

Guide for applicants:

Shakespeare at the Tobacco Factory Bursary Fund

Please call or email us if you have any questions about this grant programme. Our contact details are in section 8.

1. About the Shakespeare at the Tobacco Factory (STF) Bursary Fund

The STF Bursary Fund is a programme open to all students across all courses at Bristol Old Vic Theatre School.

For 21 years, Shakespeare at the Tobacco Factory theatre company produced plays by Shakespeare and other classic authors at Tobacco Factory Theatres in Bristol.

During this time, large-cast productions mostly directed by founder Andrew Hilton, gained praise from national media and developed new audiences. The theatre company worked with guest directors including Sir Jonathan Miller, Polina Kalinina, Richard Twyman and Elizabeth Freestone.

In 2021 Shakespeare at the Tobacco Factory (STF) stopped producing plays. Instead, the remaining funds was used to establish a bursary grants programme offered through Quartet Community Foundation. The bursary programme supports the theatre company's aims of encouraging and fostering an appreciation of the performing arts; to enable people to realise their ambitions in theatre; and to promote greater access and diversity for actors and theatre creatives.

The Shakespeare at the Tobacco Factory Bursary Fund has been established to address and support the furtherance of education of the public in the appreciation of the performing arts in all their forms by providing bursary grants to enable training, study or development in the performing arts and to promote greater access and diversity for actors and theatre creatives.

The Fund is managed by Quartet Community Foundation, to whom all correspondence should be addressed.

2. What you can apply for

The fund will offer financial assistance to students on /or joining one of the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School's courses. The STF bursaries are specifically targeted to help students develop your creative practice or increase your employability, prioritising students who are

experiencing hardship and financial barriers to completing their studies. This is separate to Bristol Old Vic Theatre School's existing Hardship Fund.

3. Who can apply?

All Bristol Old Vic Theatre School students may apply. The fund will prioritise students who are experiencing hardship and financial barriers to completing their studies.

4. Grant Awards

For 2025/26, awards of up to £750 each will be available from the Fund. If successful, the bursary grant will be paid to students in April at the beginning of the summer term.

5. How to Apply

- The fund will open for applications on 12th January 2026.
- Please complete and submit the application form, obtained from Quartet Community Foundation website <https://quartetcf.org.uk/grants-support/current-grant-programmes/>
- Provide details about your personal situation, explaining how a grant would support your creative practice and employability.
- Outline how you would use the funds and how this activity would benefit your education and career.
- Ensure each section of the application stays within the 250-word limit.
- A reference from your course leader will be requested by Quartet.
- The closing date for applications is 1pm on 12 February 2026.

6. How applications will be assessed

Applications will be assessed by a panel of Bristol Old Vic Theatre School staff and Quartet staff members. The panel will evaluate and score applicants based on:

- **Financial hardship** and barriers to completing your studies
- **Planned use of funding** to develop your creative practice
- **Planned use of funding** to improve your employability

Applications will be assessed during March 2026.

Scores will be ranked and discussed to determine award recipients.

Awards will be made in April at the start of the summer term.

7. Reporting on your grant

If you are successful, you will be required to submit a written Feedback Report at the end of the academic year following the award of the bursary grant. This report will need to detail how the expenditure of the grant has helped you to achieve your goals. If you receive a grant, please acknowledge it somewhere via this sentence “This project/play/etc was supported by a grant from the Shakespeare at the Tobacco Factory Bursary Fund.”. We may also request marketing permission from you to help with future promotion of the Bursary Fund, but you are welcome to remain anonymous.

If for any reason you leave the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School during the year of the award, we may recover some of the bursary awarded.

8. Need more information?

If you need more information, please contact:

Yan Lau, Quartet Community Foundation, Royal Oak House, Royal Oak Avenue, Bristol, BS1 4GB. Phone: 0117 989 7705 Email: yan.lau@quartetcf.org.uk

How we collect and hold your data

The personal information collected via the application form is collected to process applications for grants from Quartet. All information is collected in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA), and the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 (GDPR). For further information see our Privacy Policy at <http://quartetcf.org.uk/privacy-policy/>