



Guide for Applicants

Bristol City Council Cultural Investment Programme: Culture Fund

Please call or email us if you have any questions about this grant programme. Our contact details are in section 10 of this document. Please take the time to read and understand the following information before applying.

1. Priorities for the Culture Fund

This grant programme aims to make arts and culture accessible for all of Bristol's citizens. Further information on the background of this programme can be found in section 11.

Bristol City Council wants to advance diversity, equity and inclusion in arts and culture for all Bristol's citizens and invest in people, places and partnerships to respond creatively to need.

We will provide grants for Bristol-based artists, creative freelancers or organisations that clearly demonstrate one or more of the following. Applications addressing multiple priorities will be considered more strongly. The funding requested can be to support a project or to support your core activity.

Your project, activity or organisation should:

Address inequality

- Led by people from communities facing inequality and/or
- Designed to creatively benefit communities experiencing disadvantage, including barriers to access, opportunity, or positive life outcomes.

Be focussed on place

- Delivered in and meaningfully engages communities in Bristol City Council's priority areas (see further information below on priority areas)

Promote health and wellbeing

- Supporting wellbeing and promoting physical or mental health through creativity

Bristol City Council has a commitment to positive action on the climate and ecological emergencies. While this is not a requirement for this fund, we encourage projects/activities to meaningfully integrate environmental responsibility into their practice or outcomes.

Priority areas

Bristol continues to have deprivation 'hot spots' that are amongst some of the most deprived areas in the country yet are adjacent to some of the least deprived areas in the country.

We define our priority areas as **neighbourhoods ranked within the 20% most deprived areas** (Indices of Deprivation 2025 - see [map](#))

Our intention is that the grantees for this fund will be as representative as possible in terms of diversity, range of art forms, geographical location and the communities they serve.

2. Who can apply

Applicants can be artists, creative freelancers or organisations **based and working** in the Bristol City Council local authority area. You can check your postcode here [Find your local council - GOV.UK](#)

a) Applying as an individual

Individuals who are 18 or over can apply. You must be an artist or creative freelancer and have a home, studio or workspace address within the Bristol City Council local authority area.

b) Applying as an organisation

Organisations need to be registered in Bristol. This means that you have a main base or headquarters in Bristol City Council's local authority area. You can apply for a grant if you are any of the following:

- Constituted voluntary or community group, where there are at least three unrelated members on the board or management committee
- Registered charity
- not-for-profit company, including Community Interest Companies.
- Registered Society (including Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies)
- A non-affiliated organisation e.g. Community group, collective or organisations who do not have a formal constitution. Please see section 6 for further information if you are applying as a non-affiliated organisation

Registered charities and companies must have at least three registered trustees or directors, with the majority being unrelated and not living at the same address.

If you are a Community Interest Company (CIC) please note you must not be limited by shares.

Please find information about our eligibility criteria on our website at

Where applicable, we would like applicants to demonstrate the following baseline standards to ensure that all grant-funded programmes are well managed and provide good quality services

- A safeguarding policy*
- DBS checked all staff/volunteers involved in activity delivery*
- GDPR Compliant*
- An Equality Policy
- A Health and Safety Policy*
- A Complaints Policy
- Public Liability of £5 million minimum*
- Employer Liability of £5 million minimum

We may award funding to applicants without all baseline standards being met. However, we will do this on the basis that the applicant agrees to develop these areas of practice where required.

*For individuals and non-affiliated groups, these are the essential requirements. Outline approaches to health and safety, GDPR and safeguarding, rather than formal policies, may be acceptable in these instances.

3. What you can apply for

Funding towards arts and culture projects/events/festivals. This can be to continue something you are already doing, or for a new activity, testing new ideas, approaches and partnerships.

Refer to section 1 of this document that outlines how we will prioritise applications.

You can apply for 100% of the funding you need for the project, or you can combine it with other funding you have, or are applying for from other sources, to increase the scale of your project.

The funding should be fully spent between October 2026 and May 2027.

A grant can be towards any reasonable costs for your organisation or project, including:

- core or running costs
- project and activity costs

4. How much can be awarded

Grants are available from £500 up to £5,000 to cover up a period between October 2026 – May 2027.

If you have a mixture of funders, please make it clear in the application the specific activities and costs you want this grant to cover.

5. What this grant programme doesn't fund

- Costs that are incurred before a grant can be awarded.
- Activities that are not arts or culture related and which are not creative/do not develop creativity
- Activities, equipment or events that directly duplicate existing activities funded by Bristol City Council.
- Capital projects, such as building works or funding to support buying equipment.
- Fundraising events, such as charity galas or general appeals
- Social events
- Activities that do not provide public benefit
- Activities that result in personal financial gain, other than salaries
- Parties or fireworks
- Sports/hobby activities, festivals/events without a strong and clear arts or creative focus
- Purchase or use of alcohol and/or tobacco
- Groups/organisations or activities that are giving support to a political party
- Activities that are intended to influence people's religious choices
- Activities that are primarily supporting animal welfare
- Activities that raise funds for other organisations

6. How to apply

You will need to complete an application form and submit by 11 am on 6 August 2026. You can apply online at www.quartetcf.org.uk.

If you are an individual, as well as the completed application form, you will need to provide the following*:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proof of address of home, work studio, space |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If your applications states that you will be working with children and/or adults at risk please confirm that you hold a valid DBS check that can be verified online via the Update Service. We will request your DBS number should your application be successful. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The contact details of a referee. The referee should know your work in a professional capacity but not be directly involved in this work. |

If you are an organisation, as well as the completed application form, you will need to provide the following*:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A constitution/governing document/set of rules. If you are a non-affiliated organisation we may ask to see evidence of an agreement between those managing the organisation that clearly states how the grant funds will be received and managed. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The contact details of at least 3 members of your management committee/board of trustees/board of directors. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A copy of your most recent annual accounts or financial records that show your organisation's balance of funds, income and expenditure. If you do not have financial records that cover a full year, then you will need to provide the records you currently have. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A safeguarding policy that is up-to-date and relevant to your work. Please read more about how we assess a safeguarding policy under our safeguarding FAQs section https://quartetcf.org.uk/apply-for-funding/faqs/. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The contact details of a referee. The referee should know the work of the applicant organisation in a professional capacity but not be directly involved in this work. |

* Please **do not** provide the above documents if you have sent them to Quartet within the past six months unless they have been amended during that time. Please contact us if you have difficulty supplying any of the above supporting documents.

If your organisation does not currently have a bank account:

In the application form, you will need to provide the details of your organisation's bank account. If your organisation does not have its own bank account, you can provide the bank details of another charitable organisation if they meet our eligibility criteria and there is an agreement in place.

If your organisation cannot provide many of the above documents:

Another charitable organisation can apply on your organisation's behalf, provided it can:

- Supply the above documents.
- Have their name as the main contact and be responsible for submitting the application.
- Be responsible for receiving, overseeing and reporting back on the use of any grant awarded.

This will not affect the applicant organisation's eligibility to apply for the maximum annual grant available for its own purposes.

Please contact us if you have any queries about supplying the above supporting documents. Our contact details are in section 10 of this document.

7. What will happen next?

Once we have received your application (including all supporting documents) it will be checked to make sure your request fits the funding criteria. We will contact you by email or phone if we have any questions. Your application will then be reviewed by a decision panel that includes members of Bristol City Council's Arts Development team and other council officers with relevant experience in the areas of Community Development and Public Health. In addition, the panel may involve members of the Citizens 4 Culture initiative to provide insight and expertise but they will not be involved in the final decision-making.

We will email you the panel's decision within 8 weeks of the closing date.

Timetable summary:

Open for applications	Monday 6 July 2026
Application closing date	11am, 6 August 2026
Grant applicants notified of decision	w/c 28 September 2026
Grant period ends	31 May 2027

8. Reporting on the use of your grant

We will send you an End of Grant report form based on when you indicate you will have finished spending the grant. This form asks for details of how the grant was spent, what was achieved and any lessons learnt. Further information is on our website at <https://quartetcf.org.uk/apply-for-funding/faqs/#questions-grant>

9. Further guidance and support

In addition to reading this document, please visit the Frequently Asked Questions page of our website at <https://quartetcf.org.uk/apply-for-funding/faqs/>

10. Contact details

If you need more information or wish to discuss your application before you apply, please contact the Philanthropy Team at Quartet Community Foundation:

Telephone: 0117 989 7700

Email: applications@quartetcf.org.uk

Address: Royal Oak House, Royal Oak Avenue, Bristol BS1 4GB.

11. Further information about the Cultural Investment Programme

The Cultural Investment Programme is how Bristol City Council distributes public money to support arts and culture.

The council's vision is to make arts and culture accessible for all citizens. We know that culture means many different things to different people. When we use the word 'culture', we are referring to creative culture such as music, art, history, heritage, and events where Bristol's diverse citizens can share, celebrate or learn.

By 'accessible', we mean we want everyone to be able to experience and/or participate in arts and culture. We also want to make it as easy as we can for everyone, whatever their access needs, to apply for funding.

For more information, please visit: [Arts and culture funding](#)

The Cultural Investment Programme vision and aims relate directly to Bristol City Council's priorities and plans for the city of Bristol and its citizens, particularly for actively improving inclusivity and growing a green and sustainable cultural economy.

Bristol City Council has safeguarded its Cultural Investment Programme until 2029 and will work in partnership with Quartet Community Foundation to deliver its cultural grants for 2026/27. Quartet is a leading independent grant-maker in the West of England, established in 1986. It has a permanent endowment of around £67 million, making it one of the largest community foundations in the UK. Quartet has an existing strong track record of collaboration with the council.

This partnership is an early step in shaping how the council invests in arts and culture as part of the new Cultural Strategy. It will also begin to respond to learning from the Citizens for Culture Regional Cultural Plan, particularly around being clearer and more open about how funding decisions are made.

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/>