

Arts Council of Northern Ireland

National Lottery Support for Individual Artists Programme

Application Guidance Notes for

- Vedaaranya Artists' Residency at Ramgarh Shekhawati Rajasthan

Deadline for Applications: 12noon, Thursday 18 September 2025

Decisions: October 2025

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

Please Note: this programme is for residencies which will take place between January 2026 to February 2026



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council**
of Northern Ireland



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Introduction

The Arts Council of Northern Ireland is pleased to announce the continuation of the **Vedaaranya Artists' Residency at Ramgarh Shekhawati Rajasthan**, in association with the British Council and the Shruti Foundation. In association with the host organization in 2026 the residency is open to **mural artists only** to fit with priorities, traditions and developments in the location.

We can offer a one-month residency in the historic town of Ramgarh Shekhawati in the princely state of Rajasthan, founded in 1791, which was one of the richest towns in 19th century India.

Mural Artists may apply for a month-long residency **from January 2026 to February 2026. Artists must be in residence to coincide with the dates of the Vhah Festival which will run from the 22nd-26th January 2026.***

***Successful applicant(s) will be strongly advised to communicate with the host in order to agree optimal timing for residency.**

This residency will require the selected artists to engage with young people from local communities and undertake school workshops. If you are successful, you will be required to complete a Basic Access NI check, if you do not already have one.

These notes give information on who is eligible to apply to the programme 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.

These Guidance Notes and the relevant application form are available on our website at [Arts Council of Northern Ireland Vedaaranya Artists' Residency at Ramgarh Shekhawati Rajasthan \(opens in a new window\)](#). 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.

If you have a disability which affects your ability to complete the online application form, please contact the University of Atypical (UoA). The UoA will provide tailored advice and support to D/deaf, disabled and Neurodiverse applicants when submitting applications to ACNI Programmes.

In promoting these award schemes, the Arts Council particularly welcomes applications from groups referenced in 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.**

Is your proposal timeframe suitable?

The **Vedaaranya Artists' Residency at Ramgarh Shekhawati Rajasthan** will only fund a month-long residency for **mural artists working in traditional and sustainable materials** that will take place between January 2026 and February 2026. **Artists must be in residence to coincide with the dates of the Vhah Festival which will run from the 22nd-26th January 2026.**

*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 or support a residency which falls outside this period.

How much funding is available?

The value of the residency is £3,000 which covers:

- Accommodation costs inclusive of three meals per day and teas and coffee twice a day
- Access to Library and museum
- Free Wi-Fi
- Local doctor
- Additional offers will be discussed with the successful artist.

The Arts Council will cover:

- Costs of flights to and from India up to £1,000 with a one-night hotel stay in Delhi either end; up to £50 per night.
- Internal transport to and from Delhi, organised in collaboration with host residency.
- The cost of the Visa, up to £100, which the artist must arrange
- Daily stipend of £15
- Vaccination costs up to £300
- Travel Insurance costs up to £400 .
- Access NI Basic Check, £16

Eligibility

Who can apply?

Eligible applicants to the **Vedaaranya Artists' Residency at Ramgarh Shekhawati Rajasthan 2026** are as follows.

- **Mural artists working in traditional and sustainable materials.** In association with the host organization in 2026 the residency is open to **mural artists** only to fit with priorities, traditions and developments in the location.
- Employees of statutory bodies¹, undergraduates and postgraduates are eligible to apply but they must prove that the funds which they are seeking are for work/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 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.)
- Be at least 18yrs old and not in secondary education.

¹ A statutory body is a formally established organisation that is, at least in part, publicly funded to deliver a public or government service and which is regulated by government legislation. All schools, further education colleges and universities are statutory bodies under the Education Authority.

Who cannot apply?

- 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).

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 Vedaaranya Artists' Residency at Ramgarh Shekhawati Rajasthan \(opens in a new window\)](#). 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 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 Vedaaranya Artists' Residency at Ramgarh Shekhawati Rajasthan Programme at [Arts Council of Northern Ireland Vedaaranya Artists' Residency at Ramgarh Shekhawati Rajasthan \(opens in a new window\)](#).

If you feel you have a disability which affects your ability to complete the online application form, please contact the University of Atypical (UoA). The UoA will provide tailored advice and support to D/deaf, disabled and Neurodiverse applicants when submitting application to ACNI Programmes.

- 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, ie. 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 12noon precisely on the closing date, Thursday 18 September 2025.** 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 mandatory enclosures as listed below.

Important information on these documents can be read below from page 7 onwards.

Mandatory documents
• Artistic CV
• Statement explaining how you would benefit from an artistic residency in India.
• Artform-appropriate support material
• IF applicable: Letter from Head of Department regarding employment/academic assessment/study
• IF applicable: Masters/PhD statement

Please keep in mind the following important points:

- All mandatory enclosures must be in the accepted formats as listed on page 8 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.
- Use of Dropbox or similar cloud-based storage is not permitted as ACNI cannot access sites of that nature.
- Links to any subscription service that requires a login to access are not permitted. If you provide any such links, the enclosures will be deemed missing, and your application will be made ineligible.

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.

Mandatory Enclosure	Guidance on Enclosure
Artistic CV	<p>Starting with the most recent examples of your practice – this should include prizes, nominations, awards, commissions, major exhibitions/ performances, publications, etc.</p> <p><u>NB:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do not provide unnecessary narrative. - Please note web links to the applicant’s website or to examples of artistic practice are not acceptable.
Statement	Statement explaining how you would benefit from an artistic residency in India.
Artform-appropriate Support Material	<p>These will be examples of your work as an artist.</p> <p><i>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.</i></p> <p><u>ACCEPTABLE FILE FORMATS</u></p> <p>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.</p> <p>We can accept ONLY the following file formats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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)

Mandatory Enclosure	Guidance on Enclosure
<p>Artform-appropriate Support Material continued</p>	<p>VISUAL ARTS</p> <p>Mural Artists must provide a maximum of 10 images, <u>with an accompanying image list.</u></p> <p>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.</p> <p>Failure to provide an image list will render your application ineligible.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>A link to a website address is acceptable but you must clearly identify which 10 images you wish us to view. These should be provided in a separate enclosure document entitled “Weblinks”. 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 address, you must also provide an image list.</p> <p>Failure to provide an image list will render your application ineligible.</p>
<p>Letter from Head of Department/ Supervisor</p>	<p>IF you are an employee of a statutory body, an undergraduate or postgraduate, you must submit evidence of this in the form of a letter on headed paper from your Head of Department or supervisor stating 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.</p> <p>IF you are a post-graduate Masters or PhD student, 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”.</p>
<p>PhD or Masters Statement</p>	<p>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</p>

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 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.
- Following the assessment process, if you are shortlisted you will be invited to attend an interview, either online or in person, which will determine the successful artist for 2026.
- 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.

Please note successful applicants to this residency will be required to apply for an Access NI check.

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

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

Assessment Stages and Criteria

There are 3 stages to the assessment process. An application must be rated as *Fundable* at Stage 1 in order to proceed to Assessment Stage 2. Assessment Stage 2 will determine which applicants will be invited to the interview stage.

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

	Criteria	Assessed Against
Stage 1	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 ²
	Criteria	Assessed Against
Stage 2	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
	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

Please note an interview will also form part of the application process. Interviews are likely to take place mid-end October.

The decision process

All applications will be assessed by an Arts Development Officer against the criteria as listed above, taking into account the programme's aims and priorities. Assessors will consider applications using their professional judgement, based on the information provided within the application, 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 funding decisions will be made.

Is the Arts Council decision final?

There is a review procedure, which is available on the website and will be issued to any unsuccessful applicants upon request.

Other Information

For more information about the Arts Council of Northern Ireland go to the Arts Council Website [Arts Council of Northern Ireland \(opens in a new window\)](#).

If you have any queries about the programme or need any advice completing the application, please contact the Arts Development Officer for International, Siobhán Molloy via smolloy@artscouncil-ni.org

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