

Arts Council of Wales

COVID-19: Support for Individuals

Urgent Response Fund

Frequently Asked Questions

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.

Programme basics

<p>What is this fund and who is it for?</p>	<p>The Urgent Response Fund is for freelance creative practitioners who are experiencing financial hardship/loss of income now due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It's short-term emergency funding to enable them to survive financially and artistically.</p> <p>The Fund helps individuals to meet their most urgent financial needs while they explore the potential help available from Government schemes or from other ways of sustaining their activities.</p> <p>You should only apply for this fund if you have no other source of income.</p> <p>A Stabilisation Fund for Individuals will be announced before the end of April 2020. These funds are designed to help creative practitioners get back on their feet and to protect their creative practice.</p>
<p>How much can I apply for?</p>	<p>A grant of up to £2,500. There's no minimum level of support. You may only request more than £2,500 if your request includes access costs (more details in Preparing Your Application section in this document).</p>
<p>When can I apply?</p>	<p>There are two funding rounds.</p> <p>Round one</p> <p>Opens for applications on Tuesday 14 April 2020 and applicants will need to have submitted an online application no later than the deadline of 5pm Monday 20 April.</p> <p>Round two</p> <p>Opens for applications on Tuesday 28 April 2020 and applicants will need to have submitted an online an application no later than the deadline of 5pm Wednesday 6 May 2020.</p>

<p>Is this the only help that's available?</p>	<p>It's essential that these limited funds are used for those who need them most. So if you have other means of support from sources that will be sufficient for this period, then we ask that you please do not apply.</p> <p>There are a number of other ways that the UK and Welsh Government can help. You can find more information here:</p>
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Eligibility

<p>Who can apply?</p>	<p>Freelance creative practitioners who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• are experiencing financial hardship/loss of income due to the COVID-19• earn 50%+ of their income from freelance work• work mainly (50%+) in one of our supported disciplines (music, dance, theatre, literature, visual and applied arts, combined/multi-disciplinary arts, digital arts)• have a track record (within last three years) of working in the publicly funded culture sector (or with a publicly funded organisation)• are at least 18 years old• are based in (live in) Wales• have a UK bank account registered in their legal name
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<p>Who <u>can't</u> apply?</p>	<p>We're not able to support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• anyone who has access to alternative sources of funding or income• anyone who is being 'furloughed' as part of the UK Government's Job Retention Scheme• full-time students (including those in higher education)• Academics or other education professionals• anyone aged under 18
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<p>What if I'm not freelance?</p>	<p>If you are not freelance you should not apply. We advise you to investigate UK Government provision for wages and salaries threatened by COVID-19.</p> <p>(See Alternative Sources of Income below.)</p>
<p>What if my role is in retail, catering or other support functions in the creative sector?</p>	<p>We're prioritising support to freelance practitioners whose primary source of income comes from their creative work.</p> <p>We advise you to investigate UK Government provision for benefits, wages and salaries threatened by COVID-19.</p>

Definitions

<p>What is a 'creative practitioner'?</p>	<p>Creative individuals and artists who work in the art forms we support including artists, writers of poetry, prose or fiction, playwrights, producers, directors, designers, choreographers, composers, visual artists, makers, curators, performers.</p>
<p>What does 'publicly funded' mean?</p>	<p>You must either have been awarded a grant to deliver work – or been part of a project where grant funding went to another organisation.</p> <p>This can include funding from bodies such as Arts Council of Wales, National Lottery Heritage Fund, National Lottery Community Fund, local authorities, universities, public sector bodies, trusts and foundations, etc.</p>
<p>What can I apply for?</p>	<p>Funding to cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urgent and immediate expenses • Time to stabilise, practise your artform and connect with your creative networks of colleagues/peers/collaborators. • Activity and/or equipment that will help you sustain your practice and support you in continuing with your work • Time to think and plan for the future <p>We do not expect applicants to directly deliver creative outputs using this funding.</p>

<p>What can't I apply for?</p>	<p>We cannot support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • output-focused proposals for project work, for example, creation of new work, or touring • students for higher education tuition fees and associated costs • applications from people who do not generate more 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
<p>Can more than one person in the same household apply?</p>	<p>Yes – we recognise that more than one person in a household may be a freelance artist or freelance creative practitioner. If each individual meets the eligibility criteria, and has a separate bank account in their name, they are eligible.</p> <p>Where more than one person is applying from the same household, each individual should ensure they are only requesting funds relating to their personal costs.</p>

Preparing your application

<p>How do I demonstrate financial hardship/loss of income?</p>	<p>You just need to tell us about any income you have lost.</p> <p>This means telling us about confirmed or expected income that you've lost. You need to tell us if you have explored other sources of support (see below) and explain why they're are not available to you, or not enough to support you.</p> <p>We might contact you to ask for evidence of this at a later date, so keep a record (such as your own records, emails, copies of contracts etc).</p>
<p>Alternative sources of income that we expect you to explore.</p>	<p>It's essential that these limited funds are used for those who need them most. So if you have other means of support from sources that will be sufficient for this period, then we ask that you please do not apply.</p>

	<p>Other sources of non-arts support might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UK Government Self-employed Income Support scheme • UK Government Job Retention ('furlough') scheme • Benefits such as Universal Credit and Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) • The Economic Resilience fund from Business Wales
How would this funding impact on my application for Universal Credit/financial from the government?	We cannot advise on how our funding might impact on Universal Credit, or any other form of benefit or funding. Please remember that there might be tax implications. You should contact HM Revenue & Customs for advice.
Do I need to give you a budget for how I would spend the funding?	No, you just need to tell us why you need the money, and how much you are applying for.
Do I need 10% match funding?	No, you do not need any match funding.
I have access requirements – what help can I get to fill in the application?	If you have specific access requirements you can contact our grants and information team on grants@arts.wales
Can I include personal access costs in my project budget?	Each practitioner can apply for a grant of up to £2,500 . If you've additional costs relating to a disability, you can apply for up to £2,000 in addition to the £2,500.
What are access costs?	<p>Access costs in this context can include, but are not limited to, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal care support at home • help with transport • travel to medical appointments • personal assistant support

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- additional therapist support over and above of what you currently receive
 - an advocate
 - communication support such as BSL interpreter, note taker, speech to text reporter, lip speaker, audio description, facilitation or translation of documents into Easy Read or other formats such as large print or audio, translation support if English is not your first language
 - communication support provided remotely or purchasing software and equipment to deliver communication support.
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What bank evidence do I need to submit?

We will need the evidence to link:

- that the account is in your legal name
- the account number
- the sort code
- the address on the bank account is in Wales

This evidence will need to be:

- less than 2 years old at the date of application
 - an official bank communication, for example:
 - Photographs of the bank card for the account that show the account name, number and sort code. (If your name is not evidenced on the card then additional information will need to be provided, linking you to the account details)
 - A letter or email which clearly demonstrates that it has been sent by your bank confirming the information required.
 - Screenshots of you logged in to your online banking showing your name and your bank account information
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	<p>You might need to include several documents to ensure that the information required can be clearly linked to the account details.</p> <p>If your application is successful, we will check this information by asking you to provide further details about your account. We won't be able to release any payments to you until we have received and checked this information.</p> <p>Please note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We can't accept building society accounts that operate with a passbook only. • We cannot accept joint accounts.
<p>If I start making an application for round 1 but decide to wait until round 2, will your online system save the work I've already done?</p>	<p>Yes – you can return to your application at any time, even if you haven't completed it.</p>

About this Fund

<p>What is the budget for this fund?</p>	<p>We're aiming to allocate just over 20% of the total available funds (£1.5m) to support the two funds for individuals – the Urgent Response Fund and Stabilisation Fund. Although this seems a large sum of money, we expect the Fund to receive a large number of applications.</p> <p>We haven't yet decided on a final split of funds between the Urgent Response Fund and Stabilisation Fund. We'll monitor the number of applications and decide in the light of actual need.</p> <p>We'll ensure that the same amount of money is allocated to each of the two rounds of the Urgent Response Fund.</p>
<p>Where has this money come from?</p>	<p>We have reallocated some of our government grant-in-aid and the Welsh Government has contributed additional funding to the overall funds. We have also taken the difficult decision to suspend for six months our Lottery open-to-application programmes and to divert funding to</p>

	<p>the Resilience Fund. We will review the situation later in the year and will announce when we can the re-opening of funding programmes.</p> <p>Tŷ Cerdd and Literature Wales are contributing funding that they usually offer to individuals. We're also in conversation with Trusts and Foundations to see if they want to contribute money to our Resilience Fund.</p> <p>Alternative sources of funding are available from other organisations, including Trades Union hardship funds and Benevolent Societies.</p>
<p>When can I apply?</p>	<p>There are two funding rounds.</p> <p>Round one</p> <p>Opens for applications on Tuesday 14 April 2020 and applicants will need to have submitted an online application no later than the deadline of 5pm Monday 20 April.</p> <p>Round two</p> <p>Opens for applications on Tuesday 28 April 2020 and applicants will need to have submitted an online an application no later than the deadline of 5pm Wednesday 6 May 2020.</p>

Criteria and Decision-making

<p>How will you stop lots of people who don't need the money requesting funds?</p>	<p>Our priority in this moment of unprecedented instability for those working in the arts is to get funds to those who need them. We're not making the process competitive or asking for evidence of need although if an applicant has secured funds from elsewhere, we <u>might</u> need to take this into account if there are a large number of applications to the Fund.</p> <p>We're relying on artists and creative practitioners to be mindful of the collective needs of their peers when choosing to request funds. We trust our artistic community to respect this way of working at this time.</p>
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<p>Are there any special criteria that you'll use to decide who will get the funding?</p>	<p>Awards are non-competitive and we've created a quick, simple process for requests.</p> <p>However, we want to make sure our funding reaches those who may be considered most vulnerable or who have previously experienced difficulties in accessing funding.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>We therefore welcome applications from those who are from BAME backgrounds or who are deaf or disabled.</p> <p>Some applicants may be able to get further support in completing the application (see our access requirements question above)</p>
<p>When will I get my decision?</p>	<p>We aim to make decisions within 3 weeks of the closing dates. If we can't do this for any reason, we'll let you know.</p>
<p>If I am successful, when would I receive the funding?</p>	<p>We'll authorise payment as soon as we receive your formal acceptance of an award and have verified your bank details.</p>
<p>Will there be more rounds of this fund?</p>	<p>There will be two rounds.</p> <p>You can apply to only one of these rounds. If you applied in the first round you cannot apply again in the second round.</p>
<p>Why are you having two rounds?</p>	<p>Not everyone will need be ready, or will need, to apply in the first round. We want people to apply at the best time for them.</p>
<p>Can I apply to the Stabilisation Fund for Individuals if I've already secured funding from the Urgent Response Fund?</p>	<p>Yes</p>

<p>What will the success rate be?</p>	<p>We hope to be able to support all applications, but in these unprecedented circumstances we cannot know this until we see how many people apply.</p>
<p>Will you publish the names of people who have been awarded funds?</p>	<p>Yes. As a public funder we're required to publish the names and basic details of all those in receipt of funding through the Arts Council of Wales.</p>

Information and support

<p>How can I get access support while isolating/distancing?</p>	<p>Given the current restrictions in place, it's not possible for face-to-face support (outside of regular caregivers) to take place. We'll continue to support individuals who have support workers (including family members) via the Access Support Fund to interpret the guidance and/or make an application.</p> <p>The best thing to do is to get in touch with us via grants@arts.wales</p>
<p>Can I speak to an Arts Council officer?</p>	<p>Our staff are fully committed to supporting and helping artists and arts organisations. However, as with everyone else in these difficult times, we have a duty to look after their health and well-being.</p> <p>Our staff are currently working from home, often juggling their work and family commitments. We therefore can't offer specific, one-to-one advice about how to write applications for this fund.</p> <p>We have designed this application process to be as straightforward as possible, requesting only the information we need based on your current circumstances.</p> <p>Our capacity for advice giving is extremely limited at the moment, but if an individual has access needs and requires further support to complete the application, they can contact grants@arts.wales</p>

Other Lottery funding

I already have a National Lottery Project Grant or Does that impact on me applying for this fund?

We urge you to only consider applying to this Fund if you do not have sufficient funds available to meet your most urgent and immediate needs.

We've already contacted all individuals and organisations that have an open Lottery grant to let them know what they should do next with that funding. If you already been contacted, please read that advice carefully before applying to this fund.

If you are in receipt of other Arts Council of Wales funds you can still apply to the response fund, though it's recommended that you carefully consider the criteria for this fund and what funding you require during the COVID-19 crisis.

If you're in receipt of other Arts Council funds, please explain why these aren't sufficient to support you at this time.

When will National Lottery Project Grants re-open?

We don't have a date at the moment, but it's likely that our normal 'open-to-application' programmes will remain closed for the first 6 months of 2020/21. We know that National Lottery Project Grants are a vital part of many individuals' and organisations' business planning. We'll do our very best to re-open these funds at the earliest opportunity.
