



Arts Grant Funding 2025

Guidelines for Applicants

Deadline: 5.30pm (Ireland time), Thursday 14 March 2024

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Getting help with your application

- If you have questions about using the Online Services website, visit the FAQ section on our website: www.artscouncil.ie/FAQs/online-services/
- If you have a technical question about the online application process and your question is not answered in the FAQ section, you can email onlineservices@artscouncil.ie or call the Arts Council on **01 618 0200/01 618 0243**
- If you have a query about your application that is not technical in nature, you should email or phone the arts team to which you are applying for funding: <http://www.artscouncil.ie/Contact-us/Staff-and-adviser-lists/>
- To watch our YouTube guide on making an application, go to <http://www.youtube.com/artscouncildemos>

Note for individuals with disabilities

The Arts Council makes every effort to provide reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities or access requirements who wish to submit an application or who have difficulties in accessing Online Services. If you have a requirement in this area, please contact the Arts Council's Access Officer by phone (01 618 0200/01 618 0243) or by email (access@artscouncil.ie) as early as possible before the deadline.

1. What you need to know about Arts Grant Funding

The deadline for applications is **5.30pm, Thursday 14 March 2024**

Please prepare and submit your application **well before** the deadline.

This section gives you background information about Arts Grant Funding. It will help you decide whether or not your organisation might qualify for Arts Grant Funding.

1.1 The purpose of the Arts Grant Funding programme

The purpose of Arts Grants Funding is to ensure that there is a breadth of high-quality arts activity and programmes throughout the country by offering flexible support that responds to the needs of those who are making, presenting and supporting work.

Arts Grant Funding is intended to:

- Support **more than one** distinct arts activity taking place within a fixed period of time, **or**
- Provide supports or facilities to artists over a fixed period of time.

1.2 What are the objectives of the programme?

The focus of Arts Grant Funding is to deliver arts activity and programmes that either:

- Generate high-quality experiences for the public to engage with the arts, **or**
- Provide excellent services, resources or facilities that support the work of artists or the arts sector.

For example, a proposal might consist of:

- A series of distinct activities that may be related by theme, artistic vision or rationale
- A number of distinct projects and activities bound together by a particular focus (e.g. work in a particular artform or work targeted at a particular audience or community)
- The provision of training, support and/or resources or facilities for artists
- Programmes that develop or nurture talent

- The provision of opportunities for diverse audiences and/or particular publics to engage with arts activity.

In these guidelines we will use the term ‘activities’ to cover any elements within a proposal for the provision of resources or facilities as outlined above.

1.3 Who can apply?

Arts Grant Funding is open to:

- Organisations, including companies limited by guarantee (CLG), designated activity companies (DAC), partnerships, etc.
- Individuals (if two or more people want to make a joint application, one of them must act as the named applicant).

Note: if you are applying as an individual, you **must** show that your proposal involves collaboration with other artists and activities that include the delivery of public outcomes and/or outcomes that benefit other artists.

To be eligible to apply, you must be:

- Based/resident in the Republic of Ireland. We may consider your application if you are based outside the Republic of Ireland. However, your application would have to convince us that your proposal would benefit the arts in the Republic of Ireland.
- Professional practising artists. Even though you might not earn income continuously or exclusively from your arts practices, you must identify yourselves and be recognised by your peers as professional practising artists.

As part of its [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#), the Arts Council is committed to offering **equality of access, opportunity and outcomes** to all potential applicants regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, civil or family status, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the Traveller community, or socio-economic background. In this funding scheme the Arts Council particularly welcomes applications that are representative of the diversity of Irish society, including but not limited to any of the characteristics outlined above, and/or initiatives that deliver equitable opportunities or outcomes for those involved.

1.4 Who is the applicant?

The applicant is the person or organisation who will receive any grant offered and who must accept the terms and conditions of that grant.

Any grant we offer will only be paid into a bank account held in the name of the applicant.

All the documents provided must be in the name of the applicant (either an individual artist or arts organisation) – e.g. if you apply for funding under the name Máire de Barra, then all the documents you provide, including bank and tax details, must be in that name. We will not accept variations such as Mary Barry or Barry Studios.

1.5 Who cannot apply?

- You cannot apply if you are an undergraduate student or will be during the period for which this funding is offered
- You cannot apply for costs towards the fees for postgraduate studies or to develop work that is connected to postgraduate studies
- You cannot apply as an individual if you work on a full-time basis with an organisation that is funded by the Arts Council or directly by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media
- Members of the Council of National Cultural Institutions (CNCI) directly funded by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media cannot apply.

Note: if your application for Arts Grant Funding 2025 is successful, you will not be permitted to apply for a Project Award for 2025.

1.6 What is the funding period to which the programme applies?

Funding is available to support activities that will take place within the 12-month period from:

a) January–December 2025

or within the 24-month period from:

b) January 2025–December 2026

The Arts Council will only consider 24-month funding where applicants provide **significant detail** of their activities/programmes over this period.

Activities being applied for may take place across a full 12 or 24-month period, may occur all at once across a shorter time frame, or may occur intermittently within these time periods.

Please note that the Arts Council may offer 12-month funding in response to a 24-month application for funding.

1.7 What kind of activities can I apply for?

You can apply for the following activities:

- Creation, production (including co-production), and presentation of an artwork or event for the benefit of an audience or particular community
- Provision of arts experiences involving participants or targeted communities
- Development and creation of a piece of work for future performance or distribution (e.g. artwork, script, music composition)
- Delivery of activities that support the development of the arts or the work of artists
- Provision of supports, resources or facilities for artists
- Research (as part of a wider programme of artform development)
- Development costs (e.g. talent, partnership or audience development)
- Skills development and capacity building.

Examples of activities might be:

- Production and presentation (live, broadcast, digital)
- Artistic experimentation, development and creation, including artistic laboratory or studio work
- Publishing
- Digital publishing
- Co-production
- Artistic residencies
- Creative activity enabling public engagement and participation
- Artist development or support programme

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- Facilities and resources for artists (e.g. studio space, workspace, hot desks, Wi-Fi, meeting rooms, reading space, research facilities, networking and peer learning opportunities).

Work in an international context

We do not support costs directly related to the touring and dissemination of work abroad. Activities involving international exchange, collaboration or co-production are eligible provided they show clearly the benefit to people, artists or the arts in the Republic of Ireland and that the overseas partners will contribute to the relevant activity costs.¹

1.8 What activities can I not apply for?

You cannot apply for activities that:

- Do not fit the purpose of the programme
- Are by individual artists and there is no collaborative or partnership element (this is more suited to funding under the Artists' Supports category of our funding framework – e.g. bursaries)
- Are more suited to another award funded by the Arts Council or operated by other state agencies or funding bodies, such as Culture Ireland
- Will have commenced before 1 January 2025
- Are to raise funds for charity, to take part in a competition, or solely to make a profit
- Have already been assessed by the Arts Council, unless you can demonstrate that you worked on and developed your proposal since last applying **or** if the Council has specifically advised you to redirect your application to this award. Please bear in mind that such advice is not an indication of a successful outcome.

1.9 What costs can I apply for?

All costs must relate directly to the activities within your proposal.

The types of costs you can apply for might include:

¹ For further information, please see [the Arts Council's Making Great Art Work: International Arts Policy & Strategy](#).

- Wages and fees for artistic, creative and other staff essential to the delivery of the activity* (please see note on artists' pay following this section)
- Overhead/administrative costs that are **appropriate and in proportion** to the activities proposed, including planning and preparation costs
- Development costs
- Studio or space costs
- Rehearsal costs
- Making and physical-production costs
- Production, co-production and distribution costs
- Publishing costs
- Recording or documenting costs
- Hire of equipment, space or venue if the hire is essential to the delivery of the activity
- Marketing, PR and public engagement costs
- Accommodation, daily expenses and travel.

Access costs for artists or participants² with disabilities

The Arts Council is committed to making our funding programmes, and the work that we fund accessible to everyone.

The Arts Council takes the definition of disability from the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which states: *'Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.'*

If your application is successful, there are two types of access costs that your grant can support:

- Personal access costs

² The Arts Council defines participants as those who express themselves creatively by taking part in artistic activities.

- Costs for making your work accessible to others.

What is a personal access cost?

Access costs for artists or participants with disabilities cover any requirements you may have in order to remove barriers that might stop you from completing your proposal. For example, this may include costs towards additional time needed to complete an element of your proposal or additional assistance required to deliver your proposed activity.

If you wish to include personal access costs, please upload the following information with your application:

- A short document outlining the access needs and the related costs
- You should include an amount for personal access costs within the Individual Activity Budget (IAB) template (see section 2 below on what is required to make an application). This figure should also be included in the total amount you request.

What are costs for making work accessible to others?

We want to ensure that more people can enjoy high-quality arts experiences and that everyone can get access to, and enjoy, the work we fund. We consider the cost of making your activities accessible to audiences as a normal part of your work.

You should include any costs you will need to meet in order to make your activity accessible to a wide range of people, including audiences with access needs, in your Individual Activity Budget. For example:

- Having an ISL interpreter for your event or performance
- Using an audio description service
- Making your website compatible with screen readers
- Producing exhibition materials in other formats such as in Braille or audio.

Please show how you are making your work accessible in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion section of the application form and show the cost within the Individual Activity Budget (IAB) template. To see how we assess

your application, see section 3.1 of in these *Guidelines for Applicants*.

What if my award is less than I requested?

If you are offered an award that is less than you requested, we will ask you to provide a revised budget and we will discuss with you how you plan to deliver your proposed activity. We would not expect you to dilute or remove any access support you included in your application.

1.10 How much can I apply for?

No upper limit has been set on the amount that you may apply for. However, the Arts Council operates under budgetary constraints and the scheme is very competitive. We also need to ensure support for a wide range of artforms and arts-practice areas.

The average grant over the previous three rounds of the programme was **c.€62,000**.

This is a very competitive funding programme. Details of successful applicants under this programme in previous years is available on the Arts Council website in the [Who We've Funded](#) section.

*** Note on pay and conditions for artists**

The Arts Council is committed to improving the pay and conditions of artists. In this context, the Arts Council has published a [policy](#) on the fair and equitable remuneration and contracting of artists. This includes best-practice principles for all those working in the arts to aspire to.

All artists engaged on Arts Council-funded activities must be fairly paid. Anyone seeking funding from the Arts Council must tell us how they will ensure that artists will receive fair pay and conditions, and provide details in their budgets. We use this to assess applications and will not offer funding if we consider pay to be too low or below industry standards or where the terms of engagement are not appropriate. Through our reporting mechanisms we will monitor compliance.

As part of your application, you will be asked to set out your approach to ensuring that artists are paid properly, and also to provide information on the average rates of pay and/or range of fees that you propose to pay to independent/freelance artists and to other arts professionals.

1.11 What costs can I not apply for?

You cannot apply for:

- Costs that do not fit the purpose of the programme
- Ongoing overhead or administrative costs where there is no relationship with the activities for which you are requesting funding
- Capital costs.

2. What is required to make an application

Please note that items 1–6 below are **mandatory in all cases**:

1. A completed application form.
2. A completed Arts Activity Report (AAR) template. This is a Microsoft Excel template that is available for 2025 (and 2026 if you are applying for funding across 24 months). This can be downloaded from the [Available funding page](#) of the Arts Council website.

Where possible we encourage you to combine the following supporting material into single attachments, as follows:

3. No less than one and no more than three recent examples of previous work of your organisation or the artists/artistic personnel involved in this application (e.g. a programme; previous writing/publications, published or unpublished; sample manuscripts; still or moving images or sound files; reviews; extracts from evaluation or other reports). Examples of written work should be **no more** than ten pages in length. Video or sound files should be **no more** than five minutes in length.

Note: you have the option to provide URL links to samples of work if you wish (see section 4.5 below for further details).

Suggested filename: **Examples_of_work_name of applicant_AGF2025**

4. In order to ensure that applications can be assessed on a like-for-like basis and that assessors can see the details of how costs have been arrived at, you must provide a detailed budget for each of the activities within your proposal. We recommend that you use the Individual Activity Budget (IAB) template, or equivalent, for this purpose. This can be downloaded from the [Available funding page](#) of the Arts Council website. If you choose not to use the template, we advise that you refer to it to see the type of information that is useful to include in a detailed budget.

Note: if you do not provide detailed budgets for **each** of your proposed activities, we will not be able to evaluate the overall feasibility of your application.

Suggested filename: **Detailed_Budgets_name of applicant_AGF2025**

Note: Theatre applicants must complete the Theatre Projects Budget template.

5. Short biographies of all *confirmed* key artists and artistic personnel (e.g. producers, programmers, directors) in delivering the proposed programme of work (a paragraph or so will be sufficient). Where artists are not confirmed, you should submit a document outlining how artists will be identified and/or the types of artists/collaborators you have worked with previously.

Suggested filename: **Biographies_ name of applicant_AGF2025**

6. Documentary evidence of *confirmed* support outlining co-production, co-creation, partnership and financial commitments.* We will take into account the level of partnership funding that you have secured (cash or in-kind) when assessing the feasibility of your application. Inclusion of an agreed memorandum of understanding with partners will strengthen your application. You do not need to include 'letters of support' from partners that are not offering cash or in-kind support for co-production, co-creation, partnership or financial commitments

Where all partnerships are not yet confirmed, your application must demonstrate that your plans are feasible by providing evidence of your track record with regard to co-production and co-creation.

* **Note:** you will be required to demonstrate evidence of a formal partnership agreement with any such partners as a condition of funding, should your application be successful.

Suggested filename: **Partnership_evidence_ name of applicant_AGF2025**

Depending on the nature of your proposals, the following supporting materials will strengthen your application and it is **strongly recommended** that you include any that are relevant:

7. If your proposal involves enabling artists with access or disability requirements to create work, and/or enabling individuals with access or disability issues to attend or engage with your work, you should provide a short document setting out these costs and how they were arrived at.

Suggested filename: **Access_costs_name of applicant_AGF2025**

8. If your proposal involves commissioning artists/creative people, you should include a copy of your commissioning policy or a brief document setting out your approach. This will describe the steps you will take to deliver a transparent approach to commissioning, and one that ensures quality, equality and diversity.

Suggested filename: **Commissioning_statement_name of applicant_AGF2025**

9. Public-engagement plans

If your proposal includes public engagement activities, you can include an audience and/or, distribution and/or, engagement plan, as appropriate. In the event that your proposal involves more than one of the above activities, you can provide a combined audience/distribution/engagement plan.

- a) **Audience plan:** if your proposal includes activities involving presenting, performing, exhibiting or publishing work for the public, you should provide an outline plan as to who the work is aimed at and how they will be reached. We are calling this an audience plan, but it may be known as a marketing plan, and may contain elements of an engagement plan also (for example if the work is targeted at particular communities).

Suggested filename: **Audience_plan_name of applicant_AGF2025**

- b) **Distribution/dissemination plan:** if your proposal involves the presentation or distribution of work (e.g. a publication or exhibition) in more than a single place, you should provide an outline distribution/dissemination plan. This will describe details of where, when and how the activities will be presented/curated/distributed (e.g. which arts or other venues, public spaces, shops, libraries, cinemas). Where relevant, this may cover physical and digital distribution.

Suggested filename: **Distribution/dissemination_plan_name of applicant_AGF2025**

- c) If your proposal includes activities involving the participation of, or the active engagement by, the public or targeted groups (including professional artists), you should provide an outline engagement plan, setting out who will be engaged and the nature of that engagement.

Suggested filename: **Engagement_plan_name of applicant_AGF2025**

For further guidance about the above, see the [Public Engagement page](#) on the Arts Council website.

- 10.** If your proposal involves children and young people, you should include information about how children and young people will have a voice in decision-making. You may include this as a section in your engagement plan or as a separate document. For more information, please see: [The National Framework for Children and Young People's Participation in Decision Making](#)

Suggested filename: **Children_and_young_people_name of applicant_AGF2025**

- 11.** If your proposal involves providing workspace for artists, you should provide photographic evidence of the potential workspace/physical resources. In the event that you have no space confirmed, you should provide a description of the specifications of the type of space you are intending to use.

Suggested filename: **Artists_workspaces_name of applicant_AGF2025**

- 12.** If your proposal involves working with animals, you should provide a copy of your animal-welfare protection policies and procedures. For guidance, see [this document](#) on the Arts Council website.

Suggested filename: **Animal_welfare_name of applicant_AGF2025**

We **will not** accept as part of your application:

- Any supporting material you provide that is not listed above
- Any supporting material that is not uploaded as part of your online application
- Any supporting material submitted after the application deadline.

Note: if you do not provide a completed application form, a completed AAR template and items 1–6 as listed above, we may consider your application **ineligible**, and we will write to tell you that your application has not made it to the assessment stage.

If you do not provide any of the additional documentation that is relevant to your application and that we strongly recommend that you include, it may impact our ability to properly assess your application, which could reduce your

chances of receiving funding.

For applications involving children and young people under the age of 18

The Arts Council requires all individuals and organisations providing services (e.g. cultural, recreational, educational) to *children and young people under the age of eighteen* to have suitable child-protection policies and procedures in place. When making an application, you **must** indicate in section 1 of the application form whether or not your proposal is relevant to this age group.

- If you answer 'Yes' to this question in the application form and your application is successful, as a condition of funding you will be required to confirm and demonstrate that you have suitable child-protection policies and procedures in place.
- If successful, you will be required to complete the Arts Council's Child Protection and Welfare Quality Assurance Self-audit at <https://childprotection.artscouncil.ie/>. Please visit www.tusla.ie for more information on Children First.
- You will also be required to update your details in the Profile Information tab in your Online Services account (do this by going to the 'Update your account' section).

For applications involving vulnerable adults

When making an application, you **must** indicate in section 1 of the application form whether or not your proposal involves work with or for vulnerable persons. By ticking the Yes box, you are indicating that you will work with, or present work to, this cohort as part of your proposal, and that you acknowledge that you have familiarised yourself with and adhere to the [National Policy & Procedures on Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse](#).*

* Please note that you may be asked to provide more evidence of adherence to these policies should your application be successful.

Note: links to streaming platforms may be used to provide samples of work. Stand-alone supporting material such as CVs and letters of support, etc. **must** be uploaded as separate documents with your application.

3. How we assess your application

3.1 Assessment criteria

Applications that are deemed eligible will be passed on for assessment.

Assessment will be based on the following criteria:

Criterion 1: Artistic quality

Here we assess the quality associated with the idea, the proposed arts activity, and the artistic people involved. We will look both at what you propose to do and how you describe those activities. We will look at how you show excellence in terms of ambition, originality, experimentation, innovation, competency and collaboration in what you propose. We will also take account of the artform or arts-practice context for your proposed arts activity.

- We will take into account the quality and ambition of work that you, your organisation, or any collaborators named within your application have created, made or produced within the last three years.
- Where your ideas involve the development or creation of artistic works, we will assess how you show excellence in the process of developing and creating work.
- Where your ideas involve providing services, resources and facilities, we will assess how you show the quality of what you propose and the demand from within, and relevance to, your area of art practice.
- In all cases we will assess the artistic track record or potential of the artists and creative people involved as shown in their biographies and the other supporting materials you submit.
- We will assess how the approach you describe to selecting artists and partners will ensure quality, equality and diversity.

Criterion 2: Outcomes that deliver on the objectives of Arts Grants Funding

Here we assess how the outcomes of what you propose will meet the objectives of the funding programme and, in so doing, contribute to the development of the arts in Ireland.³

³ Please reference the policy priorities within *Making Great Art Work*, the Arts Council's ten-year strategy, and to artform and arts-practice policies.

In all cases we will assess how you show that the outcomes of what you propose will:

- Provide a supportive environment for a range of artists to develop and create work; **and/or**
- Provide opportunities for the public to engage with the arts
and
- Contribute to the ecology of the arts within your area of practice.

Where your proposals involve an engagement with the public – whether at a local, national or international level – we will assess how you show excellence, ambition and innovation in your process and approach to growing and diversifying audiences, including how you hear from the groups you engage with and respond to their interests and experiences.

Finally, we will assess how you plan to evaluate these outcomes.

Responding to the question on equality, diversity and inclusion

Since launching its [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion \(EDI\) Policy](#), in 2019, the Arts Council has committed to embedding the policy's principles in respect of **equality of access, opportunities and outcomes** into everything we do. The Arts Council is particularly keen to support work that embeds Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) principles and practices in a thoughtful and proactive way.

The Arts Council's EDI Policy considers ten protected characteristics. These are: gender, sexual orientation, civil status, family status, religion, age, disability, race, membership of the Traveller community, and socio-economic status.

In the application form, we ask applicants to Arts Grant Funding to describe how the planned activities incorporate the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion to deliver equitable opportunities or outcomes for those involved.

This can take many forms – e.g.

- The project applicant self-identifying as sharing one or more of the protected characteristics outlined in the Arts Council's EDI policy (link above)
- The lead artist(s) involved in the project sharing one or more of the protected characteristics, particularly from under-represented groups.

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- The themes or focus of the project being on a specific equality issue or involving working with a particular community of interest that shares one or more of the protected characteristics outlined in our policy.

What details should you provide in the application form?

- Write 'not applicable' if you do not believe the activities proposed in this round will make a specific contribution to the policy.
- It is very unlikely that your application will reference each of the ten protected characteristics covered in the policy. Focus on the aspects that are relevant to your arts area and the activities you propose. In assessing the answer to this question, we will be looking at the potential of your activities to address inequities in the arts and the proposed approach.
- Tell us briefly why you believe your proposals have the potential to address inequalities in the arts – e.g. you may have evidence of historical inequalities in a particular arts area; you may be working with partners that have a track record in engaging under-represented communities or artists.
- You may be introducing new processes or ways of working to support access. Tell us how you are making your work accessible, including to those taking part and to audiences with access needs.
- Describe what the change or outcome may look like for the people involved should your project be successful.

Criterion 3: Feasibility

Here we assess your capacity to deliver the proposed activity. We will assess how you have shown:

- The track record of the people involved in managing, administering and delivering the proposal.
- The capacity of the applicant entity/individual to deliver the proposed programme.
- That all participating artists will get fair pay and conditions (please see the note on pay and conditions for artists in section 1.9 above).
- That plans to engage/commission artists or other partners are transparent and realistic.

- That identified partners and/or collaborators are committed to what is proposed and the level of confirmed partnership funding or other commitments.
- That the proposed budget is realistic and will be managed appropriately.
- That other sources of income are secure and realistic, and that access to any required non-financial resources is in place.
- That the timetable or schedule is realistic and that technical requirements will be met.
- That audience or public-engagement targets, where relevant, are specific, realistic and achievable, and that there are solid plans in place to achieve this. This may include audience or participant numbers and/or more qualitative outcomes where relevant.
- That any possible risks have been identified and appropriate mitigation is in place.
- Where an applicant has other projects or programmes of work outstanding, this may be taken into account when assessing the capacity to deliver the proposed activities.

We will use what you say within your application, and what you show through relevant supporting material, to make this assessment.

3.2 Scoring

Assessors will use their professional arts expertise and judgement to score applications against each of the criteria. Their evaluation and score will be based on:

- The information you give in the application form and supporting material
- Their knowledge of your previous work
- Their knowledge of the general arts landscape
- The artform or arts-practice context in which you are working
- The competitive context for the award.

The scores to be used are as follows:

**Numeric
score**

Explanation

6	Exceptional	The application addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion comprehensively and in an exemplary manner. There are no shortcomings whatsoever. This score is reserved for the very best elements of applications and will be used very sparingly.
4.5		At the top end of 'Excellent'.
5	Excellent	The application addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion convincingly and successfully. It provides all the information and evidence needed and there are no concerns or areas of weakness.
4.5		At the top end of 'Very good'.
4	Very good	The application addresses the criterion very well. It gives clear information on the evidence needed. Any concerns or areas of weakness are minor.
3.5		At the top end of 'Good'.
3	Good	The application addresses the criterion well, although some improvements could be made. It gives information on nearly all of the evidence needed, although there are some gaps.
2.5	Sufficient	The criterion is addressed well enough to merit consideration for funding, but there are reservations about the level of detail provided and/or the quality of the response within the overall competitive context.
2.0 or lower	Not sufficient	There is either insufficient or no evidence addressing the criterion to merit support.

We will award funding on a competitive basis within an artform or arts-practice area. This means that we will award funding to the highest-scoring applicants until we reach the overall budget allocation within each artform or arts-practice area.

Note: if your proposal scores 2.0 or below against any of the criteria, it will not be offered funding.

Where your application achieves a higher score, we will try to award funding to meet the requirements of the entirety of your proposal where possible. However, in some cases we may not be in a position to support the full ambition of your request. This may be because we believe that some activities are underdeveloped or not compelling within the overall competitive context of the award, or because of the need to ensure a balance of support across artforms and geographic areas.

This means that, while all applicants who achieve a high-enough score to merit funding will get funding, the amount of funding will depend on the number of activities within your proposal that we believe merit support, and the overall level of demand within your arts area.

We will also consider the relative value for money of your proposal when deciding the level of grant to award.

4. Making your application

The deadline for applications is **5.30pm, Thursday 14 March 2024**

Please prepare and submit your application **well before** the deadline.

4.1 Register with the Arts Council's Online Services

All applications **must** be made through the Arts Council's Online Services; applications made in any other way (by post, fax or email) will **not** be accepted.

You **must** have an Online Services account to apply for funding. If you do not already have an Online Services account, sign up by filling out the registration form here: <https://onlineservices.artscouncil.ie/register.aspx>.

Within five working days you will get an email containing your unique ARN (Artist Reference Number) and a password that you can use to sign in to Online Services.

Requirements for using Online Services

Note: you will need to use a computer/laptop to submit your application. Our Online Services website does not work on phones or tablets.

Your computer and Internet browser will need to meet the following requirements to use Online Services successfully:

PC Windows 7 operating system or a newer version of Windows *with* browser versions: Microsoft Edge (v.94) or Firefox (v.27) or Chrome (v.33), or a newer version of any of these browsers.

Mac Mac OS X v10.5 Leopard or a newer version of Mac operating system *with* browser versions: Safari (v.3.1) or Firefox (v.27) or Chrome (v.32) or Microsoft Edge (v.94), or a newer version of any of these browsers.

Note: if Safari 11 prevents the upload of documents, use a newer version of Safari or use a different browser such as Firefox, Chrome or Microsoft Edge.

Note: you will also need to have Microsoft Word or OpenOffice Writer installed to complete the application form itself. OpenOffice Writer is free software that can be downloaded from here: <https://www.openoffice.org>.

OpenOffice Users

Please refer to our video *Using OpenOffice to download, complete and upload the application form* at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iT9XxgmgoEo>

You **must** use OpenOffice Writer version 4.0.1 or earlier. More recent versions of OpenOffice Writer than 4.0.1 have changed how our application forms appear when they are submitted through Online Services.

Important notes for Apple Mac users

- Note the section in the YouTube video (at 1 min. 20 secs; link provided above) that deals with the issue of downloading version 4.0.1 on Macs with the operating system mac OS Mojave or an earlier version installed.
- You cannot download OpenOffice 4.0.1 onto a Mac with the operating system macOS Catalina. If your Mac has this operating system or a newer version installed, you will have to download and use OpenOffice version 4.1.10 or newer.

If you cannot meet, or do not understand, any of these requirements, please contact us for advice as far as possible in advance of the deadline.

Give yourself enough time to complete the application

Become familiar with the Online Services website **well before** the deadline and before you prepare your application.

Make sure to leave yourself enough time to upload your application.

Remember that upload times can be much longer than download times, so it may take you longer than you think to upload your supporting materials.

Technical support

If you need technical support while making an online application, contact us.

- Email: onlineservices@artscouncil.ie
- Phone: 01 618 0200/01 6180243

Please provide a contact phone number and make sure that you are available to receive a return call from us.

We deal with queries on a first-come first-served basis. We recommend that you report any technical issues to us **well in advance** of the deadline.

Please note that there is often a high volume of calls as the deadline approaches.

Technical-support calls received after **2.00pm** on the closing date may not be resolved before the deadline

4.2 Download the application form

1. Log in to Online Services (OLS).
2. On your home page within OLS, click the **'Make an application'** button.
3. On the **'Making an application'** screen, select your organisation's primary contact for this application, and click **'Next'**. The screen **'1. Making an application: Choose a funding programme'** should appear.
4. In section A, do two things.
 - a. From the **'Funding'** drop-down list, select your funding programme.
 - b. In the **'Your reference'** field, type a unique reference for your application. This will help you identify your application on your home page.
5. In section B, click the buttons to download the guidance notes and application form.

To complete your application form, you **must** have the correct software.

- Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel, **or**
- OpenOffice Writer and OpenOffice Calc, which you can download from <http://www.openoffice.org>

Remember, you fill in the application form on your computer and then upload it through Online Services.

4.3 Fill in the application form

Once you have downloaded the application form, follow the guidance within the form as to how to complete it. Please note in particular our policy on artists' pay, as noted in section 1.9 above.

A note on max. character/word count: your answers to each question will be subject to a maximum character count (including spaces). It is fine to write shorter answers if you cover the points you need to in your response.

4.4 Complete the AAR template

Please see the next section, section 5 of these guidelines, for details on how to complete the AAR template.

4.5 Prepare the supporting material required for the application

See section **2 What is required to make an application?** (above).

You **must** upload supporting material with your application and financial report. If you do not upload supporting material, your application is incomplete and we will not evaluate it.

If you have supporting material that is not in an electronic format, you should scan it so that you can upload it.

The total combined limit for all supporting material uploaded with a single application is **40MB**.

Acceptable file formats

These are the acceptable file formats for your supporting material.

File type	File extension
text files	rtf, doc, docx, txt
image files	jpg, gif, tiff, png
sound files	wav, mp3, m4a
video files	avi, mov, mp4
spreadsheets	xls, xlsx
Adobe Acrobat Reader files	pdf

Note: if you have completed your application form as a **.docx** file, and you are confident that your application form is filled in correctly (including typing inside the grey fields) but online services displays a message saying 'Cannot upload form', please try saving it as a **.doc** file and uploading it again.

Submitting URL links

Note: links to streaming platforms may be used to provide samples of work. Stand-alone supporting material such as CVs and letters of support etc. **must** be uploaded as separate documents with your application.

You may provide links to material hosted on YouTube (www.youtube.com) or other file-sharing sites (e.g. Vimeo, SoundCloud) instead of uploading the material directly. To do this, copy the URL (the full address of where your material is hosted) into a Microsoft Word/OpenOffice Writer or PDF document and upload it as a weblink-supporting document.

While not an exclusive list, examples of acceptable sharing platforms would be YouTube, Vimeo, SoundCloud, Bandcamp.

Please note that we will not accept links to file-sharing sites (e.g. Google Drive), nor links to social-media platforms nor to individual applicants' websites.

Note: assessors will only view materials as submitted by you according to the URL link that you provide. Check that the link works from within the document you upload – i.e. that it links correctly to your material.

If you do not wish material you upload to YouTube for your application to be publicly viewable, you can flag your video as 'unlisted' in the settings. Please **do not** flag your material as 'private' as it will not be accessible to Arts Council assessors.

4.6 Review the application checklist

Use this checklist in the application form to review your application materials. If you have all the items on the checklist, you are ready to upload and submit your application.

4.7 Make your application online

Once you have completed your application form, filled in the online AAR, and gathered your supporting materials, you can submit your completed application.

To do this, log in to Online Services and follow the instructions on screen to complete your application online.

5. How to complete the AAR template

The AAR template is a spreadsheet that captures your detailed financial, audience and staff figures, as well as summary information about the activities that you plan to undertake in 2025.

The AAR process has been introduced for three reasons:

- As part of our commitment to get better at monitoring the outcomes and impacts of our investments as a tool for advocacy, advice, policy development and case-making.
- As a means of assessing and tracking applicants' work in a consistent and systematic manner.
- To act as the basis for funding agreements with grant recipients.

Note: you must upload your AAR template as a Microsoft Excel or OpenOffice Calc file. Do not convert it to a pdf file.

You should complete the AAR template as follows:

Part 1	Overhead expenditure and income
Core expenditure	<p>This is any overhead or administration costs you may have that are not <u>directly attributable</u> to the arts activities that you propose to undertake.</p> <p>This is so you can provide us with an overview of your organisation's operating model if you wish. You should not include in this section any costs for which you are looking for funding.</p> <p>Note: Do not list the same overhead or administration costs at the core level and also at the activity level.</p>
Income not directly related to activities proposed	<p>This is income not directly resulting from, or attributable to, specific activities.</p> <p>Examples include: local-authority grant income that is not being directly used against a specific activity; income from sponsorship/fundraising that is not directed towards a specific activity; rental income or income from fees for services provided.</p>

If you do not have any Core expenditure or income, you can leave this part of the AAR blank.

Part 2.1

Activity detail

A. Activity name

The name of your activity – this should be the same as the names you gave each activity in section 3, tables A (and B if you are applying for twenty-four months) of your application form.

B. Artform

Select the **primary** or main artform for the activity from the drop-down menu (or select ‘more than one artform’ if more than one artform is involved).

C. Activity type

Choose the activity type from the drop-down menu that **most closely** represents the activity that you are undertaking. These are:

- **Ticketed performance or event:** a performance to which tickets are sold or distributed (this would include a free event if there is a booking process)
- **Non-ticketed performance or event:** any event (e.g. street performance, parade, outdoor show) where people do not need to purchase a ticket to attend
- **Book/publication:** a book, such as a novel or poetry collection, or a publication, such as a periodical or journal, whether physical or online
- **Production and/or distribution of artefact:** e.g. the creation of a series of prints, or other art objects that might be sold or otherwise distributed
- **Broadcast/online/digital distribution of work:** the broadcast or distribution of a work online or digitally – e.g. a musical performance, online artwork, the online publication of a magazine or

journal

- **Exhibition:** a visual-art exhibition, including gallery installations of sculpture, art film, sound installations, etc.
- **Participatory, education or outreach activity:** any activity where people are involved in artistic production by making, doing or creating something, or contributing ideas to a work of art, regardless of their skill level, or *taking part* in workshops or other similar activities
- **New-work development activity:** any activity where the purpose is the development of a new piece of work – e.g. the dramaturgical process for a new play, the editing process for a new book
- **Research/archiving/digitisation:** any activity where the main purpose is research or the archiving or digitisation of materials relating to arts practices
- **Artist-focused/artform development activity:** any activity where the main focus is on supporting artists/creative people and helping to develop their practice or their work, or ancillary events such as information clinics, seminars or conferences aimed at professional artists

D. Primary target of activity

Choose the primary target from the drop-down menu that **most closely** represents the target group for the activity that you are undertaking. These are:

- **General audiences** – mainly, though not exclusively, individuals of 18 years of age and over who attend or engage of their own volition, not as part of a targeted group or community of interest

- **Families** – work intended for parents/guardians and children alike
- **Children up to 15 years of age** – those who are more likely to attend as part of a school or other organised group, or to be brought by parents or guardians, but for whom the work is aimed exclusively
- **Young people 16–23 years of age** – e.g. Leaving Cert students, college students, youth groups
- **Particular communities** – where the primary target of an activity is a specific group or community of interest – e.g. older people, people with disabilities, people from particular geographic areas (urban and rural, especially remote) , members of minority communities, people who experience socio-economic disadvantage status (by social class, education, income)
- **Practising artists or arts professionals** – e.g. a resource organisation focused on supporting professional development or serving a community of artists

Part 2.2	Financial detail
E. Total cost	The total direct cost to your organisation of undertaking the activity.
F. Earned income	Any income earned from ticket sales, box-office or sales income from books or other artefacts.
G. Income from other sources	Any income from sources other than sales – e.g. sponsorship, fundraising or grant income from sources other than the Arts Council.
H. Outcome/subsidy	This is a sum that will be calculated automatically, and is the difference between the cost of the activity and

required any income against it.

Part 2.3 Audience/engagement/employment/event numbers

I. Audience/engagement number – paying For the purposes of data gathering, ‘Engagement’ is taken to mean four things:

J. Audience/engagement number – free

- 1. Audience** members, readers, listeners, viewers, attenders, visitors or others *engaging* with art and arts events (e.g. recitals, book sales, concerts, plays, dance performances, art exhibitions, literary events)
- 2.** Members of the public *participating* in the making or creation of art or in arts-related workshops, classes or events (e.g. post-show discussions, public Q&As)
- 3.** People *volunteering* to work on or at an event – e.g. an arts festival or as front-of-house staff at a local arts centre (**note**: this is not the same as *participants* in arts events, where they are actively involved in the creation, making or presenting of work)
- 4.** Artists, arts professionals and/or other practitioners *taking part* in workshops, classes or other developmental activity.

In all of the above cases, individuals are either paying or not paying to attend/engage with the art. **They are not being paid.**

Need further help compiling your engagement numbers? Additional guidance on completing this section of the application form is available on our website at <http://www.artscouncil.ie/public-engagement>.

K. Artists employed: The number of artists employed, contracted or

number commissioned directly in the delivery of an activity. Give the number as a single figure, regardless of the duration of each individual’s engagement. So, an actor employed over eight weeks or a curator engaged across six months would still be an artist-employed figure of ‘1’ each against the activity for which they are employed.

Note: if you are co-producing or hosting work and you do not know the number of artists directly employed, you can leave this section blank.

L. Others employed: number Professionals employed, contracted or commissioned in a non-arts capacity directly to deliver an activity – e.g. administration or technical personnel, facilitators, marketing or finance professionals.

M. No. of performances/objects/events/days open This is to help us to understand how many opportunities the intended beneficiaries of your proposed activities have to engage with each activity – i.e. the number of individual performances of a play or dance piece; the number of books printed; the number of art objects created; or the number of workshops, classes or other events held. In the case of visual arts, it is taken to mean the **number of days** that an exhibition is open to the public.

Note on overhead/administration costs

As stated above, any overhead/administration costs need to be appropriate and in proportion to the activities you propose in your application. Arts Grant Funding is not intended to support ongoing salary or other overhead costs that are not related to these activities.

You are asked to account for costs that relate to any permanently employed artists or other professionals within individual activity budgets (e.g. if the artistic director of an organisation is directing a play, or the director of a gallery is curating an exhibition) if you are seeking support towards those costs.

Note on listing activities

The total number of activities allowed within the AAR template is **twenty**. If you have more than twenty individual activities, rather than providing details of **every** individual activity or event, you should **group** your proposed activities by artform or by type.

For example:

- Performing-arts activities (e.g. theatre, dance, circus)
- Visual-arts activities
- Music activities
- Literature activities
- Activities or events for children/young people
- Local-community/amateur activities
- Development activities

6. How your application is processed

We follow the steps below to consider applications, decide on them, and contact applicants. This helps us make sure that our system for making decisions is open, fair and transparent.

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- 1 After you submit your application, you should receive two emails:
 - The first will be sent immediately and will acknowledge your application.
 - The second should arrive a few minutes later. It will contain your application number, which we will use in all correspondence about your application.

Note: these emails only mean that our online system recognises that you have submitted an application. They **do not** mean that your application is eligible to go forward for assessment.

If you **do not** receive the email with your application number, contact onlineservices@artscouncil.ie

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- 2 Once we have received your application, we will check to make sure it is eligible for Arts Grant Funding.

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- 3 If we decide your application is not eligible, either because it does not meet the purpose for the award or because you have not fully satisfied the requirements for Arts Grant Funding, we will write to tell you that your application is ineligible and will not be assessed.

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- 4 Your application will be scored and assessments written based on the criteria in section 2.1 of these guidelines.

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- 5 Draft assessment and scores go through a moderation process overseen by an independent moderator to ensure a consistency of approach to assessment and scoring.

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- 6 We will prepare recommendations for Council (for applications requesting €50,000 or above) and for the Arts Council Executive (for applications requesting less than €50,000).

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- 7 The Council and the Executive will review and discuss the recommendations, and make final decisions on funding amounts based on the budget and the overall arts context. **Note:** for reasons to do with
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meeting its overall strategic priorities, the Council (or the Executive for applications requesting less than €50,000) may decide to alter or to overturn the recommendation of staff. In that context it is possible that Council or the Executive may decide to award less than the recommended amount, or to not fund at all. In such cases, changes to staff recommendations will be documented and communicated.

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- 8** We will send you a letter about our decision. If your application has been successful, we will include information about what you should do next.
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