

Culture Recovery Fund: Grants

Guidance for applicants

The below is an outline summary of key information. Please see [Section three](#) for full eligibility criteria.

Guidance updated 10/08/2020-

Eligibility criteria updated to similar to those used for the 2018-22 National Portfolio to ensure that as wide a range of organisations as possible can be supported through the Culture Recovery Fund, and to clarify our position on co-operative societies.

Summary of key information	
What is the focus of the fund?	<p>To maintain England's cultural ecology by supporting significant organisations, which were financially sustainable before Covid-19 but are now at imminent risk of failure and have exhausted all other options for increasing their resilience.</p> <p>This investment is intended to ensure that, by 31 March 2021, successful applicants are either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) fully or partially reopened, orb) operating on a sustainable, cost-efficient basis, so that they are able to reopen at a later date if, for example, reopening under social distancing is not permissible or does not represent a value for money approach
Who can apply?	<p>The lead organisation (the organisation submitting the application) should be properly constituted as an organisation. The kinds of</p>

	<p>organisations that are eligible to apply include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • limited companies registered at Companies House • community interest companies (CICs) registered with the CIC regulator • charitable incorporated organisations (CIOs) registered with the Charity Commission • charitable companies or charitable trusts registered with the Charity Commission • limited liability partnerships registered at Companies House • partnerships established under a partnership deed/ agreement • community benefit and co-operative societies regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority • Royal Charter bodies • statutory bodies and other public bodies including Universities and museum who run or maintain cultural services <p>The lead organisation must be based in England and be able to provide at least one year's independently certified or audited financial statements.</p> <p>Museum applicants must be Accredited museums (Full and Provisional) or museums confirmed by the Arts Council as working towards Accreditation (see list here)</p>
--	--

	<p>For this programme, we define ‘cultural’ as sitting within the remit of Arts Council England¹. Library services are not eligible to apply to this programme.</p> <p>For the avoidance of doubt, the above includes National Portfolio Organisations, Creative People and Places lead organisations and Music Education Hub lead organisations.</p> <p>For more detailed information about what we cover, please refer to the Frequently Asked Questions document which supports this guidance.</p>
When is the deadline for applications?	<p>Round One: 12pm (midday), Friday 21 August</p> <p>Round Two: 12 pm (midday), 4 September 2020</p>
How much can be applied for per application?	Between £50,000 – £3 million
When must the activity take place?	Our funding should be used during the period 1 October 2020 – 31 March 2021.
Minimum match funding from other sources	There is no minimum match funding requirement for this programme
When will we make our decision?	<p>For Round One applicants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we will aim to notify applicants for under £1 million of our decision from the end of September and no later than

¹ Arts Council England’s remit covers Visual Arts, Music, Literature, Theatre, Dance, Combined Arts and Museums. Our remit also includes Libraries, which are not eligible for this fund. Other types of organisations may also be eligible to apply, for more detailed information about what this fund will cover please refer to the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) which support this guidance.

	<p>5pm, Monday 5 October 2020.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we will aim to notify applicants for over £1 million of our decision no later than 5pm, Friday 23 October 2020 and, if possible, sooner <p>For Round Two applicants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we will aim to notify applicants for under £1 million of our decision no later than 5pm, Friday 16 October 2020 and, if possible, sooner • we will aim to notify applicants for over £1 million of our decision no later than 5pm, Friday 6 November 2020 and, if possible, sooner
--	---

Changes to this guidance or our programmes

We reserve the right to make changes to the guidance and/or programme after its launch. We will communicate any changes as quickly as we can.

Assistance with your application

We are committed to being open and accessible and want to make the recovery grants application process accessible to everyone.

We are also producing this guidance in a range of alternative formats including Easyread, BSL and Large Print. We will publish these as soon as possible. If you require a copy of this guidance in Braille, please [contact our Customer Services team](#).

Contents

Assistance with your application	4
Section one – Introduction	6
Welcome	6
About Arts Council England	7
Section two – Purpose of the Culture Recovery Fund	8
Aims and outcomes	8
How much funding is available?	10
Section three – Eligibility	12
Section four – Making an application	16
Application process	16
Section six – After our decision	28
Section seven – For information	29
Section eight – State aid	30
Section nine – Freedom of Information Act	30
Section ten – Data Protection	31

Section one – Introduction

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in the Culture Recovery Fund.

On 5 July 2020, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport announced a £1.57 billion package to protect the UK's culture and heritage sectors from the economic impacts of Covid-19.

This grants programme is part of that package and will support cultural organisations that have been affected by the Covid-19 crisis to stay afloat. This will ensure we retain both significant organisations that are the bedrock of the global reputation of England's cultural sector, and also organisations across the country that enable people to have access to great creative and cultural opportunities, no matter what their background or where they live.

You should be aware that this element of the package is up to £500 million, to be allocated across two Rounds. Competition for funds will be very high and only those able to demonstrate genuine need should apply.

The criteria for the Culture Recovery Fund have been set by the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the grants are administered, awarded and monitored by Arts Council England on behalf of DCMS.

The other element of the support available to organisations is repayable finance. A further £270 million will be available through this programme. Organisations will be able to access either grants or repayable finance, but not both. Loan terms are expected to include an up to 20-year repayment, an initial repayment holiday of up to four years, and a 2% interest rate per annum. All awards over £3 million will be made as repayable finance and organisations requiring £3 million or above should apply for loans only. Charitable and commercial organisations will be able to access this finance, which is expected to be in high demand.

Decisions on repayable finance awards will be made by the Culture Recovery Board, appointed by DCMS. Applicants will need to demonstrate that they meet the cultural criteria set out in this guidance and will need to meet the same conditions, as well as additional financial criteria. Organisations will be assessed independently on their ability to repay.

Details will be published before closure of the grants applications to enable potential applicants to make decisions on which scheme to choose.

About Arts Council England

Arts Council England is the national development agency for creativity and culture. We have set out our strategic vision in [Let's Create](#) that by 2030 we want England to be a country in which the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish and where everyone of us has access to a remarkable range of high quality cultural experiences. We invest public money from Government and The National Lottery to help support the sector and to deliver this vision.
www.artscouncil.org.uk.

Advice giving

We have designed this application process to be as straightforward as possible, requesting only the information we need.

We will not be able to offer specific, one-to-one advice about how to write your application or to read draft applications for this programme.

Our Customer Services team can help you to use the online application form or to set up or make any required updates to your applicant profile.

On our website you can find more information to help you make your application, including [Frequently Asked Questions](#) for this fund.

If you feel you face particular barriers in making an application, please contact our Customer Services team by emailing enquiries@artscouncil.org.uk.

Section two – Purpose of the Culture Recovery Fund

Aims and outcomes

The aim of the Culture Recovery Fund is to help maintain England's cultural ecology by supporting culturally significant organisations which were financially sustainable before Covid-19 but are now at imminent risk of failure and have exhausted all other options for increasing their resilience.

The central aims of the fund are to enable cultural organisations to:

- reopen/restart their operations, where appropriate **or**
- operate on a sustainable, cost-efficient basis, so that they are able to reopen at a later date if, for example, reopening under social distancing is not permissible or does not represent a value for money approach.

Organisations should only propose to deliver activities that are good value for money with social distancing in place, and that do not entail significant financial risk. For more information, please refer to our [FAQs](#).

What we can fund

Through the recovery grants programme, we can support:

- costs incurred between 1 October 2020 and 31 March 2021 that enable the organisation to remain open, reopen or partially reopen, where this represents a value for money approach and where the proposed activity is in line with Culture Recovery Fund: Grants programme specific Government Covid-19 guidance², and does not constitute unnecessary risks. Eligible costs include:
 - essential business expenditure, such as staff salaries, freelance employment and fixed/operational costs
 - equipment to ensure compliance with social distancing and other public health requirements
 - any up-front costs for preparing to restart activities that will drive future income, such as performances, exhibitions and marketing
 -

² [See](#) Culture Recovery Fund: Grants programme specific Government Covid-19 guidance

- increased costs as a result of trading in accordance with Culture Recovery Fund: Grants programme specific Government Covid-19 guidance³
 - redundancy pay outs where decisions have been made to reduce staff
 - advice from professionals, for example on risk, safety, how to support staff or on new business models
 - debts incurred as a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic
- costs to allow reduction of activity that ensure sustainability and preservation of the organisation, if that is the most cost-effective route to safeguard for the future, including:
 - essential business expenditure, such as staff salaries and fixed/operational costs
 - protecting cultural assets by:
 - i. maintaining buildings and other assets (including collections) while closed (including environmental monitoring and conservation)
 - ii. stabilising collections at immediate risk
 - iii. temporary storage for collections, artefacts and documents
 - iv. supporting the retention of specialist skills and expertise
 - security to ensure buildings and sites are secure over the closure period
 - redundancy pay outs where decisions have been made to reduce staff
 - costs to prepare for reopening, including hiring staff & building working capital
 - debts incurred as a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic
 - costs that may prevent the need for additional, unavoidable, public investment further down the line (for example, assets which may revert from third parties to public ownership in the event of insolvency, or otherwise need saving or protecting), or a future failure to deliver any statutory duties
- costs to ensure the value for money recovery of your organisation's financial sustainability, including:
 - running risk management reviews and testing any identified actions to safeguard the organisation as needed

³ [See Culture Recovery Fund: Grants programme specific Government Covid-19 guidance](#)

- reconfiguring business plans, governance and activity needed to help safeguard the future of your organisation
- considering or implementing organisational restructures and mergers where these have been identified as the most cost-effective way of sustaining an organisation
- reflating reserves up to the equivalent of up to eight weeks' turnover

What we cannot fund

We will not be able to consider your application if you include:

- costs that are eligible to be covered by other strands of Government support, for example, furloughing
- operating costs beyond 31 March 2021
- significant historic debt (prior to 1 March 2020)
- new projects/activity during a prolonged closure period that are not essential to your continued operations
- reflating reserves beyond the equivalent of up to eight weeks' turnover
- building/capital expenditure
- covering costs/losses already supported through other sources, including any other Arts Council funding (for example, National Portfolio funding and the Arts Council's Emergency Response Funds) and Government schemes
- costs related to the promotion of the beliefs of political or faith organisations

How much funding is available?

The total overall budget for this fund is up to £500 million.

Rounds

There are two anticipated rounds of recovery grants, which will run consecutively.

	Round One	Round Two
Portal opens for applications	Monday 10 August 2020 (12pm midday)	Friday 21 August (4pm)
Portal closes for applications	Friday 21 August (12pm midday)	Friday 4 September (12pm midday)

We expect to allocate approximately 75% of the overall budget to the first round. We therefore strongly encourage applicants to apply to Round One, where feasible.

Section three – Eligibility

Please read the eligibility requirements for the fund carefully. If you do not meet any of these requirements, we will be unable to consider your application for funding.

Who can apply?	<p>The lead organisation (the organisation submitting the application) should be properly constituted as an organisation. The kinds of organisations that are eligible to apply include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• limited companies registered at Companies House• community interest companies (CICs) registered with the CIC regulator• charitable incorporated organisations (CIOs) registered with the Charity Commission• charitable companies or charitable trusts registered with the Charity Commission• limited liability partnerships registered at Companies House• partnerships established under a partnership deed/ agreement• community benefit and co-operative societies regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA)• Royal Charter bodies• statutory bodies and other public bodies including Universities and museum who run or maintain cultural services <p>The lead organisation must be based in England and be able to provide at least one year's independently certified or audited financial statements.</p> <p>Museum applicants must be Accredited museums (Full and Provisional) or museums confirmed by the Arts Council as working towards Accreditation (see list here)</p>
-----------------------	--

	<p>For this programme, we define ‘cultural’ as sitting within the remit of Arts Council England⁴.</p> <p>Library services are not eligible to apply to this programme.</p> <p>For the avoidance of doubt, the above includes National Portfolio Organisations, Creative People and Places lead organisations and Music Education Hub lead organisations.</p> <p>For more detailed information about what we cover, please refer to the Frequently Asked Questions document which supports this guidance.</p>
What can be supported?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs that will help organisations to remain open or reopen/restart their operations, where appropriate or • if not yet reopened, costs that will enable applicants to operate on a sustainable, cost-efficient basis, so that they are able to reopen at a later date if, for example, reopening under social distancing is not permissible or does not represent a value for money approach
Who cannot apply?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals • Sole traders • Unincorporated organisations/associations that have a constitution but are not registered at Companies House, Charity Commission or regulated by the FCA • Charitable unincorporated organisations • Heritage organisations (support provided by Historic England and National Lottery Heritage Fund) • Non-Accredited museums (except those working towards Accreditation) • DCMS-sponsored museums

⁴ Arts Council England’s remit covers Visual Arts, Music, Literature, Theatre, Dance, Combined Arts and Museums. Our remit also includes Libraries, which are not eligible for this fund. Other types of organisations may also be eligible to apply, for more detailed information about what this fund will cover please refer to the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) which support this guidance.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MOD sponsored museums • Independent cinemas (support provided through BFI) • Private members' clubs constituted as companies and registered at Companies House or as unincorporated associations • Library services
What cannot be funded?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs that are eligible to be covered by other strands of Government support, for example, furloughing • Operating costs beyond 31 March 2021 • Significant historic debt (prior to 1 March 2020) • New projects/activity during a prolonged closure period that do not represent a value for money approach • Reflating reserves beyond the equivalent of up to eight weeks' turnover • Building/capital expenditure • Covering costs/losses already supported through other sources, including any other Arts Council funding (for example, National Portfolio funding and the Arts Council's Emergency Response Funds) and Government schemes • costs related to the promotion of the beliefs of political or faith organisations
How much can be applied for per application?	<p>Between £50,000 and £3 million</p> <p>NB – if you require over £3 million, you should apply for repayable finance, which does not have an upper limit.</p>
How much match funding from sources other than ACE is required?	<p>There is no minimum match funding requirement for this fund.</p>
Delivery timetable	<p>Our funding should be used during the period 1 October 2020 – 31 March 2021.</p>

--	--

Section four – Making an application

There will be **two rounds** of this fund.

You can apply **once** to **only one** of these rounds. If you apply to the first round you will not be able to apply to the second round, even if we are unable to offer you a grant in the first round.

We expect to allocate approximately 75% of the overall budget to the first round. We therefore strongly encourage applicants to apply to Round One, where feasible.

Please note that, since this is an emergency recovery fund, our notice period for making and processing applications is much shorter than usual. We may need to adjust our timelines depending on the volume of applications we receive.

	Round One	Round Two
Portal opens for applications	Monday 10 August 2020 (12pm midday)	Friday 21 August (4pm)
Portal closes for applications	Friday 21 August (12pm midday)	Friday 4 September (12pm midday)

If you start an application for Round One but don't submit it, you will be able to access it when the portal opens for Round Two. You will then be able to submit it in Round Two.

We aim to start notifying applicants of the outcome of their applications to Round One in early October.

Application process

If you do not have a profile in our online application system, you will need to set one up. It can take a few days to validate profiles, so please do this immediately.

You can find [guidance on our website](#) and if you need further support you can contact our Customer Services team at enquiries@artscouncil.org.uk

1. Read this guidance carefully

This guidance gives you information on how to apply.

2. Check the information in your applicant profile on Grantium is accurate and up to date

See the [guidance on our website](#).

3. Prepare and submit your application

You must apply through our [online application portal](#). You can only submit **one** application to this fund.

How to apply

The application form will ask you a series of questions, ask for a set of mandatory attachments and to detail your anticipated income and expenditure.

We have tried to keep the questions as straightforward as possible so that you can provide us with the information we need to make a decision. Some questions have prompts you need to consider when providing your answer.

The application will firstly ask for some basic details including: the amount you are requesting from us, the period you would like our funding to cover (no earlier than 1 October 2020, no later than 31 March 2021), last year's turnover and what your current organisational reserves are. We will also ask how many members of staff you regularly employ or contract.

We will then ask you to provide answers to the following questions:

1. Tell us how Covid-19 has impacted your financial viability, resilience and sustainability

(up to 2,000 characters including spaces, approximately 350 words)

You will need to tell us:

- how your organisation was financially viable before the Covid-19 pandemic took hold
- how your organisation is at clear risk of no longer trading viably by 31 March 2021 (please refer to [our FAQs](#) for definition)
- how you have taken advantage of other Government schemes and measures which have been introduced since the pandemic began
- how you have reduced your organisation's core costs in order to ensure your organisation is more financially resilient
- how you have exhausted all other reasonable options to ensure that your organisation remains financially viable, including affordable

lending, viable alternative options for commercial, contributed and philanthropic income, and using your own resources

2. Tell us your plan for how a grant from this fund will enable you to achieve financial viability by 31 March 2021 in the way that is appropriate for your organisation

(up to 2,000 characters including spaces, approximately 350 words)

You will need to demonstrate how your plan could enable your organisation to either:

- a) fully or partially remain open or reopen, where it represents a value for money approach, **or**
- b) not reopen, minimising costs in the interim period

You will need to tell us:

- your plan for the most value for money route to sustainability that:
 - sets out the cultural activity you plan to progress
 - represents good value for money with social distancing in place
 - does not entail significant financial risks for your organisation
 - shows you have taken appropriate steps to reduce costs
 - maximises income as fully as possible in a cost-effective way, including extending opening hours if appropriate and taking advantage of temporary changes to Government rules and regulations⁵
- how you have considered whether full reopening, scaled-back reopening, or remaining closed with a reduced cost base provides your best chance for longer-term survival
- how you have the skills and experience available at a senior level to enable you to adapt and flex your business to the changing external environment, and ensure the best chance of longer-term viability, sustainability and recovery
- what financial controls, monitoring and reporting processes you have in place to ensure the effective financial management of your organisation

⁵ The government has relaxed a number of rules and regulations on a temporary basis to help businesses continue working through the disruption caused by Covid-19. A list of these rules and regulations can be found [here](#)

3. Tell us about your organisation's work and how it is considered to be culturally significant and/or how it contributes to providing cultural opportunity in England

(up to 4,000 characters including spaces, approximately 700 words, split across two text boxes of maximum 2,000 characters)

You will need to tell us about:

- a) your national and international significance within the cultural sector **and/or**
- b) your role in providing cultural opportunity in England

You only need to answer option a) or b), although you are welcome to respond to both if you prefer.

- a) the following prompts will help you to tell us about your national or international significance in the cultural sector, if that is most relevant for your organisation:
 - that you are an organisation which makes a major contribution to the national and international reputation of the cultural sector in England and that you can demonstrate your commitment to excellence and innovation in the way you create, present and distribute content and to building national and/or international partnerships
 - that your organisation has national or international reach, relevance and impact, for example whether you care for and provide public access to buildings or collections that are nationally significant or that your activity is important for the development of your artform or discipline and/or
 - that you offer public access to nationally or internationally significant artistic, curatorial and/or cultural training or employment, including the development of a diverse and growing talent pipeline provision or content and/or
 - that you fulfil a national or international leadership or development role within an artform/sub-artform or discipline that could not be easily replicated or replaced
- b) the following prompts will help you to tell us about your role in providing cultural opportunity in England, if that is most relevant for your organisation:

- that you are located in a place where there is a relatively low number of cultural organisations, and whose loss would further reduce cultural engagement opportunities for audiences, particularly for people from underserved groups in society and for young people
- that you are located in a place where there are relatively low levels of cultural engagement and that, as an organisation, you work with people there, particularly those from underserved groups, to help them develop and express their creativity throughout their lives
- that you are a vital cultural organisation in a place, because of the employment opportunities you provide, the contribution you make to economic agendas such as tourism, and/or the important role you play in enhancing local creative skills
- that, as an organisation, you play an important role in supporting a collaborative approach to the cultural ecology within a place, through partnership with other cultural organisations, and/or with organisations in other sectors (for example, a Cultural Education Partnership)
- that, as an organisation, you demonstrate a leading role in driving innovation in a particular art form, or sub-art form, within the country
- that, if your organisation is a museum, you care for collections which have important national, regional, local or community resonance, and/or the loss of that collection would impact disadvantaged communities, and/or our understanding of diverse communities across England⁶

4. Using the protected characteristics outlined under the [Equality Act](#) please tell us how you will improve the diversity of your workforce, governance, audiences, visitors and participants
(up to 2,000 characters including spaces, approximately 350 words)

You will need to tell us:

- what steps you will take to broaden the diversity of your workforce and governance, and the impact of those changes
- what steps you will take to broaden the diversity of your audiences, visitor base and participants, and the impact of those changes

⁶ See our [FAQs](#) for further information

Income

While there is no requirement for match funding for this programme, we would like to understand your financial position and the income you continue to receive.

Please use the income table in the application form to detail any other emergency funding or income that you reasonably expect to receive from other sources up until 31 March 2021. The types of income we expect to see are:

- earned income
- other public funding, including any Arts Council grants you either currently hold or expect to receive up to 31 March 2021
- fundraising and donations

Expenditure

We will ask you to complete an expenditure table, to detail how you will use the amount requested. The sort of costs we expect to see are:

- staffing costs
- overheads
- consultancy fees
- equipment purchase
- indirect costs that are a consequence of maintaining sustainability (for example, continued maintenance costs where closure remains necessary)
- costs to deliver digital and/or outreach programmes, where appropriate and in line with Culture Recovery Fund: Grants programme specific Government Covid-19 guidance⁷
- programme costs, for example in relation to running a museum or gallery, where appropriate and in line with Culture Recovery Fund: Grants programme specific Government Covid-19 guidance⁸

⁷ [See Culture Recovery Fund: Grants programme specific Government Covid-19 guidance](#)

⁸ [See Culture Recovery Fund: Grants programme specific Government Covid-19 guidance](#)

Attachments

You must upload the following mandatory attachments on the ‘Attachments’ screen:

All applicants must provide:

- a completed cashflow template covering a minimum six-month period (1 October 2020—31 March 2021)
- your most recent management accounts for the year ending 31 March 2021 (these should show your organisation’s actual income and expenditure to 31 July 2020 against your original budget for the year and your forecast income and expenditure to 31 March 2021)
- a balance sheet⁹ at 31 July 2020, showing levels of restricted and unrestricted reserves

For applications under £1 million, we will also ask for:

- not less than one year’s full independently certified or audited financial statements¹⁰ (maximum of three years), prepared to the relevant legal standard for an organisation of your size and status

For applications over £1 million, we will also ask for:

- a plan showing what activity you anticipate delivering between 1 October 2020 and 31 March 2021 to include any prolonged closure period and outline budgets
- not less than three years’ full independently certified or audited financial statements (or a minimum of one year if constituted more recently), prepared to the relevant legal standard for an organisation of your size and status

Allowable formats: jpg, xls, xlsx, jpeg, pdf, doc, docx, pptx, and ppt.

⁹ A balance sheet shows the value of an organisation on a particular date, including what the organisation owns and owes (its assets and its liabilities)

¹⁰ By financial statements we mean annual accounts prepared by an independent accountant, for example audited or certified accounts

The combined limit on file size for all the attachments taken together is **10 megabytes**.

We will use the information you give us in your application form and in any attachments (and any other information we hold about you if you are in receipt of our funding for example a National Portfolio Organisation or Creative People and Places lead organisation) to decide whether we will offer you a grant.

If your application does not contain the information we need in the format we ask for it to be in, we might not be able to consider your application.

Section five – How we will make our decision

For Round One applicants:

- we will aim to notify applicants for under £1 million of our decision from the end of September and no later than **5pm, Monday 5 October 2020**.
- we will aim to notify applicants for over £1 million of our decision no later than **5pm, Friday 23 October 2020** and, if possible, sooner

For Round Two applicants:

- we will aim to notify applicants for under £1 million of our decision no later than **5pm, Friday 16 October 2020** and, if possible, sooner
- we will aim to notify applicants for over £1 million of our decision no later than **5pm, Friday 6 November 2020** and, if possible, sooner

We will check your application to ensure that you have provided all the information we have requested.

If we require clarification on any of the information provided, we, or someone working on behalf of the Arts Council, will contact you by telephone or email. If we do not receive a response from you within the allocated time, we will process your application without the requested clarification.

We will make our decision based on the information you provide in your application, any further information that we request and, where relevant, data and information from the Charity Commission and Companies House websites relating to your constitution and financial statements. If you are a National Portfolio Organisation, Creative People and Places lead organisation, a Music Education Hub lead organisation, or recent applicant to our Emergency Response Funds we may also refer to any other information we hold about you.

If your application does not contain the information we need in the format we ask for it to be in, we might not be able to consider your application.

Applications up to and including £250,000

If you apply for £250,000 and below, your application will progress to a decision meeting in the Area in which you are based. This meeting will review and decide upon your application.

Applications over £250,000

If you request £250,001 and over, your answer to each question will be assessed using the ‘prompts’ that reflect the criteria set out in the ‘Programme aims and objectives’ and ‘Making an application’ sections of this guidance:

- **Financial Resilience and Sustainability** (questions 1 and 2) where we will apply a rating of either:
 - **Not met**
The application does not meet the criteria
 - **Met**
The application meets the criteria
 - **Strong**
The application strongly meets the criteria
- **Cultural significance** (question 3) where we will apply a rating of either:
 - **Not met**
The application does not meet the criteria
 - **Met**
The application meets the criteria
 - **Strong**
The application strongly meets the criteria
- **Diversity of audiences and workforce** (question 4) where we will apply a rating of either:
 - **Not met**
The application does not meet the criteria
 - **Met**
The applications meets the criteria
 - **Strong**
The application strongly meets the criteria

On the basis of these ratings we will recommend whether an application is suitable for funding. If the application scores “not met” against any of questions 1-3, then it will not be recommended for funding.

If you are a Museum (either with Accredited or Working towards Accreditation status) applying for £250,001 and over, we will share your application with [National Lottery Heritage Fund](#) for their review and comment.

If you are an organisation whose work primarily focuses on our remit but also includes cinema and/or film, we may share your application with the [BFI](#) for their review and comment.

The application will then be considered at a decision meeting.

Balancing and Decision Meetings

To be a successful applicant you must demonstrate your financial viability, resilience and sustainability (Q1) and that you have credible, cost-effective plans for using any award from this programme for the period 1 October 2020 – 31 March 2021 (Q2).

You must also demonstrate that your organisation is culturally significant and/or contributing to providing cultural opportunity in England (Q3).

Your answer to Q4 will ensure the Arts Council is complying with the Equality Act 2010 in how it distributes these funds by ensuring your activities benefit communities that are often disadvantaged or have particular needs. The public sector equality duty is a duty on public authorities to consider or think about how their policies or decisions affect people who are protected under the Equality Act¹¹.

We are expecting more demand for this programme than we have resources available. Following this assessment of all the applications we receive, we will then look at a range of additional ‘balancing criteria’ to consider if we are achieving the right spread of investment. The balancing criteria we will consider are as follows:

- **Geographic spread:** we will take into account the need to support cultural organisations across England. We will also consider whether your organisation is based in an area of low cultural engagement, as per the [Active Lives Survey](#).
- **Increasing diversity and broadening access and participation in culture:** we want to support organisations who are committed to

¹¹ Under the public sector equality duty 2011, we have the responsibility to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations across all protected characteristics as defined in the [Equality Act 2010](#). We are also committed to promoting equality of opportunity regardless of class or socio-economic background and to promoting the social model of disability

developing diversity, particularly for those audiences and participants that are less likely to interact with culture, those organisations which promote understanding of diverse communities across the country, and those which promote positive social outcomes through place based collaboration

- **Range of artforms and disciplines:** we want to support a range of organisations across the cultural ecosystem including our defined artforms and disciplines. These are: combined arts (multiple artform, cross artform or hybrid artforms), dance, literature, museums, music, theatre and visual arts
- **Size and type:** we want to support a mix of cultural organisations across a range of sizes and scales that make a contribution to economic growth and sector employment including, for example, building-based companies, touring companies, arts venues, festivals and other types of organisations

These balancing criteria will be used to ensure a good spread of funded projects according to each balancing criterion, and to differentiate between a number of proposals that we consider fundable.

In considering your application, we will make a judgement on whether sufficient evidence is provided in support of the level of funding requested and may offer funding below the level requested.

If you have applied for more than £1 million, we will share your application externally with the Culture Recovery Board appointed by DCMS and ask them for comment before a final decision is taken.

Section six – After our decision

As this programme is administered, awarded and monitored by Arts Council England on behalf of DCMS, all successful applicants will be required to participate in a post-programme evaluation and to comply with proportionate reporting and monitoring arrangements. All successful applicants will be asked to publicise the decision in an appropriate manner.

Should your application for a grant be successful, we will ask you to provide a statement by your board (or equivalent) confirming the acceptance of the following conditions:

- the organisation will exercise pay restraint for at least 18 months from the date of the funding agreement, where legally possible for them to do so, including imposing a pay freeze for all senior staff and 10% pay reductions to pre-Covid-19 pay for those contracted to receive above £150,000 per year
- the organisation will demonstrate a commitment to increase its organisational diversity and the diversity of its audiences, visitors and/or participants
- the organisation will demonstrate a commitment to progress towards net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and reporting against it
- the organisation will demonstrate a commitment to increase educational/outreach work
- the organisation will comply with legislation relating to State aid
- the organisation will ensure they take reasonable steps to protect the heritage assets they are responsible for, in particular their physical estates.

In considering any future application you make to the Arts Council, we will take into consideration whether these conditions have been implemented.

Section seven – For information

Making a complaint

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, under ‘Contact us’ (www.artscouncil.org.uk/contact). Additionally, you can email complaints@artscouncil.org.uk for more information.

Public sector equality duty

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 equality duty we must research and monitor the different backgrounds of people who receive our grants.

Counter fraud measures

Arts Council England has a [Counter Fraud Strategy and Policy](#) and appropriate measures will be taken to ensure that grant holders given funding through this programme use the funding appropriately. This will include random sampling checks on a proportion of grants made. All grant holders must retain their financial and other documentation relating to the grant, and Arts Council England reserves the right to request this at any time.

Section eight – State aid

Public funding for organisations carrying out commercial activities, including those with charitable status, is governed by the European Commission’s ‘State aid’ rules. Failure to comply with the rules means that the aid is unlawful and may be subject to repayment with interest by the aid recipient.

We do not anticipate that funding granted through this programme will constitute State aid. However, it is your responsibility to check whether State aid clearance is required in relation to your proposed project. When developing your application, it is important to consider and, if necessary, take advice on State aid regulations. Please refer to [FAQs](#) for further information.

If you are awarded a grant, you will be asked to complete a declaration as part of your offer acceptance. We may ask for further information from you and/or ask you to comply with further reporting requirements depending on your answers to the declaration.

Section nine – Freedom of Information Act

The Arts Council is 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 funding 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 our assessment 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 www.ico.gov.uk for information about freedom of information generally and the exemptions.

We will not release any information about applications during the assessment period, as this may interfere with the decision-making process.

Section ten – Data Protection

The Arts Council is 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 EU General Data Protection Regulation (2016/679), 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](#). 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 www.ico.org.uk

Contact us

Website: www.artscouncil.org.uk

Email: enquiries@artscouncil.org.uk

July 2020