

HARDSHIP FUND FOR CREATIVE FREELANCERS

Support for creative freelancers working in the arts, screen and creative sectors who are experiencing immediate financial hardship due to loss of income as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

UPDATED 25 FEBRUARY 2022



ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL

Hardship Fund for Creative Freelancers: a summary

- The Scottish Government has committed a total of £11.3m through Creative Scotland for creative freelancers who are experiencing hardship due to lost income from work and/or practice in the creative sector due to COVID-19. The Cancellation Fund for Creative Freelancers, launched in January 2022, administered £3.3m. This fund will administer a total of £8m.
 - Funds offer a one-off award to those who are most deeply impacted and disadvantaged by the cancellation of work as a result of the emergency situation.
 - We expect this fund to experience high demand and have a fixed budget available. Therefore we ask you to carefully consider your own needs before choosing to apply, and when considering how much to apply for. We want to ensure we are able to support as many people experiencing genuine financial hardship due to COVID-19 as possible.
 - You can seek between £500 and £2,000 to help support your immediate needs.
 - For this latest round, as well as supporting new applicants, previous recipients of the fund can also apply again for a further award of up to £2,000.
 - Awards are non-competitive and administered through simple and fast processes for applicants.
 - Applications are made online. The application portal will open at 2pm on Wednesday 23 February 2022 and will remain open until the full £8m budget has been allocated.
- PLEASE NOTE - GUIDANCE UPDATE**
This is a change to the originally published process. To simplify things we will now only have one application window - rather than the previously advertised two - and the fund will remain open until the full budget is allocated.
- We aim to ensure that all eligible recipients will receive money in their account within 20 working days of submission of their request.

What is this fund for?

These funds are to support creative freelancers working in Scotland who are experiencing immediate financial hardship due to the loss of income as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The funds offer a monetary contribution to those who are most deeply impacted and disadvantaged by the cancellation of work as a result of the emergency situation.

We will trust that those who request these funds are in need of emergency funding at this time. We strongly encourage people to fully consider their needs before making a request to this programme. Funds are finite and we expect a high level of demand. It is vital that we are able to support those who have the most urgent needs at this time.

Please let us know if you need any support with submitting a request, for example if you have any access needs, or if English is not your first language.

What is the overall budget for these funds and how much can I apply for?

Following feedback from the sector, Creative Scotland, with Scottish Government, took the decision to close the Cancellation Fund for Creative Freelancers on 24 January 2022, and allocate the remaining funds to this new round of the Hardship Fund for Creative Freelancers.

£8m has been allocated to support this fund. This is in addition to the £3.3m allocated through the Cancellation Fund for Creative Freelancers in January.

Anyone applying can ask for between £500 and £2,000 in support.

Previous recipients of COVID-19 funds for creative freelancers – i.e. those who applied to the Hardship Fund for Creative Freelancers, the Screen Hardship Fund or the Cancellation Fund for Creative Freelancers, and were awarded funding in the previous round of funding - will now be allowed to apply for a further supplemental award of up to £2,000. In addition, new applicants to the fund can also apply for a one-off award of up to £2,000.

What are access costs?

Access costs are the costs of making sure everyone has access to our support and the work we fund.

You can request a contribution to your access costs if you have experienced additional costs over and above your daily living costs during COVID-19 as a result of a disability or need to remain shielding. As a contribution this is expected to be proportionate to the level of the award and is not expected to exceed the level of the award itself.

Hardship Fund for Creative Freelancers and other social security benefits

People in receipt of social security benefits, or those planning to apply for them, should make their own checks in terms of the potential impact the award of hardship funding would have on any benefits payments. It is your responsibility to consider the impact of a request to these funds on any other support you intend to access.

We are also unable to give advice on tax and self assessment. We strongly advise that you check with HMRC on the taxable status of any award from Creative Scotland.

Who can apply?

These funds are to support freelance creative professionals working in the arts and creative sector in Scotland who are experiencing immediate financial difficulty due to the loss of income as a result of COVID-19.

Applicants must be able to demonstrate that they are a freelance professional, AND that they derive a significant proportion of their income from work that contributes strongly to the cultural life of Scotland. For example, a photographer working mainly in the journalism or sports sectors would NOT be eligible for this fund, but a photographer working in the music or visual arts sectors would be eligible.

These roles include those whose work has direct creative outcomes as well as those in supporting roles whose work directly supports the making and presentation of creative work.

All applicants must be based in Scotland and must be able to demonstrate they were working and making income as a freelance creative professional before November 2021.

As well as accepting applications from new applicants, we are also accepting applications from previous recipients of this fund who can apply for a further award if they remain in financial hardship.

The Hardship Fund for Creative Freelancers is open to:

- Freelance professionals whose work has direct creative outcomes. This can include (but is not limited to) a visual artist, a writer or maker of poetry, prose or fiction, a playwright, actor or theatre-maker, a comedian, dancer, musician, craft maker or designer. You will derive a significant proportion of your income from your role in creating or producing original artistic, creative or design material.
- Freelance professionals whose work directly supports the making and presentation of creative work including cultural events. This can include (but is not limited to) a theatre producer, a lighting designer, a gig promoter, an independent curator or creative producer. You will derive a significant proportion of your income from your role in supporting or producing original artistic, creative or design material and events.

What do I need to supply to demonstrate that I am eligible to apply to this fund?

When you apply, you will be asked to select the particular area of the arts, screen or creative industries you work in (there is an appendix at the end of this document listing all areas), and describe your role in the arts, screen or creative industries.

We will ask you to upload either a current CV or biography. We need this from you to show us that you have had a freelance professional practice as described and that this practice was established prior to November 2021 (when the most recent COVID-19 restrictions began). If your role is not art form-specific your CV/biography must demonstrate that a significant proportion of your work is within the creative sector.

Please ensure that you provide us with enough information to enable us to confirm your eligibility. It is your responsibility to ensure that the information you give us is accurate, and that it details your creative practice, pre-lockdown, as well as confirming that you previously generated the majority of your income from this activity. Please be as specific as possible - if you are a musician in bands, for example, please name these bands.

Who cannot apply?

The following are not eligible to apply to this fund:

- Those deriving the majority of their income from work that does not make a significant contribution to Scotland's cultural life, for example in digital services; marketing; corporate and private events; and from technical areas of writing and publishing such as news journalism, educational, technical, academic and professional writing.
- Those working in the heritage sector including interpretation consultants, designers and tour guides
- Those who cannot demonstrate a freelance professional creative practice
- Those deriving the majority of their income from paid employment on a PAYE basis
- Individuals based outside Scotland
- Students - including anyone studying either full time, or as part of a long term, formal or accredited programme at college or university (at the time of application) including PhD students
- Academics or other education professionals not in freelance positions

All applicants can only apply to this fund once. Please do not submit multiple applications.

What is the deadline for applications?

There is no set deadline for this fund.

The £8m fund will open to online applications at 2pm on Wednesday 23 February and will remain open until all funds are allocated.

PLEASE NOTE - this is a change to the originally published process. To simplify things we will now only have one application window - rather than the previously advertised two - and the fund will remain open until the full budget is allocated.

Our online applications portal will enable us to record the overall volume of requests and monitor demands on the fund as applicants register.

Alternative Formats, Languages and Access Support

Creative Scotland is committed to offering clear and accessible application processes and programmes that are open to everyone. On request this information is available in alternative formats including translations.

We offer access support to disabled applicants, tailored to individual requests. Support includes Sign Language Interpreters for meetings and scribing support for dyslexic applicants. Officers can offer advice to new applicants and support them to make an application.

The Equalities Team can offer additional one-to-one support to applicants with access requirements. Please note we will accept applications and supporting materials which are written in English, Gaelic or Scots. If you are a D/deaf BSL user, you can access our services with the Contact Scotland-BSL programme. Go to: contactscotland-bsl.org/deaf-bsl-users for more information

Need help?

If you have any questions about this fund please contact our Enquiries Service.

You can do this by email, through our website or social media.

Email: enquiries@creativescotland.com

Web: Fill out a form on our [website](#)

Twitter: Send us a tweet [@creativescots](#)

We aim to respond to all enquiries very promptly. If you want us to call you back, give us your number and we'll arrange to come back you as soon as possible.

How to apply?

The application process for this fund has been designed to be as simple and straightforward as possible, using our online applications portal and asking only for the essential information that is required. Provided you have all the information required to complete the application (see below) we estimate that it should take you no more than 15-20 minutes to make a submission. If you are not able to complete in one sitting, you can save the submission at any time and return to it later – albeit we do envisage that this fund will be in high demand so we would encourage you to apply as soon as possible.

Using the online applications portal:

To make an application, go to Creative Scotland's online applications portal: <https://my.creativescotland.com/>. You will need to create your own account - although if you have previously applied to Creative Scotland for funding since August 2021 and have already used the online portal, then you should be registered and can use your existing account. If you haven't, then go to <https://my.creativescotland.com/signup> to register a new account. The fund will open to online applications at 2pm on Wednesday 23 February 2022. Whilst you can register your account in advance, you will not be able to submit an application to this fund before this time.

What information you will need to supply

Previous recipients of the Hardship Fund for Creative Freelancers (October 2020 and March 2021), the Screen Hardship Fund (September 2020 and March 2021) or the Cancellation Fund for Creative Freelancers (January 2022):

1. Supply your reference number from your previous award, if you have it.
2. Confirm how much you wish to apply for.
3. Supply your bank details. The account details provided must be in the same name under which you make your application.
4. Complete a short legal declaration to confirm that you are still a creative professional generating a significant proportion of your income from freelance employment in the arts, screen or creative industries, and that you are currently experiencing financial hardship due to COVID-19.

New applicants and those not previously supported by the fund:

1. Describe your role within the arts, screen and/or creative industries
2. Upload a CV or biography. If possible, please upload documents in .doc, .docx or .pdf format. The document should be titled with the name of the individual requesting the bursary, e.g. Jane Smith.docx.

A CV is a document which summarises a person's background, skills, experience and achievements. If you submit a biography of yourself and your work instead of a CV, please ensure this includes specific details of your work as a freelance creative professional, including dates of work undertaken.

Please be as specific as possible about your work as a creative freelancer, including names of organisations and employers. For example, if you play in a band, please tell us the name of the band, venues you've played in or record labels you've worked with; if you're a dancer, it would be helpful to know what companies you have danced with and where have you performed.

Whatever your role, the more information you can provide on your specific work in the sector, the more helpful this is for us. All these details help us to understand that you're working as a freelancer in the Scottish arts or creative sector and are eligible for the fund.

3. Supply details of a professional referee. A professional referee can be anyone in a recognised role in the arts or creative industries who is in an appropriate position to verify that you have a professional practice as a freelance artist or freelance creative practitioner.
 - It can also be someone who has employed you as a freelance artist or creative practitioner in the past two years.
 - It can be someone from a sector development organisation, a local creative network, or a current employer. The sector development organisations include The Federation of Scottish Theatre (FST), Scottish Contemporary Art Network (SCAN), Creative Edinburgh, Creative Dundee, Playwrights Studio Scotland, The Scottish Music Industry Association (SMIA), Craft Scotland, XpoNorth and others that exist to support artists, creative practitioners and creative businesses. For writers, a professional referee can be an agent, a publisher or a link to a Live Literature profile.
 - It cannot be an academic referee, i.e. someone who knew you as a student.
 - It cannot be a staff member of Creative Scotland or Screen Scotland.
4. Confirm how much you wish to apply for.
5. Confirm your bank details. The account details provided must be in the same name under which you make your application.
6. Complete a short legal declaration to state that the details you've supplied are accurate and that you are currently experiencing financial hardship as a result of COVID-19.

How long will it take to get a decision?

The funds are offered on a non-competitive basis and require you to submit minimal information to enable us to make awards as quickly as possible. We will aim to ensure that all eligible recipients will receive money in their account within 20 working days of submission of your request. If there are any delays to this, we'll let you know.

Can I apply more than once?

All applicants to this round can only apply once - be they new applicants or previous recipients from earlier rounds of the fund. Please do not apply using multiple email addresses.

What if I cannot apply using the online portal? Is there an alternative means of application?

If you are not able to access the online portal – either due to technical barriers or other access reasons – then please let us know as soon as possible and we will arrange an alternative means of application.

After my application is received, what happens next?

1. If you are a new applicant, we will determine your eligibility by reviewing the information provided in your CV / biography to ensure that you are a freelance artist or freelance creative professional.
2. If necessary, we will contact your referee with a standard request to verify your position as a freelance artist or freelance creative practitioner.
3. In rare cases, we may contact you to clarify information provided in your request.
4. If eligible, we will approve your request.
5. We will pay you the full amount requested. Please note this can take up to 5 working days.
6. There will be no contract for the bursary and whilst we will not seek any formal monitoring information after the bursary payment, we may contact you in the future if we are asked to report back on the impact of the funding.

When confirming your bank details:

- You must complete and return Bank Details Form even if you have received funds from Creative Scotland in the past into the same account.
- We can pay the bursary into your personal account only
- Your account must be a UK based bank account
- You will need to supply us with a copy of a recent bank statement or pay in slip which includes the bank account name, sort code and account number and this must match the name of the applicant. We can accept a photograph, screen grab or digital version of this information.
- We will pay by a BACS payment
- Your account must be in the same name under which you made your request for the bursary

Freedom of Information

Creative Scotland is committed to being as open as possible. We believe that the public has a right to know how we spend public funds and how we make our funding decisions. You can see details of our **FOI policy on our website**.

We are listed as a public authority under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. By law, we may have to provide your application documents and information about our assessment to any member of the public who asks to see them under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

We may not release those parts of the documents which are covered by one or more of the exemptions under the Act. Please see the Scottish Information Commissioner's website at **Scottish Information Commissioner (itspublicknowledge.info)** for information about Freedom of Information generally and the exemptions.

Complaints Procedure

If you are not happy with the way we dealt with your application, you can access a copy of our complaints procedure **on our website**. Please note that you can only complain if you believe we have not followed our published process when dealing with your application. You cannot use the complaints procedure to appeal against the decision.

Data Protection

Creative Scotland (CS) requires some personal information about you to consider your application. Without this information CS will be unable to provide you with any funding.

If you would like to see a breakdown of the personal information CS requires, why it is required, what CS does with that information and how long CS keeps it, please refer to CS's Privacy Notice available online at: creativescotland.com/privacy-notice

Where the personal information you have provided to CS belongs to other individual(s), please refer to CS's Privacy Notice. Please ensure you share this Data Protection Section and CS's Privacy Notice with the respective individual(s).

You have some rights in relation to the personal information that CS holds about you under data protection legislation. Information on how to exercise these rights is contained in CS's Privacy Notice or you can contact CS's **Data Protection Officer**.

If you have any concerns with how CS has processed your personal information, you should contact CS's Data Protection Officer in the first instance, as CS would welcome the opportunity to work with you to resolve any complaint. If you are still dissatisfied, you can submit a complaint to the **Information Commissioners Office**.

Appendix 1: Freelance Creative Areas in Application Form:

All applicants will be required to select one of the following creative areas when making their online application.

- Craft
- Creative Learning
- Dance
- Design
- Digital
- Literature
- Music
- Theatre
- Visual Arts
- Children and Young People
- Place and Communities
- Traditional Arts
- Gaelic Language
- Gaelic Culture
- Scots
- Arts and Health/Wellbeing
- Equalities, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Other* (a dropdown free text box is provided for you to include your area)
- Interdisciplinary Performance
- **Please note that if you work in a creative area which isn't listed above, such as the Screen sector, or Comedy, select 'Other' and then add your creative area in the free text box provided on the form.**



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UPDATED 25 FEBRUARY 2022