

Arts Council of Wales

# COVID-19: Support for Individuals Stabilisation Fund

April 2020

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Arts Council of Wales is committed to making information available in large print, braille, audio, Easy Read and British Sign Language and will endeavour to provide information in languages other than Welsh or English on request.

## Stabilisation Fund

- This is a fund for those individual artists and freelancers who have lost income due to COVID-19, and who are looking to adapt the way they develop their future creative work and/or practice.
- You can apply for a grant of between £1,000 and £10,000 to help you get back on your feet, to protect your creative practice (financially and creatively) and to invest in building creative collaborations and networks to help sustain future professional activity.
- Funded projects or activity should be completed within six months of an award.
- Many people are affected by the consequences of COVID-19. But it's important that funds are given to those in the most urgent need and are in the best position to adapt their practice at this time. We'd therefore ask you to think carefully about whether you should make an application.
- The process is intended to be 'light-touch' and quick. We're aiming to turnaround applications within 4 weeks of the closing dates. If the number of applications we receive means that this isn't achievable we'll let you know as soon as possible.

## What is this fund for?

This fund is to support freelance artists and freelance creative practitioners working in the not-for-profit sector in Wales who are experiencing difficulties in sustaining their normal creative activities due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This fund offers a one-off grant award that is intended to help creative individuals to look beyond immediate crisis and to provide the opportunity to develop, evolve and sustain their work, either individually or collaboratively with others. It can also fund individuals to lead on projects that support an artform or community of artists (provided that the individual concerned has a track-record of working in this way).

Our priority is to support those most in need at this time, particularly those who are likely to benefit least from the UK Government's **Job Retention Scheme** and **Self Employment Income Support scheme**. Where you can use other funding to develop new ways of working, we may be able to support you with this fund (provided that there is no double-funding of activity).

It's vital that we're able to support those who have the most urgent needs at this time. However, we'll want to support the best projects, and applications will be assessed against the criteria of the fund. If the available funding is heavily over-subscribed, these criteria will be the key basis for decision-making.

The criteria are explained later in these guidelines.

## Who can apply?

Awards are open to:

- Freelance professionals whose work has direct creative outcomes. You might be a visual artist in any medium, a writer or maker of poetry, prose or fiction, a playwright, actor or theatre-maker, a dancer, musician, craft maker or designer. You will derive a significant proportion of your income from your role in creating or producing original artistic, creative or design material and will invoice for this work direct.
- Freelance professionals whose work directly supports the making and presentation of creative work including events. You might be a theatre producer, a lighting designer, a gig promoter, an independent curator or creative producer. You will derive a significant proportion of your income from your role in supporting or producing original artistic, creative or design material and events and will invoice for this work directly.
- Individuals who want to work together collectively as part of a group. One individual would have to apply as the lead applicant on behalf of the wider group. (However, in the interests of offering opportunities as widely as possible, we wouldn't expect any individual to be part of more than **one** individual *and* **one** group/collaborative application.)
- You must be able demonstrate that you operate as a freelance through a professional area of arts practice. If your role is not art form specific you must be able to explain to us how a significant proportion of your work is within the not-for-profit arts and creative industries sector.

## Freelancers in the Creative Industries

These awards focus on supporting artists and creative practitioners whose work is presented mainly within the not-for-profit sector and those who produce or otherwise support the bringing of this work to an audience.

Those working predominantly in the wider creative industries are not eligible. We anticipate that UK Government, sector specific support organisations and enterprise agency interventions will be focused on this area.

## Deadlines

The fund opens for applications on **Friday 29 May 2020** and applicants will need to have submitted an online application no later than the deadline of **5.00pm on Monday 15 June 2020**.

Please note that in exceptional circumstances, for example where demand is much higher than anticipated, we may need to close the application process earlier than this date.

## How much can I apply for?

You can request any amount between £1,000 and £10,000 to be used within six months of receiving a grant.

You may also request additional funding for access costs (please refer to Frequently Asked Questions).

We will look carefully at the creative and public benefit of applications towards the upper funding limit. We would expect these to be appropriate to the scale of funding being sought.

## Is there anyone who can't apply to this fund?

- Those who cannot demonstrate evidence of freelance professional creative practice in the not-for-profit arts and creative industries sector
- Organisations
- Anyone who earns less than 50% of their income from freelance work
- Individuals based outside Wales
- Anyone still at school, or studying either full time, or as part of a long term, formal or accredited programme at college or university (at the time of application) including PhD students (who are being paid for their research)
- Academics or other education professionals
- Anyone under 18 years of age

## What the fund cannot be used for

We cannot support:

- activities which aren't related to the arts
- activities which have already happened – or are scheduled to begin before we reach a decision on your application
- activities taking place in schools, including the development of online activities or resources (we will be publishing separate information about funding for schools-related activities)
- students for higher education tuition fees and associated costs
- equipment-only applications
- self-publishing
- fundraising events or activities
- funding for film/screen projects
- projects that can't be delivered because they contravene Coronavirus/COVID-19 restrictions that apply at the time of the project
- applications from people who generate less than 50% of their income through their freelance status. If you usually generate income through a PAYE position which you have lost as a result of the COVID-19 emergency, you may be able to access the Government's salary guarantee funding

## What are the priorities for support?

Many of Wales' creative practitioners are experiencing continuing financial difficulty due to loss of earnings from their creative work and / or practice due to COVID-19. Helping to address this is the central purpose of this fund.

However, we do have two overall priorities.

The first priority is to offer the opportunity to sustain artistic practice, build artists resilience, consider new ways of working and taking creative risks. We want to invest in building individual and collaborative projects that offer a creative response to the COVID-19 constraints.

Our second priority is encouraging the arts in Wales to be more inclusive and engaging. We want principles of equality and diversity to be embedded in the projects we fund. We also want to extend the reach of our funding to ensure that people have more opportunity to enjoy and take part in cultural activities. We attach particular importance to work with and for BAME and deaf and disabled people. We'll expect you to demonstrate how you've considered these issues in your application.

Underpinning these two priorities is our commitment to promoting activity through the medium of the Welsh language. This is very important to us. Wales is a bilingual nation – legally, socially, culturally, and as individuals and communities – and nothing makes Wales more distinctive than the Welsh Language. We expect people to be able to engage with the arts in the language of their choice, whether as audience, participant or artist.

While we don't require projects to have a public-facing outcome (**and any that do should be in line with COVID-19 restrictions**), we will expect you to show how you've considered the above issues in your application.

## What are the criteria that apply to this fund?

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

- the evidence of financial need as demonstrated in your application
- the creative and/or artistic strength of the project or activity, or its contribution to supporting your artistic practice and/or creativity in others
- the extent to which the project or activity meets our priorities
- the extent and the strength of the public benefit of the project or activity, now and in the future
- the strength of the practical plans to manage and deliver the project or activity, including financial planning

We want to make sure the arts and culture sector best represents the society we live in. We hope that this funding will enable the widest diversity of creative practitioners to maintain sufficient income so they can continue to operate successfully in the future. We therefore particularly welcome applications from those who are from BAME backgrounds or who are deaf or disabled.

In reaching final decisions we will consider the balance of activities and funding across artforms, disciplines, communities and places across Wales

## What we'll need from you?

The information that we'll need from you includes:

1. Your contact details and information (unless you've applied to us before using our online system)
2. An explanation of how your work has been affected by COVID-19
3. Your Project Proposal, including start and end dates
4. Equality information about your project
5. Your project budget (this must be on the downloaded template available in our application form)
6. When you submit your application, you'll need to include evidence that you have a bank account in your legal name, which corresponds to the name under which you are applying. We can't accept applications submitted under a stage name for example.

We collect and monitor information about where our funding is awarded, what types of activity it's supporting and who benefits from the funded activity. This helps with the reports that we're required to provide on the impact of our funding. It also provides data and intelligence that helps us to make the wider case for funding for the arts.

## What is the application process?

1. We ask you to complete and submit a simple online request form, found [here](#). If you're unable to access the online form, please contact us at [grants@arts.wales](mailto:grants@arts.wales).
2. After we receive your application we'll send you an acknowledgement email which will include an equalities monitoring form for you to complete. This is separate to the application form and used solely for our Equality Monitoring reporting purposes. It will not be part of our eligibility check. It is important, however, that you complete this form.
3. We'll determine your eligibility for funding by reviewing the information provided. This will help us to confirm that you are a freelance artist or freelance creative practitioner and therefore able to receive support from this fund.
4. We might need to contact you to clarify information provided in your request.
5. If you're awarded funding, we'll contact you and ask you to complete and return our Award Acceptance and Bank Details Form.



6. Once you have returned your award acceptance and we have verified your bank details, we'll pay 90% of the award.
7. At the end of your project or activity you'll need to send us a brief Completion Report so that we can release the remaining 10% of your grant award.

**Please note:**

- If we can't establish that you are a freelance artist or freelance creative practitioner whose earnings are directly impacted by COVID-19 we will not be able to support your request.
- We'll respond to all applications within 4 weeks of the deadline and will try to respond more quickly where possible. If our own organisational capacity is reduced by the COVID-19 pandemic, we'll contact you to discuss an amended timescale.
- It's likely that some good and interesting applications will not be awarded funding. This is because we regularly receive more applications than we can support from the available budget. The demand for our funding is regularly larger than the funds that we have, and this is likely to remain the case in the future.

## Frequently Asked Questions

Before starting on your application we'd strongly recommend that you read our [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

These will provide you with additional information that you might find helpful in completing your application.

## What Questions Will I Need to Answer?

We'll start with some basic questions about you and your project. We'll also ask for some information to help us monitor where our funds are going (for example where your activities take place and what sector of the arts you work in).

We'll also ask you about the following:

1. Tell us briefly how COVID-19 has affected your freelance income due to the cancellation of existing and future work.

Tell us whatever you feel you're able to about what has happened to your income as a result of COVID-19. We're not able to support you through this fund if your change in circumstances is not related to losing income as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**2. Tell us about your track-record of working in the publicly-funded arts and culture sector.**

Use this section to let us know about you and your work. We will use our answer to decide whether your work falls within one of our eligible categories.

**3. Tell us about your proposed project or activity.**

As well as a brief description of the project, explain to us the artistic and/or creative idea for your project or activity. Tell us why you wish to do it, and why now (if relevant)

**4. Tell us what difference a grant from us would make to your work.**

Tell us how it will contribute to your development, or the development of others. What outcomes and results do you expect? And what do you think might change as a result of our funding?

**5. Tell us how your project or activity meets the Arts Council's priorities?**

What do you think you'll be able to do support the Arts Council in its concern for equalities, diversity, inclusion and Welsh Language.

**6. Budget**

Set out the basic income and costs for your project using our budget template.

**7. Management of the project**

How will you plan to do what you want to do? What planning have you done so far, and how has this informed your approach? Describe the steps you'll take to ensure that your project or activity is delivered effectively given the current circumstances.

## **Bank Details**

- We can pay the award into your personal account only
- Your account must be a UK based bank account
- We will pay by a BACS payment
- Your account must be in the same name under which you made your request for the award
- You must complete and return Bank Details Form even if you have received funds from Arts Council of Wales in the past into the same account.

Please refer to the Frequently Asked Questions for further guidance on appropriate bank evidence.

## Not sure if you or your request is eligible?

Please do check the [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

The nature of this fund relies on the integrity of the applications. Please ensure you answer all questions fully, clearly and honestly. If you give us inaccurate or incorrect information, we may need to reclaim funding at a later date or take other action if we suspect fraud.

If you want to clarify if you or your request is eligible, or you wish to discuss other questions about this fund, please contact us.

You can do this by email, through our website or social media.

Email: [grants@arts.wales](mailto:grants@arts.wales)

Web: Fill out a form on our [website](#)

Twitter: Send us a tweet [@Arts\\_Wales\\_](#)

We aim to respond to all enquiries very promptly.

If you want us to call you back, give us your number and we'll arrange to come back to you as soon as possible.

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## Freedom of Information

Arts Council of Wales 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. You can see details of our policy [here](#).

We're 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 to see 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](#) for information about freedom of information generally and the exemptions that are listed.

## Complaints Procedure

If you're not happy with the way we have dealt with your application, you can make a Complaint. You can get hold of a copy of our Complaints procedure on our website [here](#).

Please note that you can only complain if you believe we have not followed our published process when dealing with your application. You cannot use the complaints procedure to appeal against the decision.

## Data Protection

It's important that you're aware of the Arts Council of Wales' obligations and responsibilities under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). The GDPR regulates how we collect, manage, share and store personal data and your rights in relation to our management of your data.

Further information may be found in our published [Privacy Policy](#).

We will not disclose Personal data or Sensitive Personal data, (as terms are defined in the General Data Protection Regulations without your consent unless an overriding obligation applies (e.g. legal obligation).