

See yourself there: grants for the arts

The following notes are taken from Lee Corner's presentation on the ACE funding initiative, Grants for the Arts. Additional notes are taken from delegates' questions.

The training session took place in April 2003, and please be advised that the Arts Council is launching a new version of Grants for the Arts – for further details please visit their web site at www.artscouncil.org.uk or call 0845 300 6200.

This training event was held as part of **making art work**, the professional development scheme for visual artists in Suffolk. For more information about the scheme, please visit the Suffolk County Council web site at www.suffolkcc.gov.uk and follow the link from Leisure and Culture to the Arts.



making art work is a professional development scheme for visual artists in Suffolk, devised and managed by Suffolk County Council and part financed by the European Union European Social Fund and Arts Council England Grants for the Arts.

GRANTS FOR THE ARTS

INDIVIDUALS, ORGANISATIONS AND NATIONAL TOURING

AIMS:

- To change people's lives through the opportunity to take part in or experience high quality arts activities
- To increase opportunities for cultural diversity in the arts
- To support excellence, new ideas and activity to help build long-term stability in arts organisations
- To invest in the creative talent of artists and individuals
- To increase resources for the arts

This fund is based on principles rather than rules — as such it is not averse to taking risks.

Grants for the Arts wants to open up funding possibilities to those who haven't previously been involved.

An underlying principle of the fund is to trust artists to deliver - there will be a much lighter touch on monitoring, documentation, etc.

This is the first time that 'creative talent' has been stressed.

WHAT CAN BE FUNDED:

Projects

Ask not what you can do for Grants for the Arts but rather can Grants for the Arts help you with what you want to do. Get behind the thinking of the scheme - and remember to discuss your 'planned ideas'* with the

ACEE officer BEFORE submitting an application.

Events

You can apply for a solo exhibition. Unlikely to get money for framing - but see info about funding groups of artists.

National touring

Process should be simpler, as Grants for the Arts operates nationwide.

Touring in region

Taking part

Formerly known as accessibility — but the Plain English people didn't like it.

Education

Research and development

Time out to develop ideas, travel, make new work. If you're going to apply for your time, the going rate is £180 a day - but you may want to consider counting some of this cost against an in-kind contribution on your part as a reflection of the personal benefit of being an artist.

Commissions and productions

Formerly known as making and showing — but the Plain English people didn't like it.

Marketing

Audience development

Now that East England Arts has become Arts Council England, East, the responsibility shifts to the officers to liaise among themselves to establish what projects are happening when - and where.

Capital

You can apply for capital and revenue funding simultaneously - but don't bite off more than you can chew, assessment criteria include ability to manage the project and financial viability.

Professional development

An underlying principle of this fund is that the creative act in itself is of public benefit - so you don't need to deliver public

workshops to demonstrate public benefit. Instead, you can argue that there may be long term benefit but that the emphasis is on developing your skills - not product.

Training

Funds to cover attending seminars/training events that develop your practice.

Organisational development

Travel Including abroad.

Bursaries

Residencies

Fellowships

GRANTS TO INDIVIDUALS

This includes artists, performers, promoters, presenters, curators, producers, writers, groups of individuals.

Because you can apply as an individual, you no longer have to set up a charity or not-for-profit group. You can come together as a group, if this is more appropriate, to organise a one-off event and then disband.

There's much greater emphasis on trusting artists to do what they say they will - so no more articles of procedure or constitutions.

Please have a basic plan in mind when you call for advice. Often, artists call with a string of ideas, but no actual project in mind. The scheme wants to help you do what you want to do — but it's up to you to identify what that is.

Grants normally range from £200 up to a total of £30,000. Applications up to £10,000 can be discussed over the phone and then submitted. Applications over £10,000 can be discussed, then submitted for a draft reading, which should take about 3 weeks, and then submitted.

There are also seminars open to anyone applying - call 01223 454400 for details.

Match funding is not an absolute requirement: there are very few funds that can support individual artists, so it may be that you can't find another source of support.

However, if one does exist, ACEE will be very surprised if you don't apply to that one, too. Grants for the Arts is not a bottomless pot – so they will welcome applications where you've achieved part of the overall costs from other places.

If you need less than £200 don't hesitate to apply - the figures are guidelines.

You can apply for a day rate to run workshops/projects etc ; recommended rate = £180.

You could also apply for funds to pay yourself while pursuing research and development BUT artists need to recognise that there is a personal benefit in being an artist and so should include some of their time as in-kind support on the budget.

Grants for the Arts is managed by the regional office, Arts Council England, East — formerly East England Arts.

Officers are expected to have a body of knowledge about artists in their area and as such be able to make informed decisions about applications.

Your first port of call, as an artist in Suffolk, is Michael Garvey, telephone 01223 454435, email michael.garvey@artscouncil.org.uk

GRANTS TO ORGANISATIONS:

This includes arts organisations, local authorities, public organisations, partnerships, collectives, national organisations, voluntary and community groups, groups of organisations.

Regularly funded organisations may apply, but must have lead officer's agreement, first.

It may be possible for a group/groups of artists to get together and bid for framing equipment to benefit them all.

Grants normally range from £200 up to a total of £100,000.

Match funding? If it exists, you should apply to other sources, as well as to Grants for the Arts.

If you need less than £200 don't hesitate to apply - the figures are guidelines.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Q: How much is available for organisations?

A: As yet, there's no final figures set for this budget.

Q: What additional material needs to be supplied with the application?

A: None is automatically required - the decisions will NOT be made on the basis of slides, etc, but on the quality of the idea and the proposed work, backed up by a body of knowledge built up by ACEE officers.

Q: What happens if they don't know anything about me as an individual artist or the group we've put together?

A: ACEE will contact others who do, e.g. your local arts development officer. There is also a second stage of the assessment procedure, in which weighting is given to new applicants.

Q: What if circumstances change and the project has to be altered accordingly?

A: Officers should advise and support you to ensure that the project is viable.

Q: Will Grants for the Arts mean that other funding sources such as Arts & Business or the British Council, will change? A: No.

NATIONAL TOURING:

touring in two or more regions: This includes exhibitions, so scope here for individual artists to apply

work of all kinds across all scales: Encourages cross art form events.

grants normally range from £5,000 up to £200,000.

both regional and national offices

involved: Again, it's up to them to liaise among themselves - you don't have to deal with half a dozen officers in half a dozen areas.

GRANTS FOR THE ARTS — KEY FEATURES

More investment into grants: So, more scope for individuals and groups of individuals to apply.

One application pack – includes application form, guidance notes, contact details, standard grant conditions, a tour schedule form: Simplified approach. The form is for data capture and monitoring what's happening where — read on

Written proposal – applicants say what they want to do in their own words: This gives you the chance to explain what you're going to do in your own words, rather than try to fit it into a small box which, in the experience of many, does not provide enough space.

Everything depends on the strength of your argument - your ability to describe why you need to be doing this particular project.

Read the application notes - it gives advice on the sort of length your description should be.

One front door – applicants apply in region where they are based: So again, you don't need to race around the country, telling everyone what you're doing - the system should do that for you.

No deadlines – apply at any time: They will balance the budget, so they shouldn't run out of money. And you can make as many applications as you like - although if you put in for several simultaneous projects they will wonder where you're going to find the time to do them all.

Quick decisions:

6 weeks for applications of £5,000 or less

12 weeks for applications over £5,000:

Remember to speak to the lead officer BEFORE submitting an application as they will not come back to you for additional information once you've put in the papers.

Flexibility built in:

single or a combination of activities
single region or many regions
national activities and national organisations

activities lasting up to three years: As there's only one application form you can use it for everything you're requesting. So you could put together a project combining research and develop, funds to purchase a particular piece of equipment and then a final show of work.

HOWEVER: you may be better off doing the project in stages, and applying at each appropriate stage for the next bit of funding. Discuss with ACEE officer.

Light touch – simplified and consistent assessment and monitoring procedures, trusting applicants to deliver: The principle is that artists will be trusted to do what they say they're going to do - so it's not necessary to monitor the life out of every project.

Individuals not in competition for funds with organisations – different budgets: Over the next 3 years, ACEE has £650,000 per annum in the pot for individuals. No figure available for organisations, yet. But they have had an overall increase in their funds.

National advice line – 0845 300 6100: Call to request an application pack

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Q: If there are no deadlines, how will ACEE avoid running out of money?
A: ACEE will manage the budget by holding fortnightly budget meetings to keep check

on how much is being spent and balance it accordingly.

Q: When is the best time to apply?
A: The purpose of the fund is to respond to needs, so apply when you need to rather than trying to guess the best time to apply.

Q: How many times can I apply?
A: As often as you like.

Q: If my project has a history, can I still apply?
A: Yes, you can.

Q: Do I have to complete one project before I apply for another?
A: No, but remember that ACEE will look closely at your capacity to manage various projects simultaneously.

Q: If my application is rejected, will they tell me why?
A: Yes, they should tell you.

WHAT THEY DON'T FUND:

Most of this is fairly straightforward and what you would expect.

Activities which are not arts related.

Activities for which there is no public benefit - either in short or longer term: But remember that the definition of 'public benefit' is much broader now - and the need to demonstrate it in quantifiable terms is far less important.

Goods or services bought or ordered before the offer of a grant is made.

Activities that have already taken place.

Activities, equipment or events that duplicate existing provision.

Costs covered by other funding: Remember the bit about match funding? If there's another, obvious source of money for your project you should go to them first.

On-going overheads.

Fundraising events which do not benefit the arts.

Film makers and film activity (with exceptions): The exception being where it's a visual artist using film as part of their working practice. Otherwise, you have to go to the Film Council funds, handled in our region by Screen East, telephone 0845 601 5670.

Second hand equipment (with exceptions): The exceptions including such items as second hand printing presses.

Organisations which share out profits to members or shareholders, unless the activity they are applying for is self contained and has clear public benefit.

Students in full-time education, or their tuition fees: There has been much discussion about artists doing MAs and this point may be reconsidered at a later date.

Activities in a formal education setting for statutory educational purposes: That should fall within the education budget.

Activities or events mainly taking place outside England.

Applications for national touring from organisations based outside the UK: But you could apply to bring a group of artists to this country.

ASSESSMENT POLICY:

"To deliver a fair and accountable process, which is transparent, consistent, light touch, cohesive, easily remembered and deliverable"

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA:

The artistic quality of the activity and its ongoing effect on the applicant's artistic practice (or both) - your application will have to score on ALL the assessment criteria.

How the activity will be managed and its ongoing effect.

How feasible the activity is financially, and its future effect.

How the public will benefit from the activity, immediately or in the longer term - another significant change here; you don't have to demonstrate immediate public benefit. It could be 10 years down the line that the full benefit of your project is realised.

The contribution of the activity to meeting our aims for Grant for the Arts

GENERAL QUESTIONS:

Q: Who assesses the applications?

A: The arts team in the ACEE regional office - it is not dependent on an individual decision. If the project includes elements and/or activities that exceed the officers' experience/knowledge it is their responsibility to seek advice from colleagues in other regional offices.

Q: Will conditions be imposed on my application?

A: Although it may happen, it's not very likely - if the application isn't any good it won't be made better by applying conditions to a grant.

Q: Who will make decisions on my application?

A: More than one person; Decisions will be made a different stages and by different people. Your first call should be to the lead officer. In Suffolk, that is Sue Dawes. There should be a relationship of mutual respect and recognition between officers and artists - so remember to speak to ACEE BEFORE you submit an application.

Q: Will ACEE publish who gets the grants?

A: Yes.