

STABILISATION & RENEWAL PROGRAMME for ORGANISATIONS

Frequently Asked Questions

NB: Please refer to the Guidance Notes for full criteria

What is the purpose of this programme?

- To stabilise organisations financially to prevent closure and/or to allow continued delivery of outcomes and underpin longer-term changes
- To support the development of Renewal Plans where appropriate

When is the application deadline?

- The closing date for applications is **12 noon on Friday 27 November 2020**

How much can we apply for?

- The maximum award available is £500,000
- In exceptional circumstances, the Arts Council will consider requests for a larger award. In this case, you must contact the Arts Council prior to submitting an application
- Please be realistic in your request as there will be considerable demand for these funds

When will we hear if our application is successful?

- We aim to communicate decisions to you by 29 January 2021

When will the award period end?

- You must complete your project by 31 March 2021

Do we need match funding?

- No. You do not need to show match funding for this award

Who can submit an application?

- Constituted organisations/companies whose primary purpose relates to the categories below and which carry out the majority of their work in Northern Ireland
- Arts, cultural and community venues whose main use is for one of the categories below
- Arts, culture and community organisations whose primary role is to create, present or support one or more of these categories:
 - Dance
 - Drama
 - Literature
 - Music and Opera
 - Traditional Arts
 - Visual Arts
 - Performing arts and theatre
 - Festivals and cultural events
 - Participatory Arts
 - Comedy
 - Cross Art form
 - Community Arts
 - Creative Industries in the following segments:
 - Independent Cinema
 - Product Design, Fashion Design, and Graphic Design
 - Crafts
 - TV, Video, Photography, Film, and Radio

Who cannot submit an application?

- Individuals
- Broadcasters (excluding community service broadcasters)
- Central Government Departments
- Applicants to National Lottery Heritage Recovery Fund
- Local Councils

Can we make more than one application?

- No. You may submit only one application. However, you can apply for more than one project within your application

Do we have to apply online?

- Yes. We will only accept online applications
- Online applications may be edited, saved, and returned up to the closing date
- You must submit all mandatory enclosures associated with the application at the same time as your application

What can we apply for?

- Costs to stabilise your organisation in the immediate term which will ensure the culture, arts and creative activities you are involved in are not put further at risk by Covid-19, for example:
 - Deficits incurred as a direct result of Covid-19
 - Restoration of reserves where these have been depleted as a result of Covid-19
 - Costs of artists, tutors, craftspeople and freelancers
 - Staff - except for staff on the Government's or Job Support Scheme
 - Overheads such as rent
 - Costs to run immediate risk management reviews and the actions identified as needed to safeguard your organisation
 - Costs to cover essential operational costs
 - Redundancy costs to assist with remodelling or renewal of your organisation
 - Costs to recover your organisation's activity and operations by reopening and resuming activity, such as costs associated with sub-optimal reopening, specialist skills development for online presentation, managing your site during social distancing, and reconfiguring your business plans to safeguard for the future
 - Modest requests for capital equipment allied to programme/project delivery

What can we not apply for?

- Organisational debt incurred before March 2020
- Deficits not directly related to Covid-19
- Costs or losses not incurred as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic
- Costs already covered by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, National Heritage Lottery Fund, other funders or Government Covid-19 schemes to cover salaries or grants to manage Covid-related costs.
- Costs that are avoidable in the short term
- Costs you will incur after 31 March 2021
- Anything that contravenes Government's advice on Covid-19
- Recoverable VAT Requests which, before the end of Social Distancing, entail public gathering or conventional audience situations; or otherwise breach social distancing and other Covid-19 guidelines

What are recovery costs?

- Costs associated with reopening, adaptation and/or resuming activity
- These include, for example, managing sub-optimal operations, such as underwriting the costs of performance/ presentation of work due to smaller audiences and reduced box office income as a result of Covid-19 impacts and restrictions; or, where venues and facilities will remain closed, demonstrating that costs of maintaining the facility and organisation are justifiable.

What are Renewal Plans?

- Renewal Plans should set out how organisations will achieve recovery (including safe reopening and safe operations in line with general Covid advice and restrictions, and in line with sector and venue specific Covid-safety requirements), and sustainability in the next 2-3 years

What costs can be included in our Renewal Plans?

- Costs associated with proposed new activity/projects which can be delivered by 31 March 2021, for example:
 - New projects and content which will assist longer term sustainability
 - New apprenticeships
 - Support for upskilling/training existing staff
 - Pilot projects to test longer term plans set out in your Renewal Plan
 - Creating new residencies and partnerships with artists and craftspeople, including the commissioning of new work for future presentation.
 - New projects which reach different audiences and users, focused on poverty, social exclusion and deprivation and
 - Proposals to minimise negative environmental impacts and promote positive ones

What is considered to be the completion of commissioning proposals?

- You will need to confirm that the commission for future presentation has been awarded by 31 March 2021.

Can we apply to develop an idea for programming without presenting it?

- Yes. Provided R&D activity takes place before 31st March 2021 and all associated costs are incurred before this date also. We recognise that presentation and delivery may occur at a later date.

What is state aid? How do I complete these questions?

- State aid may be present whenever state resources are used to provide assistance that gives organisations that are engaged in economic activity (i.e. undertakings) an advantage over others.
- If the answer to either of the questions is 'no' then State aid would not be present. If the answer to both of these questions is 'yes' then State Aid may be present. If we deem that it is, and if your application is eligible to receive funding, you may be asked to complete the de minimis declaration as part of your grant award or we may have to ask you for further information to determine whether a grant award can be made.
- If in doubt, tick yes and we will consider whether State Aid is present. We do not expect that this will apply in most cases.

Can we contact the Arts Council to discuss the application?

- All organisations applying can contact the Arts Council for further advice before applying. It is unlikely that an individual award will exceed £500,000. In exceptional circumstances, the Arts Council will consider requests for a larger award. In this case, you *must* contact the Arts Council prior to submitting an application

Who should we contact for help?

- The Arts Council staff list is on our website: <http://artscouncil-ni.org/contact-us>

Arts Council will update these regularly throughout the duration of the submission period.