



ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL

Creative Scotland Multi-Year Funding Programme

Guidance for applicants
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Section 1:

Fund Overview and Summary

At a glance - Fund Summary

- The Multi-Year Funding Programme offers funding for creative and cultural organisations – supporting core costs and their programmes of work for the initial period April 2025 – March 2028.
- This fund replaces the Regular Funding for Organisations (RFO) funding programme.
- It will also replace elements of regular support provided through a number of other routes such as Open Funds and Targeted Funds at levels of £50k a year or higher.
- It brings together support for longer-term, year-on-year funding for organisations into one programme.
- The fund is open to not-for-profit organisations and companies based in Scotland. For details on which organisations can/cannot apply, see pages 6–7.
- Applicants can apply for a minimum of £50,000 per year from this fund. There is no maximum limit on the amount an applicant can request.
- Applications will be made through a two-stage process and all applications will be made via our online portal.
- All applicants will be assessed against our six published Funding Criteria (see page 5)
- All applicants **MUST** register their interest via a simple, tick-box Intention to Apply form which will be open from 2pm, 26 July 2023 until 2pm 10 August 2023. This Intention to Apply is **essential** for all applicants.
- Stage 1 applications will then be accepted between 6 September and 25 October 2023. For those successful at Stage 1, the Stage 2 application process will open in early 2024. For the full timeline of each stage see page 9.
- Stage 2 will require applicants to supply us with their Business Plan. Additional guidance for Stage 2 applicants will be issued in early 2024.
- Applicants that are successful at Stage 2 will be awarded funding which will begin from 1 April 2025.
- Unsuccessful applicants may be eligible for Transition support or be signposted to other funding as appropriate.
- At both Stage 1 and Stage 2 the process will be competitive, and we commit to ensuring the process is as consistent and transparent as possible by providing clear guidance about how we will assess and how final decisions will be made. It is therefore vitally important that all applicants read and understand the detail of this guidance.

What is the purpose of the fund?

The **Multi-Year Funding Programme** has been designed to support organisations which seek funding for sustained programmes of creative or cultural activity.

The Multi-Year Funding Programme is intended for organisations which wish to enter into a sustained strategic funding relationship with Creative Scotland, including Screen Scotland¹.

We expect this will be a highly competitive fund that will be required to support a wide range of activity. To make informed decisions about which activity to support, we will require applicants to provide us with a level of detail that will enable us to make the best decisions according to our published criteria.

Alongside the Multi-Year Funding Programme, an opportunity to apply for funding on an annual basis will continue for a period after the introduction of the Multi-Year programme.

Screen Scotland also has a range of other funds which support screen projects and can be found on the **Screen Scotland website**.

To understand more about the context in which this fund is being launched and other funding opportunities that may exist in the future, please continue to refer to the Creative Scotland website which will be regularly updated.

¹ All subsequent reference to Creative Scotland should be taken to read 'Creative Scotland and Screen Scotland'

Section 2: Fund Criteria and Key Information

What are the criteria that will be used to assess an application?

The criteria for the Multi-Year Funding Programme are based on the Creative Scotland Strategic Framework that was first published in 2021. These criteria will form the basis for all Creative Scotland funding routes. We are looking for applicants to address six criteria which are:

- **Quality and Ambition:** supporting people and organisations working in art and creativity to make work of quality and ambition that enriches life in Scotland for everyone.
- **Engagement:** ensuring more people from all parts of society access, participate in and value a range of artistic and creative activities.
- **Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI):** supporting a more diverse range of creative people, communities, and activity, and promoting an equality of opportunity to create, participate and engage.
- **Environmental Sustainability:** helping tackle the climate emergency across Scotland.
- **Fair Work:** promoting fair pay, conditions, and employment opportunities across the creative sector.
- **International (optional only for applications involving international activity):** developing innovative and sustainable ways of strengthening international collaboration and promoting artistic and cultural exchange.

At both Stage 1 and Stage 2 we will also assess the **management** and **financial risk** associated with your proposal, based on the information supplied in your application and programme budget. We will assess your organisation's financial health and may ask for additional information to be provided.

For further information on these criteria, why they are important and the outcomes they will help to contribute towards, go **to the Creative Scotland website**.

Who can apply?

The priority for this fund is to support non-profit-distributing **organisations based in Scotland** that are looking to undertake a programme of creative and cultural activity that delivers public benefit by aligning well with Creative Scotland's Funding Criteria. For definitions and a fuller list of the eligible types see below.

All applicant organisations **must** have a UK bank account in the same name as the applicant organisation.

All organisations applying for funding from Creative Scotland will be required to pay all directly employed staff at least the Real Living Wage and confirm that Effective Voice for workers is in place in their organisation.

Organisations that are constituted in one of the following ways at the point at which they register their Intention to Apply, are eligible to make an application:

Registered Charities

Charities registered in Scotland and undertaking activity related to the arts, creativity and culture.

Artists' Groups

You must have an appropriate management structure in place and a written constitution that clearly demonstrates that you are a not-for-profit organisation.

Companies Limited by Guarantee or Shares

You should clearly demonstrate that your programme of work will promote the public good and will not be solely for private or commercial gain. We will expect a clear and well-established asset lock² to be in place.

Community Interest Companies

CICs must be registered at Companies House, and your governing document must include an asset lock.

Consortia

One of the organisations must take the lead and assume responsibility for managing the application and any funding award made. Once we have made an award, you cannot change the lead organisation to which the funding has been paid without the prior written consent of Creative Scotland. All consortia that are successful in applying for funding must provide a legally binding partnership agreement. Any organisation applying on behalf of a consortium cannot also apply separately for itself.

² An asset lock is a clause in your founding documents that prevents the assets of a company from being used for private gain rather than the stated purposes of the organisation.

Cultural and Leisure Trusts/Local Authorities/Universities etc.

Where the applicant organisation is not an independent legal entity, we will expect to see full transparency of the governance and financial arrangements with any parent body (e.g local authority, arms-length external organisation (ALEO), University). We will want to ensure that the parent body meets the fund eligibility criteria and that any support requested from Creative Scotland is for activity that is genuinely additional to the duties and obligations of the parent body. We will also want to ensure that responses to all criteria are specific to the applicant organisation and that the parent body is committed to sustain its support for the applicant organisation for at least the period of the Creative Scotland funding commitment at a level determined in the submitted business plan.

Who cannot apply?

Please note that the following list is not definitive and if you have any queries about your organisation's eligibility to apply to this fund, please contact our Enquiries Service before starting your application:

- **Profit-distributing companies, such as companies without a clear asset lock.** We cannot support organisations that pay profits to members or shareholders or are applying for funding for activities that are aimed at making a profit to be distributed to members or shareholders. Any asset lock needs to be in place (as per Companies House records) at the point at which they register their Intention to Apply and must remain in place for any period of funding.
- **Organisations seeking funding for activity which is not covered by the work of Creative Scotland and is not related to cultural, creative or arts activity.**
- **Organisations that do not have a business address within Scotland** – other than in exceptional circumstances when you deliver a clearly demonstrated benefit to the people of Scotland (e.g. an organisation which has a UK-wide remit and a dedicated Scottish office, but the main registered address is outside Scotland)
- **Organisations in administration, receivership, or liquidation**
- **Unconstituted artists' groups, collectives or bands**
- **Individuals and Sole Traders**
The Multi-Year Funding Programme is only open to constituted organisations. Applications are not accepted from individuals or unconstituted groups.
- **The national cultural organisations, Performing Arts Companies and other companies and organisations largely funded by direct support from the Scottish Government**
- **Film and Television production companies**

How much can I apply for?

There is no upper limit to applications, but there is a minimum annual level of award of £50,000.

How long will the Multi-Year Funding Programme support us for?

All applicants to the Multi-Year Funding Programme are applying for support for the 3-year period that runs from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2028. All funding awards will be subject to satisfactory annual reporting and the level of budget settlement we receive from the Scottish Government.

I have previously received funding through other routes, can I still apply?

As noted previously, organisations have been supported for repeated and regular programmes of work via a range of funds in addition to the existing Regular Funding programme. The new Multi-Year Funding Programme will aim to bring all this multi-year funding into one programme.

Open Fund: Sustaining Creative Development / National Lottery Open Fund for Organisations / National Lottery Extended Programme Fund

Organisations previously funded for repeated and regular programmes of work through these funds and seeking £50,000 or more per year, will need to apply the Multi-Year Funding Programme if they wish to continue to receive ongoing, year-on-year funding for their programmes of work.

Touring Fund for Theatre and Dance

Those who have previously received support from the Touring Fund for Theatre and Dance are eligible to apply, and if applying to this fund, should include all touring costs in their Multi-Year Funding application. If successful, these organisations will then not be eligible for any further rounds of the Touring Fund. We currently expect the Touring Fund to continue to operate alongside the Multi-Year Funding Programme.

Screen organisations

Screen organisations working in: audience development; screen education; or skills and talent development; and that wish to enter into a sustained strategic funding relationship with Screen Scotland are able to apply to this fund. These organisations will need to demonstrate that they meet the criteria of this fund. Their applications will be assessed by Screen Scotland staff within the assessment team and a dedicated Screen review meeting will be held. Organisations that deliver screen activity within the context of a multi-artform organisation can also apply and Screen Scotland staff will contribute to the assessment of these organisations. Film and television production companies are not eligible for support through this fund.

Youth Music Initiative (YMI)

Eligible organisations in receipt of funding from the Youth Music Initiative can apply to the Multi-Year Funding Programme.

Section 3: Application Process Overview and Timeline

How will the application process work?

Applications will be managed through a two-stage process which will follow an initial 'Intention to Apply' stage that all applicants must complete.

INTENTION TO APPLY STAGE

If you intend to apply for Multi-Year Funding, you will need to log on to our online portal and complete a simple notification to tell us that you are planning to make an application, together with an indication of the amount of funding you are likely to be requesting.

This is mandatory for all applicants.

This will not form part of the assessment process but will enable us to plan most effectively for the number of applications that we can expect.

The Intention to Apply will open on our online application portal at 2pm on 26 July 2023 and will close at 2pm on 10 August 2023.

IMPORTANT: any organisation who has not submitted their Intention to Apply during this period will not be able to progress to make a full application.

STAGE 1 APPLICATION PROCESS

The application process will be in two stages, with both stages based on applicants telling us how they will deliver public benefit through their work by addressing the fund criteria.

The online application portal will open for Stage 1 applications at 2pm on 6 Sept 2023 and will close at 2pm on 25 October 2023.

For Stage 1 we will ask you to set out how your plans meet the fund criteria.

STAGE 2 APPLICATION PROCESS

If you are successful at Stage 1, we will invite you to make a Stage 2 application in early 2024, and you will be provided with additional guidance. At Stage 2 we will consider in further detail how you will deliver the commitments made in Stage 1 through a process that will be largely based on a review of your Business Plan.

At both Stage 1 and Stage 2 the process will be competitive, and we commit to ensuring the process is as consistent and transparent as possible by providing clear guidance about how we will assess and how final decisions will be made. It is therefore vitally important that all applicants read and understand the detail of this guidance.

Timetable for the Multi-Year Funding Programme

Stage 1 Full Guidance Published and portal open for applicants to complete an Intention to Apply	2pm, Wednesday 26 July 2023
DEADLINE: For applicants to register their Intention to Apply	2pm, Thursday 10 August 2023
Portal Opens for Stage 1 applications	2pm, Wednesday 6 September 2023
DEADLINE: Portal Closes for Stage 1 applications	2pm, Wednesday 25 Oct 2023
Stage 2 Guidance update published	Wednesday 17 January 2024
Applicants informed of Stage 1 decisions	By end Feb 2024
Portal Opens for Stage 2 applications	2pm, Wednesday 6 March 2024
DEADLINE: Portal Closes for Stage 2 applications	2pm, Wednesday 24 April 2024
Applicants informed of Stage 2 decisions	By end Oct 2024
Multi-Year Funding begins	Tuesday 1 April 2025

Section 4: Support in making an application

Do you need help or access support before making an application?

Creative Scotland wants to ensure that our application processes are clear and accessible to everyone. We have a number of ways we can support you to make your application:

- We can offer guidance to applicants on the process of making an application
- Access support is available for D/deaf and Disabled applicants, tailored to individual requests. Support includes Sign Language Interpreters for meetings and scribing support for applicants with dyslexia.
- Information is available in alternative formats (including large print, Braille, Easy Read, audio version and other languages such as Gaelic and BSL)
- We can accept applications and supporting materials written in English, Gaelic or Scots
- We offer video walk-throughs of our online application forms
- Additional one-to-one support is available to applicants with access requirements

If you require support, further information or have any general enquiries about the fund and how to apply please contact our Enquiries Service who will be able to advise you or will put you in contact with one of our officers.

Contacting our Enquiries Service

If you need help, want to clarify whether you and/or your project are eligible, or you wish to discuss other questions about this fund, please contact our Enquiries Service.

Email: enquiries@creativescotland.com

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

We aim to respond to all enquiries as soon as possible, and definitely within 10 working days. If your query is urgent, let us know and we'll come back to you as soon as we can. If you want to speak to someone, let us know your number and we'll arrange a suitable time for a member of the team to give you a call back.

Section 5: How to apply

How to make an application via our online application portal

To submit your Intention to Apply and begin the process of making your application to the Multi-Year Funding Programme, you will need to use Creative Scotland's online application portal. You can access this through the Creative Scotland website here:

<https://my.creativescotland.com/login>

Have you previously applied using our online portal and are already registered with us?

If yes, then you can just log in to the portal, click on 'Funding' and select 'Multi-Year Funding Programme' from the selection of funding programmes which are live and open for applications.

If no, you will need to create an account for your organisation.

To do this go to: <https://my.creativescotland.com/signup> and follow the simple sign-up process. You'll receive a validation email to confirm the account, after which you can then log in and proceed as outlined above. You will be able to work on a draft of your application online, save it as you go along and come back to it at any time before submitting.

Need access support whilst completing the online application form?

If you need help completing the online application due to a disability or access need, you will be able to click on an 'Access Support' help button in the online portal. Clicking on this will inform our support team of your requirements and you will be duly contacted by a staff member. In this situation, please wait for us to contact you. We will do so promptly and will ensure that your application is considered and that you will not be disadvantaged.

Making your Intention to Apply submission

This is mandatory and all applicants **MUST** do this. The portal will open for Intention to Apply submissions at **2pm, 26 July 2023**.

To do this, you need to log in to the online portal and select the option for Multi-Year Funding – Intention to Apply.

If your organisation has previously applied to us, you will be given the option to select this organisation for this application.

If you haven't previously applied to us – or if you wish to add a new organisation to your account, then you will be asked to add a new organisation. As part of this process, you will be required to submit your organisation's incorporation document(s).

Then, to confirm your intention to apply, we simply need you to tell us:

- The art form or creative area you work in (tick box)
- An indication of how much you intend to apply for (per year); and
- That you are intending to apply to the fund (tick box)
- This needs to be done by the deadline of **2pm, 10 August 2023**.

Please note that the information you provide here will be used to enable us to plan most effectively for the number of applications that we can expect. The figures provided by applicants at this stage are indicative and applicants will be able to change these figures when they make their full Stage 1 application.

Once you have submitted your Intention to Apply, you will be assigned a reference number (starting CS-MYFP-XXXXX-XXXX) and will be emailed to confirm we have received your Intention to Apply. If you do not receive this email or reference number, please check your junk/spam folders. If there is still no notification received, please contact our Enquiries Service who will check that we have received your submission.

What happens next?

Once you have notified us of your Intention to Apply you will be able to log in to the online portal from 6 September 2023 and begin to complete the Stage 1 application form.

IMPORTANT: If you do not submit your Intention to Apply by 2pm on the 10 August deadline, you will not be able to continue with an application for Multi-Year Funding.

Making a Stage 1 Application

When the online portal opens for Stage 1 applications we will contact all who submitted an Intention to Apply to let them know. This will happen on 6 September 2023. Applicants can then log in to the portal and begin their Stage 1 application.

What follows here is a walk-through of the information we'll require you to supply as part of this application process.

To see a full list of the actual application questions and the associated word limits for each, see the Application Questions Appendix on Page 24.

Location of activity

First, you'll be asked to confirm where your work will take place. If your organisation works in a specific location or multiple locations, you can select these. If you work across Scotland, you can select 'All of Scotland'. Applicants who have work which happens outwith Scotland can note this here and provide further information in response to the application questions.

Artform and Specialisms

We will also ask you to select from a list of which artforms or disciplines are represented in your programme. You can select one art form or discipline, or multiple.

Addressing the Criteria

We'll then ask you to provide information to help us understand how you meet each of the Multi-Year Funding Programme criteria. The online application process includes a series of questions in different sections, each section covering a different fund criterion. There will be a limit on the maximum number of characters for each response, along with a countdown of the maximum characters you can use for each section. We advise you to think about the criteria, and how the information you give us shows us how well your programme will meet each one.

Quality and Ambition

You can read more about our Quality and Ambition criterion [on our website](#).

In this section we'll ask you some questions about your organisation, its current work and proposed future programme. We want to know how this meets your aims and our criteria for Quality and Ambition. We are looking for information in this section on what kinds of activity you intend to do, why you want to do it, and how you will work to ensure the activity is delivered in a way that ensures high quality outcomes for the people involved.

We want you to tell us about how you are choosing the content of your programme. We will ask you to upload an outline programme plan and this is an opportunity for you to list the different strands of activity that make up your programme. We recognise that for some organisations there may be many more of these strands than for other organisations, but this means you will not have to list all of these in the narrative question, but rather tell us about your overall approach. We do not expect to see full details of your intended programme here, but indicative information about the form and structure of your programme and the types of work you may feature.

Engagement

You can read more about our Engagement criterion [on our website](#).

In this section we will ask about who you're planning to engage with your programme of activity and why it will be relevant to them.

If you're planning to work with specific defined groups or communities, we want to understand who they are and how your activity has been designed with particular consideration of their needs and interests.

For example, if you are planning to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults, we will want to know how you will have implemented safeguarding.

We are interested to understand how your aims for engaging people are influencing the design of your programme. Perhaps you are considering delivery in particular venues or are changing the duration and frequency of your activity to better respond to those you are trying to reach. We want to know how you think about the value your work has for those you engage with and how you evaluate the impact of your activity. We're interested in understanding how you have learned from any experience you may have had from working with people in the past, and how these experiences have influenced the approach you are planning to take in future activity.

Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

You can read more about our EDI criterion [on our website](#).

We want to understand how you consider EDI in your planning and whether there are any specific approaches you will be taking to EDI within your activity. These might be particular themes you are exploring, particular groups your activity is seeking to engage with, or any aspects of your activity that are based around ensuring equality, diversity and inclusion. We are keen to know how you understand the barriers that exist for people who are working with you or wanting to engage with your work and how you review and adapt your work to ensure these are overcome.

We also want to understand how you manage your organisation in order to fulfil your equality duties and actively support increased diversity and inclusion.

Finally, as part of your application we will ask you if you consider your organisation to be 'diversity-led'.

'Diversity-led' is a working definition. We recognise that a single individual cannot be 'diverse' and that being 'diversity-led' comes from the range of experiences and perspectives present through your leadership. Leadership relates to your Board, directors and/or leadership team, as well as your mission and impact.

'Diversity-led' can mean that there are a range of protected characteristics and lived experiences held by the majority of those leading your organisation. Or it can mean that your leadership team is made up of people of a single protected characteristic or lived experience that is persistently under-represented in the sector.

'Diversity-led' can also mean that your working practices and programme are designed around the needs of staff, artists, audiences and participants with these protected characteristics and lived experiences.

The nine protected characteristics and nine wider aspects of lived experience that Creative Scotland engage with are listed in the **EDI Fund Criteria**, where we also set out characteristics that we consider to be Indicators of a diversity-led organisation.

Environmental Sustainability

You can read more about our Environmental Sustainability criterion [on our website](#).

The questions in this section relate specifically to the climate emergency, while our assessment of your business sustainability will also be based on a consideration of your programme and financial management information. Our expectation is for applicants to prioritise a) emissions reduction work (mitigation) and b) adaptation, to think about resilience and act in response to the impact of climate risks on your organisation and activity.

We want to understand what specific aspects of your activity are supporting Scotland's 2045 pathway to net zero by reducing your greenhouse gas emissions. Your work may have themes relating to environmental sustainability, or you may be working in specific ways in order to reduce the environmental impact of your work. Tell us about the ways in which the climate emergency is influencing the way you develop your activity. We also want to know how you are incorporating the climate emergency in your organisational management, how you are managing the impact of climate risk, and how you are planning to adapt and prepare your organisational resilience.

We want to know how you will ensure the changing climate is considered in your organisational planning and who takes responsibility for this work within your organisation, and how they evaluate and monitor your progress against your priorities and aims.

Fair Work

You can read more about our Fair Work criterion [on our website](#).

This section asks you to tell us how you support Fair Work. We define Fair Work in relation to the Scottish Government's Fair Work First policy and consider all the key principles of this policy, including respect at work, effective voice and fair opportunity, alongside fair pay. Creative Scotland has commissioned the **Illustrated Fair Work Guide for Employers** – a practical handbook to help organisations put fair work principles into practice.

We are interested in how you consider Fair Work for everyone you will work with, from core members of staff to individuals working with you on a short-term project – including volunteers. You can tell us about your policies and procedures relating to Fair Work, and how you ensure that these are communicated to those you're working with. We want to understand how the people you're working with understand your approach and how they know what to do if something goes wrong. In this section you can tell us how you set rates of pay for the people you work with, and how you recruit people and ensure that your recruitment processes are clear and transparent. We will ask you to tell us about how you support workforce, talent and skills development – both within your organisation and in the wider creative sector.

Creative Scotland's **Rates of Pay** document is available to download from our website, signposting sources of guidance on industry standards, union rates and codes of practice from key leading bodies.

In line with the Scottish Government's **Fair Work First guidance**, organisations applying to this Fund will be required to confirm that, from the start of the funded period, they will pay the Real Living Wage to directly employed staff, apprentices, 16-17 year-old workers, and contracted and agency staff, and also to confirm that Effective Voice for workers is in place in your organisation.

International

International is an optional criterion, as not all applicants will be planning to work internationally.

You can read more about the International criterion on our **website**. We expect all organisations who will be undertaking distinct international projects as a core part of their mission, to complete this section. We consider international work to be activity which might take place either within or outwith Scotland that involves artists, organisations, and/or audiences from outwith the UK.

If you are planning to work internationally, we want to understand what this activity is, what your aims are for this activity and how this adds value to your programme. We want to understand why you have chosen your international relationships, and what the impact of this international work is likely to be – both for the people engaging with your work, and for your organisation as a whole. Finally, we want to understand how this international activity aligns with your aims around environmental sustainability.

Governance and Management

In this section we will ask about your governance arrangements and how your organisation is managed. We especially want to understand your experience of financial management, particularly in the context of managing public funding. We will also want to understand your proposed approach to budgeting for the Multi-Year Funding Programme period. At Stage 1 this will be just in outline form, and we will ask you to complete a budget template, but we will want to see full budget information being submitted as part of your Business Plan, if you are successful in progressing to Stage 2.

We also want to understand your approach to managing risk. Some of these risks might be outside of your control, but you may still be able to reduce these – such as reducing the risk of people not attending your events, performances, or exhibitions. Then there are risks you can manage – such as effective processes for health and safety. In all cases we want to know about the processes you will use to identify and manage the main risks for your organisation and your programme, and how you will reduce their likelihood and limit their impact. As well as describing your overall approach to risk in Stage 1, we will ask you to include a full risk assessment as part of your business plan, if you are successful in progressing to Stage 2.

Section 6: Decision Making Process

Stage 1 - Checking for eligibility and completeness

Once we have received your Stage 1 application it will be checked for eligibility and completeness. If your application is incomplete, you will be contacted and advised of the missing information we require. We will give you 5 working days to supply this information or your application will be considered ineligible. If your application is deemed to be ineligible you will be contacted, given the reasons, and your application will not proceed further. This is final and will not be reversed.

Stage 1 - Assessment

All eligible applications will be passed to an assessment team of specialists. They will review the application in detail. At this stage, it is still possible for an application to be deemed ineligible. If this happens, we'll email you and let you know why.

For all eligible applications, the assessment team will appraise all the information provided. In exceptional circumstances they may also contact an applicant to check/clarify a specific detail which may be ambiguous. This will not be to seek new or additional information, and the applicant will not be able to add anything new at this point. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure all details provided are clear, true, and accurate. Applications that do not meet this standard are likely to be assessed as unsuccessful.

All applications will be assessed against the criteria and each application will need to achieve a specific outcome against each criterion to progress.

Responses will be scored from 0-4 on the following basis:

0. Little or no demonstration that the criterion has been met.
1. Weak demonstration that the criterion has been met.
2. Partial demonstration that the criterion has been met.
3. Good demonstration that the criterion has been met.
4. Excellent demonstration that the criterion has been met.

Applicants must score at least 3 against both the 'Quality and Ambition' and 'Engagement' Criteria and also will need to score at least 2 against all other completed Criteria to progress to the Portfolio Review stage. There will be no specific advantage or disadvantage resulting from a choice to respond to the optional International Criterion – although we do expect applicants who are planning to work internationally to complete this section.

All assessments will then pass through a process to ensure consistency and all individual assessments will then be aggregated into a list of recommendations. This list will pass through a series of Portfolio Review meetings to ensure that the list progressing to Stage 2 has considered national spread, distribution, and diversity of activity being supported. This final recommended Stage 1 portfolio will then be submitted to the Creative Scotland Board for final consideration and decisions.

Progression to Stage 2

Successful applicants

Successful applicants at Stage 1 will be notified by email and invited to prepare their Stage 2 application. Further guidance on Stage 2 will be issued to all those progressing before Stage 2 opens for submissions.

Unsuccessful applicants

If your Stage 1 application is not successful, you will be notified of this by email. We will provide the reasons for this, and you will be able to receive a copy of your assessment report, but we cannot commit to discuss further details of individual applications due to the volumes involved.

Organisations that are unsuccessful in their application to the Multi-Year Funding Programme may have opportunities to apply for support through other Creative Scotland funding routes. Where possible we will aim to signpost any other opportunities that may be available.

Transition support for unsuccessful applicants

Transition support may be made available, where appropriate, for some organisations currently in receipt of repeat funding from Creative Scotland but who are unsuccessful in being awarded funding through the Multi-Year Programme. Any funding support would be dependent on the availability of funds and be part of helping organisations plan for any restructuring or realignment that may help with future sustainability. More details on any Transition support will be available at the time of communicating decisions.

Section 7: Stage 2 Applications – what happens next and what to expect

If you are successful at Stage 1, we will contact you in February 2024 and invite you to apply to Stage 2. We will also provide you with additional guidance at this stage to help you in writing your Stage 2 application. Applications to Stage 2 will be made through the same portal that is used for Stage 1.

At Stage 2 we will ask you to submit a Business Plan that covers the planned period of activity and to respond to a set of questions that will highlight specific evidence in your Business Plan regarding the commitments you set out in Stage 1. We have published guidance on writing a business plan and this is available **on our website**.

At Stage 2 we will review your Business Plan to consider in detail how you intend to deliver the commitments you have made in Stage 1. The questions and assessment process will be based around the same criteria as in Stage 1, but for Stage 2 we will look for evidence that demonstrates that your proposed activity can be delivered and that any award you request is proportionate to the outcomes you are proposing. It is possible that the outcome to Stage 2 will be an award that is more or less than you have proposed, or that there will be no award at all, as Stage 2 will still be competitive.

The Multi-Year Funding Programme is being launched at a time when there is high uncertainty around future budgets and so we are entering into the process on the basis that it will be highly competitive, and that we will need sufficient information to make informed decisions. It is likely that there will be many more applications that are worthy of support than we are able to fund. But we will not ask for anything that is not relevant to the decision-making process.

Section 8: 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 handling **on 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.itspublicknowledge.info** 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.

Section 9: 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 available online www.creativescotland.com/privacy-policy.

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. Information on how to exercise these rights is contained in our Privacy Notice or you can contact our **Data Protection Officer**.

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**.

Section 10: 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)**.

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.

Section 11: Safeguarding/ Dignity at Work

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is the term for measures that 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, young people or vulnerable adult, both in-person and online – this is available **on our website: Creating Safety.**

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.

Organisations applying for activity involving children, young people or vulnerable adults should ensure all individuals involved are members of the PVG scheme run by Disclosure Scotland.

Dignity at Work

Everyone working in Scotland's creative and cultural sectors is entitled to be treated with dignity and respect, whether they are an employee, freelancer, contractor, Board member or volunteer. Creative Scotland does not tolerate bullying, harassment, or victimisation under any circumstance, and expects the same of any organisation that we support with public funding.

Those 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 and whistle blowing.

Creative Scotland has produced guidance on what we mean when we describe dignity at work, and what our expectations are of those we fund. You can read this **on our website: Dignity at Work.**

Our role 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.

Section 12: Complaints

Creative Scotland 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, you can only complain about how we have made the decision, not the decision itself.

For more information, please visit the Complaints section of our website: [**Complaints Handling | Creative Scotland**](#)

Appendix 1 – What we will ask you in the Stage 1 application process

Stage 1 – MY questions

The information that follows sets out the questions that we intend to ask in Stage 1. We are setting these out here in order that applicants can prepare their applications in advance of the online application portal going live in September. Each question will have a word limit of approximately 500 words.

Topic	Question	What we are looking to understand at Stage 1
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QUALITY & AMBITION

Purpose and Aims	Describe the aims of your organisation, the context you work in and the outcomes you seek from your activity.	Has the applicant demonstrated a clear understanding of their purpose and what they intend to achieve?
Your programme	Tell us about the programme of activity you are applying for (referencing the outline programme that you have uploaded). How will it deliver public benefit?	How well does the applicant understand their role in delivering public benefit to the people of Scotland through their programme of work?
Developing ideas	How will you create the conditions to generate and develop your activity and explore innovative practice?	How well does the applicant understand how they create the conditions to develop their activity and innovative practice?

ENGAGEMENT

Who	Who will you engage through your programme of work and how will your activity be relevant to their needs or interests?	How well does the applicant understand the needs and/or interests of the people they intend to engage through their work?
How	How will you ensure you have been able to engage effectively through your programme?	How will the applicant know that their programme of activity has maximised the potential to engage effectively.
Impact	Tell us about the value that your work will bring to individuals, groups and communities?	How well does the applicant understand the value that their work will bring to individuals, groups and communities?

EQUALITIES, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION (EDI)

Planning for EDI	What are your aims around equalities, diversity and inclusion and how will you achieve them?	Does the applicant have clear aims and ambitions around EDI and appropriate plans for achieving these?
Ensuring inclusion	How will you advance inclusivity and accessibility in your programme?	Does the organisation have clear plans around accessibility and inclusion and is there a commitment to furthering their work in this area?
Equalities responsibilities	How will your commitment to equalities, diversity and inclusion inform the way you manage your organisation, in relation to areas such as recruitment, training or finance?	How well does the applicant demonstrate a commitment to EDI in their management practices such as recruitment, development and training of staff and financial plans?

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Actions towards net zero	How do you intend to reduce carbon emissions in line with Scotland's pathway to net zero?	How well does the applicant demonstrate an understanding of their role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions in line with the path to net zero by 2045 or place specific targets?
Sustainability in your programme	How will the climate emergency be considered in your programme and the ways it is delivered?	How well does the applicant demonstrate an understanding of how environmental sustainability can be reflected in their programme?
Adaptation and mitigation	How will you manage the impact of the climate emergency on your organisation to ensure long-term business sustainability?	How well does the applicant articulate the actions that they will intend to take to adapt and mitigate the impact of climate change

FAIR WORK

Fair Work Principles (respect; opportunity; effective voice; security; and fulfilment)	What commitments to Fair Work will you be making in your policies and processes and how will these be communicated within your organisation and to the people you work with?	How well is the organisation planning the implementation of Fair Work principles?
Fair Work in your programme	How will you reflect and support the principles of Fair Work within your programme.	How well does the applicant demonstrate their understanding of what needs to be done to achieve the principles of Fair Work within their programme?
Workforce development	How will your organisation support workforce, talent, and leadership development?	How well does the applicant demonstrate a clear understanding of their role in the development of their staff in a way that is appropriate to the scale of the organisation?

As part of the Fair Work section, we will also ask you to confirm that you intend to pay all staff at least the Real Living Wage and that Effective Voice for workers is in place in your organisation

INTERNATIONAL

International working	Tell us about your intentions and rationale for international working and how it will enhance your programme?	How well does the applicant articulate the intentions and rationale for working internationally within their programme?
International Impact	What will the impact of your international activity be for you and your international partners, and how will you measure this?	How well does the applicant understand the benefits of working internationally for the organisation and their partners, and how these can be evidenced?
Mitigation	How have you considered your commitments to environmental sustainability in planning your international working?	How well does the applicant understand the balance that needs to be achieved in mitigating the environmental impact of their international activity?

GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

Governance	What are the governance arrangements of your organisation and why is this model appropriate?	Are the governance arrangements of the organisation clear and appropriate to the scale and scope of the programme the organisation proposes?
Operational management	How does your organisation ensure that your internal structures for financial and operational management support your aims?	Has the applicant demonstrated a clear understanding of the importance of effective financial and operational management to support the programme of activity proposed?
Risk	How does your organisation identify and manage risk?	Has the applicant demonstrated a clear understanding of the importance of identifying and managing risk?

Outline Budget

As part of the Stage 1 application process we will ask to provide some outline budget information. This budget outline is intended to provide us with enough detail to help us understand the structure of your programme and the resources required to deliver it. If you are successful at Stage 1, we will expect to see more detailed budget information within the Business Plan you submit for Stage 2.

We will ask you to provide the following estimated budget information for the financial year 2025/26.

Income

- Activity/programme related (e.g. ticket, entrance, classes, membership)
- Non-activity/programme related (e.g. retail, catering, hospitality, rental)
- Creative Scotland Multi-Year Funding
- Creative Scotland Other
- Local Authority
- Creative Industry Tax relief*
- Other Public
- Private: Donations, Gifts and Legacies
- Trusts and Foundations
- Other

*** Tax relief exists for qualifying companies involved in the production and development of the following: Theatrical productions, orchestral concerts, museum or gallery exhibitions, video games, films, high-end television, children's television, animation television**

Costs

- Artistic/Creative Programme
- Administration
- Building (excluding Gas/Oil/Electric)
- Gas/Oil/Electric
- Marketing and Communications
- Other

Outline Programme

In order to better understand your responses to the questions set out above, we will ask you to upload an outline programme for the period 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2028.

This outline should provide us with enough detail to help us understand the structure of your programme and the resources required to deliver it. It does not need to include names of artists or specific dates, but should just contain an outline structure, e.g 'Year 1: 3 exhibitions, plus an events programme including 6 talks and 6 performances etc.' We will not be assessing the content of your programme at this stage, merely considering the scope of your work in relation to the answers you have provided to other questions.



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