

Global Talent visa – FAQs and Useful Information

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What is the Global Talent visa?

It is a visa that individuals working in specialist areas can apply for, that enables them to live and work in the UK for up to five years.

Unlike some other visa routes, you do not require sponsorship from an employer, or evidence of having already secured a job. Instead, you require an endorsement of your talent from a designated expert body in your field.

The Arts Council is the designated endorsing body for arts and culture.

The application involves an assessment that looks at physical evidence of your international appearances and the recognition you have received for your work.

If you receive the visa you can extend your stay for up to a further five years, or you can apply for settlement ([indefinite leave to remain](#)). When applying for an extension or settlement you would need to prove that you have been in paid employment in your specialist field during your stay.

What other routes are available?

Global Talent is not the only visa route for artists and creatives. Tier 2 ([Skilled Worker](#)) and Tier 5 ([Temporary Worker](#)) visas are also available.

Information on other routes and how to apply, can be found on the [GOV.UK](#) website.

Who can apply?

Talented and promising individuals over the age of 18, from any country outside of the UK can apply for the Global Talent visa.

- **Exceptional Talent** is the route for those who are leaders in their field
- **Exceptional Promise** is for those who have the potential to become leaders in their field

As part of the application process, all individuals must obtain an endorsement of their talent or promise from an 'endorsing body'. As an endorsing body we use our expertise to assess applications from those working in the following areas:

- **Arts and Culture** - Combined Arts, Dance, Literature, Music, Theatre and Visual Arts

We also have an agreed understanding with three external bodies, who use their expertise to assess applications from different areas of cultural practice on our behalf:

- [The Producers Alliance for Cinema and Television \(Pact\)](#) will assess applications from those working in **film, television, animation, post production and visual effects** industries
- [The British Fashion Council \(BFC\)](#) will assess all applications from **fashion designers** on our behalf
- [The Royal Institute of British Architects \(RIBA\)](#) will assess all applications from **architects and architectural designers**.

Our [Guide for Global Talent applicants](#) has more specific information about eligibility criteria, the evidence you must provide and the areas of practice we can and cannot support.

How do you make decisions on applications?

It is our role to use our expertise and knowledge to carry out a detailed assessment of the supporting documents submitted with an application. During the assessment we (or Pact, BFC or RIBA) will determine whether the evidence provides appropriate recognition of talent or promise within the arts and culture sector, and whether the applicant is a leader, or a potential leader in their field.

We assess all applications against eligibility criteria that has been set out and agreed between us and the Home Office.

As the assessment is purely evidence based, this means that to meet the required criteria for endorsement, the documents you submit with your application must sufficiently prove your exceptional talent or promise. If there is insufficient physical supporting evidence proving your talent or promise, we cannot recommend endorsement.

All applicants (and anybody acting on their behalf) should read the [GOV.UK](#) guidance and the [Immigration Rules](#), alongside our [Guide for Global Talent applicants](#) before applying.

How long does it take to process applications?

We usually return our decisions within 1-3 weeks, dependent on capacity. However, our service level agreement with the Home Office is to return **100%** of our recommendations to them within no more than **8 weeks** of an application being submitted. We advise all applicants to plan around this maximum timeframe.

We do not provide a fast-track service.

The Home Office will notify you of our recommendation and how to progress to stage 2, or what to do if endorsement has not been recommended. The stage 2 application is made via the Home Office, we are not involved in this part of the process. It can take **up to 8 weeks** for the stage 2 decision to be received.

What if I don't have awards at my stage of career, or my area of practice does not have recognised awards?

Arts and culture applicants:

To be eligible for the visa you only need to meet the criteria in at least **two** of the three evidence categories. These are media recognition, international awards, and proof of appearances.

If you have no evidence of awards this is fine, as you can just rely on media recognition evidence and proof of appearances.

If you have no media recognition for your work, then you can rely on evidence of awards and proof of appearances.

If you have no evidence of appearances, then you can rely on media recognition and international awards evidence.

If you have evidence in all three categories then you can submit in all three, which may give you a stronger chance of endorsement if our assessment finds that your evidence in one of the categories fails to meet criteria.

If you are not able to provide the required level of evidence, then this visa would not be the best route for you. Information on other routes can be found on the [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) website.

The application process can be expensive so we would advise that all applicants fully read all available guidance before starting an application – specifically our [Guide for Global Talent applicants](#).

Only apply if you are certain that the visa is right for you and you can provide the required evidence to meet the published criteria. Please [contact us](#) if you have any questions.

Film, television, animation, post production and visual effects, fashion design or architecture applicants:

Please see our [Guide for Global Talent applicants](#) for more information about the evidence you must be able to provide in these areas.

For film, television, animation, post production and visual effects applicants there is also more detailed information about the evidential requirements in the **FAQs** section of the Pact website [here](#).

I am a member of a group, so I do not have evidence for my individual work. What evidence can I provide?

We understand that for members of groups, such as orchestras, dance companies, arts collectives, or bands it can be difficult to provide evidence of media recognition, awards or appearances that single out their individual contribution. However, this does not mean that individuals such as this are not eligible for the visa, as there is some flexibility in our criteria for these individuals:

Exceptional Talent	Exceptional Promise
<p>Media Recognition - if you do not have media recognition where you are named, you can provide evidence related to the work of another individual or group that you significantly contributed to instead. Along with the media piece you must provide a supporting letter from the individual named in the review, or from a senior</p>	<p>Media Recognition - if you do not have media recognition where you are named, you can provide evidence related to the work of another individual or group that you contributed to instead. Along with the media piece you must provide a supporting letter from the</p>

person (such as the director, producer or manager) that has responsibility for the group being reviewed. This letter **must be separate to the three letters of support** and **must** detail how you **significantly** and **directly** contributed to the work being reviewed.

International awards - if you have not won an award as an individual, you can provide evidence of **making a significant contribution to** an award **won** by another individual or group. Along with the award evidence you **must** provide a letter from the individual that won, or from a senior person (such as the director, producer or manager) that has responsibility for the group. This letter **must be separate to the three letters of support**, and it **must** detail how you **directly** and **significantly** contributed to the work that won the award.

Proof of appearances – if you do not have proof of individual professional appearances, you can provide proof of **professional appearances that you have been part of** with another individual, or as part of a group. Along with the evidence of the appearance you **must** provide a letter from the individual you worked with, or from a senior person (such as the director, producer or manager) that has responsibility for the group. This letter **must be separate to the three letters of support**, and it **must** detail how you **directly** and **significantly** contributed to the appearance.

individual named in the review, or from a senior person (such as the director, producer or manager) that has responsibility for the group being reviewed. This letter **must be separate to the three letters of support** and **must** detail how you **directly** contributed to the work being reviewed.

International awards - if you have not won or been nominated for an award as an individual, you can provide evidence of **directly contributing to** a another individual or groups award **win or nomination** instead. Along with the award evidence you **must** provide a letter from the individual that won or was nominated, or from a senior person (such as the director, producer or manager) that has responsibility for the group that won or was nominated. This letter **must be separate to the three letters of support**, and it **must** detail how you **directly** contributed to the work that won or was nominated for the award.

Proof of appearances – if you do not have proof of individual professional appearances, you can provide proof of **professional appearances that you have been part of** with another individual, or as part of a group. Along with the evidence of the appearance you **must** provide a letter from the individual you worked with, or from a senior person (such as the director, producer or manager) that has responsibility for the group. This letter **must be separate to the three letters of support**, and it **must** detail how you

	directly contributed to the appearance.
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Full details regarding each evidence category for all applicants is in our [Guide for Global Talent applicants](#).

If I do not meet Exceptional Talent criteria can I be assessed as Exceptional Promise?

If you select **Exceptional Talent** or **Exceptional Promise** on the application form, we will assess your evidence against the relevant criteria for the route you applied under.

However, for arts and culture and architecture applicants (not including fashion or film and television applicants) if you apply for **Exceptional Talent** but your evidence does not meet the criteria for that route, we will review the evidence against **Exceptional Promise** criteria instead. This allows to be able to endorse more applicants. We may still reject the application though if the evidence does not meet **Exceptional Promise** criteria either.

If your application is assessed under a different route you will be advised of the reasoning behind this when you receive our decision.

Each route has different benefits, so it is important that you only apply under the route you think best suits your stage of career.

EEA Nationals and EU citizens

Following the UK's exit from the European Union (EU) all European Economic Area (EEA) nationals and EU citizens need a visa to live and work in the UK. The Global Talent visa is therefore one of the visas now available for these individuals.

Further information can be found on the [GOV.UK](#) website.

What responsibilities will you have for visa recipients when they have entered the UK?

Individuals that receive a visa must support themselves during their stay, in accordance with [GOV.UK](#) regulations. We do not have any responsibility for visa recipients.

You cannot apply for [public funds](#) (such as benefits, tax credits and housing allowance) but you could apply for grant funding from us, such as [Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants](#) and [Developing your Creative Practice](#). These grants come from National Lottery funds, not [public funds](#).

Is there a limit on the number of endorsements the endorsing bodies can make?

There are no limits on the number of people that can enter the UK through the Global Talent route.

Success rates

In the last 3 years we have received almost a 100% increase in the number of applications received across our supported areas of practice; arts and culture (Combined Arts, Dance, Literature, Music, Theatre and Visual Arts), film and television (film, television, animation, post-production and visual effects), fashion (fashion designers) and architecture (architects and architectural designers).

With a growing number of applications comes an increase in the number of endorsements made. In 2020, 88% of those who applied for endorsement from us were successful.

Year	Applications received	Endorsements made	Success rate
2018	279	214	77%
2019	441	354	80%
2020	557	492	88%

Once an individual receives an endorsement, they must then submit a stage 2 application to obtain the Global Talent Visa. We do not have statistics on the success of stage 2 applications as this part of the process is solely managed by the Home Office, but we would expect that success rate will be close to 100%.

COVID-19

The pandemic has greatly affected the arts and culture sector, by restrictions placed on travel, cancelled and postponed events and many other reasons. We have heard of visa applicants experiencing difficulties and delays obtaining letters of support, as well as difficulties providing evidence of appearances from the last year, as they have not received any bookings.

For letters of support there is not a timeframe on when they should have been written, so we can accept letters that were written over a year ago (i.e. at the start of, or before the pandemic) if needed – as long as they are written specifically for the application and the letter author still works for the organisation they are writing for, which we will verify if needed.

We need to see evidence of your past work and ideally this should be recent so that we can see you are in demand. However, the full timeframe your evidence can come from is within the **last five** years. So very recent experience from within the last year is not totally necessary, as long as all of the evidence provides the necessary level of detail that we ask for in our guidance.

Evidence of bookings that were cancelled or postponed due to the pandemic would unfortunately be ineligible. Evidence of future bookings after the application date would also be ineligible.

Stage names / Pen names

You need to enter your full legal name that is shown on your passport on the application, and the endorsement and visa will be granted in this name.

The application form does allow you to provide any other names that you use or have been known as – such as stage or pen names, aliases, maiden or married names.

If any of your evidence shows a different name to your legal name this is allowable, as long as you have entered all your other names on your application form.

Your letters of support can refer to you by any other names, but they must also reference your legal name.

If there are any differences in spelling of any of your names used in any of your evidence, you should explain this in the application.

Students or recent graduates

We do expect to see that all applicants have had sufficient **professional** experience in the last five years.

We do understand that it is possible for students to have worked in professional contexts during their course of study.

We also understand that it is possible for recent graduates to possess the required level of expertise to be future leaders in their field.

We have therefore updated the proof of appearances evidential requirements for **Exceptional Promise**. Proof of appearances evidence can now include a **mix** of professional **and** academic or amateur work, as long as the academic or amateur appearances are not the **only** proof of appearances submitted.

We also allow evidence of awards to come from scholarships or fellowships for **Exceptional Promise** applicants.

We would not expect applications from current students, as a [Student visa](#) is more suited for international students. In July 2021 a [Graduate visa](#) was introduced. Further information can be found on the [GOV.UK](#) website.

Exceptional Talent criteria remains the same. These applicants **must** have only been booked in professional programmes in the last five years.

Prestigious Prizes

Exceptional Talent applicants who have won one of the 'prestigious prizes' included in [Appendix Global Talent: Prestigious Prizes](#) can bypass the Stage 1 application for endorsement. For further details please see [GOV.UK](#) guidance.

Withdrawn endorsements

If you receive a visa you could be eligible to extend it or apply for settlement. When applying for an extension or settlement you would need to prove to the Home Office that you have been in **paid employment** in the area you were endorsed in.

You must also not have had your endorsement withdrawn by an endorsing body.

If your endorsement was withdrawn, you would have been notified of this immediately by the Home Office and your leave would have been removed.

You would not be submitting an extension or settlement application if your endorsement had been withdrawn. You and the Home Office should therefore always be aware of your endorsement status.

You may be asked to submit a copy of your original endorsement form with the extension or settlement application - it is your responsibility to provide this, not ours.

There is no need for you to contact us to check your status or ask for proof of your status. Please see [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) guidance on extending visas.

Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland

England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland form the United Kingdom. You can apply for the Global Talent visa to live and work in any of these countries, but the visa is still granted by the UK Home Office regardless of which of these countries you plan to live and work in.

It therefore remains the responsibility of Arts Council England as the designated endorsing body for the Global Talent visa to assess applications from artists, creative practitioners, and cultural workers applying to live and work in any area of the United Kingdom.

Where necessary we will share data on application numbers with our counterparts at Creative Scotland, Arts Council Wales and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, in line with our [General Privacy Notice](#).

Any other questions, or have we missed anything?

If you have any questions that are not covered in this guide, please contact our Customer Service team on 0161 934 4317 or enquiries@artscouncil.org.uk

