

Wales Cultural Recovery Fund - Freelancer Support

Frequently Asked Questions

General



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

What is the purpose of the Freelancer Fund?

The purpose of the Fund is to support Freelancers working in the cultural sectors facing financial challenges in the period from April 2021 - September 2021 as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.

For assistance

Please read this FAQ and the guidance. If you then need assistance please contact us via the channels below:

Phone: 03000 6 03000

E-mail: FreelancerWCRF@gov.wales

How much funding is available?

A total of £4m is available to support freelancers across Wales.

How will the funding be delivered?

The funding will be delivered by local authorities in Wales, on behalf of Welsh Government.

I have applied previously, can I reapply? Can you just use my existing details?

All eligible freelancers can apply, however a new application must be submitted.

Eligibility

Who can apply for the Freelancer Fund grant?

Support is available to assist freelancer professionals whose work has direct creative/cultural outcomes, who work in the five key sub sectors targeted by the Cultural Recovery Fund:

- The Arts;
- Creative Industries;
- Arts and Heritage;
- Events;
- Culture and Heritage.

These are broad sectors, covering a number of professions (the [Creative Industries Federation infographic](#) provides a useful illustration) and, in principle, applications can be received from freelancer workers in these sectors. However, please note, this funding is specifically for cultural and creative subsectors and roles **that that been forced to cease work and/or face difficulty restarting because of the impact of Covid-19 restrictions.** Those in roles that have been able to continue at previous or near previous levels of activity with or without support (e.g. architects, graphic and web designers, games designers, IT and software freelancers, etc.) should not apply.

Freelancers who work in film & TV, video games, software and other digital entertainment industries are not the intended recipients of this support as these markets are now operating at normal or near normal levels. However we understand that some specific roles including those in film & TV may still be affected (e.g. writers / musicians). Where this impact can be shown to be a result of COVID-19 restrictions, we will accept applications.

This Fund is also not intended to support freelancers in the sports sector. Welsh Government is working with Sports Wales to discuss support for the sports sector in Wales.

Will previous funding affect my application?

In this round we are assessing income and whether applicants have previously received SEISS funding. You can still apply if you have received support or have some income, but you may be in a lower priority group for receiving the grant. Please see the guidance for more details.

I am a freelancer, but I am unable to provide evidence within the timeframes set out in the Fund criteria due to being on a period of paternal / maternity leave. Does this make me ineligible?

No, you are eligible to apply. However, we would still want to see some evidence of your work as a freelancer. For example, you could provide evidence outside the agreed parameters set out in the guidance – using the year 2018-9 for example, or by providing supporting documents Please make this clear on your application in Section 2 of the form.

I am a freelancer but I also work part time, would this make me ineligible? If not, will I receive a smaller sum of money?

Applications are welcomed from both full and part time freelancers. The same flat grant of £2,500 is awarded in both cases, subject to meeting wider eligibility criteria. However, please note this grant is targeted at freelancers in most need of support due to loss of earnings as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

I'm a freelancer, but I operate as a limited company. Does that make me ineligible?

No, if you can demonstrate that you are the only person operating as part of that limited company and can provide details reflective of your annual accounts, you would still be eligible to apply.

I've already received funding from the UK Government Job Retention Scheme / Self Employment Income Support Scheme, can I still apply?

Yes. If you have received previous support from either the Government Job Retention Scheme and Self Employment Income Support Scheme and are still experiencing financial challenges you are eligible to apply for this grant. However you should note that within income bands, priority is being given to those applicants who have not been in receipt of SEISS during the period April 2020 – March 2021.

Is the grant taxable?

Yes. You will have to declare it as income as the fund is to support cash flow and replace income lost due to COVID-19. If you are unsure of tax implications you should seek advice from HMRC.

Application process

How do I apply?

Individuals can apply for the grant by accessing the Culture Recovery Fund Eligibility Checker on the Business Wales website:

<https://fundchecker.businesswales.gov.wales/culture>

If eligible to apply you will be directed to your local authority website where you will be able to access the online application form **or** you will be able request the application form.

How much can I apply for?

A one off payment £2,500 is available per individual, to support with immediate cash flow to help through the disrupted period.

When can I apply?

The Freelancer Grant is open to applications from Monday 17th May 12.00 noon, and closes at 17:00 on Tuesday 1st June. Late applications will not be accepted.

Will there be accessible formats of the guidance document and application form?

Yes. If there are any accessibility issues for you that might prevent you from completing an online application form please call the Business Wales helpline on 03000 6 03000

How should I complete the form if I can't access the internet?

If there are any accessibility issues for you that might prevent you from completing an online application form please call the Business Wales helpline on 03000 6 03000.

What is the deadline for applications?

Applications should be received by 17:00 on Tuesday 1st June. Late applications will not be accepted.

What if I am not in a priority group, will more funding be available?

Applications will be prioritised according to the table in the guidance. Should additional funds become available within a short period, those lower down the priority order may be able to benefit from support, however this is no guarantee additional funding will become available.

I live in RCT but work primarily in Cardiff. To which LA should I submit my application?

You can only apply to the one local authority you are currently resident in, not where you work. If you are resident in more than one, you must choose the one you primarily reside in. You cannot apply to both,

How will applications be appraised? Will the applications be treated on a first come first served basis?

No, for this round, an assessment will be made based on your income position for the last 2 years. We will review the following from your income statement on the application form:

- Income from freelance or salaried work
- The level of SEISS received
- Any discretionary grants received

A prioritisation will be made, with those that have received zero or no SEISS or other public support to date, and having dropped to zero or low income being of the highest priority.

Please see the guidance document for the priority table.

How quickly will I find out if I have been successful?

Receipt of your application will be acknowledged within 10 working days, and we aim to process grant applications within 30 working days of receipt. This timescale may be increased in some circumstances.

Decisions on applications will be made based on the information provided in the application form, associated evidence and information checks that are conducted from other sources. All information required must be submitted. If any data is incomplete or incorrect or the evidence provided is clearly insufficient we will contact you, but if queries are not satisfied within the timescale specified, the application will be rejected.

If successful, when will I receive the funding?

If applications are approved you will receive a grant offer by email notifying you of the award of the grant. Grants will be paid on the basis that 100% of the grant is paid up front.

Can I appeal if I am not successful?

If your application is unsuccessful, you will receive an email outlining the reason[s] for rejection. There is no appeal process. The Local Authority has absolute discretion on the terms of the fund.

Evidence / Supporting documents

What is the purpose of asking for a bank statement?

A declaration of income received in the years Apr 2019 – March 2020 and April 2020 – March 2021 is required, with bank statements reflecting this income for the months of January – March 2021. Bank statements are being used primarily to check SEISS payments, but may also be used as part of a more detailed assessment of your application where necessary.

Where you use more than one account please provide these statements also.

How many banks statements do I have to provide and how recent should they be?

Three month's statements are required between January and March 2021. Where you use more than one account please provide these statements also.

Do I have to provide personal banks statements or do they need to be business account statements?

You can provide personal or business account statements, depending on the circumstances.

How must bank statements be presented? Can these be screen shots of my banking app?

Scanned documents and photos of paper statements are acceptable forms of evidence for this purpose. Photos of screens showing full statements are acceptable, however screen shots of mobile banking apps are not acceptable as they are very difficult to process effectively.

I am a performer, and use a different name as a performer to my legal name. Some of the evidence I provide will include my performing name. Is this OK?

Yes, however, you will need to provide some supporting evidence connecting your legal name to your performing name.

Does all 'other information' need to be provided, or just some? For example, is a CV required or optional?

Yes. All the information listed in under 'other information' must be provided. We will be unable to process your application if it is incomplete or if you have failed to submit the necessary documentation.

This is as follows:

- A declaration of income received in the years Apr 2019 – March 2020 and April 2020 – March 2021 is required, with bank statements reflecting this income for the months of January – March 2021. Bank statements will allow us to see SEISS payments made in the recent round.
- Unique Tax Reference (UTR) Number or your most recent P60
- A CV (or a detailed LinkedIn account).

What should be included in the accompanying CV?

We would expect the applicant to provide a standard CV to include your name, address, details of skills and qualifications, previous employment / work.

If you are unable to provide a CV, a detailed LinkedIn account will be accepted.

What 'other' form of proof of identity is acceptable?

There is a specific list of 'other' forms of proof identify that are acceptable. These are a paper based driving licence or adoption certificate.

Please submit scanned documents, not originals.

Post award

What monitoring will be undertaken?

There will be a post completion monitoring exercise undertaken where you may be contacted for your feedback on the operation of the Fund, for information on how the grant has supported you and to ask whether you are still working as a freelancer in Wales.

We will contact you if you have signed up to the Freelancer Pledge.

Freelancer Pledge

What is the 'Freelancer Pledge'?

One of the key commitments aligned to this funding is our ambition to develop and deliver a freelancer pledge. Freelance professionals are often active participants in their community, making a positive contribution to our **social, cultural, environmental and economic well-being**. The Well-being of Future Generations Act requires public bodies in Wales to enable a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language as well as think about the long-term impact of their decisions, to work better with people, communities and each other. The Freelancer Pledge will help to forge a partnership between creative freelancers and public bodies to achieve this, and help the public sector lever your key skills as a freelancer in the culture sectors to assist us to bring creativity and imagination to all areas of public life.

This might be co-creating solutions with the community, contributing to local development plans and development or bringing new approaches to capital projects. This could be in areas such as culture through to health or sustainable development and built environment. You may already have experience in working in the public realm with partners, be a socially engaged artist, a PTA member or trustee or just an active doer in your community who uses your lived experience to make positive change.

How will the Freelancer Pledge work in practice?

The Welsh Government has established a working group of key stakeholders to develop thinking on the freelancer pledge. The working group includes representatives from the freelancer community, unions and the Office of the Future Generations Commissioner.

If you are interested in being a part of this, please opt into the Freelancer Pledge. We'll use your details to inform and involve you in developments. We value the skills and experience of freelancers. We would expect any work undertaken by freelancers as a result of the Freelancer Pledge to be paid work.

Do I have to sign up for the Freelancer Pledge?

No, you do not have to sign up for the Freelancer Pledge in order to receive this funding. However, there are benefits for you as a freelancer in signing up for this pledge, such as opportunities to access paid work.

I've signed up for the Freelancer Pledge, do I need to sign up again?

No, if you have already signed up to the pledge you do not need to again, we will be in touch about this in due course.

If I choose not to sign up to the Freelancer Pledge, will my application be treated less favourably?

No, your application will be assessed against eligibility criteria only. The Freelancer Pledge does not form part of this.