

ACE National Lottery Project Grants:

Jazz North's advice for artists and promoters intending to apply

Disclaimer: this document offers advice, guidance and opinion independent of ACE and you should take it in that spirit – Jazz North will not be held responsible for any actions or decisions taken as a result of our advice. We are not affiliated with ACE and not involved in their grant decision making. We are, however, funded by ACE to help you engage more fully with funding opportunities.

Read the main **How to apply** guidance, which has stayed largely the same as it was before ACE suspended NLPG in March, **and** the supplementary guidance. This document summarises both. <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/projectgrants>

All strands of Project Grants have reopened, up to and over £15,000, National Activities, Touring Extensions, and Supporting Grassroots Live Music. The latter is of interest to promoters & venues and is a ring fenced allocation specifically for this purpose. The application route for that strand is the same as NLPG but there are some additional guidance notes to help promoters and venues approach their answers.

NB - the Emergency Grass Roots Music Venues fund is a short-lived specific emergency recovery pot for **venues** at risk of insolvency by end of September. We won't be going into detail of that scheme here.

Neither will we tackle DYCP, which will reopen in the autumn, or the Culture Recovery Fund – the £1.57bn of funding for the culture sector, to be awarded to organisations at risk from now until March.

Applying to National Lottery Project Grants in this period

ACE want Project Grants to be available as quickly as possible to support individuals and organisations to get activities up and running **again**, and to help people take their first steps in getting **re-engaged** with culture and creativity.

NB – these key words imply an intention to support those with a track record of delivery, rather than first-time applicants.

What's different about the criteria?

- There's no requirement for 10% match funds
- The priority is for short term recovery, rather than long-term projects
- ACE *may* invest more readily in artists who have a track record of being funded/applying rather than risk investing their funds in first time applicants during this period
- Successful applicants will need to confirm they have an appropriate risk management plan
- Finance and Management sections are the same; Quality & Public Engagement sections have been modified
- You'll be asked which of the three ACE Outcomes your project meets – as part of ACE's *Let's Create* 10 year Strategy. These are:

- Creative People: Everyone can develop and express creativity throughout their life
- Cultural Communities: Villages, towns and cities thrive through a collaborative approach to culture
- A Creative and Cultural Country: England's cultural sector is innovative, collaborative and international

Select which one (s) – see Let's Create for more detail

What's different about their decision-making process?

- More ACE staff are getting involved in panels and meeting more often to turn grants around more quickly than 6 or 12 weeks
- They'll use adjusted balancing criteria more when prioritising which applications to fund
- They want to award grants to as many individuals as organisations
- They pledge to be more flexible and open in making decisions during this period

What's different about the ACE priorities?

The challenges of working in the post COVID-19 world are different – this is acknowledged; applications should reflect the changed circumstances.

NLPG already supports projects that:

- directly create and deliver creative and cultural activity and content for audiences, visitors and digital users,
- have a longer-term impact on strengthening the sector, such as organisational development, research and development and sector support.

Because of COVID circumstances during this period, ACE will prioritise:

1. applications from individual creative practitioners (including time to think and plan)
2. research and development activity
3. organisational development activity
4. live activity that can be safely delivered within this period (rather than activity with a start date far in the future)
5. activity that closely aligns with ACE's **Equality Objectives**

What does that all mean?

1. applications from individual creative practitioners (including time to think and plan)

They want to award as many grants to individuals as organisations – historically the latter outnumber the former. Can you appoint an individual to lead your project?

2. research and development activity

You don't have to produce actual work or content – but you need to show the benefit

3. organisational development activity

You can apply to adjust your organisation to be fit for purpose for post-Covid

4. live activity that can be safely delivered within this period (rather than activity with a start date far in the future)

Don't apply for national touring or concert programmes far into 2021 and beyond – wait until later

5. activity that closely aligns with ACE's Equality Objectives

These have been redefined to reflect the times and we'll look at them in more detail, and how you can demonstrate that you meet these objectives too

Temporary Equality Objectives

The equality objectives will inform all decision making in response to Covid-19, helping ACE support the communities most impacted by the pandemic as well as responding to any inequity across the sector as a result of social injustice. New objectives will come into force from April.

1. Improving access to the sector for disabled, neuro-divergent and D/deaf workers, audiences and participants
2. Ensure funded organisations and projects improve and can demonstrate meaningful engagement with BAME workers, audiences and participants
3. Challenging racism and embedding anti-racism values across all of the Arts Council's policy and funding decisions
4. Address specific disadvantages facing Children and Young People and Older People as a result of Covid-19
5. Improving access to creative and cultural activities to those from lower socio-economic backgrounds. *See the Active Lives Survey.*

How can you change your approach, the artists you work with, and the audiences you are planning to reach, to help yourselves and ACE achieve successes with meeting these aspirations?

Balancing criteria

These are used by decision-making panels to decide which of the good applications to fund over others.

Some of this is luck – who or where you are. But some you can control.

- If your project is eligible with no major risks, your application will go to the decision-making stage. £15,000 and under go to ACE staff in your area. They will consider:

the strength of the quality and public engagement aspects of your project alongside other applications (GRMV applications are assessed only against other GRMV applications)

You can control how strong your responses are – but not what other applications are being assessed alongside yours.

- the range and balance of different projects ACE are supporting: activity types, disciplines, applicants and geographical areas

Can you find out if your peers are submitting for something similar at the same time? Know your USPs!

- how projects will contribute to promoting diversity

Priority is given to applications that are likely to make a stronger contribution to the Creative Case for Diversity: artscouncil.org.uk/diversity.

- how projects will contribute to Equality Objectives

We discussed these earlier. ACE want grants awarded to broadly reflect the diversity of contemporary England.

Note the difference between diversity and equality.

- How projects will contribute to Let's Create –

ACE's 10 year plan for the arts in England. [artscouncil.org.uk/letscreate](https://arts council.org.uk/letscreate) . You will have selected from the 3 options during your application process, but check the plan and check that you demonstrate in your narrative how your project contributes to the 10 year plan.

- how projects reach areas of least engagement with the arts

*As well as other diversity characteristics, these are the local authority areas that have been identified as being in the bottom 33% of areas in England for engagement with the arts by the **Active Lives Survey**: www.artscouncil.org.uk/ALS See Jazz North's jazz-friendly version for the north on the JN website. Can you articulate that your participants, artists or audiences come from any of these areas?*

So – what types of projects would be eligible during this period?

- Live activity that is taking place in the next 6 months, mostly confirmed or heavily pencilled and with a clear marketing strategy (use the 1 upload file opportunity to expand on this)
- Buying time to think or rethink a specific facet of your career
- Enabling yourself to make a step change
- Programmes of gigs that explore potential for a hybrid live/streamed audience

The application form and criteria

The four criteria are still: Quality, Public engagement, Finance and Management

But the information you need to provide to answer the questions in the application form might feel a bit different during this period.

Public engagement

Public engagement is likely to involve less people for live activities at the moment, and/or a focus on engaging people through digital means. Public engagement might happen as part of the project, or it might happen in the longer term, beyond your project. If you're proposing organisational development or a project with R&D, use this section to explain how your project will allow you to be better able to engage people with your work in the future. With the work they fund in this period, ACE want to know how about all the different ways projects will reach people.

This is the section that most failed bids fall down on. Make sure you put the time and effort into answering the prompts as accurately as possible:

- Make a strong case for public engagement
- clearly identify target audiences
- show how your activity increases opportunities for people who don't currently get involved in creativity and culture at all or very much
- show how the activity increases opportunities for people already taking part in creative and cultural activity
- define your plans to market the activity to audiences and explain why they are likely to achieve your aims
- if there is no immediate opportunity to involve people (for example, research and development), outline the potential for the public to get involved in the future
- where relevant, outline how access and diversity have been considered effectively and how the activity might align with ACE's Equality Objectives

What does this mean?

- *show you know who your audience is*
- *explain how you can reach more people like that and/or*
- *explain how you can deepen the experience for your existing audience*
- *find out if your audience or participants are amongst the lowest engaged and highlight this and/or how you can reach people like that*
- *could you modify your plans slightly and make a big difference to the strength of your public engagement?*
- *Answer questions 'who', 'how' and 'why'. Not what, where, when.*

Management

Managing an activity effectively and safely in this period means you'll need to take some new and different things into account. If an activity involves working with the public, you will need to have a plan in place to do this as safely as possible and manage risks effectively. You'll need to use your answers in this section to explain how you can feasibly deliver the project you're proposing, and what you've done to make sure it is safely delivered. You'll need to think about contingency plans if the situation changes.

Everyone who is offered a grant in this period will need to confirm that they have an appropriate risk management plan in place and that they are able to follow all current UK Government guidance on COVID-19.

You can download a template risk assessment from the Jazz North website.

Finance: Match funding

No requirement for match funding, but if you do have cash/in kind, include it in the budget. ACE will take the difficulty of securing other funding at the moment into account. ACE won't consider any applications for **retrospective activity or losses/debt mitigation**.

Some common queries

What's the difference between an individual and an organisation?

An organisation has:

- a group of people working towards a common goal with a governing document that covers the type of project being applied for – for example a charity, a limited company or an unincorporated group.
- a bank account in the organisation's name, with two signatories
- limited companies and registered charities need to have a registered office in the UK

Can your project be led by an individual to strengthen your chances?

Making more than one application at a time

If you have overdue conditions on a previous grant, you cannot make another application unless you have kept to any payment conditions due on your earlier grant. Your original offer letter will list what conditions you had to meet, with a timeline for submitting monitoring information. You must send any overdue monitoring information before you make a fresh application.

Touring

If you are applying for funds for touring, no more than 15% of the touring activity should take place outside England. Touring work would currently need to satisfy strict safety measures, be largely confirmed, and not extend far beyond April 2021.

How will this project develop your work?

Think how doing this project will affect your work, both immediately and/or in the longer term. Does your activity allow you to:

- work in new ways, in new contexts or with new people
- reach new or different audiences
- try out new approaches; or
- develop in other ways (for example, organisational or professional development)?

Numbers benefitting

When estimating audiences, think about whether the experience is first-hand. Watching a performance is first-hand engagement, but seeing an advert on social media, or reading a newspaper review isn't. If you expect 300 of your 2,000 FB followers to experience the work, this number should be 300, not 2,000.

NPOs

Organisations that receive National Portfolio funding are only eligible to apply to Project Grants for National Activities where the application is for more than £100,000, and where the project is additional to their NPO-funded programme.

GrassRoots Music Venues – special notes

There is additional guidance for this fund that may help you articulate your answers as a venue or promoter more pertinently.

Since this fund is ring fenced, promoters may consider applying to this strand rather than the standard NLPG.

The guidance is written more clearly and simply than the standard guidance and gives many more examples of how you might respond to the questions.

Some tips for using Grantium

- ALWAYS work offline in a Word doc and only use Grantium to paste in the final draft of your application
- Install the Staying Alive plug in for Google Chrome – it stops Grantium timing out, which can risk losing unsaved work
- Use bullet points in your answers but make sure that Grantium translates these as a hyphen – otherwise you'll use up more character count
- If you find that you need a lot more space to express a particular important answer, consider using the opportunity to upload an attachment detailing this – it will dispense with the need for character count
- Character count in Grantium is different to Word – and also different to the count it states on the form itself.
 - '1000' characters = 1184 characters with spaces in Word
 - '1500' characters = 1782 characters with spaces in Word

Extra resources for Artists, Promoters and Venues

<https://www.jazznorth.org/venues-promoters-advice>

<https://www.jazznorth.org/support-northern-jazz-musicians/>