

ARTS COUNCIL NATIONAL LOTTERY PROJECT GRANTS

Music projects

Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants is our open-access programme for arts, museums and libraries projects.

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ILUVLIVE
Photo @ Abigail Shii

This information sheet relates to Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants.
See [our website](#) for more information about Project Grants.

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Music applications

Project Grants is open to applications for music projects from individuals, groups and organisations working in the music sector.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- solo artists, DJs, bands and orchestras
- labels, promoters and managers
- live music venues

We can support a range of musical types and genres including classical, jazz, brass bands and world music.

We are also keen to support contemporary popular music genres.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- indie and alternative
- rock - including blues, modern and post-rock
- metal and punk
- electronica, house, drum & bass and experimental forms
- hip-hop, R&B, grime, rap and jungle

Your music may fit into one, or possibly more of these genres, or be a completely different style altogether. In any case, we want to hear about your work and the methods you use to create it.

Through Project Grants we want to support music projects that develop artistic activity, raise the quality of work produced and increase opportunities for people to engage with your work.

What you can apply for

- developing new material
- rehearsing for live events
- performances and showcasing
- touring live shows
- recordings
- making creative digital content such as music videos or live broadcast
- purchasing musical instruments and equipment. See our [information sheet](#) 'Asset purchase: buying equipment and vehicles'.

What you cannot apply for

- music recording without appropriate plans to share your work
- projects where the intention is to make a profit. If you sell tickets, albums or merch, include this in the income. If you pay yourself or others a fee, that's fine too, include this in the expenditure. See the Finance sections of our Project Grants guidance for more information.
- buying musical instruments or recording equipment (including software) without showing artistic development and substantial public benefit from doing so
- self-promotional activity (including recording and performance) with no clear benefit to the public, either in the short or long term

Public Engagement

It is important to show how your project will engage with your intended audience, either in the short or long term. This includes existing audiences as well as reaching new ones. Existing audiences can include:

- your fan-base
- people who might typically attend your shows or events
- people who might typically listen to your music through digital or other platforms

Some music applications, particularly those for contemporary popular music (which we are keen to support), can often struggle to meet our criteria for public engagement. These applications can be made ineligible because the project is self-promotional with no clear benefit to the public, either in the short or long term.

To avoid this, tell us how your project;

- develops your creative offer for existing audiences
- reaches new audiences
- shows clear demand from the public
- demonstrates partnership support (from labels, venues etc)

The [information sheets](#) 'Public engagement' and 'Audience development and marketing' explain what we mean when we talk about public engagement and why it's important, as well as giving advice on how you can reach your audiences.

Developing new music, songs and recordings

Creating new material is an essential part of artistic development and career progression. We are aware of its value as well as that of going on to record work, however to make a strong case for support you will need to show:

- that the activity is appropriate to your stage of development and profile
- how producing a recording will create future artistic opportunities
- that you can market and share your work with specific audiences

What you can apply for

- developing new original work that challenges your current practice. In this instance, we would expect to see a strong track record of new writing in your application
- collaborating with other artists/musicians to experiment with new

ideas. In this instance, we would expect to see a strong track record of writing and/or performing in your application

- a recording that is required as an integral part of a performance (e.g. sound installation, audio-visual performance, etc). In this instance, we want to hear about the wider activity within which the recording work would sit.
- recordings to promote or support a wider activity. For example, by increasing income for a tour, or as part of a targeted marketing campaign or audience development. Any expected income from sales should be shown in the budget section of the application form, under 'earned income'
- recordings to be used for training or education purposes. Such activity would need to be innovative and of high value to the target market. We cannot support this type of activity if it is part of a student's course of study or replaces statutory educational provision. See our 'Children, Young people and learning' [information sheet](#) for more information

Touring and live performance

Touring and performing live work supports artistic development and allows artists to reach new audiences. Promoters and venues play a vital part in developing music and audiences as well as supporting talent development.

In your application, you should show:

- for artists - that the activity is appropriate to your stage of development and profile
- for venues and promoters – that the activity would support enhanced programme development, tours and artist and audience development
- that you have an effective means to reach an appropriate audience

For more information about the kinds of international activities supported by Project Grants, see the ['International Activity' information sheet](#).

Music Videos

Project Grants can potentially support the making of music videos. However, these often fail to meet the criteria if they are purely for promotional purposes.

If you apply for funding towards a music video, you should tell us:

- the content of the video and the clear artistic ideas behind it
- who is involved in making the video, and their relevant experience
- how it will develop your creative offer for your existing audiences, and help you to reach new ones
- why it is important for your artistic development
- how it will be shared and marketed, and who it is aimed at

Music Labels

There are circumstances under which Project Grants might support activities concerned directly with the creation and development of recording labels. We can also fund existing labels to undertake artistic activities or organisational development.

Project Grants can potentially support:

- a gap in provision where strong demand and artistic quality shown
- pilot activity to test new ideas
- using digital technologies to reach and engage new audiences, enhance networks and increase participation
- research and development (creative)
- organisational development

Music Education Hubs

Music Education hubs are generally unable to apply to Project Grants for activity relating to their core responsibilities and extension roles, with the exception of one extension role. For full details, see the Funded Organisations [information sheet](#)

Supporting Grassroots Live Music

From 31 May 2019 until 31 March 2020, we are making an additional ring-fenced budget of £1.5 million available within Project Grants, specifically to support the grassroots live music sector. For more information, see our [Supporting Grassroots Live Music information sheet](#).

Further information

[Musicians Union](#) – The musicians' union can recommend rates of pay for musicians as well as providing a range of support services for the sector.

[Help Musicians UK](#) is the leading UK charity for professional musicians of all genres, from starting out through to retirement.

Other Grants

[PRS Foundation International Showcase Fund](#) offers vital support for artists, bands, songwriters and producers based in England, Scotland and Wales* who have been invited to play an international showcasing festival or conference.

[PRS for Music Foundation Open Fund](#)

[PRS Momentum for Music fund](#)

Loan schemes

[Take it away](#) – Interest free loans to buy instruments for under 26s

[Creative Industry Finance](#) is led and managed by Creative United, with funding from Arts Council England. The programme is delivered in partnership with a specially selected group of lenders and a network of expert business advisors.

Music Development Organisations

[Generator](#)

[British Underground](#)

[Urban Development Music Foundation](#)

[Roundhouse](#)

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