

# OPEN FUND: SUSTAINING CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT 2020/21

Frequently Asked Questions



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## **Open Fund: Sustaining Creative Development Frequently Asked Questions**

### **General FAQs on Open Fund and relationship to the previous Open Project Fund**

#### **Why have you changed the Open Project Fund?**

Creative Scotland is committed to ensuring that the arts, screen and creative industries have the support they need to sustain and develop. We are acutely aware of the disruptive effect the COVID-19 pandemic is having on both organisations and individuals. This is a situation without precedent and the creative sector is facing significant challenges. We understand that you will be considering the impact of this emergency and its after-effects on what you do.

With this in mind, we want our funding schemes to be as responsive to need as possible. The revised *Open Fund: Sustaining Creative Development* will enable organisations and individuals to adapt and respond to the immediate challenges facing them, whilst enabling them to prepare for different ways of working in the future.

#### **How is this fund different from the previous Open Project Fund?**

The new *Open Fund: Sustaining Creative Development* is different in a number of ways:

- We have simplified the guidance documents
- We have added more specific prompts in the application form, responding to feedback from applicants
- We have created separate guidance, application and assessment routes for organisations and individuals
- We have reduced the maximum award to £50,000, reflecting the reality that the current situation makes it difficult to plan for longer-term or more complex projects
- We have simplified the criteria to ensure that we are in a position to support a wide range of projects and activities
- We are placing more emphasis on the impact and public benefit of projects in recognition of the limitations on public engagement at this time

#### **The form seems longer than that of the previous Open Project Fund. Do I have to write more?**

In response to feedback on the previous Open Project Fund guidance, we have been working to reduce the guidance and ask more specific questions in the form. This means that the form is slightly longer, but we hope it helps you to give us the information we need to assess your application fairly.

The Open Fund can support a wide range of activity, from small artist-led research projects to complex programmes of activity involving multiple partners. So, while there are maximum word counts against each question, these are limits and not targets; you should not feel that you need to fill the word count in each section. Also, if you feel you have already covered the answer to a question

elsewhere, you can say this in the form and point us to where you have provided this information.

### **Why have you changed the criteria?**

The core criteria remain the same, but we have simplified our language and presented these in a way that we think is easier for applicants to understand.

These changes mean that we will be able to respond effectively to the diverse needs and ideas of people and organisations working across the country.

### **Where has the section on Reaching People gone?**

This section has been revised to reflect the restrictions that are in place on social distancing and public gatherings. In these circumstances we are focussing our interest on the impacts and benefits of your project - on you and those you plan to work with now and into the future.

### **Why have you changed the length of time a project can last for from 2 years to 12 months?**

We want our funds to reach as many people as possible. This measure will help us do this in the short term.

COVID-19 is having a significant impact on all our lives and it is impossible to predict how this will affect people in the medium to longer term. We anticipate that organisations and individuals will wish to take time to reflect and adjust to a changing world. We anticipate that larger and more complex projects, which often involve multiple partners, are likely to be less easy to plan and deliver.

We will keep this decision under review on a quarterly basis.

### **Are there any other changes I should be aware of?**

We have added further information and guidance on how to assess the risks associated with the project or activity that you are planning. This includes a specific risk assessment with respect to COVID-19.

### **What has changed in the revised guidance/forms following the July review?**

There have been no major changes – in the main we have aimed to add clarity to our guidance and forms. The past few months have seen a huge rise in the amount of queries we are receiving from artists and organisations in the sector, and we have tried to reflect some of their questions, as well as some of the wider feedback on the new Open Fund. We have also looked at the range of applications we've received to the new fund and talked to assessors to get their feedback on ways in which we can make the guidance and form more helpful in drawing out the information we need.

## **General FAQs – Applying to the Open Fund**

### **Can I make two applications to the new Open Fund at the same time?**

No – an applicant can only have one application in the assessment process at any time.

### **I am an independent producer. Can I have more than one application in the assessment process if they are for different artists' projects?**

Yes, you are permitted to have more than one application in the assessment process at the same time if they are being submitted for different projects led by different artists. You must clearly demonstrate that the main beneficiary of each project is different and distinct.

### **Can I have more than one live Open Fund project at any one time?**

Yes – you can have up to two live projects at any time. If you have been funded by the Open Fund, you can make one additional application for a different project or activity before you complete the first project. However, we would expect you to outline how you will be able to deliver any new project activity alongside any prior commitments.

### **I have previously received funding – does this affect my chances of support?**

Whilst assessors do consider your track record in your artform or specialist area, previous funding from Creative Scotland does not make you any more or less likely to receive funding.

If you are currently in receipt of funding from Creative Scotland and delivering a live project, we would expect you to outline how you will be able to deliver any new project activity alongside any prior commitments. Additionally, if you are in receipt of previous funding from Creative Scotland you will need to ensure that you are up to date with any reporting, project monitoring and conditions related to your previously funded activity.

### **My project is due to start sooner, can you fast track my application?**

No – our turnaround times are set as 8 weeks for applications requesting £15k or less and 12 weeks for applications requesting over £15k. You should apply early enough to ensure that there is sufficient time for this assessment period, and for a suitable planning period between receiving your funding decision and the activity starting.

### **How far in advance can I submit my application?**

We do not have an upper limit for how far in advance you can apply for a project, and we appreciate that different projects will require different periods of planning. We do, however, have to take into account the timing of projects when making our decisions. For example, if the decision-making panel is considering an application for a project that has been submitted very far in advance, without

clear rationale for this, then they might prioritise another project that was taking place sooner. In general, we would normally expect applications to be submitted in time to allow one to six months between you receiving your decision and starting your project. Given the demand on our funds you may find it helpful to ensure that, where possible, you give yourself time to make a re-application.

### **Can I reapply if my first application is unsuccessful?**

Yes, you can reapply once to the Open Fund: Sustaining Creative Development if your first application is unsuccessful.

### **What other funds do Creative Scotland offer?**

You can see all our funding programmes on our website – including our targeted funds and funds delivered by partners.

### **If my activity is covered by another fund you offer can I still apply to the Open Fund: Sustaining Creative Development?**

If your proposed activity is broadly covered by one of our other funds, it is unlikely that we would prioritise funding for this type of project from the Open Fund.

### **Can I apply to multiple different funds for the same project?**

No, you cannot apply to multiple funding programmes that Creative Scotland run, or which are run by others on behalf of Creative Scotland, for the same project or activity – so please check these other funds in case one of them is more appropriate for your project.

### **What should a CV or biography cover?**

A CV or biography is a short document which summarises a person's background, skills, experience and achievements. It is useful to put the newest things first and take out any non-arts related activities.

### **How many supporting documents can I include with my application?**

Supporting documents are intended to provide additional context for your application, but the information on the application form will be the main information your assessing officer will use to understand how your project meets the criteria for the Open Fund. Please only include the supporting documents listed in the checklist at the end of the application form. We will not be able to consider additional documents.

### **I work in an area which does not have industry rates of pay, what would you advise I put as a rate?**

You should enter in a rate which is at least equal to the living wage. You may want to draw on other industry rates for comparison (where possible) and to speak to peers and colleagues about how they determine their fees. We would want artists to earn professional rates and at least the living wage.

## **Can I apply to both the Open Fund and the National Lottery?**

Yes, you can apply to different Lottery distributors for the same project, but you must ensure that you meet the specific criteria of the fund you are applying to and ensure that you address the criteria in your application.

## **Amounts available**

### **Why have you reduced the maximum grant to £50k?**

### **Why can't I seek permission to apply for over £100k anymore?**

We want our funds to reach as many people as possible. This measure will help us achieve this in the short term.

COVID-19 is having a significant impact on all our lives and it is impossible to predict how this will affect people in the medium to longer term. We anticipate that organisations and individuals will wish to take time to reflect and adjust to a changing world. We anticipate that larger and more complex projects, which often involve multiple partners, are likely to be harder to plan and deliver.

Additionally, the large majority of awards that we previously made through the Open Project Fund were for £50,000 and under.

We will keep this decision under review on a quarterly basis.

### **I had planned an over £50k application that I now can't make – what should I do?**

You are advised to read the refreshed guidance documents and take time to revisit your plans in light of the current situation. This might involve reducing your plans, or restructuring your planned activity into stages, and only applying for the initial phase at this point.

### **Has the expectation of match funding changed in the context of Covid-19?**

We can fund projects up to 100% but we encourage applicants to think about partnerships because it demonstrates resource and demand for the project. Partners and collaborators may not be able to provide cash support but they may be able to provide in-kind support. We appreciate that it may be difficult to contact partners in order to receive evidence of support at this time – please tell us if this has been the case.

## **Eligibility – Individuals and Organisations**

### **Why have you split the fund between individuals and organisations?**

We are conscious of the different needs of individuals and organisations and this will allow us to respond to these appropriately. We wish to avoid a situation where applications from individuals and organisations are competing with each other.

## **Will the balance of awards between individuals and organisations be the same as previously?**

This is a responsive fund and we expect the allocation of awards to reflect demand.

## **I'm an individual working with a company structure. Which strand of the fund should I apply to?**

If you are a freelance artist or creative practitioner, or a sole trader, you should apply as an individual.

If you have an organisational structure (such as a partnership, a company limited by guarantee, a charity, a SCIO or CIC) then you should apply as an organisation.

## **Applying to the Open Fund - Risk**

### **What is the difference between the risk question in the application form and the information you are requesting in the separate risk form?**

The question in the application form (question 3.2) asks you to describe your overall approach to risk – so thinking about who is responsible for assessing risk for your activity, how you have planned your activity to consider risk, and how you might work with partners or collaborators to address risk. The risk form is more specific, asking you to consider the specific risks that your activity includes, and your specific mitigation approach for each risk.

### **How can I plan for public activity as part of my application if I don't know when social distancing restrictions will be lifted?**

We appreciate that COVID-19 guidance from the UK and Scottish Governments is changing regularly. Our website contains the most [up-to-date guidance](#) we have and we will update this on an ongoing basis. If your creative activity relies on a future change to restrictions, then we advise you to make cautious plans on the basis of this published guidance and have a robust risk plan in place that allows you to make alternative arrangements or to shift your timescales if your proposed approach is not possible.

## **Applying to the Open Fund – EDI and Environmental Questions**

### **Is it necessary for you to ask for EDI and environmental impact information in three different places on the form?**

We regard consideration of environmental impact and EDI as core principles for all publicly funded projects, and so we want to understand how you are thinking about these aspects in all areas of your proposed activity.

**Question 1d** asks you to consider your **artistic approach** to EDI and environment – whether the work has any theme relating to these areas, whether the choice of artistic collaborators has taken this into account, or whether the choices of materials used has considered environmental impact, for example.

**Question 2c** is about **public benefit** – so have you considered how you might reach a diverse audience, how you might facilitate access for those on low incomes or without access to IT equipment (for digital projects) or how people access the activity (travel etc.) in terms of environmental impact.

**Question 3.1d** is about **project management** – how the project has been planned to ensure that the principles of EDI and environment are included. In terms of EDI, that could be thinking about how the full range of people involved in your activity have a say in how it is developed and delivered, or having flexibility in timescales to allow for changing circumstances such as childcare needs or illness, for example. In terms of environmental impact, you may be holding meetings online to avoid physical travel, or hiring rather than buying equipment. You might wish to tell us how you measure your own carbon footprint or that of your organisation or premises.

The Open Fund supports a wide range of activity and we appreciate that different projects will be able to respond to these questions in different ways. There is no need to repeat information you have given elsewhere in the form, or to write to the maximum word count in each question. We want to understand how you have considered these important areas across the different aspects of your proposal, as relevant to your project or activity

### **Specific question - eligibility**

#### **Can I apply if I am a student / if my project involves students?**

Students are not eligible to apply for Creative Scotland funding. We don't support students for their studies, living costs, tuition fees or for any funding related to any full-time, long-term, formal or accredited programmes of education in the UK or abroad. The Scottish Government produces a guide to funding for learning and training which gives an overview of the funding support available for this.

Additionally, students are not eligible to apply for funding for any artistic or creative work until they have graduated from their course. The only exception to this is part-time PhD students, who can apply if the creative activity is not part of their accredited study. We will require written proof that this is the case from your PhD supervisor.

Finally, any group or organisation applying for a project which primarily works with or involves students (like a student society or student drama group) is not eligible for this fund.

#### **Can amateur theatre groups apply?**

Yes, amateur theatre groups are eligible to apply provided the project meets the criteria of the fund. If it is your first time applying to Creative Scotland, we would strongly recommend you get in touch with us about your project so we can advise whether our funding is the most appropriate.

#### **What activity in schools is eligible for funding?**

This fund doesn't support schools or parents' groups for general arts activity happening in schools. It can support high-quality, artist-led projects and these can include, for example, artists working on creative learning projects which take place either in or out of school, relate to lifelong learning activity, or which happen in a community and involve working with schools. The application must come from the artist or arts organisation and should add real value to the learning experience.

### **Do you support self-publishing?**

The Open Fund will not support authors looking for funding to self-publish their books, to promote self-published books via events, touring or other provision such as school workshops, or to support time to develop work for self-publication. We will not support applications relating to the development or promotion of books published at the author's cost by another press or service. We cannot support authors who have been asked by a publisher to contribute to costs including but not limited to typesetting, illustration, indexing or reprint costs.

The Open Project Fund will only consider applications for support for publishing projects from recognised professional publishing houses which publish a range of authors and titles each year, and which distribute these works via recognised channels (usually trade outlets including bookshops and online retailers).

### **Can I apply for the development of a website?**

We would not consider an application solely for the development of a website as a priority for funding. The fund focuses on supporting projects centred around creative development, so your application would need to clearly articulate how a website would support creative activity. For example, if you are applying for a new programme of work and new ways of reaching people, and your website development supports this, then you could apply - the focus would be on the creative project and then describing how you are sharing this through a new website and/or other digital tools.

### **Can I still apply for Capital funding?**

If you are an **organisation**, you can include small scale capital costs in your application as long as you can demonstrate how it will enable, or further enhance, your creative activities. You cannot make 'equipment-only' applications and small scale capital costs should not exceed 50% of the overall budget of your project.

When we say 'small capital costs' we mean this to include:

- Alterations to allow for the safe activation of your space for artists, staff or public, in line with Scottish Government COVID-19 guidance.
- Installing fixed assets, such as lighting or seating
- Purchase of instruments
- Purchase of new equipment\*
- Purchase of vehicles

- Installation of new technologies (including digital or environmental)
- Small scale building renovations and improvements relating to accessibility and fitness for purpose.

\*Please note that we can consider applications for second-hand equipment where the equipment is no longer available new, for example to utilise legacy formats. Please discuss this with us before making your application.

We do not support:

- large scale capital costs
- the purchase of buildings
- feasibility studies

If you are an **individual**, you can also include some new equipment costs in an application, but you cannot make 'equipment-only' applications.

Equipment costs should not exceed 50% of the overall budget for your project. We do not support home refurbishments or projects where individuals or homeowners are seeking to build or renovate their own property (for example, to build an artistic or recording studio).

### **Are Theatre/Dance Touring Applications eligible for Open Fund support?**

If you are applying to present a theatre or dance work at more than two locations, you should apply to the [Touring Fund for Theatre and Dance](#). Please note that the next application deadline for this fund has been postponed in light of the current COVID-19 situation.

If you do not work in theatre or dance and would like to apply to tour your work, please contact us to check whether your project is eligible for the Open Fund: Sustaining Creative Practice.

### **My business offers service design and/or creative communications for an established market – can I apply?**

You are not eligible to apply for funding if you provide service design and/or creative communications for a market with an established value chain, including intermediary creative agencies. Such work is customer/client-led - not artist/creative-led - and is driven by market demand.

### **Can Comedians apply to the Open Fund?**

Yes. Individuals, projects, festivals and organisations, including comedy and individual comedians, are welcome to apply to our Open Fund.

The fund is designed to support creative activity such as a specific project, production or a period of research and development. It cannot support the general running costs of creative businesses. Please see the Open Fund guidance for full information.

## **Getting advice**

### **Can Creative Scotland read over or review an application before it is submitted?**

No. We're happy to help answer any questions you might have, but we can't review applications before you submit them. Because we're responsible for handling public funds, we have to allow applicants to make their own proposals in their own words, and be able to submit their own ideas for funding that haven't been vetted by a member of Creative Scotland staff.

### **Can I speak to someone directly before applying?**

Yes. You can contact our Enquiries Service who can offer you initial advice on eligibility, signposting you to the relevant funds, and more general advice. You can contact us at [enquiries@creativescotland.com](mailto:enquiries@creativescotland.com) and you can also request a phone call. If, in handling your enquiry, we get to the point where we need to pass you across to an art form team or specialist officer, they can continue the conversation by phone or email.

If you have any additional needs, we can offer access support to disabled applicants, tailored to individual requests. Support includes Sign Language Interpreters for meetings and scribing support for dyslexic applicants.

### **Can I get help on budgets?**

The Creative Scotland website has a page designed to help you understand budgets. It can be found here:

<https://www.creativescotland.com/funding/help-with-your-application/help-with-your-budget>

### **Where can I get more guidance on risk?**

We have provided further guidance and risk templates on the Open Fund page. It can be found here:

<https://www.creativescotland.com/funding/help-with-your-application/help-with-your-budget>

### **Where can I get more information about EDI policies and plans?**

Creative Scotland's website has a page designed to help you understand the Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Connecting Theme and how you might develop your practice or organisation to ensure that you are implementing EDI across your programmes and organisational structures. It can be found here:

<https://www.creativescotland.com/what-we-do/the-10-year-plan/connecting-themes/equalities-and-diversity>

