

Creative local growth fund: round one 2015/16

Guidance for applicants

Summary of key information	
What is the focus of the Creative local growth fund?	<p>Arts and culture can contribute to local economic growth. We want to support this because it adds to the value that arts and culture have within local and national life, and because it makes the sector more sustainable through demonstrating that value and by securing a basis for sector growth. We are working with Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), key strategic bodies supporting local economies, to create the Creative local growth fund. The fund seeks to put arts and culture at the heart of growth plans by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • securing long term partnership between LEPs, the Arts Council and other local partners to support the cultural sector • helping to leverage European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIFs) - particularly European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) - investment within the LEP area into the cultural sector • investing in new approaches to achieve these objectives, while at the same time developing learning that can inform policy and practice
Who can apply?	Each application must be collaborative, for example, with one or more arts and/or cultural organisation working with LEPs and, potentially, other public sector bodies such as

	<p>local authorities, further education colleges or universities. The lead applicant, as the accountable body, must be properly constituted. Please see Section three for full eligibility criteria.</p>
<p>When is the deadline for applications?</p>	<p>12pm (midday) 16 October 2015</p>
<p>How much can be applied for per application?</p>	<p>Between £150,000 (minimum) and £500,000 (maximum). This is to serve as match for funding, possibly for ESIFs. There is a particular reference to the ERDF, although our funding may also act as match funding for other ESIFs. The Arts Council grant cannot be the only source of match funding for funded activity.</p>
<p>When must the activity take place?</p>	<p>Activities must start no earlier than 1 April 2016 and end no later than 31 March 2019.</p> <p>Applicants may apply for projects that take place over a maximum period of three years, provided that they are completed by 31 March 2019.</p>
<p>Minimum match funding from other sources</p>	<p>Grants awarded from this programme will provide match funding for investment to drive local economic growth within and across particular LEP areas. We anticipate that this is most likely to be as match funding for ESIFs, specifically the ERDF. However, we will accept applications that are for grants to provide match funding for other ESIFs.</p> <p>We would anticipate applications for match funding for the ERDF to operate in the following way:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depending on the ERDF region category, ERDF can cover 50 to 80 per cent of the costs of a project, with the remaining balance to come from match funding. • Requirements around the ERDF, including match funding needed and eligibility criteria, are set out in separate guidance, which can be found here. The website also contains details of any relevant calls for applications for the ERDF. Each call specification will set out the level of match funding needed for that application. • Where ERDF funding covers 50 per cent of the costs of a project, it is anticipated that £500,000 match funding will be required from other sources. This could be wholly, or partly, provided by a grant from the Arts Council. • A single ERDF application could cover activity in more than one LEP area. <p>Please note that successful application to the ERDF or other ESIF does not guarantee Arts Council funding and vice versa. Separate applications will need to be made to each funding source and applicants will need to satisfy the specific criteria for each fund.</p>
<p>Other key eligibility points for Creative local growth fund</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • partnerships must include a minimum of one arts or cultural organisation

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lead applicants should not be based in London, and the activity should not take place within London • partner organisations can be based in London but the benefits would need to be realised in a LEP area outside of London • all applicants must have had a mandatory conversation with a designated Arts Council (Senior) Relationship Manager prior to applying (see Section five for further details) <p>Note that funding will be contingent on an appropriate level of match funding having been achieved. If this has not been confirmed at the point of offer, appropriate payment conditions will be imposed.</p>
<p>When will we make our decision?</p>	<p>We will aim to notify applicants of our decision no later than by the end March 2016.</p>

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Section one – introduction

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in the Creative local growth fund: round one.

Delivering artistic outcomes is the main reason why the Arts Council invests in the arts sector, but that investment can bring a range of other impacts that can help the sector become more resilient.

We know that arts and culture can contribute to local economic growth. They are a key part of the creative industries, a sector that grew by 5.8 per cent between 1997 and 2013, compared to growth of 4.2 per cent in the UK economy as a whole. We know that arts and culture provide opportunities for employment, with a growth of 10.1 per cent in jobs in this sector between 2011 and 2013, compared to a 2.4 per cent increase in jobs in the UK as a whole.

We want to support this contribution to local economies because it adds to the value that arts and culture have within local and national life, and because it makes the sector more sustainable by demonstrating that value and in securing a basis for sector growth. Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), as strategic bodies supporting local economies, are key potential partners in the Creative local growth fund. The fund seeks to put culture at the heart of growth plans by:

1. securing long term partnership between LEPs, other local partners and the cultural sector
2. helping to leverage support from European Structural and Investment Funds, and potentially other funds within the LEP area, into the cultural sector

About Arts Council England

Arts Council England champions, develops and invests in artistic and cultural experiences that enrich people's lives. We support a range of activities across the arts, museums and libraries – from theatre to digital art, reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to collections.

Great art and culture inspire us, bring us together and teach us about ourselves and the world around us. In short, they make life better. Between 2015 and 2018, we plan to invest £1.1 billion of public money from the government and an

estimated £700 million from the National Lottery to help create these experiences for as many people as possible across the country.

On behalf of the Department for Education, we are investing over £75 million between 2015 and 2016 in a network of 123 Music education hubs across England.

For more information about the Arts Council visit www.artscouncil.org.uk.

About Arts Council England's strategic funds 2015-18

Our strategic funds help us to target particular challenges, opportunities or gaps, creating the environment for further development to take place in the arts and culture sector. Ultimately, they help us meet the goals set out in our strategy, [Great art and culture for everyone](#). Our goals, for reference, are as follows:

Goal 1: Excellence is thriving and celebrated in the arts, museums and libraries

Goal 2: Everyone has the opportunity to experience and be inspired by the arts, museums and libraries

Goal 3: The arts, museums and libraries are resilient and environmentally sustainable

Goal 4: The leadership and workforce in the arts, museums and libraries are diverse and appropriately skilled

Goal 5: Every child and young person has the opportunity to experience the richness of the arts, museums and libraries

The Creative local growth fund supports Goal 3.

About other partners in the fund

As a condition of grant, the applying partnership must secure funding from [European Structural and Investment Funds \(ESIFs\)](#). We have developed this fund to provide match funding for the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) in particular, however, we will also consider applications where the Arts Council grant can serve as match funding for other ESIFs. If this is the case, you must demonstrate that the planned activity will deliver against the aims and objectives of the ESIF as set out in the relevant Operational Programme. The Operational Programme sets out how an ESIF will work during 2014 to 2020 in England. You can find the Operational Programme for ERDF [here](#). Grants could also provide

match funding for other relevant funds within an LEP area. Arts Council grants need not be the sole source of match funding.

Section two – purpose of Creative local growth fund: round one

Aims and outcomes

We know that arts and culture can contribute to local economic growth. We want to support this because it adds to the value that arts and culture have within local and national life, and because it makes the sector more sustainable through demonstrating that value and in securing a basis for sector growth. LEPs, as key strategic bodies that support local economies while working with other partners, have resources to support that growth.

The Creative local growth fund seeks to put culture at the heart of growth plans. In particular, we want to see this programme supporting growth of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in the creative and cultural sectors.

The central aims of the fund are to:

- secure long term partnership between LEPs, the Arts Council and other local partners to support the cultural sector
- lever ERDF investment, and potentially investment from other funds within the LEP area, into the cultural sector
- enable the sector to become more resilient in line with Goal 3 of our ten-year strategy: [Great art and culture for everyone](#)
- deliver against at least one of our other five goals in [Great art and culture for everyone](#)

Creative Industries Employment Statistics published in June 2014 by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) demonstrated that London has:

- 30.3 per cent of total creative industries jobs in the UK
- 19.6 per cent of total museums, galleries and libraries jobs in the UK
- 25.9 per cent of total music, performing and visual arts jobs in the UK

On this basis, to ensure the greatest impact on economic benefit for arts, culture and the creative industries in England, we will focus this fund on [LEP areas](#) outside of London. This does not exclude organisations based in London from being part of partnerships delivering the activity described in applications, although the benefit must accrue outside the capital.

The geographical focus is designed to support the Arts Council's intent that a minimum of 75 per cent of National Lottery funding is committed outside of

London. Our expectation is that 100 per cent of this fund will be committed outside of London.

How much funding is available?

A total of £3,000,000 is available for the Creative local growth fund, with indicative budgets of £1,500,000 being available in 2015/16 and £1,500,000 in 2016/17.

In the first round (2015/16) we will be inviting applications for projects lasting up to three years. However, we will take into consideration how much of the indicative budget for the second round (2016/17) needs to be committed to planning for any future rounds of the programme. Budgets are also pending our settlement from government.

Applicants can apply for projects that last for up to three years but we strongly encourage applicants to consider whether they require funding for one, two or three years.

If you are applying for funding for activity taking place in one year your project must end no later than 31 March 2017.

If you are applying for funding for activity taking place over two years your project must end no later than 31 March 2018.

If you are applying for funding for activity taking place over three years your project must end no later than 31 March 2019.

We will consider funding activities that take place over three years depending on the available budget and whether a clear rationale has been provided. Your application will need to make clear how much funding you are applying for in each year. We plan to launch another round of the programme for activity starting in 2017/18, and you should consider whether it is appropriate to defer making an application until then, for example, if you need more time to establish appropriate partnerships and develop your ideas.

It is likely that there will be a high level of demand for funding, particularly over three years, and that there will be good applications that we are unable to fund. You should think about what you would do if we cannot award you funding.

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. Note that if you are also applying to the ERDF you must also meet the specific ERDF criteria. If you are intending to apply for Arts Council funding as match funding for ERDF you are advised to carefully read the [ERDF eligibility rules](#) which will apply to the match funding as well as ERDF.

<p>Who can apply to the Arts Council’s Creative local growth fund?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the lead applicant (accountable body) must be a properly constituted body • the lead applicant should clearly identify partners, at least one of which should have significant experience and expertise in delivering arts and/or cultural programmes • the lead applicant does not need to be an arts or cultural organisation • the lead applicant must have a mandatory conversation with a designated Relationship Manager (see Section five) • applicants will be required to set out how the aims of their proposal align with priorities set out in the relevant LEP strategic economic plans and ESIF strategies – this will enable the Arts Council to judge whether or not the application is aimed at delivering identified local economic priorities • the lead applicant must be based in England but not in London • the arts and/or cultural organisations within the partnership must be based in England or deliver a significant proportion of their work in England • the lead applicant must be able to demonstrate financial stability, appropriate governance and an ability to accept, administer and account for the grant • the lead applicant can only submit one application to this scheme • there can only be one funded application per LEP
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	<p>area in each round</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • funded activity can be delivered in more than one LEP area <p>Our understanding and definition of an arts and/or cultural organisation is an organisation that can clearly demonstrate that their primary aims are around arts and culture, with activities benefitting the arts and cultural sector within England. This includes but is not limited to arts organisations, museums, libraries, music education hubs and local authority service departments.</p> <p>The kind of arts and/or cultural organisations that are eligible as partners/collaborators include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • limited companies registered at Companies House (or equivalent, if outside the UK) • Community Interest Companies registered with the CIC Regulator • charities or trusts registered with the Charity Commission • Limited Liability Partnerships registered at Companies House • partnerships established under a Deed of Partnership • Industrial and Provident Societies or Community Benefit Societies subject to regulation by the Financial Services Authority • organisations established by Royal Charter or other legislation • statutory bodies including local authorities
<p>Who cannot apply?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organisations resubmitting a previous application who have not received detailed feedback or had a further mandatory conversation with a Relationship Manager • organisations who have not met any overdue payment conditions on any previous grant from us

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • individuals • organisations based outside of England or in London, although organisations based in London can be part of applying partnerships so long as they can demonstrate that the benefit will be realised in a LEP area outside of London • organisations that do not demonstrate that they will be collaborating with arts and/or cultural organisations • organisations that cannot evidence that they are aligning their activity with the local priorities of the relevant LEP • organisations that have submitted another application to this scheme • organisations already in receipt of funding from the Arts Council for the activity specified in the application, for example, through strategic funds or through National portfolio organisation, Major partner museum or Music education hub funding
<p>What activity can be supported?</p>	<p>Supported activity must promote artistic outcomes, and contribute to the delivery of the Arts Council’s Goal 3 and at least one other of the Arts Council’s goals. We anticipate that we will largely focus support on small and medium sized enterprises in the creative and cultural sectors.</p> <p>Supported activity would include collaborative programmes and projects that seek to deliver the aims and anticipated outcomes of the Creative local growth fund. We would expect to see applications demonstrate how this would be accomplished with clear outcomes and outputs communicated, for example, contribution to local economic growth.</p> <p>The benefit must be realised in a LEP area outside of London. If ERDF is to be applied for, note that you will also have to demonstrate separately through the</p>

	<p>ERDF application process that your proposal meets the requirements necessary for ERDF and as set out in the specific call for ERDF funding – calls can be found here. The same will apply for other ESIFs where the grant being applied for from the Arts Council is to be used as match funding.</p> <p>Grants made under this strategic fund should be used as match funding for investment delivering under ERDF, or from other ESIFs, for example the European Social Fund (ESF). If this is the case, your application should set out which priority axis (the objectives which ERDF seeks to deliver, and which are set out in the Operational Programme) from the relevant ESIF relates to your application. You can find the Operational Programme here.</p> <p>Activity funded through the Creative local growth fund can also be supported by other funding programmes that promote local growth, including the Single Local Growth Fund and Regional Growth Fund.</p> <p>The kinds of activity funded could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• skills development, apprenticeships and paid internships• innovation, research and development• partnerships with other sectors (private sector, higher and/or further education, other public agencies)• commercialisation of cultural products• building digital capacity• SME and start-up business support• development of specific creative industry clusters and the role of the arts sector within them <p>Arts Council funded activity can be delivered by any appropriate organisation, which may include arts and cultural organisations, further and higher education</p>
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	institutions, and organisations in the voluntary and private sectors, for example local chambers of commerce.
What activity cannot be funded by the Creative local growth fund?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • activities that are not related to the arts • activities that do not benefit or engage people in England (in the short or long term) or that do not help artists and arts organisations in England to carry out their work • activities (including buying goods or services) that have started, been bought, ordered or contracted before we make a decision about the application as we cannot fund activity retrospectively • costs that are already paid for by other income including the organisation's own funds or any other funding • activities that are funded by other Arts Council grants • applications that do not leverage European funding
How much can be applied for per application?	Between £150,000 (minimum) and £500,000 (maximum)
How much match funding from sources other than the Arts Council is required?	Arts Council grants under this programme should operate as match funding for ESIF funding. The amount of match funding required under any ESIF application will be set out in the relevant call for ESIF.
Delivery timetable	<p>Activities must start no earlier than 1 April 2016. Activities must end no later than 31 March 2019.</p> <p>If you are applying for funding for activity taking place over one year your project must end no later than 31 March 2017.</p> <p>If you are applying for funding for activity taking place over two years your project must end no later than 31 March 2018.</p>

	If you are applying for funding for activity taking place over three years your project must end no later than 31 March 2019.
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Consortia and partnership agreements

We will accept applications for funding from organisations working as a consortium. One organisation must act as the lead organisation and submit the application.

All partners within the consortium must show a firm commitment to joint working. Your application must show the benefits and rationale of working as a consortium.

If we decide to fund your project we will enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the lead organisation. This organisation must accept our terms and conditions of grant and will be solely accountable to us for all monitoring information, how all the money is spent and for the full and successful delivery of the project.

One of our standard terms and conditions of grant is that the organisation we enter into a grant agreement with cannot subcontract any of the project to other organisations without our prior agreement in writing. So if we award a grant, before the project can start, we must approve a partnership agreement between the lead organisation and the other partners involved in the project.

There is further guidance about [Partnership agreements](#) on our website.

Section four – what you will be expected to deliver

We welcome applications that will make a contribution to achieving the aims and outcomes outlined in [Section two](#) above.

The proposal should include/demonstrate:

- strength and quality of the partnership between the arts/cultural organisation/s, local authority/authorities, LEP/s and other local partners
- quality of the proposed activity
- project management, budget allocation, timetabling and staff allocation
- previous experience and credentials of lead contact in the applicant organisation and principal partner/s
- value for money
- proposed outputs and outcomes, for example:
 - securing long term partnership between LEPs, other local partners and the arts/cultural sector
 - leveraging ESIF support, such as from the ERDF
 - leveraging LEP investment into the cultural sector and potentially other funds within the LEP area
 - making a contribution to plans for local economic growth eg number of jobs created or gross value added (GVA)
 - making a contribution to equality and diversity in the arts and cultural sector
- innovation
- details of match funding
- timescales and milestones
- proposals for the activities to be undertaken, including details of partners and stakeholders
- how the activity will be evaluated
- willingness to share emerging practice and learning and publish final evaluation/s
- how the activity will deliver against the relevant priority axes of the of the ERDF for England or other ESIFs
- which ERDF, or other fund, call you are responding to
- how the applicant has considered locally appropriate positive steps to improve the diversity of the workforce in order to make it more representative of the local population

You can find information on workforce statistics in the creative industries at www.gov.uk/government/collections/creative-industries-economic-estimates.

Section five – how to apply

Making an application

When to apply

The online application form for the Creative local growth fund: round one, will open on **Thursday 16 July 2015**. You can submit your application after this time but only once you have had your mandatory conversation with us. Applications must be submitted by **12pm (midday) on Friday 16 October 2015**. Applications submitted after this time will not be considered.

Application process

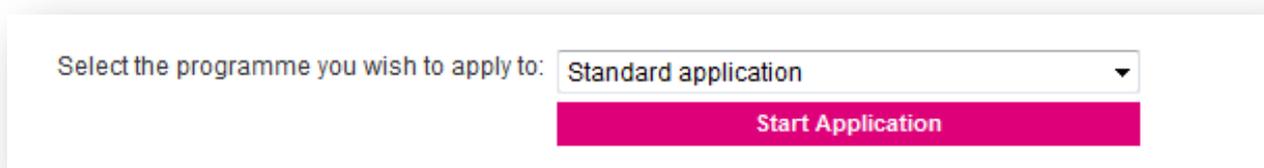
1. Read this guidance carefully and contact us

This guidance gives you information on how to apply and answers some common questions. If you have any further questions you can contact our Customer Services team at enquiries@artscouncil.org.uk

2. Prepare and submit your proposal

You must apply through our [online application portal](#) using the **Standard application form**:

- i. Once you have logged in (or created a new user account if you have not used the online portal before) you will see the welcome screen. On this screen, select 'Standard application' from the dropdown list:



Select the programme you wish to apply to:

[Start Application](#)

- ii. Press 'Start Application'. You will be taken to the Eligibility Check section where you should select the name of this fund from the dropdown list:

Eligibility Check

Eligibility questions - Section 1

The following questions are to check your application against some basic criteria.

* Which strategic programme are you applying for?

- iii. When you have completed the Eligibility Check you will be taken to the full application form which includes questions about you (or your organisation), the activity you are applying for and a section called 'Response to the brief' which gives you space to provide a full proposal for your activity. There is also a section where you can upload the mandatory attachments and any other supporting information.

iv. Proposal

The proposal can be a maximum of 9,000 words, divided into three sections: 'Meeting the brief' (maximum 3,000 words), 'Governance and

- Introduction
- Organisation details
- Main contact details
- Basic details
- Meeting our goals
- Response to the brief
- Attachments
- Activity beneficiaries
- Monitoring information
- Declaration
- Submit the form

management of activity' (maximum 3,000 words) and 'Financial viability' (maximum 3,000 words). You do not need to use the full word count if you do not feel it is necessary. Use the criteria/prompts in Section six of this guidance to help you structure your proposal.

v. Attachments

You must upload the following mandatory attachments on the 'Attachments' screen:

- a detailed budget and cash flow for the activity showing proposed income and expenditure (as an Excel sheet or similar)
- a work plan for proposed project, including milestones and key review dates
- financial statements for your previous financial year, prepared to the relevant legal standard for an organisation of your size and status (non-National portfolio organisations only)
- your latest management accounts (non-National portfolio organisations only)
- your governance documents (non-National portfolio organisations only), to include draft partnership agreement/s if available
- the email we sent confirming that you had a mandatory conversation with an Arts Council Relationship Manager (uploaded to the 'Non-standard attachments' section of the screen)

You may also upload the following optional attachments:

- up to three other relevant attachments, each a maximum of five pages in length

Examples of optional documents we would expect to see for the Creative local growth fund: round one, include but are not limited to:

- an outline of proposed activities, including artistic/cultural content and audiences/participants to be reached
- brief biographies of artists/cultural practitioners to be involved
- draft partnership agreement
- evidence of match funding expected or confirmed

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 any attachments 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. After you have read this guidance, if you have any further questions please contact us.

Assistance with your application

We are committed to being open and accessible, and want to make the Creative local growth fund: round one application process accessible to everyone.

If you experience any barriers within the application process or require help to make an application, our enquiries team can be contacted by:

- telephone: 0845 300 6200
- text phone: +44(0)161 934 4428
- email: enquiries@artscouncil.org.uk

Talking to us about your application – the mandatory conversation

Once you have read the guidance and started to think about your application, you must speak with a designated member of staff in one of our area offices in more detail about your proposal. We use the term 'mandatory conversation' to describe this scheduled, structured conversation, which often takes place by telephone. You must have this mandatory conversation before submitting your application to the Creative local growth fund. Please contact our Customer Services team to find out more about this.

We will arrange a time to speak with you. As a general guide, we would aim to cover the following points:

- how the project will help to secure long term partnership between LEPs and the cultural sector
- how the project will lever ESIF investment, and potentially investment from other funds within the LEP area, into the cultural sector
- how relationships will be sustained and developed through and, if appropriate, beyond the life of the project
- how the project will be evaluated, and how learning from the project will be shared across all partners as well as more widely across the arts and cultural sector

- possible ways of thinking more broadly about prospective partners and the economic reach of the project (stretching the reach of the activity)
- finance and management of the project
- any diversity and equality issues that may be relevant to the project
- whether other funding programmes might be more appropriate for the project

We will not be able to read, or provide written comment on, draft applications.

Once you have had this conversation with the designated member of staff, we will send you an email to confirm that the mandatory conversation has been completed. You can then submit your application at any time, uploading a copy of the email we have sent you as supporting information (see the Attachments section of the application form for instructions on where to do this).

It is your responsibility to develop and write the application, including what you feel to be all the relevant information. We will talk with all potential applicants but cannot guarantee success for any applicant.

After you submit your application

You will receive an acknowledgement email confirming that we have received your application. This will be sent to the email address which you used to log into the portal. The email will include a PDF copy of your application for your reference.

We will conduct an eligibility check within ten working days of the deadline for applications. If your application is not eligible, this means that we cannot process it any further and it will not be considered for funding. If your application is not eligible we will write to you to let you know, and will explain our decision.

Section six – how we will make our decision

We will aim to notify applicants of our decision no later than 15 January 2016.

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

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 audited accounts from the past two years.

Each criterion ('Meeting the brief', 'Governance and management of the activity', and 'Financial viability') will be assessed using a five-point word scoring:

- **Not met**
The application does not meet the criteria.
- **Potential**
The application does not meet the criteria but shows potential to do so.
- **Met**
The application meets the criteria.
- **Met (strong)**
The application meets the criteria and shows strong qualities.
- **Met (outstanding)**
The application meets the criteria and shows outstanding qualities.

On the basis of these ratings we will recommend whether an application is suitable for funding. Applications that do not achieve at least 'met' under all three criteria will not be recommended for funding.

We will assess each application against the following criteria, using the assessment prompts below:

Criteria
<p>Meeting the brief Weighting: 50 per cent Word count: up to 3,000 words</p> <p>The application should demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• clear and convincing plans to deliver on the fund's aims and outcomes and all the elements of what you will be expected to deliver, as described in this brief• appropriate partnerships with clear roles and responsibilities• robust plans for resourcing the activity effectively• activity that builds on and does not duplicate activity funded by other Arts Council grants• proposed outputs and outcomes:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ securing long-term partnerships between LEPs and the arts/cultural sector○ leveraging LEP investment into the cultural sector, and potentially investment from other funds within the LEP area○ leveraging ERDF or other ESIF investment○ contribution to plans for local economic growth, for example, number of jobs created or GVA○ contribution to equality and diversity in the arts and cultural sector• if the application is to be used as match funding for ERDF or other ESIF funding, how the activity will deliver against the relevant priority axes• which ESIF call you are responding to• how the applicant has considered locally appropriate positive steps to improve the diversity of the workforce in order to make it more representative of the local population
<p>Management of the activity Weighting: 25 per cent Word count: up to 3,000 words</p> <p>The application should demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• feasibility of workplan• appropriate skill and capacity to deliver the proposed programme• robust plans demonstrating that taking on this activity will not place at risk the management of the core business or any other discrete programmes currently

being delivered (for the lead applicant and any National portfolio organisations or Major partner museums engaged in the partnership)

- in relation to the lead applicant: financial stability, appropriate governance and an ability to accept, administer and account for the grant
- project management, budget allocation, timetabling and staff allocation
- previous experience and credentials of lead contact in the applicant organisation and principal partner/s
- for National portfolio organisations and Major partner museums: demonstration that the organisation's current Arts Council risk rating has been considered in planning the proposed activity and that actions to mitigate potential risks have been incorporated into the overall management of the project and of the organisation

Financial viability

Weighting: 25 per cent

Word count: up to 3,000 words

The application should demonstrate:

- financial viability of the applicant and of the project
- appropriateness of proposed budget
- evidence of organisational buy-in by applicant and project partners, as cash investment and/or in-kind support
- a clear indication of the sources and proof of commitment of the remaining proportion of match funding if the Arts Council grant applied for makes up a proportion of the total source of match funding for an ESIF application
- value for money – an appropriate return on investment

In assessing the application we will also consider these balancing criteria:

1. geography - where the activity is proposed to take place and where the benefit will be realised
2. the type of project activity proposed
3. diversity - eg of those delivering the activity, the proposed reach of the activity in terms of participants and audiences and the nature of the activity
4. maximising opportunity - the extent to which Arts Council investment acting as match funding can lever in extra resources to the arts sector, using them to efficiently to deliver artistic outcomes and promote economic growth

These criteria will be used in addition to the main criteria to ensure a good spread of funded projects across the balancing criteria, and to differentiate between proposals that are considered strong.

Decision-making

Once we have scored your application and a recommendation has been made whether to fund it, we will make our decision. To do this we will consider how strongly your activity scored against our criteria and any balancing criteria we have outlined above, and will also consider your activity alongside other applications to the fund.

Complaints procedure

If you are not happy with the way we have dealt with your application, please contact us and we will discuss this with you. If you are still unhappy, you can ask us for a copy of our complaints procedure.

Details can be found in [Making a complaint](#), which is available on our website, www.artscouncil.org.uk, or by contacting our enquiries team by email to enquiries@artscouncil.org.uk or by phoning 0845 300 6200.

Please note that you can only complain if you believe we have not followed our published procedures when assessing your application. You cannot appeal against the decision.

Section eight – 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.

Contact us

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49 Lever Street
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M1 1FN

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