

Arts Council of Northern Ireland

WOMEX 2026 Bursaries

Deadline for Applications: 12 noon, Thursday 27 August 2026
Decisions: September 2026

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



THE
NATIONAL
LOTTERY®

Contents

Introduction	3
Getting Help with your Application	
How Much Funding is Available	
Eligibility	5
Who Can Apply	
Who Cannot Apply	
Horizon Partners	
How to Apply	7
Help with your application	
Making an application	
After you submit your application	
If You Receive an Award	9
Letter of offer	
How payments will be made	
Post-project Monitoring	
How We Will Make Our Decision	11
Assessment Stages and Criteria	
Is the Arts Council Decision Final?	
Other information	11

Introduction

WOMEX World Music Expo will take place in Gran Canaria Palmas de Granaria, Spain from 21st to 25th October 2026. This will be the twelfth occasion of the Arts Council of Northern Ireland's attendance at WOMEX which has fast become the most important international professional market for world music of every kind including folk, roots, ethnic and traditional music.

The five-day event attracts over 2,600 delegates from over 90 countries, including hundreds of concert and festival bookers, labels, publishers, distributors, managers, and the world's media.

This year, the Arts Council of Northern Ireland will host a combined stand located within the Horizons section of WOMEX. Horizons is an initiative to collectively promote the music of nations of the UK & Ireland at WOMEX. The Horizons partners are Arts Council England, British Underground, Arts Council of Ireland, Arts Council of Northern Ireland, Culture Ireland, Creative Scotland, Scottish Music Industry Association, Arts Council of Wales, Cerdd Cymru: Music Wales, Wales Arts International, UK Trade & Investment.

Selected delegates will participate in the national stand to promote their work to international arts industry presenters and promoters.

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 \(SIAP\) Womex 2026 \(opens in a new window\)](#). 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 help 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. **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 \(opens in a new window\)](#).

How much funding is available?

The Arts Council of Northern Ireland will offer a maximum of up to three bursary awards for WOMEX 2026 (subject to available budget). The award – **£800** per delegate - is towards the costs of registration for the conference, return flights and a contribution towards accommodation.

Eligibility

Who can apply?

The delegate bursaries are available to musicians, managers and agents working in Northern Ireland and are aimed at those artists and promoters who have a track record of touring internationally, have excellent promotional material available (CDs, website etc) and who would benefit from attending the event to promote their work at this particular music industry marketplace. Only one delegate bursary will be awarded per group.

Eligible applicants must also

- Have contributed to artistic activities in Northern Ireland for a minimum period of 1 year 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 you are primarily living in another region of the UK, Republic of Ireland or elsewhere (ie. 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.

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.

Who cannot apply?

- Applicants who are in breach of the conditions of any previous ACNI grant.
- Applicants who have been in receipt of an ACNI WOMEX bursary 3 times or more previously.

Horizons Partners

The Horizons partners offer support for delegates including:

- Priority use of a high-profile, centrally-located Horizons stand
- An online profile and printed directory helping Horizons at WOMEX delegates connect
- An online toolkit with news, beginners guide, ongoing support and advice for delegates and artists
- A newsletter with updates on the event
- Dedicated first-timers orientation and in-festival networking events

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 \(SIAP\) Womex 2026 \(opens in a new window\)](#). 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 \(opens in a new window\)](#).

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 Womex 2026 Bursaries Scheme at [Arts Council of Northern Ireland Support for Individual Artists Programme \(SIAP\) \(Womex 2026\) \(opens in a new window\)](#).

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.
- **Please ensure that you leave sufficient time to submit your application 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, 12noon on Thursday 27 August 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 by the closing time and date.

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, the 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

Applications will be assessed against two criteria: **Contribution to the Sector**; and **Potential for Skills/Career Development of the Proposal**.

Make sure you address each question otherwise your application may be deemed ineligible.

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 - [Arts Council of Northern Ireland Funding Decisions \(opens in a new window\)](#).

Other Information

If you have any queries about the programme or need any help or advice completing the application, please contact the Arts Council's Head of Music, Ciaran Scullion – cscullion@artscouncil-ni.org.

Arts Council of Northern Ireland

The MAC
10 Exchange Street West
Belfast
BT1 2NJ

ArtsCouncil-ni.org

T: +44 (28) 9262 3555

E: info@artscouncil-ni.org

Alternative formats of this publication may be available upon request.

For further information, email: info@artscouncil-ni.org