

Information sheet

Touring and Grants for the Arts

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1 Grants for the Arts

Grants for the Arts (GFTA) is our Lottery-funded grant programme for individuals, arts organisations and other people who use the arts in their work. Grants are available for activities carried out over a set period and which engage people in England in arts activities and help artists and arts organisations in England carry out their work.

Activities we support must be clearly related to the arts and must be project-based, up to a maximum of three years in length. Grants normally range from £1,000 to £100,000 and we can fund up to 90 per cent of the cost of an activity.

All applicants must also read the '[How to apply guidance](#)'. Download it from our website or contact us for a copy.

2 Grants for the Arts and Touring

Touring plays an important part in our 10 year strategy Great Art and Culture for Everyone. We fund touring work so that people across the country can access a wide range of arts and culture activities in their local area.

We fund touring primarily through our National Portfolio Organisations, Grants for the Arts and the [Strategic Touring Programme](#).

2.1 What you can apply for

We define touring activity as the same artistic programme or event is taking place in two or more venues.

By venue we mean theatre, space, gallery, library, museum, festival, community centre or other site (including outdoor spaces) where the activity is taking place.

Touring activity might involve performances or exhibitions, artistic residencies, artistic work involving people from particular communities, or possibly all of these things.

You can apply to Grants for the Arts (or Strategic Touring) for all scales of touring projects that engage people in quality arts activities, spanning any number of Arts Council Areas.

You can apply to create and tour new work. You can also apply to tour work which has already been presented to the public. In these cases we would expect to see that it was engaging different people, or that the work has developed since the first time it was presented, or both.

Examples of what you may apply to do include:

- tour a production or event around several venues in one or more Arts Council Area
- tour a production or event to venues regardless of whether they are funded by Arts Council England
- stage a production or event in two or more places, at different times alongside participatory activity
- re-stage a previous production or event and tour it to venues for the first time
- tour a production or event around several locations in one city or local area

3 Where activity can tour to

Arts Council England is the national development agency for the arts in England, and we welcome touring applications that take quality work to audiences in England.

A Grants for the Arts tour schedule can include activity in any combination of one or more of the Arts Council England areas: North, Midlands, East & South East, London and the South West.

3.1 Touring out of England – the 15% rule

Although we mainly fund touring activity that takes place in England, up to 15% of any touring activity presented to us may take place outside England: either in other part(s) of the UK (Scotland, Wales and/or Northern Ireland), or internationally outside the UK (or a combination of both).

We calculate the percentage of an activity happening outside England based on the number of performance or event days in each location shown in the preliminary tour schedule in the application form.

Normally, we would only fund activity taking place at the Edinburgh International or Fringe Festivals if it is part of a wider tour of Scotland and the total activity in Scotland does not make up more than 15% of the touring activity.

Example A

An 18-date tour has 16 performance days in England, one in Wales, and one in France. Two of the 18 performance days are outside England, therefore 11% of the touring activity is outside England. On the basis of this tour schedule, the activity would be considered eligible for Grants for the Arts.

Example B

An 18-date tour had 14 performance days in England, two in Wales and two in France. Four of the 18 performance days are outside England, therefore 22% of the touring activity is outside England. On the basis of this tour schedule, the activity may not be considered eligible for Grants for the Arts.

3.2 Including activity outside England in your application

Generally, a maximum of 15% of the total number of performance or event days included in a Grants for the Arts tour schedule can be outside England.

Sometimes, however, a tour will include more than 15% of performance or event days outside England and there may be a case for presenting the full tour schedule to us (for example, if your international dates are part of a wider programme of artistic or organisational development that you want to show).

If your tour schedule includes more than 15% of performance days outside England there are two possible approaches to presenting this in your Grants for the Arts application:

Apply for support towards part of your tour

Apply to us for a project that makes up part of your overall tour, and which includes 15% or less of touring activity outside England (you can tell us about the wider tour

in your narrative but wouldn't include the dates outside England in your tour schedule)

Show how activity outside England is paid for by other funds

Include your full tour schedule that includes more than 15% touring performance or event days outside England, but show and clearly articulate that any performance or event days taking the proportion over the 15% threshold are fully covered by clearly allocated confirmed funding from other sources (this can be shown in your detailed budget attachment).

Example C

A 10 date tour might have six performance days in England and four in Wales. If this was presented without any other confirmed income, it would be considered ineligible for Grants for the Arts funding because 40 %of the performance days are outside England. However, if this project had funding confirmed from Arts Council Wales (or another funder) that was directly allocated to covering at least three of those performance days in Wales, we could view this as eligible for Grants for the Arts because we would only be contributing to the performance days in England and one of the dates in Wales (10% outside England).

In exceptional circumstances we may be able to take expected income from venues into account along with, or instead of, confirmed income from another funder. We would only be able to take this kind of funding into account where an applicant has explicitly demonstrated a very strong track record of securing box office income with that venue previously. Whether we accept expected box office income in this way to offset performance or event days outside England is entirely at our discretion.

If an applicant chooses to present their full tour schedule in their application, they should be aware that we do not take the amount of confirmed income allocated to covering international dates into account when we calculate the project's partnership ('match') funding. This means that the budget would need to show at least the minimum ten per cent match funding in addition to the amount of confirmed funding that will cover international performance or event days. (This is because we use that amount of confirmed funding to offset the ineligible international activity, so it cannot also be taken into account when we calculate the match funding for the eligible part of the activity.)

Please also read the information sheet 'International activity and Grants for the Arts'. Download it from our [Grants for the Arts information sheets](#) page, or contact us for a copy.

3.3 In-coming tours

Applicants based outside of England but within the EU can apply to tour their work into England.

4 Rural touring

By rural touring, we mean a tour schedule that is fully or partly made up of venues that are members of recognised rural touring schemes or where you work directly with promoters in village halls or rural venues. You can find out more about rural touring schemes on the National Rural Touring Forum website www.ruraltouring.org

Rural touring schemes work with voluntary promoting groups (village hall committees, pubs, local schools, church halls, community groups) to bring high quality, professional performing companies and artists to perform in their village or community venue.

Rural touring schemes produce a menu of shows that they will support. The voluntary promoters choose from the menu and the scheme will book one or more dates for their region.

Applicants applying for rural touring should have developed relationships with the rural touring scheme(s) or voluntary promoting groups involved in the activity. Please tell us about these partnerships when you answer the questions about your partners and how you will manage the activity.

We would expect to see clear plans to engage and develop local audiences. If your activity is reaching locations where there is comparatively little arts provision or audience, you should tell us about it when you answer the questions about how your activity engages the public.

You will be asked to fill in a provisional tour schedule. We recognise that it is unlikely that you will have confirmed dates at the time of application. We consider confirmation of being on the menu of the rural touring scheme as a pencilled in terms of booking status unless you have confirmed specific dates with rural venues. If your activity has been selected for the menu and you don't know specific dates and venues, you can write the name of the rural touring scheme under venue and provide details of the range of dates from which promoters will be able to select your work. Remember to tell us in your written answers how many tour dates you expect within the scheme(s).

We will consider your tour using the information you provide us about your relationships with venues or touring schemes, and your track record. We may contact the rural touring schemes listed in your application and discuss the tour with them.

5 Large-scale performing arts touring guidance

By large scale, we mean productions or events touring to venues of 800 seats or more. Before making an application for large-scale touring, we recommend that you contact us to discuss your application.

We would expect any application for large-scale touring to reach a wide spread of venues across a number of Arts Council Areas. This should include locations where there is comparatively little arts provision or audience. We would expect to see clear plans developed in partnership with the venues to engage and develop audiences.

If you are applying for a large scale tour, you will be asked to fill in a provisional tour schedule. We recognise that it is unlikely you will have fully confirmed dates at the time of application. We will consider your tour using the information you provide us about your relationships with venues and your track record. We may contact the venues listed in your application and discuss the tour with them.

You must provide a detailed budget to accompany your application, clearly showing:

- production costs
- management costs
- audience development and associated costs

- weekly running costs
- financial deals
- royalty breakdown if applicable

6 Key things to remember

In addition to meeting the standard criteria for the Grants for the Arts programme criteria (as explained in the [How to apply guidance](#)'), applicants applying for touring activity should also consider the following:

6.1 Tell us about your planning and your aims

As you answer the application questions, you should tell us about why the work is suitable for touring. You should tell us about why the activity is relevant to your venues and audiences. Think about public engagement in terms of location, participants and any learning or participatory opportunities.

In addition to information about existing relationships, you may want to tell us of any plans for developing or maintaining longer-term links between the touring work, artists, promoters, and venues. We encourage artists, producers, venues and promoters to work together so that the largest possible audience can enjoy the best possible work.

Where relevant, tell us about any research and development you have undertaken for this activity. You should also tell us about your track record in managing touring projects and budgets, particularly if you have gained experience or learning from previous tours and this has informed the planning of your activity.

6.2 Apply in good time

We need six weeks to make a decision on applications for £15,000 or less, and 12 weeks for applications for £15,001 to £100,000. If you wish to apply for over £100,000 you will need to get our permission to apply. You must ensure that you submit your application in enough time for us to reach a decision before your activity is due to start.

Grants for the Arts, as with other Arts Council funding, cannot fund goods or services that are already contracted, ordered or paid for. You must ensure that you apply in good time. In the case of touring applications, you should allow time to confirm your activity with venues prior to starting publicity. You should check the timetable for your application with your venues and manage any risks accordingly.

6.3 Completing the tour schedule

If you are applying for a tour, you will be asked to fill in a provisional tour schedule.

You should tell us whether each tour booking is:

- **Confirmed** – the booking dates and contractual arrangements are confirmed, subject to Grants for the Arts funding, and probably won't change
- **Pencilled** – there has been a detailed discussion between you and the venue. The venue has an understanding of the likely contractual arrangements and has agreed to pencil a date
- **Discussed** – you are currently in active discussion with a venue about your project but have not agreed a date or terms
- **Not discussed** – you have identified suitable venues but have not yet discussed the project with them

We do not expect you to have fully confirmed your tour by the time you apply. We will consider your tour based on the number of 'confirmed', 'pencilled', 'discussed' and 'not discussed' bookings, your track record and the relationship you have with the venues. We may also contact a selection of listed venues on your tour schedule to discuss with them your proposed tour and its relevance to their venue.

An unconfirmed tour schedule does not automatically mean that we will consider your activity major risk or that your tour schedule is unrealistic. However, where a large proportion of tour dates are unconfirmed you must explain within the application how realistic the proposed tour schedule is. If you have a strong track record of securing tours and have strong partnerships with the proposed venues, producers etc, tell us so we can have confidence that the proposed tour is achievable.

However, you are advised against submitting a vague tour schedule in expectation of updating this later. Normally, if your application contains only 'not discussed' dates or little evidence of relationships with the venues, we would consider your application to be major risk and/or underdeveloped. If we consider any aspects of your activity's management or finances to be major risk, your application will not be funded. Please also read the [guidance on large-scale performing arts touring](#) in section 5 of this information sheet

6.4 Completing the budget

You will be asked to fill in a budget for your activity. We suggest you provide as much detail as you are able to about the expected earned income. For example, if you are expecting income on a box office split, you should tell us the calculation your share of the split is based upon and your track record for being able to achieve this.

If your application is for more than £15,000, you will need to provide a more detailed budget breakdown as supporting material. We suggest that you provide a budget that shows us both the production costs and touring costs separately. If you are applying to tour work outside of England, please follow the guidelines in [Section 3](#) of this information sheet.

For more information on financial deals, please see our guide to [Marketing and touring - a practical guide to marketing an event on tour](#).

6.5 How we make decisions

If your application is for £15,000 or less, we will make a decision within six weeks. The decision will be made in the Area you are based in.

If your application is for more than £15,000, we will make a decision within 12 weeks. If your activity takes place in two or more Arts Council England Areas but less than 25% of overall activity is happening outside of your home area, the decision will be made in the area you are based in. If your activity takes place in two or more Arts Council England Areas and more than 25 per cent of the overall activity is happening outside of your home area, or if you are applying for more than £100,000, the decision will be made at a national level.

We involve specialist staff across the country to inform our appraisal of applications for national tours. We will use the information provided in your application form to make a decision, as well as information from your previous projects and comments from venues. We will consider your application in competition with others, and we aim to fund a balanced range of applications. We will consider the quality and range of the work alongside the places the work tours to and the people that experience the work.

6.6 If your application is successful

If your application is successful we will offer you a maximum amount of money to support your activity. We will normally pay 50% of the grant at the start of the project, 40% midway through the project and the remaining 10% on completion.

Payment of the grant will normally be conditional on you providing a tour schedule of confirmed venues and dates, and updated budget. We may also set other conditions. We must agree with the tour schedule or any changes to the activity before we can pay any grant instalments to you.

Payment of the final instalment of your grant is conditional on completing an Activity Report Form and any other evaluation we require. You will be asked to provide detailed information about your tour venues, audiences and finances.

If you do not require the full amount of the grant (for instance, if the box office income exceeds expectations or final costs were lower than originally budgeted) then we retain a final percentage according to the amount you need. For more information on excess income please read the information sheet 'Final budgets for Grants for the Arts activities'. Download it from our [Grants for the Arts information sheets](#) page, or contact us for a copy.

You will be required to display the appropriate funding acknowledgement logo on all publicity for your activity. This includes material published by venues and other partners.

7 Further information

Resources from Arts Council England

Further information on our approach to touring

[Arts Council and Touring](#)

The Strategic Touring Programme funds touring work, focusing especially on areas where people have low engagement with the arts and those that rely on touring for much of their arts provision. It also seeks to extend the reach of high quality work by broadening the range of venues presenting it.

[Arts Council Strategic Touring Programme](#)

The Arts Council's approach to equality and diversity in our sector.

[The Creative Case for Diversity](#)

A Sport England-led survey about English adult's (aged 16+) participation in leisure and recreational activities, including sport, physical activity and culture.

[Active People Survey](#)

A major survey of cultural and sport participation in England, commissioned by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) in partnership with Arts Council England, Sport England and Historic England.

[Taking Part survey](#)

[Marketing and touring](#) – a practical guide to marketing an event on tour

[Greater than the sum of its parts](#) – a joined up guide to working in groups

Other useful information

[Audience Spectrum](#)

An arts and culture- based segmentation model.

[Audience Finder](#)

A national audience data and development programme, enabling cultural organisations to share, compare and apply insight.

[Audience Development Planner](#)

A free tool from The Audience Agency to help you to create a plan focusing on the audiences you want to reach.

[Culturehive](#)

A website of shared audience development resources for arts and culture

[Tour Finder](#)

A free national tour listings site for artists and programmers

[National Rural Touring Forum](#)

The national body for rural touring, whose members cover every Area of England. They provide *Eyes Wide Open*, a comprehensive guide to touring.

[Visiting Arts](#)

Visiting Arts has resources available on performing arts and visual arts touring, both in the UK and internationally. It is the UK's Cultural Contact Point for EU Cultural funding and has a range of services to support international collaboration.

[Touring Exhibitions Group](#)

Collective of visual artists, organisations and galleries committed to touring visual arts work.

[Independent Theatre Council](#)

Provides training on tour booking, producing and other relevant topics. Operates industry agreed contracts and rates of pay for touring activity. Arranges regular members' meetings to discuss touring issues.

[UK Theatre](#)

Provides training on touring management and other relevant topics. Operates industry agreed contracts and rates of pay for touring activity. Organises an annual touring symposium to discuss touring issues as well as events throughout the year.

[Theatre Tax Relief](#)

Creative industry tax reliefs are a group of 5 Corporation Tax reliefs that allow qualifying companies to claim a larger deduction, or in some circumstances claim a payable tax credit when calculating their taxable profits.

8 Contact us

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