



Explore

Guidelines

Accessibility

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

Arts Council of Wales operates an equal opportunities policy.



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Overview

All children in Wales should have the opportunity to explore the expressive arts. Whether it's to 'have a go' at something new, develop their creative and artistic skills or to nurture their well-being and self-esteem. The dynamic nature of the expressive arts can engage, motivate and encourage learners to develop their creative, artistic and performance skills to the full.

The Explore fund offers grants of up to £3,000 for learners aged 3-16 years to engage in hands-on activity in the expressive arts, in and out of school settings with external creative practitioners. Explore enables teachers to discover rich, authentic opportunities to enhance and enrich learning within the expressive arts. Teachers will be able to provide their learners with opportunities to explore, refine and communicate ideas while thinking creatively and engaging their imagination and senses.

Explore supports the delivery of the programme for Government 2021-26 and the [National Plan for Music Education](#). The fund covers the five disciplines; art, dance, drama, film and digital media and music.

Who can apply?

Explore is available to support:

- All state-maintained schools in Wales for pupils aged 3-16 years.
- Pupil referral units in Wales for pupils aged 3-16 years.

We are unable to support post 16 education, including FE Colleges and Sixth Form.

Explore applications can be submitted by:

- A state-maintained school.
- A pupil referral unit.
- An arts/cultural organisation based in Wales.

Creative practitioners/individuals are unable to submit applications to Explore. Applications that include activity delivered by a creative practitioner must be submitted by the school or pupil referral unit.

Can I access Explore in addition to other funds?

Schools and Pupil Referral Units

You can apply for Explore:

- In addition to other Creative learning projects such as Lead Creative Schools, Cynefin or Go and See.
- Alongside a Go and See application to support the learning of your pupils.
- More than once throughout the year but you must submit your final report before reapplying.

You cannot:

- Have more than one Explore application open at a time.
- Use Explore for activity related to your Lead Creative Schools or Cynefin project.

Arts Organisations

You can apply for Explore:

- In addition to other Arts Council of Wales grants.
- More than once throughout the year, but you must submit your final report before reapplying.

You cannot:

- Have more than one Explore application open at a time.
- Be named as delivering activity in more than three open Explore applications at any given time. Final reports must be submitted by the lead applicant to close grants before an Arts Organisation or creative practitioner can be named on additional Explore applications.
- Use Explore to support existing projects.
- Match funding for Explore must come from a non-Arts Council of Wales source.

What can I apply for?

Explore can be used to fund:

- Hands-on expressive arts activity for learners, delivered by either an arts organisation or a creative practitioner. To provide experiences that will enhance and enrich learning within the Expressive Arts.

The activity can take place either at school or at suitable location within Wales and can be during school hours or as an extra-curricular activity. It can be a single session or take place across a number of days.

Here are a few pointers on things we are prepared to consider as part of the total project cost:

- Professional fees of artists, creative practitioners, and arts organisations incl. travel expenses if required.
- Coach hire or other public transport costs if the activity is taking place at a location outside of school. We expect you to use the most economical means of transport practical and can only fund transport to locations within Wales.
- Applications from arts organisations that include more than one school providing the application demonstrates how the proposed experience will provide a hands-on activity and will the support teaching and learning of all named schools.
- Cost of materials up to £500.
- Equipment hire.

Unfortunately, we are unable to provide funding for:

- Activity that has already started or has already taken place.
- Activity that could take place without our funding and/or has already been budgeted or paid for. There is no guarantee that funding will be awarded, so bookings should not be committed prior to funding approval.
- Creative learning across other areas of learning and experience.
- Music tuition.
- Capital expenditure/purchase of equipment incl. instruments.
- Software licences.
- Overnight stays or refreshments.
- Activity that takes place outside of Wales.
- Additional school staff.
- Activity that does not have an expressive arts focus.

If the focus of your activity is less about having a go at an expressive arts activity and more about visits to performances and exhibitions or visits to experience arts professionals developing and creating their work please visit our [Go and See guidelines](#) instead.

How much can I apply for?

We will fund applications up to £3,000.

The amount you apply for will depend on the type of activity you have identified, it could be a half day workshop or it could be activity over a couple of days.

We can't fund the total cost of your activity. The maximum percentage of the total cost of your activity that we can fund is 90% and match funding can be a mix of cash or in-kind support. For example, if the total cost of your activity is £2,500 we will award you £2,250 with the additional £250 identified by you in your application.

Guidance for schools and pupil referral units on 10% match funding

This can be 'in-kind' such as teacher supply cover or could be made up of cash from parent or Parent Teacher Association fundraising contributions. You do not need to send the match funding to us directly, just let us know how it will be covered in your application.

Guidance for Arts Organisations on 10% match funding

The remaining income must come from a non-Arts Council of Wales source. At least 10% of the total cost of your activity must be covered from sources other than National Lottery funding, and can include 'in-kind'.

What questions will I need to answer?

In your application, you will need to tell us:

- What is the total cost of your activity?
- What aspects of the cost are you applying for? i.e. professional fees and materials.
- How will you match fund 10% of the total cost?
- What is the activity and who is delivering it?
- Where is the activity taking place and how will you get there?
- What are the ages of the learners and how many are going?
- How will the experience enhance and enrich teaching and learning within the expressive arts area of learning and experience?

After your activity has completed, we will ask you to complete a short online form, we call it a final report, which helps us to learn from what's happening. You can include images and quotes from the learners too if you're happy for us to see them. This final report also helps us to check that your activity took place so once you have submitted it, your grant is closed and you can apply again.

How can I apply?

To access the application form you will need to have registered on the [online portal](#). We recommend that you register at least 5 working days before you wish to start your application. Once you have received your login details, you can use these to access all Creative learning application forms and will not need to re-register when you want to apply again.

If you require further assistance in accessing the online portal, please contact our Grants and Information team:

- grants@arts.wales
- 029 2044 1300 or 03301 242733 (helpline) local call rate is charged.

What is the deadline?

There is no deadline for Explore, which means you can apply for funding at any time. In most cases, you will normally hear within 4 working weeks whether your application has been successful or not. We recommend submitting your application a minimum of 5 working weeks in advance of your start date to allow for our grant making process. Applications submitted less than 5 working weeks ahead of the proposed activity may be withdrawn or declined.

Please remember schools can only have one Explore application open at a time. We encourage all applicants to consider whether applications submitted 12 weeks or more in advance of the activity will prevent other teachers and learners within the school from accessing the fund.

What if I have a question?

If you have any questions about Explore, we'd be happy for you to contact us.

Email us at: creative.learning@arts.wales

We'll do our best to respond to all enquiries as promptly as we can. If you want us to call you back, please provide your contact number and we'll arrange to get back to you as soon as possible.

[Find out more about the expressive arts area of learning and experience here.](#)