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Open Fund For Individuals

APPLICATION GUIDANCE

Updated October 2024



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AWARDING FUNDS FROM
THE NATIONAL LOTTERY®

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What is the Open Fund for Individuals?

- It is a fund that can support a wide range of research, development and project activity.
- Applicants can request between £500 and £50,000.
- There are three funding levels - £500 to £5,000, £5,001 to £20,000 and £20,001 to £50,000.
- There are no deadlines for this fund, you can apply at any time, subject to available budget allocations.
- You can apply for activities lasting up to 24 months.
- We will inform you of the outcome of your application within 10 weeks for requests up to £20,000 or 14 weeks for requests over £20,000.

The Purpose of This Fund

The Open Fund for Individuals is one of Creative Scotland's key funding programmes, supporting the wide range of activity initiated by artists, writers, producers and other creative practitioners in Scotland.

Applicants must demonstrate how their activity will not only benefit their own creative development, but also provide opportunities for the wider community to develop, evolve and flourish.

We have a duty to ensure that our funding benefits as wide a range of people as possible across the whole country, so you will be expected to tell us how you will promote Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in your activity. We also want to understand how you have considered your activity's impact on environmental sustainability.

Demands on This Fund

The Open Fund for Individuals is highly competitive. Applications have more than doubled since 2019 and increased by 42% in the past year. However, during this same period, Creative Scotland's budgets have remained at the same level. Due to the high demand, 70% to 75% of applications assessed as meeting the criteria do not receive funding because the budget cannot meet the demand. It is important to understand this context before applying for funding.

Alternative Formats, Languages and Access Support

Creative Scotland is committed to offering clear and accessible application processes that are open to everyone. We have several ways of supporting you to make your application.

Alternative Formats and Languages

Our published materials, including funding guidance and application forms, can be made available in other formats as required.

We can accept applications and supporting materials which are written in English, Gaelic or Scots.

Access Support

Access support contributes to costs for services to help applicants overcome barriers to applying for our funds.

We offer access support to individuals or the lead applicant of a group who self-identify as d/Deaf, hard of hearing, disabled or living with chronic illness, mental illness or neurodivergence, such as dyslexia, autism or ADHD.

For information on the types of support available, how to request assistance, and how to include access costs in your funding application, please [visit our website](#).

If you need further assistance, please contact us at:
accesssupportrequests@creativescotland.com

If you are a d/Deaf BSL user, you can access our services with the Contact Scotland-BSL programme. Visit www.contactscotland-bsl.org for more information.

Contacting our Enquiries Service

The [Contact Us page on our website](#) offers a range of information, [FAQs](#) and [video walk-throughs](#) of our online application forms – we encourage you to review these resources first.

If you require technical support, further information or have any other queries, contact our Enquiries Service by emailing: enquiries@creativescotland.com

Open Fund for Individuals: Overview

How much can I apply for?

You can apply for between **£500** and **£50,000**.

There are three funding levels – £500 to £5,000, £5,001 to £20,000 and £20,001 to £50,000.

We ask for only the information needed to make an informed decision, varying based on your application and request amount. We aim to award the requested funds, if possible, but may grant less if, for example, ineligible costs are included in your budget.

Who can apply?

Freelance and self-employed artists and creative practitioners living in Scotland who are **at least 18 years old**.

You must have a **UK bank account** in your legal name, which must be the same name you apply under. Please ensure the name on your funding application matches the name on your bank account, as we cannot pay into an account with a different name. Please [visit our website for more details on this](#).

We recognise some applicants may use a different chosen name. We are working on updating our system to allow for chosen names and will update this guidance once changes are made.

If you are not a self-employed individual or a sole trader, you may be eligible for [The National Lottery Open Fund for Organisations](#).

Full-time students cannot apply to this fund. Part-time students can apply but will need to prove their part-time status and that the activity they are applying for does not contribute to their academic studies.

If you need assistance from a friend, colleague or support worker to complete your application, you must create an online account with Creative Scotland. You can then grant them access to your funding application. Please [visit our website for further information on how to do this](#).

When can I apply?

There are no deadlines for this fund, allowing you to apply at any time throughout the year, subject to available budget allocations. Please **check our website** to ensure that you are using the most up-to-date version of the funding guidance.

You can only have one application in the assessment process at any time. The assessment process means the period from submitting an application to the point when the funding decision is communicated to you.

If you have been funded by the Open Fund for Individuals already, you can make one additional application for a different project or activity before you complete the first project.

You can only have two 'live' Open Fund for Individuals projects at any time.

If your application is unsuccessful, you can reapply once more with the same project – see **reapplication on page 15**.

How long will it take to get a decision?

If your application request is between £500 and £20,000 you will hear the outcome in **10 weeks**.

If your application request is between £20,001 and £50,000 you will hear the outcome in **14 weeks**.

If you are applying between October and December, these timescales will be affected by office closures due to public holidays over the New Year period. Please check our **website for updates**.

Your start date must be after the date by which you will hear the outcome of your application. We strongly recommend allowing extra time for completing and exchanging funding contracts, and for the first payment of the award to be made. You should not start your activity – including advertising events that form part of your application or calls for collaborators or participants – until you have received confirmation of funding from us.

What can the funds be used for?

The fund is intended to support periods of research, development and/or delivery of creative activity, such as specific projects and productions for up to 24 months. It can support an individual's time where this is related to specific creative outcomes.

We will ask you to tell us the start and end date for this activity and to describe the outcomes, benefits and impacts that you wish to achieve.

What the funds cannot be used for

This fund does not support the following:

- **Non-Arts Activities:** Activities unrelated to the arts or creative industries.
- **Non-Scotland Applicants:** Applicants based outside Scotland.
- **Past Activities:** Activities that have already happened or will start before we decide on your application.
- **Student Projects:** Projects led by or involving full-time students, funding for tuition fees, or projects which are part of an accredited course or core curriculum activity. This includes individuals enrolled as full-time students but who are taking a leave of absence or other break from study.
- **Schools Activities:** General arts or creative activities in schools. Artist-led activity which is in addition to core curriculum delivery and demonstrates clear partnership working can be supported provided the application comes from an individual with an established creative practice and adds value to the learning experience.
- **Building Projects:** Building work or feasibility studies for building projects.
- **Business Costs:** Business start-up or ongoing running costs.
- **Profit-Driven Activities:** Activity where the aim is to generate a profit for the applicant. Please see [Appendix 6 – Profit Making Activities](#).
- **Equipment-only Funding:** Funding solely for equipment. Please see [Appendix 2 – Equipment and Consumables](#).
- **Self-Publishing:** Self-publishing projects, except those related to Visual Arts, Crafts and Design. Visual, Arts, Crafts and Design books can be supported if: their purpose does not align with standard trade publishing or sit within that market (which may mean they do not have ISBNs or are not sold through the recognised book trade); they are craft pieces in their physical form; or they are interventions, catalogues, or writing used to specifically support a visual art practice rather than literary form.
- **Fundraising Programmes:** Funding for fundraising activities.
- **Film and TV Projects:** Funding for film, screen, TV led activity or projects led by individuals whose primary artform is film. Please [visit Screen Scotland's website](#) for more information on funding opportunities.
- **Other Funding Programmes:** Activities which would more appropriately be supported by another Creative Scotland or Screen Scotland funding programme.
- **Organisational Activity:** Activities better suited for an existing organisation where the applicant holds a key role, or where the primary beneficiaries are a constituted organisation. Please see [The National Lottery Open Fund for Organisations](#).
- **Non-Scotland Beneficiaries:** Activity where the main beneficiaries are based outside Scotland.
- **Touring Productions:** Touring of Theatre or Dance productions. Please refer to the [Touring Fund for Theatre and Dance | Creative Scotland](#) for this activity. We consider a tour to be the presentation of the same production in four or more locations.
- **Substitute Funding:** Repeats or revised versions of projects or programmes that were previously funded by local authorities or other public bodies, if the funding has been withdrawn.
- **Previously Funded Activities:** Activity that you have already received funding for, from any Creative Scotland funding programme.

Reaching People

We have a duty to ensure that our funding benefits as wide a range of people as possible across the whole country. We expect you to promote Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in your activity and to tell us specifically how you will do that.

Projects and activities that include public engagement or participatory work must demonstrate that they have appropriate plans in place for safeguarding – see **Appendix 5 – Safeguarding and Dignity at Work**.

How to apply

Applications for the Open Fund for Individuals must be made through Creative Scotland's **Online Funding Portal**.

For information on how to register, access and complete the application form, visit: **my.creativescotland.com/user-guide**.

To register an account, visit: **my.creativescotland.com/signup**

If you are already registered, log in to the portal at: **my.creativescotland.com/login**

1. Once logged in, select the **Open Fund for Individuals** application form.
2. Click on '**Apply Now**' to begin your application and complete the form as instructed.
3. You can save your application and return to it at any time.
4. If you need access support during the application, click on the '**Access Support**' button. This will inform the support team of your requirements, and you will be contacted as soon as possible.
5. Once you have completed and submitted your application, you will receive a confirmation message with a reference number. If you do not receive this email, check that you have submitted the application, and then contact our Enquiries Service by emailing **enquiries@creativescotland.com**.

Please note: it is not possible to amend the application once it is being assessed, so ensure that you thoroughly review and check before submission.

Please ensure the name on your funding application matches the name on your bank account, as we cannot pay into an account with a different name. For more details on this please **visit our website**.

If you cannot access the internet to make an application, or need additional support, please contact our Enquiries Service by emailing **enquiries@creativescotland.com**.

Stage 1 – Eligibility

This part of the application process asks you to confirm that you meet the eligibility criteria to make an application to the Open Fund for Individuals. This stage is the same for all applicants, no matter how much funding you are applying for or what type of project you are planning.

If you do not meet any of the eligibility criteria – for example, you are not aged 18 or over – then you will not be able to continue with your application.

It is important you answer all these questions honestly. If we later find that your answers were inaccurate this may result in payments being suspended or your grant being withdrawn. We may also seek to reclaim any funds already paid to you.

Once you have completed Stage 1, you can progress directly to Stage 2.

If Creative Scotland consider that the application includes insufficient information to allow us to assess the application against one or more of the criteria, your application may still be considered ineligible at Stage 2 and not progress to full assessment.

Stage 2 – Addressing the Criteria

Applications to the Open Fund for Individuals are assessed against the following criteria:

- **Creative and/or artistic strength of the project or activity idea, or its contribution to supporting creativity in others.**
- **Strength of the impact of this project or activity on your work and benefit for others, now and in the future.**
- **Strength of plans to achieve the project or activity including financial planning.**

The application will provide you with specific questions, which you will need to answer to demonstrate you meet these criteria. Each section has a maximum word count and character limit to help you focus on essential details. It's crucial to address all required areas thoroughly and not add any unnecessary information. Consider how your information collectively illustrates how your project meets each criterion.

When writing an application, it's sometimes helpful to think of it as telling a story with a beginning (what you want to do and why you want to do it), a middle (how you will do it and who else is involved) and an end (what will be different when you've finished the project, and what might happen next).

Specifically, in each section we are looking for the following information:

Your Creative Practice

When completing this section, consider:

- **How can you best describe to us what you do in the arts and creative industries?**
- **What experience and skills are you bringing to this project?**
- **Is there previous work and/or projects that are relevant to the project?**

You can either write a short statement about your work or upload a CV. This should enable assessors to understand your past work and how you will use relevant skills and experience in this project. In the supporting documents section, you also have the option to upload or link to examples of your work such as music files or performance videos if you're a musician, or images and excerpts from recent works if you're a visual artist or writer.

Your Project

This section forms the main body of your application and is where we ask the key questions about your project and plans. You should consider the following questions when completing this section:

- What do you want to do?
- Why do you want to do it?
- Why do you want to do it now?
- Why is the project important?
- How does the project relate to your work?
- When will your project take place?
- Which art forms will be involved?
- What impact will the project have on you and/or others?
- Describe your considerations for Equalities, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) in developing your project to ensure representation of Scotland's diverse creativity and communities.
- Explain how you've assessed the environmental impact of your project.

For projects applying for over £5,000, we will ask for additional details on:

- Your approach to managing your project or activity, including what the key stages of your project are, the timeline and budget management.
- How you will collaborate with project partners, if applicable.
- Any experience you have in managing projects of this type.

Engaging people as audiences or participants

When completing this section, consider:

- **Who else will be involved in your activity?**
- **How will they become involved?**
- **How will you reach people?**
- **Is the activity aimed at any specific groups of people?**

We will ask you if your proposed activity involves directly engaging other people as audiences or participants. Select “yes” if your project has any public outcomes, such as music that people will listen to, writing that people will read or performances that people will watch. If your project is focused on your own work such as research or training, select “no”.

If you select “yes”:

- Outline your approach to engaging with people, including how you will reach them and how they will find out about your work. Outline what their experience will be like and how you have considered EDI, including how you will make sure that your work is accessible. If you’re working with children, young people, or vulnerable adults, we need to know how you will keep them safe and you should provide a Safeguarding Policy.

If you select “no”:

- Outline how your proposed activity will help you reach people in the future. For example, if you’re seeking funding for training, how will this impact your future work, enable you to make higher quality work or offer new or more inclusive participation opportunities to other people. If you’re applying to research a new artwork, outline how this research might help you connect with organisations that could allow the work to reach audiences.

Working with/employing other people

When completing this section, consider:

- **Who are you working with or employing within your project?**
- **How and why did you select these people?**
- **How will you manage them effectively, and ensure a safe and respectful working environment?**

We want to know about any people you will be working with on the project, such as other artists, project managers or suppliers. If you have selected people, explain why you chose them and provide their CVs or biographies. You may be choosing to work with someone because of specific skills and/or experience, or because your project builds on an existing working relationship.

If you plan to recruit people after funding is in place, outline your recruitment process and how it will be inclusive. Detail how much you will pay them, including the industry rates you’ll use. Also explain how you will manage your team, considering Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), and ensuring a safe and respectful environment.

Creative Scotland's Strategic Priorities

Each section of the application shows how your project meets the Open Fund for Individuals' criteria and Creative Scotland's strategic priorities.

Due to the huge demand, the Funding Panel will prioritise applications that address one or more of our long-term **strategic priorities**. Use this section to highlight aspects of your project that align with these priorities, especially if you haven't mentioned them elsewhere in the application.

Please ensure you refer to the specific elements of these priorities that this fund will consider, which are detailed in **Appendix 1 – Creative Scotland Strategic Priorities**.

Budget

When completing this section, consider:

- **Does your budget balance?**
- **Are you paying people fairly?**
- **How have you calculated your costs?**

You will need to provide:

- 1. Funding request:** State how much money you are requesting from Creative Scotland.
- 2. Summary budget:**
 - a. For applications under £5,000, a summary budget is sufficient. You can attach a more detailed budget if you wish.
 - b. For applications over £5,000, a detailed budget must be uploaded.

Each budget line should detail how you arrived at the figures. For example:

- **Fees:** Specify how much time this covers, and the industry rates used.
- **Studio or equipment hire:** Indicate the duration and whether this is based on quotes or an estimate.
- **Income:** Specify the sources and whether confirmed or estimated. For ticket, book or record sales or similar, detail how many sales this is based on and at what income per sale.

To help you with this section of the form, see **Appendix 4 – Help with Budgets**.

For projects over £20,000, provide additional information on your financial management including any experience of managing public funds and projects of this scale, and what systems or procedures you will have in place to ensure that your finances are appropriately managed.

Access Costs

We are committed to ensuring our funding is accessible to all. Access costs are essential expenses that enable individuals to participate fully in your project, regardless of their personal circumstances or abilities.

Eligible access costs are non-artistic expenses that directly remove or reduce barriers to participation for:

Personal Access Costs

This covers costs related to disability only and is for:

- You and your team

Personal Access Costs are treated **separately** to your main project budget. They do not count towards your total funding request. This is to ensure that your requests under Personal Access Costs do not push you into a higher funding band or take your total budget over the maximum funding level for the fund.

Project Access Costs

This covers costs related to disability of others working on or participating in the project, and any further access costs such as childcare, travel for safety reasons and translation for:

- You and your team
- Those you are employing or working with for the funded project
- Participants
- Audiences

Eligible personal access costs may include, but are not limited to:

- Reasonable adjustments for disabled individuals

Eligible project access costs may include but are not limited to:

- Translation or interpretation services
- Essential care costs for primary caregivers
- Short-term childcare expenses directly related to project activities

Important considerations:

- Childcare costs are considered a taxable benefit. While Creative Scotland will reimburse these costs where eligible, you are responsible for reporting them to HMRC.
- If you or a team member has ongoing higher living costs due to a disability, health condition, or long-term care responsibilities, these can be included as a Project Cost or reflected in the fees under Artistic Costs. If including them in Artistic Costs, please clearly explain this in your budget breakdown.

Please note that only eligible access costs will be covered. For detailed information on what qualifies as eligible personal and project access costs, as well as a breakdown of eligible and non-eligible expenses, please **visit our website**. If you need further assistance, please contact us at:

accesssupportrequests@creativescotland.com

Risks

In this section, describe your risk management approach by identifying the main risks to your project and explaining how you will manage them. Risks to your activity are not just about health and safety – there may be a range of unpredictable elements that could affect the successful delivery of your activity. We want to understand how you are addressing the full range of risks that could affect your ability to deliver the activity that you're applying to the Open Fund for Individuals to support.

Creative Scotland aims to support creative and experimental practice in the arts but cannot accept avoidable or unmanaged risk to health and safety. Our funding approach will therefore be cautious in this regard.

Risks could include:

- **External risks:** such as illness of a team member, bad weather for an outdoor project, etc.
- **Reducible risks:** such as low attendance at your performance or exhibition, which you can mitigate through marketing plans.
- **Manageable risks:** such as potential injuries, which can be managed through health and safety checks and briefings.

You can upload a risk assessment as part of your application. Uploading a risk assessment is mandatory for all applications of £5,000 and over, and for applications with projects that involve public-facing activity. You can find some templates and more information on managing risk [on our website](#).

This includes two templates you can use to manage risk when planning a project. For Creative Scotland applications, you can use these formats or your own—whichever best helps identify, assess, and control risks related to your activity. Please [visit our website](#) to view the templates.

Decision Making Process

We use your answers to assess how well your application meets the fund criteria and **Creative Scotland's Strategic Priorities**. Applications that meet the criteria are recommended for funding and reviewed by a Funding Panel. Funding Panels are usually made up of Creative Scotland staff but may also draw on our pool of specialist assessors from the creative and cultural sector. Panels meet at least every two weeks.

Each Panel has a set budget and reviews applications from various artforms and specialist areas. We anticipate demand for the funding to be higher than the available budget, in which case the Panel will prioritise applications that address one or more of our strategic priorities. These considerations will be based on the information supplied in each application, including the answer to the Creative Scotland's Strategic Priorities question. This will result in a set of recommended outcomes from the Panel.

The Panel's recommendations are approved by the Senior Leadership Team at Creative Scotland before final decisions are communicated.

Funding Decision

We will inform you of the outcome of your application within:

- **10 weeks** for requests up to £20,000
- **14 weeks** for requests over £20,000

If funded, you'll receive award details and any grant conditions. All notifications are provisional, and funding is not formally confirmed until you sign and return the funding agreement and meet any conditions. At this point your first payment will be made. This will usually be 100% for grants up to £5,000 and 90% for grants over £5,000.

If your application is not awarded funding, you'll receive feedback and can request your full assessment.

Reapplication

You can reapply for the same project once. When you make your reapplication, we will ask you how you have addressed the feedback from your original application, and if you have made any other significant changes to your project. If unsuccessful again, you cannot reapply for the same project to the Open Fund for Individuals.

Application Process

Applications up to £20,000 will take up to 10 weeks to process.

Applications over £20,000 will take up to 14 weeks to process.

You will receive email confirmation of the outcome.

Pre-application

Stage 1:

Confirm you meet the basic eligibility criteria. If eligible, proceed to Stage 2. You will receive a reference number (CS-OFI-XXXXX-XXXX) and a confirmation email. If you don't receive these, check your spam/junk folders. If still not received, contact our Enquiries Service by emailing enquiries@creativescotland.com.

Stage 2:

Submit your application.

Creative Scotland will send an email confirmation.

If approved after an initial check for completeness and basic eligibility, your application moves to Stage 3.

Assessment

Stage 3:

Your application and any supporting materials are assessed by a specialist officer.

Stage 4:

Your application and assessment are reviewed by a panel of specialist officers and a panel chair. They evaluate the application against the fund criteria, and its strengths and impact against **Creative Scotland's Strategic Priorities**.

Demand for funding is always higher than the budget available, and therefore the Panel will determine which applications offer the strongest match to the fund criteria and **Creative Scotland's Strategic Priorities**.

Stage 5:

The Panel outcomes are approved by the Creative Scotland Senior Leadership Team.

Decision

Stage 6:

You are informed of the outcome of your application by email and can request the full assessment.

If your application is successful, you will receive a **Funding Agreement**. Once signed and conditions met, the first payment is made, and your project can begin. To see the full **Terms and Conditions** of the funding please [visit our website](#).

End of Project Monitoring

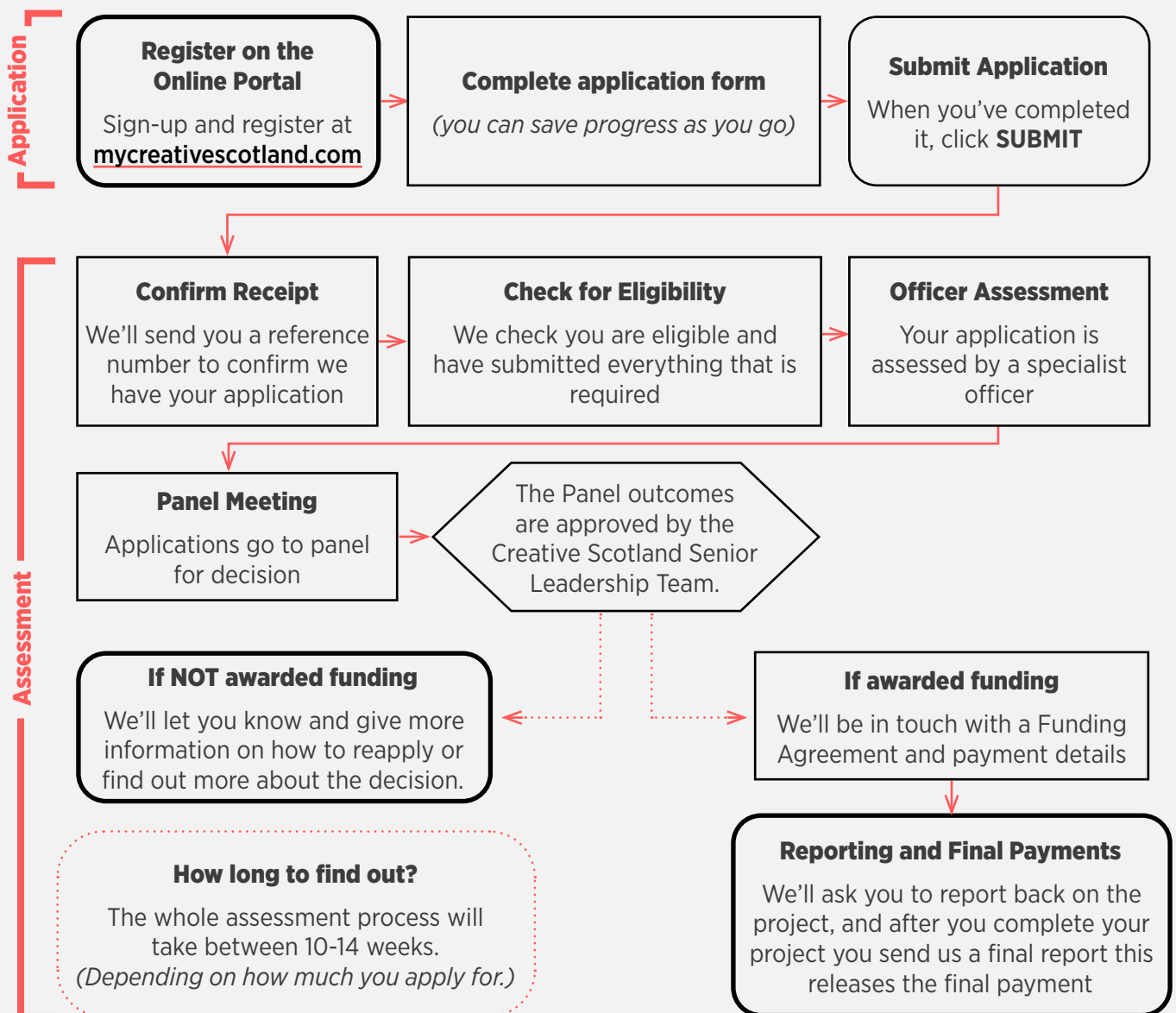
After completing your project, you will need to complete the End of Project Monitoring Report within 30 days of your project’s conclusion.

If your funding decision was on or after 5 July 2024, the form will be made available on the online application portal. Information on completing this report can be [found on our website](#).

If your funding decision was before 5 July 2024, you should continue to submit your End of Project Monitoring Report via the manual process, until advised otherwise.

Once you have submitted the report, it will be reviewed and signed off by your assessing officer, and any remaining payments will be made as per the terms and conditions of the Funding Agreement.

Application & Assessment Flowchart



Subsidy Control

As a public body Creative Scotland must comply with the subsidy control rules in the Subsidy Control Act 2022 and Trade and Cooperation Agreement between the UK Government and the European Union. More information can be found at [UK subsidy control regime - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/uk-subsidy-control-regime).

Any award made through this fund will require the recipient to acknowledge that the grant comes from public funds and confirm that the support provided is compliant with the Subsidy Control rules. Where applicable, the recipient must agree that Creative Scotland will publish information relating to the grant and that the recipient will keep reasonably detailed records to demonstrate compliance with the Subsidy Control rules and shall provide a copy of such records to Creative Scotland upon reasonable request. In the event that it is deemed to be non-compliant with the Subsidy Control rules, the recipient may be required repay the entire grant (and any other sums due) immediately.

Data Protection

Creative Scotland requires some personal information about you/your organisation to consider your application for funding. Without this information we will be unable to process your application.

If you would like to see a breakdown of the personal information we require, why it is required, what we do with that information and how long we keep it, please refer to our [Privacy Notice on our website](#).

Creative Scotland may share your personal information with third parties to comply with the law and/or for our legitimate interests and/or the third parties concerned.

Where the personal information you have provided to Creative Scotland belongs to other individual(s), please refer to our Privacy Notice. Please ensure you share this Privacy Statement and Creative Scotland's Privacy Notice with the respective individual(s).

You have some rights in relation to the personal information that Creative Scotland holds about you under data protection law. Our Privacy Notice contains information on how to exercise these rights, or you can contact our Data Protection Officer by emailing dataprotection@creativescotland.com.

If you have any concerns with how we have processed your personal information, you should contact our Data Protection Officer in the first instance, as we 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](#).

Complaints

As an organisation, we will always listen to and respond to any concerns that you may have. If you would like to make a complaint about either the service you have received from Creative Scotland or the way we have handled your application, we have a process that you can use.

Please note that Creative Scotland does not have an appeals process and for this reason, we are unable to accept complaints that relate solely to the decision we have made rather than how we have made it. For more information, please visit the [complaints section of our website](#).

Freedom of Information (FOI)

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. For more information, visit the [Freedom of Information section of our website](#).

We are listed as a public authority under the Freedom of Information Act (Scotland) 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 Freedom of Information website at www.foi.scot for information about the Act generally and the exemptions. We will not release any information about applications during the assessment period, as this may interfere with the decision-making process.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Creative Scotland Priorities

Creative Scotland has four key priorities for its work:

1. **Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)**
2. **Fair Work**
3. **Sustainable Development**
4. **International**

Creative Scotland prioritise projects that address these areas across all activities we support. You can find more information on each of these priorities [on our website](#).

For the Open Fund for Individuals, each application will be assessed against our fund criteria, which reflect these priorities. Funding panels will support applications that best meet these criteria. However, when there are more applications that meet our criteria than we have funds to support, we will prioritise activity that particularly contributes to these priorities in the following ways:

1. Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

Projects should demonstrate how they have considered EDI in the development or implementation of their activity. Panels may prioritise projects that:

- Create employment or engagement opportunities for people with limited access to the arts and creative industries.
- Help to diversify the range of creative work available to audiences and participants across Scotland

2. Fair Work

Projects should demonstrate Fair Work in the development or implementation of their activity, particularly in the context of applying industry recommended pay rates. Panels may prioritise projects that:

- Support a significant change in an individual's development as a creative practitioner, enabling them to access opportunities that would otherwise not be available to them.
- Respond to a sector need, for example a gap in skills or expertise, or benefit other individuals in that sector, for example through peer sharing or engagement with sector networks.

3. Sustainable Development

Projects should demonstrate how they have considered environmental sustainability in the design and delivery of their activity. Panels may prioritise projects that:

- Contribute to Scotland's net zero target through innovation to reduce the environmental impact of their project.
- Include themes that are linked to the causes and impact of the climate emergency and/or climate justice.
- (For projects requesting over £20,000) Use the [**Creative Carbon Scotland's Quick Carbon Calculator**](#) to calculate anticipated emissions and provide a narrative as to how emissions will be minimised.

4. International

For projects involving international activity, funding panels may prioritise projects that:

- Extend the reputation and awareness of Scotland's arts and creative industries through international collaboration.
- Support professional growth through showcases or development opportunities.

Appendix 2 – Equipment and Consumables

- Applicants can request support for equipment and consumables through the Open Fund for Individuals, which are defined as:
 - **Equipment:** items necessary for the delivery of the funded activity and that will remain yours after the project ends.
 - **Consumables:** items used up during the project, like art materials, with no value after the project ends.
- If you are requesting support for equipment, you should explain why you are buying rather than renting – this may be because it is more cost effective, or because rental equipment is unavailable, for example.
- You can request up to £10,000 for equipment and consumables, but this can't exceed more than 50% of your total request to this fund. These must be essential for your project and significantly enhance your creative activities.
- We can fund second-hand equipment if new ones are unavailable or if they are in excellent condition or come with a warranty (supporting reuse in light of the climate emergency).
- We do not fund building projects, such as home refurbishments or projects where individuals or homeowners are seeking to build, improve or renovate their own property (for example, to build an artist's or recording studio, or to install broadband).

Appendix 3 – Fair Pay

Creative Scotland is committed, through any activities we support, to ensuring that artists and professionals working in the creative community are paid fairly and appropriately for their time and effort.

Applicants to the Open Fund for Individuals are expected to pay themselves and others involved with their project fairly. All applicants should clearly outline payment costs in their budgets. We **expect payment of at least the Real Living Wage** to all people being employed to undertake work.

While Creative Scotland does not set specific pay rates, we produce a **Rates of Pay Signposting Guide**, which applicants should refer to. This includes guidance on industry standards, union rates and codes of practice from key leading bodies.

If your project includes other professionals, you should set out how they will be paid, including how you have considered industry standard rates of pay. If anyone beyond you, the applicant, is providing their time to the project in an in-kind or in a voluntary capacity, then a letter confirming this must be provided.

Appendix 4 – Help with Budgets

This section explains what budget information is required as part of an application to the Open Fund for Individuals. More details can be found on the **Creative Scotland website**.

We ask you to provide us with a breakdown of the costs associated with your project by completing the following three tables in the application form:

- **Budget Summary Table**
- **Project Cost Table**
- **Project Income Table**

Please only use full pound amounts in all budgets. You can round any more specific costs up to the nearest pound. This helps us report back to our funders.

If you request more than £5,000, you should provide a separate budget to help us assess the financial management of your project.

We want to support projects that show a good understanding of the costs and income involved and how they will be monitored and controlled.

When filling in the Project Costs table in the form, what information should I include?

In the application form, we ask you to complete two main tables: one listing your costs, and another listing your income.

Project Costs Table: we advise you to make a list of the sort of expenses your project will involve. These are likely to include:

- **People costs:** Include fees and wages of all the involved, using industry standard rates of pay.

- **Running costs or overheads:** Essential expenses for project delivery (see example budgets).
- **Equipment and materials:** Purchase or rental of equipment or materials (must be under 50% of the overall budget and not more than £10,000). We expect you to explain why the equipment is necessary for the delivery of your activity, why you are choosing to hire or purchase the equipment, whether the equipment is new, refurbished or second-hand, and what you plan to do with the equipment following the project.
- **Promotional costs:** marketing, research, audience development and the development and production of any marketing communications materials.
- **Access costs:** There are two sorts of access costs – Personal Access Costs and Project Access Costs, which should be presented separately in your budget. For detailed information on what qualifies as eligible personal and project access costs, as well as a breakdown of eligible and non-eligible expenses, please [visit our website](#). For further information or guidance on access support and costs please email: accesssupportrequests@creativescotland.com

Other costs:

- **Contingency costs:** Most projects will include a ‘contingency’, which is usually a small percentage of the overall cost of a project that is set aside as a safety measure for unforeseen costs. For most projects this is likely to be set at around 5%, but a contingency of up to 10% may be appropriate for activity with more variable costs or risk, such as outdoor work.
- **In-kind contributions:** List all costs, even the ones you get ‘for free’ – otherwise known as in-kind – where no money exchanges hands, or you get a discount. For example, you might have volunteers helping with your project. You should estimate the amount of money you would normally have to pay for the work and add it to your costs. Or you could get advertisement space at a discounted price from a company. Again, include the full amount it would normally cost. Be sure to assign a monetary value to all in-kind contributions and include them in your income table. Refer to the example budget below and additional resources [on our website](#) for guidance on how to reflect in-kind income accurately.

Are there any costs which I can’t include?

There are some types of activity that this fund does not support. Additionally, since most of the budget for the Open Fund for Individuals comes from the National Lottery, there are certain things that our money cannot be used for. You can’t include the following costs in a project budget:

- repayment of loans, endowments or interest
- money which has already been spent
- paying someone else to write your application for you
- costs for political or religious activities
- money for profit-making or wider fundraising purposes
- if you are VAT registered, VAT you can reclaim
- costs for projects which are replacing statutory activities.

What do I include in my Project Income table?

- **List all income sources:** in-kind contributions (e.g., volunteer work, discounted services), and expected earnings (e.g. ticket sales).
- **Show other funding:** indicate how much other funding you have or expect and request the rest from Creative Scotland. It is possible to request 100% from Creative Scotland, but it strengthens your application if you can show that there is wider support for the activity you're proposing. Also, it is not a condition of our funding that other partnership funding must be guaranteed, but evidence of funding support from other partners is something that we have to consider in a highly competitive fund.

Types of Funding

Table showing the eight different types of funding that can be included in your budget and corresponding information required for each.

Type of Funding	Name of Funder/Source of Income	Cash or In-kind	Conditional Guaranteed or Pending	Amount of Funding/Income £
Creative Scotland	Creative Scotland Open Fund for Individuals	Cash (Our grants are always cash)	Pending <i>(this is what you are applying for, so it's always pending)</i>	£ XXX
Local Authority	XY Council	Cash	Guaranteed	£ XXX <i>(For any guaranteed cash from other sources, you will need to provide evidence with your application)</i>
Trusts & Foundations	YZ Trust	Cash	Conditional	£ XXX <i>(We will ask you to provide details on what this income is conditional on, for example confirmation of match funding)</i>
Companies	WZ advertising	In-Kind	Guaranteed	£ XXX <i>(Where possible, please provide evidence of any in-kind contributions where a supplier/partner is giving you a free or discounted service – this could be a letter or email confirming their offer, for example)</i>
Individuals & Fundraising	Crowdfunding campaign	Cash	Pending <i>(if not yet done) or</i> Guaranteed <i>(if funding already raised).</i>	£ XXX <i>(If guaranteed, give us the link to the webpage as proof.)</i>
Own Resources (cash and/or in-kind, please specify)	You might want to add some of your own cash or in-kind contribution (time, equipment, etc.)	In-kind or cash (please specify which)	Guaranteed <i>(we normally accept your own contribution as guaranteed)</i>	£ XXX
Earned Income (e.g. Box Office)	Box office income	Cash	This is usually 'Pending' as it is future income. It is only 'Guaranteed' if you have set fees guaranteed by venues, etc.	£ XXX <i>(if 'Guaranteed' you must provide written evidence, such as emails, with the amount offered.)</i>
Other (please specify)	Volunteers	In-kind	Guaranteed	£xxx <i>(Please attribute an amount to the costs of the contribution and insert here).</i>
Total Project Income				£ XXX This must be same as the total in the Project Costs table

What else do I need to know about budgeting?

Double Funding

If your project includes other funding from Creative Scotland – either directly through any of Creative Scotland’s other funding programmes, or through one of our funds delivered by partners – then this should not be included in your project budget. We sometimes refer to this as ‘double funding,’ and it cannot be described as partnership funding in your budget.

We recommend that you contact our Enquiries Service by emailing enquiries@creativescotland.com if you need any clarification on whether any of the partnership funding in your budget is considered ‘double funding’.

Project Reporting

If funded, as part of managing your project and budgets, you will be required to monitor your income and expenditure throughout and report back on this in the End of Project Monitoring form at the end. We need to see your final costs compared to the budget information presented when you applied, so you will be expected to record this information throughout the project. If your funding decision was on or after 5 July 2024, the form will be made available on the online application portal, and information on completing this report can be [found on our website](#). If your funding decision was before 5 July 2024, you should continue to submit your End of Project Monitoring Report via the manual process unless advised otherwise.

Cashflow

If your application is funded, grants under £5,000 are paid in full when you return the Funding Agreement. Grants over £5,000 are paid in two instalments – 90% upfront when you return the Funding Agreement and 10% upon successful completion of the project and approval of the relevant project monitoring reports.

For grants over £5,000, ensure you can manage your cashflow, as 10% is paid after the project has ended and the End of Project Monitoring Form has been returned. If this is a problem, contact your assessing officer to discuss possible adjustments once your application has been successful.

Budget Examples

All applications must complete in full the Budget Summary, Project Costs and Project Income tables. Applications for more than £5,000 are also required to submit a separate budget.

The format of this additional budget is dependent on your project and the examples we provide below are only to give you an idea of the way your budget could look and what items to include in it. We recommend that you use a spreadsheet to prepare your budget and that you check it carefully before you submit, to ensure that it adds up correctly and includes every part of your project.

For more information on budgets including some examples, you can visit the [Help with Budgets section on our website](#).

Appendix 5 – Safeguarding and Dignity at Work

Safeguarding is the term for measures you put in place to ensure that people you are working with, as participants or employees, are protected from harm, abuse and exploitation.

Creative Scotland has produced guidance on safeguarding when working with children, both in-person and online – this is available [on our website](#).

If you are undertaking any work with children, young people or vulnerable adults (either in-person or online), you should have a safeguarding policy in place, and we would encourage you to take expert advice on this – our Creating Safety guidance can help, and other organisations such as NSPCC also have guidance for individuals undertaking this work.

Individuals applying for activity involving children, young people or vulnerable adults should be members of the PVG scheme run by [Disclosure Scotland](#).

Individuals applying for activity that involves employing other people should ensure that they have appropriate safeguards in place to ensure dignity at work, including approaches to ensure best practice in areas such as: equality and diversity, harassment and bullying, disciplinary procedures and whistle blowing.

Creative Scotland’s primary function is as a funder, and we do not have a regulatory role. However, we expect all grant recipients to take their responsibilities around safeguarding and dignity at work seriously when in receipt of public funds and failure to do so could result in payments being suspended or grants withdrawn. For further information about dignity at work in Scotland’s creative and cultural sectors please [visit our website](#).

Appendix 6 – Profit Making Activity

We understand that some activity will include producing products (e.g. artworks, music, writing) which are likely to have a commercial value, and that this commercial value is often realised beyond the timeline of the project/activity supported by a successful funding application. This is welcomed, especially if it allows you to build a more sustainable practice. You should include any expected income (e.g. ticket sales, album sales, artwork sales) you intend to achieve during your project period in your budget.

Projects or activity focused on business development are ineligible for this fund, and activity where the primary purpose is generating profit is also likely to be ineligible. You are expected to demonstrate in your application how your project/activity will develop your own or others’ creativity in order to meet our criteria.

When completing your End of Project Monitoring Form, if you have achieved more or less income than expected then you should show this in your final budget. If you have achieved more income than expected, this additional income may mean that any outstanding payments from Creative Scotland are reduced accordingly.

In line with The National Lottery Terms and Conditions, if anything created using our funding is subsequently exploited for significant commercial gain, Creative Scotland may contact you to discuss recoupment of your award. Please visit our website to see the full [Terms and Conditions](#).