



Awarding funds from  
**THE NATIONAL LOTTERY**®

# SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME

## GUIDANCE NOTES

THIS PROGRAMME IS OPEN FOR PROJECTS COMMENCING  
27 MARCH 2022 ONWARDS

Applications must be submitted on-line at [www.artscouncil-ni.org/funding](http://www.artscouncil-ni.org/funding).

Please read these Guidance Notes carefully as there have been some changes to the Programme.

**Please Note:** The maximum award available is £10,000.

## ABOUT THE SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME

The Arts Council has designed this programme to encourage you to develop and deliver your ideas, linked to your artistic needs and to your future plans.

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.

We want to support activities which benefit the people of Northern Ireland or that help arts organisations in Northern Ireland carry out their work.

All applications should fit within the objectives stated in the Council's five-year plan<sup>1</sup>.

### WHO CAN APPLY?

We welcome applications from the widest possible range of organisations. You will be required to provide proof that you have a legal constitution.

- Registered charities and other organisations which cannot distribute profits
- Groups of organisations working together to deliver specific projects
- Formally constituted parent-teacher associations

### WHO CANNOT APPLY?

- **Organisations currently in receipt of Arts Council funding from its Annual Funding or Lottery Project Funding programmes**
- Individuals or Sole traders
- Commercial trading companies
- Companies that exist to distribute a profit or which are constituted to allow payment of dividends to non-asset-locked bodies
- Statutory authorities or organisations governed by statutory authorities i.e. ELB schools.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.artscouncil-ni.org/images/uploads/publications-documents/ACNI-5-year-Strategic-Framework-for-Developing-the-Arts-2019-2024.pdf>

## HOW MUCH CAN YOU APPLY FOR?

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

## WHAT YOU CAN APPLY FOR

You can apply for the following costs:

- Costs of artists and tutors (including fees<sup>2</sup>, accommodation, subsistence, travel). If applying for artists and/or tutor costs, you must supply the CVs / biography / history of artistic practice)
- Materials
- Travel expenses within Northern Ireland – *please note Arts Council has a maximum allowance of 0.27p per mile.*
- Equipment hire
- Volunteer expenses
- Venue hire for workshops, training, rehearsals and performance
- Publicity and marketing costs
- Evaluation costs
- Participation, education and outreach work in film and media and film festivals.
- Equipment costs to a maximum value of 50% of your requested amount. Equipment items will only be considered if identified as essential within your project and where it is vital for its successful delivery. Arts Council will not fund equipment only projects. The equipment must be an essential element of your proposal

**When planning your project please give careful consideration to the feasibility, timing and presentation of your project given restrictions due to Covid-19:**

## WHAT YOU CANNOT APPLY FOR

- Costs that will have been incurred before we make a decision on your application
- Travel to events outside Northern Ireland
- Events which promote religious or political views
- Musical instruments

## CAN YOU HOLD MORE THAN ONE AWARD?

You can hold only one Small Grants Programme award at a time. An award is not finished until we receive your End of Project Report.

You will not be eligible to apply for another Small Grants Programme award where a previous award, if applicable, has not been completed.

## HOW TO APPLY

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### <sup>2</sup> Level of fees for artists and personnel:

Arts Council will expect applicant organisations to ensure that they use reasonable current industry rates when calculating budgets. See FAQ document.

You **MUST** apply online. We will not accept applications in hard copy, by email or by fax.

Online applications may be edited, saved and returned to at any time until you submit. You **MUST** submit **ALL** mandatory enclosures associated with the application at the same time, ie. at the point at which you submit your online application. The enclosures are listed within the online application and in the FAQs document.

The online application allows you to upload and attach the necessary enclosures to your application. You must upload the following mandatory enclosures:

- **Legal constitution** of the applicant organisation
- **Detailed project budget** to include both income and expenditure associated with the proposed project.

You should 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).

You will be required to provide us with a breakdown of each activity (budget heading). You should provide a breakdown of any activity which costs over £1,000, eg artists fees, £1,500 – 5 artists at £300 each.

Further detail regarding our requirements is available in the FAQs document. A template project budget is available on our website.

And if available you must upload

- CVs or information on artist/s, groups, technical staff, other personnel you propose to employ as part of the project

Applicants must read the FAQs document for more detail on these enclosures. All such documents must be in Word, Excel or pdf format. We cannot accept documents in other formats. Total size of documents should not exceed 25 Mb.

All of the information you provide will be held on computer. This information will be used for the administration of applications and grants, for producing statistics and information on successful applicants. Remember to keep a copy of the completed form and enclosures for your own records.

## WHEN SHOULD YOU APPLY?

Decision meetings are normally held on a monthly basis, with the exception of August.

- You should apply at least two months before the start of your event (**applications which start within two months of the application date will not be accepted**)
- We will aim to make a decision within two months of receiving your application.

## FIRST TIME APPLICANTS

If applying to the Arts Council's Small Grants Programme for the first time, we would request that you contact the relevant Artform Officer to discuss your proposal. Staff contact details are available from our website -<http://artscouncil-ni.org/news/contactus>

## ASSESSMENT AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

- The Arts Council will acknowledge receipt of the application.
- You will receive a Monitoring Form which will be published to your application account. **You must complete and return the Monitoring Form as part of the application process. If you do not do so, your application will be ineligible and will not be assessed.**
- The Arts Council will undertake an eligibility check on your application. In the event of missing information, your application will be deemed as ineligible and will not proceed to assessment.
- The Arts Council will provide you with a unique reference number and the name of the Arts Development Officer who will be responsible for the application.
- The application will be assessed by the Arts Development Officer. This process will be based on the information contained in the application form as well as your organisation's management of any previous awards.
- Applications are scored as follows:
  - **Artistic Practice:** including quality of production, artists
  - **Public Benefit:** including under-represented local authority area and contribution to the growth of arts in the community
  - **Financial Viability:** including grant compliance history; value for money; partnership funding
  - **Project Management:** including appropriate planning and management
- Applications are moderated at a meeting attended by all assessing officers, chaired by a Director or the Head of Participatory Arts. This meeting will make decisions on applications.

- Decision meetings are normally held on a monthly basis with the exception of August.
- The Small Grants Programme budget is currently £500,000. Because of limited funds, it is not always possible to fund all applications recommended by officers. Those applications achieving the highest scores will receive funding until there are no funds remaining.
- The final decision will be communicated to you by letter.
- Successful applicants will be issued with a contract outlining the conditions attached to the award and the purposes for which the award can be used.
- If your application is rejected, the Council will provide you with detailed reasons for the rejection.

## IF YOU RECEIVE AN AWARD

### LETTER OF OFFER

Following the decision, Arts Council will issue successful applicants with a contract outlining the conditions attached to the award and the specific purposes for which the award can be used.

- **You will not be able to start your project until you have met certain conditions of grant and received a letter of commencement from the Arts Council. You should take this into account when planning your proposal.**
- It is important that you read the letter of offer and enclosed conditions carefully before signing and returning it. The letter of offer will set out what you may spend the grant on and by what date the proposal must be completed.
- Any artists, facilitators or staff hired to deliver the funded project must be formally contracted to do so, and your letter of offer will require submission of these contracts as evidence that the project has been appropriately managed.
- **If there are any changes to your project from the original application, you must inform the Arts Council immediately in writing before incurring any proposal expenditure.** If you don't tell us about changes you may have to repay the award and this will affect decisions on any future applications you might make.

## **HOW PAYMENTS WILL BE MADE**

Arts Council will make payments using BACS transfer only. You will need to complete and return the BACS form issued with your letter of offer.

Payments are normally made in two stages of 90% and 10%.

- The first payment of 90% will be made upon satisfactory receipt of documentation as set out in the letter of offer.
- The final payment of 10% will be made upon satisfactory receipt of End of Project Report, a full I&E account breaking down all project costs and other relevant documentation as stipulated in your LOO.

Lottery funded projects are not permitted to generate a profit. In the event that your project realises a profit, Arts Council will not release all or some of the final payment and may also seek part or full recovery of the first payment made. This will be dependent on the profit realised.

## **POST-PROJECT MONITORING**

At the conclusion of your project, you will have to submit an End of Project Report and provide a final income and expenditure account for the project, in addition to evidencing the appropriate use of Arts Council and National Lottery branding throughout the course of project delivery.

### **POST-PROJECT MONITORING – Verification Visits**

Your project may also be subject to a Verification Visit. This will ensure that the project grant has been spent in accordance with your letter of offer and that all processes (eg. procurement, recruitment, processing of payments within your organisation) related to project delivery comply with LOO conditions and your own stated financial procedures. It is therefore important that you retain all the project documentation to evidence this.

## **CHILDREN / YOUNG PEOPLE / ADULTS AT RISK**

Organisations that work with children, young people and adults at risk need to ensure that their safeguarding systems and procedures adhere to best practice. Please see the information below to consider in relation to your own organisation's procedures and note that you must agree a protection policy statement as part of your application form.

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 which must have been formally agreed by your organisation.

If your Safeguarding Policy and Procedures are older than three years, please review and update them to ensure your policy and procedures are in line with best practice and legislation relating to protection issues. If you are successful in obtaining a grant, the Arts Council may, as part of its monitoring processes, ask to see these documents during the incoming year.

## **EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY**

It is a requirement of our funding that your organisation commits to equality of opportunity and good relations duty.

The Arts Council of Northern Ireland has a statutory duty under the Northern Ireland Act 1998 in carrying out its functions to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between all Section 75 groups and you will note that you must agree an Equality of Opportunity and Good Relations policy statement as part of your application form.



## **OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION**

### **Publicity**

Full listings of all the grants we award are published in our Annual Report and on our website. You will be required to acknowledge Arts Council of Northern Ireland funding in all your publicity. Failure to credit the Arts Council of Northern Ireland will affect payment of your grant.

### **Openness and accountability**

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 any information held by us (which will include your application) is potentially accessible by the public.

Information supplied by you will be held in manual files and on a computer-based grants management system. Reports from the information you supply and from comments made on your application by staff members and external assessors, where relevant, are also on both manual and computer-based systems. The information you supply will be made available to those assessing any grant applications you make.

By submitting your application you waive any right to raise any type of proceedings against the Arts Council of Northern Ireland as a consequence of, or in contemplation of, any disclosure of the contents of your application in response to an information request made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

### **Data protection**

Data held on our grants management system is used for all of the following purposes: statistical reporting, application assessing, accounting purposes and for contacting you.

The details of your grant will be public information (see Openness and Accountability). However, any personal details will be held within our grants management system and our electronic files, and accessed only by our staff, appointed auditors and individuals or organisations that may help us assess or monitor grants.

You have a right under the Data Protection Act 2018 to access the data held on you by Arts Council of Northern Ireland.

**We view your signature on your application form as acceptance of the use of your data as outlined above.**

## APPLYING ONLINE/EMAIL NOTIFICATIONS

Applications to the Small Grants Programme will only be accepted online.

The online application system has been tested and is sending out relevant notifications. We are, however, aware that some applicants to online grants programmes may experience issues such as the account holder not receiving links to reset passwords, not receiving notifications of when applications are edited and saved, nor when applications have been submitted. These issues relate to those account holders with email addresses from the following email providers – btinternet, yahoo and virgin – and customised email addresses.

The potential issues lie with those email providers and are beyond the control of Arts Council; if encountered they need to be addressed by the relevant email provider.

Should you be affected by a problem which cannot be resolved with an email provider, we would strongly recommend that accounts are set up using Gmail or Outlook email addresses. Where applicants may have previous accounts with other email addresses, we will be able to transfer historical information to new accounts if required.

**In addition, to avoid the blocking of any application-related emails or information, you should ensure that the addresses [mail@grantapplication.com](mailto:mail@grantapplication.com) and [mailuk@grantapplication.com](mailto:mailuk@grantapplication.com) will not be blocked by your email or firewall programmes.**