

ARTS COUNCIL NATIONAL LOTTERY PROJECT GRANTS

Museum projects

Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants is our open-access programme for arts, museums and libraries projects.

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This information sheet relates to Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants.
See [our website](#) for more information about Project Grants.

In this sheet, we will talk about the following.

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Museums and Project Grants

We welcome applications to Project Grants from all types of museums for arts-focused projects. As well as being able to apply for arts-focused projects, Accredited museums can also apply for non-arts museum projects.

Museum projects

Museum projects are focused on museum practice. In other words, a museum's collections, or other activities linked to its core mission or on developing the museum or its staff's expertise. To be eligible for Project Grants, any museum project must have a long-term or short-term public engagement outcome as part of its project aims.

By funding museum activity in Accredited museums, we want to enable high quality public engagement with museums and their collections.

What you can apply for

Museum-focused work could include:

- public programming, including displays and exhibitions (which could include some appropriate equipment/asset hire or purchase costs, eg display cases)
- commemorative learning projects around the museum's core collections and objectives
- digital and creative media projects that encourage the public to interact with collections
- projects focusing on the conservation of objects, as long as there are associated public engagement outcomes
- projects that engage the public in consultation on collecting or other museum activity (for example, community or youth panels)
- outreach activity or community engagement projects linked to the museum's core objectives

- projects focused on engaging people with historic art collections (we would view this as a museums project rather than arts activity because our remit for visual arts focuses on contemporary arts)

Organisational development work and professional development could include:

- organisational resilience-focused activities, where these will have a longer-term benefit for a museum's ability to reach audiences and the quality of its programme of work
- projects involving professional development for Accredited museum staff and volunteers

What you cannot apply for

There are some types of museum project that we can't support through Project Grants. These are:

- building-based capital work
- funding purchase of collections/collection items (except new artistic commissions where the commission is part of the project)
- projects that deliver Subject Specialist Networks activity (either from existing Subject Specialist Networks or that aim to set up new Subject Specialist Networks)
- archaeology or field work where this is the main focus of the application
- documentation projects as the main focus of the application without a strong public engagement outcome
- digitisation of collections where this is the main focus of the activity without a strong public engagement outcome
- individuals are not eligible to apply for projects such as curation and display work (this means individuals who are self-employed outside of museum employment)

Key things to remember

- we can only accept applications for museums-focused projects from accredited museums
- all applications, regardless of the type of activity, must include elements of public engagement, either in the short term or the long term.

Museums and arts activity

All museums are still eligible to apply for (and be part of wider projects focusing on) arts activity, and we continue to encourage and enable arts and cultural organisations to collaborate.

Project Grants can support a range of arts activity associated with museums, such as:

- artists' and creatives' residencies (including international exchanges)
- exchange projects (focused on interpreting art collections or interpreting non-art collections through art)
- exhibitions (including touring)
- arts workshops
- artistic commissions
- site specific work
- festivals (including multi-cultural festivals)

Key things to remember

- partnership with art organisations/specialists is strongly encouraged
- project should have a clear artistic rationale, with clear description of artistic aims and how they would be achieved and evaluated
- show how quality of the artistic outcome and process will be ensured
- be clear about the artists you are using, their track record, and what the idea behind the project is
- how can emerging or young artists get involved, as well as established?

- consider all art forms, from literature to theatre, visual arts to dance, combined arts and festivals to creative media and online projects

Who is eligible to apply for what?

	Arts project	Museum projects
Accredited museums (non-National Portfolio Organisation)	✓	✓
Organisations that have an established role in supporting Accredited museums	✓	✓
Museums in the National Portfolio (lead applicants only)	National Activities £100,001 and above only, by invitation following an Expression of Interest; activity must be additional to NPO-funded programme	National Activities £100,001 and above only, by invitation following an Expression of Interest; activity must be additional to NPO-funded programme
Non-lead consortium members in National Portfolio	✓ For activity additional to NPO-funded programme	Accredited museums only; for activity additional to NPO-funded programme
National museums	✓	✓ Where the activity is a National Activity

See our 'National Activities' [information sheet](#) for more detail on these types of project.

Further information

[The Museums Association](#) is a professional membership organisation for museum, gallery and heritage professionals, museums, galleries and heritage organisations in the UK. They can provide recommended rates of pay as well as advice and news about the museums sector.

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