ARTS COUNCIL NATIONAL LOTTERY PROJECT GRANTS

Project Grants: Supporting Grassroots Live Music

Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants is our open-access programme for arts, museums and libraries projects. Supporting Grassroots Live Music is part of Project Grants, with its own budget set aside for supporting organisations and individuals whose work focuses on the hosting and promotion of live music events in venues.

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This information sheet relates to the **Supporting Grassroots Live Music** strand of Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants. This information sheet should be read alongside the [How to apply](#) guidance for applicants to Project Grants. It is intended to give some additional context for those hosting and/or promoting live music events, and helps support potential applicants to think about the application form in relation to the types of activity they deliver.

See [our website](https://artscouncil.org.uk) for more information about Project Grants.

In this sheet, we will talk about the following.

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Project Grants: Supporting Grassroots Live Music

Venues and promoters are vital to England’s music ecology, developing music and audiences as well as supporting talent development. Grassroots music venues are where many musicians and music professionals develop their skills and their craft, testing out new approaches and developing audiences, as well as gaining vital experience of live performance.

All venues and promoters in England are eligible to apply for Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants to support projects that help them bring live music to the public. However, we currently receive few applications from the grassroots part of this sector in particular.

The grassroots live music sector is crucial to the development of musicians and audiences across the country. It could be described as the main ‘research and development’ sector of the music industry.

We also recognise that there are some significant challenges facing the grassroots live music sector that mean venues can struggle to focus on developing their programmes, their audiences and their business models.

We have set aside a new amount of funding specifically to support the organisations and people involved in the hosting and promotion of live music events in venues. This is called Supporting Grassroots Live Music, and it is part of Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants.

£1.5 million will be available in the 2019/20 financial year specifically to support activities that help grassroots music venues and promoters to deliver and develop their work, getting live music to more people across England. This is money that is additional to the general Project Grants budget. It can only be accessed by those whose work focuses on hosting and/or promotion of live music events, for projects that support them to deliver their work bringing live music to the public.
How much can you apply for?

You can apply to Project Grants: Supporting Grassroots Live Music for **between £1,000 and £40,000**, for projects up to three years long. If you need to apply for more than £40,000, you can still apply to the main Project Grants programme for activity that delivers grassroots live music activity.

You will need to show us that you can fund at least 10% of the total cost of your project using income from other sources. We call this ‘match’ or ‘partnership funding’. This can be cash support, or in kind, and could be your own contribution (for example, ticket sales), and/or support from any partners in your project.

See our [Support in kind information sheet](#) for more information.

How does it work?

Applications to Project Grants: Supporting Grassroots Live Music are made using our online application portal in the same way as Project Grants. The application form is the same, and it follows the same process. We outline the process in the [How to apply guidance](#), which every applicant must read.

You can apply to Project Grants: Supporting Grassroots Live Music **between 10 May 2019 and 31 March 2020**. There are no application deadlines within that time, and the application form is always available.

- If you apply for between £1,000 and £15,000, we will make a decision within six weeks.
- If you apply for between £15,001 and £40,000, we will make a decision within 12 weeks.

Applications to Project Grants: Supporting Grassroots Live Music must meet the four [Project Grants criteria](#):

- **Quality**
- **Public engagement**
- **Management** and
- **Finance**
This information sheet gives some additional context for those working in hosting and/or promotion of live music events, and helps them to think about the application form in relation to the types of activity they deliver.

Applications for grassroots live music activity will not be in competition with everyone else applying to Project Grants – they will only be in competition with each other. We do generally receive more good applications than we can fund, and unfortunately some applicants will be disappointed.
Who can apply?

This funding is available to those whose main function is to host and/or promote live music events in venues. Usually, this will be venues and promoters (or groups of venues and/or promoters). We are particularly interested in supporting those venues and promoters who work in the grassroots part of this sector (ie those working with new, developing talent in small to mid-size venues).

We welcome applications from those who work with all types of musical types and genres. We are keen to support projects that bring the full spectrum of contemporary popular music genres to live audiences. This includes, but is not limited to:

- electronic (including house, electronica, drum & bass, dubstep, experimental etc)
- hip-hop, grime, etc.
- indie and alternative
- metal and punk
- pop
- rock (including blues, modern, post-rock etc)

We are also keen to support projects which develop diverse approaches to music programming, incorporating for example classical, jazz, folk, and/or world music alongside contemporary pop.

Your programme may fit into one more of these genres, or be a completely different style altogether. If you have any questions about your project idea or how to approach your application, you can speak to a Relationship Manager in your area. Please contact our Customer Services team, who can put you in touch.

We cannot support individual bands, managers or agents to tour work as part of Project Grants: Supporting Grassroots Live Music, but you can apply to the main Project Grants programme to support activity like this.
What you can apply for

You can apply to Project Grants: Supporting Grassroots Live Music for a variety of types of project that aim to bring more and better-quality live music to more people in venues in England. A project is a time-limited programme of activity (with a start date and an end date) that you want to deliver in order to achieve something.

Projects might involve presenting live music programming, but they might also include activities that put live music venues and promoters in a better position to deliver their work in the long term, for example: purchasing some essential equipment, carrying out building work, developing new routes into off-stage roles, or business planning. The activity we fund must primarily benefit audiences for live music in the short or longer term.

Some examples of the types of activity we can support include:

Artistic programming and audience development

This could include a season of performances or shows across one or more venues, or a particular project to develop a more diverse programme and audience, for example to allow you to take risks on programming new genres of music or new ways of presenting live music.

Developing a venue’s resilience and sustainability

This could include trialling alternative uses of venues during non-showtimes, such as offering music-related activities to children and young people, afternoon performances, developing on- or off-stage talent, renting space out for rehearsals or training activities, paying for support with business planning, exploring new initiatives with partners, or mentoring from other venue or promoter colleagues, for example.

Equipment purchases and small capital (building) works

Any plans for asset purchases must be part of a project that clearly demonstrates development of artistic activity and benefit to the wider public. Equipment purchases could include production equipment (sound or lighting) that will clearly make a positive impact on the artistic activity and audience engagement.
Other purchases or building work could include alterations to venues to make them more accessible to all members of the public.

If you do want to make these kinds of alterations, Attitude is Everything have published a Charter of Best Practice\(^1\) which you may find useful.

You need permission from us in advance to apply for capital (building) works if you’re applying for more than £15,000.

See our Asset Purchase and Capital information sheets for more information.

Whatever you apply for, you need to think about how what you are proposing will ultimately have a benefit for audiences experiencing live music in venues. If you’re not sure whether what you want to do would be eligible, contact us and we can help.

\(^1\)http://www.attitudeiseverything.org.uk/the-charter-of-best-practice
What you cannot apply for

Because this strand is focused on supporting those who host and/or promote live music events in venues, you cannot apply to Project Grants: Supporting Grassroots Live Music for:

- delivery of non venue-based outdoor festivals
- artists’ own tours

You may still be able to apply to Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants for support towards this type of activity.

All applications to Project Grants: Supporting Grassroots Live Music must meet the eligibility criteria for the wider Project Grants programme. The How to apply guidance sets out what is eligible. In particular we can’t support:

- day-to-day running costs like rent or utilities (you can include management costs for running the project but these need to be directly related to the activity you are delivering)
- activities where the outcome is fundraising (for example, fundraising events) – this is because you need to declare the direct income from your project
- any activity that is already funded, either by the Arts Council or through other sources
- activity that doesn’t benefit the public in the short or longer term
- activity that is intended to make a profit (within the project) – see the Finance section below for more information.

We are unable to support legal fees and/or any other costs associated with challenging or contesting local business (eg planning) decisions.
Shaping your project

Project Grants – and the Supporting Grassroots Live Music strand within it – are intended to support project activity: a time-limited programme of activity (with a start date and an end date) that you want to deliver in order to achieve something.

This programme cannot be used to support the day-to-day costs of running a business like rent or utilities, though you can apply for any extra expenditure like this that you incur because of delivering your project, like time-limited extra staff costs, or hire of specialist equipment. This means that when you apply to us, you need to think about how to shape the activity you want to do into a project.

Think carefully about the scope of what you want to use the funding to deliver, making sure it is manageable, realistic, and likely to achieve what you want it to by the end of the project timeframe.

This won’t necessarily be everything you might achieve as a result of your funding in the long term – you only need to tell us in detail about what you can reasonably expect to achieve by the end of the funded project.

You should focus your application on the project you’re asking us to support. You don’t need to give us lots of information about your whole wider business operation if what you’re asking us for is something quite specific.

This also means you will also not usually need to give us your whole business accounts. We ask you to submit a project budget, showing the income and expenditure that is specific to the activity you want to carry out as part of your project. See the section on Finance below for more information on how to put your budget together.

We recommend speaking to a Relationship Manager about how you’re planning to shape your project. Contact us to set up a conversation.
Completing an application

Applications to Project Grants: Supporting Grassroots Live Music should be made using Grantium, our online portal.

There is detailed guidance on how to plan your activity and complete the application form in the How to apply guidance (which all applicants must read).

This section gives some additional context for those working in on hosting and/or promotion of live music events, and helps them to think about their project and the application form in relation to the types of activity they deliver.

The Project Grants criteria

We use four criteria to decide which projects we award a grant to:

- Quality
- Public engagement
- Finance
- Management

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

The next four sections will go into more detail on each of our four critiera.
Quality – what do we mean by quality?

This part of the application form is your space to tell us about what it is you want to use a grant to do, what you want that activity to achieve, and why it is important. You can tell us about the idea and the vision that’s behind your project, and why it is important for your venue to be doing this project now. And most importantly, how the project will enhance your ability to bring quality live music to audiences.

If your project involves live music programming directly – putting on a season of shows, for example – tell us about the artists that you want to put on, and why. Are they the most innovative artists working in their genre, for example? Do they represent a diversity of talent or a musical genre that you’ve not been able to programme before? Are they emerging artists that you want to give a platform? If, for example, you’re working with a particular promoter, or consortium of other venues, what is it about their approach that means you want to work with them?

If your project is about undertaking work to get your venue to a better position in the long term (for example, purchasing some technical equipment or undertaking some capital/building work), tell us about the impact that this work will have on the quality...
of the programme you’ll be able to offer in the longer term, and the benefits for how people will experience music in your venue. Will having a more accessible space mean that you can offer more inclusive shows, for example?

Public engagement – what do we mean by public engagement?

This section of the form is where we ask you to tell us about who the project will benefit, how you’ll make sure that they get to know about it, and what kind of experience you want them to have. If you are applying for a programme of shows that will appeal to a wider range of people than your usual audience base, for example, use this section to tell us about who they are, how you know they’ll be interested in what you have to offer and how you intend to reach them.

If your project is about undertaking work to get your venue to a better position in the long term (for example, purchasing some technical equipment or undertaking some capital/building work), use this section to tell us about the longer term impact that the project will have on your ability to reach new and more diverse audiences, and to provide a high quality live music experience for them.
Finance – what do we mean by finance?

This section is where you tell us about your budget and your plans to manage the project finances.

You will not usually need to give us your whole business accounts. We ask you to submit a **project budget**, showing the income and expenditure that is specific to the activity you want to carry out as part of your project.

Remember that Project Grants are for not-for-profit activity. A project budget **must balance** – every pound of income must have a corresponding pound of expenditure. But you only need to tell us about the income that will be directly associated with the project that you’re proposing. You don’t need to tell us about the full income for your business during the time covered by the project, or any future income.

This doesn’t mean that your project can’t contribute to getting you into a more stable financial position in the longer term, for example by broadening your audience base, or developing your business model. It just means that the activity doesn’t make a cash profit within the boundaries of the project itself.
For example: if your project is a series of gigs or shows and you’ll be using the ticket income from these shows as income in your budget, you don’t also need to include income from other unrelated shows that will be happening during the project period (unless you want to, as an investment).

If your venue includes a food and/or drinks offer (for example, a bar or café), you don’t need to tell us about the overall income from this in your project budget, only the amounts that are a direct result of the activity you’ve included in your project. (You can include more of this income if you want to include some of this income as an investment in the project).

We also want to see that you are paying people involved in the project fairly. We expect to see fees and rates associated with your project at least in line with relevant industry guidelines, for example the rates encouraged by the Musicians’ Union’s Fair Play initiative, even if these are more than you usually pay.

Management – what do we mean by management?

- Who are your partners?
- What will the role of any partners be?
- Where will your project take place?
- What will the key milestones of your project be?
- How will you evaluate your project?
This section of the application form is where you tell us about your project planning, the partnerships that are going to help you deliver your project, and how you’ll manage any risks to the successful delivery of your project.

Filling in this section should help you to think through how you are practically going to manage the activity. We need to have confidence that the team managing any grant are sufficiently experienced and knowledgeable to appropriately manage the project.

It is important to ensure that your project plan includes enough detail, realistic timelines and that the right people lead the right tasks.

Example project plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start date</th>
<th>End date</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Task Lead</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/7/19</td>
<td>24/7/19</td>
<td>Confirmation of funding, plans, performances and dates</td>
<td>John Smith (project manager) Vish Khan (venue manager)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23/7/19</td>
<td>25/7/19</td>
<td>Management planning meetings</td>
<td>John Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26/7/19</td>
<td>16/9/19</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>Lucy Jones (head of marketing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/8/19</td>
<td>8/9/19</td>
<td>Audience development initiatives</td>
<td>Lucy Jones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25/8/19</td>
<td>26/8/19</td>
<td>Rehearsal - Electric Atlas</td>
<td>Vish Khan / Electric Atlas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/9/19</td>
<td>1/9/19</td>
<td>Rehearsal - Aimee Greene</td>
<td>Vish Khan / Aimee Greene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/9/19</td>
<td>2/9/19</td>
<td>Performance - Aimee Greene</td>
<td>Vish Khan / Aimee Greene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/9/19</td>
<td>9/9/19</td>
<td>Rehearsal - I am the morning</td>
<td>Vish Khan / I am the morning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/9/19</td>
<td>9/9/19</td>
<td>Performance - I am the morning</td>
<td>Vish Khan / I am the morning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/6/19</td>
<td>13/6/19</td>
<td>Workshop prep</td>
<td>John Smith / I am the morning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/6/19</td>
<td>13/6/19</td>
<td>Electronic music workshops</td>
<td>Vish Khan / I am the morning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/6/19</td>
<td>13/6/19</td>
<td>Feedback sessions with attendees</td>
<td>John Smith / I am the morning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14/9/19</td>
<td>14/9/19</td>
<td>Feedback session with I am the morning</td>
<td>John Smith / Lucy Jones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15/9/19</td>
<td>18/9/19</td>
<td>Management debrief meetings</td>
<td>John Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26/8/19</td>
<td>25/9/19</td>
<td>Evaluation period</td>
<td>John Smith with artists</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is an example only, your plan, tasks and timescales may look very different.
Capital (building) work and purchasing equipment

We can support some types of building development work and equipment purchases through Project Grants: Supporting Grassroots Live Music.

We prioritise the consolidation and improvement of existing venues rather than investing in significant expansion or new infrastructure. We could support some building work to make a venue more accessible, for example, or the purchase of a key piece of equipment that would improve the quality of a venue’s offer for audiences.

You should read our Capital (building) work and/or Asset purchase information sheet(s) before developing an application for either of these types of project.

You need to ask for our permission before submitting your project application if your request for support towards building or equipment purchase costs is for more than £15,000.

If you are planning to apply for this type of activity as part of your project, your first step is to speak to a Relationship Manager.

Contact us to set up a conversation.

We’ll discuss an outline of your plans in this conversation, and we’ll review your security of tenure if you are applying for building works or fixed assets. We’ll then decide whether to give you permission to apply.

Some important things to note are:

• We are very unlikely to support the purchase of leases
• We can’t support the purchase of second-hand equipment in most cases
• You can’t apply for equipment if you plan to sell it within the monitoring period
Decision making process

Applications to Project Grants: Supporting Grassroots Live Music follow the same appraisal and decision making process as the wider Project Grants programme, as detailed in the How to apply guidance.

The only difference is that applications for grassroots live music activity will not be in competition with everyone else applying to Project Grants – they will only be in competition with each other. We do generally receive more good applications than we can fund, and unfortunately some applicants will be disappointed.

We won’t always commit all the available budget in each decision meeting. We look at demand across a period of time and might choose not to invest in a project even if we have sufficient money available in a particular decision meeting.

Can I reapply if my application isn’t successful?

If we decide not to fund your project, your online account will show a letter explaining our decision and outlining your next steps. You can apply again, but 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 the online system.
Case studies

Below are some examples of successful projects funded recently through Projects Grants that give you some sense of the range of activity we hope to support through Project Grants: Supporting Grassroots Live Music.

**The Boileroom, Guildford – received £15,000**

A three-month programme that targeted a new, young audience of music fans to the venue, with a focus on engaging students from nearby further education colleges. This new audience was engaged through the scheduling and marketing of a diverse programme of emerging local and national talent with a series of events aimed at this target market. The project also built strong creative marketing strategies to engage with this audience; forging new partnerships with appropriate brands and the students themselves.

**The Smokehouse, Ipswich – received £38,809**

A three year project called ‘Smokehouse Live’, an online media platform and physical brand, which creates and hosts professionally produced media content in order to increase the reach of bands and artists in the region to a wider audience beyond East Anglia. The media content includes live session videos, showcase gigs, live streams and artist interviews. The project addresses the lack of regional live music infrastructure and helps with the development of new artists and audiences for live music, including new audiences to the venue itself.

**Kraak Gallery, Manchester – received £12,100**

A project called ‘SAM Series’ which was a series of performances from a diverse range of artists, largely performing experimental contemporary music, which took place alongside the delivery of a strategy aimed at increasing audiences to the venue.

**Cobalt Studios, Newcastle – received £39,634**

A project involving a series of performances that showcased both high-profile and emerging female musicians to a diverse regional audience. This series was tied to music industry advice masterclasses, clinics, future workshops and residencies.
Live! At GIANT STEPS - received £14,995

A project involving hosting a summer series of live jazz performances aimed at developing new audiences for jazz. 10 contemporary jazz musicians will perform their own interpretations of albums from the jazz canon for a diverse audience. Performances will take place in the day time and promotion and marketing will encourage families and audiences that are new to jazz to come and explore the genre for free. The programme also allows jazz musicians to explore new collaborations and experiment in ways that aren’t always possible in more formal venues.

Contact us

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