **criteria**

**Remember - we receive more good applications than we can fund.** If you are unsuccessful you can apply again.

## **Project Grants and Let's Create**

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This refreshed National Lottery Project Grants (NLPG) programme will continue to be a high volume, flexible programme to help individuals and cultural organisations to recover from the pandemic as well as help deliver our strategy **Let's Create**. It will support a wide range of individuals and organisations, professional companies, and non-professional groups to undertake projects ranging from small-scale research and development, right through to large national tours. It will continue to be targeted primarily at individuals and organisations that are not part of the National Portfolio.

For this new version of the programme, we are:

- aligning the application criteria closely to the delivery of the **three Outcomes and their elements** (<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/outcomes-0>) and **four Investment Principles** (<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/our-investment-principles>) in **Let's Create**
- targeting our advice-giving to those who might not have previously engaged with Arts Council England so that we ensure a more equitable spread of investment
- raising the threshold for smaller grants from £15,000 to £30,000 so that we can use faster decision-making processes to support more ambitious projects. This guidance is for anyone applying for over £30,000

- simplifying our application processes and making clearer what we will, and won't support in advance
- providing improved support for individual artists and creative and cultural practitioners
- supporting libraries to deliver fully against the four Universal Library Offers (Reading, Health and Wellbeing, Digital and Information, and Culture and Creativity)
- supporting museums, including accredited and non-accredited museums, to make them more relevant, inclusive and accessible
- establishing some new strands, with separate budgets, within National Lottery Project Grants:
  - Place Partnership projects to support our place-making work
  - Touring projects to support national and international touring activity
  - Nationally Significant projects to support major projects that can demonstrate national significance

# Eligibility

## Who can apply?

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**Individuals** and **organisations** are both able to apply to Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants for more than £30,000.

Anyone who applies to Project Grants – individual or organisation – needs to:

- be based within (live in or have a business address in) England or the wider UK
- have a UK bank account in the exact name they're applying in; and
- be at least 18 years old (for organisations, have an accountable person who is at least 18) By 'organisation' we mean:
  - a group of people working towards a common goal with a governing document that covers the type of project being applied for, such as a charity, a limited company or an unincorporated group. Examples would be: arts organisations, museums, libraries and Music Education Hubs, and organisations that use arts and culture in their work
  - all organisations need to have a bank account in the organisation's name, with two signatories (people allowed to sign cheques)
  - limited companies and registered charities need to have a registered office in the UK
  - consortiums and partnerships

We will accept applications from organisations working as a consortium, partnership, network or group. For nonconstituted consortiums or groups, one organisation must act as the lead organisation and send us the application. If the application goes on to be successful, this organisation would then be accountable for the grant.

## Who cannot apply?

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- **National Portfolio Organisations** cannot generally apply to Project Grants. But they can apply for Touring projects, Nationally Significant projects and Place Partnerships projects. Please see our Funded Organisations information sheet on our website
- Anyone who has **overdue conditions on a previous grant**
  - If you currently have an open Grants for the Arts or Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants award, you cannot make another application unless you have met any payment conditions due on your earlier grant. You must send us any overdue information before you make a new application

## What you can apply for – the disciplines we support

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**Activities we support through Project Grants must have outcomes that focus on one or more of these disciplines:**

- **Dance**
- **Combined arts**
  - including festivals and carnivals
- **Libraries**
  - for activity that delivers against at least one of the four Universal Library Offers
- **Literature**
- **Music**
- **Museums and collections**
- **Theatre**
- **Visual arts**



A project might sit exactly within one of our supported disciplines, across a few of them, or work with another discipline.

## **What you can apply for**

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We fund projects that focus on **the disciplines we support** and that engage people in England with creativity and culture. We don't want to be too prescriptive in saying what kind of project is a good fit for Project Grants. We want to hear new ideas.

### **What do we mean by 'engage people'?**

To help people experience, become involved with or participate in creativity and culture.

### **What do we mean by 'project'?**

The main questions to ask yourself about your project are:

- Does it have a start and end date, and things you want to achieve in that time?
- Does it allow people to experience or take part in artistic work, museum-focused work or libraries-related activity (either as part of the project or in the longer term)?
- Does it focus on the disciplines we support?

While you may be eligible for funding for arts, museum or libraries-related activity (such as developing or making new work, showing or touring work, residencies or commissions), our funding can also be used towards associated work such as developing skills, marketing, organisational development and project-related overheads.

## **When do I need to ask for permission to apply?**

There are some circumstances where you will need to ask our permission before you make an application. These include:

- **Applications for more than £100,000** (unless you are applying for a **Nationally Significant project, Touring project** or **Place Partnership project**. If you're applying to any of these strands, you'll need to make an Expression of Interest instead of asking permission to apply)

You will need to ask permission to make an application for more than £100,000 because we only make grants at this level in exceptional circumstances. We want to make sure that a project has potential to have the kind of impact we would expect before you invest time in developing a full application. We will also think about whether we have the budget available to consider your full application. You will need to contact us for permission. We will confirm in writing whether you can apply. You must attach our letter with your application.

- **Making a second application**

If you are already waiting for a decision from us about one application, you can only send us a second application in exceptional circumstances. If you want to do this, you must first contact us. We will confirm in writing whether you can apply. You must attach our letter with your second application.

- **Time sensitive**

In exceptional circumstances we may be able to give you a decision faster than our normal. We don't give permission for time sensitive applications very often, and only in specific circumstances. See our Time Sensitive information sheet on

our website [artscouncil.org.uk/NLPGinfosheets](https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/NLPGinfosheets) for more details.

- **Over £30,000 applications that include building costs**  
If you plan to apply for activity relating to building work (for example: refurbishing arts and cultural buildings, improving access, buying property or leasing a building) as part of an application requesting more than £30,000, you will need to contact us for permission.

We will confirm in writing whether you can apply. You must attach our letter with your application.

You can find out more about building projects in the information sheet on our website [artscouncil.org.uk/NLPGinfosheets](https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/NLPGinfosheets)

## **Additional Guidance**

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**There are some instances where our eligibility rules are specific.** They include:

- **Museum and collections projects**
- **Library applications that deliver against the Universal Library Offers**
- **Using digital technology**
- **Place Partnership projects** - there are some **specific criteria** for Place Partnership projects included later on in this guidance
- **Touring projects** - there are some **specific criteria** for touring projects included later on in this guidance
- **Nationally Significant projects** - there are some **specific criteria** for nationally-significant projects included later on in this guidance
- **Education and learning-related projects**

- **Buying equipment or assets** - including instruments and vehicles
- **Applications for building work** - Project Grants can support projects where the building-specific expenditure totals less than £100,000. This includes:
  - applications for building work only, where that building work will cost up to £100,000
  - applications for a mix of activities that include some building work costs where the total cost of the work is less than £100,000

You need to ask for our permission to apply if you are applying for more than £30,000 for a project that includes **any** building work. See the **Building Projects information sheet** (<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/NLPGinfosheets>).

Before you fill in an application for these types of projects, it is important that you read the related information sheets. These are available on our website:

**artscouncil.org.uk/NLPGinfosheets**. Your application will not be eligible if you do not meet any specific requirements related to these types of activity.

**A full list of information sheets is included in the appendix of this document.**

## **What you cannot apply for**

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- Activities that **do not focus on the art forms and disciplines we support**
- Direct or indirect **costs of statutory education, further education or higher education** (undergraduate or postgraduate) for activities directly linked to a formal course of study

- **Ongoing overheads or running costs** outside of your project timeline
- **Re-applications** (activity you have applied for and been unsuccessful) unless your new application for the same activity addresses the reasons that the original application was not successful. We will not be able to consider any reapplications that have not addressed this
- **Activities, goods or services that have already taken place, or been bought or ordered** before we can make a decision on your application
- **Showcasing work at Edinburgh Festival Fringe** - We don't normally directly fund applications that include taking work to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. However, we are committed to increasing opportunities for international exchange and market development for creative practitioners and arts and cultural organisations based in England. We have supported **Horizon** (<https://www.horizonshowcase.uk/>) Performing Arts Showcase for England-based individuals and organisations to present work including theatre, dance, circus and live art, within the Edinburgh Festival Fringe
- **Cash prizes and re-granting** - You cannot use Project Grants funding to give cash prizes or make grants as part of your project. We can only support costs that are for specified items of expenditure on goods (products) or services (time) that will be used to deliver the project. If your project includes giving cash prizes as part of a wider activity (for example, a publishing project that includes the publication of an anthology of new writing and a cash prize to a writer), you should either exclude that strand of activity from your budget, or show clearly that the cash prize is completely paid for using other **confirmed** income
- **Projects that make a profit** - If your project budget includes surplus income that is not being spent within the project, then your project will not be eligible

- **Fundraising and donations** - You cannot use Project Grants funding to give funds to individuals or organisations, including private business or charities, which are not in exchange for goods (products) or services (time) that will be used to deliver the project. We are accountable for distributing public funding and therefore need to know how project costs are being spent.
- **Carbon off-setting payments** - Payments for carbon offsetting, for example to environmental charities or related commercial organisations, are not made in exchange for a resource used in the delivery of the project. You should either exclude carbon offsetting costs from your budget or clearly show that the expenditure will be covered by confirmed income.

## **Ineligible applications**

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We will view your application as ineligible if it doesn't focus on the **disciplines we support**, or if it doesn't clearly demonstrate how the project will engage people in England.

We might also view an application as ineligible if it is not developed enough for us to be able to make a decision (for example: if it does not include the level of detail we need). We can view an application as underdeveloped against one or more of our criteria.

We can also view your application as ineligible if it doesn't include the supporting documents or **permission letter** we need.

We cannot use our funding to support activities, goods or services that have already taken place, been bought or been ordered before we can make a decision on your application. We cannot support mitigation of losses and/or debt mitigation through Project Grants.

There are also some types of activity that we are not able to support due to technical restrictions on the Lottery funds that we distribute. If one of these reasons applies to your activity, we will write to you and let you know why it is not eligible.

### **Our information sheet**

(<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/NLPGinfosheets>) on Ineligible Applications explains the main reasons an application could be ineligible.

## **What are the criteria we'll use to make decisions on applications?**

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The application form is made up of four parts:

- **Essential information**

Here we'll ask for a description of your project and some basic details about you and the activity.

The next three sections make up the Project Grants criteria:

- **Feasibility and risk**
- **Your project and the Outcomes**
- **Your project and the Investment Principles**

**We'll make our decision based on how strongly your application responds to the questions in each of the three criteria sections.**

This guidance lists the questions in each part of the application form.

In the application form section of this guidance we outline the parts of the application form, and tell you the things to think about when answering the questions in that section. These are the things we think about when we make a decision on your application.

We'll take into account all of the information you tell us in the application form.



# Additional Strands

There are some additional strands within National Lottery Project Grants:

- **Touring** to support local, national and international touring activity
- **Nationally Significant projects** to support major projects that can demonstrate national significance
- **Place Partnership projects** to support our place-making work
- **Time Limited Priorities**

The next few pages of this guidance go into more detail about these strands. If you're not applying for the types of work covered by these strands you can skip ahead to the **Application Form** section of this guidance on page 26.

There are restrictions on applicants applying to **Nationally Significant Projects, Touring** and **Place Partnerships** strands of National Lottery Project Grants.

The restrictions below will apply from 1 April 2023-31 March 2026.

We don't count any Expressions of Interest (EOI) or full applications you made before 1 April 2023.

## **NPOs/IPSOs/Transfer organisations/National museums:**

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- Can apply to **Nationally Significant Projects, Touring and Place Partnerships**
- Can make a maximum of 2 full applications (successful or unsuccessful) within the period 1 April 2023-31 March 2026, across any combination of these strands
- Expressions of Interest (EOIs) to any strand can only be resubmitted once, revised after feedback, before a full application is made
- If unsuccessful at full application you can't resubmit an EOI for the same project
- We decide which period (22-23 or 23-26) your application falls into based on when you submit your EOI

## **All other applicants (this includes non-NPO organisations and individuals):**

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- Can apply to **all** strands of Project Grants, including Touring applications up to £100,000.
- There is a **restriction** on the number of times you can apply to **Nationally Significant Projects** and the **Touring strand for £100,001 and over**
  - You can make a maximum of 2 full applications (successful or unsuccessful) within the period 1 April 2023-31 March 2026, across any combination of these two strands
- Expressions of Interest (EOIs) to any strand can only be resubmitted once, revised after feedback, before a full application is made
- If unsuccessful at full application you can't resubmit an EOI for the same project
- We decide which period (22-23 or 23-26) your application falls into based on when you submit your EOI

# Touring Projects

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We can support a variety of touring work through Project Grants that can involve live performances, international work, streaming, hybrid models, exhibitions, workshops, residencies, digital distribution, showcasing, testing or previewing work, or a combination of these things. In Project Grants we also have a dedicated **Touring strand**.

## To apply to the Touring strand your project needs to:

- Be for **more than £30,000**. There is no maximum threshold for the fund
- Meet our touring strand definition. For the purposes of this strand we define touring as the **distribution of the same product, programme or event to at least two different locations**
- Your tour can include digital distribution, but the primary focus of your project must be touring work to **physical places**
- Focus on **work that is ready to tour**. We wouldn't expect to support testing or previewing work through this strand. You can apply to the main Project Grants programme for this kind of work

If you want to apply to the Touring strand, you'll need to submit an Expression of Interest first. It will take us four weeks to make a decision on this Expression of Interest. We'll then tell you if we'd like to invite you to make an application. This is because we want to make sure that a project has potential to reach audiences and have the kind of impact we would expect before you invest time in developing a full application. We will also think about whether we have the budget available to consider your full application.

To read more about the Touring strand, and understand whether you should apply to the **Touring strand** or the main Project Grants programme, see our **information sheet** (<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/NLPGinfosheets>).

## **Nationally Significant Projects Over £100,000**

We can support projects that we view as having a **national significance** for the arts and culture sector.

We define an application as having a National Significance when it is:

- for more than £100,000
- activity that we view as significantly developing a discipline, a part of the creative and cultural sector in England and/or an activity that we view as engaging and influencing significant numbers of people in England beyond the applicant's own geographic area

You need to ask our permission in advance to apply to us for over £100,000 for a Nationally Significant project by making an **Expression of Interest**. This is because we only make grants at this level in exceptional circumstances. We want to make sure that a project has potential to have the kind of impact we would expect before an applicant invests time in developing a full application. We will also think about whether we have the budget available to consider your full application.

See our Nationally Significant **information sheet** (<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/NLPGinfosheets>) for more detail on how to apply for these types of projects.

## **Expression of Interest**

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The Expression of Interest process can take up to eight weeks and is additional to the 12 weeks we need to make a decision on a full application. When planning your project, make sure that you leave enough time for us to complete this process.

**We would only be likely to invite a full application where the Expression of Interest has also demonstrated significant potential for meeting at least one of these Areas of Focus as set out below.**

## **Nationally Significant Projects Over £100,000 - Our Areas of Focus:**

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- **Creation of new work**  
work that shows exceptional creative ambition and can demonstrate the potential it has to influence significantly the creative and cultural sector in England and/or internationally. We are especially interested in projects that will:
  - establish long-term partnerships which will increase the creation, commissioning and distribution of new work, especially for diverse audiences (by geography and/or protected characteristics and/or socioeconomic status)
  - utilise new technologies to develop new forms of creative and cultural content and ways of reaching audiences
- **Sector development activity** projects that are designed to improve the capability of those working in the arts and/or museums and/or libraries across England. This could include large-scale development programmes such as:
  - provision of mentoring
  - training and skills development
  - increased networking and partnership building

- building new research and technology partnerships that support innovation in practice
- developing partnerships with organisations outside the cultural sector in order to increase the impact of culture on a national level

These projects must have the potential to deliver demonstrable outcomes across the cultural sector in England, including through a replicable approach to transformational change.

- **Innovation projects:**

- exploring new ways of working with new technologies at a scale that is likely to have national and/or international impact
- establishing new partnerships in practice and research that have the potential to be replicable across the country
- supporting or testing new national or international touring models, including ways of removing barriers to access
- testing new ways of reaching new and diverse audiences including through experimental practice in digital engagement. These must have the potential to be nationally replicable

- **National moments**

- creative and cultural projects of scale that will reach a national audience through the celebration and promotion of national moments, stories and anniversaries

- **International collaborations**
  - co-commissioning of work of scale or ambition with international partners, especially where Arts Council investment will secure international co-investment
  - significant international collection loans into England
  - network and partnership development that builds international
  - production infrastructure for the benefit of the wider cultural sector
  
- **International market development opportunities**
  - long-term initiatives that are designed to showcase to international promoters, partners and investors the work of cultural and creative practitioners based in England. These international showcasing initiatives must be able to demonstrate that they will reach a significant number of international partners and provide long term creative and financial benefits to cultural organisations and creative practitioners in England

## **Place Partnership Projects**

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We can support specific types of projects that can make a step change in the creative and cultural opportunity in places through Project Grants. These are activities that seek to transform an aspect of creative and cultural provision in line with **Let's Create** and the strategic cultural development aspirations of the place the activity benefits.

The type of change we wish to see these projects make will necessitate partnership working. We have ring fenced budget within Project Grants for Place Partnership projects, and we will use it strategically to make sure we are supporting activities that have significant impact for communities across England.

## **We define an application as a Place Partnership project when it is for over £100,000 and:**

- is a strategic place-based intervention that is intended to make a long-term difference to the cultural and/ or creative life of the local community and;
- makes a clear step change in provision in that place where a relevant partnership exists to deliver the project

**We define place as:** a specific geographic area of any scale (village, town, local authority, city or city region) where the proposed intervention will take place and where a cultural strategy (or similar) exists that covers the same geography. This could mean that an application might be for activity in a town or village that is covered by a cultural strategy for their district.

We can support applications for between £100,001 and £1,000,000, or above in exceptional circumstances.

You need to ask our permission in advance to apply to us for over £100,000 for a Place Partnership project by making an **Expression of Interest**. This is because we only make grants at this level in exceptional circumstances. We want to make sure that a project has potential to have the kind of impact we would expect before you invest time in developing a full application. We will also think about whether we have the budget available to consider your full application.

The Expression of Interest process can take up to eight weeks and is additional to the 12 weeks we need to make a decision on a full application. When planning your project, make sure that you leave enough time for us to complete this process.



See our Place Partnerships **information sheet** (<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/NLPGinfosheets>) for more detail on how to apply for these types of projects.

## **Time Limited Priorities**

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From time to time, we may ask for specific types of applications through Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants to help us achieve our strategy **Let's Create**.

The opportunity to respond to any priority is part of Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants programme and is not a separate programme. Any application must meet the criteria for Project Grants, as well as respond to the specific characteristics of any priority.

While we encourage applications to respond to time limited priorities we remain open to all other types of applications through the other strands of Project Grants.

For details of how to respond to any current Time Limited Priorities, visit the Project Grants: Time Limited Priorities **notice board** (<http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/NLPGtimelimited>) on our website.

# The application form

Before you start applying to National Lottery Project Grants, you should read our strategy **Let's Create**. The full strategy is **here** (<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/lets-create/strategy-2020-2030>), and the Easy Read version is **here** (<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/lets-create/strategy-2020-2030/accessing-lets-create>).

This section lists all of the questions in the application form and explains what we will think about when we read your answers.

We will use the information you give us in your application form to decide whether we will offer you a grant.

The form is made up of four parts:

- Essential information
- Feasibility and risk
- Your project and the Outcomes
- Your project and the Investment Principles

We can only fund applications that meet our criteria. See each section below for more details.

## **Before you start**

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Applications are made using our online system, Grantium. For guidance, please visit our website [artscouncil.org.uk/welcome-grantium](https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/welcome-grantium)

- You need to have a validated, up to date applicant profile
- You will need to complete the short eligibility questionnaire. This will show up automatically if you start an application

**We recommend having this guidance to hand to help you answer the questions.**

## **Essential information**

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In this section of the application form we'll ask you for some basic details about you and your project.

## **The questions**

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**Tell us the total amount you are applying to us for, including any personal access costs**

### **Personal access costs**

If you or the people you are working with are:

- deaf or disabled
- neurodivergent
- experience learning difficulties
- have a mental health condition
- long term health condition

there may be extra costs relating to your access needs. These could be to help you deliver your project or for the online management of your grant. Some examples are: a BSL interpreter, a notetaker, or specialist tutor for admin support, counselling costs for your project.

If there are extra costs please include them in this figure.

**Do you, or does your organisation, object to receiving National Lottery funding for religious reasons?**

If you answer 'yes', you will need to upload a letter explaining why you or your organisation object to receiving National

Lottery funding for religious reasons later in the application form.

If we decide to offer you a grant, it will not come from our budget from the National Lottery.

### **Fair Pay**

**Have you used a recognised industry standard to work out how to pay artists and professionals involved in your project (including you)?**

If you answer 'yes', tell us which one.

If you answer 'no', tell us how you have calculated fees in a different way.

### **Fair pay**

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We are committed to making sure those who work in creativity and culture are properly and fairly paid.

We expect you to show how fees for artists, creatives and specialists for projects funded by us are in line with, or better than, recognised codes of practice and guidelines set by the relevant lead bodies.

When putting the budget together for your application, you should make sure you can provide proper and fair payments to creative and cultural practitioners. Applications that include touring should make sure that, as well as adequate fees, payments for accommodation, food and so on, are in line with the relevant trade union agreements.

We are not able to offer specific guidelines on rates of pay for creative and cultural practitioners from parts of the sector that

don't have a lead union body. We would encourage you to find out and put in place best practice guidelines and industry standards from the relevant bodies. See our **Fair pay** information sheet for a list:  
**[artscouncil.org.uk/NLPGinfosheets](https://artscouncil.org.uk/NLPGinfosheets)**.

When you employ someone on a contract or freelance basis, you should agree the number of hours needed to complete the activity, which should include research, development and planning as well as delivery.

If there are other people included in delivering your project, either as workers or volunteers, we will ask you to confirm that you are aware of your statutory responsibilities. For information, visit HM Revenue and Customs' (HMRC) website at **[gov.uk/HMRC](https://gov.uk/HMRC)**.

- **Fees and salaries for those aged 23 or over**

We expect that fees and salaries for those aged 23 or over should match the National Living Wage as an absolute minimum.

- **Fees and salaries for those aged under 23**

Fees and salaries for under 23s vary, but should match, or be more than, the National Minimum Wage. We ask you to confirm in the application that you are aware of your responsibilities if you are employing people as part of your project.

For more details on the National Minimum Wage and the Living Wage:

- visit HM Revenue and Customs' website: **[gov.uk/national-minimum-wage](https://gov.uk/national-minimum-wage)**; or
- ACAS runs a helpline for workplace advice online **[acas.org.uk](https://acas.org.uk)** and by phone (0300 123 1100)

## **Volunteers**

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Volunteers make an essential contribution to our cultural life. The relationship between an arts or cultural organisation and its volunteers should benefit both the organisation and the volunteers.

You should respect volunteers, train them properly, and not ask them to take on responsibilities that are beyond their experience.

You can find more information on working with volunteers in our guidelines on our **website** (<https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20220723175154/https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/publication/internships-arts>). This guidance has been jointly published with Creative and Cultural Skills.

## **Fair pay, volunteering and our decision making**

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Your application may be negatively affected if we feel that any of the fees or payments included in it are not appropriate, or that volunteers or interns are not being treated fairly. Arts Council England is committed to ensuring proper and fair payment to creative and cultural artists and those who work in the creative industries. Please see our information sheet on our website for more details [artscouncil.org.uk/NLPGinfosheets](https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/NLPGinfosheets).

**In your own words, tell us what your project is. Give us a short summary (300 characters)**

**Then, give us a more detailed description of what you want to do using our funding (800 characters)**

We'd like to know:

- what your project is
- what will happen
- who it is aimed at; and
- how your project is developing and delivering excellence

### **What type of activity does your project mainly focus on?**

This gives us a good sense of the different elements of your project. Tick as many as you feel are relevant:

- **Developing new creative or cultural work mainly on my own, or within my organisation**
  - For example: new visual artwork, a theatre piece, a piece of research
- **Developing new creative or cultural work mainly with other people**
  - For example: co-creation, learning or participation activities
- **Developing my own skills, or the skills within my organisation**
  - For example: skills development, talent development, mentoring
- **Showing, performing or exhibiting something to/with, people in your/ their, communities**
  - For example: a show, an exhibition, a tour, a programme of activities
- **Working in a way that is focused on a specific place (a village, town, city or region) or community in England**
  - For example: developing or delivering a cultural strategy for a specific place
- **Developing our organisation**
  - For example: trying out new business models, business planning, testing out a new approach

- **Working internationally**
  - For example: international exchange, network development, or touring
- **Working at significant scale or scope, with a national impact**
  - For example: national touring, an event for a national anniversary or commemoration
- **Working innovatively and/or collaboratively**
  - For example: working across sectors, with new partners, learning from inter/national best practice
- **Something else (narrative text box – 200 characters)**

## Who will experience your project?

We'll show you these definitions and ask you to tell us how many people from each category will experience your project:

### **Creative practitioners**

People taking part in the project to deliver creative activity or directly benefitting from the project in their role as creative or cultural practitioner

### **Active Participants**

People taking part in or contributing to the project. This might include taking part in a workshop, performing in a community show, or joining a class

### **Volunteers**

Those supporting or benefitting from the project in a voluntary role

### **Live Audiences, visitors and public**

Those who are present during the live presentation of a creative product, such as a live show or creative exhibition



## **Streaming Audiences**

Those who experience a recording or broadcast of a live presentation through a digital platform

## **Digital Audiences**

Those who experience a creative product designed to be experienced through digital technology

**How have you worked out these figures? (Up to 800 characters)**

**How many of the people taking part in/contributing to your project are employed on a freelance basis?**

**How will people experience your project?**

We'll show you these definitions and ask you to select all the ways that people will experience your project:

### **Live event(s) – static**

A creative event or programme (such as a show in a theatre or an exhibition in a museum) with a live audience, happening in one location over a single or multiple number of events

### **Live event(s) – multiple locations/ touring**

A creative event that is happening in multiple locations either simultaneously or consecutively. This can include touring shows and exhibitions visiting multiple venues, or purpose-built structures that are moved from one location to another

### **Digital Experience**

A creative product that is designed to be distributed and experienced through digital platforms or hardware such as headsets or personal devices

## **Streaming or Broadcasting**

A creative event that is presented live but either streamed live or broadcast as a recording of a live event

## **Longer term public engagement in England**

This activity will allow you to engage individuals and communities in the future rather than during your project. For example: if your project solely focuses on research and development, organisational development, creating a product, or only touring outside of England

## **Feasibility and Risk**

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This section helps us to understand how you will successfully deliver your project. We need to know your plans for managing the project, what your budget is and how you will respond to any risks or challenges.

You don't need to have managed a project before, but you need to be able to demonstrate that you have given consideration to how you will manage the project, the budget, and any risks/challenges, and that you or your project partners have the skills to ensure it is delivered successfully.

### **When we look at your answers to the questions in this section, we will think about:**

- whether the budget is appropriate for the scale and type of activity
- if the areas of income and spending are appropriate
- whether all items in the budget are relevant and reasonable. For example: are fees or wages appropriate to the context? Have quotes for assets/equipment been appropriately researched for any purchases?

- whether the activity is attracting income from other sources. Is any other income confirmed? If not, are your potential income sources realistic?
- if appropriate financial controls are in place. Do you, or the people you're working with, have the necessary skills to manage the budget?
- if the activity is realistic, well-planned, and if you have demonstrated that you, or the people you are working with, are able to deliver the project

## **The Questions**

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### **Tell us the start and end dates for your project**

Please give a start date and end date for your project, making sure they will give you enough time to complete all the main stages of the project that you are asking us to support. For example: if your activity is a short festival but you are asking us to support the development and marketing of that festival as well as delivering it, you should give dates that include the development and marketing period, as well as the festival itself.

The start date you give must allow enough time for us to decide on your application.

We need at least 12 weeks to make a decision on applications for over £30,000. You can still submit your application if your start date is in exactly 12 weeks, but we would not view this as good practice and it is likely to be noted in our risk check.

We cannot fund any goods or services that you have bought, ordered or contracted before we make a decision on your application.

If your application is successful, we cannot make payments immediately. We will first let you know that your application has been successful and wait for you to accept the grant, authorise your bank details, consider any material to meet the payment conditions we have set, and go through necessary financial checks. This can take two weeks or longer, depending on the circumstances. You should allow for this when choosing your start date.

### **Project timeline**

**Please use the table to list the main stages and tasks of the project from the start date onwards, and to show who will lead on each part of the project.**

You can add as many lines as you need to this table to tell us about the main stages of the activity, for example: planning, developing partnerships, research, delivery (any performances, shows, exhibitions, workshops and events), evaluation, and so on.

In the final column 'task lead', please tell us who will be managing each stage of the project. This could be you, or one of your partners.

### **Budgets**

**The main things to remember about budgets:**

- **The budget you present should describe the most likely scenario**
- **Your budget should be for the total cost of the project you are applying to do**

We view your application as a contribution towards the overall cost of your project. We do not generally allocate our funding to specific items of spending in your project budget.

- **We can't support projects that make a profit. If your budget includes surplus income that is not being spent within the project, then your project will be ineligible**
- **Your budget has to balance, so your income amount needs to be the same as your expenditure amount.**
- **If you can, you need to find at least 10% of your project budget from sources other than Arts Council England**
- **We need to be able to see how you have worked your figures out, so please break them down clearly under the headings provided in the budget table**
- **We will consider the strength of your budget using both your calculations and your explanations**
- **Things are likely to change between the application and the end of your project**

We understand that projects can change between the start and the end. If your application is successful you should tell us about any changes in your final report form. For example: **tell us what you spent your contingency on.**

## Income budget

### **How to fill in the income table**

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- You should make sure that you show how your figures have been worked out in the Description field  
**Example:**  
 Ticket sales (7 dates @ 60% of 100 capacity x £8 ticket price)  
 £3,360
- Enter all the cash income specific to this project on this page, (excluding the amount you are applying to us for) as well as any support in kind you will receive
- Include any other income that is either confirmed or expected towards the project, including any applications to other funding bodies, trusts or foundations, under the appropriate

budget headings. We take this into account when we are carrying out the risk check, and we think about how realistic any expected income is when we look at financial risk. If you are successful, we may ask you to provide evidence of income you have shown as a condition for your first payment

## **Tell us about your project income by using the income headings**

### **Earned income**

---

Include any income you will earn from this activity (for example: from ticket sales, workshop fees or selling work or publications). Be realistic about earned income. For touring activities, please provide details of guaranteed fees from venues, your estimated income, or both. Please provide a clear breakdown for each entry to show us how you have reached your figures.

### **Example: Earned income**

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Four performances at a venue with 600 seats and a 70% full audience (420 people) is  $4 \times 420$  tickets at £6 = £10,080

If VAT is charged on ticket sales or admission prices, do not include it in your earned income figures. For information about VAT and other taxes, contact HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) through their website: [gov.uk/HMRC](https://www.gov.uk/HMRC) **Local authority funding**

Include any funding you have received or applied for from local authorities for this activity. Please give us the name of each local authority

## **Other public funding**

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Include any funding you have received or applied for from any other public organisation (for example, the British Council). Please give us the name of each organisation and the amount.

## **Private income**

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Include any income from private sources, for example from you or your organisation, donations or grants from trusts and foundations, or from crowdfunding. This should include funding you have already confirmed and funding you expect to receive (for example, applications you have made but have not received a decision on yet, or applications that you intend to make during the project). If you are an individual and you are providing some cash income towards the activity, please include it here.

## **Support in kind**

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Support in kind means any materials or services that you would otherwise have to pay for but that are being provided free of charge or at a reduced rate. The value of support in kind contributes towards the percentage of funding we need you to have from other sources.

## **Income budget Questions**

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**Tell us more about the match funding for your project? (Up to 1500 characters)**

This is to help us understand how realistic your budget is, including any partnership support that is in place.

## **Tell us:**

- what you have done to secure income from other sources for this specific project
- how you plan to raise any remaining amounts from other sources shown in the income section (if you have a fundraising plan, you can refer to it here) and;
- if your budget includes earned income, tell us how you have worked this out (for example: how you decided on ticket prices).

## **If you tell us about other specific sources of funding you have applied for, please include:**

- when you expect to know if you have been successful
- an appropriate figure in the income section of your budget, or we may treat your budget as unbalanced

You may have made (or plan to make) several applications for funding elsewhere, amounting to more than you will need, on the basis that some of them will be unsuccessful. If this is the case, base your budget on the applications you think are most likely to be successful and tell us about your approach. Tell us how you will allocate any extra funding if you raise more than you expect.

## **Expenditure budget**

**Tell us about your project expenditure by using the expenditure headings:**

### **Artistic, creative or specialist costs**

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In this section, please include the fees and wages of artists, creatives or specialists involved in the activity, as well as any artistic, creative or specialist costs you need to pay for. For example: actors, musicians, dancers, visual artists, stage designers, directors, producers, composers, writers,



choreographers, stage managers, library specialists, lighting designers, curators, workshop leaders, conservators and so on.

We are committed to making sure that artists and creatives are paid appropriately for activities we support. The amount is likely to depend on a number of factors, including experience and skills, the type of work and the length of the contract. If you are involved in the activity as an artist or creative, you can include your own fees here. Please see the section on fair pay on page 28 of this guidance.

If you are employing people to take part in your activity, you may need to budget for statutory costs relating to this (for example: paying an employer's National Insurance contributions, holiday pay and pension contributions).

When including costs or fees, show how you have calculated them.

### **Example:**

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2 x Creative specialists @ £150 per day for 10 days = £3,000

If you are registered for VAT, your expenditure figures should not include VAT that you can claim back. If you are not registered for VAT, your costs should include VAT.

You should get financial advice from your own accountant or the relevant tax office. For information about VAT and other taxes, contact HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

## **Other artistic or creative costs of delivering the activity**

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For example, the cost of events, commissions, research and development, preparation, conservation, productions and residencies, including any materials or equipment you hire to carry out these things.

For touring activities, please include costs for creating and preparing the tour, and costs that are the direct result of touring (for example: travel, transport and accommodation).

## **Making your work accessible**

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Please include the costs of making sure your activity is accessible to those taking part and audiences with access needs. These might include costs of signing for performances or producing exhibition materials in other formats such as in Braille or audio. Please use the budget heading 'personal access costs' to tell us about costs relating to your own access needs, or any access needs of those who you will need to pay to help you deliver your project and manage your grant online. Please see more information about personal access costs on page 44.

## **Developing your organisation and people**

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Include the costs of any activity aimed at developing your organisation. This could include things like business planning, support from consultants, staff training and professional development costs.

## **Marketing and developing audiences**

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Include all marketing and audience development costs that relate directly to the activity you are applying for.

## **Overheads**

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You can apply for extra, time-limited overhead costs that are directly related to the activity you are asking us to support, for example: payments to staff, phone bills, postage and insurance. You can apply for a contribution to your ongoing overheads if these are not covered by other funding. The amount you apply for must relate directly to the amount of time spent on the activity you are asking us to support, so please explain how you have worked this out.

**For requests of over £50,000:** If your application is successful, your final payment will be on condition that you have provided a project-specific final statement of income and expenditure certified by an independent qualified accountant. The cost of producing this statement is a valid item of expenditure at application stage, so you should include the cost of this under 'Overheads'.

## **Assets – buildings, equipment, instruments and vehicles**

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Include any costs relating to refurbishing buildings, improving access, buying property or leasing a building. In general, we would not expect to fund feasibility studies (studies to test the potential of a building plan) or early development of designs.

For more information, see our 'Building Projects' information sheet on our website: [artscouncil.org.uk/NLPGinfosheets](https://artscouncil.org.uk/NLPGinfosheets)

Include the costs of buying assets such as equipment, instruments and vehicles. You should get competitive quotes from more than one business or supplier. We ask you to tell us about them in the question below this section of the budget. As part of our eligibility and risk checks we will decide if proposed asset purchases are appropriate. You may be asked to send invoices for any purchases.

You can find out more in the information sheet 'Asset purchase' on our website: [artscouncil.org.uk/NLPGinfosheets](https://artscouncil.org.uk/NLPGinfosheets)

## **Environmental Responsibility costs**

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Include any spending specifically relating to making your project environmentally responsible. For example travel alternatives, training costs, production materials, building improvements. Please see 'What you cannot apply for' for specific information about carbon off-setting.

## **Other spending**

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Include any other spending for your activity that is not included elsewhere. This can include an amount for unexpected costs (contingency spending).

## **Personal access costs**

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If you, or the people you are working with, are:

- deaf
- disabled
- neurodivergent
- experience learning difficulties; or
- have a mental health condition
- a long term health condition

there may be extra costs relating to your access needs. These could be to help you deliver the project, or for the online management of your grant.

Some examples are a BSL interpreter, a notetaker or specialist tutor for admin support, counselling costs during your project.

Only include **personal access costs you will incur if your application is successful** in your expenditure table. Do not include costs relating to preparing, planning and submitting your application.

To find out more about personal access costs please read our **Access support** information sheet:  
[artscouncil.org.uk/NLPGinfosheets](https://artscouncil.org.uk/NLPGinfosheets)

### **Expenditure budget questions:**

**How have you worked out the costs included in your budget? (Up to 1500 characters)**

We'll ask you to tell us about each expenditure heading you've included in your expenditure table.

**How much of your total budget is being spent on international costs (such as visas, carnets, freight, travel, accomodation, per diems)?**

We're asking this question so that we can understand how much international work we support through Project Grants.

**What experience do you have of managing a project budget of this size?**

Pick from the list below:

- I have managed a project budget of this size or larger before
- I have managed a smaller project budget before
- I have not managed a project budget before, but I can draw on the experience of other people involved in this project
  - which people involved in the project will support you?
- This is the first time I've managed a project budget, it's a good opportunity to learn - what do you plan to do to manage the budget for this project?

## **Attaching your supporting financial documents**

We will ask you to upload some supporting financial documents.

The attachments we ask for depend on how much you are requesting from us:

- All applications over £30,000: **you will need to attach a cashflow projection for the project**
- Applications over £100,000: you will need to attach a **cashflow projection for the project** and **an electronic copy of your financial statements for the last financial year** that have been examined by an independent auditor (unless exempt) and have been prepared to the relevant legal for an organisation of your size and status

**Generally, your financial statements must include:**

- an income and expenditure statement
- a balance sheet
- notes to the account
- group accounts (if appropriate)

**And statements are usually accompanied by:**

- a directors' report
- an auditors' report (unless your organisation is exempt from audit)

## Who will be working with you to deliver your project?

There will be a table where you can tell us about the people involved in your project.

You should include any partners helping you deliver the work. This may include individuals and organisations working outside the creative and cultural sector or those working within the sector, as well as any artists, or creative or cultural practitioners you are working with. We may contact these people as part of our risk check.

Choose from the list below:

- I have managed projects like this before
- I have managed some tasks of projects like this before
- I have not managed a project like this before, but I can draw on the experience of other people involved in this project
  - which people involved in the project will support you?
- This is the first time I've managed a project like this, it's a good opportunity to learn - what do you plan to do to manage your project?

**What are the main risks and challenges to your project meeting its aims, and what will you do to manage these risks? (Up to 1500 characters)**

## Your Project and the Outcomes

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Our strategy, **Let's Create** sets out three outcomes:

**Creative People** - Everyone can develop and express creativity throughout their life

Everyone can be creative, and each of us has the potential to develop our creativity further. Taking part in creative acts such as singing, photography or writing delights and fulfil us, and helps us to think, experiment, and better understand the world. The public has told us how much they value opportunities for children to take part in creative activities and that they want to see us to do more to widen and improve these opportunities.

**Cultural Communities** -Villages, towns and cities thrive through a collaborative approach to culture

Culture and the experiences it offers can have a deep and lasting effect on places and the people who live in them. Investment in cultural activities and in creative and cultural practitioners, arts organisations, museums and libraries helps improve lives, regenerate neighbourhoods, support local economies, attract visitors and bring people together. But this can only work if there is a shared commitment to removing the geographic, economic and social barriers that currently prevent many people from taking part in publicly funded cultural activity.

**A Creative and Cultural Country** - England's cultural sector is innovative, collaborative and international

The cultural sector will only ever be as strong as the talent on which it is built. Its future success depends on being able to draw on a talent pool that reflects society as a whole and is much wider and deeper than it is now. To achieve the first two Outcomes, we need a professional cultural sector that: generates new ideas, works easily and effectively with others, and is adept at developing talent from every community. It should aspire to be world-leading – in the way it makes art, in the imagination and expertise with which it makes exciting use of collections and develops libraries, and in the culture it creates and shares.



**Your project doesn't have to address all three Outcomes, but we do want projects to align to at least one and to set out in detail how their particular Elements are being addressed and how your project is helping to deliver our strategy.**

You can read more about our Outcomes **here** (<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/outcomes-0>).

**For each Outcome you have selected, you'll get a text box (up to 3000 characters) to tell us how your project will contribute to that Outcome.**

When we look at your answers, where relevant we will think about how they address the key Elements of our Outcomes:

**Creative People:**

- Supporting people at all stages of their lives to design, develop and increase their participation in high-quality creative activities
- Promoting creative opportunities in the local community to people at all stages of their lives
- Providing high-quality early years activities that reach families from a wider range of backgrounds
- Widening and improving opportunities for children and young people to take part in creative activities inside schools
- Widening and improving opportunities for children and young people to take part in creative activities outside schools
- Improving teaching for creativity in schools
- Supporting children and young people to develop their creative skills and potential
- Developing and improving pathways towards careers in the creative industries

## **Cultural Communities**

- Improving access to a full range of cultural opportunities wherever people live
- Working with communities to better understand and respond to their needs and interests, resulting in increased cultural engagement and the wide range of social benefits it brings
- Working collaboratively through place-based partnerships to:
  - support and involve communities in high-quality culture
  - improve creative and cultural education for children and young people
  - improve health and wellbeing through creative and cultural activity
  - build skills and capacity in the cultural sector and grow its economic impact
- Connecting people and places, including diaspora communities, nationally and internationally

## **A Creative and Cultural Country**

- Supporting new types of creative practice, new forms of cultural content and new ways of reaching new and existing audiences and participants
- Collaborating with other cultural organisations and/or with the commercial creative industries and/or with further and higher education, especially with a view to supporting innovation, research and development, new skills and the use of new technologies
- Strengthening the international connections of cultural organisations and creative and cultural practitioners, including co-production and touring
- Bringing world-class culture to audiences in England
- Giving more opportunities to people to start a professional career in the creative industries, especially those who are currently under-represented

- Ensuring people have opportunities to sustain their careers and fulfil their potential in the creative industries, especially those who are currently underrepresented

## **Your Project and the Investment Principles**

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The Investment Principles are an important part of our strategy and we encourage you to use them to strengthen the planning and delivery of your project.

Our Investment Principles are:

- **Ambition and Quality**
- **Dynamism**
- **Environmental Responsibility**
- **Inclusivity and Relevance**

We will expect successful applicants to use the **Investment Principles** as development tools to help you focus and track your journey of continuous improvement and help to underpin your commitment to excellence.

Over the next three years, we will increasingly direct our investment to applicants that show a demonstrable commitment to the Investment Principles.

You can read more about our Investment Principles **here** (<http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/our-investment-principles>).

In the Investment Principles section of the application form you can use the Investment Principles to build up an indepth picture of your project. This will give us a stronger understanding of your intentions and plans, and how your project will contribute to delivering our Strategy. Each text box in this section has a limit of 2000 characters.

The application form will only ask you to respond to the Investment Principle questions that are mandatory for the amount/strand you are applying to. You will also see a list of questions for the other Investment Principles and you can tick the boxes and respond, if you feel that they are relevant to your project:

- Applications for **£100,000 and under**
  - You need to complete the section on **Inclusivity and Relevance**
  - You can answer any of the other questions in this section to help you develop your own approach to adopting the Investment Principles. If you do answer any of the other questions we'll take that information into consideration when we make a decision on your application
- **Touring** applications for **Over £30,000**
  - You need to complete the sections on **Inclusivity and Relevance** and **Environmental Responsibility**
  - You can answer any of the other questions in this section to help you develop your own approach to adopting the Investment Principles. If you do answer any of the other questions, we'll take that information into consideration when we make a decision on your application
  - National Portfolio Organisations need to complete all four Investment Principle sections
- Applications for **Over £100,000**
  - You need to complete **all four Investment Principle sections**. We'll use the information you give us when we make a decision on your application

**All applicants need to complete the section on Inclusivity and Relevance.**

In the following section of this guidance, we have included each of the Investment Principles and listed the corresponding

questions you will need to answer, if relevant to your project. We have also listed what we will be thinking about when reading your answers.

Any information you provide in your application form, we will use when making a decision.

## **Inclusivity and Relevance**

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This Investment Principle is about England's diversity being fully reflected in the organisations and individuals we support and the culture they produce. **All applicants need to respond to Inclusivity and Relevance:**

### **Communities**

- Tell us who you want to reach with this project, how you have identified them, and how they have been involved in the planning and/or creative process
- Tell us about the steps you will take to make sure your project is open and accessible to people within the communities you plan to work with

### **Workforce**

If you're engaging a team of people to work on your project, or are working in partnership with other individuals or organisations, tell us:

- how you will ensure they reflect the communities you wish to reach
- how you will make sure access to opportunities are open and accessible

If you're not working with anyone else on your project you should explain why here and consider how working with others would help you to reflect the communities you wish to reach.

## **Creative Case**

- Tell us how your project addresses the Creative Case for Diversity Read about the Creative Case for Diversity **here** (<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/diversity/creative-case-diversity>).

### **When we look at your answers, we will think about:**

- Are the target individuals/communities for the activity clearly identified and is there meaningful engagement?
- Does the activity increase opportunities (in the short or long-term) for:
  - People who don't currently get involved in creativity and culture?
  - People who are only involved a little in creative and cultural activity?
  - People who are already taking part in creative and cultural activity?
- Are those managing the project able to reflect and represent the communities they want to reach?
- Have they thought about how the project could help to make a contribution to the Creative Case for Diversity?
- Does the project show how the activity might align with our **Equality Objectives**? (<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/our-delivery-plan-2021-2024/equality-objectives>)

You can read more about **Inclusivity and Relevance here** (<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/lets-create/essential-read-inclusivity-relevance>)

# **Environmental Responsibility**

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This Investment Principle is about leading the way in your approach to Environmental Responsibility.

## **Using data**

- Has your project been informed by your own, or other environmental data? If so, tell us about this here

## **Plan, action, change**

- If you plan to measure the environmental impact of your project, tell us about the data you will collect and how it will be used

## **Advocacy, education and influence**

- If you plan to develop you or your organisation's skills and knowledge on environmental responsibility, tell us about it here

## **When we look at your answers, where relevant we will think about:**

- Is appropriate data/information being used to inform the approach to Environmental Responsibility?
- Has the applicant thought about how they will measure the environmental impact of their project?
- Are they taking steps to improve the environmental responsibility of the project, and their wider skills and knowledge?

You can read more about **Environmental Responsibility** here (<http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/applying-investment-principles/essential-read-environmental-responsibility>)

# **Ambition and Quality**

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This Investment Principle is about cultural organisations and creative individuals being ambitious and committed to constantly improving the quality of their work through:

## **Understanding what others think**

- If you are taking steps to understand what people (audiences, participants, co-creators, customers, peers, staff, or other people) think about your work and how you make it, tell us about it here

## **Developing your work**

- If this project aims to develop your skills (and those you work with) and contribute to your longer-term ambitions for strengthening the quality of your work, tell us about it here

## **Measuring your progress**

- If you are setting out what 'good' looks like for your project; know how you'll track how well you're doing, and how well your project been received, tell us about it here

## **When we look at your answers, where relevant we will think about:**

- Has the applicant shown a commitment to improving the quality of their work? Have they listened to the views of others?
- Will the project develop them and their work, or the work/skills of the people/organisations involved?
- Has the application demonstrated creative ambition?
- Is the applicant pushing/stretching themselves?
- Has the applicant demonstrated that they've thought about how they will measure performance against their ambitions?



You can read more about **Ambition and Quality here** (<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/applying-investment-principles/essential-read-ambition-quality>)

## **Dynamism**

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This Investment Principle is about being dynamic and able to make the most of opportunities, as well as respond to the challenges over the next decade.

### **The way you work**

- If you are testing your organisation's model or your individual practice to ensure you can account for change, or adjust when things do not go as planned, tell us about it here

### **Developing people**

- If you plan to develop you/your organisation's skills and knowledge tell us about it here

### **Technology and data**

- If you are using technology and/or data and evidence to deliver and develop your project, and assess its impact, tell us about it here

### **When we look at your answers, where relevant we will think about:**

- Has the applicant shown the ability to respond to challenges?
- Are they becoming less static and more inventive?
- Is there evidence that the project will develop them/their organisation's skills and knowledge?
- Does the application evidence informed and effective use of technology and data?

You can read more about **Dynamism here**  
(<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/applying-investment-principles/essential-read-dynamism>)

## **Attachments**

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### **Letter Attachments**

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This screen will only be visible if you have told us in the eligibility questionnaire that your activity requires **permission to apply**:

Please upload a copy of any letter we have sent you giving you permission to apply under certain circumstances:

- if your application is for more than £100,000 and you have not applied for a Touring project, a Nationally Significant project or a Place Partnerships project using an Expression of Interest
- if your application is for a building project for more than £30,000
- if you are making an additional application while you are still awaiting a decision from us on a first application

If you do not attach the appropriate letter(s) here, we will be unable to process your application.

### **Nationally Significant project attachments**

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If you are applying for more than £100,000 for a Nationally Significant project, please upload:

- a detailed workplan for the project, including milestones and key review dates (mandatory)
- partnership agreements between the lead organisation and all key partners involved in the project (if relevant)

- a cashflow for the project (mandatory)
  - an electronic copy of your **Financial Statements for the last financial year** that has been certified by a qualified independent accountant (or that has been prepared to the relevant legal standard for an organisation of your size and status) (mandatory)

## **Place Partnerships project attachments**

If you are applying for more than £100,000 for a Place Partnerships project, please upload:

- a detailed workplan for the project, including milestones and key review dates (mandatory)
- partnership agreements between the lead organisation and all key partners involved in the project (if relevant)
- a cashflow for the project (mandatory)
  - an electronic copy of your financial statements for the last financial year that has been certified by a qualified independent accountant (or that has been prepared to the relevant legal standard for an organisation of your size and status) (mandatory)
- a copy of any needs analysis that has already taken place
- copies of local strategies to which this project activity relates

## **Touring project attachments**

If you are applying for more than £30,000 for a Touring Funds project, please upload:

- partnership agreements between the lead organisation and all key partners involved in the project (if relevant)
- a cashflow for the project (mandatory)
- audience development plan (mandatory)

If you are applying for more than £100,000:

- an electronic copy of your financial statements for the last financial year that has been certified by a qualified independent accountant (or that has been prepared to the relevant legal standard for an organisation of your size and status) (mandatory)

## **Other attachments**

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Where appropriate, you can upload **up to three** supporting documents as attachments to support your application. These attachments are in addition to the mandatory documents we have already requested

(eg audience development and marketing plan and budget breakdown and/or cashflow projection and audited accounts).

**Each optional attachment can be a maximum of five pages. If they are longer than this, we cannot guarantee the information will be taken into account as part of our appraisal and decision making process.**

**You can use these attachments to:**

- illustrate the quality of your work
- provide more detail to explain complex or multi strand projects, or those happening over a number of years

**Attachments you might choose to upload to give us more detail:**

- an audience development/marketing plan (if not already uploaded as mandatory)
- a detailed management plan, particularly for complex projects

We can only accept up to three documents. Your combined document size must not exceed 10 MB. We can accept the following formats:

- PDF
- JPEG (image file)
- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft PowerPoint
- web link (please note we will only view a single website page)

Please do not upload links to folders or sites containing lots of documents – we will not be able to take these into account.

## **Monitoring information**

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We are asking you for this information so that we can think about the range and balance of different projects we're supporting. We want to support a diverse range of applicants that work in a broad range of artforms and disciplines and geographical areas. We need to think about our investment in areas of least engagement with arts and culture.

We also want to make sure that the projects we support help us to achieve our **Equality Objectives** (<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/our-delivery-plan-2021-2024/equality-objectives>).

We will only ever use this information in balancing. Please see the '**How we make decisions**' section of this guidance for more information.

We will also consider whether applicants identify as being from an under-represented protected characteristic group to make sure that we support people who are representative of this country and who can best continue to contribute to our **Creative Case for Diversity** (<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/diversity/creative-case-diversity>).

# What happens next?

## 1. Eligibility check

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When we get your application, we first check whether it is eligible. You can find more information on eligibility in the **Eligibility section** of this guidance.

If your application is **eligible**, we will send you a confirmation email using our online system, Grantium.

If your application is **not eligible**, this means that we cannot process it any further and we will not consider it for funding. We will tell you using our online system, Grantium, and will explain our decision.

## 2. Feasibility and risk check

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If your application is eligible, we will next carry out a feasibility and risk check. We look at how realistic and achievable your plans and budget are and consider other risks that might be relevant.

Our check may include the following, among other things:

- **timeline** - is the timeline achievable and detailed enough?
- **partnerships** - are appropriate partnerships in place to support the activity, and are they confirmed?
- **planning** - is the activity planned well enough?
- **tour schedule** - is any tour schedule at an appropriate stage of confirmation?
- **budget** - is the budget reasonable and appropriate?
- **partnership funding** - is there an appropriate level of partnership funding, and is any expected funding likely to be secured?

- **financial management** - are there appropriate measures in place to manage the budget?
- **asset purchase** - are any assets you want to buy justified clearly, and are the costings based on quotes?
- **previous grants from us** - how have you managed any previous funding you have had from us?
- **governance (organisations)** - we will check your Companies House or Charity Commission registrations where appropriate and may check that your governing document allows you to deliver the activity you are proposing.

We may contact the people involved in your project as part of our risk checks.

We can give any of these factors a risk rating of **major**, **moderate** or **minor**.

**Major risk** - means that an issue gives us concern that the activity is not likely to be managed successfully and/or there are serious concerns about your budget.

If we consider any aspects of your activity's management or finances to be major risk, we will not fund it.

If your application is not successful at the feasibility and risk check stage, we will tell you using our online system, Grantium, and will explain our decision.

**Moderate risk** - means that although an issue represents some risk to successfully delivering the activity, we have decided that this can be dealt with.

If we award you funding and we have noted any moderate risks, we will ask you to send us more information before we release your first payment. We call these additional pieces of information 'payment conditions'. For example: we might ask for

a confirmed tour schedule or confirmation that the other income for the activity is in place.

**Minor risk** - means that although we have noted an issue, we do not think it represents a risk to successfully delivering the activity, and we will take no action.

We'll ask everyone who is offered a grant in this period to confirm that they have an appropriate risk management plan in place and that they are able to follow all current UK Government guidance on COVID-19. Our Terms and Conditions set out grantholders' responsibilities around adhering to UK Government guidance.

### **3. Appraisal**

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If your project is eligible, your application will go to the appraisal stage.

We will appraise your application against our criteria using the information in your application form and any supporting information. We will use our expertise and judgement to score each application against the three criteria:

- Feasibility and risk
- Your project and the Outcomes
- Your project and the Investment Principles

The full prompts we use are given under the cover page for each section of the application form in this guidance. We will share our appraisal of your application with you.



## How we make decisions

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We will use the information you give us in your application form and in any attachments (and any other information we hold about you) to decide whether we will offer you a grant.

Where decision making happens depends on whether your activity is a Nationally Significant project, a Place Partnership project, a Touring project, and how much you are requesting from us:

- **Applications for £30,000 - £100,000+**
  - Panels of staff based in our Area offices make decisions on applications for over £30,000 every two weeks
- **Over £30,000 Touring projects**
  - **The National Touring** panel meets monthly to make decisions
- **Applications for £100,000 - Place Partnerships projects**
  - Panels of staff based in our Area offices meet monthly to make decisions
- **Applications for £100,000 - Nationally Significant projects**
  - The National Investment Panel meets monthly to make decisions

We will look at the **strength of the activity against our criteria** as shown in the appraisal and consider the strength of your application alongside other applications we receive.

We will also think about the **range and balance** of different projects we're supporting. We want the projects we fund to cover a broad range of activity types, disciplines, applicants, and geographical areas and Priority Places. We will review our internal data on our spending so far and look at applications in the light of future demand on our budget.

We want to make sure that individual applicants are well supported through Project Grants. As we make decisions we will be making sure that the success rate for individual applicants is at least the same as it is for organisations.

We think about our investment in activities in areas of least engagement with arts and culture. These are the areas that have been identified as being in the bottom 33% of areas in England for engagement with arts and culture by the Active Lives Survey: [artscouncil.org.uk/ALS](https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/ALS).

We think carefully about diversity when making our decisions, and we may choose to prioritise applications that are likely to make a stronger contribution to the **Creative Case for Diversity** (<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/diversity/creative-case-diversity>). We also consider our **Equality Objectives** (<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/our-delivery-plan-2021-2024/equality-objectives>) carefully, and how the projects we fund might align with them. We try to make sure that – over time – the grants we make broadly reflect the diversity of contemporary England.

We also think about how applications contribute to our strategy **Let's Create: [artscouncil.org.uk/letscreate](https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/letscreate)**

We receive many more good applications than we can fund, and we choose to support the ones that help us achieve a balanced spread of projects.

## **If your application is successful**

If we award funding, your online account will show an offer letter and other information that will allow you to accept the grant.

Your grant will usually be split into three instalments:

- The first instalment will usually be **50%** of your grant, and will be made at the start of your project.
- The second instalment will usually be **40%**, made at the mid-point of your project, after you have submitted your **progress report**.
- The final **10%** is made at the end of your project, after you have submitted your **final report**.

We might also list some other information ('payment conditions') you will need to give us before we will release your first payment.

## **Accepting your offer**

We will ask you to acknowledge and accept your offer letter and our **Terms and Conditions**

(<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/standard-conditions-grants>) using our online system, Grantium. Everyone who receives a grant must accept our standard conditions. You can also contact us for a copy by email **enquiries@artscouncil.org.uk** or phone 0161 934 4317.

## **If your application is not successful**

If we decide not to fund your activity, your online account will show a letter explaining our decision and outlining your next steps.

This letter contains the full level of feedback that we can provide, but there is further guidance available in our **Unsuccessful applications** information sheet: [artscouncil.org.uk/NLPGinfosheets](https://artscouncil.org.uk/NLPGinfosheets).

Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants is a rolling programme and you can apply again. Any new application for the same activity must sufficiently deal with the reasons that the original application was not successful.

**If you would like to apply again, you will need to begin a new application form using our online system Grantium.**

## **Further information**

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### **Making a complaint**

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As an organisation, we will always listen to and respond to any concerns that you may have. If you would like to make a complaint about either the service you have received from Arts Council England or the way we have handled your application, we have a process that you can use.

Please note that Arts Council England does not have an appeals process and for this reason, we are unable to accept complaints that relate solely to the decision we have made rather than how we have made it.

For more information, please visit the 'Complaints' section of our **website** (<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/advice-and-guidance-library/making-complaint>), under Contact us: [artscouncil.org.uk/contact-us](https://artscouncil.org.uk/contact-us). Additionally, you can email [complaints@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:complaints@artscouncil.org.uk) or call our Customer Services team on 0161 934 4317 for more information.

## **What to do if you cannot accept National Lottery funding for religious reasons**

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The funding we can provide from other sources is very limited, but we can arrange other funding if you cannot accept National Lottery funding for religious reasons. You should apply using our normal application materials and tick the box in the Essential information section to state that you cannot accept National Lottery funding. We will process your application in the same way that we process all applications.

## **Making records of your project available to us for audit**

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You should be aware that we carry out checks on a sample of applications every year to make sure that our funding is being used appropriately. We reserve the right to ask successful applicants for access to all or part of their documentation relating to their activity. If you receive a grant, you must keep clear records of project management and financial records (including all invoices) for us to see when we ask.

## **Individual applicants**

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We will ask all individual applicants for their date of birth when they complete the declaration in their application form. This will be a mandatory requirement which will help reduce the possibility of fraud. Your Date of Birth will not be used in any decision-making processes or for any other purpose. For further information about how we process your data, please refer to our **General privacy notice** (<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/freedom-information/data-protection>).

## **Freedom of Information Act**

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We are 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 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 how we have reached our decision 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 **ico.org.uk** for information about freedom of information generally and the exemptions.

We will not release any information about applications while we are making a decision, as this may interfere with the decision making process.

You can find out more on the Freedom of Information section of our website: [artscouncil.org.uk/freedom-information](http://artscouncil.org.uk/freedom-information).

## **Public sector equalities duty**

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Your application form gives us information we may use to report to the Government or to monitor the different backgrounds of people who receive grants.

Under the Public Sector Equalities Duty we must research and monitor the different backgrounds of people who receive our grants.

## **Applications we invite**

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We may occasionally ask for specific applications to help us achieve our strategy. We call these ‘solicited applications’.

For more details about our strategy, please see our website at **artscouncil.org.uk**.

## **Data protection**

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We are committed to using any personal information (or personal data) we collect on a lawful, fair and transparent basis, respecting your legal rights as an individual in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation, the UK Data Protection Act 2018 and other applicable laws that regulate the use and privacy of personal data (Data Protection Law).

As part of us meeting this requirement, we have published our General Privacy Notice for you to refer to **here** ([https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/ACE\\_General\\_Privacy\\_Notice\\_Feb\\_2020\\_0.pdf](https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/ACE_General_Privacy_Notice_Feb_2020_0.pdf)). This tells you more about the personal data the Arts Council collects; the different purposes that we use it for and on what legal basis; who we may share that personal data with; how long we keep it; and your legal rights, including your right to contact us and receive information regarding the personal data about you that we may hold from time to time.

For further information about our obligations and your rights under Data Protection Law, as well as how to report a concern if you believe that your personal data is being collected or used illegally, please also see the Information Commissioner’s Office website at **ico.org.uk**.

## **Appendix - Information sheets**

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To provide more detail on specific types of projects, we've put together a range of information sheets. You won't need most of them, but they may come in handy depending on the type of activity you apply for. Find them on our website:

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

- Access support
- Asset purchase: Buying equipment and vehicles
- Audience development and marketing
- Buildings projects
- Building permission request form
- Children, young people and learning
- Evaluating your project
- Fair pay
- Festivals and Carnival arts
- Final Income and expenditure
- Funded Organisations (NPOs and MEHs)
- Governing Documents and Project Grants
- Ineligible Project Grants applications
- International activity
- Libraries projects
- Literature projects
- Museum and collections projects
- Music projects
- Nationally Significant projects
- Payment conditions
- Place Partnership projects
- Repeat projects, ongoing overheads and salaries
- Research and development (R&D)
- Support in kind
- Touring activity
- Unsuccessful and major risk
- Using digital technology



# Questions? We're happy to help

Reach out to our customer services team here:

- **Email:** [enquiries@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@artscouncil.org.uk)
- **Web:** [artscouncil.org.uk](http://artscouncil.org.uk)
- **Twitter:** [@ace\\_national](https://twitter.com/ace_national)
- **Facebook:** [/artscouncilofengland](https://www.facebook.com/artscouncilofengland)

You can also **Livechat** with us by visiting our website:  
[artscouncil.org.uk/projectgrants](http://artscouncil.org.uk/projectgrants)

Transcribed into Large Print by: A2i Transcription Services  
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We welcome feedback so please get in touch!  
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