

Wales Cultural Recovery Fund Freelancer Support – Guidance Document



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

1.0 Guidance Notes

This is a grant to provide financial assistance for freelancers in the cultural sectors that are facing financial challenges as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.

1.1 Freelancer Grant - Purpose of the Grant

The purpose of the grant is to support freelancers in the cultural sectors facing financial challenges in the period from April 2020 - March 2021 as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.

1.2 Business Wales

Business Wales provides support for existing businesses and individuals considering starting a business or freelancing, or setting up as a sole trader. The service can help you understand your needs and provide tailored support that include access to online tools, workshops and webinars on a range of business topics, advisers and mentors. Our advisers can help you develop an action plan, provide business and financial advice and help you access other support or wider networks that you might benefit from.

To find out more, please visit www.businesswales.gov.wales.

1.3 Freelancer Grant – Who Can Apply?

Support is available to assist freelancer professionals whose work has direct creative/cultural outcomes, who work in the four key sub sectors:

- The Arts;
- Creative Industries;
- Non Sport related events that have been significantly impacted by the pandemic;
- Arts and Heritage Events;
- Culture and Heritage.

To find out more please visit the eligibility checker on <https://fundchecker.businesswales.gov.wales/culture>

You will also be eligible if you're employed part-time and also have a freelance professional creative practice, however, please note this grant is targeted at freelancers in most need of support due to loss of earnings as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

If you have received previous support from either the Government Job Retention Scheme and Self-employment Income Support Scheme and are experiencing financial challenges you are still eligible for this fund.

We will support freelancers who work in events that have been significantly impacted by the pandemic, including those working in weddings and corporate events, but not sport events.

You will not be eligible:

- If you are a freelancer working in the sport sector;
- You have recently received funding from the Start-Up Grant launched in June 2020 to help new businesses survive the economic consequences of coronavirus (Covid-19).

This funding is specifically for creative/cultural subsectors and roles that have been forced to cease work and/or face difficulty restarting because of the impact of Covid restrictions. Those in roles that have been able to continue at previous or near previous levels of activity (e.g. architects, graphic designers, games designers etc.) with or without support should not apply.

1.4 Freelancers will need to provide:

Proof of identification (one of the following):

- Current UK or EEA photocard driving licence;
- Current signed passport;
- Original Birth certificate;
- Other (please specify).

Proof of address (one of the following):

- Utility bill;
- Bank statement;
- Mobile phone statement.

Proof of some work between April 2019 - July 2020 and / or proof of work cancelled between April 2020 – March 2021. Please note proof of work will not be required for all of the above timeframe. If you are unable to provide the relevant documentation due to maternity/parental or adoption leave please let us know.

Examples of how this can be provided include:

- Contract / cancelled contracts;
- Invoices;
- Reference from employer / confirmation of cancelled work from employer;
- Letter of Engagement / cancelling engagement;
- Arts Council of Wales grant confirmation;
- Other (you will need to specify).

Other Information which must be provided:

- a recent copy of your individual bank statement will need to be provided (this is needed to corroborate bank details, and will not be used as part of the appraisal of your application);

- Unique Tax Reference (UTR) Number (if available) or if you work under PAYE deducted contracts, other evidence such as p60 or proof of employment on short term contracts;
- A CV (or a detailed LinkedIn account).

1.5 Freelancer Grant - How Much Can You Apply For?

A grant of £2,500 is available per individual, to support with immediate cash flow to help through the disrupted period.

All applications will be considered on an individual basis and payment of the grant is at the absolute discretion of the Local Authority within the criteria set out in this guidance.

1.6 Freelancer Pledge

Freelancers are often active participants in their community, making a positive contribution to our social, cultural, environmental and economic well-being. The Well-being of Future Generations Act requires public bodies in Wales to enable a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language as well as think about the long-term impact of their decisions, to work better with people, communities and each other. There is an opportunity now for creative freelancers and public bodies to forge a partnership to achieve this. By encouraging you to sign up to the Freelancer's Pledge we hope you can bring your skills to assist us bring creativity and imagination to all areas of public life.

This might be co-creating solutions with the community, contributing to local development plans and development or bringing new approaches to capital projects. This could be in areas such as culture through to health or sustainable development and built environment. You may already have experience in working in the public realm with partners, be a socially engaged artist, a PTA member or trustee or just an active doer in your community who uses your lived experience to make positive change.

If you are interested in being a part of this, please opt into the Freelancer Pledge. We'll use your details to inform and involve you in developments. We value the skills and experience of freelancers. We would expect any work undertaken by freelancers as a result of the Freelancer Pledge to be paid work.

1.7 Freelancer Grant - How to Apply

Individuals can apply for the grant by accessing the Culture Recovery Fund Eligibility Checker on the Business Wales website <https://fundchecker.businesswales.gov.wales/culture>

If eligible you will be directed to your local authority website where you will be able to send a link to the online application form **or** you can request the application from the Local Authority. Please apply through the local authority you are resident in not where you may spend the majority of your time working in.

You will need to complete all the requested fields together with the required evidence documents. Scanned documents and photos are acceptable forms of evidence for this purpose.

If you would like to complete this form in a different format please call the Business Wales helpline on 03000 6 03000.

If you do not have the facilities to complete this application online please call the Business Wales helpline on 03000 6 03000.

The Freelancer Grant is open to applications from Monday 5th October, with Phase 1 open for a short period of time, and then followed shortly after by a second phase. The length of time each phase is open and the gap between phases will be dependent on the number of applications received. This phased approach is being used to allow us to assess demand against the funding available and also aims to provide enough time for freelancers to be able to prepare applications.

The Local Authority has absolute discretion on the duration and terms of the fund.

2.0 Freelancer Grant - Guidance on Completing the Form

2.1 Application form sections

Section 1 – Your personal details

This part asks for information about you ‘the applicant’.

Section 2 – Information about your work

This part asks for information about your range and type of work. Please ensure the details in this section are accurate and complete. Application forms that have incomplete or inaccurate data will **not** be processed.

Section 3 – Impact of COVID-19 on you

We need to understand how the COVID-19 outbreak has affected you and your work. Please complete this section in as much detail as possible so that we can understand why you need assistance from this grant fund. Further information can be provided through submitting an up to date CV.

Section 4 – Bank Details

Please provide your bank account details as this information will be used to make the grant payment to you – please ensure these details are correct.

Section 5 - Declarations

Please read the declarations carefully and tick the boxes to confirm you accept and understand the declarations. Please note you will need to opt in or out of the freelancer pledge.

It is very important that you have read and understood this guidance document.

2.2 De Minimis Aid

You must declare if you have received any De Minimis Aid during the previous 3 fiscal years (i.e. current fiscal year and the previous two fiscal years) together with the amount received and details of the awarding body.

What is De Minimis Aid?

In order to minimise distortion of competition the European Commission sets limits on how much assistance can be given to organisations operating in a competitive market. Under EC Regulation 1407/2013 (de minimis Aid Regulation) as published in the Official Journal of the European Union 24 December 2013, the support provided is a de minimis aid. There is a

ceiling of €200,000 (€100,000 for undertakings in the road transport sector) for all de minimis aid provided to any one organisation over a three fiscal year period (i.e. the current fiscal year and the previous two fiscal years). Any de minimis aid provided to you under this service will be relevant. Please advise us of any other de minimis aid received during the current and previous two fiscal years, as we need to check that our support added to that previously received, will not exceed the threshold of €200,000 (€100,000 for undertakings in the road transport sector) over the last 3 fiscal years. Aid includes not only grant but also assistance such as free or subsidised consultancy services, marketing advice etc. If you are in any doubt about whether previous assistance received classes as de minimis assistance please include it.

2.3 Checklist

Your completed application form must be accompanied by proof of identification, proof of work, a recent bank statement, UTR number / other relevant evidence and CV / detailed LinkedIn account as detailed on pages 1 and 2 of this document.

3.0 Freelancer Grant

3.1 What Happens after the Application is Received?

Receipt of your application will be acknowledged within 10 working days. Decisions on applications will be made based on the information provided in the application form, associated evidence and information checks that are conducted from other sources. If any data is incomplete or incorrect or the evidence provided is insufficient we will **contact you, but if queries are not satisfied** the application will be rejected. We aim to process grant applications within 30 days of receipt.

3.2 If applications are approved you will receive a grant offer by email notifying you of the award of the grant. Grant offers will be open for 14 days – if not accepted within this period the offer will be withdrawn. Grants will be paid on the basis that 100% of the grant is paid up front.

Applicants must accept the grant offer by e-mail before payment can be made.

3.3 If your application is unsuccessful, you will receive an email outlining the reason[s] for rejection. There is no appeal process.

3.4 Freelancer Grant - Grant Repayment

Applicants should note that the Local Authority may require repayment of the grant in full or part if evidence emerges that the applicant was not eligible for the Freelancer Grant.