

Arts Council of Northern Ireland

National Lottery Support for Individual Artists Programme

Guidance Notes for - Major Individual Artist Awards

Deadline for Applications: 12 noon, 20 July 2026

Decisions: August 2026

Applications must be submitted on-line at www.artscouncil-ni.org/funding

Please Note: this programme is for proposals which will complete by **31 August 2027**.



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Introduction

The **Support for Individual Artists Programme** (SIAP) is a range of schemes which aim to support artists across all disciplines to create work and develop their practice. These guidance notes are in relation to the **Major Individual Artist Awards** scheme and provide information on who is eligible to apply to the scheme and how to submit an application. It also describes how your application will be assessed, how payments will be made and what you will be asked to do if you are awarded a grant.

If you are looking for information on other Support for the Individual Artist Schemes, guidance notes for all schemes will be available on our website in the coming weeks at [Arts Council of Northern Ireland Funding for Individuals \(opens in a new window\)](#). **You should read the guidance notes for each scheme to find the most suitable for you and your project idea.**

A general summary of who each scheme is aimed at is given below.

SIAP Scheme	Who is the scheme aimed at?
Project Funding for Individuals	Artists of all disciplines and in all types of working practice, at all stages of their career, including emerging ¹ artists.
Major Individual Artist Awards	Artists of all disciplines and in all types of working practice who have achieved national or international recognition.
Artists International Development Fund (AIDF)	Artists of all disciplines and in all types of working practice, at all stages of their career, including emerging artists, who have received recognition for their work in Northern Ireland but have not had extensive international experience.
Creative Progression	Artists and creative practitioners from all disciplines in all types of working practices from minority ethnic backgrounds, particularly those who have experienced structural barriers linked to racialisation, migration, displacement, including those in need of international protection. Applications are welcome from artists at any stage of their career.
Young Musicians' Platform	Classical, jazz, traditional and contemporary singer-songwriter musicians: who are at least 18 years old and up to an age limit of 26 for instrumental players, and 29 for singers; and who have reached a high standard of public performance.
Travel Awards	Artists of all disciplines and in all types of working practice, at all stages of their career, including emerging artists.
Musical Instruments for Individuals	Professional musicians who are from or currently reside in Northern Ireland AND who are working as a high-level performer in a solo capacity or as part of a small group / chamber ensemble in any musical genre.

¹ ACNI's definition of an emerging artist can be found on page 6 of these guidance notes.

Please note that the above table provides broad guidance only. **You must read the guidance notes for each scheme for full details on eligibility criteria, application requirements and programme deadlines.**

Getting Help With Your Application

These Guidance Notes and the relevant application form are available on our website at [Arts Council of Northern Ireland Support for Individual Artists Programme \(SIAP\) \(opens in a new window\)](#). The Arts Council of Northern Ireland is committed to offering clear and accessible application processes and programmes that are open to everyone. If you have any access needs and are thinking about making an application, we can help to make sure that you're supported during the application process.

We have a number of ways we can support you to make your application:

- Arts Officers can offer general guidance to applicants on making an application
- If you are d/Deaf, disabled, or neurodivergent, University of Atypical can provide support with completing your application. Due to the time needed to match you with the best advisor, it is likely that advice sessions will start on/after Friday 19 June 2026. **Please contact University of Atypical as soon as possible to ensure sufficient time for the support process.** Phone: 028 90239450; Email: access@universityofatypical.org.
- Other accessibility support for disabled applicants : The Arts Council of Northern Ireland can make information available in other formats tailored to individual requests for the application in other formats e.g. large print, braille, audio, Easy Read and British Sign Language

Please contact us at artgrants@artscouncil-ni.org if you need further assistance with your application including alternative language versions.

Further contact details for all our Artform staff can be found on the Arts Council Website [Arts Council of Northern Ireland Contact Us \(opens in a new window\)](#).

The Arts Council of Northern Ireland welcomes applications from the widest possible range of individuals, representing all categories under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. **We particularly welcome applications by disabled artists and by artists from the generally unionist community as applications from both these demographics are currently under-represented across our programmes aimed at individuals.**

Aims of Major Individual Artist Awards (MIA)

The Major Individual Artist Awards are intended to create the circumstances in which established artists with national / international recognition may develop extended or ambitious work. Your proposal should result in a significant creative outcome. Project proposals could, for example, be any of the activities below - or a combination of them:

- Create new work
- Support an individual's time where this is related to specific creative outcomes
- Research and development time to explore practice or develop work
- Facilitation of innovation and experimentation
- Participate in a residency

The creation of new work and the associated costs will vary across artforms. Examples of projects within the *creation of new work* category could be :

- Creation of new visual art pieces, e.g. paintings, street art, sculptures, ceramics, craft pieces, video art/installations – which could include the costs of art materials, framing
- Creation of a new novel or poetry collection – which could include the costs of self-publishing (see page 8 onwards for an important note on this)
- Creation of a new play or performance – which could include development costs such as collaborating with others, workshopping of early scripts, or the costs of staging a small independent production².
- Creation of a new composition or album - which could include development costs such as collaborating with others and workshopping which could include the costs of session musicians, studio technicians and studio time, or the costs of presenting work
- Creation of a new circus performance piece, which could include the costs of collaborating with others, necessary studio or equipment hire

Remember: These lists are not exhaustive, and cited costs are examples only. More detailed information on eligible and ineligible costs is provided on page 7 onwards.

² NB: Applications can be from freelance writers/directors/theatre makers/performers/actors/choreographers /dancers only. Individuals applying on behalf of companies in receipt of Arts Council funding will not be eligible. Also, applications can only be for projects which are not currently in development with or already scheduled for development with any company or venue.

How much funding is available?

Four awards for £15,000 are available.

No partnership funding is required, but if your proposal cost is greater than the award value you must detail the total cost of your project and all other sources of funding in your application.

Are collaborative projects eligible?

No. While your project can involve the contribution of other artists and creative professionals (and your budget should reflect those costs), the application cannot be a formal collaboration. The proposal should be the creative vision of a single artist.

Is your proposal timeframe suitable?

The Major Individual Artist Awards will only fund proposals that will take place **between 1 September 2026 and 31 August 2027**. All eligible expenditure must be incurred within these dates. If this is not the case for your proposal, you should NOT apply to this scheme as the Arts Council will not meet any costs incurred outside this period.

Can I apply to more than one SIAP scheme?

You may apply to more than one scheme within the suite of SIAP programmes (for which you are eligible) but you will only be awarded one grant in any funding round.

If you choose to apply to more than one scheme:

- You must complete a separate application form for each scheme.
- The projects within each application must be significantly distinct.
- If, in the view of the Arts Council, the projects are not significantly distinct, you will be contacted and asked to select which scheme and application you would like to proceed with.

Eligibility

Who can apply for a Major Individual Artist Award?

Eligible applicants for a Major Individual Artist Award are as follows³:

- Established artists of all disciplines and in all types of working practice who have not previously received a major award and who have achieved national or international recognition.
- **Please note: You must contact the relevant artform officer and discuss your proposal with them prior to submission of any application to the Major Individual Artist Awards and by close of play on Friday 10 July 2026 at the latest.** Applications submitted to the Major Individual Awards programme with no prior contact with the relevant art form officer will be ineligible for consideration. Staff contact details are available on the Arts Council website [Arts Council of Northern Ireland Contact Us](#) ([opens in a new window](#)).
- Practicing artists who are also undergraduates, postgraduates and academics employed at 3rd level educational institutions are eligible to apply but – where their project proposal lies within the same artform area as their study or work - they must prove that the funds which they are seeking are for costs which are not properly the concern of their employer and/or are not related to their work or academic study. **They must submit evidence of this in the form of a letter on headed paper from their Head of Department.**
 - In the case of post-graduate students, the letter must clearly state the title of the student's PhD thesis and include a declaration by the Head of Department. This declaration must state "The project for which funds are being sought does not form part of any academic work undertaken in relation to the above-titled PhD nor will it be assessed as part of any academic course".
 - Applicants undertaking a Masters or a PhD must also include a separate statement which provides information on how the project applied for differs from their Masters or PhD work.

Please note: The Arts Council may use its own judgement in determining this matter.

Eligible applicants must also

- Have made a contribution to artistic activities in Northern Ireland for a minimum period of 3 years within the last 5 years.
- Live in Northern Ireland
(ACNI's budgets are limited and subject to extremely high demand. Our priority must be for artists living and regularly contributing to the arts within Northern Ireland. If

³ Each scheme can have its own additional eligibility criteria. Read the notes carefully.

you are primarily living in another region of the UK, Republic of Ireland or elsewhere (i.e. you live in that region for the majority of the year), you should apply to the Arts Councils in the relevant jurisdiction. Where the Arts Council has concerns regarding this matter, we may seek further clarification from you with regard to this including documentary evidence.)

- Be at least 18yrs old and not in secondary education.

Who cannot apply?⁴

- Applicants who have broken the conditions of any previous ACNI award and applicants who remain in breach of any previous letters of offer (regardless of the letter of offer date).
- Previous recipients of a Major Individual Artist Award.

Eligible Project Costs

Eligible costs vary across schemes⁵ and you should keep in mind that the Arts Council may choose to contribute to some of your eligible project costs, and not others. For Major Individual Artists Awards these can include:

- Art materials
- Costs of your own time in undertaking the proposed activity⁶
- Residency costs, including travel costs (**NB:** if you are applying for a residency you must provide evidence of an invitation or letter of support from the host organisation.)
- Artistic or technical fees including those towards production or post-production costs associated with presentation or exhibition of work**
- Venue hire e.g. rehearsal space
- Project-related travel costs, including mileage costs (@25.7p per mile) and air travel
- Technical equipment related to the project/proposal*** (equipment requests cannot comprise more than 50% of the value of your request)
- IT Equipment : A maximum contribution of £1,200 will be made towards laptops and pcs, and £500 towards tablet computers.

⁴Individual schemes may have additional eligibility criteria. Read the guidance notes carefully.

⁵ Individual schemes may have additional project costs eligibility criteria. Read the guidance for the particular scheme you're interested in carefully and contact us if you need advice.

⁶ For writers/poets in particular, these costs may be 100% of project expenditure.

Important Points

* As a working artist, the cost of your own time spent on the project is an element of the real cost of project delivery and your project budget should reflect this. You should set out clearly how you have costed the fees for your own time (ie. break it down appropriately). In the event that the Arts Council chooses to contribute to these costs, it will make a maximum contribution as follows:

- £125 per day for any period up to 5 days
- £500 per week, on a pro rata basis for any period longer than 5 days

We will not award a higher rate per day/week, so you should apply for an ACNI contribution to your costs at these rates. Please keep in mind that the Arts Council is unlikely to be able to fund the full level of your request.

** The fees for any other artists or technicians involved in delivering the project are an element of the real cost of the project and your project budget should reflect this. You should itemise all fees clearly and break them down appropriately. In the event that the Arts Council chooses to contribute to these costs, it will make a maximum contribution as follows⁷:

- £125 per day for any period up to 5 days
- £500 per week, on a pro rata basis for any period longer than 5 days

*** If you are including costs for technical or creative equipment as part of your application it's important you tell us:

- *why the equipment is necessary for the project and appropriate for your needs*
- *why buying equipment is more appropriate than hiring it, where applicable*
- *your plans for continued use of the asset after the end of the project*
- *your plans for maintenance, storage and insurance, and any additional ongoing costs after the project ends*

If you do not include this information, we may decide not to fund the equipment element of your request.

**** Traditionally the Arts Council has supported writers to create new work and publishers to foster, develop and ultimately sell books. However, the publishing industry in Northern Ireland now has very limited capacity to service the niche demands of literary work. We also understand that 'open self-publishing' platforms are now a part of the publishing ecology. As the mentoring, editorial, design, marketing and promotion functions of established publishers will be absent in self-publishing, writers seeking costs for self-publishing must demonstrate how they can fulfil each of these functions to ensure that their work is of a professional standard. Moreover, such applicants should be able to demonstrate a consistent quality practice of published writing over time. Our aim is to assist high-quality writing to reach an

⁷ This does not mean that your budget should not reflect the full costs. For example, a technician may cost £200 per day, but your request in relation to those fees should only be for £125 per day.

appreciative readership or audience, so it is incumbent on the applicant to demonstrate their ongoing quality with evidence of publication or performance at a professional level. We would also expect writers applying for self-publishing costs who intend to market and distribute their work via social media platforms to make a very strong case for how this will be effective in reaching people outside their usual networks.

What you cannot apply for

- Projects which take place or start before the decision date for this programme.⁸
- Prolonged study at centres of further and higher education or fees for same or any cost related to such study or related academic work, including: under- and post-graduate fees; fees for study leading to a professional qualification; travel, or accommodation.
- Work which forms part of your professional or academic employment. This does not exclude those working in an academic institution or statutory body who are continuing to pursue their artistic practice.
- Translations of literary works.
- Applications to fund or establish websites.
- Podcast related projects.
- Film/TV or media projects - except
 - projects in relation to the production and exhibition of experimental and innovative lens-based work by artists intended for exhibition; or
 - projects by digital artists whose artwork is created exclusively in the digital space.

NB: we do not fund scriptwriting for film or television. If you are seeking support for scriptwriting in that regard, you should apply to NI Screen which is the relevant funding body for such activity.

- Applications relating to projects/commissions already in receipt of Arts Council of Northern Ireland funds.
- Individual artists seeking to purchase musical instruments can make an application to the SIAP Musical Instruments for Individuals scheme once it is available (check our website for updates) or can alternatively access the Arts Council of Northern Ireland's "Take It Away NI" loan scheme which is run in association with Arts Council England. The "Take It Away" scheme provides applicants with interest-free loans through a network of approved instrument retailers in Northern Ireland.).

⁸ Applicants who initiate projects prior to receipt of an ACNI letter of offer do so at their own risk. Any costs incurred prior to the date of a letter of offer cannot be covered by the grant we offer.

- Costs already covered by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, other funders or Government schemes.

Please note that these lists are not exhaustive. If you have any queries about the eligibility of your project or a cost within it in relation to the scheme, please contact the relevant art form officer by close of play 10 July 2026⁹. Staff contact details are available on the Arts Council of Northern Ireland website at [Arts Council of Northern Ireland Contact Us \(opens in a new window\)](#).

What do I need to submit with my application to this scheme?

You have to upload a number of additional documents to your application before you submit it. Important information on these documents can be read below from page 13 onwards.

Mandatory documents
Artistic CV
Detailed project budget – You must use the template provided
Artform-Appropriate Support Material ¹⁰
Letter from Head of Department regarding employment/academic assessment/study (if appropriate)
Masters/PhD statement (if appropriate)
Evidence of an invitation or support from the host organisation (if relevant)

⁹ Officers' advice is restricted to general proposal eligibility and costs. Officers cannot give consideration to detailed budgets or comment on written proposals until a full application has been submitted. (Please note also, that it is only on submission of the full application that a final determination of eligibility can be made.)

¹⁰ Depending on your artform, specific documents will be requested in relation to artform support material. Read the support material guidance for your artform carefully. If you omit any requested document – e.g. an image list for visual art or a synopsis in Drama, your application will be ineligible.

How to apply

Help with your application

These Guidance Notes and the relevant application form are available on our website at [Arts Council of Northern Ireland Support for Individual Artists Programme \(SIAP\) \(opens in a new window\)](#). They may also be requested in large print or other accessible formats if required. Please contact us at artgrants@artscouncil-ni.org if you need further assistance in this regard, including alternative language versions. You can also contact us at that address if you have any queries about any aspect of the programme or its application requirements. Further contact details for all our Artform staff can be found on the Arts Council Website [Arts Council of Northern Ireland Contact Us \(opens in a new window\)](#).

NB: Officers' advice is restricted to general proposal eligibility and general advice on costs. Officers cannot give consideration to detailed budgets or comment on written proposals until a full application has been submitted. (Please note also, that it is only on submission of the full application that a final determination of eligibility can be made.)

Making an application

You must apply using our online system. We will not accept applications in hard copy or by email. You will find a link to the Support for Individual Artists Programme at [Arts Council of Northern Ireland Support for Individual Artists Programme \(SIAP\) \(opens in a new window\)](#).

If you feel you have a disability which affects your ability to complete the online application form, please contact us immediately.

- Online applications may be edited, saved and returned up to the closing date.
- You must submit all mandatory enclosures associated with the application at the same time as your application, i.e. they must be uploaded to your online application prior to its submission. These enclosures are listed on the Attachments page within the online application and are detailed below.
- **Please ensure that you leave sufficient time to upload all documents to the system as there can be long delays as the closing deadline approaches and the system will shut down at 12 noon precisely on the closing date, Monday 20 July 2026.** If your complete application is not **fully** uploaded when the system closes, your application will not be accepted.
- If you submit your application by the closing deadline, you will receive an automated email advising that your application has been successfully submitted to the system. **If you do not receive this email, your application has not been submitted.**

Please remember that it is your responsibility to ensure that we receive the application form and uploaded enclosures by the closing time and date.

Mandatory Enclosures

Before you submit your application, you **must** upload the relevant mandatory enclosures as listed on page 10 above. Further detailed guidance on these enclosures is included below and from page 13 onwards:

Please keep in mind the following important points:

- All mandatory enclosures must be in the accepted formats as listed on page 14 below. We cannot accept documents in other formats.
- **The total size of all your uploaded documents should not exceed 25 Mb.**
- You must submit **all** necessary enclosures with your application form. If any enclosures are missing, your application will be ineligible.
- If you submit an enclosure in a format which we do not accept or which is corrupted or which we cannot open, the enclosure will be considered missing and your application will be ineligible.
- Do not compress files into one zip file. Files must be uploaded as individual documents.
- **All data must be PC compatible.** If non-PC compatible data is supplied, your application will not be assessed. For example, if using a MAC, it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that any enclosures uploaded to the online application are PC compatible.
- Unless explicitly stated as permissible in the Mandatory Enclosure details below, the submission of weblinks or website addresses in lieu of enclosure documents is not acceptable and will result in your application being made ineligible.
- Arts Council will accept the use of cloud-based storage; however **you must not provide links to any subscription service that requires a login to access.** If you provide any such links, the enclosures will be deemed missing, and your application will be made ineligible. Arts Council must be able to access relevant support material at time of eligibility checking; if unable to do so, your application will be ineligible.
- If submitting video links, e.g. using YouTube, you must ensure that the links are set as public. If the links are set as private and the Arts Council cannot access the links during eligibility checking and/or assessment, your application will be deemed as ineligible as critical support material has not been made available.

Detailed guidance on mandatory enclosures

Further information on all mandatory enclosures is detailed below. If you have any queries about any of the documents, please contact the Arts Council of Northern Ireland by email at artgrants@artscouncil-ni.org. If any mandatory enclosures are omitted, your application will be ineligible.

Mandatory Enclosure	Guidance on Enclosure
Artistic CV	Your Artistic CV should show us your track record of artistic practice and contribution to the arts. Starting with the most recent examples of your practice, it should include exhibitions, performances, publications, collaborations etc., as well as any prizes, nominations, awards, commissions, that you have received. If you have a 3rd level/post-graduate or professional qualifications <u>related to your practice</u>¹¹, you should also list them in your CV. <u>NB:</u> - Do not provide unnecessary narrative. - Please note web links to the applicant's website or to examples of artistic practice are not acceptable.
Detailed Project Budget (Use the Budget Template Provided)	You must use the budget template provided. This should provide a breakdown of the expenditure to be incurred throughout your project e.g. materials, artist fees, venue hire, equipment cost/hire, travel, residency or mentoring costs, course fees, accommodation, etc. You must give as detailed a budget as possible, e.g. rather than <i>Equipment £1,000</i> the budget should list each item separately. If are applying for fees for any artist – including for yourself - you must indicate how the cost has been calculated for what amount of time, e.g. <i>X days at £X per day</i> or <i>X hours at £X per hour</i>. <u>NB:</u> - Mileage rate is 25.7 pence per mile - Daily rate for artist fees (including the applicant's) up to 5 days = £125 per day - Weekly rate for artist fees (inc the applicant's) = £500 per week pro rata

¹¹ Do not provide information in relation to educational attainment not related to your artistic practice, or below 3rd level education, ie. do not list O'Levels, GCSEs or A Levels etc.

Mandatory Enclosure	Guidance on Enclosure
	Remember: How you cost your project impacts how it will be scored in relation to its financial planning. Budgets indicating accurate costing from named suppliers will score more highly than those with estimated rounded figures; while the provision of quotations are not mandatory, your project may score more highly in relation to financial planning if quotations are provided. Also, if you indicate a total project cost and a request amount in your application which is different from the figures provided in your budget attachment, that may also negatively impact the assessment of your application. <u>Check your figures before submission.</u>
Artform-appropriate Support Material	These will be examples of your work as an artist. (Arts administrators do not need to provide Support Material.) As with all mandatory enclosures, if you omit a document requested Unless explicitly permitted below in relation to your project’s artform, the submission of weblinks or website addresses in lieu of artform-appropriate support material is not acceptable and will result in your application being made ineligible. Please note: you provide weblinks at your own risk. If the weblinks provided are not working during the assessment period, the enclosures will be considered missing, and your application will be ineligible for assessment. If submitting video links, e.g. using YouTube, you must ensure that the links are set as public. If the links are set as private and the Arts Council cannot access the links during eligibility checking and/or assessment, your application will be deemed as ineligible as critical support material has not been made available. NB: You must not provide links to any subscription service that requires a login to access. If you provide any such links, the enclosures will be deemed missing, and your application will be made ineligible. <u>ACCEPTABLE FILE FORMATS</u> All data must be PC compatible. If non-PC compatible data is supplied, your application will not be assessed. For example, if using a MAC, it is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure that any enclosures uploaded to the online application are PC compatible.

Mandatory Enclosure	Guidance on Enclosure
	We can accept ONLY the following file formats: Image files (GIF, JPEG, JPG, PNG, TIF, TIFF) Sound files (MP3, WAV, WEBM) Video files (AVI, MKV, MP4) Text files (DOC, DOCx, PDF) Spreadsheet files (XLS, XLSx, CSV)
Artform-appropriate Support Material continued	DRAMA <u>Actors, performers, directors</u> Must supply at least one relevant review which clearly identifies the applicant, (a maximum of two relevant reviews can be supplied.) AND may also supply one visual moving image – max 5 minutes duration. <u>Playwrights</u> – Up to 10 pages of draft script <u>along with a synopsis</u>.
	DANCE Performers must provide one visual moving image of their work up to 5 minutes duration. OR A link to a website address is acceptable but you must clearly identify which 5 minute section you wish us to view. If a link or website is not working correctly, your application will be deemed ineligible as critical support material has not been made available.
	VISUAL ARTS / CRAFT Artists must provide a maximum of 10 images, <u>with an accompanying image list</u> Please note: The accompanying image list must contain, as a minimum, the title of the work, size of the work, a description of the media and the date it was made. Failure to provide an image list will render your application ineligible. OR A link to a website address is acceptable but you must clearly identify which 10 images you wish us to view. If a link or website is not working correctly, your application will be deemed ineligible as critical support material has not been made available. If providing a link or a website

Mandatory Enclosure	Guidance on Enclosure
Artform-appropriate Support Material continued	address, you must also provide an image list. Failure to provide an image list will render your application ineligible. FILM-BASED VISUAL ART / DIGITAL ART Artists must provide 2 visual moving image clips of their work up to 5 minutes duration. OR 2 weblinks to separate visual moving image clips are acceptable. The links must be directly to the clips; not to a general website. Please remember that you provide links at your own risk. If a link or website is not working correctly or you provide a clip to a general website page and not a specific clip, your application will be deemed ineligible as critical support material has not been made available. PERFORMANCE ARTISTS¹² Performance artists must provide 2 visual moving image clips of their work up to 5 minutes duration. OR 2 weblinks to separate visual moving image clips are acceptable. The links must be directly to the clips; not to a general website. Please remember that you provide links at your own risk. If a link or website is not working correctly or you provide a clip to a general website page and not a specific clip, your application will be deemed ineligible as critical support material has not been made available.
	MUSIC <u>Musicians</u> – Must supply a maximum of 2 sound recordings of no more than 8 minutes each. <u>Composers</u> – Must supply 2 examples of full scores or excerpts from most recent work. TRADITIONAL ARTS (Music) Must supply a maximum of 2 sound recordings of no more than 8 minutes each.

¹² A piece of performance art is an artwork created through actions executed by the artist. It may be witnessed live or through documentation, spontaneously developed or written, and is traditionally presented to a public in a fine art context.

Mandatory Enclosure	Guidance on Enclosure
Artform-appropriate Support Material continued	Weblinks Instead of uploading audio or video files, you may provide weblinks to audio or visual recordings of 2 contrasting works of no more than 8 minutes each. These should be provided in a separate enclosure document entitled “Weblinks”.
	PARTICIPATORY ARTS/ CIRCUS & CARNVAL APPLICANTS A maximum of 2 website links. Each piece of evidence should not exceed 5 minutes in duration. Where web-based evidence is part of a longer piece of recorded material the artist needs to clearly identify the time frame they wish to have viewed / listened to.
	LITERATURE A maximum of 10 pages of the work in progress for which the application is being made OR A maximum of 10 pages of a recently published work. <u>Applicants in spoken word forms</u> A maximum of 2 recordings of their performance.
Letter from Head of Department/ Supervisor	IF you are an undergraduate, a postgraduate or an academic working in 3rd level education and your project proposal lies within the same artform area as your study or work - you must submit a letter on headed paper from your Head of Department or supervisor clearly stating that that your proposal is not part of your professional or academic employment and/or the work is not related to and does not form part of under-graduate/post-graduate study and is not intended to be assessed as part of any academic course. IF you are a post-graduate Masters or PhD student, the letter must also clearly state the title of the student’s PhD thesis and include a declaration by the Head of Department. This declaration must state “The project for which funds are being sought does not form part of any academic work undertaken in relation to the above-titled Masters/PhD nor will it be assessed as part of any academic course”.
PhD or Masters Statement	IF you are Masters or PhD student, you must submit a statement which briefly describes the subject of your post-graduate thesis and sets out how the project applied for differs from your Masters or PhD work

Mandatory Enclosure	Guidance on Enclosure
Invitation or Letter of Support from Host Organisation	IF you are applying for a residency you must provide evidence of an invitation or letter of support from the host organisation.

After you submit your application

- The Arts Council will acknowledge receipt of the application form.
- The Arts Council will undertake an eligibility check on your application. In the event of missing information, your application will be deemed as ineligible and will not proceed to assessment. If ineligible, the Arts Council will issue an email advising reasons for ineligibility.
- During the eligibility checking process, the Arts Council will publish a monitoring form to your application account and issue an email notification advising of same. Completion of the monitoring form is not mandatory and will not affect the eligibility and/or assessment of your application. **However**, we would strongly encourage all applicants to complete and submit the monitoring form as monitoring can assist us to deliver better public services and continuous improvements.
- Eligible applications will be assessed by an Arts Development Officer or Head of Artform Team.
- Assessments will be subject to a moderation process.
- The Arts Council will contact you with the final decision by letter by email. If rejected, the Arts Council will provide you with detailed reasons for the rejection.

If you receive an award

Letter of Offer

Following the decision, Arts Council will issue successful applicants with a contract outlining the conditions attached to the award and the specific purposes for which the award can be used.

- You will not be able to incur expenditure until you have received your letter of offer from the Arts Council. You should take this into account when planning your proposal.
- It is important that you read the letter of offer and enclosed conditions carefully before signing and returning it. The letter of offer will set out what you may spend the grant on and by what date the proposal must be completed.
- **If there are any changes to your agreed project from the original application, you must inform the Arts Council immediately in writing before incurring any proposal expenditure.** If you don't tell us about changes you may have to repay the award, and this will affect decisions on any future applications you might make.

How payments will be made

Payments are normally made in stages of 90% and 10%. Each stage will have specific conditions attached to it; your letter of offer will set out these specific conditions and you must comply with them prior to the drawdown of each tranche of funding.

The Arts Council will make payments to UK-based bank accounts in the applicant's name only, or to joint accounts where the applicant is a named account holder. Payments are by BACS transfer only. You will need to complete and return the BACS form issued with your letter of offer.

Post project monitoring

At the conclusion of your project, you will have to submit an End of Project Report and provide a final income and expenditure account for the project, in addition to evidencing the appropriate use of Arts Council and National Lottery branding throughout the course of project delivery. The project report will include

- Details of the how the project has benefited you
- Evidence of appropriate use of Arts Council and National Lottery branding where relevant
- An evaluation of the project – was it successful? Did you meet your aims? etc.

We may discuss with you how this information is to be collected.

Post project monitoring – Verification Visits

Your project may also be subject to verification by an ACNI staff member. This will ensure that the project grant has been spent in accordance with your letter of offer. It is therefore important that you retain all the project documentation to evidence this.

How we will make our decision

Throughout the assessment process, Officers will consider applications using their professional judgement, based on the information provided within the application and knowledge of the wider arts landscape, and the competitive context in which all applications are evaluated. All assessments are then considered at a Moderation meeting at which final recommendations are agreed.

Assessment Stages and Criteria

There are 2 stages to the assessment process. An application must be rated as *Fundable* at Stage 1 in order to proceed to Assessment Stage 2.

Why might an application be considered *Not Fundable*?

If, in the view of the assessor and Moderation, the application does not demonstrate

- a sufficient quality of artistic practice by the applicant; or,
- the proposal is not of sufficient artistic quality or innovation; or,
- the proposal lacks critical detail

Stage 1	Criteria	Assessed Against
	S1.1 Evidence of the quality of the applicant's artistic practice	Artistic CV and work submitted
	S1.2 Artistic quality / innovation of the proposal and its detail	Information provided by written responses within relevant sections of the application form and relevant mandatory enclosures where appropriate ¹³
Stage 2	Criteria	Assessed Against
	S2.1 Evidence of the applicant's contribution to the arts	Artistic CV and work submitted
	S2.2 Evidence of how the proposal may enhance the applicant's artistic or professional development	Information provided by written responses within relevant sections of the application form and relevant mandatory enclosures where appropriate ¹⁶
	S2.3 Evidence of how the proposal may enhance the applicant's career	Information provided by written responses within relevant sections of the application form and relevant mandatory enclosures where appropriate
	S2.4 Detail and accuracy of planning and budgeting	Information provided in your Budget Template enclosure.

Is the Arts Council decision final?

If you are unhappy with the Arts Council's decision on your application, please see our website for information on how you can contact us - <https://artscouncil-ni.org/funding/funding-decisions>

Other Information

If you have any queries about the programme or need any help or advice completing the application, please contact the Arts Development Officer relevant to your artform. A list of ACNI's Arts Development Officers and their contact details can be found at [Arts Council of Northern Ireland Contact Us \(opens in a new window\)](#).

Arts Council of Northern Ireland

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