

ARTS COUNCIL NATIONAL LOTTERY PROJECT GRANTS

# Literature projects

Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants is our open-access programme for arts, museums and libraries projects.

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This information sheet relates to Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants. See [our website](#) for more information about Project Grants.

In this sheet, we will talk about the following.

<b>Literature projects</b>	<b>3</b>
What you can apply for	3
Self-publishing	4
<b>Further guidance on specific types of project</b>	<b>6</b>
Publishing	6
Translation	7
Literature festivals	7
Live literature and storytelling	8
Reader development work	8
<b>Contact us</b>	<b>9</b>

## Literature projects

There are many ways in which writers can create work and reach audiences, from traditional publication, to new digital forms of distribution and production, to a variety of live events and activities.

### What you can apply for

We can consider funding a range of literature based projects, including:

- digital literature (using technology to create new forms of work)
- literature festivals and programming
- live literature
- magazines publishing original fiction and poetry (including newly translated work)
- participatory activity, such as workshops
- poetry
- prose fiction (including novels, novellas and short fiction, graphic novels)
- publishing
- reader development
- residencies
- storytelling
- translation (fiction and poetry)
- writing and illustration for children and young people

We focus primarily on supporting original fiction and poetry. We can also consider projects with innovative, creative approaches to non-fiction work where the project demonstrates strong literary merit. For example, where the work experiments creatively with form or genre. This applies to memoir, travelogue and biography, for example.

## What we are unlikely to fund

We are generally unable to fund:

- screenwriting for film or television
- lifestyle or general arts magazines
- academic publications
- non-fiction where there is no

## Self-publishing

If you intend to self-publish your work you will need to make an exceptionally strong case for public engagement, particularly considering how the work will reach a wide readership without the distribution support of a publisher. Applications for self-published work may not meet our eligibility criteria if a strong case is not made.

## Developing your project and application

When planning your project, consider the following:

- you will need to demonstrate the quality of your work objectively, i.e. with the secured interest or involvement of an agent, publisher, editor, literary magazines, literature organisation or producer. A supporting letter can be included as part of your application.
- we fund organisations that support emerging writers to develop their work, through a range of services including manuscript assessment, writing courses, and one-to-one mentoring. It might be more appropriate for some emerging writers to access support from these organisations first than through Project Grants directly.
- to make a strong case for investing in an individual writer, we need you to show that our investment is likely to support you at a key point in your development. This might include whether a project will allow you to work in new ways, or take your practice in new directions, for example.

- you will need to demonstrate how readers or audiences will engage with your work, for example in print, through events, or online. Where the focus of the project is on writing or developing new work, we will base our view of public engagement on how likely this is to reach audiences in the longer term, for example through support from a publisher. Your application form and any letter of support from an agent, publisher or editor should explicitly address future plans for the publication of the work you apply for to do.
- we encourage writers to consider proactive approaches to reaching audiences, whether in the promotion of completed work (for example, readings or online), as part of its development (such as research or sharing work-in-progress), or in specific community projects (for example, workshops or residencies).
- if you apply for a project to write or develop new work, refer to our 'Fair pay' [information sheet](#)
- to help you to work out your fee. List all fees under 'Artistic spending' in your budget.
- While you may include project-specific overheads in your budget, we would not expect to see your living costs (such as food, rent or childcare) as these should be covered by your fee for the project and any other personal income. For example, costs for printing and postage are project-specific overheads which you could include in your budget.
- If you are using your home or office as the main location for your project (for example, writing at home), you may be able to claim a percentage of your ongoing overheads as project expenditure. For example, if you are writing a new collection of poetry at home for two days a week for a year then you could include the relevant proportion of your utilities as project expenditure. This is distinct from your personal living costs (including the remaining amount for utilities), which you should not include in your budget. See our 'Repeat projects, ongoing overheads and salaries' [information sheet](#) for more details.
- If you are working with any publishers, literary agents, literature development organisations, or any other related people or organisations, then we would expect you to list them as partners in your project.

- When you complete the Activity plan section, include clear milestones for your project, as well as any specific events such as readings and workshops.

## Further guidance on specific types of project

### Publishing

Publishers can apply for projects that may include, for example, a publishing programme or marketing activity. If your project is a publishing programme then include details of proposed titles and tell us how they fit into to the development of your list.

Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants is a programme designed to provide funding for projects with their own clear objectives and a discrete set of project outcomes, rather than for ongoing activity. You will need to make sure that your application presents your activity as a self-contained project. If your budget includes any overheads then you should show us how costs relate directly to the project and how you have worked this out. See our 'Repeat projects, ongoing overheads and salaries' [information sheet](#) for more details

If you have a business plan, you can include a relevant section of this as supporting information and refer in your application to how the project will contribute to your longer-term business development. You should also consider how your publishing activity will be sustained in the longer term.

It is important that you show the wider public benefit of your project, so you should include details of your distribution and marketing plans.

## Translation

Publishers and translators can apply for funding to translate work from other languages into English. We are generally unable to support translations from English into other languages.

Usually it is the publisher who applies for a grant, which may cover both translation and promotion, however translators are also eligible to apply as individuals when appropriate.

We are particularly keen to encourage translation from languages and literatures currently under-represented in English.

- in your application, explain the rationale for selecting the text or texts for translation, with brief information about the writer, translator, and the literary context. Publishers should explain how the titles contribute to their list.
- as with publishing in general, it is important that you show the public benefit of your project, which in this case usually means demonstrating that the translation will reach readers. In the public engagement section of the application form, applicants need to show strong and well thought out plans for the publication, distribution and marketing of the title they are proposing to translate.
- for information on how to pay translators, see the guidance published by the [Translators' Association](#)

We appreciate that projects involving literary translation often require a long lead-in time. Remember that Project Grants cannot fund services that have been ordered, contracted, or paid for before we are able to reach a decision on your application (six working weeks from receipt for applications for £15,000 and under, and 12 working weeks for applications over £15,000).

## Literature festivals

We can support literature festivals to commission, programme and promote literature and literature events. We can also support associated programmes such as outreach

activities and talent development work. We focus on festivals that feature literary fiction, poetry, international work and/or new writing.

If you apply for a festival programme you should tell us about your draft programme or outline your approach to programming, and how the festival offer will reflect your artistic aims.

If you apply for an annual festival that we have funded before, it is important that your application clearly demonstrates how the activity has been developed since your last event or project. See the 'Repeat projects, ongoing overheads and salaries' [information sheet](#) for more details.

## Live literature and storytelling

Individuals and organisations can apply for projects including, for example, a tour or research and development for a show.

If you apply as an individual, you can demonstrate the quality of the work and its ability to reach an audience through endorsements from or partnerships with a third party, such as a live literature promoter or festival. There is now a developed infrastructure for live literature in England, including specialist organisations, promoters, venues, touring specialists and festivals. For research and development projects, you should provide clear plans for how the public will be engaged with the work in the longer term.

## Reader development work

Organisations can apply for the development and delivery of **projects** that support access to reading for pleasure for individuals and communities. Projects might include reading group activity, events, workshops, residencies and promotions. They might also help readers to enjoy and engage with a diverse range of literature. We focus on **projects** that promote the reading of literary fiction, poetry and work in translation.

Organisations can apply for reading development work, including work targeting specific audiences such as children and young people and communities requiring access support, for example emergent readers or those not yet comfortable with reading for pleasure.

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