



Creative Places Award 2024

Guidelines for Applicants

Deadline: 5.30pm (Ireland time), Thursday 28 March 2024

Note for people with disabilities or access requirements

The Arts Council makes every effort to provide reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities or access requirements who wish to submit an application or who have difficulties in accessing Online Services. If you have a requirement in this area, please contact the Arts Council's Access Officer, by phone (01 618 0200/01 618 0243) or by email (access@artscouncil.ie) as early as possible before the deadline.

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Getting help with your application

If you have questions about using the Online Services website, visit the FAQ section on our website: www.artscouncil.ie/FAQs/online-services/

If you have a technical question about the online application process and your question is not answered in the FAQ section, you can email onlineservices@artscouncil.ie or call the Arts Council on **01 618 0200/01 618 0243**

If you have a query about your application that is not technical in nature, you should email or phone the arts team to which you are applying for funding.
<http://www.artscouncil.ie/Contact-us/Staff-and-adviser-lists/>

To watch our YouTube guide on making an application, go to
<https://youtu.be/-a3xeZdZj3o?feature=shared>

Key points to remember

- In order to make an application, you **must** be registered for an Arts Council Online Services (OLS) account. If you do not have one, you can sign up for one [here](#). Please note that it can take up to **five working days** for a new user to be registered on OLS, so give yourself plenty of time to do this ahead of the deadline.
- We strongly advise that you read this document carefully before beginning the process of making your application.
- We also strongly advise that you start the process early, and give yourself **plenty of time** to make your application.
- We recommend that you aim to upload your application **at least forty-eight hours** before the advertised deadline. That way, if you encounter a technical problem, you will have time to contact us so that we can assist you in resolving it.
- Please note that, on account of the large volume of applicants using the online system on the last day of the deadline, we cannot guarantee that we can resolve any technical issues you may have if you contact us **after 2.00pm on the day of the deadline**.
- Please read the following checklist carefully:

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- I have read and understand these guidelines.
 - In the event that I have had an issue, I have contacted the Arts Council for assistance well in advance of the deadline.
 - I have filled in all of the sections of the application form relevant to my application.
 - I have prepared all required supporting material as set out in these guidelines, and have this ready to upload.
 - I have asked someone else to check over my application to make sure there are no errors and that nothing is missing.
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1. About the Creative Places Award

1.1 Objectives and priorities of the award

The Arts Council's objective for its Creative Places programme is to invest in places (e.g. towns, villages, suburbs, rural places) that have had fewer opportunities to take part in the arts.

Creative Places should be inclusive and diverse, and their programmes rooted in socially engaged arts practice and community-development principles. Successful applicants will build on existing cultural strengths and be led by community participation and ideas. In particular, they will look to involve people who are often excluded.

Features of Creative Places include:

- Knowledge and understanding of the people and the place being proposed: its demographic profile, its social, cultural and economic strengths, its challenges and aspirations
- Can demonstrate a lack of arts infrastructure/investment in their place (e.g. arts buildings, projects, festivals, galleries, arts organisations, etc.)
- Can demonstrate a lower-than-average public participation or attendance at arts activities
- Can provide evidence that the locality includes higher-than-average numbers of people often experiencing barriers to the arts for various reasons (e.g. older people, people with disabilities, people from migrant backgrounds and/or people facing economic challenges etc.)
- Have a clear understanding of its mission and vision for the programme
- Understands there are many culturally and socially diverse perspectives, and a need for diversity in partnerships across different sectors
- Will connect with and energise local artists and local creative skills
- Understand that *time* is essential for meaningful relationships and work to flourish, and that it has considered the future sustainability of the project
- Demonstrate the ability to build relationships, build capacity, communicate, plan, deliver, document and evaluate
- Will invest in a dedicated coordination and/or research personnel with appropriate socially engaged arts expertise to work with people and in the place
- In a research phase, has identified clear research questions for a Creative Places programme that will inform a model of best practice.

The award has three strands

1. Strand 1: Creative Places Phase 2

This strand is only open to applicants who have **completed their Creative Places three-year award** and are now entering into the next phase of their development. This award will be for one year, and applicants need only demonstrate their stakeholder engagement and programming plans for 2024. The maximum you can apply for is €70,000.

2. Strand 2: Creative Places Year 2 or Year 3

This strand is only open for those who have been awarded Creative Places three-year funding in 2022 or 2023 and are entering into Year 2 or Year 3. These applicants should

refer to their letters of offer in 2022 and 2023 and apply for no more than the funding indicated that was awarded for Year 2 or Year 3.

3. Strand 3: Creative Places Research-and-Development Award

This strand is open to new applicants for a one-off Research and Development Award, which can be drawn down over eighteen months. The award covers research fees and consultation costs. The maximum you can apply for is €30,000. In 2024 it is anticipated that up to two awards will be made.

Note: from 2025, new applicants to the Creative Places programme for multi-annual funding must have completed this research-and-development strand (Strand 3) in this round of funding or in previous rounds of funding.

The scheme is rooted in the policies set out in the Arts Council's ten-year strategy (2016–25), *Making Great Art Work: Leading the Development of the Arts in Ireland* (see here: <http://www.artscouncil.ie/arts-council-strategy/>).

The Arts Council has identified the following as strategic priorities for support through this award:

- **Public engagement:** e.g. the applicant can demonstrate that the proposed place includes a higher-than-average number of people often experiencing barriers to the arts: lack of cultural infrastructure, demographic profile with high numbers of older people, youth population and cultural diversity, etc.
- **Socially engaged or collaborative arts practice:** e.g. the principles of socially engaged or [collaborative arts practice](#) coupled with community-development principles are clearly understood and articulated and the application is informed by this expertise.
- **Research, policy and sustainability:** e.g. can demonstrate public consultation and engagement, align with local regeneration policies and plans, has clear research questions (if applicable), [social-impact evaluation and measurement methods](#), models of local approaches to collaboration, new investment models for supporting the arts, and can create a sustainable future.
- **Partnership:** e.g. a consortium that can demonstrate a meaningful and long-term commitment by a local-authority arts office, community-development partners, local arts organisations already working in or near the place, and socially engaged arts expertise. At least five partners are recommended. For research projects the partnership should involve three partners.
- **The level of cash and in-kind investment by the supporting partner(s).** This must be a minimum of 30% of the overall costs for Strand 1 and 25% for Strand 2 and Strand 3. In-kind investment must be no more than 25% of your overall contribution – e.g. Strand 1: overall costs €100,000 = grant requested €70,000, cash contribution €22,500, in-kind investment €7,500.

1.2 Who can apply?

- Strand 1 and Strand 2 are open only to existing Creative Places Award recipients who have already been awarded three-year funding in the Creative Places programme.
- Strand 3 is open to new applicants, such as **local-authority arts offices**, including **Ealaí na Gaeltachta**, **arts organisations and community-development organisations** (e.g. family-resource centres, agencies or organisations supporting specific groups).

- Applicant arts organisations must be a CLG and demonstrate expertise in socially engaged arts practice. The arts organisation does not have to have an existing connection to the place, but public and community partners do.
- Applicant community-development organisations must be located in the place proposed and be a CLG.
- An organisation must be the lead applicant (not an individual), with a range of other partner organisations. The identification of the lead applicant is at the discretion of the partners.
- Places that have benefitted from other public investment focused on public-realm development or capital-cultural infrastructure can apply, but must demonstrate existing investment has not yet engaged the community in a sustained programme of arts activities. This is people and community-focused investment than can add value to other regeneration initiatives.
- The applicant is the organisation that will receive any grant offered and which will be required to accept the terms and conditions of that grant.
- Any grant offered will be paid only into a bank account held in the name of the applicant.
- All documentation provided must be in the name of the lead applicant.

As part of its [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#), the Arts Council is committed to offering **equality of access, opportunity and outcomes** to all potential applicants regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, civil or family status, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the Traveller community, or socio-economic background. In this funding scheme the Arts Council particularly welcomes applications that are representative of the diversity of Irish society, including but not limited to any of the characteristics outlined above, and/or initiatives that deliver equitable opportunities or outcomes for those involved.

1.3 Who cannot apply?

- Any organisation that does not fall within the categories above is not eligible to apply
- Individuals are not eligible to apply.
- Members of the Council of National Cultural Institutions (CNCI) directly funded by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media cannot be a lead applicant but may be a partner.

1.4 What may you apply for?

This award has three strands

Strand 1: Creative Places Phase 2

- **The maximum you can apply for is €70,000 for 2024.**
- This award will be for one year (2024), although you can demonstrate your intention and plan to continue to develop your Creative Place in 2025 and beyond.

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- The award will support the (ongoing) appointment of a Creative Places coordinator and a programme budget. This role should be budgeted for at least three days per week, ideally higher, commensurate with appropriate and expert experience.
- No more than 45% of the budget should go towards administration, research, development and evaluation costs.
- At least 55% of the budget should be allocated for programme and communication costs. During Phase 2, it is expected that partner contributions to the programme will have developed financially and will account for at least 30% of the costs for 2024.
- In Phase 2, you may have existing funding committed from your three-year phase into 2024 – please account for this in your detailed income and expenditure as income.

Strand 2: Creative Places Years 2 or 3

- The maximum you can apply for is the amount indicated in your letter of offer for Year 2 or Year 3.
- The award will support the (ongoing) appointment of a Creative Places coordinator and a programme budget. This role should be budgeted for at least three days per week, ideally higher, commensurate with appropriate and expert experience.
- No more than 45% of the budget should go towards administration, research, development and evaluation costs.
- At least 55% of the budget should be allocated for programme and communication costs.
- You may have existing funding committed from Year 1 or Year 2 into 2024 – please account for this in your detailed income and expenditure as income.
- The award will cover 75% of costs. The applicant should identify partner income for 25% of the costs, 25% of which may be benefits in kind.

Strand 3: Creative Places Research-and-Development Award

- The **maximum** you can apply for is €30,000.
- This award is a one-off award, which can be drawn down over eighteen months.
- The award covers research fees and consultation costs. Applicants can consider a residency or some activity that will inform the research process.
- The award will cover 75% of costs. The applicant should identify partner income for 25% of the costs, 25% of which may be benefits in kind.

You may apply for support under only **one** strand of the award. You **must** clearly identify which strand you are applying for in section 1.5 of the application form.

Access costs for artists or participants¹ with disabilities

In addition to the maximum amount permitted, the Arts Council will also consider access costs specifically relating to the making of work by artists or participants with disabilities and/or non-capital public-access costs (e.g. audio description, interpretation) in cases

¹ The Arts Council defines participants as those who express themselves creatively by taking part in artistic activities. In broader terms, this includes anyone who engages with the arts in any way at any level – e.g. those attending an event, reading a book, watching a performance, etc.

where your proposal has a public outcome.

The Arts Council takes the definition of disability from the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which states: 'Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.'

If you wish to apply for access costs, please upload the following information with your application:

- A short document outlining what your additional access costs are
- An amount for access costs in the expenditure section of your application-form budget. This figure should also be included in the total amount you request.

What is an access cost?

Access costs for artists or participants with disabilities cover any requirements you may have in order to remove barriers that might stop you from completing your proposal. This may include, for example, costs towards additional time needed to complete an element of your proposal or additional assistance required to deliver your proposed activity.

Note: in the event that you are requesting access costs, you should include information about the costs and how you arrived at them as part of your supporting documentation (see section 1.6 below).

How much funding should you apply for?

In applying for Creative Places, you are required to submit a **separate detailed budget plan** listing all items of income and expenditure relating to your proposal. This applies to applicants under all strands

The maximum amount you may request is the difference between the **proposed expenditure** and the **proposed income** you indicate in the budget.

- Proposed expenditure should include all fees, * wages, research-and-development costs, production, promotion and publicity costs, administrative costs, etc.
- Proposed income (30% of entire costs for Strand 1 and 25% for Strand 2 & Strand 3) should include what you expect to receive from other funders, or any income generated from activities, etc. A quarter of your income can be from support in kind.

It is also important to reflect all in-kind** support in both income and expenditure, so reflecting the full and true value of your proposal.

*** Note on artists' pay** The Arts Council is committed to improving the pay and conditions of artists. We have published a [policy](#) on the fair and equitable remuneration and contracting of artists. It is important that you read this policy in advance of making your application. You will be asked as part of the application process to set out how you will ensure proper pay and conditions for the artists you work with. This will help us assess the

feasibility of your application.	
** Note on in-kind support	If you expect to receive in-kind support, you need to put a financial value on it so that the contribution it makes to the real value of your proposal is clear. You should think of in-kind support both as expenditure and as income: whatever amount you declare on the expenditure side you should also declare on the income side. Time contributed by directors or board members may not be reckoned as an in-kind cost.

You are asked to indicate income, expenditure and amount requested at three stages during your application:

- On the separate detailed budget that you submit as part of your application
- Online, when you initiate the application (totals only)
- In section 3 of the application form.

Make sure that the totals are the same in all three, and make sure that the amount requested equals TOTAL EXPENDITURE minus TOTAL INCOME.

1.5 What may you not apply for?

You may not apply for more than one project-type award in this round of funding. Activities and costs that you may not apply for include the following:

- Major capital purchases or investment into a capital project
- Ongoing core costs; however, project-management costs as they relate to the delivery of the proposal are eligible
- Activities or costs that do not fit the purpose of the award
- Activities that are more suited to another award funded by the Arts Council or operated by other state agencies, such as Culture Ireland
- Activities that have already taken place
- Activities undertaken for charity fundraising purposes, for participation in a competition, or for primarily profit-making purposes
- Proposals that have already been assessed by the Arts Council, unless you demonstrate that you have significantly developed the proposal since previously applying based on feedback received **or** if the Council has specifically advised you to redirect your application to this award. Please bear in mind that such advice is not an indication of a successful outcome.

1.6 What supporting material must you submit with your application?

Supporting material means material that is **separate from** and **additional to** your application form. This helps those assessing your application to get a clearer understanding of your proposal. Please read the following list of what supporting material is required very carefully, as failure to comply with this is the most common reason for applications being deemed ineligible.

In order to be considered eligible for assessment for Creative Places, you **must** submit the following supporting material online:

- A cover letter from the lead applicant indicating which strand you are applying for and why.

- A statement/letter of support from each participating partner outlining their objectives, expectations and commitment in relation to the project – see ‘Acceptable file formats’ in section **2.3 Prepare any supporting material required for the application**.
- A **separate detailed budget** for the proposed activity – this must be in addition to the budget information provided in the application form.
- Evidence of any financial support, including benefits in kind, or sponsorship identified in the project budget – e.g. a memorandum of understanding, a letter of support or a similar document.

In addition:

Those submitting proposals for **Strand 1 and Strand 2 must** upload:

- A document that articulates and gives strong evidence of their work to date as a Creative Place.
- A document that describes the monitoring-and-evaluation process used to date, the learnings and how they influence your approach.
- Those submitting for **Strand 3 must** upload a document to demonstrate their knowledge and research into the demographic profile, social, cultural and economic strengths, and potential of the proposed place.
- Those submitting for **Strand 3 must** upload a document outlining their research questions: what is the purpose of the research and what questions will a researcher be asked to respond to?

Note: links to streaming platforms may be used to provide samples of work. Stand-alone supporting material – e.g. CVs and letters of support – must be uploaded as separate documents with your application.

Additional material required in certain circumstances:

- If you are seeking additional access costs to support work by individuals with access requirements or to support access to your work by audiences with disability requirements, please provide a document outlining these costs and how they have been arrived at. Please also ensure that you include this additional amount as part of your budget.
- If your proposal involves working with animals, you must provide a copy of your *Animal Welfare Protection Policies and Procedures*.

For applications involving children and young people under the age of eighteen

The Arts Council requires all individuals and organisations providing services (e.g. cultural, recreational, educational) to children and young people under the age of eighteen to have suitable child-protection policies and procedures in place. When making an application, you **must** indicate in section 1 of the application form whether or not your proposal is relevant to this age group.

- If you answer ‘Yes’ to this question in the application form and your application is successful, as a condition of funding you will be required to confirm and

demonstrate that you have suitable child-protection policies and procedures in place.

- If successful, you will be required to complete the Arts Council's Child Protection and Welfare Quality Assurance Self-audit at <https://childprotection.artscouncil.ie/>. Please visit www.tusla.ie for more information on Children First.
- You will also be required to update your details in the Profile Information tab in your Online Services account (do this by going to the 'Update your account' section).

For applications involving vulnerable adults

When making an application, you **must** indicate in section 1 of the application form whether or not your proposal involves work with or for vulnerable persons. By ticking the Yes box, you are indicating that you will work with, or present work to, this cohort as part of your proposal, and that you acknowledge that you have familiarised yourself with and adhere to the *National Policy & Procedures on Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse** (see [here](#)).

* Please note that you may be asked to provide more evidence of adherence to these policies should your application be successful.

If you do not submit the required supporting material, your application will be deemed ineligible.

For further information on the formats you may use for supporting material you wish to upload as part of your application, see section **2.3 Prepare any supporting material required for the application**.

1.7 Eligibility

Your application will be deemed **ineligible**, and will not go any further in the process, if any of the following is true:

1. You miss the application deadline.
2. You do not submit a completed application form through Online Services (an application form attached as a supporting document will not be accepted).
3. You fail to complete all of the sections in the application form relevant to your proposal.
4. You cannot apply as set out in sections 1.2 to 1.3 above.
5. You apply for an amount of funding greater than the maximum amount allowed for within the award to which you are applying, as set out in section 1.4 above (except where you are applying for an additional amount to cover access costs).
6. You apply for an activity or purpose that you cannot apply for, as set out in section 1.5 above.
7. You fail to provide all mandatory supporting materials as set out in section 1.6 above.
8. Your application is better suited to another funding programme offered by the Arts Council or by another funding agency (in this case we will redirect you to the more appropriate funding opportunity).

Note: in the event that your application is ruled ineligible, it will not be assessed, and you will be able to apply again with the same proposal in future funding rounds.

2. How to make your application

2.1 Register with the Arts Council's Online Services

All applications must be made through the Arts Council's Online Services; applications made in any other way (by post, fax or email) will not be accepted.

You must have an Online Services account to make an application. If you do not already have an Online Services account, sign up by filling out the registration form here:

<https://onlineservices.artscouncil.ie/register.aspx>.

Within five working days you will be emailed a unique ARN (Artist Reference Number) and password that you can use to sign in to Online Services.

Requirements for using Online Services

Note: you will need to use a computer/laptop to submit your application. Our Online Services website does not work on phones or tablets.

Your computer and Internet browser will need to meet the following requirements to use Online Services successfully:

PC Windows 7 operating system or a newer version of Windows *with* browser versions: Microsoft Edge (v.94) or Firefox (v.27) or Chrome (v.33), or a newer version of any of these browsers.

Mac Mac OS X v10.5 Leopard or a newer version of Mac operating system *with* browser versions: Safari (v.3.1) or Firefox (v.27) or Chrome (v.32) or Microsoft Edge (v.94), or a newer version of any of these browsers.

Note: if Safari 11 prevents the upload of documents, use a newer version of Safari or use a different browser such as Firefox, Chrome or Microsoft Edge.

Note: you will also need to have Microsoft Word or OpenOffice Writer installed to complete the application form itself. OpenOffice Writer is free software that can be downloaded here: <https://www.openoffice.org>.

OpenOffice Users

Please refer to our video *Using OpenOffice to download, complete and upload the application form* at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iT9XxgmgoEo>

You **must** use OpenOffice Writer version 4.0.1 or earlier. More recent versions of OpenOffice Writer than 4.0.1 have changed how our application forms appear when they are submitted through Online Services.

Important notes for Apple Mac users

- Note the section in the YouTube video (at 1 min. 20 secs; link provided above) that deals with the issue of downloading version 4.0.1 on Macs with the operating system Mac OS Mojave or an earlier version installed.
- You cannot download OpenOffice 4.0.1 onto a Mac with the operating system Mac OS Catalina. If your Mac has this operating system or a newer version installed, you will have to download and use OpenOffice version 4.1.9 or newer.

If you cannot meet, or do not understand, any of these requirements, please contact us for advice as far as possible in advance of the deadline.

Give yourself enough time to complete the application

You should become familiar with the Online Services website well in advance of the deadline and in advance of preparing an application. It is likely that there will be heavy traffic on the site on the final afternoon of the closing date. You should prepare your application and submit it well in advance of the deadline.

Upload times can be much longer than download times. It may take longer than you think to upload your supporting materials.

Getting technical support

If you need technical support while making an online application, you can contact the Arts Council by emailing onlineservices@artscouncil.ie or by phoning 01 6180200/01 6180243. We recommend you report any technical issues with us well in advance of the deadline. Please provide a contact phone number and make sure that you are available to receive a return call from us.

We deal with queries on a first-come first-served basis.

Please note that there is often a high volume of calls as the deadline approaches and that technical-support calls received after 2.00pm on the closing date may not be resolved before the deadline.

2.2 Fill in the application form

If you have not already done so, download the application form for the award you wish to apply for. The application form is a Microsoft Word/OpenOffice Writer document that you fill in offline (on your own computer). The application form includes guidance on how to fill in each of its sections.

Note: the application form is formatted in such a way that the Arts Council can extract information from the form for assessment purposes. It is **very important** that you type inside the grey boxes in the form, and that you do not delete them and/or type outside them. If you do this, the form will not upload properly.

2.3 Prepare any supporting material required for the application

You are required to include supporting material with your application. For example, this might include a CV or samples of your current work – e.g. text, video, images or sound recordings (see section **1.6 What supporting material must you submit with your application?**).

You must submit all such supporting material online – if necessary, you should scan or save material in electronic format.

Acceptable file formats

The following table lists file formats for your supporting material.

File type	File extension
text files	.rtf/.doc/.docx/.txt
image files	.jpg/.gif/.tiff/.png
sound files	.wav/.mp3/.m4a
video files	.avi/.mov/.mp4
spreadsheets	.xls/.xlsx
Adobe Acrobat Reader files	.pdf

For convenience, gather together all the files you need in an accessible location on your computer.

Submitting URL links

Note: links to streaming platforms may be used to provide samples of work. Stand-alone supporting material – e.g. CVs and letters of support – must be uploaded as separate documents with your application.

Instead of uploading material directly, you may provide links to material hosted on streaming platforms that do not limit access through financial subscription. To do this, copy the URL (the full address of where your material is hosted) into a Microsoft Word/OpenOffice Writer or PDF document and upload it as a weblink-supporting document.

While not an exclusive list, examples of acceptable sharing platforms would be YouTube, Vimeo, SoundCloud, Bandcamp.

Please note that we will not accept links to file-sharing sites (e.g. Google Drive) nor links to social-media platforms nor to individual applicants' websites.

Note: assessors will only view materials as submitted by you according to the URL link that you provide. Check that the link works from within the document you upload – i.e. that it links correctly to your material.

If you do not wish material you upload to YouTube for your application to be publicly viewable, you can flag your video as 'unlisted' in the settings. Please do not flag your material as 'private' as it will not be accessible to Arts Council assessors.

Naming files appropriately

Give all files that you intend to upload filenames that make it clear what they contain or represent – i.e. it should be clear from the filename whether the document is a CV, a sample text, or a review of previous work.

Please submit supporting documents in separate, appropriately named files.

Good filenames for an applicant called Jack Russell	russelljack Architecture Project application.doc
	russelljack performance clip.mp4
	russelljack Architecture Project budget template round 2.xls
	russelljack youtube link.doc

The total combined limit for all supporting material uploaded with a single application is **40MB**.

2.4 Make your application online

To make your application online, you go through four main stages. Click **Save draft** at the end of each stage. You can come back to your application and revise it at any time before you finally submit it.

2.4.1 Choose a funding programme and download application form

To start a new application, click the **Make an application** button on your home page, and follow the prompts to choose the funding programme you wish to apply for and to give your application a unique reference by which to identify it. At this stage you can also download the application form (if you have not already done so).

2.4.2 Request funding amount

At this stage specify the expenditure and income related to your proposal, and the amount of funding you are requesting. The **Amount requested** should equal the **Total expenditure** minus the **Total income**. The final figures you enter here should be the same as those you enter in section 3 of the application form and in your detailed budget.

2.4.3 Upload application form and supporting material

Follow the prompts to upload your completed application form, CV or CVs, detailed budget and any other required supporting material (see section **1.6 What supporting material must you submit with your application?**). You do not have to upload everything at the same time. You can save your application as a draft and come back to it later.

Note: if you have completed your application form as a **.docx** file, and you are confident that your application form is filled in correctly (including typing inside the grey fields) but Online Services displays a message saying 'Cannot upload form', please try saving it as a **.doc** file and uploading it again.

2.4.4 Submit application

When you are satisfied that you have uploaded everything you need to support your application and ticked the declaration, click **Submit**.

Once submitted, your application cannot be amended. Do not submit your application until you are completely satisfied.

You should receive two emails. The first will be issued immediately your application is received by the Arts Council. The second may arrive a few minutes later and will contain your application number, which will be used in all correspondence relating to this application. **Note:** it is important that you contact onlineservices@artscouncil.ie if you **do not** receive the second confirmation email containing the application number.

3. Processing and assessment of applications

3.1 Overview

The Arts Council considers all applications, makes decisions and communicates these to applicants in accordance with set procedures. The aim is to ensure that the system for making awards is fair and transparent.

3.2 The assessment process

All applications received are processed by the Arts Council as follows:

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- 1 After you submit your application, you should receive two emails:
 - The first will be sent immediately and will acknowledge your application.
 - The second should arrive a few minutes later. It will contain your application number, which we will use in all correspondence about your application.

Note: these emails only mean that our online system recognises that you have submitted an application. They do not mean that your application is eligible to be assessed.

If you do not receive the email with your application number, contact onlineservices@artscouncil.ie

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- 2 Your application is checked for eligibility. Please see section **1.7 Eligibility** above.
 - 3 Adviser(s) and/or staff recommend an application as shortlisted or not shortlisted, based on the criteria in section 2.1 of these guidelines.
 - 4 A peer panel reviews all shortlisted applications and associated material, then scores and makes decisions.
 - 5 Decisions are communicated in writing to applicants.
 - 6 Decisions are noted by Council.
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Time frame

The Arts Council endeavours to assess applications as quickly as possible, but the volume of applications and the rigorous assessment process means that it may take up to ten weeks from closing date to decision.

3.3 Criteria for the assessment of applications

Applications are assessed in a competitive context and with consideration of the available resources. All applications are assessed against criteria of:

- Quality of the application
- How they meet the objectives and priorities of the award
- Feasibility.

Each of these criteria is assessed as follows:

Quality of the application

The assessment of quality focuses on the proposal and how it has understood the objectives and priorities of the award, and includes consideration of:

- The evidence and knowledge gathered to inform the proposal

- The track record of the applicant and the partnership involved as evidenced in other supporting material submitted
- The potential of the applicant and partnership as evidenced in the application form and the supporting materials submitted
- The ambition, originality and competency demonstrated in the proposal
- How the application demonstrates innovation, collaboration and sustainability.

Meeting the objectives and priorities of the award

Applications are assessed on how well they meet the objectives and priorities of the award (see section **1.1 Objectives and priorities of the award**).

Feasibility

The assessment of feasibility considers the extent to which the applicant demonstrates capacity to deliver the proposed activity. This includes consideration of:

- The track record of personnel involved in managing, administering and delivering the project
- The extent to which the applicant demonstrates the provision of equitable conditions and remuneration for participating artists
- The extent of involvement or commitment of identified project partners
- The proposed budget
- Other sources of income
- The availability of, and access to, other resources
- The proposed timetable or schedule.

3.4 Peer panels

The purpose of peer-panel meetings is to allow for a diversity of expert views to inform the decision-making process. Peer panels normally consist of at least three external adjudicators with relevant artform and/or arts-practice expertise.

Each meeting is usually led by an Arts Council member acting as non-voting chair. Arts Council advisers and staff attend as required, and those involved in the initial assessment of applications are on hand to provide information as required. Panellists have access to all shortlisted applications and associated materials prior to the day of the meeting, at which point they review, discuss and score shortlisted applications. Following this, applications are ranked by score. In light of the competitive context and the available budget, it is likely that the Arts Council will be able to fund only a proportion of the applications received.

Scoring process

The panel is asked to score applications according to the following system:

- A – Must Fund (10 points): this means that, in the view of the panel member, the application is deemed to have fully met the criteria for the award and merits funding on that basis, to the amount requested where possible.
- B – Should Fund (8 points): this means that, in the view of the panel member, the application is deemed to have met the criteria to an extent sufficient to merit funding should resources allow.
- C – Could Fund (5 points): this means that, in the view of the panel member, the application is deemed to have met the criteria, but to a lesser extent within the competitive context than other applications.

- D – Not a Priority (2 points): this means that, in the view of the panel member, the application is deemed to have not met the criteria to an extent sufficient to merit funding.

Declaration of interest

In order to ensure fairness and equity in decision-making, a panel member must declare an interest where they have a close personal or professional link with the applicant or are linked in any way with the application. An 'interest' is either 'pecuniary' or 'non-pecuniary' (e.g. familial relationships, personal partnerships, or formal or informal business partnerships, etc.).

The interest must be declared as soon as the panellist becomes aware of it. This may be at the point when they are approached to sit on the panel (if the 'interest' is known at that stage) or following receipt of the list of applicants. Where an interest is declared, the panellist will not receive papers relating to that applicant and will be required to leave the room when the specific application is being reviewed. Where this situation arises, the chair will vote in lieu of the panellist.

In some instances a panellist may not realise that a conflict of interest exists until they receive and review the panel papers. In such instances the panellist must alert an Arts Council staff member or the panel chair as soon as they become aware that a conflict may exist.

In the event of two panellists declaring a conflict of interest for the same application, the chair will be part of the decision-making process for that specific application.

If the nominated panel chair has a conflict of interest, they must declare it in writing in advance of the meeting as soon as they become aware of it. In this instance the head of team will chair the discussion on the conflicted application.

3.5 Outcome of applications

All applicants are informed in writing about the outcome of their application.

If your application is successful, you will be sent a letter of offer detailing the amount of funding you have been awarded and the terms and conditions of the award. You will also be told how to go about drawing down your award.

The Arts Council receives a large volume of applications, and demand for funding always exceeds the available resources. If your application is not successful, you can request feedback from Arts Council staff. Eligibility and compliance with application procedures alone do not guarantee receipt of an award.

Unsuccessful applicants are not eligible to apply for another Arts Council award to undertake the same activity. If the Arts Council feels that the proposed activity would have been better suited to a different award programme, an exception may be made. In such circumstances you will be informed in writing.

Appeals

Applicants may appeal against a funding decision on the basis of an alleged infringement or unfair application of, or deviation from, the Arts Council's published procedures. If you feel that the Arts Council's procedures have not been followed, please see the appeals process at http://www.artscouncil.ie/en/fundInfo/funding_appeals.aspx or contact the Arts Council for a copy of the appeals-process information sheet.