

HARDSHIP FUND FOR CREATIVE FREELANCERS

Support for creative freelancers working in the arts and creative sector who are experiencing immediate financial hardship due to the loss of income as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.



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Hardship Fund for Creative Freelancers: a summary

- The Scottish Government has committed £5m through Creative Scotland and Screen Scotland for creative freelancers who are experiencing hardship due to lost income from work and/or practice in the creative sector due to COVID-19
- £700k of these funds have previously been allocated to the Screen Scotland Hardship Fund, with the £4.3m balance available for the remainder of the arts and creative sector
- These funds will be delivered through a range of partners who are operating existing hardship funds, alongside direct support from Creative Scotland for eligible freelancers whose roles are not supported by external funds. The external partners are:
 - The Crafts Council and Craft Scotland
 - Visual Arts Scotland
 - Society of Authors
 - Help Musicians
 - BECTU
- Funds offer a one-off award to those who are most deeply impacted and disadvantaged by the cancellation of work as a result of the emergency situation
- You can seek between £500 and £2000 to help support your immediate needs
- Awards are non-competitive and administered through simple and fast processes for applicants
- Applications will open through our online portal from 12 noon on Monday 26 October 2020. All applicants will register on the Creative Scotland site before being channeled to the relevant funding partner to complete their application.
- The funds do not have a published deadline – but will only remain open for as long as the funds are available.
- We aim to ensure that all eligible recipients will receive money in their account within 6 weeks of submission of your request.

What is this fund for?

These funds are to support creative freelancers working in Scotland who are experiencing immediate financial hardship due to the loss of income as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The funds offer a one-off monetary contribution to those who are most deeply impacted and disadvantaged by the cancellation of work as a result of the emergency situation.

We will trust that those who request these funds are in need of emergency funding at this time. We strongly encourage people to fully consider their needs before making a request to this programme. Funds are finite and we and our partners expect a high level of demand. It is vital that we are able to support those who have the most urgent needs at this time.

Whilst there are no deadlines for this programme, the nature of this fund is that it will only remain open whilst budget remains available. We realise however that not everyone will be able to respond to this opportunity immediately, and therefore we and our partners will hold back a proportion of the budget so that we can support requests that take a little more time to reach us. But we do suggest you apply as soon as possible.

Please let us, or our partners, know if you need any support with submitting a request, for example if you have any access needs, or if English is not your first language.

What is the overall budget for these funds and how much can I apply for?

There is £5m allocated towards this programme. £700k supported the Screen Hardship Fund (delivered by Screen Scotland in September and early October) and £4.3m will support this round of funding. Bursaries can be requested for any sum from £500 - £2000. If you have specific access needs, then you may request more than this.

What are access costs?

Access costs are the costs of making sure everyone has access to our support and the work we fund.

You can request a contribution to your access costs if you have experienced additional costs over and above your daily living costs during COVID 19 as a result of a disability or need to remain shielding. As a contribution this is expected to be proportionate to the level of the award and is not expected to exceed the level of the award itself.

Hardship Fund for Creative Freelancers and other social security benefits

People in receipt of social security benefits, or those planning to apply for them, should make their own checks in terms of the potential impact the award of hardship funding would have on any benefits payments. We also strongly advise that you check the most up-to-date information and advice from the UK Government on their support programmes for freelancers before making a request to this programme. It is your responsibility to consider the impact of a request to these funds on any other support you intend to access.

Who can apply?

These funds are to support freelance creative professionals working in the arts and creative sector in Scotland who are experiencing immediate financial difficulty due to the loss of income as a result of COVID-19.

These roles include those whose work has direct creative outcomes as well as those in supporting roles whose work directly supports the making and presentation of creative work.

All applicants must be based in Scotland and must be able to demonstrate they were working and making income as a freelance creative professional before lockdown began (in March 2020).

The Hardship Fund for Creative Freelancers is open to:

- Freelance professionals whose work has direct creative outcomes. This can include (but is not limited to) a visual artist, a writer or maker of poetry, prose or fiction, a playwright, actor or theatre-maker, a comedian, dancer, musician, craft maker or designer. You will derive a significant proportion of your income from your role in creating or producing original artistic, creative or design material.
- Freelance professionals whose work directly supports the making and presentation of creative work including events. This can include (but is not limited to) a theatre producer, a lighting designer, a gig promoter, an independent curator or creative producer. You will derive a significant proportion of your income from your role in supporting or producing original artistic, creative or design material and events.

What do I need to supply to demonstrate that I am eligible to apply to this fund?

When you apply, you will be asked to identify your role by selecting from a drop-down list of the specific roles this fund will support. The selection you make will determine which partner your application will be made to. If your role is not listed and you believe it qualifies under the broader criteria above, you will be able to tell us.

If your role is directly supported by Creative Scotland, we will ask you either to upload a current CV or write us a short biography. We need this from you to show us that you have had a freelance professional practice as described and that this practice was established prior to March 2020 (when COVID-19 lockdown began). If your role is not art form-specific your CV/biography must demonstrate that a significant proportion of your work is within the creative sector. If you are directed to one of our partners, they will advise you on the information you need to supply.

Who cannot apply?

The following are not eligible to apply to this fund:

- Those deriving the majority of their income from client-led work – for example in advertising, architecture, software/electronic publishing and from technical areas of writing and publishing such as news journalism, educational, technical, academic and professional writing
- Those working in the screen and photography sector (as they were covered by the Screen Scotland Hardship Fund which was recently administered and applications are presently being assessed)
- Those working in the heritage sector including interpretation consultants, designers and tour guides
- Those who cannot demonstrate a freelance professional creative practice
- Those currently working in paid full-time employment
- Individuals based outside Scotland
- Those who are currently furloughed under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and are receiving 80% or more of their full-time salary.
- Self-employed individuals (or members of a partnership) who have received support under the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme (SEISS) equivalent to, or in excess of the **UK living wage**, pro rata, since 1 April 2020 (we calculate this at £10,114).
- Anyone studying either full time, or as part of a long term, formal or accredited programme at college or university (at the time of application) including PhD students
- Academics or other education professionals not in freelance positions

What is the deadline for applications?

The funds do not have a published deadline – but will only remain open for as long as the funds are available with each of the partners. We therefore encourage applicants to apply as early as possible.

Our online application portal – which requires all applicants to register first with Creative Scotland - will enable us to record the overall volume of requests and monitor demands on the fund as applicants register.

We plan to briefly pause applications to allow for those who need additional support and time to apply. When this happens we will communicate with registered applicants and let them know when the fund will reopen.

Alternative Formats, Languages and Access Support

Creative Scotland is committed to offering clear and accessible application processes and programmes that are open to everyone. On request this information is available in alternative formats including translations.

We offer access support to disabled applicants, tailored to individual requests. Support includes Sign Language Interpreters for meetings and scribing support for dyslexic applicants. Officers can offer advice to new applicants and support them to make an application.

The Equalities Team can offer additional one-to-one support to applicants with access requirements. Please note we will accept applications and supporting materials which are written in English, Gaelic or Scots. If you are a D/deaf BSL user, you can access our services with the Contact Scotland-BSL programme. Go to: contactscotland-bsl.org/deaf-bsl-users for more information

Need help?

If you have any questions about this fund please contact our Enquiries Service.

You can do this by email, through our website or social media.

Email: enquiries@creativescotland.com

Web: Fill out a form on our [website](#)

Twitter: Send us a tweet [@creativescots](#)

We aim to respond to all enquiries very promptly. If you want us to call you back, give us your number and we'll arrange to come back you as soon as possible.

How to apply?

At midday on **Monday 26 October 2020**, our online application portal will open for applications.

Go to www.creativescotland.com/creative-freelancers to access the link to the online portal.

How does the application process work?

To apply, you will need to do the following

1. All applicants must firstly register on the Creative Scotland online application portal. Go to www.creativescotland.com/creative-freelancers to register.
2. We will ask you to set up a temporary application account – which you do by simply providing us with your name and email address and creating a secure password.
3. We will ask you to verify your email address (by emailing you confirmation that you want to set up the account) and once this is done, you can log in and begin.
4. Once logged in, we will ask for your name and contact details. We will also ask you to select what you do (ie what is your freelance role presently) from a drop-down list of eligible roles.
5. Based on what you tell us, you will be given a Unique Reference Number and told which of the funding partners you should complete your application with (ROUTE A), or you will progress directly through Creative Scotland's process (ROUTE B).

ROUTE A: Applying to one of the partner hardship funds

If your role is supported by one of our partners, we will give you the link to their fund and will ask you to complete your application with them. Please note - you will be required to submit the Unique Reference Number when you apply to the fund. Please don't attempt to apply direct to one of the partner funds without having first set up your account with us and received your Unique Reference Number.

ROUTE B: Direct support from Creative Scotland (for eligible freelancers whose roles are not supported by any of the partner hardship funds)

If your role is supported by Creative Scotland, you will be able to continue on our application portal and complete and submit your application through our system. Please see P9 for more details on how to do this.

What if my freelance role isn't listed on the system?

The roles listed have been developed by Creative Scotland and our partners to help establish the range and type of individuals that these hardship funds can support. If your role is not listed in our system and you believe it is eligible under our criteria, you will be able to tell us what you do and we will then advise you.

If we cannot establish that your role is eligible under our criteria, we will let you know that your request has not been approved. This decision will be final.

How long will it take to get a decision?

The funds are offered on a non-competitive basis and require you to submit minimal information to enable us to make awards as quickly as possible. We will aim to ensure that all eligible recipients will receive money in their account within 6 weeks of submission of your request. If there are any delays to this, we'll let you know.

Can I apply more than once?

No. If you are eligible, you may only receive support through this fund once. We and our partners will use your Unique Reference Number to ensure you have not applied to multiple partners. We will ask you to verify that all information submitted is true and accurate.

What if I cannot apply using the online portal? Is there an alternative means of application?

If you are not able to access the online portal – either due to technical barriers or other access reasons – then please let us know as soon as possible and we will arrange an alternative means of application.

Completing your online application:

ROUTE B: Direct support from Creative Scotland

If your application is to be managed by Creative Scotland, you will be then asked to provide the following information:

1. A CV (Curriculum Vitae) or a short supporting statement of your work. If possible, please upload documents in .doc, .docx or .pdf format. The document should be titled with the name of the individual requesting the bursary, e.g. Jane Smith.docx.

A CV is a short document which summarises a person's background, skills, experience and achievements. If you submit a short supporting statement instead of a CV, please ensure this includes specific details of your work as a freelance creative professional, including dates of work undertaken.

2. A name and email address of a professional referee:

- A professional referee can be anyone in a recognised role in the arts or creative industries who is in an appropriate position to verify that you have a professional practice as a freelance artist or freelance creative practitioner.
- It can also be someone who has employed you as a freelance artist or creative practitioner in the past two years.
- It can be someone from a sector development organisation, a local creative network, or a current employer. The sector development organisations include The Federation of Scottish Theatre (FST), Scottish Contemporary Art Network (SCAN), Creative Edinburgh, Creative Dundee, Playwrights Studio Scotland, The Scottish Music Industry Association (SMIA), Craft Scotland, XpoNorth and others that exist to support artists, creative practitioners and creative businesses. For writers, a professional referee can be an agent, a publisher or a link to a Live Literature profile.
- It cannot be an academic referee, i.e. someone who knows/knew you as a student.

You will also be asked how much you are requesting, and to confirm that you hold a UK bank account. We will also ask (for monitoring purposes only) about other support you have applied for/received during COVID-19.

After my application is received, what happens next?

Please note that this process applies to all applicants – whether they are applying via Route A (via one of the partner hardship fund) or Route B (seeking direct support from Creative Scotland).

1. We/the partner will determine your eligibility by reviewing the information provided in your CV / short supporting statement to ensure that you are a freelance artist or freelance creative professional.
2. If necessary, we/the partner will contact your referee with a standard request to verify your position as a freelance artist or freelance creative practitioner.
3. In rare cases, we/the partner may contact you to clarify information provided in your request.
4. If eligible, we/the partner will approve your request and ask you to provide your bank details.
5. Upon receipt of your bank account details, we/the partner will pay you the full amount requested. Please note this can take up to 5 working days.
6. There will be no contract for the bursary and whilst we will not seek any formal monitoring information after the bursary payment, we may contact you in the future if we are asked to report back on the impact of the funding. We will ask for permission to contact you; this will not affect the outcome of your application.

When confirming your bank details:

- (If receiving funds direct from Creative Scotland) you must complete and return Bank Details Form even if you have received funds from Creative Scotland in the past into the same account.
- We/the partner can pay the bursary into your personal account only
- Your account must be a UK based bank account
- You will need to supply us with a copy of a recent bank statement or pay in slip which includes the bank account name, sort code and account number and this must match the name of the applicant
- We/the partner will pay by a BACs payment
- Your account must be in the same name under which you made your request for the bursary

Freedom of Information

Creative Scotland is committed to being as open as possible. We believe that the public has a right to know how we spend public funds and how we make our funding decisions. You can see details of our **[FOI policy here](#)**.

We are listed as a public authority under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. By law, we may have to provide your application documents and information about our assessment to any member of the public who asks to see them under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

We may not release those parts of the documents which are covered by one or more of the exemptions under the Act. Please see the Freedom of Information website at www.foi.gov.uk for information about freedom of information generally and the exemptions.

Complaints Procedure

If you are not happy with the way we dealt with your application, you can access a copy of our complaints procedure on **[our website here](#)**. Please note that you can only complain if you believe we have not followed our published process when dealing with your application. You cannot use the complaints procedure to appeal against the decision.

Data Protection

Creative Scotland (CS) requires some personal information about you to consider your application. Without this information CS will be unable to provide you with any funding.

If you would like to see a breakdown of the personal information CS requires, why it is required, what CS does with that information and how long CS keeps it, please refer to CS's Privacy Notice available online at: **www.creativescotland.com/privacy-policy/funding-privacynotice**

Where the personal information you have provided to CS belongs to other individual(s), please refer to CS's Privacy Notice. You are welcome to share this Data Protection Section and CS's Privacy Notice with the respective individual(s).

You have some rights in relation to the personal information that CS holds about you under data protection legislation. Information on how to exercise these rights is contained in CS's Privacy Notice or you can contact CS's **[Data Protection Officer](#)**.

If you have any concerns with how CS has processed your personal information, you should contact CS's Data Protection Officer in the first instance, as CS would welcome the opportunity to work with you to resolve any complaint. If you are still dissatisfied, you can submit a complaint to the Information Commissioners Office.



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