

SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

NB: Please refer to the Guidance Notes for full criteria and programme application information.

What is the purpose of this programme?

The aim of this programme is to assist organisations to deliver arts projects which contribute to the growth of arts in the community for new and existing audiences and which reflect the diversity of Northern Ireland's society and culture.

When is the application deadline?

This is a rolling programme which will remain open until the budget is spent.

How much can we apply for?

You can apply for an award between £500 and £10,000 for a project.

When will we hear if our application is successful?

We aim to communicate decisions to you within 2 months of receiving your application. However, if you are applying far in advance of your project date, you may not receive the decision within 2 months, as we may prioritise the assessment of applications for projects which are happening sooner.

Do we need match funding?

No. You do not need to show match funding for this award.

Who can submit an application?

Any formally constituted voluntary, community or arts group can apply. As can formally constituted parent-teacher associations. Groups of organisations can work together on projects, though there must be a lead applicant whose name will be on the application and who will have overall responsibility for the project and who manage the grant, if awarded.

Can we make more than one application?

No. You may submit only one application.

Do we have to apply online?

Yes. You must apply using our online system. We will not accept applications in hard copy or by email.

- Online applications may be edited, saved and returned while the programme remains open.
- You must submit all mandatory enclosures associated with the application at the same time as your application, i.e. they must be uploaded to your online application prior to its submission. These enclosures are listed on the Attachments page within the online application and are detailed below.

What other information do I need to provide in support of my application?

You must provide the requested mandatory enclosures. **If you do not, your application will be ineligible.**

What are Mandatory Enclosures?

Mandatory enclosures are the documents which you must provide in conjunction with your application. Some of these must be submitted with your application; others can be made available on the Government Funding Database (GFD - see notes below).

Please keep in mind the following important points:

- All mandatory enclosures must be in **Word, Excel or pdf format**. We cannot accept documents in other formats.
- **The total size of all your uploaded documents should not exceed 25 Mb.**
- You must submit **all** necessary enclosures with your application form. If any enclosures are missing, your application will be ineligible.
- If you submit an enclosure in a format which we do not accept or which is corrupted or which we cannot open, the enclosure will be considered missing and your application will be ineligible.
- Do not compress files into one zip file. Files must be uploaded as individual documents.
- **All data must be PC compatible.** If non-PC compatible data is supplied, your application will not be assessed. For example, if using a MAC, it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that any enclosures uploaded to the online application are PC compatible.
- The submission of weblinks or website addresses in lieu of enclosure documents is not acceptable and will result in your application being made ineligible.

IMPORTANT

What Mandatory Enclosures are necessary for Small Grants Programme applications?

- Constitution / Articles of Association / Memorandum of the applicant
- Detailed project budget

If available:

- CVs of proposed artists, facilitators, project personnel who will help deliver your project.

What if my constitution is already on the Government Funding Database?

If your constitution is already available on the GFD, you do not have to upload it to your application.

What should the project budget contain?

The project budget should provide details of both income and expenditure associated with the project.

You need to tell us how much your project will cost and how much you need from us.

Both the project cost and how much you need from us must tally with the amounts detailed on page 6 of the online application form. You will be required to provide us with a breakdown of each activity (budget heading). You must provide a breakdown of any activity which costs over £1,000, eg artists fees, £1,500 – 5 artists at £300 each.

You must ensure that the project budget is balanced, ie there is no shortfall. If your total project cost is more than you have asked from us, please provide details of income (confirmed and anticipated). Examples of other income is detailed below:

- Grants from other agencies
- Ticket sales, eg 300 tickets at £5 each - £1,500
- Income from sales of other items, eg books, publications, programmes
- Fees
- Fundraising
- Sponsorship.

In what circumstances will my application be deemed ineligible?

Your application will be deemed ineligible if:

- You do not provide the mandatory enclosures when you submit your application form which are:
 - **Legal constitution** of the applicant organisation – please ensure the organisation name on the application form is the same as the name on your constitution document
 - **Detailed project budget** to include both income and expenditure associated with the proposed project – **please ensure the budget balances**. A template is available on our website. Further information about our requirements is provided both in the FAQs (see above) and the Guidance Notes.
- Costs over £1,000 are not broken down.
- You fail to answer ALL the questions. As per the online application form, ALL questions must be answered. Incomplete application forms will not be accepted.
- You submit an application for ineligible projects. The following is ineligible:
 - Purchase of musical instruments
 - Capital costs, eg refurbishment or renovation of buildings
 - Equipment only projects – the Arts Council will consider funding equipment costs to a maximum value of 50% of your requested amount. Further detail is available on page 3 of the Guidance Notes.

If you have a query regarding the eligibility of your project, please contact a member of Arts Council staff to discuss further.

- You submit your application less than two months before the start of your project / event.
- You do not complete and return the Monitoring Form (published to your application account) by the specified timeframe. Further information about the Monitoring Form is detailed on page 5 of the Guidance Notes.

How will the Monitoring Form be issued?

You will receive a Monitoring Form which will be published to your application account after we receive your application form. You will receive an email advising you that the monitoring form is available for completion once the form has been published to your account. **You must complete and return the Monitoring Form as part of the application process by the date specified in the email. If you do not do so, your application will be ineligible and will not be assessed.**

What happens if I submit an application which is deemed to be ineligible?

We will issue you with a notification outlining the reason(s) for ineligibility. Unfortunately you will not be able to provide any missing enclosures or supplementary information after a notification of ineligibility has been issued. However you may wish to address the reasons for ineligibility and submit a new application if this is applicable to your project. Please remember ineligible applications have no bearing on any further applications you wish to make.

My organisation is in receipt of Lottery Project Funding, can we apply to the Small Grants Programme?

Lottery Project funded clients can apply to the Small Grants Programme as long as their Lottery Project Funding award is deemed as complete.

If we are in receipt of Small Grants funding, can we apply to Lottery Project Funding?

There is no prohibition on organisations applying to the Lottery Project Funding programme if they are in receipt of Small Grants funding. However through Lottery Project Funding we aim to distribute our funds as widely as possible and may take account in the assessment of any application the level of support the applicant organisation has previously received or is currently receiving at time of LPF application.

Must we be registered with Access NI and perform Access NI checks?

As long as the activity is not regulated activity, *i.e.* working with the same group of participants more than once on a regular basis, then the activity is unregulated and as such there is no legal requirement for Access NI checks. However best practice would dictate that the organisation registers with Access NI or an Umbrella Body regardless and undertakes checks.

However if the activity is deemed to be regulated, then a legal requirement for Access NI checks exist.

Must we be registered with Access NI and perform Access NI checks? (cont'd)

Best Practice Guidelines for Arts Sector Organisations are available from our website - <http://www.artscouncil-ni.org/images/uploads/publications-documents/ACNI-Safeguarding-Guidelines-February2020.pdf>

Volunteer Now's Standards & Guidance for Safeguarding Children & Young People are available from our website - <http://www.artscouncil-ni.org/images/uploads/publications-documents/VN-Keeping-Children-Safe-2016.pdf>

If your organisation is not registered with either Access NI or an Umbrella Body in order to obtain Access NI checks, you must provide a statement explaining why.

ACNI would advise that you contact Access NI to discuss why you believe you do not require Registration to obtain Access NI checks in relation to your proposed project.

Contact details for Access NI are available from their website - <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/information-and-services/accessni-criminal-record-checks/apply-accessni-check>

Failure to answer the question on Access NI will deem your application ineligible. Arts Council will assess the suitability of your response where you are not registered with either Access NI or an Umbrella Body during the assessment of your application.

Please note it is a requirement of our funding that any organisation which comes into contact with children, young people and adults at risk, either directly through its programmes or indirectly through its services, must commit to a Safeguarding Policy. Arts Council will reserve the right to request sight of your organisation's Safeguarding Policy.

We are a recently established organisation and will be unable to provide annual accounts, what information will we need to provide?

Organisations do not need to provide annual accounts at time of application. We do however request annual accounts if successful in your application. If recently established organisations are unable to provide annual accounts, normally we request 3 months' worth of original, consecutive bank statements (the most recent of which is not more than 3 months old) or for new groups which do not have 3 months' worth of bank statements, all the statements that you have.

What is the appropriate level of fees for artists and personnel?

Different rates will apply depending on your artform.

We would suggest that you refer to the industry rates for your particular artform (where appropriate).

Please find below links/information for Music, Drama & Dance and Visual Arts.

Music

<https://musiciansunion.org.uk/rates>

Drama and Dance

[Rates of Pay – ITC \(itc-arts.org\)](https://itc-arts.org/)

Visual Art (in euro)

[Visual Artists Payment Calculator – EURO | Visual Artists Ireland](#)

Who should we contact for help?

The Arts Council staff list is on our website: <http://arts council-ni.org/contact-us>

Arts Council will update these regularly throughout the duration of the submission period.