VACMA Bursary Scheme Q&A (October 2020)

Is the bursary scheme subject of the same application process and timelines as the Open Fund schemes?

The application processes are different with different forms for each fund. VCAMA applicants will be notified within 8 weeks of the deadline on the outcome of their application. The Open Fund has an 8-12 week turnaround. VACMA has fixed deadlines and Creative Scotland's Open Fund has no deadlines.

Hello! are the images/photographs included in our application directly related to our future proposed project? e.g. photographs of initial ideas or mock-ups? or photographs of just previous work

The images should back up what you want to do - so if you are looking to move into a different media the images should back this up. Sometimes it is helpful to include one or two mock-ups or sketches to show the experimentation, but it is also helpful to see recent completed works to understand your current practice.

If I am developing new work, what images should I submit – existing images or what is being proposed?

The images should back up what you want to do - so if you are looking to move into a different media the images should back this up. Sometimes it is helpful to include mock-ups or sketches for some of the images to show the experimentation, but you should also include recent completed works to show your current practice.

Are there specific requirements for a collaborative project application?

You can apply to collaborate with another artist. If you are submitting a joint proposal someone will need to take the lead - on a practical level this means that they would receive and manage the funds. If you are applying separately (to the same scheme or to different schemes) you should assess the risk around this approach and explain the impact it would have if one of the applications is unsuccessful. The bursary amount is fixed.

Hello, can you apply for the bursary to develop an application for the Open Fund?

The VACMA programme is focussed on supporting your creative development so it wouldn't be a priority to support somebody to develop a funding application to Creative Scotland - but it can help you develop work that you could then develop further with CS support.

Can you apply for funding for one project that sits within a larger project (not yet funded)?

You can apply for a project that sits within a larger project but you should be clear about the activity that is being supported through this fund.

Do you fund artist's time to experiment? Or is it just for physical things like materials and exhibition costs?

We are trying not to be prescriptive about how the money can be used as long as it supports your creative development. For example, this could be a period of research or reflection, experimentation, skills development, or mentorship. You can also purchase equipment as long as you are clear how it will support your creative development and experimentation.

Is there any limitations for the funding going to equipment / materials? Can I purchase equipment? For example-kiln, laptop, camera, rolling mill

As long as you can clearly explain how it will support your creative development and experimentation you can include costs for equipment and materials. If the intention is to make your practice more commercially viable it would not be a priority. In the past we have tended not to encourage equipment only applications, but we understand that access to production facilities and specialist equipment has been impacted by COVID-19. If the piece of equipment costs more than the bursary level applied for, you will need to explain where the rest of the budget is coming from and risk assess this.

How detailed does your budget summary need to be, and are we required to give feedback after the project?

We are just asking for a summary of the overall income of your project/activity including any additional funds and in-kind contributions and yes, we ask for an end of project report.

Guidelines state that a contribution from the gallery will be needed, what kind of contribution is appropriate?

We are committed to seeing artists properly paid for their time so if a gallery is asking you to present work for them, we would expect to see costs around this supported. This guide might help:

http://www.payingartists.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Paying-Artists-Exhibition-Payment-Guide.pdf

Can I apply for funding to support a community project where I would be the lead artist/maker - the funding would cover my time to set up the project and send materials/instructions to participants across the country and then bring the work together to document and exhibit the work at the end of the project?

For community projects it should be clearly part of your participative practice and self-initiated. This fund is not for organisations to get you to find your own money to deliver their ambitions. You should also consider how this is developmental and what the impact is on you rather than the 'communities'.

We are hoping to apply for funding for a project in Dundee but we don't live there are we eligible to apply for the Dundee deadline?

You should apply to your local scheme the guidelines state that 'you need to live, work or maintain a studio space in the local authority you are applying to'.

Does doing a project in the area not count as working there?

Not generally but you could contact the Dundee Scheme for their position. Some LAs are more flexible.

Just slightly confusing because the last question of the application form is: "If you are not resident, please say why you are applying to this scheme in this area."

Some areas are more flexible particularly if there is not a scheme in an adjacent area but generally you should apply where you live as the activity does not have to take place there. If in doubt contact the area you wish to apply to, to see if they will accept an application. CS funding covers all areas but the partnership money is usually very focussed on that area specifically.

If I were to apply for VACMA to fund education or training to develop a facet of my practice would I need to provide a finished outcome to show how the funding has been used?

The fund is about developing and experimentation. We want to know what has happened with the funds through the End of Project Report. This does not need to be a completed outcome we are interested in the journey.

The COVID-19 situation has encouraged me to consider accelerating my development opportunities, in order to maintain my sustainability. However, the process timescales seem inhibitive, i.e. deadline in February then 8 week waiting time = 6 months delay. Should I consider the Open Fund Sustaining Creative Development option?

If the Open Fund suits your timelines better then you should consider that route. But please note that the Open Fund does have a different a application form and process. As mentioned, it has a rolling deadline.

Would I be able to apply for funds for exhibiting work? eg. framing and canvas costs?

We are more interested in the development of your work rather than putting it on a wall - the funds are more for experimentation, so an application about framing is generally not a priority.

Can I use the funding to cover a specific course online? For example, I want to learn writing and creating graphic novels.

Yes, you can - you would of course need to tell us why that course and how it fits with your current practice. It is not a bursary for a change of career.

I'm a jeweller and I want to develop online teaching classes that people can buy or subscribe to via my website or platforms like skillshare. An online version of one-to-one teaching. I would need to purchase some equipment, but also cover the costs for web and video hosting and plugins

to enable me to sell digital products via a website. Is this something that would be covered by the fund?

We would regard this as business development so it would not be something that the fund would support.

Can I ask about the type of courses that would be supported by the funding?

As long as the courses aren't in formal education and relate to your practice it is for you to make the argument as to how it would develop your practice. This can include artistic mentoring.

Are the mentoring schemes running this year?

We are not able to run the mentoring schemes this year but we will review this again next year. If you feel you would benefit from mentoring, you can use the bursary to arrange this yourself. You should ensure that you follow the government's health and safety guidelines – for example if face to face contact isn't possible can you use digital platforms instead?

What kinds of costs are able to be funded if courses and travel are off the table due to Covid?

We don't ask you to outline the expenditure - some courses and travel are still possible but we ask you to assess the risks around these. Some people will use the fund for materials or equipment or research.

What if I have to adapt my original proposal due to COVID and my alternative plans are less 'exciting', for example if the project originally included travel and hands on research/development and the alternative is to carry it out remotely. Will this count against me?

We understand that there is a chance that some activity may be delayed or reconfigured due to COVID, this is why we are asking all applicants to considered risk and to plan appropriately. It will strengthen your application to show that you understand and have plans in place to mitigate these risks. We want to be flexible with applicants and understand that some things might change, as long as your alternate plans are realistic and support your original aims this should fine.

My partner is an emerging artist (has been making art for 1.5 yrs) with no art qualifications. Will his CV be rejected as his previous experience was not art related?

Formal qualifications are not needed. We need to see how the practice has been developed and commitment to it and where it has been shown etc.

I am a student, currently taking a year out to develop my practice before my final year which I would start in 2021. Would I be eligible for the emerging artist funding?

Unless you have formally left the course, you would still be classified as a student (even in a gap year) so would be ineligible.

Due to the lockdown I was unable to collect material for a botanical project I had started working on at the start of 2020 (illustration, photography, poetry, etc). I would like to catch up with this but have pivoted toward other plant forms as I do not want to wait another year for the next growing season; it means taking me away from my core work; would a bursary be available to support this?

If this allows you to continue to develop your creative practice then this should be fine.

If I apply to undertake research, does that research have to take place in Scotland?

No. You need to be based in Scotland, but the activity can be anywhere. However, you should be mindful of the restrictions and risk associated with Covid-19 and plan accordingly.

I graduated over 5 year ago but have only just recently started practising in the last year. What Bursary would I apply to?

As you have been practising for less than 5 years, you should apply for the Emerging bursary of £500.

I finished my undergraduate course over 5 years ago but have more recently finished my Masters. Which bursary is best for me?

If you can demonstrate a continually active practice, you should apply for the main Bursary (£750). If you are returning from a substantial break in your practice, you should apply for the emerging Bursary (£500).

What do you mean by Digital and how do I factor this into my proposal to meet your requirements?

Digital is a Creative Scotland cross cutting theme alongside the environment and Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion. We are aware that many artists are pivoting onto digital platforms as a result of COVID-19 and have provided some links in the guidelines to help you think about this. Digital can mean many things including moving to working online to replace face to face meetings or developing digital as part of your creative practice. We ask applicants to consider these areas, but it is not a requirement that you develop a project to include them and we do not expect you to shape a project specifically to address these. If your project doesn't include a digital element it will not count against you.